

"Taste participation"

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Minutes of the 17.9.05 Workshop: Participation of Young People in Youth Information work - and quality

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Presentation round of participants: who we are and what is our link to participation issue?

Some elements to open up discussion

Päivi Timonen-Verma presented shortly some elements related to the topic:

DIFFERENT LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION by Hart

(See *Working Together workbook*, p.20):

- Manipulation

- Decoration

- Redeeming

(Above is not participation)

- Initiative of adults
- Adults ask for advice
- Young people participate equally, on initiative of adults
- Young people take the initiative and they are in charge
- Young people take the initiative – adults and young people work together

DIFFERENT FORMS OF PARTICIPATION

Source: Draft minutes of the Working-group on training modules for experienced youth info workers, 2005

- 1) Identify information needs of young people
- 2) Producing information materials, using various media, and adapting raw info for the target-group
- 3) Collecting information from various sources
- 4) Young people inform / advise other young people
- 5) Distributing information, using various methods
- 6) Evaluating information actions / services / centres, to improve quality
- 7) Organising and managing information projects
- 8) As members of advisory boards = to influence youth info policy / structures

There are at least three different categories to define participation of young people in the youth information work. Mrs. Timonen-Verma named those:

1. Youth information done by professionals
2. Category A + young people participating in projects or as part of strategy
3. Peer youth information – during process aim is to coach the principles of YI

Following sub discussion groups were formed

Method used was called Gallery Walk or carousel.

1. Motivation
2. Web-page and participation
3. Participation and quality
4. Link and interaction between young people and youth information workers in participation projects and workers expectations

Issues to be concern in the sub discussion groups:

- What are main questions to solved in each topic before to elaborate participation
- How to ensure and measure quality
- What is possible at European level – ideas and action?

Theme 1. Motivation

Questions from the participants of workshop:

What is the motivation of young people to participate? How can we motivate them? Participation or once? or more? How can we motivate young people to participate? How to make participation fun and attractive to them? How do we retain (hold on to) trained young people advisers? Do reward mechanisms work? How do we make it exciting for us and the young people? FUN, what possibilities are there to give young people the chance to participate in youth information? Should participation be also rewarded? How? How to motivate youngsters to participate?

Discussions on the workshop:

a) Indicators

- Own benefit
- Take over responsibility
- "Job" – qualification
- Recognition of young people (their decisions, opinions)
- Equality between young people and youth information worker
- "Group / common" activity
- "Power" (competence) to come to results
- Enjoy participation
- To feel "authentic" (=to be oneself!)
- Interest in special topics / methods
- Fun, teasers
- Have a special relation with centre
- Other young people (Little older)
- Rewards: free tickets, seminars, international and national conferences

Participation is quality -> transparency

European level:

- Where are young people in the networks (+++ Euro<26)
- Youth advisory committee for the youth portal
- EVS in youth information work, "Euro peers" + other projects (e.g. young team Europe): youth mobility use in youth information

Theme 2. Web-page and participation

Questions from the participants of workshop:

Different methods on youth participation and web site (content, design, interactivity, skills) versus time, money, quality?; Web-based youth information and young people: criteria for quality, moderators training, if someone has done something, please share it; The practicalities of young peoples participation I the European Youth Portal? What methods can be used?

Discussions on the workshop:

