



OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

**Promoting and Increasing Youth Political Participation and Civic  
Engagement in the OSCE Region**

Youth Leadership Forums  
Warsaw 16-17 June and 13-14 November 2014



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Recommendations from working groups were prepared and developed by participants of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> OSCE/ODIHR Youth Leadership Forum. The recommendations from Working Groups were not formally adopted by the Conference participants and do not necessarily reflect the views of any individual participant, organization, OSCE participating State or Partner for Co-operation. They do however represent voices and concerns of young leaders.



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## Executive summary

In an effort to address the challenges that youth<sup>1</sup> face in relation to political participation,<sup>2</sup> the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) organized two Youth Leadership Forums (Forums) in 2014. The Forums were held within the framework of the project, titled “*Promoting and increasing youth political participation and civic engagement<sup>3</sup> in the OSCE region*”. The Forums brought together almost 100 experts and young leaders from 37 OSCE participating States including politicians, journalists, civil servants, civil society, media representatives and online activists. The purpose of the events was to discuss how the OSCE and its institutions can better assist participating States in meeting their commitments on promoting the inclusion of youth in democratic processes. Forum participants discussed the challenges to democratic institutions and youth political participation. Additionally, participants increased their knowledge about OSCE tools and commitments, shared good practices, built new partnerships and networks, and developed recommendations for the OSCE participating States and the OSCE executive structures. Participants agreed on a number of recommendations on how to enhance youth participation in the OSCE region that are presented in this report.

Three specific but not indistinct forms of political participation had been identified prior to the Forums namely; Voice (informal), Influence (semi-formal) and Governance (formal). Ahead of the Forums the OSCE/ODIHR commissioned three research papers, one for each topic, which participants were asked to comment on. The research papers were discussed at the Forums and formed the basis for group discussions. Each form of political participation was discussed in working groups. The working groups proposed a set of recommendations at the end of the Forum.

ODIHR commissioned research found that there is a general decline of conventional political participation among all age groups, such as voting and electoral campaign volunteering, across the OSCE region, particularly when examining the youth age cohort, as the gap between youth and other age groups is generally widening. Nevertheless, there seem to be no important differences in unconventional political participation, between different age groups. Some researchers and policy makers even argue for higher levels of youth engagement in unconventional forms of political participation, however, there is not enough evidence to establish that. There are, however, indications that the Internet may prove to be a game-changer in terms of political participation. Acknowledging these trends in political participation, it is important to reiterate that voting remains among the most-exercised forms of political participation, and a decline in voter turnout may have serious consequences for the health of a democracy. It is also commonly believed by academia and, international organisations that widespread political participation is a necessary precondition for the existence of a democratic polity. Political participation is and always has been a prerequisite

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<sup>1</sup> Youth is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence. That's why, as a category, youth is more fluid than other fixed age-groups. Yet, age is the easiest way to define this group, particularly in relation to education and employment, because 'youth' is often referred to a person between the ages of leaving compulsory education, and finding their first job. See UN, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Political participation is a set of activities aiming to influence political authority (Lamprianou, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Civic engagement includes any activity, individual or collective, devoted to influencing the collective life of the polity. This includes the acquisition of relevant knowledge and skills as well as a wide range of acts (Macedo et al., 2006).

for every democratic system since even in the most elitist conceptions of democracy, the political participation of citizens is necessary. Participants of the forums argued that citizen participation provides the best mechanism for the articulation of interests and performs an educative role among citizens.

Forum participants argued that re-engagement of youth in elections should be complemented with mechanisms allowing for a more direct say in and influence over more-defined policy packages that can be introduced either at the systemic level or at the level of individual organisations. In effect, this implies combining direct and indirect forms of participation, which will allow youth to have a say through their representatives and a more direct say in certain policy issues. It is, therefore, the interplay of two sets of measures (individual-centred and organizational/system-centred) that may contribute to the substantive representation of youth in a system with efficacious young individuals and an inclusive polity.

During the two Forums, young leaders across the OSCE region, proposed the following key sets of recommendations to improve youth political participation: (1) civic education<sup>4</sup> and capacity building<sup>5</sup> of individuals, sectors and organizations should be invested in; (2) security and protection of fundamental freedoms should be ensured; (3) access to the Internet, ICT and media regulatory framework should be provided for; (4) institutional structures, standards and mechanisms promoting youth political participation should be introduced; (5) representation<sup>6</sup> and participation of youth in policy making processes and democratic institutions should be improved; (6) youth interaction with and participation in democratic institutions should be established and improved.

The discussions at the Forums and the final recommendations show that youth leaders are politically active and wish to take part in public life. However, youth concerns are not being addressed adequately and their expectations are not being met. Traditional democratic institutions are lagging behind in acknowledging the importance of e-governance and e-democracy thus failing to engage a significant part of their potential electorate. The recommendations suggest ways to overcome these challenges.

With this report OSCE/ODIHR wishes to acknowledge the dedication, expert advice and input provided by almost 100 young leaders from all over the OSCE region. OSCE/ODIHR also wishes to thank the researchers, experts and moderators for their skillful facilitation of dynamic and diverse discussions.

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<sup>4</sup> Citizenship education refers to institutionalised forms of political knowledge acquisition that take place within formal educational frameworks and informal frameworks. We may distinguish between *specific* citizenship education that proceeds through curricular and extracurricular school activities as well as the hidden curriculum, and *diffuse* citizenship education that refers to educational attainment in general (see Ichilov, 2003). Although some scholars (e.g. Kerr, 1999) clearly distinguish between the terms *civic education* and *citizenship education*, we decided to use them indiscriminately for the purposes of this paper.

<sup>5</sup> The creation of an enabling environment with appropriate policy and legal frameworks; institutional development, including community participation (of women in particular); human resources development and strengthening of managerial systems (UNDP, 1991; UNHCR, 2015).

<sup>6</sup> Political representation is the activity of making citizens' voices, opinions, and perspectives "present" in the public policy making processes (Pitkin, 1967).

## Methodology of the Youth Leadership Forums

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) organized its first and second Youth Leadership Forums (Forums) in Warsaw on 16 and 17 June 2014 and on 13 and 14 November 2014. Both Forums gathered almost 100 young politicians, journalists, civil servants, civil society, media representatives and online activists. Participants of the first Forum came from South-East Europe, Central and Western Europe, and the United States. Participants of the Second Forum came from Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Mongolia and the South Caucasus. ODIHR received more than 1400 applications and participants were selected on a competitive basis via an online application tool, and were given a choice of three working groups in which to participate, namely Voice, Influence or Governance.<sup>7</sup>

Discussions within the three groups were based on three ODIHR commissioned research papers (one for each category) that defined the purpose of the youth forums, provided structure for discussions among representatives and allowed participants to propose and defend tangible recommendations. The purpose of the research papers was to present the topic of youth political participation from different perspectives. All three papers contextualized the challenges facing informal, semi-formal and formal youth political participation. The research papers were published online in a web group, and all participants were able to comment on them prior to the Forum. The research papers were updated based on input from participants and finalized after the Forum.

The two-day forums consisted of four interactive knowledge-sharing sessions, including group discussions, brainstorming exercises and debates. The sessions were facilitated by experts and ODIHR representatives in a format of small groups. This approach proved to be effective in ensuring participants' engagement and detailed exchanges on priority issues with regards to youth political participation. In addition to a series of -specific recommendations and action points, the Forums highlighted the need to establish and maintain the network of participants, and to communicate regularly on substantive and programmatic activities undertaken by ODIHR, OSCE structures and OSCE participating States.

## Developing recommendations

As the challenges to informal (voice), semi-formal (influence) and formal (governance) youth political participation were debated by Forums participants, the working groups came up with a set of recommendations. Recommendations were grouped into the

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<sup>7</sup> 1. **Voice:** This relates to informal forms of political participation and focuses on online activism. Ideal candidates include representatives of social media groups and bloggers.

2. **Influence:** This relates to semi-formal forms of political participation and focuses on civil society organizations active in advocating and lobbying for changes to policies. We are looking for leaders who want to influence politics but do not want to do so through formal structures.

3. **Governance:** This relates to formal mechanisms of political participation such as political parties and governance institutions. Ideal candidates are leaders such as young politicians and members of parliaments, government representatives, city councilors, policy and political advisors.

three categories addressing the selected topics which constituted the basis for the working groups. The categories had been identified ahead of the Forum and participants had been asked to reflect on these by reading and commenting on the research papers developed for the event. The working group on voice considered informal forms of political participation, with a particular focus on online activism. Participants of the working group on *voice* included representatives of social media groups and bloggers. The working group on *influence* examined semi-formal forms of political participation and focused in particular on civil society organizations active in advocating and lobbying for changes to policies. Participants of this working group included CSO and political leaders who wish to influence politics but do not want to do so through formal structures. The working group on *governance* discussed formal mechanisms of political participation, such as political parties and governance institutions. Participants included young politicians and members of parliaments, government representatives, city councilors and policy and political advisors.

In keeping with the general discussions outlined above, special emphasis was placed on gender equality and women's political participation, as well as on the political participation of ethnic minorities, such as Roma and Sinti. Participants, together with experts and ODIHR staff facilitating the Forum, drafted a number of recommendations, followed by concrete action points.

Participants agreed to a set of recommendations that were presented during the final plenary sessions during Youth Leadership Forums.

Recommendations were prepared and developed by participants of the 1st and 2nd OSCE/ODIHR Youth Leadership Forum.

Trends and challenges to Youth Political Participation ODIHR commissioned research on "governance", challenges to conventional forms of politics, argued that this form of political participation still represents the most effective way to induce political changes. Although voting remains the most common form of political participation, however, this form of political participation is in decline, especially among young people. This is all the more surprising at a time of acute discontent and disillusionment. In this regard the importance of eliminating barriers to voting in order to encourage political participation was highlighted. In particular, it was considered essential to change the entrenched belief that individual action is futile. The expert also argued that young people must be made to understand that they can be influential even through such simple activities as voting.

ODIHR commissioned research on "influence" discussed the importance and usefulness of social media in political participation today. It was highlighted that the Internet has given young people a whole range of new possibilities, including the ability to select issues of interest to them, personalize their opinion, share trends and choose the means of influence. The Internet is a very practical and accessible tool that allows citizens to express their opinions at any time, and is much more convenient than having to attend traditional political meetings where one has to adhere to the official stance of the group. At the same time new media can also be used by groups, and allows them to recruit people and overcome some barriers to participation. However, several important negative aspects of the Internet were also highlighted, namely 1) the problem of unequal access to the Internet, which depends largely on people's level of education and income, and 2) threats to Internet usage that may be instrumentalized by the state or by various radical groups. Among the possible

solutions to these problems, it was suggested that marginalized youth should be targeted, such as women and minorities, and their awareness raised about the dangers posed by the Internet, while at the same time teaching these groups how to use social media to their benefit.

ODIHR commissioned research on “voice” highlighted that young people are not politically “lost”, but rather politically “different”, in the sense that the form of political participation has changed. In particular, there has been a change in the manner in which civil society and political groups cope with new realities. Nevertheless, there are doubts as to whether grass roots participation (for example, the Five Star Movement) is real or just a façade. One of the main questions explored was whether, and to what extent, new technologies are capable of transforming political participation and political parties. Some of the challenges facing new media were outlined, such as the fact that technology is not necessarily easier to access than decision-making circles. However, the Internet is not only an arena where information circulates freely, but also a platform that has the ability to shape political ideas. As such, we should be wary of taking information available on the Internet at face value, as it can be confusing, contradictory and of poor quality. In conclusion it was highlighted that there is a clear need to link online and offline participation in order to avoid creating two-tier societies composed of those who can access the Internet and those with restricted Internet access.

