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



The role of youth participation and civil society in youth policy and youth work development in the broader Euro-Mediterranean context

24 – 27 October 2007, European Youth Centre Budapest

SEMINAR REPORT

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Budapest, January 2010

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Compiled by Gisele Kirby

Finalisation: secretariat of the partnership between the European Commission and
the Council of Europe in the field of youth

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1. Background and introduction

The seminar on the *Role of youth participation and civil society in youth policy development* is the third seminar organised within the framework of Euro-Arab youth cooperation on human rights education, intercultural dialogue and youth policy development. It was held at the European Youth Centre in Budapest and organised by the Partnership on Youth between the Council of Europe and the European Commission, in cooperation with the League of Arab States - Population Policies and Migration Department (LAS - PPMD).

This series of seminars started in 2005, to play an important role in making it possible for youth workers and representatives of non-governmental organisations from European and Arab countries to meet, exchange information and participate in different study visits and trainings. The title of the first seminar, held in Alexandria in September 2005 was “*Youth Policy – here and now!*”, the second one, held in Cairo in November 2006 was entitled “*The role of research in youth policy and youth work development in the broader Euro-Mediterranean context*”. The second round table on youth policy cooperation in the broader Euro-Mediterranean context, to be held in 2008, bringing together international and national, governmental and non-governmental partners active in youth policy development and implementation in the European and Arab countries, would analyse, among others, the outcomes of the three seminars and work towards achieving the resulting recommendations.

The first two seminars had emphasised the role of young people’s participation in the development of youth policy. Conclusions from the seminars’ working groups stressed that young people and their organisations should have a key role in the process of developing and monitoring youth policy at local as well as at national level. Consequently, the objectives set for this seminar were:

- To explore underpinning values, concepts, principles and forms of youth participation;
- To better understand the socio-cultural context of youth participation and reflect on the various factors influencing youth participation;
- To exchange examples of youth participation practice, analyse achievements and challenges related to it;
- To discuss the roles of the different actors (youth organisations, international/regional institutions and agencies) in fostering youth participation in all areas of concern to young people;
- To identify key areas for youth participation and youth policy development within the framework of Euro-Med cooperation;
- To plan follow-up initiatives enhancing youth participation in political processes and concrete ways, in which young people could contribute to the process of Intercultural Dialogue.

2. Seminar participants

The 21 participants to the seminar were representatives from various youth organisations and NGOs, more or less balanced in gender and geographical terms from both regions. The seminar was addressed and attended by policy and decision makers, as well as by a number of youth experts and researchers. The list of participants is attached (Annex 1).

3. Seminar Programme and Expectations

The 3-day seminar programme consisted of:

- Inputs from officials, youth researchers and experts from both Europe and the Southern Mediterranean region, on current youth policy and youth participation
- Working groups on sharing experiences on regional realities: sessions on mutual learning process, during which participants shared, compared and learnt from each other's experiences
- Presentation of successful projects motivating youth participation and examples of good practice
- Presentation of support measures: existing support structures, tools and sources of funding
- Evaluation of the seminar.

The expected outcomes were summarised as follows:

- a better understanding of various realities on youth participation in policy formulation;
- strengthened networking among youth organizations and other stakeholders (decision-makers, researchers, etc);
- initiated new Euro-Med youth projects;
- young people motivated to contribute to promoting intercultural dialogue.

The seminar programme is attached (Annex 2).

3.1. Official Presentations

Hans-Joachim Schild, coordinator of the Partnership on Youth between the Council of Europe and the European Commission, welcomed the seminar speakers and participants. In his opening speech he stressed that intercultural dialogue, conflict solution, security and peace were major current issues of European youth policies in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Young people should play a major role in promoting world peace and conflict transformation and should be the leaders in creating change within an environment of equal opportunities. Young people throughout the whole region were frustrated as they did not feel secure and faced many serious problems such as poverty, unemployment, housing, education. Europe could play an important part in addressing the root of such problems and work towards creating a secure environment for all young people, in Europe and in the Southern part of the Euro-Mediterranean region.

Dr. Atef Odaybat, Secretary General of the Supreme Youth Council in Jordan, gave a short briefing on the National Youth Strategy in Jordan, which included governmental youth organisations as well as NGOs. He mentioned that the King of Jordan considered youth among top priorities, and had asked for a national strategy for youth. For the first time a budget had been assigned for civil society, and the budget for the National Council for Youth had been doubled between 2006 – 2007. Youth participation was a major issue and a large portion of the national budget for youth was earmarked towards promoting participation. Efforts were made in reducing illiteracy, and a major education reform programme 'Education reform for economy knowledge' was being promoted. The age for participating and voting in elections had been reduced from 19 to 18 years.

Antje Rothmund, Executive Director of the European Youth Centre Budapest, expressed her pleasure in hosting this important seminar as part of the cooperation between the League of Arab States, the European Commission and the Council of Europe. She gave a brief background information on the European Youth Centre Budapest, which was established in 1995 as a part of the Council of Europe Directorate of Youth and Sport, and was the first Council of Europe service in a country of the former Eastern block. The European Youth Centres (EYCs) in Strasbourg and Budapest are places for non-formal education and civil society development with young people and those working with young people, be they volunteers, civil servants or public employees, youth workers, youth leaders, youth researchers or policy makers. Both EYCs are places for learning, exchange and intercultural dialogue, places for knowledge production and consolidating European youth work and youth policy, for creating and supporting civil society networks and common projects with young people from the 47 Council of Europe member states and beyond.

The youth sector of the Council of Europe works along the philosophy “Nothing about us without us” and “Young people are a resource and not a problem”. This philosophy is reflected in so-called “co-management” structure, meaning representatives of youth organisations and representatives of the specialised ministries of the member states are deciding commonly about the work programme of the youth sector, the distribution of funding and policy priorities. Youth participation is only possible if power is shared, if young people have access to established decision-making structures, if competencies are developed, and most importantly, if young people are motivated to participate. She drew attention to the Council of Europe’s “Charter on the participation of young people in local and regional life”, which is an important reference for the member states and gives concrete guidelines to local and regional governments on how to involve young people in society.

She stressed that the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in specific, and Intercultural Dialogue in general were on the top of the Council of Europe’s political agenda – among others, a White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue was under preparation - and expressed her hope that this would also contribute to intensify the cooperation with other international organisations working in the field.

Dr. Iman El Kafass, Board Member of the National Youth Council of Egypt, outlined that the Youth Council was responsible for developing and implementing policy on youth. It had 15 board members and various committees, such as on culture, youth participation and development of youth policy. Half of its membership was below 30 years old, which was a council requirement.

She referred to previous state leaders who had been young and to young women who had fought for women’s rights. She highlighted that the situation had changed and youth had become distracted from the political field as economic pressure and unemployment had made them to become alienated. There was an increasing role of the state with no role model for youth leadership.

A new law for the management of youth centres by young people was in process of discussion and the laws for youth participation were being reformed. However, there were challenges to these initiatives, as young people in general were not empowered enough to sustain representation on committees. There was an urgent need for opportunities on

training to promote skills on democratic management and motivation in good governance and decision-making.

H.E. Nancy Bakir, Assistant Secretary General of the League of Arab States, expressed her appreciation of the fruitful cooperation between the Council of Europe and the League, which consists of 22 Arab states. She gave a brief statement on the serious challenges (current wars, the threat of terrorism, poor economy and an increase in poverty, high unemployment, international competition, immigration, lack of education, doubts on achieving the millennium objectives by 2015) facing the Arab region, and especially the Arab youth. The youth population in the Arab states increased from 22 million in 1990 to 66 million in 2005 for the age group 15-24 (about 20.6%) and to about 90 million for 15-29 age bracket (30% of the population).

She stressed the need to change society to a 'knowledge-based society' and summarised the activities and efforts promoted by the League to empower Arab youth by referring to the outcomes of the summits of Kings and Presidents held since 2004 (Annex 3). She made a power-point presentation on opportunities and challenges for youth in Arab countries and on the implemented activities in the field of youth (Annex 4).

The 'Arab Declaration on Youth Empowerment' of the Khartoum Summit in 2006 stated "We, Arab kings and presidents, call for youth empowerment and active participation in the society by contributing to the economic, social cultural and political development". The Declaration targeted young people in the 15-29 age bracket from all backgrounds including those with special needs. It addressed strategic cross-sectoral issues such as rights to quality education, training, decent employment, good health. It also focused on youth participation in decision making and social integration. It proposed to develop programmes to facilitate the participation in society of marginalized youth and street children. It referred to the creation of the 'Arab Youth Observatory' by the League Arab of States, to monitor changes in youth conditions and to identify obstacles, challenges and risks faced by youth.

Giuseppe Porcaro, the European Youth Forum (YFJ) representative, introduced the European Youth Forum - a platform of national and international youth councils. He clarified the difference between the national youth councils in Europe, which were a federation of national and local non-governmental youth organizations, and the national youth councils in the Arab world which were governmental organizations. He indicated that some of the YFJ international youth organisations had also member organisations in Arab countries. Europe and Arab States faced common challenges (migration, poverty, security, etc).

The YFJ member organisations are youth organisations led by young people, elected by young people. It is managed by a President and 8 board members, elected every two years. The YFJ had been an active actor in the consultation process for the European Commission's White Paper on Youth and in the open method of consultation on participation, information on and for youth, and on volunteering.

The YFJ worked on a frame for cross-sectoral youth policy development based on participation, autonomy, well-being and personal development of young people within a knowledge society. It had also contributed to the drafting of the former European Convention; the new Treaty included the article on youth which had been in the Convention.

YFJ was involved in preparing AGENDA 2020 - the road map for development of youth sector from the Council of Europe perspective - for the meeting of youth ministers in 2008.¹

Dr. Helmut Willems, University of Luxemburg (INSIDE – Integrative Research Unit on Social and Individual Development) made a slide presentation on *Democracy, political participation and youth - conceptual, empirical and strategic questions* (Annex 5), in which he focused on the following main issues:

- Democracy and participation - why political participation was so important for democracies: participation in society, community and political life played a central role in concepts of democratic civil societies.
- Functions of participation: improving decision-making processes; education and development of competencies.
- Indicators of political participation: civic and social engagement; conventional electoral and party engagement; unconventional political engagement.
- Forms of participation: political versus social participation.
- Changes in political participation: youth research leading to contradictory conclusions and ambivalent interpretations on the political involvement of young people.
- Membership and activity within political parties.
- Political protest activities: boycotting of products or buying products for political reasons.
- Membership in NGOs: under 10%.
- Education for democratic citizenship: ‘...preparation of young people to become active and engaged citizens within their democracy’.
- Strategy to promote youth political participation: increase institutional opportunities to participate; strengthen young people’s participation in their local communities, schools, youth work; create different ways of learning to participate to make it more attractive.

He concluded by stressing that civic participation should start early within families and local communities and pointed out that it was the new generation’s role and responsibility to promote change.

