

Protected by PDF Anti-Copy Free

4th Regular Call, South Baltic, Programme 2014–2020

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK

STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

(Upgrade to Pro Version to Remove the Watermark)

Gdańsk University of Technology, Klaipėda University



Report on the Quantitative Research Results

Institutions' needs on Youth civic participation
in the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network
Project Partner countries

2020

Introduction

(Upgrade to Pro Version to Remove the Watermark)

The Report regarding Institution on Youth civic participation is one of the results of WP3 - 3.1. Activity: Local analysis and a report (the SB YCGN project indicator: D3.1).



This report includes the description of the quantitative research assumptions, including full methodology, the organizational rules of survey implementation, the research tool – questionnaire pattern and the results of the research.

The quantitative studies of institutions were designed by a Polish-Lithuanian researchers team whose members were prof. dr hab. Krystyna Gomółka, dr Izabela Borucińska (Gdańsk University of Technology), prof. dr Ligita Šimanskienė and dr Jurgita Paužuolienė (Klaipėda University) and conducted under their control and with their support.

The aim of the quantitative study was to identify and assess the needs of institutions relating to the stimulation of youth civic participation at local and cross-border level, youth engagement in decision-making processes, key barriers to civic participation of young people and effective forms and methods of involving youth in active citizenship. The problem was highlighted from the perspective of adult decision-makers represented by employees of local institutions from the Lithuanian municipality of Telšiai, Polish municipalities of Dziergoń, Elbląg, Gdynia, Iława and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, and the Swedish municipality of Hässleholm.

The issues of civic participation, including youth civic participation, has been present in both the scientific and political discourse for many years. The changes taking place in modern societies and civic activity encourage the search for effective solutions, especially systemic ones, to involve as many citizens as possible in decision-making processes.

The importance of youth issues has been emphasised in a number of European Union documents from the Maastricht Treaty until the Treaty of Lisbon, European Commission White Paper, the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, the European Pact for Youth and the EU Strategy for Youth. Young people are also the subject of many national documents: laws, ordinances and strategies of Sweden, Lithuania and Poland. However, neither the European Union policy nor the policies of Lithuania, Poland and Sweden concerning youth and its civic participation can ensure the desired level of youth engagement in decision-making concerning young people as citizens. International projects, particularly those

Protected by PDF Anti-Copy Free

⁴th Regular Call, South Baltic, Programme 2014–2020

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK

STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

co-financed by the European Union, has been implemented to help promoting young people's civic participation. They allow the exchange of knowledge and experience, the creation of new solutions to problems and their implementation at the grassroots level. This was the role of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network (SB YCGN) project implemented in the framework of the 2014–2020 Interreg V-A South Baltic Programme by a Polish-Lithuanian-Swedish partnership.



The methodology of the quantitative research on Institutions' needs



The following research questions were identified for achieving the study's aim:

- What is the current and desirable level of youth civic participation in the Lithuanian municipality of Telšiai, the Polish municipalities of Dzierzgoń, Elbląg, Gdynia, Iława and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie and the Swedish municipality of Hässleholm from the perspective of public institutions, and NGOs?
- What is the participation of young people in decision-making from the perspective of public institutions, and NGOs?
- What are the barriers to youth civic participation according to public institutions, and NGOs?
- What are the needs and expectations of public institutions, and NGOs in respect of intensification of dialogue and cooperation with young people and stimulation of their civic participation at local and cross-border level?

The research population: representatives of institutions dealing with problems of youth aged 14-24 from 7 partner municipalities: Dzierzgoń, Elbląg, Gdynia, Iława, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, Telsiai, Hässleholm

The sample size: 71 institutions from all partner countries – there were surveyed 3 people of each institution who cooperate with young people aged 14-24 out - **the total number of respondents in all municipalities = 213**

Wherever possible, attempts were made to keep a proportion of 50% women, 50% men.

Table 1. Structure of the research sample in the individual municipalities

Partner	Institutions
Dzierzgoń 6 institutions 18 people 50% women and 50% men	Public institutions: 1. Municipal Office 2. City Council 3. Youth City Council – a Carer person 4. Dzierzgoń Cultural Centre 5. Cyprian Kamil Norwid School Complex NGO: 6. NGO (<i>please choose one non-governmental organization operating in the municipality</i>)
Elbląg	Public institutions:

<p>13 institutions 39 people 50% women and 50% men</p>	<p>1. (Municipal Office) 2. City Council 3. The Complex of High Schools in Elbląg and Juliusz Słowacki High School 4. The Complex of High Schools No. 2 in Elbląg and Kazimierz Jagiellończyk High School No. 2 5. The Complex of Economic Schools and High Schools in Elbląg 6. Vocational School in Elbląg 7. The Complex of Technical and IT Schools in Elbląg 8. Centre for Vocational and Further Education in Elbląg 9. Hall of Residence No. 2 in Elbląg 10. Youth Culture Centre in Elbląg</p> <p>NGOs:</p> <p>1. Elbląg Youth Council - a Carer person 2. Elbląg-Europe Association 3. Polish Scouting Association in Elbląg</p>
<p>Gdynia 20 institutions 60 people 50% women and 50% men</p>	<p>Public institutions:</p> <p>1. Municipal Office 2. City Council 3. 4 Junior High Schools (<i>selected as suggested by the Mayor of the City</i>) 4. 4 High schools (<i>selected as suggested by the Mayor of the City</i>) 5. “Wymiennikownia” - Youth Centre for Creative Innovation and Design 6. Gdynia Library, "Library with a passion"- youth branch 7. Museum of the City of Gdynia 8. Culture Centre in Gdynia 9. Youth City Council - a Carer person 10. School Youth Hostel</p> <p>NGOs:</p> <p>1. Youth Cooperation Centre 2. Association for Children and Youth "Vitava" 3. Polish Scouting Association in Gdynia 4. ZHR Scouting Association – Gdynia Circuit</p>
<p>Ilawa 8 institutions 24 people 50% women and 50% men</p>	<p>Public institutions:</p> <p>1. Municipal Office 2. City Council 3. Youth City Council - a Carer person 4. Junior High School No 1 5. S. Żeromski High School 6. Secondary Technical School of Mechanical Engineering 7. Theatre Circle at the Ilawa Cultural Center</p> <p>NGO:</p> <p>8. ORKA Association</p>
<p>Nowe Miasto Lubawskie 6 institutions 18 people 50% women and 50% men</p>	<p>Public institutions:</p> <p>1. Municipal Office 2. City Council 3. Youth City Council - a Carer person 4. The Complex of Vocational Schools in Nowe Miasto Lubawskie</p> <p>NGO:</p> <p>5. “Drogowskazy” Foundation 6. Children’s Friends Association Board of the Municipal Department in Nowe Miasto Lubawskie</p>
<p>Telšiai 10 institutions 30 people 50% women and 50% men</p>	<p>Public institutions:</p> <p>1. Municipal Office 2. City Council 3. 4 schools (<i>please choose schools attended by young people aged 14-24</i>) 4. Youth Council – a Carer person</p> <p>NGOs:</p> <p>4. Telšiai Youth Center</p>

	<p>5. (Upgrade to Pro Version to Remove the Watermark)</p> <p>6. Tent Arts Incubator</p>
<p>Hässleholm 8 institutions 24 people 50% women and 50% men</p>	<p>Public institutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Municipal Office 2. City Council 3. schools attended by young people aged 14-24 (<i>please choose them in your commune</i>) 4. other public institutions such as youth clubs, libraries, cultural institutions ect. (<i>please choose them in your commune</i>) <p>NGOs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. NGO (<i>please choose minimum one non-governmental organization operating in your commune</i>)

Research method and tool: the quantitative studies were based on the diagnostic survey method and the electronic survey technique on a sample of 213 institution representatives working with young people aged 14–24 from seven Lithuanian, Polish and Swedish municipalities such as: Telšiai, Dzierzgoń, Elbląg, Gdynia, Iława and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie and Hässleholm.

The survey was carried out online - using an Internet questionnaire – this is the link to an online form: <https://forms.zie.pg.gda.pl/sbycgn/institution/en/>

The description of the research implementation:

Each Partner has identified appropriate person representing an indicated institution in its municipality, then sent to the person a link to the electronic questionnaire (<https://forms.zie.pg.gda.pl/sbycgn/institution/en/>) with a request to fill it and to click the "SEND FORM" button at the end of the questionnaire to submit it.

If a paper questionnaire was needed, research team members were informed about it by e-mail. A paper version of the questionnaire was conditionally admissible - only in cases when it is not possible to conduct the survey via the Internet. The Project Partner responsible for the research implementation in his commune should enter the answers from the paper questionnaire into the online questionnaire and click "Send form".

Deadline for the research implementation: until March 31, 2019. Deadline for the research implementation: until March 31, 2019. Due to the changes in the SBYCGN partnership the main quantitative surveys were finalized near the end of November 2019.

Questionnaire concerning the civic participation of youth – the perspective of the institution

Dear Madam or Sir,

The survey is conducted as part of the SB YCGN (South Baltic Youth Core Group Network) project. The aim of this survey is to identify the local needs related to the civic participation of youth* aged 14–24 with a view to increasing the participation of young people in public life, including decision-making regarding the local social, economic, cultural, ecological and political environment. It will enable comparison of the situation of young people and your opinions on a cross-border (international) scale in Denmark, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden. The survey was prepared by researchers from the Gdańsk University of Technology and the University of Klaipėda.

The survey is anonymous, and its results will be used only for scientific and practical purposes to increase the participation of young people in public life.

Thank you for participating in the survey.

**Civic participation is the possibility to speak up and participate in activities and decisions taken by authorities, organizations, schools, etc. that concern us as citizens*

1. Do you cooperate with young people aged

- a) 14–17 b) 18–24 c) I do not work with young people
=> please exit the survey

2. How often do you come across the following attitudes in cooperation with young people in matters related to their impact on their nearest environment i.e. school, neighbourhood, district, commune, local environment: please rate each statement according to the scale: **1** - Very rarely, **2** - Rarely, **3** - Hard to say, **4** - Often, **5** - Very often

No	Statements	Very rarely	Rarely	Hard to say	Often	Very often
1.	Young people want to have an impact on matters concerning them	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Young people are eager to engage in cooperation for the benefit of their nearest environment, i.e. school, neighbourhood, district, commune, local environment	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Young people expect adults to help solve their problems	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Only people who want to benefit their career become involved	1	2	3	4	5
5.	There is a lack of mutual understanding between young people and adults	1	2	3	4	5

3. Assess the level of youth involvement in the process of civic participation in your municipality:

- a) Very high b) High c) Medium d) Low e) Very low

Protected by PDF Anti-Copy Free

4th Regular Call, South Baltic, Programme 2014–2020

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK

STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

(Upgrade to Pro Version to Remove the Watermark)

4. Assess the extent of influence young people in your municipality have on the decisions made in following matters: please rate each statement according to the scale: **1 – Very small, 2 – Small, 3 - Medium, 4 – Large, 5 – Very large**

No	Statements	Small	Medium	Large	Very large	
1.	Election of youth representatives in local authorities	2	3	4	5	
2.	Election of youth representatives at school/university	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Preparation of strategic planning documents	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Education issues in the municipality	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Culture initiatives in the municipality	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Public transport in the municipality	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Spatial development in the municipality	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Social assistance in the municipality	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Distribution of funds from the commune budget	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Preparation and implementation of international projects	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Other – specify the type.....	1	2	3	4	5

5. What would be needed to increase civic participation of youth in your municipality:

please rate each statement according to the scale: **1 - Quite unnecessary, 2 - Rather unnecessary, 3 - Neither necessary nor unnecessary, 4 - Rather necessary, 5 - Definitely necessary**

No	Statements	Quite unnecessary	Rather unnecessary	Neither necessary nor unnecessary	Rather necessary	Definitely necessary
1.	Increasing financial resources for activities involving young people in deciding on public matters	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Increasing the competences of adults responsible for cooperation with young people	1	2	3	4	5
3.	The opportunity to exchange experiences with other institutions and organizations working with youth	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Greater openness of decision-makers to include young people in deciding on public matters	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Formal cooperation with institutions implementing youth policy, including in the Baltic Sea region	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Finding a good leader who will be able to effectively motivate and engage young people	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Other – specify the type	1	2	3	4	5

Protected by PDF Anti-Copy Free

4th Regular Call, South Baltic, Programme 2014–2020

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK

STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

6. In your opinion, what limits the involvement of young people in the matters of their nearest environment:

Please rate each statement on the scale: 1 – Very low impact, 2 – Low impact, 3 - Medium impact, 4 – Strong impact, 5 – Very strong impact

No	Barriers	Very low impact	Low impact	Medium impact	Strong impact	Very strong impact
1.	Young people's lack of interest in local life	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Lack of conviction that their (young people's) involvement would change anything	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Young people's lack of knowledge and skills	1	2	3	4	5
4.	The bans on the part of careers for young people to be getting involved in local affairs	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Lack of formal possibility for young people to participate in decisions on public matters (e.g. because of an age limit)	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Excluding young people from participating in decisions on public issues	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Adults' disregarding the opinions of young people in the decision-making process	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Underrating the knowledge and experience of young people by decision makers	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Lack of adults who know how to work with young people, communicate with them and motivate them to engage in public affairs	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Lack of politicians interested in engaging youth in public affairs	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Lack of clear and understandable information about the opportunities for youth involvement in local affairs	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Other – specify the type.....	1	2	3	4	5

7. How do you assess the effectiveness of the following forms of action to increase the involvement of young people in the matters of their own environment: please rate each statement according to the scale: 1 - Very ineffective, 2 – Rather ineffective, 3 - Moderately effective, 4 – Effective, 5 - Very effective

No	Forms	Very ineffective	Rather ineffective	Moderately effective	Effective	Very effective
1.	Meetings of politicians with youth	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Meetings of officials with youth in schools / universities	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Meetings of officials with youth in public institutions, outside of a school	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Youth meetings with representatives of non-governmental organizations	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Opportunity for young people to express their opinion on draft decisions of school authorities	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Opportunity for young people to express their opinion on draft decisions of local government	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Creation of a list of areas in which young people can co-decide	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Opportunity for young people to participate in decisions about the distribution of funds in the commune budget	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Organisation of public hearings for young people	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Creation of Youth Councils in municipalities	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Organisation of "round tables" e.g. by public institutions as forms of dialogue between officials, politicians and youth	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Information in the media about the possibilities of civic youth	1	2	3	4	5

Protected by PDF Anti-Copy Free

4th Regular Call, South Baltic, Programme 2014–2020

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK

STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

	participation					
13.	Online promotion of civic participation among young people	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Promotion of civic participation by young leaders in their own environment	1	2	3	4	5
15.	Development of youth cooperation in ... at the local level	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Development of youth cooperation in ... at the cross-border (international) level	1	2	3	4	5

8. What additional knowledge or skills could facilitate your cooperation with young people in the area of their involvement in public affairs? You can choose more than one answer.

- a) pedagogical b) psychological c) sociological
d) other, what kind

9. Your gender

- a) Female b) Male

10. You are: (please select all matching answers)

- a) a representative of the local government
b) an employee of an educational institution (school/university/other institution)
c) an employee of the municipal office
d) an employee of a cultural centre
e) an employee of a social welfare centre
f) an employee of another public institution (specify)
g) an employee/activist of a non-governmental organization
h) a representative of a religious institution

11. Your position in the institution:


.....

12. Municipality:

- a) Dzierzgoń b) Elbląg c) Gdynia d) Iława e) Nowe Miasto Lubawskie f) Telsiai g) Hässleholm

Thank you for your time and opinion.

The results of the quantitative research on Institutions' needs



Young people's civic participation can be seen as a process requiring continuous, comprehensive and integrated action, primarily from the institutional environment. The reality of young people's experience is largely created by adults as decision makers. Therefore, the role of public institutions and NGOs in shaping young people's civic attitudes is crucial for the future of local communities as well as entire societies and cross-border communities. This justifies the development of research into youth civic participation and practical actions such as international projects aimed at diagnosing the evolving situation, exchange of knowledge and experience, seeking effective ways of overcoming the existing barriers to dialogue and cooperation with young people in order to make young people's involvement in the public life more effective.

The quantitative studies as part of the SB YCGN were conducted with the aim of identifying and assessing the following main issues at local and cross-border level: the needs of public institutions and NGOs in respect of increasing youth civil participation at local and cross-border level; the current level of youth involvement in resolving local and cross-border problems, including participation in the relevant decision-making process, effective forms and methods of youth inclusion in active public life by public institutions and NGOs, and the key barriers to increasing young people's civic participation.

