

BE PART OF IT



EU YOUTH SOCIAL AGENDA

LOCAL YOUTH PARLIAMENTS NETWORKING IN EUROPE



THE EU YOUTH SOCIAL AGENDA

THE EU YOUTH SOCIAL AGENDA is based on the proposals developed by young people themselves with the help of the Open Space Technology used during the WEEK of BE PART OF IT in Venice (4th-6th December 2008). In the forefront of the WEEK young people worked out proposals and ideas based on local investigations in their countries.

THE EU YOUTH PARLIAMENT „BE PART OF IT“

THE EU YOUTH PARLIAMENT “BE PART OF IT” was established by young people from 10 European countries who worked together to address the three social topics immigration/emigration, addiction & health provision and environmental risks.

BE PART OF IT wanted to reflect young people’s opinion on crucial topics in order to make the European Union and civil society aware of what young people think of their future and how they appraise different situations.

The countries represented in the project BE PART OF IT: Austria, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

This work was published on the responsibility of the project coordinator (Zeit!Raum) of the project BE PART OF IT. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein were made by young people during the WEEK of BE PART OF IT.

You can download this report on the website www.young-parliament.eu.

The Open Space Technology

THE OUTPUTS WORKED OUT during the transnational workshops based on the Open Space Technology. In Open Space meetings, events and organizations, participants create and manage their own agenda of parallel working sessions around a central theme of strategic importance. Open Space works the best way when the work to be done is complex, the people and ideas involved are diverse, the passion for resolution and the potential for conflicts are high, and the time to get it done was yesterday. There are several features to an open space meeting. Chairs are arranged in a circle to facilitate communication. The role of the facilitators is to open the space and to hold safe space open. The process acknowledges the potential for leadership in every person. The people in the room create the agenda. Passion and responsibility are the two keys to a successful meeting. Without passion, no one is interested, and without responsibility, no one will follow-up.

Open Space consistently promises that:

- Every single issue that anybody cares enough about to raise will be on the table.
- All issues will receive as much discussion as people care to give them.

- All discussion will be captured in a book and made available to all participants.
- All issues will be prioritized.
- Related issues converged.
- Responsibility assumed for next action steps

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE WORK SESSIONS

All of the statements made during the 3 days of working sessions are opinions of the young people taking part to or alternatively findings from the research work that each partner did as a preliminary work on the social topics or what they perceive to be the common view in the countries they live in.

Work sessions are not meant to be the place where facts and data are scientifically discussed but should be a place where any opinion is accepted, inaccuracy expected and allowed and where probably some of the views expressed reflect the views of the group or participant's perceptions of what people think rather than the view of the single participant.

The main goal is to make things emerge as participants feel/think they are or should be without interfering or suggesting correct answers.





EU Youth Social Agenda

Open Space Technology Day 1 – Immigration/Emigration

EU PERSPECTIVE

All Member States of the European Union (EU) are affected by the flow of international migration. They have agreed to develop a common immigration policy at EU level. The European Commission has made proposals for developing this policy, most of which have now become EU legislation. The main objective is to better manage migration flows by a coordinated approach which takes into account the economic and demographic situation of the EU.

In spite of the restrictive immigration policies which have been in place since the 1970s in most Member States, large numbers of legal and illegal migrants have continued to come to the EU together with asylum-seekers. Taking advantage of persons seeking a better life, smuggling and trafficking networks have taken hold across the EU. This situation meant that considerable resources have had to be mobilised to fight illegal migration especially to target traffickers and smugglers. Furthermore, it is recognised that the EU needs migrants in certain sectors and regions in order to deal with its economic and demographic needs.

Realising that a new approach to managing migration was necessary, the leaders

of the EU set out at the October 1999 European Council in Tampere (Finland) the elements for a common EU immigration policy. The approach agreed in Tampere in 1999 was confirmed in 2004 with the adoption of The Hague programme, which sets the objectives for strengthening freedom, security and justice in the EU for the period 2005-2010.

