

ONLINE GUIDE WITH INSTRUMENTS FOR INVOLVING YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE SOCIAL LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY

The Rural Youth Parliament Project

KA220-YOU – Cooperation partnerships in youth



Prepared by :

LEARNING FOR INTEGRATION RY- FINLAND

TAVO EUROPA - LITHUANIA

LAG NAPOCA POROLISSUM ASSOCIATION - ROMANIA

PLŒUC-L'HERMITAGE - FRANCE

1.INTRODUCTION:



Welcome and overview of the guide

Welcome to our online guide on engaging young people in the social life of your community! This comprehensive resource provides essential tools and insights to empower youth involvement, fostering a vibrant and inclusive community. Explore strategies to overcome challenges, create youth-friendly spaces, and utilize online platforms for effective engagement. Let's work together to build a community where the voices and contributions of young individuals thrive, shaping a brighter future for all. Get ready to embark on a journey of collaboration, innovation, and social impact!

Brief explanation of the importance of youth involvement in rural community life

In rural communities, the active involvement of youth plays a pivotal role in shaping a dynamic and sustainable future. These young individuals bring fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and boundless energy to the community's social fabric.



By engaging youth, we not only empower them to become leaders but also cultivate a sense of ownership and pride in their community. Their participation in local activities not only bridges generational gaps but also infuses vitality into rural life. In this guide, we'll explore the profound impact of youth involvement, offering practical instruments to harness their potential and foster a thriving rural community for generations to come. Embrace the power of youth in building a resilient and vibrant rural landscape.



MISSION AND GOALS OF THE GUIDE

Mission:

Our mission is to empower and inspire positive change in rural communities by fostering meaningful youth involvement in social life. Through this guide, we aim to provide valuable resources and practical tools that equip communities to tap into the potential of their young members, creating a sustainable and inclusive environment where everyone can thrive.

Goals:

1.Promoting Inclusivity: Facilitate the integration of youth from diverse backgrounds into the fabric of rural community life, ensuring their voices are heard and valued.

2.Building Leadership Skills: Empower young individuals with the necessary skills, knowledge, and confidence to take on leadership roles within their communities.



3. Enhancing Community Connection: Strengthen the bonds between generations by creating opportunities for meaningful interaction, collaboration, and shared experiences.

4. Addressing Local Challenges: Equip communities with strategies to identify and overcome challenges faced by young people, fostering an environment where obstacles transform into opportunities.

5. Utilizing Digital Platforms: Explore and leverage online tools and platforms to bridge the gap between traditional rural life and the digital age, enabling effective communication and collaboration.

6. Creating Youth-Friendly Spaces: Encourage the development of spaces and activities tailored to the preferences and needs of young individuals, promoting a sense of belonging.

7. Encouraging Civic Engagement: Instill a sense of civic responsibility and active participation in community affairs among young people, cultivating a culture of shared responsibility for community well-being.

8. Celebrating Diversity: Embrace and celebrate the diversity of talents, skills, and perspectives that young individuals bring to the community, fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding.

9. Long-Term Sustainability: Lay the groundwork for a sustainable future by instilling a sense of pride, ownership, and commitment among youth towards the well-being and development of their rural communities.

This guide is a catalyst for positive transformation, offering a roadmap for communities to harness the potential of their youth and build a resilient, thriving, and interconnected rural environment.

2. ABOUT RURAL YOUTH PARLIAMENTS:

What are youth parliaments, and why are they important for rural communities?



The simulation of parliaments aims to propose an interactive and educative experience of a parliamentary session. Although simulations of parliaments can be intended for different audiences, they mainly concern young people, and are used to strengthen their skills around citizenship and state and European parliamentary bodies. Thus, youth parliaments' aims are to involve young people in a simulation of a parliament so that they discover the functioning and issues of legislative power.

They play a vital role in the civic education of young people, and in their integration into public and political life. Young people thus become actors in current public policies, and can express the opinions and issues they encounter on a daily basis.





These parliaments play an all the more important role as they constitute a point of contact between local, regional or national institutions with their young populations. Indeed, young populations constitute a segment of the population that is difficult to integrate into local and national institutional life. The Youngelect 2022 post-election survey, coordinated by Vincent Tiberj and Amaïa Courty (from the Emile Durkheim Center) and financed by the INJEP (National Institute of Youth and Popular Education) established that youth electoral participation is intermittent at best and is also characterized by a loss of trust in traditional institutions and parties. This results in a more distant citizenship which expresses itself more and more outside the traditional channel of the electoral act.

These youth parliaments thus make it possible to connect young people to civic practices, and to take up political and public issues. This issue is all the more important in rural areas. Indeed, if the entire young population experiences a distancing from political institutions, this is all the more important in rural areas. Indeed, first of all, there is a real distance between rural territories and urban territories, and in particular the capitals, where most of the political and public news of the territories takes place. A feeling of remoteness and abandonment can thus be felt by rural populations, who can feel withdrawn from public decisions.

This is particularly true among rural youth. Youth parliaments can thus enable young rural people to reconnect with local public life and get involved in its progress. They are an opportunity both for young rural people who can find there a place to express their opinions and their issues, and for the local community which finds there a point of contact and integration with its young population.



Success stories and examples of how youth parliaments have made a difference in rural areas

In France, it is not uncommon for municipal councils to decide to set up municipal youth councils within their municipality. Often, they are created in cooperation with schools present in the area. Indeed, municipalities have management skills over primary schools, particularly in the maintenance of buildings, cleaning and catering staff. Primary schools and town halls are therefore used to working together. This is why municipal youth councils regularly target children in CM1 and CM2, i.e. the last years of primary school in France.

Municipal Youth Councils bring together children aged 9 to 12 in general. Within these Municipal Youth Councils, which bring together between twenty and thirty young people, young elected officials can be grouped into different thematic commissions. For example, in Plœuc-L'Hermitage, around twenty young elected officials are united in three commissions: Environment and Safety, Culture and Sport, Health and Solidarity. The young elected officials meet once every three weeks in committee and once every month in plenary assembly. During these assemblies, young people are invited to discuss the themes of their commissions and to propose projects to contribute to them. The young elected officials are accompanied by elected officials from the Municipal Council and by youth workers from the Children's and Youth Service of the Plœuc-L'Hermitage town hall.



The young elected officials first debate among themselves the projects to be implemented to respond to the problems and challenges that they themselves have identified in their daily lives. They are made aware of the notion of the common good and the notions of public services. Once the project has been selected, the young elected officials discuss how to implement it.

In fact, the children decide on all the elements of the project. If the supporters are there to define what is achievable or not at the municipal level, the young elected officials remain the only decision-makers. Thus, within the municipality of Plœuc-L'Hermitage, numerous projects have been implemented thanks to the young elected officials of the Municipal Youth Council. For example, a book box for children has been set up. The young people elected chose the location, the model of the box as well as the color of it. The young elected officials therefore have full responsibility for carrying out the projects. And the municipality and the entire population benefits from these projects.



In Finland, multiple forms of national and regional councils and parliaments exist. There is a National Children's Parliament, local youth councils and local school clubs. These structures are top-down and allow little opportunity for young people to organize on their own or set their own agenda. In addition, while the bodies state that they offer the same opportunities in Finland, there is no evidence that minority youth from Roma, Sámi or migrant communities have equal participation. The Sámi Parliament has its own Youth Council.