Dr. Abdel Basset Abdel Muty, Consultant for the Population Policy and Migration Department of the League of Arab States, made a slide presentation on the “*Socio-Cultural Aspect of Arab Youth Participation - NGOs as a Case Study*” (Annex 6). He focused on the constraints in youth participation in Arab States. First, he presented the conceptual framework for participation as a social process, as well as an action undertaken individually and/or collectively. The fields of participation were political, economic, social and cultural. He concluded that the challenges to youth participation were at many levels:

- Lack of generational communication
- Lack of cooperation and communication between NGO leaders and young people
- Several meaningless bureaucratic regulations and procedures
- Lack of time
- Loss of trust in the NGOs

¹ European Youth Forum’s website: <http://www.youthforum.org>

- Attraction of a wage against volunteering
- Lack of information on voluntary work and the misleading culture of volunteerism.

3.2. Working Groups

Following an ice-breaker activity, the participants were split into 5 working groups, balanced in gender and region, to share, compare and learn from experiences related to youth participation. They had the task to discuss the following questions and report back on their conclusions. Brief summary of the working groups' feedback on the provided questions:

1) What is participation?

- *An active engagement of young people throughout their communities*
- *To have a voice in the local/regional/national decision-making process*
- *To be actively involved in the decision-making, planning, implementation and monitoring of a project*
- *To have access to information and opportunities for active involvement*

2) Why is youth participation important?

- *Youth represent an important part of society*
- *Young people are the leaders of tomorrow*
- *Participation leads to knowledge, new ideas, innovation, progress*
- *Participation is a youth policy priority*
- *Opportunities result for active and personal involvement*
- *Young people are a resource and not a problem*

3) What are the main obstacles to youth participation in both governmental organisations and NGOs?

- *Lack of opportunities, information, poor communication*
- *Patriarchal society - lack of consultation*
- *Lack of resources*
- *Frustration and lack of trust in authorities, negative perceptions*
- *Lack of resources*
- *Age, gender and social discrimination*
- *Lack of initiative and/or commitment from young people*
- *Economic circumstances*

4) How to motivate youth participation?

- *Empowerment - give young people a voice*
- *Building young people's trust and motivation*
- *Promotion of equal opportunities*
- *Access to resources, information*
- *Promote youth work, volunteering and peer education*

5) How can young people contribute to youth policy development?

- *Active involvement in youth organizations/youth councils*
- *Participation in political parties and movements*
- *Participation in co-management structures*
- *Regular consultation with young people on their needs, views, recommendations*
- *Young people should be involved in the development as well as implementation of youth policy.*

3.3. Presentation of success stories

3.3.1. The four participants from Sweden presented the policies of the *Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs*, a governmental body responsible for the development of cross-sectoral youth policy. The focus was on the principle that *young people should have the possibility of influencing the development of society in general as well as their own lives and their local environment.*

The objectives of the *National Youth Council of Sweden*, an umbrella of 90 youth-led organizations (student movements; political, religious, environmental, cultural, ethnic youth organizations; scouts) were presented. The Council's vision was that youth were a resource, playing a central role in the democratic process and having a real influence on society and over their own lives. Swedish youth policy was based on the Council of Europe recommendations.

As a good example of youth policy implementation in Sweden, the policies of *Umea*, a local municipality, were highlighted – '*a way to influence your municipality*' (see Annex 7). The role played by the municipality in involving young people in the decision-making process through local youth councils (4 such councils in Umea); facilitating links between young people and politicians; cooperation with the network of youth ombudsmen; financial and other resources made available to encourage young people in taking part in the creation of local projects (sports fields, youth centres, youth activities) were among the main actions promoted by the municipality.

3.3.2. A young expert from *Egypt* presented the model of community youth development, which was a pilot programme implemented two years ago in five Arab countries within the region. Community youth development was presenting a new concept, in which youth development occurred inside the communities. Within this process both youth and communities were developed and trained to acquire the skills of participation. On the other hand, communities accepted a leading and participatory role for youth in the development process.

3.3.3. A member of the '3rd Eye Initiative' in *Egypt* briefly outlined the main challenges faced in the formulation of youth policies within the region. In some Arab states youth policy was considered as plans and programmes implemented by the youth sector. In others, youth policy was considered as a governmental rather than national policy, and implemented as a tool of control, imposing the government's point of view on stakeholders.

The availability of a youth policy document was considered to be more important than implementation. Youth involvement in the process of developing policies was questionable.

3.3.4. A participant from *Bahrain* outlined his participation in the formulation of the national strategy for youth policy (Annex 8) in Bahrain as a success story. Ten percent of Bahrain's population of 650,000 was under 30 years of age, and the majority had been involved in developing the youth policy strategy. There were 19 youth NGOs, each with a large membership. The first step had been in building concrete partnership between government and civil society. In 2005 it had been nominated as the best youth strategy in the Middle East in the areas of employment, human rights, civil rights and participation. A 'speak out' campaign had been promoted. A Youth Parliament had been set up in 2003 as well as youth centres, a national youth council and a national youth committee.

3.3.5. The main findings of the *Survey on Arab youth participation* were presented by a member of the PPMD of the League of Arab States. About 500 young people (aged 15 to 29, 64.7% male and 35.3% female), from urban and rural areas, had taken part in this survey. The survey, based on 4 questions, had focused on constraints and suggestions for active participation. The responses varied on basis of age, gender, educational background, unemployment, the size of family and place of residence. The main findings were summarized as follows:

- 63% of Arab youth participated in legislative elections (33% to select the best candidate; others considered voting a national duty and were eager to express their views).
- 36% of youth did not vote in parliamentary elections because they did not trust the election process.
- 28% of the surveyed young people voted in local elections and 38% did not, either because they did not have faith in the process, or due to lack of time or access to information.
- 97.5% confirmed participating in their families' affairs.
- 62% said they were involved in volunteering work within their local community (higher among males than females).

The main problems affecting Arab youth were identified as:

- Looking for jobs (50.6%)
- Education (38%)
- Personal problems within families (11.4%).

In general, the young people did not trust politics and considered families as obstacle to participation. It was proposed that the youth problems could be solved by the government by listening to young people's opinions and by the young people themselves.

3.3.6. A young representative from the LAS youth consultancy committee presented a *comparative analysis on youth participation*, based on the answers given to the questionnaires sent to Arab and European applicants to this seminar (Annex 9). The questions focused on the motivation for attending the seminar, on the principles of participation, and on the challenges faced by youth.

The main motivation for the European applicants was to gain knowledge and share and exchange information; in addition, there was also an urge to learn about cultural diversity. The Arab applicants declared that they wanted to learn from each other, the female applicants focusing on cultural exchange, whilst the males were interested in the issues of participation. The main challenges to participation were negative prejudices, lack of volunteering and of motivation. There was a need for skills development and training. The Arab young people were keen to learn from European success stories. Interest was also expressed among the European and Arab applicants to developing common projects.

Following these presentations, all participants had the opportunity to share experiences and examples of good practice by each briefly presenting their organization and distributing leaflets and pamphlets.

3.4. Support Measures

Brief presentations were given on structures, tools, sources of funding as support measures towards projects and trainings.

EuroMed Youth Programme

The foundations for the EuroMed Youth Programme had been established as a result of the Barcelona Declaration, adopted in 1995, and which had stressed that *'youth exchanges should be the means to prepare future generations for a closer cooperation among the Euro-Mediterranean partners.'* The aims of the regional EuroMed Youth Programme are to promote mobility of young people, non formal education and understanding between nations. The main objectives are to foster mutual understanding, promote active citizenship, contribute to the development of youth policy and enhance the NGOs' contribution to civil society and democracy.

The thematic priorities were to:

- fight racism and xenophobia
- promote active citizenship, gender equality and minority rights
- promote the protection of heritage and the environment

The third phase of the Programme (www.euromedyouth.net) had been decentralized to national authorities in nine Mediterranean partner countries and was administered through Euro-Med Youth Units. The Euro-Med youth grants were awarded on basis of calls for proposals for youth exchange and voluntary service projects as well as support measures (training courses, study visits, job-shadowing).

SALTO (Support Advanced Learning & Training Opportunities) EuroMed Resource Centre

The SALTO (www.salto-youth.net/euromed), based in France and established in 2001, supports cooperation between European and Mediterranean countries in four ways:

1. Training opportunities and events on basis of innovative thematic courses and training of multipliers

2. Dissemination of good practices: an on-line 'tool box' offering users access to different training tools and documents (www.salto-youth.net/toolbox)
3. Support to networks through dissemination of information on relevant issues as well as of educational good practices in youth work through newsletters
4. Cooperating in close partnership with several European and Mediterranean institutions.

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

The Youth Partnership has the following objectives:

1. Citizenship, participation, human rights education and intercultural dialogue
2. Social cohesion, inclusion and equal opportunities
3. Recognition, quality and visibility of youth work and training
4. Better understanding and knowledge of youth and youth policy development.

Existing since 1998, as of 2003 the Partnership encompasses Euro-Mediterranean cooperation activities, focusing on intercultural dialogue, Human Rights Education and youth policy development as well as ensuring quality development and support to Euro-Med youth work.

Also training courses on European citizenship, trainings for trainers, research seminars, expert workshops, researchers network meetings, policy seminars and other activities are organised within its framework. It provides knowledge on youth issues on-line in the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy. It also produced a number of useful publications, such as the various T-Kits and the magazine COYOTE (www.youth-partnership.net).

Information was also provided on the following institutions:

- The Council of Europe's (www.coe.int/youth) educational activities ranged from study sessions, seminars, language courses, traineeship to production of publications, one of which was the revised 'European Charter on the Participation of Young People' in local and regional life. This policy document had been adopted in consultation with all Council of Europe member states. There also exists a manual suggesting the ways of practical implementation and promotion of the Charter (http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Coe_youth/Youth_Participation_Charter_en.asp)
- The European Youth Foundation promoted and co-funded international youth activities. (<http://www.eyf.coe.int/fej/>)
- The European Commission 'European Neighbourhood Policy' applied to the EU's immediate neighbours by land or sea. The central element of the European Neighbourhood Policy is the bilateral ENP Action Plans agreed between the EU and each partner country. These set out an agenda of political and economic reforms with short and medium-term priorities. (http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/policy_en.htm)
- The Peace Child International (<http://www.peacechild.org/>)
- The Soros Foundation funded civil society projects (<http://www.soros.org/about>)

- The bloggers network existed to spread information on available opportunities.
- The support and structure tools, activities and opportunities offered by the League of Arab States in the Arab region were also presented. Reference was made to the various summit declarations to promote youth rights and participation. (www.poplas.org/youth)
- An announcement was made on the League of Arab States Youth Forum which was to be held in Egypt in November 2007 under the auspices of the LAS General Secretary. (www.lasyouthforum.org)

Brief mention was also made of the other regional partners and funders:

- The Euro-Mediterranean Youth Platform, based in Malta (www.euromedp.org)
- The Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue among cultures, based in Alexandria, Egypt (www.euromedalex.org)
- NASEEJ (www.naseej.cyd.org)
- Save the Children (www.savethechildren.org/countries/middle-east-eurasia)
- SAFAR for travel grants (www.safarfund.org)
- UNICEF (http://www.unicef.org/voy/takeaction/takeaction_97.html)
- http://www.unicef.org/voy/takeaction/takeaction_347.html)
- Global Youth Action Network (<http://www.youthlink.org/gyanv5/index.htm>)
- DEFRA department for environment, food and rural affairs (<http://www.defra.gov.uk/funding/index.htm>)
- The Euromed Heritage programme aims at strengthening relations between the EU and Mediterranean partners (<http://www.euromedheritage.net/>)
- EuroMed Portal of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) Info Centre with general information on EuroMed (<http://www.enpi-info.eu/indexmed.php>)
- The World Bank as funder of projects (<http://www.worldbank.org>)
- USAID (<http://www.usaid.gov>).

