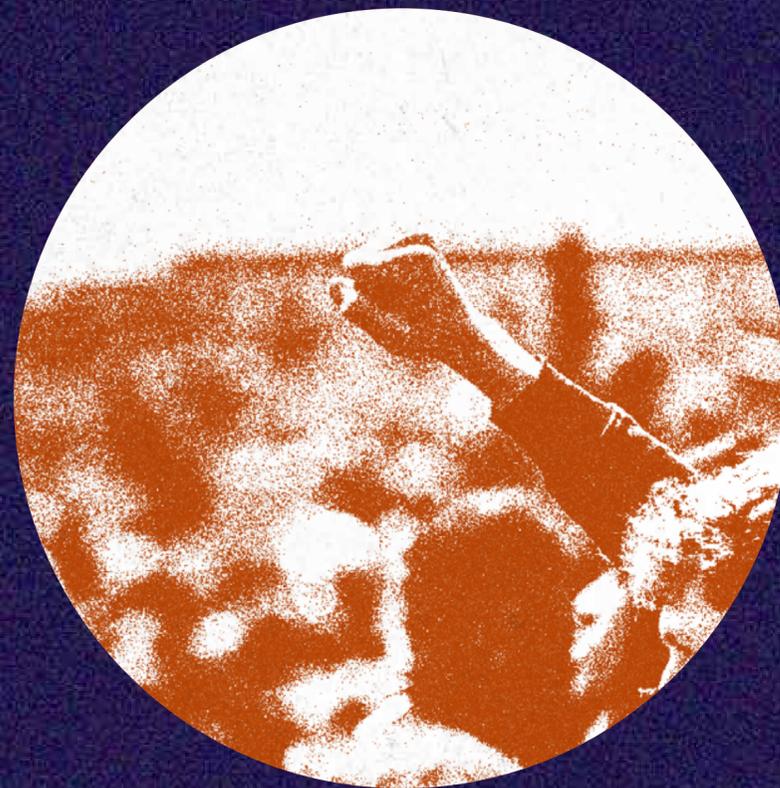
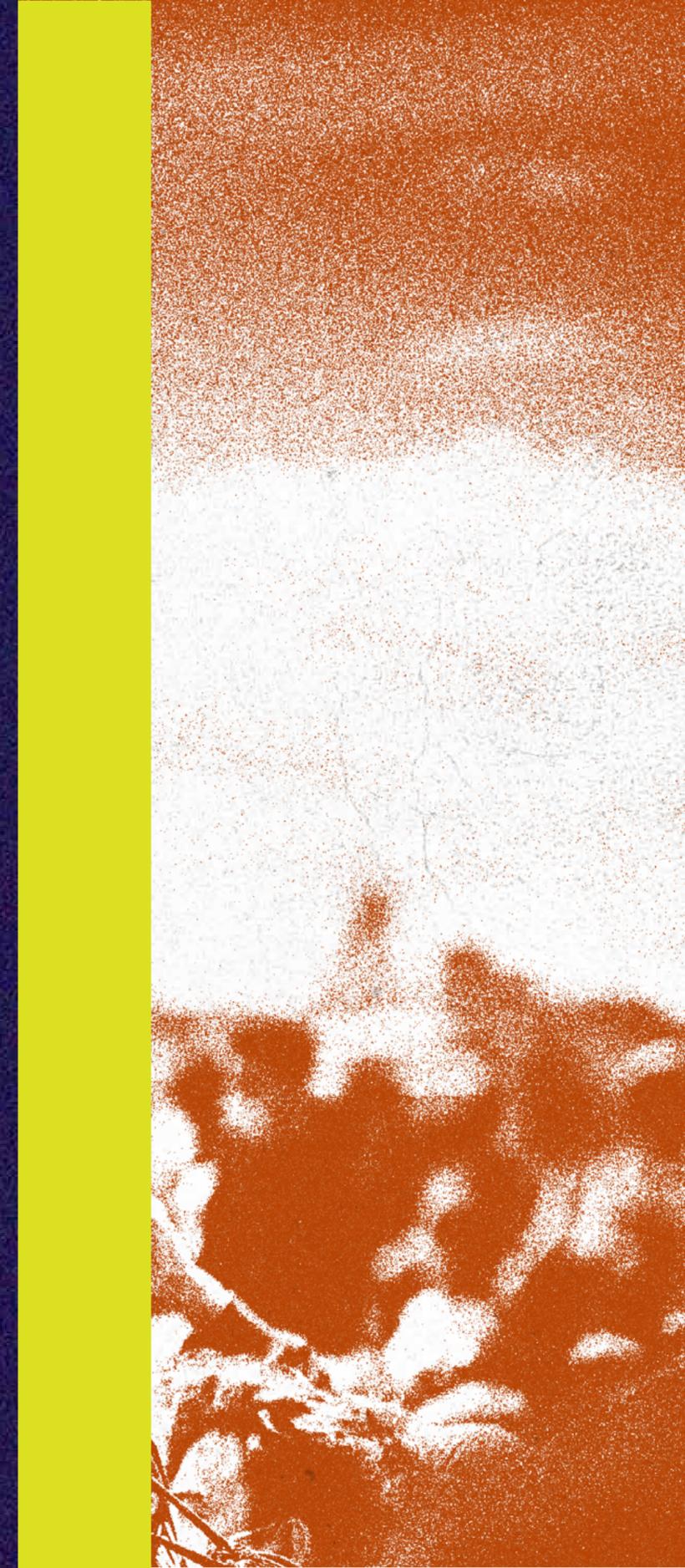


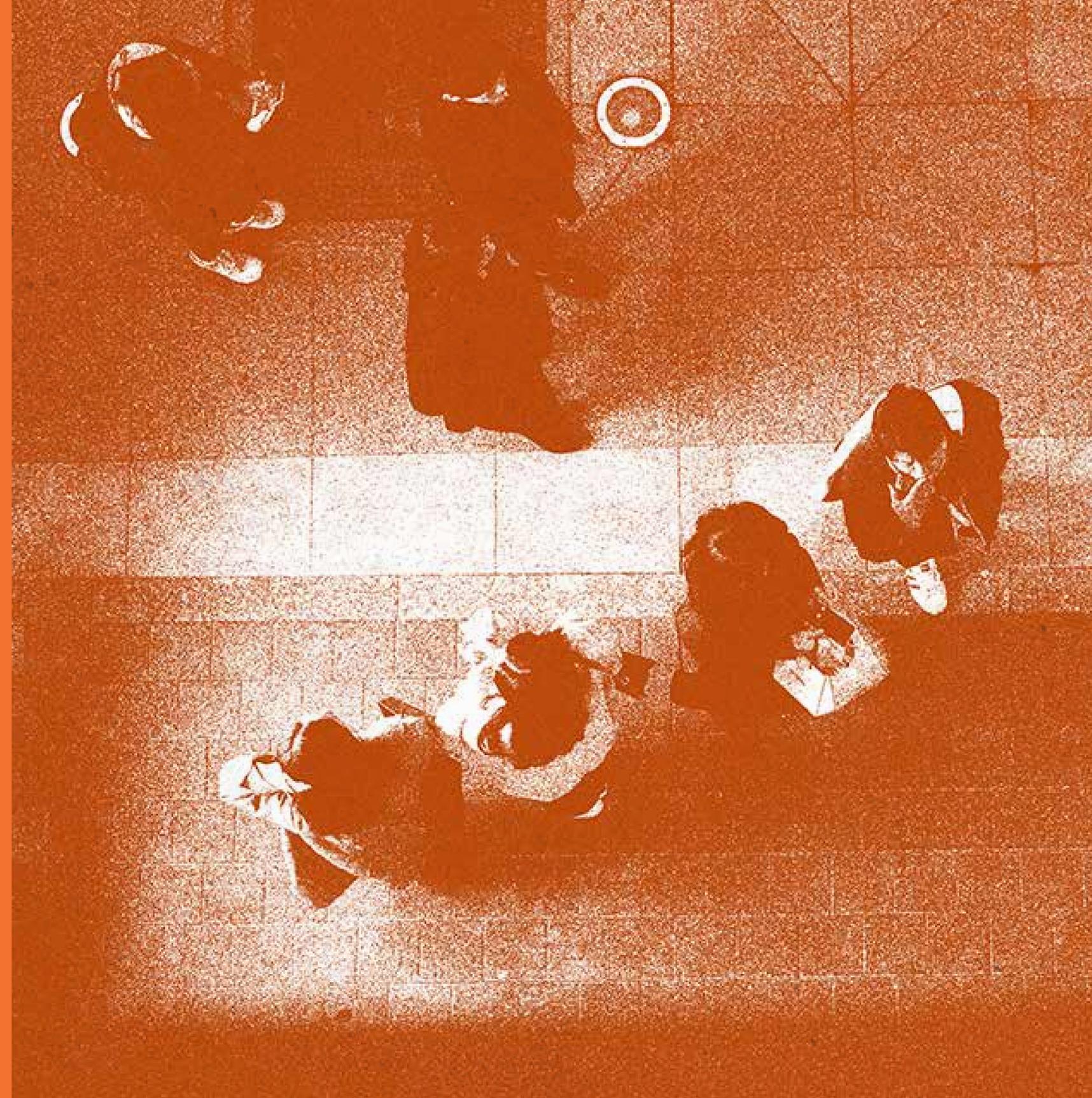
Future-Proofing:

The Professionalization of an
Anti-Rights Youth Generation



Ipas





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Cover image: *Protester at demonstration, Cologne, Germany (2020)*. Mika Baumeister.

Image: *People walking on street, Seoul, South Korea (2019)*. Jouwen Wang

Table of Contents

| | | | | | |
|--|-----------|---|-----------|--|-----------|
| Foreword | 4 | Chapter 3: Life-Long Learners | 35 | Annex I: | 72 |
| Abbreviations and Acronyms | 5 | Guiding future anti-rights leaders | 38 | Selection of far-right European parties with youth wings | |
| Introduction | 6 | Mentoring the young career professional | 41 | Annex II: | 73 |
| Chapter 1: Conception | 8 | Incubating global groups | 43 | Anti-rights groups with youth training programs | |
| Sowing seeds | 11 | ▶ Youth UN engagement | 45 | Annex III: | 75 |
| Spreading to a new audience | 12 | Chapter 4: All Grown Up | 46 | Selection of far-right young politicians elected since 2019 | |
| Tending a politicized youth base | 14 | Crafting anti-rights policy and advocacy | 48 | Annex IV: | 78 |
| Boots on the ground | 16 | ▶ A look at World Youth Alliance | 49 | Selection of youth influencers with ties to the anti-right ecosystem | |
| ▶ Political awakening | 16 | ▶ A look at Frente Joven | 51 | | |
| ▶ Anti-abortion marching goes global | 18 | Rising far-right politicians | 53 | | |
| Chapter 2: Off to School | 19 | Leading in the social media age | 55 | | |
| Rallying the ranks | 21 | ▶ A look at Live Action | 56 | | |
| ▶ A look at Students for Life | 22 | ▶ Youth influencers with anti-rights networks | 58 | | |
| ▶ A look at the Federalist Society | 25 | ▶ Anti-rights narratives adapting for new generations | 59 | | |
| Fostering the talent pipeline | 26 | Shining on the global stage | 62 | | |
| ▶ Billionaire backers schooling the best legal minds | 27 | What Next? | 64 | | |
| ▶ Connected US Christian campuses | 28 | Implications for education and democracy | 64 | | |
| ▶ Globally linked Catholic higher education | 31 | Conclusions | 67 | | |
| Shaping the far-right curriculum in Europe | 32 | Recommendations | 68 | | |

Foreword

We are at a critical juncture. Around the world, the ground beneath us is shifting, and not in our favor. Authoritarian governments are on the rise, dismantling decades of hard-won freedoms. Political and social polarization is deepening, reaching even into the spaces once built to safeguard human rights, such as the United Nations. Anti-rights actors, increasingly well-coordinated and extremely well-funded, are launching relentless attacks on equality, dignity, and justice. Their sharpest blows are aimed at gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). This is the context in which young people fighting for SRHR find themselves today. And it is not an easy fight.

For us, the struggle is both personal and political. Fear stalks our activism. We are harassed online, targeted for speaking out, and too often made to feel unsafe in the very spaces and places designed to advance human rights. We carry the psychological weight of watching rights our predecessors fought for, rights many of us grew up taking for granted, being rescinded in real time. We enter global spaces where our adversaries are not shadowy figures in the background, but peers of our own age, trained and funded to silence us, erase us, and roll back our freedoms. The irony is that young people are being mobilized to strip young people of their rights.

As this report shows, the rise of youth-led anti-rights organizing is not spontaneous, organic, or grassroots. It is a deliberate tactic. It is strategic. And it has been carefully nurtured for decades. Behind the façade of “youth voices” and “new leadership” lies a machine designed to groom, train, and mobilize young people to carry forward an agenda of regression. And today, that machine is bearing fruit.

The consequences are concrete and devastating. More violent content targeting young people online. A shrinking landscape of accessible SRHR services. Entire generations facing restricted reproductive rights, fewer choices, less freedom, and diminished futures. This is why we cannot afford to remain reactive. We cannot afford short-term solutions while our opponents plan for decades, future-proofing their movement, investing in younger leaders and networks that will preserve the anti-rights agenda for generations to come.

We must disrupt, we must challenge, and we must build a movement with the same patience, strategy, and foresight but rooted in justice, freedom, and equality.

This report highlights the scale of the youth anti-rights architecture and the structures set up to silence us. The findings encourage us to invest in our own human rights community and youth movements, to develop survival strategies to withstand the threats to come, and to set out a roadmap to future-proof the pro-choice movement.

- We need collaboration across borders and movements to resist and outmaneuver sustained attacks.
- We need robust, long-term funding, not tokenistic gestures, but serious investment in youth-led pro-choice groups.
- We need resources for research and opposition work, to study and expose the tactics used against us and build effective counters.
- We need protective infrastructures, from digital security to legal support, to defend youth activists against harassment and backlash.
- We need new ways of reaching young people, disrupting the disinformation and hate that seek to groom them into turning against their own rights.

For decades, the pro-choice movement has weathered storms of opposition. This moment demands something different. It demands boldness, unity, intergenerational action, and imagination. It demands that we stop apologizing for our vision of a freer world and start building the power to realize it.

- **To donors:** fund us like our lives, our present, and our future matter, and disrupt the funding flows fueling hate.
- **To governments:** legislate with us, not against us.
- **To civil society:** stop co-opting and start sharing power. Invest in youth leaders and set out clear paths for leadership transition, passing the baton to future leaders to sustain and future-proof feminist movements.
- **To our peers in youth movements:** protect one another, nurture joy alongside struggle, and know that resistance is not only possible but necessary.

The fight for SRHR at this juncture is not only about resisting rollbacks but also about claiming the future.

And as young leaders, we will not wait for our turn. We are here now, and we are not going anywhere. We refuse for our rights to be taken away by our young counterparts in the anti-rights movement.

We carry not only the weight of this struggle, but also the power to imagine and build a freer future. A future where young people’s voices shape decisions, where rights expand across generations, and where justice and equality are not dreams but realities. This is the world we are fighting for, and together, we will build it.

This foreword was written by youth human rights activists from seven countries, whose identities have been protected to safeguard their security and wellbeing.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

| | | | |
|---------------|--|----------------|--|
| AAPLOG | American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists | KCPF | Kenya Christian Professionals Forum |
| ADF | Alliance Defending Freedom | LGBTQI+ | Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex |
| CCI | Christian Council International | LI | Leadership Institute |
| CEU | Centro de Estudios Universitarios (Center for University Studies) | MAGA | Make America Great Again |
| C-Fam | Center for Family and Human Rights | MCC | Mathias Corvinus Collegium |
| CLC | Campaign Life Coalition | MEP | Member of the European Parliament |
| CPAC | Conservative Political Action Conference | MP | Member of Parliament |
| CSE | Comprehensive sexuality education | NGO | Nongovernmental organization |
| CSW | United Nations Commission on the Status of Women | NRLC | National Right to Life Committee |
| EU | European Union | OAS | Organization of American States |
| EYC | Empowered Youth Coalition | PiS | Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice) |
| FEMM | Fertility Education and Medical Management | PNfV | Political Network for Values |
| FJ | Frente Joven (Youth Front) | RN | Rassemblement National (National Rally) |
| FOTF | Focus on the Family | SFLA | Students for Life of America |
| FWI | Family Watch International | SPLC | Southern Poverty Law Center |
| GCHR | Global Center for Human Rights | SRHR | Sexual and reproductive health and rights |
| ILDJ | Institut Libre de Journalisme (Free Institute for Journalism) | TFP | Tradition, Family, Property |
| IOF | International Organization for the Family | TPUSA | Turning Point USA |
| ISSEP | L'institut des sciences sociales, économiques et politiques (Institute for Social, Economic and Political Sciences) | UN | United Nations |
| IYC | International Youth Coalition | USCCB | US Conference of Catholic Bishops |
| | | WCF | World Congress of Families |
| | | WYA | World Youth Alliance |
| | | YWAM | Youth With A Mission |

Introduction

For decades, the anti-rights movement has worked with youth to sow the seeds of extremist ideologies into future generations. These efforts have translated into political action against sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), LGBTQI+ rights, and targeting human rights systems and democratic norms that counter their worldview. The investment in young people has borne fruit, producing influential and networked activists, politicians, and changemakers trained to undermine universal human rights and gender justice. The focus on recruiting and developing anti-rights youth leaders has been critical for securing their long-term goals in public policy and legislation, as well as social and cultural shifts. To build successful progressive human rights and social movements to counter the current rise in global authoritarianism, it is imperative to understand the long game anti-rights actors have been playing to consolidate their agendas by investing in youth leadership.

This report focuses on the evolution and increased professionalization, recruitment, and coordination of young people as part of the wider trend of surging anti-rights transnational organizing. It takes a historical view to analyze the different types of long-term investments in youth mobilization to future-proof regressive and far-right political gains, including in regional and global human rights spaces. The report includes key examples of anti-rights individuals, organizations, political parties, and donors from around the world to illustrate the evolution and expansion of youth anti-rights advocacy and how they have gained traction and built momentum, with dire consequences for human rights. Many of the models for building professionalized anti-rights youth cohorts, and their wider links to transnational anti-rights groups, have roots in the United States. Having a grounding in the organized movement building from the United States and how it has succeeded can forecast

what is to come for other countries and regions. The recruitment and investment in young people by US anti-rights groups dates to mid-20th century evangelical Christian and Catholic political organizing and anti-abortion student movements. Current anti-rights efforts have expanded to include activities to educate youth activists; train anti-rights legal experts; shape formal higher education; and capture young professionals early in their careers and feed them into a political pipeline to power. These same tactics and strategies have been exported and exchanged overseas by networked individuals and organizations adapting the US models to their contexts, particularly in the last 25 years. The consolidation of social media and far-right political wins around the world has further strengthened these efforts.

In this report, we look at a range of activities and connections: from conservative educational initiatives and youth-centered training to the creation of youth-led anti-rights groups to international links through key organizations and their intersections with far-right politicians, parties, and governments—largely in Europe and Latin America, and increasingly in Africa. We acknowledge that these efforts interact with a history of fascist and far-right youth recruitment and activism that dates to the 1930s in Europe. However, here we highlight specific organizations that had, or continue to have, a central role in shaping different youth outreach strategies, their interactions with anti-right networks as well as far-right political parties, and how these mingle and are exchanged globally. We particularly focus on the politicization of young people against SRHR, including abortion, and LGBTQI+ rights. We detail the tactics this movement has innovated, their reach and political influence, and how their narratives and efforts are being adapted. Where possible, we include information about their funding and donors.

This report does not aim to be exhaustive. Given the focus on interactions of the transnational anti-right movement, this has led us to provide perspectives largely from the United States, Europe, and Latin America, with some examples from Sub-Saharan Africa. Further investigative work is required to understand the full extent of financial networks, different regional dynamics, and other outreach tactics fueling anti-rights youth mobilization. This report is just one launching point to understand how a transnationally connected anti-rights movement has been successful in captivating young people and what can be learned to counter these advances.

The great irony is that while recruiting young people to regressive causes, the anti-rights movement is simultaneously eroding children’s and young people’s rights nationally and on the global stage. This is especially the case in terms of access to SRHR information and services, the right to bodily autonomy, and the wider right to education, all in favor of so-called parental rights. The world has experienced extensive geopolitical shifts in the first quarter of the 21st century that are affecting international human rights systems and democratic institutions. The swing to the far right in many countries will impact not only youth recruitment and mobilization, but also public education on topics ranging from history and gender to medicine and law, with generational repercussions.

We are proud to partner with youth human rights activists who have provided insight into anti-rights recruitment and critical reflection on the risk of regressive youth movements. Their contributions to the recommendations offer avenues to counter the erosion of human rights, protect and advance progressive youth activism, call to action allies, and future-proof our movements to continue to advance human rights and gender justice.

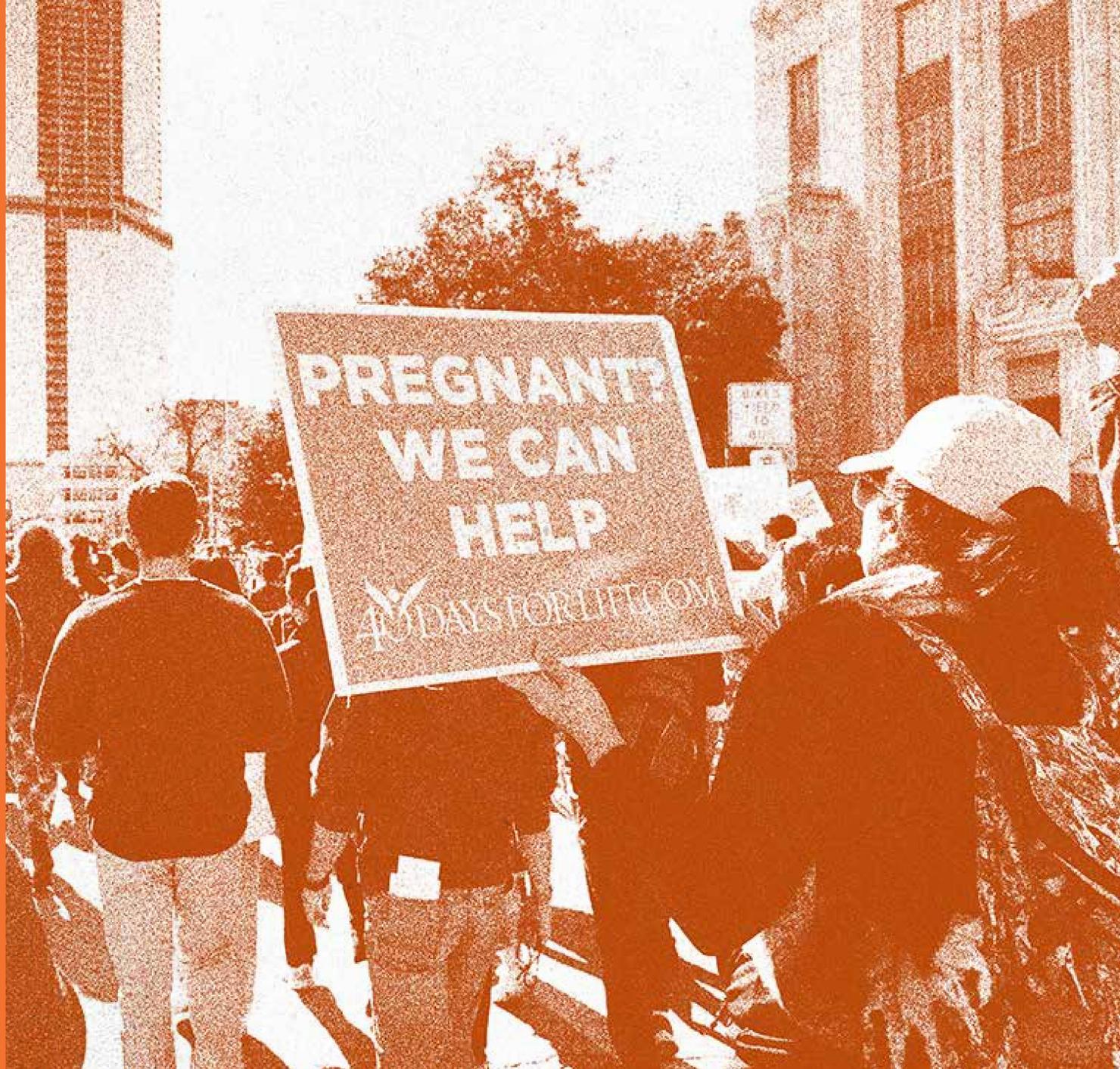


Image: *Protestors march with signs from the anti-abortion group 40 Days for Life, Austin, TX, United States (2024).* Elyssa DeDios.

Methodology, definitions, and limitations

This report is based on primary sources (official websites, organizational reports, financial reporting data, interviews, and social media profiles), secondary sources and grey literature (journalistic and academic reports and articles), and OSINT verification. Charts included in the report were developed through publicly available research conducted between June and August 2025, combining quantitative data (such as social media metrics) and qualitative analysis, and as such reflect a snapshot in time. Preliminary structuring and synthesis were supported using OpenAI's ChatGPT-4.0, with all findings independently verified through public documentation. Please note: where possible, we have archived websites using the Wayback Machine, which also retains the original URL.

As defined by the [Observatory on the Universality of Rights in 2017](#), which addresses “religious fundamentalist discourses,” in this report we use the term “anti-rights” to describe the individuals, groups, and movements whose positions, tactics and arguments claim a moral and cultural superiority; pit the “natural” family and gender binary against LGBTQI+ rights; adopt absolutist, intolerant, and coercive stances; and selectively co-opt human rights language to the exclusion of certain rights—like SRHR and abortion—to the detriment of certain populations, including women, girls, and LGBTQI+ people. When addressing US “hate groups”, we use the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) [definition](#) of an organization whose statements, principles, or activities attack or malign an entire group of people, typically based on characteristics like race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Additionally, we use *The Guardian* definition of “far-right” when discussing political parties that are [nativist, exclusionary of outgroups, and authoritarian](#).

We recognize that this investigation could not examine all the phenomena related to the recruitment of young people into the anti-rights movement or extremist ideologies. Where possible, we point readers to existing research on digital disinformation and online radicalization of youth, including the perpetuation of harmful masculinities aimed at adolescent boys and young men. We also acknowledge that anti-rights rhetoric and narratives spread at the sub-national level and offline within communities, as well as this report's limitations in terms of geographic representation and other gaps.



01

Conception

8

Sowing seeds

11

Spreading to a new audience

12

Tending a politicized youth base

14

Boots on the ground

16

▶ Political awakening

16

▶ Anti-abortion marching goes global

18

“Those who **control** what young people are taught, and what they experience—what they see, hear, think, and believe—will determine the **future course** for the nation.”