The Youth Council of the Sámi Parliament represents the rights of the indigenous population of Finland - the Sámi people. In 2018, they launched the Dihtosis project that was meant to educate the Finnish majority population about Sámi people and culture. The project was aimed at children aged 6 to 18 and was distributed through schools.

(Source:www.thebarentsobserver.com/en/indigenous-peoples/2022/07/project-educate-finnish-students-about-sami-needs-be-permanent-youth).

Imatra's youth council published its first podcast in 2020. The podcast was meant to be a trial to try to inform the people in Imatra about the work of the youth council.

(Source:<https://www.imatra.fi/en/imatran-nuorisovaltuusto-julkaisi-ensimmaisen-podcastinsa>).

In a small locality of Korttesjärvi, in Western Finland, the Youth Council together with the residents' board organized a Christmas party for the community in 2022

(Source:<https://www.jarviseudunsanomat.fi/arkisto/2022/12/15/nuva-ja-asukaslautakunta-toteuttivat-onnistuneen-jouluriehan-kitkalla/>)



Newly elected Kaunas district student council (KRMT)
Source: <https://kaunas.kasvyksta.lt/2023/10/15/rajonas/veikla-pradeda-naujos-kadencijos-kauno-rajono-mokiniu-taryba/>

Currently in Lithuania, the situation of student self-government institutions is improving: formally established student self-government institutions are rapidly decreasing, as their members, students, are becoming more and more active and motivated. Therefore, the desire to work in such an institution grows stronger; students consider it a matter of honor, and active members of student self-government institutions and later successfully participate in public activities are civically oriented. Student self-governance becomes one of the main tools for a young person to improve in many ways and lay the foundations for his successful career.

Newly elected Kaunas district student council (KRMT) plan to do a lot of work during their term of office: analyze issues relevant to students, initiate and organize civic, preventive, support actions, contests, festivals, sports competitions and other events, cooperate with student self-governments of the Republic of Lithuania, other youth organizations.



The nearest task of KRMT is the for the kindness campaign "open our hearts", organized for the tenth year, together with the Department of Culture, Education and Sports. In this campaign, all district gymnasiums, pro-gymnasiums and primary schools will participate and for the second year, will provide aid to Ukraine, which is suffering from the war.

Last year, the students made 3,000 trench candles for residents and fighters without electricity. This year, it was decided to expand aid to Ukrainians by weaving camouflage nets, knitting socks for soldiers, collecting paraffin/wax and cans to make candles, looking for donations to buy blankets, first aid kits, canned goods, thermal clothes, shoes and other tools.

In Romania, youth parliaments can have a significant impact on rural areas in Romania by empowering young people to engage in civic activities, advocate for their communities, and contribute to local development. While specific success stories may vary, here are some examples of how youth parliaments can make a difference in rural areas:

1. Policy Advocacy: Youth parliaments can advocate for policies that address the unique needs and challenges of rural communities. For example, they can lobby for improved infrastructure, access to education and healthcare, and support for local businesses and agriculture.

2. Community Development Projects: Youth parliaments often initiate and implement community development projects that benefit rural areas. These projects can range from environmental conservation initiatives to entrepreneurship programs aimed at empowering young people to start businesses in their communities.



3. Policy Advocacy: Youth parliaments can advocate for policies that address the unique needs and challenges of rural communities. For example, they can lobby for improved infrastructure, access to education and healthcare, and support for local businesses and agriculture.

4. Community Development Projects: Youth parliaments often initiate and implement community development projects that benefit rural areas. These projects can range from environmental conservation initiatives to entrepreneurship programs aimed at empowering young people to start businesses in their communities.

5. Social Cohesion: Youth parliaments can foster social cohesion and solidarity within rural communities by bringing together young people from diverse backgrounds to work towards common goals. This can help reduce social isolation and strengthen community bonds.

6. Access to Information and Resources: Youth parliaments can serve as a conduit for information and resources, helping to connect rural youth with opportunities for education, employment, and personal growth. This is particularly important in areas where access to information and resources may be limited.

Overall, youth parliaments play a vital role in empowering young people and driving positive change in rural areas in Romania. Through advocacy, community development projects, skills development, and fostering social cohesion, youth parliaments can make a meaningful difference in improving the lives of rural youth and their communities.



3.GETTING STARTED:

How to join a rural youth parliament

There are many simulation parliaments. Each has its own specificities. Some will only concern certain subjects; others will only target certain audiences. Each parliament simulation will therefore have its own operation with its own participant selection procedure. First of all, when you are interested in participating in parliamentary simulations, it is interesting to target the themes on which you wish to intervene. Indeed, certain subjects such as diplomacy, international relations and major economic dynamics may only be present in national simulations.

You must therefore analyze what subject you wish to cover and then look for parliament simulations that correspond to these search criteria. The search criteria can also be adapted to the conditions under which these parliamentary simulations are held: date, location, etc. Then, when a suitable parliament simulation is found, the participant can start look for the application method applied to the event. Different types of participant selection can be applied. First of all, parliamentary simulations are sometimes free to access.

Participants sometimes simply have to register in advance, but no selection is made by the organizers. Participants only need to know whether or not registration forms exist, and fill them out if necessary. Other parliaments require prior selection of participants. Each organizing structure will thus specify its selection criteria. The potential participant must therefore find out about the participant selection procedure. Similarly, some parliamentary simulations hold elections to select participants. Indeed, for example, municipal youth councils, which exist in France, are elected by primary school students in the territories concerned. Potential participants are therefore invited to build their candidacy for the election and to participate in this election. However, the skills and resources required of potential participants are rarely high. Indeed, parliament simulations mainly wish to integrate participants in the most inclusive and representative way possible. Therefore, participants are strongly encouraged to register and participate, even if they think they do not perfectly match the selection criteria.



Eligibility criteria and requirements

The goal of parliamentary simulations, and particularly those taking place in rural areas, is to integrate a selection of participants that is as inclusive and representative of the population as possible. Thus, the criteria and the requirements will remain adapted to the target group of the parliament simulation. Indeed, in order not to exclude the applications of potential participants who are isolated or in difficulty, the conditions required to participate in parliamentary simulations will be adapted and will not require advanced skills and knowledge in the subjects covered. . The organizers of parliamentary simulations keep in mind that certain segments of the population may encounter difficulties in participating in this type of event, particularly in terms of access to digital resources and access to information.

In order to remain an inclusive and representative event for the population, participation in parliamentary simulations does not require you to answer knowledge or eloquence tests. If the event has a participant selection procedure, then the conditions will mainly be based on the motivation of the candidates and their willingness to engage in the event. Under no circumstances may participation in a simulation parliament require a participant to devote large financial resources.



However, it is important to recognize that participation in this type of event requires a greater investment for young rural people, whose transport, accommodation and information expenses are more important. This is why the organizers try to reduce the subsidiary costs of these events as much as possible by ensuring that each category of the population can participate. Finally, as explained earlier, each event may or may not have its own participant selection method. The potential participant must therefore find out about the existence of such a procedure and follow it if necessary. However, this should not constitute a barrier to participation. Indeed, the most important criteria in participating in a parliamentary simulation are the time invested, the motivation to participate, the interest in the discussions and the relevance of the solutions proposed.