The diagnostic survey conducted in the framework of the SB YCGN project, carried out by means of an online survey, was sent to representatives of local public and non-governmental institutions in five Polish communes (Dzierżoń, Elbląg, Gdynia, Iława and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie), one Lithuanian (Telšiai) and one Swedish (Hässleholm). The respondents were selected based on expert opinion in accordance with the assumptions set out in Chapter 2. The sample consisted of 213 respondents, with persons working with young people aged 14–17 representing 51.6% of the sample and those working with young people aged 18–24 representing more than 48.4% of the sample. In all the municipalities with the exception of Elbląg and Hässleholm, a majority of those surveyed maintained contacts with youth aged 14–17. In terms of gender, women accounted for 55% of the

sample, which reflected population structure in the Wałbrzych region. With respect to the status of respondents, the majority (43.6%) were employees of educational institutions, followed by various representatives of local authorities representing 18.8% of the sample, employees of the City/Municipality constituting 11.1%, representatives of other public institutions representing 15.6% and NGO employees/activists accounting for 9.3% of the sample. The smallest groups were workers of social assistance centres (4.3%), of cultural centres (3.4%) and of religious institutions (1%). The structure of the sample is shown in Table 1. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics techniques.

Areas and forms of youth civic participation as an expression of its influence on decision-making processes at the commune level

Active participation of young people in different areas of the public sphere is an expression of youth's impact on the decisions concerning young people as citizens. Young people can be involved in the decision-making process at different stages and in different forms. The extent and depth of young people's involvement demonstrates the strength of their civic participation, which depends on a number of objective and subjective factors. Among the important determinants of young people's civic participation are their attitudes toward engaging in the shaping of their closest environment, such as school, neighbourhood, district, commune and local environment. In this context, it seems interesting to examine the viewpoint of local public and non-governmental institutions as important actors in the youth's environment, whose activities have a large impact on the current and future state of youth civic engagement.

The study of the representatives of the institutions referred to their experiences in cooperation with young people, which revealed both similarities and differences in the situation of the individual communes surveyed. Among the similarities is the fact that in all the municipalities young people often or very often want to have an impact on the issues that concern them and expect adults to help solve their problems, but frequently there is a lack of mutual understanding between young people and adults. In the opinion of the majority of respondents in all municipalities, young people are often willing to engage in

¹ Population. Size and Structure and Vital Statistics in Poland by Territorial Division in 2016 as of December 31, Statistical Information and Elaborations, Central Statistical Office, Warsaw 2017, <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/ludnosc/ludnosc/ludnosc-stan-i-struktura-oraz-ruch-naturalny-w-przekroju-terytorialnym-stan-w-dniu-31-12-2016-r-6.21.html>(accessed: 20 May 2019).

Protected by PDF Anti-Copy Free

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK

STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

cooperation for the [Upgrade of Vocational Training to Remove the Workforce](#) surveyed found it difficult to assess whether only youth seeking career benefits become involved. The distribution of the variable is shown in



SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUP NETWORK STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

Table 1 Structure of the sample representing institutions in Lithuania, Poland and Sweden (frequency, % of sample)

No	Variable	Scale	Lithuania					Poland			Sweden	Σ
			Telšiai	Dzierzgoń	Elbląg	Gdynia	Ilawa	Nowe Miasto Lubawskie	Hässelholm			
1.	Youth workers working with people aged	14–17 years	16 (7.5)	11 (5.2)	18 (8.5)	32 (15)	14 (6.6)	14 (6.6)	5 (2.3)	110 (51.6)		
		18-24 years	14 (6.6)	6 (2.8)	21 (9.9)	28 (13.1)	10 (4.7)	5 (2.3)	19 (8.9)	103 (48.4)		
2.	Gender	Female	12 (5.6)	9 (4.2)	22 (10.3)	37 (17.4)	15 (7)	10 (4.7)	13 (6.1)	118 (55)		
		Male	18 (8.5)	8 (3.8)	17 (8)	23 (10.8)	9 (4.2)	9 (4.2)	11 (5.2)	95 (45)		
3.	Respondent's status ²	local government representative ³	4 (1.9) ⁴	3 (1.4) ⁵	9 (4.2) ⁶	7 (3.3) ⁷	9(4.2) ⁸	7(3.3) ⁹	1 (0.5)	40 (18.8)		
		employee of the Municipal/Commune Office	3 (1.4) ¹⁰	2(0.9) ¹¹	4 (1.9) ¹²	3 (1.4) ¹³	5(2.3) ¹⁴	2 (0.9) ¹⁵	10 (4.7) ¹⁶	29 (13.5)		
		employee of a community centre	1 (0.5) ¹⁷	1 (0.5) ¹⁸	1 (0.5)	1 (0.5)	2(0.9) ¹⁹	0(0)	1 (0.5) ²⁰	7 (3.4)		
		employee of a social assistance centre	0 (0)	1 (0.5) ²¹	0 (0)	0 (0)	0(0)	1(0.5)	7 (3.3) ²²	9 (4.3)		
		employee of an educational institution (school/university/other institution)	15 (7) ²³	7 (3.3) ²⁴	25 (11.7) ²⁵	28 (13.1) ²⁶	11 (5.2) ²⁷	4 (1.9) ²⁸	3 (1.4) ²⁹	93 (43.6)		

² The total percentage was 109,5, as some of the respondents indicated several answers corresponding to their status.

³ A representative of local authorities other than an employee referred to in the institution questionnaire.

⁴ Position – 4 specialists, 2 of which were employees of the Municipal Office.

⁵ Position – 2 employees of the Municipal Office, Chairman of The City Council.

⁶ Position – 4 employees of the Municipal Office, 2 councillors, 1 non-response.

⁷ Position – 3 employees of the Municipal Office, 2 councillors, 2 non-responses.

⁸ Position – 5 employees of the Municipal Office, 3 councillors, 1 non-response.

⁹ Position – 2 employees of the Municipal Office, 2 councillors, Youth City Council Supervisor, President of the Youth City Council, 1 non-response.

¹⁰ Position – 2 specialists, 1 teacher.

¹¹ Position – inspector, deputy mayor.

¹² Position – project specialist, sub-inspector for secondary schools, sub-inspector, officer, NGO cooperation officer, 1 non-response.

¹³ Position – chief specialist and activity organiser working exclusively with young people, sub-inspector, 1 non-response.

¹⁴ Position – 3 managers, 1 inspector, 1 sub-inspector.

¹⁵ Position – manager, municipality secretary.

¹⁶ Position – 2 project managers, 2 coordinators, 2 project coordinators, 1 communication officer.

¹⁷ Position: director.

¹⁸ Position: manager.

¹⁹ Position: director.

²⁰ Position: operational manager.

²¹ Position – educator.

²² Position – 2 social workers, 2 officers for maintenance support for persons aged 18–29; 1 manager.

²³ Position – 5 teachers, 3 educationalists, 2 directors, 1 head of department, 1 non-formal education guide, 1 student self-government supervisor.

²⁴ Position – 4 teachers, 1 Youth Town Council Supervisor, 4 employees of educational institutions, including 3 teachers, 1 office worker, 1 non-response.

²⁵ Position – 20 teachers (including 2 head teachers, 2 deputy head teachers, 1 career counsellor), 1 school counsellor, 1 educator, 1 leader and representative of a religious institution, 2 non-responses.

²⁶ Position – 11 teachers, 3 lecturers, 3 psychologists, 2 education specialists, 1 educationalist, 1 educator, 1 specialist, head of Education Centre, 5 non-responses.

²⁷ Position – 5 teachers, 6 non-responses.

²⁸ Position – 1 head teacher, 1 youth council supervisor, 2 teachers

²⁹ Position – 2 head teachers, 1 teacher.

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUP NETWORK				STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17					
	employee of another public institution	15 (7) ³⁰	4(1)	1 (0.5) ³²	10 (4.7) ³³	1(0.5) ³⁴	1(0.5) ³⁵	1 (0.5) ³⁶	33 (15.6)
	NGO employee/activist	1 (0.5) ³⁷	2 (0)	5 (2.3) ³⁹	3 (1.4) ⁴⁰	1 (0.5) ⁴¹	6 (2.8) ⁴²	2 (0.9)	20 (9.3)
	representative of a religious institution	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.5) ⁴³	1 (0.5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (1)

Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and N

³⁰ Position – 2 directors, 2 chairpersons, 1 assistant, 1 member of the Lithuanian Riflemen’s Association, 1 project coordinator, 1 manager and trainer, 1 councillor, 1 specialist, 1 volunteer.

³¹ Position – Secretary of the Youth Town Council.

³² Position – administrative employee.

³³ Institution/Position – 4 museums (including Gdynia City Museum) / education specialist, promotion specialist, educator, 1 non-response; cultural institution employee / specialist and councillor; 3 libraries (including Municipal Public Library)/ 3 managers; MIR-PIB Gdynia Aquarium / education specialist.

³⁴ Institution/Position – tourist information / tourist information centre assistant.

³⁵ Institution/Position – Municipal Sports and Recreation Centre / Director.

³⁶ Position – 1 process manager in the culture and entertainment department.

³⁷ Position: specialist.

³⁸ Position – volunteer, member of the management board.

³⁹ Position – commandant, activity organiser, 1 non-response.

⁴⁰ Position – coordinator, representative of religious institution, 1 non-response.

⁴¹ Position – 1 non-response.

⁴² Position – 3 instructors, 1 attendant, 1 coach (“Drogowskazy” Foundation).

⁴³ Position – leader and employee of an educational institution.

Table 2 Experiences of respondents in cooperation with young people in Lithuania, Poland and Sweden (frequency, % of responses)

No.	Statement	Scale	Lithuania	Poland					Sweden	Σ
			Telšiai	Dzierzgoń	Elbląg	Gdynia	Iława	Nowe Miasto Lubawskie	Hässleholm	
1.	Young people want to have an impact on the issues that concern them ⁴⁴	Very rarely	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	1(0,5)	0(0)	0(0)	4(1,9)	5(2,3)
		Rarely	4(1,9)	2(0,9)	3(1,4)	7(3,3)	4(1,9)	1(0,5)	0(0)	21(9,9)
		Hard to say	1(0,5)	2(0,9)	4(1,9)	8(3,8)	3(1,4)	4(1,9)	3(1,4)	25(11,7)
		Often	20(9,4)	8(3,8)	21(9,9)	20(9,4)	12(5,7)	6(2,8)	8(3,8)	95(44,6)
2.	Young people are willing to work together for their immediate environment, i.e. school, neighbourhood, district, municipality, local environment	Very rarely	0(0)	0(0)	1(0,5)	3(1,4)	0(0)	0(0)	1(0,5)	5(2,3)
		Rarely	3(1,4)	1(0,5)	9(4,2)	20(9,4)	2(0,9)	4(1,9)	5(2,3)	44(20,7)
		Hard to say	7(3,3)	7(3,3)	7(3,3)	24(11,3)	12(5,7)	4(1,9)	8(3,8)	69(32,4)
		Often	15(7)	7(3,3)	16(7,5)	13(6,1)	9(4,2)	7(3,3)	9(4,2)	76(35,7)
3.	Young people expect adults to help solve their problems ⁴⁵	Very rarely	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	1(0,5)	0(0)	0(0)	3(1,4)	4(1,9)
		Rarely	6(2,9)	4(1,9)	3(1,4)	9(4,3)	1(0,5)	1(0,5)	5(2,4)	29(13,6)
		Hard to say	4(1,9)	1(0,5)	10(4,8)	8(3,8)	5(2,4)	3(1,4)	6(2,9)	37(17,4)
		Often	15(7,2)	8(3,8)	20(9,6)	25(12)	11(5,3)	7(3,3)	9(4,3)	95(44,6)
4.	Only those who want to achieve career benefits become involved ⁴⁶	Very rarely	1(0,5)	0(0)	5(2,4)	2(0,9)	0(0)	7(3,3)	1(0,5)	16(7,5)
		Rarely	6(2,9)	4(1,9)	6(2,9)	7(3,3)	4(1,9)	0(0)	7(3,3)	34(16,0)
		Hard to say	15(7,1)	8(3,8)	15(7,1)	20(9,5)	10(4,7)	7(3,3)	11(5,2)	86(40,4)
		Often	6(2,9)	4(1,9)	10(4,7)	23(10,9)	7(3,3)	3(1,4)	4(1,9)	57(26,8)
5.	There is no mutual understanding between young people and adults	Very rarely	1(0,5)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	1(0,5)	8(3,8)	1(0,5)	11(5,2)
		Rarely	7(3,3)	2(0,9)	13(6,1)	6(2,8)	3(1,4)	5(2,4)	7(3,3)	43(20,2)
		Hard to say	2(0,9)	4(1,9)	15(7)	20(9,4)	6(2,8)	3(1,4)	7(3,3)	57(26,8)
		Often	20(9,4)	8(3,8)	6(2,8)	22(10,3)	12(5,6)	2(0,9)	9(4,2)	79(37,1)
		Very often	0(0)	3(1,4)	5(2,4)	12(5,6)	2(0,9)	1(0,5)	0(0)	23(10,8)

Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and November 2019

⁴⁴ In Dzierzgoń – 1 non-response.

⁴⁵ In Dzierzgoń, Elbląg, Gdynia, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie: 1 non-response each.

⁴⁶ In Nowe Miasto Lubawskie – 1 non-response.

According to the largest number of institution representatives from the Lithuanian municipality of Telšiai and three Polish municipalities: Dzierzgoń, Elbląg i Iława, young people want to have an impact on the immediate environment that concern them. A majority of the persons surveyed in Gdynia, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie and Hässleholm observed this attitude among young people. This represents the potential for developing youth civic participation in the three countries. The willingness of young people to engage in cooperation for their immediate environment is of vital importance in this respect. In this respect, in the municipalities of Elbląg, Telšiai, Hässleholm and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie the predominant opinion was that young people are often willing to become involved in such efforts. In Dzierzgoń the number of participants who often observed such attitude among youth was the same as the number of respondents unable to give a clear assessment of that matter. “Difficult to say” was the answer most frequently selected by participants from Gdynia and Iława.

A majority of those surveyed in the three countries also found it difficult to determine whether only those who want to improve their career prospects become involved. The exception in this case were the respondents from Gdynia, according to whom such situation occurs frequently.

According to the majority of respondents from Lithuania, Poland and Sweden, young people often expect adults to help solve their problems. This creates the space for developing cooperation with young people and stimulating their engagement in public life. However, this must be based on mutual understanding and trust between young people and adults, which, according to a majority of respondents, is a common problem in Lithuanian, Polish and Swedish realities. Two Polish municipalities were the exceptions here: Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, where the problem of mistrust is very rare, and Elbląg, where most of the respondents chose the option “difficult to say”.

Confrontation of the above conclusions indicating that young people in most of the surveyed municipalities often or very often want to have an impact on the immediate environment and are willing to engage in cooperation with the assessment of the level of youth involvement in the process of civic participation, does not allow for an overly optimistic interpretation. In all the municipalities surveyed, a majority of participants rated the level of youth activity as average. This demands a search for the causes of the gap

Protected by PDF Anti-Copy Free

4th Regular Call, South Baltic, Programme 2014–2020

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK

STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

between the will of young people to participate in public affairs followed by effective measures aimed at enhancing their civic participation. The distribution of the variable is shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Assessment of the level of involvement in the process of civic participation in Lithuania, Poland and Sweden (frequency, % of responses)

Scale	Lithuania	Poland ⁴⁷					Sweden	Σ
	Telšiai	Dzierzgoń	Elbląg	Gdynia	Ława	Nowe Miasto Lubawskie	Hässleholm	
Very high	1(0,5)	1(0,5)	1(0,5)	1(0,5)	1(0,5)	0(0)	0(0)	5(2,3)
High	9(4,3)	3(1,4)	8(3,8)	3(1,4)	2(1)	6(2,8)	2(1)	33(15,5)
Medium	14(6,7)	9(4,3)	17(8)	30(14,3)	14(6,7)	8(3,8)	15(7,1)	107(50,2)
Low	5(2,4)	3(1,4)	11(5,2)	19(9)	6(2,8)	3(1,4)	6(2,8)	53(24,9)
Very low	1(0,5)	0(0)	1(0,5)	7(3,3)	1(0,5)	1(0,5)	1(0,5)	12(5,6)

Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and November 2019

Although the involvement of young people in public affairs in all surveyed municipalities was rated as inadequate, the differences between municipalities indicate that the problem with the level of civic participation is more acute in Gdynia than in Elbląg or Telšiai. One-way analysis of variance shows that the municipality represented differentiates the perceived degree of youth involvement in the process of civic participation. The analysis revealed a significant intergroup effect, $F(2, 126) = 5.75$; $p < 0.01$. It was found that the assessments given by Gdynia residents were significantly lower than those obtained in Elbląg ($p < 0.1$) or Telsiai ($p < 0.01$). One-way analysis of variance demonstrated that the type of institution represented survey participants did not differentiate the assessment of the degree of youth involvement in the process of civic participation in municipalities (no significant intergroup effect, $F(2, 161) = 1.12$; ns). Similarly, the results of Student's *t*-test revealed that the gender of the institutions' representatives did not differentiate the assessment of the degree of youth involvement in the process of civic participation in municipalities (no significant inter-gender differences in this respect, $t(184) = 0.5$; ns).

The issue of youth involvement in the process of civic participation is linked to the assessment of youth's impact on the decisions taken in their municipalities in various matters. Analysis demonstrated that in most cases, the capacity of young people to

⁴⁷ In Dzierzgoń 2 non-responses; in Elbląg and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie 1 non-response each.

