



**all different
all equal**



Training course

Active Youth Participation

A training course for experienced and active youth
leaders/workers and governmental representatives

23 March – 1 April 2007

European Youth Centre Strasbourg

Final Report

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Final report prepared by the educational team of the training course

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This report has been produced by and is the responsibility of the educational team of the training course. It does not necessarily represent the official point of view of the Council of Europe and its member states.

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1. Executive summary

“Youth Participation and Active Citizenship” is one of four priority areas of the Directorate of Youth and Sport (DYS) in the period 2006-08. In this light a training course on participation and the “Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in local and regional Life” (the Charter) was developed back in 2005.

From 23 March to 1 April 2007 a third edition of this training course (TC) on “Active Youth Participation” took place at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg. The main aim of this training course was “to empower experienced and active youth leaders / workers and governmental representatives to enhance youth participation on local, regional, national and European levels”. The activity brought together 28 participants from 22 countries from all over Europe, two-thirds of them being youth workers or leaders and one-third coming from governmental structures.

The final report of this activity is meant to provide valuable information to the statutory bodies of the Directorate of Youth and Sport and its partners on the training course and its outcomes, in particular in respect of the new priorities to be set for 2009-11. It is also meant to be a useful resource for the participants of the training course, in addition to an internet platform which is at their disposal with detailed outcomes of single sessions and discussions.

This report is structured in a way to give an overview of the background and development of the training course, the preparation process, aims and objectives, participants and partners as well as the final programme and the methods used.

In the last part the report will focus on the concrete outcomes of the training course and concrete recommendations developed by the group of participants to the DYS and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress).

As main outcomes of this training course (described in more depth in point 9 of this report) can be considered concrete resources and competences which were developed and put together during the TC and which can be used within the newly created network of people working on youth participation issues, as well as concrete action plans of participants on how to follow up the course and on how to use the gained knowledge and competences and some newly developed innovative methods regarding awareness raising in youth participation and co-operation matters.

The concrete recommendations given to the Directorate of Youth and Sport, the Congress and other actors on how to support the participants in particular and active youth participation processes in general and for their future work on participation and the Charter are listed below.

Recommendations to the DYS:

- ensure that “active youth participation” is kept promoted also in other activities
- introduce the Charter in all relevant study sessions
- introduce the Charter to all new (and old) members of the statutory bodies
- promote the Charter towards youth NGOs
- promote the Charter and the relevant materials (CD, manual, brochure, etc.) within the Youth Forum Jeunesse (YFJ)
- keep this TC as priority in the DYS’ programme
- encourage the Advisory Council to promote participation of their representatives in the TC

- provide the Congress with participants' lists of activities related to the Charter in order to foster networking on a local and regional level
- organise a consultative meeting (on a practical level) with different actors (including representatives from the statutory bodies, Congress ...) or an impact study in order to evaluate and further develop the series of TCs on youth participation
- finalise the CD and manual on the Charter
- provide means for a proper follow-up of the course
- provide budget for one extra working day for TC
- examine the opportunity to extend the TC to an LTTC (long-term training course)
- keep the composition of participants, being one-third from governmental structures and two-thirds youth leaders, workers and NGO representatives, as it proved to be very fruitful in this particular training.

Recommendations to the Congress:

- develop an action plan on how to promote the Charter
- draft a report on the implementation of the Charter in different countries and on good practice
- invite participants of the TC to the planned hearing in the "Committee of Culture and Education" of the Congress to present their experiences, challenges and recommendations
- organise training courses on active youth participation and the Charter in the format of a 50:50 (or 2/3:1/3) course (50% of the participants coming from governmental structure, 50% coming from non-governmental structures) in co-operation with DYS
- organise training courses or sessions on the Charter and participation of mayors and higher officials, using the expertise of the DYS
- use the outcomes of the TC and the participants as resource for the planned reports on youth participation
- support the building of local networks (former participants and regional representatives)
- support and promote the translation of the youth-friendly version and the CD into more languages
- promote future TCs on youth participation and try to send participants and experts.

Some steps have already been taken in order to provide a proper follow-up of the TC and the further promotion of the Charter such as presenting the existing Charter materials at the meeting of the Committee of Culture and Education of the Congress, drafting a letter to be sent to all heads of national delegations of the Congress and drafting a letter with the recommendations of the participants to be sent to the Congress.

More information on the training course can be obtained in the following report and can be requested from the secretariat of the Directorate of Youth and Sport.

2. Introduction and background

“Youth participation and democratic citizenship” has been one of the priority areas of the Council of Europe’s Directorate of Youth and Sport (DYS) for several years. It is also one of the three main pillars of the European youth campaign for diversity, human rights and participation “All Different – All Equal”. The Council of Europe’s Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (the Congress) is also focusing on youth participation and back in 1992 it adopted the “European Charter on Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life” (the Charter), which was revised in 2003 in close co-operation with the DYS.

In order to foster youth participation even more and to promote the Charter on a European level, a pilot training course (TC) on the Charter was organised in 2005. This training course was followed by two more TCs in 2006 and 2007, aiming at empowering experienced and active youth leaders and workers and governmental representatives to enhance youth participation on local, regional, national and European levels through exploring related concepts, best practices, instruments and their implementation. Whilst in 2005 and 2006 the focus was on project development, the focus in 2007 was rather on developing strategies and changing attitudes within the respective working field and responsibility of the participants back home.