Information on local youth parliament groups and how to find them

In France, in order to build a simulation of a parliament that produces concrete and appropriate results, it is organized in cooperation with the relevant stakeholders in the territory. Many players are involved in the preparation and organization of the event.

The organizing structures are therefore required to work with local elected officials, youth workers from youth reception structures, teachers from local schools, volunteers from local associations, etc. These actors depend on numerous partner structures which thus participate directly or indirectly in the parliamentary simulation. All the actors involved are potential networks to relay information relating to the event. Potential participants can thus contact these structures in order to have information about existing events. Likewise, partner structures, and particularly those working with target audiences, such as schools or leisure centers for example, can offer presentations of the simulations. They will thus be able to present the criteria and necessary information about the events.



Potential participants can thus ask their questions directly to the speakers and obtain adequate answers. Partner structures represent entry points to these events and allow potential participants to obtain the necessary elements, or to be redirected to the appropriate contacts. Likewise, on social networks there are many groups aimed at young audiences. Events surrounding youth are easily relayed there. This is particularly true in rural areas, where youth actors are often linked in the same networks. Young people wanting to participate in parliamentary simulations can obtain information from different channels: social networks, local and regional authorities, partner institutions.

In Finland, there are several different bodies that organize councils. At the national level, it is possible to contact the Union of Local Youth Councils in Finland, Nuva ry, (<https://nuva.fi/en/contact-us/>). They can put you in touch with local chapters or provide you with information on how to organize a council in your locality, if you do not have one. In Helsinki, Helsinki Youth Council can be contacted (<https://nuorten.hel.fi/en/take-part-and-make-a-difference/helsinki-youth-council/>). In Espoo, one should contact the Espoo Youth Council (NuVa) (<https://www.espoo.fi/en/youth/youth-council>) .

The vast majority of the youth parliaments in Lithuania are based in the schools and are called "Student council". New members of the student council are chosen through auditions, during which students introduce themselves, answer a few questions and explain why they would like to join the team.



Student self-government is the right and freedom of students to independently make significant decisions for the student community, solve relevant issues, and organize activities in an educational institution. In other words, organize various activities and changes in the school, taking into account the opinions and expectations of the students.

They are all united by the Lithuanian students union. Public and voluntary non-profit organization, only representative of interests of Lithuanian students self-governments. Their goal is to represent students on issues relevant to education and youth policy, in cooperation with state institutions and other non-governmental organizations, to provide information on issues relevant to students.

Smaller municipalities unite different school councils and provide meeting and exchange opportunities as well as training and travel for the students. This also helps the students to organize events and competitions between different schools and have a better representation of the youth.



Here are a few examples of youth parliament groups and initiatives in Romania:

1. Youth Parliament of Romania: The Youth Parliament of Romania is a national-level organization that provides a platform for young people to discuss and propose solutions to various societal issues. It organizes annual sessions where youth delegates from across the country gather to debate and draft resolutions on topics ranging from education and employment to environmental sustainability and social justice.

2. Local Youth Councils: Many cities and municipalities in Romania have established local youth councils or similar bodies that serve as youth parliament groups at the local level. These councils typically consist of elected or appointed youth representatives who advocate for the interests of young people in their communities, organize youth-led initiatives, and collaborate with local authorities on youth-related policies and programs.

3. Youth NGOs and Associations: Numerous youth-oriented non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and associations in Romania focus on promoting youth empowerment, civic engagement, and leadership development. These organizations often organize youth parliament activities, such as mock parliamentary sessions, debates, and youth-led advocacy campaigns on issues of local and national importance.

4. Student Councils and Associations: Schools, colleges, and universities in Romania commonly have student councils or associations that function as youth parliament groups within educational institutions.



These student-led bodies represent the interests of students, organize events and activities, and engage in dialogue with school administrations and educational authorities on matters affecting students' welfare and academic experience.

5. Youth Exchange Programs and International Partnerships: Romanian youth parliament groups frequently participate in international youth exchange programs, partnerships, and networks aimed at fostering cross-cultural understanding, cooperation, and collaboration. These initiatives provide opportunities for young people to engage with their peers from other countries, share perspectives, and work together on common challenges and projects.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Description of the roles and responsibilities within youth parliaments



Youth parliaments typically operate similarly to adult parliaments, providing a platform for young individuals to engage in civic activities, voice their opinions, and contribute to the decision-making process. Roles and responsibilities within youth parliaments may vary based on the specific structure and goals of each organization. Here is a general overview of common roles found in youth parliaments:

1. **President/Chairperson:**

- Role: Presides over meetings, ensures order, and facilitates discussions.
- Responsibilities: Sets the agenda, maintains decorum, and represents the youth parliament externally.

2. **Vice President/Vice Chairperson:**

- Role: Assists the president and assumes responsibilities in their absence.
- Responsibilities: Collaborates with the president, oversees committees, and may represent the youth parliament at events.

3. **Secretary-General/Secretary:**

- Role: Manages administrative tasks and keeps records of meetings.
- Responsibilities: Takes minutes during meetings, maintains records, and handles communication.

4. **Committee Chairs:**

- Role: Lead specific committees focusing on different issues or sectors.
- Responsibilities: Organize committee meetings, guide discussions, and present recommendations to the full youth parliament.

5. **Members of Parliament/Delegates:**

- Role: Represent the interests of the youth they serve.
- Responsibilities: Participate in debates, propose motions, and advocate for policies that address youth concerns.

6. **Youth Advocate/Spokesperson:**

- Role: Represents the youth parliament to external entities.
- Responsibilities: Communicates the positions and decisions of the youth parliament to the public, media, or relevant stakeholders.



7. Event Coordinator:

- Role: Plans and oversees events organized by the youth parliament.
- Responsibilities: Coordinates logistics, promotes events, and ensures their successful execution.

8. Community Liaison Officer:

- Role: Connects the youth parliament with local communities and organizations.
- Responsibilities: Collaborates with external stakeholders, seeks community input, and ensures the parliament is responsive to local needs.

9. Outreach and Public Relations Officer:

- Role: Manages communication and outreach efforts.
- Responsibilities: Engages with the public, uses social media, and promotes the activities and initiatives of the youth parliament.

10. Policy Analysts/Researchers:

- Role: Analyze policies and gather information to inform decision-making.
- Responsibilities: Conduct research, provide data-driven insights, and contribute to the development of informed policies.

11. Youth Ambassadors:

- Role: Serve as representatives to external organizations or initiatives.
- Responsibilities: Act as ambassadors, promoting the interests and values of the youth parliament in broader contexts.



It's important to note that the specific roles and responsibilities within youth parliaments can vary, and some organizations may have additional positions based on their structure and focus areas. These roles collectively contribute to the functioning and effectiveness of youth parliaments in representing the diverse voices and interests of young individuals in the community.

Information on leadership positions and how to run for them

Leadership Positions in Youth Parliament:

1. President/Chairperson:

- Role: Presides over meetings, sets the agenda, and represents the youth parliament.
- How to Run: Develop a clear vision for the organization, emphasize leadership skills, and articulate your ability to guide the youth parliament effectively.



