



Ung och Aktiv i Europa



THE SWEDISH NATIONAL
BOARD FOR YOUTH AFFAIRS
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Creating meetings

Inspiring resources for meetings between
young people and decision makers

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Foreword

Meetings can be one stage of creating growth, survival and development in a municipality or organisation. What meetings and what forms of dialogue exist between decision-makers and young people in your municipality? These resources provide ideas for methods of creating meetings where the participants really do meet. The methods can be used by young people, youth leaders, decision-makers, and anyone else who works with youth issues. We hope that these resources will inspire meetings.

Per Nilsson,
Director General,
The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs

The art of creating meetings

Here are a few factors that help ensure a successful meeting where people really meet:

- the meeting has a clear purpose
- there is a shared vision, and the participants feel that they are part of a greater whole
- the participants can express passion and responsibility
- there is trust and participation

Planning the meeting

To ensure good results, it's important to plan your meeting. If you have a clear view of your purpose, leadership and vision, it will be easier to plan who should be invited to the meeting and how it should be organised. It is better to start with those elements than to start by organising. Talk through the questions below in order to create a quality meeting.

Purpose

- What is the purpose of the meeting?
- What is your purpose in creating dialogue between decision-makers and young people?

In order to clarify the purpose, can you answer the question 'Why?' Write down the purpose again. Do the same thing four more times, and see whether the purpose has become clearer and whether you have reached the core of the issue.

If there is a hidden agenda, or if you are not honest about the purpose, the meeting, and its results, will be affected. Be honest in your intentions – that you are looking for thoughts and ideas from the young people – and you will be onto a winner.

Leadership

When you have expressed the purpose, you can consider leadership:

- What does leadership look like in the context of a meeting with participation and influence?
- How can listening and curiosity be woven into the meeting?
- What kind of leadership do you want the meeting to be characterised by?

Start by writing down all words and expressions that you associate with leadership. Then mark them with a plus or minus sign, depending on whether they have positive or negative associations for you. Then use the positive words, and create a sentence or a few bullet points on leadership based on these words.

Vision

A vision is an image of a desired future. The vision describes *what* should be done and needs to be linked to *how* it should be done, which is dealt with later under 'organising'. It's great if the vision can challenge and encourage change and development. It should be easy to communicate and to understand. It should inspire enthusiasm and motivation, but it should nonetheless be realistic and desirable.

- What does your vision look like?
- What do you want from this meeting?
- How do you see this meeting linking in with other future work?

Let other people enlarge your vision – how would it look without limitations? When the vision has been enlarged, you can see whether there are parts of it that you want to include in the original version.

Target group

Who are the young people, actually? Sometimes generalisations are made about young people as a group, and people imagine they are all alike and have the same conditions and needs. But 'young people' does not constitute a homogenous group. Rather, it consists of many different individuals and groups.

- What is the target group for the result of the meeting?
- What is the target group for the meeting?
- Which 'young people' should be invited to this particular meeting?
- Which other people is it important to invite, who make it possible to realise the purpose of the meeting?

Young people can be:

Young people in youth organisations, at youth recreation centres, young people with non-Swedish backgrounds, of different ages, of different sexual orientation, who live in the city or in the country, from different social groups, with jobs, without jobs, in school with high grades, dropped out of school, or young people who like different kinds of music. And in all these groups, there are both boys and girls.

Discuss the following:

- How do you define young people?
- How can you achieve diversity within the term 'young people'?
- In what scenes do you find different groups of young people?
- Do you want to reach out to young decision-makers? How can you use young decision-makers in your work?

Problem or resource?

Are young people a problem or a resource? What do you think of young people, and how does that affect the measures you take? Can young people's youth and knowledge be a useful contribution, or are they vulnerable and a problem for society?

Discuss the following:

- How do you view the young people in the municipality/organisation?
- In what way could they contribute?
- In what way are they vulnerable and a source of problems?

To include or to exclude?

Language gives us the opportunity to include or exclude. What is the difference between saying:

- "We Swedes"
- "We in Sweden"

Discuss the following:

- How can you include instead of excluding?
- Is it sometimes justified to exclude?

Organising

Now its time to organise what you have already described:

- How should the meeting be organised?
- Place?
- Invitations?
- Methods?
- Start and finish?
- Refreshments?
- Follow-up?

