VOICE WITHIN

Handbook for young
political leaders
on intra-party democracy

Introduction

T his handbook examines the implementation of norms within the organization of political parties with the emphasis on reach and the power of impact of youth political organizations and young political leaders on the functioning of political parties. By studying the intra-party democracy, the text deals with the inclusion of youth, indirectly in the social and political life and directly in the decision-making processes in political parties.

Intention of the author is to give guidelines and recommendations for basic democratic principles and procedures in a political party system for young political leaders. Special emphasis is put on the close connection of achieving democracy in political parties with the democratic development of the society.

This publication is based on research and collaboration with international organizations, it summarizes strategies to increase the influence of young people through political party youth organizations on their mother parties, democratization processes within their countries and integration efforts within the region. Recommendations and guidelines are intended as a tool for political parties and those who seek to promote their development. As such we hope that this document will better inform the efforts of political parties that seek to make their practices more inclusive and their operations more institutionalized.

This handbook presents a short history of democracy, elements of representative democracy, democratic culture and its contributions, challenges that modern democracy faces and capabilities of political parties to develop democratic values as a pillar of a stable and modern society by integrating young people.

Author's wish is to inform and educate young political leaders on significance of creating public policies through functioning in political parties. As we are aware

that the path to success in politics is hard and painstaking and that youth political organizations are not always close to the real decision-making power, we will try to give a full view of possibilities that will make young people the actual and unavoidable stakeholders in the decision-making process.
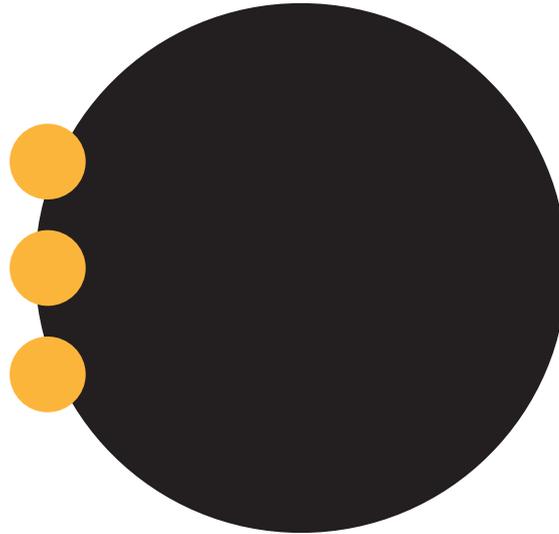
Democracy.

Term,
features,
challenges
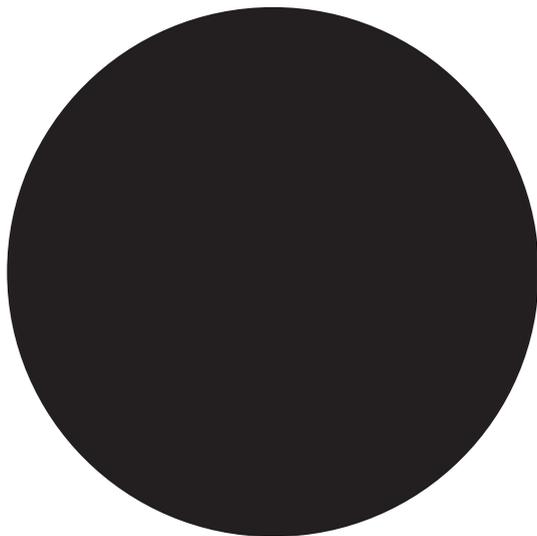
The oldest, simplest and most common definition of democracy comes from the very word *democracy* which originates from Greek words *demos*, meaning people and *kratein*, meaning to rule, therefore the rule of people. The term is quite old and is mentioned for the first time around 5th century BC in Athens, Greece.[1] In the beginning, democracy was a political system with freedom as its central value, with a special focus on political freedom. To the people of Athens, this meant political participation. People became citizens by participating in political discussions and by working in public service.[2]

With historical progress, political freedom did not only mean political participation any more, but also freedom from absolute and arbitrary power. Political equality was not the same as the probability to take part in the government, but rather meant equality of consent to be governed. Citizens became the source of legitimacy, free individuals that can decide what is best for them themselves.[3]

In its basis, democracy is a form of government. It is a social structure with a way of making collective decisions through which citizens supervise political power and acts in their best interest.

Simplified definition of democracy is a government of the majority in the best interest of the majority.

Modern understanding of democracy defines it as a form of government in which decisions are made either directly by citizens or by representatives appointed by citizens in elections. One feature of democracy is the division of government into three branches: judicial, executive and legislative.[4]

Even though the defining of democracy is subject to different interpretations of

1) Hadžić, 2015

2) Bovan, 2017

3) Ibid.