Protected by PDF Anti-Copy Free

4th Regular Call, South Baltic, Programme 2014–2020

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK

STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

influence local authorities' decisions on very low municipalities. The distribution of the variable is shown in Table 4.

The area where young people had the most impact was the distribution of resources from the municipality budget. In three municipalities (Gdynia, Elbląg and Telšiai) the most frequent response was that young people had very little influence on that matter. In the case of Dzierzgoń, the same number of responses pointed to very low and low impact, and in Iława, in addition to the aforementioned two, an equal number of respondents rated the impact as medium. Young people from Nowe Miasto Lubawskie also had little influence on the decisions on funds allocation in the municipality. Only in the case of Hässleholm most of those surveyed considered young people's impact to be medium in that respect. Municipal spatial planning is another area where young people participated to a very small or small extent in the decision-making process, according to most respondents from all the municipalities. A very small degree of influence was predominant in Gdynia, Elbląg, Iława and Dzierzgoń, and a small degree – in Telšiai and Hässleholm. The same numbers of respondents from Nowe Miasto Lubawskie considered that young people had a very small, small and medium degree of influence on such decisions. The views of the dominant group of respondents were distributed in a similar way with respect to the impact of young people on public transport decisions in the municipality. According to the majority of those surveyed from Elbląg, Gdynia and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, that influence was very small, whereas participants from Telšiai, Hässleholm and Dzierzgoń considered it to be small. Only the respondents from Iława concluded that young people had a medium impact on shaping the municipal public transport solutions. The impact of young people on the development of municipal development strategies was also critically rated by a majority of respondents. The participants from Elbląg, Telšiai, Hässleholm and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie found the degree of youth impact on local government decisions to be small, while in Gdynia the most frequent opinion was that youth's impact was very small. Only the respondents from Iława considered it to be medium. Youth participation in social assistance decisions was similarly rated by a majority of those surveyed in the individual municipalities: very low in Elbląg, Iława and Dzierzgoń, low in Nowe Miasto Lubawskie and medium in Gdynia, Telšiai and Hässleholm.

The influence of young people on the preparation and implementation of international projects in the municipalities was slightly better perceived by a majority of respondents. According to them, young people from Gdynia, Elbląg, Telšiai, Iława and Hässleholm were allowed a medium degree of leverage in decisions on issues related to international projects. Small and very small participation was observed by a majority of respondents in Nowe Miasto Lubawskie and Dzierzgoń. As to the extent of young people's influence on cultural initiatives in their municipalities, a majority of respondents from Gdynia, Elbląg, Telšiai, Iława and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie considered it to be medium, and those from Hässleholm and Dzierzgoń described it as large. According to the prevailing responses received from participants from Dzierzgoń, Hässleholm and Telšiai, young people from these three municipalities were offered a medium degree of leverage on the selection of their representatives in the local authorities. In Iława, the answers corresponding to the average and high strength of the variable were balanced. Only the respondents in Nowe Miasto Lubawskie considered that the impact of young people was large. On the other hand, young people in Gdynia had a very small influence on the election of their representatives in the local government. In the opinion of the participants from Elbląg, youth's impact on the choice of their representatives in the local authorities was small. This seems to be more problematic than in other municipalities, as a majority of respondents could have obtained the relevant knowledge during their cooperation with young people aged 18–24, i.e. having the right to vote.

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUP NETWORK **STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17**

Table 4 Extent of young people's influence on decisions taken in individual matters by municipalities in Lithuania, Poland and Sweden (frequency, % of responses)

No.	Statement	Scale	Lithuania	Poland					Sweden	Σ
			Telšiai	Dzierzgoń	Elbląg	Gdynia	Hawa	Nowe Miasto Lubawskie	Hässleholm	
1.	Election of youth representatives in local authorities	Very small	4(1.9)	1(0.5)	5(2.4)	19(9.0)	2(0.9)	1(0.5)	7(3.4)	39(18.3)
		Small	11(5.2)	3(1.4)	13(6.1)	17(8.0)	4(1.9)	3(1.4)	8(3.8)	59(27.7)
		Medium	12(5.7)	7(3.3)	9(4.2)	16(7.5)	7(3.3)	6(2.8)	9(4.2)	66(31.0)
		Large	2(0.9)	3(1.4)	11(5.2)	4(1.9)	7(3.3)	7(3.3)	0(0.0)	34(16.0)
		Very large	1(0.5)	3(1.4)	1(0.5)	3(1.4)	4(1.9)	2(0.9)	0(0.0)	14(6.6)
2.	Election of youth representatives at school/university	Very small	1(0.4)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	4(1.8)	1(0.4)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	6(2.8)
		Small	2(0.9)	3(1.4)	1(0.4)	8(3.7)	1(0.4)	1(0.4)	6(2.8)	22(10.3)
		Medium	9(4.2)	3(1.4)	9(4.2)	16(7.5)	5(2.3)	4(1.8)	10(4.7)	56(26.3)
		Large	11(5.2)	7(3.3)	16(7.5)	21(9.9)	11(5.2)	8(3.8)	6(2.8)	80(37.6)
		Very large	7(3.3)	4(1.8)	13(6.1)	10(4.7)	5(2.3)	6(2.8)	2(0.9)	47(22.1)
3.	Preparation of strategic documents	Very small	9(4.3)	0(0.0)	10(4.7)	27(12.8)	4(1.9)	1(0.5)	4(1.8)	56(26.3)
		Small	13(6.2)	4(1.9)	19(9.0)	10(4.7)	5(2.4)	9(4.3)	8(3.8)	70(32.9)
		Medium	7(3.3)	7(3.3)	7(3.3)	19(9.0)	8(3.8)	6(2.8)	3(1.4)	61(28.6)
		Large	1(0.5)	6(2.8)	3(1.4)	3(1.4)	4(1.9)	1(0.5)	2(0.9)	20(9.4)
		Very large	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	2(0.9)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	4(1.9)
4.	Educational issues in the municipality	Very small	7(3.3)	2(0.9)	11(5.1)	23(10.8)	5(2.3)	0(0.0)	1(0.4)	49(23.0)
		Small	14(6.6)	5(2.4)	16(7.5)	12(5.6)	10(4.7)	4(1.8)	11(5.2)	72(33.8)
		Medium	8(3.7)	6(2.8)	10(4.7)	21(9.9)	7(3.3)	11(5.1)	9(4.2)	72(33.8)
		Large	1(0.4)	4(1.9)	2(0.9)	3(1.4)	2(0.9)	3(1.4)	1(1.4)	18(8.5)
		Very large	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(0.4)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)
5.	Culture initiatives in the municipality	Very small	3(1.4)	1(0.5)	5(2.4)	8(3.8)	2(0.9)	0(0.0)	3(1.4)	22(10.3)
		Small	10(4.7)	2(0.9)	9(4.3)	12(5.7)	1(0.5)	4(1.9)	2(0.9)	40(18.8)
		Medium	13(6.2)	5(2.4)	18(8.5)	23(10.9)	11(5.2)	8(3.8)	8(3.8)	86(40.4)
		Large	4(1.9)	7(3.3)	6(2.8)	14(6.6)	9(4.3)	6(2.9)	11(5.2)	57(26.8)
		Very large	0(0.0)	2(0.9)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	6(2.8)
6.	Public transport in the municipality	Very small	8(3.8)	5(2.4)	20(9.5)	27(12.8)	6(2.8)	8(3.8)	3(1.4)	78(36.6)
		Small	16(7.6)	6(2.8)	12(5.7)	15(7.1)	7(3.3)	3(1.4)	10(4.8)	69(32.4)
		Medium	5(2.4)	4(1.9)	4(1.9)	13(6.2)	10(4.7)	6(2.9)	7(3.3)	49(23.0)
		Large	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	3(1.4)	2(0.9)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	10(4.7)
		Very large	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	2(0.9)	0(0.0)	2(0.9)	2(0.9)	5(2.3)
7.	Spatial	Very small	4(1.9)	7(3.1)	17(8.1)	21(10.0)	8(3.8)	6(2.8)	5(2.4)	68(31.9)

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK **STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17**

		Small	14(6.6)	4(1.9)	16(7.6)	18(8.5)	7(3.3)	6(2.8)	9(4.3)	74(34.7)	
	development in the municipality	Medium	10(4.7)	5(2.4)	5(2.4)	14(6.6)	8(3.8)	6(2.8)	8(3.8)	56(26.3)	
		Large	2(1.0)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	5(2.4)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	2(1.0)	13(6.1)	
		Very large	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
		Very small	4(1.9)	6(2.8)	16(7.6)	14(6.6)	9(4.3)	5(2.4)	4(1.9)	58(27.2)	
8.	Social assistance in the municipality	Small	9(4.3)	2(0.9)	9(4.3)	10(4.7)	6(2.8)	9(4.3)	7(3.3)	52(24.4)	
		Medium	13(6.2)	5(2.4)	10(4.8)	19(9.0)	5(2.4)	4(1.9)	11(5.2)	67(31.5)	
		Large	4(1.9)	2(0.9)	3(1.4)	15(7.1)	4(1.9)	0(0.0)	2(0.9)	31(6.1)	
		Very large	0(0.0)	2(0.9)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	3(1.4)	
9.	Allocation of funds from municipal budget	Very small	14(6.5)	6(2.9)	23(10.9)	33(15.7)	7(3.3)	2(0.9)	6(2.9)	91(42.7)	
		Small	12(5.7)	6(2.9)	10(4.8)	10(4.8)	7(3.3)	8(3.8)	7(3.3)	60(28.2)	
		Medium	4(1.9)	4(1.9)	3(1.4)	11(5.2)	7(3.3)	7(3.3)	8(3.8)	44(20.7)	
		Large	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	2(0.9)	5(2.4)	2(0.9)	0(0.0)	3(1.4)	13(6.1)	
10.	Preparation and implementation of international projects	Very large	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	3(1.4)	
		Very small	3(1.4)	6(2.9)	11(5.2)	12(5.7)	4(1.9)	4(1.9)	3(1.4)	43(20.2)	
		Small	12(5.7)	5(2.4)	8(3.8)	16(7.6)	7(3.3)	6(2.9)	6(2.9)	60(28.2)	
		Medium	13(6.2)	2(0.9)	12(5.7)	20(9.5)	10(4.7)	4(1.9)	8(3.8)	69(32.4)	
		Large	2(0.9)	4(1.9)	7(3.3)	11(5.2)	3(1.4)	2(0.9)	7(3.3)	36(16.9)	
		Very large	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	2(0.9)	0(0.0)	3(1.4)	
11	Other – specify:	2(0.9) ⁴⁸	3(1.4) ⁴⁹	6(2.8) ⁵⁰	8(3.8) ⁵¹	2(0.9)	1(0.5) ⁵²	2(0.9) ⁵³	24(11.3)		

Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and November 2019

⁴⁸ There were developed two answers by respondents: “Theoretically, young people may realize that they could or even would like to contribute to change, but neither the school nor the representatives of other governmental institutions teach them and do not encourage them to express their views, positions.” and “Issues of youth employment organization”.

⁴⁹ There was developed one answer by respondent: “sprawy kulturalne”.

⁵⁰ There were developed two answers by respondents: „Kwestie kulturalne i turystyczne w regionie” and „Inne działania charytatywne”.

⁵¹ There was developed one answer by respondent: „Mogliby mieć wpływ, ale sami się nie angażują”.

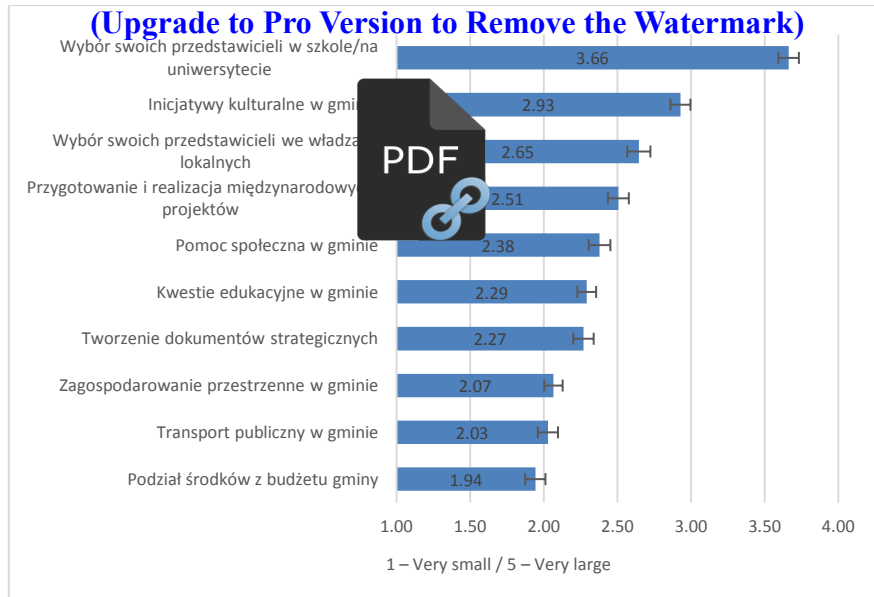
⁵² There was developed one answer by respondent: „zajęcia sportowe”.

⁵³ There was developed one answer by respondent: “Unfortunately many Young people dont need to participate because they have everything they need.”

The only area where young people can have a significant impact on their environment is school/university. According to most respondents from nearly all the municipalities (with the exception of H¹), young people has a significant influence on the election of their representatives in those institutions. However, the ability of young people to influence educational decisions at municipal level has proved to be considerably lower. In this respect, young people had the least influence on the decisions of local authorities in Gdynia, as stated by a majority of respondents. The extent of youth influence in that area was small in four municipalities: Elbląg, Telšiai, Hässleholm and Iława. A medium level of youth impact was indicated by the largest share of participants in Dzierzgoń and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie.

The above conclusions regarding the impact of young people on various decisions taken in their municipalities have also been confirmed by the variance analysis method. One-way analysis of variance demonstrated significant differences between the answers $F(7, 1425)=86.98; p<0.001, \eta=0.29$. The differences between the answers to the individual test questions were 29% in total. The results of analysis showed that, in the opinion of institution representatives, young people had the greatest influence on the election of their representatives at school/university and the least influence on the allocation of resources from the municipal budget. The results are shown in Figure 1.

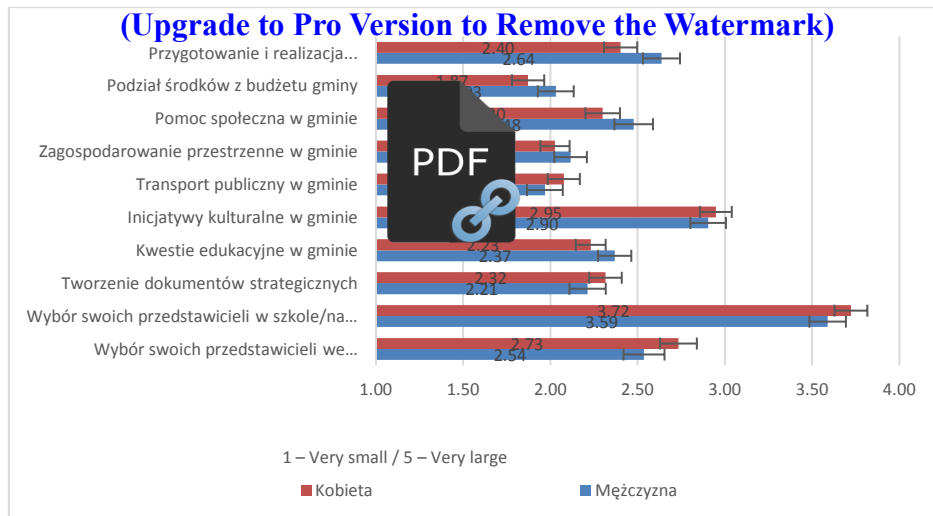
Figure 1. Differences between respondents' answers relating to their assessment of the extent of young people's influence on the decisions taken on the individual matters in the municipality (the error bars in the chart show standard errors)



Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and November 2019

In order to verify the gender-related differences in the answers to the individual test items, a two-way analysis of variance was performed. It showed a significant (at a statistical trend level) effect of interaction between the two factors, $F(7, 1423)=1.95$; $p<0.1$, $\eta=0.01$, however, multiple comparisons analysis performed with the Bonferroni correction did not reveal any significant gender-relating differences in the responses given to the individual test items. The interaction feature explains 1% of the variance of the dependent variable. The results are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Assessment of the extent of young people's influence on the decisions taken on the individual matters in the municipality vs respondents' gender (the error bars in the chart show standard errors)



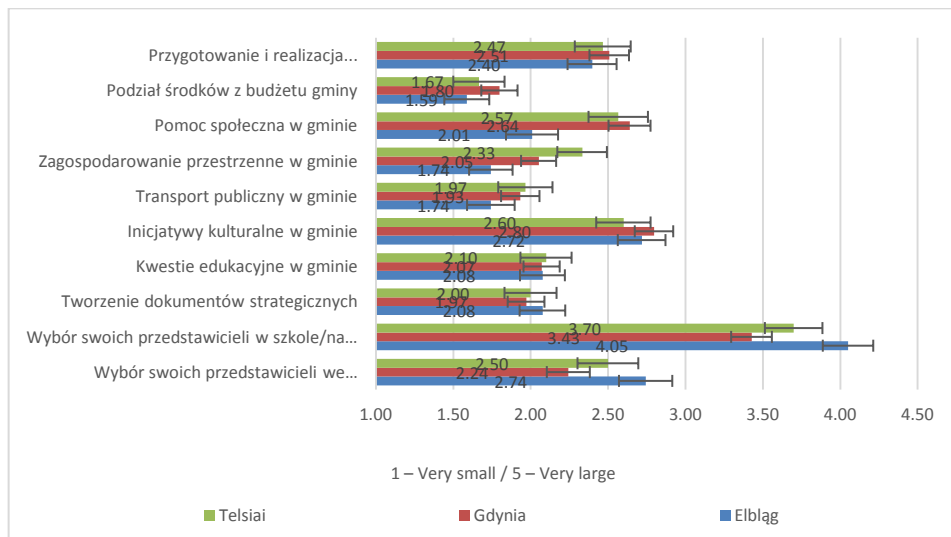
Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and November 2019

It was determined on the basis of two-way analysis of variance that the municipality represented by those surveyed differentiated the assessment of the impact of young people on the decisions taken in the municipality in relation to various matters. The analysis demonstrated a significant interaction effect, $F(14, 855) = 3.11$; $p < 0.001$; $\eta = 0.05$. The interaction feature explains 5% of the variance of the dependent variable. In four test items, participants' responses differed significantly with respect to the municipality represented. This was the case in questions about the decisions concerning:

- social assistance in the municipality, where the representatives of the Elbląg institutions gave a significantly lower assessment of youth decision-making power than the respondents from Gdynia ($p < 0.05$) and Telšiai ($p < 0.1$);
- spatial development in the municipality, where the participants from Telšiai gave a significantly higher assessment of youth decision-making power than the respondents from Elbląg ($p < 0.05$);
- election of youth representatives at school/university, where the representatives of the Elbląg institutions gave the highest ratings of the level of youth decision-making power, with slightly lower ratings from the respondents from Telšiai and the lowest ratings from the respondents from Gdynia;
- election of youth representatives in the local authorities, where the representatives of Telšiai institutions gave a significantly higher assessment of youth decision-making power than the respondents from Gdynia ($p < 0.1$).

