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## REPORT FORM

### Trio Presidency: Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg Consultation on youth empowerment for political participation

**DEADLINE: Sunday March 1<sup>st</sup> 2015**

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Please find below the form allowing your National Working Group or International Non-Governmental Youth Organisation, to carry out and communication the results of the consultation to the European Steering Committee. The input you will provide through this form will serve as a common base for the discussions at EU level.

We want to remind you that NWGs are encouraged to use the Online Participation Platform (OPP) to carry out the consultation, with wider access to young people. The questions are being inserted in the platform. If you wish to use the OPP, please contact Graeme Robertson ([Graeme.ROBERTSON@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Graeme.ROBERTSON@ec.europa.eu))

In order to allow the European Steering Committee to integrate the results of the consultations in preparation for the EU Youth Conference in Latvia, we kindly ask you to please send this report form filled in to the European Steering Committee (**mail to:** [lucille.rieux@youthforum.org](mailto:lucille.rieux@youthforum.org)) **and to your national government by Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2015**

The European Steering Committee kindly asks you to **fill out this form in English and return it in typed format (not as a PDF file, please).**

#### Technical details of the consultation:

Please provide the requested information on your National Working Group or INGYO:

Details of the contact persons:	
Name	Nizar YAICHE
E-mail address	<a href="mailto:Dialogue.structure@cnejep.asso.fr">Dialogue.structure@cnejep.asso.fr</a>
Institution	CNAJEP – Comité pour les relations Nationales et internationales des Associations de jeunesse et d'éducation populaire.
Position	Chargé de projet Dialogue Structuré
EU Member State (if appropriate)	FRANCE

<b>Members of the National Working Group (number and names)</b>	
Youth Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ANACEJ – Association Nationale des Conseils d’Enfants et de Jeunes,</li> <li>• Animafac</li> <li>• EEDF – Eclaireuses Eclaireurs de France,</li> <li>• EEUdF – Eclaireuses Eclaireurs Unionistes de France,</li> <li>• FAGE – Fédération des Associations Générales Etudiantes,</li> <li>• FFMJC – Fédération Française des Maison de Jeunes et de la Culture,</li> <li>• FFJ – Forum Français de la Jeunesse,</li> <li>• les Francas,</li> <li>• Itinéraire International,</li> <li>• Association Jean Monnet,</li> <li>• Jeunes Européens France,</li> <li>• JOC- Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne,</li> <li>• Mouvement de la Paix,</li> <li>• Mouvement Rural des Jeunesse Chrétiennes,</li> <li>• PEJ- Parlement Européen des Jeunes,</li> <li>• SGDF- Scouts et Guides de France,</li> <li>• UFAL – Union des Familles Laïques.</li> </ul> <p>Les associations membres du Groupe National de Travail (présentes ou excusées) sont au nombre de 17.</p>
National Authorities (please specify if Ministry for Youth and/or representatives from other Ministries)	<p>Ministère de la Ville, de la Jeunesse et des Sports Direction de la Jeunesse de l’Education Populaire et de la Vie Associative – Mission de la Coopération Européenne et Internationale.</p> <p>Ministère de l’Education Nationale – Direction Général de l’Enseignement Scolaire.</p> <p>Assemblée Nationale - Commission des Affaires Culturelles</p>

	et de l'Education	
National Agencies	Agence Erasmus + Jeunesse	
Others (please specify)	INJEP – Institut National de la Jeunesse et de l'Education Populaire  CIDJ – Centre d'Information et de Documentation Jeunesse, Eurodesk.	
<b>Level of the consultation (international, national, regional, local).</b> Please, describe briefly for each level, how the consultations were carried out and which methodologies were used.		
Local	Through an online questioner we have reached local level in all region of France (including overseas territory). This questioner has been spread via our member organisations and our territory platform (CRAJEP).	
Regional	In close working with few of our CRAJEP we help to design, implement and evaluate regional events, we also foster the involvement of regional stakeholders in taking part to the Structured Dialogue process by joining training activities.	
National	We ensured participation of national youth organisations and institution through a questioner based on the outcomes of the online questioner which was dedicated to young people.  Via this second questioner national stakeholders have been encouraged to bring expertise, to formulate propositions and to share good practices	
International (for international youth NGOs)		
<b>Target group consulted</b>	<b>Specify the methodology of the consultation</b>	<b>Number of people</b>
Young people (non associated)	Online questioner	1478 Young people
Young people represented by youth organisations	Based on the results of the online questioner, a second step in consultation	Directly: 88 Indirectly: 1 288

