

43rd SESSION

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Summary of projects drawn up and implemented by youth delegates

Ambition | Academic Curiosity | Impact

Hermes Gjinaj,
Shkoder, Albania

I was planning to work with the youth department of Tirana, but since Tirana was selected as the "European Youth Capital 2022" there were many projects in place planned to empower youth. Therefore, I decided that it would be more convenient to do it in the city where I am from (Shkoder) which - unlike Tirana - has not had enough capacity to create sustainable youth-empowerment projects.

I trained students in high schools in Albania regarding the work of the Congress and its agenda with the youth, fellowship/scholarship opportunities throughout Europe and how they can use the knowledge obtained in these institutions to bring a tangible impact in their local communities which aligns with one of the objectives of the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People.

Firstly, I wanted to focus on the politics only, especially the Congress' priorities for young people. However, I thought that politics although interesting, may not sound appealing to everyone. Therefore, I decided to add-in two more points to discuss: international fellowship opportunities and the notion of local impact, which are both areas in which I have extensive knowledge and experience and it felt quite easy and comfortable for me to simply train them on those matters.

Successful model of social democracy - Armenia's local self government system and relevant issues - Democracy and civil rights

Siranush Grigoryan
Tavush region, Armenia

The goal of the project is to strengthen the connection and communication of young people with the local authorities, which will help raise awareness of the problems of youth; proposing fresh and innovative solutions by youth; Encouraging young people in developing, planning, and implementing activities that will benefit the community and ensure its well-being.

Striving to increase the engagement of people from rural areas with democracy by giving them the chance to completely realize their ability, instilling confidence that they will be more decisive in the next crucial phases. Promoting gender equality, in particular in the fields of education, socio-cultural, political, economic, and legal spheres.

Outcome : to create opportunities for young people to reveal and demonstrate their abilities and skills, involving them in the decision-making and implementation process; in the meantime, to promote respect for all without discrimination by raising awareness of human rights, democracy and the rule of law among young people.

Binokl Podcast

Ilkin Akhundlu
Azerbaijan

The goal is to increase awareness of the Congress and its work, boost the target group's motivation to be actively involved with local democracy and discuss the problems that Azerbaijani municipalities face.

I expect to change apolitical and unmotivated approach to municipal work. Additionally, increase the awareness of local governments' shortcomings while discussing them.

5 episodes of podcast streamed on YouTube and Spotify.

Placemaking with Youth

Mariya Badeva
Municipality of Plovdiv, Bulgaria

Goal of the Project : To address points of the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life such as 1.3 Sectoral Policy on urban environment and habitat, stating that "Together with representatives of youth organisations, local and regional authorities should create conditions for developing an urban environment policy based on a more integrated, less fragmented living environment which is conducive to social interaction and the development of high quality public spaces; Local and regional authorities should pursue urban environment policies which closely involve young people bringing together locally or regionally elected representatives, decision makers, leaders of associations and architects", simultaneously promoting young people's organisations (II.7) such as The Local Youth Center and the United Nations Association of Bulgaria.

Promote more inclusive and sustainable/resilient urban spaces and environments for youth;

Show ways youth can actively participate in the conception of the urban environment bringing together youth organisations, architects, urban specialists and municipality representatives;

Popularize the work of the Congress at the Council of Europe and intertwine it with some of the UN's SDGs such as SDG 11 and SDG 3

Conduct a doctoral research on how youth representatives and municipalities can work effectively when it comes to the conception of the urban realm

Outcome : The primary outcome of the project is a conceptual project proposal (architecture/ urban vision) for the redevelopment of the public space where the workshop took place based on the ideas and visions of the young people who participated in it and thus involving them in the transformation of a public space in the city based on the 1.3 Sectoral Policy from the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life.

Other significant outcomes include the knowledge gained by young people of the Revised European Charter and the principles of "placemaking" as a tool for the transformation of the urban environment.

Additional skills acquired during the workshop involve learning to work together in teams and working with architectural tools such as a physical model (1:50 scale) in order to imagine and recreate a youth public space in the heart of Plovdiv and thus changing the attitude of young people towards that particular public space through developing certain place attachment.