Employment and occupation are key elements in guaranteeing equal opportunities for all. They contribute strongly to the full participation of citizens in economic, cultural and social life, and to realising their potential. For nearly 50 years, the European Member States have worked towards achieving a high level of employment and social protection, increased standards in living and quality of life, economic and social cohesion and solidarity. They have also endeavoured to create an area of freedom, security and justice. Discrimination can seriously undermine these achievements, and damage social integration in the labour force and at large.

Keywords

Acceptance, integration, discrimination, rejection, legal, illegal, detention, freedom, rights, racism, culture, multi-culture, language, education, economy, jobs, fear.

OST workgroups

During the plenary session at the very beginning of the afternoon, according to the Open Space Technology, young people have established the topics which should be discussed and – therefore – created their workgroups. 7 workgroups have been created:

- How do immigrants feel in the host country?
- One of the causes of immigration is the economical difference between the countries
- Reasons for immigration?
- What should the government do if immigration does not work?
- Assimilation or integration?
- How do we remove negative attitudes towards immigrants?
- How does the European Union welcome immigrants?

All workgroups were able to end up with concrete proposals, open questions or simply the point of view of the youngsters about the topic. Not all workgroups made proposals. Sometimes the results are simply a list of personal comments and ideas.



GROUP 1: HOW DO IMMIGRANTS FEEL IN THE HOST COUNTRY?

SUMMARY

The participants focused their discussion on how immigrants feel when they emigrate. Basically the work has provided a picture of how young people feel about the topic without coming to any direct proposal regarding the original question. If someone wants to go to a country she/he does not know, she/he feels lonely and rejected. Immigrants feel very bad and not accepted. They have a lot of problems and feel persecuted by the people and authorities who mistreat them.

GROUP 2: ONE OF THE CAUSES OF IMMIGRATION IS THE ECONOMICAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES.

SUMMARY

Participants focused on economic factors that cause immigration and have written a list of concrete proposals which, according to them, might help to solve part of the problem. There are issues that harm the economy of a country like corrupt governments, weapon industry or the run for power that creates civil wars. Some countries have economical stability and immigrants try to go there. This is especially true in these areas (just to make a few examples): Luxembourg, Zurich, Vienna. Best infrastructures in the world, average wages are better, quality of living standards, health care. The higher the economical stability in a country is the more it is inviting to immigrants to settle there.

GROUP 3: WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR (IM)MIGRATION?

SUMMARY

Participants focused on the main reasons for immigration, mainly work, war and human rights related issues and ended their session with some open questions which could be asked to migrant people.

GROUP 4: WHAT SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT DO IF IMMIGRANTS DO NOT WORK?

SUMMARY

As there were quite many different countries represented in this group, the discussion focused on the different situations in each country referred to the immigration process (especially: integration and effects of lack of integration at local level) and some proposals were written down at the end of the discussion.

GROUP 5: ASSIMILATION OR INTEGRATION?

SUMMARY

Integration and assimilation have been debated starting with each country's experience. Despite of the different ways and attitudes each country has by integrating immigrants into their society, it seems to be evident among young people that a community which is able to mix different cultures, languages and ways of living is a good place to live. The issue is that the "inclusion" process has not been completed yet.

GROUP 6: HOW DO WE REMOVE NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS?

SUMMARY

Young people shared their views starting from their own country perspective. Fear is the most recurrent word arising from the discussion. Young people ended up asking for education and cooperation among states in order to make the "migration" process working and to make people feel that it is part of the daily life and not something which they should be afraid of.

GROUP 7: HOW DOES THE EU WELCOME IMMIGRANTS?

SUMMARY

The group focused merely on the Italian situation and the way a multicultural community should be seen as an opportunity rather than something to be scared of. Youngsters ask for common EU policies in this field which should facilitate the creation of a multicultural living environment in Europe. The main focus was on the differences in the way other European member states address the immigration issue. Immigration is an opportunity and a problem as well. If there were no immigrants some jobs would not have been taken. But immigrants also take jobs from Italians and getting paid less.

