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

INFORMATION SHEET

PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

SLOVAK REPUBLIC



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1. Youth participation in Slovakia

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?

The document “Key areas and action plans of state policy towards children and youth in the Slovak Republic for years 2008 – 2013” (further referred as “conception”). This document defines aims, principles, priority areas within the competence of state, self-governments and other subjects in the respective fields concerning the life of children and youth. Conception names the basic roles of all structures that are involved in its implementation and describes the necessary steps that lead to its successful realisation

Conception aims to improve the life of young people in an integrated way and it is concentrated on 15 different areas including education, information, housing, employment, health, participation and other. Participation of young people is one of the great areas that enjoys full attention in the Conception.

Conception of information and counselling services for youth in the Slovak Republic is another related document. This material was adopted in 2009 and is focused on development of information services including the specific measures at the level of Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport and via recommendations also at the level of regional self-governments and local governments as well as Association of information and counselling centres. Conception describes the actual state in the respective field, defines the main challenges for the improvement and aims to support better access to information for wide youth public in Slovakia.

Act No. 596/2003 on state administration in education is a third important document. Specifically §26 of the respective law mentions the Pupils self-governments, which can represent students of secondary schools and is an active partner of school Headmaster and school board. These councils of students can express the opinions to all internal legislation of the school in the field of education, it can be actively involved in the creation and implementation of the school rules, represents and advocates students towards the headmaster, submits its opinions and proposals. Council votes the representatives to the school board and represents students also towards the outer structures.

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

Concept of youth participation is given in the Memorandum of the Government and is based on the Conception. Participation is understood as initiative of young people at any level of their involvement and presence (local, regional, national, European, global) in order to foster the change and make better condition for living of young people and the overall community. The specific official definition of participation is not existing in other relevant documents.

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

The new action plan of state policy towards children and youth in the Slovak Republic for the years 2012-2013 is under preparation. The Action plan is prepared under the new systems, where all relevant ministries are involved and all 15 areas of life of young people are covered by working groups. Working groups have the mandate to pass the draft of the Action plan. Action plan is the discussed in the Intersectorial working group (relevant ministries) and consulted with representatives of young people

The same model is encouraged to be in place within self-governing regions where majority of them follows the model of creating the state national youth policy and action plans.

Municipalities are also invited to work on modern and up-to-date youth conceptions following the same model, where different departments of Municipality Office are involved in drafting and consulting the Action plan with the active involvement of local young people.

EU Youth Strategy is communicated to all relevant actors at all level who are part of creating new youth legislation and conceptions.

IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute provides methodological help in all the three levels of this process (national, regional, local).

- 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): Roma, Hungarian

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

other: workers at municipalities responsible for issues related to youth

2. Youth participation in representative democracy in Slovakia

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:	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?

In Slovakia we call it active voting right. Active voting right for president and into parliament has any person with citizenship of the Slovak Republic, who latest at the day of elections have reached 18 years and is during the elections in territory of the Slovak Republic.

Voting right into municipalities has any person (citizens of the Slovak Republic and foreigners) who has permit residence in Slovakia and has at least 18 years.

Voting right in elections into European parliament have citizens of the Slovak Republic, who latest at the day of election reached 18 years and have permit residence in Slovakia, citizens of other member states of European Union, who latest at the day of election reached 18 years and have permit residence in Slovakia. Citizens of the Slovak Republic who latest at the day of election reached 18 years and do not have permit residence in Slovakia or at any other member state of European Union have voting right, if during the day of elections are in territory of the Slovak Republic.

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

Passive right to be elected into national parliament has citizen of the Slovak Republic who reached at least 21 years and have permit residence in Slovakia.

For president of the Slovak republic, candidate can be citizen, who reached at least 40 years and have permit residence in Slovakia.

Right to be elected as mayor have person who reached at least 25 years and have permit residence in adequate municipality.

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	58,83 %			19,64%		
13 – 30 year olds						
16 – 19 year olds						
20 – 24 year olds						
25 – 30 year olds						

Further statistics according gender or age are not available.

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	
	Women	1	0,67 %	23
Men	4	2,66 %	127	84,66 %
Total	5	3,33 %	150	100,0 %

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.

	NGOs, including political NGOs and youth NGOs			Youth NGOs			Political parties		
	Total	female	male	Total	female	male	total	female	male
% of total population									
13 – 30 year olds									
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.

Subjects at school where participation is one of the topics are civic education and theory of society. Apart of these subjects, there is a mechanism of involving young people in democracy at school level in school councils. School councils are regulated by Act. 596/2003 in chapter 26.

Are there teacher trainings programmes at the national and/or regional level on this topic?

Only teacher training program focusing on participation is for coordinators of school councils. This program is for teachers which have a role of coordinators of school councils which means they function as a bridge between representatives of students and management of school. It is run by IUVENTA – Slovak youth institute and during years 2008 – 2010 over 420 teachers participated in this training courses.

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.