Methods for creating meetings

There are many methods for organising meetings. When you have decided the purpose and leadership of the meeting, it's easier to choose your methods. Use methods that you feel comfortable with, but dare to stretch yourself. It's a good idea to get help from a facilitator to lead the meeting.

Method 1: Breaking norms and power structures

When you want to create good meetings, it's important to consider methods that can break power structures. There is both informal and formal power. Decision-makers can have formal power, in the form of positions and projects. There can be informal power in groups, for example, if there is an informal leader who everyone follows.

Consider how you could break power structures in a group:

- How you are seated. Instead of a rectangular table with two short sides, one of which is traditionally the 'chairman's place', try placing the chairs in a circle, without a table.
- Reflect together on power and status, and on how to handle it in this group.
- Don't allow people to introduce themselves with their job titles
- Do status exercises.

Discuss the following:

- How can you break power structures?
- How can you give everyone a chance to participate?

Splitting into groups

In some exercises, the participants will be split into groups. Think about how you create these groups. You can make the most of people's energy, and let them work with the people they want to work with. Or you can use instructions to guide people into groups with people they don't know, or girl and boy groups, or groups of mixed ages. Trust that people will do what is best for them.

Reporting back

Must all group work be reported back? And if so in what way? Sometimes the conversation in the group was the important part. Sometimes maybe showing a flipchart page is enough. And sometimes it might be appropriate to do report back in mixed groups. This involves creating new groups with one person from each original group, where the participants tell each other what was said in their original groups. Think about which of these methods is best for achieving your intentions and maximising learning in the group.

Method 2: Work experience

Young people and decision-makers do work experience in each other's lives. Invite girls and boys to do work experience as decision-makers/politicians for a week. Give decision-makers/politicians the opportunity to do work experience in the young people's everyday lives.

Purpose: Increase decision-makers' knowledge of what it's like to be young today, inspire young people to participate in decision-making.

Target group: Decision-makers: municipal commissioners, opposition party commissioners, county council commissioners, MPs or MEPs; as well as civil servants, youth recreation leaders, headteachers, directors of industry and media; and young people.

Method: Young people and decision-makers do work experience in each other's positions. One day in each other's shoes is a minimum, but a week gives a much better opportunity to get to know each other's personalities, environments and lives. Young people could do work experience in pairs with decision-makers. It could just be one young person and one politician who do work experience, or there could be a large number of participants in the scheme during the same period of time.

1. Communicate the purpose of doing work experience for the young people, the decision-makers and the organisation.
2. Recruit decision-makers by allowing them to discuss the advantages of gaining an insight into the everyday life of young people.
Or through decisions made in the municipal executive board.
3. Recruit young people through essay competitions, by inviting applications, or via schools or youth centres.
The possibilities are endless.
4. Match up young people and politicians. When matching, remember the purpose of the work experience.
5. In order to be able to evaluate the process, conduct an evaluation before and after. See the questions below. Have the participants complete the sentences.
6. Are there any risks involved in the work experience programme? If so, is there anything you should be prepared for? For example, illness or travel.
7. Invite the media to follow one or several stages of the project.
8. Make sure you carry out a preparatory meeting with the different groups. Have the participants think about what they want to find out during the week, about how they will use that knowledge afterwards, and about practical things. See below for suggestions.
9. Carry out the work experience. Ask the participants to write a diary of what happens and what things they learn.
10. Carry out another evaluation after the work experience.
11. Try to hold a meeting after the work experience programme, with the different groups or all together, where you discuss things learned and how to move forward with the ideas that have emerged during the week. See below.
12. What did you learn? How can you use what you learned? How will you move forward?

Evaluation

Carry out an evaluation before and after the work experience. Here are a few ideas of questions you could use.

Before the work experience

- I think the best thing about being a young person/a decision-maker is...
- I think the worst thing about being a young person/a decision-maker is...
- I think the most difficult thing about being a young person/a decision-maker is...
- I think the most important thing I'll learn this week will be...
- One thing I don't think the other person understands about my life is...
- One thing I think the other person will learn from my life this week is...
- If I was a young person/a decision-maker I would...