### The Problem of Declining Political Participation among Youth in the OSCE region

The general decline of conventional political participation is undeniable and this trend is demonstrated by the post-WWII drop in voter turnout, which increased its speed of decline in the mid-1980s and has presented a major challenge ever since (see López Pintor et al., 2002). A brief examination of data from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) reveals a decrease in voter turnout in democracies which, after a several decades-long period of high and stable turnout, began to record continuous declines of unprecedented proportions (see Figure 1). The trend that started in the 1970s had a negative impact on modern democracies and led to the emergence of quite volatile voting patterns in post-Soviet countries. What makes this data even more significant is that presented levels indicate turnout for national elections (parliaments), while turnout levels for less important electoral races may be considerably lower (see Appendix 1). The elections to the European Parliament are a prime example of this, particularly among countries that joined the European Union (EU) in 2004 or after (see European Parliament, 2015).



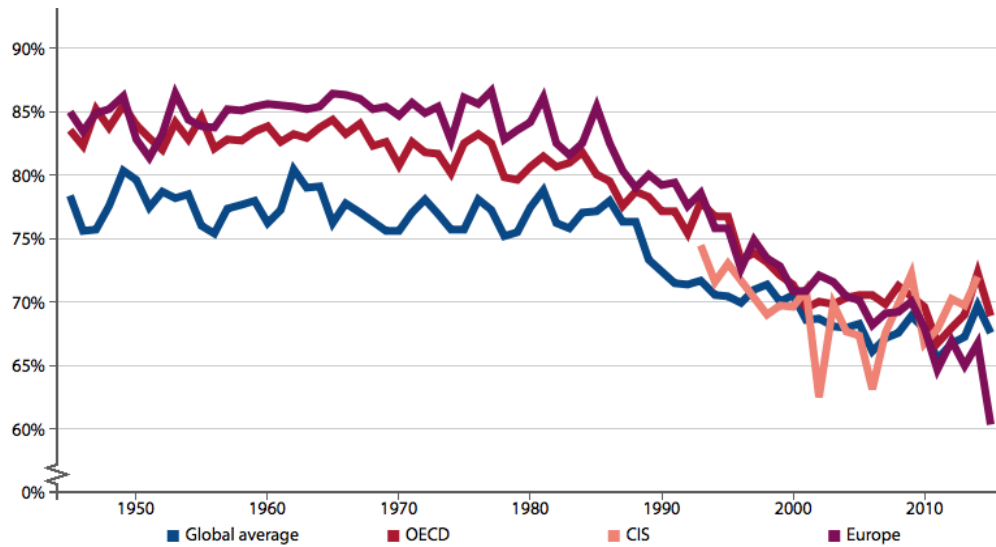


Figure 1. Turnout in parliamentary elections for OECD, European and CIS states compared to the global average.

Source: IDEA (2015)

To make the problem worse, voter turnout is generally the lowest among the youngest age categories of eligible voters, even when compared to the oldest age categories (IDEA, 1999). To be precise, the European Values Study (EVS, 2011) reflects an increase in voters below the age of 30 who fail to attend general elections in 24 of 32 participating OSCE states.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, eligible voters below the age of 30 consistently report lower scores on willingness to vote than the population average; in some states, the difference is 15% or more (e.g., Cyprus, Lithuania, Slovenia, Switzerland and Great Britain). The latest cycle of the seminal World Values Survey (WVS, 2014) reveals large differences (in some cases more than 15%) between young voters and the population overall in certain countries (e.g., the United States, Spain and Sweden) (see Appendix 3). There is empirical evidence for this claim for a large majority of examined countries in the OSCE region (see Appendix 4).

Another sign of diminishing conventional political participation among the member States of the European Union is the declining membership in political parties. Numerous studies consequently indicate a drop in youth party membership as,<sup>9</sup> in general, does the EVS data across four waves with approximately one decade between each (see Appendix 5). This is of particular importance due to the recruitment and mobilisation functions of political parties. What is more, the gap in political party membership between individuals under the age of 30 and the population as a whole is soaring (see Figure 2). To be precise, the general trend is that the level of party membership of individuals below age 30 is only a fraction of the population average in numerous developed democracies.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> The increase was calculated between the third and the fourth waves of study (approximately from 2000 to 2010).

<sup>9</sup> E.g., Cross & Young, 2008; Hooghe et al., 2004; Seyd & Whiteley, 2004.

<sup>10</sup> We need to add that women and members of Roma and other minority ethnic communities that do not form their own ethnic political parties are far less engaged in the life of political parties than their dominant (ethnic) group male counterparts.

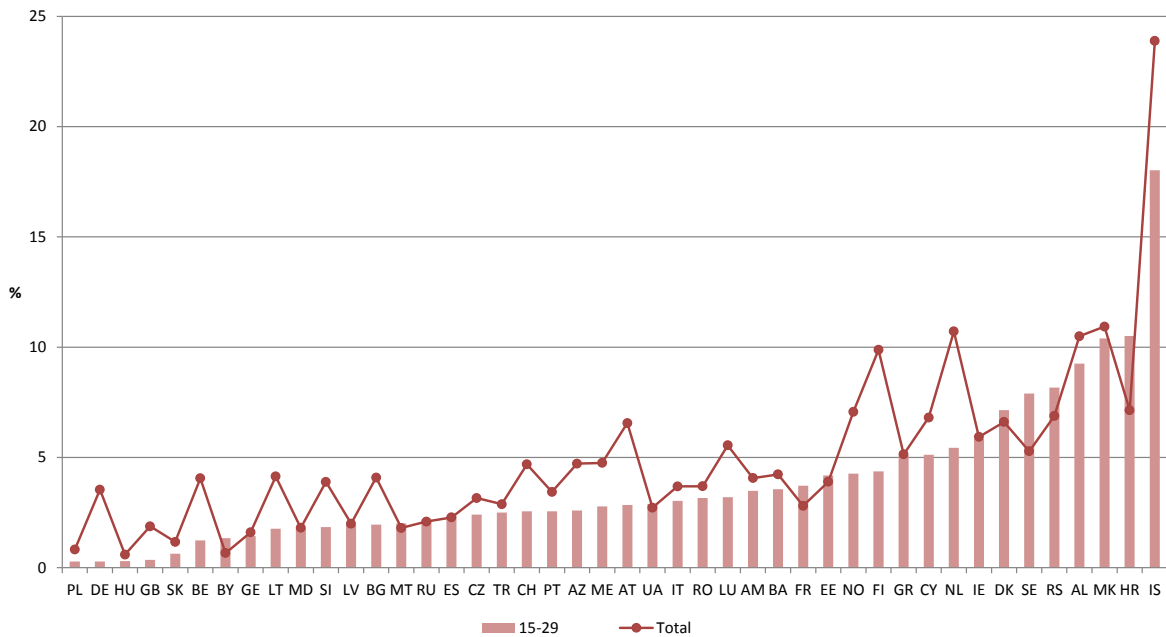


Figure 2. Percentage of respondents that belong to a political party or group in 44 OSCE participating States.<sup>11</sup>

Source: EVS (2011)

When observing the mildest form of direct action —signing a petition— it is clear that there are still gaps, but these vary from country to country, are generally smaller and sometimes indicate higher or lower levels of youth engagement (see Figure 3). It is, in fact, very hard to talk about ‘disengaged youth’ in the sense of conventional forms of political participation. This is additionally confirmed when analysing attendance of lawful demonstrations, joining in boycotts, occupying buildings and factories (squatting), and joining unofficial strikes (see Appendices 6-8). International comparative studies clearly support the hypothesis of declining conventional forms of political participation, particularly when the youth age cohort is examined, as the gap between youth and other age groups is generally widening. Nevertheless, there seem to be no important differences in unconventional political participation between the various examined age groups across the examined countries. Some studies even indicate higher levels of youth engagement in unconventional forms of political participation due to various factors (see López Pintor et al., 2002, 75–77), though this was not established across the examined set of countries.

<sup>11</sup> The graphs refer to 44 out of 57 OSCE participating States as this is the comparative public data on youth political participation that is available.

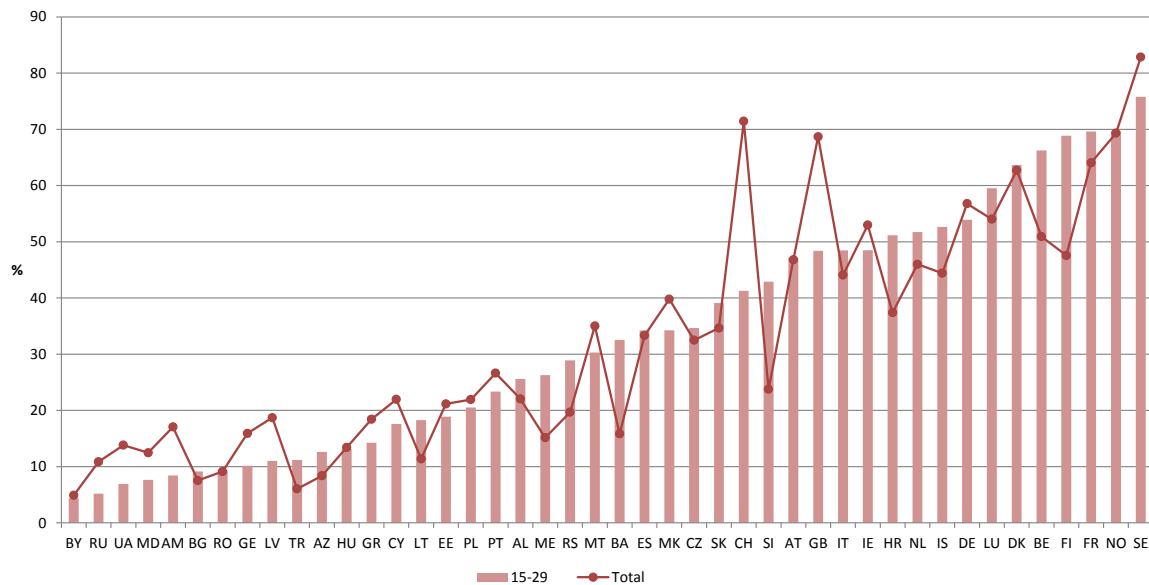


Figure 3. Percentage of individuals that have already signed a petition, in 44 OSCE participating States.  
Source: EVS (2011)

There is also some evidence that the Internet may prove to be a game-changer in terms of political participation, but it is still too early to make any claims about that. Latest innovations in information technology may have a liberation effect (see Diamond, 2010), as is aspired by cyber optimists, however, they may also reaffirm power positions from the offline, as is argued by normalization theorists (see Wright, 2012). To be precise, youth political engagement via the Internet does appear to break certain rules that are otherwise valid for youth political participation (see Smith et al., 2009). According to some, youth are at least equal with other age cohorts in terms of online political activities, whereas older population cohorts (those aged 25 and above) are still principally active offline, primarily in conventional forms of political participation (ibid, 40). Furthermore, blogs and social media proved to be “the” online political engagement of young adults (those aged from 18 to 24), who utilised these tools more than other age groups (ibid, 52).<sup>12</sup> In addition, results on the political use of social media by young adults show signs of the diminishing importance of income and the level of education as a predictor of political participation. At the same time, it should be pointed out that the responsiveness of governments and political parties to these forms of political activism is still tentative and reticent.

While acknowledging these emerging trends in political participation, it is important to reiterate that voting remains among the most-exercised forms of political participation, and a decline in voter turnout may have serious consequences for the health of every democracy.

<sup>12</sup> We should stress that, for the moment, these claims are based solely on US data. However, there is other evidence of this trend emerging in other environments (e.g. Mašić and Vehovar, 2010).