IUVENTA – Slovak youth institute organized long term training for municipality workers who has youth in their agenda called „PARTNERSHIP”. Main aim is to build strategy of youth policy development in the city or village with participation of young people and youth organisations. In period 2008 – 2009 over 570 people were involved in this training and linked activities.

IUVENTA – Slovak youth institute also administrates program of Ministry of education, science, research and sport of Slovak Republic ADAM which provides financial support for youth organisations. Participation is one of the priority topics. Yearly budget of ADAM is app. 2.000.000 €.

In year 2009 IUVENTA – Slovak youth institute also organized 9 information seminars in all regions of Slovakia to support participation of young people in elections to European parliament where over 400 young people participated.

Also in the area of non-formal education belongs education of coordinators and also members of school councils which is an on-going process which IUVENTA – Slovak institute organize in cooperation with partner organisations in regions.

Another way of participation of young people is through Youth parliaments. They are not regulated by any official document. Usually they are set up in two ways. Either young people themselves get together and they want to do something in the city and then they approach municipality or mayor wants to have advisory body in area of youth. Mostly youth parliaments cooperate with leisure time centres or regional youth councils to gain also some financial support from the city. Range of their activities is then always mainly dependent on motivation of young people in long term perspective and also interests of the mayor.

5. Youth information in Slovakia

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

Does youth information coordinated at the national level exist?

Yes

Does youth information coordinated at the regional level exist? If yes, where?

Yes, network of youth information centres is coordinated by ZiPCEM (association of youth information centres) and local points of Eurodesk is coordinated by national coordinator which belongs to IUVENTA – Slovak youth institute.

Is youth information in your country member of any European network (ERYICA, EYCA, Eurodesk)? If yes, name the network.

- ZiPCEM was in past member of ERYICA, they are not member at the moment, but they closely cooperate with ICPM from Czech Republic.
- Eurodesk

5.2. The youth information services

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

There are in total 21 youth information centres around Slovakia in 6 out of 8 regions (75%) which are members of ZiPCEM. In total we have 138 cities in Slovakia which means 15 % coverage.

Eurodesk has 7 organisations as regional partners and provides information. They are in including central office in 6 out of 8 regions which is 75% coverage.

Is there an online national youth information system? If yes, please provide the links to the relevant webpage(s), state if the portal provides youth information only on a specific topic.

Yes, www.eurodesk.sk, www.icm.sk

Are there any online regional youth information systems? If yes, please provide the links to the relevant webpage(s), state if the portal provides youth information only on a specific topic.

No

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

Youth information centres produce also printed materials. They are mostly brochures or folders with different topics such as:

- Be informedInfo pass - list of interesting websites 2010
- How to write CV
- How to write motivation letter
- Don't use drugs
- Youth and drugs – info brochure
- Stop AIDS
- You are never alone – bullying
- Myths and facts – cruelty and sexual harassment
- All different all equal
- Sexuality of girls
- Sexuality of boys
- It's OK to be different
- Coming out

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?

- career guidance
- studies and scholarships
- jobs and training
- general health matters

- x relationships and sexuality
- social security benefits
- x rights of young people
- consumer rights
- x European opportunities for young people
- x youth activities and exchanges
- x Other (please explain) contacts in program Youth in Action, travelling, other according to requests

5.4. Young people's involvement in youth information

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

Network of youth information centres use different ways to collect needs and interests of young people in area of information. One of the ways is when regional youth information centres (YIC) regularly collects data what mostly interests young people who visit their centres. Like this e.g. general leaflet about how to write CV and motivational letter was created as very often young people visited YIC looking for advices how to do it.

Another way of collecting needs and interest is by interviews of young people directly on the street which they record on video and then also publish on internet (www.youtube.com/icmmladym). After they analyze received answers and this is also basis for other information material which they prepare. In preparation of info material are young people not directly involved.

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.

Research from year 2009 called "On-line generation: information, communication and digital participation of youth in information society" shows that media plays in everyday life of young people key role and apart of using them for fun and mutual communication, they use it also for different forms of digital participation.

Mostly they are interested in practical information about their everyday life e.g. work opportunities, studies, part-time jobs, exchange programs or leisure time possibilities or education. Also the phenomenon of peer learning is rising and young people more and more gain information from their peers. They see their virtual communication as addition to their relations in real life and apart of fun and fulfilment of their needs they consider also dialogue, discussion, solidarity and on-line participation on issues which they care about as important.

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?

Few municipalities or regional youth councils use already different online instruments to collect opinions of young people from the region before preparing policy papers in their city referring to youth issues. Network of youth information centres use video recording during their interviews with young people which they then publish on web (Youtube) and analyze or organisations use on their websites different polls (but mostly to attract attention then to really collect information).

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

We are aware of different actions through social networks and internet such as e-mails with information about different referendums (like against demolition of parks, changing system of financing organisation in third sector etc.) or organized campaign through social networks, but there is no general overview or research in this area with specific results.

7. Sources of information

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Websites:

www.mladez.sk

www.eurodesk.sk

www.icm.sk

www.zipcem.sk

www.iuventa.sk

www.vyskummladeze.sk

www.migration.sk