Thus, in the opinion of the representatives of Elbląg institutions, the local youth have a significantly lower impact on spatial planning decisions taken by the municipality compared to young people in Gdynia and Telsiai. On the other hand, in respect of the choice of their representatives in local authorities and at school/university, young people from Elbląg have a greater decision-making power than their peers in Gdynia and Telsiai. The results are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Assessment of the extent of young people’s influence on the decisions taken on the individual matters in the municipality vs municipality represented by the respondents (the error bars in the chart show standard errors)



Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and November 2019

In the remaining six cases, the representatives of institutions from different municipalities made similar assessments of the level of the decision-making power of youth decision in the individual matters. This means that opinions expressed as to the impact of young people on the allocation of resources from the municipal budget, development of strategies, educational issues in the municipality, public transport in the municipality, cultural initiatives in the municipality, and the preparation and implementation of international projects were independent of the municipality represented by the respondents.

The assessment of young people's participation in the decision-making process in the municipalities investigated varied according to the institution represented. The results of

Protected by PDF Anti-Copy Free

4th Regular Call, South Baltic, Programme 2014–2020

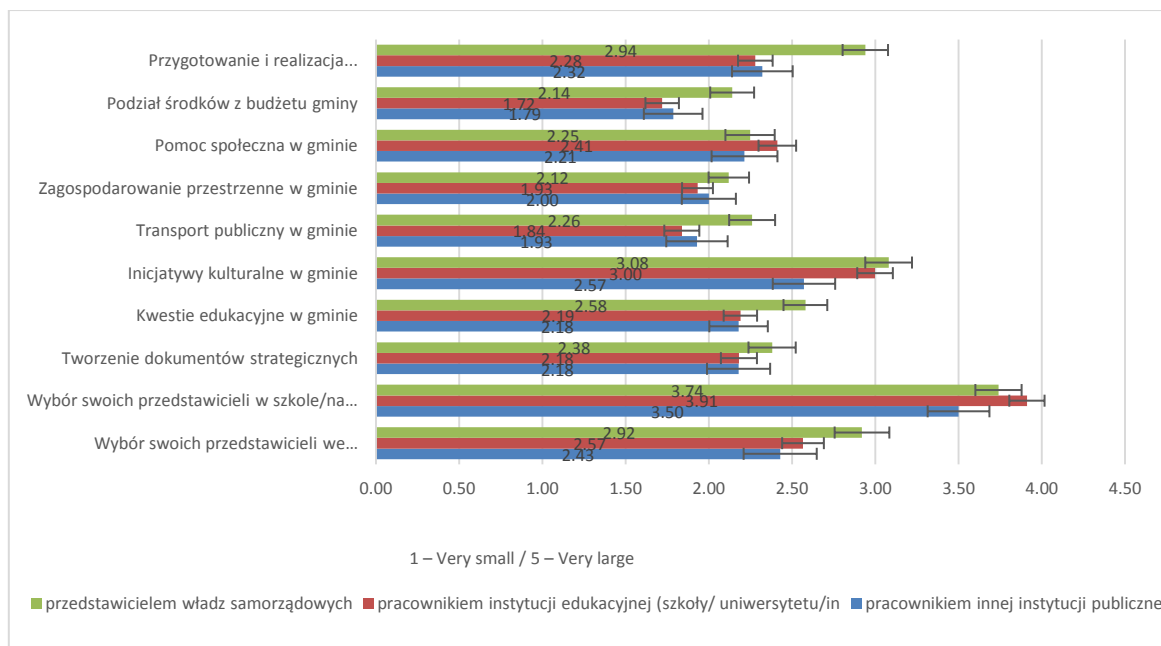
SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK

STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

two-way analysis (Upgraded Analysis) in the Region of W. (13,103) = 2.06; p < 0.05;

$\eta=0.03$. The interaction feature explains 20% of the variance of the dependent variable. The differences were observed in half of the choice answers in that question. The local government representatives gave a significantly higher rating of youth's decision-making power than the employees of educational institutions in the following areas: distribution of resources from the municipal budget (p<0.05), public transport in the municipality (p<0.05), educational issues in the municipality (p<0.1). The representatives of local authorities also assessed significantly more positively the impact exerted by young people on the decisions relating to the preparation and implementation of international projects compared to the employees of educational institutions (p<0.01) and of other public institutions (p<0.05). Similarly, the impact of young people on cultural initiatives in the municipality was rated significantly higher by the representatives of the local authorities than by members of staff of other public institutions (p<0.1). In other cases, representatives of different types of institutions provided similar assessments concerning young people's capacity to influence decisions taken at municipal level. The results are shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Assessment of the extent of young people's influence on the decisions taken on the individual matters in the municipality vs institution represented by the respondents (the error bars in the chart show standard errors)



Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and November 2019

In conclusion, according to the majority of the institutions, the level of youth involvement in civic participation projects in the municipalities was average. There is a gap between the diagnosed state and the existing potential. However, this does not mean that the situation and possibilities are equal in all the municipalities. According to a majority of respondents, young people from Gdynia, Hässleholm and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie were more keen to have an influence on the issues that concern them than their peers in Dzierzgoń, Elbląg, Iława and Telšiai. It seems that the potential for enhancing young people's civic participation in the first three municipalities is slightly greater than in the remaining ones. However, in Gdynia, Iława and Dzierzgoń the respondents' opinions as to young people's willingness to engage in cooperation for the closest environment were much more cautious than in Hässleholm and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie. From the point of view of the institutional capacity to stimulate civic participation of young people, an important space for cooperation arises from the fact that young people expect adults to help them solve their problems, as confirmed by the majority of respondents in all municipalities. A sine qua non condition should be to overcome the lack of mutual understanding between young people and adults, which was indicated by a dominant group of respondents from almost all municipalities (except Elbląg) as one of the negative experiences in their work with young people.

The unsatisfactory level of youth civic participation in the selected municipalities of the three Southern Baltic region countries is also suggested by the institutions' opinions as to the impact of young people on the decisions taken in the municipality. Overall, in the opinion of institution representatives, young people had the most influence on the election of their representatives at school/university and the least influence on the allocation of resources from the municipal budget. One exception was the municipality of Hässleholm, where young people had an average impact on such issues. Generally, the choice of youth representatives at school/university is the only area where young people had a significant influence in almost all municipalities. In almost all municipalities, young people had very little or no leverage in areas such as spatial development, public transport, creation of municipal development strategies, social assistance and education. They had a slightly greater impact on decisions concerning the preparation and implementation of international projects in the municipality, cultural initiatives in the municipality and election of their

representatives in the municipalities. With respect to geographical location, there were statistically significant differences in the responses of respondents depending on the municipality represented by those surveyed. In the opinion of the representatives of Elbląg institutions, the local youth have a significantly lower impact on decisions in the area of social assistance compared to young people in Gdynia and on spatial planning decisions – compared to youth in Telšiai. On the other hand, when it comes to choosing their representatives in local authorities and at school/university, young people from Elbląg had a greater decision-making power than their peers in Gdynia and Telšiai.

These conclusions encourage the search for effective measures to meet the needs and expectations of young people, public institutions and NGOs wishing to develop participatory decision-making processes at local level. An important consideration here is the need to take into account the specific circumstances of each municipality, as many problems and their solutions are not of universal nature.

Barriers to youth civic participation

A key aspect of strengthening young people's civic participation is to identify the barriers whose elimination will help to unlock the civil society potential. Factors that have a negative impact from the point of view of institutions' employees also suggest the choice of methods for reducing or eliminating such barriers. In this area, it is also possible to identify similarities and differences between the municipalities of Lithuania, Poland and Sweden participating in the survey.

The prevailing opinions of representatives of the institutional environment of young people in the Lithuanian municipality of Telšiai, the Polish municipalities of Dzierzgoń, Elbląg, Gdynia, Iława and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, and the Swedish municipality of Hässleholm revealed a medium level of youth civic participation. There may be many reasons for this phenomenon, and the studies carried out as part of the SB YCGN project show that there are certain universal barriers as well as those specific to each municipality. The distribution of the variable is shown in Table 5.

Taking into account the geographical distribution of responses, the most important factors that restrict youth involvement in matters concerning their immediate environment may include:

- lack of willingness on the part of politicians to engage youth in public affairs (prevailing response in Gdynia, Dzierzgoń and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie);
- adults' disregarding the opinion of young people in the decision-making process (prevailing response in Gdynia, the case of Dzierzgoń, equal number of responses corresponding to very high and high strength of the variable);
- excluding young people from co-deciding on public issues (prevailing response in Gdynia and Hässleholm);
- young people's doubts that their participation could change anything (prevailing response in Iława and Dzierzgoń);
- young people's lack of knowledge and skills to participate fully in the decision-making process (most frequent response in Gdynia);
- underrating the knowledge and experience of youth by decision makers (prevailing response in Gdynia);
- lack of formal opportunities for young people to participate in decisions on public matters (prevailing response in Elbląg),
- lack of clear information about the opportunities for youth involvement in local affairs (prevailing response in Gdynia and Elbląg);
- lack of adults who know how to work and communicate with young people and motivate them to engage in public affairs (prevailing answer in Dzierzgoń).

It is noteworthy that the restrictions identified as having the greatest impact on young people's participation processes were indicated as dominant almost exclusively by the Polish respondents, the exception being Hässleholm – with respect to one of the issues. This is due to the fact that, according to employees of public and non-governmental institutions, the most and the strongest barriers to civic participation of young people were chiefly found in Polish municipalities in the following order: Gdynia, Elbląg, Dzierzgoń and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie.

According to a majority of respondents in Elbląg, Telšiai and Dzierzgoń, a strongly negative impact on young people's involvement in their immediate surroundings arises from their disinterest in local life; in Iława the numbers of answers corresponding to the average and high strength of the variable were balanced here. By contrast, a majority of those surveyed in Gdynia, Hässleholm and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie considered the impact of this factor as medium. The prevailing responses in Gdynia, Elbląg, Telšiai, Hässleholm,

and Nowe Miasto (Upgrading, Point Version to Strongly in the Watermark) of young people's doubts that their involvement could change anything. Lack of knowledge and skills among young people was rated as having a strong negative impact by the respondents from Elbląg and Telšiai, and as having a medium impact by those surveyed in Iława, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie and Hässleholm. In the opinion of a majority of participants from Telšiai, Hässleholm and Dzierzgoń, the lack of formal opportunities for young people to participate in public decision-making is a major barrier. In Iława, the answers corresponding to the average and high strength of this factor were equally frequent. That issue was also seen as a restriction of medium importance by a majority of those surveyed in Gdynia and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie. A major part of participants from Elbląg, Telšiai and Dzierzgoń considered exclusion of youth from co-deciding on public issues to be a very restrictive factor. According to the respondents from Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, that factor has a medium impact on impeding the involvement of young people in the affairs of their immediate surroundings. In Elbląg, Hässleholm and Iława, disregarding the opinions of young people in the decision-making process was considered a strongly adverse factor in the opinion of a major part of respondents. In Telšiai, the same number of respondents indicated the strong and medium impact of that item, whereas in Nowe Miasto Lubawskie a substantial majority indicated the medium strength of that feature. A majority of those surveyed in Elbląg, Telšiai, Iława and Dzierzgoń also recognized the underestimating of the knowledge and experience of young people by decision makers as a major barrier. The respondents from Nowe Miasto Lubawskie showed no clear preference and their opinions were divided equally between the strong and medium effect of that factor. A major group of those surveyed in Hässleholm indicated that the impact of that barrier on the involvement of young people in public life was medium. The prevailing opinion in Gdynia, Telšiai and Elbląg was that the lack of adults who know how to work and communicate with young people and motivate them to engage in public affairs has a strong negative impact. The opinions of those surveyed in Nowe Miasto Lubawskie were divided equally between the strong and medium effect of that factor, whereas in Hässleholm a majority pointed to its medium impact. A major barrier in Telšiai and Iława was the lack of willingness on the part of politicians to engage youth in public affairs; in Hässleholm the respondents considered that issue to have a medium negative effect. The strongly limiting effect of the lack of clear information about the opportunities for youth involvement in local affairs on the

engagement of young people in the issue of raising the water level was identified by a majority of those surveyed in Itawa, Telšiai and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie. According to the respondents in Dzierzgoń, it had an average impact. It is difficult to assess the significance of that issue in Hässleholm due to the lack of a prevailing response – the same number of participants indicated the strong and low impact of the factor. Broadly understood competences of institutions as well as youth are a key element of civic education. Various types of schools, in particular universities, although they appreciate the importance of this aspect of their role, in practice it is not always easy for them to unleash the potential of civic involvement of young people, which is increasingly recognized as an important feature of healthy democratic communities and cultures. The impact of educational practices and student learning on local communities seems to be one of the best ways to shape youth civic participation in the long run⁵⁴.

The issue of relatively lowest importance as a barrier to youth involvement in the affairs of their immediate environment are the bans imposed by their parents or guardians. In the opinion of a majority of respondents from Telšiai and Hässleholm, it had a medium impact on the involvement of young people in local affairs, and according to the respondents from all the Polish municipalities its influence was small or very small. However, it is worth to pay attention to the issues of relations of children and young people with parents and grandparents, which are particularly important for their civic participation. The family plays a much more important role in developing a willingness to engage in civil society than is commonly seen⁵⁵. This means that youth civic education should start in the family and be conducted in cooperation with the institution with family members of young people.

⁵⁴ See: Handbook of research on civic engagement in youth, Lonnie R. Sherrod, Judith Torney-Purta and Constance A. Flanagan (Eds), 2010 Hoboken, NJ, John Wiley & Sons, pp. 706; D. Watson, R. Hollister, S. E. Stroud, E. Babcock, The engaged university: international perspectives on civic engagement, Routledge, New York 2011, pp. 282.

⁵⁵ E. Muddiman, C. Taylor, S. Power, K. Moles, Young people, family relationships and civic participation, Journal of Civil Society 2019, Volume 15, Issue 1, p. 82-98.

