

Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life “Have Your Say!”



Peace
social cohesion
intercultural dialogue
participation
human rights
democratic citizenship
research

**The Plain Language
Version**





COUNCIL OF EUROPE





CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE





INTRODUCTION

— This Charter was developed by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe  which is part of the Council of Europe . It was also developed with young people themselves, working with the Youth Department of the Council of Europe.

— The Charter contains many important principles, ideas and actions in the area of youth participation . However, as an official document it was written in a form that is not always easy to read. As a result, the Congress decided to produce “Have Your Say!” in order to assist and support everybody to better understand the Charter.

— It is our hope that young people, Local and Regional Authorities  and everyone working in this area will find this version helpful when implementing the Charter. However, it should be used as an aid alongside the Charter and does not aim to replace it.

PREAMBLE

— Young people have the right and should have the opportunity to have a real say when decisions affecting them are being made at local and regional level. They should also be supported and given the space to be involved in all kinds of activities and actions. Of course, having a right is no good, unless young people have the opportunity, support and knowledge to use it. Therefore, this Charter says what and how Local and Regional Authorities  should support young people. Through this experience young people will gain the knowledge and experience to use these rights and opportunities to the maximum. This is participation and is one of the keys on which our democratic society  is based.

— Enabling young people to participate in their community is not only about helping young people to have a say now. It is also about supporting young people to experience the opportunities and challenges of participation and being involved in community life. If the participation is to be real and meaningful for young people it not only requires their commitment, it also requires the strong and lasting commitment by everyone else, in particular the Local and Regional Authorities, as the authorities closest to young people.

— Anything done to promote youth participation should take into account the diverse needs, circumstances, dreams and hopes of young people. And it should also include some fun!



THE PRINCIPLES OF THIS CHARTER

— The participation of young people in local and regional affairs is central to any work done to promote participation in general.

— Local and Regional Authorities should ensure that all the areas (see Part I) in which they have a role should take into account the needs and views of young people. This should be done in co-operation and consultation with young people.

— The principles, ideas and forms of participation discussed in this charter apply to all young people. In particular young people from different backgrounds and situations should be encouraged and supported to participate.



Glossary

Congress = Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, a consultative body representing local and regional authorities

Council of Europe = European organisation founded in 1949, which aims to protect and promote human rights and democracy, and to achieve greater unity between its 46 member countries

Youth Participation = young people taking part in how decisions are made

Local and Regional Authorities = Public administration structures, led by elected officials, responsible for aspects of citizens' lives not dealt with at the national government level

Preamble = An introductory statement

Democratic society = The idea that government is elected by the people

Principles = Values and central ideas

Co-operation = People working together

Consult = Asking people for their views



Chapter 1

The Areas where young people should be involved

1. SOCIAL, SPORTS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Leisure, sports, cultural activities and events run by youth groups and other clubs and organisations play a very important part in the lives of young people. In many communities there are not enough interesting or exciting activities for young people. These activities and events not only help those involved to learn new things, such as how to organise events, how to work with others, find out more about their local community, they also allow young people to meet new friends and to build their skills and confidence.

Local and Regional Authorities should encourage and support young people to get involved in, to set up and run clubs and groups for young people. They can do this by giving money and providing facilities to youth groups and clubs, so that they can run activities and events in the local community. Such activities could be: sports, plays, concerts, trips away etc.



Example

Sebastian and his friends enjoy playing football but until recently they just played among themselves. They wanted to improve their game and felt they needed to play regularly in a proper league to do so. They decided to establish their own team, but they were not sure exactly how to do this and they did not have enough money to pay all the costs. They approached the local authority and after explaining their plans they got funding that helped them set up and run their own football team. The local authority also put them in touch with the local football officials. Now their team is part of the local youth football league and every weekend they are playing teams from all over the region. Sebastian has noticed that there is a great spirit and cohesion in his team, not only because they enjoy the football, but also because the team is their idea and creation, which the local authority helped them achieve.