Main outputs include a report on the workshop as well as a future research publication on its results. In addition, another tangible output is a conceptual project proposal (architecture/ urban vision) for the redevelopment of the public space including plans, drawings, physical model, collages and 3-dimensional visualisations on the proposal to be donated/given to the local municipality.

Clean up!

Zrinka Burazer
Jadrtovac, Croatia

Goal of the Project : Gathering the youth of the municipality of Jadrtovac for a cleaner environment.

Outcome : A cleaner environment and making the youth more aware of the conditions in nature regarding how polluted the environment is.

Woods, the sea, and the seaside are less polluted. We gave our contribution towards diminishing nature's pollution.

Empowering the role of youth during crisis management

Evie Theocharous
Nicosia, Cyprus

The project was implemented to inform and educate young people about the possible risks during any crisis, be it humanitarian, economic, health, or environmental. In this way, the event also aimed to create an active platform where young people can freely express their ideas and proposals regarding crisis management whereas the main target of the event was to develop policy recommendations on each theme by young people through the workshops. Additionally, the event focused on dissemination, awareness, correct information, as well as brainstorming new ideas and possible solutions on ways youth can regroup and mobilize to act with preparedness during a crisis. The project aims to raise awareness on youth in times of crisis and was based on six themes (The importance of civic education, abuse against women, mental health and young people, reliable means against disinformation in young people, the restructuring of lives of young immigrants and refugees, and the role of young people in Cyprus as a pillar of stability). The event focused on a series of workshops and discussions by experts from various sectors, such as the public sector, academia and civil society. The speakers as well as the trainers of the workshops contributed with their own expertise to the benefit of young participants with the necessary information and tools the information in order to develop policy recommendations on each theme.

The primary outcomes of the event were fantastic for the time after the event. The exceptional feedback the event received was very encouraging to repeat this journey! Participants were very impressed and appreciated every effort made. This was an incredible experience and learning curve

in order to prepare for more of its kind. For the time before the implementation of the event, through this experience I learned to rely on myself and be ready for every kind of behavior response, whether positive or negative. It is without a doubt that I have increased my knowledge capacity and skills, practical, technical as well as interpersonal. The attitude of people changes when work is involved thus you adapt to the behavior and learn how to deal with it when it is necessary without forgetting the purpose and goal you set.

The speakers of the event were, a Cypriot MEP (recorded), the Commissioner of Gender Equality, the Commissioner for the Protection of Young People, the Head of the International Organisation of Migration in Cyprus (IOM) the Director of Research of the Cyprus Institute of Marketing as well as the Former manager of the Crisis Management Center of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cyprus. The trainers of the workshops, which took place after the discussions with the experts, were life coaches, teachers, youth activists and lawyers.

Since the event took place a day before this report was submitted a report was not produced still, nonetheless a report with all the outcomes and policy recommendations produced at the event will be developed. The social media pages and accounts (Facebook page, Instagram account and LinkedIn), which are still being updated, were updated at least 3-4 times a week for the past 2 months introducing the speakers, trainers, purpose, agenda of the event, and thank you posts for all the supporters and sponsor of the event.

Moreover, I created a logo for the event (the shape of Cyprus formed by different colour puzzles pieces representing youth coming together from everywhere and a circular line around Cyprus representing unity and working together) i also designed and created banners, flyers, made presents for the participants and speakers and trainers (the present was stress ball as the event is related to crisis management for the participants and a stress ball with a candle for the speakers and trainers with a thank you note i designed to thank them for their contribution) , I designed and created an agenda and certificates and I designed and uploaded all the posts and content on social media for two months.

I also organised the catering for the event (coffee breaks and lunch).

Moreover, I created a concept note explaining the purpose of the event a description for each theme and a timeline of the event.

I have also prepared individual emails containing all the information on each speaker and also had meetings with all the trainers and created group chats in order to keep them updated.

I have also designed special invitations to invite special guests to the event and wrote individual messages to people that would be interested in the event which counted up to 60 people.