James C. Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family, in *Solid Answers*, 1997

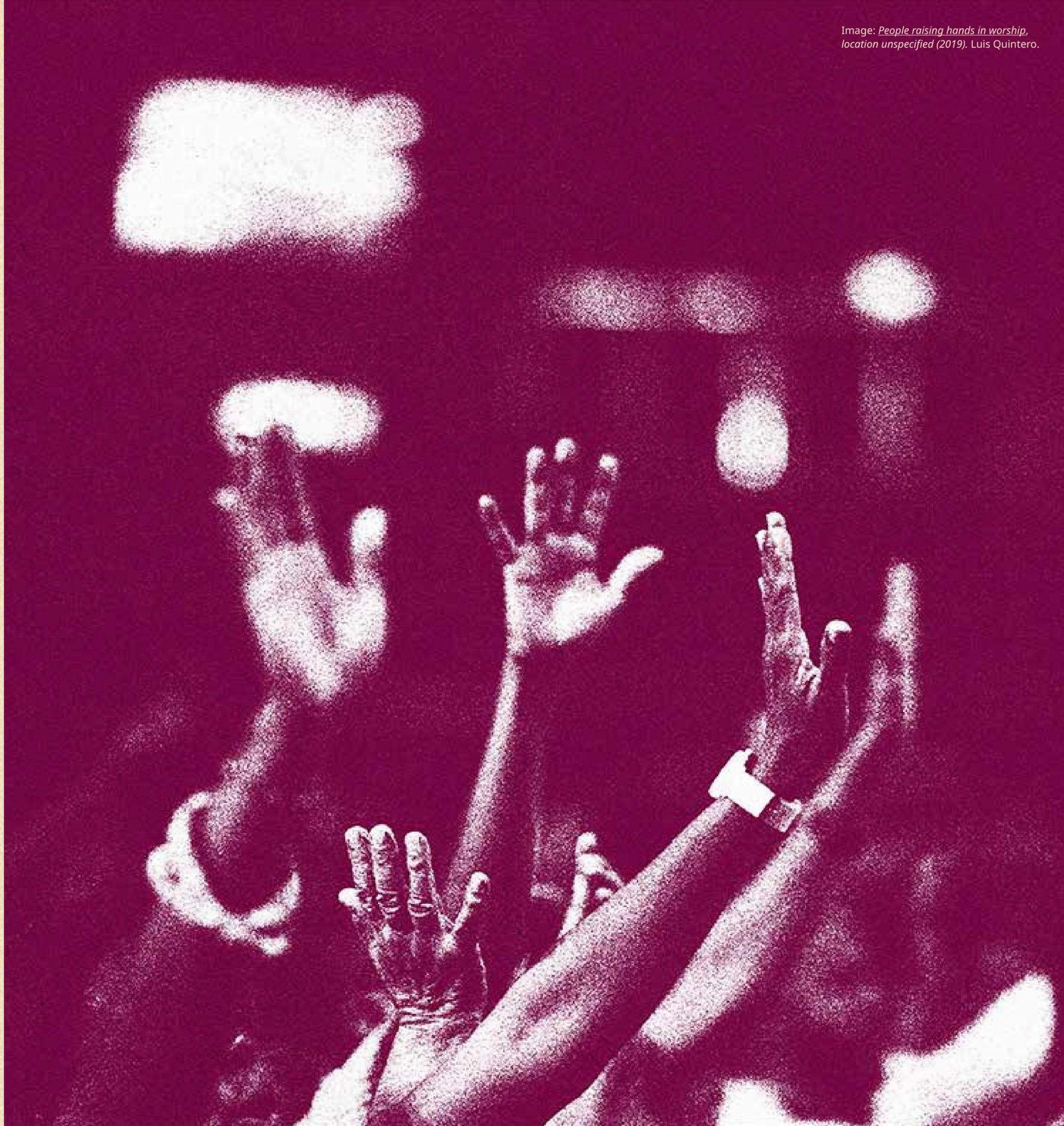
Conception

The investment in youth political mobilization by the anti-rights movement has been a decades' long project in the United States. The development of youth political advocacy is largely in response to progressive advances in SRHR, gender equality, and LGBTQI+ rights, and over questions relating to public education, segregation, and the American Civil Rights Movement. The models of youth outreach that developed in response to social and political developments in the United States in the 20th century are today the cornerstone for anti-rights recruitment of young people around the world.

In this section we focus on US evangelical Christian groups and religious political movements to highlight: 1) why they became a powerful political force, from the pulpit to the presidency; and 2) how recruitment of youth became a key pillar to consolidate and future-proof their political agenda. We also show how Catholic organizations were instrumental to the development of the so-called “pro-life” movement and youth engagement but also created an opportunity to unify the political Religious Right in the United States.

In these examples, and broadly throughout the report, when we highlight individuals, groups and movements, we focus on those that actively advocate against universal human rights and how they interact with broader far-right political movements.

Image: *People raising hands in worship, location unspecified (2019), Luis Quintero.*



Sowing seeds

In the 1950s and 1960s, as historically oppressed groups including African Americans, women, and LGBTQI+ people increasingly demanded—and sometimes obtained—expanded access to civil and political rights, a regressive evangelical Christian movement began organizing against the federal government, throwing off their apolitical mantle. However, an earlier event marked a defining “culture war” moment in US history that galvanized evangelicals to political activity: the Scopes Trial of 1925. That year, the state of Tennessee passed the Butler Act that made it illegal for public schoolteachers “to teach any theory that denies the story of divine creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animals.” The American Civil Liberties Union persuaded a young teacher, John Thomas Scopes, to challenge the law.

While Scopes’s team lost in court, the case was seen as a success for science in the media and public opinion. But it also fanned an evangelical fire that would build throughout the rest of the century. Chris Lehmann described in 2018 that, following the Scopes trial, evangelical leaders “patiently erected a militant network of Bible colleges, radio broadcasts, and parachurches to safeguard the confrontational brio of their messages while seeking once more to connect the gospel to a mass audience.”

Across denominations—including evangelical and Catholic—parachurch¹ organizations have been critical to the political mobilization of religious agendas in US politics, particularly those involved in movement building, political lobbying and advocacy, and conservative think tanks. These parachurches operate outside church structures, parishes, or diocese. As we highlight throughout this report, some organizations register and operate as nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). They fill gaps in areas like missionary work, charitable endeavors, and education, but also media, legal advocacy, and specialized training.

Of course, not all parachurch ministries are anti-rights. Many have, however, piloted successful models of outreach and recruitment of young people that have been used by anti-SRHR and anti-LGBTQI+ groups, who are often also racist and anti-immigrant. A 2020 Political Research Associates report outlines how influential parachurch ministries helped develop the US political movement known as the Christian Right, which eventually expanded in the 1970s into the more denominationally inclusive “Religious Right.”

The mass audience evangelical Christians tapped into through parachurch ministries and media in the mid-20th century, and have groomed successfully since, was young

people. To advance their biblical perspectives on social and cultural issues, particularly those related to bodily autonomy and sexuality, marriage, education and parental rights, as well as religious freedom and race, (predominantly white) evangelicals forged an alliance with the US political party most open to their aims in the post-war years: the Republican party.

Today’s US Religious Right pushes an anti-rights radical agenda against democracy and universal human rights. The early parachurch groups working through the Religious Right movement were instrumental in this evolution and the eventual election of Ronald Reagan to the presidency in 1980. In turn, Reagan was crucial to the Religious Right, legitimizing its influence in national politics, forming powerful alliances, and bringing evangelical priorities to the Republican Party and US policy debates, where they have remained ever since.

¹ Political Research Associates defines these groups as “trans-denominational organizations with a religious mission that operate outside of, but not necessarily in conflict with, and often in cooperation with denominations.” PRA describes how, in the United States, parachurch organizations “evangelized, recruited, and trained people in theologies, skills, and ecumenical organizing activities [...] and paved the way for the more aggressive political operations that have emerged, matured, and gained real political power in recent decades.”

Spreading to a new audience

The anti-rights movement treats young people as a cohort whose education must be molded to develop and harness as a potential force to achieve their long-term goals. Targeting and working through young people has been a unique strength in the history of parachurch organization and conservatives generally. Among the early, influential evangelical youth parachurch groups are listed below, some of which either had or soon developed distinct anti-abortion and anti-LGBTQI+ messaging. From the start, they reached students and youth using strategies that are still deployed today by other parachurch and anti-rights organizations, and they have been copied on an international scale.

Innovations include: youth ministry; campus outreach; youth mission trips; and incorporating youth outreach by political anti-rights organizations. Through their different approaches, parachurch organizations like Youth for Christ; Cru (formerly Campus Crusade for Christ)²; Youth with a Mission (YWAM); and Focus on the Family (FOTF) helped shape modern evangelical youth and student outreach.³ Additionally, FOTF is, in particular, a highly politically influential organization. The Southern Poverty Law Center has designated it a hate group for its use of a “biblical worldview strategy to push back against LGBTQ+ progress and reproductive rights.”⁴

² The rebranding was strategic to make the organization appear more adaptable, inclusive, and relevant to reach a broader audience, including youth and non-campus communities.

³ Other organizations influential in the youth ministry movement include The Navigators and Young Life.

⁴ The SPLC defines a hate group as an organization whose statements, principles, or activities attack or malign an entire group of people, typically based on characteristics like race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Youth for Christ

Youth for Christ, founded in 1944 by evangelical leaders, was a pioneer in recognizing and tapping into the cultural shifts happening with teenagers in the post-war World War II period. Adapting its evangelistic methods to teen culture, Youth for Christ reached an audience previously overlooked by the church, paving the way for modern youth ministry. It is where Billy Graham gained wider recognition as the organization’s first full-time evangelist and laid the foundation for his hugely successful ministry, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Graham’s early involvement with Youth for Christ influenced the global and youth-focused approach to evangelism used by many other groups.

- **Youth tactic:** *direct ministry and media outreach, including creating literature, radio, and, eventually, online content.*
- **Reach:** *12 million people across 128 countries as of 2023, and 1,200 sites in the United States alone.*
- **Annual revenue:** *\$14.4 million for Youth for Christ USA—though state-specific chapters have separate budgets—and \$13.9 million for Youth for Christ International Ministries, as of 2023.*
- **Political influence:** *contributed to the evangelical foundation of the modern conservative movement.*

Cru

Cru was founded by Bill Bright in 1951 and is one of the largest Christian campus ministries in the world. Like Youth for Christ and Youth With A Mission (YWAM), Cru focuses on evangelizing young people, chiefly university students, and emphasizes global missions. The organization maintains a significant presence in Latin America. As a conservative evangelical group, Cru does not affirm LGBTQI+ identities or same-sex relationships and opposes abortion. In his 1995 book, *The Coming Revival*, Bright wrote that “God has cursed those who insist on practicing and promoting homosexuality.” He has described abortion as the legalized slaughter of millions.

- **Youth tactic:** *ministry in secondary schools and universities and media outreach.*
- **Reach:** *900 campus ministries in the United States; the FamilyLife program reaches 18 million people annually in 95 countries and the Jesus Film Project has been viewed in over 2,000 languages.*
- **Annual revenue:** *Cru is classified as a church and as such in the United States they are not required to make public financial disclosures.*
- **Political influence:** *indirect through shaping youth culture and theological stances, including anti-LGBTQI+ and anti-abortion views.*

Youth with a Mission

YWAM built on the work of Youth for Christ in 1960 with the unique and now ubiquitous concept of “youth missions.” YWAM has grown into one of the largest mission organizations worldwide through its 12-week youth Discipleship Training School and short-term mission trips. It has ties to affiliated groups in other countries, like The Send in the United Kingdom and Ireland.⁵ An April 2025 investigation by The Guardian reported the experiences of YWAM’s volunteers from around the world. It described the organization’s exertion of intense control and pressure on its missionaries, as well as shaming and rejecting those who deviated from its traditional Christian worldview.

- **Youth tactic:** *short-term mission volunteers.*
- **Reach:** *25,000 participants annually in over 180 countries with youth ministries.*
- **Annual revenue:** *varies by branch as there is no central headquarters. YWAM branches file as independent nonprofits and some claim exemption.*
- **Political influence:** *indirect shaping evangelical worldview on “life” and sexuality.*

⁵ The Send is also linked to the US group, The Call, co-founded by Lou Engle, who spoke at a rally against LGBTQI+ rights in Uganda in 2010, and has called for the criminalization of abortion, in addition to his Islamophobic stance. Engle is part of the Christian supremacist New Apostolic Reformation movement.

Focus on the Family

Focus on the Family (FOTF), founded by James Dobson in 1977,⁶ has a significant focus on professionalized youth engagement and outreach with targeted programs. These emphasize abstinence, traditional family values, moral integrity, and biblical teachings. FOTF approaches youth issues through a family-values lens, feeding into national campaigns on issues like abstinence-only education, media censorship, and “pro-life” activism. The organization has consistently opposed same-sex marriage and LGBTQI+ rights. Dobson played a significant role in shaping the US Christian Right in the 1980s and 1990s and the “culture war”, “spiritual battle”, and “moral crisis” narratives that followed, criticizing feminism and LGBTQI+ activism. In the 1980s Dobson created the anti-LGBTI hate group Family Research Council, and FOTF’s lobbying arm, the Family Policy Alliance, in 2004. FOTF has deep ties to prominent conservative think tanks and legal organizations like the Heritage Foundation and Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF).⁷

- **Youth tactic:** *mass media outreach, including literature, radio, and online content and discipleship tools, including resources for youth ministries.⁸*
- **Reach:** *through national and digital engagement, FOTF reported receiving 10,000 letters and 3,000 calls a day in the 1990s. By 2007, the group had an international presence in 98 countries with offices in 14 and had pivoted to include more programs targeted at younger generations in digital spaces.*
- **Annual revenue:** *nearly \$115 million in 2024.*
- **Political influence:** *significant actor in the anti-abortion and anti-LGBTQI+ movements, influencing legislation and public policy.*

⁶ Dobson was renowned as a Christian psychologist who, in the 1970s, offered parenting advice.

⁷ ADF is also a designated hate group.

⁸ FOTF has a Youth Culture and Family Life initiative, the True U campaign for university students, and resources for youth pastors on anti-abortion and anti-LGBTQI+ stances.

Tending a politicized youth base

The parachurch movement gained a political bent in the 1970s through the work of groups like FOTF that had both a youth component and political influence in Washington, DC. Parachurch groups like those mentioned further strengthened the movement by aligning with Catholic youth mobilization that fused religious conviction against abortion with civic engagements. Energized by the federal debates around desegregation and education, evangelical political organizing through the Christian Right movement quickly evolved to take more vocal positions against SRHR, gender equality, and LGBTQI+ rights on the national stage.

With the legalization of abortion in 1973 through the Supreme Court *Roe v. Wade* decision, attempts to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment throughout the 1970s,⁹ and LGBTQI+ activism, the Christian Right found new galvanizing causes that were then used in youth outreach. Anti-abortion advocacy was not the initial focus or even a main issue for evangelicals like James Dobson and the Southern Baptist Convention.¹⁰ Author Randall Balmer describes how

conservative strategists sought to “deflect attention away from the real narrative” of racial integration by advocating “on behalf of the fetus,” and uniting “apolitical evangelical Christians” as well as Catholics and Mormons.¹¹ By vocally centering itself against abortion, the Christian Right—subsequently re-labeled as the broader Religious Right—now appealed to a larger base.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the Catholic Church began playing a pivotal role in organizing youth and the broader Catholic community, forming the backbone of what would become the “pro-life” movement. Catholic leaders often connected the anti-abortion cause with themes of social justice and civil rights, which resonated with young Catholics motivated by the activism of the 1960s. The Church emphasized protection for the poor and vulnerable, drawing links between Catholic teaching on poverty and opposition to abortion. And it mobilized youth through the Church structure and parachurch organizations, including:

- **The formation of national organizations:** the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) founded the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) in 1968.¹² The NRLC became a hub of anti-abortion advocacy, providing resources and coordination for local and national campaigns and youth engagement.¹³ It is the oldest and largest US anti-abortion NGO. In 1985, NRLC created National Teens for Life to organize adolescents to speak at schools and youth groups, and volunteer at pregnancy centers and as peer counselors.
- **The creation of local chapters:** the NRLC and related Catholic groups founded chapters across the country, collaborating with Catholic youth associations, parishes, and schools to educate young people and encourage their involvement in volunteering, public demonstrations, letter-writing campaigns, contests, and educational events. The NRLC has affiliates in all 50 US states and over 3,000 chapters.
- **Parish-level recruitment built into Church planning:** The USCCB launched their own Respect Life Program in 1972 and a comprehensive Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities in 1975, both of which are updated annually. These national frameworks provide parish materials, youth ministry toolkits, and activity guides—infrastructure for mobilizing youth.

⁹ The amendment would have made sex equality a constitutional right.

¹⁰ The Southern Baptist Convention is a network of 47,000 churches in the United States and the largest Protestant body in North America. Billy Graham was a Southern Baptist.

¹¹ Dr. Anthea Butler, in her book *White Evangelical Racism*, dates the origin of evangelical political activism in the United States to the 1970 Supreme Court case that stripped tax-exempt status from “segregation academies”—white private religious schools that were seeking to avoid paying taxes.

¹² The USCCB is the assembly of bishops of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. It guides and promotes Catholic activities, including supporting Catholic education and charitable work.

¹³ The NRLC’s 2023 annual revenue was \$4.16 million and it advocates for a constitutional amendment to ban abortion and has played an important role in state and federal legislation restricting abortion access.

In addition to these US Catholic Church initiatives, during the 1960s, a traditionalist Catholic movement founded in Brazil gained international traction with youth mobilization. Formed by Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira, Tradition, Family, Property (TFP) emphasized the defense of Christian civilization against perceived threats posed by modernity, secularism, and liberalism. TFP continues to operate through a network of national organizations, each with a degree of autonomy, on college campuses in Latin America, Europe, and the United States. Its approach to youth is highly structured and ideologically intense, emphasizing formation, activism, and leadership to build a dedicated cadre of young defenders to carry the movement's cause forward. The US branch, TFP Student Action,¹⁴ became active in the late 1970s, with more visible campus engagement and street demonstrations taking off in the early 1980s, partly in response to growing debates around abortion rights and the rising LGBTQI+ rights movement.¹⁵

Although the early “pro-life” movement was overwhelmingly Catholic in composition—estimates place Catholics as more than 80% of early US anti-abortion activists—the Church and its leaders made efforts to frame the issue as a nonsectarian “right to life.” They built alliances with youth and adults from other denominations, emphasizing common ground rather than purely religious doctrine. This galvanized Catholic youth to defend not just their views on abortion, but also the Church's right to participate in public debates.

Women and youth mobilized through evangelical and Catholic Church networks were key to the grassroots opposition to progressive political developments, with the fight over the Equal Rights Amendment also serving to bridge the religious divide on the right. Rallying against the amendment, the Catholic activist Phyllis Schlafly forged strong networks with evangelical ministries including FOTF, Cru, and conservative church coalitions, as well as Republicans and Mormons. Following the Catholic model against abortion rights, young people were introduced to Equal Rights Amendment opposition through Christian schools, church youth groups, and pro-family conferences. There, they were taught that the amendment threatened biblical gender roles, the sanctity of the family, and would promote abortion and LGBTQI+ rights.

The efforts against the Equal Rights Amendment and the *Roe v. Wade* decision demonstrate a particularly successful mobilization of young people across Christian denominations. With the growing politicization of youth during this period, the Religious Right began shaping a generation of conservative activists aligned in opposition to abortion and gender equality, as well as other issues relating to school prayer, education, and “family values.”¹⁶ These established narratives are still used today: pitting religious freedom against the state and the righteous against those opposed to “traditional family.”

¹⁴ The US chapter of TFP is The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family, and Property.

¹⁵ TFP Action claims to have over half a million followers in the United States. The wider organization is linked to transnational networks that we outline in further detail in this report, including Catholic anti-rights groups the World Congress of Families (WCF), CitizenGO, and other Catholic NGOs at the United Nations (UN).

¹⁶ The Religious Right's reactions to school desegregation (*Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954), Supreme Court rulings against school prayer (*Engel v. Vitale*, 1962, and *Abington School District v. Schempp*, 1963), and other perceived threats to Christian cultural authority (like Internal Revenue Service threats to revoke tax-exempt status from discriminatory Christian schools), in the mid-to-late 20th century were key drivers in the rise of conservative political activism in the United States.



Image: *March for Life at the White House, Washington, DC, United States (1979)*. Marion S. Trikosko.

Boots on the ground

The US Christian Right's focus and recruitment of young people through ministries, campus groups, and other youth-targeted outreach paved the way for what has since become a highly successful mobilization tactic for the more encompassing Religious Right: marches. Marches, particularly anti-abortion convenings, which are now held annually around the world, trace their roots to [Youth for Christ rallies](#) in the 1940s-1950s and [Billy Graham's Crusades](#) of that era. These [strategies and symbols of mass protest](#) were often borrowed from the American Civil Rights Movement and coopted social justice rhetoric. Today, this includes language around gender equality and human rights, like the 2022 March for Life whose theme was "[Equality Starts in the Womb.](#)"

► Political awakening

Participation in large-scale evangelical rallies focusing on abortion in the 1970s played a crucial role in shaping the political identities and careers of youth participants. Many of the organizations discussed in the section above have an emphasis on youth ministry and discipleship. They thus provide a ready-made base of young people motivated by their faith to advocate against abortion and other issues.

[March for Life](#) in Washington, DC, is a quintessential example of the mobilizing power of rallies and youth involvement. It remains the largest [annual anti-abortion gathering](#) in the country and has grown to include a powerful international presence. Held around the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* (despite *Roe's* reversal in 2022 by the Supreme Court in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*),¹⁷ March for Life has [always drawn young people](#).

Founded in 1974 by US Catholic lawyer and activist Nellie Gray, the [March for Life](#) was institutionalized as a yearly demonstration when the *Roe* decision remained in force. [From its earliest years](#), the march emphasized recruiting young people, especially students, by coordinating outreach through schools, churches, and youth ministries,

encouraging them to travel to Washington as organized groups. As the [New York Times reported](#), the 2022 march drew an [estimated 150,000 people](#); "buses of students from around the country to what has transformed over the years into a festive youth-driven rally." Framed as both a moral duty and a generational mission, the once predominantly Catholic marches [became more religiously diverse](#), drawing [Evangelical Christian and other faith-based groups](#) in the 1980s and 1990s.¹⁸

During that time, evangelicals were holding their own series of large-scale prayer rallies in Washington, DC, [Washington for Jesus](#).¹⁹ [Organizers](#) deliberately featured young people in the rallies—with segments of the program dedicated to youth-led worship—portraying the younger generation as responsible for reclaiming the nation for Christian values and leading its future revival. While Washington for Jesus and the March for Life were distinct, they were closely aligned, sharing not just leaders, but also moral convictions and strategies of high visibility and deliberate inclusion of youth. Together, these events concretized the "pro-life" Christian political movement and burgeoning youth advocacy of the 1980s and beyond.²⁰

¹⁷ The [Dobbs decision](#) overruled the *Roe* as well as the *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* decisions, effectively eliminating the constitutional right to abortion. The decision has allowed individual states to regulate or ban abortion, leading to a patchwork of laws across the country.

¹⁸ Early supporters were affiliated with [Catholic groups](#), including [national Catholic Bishops' Conferences](#) (not just in the United States but in, for example, [Nigeria](#), [Argentina](#), and [Poland](#)) and organizations like the [Knights of Columbus](#).

¹⁹ Many Washington for Jesus' [organizers](#) aligned and overlapped with the March for Life, including Bill Bright of Cru, Pat Robertson of the Christian Coalition, and Jerry Falwell Sr. of the Moral Majority. The primary events were held in [1980s and 1990s](#), and crowd estimates for the first [Washington for Jesus](#) ranged from 200,000 to 500,000 people. Evangelical churches, Christian schools, and campus ministries—including Cru, Youth for Christ, and YWAM—organized buses and caravans to bring students to the National Mall.

²⁰ James Dobson of FOTF was [instrumental](#) in aligning the Religious Right during this period. The [SPLC](#) reported, "Dobson played an integral role in cofounding, funding and platforming what has become the infrastructure of the modern anti-LGBTQ+ and anti-abortion movements." FOTF targets its educational material, radio programs, and digital outreach to [encourage its youth supporters to attend](#) the March for Life. FOTF features [March for Life coverage](#) in its digital media like [FOTF Broadcast](#) and its [website](#).

▶ Anti-abortion marching goes global

As arguably the more successful of the two events in terms of galvanizing youth power, size, and reach, March for Life has inspired anti-abortion marches around the world, particularly as the right to abortion expanded in many countries. While the early years saw limited international replication, the late 1990s and early 2000s marked a significant expansion, for example, [South Africa's March for Life in 1997](#) following the legalization of abortion there in 1996. Latin America and Europe soon followed with national marches in [Argentina](#) (1999), the [Czech Republic](#) (2001), and [France](#) (2005). This growth accelerated in the 2010s to other regions including Eastern Europe and parts of Africa and Asia. Today, March for Life-style events are reported to take place annually in some 40-50 countries, often under similar names, though varying in size.²¹

The active engagement of young people is a feature of these global marches. A 2018 March for Life in Peru drew [2,500 youth volunteers](#). In Mexico, [Pasos por la Vida](#) (Steps for Life) has hosted annual march for the last 14 years, drawing from its strong youth base. These events provide youth with firsthand experience of political mobilization, opportunities to volunteer, advocacy messaging, a strong sense of community, and a clear moral framework linking faith to public policy.

The “blue wave”: a youth anti-rights counteroffensive

The “blue wave” emerged in [Argentina](#) during the legislative debates on the [decriminalization of abortion in 2018](#). It was a counter to the green wave movement that spread from Argentina throughout Latin America in the late 2010s as a symbol for the defense of legal and safe abortion. The blue wave was a coordinated social and political mobilization, mainly composed of young people and supported by religious sectors, professional networks, institutions, and politicians opposed to abortion. This movement gave rise to the “[salvemos las dos vidas](#)” (“let’s save both lives”) campaign that emphasizes the right to life of the fetus as equal to that of the pregnant person and advocates for legislative changes in several countries in the region. Like the green scarf, known in Spanish as the *pañuelo verde*, that symbolizes the fight for the decriminalization of abortion, the blue wave launched their own anti-abortion blue scarf.

²¹ A 2024 [article](#) counts anti-abortion marches in 36 European countries; [Rally for Life](#) lists another 5 in Latin American countries as well as ones in Australia and New Zealand in 2024; [Kenya](#) and [South Africa](#) regularly have marches hosted by anti-rights groups, while the Catholic fraternal organization the Knights of St. Mulumba hosted a “walk for life” that was also anti-LGBTQI+ in [Nigeria](#) in 2024; and the Catholic Church in [India](#) held its third annual march in August 2025.



Image: People attending the March for Life rally, Washington, DC, United States (2024). Anna Moneymaker.

In an increasingly polarized world with far-right leaders in power and the rise of authoritarianism, the March for Life has increasingly drawn high level participants. In 2020, Donald Trump became the first sitting US president to attend the march, albeit virtually. His 2025 video address at that year’s march promised to “protect the historic gains we have made and stop the radical Democratic push for a federal right to unlimited abortion on demand up to the moment of birth and even after birth.” In Poland, former President Andrzej Duda was the first head of state to participate in the country’s March of Life and Family events from 2020-2022. In other countries, like the Czech Republic, Ireland, Canada, and Argentina, anti-abortion rallies draw Catholic archbishops, members of parliament, and other leaders. Tony Abbott, the former Prime Minister of Australia, alongside the Catholic Archbishop Anthony Fisher, spoke at an anti-abortion rally in Sydney in May 2025 in protest of a bill to improve abortion access. In Spain, former politician and co-founder of the anti-rights Political Network for Values (PNfV) Jaime Mayor Oreja participated in the “Yes to Life” rallies alongside the far-right political party Vox (more on Vox below).