Within the recent work of the DYS on youth participation, several supporting documents and materials have been produced such as the documentation of the training courses including session outlines, leaflets about the youth-friendly version of the Charter, brochures with the youth-friendly version of the Charter, a manual on the Charter, an interactive CD-Rom with the youth-friendly version, study session reports, etc.

All these activities aim to contribute to reaching the set objectives within the DYS priority “youth participation and active citizenship”, namely:

1. promoting and sustaining the role of youth organisations in the development of democratic participation;
2. promoting citizenship education and participation of and by young people;
3. promoting the access of young people to decision-making.

Active youth participation has some underlying values, which cannot be separated in the discussion, such as human rights, diversity and democracy. In fact the whole training programme of the Council of Europe’s Directorate of Youth and Sport is aimed at promoting the building and strengthening of open and democratic European societies, based on a philosophy of participation, democracy and intercultural exchange for young people who are in a position to act as “multipliers”.

“Multipliers” are therefore the main target group of the DYS activities. “Multipliers” in this context are youth leaders and workers as well as governmental representatives being active in the domain of youth and able to multiply and put into practice the contents and outcomes of the activities. The dialogue between the different actors is a main objective of many activities.

Dialogue, co-operation and partnership between young people, youth NGOs, policy-makers and governmental authorities were explicitly promoted in the TC “Active Youth Participation” 2007. Different partners such as the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, the city of Mulhouse, local associations of Strasbourg, the OSCE and others made this co-operation directly visible during the course, so participants did not only hear about it in theory but could observe a functioning co-operation in practice.

3. The preparation process of the training course

Within the yearly programme planning of the DYS set by the Programming Committee, the training course was put onto the agenda and budgeted as a follow-up of the two very successful courses in 2005 and 2006. Aims and objectives were adapted by the secretariat according to the experiences from the previous years but also according to the expected outcomes within the yearly programme and the priority area 2006-08.

According to the procedures for the recruitment of consultants/trainers of the Trainers' Pool of the Directorate of Youth and Sport, two senior and two junior trainers with a thorough experience in youth participation at local, regional and European levels have been recruited. Selection criteria for the team were experience in the topic, a geographical balance as well as a balance of sex and backgrounds. From the secretariat's side the TC was supported by an educational advisor and an assistant, as well as a trainee.

In a preparatory meeting of three days, the team consisting of the four trainers, the educational advisor and the trainee met to do a final selection of participants, to adapt the aims and objectives according to the participants' experience and expectations put down in the application forms, to clarify the aims and the objectives, to discuss the methodology, to draft the programme flow and a draft programme as well as to set objectives for the single blocks in the programme.

The time between the preparatory meeting and the training course itself was used to finalise the detailed planning of the sessions put down in session outlines, and preparing the concrete contents and inputs for the sessions, as well as inviting experts, organising field visits and informing participants about their preparation for the course.

The secretariat of the Congress was represented during parts of the preparatory meeting and was very supportive in the preparation, especially in finding experts and speakers. It was agreed to strengthen the co-operation on follow-up of this particular training course and on the promotion of the Charter in general.

In order to get prepared for the TC, participants were asked to read the Charter and to do a small piece of research on whether the Charter is used in their country and, if yes, in what ways, to register on an internet platform which was used more at a later stage and to find out what is going on in their country in the framework of the European Youth Campaign "All different – All equal".

"Everything was perfect and amazing, I have never attended such good organised and well-prepared training. Thanks a lot to the organisers." (Participant, TC Active Youth Participation 2007)

4. Aims and objectives of the training course

The overall aim of the training course was “to empower experienced and active youth leaders and workers and governmental representatives to enhance youth participation at local, regional, national and European levels through exploring related concepts, best practice, instruments and their implementation”.

The concrete objectives in order to reach the overall aim were to:

- explore the concept of youth participation and related concepts, such as active citizenship, human rights education, intercultural dialogue and civil society
- analyse current youth participation realities and practice
- examine the importance of youth participation and define the challenges and perspectives towards it
- introduce the Charter as a relevant instrument to foster youth participation and to develop ways and competences to use it
- explore instruments other than the Charter which participants are using in their daily practice to foster youth participation
- provide space to participants to reflect on transferring their learning in the TC into “Active Participation Action Plans”
- provide space to participants to develop ideas for innovative approaches and projects
- enable participants to act as multipliers on the issues of the TC
- identify ways of trilateral participation processes between public authorities, young people and youth organisations
- encourage networking amongst participants, also with participants from the 2006 TC and other relevant actors
- introduce the Campaign “All different – All equal” and encourage participants to become active within it
- present the Council of Europe, the Congress and the DYS and their approach to youth participation and youth policy
- deepen participants’ competences to work on youth participation.

“I have learned that youth participation is the issue that is very needful for everyone, I have learned that it is important to be active, to involve other young people in participation, to make them believe that it is interesting as well as useful and fruitful.” (Participant, TC Active Youth Participation 2007)

5. Participants and partners

The course caught the interest of many youth leaders and workers, governmental representatives, policy-makers, and also of different institutions all over Europe, something which is clearly reflected in the high number of applications (288) and several parallel requests to take part in the TC.

