



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

# **“You(th) in Decision Making: Re-inventing/enforcing the Co-management procedure”**

Report of the study session held by  
International Federation of Liberal Youth  
in co-operation with the  
European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe



European Youth Centre Budapest

June, 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, 2015

This report gives an account of various aspects of the study session. It has been produced by and is the responsibility of the educational team of the study session. It does not represent the official point of view of the Council of Europe.



**“You(th) in Decision Making:  
Re-inventing/enforcing  
the Co-management procedure”**

Report of the study session held by  
International Federation of Liberal Youth  
in co-operation with the  
European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe

European Youth Centre Budapest

June, 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, 2015

## Acknowledgements

Team: *Anna Halavina, Emine Gyulestan, Hend Shaheen, Knut Figenschou, Sven Gerst*

Reporter: *Anna Halavina*

Educational advisor: *Ivana Davidovska*

Lecturers: *Sergio M. Belfor, Marko Paunovic*

### **International Federation of Liberal Youth (IFLRY)**

1 Whitehall Place, London, SW1A 2HD, United Kingdom

Tel: +44.2032396840, fax: +44.2071008159

E-mail: [office@iflry.org](mailto:office@iflry.org)

website: [www.iflry.org](http://www.iflry.org)

## **Table of Contents**

Executive summary.....	6
Introduction .....	7
The Profile of Participants .....	8
The main issues covered .....	10
Programme – Inputs and Discussions .....	11
Main Outcomes of the Study Session .....	22
Follow-up activities.....	25
Final Conclusions and recommendations.....	28
Appendix 1: Analysis of the Session .....	30
Appendix 2: Final Programme (as executed) .....	33
Appendix 3: List of participants .....	37
Appendix 4: List of references.....	39
Appendix 5: List of links where information about the study session was posted online to ensure visibility. ....	40

## Executive summary

The International Federation of Liberal Youth (IFLRY) Study Session on Youth Participation in Democratic Decision-Making at the European Youth Center in Budapest could be best summarized by aiming at (1) a general understanding why youth involvement is justified and needed, which tools already exist, and which obstacles they face, as well as at (2) encouraging its participants to actively engage in established processes or to actually formulate a demand for new structures.

The study session itself was separated in theoretical, input-oriented sessions, and practical output-oriented parts. Since this framework was reflected in the actual proceeding of the seminar, the first sessions were mainly dedicated to level knowledge and understanding amongst participants and contained lectures on the special role of young people in liberal democracies, the foundation of liberalism, the rights and obligations of citizenship, as well as human and youth rights. The later sessions, however, were more participant-driven and hand-on and thus accommodated for the practical part of the training. For instance, participants were asked to work creatively on youth decision-making procedures in their home countries (e.g. enhancing youth participation by (i) indicating fields that demand youth involvement or (ii) strengthening established structures through more engagement) and to present their findings to the group.

As a transition between the theoretical and practical parts, the seminar team used two expert panels (with Sergio Belfor and Marko Paunovic) to show real world application of youth participation from the structures of the European Union and the Council of Europe in order to show the relevance, scale, and practicability of tools by using the examples of co-management and structured dialogue.

Since the main aim of the IFLRY study session was to enhance understanding of contemporary tools for youth participation in democratic decision-making structures and thus create capacities within the organization and its member organizations, the team also put a lot

of emphasis on future traceability of the success of this training – by e.g. follow-up on ideas presented during the study session.

Outside the official schedule, participants were encouraged to engage with each other and getting to know the different people, organizations, and countries. This was formally facilitated by the obligatory cultural evening and organizational display as well as through common activities during the free afternoon –actually completely organized by the participants themselves. Judging on the basis of social media activity (common Facebook and WhatsApp group) and follow-ups after the study session itself, this can be also labeled as very successful with many “reunions” already taking place all over Europe.

## Introduction

Low voter turnouts, as well as increasing frustration and distrust of the electoral towards the political realm pose severe challenges to democratic institutions in contemporary European societies. On the other hand, active involvement in voluntary projects within civil societies is continuously increasing. IFLRY and its member organization do not only acknowledge this fact, but also aim at leverage this shift in civic participation and facilitate democratic innovation. Through the strong commitment of the Council of Europe towards innovative decision-making initiatives such as co-management, IFLRY aimed to use this Study Session to extract knowledge and build capacities within the organization and its member organization, especially the promotion of youth participation in decision making processes on various levels (society, mother party, etc.). Besides the engagement in decision-making procedures and youth involvement, IFLRY also aims at strengthening its role as facilitator and educator on matters of democratic citizenship. IFLRY understands that addressing institutions and demanding democratic innovation is at the core of its mission as globally operating Non-Governmental Organization, but also acknowledges that it is its own (as well as the one of its member organizations) responsibility to raise awareness and facilitate democratic citizenship in the group of young adults.

More specifically, both the bureau and organizing team wanted to reach above mentioned aim by the means of the following objectives:

- Reflect on the current state of youth involvement in order to identify needs, obstacles, and potential challenges;
- Equip participants with competences and tools in enhancing youth participation in decision making;
- Motivate participants to share best practices and come up with new approaches on youth involvement in decision making processes;
- Encourage them to come up with follow up initiatives on local, national and European level.