	has been made for organisations.	000
Experts (e.g. NWG, youth researches, youth workers, employment agencies, social services, etc.). Please specify.	<p>The same questioner has been sent to experts, agencies, and institutions.</p> <p>A total of 59 different proposals have been established as an outcome of the online questioner and the second step questioner. These 59 proposals have been presented to the NWG which has given priority and few modifications to build the present contribution.</p>	29 experts and representatives of youth.
Public authorities in the field of youth or in social affairs and welfare or others. Please specify.	Based on the results of the online questioner, a second step in consultation has been made for public authorities.	3 different public bodies.
Good practices from the consultation.	<p>3 steps consultation in a bottom-up approach has enable us to raise the quality level of contribution; the National Working Group has work efficiently thanks to this preliminary work. As a reminder:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An online survey has been shared via regional youth platform and national youth organisations. It has produced opinion data and 861 written propositions.</li> <li>• A second questioner taking into account outcomes of the online survey has been sent to national youth organisation, experts and public authorities. This questioner aimed to collect analysis, proposals and good practices.</li> <li>• We have collected all different proposals made along this process, sorted them by thematic and connected them to different explanation. The NWG has worked on it to prioritize and to give coherency to the French proposition.</li> </ul> <p>Using online survey enabled us, for the first time, to reach directly young people. It has increased the diversity of opinion collected and we have collected more “raw contribution”.</p>	

<p>Do you have any suggestions / comments on the current process?</p>	<p>The consultation period of this remain a bit too short to ensure multiple phases in the consultation. However we managed to deal with it.</p> <p>However, we would like to thanks the ESC for all the improvements made on this 4<sup>th</sup> cycle.</p>
<p>How would you improve the working methods and decision-making process in the EU Youth Conference<sup>1</sup></p>	

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<sup>1</sup> The ESC is gathering input on this issue, as mentionned in the [Council Resolution on the overview of the structured dialogue process including social inclusion of young people](#), of April 30th 2014

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## GUIDING QUESTIONS

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### **Structured Dialogue on Youth Youth Empowerment for political participation**

*The Trio Presidency – Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg – together with the European Commission and the European Youth Forum have agreed on “youth empowerment for political participation” as the overarching theme for the 18 months from July 2014 to December 2015.*

*Building on the Council Resolution of 20 May 2014, on the overview of the structured dialogue process including the social inclusion of young people, that endorsed a simplified architecture for the conduct of the structured dialogue, youth representatives and representatives of national authorities have worked together in Rome, for the elaboration of a guiding framework. The latter sets the basis for common understanding on the overall theme. The questions below are based on the challenges outlined in the Guiding Framework and aim to find solutions, good practices, preventative measures, and innovative ideas on empowering young people for political participation.*

Genuine youth political participation exists when young people form an integral part of political decision-making processes at all levels as equal stakeholders. As few participatory structures are available at the local level, that is closest to young people; this does not facilitate their involvement in bottom-up approaches.

There are formal barriers to youth political participation at all levels, such as the lack of transparency, age-related limitations and eligibility criteria to stand for election. Other barriers derive from a lack of citizenship education, low levels of confidence in the democratic process, and a lack of young people's priorities being reflected in mainstream politics. In addition, politicians and political institutions often lack the capability and willingness to engage with young people in political processes.

In the absence of legal frameworks, youth engagement often occurs through consultations, where young people are rarely an equal partner in the process and often do not see the impact of their inputs reflected in the outcomes of the political process. This is reflected in a growing lack of trust and interest in politics, including traditional means of participation, as illustrated by the low turn-out of young people in the electoral process and the lack of young candidates for political office.