## The Relevance of Political Participation

### On Political Participation and its Links to Democracy

The importance of effective political participation for the process of the formulation, enactment, and implementation of public policies are undisputed. There is great variation in the repertoire of actions individuals can engage in to participate in political process. Despite elections being the dominant conventional way in which people are given the opportunity to influence the political process, there is a wide repertoire of actions at the disposal of the politically engaged. The concept of political participation has thus expanded over time from activities focusing on election campaigns in the early studies of political behaviour to activities beyond the ballot box. The latter included citizen-initiated contacts with politicians outside the election process and participation through interest groups, unconventional types of participation such as signing a petition, demonstrations, boycotts, street blockades and so forth (see Barnes et al., 1979), as well as activities ranging from volunteering in local governmental bodies to jury duty (see Parry et al., 1992). For some, even participation in nongovernmental decision-making processes constituted grounds for political participation; as such participation might have an impact on participation in the political sphere itself (Moyser, 2003, 176). A broader repertoire of political actions also established that political participation is a multi-dimensional concept (i.e., certain individuals are very active in some modes of political participation but passive in others). This is particularly evident when comparing conventional to unconventional modes of political participation (see Barnes et al., 1979).

Regardless of the debates on the most appropriate model of democracy (see Held, 2006), it is clear that political participation is and always has been a prerequisite for every democratic system. While democracy is not a panacea for all human problems, it does offer the consent of the governed as the most compelling principle of legitimacy and the basis of political order (see Held, 2006, ix). The statement "the more participation there is in decisions, the more democracy there is" (Verba & Nie, 1972, 1), is probably the most direct link between democracy and participation. That is, even in the most elitist or "thin" conceptions of democracy, the political participation of citizens is necessary, despite usually being restricted to voting in general elections for the selection of political representatives (O'Neill, 2009, 7).

Notwithstanding the views of some critics,<sup>13</sup> it is hence commonly believed that widespread political participation is a necessary precondition for the existence of a democratic polity. To be precise, the majority of contemporary models of democracy rely on high levels of citizen participation and encourage the participation of a knowledgeable citizenry with a sustained interest in the governing process. According to these views, citizen participation provides the best mechanism for the articulation of interests and performs an educative role among citizens. Political participation is therefore an essential mechanism provided to citizens to influence decision-makers, thus linking the responsiveness of governments directly to political participation (O'Neill, 2009, 7).

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<sup>13</sup> For example, elite theories of political participation (e.g., Schumpeter).

A group of distinguished American scholars (see Macedo et al., 2005, 4–6) provided a set of contemporary arguments in support of the importance of robust citizen engagement<sup>14</sup> in (Western) democracies. The *first* contends that civic engagement enhances the quality of democratic governance, as democratic decision-making requires knowledge of people's interests. They argue that citizen input has the potential to improve the quality of public decisions by marshalling the knowledge and registering the preferences of the entire community. The *second* argument puts forward the notion that a government is legitimate only when the people as a whole participate in their own self-rule. Here, it is argued that, while democracy is supposed to represent the people as a whole, there is an abundance of evidence that political institutions are most responsive to those who mobilise. The *third* argument asserts that participation can enhance the quality of citizens' lives as an exercise of distinctive human capacities. In other words, with civic engagement, citizens acquire skills and knowledge. *Fourth*, they claim that participation in voluntary and non-profit organisations provides a wide variety of goods and services that neither the state nor the market can replace nor that membership in groups and involvement in social networks is even associated with greater individual satisfaction with one's community and personal life (Macedo et al., 2005, 5).

### Explanations for Declining Participation and Ways to Tackle Them

On the basis of what has been mentioned above, it is clear that achieving higher levels of youth participation in the political process and civil society is crucial. However, in order to understand what to fix, one needs to understand the reasons behind declining political participation. These can include various factors that impact political participation (e.g., income levels, gender, social class and education) and require an understanding of the *agency-structure* interpretations of political participation. The first are primarily focused on the individual and deal with feelings of political efficacy (of an individual or a group) – whether or not his or her participation will make a difference –, which is frequently conditioned with the feeling of political competence. The second set of interpretations are structure-centred and explain levels of political participation from the perspective of formal rules (legal framework, organisational rules), social structure (class, religion, gender, ethnicity) and dominant ideas (belief systems – e.g., patriarchal) (see Axford & Rosamond, 1997). As a result, when devising mechanisms to improve political participation, improvements which are structure-oriented or agent-oriented need to be considered (i.e., do they reach out to youth by revising the structure, or bring youth back into the political process by making them feel more efficacious?). Thus, agent-centred mechanisms target barriers to participation on the individual level – primarily targeting a lack of skills, motivation, awareness and knowledge. However, structure-centred mechanisms target barriers at both the

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<sup>14</sup> For the purposes of conceptual clarity, we need to say that the concepts of civic engagement and political participation are popular catchphrases that are rarely defined in a coherent manner (Levine, 2007, 1). Due to broad views of the reasons and motives for political action, this is reflected in definitions of both concepts (see Macedo et al., 2005, 6). We therefore do not draw a sharp distinction between the “civic” and the “political” due to comprehension of politics and civil society as interdependent concepts, but merely put forward a tentative distinction between political participation as a behavior that involves the state and civic engagement as behavior that involves the state as well as civil society (see Levine, 2007, 48).

organisational (know-how, internal mechanisms and rules and procedures of political organisations) and systemic (socio-political constraints deriving from policies, legislation, power relations and social norms) levels (UNDP, 2013, 17–18).

All this being said, youth should not be expected to act like their grandparents, simply out of duty (see Dalton, 2009). On the contrary, it is widely believed that the state should reach out to youth and fully grasp their engagement potential, which can be reflected in a wide set of less conventional participation modes. Thus, re-engagement of youth in elections should be complemented with mechanisms allowing for a more direct say in and influence over more-defined policy packages that can be introduced either at the systemic level or at the level of individual organisations (e.g., political parties, youth organisations, educational institutions). In effect, this implies combining direct and indirect forms of participation—that is, principles of participatory and representative democracy (see Aars, 2007)—which will allow youth to have a say through their representatives and a more direct say in certain policy issues. It is, therefore, the interplay of both sets of measures (agency-centred and structure-centred) that may contribute to the substantive representation<sup>15</sup> of youth in a system with efficacious young individuals and an inclusive polity.

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<sup>15</sup> For different types representation see Pitkin, 1967.

## Summary of Proceedings

### Opening Session

The opening session at both Youth Leadership Forums was dedicated to a discussion around the problems of political participation in general and declining youth political participation in particular.

The panel discussion organized during both Forums considered whether the current generation of young people should be labelled a “politically lost generation”. Panelists stated that, although currently conventional political activities (such as party meetings) are still the most effective in introducing change, there is a decline, especially among youth, of conventional political activity such as party meetings. The Internet has given young people a whole range of new possibilities, from the ability to identify the issues that interest them to choosing the means they use to exert their influence. Despite these positive aspects, online participation triggers many questions regarding accountability and responsibility. The emergence of social media has altered the political cycle, as major issues are reduced to sound bites, discouraging substantive political discussions and making the dissemination of information superficial. Panelists also touched on the issue of voting, and concluded that people vote if they believe that their votes count, which is ultimately determined by the level and type of political education that citizens receive.

### The Process of Delivering Recommendations

As previously highlighted the two Forums brought together young leaders involved in both traditional and new forms of political participation. The Forums covered the whole spectrum of youth political participation – from the most informal mechanisms to the institutionalised ones. The initiative was operationalised into three distinct but interrelated categories: *voice, influence and governance*.

### Themes of Political participation: Voice, Influence and Governance

The participants in the working groups on *voice, influence and governance* discussed challenges to youth political participation from the following perspectives;

Forum participants in *Voice, Working group 1*, addressed informal mechanisms of political participation and focused on online political activism utilised by engaged individuals or groups as the key informal agents of youth activism. With social media, new forms of political communication and freedom of speech were of particular interest. A group of bloggers and online activists discussed possible answers to the following questions: How can we link the work of traditional democratic institutions with young voices of change?; In what forms do e-democracy and e-governance contribute to bridging the gap between new and old forms of political participation and what role could democratic institutions, such as political parties, play in this process?; What are the opportunities for young women and men specifically to engage in politics using new forms of participation, and what are the new generation and gender-related challenges that have emerged as a result of alternative forms of

political engagement?; and How can we address the generation gap when it comes to the different communication channels (traditional media vs. on-line media)?

Forum participants in the *Influence, Working group 2*, category tackled semi-informal mechanisms of political participation and focused on non-governmental organisations that utilise different advocacy and lobbying tools that may be either online or offline in nature. Hence, NGOs, civil society, think-tanks and action-tank representatives discussed their roles in a democratic society from the viewpoint of political participation and the way they influence politics outside conventional and formal mechanisms. This primarily encompassed the search for answers to the following questions: How do these actors perceive political participation, and to what extent are political parties responsive and inclusive towards them? How should political parties adapt in order to better respond to a larger group of policy advocates who are no longer linked to political parties but are still a part of civil society?

Forum participants in the *governance* category, *Working group 3*, deliberated on the formal mechanisms of political participation and focused on institutions and actors central to the concept of governance. The discussion focused on mechanisms taking place in organisations defined by formal rules of behaviour with defined relationships of authority. Young politicians, executives and policy specialists tackled the gap between new forms of political participation and traditional democratic institutions, and attempted to find linkages between the two.

Recommendations were initially developed and presented by each working group but because they were cross-cutting OSCE/ODIHR decided to consolidate the recommendations thematically. By doing so recommendations address different challenges to participation from different policy areas while also taking into account the specific challenges to these issues from the perspectives of voice, influence and governance.

### **Consolidated Recommendations**

The following list presents sets of recommendations prepared and developed by each of the three working groups (governance, influence, voice) within each forum. The recommendations consist of six sets and represent voices and concerns of young leaders from the OSCE region. This integral list is divided into several theoretically informed subsets. Recommendations were prepared and developed by participants of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> OSCE/ODIHR Youth Leadership Forums.

*Each set of recommendations begins with an introductory paragraph that serves to discuss the main and most important recommendations in the specific set.*

#### **1. Civic education and capacity building of individuals, sectors and organizations**

Civic education in primary, secondary, and tertiary education curricula is one of the most widely used approaches to “produce” competent and virtuous citizenry. Either in the form of specially designed courses or cross-curricular content, civic education is conceived of as an



important facilitator of democratic citizenship.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, research indicates that contextualized and active learning pedagogies lead to better results than do traditional teaching and learning modes (see Birzea, 2000; Ichilov, 2003; Hoskins et al., 2008; Biesta, 2011).

The development of interactive web-based applications that would bring elections closer to youth may be an appropriate method of revitalizing the political process. Voting advice applications (VAA) that inform young citizens about programmatic stances of political parties and candidates, and “vote watches” that inform youth about the actions of deputies, have the capacity to improve political knowledge and activate youth political participation.

The promotion of training programs for youth is an important tool to provide civic education for various groups of youth, particularly the disadvantaged—Persons Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEETs); minorities; women; and the disabled—in order to develop the appropriate competence to engage in the political process. These programs should extensively cover media education and could frequently have multiplicative effects if designed as a “breeding-ground” for future youth projects and initiatives (see UNDP, 2013, 25–26).

**The OSCE executive structures'<sup>17</sup> and its participating States (pS) should ensure and support formal as well as non-formal civic and human rights educational activities.**

- The OSCE executive structures' and its pS should provide training in digital skills to youth as well as to public officials and representatives of political institutions and organizations through formal and non-formal education<sup>18</sup> programmes implemented by public and civil society organizations. Training should place specific emphasis on ethics, forms of political participation, gender equality, minority rights, fundamental freedoms and security issues relevant for youth.

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<sup>16</sup> Citizenship refers to membership within a political community. In legal terms, citizenship refers to a legal relationship between an individual and a political community (i.e., a state). Beyond the strictly legal relationship, citizenship also refers to the set of rights and duties that accompany this membership. This view of citizenship goes beyond the mere obeying of the state’s law and puts forward also political obligations of the citizen, such as participation in the political process (Maas, 2011).

<sup>17</sup> For the purpose of this report the recommendations refer to the OSCE Secretariat, its Institutions and field missions as 'the OSCE executive structures' unless differently specified.