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUP NETWORK STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

Table 5 Barriers to youth involvement in matters concerning their immediate environment in Lithuania, Poland and Sweden (frequency, % of responses)

No.	Statement	Scale	Lithuania	Poland					Sweden	Σ
			Telšiai	Dzierzgoń	Elbląg	Gdynia	ława	Nowe Miasto Lubawskie	Hässelholm	
1.	Young people's lack of interest in local life ⁵⁶	Very low impact	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	2(0.9)	2(0.9)	0(0.0)	4(1.9)	10(4.7)
		Low impact	2(0.9)	3(1.4)	4(1.9)	10(4.7)	5(2.4)	3(1.4)	7(3.3)	34(16.0)
		Medium impact	7(3.3)	2(0.9)	11(5.2)	19(9.0)	7(3.3)	7(3.3)	10(4.7)	63(29.6)
		Strong impact	15(7.1)	11(5.2)	15(7.1)	15(7.1)	7(3.3)	6(2.8)	2(0.9)	71(33.3)
2.	Lack of conviction that their involvement would change anything ⁵⁷	Very strong impact	5(2.4)	1(0.5)	8(3.8)	14(6.6)	3(1.4)	2(0.9)	1(0.5)	35(16.4)
		Very low impact	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	4(1.9)
		Low impact	1(0.5)	3(1.4)	2(0.9)	5(2.4)	2(0.9)	4(1.9)	6(2.8)	23(10.8)
		Medium impact	9(4.3)	3(1.4)	5(2.4)	14(6.6)	6(2.8)	5(2.4)	7(3.3)	49(23.0)
3.	Young people's lack of knowledge and skills ⁵⁸	Strong impact	15(7.1)	5(2.4)	17(8.1)	22(10.3)	7(3.3)	6(2.8)	8(3.8)	80(37.6)
		Very strong impact	4(1.9)	5(2.4)	15(7.1)	18(8.5)	9(4.3)	2(0.9)	2(0.9)	56(26.3)
		Very low impact	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	5(2.4)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	2(0.9)	9(4.2)
		Low impact	2(0.9)	6(2.8)	11(5.2)	9(4.3)	3(1.4)	2(0.9)	9(4.3)	42(19.7)
4.	Banning young people from engagement in local affairs by their parents/guardians	Medium impact	11(5.2)	7(3.3)	11(5.2)	15(7.1)	11(5.2)	11(5.2)	11(5.2)	77(36.2)
		Strong impact	14(6.6)	4(1.9)	16(7.6)	15(7.1)	7(3.3)	4(1.9)	2(0.9)	62(29.1)
		Very strong impact	2(0.9)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	16(7.6)	2(0.9)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	22(10.3)
		Very low impact	2(0.9)	6(2.8)	13(6.2)	12(5.6)	4(1.9)	6(2.8)	2(0.9)	45(21.1)
5.	Lack of formal possibility for young people to participate in decisions on public matters (e.g. because of an age limit)	Low impact	2(0.9)	4(1.9)	10(4.7)	24(11.3)	12(5.6)	6(2.8)	6(2.8)	64(30.0)
		Strong impact	11(5.2)	3(1.4)	7(3.3)	11(5.2)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	2(0.9)	36(16.9)
		Very strong impact	2(0.9)	3(1.4)	2(0.9)	4(1.9)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	15(7.0)
		Very low impact	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	2(0.9)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	2(0.9)	9(4.2)
6.	Excluding young people from co-deciding on public issues	Low impact	4(1.9)	3(1.4)	4(1.9)	9(4.3)	3(1.4)	5(2.4)	2(0.9)	30(14.1)
		Medium impact	10(4.7)	3(1.4)	13(6.2)	20(9.4)	8(3.8)	9(4.3)	6(2.8)	69(32.4)
		Strong impact	12(5.6)	8(3.8)	6(2.8)	12(5.7)	8(3.8)	2(0.9)	9(4.3)	57(26.8)
		Very strong impact	3(1.4)	2(0.9)	14(6.6)	18(8.5)	4(1.9)	1(0.5)	5(2.4)	48(22.5)
		Very low impact	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	3(1.4)	1(0.5)	2(0.9)	2(0.9)	0(0.0)	10(4.7)
		Low impact	4(1.9)	1(0.5)	2(0.9)	7(3.3)	5(2.4)	3(1.4)	6(2.8)	28(13.1)
		Medium impact	9(4.3)	3(1.4)	9(4.3)	15(7.1)	4(1.9)	7(3.3)	6(2.8)	53(24.9)
		Strong impact	13(6.2)	10(4.7)	16(7.6)	18(8.5)	9(4.3)	4(1.9)	3(1.4)	73(34.3)

⁵⁶ In Dzierzgoń – 1 non-response.

⁵⁷ In Dzierzgoń – 1 non-response.

⁵⁸ In Dzierzgoń – 1 non-response.

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUP NETWORK				STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17						
7.	Adults' disregarding the opinions of young people in the decision-making process ⁵⁹	Very strong impact	3(1.4)	2(0.0)	9(4.3)	19(9.0)	4(1.9)	2(0.9)	7(3.3)	47(22.1)
		Very low impact	2(0.9)	2(0.9)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	8(3.8)
		Low impact	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	5(2.4)	4(1.9)	4(1.9)	3(1.4)	5(2.4)	22(10.3)
		Medium impact	11(5.2)	1(0.5)	5(2.4)	14(6.6)	5(2.4)	7(3.3)	4(1.9)	47(22.1)
		Strong impact	11(5.2)	7(3.3)	15(7.1)	15(7.1)	10(4.7)	4(1.9)	12(5.7)	74(34.7)
8.	Underrating the knowledge and experience of youth by decision makers ⁶⁰	Very strong impact	5(2.4)	7(3.3)	13(6.2)	26(12.3)	5(2.4)	2(0.9)	2(0.9)	61(28.6)
		Very low impact	2(0.9)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	2(0.9)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	6(2.8)
		Low impact	2(0.9)	0(0.0)	3(1.4)	3(1.4)	3(1.4)	4(1.9)	2(0.9)	17(8.0)
		Medium impact	6(2.8)	2(0.9)	7(3.3)	12(5.7)	7(3.3)	5(2.4)	8(3.8)	47(22.1)
		Strong impact	15(7.1)	8(3.8)	19(9.0)	20(9.4)	10(4.7)	5(2.4)	7(3.3)	84(39.4)
9.	Lack of adults who know how to work and communicate with young people and motivate them to engage in public affairs ⁶¹	Very strong impact	5(2.4)	6(2.8)	9(4.3)	22(10.4)	4(1.9)	3(1.4)	5(2.4)	55(25.8)
		Very low impact	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	2(0.9)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	5(2.3)
		Low impact	0(0.0)	2(0.9)	6(2.8)	9(4.3)	5(2.4)	3(1.4)	3(1.4)	28(13.1)
		Medium impact	3(1.4)	6(2.8)	5(2.4)	14(6.6)	8(3.8)	6(2.8)	9(4.3)	51(23.9)
		Strong impact	19(9.0)	3(1.4)	16(7.6)	21(9.9)	7(3.3)	6(2.8)	8(3.8)	80(37.6)
10.	Lack of willingness on the part of politicians to engage youth in public affairs ⁶²	Very strong impact	7(3.3)	6(2.8)	10(4.7)	13(6.2)	3(1.4)	3(1.4)	3(1.4)	46(21.6)
		Very low impact	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	2(0.9)	0(0.0)	2(0.9)	2(0.9)	7(3.3)
		Low impact	1(0.5)	3(1.4)	2(0.9)	0(0.0)	5(2.4)	3(1.4)	2(0.9)	16(7.5)
		Medium impact	6(2.8)	5(2.4)	3(1.4)	11(5.2)	3(1.4)	4(1.9)	9(4.3)	41(19.2)
		Strong impact	13(6.2)	3(1.4)	15(7.1)	21(9.9)	10(4.7)	4(1.9)	6(2.8)	72(33.8)
11.	Lack of clear information about the opportunities for youth involvement in local affairs ⁶³	Very strong impact	9(4.3)	6(2.8)	19(9.0)	25(10.9)	6(2.8)	5(2.4)	5(2.4)	76(35.7)
		Very low impact	2(0.9)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	4(1.9)	7(3.3)
		Low impact	1(0.5)	2(0.9)	2(0.9)	2(0.9)	4(1.9)	3(1.4)	6(2.8)	20(9.4)
		Medium impact	7(3.3)	7(3.3)	5(2.4)	11(5.2)	3(1.4)	3(1.4)	5(2.4)	41(19.2)
		Strong impact	13(6.2)	5(2.4)	14(7.1)	14(7.1)	14(7.1)	7(3.3)	6(2.8)	73(24.3)
12.	Other – specify:	0(0.0)	1(0.5) ⁶⁴	3(1.4) ⁶⁵	11(5.2) ₆₆	1(0.5)	1(0.5) ⁶⁷	0(0)	17(8)	

Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and November 2019

⁵⁹ In Nowe Miasto Lubawskie – 1 non-response.

⁶⁰ In Gdynia and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie: 1 non-response each.

⁶¹ In Elbląg, Gdynia and Iława: 1 non-response each.

⁶² In Gdynia – 1 non-response.

⁶³ In Elbląg, Gdynia, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie: 1 non-response each.

⁶⁴ "lack of this tradition".

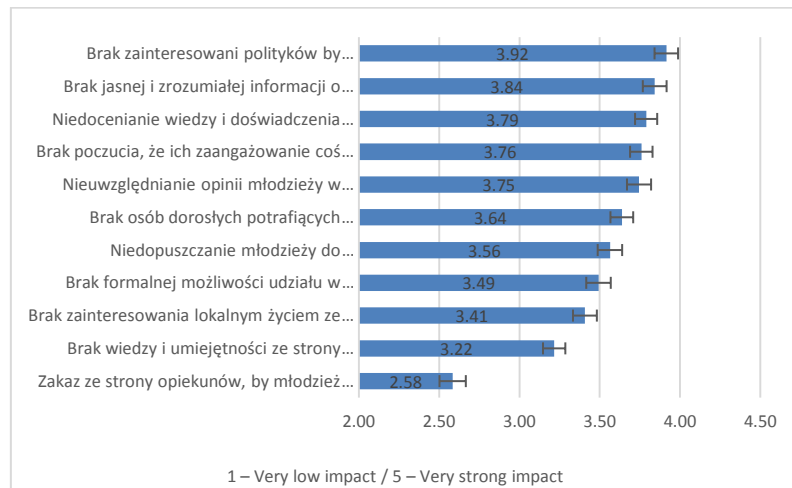
⁶⁵ "Upbringing in the spirit and a sense of influence over decisions, politics - low flight Policy", „Experiences - instrumental use of young people to sanction already made decisions", 1 no answer..

⁶⁶ Out of 11 answers, only 4 were developed: "lack of time", "general abnegation of young people", "lack of proper advertising of activities in which young people can do something", "Focus on themselves appropriate for this age and time spent at the university, at school".

⁶⁷ "People on sport".

One-way analysis of variance confirmed the validity of the above conclusions and showed that there were significant differences between the responses $F(7, 1549)=37.67$; $p<0.001$, $\eta=0.15$. The differences between the answers to the individual test items amounted to 15% in total. According to the survey participants, the factor with the most significant limiting impact on young people's involvement in their immediate environment is politicians' reluctance to involve young people in public matters, and that with the lowest impact is the ban imposed by parents or guardians. The results are shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Assessment of the extent of young people's influence on the decisions taken on the individual matters in the municipality vs institution represented by the respondents (the error bars in the chart show standard errors)



Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and November 2019

The gender of institution representatives does not differentiate their assessment of the impact of the various factors limiting the involvement of young people in the affairs of their immediate surroundings, as a two-way analysis of variance showed no significant interaction effect between the two factors, $F(7,1535) = 1.64$; ns. The lack of significant interaction was also revealed with respect to membership of a specific type of institution and the assessment of the impact of the individual barriers on youth involvement in their immediate environment $F(14,1164) = 1.39$; ns. However, a significant interaction effect, $F(14, 891) = 2.93$; $p < 0.001$; $\eta = 0.05$ was identified via two-way analysis of variance in the case of the municipality represented and the opinion on the individual barriers to youth civic participation. The interaction feature explains 5% of the variance of the dependent

variable. As to the (Upgrade of Pre-Information to Remove the Watermark) for young people to engage in local affairs, representatives of Gdynia institutions rated the impact of that factor significantly higher than the respondents from Telšiai ($p < 0.1$). With regard to banning young people from engagement in local affairs by their parents/guardians, representatives of the institutions from Telšiai placed significantly more emphasis on the negative impact of that factor than those from Elbląg ($p < 0.01$) or Gdynia ($p < 0.05$). In the remaining cases, the municipality represented by the respondents did not differentiate their views: they made similar assessments of the limiting impact of those factors. This means that the lack of appropriate and accessible information on young people's opportunities to engage in local affairs is a stronger restriction for young people from Gdynia than from Telšiai, but the Lithuanian respondents, compared to those in Gdynia and Elbląg, considered that the bans on the part of parents/guardians constituted a greater barrier for young people.

In conclusion, it should be noted that a majority of the barriers to civic participation, as indicated by representatives of Lithuanian, Polish and Swedish public and non-governmental institutions, are present in all the municipalities concerned and their impact is perceived quite similarly by all respondents. The study revealed that most representatives of public and non-governmental institutions consider the following factors to be the major barriers to youth involvement in the affairs of their immediate environment:

- lack of willingness on the part of politicians to engage youth in public affairs – to the greatest extent in Gdynia, Elbląg, Dzierzgoń and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie;
- adults' disregarding the opinions of young people in the decision-making process – to the greatest extent in Gdynia;
- excluding young people from co-deciding on public issues – to the greatest extent in Gdynia and Hässleholm;
- young people's doubts that their participation could change anything – to the greatest extent in Iława and Dzierzgoń;
- young people's lack of knowledge and skills to participate fully in the decision-making process – to the greatest extent in Gdynia;
- underrating the knowledge and experience of youth by decision makers – to the greatest extent in Gdynia;

- lack of formal opportunities for young people to participate in decisions on public matters – to the greatest extent in Elbląg;
- lack of clear information about opportunities for youth involvement in local affairs – to the greatest extent in Elbląg and Elbląg;
- lack of adults who know how to work and communicate with young people and motivate them to engage in public affairs – to the greatest extent in Dzierzgoń.

It might be worth noting that the restrictions identified as having the greatest impact on young people's participation processes were highlighted almost exclusively by the Polish respondents, the exception being Hässleholm – in respect of one of the issues. The most numerous and strongest barriers were identified in the Polish municipalities in the following order: Gdynia, Elbląg, Dzierzgoń and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie. This suggests that employees of public and non-governmental institutions, particularly in Poland and Sweden, should undertake intensive and large-scale measures to reduce or eliminate these barriers in order to enhance the civic participation of young people in the long term.

In the opinion of those surveyed in all the municipalities, the factor with the most significant limiting impact on young people's involvement in their immediate environment is politicians' reluctance to involve young people in public matters, and that with the lowest impact are bans imposed by parents or guardians. It is also worth considering such negative factors as young people's belief that engaging in public affairs is pointless, disregarding young people's opinions in the decision-making process, keeping youth from co-deciding on public affairs or the decision makers' reluctance to involve young people in public matters. They are particularly significant for civic participation of both youth and adults. Therefore, in addition to other major barriers, these issues should be addressed and minimised by decision-makers in the first place and with greatest determination.

Local institutions' needs and effective instruments for youth civic participation enhancement

The situation in each of the municipalities surveyed is unique in terms of scope, form and barriers to civic participation. Although many problems could be described as rather universal, there are noticeable differences in the experience and capacity of the institutions in respect of stimulating the civic participation of young people.

The survey conducted as part of the SB YCGN project showed that all the municipalities concerned had considered aspects that determined their ability to increase civic participation of young people in Gdynia, Poland and Sweden. The distribution of the variable is shown in Table 6. The vast majority of the categories analysed were considered to be rather necessary or very necessary. The key need and at the same time one of the most serious issues in the Polish municipalities (Gdynia, Elbląg, Iława, Dzierzgoń, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie) and in the Lithuanian municipality (Telšiai) as indicated by a majority of respondents was finding a good leader who would be able to motivate and involve young people effectively. One exception was Hässleholm, where the respondents found that aspect to be indifferent. A major part of those surveyed in Gdynia, Elbląg, Iława and Dzierzgoń identified greater openness of decision-makers to involve young people in public matters as one of the most important needs. In Telšiai, Hässleholm and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, most of the respondents stated that such an attitude was rather necessary in their municipality in order to positively influence the participatory nature of decision-making processes. According to a majority of those surveyed in Gdynia, Elbląg and Dzierzgoń, there was a pressing need to exchange experiences with other institutions and organisations working with young people. The prevailing opinion in Telšiai, Hässleholm, Iława and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie was that it is a rather necessary instrument for engaging young people in decision-making. This aspect also entails a very strong need for increasing the competences of those responsible for cooperation with young people in Gdynia and Elbląg and, respectively a strong need in Telšiai, Hässleholm, Iława and Dzierzgoń. In Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, the opinions of the respondents were equally distributed between the options “rather necessary” and “neither necessary nor unnecessary”. A majority of participants from Gdynia and Elbląg also considered it very necessary to develop formal cooperation with youth policy institutions, including those in the Baltic Sea region, whereas the respondents from other municipalities perceived that instrument as rather necessary.