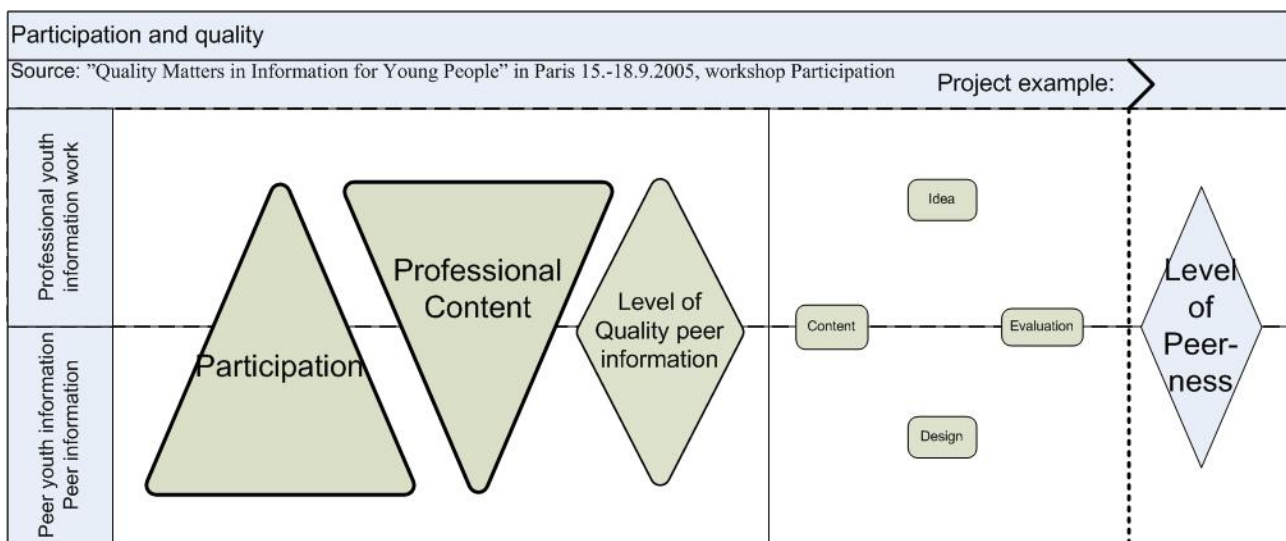
- Get a youth committee for the EYP = Vip = with young professionals ??
- Is just a different media: motivation is the same
- Youth Advisory committee → 15-20 young people, one from each state in Germany, ca +- 20 old.
- What about the equal access to the web? (Equipment, language level, handicapped people ...)
- Is even web-based participation more successful on local level? Is it possible on international level? How? – difficult but possible but not with all young people.
- In case of direct publishing by young people, what moderation policy to use? Rules, transparent.
- **Think of the consequences before: funding, technical, ethical.**
- What is the limits – how to make them transparent?
- Young people on management and advisory comities: you have to have rules → with young people?
- Web is a good tool to identify needs: could / should lead to more quality / more forum users, moderators etc.?

Theme 3. Participation and quality

Questions from the participants of workshop:

How can pure peer group information activities be evaluated? What is more important? To or has more advantages: get quality youth information, professionally or to give youth information peer to peer? How can we train young people (volunteers) to the same level of expertise as professional workers? (Do we need to try?) How to combine participation and quality? Is the quality of the peer group information depending on the input of the professional youth information work? How we can measure quality in youth to youth information? Do we xx indicators to do that? Quality: rights to receive service; young as staff.

Discussions on the workshop:



Participation and quality in the field of youth-information

High-quality-youth-information and participation of young people in the field of information seemed to be hard to combine with each other. The initials of peer-youth-information, such as reports, supports etc. are of course very effective, especially to reach the target group of the information. But in the view of professional Youth information workers there will be always the risk of incorrect information with all consequences attached to pure peer-information.

So the advice of skilled information workers seemed to be essential for high quality youth information projects.

To avoid on the one hand side alibi-peer-projects, to guarantee on the other hand high quality information it is important to consider both factors in the planning and organisational parts of a information project.

Helpful for the organisation, planning and evaluation of information projects is the model "Level of high quality peer-ness":

Basis of this model is the assumption, that the quantity of professional information is decreasing, the less input is made by skilled information workers. The Quality of the information project is increasing if the participation of youngsters is growing to a specific level.

The highest quality of a peer information project can be reached if the quantity of professional content and the quantity of peerness is in balance.

To evaluate the "level of quality peerness", it is important to assess the involvement of skilled workers and young people in each part of a project separately.

During workshop:

- How he learn to do it in a professional way? How to make sure it's participation and not take advantage of them? E.g. working for free; the aim: balance process and product, also quality of process and quality of result.

Quality:

- Participation can involve quality (You know the needs); we need concrete specific indicators (Even about social/cultural mixed of public involved); long term involvement if possible.

Europe:

- See motivation workshop results; what new skills do we need?

Theme 4. Link and interaction between young people and youth information workers in participation projects and workers expectations

Questions from the participants of workshop:

In which fields of youth information can we involve young people? How to involve young people from groups that are difficult to reach? How to deal with "fear" of the workers? The use of voluntary services in Youth information work: volunteers work in YICs; volunteers disseminate information at schools, events; volunteers are involved in youth information projects like youth portals etc.; volunteers get profiting in youth information (Future capital); What do we expect from young people participation in youth information work – is it more users / young friendly?

