
2021

GUIDE ON STRUCTURED DIALOGUE

EVIDENCE-BASED RECOMMENDATIONS



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THE PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE

The Evidence Based Structured Dialogue (EBSD) and ‘Youth Voice Matters’ Initiative is a project that has on one side the National Youth Councils (NYCs) from Moldova and Georgia, the Armenian Progressive Youth NGO, and on the other side the Romanian Youth Council, NYC of Slovenia, and Institute for Policy Research and Analysis.

The initiative has the primary goal of building and improving the capacities of national, regional, and local youth councils through the development of innovative and collaborative practices between youth organisations, youth and entities responsible for decision-making. The gathered materials for the guide were collected through insight collection methods, as well as evidence-based approaches for the policy-making processes.

For the intents and purposes of this endeavour, the Guide contains a comprehensive approach of:

- Identifying the issues which will be discussed with the participants of the Dialogue;
- Conducting a Structured Dialogue based on the gathered evidence through a methodological-based approach.

The following Guide is developed as a tool-kit for use in youth councils, as well as for youth in order to be able to proceed accordingly in the evaluation procedure of the public policies in the implementation phase (intermediary) and after the finalisation of the process (ex-post). The evaluation allows the involved stakeholders to obtain information in regards to the implementation of public policies, as well as achieving the set objectives and impact on society in general or on certain groups, sectors or specific areas in particular.

The evaluation process ends the cycle of public policies and allows youth councils and youth to develop certain recommendations regarding the continuation, modification or completion of the public policy subject to evaluation. The guide serves as a tool used in the evaluation of public policies for several types of beneficiaries and public policies.

The guide contains two parts: first one being the guide itself, which contains the operational methodology, which can be used by anyone responsible for engaging in this venture. It contains a comprehensive set of guidelines and rules, which have the potential to conduct a proper and continuous Structured Dialogue with the authorities. The second part contains the best approach to ensure continuity, which in this case refers to the development of the co-management structure. This chapter is vital in order to ensure that in case of a successful result in the engaged dialogue provides a follow-up phase, which in this paper is the co-management structure. This stems from the recommendations gathered throughout in the projects, which pointed out insistently on the fact that a structure, which is specifically based on co-creation and co-management does, indeed, provide results, which aids in the process of getting youth involved in the decision-making process, which also helps in enabling the process of youth being included in the processes, encouraging a civic responsibility in the youth.

WHAT IS STRUCTURED DIALOGUE?

For the past 20 years the youth in the EaP region became an integral role in influencing changes in the political situation in the region, each year striving for further inclusion in the ever-changing political

arena of the region. It cannot be denied the driving force of youth in further developing the civil society and their active part in changing their communities, which later on will influence the bigger part of society. For further development in the region, a close cooperation with EU is necessary to actively engage the youth and include them in the decision-making process.

The concept of Structured Dialogue can be easily described as the action which promotes the diligent participation of youth in the democratic life and entertains debate on topics revolving on the themes and objectives set by the Structured Dialogue and modernized political framework in the youth field. The definition of 'Structured Dialogue' is used when it describes the discussion between youth and youth-policy makers for obtaining results, which provide useful insights for the procedure of policy-making. In general terms, the procedure of Structured Dialogue revolves around a structured debate

on priorities and proper timing, which foresees events, in which the youth discuss the agreed terms and prepare events where youth discuss the negotiated terms amongst themselves and with policy-makers, youth experts and representatives of public authorities, charged with the field of youth.

