

FIP Youth Philately Commission Report 2022-2025

This report presents an overall review of the work, progress, challenges, and development trends of the FIP Youth Philately Commission during the period from 2022 to 2025. Over these four years, youth philately moved from pandemic-related disruption to gradual recovery and then toward more structured development through exhibitions, educational outreach, mentoring, and closer cooperation with schools, clubs, postal authorities, and national federations.

Overall Development

During this period, many countries continued to face a common challenge: young people had less direct contact with stamps and letter writing in daily life, while digital culture competed strongly for their attention. Nevertheless, federations, stamp clubs, schools, youth organizations, and postal administrations found effective ways to keep philately visible and attractive. Their work ranged from youth exhibitions and beginner exhibit formats to campus programmes, youth post offices, competitions, workshops, museum visits, online communication, and philatelic training. These efforts helped preserve continuity during a difficult period and gradually rebuild a stronger foundation for future development.

2022: Continuity Under Difficult Conditions

In 2022, significant activity continued in several countries despite the difficult environment. Argentina sustained youth philately through specialized youth exhibitions, school and scout workshops, and local philatelic school initiatives. China reported that there were no national youth philatelic activities because of Covid-19, but many provincial and municipal programmes remained active, especially one-sheet exhibit training, junior post offices, and stamp design contests. France resumed its national youth exhibition "Timbres-Passion" in Moulins, where more than 90 young exhibitors participated, including international youth entries. India promoted youth philately through district and state exhibitions, the PCI Youth Academy, quiz and essay programmes, painting contests, and efforts to encourage school-level stamp clubs and exchange groups. The main feature of 2022 was therefore continuity through local networks and educational outreach rather than broad international expansion.

2023: Recovery Through Exhibitions and Public Engagement

The year 2023 marked a stronger recovery. Youth participation reappeared more clearly at international, regional, and national exhibitions. Both IBRA 2023 and Thailand 2023 included FIP Youth Philately classes, with 30 and 48 exhibits respectively. Youth exhibits were also present in regional exhibitions, while dedicated national youth events such as Juvenex 2023 in Argentina and the All-China Youth Philatelic Exhibition demonstrated renewed momentum. The 2023 All-China Youth Philatelic Exhibition, held from 20 to 22 October 2023 in Mianyang, Sichuan, was especially notable. It included 202 exhibits in 365 frames across ten classes and also introduced 273 one-sheet exhibits by children under the age of ten. This indicated that the youth pipeline was being rebuilt not only through competitive exhibiting but also through beginner-friendly formats more accessible to first-time participants.

Another important feature of the 2023 recovery was the combination of exhibitions with public engagement and educator training. In Mianyang, the exhibition programme included one-sheet guidance activities, postcard writing experiences, commemorative handstamp attractions, seminars for principals of youth philatelic activity demonstration bases, and training for counsellors. More than 70 principals and excellent counsellors from 50 national youth philatelic activity demonstration bases participated in the seminars and training, while philatelic lectures and judging presentations reached more than 500 participants online and offline. This reflected an increasingly systematic approach: the development of youth philately depended not only on young collectors themselves, but also on trained teachers, advisers, jurors, and institutional partners able to introduce philately in schools and guide children in building exhibits.

2024: Consolidation, Exchange, and New Youth Activity Models

In 2024, no Bureau meeting was held, but delegates maintained regular online exchanges and continued reporting youth philatelic activities through the Commission's communication channels. Efiro was the only international exhibition with FIP patronage in 2024, but it did not include a Youth Class. Even so, youth exhibits remained active in continental events, and the Commission continued to encourage feedback on the effectiveness of the new Youth Judging Guidelines introduced after the FIP Congress in Jakarta in 2022. The Commission also began looking ahead to a future meeting and qualifying seminar during the FIP Exhibition in Macao in 2026, indicating that youth philately had entered a stage of further consolidation and planning.

Reports from different countries showed that youth philately in 2024 developed through a variety of models. In France, the FFAP continued to engage more than 1,000 young members through national initiatives, including the renewed "Timbres Passion" youth exhibition and activities held alongside the Paris Olympic Games. In China, the "I Love Philately" programme in Shanghai continued to integrate philately into student activities, including hand-painted cover competitions and one-page display projects during China 2024. In Hong Kong, a pilot programme was launched to reintroduce the basic concepts of stamp collecting to students after a long interruption, while in Macau students were encouraged to connect philately with local history, museum visits, creative cover design, and short presentation videos.