5.1 Selection procedure and profile of participants

The training course was planned for 30 participants. The DYS received 288 applications for the training course from all over Europe. A pre-selection was made according to the below-mentioned criteria. Applicants had to be:

- youth leaders or workers in a position of responsibility in international non-governmental youth organisations (INGYOs), national youth councils (NYCs), national or local youth organisations, actively and directly involved in youth participation projects at local or regional level, or
- staff of governmental or local authority services responsible for youth participation at local and/or regional level, or
- actively and directly involved in youth participation projects at local, regional or other levels, or in charge of youth participation within their organisation or service
- motivated in developing further youth participation projects and to act as multiplier after the training, also regarding innovative ways or projects and/or new target groups which could not be reached so far
- interested in working with the revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life as a tool to promote youth participation
- able to work in English
- aged between 18 and 30 years (exceptions possible).

The DYS secretariat did a pre-selection of participants, the final selection was done by the educational team of the training course.

Priority was given to applicants with much experience in youth work and the impact they would have as multiplier(s) after the TC, according to the application. The team aimed at a gender and geographical balance and the group should consist of on-third participants from governmental structures and two-thirds from youth NGOs.

The overall quality of the applications was very good and much more than 30 applicants would have been eligible for the course. This was different from the experience of the selection process for the TC in 2006. A final list of participants can be found in annex 3.

“The diversity of the group helped a lot in the learning process.” (Participant TC Active Youth Participation 2007)

5.2 The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress)

As mentioned before, the Congress played an active role when preparing the training course and gave loads of support in disseminating the call for applications as well as in finding appropriate experts on the Charter. This co-operation is a follow-up of the good experiences in the training courses in 2005 and 2006 with the aim of joining forces regarding the promotion of the Charter as well as co-operation between governmental structures and NGOs and young people. The concrete involvement of the Congress happened at different stages:

- introduction of the Congress and its way of working with local and regional authorities
- presentation of the Charter, its background, developments, function and the mechanisms of its promotion
- presentation and discussion of concrete examples of the use and the challenges in using the Charter, as well as good practice in co-operation between governments and NGOs
- planning of close co-operation for the follow-up of the training course.

More details of the last item can be found under point 9.4 of this report.

5.3 Local associations

The local associations in Strasbourg supported the training course in two ways. On 24 March, the first full day of the training course, a local campaign event in the framework of the “All different – All equal” campaign took place in Strasbourg to which the participants were invited and where they could get a lively experience and some background information on the campaign.

Furthermore some field visits have been organised to associations dealing with participation, namely:

- **Club des Jeunes L’Etage and Youth Express Network**
L’Etage offers various services to disadvantaged youth between 18 and 25 years old, many of whom are homeless or don’t have a permanent residence. L’étage helps them in finding ways of overcoming their immediate crisis, stabilising their lives and establishing themselves in the community. L’étage is a member of Youth Express Network, a pan-European non-governmental organisation and a network of youth and social workers and organisations working on local, regional and international levels with young people with disadvantaged backgrounds.
- **The municipality of Strasbourg, sector of Citizens’ Participation**
The sector of citizenship participation of the municipality of Strasbourg mainly deals with the local children and youth council and supporting youth initiatives.
- **Radio Bienvenue Strasbourg (RBS)**
Radio Bienvenue Strasbourg was established in 1981 with the aim of giving foreign residents of Strasbourg an opportunity to speak. RBS is completely based on a participative and voluntary basis.
- **Banlieues d’Europe**
The “Banlieues d’Europe” network brings together association officials, towns, experts and researchers, cultural workers and artists, who are familiar with questions of neighbourhood artistic performances aimed at people who are usually excluded. The network currently has 35 members in 20 countries.

For unexpected reasons, only two of the field visits could take place. However, all organisations were presented and contacts were given to participants in order to allow getting in touch with the different associations if wished.

5.4 Experts and speakers

Several experts and speakers contributed to the training course. Their inputs were highly appreciated (the experts are listed in chronological order of their inputs).

Mr Jean-Philippe Restoueix, staff member of the Council of Europe (DGIV), held an input on “Youth Participation in/for Europe” and concepts related to youth participation.

Ms Brith Fäldt, a representative from the Congress who has been involved in the revision of the Charter, presented the main ideas behind the Charter, as well as its development and the process of revision. Furthermore, being also a local politician in her home country, Sweden, she contributed a lot to the discussion on the role of young people in youth policy development and implementation.

Mr Trefor Williams from the OSCE mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina presented a best practice study on how the Charter was used in order to develop a youth policy and a youth programme in his organisation.

Ms Chantal Risser from the City of Mulhouse presented her experience and good practice with trilateral co-operation between the city, NGOs and young people in Mulhouse, mainly focusing on the children and youth council, framing it within the whole concept and youth strategy of the city.

The selection of the speakers and experts shows that an important issue of the course was to encourage the use of the Charter and to increase and improve the dialogue between young people, NGOs, governmental representatives and policy makers.

“I had a lot of prejudices about local authorities, that they are against active youth participation and we need to force them to involve young people in the decision-making process. Now I understand that we need to work together, with them for a common goal like a team. In this process, each of us have some responsibilities.” (Participant, TC Active Youth Participation 2007)

Other institutions such as the Youth Forum Jeunesse, the SALTO Participation and ICLEI-local governments for sustainability, showed a high interest in the training course itself, the outcomes, follow-up and in particular co-operation in the future. All three organisations were presented to the participants in order to open the floor for future co-operation and networking.

6. The training course programme

The programme was designed in accordance with the objectives and the training needs and expectations of the selected participants. During the training course itself, the programme was continuously (or further) adapted according to participants' needs, and the educational process.

