

CELEBRATION OF THE TREATY OF KIEL - 14 JANUARY 2014

Youth seminar on democracy, tolerance, freedom of speech and youth participation

Report from the group work

One of the objectives of the 200 years jubilee for the Norwegian Constitution is to generate debate about the main challenges facing democracy in the future, to stimulate reflection, engagement and participation in democratic processes.



The proposed discussion topics refers to paragraphs in the UN Declaration of Human Rights and ask questions on what this means in reality and how young people interpret and act according to these statements.

1. Freedom of speech

“Article 19.

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”

- How do you interpret the freedom of speech?
- Do you see any threats or misuse of the freedom of opinion and expression today – in Europe and in other parts of the World?
- What are the most important challenges today regarding the freedom of speech?
- What can young people do to approach these challenges?

Group 1

Group work- Democracy

1 Freedom of speech

Article 19, "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

- How do you interpret the freedom of speech?

You can express yourself as long as you don't compromise another person's rights and their individual security.

- Do you see any threats or misuse of the freedom of opinion and expression today-in Europe and in other parts of the world? What are the most important challenges today regarding the freedom of speech?

Some people use the freedom of speech to justify racism, verbal abuse and attacks on beliefs, religion and culture.

- What can young people do to approach these challenges?
Focus on and take initiative to educate yourself and others about culture, religion and communication to achieve mutual respect

2. Right to participation and to be heard

"Article 21.

(1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives."

- How do you interpret democracy?
- Do you think that young people today given the appropriate opportunities to influence local and regional policy making- and European policy?
- What are the biggest challenges related to youth participation and opportunities to be heard?
- What are the most important issues for young people to influence today?
And why is it important for young people to be heard?



Group 2

We are the adults of the future

Challenges and opportunities related to youth participation

Opportunities

- Dedication and engagement
- Political will and interest for youth participation
- Independence from the political parties enable youngsters to see their full potential

Challenges	Solution
COMMUNICATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Get new members /engage more youth ➤ Missing structures for youth participation on different levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The public and youth have to know about the value of youth participation ➤ The public and the youth have to know about the possibilities of youth participation. Media , politicians etc ➤ Create new ways connection with other youth organizations. ➤ Create laws and policies to make youth politics more common and better.

MONEY	➤ Establish Fonds to pay for project Young people can apply funding of projects.
VALUES	➤ “Juleica” – a certificate which allows people (youth) that are involved to pay less (bus , hostel, etc)
SUPPORT	➤ Support teachers and schools
	Create laws and policies to make youth politics more common and better

3. Obligation to care and to be engaged in society

Article 29.

(1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

- In your opinion are young people today enough interested and concerned about politics the society they live in? What are the obstacles for engagement?
- In Norway results from the last two elections (local and regional elections in September 2011 and national elections in September 2013) show an increased participation from young voters (18 – 25 years). Researchers relate this fact to the 22 July 2011 terror. Why do you think more young people use their right to vote as a reaction to this horror?
- Are all parts of society included and their voice heard today? If not –who’s missing?
- What are in your opinion the biggest threats to safety and social welfare in Europe today?

Group 3

Included in the society :

- ✓ Grown ups
- ✓ Children
- ✓ Highly educated people
- ✓ Socially and politically involved youths

NOT (very well) included in the society

- ✓ Youths 13 – 25
- ✓ Children in foster care
- ✓ People with disabilities
- ✓ Elderly people (+ 65)
- ✓ Single parents
- ✓ Unemployed
- ✓ Foreigners/refugees
- ✓ People with Disabilities