Relating to the EU level, the impact of applying Structured Dialogue cannot be denied, since it became the mechanism which every country uses as a valuable driver for socio-economic progress. Meanwhile, youth participation in the decision-making process in the EaP countries is not fully accessible for everyone, as well as not being understood by the target audience. The opportunity to take part in the decision-making consultation, as well as participating at consultations is open to youth and youth organisations and ensured by Legislation. The issue in the aforementioned right lies in the phenomenon of participation being limited to specific organisations and the national youth councils dealing with youth issues.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The Evaluation Cycle is a data-collection and analysis procedure of the information in order to develop certain observations, as well as to formulate certain recommendations which target the issues discovered in the evaluation. The evaluation has the following objectives:

- Increasing accountability - by evaluating public policies by various stakeholders (Parliament, citizens, etc.);
- Increasing the efficiency of allocating public resources and improving the performance of programs;

- Obtaining information - in cases where the Government needs data on the results intervention, and they are lacking;
- Improving the formulation of public policies - mainly achieved in cases where it is obviously the current form of public policy is not a successful one (this may be related to objectives, indicators for measuring progress and impact, etc.);
- Improving implementation;
- Gaining knowledge and formulating lessons for the future.

The analysis and evaluation procedures of the public policies include three consecutive steps: ex-ante analysis (EAA), intermediary evaluation (IE), and ex-post evaluation (EPE). The public policies cycle is operational and efficient only if all the afore-mentioned types of analyses and evaluation are tightly integrated into a single coherent system, and whether it comes to support the development public policy and budgeting in a sustainable manner.

The ex-ante analysis is the first step in the cycle of public policies which discerns the potential impact of the public policies of the target-groups as well as other groups, budgets, certain fields, etc. The basic objective of the analysis is to support the Government's decision-making process through the recommendation that approaches to public policy, which we anticipate to be the most efficient or the most efficient positive impact and which avoids, as far as possible, inappropriate side effects.

The intermediary evaluation is done throughout the implementation phase of the public policies, the accent being placed on their efficiency and effectiveness. This phase has the objective of evaluating the performance of the public policy in motion and identify the necessity for its revision.

The ex-post evaluation is the analysis of the real results of the interventions of the finalised public policies which allows to understand the success/failure, as well as the larger-scale impact of the public policies. One of the primary goals of this procedure is the development of conclusions, which can be generalised and applied for other interventions of public policies- potential or in motion.

The intermediary evaluation and ex-post evaluation are based on almost identical methodologies, the difference being the period in which they apply. Thus, the Guide offers a unique perspective on both types of assessments, using a single concept called assessment (when in some cases it is required differentiation between EPE and IE, these are expressly stipulated).

The section in question defines for which area of public policy and in which cases they will be applied interim or ex-post evaluations. Listed below are the types of public policies that can be used subject of evaluation:

- Public Policies Documents;
- Legislative/Normative Act;
- Budget Program/Sub-program or Sectoral Spending Strategies.

The Evaluation Cycle involves on a basis the following major stages (depending on the specific particularities of the committed evaluation, and the standard procedure can be modified by eliminating or adding some steps):

1. Determine the subject for evaluation;
2. Identifying (or reforming) the objectives of the public policies;
3. Developing the questions of the evaluation;
4. Establishing the model of the resources-products and conducting evaluation;
5. Forming conclusions and recommendations.

By following the mechanism of the afore-mentioned steps, in this regard we employ the technique known as the 'Problem Tree Diagram', which projects the issue in a graphic way, ensuring that all three components (Main Problem, Causes, Consequences) have a visual representation, which can be later employed when developing the counter-measures and/or recommendations/revisions in order to improve upon the research area.

DETERMINE THE SUBJECT FOR EVALUATION

Once the public policies qualify for the evaluation and the primary objective, or the reason for evaluation, it can be determined the subject of evaluation and its area of application. The area of application determines the limits of the evaluation and deals with questions, some, but not limited to:

- What is being evaluated?
- Will the public policy be evaluated in its entirety or specific parts? (as a common practice, the policy at the EPE stage to be evaluated in its entirety)
- What is the time interval for the evaluation? Does it start from the initial announcement or the evaluation phase partakes a specific timeline)?
- Who will participate at the evaluation?

It must be borne in mind at this stage that the general impact may often not be felt manifests at the early stages of implementing public policies. In cases where some policies are closely interrelated, it is useful to evaluate them conjugate - for example, if they are analysed the objectives of public policies on the labour market would be useful to examine certain programs budget, as well as vocational and higher education programs, continuing education programs for employees, etc.

