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When You(th) Needs to Speak Up: Enabling Speech and Expression in a Diverse World

Report of the study session held by
International Federation of Liberal Youth

in co-operation with the
European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe

European Youth Centre Budapest
4 – 8 March 2019

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

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Executive Summary

In this executive summary, we state the most important facts, issues, and conclusions from the study session “When You(th) Needs to Speak Up: Enabling Speech and Expression in a Diverse World” that was held in European Youth Center Budapest in 4 - 8 March 2019. This section also gives an overview of the event as well as the report very briefly.

“When You(th) Needs to Speak Up: Enabling Speech and Expression in a Diverse World” is planned as the first international event of the International Federation of Liberal Youth (IFLRY) for the 2019 event plan to kick-start the “Changing the Norm” theme of the year. Looking at the previous yearly themes of IFLRY, namely that migration, and populism, change making is the natural next theme for us. The theme is also closely linked to the work of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, more specifically to its priority “Inclusive and peaceful societies.”

In this event, we aimed to kick-start our theme of change making through social norms and specifically addressed the issue of freedom of expression because IFLRY believes that the populist backlash against liberal values and democracy that we see in Europe can be successfully addressed only through promoting pluralism and freedom of expression as its furthest extension.

During the study session, we aimed at covering the above-mentioned issues with participants from Europe and most importantly, from its peripheries such as the MENA region where they suffer from the lack of freedom of expression in various parts of their social life. They first explored the conceptual side of the freedom of speech, and realized through interactive and reflective sessions that it is not just an abstract idea, but an inevitable part of our lives as democratic citizens. They later discussed topics such as hate speech, limits of free speech, and freedom of the press and civic society. Participants were provided with the space to learn and discuss these ideas from both sides of the debate. Finally, they were given the space and resources to come up with their own projects to tackle some of the challenges that they see in their surroundings especially undermining the freedom of speech for the youth.

During this journey from conceptual analysis to mapping the problem to addressing and finally proposing solutions, participants benefited enormously from the external speakers’ and guests’ perspective. They had access to different frameworks of experts working on enhancing the freedom of expression from different walks of life. This allowed them not only to interact with these experts and their ideas, but also to develop an empathetic view to each of these perspectives. Moreover, these perspectives helped them to articulate the main issues regarding the populist backlash against minority groups in society, and especially towards the immigrants. They discovered innovative and smart ways of enhancing the freedom of speech for different groups in society, and learned about the tools that they can use for social change that they can bring about in their local and (even) regional communities.

As a result, they come up with seven different projects that they will implement with their partners in this study session, and also immediately responded with an ad-hoc video campaign to the unfortunate hate crime event in New Zealand that has happened right after the study session. Therefore, as a silver lining, we believe that this event has met its expectations to raise awareness and deep understanding of the importance of freedom of expression in our participants, and their respective member organizations.

2. *Introduction*

In this introduction, we would like to give you an idea what this report contains, and also some facts about the study session such as the background to the session, aims and objectives, a short introduction to the participants and organizations, and finally the presentation of the topic of the study session. Last but not least, we will also try to carve out the reasons why this study session is closely related to Council of Europe's agenda and specialty in the topic.

IFLRY

To start with, an introduction to International Federation of Liberal Youth would be appropriate to explain the background of the organisation for the application for this study session. International Federation of Liberal Youth (IFLRY) is a network of young liberals all around the world. IFLRY represents more than 1.2 million members all around the world from a wide spectrum. The core values of IFLRY are human rights, and freedom of expression, and democracy. And this brings us to the background reason of International Federation of Liberal Youth to apply for this study session to be organised in cooperation with the Council of Europe.

Background

IFLRY, especially in the last couple of years, is focusing its strength in non-formal education and change making into addressing the challenges related to the recent discussions around immigration, such as the rise of populism and xenophobia against migrants and refugees, and issues related to the restriction of freedom of speech and expression more generally. Last year, IFLRY's yearly theme for its events was immigration, and we applied for and conducted a study session in cooperation with the Council of Europe called "You(th) and Migration: Transforming the Crisis" aiming at social inclusion of migrants and refugees. In 2019, IFLRY chose changing the social norms as their theme. To bolster this theme, IFLRY applied for this study session, "When You(th) Needs to Speak Up: Enabling Speech and Expression in a Diverse World", this year aiming at focusing on freedom of speech and expression for youth, especially in diverse societies. The main motivation for IFLRY to do this has been not only IFLRY's mission of spreading and protecting liberal values such as freedom of speech and freedom of expression as a principle, but also to further emphasise their importance in democratic and pluralistic societies. While we are going through times in politics that are giving in to the populist turn, IFLRY believes that reminding these values are crucial. And therefore, we believe that this study session, especially hold in Budapest, is enclosing an immense message.