<sup>18</sup> In this paper we utilize the following definitions of formal, non-formal and informal education (see Cooms et al., 1973; Council of Europe, 2011; OECD, 2015): (1) Formal Education is the hierarchically structured, chronologically graded “educational system”, running from primary school through the university and including, in addition to general academic studies, a variety of specialized programmes and institutions for full-time technical and professional training.; (2) Non-Formal Education is any organized educational activity outside the established formal system-whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity-that is intended to serve identifiable learning clientele and learning objectives.; and (3) Informal Education is the truly lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences and resources in his or her environment-from family and neighbors, from work and play, from the marketplace, the library and the mass media etc.

- The OSCE executive structures' and its pS should promote and support non-formal education and training programmes for marginalized groups to foster leadership and acquire ICT-related skills, with a special focus on the grassroots level.
- The OSCE executive structures' and its pS should promote and create institutionalized youth platforms following the Model OSCE.
- The OSCE executive structures' and its pS should focus on media and digital literacy, in order to ensure an effective and informed political participation of youth online as well as offline.

**The OSCE executive structures' and its pS should introduce and support media programmes and all forms of media activities fostering civic education and capacity-building of youth in order to increase their participation in public life.**

- pS should promote and provide financial support to training activities in media content-development as well as the creation and maintenance of community media initiatives (both new and traditional) focused on youth and/or managed by youth.
- pS should guarantee specific programming in national and community media designed for youth, aimed at improving youth representation in society and providing a place to publicly discuss relevant issues.
- pS should promote permanent co-operation between media and CSOs in implementing specific programming, linking CSO's and media in the field of youth political participation, targeted at youth.

**The OSCE executive structures' and its pS should promote an enabling environment for CSOs engaged with youth and provide them with capacity-building activities and networking platforms.**

- pS should promote an enabling environment for CSOs engaged with youth by providing them with infrastructures, space, safety, funding for various programmes, and by ensuring the full respect of existing international legal frameworks.
- The OSCE executive structures' should support capacity-building initiatives targeted at CSOs engaged with youth, especially disadvantaged groups,<sup>19</sup> including the transfer of knowledge among them, the promotion of new initiatives and their training on policy-making mechanisms (e.g. government consultations and parliamentary hearings) with a particular focus on digital literacy.
- pS should provide legal and material grounds for youth organizations to establish youth councils in order to cooperate with public authorities on youth-related issues.
- pS should ensure the integration and recognition into formal school curricula of knowledge, skills and competences acquired by youth through voluntary activities and non-formal educational programmes.

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<sup>19</sup> A disadvantaged group is a group within a society that is marginalized and has reduced access to resources and services such as education, health, credit and power (see The Philippine Government, 2015; The UK Government, 2015; SACHET, 2015; Mayer, 2003; Barrett, 2010).

## 2. Security and the protection of fundamental freedoms

The protection of individual's civil and political freedoms and rights is one of the main prerequisites for a functioning democratic system as there is no democracy without the consent of the governed. In addition, the provision of free civic space for organized and primarily unorganized youth to debate topics relevant to them and engage in deliberation can create an inclusive atmosphere for youth. These spaces should particularly include youth at the risk of exclusion by providing programs that facilitate the acquisition of relevant skills, knowledge, and competences (media literacy programs, e.g.).

**OSCE pS should guarantee the safety of all individuals and social groups in their public expression of views and ensure the full respect of fundamental freedoms and rights (e.g. the freedoms of assembly, association and movement) both online and offline.**

- pS should provide free and safe public spaces where youth can learn about as well as participate in public affairs.
- pS should allow young individuals to participate in the political process through different activities (e.g., youth centres, hacktivism<sup>20</sup>).
- The OSCE executive structures' should urge pS to work on legislative reforms<sup>21</sup> in order to actively protect and ensure the full respect of citizens' fundamental freedoms both online and offline.
- The OSCE executive structures' should monitor and report on legal frameworks by pS that can be used to undermine human rights.

## 3. Access to the Internet, ICT and media legal framework

One of the principal challenges concerning political participation on the Internet is grounded in unequal access to available tools, which in effect reproduces and frequently even amplifies existing gaps in participation. This concern is well portrayed by the digital divide debate that exposes the consequences of unequal access to as well as mastery of tools based on information and communication technology. The above-mentioned debate is somewhat interlinked with another important challenge of contemporary societies -- widespread and uncontrolled government surveillance and corporate control of online platforms. As the gains of governments to use digital tools to control dissent and the dissemination of sensitive information are simply too rewarding to expect self-limitations in this field, a push towards the introduction of legislative instruments to ensure the availability and usability of encryption and anonymity tools as well as to limit mass surveillance of government is critical.

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<sup>20</sup> Non-commercial activities (not-for-profit) undertaken with the intention of causing or protesting against a political or institutional change (such as procurement policies, political decisions, policy development, etc.) by means of a computer or any IT network, such as gaining unauthorized access to a computer system, temporary overloading of network capacity ("DDOS"), website defacements or other disruptive actions.

<sup>21</sup> e.g. Cybercrime convention, ETS185, 2001

In addition, in order to boost political participation, voter educational (literacy) programs are crucial. As a result, these programs for youth should be focused on relevant youth groups and should entail youth-related content. Of special importance are projects and programs focusing on the functioning of the political system that could be frequently broadcast through specially designed media productions for youth. Public broadcasters and community media lead the way in supporting these efforts by frequently addressing special needs and the interests of more disadvantaged youth groups (see OSCE Ljubljana commitments). In addition, topics related to fundamental human rights could be explored.

**The OSCE executive structures' and its pS should support equal access to the Internet for all, including disadvantaged groups and youth living in remote areas.**

- pS should improve access to the Internet for youth by reviewing national youth strategies and national ICT infrastructure policies, particularly regarding access to the Internet in rural areas.
- The OSCE executive structures' and its pS should promote projects and programmes (including programmes for the donation of second hand equipment) to provide digital devices to disadvantaged groups, such as Roma and Sinti, women and persons with disabilities.

**The OSCE executive structures' and its pS should promote an enabling media environment in order to encourage youth to speak up on important public issues and ensure that their voices are heard.**

- pS should support cost free access to airtime for representatives of different social groups, specifically youth.

**The OSCE executive structures' should encourage and support its pS in drafting and implementing legislation on digital rights to allow for young people to engage in creative expression<sup>22</sup> and free flow of information online.**

- The OSCE executive structures' and its pS should consider legislative instruments to ensure legality of encryption and anonymity tools and availability of such tools, as well as preserve the right against self-incrimination in order to protect private communication from State intervention and to overcome mass surveillance.
- The OSCE executive structures' should monitor and report on investments and exports of technologies by its pS that can be used to undermine human rights, since network filtering and intermediary liability create uncertainty and foster the development of technologies that can be used to violate human rights and fundamental freedoms.

#### 4. Institutional structures, standards and mechanisms

Continuous and systematic research and youth related advocacy should be supported by public authorities on various levels (e.g. youth observatories) in order to track youth participation, representation, and inclusion; youth transition from school to the world of work; the impact of policies on various groups of youth; and to provide continuous data on key points concerning youth involvement in the political process (see Chisholm & Kovacheva, 2002; Gretschel et al., 2014; OSCE Geneva, Porto, Maastricht, Sofia, Ljubljana and Madrid commitments).

**The OSCE executive structures' should ensure co-operation among its pS, International Organizations, CSOs and other relevant actors to exchange information, promote consultation and raise awareness on youth issues.**

- The OSCE executive structures' should: i) promote the creation of national focal points for data collection and information exchange; ii) establish an OSCE Youth Focal Point within its organization, which would be in contact and work with national focal points; and iii) support co-operation between national focal points, the OSCE Youth Focal Point and all relevant stakeholders in order to facilitate the circulation and sharing of information as well as the creation and promotion of youth policies.
- The OSCE executive structures' should promote co-operation among CSOs through the development of shared online platforms.
- The OSCE executive structures' should set up a permanent Youth Advisory Body covering all three dimensions of the Organization. The OSCE Institutions should consult with the Youth Advisory Body on a regular basis and jointly formulate guidelines for developing alternative youth government models at national and subnational levels, based on a review of international standards, in accordance with Open Government Partnership principles (OGP) and with special attention devoted to disadvantaged groups (e.g. Roma and Sinti, national minorities, women).
- The OSCE executive structures' should promote the creation of "Youth Ambassadors" to strengthen the Youth Advisory Body and expand its reach at national and sub-national levels.
- The OSCE executive structures' should design a Youth Influence Index (YII), which should cover elections, political parties, governmental youth policies, civic education, access to the Internet and related security issues. pS should collect and submit data and OSCE institutions should analyze them and disseminate results across the entire OSCE region. The YII should particularly include indicators related to disadvantaged groups such as women and Roma and Sinti.

#### 5. Representation and participation of youth in democratic processes and democratic institutions

The removal of context-specific legal barriers to youth participation may also significantly reduce the cost to youth participation in the electoral process and eliminate the negative costs of youth absenteeism. Eliminating financial deposits and higher education requirements as well as establishing a strict cap on election campaign financing may allow young candidates to entry into the electoral arena and reduce the gap between youth and

incumbent politicians. In addition, voter registration requirements may present additional costs that less-engaged citizens would not be willing to take, while automatic voter registration by design removes this barrier (e.g., as in Slovenia). In addition, extending the number of voting days (early voting) and voting hours over more than one day, and to working days and weekends, would further remove potential barriers (e.g. Sweden). Youth involvement in all phases of an election campaign, for example by including young individuals on electoral management bodies' advisory boards (or including experts on youth) and as poll station workers, as well as election observers, would improve the knowledge about the needs of young voters as well as the ownership of the political process of involved youth (see UNDP, 2008).

In addition, on a political party level, youth representatives that participate in an executive campaign team may be more responsive to the needs of youth and may provide greater impetus for youth participation at the party level. Nevertheless, these innovations should prevent possible abuses that make youth mere satellites of party interests in electoral management bodies and/or a source of free labour (overuse of volunteers). This is the situation in many states across the world, having become particularly widespread during the recent economic crisis.

Legislatures could indirectly improve the political participation of youth and young politicians by implementing a series of minor changes in the manner in which they operate. Firstly, supranational, national, and regional parliament if open for youth present a great opportunity for young individuals to learn about the political system and engage with high-level politicians, as well as being an indispensable pillar of the civic education curricula.

In addition, continuous, stable and appropriately remunerated internship programs in state parliaments may significantly broaden the number of individuals with first-hand experience of the policy making process. Parliaments should also consider organizing special training and support programs for young deputies and parliamentary staff, with special attention to women and minority and disadvantaged groups, to facilitate their seamless transition into the parliamentary arena (see UNDP, 2011, 36). Furthermore, representative institutions should become friendlier to young parents with appropriate child-care services and sensible working hours—for example, avoidance of late-night parliamentary sessions.

Strong youth party wings, depending on how they are legally defined, are instrumental in assuring effective representation of youth and youth interests in a party. Strong wings facilitate networking, the formation of alliances, and acquisition of important skills and competences through regular activities and various training programs, as well as performing an important recruitment function. Youth wings may prove instrumental in the provision of innovative ideas and projects and assuring significant outreach to their peers.

Another potential booster of youth political (electoral) participation is mainstreaming of youth-related topics/policies/problems into high-profile election debates. In this way,

youth would be addressed directly by high-level politicians; also, political parties would have to devise coherent programs and policy stances.

E-voting is another area that should be considered as possible booster of increasing political participation. E-voting—the ability to vote over the Internet from any location—has been a frequent topic on the agenda of many states that have been trying to boost voter turnout in the last decade (e.g., Slovenia). A number of states have introduced e-voting at various levels but results so far have not been encouraging (see BBC, 2007; Democratic Audit, 2013; LSE, 2013).