After the work experience

- The most important thing I learned this week was...
- I think the best thing about being a young person/a decision-maker is...
- I think the worst thing about being a young person/a decision-maker is...
- I think the most difficult thing about being a young person/a decision-maker is...
- The most important thing I learned this week was...
- One thing I don't think the other person understood about my life is...
- One thing I think the other person has learned from my life this week is...
- If I was a young person/a decision-maker I would...

Preparations

Hold an introductory meeting with the participants. Or at the very least, write a letter where you ask them to prepare the following:

- Prepare a short description of your environment, your everyday life, and the tasks you have to do.
- Write down what is important to you as a young person/decision-maker
- What do you want to know about the other person?
- What places/meetings from your everyday life do you want the other person to get to see?

Follow-up

Meet up again a while later, and discuss the following together:

- What was the most important thing you learned?
- What was the most surprising thing?
- What was the most fun?
- What was the best thing about the other person's everyday life?
- If you were to do this again, what would you do differently?

Method 3: Dinner

Hold a dinner where young people and decision-makers come together. A dinner that involves cooperation and intercultural learning¹, and that gives participants a chance to test their skills in the kitchen. Young people and decision-makers work in teams to cook dinner together in a family home. Then they eat with the family. The young people and decision-makers are invited to dinner and they don't find out until later, when their tasks are introduced, that they are responsible for cooking the dinner. This activity could involve an overnight stay. An alternative could be to serve lunch.

Purpose: Teamwork, but also the chance to try out a new culture in the form of an entirely new environment, where no-one feels at home, which provides the right conditions for communication on the same level.

Target group: Young people and decision-makers. This could take place at local, regional and national level.

Method:

1. Arrange with a number of families that a team will come to their home and cook them dinner one evening. Send information to the families.
2. Invite decision-makers and young people to dinner.
3. Place them in mixed groups of 3-5 participants.
4. Introduce the evening's task: Decision-makers and young people are to work together in groups. They will receive a fixed sum of money to buy ingredients to make dinner for themselves and family they will be cooking for, and they will do the dishes after dinner. They are given directions to the shop and to the family's house, and told what time they are to arrive. Remember to give them an emergency number for the course leader. You could also give them a number of questions that you want the participants to discuss in their groups and with the families.
5. When the participants come back from the families' houses, ask them to draw a picture of their feelings from the evening.
6. The next day, ask them to report back on the questions they discussed and the lessons they learned. Talk about how it felt to work in a new team, how it felt when they were given the task, when they arrived at the family's house, when they were preparing dinner and when they ate together. Ask them what they might be able to learn about themselves based on this? About meetings with other people? How might they be able to move forward with the knowledge they have gained today?

Coffee with a politician

Perhaps there is a café where politicians meet after municipal council meetings or other meetings? Take the chance to invite young people to come along, and create spontaneous meetings. Raise relevant issues in small groups or in one large group.

¹ Intercultural learning is a way of letting your own cultural background meet others' backgrounds.

Method 4: Human Library

A method where decision-makers get the chance to find out about boys' and girls' everyday lives, in an unprejudiced way. This method gives them a chance to borrow two young people for a meeting, with a chance to ask them questions. The young people can be borrowed for committee meetings, municipal council meetings or public sector workplace meetings. It is best if they go in pairs, partly to gain different perspectives, but also because it feels more secure for the young people.

Purpose: For decision-makers to gain knowledge of young people's situations.

Target group: Young people, decision-makers and civil servants.

Method:

1. Contact an organisation, school or youth centre. Recruit young people who are willing to be 'human libraries'.
2. Have the young people prepare themselves by meeting to discuss possible questions and attitudes. Give them access to statistics relating to the situation for young people in the municipality. However, note that the young people are not expected to be experts on the situations of all young people in the municipality, only on their own lives. The young people could divide into groups depending on the subjects they are interested in.
3. Offer committees, municipal councils and workplaces the opportunity to borrow the young people for a short time.
4. Conditions and limitations: Those who borrow the young people have a right to ask any questions, but the young people have a right to refuse to answer any question that is too personal, disrespectful, etc.
5. Have the young people write down the questions, and have the borrowing party write down what they have learned.
6. Finish with a meeting with the young people, to reflect on how it felt and what they have learned. The young people could collate material to send to the people who borrowed them. They could also organise a press conference where they present the project for the media.
7. Do follow-up work with the people who have borrowed young people, and document how they are using the lessons they have learned.

