

# **ACTION 1.3**

## **DEMOCRACY PROJECT**



## **YOUTH IN FRONTLINE**

### ***Partnership:***

**Asociatia Tinerilor Romi Valcea, Romania.**  
**Gaziantep Youth Union Association-Turkey.**  
**Non-Formal Youth Group, Tekkirdag, Turcia.**  
**Ecomission 21 th Century, Bulgaria.**  
**Consulting Club for Civic Education, Bulgaria.**  
**Fundatia Judeteana pentru Tineret Valcea.**



**ATRV**  
[www.atrv.eu](http://www.atrv.eu)



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## **Index:**

**1.Introduction.**

**2.Partnership.**

**3.Working methods.**

**4.Revised European charter of participation.**

**5.The strategy of participation.**

**6.Youth in Action Programme.**



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## **Introduction:**

The strategy concerning the identification of the youth needs and desires regarding the problems of the participation in the democratic life, was realised within the participative democracy project "Youth in frontline", project financed by European Commission by Youth in Action program. The project "Youth in frontline" was developed in 11 months and involved 24 young people with reduced opportunities representing 6 partners: 2 from Romania, 2 from Bulgaria and 2 from Turkey.

The project activities took place in Baile Olanesti, Valcea, Romania between 16-25 July 2010.

The aims of the project were:

- to encourage the active participation of young people in the life of their local, regional, national international community
- debate for young peoples centred around the mechanisms of representative democracy at all levels including the functioning of the EU institutions and the EU policies.

The objectives of the project were:

- promoting the young peoples mobilities
- promote the young people participation in democracy.
- Knowledge about mechanisms of representative democracy including the functioning of the EU.

The activities of the project were developed using various non-formal educational methods such as: learning by doing, games, energisers, icebreakings, workshops, forum theatre

(The project team)



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## **Partnership:**

**1.Asociatia Tinerilor Romi  
Valcea,Romania.**

**2. Gaziantep Youth Union Association-  
Turkey.**

**3.Non-Formal Youth  
Group,Tekkirdag,Turcia.**

**4.Ecomission 21 th Century,Bulgaria.**

**5.Consulting Club for Civic  
Education,Bulgaria.**

**6.Fundatia Judeteana pentru Tineret  
Valcea.**



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## **Asociația Tinerilor Rromi - Valcea.**

ATRV's objectives: promoting the youth policies in Romania and Roma minority integration policies, support and financial support for specific youth activities, cultural activities, social activities and training activities and promoting Roma activities.

### **Activities:**

- vocational training for youth, disadvantaged youth, ethnic minorities, unemployed.
- foreign languages courses for youth, unemployed people, old people, ethnic minorities.
- international youth exchanges.
- establish and implement social programs.
- establish and implement programs in the cultural and civic domain.
- promotion and implementation of voluntary activities in the local community.
- rural development and access to non formal education for youth coming from rural area.
- training sessions in relevant institutions abroad.
- promote the transnational mobility.
- summer youth camps organization.
- organization of seminars, conferences and exhibitions.
- developing transnational networks in youth, art and culture domain.



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- printing informative materials, books, brochures for promoting youth, civic and cultural activities.
- web pages for promoting the youth, civic and cultural activities.
- establish and implement projects implemented from European and national funds.
- develop training courses for school mediators.

More on: [www.atrv.eu](http://www.atrv.eu)

### **Gaziantep Youth Union Association-Turkey.**

The association founded on July 2006 in Gaziantep by the volunteer students of Gaziantep University. Despite the fact that Gaziantep has many possibilities for youth people and volunteers projects, there are not enough organizations for them. Although our association has been founded yet, it will have an important role to fill up this blank. Our target groups are children and young people.

The aims of the organizations are:

- Being organized between children and youth people by legal and juristic personality,
- Being situated between children and youth people in the process of management, decision and administration with the comprehension of equality,
- Researching the problems of children and youth people and producing solutions for the problems,
- Assisting in raising the conscious of children and youth people' rights,



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- Providing the communication and cooperation between children, youth people and volunteer foundings,
- Constituting politics related to children and youth people and assisting in improving existing politics.

Website : <http://www.gaziantepgenclik.org/>

### **Ecomission 21th Century-Bulgaria.**

Ecomission 21st Century is an ecological NGO located in Lovech, Bulgaria registered in the year 2001. Its 20 members are united in the missions to defend the human right to live in an eco-friendly environment, to increase youth participation in public life, and to confirm the civil and social principles of democracy.

The organization includes a Youth Center out of which operate the Youth Information and Consultation Center, the Big Brother Big Sister Program, and the Resource Center for Work with Volunteers. About 20 high school youth volunteers meet regularly at the Center to implement various community service projects. The organization is also certified as both a hosting and sending organization for the European Voluntary Service (EVS).

The Youth Center regularly sends Bulgarian youth to various national and international youth exchanges, camps, and trainings.

Website : <http://www.ecomission21.com>



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## **Non-Formal Youth Group-Turkey**

Is formed by 25 young peoples from Tekkirdag,very active in the voluntaru field.Their gosl is to learn the mechanism of active participation and to become more involved in the democratic life of the community.

Consulting Club for Civic Education-Bulgaria.

Mission: To facilitate the educational process in the district of Razgrad by providing new educational technologies, working out projects, encouraging innovations and harnessing its experience in working with young people.

- Main goals: to facilitate young people in their personal formation and development through organizing their spare time and through school and youth self - government;
- to motivate youth community to take part in local and regional initiatives;
- to establish relations of partnership between the local authorities and civil organizations for developing civic society in the region.





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## **Fundatia Judeteana pentru Tineret Valcea-Romania.**

FJT Valcea has a main goal the elaboration, organisation and financing of specific programs for youth and the training, education of youth in the spirit of humanistic traditions, democratic values and aspiration of Romanian society.

FJT Valcea own a surface of 16 600 square meters, wich are used fo sport clubs, swimming pool, disco, hostel and exhibition space for local NGO's.



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## **Working Methods.**

- 1. Energisers.**
- 2. Forum Theater**
- 3. Work in team**
- 4. RMSOS Approach**
- 5. Ladder of Young People's Participation**
- 6. Intercultural Game : the Islands**



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## Energisers

**Columbian Hipnosys:** Played in pairs. One player holds her open hand, fingers upward, about 2-3 inches from her partner's face. She then starts moving her hand about slowly, while her partner tried to keep his face at exactly the same distance from her hand, like her hand is pulling or pushing his face about.

Switch sides and partners after a couple of minutes.

**Bomb & Shields:** Group spread out around the room. Each person chooses one other person without making their choice known; that person is their bomb. Then choose another person - that one is their shield. The aim of the game is to keep your shield between your shield and your bomb. There will be a lot of frantic movement to begin with and the facilitator can count down from 10 to 1 as the bomb is about to explode. On the command freeze, the facilitator goes around the group asking if people managed to keep their shield between themselves and their bomb.

**Blind cars :** Divide into pairs. One person stands in front of the other and closes his eyes - he is the blind car. The person behind is the driver who gives directions by touching the "car's" back with his hands. Touch left shoulder = Turn left ; right shoulder = turn right ; center of the back = move forward. The pressure denotes speed. No touch = Stop.



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**Complete the image :** Two people shake hands and freeze. The leader ask the spectators what story they see. One person then comes out of that frozen pictures, leaving an incomplete image. A volunteer comes and complete the image to make another story.

**Remeber the image :** One volunteer stands in front of the rest of the group. The group is asked to close their eyes by the leader. Then, the volunteer moulds himself into a frozen image. The leader asks people to open their eyes for a couple of seconds, memorize the picture, then close their eyes again and recreates the picture.