**The OSCE executive structures' and its pS should promote representation of youth in political institutions and civil service by integrating youth voices into decision-making processes, removing barriers to youth participation and providing fair opportunities for young people to take part in decision-making processes.**

- pS should ensure participation of youth in political processes with specific focus on developing complementary online and offline participation mechanisms.
- The OSCE executive structures and OSCE pS should ensure the right of individuals to communicate with public authorities and receive information in all main languages spoken in the country, with special attention being devoted to minority languages and languages spoken by disadvantaged groups (e.g. Roma and Sinti, national minorities).
- pS should develop merit-based talent development programmes for graduates wishing to enter the civil service as well as provide capacity-building for young political candidates and elected representatives.
- pS should provide opportunities for youth voices to be heard within the legislative process (including via the Council of Europe Advisory Council, National Youth Councils and Youth Inter-Groups).
- pS should refrain from practices of having the nature of free youth labor (e.g. non-remunerated traineeship and internship schemes) in public and private sectors.
- pS should remove context-specific electoral barriers for youth (e.g. voter registration, financial deposits and higher education requirements) and align the voting age with the eligibility to run for office.
- pS could explore possibilities to introduce e-voting systems to make electoral processes more inclusive and youth-friendly.

**The OSCE executive structures' and its pS should support programmes and measures that increase youth participation in decision-making structures and processes within political parties.**

- pS should link existing incentives (including financial incentives, additional human resources, traineeships and internship schemes) to political parties and political organizations in order to promote and facilitate the presence of youth in political processes.
- The OSCE executive structures' should conduct research to identify gaps in the effective participation of youth in political parties.
- The OSCE executive structures' should encourage pS as well as political parties to mainstream youth perspectives within party policies/agenda.

- The OSCE executive structures' should initiate dialogue with political parties to adopt youth quotas to increase representation of young people within party structures and candidate lists for elections at national, regional and local levels.
- The OSCE executive structures' should pay particular attention to the participation of youth from marginalized groups (e.g. Roma and Sinti, national minorities, women) in political parties.
- The OSCE executive structures' should engage in discussions with political parties and encourage them to provide adequate resources for their youth branches' activities.

## 6. Youth interaction with democratic institutions

Youth recognized the importance of interaction with democratic institutions and participation in decision making process outside elections. Youth-friendly information-sharing as well as feedback mechanisms should be devised, to consider youth partners in governance at all levels. Therefore, social media and other online tools should be exploited in order to allow youth to participate in national and local decision-making. This may include sharing policy information that is presented in a youth-friendly fashion, providing direct youth feedback to government on certain policies (feedback forums), consultations between youth and politicians through social media or other online platforms (e.g. Tweet Congresses), structured citizen surveys, opinion polls, online petitions, policy consultations and dialogue, involvement of youth in development planning, and so forth (see Gretschel et al., 2014, 25–27). It should be noted that these structured dialogues, which may be conceived as a combination of online and offline methods, should include grassroots organizations and unaligned youth, and that the content of dialogue should be codetermined with youth and should have clear follow-ups and consequences (see LSE, 2013, 9).

In-depth coverage of electoral campaigns on social media outlets by political parties, state institutions and public media broadcasters covering elections, and the integration of social media into more prominent campaign tools could enhance the participation of youth. However, these platforms should not replace direct contacts with and among youth; in addition, these tools should try to facilitate dialogue (see LSE, 2013, 14). It should be stressed that politicians and officials that engage in this type of interaction should be appropriately skilled; otherwise these initiatives could lack credibility with "digital natives."

**The OSCE executive structures' and its pS should ensure effective and innovative communication platforms and feedback mechanisms among policy stakeholders at all levels.**

- pS should organize forums that facilitate formal and non-formal interaction between politicians, political and administrative institutions and youth in order to enhance trust and interpersonal understanding.
- pS should support the development of innovative and interactive campaigns that address younger audiences and encourage youth political participation, especially targeting young women and disadvantaged groups.



- pS should consult youth on policy issues and developing policies, specifically gender sensitive policies, based on research findings related to youth needs and opinions.
- pS should promote the use of social networks and e-participation tools by public institutions and representatives at all levels in electoral and policy making processes.
- pS should increase the role of youth organizations in monitoring the implementation of youth policies at all levels. This should be facilitated by the development of youth-friendly web-based applications that would serve as a tool of oversight and feedback in terms of policy agenda setting, policy formulation, policy enactment, policy monitoring and policy evaluation, and would be available to all relevant stakeholders.

## Thematic Analysis of Proposed Recommendations for Improving Youth Political Participation

### Thematic Distribution of Proposed Recommendations

When analysing the distribution of recommendations put forward by participants of both Youth Leadership Forums in the three thematic working groups (governance, influence and voice), several patterns were observed (see Figure 4). Capacity building recommendations were the most frequently proposed recommendations by Forum participants to curb declining youth political participation, as this type of recommendation was proposed 53 times out of a total of 201 (see Appendix 9).

A detailed breakdown of the "capacity building" category of recommendations reveals that most of the recommendations within this category fall within a varied set of programmes and projects that tap into capacity building, from general media literacy programmes, to volunteerism, programmes of intergenerational solidarity, cultural projects and human rights awareness. Furthermore, a set of 13 out of 53 recommendations directly targeted civic education in at least one segment of the educational system (primary, secondary or tertiary) and formal as well as non-formal programmes. Additionally, another robust topic identified among the proposed recommendations was digital literacy. This topic encompassed recommendations targeting general programmes for the promotion of digital literacy, IT skills training, understanding the technical background of the Internet, coding and network administration, inclusion of these topics into school curricula and building teachers' capacity to integrate information and communication technologies (ICT) into the teaching and learning processes. Two other sub-groups of recommendations within the capacity building categories targeted identified deficiencies among civil servants and young (and female and disadvantaged) politicians.

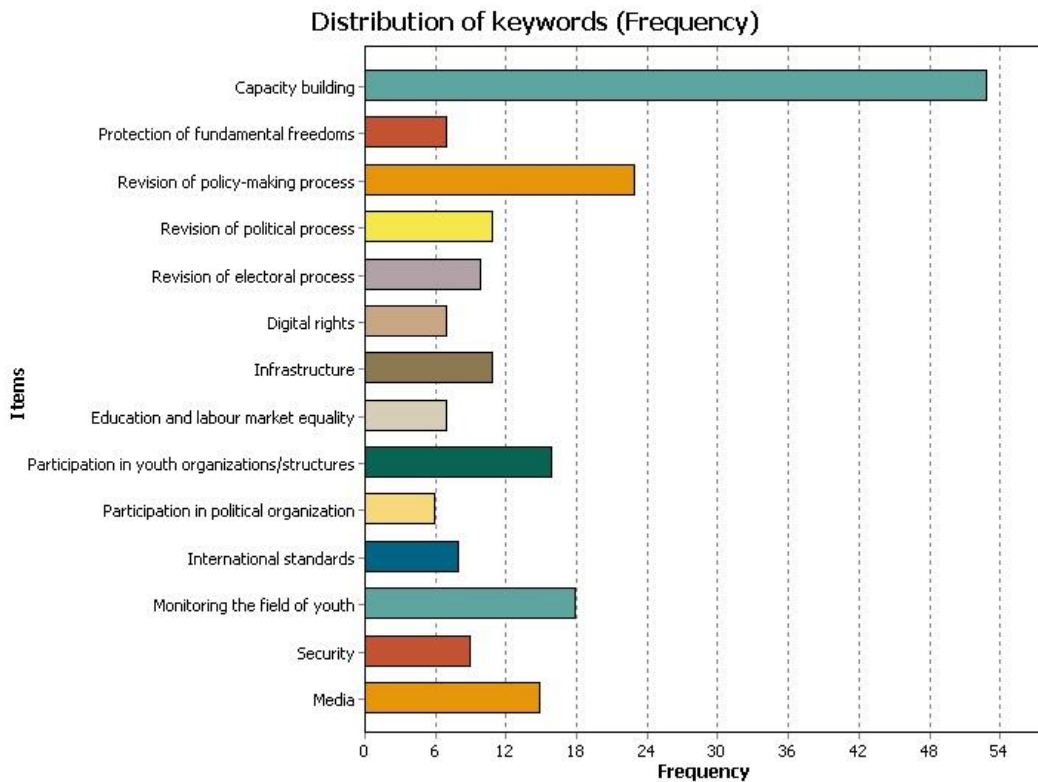


Figure 4. Distribution of identified themes of recommendations.

The second most frequently tapped theme in the Forum proposed recommendations was the policy making process. This clearly indicated that youth representatives conceive of the "political" as something that transcends mere electoral races or politics in terms of acquiring power and influence. Moreover, participants of the Forums clearly understand that the issue of declining youth participation has to be firmly placed within the processes of the formulation, enactment and implementation of public policies. This category of recommendations therefore focuses on various mechanisms that would make the process of public policy making closer, more understandable, more responsive and, primarily, more transparent to contemporary youth. This includes the introduction of various innovative communication platforms, the improved use of new media in the policy-making process, inclusive and transparent interaction of policy-makers and civil society and representatives of different other interests, calls for more evidence-based policies, the introduction of various feedback mechanisms at different stages of the policy process and so forth.

Another theme that proved to be high on the priority list of young leaders was the importance of collecting data about youth, monitoring public policies that have an impact on youth, conducting research in the field of youth concerns and debating and disseminating information on the state of youth. Young leaders clearly expressed an understanding of the importance of the systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of a diverse set of statistics related to youth and the creation of specialised bodies to perform these tasks, in order to make informed decisions on appropriate public policies and detect potential problems. Roughly of equal importance were the recommendations of young leaders to elevate and enrich the participation of young people in youth organisations and, consequently, improve their expression of interests. These recommendations ranged from the provision of a more enabling environment for the establishment of and conduct of activities

of youth organisations to the identification of ways to reinforce youths' interests and the influence of youth organisations on the political process.

In addition to the above observed priority areas, the topic of the media also gathered attention (15 recommendations out of 201). These concentrated on standards for media regulation, co-operation between media and civil society organisations (CSOs), youth-specific media programmes, community media development, funds for youth-targeted media activities and so on. Other less frequent recommendations, still of vital importance for the health of democracies, were the notions of protecting fundamental rights and freedoms, digital rights and the issue of security. Recommendations concerning digital rights focused on the introduction of legislative instruments to protect anonymity, rights concerning the use of encryption, network filtering, intermediary liability and copyright. These issues are crucial in terms of the provision of safe online and offline environments for activists and citizens.

### Differences in Recommendations between to the First and Second Youth Leadership Forums

The main difference between the two organised youth forums was their geographical focus, since the first included representatives from Western and Central Europe, as well as South-East Europe, while the second hosted representatives from Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Mongolia and the South Caucasus. As was anticipated, despite more or less equivalent attention paid to a number of different thematic areas, some clear regional differences emerged. .

Beginning with similarities, a high level of attention was given to recommendations exposing the importance of capacity building among youth (see Table 1). Almost equal attention was devoted to proposals aimed at revising the policy-making process, available infrastructure (mainly related to the ICT), participation in youth organisations and structures and the media.

Some important differences were also observed. In relation to the recommendations focused on capacity building, digital literacy was identified as a high priority among participants in the first forum, in particular for participants from Western and Central Europe (see Appendix 10). This clearly reflects the reality that digital literacy is more present in both the public and political agendas in these regions. This is in line with observations regarding recommendations for tackling security issues, as the first forum mainly focused on online security, whilst the second also focused on its offline aspects. Digital rights corroborate this claim, as this was an issue more present on the agenda of participants attending the first forum.

	First forum	Second forum
Capacity building	33	20
Protection of fundamental freedoms		7
Revision of policy-making process	12	11
Revision of political process	8	3
Revision of electoral process	7	3
Digital rights	6	1
Infrastructure	5	6
Education and labour market equality	1	6
Participation in youth org./str.	9	7
Participation in political organization	6	
International standards	5	3
Monitoring the field of youth	16	2
Security offline	1	3
Security online	4	1
Media	7	8

*Table 1.* Distribution of identified themes of recommendations according to two forums.