3.5. Proposals for joint projects

Following a number of project proposals presented in plenary, participants formed groups to discuss and elaborate concrete undertakings. The following projects were proposed by the groups and commented by the panel of speakers:

- Youth participation as a tool for protection of youth migration (Bulgaria/Turkey/Greece/Morocco/Spain)
- Comparative study of the Euro Youth Participation Charter and the Arab Youth Participation Declaration (France/Sweden/Spain/Arab League)
- Building a democratic community by networking – a youth exchange project (Sweden/Spain/Palestine/Morocco/Jordan).

The panel's views were encouraging with practical recommendations to facilitate implementation of the projects.

4. Seminar recommendations

Participants proposed some recommendations at three levels: political, practical and institutional, for adoption by decision makers, as follows:

Political level

- To conduct a survey on Arab and European youth views and suggestions towards the “Revised European Charter on the participation of young people in local and regional life – Have your say” and the “Arab declaration on Youth empowerment”.
- To develop monitoring instruments on the implementation of these documents.
- To give young people opportunities to establish youth-led organizations to promote the democratic process.
- To motivate and encourage young people to take part in the political process.

Institutional level

- To involve young people as resource persons and volunteers in the development of policy papers and legislation.

Practical level

- To hold a seminar to compare the two policy documents on youth participation (Revised European Charter on the participation of young people in local and regional life, and the Arab declaration on Youth empowerment elaborated by PPMD).
- To organise a seminar on how to implement and promote the two documents in both regions.
- To develop tools to disseminate the concept of youth participation, using already existing materials from both regions.
- To organise training on project management and on how to present recommendations to policy makers.

It was stressed that these recommendations were proposed by the seminar participants who were not representing the whole youth population of both regions. Seminars were not democratically mandated forums but acted as a ‘think tank’.

5. Evaluation and conclusion

In one word, each participant evaluated the outcomes of the seminar as being interesting even if at times frustrating; skill- and experience sharing; rewarding; challenging; empowering.

It was agreed that the seminar objectives and expectations had been, to a large extent, achieved as there had been a great deal of information, experiences and good practices on youth participation shared among participants, within an intercultural environment promoting intercultural dialogue. It was hoped that the projects proposed and partnerships developed during the seminar would be sustainable and supported with relevant resources.

The seminar organisers thanked the panel members, speakers and participants for their contribution towards the success of the seminar and for facilitating a fruitful exchange of information and experiences.

And in conclusion, a poem written by the Romanian participant *Tiberiu Iacomi*, who was inspired by the seminar theme...

Just if

*If we are far away, we'll name it close than ever
We'll build a bridge of waves if there's a sea between
It's now that our generation should replace forever
And change the present storm with our mountain dream.*

*If we are speechless trees we will unite our ancient roots
We'll build a branches' rainbow if our world is dark within
It's now that our youth should find its deeper routes
And rise towards the sun ideals that will burn the hatred sin.*

*If we have yet forgotten lessons, we'll teach each other at least one story
We'll build a human circle if there's a breach in our common goal
It's now that our dialogue should raise perspectives instead of empty glory
And change traditions with strategies that will define for us another role.*

*If there is peace instead of seas and forests,
It's now that we've already found the youth.*

Annex 1. Programme of the seminar

Wednesday, 24 October

Arrivals of participants

Thursday, 25 October

- 9:30 Welcome words, introductory speeches
Dr. Atef Odaybat – Secretary General of the Supreme Youth Council in Jordan
Dr. Iman El Kafas – Board member of National Youth Council of Egypt
H. E. Nancy Bakir – Under Secretary General of the League of Arab States
Mrs. Antje Rothmund – Executive Director of the European Youth Centre
Budapest
Mr. Hans-Joachim Schild – Co-ordinator of the Partnership between the Council of
Europe and the European Commission on Youth
Mr. Giuseppe Porcaro – Representative of the European Youth Forum (YFJ)
- 11:00 *Coffee break*
- 11:30 Introduction to the seminar
- 12:00 Getting to know each other
- 12:45 Lunch
- 14:30 Regional realities – sharing experience among participants
- 16:00 *Coffee break*
- 16:30 Regional realities – sharing experience among participants continued
- 17:30 Reports of the working groups on regional realities
- 19:00 Dinner
- 20:00 Welcome reception and socialising time

Friday, 26 October

- 9:30 Recap of Thursday by participants (reporters)
- 9:45 Input on “Socio-cultural Aspects of Youth Participation in the Arab Region” by Dr.
Abdel Baset Abdel Muty
- 10:15 Questions and discussion related to input
- 10:30 Input on “Political Participation of Youths: new Forms, new Ways,
new Perspectives?” by Prof. Dr. Helmut Willems
- 11:00 Questions and discussion related to input
- 11:15 *Coffee break*
- 11:45 Success stories of youth policies – good practice examples from Arab and
European regions
- 12:45 Lunch
- 14:30 Presentation of findings of the survey (application forms)
- 15:00 Preparation for fair of good examples of youth participation practice

- 15:30 Coffee break
- 16:00 Fair of good examples of youth participation practice
- 19:00 Dinner
- 20:30 Diversity night

Saturday, 27 October

- 9:30 Recap of Friday by participants (reporters)
- 9:40 Support measures (structures, tools, sources of funding)
- 11:00 *Coffee break*
- 11:30 Planning concrete activities
- 12:45 Lunch
- 14:30 Planning concrete activities – continued
- 16:00 *Coffee break*
- 16:30 Presentation of follow-up steps
- 18:00 Concluding session and evaluation
- 20:00 Farewell dinner on the Danube

Sunday, 28 October

Departures of participants

Annex 2. List of participants

<i>PARTICIPANTS</i>	
<i>Bahrain</i>	
Nawaf A.Nabi AlMaskati	Bahrain Child Society
<i>Bulgaria</i>	
Borislava Daskalova	Euro-Mediterranean Network for Youth Trafficking Prevention
<i>France</i>	
Khalil Raihani	AMSED
<i>Egypt</i>	
Yassein Hussein Mohamed	3rd Eye initiative
Amin Zayani	Arab youth bloggers
<i>Germany</i>	
Cilly Kurkhaus	Youth office of the city of Leipzig, department for international work
<i>Greece</i>	
Christina Kontaxi	MEDITERRANEAN SOS Network
<i>Italy</i>	
Simona Rossi	MSOI Movement for the International Student Organization
<i>Jordan</i>	
Roa'a Khudairi	Save the children federation
<i>Lebanon</i>	
Maya Georges Boutros	Arab Thought Foundation
<i>Morocco</i>	
Sarah Zaaïmi	AUI Diplomacy Club
<i>Palestinian Authority</i>	
Rasha R. A. Fityan	Ta'awon for Conflict Resolution inst.- Ta'awon Youth forum
<i>Romania</i>	
Tiberiu Iacomi	SAVE THE CHILDREN - ROMANIA
<i>Spain</i>	
Natalia Sacristan Romero	AIPC-PANDORA
Esther Gelabert	INJEP-Pole Euromed (RCBS) (French National Institute for Youth and popular education)

Sweden	
Emmy Bornemark	UNGDOMSSTYRELSEN - The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs
Simon Klein	Umea Central Youth Council
Fredrik Engström	The National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations
Johan Lindgren	Youth ombudsman
"the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"	
Zoran Ilieski	Coalition of youth organizations SEGA
Yemen	
Abdullah Abdulsalam Al-Thawr	Democracy School
Tunisia	
Foued EL Ouni	Observatoire National de la jeunesse
UK	
Gisele Kirby	SALTO Euromed Resource Centre
PREPARATORY GROUP	
Khaled Louhichi	League of Arab States Population Policy and Migration Department – Social Sector / League of Arab States 22 A Taha Hussien Street – Zamalek – Cairo – Egypt Tel: : +202 7354306 Fax: : +202 7351422 youth@poplas.org www.poplas.org/youth
Ghada El Shazly	
Haythem Kamel	
Hans-Joachim Schild	
Marta Medlinska	Partnership on Youth between the Council of Europe and the European Commission
Philipp Boetzelen	
Viktoria Karpatska	
Iris Bawidamann	European Youth Centre Strasbourg
SPEAKERS AND GUESTS	
Dr. Atef Odaybat, Secretary General of the Supreme Youth Council in Jordan	
Dr. Iman El Kafas, Board member of National Youth Council of Egypt	
H. E. Nancy Bakir, Under Secretary General of the League of Arab States	
Antje Rothmund, Executive Director of the European Youth Centre Budapest	
Giuseppe Porcaro, European Youth Forum (YFJ)	
Dr. Abdel Baset Abdel Muty, Expert, Egypt	
Dr. Helmut Willems, Luxembourg University	
Rui Gomes, Head of Unit Education and Training, Directorate of Youth and Sport, Council of Europe	
Yara Shahin, Expert, Egypt	

Annex 3. Speech by H. E. Nancy Bakir, Assistant Secretary General of the League of Arab States for the Social Sector

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am pleased to be here in this wonderful city, at this important seminar, among this unique gathering to discuss "youth's issues".

I am speaking today on behalf of the League of Arab States, and would like to convey to you Mr. Amr Moussa's greetings and wishing this seminar all the success.

Let me express my profound appreciation for the fruitful cooperation between the League and the Council of Europe as well as the European Commission in several fields in which youth is one of them.

Allow me to take this opportunity to brief you on the League of Arab States.

I will begin with the gloomy reality and end with a more positive note.

The League of Arab States (which consists of 22 countries) operates in an area that is currently plighted by crisis. The past (35) Arab summits addressed these unfortunate challenges; for example: the continuing Arab Israeli conflict, to the failing situation in Iraq, the problems in Lebanon, the crisis in Darfour, the nuclear situation in the region, and of course the continuous threat of terrorism that has impacted many Arab States in the past years. It is indeed a rough time for this region, besides that these problems are enough to destabilize the Middle East and affect the rest of the world.

My friends and colleges

The human challenges are even more compelling: the list is long but the followings are most important, bearing in mind that the situation varies from one Arab State to another:

- We have an increase in poverty and unemployment rates of the Arab region.
- Arab capital flight and brain drain to cross-border markets.
- Lack of efficient Methods to deal with globalization.
- Weak basic infrastructure in many Arab countries.
- The need to develop the outputs of the educational process to cope with the growing needs of development as well as international competition.
- Illiteracy rates among women are intolerable.
- Most of what is produced in the Arab world is not competitive with what international markets offer.
- The need for sufficient health care especially the primary care .
- Doubts of achieving The MDGs by 2015.

Despite all the frustration, I believe that Arab States are now entering the age of human renaissance. An age where Arab Leaders, scholars, and experts are voicing their need to transform our societies in to a knowledge society, because they believe that knowledge will serve the loftier goals of freedom, justice and human dignity, the steps towards the knowledge society are visible and promising. Most importantly, the belief and commitment is in fact, regional.