Aims and Objectives

Aims:

The main aim of the study session was to enhance participation of Young Activists, by educating them with a focus on the following specific issues:

- Freedom of Speech
- Expression
- Inclusion
- Peaceful co-existence
- Cooperation in groups of society/civil society
- Migrants + refugees as the starting point

Objectives included the analyses of the importance of freedom of speech in a Human Rights framework, paying attention to topics such as:

- Discover the barriers
- Diversity and Pluralism perspective and importance
- Acknowledgment of prerequisites of a plural society
- Non-formal education methods
- Creating projects
- Best practice sharing and creating
- Intercultural dialogue

We believe that these aims and objectives reflect our reasons for applying for and holding this study session, and they were adequately represented during our session.

Profile of the Participants

The study session was not envisaged only for participants from IFLRY member organizations, but also participants who have an interest in the topic, including different levels of expertise on the topic. Whilst a majority of the participants were expected to be active within IFLRY member organizations, we invited and actively looked for some participants who are active in local or national youth organizations. All of the participants had previous background either in human rights' activism and/or worked with young people related to the topic. Particular attention was paid to gender and regional balance and participation from students or activists from marginalized groups was ensured. We did our best to focus on bringing together different groups in our participants to have a more fruitful discussion. Therefore, we had participants from Austria, Azerbaijan, Denmark, Hungary, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, Lebanon, and Jordan.

Participants were selected based on their answers to questions in the application form such as "Please describe why you would like to attend the study session and what your expectations are?", or "Please describe how this study session can support, develop and strengthen your own organization and how you plan to share the results with your home organization." so that the team would have an overall idea of the motivation of the applicant to this session. After the initial selection process, we took gender and cultural balances into consideration for providing them with an adequate representation of different cultures and also providing a healthy platform for intercultural learning throughout the session as study sessions of this length are an opportunity for the participants to have a more holistic experience of non-formal education.

The selected participants arrived with different levels of knowledge of theoretical principles, awareness, personal backgrounds, expectations, and plans. The diverse composition of the group of participants was also revealing differences within our membership, as well as different levels of individual and organizational awareness and familiarity with concepts. For instance, some participants were coming from youth wings of larger political parties from their country whereas some of them were members of small think-tanks in their country and had completely different outlooks for the topic. The intimate nature of the discussions was at times challenging. This was especially true for those participants who were either very new to these reflections due to their age or background, or for those who were very advanced due to their advancement within the field.

Theme and Council of Europe

The theme for the study session, freedom of speech and expression, is closely related to the Council of Europe's core values during its creation, and also its agenda. The Council of Europe stands for human rights, rule of law, and each individual's fundamental freedoms. Freedom of expression has always been one of the core values and principles that Council of Europe and

also liberals around the world have advocated. When we move towards more recent history, Council of Europe has initiated the No Hate Speech Movement campaign which has brought public attention to the issues related to hate speech in public and online. Both of these agendas for Council of Europe are closely related with the aims of this study session, namely to draw attention and emphasize the significance of freedom of expression for everyone, and bolstering pluralist societies for protecting the fundamental rights of individuals, and human rights in general.

3. *Results and Conclusions*

This study session was an immense opportunity for IFLRY's member organizations to gather together and represent their organization and discuss with other member organizations. Therefore, it has been highly valuable for those member organizations which participated. Yet, what is more important was the individuals' outcomes from this study session: it has been a highly engaging and sometimes even too challenging learning experience for our individual participants. These reflections and challenges, of course, had an impact on IFLRY's later events and programmes. For instance, within only two weeks, IFLRY had their bi-yearly General Assembly and the results from the study session has been presented to the membership and has been discussed in world café style while member organizations were interacting with each other and building up various cooperation between each other based on these results and discussions. Moreover, these results will be implemented on IFLRY's Work Plan events in 2019.

