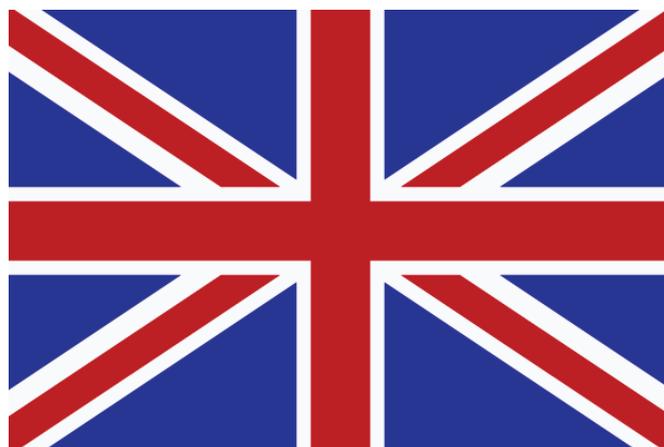




**Youth**Partnership

***QUESTIONNAIRE***  
***“PARTICIPATION”***  
***UNITED KINGDOM***



**Youth**Partnership  
Council of Europe  
European Commission



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## **1 Structures of participation at the local regional or national level**

*This section is about organised/permanent structures of youth participation in institutions of democracy.*

### **1.1 Youth parliaments**

*1.1.1 Local youth parliaments (names + contact person + role + number of people this represents)*

There is no clear distinction between local youth parliaments and youth councils – while local youth parliaments may have a more formal structure than youth councils, many local youth councils are permanent representative bodies linked to local decision-making structures. Examples of local youth parliaments include [Bradford and Keighley Youth Parliament](#); [Medway Youth Parliament](#); Newham Youth Parliament and [West Sussex Youth Cabinet](#).

*1.1.2 Regional youth parliaments (names + contact person + role + number of people this represents)*

The UK Youth Parliament has a [network of regional contacts](#).

North East Regional Youth Assembly represents young people aged 12-21 in the 12 Local Authorities in the North East Region of England.

*1.1.3 National youth parliaments (names + contact person + role + number of people this represents)*

[UK Youth Parliament](#) (UKYP) aims to give a voice to young people aged 11 to 18 in the UK. It has over 300 elected young MPs aged between 11 and 18.

[Scottish Youth Parliament](#) is a group of nearly 200 elected young people aged 14-25 who aim to be the collective national youth voice for all young people in Scotland.

[Funky Dragon](#) - the Children and Young People's Assembly for Wales aims to give young people up to 25 the opportunity to get their voices heard on issues that affect them.

[Northern Ireland Youth Forum](#) aims to promote the views of young people (14-25) to government, policy makers and others.

### **1.2 Youth councils**

*There are different forms of youth councils or youth committees. Some of them are simply called “youth council”; others are called “student councils” or “pupil councils”. You may find other councils representing particular groups of young people.*

### *1.2.1 Local youth councils*

There is no uniform structure for youth councils in the UK; they include both formal representative structures and those which are open to all young people in particular areas or specific groups. The [British Youth Council](#) has a network of 400 youth councils across geographical areas or specific communities of interests.

### *1.2.3 Regional youth councils*

None

## **2 Percentage of young people in global population who are members of institutions allowing for participation in representative democracy**

### **2.1 Percentage of young people in global population from 13 to 30 who are members of a political party**

No information available.

#### *2.1.1 Percentage of young people in global population who are members of a political party by gender*

No information available

### **2.2 Percentage of young people in global population who are members of a trade union from the ages of 13 and 30**

10 per cent of UK employees aged 16 to 24 and 24 per cent of those aged 25 to 34 were [trade union members](#) in 2006.

### **2.3 Percentage of young people in global population who are members of a youth organisation from the ages of 13 and 30**

There is a national target for local authority youth services to contact 25% of those aged 13-19 in England. The [National Youth Agency's audit](#) collects information on young people's involvement in youth services; in 2005-06 on average local authorities contacted 27.5% of their 13-19 youth population. The [Northern Ireland Youth Strategy](#) stated that one third of young people aged 4-25 (a total of 517,000) will be involved in some form of youth service provision at any one time. The Northern Ireland Government has set a target to increase this to 42 per cent by 2008. The [Wales youth work strategy](#) (2007) sets out a target of increasing the number of young people using the youth

service from 200,000 to 300,000 a year. In Scotland, [Key Trends for Scotland 2006](#) reported that nearly a third of a million young people aged five to 25 (25% of this age group) had been involved in voluntary and statutory youth provision. [Social Trends 2007](#) found that eight large youth national voluntary youth organisations (NGOs) have a combined membership of approximately 1 million young people. These figures are likely to include multiple memberships.

*2.3.1 Identify if this category (percentage of young people who members of a youth organisation) is made up from a youth organisation with varied general activities, a sports organisation, a cultural organisation or others*

The youth service is a complex network of providers including community groups, voluntary organisations and local authorities. They offer a mix of universal provision, open to all young people, and provision targeted at young people with specific needs or in particular circumstances (for instance disabled young people, young people not in formal education or young people from minority ethnic groups). National voluntary youth organisations such as the Scouts or Girl Guides are organised through local units or centres, in most cases offering a structured programme of activities.