**Two by Three by Bradford :** In pairs, begin counting : 1, 2, 3... Each partner saying one number at a time. Once this has been mastered, replace the count number 1 with a sound, then number 2 with a physical action and number 3 with both sound and physical action. (You can also run this exercise with the group standing in circle)



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## **Theatre-Forum**

Forum Theatre is a type of theatre created by the innovative and influential practitioner Augusto Boal as part of what he calls his "Theatre of the Oppressed." While practicing earlier in his career, Boal would apply 'simultaneous dramaturgy'. In this process the actors or audience members could stop a performance, often a short scene in which a character was being oppressed in some way.

The audience would suggest different actions for the actors to carry out on-stage in an attempt to change the outcome of what they were seeing. This was an attempt to undo the traditional actor partition and bring audience members into the performance, to have an input into the dramatic action they were watching.

## **Work in team**

Man is a social being thus he needs to interact with people. Almost every individual has experienced, in one way or another, how it is to work in a group – from his childhood games to wherever he is now earning his living. Unfortunately, not every group succeeds in its objectives or goals. Failure is a possible consequence whenever we get into a challenge.

However, we can always avoid this much dreaded "failure" if every member of a group would not fail to use or exercise TEAMWORK. Yes, every group of people must not only work as a GROUP where every individual works for his



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own advantage, but instead, every one should work as part of a TEAM – where he is working towards a common goal. When these “small contributions” build up, success is hardly unforeseeable.

How can a person work as part of a TEAM? It's actually so easy: just remember the word TEAMWORK as a guideline. Also remember that all these should work together – should be there hand in hand from the conception of the team to the achievement of the final goal. No one of these can be enough and can work in isolation to be able to come up with a successful team.

### **T is for Talent**

By talent, I mean a person's knowledge or capabilities. It is of course quite necessary for a member of a team to be knowledgeable about the work that his team is going to do. Where can these knowledge be gained? Knowledge can explicitly be learned from some useful handbooks on whatever you are working on. However, implicit knowledge – that which is acquired through experience and practice, is found to be much more useful.

### **E is for Enthusiasm**

But as we will later realize, talent alone is not enough. A knowledgeable team member must also be enthusiastic. He must seek responsibility, he must find ways to make the talents he has useful. He must always have the energy and the drive to work. Eventually, this enthusiasm will naturally come out of him and he will realize that his example becomes so inspiring



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and motivating enough for his other teammates to work – without him asking them any demands.

### **A is for Accountability**

Every member is accountable not only to his team but to all his other work mates. We are not responsible only of ourselves. It is everyone's responsibility to keep others informed. Whenever someone keeps on forgetting what he needs to do, it is our responsibility to keep him reminded. What he failed to do is a reflection of what we were also not able to do ourselves.

### **M is for Management**

Every member must know his specialization relative to what his other teammates can do best. A good organization is really needed in proper distribution of work. The best member of any group is he who demands work based on what he can do. When we are assigned to do or work on something, we must also know where to go for help (just in case we couldn't work out on something), and when those help must be asked. Ultimately, it is every group member's responsibility to ensure that everyone has a work to do and that every one is always the best man for his job.

### **W is for Work-able**

When a person has all the talents and the enthusiasm in the world and yet he doesn't have free time to work, it all turns out useless. Availability of every member is very much needed to work as a team. If no one's there, who do you expect to pursue the team's goals? This work-ability is not all about free-



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time, however, it also entails a large amount of adaptability.

Every member must be able to expect different possibilities and must know how to react on them should they arise in the course of events.

### **O is for Openness**

Understanding among team members is a necessity in every team for every member to be able to work in the best of his abilities. Everyone must be open to new ideas and suggestions. Everyone must have the capability to understand people. It is in keeping the communication lines open that the team can more efficiently achieve its goals.

### **R is for Respect**

Every team member must be able to practice respect so that he can expect to be respected in return. A team could discuss things and every member could voice out his own opinion in whatever matter they are discussing without degrading his teammate or his teammate's suggestions no matter how irrational they are. It is one thing to listen and be able to humbly object and it is another thing to just avoid to listen. Whenever a team is brainstorming, everyone must be able to raise his opinions without having any hard feelings.

### **K is for Keeness**

Keeness is the final key in working as a part of a team. It is more than enthusiasm. Enthusiasm comes before doing the actual work. This keeness – this intensity, is manifested while going through the work itself. It is what pushes us to move on and keep on working until we are finally done.





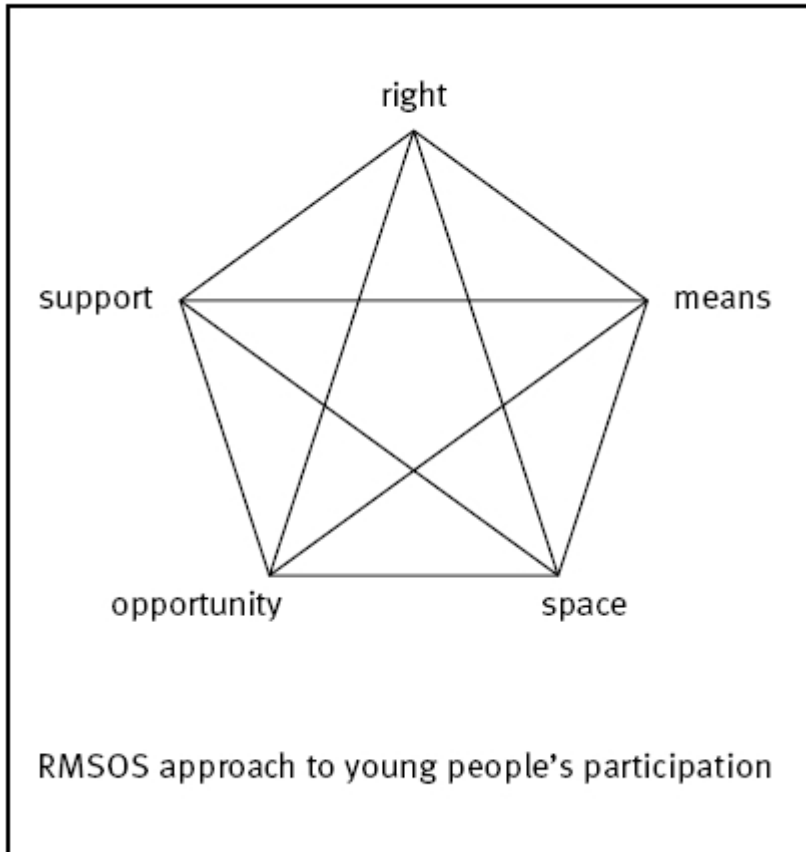
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## RMSOS Approach

### RMSOS picture



The RMSOS framework is a means of assessing the extent to which each of the five main factors influencing



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youth participation is present within a project, initiative, organisation or in community life.

## **Right**

Young people have an implicit right to participate and, as has been already mentioned in Chapter 1, it is referred to as a human right or citizen's right. Ideally, there should be a law at local and/or regional level stating that young people have to be consulted and have the right to participate in issues, actions and decisions affecting them. But even in communities where no such law officially exists, young people have a right to participate. In other words, it is not dependent on local or regional authorities to grant such a right, but it is a fundamental right that all young people have and should demand.

Young people should be active in promoting their rights. In practice, this means much more than influencing local decisions by consultations or voting. It implies that the activities, projects or organisations should promote rights that young people have in all areas of life, and this means not only civil or political rights, but also social, economic or cultural ones.

## **Means**

Life can be more difficult for young people who have insufficient resources in life (financial resources, for example) and who live in poverty due to unemployment or other difficult



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culties. This may mean that their basic needs like food or shelter are not met and they may feel isolated or left out of society as a result. It is natural that, in such circumstances, the priority is to try to look for different ways of obtaining the missing resources and, as a result, young people might lack the time or motivation to participate in the life of an organisation or community. In order to encourage young people to get involved, therefore, it has to be ensured that basic needs are met. These include sufficient social security, education, housing, health care, transportation, know-how and access to technology.