For future conservative and anti-rights activists, leaders, and politicians, early involvement in these marches can foster a lifelong commitment to conservative Christian values and activism. With access to networked individuals and anti-rights organizations involved in the marches—like the Madrid-based CitizenGO and Kenya Christian Professionals Forum (KCPF)—young people move through a pipeline from early advocacy to formalized involvement in the anti-rights movement, and even careers. Often, this movement goes beyond their national borders with the involvement of international groups, like CitizenGO, which have a global audience. This directly influences young people’s engagement in national, regional, and global politics, grassroots organizing, and policy advocacy, and increasingly beyond SRHR issues to anti-LGBTQI+ and anti-democratic initiatives.

The March for Life operates as a registered US NGO and has shaped the youth movement and provided young people direct advocacy experience and knowledge of public policy.

- **Youth tactic:** *national coordination and mobilization for in-person advocacy with potential for political access.*
- **Reach:** *extensive interdenominational access through schools, churches, and youth ministries which has translated to March for Life-like events in other countries.*
- **Annual revenue:** *steady growth to \$2.39 million in 2023.²²*
- **Political influence:** *a flagship anti-abortion event, particularly alongside the rise of the populist right in the United States, as well as in other conservative and Christian countries where abortion and LGBTQI+ rights are criminalized.*

²² The March for Life’s funding sharply increased between 2011 and 2012, and then grew from just over \$1 million that year to consistently over \$2 million since 2019.

While this report largely focuses on university students and young professionals, Students for Life America (SFLA), MassResistance, the National Right to Life Committee, World Youth Alliance and other groups have long tailored their outreach to secondary school students and younger children. Teenagers and children are present in March for Life events in the United States and around the world. CitizenGO, especially in Kenya alongside KCPF, has mobilized elementary school-aged children in its anti-abortion and anti-LGBTQI+ activities. KCPF acknowledged at its annual fundraising dinner in 2025 that it has begun working in secondary schools. At the 2025 March for Life in Nairobi and the KCPF-hosted Youth Chastity conference, children attended wearing school uniforms holding CitizenGO placards.

There are also opportunities for this younger cohort to begin working on anti-rights issues as volunteers. The Catholic media network Eternal Word Television Network provides, in addition to a resource on teenage “Pro-Life Youth Groups,” a list of anti-abortion organizations that offer summer internships for “teenagers interested in preparing for a lifetime of pro-life activism.” Many of the groups have legislative training as well as opportunities “for developing group organization and street activism skills.” There are even anti-abortion competitions for “high school juniors and seniors,” usually those between 16 and 18 years of age.



02

Off to School

19

Rallying the ranks

21

▶ A look at Students for Life

22

▶ A look at the Federalist Society

25

Fostering the talent pipeline

26

▶ Billionaire backers schooling the best legal minds

27

▶ Connected US Christian campuses

28

▶ Globally linked Catholic higher education

31

Shaping the far-right curriculum in Europe

32

“There’s no such thing as
neutral education. Education
either functions as an
instrument to bring about
conformity or freedom.”

Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 1968

Off to School

While desegregation and education may have been political entry points for parachurch politicization in the United States in the 1950s and 60s, the evolution of youth mobilization as a “pro-life” movement has been an even more effective call to action. Building on the work of the organizations that paved the way for youth evangelical outreach, in particular Cru, the pipeline from student to professional gained ground with dedicated anti-abortion and conservative student groups at both the undergraduate and other professional university levels in the 1970s and 1980s. What may have been fringe organizing through campus groups and youth mission trips in the 1960s and 1970s, is now mainstream and globalized. Anti-abortion student organizing, volunteering, and student-led protests is now a given not only on most university campuses but also in secondary schools, and not just in the United States.



Image: *Graduation ceremony for international graduates, Russian University of Transport (2022).*
RUT MIIT.

Rallying the ranks



“Students for Life reaches young people during crucial developmental years.”

Students for Life of America, [2019-2020 Annual Report](#)

Cru’s broad campus evangelism created a foundation and community from which student organizations like [SFLA](#), which ostensibly has no religious affiliation, have grown into major anti-abortion hubs with broader bases than groups like the Catholic TFP Action. While Cru and SFLA are closely connected through shared networks, overlapping memberships, and complementary missions, SFLA, as their name suggests, are anti-abortion to the core. The early 2000s through the 2010s were a period of scaling up their campus presence, both within and beyond the United States. This provided scaffolding for student-led anti-abortion activism, creating a pool of trained young people with experience in volunteering and, to a certain extent, political lobbying. Anti-rights groups could then recruit from this ideologically motivated young talent.

► A look at Students for Life

SFLA started with a minimal presence in the 1970s and rebranded in 1988 as American Collegians for Life. Always focused on student mobilization through conferences and publications, the group renamed itself in 2005 to SFLA. It also transitioned from a volunteer-based group to one with a single employee, Kristan Hawkins, who was 21 at the time and continues to lead the organization. As of 2025, SFLA estimates a presence of 1,250 groups on nearly 50% of university campuses across the United States. The organization is rooted in the belief that life begins at conception, advocates for a near-total ban on abortion, and opposes modern contraceptive methods.

Under Hawkins, SFLA underwent massive expansion in both youth outreach and political connections, making her a critical influencer within the anti-abortion youth movement. A *Vice* article reported that in January 2018, Hawkins and other SFLA representatives met with former Vice President Mike Pence and later that year Hawkins met with other White House staff to discuss halting Department of Health and Human Services funds for fetal tissue research and make Planned Parenthood ineligible for federal funding.

While youth organizing often conjures images of low-budget, transitional operations, SFLA is anything but that. It has a \$14 million budget backed by donors with deep pockets and access to policymakers. The organization now has over 80 full time staff at its headquarters in the state of Virginia. Leonard Leo, a key figure in the conservative legal movement, was listed as a member of SFLA's board until 2023. Leo's influence

in US politics and society cannot be overstated and his network funnels millions of dollars into anti-rights causes. In addition to other initiatives we outline below, Leo founded CRC Advisors, a conservative public relations and political strategy firm. CRC Advisors is currently run by Greg Mueller, who was also a board member of SFLA at the same time as Leo. Other SFLA board members have decades of experience in financial services and investment managements firms, all with extensive influence in the NGO and political spheres.

SFLA's efforts have fueled the growth of campus-based anti-abortion groups via grassroots organizing and polished digital campaigns. The organization has five primary initiatives, as advertised on its "Pro-Life Generation" website, each meant to achieve specific goals, from training students in anti-abortion advocacy, to communication strategy development, to promoting anti-abortion clinics. In addition to these initiatives, SFLA streams weekly podcasts online; advertises a "Pro-Life Future Job Board"; pushes its brand through merchandise and the slogan "I am the pro-life generation"; and, since 2023, has used geo-targeted advertising to "reach 10.5 million unique students."

SFLA partners with like-minded anti-abortion groups, many of which are also anti-LGBTQI+. These include the Family Research Council, Alliance Defending Freedom, and Live Action (more on the latter, below). The organization also has a dedicated political lobbying arm, Students for Life Action. Demonstrating the intertwining of anti-abortion student groups and anti-rights legal work, SFLA advertised in 2023

that its "legal counsel also stands ready to help with any First Amendment violations our groups may face" to "defend young mothers from the predatory abortion industry."²³

Although SLFA is US-based, like March for Life, its influence has spread globally. In 2021, the organization conducted an anti-abortion leadership training in Uganda, though does not appear to have made this into a regular program. However, similar SFLA-like, student-led anti-abortion organizations have emerged in countries like Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, and Mexico. Like SLFA, these groups engage youth through education, activism, public demonstrations, and political lobbying efforts. There are also groups that mirror SFLA-like events, such as the March for Life Youth Conference hosted by Campaign Life Coalition, a Canadian anti-abortion group.

Globally, universities are the latest front for the anti-abortion movement, with anti-rights groups using them to proliferate and garner support for reactionary narratives around free speech, traditional family, and against LGBTQI+ rights. SFLA is just one example of student anti-rights mobilization, though arguably it is the most politically effective, highly polished, and widespread to date. As a comparison, the chart below includes information on a selection of anti-abortion student groups from around the world.

²³ In the United States, the First Amendment of the Constitution protects key individual freedoms and limits the government's power to restrict expression and belief.

| Organization | Region | Founded | Affiliation or network | Student reach | Notes |
|---|--------------------------|---------|--|--|--|
| Students for Life of America | United States | 2006 | Collaborates with the Heritage Foundation and other anti-abortion groups | Over 1,300 campus groups; 150,000+ trained students (since founding) | Largest and most influential “pro-life” student org in the United States |
| National Campus Life Network | Canada | 1997 | Partners with Campaign Life Coalition | 40–60 active groups per year; thousands reached via campus events | Legal help for student censorship; organizes national student symposiums |
| Alliance of Pro-Life Students | United Kingdom | 2012 | Supported by Society for the Protection of Unborn Children | 20–30 university groups and additionally over 10 informal student contacts | Umbrella for UK campus groups; hosts debates, and events |
| Students for Life Ireland | Ireland | ~2013 | Youth wing of Pro-Life Campaign Ireland | Approximately 12–15 student chapters; active presence in Dublin, Cork, and Galway | Played key role during 2018 abortion referendum campaigns in Ireland |
| Juventud y Vida | Mexico and Latin America | ~2015 | Collaborates with Catholic youth movements | Estimated 5,000+ youth reached per year with approximately 30 active university and church-based teams | Focuses on marches, legislation, education in Mexico, Peru, Colombia |

Table 1: Selection of anti-abortion student groups around the world, their affiliations and reach.

It is important to note that student organizing, in addition to being linked to international youth and student groups, is also connected to powerful anti-rights legal advocacy groups like [Alliance Defending Freedom International](#), the European arm of ADF. In the United States, [ADF](#) has represented anti-abortion student groups in court, while ADF International has done the same outside of the United States, including in 2019 with the [Glasgow Students for Life](#) and an [anti-abortion midwifery student](#).

SFLA is at the apex of professionalized anti-abortion student organizing

- **Youth tactic:** professionalized, multi-pronged, explicitly student-led anti-abortion advocacy with a vision of policy change at the national, state, and local levels, as well as student-to-professional networking. Beyond anti-abortion, SFLA has successfully incorporated anti-contraception and the promotion of crisis pregnancy centers into the anti-rights youth movement.
- **Extensive reach:** polished digital presence across social media and podcasts, including branding and merchandise and targeted advertising; the organization has reached over 1,300 campus groups and trained over 150,000+ trained students since its founding.
- **Annual revenue:** \$14.6 million in 2023 and Students for Life Action \$3.5 million.
- **Political influence:** SFLA has a national presence and access to politicians, as well as strong allies in other anti-rights institutions. With Students for Life Action, it also has a lobbying arm to influence policymakers.

In the United States, campus-specific anti-abortion clubs exist within universities and schools, some which host conferences at elite institutions like Yale, Princeton, as well as Georgetown University, and other Catholic universities and institutions. While SFLA attempts to appeal to a broad swathe of students, other organizations in the United States specifically target law students to affect public policy and regulations at the highest levels. Litigation and legal support for anti-abortion youth advocacy highlights a parallel trend among law students that started in the 1980s. Less showy than the grassroots student anti-abortion mobilization model of SFLA, anti-rights legal professionalization is happening globally through law associations and formal education.

Creating a cadre of youthful, conservative legal experts in the United States has been a trend and explicit goal of the anti-rights movement since the Reagan administration. This has included the development of conservative legal students' associations, as well as funding and establishing law schools to form legal minds at the earliest possible stage of their education. The Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy Studies is a prime and unparalleled example of the attention given to ambitious conservative law students, hustling them from the classroom to the courthouse.



“The conservative legal movement has been extremely effective at identifying people who are ideological true believers and getting them credentialed, getting them the attention of the White House, and getting them onto the bench.”

Carolyn Shapiro, founder and co-director of Chicago-Kent’s Institute on the Supreme Court of the United States, quote in *Bloomberg Law*, May 2025

▶ A look at the Federalist Society

Founded in 1982 by students from Yale, Harvard, and the University of Chicago law schools as a student organization, the Federalist Society challenged what it perceived to be liberal ideology within elite American universities. The group’s first major event was a symposium held at Yale, and within a few years it expanded to other law school campuses across the United States. The European Parliamentary Forum stated in a 2025 report the society “argues for an ‘originalist’ interpretation of legal tradition and has devised legal strategies to undermine the right to abortion and LGBTQI rights.” As of 2023, the society boasts chapters at more than 200 law schools and has approximately 70,000 members in its lawyers’ division across over 100 cities.

Over its four decades, the society has built a powerful pipeline from student legal organizing to the highest level of judicial appointments in the United States, including the Supreme Court. As of 2025, six of the nine Supreme Court justices are affiliated with the society. Since the Reagan administration in the 1980s, the society

has had extensive connections with subsequent Republican administrations. Harvard and Boston University lecturer Christopher Rhodes wrote in an opinion piece for *Al Jazeera* in 2022, “alongside the NRA [National Rifle Association], Family Research Council, the Heritage Foundation, and others, the Federalist Society became an expansive and extremely political influential network counting among its members countless judges, attorneys, and scholars.”

Leonard Leo, co-chair and former executive director of the Federalist Society, who was also on the board of SFLA as mentioned above, first joined the society in 1989 while studying law at Cornell University, where he founded the university’s chapter of the organization. Leo’s involvement with the Federalist Society, SFLA, the universities mentioned below, and other conservative and shadowy US groups and institutions, including the aforementioned CRC Advisors, is part of his broader effort to reshape American society and culture, and consequently democracy.²⁴

²⁴ Leo is known for his role in successfully selecting conservative judges to the US Supreme Court. His network of NGOs has raised hundreds of millions of dollars and channeled hundreds of millions more to support his causes. A \$1.6 billion gift from conservative donor Barre Seid through Leo-managed vehicles in 2023 further underscores Leo’s influence. The Campaign for Accountability has called for investigations into seven of his NGOs.

The Federalist Society has been a model for capturing legal minds early in their careers and turning them into supportive conservative lawyers.

- **Youth tactic:** establishing student chapters across law schools throughout the United States and creating a law student to conservative leader pipeline, providing opportunities for mentorship, networking, legal fellowships and scholarships. It also engages in publications, including law journals, as well as media with podcasts to reach younger audiences.
- **Reach:** 200 law school chapters nationwide with tens of thousands of lawyers, judges, law professors, and law students affiliated.
- **Annual revenue:** between \$20–30 million from 2021 to 2023.
- **Political influence:** from judicial appointments at the Supreme Court to its network's influence on judicial philosophy and shaping debates to coordination across the conservative movement and government access.

Fostering the talent pipeline

“The [Koch] network is fully integrated, so it’s not just work at the universities with the students, but it’s also building state-based capabilities and election capabilities and integrating this talent pipeline.”

Charles Koch advisor to supporters at a 2014 meeting, quoted in a 2015 *Atlantic* article

The Federalist Society and Leonard Leo’s influence extends nationally in US law and policy, particularly the latter’s influence on young people and formal legal education. Leo’s ties to conservative universities and billionaires are not unique, nor are they solely features in the United States. Anti-gender leaders, organizations, and governments, understanding the value of investing in the next generation, are increasingly involved in the higher education sphere. This goes beyond simply establishing student clubs and associations to directly creating and financing conservative curricula, institutions, and entire schools. Below, we start with the United States and Leo’s ties, examining how

influential universities operate hand-in-hand with anti-rights actors. We then move to Europe to show this phenomenon at the global level and its ties to far-right political parties and authoritarian regimes.

The universities and programs mentioned below were selected for their ties to major rightwing donors like Leo and the billionaire industrialists Charles and David Koch, as well as their involvement with transnational anti-rights groups and the pipeline they created to conservative politics. We focus on the last decade to demonstrate their continued relevance and reach.

► Billionaire backers schooling the best legal minds

As part of his wider societal agenda, Leo has actively sought to establish legal research centers and guide legal education at universities nationwide. His donations to universities—or rather the money he channels there through his networks—have explicit instructions on how the funds must be spent to align with priorities that promote conservative legal principles to the detriment of progressive human rights, like abortion and LGBTQI+ rights. While the exact figures are not fully transparent, reporting suggests a substantial and strategically directed investment by Leo in shaping legal education in the United States with generational consequences for policy and practice.

For decades, the billionaire benefactor behind Leo, Barre Seid, has financed efforts to shape higher education in the United States and fuel climate denialism.²⁵ Millions of dollars have been distributed to law schools to fund educational initiatives and endow professorships through DonorsTrust and the 85 Fund, donor-advised funds avored by Leo and the Koch network. According to research by Politico, the 85 Fund “undertook activities to educate the public about the importance of constitutionalism, limited government, religious liberty, the role of the courts, education policies and election reforms.” The fund has also given \$2.3 million to the Federalist Society.²⁶

Leonard Leo is not the only conservative player shaping US education—and larger anti-rights initiatives—as he operates

in the same conservative circuit of influence with the Koch brothers’ funding.²⁷ The Charles Koch Foundation is another prominent force in conservative and libertarian funding for education, including law schools, but also economics departments and other university institutes. Its educational initiatives focus on advancing free-market principles, individual liberty, and limited government. Public Integrity reports that the Koch Foundation, along with three affiliated groups, gave nearly \$108 million to 366 universities between 2005 to 2014. Another investigation subsequently found that Koch NGOs funneled \$548.5 million to higher education beneficiaries between 2018 and 2023. Though its funding of conservative youth groups has focused on libertarian causes and less overtly anti-abortion or anti-LGBTQI+ youth organizations, the Koch Foundation has also been a supporter of the Federalist Society.

Both Leo and Koch have been instrumental in the last decade in funding legal education as well as preparing for the second Trump administration. In 2016, a \$20 million initial gift was made by Leo to rename the George Mason University law school after the late conservative Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, alongside another \$10 million from Koch.

These donations have transformed the university into what Slate Magazine described as “the nation’s nerve center for libertarian-conservative law and policy.”²⁸ In addition to

this massive investment at George Mason University, Leo, through a DonorsTrust donation, earmarked \$15 million for the creation of the “Center on the Structural Constitution” at the Texas A&M School of Law.²⁹ Leo is also a lay board member at the Catholic University Columbus School of Law and directed a \$4.25 million gift through DonorsTrust under the Project on Constitutional Originalism. Leo facilitated another \$4 million donation for an endowed chair position, in partnership with the Catholic fraternal organizations the Knights of Columbus.³⁰ The school has also received over \$10 million from Koch Foundation over the years and Leo secured \$13 million from an anonymous donor for the university’s business school, where he sits on the board.³¹

These donations are designed to ensure multiple law programs that will continue to churn out and support the careers of young lawyers. In partnership with the Federalist Society, this education to professional pipeline will continue feeding a legal system that restricts SRHR and abortion rights as students, for example from the Scalia Law School, become Supreme Court clerks for the conservative justices. The shaping of legal minds in the United States will have long-term regressive repercussions at both the federal and state levels as seen in not just the overturning of *Roe*, but state bans on abortion, anti-trans state level bills, and further attacks on LGBTQI+ rights and the rollback of other protections.

²⁵ These donations are often made through a network of dark money groups.

²⁶ Monitoring Influence found that the 85 Fund channeled money to other conservative and far-right groups, some of which were tied to efforts to overturn the US presidential election in 2020 that Donald Trump lost.

²⁷ There is much overlap between Koch and Leo, the former having funded some of the latter’s organizations, as well as interlinkages among their financial structures and other affiliations and objectives.

²⁸ Conservative US Supreme Court Justices Clarence Thomas, Brett Kavanaugh, and Neil Gorsuch have all taught at George Mason. Since 2017-2018, the law school has received over \$4 million per year via Leo networks. Leo and Koch also have ties to the university’s Mercatus Center and its Institute for Humane Studies, which has a project that pushes climate disinformation, among other conservative “principles,” for secondary school and university teachers.

²⁹ The center was approved in November 2024 to be “a hub for the study of structural constitutional law and policymaking [...] to foster engagement opportunities with legal scholars, judges, and government officials.”

³⁰ The Knights of Columbus are involved in anti-abortion funding and advocacy.

³¹ Both Harvard and the University of Chicago law school were instrumental in the founding of the Federalist Society and are influential in conservative and libertarian legal theory and judicial appointments.

| Institution | Influence and political ties | LGBTQI+ policy | Abortion stance | Donor connections |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| George Mason University <i>(Scalia Law School)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Leading conservative legal hub; strong influence in judicial appointments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Traditional; conservative faculty presence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Predominantly anti-abortion; anti-abortion legal scholarship | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Strong Leo involvement •Significant Koch Foundation funding |
| Catholic University of America <i>(Columbus School of Law)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Strongly Catholic, socially conservative legal education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Policies reflect Catholic doctrine; non-affirming LGBTQI+ stance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Strongly anti-abortion, aligned with Catholic Church teachings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Leo influence via Catholic networks •Strong ties to Knights of Columbus and Catholic donors |
| Texas A&M University <i>(School of Law)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Growing conservative influence; rising conservative network connections | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Moderate; formal non-discrimination policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Generally anti-abortion stance among faculty | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Leo ties •Some Koch-affiliated donor support |

Table 2: Key US university law schools receiving billionaire conservative funding.

▶ Connected US Christian campuses



“I hope to see the day when, as in the early days of our country, we don’t have public schools. The churches will have taken them over again and Christians will be running them.”

Jerry Falwell Sr., founder and president of the Moral Majority and Liberty University, in *America Can Be Saved*, 1979

Hillsdale College

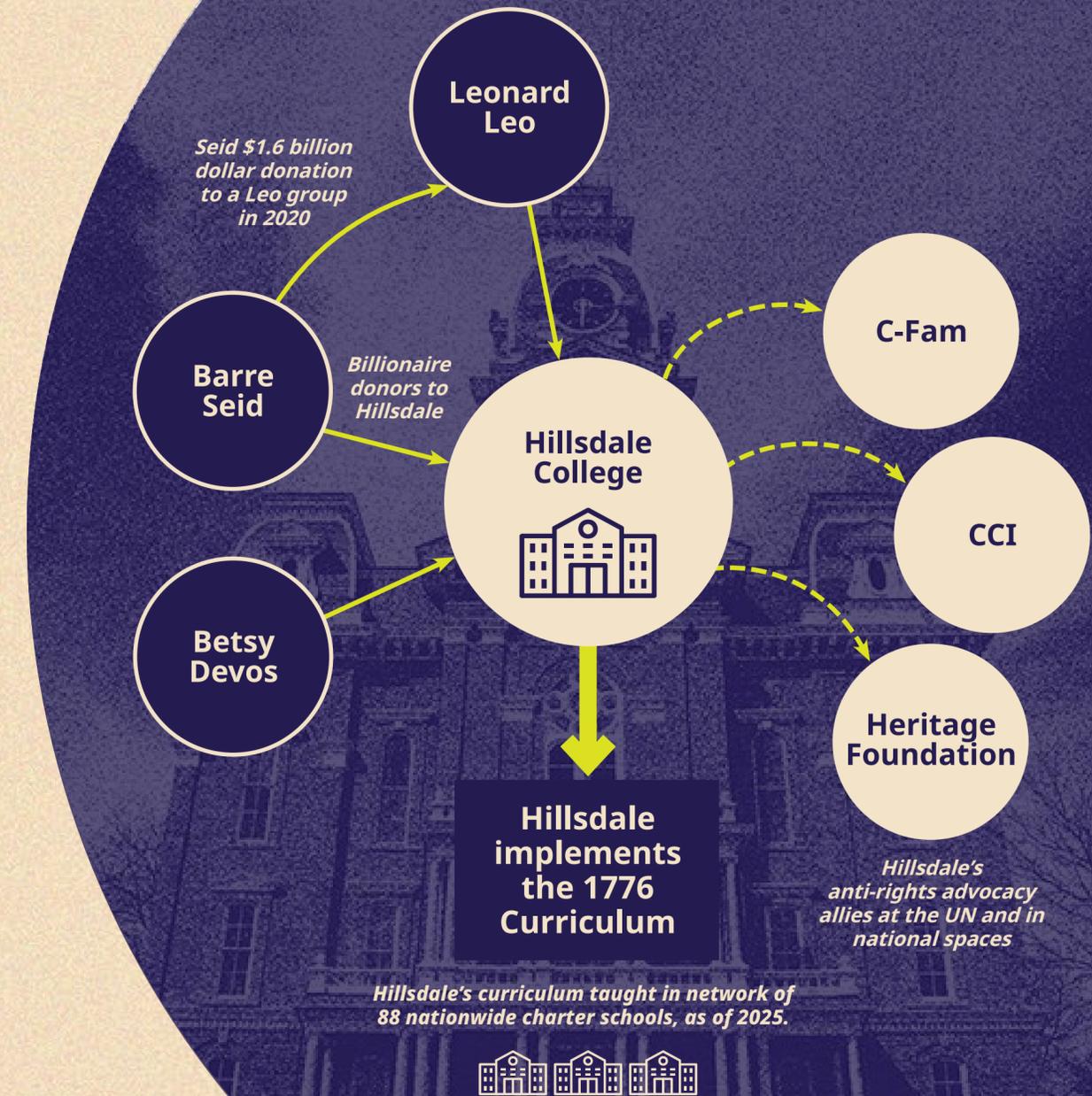
Leonard Leo and his billionaire donor Barre Seid also have connections to Hillsdale College, a small Christian school. The college is at the center of the current “culture wars,” having developed an ahistorical and racist elementary and secondary school curricula that it champions nationally (more below). Hillsdale’s president is a co-founder of the right-wing think tank Claremont Institute and is on the board of the Heritage Foundation. Hillsdale actively works with international anti-rights groups like the Center for Family and Human Rights (C-Fam) and the Dutch-American group Christian Council International (CCI) and others in youth advocacy at the UN. The Global Project against Hate and Extremism summarized: “Hillsdale is one of the main universities in the country promoting the authoritarian, rights-stripping Project 2025, organized by anti-rights think tank the Heritage Foundation, alongside Liberty University and Patrick Henry College.”³²

NBC News reported in 2023 that “the school’s alumni pepper the staffs of conservative media outlets and the offices of GOP [Republican] officials.” Hillsdale has spent years integrating itself into national conservative circles, notably through a Washington, DC, satellite campus, established in 2010.³³ The college is known both for being a feeder of staff and an ideas factory for the Trump administrations. As the rightwing

governor of Florida Ron DeSantis has said, “if I get somebody from Hillsdale, I know they have the foundations necessary to be able to be helpful in pursuing conservative politics.” While Hillsdale was founded by slavery abolitionist Baptists in 1844 and was open to women and Black students from its beginning, it has clearly deviated from its progressive roots. Hillsdale disseminates the 1776 Curriculum to elementary and secondary school students through a network of charter schools nationwide. Vanity Fair reports the curriculum “has been criticized for revisionist history, including whitewashed accounts of US slavery.”³⁴ Hillsdale currently has 23 member schools implementing the curriculum in 14 states.

In addition to funding from Leo, Hillsdale also draws from other conservative billionaire and influential donors, like the former Secretary for the Department of Education under the first Trump Administration Betsy DeVos, of the Devos billionaires, who is also linked to dark money.³⁵ The college has fewer than 1,700 students but a \$900 million endowment. By contrast, Liberty University is one of the largest Christian universities in the United States with 140,000 students enrolled in its residential and online programs for the 2024-2025 year. As of 2023, Liberty has an endowment of \$1.6 billion, and is a beneficiary of the Koch network.

Graphic 1: Sample of Hillsdale College’s billionaire donors, its anti-rights advocacy network with global and national influence, and its implementation of the 1776 curriculum nationwide.



