

Description of youth participation project

Name of project: **Children's parliament**

Cities for Children contact person

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Executive organisation

Name of organisation: Youth department of the city of Bern / Jugendamt der Stadt Bern
Type of organisation: Governemental department
Website: www.bern.ch
Additional information: www.kinderbern.ch

Project description

The project provides a solution to the following question/problem:
Participation of the children in political and social questions and discussions.

Project idea conceived by:
Youth department together with children by visiting another children's parliament.
Parliament of the city of Bern by defining the rules for children and youth participation

Date started: November 2003

Date of completion: ---

Aims:
Getting children participating in questions they feel involved or affected.
Letting them show their point of view and asking their questions.
Having them involved in discussing, deciding and realizing.
Encouraging other children to participate in public and social questions.

Target group:
Children from 8 to 14 years

The project reached ~400 young people:

Working method:
Organizing meetings of the parliament and their working groups like the group of building and improving, group of financial affairs, city detectives, board office,...
Defining projects for the work groups after propositions of the members like safety on school-ways, improving of a playground, participating in the planning for a new concept for public toilets, safety for children in the city, controlling if the cinemas care about the age limits of the movies,...

How are young people involved?
They are involved in the whole organisation. The children's bureau (KINDERBÜRO) prepares the

meetings and cares for proper communication. All the decisions are made by the children. They elect out of their middle the members of the working groups, and they even determine the rules of the parliament.

What is the role of young people?

As told above.

How many young people participated?

About 100 per year. There are no limits for the members.

How many young people were involved in the organisation of the project?

As shown above.

What was the role of the executive organisation?

The city government let the children's bureau work out the rules of the law together with some children, the parliament decided it. The children's bureau puts into practice the law and supports the members of the children's parliament in organisation.

What other organisations were involved?

Organisations of the open children work (animators)

Finance

What is the budget?

~20 000€ / year for the parliament itself. About 100 000€ of product costs in the NPM-budget of the city.

Who provided the finances?

City parliament

Outcome

Have the aims been achieved? Yes. The number of members is constant, the government takes the decisions serious, many projects were successful.

What were the success factors?

The right to participate is in the city constitution, in the law of children and youth participation. As the children's parliament makes its own rules, they are the owners of their rights.

What were the pitfalls?

The information of all children in the city is still very hard to realize. Teachers sometimes ignore that they should inform every child about his rights. Hard enduring work and communication helps.

Future plans: To go on this way.

Quotes and opinions of young people:

Most of the children – especially in the work groups – are proud and self-conscious about their work and their way to participate. We do know from many young people who had to leave the children's parliament because of their age, that they'd wish to go on participating in another way.

Photograph:



Presentation of a work group in the parliament's hall.



Official City emblem



and the children's parliament's emblem

REGISTRATION FORM

Youth participation workshop

27 – 28 March 2008, The Hague, The Netherlands

Please reply by 28 February 2008

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Yours sincerely,

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