2. Vice President/Vice Chairperson:

- Role: Assists the president and assumes responsibilities in their absence.
- How to Run: Highlight your support for the president, showcase leadership qualities, and demonstrate how you can contribute to the overall success of the organization.

3. Secretary-General/Secretary:

- Role: Manages administrative tasks, keeps records, and handles communication.
- How to Run: Emphasize organizational skills, attention to detail, and effective communication. Showcase any relevant experience in record-keeping or secretarial roles.

4. Committee Chairs:

- Role: Lead specific committees focusing on different issues or sectors.
- How to Run: Showcase your expertise in the committee's subject matter, propose innovative ideas for committee projects, and demonstrate leadership and organizational skills.

5. Youth Advocate/Spokesperson:

- Role: Represents the youth parliament to external entities.
- How to Run: Emphasize communication skills, public speaking ability, and a passion for advocating on behalf of the youth parliament. Showcase any experience in public relations or spokesperson roles.

How to Run for Leadership Positions:

1. Understand the Positions:

- Familiarize yourself with the responsibilities and expectations of the position you are interested in. Tailor your campaign to highlight how your skills align with these requirements.



2. Develop a Vision:

- Clearly articulate your vision for the youth parliament. What positive changes do you hope to bring? How will you address the needs and concerns of the youth community?

3. Build a Campaign Team:

- Assemble a team of supporters who can help with campaign strategies, outreach, and communication. Having a dedicated team can enhance your visibility and effectiveness.

4. Create a Platform:

- Develop a platform that outlines your goals, plans, and the specific initiatives you aim to undertake if elected. Clearly communicate how your leadership will benefit the youth parliament.



5. Engage with Members:

- Connect with the members of the youth parliament. Attend meetings, participate in discussions, and listen to the concerns and ideas of your peers. Building relationships will strengthen your candidacy.

6. Communicate Effectively:

- Develop a compelling message that communicates your qualifications, vision, and dedication to the youth parliament. Utilize various communication channels, such as speeches, social media, and posters.



7. Participate in Debates and Forums:

- If the election process involves debates or forums, actively participate to showcase your leadership qualities, articulate your ideas, and address questions from the community.

8. Be Transparent and Authentic:

- Build trust by being transparent about your intentions, qualifications, and potential challenges. Authenticity resonates with voters and enhances your credibility.

9. Encourage Voter Participation:

- Motivate members of the youth parliament to participate in the election process. Engage with them, answer questions, and ensure they understand the significance of their vote.

10. Follow Election Rules:

- Adhere to the rules and guidelines set by the youth parliament for the election process. Maintain integrity throughout the campaign.

How youth can contribute to decision-making in their communities

In Romania, as in many other countries, youth can actively contribute to decision-making in their communities through various channels. Here are some specific ways young individuals can engage in decision-making processes in Romania:

1. Join Youth Councils and Organizations:

- Many municipalities and regions in Romania have youth councils or organizations that work closely with local authorities. Young people can become members of these councils to actively participate in decision-making processes and advocate for youth-related issues.



2. Participate in Community Meetings:

- Attend local community meetings, town halls, and public forums organized by local authorities. These events provide opportunities for young individuals to voice their opinions, ask questions, and contribute to discussions on matters that affect the community.

3. Collaborate with Youth NGOs:

- Romania has various youth-focused non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that address a wide range of issues. Young people can join or collaborate with these NGOs to engage in community development projects, advocacy, and initiatives that contribute to decision-making.

4. Utilize Online Platforms:

- Leverage digital platforms and social media to connect with other young individuals and share ideas. Online campaigns, petitions, and discussions on social media can raise awareness and garner support for youth-led initiatives, influencing decision-makers.

5. Engage in Local Planning Processes:

- Participate in local urban planning processes, environmental initiatives, or development projects. Youth involvement in these areas can ensure that the unique perspectives and needs of young individuals are considered in community planning.

6. Youth Consultations:

- Encourage local authorities and organizations to conduct youth consultations before making decisions that directly impact young individuals. This ensures that their perspectives are considered in the decision-making process.



7. Youth Representatives in School Boards:

- Actively participate in school boards and student councils. These platforms provide opportunities for young people to contribute to decisions related to their education, school environment, and extracurricular activities.

8. Advocate for Youth-Friendly Policies:

- Advocate for policies that address the specific needs of young people, such as improved educational opportunities, access to healthcare, and support for entrepreneurship. Engaging with local policymakers and elected officials can be a proactive way to influence policy decisions.

9. Participate in National Initiatives:

- Get involved in national youth initiatives or campaigns organized by governmental bodies or NGOs. National platforms can amplify the impact of youth voices and contribute to shaping policies at a broader level.



By participating in events such as simulated parliaments, young people can actively take part in local public and political life. Indeed, these events represent an opportunity for local and regional authorities to learn about the opinions and issues encountered by the young population. A segment of the young population being too young to vote, it is sometimes difficult to integrate them into local public life, and particularly to know their opinions on the situation in the territory.

These times of exchange are therefore privileged moments to find out what motivates and what worries the young people of the region. These events are also an opportunity for young people to propose solutions to the problems they encounter. Indeed, by explaining the issues and problems they encounter in their daily lives, young people can reflect on the possible solutions to be addressed. In addition, some of these parliamentary simulations invite local elected officials to attend or even participate.

This exchange between young people and representatives of local and regional authorities can make it possible to raise unsuspected problems on the local political scene. Indeed, it is difficult to respond to a problem if you are not aware of it. These parliamentary simulations thus make it possible to make these issues visible, but also to provide initial elements of response. Armed with these elements, elected representatives can address these issues and adapt them to the resources available to them. These parliamentary simulations should not be seen as theater sessions where young people play a role.



These events must also be spaces for sharing, exchanges and demands. Likewise, this awareness allows young people to discover their rights and duties as citizens. These events allow young people to grasp their civic practices and habits to take part in local public life. Beyond allowing young people to act directly in the local territory, this indirectly allows them to become active citizens.

5. BUILDING SKILLS:

Training opportunities for rural youth interested in youth parliament involvement



Empowering rural youth with the skills and knowledge needed for effective youth parliament involvement is crucial for fostering active civic engagement. Here are some potential training opportunities that could benefit rural youth interested in youth parliament involvement:

1. Youth Leadership Workshops:

- Workshops focused on developing leadership skills, effective communication, and teamwork can provide essential foundations for those looking to participate in youth parliaments.

2. Civic Education Programs:

- Civic education programs can help rural youth understand the principles of democracy, governance structures, and their role in decision-making processes. These programs may cover topics such as the legal system, civic rights, and responsibilities.

3. Public Speaking and Debate Courses:

- Training in public speaking and debate can enhance the ability of rural youth to articulate their ideas, express opinions, and participate confidently in parliamentary discussions.

4. Policy Analysis and Advocacy Training:

- Courses on policy analysis and advocacy can equip young individuals with the skills needed to understand, analyze, and influence policies. This knowledge is crucial for effective participation in youth parliaments.

5. Community Organizing and Mobilization Programs:

- Training in community organizing and mobilization can help rural youth build connections, engage their communities, and rally support for youth parliament initiatives.