## Space

Young people need physical space to meet, to spend time or to organise their own activities. As far as participation in school activities or other organised curricula is concerned, facilities are usually provided (in classrooms, gyms or youth clubs, for example). But it is much more difficult for young people to find a place to meet in if they are interested in getting involved in non-organised initiatives. That is why we are seeing the Internet being used more and more frequently by young people as a space for exchanging views or even setting up projects with other likeminded people.

But this RMSOS factor is not only about physical space, it is much more about the space to participate within the institutional framework of policy making. This essentially means that young people's views, recommendations and



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conclusions should have a real impact on decisions that are made. Very often young people are invited to participate in processes, but in fact they have little possibility to influence and shape the final outcome. This is called “token representation”.

## **Opportunity**

In order to be able to participate actively young people need to be provided with the opportunity to do so. This means, for example, that young people must have easy access to information on how to get involved, what the opportunities available are and where they are. When they know what is going on in their local community in terms of youth participation they can make informed decisions about their involvement. It is sometimes the case that young people do not participate, not because they have no interest, but simply because they do not get information about existing opportunities.

Secondly, events, decision-making processes and systems need to be youth-friendly. There should not only be space for young people within these processes and structures, but the way they are organised and the way they work should be such that young people can understand them and can fully contribute if they so wish. It therefore has to be ensured, for example, that young people have the opportunity to participate in terms of having sufficient time and supportive structures.



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## Support

Young people have lots of talent and the potential to participate, but without the necessary support, their involvement might not be as efficient as it could be. They should have access to various forms of support.

These include, for example, financial, moral and institutional support at a number of different levels – personal, organisational or at local community level. Ideally, local authorities should provide adequate financial support to cover expenses and structural costs, but it is still the case that in many communities, youth issues do not have priority in terms of local financial management.

Young people also need to have access to moral support and advice. This can be provided, for example, by a person referred to in the revised charter as a guarantor<sup>32</sup> or, alternatively, by a youth worker or other professional who has the necessary experience and expertise in working in the field of youth-adult partnerships or in working with young people. Lastly, the institution or community as a whole needs to support and recognise the importance and contribution of youth participation, not only for young people, but also for public authorities and society in general.



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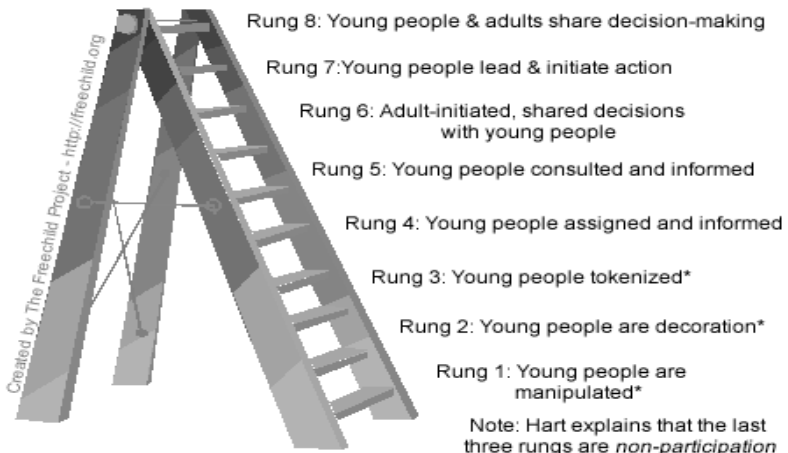


## Ladder of Young People's Participation

### About the Ladder

Sociologist Roger Hart wrote a book called Children's Participation: The Theory And Practice Of Involving Young Citizens In Community Development And Environmental Care for UNICEF in 1997. This groundbreaking work put the work of young people and adult allies around the world in the context of a global movement for participation, offering needed guidance and criticism of many efforts. The "Ladder of Children's Participation," also called the "Ladder of Youth Participation," is one of many significant tools from the book.

### Roger Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation



Adapted from Hart, R. (1992). *Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship*. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.



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## Exploring the Rungs of Participation

8) Young people-initiated, shared decisions with adults. This happens when projects or programs are initiated by young people and decision-making is shared between young people and adults. These projects empower young people while at the same time enabling them to access and learn from the life experience and expertise of adults. Learn more about youth/adult partnerships.

7) Young people-initiated and directed. This step is when young people initiate and direct a project or program. Adults are involved only in a supportive role. Learn more about youth-led activism.

6) Adult-initiated, shared decisions with young people. Occurs when projects or programs are initiated by adults but the decision-making is shared with the young people. Learn more about participatory action research.

5) Consulted and informed. Happens when young people give advice on projects or programs designed and run by adults. The young people are informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of the decisions made by adults. Learn more about youth advisory councils.

4) Assigned but informed. This is where young people are assigned a specific role and informed about how and why they are being involved. Learn more about community youth boards.

3) Tokenism. When young people appear to be given a voice,



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but in fact have little or no choice about what they do or how they participate. Learn more about adultism.

2) Decoration. Happens when young people are used to help or "bolster" a cause in a relatively indirect way, although adults do not pretend that the cause is inspired by young people. Learn more about adultism.

1) Manipulation. Happens where adults use young people to support causes and pretend that the causes are inspired by young people. Learn more about adultism.

## **The 7/8 Debate**

Roger Hart's Ladder of Participation shows young people-initiated, shared decisions with adults as the top form of young people's participation, followed immediately by young people-initiated and directed. This is somewhat controversial an issue for many people working with and around young people. Essentially, the debate is which of these levels of participation is actually the most meaningful?

Many believe that shared decision making is most beneficial to both young people and adults. Others believe that young people are most empowered when they are making decisions without the influence of adults. Most often, this doesn't exclude adults but reduces their role to that of support.

Both arguments have merit; ultimately, it is up the each group to determine which form of decision-making best fits with the





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groups' needs.

## **Intercultural Game : the Islands**

There is an island where two tribes live. Tribe Y lives in the upland hilly regions and tribe Z lives by the coast. They co-exist side by side and rarely have contact with each other.

The two tribes have different languages and different cultures, although for both tribes balloons have a special significance. In tribe Y, people put great value on the diversity of balloons for religious reasons and try to collect as many different types, shapes and colours as possible. In tribe Z people use balloons, particularly round, red ones for medical purposes.

Recently the people in tribe Z have begun to suffer from a strange illness for which, according to legend there is only one cure, a rare type of balloon which can only be found in an unknown location on the island. Luckily for them there is a map which has been handed down over the generations which they are sure will lead them to the new balloon they need.

Unfortunately, many years ago the map was almost destroyed in a war, tribe Z only has a part of it. Legend has it that tribe Y has the other half.

The aim of the game is for tribe Y to protect their balloons and for tribe Z find the medicine they need. However, as in real life, the participants may find that there are other unexpected outcomes.



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**Revised European Charter on the Participation of  
Young People in Local and Regional Life  
Charter without the status of a convention  
Adopted by the Congress of Local and Regional  
Authorities of Europe  
(10th session – 21 May 2003 – Appendix to the  
Recommendation 128)**

## **Introduction**

The foundation for what was to become the revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life was laid at the first and second conference on youth policies, organised by the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, in Lausanne (June 1988) and in Llangollen (September 1991) respectively. Soon after, in March 1992, the Standing Conference adopted Resolution 237 and Article 22 thereof on the adoption of the Charter.

To celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, in partnership with the Council of Europe's Directorate for Youth and Sport, organised a conference entitled "Young People – Actors in their Towns and Regions".



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The general purpose of the conference held in Krakow on 7 and 8 March 2002 was to evaluate the progress made in the field of youth participation during the Charter's ten years of existence, while discussing ways of further promoting youth participation, amongst others by disseminating good practices.

The participants at the conference adopted the Krakow Declaration in which they reaffirm that young people are citizens in the municipalities and regions where they live, in the same way as any other age group, and must therefore have access to all forms of participation in society and that reaffirming and promoting the role of young people in the development of a democratic society, in particular in local and regional public life, was endorsed and re-established.

Moreover, the conference constituted a contribution to the Council of Europe Integrated Project "Making Democratic Institutions Work".