Check-List of the activities in Step 1:

- Define the primary objective of the evaluation;
- Analyse if the application sphere is too narrow or too broad, keeping in mind the primary objective of the evaluation, as well as the available resources;
- Establish if the public policy will be evaluated in its entirety or specific parts;
- Establish the time-frame of the evaluation;
- Identify the primary actors involved in the evaluation process.

IDENTIFYING (OR REFORMING) THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PUBLIC POLICIES

If the results of the objective discounted of the public policies are not defined simply, and not quantified, it might prove challenging to evaluate. In the process of reformulating public policy objectives, relevant government bodies should usually be consulted. If the objectives exist but are not quantified, it is necessary to analyse the extent to which they could be quantified on the basis of all related public policy sources. It should also be noted that the objectives are measured by outcome indicators which, if missing, must be set at this stage of the evaluation.

At the current stage, apart from ascertaining or establishing the objectives of the policy, those who take upon the task of evaluating must also describe the rationalities of the public policies (which can be translated as the justification of the evaluation, i.e., as a rationality aspect for a program might serve the remedying a certain market failure or addressing social / equity issues, etc.)

Preliminary data gathering and identifying the references

At this stage it must be kept in mind the fact that gathering information and the analytic activity must be realist and cost-efficient, which means that it must determine the excessive data collection and excessive spending for the evaluation process, when compared to the operational cost of the said public policies.

Throughout the evaluation phase primary and secondary data must be used. Primary sources are collected from the primary source, specifically for the evaluation study, include, but are not limited to on-the-field questionnaires and polls, group/individual interviews, etc. The secondary data, which is already existent from the gathered materials (other reports, statistical data, studies, etc.) is also to be used. In order to enable the cost-efficiency parameter, secondary sources are should be used a lot more rather than the primary data. Primary data collection is to be initiated if secondary data sources are insufficient or if the design of the assessment requires the acquisition of specific information.

Both quantitative and qualitative data can be useful for conducting an assessment. Data Quantitative data are measurable or numerical and may be used to illustrate or support a statement of evaluation. Qualitative data refer to general opinions and attitudes or observations. Collection techniques of the information could include:

- Documenting the existent literature of primary and secondary data and are based on two types of documents: primary: the official documents, scientific papers, published articles, and professional literature on the topic. The second is the specific studies in the domain which presents interest, including the previous evaluations;
- Polls and Questionnaires which imply the collection of the detailed information and specific from a specific group of people or organisations;
- Focus groups and Reference Groups;
- Natural Observations, which imply local visits in the field in the area where the policy was implemented for observations and noting;
- Interviews;
- Case Studies.

At the finality of this stage, the person(s) involved in the evaluation must synthesize the data in a form which can graphically represent it (as an advice the best way to represent it might be in a two-column table, which can be used during the entirety of the evaluation procedure.

The left part should include the following points)

- The extended context of the public policies;
- Rationality for the public policy;
- The framework of the public policy;
- Legal framework;
- When the public policy entered in force;
- Has the public policy been finalised? If not, at what stage is the public policy?
- Related budget programs/sub-programs, strategies sectoral expenditure (if are applicable);
- Short description of the public policy;
- Major changes in the public policy (if they are applicable);
- Key objectives;
- Implementing authorities and the arranged arrangements.

Check-list of the activities in Step 2:

- Establish (reformulate) the objectives if the public policies;
- Determine which are the actual necessities and initiate the preliminary data collection (including the reference data);
- Establish the reference values as a landmark for performing evaluation;
- Summarize the relevant information in the form above.

DEVELOPING THE QUESTIONS OF THE EVALUATION

This stage involves formulating the main questions of the evaluation as well as the detailed ones that related to certain important dimensions in the evaluation. In general, the evaluation aims to answer four main questions, namely:

1. Have the established public policy objectives been achieved and are they attributable to the intervention?
2. Have the needs of the target groups been met and to what extent have they undergone changes?
3. What impact has public policy had (economic, social, fiscal, environmental, etc.) and how sustainable has it been this?
4. What are the lessons learned from the assessment?