4) Croatian Debate Society, 2017

scholars from the fields of political science, sociology, law, philosophy and other sciences, its core components are the rule of the people, the rule with the consent of those ruled upon, the rule of majority which respects the minority, guarantee of basic human rights and freedoms, free and fair multiparty election, equality before the law, independent judiciary, government restricted by the constitution and laws, social, economic and political pluralism, freedom of thought and media, tolerance, equality.

„Democracy is a universally recognised ideal as well as a goal, which is based on common values shared by peoples throughout the world community irrespective of cultural, political, social and economic differences. It is thus a basic right of citizenship to be exercised under conditions of freedom, equality, transparency and responsibility, with due respect for the plurality of views, and in the interest of the polity" [5]

5) Universal Declaration on Democracy, 1997

Modern representative democracy entails:

1) **Liberal element:** one's rights and freedoms, restrictions of government and the autonomy of civil society
2) **Representative element:** representative institutions and free election of representatives
3) **Democratic element:** people's sovereignty – exercised through the rule of majority and participation of citizens

Modern democracy is a political order in which two preoccupations are combined: preservation of human and citizens' rights and a wide participation by citizens in making collective decisions.

Challenges to societies which aim to achieve high levels of democratic values and principles are oriented to achieving a higher level of protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Focus is on the division of government, lowering crime rates and corruption, serious effort by the state to enforce laws and other legal acts, reducing bureaucracy which represents an obstacle to dynamics and promptness of state bodies in achieving individual rights, higher level of media freedom, higher level of political culture in terms of citizen participation in exercising active and passive elector's rights.

Representative democracy

Representative democracy is a name for a democratic socio-political organisation in which the government is created through elections where citizens elect their representatives – individual representatives of executive and/or judicial branch, and members of representative institutions (Assembly, Parliament) as legislative power – which make decisions for them.

Political theorist John Keane claims that representative democracy includes written constitution, independent court bodies, periodical elections, restricting mandates of politicians, secret ballot, competitive political parties, referendum, civil society and civil freedoms, right to public gathering and freedom of press.[6]

The crisis of the representative model is reflected in the decrease in election participation, decrease in number of members in political parties, decrease in trust in political elites and institutions, as well as an increase in populist parties and movements.[7] In regards to that, we can discuss the *crisis of democracy* or *democratic deficit* and the need for modern democratic societies to face these problems.

Therefore, challenges to achieving more successful representative democracies are how to enable higher citizen participation in making decisions and creating public policies, how to gain citizens' trust in the functioning of political parties and how to affect the development of all principles on which socio-political organization of today's democracies are based.

The goal of participatory democracy is to engage citizens in the process of decision making. To achieve that, we actually experience the principle that all those whose decisions refer to should take part in their making.

6) Keane, 2008

7) Ćelap, Nikić Čakar, 2017

The importance of political parties in the development of democracy with - challenges in the states of the Western Balkans

Constitutional-legal frames of European states, as well as those of Western Balkans states include multiparty systems as a basis for achieving democratic procedures and goals. Therefore, political parties keep their position as the guardian of democratic values, principles and procedures.

It is important that the candidates for representative bodies as holders and implementers of certain political agendas that include a whole range of policies, are educated in the field of democracy, capable of accomplishing policies they stand for, while not entering a conflict with democratic imperatives to which they are bound by both national and international regulations and mechanisms.

Socio-political reforms cannot be accomplished without the help of political parties. Hence, modern political parties are also holders of the reforms of public policies in advanced democracies.

Western Balkans states are faced with special types of democratic challenges. Young democracies, faced with post-transition burden and socio-economic upheavals, who tend to enter the European Union or have become a member recently, achieve the stability of their socio-political order only by making huge effort. The rule of law, fight against corruption, judiciary reform and the freedom of expression are unavoidable topics with which politicians from the region are often faced.

Advanced democracies imply transition and consolidation of the society by taking into account structural and procedural factors – international context, nation and state building, economic and social level of development and modernization, social

structure, culture and values, political processes and individual factors.

It is important to address European Union membership as an expected guarantee for social consolidation. By becoming a member state of the European Union, according to various authors, states do not become *ipso facto* advanced democracies. Moreover, by entering the European Union, some democracies regress, therefore significant effort must be made by political elites in order to build high-quality public policies in accordance with the principles of democracy.

