

Oskar Zgonina

Bund der Jugend der Deutschen Minderheit in der Republik Polen (BJDM)

Candidate for vice president for external relations of YEN

My Name is Oskar Zgonina. I was born in upper Silesia in a small town called Tarnowski Góry. People in Silesia have very diverse backgrounds and the cultural diversity has been present already for centuries. Growing up in this region, I learned about the importance of being openminded to other Cultures, to respect the history and to love your homeland. The people, nature, and architecture of this region also formed my identity. As young German growing up in Poland, I treasure diversity and the opportunity to express myself. Which is why I am active in the organisation of the German speaking minority in Poland.

Since 2016 I have been a member of BJDM, the biggest youth organisation representing German speaking youth in Poland. In 2020 I was elected president of BJDM and before I was board member and vice-president. It is an honour to represent young Germans in Poland.

Being active in my organisation allowed me to further develop my identity, implement new ideas, working with other youth and support the cooperation between Germany and Poland. Over the last years I gained experience in representing minorities. I acquired a lot of knowledge about the problems and challenges of European minorities and youth organisations.

Currently, I am studying law in the Silesian University in Kattowitz, Poland and I try to apply what I learn in my work with minorities. The protection of rights for national, ethnic and linguistic Minorities in Poland and Europe is an important topic for me. Studying law, also taught me about the importance of valuing democratic principles.

I believe, that civil society is an important pillar for democratic systems. Thus, I started to be active very early, being part of school student unions and other groups. Working with young people brings me joy, hence, I tutor pupils in social sciences and help them to prepare for final exams.

I continuously want to learn new things by attending different workshops and seminars. Between 2017 and 2018 I participated in an ELOm-program (education for young group leaders). Since 2021 I have been part of AkaDeMia-program (course for young leaders of german minority). Both of this programs are organised by "Haus der Deutsch-Polnischen Zusammenarbeit".

It would be a great honour and pleasure to represent young minority members and nationalities in the largest network of youth organisation of national, ethnic and linguistic. I am very knowledgeable in regards of minority youth. Especially nowadays it is important to articulate the needs and rights of minorities in Europe.

My interests include are civil rights, international relations, minority rights and languages and dialects.