Method 5: The map – images of the municipality and of Europe

How do we actually see our municipality and Europe – are our mental maps the same? This method helps young people and decision-makers to gain a shared 'map' so that they can talk about what needs to be developed in their municipality.

Purpose: To create a shared map for further discussion.

Target group: Young people and decision-makers.

Resources: Flipchart, marker pens, and possibly a map of the area.

Method:

1. Invite young people and decision-makers to a meeting.
2. Divide the participants into groups, based for example on age and gender.
3. Ask the groups to work together to draw a map of the municipality, city or district on a piece of flipchart paper.
4. Ask them to mark important things or places in the municipality or city. They could also mark areas where there are problems.
5. Compare the groups' maps. Discuss the following: What did you highlight? Why is that important for you? What are the similarities and differences between the pictures?
6. In smaller groups again, have them discuss how they want to develop their pictures: What would you add to make the municipality a better place? What would you like to take from the other groups' maps to put in your picture?
7. Come together again in one large group, and study each other's pictures.
8. Discuss lessons learned and how to move forward.

Alternative version

You can discuss perspectives of Europe using a similar exercise.

1. Ask the participants to work together to draw a map of Europe on a piece of flipchart paper.
2. Ask the participants to mark important places on the map.
3. List the best things about Europe, and the opportunities for young people in Europe.

Method 6: The camera – documenting reality

Are you curious about how young people perceive their environment? Ask them, for example, to document unsafe places in the municipality. Or good places, or places that they wish existed. Send the young people out with a disposable camera, ask them to present their findings, and discuss the results.

Purpose: To gain knowledge of how young people perceive their surroundings.

Target group: Young people and decision-makers.

Resources: One disposable camera or digital camera per group.

Method:

1. Invite young people to participate.
2. Give out disposable cameras or digital cameras. Ask the young people to take photos of unsafe environments, places where they are happy, places they'd like to improve, or places they wish existed.
3. Develop or print the pictures. Ask the participants to do a presentation for the decision-makers, where they report back and talk about places that they think are unsafe.
4. Work together in groups of young people and decision-makers. Discuss how unsafe environments could be improved, and list three possible solutions to make them into safe environments. Discuss the places where the young people are happy, and have the participants list the three best things about these places. List the places the young people wish existed.
5. Talk about what is possible and how to move forward with these suggestions.

Method 7: The t-shirt

An innovative meeting where creativity is in focus. Ask young people and decision-makers to design their own t-shirts on the theme 'What's the best thing about your municipality/the EU?' Then discuss the results, and how you would like things to be.

Purpose: To bring out different images of the municipality or the EU.

Target group: Young people and decision-makers.

Resources: T-shirts (or other garments, depending on the target group), fabric paints or marker pens.

Method:

1. Invite them to a meeting.
2. Have each participant design a t-shirt using words, colours and symbols, on the theme 'I think this is the soul/identity of my municipality'. One alternative is to design the back of the t-shirt too; 'This is how I'd like things to be in my municipality'. Or the participants could paint t-shirts about how they'd like things to be in the EU.
3. Discuss the following: What does my t-shirt say? What does yours say? Similarities? Differences? How would we like things to be? How can we get to where we want to be?
4. End the meeting by discussing how to move forward.

Alternative version

Ask the young people to come with ideas for marketing gimmicks or for something that could be used in the politicians' and civil servants' working lives. Something that could be given out to politicians and civil servants that constantly reminds them of the youth perspective, and that they can take with them where they go.

Method 8: City walking tour

Invite decision-makers to go on a walking tour where girls and boys guide them around their city, talking about what works well and what problems exist.

Purpose: Gaining a youth perspective on the outdoor environment.

Target group: Young people and decision-makers.

Method:

1. Gather a group of girls and boys. Ask them to prepare a walking tour of their town or city.
2. Have them list places they like to be, places they are scared of and places they wish were different.
3. Invite decision-makers to the walking tour.
4. Ask the young people to guide the decision-makers around their town or city, telling them how they would like it to develop.
5. Talk about what the participants can learn from the walking tour.
6. If possible, arrange a second meeting where the decision-makers guide the young people and explain how they plan to develop the town/city.