The event was appraised and shared on social media and online platforms by every university in Nicosia and Paphos, by the Nicosia Municipality, by various NGOs and civil society organisations as well the office of the Commissioner of Gender Equality.

Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

Alexandr Kuril
Brno, Czech Republic

The goal of the project was the presentation of the Congress and its Rejuvenating Politics initiative.

I wanted to enlighten my fellow students about the Congress and its activities/initiatives, as well as present them the opportunity to become the next Czech youth delegate. We spoke at length about the "How to make your town a better place booklet", the students seemed really interested in the topic of involving children in sustainable development since they asked a lot of follow-up questions about this. I described how the committees work, what is their purpose. We went over the Turkish monitoring report from the 42nd session. We discussed the topic of rural youth and the recent temptation of younger generations to leave their local community and move into a bigger city.

The Rule of law crisis and the future of European migration policy

Zoé Elkær Nicot, Denmark and Francesca Knaus, Austria
Copenhagen

Zoé Elkær Nicot and Francesca Knaus hosted two panel discussions in the Danish Parliament, addressing two themes that are crucial for the future of Europe: the rule of law and migration policy. With input from analysts and decision-makers from Germany and Denmark, we discussed ideas for possible concrete solutions. We assembled civil society, policy makers and media to present and discuss concrete proposals.

Panel 1: What can be done to protect the rule of law in the EU?

For the first time ever, the ECJ ruled that "effective legal protection" is at risk in an EU member state. Against this background, we invited award-winning Polish lawyers Sylwia Gregorczyk-Abram & Michał Wawrykiewicz who founded the most effective civil society initiative – Free Courts - to oppose the subjugation of courts and defend judges, to discuss the next steps, at a high-level panel discussion Gerald Knaus furthermore contributed to the discussion with concrete policy proposals.

Panel 2: Is a Humane EU Border & refugee policy possible?

Today, pushbacks are taking place on the Greek border to Turkey, the Croatian border to Bosnia and the Polish border to Belarus. EU governments seeking to control their borders cooperate with Libyan militias. And thousands drown every year. Is a Humane EU Border & refugee policy possible? Against this background, we invited two ministers and experts to discuss concrete proposals.

Our initiative aimed to address two concrete problems with the aim of finding solutions that could also protect and safeguard democracies in other countries facing similar threats and to strengthen the mechanisms that can protect democracy.

The independence of the judiciary of course is a core pillar of a functioning democracy. Thus coming up with tools that enable countries to defend judicial independence, is a great addition to the protection of democracy.. If we find the best tools that can protect judicial independence in one

member state, then this will not only strengthen democracy in this country, but also protect all other democracies when they face similar attacks on the independence of their judicial system in the future. We thus believe that the issues and the solutions we discussed in the context of Poland are highly relevant also for other countries and democracy as a whole. It is also the first time in the history of the EU, that the ECJ found that a member state has violated article 19 of the Treaty of the European Union which states that “Member States shall provide remedies sufficient to ensure effective legal protection in the fields covered by Union law.” Finding mechanisms that allow to protect against violations of article 19 TEU in the future, will help consolidate democracies across the EU in the future.

Human Rights Detectives

Tamar Tsatskrialashvili
Bakuriani, Georgia

Goal of the Project : Train youth leaders and build their skills and capacity to develop quality initiatives to promote human rights, increase participants knowledge and understanding of human rights education, to engage youth in civic activism and involve them in the work of democratic institutions and develop a network of like-minded individuals ready to cooperate on follow-up projects on human rights.

Project's primary outcomes were following:

- Knowledge - (learn about human rights)
- Improved understanding of human rights issues and social and political concepts like democracy, justice, equality, civil rights;
- Increased knowledge of how to plan and carry out human rights actions;
- Increased knowledge of how to promote and safeguard human rights both locally and globally;
- Improved ability to think logically and draw conclusions (analytical skills);
- Improved skills to develop an idea and put it into practice;
- Skills to cooperate in teams;
- Ability to write formal policy recommendations for public institutions;
- Ability to write articles/blog posts for raising awareness about social issues. Attitudes - (learn through human rights);
- Increased sense of responsibility for one's own actions, a commitment to personal development and social change;
- Empathy and solidarity with others and a commitment to support those whose human rights are under threat;
- Motivation to participate more actively in social and political life of their community and be more involved in the decision making of democratic institutions.