There are three key regional commitments in the last few years:

First: The 2004 **Arab Summit in Tunisia** marks an evident change in tone and unprecedented recommendations. It called for the reform and modernization in the Arab world, by focusing on democracy, rights of women, human rights, transparency, and development. These recommendations were reinforced by other two summits...the Algerian Summit 2005, Al Khartoum Summit 2006...but the most interesting decision was the call for modernizing education in order to meet globalization challenges.

Under this particular recommendation, the Arab League started by implementing widely an important project on family health and planning, followed by a regional strategy for Arab women along with several programs for children and youth. The Arab League is putting education and knowledge at the top of its priority.

We are working closely with ALCSO the **Arab educational cultural and scientific organisations** and UNESCO to develop a comprehensive project on education reform. This project aims at promoting the quality of education in a way that will respond to the needs of today's world and to put history in its right framework.

Second: The Arab League is fostering economic reform throughout the Arab region and the transition to a market economy has already taken place in several countries. In addition LAS has provided the private sector with opportunity to contributing effectively to this development process and a number of active Arab NGOs have been approved by our organisation hence creating an appropriate and optimistic environment for joint and integrated economic activity. One of the main channels pursued by LAS was the implementation of a time frame for the establishment of **(PAFTA)**, 1998(**Pan Arab Free Trade Area**) which came into force at the beginning of January 2005. Currently LAS is preparing for the next phase of Arab economic integration, which is "**An Arab Customs Union**" to be reached in 2014 paving the way to the **Arab Common Market** by 2020.

The Third major step was the Al- **Riyadh Arab Summit** 2007, which called for social and economic summit. The Riyadh summit also supported and sponsored a comprehensive study on education in the Arab region. Knowledge is the beacon that lights the way on the Arab journey to the future.

Having said that, I think the upcoming Arab Socio- Economic Summit, which initially will take place in Kuwait November 2008, will place human resources on top of our agenda, and will involve the Arab Specialized Organisations, business community, private sector and civil society in all preparation phases of this summit.

Ladies, and Gentlemen,

Thus placing human resources development on the top of our agenda is a must, it becomes apparent to everyone that it is one of the extremely vital tools that will aid us to overcome the problems that we face irrespective of there diversity and inconsistency. Adding to my personal belief in the need to develop new human resources and imaginative abilities and capacity, the world of today is built upon a knowledge based society which can only be achieved through encouraging new human resources potentials. The wider ones scope his ideas, knowledge and understanding the better he overcomes the challenges that face him.

We, at the Arab League also believe that building a knowledge society requires Social innovation, a process that can only be led and undertaken by the people of each Arab society themselves, for themselves. In this respect Arab states have to interact with other regions based on understanding and mutual respect. I hope that the Arab League will be able to cooperate with you and I hope this forum will be the inspiration and lightening for cooperation and accomplishments.

These are some of our accomplishments and aspirations. In all this there is a crucial role for the youth. They have to be prepared to face the challenges. They have to start now.

Finally, I would like to express thanks and appreciations to;

-The Organisers, Speakers, Participants,

I wish you all a successful seminar by fulfilling all the desired objectives.

Thank you.

Annex 4. Presentation by H.E. Nancy Bakir, Assistant Secretary General of the League of Arab States for the Social Sector

Seminar "The role of youth participation and civil society in youth policy and youth work development in the broader Euro-Mediterranean context"
European Youth Centre Budapest, 24-27 October 2007

الشباب في البلاد العربية
فرص وتحديات
“Youth in Arab Countries:
Opportunities & Challenges”

نانسى باكير - الامين العام المساعد للقطاع الاجتماعى
Nancy Bakir – Assistant Secretary General – Social Sector

• الاهتمام العربى فى تزايد

Increasing the Arab Concern

الملوك والرؤساء يدعون :

Kings and Presidents Decree

نحن الملوك والرؤساء العرب في اجتماعنا بالخرطوم 2006: ندعو إلى تمكين الشباب من المشاركة الفاعلة في المجتمع من خلال المساهمة في التنمية الاقتصادية والاجتماعية والثقافية والسياسية.

قمة الخرطوم - 2006

”We , Arab Kings and Presidents , call for youth empowerment and active participation in the society by contributing in the economic , social , cultural and political development .”

Khartoum Summit 2006

لماذا تنامي اهتمام العرب بالشباب:

- الشباب أكبر فئة اجتماعية
 - الفئة 15-24 تمثل 20.6% من السكان في المتوسط
 - الفئة 15-29 تمثل حوالي 30% من السكان في المتوسط
 - ارتفع عددهم من 33 مليون عام 1980 الى 66 مليون عام 2005 وحوالي 90 مليون للفئة 15-29 سنة

Why the Arab Concern Increased:

❑ Youth is the largest social group

✓ Age from 15-24 about 20.6%

✓ Age from 15-29 about 30%

❑ The youth population increased from 22 million in 1980 to 66 million in 2005 for the age group 15-24 & about 90 million for 15-29 years.

- كون هذا التحول صوب تحسين في الأوضاع الصحية و تراجع في نسبة الخصوبة من 6.2 طفل لكل امرأة عام 1980 الى 3.3 عام 2000، وتقلصت بالتالي قاعدة الهرم السكاني :

- As this change was accompanied by improvement of health conditions and decrease in the fertility rate from 6.2 Child/woman in 1980 to 3.3 in 2000 , in consequence the population pyramid base collapse

Figure 2: Population pyramid, Arab countries, 2005

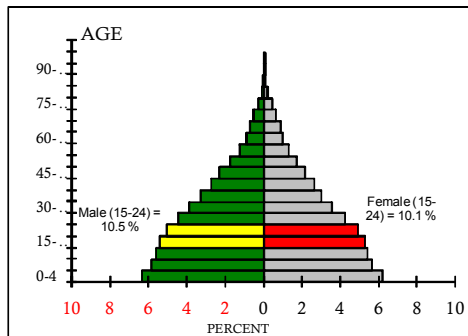
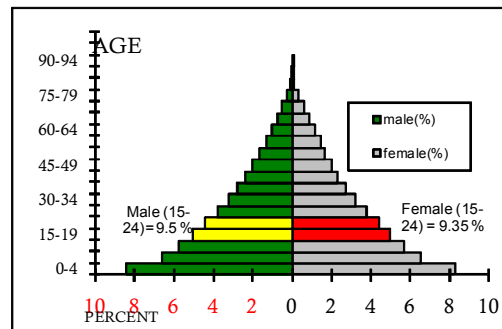



Figure 1: Population pyramid, Arab countries, 1980



Source: UN World Population Prospects, 2006 Revision. Online Population Database.

- ولكون ارتفاع الحجم + تحسن الخصائص التعليمية والصحية للشباب + تراجع نسبة الاعالة  يوفر فرصة تاريخية فريدة لعدد محدود من العقود : ” الفرصة الديمغرافية“.


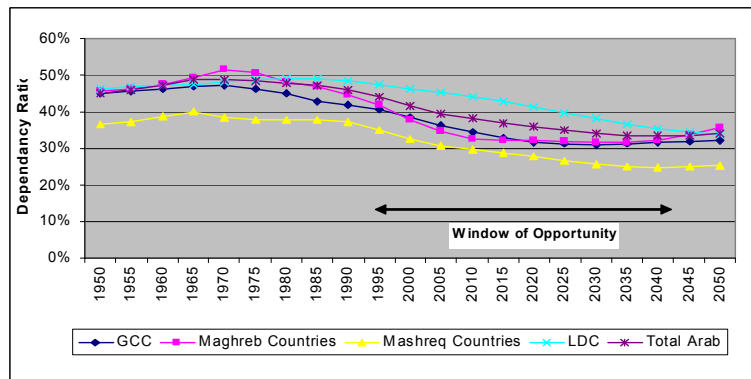
▪ And because the Increase in youth population + improvement in education & health characteristics + Decrease in dependency rate  Create a special historical opportunity for a few decades : “the Demographic Bonus”

Figure 3: The demographic “window of opportunity” in Arab countries



- غير أن تحديات مهمة تواجه الشباب في المنطقة : منها بالأخص

- ضعف مؤسسات المجتمع المدني كما وكيفا بما فيها منظمات الشباب
- الفقر: 18% من السكان في المنطقة دون عتبة الفقر (54% في العراق و47% في فلسطين)
- 26% من الشباب عاطلين عن العمل = أعلى نسبة في العالم
- سيادة الرؤية السلبية للشباب: الثقافة الابوية والسلطوية لازالت قوية وتحول دون التواصل بين الاجيال ومشاركة الشباب

However Arab Youth faced strong Challenges

- Quantitative and qualitative weakness of civil society institutions including youth organizations.
- Poverty : 18% of the population in the region are below the poverty line 54% in Iraq , 47% in Palestine.
- 26% unemployed youth = highest percentage in the world.
- Wide negative vision towards youth :the patriarchal society still very powerful in our region.

الجامعة العربية دعم متواصل لسياسات تمكين الشباب:

Continuous support of the League of Arab States to youth empowerment policies:

- المنطلق: "الشباب فاعل رئيسي في تحقيق التنمية المنشودة والتكامل العربي"
- Aim: Youth are main players in Achieving the development goals & Arab regional integration.
- ابرز الوثائق المرجعية
 - قرار قمة الملوك والرؤساء
 - **Kings and Presidents Decree.**
 - الاعلان العربي لتمكين الشباب:
 - مرجع رئيسي لسياسات تمكين الشباب اقليميا ووطنيا.
 - **Arab Youth Empowerment Declaration :**
 - The main resource for youth policies

Arab Youth Empowerment Declaration : the main resource for youth policies



Which includes:

- Fostering youth participation in all national and international fields as inherent rights particularly in decision making and supporting their commitment towards national rights based on the principle of equal opportunity.
- Intensifying cultural and advocacy programs for governmental and non governmental organization and parents to raise their awareness about youth issues.
- Enhancing knowledge and training on democratic practices and enrooting the culture of initiative and citizenship responsibility among youth, and expanding the participation of governmental and NGO organizations for youth social integration.
- Supporting research and studies on youth issues and stimulating governmental and non governmental organizations to incorporate youth issues in their research policies and scientific interests
- Establishing databases and updating indicators to assess achievements and trends of change in youth conditions and identify challenges.
- Ensuring coordination among different parties in favor of youth empowerment through programs and projects related to youth issues.

- التقرير السنوى حول الشباب العربى

- Arab Review on Arab Youth:



تم اعداد 3 تقارير سنوية حول الموضوعات التالية :
Preparation of 3 annual reports on the following issues :



• حالة المعرفة حول الشباب العربى 2005:

ما الذى نعرفه حول خصائص واتجاهات الشباب

- **State of the Art about Arab Youth 2005 :**
What we know about youth characteristics and attitudes

• قيم الشباب 2006:

ما هى رؤية واتجاهات الشباب إزاء القضايا الاجتماعية والتنمية الرئيسية

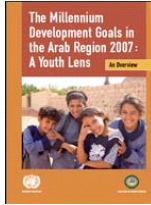
- **Youth Values 2006 :**
what is the vision and the attitudes of the young people to the Social and Developmental main issues

• الشباب والمشاركة 2007 (بصدد الاعداد):

كيف يشارك الشباب فى اعداد وتنفيذ السياسات التى تخصه، وكيف ينظر الى المشاركة .