Citizenship? it is my impression that the "best" youth participation is when young people take the initiative themselves - Are they interested in participating in youth information? Will they take the initiative to participate in youth information? (Expect peer to peer); What level of supervision do young people need when delivering peer information services?

Discussions on the workshop:

* Two different approaches and expectations:

- Consultation of young people "use them", involve
- Let them participate in the organisation – being part of the youth information centre.

* Involve them – isn't which scope?

- Projects (decide by themselves?)
- Strategy

* Be clear from Youth information worker on the expectations from young people and their place.

* Evaluation of participation / involve young people in the evaluation process

* In order to measure: set of criteria and guidelines specific to each project

* European level: exchanges, study visits, B.P. involving young people in youth information work

How to reach young people that are difficult to reach?

Empower young people

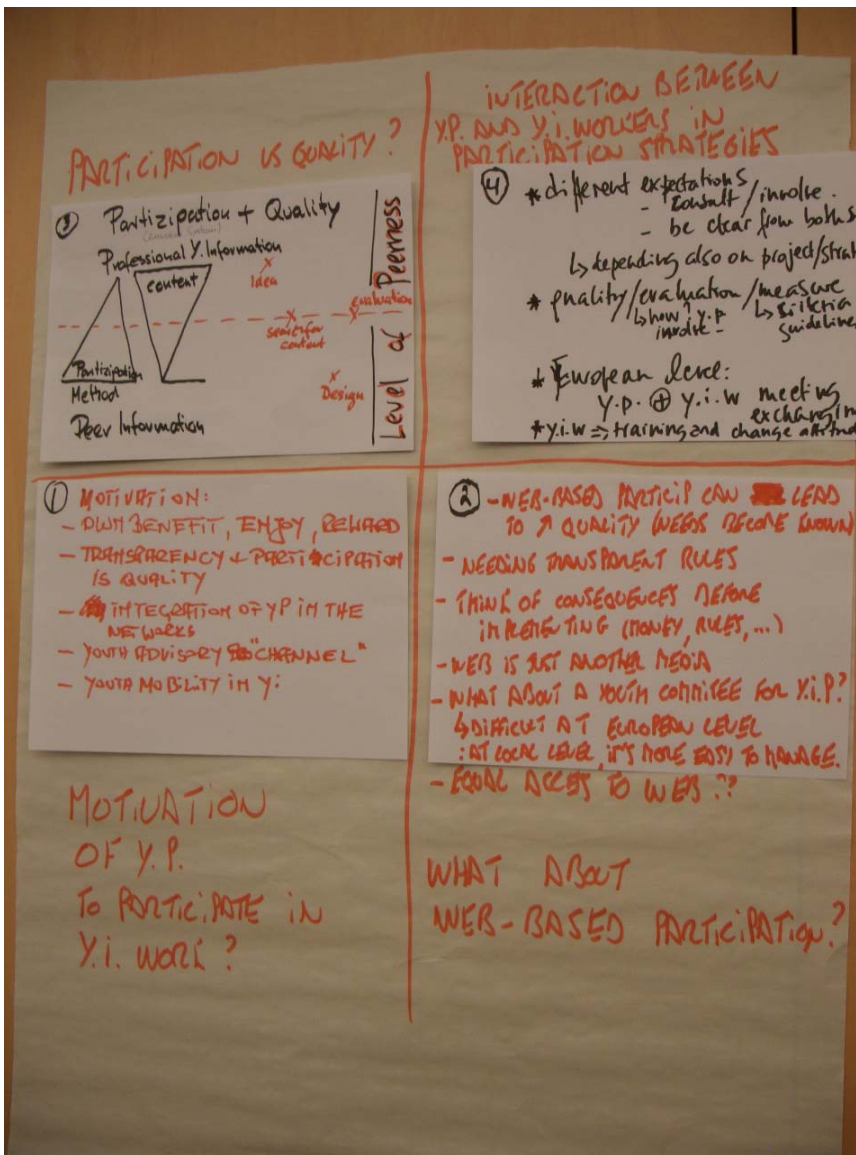
E.g. with young immigrants – how to involve them?

More disadvantaged – more use youth information centre → need to adapt participation possibilities

E.g. Ijab Fuji/picture projects

Training and attitudes → to get rid of "fear" in the youth information work/-ers.

Summary on the plenary presented by the participation workshop



Minutes summarized by Päivi Timonen-Verma, theme 3. Participation and quality: part of the content is written by Robert Helm-Pleuger.