³² Patrick Henry College is a private Christian institution known for its conservative evangelical values. Despite its small size, the college wields outsized political influence, and, like Hillsdale, places graduates in key positions within conservative legal, political, and media circles.

³³ Ginni Thomas, wife of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, helped establish the DC campus.

³⁴ The curriculum states “progressivism was a rejection of the principles of the Declaration of Independence” and the Civil Rights Movement created “programs that ran counter to the lofty ideals of the Founders.”

³⁵ DeVos has also been a donor to the Heritage Foundation.

Liberty University

Jerry Falwell Sr., of the Moral Majority,³⁶ founded Liberty University in 1971 with a vision to combine Christian education with political activism, establishing a training ground for conservative leaders. The university opposes same-sex marriage and abortion. Like the Federalist Society, Liberty’s School of Government and School of Law emphasize constitutional originalism, a key component of conservative legal thought in the United States. Graduates from Liberty’s law school often align themselves with right-wing legal organizations, including the Federalist Society.³⁷

Liberty has hosted many prominent Republican politicians and conservative leaders, including President Donald Trump.³⁸ Trump first spoke at Liberty in 2016 when he and other Republicans were presidential hopefuls. At the time, then-university president Jerry Falwell Jr. was donating millions of dollars from Liberty’s funds to Republican causes and efforts to elect Trump. The university has an important influence on conservative media, with many of its students

and alumni working for right-wing news outlets, especially in Christian journalism. Liberty also has ties to anti-rights groups that are globally influential in education, health, and foreign affairs, including the Institute for Women’s Health—that works to operationalize the anti-rights Geneva Consensus Declaration—and which has hired Liberty students as interns and staff.³⁹

Both Liberty University and Hillsdale College were listed as Heritage Foundation coalition partners for its 2025 presidential transition project—Project 2025—that set out the agenda for the second Trump administration to consolidate executive power, impose far-right policies, and reshape US society and culture.⁴⁰ Hillsdale and Liberty are only two examples of Christian universities and colleges that are politically influential. Below we include a summary of the top six Christian colleges and universities in the US that have over \$100 million dollar endowments and are well-connected in their political influence.⁴¹

³⁶ The Moral Majority was a prominent US political organization founded in 1979 by Jerry Falwell Sr. that mobilized conservative Christians into a powerful voting bloc, helping elect President Reagan in 1980.

³⁷ Liberty Counsel is an SPLC-designated hate group founded by a lawyer and former dean at Liberty’s School of Law and partners with the Liberty Center for Law and Policy in Washington, DC.

³⁸ These figures have spoken at Liberty’s Convocation, a mandatory, weekly event that is streamed online.

³⁹ The Institute of Women’s Health is led by former Trump administration official Valerie Huber. The institute’s Protego program is designed to operationalize the non-binding, anti-abortion Geneva Consensus Declaration, which was created in 2020 by Huber under the first Trump administration to supplant science-based and rights-respecting education, health, and foreign policy programs.

⁴⁰ Patrick Henry College is the only other university listed as a Project 2025 partner, though it is smaller than either Hillsdale or Liberty, with an endowment of under \$3 million in 2025 and only 425 students as of 2024.

⁴¹ In the United States, in contrast to the United Kingdom or non-English speaking countries, both colleges and universities offer undergraduate degrees.



Image: *Jerry Falwell Library, Lynchburg, VA, United States (2023).* Justin Ide.

Religious higher education in the United States

There are more than 4,300 degree-granting institutions in the United States, over half of which are private, and over 1,000 are religiously affiliated, including 140 colleges and university that are part of the Council for Christian Higher Education. The Council is grounded in evangelical belief, assumes a “pro-life” orientation, and describes that sexual relations are “intended for persons in a marriage between one man and one woman.” The Council maintains a policy framework and active advocacy efforts that defend religious freedom and institutional authority to restrict LGBTQI+ inclusion. Some of its member institutions enforce anti-LGBTQI+ policies in hiring, student codes, and programming, and are involved in discrimination and religious exemptions lawsuits. The Council has affiliated institutions in 18 countries as of 2024. Neither Hillsdale College nor Liberty University are members.

| Institution | Abortion policy | LGBTQI+ policy | Affiliation with anti-rights groups | Endowment |
|--|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| Liberty University | Anti-abortion, life begins at conception; opposition is theological and activist-level | Anti-LGBTQI+, bans same-sex dating, romantic behavior; supports conversion therapy | Yes — Close ties to Heritage Foundation, Liberty Counsel, and ADF | \$2.28 billion (2023) |
| Baylor University | Anti-abortion; policies align with Baptist teachings | No formal recognition of same-sex relationships, LGBTQI+ student groups not officially supported | Indirect — Baptist-affiliated; alumni involved in conservative politics | \$1.96 billion (2024) |
| Hillsdale College | Anti-abortion, ties to national anti-abortion movement and active student groups | Heterosexual marriage only; no LGBTQI+ clubs; no anti-discrimination protections | Yes — Tightly connected to Heritage Foundation, Claremont Institute, C-Fam, Christian Council International | \$1 billion (2023) |
| Wheaton College (Illinois) | Anti-abortion, community covenant upholds “sanctity of life” | Prohibits “homosexual behavior”; requires covenant signing | Indirect ties via faculty affiliations; less institutionally active than Hillsdale | \$610 million (2024) |
| Samford University | Anti-abortion; policies align with Southern Baptist teachings | No formal recognition of same-sex relationships, LGBTQI+ student groups not officially supported | Indirect — Southern Baptist-affiliated; alumni involved in conservative politics | \$443 million (2023) |
| Regent University | Anti-abortion; part of Christian nationalist ideology | LGBTQI+ identities not recognized; conduct codes prohibit same-sex relationships | Yes — Founded by Pat Robertson, affiliated with Christian Right media and legal groups | \$111 million (2023) |

Table 3: Influential Christian education institutions and their anti-rights policies

► Globally linked Catholic higher education

As we consider public and private education, particularly higher education, it is important to consider the role of the Catholic Church as a force in certain forms of anti-rights educational advocacy, particularly the influential personal prelature—special Church structure—[Opus Dei](#).⁴² Opus Dei has a significant presence in education and social institutions. There are 19 universities officially affiliated with Opus Dei around the world, with [over 110,000 students](#) as of June 2024. The University of Navarra in Pamplona, mentioned below for its interlinkages with anti-rights institutions, is one of the largest.

Opus Dei is [very influential](#) in anti-rights and religious extremist activism. The Opus Dei-affiliated [Foundation for Higher Education](#) connects Opus Dei university alumni and has helped finance legal work in the United States promoting “natural law” and anti-rights campaigns in higher education. The foundation’s programs are strategically located near prestigious US universities, and, through its leadership, is [linked](#) to anti-LGBTQI+ groups like Brian Brown’s National Organization for Marriage and the conservative Catholic think tank the Witherspoon Institute. Opus Dei itself is linked to anti-rights groups like the [Heritage Foundation](#) and the Center for Family and Human Rights. In Latin America, Opus Dei-affiliated groups have become [increasingly influential](#) in countries like Guatemala.

[Leonard Leo](#) has ties to [Opus Dei](#) through its Washington, DC-based institution, the [Catholic Information Center](#). The Center is an influential hub for Catholic conservatives in politics, law, and policy, and is frequented by members of the Federalist Society. It has links to the [Young Catholic Professionals](#), who host networking events, as well as conducts its own outreach to university students through Opus Dei Youth. Like with its colleges and other private schools, the Center is just one part of [Opus Dei’s design](#) “to attract and mold the influential.”

⁴² Opus Dei has its own bishop and operates as a special group within the Catholic Church. For more information, see Nina Burleigh’s [September 19, 2024, investigation](#) “How Opus Dei Conquered D.C.”

Shaping the far-right curriculum in Europe



“Our campaigns are related to education, countering the intrusive promotion of LGBT rights in schools, protecting young people from vulgar sex education, and promoting the values of marriage and parenthood.”

Ordo Iuris, in its *commemoration of the Warsaw Uprising*, August 6, 2024

Image: *Flag of the European Union*,
Location unspecified (2019), Adrien Olichon.

As far-right parties have gained ground across Europe, some have established youth wings, which create pipelines from higher education to induction to far-right party membership and political participation at the national and regional level.⁴³ The selection of far-right parties we focus on from Europe meet the definition provided by *The Guardian* in 2024 of being nativist, exclusionary of outgroups, and authoritarian. Some are additionally illiberal, populist, and anti-LGBTQI+. A special issue in the 2025 *Journal of Contemporary European Education* notes that these parties “frame education primarily as a means of disseminating (conservative and nativist) culture and values.” It adds that the “reshaping of educational content and curricula is therefore a key common focus of the educational approach of European far-right parties.”

This includes countries like Hungary, Poland, and France where political parties and governments have played a key role in shaping conservative higher education. *Fidesz* (Hungary), *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* (Law and Justice, PiS, Poland), and *Rassemblement National* (the National Rally, RN, France) have been instrumental in funding and creating universities and institutes in the last two decades. Meanwhile, *Alternative für Deutschland* (Alternative for Germany), Brothers of Italy, *Chega* in Portugal, and *Vox* in Spain all have youth branches to engage young voters. These parties intersect with many US anti-rights groups and others in transnational anti-right networks.⁴⁴

Below, we examine three learning institutions with links to far-right parties: *Mathias Corvinus Collegium* (MCC, Hungary), *L’institut des sciences sociales, économiques et politiques* (Institute for Social, Economic and Political Sciences, ISSEP, France), and *Ordo Iuris’s College Intermarium* (Poland, though, as of 2024, the college is defunct).⁴⁵ These three institutes all share an ideological focus on conservative elite formation.

⁴³ See Annex I for more details on European far-right parties and their youth wings.

⁴⁴ To better understand the transnational far-right network, please see the Global Project against Hate and Extremism’s report *mapping far right* coordination between 2000 and 2024.

⁴⁵ Ordo Iuris Institute for Legal Culture—Ordo Iuris for short—is a Polish, ultra-conservative, Catholic legal think tank closely associated with PiS and opposed to abortion, LGBTQI+ rights, and gender equality. It has been increasingly operating outside of Europe in the last five years with anti-rights groups in East Africa.

MCC is institutionally different from ISSEP and Collegium Intermarium in terms of its funding, its structure as a recognized degree-accrediting institution, and its wider reach in Europe.⁴⁶ Established in 1996, MCC has a budget of over \$1.7 billion from the Hungarian government and is essentially a semi-state institution.⁴⁷ In 2020, the total amount of finances MCC received from the state was higher than the amount Hungary spent on higher education in the whole year. Critics of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and his Fidesz party have labeled MCC as an institution designed to breed right-wing intellectuals. Students receive stipends, fellowships, and access to the university's network of international business and think tank partners, like the US Heritage Foundation, among others. The *New York Times* reported that Orbán seeks “to intertwine conservative politics with culture and academia.” Demonstrating its reach beyond Hungary, in 2022, MCC launched what it calls a “Brussels campus”—a government-sponsored think tank to support Orbán’s efforts to disrupt trust in the European Union, undermine and defund civil society organizations in the European space, and boosts the far-right agenda in the European Parliament—all the while offering “a challenging and stimulating environment for visiting young students to acquaint themselves with the policy and decision-making process in Brussels.”

ISSEP and the Collegium Intermarium, by contrast, are more ideological educational start-ups connected to political parties, and not the government. The former was founded

by the French far-right member of the European Parliament Marion Maréchal in 2018, who was also the school’s director until 2022.⁴⁸ The school’s co-founder, Thibaut Monnier, is a member of RN and a former member of the even more ideologically extreme right party Reconquête. While not recognized by France as an accredited institution, ISSEP offers non-credentialed degrees in political science and certificates in political campaigning. The institution bills itself as “the other political science school” in an attempt to set itself on par with the renowned 1872 “grande école” Institut d’étude politique (the Institute of Political Studies, or Sciences Po). A *Guardian* story reports that ISSEP has attracted “students who are members of far-right groups in France, such as the National Rally or the extreme activist group Génération identitaire,” a 2012 anti-immigrant group that has been likened to a private militia.

According to its enrollment data, ISSEP had 338 students between 2018-2021, and as of the last academic year (2023-2024) over 150 students participated in programs in both Lyon, France, and Madrid, Spain. The institute’s Madrid campus, first established in 2020, demonstrates ISSEP’s links to both the Spanish party Vox and, through its staff, additional far-right connections. The director of the Madrid campus is Santiago Muzio, a French-Argentine lawyer with close ties to current Argentine President Javier Milei. Muzio is also close to the young ultra-conservative Argentine influencer and author Agustín Laje, known as the “crusader of the new right,” who frequently participates in ISSEP’s

training activities. ISSEP also has close ties to faculty and alumni at the University of Navarra in Spain—the influential Opus Dei-affiliated Catholic university—that has been “closely involved in the promotion of a range of anti-gender services, such as natural family planning and abstinence-based reproductive health initiatives.”

Though now defunct, the College Intermarium was Ordo Iuris’ attempt to formally train European legal specialists through an ultra-Catholic educational institution. This was part of its broader goal of reforming the European Union. The college launched in 2021 in Warsaw under the former national-conservative PiS government.⁴⁹ Over its three years of operation, the college reportedly enrolled 400 students, though only 13 were part of its full-time law degree program between 2021-2023; the rest were postgraduate and short course attendees in courses on the “Psychology of Marriage and Family” and “Faith and Science.”⁵⁰ And yet, between 2022-2023, College Intermarium received over 4.6 million z łoty (over \$1.2 million) from the Ministry of Education. With the change in government in January 2024 and PiS losing power, Ordo Iuris claimed the college’s lackluster numbers were due to being blacklisted alongside other right-wing, conservative, and Christian organizations. Shifting gears, in October 2024 Ordo Iuris launched an educational center with an e-learning platform available in Polish and in English.

⁴⁶ The Global Project against Hate and Extremism, in its analysis on far-right actors investing in educational institutions, adds the Centro de Estudios Universitarios (Center for University Studies, CEU), established in 1933, which is linked, to Vox, Fundación Disenso, among others, though not explicitly funded by far-right parties as the three institutions we mention.

⁴⁷ Under Orbán, all but five public universities in Hungary are under the control of privately managed foundations.

⁴⁸ Maréchal is a former National Rally deputy and ex-spokesperson for the far-right politician Éric Zemmour, leader of the Reconquête party.

⁴⁹ College Intermarium inauguration was attended by then-education minister, Przemysław Czarnek, and then-culture minister, Piotr Gliński, as well as by Hungary’s then-justice minister, Judit Varga. Czarnek believed that Collegium Intermarium would bolster the struggle against the “absurd ideologies” of “postmodernism and neo-Marxism.”

⁵⁰ *Business Insider* rounds the number up to 15. Only 11 students apparently made it to the third semester.

| Institution | Details | Political party ties | Anti-rights stances | Far-right links |
|------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| <u>MCC</u> | ~\$95 million per year, 2022; ~\$1.2 billion in assets 2023 Fully accredited institution with state-recognized degrees and diplomas, from elementary school to postgraduate | Tied to Fidesz and Orbán; board includes senior politicians | Anti-LGBTQI+ and strongly anti-abortion; aligns with Orbán-era far-right policies | Engaged with US conservative networks including the <u>Conservative Political Action Conference</u> and the Heritage Foundation; also <u>linked to Latin America</u> |
| <u>Collegium Intermarium</u> | ~\$1.2 million public funding per year, 2022 to 2023 Legally established university but currently inactive; had university-level courses, mostly in law | Founded by Ordo Iuris; aligned with the former PiS government | Actively anti-LGBTQI+ and instrumental in Poland's near-total abortion ban | Ordo Iuris is allied with US anti-LGBTQI+ Christian right groups and linked to ADF, the Federalist Society, the Family Research Council and conservative donors opposing LGBTQI+ rights and abortion |
| <u>ISSEP</u> | Private funding, no public budget disclosure Not officially state-accredited and issues unaccredited diplomas; university-level and young professionals | Linked to Marion Maréchal, Reconquête; Spain campus ties to Vox party | Hosts anti-LGBTQI+, anti-trans, and anti-abortion programming | Ties to French far-right identitarian movement; some connections to US conservative Catholic networks; campus in both France and Spain; ties to the US right wing |

Table 4: Selection of far-right-linked educational institutions in Europe and their anti-rights stances.

While less powerful than MCC, both ISSEP and the Collegium Intermarium—and by extension its host, Ordo Iuris—are noteworthy because they benefit from their mutual collaboration with anti-rights circles to influence educational practices for young people. On June 2, 2025, MCC and Ordo Iuris held an educational conference on “Reclaiming Classical Education” in Warsaw, drawing “experts” from around the world. Among the organizations in attendance was the Heritage Foundation. Ordo Iuris and MCC also teamed up, with support from Vox and other European far-right parties, to create the “Great Reset”; a roadmap for reconfiguring the European Union.⁵¹ The document focuses on national sovereignty, listing education, along with other sociocultural and political issues, that would be exempt from the oversight of the “new” European Union it proposes.

⁵¹ These initiatives are part of the European far-right’s efforts to “consolidate a trans-national cultural, educational, and strategic project.”



03

Life-Long Learners 35

Guiding future anti-rights leaders 38

Mentoring the young career professional 41

Incubating global groups 43

▶ Youth UN engagement 45

“It’s very important, in my view, to create **pipelines of talent and networks** of very driven, strategic people in all sectors of American life if you want to introduce the **Western cultural tradition and traditional values.**”

Leonard Leo, co-chairperson of the Federalist Society and founder and chairman of CRC Advisors, in an interview on *National Public Radio*, November 25, 2024

Life-Long Learners

Investing in education and student organizing is one of the first steps of indoctrinating young people. Once students are fully imbued with conservative values, the anti-rights movement is also there to provide professional opportunities, often accompanying them throughout their careers.



Image: A group of students gathering outdoors, location unspecified (2025). Brelyn Bashrum.

Guiding future anti-rights leaders

Anti-rights groups have created short-term training courses and academies to provide formative opportunities for young people. They have invested substantially in a myriad of capacity-building initiatives, including providing young professionals with opportunities for training and networking beyond universities on topics ranging from advocacy to communications, and legal formation.⁵²

These training and programs are available globally. Some leverage religious affiliations for legitimacy and network expansion. In Latin America, conservative and anti-rights movements have a long tradition of recruitment through the Catholic Church and, more recently, evangelical churches. Many of these programs begin with basic training in church social doctrine and family values, progressing to more specialized political training.

Some key anti-rights organizations, like the US-based Alliance Defending Freedom and the [Leadership Institute](#) (LI), the youth-led World Youth Alliance (WYA), and CitizenGO, form the core connective tissue between global movements and youth training. The Heritage Foundation, SFLA, and [Turning Point USA](#) (TPUSA) dominate the US youth training pipeline.

In Europe, Hungary, Poland, and Spain are hubs for regional coordination in Europe—with ties to Latin America—through organizations like Ordo Iuris and a number of linked Spanish initiatives including the Vox party, Political Network for Values (PNfV), Hazte Oír, and the Catholic [Centro de Estudios Universitarios](#), among others.⁵³

[Leadership Institute](#) hosts hundreds of trainings annually on public speaking, political communication, and grassroots organizing. It claims to [have trained](#) over 200,000 activists and leaders globally [through 40 different types of training schools](#), including its summer seminars in the United States. Founded in 1979, LI's mission is to train young people to advance “conservative values”—among them anti-abortion and anti-LGBTQI+ positions—and groom political candidates domestically, though it also operates internationally. [According to SPLC](#), LI has a history of supporting radical right student groups in the United States. Notable [LI alumni](#) include US politicians,⁵⁴ like first Trump administration [Vice President Mike Pence](#), and influential far-right conservative pundits.

Since 2000, ADF, a US-based organization, [has focused on legal capacity building](#) of American and international students through its [Blackstone Legal Fellowship](#) programs. ADF has trained more than 1,800 first-year law students from more than 227 law schools in 21 countries. Additionally, its European counterpart ADF International hosts its own initiative to train young Christians to defend their values in a “hostile environment” through [the Areté Academy](#). The academy's Europe Class 2025 training took place in Vienna, Austria, with 50 participants from 23 countries. The academy exists “to equip and engage the next generation of leaders to influence law, government, policy, media, academia, and other culture-shaping fields,” and ADF reports it [has trained over 650 young people](#) to date with an academy presence not just in Europe but also in Latin America. Many Areté participants then go on to attend Blackstone. ADF has a wide footprint outside the United States and Europe, and its programs extend from Latin America to Africa, Asia, and Australia.

⁵² Of the 275 organizations investigated for the [European Parliamentary Forum's 2025 report](#), 121 anti-rights groups offer some form of training, from academic to leadership development programs.

⁵³ For a breakdown of youth training examples by organization, see Annex II.

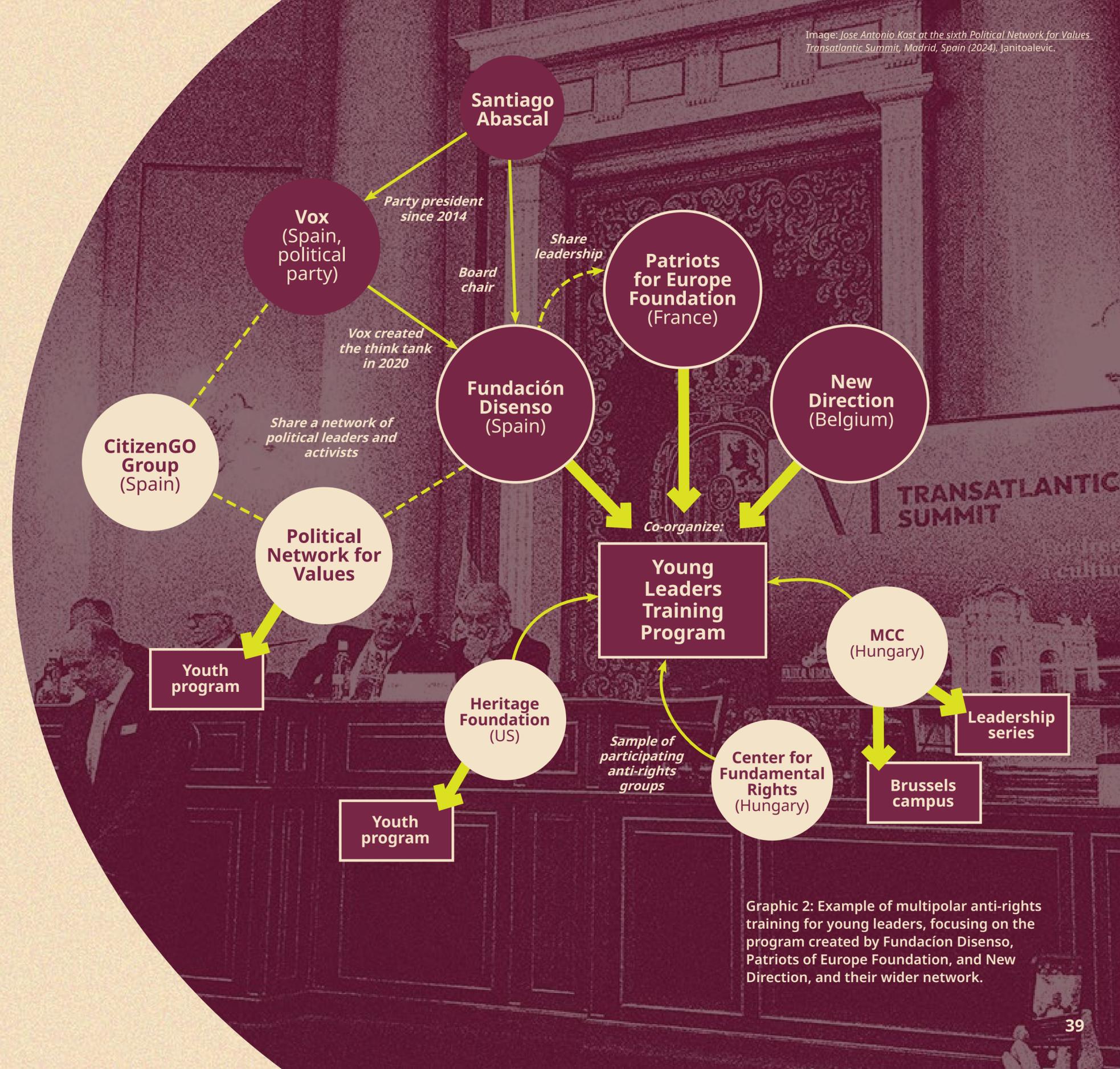
⁵⁴ A [2019 LI list](#) names nearly 30 US senators and congresspeople.

Meanwhile, the Fundación Universitaria San Pablo Centro de Estudios Universitarios (San Pablo CEU's University Foundation) in Spain has its own conservative training center for young leaders based on Catholic doctrine, the Centro de Estudio, Formación y Análisis Social (Center for Studies, Training and Social Analysis). The Center collaborates with Latin American organizations and spaces, such as the Mexican organization Patria Unida, whose director and founder was herself a participant in a young leaders' program. CEU also has a Family Studies Institute, through which it established the CEU Prize for Life in 2015 to reward students from any of its campuses for their "best initiative in defense of life."

This multipolar ecosystem of anti-rights training programs is not dominated by any one organization, but is networked through shared ideology, funding flows, and personnel—many share board members, former executive directors, and other staff. A prime example is Fundación Disenso—founded by the Spanish far-right party Vox as its political foundation in 2020 and led by Vox's president, Santiago Abascal.

Fundación Disenso was modeled on think tanks like the Heritage Foundation and Ordo Iuris. Its young leaders academy for 25-35 year olds focuses on the Ibersphere and Europe. It is co-organized with Patriots for Europe Foundation,⁵⁵ based in France, and New Direction—the think tank of the European Conservatives and Reformists at the European Parliament founded in 2009 by Margaret Thatcher. The youth program involves other anti-rights groups like the Heritage Foundation, Ordo Iuris, and the Orbán and MCC-affiliated Center for Fundamental Rights, as well as other anti-rights groups for participants from Europe, Latin America, and the United States. Fundación Disenso, through its structural links to Vox, is also linked to CitizenGO and Hazte Oír, as well as PNFV,⁵⁶ which hosts in turn its own youth program where participants learn to lobby international organizations and the United Nations.

⁵⁵ The foundation is part of Orbán's Patriots for Europe, which is chaired by the French MEP Bardella.
⁵⁶ Since 2016, CitizenGO and Hazte Oír are part of the same legal entity, the CitizenGO Group, and share the same leaders and funding as Vox. The organizations also all have ties to anti-rights actors like Brian Brown of the WCF and International Organization for the Family (IOF), Sharon Slater of FWI, and Spanish politician Jaime Mayor Oreja. In 2021, WikiLeaks revealed Hazte Oír's ties to El Yunque, a secret Catholic Mexican society with paramilitary origins founded in the 1950s.



Graphic 2: Example of multipolar anti-rights training for young leaders, focusing on the program created by Fundación Disenso, Patriots of Europe Foundation, and New Direction, and their wider network.

These organizations form a highly interconnected transnational network, and their youth trainings are just one of their tried and true tools. To that end, they focus on specific programs to target areas of engagement, including:

- **Broad leadership development programs, summer schools, and fellowships, for example:** in the United States, ADF, the Heritage Foundation, and the Leadership Institute, among many others; in Europe and Latin America, Vox and CEU-CEFAS as well as MCC; and globally, Political Network for Values and World Youth Alliance.
- **Legal clinics, litigation training, and EU and UN-focused legal programs, for example:** ADF International, Ordo Iuris, and the European Centre for Law and Justice.
- **Digital mobilization, campaigns, and media training, for example:** CitizenGO, the Institut Libre de Journalisme (ILDJ),⁵⁷ and SFLA.