- **Youth and Participation 2007 (under construction)**

How the young people participate in designing and implementing the youth related policies and how youth perceive the participation.



التقرير الاقليمى حول الشباب وأهداف الألفية :

اعد بالتعاون بين الجامعة ووكالات الامم المتحدة المعنية بقضايا الشباب

The Millennium Development Goals in the Arab Region 2007 : A Youth Lens
Prepared in cooperation between the League of Arab States and the related UN Agencies .

❖ منتدى جامعة الدول العربية للشباب ،

جمهورية مصر العربية 19-22 نوفمبر 2007

❖ League of Arab States Youth Forum,

Egypt 19 – 22 November 2007

- تظاهرة سنوية للحوار و التشبيك
- Annual event for Dialogue and networking.
- سوف يحضره حوالى 250 شاب فى المنطقة عدد منهم من المسؤولين وعدد من الشباب الأوروبى.
- Around 250 young participants from the region , a number of responsible and a number of European youth.
- يعالج محورين : التحديات التى تواجه الشباب – المشاركة.
- 2 main themes : Youth Challenges & Youth Participation
- يتضمن مجالات للحوار و المعارضات و لثقافات الشباب.
- With a dialogue space , knowledge fair and youth culture space.

اللجنة الشبابية الاستشارية للمرصد العربي للشباب – الجامعة العربية.

Arab Youth Consultancy Committee – for the Arab youth observatory program / League of Arab States.

12 شاب و شابة من القيادات الشبابية العربية (نقطة اتصال بمختلف الدول العربية)
12 Arab Youth Leaders (as a focal points in the Arab Countries)

تشارك في إختيار المشروعات و البرامج و التخطيط لها و متابعتها و تقييمها ،كما تساهم بشكل فعال للبناء القدرات للشباب في المشاركة

Participate in selecting ,planning ,designing , following up and evaluating of the program's outputs , and contribute to the youth participation capacity building activities

الجامعة العربية – تعاون متدعم مع مجلس أوروبا

League of Arab States and cooperation with Council of Europe.

ساهمت الجامعة في كافة محطات برنامج السياسات الشبابية في المحيط الأورومتوسطي (اجتماعات الاسكندرية ، القاهرة ، ستراسبورج و اليوم)

LAS Participated in all the stages in the Youth Policies in the Broader EuroMed Context Program.

(Events in Alexandria , Cairo , Strasbourg and Budapest)

نتطلع لتدعيم التعاون و التنسيق مع مجلس أوروبا و المفوضية الأوروبية و منتدى الشباب الأوروبي.

LAS looking Forward to support cooperation and coordination with Council of Europe , European Commission and European Youth Forum.

Annex 5. “Democracy, Political Participation and Youth – conceptual, empirical and strategical questions”, by Prof. Dr. Helmut Willems, University of Luxemburg – Integrative Research Unit on Social and Individual Development (INSIDE)

1. Participation, Democracy and Youth – first insights
2. Youth and Political Participation: How do young people participate in politics?
3. Education for Democratic Citizenship
4. Strategies to promote youth political participation: Participatory Engineering
5. Summary and Outlook

2

1. Participation, Democracy and Youth: first insights

3

1.1. Why is political participation so important for democracies?

- Democracies are grounded on the concept of political participation
- Therefore democracies need political participation not only to stay healthy but to survive
- Participation in society, community and political life plays a central role in concepts of democratic civil societies
- In this way, citizenship is not only considered as a legal status, but also as a competence, whose acquisition cannot be left by chance
- Required are values like respect, solidarity, tolerance and a sense of responsibility, and the capacity to engage in dialogue,

4

1.2. Functions of Participation

- Legitimization of decision making and of political systems
- Improving decision making processes
- Integration and Identification
- Educating and development of competences

5

1.3. Indicators of Political Participation

1. Civic and social engagement

- Active membership in groups/associations; volunteering; fundraising for charities; community participation/problem solving

2. Conventional Electoral and party engagement

- Regular voting; contributions to political parties; assisting candidates with campaigns

3. Unconventional Political engagement

- contacting, print and broadcast media; protest, written petitions; boycotting; email petitions and internet engagement, grass root initiatives and social movements (vgl. Circle 2002)

6

1.4. Forms of Participation: Political vs. Social Participation

**There are two possible understandings
of the term « participation »**

1. A stricter definition links participation to political processes and political institutions (**political participation**).
Here political participation includes “actions of citizens, that are being undertaken alone or voluntarily with others with the aim to take influence on political decisions” (Kaase)
2. A broader definition connects participation to social and public processes or offers (**social involvement/ civic engagement/ civic participation**)

7

1.5. General Trends: Democracy, Globalization and the Weakening of National Political Systems

- Democracy is being weakened at the beginning of the 21st century.
 - Decline of established forms of political participation (
 - due to changing values and the participatory revolution;
 - due to the reduced steering competence and influence of national political actors in globalized societies (Through globalization the « architecture » of thinking, acting and living in states is broken (Beck, 1997);
 - due to increasing distrust and negative attitudes towards political parties and governments.
- As a counterpart to the weakening of these structures, a solution is seen in fostering and enlarging participation, educating citizenship and the strengthening of *civil society* or even *global and transnational civil society*.⁸

2. Youth and political participation

2. 1. Changes in Political Participation

In the last 15 years Youth Research in many European countries has come to contradictory conclusions and ambivalent interpretations concerning the development of political interest and political involvement of youths.

10

2.2. How do Young People Participate?

- Voting
- Membership and Activity within Political Parties
- Boycotting Products or Buying Products for Political Reasons
- Political Protest Activities
- Active Participation in Public Political Discourses
- Memberships in NGOs

11

Voting in local, national or international elections is practiced by a majority of young people (those who may vote), but often to a lesser degree than in other age groups.

12

Membership and Activity within Political Parties

- Only a small minority (5-15%) of young people actively support election campaigns of political parties or are willing to become members of political parties.
- only a small minority (under 5%) are actively involved in youth organizations of political parties.

13

Boycotting Products or Buying Products for Political Reasons

- Still a minority but more and more young people show this attitude than are being actively involved in party work

14

Political Protest Activities

- Higher percentage of young people feel attracted by this form of participation
- Issue driven, often only as temporary activity
- Differences between different political cultures
- Very strong in Europe

15

Active Participation in Public Political Discourses

- Publications of articles in newspapers, collecting signatures, holding speeches, contacting politicians
- Practiced by a very small group of young people depending on country and issue between 2 and 15%
- New media offering more and easy accessible opportunities

16

Memberships in NGOs

- environmental organisations, civil rights organisations, peace organisations, charity organisations, anti –globalization movements or trade unions
- Small minorities: under 10%

17

2. 3. Changes in Political Participation have lead to two main Empirical Conclusions

A. Results from political and sociological research show

- that political interest of young people is decreasing ; Political interest varies greatly, between 50 to 70 % of young people tell they are not interested in politics
- that fewer young people are politically involved in party work, in supporting electional campaigns etc., and that there is lower trust in political institutions
- that the low interest and frustration of young people with politics is mainly focused on conventional forms of political participation and traditional ways of organizing politics.
- Young people seem to believe in democracy and see themselves as democrats, but they are critical towards the established institutions and more passive in their political behaviour.
- Some speak about a retreat from politics into new forms of privacy which seem to be characteristic for the young generations.

18

2. 4. Changes in Political Participation

B. Youths in all countries show relatively high rates of activities and engagement in different areas

- they are actively involved in school or youth clubs activities,
- they support the work of NGOs in the field of environment, human rights, anti globalisation movements etc.,
- they are active in youth subcultures and social initiatives
- they can be mobilized for different protest activities and social movements (attack, anti G 8 protest..)

19

2.5. Youth and Political Participation: limited and unequal access

- A) Young people and esp. children have only very limited access to political participation: under 18 they have no voting rights. Youths are excluded from being elected through age (often 21)
- B) Access to participation is unequally distributed due to socio-economic differences (family background, educational differences, migration status, gender etc.): one of the greatest challenges for participative policies and democracies
- C) There are more direct forms of participation like children or youth forums/youth parliaments/participation in schools and communities; Empirical evidence shows that the possibilities of direct participation are intensively used by young people because
 - they perceive them as effective
 - the access via Internet or chat rooms has been simplified.
- D) Political engagement of young people has been individualized (dissolution of social class identities or family traditions) and pluralized (more opportunities, new forms)²⁰

3. Education for Democratic Citizenship

3.1. What is Education for Democratic Citizenship?

« Education for democratic citizenship may be defined as the preparation of young people to become active and engaged citizens within their democracy.

It aims to develop their capability for thoughtful and responsible participation as democratic citizens in political, economic, social and cultural life.

Such citizens [...] are willing, able and equipped to exert influence in public life, but do so with critical capacities to weight evidence before acting » (Naval/Print/Veldhuis 2002, S. 109f.)

22

3.2. Political Participation and democratic citizenship

- Civil society: Citizenship, participation not only through voting but active engagement in different areas
- Initiatives, networking, movements, ngo`s
- Participative decision making, shared planing processes
- Requires changes in administrative structures and procedures, interdepartemental cooperation, cross sectorial and transversal structures

23

3.3. Where do Young People Learn How to Participate?

- Main sources which influence young people's learning about politics and democracy:
 1. Family: role modelling, discussion, media use
 2. Media: television and newspapers
 3. School: providing knowledge, skills and values from non-partisan educators
 4. Participatory culture at community level
 5. Other sources like peers, youth work, youth subcultures.
- Of these sources it has been widely accepted that schools offer the best chances « of building an informed, balanced sense of democratic worth, political knowledge and democratic values and skills » (Print 2007, S. 330)
- Education for democracy, educating citizenship and participation has to start in childhood: as everyday praxis in family, school and community

24

4. Strategies to promote youth political participation: Participatory Engineering

25

4.1. What is Participatory Engineering?

Definition

Participatory Engineering is the purposive attempt of political elites to positively affect the quality and quantity of political participation,
by increasing institutional opportunities to participate and
by fostering the political socialisation processes of young people through trainings, programs and projects

26

4.2. Does Participatory Engineering work?

- Sceptical voices: participation is explained by socio-economic status, educational achievement, and civic skills acquired at early age
- Others believe that the success or failure of strategies to extend participation has to do with the quality of participative activities and the experiences of young people

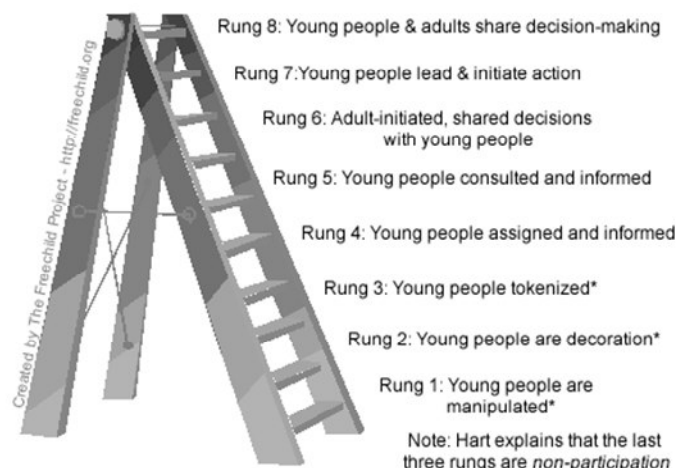
27

4.3. Degrees of youth participation: Roger Hart's participation ladder.4.3

Degree of participation	Type of participation
8. Young people-initiated, shared decisions with adults. Projects or programs are initiated by young people and decision-making is shared between young people and adults. These projects empower young people while at the same time enabling them to access and learn from the life experience and expertise of adults	Ex. youth-adult partnerships
7. Young people-initiated and directed. Young people initiate and direct a project or program. Adults are involved only in a supportive role	Ex. youth-led activism
6. Adult-initiated, shared decisions with young people. Projects or programs are initiated by adults but the decision-making is shared with the young people	Ex. participatory action research
5. Consulted and informed. Young people give advice on projects or programs designed and run by adults. The young people are informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of the decisions made by adults	Ex. youth advisory councils
4. Assigned but informed. Young people are assigned a specific role and informed about how and why they are being involved	Ex. community youth boards
3. Tokenism. Young people appear to be given a voice, but in fact have little or no choice about what they do or how they participate.	ADULTISM NO REAL PARTICIPATION
2. Decoration. Young people are used to help or "bolster" a cause in a relatively indirect way, although adults do not pretend that the cause is inspired by young people.	
1. Manipulation. Adults use young people to support causes and pretend that the causes are inspired by young people.	