## The Profile of Participants

IFLRY is always aiming with all of its projects as well as the current study session to reach out to many people with as various backgrounds and experiences as possible in order to establish a successful network for tackling the existing challenges, addressed by the event.

During this Study Session participants represented different IFLRY member organizations, aged from 19 to 27 years old. Not all of them had previous knowledge on the topic, however, nevertheless, all are involved in the departments of the member organizations, that have to deal with mother parties communication, local authorities and so on. Here are a few numbers representing the group:



Total Number of Participants (including team)	28
Male Participants	12
Female Participants	16
Countries Represented Through Participants	15
Average age of Participants	23.2



## The main issues covered

The main topic of the Study Session was Youth Participation in Decision Making, thus the event overall discussed the concept of Active Youth Participation, Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights, and how young people can be inspired to influence decision making both on local and European Level.

Participants had a chance in particular to discuss about the following issues: role of youth in liberal democracies; democratic theory; decision-making procedures; co-management, structured dialogue; youth rights; active youth participation; civic duty; institutional change.

## Programme – Inputs and Discussions

The Programme, developed by the organizing team, proved to encourage participants to be engaged through the whole Study Session; learning, sharing with each other, being engaged in the various discussions as well as tackling the raised issues.



The session *Why Young People Deserve A Say* was the first ‘input session’ of the first day of the Programme, where the facilitator introduced participants to the limits of liberal democracies and why young people deserve a special, exposed position within the democratic processes. This session aimed to clarify the original purpose and need for a study session on youth participation in decision-making processes in a rather abstract context. It was followed by an intense discussion on the topic. Further, it should be noted that the heterogeneous interests of the group (dichotomy between (a) theoretically and (b) practically oriented participants) posed a challenge to this session as its purpose was solely targeted towards a theoretical introduction of the topic. During discussion were raised the following questions:

- Shall the rights of young people (as well as the rights of any other group) be decided on by the majority? Youth has to participate in decision making regarding their present and future in order to learn responsibility.



- Why a general voting process is targeting the average voter? Though in fact this average picture doesn't really represent each particular voter.
  - How to avoid the tyranny of the majority?
  - How to protect the rights of the people who cannot vote (for instance, a group of children/young people who have not reached the voting age)?
  - Why are voting, driving or drinking age defined differently?

The last session of the first day of the Study Session *Homework Presentation 'Challenges to Youth Participation'* can be seen as the part of the individual reflection process of participants before arriving at the study session. The session was the presentation of the initially assigned homework. This was not only a very insightful panel, but also important for participants to acknowledge and reflect upon the challenges that fellow participants face in their home countries. Despite the fact that facilitators were careful with the timing of each presentation, participants signalled their need for discussing the individual presentations and actually continued the debates during the informal part of the evening. The homework presentation was followed by regional group meetings to review the common challenges and treats. Although there are regional differences it was also clear that, such problems as the lack of motivation and lack of knowledge of available tools and mechanisms were common for young people coming from all different regions.

Some other main traits and challenges of the situation in which young people find themselves are listed below in groups that participants divided themselves:

Group #1 Ukraine, Bulgaria, Armenia, Azerbaijan



*Similarities:*

Despite being constitutionally guaranteed, democratic bodies/mechanisms do not function in reality.

Youth organizations are being manipulated and controlled (especially difficult case in Armenia and Azerbaijan).

Young people being disappointed by earlier failures loose the hope to try again.

Feeling inability to make a slightest change.

*Peculiarities:*

Armenia & Azerbaijan: Absence of free elections, active pressure on active people (a number of young people being arrested, or losing their jobs or even the right to attend the educational institution (university, college, etc.)).

In Armenia a strong leader culture exists, while in other countries no such observations are being made.

In Bulgaria a widespread propaganda from media is being spread.

In Ukraine people have/use the power to change leadership.

Group #2 Finland, the Netherlands,  
Turkey, Azerbaijan



*Similarities:*

Credibility of youth is very low: lack of self-esteem, lack of importance and ageism.

There is inability to change the *status quo* of the particular institutional setting or political landscape, as Finnish and Dutch young people would not; Azerbaijanis and Turkish young people cannot.

*Peculiarities:*

Finland, the Netherlands: lack of motivation among youths.

Turkey, Azerbaijan: governmental oppression toward youth, Political instability.



Group #3 Norway, Russian Federation,  
United Kingdom (England) ,

*Peculiarities:*

Lack of motivation. Distrust within society (in parties, in government).

*(Challenges for those  
who are not involved)*

Lack of knowledge (not learning enough in school about politics).

Absence of political culture.

Think-tanks run government policies (conservative party).

People are certain that there is one and the only way to get involved in

politics – through membership in a political party.

People have to struggle for basic needs before they can involve themselves in societal/political activities.

*Peculiarities:*

Corruption within the electoral system.

*(Challenges for those who are involved)*

Young people are not heard or listened to in the meetings/discussions of the mother parties.

Sexism/minorities, young women/minorities are put on the front stage more often because of their gender, rather than that they are involved in politics. Not being old enough to vote.