Member states are expected to show willingness to carry out whole reforms in order to achieve the rule of law, effective fight against corruption, restriction of government by putting under public control. Care about democratic procedures and values especially relates to states that were recently engaged in war, when political decisions due to the extraordinary conditions had to be made without high democratic standards. Because of that, it is important to put in additional effort to establish liberal democracies. More precisely, the change of constitutional-legal frames and legislative solutions does not bring *ipso facto* change in understanding democratic principles among political elites and citizens in whole.[8]

8) Boban, 2015

9) Ibid.

„*Democracy is not made only of laws and institutions, nor only from behavior, attitude and values of the elite, but of attitude and values of citizens that take part in the electoral process and in the creation of public opinion that affects the elites*" [9]

There is a significant amount of analysis and research which tries to systemize and spot the quality of democracy that often takes into account the state in fields such as national democratic governments, electoral process, civil society, media independence, local democratic governments, judiciary and corruption.

In that regard, it is important to strengthen the role of political parties, not only with the goal of establishing formal procedures that democratic processes entail, but also for the content of programs of political parties to guarantee and enable inclusion and responsibility towards voters on a high level. Thus, guaranteeing rights guaranteed by international legal acts that commit to respect for human rights and the rule of law.

Intra-party democracy is a complicated and multi-dimensional phenomenon which is not simple to define, especially considering that there is neither a generally accepted definition of intra-party democracy, nor are there mechanisms of measuring it.[10] However, there is research and analysis that have that in focus, measuring the level of impact of members on the choosing of party leaders and candidates in the election, making decisions and creating party programs.

Various analyses have shown that for successful functioning, stability and further development of democracy, it is important that there is trust between citizens and different sectors of society. Democracy requires not only institutional organization, but also a certain type of political culture that would benefit from spreading trust in society, which is necessary for legitimacy and mass support for its core principles.[11]

When talking about democratic political culture it is important to highlight that it is encompassed by a wide range of attitudes and values which entail democratic procedures, laws and institutions, but also attitudes and values shared by citizens that impact political elites.

Political culture holds an important place in the development of a stable democracy and it is unavoidable for the development of a stable and effective democratic state. Also, political tolerance is important in the structure of political culture as well as for improving overall political freedoms of the people.[12]

Many theorists and researchers prove the importance of political culture for accomplishing democratic changes, claiming that beliefs, values and actions of regular citizens can have a substantial role in the process of social changes and also on maintaining stability of democratic social structure.[13] Supporting the idea of tolerance is almost omnipresent in the structure of political culture of citizens in democratic communities.

R. Dahl, one of the most important American theorists of democracy, claimed that tolerating the right to opposing political activity is one of the fundamental political rights and that it is key for the very essence of political tolerance.[14]

Independent watchdog organization *Freedom house*, dedicated to the expansion of freedom and democracy around the world, analyzed progress and setbacks in democratization in 29 countries from Central Europe to Central Asia. The 2018 ratings reflect the period from January 1 through December 31, 2017, covering seven categories: electoral process, civil society, independent media, national democratic governance, local democratic governance, judicial framework and independence, and corruption. Research showed that Montenegro, Kosovo, Serbia and Croatia are semi consolidated democracies. Bosnia and Herzegovina are labeled as transitional government or hybrid regime.[15]

12) Vujčić, 1993

13) Ibid.

14) Ibid.

15) more details on web page https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2018
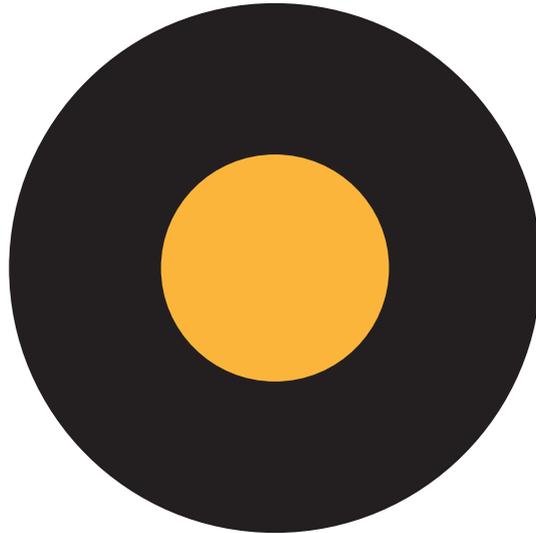
Code of good practice for political parties:

intra – party democracy

Intra-party democracy is a matter of organizational choices and aspirations as well as of strategy: a party's internal procedures help to define what the party stands for. Clear internal rules and procedures are invaluable for parties which are seeking long-term electoral success. Procedures that regulate internal conflict can contribute to a party's longevity, particularly if rules are transparent, well-publicized and understood by members.