For most of the participants, it was their first time in an international setting, and also their first time working with the conceptual framework of freedom of speech, hate speech, and social norms governing our actions of speech and expression. In the first day, many of the participants visibly show their concern and discomfort in the sessions. Later in the week, they started to take action towards solving these unsettling issues using the tools we provided during the session.

In the study session, we aimed at tackling the issues related to seen and unseen barriers to freedom of speech and expression. Moreover, we also touched upon the subject of hate speech and how it is related to freedom of speech and other fundamental human rights. During the session, mainly Council of Europe's learning structures and guidelines were used. We also used strong team building activities in the beginning of the session to introduce European Youth Center and Council of Europe, as well as IFLRY and non-formal education methods.

A specific note should be given on the cultural aspects of non-formal education methods and how participants react to them. All of the participants were part of a student organization or a youth wing of a political party and they knew the ways in which such groups organize themselves around a common goal. However, the differences between cultures and the ways they use to organize has been a challenge between participants that they overcome through using the tools that has been provided during the session. From that perspective, we are confident in saying that the methods and tools used in the session has been put in use immediately and has been quite successful in overcoming cultural differences and start the intercultural learning process.

4. *Programme – Inputs and Discussions*

In this part of the report, we will introduce and guide you through the programme of the study session, explaining some of the main points of discussions and debates during the session, as

well as introducing the main concepts and methodology used in the session. The Study Session final programme can be found in the annex part of the report.

Programme Design

The session has been designed based on IFLRY's past experiences in Council of Europe Study Session experiences and updated based on the feedback and also to improve the overall flow for providing a better learning environment to the participants with different learning styles.

The programme is designed as follows:

Day 1: Team Building

Teambuilding and get to know each other through activities, and introducing the "problem" to the participants

Day 2: Unpacking

In this day we explore the challenges to expression that might appear in formal and informal forms and build up the empathy and reflection between participants that come from different backgrounds.

Day 3: Expert Day

Talk with an expert with No Hate Speech Movement about the relationship between free speech and hate speech and Council of Europe's actions in this field.

Day 4: Liberal Perspective and Tools

Talk with a Hungarian journalist in the beginning of the day to kick-start the discussion on liberal perspectives and tools to provide solutions to the barriers of free speech and expression and sharing tools to resist those formal and informal barriers.

Day 5: Developing Ideas

Planning projects that are feasible within the participants and their organizations' limits, and presentation of those ideas for future cooperation and project work, evaluation, closing ceremony.

Below, the reader can have a closer look into each of the day, how the sessions were conducted and what kind of reflections took place.

Day 1 – Team Building

On this day, we opened up the study session and started with team building activities, as well as the rules, and goals and expectations sessions. On this day, we presented the programme to participants and get their immediate questions and feedback regarding the programme.



After this team building part of the day, the session continued with a role play game that would not only allow them to connect with their experiences better, but also to raise their own awareness on the issues of freedom of speech. In this role-playing game of “When I Couldn’t Speak...” we made use of “Where do you stand?” activity in the Compass. During this game, the differences between different cultures, genders, and biases have seen much more clearly and participants were much more emotionally active afterwards.



During Role Play: “When I Couldn’t Speak...”

The previous role-play game allowed participants to better address the issues of free speech in their communities, and this helped the day to transition into the first content session of the week—definitions and framework. In this session, we introduced some of the key concepts for diving into the free speech debate. Also, participants had time to discuss why these concepts are important, and why they are especially important for liberals.

Day 2 – Unpacking

Every day, we started with the Click of the Day exercise in which participants submit keywords about the last day. This exercise allowed us to not only recap the day before, but also have a much smoother flow for the new day as well. You can find the Click of the Day 1 below.

Click of the Day, Day 1

Mentimeter



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Later, we continued with a mapping session in which we explored the formal and informal barriers to free speech. In this exercise, we used the World Café format and divided the participants into groups to explore different kinds of barriers for young political activists.

