

3rd Annual Conference of the European Network Cities for Children
29th & 30th June 2009, Stuttgart City Hall

Meeting of the Working Group 6 Youth Participation

30th June 2009, Stuttgart City Hall, 9 - 11:45am

List of Participants:

Moderation: Mathias Trümner-Friese, City of Offenbach, Germany

City, Country	Participant
Cologne, Germany	Anna Dölling
Cologne, Germany	Dorothea John
The Hague, Netherlands	Annie In den Kleef
Tartu, Estonia	Kristel Altosaar
Graz, Austria	Verena Ennemoser
Stuttgart, Germany	Roland Kelm
Basel, Switzerland	Marc Flückiger
Malmö, Sweden	Patrik Widerberg
Malmö, Sweden	Agneta Eriksson
Malmö, Sweden	Caroline Lundholm
Tampere, Finland	Mia Lumio
Offenbach, Germany	Mathias Trümner-Friese

Protocol

Agenda

1. Introduction
2. What has been achieved in the cities since the last meeting?
3. Agenda for the next working group meeting
4. Next meeting in Offenbach

Introduction

Moderator Mathias Trümner-Friese recalled the main points that had been pointed out during the conference the day before:

Each working group should first define how success concerning the specific topic being discussed in the group could be measured and how in this way the theme could be transparently evaluated. Secondly, sustainability as one of the most important attitudes of the group's topic should be considered and integrated into the discussion. Finally each team should try to reach the target of formulating a charter important to serve as a basis for lobbying with the EU.

What has been achieved in the cities since the last working group meeting in The Hague?

- a. **The Hague:** Since the last meeting a digital map showing different places (playgrounds, etc) where children can play has been initiated. Moreover a voluntary work programme for young people has been established through which youngsters can gain credits for sportive/cultural activities. These measurements have been installed to enable children and young people to better participate in city's life
- b. **Tampere:** Different international meetings are planned, for a conference on child abuse, where the youth should participate
- c. **Cologne:** The department of child affairs is trying to integrate the childrens' opinions into the city's planning institutions
- d. **Kassel:** It is trying to establish democracy in the school system by asking the children what school should be like.
- e. **Tartu:** Meetings between mayors, city counsellors and young people have been organized; for instance, young people get money to realise their own little projects. Furthermore, the question has evolved how this kind of youth participation can be improved.
- f. **Graz:** A parliament for children has been established.
- g. **Stuttgart:** A youth parliament has been created in nearly all districts of Stuttgart. The young people are elected by their peers. In this way they are integrated in the decision-making political process of the city.
- h. **Basel:** The city of Basel is not yet a member of the network, but it is interested in joining the group and getting new inspiration through it concerning the question how youth participation can be achieved.
- i. **Malmö:** Comparable to Basel the City of Malmö is just thinking about joining the network. Regarding youth participation a process handbook has been created representing a kind of checklist with proposals of how the youth can be integrated into

city planning projects. Moreover a web-based evaluation of schools has been installed in order to find out if children feel comfortable at school and how the educational system could be modified towards their needs. Such projects are directed by a special youth coordinator.

- j. **Offenbach** is planning a city-wide Youth conference in October 2009 with politicians, municipal authorities, members of the children- and youth parliament and young people, who are not yet involved in participation structures. The conference is the beginning of a campaign to strengthen youth participation in the city.

Agenda for the next working group meeting in Offenbach

Items on the agenda:

1. How can we reach the population? – Public relation affairs to promote youth participation
2. The intercultural aspect – how can we achieve youth participation including migrants?
3. Linking the different city's departments concerning youth participation
4. Evaluation: how can success in youth participation be defined and measured?
5. The gender aspect? – how must it be considered to create an appropriate concept?
6. Which tools are useful to achieve a better kind of youth participation? (see the combined process handbook Malmö and Tampere are going to create and which will be sent to you via e-mail)
7. Participation of young people in international youth conferences
8. Formulation of a charta including targets how to achieve youth participation an being useful for EU-lobbying

Points to take into account for the preparation of next working group discussion:

- It is important that projects aiming at creating better youth participation have rapid effects to keep young people following the project.
- The group has the idea to develop central questions for the children and youngsters in order to find out how in different cities and countries they want to be involved in the decision-making (political) process.
- The young people want to be taken seriously. This should always be taken into account when creating appropriate projects to involve them.
- The youth should be invited to international conferences dealing with that topic.
- Therefore each city should try to find a representative youngster to take part in the working group meeting
- For the next meeting a list with best practices and one with the worst case examples of projects trying to promote youth participation should be created. It should serve as a basis for cities that want to achieve better youth participation
- The cultural aspect of the topic should always be taken into account in the different discussions. The better someone is integrated, the better he or she will participate.
- Finally, all members of the working group should think about how the gender specific differences could be considered. Especially the problem of young girls often not being attracted by the offers should be discussed and solved by inventing new kinds of projects.

The next meeting in Offenbach

The next meeting will take place in Offenbach, in Hessen, in Germany in March 2010. Deputy Mayor Birgit Simon invites the whole working group and all cities interested in the topic, even if they are not yet a member of the network Cities for Children.

Recorder: Sebastian Camarero, City of Stuttgart