#### Group #4 Turkey, Morocco, Denmark



*Peculiarities:*

Denmark: lack of motivation within youth; low trust in government/politicians, absence of feeling of community -> young people leave their local communities, therefore, it is not interesting to be involved. The generational gap raises a lot of stereotypes based behaviour toward another age group.

Morocco: Distrust of political parties. Though politics is important, young people are involved in NGOs.

Too many old candidates in local elections who can neither be challenged by youths, nor represent them.

Hierarchy of decision-making process in the government/parties.

Turkey: Inability to campaign in traditional media, because of high costs, but it is the exact stage where a huge input made during the electoral campaigning. Generational gap problems.

Group #5 Belarus, Russian Federation, Ukraine,  
Denmark



Similarities: Ignorance (lack of knowledge) among young people, indifference (lack of motivation) among young people.

Peculiarities: Denmark is much different from the others.  
Youth participation mechanisms are either fictional or not transparent. Moreover, there is a lack of solidarity between Non-Governmental Organizations or movements, when different stakeholders agree on topics, but they do not cooperate.  
Youth participation is welcome in some countries, while not encouraged in others. No state support (financing) for political, youth organization.

The start of the second day accommodated for the practically minded parts of the group as methods of **youth participation** where introduced through the usage of tools from the 'Having Your Say' handbook of the Council of Europe (in appendix).



The session was built around the Hart's Ladder of Participation model of 8 steps of involvement of young people in decision making, namely, (1) Manipulation, (2) Decoration, (3) Tokenism, (4) Youth Informed, (5) Youth Consulted, (6) Adult initiated shared decisions with young people, (7) Youth led, (8) Young people & adult share decision-making. After presenting the core concepts, the group explored in detail the levels of participation and

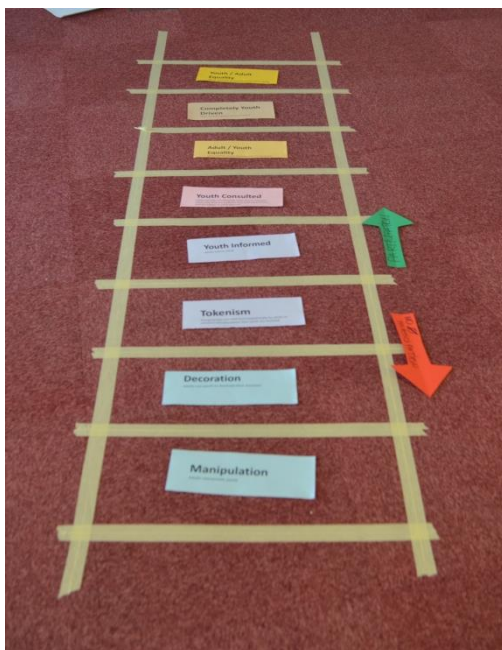


worked on developing possible strategies to increase participation within their own communities. The main outcomes were the conclusion of participants that there should be (a) more support (i.e. capacity building) through existing entities, such as their mother parties or other institutions, and (b) a strategy to motivate other young people to engage in decision-making procedures (i.e. aiming at the general public).

During multiple discussions participants came to the conclusion that youth participation is: activism of young people, voting, campaigning, understanding, being a part of the process, as well as volunteering. They also concluded that the youth participation mechanisms are needed to stimulate active citizenship of young people (active young people=active citizens) and contribute to democratic development of society.

The block session further explored the links between youth policy, youth work and youth research and discussed the pre-conditions for youth participation

Participants agreed that policies affect their lives, and they have to protect certain realms from political intrusion. Moreover, they concluded that youth is, as the new generation, very distinct from other groups within society. Further, since they also have to engage in majority votes they need to take part in decision-making.



On levels of participation the following barriers were mentioned by the participants:

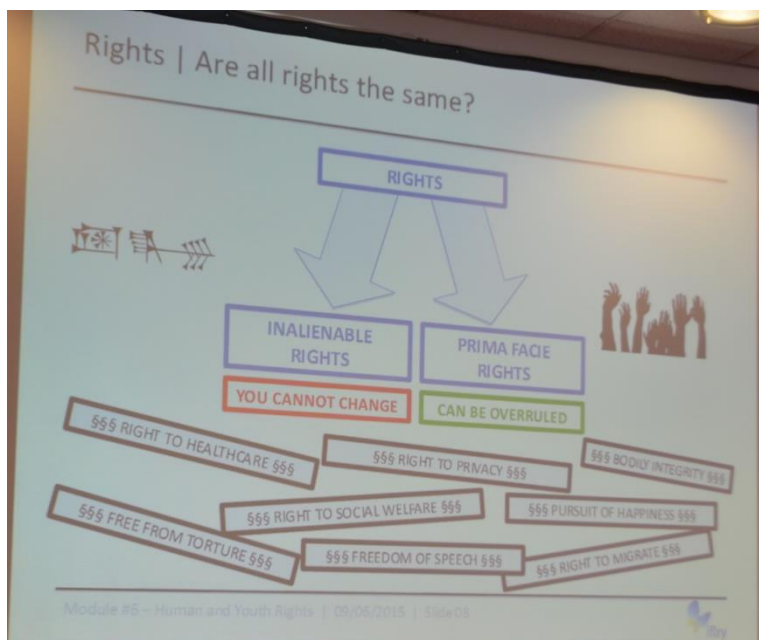
- Family Manipulation: when the younger generation has to adopt the opinion and views of the older “respected” members of the family;
- Participants from Armenia mentioned that they are used as decoration, and in Russian Federation they can see a lot of youth during elections but they do not appear again;
- During the discussion of Tokenism participants mentioned that some parties use fashionable words like “inclusion”, because it looks good for donors and stakeholders, while young people are only included on paper and are presented during campaigns, neither included in the decision making of the party priorities;