By combining these programs with on-the-ground opportunities, like direct advocacy involvement at the EU and the UN, their efforts demonstrate the continued professionalization and pipeline for the next generation of conservative political and social leaders at the global, regional, and national levels. This programming is specific, as exemplified by MCC's leadership series—separate from its credentialled programs—to be “anti-woke” and “anti-gender ideology,” prioritizing opposition to abortion, LGBTQI+ rights, and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE).⁵⁸ Youth trained

through these opportunities are meant to be prepared to enter legal, political, and media careers, amplifying the long-term impact of this investment.

Additionally, some US organizations, such as the Clare Boothe Luce Center for Conservative Women, Conservative Women for America, and TPUSA—which have ties to, for example, the Heritage Foundation and LI—have programs focused on young conservative women. This training builds on work that started in the 1970s and 1980s in the United States with Phylis Schlafly. Schlafly organized young people and women against the Equal Rights Amendment, focusing on abortion, LGBTQI+ rights, and gender equality. Such efforts combine the Christian-right moral narratives with anti-feminist, pro-family political messaging, often pushing back against gender justice in both national and international arenas.

It is also important to note the work of smaller, US-based anti-rights groups doing work overseas like the SPLC-designated hate group MassResistance, which is best known for its work as an extremist anti-LGBTQI+ and education group in US legislative efforts, including working to challenge same-sex marriage. MassResistance has conducted short courses overseas, most recently in Kenya. From December 17-19, 2024, the organization trained “approximately 80 high school and college students” to help “fight the LGBT invasion of their country that’s targeting young children and teenagers.” We cannot ignore the influence these smaller organizations have in terms of reach overseas, often with little fanfare or limelight, and the implications for local contexts of their training young people.

⁵⁷ILDJ was created by conservative journalist Alexandre Pesey in 2018. He also created in 2004 the Institut de Formation Politique, inspired by LI, which in turn inspired Maréchal to create ISSEP.

⁵⁸MCC has also established a Brussels office.

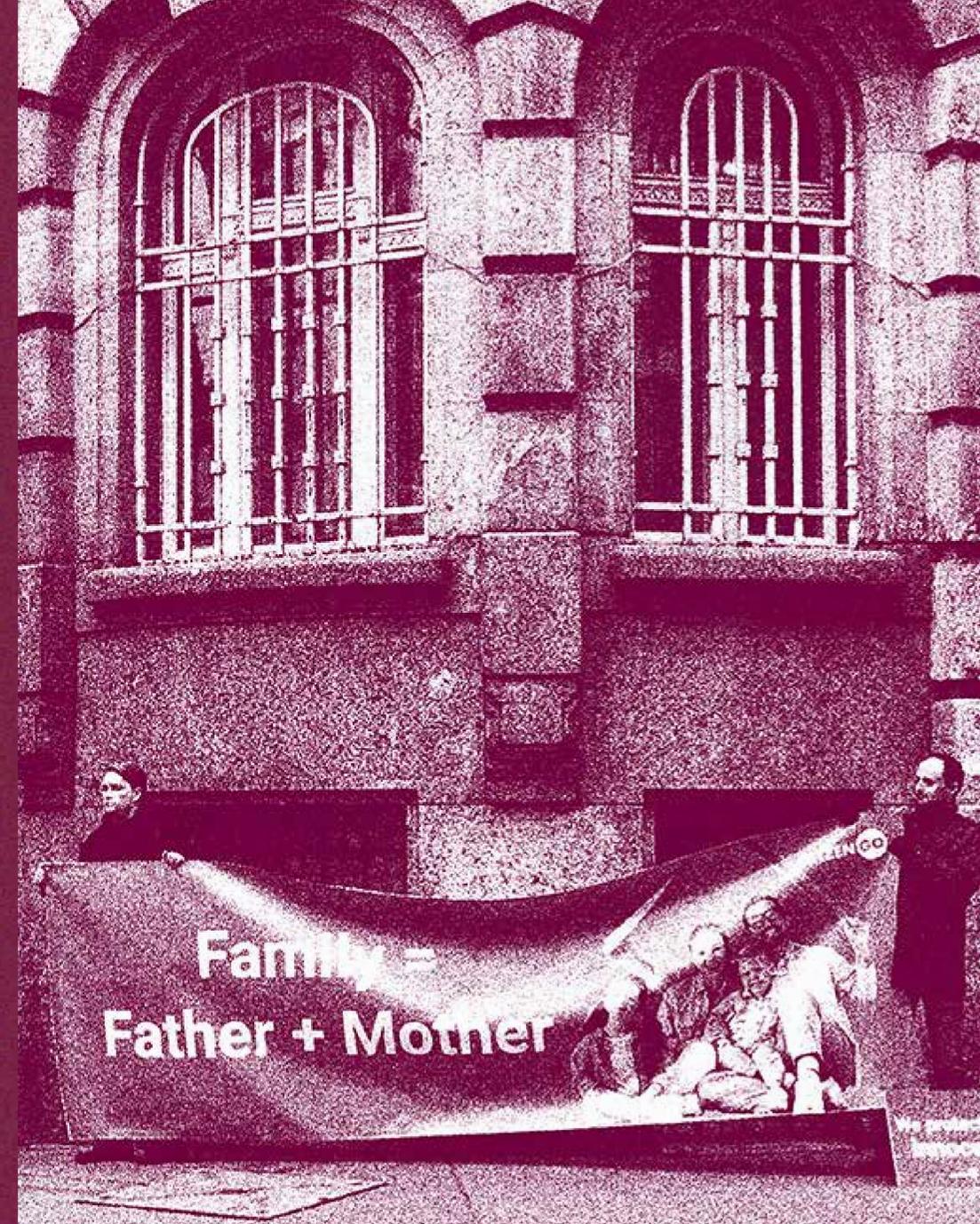


Image: *CitizenGO demonstration, Budapest, Hungary (2024)*. Elekes Andor.

Mentoring the young career professional

As this report shows, anti-rights groups of all different stripes have a dedicated focus on legal advocacy. Young professionals can tap into or hold membership in associations that represent their fields or through broader religious or affinity groups. Outside the United States, many groups are affiliated with or inspired by US-based professional associations or the Catholic Church's global networks. But there are also associations focusing on medical ethics that defend ideologically conservative or altogether anti-abortion, homophobic, and/or transphobic frameworks.

These organizations engage young professionals via student and young professional-specific chapters, provide internships and continuing education, and host conferences, among other initiatives. The groups mentioned below emphasize the formation of a new generation of professionals that is committed to resisting “gender ideology” and abortion. Through their members they shape professional ethics and codes, support legal or professional protections for conscientious objectors refusing to provide and/or refer for abortions or trans-affirming care and often partner with larger global networks.

United States

In the United States, the Young Catholic Professionals and the Federalist Society work with legal students and young professionals. Other groups that target young people early in their careers include denomination-specific legal groups, like the [Christian Legal Society](#), as well as medical associations like the [American College of Pediatricians](#); the [Christian Medical and Dental Associations](#); the [American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists](#) (AAPLOG); and the [American Association of Christian Counselors](#).⁵⁹

All four of these associations engage with young professionals in different ways through student and resident memberships; [mentorship](#) and [networking](#); [deliberate outreach](#) to early-career professionals; mission trips; and certificate programs.⁶⁰ [AAPLOG states](#) that its program to connect medical students and residents to doctors provides them with a “critical opportunity for students to hear a medical professional pro-life perspective, reinforcing and informing their personal beliefs and perspectives.” Meanwhile [AAPLOG continues to promote the medically unfounded](#) and potentially lethal “abortion reversal pill” and other anti-abortion disinformation.

These associations have also been directly involved in anti-transgender initiatives in healthcare policy, advocacy, and education. They promote restricting or banning gender-affirming care, oppose transgender rights in schools and sports, and advocate for religious exemptions to LGBTQI+ nondiscrimination laws. The [American College of Pediatricians](#)—labeled a [hate group](#) by the SPLC—is one of the most active medical voices against transgender rights in the United States.⁶¹ It has [published position papers](#) opposing gender-affirming care for youth; [advocates against puberty blockers, hormone therapy, and social transitioning](#); and their staff have testified in support of [anti-trans legislation in at least four states](#). Meanwhile, the American Association of Christian Counselors trains counselors to promote “biblical identity” in response to gender dysphoria and the widely discredited and harmful practice of conversion therapy. These organizations often testify in legislative hearings, submit expert declarations in court cases, and work with groups like ADF or the Heritage Foundation to amplify their messaging.⁶²

⁵⁹ The Christian Medical and Dental Associations lists 13,000 members; the AAPLOG 7,000; the American Association of Christian Counselors 50,000; and the American College of Pediatricians 700.

⁶⁰ These organizations have varying levels of revenue that do not correlate to their influence: [Young Catholic Professionals](#), \$1.88 million, 2023; [Christian Legal Society](#), \$3.4 million, 2023; [American College of Pediatricians](#), \$275,000, 2023; the [AAPLOG](#), \$69.9 million, 2023; [American Association of Christian Counselors](#), \$1.01, 2023; and the [Christian Medical and Dental Society](#), \$12.5 million, 2024.

⁶¹ The American College of Pediatricians closely resembles in name the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), a large, broad-based organization dedicated to the health and wellbeing of children.

⁶² The AAPLOG lists ADF among its partners and [Heritage Foundation](#) awarded AAPLOG with a \$100,00 Innovation Prize in 2024 for the association's work on the harmful and disproven “abortion reversal pill.” The American College of Pediatricians [won the Heritage Foundation prize in 2025](#).

Europe

In Europe, associations that play a role in medicine and law feed into broader religious and conservative policy movements, again with youth components. While their visibility may be lower than large NGOs like ADF International, they are highly influential within specific professional sectors, especially as they are tied to Christian or Catholic doctrine. For example, in Brussels, the European Federation of Catholic Medical Associations targets Catholic medical students and young doctors with anti-abortion advocacy at the EU and across Europe.

The federation's parent organization, the World Federation of Catholic Medical Associations, which has representation in six global regions, has an initiative for Young Catholic Doctors. These include mobilizing for "World Youth Days," "bootcamps", and international meetings. The young doctors are represented through national Catholic Medical Association Youth Sections from their respective countries.

East Africa

Some professional associations in Africa, like the Kenya Christian Professionals Forum, are directly connected with international anti-rights organizations, including ADF, CitizenGO, Ordo Iuris, and the Heritage Foundation.⁶³ The Nairobi-based KCPF includes members from legal, medical and other professions, as well as students, and provides engagement in forums and civic training for Christian students and professionals.⁶⁴ The organization has long been supported by influential Kenyan religious bodies and umbrella groups from various denominations. For the last decade, KCPF has been leading anti-SRHR and anti-LGBTQI+ initiatives in Kenya, working to advance "biblical values in the society" through discriminatory and anti-rights legislation and policies.

Demonstrating the links between these groups and other legal associations, in August 2025, representatives from KCPF's regional arm—the Africa Christian Professionals Forum—and ADF International were featured at the 16th Advocates for Africa Conference in Kigali, Rwanda. ADF was also among the event's sponsors, alongside the US-based Christian legal group Advocates International, which has institutional ties to both ADF and some of the US universities named above.⁶⁵ While the conference—hosted by Advocates International's offshoot, Advocates Africa, and another Christian legal group Lawyers of Hope—was more generally focused on Christian values in legal practice, KCPF used its session to denounce SRHR and CSE and to promote the Geneva Consensus Declaration. In addition to other speakers, including government representatives and national bar associations, of the estimated 240 attendees roughly 30 percent were law students supported by Lawyers of Hope.⁶⁶

⁶³ An SPLC investigation outlines the organizational ties between KCPF and the African Christian Professionals Forum, which hosted a May 2025 conference with members and sponsorship from the Family Research Council, C-Fam, PNFV, and the Foundation for African Cultural Heritage, a longtime affiliate organization of WCF, FWI, and World Youth Alliance.

⁶⁴ KCPF's goal is to grow its membership to 5,000 by 2026. KCPF annual report 2023-2024, on file with Ipas.

⁶⁵ Advocates International has links to Regent and Liberty universities. The organization is primarily a network of Christian lawyers' associations, whereas ADF is a litigation and lobbyist group. However, Advocates International operates in the same Christian legal ecosystem and has overlapping networks, including in academia through Christian law schools.

⁶⁶ Information on file with Ipas.

Incubating global groups



“A small number of dedicated and fearless people can change the world. They can even change the U.N. After watching these brave young people work for only two days at U.N. headquarters, I now believe even that institution can be turned around. Some say youth is wasted on the young. Not me.”

Austin Ruse, President of C-Fam, in *The Catholic Thing*, July 29, 2011

Landmark events at the United Nations around women’s rights, the inclusion of SRHR, and LGBTQI+ inclusion and protection were a trigger point for inter-denominational political organizing and helped catalyze lobbying and advocacy efforts of international anti-rights groups. This organizing against the UN coalesced following the September 1994 UN International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo and the September 1995 4th in Beijing.

James Dobson of Focus on the Family and allies of Jerry Falwell Sr.’s Moral Majority, along with evangelicals and Catholics (including members of Opus Dei), began building a resistance to UN advances on SRHR, which had also laid the groundwork for advocacy around diverse sexualities and identities. The Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute, now called the Center for Family and Human Rights (C-Fam); the Howard Center for Family, Religion and Society; and the World Congress of Families (WCF), a project of the Howard Center, were all founded in 1997. WCF, which began operating as the International Organization for the Family (IOF) in 2016, would go on to serve as the global hub of a primarily Catholic, Protestant, and Mormon anti-rights coalition. This coalition gave a jump start to the work of Family Watch International (FWI), which today is one of the more influential anti-rights groups working at the global level.

Today, IOF is run by Brian Brown, who is president and executive director of one of the most influential hate groups opposing LGBTQI+ rights and same-sex marriage in the United States, the National Organization of Marriage.⁶⁷ Brown’s IOF, Austin Ruse’s C-Fam, and Sharon Slater’s FWI are all SPLC-designated hate and extremist groups. C-Fam, through Ruse, and FWI, through Slater, remain the main mobilizing actors at the UN in New York City, and Slater is extremely active in anti-LGBTQI+ and anti-CSE organizing, particular in East Africa.

⁶⁷ The organization has a youth division, which includes youth-focused rallies and lobbying campaigns.

While these groups did not initially incorporate youth activists, this changed in the last two decades when youth representation became a feature in their UN advocacy work. They have formed youth arms or youth spin-off organizations to cultivate and mobilize young people in the global arena and in other countries. In 2010, C-Fam created the International Youth Coalition (IYC) and in 2021 FWI developed the Empowered Youth Coalition (EYC). Both anti-rights groups gave their youth arms names that mirrored established youth-led human rights organizations, which

had been engaged in UN advocacy efforts to advance human rights and SRHR since the late 1990s. For example, Youth Coalition (1999) and the Council on Youth and Population (1997), which became CHOICE for youth and sexuality. In contrast to their progressive counterparts, IYC and EYC engage young people to promote anti-abortion, “pro-family” issues, including against CSE in UN spaces and internationally. EYC is a fully independent entity from FWI, reporting \$295,000 in revenue in 2021.

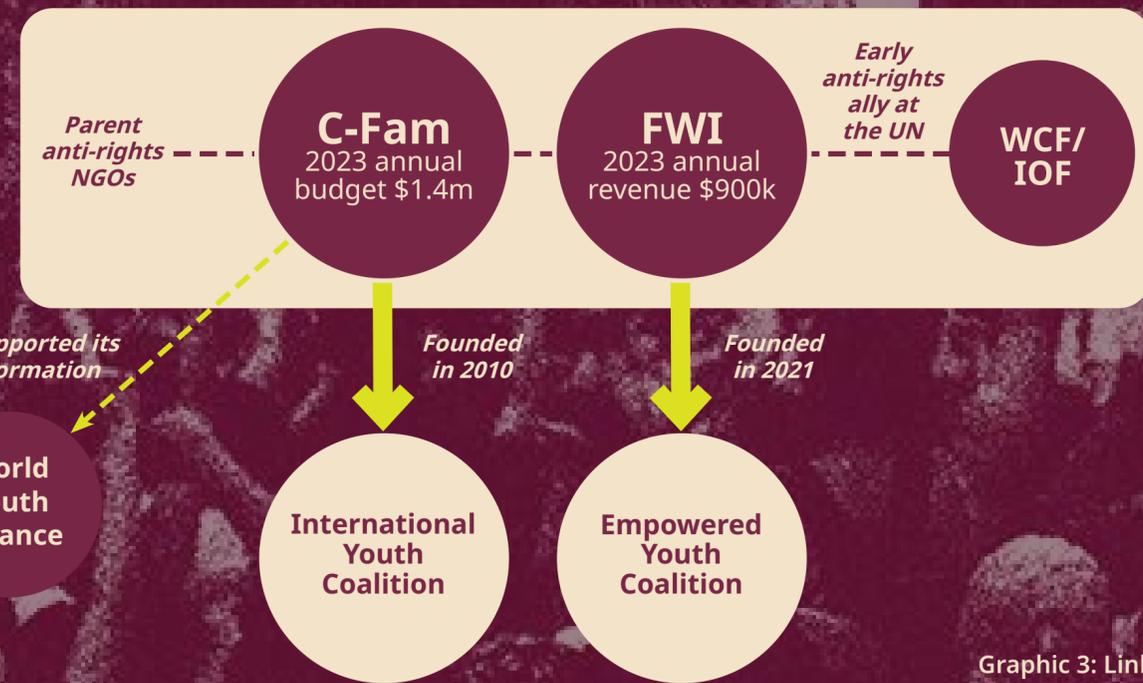
IYC operates under C-Fam, not as a separate legal entity. While C-Fam’s annual 2023 revenue was just \$1.4 million, IYC benefits from its parent organization’s connections and access to Member States at the UN, including close ties to the Holy See. IYC carries out activities under its own name, training youth to advocate at the UN on anti-abortion, “pro-family” issues; hosting events; and publishing youth-written statements, for example for the annual UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The organization debuted publicly in Mexico in 2011 and that year hosted a training in New York City with anti-rights youth leaders Kristan Hawkins of SFLA and Lila Rose of Live Action, among other young influencers of the time. (More on Rose and her organization below.)

Ten years later, FWI launched EYC, also in Mexico and in the company of Maviela León of the youth wing of Frente Nacional por la Familia. Slater introduced León as the network’s coordinator for Latin America.⁶⁸ Frente Nacional por la Familia (National Front for the Family) organizes Catholic student networks, youth marches, and legal advocacy and is led by Rodrigo Iván Cortés Jiménez. Demonstrating how close knit the anti-rights community is, Cortés is currently being represented by ADF International before the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights for a conviction he received in Mexico for political gender-based violence against a transgender federal congresswoman. In addition to its links to ADF, Frente Nacional por la Familia is closely allied to CitizenGO, Hazte Oír, and Ordo Iuris, and Cortés serves on the advisory council of PNFV.

Whereas IYC focuses more on the UN, EYC is a global youth network of adolescents and young people aged 15–35 who engage in campaigns against CSE, abortion, “gender ideology” and LGBTQI+ rights. FWI wrote in its introduction of EYC in 2021, “The world has come to a tipping point as across the globe youth and young adults are being indoctrinated, sexualized, and enlisted in the radical sexual rights movement. Enter the exciting new Empowered Youth Coalition (EYC) which has already begun uniting youth and young adults across the globe to stand for life and family.”

EYC members include youth-led or youth-focused organizations in dozens of countries across the world. The coalition claims it has over 100 active members who are required to sign the “Declaration on The Rights of Children, Youth, and Their Families” when joining. EYC also provides a list of mentorship organizations for youth groups that are a who’s who among the global anti-rights network. These include many of the groups listed throughout this report—CitizenGO, the Dutch-American Christian Council International, and KCPF—as well as other anti-LGBTQI+ and anti-abortion groups, from Red Familia in Mexico to AILA in Indonesia.

⁶⁸ León is an anti-rights activist who was previously a spokesperson for the anti-rights coalition Freedom of Conscience and Expression at the General Assembly of the Organization of American States.



Graphic 3: Links between C-Fam and FWI, their ties to the WCF/IOF, and the youth organizations they subsequently founded.

► Youth UN engagement

Anti-rights attacks against the UN are not new, and the Commission on the Status of Women has become a hotspot for anti-rights organizing in the last decade. Youth contingents from the organizations mentioned above are particularly visible, as are select colleges and universities, and other anti-rights groups. Cortés of Frente Nacional por la Familia exemplifies some of this activity, having spent the last few years at CSW with a contingent of anti-rights youth activists from Mexico.⁶⁹ However, most of the youth arms of anti-rights groups coordinate their own workstreams at the UN.

World Youth Alliance (WYA) is one of the leading anti-rights youth groups on the international and regional human rights circuits. Like many professional advocacy NGOs, and other anti-rights groups, WYA holds NGO accreditation at the UN, giving it access to speak at sessions and directly lobby UN Member State delegations. It also engages with the EU and other European bodies and has official status with the Organization of American States (OAS), attending its general assembly and regional conferences, more below on their methods.

Joining WYA's youth delegation in the UN youth advocacy are C-Fam's IYc representatives. IYc produces a "UN Weekly" series where they defend C-Fam's anti-rights stances across different UN mechanisms, in particular proceedings in both New York City and Geneva. Their attention on CSW is a feature of their work. For example, at the 69th session of CSW in March 2025, anti-rights youth activists, including those from IYc and EYC, participated in the official UN event and a parallel anti-rights conference sponsored by C-Fam—the Conference on the State of Women and the Family.

Alongside the US youth cohort at CSW69 and C-Fam's conference was Canada's Campaign Life Coalition Youth (CLC Youth) division. Like WYA and IYc, CLC Youth has dedicated UN work, and for several years has submitted written statements to CSW while also making interventions from the floor at both CSW and the UN Commission on

Population and Development. At CSW69, CLC Youth chronicled their experiences and noted that "pro-abortion actors were 'sounding the alarm' on the rise and influence of the pro-life and pro-family movements." CLC Youth representatives were highlighted at the parallel C-Fam event, speaking out against efforts in Canada to enforce buffer zones around abortion clinics and bubble zones to protect patient access.

To foster additional anti-UN youth engagement, C-Fam and FWI ally Christian Council International established in 2025 UN fellowships in both Geneva and New York, where "(young) people were introduced to CCI's work at the UN. During these fellowships, youth participants visit UN buildings, side conferences are attended and it is made clear how CCI tries to influence policies made on the themes of life, family, freedom and sovereignty." It is notable that this small Dutch NGO is able to tap into the highest levels of US right-wing universities; the 2025 cohort of CCI fellows were from Hillsdale College, eight of whom were also brought to CSW69. In addition to their indoctrination into the ways of anti-rights UN work, the students joined official CSW sessions where SRHR and LGBTQI+ advocates reported these students attempted to intimidate progressive speakers and interrupt proceedings.

Beyond New York City and Geneva UN headquarters, anti-rights actors have mobilized young people at other global UN fora. In the lead up to the September 2024 UN Summit of the Future, on May 9 and 10 that year, the UN hosted a multistakeholder civil society conference "to discuss issues of global concern" in Nairobi, Kenya. Over 2,100 members of civil society participated, including those from the anti-rights movement. CitizenGO staged a minor protest outside UN offices and, during the conference, KCPF hosted a counter parallel forum, "Pro-life and Pro-family events to the UN CSO Conference Nairobi," copying C-Fam's tactic. Speakers included, among others, the regional director of World Youth Alliance.

Before an audience of primarily young people, the KCPF presenters pitted "authentic sexuality" against an "SRHR wave." They invited young people to join their platform because, as KCPF staff member Richard Kakeeto claimed, "young people who hold pro-life and pro-family values tend to be sidelined" in UN spaces. International anti-rights NGOs are not the only ones actively lobbying against the UN, but national level groups—in concert either with US or other international groups or certain UN Member States—are also actively working against certain human rights progress or the multilateral system more broadly. As part of KCPF's anti-UN push, on May 9, 2024, anti-rights youth advocates released the "Nairobi Declaration on the Unheard Youth Voices for the Future," which was subsequently referenced by FWI during a UN commemorative event on the International Day of the Family. The declaration is a thinly veiled anti-abortion and anti-LGBTQI+ manifesto dressed up in youth advocacy language. It affirms the "human dignity and the sanctity of life from conception to natural death" and defines "traditional family structure" as "a biologically male husband and a biologically female wife, united in marriage."

Anti-rights civil society mobilization at and around the UN is part of a documented rise in targeting gender in UN spaces in recent years, and the inclusion of anti-rights youth activists has also markedly increased. This trend unfortunately accompanies the global reality of far-right political shifts that have ramifications at the UN, which have led to increased coordination of anti-rights actors with certain UN Member States, including the Holy See—a UN observer. Highly professional youth anti-rights activists are becoming a new norm to project a youth front for regressive policies, with legitimacy, building a track record of engagement at the UN level and strong relationships with UN Member States. This was exemplified in the December 2023 Political Network for Values Transatlantic Summit that was hosted inside the UN headquarters in New York City (more below).

⁶⁹ Sources on file with Ipas, 2023-2025.



04

All Grown Up

46

Crafting anti-rights policy and advocacy

48

▶ A look at World Youth Alliance

49

▶ A look at Frente Joven

51

Rising far-right politicians

53

Leading in the social media age

55

▶ A look at Live Action

56

▶ Youth influencers with anti-rights networks

58

▶ Anti-rights narratives adapting for new generations

59

Shining on the global stage

62

“You are the **rising leaders** of a generation that is making America great again.”

Mike Pence, former US Vice President, in an address to the Young America's Foundation Annual National Conservative Student Conference, July 31, 2019

All Grown Up

While still intimately connected to “parent” or the older generation of anti-rights groups, the younger generation of anti-rights individuals and organizations examined below demonstrate a new trend. They are not only exceedingly well networked but have their own demonstrable and powerful presence on the global and digital stages, showing a new way to reach a youth audience with conservative ideology and tap into its potential to spread regressive values. We focus on specific groups and individuals, including established organizations, politicians, and influencers, to highlight their tactics and rhetoric to show how the movement has evolved and what is at risk for human rights.



Image: *Young Women's Leadership Summit attendees, Dallas, TX, United States (2018).* Gage Skidmore.

Crafting anti-rights policy and advocacy

The new anti-rights vanguard in the policy space, particularly around human rights advocacy at the global and regional levels, has boomed since the early 2000s. Groups and key individuals are present across human rights mechanisms, not just at the UN in New York and Geneva. Young people are increasingly the face of anti-rights advocacy, policy, and litigation. With a more digitally connected world, they are also more interconnected in their strategies and agendas.

► A look at World Youth Alliance

WYA is an independent youth-led anti-rights group, not housed within any parent organization like EYC, IYc, or CLC Youth. It does, however, have ties to C-Fam, the Holy See, and the high ranks of Catholic financing and philanthropy. The organization was founded in 1999 by Anna Halpine, when she was a 21-year-old student, following her attendance of the five-year review of the 1994 Cairo Programme of Action, a landmark UN conference on population development. There, Halpine claims, “thirty two young people were brought into the negotiations and given the floor. They stated that they represented all three billion of the world’s youth, and demanded the following: abortion as a human right, sexual rights for children, and a deletion of parents’ rights.”

