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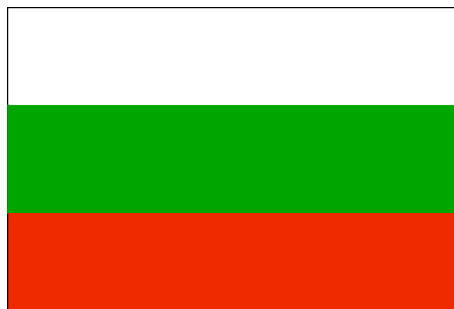
European Union
Union Européenne

Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth

INFORMATION SHEET

PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

BULGARIA



Last updated: 02.12.2011

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1. Youth participation in Bulgaria

Give an overview on participation of young people (13 – 30) in your country on the national and regional level (in federal states) answering the following questions:

- Are there official national/regional recommendations (policies) establishing the right of young people to participate in society?

National Youth Strategy 2010-2020

- If so: how is the concept of youth participation defined?

Strategic objective: Providing young people with opportunities for complete participation in the civic society and for their involvement with the main democratic values and standards.

Operational objective 1: Encouraging the self- organization of young people

Operational objective 2: Fostering the civic education and training

Operational objective 3: Ensuring an effective representation of young people's interests in developing, implementation and evaluation of sector policies on national, regional and municipality level

- What are the measures envisaged to promote different forms of participation on local, regional and national level?

- Financing of youth projects, campaigns, initiatives and events
- Organizing of events
- Providing quality and update information
- Encouraging and support for development of youth organizations by the state, municipalities, business and society
- Improving the normative arrangements for youth organizations
- Recognition of non-organized young people's initiatives
- Promotion and multiplication of the best practises of youth civic activities
- Establishment of good conditions for support and realization of youth campaigns and initiatives
- Trainings and promotion of the protection of human rights, especially children's rights, non-discrimination, gender equality, labour rights of young people etc.
- Training of youth leaders

- Mobilizing the involvement of young people with the management on local, regional and national level as well as their civic control over the municipal and state bodies, through organization of campaigns for recovering their trust in the administration in this number.
- Fostering the establishment and development of youth's representation by:
- Ensuring guarantees for democratic organization, representation and publicity
- Support for youth representation by state and municipalities
- Ensuring representation of young people on national, regional and municipal level in taking, implementing and evaluation of decisions
- Stimulating the participation of young people and their organizations in preserving, improving and management of natural wealth
- Organizing campaigns and initiatives on questions of present interest and according to the policies of the European Union, The Council of Europe and the United Nations.

- *Do any of the above mentioned measures target specific groups? (please tick)*

females

males

migrants

young people with fewer opportunities

young people in specific regions

minorities (which):

certain age groups within the age range 13-30(which):

other:

2. Youth participation in representative democracy in Bulgaria

Please describe the rules of representative democracy related to young people answering the questions below:

- Is voting compulsory in your country? No
- What is the legal minimum age to vote in elections?

European ¹ :	18	National:	18	Regional:	18	local	18
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- What are the legal requirements for voting in local, regional, national and European elections?

The legal requirements for voting in local, regional, national and European elections are:

The right to vote for members of Parliament, president and vice president of the republic have Bulgarian citizens who are at the age of 18 or over at the day of election, who are not persons under judicial disability and who don't serve imprisonment.

The right to vote for members of European parliament in Republic of Bulgaria have Bulgarian citizens who are at the age of 18 or over at the day of elections, who have lived at least last three months in the Republic of Bulgaria or another member country of EU, who are not persons under judicial disability and who doesn't serve imprisonment.

Any citizen of member country of EU who is not Bulgarian citizen has the right to vote for members of European parliament in Republic of Bulgaria if he/she is at the age of 18 or over at the day of elections, who is not person under judicial disability and who doesn't serve imprisonment, who has the statute of long or permanent resident of the Republic of Bulgaria, who has lived at least last three months in the Republic of Bulgaria or in another member country of EU, who is not deprived from the right to vote in the member country whose citizen he/she is, who has declared in advance in written his will to exercise his/her right to vote on the territory of Republic of Bulgaria.

The right to vote for municipal councillors and mayors have Bulgarian citizens who are at the age of 18 or over at the day of elections, who are not persons under judicial disability, who don't serve imprisonment and who have lived at least last 12 months in the relevant town or village.

Any citizen of member country of EU who is not Bulgarian citizen, has the right to vote for municipal councillors and mayors if he/she is at the age of 18 or over at the day of elections, who is not person under judicial disability and who doesn't serve imprisonment, who has the statute of

¹ If applicable

long or permanent resident of the Republic of Bulgaria, who has lived at least last 12 months in the relevant town or village, who is not deprived from the right to vote in the member country whose citizen he/she is and who has declared in advance in written his will to exercise his/her right to vote in the relevant town or village.

- What are the legal requirements for being a candidate in elections?

