

Young Women and Next Generation Initiative (YWNGI) Event: Mentorship Alumni Regional Meeting in Brussels

15 April 2025, 15.00-18.30 CEST
Flemish Parliament, Rue de Louvain 86, 1000 Brussels

The Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (VCDNP) and the International Affairs Institute (IAI), in the framework of the Young Women and Next Generation Initiative (YWNGI) are organizing the first regional alumni event for participants of the YWNGI Mentorship Programme. The event will be held in Brussels on **15 April 2025** at the Flemish Parliament, in collaboration with the Flemish Peace Institute.

The event will **gather Mentors and Mentees based in Brussels** and in nearby locations, and it will be open to participants from the **current and previous cohorts**. This format represents not only an opportunity to meet in-person, but also to exchange personal experiences regarding four editions of the Mentorship Programme and enable networking opportunities. In addition, it will be an occasion for current Mentors and Mentees to meet before the formal conclusion of the 2024-2025 Mentorship Programme (15th May 2025).

The **Mentorship Alumni regional meeting** will also **feature a lecture by Dr. Nils Duquet, Director at the Flemish Peace Institute**. He will speak about the **diversion of Conventional Weapons** and how such weapons, during their lifecycles, happen to be diverted from the legal trade into the illicit domain. Nils Duquet will also address the **existing international normative frameworks and initiatives** aiming at combating the illicit proliferation of such weapons. The lecture will be **accessible online** and it will be followed by a Q&A session. The hybrid format will allow local Mentors and Mentees to attend the lecture in-person and facilitate the interaction. Being accessible online, it will be, at the same time and in accordance with the previous webinars organized in the framework of the YWNGI, be open to a wider audience. The lecture will be aimed at students and young specialists interested in learning more about the field of arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament, as well as at the general public.

For online participation, please register using this link:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ZvIGS_bFQim4_YVC7nosEA

The working language will be English.

The VCDNP and IAI warmly thank the Flemish Peace Institute for hosting the Event.

Tentative Agenda

15.00 Welcome remarks

Moderator:

Ettore Greco, Executive Vice-President, IAI

Speakers:

Stephan Klement, EU Special Envoy for Disarmament and Non-proliferation TBC

*Sibylle Bauer Director of Studies, Armament and Disarmament, Stockholm International
Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and Chair of the EUNPDC TBC*

Nils Duquet, Director, Flemish Peace Institute

15.15 Session 1: Mentorship Alumni regional meeting

Moderator:

Paola Tessari, Senior fellow, International Affairs Institute (IAI)

Roundtable among Mentors and Mentees from the four cohorts (in-person and online)

16.00 Session 2: Hybrid Presentation - *Conventional Weapons Diversion: challenges and initiatives to counter illicit trafficking*

Moderator:

Federica Dall'Arche, Senior Research Associate, VCDNP

Speaker:

Nils Duquet, Director, Flemish Peace Institute

17.15 Q&A

17.45 Meeting ends

18:00 Networking Dinner (restaurant TBC)

Background

The Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (VCDNP) and The International Affairs Institute (IAI), in the framework of the [EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament \(EUNPD\) Consortium](#) have launched a *Young Women and Next Generation Initiative (YWNGI)*, an initiative to encourage young women and the next generation to enter the non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament field.

Driven by the widely shared awareness of the persistent age and gender imbalances among experts and practitioners in the non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament field, the *Young Women and Next Generation Initiative* aims to help address such imbalances by exposing college and university level students to arms control issues, increasing awareness and encouraging participation in events and workshops. The initiative also aims to respond to the very limited offering of relevant courses on WMD issues in colleges and universities at undergraduate and master's level. The goal is to help students understand how to pursue a career in the field, making the best use of their own skills. The Initiative includes the creation of a [mentorship programme](#), the conveying of workshops and meetings, and the organization of outreach visits at universities.

The YWNGI is possible thanks to the generous support of the European Union.