Collection of proposals and ideas on the issue “immigration/emigration” from all workgroups:

- The government should offer more jobs to immigrants.
- Entrepreneurs should pay them more money.
- Improving economical situations in third world countries in order to avoid the need of people to emigrate.
- Politicians should put aside their interests and get together to improve the living conditions in other countries.
- Developed countries should contribute by improving better education for very young children in less developed countries.
- Europe faces an ageing population. All European economies will benefit from immigration as in the future because they will face a shortage of the working population.

Open questions:

- Reasons for migration? (Why do they immigrate?)
- Duration of asylum procedure (How long does it usually take to get asylum?)
- New life conditions (How is the new life?)
- Attitude (How do people look upon an asylum seeker?)
- Alternative options (Do they also regard other possibilities aside from leaving their country?)
- Future situation (How will it be in 50 years? Will the language be the same or will there be another language or a mix in each language?)



Open Space Technology Day 2

Addiction and health provision

EU PERSPECTIVE

EU Policies use the term addiction when referring to drug, alcohol and tobacco but it is sometimes applied to other compulsions, such as problem gambling, compulsive overeating, shopping, sex, pornography, computers, work and exercise.

The use of drugs, particularly among young people is at historically high levels. EU strategies in this field aim especially on information and prevention among young people and the fight against drug trafficking (EU Drugs Strategy 2005-2012). Smoking prevention and tobacco control as well as Prevention of harmful alcohol use among young people are also among the priorities.

From a health provision perspective, the EU aims to improve public health, prevent human illness and diseases, and identify sources of danger to human health. EU plays its part in improving public health in Europe through the development of a comprehensive health information system, enhancing the capability for responding rapidly to health threats, ensuring patient safety and the quality of healthcare but also through actions focused on environment, food, work, school, sport and health.

Keywords

Influence, fear, legal, illegal, expensive, cool, smoke, drink, cannabis, marijuana, alcohol, party, hashish,

heroin, cigarettes, shisha, excitement, drugs, tobacco, education, family

OST workgroups

During the plenary session at the very beginning of the afternoon, according to the Open Space Technology, young people have established the topics which should be discussed and – therefore – created their workgroups. 10 workgroups have been created:

- How does the social background influence the use and kind of drugs?
- Accessibility of drugs in EU member states and its influence on inhabitants
- Taking drugs influences the behaviour of people
- Are there differences between the city and the country side?
- Do bans really deter people from drugs?
- Do you think that shop-addiction derive from emotional problems?
- What would happen to the world if we legalize drugs?
- Do you think the laws on alcohol and drugs are strict enough?
- What kind of effects people with addictions have on the environment?
- Why do people take drugs?



GROUP 1: HOW DOES THE SOCIAL BACKGROUND INFLUENCE THE USE AND KIND OF DRUGS?

SUMMARY

The group had a long discussion about the different meanings of drugs, how easy or difficult it is to be “kept” by drugs. The discussion provided a picture of the personal views of everyone about smoking, alcohol and any other possible “drug” related topic. The young people agreed on the strong influence of the peer group. They also talked about the age limit for cigarettes and alcohol. As long as there are older friends who buy it or shop-sellers who do not care about the age, there is still the possibility to use it at a younger age.

GROUP 2: ACCESSIBILITY OF DRUGS IN EU MEMBER STATES AND ITS INFLUENCE ON INHABITANTS

SUMMARY

The group compared the different ways how people can get access to the different types of drugs in their country. The group provided a picture on how youngsters see the phenomenon. And they also compared the different situations in their countries. By the end they came up with a question “How is the society’s reaction to young people who take drugs?”.

GROUP 3: TAKING DRUGS INFLUENCES THE BEHAVIOUR OF PEOPLE

SUMMARY

In this group young people shared their points of views about how drugs can influence people’s behaviour, what kind of effects drugs might have on the body and why people still take drugs even if they know what kind of negative effects they may have.

GROUP 4: ARE THERE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE CITY AND THE COUNTRY SIDE?

SUMMARY

The workgroup shared the countries’ differences in terms of drug availability in the city and the countryside.

GROUP 5: DO BANS REALLY DETER PEOPLE FROM DRUGS?