Latin American reports also illustrated how hands-on outreach continued to support growth. In Peru, museum workshops, guided exhibition visits, and youth philatelic sessions at public events introduced children to basic concepts of collecting through interactive learning. In Argentina, the Youth Commission maintained active outreach, organized philately courses and workshops in several cities, supported participation in Juvenex, and used a WhatsApp group titled "My First Collection" to help families and young collectors begin building collections. At the same time, reports from Slovenia underlined continuing structural difficulties, especially the decline of school-based youth groups, the shortage of teachers prepared to lead them, and reduced support from postal authorities. Taken together, these reports show that 2024 was a year of consolidation: youth philately advanced not through a single major international platform, but through sustained local initiatives, educational experimentation, and ongoing exchange of experience among delegates.

2025: Expansion, Diversification, and Stronger Structures

By 2025, the overall picture had become more mature and diversified. In China, the All-China Philatelic Federation reported both international and national youth exhibiting results. Five youth

exhibits were sent to international exhibitions in 2025. At PHILAKOREA 2025 these exhibits received two Large Vermeil medals, one Vermeil medal, and one Large Silver medal, while at the Thailand 2025 Asian International Stamp Exhibition a youth exhibit received one Large Vermeil medal. At national level, Shanlian 2025 produced one Vermeil, three Large Silver, and four Silver medals in the youth class, and 33 youth exhibits were entered for Hengqin 2025. These results suggest a stronger and more competitive youth exhibiting structure than in the immediately preceding years.

The 2025 report also showed that youth philately was expanding well beyond exhibitions alone. China organized a national youth one-page philatelic exhibit activity under the theme "The World in Square Inches, A Youthful Chapter" from May to September 2025. A national children's stamp design contest under the theme "Dreaming of the Future with Stamps, Children Drawing the Galaxy" attracted more than 86,000 entries from 23 competition zones. Study-tour programmes such as "Traveling with Stamps" involved teachers and students from 18 provinces. Many schools integrated philately into their curriculum and campus cultural life, while themed local exhibitions, lectures, and public activities continued to broaden participation. Nearly 500 Youth Post Offices nationwide provided a particularly effective bridge between philately, postal culture, and hands-on social practice.

Regional and organizational initiatives formed an important part of the 2025 picture and should be understood within this broader expansion. In the Inter-American region, youth collections increased in national exhibitions held in Argentina, Spain, and Peru, while countries such as Brazil, the United States, Colombia, Cuba, and Mexico also organized youth exhibitions, workshops, or school and scout activities. The official FIAF Youth Philately Facebook page grew to more than 1,700 followers and became an increasingly visible platform for communication and promotion. PHILAKOREA 2025 included youth exhibits from Brazil, Spain, and the United States, while regional events such as Juvenex 2025 in Argentina and AMIFIL Youth 2025 in Peru provided additional platforms for youth participation and exchange.

Further useful examples came from Malaysia and Thailand. In Malaysia, the Philatelic Society Malaysia supported Pos Malaysia in promoting philately through 520 school stamp clubs under the KESEF project, and five schools were selected for pilot training in international exhibiting. In Thailand, the national association continued to provide practical coaching for youth exhibitors, from story planning and exhibit writing to material selection and page improvement. Thailand also waived frame fees for youth class entries and supported students through lectures, museum visits, and guided educational activities. These approaches underline the value of reducing barriers to entry and providing structured mentoring.

Assessment and Outlook

Taken as a whole, the period from 2022 to 2025 demonstrates several clear trends. First, the recovery of youth philately has depended on strong local organization, especially through schools, scout groups, stamp clubs, postal administrations, and national federations. Second, beginner-friendly formats such as one-sheet and one-page exhibits, design contests, and youth post offices are effective entry points for children who are not yet ready for formal multi-frame exhibiting. Third, exhibitions remain essential, but their greatest value often lies in the wider educational and outreach activities built around them, including training, lectures, workshops, and public participation. Fourth, digital communication is now indispensable, both because it reflects the habits of younger generations and because it helps national and regional bodies remain connected. Finally, the

Commission continues to face important challenges, especially the declining natural visibility of stamps in daily life, the need for clear and practical judging standards, and the need to safeguard authenticity in youth exhibits.

Looking ahead, the most effective strategy appears to be an integrated one: combining school-based education, postal and cultural partnerships, beginner-level activities, structured mentoring, national and international exhibiting opportunities, and modern digital communication. If these elements continue to reinforce one another, youth philately will not only recover from recent years of disruption but also build a stronger foundation for long-term renewal.

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