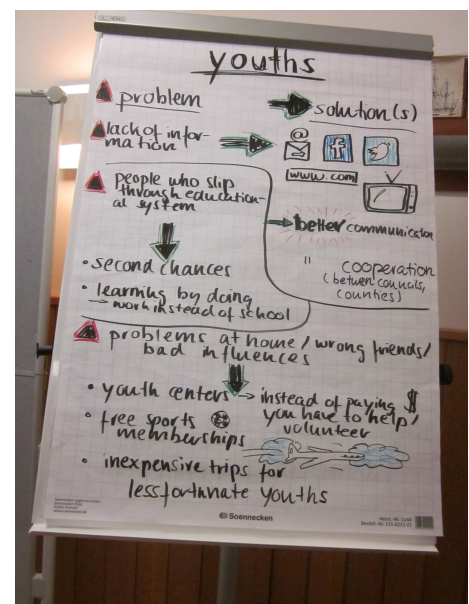
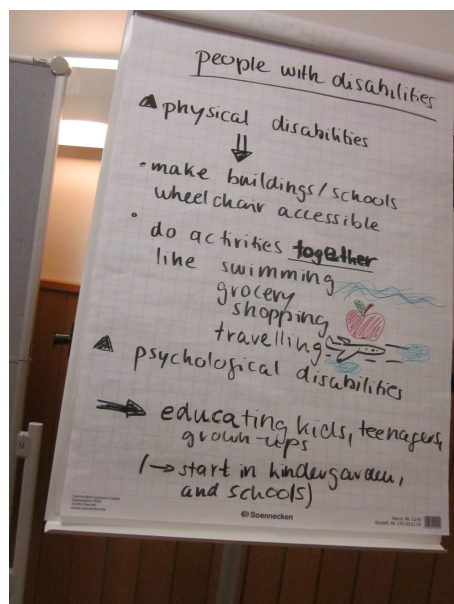
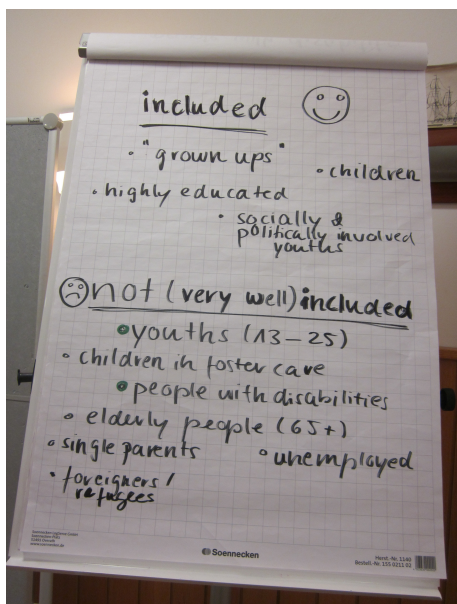
Group	Actions
Physical disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Make building schools wheel chair accessible➤ Do activities together such as<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Swimming- Shopping- Travelling
Psychological disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Education kids, teenagers and grown-ups to recognize the symptoms and to get help early.➤ Information must start in the kindergarten and schools➤ More openness about the problem

YOUTHS

- ✓ Youth have to be more involved in the decision making for the future.
- ✓ Youth are involved but not enough

Problems	Solutions
➤ Lack of information	➤ E-mailing, facebook, twitter, www com, television
➤ People who slip through education system Give them a second changes Learning by doing – work instead of school	➤ Better communication and Cooperation between councils and counties
➤ Problems at home /wrong friends bad influence	➤ More Youth centres/clubs – the Youth are responsible for the activities. ➤ Youth centres – instead of pay you have to help as a volunteer ➤ Free sport memberships ➤ Inexpensive trips for less fortunate youths

- ✓ Lack of information to the Youth - they don't know what rights they have to be heard
- ✓ Better communication leads to better cooperation
- ✓ The Information must be structured
- ✓ Drop – out - get them back to school –
- ✓ People with disabilities



Comments from the participants:

- Very interesting speech from Mustafa about the Voluntaries work. Nice to meet engaged friends
- Information about the voluntary Year was very interesting - it's important to get to know more about international work.
- The best with this kind of seminars is exchange of experience - similarities and differences
- Maria's speech was very interesting. She highlighted important thoughts and important issues concerning the democracy and the future.
- Making new friend, getting new ideas and be together. ew ideas, new impulses – important not to stop !