WYA operates in six global regions where it runs training and advocacy programs tailored to each region. It has national and city chapters in over 40 locations, including elementary school clubs, college or university campus chapters, and national committees; and its membership is limited to children and young people between 10-30 years of age. As a highly professionalized organization with accredited status in different global fora, it has a unique approach to reaching a global youth audience and continuing to feed young people to the anti-rights professionalization pipeline. WYA’s main activities include:

1. International advocacy to oppose abortion and “sexual rights”, promote binary “natural family”, and youth development through “integral human development.”
2. Education and training, including its Certified Training Program on human dignity, freedom, and culture; its Human Dignity Curriculum taught in elementary and secondary schools across the world; and in 2021, WYA launched a seven-week Advocacy Academy.
3. Internships, after completion of the training program and the advocacy academy.
4. Regional and global summits, like the International Law Summer School in Brussels, the International Solidarity Forum, and the Emerging Leaders Conference, on topics like international law, family policy, population and development. The 2025 International Solidarity Forum was hosted in New York during CSW for “young leaders worldwide” to “come together to discuss pressing issues surrounding gender ideology.”
5. Cultural engagement with arts programs, film screenings, and the contests referenced above open to students around the world.
6. The Fertility Education and Medical Management (FEMM), a “natural family planning” and fertility tracking digital app—found to have a high failure rate for unintended pregnancy. FEMM is a regular feature at CSW where FEMM representatives push disinformation about modern contraceptive methods.

The European Parliamentary Forum described in a 2025 report that, while WYA claims it was founded by young people to give them voice, “its leadership features some of the most high-ranking and influential Catholic dignitaries both within and outside the Church, often with an extensive track record of campaigning against human rights in sexuality and reproduction.” According to the same research, WYA has ties to the Knights of Columbus, Opus Dei-affiliated private donors, and billionaire WYA board member Sean Fieler of the Chiaroscuro Foundation.⁷⁰ A 2019 Guardian investigation found that the foundation provided \$1.79 million to the FEMM app developers and that Fieler also sits on the board of the FEMM Foundation, which operates the app. Additionally, the organization once proudly listed the EU as a funding sponsor on its website, having received \$1.26 million from the Commission over the past 10 years. The EU Erasmus program contributed over \$630,000 between 2010-2022 to WYA, and, according to an openDemocracy investigation, this included \$420,000 for ‘Women’s Health Goes Digital’, an SRHR training that stated “abortion is not part of reproductive health.”

⁷⁰ For more information on WYA’s board and funding, see the European Parliamentary Forum’s 2025 report.

WYA has also increased its footprint outside the UN multilateral space. While it does not yet have formal consultative status at the African Union, it has established a presence in Africa through its regional office in Kenya—World Youth Alliance Africa—and other initiatives in the region. In 2019, in Lagos, Nigeria, WYA founder Halpine attended the International Youth Conference on “Responding to the Challenges of Youth, Family and Society – The Millennial’s Response.” One of the conference goals was “informing and guarding the youth against external influences from some international organisations, most especially those that promulgate LGBT agenda in contradiction of the African Cultural and religious beliefs, thereby contributing to the collapse of family values.” The event was hosted by WYA partner the Foundation for African Cultural Heritage—previously mentioned ally of FWI and WCF—and youth from all over the country converged on the event at the University of Lagos. In November 2024, WYA found itself across the continent in Kenya hosting a conference on “Foreign Aid and Coercive Practices: African Youth Perspective on Donor Funding and Ideology,” featuring FWI Africa policy advisor and KCPF “life convener” Richard Kakeeto. Previous WYA events have also included a youth chastity conference in Uganda.

WYA frequently collaborates with other anti-rights groups, including, for example in East Africa on an ongoing anti-abortion campaign with KCPF, Human Life International Kenya, the East Africa Center for Law and Justice—all organizations with international links to other anti-rights groups. Additionally, the World Youth Alliance Asia Pacific hosted its “first-ever international summer camp” in the Philippines in July 2023 on the theme of “Building Solutions by Bridging Cultures,” demonstrating its goal of further geographic reach and expanded influence.

World Youth Alliance

- **Youth tactic:** professionalized international and regional advocacy in human rights systems with recruitment using human rights language, training, and internship to continue feeding the anti-rights advocacy pipeline in these spaces.
- **Reach:** across six geographic regions, WYA claims to have over 1 million members and charter signatures throughout the world. In 2023, the organization said it added over 1,000 new members from 60 countries at the at the World Youth Day in Lisbon.
- **Annual revenue:** \$749,000 in 2024.
- **Political influence:** with official NGO accreditation across multiple human rights bodies and its network of influential anti-rights partners, the organization is one of the most successful anti-rights youth groups.



► A look at Frente Joven

The ascendancy of anti-rights youth leaders in Argentina presents another pipeline from youth-led professionalization to positions in government and the global advocacy stage. Like WYA, Frente Joven (FJ) is a prime example of the evolution in the last decade of youth involvement in multilateral spaces, in this case regionally with the OAS and its Inter-American Human Rights System.

Frente Joven, like other anti-rights youth groups, including WYA, coopts rights-based language and defines itself as “a youth movement that seeks to build a better society through the promotion and support of human rights.” An ultra-Catholic group mainly present in Argentina and Ecuador, FJ started in 2010 during the fight to legalize abortion in Argentina. It has strong ties to ultra-Catholic and conservative sectors, as well as conservative business organizations and foundations linked to Christian social doctrine.

The organization was co-founded by Sebastián Schuff, a lawyer who gained visibility in the region, both as a litigator and as president of the highly networked anti-OAS DC-based NGO, the Global Center for Human Rights (GCHR). At FJ, Schuff served as director of institutional relations, overseeing the organization’s advocacy with government and legislative bodies. Schuff is also a founding partner of the Argentine

group Prodeci, a Catholic legal organization that, among its strategies, uses conscientious objection and religious freedom to oppose abortion and CSE in Argentina.

Through GCHR, Schuff and his wife Neydy Casillas lead advocacy efforts and anti-rights attacks in the Inter-American Human Rights System, including strategic litigation before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Casillas is a Mexican lawyer who began her career in the ranks of a Catholic youth group of the Legionaries of Christ, which trains young people, during her student days.⁷¹ She later worked for more than ten years as a Senior Legal Counsel at ADF and for three years as Vice President of International Affairs at Concerned Women for America before joining her husband to lead GCHR.

GCHR was established in 2021 in the United States and officially launched in a private online event on September 20, 2022.⁷² 2022 was GHCR’s year, with a chronology of milestones that demonstrates the organization’s rise as a significant anti-rights player with political and financial support from key leaders in the international conservative ecosystem, for example through PNFV. From leading the organization of the 2022 WCF in Mexico, to making its first appearance that year at the OAS General Assembly in Lima,

to then participating in the first Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in Mexico, organized by ultra-Catholic activist Eduardo Verástegui,⁷³ GHCR has since been active in the high-profile abortion rights case at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Beatriz v. El Salvador.⁷⁴ For the case, Schuff and Casillas worked with a vast network of anti-rights organizations including ADF and other US anti-abortion groups like the Population Research Institute and Heartbeat International, as well as youth organizations and anti-rights influencers, using the tagline “No Next Roe.”

Another former FJ staff member, Santiago Santurio,⁷⁵ was an Argentine teacher and FJ’s fundraising director. In 2023, Santurio became a member of the Argentine National Chamber of Deputies and part of far-right President Javier Milei’s coalition, La Libertad Avanza (Freedom Advances).⁷⁶ Both Casillas and Santurio participated in the Political Network for Values Transatlantic Summit at the UN in New York City in December 2023, mentioned earlier, alongside anti-rights youth politicians, influencers, and some of the major groups we have described throughout this report. Santurio’s anti-abortion activism predates his foray into government.

⁷¹ Youth groups linked to the Roman Catholic Legionaries of Christ are part of the international Regnum Christi ecclesial movement. The Legionaries were founded in the 1940s in Mexico and operate schools and universities; youth ministry, evangelization and missions; and other activities.

⁷² Recording on file with Ipas. While Schuff and Casillas are GHCR’s public faces, Mexican Vicente Segú is another GCHR director and a key player with a low profile, though he is the founding president of the influential ultra-conservative organization Incluyendo México and member of the board of directors of the WCF.

⁷³ The 2022 WCF in Mexico was attended by prominent conservative leaders like Brown and his allies, including the founder and president of CitizenGO and Hazte Oír Ignacio Arsuaga; German socialite and Catholic activist Gloria von Thurn und Taxis; and Patrick Slim, the anti-abortion millionaire son of Mexican businessman Carlos Slim.

⁷⁴ Beatriz v. El Salvador is a landmark 2024 ruling by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights that found that El Salvador violated the rights of a woman known as Beatriz by denying her a medically necessary abortion. The Court held that the country’s total abortion ban violated multiple rights under the American Convention on Human Rights, including the rights to life, health, and privacy.

⁷⁵ Casillas is on the board of directors of PNFV along with Brown of IOF and WCF, Slater of FWI, Jaime Mayor Oreja, and Rodrigo Iván Cortés. She has also been an advisor to the Holy See in Washington, DC. When Casillas was with ADF and Santurio at FJ they both attended OAS general assemblies.

⁷⁶ La Libertad Avanza is aligned with international right-libertarian and far-right populist networks, loosely connected to groups like CPAC, the Heritage Foundation, and others, and youth-oriented conservative movements in the United States and Europe.

During his time with FJ, he participated in events at the Inter-American regional level and in UN advocacy. In addition to FJ, Santurio is a founder and activist with Ciudadanos, a political organization that works to abolish the law on legal termination of pregnancy in Argentina. In fact, the now-national deputy said he decided to join Milei's La Libertad Avanza so he could legislate against abortion. In August 2024, while the *Beatriz* case was under review by the Inter-American Court, Santurio released an anti-abortion short film against the case through Ciudadanos and in collaboration with GCHR.

FJ's flagship "Young Leaders Program" combines academic training, seminars, and meetings with political and social leaders to provide experience for young people to influence public and private spheres. The program also includes regional youth conferences, having organized, for example, the 2017 Pan-American Youth Forum in Lima, Peru. There, young people came together to develop an agenda with a strong emphasis on influencing the OAS. Santurio presented on FJ's program designed to develop youth leaders to allegedly defend human rights, particularly the right to life.

Other FJ members have secured positions in Milei's administration, including Ana Belén Mármora and her husband Agustín Caulo. In June 2025, Mármora was appointed director of the International Center for Promotion of Human Rights, a new institution created by the Milei government to advance its reactionary international policy against the rights of women and LGBTQI+ people.⁷⁷ For his part, Agustín Caulo has taken over as president of FJ and holds the position of director of Catholic worship within the Milei administration's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. FJ's training and pipeline to political positions has demonstrated the value of the model as a successful investment.

⁷⁷ Mármora, who has no notable background or experience in human rights, is also Argentina's representative on the Committee of Experts of the Mechanism to Follow-up on the Inter-American Convention to Eradicate Violence against Women.

Graphic 4: example of Frente Joven's links from youth mobilization to political power to coordination against the regional human rights system.



Rising far-right politicians



“I believe that the National Rally will reach power and that all the sacrifices will be worth it. I am convinced that I belong to a generation that will end up governing.”

Jordan Bardella, 29 year old president of the National Rally, in an interview with *The Times*, January 11, 2025

In Europe, the far-right parties we have previously mentioned are heavily investing in recruiting young people to both be future leaders and to reach younger voters. Their strategies are clearly meeting with success. Throughout the 2010s, the far-right gained ground with the electorate in general. During the COVID-19 pandemic, researchers argued that young people were pushed further to the right. As the Associated Press reported in 2019, “Young European voters are responding with a rightward shift sometimes faster and farther than their elders — as illustrated by voting results or party rolls from Italy, France, Spain and Austria.” Meanwhile, in the United States, during the 2024 presidential election Trump won nearly half of all voters under the age of 30. Eight years earlier in 2016, he had secured just 37% of that same age group. In that time period and since the 2019 pandemic, the far-right globally has excelled in capturing the digital media ecosystem and subsequently younger voters.

Today’s generation of young people are responding to candidates who reach them through social media, even if the candidates themselves are relatively unknown to them. In June 2024, Luis “Alvise” Pérez Fernández, a Spanish far-right

influencer, collected over 800,000 votes for a party he had founded only 40 days before the European Parliamentary elections. His campaign relied mainly on TikTok, Instagram, and podcasts. One journalist reported that Pérez Fernández has run “anti-abortion protests, labelled journalists as ‘whores’, said he ‘must destroy the system and rebuild it from scratch’ and complained that immigrants require less paperwork to arrive into Spain than a tomato does to leave a field.”⁷⁸ While not in the same far-right party, he echoes similar sentiments to those of the leaders of Vox, who are also increasingly appealing to economically frustrated young voters in Spain, using anti-immigration rhetoric.

Far-right parties are also running younger candidates to appeal to a disenchanted youth electorate. In Annex III, we provide examples of representatives from Europe, Latin America, and the United States who came into office in the last five years when they were under the age of 35; several were under 25. They reflect a cross-section of anti-rights youth politicians who are either members of far-right parties, or, in the case of the United States, affiliated with the “Make America Great Again” (MAGA) branch of the Republican party.

⁷⁸ Pérez Fernández is also facing defamation charges for spreading misinformation.

Most of the listed elected officials are opposed to abortion and LGBTQI+ rights and “gender ideology.” The majority also favor strict immigration controls as well as express populist and nationalistic rhetoric, aligning with movements critical or hostile to multilateralism and human rights systems, and advance conspiracy theories, like Nikolas Ferreira, a transphobic and homophobic member of the Chamber of Deputies in Brazil. Additionally, many are linked through the transnational, anti-rights ecosystem made possible by regional gatherings like the US-founded CPAC.⁷⁹ In the last decade, CPAC has ramped up its regional presence across Europe and Latin America, like Mexico in 2022 mentioned above, featuring young politicians and influencers, including several of those highlighted in the annexes.

In addition to being elected to office, young anti-rights leaders are finding other ways into government. The United States is a prime example. While the Republican Party does not have an official youth arm, it does have a constellation of recognized auxiliary organizations that are closely linked with the party and are often affiliated or supported, even if not directly governed, by the Republican National Committee. These include the Young Republican National Federation, College Republicans, and Teen Age Republicans at the local

and state levels. These ideologically aligned youth groups recruit, train, and activate young conservatives. They are also feeders into larger political operations, like the Heritage Foundation’s Project 2025, which launched in 2023.⁸⁰

The highly influential Heritage Foundation showed how to recruit a ready talent pool into Republican political power through its Project 2025-linked initiatives. It has mobilized youth-led groups like SFLA and Turning Point USA. In addition to shaping the political ideology of young people through its many policy training programs, internships, students’ leadership summits, and partnerships—like other anti-rights groups we have discussed—it deliberately structured a mechanism to pump young conservatives into the second Trump administration. Heritage Foundation’s “Presidential Personnel Database”—considered a “conservative LinkedIn”—explicitly targeted young conservatives; for the most part, recent graduates and early-career professionals interested in federal positions.⁸¹ The think tank also promoted Project 2025 and the opportunities it proposed for young people in the administration through TPUSA conferences, Leadership Institute training, and other youth-focused events.⁸²

⁷⁹ CPAC is a major gathering of conservative activists, politicians, media figures, and thought leaders, created in the United States in 1974, that has been exported as a global phenomenon since 2019. It has been known as a kingmaker event since the Reagan era and has an increasingly Christian nationalist agenda.

⁸⁰ Officially called “Mandate for Leadership: The Conservative Promise 2025,” Project 2025 was a series of policy recommendations aimed at implementing conservative values across the federal government and included a “Presidential Administration Academy” for those who uploaded their information.

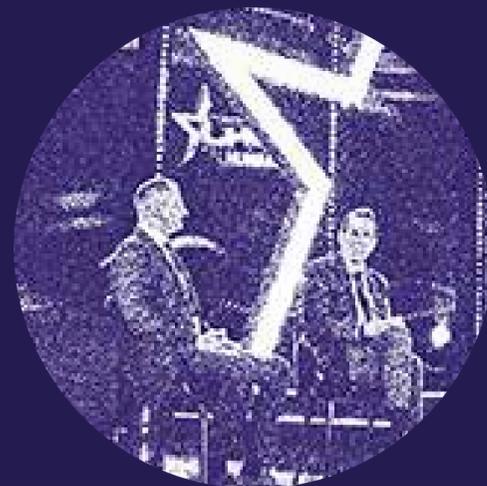
⁸¹ The database collected applications from thousands of conservatives, evaluated them based on ideological alignment, and provided a pre-vetted pool of applicants to staff the new Trump administration and both tear down and reshape the government’s workforce.

⁸² Project 2025 initiatives have since dovetailed with those formerly led by billionaire Elon Musk’s Department of Government Efficiency and the extremely young recruits linked to his companies who have carried out work for the second Trump administration.

Image: *President Donald J. Trump at the March for Life, Washington, DC, United States (2020).* Tia Dufour.



Leading in the social media age



“The far right has made a very explicit effort to pander to younger audiences. **They’ve essentially rebranded themselves** [...]. Far-right political parties have been most active in engaging with social media users.”

Julia Ebner, of the Institute for Strategic Dialogue, quoted in a 2019 Associated Press article



In the United States, Lila Rose and Ben Shapiro are part of a younger generation of leading conservative American, anti-rights influencers. These youth influencers—who are often adjacent to if not directly linked to political parties or government administration—have adopted strategies and talking points that are more media-savvy, digital-first, and tailored to social media audiences compared to the more traditional approaches taken by older parachurch leaders and politicians like James Dobson, Jerry Falwell Sr., and Phyllis Schlafly. Despite the generational differences in approach, they share many core values, especially around abortion, LGBTQI+ rights, and “family.” The global reach of this new cohort has pulled them onto the international conservative stage where they interact with young far-right political leaders who are influential in their own national and regional ecosystems.

► A look at Live Action

“Remember, the science is on our side. Natural law is on our side. The truth is on our side. [...] Importantly, we must urge our elected officials to abolish abortion. Abolishing abortion is the most important human rights cause of our time.”

Lila Rose, founder of Live Action, in her [March for Life 2025 address](#)

A major anti-rights organization with a massive media presence, personified in its leader Lila Rose, is [Live Action](#). With the tagline “Pro-Life Advocacy for Dignity and Human Rights” it uses social justice and rights-based language, similar to that used by Students for Life of America, to attract and sway a broader audience of young people. Both groups are often in the same circles, featured, for example, at the annual March for Life, which benefits from Rose’s extensive online visibility and 7 million social media followers.

Live Action’s use of media dates back to its early [production](#) of deceptively edited videos and undercover sting operations, which it used to attack Planned Parenthood. Today Live Action continues producing videos for social media campaigns, broadcasting disinformation to its massive following. As of January 2025 data, the videos have amassed more than [2.5 billion video views over the years](#), and the organization reaches [40 million people](#) every month. Established as a registered NGO in 2008, Live Action was founded by Rose at age 15 and she conducted her first “undercover investigation” of an abortion health center while she was at university. As of 2023, the organization’s revenue was [over \\$14 million](#). While the organization is a registered nonprofit and claims, like SFLA, to be secular, Rose’s rhetoric is steeped in Christian doctrine.

While novel in its media and dissemination practices, Live Action’s [primary target is a traditional one](#) for conservatives in the United States: abortion. And, Live Action uses tactics that are rooted in decades’ old anti-abortion advocacy in the form of direct action and the use of fetal imagery, which dates to the post-World War II development of the ultrasound, a [medical technology](#) that allowed doctors to

view fetuses. Anti-abortion advocates used this new tool to personify and individualize the fetus as a baby, leading to not just pictures that are widely used in anti-abortion protests, but also fetal models and other representations. These were used extensively in the pro-life movies of the 1980s and 1990s; “educational” films used for anti-abortion outreach in schools, churches, and community groups, reaching young people. This phenomenon also [pitched](#) “fetal bodies squarely into American political culture” and are now used by anti-abortion advocates around the world.

Live Action disseminates other [digital disinformation](#) including [misrepresenting facts about abortion](#), promoting [inaccurate scientific information](#) (like [abortion reversal](#)), and other [unverified scientific claims](#). In 2023 the organization created the “[Baby Olivia](#)” 3D-animated video, which depicts the development of a human fetus, and widely used in [anti-abortion education](#) and lobbying efforts. Live Action describes the video as “human development” or “human embryology” education, as opposed to anything related to sexuality, like CSE, and it claims the video is “medically accurate”. However, critics—including [medical professionals](#) and SRHR advocates—argue that while some individual facts are grounded in science, the presentation is [ideologically motivated](#), [misleading](#), and [emotionally manipulative](#).

Nevertheless, Live Action has succeeded in having “Baby Olivia” shown in [public schools](#) through legislation in two states—[Tennessee](#) and [West Virginia](#). Other [states are following suit](#) and have legislated or considered mandates with “[prenatal education](#)” requirements, as Live Action refers to them, that cite the video by name or use comparable videos for students in elementary and secondary school.



Direct action and abortion clinics

The polished and professionalized anti-abortion activists who curate their social media, engage in mass digital campaigns, and attend the UN, have sought to distance themselves from direct-action extremism against abortion providers and healthcare seekers. In the 1980s and 1990s, direct-action tactics—including “rescue missions”—involved young people and students with groups like Operation Rescue and Collegians Activated to Liberate Life. Some actions resulted in the killing, assaults, death threats, and kidnappings of abortion providers.⁸³ In response to the violence, certain US states and some countries created laws to restrict protests near or around abortion clinics. Direct action to impede reproductive healthcare access is still widely used by anti-rights actors, particularly in conjunction with lawsuits. ADF has represented anti-abortion clinic protestors in the United States and United Kingdom. Trump’s 2025 pardon of anti-abortion clinic activists has sparked concerns that the violent era will return, and groups like ADF and SFLA advocate for repealing the 1994 Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act that made it a crime to prevent patients from accessing clinics.

⁸³ The National Organization for Women categorized Operation Rescue’s tactics as domestic terrorism.

▶ Youth influencers with anti-rights networks

Other influential youth anti-rights figures orbit their far-right political counterparts. These individuals have extensive social media presence across platforms like Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and X, as well as their own blogs and podcasts to push their content. However, their activism often goes beyond digital media, including campus organizing and circulating in transnational anti-rights or religious conservative networks, including CitizenGO, Ordo Iuris, Vox, and CPAC. We include a selection of anti-rights youth campaigners from the United States and Latin America in Annex IV for their recent increased interactions with significant social media presence and connections.⁸⁴ Turning Point USA is one such example.

The growth of TPUSA—and the extensive reach of its affiliated influencers, especially women, see Annex IV—demonstrates the organization’s transformation from a free-market advocacy group into a major player in the anti-rights youth movement.⁸⁵ TPUSA has deep ties to parachurch organizations that advocate for anti-abortion and anti-LGBTQI+ positions, as well as politicians, like its former president and US Congresswoman Anna Paulina Luna, see Annex III. Operating in the same ecosystem with groups like SFLA, FOTF, and others, TPUSA has been able to mobilize young conservatives around issues of abortion, religious freedom, and family values. Additionally, with a Heritage Foundation partnership, the occasional legal support from

ADF, and now featured in CPAC events, the organization has become a central hub for anti-rights youth political activism, significantly influencing Republican politics and contributing to key legislative victories on social conservative issues.

Other youth anti-rights influencers use an academic and medical veneer to push their worldviews, like Calum Miller. A British physician and Oxford graduate in medicine and biblical studies, Miller started anti-abortion advocacy during medical school in the mid-2010s.⁸⁶ He has delivered more than 40 international academic presentations, including a keynote titled “Abortion Isn’t Mental Healthcare” at the March for Life UK Health Summit in 2024. As an international consultant with the anti-abortion US group Canopy Global, he speaks in Asia and Africa addressing medical professionals and policymaking bodies against abortion. For the last few years, Miller has traveled to Indonesia to meet with government representatives and speak at secondary schools and universities and to religious leaders. In addition to being a prolific blogger, he is a frequent guest on anti-abortion podcasts, featured by, among others, AAPLOG and Jonathon Van Maren, a Canadian anti-abortion influencer and board member of the US group, Pro-Life Global. Miller attended the 2024 Madrid PNfV “Summit for Freedom and the Culture of Life.”

⁸⁴ This report focuses on anti-rights youth mobilization intersecting with global far-right groups and transnational movements. However, it is important to note that we are not discounting the impact on politics, society, and culture of other social media influencers outside of this ecosystem, including “micro-influencers.” These influencers with smaller audiences have been noted as successful in swaying their more intimate following and contribute to the success of the wider anti-rights movement.

⁸⁵ TPUSA was created when its founder was just 18.

⁸⁶ Miller is married to ADF UK’s spokesperson Lois McLatchie-Miller.

Eduardo Verástegui’s influence on Latin American youth and beyond

While not a youth leader per se, Eduardo Verástegui—Mexican actor-turned-activist and presidential hopeful—has become a leading youth-galvanizing figure in anti-abortion and anti-LGBTQI+ activism in Latin America and beyond. He has leveraged his celebrity—fusing rhetoric on nationalism, Catholic moral teaching, and anti-globalist themes—to appeal to young conservative activists.⁸⁷ As president of CPAC Mexico and a featured speaker at CPAC Argentina 2024 and DC in 2025, his reach has also gone global and he is tied to many of the far-right leaders referenced throughout this report. His close ties to US religious-right figures and organizations underscore his role as a connector in a transnational network promoting a socially conservative agenda. He has nearly 1 million followers on Instagram, over 2.5 million on both X and Facebook combined, a strong presence on TikTok (over 478,000 followers and 2.2 ‘likes’) and maintains a YouTube channel with nearly 400,000 subscribers.

⁸⁷ In 2024, he announced plans to form a political party in Mexico grounded in “pro-life” and anti-LGBTQI+ principles, further institutionalizing his influence. During his failed 2024 presidential bid, he pledged to eliminate “gender ideology” from schools and strongly opposed LGBTQI+ inclusion and same-sex adoption.

▶ Anti-rights narratives adapting for new generations

“Gender ideology erodes political freedoms ...; freedom of opinion, through the increasing criminalization of politically incorrect speech; freedom of conscience ...; the expression of certain religious beliefs ...”

Agustín Laje, *interview in Actuall*, February 13, 2018, prior to his participation in the First International Congress on Gender, Sex, and Education organized by CitizenGO and Hazte Oír

Young influencers take a different approach to communicating about anti-rights issues than their predecessors like James Dobson of FOTF or Phyllis Schlafly. In the 1970s and 80s, as part of their messaging, US anti-abortion activists—predominantly White Christians—adopted historical comparisons of abortion to the Holocaust and American slavery, in addition to their religious and other frameworks of opposition to SRHR and LGBTQI+ rights.⁸⁸

Today, anti-rights youth influencers and youth-led groups are pulling from a wider range of ideological frameworks.⁸⁹ These influencers, much like Dobson and Schlafly, still tap into feelings of moral outrage, but have turned that outrage into effective soundbites and catchphrases to garner greater engagement online from their audiences. This includes using what has been called “rage bait” on social media to activate youth to their views and causes. In terms of SRHR and gender in particular, Agustín Laje, Calum Miller, Lila Rose, and others are using new framings around “human rights”, “social justice”, and even non-violence narratives.