Table 6 Local institutions' needs in respect of stimulating the participation of young people in Lithuania, Poland and Sweden (frequency, % of responses)

No.	Statement	Scale	Lithuania	Poland					Sweden	Σ
			Telšiai	Dzierzgoń	Elbląg	Gdynia	Iława	Nowe Miasto Lubawskie	Hässleholm	
1.	Increasing funds for activities engaging young people in public decision-making	Quite unnecessary	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	6(2.8)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	4(1.9)	11 (5,2)
		Rather unnecessary	2(0.9)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	7(3.2)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	3(1.4)	14 (6,6)
		Neither necessary nor unnecessary	6(2.8)	2(0.9)	6(2.8)	13(6.1)	4(1.9)	3(1.4)	4(1.9)	38 (17,8)
		Rather necessary	14(6.6)	8(3.8)	15(7)	22(10.3)	13(6.1)	13(6.1)	10(4.7)	95 (44,6)
		Very necessary	8(3.8)	7(3.2)	17(8)	12(5.6)	7(3.2)	0(0.0)	3(1.4)	55 (25,8)
2.	Improving the competences of adults responsible for cooperation with young people	Quite unnecessary	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	4 (1,9)
		Rather unnecessary	1(0.5)	2(0.9)	3(1.4)	3(1.4)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	3(1.4)	12 (5,6)
		Neither necessary nor unnecessary	4(1.9)	1(0.5)	3(1.4)	10(4.7)	2(0.9)	7(3.2)	4(1.9)	31 (14,6)
		Rather necessary	19(8.9)	10(4.7)	13(6.1)	21(9.9)	12(5.6)	7(3.2)	14(0)	96 (45,1)
		Very necessary	6(2.8)	4(1.9)	19(8.9)	25(11.8)	10(4.7)	3(1.4)	2(0.9)	70 (32,9)
3.	Opportunity to exchange experiences with other institutions and organisations working with youth	Quite unnecessary	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	2(0.9)	3 (1,4)
		Rather unnecessary	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	2(0.9)	5 (2,3)
		Neither necessary nor unnecessary	3(1.4)	2(0.9)	6(2.8)	10(4.7)	1(0.5)	3(1.4)	5(2.4)	30 (14,1)
		Rather necessary	15(7)	7(3.2)	15(7)	21(9.9)	12(5.6)	9(4.3)	13(6.1)	92 (43,2)
		Very necessary	11(5.2)	8(3.8)	17(8)	28(13.1)	11(5.2)	5(2.4)	2(0.9)	83 (39)
4.	Greater openness of decision-makers to include young people in public decision-making ⁶⁸	Quite unnecessary	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	1 (0,5)
		Rather unnecessary	2(0.9)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	5 (2,3)
		Neither necessary nor unnecessary	2(0.9)	2(0.9)	5(2.4)	8(3.8)	0(0.0)	6(2.8)	4(1.9)	27 (12,7)
		Rather necessary	14(6.6)	5(2.4)	13(6.1)	15(7)	10(4.7)	9(4.3)	12(5.6)	78 (36,6)

⁶⁸ In Gdynia – 1 non-response.

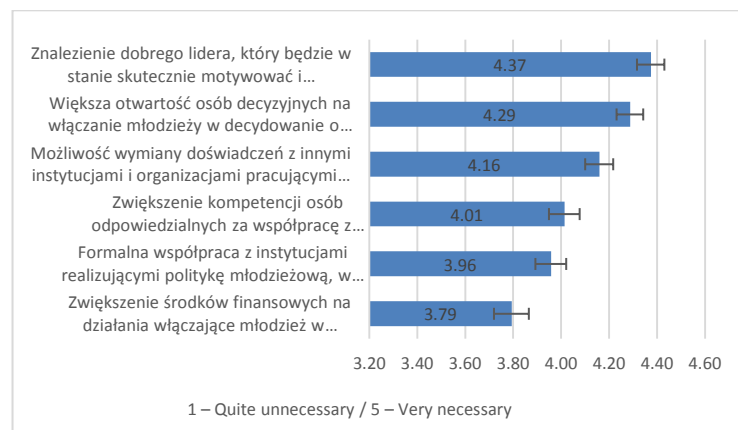
SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUP NETWORK					STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17					
		Very necessary	12(5.6)	10(4.7)	20(9.4)	35(16.5)	14(6.6)	2(0.9)	7(3.2)	101 (47,4)
5.	Formal cooperation with institutions that implement youth policies, also in the Baltic Sea Region	Quite unnecessary	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	2(0.9)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	2(0.9)	5 (2,3)
		Rather unnecessary	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	3(1.4)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	2(0.9)	9 (4,2)
		Neither necessary nor unnecessary	3(1.4)	3(1.4)	5(2.4)	14(6.6)	3(1.4)	6(2.8)	7(3.2)	41 (19,2)
		Rather necessary	20(9.4)	7(3.2)	15(7)	17(8)	15(7)	7(3.2)	12(5.6)	96 (43,7)
		Very necessary	6(2.8)	6(2.8)	18(8.5)	24(11.3)	6(2.8)	3(1.4)	1(0.5)	65 (30,5)
6.	Finding a good leader capable of motivating and engaging young people effectively	Quite unnecessary	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	2 (0,9)
		Rather unnecessary	3(1.4)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	2(0.9)	0(0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	5 (2,3)
		Neither necessary nor unnecessary	2(0.9)	1(0.5)	3(1.4)	5(2.4)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	11(5.2)	22 (10,3)
		Rather necessary	11(5.2)	6(2.8)	12(5.6)	14(6.6)	10(4.7)	6(2.8)	6(2.8)	65 (30,5)
		Very necessary	14(6.6)	10(4.7)	24(11.3)	38(18)	14(6.6)	11(5.2)	5(2.4)	117 (54,9)
7.	Other – specify	2(0.9) ⁶⁹	1(0.5)	4(1.9) ⁷⁰	10(4.7) ₇₁	1(0.5)	1(0.5) ⁷²	2(0.9) ⁷³	21(9.9)	

Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and November 2019

⁶⁹ "leaders are enough. It is more important to educate and have more than one leader, but to attract as many students as possible to innovate and convince them that they can contribute to change"; "Depoliticisation of NGO leaders is much needed".
⁷⁰ Out of 4 answers, 3 were developed: "Appreciation by municipal authorities, adults who cooperate with young people, are able and willing to do it", "do not disturb, encourage promotion", "work on the issue of participation in early school years", "greater, strategic openness of the institution in providing space, space, on its own terms - building young people ability to achieve or change or do something and then an attempt to integrate in other processes. ".
⁷¹ Out of 10 answers, 3 were developed: "finding leaders among the youth themselves and training these leaders", "start with civic education from an early age", "can go to international exchanges and learn how to live abroad, work there ... learn ".
⁷² "building a swimming pool".
⁷³ „Better working conditions among adult professionals. If they work load where more reasonable they would be more likely to find ways to engage young pe ople”; “More financial resources for activities involving young people in international youth issues”

The need to increase the funds for engaging youth in decision-making concerning public affairs was confirmed by participants from all the municipalities surveyed. It was considered to be highly necessary by majority of respondents Elbląg, while in other municipalities an increase in expenditure was seen as rather necessary in order to increase the civic participation of young people. This was also confirmed by one-factor analysis of variance, which revealed significant differences between the answers $F(4, 946)=20.78$; $p<0.001$, $\eta=0.09$. The least urgent need was to increase the financial resources for activities involving young people in public decision-making, whereas the most pressing one was finding a good leader able to motivate and engage young people effectively. The differences between the answers to the individual test questions were 9% in total. The results are shown in Figure 6.

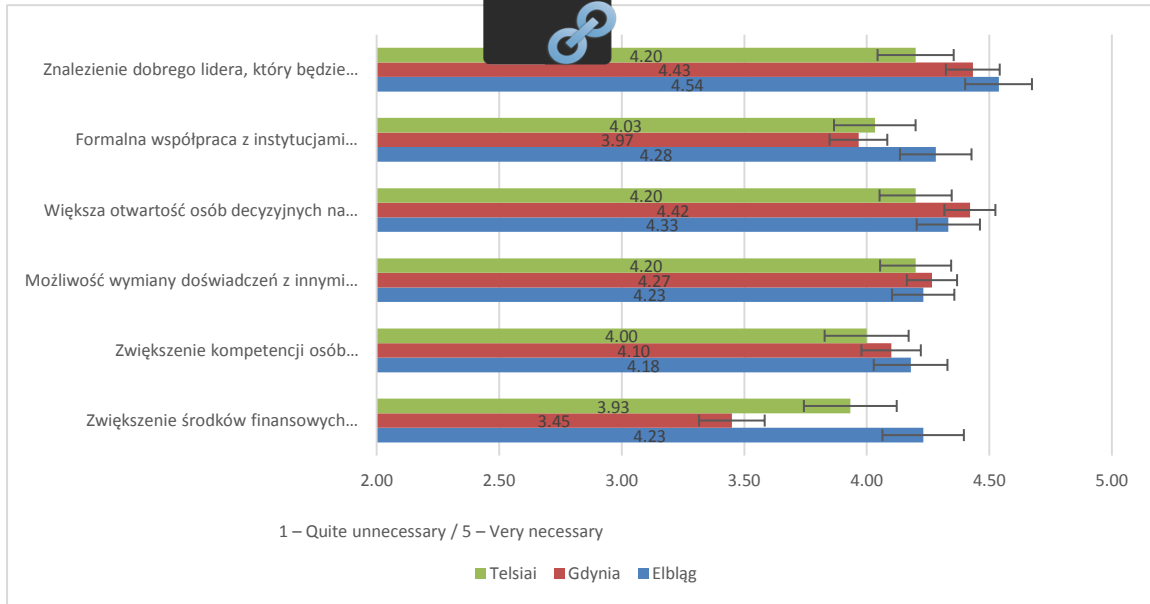
Figure 6. Local institutions' needs in respect of stimulating the civic participation of young people in Lithuania, Poland and Sweden (the error bars in the graph show standard errors)



Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and November 2019

A two-factor analysis also confirms the existence of a significant interaction effect between the opinions of the subjects and the animals represented, $F(9, 541) = 2.83$; $p < 0.01$; $\eta=0.04$. The interaction feature explains 4% of the variance of the dependent variable. The representatives of Elbląg institutions gave augmentation of financial resources for activities involving young people in deciding on public affairs a much higher priority than their counterparts in Gdynia ($p<0.01$). No other significant inter-group differences were observed in respect of the remaining test items.

Figure 7. Local institutions’ needs in response of stimulating the civic participation of young people vs the municipality represented (bars in the graph show standard errors)



Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and November 2019

In the light of two-way analysis of variance, neither gender ($F(4.943) = 0.68$; ns) nor membership of a specific type of institution ($F(9.691) = 1.26$; ns) differentiates the assessment of factors that increase civic participation of young people.

Improving the competences of those responsible for cooperation with young people was identified by a major group of respondents as “rather necessary” in 5 municipalities and as “very necessary” in 2 municipalities. As a follow-up, the staff of public and non-governmental institutions were inquired about the additional knowledge and skills that would facilitate their cooperation with young people with the aim of engaging youth in public affairs. The study revealed that a majority of respondents in Lithuania, Poland and Sweden alike selected the enhancement of knowledge and skills in the area of psychology, sociology and pedagogy. Most of the participants from Gdynia, Telšiai and Iława reported the need for psychological knowledge, whereas interest in sociology was declared by a majority of those surveyed from Elbląg, Hässleholm, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie and Dzierzgoń. Pedagogical issues were the least frequently mentioned in all responses, which is presumably due to the training received by youth workers in this area. However, a few respondents from each municipality pointed to some existing competence gaps. The

Protected by PDF Anti-Copy Free

4th Regular Call, South Baltic, Programme 2014–2020

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK

STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

personnel of Lithuanian institutions, for example, lack the knowledge of civic education and practical skills in that area, whereas teachers complain about insufficient knowledge of the principles of functioning of NGOs. In Dzierzgoń and Elbląg, representatives of the institutions additionally pointed to the need to improve their legal knowledge and coaching skills. In Sweden, there was a need for knowledge on how to motivate and inspire young people, as well as for better knowledge of the social media, including effective channels for reaching to and communicating with young people. The respondents from Nowe Miasto Lubawskie reported only the need concerning sports activities. Gdynia declared the most extensive requirements concerning the improvement of skills of representatives of the institutional environment of young people. This included additional knowledge in the field of politics, sociology, economics and philosophy. The respondents also pointed to the shortage of time to develop the forms of civic education outside school and insufficiency of additional remuneration for these responsibilities. The distribution of the variable is shown in Table 7.

Table 7 Additional knowledge and skills of institution representatives that would facilitate cooperation with young people with the aim of engaging youth in public affairs in Lithuania, Poland and Sweden (frequency, % of responses)

Area of knowledge/skills	Lithuania	Poland					Sweden	Σ
	Telšiai	Dzierzgoń	Elbląg	Gdynia	Iława	Nowe Miasto Lubawskie	Hässleholm	
Pedagogy	14(6.6)	6(2.8)	9(4.2)	18(8.5)	6(2.8)	13(6.1)	14(6.6)	80 (37.6)
Psychology	21(9.9)	6(2.8)	19(8.9)	28(13.1)	13(6.1)	13(6.1)	8(3.8)	108 (50.7)
Sociology	16(7.5)	8(3.8)	26(12.2)	27(12.7)	12(5.6)	15(7)	15(7)	120 (56.3)
Other:	1(0.5) ⁷⁴	2(0.9) ⁷⁵	2(0.9) ⁷⁶	10(4.7) ⁷⁷	1(0.5)	1(0.5) ⁷⁸	1(0.5) ⁷⁹	17 (8.0)

Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and November 2019

⁷⁴ There was developed one answer by respondent: "Both theoretical civic education knowledge and practical skills are lacking. Teachers are not familiar with the principles of non-governmental organizations".


⁷⁵ There were developed two answers by respondents: "law" and "coaching".

⁷⁶ There were developed two answers by respondents: "law" and "coaching".

⁷⁷ There were developed following answers by respondents: 4 answers regarding political science and sociology ("political science", "regarding political structures", "in the field of politics and activities of the commune, what we are allowed, in which we can decide", "political science, knowledge about society"); 2 answers regarding Economics ("lectures about enterprise", "economics, business") 1 answer on "philosophy", 1 answer on "being a couch", 1 answer "I don't need something like that", 1 answer "not so much knowledge as time at work for the kind of activity for which I will receive additional remuneration", 1 answer "more time at work to develop activities outside the curriculum, it is currently impossible".

⁷⁸ 1 answer "sports".

⁷⁹ There were developed two answers: „Knowledge of how to inspire youth” and “increased knowledge of social media and through which channels to reach young people”.

Another issue investigated was the evaluation of the effectiveness of selected forms of stimulating young people's civic participation in Lithuania, Poland and Sweden. The distribution of the variable is shown in . In general, a majority of respondents from the three countries considered the forms examined as effective and very effective. These top grades were awarded to the following initiatives:

- promotion of youth civic participation via the Internet;
- informing of youth civic participation opportunities in the media;
- creation of youth councils in municipalities;
- organisation of “round tables” e.g. by public institutions;
- the development of cooperation networks between young people at local level;
- the development of cooperation networks between young people at cross-border level;
- opportunity for young people to comment on draft decisions of local authorities;
- opportunity for young people to comment on draft decisions of school authorities;

The municipality was not a differentiating factor in the assessment of effectiveness of the different efforts to increase the involvement of young people in the affairs of their own environment, as two-way analysis of variance revealed no significant interaction between the two factors, $F(17,1052) = 1.22$; ns. However, examination of the prevailing responses discloses certain differences in opinion across municipalities, due to specific local constraints and needs. Most of the respondents from Gdynia, Elbląg, Telšiai, Hässleholm, Iława and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie found that enabling young people to comment on draft decisions of school authorities and local authorities was an effective method of stimulating civic participation; according to those surveyed in Dzierzgoń these were the most effective ways in that respect. In the opinion of a majority of respondents from Elbląg, Telšiai, Hässleholm, Iława and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, young people can also be effectively influenced by media information about the existing opportunities for civic participation and by developing youth cooperation in networks at local level, which, according to the respondents in Gdynia and Dzierzgoń, are very powerful instruments. A majority of participants from Elbląg, Telšiai, Hässleholm, Iława and Dzierzgoń also highly rated the effectiveness of developing cooperation between young people via cross-border networks, while most of the respondents from Gdynia and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie gave it

Protected by PDF Anti-Copy Free

4th Regular Call, South Baltic, Programme 2014–2020

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK

STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

a very important (Upgrade to Provision to Remind the Water people's) civic participation may be promoted, most of the people surveyed in Gdynia, Elbląg, Iława and Dzierzgoń gave the highest ratings to Internet-activities. In Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, the respondents' opinions were equally divided between a high and very high effectiveness of online promotion, and the participants in Telšiai and Hässleholm considered these measures to be effective. The views of promotion of civic participation by youth leaders in their own environment were somewhat different. In Gdynia, Elbląg and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie it was considered to be a very effective way of stimulating the involvement of young people in public affairs, in Iława, Telšiai and Dzierzgoń was that such an instrument was effective, and in Hässleholm a majority of the respondents deemed such a promotion formula to be of medium importance. A major part of the respondents from Gdynia, Elbląg⁸⁰, Iława, Dzierzgoń and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie found that an effective tool for informing, coaching and stimulating youth civic participation could be youth meetings with representatives of NGOs. The opportunity to work with experienced representatives of the third sector would make young people more willing and more likely to participate in public life. According to a majority of respondents from Hässleholm, that tool was moderately effective.