Alternative version: Ask the young people to shoot a film on the theme 'My town/city...' or 'This is what young people think...' where they show off their outdoor environment, and maybe also present a vision for how they would like it to be.

Method 9: Capturing ideas

Purpose: To capture ideas on how to develop the municipality.

Target group: Young people.

Resources: Flipchart paper and marker pens.

Method:

1. Send out invitations to a meeting with young people.
2. Ask the participants to split into smaller groups of 3-5 people.
3. Ask the groups to list answers to the following questions on flipchart paper: What should the municipality stop doing? What should the municipality start doing? What should the municipality continue to develop? What is important and what works well?
4. Report back to the group.

Alternative version

Visit some school classes, explaining the purpose of your visit. Ask the students to write down answers to the above questions. What do the different age groups prioritise? You can also visit a youth centre or organisation.

Method 10: Appreciative conversations – panning for gold

Constructive conversations that focus on things that are good is one way of working together to create a narrative of a desired future. Take something that has worked in the past as your starting point. Interview each other in pairs.

Purpose: To study reports of previous success in order to create a desired future.

Target group: Young people and decision-makers.

Method:

1. Invite young people and decision-makers to a meeting.
2. Divide the participants into pairs. It's best to mix decision-makers and young people.
3. Introduce the topic. One possible topic could be successful youth influence on decision-making. You can word the theme differently depending on what you want to focus on. But it should be worded as a challenge – a positive challenge.
4. Ask the participants to interview each other. One interviews the other for around 15-20 minutes and writes down the answers.
See Interview questions.
5. Swap roles.
6. Put the participants into groups of three pairs.
7. Go around the group. Each person briefly relates their partner's story. Be generous, emphasise good qualities and efforts that contributed to successful youth influence on decision-making.
8. When everyone has told their stories – discuss factors that contributed to success. List three actions and three conditions that contributed to positive results.
9. Report back to the group as a whole.
10. Talk together about how you can move forward with the results.

Interview questions

1. Define the theme as a positive challenge.
2. Investigate actual positive occasions when the person has experienced or faced a challenge, for example, successful youth influence on decision-making. What was it like? What did you do? Who else was around you? What was your task?
3. Continue the interview with questions like: What was it that made this experience so fantastic and special? What are you most proud of?
4. Imagine that your dream of youth influence comes true. How does it make you feel? What can you see? What do you do? How do you do it? Who do you cooperate with?
5. What does this story say about your skills? What is the simplest (smallest) step you can take to come closer to that dream?

Method 11:

SWOT – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

This is a method that helps to create a shared picture of work on young people's situations, youth influence in the municipality, or another theme. The method helps you to see the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation in question, and it also helps you visualise opportunities and threats that the organisation faces. SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

Purpose: To map out a situation and investigate how to move forward.

Target group: Young people and decision-makers.

Method:

1. Fill in the table below. What is the situation in terms of youth influence/young people's situations in your municipality?

Strengths and weaknesses are internal to the organisation. Threats and opportunities refer to the world around the organisation – external factors.

Strengths 'What strengths do you have?'	Opportunities 'What opportunities do your surroundings present?'
Weaknesses 'What should you improve?'	Threats 'What threats are you facing?' 'What trends are there in your surroundings?'

2. What conclusions can you draw?

3. If you want to take it further:

- From the 'strengths' box, choose three things that are important and that you want to do even better.
- From the 'weaknesses' box, choose three things you want to develop.
- Choose three ideas you think would be exciting to make use of from the list of opportunities.
- Choose three threats that could cause problems and make a plan for how to avoid them.

Method 12: Essay

Do you need help to develop a vision for your municipality? Get help from the young people – how do they want the municipality to look in the future? What would make them stay here? Work with a few schools, or do a mailing to all the young people in the municipality. Organise an essay competition, choose the ten best visions and publish them on the Internet or in a book. Make sure there is some form of prize. Have the young people present their visions, for example at a meeting of the municipal council. Work the ideas in to the municipal work plan.

Six months later, give feedback to the young people who participated in the competition, showing what has been done to move towards their visions.

Purpose: To find out young people's thoughts and visions of the future.

Target group: Young people.