Facts

Name: Sebastian

Age: 15

Interests:

Sport and music



Glossary

Local and Regional Authorities = Public administration structures, led by elected officials, responsible for aspects of citizens' lives not dealt with at the national government level

Facilities = Places and venues where young people can do things and hang out together

Cohesion = Holding strongly together



2. WORK AND EMPLOYMENT

Life can be more difficult for young people who are unemployed because they might not have enough money, may feel isolated and left out of society. As a result unemployed young people are less interested, or can find it harder to get involved in activities and groups.

Local and Regional Authorities should, together with young people, develop ways to help them find jobs and reduce unemployment. This can be done by setting up and running job centres that prepare young people for the world of work and could help them find employment. Also if they want they should receive help to set up their own business.

Example

Ever since Maria was little, she had dreamt of becoming a hairdresser. For a long time, she had also wanted something she could call her own, which she could do by setting up and running her own business. After passing her school-leaving exam, she tried to find a hairdressing job but was not successful, so she considered opening her own hairdressing salon since that was the work she wanted to do. She contacted her local authority for help and guidance. She was advised and supported to undertake "a start your own business course" which many young people considering setting up their own business should do. She took the opportunity to do this training and gained enough knowledge and self-confidence to open her own hairdressing salon. She has now made reality both her dream of working as a hairdresser and running her own business.



Facts

Name: Maria

Age: 21

Interests:
fashion and travel



Glossary

Local and Regional Authorities = Public administration structures, led by elected officials, responsible for aspects of citizens' lives not dealt with at the national government level



3. HOUSING AND WHERE YOU LIVE

When young people want to have their own home it should be possible for them to get good quality and affordable housing. To make this possible Local and Regional Authorities should provide housing information as well as funding and advice to young people who want to buy or rent a home.

Local and Regional Authorities should also involve young people and youth groups when making decisions and carrying out work in public areas in cities and towns. In particular, this should happen when new housing and other facilities are being built or renewed. This would ensure that there are more facilities i.e. sport grounds, parks, playgrounds and places to hang out for young people. Authorities should also actively encourage and support young people and their organisations to be involved in decisions and projects aiming to protect and to improve the places where they live.

Example

Alexander wants to have his own flat but does not know if he can afford it. Also, he is not sure what type of accommodation will suit him best and is not fully aware of his rights as a tenant. Since he, like most of his friends, is still living at home, he decides to visit the local housing advice centre, which is funded and supported by the regional authority. Young people like Alexander are employed at the centre, so they understand his situation. He is given information and advice to enable him to make a decision. He is told he is entitled to a sum of money called housing benefit, which is a good thing since the flat he wants to rent is more expensive than he had planned for. Until now, he had no idea this benefit was available. up their own business should do. She took the opportunity to do this training and gained enough knowledge and self-confidence to open her own hairdressing salon. She has now made reality both her dream of working as a hairdresser and running her own business.



Facts

Name: Alexander
Age: 20
Interests:
cars and computers



Glossary

Local and Regional Authorities = Public administration structures, led by elected officials, responsible for aspects of citizens' lives not dealt with at the national government level

Facilities = Places and venues where young people can do things and hang out together

Accommodation = Place where you live or stay

Tenant = Person who rents accommodation



4. TRANSPORT

— Cheap, available and reliable public transport is really important if young people are going to be involved in the local community. They often have difficulties getting to their local youth club or other leisure or sporting activities because public transport does not run when they need it, is too expensive, or is not available at all. This can especially be the case in the countryside. As a result, many young people are excluded from activities and from being involved in local clubs and groups.

— Local and Regional Authorities should, in co-operation with young people and youth organisations, work on improving these services and make public transport meet their needs.