When formulating policies affecting the lives of young people, many political actors, including institutions, decision and policy makers, do not consider young people nor youth organisations as relevant contributors, thus denying their ability to have an impact. Traditional means of political participation often lack transparency and the accountability of decision makers to young people. Such means also lack the flexibility and modern tools and techniques to meet the needs of young people.

The opportunity to experience political participation and be decision makers in their own environment from an early age is crucial for young people to become active citizens.

Comprehensive formal education towards political participation does not exist in all Member States and barriers to full accessibility and participation of all young people in non-formal education persist. Citizenship education often does not combine formal and non-formal education and thus the methodology is not always adapted to the needs of young people.

A perceived lack of motivation of educators and students/pupils along with a lack of participatory culture within educational establishments results in less political participation. Insufficient involvement and cooperation of a wide range of stakeholders is a further challenge.

Informing and engaging with all young people is important to ensure and strengthen democratic processes, and to bridge the gap between young people and decision-makers. Young people are not a homogenous group, which leads to challenges for youth organisations, educators, media, political bodies and other stakeholders to inform and engage individual young people in a meaningful way, and avoid accusations of “tokenism”. Involving and representing young people with fewer opportunities in political processes remains a problem, including for youth organisations.

Financial and other resources are often insufficient to enable the effective empowerment in political participation of young people from all parts of society.

**Based on this framework, these are the guiding questions:**

1. What should be done to stimulate a culture of political participation in all aspects of education? (max 500 words)

*The terms “culture of political participation” are often reduced to the involvement of people in classical and traditional ways of representative democracy. But main part of young people that now refuse to vote, to join political party, to trust politics can explain this as a carefully thought choice. Lot of young people understands the world they live in and attach importance in changing it at their level. **It is important to recognize new forms of commitment** as a way to express citizenship.*

*For the French National Working Group, the best way to stimulate a culture of political participation goes through a better recognition by the society of commitment in nonprofit organization and political organization. Nowadays lot of young people gives up with their commitment for their studies, their work and internship. **We support the idea of integrating “commitment cursus” in all educational cursus** and to support young people seeking time or support to commit themselves (Youth year, extra days for committed youth).*

***The first barrier to youth participation remains social situation.** In terms of priority, young people in a precarious and fragile situation can't have access to their civic rights often for administrative reasons, precarious situation and instability of life. Their social situation also increases the lack of trust in politics and in their ability to tackle youth issues. In full coherency with the adopted resolution of the European council of minister in charge of youth of affairs of the 12<sup>th</sup> of December and with priority reaffirmed by the European Commission, we urge member states and European commission to implement results of the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle of Structured Dialogue and all effective measures to tackle social situation of young people in Europe.*

2. What should be done to increase trust and understanding between young people and decision-makers, empowering both to better work with each other? (max 500 words)

*The consultation process conducted in France outlined that the lack of trust and understanding between young people and decision makers at all level is very significant and sometime provoke violent reaction. A huge majority of young people who took part to this consultation express feeling that they aren't equal at judicial, social and economic level to public decision maker.*

*Following propositions made by young people during this consultation as promises made by French government the National Working Group would like the European Union to press member states to establish a renewed frame of decision maker status. Member states should especially do all what is possible **to avoid careerism effects in politics and ensure that decision makers work for public interest**: limitation of mandate for simultaneous functions and in time, limitation of wages, better transparency. One case of financial or ethical scandal involving public responsible has dramatic effects on trust and understanding between young people and decision makers and gives impression that young people and politics aren't equal to justice.*

*Most part of young people does not feel they are part of the same world as decision makers and don't think to share common interest. This feeling is increased by youth policies that are often targeting a specific range of age. This approach doesn't facilitate inclusion of young people into the society by the feeling that they're not a charge or a problem. We call **to stop the use of measure targeting only young people** which stigmatize them or treat them as a problem. We encourage the development of common law that could take into account specificity of young people, and that support better integration in society.*