The focus of the day were the next two sessions where participants were aimed at reaching the core of the issue with free speech: one theoretical and one practical session to further develop a learning environment for participants to flesh out the main tension with barriers to free speech with the help of reflection and Socratic dialogue. In the content session, we explored the relationship between identity and freedom of expression. To have a more concrete idea on our biases and how they are closely related to identity and expression topic, we made use of Harvard University's Implicit Bias Test database.¹

¹ Link: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/?fbclid=IwAR3qWhHBim4XANKOXsMNS_R1WUpNKWeHKhRE-HOKOjO4vRC4foOej3Kr-AU



The next session was a surprise role play game for all participants. They are divided into groups during the lunch and then they were asked to write a populist speech against a “made-up” minority. Right before they deliver their speech, those “made-up” minorities have been changed to real ones and they were asked to deliver their speech in the new format. The aim was to create a sense of uneasiness and empathy, and the game had been very successful in giving this.



Lastly, we had an intercultural learning session with the participants on the second day to tease out the cultural element in their learning experience even more. In this session, we introduced a game called “5 TRICKS!” to each table and instructed them to play completely silently.² As easy

² The rules of the game are available online: *BARNGA Game Rules: Five Tricks. A Card Game Easy to Learn and Easy to Play.*

as it seems, it created an immense learning space for the participants to see how the cultural differences play a role in our communications with each other. On this day's home groups, they reflected on this game heavily and expressed their amazement. The handout used for this session is attached in the appendices.

Day 3 – Expert Day

The Click of Day 2 was as follows:



On Day 3, we started with *Menno Ettema's* (No Hate Speech Movement) presentation. We arranged a video conference with him, and he gave a speech on the mission of NHSM. He also touched upon the issue of definition of hate speech, or the lack thereof. Afterwards his speech, participants had a chance to direct question to him and especially has been interested in the definition issue specifically. There were a great discussion around this topic and this came up later during the week as well.

A definition of HS

Human Rights based approach to narratives



3 main rules:

- It should include **no hate**, **no violence** and **no discrimination**
- It should foster **equality**, **respect** and **solidarity** among individuals and social groups
- It should promote an understanding of the **equal dignity of all human beings**, promote **critical thinking**, **fair dialogue** and **correct information**



On the next session, participants were divided into groups for a debate exercise. They are given three subjects and divided into six groups respectively of these subjects for and against.

- Pornography
- “Satanic Verses”
- Speech Ban on College Campus

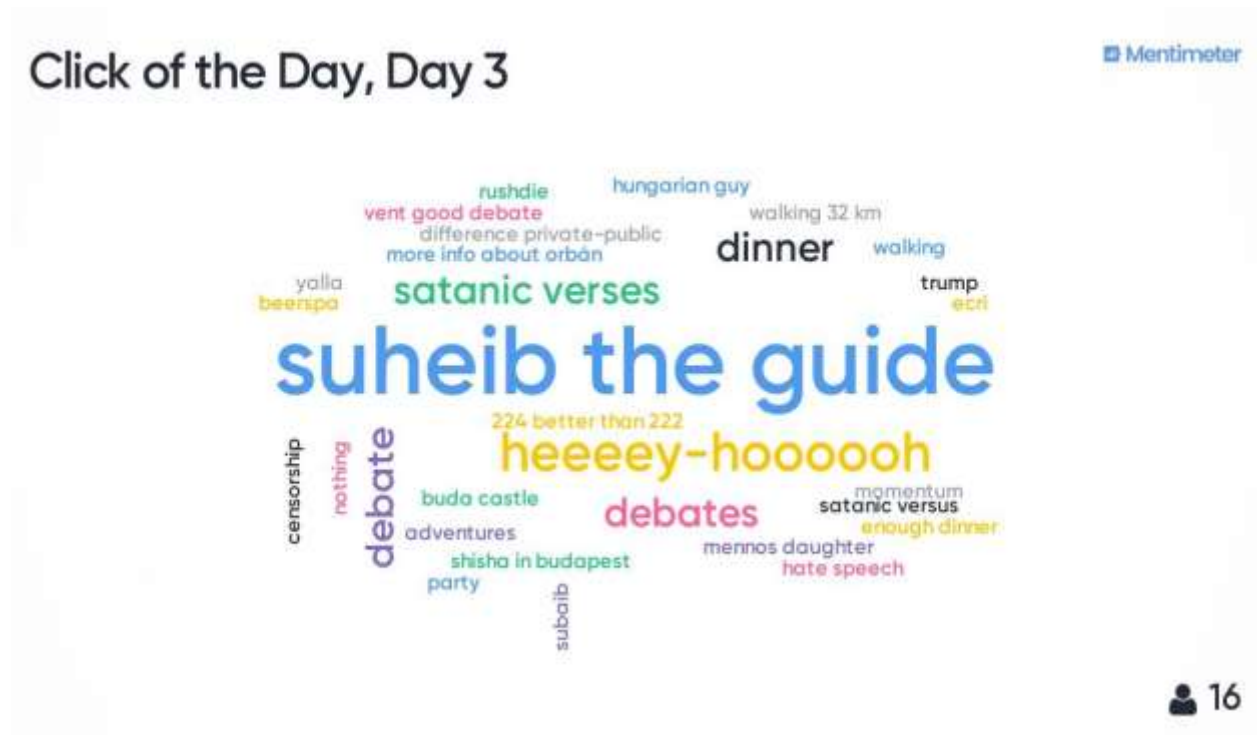
We met with *András Sztanef* from Momentum Movement in Hungary in the dinner in town. Participants had their opportunity to approach a local political activist and direct their questions to him personally. It not only helped them to get a better understanding of the real effects of populist agenda but also help them to network and build cooperation between sister organizations.