The participants furthermore called for a response to new challenges faced by young people in contemporary society. Consequently they requested the CLRAE and the Advisory Council on Youth Questions of the Council of Europe to appoint experts to prepare proposals for amending the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life in order also to make it respond to new challenges of the twenty-first century such as the information society and urban insecurity.

The working meetings were convened at the end of 2002 and the beginning of 2003.



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The deliberations of these working meetings provide the basis of the present version of the Charter. This version of the Charter is divided into three sections. The first provides local and regional authorities with guidelines for how to conduct policies affecting young people in a number of areas. The second part provides the tools for furthering the participation of young people. Finally, the third section provides advice on how to provide institutional conditions for participation of young people.

## **Preamble**

The active participation of young people in decisions and actions at local and regional level is essential if we are to build more democratic, inclusive and prosperous societies. Participation in the democratic life of any community is about more than voting or standing for election, although these are important elements.

Participation and active citizenship is about having the right, the means, the space and the opportunity and where necessary the support to participate in and influence decisions and engage in actions and activities so as to contribute to building a better society.

Local and regional authorities, as the authorities closest to the young person, have a very important role to play in promoting youth participation. In doing so, local and regional



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authorities can ensure that young people not only hear and learn about

democracy and citizenship, but rather have the opportunity to practice it.

However, youth participation is not solely about developing active citizens or building democracy for the future. It is vital, if participation is to be meaningful for young people, that they can influence and shape decisions and actions when they are young and not only at some later stage in life.

When local and regional authorities support and promote youth participation they also contribute to the social integration of young people, helping them to deal not only with the challenges and pressures of youth, but also with the challenges of a modern society where anonymity and individualism are often predominant. However, for youth participation in local and regional life to be successful, lasting and meaningful requires more than the development or restructuring of political or administrative systems. Any policy or action designed to promote youth participation must ensure that the cultural environment is one of respect for young people and must also take into account the diverse needs, circumstances and aspirations of young people. And it must involve some element of fun and enjoyment.



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## Principles

1. The participation of young people in local and regional life must constitute part of a global policy of citizens' participation in public life, as set out in Recommendation Rec (2001) 19 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the participation of citizens in local public life.
2. Local and regional authorities are convinced that all sectoral policies should have a youth dimension. They therefore undertake to comply with the provisions of this charter and to implement the various forms of participation, which follow in consultation and co-operation with young people and their representatives.
3. The principles and various forms of participation advocated in this charter apply to all young people without discrimination. In order to achieve this, special attention should be paid to promoting the participation in local and regional life of young people from disadvantaged sectors of society and from ethnic, national, social, sexual, cultural, religious and linguistic minorities.

### **Part I: Sectoral policies.**

#### ***1.1 A policy for sport, leisure and associative life.***

4. Local and regional authorities should support organised socio-cultural activities – run by youth associations and organisations, youth groups and community centres – which,



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together with the family and school or work, are one of the pillars of social cohesion in the municipality or region; these are an ideal channel for youth participation and the implementation of youth policies in the fields of sport, culture, crafts and trades, artistic and other forms of creation and expression, as well as in the field of social action.

5. In order to develop the local and regional youth association sector, local and regional authorities should through appropriate measures lend their support, in particular to organisations which train facilitators and leaders of youth clubs and organisations, as well as youth workers, who play a vital part in life at local and regional level.

6. Local and regional authorities should encourage associations to promote the active participation of young people in their statutory bodies.

### ***1.2 A policy to promote youth employment and combat unemployment***

7. The economic and social conditions that young people experience impact upon their willingness and ability to participate in their local community. When young people are unemployed or living in poverty they are less likely to have the desire, resources and social support to be active citizens in local and regional life. Young people who are unemployed are likely to be among the most excluded in society and therefore local and regional authorities should develop policies and promote initiatives to reduce youth unemployment.



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8. Therefore, local and regional authorities should:

- develop policies and programmes in concertation with young people (including those who are unemployed or at risk of being unemployed), local employers, trade unions, education, training and employment authorities and youth organisations to address the causes of youth unemployment and promote employment opportunities for young people;
- establish local employment centres to provide specialist help and support to young unemployed people in finding meaningful and stable work. Young unemployed people should have the right to be involved in the management of these centres if they so wish;
- support the establishment of businesses, enterprises and co-operatives by young people or groups of young people by providing funding and other support such as premises, equipment, training and professional advice;
- encourage experimentation by young people with the social economy, community self-help initiatives or co-operatives.

### ***1.3 Urban environment and habitat, housing policy, and transport***

9. Together with representatives of youth organisations, local and regional authorities should create conditions for developing an urban environment policy based on a more integrated, less fragmented living environment which is conducive to social interaction and the development of high-quality public spaces.





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10. Local and regional authorities should pursue housing and urban environment policies which closely involve young people in consultation arrangements bringing together locally or regionally elected representatives, economic decision makers, leaders of associations and architects. Their aim is:

- to draw up programmes for a more harmonious environment conducive to personal self-fulfilment and the development of real solidarity between the generations;
- to develop a concerted policy on the urban environment that takes account of residents' social and intercultural realities in the drawing up of housing and/or housing renovation programmes.

11. In close co-operation with youth organisations, tenants' organisations and/or consumer organisations, social housing agencies and social workers, local and regional authorities should promote the development of, or develop within existing social structures:

- local information services on housing for young people;
- local schemes (e.g. low-cost loans, rent guarantee systems) to help young people gain access to housing.

12. The mobility of young people is made possible through easy access to public transport, of which they are the main users. This mobility is indispensable for participation in social life and for being full citizens.

13. Young people should therefore be involved in the organisation of public transport, at both local and regional



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



level. Specially adapted rates should allow the most disadvantaged young people to travel.

14. In rural areas, mobility and transport are a fundamental necessity for quality of life and not just necessary to facilitate participation. Therefore, local and regional authorities should support rural transport initiatives that seek to provide transport services (public or private, individual or collective) and increase mobility in rural areas for groups such as young people who are currently excluded due to lack of means of transport.

I.4 An education and training policy promoting youth participation

15. School is an institution in which young people not only spend a considerable proportion of their lives and where they undertake a formal educational programme; it is also a place where many of their views and perspectives on life are shaped. It is essential that young people learn about participation and democracy while in school and that courses on democracy, participation and citizenship are available and properly resourced. However school must also be a place where young people experience democracy in action and where their participation in decision-making is supported, promoted and is seen as effective.

***Therefore:***

- local and regional authorities should actively encourage the participation of young people in school life. They should



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



provide financial and other supports such as meeting facilities to enable young people to establish democratic school student associations. These associations should be independent and self-governing, and if they want to, they should have the right to participate in decisions concerning the management of the school in partnership with the teachers and school authorities.

- where local and regional authorities are responsible for school curricula, they should ensure that students and student associations are consulted on an ongoing basis concerning curricula and their development. They should also ensure that civic and political education is incorporated into school curricula and given the necessary prominence and resources in the educational programme of all students.

### **1.5 A policy for mobility and exchanges**

16. Local and regional authorities should support those associations or groups which favour the mobility of young people (young workers, students, or volunteers) through exchange policies, and develop networking policies and an awareness of European citizenship.

17. Local and regional authorities should encourage young people, their organizations and their schools to participate actively in international twinning activities, all types of exchanges, and European networks. These authorities should be ready to give them financial support, in order to promote language learning and intercultural exchanges, as well as exchanges of experience.



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



18. They should include young people and/or their representatives in the twinning committees and other organs responsible for implementing these exchanges.

### ***1.6 A health policy***

19. With a view to promoting the emergence and implementation of projects that originate from young people and promote both the development of the concept of all-round health and the dynamics of community life, local and regional authorities should create or develop institutional machinery for consultation between youth organisations, elected representatives and all social and professional groups concerned with social welfare and the promotion of health.