Example

— Rebecca has always been interested in singing. Along with about twenty friends, she decided to form a choir about six months ago. In the beginning they spent most of their time practising and performing in their own neighbourhood. However they began to get lots of invitations to perform at events and concerts all over the city and beyond. Since the choir is new and most of the invitations are for charity events, they don't get paid. So the choir had to turn down some requests, because Rebecca and her friends could not afford the cost of public transport to get to these venues. Rebecca was worried that some of the choir members might drop out and the choir might break up if they had to continue to turn down requests. She contacted the person responsible for youth affairs in the local authority for help. Having explained the situation, the youth officer in the local authority met with the public transport department and he negotiated a special group rate for the choir members when they are travelling on public transport to events/concerts in the city. In order to support the activities of youth groups in the city the local authority are considering extending this scheme, since it has been so successful in supporting the activities of the choir.



Facts

Name: Rebecca

Age: 19

Interests:
aerobics and animals



Glossary

Public transport = means of transport that can be used by everybody (e.g. train, bus)

Local and Regional Authorities = Public administration structures, led by elected officials, responsible for aspects of citizens' lives not dealt with at the national government level

Co-operation = people working together

Charity = Working for the benefit of others, outside your own family



5. EDUCATION AND SCHOOL

Young people go to school to get an education, which is necessary. As a result, a lot of their time is spent in school studying different subjects and preparing for exams. But schools should be about more than this, since school is a place where young people develop views and attitudes on the world around them. Therefore schools should be places where young people learn about democracy and democratic society. However, school should not only be a place where young people are taught about democracy, it should also be a place where they experience democracy in action.

Local and Regional Authorities should work with students and teachers to ensure young people are consulted and have a real say in how their school is run. Students should also have the right and opportunity and be funded to set up their own independent school councils. Teachers and school authorities should recognise that student councils have an important role to play and should work with them in running the school.

Example

Nina and her friends always thought that their school could be much better run, and in a way that would make it more enjoyable, pleasant and friendly for all the students. Until recently there was no school council where students could give their views or participate in the running of the school. Nina and her friends approached and met with the politicians from the local authority. They explained that even though they spend a lot of time in school, they are not encouraged to participate in how the school was run. They told the politicians that if the students had more of a say in how their school was run, they might become more encouraged and interested in getting involved in other community activities as well. As a result the local authority agreed to support the creation of a student council by providing funding and meeting facilities. The local politicians who are also involved in the management of the local schools have agreed to take on board the ideas and proposals from the student council. As chairperson of the student council Nina and her colleagues have decided that their first action should be to consult with all the students to find out what are the most important issues and proposals.



Facts

Name: Nina

Age: 17

Interests:
associating with
friends (also has a
considerable interest
in community affairs)



Glossary

Democratic society = The idea that government is elected by the people

Local and Regional Authorities = Public administration structures, led by elected officials, responsible for aspects of citizens' lives not dealt with at the national government level

Consultation = Asking people for their views



6. HEALTH

Young people should be able to get information and advice about how best to live a healthy life. In particular, they should be given information on the effects of tobacco, alcohol and drugs. This information and advice should be provided without going into the rights and wrongs.

Local and Regional Authorities should provide advice, support and information that young people need to make informed decisions about these issues. This should be done in close co-operation with young people and their organisations.

Example

One of Thomas's friends became a drug addict. For a long time, Thomas felt helpless – what could he actually do to help his friend and how could he become involved in drug prevention? He met with some friends and other people who had similar ideas, and they decided to get involved in drug awareness and prevention. They contacted the local authority to find out if they could get some funding for training on this issue. They received the help they needed and after their training had been completed they set up a youth organisation specialising in the field of drug prevention and in the rehabilitation of young people already addicted to drugs. Thomas thinks it is nice to be given the opportunity to do what he can to combat drug misuse and to be able to get into contact with others who want to do the same thing as him.