6. Online Learning Platforms:

- Utilize online platforms offering courses on civic engagement, leadership, and parliamentary procedures. Websites like Coursera, edX, or local educational platforms may provide relevant content.

7. Local Government Training Initiatives:

- Some local governments, NGOs, or youth organizations may offer training programs specifically designed to educate young individuals about local governance and parliamentary processes.

8. Participate in Model Parliament or Youth Parliament Simulations:

- Engaging in simulated youth parliament sessions allows participants to experience parliamentary procedures, debate issues, and develop practical skills in a controlled environment.

9. Mentorship Programs:

- Establishing mentorship programs with experienced individuals involved in youth parliaments or community leadership can provide valuable guidance and support for rural youth.

10. Youth Exchange Programs:

- Participating in youth exchange programs, both at the national and international levels, can expose rural youth to diverse perspectives, ideas, and parliamentary systems.

11. Training on Utilizing Digital Platforms:

- Given the importance of technology in modern civic engagement, training on using digital platforms, social media, and online tools for effective communication and advocacy can be beneficial.



12. Project Management Courses:

- Learning project management skills can be valuable for youth involved in organizing and implementing community projects or initiatives within the youth parliament framework.

13. Funding and Grant Writing Workshops:

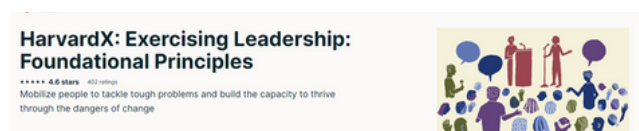
- Training on writing proposals and securing funding can empower rural youth to initiate and sustain projects within the context of their involvement in youth parliaments.

Workshops, courses, and resources for developing leadership, public speaking, and teamwork skills:

- Master a variety of communication skills with **TED's official public speaking course**, now available on YouTube Courses. This course will teach you how to identify, develop and share your best ideas with the world.
- **HarvardX: Exercising Leadership: Foundational Principles:**

In this introductory course, you will explore strategies for leading in a changing world where adaptive pressures will continue to challenge all of us. You will discover new ways to approach complex organizational systems and take thoughtful action on the work we all face ahead. Most importantly, you will reflect on how to move forward on the leadership challenges you care about most.

In this introductory course, you will explore strategies for leading in a changing world where adaptive pressures will continue to challenge all of us. You will discover new ways to approach complex organizational systems and take thoughtful action on the work we all face ahead. Most importantly, you will reflect on how to move forward on the leadership challenges you care about most.



<https://masterclass.ted.com/>

- Possibly one of the most popular MOOC platforms, Coursera offers hundreds of online courses from accredited educational institutions in various languages. It's by far one of the platforms with the most MOOCs on the market. Although many of the courses are free, you will also come across paid classes, or MOOCs that are free but require payment for official certification.

Learn without limits

Start, switch, or advance your career with more than 5,800 courses, Professional Certificates, and degrees from world-class universities and companies.

Join for Free

Try Coursera for Business



<https://www.coursera.org/>

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

Strategies for engaging with the local community



Engaging with the local community is essential for the success of any youth parliament initiative. Here are strategies to effectively connect with and involve the local community:

1. Community Needs Assessment:

- Conduct a thorough assessment to understand the specific needs, concerns, and priorities of the local community. This will help tailor youth parliament initiatives to address genuine issues.

2. Community Forums and Town Halls:

- Organize regular community forums and town hall meetings to provide a platform for open dialogue. Use these events to listen to community members, share information about the youth parliament, and gather feedback.

3. Collaboration with Local Organizations:

- Partner with local community organizations, NGOs, and grassroots movements. Collaborative efforts can amplify the impact of initiatives, leverage existing community networks, and ensure inclusivity.

4. Youth Outreach Programs:

- Implement outreach programs specifically targeting local youth. Visit schools, colleges, and community centers to raise awareness about the youth parliament, its goals, and how young people can actively participate.

5. Digital Engagement:

- Utilize social media platforms, community websites, and other digital tools to connect with residents. Share updates, engage in conversations, and use online surveys or polls to gather input on various issues.

6. Local Media Engagement:

- Collaborate with local media outlets such as newspapers, radio stations, and community blogs to share stories about the youth parliament's activities. Regular press releases and interviews can help build visibility.



7. Language and Cultural Sensitivity:

- Ensure that communication materials, events, and initiatives are culturally sensitive and accessible to all community members. Consider language diversity and cultural nuances in your engagement strategies.

8. Door-to-Door Outreach:

- Engage in door-to-door outreach to connect with residents who may not be active online or able to attend community events. This personal touch demonstrates a commitment to reaching every corner of the community.

9. Community Workshops and Training Sessions:

- Host workshops and training sessions on topics relevant to the community's needs. This not only provides valuable information but also creates opportunities for direct interaction with residents.

10. Youth-Led Initiatives:

- Empower local youth to lead community initiatives. Projects initiated by young people can be more relatable and may encourage broader community involvement.

11. Local Leadership Endorsement:

- Seek endorsements from local leaders, community influencers, and respected individuals. Their support can enhance the credibility of the youth parliament and encourage community participation.

12. Regular Newsletters and Updates:

- Keep the community informed through regular newsletters, updates, and bulletins. Highlight achievements, upcoming events, and ways in which community members can get involved.



13. Inclusive Event Planning:

- When organizing events, ensure they are inclusive and considerate of different age groups, backgrounds, and abilities within the community. Accessibility is key to engaging a diverse audience.

14. Community Surveys and Feedback Mechanisms:

- Implement regular surveys or feedback mechanisms to gather input on proposed initiatives and to gauge community satisfaction. This participatory approach makes residents feel heard and valued.

15. Celebrating Local Culture and Traditions:

- Integrate local culture and traditions into youth parliament initiatives. This fosters a sense of community pride and encourages residents to actively participate in events.

By employing a combination of these strategies, youth parliaments can build strong connections with the local community, ensuring that their initiatives are responsive, inclusive, and reflective of the community's aspirations.

Tips on organizing and participating in community events

Organizing and participating in community events can be a rewarding way to foster connections, raise awareness, and engage with the local community. Here are tips for successful event organization and participation:

Organizing Community Events:

1. Define Clear Objectives:

- Clearly define the purpose and objectives of the event. Whether it's raising awareness, celebrating a local milestone, or addressing a community issue, having clear goals will guide your planning.

2. Community Needs Assessment:

- Conduct a needs assessment to understand what the community values and what type of events would be most meaningful. This ensures that your event aligns with the interests and needs of the residents.



3. Create a Planning Committee:

- Form a dedicated planning committee with diverse skills and perspectives. Assign specific responsibilities to ensure all aspects of the event are covered, from logistics to promotion.

4. Set a Realistic Budget:

- Establish a budget that covers all necessary expenses, including venue rental, permits, marketing materials, and any additional costs. Seek potential sponsors or partnerships to alleviate financial burdens.

5. Secure Necessary Permits:

- Check with local authorities to obtain any required permits for your event. This includes permits for public gatherings, road closures, or other special permissions.