In some cases, it is sufficient to answer these questions, providing qualitative argumentation and quantitative assessment, and thus the assessment is considered to be successful.

Often, however, to answer these main questions or to understand more deeply the impact of public policy is necessary to formulate a series of detailed questions that derive from several evaluation criteria or dimensions. The first set of dimensions is included in the model of the three "E"s:

- **Economy:** refers to the realisation of activities at minimal cost. This one refers specifically at resources, measuring the acquisition prices of the resources;

- **Efficiency:** it is about 'doing the right thing'. Efficiency analyses the relationship between resources and products and ascertains whether the same products from the point of view of quality, quantity and opportunity could be generated with fewer resources.

- **Effectiveness:** it is about 'doing the right thing' and evaluating performance goals/objectives of public policy. Size effectiveness analyses the relationship between resources, results and impacts. In the first in turn, effectiveness assesses whether the objectives set (outcomes) are and whether the observed impacts are fully attributable (predominantly) the public action/policies of the Government (or others) circumstances). The analysis of effectiveness must answer the question of what to the extent that the resources invested and the products obtained contributed to the achievement public policy objectives.

Check-list of the activities in Step 3:

- Ask the main questions of the evaluation;
- Ask detailed questions based on the main and additional dimensions of the assessment, as appropriate;
- Make sure that the evaluation questions are in line with the evaluation objectives.

ESTABLISHING THE MODEL OF THE RESOURCE-PRODUCTS AND CONDUCTING EVALUATION

Once the general and detailed evaluation questions have been asked, use is recommended resource-product model to respond more structured to them. Resource-product model allows the evaluator to explicitly set out the logical framework for public policy intervention

(objectives, resources, products, results, causation, etc.) and to define those aspects, on which the evaluation effort will focus on.

That model elucidates the hierarchy of public policies in perspective of objectives, effects, results, resources and allows for a better response to the evaluation questions, established in the previous stage.

The resource-product model implies an ‘if-then’ relationship between resources, products, results (short-term results) and the impacts (intermediate and long-term results) of the intervention.

The resource-product model and the ‘if-then’ relationship are interpreted from left to right, i.e., if resources are invested, then products are generated, if products are generated, then they will be touched the objectives set. However, this also implies that at the planning / scheduling stage achieved a decent level of resource cost estimation - such as accurate budget estimation necessary, staff, equipment, etc. - which could generate the planned quantity of products and comply with the established targets. For evaluations that contain a wide range of objective public policies various and numerous targets, it may be useful to establish several resource-product models.

Check-list of the activities in Step 4:

- Collect data needed to develop the resource-product model and analyse the main one’s dimensions of the evaluation;
- Build the resource-product model with the four main components (resources, products, results, impacts);
- Analyse the main components of the product-resource model in terms of the main one’s dimensions of the evaluation;
- Identify the evaluation methods that will be used;
- Make sure that the dimensions and issues of the evaluation have been addressed during the stage analytical;
- Verify that all evaluation questions are answered, which allows conclusions to be drawn on the quality of public policies;
- Examine variability as well as core trends in cases where methods have been used quantitative.

FORMING CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the answers obtained to the evaluation questions, using the resource-product model and the tools selected qualitative or quantitative, at this stage the conclusions are presented and justified by evidence and the main recommendations of the evaluation. The step-in question is to provide an answer to the question of whether specific public policies are considered to be successful and satisfactory of the main dimensions of the evaluation analysed in the evaluation study. For example, if the evaluation study analyses the economy

and efficiency, it must determine whether the administration public policy has been cost-effective if the unit cost is comparable to that of other public policies, if procurement procedures are appropriate, etc.

The main conclusion must be based, in large part, on the results of the resource-product model, which established or disavowed the causal link between public policy intervention and observed results, and appreciated the size of this impact.