20. Faced with the ravages of tobacco, alcohol and drug abuse among young people, local and regional authorities should introduce, develop or promote, together with representatives of youth organisations and of health services, local information policies and counselling facilities for young people affected by these problems, as well as special training policies for young social workers and for voluntary workers and leaders of organisations operating prevention and rehabilitation strategies for the young people concerned.

21. In view of the current increase in sexually transmitted diseases, local and regional authorities should intensify information campaigns and preventive measures aimed at young people, thus promoting within the community a spirit of solidarity engendering social relationships in which moral judgments and segregation have no place. Young people and



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



the representatives of local youth organisations and of health services should be closely involved in the design and implementation of these information and action programmes.

### ***1.7 A gender equality policy***

22. As part of their policies to create optimum conditions for equal participation by women and men in local and regional affairs, local and regional authorities should take affirmative action in support of the access of young men and women to positions of responsibility within professional life, associations, politics and local and regional authorities.

23. Within the limits of their powers, local and regional authorities should promote, from early childhood onwards, an educational policy of equality between women and men.

24. To promote a policy of equality between women and men, local and regional authorities should:

- draw up a medium-term plan with the aim of eliminating inequalities between young men and young women;
- Implement and evaluate measures which promote equal opportunities for girls and young women.

25. In order to achieve this aim, these policies should in particular enable girls and young women:

- to receive specific information on training courses leading to professional qualifications;
- to learn occupational skills by offering grants and specific courses of study in professions including those which have traditionally been filled by men;



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



- to train them in the running of public affairs by entrusting them with responsibilities at the highest level, on the basis of a quota of places reserved for women;
- to introduce financial measures for social services which assist girls and young women.

### ***1.8 A specific policy for rural regions***

26. Local and regional authorities need to take into account the different needs of young people in rural areas when developing or establishing actions and activities to promote youth participation. Therefore, they should:

- ensure that educational, employment, housing, transport and other sectoral policies reflect and address the special needs of young people living in rural areas.

These policies should help young people who want to live in rural areas to do so.

Young people living in rural areas should not have to endure or expect a lower level of social services and provision than those living in urban areas;

- provide financial and other support to youth organisations and other community organisations active in rural areas. These organisations can stimulate social and cultural life in rural communities and can be an important social outlet for young people. Youth and other community organisations not only play an important role in encouraging youth participation; they can also enhance the quality of life and combat problems such as rural isolation.



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



### ***1.9 A policy on access to culture***

27. Art and culture exist in forms that are both multiple and constantly changing, according to tastes, places and period. They are, however, part of the past, present and future personal and collective heritage, to which successive generations contribute. They are, in a way, the reflection of each society. Young people, through their practice of culture and their capacity for initiative, exploration and innovation, build and play a role in these cultural developments. It is therefore important to allow them access to culture in all its forms and to promote their possibilities for creative activity including in new fields.

28. Local and regional authorities should therefore adopt, in association with young people and their organisations, policies designed to allow them to become cultural actors, with access to knowledge, the practice of culture and creative activity in places and using methods designed for that purpose.

### ***1.10 A policy for sustainable development and for the environment***

29. Faced with an increasingly obvious deterioration of the environment, local and regional authorities should give financial support to educational projects in schools and associations, in order to raise awareness of environmental problems.

30. Aware that environmental problems are of primary concern to the young people who will be obliged in the future to cope with the consequences of past mistakes, local and regional



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



authorities should support activities and projects which promote sustainable development and environmental protection and which involve young people and their organisations.

### ***1.11 A policy to combat violence and crime***

31. Bearing in mind that the victims of crime and violence are often young people, and recognising the necessity of finding adequate responses to the crime and violence in contemporary society, as well as the need to involve young people directly in combating these problems;

32. Local and regional authorities should:

- include young people in crime prevention councils, where these exist;
- work in particular with young people who risk being involved in crime or who have already been involved in crime;
- combat racist violence by all means available;
- tackle all forms of violence in schools. This should be done in co-operation with all relevant actors, such as educational and police authorities, teachers, parents and young people themselves;
- contribute to the creation of networks of associations and projects promoting non-violence projects and tolerance both in school and out of school;
- do their utmost to protect young people from sexual exploitation, abuse or other forms of maltreatment and provide





Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



structures that provide psychological and material support and confidential consultation to victims.

33. In implementing the above, local and regional authorities contribute towards building a climate of trust and respect between young people and public authorities such as the police.

### ***1.12 An anti-discrimination policy***

34. Local and regional authorities should actively promote human rights and measures to counter discrimination against minorities (including their young members) or against young people with disabilities and other population groups that may suffer discrimination, and should promote the development of multicultural communities through the integration of minorities, taking account of their diverse needs and customs, cultures and lifestyles.

35. In this connection, local and regional authorities should:

- pass or reinforce anti-discrimination legislation so as to ensure equal access for all citizens to public places, to vocational training, to schooling, to housing, to cultural activities and to other areas of life. Such access should be monitored and guaranteed by joint bodies comprising local government representatives and representatives of minorities and young people themselves;
- foster inter-religious dialogue, multicultural, anti-racist education and education against discrimination as part of the school curriculum.

### ***1.13 A policy on sexuality***



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



36. During their transition from childhood dependence on family, school, religious community or other “authorities” towards an autonomous adult life, young people may be faced with a variety of questions on issues connected to their personal relationships (within the family or close circle, with their peers, with their friend or partner). The emergence and exercise of their sexuality is not always easy, even if they are not ready to admit it. In addition, there is a persistent ignorance surrounding issues of sexual health and mistrust towards official attitudes concerning the risks of certain sexual behaviours.

37. In order to help young people find their way in this area towards a healthy and fulfilling affective life, local and regional authorities, in association with parents, schools and organisations specialised in this field, should promote and support:

- non-directive sex education in schools;
- organisations and services offering information about relationships, sexual methods and family planning;
- peer group work in this field.

38. Young people should be actively associated with the planning, implementation and evaluation of information and other services aimed at young people in this field.

#### ***1.14 A policy of access to rights and law***

39. In order to live together, societies are based on rules which must be respected by all. In democratic societies, these rules are discussed and adopted by the citizens' elected



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



representatives and given concrete expression, particularly in legislative texts which bestow rights and obligations upon all persons.

40. As these texts increase in number, it is more and more difficult for the individual to know, respect and apply them, thus creating disparities between citizens. Young people are the most naturally concerned by this phenomenon.

41. Local and regional authorities should therefore facilitate young people's access to their rights:

- by developing their knowledge through the dissemination of information, particularly in schools, peer groups and information services;
- by the application of their rights through the support of services designed to work alongside young people who desire this;
- by allowing young people to participate in the drawing-up of new rules.

### ***Part II: Instruments for youth participation***

42. In order to achieve real youth participation a certain number of instruments need to be placed at young people's disposal. This entails developing participation training for young people, keeping them informed, providing them with means of communication, supporting their projects, and recognising and giving a higher profile to young people's dedication to community causes and voluntary work.



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



Participation only takes on full meaning where young people's role in political parties, trade unions and associations is acknowledged and, above all, where an effort is made to promote youth associations set up with and by young people themselves.

## **II.1 Training in youth participation**

43. Local and regional authorities, conscious of the dominant role that the school plays in the life of young people, should provide, in the school environment, support and training in youth participation, human rights education and non-formal learning in schools. They should also provide training and support for the participation of young people in associative life and in their local community by promoting:

- vocational training for teachers and youth workers in the practice of youth participation;
- all forms of participation of pupils in schools;
- civic education programmes in schools;
- peer-group education, by providing the necessary space and means and by supporting the exchange of good practice.

## **II.2 Informing young people**

44. Information is often a key to participation, and the right of young people to have access to information about opportunities and matters which concern them is increasingly recognised in official European and international documents,<sup>1</sup> and not only in the context of local and regional life.



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



45. In order to participate in activities and in the life of their community, or to benefit from services and opportunities aimed at them, young people need to know about them. Participating in activities and projects of interest to them and which they organise themselves is often a step in a process encouraging their deeper involvement in the community, including its political life.