Other noticeable differences in recommendations focused on the revision of the political and electoral processes. These disparities regarding the monitoring of the field of youth such as, youth participation in political organisations, education and labour market equality, and the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms, attracted the most attention. To be precise, collecting data on the situation of youth, analyzing it and establishing a supporting infrastructure that allows for the systematic implementation of monitoring activities is clearly prioritised among Western and Central European participants. This was highlighted in recommendations aiming to improve the position of youth within political parties, either by introducing youth party quotas, providing additional resources to youth party wings or mainstreaming, instead of ghettoising youth in party agendas.

Participants in the second forum prioritised measures that protect the autonomy of educational institutions, including youth in the educational governance process and the creation of fair educational and job opportunities for individuals coming from different backgrounds. In addition, their aspirations to improve mobility and the respect of certain fundamental rights and freedoms (e.g., freedoms of expression and association) appeared exclusively on the agenda of the second forum participants.

### Differences in Recommendations According to the Three Thematic Working Groups

On the basis of participants' diverse backgrounds, one would expect important differences in the prioritisation of various mechanisms that must be employed in order to improve the level of political participation of youth.

#### Voice

As the three groups centred their discussions around different sets of activities (non-formal, semi-formal and formal), it was somehow to be expected that a group of bloggers and online activists (voice) would prioritise capacity building mechanisms to a higher degree than the other two categories (Table 2). The bulk of the recorded differences may mainly be attributed to their prioritising of programmes and projects designed to improve media and

digital literacy. (see Appendix 11). The voice group also predominantly prioritised the area of digital rights and media regulation and activity, as these two areas are linked to the voice category (see Table 2).

	Governance	Influence	Voice
Capacity building	16	13	24
Protection of fundamental freedoms	1	4	2
Revision of policy-making process	10	3	10
Revision of political process	9	2	
Revision of electoral process	5	2	3
Digital rights		1	6
Infrastructure	1	3	7
Education and labour market equality	1	6	
Participation in youth org./str.	3	9	4
Participation in political organization	6		
International standards		4	4
Monitoring the field of youth	3	8	7
Security	2	4	3
Media	1	4	10

*Table 2.* Distribution of identified themes of recommendations according to three thematic working groups.

## Governance

Another important, and also expected, difference is the governance group's (young politicians, executives and policy specialists) focus on recommendations for reforming the political process, including various fast-track mechanisms to increase the level of representation of youth in the political process, but also proposals to address negative perceptions of politics among youth and to forge strong links between young people and established political actors. Equally anticipated are the young politicians', executives' and policy specialists' focus on participation in political organisations (i.e., political parties). As parties are the main gate keepers in contemporary representative democracies, it is in line with this group's orientation and participants' backgrounds to focus on ways to make political parties more bearable to youth cohorts (primarily in terms of supporting youth wings and preventing the ghettoization of political apprentices and youth topics). To a degree, the Governance group also focused a bit more than the other groups did on reforms related to the electoral process, primarily in terms of removing electoral barriers (e.g., voter registration, higher education requirement, financial deposits), voting age alignment and the introduction of e-voting systems.

## Influence

The influence group, with its representatives coming from NGOs, civil society and think tanks, highlighted monitoring the field of youth such as youth participation in political organisations, education and labour market equality, and the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms, but primarily focussed on participation in youth organisations. As this group



was concerned with public campaigns, activism and the lobbying activities of CSOs, including NGOs and think tanks, it forwarded recommendations focusing on strengthening civil society and creating monitoring mechanisms that would "shadow" the actions of the state in various fields relevant to youth. In this sense, the calls for the establishment of structures for ensuring systematic practices to monitoring the field of youth should be performed by independent non-state actors.

All three groups covered most of the identified thematic areas and highlighted the major issues concerning political participation of youth, to a certain degree. The three thematic groups proposed both agency-centred and structure-centred measures in a more or less balanced manner, which testifies to their in-depth understanding of the political process and the complex task of reversing the trend of declining youth political participation.

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## List of Abbreviations

CIS - Commonwealth of Independent States

CSO - civil society organization

EU - European Union

EVS - European Values Study

ICT - information and communication technology

IDEA - International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

NGO - Non-governmental organization

OECD - Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

OSCE - Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

OSCE ODIHR - OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

US - United States of America

WVS - World Values Survey

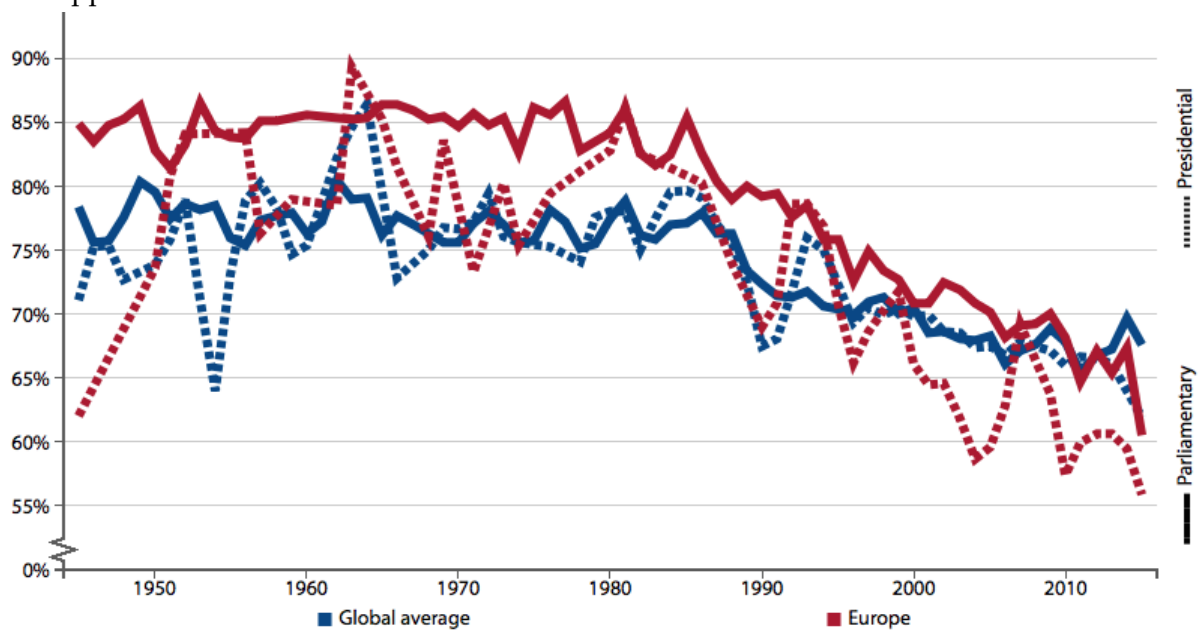


## Appendices

Appendices show various trends to political participation in a large number of OSCE participating States such as voter turnout, membership in political parties, activism. The graphs refer to 44 out of 57 OSCE participating States as this is the comparative public data on youth political participation that is available.

### Statistics (appendix 1-11)

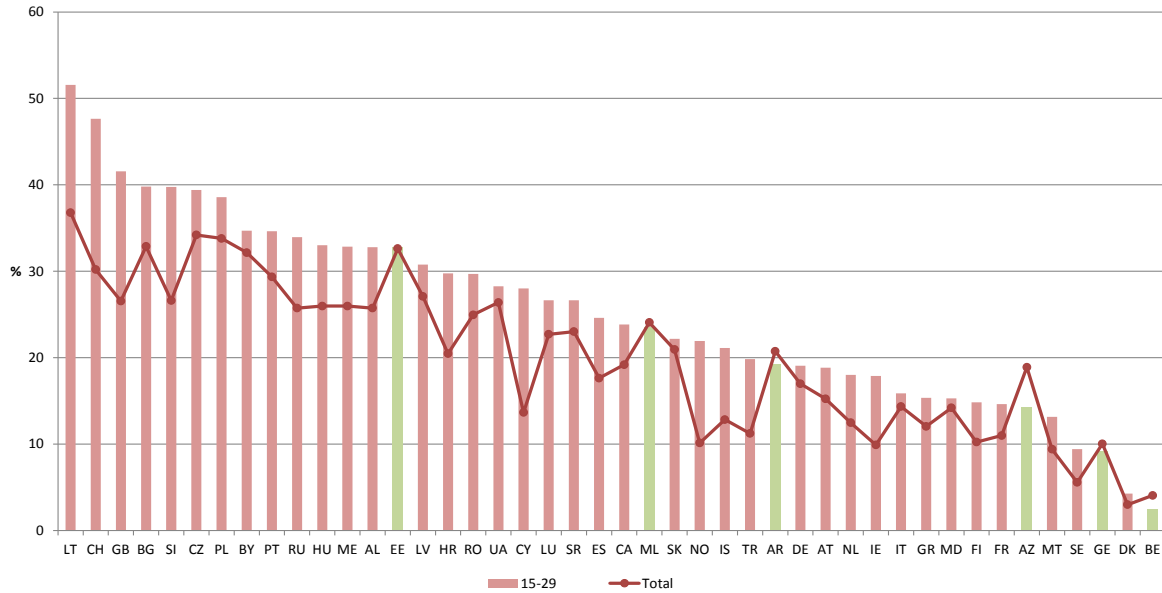
*Appendix 1.* Turnout in parliamentary and presidential elections for European states compared to the global average. Numbers refer to 44 out of 57 OSCE participating States. See appendix 4.



Source: IDEA (2015)

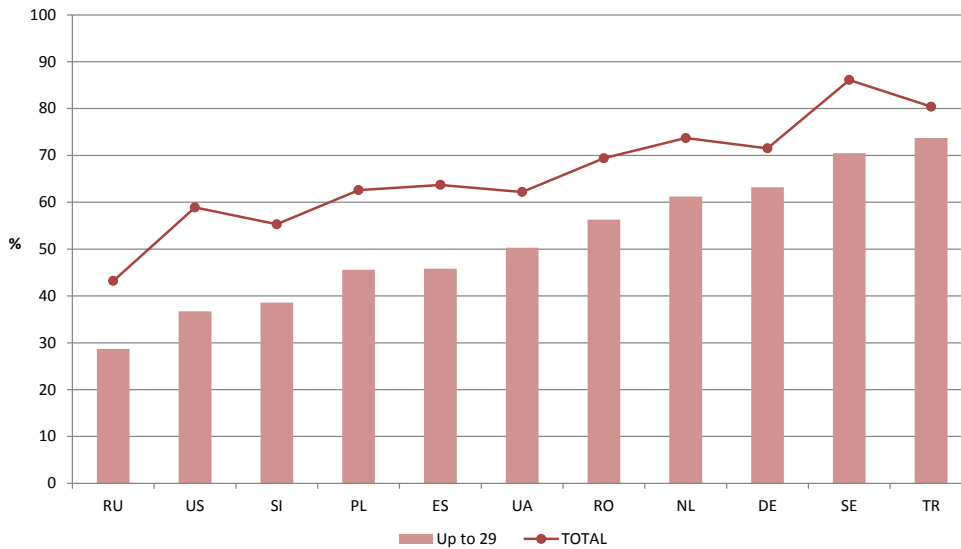


*Appendix 2.* If there was a general election tomorrow, can you tell me if you would vote? (No). Numbers refer to 44 out of 57 OSCE participating States.



Source: EVS (2011)

*Appendix 3.* Percentage of respondents that always vote at national-level elections. Numbers refer to 44 out of 57 OSCE participating States.



Source: WVS (2014)

*Appendix 4.* Number of respondents responding that they would not vote in the next general elections. Question: If there was a general election tomorrow, which party would you vote for? (I would not vote) Numbers refer to 44 out of 57 OSCE participating States.