Internal party democracy can be defined as "implementation of a minimum set of norms within the organization of political parties".[16] This minimum set of norms should provide a bottom-up approach to forming a decision in the party and the internal distribution of power at different levels, bodies, and individuals.[17] The minimum set of norms are "internal rules and procedures that give ordinary members greater influence on issues such as candidate selection, leadership selection and policy platform".[18] The most engaging models of internal party democracy are inclusive, participatory, deliberate, responsible and include fair distribution of power.[19]

The internal rules of political parties should be guided by clarity, transparency, accountability and independence, as well as by effective links between party leadership and local and regional levels of the organization. Their interaction with society should be based on dialogue, interdependence and co-operation. Parties have to use open conditions for membership and list the members' rights.

Parties generally adopt party constitutions or party statutes to spell out the relations between different levels of the party, and to define procedures for making decisions. These rules usually detail how local and national party leaders are selected (and often, how they may be de-selected), how candidates for public office are selected, and who is eligible to stand for both types of positions. Parties' organizational choices reflect

16) Von dem Berge et al., 2013: 2

17) Čular, 2004: 34

18) Di Virgilio, Giannetti, 2009: 1

19) Cross, Katz, 2013

the environments in which they compete, and because of this they are likely to vary widely over time, and across countries.[20]

As parties contribute to the expression of political opinion and are instruments for the presentation of candidates in elections, some regulation of internal party activities can be considered necessary to ensure the proper functioning of a democratic society.

Over the last decade many European countries have increased both the scope and content of national party regulation. Besides national party regulation, supranational bodies and international mechanisms for protection of human rights have been involved in producing guidelines and recommendations for political parties with the intention of enhancing internal party democracy which contributes to inclusion, equality and respect of human rights.

International standards regarding internal party organisation will be presented in this chapter. They will include standards and guidelines by European institutions and party aid mechanisms.

20) National Democratic Instiute, 2008: 5

Council of Europe

Based in Strasbourg, France, the Council of Europe (CoE) is an intergovernmental organization composed of 47 States. Its objectives are to: Protect human rights, pluralist democracy and the rule of law; Promote awareness and encourage the development of Europe's cultural identity and diversity; Seek solutions to problems facing European society, including discrimination against minorities, xenophobia, intolerance, environmental protection, human cloning, HIV/AIDS, drugs, organized crime and other problems; Help consolidate democratic stability in Europe by backing political, legislative and constitutional reform.

The Council is governed by an intergovernmental Committee of Ministers and an indirectly elected Parliamentary Assembly. The Council of Europe should not be confused with the European Council, an official institution of the European Union, although all the 27 European Union States are also members of the Council of Europe.

Over the last two years the Council has started working on the promotion of desirable internal characteristics of political parties and development of intra-party democracy. Within its integrated 'Making democratic institutions work' project constant mention is made of the importance of and problems related to effective representation [21] and of political discontent and its effects on liberal democracy.[22] The development of internal party democracy is offered as a desirable solution to these developments.

21) Pratchett, Lowndes, 2004: 53

22) Schmitter, Trechsel, 2004

Parliamentary assembly of Council of Europe (PACE)

The Assembly brings together 324 members from the parliaments of the Council of Europe's 47-member states. Though it contains many voices, reflecting political opinion across the continent, its mission is to uphold the shared values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law that are the "common heritage" of the peoples of Europe.

It holds governments to account over their human rights records, and presses states to achieve and maintain democratic standards, both in Europe and – increasingly – in neighboring regions. t is a forum for sometimes heated debate on key political and social issues facing the continent, helping to head off conflict and encourage reconciliation. Though its texts are not binding, the Assembly speaks on behalf of 800 million Europeans and the 47 Council of Europe governments must give a collective reply.[23]

23) http://assembly.coe.int

PACE Resolution 1546 (2007)

Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe prepares resolutions which are part of international law and serve as recommendations and guidelines for 47-member states of the Council.

In 2007 PACE adopted a resolution 1546 called 'The code of good practice for political parties'.

The aim of Code of good practice for political parties is to address the crisis in public confidence that political parties face as it discredits the entire democratic system. It introduces steps that political parties should take to enhance the reputation of the political system. These steps consist of, among others, introducing of a code of good practice for political parties, which would reinforce parties' internal democracy, thereby increasing citizen appreciation of parties.

The Code of good practice very precisely specifies the best practices with regard to the internal organization of political parties.

The document emphasizes the importance of clear and transparent internal hierarchy and a direct flow of information between various levels of party hierarchy. Parties should introduce greater transparency in the way the party operates and activate the local life of political parties.