6. Choose an Appropriate Venue:

- Select a venue that suits the type and size of your event. Ensure it is accessible, safe, and has the necessary facilities. Consider factors like parking, seating, and restroom facilities.

7. Promote the Event:

- Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy to promote the event. Utilize a mix of traditional methods (posters, flyers) and digital channels (social media, community websites) to reach a broad audience.



8. Engage Local Businesses:

- Collaborate with local businesses for sponsorship, in-kind donations, or collaborative efforts. This not only supports the event financially but also strengthens ties within the community.

9. Plan for Accessibility:

- Ensure that your event is accessible to individuals with disabilities. Provide ramps, clear signage, and consider the needs of diverse community members when planning logistics.

10. Offer Diverse Activities:

- Include a variety of activities to appeal to different age groups and interests. This ensures a more inclusive and engaging experience for all community members.

Participating in Community Events:

1. Be Informed:

- Stay informed about upcoming community events through local announcements, social media, or community bulletin boards. Being aware allows you to actively participate.

2. Volunteer:

- Offer your time and skills as a volunteer for community events. This not only contributes to the success of the event but also provides an opportunity to connect with others.

3. Engage with Organizers:

- Connect with event organizers to learn more about their initiatives and share your ideas or feedback. Open communication helps build a stronger relationship between organizers and community members.

4. Promote the Event:

- Help promote the event within your social circles. Word-of-mouth remains a powerful tool in increasing event attendance.



5. Attend with an Open Mind:

- Attend events with an open mind and a willingness to engage with others. Participate in activities, workshops, or discussions to make the most of your experience.

6. Network with Others:

- Use community events as an opportunity to network with other residents, local leaders, and businesses. Building connections strengthens the community fabric.

7. Provide Constructive Feedback:

- If there are aspects of the event that you particularly enjoyed or feel could be improved, provide constructive feedback to the organizers. This helps them enhance future events.

8. Respect Community Guidelines:

- Follow any guidelines or rules set by event organizers and local authorities. Respecting these guidelines ensures a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone.

9. Share Your Experience:

- Share your experience at the event on social media or local community platforms. Positive feedback encourages continued community engagement.

10. Attend Debriefing Sessions:

- If organizers host debriefing sessions after the event, attend them to provide feedback and share your perspective. This contributes to the continuous improvement of future events.

Whether you're organizing or participating, community events provide opportunities to strengthen the social fabric of the community and create a positive and inclusive atmosphere.



Collaborative projects and initiatives with other community organizations

Collaborative projects and initiatives with other community organizations can amplify the impact of your efforts, leverage shared resources, and foster a stronger sense of community. Here are tips for successful collaboration:

1. Identify Common Goals:

- Before initiating collaboration, identify shared goals and interests between your organization and potential partners. A clear alignment of objectives will ensure a more cohesive and productive partnership.

2. Build Relationships:

- Establish strong relationships with other community organizations. Attend networking events, engage in open communication, and find common ground to build trust and understanding.

3. Assess Complementary Strengths:

- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of each organization involved. Identify areas where your organization's strengths complement those of your partners, creating a well-rounded collaboration.

4. Define Roles and Responsibilities:

- Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each organization in the collaborative project. Establishing expectations upfront helps prevent misunderstandings and ensures accountability.

5. Develop a Memorandum of Understanding :

- Create a Memorandum of Understanding or a formal agreement outlining the terms and conditions of the collaboration. Include details such as project scope, timelines, and each organization's contributions.

6. Foster Open Communication:

- Maintain open and transparent communication throughout the collaboration. Regularly update your partners on project progress, challenges, and successes to ensure everyone is on the same page.

7. Share Resources:

- Pool resources, whether they be financial, human, or material. Sharing resources can lead to cost savings and more efficient project implementation.



8. Leverage Diverse Perspectives:

- Embrace the diversity of perspectives brought by different organizations. This diversity can lead to innovative solutions and a more comprehensive approach to community challenges.

9. Create Joint Initiatives:

- Develop joint initiatives that capitalize on the strengths of each organization. This could include community events, educational programs, or collaborative projects that address shared goals.

10. Seek Funding Collaboratively:

- Explore opportunities to seek funding collaboratively. Grant applications, sponsorships, or fundraising campaigns that involve multiple organizations can enhance the chances of success.

11. Establish a Steering Committee:

- Form a steering committee with representatives from each participating organization. This committee can provide guidance, make decisions, and ensure effective coordination.

12. Evaluate and Learn:

- Regularly evaluate the progress and impact of collaborative projects. Use feedback to learn from the experience and make adjustments for future initiatives.



14. Encourage Cross-Training:

- Encourage cross-training and knowledge-sharing among team members from different organizations. This helps build a collective skill set and promotes a collaborative learning environment.

15. Stay Committed to the Community:

- Keep the community at the center of your collaborative efforts. Focus on creating positive impacts that benefit the community as a whole.

Successful collaboration is an ongoing process that requires commitment, communication, and a shared vision. By working together, community organizations can create a more resilient and vibrant community.

7. ADVOCACY AND POLICY:

How rural youth can advocate for their community's needs

Being part of the Student council is an opportunity to contribute to the creation of a school microclimate. Conditions are created for students to feel like equal owners of the school: students, together with other school self-government institutions, take care of the school's microclimate, make decisions on its improvement. Together, they learn to combine opinions and make the best decisions.

Student self-government gives students the opportunity to diversify school life. Ingenious, enterprising young people, who have various ideas and are able to inspire their peers, gather in the teams of student self-government institutions.



Representatives of student self-government institutions participate in the preparation of the school activity program, planning school events. Students participate more actively in events when they themselves initiate them, participate in their preparation.

Student self-government can also engage in preventive activities in their school, e.g. by promoting a healthy lifestyle, giving up bad habits, harming addictions. Preventive activities can include lectures, events (e.g. sports day, no-smoking day, etc.), as well as informative stands, posters, contests, etc. It is important that schools are interested in this community and would yield positive results.

Preparation of projects:

Student councils can propose projects for selected activities. Sometimes Student councils have a legal status - this means that they can submit projects themselves, if not, projects can be submitted through other local youth organizations. Each municipality has project application deadlines in which you can propose the projects you want, it is also possible to search for project applications nationally (e.g. on the website of the Department of Youth Affairs.) Communicate with the Youth Affairs Coordinator in the municipality, who should help in this matter.

Successful case studies of youth-led advocacy efforts



The Nordic Sámi Youth Conference was organized in 2021. It focused on climate change and was organized virtually to make it accessible to more people. It was specifically for Sámi youth; to increase the participation of Nordic indigenous communities in the climate discussion. They were able to draft and submit a declaration from Sámi youth parliaments from Finland, Sweden and Norway. This was a successful example of cross-border and advocacy for the rights of Sámi and indigenous populations in particular. As the indigenous populations are often the ones who feel the consequences of the climate crisis the most, such collaboration between the youth groups is an important part of mobilization for climate.