46. Local and regional authorities should therefore support and improve existing information and counselling centres for young people, in order to ensure that they provide services of quality that meet the needs expressed by young people. Where such centres do not exist, local and regional authorities and other relevant actors should promote and assist the creation of adequate information services for young people, inter alia, through existing structures such as schools, youth service and libraries. Specific measures should be taken to meet the information needs of groups of young people who have difficulty in accessing information (language barriers, no access to the Internet, etc.).

47. Information services for young people must conform to certain professional principles and standards.<sup>2</sup> Public authorities are encouraged to guarantee such standards and to promote their continual improvement, where possible in accordance with a set of nationally (or regionally) agreed quality measures and standards. Young people should have the possibility to participate in the preparation, implementation and



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



evaluation of the activities and products of youth information centres/services and be represented in their governing bodies.

### **II.3 Promoting youth participation through information and communication technologies**

48. Information and communication technologies can offer new possibilities for informing and allowing the participation of young people. They can be used to exchange a wide variety of information, and thanks to their inter-activity, to increase the participation of young people. Local and regional authorities should therefore use these technologies in their information and participation policies, on the condition that access to them is guaranteed for all young people in terms of places of access to and training in these new tools.

### **II.4 Promoting young people's participation in the media**

49. Whilst young people are major media consumers, they can also be actors in this field by increasing the possibilities they are given to express themselves and participate in the production of the information supplied by the media. Through their way of dealing with certain subjects, they allow different and often more accessible information to be provided for their peers. This participation also allows young people to understand the construction of information and to develop the necessary critical faculty. 50. Local and regional authorities should therefore support the creation and the functioning of the media (radio, television, the written and electronic press, etc.) developed by and for young people, as well as relevant training programmes.



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



## **II.5 Encouraging young people to undertake voluntary work and dedicate themselves to community causes**

51. Young people should be supported and encouraged to engage in voluntary activity. At a time when young people are under increasing pressure to perform and succeed as individuals in education and in the world of work, it is important that volunteerism is promoted and recognised. Therefore, local and regional authorities should:

- support the establishment of volunteer centres and develop initiatives aimed at supporting and promoting the involvement of young people in voluntary activity such as information and promotional campaigns.
- in partnership with young people, voluntary organisations, educational authorities and employers, develop systems which recognise and validate voluntary activity in the formal education system and in employment.

## **II.6 Support for young people's projects and initiatives.**

52. Through their hopes and their desires, young people have many ideas which can be translated into projects and local activities that are beneficial to all. Given proper support, these projects, and their successes as well as their failures, can also help young people to develop their sense of responsibility and their autonomy, thus becoming social actors. Local and regional authorities should therefore facilitate the implementation of these projects, be they small- or large-scale, by allowing them to be accompanied in their execution by



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



professionals and to have access to financial, material and technical assistance.

## **II.7 Promoting young people's organisations**

53. Youth organisations are unique in that they are primarily focused on reflecting the views and serving the needs and interests of young people. They also provide a space where young people can learn and experience the opportunities and challenges of participating in decisions and actions with other young people. They

can be structured organisations or they can be informal groups of young people. It is important that young people have the opportunity to join a youth organisation of their choice in their community if they so wish. Young people should also have the right and be supported to establish their own organisations if they want to.

Therefore:

- local and regional authorities should have a specific budget designated solely for supporting youth organisations that run activities or provide services or act as the voice of young people in the community and advocate on their behalf. Preference should be given to organisations that are run by and for young people and/or have policies and systems in place to enable active youth participation;
- local and regional authorities should develop the Council of Europe comanagement principle and system of decision-making in partnership with young people and youth organisations in policy areas of relevance to young people. It is





Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



important that where such co-management structures are put in place, young people and youth organisations are respected as full partners and also have the choice not to participate if they so wish.

## **II.8 Youth participation in non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and political parties**

54. A vibrant, independent and active non-governmental sector is an essential element of any truly democratic society. It is also important that other sectors of civil society such as political parties are strong and active at a local and regional level.

Participation in the democratic life of any country, region or locality is about more than voting every few years. That is why participation in NGOs and political parties is so important, because they help citizens to be involved in, and influence, decisions and actions on an ongoing basis. Therefore it is crucial that young people are encouraged and supported to participate in associative life in their communities.

55. Local and regional authorities should provide financial and other resources to NGOs which actively promote the participation of young people in their activities and democratic decision-making structures and procedures.

56. Local and regional authorities, in partnership with political parties and in a nonpartisan manner, should promote the involvement of young people in the party political system in general, and support specific actions, such as training.



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



### **Part III: Institutional participation by young people in local and regional affairs**

57. In order to carry out the sectoral policies set out in part one, local and regional authorities should undertake to put in place the appropriate structures or arrangements enabling the participation of young people in the decisions and debates affecting them.

58. These structures will take on different forms according to the level at which they are established, be it that of a village, a town, an urban neighbourhood within a city, or even a region. They should create the conditions for genuine dialogue and partnership between young people and local and regional authorities and they should enable young people and their representatives to be full actors in the policies affecting them. Such structures should normally be representative and permanent, dealing with all matters in which young people express an interest. In addition it can be envisaged that an ad hoc structure can be made to debate or act upon a specific issue. On occasion it may be appropriate to combine different forms.

#### **III.1 Youth councils, youth parliaments, youth forums.**

59. Effective participation of young people in local and regional affairs should be based on their awareness of the social and cultural changes taking place within their community, and requires a permanent representative structure such as a youth council, a youth parliament or a youth forum.



Education and Culture DG

### 'Youth in Action' Programme



60. Such a structure may be composed by election, or by appointment from within organisations of young people and/or on a voluntary basis. Its membership should reflect the community's sociological make-up.

61. Young people should assume direct responsibility for projects and play an active part in the related policies. For this purpose, local and regional authorities should create or support structures for active participation.

62. These structures provide the physical framework for the free expression by young people of their concerns, particularly as regards the raising of such concerns with the authorities, and the possibility of making proposals to them. Issues to be raised might reflect those laid out in Part I of the present Charter.

63. The roles of such a structure might include:

- providing a forum for the free expression by young people of their concerns, relating, inter alia, to proposals and policies of the authorities;
- offering the possibility for young people to make proposals to the local and regional authorities;
- enabling authorities to consult young people on specific issues;
- providing a forum where projects involving young people are developed, monitored and evaluated;
- providing a forum to facilitate consultation with young people's associations and organisations;



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



- facilitating the participation of young people in other consultative bodies of the local and regional authorities.

64. By giving young people the opportunity to speak and act on the problems affecting them, such structures provide training in democratic life and the management of public affairs.

65. Young people should therefore be encouraged to participate in such structures and the activities undertaken within their framework, in order to promote their capacities for learning about and practicing the principles of democratic citizenship. Particularly for those young people who are instigators of projects and dialogue with the authorities, such structures should also provide a forum for training in democratic leadership.

66. The local and regional authorities, and the young people themselves, will also benefit from the multiplier effect that the act of participation by young people in such structures can bring, particularly in terms of encouraging young people in the exercise of their civic rights, such as participation in elections and other forms of polling including referenda.

### **III.2 Support for structures of youth participation**

67. In order to function effectively, institutional structures of youth participation (whether they are formal or informal) require resources and support. To this end, local and regional authorities should provide such structures with the space, financial means and material support necessary for the purpose of ensuring their smooth and effective operation. The provision of such means does not exclude such structures from seeking



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



additional financial and material support from other sources, such as private foundations and companies.

68. Local and regional authorities should ensure that the provision of support to structures of youth participation is guaranteed. To this end, they should appoint a guarantor – a person or group of persons – to follow implementation of support measures, to whom the structures can address themselves in case of need.

69. Such a person or group of persons should be independent from the political structures and from the structures of youth participation, and nomination is agreed upon by both of the above.