Facts

Name: Thomas

Age: 16

Interests:
literature and history



Glossary

Local and Regional Authorities = Public administration structures, led by elected officials, responsible for aspects of citizens' lives not dealt with at the national government level

Co-operation = people working together

Drug addict = A person who is dependent on drugs

Prevention = Working to stop something before it happens

Rehabilitation = Helping someone to get back to normal or to rebuild their lives after going through a difficult time/experience



7. LOVE AND SEXUALITY

Being in love and being in a relationship can be great. However, everybody has questions and doubts about love, relationships and sexuality. Young people are no different and in some cases may need more support because they may have less experience in dealing with these issues. So it is important that they can get advice, information and support about relationships, sex and sexuality if they need it. In particular, young people should get advice about how to avoid unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.

People have different sexual orientations, many are straight, but others are gay, lesbian and/or bisexual. Everyone wants to find love and happiness, however sometimes they find it more difficult than straight young people because of a lack of support or understanding from others.

Local and Regional Authorities should support families, agencies and groups who are providing young people with the information, advice and supports they need about love, sex and sexuality. Young people and youth organisations should be actively involved in developing and running these services.

Example

Sandra has had a difficult time recently. A year ago, a young man sexually abused her. She was not able to talk to her family about this for some time. Her family and friends were eventually able to help her to deal with her situation. She soon realised there were many young women in her community who faced similar experiences. She decided she would like to help set up a centre to provide young people who have been abused in any way. She contacted the local medical and social authorities with a view to doing this. She has been given a lot of support for her idea and currently she and her friends are working in their free time on this idea. At present they are trying to decide what support services could be provided at this centre to meet the needs of young people who have been abused. Knowing that she can help other young people overcome these painful experiences is helping Sandra deal with her problems. It has also influenced her career plans, as Sandra would now like to get professional training so that she could work in this area when she leaves school.



Facts

Name: Sandra

Age: 17

Interests:
yoga and
mountain climbing



Glossary

Sexually transmitted diseases = any infection acquired through sexual intercourse

Sexual orientations = People with different sexual preferences

Local and Regional Authorities = Public administration structures, led by elected officials, responsible for aspects of citizens' lives not dealt with at the national government level

Agencies = An organisation providing specific services

Sexually abused = Forced sex or unwanted sexual suggestions or contact



8. EQUALITY FOR YOUNG WOMEN AND YOUNG MEN

Women and men are still not always treated the same. This can be a problem for both, but in particular for young women. It would be better for all if everyone were treated equally.

Local and Regional Authorities should make sure that young women and men are treated equally in all their activities and work. They should provide training on this topic and support all, especially young women to achieve their full potential in school, university, work and in all areas of their lives.

Example

Anna was unsure about what type of career she would like to pursue. She felt that none of her female friends' career choices were right for her – nor were the jobs she had tried out in the past. Her male friends' career choices, on the other hand, seem to suit her better. She was particularly interested in working with forged iron but knew it was not so easy to get a job in that industry. Nevertheless, she wanted to have the opportunity to demonstrate her capabilities. Initially she felt that potential employers were reluctant to take her on because she was a woman. However after consulting with the employment advice centre, she learnt that these employers have received grants from the local authority and one of the conditions is that they must not discriminate on the basis of gender. When she brought this to the attention of an employer she was given a six-month trial. One year later, she is a valued employee and is really enjoying her work. She is glad that her local authority is proactive in ensuring that young women are not discriminated in the workforce.



Facts

Name: Anna

Age: 20

Interests:

**physical exercise
and cooking**





9. YOUNG PEOPLE IN RURAL AREAS

Living in the countryside and outside a city or town can be great. But there are some downsides. Sometimes it means that young people have little or no transport and as result might be involved in fewer activities. They may also find it hard to get a job in their local area.

Local and Regional Authorities should make special efforts to provide transport, employment, housing etc, for young people in rural areas so that they can have a good quality of life. Local and Regional Authorities should also fund, support and help groups and clubs for, and run by, young people in rural areas.