Country	EVS-wave					
	1990-1993		1999-2001		2008-2010*	
	Total	15-29	Total	15-29	Total	15-29
Albania					25.7%	32.8%
Azerbaijan					18.9%	14.3%
Austria			4.9%	6.4%	15.3%	18.9%
Armenia					20.7%	19.2%
Belgium			7.8%	5.7%	4.1%	2.5%
Bosnia Herzegovina						
Bulgaria	12.3%	9.9%	33.5%	47.3%	32.9%	39.8%
Belarus			38.8%	34.8%	32.2%	34.7%
Canada					19.2%	23.8%
Croatia			14.7%	16.7%	20.5%	29.8%
Cyprus					13.7%	28.0%
Czech Republic			20.3%	23.4%	34.2%	39.4%
Denmark			2.4%	1.8%	3.0%	4.3%
Estonia			15.0%	19.8%	32.6%	32.8%
Finland			7.0%	6.5%	10.2%	14.8%
France			8.2%	11.5%	11.0%	14.6%
Georgia					10.0%	9.2%
Germany	.3%	.6%	12.9%	18.9%	17.0%	19.1%
Greece			13.6%	17.3%	12.1%	15.4%
Hungary	14.2%	11.2%	31.6%	35.2%	26.0%	33.0%
Iceland	2.9%	4.1%	3.2%	3.4%	12.8%	21.1%
Ireland			11.0%	16.0%	9.9%	17.9%
Italy			14.5%	15.3%	14.3%	15.9%
Latvia			11.6%	12.5%	27.1%	30.8%
Lithuania			32.0%	37.5%	36.8%	51.6%
Luxembourg			11.4%	14.6%	22.7%	26.6%
Malta			12.1%	18.4%	9.4%	13.2%
Moldova					14.2%	15.3%
Montenegro					26.0%	32.9%
Netherlands			1.7%	2.0%	12.5%	18.0%
Norway					10.1%	21.9%
Poland	.7%	.0%	15.2%	14.3%	33.8%	38.6%
Portugal			17.2%	22.1%	29.4%	34.6%
Romania			23.4%	31.2%	25.0%	29.7%
Russian Federation			15.9%	19.1%	25.7%	33.9%
Serbia					23.0%	26.6%
Slovak Republic	3.2%	1.4%	10.9%	13.3%	20.9%	22.2%
Slovenia			25.2%	32.5%	26.6%	39.8%
Spain	1.1%	1.2%	19.1%	24.8%	17.6%	24.6%
Sweden			1.9%	1.6%	5.6%	9.4%
Switzerland					30.2%	47.7%
Turkey			9.8%	9.1%	11.2%	19.8%
Ukraine			6.4%	10.7%	26.4%	28.3%
Macedonia					24.1%	23.5%
Great Britain			14.6%	21.8%	26.6%	41.6%

USA

\*e178\_01 If there was a general election tomorrow, can you tell me if you would vote? (No)

Source: EVS (2011)

*Appendix 5. Membership in Political Parties. Question asked: Please look carefully at the following list of voluntary organizations and activities and indicate which, if any, you belong to? (political party—1 mentioned) Numbers refer to 44 out of 57 OSCE participating States.*

Country	EVS-wave							
	1981-1984		1990-1993		1999-2001		2008-2010	
	Total	15-29	Total	15-29	Total	15-29	Total	15-29
Albania							10.5%	9.3%
Azerbaijan							4.7%	2.6%
Austria			11.6%	5.7%	11.5%	6.6%	6.6%	2.8%
Armenia							4.1%	3.5%
Belgium	2.8%	1.6%	5.8%	4.6%	7.0%	4.6%	4.1%	1.2%
Bosnia Herzegovina							4.2%	3.6%
Bulgaria			11.4%	6.3%	3.7%	3.4%	4.1%	2.0%
Belarus					0.6%	0.4%	0.7%	1.3%
Canada	5.5%	3.6%	7.2%	5.5%				
Croatia					3.8%	2.5%	7.1%	10.5%
Cyprus							6.8%	5.1%
Czech Republic			5.0%	2.3%	3.6%	1.9%	3.2%	2.4%
Denmark	7.3%	2.7%	6.5%	2.2%	6.6%	4.8%	6.6%	7.1%
Estonia			7.9%	4.4%	1.6%	1.3%	3.9%	4.2%
Finland			13.8%	7.8%	6.6%	2.8%	9.9%	4.4%
France	2.5%	2.1%	2.7%	0.4%	2.0%	1.3%	2.8%	3.7%
Georgia							1.6%	1.4%
Germany	8.2%	8.4%	8.1%	5.4%	2.8%	1.1%	3.5%	0.3%
Greece					7.9%	5.6%	5.1%	5.1%
Hungary			2.4%	1.8%	1.6%	0.9%	0.6%	0.3%
Iceland	12.6%	5.4%	15.1%	11.9%	19.0%	13.9%	23.9%	18.0%
Ireland	4.4%	3.6%	3.8%	2.0%	4.2%	3.9%	5.9%	5.8%
Italy	6.3%	4.6%	5.3%	5.7%	4.1%	2.0%	3.7%	3.0%
Latvia			18.4%	13.7%	1.9%	1.1%	2.0%	1.9%
Lithuania			7.4%	4.3%	1.3%	1.1%	4.1%	1.8%
Luxembourg					6.0%	2.4%	5.5%	3.2%
Malta	8.6%	9.2%	8.4%	7.7%	5.9%	2.7%	1.8%	2.0%
Moldova							1.8%	1.8%
Montenegro							4.7%	2.8%
Netherlands	8.6%	3.7%	9.8%	4.1%	9.3%	2.9%	10.7%	5.4%
Norway	14.3%	6.5%	13.9%	8.1%			7.1%	4.3%
Poland			1.6%	2.6%	0.7%	0.0%	0.8%	0.3%
Portugal			4.6%	6.2%	0.9%	1.2%	3.4%	2.6%
Romania			2.5%	1.1%	2.3%	2.5%	3.7%	3.2%
Russian Federation					0.7%	1.4%	2.1%	2.2%
Serbia							6.9%	8.2%
Slovak Republic			2.7%	1.6%	6.6%	3.2%	1.2%	0.6%

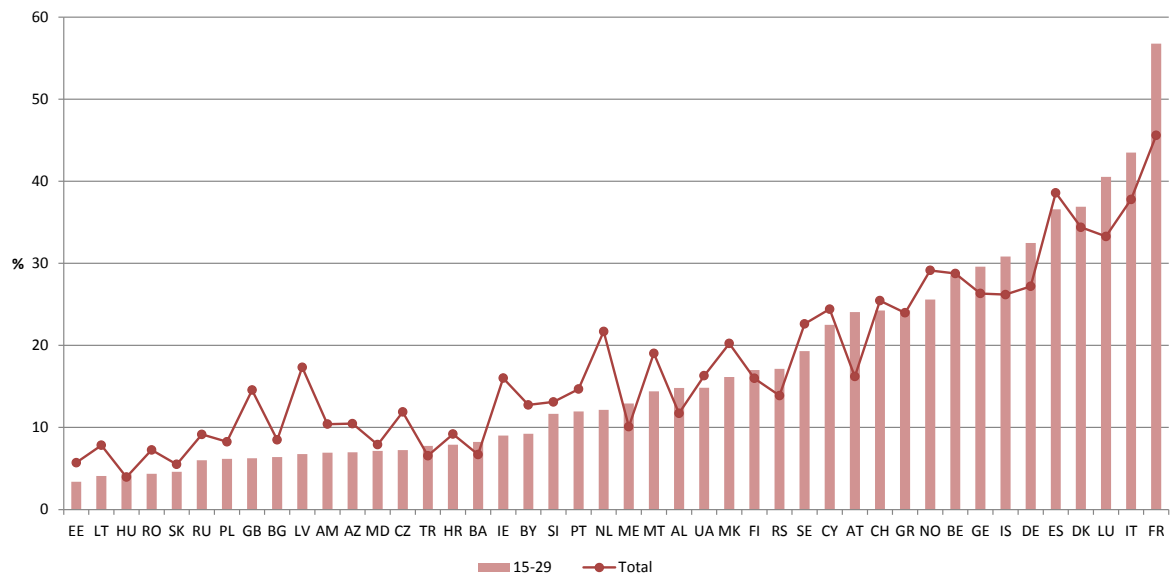
Slovenia			3.3%	1.6%	3.0%	2.3%	3.9%	1.8%
Spain	2.7%	3.3%	1.4%	0.7%	2.0%	1.0%	2.3%	2.4%
Sweden	13.5%	6.3%	10.1%	3.6%	10.6%	5.5%	5.3%	7.9%
Switzerland							4.7%	2.6%
Turkey					3.5%	3.3%	2.9%	2.5%
Ukraine					2.2%	0.7%	2.7%	2.9%
Macedonia							10.9%	10.4%
Great Britain	4.5%	2.4%	5.7%	3.1%	2.5%	2.3%	1.9%	0.4%
USA	11.7%	8.1%	13.9%	9.0%				

Source: EVS (2011)

Appendix 6. Occupying buildings or factories (Have done). Numbers refer to 44 out of 57 OSCE participating States.

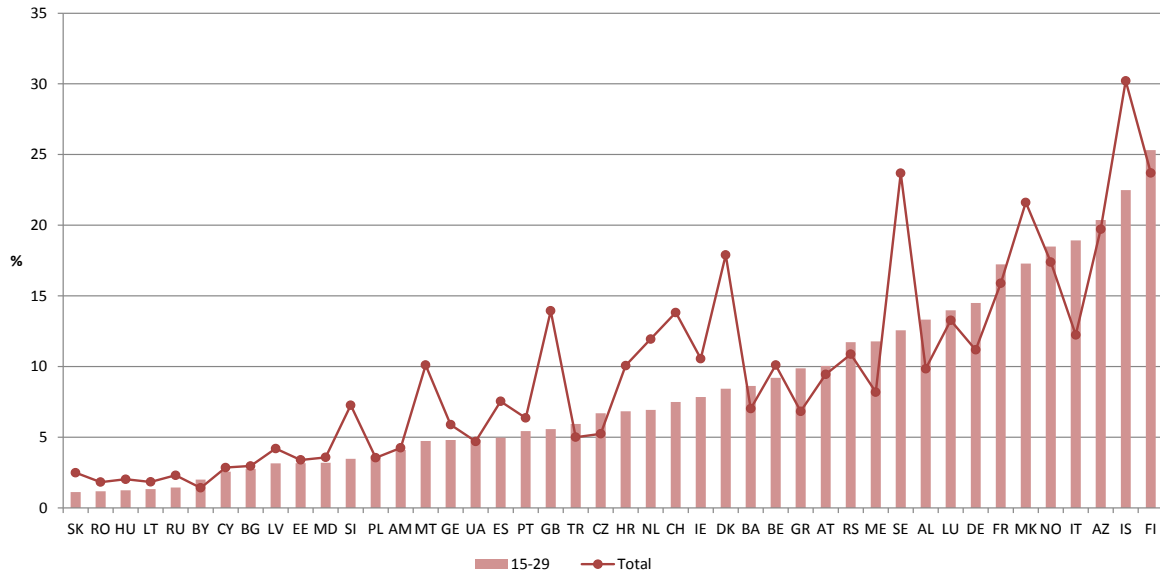
Source: EVS (2011)

Appendix 7. Attending lawful demonstrations (Have done). Numbers refer to 44 out of 57 OSCE participating States.



Source: EVS (2011)

*Appendix 8. Joining in boycotts (Have done). Numbers refer to 44 out of 57 OSCE participating States.*



Source: EVS (2011)

*Appendix 9. Thematic distribution of recommendations proposed by two youth forums.*

As previously described, for the analysis of the proposed recommendations, ODIHR expert implemented a computer-assisted content analysis, a version of computer-assisted text analysis conventionally recognized as thematic text analysis (see Popping, 2000). The set of six documents proposing recommendations, each produced within one of the three working groups of the two youth forums, was manually coded utilizing theoretically informed codes that were grouped into broader categories depicting a plethora of identified theoretically relevant problems and solutions related to youth political participation. The coded qualitative data was subsequently quantified in order to explore any emergent patterns, and for presentation purposes (see Saldaña, 2009, 50).