The programme was split into five parts:

- introductions and group building
- exploring the concepts and realities and practices of youth participation
- instruments of youth participation: the Charter, trilateral co-operation, good practice, transfer into youth policy development
- development of individual strategies and planning of participants' follow-up of the TC
- follow-up and evaluation.

In the introductory part the participants and the team, the Council of Europe, the programme and background of the training course, the facilities of the European Youth Centre Strasbourg as well as the European youth campaign for diversity, human rights and participation "All different – All equal" were introduced and participants shared and discussed their expectations from the training course with the group and the trainers' team.

In the second part, "Definition and meaning of participation", the participants exchanged their own experiences regarding youth participation, the term "youth participation" was explored and measures on how to succeed in youth participation processes and projects were elaborated and exchanged. In different field visits to local associations, some participative projects could be visited as examples and the basis for further discussions on the definition and different levels of participation. Finally participants experienced active youth participation and negotiations between different relevant actors in a simulation before related concepts to youth participation such as diversity, democracy, human rights and intercultural dialogue were explored and the underlying values and their meaning for active youth participation in a positive sense were discussed.

The third part, "Instruments of participation", dealt first with the role the Council of Europe's Directorate of Youth and Sport and the Congress are playing on a European level regarding youth participation, focusing on the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, its aims, possibilities and limits and good practice. Later on participants shared the instruments and tools they know and use, and created a "gallery of instruments".

A next step was then to discover more in detail the key actors of youth participation and the importance of the so called trilateral co-operation between them, the key actors being young people, NGOs and local and regional governmental structures. This was explored by a simulation and an example of good practice from the city of Mulhouse, France.

Following that, participants drew conclusions on the role of young people and how they themselves can influence youth policies in their realities. This was used as a summing up of the training course so far.

The last part of the training course – before the evaluation – was dedicated to the concrete follow-up of the training course, thus focusing on participants' creating action plans for the time after the course, how to transfer the knowledge, experiences, inspirations and ideas gained into practice and also what support the institutions and the participants can give to each other.

The final weekly programme and the day-by-day programme of the TC can be found in Annexes 1 and 2.

In the last session participants had the chance to discuss questions or topics which were still open, or which they wanted to explore more deeply. The topics arising were:

- other ways of engaging young people (practices, methods, tools)
- projects together (mainly Youth in Action and CoE)
- youth councils – discover weaknesses and find ways to deal with them
- how to animate participative meetings
- how to turn non-participative young people into participative ones?
- my main learning outcomes from the TC Charter
- learning more about the Charter

The final evaluation of the course showed that the programme was logical and balanced and that it was coherent with the objectives of the TC. It therefore brought the expected educational and political outcomes.

“It was a very good, thought-over programme. I enjoyed it a lot. Especially the chance to see how the theory goes together (or not) with the practice. It worked for such a diverse group.”
(Participant, TC Active Youth Participation 2007)

7. Methodology and methods used

The training course was based on non-formal education. As mentioned earlier, the team deliberately focused on the content and the methodology to allow developing strategies for enhancing youth participation rather than on project development as has been done in previous TCs.

The methodology of the course highlighted the experience of the participants as a learning resource for the group. It furthermore provided space to participants to review their youth participation practice and strengthened their competencies and motivation to work on the theme.

In addition, the TC used internal institutional resources and provided for strengthening the co-operation with associations and authorities in Strasbourg. Also the diversity of background and expertise present in the team made a significant contribution to the educational process. Overall a wide variety of methods was selected, such as group work, simulation exercises and inputs, study visits, individual work, plenary sessions, etc.

The concrete descriptions of the majority of methods used can be found in the session outlines, as well as in the exhaustive course documentation of the TC 2006 ([www.coe.int/youth;downloadable documents/ training courses](http://www.coe.int/youth;downloadabledocuments/trainingcourses)).

It should be highlighted that for this training course some innovative methods and activities have been developed and successfully implemented, such as:

- use of an internet platform before, during and after the TC
- participation café
- simulation: "Meeting the Mayor"
- simulation: "Confusion City"
- the "human sandwiches".

In order to promote the use of these newly developed or adapted methods and activities, they are described in more detail in this report and the simulations have been integrated in the Charter manual, to be published in late 2007.

"My reflection is that the TC put a spotlight on the way to work with a clear idea of methodology. To present the scheme, use energisers, use the knowledge within a group and take time for follow-up and reflection. And this was very encouraging to experience!"
(Participant, TC Active Youth Participation 2007)

7.1 Internet platform

In order to provide the participants with a proper means of staying in touch after the TC and to share ideas and resources, but mainly to support networking amongst participants, a space on an existing internet platform was set up (<http://act-hre.coe.int>).

Before the actual TC participants were invited to register on the platform, to complete their profile (basic personal, educational and professional data) and to get in touch with each other. A quiz on the Council of Europe was also provided. During the TC the platform was introduced to the whole group and participants were invited and supported to upload recent information, resources, but also the action plans and instruments they are using in order to foster youth participation. The categories on the platform were: general forum for all kind of news, resources, upcoming events, action plans and instruments. The main tools used from the platform software were fora and Wikis. After the TC the platform was also used to evaluate the impact of the course (survey), to further plan concrete projects, to keep each other updated and to give feedback to plans, ideas, etc.

The platform turned out to be a very useful educational tool and was used quite a lot by many participants before, during and after the course. However, it has to be stated that not all participants used the tool with the same intensity and that following and facilitating the processes on the platform requires a lot of time and energy from the trainers' and the educational advisors' side.