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Roger Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation



Adapted from Hart, R. (1992). *Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship*. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

29

5. Summary and Outlook

30

5.1. Summary and Outlook

- The majority of young people in Europe is not interested in politics and is not actively involved in political discourses and political decision making – neither on the federal, regional or local level
- In most countries politically active youths are just a small minority (socio-demographic criteria: male, higher education, family tradition)
- Part time and issue related involvement in protest groups and social movements is more attractive than conventional institutionalized forms of participation
- Illegal and violent forms of participation: very small minorities; right wing and left wing groups/subcultures; escalation of conflicts; seen as less effective
- Trust in NGOs is higher than trust in political parties, governments, parliaments or politicians
- There is no immediate danger for representative democracies; but we are still far away from participatory democracy and far away from including all youths equally in the process of participation

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5. 2. Summary and outlook: strategies

- Strengthen the rights for political participation of youths in the representative democratic systems (voting rights)
- Strengthen the social participation of youths in their communities, schools, leisure, sports, neighbourhoods, youth work
- Support different ways of learning to participate (spaces for experimentation, non formal learning approaches..) to make participation more attractive

32

5. 3. Participation as Simulation? A risky development

- If participation does not increase young people's impact on decision making
- If participation is representation or simulation without real influence
- If all the trainings, programs and projects to foster participation do not lead to the improvement of new structures or better access to political decision making for the young generation
- Then there is a danger of frustration, growing distrust in political institutions and a weakening identification with democracy
- “there is perhaps no greater danger than to gain the confidence of youth but then fail to deliver” (Barrington-Leach et al., 2007, p. 77)

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Annex 6. “Socio - Cultural Aspect of Arab Youth Participation. NGOs as a Case Study”, by Dr. Abdel Basset Abdel Muty, Consultant of Population Policy and Migration Department (PPMD) League of Arab States

Outline

- Idea and background.
- The scientific and practical objectives.
- The conceptual framework and Approach.
- Socio-cultural determinants of participation.
- Why we selected NGO'S as a model to explain throughout it the status-quo of Arab youth participation
- Socio-cultural Challenges of Arab youth participation in NGO'S.

2

Idea and background

- There is a consensus between the social intellectuals on the importance of participation for youth, adults, NGO'S, local communities and to achieve the main purposes of sustainable development processes.
- The main problematic within these presentation is; In spite of the necessity of youth participation but there are some social and cultural determinants in Arab reality hindering Arab youth participation so, the central question in these context will be ; how to activate the Arab youth participation not only in the political life but also in all aspects of life even politically or socially or economically or culturally.....etc.

3

The scientific and practical Goals

- Explaining the opportunities and challenges of Arab youth participation.
- Analyzing the details of the opportunities and challenges which facing Arab youth participation in NGO'S (as a case study).
- Offering some Recommendations to activate the Arab youth participation in NGO'S.

4

The Conceptual Framework

• Conceptual framework (1) :

Participation is a societal process and human action even individually or collectively. Participation is including the right of citizenship which including the right of the freedom of expression, the rights of meeting and organization, the right of sharing in authority within different situations in the society and participating in both decisions making and decisions taking processes especially participation in the political decisions throughout the governmental youth institutions and civil society organizations.

5

Conceptual framework (2)

- The levels of participation process include participation on formal and informal organizations, participation on central and decentralized levels, participation in the legislation process, in civil society, in family affairs, in the educational institutions "students activities in the schools and universities", in work and participation in mass-communication.
- The fields of participation are political, economic, social and cultural.

6

Approach

- These presentation will depend on the Radical Critical Approach (RCA) in analyzing the dynamics of participation.
- RCA is considered as one of the main marvelous outputs of Frankfurt school in social sciences .These approach adopting a critical emphasis for analyzing different phenomenon.
- The main statements of RCA are :
 - Youth are an active agent in each society due to their capabilities and visions.
 - Youth are one of the main societal change forces.
 - Youth participation is a value added for youth empowerment.

7

Socio - Cultural determinants of participation

- The nature of state's authority and the patterns of authority distribution; patriarchal pattern of rule, the state of participation and the democratic practices, the existence of political rotation or not, the status-quo of citizenship discourse on the formal level.
- The class system in the society; the class content of the formal authority, an incomes poverty rates.
- The Economic and Legislative systems.
- The Cultural system (Traditional forms of culture especially the popular culture which based on patriarchal pattern of culture and male culture which excluding females and perceiving women as a body. popular culture also seeing that the mothers have a role only inside their houses (Misperception).

8

Why we selected NGO'S as a model to explain throughout it the status-quo of youth participation in Arab world

- The remarkable increasing in the numbers of Arab NGO'S. Nowadays, there are over than 250000 NGO'S while ten years before there were only 150000 NGO'S in Arab world.
- The continues tendencies to establish NGO'S especially by youth.
- One of the studies which concentrated on youth and NGO'S reached that 50% - 55% of Arab youth who were included within the samples are looking forward to participate in NGO'S because there are a good chances for them in NGO'S to express their opinions, the absence of restrictions and punishments which already existed in the formal political sphere, they can achieve their self actualization in NGO'S, participating in decision making within NGO'S and they may be get any working opportunity through NGO'S.

- Although youth are turning away from participating in the political life but, - they are keen on participating in NGO'S

- Youth Managed to create a virtual community through the Internet " chatting- & ploggers" where there aren't any kinds of restrictions.

Socio-Cultural Challenges of Arab youth participation

- The lack of generation communication between the members of each family because, the parents don't concern with the participation of their sons in their family affairs so, the youth won't adopt the culture of participation which will lead him to turn away from participation on different levels within their societies.
- The lack of cooperation between the leaders of NGO'S and youth who are participating in these organizations.
- The lack of culture of youth participation in educational institutions as a result of lack of time and existence of several meaningless bureaucratic regulations and procedures.
- The misperceptions about the self and others.

10

The Challenges of Arab youth participation in NGO'S

- There are some fundamental reasons which hinder youth participation in NGO'S. These reasons can be summarized as the following:
- Lack of time , losing the trust in NGO'S , Preferring working with wage instead of working as a volunteer in NGO'S, lack of available informations about volunteerism and it's different fields, the misleading of culture of volunteerism and there some habits and conventions in Arab world which hinder youth to work as volunteers in NGO'S.

Participation between avoidance and Exclusion


legislative exclusion " electoral age ".

Non-enough participation institutions especially the civil ones.

Exclusion as an alternative due to the absence of participation benefits.

11

Annex 7. Presentation on the Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs



UNGDOMSTYRELSEN
www.ungdomstyrelsen.se

The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs

The Overall Objectives of the Youth Policy

- Young people shall have the possibility of **influencing the development of society** in general as well as their own lives and their local environment.
- Young people shall have **real access to a good material, cultural and social standard of living**. They shall also be afforded beneficial conditions for good health and be protected from being subjected to crime and other forms of discrimination.



UNGDOMSTYRELSEN
www.ungdomstyrelsen.se

The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs

Five areas of analysis and follow-up

The youth policy has been divided into five areas. Every year the progress in each area is reported to the government. An annual in-depth analysis is carried out within one of these areas:

- Learning and personal development
- Health and vulnerability
- Influence and representation
- Self-support
- Culture and recreation



UNGDOMSTYRELSEN
www.ungdomstyrelsen.se

The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs

Four important perspectives ... to consider while working with youth policy

- Resource – youth have valuable skills and knowledge
- Rights – to influence their own lives, and to a good material standard
- Independence – youth should be encouraged to lead lives free from different kinds of oppression
- Diversity – young people are a diverse group, this should be respected, all should be treated alike



Influence and representation

- Building a democratic society
- Young people are a resource
- Young people in decision-making bodies (channels for experience-sharing – dialogue forums, employ young people in the public sector)
- Development and spreading of methods on how to integrate a youth perspective





Support for youth influence

- Research
- Support to youth municipalities – conferences, good practice and tools
- Funding to youth NGO's



Actors within Swedish Youth policy

- Government bill, Minister of Youth Affairs
- Youth unit at the ministry
- Governmental body – The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs
- Municipalities
- Local youth councils
- LSU

<p>Local youth influence in the municipality of Umeå</p> 	<p>4 Youth ombudsmen</p> 
<p>Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strengthen the youth influence in school and leisure time ➤ Support young people and their ideas ➤ Work as a link between the young people of Umeå, the politicians and the civil servants. ➤ Create spaces where these people can meet. <p>Methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Office in the city hall. Meet a lot of young people, civil servants and politicians. ➤ Education to students, teachers and principals ➤ The student councils attend on the political meetings. ➤ We give money to many youth projects. ➤ Be updated – national network for youth ombudsmen. 	<p>Why – youth influence?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Umeå – 25% is youth. • If the municipality want their young inhabitants to stay we have to involve them. • Research tell that everyone feel better and happier if they can influence their surroundings. • The youth is the one who is going to be affected by decision made today and the one who is going to take care of it.
<p>Good examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogue young Umeå • House of youth • Democratic processes – Graduation party, Culture break, Health.. • Money to youth projects 	<p>The National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations</p> <p>Landsrådet för Sveriges ungdomsorganisationer (LSU)</p>
<p>LSU</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the coordinating body for 90 Swedish non-governmental youth organisations • Member organisations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Party political youth organisations – Student movements – Religious youth organisations – Environmentalists – Ethnical youth organisations – Youth organisations for culture, science, soberness and more... 	<p>LSU Vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We work for a society where the potential of young people are used as a <i>resource</i>. • We believe in a world where youth has a <i>central part in the democratic development</i> • We strive for a society where young people, despite background, will have a <i>real influence over their lives</i>.