Example

Max lives in the countryside. He has been unemployed for a while but has now finally found a job. Everything would be fine if it were not such a long way to his place of work, especially since the local transport system is so bad. In fact, it is so poor that he does not know whether he can accept his new job. He decides to find out what he can do about this situation himself. He believes the public transport system has to be improved to enable people to commute to work from the rural areas instead of moving to the town. In his opinion, this is essential if the countryside is to survive. He contacts the local authority and the authority responsible for the transport system to enquire if something can be done. As a result of Max's initiative the authorities have decided to make rural transport a priority and are looking at the possibility of getting funding from the national government to improve the service so that Max and others of his age can continue living in the countryside, while working in the town.



Facts

Name: Max

Age: 22

Interests:
photography and
fishing



Glossary

Local and Regional Authorities = Public administration structures, led by elected officials, responsible for aspects of citizens' lives not dealt with at the national government level

Public Transport = Means of transport that can be used by everybody (e.g. train, bus)

Commute = To travel to and from your place of work



10. RESPECT FOR EVERY YOUNG PERSON

Everyone is different but also equal. Our community is made up of people from different backgrounds and situations, i.e. customs, cultures and lifestyles. This also includes people with disabilities. We all expect to be treated equally and with respect and we should treat others likewise.

Local and Regional Authorities should promote understanding and a respect for human rights. They should also make sure that all young people no matter what their background or situation, should be given equal access to all public services and facilities such as schools, public places, activities, etc. Local and Regional Authorities should work and consult young people and youth groups to promote equality and understanding among people from different backgrounds.



**NO HATE
SPEECH
MOVEMENT**



Example

— Amanda was on the local authority housing list, but was never offered a flat in the areas where she wanted to live. She knew that other people had been offered accommodation in those areas and suspects that the reason for this may be because of her origin and background or her religion. She was frustrated and felt it was wrong that she was discriminated against. She confronted some of the landlords and was offered a flat after a while. She also contacted the local authority to help bring about a long-term solution to the problem and ensure that other people from an immigrant background are not discriminated against. This results in the local authority checking the activities of the local landlords. As a result of Amanda's case and others the local authority issued a warning to all landlords informing them that they may face prosecution and heavy fines if they do not treat all applicants for housing equally.



Facts

Name: Amanda

Age: 21

Interests:
singing in choir and
writing poetry



Glossary

Equal = The idea that even though we are all different we all have the same rights

Local and Regional Authorities = Public administration structures, led by elected officials, responsible for aspects of citizens' lives not dealt with at the national government level

Human Rights = Your basic rights as a person, based on respect for each individual human life and human dignity

Consult = Asking people for their views

Accommodation = Place where you live or stay

Discriminate = Treating people differently due to their appearance, background

Landlord = Owner of a place that is rented out

Prosecution = When you have to go to court to defend yourself against others who say you have broken the law



11. THE RIGHTS OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE LAW

Every community and country needs rules and regulations in the form of laws, which we must all respect. These laws state what people's rights and responsibilities are. However, many young people are not aware of their rights and responsibilities and sometimes it is not clear what is expected from them and what they should expect in return.

Local and Regional Authorities should provide young people with information on laws in all places where they spend time, such as in schools, youth clubs, public spaces, etc. They should develop and provide more information to young people on their rights and responsibilities. Authorities should also ask them for their views when they are changing the current rules and laws or when they plan to make new ones.



Facts

Name: Adam

Age : 23

Interests:

football and drawing



Example

Just over a year ago, Adam bought a new car stereo, which has now stopped working. He went back to the shop where he bought it to ask for his money back. There he was told that the type of defect in his stereo is not covered by the guarantee as the shop claimed it was caused by his own carelessness. As he has been careful with his stereo, he does not agree with this and contacts his local authority. They advise him to get in touch with the local consumer advice bureau, which explains to him what his consumer rights are. The consumer advice bureau advises him that since the car stereo has broken down after only a year he is entitled to a new stereo or his money back. He goes back to the shop with this information and they agree to give him a new car stereo, which he accepts.