The right to be elected for members of Parliament have Bulgarian citizens who are at the age of 21 or over at the day of elections, who don't have another citizenship, who are not persons under judicial disability and who don't serve imprisonment.

The right to be elected for president and vice president of the republic have Bulgarian citizens by birth, who are at the age of 40 or over, who don't have another citizenship, who are not persons under judicial disability and who don't serve imprisonment and who have lived the last 5 years in the country.

The right to be elected for member of the European parliament in the Republic of Bulgaria has any Bulgarian citizen who is at the age of 21 or over at the day of election, who doesn't have any citizenship in a country out of European Union, who is not a person under judicial disability and who doesn't serve imprisonment, who has a permanent address in Republic of Bulgaria and who have lived in Republic of Bulgaria or in another member country at least last 2 years.

The right to be elected for member of the European parliament in the Republic of Bulgaria has also any citizen of member country of EU who is not Bulgarian citizen, who is at the age of 21 or over at the day of election, who doesn't have any citizenship in a country out of European union, who is not a person under judicial disability and who doesn't serve imprisonment, who is not deprived from the right to be elected in a member country whose citizen he/she is, who has the statute of long or permanent resident of Republic of Bulgaria, who has lived in Republic of Bulgaria or in another member country at least last 2 years and who has declared in written his will to be elected.

The right to be elected for municipal councillors and mayors have Bulgarian citizens who have not another citizenship in a country out of European Union, who are at the age of 18 or over at the day of elections, who are not persons under judicial disability and who don't serve imprisonment and who have lived at least last 12 months in the relevant town or village.

The right to be elected for municipal councillor and mayor has any citizen of member country of EU also who is not Bulgarian citizen, who has no any citizenship in a country out of EU, who is at the age of 18 or over at the selection day, who is not person under judicial disability and who doesn't serve imprisonment, who has a statute of long or permanent resident of Republic of Bulgaria, who has lived at least for last 12 months in the relevant town or village, who is not deprived from the

right to be elected in a member country whose citizen is he/she is and who has declared in written his/her will to be elected.

2.1. Participation in elections

Please give the percentage of young voters (young people who are allowed to vote below 30 years old) on European (for EU-countries only) and national level.. If detailed data on young people is not available please provide the general turnout of all voters and describe the young voter's participation

	Participation in European elections in % of people with the right to vote			Participation in national elections in % of people with the right to vote		
	Total	female	male	total	female	male
% of total population	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
13 – 30 year olds	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
18 – 29 year olds	72%	N/A	N/A	72%	N/A	N/A
16 – 19 year olds ²						
20 – 24 year olds						
25 – 30 year olds						

2.2. Young people elected into representative bodies

Please provide the number (in total and by gender) of young people under the age of 30 who are members of the national parliament. Please provide the total number of parliamentarians on national level.

	MP ≥ 30		All MP	
	N/A	%		%
Women	N/A		184	76.67 %
Men	N/A		56	23.33 %
Total	232	96.67 %	240	100 %

² If applicable

3. Youth participation in civil society

3.1 Membership in NGOs

Please give the percentage of young people aged 13 to 30 (if possible in total and gender) who are members in non-governmental organisations (including political and youth NGOs) and if possible for youth NGOs. Please provide the same data for political parties as well. For comparison, please provide the same data for the whole population.

- Youth political organizations;
- Youth non-governmental organizations;
- Youth parliaments;
- School parliaments;
- Children’s parliaments;
- National Youth Forum.

	NGOs, including political NGOs and youth NGOs			Youth NGOs			Political parties		
	Total	female	male	Total	female	male	total	female	male
% of total population	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
13 – 30 year olds	28 %	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
15 – 29 year old	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
16 – 19 year olds									
20 – 24 year olds									
25 – 30 year olds									

3.2 Youth participation structures on local, regional or national level

Please give a picture of how young people can/do participate in formally recognized ways in civic society/policy in your country by answering to the following questions:

which types of **youth participation structures** exist in your country and which group of young people these structure do represent

what is the degree of participation to decision making allowed by these structures (please fill in the table below):

type of youth participation structure	% of local structures			% of regional structures			% of national structures		
	Share of power	consultation	information	Share of power	consultation	information	Share of power	consultation	information
.....									

4. Learning to participate

4.1 The formal education system

Please describe existing mechanisms within the system of formal education aiming at developing and deepening learning to participate in your country.

Eligible disciplines schooling;
The class teacher' lesson.

4.2 Non formal education

Please describe five to ten existing examples of actions/programmes/activities at national or regional level, outside the formal education system, aiming at developing and deepening learning to participate in your country.