Parliamentary assembly puts equality as an essential part of democracy. Equality means equal access for all in participation and involvement in public affairs. Equality in politics starts with equal political rights for all citizens – men and women, young and old.

Mechanisms to enhance party ethics should include strict eligibility requirements for party candidates and officials including signed codes of conduct to hold party candidates accountable, monitored and implemented by the party committee on the Code of Conduct.

Parties could consider the possibility of obliging all party members who hold public office (MPs, ministers, provincial governors) to sign a contract before accepting their appointment engaging them to resign voluntarily from their position if they violate provisions in the contract relating to ethical conduct and job performance (e.g. conflict of interests). Regular evaluation aimed at ensuring that the contract is fulfilled should be ensured.

Political parties need to adopt or strengthen practices, such as evaluation and monitoring, which fight against corruption and improve internal accountability. They should recommend internal procedures involving consultation of members on policy or on important decisions for the party (electoral coalitions, government agreements etc). This consultation process, which is absent in many parties, could be carried out through deliberative opinion polls so as to discuss policy-centered issues or through referendum.

Party life risks being put aside when the party is in government. Nevertheless, the party in central office should not only act as an information provider to the party in public office but should also monitor its performance. Therefore, members should have the right to control the political activity of their representatives in institutions and on the party boards. This requires the, dissemination of periodical information to all levels of the party and the discussion and vote of the leadership's report at the party congress;

From a democratic values standpoint, internal party democracy fulfils the citizens' legitimate expectation that parties, which receive public funding and effectively determine who will be elected to public office, should conform to democratic principles within their own organizations. However, given the diversity of parties' circumstances and political outlooks, there is no single "one size fits all" set of "best practices" for intra-party governance. In short, expanding intra-party democracy may benefit those parties that implement these reforms as well as the wider society, but these changes may entail high costs for parties so party leaders ought to judiciously consider the practicalities of certain internal democratic party procedures and assess their respective merits.[24]

Council of Europe - Good practices
for internal accountability and intra-party democracy:

• Ensuring that the internal rules of political parties are guided by legal certainty, clarity, transparency, accountability and independence;
• Ensuring that interaction between local political parties and society is based on dialogue, interdependence and co-operation;
• Promoting and enforcing equality in the administrative system of political parties at all levels;

- Reinforcing links between party leadership and local and regional levels of organisations;
- Reinforcing measures aimed at combating corruption within the party and improving internal accountability;
- Introducing open conditions for membership and member rights;
- Adopting internal procedures involving consultation of members on policy or on important decisions for the party such as electoral coalitions or government agreements;
- Establishing of mechanisms ensuring internal accountability of party members holding public offices [25]

25) PACE Resolution 1547, Report of PoliticalAffairs Committee, 2007

International party aid

Besides international human rights mechanisms like Council of Europe, international party aid is also important source for recommendations on internal party democracy. Party aid offered by international organizations addresses national political parties and political party legislation. Party aid is best defined as ''any type of international assistance geared towards individual parties or the party system as a whole, with the purpose of strengthening democracy in given country''.[26]

National democratic institute (NDI) is one of the international party aid mechanisms and organizations which focuses on enhancing internal party rules and procedures, on strengthening party branches, improving a party's membership practices, increasing opportunities for marginalized groups and so on. NDI published a series of documents, guidelines and recommendations on various aspects of political parties within democracy, such as selection of candidates for legislative office and implementation of intra-party democracy. Since its founding in 1983, NDI and its local partners have worked to establish and strengthen political and civic organizations, safeguard elections, and promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in political parties and governments.[27]

In its publication *Minimum Standards for the Democratic Functioning of Political Parties* NDI developed universally-accepted guiding principles and norms for open and democratic functioning of political parties. NDI attempts to articulate guidelines that largely reflect the existing, common practices of a range of established and broadly democratic political parties regardless of ideology, geographic location or size.[28]

26) Molenaar, 2010

27) ndi.org

28) National democratic institute, 2008

Most important guidelines are focused on internal party organization and intra-party democracy.

Conditions for Party Membership

Party rules should define membership eligibility requirements and spell out members' rights, roles and responsibilities. Many political parties enlist their supporters as enrolled members. Having enrolled memberships can help parties to spread their ideas and to solidify their popular roots. Membership dues can also be an important source of party revenues. Parties can use their membership organizations to encourage meaningful political participation and to strengthen ties between supporters and leaders.