*2.3.2 Percentage of young people in **global population** who are members of a youth organisation by gender*

No information available

*2.3.3 Identify if this category (percentage young people who members of a youth organisation) is made up from a youth organisation with varied general activities, a sports organisation, a cultural organisation or others*

No information available

### **3 Explain the existing actions/support, of national or regional scope, to promote the participation of young people in local life and follow-up mechanisms**

Encouraging young people's participation in local life underpins youth work in all four countries of the UK. *Aiming high for young people* outlines various actions to encourage young people's participation in their communities, including direct control of some budgets for youth provision (building on the success of the Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital Funds), and additional funding has been allocated to support this.

Specific national programmes include the [Young Advisors](#) scheme in England, which recruits young people aged 15 to 21 to show community leaders and decision makers how to engage young people

in community life, regeneration and renewal. In Scotland, Dialogue Youth aims to give young people a real say in the design and delivery of services that affect them.

The National Youth Agency and Local Government Association have developed (non-statutory) [Hear by Right](#) standards for the active involvement of children and young people in decision-making and local democracy. Young people are also involved in decision-making in specific sectors, for instance through the National Service Framework for the Health Service.

Volunteering organisations such as v and the Youth Action Network promote and support youth-led projects involving young people in their communities.

### **3.1 Local actions to support the structures for participation for young people in local life**

Local government legislation requires local authorities to consult local people, including young people, about the services they provide. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires local authorities to consult young people about educational and recreational leisure-time activities and to take their views into account.

### **3.2 Financial actions to support the various structures for youth political and NGO participation – Among these actions, actions that have been undertaken this year**

The Department for Children, Schools and Families funds a range of NGOs to promote participation, including the British Youth Council and the UK Youth Parliament. The government introduced the Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital Funds in 2006, and allocated a total of £115m (€170m ) to fund them for 2006-08.

### **3.3 What other initiatives are planned in the short term to support youth participation on the local level?**

The Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital Funds have been extended until 2011, with £198m (€274m ) available for the three years 2008-11.

### **3.4 Do some of the existing or planned actions aim at certain specific groups of young people?**

While actions are made to involve all young people, many organisations make efforts to involve excluded young people - such as those not in education, employment or training, those from minority ethnic groups, young people in or formerly in care, disabled young people etc. The Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital Funds are specifically required to involve socially disadvantaged young people.

## **4 The vote**

### **4.1 Is voting obligatory?**

NO

### **4.2 Age of the right to vote**

18

### **4.3 Please describe, who is entitled to vote in local, regional and national elections.**

Only individuals on the electoral register are entitled to vote. Voters must be 18 or over on polling day. All British, Commonwealth or Republic of Ireland citizens living in Great Britain is eligible to vote in general elections. Other EU citizens are eligible to vote in European Parliamentary elections and local elections.

### **4.4 Age of eligibility to be a candidate**

18

### **4.5 Describe as exact as possible, who is entitled to be a candidate in local, regional or national elections.**

Candidates for all elections must be 18 or older and a citizen of the UK, Commonwealth or the Republic of Ireland. Some people are disqualified from being MPs: members of the House of Lords; undischarged bankrupts; some public servants including judges, civil servants, members of the armed or police forces, some company directors; prisoners serving sentences of more than 12 months, and people found guilty of certain electoral offences. Local election candidates must be registered to vote in the constituency, or have lived, worked or owned land or property there for the previous 12 months. Those disqualified from candidacy at local elections include council employees earning over a certain amount and those who have served a prison sentence of over three months in the past five years.

## **5 The elections**

*In this section statistics about how young people vote in the different types of elections.*

### **5.1 Number of young people that have voted recently between the ages of 18 (or the age of right to vote) and 30**

45% of young people aged 18-24 and 53% of those aged 25-34 voted in the 2005 general election. (Source: Social Trends 2007).

## **5.2 Number of young people between the ages of 18 (or the age of right to vote) and 30 registered on the lists of voters**

No information available

## **5.3 Indicators of participation related to European polls**

*These indicators are related to the election of the European parliament. You want to proceed with section 6.4 if the country of your review is not a member state of the European Union.*

*In European elections, the percentage of young voters in relation to the number of young people in age to vote who are registered from the ages of 13 and 30.*

No information available

*5.3.1 In European elections, the percentage of young voters in relation to the number of young people in age to vote who are registered from the ages of 13 and 30.*

No information available

*5.3.2 In European elections, the percentage of young voters in relation to the number of young people in age to vote who are registered, by age groups*

No information available

*5.3.3 In European elections, the percentage of young voters in relation to the number of young people in age to vote who are registered, by gender*

No information available

*5.3.4 In European elections, the percentage of young voters in relation to the number of young people in age to vote who are registered, by rural-urban*

No information available

*5.3.5 In European elections, the percentage of young voters in relation to the total population to vote*

No information available

#### **5.4 National indicators of participation in the polls**

*5.4.1 In national elections, the percentage of young voters in relation to the number of young people in age to vote who are registered*

45% of young people aged 18-24 and 53% of those aged 25-34 voted in the 2005 general election. (Source: Social Trends 2007).