3. How should young people and youth organizations be fully involved in shaping policies together with decision-makers? (max 500 words)

*The lack of actions' visibility and process' transparency doesn't support the implication of young people and youth organizations in policies shaping. The French National Council consider that the entire decision making process in general, and in the field of youth in particular, should be revisited.*

*Furthermore than basic consultation or simple contribution, French National Working group would like to encourage member state **to develop and review clear process of co-decision in the conception of youth policies**. This process should **establish clearly roles and responsibilities** of public authorities, associative stakeholders and citizen in a way of co-management for topics that concern them. It should ensure a **high standard of visibility and transparency** carried both by public authorities and youth association in order to enable each citizen to follow and understand decision process and policy implementation. The conception of this decision process should be inspired by the process of Structured Dialogue as it is developed at European level.*

*As a part of each decision process, evaluation and prospective impact are high value elements. French state is currently reflecting about **the development of a "Youth impact clause"** which could oblige to anticipate every legislative project's impact on youth. We think that this principle*

*should be used both at European and national level. This measure is still under construction in France and many things remains to be defined such as place and role of youth organization in this evaluation, evaluation criteria, ...*

*Finally, we would like the council of the European Union to encourage member states **to conduct regular general review of public policies** in the field of youth in order to develop policies taking into account real situation of young people and not presupposition and to offer opportunities to youth organizations to provide general feedback and ideas to improve them.*

*The French National Working Group also calls for **the establishment of co-decisional National Youth Council** created in close cooperation with national authorities in each member state as a tool to enhance quality and sustainability of youth-decision maker dialogue. The European Commission in link with the European Youth Forum should use the open method of coordination to help member states to define standards and requirement for National Youth Council.*

#### 4. How can youth work empower young people for political participation? (max 500 words)

Data collected via our online survey proved that youth work has an important impact on young people political participation and is often a first step in taking part to citizen life. But a large amount of young people also says that youth work doesn't reach enough of young people to be really efficient.

**We encourage stakeholders of formal and non-formal education to foster links** between their two sectors in order to work on youth participation as an essential element of the global development of each citizen. The sector of non-formal education has fully demonstrated its complementary to school educational impact, especially on these issues. We encourage youth organization to work with school on local educational project and school to open their doors to youth organization.

A quality work between these 2 sectors of formal and non-formal education must be supported **by an appropriate and relevant training offer for teachers and youth workers**. We observe that most part of professional or volunteer persons which are in front of children and young people doesn't dare to broach this topic. We identify at least 3 causes to this: They don't have competences enough, or knowledge to bear debates in a positive way, they don't feel allowed to broach political topics, they're afraid to not manage. All these barriers must be tackled by a coordinated action bear by youth organization and national educational system.

#### 5. How should young people from all backgrounds be informed, empowered, and engaged to take part in political and democratic processes, and how should new and alternative technologies and tools be used for this? (max 500 words)

A large amount of young people express the desire to be more involved in public action, but has difficulties in passing from the idea to action mostly because they don't think they have

time (87% of people who answered our online survey express a lack of time to be more engaged). If they decide to give priority for other matters (studies, work ...) it means that other activities are more recognized in actual society.

The use of alternative technologies and tools has to be taken carefully as most of people who answered our survey think that a priority should be given in re-appropriation of physical public space, that the “easy-click” isn’t a solution to change the world around of them. For these reasons the French National Working Group recommend to use these tools with precaution and to not consider it as a solution for problems.

The French National Working Group consider that support for youth organization in establishing activities and project which support youth political participation might have a greater qualitative and quantitative impact.

Considering the incredible development of media offer which bring changes, as the problematic isn’t anymore to get information but to treat it, considering as well that lot of young people face difficulties in shaping their own opinion and are easy target for different manipulation we also recommend the European Commission, the member states and youth **organization to develop content for a large, ambitious and relevant media education policy** which could enable citizens to receive, understand and take over information.