Method:

1. Organise an essay competition. The best essay could win a prize like the chance to do work experience with politicians, a visit to your MP, or a short course in writing at a local college. Or publish a book containing a number of essays.
2. Decide who should be on the panel that judges the essays.
3. Invite young people to write essays about the future in the municipality, or in Europe.
4. Read and judge the essays, then announce the winners.
5. Collate the ideas and give feedback to the young people on how you are moving forward with their ideas.
6. Publish the essays – on the Internet, in your local paper or in a book.

Method 13: Online survey with follow-up meeting

Invite boys and girls to submit their opinions online. You could use schools' email addresses, Lunarstorm or Facebook to contact young people. Then invite them to a meeting to discuss the results. Or make it into a competition and get the young people to guess what percentage of them gave what answers.

Purpose: To 'take the temperature' on key issues.

Target group: Young people in an online community or school students.

Method:

1. Draw up questions on what you want to know. You could ask respondents to rank certain things in order of importance. There is free software available for web-based surveys, for example at surveymonkey.com. Make sure you test the questions on a few people from the target group before launching the online survey, so that you know the questions work.
2. Decide on a target group. It may be possible to use school email addresses, or purchase addresses on an online community such as Lunarstorm.
3. Carry out the survey. Compile the results.
4. Invite people to a meeting where the results will be presented. You could run a competition where people have to guess how many people answered X or Y.
5. Discuss how to move forward. What needs to change? How can that happen? In what way can you cooperate?
6. Send feedback on how you are moving forward to all the people who were offered the chance to participate in the online survey.

Alternative version

Create a group on Facebook, a forum where you can discuss important questions. Invite people, and ask those who join to invite others. Challenge people and create dialogue. Blogging is another alternative. Write about important issues. Get others to contribute.

Method 14: Newspaper from 2015

Create a newspaper from 2015. One newspaper for the municipality and one for the EU. This is a method where the participants get a chance to use words and pictures to express what has happened in the municipality and the EU in the future. The vision will be presented in newspaper format.

Purpose: Creating visions of the municipality/the EU and young people's role.

Target group: Young people and decision-makers.

Resources: Roll of paper or flipchart pad, crayons and marker pens.

Method:

1. Send invitations to a meeting or visit youth centres and school classes.
2. Ask the participants to split into groups. Each group is to produce the front page of a newspaper, a debate page, and five news items. The newspapers should be produced on flipchart paper or long rolls of paper where all the pages fit side by side. The groups do not need to write full articles – the important thing is to write the headings and a few key points explaining what the articles are about. They should also give their newspapers names.
3. Based on this, each group can then formulate a vision for the activities of the municipality and the EU.
4. When the groups present their newspaper and vision, it could be fun if the other groups cross-examine them. They could do that by working on the positive aspects – what is it that makes this exciting and challenging, what would they like to take from this vision to add to their own visions.
5. Discuss how to move forward with the visions expressed and lessons learned from the meeting.

Alternative version

Instead of a newspaper, you could create a website for the year 2015. What are the news headlines?

What does the website look like?

Method 15: The organisation in a day, in a year, in five years

Create visions of the future together. How might the future look in your municipality, in Sweden and in Europe with different time perspectives – in a day, in a year and in five years? What is it possible to change in that time?

Purpose: To create images of the future in the EU and your municipality.

Target group: Young people and decision-makers.

Method:

1. Invite them to a meeting. Try to bring young people and decision-makers together.
2. Ask the participants to split into groups of 3-5 people.
3. Ask them to work on the theme 'This is what I want the municipality to do for girls and for boys'. Give the groups different time perspectives: in a day, in a year, or in five years. Some groups can work on the municipality and others on the EU. The groups can write, draw, sing, or do whatever suits them to develop their vision.
4. Ask the groups to report back to each other on their visions.
5. After reporting back, you can move forward by discussing the following questions: What is inspiring and attractive about these different pictures? What do you want to include in your vision? How will things be for girls, and for boys, according to the vision? What is realistic? What is missing?
6. Based on this conversation, you can formulate a joint vision, incorporating what you want to see happen from all the visions. How do you move forward? What do you need in order for it to become a reality? Whose responsibility is it?
7. Report back to the group on how the work is going. Invite group members to participate.