70. In addition to guaranteeing the above-mentioned support, the functions of this person(s) could include:

- acting as the interface between young people and the elected local and regional representatives on any issue raised by either of these;
- acting as the advocate for young people vis-à-vis the local and regional authorities in situations of tension between the two;
- acting as a channel through which local and regional authorities can communicate with young people;
- preparing regular reports for the attention of young people and the local and regional authorities in order to evaluate the level of participation by young people in local and regional life, for example through the implementation of projects or involvement in structures of youth participation, and the impact of their participation.



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



## **The strategy intends to:**

- set out our vision for participation
- clarify what participation involves,
- outline the legislative framework and benefits of participation
  - identify good practice to date
- outline areas for further development and steps to achieve this
- clarify the role of the participation strategy group in supporting the implementation of the strategy and in monitoring its effectiveness.



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



## Participation

Is the process by which individuals can influence decision-making and bring about change. This could mean individuals influencing decisions about their own lives, for example children who are supported by social care and health influencing their care plans, or it could mean young people influencing service planning, delivery and evaluation.

There are many examples of participation. The following is not an exhaustive list:

- Recruiting and selecting staff
- Peer mentoring
- Deciding how money should be spent
- Planning, running and evaluating events
- Being on forums or councils that lead to change
- Assessing learning
- Involvement in commissioning services (identifying needs, drawing up service specifications, assessing tenders, inspecting services)
- Lobbying elected members
- Making positive changes in your local area.



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



## Consultation

Is the process by which children and young people are asked their opinions. Consultation requires a commitment to listen, give due weight to the views expressed and feed back outcomes to the children and young people consulted.

It can be informal and everyday a social worker or a youth worker seeking the views of individual children or young people, for instance – or it can be formal and one off a public body consulting on the voting age, for example.

## The Benefits of Participation

Our ambition to enable all children and young people to have the opportunity to participate in decisions which affect their lives is also driven by the belief that the process of participation brings about many benefits and improves outcomes:

### **For children and young people, through:**

- Skill development, aspiration raising and confidence building
- Raising their awareness and knowledge about services and how organisations work
- Promoting active citizenship
- Enabling children and young people to make a positive contribution

### **For the community through**

- Building a shared understanding





Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



- A sense of belonging across generations
- A more vibrant local democracy
- Developing a positive image of children and young people as Citizens.

### **For service providers through**

- Services meeting actual rather than assumed needs and thus leading to better value for money
- Children and young people bringing fresh perspectives and new ideas about services
- Feedback from children and young people leading to improved Services.

## **YOUTH IN FRONTLINE Principles for Participation**

1. *All* children and young people should have an equal opportunity to participate, should they choose to, so we will work to support those who face the greatest barriers
2. Children and young people should have the opportunity to participate in an age-appropriate way
3. Participation needs to lead to positive outcomes which are agreed with and communicated to children and young people
4. *All* organisations working with children and young people should work together to support and promote participation
5. We value all children and young people and will promote their successes



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



6. Organisations should seek to actively involve children and young people, rather than simply consult

## Key Conclusions

1. Active participation of young people is not a key principle in policies concerned with young people' transitions to work.
2. It tends to be limited to 'soft' policies such as youth work, compared to 'hard' policies for young people such as education, training or labour market policies.
3. In 'hard' policies disadvantaged young people are seen as having individual deficits that need to be rectified rather than being entitled to subjectively choose a career.
4. Lack of motivation is being regarded as such a deficit. Especially, activation policies reduce motivation to a rational choice model justifying coercion and pressure.
5. In many cases policies fail to reach disadvantaged young people due to their high distrust of formal institutions, where they do not feel treated as individuals.
6. If available they prefer informal rather than formal support, these informally acquired competencies do not get the necessary recognition.
7. Social inequality and marginalisation tend to be reinforced because networks of disadvantaged youth are weaker, especially for youth from ethnic minorities.
8. There is some evidence of gender differences:



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



- Young men seem to have more difficulties in maintaining motivation after having demotivating experiences in the formal system.
  - Although being channelled into restricted gendered pathways young women seem to be more capable of managing their motivation in a reflexive way. But, this does not mean that they are more successful in finding their way into recognised positions.
9. Socio-economic and motivational factors are interrelated in determining young people's transition patterns.
  10. Key motivational factors are having a specific interest to focus on and a feeling of self-efficacy. This means that motivation itself depends on access to resources and opportunities.
  11. Young people's experience of active participation tends to result in motivational change. Participation and motivation are to be seen as external and internal aspects of self-determination.
  12. Analysed case study projects achieved participation by:
    - Choice to enter projects on voluntary basis.
    - Flexibility to adapt projects to own needs and interests.
    - Relationships with project workers based on trust.
    - Leaving directions of individual orientation open.



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



- Activities that were relevant, of self-interest and had social recognition.
  - Space for self-chosen and self-determined activities.
  - Group building and peer learning
  - Non-formal learning and training situations
  - Being responsible for their own learning and project-related decisions.
  - Respect and recognition for own choices and aspirations.
  - Being able to act out and mediate conflicts.
  - Reflecting on learning careers in retrospect as well as with regard to the future.
13. However, due to structural limitations the experience of motivation through participation does not necessarily result in sustainable inclusion for all young people:
- Only a few initiatives succeed in providing young people with both 'hard' resources (qualifications, jobs and/or income) and 'soft' skills.
14. Most projects – and especially the most innovative and participatory ones – suffer from discontinuous funding as the integration of youth policy elements with education, training and labour market policies rarely takes place.
15. Differences also result from structures of different European transition regimes: -



Education and Culture DG

### 'Youth in Action' Programme



- The largest scope for participation can be found in the Scandinavian universalistic regime. Choice is provided at different levels and participation integrated within 'hard' policies. Education and training are rewarded by financial allowances.
  - In the liberal regime of Anglo-Saxon countries and the employment-centred regime of continental European countries 'hard' and 'soft' policies are separated. Active participation initiatives tend not to result in a transition to work.
  - In the sub-protective transition regime of Southern countries and the post-socialist transition regime of Eastern Europe 'soft' policies are often underdeveloped, despite there being structural deficits in transitions to work.
16. The effects of participation with regard to young people's motivational change, social inclusion and citizenship remain ambivalent as long participation is:
- Reduced to 'soft' policies
  - Not secured by material security and negotiation rights .



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



## **Key Recommendations**

### ***Influence in decision making***

We are really willing to take an active part in our communities, but we feel like most of the time we are not being listened to. The policies or the way they are implemented do not always connect with our needs.

So we recommend:

1. To each local municipality to commit itself to establishing a youth council. The young people should be welcome to discuss questions that involve them and they should have equal influence in the decisions regarding youth issues. This idea should be promoted, among others, in the European Parliament.
2. To authorities and young people to improve communication between both parties using methods where they are both on the same level, sharing ideas about youth related subjects but also to discuss other topics through round tables, panels, common trainings and outings etc.
3. To organise shadow elections for young people taking place during the official elections, the results being distributed through media, to increase the interest and involvement of youth in politics.

### ***Creativity***

Creativity is about searching outside the box and adapting to situations. For us, creativity is innovation, freedom, solving problems, pioneers, minds, open platforms. Currently,



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



politicians and schools are not promoting creativity; it is even being discarded. We have an obligation to the next generation to promote and teach them how to think creatively and freely. We need to influence both political and educational authorities: these are the places where creativity will have a positive influence on European citizenship and self-awareness.

So we recommend:

1. To simplify bureaucracy, because it prevents a lot of young people from expressing themselves.
2. To create a European online media platform for young people, one that has user generated content. Besides, the existing social networking sites could be used as well. By giving young people access and the freedom to share information about their countries and their opinions, we can create a common European vision of creativity.
3. To create teams in schools and universities to promote creativity and share experiences. The aim is to show authorities ideas, opportunities and information about youth cultures and the way young European people deal with problems. The online media platform can be used for this purpose.
4. To facilitate the organization of festivals or other activities promoting youth talents, cultures and creativity. These festivals would bridge the gap and generate more understanding between the younger and older generations.