8. RESOURCES AND SUPPORT:

Websites for local and regional collectivities (municipality, agglomeration, department and region) in France:

- <https://www.ploeuchhermitage.bzh/>
- <https://www.saintbrieuc-armor-agglo.bzh/>
- <https://cotesdarmor.fr/>
- <https://www.bretagne.bzh/>

Youth associations :

- <https://www.famillesrurales.org/>
- <https://www.mfr.fr/>
- <https://www.cnajep.asso.fr/>
- <https://www.associations.gouv.fr/je-suis-jeune.html>
- <https://www.electeursenherbe.fr/presentation/>
- <https://forumfrancaisjeunesse.fr/>
- <https://www.solidaritesjeunesses.org/>

In Finland:

- **The Sámi Youth Council:** info@samediggi.fi
- **The Youth Parliament:** Heikki Korhonen, Project Coordinator, tel. +358504777352
- **European Youth Parliament Finland (EYP Finland):** +358 44 970 7743 (also WhatsApp), info@eypfinland.org
- **Teachers' Facebook group:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/eypfinlandteachers/>



- **City of Lappeenranta Children's Parliament,** contact the instructor: +358 405917784
- **The Tampere Children's Parliament (TLP):** Teemu Illikainen, Youth Leader, 050 322 6379, teemu.illikainen@tampere.fi
- **Tavo Europa** - a safe place where non-formal education methods meet different environments and miracles really begin to happen. Teachers, trainers, instructors, researchers, activists and youth leaders gather together to make the choice – bring a positive change, while giving floor to youth and helping them advance their major skills.

On the social media pages can find vast opportunities of conferences, exchanges and training courses both in Lithuania and abroad.

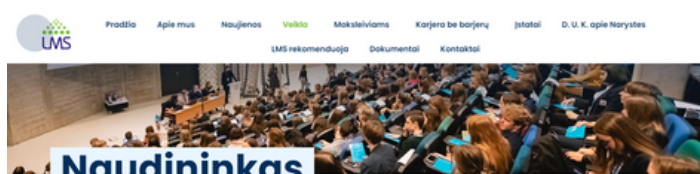


- **NAUDININKAS:** intended for members, departments and individual students of the Lithuanian Students' Union (hereinafter - LMS), which can provide all the necessary tools to function efficiently and smoothly in a school or city. The goals of training for students are to strengthen the team and deepen knowledge in relevant topics.



Training is conducted by LMS training managers who specialize in working with students and are competent in sharing experience, using theoretical and practical material on various training topics.

The user consists of two main parts: training and training cycles.



<https://www.moksleiviai.lt/naudininkas/>

- **School self-government guide:**

https://old.jrd.lt/informacija-jaunimui/mokiniu-savivalda/savivaldos_gidas_2009.pdf



Information on available funding sources and grants for youth-led initiatives (EU portals)

Many European opportunities are available for young people and for youth-led initiatives. Indeed, one of the priority objectives of the European Union is territorial cohesion between member states. This territorial cohesion involves reducing inequalities between territories. This objective can therefore be achieved thanks to the involvement of all populations in the European Union, and in particular isolated populations. In order to achieve a more inclusive and more resilient European Union, it is therefore necessary to integrate these fringes into the discussions and into the projects implemented.



Among these isolated and difficult to access populations, we find people in social difficulties, the elderly, people living in rural areas, women who are often under-represented, but also young people. Indeed, young people are struggling to grasp local public life, but also to grasp their European citizenship. The European Union has therefore developed several programs for young people and for projects aimed at young people. Among these programs, the ERASMUS+ program is the best known. It has a total budget of 26.2 billion for the period 2021-2027.

The main objective of the project is to encourage the education and training of individuals, particularly young people. The program notably finances learning mobility projects and cooperation projects between institutions and organizations. This program therefore makes it possible to finance projects aimed at young people, or even projects led by young people. Thanks to these projects, young people can acquire new skills and embrace their European citizenship.

The European Union also has platforms that allow young people to discover the projects and opportunities that concern them. The European Youth Portal platform offers European and country level information about opportunities and initiatives that are of interest to young people who are living, learning and working in Europe. SALTO-YOUTH is a network of seven Resource Centres working on European priority areas within the youth field. It provides non-formal learning resources for youth workers and youth leaders and organizes training and contact-making activities to support organizations and National Agencies (NAs) within the frame of the European Commission's Erasmus+ Youth program, the European Solidarity Corps, and beyond.



9. SUCCESS STORIES:

Inspirational stories of rural youth who have made a positive impact on their communities through youth parliaments (Familles Rurales)

Integrating young people into public and social life is a challenge for everyone. Indeed, better inclusion of all categories of public, including isolated populations, allows the territory to be more attractive and welcoming. Some actors have already taken up this issue, including outside communities and public institutions. In France, a national association, Familles Rurales, has included young people in its management.

Familles Rurales is a national association recognized as being of public utility which acts in favor of families throughout the territory, in rural and peri-urban areas. The Familles Rurales association is organized as a network. Indeed, there are associations established on local territory, which depend on a departmental branch, which itself depends on a regional branch, which is itself attached to a national branch. Each level has its own board of directors.

The Familles Rurales association meets all the needs of families, ranging from after-school activities to help with budget management, social workers and training. This association is all the more important in rural areas as it compensates for the lack of public services for isolated populations. However, the association struggled to offer actions aimed at young people because there are very few of them in the association's workforce. It is difficult to recruit young people to volunteer within the association. In order to attract more young people to their actions, the Familles Rurales association has decided to integrate young people into the association's board of directors. The young people, aged 16 to 30, have their own board of directors, which is attached to the national board of directors of the association. Young people therefore have their own budget to carry out projects within the association. Due to their national scope, they can operate throughout France. They thus respond to the challenges encountered by the young population, particularly those present in rural areas. Some of their projects are taken up within the national board of directors of the association. In addition, many young people join the association and its boards of directors when they are over the required age.



Advices from young elected represent

Municipal Youth Councils are recurrent in France. Many cities are implementing them because they allow children to be integrated into local public life and allow them to take their first steps in their citizenship. These elected representatives of the Municipal Youth Council are elected according to a process similar to the Municipal Council. Every year, part of the Municipal Youth Council is renewed for a two-year term. The voters are CM1 and CM2 students from classes in the town. This year, the elections were held on November 6 and 7.

On this occasion, we questioned the candidates for the election as well as the young elected officials who still have one year of mandate to complete. We asked them about their motivations and the advice they could give to other young people who would be interested in carrying out similar actions. The majority of candidates and young elected officials interviewed explain that they submitted their candidacy out of curiosity. In fact, they explain that they wanted to find out how a municipal council worked. They also explain that they wanted to act for their municipality by proposing projects that were close to their hearts and to be able to carry them out from start to finish.



Most explained that the election process was also intriguing and that they wanted to participate in order to find out. Everyone is satisfied with their experience within the Municipal Youth Council, including the unelected young candidates. Many say they have a better understanding of how the democratic process and citizenship work. Finally, the young elected officials offered some advice to candidates and young people wishing to get involved in similar actions.

They recommend that young people be ready to invest time in these actions. In fact, these actions do not represent a cost for their parents, but represent a long-term investment of time. In fact, young elected officials devote one hour every two weeks, for two years, to meetings of the Municipal Youth Council. The young elected officials explain that it is the regularity and intensity of this investment which allows the realization of these projects. They therefore advise young people to be motivated, dedicated and enterprising.