Method 16: Training decision-makers and leaders

Educate those who are responsible for youth issues in the municipality on how young people's lives are. Use young people as teachers. You could also use facts and statistics, for example from the 'local follow-up of youth policy' survey carried out by the National Board for Youth Affairs.² This training provides a starting point for making girls' and boys' perspectives more visible in the work of the municipality.

Purpose: To bring a youth perspective into the work of the municipality.

Target group: Decision-makers, leaders, teachers and municipal civil servants.

Method:

1. Send out invitations to a training event.
2. Train leaders and decision-makers from the municipality or organisation in the UN Child Convention, for example – what does it mean in practice? Other content could be drawn from the 'local follow-up of youth policy' survey carried out by the National Board for Youth Affairs, the art of creating dialogue, or how we can increase youth influence in the work of the municipality.
3. You can also train the participants in doing consequence analyses of decisions from a youth perspective. Remember that 'young people' as a group actually consists of many groups. Use gender as the basis for division, and then use sub-categories such as age, living in urban or rural area, Swedish or non-Swedish background.
4. Ask the participants to go through their work from a youth perspective before the next meeting.
5. At the second meeting, talk about what they have learned about youth issues on the basis of their own work. What do they want to keep, and what needs to be developed?
6. Find ways to ensure that youth policy is always present in the work of the municipality.
7. Follow up and reward the participants.

² The survey on local follow-up of youth policy was compiled by the National Board for Youth Affairs, and gives municipalities a basis for developing an overall municipal youth policy. The survey consists of 80 questions and was adapted for three age groups: students in years 7-9 of compulsory schooling (age 14-16), upper secondary school students (age 16-19) and young adults (age 19-25).
www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se/kat/0,2070,1097,00.html

Meetings with dialogue

Here are a few methods for meetings with dialogue. These meeting forms can be used in small groups but can also be used successfully in larger or very large groups.

Method 1: Dialogue café

A structured dialogue, where the participants sit in groups around coffee tables and discuss the questions given to them. The answers are reported back and compiled, if desired. During the process, people swap groups. A shared understanding and insight will give the participants the will to act. This method works for groups from twelve up to over a thousand.

Instructions: www.theworldcafe.com

Method 2: Open Space meeting

This is a method that is based on self-organising. Its founder, Harrison Owen, describes it as follows: Come together, sit in a circle, set up an agenda together, and get to work. The method has been used for anything from two people up to two thousand.

Instructions: 'Open Space Technology, a user's guide' by Harrison Owen.

You can also carry out your meeting online at www.openspace-online.com. This is an excellent form of meeting when the participants are not in the same geographical area.

Question bank for use in all exercises

Below are examples of questions to discuss that can be used in the different exercises. Choose a few that suit the purpose of the exercise. You can also make up your own questions. Remember that they should be open questions – not yes/no questions, but questions that lead to dialogue. The questions should not lead to value judgements and should not be intrusive.

Examples of questions to discuss:

Future visions

- What's the best thing about being young in Europe/this municipality?
- What's the worst thing about being young in Europe/this municipality?
- How do young people's futures look in Europe/this municipality?
- How would you like things to be in Europe/this municipality?
- In what way can decision-makers contribute to creating a better future for young people in Europe/this municipality?
- List key areas, in order of importance, for the EU to work on in order for young people to have a good future in Europe.
(e.g. employment, environment, education, human rights, housing, equality, traffic and infrastructure)

Equality

- What opportunities exist for girls and boys in the municipality/Sweden/Europe?
- What obstacles exist for girls and boys in the municipality/Sweden/Europe?

Perspective

- What's the best thing about being young right now?
- What was the best thing about being young fifty years ago?
- What is lacking now that used to exist?
- What has got better?
- How can this develop even more?
- What's your most important lesson from when you were young?
- What message did you get from adults about being young/your future?
- What message would you give young people today?

Influence

- If you were a politician for a day – what would you change in this municipality/Sweden/Europe?
- What's the best thing/worst thing about politicians/young people?
- What would make you become a decision-maker/politician?
- What are the EU's most important future issues for young people/decision-makers?
- What advice would you give the EU commissioners for improving the situation in Europe in terms of young people's futures?
- What makes you get involved, and what do you do with your involvement?
- What would make more people get involved in the future of the municipality?

Evaluation

- What have you learned today?
- What was the best thing about this conversation?

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