Relations between Party Units

Party statutes can clarify lines of communication, authority and accountability between a party's various layers. Most parties exist on several political levels (local, provincial, national), and have several faces (the voluntary organization, the legislative group, and, in some cases, the president and provincial chief executives). This raises the question of who ultimately defines what the party stands for. In many cases, party structures will reflect national political structures: for instance, parties' regional units may be more autonomous in federal states, whereas party organization may be more hierarchical in unitary states. The relative autonomy of provincial parties may make particularly good political sense in countries where regional elections are fought on distinct issues. But even in these situations, it is important to have rules in place to help mediate conflicts between national and regional party leaders.

Mechanisms for Dispute Resolution

Party statutes should anticipate conflicts and should provide frameworks for fostering, but also for containing, healthy internal debate. In democratic political parties, it is both inevitable and desirable that dedicated and ambitious politicians will have clashing perspectives about which policies and approaches are in the best interests of the nation, and of the party. Having rules for the internal adjudication of conflict may prevent disputes from escalating and may make it less likely that aggrieved members take disputes to the courts. These frameworks should include an independent appeals body within the party in cases where party members or party representatives are expelled from the party, or from the party's legislative caucus.

Selection of Party Leaders and Candidates

Parties benefit from having clear rules about the regular selection (and possible de-selection) of party leaders and party candidates. Clear rules help to channel and encourage competition among politicians and among advocates of rival policy alternatives. For parties committed to democratic principles, there is some appeal to implementing democratic principles within the party organization, giving party members a voice in important decisions through representative party congresses or through direct membership votes. But however inclusive the decision-making rules, merely having clear and established procedures for making important decisions may make it more likely that losing participants will respect the outcome, and that they will put their energies into winning under existing rules, or into changing the rules, rather than breaking away to found new parties. This channeling of conflict is one of the virtues of transparent rules.[29]

29) National democratic institute, 2008: 6-10
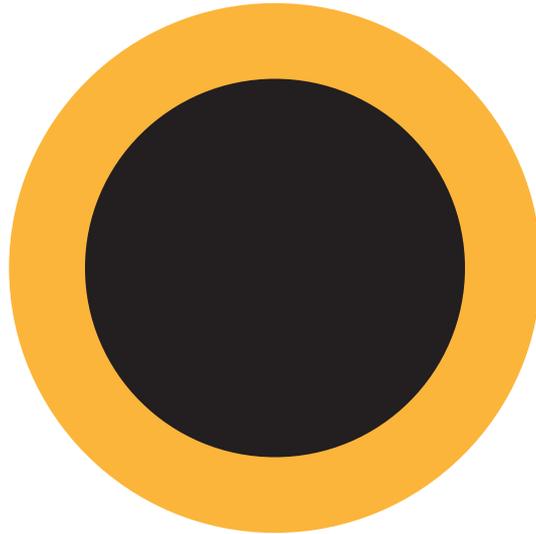
Strengthening the voice

of political youth organizations
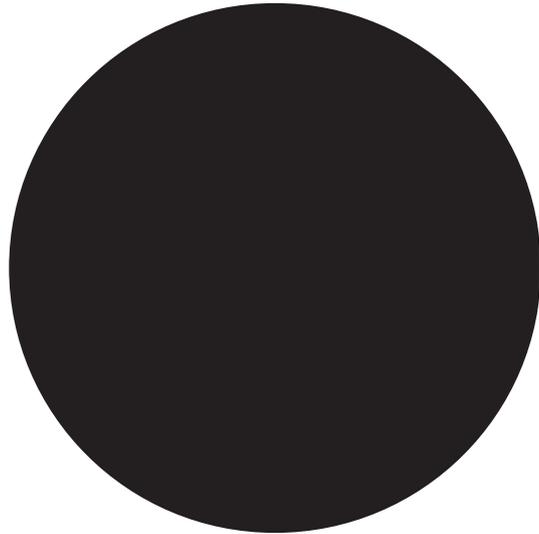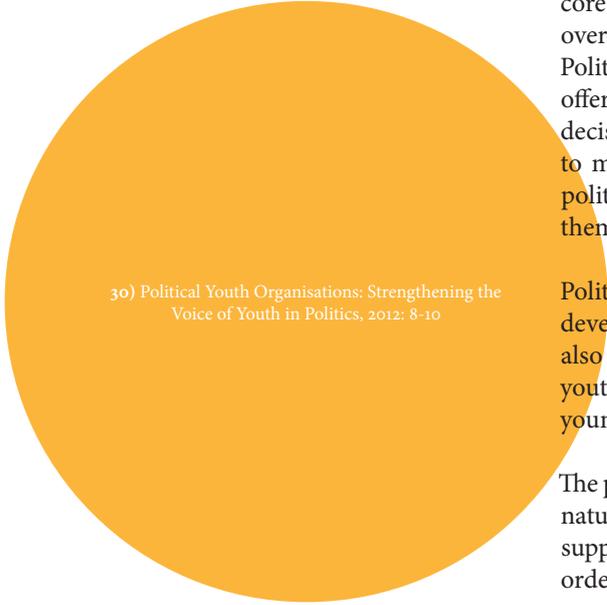
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Political youth organizations are a significant part of every political system. They are an important support base for their mother parties, as well as central actors in getting new members and recruiting future decisionmakers. One of their core functions is influencing policy in their mother parties. In addition, they work to oversee the interests of young people, and work to improve youth affairs in general. Political youth organizations complement the work of their mother parties. They offer young people between the ages of 15 and 30 the chance to take part in making decisions, learn about society and how to run societal affairs, as well as opportunities to make a difference. These organizations seek to awaken the interest of youth in politics and matters of social development, and to disseminate information about them in a suitable form to young people.[30]