Glossary

Responsibilities = Something that you should or are required to do

Local and Regional Authorities = Public administration structures, led by elected officials, responsible for aspects of citizens' lives not dealt with at the national government level

Consumer Advice Bureau = Office where you get advice on your rights as a shopper/user of services



12. INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

Travelling to and living in another European country for a short or long period can help young people to find out and experience how others live. This can help develop greater understanding among people from different backgrounds and countries.

Local and Regional Authorities should support and help young people, schools, youth organisations, volunteers and others to organise and run exchanges between young people and groups in other countries.

Example

David was always interested in other languages and different cultures and dreamed of spending part of his school time abroad to get to know people from a different background and culture and to improve his knowledge of other languages. He examined with his school the possibility of studying abroad for a year. As a result of his initiative his school entered into a twinning arrangement with a school from another European country, which was funded by the local authority. He was actively involved in all the preparations and has just returned having spent a year studying abroad. As a result of his initiative and since the twinning arrangement has been such a success, the local authority have provided additional funding to the school so that other young people from the locality also have the opportunity to study and live abroad.



Facts

Name: David

Age: 24

Interests:
Computer games
and films



Glossary

Local and Regional Authorities = Public administration structures, led by elected officials, responsible for aspects of citizens' lives not dealt with at the national government level



13. CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Crime and violence is a major issue for young people. Many are victims of crime and violence, while a small minority is also involved in it. There is a need to involve young people in tackling crime and violence and to build trust between all the authorities, young people and the police.

Local and Regional Authorities should work with those young people at risk of becoming involved in crime and violence, and those already involved. They should also support projects, groups or agencies working to prevent crime and violence of all types, including the sexual exploitation of young people. Authorities should also ensure that young people are consulted and involved in local structures such as crime prevention councils.

Example

Mario was recently badly beaten in an unprovoked attack by a local gang as he walked home from college. He had been concerned for a long time about the increase in violence in his neighbourhood and discussed with friends what they could do to prevent and combat it. The attack prompted him to organise a theme week at his college. Together with the police, youth organisations and the regional authority, he wanted to get the views of other young people. As a result of the discussions during the theme week, it was clear that violence was a big issue for a lot of young people in his college and in the locality and they wanted to see something done about it. He considered it was important that young people themselves help address the problem and take the initiative. The theme week resulted in a number of ideas and proposals being put in place. It has led to regular contact between young people, youth organisations, the local authority and the police aimed at everyone working together to combat violence and crime.



Facts

Name: Mario

Age: 18

Interests:

spare-time disc jockey; also enjoys spending time with his girlfriend and friends



Glossary

Local and Regional Authorities = Public administration structures, led by elected officials, responsible for aspects of citizens' lives not dealt with at the national government level



Chapter II

How to support the participation of young people

YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND TRAINING

— Young people should be given advice, guidance and support about how best to be involved in decisions and actions that affect them in school, youth groups and in their community. However older people may also need training in how best to support young people in having their say.

— Local and Regional Authorities should make sure that teachers, youth workers and all others working with or for young people, receive training and guidance on this topic. They should also provide training, advice and support to young people and should make sure it is run and organised to suit young people's needs

YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND INFORMATION

— One of the biggest problems is the lack of relevant and available information concerning activities, opportunities and events. This can sometimes also include the lack of information about many important issues in young people's lives. These may include: housing, employment, sexuality, law, rights, etc.

— Local and Regional Authorities should support youth information centres where all this information is located, and where young people are able and feel comfortable accessing it. These centres can be in schools, libraries, youth clubs etc. Additionally, Local and Regional Authorities should use modern means of communications, e.g. websites to provide this information. Websites should not be the only means as not every young person has access to the Internet.



YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND THE MEDIA

Magazines and newspapers, radio and television programmes and the internet play an important role in the lives of young people. They can provide entertainment, information and can help consumers to develop their opinions and to make decisions.

Despite this, young people rarely have an opportunity to be involved in and contribute to media products. It is more difficult for them to contribute to or develop their own media products, such as newspapers, local radio and TV programmes.