Main tangible outputs of the project are recommendations prepared by participants to their local government on supporting Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education.

WAKE up! - The young conference in the Wartburgkreis District

Marius Wallstein

Wartburgkreis District, Germany

The goal of the project was to give young people the chance to educate themselves on youth-relevant topics; help them understand the concept and steps of meaningful (political) participation, give them the space to reflect on how they want to be included in local and regional life, listen to obstacles they are facing and find solutions for them plus enhancing social competencies, inclusiveness, and empowerment.

The participants now know what political participation means in a theoretical and practical way. They have learned about sustainable development, queerness, media competencies (radio and video), and had the chance to express their thoughts and ideas on how to improve local and regional life from a young perspective.

A report with recommendations to our district counselor, pointing out what format youth participation could have in our region and what challenges and needs young people are facing.

Conference on Good Governance, the Protection of Human Rights and Youth Participation in Europe

Prodromos Tzounopoulos

Thessaloniki, Central Macedonia

The main aim of the project was to inform and awaken young people, and in general Civil Society, regarding the institutional role of the Council of Europe and the Congress and to empower them by raising awareness of burning issues in order to achieve the active participation of youth in everyday life at all levels, starting from the local and regional to the national and international. In that context, our objectives were to inform people about the Council of Europe and its Congress and the possibilities for young people to get involved in its work, to raise awareness of good governance and its subtopics (e-governance, e-democracy, public ethics, and youth participation and involvement), to raise awareness of the protection of human rights (of children and youth, of women, of immigrants and refugees, during the war in Ukraine and in areas that are in conflict), to give students and youth the opportunity to network and get to know other active youth and last but not least, to give youth the opportunity to express their thoughts on the aforementioned topics.

I believe that together with all the co-organizers and the organizations that supported my effort we managed to achieve all of our aforementioned aims and objectives. The best example to prove that is that when asked by one of the speakers almost no one from the audience could answer the question of whether Greece has a national strategy for youth, while when the conference was over not only did they know the answer to this question but they were also familiar with the opportunities they have within the context of that strategy.

We are planning to ask participants to answer a question on what they expect from the Municipal Youth Councils of their cities but that is yet to be done.

Target: Apart from the 135 participants we indirectly reached hundreds of people through the promotion of the conference on all social media not only by me and my team but also by many participants.

Youth plenary on the position of rural youth: Strandir and Europe (is: Sýndarþing um stöðu ungmenna á landsbyggðum: Strandir og Evrópa)

Bára Örk Melsted
Strandabyggð & Kaldrannaneshreppur, Iceland

The goal was to educate youth about democracy and social participation. Introducing the Congress and Council of Europe and their importance. Empowering young people to express their opinions and be active in their communities. This was done through implementation of a youth plenary, a simulation of sorts of the Congress of COE and working with the Congress's report Future of Rural Youth: Responsibilities of Local and Regional Authorities with students aged 12-16.

Information about the Congress and COE, most of students had never heard of either one.

More concrete knowledge about challenges and potential actions regarding the situation of rural youth. Expanded perspective about how the situation of rural youth elsewhere in Europe might differ from their own. Practice cooperation as two schools were involved they got different perspectives from two different villages. Practice public speaking, performing and debating.

Translated and shortened version of the Congress of COE report Future of Rural youth: Responsibilities of local and regional authorities.

YOUTH LOCAL ASSEMBLY

Sharon Amadi
Brescia, Italy

The goal of the project is to increase awareness of youth participation with the local administration, promote inclusion and diversity, promote civic engagement amongst youth, create forums for open dialogue

The outcome of the project was the following:

- Young people more involved with local community;
- More information on civic duties and democratic processes;
- Freedom to express and exchange opinions regarding various topics;
- Young people in local area more included and educational events created;
- Social Media Content and establishment of a Youth Assembly.