- In Netherlands, youth are invited to attend (and they do) meetings with focus groups/ministers to represent youth in decision making but actually not having a word;

Participants concluded the session with suggestions to stimulate better communication in their organizations/countries:

- Mother parties should inspire youth to become more interested in political work by giving them interesting courses (English – Free Market) in order to raise their awareness and build their capacities.
- Adults and youth should not ignore the generation gap as it is a fundamental obstacle.
- Work on reinventing new approaches for youth involvement.
- Give youth more responsibilities, and equip them with tools to make use of the space they have.

This session was followed by another theoretical panel on **human and youth rights**. After participants acknowledged the need for youth participation during the first day and the challenges and duties of decision-making procedure, this session aimed at putting these learning into context. More precisely, it addressed the question whether young people should have specific rights that enable them to e.g. legitimately decide on particular topics. This



was achieved through presenting liberal rights theory and thus, the dichotomies between negative and positive, natural and legal, and inalienable and prima facie rights. This panel caused intense discussion and participants ultimately rejected specific youth rights, which seemed to follow from a rigorous understanding of liberal rights, underlining that rights are truly universal regardless of age.

The formal part of the day was closed by a session on **democratic citizenship** where duties and responsibilities within liberal democracies were discussed. The objective was to indicate and understand the stakeholders within democratic decision-making procedures and was vividly represented by a facilitated debate related to these actors.; Participants previously worked in groups in order to indicate, summarize and debate on the particular interests of the different stakeholder groups listed below.

- *Youth groups* have elaborated the fact that they are the future, and their role is to guarantee sustainable development in the long term, their function is to co-operate with activist, demonstrate small-scale decision making especially on youth themes, and spread liberal ideas.
- *NGOs group* believed that they should represent youth in the process of decision making, create conditions and areas for young people to participate, lobby for young people's opinions and ideas, protect youth's interests and rights, and influence media. They asked decision makers for co-operation, and funding, encouraging them to guarantee transparency.
- *Decision making group* agreed on all proposals, reconsidered and admitted the importance of implementation of co-management principles, and creating platforms of youth Non-Governmental Organizations to express their concerns, and enable them to access to media

The third day was part of the transition phase from the part of building up theoretical and conceptual knowledge towards a more practically and hands-on applications of the previously introduced information. Therefore, two expert panels were scheduled.

The first session was hold by Sergio Belfor who introduced the process of **co-management** within the Council of Europe and shared with the participants' success stories as well as obstacles and problems of this sort of decision-making processes. This session gave participants not only a better understanding of the real world implication of the study session, but also made them aware of the various possibilities within the European institutions. It is noteworthy, that most of the participants – despite that fact that they are heavily engaged in politics in their home countries – were also aware of the work and the members of the European Advisory Council of Youth.

During further discussions the following benefits and challenges of the co-management system were raised:

<u>Benefits</u>	<u>Challenges/Flaws</u>
Less-political;	Consensus to be reached;
Good representation;	Cannot cover all the issues;
Transparency of the process;	Monitoring process itself;
Opportunity to be presented in the decision-making process;	Slow!;
Effectivity;	Absence of self-representation;
Co-creation, common ideas.	Bureaucracy.

Participants were concerned with the national representation of youth organizations, so they have raised various related questions. After the end of the session, most of the participants continued the search online for the specific contacts of their national representatives. Inviting experts from the advisory council could therefore also be of tremendous value to future study sessions.

The second expert, Marko Paunovic, presented the concept and application of **Structured Dialogue**. Besides the general introduction to the topic, the expert gave a special emphasis to the struggles and obstacles. Again, this can be seen as an important part of the transition between the theoretical and practical parts of the study session, as this session contained still some conceptual clarifications as well as sharing real world experiences. Some of the following conclusions were drawn:

- That it is not very known in the Netherlands.
- Finland is the most contributing in this case.
- Turkish case: not all the regions are represented by the Ankara organization.
- Political challenges in such countries as Belarus: existence of five-year governmental planned and implemented project in this way reducing the social innovation by organizations or individuals.

While Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday were *mainly* scheduled as 'input days', Thursday kicked off the 'output days'. This part was started with the second homework presentation and related to the best practices from the home countries, mother countries, or

member organizations of the various participants. While this seemed not only to create a common knowledge pool and raised awareness for the activities of the other member organizations, it actually helped participants in indicating common obstacles and interests before starting to work on the outcomes of the study session.

After presenting their particular best practices, participants regrouped in smaller clusters in order to develop concrete projects they want to pursue or implement after the study session. The facilitators steered this work of 'spontaneous order' by only giving participants a general guidance on writing a project that every team should be able to follow when brainstorming on the issues and developing possible solutions to present on the following - the final day of the Study Session.