⁸⁸ The Organization of American Historians reports in its analysis of the “pro-life” movement that conservative children are asked “to think of themselves as ‘survivors of the Abortion Holocaust.’ And they helped new ‘family values’ constituents consider the fetus a member of the family and legal abortion the biggest challenge facing the modern family.”

⁸⁹ For more information, please see the 2024 article “Embodied Political Influencers: How U.S. Anti-Abortion Actors Co-Opt Narratives of Marginalization.”

Anti-rights and toxic masculinity

The use of traditional concepts of masculinity to prop up anti-abortion arguments are an intrinsic part of the digital anti-rights ecosystem, aiming to appeal to some young men. This toxic masculinity is celebrated by influencers as part of an anti-feminist, anti-“woke” youth mobilization. YouTube, TikTok, Discord, Reddit, and Telegram host communities where young men mix self-improvement with misogyny and conspiracy theories, rejecting gender equality, LGBTQI+ rights, and even CSE. These social media platforms have enabled the creation of a “manosphere” that is used by anti-rights extremists to radicalize teenagers, particularly boys, and are part of the system that perpetuates incel culture (involuntary celibates), sexism, sexual harassment, and violent acts. They are also often racist and xenophobic, antisemitic and Islamophobic.

Others offer “empowerment” language for young women and “health” and “wellness” terminology, particular against abortion and modern contraception. There is a growing conservative and anti-rights “womanosphere” media ecosystem that deliberately targets young female audiences to harness them as part of its culture war. In the United States, young women influencers closely linked to TPUSA and anti-rights networks are leading this phenomenon, including commentator Candace Owens, the anti-trans activist Riley Gaines, *Daily Wire* writer Brett Cooper, and “wellness” personality Alex Clark. In an April 2025 article, *The Guardian* reported on the four young women and underscored that “Young women are particularly vulnerable to these appeals. Like their peers in the manosphere, these commentators are capitalizing on a real crisis of loneliness and economic precarity facing gen Z.” The womanosphere is heavily intertwined with the broader political and religious far-right. In June 2025, TPUSA hosted its “Young Women’s Leadership Summit,” which had stalls advertising opportunities for Heritage Foundation fellowships and included speakers like Alex Clark who promoted her wellness conspiracy theories. This other side to the “manosphere” coin seeks to radicalize young women through different tactics and styles but is ideologically aligned with regressive worldviews on “traditional family”, binary gender roles, and “anti-woke.”

The following word cloud was synthesized from public statements, speeches, and social media content (Instagram, X/Twitter, Facebook, YouTube) of the influencers mentioned above and others from the lists in Annexes III and IV of this report, encompassing both young politicians with significant social media followers and the other young influencers. The phrases highlight in particular:

- Anti-abortion framing of “murder” by influencers such as Lila Rose, who uses formulations like “abortion is murder,” while Kristan Hawkins uses the inverse popularized “Pro-Life Generation” to create a sense of belonging and community for anti-abortion youth.
- Anti-LGBTQI+ and especially anti-trans narratives with a newer focus on “women’s sports,” like influencer Riley Gaines, while Ben Shapiro and Matt Walsh emphasize a broader anti-trans rhetoric. Conveniently, when there is negative reaction to their stances, these younger conservative figures frame their opposition to LGBTQI+ rights in terms of religious freedom and freedom of speech, focusing on narratives of censorship and victimhood.
- Broader cultural panic is perpetuated by influencers, from Candace Owens, Walsh, and Shapiro in the United States to Argentine Agustín Laje to French figures Jordan Bardella and Marion Maréchal. They use “stop gender ideology” themes that align with defending moral panic and the “war on children”—an old, but still used, argument against the LGBTQI+ movement and CSE.

Image: Pro-abortion rally outside of the state Supreme Court, Denver, CO, United States (2022). Jack Prommel.

save the children
defend the family
abortion is not healthcare
men can't get pregnant
stop gender theory men are not women
protect women's sports
protect girls' sports biological reality
gender ideology
child mutilation pro-life generation
life begins at conception
abortion is murder parental rights
ban puberty blockers
truth over pronouns
protect the unborn
fairness in women's sports
stop indoctrination

Graphic 5: Each identified phrase in the word cloud was assigned a relative weight reflecting its prominence in viral posts, speeches, hashtags, and campaigns, captured in the post-Roe (June 2022) period through August 2025.

For the anti-rights influencers attempting to appeal to wider audiences with somewhat less violent rhetoric—or not purely homophobic as well as anti-abortion—their narratives and approaches have evolved. Some of the changes in framing the anti-rights narrative appeal to a broader, young audience around abortion, LGBTQI+ rights, and education. Examples include Ecuadorian anti-abortion influencer [Mamela Fiallo](#), who presented on a young conservatives panel and Argentine, and focuses her rhetoric on education. Others have even adapted “pro-life” [secularism](#) and feminism-like language, like “queering” [anti-abortion messaging](#) and coopting the LGBTQI+ rainbow and other imagery for anti-rights extremism. And, as science has become a common target of the anti-rights movement, influencers also invoke “scientific” [arguments](#), alongside “wellness” themes. They tie abortion and contraceptive use to faulty scientific data, such as fetal heartbeat laws, even framing it under [environmental justice](#), claiming the use of abortion medication is toxic and harmful to the environment.

These narratives are not unique to youth culture and are echoed by other anti-rights groups noted throughout this report. From [FWI's framing of CSE](#) as “[sexualizing children](#)” to [C-Fam's vitriolic anti-transgender stances](#) as being against women's rights to Viktor Orbán's views on conservative ideas and “[No Woke Zones](#)”, young influencers repackage old talking points. These become effective soundbites and hashtags that appeal to their captive, million-strong audiences, using progressive window dressings for their arguments and warping human rights language to their own ends.

What is essential to understanding these young influencers is how they [interact and align](#) with political parties and politicians, increasingly to [those in power](#). Influencers offer their platforms to politicians and far-right parties to spread their messages, and the influencers in turn have been brought into political spheres of influence (like the 2024 [Republican National Convention](#)) and have been given a seat at the table. In the case of the United States, as [Vanity Fair reported](#) early in 2025, “young influencers ... admire Trump for valuing their voices, contrasting him with other politicians who they feel dismissed their generation.” Harkening back to parachurches who adapted to youth culture, the Republican Party, with allies like TPUSA, has [deliberately built a cadre of influencers](#) to reach the latest youth audience.

Shining on the global stage



“And beware of those who dare to oppose the marvelous prospects of this new world! We, we want youth who believe in hard work, who believe that the flag has meaning. We want to defend individual freedom ... to protect children from eugenics and from the delirium of gender theory.”

Marion Maréchal, current MEP with Identité-Libertés, at [CPAC, Washington, DC, 2018](#)

The inclusion and elevation of youth broadly, and anti-rights youth influencers in particular, is especially visible in international conferences. Young people’s participation on global anti-rights stages has skyrocketed in the last decade. These young conservatives have the opportunity to meet, network, and be featured in high-level forums across the world. Critically, they are no longer just the audience, but rather the features.

Nearly ten years ago, in 2016, at the VII ProLife World Congress “Generation Life,” over 1,200 international participants hailing from nearly 20 countries descended on Guatemala City, an event that stood out for its inclusion of youth participants. Then-Guatemalan President Jimmy Morales gave the opening address, affirming his opposition to abortion and, on the Congress’s opening day, the hashtag #SoyGeneracionVida (#IAMGenerationLife) was trending on Twitter (now X) with more than 6,000 posts and approximately 1.4 million views from Latin America to the United States to Europe. Veterans of the anti-abortion movement participated in significant numbers, and younger presenters at the time included Neydy Casillas and Sofia Martínez of ADF and Manuel Soto of World Youth Alliance, signaling the development of new youth leadership.

While ProLife World Congresses aim to pull together a critical public mass, other anti-rights events offer emerging leaders more direct access to policymakers. The [Political Network for Values](#) holds regular “Transatlantic Summits,” which are a [major organizing nexus for the global political far-right](#). As a platform focused on international meetings and high-level networking, PNfV’s events bring together legislators, government officials and leaders of anti-rights NGOs. Marking its tenth anniversary in New York City at UN headquarters in December 2023, PNfV [featured several youth speakers](#) including Lila Rose of Live Action and the young Brazilian politician [Nikolas Ferreira](#).⁹⁰ Rose used her UN platform to show the audience of politicians, UN delegates, and anti-rights NGO leaders the “Baby Olivia” video. This high-level interaction in the halls of the UN was then fed to Rose and Ferreira’s extensive social media followers (see Annexes III and IV). The subsequent PNfV event in Madrid in December 2024 featured many of the youth politicians and anti-rights influencers named in this report, including extremist intellectuals Calum Miller of the UK and Augustín Laje of Argentina and far-right politicians like Ferreira again as well as [Rita Matias](#) of Chega in Portugal.

From Guatemala City to the UN in New York City and beyond, anti-rights youth advocates, influencers, and politicians have become a feature of gatherings by the far right. This is especially true of the conservative political gathering that started in the United States in 1974, CPAC. That conference

has multiplied across the world, pulling several thousand participants per event. As [CPAC has veered](#) from a once-considered mainstream US conservative space to a global radical far-right gathering, this has coincided with the inclusion of both anti-rights young influencers on its stage as well as an increase in young people and students in the crowd.⁹¹ Matt Walsh, Ben Shapiro, and Marion Maréchal of France appeared at [CPAC USA in 2018](#). Since then, Maréchal has also joined CPACs in [Hungary](#) and [Poland](#), calling to “Make France Great Again.” Nikolas Ferreira was at CPAC Mexico in 2022 and [CPAC Brazil in 2024](#), which had over [3,500 participants](#), and [posted about the conference to Instagram](#). Meanwhile, [Shapiro](#) and Santiago Santurio attended the first [CPAC in Argentina](#) that same year, which had another [2,000 participants](#).

These are but a few examples of what has become a regular trend in global anti-rights gatherings: focusing and elevating young anti-rights voices. This again harkens back to the acknowledgement by conservative movements that young people are integral to future-proofing far-right political gains. As United States Vice President JD Vance [told the crowd](#) of young people at CPAC Washington in February 2025, “we need you.” As youth voices come with influential organizations of their own and mass online followings, the next generation of anti-rights leaders is already activated with evolving outreach tactics and a new captive audience of their own.

⁹⁰ In April 2023, Ferreira was fined for a 2020 case where he harassed and misgendered a transgender federal deputy, and, as of August 2025, there are several other penal and administrative investigations pending against him for anti-trans remarks.

⁹¹ In 2009, CPAC was sponsored by Youth for Western Civilization, which was tied to a white nationalist hate website.

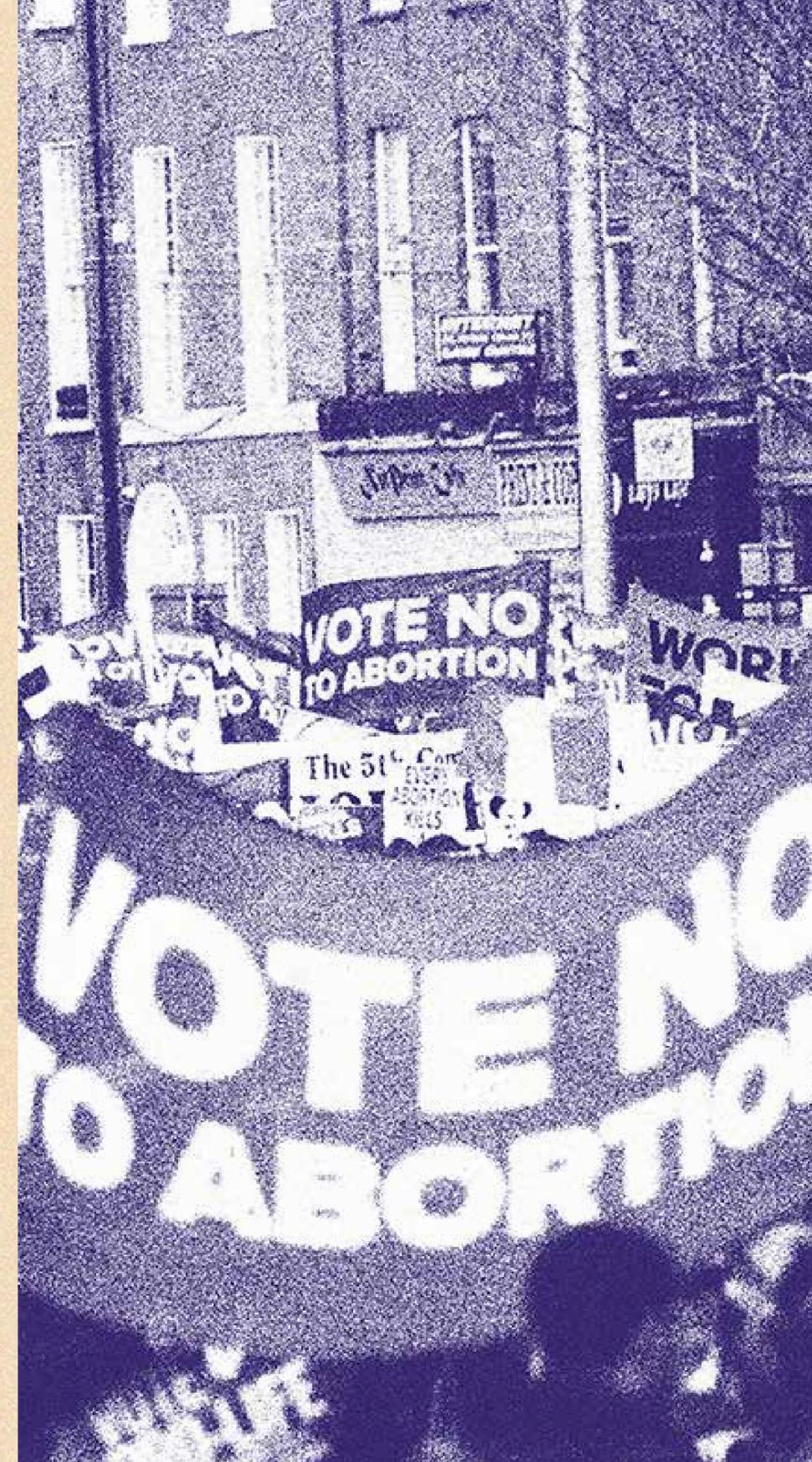


Image: *March for Life Rally, Dublin, Ireland (2018)*. National Party.

What Next?

Anti-rights youth mobilization and professionalization under the models described in this report are continuing to evolve. With social media, the interaction of anti-rights influencers and far-right politics, and the web of funding from billionaires and government-linked sources in the last twenty years, successful methods of reaching young people are still being tested. This is particularly true for geographies outside of Europe, Latin America, and the United States. With the rise of far-right parties and authoritarianism globally, there are particularly vulnerable spheres that need safeguarding, including primary and secondary education, as well as freedoms of assembly and speech.

Implications for education and democracy



“The aim of totalitarian education has never been to instill convictions but to destroy the capacity to form any.”

Hannah Arendt, [The Origins of Totalitarianism](#), 1951

2025 marks the 100th anniversary of the Scopes trial, mentioned at the beginning of this report, and controversies over education and arguably the rise of targeting youth for anti-rights political gains in the United States. Today, the discussion of public education, what can and cannot be taught, rages globally and targets topics beyond the teaching of evolution to history and racism to gender and sexuality. Movements like *Con Mis Hijos No Te Metas (Don't Mess with My Kids)* that started in Peru against CSE and “gender ideology” in 2016, and anti-rights groups like the US-based Moms for Liberty, are also championing “parental rights”—which are not absolute and have to be exercised in a manner consistent with the child’s best interests and rights. These movements attack not only gender and sexuality education but also promote book banning and target teachers.

The investment in education, which we discussed early in this report, goes beyond shaping the minds of postgraduate legal and university students to target younger children in secondary and elementary school. From Hillsdale College’s 1776 curriculum to MCC Hungary’s elementary school programs, there is an increased effort to reach young people early and spoon feed them conservative and revisionist histories of the world, while erasing the most historically marginalized groups. Additional efforts to shape elementary and secondary education around social studies and history

include the Bill of Rights Institute, founded by Charles Koch in 1999 and led by a former Hillsdale professor; and efforts of the Civics Alliance and the Fordham Institute are focused on educational reform and advocate to weaken public education and certain studies. The Koch network pushes for school choice policies and supports alternatives to traditional public education to the detriment of the most disenfranchised socioeconomic groups in the United States. Billionaires like Koch and the DeVos family, as well as the Leonard Leo affiliated DonorsTrust, have funded TPUSA, which in 2022 piloted a “Turning Point Academy” for a “classic, pro-American curriculum as well as a Christian educational programming” for grammar through secondary school students.⁹² And Prager University—which is not actually a university—is spreading disinformation and fueling racism and conspiracy theories in schools with millions in seed funding from conservative operatives, including Leonard Leo’s network.

Far-right heads of state, from Milei to Trump to Orbán, are targeting education, posing threats to public schools and universities. Orbán’s government, in addition to funding and privatizing education with MCC, has forced the Central European University, founded by Hungarian-American billionaire philanthropist George Soros, to relocate to Austria. In the United States, even before the second Trump

administration, more than 150 bills were introduced between 2021-2025 to undermine academic freedom, targeting higher education in a coordinated attack by conservative elites, state-level Republican politicians, and right-wing think tanks. Eight of eleven identified think tanks were affiliated with Project 2025, which provided a blueprint on dismantling public education, and others were linked to DonorsTrust.

In the first six months of the second Trump administration, attacks on universities exponentially increased as well as the wholesale targeting of the US Department of Education in favor of private education.⁹³ Additionally, the administration has taken aim at primary and secondary education and “gender ideology and discriminatory equity ideology” to pull funds from public schools and impose federal oversight over curricula to restrict topics involving gender, sexual orientation, history, and racial injustice. As part of the Executive Order, Trump called to reestablish the 2020 President’s Advisory 1776 Commission “to promote patriotic education.” The American Historical Association called the Commission, at the time, an attempt to reject “the multiple ways the institution of slavery shaped our nation’s history” and “relies on falsehoods, inaccuracies, omissions, and misleading statements.”

⁹² TPUSA states it is “seeding schools” in multiple locations and has one physical school in collaboration with Dream City Christian in the state of Arizona.

⁹³ Plans include eliminating funding programs for low-income households; pushing, like the Koch network, for school privatization; opposing addressing or even teaching about systemic racism and gender identity; defining “sex” and prohibiting the use of pronouns; emphasizing a “parents’ bill of rights”; and further protecting faith-based educational institutions.

The recurring themes across the world from authoritarian leaders and their supporters and funders are that universities and public education is biased, “woke,” liberal and/or socialist and/or Marxist, and hostile to free speech and conservative values. During his time in office, former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro undermined public education with disinformation and asserted that universities were turning students into “leftists, gays, drug addicts and perverts.” In Argentina, Milei has characterized public education as a “brainwashing mechanism” and “center of Marxist indoctrination,” that is biased against family values. Milei’s government implemented an aggressive policy of defunding the health and education sectors. His administration eliminated comprehensive sex education content on the grounds that it promoted gender ideology and indoctrination. In addition, it has eliminated institutions such as the Ministry of Women, Gender, and Sexual Diversity, along with dismantling related public policies. In terms of health, the libertarian government halted the purchase and delivery of essential reproductive health supplies, including abortion drugs, delegating that burden to local provincial governments, as well as drastically reducing the delivery of contraceptives.

As lecturer in education at Cardiff University Anja Giudici and her co-authors wrote in 2024, far-right ideology “fundamentally challenges many of the principles underpinning post-WWII education reform, including the commitment to promoting equity and strengthening liberal values and tolerance.” In Europe, the far-right surge and its entry into parliaments and governments at the national and regional levels means it will be able to further legislate

on education. This may, among other impacts, restrict the enrollment of foreign students in universities; inhibit international research collaboration; and affect scientific autonomy. A 2022 Global Observatory on Academic Freedom report also demonstrated the widespread crisis of repression and administrative interference that is having “a high malignant and human cost” on education. From Orbán’s ban of gender studies in Hungary to Marion Maréchal’s and her ISSEP’s focus on conservative values, there is already a redefining of academic fields beyond gender and sexuality to include topics like climate change and, unsurprisingly, even evolution.⁹⁴

In addition to the widespread loss of gender programming and revisionist history are the attacks on medical education, including knowledge and skill in abortion care. The United States is again an unfortunate example given its descent into authoritarianism and the decades long-impacts of the far-right on both law and education. As the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists writes, “the number of trained clinicians providing abortion care is dependent on exposure to abortion training” and medical school is essential to this education. Estimates, however, approximate that since the decision to overturn *Roe* in the United States, 48% of students will receive their medical training in states with restricted abortion access. For example, in the state of Oklahoma, where most abortions are illegal, abortion training is not offered at its two medical schools.⁹⁵

In addition to limited abortion education availability in hostile states, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists explains that “existing disparities in abortion

training and provision will continue to worsen as state-specific restrictions and limitations on abortion training opportunities lead to shifts in where individuals choose to attend medical school, residency, and fellowship, and where they will eventually practice medicine.” There will be fewer trained medical professionals across specialties overall in states with near-total abortion bans, not just OB-GYNs, in which the Association of American Medical Colleges has called a “geographic misalignment between where the needs are” and where students are willing to take up medical residency. Not only will a generation lack education and skills in providing the full spectrum of sexual and reproductive healthcare, but patients seeking care will have fewer options.

Such globally dispersed restrictions on education and training will:

- Undermine critical thinking and scientific literacy, leaving students ill-equipped to engage with complex social, medical, and environmental challenges.
- Erase marginalized histories and identities, fostering intolerance and ignorance, and denying students a comprehensive understanding of their societies.
- Create healthcare gaps, particularly by limiting medical training in areas like reproductive care, gender-affirming medicine, or mental health, leading to worsened health outcomes.
- Delay climate action, as students may be deprived of accurate information about environmental science and global interdependence, weakening future policy leadership.
- Fuel inequality, by targeting public education and vulnerable communities while wealthier families access uncensored or private alternatives.

In the long run, such policies that focus on conformity over freedom of thinking risk producing a generation less prepared to participate in democracy, solve societal problems, or understand the pluralism that underpins healthy, diverse societies.

⁹⁴ Several US states have laws that define academic freedom to include teaching scientific controversies, including intelligent design against the theory of evolution.

⁹⁵ Medical education in the United States requires students to complete a clerkship in obstetrics and gynecology, but there is no mandate that it include abortion education.



Image: People sitting outside, Jerusalem Beach, Occupied Palestine (2018). Toa Heftiba.

Conclusions

Anti-rights organizations and movements have developed sophisticated and multifaceted strategies to recruit and train young people, as part of the arsenal to future-proofing their social and political agendas against advances and wins for gender equality, sexual diversity, and reproductive justice. These strategies go beyond mere indoctrination of youth, seeking to build a cadre of equipped and supported future anti-rights leaders. They do so by empowering young people early in their education and careers with leadership skills, establishing networks of influence and connection, and mobilizing them both in the public sphere, on the streets as well as online.

Education and ideological training are fundamental pillars of this strategy. Young people brought into the anti-rights movement are provided with a coherent ideological framework that allows them to interpret the world from conservative and religious perspectives and equips them with arguments to refute progressive ideas. This is achieved through the development of practical skills with anti-rights lenses in leadership, law, communication, and activism, preparing them to be effective agents of change across sectors with generational impacts. All the while, public education and critical thinking are targets of anti-rights agents to consolidate their worldviews.

Meanwhile, mobilization and direct activism, such as anti-abortion marches and protests, including at the UN and within regional spaces, like the EU and OAS, demonstrate

these organizations' ability to translate successful ideological training into concrete action. The goal is to build a robust and coordinated movement that can influence and shape public opinion, government policies, and cultural direction, creating a long-term defense of conservative and traditional values against perceived progressive threats.

The creation of social and political networks and communities of belonging, including through professional associations, is a crucial component of anti-rights youth professionalization. Through conferences, summits, and training programs, young people, including politicians and influencers, establish ties with like-minded peers and leaders, both nationally and internationally. These networks not only strengthen young people's commitment to the cause, but also open doors for them to enter spheres of influence in politics, the media, academia, and business, among others. It also serves to reinforce their worldviews and sense of shared experience and righteousness of the wider cause.

Conservative youth networks, and the powers that support them, represent a sophisticated, coordinated force for future-proofing the anti-rights movement and shaping future social and political landscapes, with damaging ramifications for global human rights. Understanding this ecosystem, its history, narratives, and global spread reveals multiple leverage points for those seeking to counter the grooming, recruitment, sustained investment, and mobilization of young people to anti-rights movements.

Recommendations



“To refuse to participate in the shaping of our future is to give it up. Do not be misled into passivity either by false security (they don’t mean me) or by despair (there’s nothing we can do). Each of us must find our work and do it.”

Audre Lorde, *“Learning from the 60s,”* 1982

The anti-rights movement has excelled in recruiting and retaining the next generation of its leaders and disciples, deliberately cultivating intergenerational continuity. By contrast, many progressive movements are engaged in short-term action, responding to current political and funding crises. Additionally, some progressive and rights-based movements treat youth leadership as an afterthought. Young people are invited to the table symbolically rather than equipping them with the resources, protection, and influence needed to lead. This imbalance creates space for anti-rights narratives to take root among younger generations, threatening to erode hard-won gains in gender justice and SRHR.

This urgency highlights that future-proofing human rights requires more than policy wins in the present. Progressive, human rights-promoting allies must ask themselves what they are doing to future-proof gains for human rights, gender justice, and SRHR, and where the movement is failing young people. As these anti-rights youth engagements adapt and gain traction with

far-right governments, our movement requires diligence. Progressive actors, including governments, must offer alternatives to a generation that is discontented with the current status quo in terms of opportunities, including education. It demands intentional investment in youth-led leadership, infrastructures of care, and intergenerational solidarity to ensure that human rights advocacy remains resilient, inclusive, and visionary in the face of organized and increasingly younger opposition.

This cannot happen in a void as the expansion of anti-rights youth is occurring alongside widespread shrinking of civil society space, including independent media, and a deviation from support to international development in favor of defense and security. Proactive, multi-sectoral strategies are essential to promote inclusive, rights-based values and societies. Additionally, further research, disruption of traditional methods of work, and critical reflection are required for the human rights movement to scale up meaningful inclusion, engagement, and leadership of young people.

1. Strengthen youth engagement and movement building:

- ▶ Support and fund youth programs that promote inclusive values, critical media literacy, and civic engagement to provide alternative leadership pathways.
- ▶ Fund pluralistic youth civic organizations and leadership programs that build young people's skills and networks outside ideologically extreme pipelines.
- ▶ Support peer-to-peer mentoring initiatives that center rights-based approaches to identity, health, and democracy.
- ▶ Ensure these programs are co-designed and co-led by youth, with compensation.
- ▶ Invest in burnout prevention and mental health support for youth advocates.
- ▶ Strengthen youth recruitment in non-youth led organizations, beyond advisory roles.
- ▶ Prioritize multi-year, unrestricted core funding, flexible multilingual reporting, and support for operational infrastructure, such as salaries, rent, and secure digital tools.
- ▶ Embed leadership rotation and age-out policies and intergenerational tandems—youth co-leading with senior leaders—in organizations to ensure sustainability.