Youth Participation in Municipalities

Andžela Rudzīte
Rīga, Latvia

My project aims to study the existing youth work policies in Latvian municipalities to learn how the municipalities encourage youth participation.

As an outcome I found out answers to different questions, concerning how municipalities encourage youth participation, what problems there are when planning youth work, whether the municipalities follow the Charter etc. I came to multiple conclusions that can be found in my research paper.

Youth cooperation hub

Beatrice Jurgaityte,
Kaunas region/ Pasvalys region, Lithuania

The goal of the project was to Engage regional youth in participation by showing them examples of successful and interesting activities examples in centralized cities of Lithuania

The primary outcome was that both targeted groups of regional and centralized youth became aware where they can find the information about certain topics they are interested in. Centralized youth became more aware of the difficulties the regional youth faces everyday and suggested their help and support. Regional youth listed their problems, what is stopping them from achieving certain goals.

The planned output of this project failed, because I was planning to create a recommendation with youth for responsible entities on how to better curate the youth activities so that they could deliver attractive activities. This failed, due to my wrong perception that youth would know what they want instantly. Yet, instead we managed to come to a common ground that in order to present the accurate recommendations first of all we need to facilitate the cooperation among the youth in Lithuania. therefore, the main outcome for this day is the established cooperation between Pasvalys regional youth and Kaunas region youth, where they share ideas, best practices, advices etc.

Political influence workshop

Ingebjørg Flyum Bjørlo
Vestland/Oslo, Norway

The aim for my project was to make it easier for people to change the world, starting with your local community. I want more people to know how to navigate the political system and take part in their local youth councils etc.

Knowledge about how to change the world, starting with your local community and the skills to do it.

The Joy of Choosing

Ioana Livadariu
Bucharest, Romania

The goal of the project was to encourage kids to express their opinions, their ideas and to make decisions for having a better grasp of their functioning mechanisms. Educate and inform kids about different democratic processes such as voting and consensus decision making in a very friendly manner that is in line with their universe. Bring children closer to a wide spectrum of values that underpin democracy such as freedom of speech, equality and cooperation, inclusivity and solidarity, consensus decision making. Through different interactive activities, how to make appropriate decisions for them, what are the benefits of expressing their opinions and how significant their interests, passions and perspectives really are.

The main outcomes of my project are very much related to the behavioral changes, attitudes and skills that children acquired through the interactive activities. All the games included in this project were based on promoting democratic values and aimed at helping and encouraging kids to develop positive attitudes towards democratic practices.

List of the primary attitudinal outcomes of my project:

- Kids acquired the ability to work in teams;
- The ability to make inclusive decisions (eg. Kids made sure that the decisions they made respected everyone's points of view and no one was left out);
- Open communication and listening to one another's perspective.
- They gained more knowledge with respect to primary notions related to democratic systems and their functioning mechanisms.
- They exercised active attitudes towards democratic processes like voting and consensus decision making which showed them that their perspectives are indeed important and are seriously taken into consideration.

The first output of my project consists in social media content which is being made publicly available via the kindergarten's facebook page. In the following period of time, I would also like to make a list of recommendations based on the project's results and observations gathered during the implementation of the project. Accordingly, my recommendations could be further applied in the future activities carried out by the kindergarten.

"Voice & Vote"

Elena Manso Palao,
Madrid, Spain

The principal aim of the project is to motivate young people in my region to engage actively with society and public life. How? By making visible some inspiring stories of talented youths who have a say in their area of expertise, and by demonstrating that we young people do have both voice and vote; Broadcast a weekly section in the regional stream of one of Spain's most heard radio channels

(Cadena SER); Interview, in each episode, people aged 18-30 who can stir the desire of people of that same age to become more involved with their community; Follow the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life: when it comes to choosing the interviewees and the topic of each episode, regarding sectoral policies youth can be affected by, as well as the tools that can enhance youth participation.