Each group was assigned to one facilitator in order to have close monitoring of the process of project developing already during the study session. This paid out as a very valuable tool as there have been cultural barriers between certain countries. Most saliently between Western European and Eastern European or Caucasian countries where youth participation in general seemed to be at very initial stages of development. The heterogeneity of the group, however, did not only pose challenges to the outcome creation, but also facilitated the creativity of the projects itself and the variety of endeavours.

The last day mainly contained the outcome presentation of the participants itself. Each presentation was scheduled for a few minutes and should provoke ideas to other group members as well as critical questions and feedbacks amongst the peers. We could experience a wide variety of outcomes, from very concrete and planned campaigns to very idealistic projects; also the heterogeneous composition of the group revealed the different priorities: while participants from Eastern European or post-Soviet countries focused on the creation of institutions or youth participation in general. Western Europeans aimed at motivating the youth to engage in already existing schemes within their institutions. Also, the array ranged from very narrow and precise plan of actions to general campaigns that strived for democratic education.

It should be noted that participants felt very comfortable in exercising their right to ask critical questions and challenge their fellow group members on the feasibility of their projects. Even without much guidance, projects hardly overlapped (there have been maybe two presentations that had similar concerns and themes).

## Main Outcomes of the Study Session

Participants have managed to identify common challenges and barriers in youth participation in different regions and communities.

After being introduced to the ladder of youth participation, participants have learned to identify the level on the ladder reflecting the situation of their member organization. Moreover, they have learned how to



connect theory and practices in the relationship with their mother party, partner organizations and state institutions.

Participants have grasped the meaning of the Human Rights and Democratic Citizenship principles stated in the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, as well as learned how Co-management and Structured Dialogue are functioning in practice. They were also given a space to brainstorm on the tools of youth participation in decision-making process and to develop follow-up projects reflecting the whole flow of the Study Session.

As a more concrete outcome, participants developed seven very hands-on projects that they will try to implement through their member organizations or through a cooperation of regional member organization. These projects vary from long-term change of society (e.g. fight conservatism) and practical tools to boost youth involvement through media campaigns or topic for specific mobilization of the young population (e.g. open borders/refugees). Participants needed to develop a general outline of their projects as well as a detailed implementation plan in order to reach their defined goals within a feasible time horizon. IFLRY sees its role in monitoring the outcomes of these projects as well as complementing a facilitator in cases needed.

Most of the learning results as well as developed outcomes have reflected the core priorities of the Youth department. For instance, such as Democratic governance has been to

different extent incorporated in the planned follow-up projects mostly thanks to the successful sessions on the topics of Human/Youth Rights, Democratic Citizenship.

In relation to that, participants had the following discussions:

- Are Youth Rights a specific set of rights or just part of general Human Rights. Participants ultimately concluded that there might be certain rights that specifically apply to young adults (e.g. right to education) but that should not be treated as a separate category. It rather seems that rights are truly universal – even in terms of age.
- Benefits and Challenges of the Co-management system: Among the first mentioned were Transparency of the process, less political mechanisms, though in the other group were pointed out the following: consensus in itself to be reached, slow speed of the whole process as well as others. We believe that the outcomes of these discussions will be beneficial for the Youth Department and in particular contribute to the already existing debates on Human Rights and Youth participation in Decision Making;

The composition of the participants and also the team, coming from different IFLRY Member organizations, that were representing more than 14 countries and even more local communities, allowed to build the capacity during the Study Session of focusing on enabling multicultural dialogue, conflict transformation etc. (For instance, Armenian and Azerbaijani young people have developed a common project.)

Participants have discovered an opportunity to practice Co-management each day of the Study Session on a small scale within the working groups during various sessions based on sharing the tasks, reaching common goals, respecting each other, etc.

As emphasized by participants, the levels of Youth Participation (according to Roger Hart's Ladder of Participation) were one of the highlights in the learning of participants, as they were able to connect it to their own reality, and identify level for which they would like to advocate for in their own local realities.

Participants also discovered the Concept of Democratic Citizenship, and were able to make the connection between that concept and Human Rights and Youth Active Participation, thus raise their understanding on the Education for Democratic Citizenship and the necessity to promote its implementation in the Council of Europe Member States;

Participants have discovered the connection between the human rights and youth participation. One does not exist without the other.

Engagement in the interactive and intercultural learning process has allowed the participants to follow the programme and reach common solutions to the challenges and develop the outcomes.

It can be concluded that participants were equipped with a combination of theoretical and practical knowledge. We should be aware that both parts were enriching and well prepared. Participants constantly noted that they were 'mentally tired' after each of the days; this is a very positive remark as the sessions should be enjoyable but also challenging. Since the group was split in half between abstract and concrete oriented people, the mix fitted the interests of the group as a whole maybe best.

We are confident that the first day e.g. put the study session very nicely into context: why is this relevant? Why do we do that? Why is this funded? – This might be often forgotten, but seems to be an important part – especially when reporting back to member organizations.