<div data-bbox="256 302 748 374"> LSU spheres </div> <div data-bbox="256 389 748 647"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobbying/advocacy: on youth issues • Capacity building: leadership and organisational development • For Youth NGOs in Sweden, LSU is a... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Knowledge center – Meeting place – Voice </div>	<div data-bbox="882 302 1374 374"> Relation government and LSU </div> <div data-bbox="882 389 1374 647"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As as basic strategy to involve young people in the implementing the NYP, the Swedish government supports youth organisations by providing financial support to youth organisations (including LSU). • The Government has a continuous dialogue and cooperation with LSU. </div>
<div data-bbox="256 759 748 831"> Lobbying in Sweden- what areas? </div> <div data-bbox="256 846 748 1104"> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Funds and contributions. Governmental financial support to youth organisations. The Gamemarket.. 2. NGO Politics. Taxes and laws 3. Advocacy for a youth perspective in development policies </div>	<div data-bbox="882 759 1374 831"> YAP: Youth Advocacy Process </div> <div data-bbox="882 846 1374 1104"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The YAP was launched in 2001 by a large number of organizations as a A totally new and unique initiative in the Lebanese society • Aim: <i>to have youth friendly policies that address youth and provide them with opportunities to participate in the public sphere as decision makers.</i> • Works in four taskforces: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Citizenship & democratic freedoms – Education & health, – Palestinian youth in Lebanon – Economic & social </div>
<div data-bbox="256 1218 748 1290"> YAP member organizations 2007 </div> <div data-bbox="256 1305 748 1563"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 30 youth organizations who are members in the 4 TFs and who plan and implement activities. • Overall, more than 85 organizations participate in YAP activities, including youth NGOs, clubs, youth wings in political parties, UN agencies, young journalists , youth volunteers, university students </div>	<div data-bbox="882 1218 1374 1290"> LSU – YAP cooperation </div> <div data-bbox="882 1305 1374 1563"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSU – YAP cooperation 2005, 2006, and 2007 (Funding from Forum Syd/Sida) • One way for LSU member organisations to take part in the cooperation is the joint workshop (annually). Different topics. • Use LSU as a source of information and channel for contacts in Lebanon. </div>

Annex 8. Presentation on Bahrain National Youth Strategy

Bahrain National Youth Strategy

2004-2009
UNDP & GOYS

What is BNYS?

- It is a Partnership Between the Government and the UN.
- More than 16,000 Youth Participated in the Different stages of Developing the Strategy.
- It is the First Youth Project to build a very strong partnership between the Government and the Civil Society.
- The Consultants were brought from all around the World.

Strategy's Domains

- Youth & Employment.
- Youth & Human Rights.
- Youth & Environment.
- Youth & Health.
- Youth & Culture.
- Youth & Globalization & Technology.
- Youth & Sport.
- Youth & Participation and Civil Rights.

“Speak Out” Campaign

- Covered More than 10,000 Youth.
- Surveyed 2200 Families all over Bahrain.
- 30 Focus Groups Sessions Were Held.
- 19 E-Forums Were Held, With 3,500 Participants.
- 300 Youth Participated in the Work Groups.
- Established the First Youth Radio in the Middle-East.

Finalizing BNYS

- A Youth Consultation Committee was formed to lead and follow-up the finalizing processes of the Strategy.
- All the 19 Youth NGOs In Bahrain Participated Actively in Finalizing the last copy of the Strategy which is in Your hands.
- The Final Copy of the Strategy Was Signed by H.M King Hamad, **Without any Changes**.

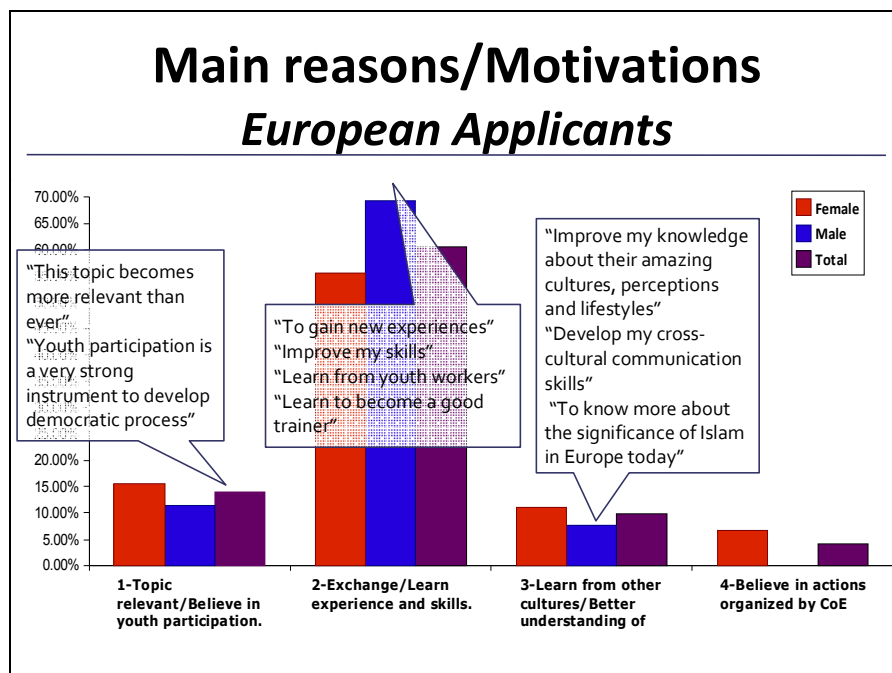
BNYS Outcome “Projects”

- Bahrain Youth Parliament.
- Bahrain Youth Centre.
- National Youth Council.
- National Youth Committee.

Annex 9. Findings of the survey on youth participation, conducted among the applicants to the seminar

Questions addressed:

- 1. What is your motivation for participating in this seminar?**
- 2. What do you consider the 3 main elements/principles of youth participation?**
- 3. What are the challenges that you have faced? What do you need to better implement youth participation principles?**



Main reasons/Motivations

European Applicants

Others:

"Because I am from the two Mediterranean sides"

"To learn from integration of youth diaspora in EU"

Main reasons/Motivations

European Applicants

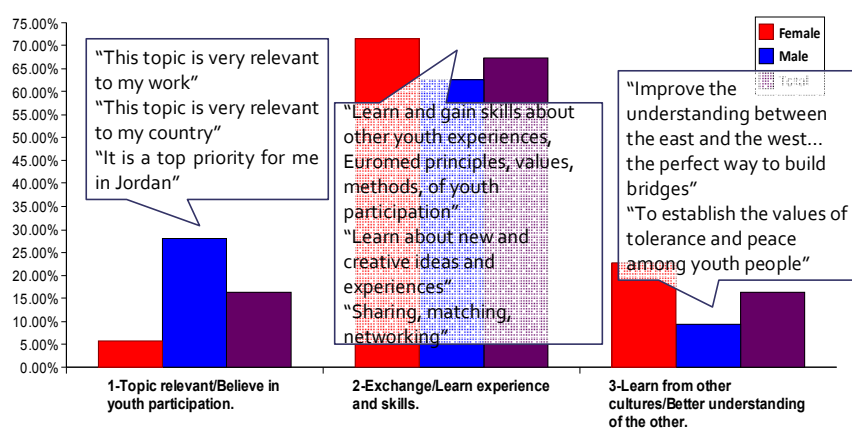
- *The first motivation of applying, for both male and females, is to gain more knowledge, and exchange informations with other youth worker.
We feel the big need to be informed about successful stories. This is maybe due to that youth participation is relatively a new development item all over the world.*
- *The second important reason is the relevance of the topic; many young people believe that participation is a key mechanism/tool for empowering youth, and youth policy and development (democracy).*
- *Many youth mentioned also to learn about cultural diversity and cultures-interactions as a main reason for applying.*

Main reasons/Motivations European Applicants

•Youngest are more enthusiastic and spontaneous in their responses than less young (ex: ***"I want to take part in this even with both my heart and my mind"***). The older applicants are more structured, stereotyped, which appears well done but less attractive and less alive.

•Several youth from Eastern Europe look fascinated by western Europe experiences.

Main reasons/Motivations Arab Applicants



Main reasons/Motivations *Arab Applicants*

Others:

“To introduce the blogosphere and to integrate it in the process of youth participation”

“To build common projects”

“To explain to other youth, Arab and European, the frustration that Palestinian youth face”

“Exploring ideas, mechanisms, projects, enhancing human rights.”

Main reasons/Motivations *Arab Applicants*

- Although the majority from both two sexes declare that their main motivation for applying is **“To learn from each others”**, the difference between boys and girls is more noticeable when it comes to the second main motivation: young girls focused more on **cultural exchange**, while boys mentioned more **the relevance of the topic** (Youth Participation).
- Young girls appear to be more interested by cultural issues than boys.

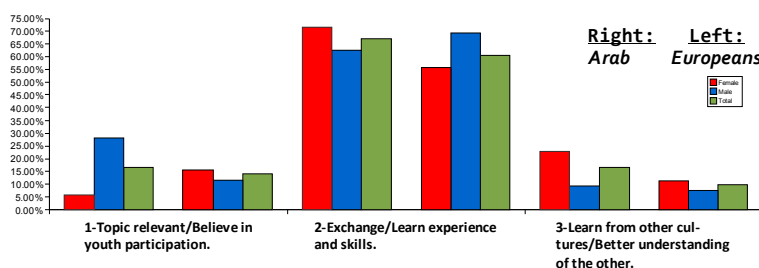
Main reasons/Motivations Arab Applicants

Candidates from Arab countries, both girls and boys, have expressed their great need to learn about successful ideas and stories on youth participation. Some of them mentioned the fact that this issue is new in their countries. This is also valid for the European youth candidates.

Many youth mentioned their will to elaborate common projects.

Answers from young females: "Effective communication based on trust, love and social interaction construction", "oh, many ..." (emotionality).

Motivations: Arab vs Europeans



There is a big similitude in the answers of all youth: "Exchange and gain experience/skills/learn..."

Unlike European youth, arab youth did not stress on motivation and volunteering, but more on responsibility. Why this divergence in opinions, and how can we explain it ?

Motivations: Arab vs Europeans

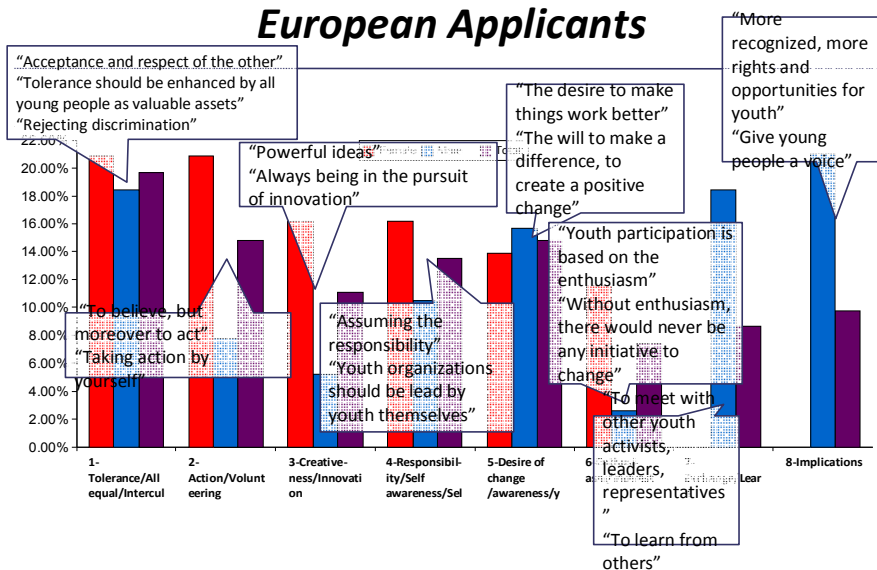
In the light of these remarks, we can raise some questions:

•Is Youth Participation a new issue even in some European countries? What are the best mechanisms/tools to share widely knowledge , theory, data and practices about youth participation?