7.2 Participation café

The "participation café" was adapted from the world café and human rights café. It aimed at providing space outside the official sessions for participants to reflect about the day, discuss open issues and/or interesting topics and the transfer of the contents into participants' reality. Specifically the following topics were discussed:

- general feedback on the day
- symbols of participation
- formal / non-formal education at schools, formal / non-formal settings / methods/ learner approach / subjects
- involvement of non-organised youth in decision-making processes
- sport as a tool of participation
- sharing about the questionnaire (where do you stand on the "ladder of participation"), concept of participation
- the importance of the platform after the TC.

It is important to create an inviting space, representing a café-area where people feel comfortable to meet and chat, share experiences, thoughts, ideas etc.

The participation café was in general evaluated quite positive by the participants, though participants found it hard to still discuss and work even after the sessions as the days were quite full and compact. An important issue for the participation café was to give the participants the whole freedom to organise and to decide completely free on the topics to be discussed. The presence of trainers and at times experts at/in the participation café was highly appreciated.

7.3 Simulation: "Meeting the mayor"

In order to confront the participants with their own practices of youth participation, to open reflection on the communication and co-operation strategies with the local authorities and to identify aspects to improve, a simulation named "Meeting the mayor" was developed. In this simulation participants were representing a NGO preparing and later having a meeting with the local authority, namely the mayor, trying to find a strategy for how to deal with increasing violence caused by obviously unsatisfied citizens of the city.

The simulation was evaluated as extremely positive and is highly recommended to be used for raising awareness on youth participation issues in general and the co-operation between young people, NGOs, policy-makers and local authorities in general.

The full description of the method can be found in the Charter manual (to be published by end 2007).

7.4 Simulation: "Confusion City" – the triangle of co-operation

In order to simulate negotiations between young people, youth NGOs and public authorities (decision-makers), to outline the different needs of different actors, to share experiences from similar situations in participants' reality and to explore and promote fruitful communication and co-operation between the main actors, a simulation called "Confusion City" was developed. Participants were representing the three different groups of the triangle:

young people; youth NGOs; and local authorities, and had to negotiate on how to solve a certain problem.

This exercise was also very much appreciated by participants and the outcomes were very relevant. It was a big learning process for all participants in the different roles of the actors. The full description of the method can be found in the Charter manual (to be published by end 2007).

7.5 Exercise: “The human sandwiches”

As a starting point it was crucial that participants share their youth participation realities relating to their communities and organisations and to explore their different experiences with youth participation. Therefore a method was developed in which participants first described and discussed on four levels: personal level (family, studies, free time); organisation/work level; level of the community / young people they are working in; and the level of experiences with concrete actions of youth participation. The method got the name from the idea that participants write these four levels on two big sheets, which they “get dressed” with, having one on their front and one on their back. For the sharing the “sandwiches” read and discuss with each other at the same time.

The full description of the method can be found in the Charter manual (to be published by end 2007).

8. Evaluation methods and feedback

The evaluation of the TC was an ongoing process. A daily evaluation took place within the participation café with questions such as:

- my learning today
- my feelings about today
- message to the team
- my best / worst moment of the day.

Methods used were open comments on flipcharts on the above-mentioned questions, diagrams evaluating single sessions (scale from 1-10), rankings of session with smileys and some more.

As a final evaluation participants got a questionnaire with one part on self-reflection, such as learning achievements and possible impact, and one part on evaluation and assessment of the objectives, the sessions, the methods used, group dynamics and the facilities.

The ongoing daily evaluation helped the team to better grasp the mood and dynamics within the group and to adapt – if appropriate – the programme according to participants’ feedback, needs, wishes and to react quickly, directly and in an adequate way. The final evaluation proved that this process had been effective.

“I evaluated my reality and how I work and realised I use a lot of manipulation with young people. I look forward to try promoting active participation according to the wishes of young people.” (Participant, TC Active Youth Participation)

9. Main outcomes of the training course

This training course proved to be successful through various outcomes on different levels.

9.1 Competences and experiences of participants and their organisations

Participants were asked to share what competences and experiences they have that could benefit the group. The list of competences and experiences are a clear outcome and invaluable resource of further networking of participants. An enormous variety of experiences, competences and capacities came out such as involving youth / youth representatives into drafting action plans:

- developing youth work; drafting different laws on the local level
- creating, working in and with youth councils
- co-operation of young people, NGOs and decision-makers (local authorities as well as policy-makers)
- working on national youth policies
- ways of supporting initiatives of youth organisations and projects
- delegating functions to youth NGOs from municipalities
- training experience on human rights, participation, volunteering with children and young people, youth policies, leadership
- “youth in action” projects, youth participation in international youth exchange
- understanding political processes and economic reforms in order to react over them
- facilitation of connection with formal and non-formal initiatives in universities
- role of youth media encouraging youth participation
- eastern European youth co-operation issues: youth participation and promoting diversity
- work on recognition of abilities and autonomy from public authorities
- concrete project experiences
- co-management system of CoE youth sector
- fundraising experience
- motivating people to implement local projects
- participation of minorities
- role of election committee, how to work actively to promote participation.

A complete list with all experiences and names of people offering it was posted on the platform, so that participants can complete it and make the best use of it.