At this stage, the evaluator should also make recommendations if any are needed changes and if so, what are they. The evaluation should recommend one of four options available for the continuation or cessation of public policies (in this regard a recommendation to present in the form of a two-column, in the left hand mentioning the options)

Check-list of the activities in Step 5:

- Report informed and balanced conclusions and recommendations;
- Limit conclusions to applicable time, context, goals, questions, and activities;
- Make sure that the conclusions and recommendations result from the available analysis and data.

THE CO-MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

WHAT IS PARTICIPATION?

Majority of governing bodies are built on the concept of ‘representative democracy’, which enables the participation of the citizens, once every couple of years, in order to elect their representatives in the state structures. A similar method of expressing the will of the people is applied in the Republic of Moldova when electing the Parliamentary Deputies. However, due to the longevity of the mandate, the reality of maintaining the priorities on the span of 4 years becomes less and less in the current ever-changing environment.

The previous experiences from the past 2 years have shown that the opportunity of voting more is a reality, but it is not always for the better. The right of the citizens to initiate legislative actions or organise referendums, to be consulted on diverse decisional projects are parts of ‘participative democracy’, which makes up for the short-comings of ‘representative democracy’. Participative democracy is the continuous relations between the elector and electee, public servant and constituent. In practical terms it represents the ‘Dialogue with the citizen’. Ideally, all members of a community must have the right to participate in the decision-making process altogether.

Through active participation, the youth are empowered to play a vital role in their personal development, as well as their surrounding community, aiding them to learn vital life-lessons, to build knowledge on human rights and active citizenship, and to promote positive civic actions. Participation can be consolidated by involving the youth in developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the tools, strategies and programmes.

These are but some of the participation methods which supports and allows youth to participate in the decision-making processes of the public structures: (1) Co-Management and Co-Development Structures, (2) Youth Councils, Youth Parliaments, Student Councils, and Student Boards, (3) Voluntary Participation of youth, (4) Youth Activism and Protest, (5) Digital Participation of youth. Where cooperation between the youth and institutions exists, communities' benefit from an improved life quality, which also means that youth organisations are a lot more active, and can attract investors a lot easier, and benefit from recognition.



WHAT IS CO-MANAGEMENT?

Establishing the co-management structures presents an efficient empowering and promoting instrument of youth engagement in the decision-making processes which affects them, such as education, social protection, employability, health, environment, etc.

Over the last years, the co-management concept grew as an important subject in several sectors, including the youth sector. At the core of this concept lies the principle in which those who hold power (politicians, public servants, service providers) distribute in an equal manner the rights and responsibilities with the representatives of the target-groups/beneficiaries. The co-management process encompasses the following steps:

A.Co-Creation: refers to the developed policies, programmes and specific services developed in close collaboration between the decisional factors and beneficiaries;

B.Co-Management: refers to the continuous undertaking of shared monitoring, governing and decision-making between the decisional factors and beneficiaries regarding the implementation of a policy, a programme, providing services or providing services or managing a process.

How to develop a co-management structure and how it operates?

A co-management structure can take on different forms and possesses various competencies regarding the field and its objective. The following refers exclusively to the Youth Policies Committees as a type of co-management structure promoted by the government:

- The Central Level is established through the order of established of the head of the public authority responsible for youth policies and brings together officials of public dignity and leadership from the authorities, non-profit organizations and youth associations with projects and national coverage, as well as other actors relevant to national policy;

- The Local Level is established by the Decision of the local public authority of level II and brings together actors from public institutions, representatives of the private and associative sector with competences and attributions in the field of youth policy, as well as active young people, opinion leaders, etc.

In order to make the Commissions functional and efficient, we must keep in mind that at its core lies the principle of cooperation, not competition.

The participants are guided by a common goal and contribute voluntarily with their individual expertise and experience in order to ensure the prioritisation of youth needs on the public agenda and to develop the youth sector accordingly. The founding public authority must ascertain the benefits and opportunities offered by a functional and efficient structure. The constitution process is exclusively related to the competences of the public authorities.