Meeting with András Sztanef from Momentum

Day 4 – Liberal Perspective and Tools

The Click of Day 3 was as follows:



This day was especially dedicated to exploring the tools of creating and fostering an environment for freedom of speech and expression. We start the day with *Gergő Saling* from Direkt36.hu as he gave a presentation called “Tough times require tough questions - Journalists' responsibility in an illiberal state” and discussed the “baby steps” to populist leaders and their effect on daily life of the people living in Hungary.

After that, we focused on the tools of liberal policymaking for recognizing and changing the social norms in a community or society. For the recognizing part, we used anonymous polls to ask them about specific situations. For instance, we asked our participants that whether they would speak up in a situation where a good-looking male friend is called gay “as a joke” and they reacted in this way:



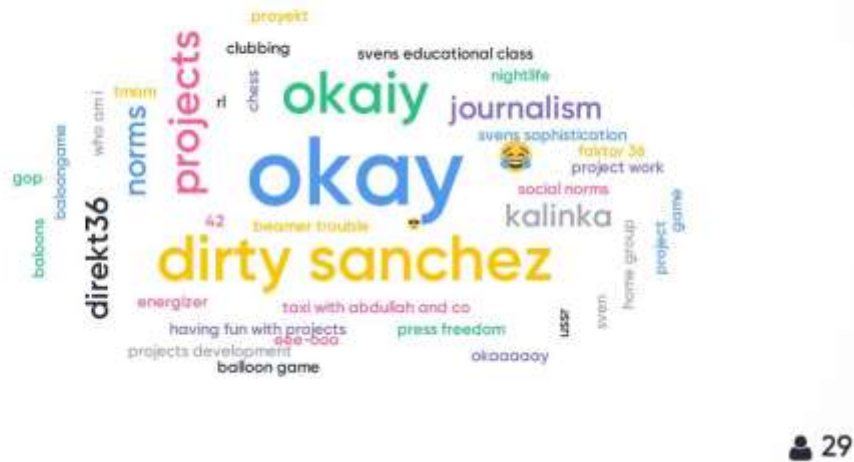
Some of the participants did not feel comfortable joining in this poll, yet most of them joined and we achieved these results. Then we explained the social norms around LGBTI+ community between different cultures and societies and how can we change them for the better.

At the end of the day, participants shared their ideas with which areas they would like to build projects to improve and change social norms for enhancing freedom of speech and expression in their communities. They jointly decided to work on 4 different topics and 7 different projects. They break into groups and brainstormed about their projects for the rest of the day.

Day 5 – Developing Ideas

The Click of Day 4 was as follows:

Click of the Day, Day 4



This last day was the day which participants finished their projects and presented them.

