



Youth participation in decision-making processes in Estonia

Martti Martinson
Estonian National Youth Council

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Main forms of youth participation



- **local youth councils**
- **regional youth councils**
- **school student councils**
- **student councils**
- **youth organisations**
- **umbrella organisations**

Local youth councils



- First youth councils was established in 1998-1999 in Kuressaare and Narva
- 2005 – amendment proposals to Youth Work Act
- 2010 – Renewed Youth Work Act
- At the end of 2011 – approx 75 local youth councils (out of 226 municipalities)
- National youth council as a coordinating, developing and representative body in national level
- Main support must come from the local government, but state government is also supporting

Local youth councils and legislation



Definition - youth council is a participating council with advisory right consisting of youth operating at a rural municipality or city council



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Local youth councils and legislation



§ 9. Youth council

(1) A youth council may be formed at a rural municipality or city council. The objective of the youth council is to discuss the matters concerning youth who fall under the authority of the rural municipality or city and submit proposals connected therewith to the rural municipality or city council and rural municipality or city government, following the needs and interests of youth.

Local youth councils and legislation



(2) A youth council shall be elected by the youth of the rural municipality or city under the principles of democracy pursuant to the procedure established by the rural municipality or city council.

(3) The bases for activities of the youth council shall be established by the rural municipality or city council.

(4) A rural municipality or city shall support the sustainable activities of the youth council operating in their administrative territory pursuant to the procedure established by the rural municipality or city council.

Local youth councils and legislation



(5) At the request of the youth council, a rural municipality or city council shall forward to the youth council the draft agendas of their sessions and draft legislation concerning youth prior to the sessions of the rural municipality or city council.

Rural municipality and city councils shall:

4) consult with a youth council, if applicable, upon planning, performing and evaluating youth work;

Regional youth councils



- **First regional (county level) youth council was established in 2006.**
- **15 counties – 15 regional youth councils**
- **State government supports each council with €2000 annually**
- **No mentioning in the law, some of them are registered NGOs, some work under the county government**
- **The role is to be coordinating and umbrella body for local youth councils in a certain county**

School student councils



- **A bit less than 600 schools (including Elementary schools) plus vocational schools**
- **School student council in almost every gymnasium (high school) and in many basic schools**
- **Mentioned in the law since 1998, renewed legislation in 2010**
- **Quite big support from the law**
- **Main support comes from the schools and local governments**

Student councils



- **Student council exist in every higher education institution (more than 30)**
- **Strong support in the law**
- **Main funding is coming from universities and ISIC card**
- **Main problem is that students are not very active in elections**

Youth organisations



- **Defined in the law** - a youth organization is a non-profit association at least two thirds of the members of which are young people, the objective of which is the organisation and performance of youth work

A youth organization that has at least 500 members and the local units of which operate in the territory of at least one-third of the counties has the right to apply an annual grant for youth organizations from the state budget. (less than 20 organizations, € 480 000 annually)



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Umbrella organisations



- **Estonian National Youth Council (58 members, out of which 49 are youth organisations, representing over 40 000 young people)**
- **Estonian School Student Councils' Union (approx 200 members, representing ca 100 000 school students)**
- **Federation of Estonian Student Unions (22 members)**



Thank you for your
attention!

Martti Martinson

Youth Policy Officer

E-mail: martti@enl.ee

Tel: +372 56 151 626

www.enl.ee

Estonia pst 5a

10143 Tallinn