The youth and youth structures can promote the creation of co-management structures through advocacy actions and activities, bringing to the agenda of the responsible authorities the importance and the need to have a functional structure. Members' participation in the Commission is voluntary and not financially remunerated. However, the founding public authority is encouraged to plan financial resources, from the resources allocated to the youth budget, for the work of the Commission (round tables, consultations, trainings, presentations, etc.).

How to involve myself? My role and my importance in the co-management process

The role of all actors in the co-management process is contributing with the experience, expertise and information they possess based on their specifics of the field of activity. Each participant in the structure comes with their own perspective on the problem or challenge addressed, be it a thematic or an overall one.

Assuming the challenge is related to the internal migration of young people after the completion of the local education program. In this segment we can identify the relevant actors and the contribution they can make to develop a public policy that will provide those benefits to young people, which will reduce the level of local migration.

The benefits and opportunities of the co-management process

In order to understand the benefits of the co-management process in the development and implementation of youth policies, it is imperative to realize that we are talking about an intersectoral field that requires a systemic and complex approach.

If we refer to infrastructure policies, for example, the area of competence of a central public authority, we can say that the state has the necessary mechanisms and levers to implement policies and reforms vertically. The field of youth, on the other hand, mainly because it includes the development of the human component, requiring a horizontal approach. However, the youth component includes in itself the policies related to formal and non-formal education, culture, sports, entrepreneurship and employability, etc. All this needs to be developed in parallel with the infrastructure projects for the provision of services and programs focused on young people. In order to develop effective youth policies, it is necessary to create a system that includes institutions, service providers, practitioners, researchers, etc.

The benefits of a co-management structure:

- Platform for dialogue and coordination between relevant actors with skills in the sector;
- Relevant fresh statistics underlying policies;
- Program for the involvement of young people and youth structures in the decision-making process;
- Platform for attracting investments and financial resources in the field;
- Continuous policy monitoring and evaluation mechanism;
- Increasing visibility, attractiveness and trust in public authority;
- Ensuring the link between direct beneficiaries and policy makers

Planning and Sustainability

A key-component of public policies which is vital to be at the base of the development process is their sustainability in time. It is necessary to ensure the balance between the benefits and used resources in order to reach said benefits. This is also relevant and applicable towards public policies, institutions, structures or services.

The process of planning the financial resources for the work of the Youth Commissions is the basis of their resilience over time. However, if the work within the structure is not remunerated, the assigned powers and competencies may require additional financial resources.

The Commission carries out its work on the basis of an annual Business Plan with outlined objectives and planned activities. The founding public authority can plan the financial resources for carrying out the activity in compliance with the budget planning process and can analyze the trend of the resources used.

The planning process must not be an ad hoc activity, but is the result of awareness of the usefulness and need for systemic approaches. In order to provide a local impetus in the process of creating co-management structures, the state promotes a mechanism based on parity-based co-financing of the Commission's activities. The mechanism is based on the allocation of financial resources to local public authorities of level II from resources allocated in the state budget, analogous to the process of co- financing local grant programs for youth initiatives carried out by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research.

Another key element to ensure the sustainability of the Commissions is their flexibility, or the form promoted by the Government leaves it to the discretion of the founding authority to decide on their constitution and composition depending on the local specifics. The obligation to include representatives of young people and youth associations in the composition lies in the principle of dialogue and the decision-making process on an equal footing between policy makers and direct beneficiaries.

PROMOTING LOCAL YOUTH INITIATIVES AND LOCAL ADVOCACY

WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

Advocacy is a continuous process in order to adapt, collect, organization and developing of information in an argument, in order to be communicated by the decisional factors through different channels in order to influence their outcomes. Advocacy is a strategic and planned process which the representatives of the civil society and individual entities can use in order to bring about change through identifying a problem inside a community, proposing a solution for solving said problem, holding true to its sustainability and providing the plan of putting it in an efficient manner.