Local and Regional Authorities should provide training to enable young people to get easier access to media and to produce their own media products. At the same time they should also provide support for the creation of young people's own media.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND VOLUNTARY ACTIVITY

Young people today are under a lot of pressure to do well in school and in work. As a result, there is less time available to get involved in activities in the community. Because of this young people should be supported to do voluntary work if they want; not only because it can be good fun, but also as it can be beneficial for themselves and for the community.

Local and Regional Authorities should assist young people to volunteer by funding voluntary organisations, especially youth organisations and volunteer centres. They should also organise promotional and information campaigns on volunteering and give recognition to young people for their voluntary work.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND YOUTH PROJECTS


Young people often have ideas about how to improve life or tackle problems in their community, but lack the encouragement and necessary support from the authorities to make them a reality.

Local and Regional Authorities should help young people to develop their ideas and projects with advice, money, space etc. If the proposal is successful it has the potential to improve life for all in the community. Even when ideas or proposals cannot be set up or are not successful, young people and the authorities can learn a lot from the experience.




YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND YOUTH GROUPS

■ Youth groups that are set up and run by young people themselves are an ideal way for young people to learn about participation. In these groups young people can have a real say in deciding what they want to do which allows them to take full responsibility for their own affairs. All young people should be able to join or set up a youth group if they want to.

■ Local and Regional Authorities  should have a specific fund to support youth clubs and groups, which special emphasis on helping those groups set up and run by young people themselves.


YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND CO-MANAGEMENT

■ At European level and at a local and national level in some countries, a system called “Co-Management” is in place. This means that there is a structure where the authorities and young people representing youth organisations meet frequently. Both sides should have the same number of representatives and they should have the same rights.

■ Local and Regional Authorities  should set up these (“co-management”) structures to provide young people with the opportunity and ability to have a real say in decisions and actions affecting them.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND OTHER GROUPS AND POLITICAL PARTIES

■ Young people should be encouraged to get involved in all types of organisations and causes. Therefore it is important that they have the choice, opportunity and support to be involved in all types of organisations and groups, such as political parties, issue specific organisations, etc.

■ Local and Regional Authorities  should provide funding to groups and organisations which actively welcome and support young people to be involved in their activities and structures at all levels. They should support all political parties to encourage young people to become interested and active in politics.



Glossary

Local and Regional Authorities = Public administration structures, led by elected officials, responsible for aspects of citizens' lives not dealt with at the national government level

Consumer = A person who buys and uses goods and services

Media products = Press and Media, e.g. TV, radio, newspapers



Chapter III

Structures to support the Participation of Young People

— In order to support the participation of young people certain structures and supports should be put in place.

YOUTH PARLIAMENTS, YOUTH COUNCILS, YOUTH FORUMS

— All structures such as youth parliaments, youth councils, youth forums, student councils, etc. may take many different forms depending on the needs of young people and the authorities involved. They can achieve the same result, as long as young people are treated with respect and as equals. It is vital that these structures are flexible and can change according to the needs and views of the young people involved. All structures should include people from all backgrounds and situations. To make sure young people have a real say in decisions and actions affecting them these should be permanent structures and not once-off meetings.



SUPPORT FOR STRUCTURES OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION

■ So that these structures can work effectively, it is important that the authorities give them financial support and the use of facilities. However they should also be given advice and information on how to get money and facilities from other sources e.g. private companies.

■ All those elected and working within Local and Regional Authorities should support youth participation. However, the authorities should appoint a person or a group of person (guarantor) to be the main contact for young people and to support them in taking the lead in youth participation.



Glossary

Facilities = Places and venues where young people can do things and hang out together

Local and Regional Authorities = Public administration structures, led by elected officials, responsible for aspects of citizens' lives not dealt with at the national government level

Guarantor = Somebody who helps and advises and is a link person

Youth Department

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Partnership Programme between the Council of Europe and the European Commission on European youth worker training

<http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int>

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