SUMMARY

Young people discussed the topic and compared the different situations in their countries. The conclusion was that bans should always be followed by campaigns that should get people in touch with the reality (e.g. which consequences drugs have on the body), otherwise bans are quite useless and they are not enough to solve the drug problem.

GROUP 6: DO YOU THINK THAT SHOP-ADDICTION DERIVE FROM EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS?

SUMMARY

Young people discussed the topic and compared the different situations in their countries. The conclusion was that bans should always be followed by campaigns that should get people in touch with the reality (e.g. which consequences drugs have on the body), otherwise bans are quite useless and they are not enough to solve the drug problem.

GROUP 7: WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO THE WORLD IF WE LEGALIZE DRUGS?

SUMMARY

This group had a very interesting discussion about the legalisation of drugs. Even if young people seem to fear the consequences of accessibility of drugs they seem to be in favour of legalisation because this would prevent the contact of addicted people with criminal structures and it would open ways to assist drug addicted people.

The opinions differed among the youngsters. Some said that only natural drugs should be legalised but not chemical drugs.

GROUP 8: DO YOU THINK THE LAWS ON ALCOHOL AND DRUGS ARE STRICT ENOUGH?

SUMMARY

Young people shared their personal opinions about how good or bad it is for them to have strict rules. The common element is the need of having the same rules everywhere. The youngsters agreed on the proposal that there should be the same age limit for alcohol and cigarettes, voting and driving all over Europe. The age limit should be 18 when young people turn to adults by law.

GROUP 9: WHAT KIND OF EFFECTS PEOPLE WITH ADDICTIONS HAVE ON THE ENVIRONMENT?

SUMMARY

Young people shared their opinions and ideas on this issue. It was interesting to notice that the effect is labelled as negative or not so bad depending on the type of addiction and substance. It was also noticed that addiction may have a negative impact on social relations but also bad social relations may have an impact on the decision to start consuming drugs

GROUP 10: WHY DO PEOPLE TAKE DRUGS?

SUMMARY

Young people worked out a list of reasons referred to the question. The list included the following reasons: the social pressure, problems with the family or at work, curiosity, lack of personality (no confidence) etc.

Collection of proposals and ideas on the issue “addiction and health provision” from all workgroups:

- Bans should be accompanied with information campaigns.
- There should be the same age limit for alcohol, cigarettes all over Europe. The age limit should be 18 when young people turn to adults by law.

Open Space Technology Day 3

Environmental risks

EU PERSPECTIVE

The EU's environmental laws help protect against water, air and noise pollution and control risks related to chemicals, biotechnology and nuclear energy within the Union.

The overall direction of EU environment policy is laid out in the latest action programme „Environment 2010: Our Future, Our Choice.“ It concentrates on 4 priority areas: climate change; nature and biodiversity; environment and health; and natural resources and waste. Also, an Environment and Health Action Plan for 2004-2010 promotes a close relationship between health, environment and research policy.

The EU is a leader in global efforts to protect the environment. The EU, for instance, is one of the initiators of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) creating a strategic approach to the international management of chemicals. The EU is a signatory and active participant in the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change, which entered into force in February 2005. Moreover, the EU is party to a number of international agreements and partnerships, including the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the UN Montreal Proto-

col on Ozone Depletion.

Internally, the EU has established a comprehensive system of environmental protection covering emissions into the air and water, noise, waste disposal, conservation of natural habitats, chemicals and industrial accidents. An example of such domestic actions is the EU Emission Trading Scheme (EU ETS) on CO₂ emissions from industrial installations. In general, the EU's environmental policy is underpinned by the „precautionary principle.“ It is based on the „polluter pays“ concept and the management and control of pollution at source.

The EU's treaty-based notion of „sustainable development“ adheres to this practice by integrating environmental requirements into the definition and implementation of other EU policies and activities. The ultimate goal of sustainable development is to achieve a form of development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Keywords

Money, CO₂, coal, renewable, gas, oil, climate change, car, petrol, LPG, electro-ma-

gnetic, pollution, change, emission, transport, congestion, extinction, cancer, recycle.