⁸⁰ In Elbląg, the responses were equally divided between the effective and very effective option.

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUP NETWORK **STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17**

Table 8 Effectiveness of various forms of impact on increasing civic participation in Lithuania, Poland and Sweden (frequency, % of responses)

No.	Statement	Scale	Lithuania	Poland					Sweden	Σ
			Telšiai	Dzierzgoń	Elbląg	Gdynia	Ilawa	Nowe Miasto Lubawskie	Hässleholm	
1.	Politicians' meetings with youth ⁸¹	Very ineffective	2(1)	1(0.5)	6(2.9)	5(2.4)	0(0)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	16(7.5)
		Ineffective	4(1.9)	5(2.4)	9(4.3)	13(6.2)	3(1.4)	8(3.8)	5(2.4)	47(22.1)
		Moderately effective	15(7)	3(1.4)	5(2.4)	21(9.9)	5(2.4)	1(0.5)	7(3.4)	57(26.8)
		Effective	7(3.4)	7(3.4)	10(4.7)	10(4.7)	12(5.7)	6(2.8)	5(2.4)	57(26.8)
		Very effective	2(1)	2(1)	8(3.8)	11(5.2)	4(1.9)	2(0.9)	6(3.8)	35(16.4)
2.	Meetings of officials with youth at schools/universities	Very ineffective	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	4(1.9)	8(3.8)	0(0.0)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	16(7.5)
		Ineffective	3(1.4)	7(3.8)	8(3.8)	11(5.2)	1(0.5)	4(1.9)	5(2.4)	39(18.3)
		Moderately effective	14(6.6)	4(1.9)	6(2.9)	20(9.4)	7(3.4)	4(1.9)	6(2.9)	61(28.6)
		Effective	9(4.3)	1(0.5)	13(6.2)	14(6.6)	12(5.7)	6(2.8)	7(3.4)	62(29.1)
		Very effective	3(1.4)	5(2.4)	8(3.8)	7(3.4)	4(1.9)	3(1.5)	5(2.4)	35(16.4)
3.	Meetings of officials with young people in public institutions, outside the school	Very ineffective	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	5(2.4)	4(1.9)	0(0.0)	2(1)	2(1)	14(6.6)
		Ineffective	2(1)	4(1.9)	6(2.8)	14(6.6)	1(0.5)	5(2.4)	4(1.9)	36(16.9)
		Moderately effective	13(6.2)	3(1.5)	12(5.7)	19(9)	8(3.8)	4(1.9)	5(2.4)	64(30.0)
		Effective	12(5.7)	6(2.9)	9(4.3)	9(4.3)	11(5.2)	2(1)	8(3.8)	57(26.8)
		Very effective	2(1)	5(2.4)	7(3.4)	12(5.7)	3(1.5)	5(2.4)	5(2.4)	39(18.3)
4.	Youth meetings with representatives of NGOs ⁸²	Very ineffective	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	2(1)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	4(1.9)	8(3.8)
		Ineffective	1(0.5)	2(1)	3(1.5)	6(2.8)	0(0.0)	5(2.4)	4(1.9)	21(9.9)
		Moderately effective	8(3.8)	3(1.5)	4(1.9)	11(5.2)	4(1.9)	2(1)	8(3.8)	40(18.8)
		Effective	12(5.7)	7(3.4)	15(7)	24(11.3)	13(6.2)	6(2.8)	3(1.5)	80(37.6)
		Very effective	8(3.8)	6(2.8)	15(7)	18(8.5)	7(3.4)	5(2.4)	5(2.4)	64(30.0)
5.	Opportunity to comment on draft decisions of school authorities	Very ineffective	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	2(1)	3(1.5)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	5(2.3)
		Ineffective	3(1.5)	3(1.5)	2(1)	5(2.4)	0(0.0)	3(1.5)	5(2.4)	21(9.9)
		Moderately effective	8(3.8)	4(1.9)	7(3.4)	16(7.5)	7(3.4)	5(2.4)	6(2.8)	53(24.9)
		Effective	14(6.6)	4(1.9)	18(8.5)	21(9.9)	10(4.7)	7(3.4)	10(4.7)	84(39.4)
		Very effective	5(2.4)	7(3.4)	10(4.7)	15(7)	7(3.4)	3(1.5)	3(1.5)	50(23.5)
6.	Opportunity to comment on	Very ineffective	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	3(1.5)	4(1.9)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	7(3.3)

⁸¹ In Elbląg – 1 non-response.

⁸² 2 non-responses in Gdynia and 1 in Ilawa.

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUP NETWORK **STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17**

	draft decisions of local authorities	Ineffective	3(1.5)	3(1.5)	2(1)	5(2.4)	1(0.5)	6(2.8)	5(2.4)	25(11.7)
		Moderately effective	10(4.7)	2(1)	9(4.3)	18(8.5)	5(2.4)	3(1.5)	7(3.4)	54(25.4)
		Effective	13(6.1)	6(2.8)	18(8.5)	21(9.9)	12(5.7)	7(3.4)	10(4.7)	87(40.8)
		Very effective	4(1.9)	7(3.4)	6(2.8)	12(5.7)	6(2.8)	2(1)	2(1)	39(18.3)
7.	Creation of a list of areas where young people can co-decide ⁸³	Very ineffective	1(0.5)	0(0)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	2(0.9)
		Ineffective	3(1.5)	4(1.9)	2(1)	2(1)	0(0)	3(1.5)	1(0.5)	15(7.0)
		Moderately effective	6(2.8)	0(0.0)	2(1)	15(7)	5(2.4)	5(2.4)	12(5.7)	45(21.1)
		Effective	13(6.1)	7(3.4)	17(8.1)	20(9.4)	10(4.7)	5(2.4)	10(4.7)	82(38.5)
		Very effective	7(3.4)	6(2.8)	17(8.1)	23(10.9)	9(4.3)	4(1.9)	1(0.5)	67(31.5)
8.	Opportunity for young people to co-decide about commune budget allocation ⁸⁴	Very ineffective	1(0.5)	0(0)	4(1.9)	5(2.4)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	3(1.5)	15(7.0)
		Ineffective	2(1)	4(1.9)	3(1.5)	6(2.8)	2(1)	1(0.5)	3(1.5)	21(9.9)
		Moderately effective	7(3.4)	2(1)	7(3.4)	18(8.5)	6(2.8)	7(3.4)	8(3.8)	55(25.8)
		Effective	16(7.5)	6(2.8)	12(5.7)	20(9.4)	9(4.3)	6(2.8)	9(4.3)	78(36.6)
		Very effective	4(1.9)	6(2.8)	13(6.1)	11(5.2)	6(2.8)	2(1)	1(0.5)	43(20.2)
9.	Organisation of public hearings for young people	Very ineffective	0(0)	0(0)	2(1)	3(1.5)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	2(1)	9(4.2)
		Ineffective	2(1)	0(0)	4(1.9)	9(4.3)	0(0)	0(0)	1(0.5)	16(7.5)
		Moderately effective	5(2.4)	6(2.8)	10(4.7)	19(9)	7(3.4)	10(4.7)	7(3.4)	64(30.0)
		Effective	14(6.6)	7(3.4)	17(8.1)	19(9)	7(3.4)	5(2.4)	11(5.2)	80(37.6)
		Very effective	9(4.3)	5(2.4)	6(2.8)	10(4.3)	9(4.3)	2(1)	3(1.5)	44(20.7)
10.	Creation of youth councils in municipalities	Very ineffective	0(0)	0(0)	1(0.5)	3(1.5)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	4(1.9)
		Ineffective	2(1)	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	4(1.9)	0(0)	0(0)	2(1)	10(4.7)
		Moderately effective	3(1.5)	0(0)	8(3.8)	14(6.6)	3(1.5)	2(1)	7(3.4)	38(17.8)
		Effective	14(6.6)	5(2.4)	16(7.5)	25(11.7)	7(3.8)	11(5.2)	9(4.3)	87(40.8)
		Very effective	11(5.2)	11(5.2)	13(6.1)	14(6.6)	14(6.6)	5(2.4)	6(2.8)	74(34.7)
11.	Organisation of “round tables” e.g. by public institutions as a form of dialogue between officials, politicians and youth	Very ineffective	1(0.5)	0(0)	2(1)	3(1.5)	0(0)	3(1.5)	2(1)	11(5.2)
		Ineffective	1(0.5)	0(0)	1(0.5)	6(2.8)	0(0)	4(1.9)	2(1)	14(6.6)
		Moderately effective	5(2.4)	6(2.8)	9(4.3)	14(6.6)	7(3.4)	2(1)	4(1.9)	47(22.1)
		Effective	11(5.2)	4(1.9)	17(8.1)	19(9)	10(4.7)	7(3.4)	9(4.3)	77(36.2)
		Very effective	12(5.7)	8(3.8)	10(4.7)	18(8.5)	7(3.4)	2(1)	7(3.4)	64(30.0)
12.	Information in the media about opportunities for youth civic participation ⁸⁵	Very ineffective	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	3(1.5)	0(0)	1(0.5)	0(0)	4(1.9)
		Ineffective	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	3(1.5)	4(1.9)	1(0.5)	0(0)	3(1.5)	13(6.1)
		Moderately effective	3(1.5)	3(1.5)	7(3.4)	8(3.8)	4(1.9)	5(2.4)	8(3.8)	38(17.8)

⁸³ In Dzierzgoń and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie: 1 non-response each.

⁸⁴ In Nowe Miasto Lubawskie – 1 non-response.

⁸⁵ In Gdynia – 1 non-response.

		SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUP NETWORK			STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17					
13	Promotion of youth civic participation via the Internet ⁸⁶	Effective	15(7)	5(2.4)	16(7.6)	18(8.5)	10(4.7)	9(4.3)	11(5.2)	84(39.4)
		Very effective	11(5.2)	9(4.3)	13(6.1)	26(12.2)	9(4.3)	3(1.5)	2(1)	73(34.3)
		Very ineffective	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0.0)
		Ineffective	3(1.5)	2(1)	0(0)	3(1.5)	0(0)	3(1.5)	1(0.5)	12(5.6)
		Moderately effective	2(1)	0(0)	9(4.3)	10(4.7)	2(1)	3(1.5)	7(3.4)	33(15.5)
		Effective	15(7)	6(2.8)	9(4.3)	14(6.6)	10(4.7)	6(2.8)	9(4.3)	69(32.4)
14	Promotion of civic participation by youth leaders in their own environment	Very effective	10(4.7)	10(4.7)	20(9.4)	33(15.6)	12(5.7)	6(2.8)	7(3.4)	98(46.0)
		Very ineffective	1(0.5)	0(0)	0(0)	1(0.5)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	2(0.9)
		Ineffective	1(0.5)	0(0)	1(0.5)	0(0)	0(0)	3(1.5)	3(1.5)	8(3.8)
		Moderately effective	3(1.5)	3(1.5)	8(3.8)	15(7)	2(1)	3(1.5)	9(4.3)	43(20.2)
		Effective	15(7)	8(3.8)	12(5.7)	13(6.1)	15(7)	5(2.4)	7(3.4)	75(35.2)
15	Development of cooperation networks between young people at local level	Very effective	10(4.7)	7(3.4)	18(8.5)	31(14.6)	7(3.4)	7(3.4)	5(2.4)	85(39.9)
		Very ineffective	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0.0)
		Ineffective	1(0.5)	1(0.5)	2(1)	3(1.5)	0(0)	1(0.5)	3(1.5)	11(5.2)
		Moderately effective	3(1.5)	5(2.4)	6(2.8)	15(7.0)	4(1.9)	2(1)	9(4.3)	44(20.7)
		Effective	16(7.5)	4(1.9)	16(7.5)	17(8.1)	12(5.7)	11(5.2)	11(5.2)	87(40.8)
16	Development of cooperation networks between young people at cross-border (international) level ⁸⁷	Very effective	10(4.7)	8(3.8)	15(7)	25()	8(3.8)	4(1.9)	1(0.5)	71(33.3)
		Very ineffective	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	3(1.5)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	3(1.4)
		Ineffective	1(0.5)	2(1)	4(1.9)	2(1)	1(0.5)	0(0)	4(1.9)	14(6.6)
		Moderately effective	5(2.4)	4(1.9)	7(3.4)	13(6.1)	5(2.4)	6(2.8)	9(4.3)	49(23.0)
		Effective	16(7.5)	8(3.8)	17(8.1)	14(6.6)	11(5.2)	4(1.9)	11(5.2)	81(38.0)
	Very effective	8(3.8)	4(1.9)	9(4.3)	28()	6(2.8)	8(3.8)	0(0)	63(29.6)	

Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and November 2019

⁸⁶ In Elbląg – 1 non-response.

⁸⁷ 2 non-responses in Elbląg and 1 in Iława.

An effective way of involving young people in decision-making is also the establishment of youth councils in municipalities such as Gdynia, Elbląg, Telšiai, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie and Hässleholm, which were mentioned by 60% of the respondents from Iława and Dzierzgoń recognised as very effective in terms of influencing young people. As to the organisation of “round tables”, a majority of those surveyed in Gdynia, Elbląg, Iława, Hässleholm and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, considered it to be an effective form of dialogue between officials, politicians and young people. In Telšiai and Dzierzgoń, most of the respondents stated that it was a very good formula because of its participative nature. It is also important to enable young people to influence local authorities' decisions regarding the allocation of financial resources to meet the needs of that group of municipality population. For this reason, the participation of young people in the allocation of municipal budget resources was recognised by most of the respondents from Gdynia, Telšiai, Hässleholm and Iława as an effective way of increasing civic participation. In Dzierzgoń, opinions were divided as to whether it was an effective or very effective form, while the respondents from Elbląg had no doubts as to its high effectiveness. Only in the case of Nowe Miasto Lubawskie prevailed the opinion that youth participation in decisions concerning the municipal budget had a moderate effect on increasing their civic engagement. There was also a difference of opinion on the effectiveness of creating a list of areas where young people could co-decide. A majority of the respondents in Gdynia strongly supported that solution, in Elbląg the opinions were distributed equally between very high and high effectiveness of that form, whereas in Telšiai, Iława and Dzierzgoń dominated the view that such method of including young people in decision-making processes was highly effective. The representatives of Nowe Miasto Lubawskie institutions did not decide unanimously whether such an initiative would have a high or medium impact on increasing youth civic participation, while in Hässleholm a majority rated that issue as of average importance. Another instrument evaluated was the organisation of public hearings for young people. Meetings of that type provide an additional platform for youth dialogue with decision makers, and most of those surveyed in Iława rated them as very effective; they were considered slightly less effective by a majority of respondents from Elbląg, Telšiai, Hässleholm and Dzierzgoń. The responses selected in Gdynia did not reveal a preferred option (equal frequency for high and moderate effectiveness) and the prevailing opinion in Nowe Miasto Lubawskie was that public hearings were moderately effective.

A relatively less positive impact on stimulating the involvement of young people in the affairs of their own environment, according to a majority of respondents, was exerted by meetings of officials or politicians with young people at and outside schools/universities. Officials' meetings with young people at schools and universities were judged to be effective in Elbląg, Iława, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie and Hässleholm, moderately effective in Gdynia and Telšiai, and ineffective in the municipality of Dzierzgoń. Such meetings with young people outside school were considered highly attractive by a majority of those surveyed in Iława, Hässleholm and Dzierzgoń, and moderately effective by those from Gdynia, Telšiai and Elbląg. They were given little importance by a majority of respondents from Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, as were the meetings of politicians with young people. The positive impact of politicians was recognised by most of the survey participants in Iława, Elbląg and Dzierzgoń, but it was rated moderate in Gdynia, Telšiai and Hässleholm. Failure to exploit such potential would be to the detriment of local communities, as such tools could enable young people to acquire knowledge and develop civic skills, drawing directly on the experience of public officials and politicians, and participate in decision-making at both national and cross-border level.

Analysis of the results identified statistically significant differences in the perception of the effectiveness of the various tools and ways of stimulating youth participation in local life. Using a one-way analysis of variance, it was determined that these differences were $F(9, 1983)=31.62; p<0.001, \eta=0.13$. Overall, the differences between the answers to the individual test questions were 13%. The analysis demonstrated that the most effective way of increasing young people's involvement in their own environment was to promote participation via the Internet, whereas meetings of politicians with young people were considered to be the least effective. The results are shown in Figure 8.