Participants were equipped with a wide array of learning. Amongst the most important:

- The Need for Youth Participation in general: the youth is not only a stakeholder, it is a special stakeholder as it is specific socio-ethical category, extremely vulnerable to the social, economic and political changes and hence, deserves a special role within democratic decision-making
- Challenges, Obstacles, and Duties within Youth Participation: while participants from more developed countries pointed out that young adults are too apathetic towards democracy, other participants shared their struggle with authoritarian government. Through this discussion participants acknowledged the heterogeneity and distinctiveness of the obstacles that youth participation faces in the different regions of Europe.
- Nuanced and More Critical View on Democracy (from a youth perspective): being aware of the virtues of democracy participants engaged with the dangers of majority rule. Ultimately they concluded that democracy is a tool and procedure that does not fit (and does not have to fit) *every* situation.



- Philosophical Foundations of Liberal Rights Theory and Liberalism: participants discussed the various schools of liberal thought and learnt about the distinctiveness of liberalism – the respect and protection of individual flourishing
- Concrete Processes within the European Institutions: most participants only possessed very little knowledge of the various possibilities of decision-making procedures used within the governance of the European Institutions. They learnt about co-management and structured dialogue in particular and will transfer these ideas (if not already implemented) to their countries.
- How to Break down the ‘Big Picture’ Into Smaller Projects: since the Study Session was based on a mix of theoretical as well as practical parts, participants were stimulated to transfer the rather abstract knowledge to applicable projects. This has been a very challenging part for some participants, but was facilitated by the team.

When it comes to recommendation, I would note these suggestions:

- overcome the pre-determination of participants of working on ‘certain project’ they already had in mind before arriving at the study session
- introduction of discussion groups: after theoretical session, 30 minutes to discuss in smaller groups, note questions and learnings, being able to ask more refined questions, could boost the learning process especially regarding more complex panels
- introduce a ‘no local language’ policy in order to avoid local grouping; also in breaks!

## Follow-up activities

As envisaged by IFLRY, during the study session the participants were encouraged to look into follow-up events within their own organizations to encourage the debate on democratic innovation within their own country. The study session was rich in terms of outcomes/project proposals created by the participants. The IFLRY office will contact the participant/groups who came up with proposals and ideas to help follow them up where needed. Some of the groups were thinking of applying to the European Youth Foundation for similar trainings as a follow up, IFLRY will guide them through the application procedure. Different groups will have smaller events on youth participation in their organizations and IFLRY will provide expertise/trainers. The participants were also encouraged to share the best-practices used during the study session in their respective organizations. Participants had more time to work on their projects during last month independently.

The created email subscriptions and social media group have empowered both, the team and participants, to get updates on each other's follow up process and provide support and advice when needed.

As IFLRY has mentioned in the grant application, the IFLRY 2014-2015 Plan of Action among other objectives, outlines the focus to be put on the development and exchange of ideas between its member organizations, in order to increase the effectiveness of the priorities set by its Member Organizations. As an international political organizations, it is in IFLRY's interest to promote greater youth participation in decision making from which its member organizations will benefit as well. Being part of and supporting the Council of Europe's commitment in its Co-Management system, IFLRY is promoting the same system on other levels and institutions. IFLRY has a strong belief that more young people engaged in decision making means, more autonomy and greater contribution to social cohesion. The study session was important for IFLRY to re-assess the current status of youth democratic participation in general and electoral politics and co-management in particular. The developed project will feed in the future IFLRY's work in this area.

Two of the groups have developed ideas to organize similar events on a smaller scale in their countries including three or four member organizations of IFLRY. The teams will be contacted and asked to send their proposal to the IFLRY office. Once submitted, our organization will help them apply for Pilot Projects with the EYF. Besides this, it will support not only with the applications but with experts and trainers for these activities. This will be a perfect opportunity for more people to get to know the challenges of the youth participation in the decision making process and find encouragement to act on a local level.

There are several follow up project ideas, two of them for which there is a potential to collaborate with the Youth Department is:

- (1). Pilot Initiative on Co-management; training and guiding steps how to implement co-management on a local level;
- (2) Regional Training Course in Human Rights Education: this has been especially requested by participants from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Turkey.
- (3) Transparency Initiatives: pushing for more transparent processes and political accountability, especially in terms of budget spending.

- (4) Pushing For Controversial Topics: this aims at polarizing the electoral and thus for more heated and interesting debates that could attract young voters (e.g. open borders)
- (5) Media Campaigns: several groups created plans for the development of subsequent outreach activities on matters of (a) fighting conservatisms or (b) general youth involvement/attraction.

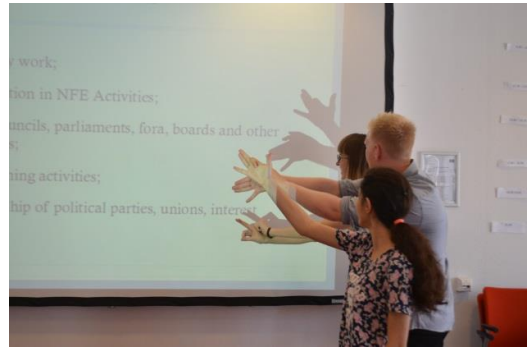
## Final Conclusions and recommendations

IFLRY is immensely grateful to the Council of Europe for giving us an opportunity to organize the study session on this very important topic for us. It has been a challenging step, and as the evaluation conducted by the participants demonstrated, it has been a successful experience. IFLRY plans to continue with this priority in the next plan of action. and hopes, the organization will be given the chance in the future to hold more events and profound discussions on the youth participation and have more space for delivering the tools of youth participation, Co-Management in particular. The study session turned out to be beneficial both for IFLRY, as an International umbrella organization, and for its member organizations. And hopefully it did have a valuable contribution to the work that the Council of Europe is conducting in the field.