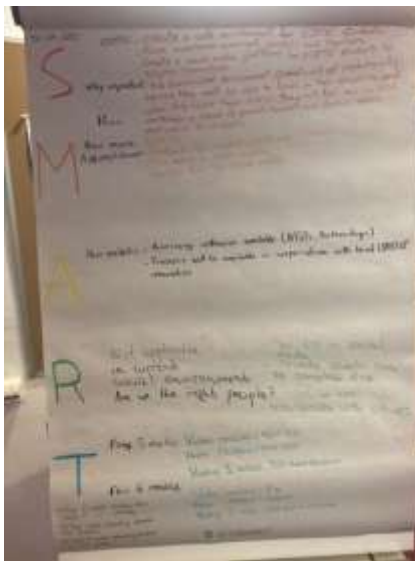
Project 1: Let's Debate



Project 2: Sisyphus



Project 3: Say No to Bullying



Project 4: HateScope



Project 5: Hate Speech Manual



Project 6: Policy paper



Project 7: The Sofa Project



5. *Follow-up Activities*

This study session was designed in a way that allowed participants to use their acquired knowledge and experience gained at sessions jointly with their existing knowledge of the political field, as well as bolstering follow-up activities in their chapters and regions. We spared half of the Day 4 and Day 5 to build and develop such activities that would not only motivate participants to follow-up with their learning experience in the study session, but also to critically think about executing a project with a realistic mindset. During this project development time, participants examined resources they have and tools they need—which sometimes turned out to be “each other”. Finally, they received feedback on their project proposals from other participants as well as from the facilitators to better execute and cooperate after the seminar.

A list of the proposed plans was posted on the participants' Facebook page, where participants are also updating each other on the implemented projects, as well as sharing materials and interesting events. However, the most important follow-up activity has been developed right after the seminar due to the extremely unfortunate event in New Zealand shooting. Participants were very active in developing a project within 24 hours of the event and they have produced a video aiming at pointing out at the limits of free speech and hate speech as they can and often do inflict hate crimes.

The video can be found here on IFLRY's Facebook page:

https://www.facebook.com/iflry/posts/10162045987300393?_tn=C-R

Also on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/IFLRY/status/1108085045967900673>

It has been an unforgettable experience for the whole team of trainers and participants to see the horrendous effects of hate speech and hate crime, and this follow-up video not only crystallized the importance of bolstering pluralism and free speech for those who were in the study session, but also to the whole IFLRY family through this quick action. We as facilitators and trainers were very proud of the participants' initiative on this follow-up project.

6. *Appendices*

Annex 1: Daily Programme as Executed

When You(th) Need to Speak up: Enabling Expression and Speech in a Diverse World

**Organised by IFLRY
in co-operation with the European Youth Centre Budapest**

Day by day Programme

Sunday, 3rd of March 2019

Arrival of participants
19:00 Dinner
21:00 Welcome Evening

Monday, 4th of March 2019

09:30 Opening with Introduction to Study Session, to IFLRY and European Youth Foundation, and the Center
Intro of aims & objectives of the Study Session / Expectations & programme
11:00 Break
11:30 Team Building Activity "Treasure Hunt"
13:00 Lunch
14:30 Role Play Game "When I couldn't speak..."
16:00 Break
16:30 Definitions and Framing Concepts "Freedom of Expression: A Liberal Dream?"
18:00 Reflection Groups (Home Groups)
19:00 Dinner
21:00 Organisational Display

Tuesday, 5th of March 2019

09:30 Formal and Informal Barriers to Free Speech (Mapping Session)
11:00 Break
11:30 Content Session on "Identity, Alienation, and Stigma"
13:00 Lunch break
14:30 Role Play Game "When Hate Speech Hits You"
16:00 Break
16:30 5 TRICKS: Intercultural Learning Space
18:00 Reflection Groups (Home Groups)
19:00 Dinner
21:00 Cultural Evening

Wednesday, 6th of March 2019

- 09:30 External Speaker - No Hate Speech Movement – Menno ETTEMA, Council of Europe
- 11:00 Break
- 11:30 Debate: “Limits to Free Speech – Better Shut up?!”
- 13:00 Lunch break
- 14:30 Free Afternoon
- 19:00 Dinner in Town
- Political Café: External Guest from Momentum Movement