- Youth in Action programme 2007-2013;
- National Youth Programme 2011-2015;
- Municipal Youth Programs;
- Discussions about European economic and social policies for young people in Europe
- Exchange of experience on volunteering associating issues;
- Discussions about the equal opportunities for young people and for those of them with fewer opportunities;
- Exchange of experience about integration of youth government and self-government in the municipality region;
- Promotion of youth initiatives, exchange of experience and best practices among young people for organizing and implementation of different youth initiatives – sport, social and ecological activities;
- Joint visits of young officers by municipal administration for exchange of best practices aiming good management, exchange of social, educational and cultural practices;
- Exchange of cultural values, customs and traditions helping young people to communicate with other young people from different ethnic groups and cultures;
- Organizing of work meetings (discussions, round tables, training seminars);
- Organizing of Day of Youth Self-government (Mayor for 1 day, Manager for 1 day);
- Participation in Public council (Municipal youth council, Regional youth council);
- Establishment of ecological clubs aiming at socialization of young people.

5. Youth information in Bulgaria

5.1 The structure of youth information

Please describe how youth information is organised in your country answering the following questions.

- Do youth information points / centres exist? Yes

The Republic of Bulgaria developed and implemented Youth Information Consultative Centres Programme. 37 centres are established and function according to this programme in the country regions.

Programme's strategic objective is to develop and strengthen stable mechanism for delivering quality and approachable services relevant to the needs and interests of young people on the bases of existing experience and practices.

Main objectives:

- Raising young people's motivation for their own growth, for development of the society they live in and for their participation and realization in public life
- Supporting the realization of youth communities and their adaptability to the European values and standards
- Capacity building of the organizations working for the target group of the Programme for delivering of youth services

The initiative Youth Information Consultative Centres is directed to children and young people aged 14 to 35 years, youth organizations and structures in the regional towns of Republic of Bulgaria. Any of the centres offers information and consultation services and trainings aiming at presenting of up-to-date, systemized and available information. This information satisfies a wide range of interests and needs of young people, provides a preventive and timely qualified and specialized support for individual or group consultations as well as promotes healthy way of life, social integration, protection of the environment, mobility, motivation for realization on labour market, citizen participation and volunteering.

All the activities of the programme Youth Information Consultative Centres are implemented by means of interactive methods and techniques (non-formal education) in the following spheres:

- Citizen participation and social inclusion
- Opportunities for choice and continuation of education
- Labour realization and employability
- Youth entrepreneurship

- Healthy way of life
- Potential for creativeness
- Safety environment
- Mobility
- Realization and management of projects
- Volunteering

- Does youth information coordinated at the national level exist? Yes

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Science through its Youth Directorate maintains youth information site www.youth.mon.bg. The site contains National information system for youth (register of youth non-governmental organizations) and information site with up-to-date information for young people according to their needs as well as documents connected with the implementation of youth policy in the country. Youth organizations providing up-to-date information for activities, initiatives, campaigns and competitions are actively involved and their activities are published on the site.

- Does youth information coordinated at the regional level exist? No

- Is youth information in your country member of any European network (ERYICA, EYCA, Eurodesk)? Eurodesk

5.2. The youth information services

Please provide the percentage of municipalities with a youth information point/centre. N/A

Is there an online national youth information system? Yes

www.youth.mon.bg

www.youthbg.info

www.mikc.bg

Are there any online regional youth information systems? No

Please describe existing national or regional (federal states) print publications for information of young people in your country (e.g. magazines, folders/brochures).

5.3. Topics of youth information

In relation to the structures of youth information you mentioned above, what are the main contents of information delivered to young people?

- X career guidance
- X studies and scholarships
- X jobs and training
- X general health matters
- X relationships and sexuality
- X social security benefits
- X rights of young people
- X consumer rights
- X European opportunities for young people
- X youth activities and exchanges
- Other (please explain)

5.4. Young people's involvement in youth information

How do young people participate in the national/regional system of youth information?

- o Writing articles;
- o Youth blogs publications;
- o Participation in Youth information consultative centres as volunteers;
- o Providing information for different events.

6. Informal ways of young people's participation

Please describe informal ways used by young people to make their voices heard in society in your country.

- Volunteering activities;
- Trainings;
- Round tables;
- Conferences;
- Campaigns and initiatives;
- Seminars;
- Other activities.

Please describe alternative ways of youth participation connected to the use of online technologies answering the following questions:

Top down approach (e.g. online consultations): in which occasion?

National consultations concerning the conduction of youth policy at local, regional, national and European level

Bottom up approach (e.g. organised actions through social networks and the internet): in which occasion?

Different campaigns and initiatives in the social networks.

7. Sources of information

1. <http://www.parliament.bg> – National assembly of Republic of Bulgaria;
2. <http://www.nsi.bg/index.php> - National statistic institute;
3. www.mon.bg – Ministry of Education, Youth and Science;
4. www.youth.mon.bg – Youth directorate of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science;
5. www.youthbg.info – National center “European youth programmes and initiatives”;
6. www.mikc.bg – Youth information and counseling centers in Republic of Bulgaria.