IFLRY would also like to thank the Council of Europe for granting a possibility to use the E-platform for our study session. It serves as a platform for us to find essential materials needed by the participants, the team members and IFLRY. The organizing Team would like to thank the Council of Europe for the immense spot assistance provided at European Youth Center in Budapest which has definitely contributed to the success of the Study Session.

The work carried out in Budapest has empowered the team and participants to reach the set goals what makes the Study Session significant. First of all, it is crucial for IFLRY to have an opportunity to organize such Session where it can use available resources and support of the Council of Europe to readdress following issues: undermined democratic process; generational gap, lack of motivation, ignorance, low trust in governments and politicians - as for youth participation; lack of knowledge or misunderstanding of Co-Management process. All that, with the focus on education on democratic citizenship in combination with the current status of the democratic process on different levels, has proved to boost the preparation of each participant and team once again. We believe, that the success of the Study Session could be measured by the amount of the produced visual materials, immediately exchanged among participants, that will be used by the member organizations in spreading the discussions on the topics: plans of the follow-up projects/campaigning ideas, as well as media-presentations, speaking notes and outcome reports from each stage and activity of the Study Session, established network by the representatives of IFLRY member organizations.

IFLRY is grateful for the chance to be a part of the Advisory Council having a direct access to this influential mechanism; and as a political youth organization, has to use this valuable advantage. As the conducted evaluation has proved one more time, participation in decision making process is far from being an easy process. IFLRY is reassured to continue its work on spreading the knowledge on the topic among its member organizations.



Each of the participants and the Team members themselves were prepared to turn into multipliers of the knowledge on the tools of Youth Participation acquired in the process of this study session. IFLRY is confident that the outputs will be spread among member organizations, as well as local party branches reaching and benefiting many more fellows.

## Appendix 1: Analysis of the Session

Summary of Participants' evaluations

### 1. General feeling at the end of this Study Session?

Very happy. A recurring theme is that people were happy to have seized this opportunity.

2. How far according to the individual feeling of the participants the objectives of the Study Session were achieved? (1 = not achieved at all, 6 = fully achieve

#### *Objectives*

Reflect on the current state of youth involvement in order to indicate needs, obstacles, and potential challenges	Average score: 5.0
Equip participants with competences and tools in enhancing youth participation in decision making	Average score: 5.0
Motivate participants to share best practices and come up with new approaches on youth involvement in decision making processes	Average score: 5.0
Encourage them to come up with follow up initiatives on local and European level	Average score: 5.0

3. How far did this Study Session fulfilled the individual expectations of the participants.

An overwhelming yes. A lot of participants mentioned that they really appreciated the new knowledge and fresh ideas.

4. How did the participants felt about the flow of the Programme? Is there anything you would have done differently?

Generally positive. Some remarks about the programme being too heavy.

**5. What were the most valuable sessions for participants? And why?**

The session on Democracy and Human Rights got many mentions.

**6. Which sessions were the least useful for participants? And why?**

Marko's session on structured dialogue was not well received.

**7. How participants evaluated their own contribution to their learning and to the Study Session.**

Generally very good.

**8. How the participants evaluated the contribution of the group of participants to this Study Session and their learning.**

Stellar group atmosphere. Very good participation and lot of intercultural learning.

**9. How participants evaluated the contribution of the facilitators' team to this Study Session and their learning.**

Overwhelmingly positive feedback.

**10. How participants will transfer what they've learnt during the Study Session to their organization and/or their reality?**

Generally most participants plan to bring it up in relevant internal meetings in their organizations, either informally or through a presentation. A few will write a report document or implement some form of activity locally.

**11. How participants intended to share the information they have received with their organisation/structure?**

See point 10, please.

**12. Any other comments**

Nothing worth noting. Very few comments.



## Appendix 2: Final Programme (as executed)

	Sunday [07 <sup>th</sup> of June]	Monday [8 <sup>th</sup> of June]	Tuesday [9 <sup>th</sup> of June]	Wednesday [10 <sup>th</sup> of June]	Thursday [11 <sup>th</sup> of June]	Friday [12 <sup>th</sup> of June]	Saturday [13 <sup>th</sup> of June]
9.30 – 11.00		Introduction to Study Session/ Intro to IFLRY, Council of Europe	Youth Participation	Models for Youth Participation in Decision Making [Co-management] Expert	Tools of youth involvement in decision making Homework Presentation #2 "Best Practices"	Presentation of outcomes	Departure of participants
11.30 – 12.00		Group Building	Youth Participation	Models for Youth Participation in Decision Making [Structured Dialogue] Expert	Tools of youth involvement in decision making	Presentation of outcomes	
15.00 – 16.30		Why young people have a 'say'	Youth/Human Rights	Free afternoon	Outcomes development	Evaluation	
17.00 – 18.30		Homework Presentation #1 "Challenges of Youth Participation"	Democratic Citizenship		Outcomes development	Closing Ceremony	
18.30-19.00		Home Group (daily evaluation)	Home Group (daily evaluation)		Home Group (daily evaluation)		
21.00			Backyard Reception 20.00	Dinner in town			
		(+Organization Display)	Cultural Evening				