9.2 Active participation action plans

Each participant developed their personal active participation action plan with concrete steps and ideas to be implemented after returning back home from the training course, including concrete objectives, indicators, actions and a time plan. Some examples for concrete planned activities are:

- information sessions on the Charter for and with municipalities and young people
- analysis of responsibilities of community actors in active youth participation process
- capacity development of youth workers and local authorities’ representatives in the field of how to promote youth participation
- improving practices that are already ongoing and proposing somewhat more intensive information/training activities on youth, e.g. training with young people and training with the Non-formal Youth Advisory Council, an open day in which participation is the core issue (also as part of the “All Different – All Equal” campaign), the elaboration of a Youth in Action project on youth participation (already ongoing), a project to the

- EYF on youth participation and gender issues, information and strategic lobbying with my association to see youth participation in our local stakeholders' practices
- translation and printing of the Charter (plain version) as well as copying of existing translated (but never printed) full version of the Charter
 - set up a working process in the organisation about the link between local and international work: that international work can be useful in our daily work and our practices about youth participation, democracy ...

Four weeks after the course participants were asked if they have started to implement their action plans and if they turned out to be still realistic after coming home. A majority of the replying participants had started the implementation of the plans and all action plans of responding participants had proved to be fully or partly realistic.

"I've written the project for the promotion of the Charter of Youth Participation in Local and Regional Life and the creation of the youth councils in the municipalities of Albania, as they do not exist." (Participant, TC Active Youth Participation 2007)

"There were several workshops for pupils of 9th-11th year aimed to introduce the Charter and to talk about active youth participation." (Participant, TC Active Youth Participation 2007)

9.3 Support network

A very concrete outcome of the TC is a newly created support network. Participants of the course have very different backgrounds, experiences, knowledge and skills which are complementary to each other. Participants decided to use these resources and to support each other. A list of possible areas where participants could support each other was drawn up and ranged from information on concrete programmes and activities to consultancy on different issues. As an example, one concrete outcome of the networking between participants is a common application to the Youth in Action programme of the European Commission of four participants and their organisations.

"The training course gave an opportunity to get to know a lot of people who are now for me both sources of inspiration and support, as well as "advisors" from whose experience I can learn. I do believe some common projects will also follow." (Participant, TC Active Youth Participation 2007)

9.4 Concrete proposals to the Congress on the follow-up of the course

Participants gave clear recommendations especially to the Congress on how they could effectively support the participants after the TC:

- the Congress should develop an action plan on how to promote the Charter
- the Congress should draft a report on the implementation of the Charter in different countries and on good practice
- participants shall be invited to the planned hearing in the committee of culture and education of the Congress to present their experiences, challenges and recommendations
- a list of activities related to the Charter in which participants have been, are or will be involved should be communicated to the Congress (facilitated by DYS)

In addition to the recommendation further steps have already been taken from the DYS side:

- The Charter-related materials have been presented at the meeting of the committee of culture and education of the Congress
- a letter to all heads of national delegations of the Congress might be sent
- a letter with the proposals for possible follow-up measures and recommendations drawn up by the participants of the TC will be sent to the Congress.

9.5 Charter implementation

Participants developed within their action plans concrete ideas on how to implement the Charter, such as information sessions with the members of their organisations, the local authority and the young people, translating the Charter into the national language, etc.

“I had already translated the Spanish version into Portuguese. The Vice-President of IPJ will send it to a professional translator to see if we can divulge it now that we will have the Presidency of the EU.” (Participant, TC Active Youth Participation 2007)

9.6 Development of new methods

In the framework of the TC 2007 three new educational activities have been developed which will be included in the Charter manual and one exercise was adapted to the topic of participation. Furthermore, the use of new technology in the form of an internet platform was further developed and the experiences can be used for other projects and activities.

“I want to use these activities for providing more space for young people, youth workers, local authorities, and other community actors to communicate, to negotiate, to work together for a common goal.” (Participant, TC Active Youth Participation 2007)

9.7 Main learning achievements

Participants mentioned as their main learning achievements that they:

- became acquainted with the Charter, its background and use
- became familiar with the work of the CoE, particularly the DYS and its instruments
- learned new concepts of participation and the preconditions to it
- exchanged and learned from good and bad practices of others
- gained new contacts for networking
- learned and understood the importance of trilateral co-operation
- understood that youth participation is not only a political issue but also about taking responsibility and deciding by yourself in daily life
- reconsidered prejudices about local authorities and understood the importance of co-operation
- evaluated their own work and realised their weaknesses.

“I have learned that young people are very important for each area of life, because they can move change in a community, in a city; in one way they are the future of the developing communities and cities.” (Participant, TC Active Youth Participation 2007)

10. Recommendations to different actors

Throughout the training course the participants formulated explicitly and implicitly some recommendations to different actors, which are summarised here but will also be transferred directly to the structures concerned.

10.1 Recommendations to DYS

- ensure that “active youth participation” is also promoted in other activities
- introduce the Charter in all relevant study sessions
- introduce the Charter to new (and old) members of the statutory bodies
- promote the Charter towards youth NGOs
- promote the Charter and the relevant materials (CD, manual, brochure etc.) within the Youth Forum Jeunesse, possibly link to YFJ symposium on participation in December 2007
- keep this TC as priority
- encourage advisory council to promote participation of their representatives in the TC
- organise a consultation meeting (on practical level) with different actors (including advisory council, Congress ...) or an impact study in order to evaluate and further develop the series of TCs on youth participation
- finalise the CD and manual on the Charter
- provide means for follow-up of the course
- provide budget for one extra working day for TC
- examine the opportunity to extend the TC to an LTTC (long-term training course)
- keep the composition of participants being one-third from governmental structures and two-thirds youth leaders / workers / NGO representatives, as it proved to be very fruitful in this particular training.