2. Monitor legal advocacy networks:

- ▶ Track anti-rights legal clinics and litigation efforts, especially those targeting reproductive and LGBTQ+ rights, but also climate change, gender equality and other intersecting issues, to anticipate and respond to policy shifts.
- ▶ Fund legal training on progressive issues to continuously support progressive legal champions, including through progressive bar associations, fellowships, and other programs.
- ▶ Establish cross-regional rapid-alert systems between youth-led groups and legal champions to share intelligence on anti-rights litigation trends and co-develop progressive legal strategies.
- ▶ Pair these with a digital SRHR rights charter and anti-backlash clauses that explicitly protect youth activists from harassment, lawsuits, and surveillance.

3. Promote alternative narratives and cultural spaces:

- ▶ Fund arts, storytelling, and digital media projects that empower youth to reclaim their histories, identities, and futures.
- ▶ Support content creators and platforms that challenge extremist ideologies and offer space for young people's values-driven leadership.
- ▶ Invest in public media and youth journalism that amplify diverse perspectives and democratic debate, as well as infrastructures grounded in art, music, and archives.
- ▶ Ensure digital platforms protect youth-led content from censorship and shadow banning on social media platforms, reserve collective knowledge on movement building and feminist organizing, and pair cultural strategies with cross-movement campaigns in SRHR, climate, gender equality, LGBTQI+ rights, and anti-racism to broaden reach and resilience.

4. Enhance digital counter-messaging:

- ▶ Develop strategic communication campaigns to counter misinformation and disinformation consistently and reframe public debates on SRHR.
- ▶ Ensure that the right messengers—youth advocates—are capacitated to lead these efforts to engage new audiences, for example to counter the “womansphere” and “manosphere” narratives.
- ▶ Provide secure digital infrastructure and localized language strategies for counter-messaging to effectively reach beyond English-dominant spaces and resonate with diverse youth communities.
- ▶ Fund digital security infrastructure, including encrypted platforms and servers, and support coalitions with shared toolkits and rapid-alert capacity across regions.

5. Foster interfaith and ecumenical dialogue:

- ▶ Build alliances with moderate and progressive religious groups to challenge extremist narratives and support pluralistic social values, tapping into youth religious leadership.
- ▶ Convene interfaith dialogues at community and national levels, invest in intergenerational faith leader programs supporting SRHR.
- ▶ Engage with the religious pro-choice community that can provide the moral, cultural, and political legitimacy to counter the misinformation and harmful narratives around abortion.
- ▶ Ensure youth religious leaders are funded and supported with mentorship networks and connect them to broader human rights coalitions and movements.

6. Support international and regional democratic norms and coordinate international policy responses:

- ▶ Engage with UN, EU, African Union, OAS and other regional bodies with greater due diligence to ensure that conservative youth networks do not disproportionately shape international human rights agendas so that funding does not reach entities responsible for hate speech, disinformation and misinformation.
- ▶ Invest in cross-border networks that support democratic youth movements, journalists, and educators resisting authoritarian ideologies.
- ▶ Leverage diplomatic and development tools to promote access to SRHR, CSE, anti-racist education, and climate education globally.
- ▶ Expose transnational anti-rights education networks and build coalitions to challenge their influence in global policy spaces.
- ▶ Ensure binding youth participation in these global processes—statutory seats, stipends, and co-sponsorship of resolutions—rather than symbolic consultation.
- ▶ Institutionalize youth-led monitoring and evaluation of global processes, providing real-time accountability on participation, outcomes, and funding transparency.



Image: People walking during protest, city unspecified, TN, United States (2020). Zoe VandeWater.

7. Invest in education and critical thinking:

- ▶ Learning from the billionaire and government-supported conservative education hubs, progressive donors, including private philanthropy, should invest in supporting public education and fighting the web of investment to change public-school curricula.
- ▶ In terms of medical education in particular, education- and health-focused nonprofit and philanthropic organizations should prioritize programs that support abortion training for residents in restrictive states and countries where knowledge and experiences for comprehensive care is being lost.
- ▶ Establish cross-movement curricula that integrate SRHR, climate justice, equality, anti-racist education, and digital literacy, recognizing the interconnectedness of these struggles through an intersectional lens.
- ▶ Support sabbatical programs for young leaders in education and healthcare fields to address burnout and retain expertise.

8. Ensure public support is not diverted to youth anti-rights groups:

- ▶ Build anti-rights language literacy to understand which groups advance exclusionary or authoritarian ideologies under the guise of “values” education.
- ▶ Block public subsidies, including by regional bodies, from funding organizations promoting hate and disinformation.
- ▶ Map anti-rights funding pipelines transparently and build watchdog monitoring initiatives to track misuse of public subsidies.

9. Hold the line and stay vigilant:

- ▶ At minimum, progressive actors must watch where funding is being cut by the US and other donors to education, health, and development and explore where movements are missing in action and where anti-rights groups are actively on the attack.
- ▶ Institutionalize monitoring and evaluation systems that provide real-time data on movement health, threats, and gaps—ensuring funders and policymakers act on early warning signs rather than react after losses.
- ▶ Build cross-border coalitions that include youth-led entities, NGOs, healthcare providers and progressive legal champions to coordinate rapid responses when threats emerge.

10. Protect youth activists from backlash and repression:

- ▶ Anti-rights movements increasingly weaponize harassment, surveillance, and criminalization to silence pro-choice voices.
- ▶ Progressive donors, governments, and civil society must fund holistic protection mechanisms for youth activists, including digital security, legal aid, psychosocial support, and safe convening spaces.
- ▶ Embed anti-backlash clauses into national and international commitments to ensure that young advocates are not penalized for advancing SRHR, gender equality, abortion rights, or related human rights agendas.

Annex I:

Selection of far-right European parties with youth wings

| Party | Youth wing | Founded | Overview | Geographical reach |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (Freedom Party of Austria) | <u>Freiheitliche Jugend</u> | 1950s | Nationalist, Eurosceptic, anti-immigration, populist party. | Links to the Identitarian Movement and extremist fraternities. |
| Rassemblement National (National Rally, France) | <u>Génération Nation</u> | 1973, rebranded in 2018 | Nationalist, anti-immigration, socially conservative, less Catholic-centric than Vox but similarly active and structured. | France and European far-right youth networks. |
| Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice, Poland) | <u>Law and Justice Youth Forum; Young Conservatives</u> | PiS Youth Forum (1989, re-founded 1993); Young Conservatives (2002) | Strongly nationalist, socially conservative, Catholic-rooted. Youth wings are well-structured and influential, fostering political engagement and leadership. | Poland and Central/Eastern Europe. |
| Fidesz (Hungary) | <u>Fidelitas</u> | 1996 | Conservative, Christian democratic, highly organized youth wing grooming future political leaders. Active internationally in right-wing youth forums. | Hungary and Central European countries. |
| Vlaams Belang (Flemish Interest, Belgium) | <u>Vlaams Belang Jongeren</u> | 2004 | Nationalist, Eurosceptic seeking independence for Flemish-speaking Flanders. | Influential in feeding new party chairs (see current vice chairs in Annex III). |

| Party | Youth wing | Founded | Overview | Geographical reach |
|---|-------------------------------------|------------|--|--|
| Alternative für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany) | <u>Junge Alternative</u> | 2013 | Nationalist, conservative but more secular and populist than Vox's Catholic identity. Politically active with international far-right ties. | Germany and wider far-right international connections. |
| Fratelli d'Italia (Brothers of Italy) | <u>Gioventù Nazionale</u> | 2014 | Nationalist, social conservative, populist party with links to neo-fascism. The youth arm has been known for fascists songs and chants. | European far-right networks. |
| Sverigedemokraterna (Sweden Democrats) | <u>Ungsvenskarna (Young Swedes)</u> | 2015 | Nationalist, socially conservative, anti-immigration, and populist party. | European far-right networks. |
| Vox (Spain) | <u>Vox Jóvenes and Revuelta</u> | 2018; 2023 | Nationalist, socially conservative, strongly Catholic-influenced. The Vox youth wing mobilizes young voters, promotes traditional values, family, faith, and sovereignty. Revuelta is the highly active, more covert youth wing. | Spain and European right-wing Catholic networks. |
| Chega (Enough, Portugal) | <u>Juventude Chega</u> | 2019 | Nationalist, conservative, sovereigntist. Conducts political education and activism and has expanded Chega's appeal to young voters. | Portugal and European far-right networks. |

Annex II:

Anti-rights groups with youth training programs

| Organization | Name | Youth training | Influence and reach |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| ADF (1994) | Areté Academy (2013) | Legal formation in bioethics, human rights, and international law. Opposes abortion, CSE, LGBTQI+ rights. | High – Evangelical; ties to Heritage, LI, Witherspoon, WYA; major UN & EU presence Reach: Global |
| Heritage Foundation (1973) | Young Leaders Program (1990s) | US internships in communications, law, and policy. Focus on anti-abortion, anti-CSE, anti-LGBTQ+ legislation. | High – Broad conservative; tied to ADF, LI, WYA; major US policy pipeline Reach: Primarily US |
| Institut Libre de Journalisme (ILDJ), 2020) | Youth Journalism Academy (2020) | Youth trained in framing narratives on abortion, gender, and sexual ethics. Direct media messaging, esp. in Catholic/francophone world. | Medium – Traditionalist Catholic; ties to Vox, Hazte Oír, CitizenGO Reach: France, Spain, EU |
| Leadership Institute (LI, 1979) | Campus Leadership Program (1980s) | Trains youth in conservative politics, communications, and campus organizing. Opposes abortion, LGBTQ+ rights, CSE. | High – Evangelical/Catholic-friendly; tied to ADF, Vox, WYA, Heritage Reach: Global (US-led) |
| World Youth Alliance (1990) | Track A, Advocacy Internships (2000) | Training in dignity-based human rights language for UN and regional advocacy. Opposes abortion, LGBTQ+ rights, CSE. | High – Catholic-rooted/ecumenical; tied to ADF, C-Fam, LI, PNfV Reach: Global |

| Organization | Name | Youth training | Influence and reach |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Witherspoon Institute (2003) | Summer Seminars (2005) | Offers natural law theory and critiques of marriage redefinition, gender identity, and sexuality norms. | Medium – Catholic-conservative; intellectual feeder for ADF, WYA, Heritage Reach: Global |
| Hazte Oír (2001) | Youth Forums, Summer Events (2005) | Organizes events to train youth in activism and conservative communication. Notorious for anti-trans campaigns (e.g., hate bus). | High – Catholic-conservative; launched CitizenGO; tied to Vox, PNfV, ILDJ Reach: Spain, Latin America |
| Fundación Valores y Sociedad (2010) | Youth Forums, Leadership Training (2015) | Focuses on promoting traditional family values, Christian ethics, and conservative social policies. Runs youth leadership programs. | Medium-High – Catholic-conservative; allied with Vox, Hazte Oír Reach: Spain |
| Vox (2013) | Youth Leadership Program (2018) | Political formation focused on nationalism, family rights, religious liberty. Opposes abortion, LGBTQ+ rights, and CSE. | High – Catholic-nationalist; allied with Hazte Oír, CitizenGO, PNfV, ILDJ Reach: Spain, Latin America, EU |
| CitizenGO (2013) | Digital Mobilization Training (2014) | Trains youth in global petition campaigns, media messaging, and digital tools to fight CSE, LGBTQ+ rights, and abortion. | High – Catholic-conservative; spun out of Hazte Oír; allied with PNfV, Vox, ILDJ, EYC Reach: Global |

| Organization | Name | Youth training | Influence and reach |
|---|---|--|--|
| Political Network for Values (2014) | Youth Leadership Programs, Fellowships (2018) | Formal training in values-driven governance, UN/legislative advocacy, and natural family promotion. Opposes abortion, SOGI, and CSE. | High – Christian-conservative (Evangelical/Catholic); tied to Vox, ADF, WYA, CitizenGO, Hazte Oír Reach: Global (especially Europe and Latin America) |
| Centro de Bioética Persona y Familia (2010) | Educational Seminars, Youth Workshops (2015) | Provides training on bioethics, family, and life issues from a Catholic perspective. Works primarily in Spanish-speaking countries. | Medium – Catholic; ties to Church and conservative Latin American groups Reach: Latin America and Spain |
| Mathias Corvinus Collegium (1996) | MCC Youth Programs (2010) | Non-degree leadership programs for youth in politics, media, and education. Emphasizes nationalism, anti-gender ideology, Christian identity, and “anti-woke.” | High – Hungarian nationalist-conservative; tied to Fidesz, Catholic and traditional values Reach: Regional, Central and Eastern Europe |
| Ordo Iuris (2013) | Legal Clinics, Youth Workshops (2015) | Trains youth in conservative legal thought, bioethics, and family law. Sends youth to UN, EU, and national-level policy arenas. | High – Catholic-conservative; close to Polish right-wing political circles Reach: Poland and EU |
| Family Policy.RU (2014) | Youth Advocacy and Training (2016) | Engages youth in promoting traditional family and pro-natalist policies, anti-LGBTQI+ rhetoric, and opposition to Western “gender ideology.” | High – Orthodox Christian conservative; aligned with Russian state policies Reach: Russia |

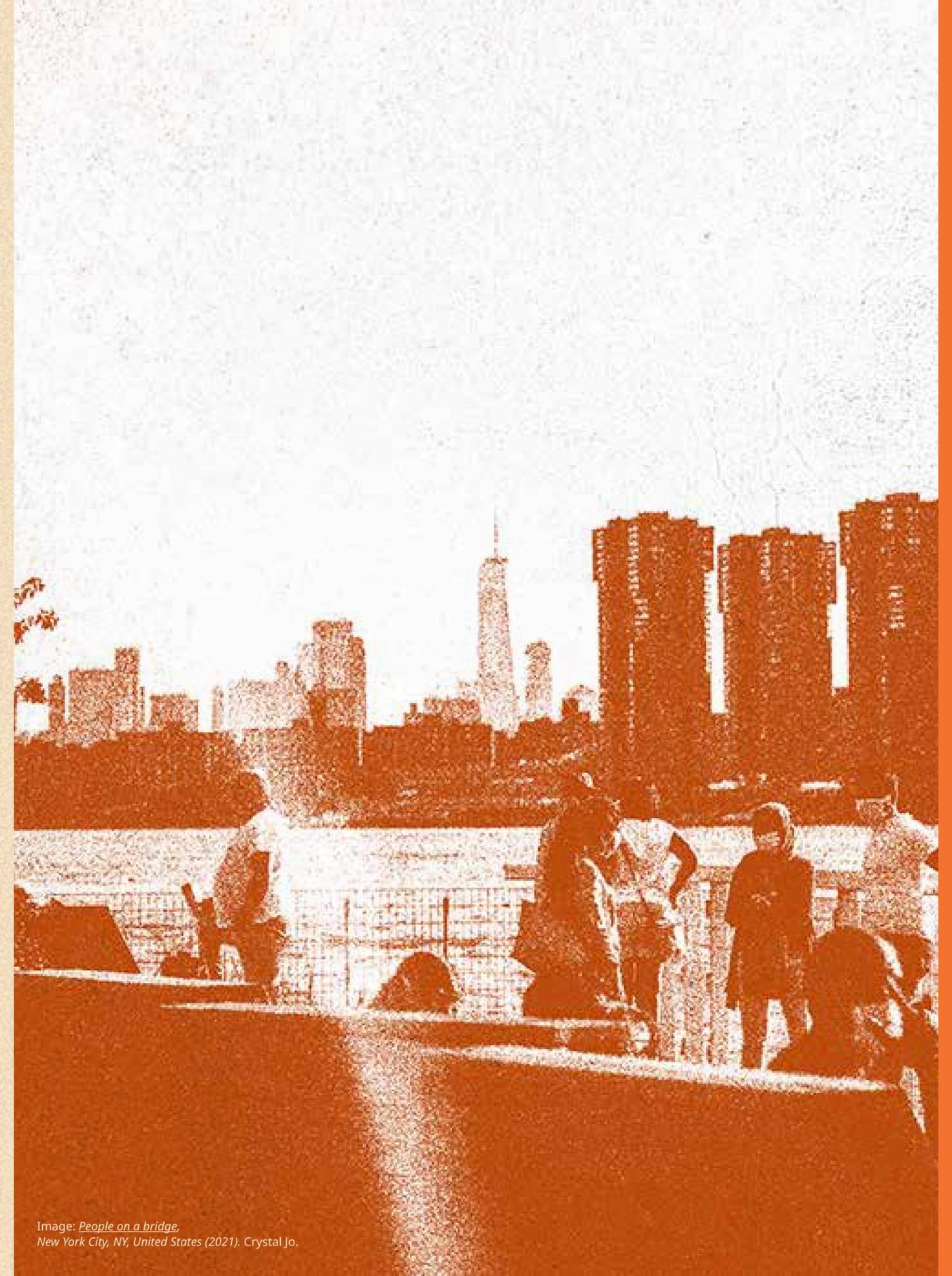


Image: *People on a bridge*, New York City, NY, United States (2021). Crystal Jo.

Annex III:

Selection of far-right young politicians elected since 2019

| Country | Name | Party or bloc | Age at election | Political position | Far-right connections |
|---------|--------------------------------------|---|-----------------|-----------------------|--|
| Belgium | Dries Van Langenhove | Vlaams Belang | 26 | MP, 2019-2023 | Founder of the Schild en Vrienden (Shield and Friends) far-right youth movement; kicked out of Vlaams Belang, a Flemish nationalist , Eurosceptic, and far-right party, in 2023 and sentenced in March 2024 for inciting violence . |
| Belgium | Filip Brusselmans | Vlaams Belang | 22 | MP, 2019-current | Co-vice-chair of Vlaams Belang; vice-chair of the Flemish Parliament; anti-abortion, anti-trans, and anti-euthanasia; Member of ultra conservative Catholic group, Pius X. |
| Belgium | Britt Huybrechts | Vlaams Belang | 25 | MP, 2024-current | Co-vice-chair of Vlaams Belang. |
| France | Jordan Bardella | RN | 26 | MEP, May 2019-current | President of the RN since 2022 and formerly president of its youth wing from 2018-2021. Chair of the Patriots for Europe in the European Parliament. Significant social media presence: Instagram ~1M; TikTok ~2.2M; YouTube ~184K; X ~576K. |
| France | Marion Maréchal | Identité-Libertés (formerly of Reconquête and RN) | 22 | MEP, 2024-current | Elected MP of RN in 2012 at age 22 before joining Reconquête and now leads Identité-Libertés, a more explicitly anti-same sex marriage, anti-trans, and critical-of-abortion party. She founded ISSEP in 2018 and is well connected to the European far right. Notable social media presence: Instagram ~230K followers; TikTok ~250K; YouTube ~104K; X ~674K. |

| Country | Name | Party or bloc | Age at election | Political position | Far-right connections |
|-----------|---|--|-----------------|--|---|
| Portugal | Rita Matias | Chega | 23 | Deputy, March 2022-current | Member of Patriots for Europe and vice-president of Juventude Chega. She attended PNFV Madrid in 2024. Moderate social media presence: Instagram ~197K; TikTok ~90.4K; X ~55K. |
| | Madalena Cordeiro | Chega | 20 | Deputy, March 2024-current | Member of Patriots for Europe; active on European Affairs Committee. |
| Slovenia | Zala Tomašič | Slovenska demokratska stranka | 28 | MEP, July 2024-current | The Slovenian Democratic Party is part of Patriots for Europe. She interned at the European People's Party Martens Center and in the US Senate with Republican Chuck Grassley's office . |
| Spain | Luis "Alvise" Pérez Fernández | Se Acabó La Fiesta ("The Party is Over") | 34 | MEP, July 2024-current | Fernández is a new and controversial figure with no documented ties yet to the European far-right infrastructure. |
| Argentina | Florencia Klipauka Lewtak | La Libertad Avanza | 27 | National deputies 2021-current; 2023-current; and 2023-current | La Libertad Avanza is aligned with international right-libertarian and far-right populist networks, and with youth-oriented conservative movements in the United States and Europe. None of the three national deputies is popular on social media. |
| | Lourdes Arrieta | La Libertad Avanza | 31 | National deputies 2021-current; 2023-current; and 2023-current | La Libertad Avanza is aligned with international right-libertarian and far-right populist networks, and with youth-oriented conservative movements in the United States and Europe. None of the three national deputies is popular on social media. |
| | Rocío Bonacci | La Libertad Avanza | 28 | National deputies 2021-current; 2023-current; and 2023-current | La Libertad Avanza is aligned with international right-libertarian and far-right populist networks, and with youth-oriented conservative movements in the United States and Europe. None of the three national deputies is popular on social media. |

| Country | Name | Party or bloc | Age at election | Political position | Far-right connections |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Brazil | Nikolas Ferreira | Partido Liberal (Liberal Party) | 26 | Federal Deputy, 2023-current | Attended CPAC Florida 2023 and PNfV in December that year and attended the 2024 PNfV Madrid. The Liberal Party is aligned with “MAGA-like” youth networks. Significant social media presence: Instagram ~18.3M; TikTok ~8.1M followers; YouTube ~2.4M; X ~5.1M. |
| | Ícaro de Valmir | Partido Liberal (Liberal Party) | 21 | Federal Deputy, 2023-current | Youngest member of the Chamber of Deputies. De Valmir has some social media presence on Instagram ~41K. |
| United States | Anna Paulina Luna | Republican Party | 33 | US Representative, 2023-current | Former Turning Point USA director, aligned with Heritage Foundation and Project 2025 agenda, and has multiple CPAC appearances. Notable social media presence: Instagram ~727K; X ~844K. |
| | Brandon Gill | Republican Party | 30 | US Representative, 2025-current | Emerging CPAC participant and part of MAGA media ecosystem. Moderate social media presence: Instagram ~81K; X ~194K. |

Annex IV:

Selection of youth influencers with ties to the anti-right ecosystem

North America

| Name | Age at entry | Key activities, organizations, and reach | Social media presence | Anti-rights network |
|-----------------------------|--------------|---|---|--|
| Candace Owens (US) | 28 | Conservative commentator; former director of urban engagement at TPUSA; worked on The Daily Wire; first emerged in 2017 with “Red Pill Black” on YouTube | Instagram ~5.6M; TikTok ~4.8M; YouTube ~4.58M; X ~6.9M | TPUSA |
| Ben Shapiro (US) | 17 | Began political writing around 2004; co-founded the Daily Wire in 2015; vocal against abortion and LGBTQI+ rights, especially transgender rights. | Instagram ~3.3M; TikTok ~2.8M; YouTube ~7.2M; X ~7.8M | CPAC, Heritage, religious conservatives |
| Matt Walsh (US) | Early 20s | Became prominent with the Daily Wire from 2015; created transphobic documentary What is a Woman? Vocal anti-abortion advocate focusing on traditional gender and family roles. | Instagram ~1.8M; TikTok ~1.1M; YouTube ~3.3M; X ~3.7M | Daily Wire, CPAC, C-Fam, US Catholic-right circles |
| Brett Cooper | Early 20s | Started The Comments Section at The Daily Wire in 2022 and is prolific on the anti-rights influencer circuit | Instagram ~1.3M; TikTok ~1.2M; YouTube ~1.6M; X ~506.7K | TPUSA, Prager University |
| Riley Gaines | 22 | Conservative activist focused on restricting trans participation in women’s sports; hosts the “Gaines for Girls” podcast. Trump praised Gaines before signing an executive order against trans athletes. | Instagram ~859K; TikTok ~1.1M; X ~1.5M | TPUSA, ADF, Heritage, Jordan Peterson |
| Lila Rose (US) | 15 | Founded Live Action in 2003; produced viral anti-abortion videos starting in mid-2000s; opposes abortion and same-sex marriage; promotes pro-life Catholic stance. | Instagram ~525K; YouTube ~346K; X ~394K | ADF, CPAC, Heritage, Catholic-right media |
| Kristan Hawkins (US) | 21 | Became president of SFLA in 2006; leads campus anti-abortion activism; opposes LGBTQI+ inclusion and “gender ideology.” | Instagram ~244K; TikTok ~147K; YouTube ~71K; X ~92K | ADF, CPAC, Heritage |
| Jonathon Van Maren (Canada) | Early 20s | Active since mid-2010s as speaker and author targeting youth pro-life movement; opposes LGBTQI+ rights and gender ideology; engages youth through podcasts and social media aligned with Catholic groups. He is on the board of US group Pro-Life Global. | Modest reach; known for his YouTube Channel “The Bridgehead” and various podcasts | Canadian Centre for Bio-Ethical Reform, Population Research Institute (US) |

Latin America

| Name | Age at entry | Key activities, organizations, and reach | Social media presence | Anti-rights network |
|---|--------------|--|--|---|
| Agustín Laje (Argentina) | 15-24 | Argentine ultraconservative, anti-abortion, anti-gender ideology writer, political commentator, and lecturer who founded the think tank Fundación Faro. | Instagram ~1.3M; TikTok ~640K; YouTube ~2.5M; X ~936K | CPAC, Vox party, Madrid Forum, The Center, ally of Javier Milei, Atlas Network, master's degree from the Opus Dei-linked Universidad of Navarra |
| Sara Huff (aka as Sara Winter) (Brazil) | 19-21 | "Ex-feminist," shifted to anti-abortion and anti-gender activism in the early to mid-2010s and now a vocal anti-abortion figure who served in the Bolsonaro administration in 2019. | Instagram ~101K; TikTok ~89K; YouTube ~7.7K; X ~22K | Pró-Mulher (Pro-Woman) movement, CPAC, March for Life DC in 2016 |
| Guadalupe (Lupe) Batallán (Argentina) | 15-16 | Ultra-Catholic activist, writer, and anti-feminist and anti-abortion advocate. A pro-life leader in the region and one of the driving forces behind the so-called "marea celeste" (blue wave) against abortion, she participated in legislative debates against the legalization of abortion in Argentina. | Instagram ~95.1K; TikTok ~18.6K; YouTube ~44.8K; X ~83.8K | Global Center for Human Rights, Frente Joven, Catholic Church |
| Alice Galván (México) | 18-20 | Conservative and ultra-Catholic activist, fellow of Vox's Iberosfera youth leadership program; president and founder of Patria Unida, a center for conservative ideas. Anti-feminist, anti-abortion, anti-gender ideology, anti-LGBTIQ. | Instagram ~3.2K; X ~7.8K | Vox party, Fundación Disenso, CPAC, CEU, Atlas Network, ACTON Institute, Alejandro Chafuen, Heritage Foundation |
| Axel Kaiser (Chile) | Early 20s | Ultra-conservative writer and activist. Co-director of the Faro Foundation with Agustín Laje. Anti-woke, anti-left, anti-feminist. Defends the Chilean dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. A leading figure in the "cultural battle." | Instagram ~333K; YouTube ~100K; X ~362.3K | CPAC, Atlas Network, Javier Milei's intellectual advisor. Movimiento Viva México (Eduardo Verástegui) |
| Carlos Ramírez (Mexico) | Early 20s | Ultra-Catholic lawyer, founder of Choose Life Mexico and Prolife-Army. Anti-feminist, anti-abortion, anti-gender, anti-LGBTIQ. Legal director for Mexico of the Federation of Christian Lawyers of Spain. | Instagram ~63.9K; YouTube ~791; X ~70.5K | Abogados Cristianos España, CPAC, CitizenGO, Movimiento Viva México (Eduardo Verástegui) |
| Pablo Muñoz Iturrieta (Argentina) | Early 20s | Writer, professor, and ultra-Catholic and conservative activist. Anti-feminist, anti-abortion, anti-gender, anti-LGBTIQ, anti-woke. | Instagram ~111K; YouTube ~372K; X ~114.8K | CPAC, GCHR, 40DaysForLife, Jordan Peterson, Movimiento Viva México (Eduardo Verástegui) |



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