### *Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2015*

Arrival of participants

19:00 Welcome evening

### *Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> June 2015*

09:30 Introduction to Study Session, Introduction to IFLRY / Council of Europe"

Intro of aims & objectives of the Study Session / Expectations & Programme

11:00 Break

11:30 Group Building activity

13:00 Lunch

15:00 Why young people have a 'say'

16:30 Break

- 17:00 Homework Presentation #1  
“Challenges of Youth Participation”
- 18:30 Home Group  
(daily evaluation)
- 19:00 Dinner
- 21:00 Cultural Evening  
(+Organization Display)

*Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> June 2015*

- 09:30 Youth Participation \_Part 1
- 11:00 Break
- 11:30 Youth Participation \_Part2
- 13:00 Lunch
- 15:00 Youth/Human Rights
- 16:30 Break
- 17:00 Democratic Citizenship
- 18:30 Home Group  
(daily evaluation)
- 19:00 Dinner

*Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2015*

- 09:30 Models for Youth Participation in Decision Making [Co-management]  
Expert invited:  
Sergio M. Belfor  
Representative of UNITED | Advisory Council on Youth
- 11:00 Break
- 11:30 Models for Youth Participation in Decision Making [Structured Dialogue]  
Expert invited:  
Marko Paunovic  
tbc
- 13:00 Lunch
- 15:00 Free afternoon in the city

19:00 Dinner out in the city  
20:00 Free time

*Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015*

09:30 Tools of youth involvement in decision making\_Part1  
Homework Presentation #2  
“Best Practices”  
11:00 Break  
11:30 Tools of youth involvement in decision making \_Part 2  
13:00 Lunch  
15:00 Outcomes development  
16:30 Break  
17:00 Outcomes development  
18:30 Home Group  
(daily evaluation)  
19:00 Dinner  
20:00 NGO market

*Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> June 2015*

09:30 Presentation of Outcomes  
11:00 Break  
11:30 Presentation of Outcomes  
13:00 Lunch  
15:00 Evaluation  
16:30 Break  
17:00 Closing ceremony  
19:00 Dinner  
20:00 NGO market

*Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> June 2015*

07.30 Breakfast

09:30 Departure of participants.

### Appendix 3: List of participants

**Hasmik Petrosyan**, Armenia, Armenian National Congress Youth

**Shaghik Matevossian**, Armenia, Armenian National Congress Youth

**Mane Manukyan** Armenia/United Kingdom, IFLRY

**Aydan Sultanli**, Azerbaijan, Dalga Youth Movement

**Hamida Talibova**, Azerbaijan, Dalga Youth Movement

**Darya Mironava**, Belarus, IFLRY Belarus Programme

**Gyulfie Arnaudova**, Bulgaria, Youth Movement For Rights & Freedoms

**Bjørn Cilleborg**, Denmark, Radikal Ungdom

**Mathias Niemann**, Denmark, Radikal Ungdom

**Emma Tcheng**, Finland, Svensk Ungdom

**Alaoui Moulay Omar**, Morocco, AJA

**Elin Engerbakk**, Norway, Young Liberals of Norway

**Feliks Nachalov**, Russian Federation, YDM Vesna

**Karina Garinova**, Russian Federation, YDM Vesna

**Elion Claudia**, The Netherlands, Jonge Democraten

**Yannick van den Berg**, The Netherlands, Jonge Democraten

**Batuhan Durmus**, Turkey, 3H Movement

**Kursat Ozer**, Turkey, 3H Movement

**Nazlican Kanmaz**, Turkey, 3H Movement

**Courteleigh Smith**, United Kingdom, Liberal Youth

**Matthew Clark**, United Kingdom, Liberal Youth

**Olena Domina**, Ukraine, European Youth of Ukraine

**Sergii Pashchukov**, Ukraine, European Youth of Ukraine

## Appendix 4: List of references

(books, web-sites, handouts, articles, pictures used)

<i>Name of the Session</i>	<i>Materials used:</i>
<b>Why young people have a say</b>	Literature: Brennan: The Ethics of Voting; Caplan: The Myth of the Rational Voter; Brennan/Lomasky: Politics and Process
<b>Democratic citizenship</b>	<i>The Compass Manual on HRE (Compass 2012: 223-6).</i>
<b>Youth Participation</b>	Have your Say! Manual on the Revised European Charter

## **Appendix 5: List of links where information about the study session was posted online to ensure visibility.**

As it is usually the case, IFLRY has posted a call for applications in its website (please see the link below) which was linked to IFLRY Facebook page. IFLRY has also used internal channels to contact its member organizations' international officers and presidents, who then disseminate the call among their members. The call has been sent out also by IFLRY newsletter to attract bigger audience.

<http://interim.iflry.com/budapest-calling-applications-open-for-iflry-study-session-on-youth-in-decision-making/>