•Several youth from the Arab region and eastern Europe showed their interest to learn from the western experiences. What is the reaction of western youth participants on this attitude?

•Several youth from European countries focused on the needs to learn about other cultures, and some of them mentioned the difficulties to work with youth of diversified cultures. How can the cultural diversity play a positive role in youth empowerment?

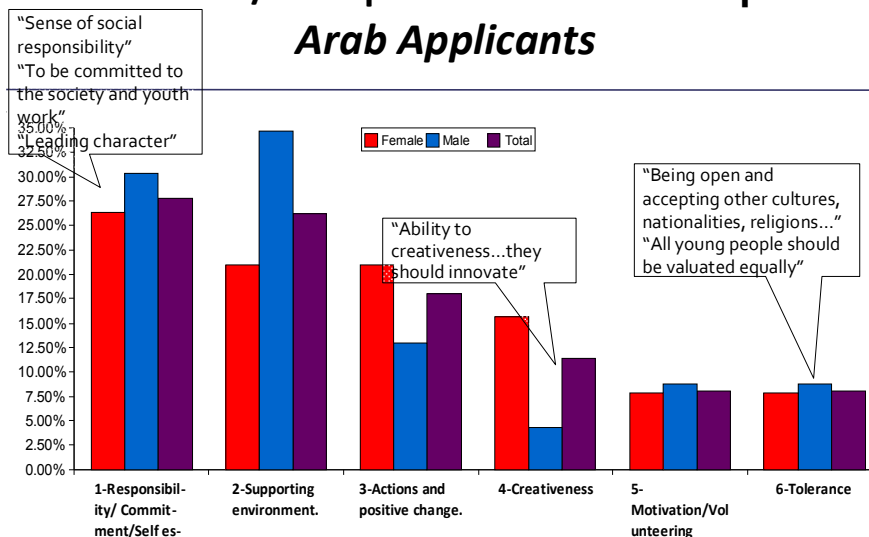
Main Elements/Principles of Youth Participation : European Applicants



Main Elements/Principles of Youth Participation : *European Applicants*

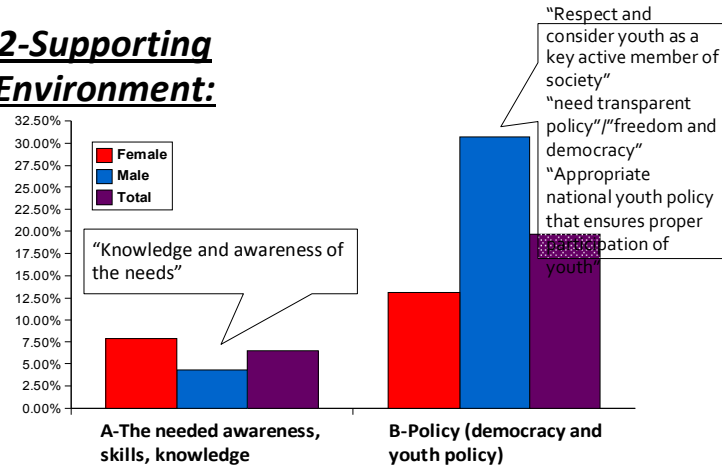
- While girls focused very much on “action and volunteering”, in addition to “tolerance”, “creativity”..., boys highlighted more the possible implications of YP (more awareness ad rights ...).
- Stress on “tolerance”, “non-discrimination”, ... by both sexes.
- The oldest applicants seem to be more classical thinkers, they write structured phrases, but not always relevant to the topic (exp: community, self protection, result, understanding the MDG’s, citizenship, anti-fascism, peace making, youth centered approach ...), at some moments they give the impression of ready-to-write stuff, the youngest however, especially girls, have here also some less well-structured but more spontaneous answers.

Main Elements/Principles of Youth Participation : *Arab Applicants*



Main Elements/Principles of Youth Participation : *Arab Applicants*

2-Supporting Environment:



Main Elements/Principles of Youth Participation : *Arab Applicants*

General Stress on:

A-Being responsible and committed to youth work.

B-The need of a supporting environment:

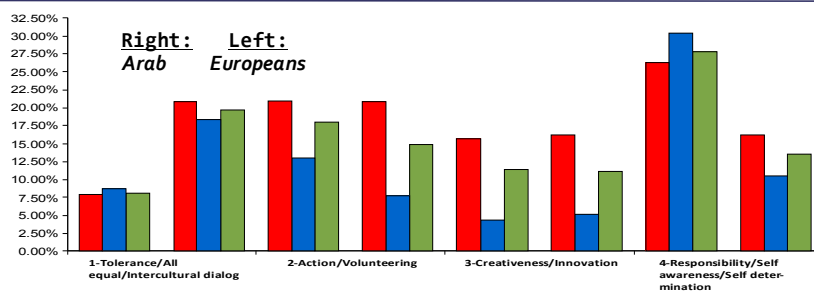
-Enhancement of skills and awareness (training is strongly recommended).

-Appropriate development and democracy policy.

Main Elements/Principles of Youth Participation: *Arab Applicants*

- *Many boys and girls mentioned the terms of “democracy”, “freedom” ... are they conditions, principles or implications of YP ?*

Youth Participation Principles: *Arab vs Europeans*



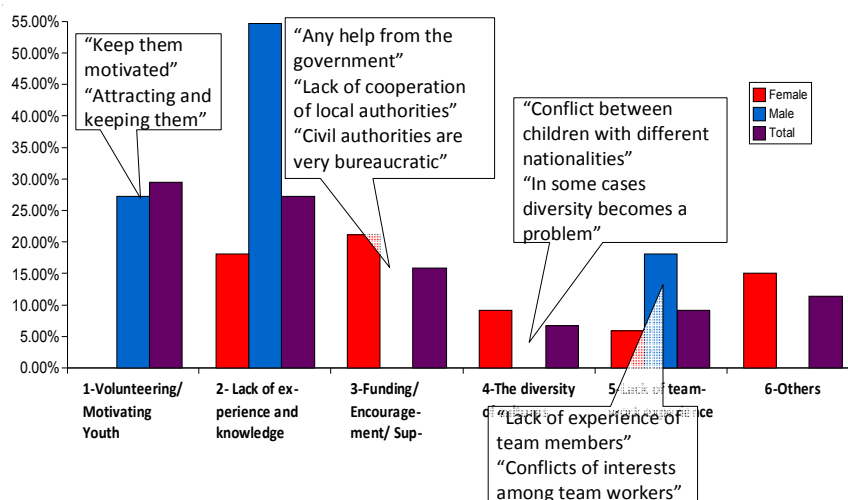
Many socio-cultural dimensions were cited by youth such as: inter-culture, otherness, dialog and common action between youth of diverse cultures, and matters related to gender and inter-generations.

How to ease and strengthen meeting occasions between youth of diverse cultures? And how to ensure wide dissemination of meetings experiences and outcomes, and related data ?

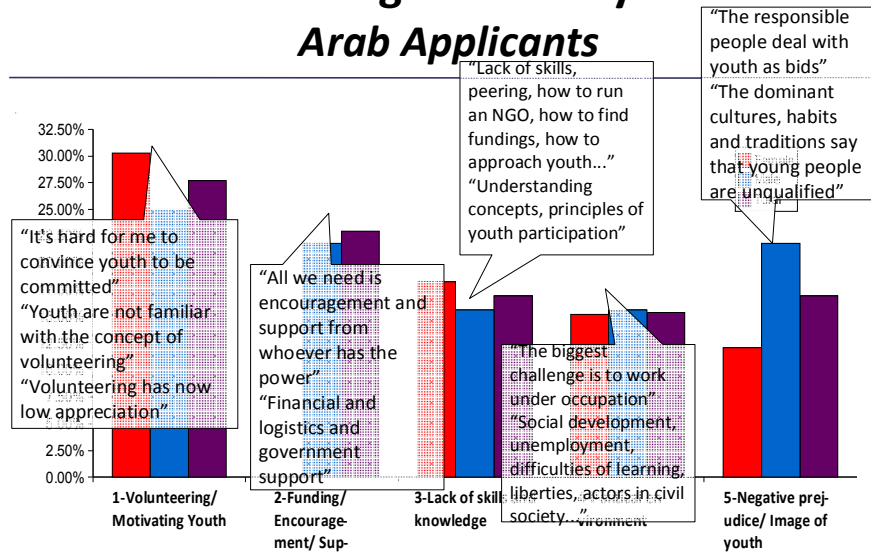
Youth Participation Principles: *Arab vs Europeans*

On the arab side, there is lot of stress on supporting environment as a major principle of youth participation, while it is rarely mentioned by european applicants, who insisted more on tolerance, inter-culture, terms which are more absent in arab conception of principles.

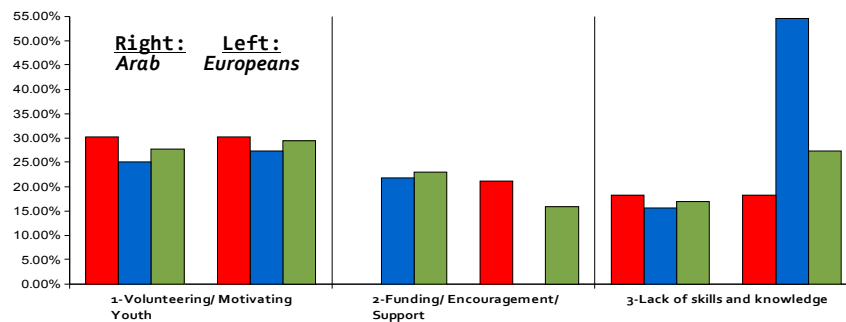
Main Challenges faced by Youth: *European Applicants*



Main Challenges faced by Youth: *Arab Applicants*



Main Challenges faced by Youth: *Arabs vs Europeans*



Some expressions and ideas were so frequently repeated by candidates, but most of all: they insisted on the lack of volunteering and the difficulties of convincing youth to participate, they all have an imminent need to know about other experiences to better understand the process and gain the "how to".

How can we develop ideas and mechanisms to enlarge and accelerate the dissemination of successful experiences related data?

Main Challenges faced by Youth: *Arabs vs Europeans*

Youth, especially from southern side countries, often mentioned the omnipresent need of skills development: Principles, theories, methods, to develop youth participation.

How can we facilitate the access to training and capacities building activities? And how can we develop some grand formation projects destined to youth ?

***Thank you
for your
attention!***