What we must keep in mind in order to be as efficient as possible in the advocacy procedure:

- Presenting the decisional factors of the researches and concrete data;
- An efficient communication requires concrete messages, which target the right audience;
- Educating and involving the decisional factors;
- Developing the basis of a strong, diverse and involved partnership.

What is the importance of the involvement of the non-profit organisations in this process?

- It builds a bridge between decision makers and the community, knowing the specific needs of the target group to which they are connected;
- They have experience both in interaction with the target group and with the public authorities;
- They have the ability to identify necessary data in the advocacy process, to formulate proposals as well as to implement activities, projects;
- Provides credibility to the parties (young people - local authorities) in the collaboration process, sometimes having the role of mediator;
- There is a growing public attention, interest and awareness of the issue at hand;
- They can more easily mobilize other partners, including donors.

What are the necessary steps in developing an advocacy plan?

- Step 1: Identify the subject which you desire to focus in the advocacy process;
- Step 2: Identify the necessary actions for solving the challenge and establish a plan;
- Step 3: Identify your target for advocacy;
- Step 4: Collect information and data;
- Step 5: Identify the strong points of your team;
- Step 6: Develop the plan of your advocacy initiative;
- Step 7: Follow and tabulate the results.

Where do we start in the promotional process on the public agenda of a youth initiative?

- Informing;
- Planning;
- Implication;
- Partnership;
- Responsibility;
- Preparation;
- Communication.



EXPERIENCES AND GOOD PRACTICES

The European Council: the founding structure and the veritable promoter of the co-management concept

The co-management concept began immediately with the commencement of youth activities in 1963. As it is known today, the co-management with a complete parity of 50:50 between the government and civil society was institutionalized in 1972. The concept and practicality co-management developed by the European Council involves several participation fields:

- Consulting;
- Cooperative dialogue;
- Co-decision;
- Co-management.

Izola, Slovenia- model of shared responsibility

Izola was one of the first municipalities in Slovenia to start using a new approach to young people in order to empower them and increase their interest in managing public affairs. The mayor of the municipality, since then (1999), Breda Pecan was very interested in the idea of involving young people in the decision-making process and encouraged by local initiative, he made an effort to create a youth structure based on the principle of co-management.

After applying this participation mechanism for more than 2 decades, the representatives of Izola municipality conclude that if we really want young people to behave responsibly, we must let them manage high-responsibility projects. This is the basis of co-management in our local community.

Today, the Youth Commission functions as a meeting point for different opinions of young people and is a representative body that transmits to the municipality and other public

institutions the ideas of young people, regarding the development of infrastructure and public services in the local community. This involves all active local community organizations working with and for young people. Prior to the establishment of the Youth Commission, the views of young people were rarely taken into account in the preparation of major development agreements and other important decisions taken by the city council. After the establishment of the structure, its president signed an extensive collaboration with the municipality. Gradually, the young people noticed that the politicians and the mayor are serious and that the promises are not just temporary. This was an important understanding for young people who are sufficiently motivated to take an active role in various youth organizations and the activities of the Youth Commission.

We are aware that the example of good practice between local authorities and young people in Izola would never have evolved so quickly and successfully if it had not been for the strong support of the mayor and the major political parties that have recognized young people as the future of our city.

There are a number of contexts in which the model presented has already been transferred, for example: the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has adopted the co-management model for its new field of youth programming; The Regional Office for Youth Cooperation for the Balkans (RYCO) operates a co-managed system of governance; Croatia, Lithuania and Finland have all adopted a co-management system for programming national youth

policies; and local and regional authorities in several European countries govern their youth programs through co-management systems, including municipalities in Estonia, Finland, Slovenia, Germany, Greece, Iceland and Portugal.



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EVIDENCE-BASED
RECOMMENDATIONS



MLADINSKI
SVET
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NATIONAL
YOUTH
COUNCIL
OF SLOVENIA



Consiliul
Tineretului
din România

