Formal Mechanisms of Consultation

The participation and co-determination of young people in politics at all levels, but also generally in society, is an important focal point of the Department for Families and Youth at the Federal Chancellery.

The Institute for Research on Qualifications and Training of the Austrian Economy (Institut für Bildungsforschung der Wirtschaft, ibw), Austrian Institute for SME Research (KMU Forschung Austria) and the Institute for advanced studies (Institut für Höhere Studien, IHS) frequently conduct studies on behalf of public authorities. Within those studies, important stakeholders are interviewed. External evaluations are also carried out by these institutions.

Recent studies and study projects on employment and entrepreneurship:

- Success factors for the Dual VET System [1]
- Postsecondary vocational education and training in Austria [2].
- Muddling through’ and historical institutionalism – Explanatory devices for the long-term development of the dualistic Austrian VET system (IHS) [3].
- National Education Report 2015 (Nationaler Bildungsbericht 2015 [4])

Education 18 – Basic Research
The aim of this basic research was to investigate the preconditions of the planned initiative to extend compulsory education until the age of 18 can build upon. Therefore, the number of young people affected has been calculated and their need of support has been analysed. By contrasting, supply and demand of support in a qualitative and quantitative perspective conclusions can be drawn, which measures should be implemented.

The outcomes of the studies are being considered in any kind of decision-making. The National youth council has to be consulted for any youth related law.

In the interests of a successful implementation of the European Union "renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field" in Austrian youth policy, the participation of young people is of particular importance.

Like youth policy in general, participation is a cross-sectional topic and requires implementation in all areas of politics.

The department itself is, in particular, a provider of inputs and the coordinator for the establishment and extension of participation in a variety of fields. Support for clubs and associations, initiatives and projects plays a central role here. The Federal Youth Promotion Act (Bundes-Jugendförderungsgesetz [5]), which came into effect in 2001, also defines projects worthy of support as those which in particular include the co-determination and participation of young people in all areas of life, as well as responsibility, independence and the promotion of democracy as principles of their youth work.

Active inclusion is also a core criterion of the Austrian Youth Strategy [6]. Consultations take place on national, regional and local levels.

**Participation Working Group (ARGE [7]Partizipation [7])**

The Participation Working Group is an institution of the provincial youth departments, because, in terms of competencies, the implementation of co-determination and participation opportunities at provincial, regional and municipal levels is the task of the respective federal states. The Department for Families and Youth at the Federal Chancellery is represented in the Participation Working Group, whose task is to coordinate participative measures in Austria and to further develop them. The Austrian Youth Council is part of the working group, representing all major youth organisations.

**Consultation of young people**

Online consultation of young people and consultation processes by the members of the National Working Group (eg. amongst federal provinces) take place on a regional level.

Within the framework of structured dialogue, online consultation through the networking contacts of all National Working group members are performed. The outcomes are used to further develop the Austrian Youth Strategy and to implement more projects to foster social inclusion.

- **Youth monitor**

The youth monitor is based on telephone surveys, and on computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI). These were carried out by several different institutions. Surveys are performed every 3-4 months. With this method the former Ministry for Families and Youth asked 800 young people, aged 14-24, for their opinions and attitudes in the course of each survey. The method consists of a series of events held by the Youth Competence Centre [8] and serves as a method to present and discuss current research results and activities in the field of youth research.
• **Youth strategy on tour**

Within the context of "Youth strategy on tour" [9], young people are questioned using high-quality methods well-established at social research. Furthermore, young people have the opportunity to actively express their ideas, wishes, concerns and suggestions and to discuss them and put them down in words in workshops with their peers. Groups are formed to reach a maximum diversity within the youth population and to gain a better insight.

• **Online Surveys on the Youth Portal**

On the [Austrian Youth Portal] [10] (German only), regular online surveys are conducted on a wide variety of youth policy topics. Around 300 to 500 young people take part in each of these surveys. The results are incorporated into the Youth Strategy and are published on the Youth Portal. Furthermore, these online surveys are part of the Structured Dialogue within the framework of the EU Youth Strategy.

• **Better-life-index/Open Delphi 4 youth**

OD4Y is an open process for young people between 16 and 30. As an important part of the Austrian Youth strategy young people are regularly being consulted on specific topics. The results have a direct impact on the development of the Austrian youth strategy and the Austrian position concerning youth on the European level. Topics as employment, education or well-being are just a few examples discussed through this method.

• **Participation platform**

The [participation platform] [11] is a project by the National Youth Council (Bundesjugendvertretung [12], BJV). Via the platform different online consultations processes are carried out. Young people can not only vote, but also discuss ideas and concerns together. This allows a detailed answer of questions. There are no limits for topics that young people are consulted for.

• **Youth Check**

On 1 January 2013, the [Youth Check] [9] (effect-oriented impact assessment) went into effect. The law stipulates that all new legislative and regulatory proposals be evaluated for the potential consequences they could have for children, young people and young adults. This instrument makes it easier for youth organisations, in particular, the National Youth Council, to become involved in the legislative process.

• **Dialogue Youth Research (Dialog Jugendforschung)**

Dialogue Youth research is a series of events of the Youth Competence Centre at the Department for Families and Youth at the Federal Chancellery and serves to present and discuss recent research result and activities in the youth field.

• **Austrian Youth Portal**

Information is the basis of every form of participation. The [Austrian Youth Portal] [10] is operated by the National Network of Austrian Youth Information Centres on behalf of the Department for Families and Youth at the Federal Chancellery. It offers a selectively chosen and regularly updated collection of annotated links to a wide array of youth-related topics, thereby making it easier for young people to remain informed. From the beginning onward, young people have been involved in the development of the Youth Portal.
- **Youth Speech competition**

Eloquent youngsters can speak up for topics that are important to them. With the youth-speech competition, they present their ideas and opinions and take up positions - in the form of a classical speech, a spontaneous speech or a creative presentation (New mouthpiece). The competition first takes place on a regional level organised by the regional authorities, the winners can take part in the national competition organised by the national authorities.

**Actors**

Main youth actors are the National Youth Council BJV ([Bundesjugendvertretung](#)) representing 53 member organisations), **bOJA** ([bundesweites](#) **Netzwerk** [offene](#) **Jugendarbeit** [13], representing open youth work), **BÖJI** ([Bundenetzwerk Österreichische Jugendinfos](#), representing youth information).

A high diversity is the goal of any survey, therefore, no specific target group is addressed.

The Department for Families and Youth at the Federal Chancel, together with the local authorities in charge of youth relevant topics, the extracurricular youth work and assigned institutions are in charge.

The Austrian institute for family research continuously protocols all youth relevant data, which have been collected by various institutions. This enables to quickly access any youth relevant topic and to easily link a variety of different data with regards to content.

**Information on the extent of youth participation**

Depending on the method the number of participants varies. Online surveys directly show these numbers. 300 - 500 young people are taking part in such surveys.

**Outcomes**

The outcomes are being considered in decision making by the national authorities. The outcome is available for the public on the corresponding websites. Among others, recent participation projects addressed the EU-Youth Conference, how to improve the confidence of young people in policy makers, participation in the education sector and how young people and youth organisations should be integrated into policy making. The outcome of these surveys is presented [online](#).

**Large-scale initiatives for dialogue or debate between public institutions and young people**

**Giving Young People a bigger Voice**

The model initiative “[Giving Young People a bigger Voice](#)” collects the results of participation projects, processes them according to the target group and publishes them. Wishes and ideas of young people which have originated within the scope of youth participation processes are presented online. The main matters of interest comprise, among others, employment, education, health, leisure time, money, politics and media.