*5.4.2 In national elections, the percentage of young voters in relation to the number of young people in age to vote who are registered, by age groups*

No further information available

*5.4.3 In national elections, the percentage of young voters in relation to the number of young people in age to vote who are registered, by gender*

No information available

*5.4.4 In national elections, the percentage of young voters in relation to the number of young people in age to vote who are registered, by rural-urban*

No information available

*5.4.5 In national elections, the percentage of young voters in relation to the total population to vote*

No information available

#### **5.5 Regional and local indicators of participation in the polls**

*5.5.1 In regional and local elections, the percentage of young voters in relation to the number of young people in age to vote who are registered*

No information available

*5.5.2 In regional and local elections, the percentage of young voters in relation to the total population to vote*

No information available

**5.6 Number of young people elected (under the age of 30) at the national level: overall and by gender**

[2005 General Election](#): 3 MPs elected aged 18-29.

**5.7 Number of young people elected (under the age of 30) at the regional level: overall and by gender**

Not applicable

**5.8 Number of young people elected (under the age of 30) at the local level: overall and by gender**

[England](#): 331 local councillors aged 18-29 (out of total of 19,689 – under 2%). 249 male, 82 female. [Wales](#): 0.9% under 25, 3.4% 25-34. [Scotland](#): 1% under 30.

**6 List actions, programmes, and financial or social support that promote the participation in the system of representative democracy, in particular to young people under the age of 30**

The Local Government Association's [Local Democracy Campaign](#), run in collaboration with a range of partners, aims to promote young people's understanding of and involvement in local democracy.

The government-funded [Electoral Commission](#), whose aims include encouraging greater participation in and understanding of the democratic process, undertakes a range of activities including providing information and resources, a research programme, media campaigns, and funding programmes to promote young people's engagement with the democratic process and increase voter turnout.

The independent charity the [Hansard Society](#) also works to promote young people's understanding of and involvement in democratic processes, through its citizenship education programme. The [Citizenship Foundation](#) aims to empower individuals to engage in the wider community through education about the law, democracy and society, and has specific programmes and resources related to young people, citizenship and participation.

## **6.1 Are there any instruments used to monitor the results of this support.**

No

## **6.2 Do some of the existing or planned actions aim at specific groups of young people?**

Some initiatives have targeted socially disadvantaged groups, students living away from home, or young people in particular localities.

## **7 Learning to participate**

*The following section is about the activities that promote active participation to young people in formal and non-formal education.*

### **7.1 Existing actions within the systems of formal education aiming at developing and deepening learning to participate**

Schools in all four countries aim to develop young people's citizenship and ability to participate in society, although only England and Northern Ireland have an explicit citizenship curriculum. In England, the Department for Children, Schools and Families promotes volunteering in schools by young people aged 11 to 15 through the Active Citizens in Schools programme. The DCSF also supports a national programme encouraging young people to act as peer mentors. The Quality Improvement Agency runs a website to support [post-16 citizenship](#), following the successful pilot of citizenship education post-16 in schools, further education colleges, training providers and youth services between 2001 and 2005.

#### *7.1.1 What are the mechanisms of citizens' education in formal education?*

England: citizenship education is a compulsory curriculum subject for all 11 to 16 year olds structured around three strands: social and moral responsibility, community involvement and political literacy. Scotland: no formal curriculum, but Scottish Executive guidelines say that 'young people should be enabled to develop capability for thoughtful and responsible participation in political, economic, social and cultural life'. Wales: citizenship is taught through personal and social education lessons, which have been a legal requirement since 2003. Northern Ireland: lessons on local and global citizenship were introduced in 2007.

#### *7.1.2 Please list guidelines, teacher training programmes, etc. that are related to citizens' education but are not directly affecting the formal curriculum.*

England: Department for Skills and Learning (now DCSF) issued guidance on pupil participation in 2003, [Working Together – Giving children and young people a say](#). The DCSF announced a national roll out of a continuous professional development programme for citizenship teachers in 2006. In Scotland, the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000, requires that school development plans to specify how pupils will be involved in decision-making. Many schools have school councils (with varying degrees of power and influence), and the DCSF is putting more resources into promoting school councils and working with School Councils UK to offer schools guidance on making councils work more effectively.

**7.2 In which fields, other than formal education, do actions and/or support - of national or regional scope- exist, which aim at promoting learning to participate amongst young people? What is the nature of these actions/this support?**

Youth services have a central role in supporting and promoting young people's participation and involvement in decision-making, within the service itself, in local publicly provided services, and in their local communities. In many local authorities youth services have taken the lead in promoting and supporting participation, including training for effective participation. [YouthBank UK](#) supports local groups of young people who are responsible for allocating funds to other young people in their local areas. This has been further developed in England, through the Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Funds.

**7.3 Do some of the existing or planned actions aim at certain specific groups of young people?**

While participation initiatives seek to engage all young people, particular attention is paid to involving those who would not normally have a voice about services and policies