10.2 Recommendations to the Congress

- organise training course on active youth participation and the Charter in the format of a 50:50 (or 2/3:1/3) course (50% of the participants coming from governmental structure, 50% coming from non-governmental structures) in co-operation with DYS
- find mechanisms to promote the Charter internally
- organise trainings of mayors / higher officials, using the expertise of the DYS
- conduct a survey / database on best practice of the use of the Charter
- invite participants to the hearing planned for the next meeting of the Committee of Culture and Education
- use the outcomes of the TC and the participants as a resource for the planned reports on youth participation
- support the building of local networks (former participants and regional representatives)
- support and promote the translation of the youth-friendly version and the CD into more different languages
- promote future TCs on youth participation → try to send participants, send experts
- organise other activities.

Annexes:

Annex 1: Programme overview

Annex 2: Day-by-day programme

Annex 3: List of participants



Annex 1



Training Course “Active Youth Participation”
EUROPEAN YOUTH CENTRE STRASBOURG, 23 March – 1 April 2007

	Friday 23 March	Saturday 24 March	Sunday 25 March	Monday 26 March	Tuesday 27 March	Wednesday 28 March	Thursday 29 March	Friday 30 March	Saturday 31 March	Sunday 01 April
<i>Breakfast</i> 8.30 a.m. - 9.15 a.m.										
9.30 a.m. Morning session <i>coffee break</i> 11 a.m. - 11.30 a.m.		Opening Introduction/ background to the course Participants' expectations Getting to know each other	Analysis of participants' reality Sharing reality (individual and group exchange, common understanding)	Experiencing Participation	Challenges and perspectives Related concepts (civil society, inclusion, minority youth participation etc.)	Contents of the Charter	Other instruments and tools	Drawing conclusions Role of young people and other actors Youth/youth policy	Follow-up of the TC Active Participation Action Plans	
<i>Lunch break</i> 1 p.m. - 2.30 p.m.										
<i>coffee break</i> 4 p.m. - 4.30 p.m. <i>Participation café</i> 6 p.m.	A R R I V A L	Strasbourg Campaign event Team building Getting into the theme	Theory on Youth Participation Papers on Participation (law)	Field visits	FREE AFTERNOON	Background of Charter and use in practice	Key actors/ partnership Trilateral co- operation Exchange of best/worst practice	Needs/analysis Skills workshops	Networking/ support/ follow-up Evaluation of the TC	D E P A R T U R E
<i>Dinner</i> 7 p.m.										
Evening	Welcome evening	International evening	Organisation fair/ market		Dinner in town					

Annex 2

Day-by-day programme

Friday 23 March 2007

- 8.30 p.m. Welcome, introduction of the team and technical info
- 8.35 p.m. Name game
- 9 p.m. Getting to know each other exercise
- 9.20 p.m. Icebreaker
- 10 p.m. Technicalities and welcome drinks

Saturday 24 March 2007

- 9.30 a.m. Welcome, opening and technicalities
 - 9.50 a.m. Round of names
 - 10.15 a.m. Discovering the EYCS (Rally) / getting to know each other
 - 11.30 a.m. Introduction to the COE and DYS
 - 12 noon Intro to TC (background, aim and objectives, programme and methodology)
 - 12.30 p.m. Expectations
-
- 2 p.m. Strasbourg Campaign event
 - 5.30 p.m. Participation café
 - 9 p.m. International evening

Sunday 25 March 2007

- 9.30 a.m. Opening of the day
 - 9.40 a.m. "Human sandwiches" + Station exercise + Wall of sandwiches
 - 11.30 a.m. "Where do I stand?" – statements exercise
 - 12.30 p.m. Technicalities
-
- 2.30 p.m. Intro to the afternoon
 - 2.35 p.m. My story of participation
 - 2.55 p.m. What is and what is not youth participation?
 - 3.15 p.m. Input Ladder of Participation + Preconditions to Youth Participation
 - 4.30 p.m. Intro to Analyse
 - 4.40 p.m. Individual work with the questionnaire
 - 5 p.m. Sharing in pairs or threes
 - 5.30 p.m. Participation café

Monday 26 March 2007

- 9.30 a.m. Opening of the day
 - 9.50 a.m. Introduction to the simulation "Meeting the Mayor"
 - 9.55 a.m. Group work on the case study of the simulation
 - 11.30 a.m. Simulation meeting
 - 12 noon Debriefing + discussion
-
- 2 p.m. Field visits
 - 9 p.m. Organisation market

Tuesday 27 March 2007

- 9.30 a.m. Energiser and opening of the day
9.40 a.m. Intro to "Youth Participation Theatre"
9.50 a.m. Working groups on Challenges and Perspectives of Youth Participation and preparation of a performance – "How can we make a change?"
10.30 a.m. "Youth Participation Theatre" – creative presentation of group work results
11.30 a.m. Input: "Youth Participation in and for Europe"
12.30 a.m. Technicalities about the free afternoon
-

Free afternoon

- 8 p.m. Dinner in town

Wednesday 28 March 2007

- 9.30 a.m. Working in groups on different parts of the Charter
10.30 a.m. Preparing a presentation on the various parts of the Charter
11.30 a.m. Presentations of group work (4 x 15 mins, plus 5 mins questions each)
-