OST workgroups

During the plenary session at the very beginning of the afternoon, according to the Open Space Technology, young people have established the topics which should be discussed and – therefore – created their workgroups. 6 workgroups have been created:

- How do we deal with nations that do not follow the CO₂ reducing treaties?
- What can we do to encourage countries who have not agreed to sign up?
- How do we make people understand to drive hybrid cars or use public transport?
- How can we make sure that transport systems are environmentally friendly?
- People say that climate change doesn't exist, but why?
- Who really provokes the climate change and what impact does CO₂ have on the environment?
- We should all care about it!



GROUP 1: HOW DO WE DEAL WITH NATIONS THAT DO NOT FOLLOW THE CO2 REDUCING TREATIES?

SUMMARY

The group started discussing how Europe, Asia and the USA may cooperate (or not) in order to make the treaties become reality. Then young people focused on what is happening in their own country and how realistic, according to them, are the goals and the declarations each government does about them.

GROUP 2: WHAT CAN WE DO TO ENCOURAGE COUNTRIES WHO HAVE NOT AGREED TO SIGN UP?

SUMMARY

Young people have proved to be really interested and informed about new technologies and the possibility of introducing them in order to facilitate the achievement of environmental goals. On the other side it does not seem to be very clear what prevents countries to sign treaties which ask to achieve certain goals. Young people have listed concrete proposals in order to force countries.

GROUP 3: HOW DO WE MAKE PEOPLE UNDERSTAND TO DRIVE HYBRID CARS OR USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT?

SUMMARY

The group shared their knowledge and explained what is going on in their countries. They worked on concrete proposals which focused on communication campaigns that should make people understand how easy it is to adopt environmental friendly transport approaches.

GROUP 4: HOW CAN WE MAKE SURE THAT TRANSPORT SYSTEMS ARE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY?

SUMMARY

Young people compared first the different systems which exist in their countries. Subsequently they discussed how pollution and congestion may be reduced. At the end of the discussion they came up with some concrete proposals.

GROUP 5: PEOPLE SAY THAT CLIMATE CHANGE DOES NOT EXIST, BUT WHY?

SUMMARY

Young people observed that even though there actual changes in the way seasons look like, there are experts or representatives at institutional level who say that this is not a structural change of the climate. Youngsters put down a list of proposals targeted to different actors in order to make things changing.

GROUP 6: WHO REALLY PROVOKES THE CLIMATE CHANGE AND WHAT IMPACT DOES CO2 HAVE ON THE ENVIRONMENT?

SUMMARY

Young people who participated in this workgroup came to the conclusion that we have to stop the global warming. v

GROUP 7: WE SHOULD ALL CARE ABOUT IT!

SUMMARY

Young people focused on the “sacrifice” of each human being living on this planet. The whole issue on environmental risks and climate change is a relevant problem to the whole world.

Collection of proposals and ideas on the issue “environmental risks” from all workgroups:

- Organising a worldwide demonstration: On one particular day a worldwide demonstration on climate change should take place on the busiest street/road in each country. On this road a festival should take place and no cars should be allowed.
- The prime ministers should force their impact that this can happen.
- Organising a “stop the traffic” day.
- A proposal should be presented to Barack Obama with the question why Europe is doing hard work to reduce CO2 emission and the US government does not.
- We should make America jealous and convince them that Europe is doing it the right way instead of invading them.
- Producing an emotion-film: A hybrid car drives along a mountain road and the polar ice caps behind the car start to reform from melted ice because the car produces less CO2 emissions. The balance of the world environment starts to restore.
- Creating a congestion charge system in heavily polluted cities similar to what happens in London.
- Subsidise public transport companies in order to provide cheaper fares to passengers. The fares should be that cheap that using the car is definitely more expensive and becomes unattractive.
- Ensuring that public transport runs regularly and efficient when passengers require it.
- Making public transport attractive, safe and clean.
- Government can provide rules and laws in order to fight against the climate change in an efficient way.
- Economy, projects and education should be forced in order to increase their impacts.
- Stop the global warming.
- We should not exploit richer countries but we have to start with ourselves first!





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REGIONE DEL VENETO

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