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



## ***Opportunities***

To be able to seize opportunities in life, we need to know that they are there. We are still young and not so independent. That is why we need help from a stable partner.

So we recommend:

1. To provide “youth friendly” information by using simple and adapted language. This involves all documents needed to realise a new project, details about support systems and other information. Young people and civil servants should write these in cooperation.
2. To stimulate the participation of young people in daily life and diverse projects by improving the communication between them and administration. Young people should have the opportunity to meet directly with the civil servants in order to explain or defend their ideas.
3. To create a special fund, on a European level, so that local governments can hire extra social or youth workers to stimulate and guide young people in the running of their projects. Social and youth workers are the link between the adult world and that of youth.
4. To increase the amount of projects that don't require financial contribution from the disadvantaged youth to create equal opportunities and to give young people who aren't a member of a youth initiative group a chance to participate in projects.
5. To spread the use of a unique European youth card that can provide the same discounts all over Europe (e.g. in public





Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



transport) and facilitate the participation in youth events and competitions. This card could also be used as a promotion tool for volunteer activities, awarding discounts for cultural events and products.

### ***Education***

Living in the 21st century has shown that education is a great means of offering chances and opportunities for development. Formal education can be more practical and interactive: our aims have to be the improvement of education and the increase of youth's awareness of their role in society through education and of the advantages of participation.

So we recommend:

1. To develop mobility of teachers for sharing methodologies for interactive and intercultural learning, for increasing the self-confidence of students while speaking and acting. Authorities should grant scholarships for teachers and help them through exchanges and networking policies to contribute stirring youth's awareness of European citizenship. The barriers of mobility should be removed.
2. To encourage and organise teams of advisors in youth associations who will visit schools and universities in order to inform the youth community about other European educational systems, scholarships and jobs.
3. To increase financial support for technology in rural schools and youth clubs, to organise trainings for ICT teachers and to encourage them to use these technologies as much as possible in order to improve the educational system.



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



4. To promote and encourage non-formal education and voluntary work. Authorities should develop new structures and establish local youth clubs. In this way, voluntary work and non-formal activities will be widespread.

5. To activate youth in villages. Nowadays there is a lack of social life for youth. Municipalities should obtain grants for equipping youth clubs where youth could spend their free time actively. Youth workers could be volunteers coming from abroad.

### ***Motivation***

One common problem in Europe is the lack of interest and motivation of young people to be active and useful in their society. There is a lot to be done in this direction on the side of both youth and authorities. The main drawback is the way local politicians approach youth. This is why new ways of provoking youth to participate must be introduced. Social networks, websites and other kinds of technology young people use are the best means of attracting interest. It is essential that any action the authorities take be fresh and entertaining because this is what youth demands.

So we recommend:

1. To inform, support and entertain young people with the use of new technologies that are closer to them. Authorities should also be encouraged to use social networks and other new technologies in order to speak the same language as the youth.
2. To conduct surveys among young people on a local level to find what they are interested in and what problems they are



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



concerned about so that communication between authorities and youth improves.

3. To provide space for active young people to promote their activities so that passive youngsters get the idea of what they can gain (values, material possessions, etc.).

4. To offer visibility and explain young people's projects in detail through media to the people and to show the results of these projects to authorities.

5. To raise the importance of extracurricular activities when applying for universities or a job. Authorities should recognise, certify and validate such activities in favour of young people's future employment

1. Put young people at the centre of policies concerning their lives and give them negotiation power.
2. Rather than addressing lack of motivation as the result of 'individual deficits' there is a need to provide young people with access to relevant meaningful careers and increase their control over achieving this target.
3. Overcome the structural limitations between formal and non-formal learning i.e. between youth work, education, training and labour market policies.
4. Re-structure funding for projects in a way that provides security and continuity of initiatives.
5. Assist projects in providing young people with "hard" resources (qualifications, jobs and/or income) within



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



“soft” youth work settings. Key elements should include opportunities for young people to: -

- Choose appropriate careers
- Develop trust, a feeling of belonging and self-confidence
- Space for experimentation
- Options beyond traditional gender roles and are related to ethnicity
- Take responsibility for own projects with support available “on demand”.
- Orientate and plan their individual destinations
- Focus on strengths
- Have space to address conflict due to diverging interests

Further research into young people in their transitions to work should:

6. Consider the socio-economic, institutional and psychological dynamics involved in the processes of de-motivation and re-motivation.
7. Give young people a voice through qualitative research that can provide knowledge on the relevance that “policy offers” have for their “clients” and thus explain why some initiatives are used by young people and others not.



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



## **FINAL RECOMANDATION:**

- interviews with local authorities
- showing public demonstrations on TV
- special radio programs
- theatres on tv
- discussion programs between the public
- a special TV channel for reflecting what`s going on in the town
- criticisms of writers about the problems
- tv show with local authorities
- interview with the society!
- questionnaires among the people
- online media
- involvement of NGOs media is the best way to reflect the problems and solutions so long as it used for true purposes!
- volunteering activities for saving money for activities: prepare cards and sell them; arrange amateur concerts; sell home made cookies
- protesting: organizing people by preparing some articles and delivering them
- a group of young people go to the local authorities.
- collecting suggestions from citizens
- concerts for youth
- building food houses, for poor people



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



## YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME

**Youth in Action is the Programme the European Union has set up for young people. It aims to inspire a sense of active European citizenship, solidarity and tolerance among young Europeans and to involve them in shaping the Union's future.** More about Youth in Action

The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Agency Executive Agency (EACEA) is responsible for the management of certain parts of the Youth in Action programme under supervision from its parent Directorate-General for Education and Culture (DG EAC of the European Commission).

The following four sections provide information about the programme, its funding opportunities and the follow-up of selected projects.

The YOUTH IN ACTION programme is the EU's mobility and non-formal education programme targeting young people aged between 13 and 30 years. Its general objectives are the following:

- Promote young people's active citizenship in general and their European citizenship in particular;
- Develop solidarity and promote tolerance among young people, in particular in order to foster social cohesion in the European Union;



Education and Culture DG

## 'Youth in Action' Programme



- Foster mutual understanding between young people in different countries;
- Contribute to developing the quality of support systems for youth activities and the capabilities of civil society organisations in the youth field;
- Promote European cooperation in the youth field.

### *Actions*

In order to achieve its objectives, the Youth in Action Programme foresees five operational Actions.

- Action 1 - Youth for Europe
- Action 2 - European Voluntary Service
- Action 3 - Youth in the World
- Action 4 - Youth Support Systems
- Action 5 - Support for European cooperation in the youth field

Depending on the Programme Action, the selection process of projects is initiated in one of the following ways:

- for most Actions, the Programme Guide acts as a permanent call for proposals.
- for some Actions, specific calls for proposals are published.

More information on who can participate? and How to apply?



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



## ***Responsible entities for the management of the Programme***

**DG Education and Culture** is responsible for the running of the Youth in Action Programme. It manages the budget and sets priorities, targets and criteria for the Programme on an ongoing basis. Furthermore, it guides and monitors the general implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the Programme at European level.

**The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)** is responsible notably for the implementation of the permanent and centralised actions of the Youth in Action Programme and for launching the specific calls for proposals. It is in charge of the complete life cycle of selected projects, from analysing the grant request to monitoring projects on the spot.

The **National Agencies** are responsible for the implementation of the permanent and decentralised actions of the Youth in Action Programme.

They are in charge of the complete life cycle of selected projects, from analysing the grant request to monitoring projects on the spot.

To know more about the roles of the Executive Agency and the National Agencies, please consult Part A of the Programme Guide.





Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



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Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



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Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme





Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



## Participation

*is the process by which individuals can influence decision-making and bring about change. This could mean individuals influencing decisions about their own lives, for example children who are supported by social care and health influencing their care plans, or it could mean young people influencing service planning, delivery and evaluation.*



[www.youthinfrontline.eu](http://www.youthinfrontline.eu)

[www.atrv.eu](http://www.atrv.eu)