Political youth organizations challenge their parties ideologically to reform and develop, they are a necessary critical voice within their mother parties and they also ensure that young people are nominated for key positions in elections. Without youth organizations there would undoubtedly be fewer young candidates and fewer young representatives selected to positions of power in different areas.

The participation of young people in policymaking is important for the representative nature of democracy. Although political youth organizations compete for members, support, and political power to realize their objectives, they work well together in order to improve issues affecting the well-being of youth. They also stimulate young people's interest and participation in policymaking.

Youth organizations try to bring youth issues into public and political discussions, for instance through different kinds of events, campaigns and public statements. Political youth organization's activists can be involved in policy preparation and background work as assistants to MPs and ministers and as employees in party offices and

30) Political Youth Organisations: Strengthening the Voice of Youth in Politics, 2012: 8-10

parliamentary groups. Many of today's ministers, MPs and government officials were formerly active in youth politics in their party's youth organizations.[31]

The official position of political youth organizations in their mother parties varies. In some parties the members of the youth organizations are automatically members of the mother party. Automatic membership of the party can bring the rights of representation in the party's decision-making bodies, such as the party congress, delegation, management board, working committee and working groups. At the local level, these political youth organizations are also entitled to be represented in the party's district and municipal organizations.

The youth organizations of the other parties' function as separate associations alongside the mother party, and thus it is possible for an individual to be a member of just the youth organization and not the mother party.

Sometimes the youth members are not able to participate in developing their respective party manifestoes and policy positions which can greatly shape the direction of national development and public policy. This role of youth and possible contribution is not appreciated enough by elder members or mother party in general. The lack of recognition of the youth contribution to the successes of their mother parties and the democratization process in general is a function of two factors both of which work in tandem.[32] On the one hand, is the intention of the older cadres to relegate the performance of young people to the periphery. On the other hand, sometimes it is the inability of the youth themselves to take visible strategic positions and highlight their own contributions.

Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe Resolution 1546 put a lot of emphasis on internal party democracy in terms of inclusion and visibility of youth in decision

31) Ibid., 25-26

32) Kanyadudi, 2010: 15

making and policy making processes.

Parliamentary Report which follows the resolution has put forward that in many countries, interest in politics among young people has shown a declining trend. Any policy or action designed to promote youth participation must ensure that the cultural environment is one of respect for young people and must also take into account the diverse needs, circumstances and aspirations of young people. Getting youth involved in the political life is vital for the future prospects of democracy.

Global data

- Young people under 30 make up less than 2 per cent of the world's Members of Parliaments (MPs)
- About 30 per cent of the world's single and lower houses of parliament have no MPs aged under 30
- More than 80 per cent of the world's upper houses of parliament have no MPs aged under 30
- Finland, Norway and Sweden are the only parliaments in Europe where more than 10 per cent of members are aged under 30

Encouraging signs

• The gender imbalance is less pronounced among younger MPs, where the male/female ratio is 60:40
• Recent elections have seen a global trend towards more young MPs aged under 45
• Youth quotas, lower eligibility ages, proportional representation and inclusive parliaments are all factors that increase the number of young MPs [33]

Council of Europe document emphasized that working with youth party activists can be a way to work from the grassroots to affect change in political parties. Young political party activists can also present the best opportunity to galvanize the parties' outreach to the electorate. They often have fresh ideas and enthusiasm, but they have not been afforded growth opportunities by party hierarchies. Therefore, party lists should reserve some posts, both in internal lists as well as in party lists in public elections for the young with the two-fold benefit of improving the party itself and opening leadership to new ideas.

33) Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2016: 3

Party authorities, particularly at local and regional level, should promote the active participation of young people in statutory bodies. Furthermore, policies and programs should be developed in co-operation with young people. CoE resolution suggests that party boards could develop a system of decision-making in partnership with young people and youth organizations in policy areas of relevance to young people and put in place the appropriate structures or arrangements enabling the participation of young people in the decisions and debates affecting them.

In the resolution text, parties are encouraged to provide support and training in youth participation. Information and communication technologies can offer new possibilities to allow for the participation of young people. That is why party authorities should use these technologies in their information and participation policies towards youth.

Local and regional party authorities might have a specific budget for supporting youth organizations that run activities or provide services or act as the voice of young people in the community and advocate on their behalf;

Parties could create structures which provide the physical framework for the free expression by young people of their concerns, particularly as regards the raising of such concerns with the authorities, and the possibility of making proposals to them. The roles of such a structure might be oriented to providing a forum for the free expression by young people of their concerns; to providing a forum where projects involving young people are developed; to facilitating consultation with young people's associations and organizations on specific issues, to offering the possibility for young people to make proposals to public authorities.

This is the ideal opportunity for young public officers to bring public institutions

closer to the youth. In this vein, parties could create parliamentary offices headed by young parliamentarians aimed at facilitating access of proposals made by young citizens to the parliamentary group as well as to creating bridges between social organizations led by young people and the party.

Good practices should encourage the candidature of young people at all levels and elections, provide training in youth participation and promote their active participation in their statutory bodies by the creation of youth commissions inside the party.

Council of Europe - Good practices for the involvement of young people in the political process:

• Supporting youth organizations of parties at local and regional levels;
• Providing training for youth participation;
• Creating youth sections within parties;
• Promoting of active participation of young members in statutory bodies, and in particular, encouraging candidatures of young people at all levels and elections [34]

34) PACE Resolution 1547, 2007

Besides initiatives taken by mother parties, members of youth organizations should take actions in order to make their contribution more visible and to take batter strategic positions in decision making process within the mother party.

Accountability: Youth organizations and its members should constantly hold mother party accountable for progress in increasing youth's participation, involvement in decision making and representation.

Promotion: Youth organizations and its members should facilitate linkages between youth in decision-making positions and those working for the empowerment of youth at the grassroots, in the academic community and in civil society organizations.

Education: Youth organizations are encouraged to strengthen training and continuing education for its members.

Advocacy: Youth organizations should strengthen advocacy on the issues of empowerment of youth among the decision makers within the mother party.
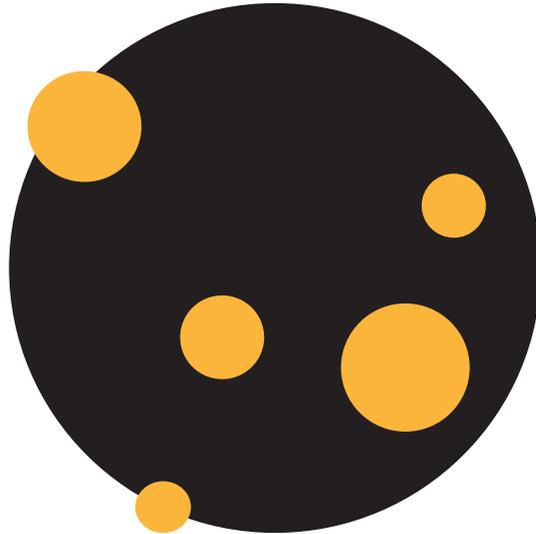
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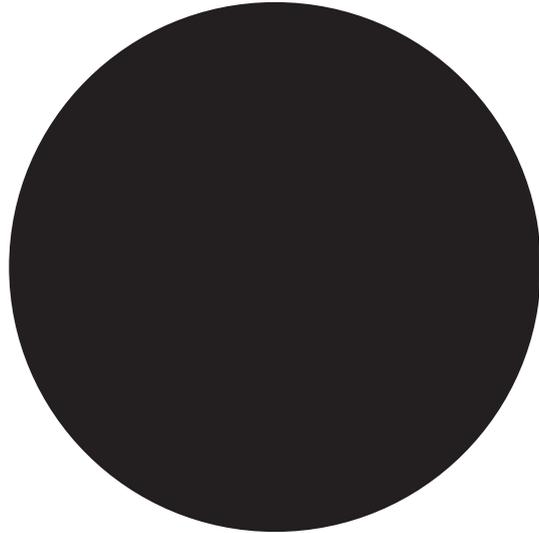
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