The primary outcome of this project was filling me (and hopefully other people as well) with hope about our future. Why? Because when planning the potential interviewees and episodes, I realized that what I already believed in as an ideal was a tangible truth: young people are incredibly talented, and have a strong voice. We are only missing a proper megaphone. It was truly uplifting, moreover, to see how many of the people I could find to interview for the project were women. I had a previous experience running a programme of interviews for a youth-led newspaper, but it was mainly focused on adult interviewees. We always had a hard time finding women to interview. However, in this case, with a more "generational" focus, it was an amazing relief to see how easy it was to get brilliant and skillful women to speak.

Furthermore, I hope to have contributed to (at least slight) changes in intergenerational behaviour: both the young people in my region to become more prone to participate in politics and public life and the regular adult listeners of the regional broadcast stream to change their opinion about youth and their engagement.

Regarding the knowledge and skills I personally gained, the implementation of this project helped me to acquire an improved ability at being "solution-oriented". The fact that the episodes are broadcast weekly requires a strong participation and thinking about different "back-up" options in case something unexpected happens.

The main outputs of the project, thus are the episodes of the radio broadcast. They are aired by radio, posted on the webpage (where "Voice and Vote" has its own section) and posted on Spotify as well. Here are the links to the first two episodes:

[- Episode 1: Introduction and interview with Member of the European Parliament Alicia Homs \(youngest Spanish MEP\)](#)

[- Episode 2: Tools for youth participation - interview with María Rodríguez Alcázar, member of the European Youth Forum's board and candidate to its presidency.](#)

Influence of Youth in Local Politics

Joel Gustafsson Hall
Uppsala, Sweden

The goal of the project is to engage with youth in the Uppsala municipality, find out what youth believe that their opportunities are to engage in politics; Interview officials (both elected and appointed) to see what they believe the possibilities are for youth engagement; Cross-examine the answers of both with regards to the framework set by Council of Europe.

Zusammen an einem Tisch (in English together at one table)

Leonard Wilks

Region of Solothurn, the city Solothurn, Switzerland

The goal of our project was to bring (young) people from different ethnic, social and religious backgrounds together, inform the attendants about our migration system, to start a debate on local and regional migration policy and to bring people from these different backgrounds together. Therefore, we invited young people, a social worker, an integration officer and local as well as regional politicians from the major parties to participate in our project. The project was implemented throughout one day. In the morning, the focus was put on informing the attendants on how the region of Solothurn integrates migrants at a local and regional level. After we held a presentation on how migrants are integrated into the municipalities - presented by the local integration officer - the participants had to work out solutions on specific topics, considering local or regional migration policy. The goal of this part was, that the youth of our region brought their ideas and knowledge into their postulation and figured out ways how we could improve the integration of migrants at a local and regional level.

In the afternoon, we organized an activity called "speed-debating". The politicians had to debate the postulation with the participants and find out ways how their project ideas could be implemented in a direct democratic way. (e.g. petition, initiative or motion in the parliament).

The project had multiple outcomes. We did not just inform our participants about local and regional migration policy but also confronted them with the problems our authorities, knowingly or unknowingly, are struggling with in this field. We gave the attendants the task of finding out solutions on how these difficulties could be solved in the best possible way. Furthermore, we wanted them to have the chance of speaking directly to the decision-making person. Therefore, we invited politicians from local and regional parliaments. This had a very valuable outcome. For one, as already mentioned, the participants had the possibility to share and debate their ideas with the politicians. For another, the participants got to connect with the politicians and get the feeling that their ideas are for one getting listened to and for another make the politicians more aware about migration policy. This also gave our participants the feeling that their work is impacting politics and can have an influence on the way politicians think about a certain subject.

The idea and workings of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

Daniël Spierings,

Municipality of The Hague, The Netherlands

Goal of the project : provide Information on the foundation, organisation and work of the Council of Europe and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, sharing experiences as a youth delegate to provide insight into practice. Focus on fundamental human rights as laid down in the European Convention on Human Rights. Exercise organisational and political sensitivity.

I think this was the first time many of the students heard about the Council of Europe and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. They are made aware of the existence and important work of both.