Thursday, 7th of March 2019

- 09:30 External Speaker – Journalist from Direkt36/Hungary: “Tough times require tough questions - Journalists' responsibility in an illiberal state”
- 11:00 Break
- 11:30 Content Session on “From Institutions to Structures”
- 13:00 Lunch
- 14:30 Project Time: “Time to Take Action!”
- 16:00 Break
- 16:30 Working Groups for Projects
- 18:00 Reflection Groups (Home Groups)
- 19:00 Dinner
- 21:00 Social Committee Activity Time

Friday, 8th of March 2019

- 09:30 Working Group Projects Continued
- 11:00 Break
- 11:30 Group Presentations: “Time to Shine”
- 13:00 Lunch
- 14:30 Follow Up: Expectations, Reflections, Evaluation
- 16:00 Break
- 16:30 Closing Ceremony
- 18:00 Reflection Groups (Home Groups)
- 19:00 Dinner
- 21:00 Farewell

Saturday 9th of March 2019

Departure of participants

Annex 2: List of Participants



Study session

When You(th) Need to Speak up: Enabling Expression and Speech in a Diverse World

Study session organised by International Federation of Liberal Youth in cooperation with the Youth Department of the Council of Europe

European Youth Centre Budapest
4 – 8 March 2019

List of Participants

Participants

AUSTRIA / Autriche

Name : Peter Zipper Organization's name : JUNOS
Website:

AZERBAIJAN / AZERBAIDJAN

Name : Subhan Hasanli Organization's name : Institute for Citizen Rights

DENMARK / DANEMARK

Name : Mina Qaume Organization's name : Radikal Ungdom

GEORGIA / GEORGIE

Name : Ana Okriashvili Organization's name : Liberal Line

Name : Ketevan Mikava Organization's name : Liberal Line

HUNGARY / HONGRIE

Name : Suhib Bani Hamad Organization's name : Jordan Heritage

JORDAN / JORDANIE

Name : Amani Al-Farajat Organization's name : Free Thought Forum

Name : Haytham Al Tawalbeh Organization's name : Free Thought Forum

LEBANON / LIBAN

Name : Zeina El-Samman Organization's name : Future Youth

Name : Youmna Rachid Organization's name : Future Youth

Name : Karim Bisher El Kabbani Organization's name : Future Youth

LITHUANIA / LITUANIE

Name : Jonas Petraševičius Organization's name : Lithuania Liberal Youth

Name : Agnes Baltrūnaitė Organization's name : Lithuania Liberal Youth

NETHERLANDS / PAYS-BAS

Name : Siem van Ostaden Organization's name : JOVD

Name : Dikran Kassabian Organization's name : Jonge Democraten

POLAND / POLOGNE

Name : Paweł Dobrosz Organization's name : Nowoczesna Youth

RUSSIAN FEDERATION / FEDERATION DE RUSSIE

Name : Novikova Mariia Organization's name : Vremya

Name : Andrew Graf Organization's name : Vesna

Name : Sergey Kargapoltsev Organization's name : Vesna

SWEDEN / SUEDE

Name : Emil Lewenhaupt Organization's name : LUF

Name : Dennis Kronholm Organization's name : CUF

TURKEY / TURQUIE

Name : Mehmet Ataberk Atan Organization's name : 3H Movement

Name : Sude Çelikörs Organization's name : 3H Movement

Name : Deniz Hazal Özen Organization's name :

UKRAINE / UKRAINE

Name : Diana Nazaruk Organization's name : EYU

Name : Kateryna Rivna Organization's name : LDLU

Preparatory team

Name : Sven Gerst

Name : Abdallah Abdoh

Name : Baker Halawi

Name : Katharina Schreiner

Lecturers

Name : Gergő Function / Professional affiliation : Direkt36.hu
Saling Journalist

Function / Professional affiliation :
Direkt36

Course director

Name : Nazlıcan Kanmaz

Educational advisor

Name : Simona Molari

Council of Europe

Name : Menno Ettema

Annex 4: List of Links connected to the activity

Website:

<http://www.iflry.com/open-call-for-participants-for-a-study-session-on-pluralism-in-budapest/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/iflry/posts/10162013312350393>

https://www.facebook.com/groups/2069577499824876/?epa=SEARCH_BOX

<https://www.facebook.com/iflry/posts/10161865537960393>

Instagram:

https://www.instagram.com/p/Bs6AI_oBk0G/