Code	Count	% Codes	Cases	% Cases
Capacity building	53	26,4%	6	100,0%
Protection of fundamental freedoms	7	3,5%	3	50,0%
Revision of policy-making process	23	11,4%	6	100,0%
Revision of political process	11	5,5%	4	66,7%
Revision of electoral process	10	5,0%	4	66,7%
Digital rights	7	3,5%	2	33,3%
Infrastructure	11	5,5%	5	83,3%
Education and labour market equality	7	3,5%	2	33,3%
Participation in youth organizations/structures	16	8,0%	6	100,0%
Participation in political organization	6	3,0%	1	16,7%
International standards	8	4,0%	3	50,0%
Monitoring the field of youth	18	9,0%	5	83,3%
Security	9	4,5%	4	66,7%
Media	15	7,5%	4	66,7%

Detailed breakdown of "Capacity building" and "Security" categories.



Code	Count	% Codes	Cases	% Cases
Civic education	13	6,5%	4	66,7%
Digital literacy	9	4,5%	4	66,7%
Capacity building of youth representatives	4	2,0%	4	66,7%
Capacity building in civil service	4	2,0%	3	50,0%
Capacity building of young individuals	23	11,4%	6	100,0%
Security offline	4	2,0%	3	50,0%
Security online	5	2,5%	3	50,0%

*Appendix 10.* Distribution of identified themes of recommendations according to two forums (detailed breakdown of "Capacity building" and "Security" categories).

	First forum	Second forum
Civic education	9	4
Digital literacy	8	1
Capacity building of youth representatives	2	2
Capacity building in civil service	2	2
Capacity building of young individuals	12	11
Security offline	1	3
Security online	4	1

*Appendix 11.* Distribution of identified themes of recommendations according to three thematic working groups (detailed breakdown of "Capacity building" and "Security" categories).

	Governance	Influence	Voice
Civic education	3	5	5
Digital literacy	1	2	6
Capacity building of youth representatives	2	1	1
Capacity building in civil service	3	1	
Capacity building of young individuals	7	4	12
Security offline	2	1	1
Security online		3	2

## Agenda from 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Youth Leadership Forums

### Appendix 12

## Youth Political Participation Forum

16-17 June 2014

ODIHR Office – Helsinki Room

Ul. Miodowa 10, Warsaw

### Final Agenda

Monday, 16 June 2014

#### Plenary

08.30-09.00 Coffee served

09.00-09.45 *Welcome address by Mr. Thomas Vennen*, Head of Democratization Department, ODIHR

**Key-note speech** by Ms Amelia Andersdotter, Member of the European Parliament, Pirate Party  
**Video Messages** from the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Carl Bildt, the UN Special Envoy on Youth, Mr Ahmad Alhendawi and Mr. Stanko Daniel, Romani EP candidate

09.45-10.00 *Introduction to the event*

Introduction to the Agenda, the Plenary and the modalities of break-out sessions

10.00-11.30 *Panel discussion followed by Q&A session: "Politically lost generation"*

**Moderator**, Stefan Schocher, Journalist at the Kurier; **Researchers**, Chiara Lorenzini (Voice), Alina Östling (Influence) and Tomaž Deželan (Governance); **Discussant**: Allan Päll, Secretary General - European Youth Forum

11.30-12.00 *Coffee break*

12.00-12.45 *OSCE Commitments and Initiatives pertaining to Youth, Good Practices and Challenges and Q&A session. Speaker: Marijana Rakic*, Advisor Ministerial Council Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA OSCE Chairmanship Task Force and **Peter Mossop**, ODIHR

13.00-14.00 *Gender Equality Power Lunch (ODIHR): "Are young women really interested in politics?"*

### Thematic Discussions (Thematic Working Groups)

14.00-16.30 **Working Group – Session I:** *This session will serve to initiate the work of developing recommendations and action points that will be presented at the end of the Forum. The research papers and comments received in online discussion will initially be discussed and elaborated on more in-depth. Researchers will present a more in-depth perspective of their papers and invite participants to engage in a discussion. Participants will validate researchers' hypotheses, linking the findings to on-line discussions thus aiming at presenting recommendations/action points. Rapporteurs will collect and circulate initial recommendations based on the first day of discussions.*

- Group 1 - Voice: In-depth topical discussions with researcher and additional panelist.  
Moderators Chiara Lorenzini - Researcher and Rapporteur: Danica Hanz - ODIHR
- Group 2 - Influence: In-depth topical discussions with researcher and additional panelist. Moderators Alina Östling - Researcher and Rapporteur: Peter Wittschorek - ODIHR
- Group 3 - Governance: In-depth topical discussions with researcher and additional panelist.  
Moderators Tomaž Deželan - Researcher and Rapporteur: David Mark - ODIHR

17.30-18.30 **Pizza and drinks (ODIHR)**

18.30-20.00 **Late-night Oxford Debate ("This House Believes that Democracy disregards Minorities")**

**Moderators :** Marcin Walecki - ODIHR and Stefan Schocher - Journalist, Kurier

### Tuesday, 17 June 2014

09.15-09.30 **Opening of the second day**

09.30-12.00 **Working Group – Session II:** *Discussions from the first day continue. Each working group will finalize the recommendations they wish to put forward to the plenary.*

- Group 1 - Voice: Moderators Chiara Lorenzini - Researcher and Rapporteur: Danica Hanz - ODIHR

- Group 2 - Influence: Moderators Alina Östling - Researcher and Rapporteur: Peter Wittschorek - ODIHR
- Group 3 - Governance : Moderators Tomaž Deželan - Researcher and Rapporteur: David Mark - ODIHR

**Parallel activities:**

12.00-13.30 **Lunch (ODIHR)**

12.00-13.30 **Rapporteurs and researchers meet with moderator to finalize draft recommendations/action points from discussion** (on-line and breakout groups). **Recommendations/action points circulated to participants.**

13.30-14.45 **Working Group – Session III:** Working groups individually discuss recommendations/action points compiled by the rapporteurs, researchers and the moderator and assess to what extent they are overlapping, incompatible or complementary. **Comments submitted to the moderator of the plenary by the Rapporteurs.**

- Group 1 - Voice: Moderators Chiara Lorenzini - Researcher and Rapporteur: –Danica Hanz
- Group 2 - Influence: Moderators Alina Ostling - Researcher and Rapporteur: Peter Wittschorek - ODIHR
- Group 3 - Governance : Moderators Tomaž Deželan - Researcher and Rapporteur: David Mark

14.45-15.30 **Coffee break**

**Plenary**

15.30-17.00 **Presentation of recommendations/action points of thematic discussions:** Moderator will present comments submitted on the recommendations and open up for a discussion. A final list of recommendations will be presented to the plenary and the floor will be open for final remarks.

17.00-18.00 Closing addresses and Group Photo

18.30-21.00 **Reception – Momu Gastrobar, Wierzbowa 9/11, 00-094 Warszawa**

*Coffee and tea will be available throughout all sessions.*



Appendix 12

## Youth Leadership Forum

13-14 November 2014  
ODIHR Office – Helsinki Room  
Ul. Miodowa 10, Warsaw

### Draft Agenda

Thursday, 13 November 2014

#### Helsinki Room

- 08.30-09.00 Coffee served
- 09.00-09.45 **Welcome address** by Marcin Walecki, Chief of Democratic Governance and Gender Unit, Democratization Department, OSCE/ODIHR
- Video Messages** from the UN Special Envoy on Youth, Mr Ahmad Alhendawi and Mr. Stanko Daniel, Romani EP candidate
- Keynote speech** by Mr Andriy Shevchenko, former Member of the Parliament of Ukraine
- 09.45-10.00 *Introduction to the event*
- Introduction of the participants, the Agenda, the Plenary and the modalities of break-out sessions
- 10.00-11.30 *Panel discussion followed by Q&A session: Generation "Politics"*
- Moderator**, Peter Mossop, OSCE/ODIHR; **Researchers**, Chiara Lorenzini, Tomaž Deželan; **Discussant**: Dorota Mitrus, European Institute for Democracy, Chris Holzen, International Republican Institute (IRI)
- 11.30-12.00 *Coffee break*
- 12.00-12.30 *OSCE Commitments and Initiatives pertaining to Youth, Good Practices and Challenges and Q&A session.* Marcin Walecki, OSCE/ODIHR
- 12.30 **Lunch served (ODIHR premises)**
- 13.00-14.00 *Gender Equality Power Lunch (ODIHR premises): "Gender Equality in Elected Office"*

### Thematic Discussions (Thematic Working Groups)

14.00-16.30 **Working Group – Session I:** *This session will serve to initiate the work of developing recommendations and action points that will be presented at the end of the Forum. The research papers and comments received from participants on the papers will initially be discussed and elaborated on more in-depth. Researchers will present a more in-depth perspective of their papers and invite participants to engage in a discussion. Participants will discuss researchers' hypotheses aiming at presenting recommendations/action points. Rapporteurs will collect and circulate initial recommendations based on the first day of discussions.*

- Group 1 - Voice: In-depth thematic discussions with researcher and additional panelist.  
Moderator Mr Andriy Shevchenko and Rapporteur: Chiara Lorenzini
- Group 2 - Influence: In-depth thematic discussions with researcher and additional panelist.  
Moderator Oleksandr Solontaj and Rapporteur Alexander Shlyk – OSCE/ODIHR
- Group 3 - Governance: In-depth thematic discussions with researcher and additional panelist.  
Moderators Tomaž Deželan and Rapporteur Kateryna Ryabiko – OSCE/ODIHR

17.30-18.30 **Pizza and drinks (ODIHR premises)**

18.30-20.00 **Late-night Debate (“The power of Technology in Democracy”) - Moderated Debate on Larry Diamond’s article “Liberation Technology”**

**Moderator:** Marcin Walecki, ODIHR

<b>Friday, 14 November 2014</b>
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09.15-09.30 **Opening of the second day,** Peter Mossop, OSCE/ODIHR

09.30-12.00 **Working Group – Session II:** *Discussions from the first day continue. Each working group works on the recommendations they wish to put forward to the plenary.*

- Group 1 - Voice: Moderator Mr Andriy Shevchenko and Rapporteur: Chiara Lorenzini
- Group 2 - Influence: Moderator Oleksandr Solontaj and Rapporteur: Alexander Shlyk – OSCE/ODIHR
- Group 3 - Governance: Moderator Tomaž Deželan and Rapporteur: Kateryna Ryabiko – OSCE/ODIHR



*Coffee and tea will be available*

**Parallel activities:**

12.00-13.30 **Lunch (ODIHR premises)**, during the lunch there will be an opportunity to informally meet and discuss with represented organizations at different tables.

13.30-15.00 **Working Group – Session III: Working groups finalize the recommendations/action points they will be presenting to the plenary.**

- Group 1 - Voice: Moderator Mr Andriy Shevchenko and Rapporteur: Chiara Lorenzini
- Group 2 - Influence: Moderator Oleksandr Solontaj and Rapporteur: Alexander Shlyk – OSCE/ODIHR
- Group 3 - Governance: Moderator Tomaž Deželan and Rapporteur: Kateryna Ryabiko-OSCE/ODIHR

15.00-15.30 **Coffee break**

**Plenary**

15.30-16.30 **Presentation of recommendations/action points resulting from thematic discussions and the way forward:** Rapporteurs present the recommendations and action points from each group. The floor will then be opened for final remarks and questions.

17.00-18.00 Closing addresses and Group Photo

18.30-21.00 **Reception – venue tbc**

*Coffee and tea will be available throughout all sessions.*