10. GET INVOLVED:

Opportunities for readers to take action and get involved immediately

In France there are several possibilities available to readers who wish to get involved directly. First of all, readers can join projects aimed at young people that already exist. Readers can therefore find out about existing projects by inquiring about the European Union platforms which were mentioned earlier in the document.



Readers can also obtain information from local authorities and public institutions in the areas, particularly those with expertise in youth and youth work. Indeed, actors from institutions and public authorities regularly have information and contacts on the activities and projects carried out in their territory, particularly in activities dedicated to young people. In addition, readers can contact the structures in their area which deal with welcoming young people or activities for young people. Indeed, these structures are often present within local networks of similar structures. Readers can also contact local associations which address the issues of the young population, and/or which offer activities for young people.

These associations sometimes have current projects on the theme of youth and will be able to provide readers with information. However, if readers cannot find a project that meets its requirements, they can search for the resources to implement their own projects.

Indeed, the European Union provides funding through different programs and different funds for projects for young people. Young people wishing to find out about opportunities corresponding to their project ambitions can contact the Europe Direct centers which are located throughout Europe. These actors list all the resources that young people can request to carry out their projects. They can also contact associations dedicated to young people in order to find the necessary help to create a project that meets their expectations.

In Finland:

- **Become a member European Youth Parliament Finland (EYP Finland):**
<https://eypfinland.org/en/get-involved/>
- **Join a sessions of the European Youth Parliament Finland (EYP Finland):**
<https://eypfinland.org/signup/>
- **Become a member of the Finnish Youth Council Alliance:** <https://nuva.fi/tule-mukaan/>



Links to relevant organizations and online communities:

- Visit the website of your school or municipality to find out more about what type of student councils exist in your community.
- The largest youth news portal in Lithuania - "Žinau viską"!

Here you will find all information on all issues of concern to young people (and not only): from education, volunteering to emotional and physical health and young family topics! It is updated daily with the opportunities of training, conferences, events ecc.



<https://zinauviska.lt/>

- **Career without barriers** - by carrying out various types of activities, it intends to inform students studying in general education institutions about career education topics, to encourage society, state institutions and school communities to pay attention to the importance of career education for students. It is possible to become an ambassador of this programme:

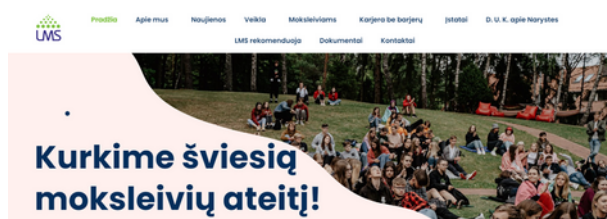


<https://www.moksleiviai.lt/karjera-be-barjeru/>

Links to relevant organizations and online communities

- **Lithuanian students union.** Public and voluntary non-profit organization, only representative of interests of Lithuanian students self-governments. Unites more than 500 self-government councils and has more than 1000 volunteers.

<https://www.moksleiviai.lt/>



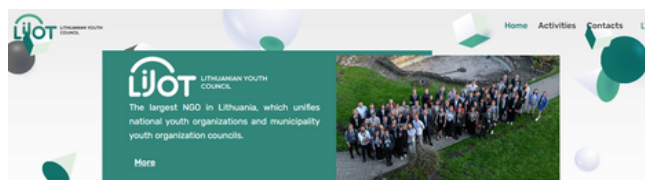
- **The largest non-governmental youth organization in Lithuania,** uniting national youth organizations and councils of municipal youth organizations

<https://lijot.lt>



- **Youth information and counseling contacts:**

<https://lijot.lt/veikla/jaunimo-informavimas-ir-konsultavimas/>



- **The Sámi Youth Council:**

<https://nuor.fi/en/etusivu-en/>

- **The Youth Parliament:**

<https://opinkirjo.fi/en/activities/for-children-and-youth/the-youth-parliament/>

- **European Youth Parliament Finland (EYP Finland):** <https://eypfinland.org/en/>
- **City of Lappeenranta Children's Parliament, contact the instructor:** +358 405917784
- **The Tampere Children's Parliament (TLP):** Teemu Illikainen, Youth Leader, 050 322 6379, teemu.illikainen@tampere.fi
- **The Children's Parliament of Imatra:** <https://www.imatra.fi/en/pathos-making-and-participation/children%27s-parliament>
- **Imatra's youth council:** <https://www.imatra.fi/en/pathos-making-and-participation/youth-council>



Youth Information Point websites (national and regional):

- <https://infojeunesfrance.org/>
- <https://crij.bzh/>

Europe Direct Centers:

- https://european-union.europa.eu/contact-eu/meet-us_fr
- <https://cotesdarmor.fr/europ-armor-label-europe-direct>

References:

- <https://www.moksleiviai.lt/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/ms-pradziamokslis.pdf>
- https://old.jrd.lt/informacija-jaunimui/mokiniu-savivalda/savivaldos_gidas_2009.pdf
- <https://gabijos.lt/apie-musu-savivalda-mokiniu-taryba/>
- <https://www.svietimonaujienos.lt/kaip-privaloma-socialine-pilietine-veikla-paversti-savanoriska-prasminga-ir-auginancia-praktika/>
- <https://www.annalindhoundation.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/3891-Article%20Text-15624-1-10-20230116.pdf>
- <https://kaunas.kasvyksta.lt/2023/10/15/rajonas/vaikla-pradeda-naujos-kadencijos-kauno-rajono-mokiniu-taryba/>
- <https://alytus.lt/lt/naujienos/alytaus-putinu-gimnazijos-pasididziavimas-mokiniu-taryba>

The link for the websites of municipalities that organize Youth Municipal Councils (among others):

- https://www.ploeuelhermitage.bzh/Conseil-municipal-des-jeunes_141.html
- <https://www.mairie-vannes.fr/conseil-municipal-des-jeunes>
- <https://www.ville-paimpol.fr/conseil-municipal-des-jeunes-2/>
- <https://www.reims.fr/enfance-jeunesse-education/laccompagnement-des-jeunes/le-conseil-municipal-des-jeunes>
- <https://www.chatou.fr/Mes-loisirs/Les-espaces-jeunes-11-25/Conseil-municipal-des-jeunes-2021-2023>
- <https://www.ville-lhermitage.fr/conseil-municipal-des-jeunes/>
- <https://www.tours.fr/page-portail-tours-agit/conseil-municipal/conseil-municipal-des-jeunes/>



The Rural Youth Parliament Project

As you conclude reading this online guide, we hope you have found the information and tools provided to be helpful and inspiring in your efforts to involve young people in the social life of the community. The participation of youth is crucial for creating a brighter and more inclusive future for our community.

The actions we take today to involve young people will shape the direction our community takes in the future. By engaging youth in the social life of the community, we not only provide them with opportunities for personal growth and development but also bring new perspectives and fresh energy to decision-making processes and community problem-solving.



THANK YOU!

We hope this guide has offered you practical ideas and resources to initiate or strengthen your youth engagement initiatives. We encourage continued dialogue and collaboration among young people, organizations, local authorities, and other stakeholders to create a more inclusive and participatory environment for all members of our community.

Thank you for your interest and commitment to involving young people in the social life of the community. Every step we take together matters and can make a significant difference in our common future.