



Dec 10, 2021 09:00 GMT

Northumbria student represents the UK at World Forum for Democracy 2021

A Northumbria University student has joined an international debate examining issues around democracy and the environment after being selected as the UK's only youth ambassador to attend The World Forum for Democracy 2021.

Cara Dunlop, a second year [Psychology](#) student, travelled to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France – the continent's leading human rights organisation – to attend the World Forum for Democracy event where political decision-makers and activists, intellectuals, and young people met to

debate solutions to key challenges for democracies worldwide.

Cara Dunlop pictured at The World Forum for Democracy 2021

The forum, which took place in November to coincide with the COP26 climate change conference, addressed the theme ‘*Can Democracy Save the Environment?*’ It was held after a year-long, worldwide, online debate between participants about democracy and the environment.

Cara was encouraged to sign up for the forum through her work with the National Citizens Service, a service which empowers young people and builds their confidence. She attended as the UK’s only Youth Delegate, with the main role of providing a young person’s perspective in the discussions at the forum.

Earlier in the year, Cara attended an online event which was held in preparation for the forum and discussed how young people can lead the fight against climate change with panellists including the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

“My main aims for the forum were to immerse myself in the different cultures which have come together to tackle such a global issue,” said Cara.

“Hearing the opinions of people from around the world has been fascinating and has cemented my belief that we truly need to work together to tackle climate change.”

Discussing how the forum has enabled her to understand more about climate change, Cara added: “There is a clear difference in the urgency of climate change between countries around the world. One Youth Delegate travelled from an island in New Zealand and fears his island may be submerged due to rising sea levels.

“The urgency of the climate crisis is a worldwide issue and the emergency that the world is facing is not emphasised enough.”

[The World Forum for Democracy](#) event covered topics including deliberative

democracy for climate, human rights for the environment, biodiversity, climate change and much more. This was the ninth forum to take place to encourage systematic changes to democracies worldwide as a response to the problems raised throughout the forum.

Cara's personal tutor at Northumbria University and Associate Professor in Psychology, Dr Michael Smith, said: "We are immensely proud that Cara has been selected as the UK's only youth ambassador to attend the World Forum for Democracy.

"Cara is an asset to the Psychology Department at Northumbria. She is an excellent student who brings an insightful perspective to our BSc Psychology programme from the admirable work she has done around youth and social justice."

[Find out more about the work Northumbria University is leading on in the fight against climate change here.](#)

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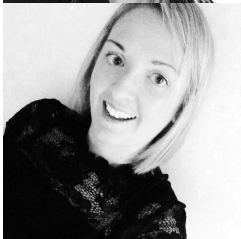


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