- 2.30 p.m. Input: Where does the Charter come from, why a Charter on participation?
3 p.m. Presentation best practice on how to use the Charter (OSCE)
3.30 p.m. Did/how did participants use the Charter, how could they imagine using it?
4.30 p.m. Discussion of the ideas of participants with feed-back from speakers
5.45 p.m. Presentation of the Charter Manual and the youth friendly version of the Charter (CD)
6 p.m. Participation café

Thursday 29 March 2007

- 9.30 a.m. Opening of the day
9.40 a.m. Presentation and discussion of instruments to foster participation, "gallery of instruments"
12 noon Presentation of DYS instruments and EC Youth in Action programme
-

- 2.30 p.m. Simulation and de-briefing "Confusion City"
4.30 p.m. Presentation of good practice: City of Mulhouse
6 p.m. Participation café

Friday 30 March 2007

- 9.45 a.m. Individual reflection on consequences/conclusions regarding personal attitudes, values, project/job, further developments
10.15 a.m. Share findings in small groups, present in plenary
11.30 a.m. Link to youth policy
12 noon Discussion in small groups on local youth policy
12.45 p.m. Groups present key factors of local youth policy
-

- 2.30 p.m. Open space
6 p.m. Participation café

Saturday 31 March 2007

- 9.30 a.m. "Ideas' market"
10 a.m. Time to consult/discuss and develop APAP (active participation action plan)
12.30 p.m. Sharing APAP with group
-

- 2.30 p.m. Summing up the course and presenting the follow-up support available
3 p.m. Letter to myself
3.30 p.m. Completing evaluation forms
4.15 p.m. Interactive evaluation
4.45 p.m. Official closing of the course and certificates

Annex 3

	Name	First name	Country	Organisation
1	Bino	Blerjana	Albania	Macedonian Committee of the European Youth Parliament, and Albanian Liberal Institute
2	Kurti	Orsiola	Albania	Albanian Association of Municipalities
3	Mardoyan	Khoren	Armenia	Municipality of Nor Nork District of Yerevan
4	Arabov	Orkhan	Azerbaijan	National Youth Council of Azerbaijan (NAYORA)
5	Artsiukh	Olga	Belarus	International Youth Public Organization "ILYSA"
6	Jõesalu	Arvo	Estonia	The Department of Culture Youth Policy Service of Tartu City Government
7	Laeuffer	Viviane	France	Cap Berriat
8	Esadze	Ketevan	Georgia	National Council of Youth Organizations of Georgia (NCYOG)
9	Gvalia	Valerian	Georgia	The Cultural and Political Centre of Abkhazia
10	Ruzzi	Noemi	Italy	European Region WAGGGS
11	Vaccarezza	Tommaso	Italy	Local Democracy Agency Mostar
12	Georgescu	Mara	Italy	Arciragazzi Liguria
13	Ikauniece	Eva	Latvia	Latvian Red Cross (LRC)
14	Zverevs	Dmitrijs	Latvia	Education, Youth and Sports Department of Riga City Council
15	Ufert	Karina	Lithuania	Vilnius University Students' Representation
16	Bislim	Elez	"The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"	Association of Citizens Sumnal
17	Babii	Viorel	Moldova	National Youth Resource Centre
18	Willumsen	Eliza	Norway	Council of Children and Youth in Oslo
19	Brito	Sara	Portugal	Portuguese Youth Institute
20	Nenilin	Aleksandr	Russian Federation	Samara Youth Unite (the regional filial of Russia Youth Unite)
21	Jovic	Danijela	Serbia	Forum Syd Balkans Programme - FSBP
22	Varela García	Julio	Spain	Comité de Irmanamento de Lalín - CIRLA
23	Nilsson	August	Sweden	Swedish Red Cross Youth
24	Demir	Basak	Turkey	Youth Association For Habitat
25	Kuzmintsova	Anastasiia	Ukraine	"Youth CAN (Community Action Network)"
26	Pekh	Mykola	Ukraine	Lviv Youth Organization of Protection and Care for the Visually Impaired "Wings of Hope"
27	Richards	Robert Lee	United Kingdom	Cardiff Children and Young People's Partnership (also Cardiff County Council)
28	Waller	Claire	United Kingdom	City and County of Swansea

TRAINERS' TEAM

	Name	First name		
1	Bawidamann	Iris	CoE	Educational Advisor
2	Klocker	Sabine	CoE	Consultant – DYS pool of trainers
3	Morel	Denis	CoE	Consultant – DYS pool of trainers

4	Piliouris	Yannis	CoE	Consultant – YFJ pool of trainers
5	Raykova	Alexandra	CoE	Consultant – DYS pool of trainers

SPEAKERS

1	Fäldt	Brith	Congress, Sweden	Speaker
4	Pustelnyk	Nataliya	Ukraine	Lviv Youth Organization of Protection and Care for the Visually Impaired “Wings of Hope” – assistant to Mr Pekh
5	Restoueix	Jean-Philippe	CoE	Speaker
6	Risser	Chantal	Ville de Mulhouse	Speaker
7	Williams	Trefor	OSCE, BiH	Speaker

OTHERS

1	King	Lesley	United Kingdom	Secretarial Assistant
2	Panova	Ekaterina	Russian Federation	Trainee Educational Team