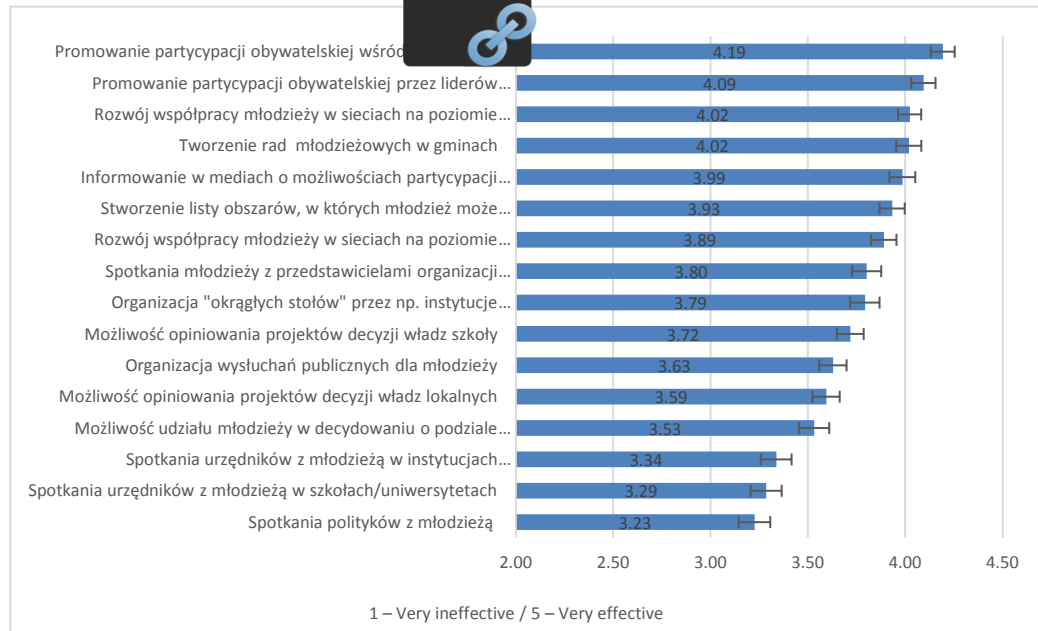
Protected by PDF Anti-Copy Free

4th Regular Call, South Baltic, Programme 2014–2020

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK

STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

Figure 8. Assessment of the effectiveness of various forms of increasing the involvement of young people in the affairs of their own environment, i.e. school, neighbourhood, district, municipality, local environment (the error bars in the graph show standard errors)



Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and November 2019

The gender of the respondents and their institution were the differentiating factors. To verify the gender-related differences in the answers to the individual test items, a two-way analysis of variance was conducted. It showed an important interaction effect between both factors at a statistical trend level, $F(9, 1989) = 1.87$; $p < 0.05$; $\eta = 0.01$. The interaction feature explains 1% of the variance of the dependent variable. The analysis revealed that female representatives of the institutions gave significantly higher ratings to the following forms of action:

- development of youth cooperation in cross-border (international) networks, $p < 0.1$;
- development of youth cooperation in networks at local level, $p < 0.05$;
- promotion of civic participation by youth leaders in their own environment, $p < 0.05$;
- promotion of youth civic participation via the Internet, $p < 0.05$;
- information on youth civic participation opportunities in the media, $p < 0.1$;
- organisation of “round tables” e.g. by public institutions as a form of dialogue between officials, politicians and youth, $p < 0.05$;
- creation of youth councils in municipalities, $p < 0.05$;

Protected by PDF Anti-Copy Free

4th Regular Call, South Baltic, Programme 2014–2020

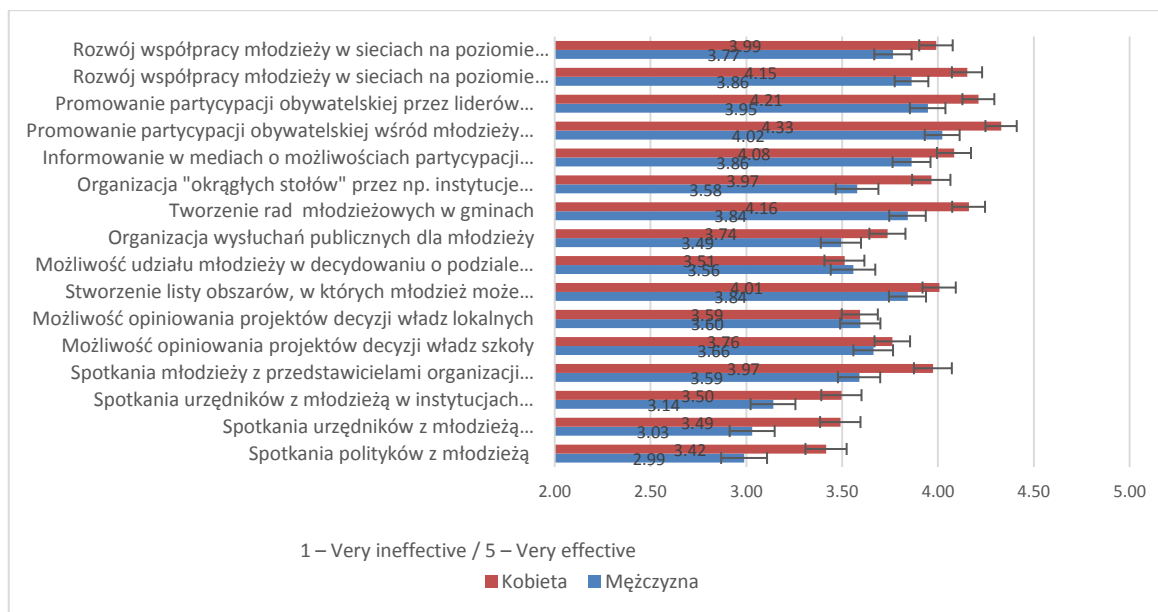
SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK

SIHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

- organisation of public hearings for young people, p<0,1;
- youth meetings with NGO representatives, p< 0,05;
- meetings of officials with young people in public institutions, outside school, p<0.05;
- meetings of officials with young people in schools/universities, p<0.01;
- politicians' meetings with young people, p< 0.01.

No significant gender-related differences were observed in respect of the remaining forms of action. The results are shown in Figure 6.

Figure 9. Assessment of the effectiveness of various forms of increasing the involvement of young people in the affairs of their own environment, i.e. school, neighbourhood, district, municipality, local environment vs gender of respondents (the error bars in the chart show standard errors)



Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and November 2019

Differences in responses were also found to exist with respect to the institution represented. A two-way analysis of variance demonstrated a significant interaction effect of the two factors, $F(18, 1419) = 1.71$; $p < 0.05$; $\eta = 0.02$. The interaction feature explains 2% of the variance of the dependent variable. The analysis revealed that, compared to education institution employees, the representatives of local authorities had significantly higher opinions of the effectiveness of the following measures:

- creation of youth councils in municipalities ($p < 0.1$);

Protected by PDF Anti-Copy Free

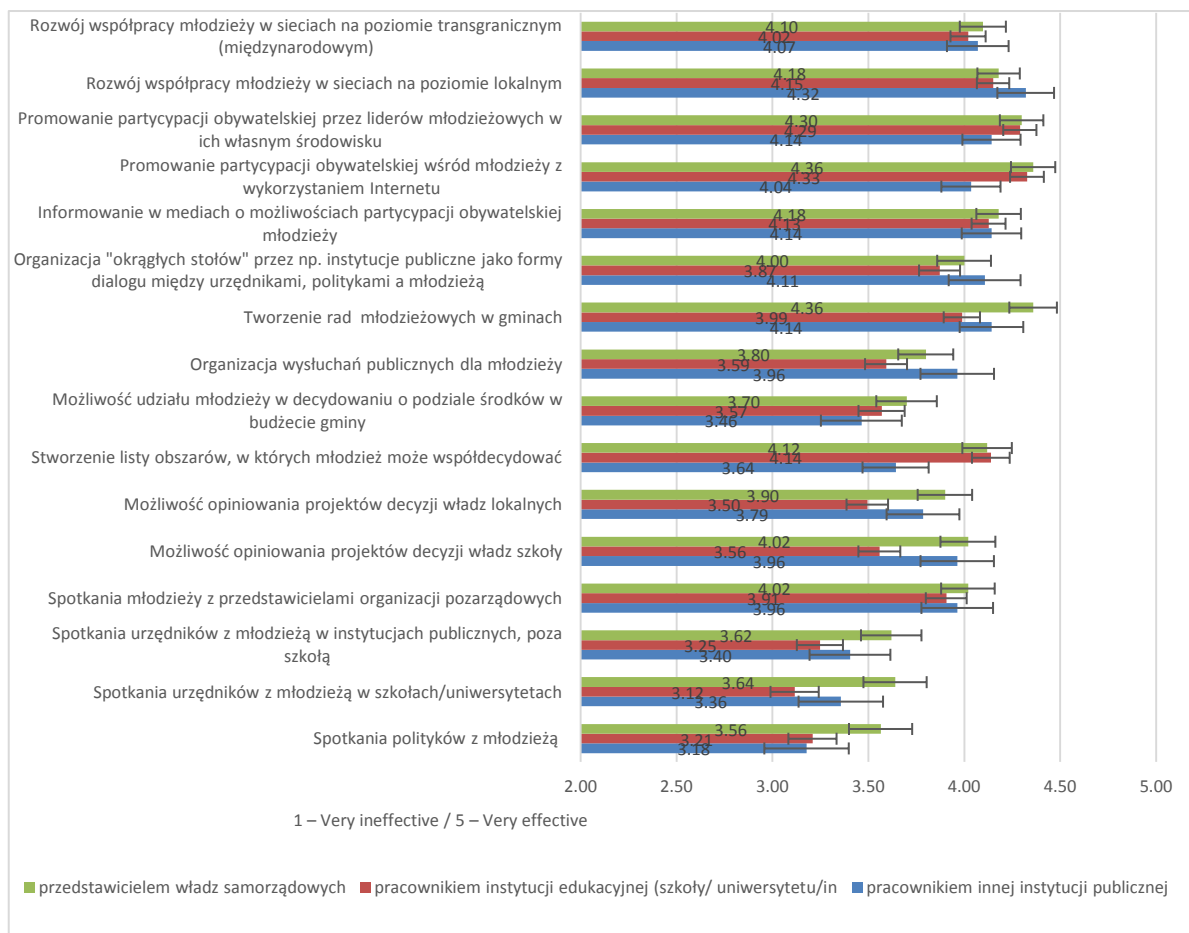
4th Regular Call, South Baltic, Programme 2014–2020

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

- opportunity for young people to comment on draft decisions of local authorities ($p < 0.1$);
- opportunity for young people to comment on draft decisions of school authorities ($p < 0.05$);
- meetings of officials with young people in schools/universities ($p < 0.05$).

The employees of other public institutions rated the effectiveness of creating a list of areas in which young people could co-decide significantly less favourably than the representatives of local authorities ($p < 0.1$) and the employees of educational institutions ($p < 0.05$). No significant differences were observed with regard to the other forms of action. The results are shown in Figure 10.

Figure 10. Assessment of the effectiveness of various forms of increasing the involvement of young people in the affairs of their own environment, i.e. school, neighbourhood, district, municipality, local environment vs the institution represented (the error bars in the graph show standard errors)



Source: own elaboration based on the results of studies conducted as part of the South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network project between September 2018 and November 2019

In conclusion, significant needs that determine the capabilities of stimulating youth civic participation in Lithuania, Poland and Sweden were identified in all the municipalities surveyed. The vast majority of the categories analysed were considered to be rather necessary or very necessary.

According to the representatives of all the municipalities, the least urgent need was to increase the financial resources for activities involving young people in public decision-making, whereas the most pressing one was finding a good leader capable of motivating and engaging young people effectively. The demand for increased funding was reported by respondents from all the municipalities, but in Elbląg the demand was the highest. On the other hand, the greatest need to find a good leader was observed in the following municipalities: Gdynia, Elbląg, Iława, Dzierzgoń, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie and Telšiai. Greater openness of decision-makers to include young people in public decision-making is among the most pressing needs in Gdynia, Elbląg, Iława and Dzierzgoń. A similar opinion was also expressed about the need to exchange experiences with other institutions and organisations working with young people in Gdynia, Elbląg and Dzierzgoń. According to a majority of respondents from Gdynia and Elbląg, formal cooperation with institutions that implement youth policies, also in the Baltic Sea region, should be developed and the competences of those responsible for youth cooperation need to be improved in order to strengthen the capacity of institutions to promote youth civic participation. The improvement of knowledge and skills was highlighted by a majority of those surveyed in all the municipalities, particularly in the field of psychology, sociology and pedagogy. Gdynia declared the most extensive requirements concerning the improvement of skills of representatives of the institutional environment of young people. This included additional knowledge in the field of politics, sociology, economics and philosophy. In Dzierzgoń and Elbląg the respondents additionally pointed to the need to improve their legal knowledge and coaching skills. In Sweden, there was a need for knowledge of the ways to motivate and inspire young people, and of social media, including effective channels for reaching to and communicating with young people. The respondents from Nowe Miasto Lubawskie reported only the need concerning sports activities.

The barriers and needs identified necessitated various forms of effective impact on the participatory processes. A majority of respondents from the three countries considered the

forms examined (Upgrade to Pro Version to Remove the Watermark) were awarded to the following initiatives:

- Promotion of youth civic participation via the Internet – most effective according to the respondents from Dzierzgoń, Elbląg, Gdynia, Iława and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie;
- informing of youth civic participation opportunities in the media – most effective according to the respondents from Dzierzgoń and Gdynia;
- creation of youth councils in municipalities – most effective according to the respondents from Dzierzgoń and Iława;
- organisation of “round tables” e.g. by public institutions – most effective according to the respondents from Telšiai and Dzierzgoń;
- development of cooperation networks between young people at local level – most effective according to the respondents from Dzierzgoń and Gdynia;
- development of cooperation networks between young people at cross-border level – most effective according to the respondents from Gdynia and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie;
- opportunity for young people to comment on draft decisions of local authorities – most effective according to the respondents from Dzierzgoń;
- opportunity for young people to comment on draft decisions of school authorities – most effective according to the respondents from Dzierzgoń.

Furthermore, the tools considered to be the most effective means of strengthening civic participation by a majority of participants from the individual municipalities surveyed include:

- meetings of officials with young people outside school – in Nowe Miasto Lubawskie;
- youth meetings with NGO representatives – in Elbląg;
- creation of a list of areas in which young people can co-decide – in Elbląg and Gdynia;
- opportunity for young people to co-decide about commune budget allocation – in Dzierzgoń and Elbląg;
- organisation of public hearings for young people – in Iława;
- promotion of civic participation by youth leaders in their own environment – in Elbląg, Gdynia and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie.

The knowledge obtained from research and experiences gained e.g. via the implementation of international projects help strengthen youth civic participation through the

development of effective methods and tools to improve the institutional and youth environments. Only effective cooperation between the two groups and joint participation in decision making will be possible to create a stable and strong civil society.

The importance of young people in modern society is linked, among other things, to two important issues: their future role in society and the protection of human rights. Participation of young people in the public life is crucial for social processes. Youth civic participation is connected to the engagement of young people in decision-making processes concerning issues relevant to them by the government, organisations and public services at many levels of governance. By enhancing the dialogue with young, the quality and legitimacy of public policies can be improved. Young people's active citizenship is an important factor in the development of every society and should be shaped by means of an effective multi-level youth policy.

The quantitative studies carried out as part of the SB YCGN project showed that youth civic participation is an important element of civic society that requires strengthening in Lithuania, Poland and Sweden through bottom-up actions at the local community level, with the central role played by institutions. It has been demonstrated that the institutional environment has untapped potential, exceeding that of young people, for initiating and implementing inclusive action, so that the voice of youth in decision-making processes can be heard and taken into account by decision-makers.

The survey results revealed a medium level of civic participation of young people aged 14–24 in all the municipalities surveyed in Lithuania, Poland and Sweden. However, a significant proportion of institution representatives indicated rather low levels of youth participation in public life. This situation is unsatisfactory given the needs and expectations of institution representatives and young people and suggests that there is a gap between the diagnosed state and the existing potential in both the institutional and youth environment. This problem is complex and determined by a number of factors, often difficult if not impossible to recognise together with correlations.

It was also the opinion of a majority of institution representatives that young people often wish to have an impact on matters relevant to them and engage in cooperation for the immediate environment. The opinions of institutional environment representatives from Gdynia, Iława and Dzierzgoń as to young people's willingness to engage in cooperation for

the immediate environment (Upgradi to Pro Version to Remove the Watermark) in Miasto Lubawskie. The capacity of the institutional environment to stimulate civic participation of young people depends on the ability to respond to the needs of young people, for example, to provide assistance in solving their problems. However, a sine qua non condition is to overcome the lack of mutual understanding between young people and adults, which was recognised by a dominant group of institutional respondents from almost all municipalities, except Elbląg.

In the opinion of a majority of institution representatives, young people had the most influence on the election of their representatives at school or university and the least influence on the allocation of resources from the municipal budget. One exception was Hässleholm, where young people had an average impact on such issues. Generally, the choice of youth representatives at school or university is the only area where young people had a significant influence in nearly all the municipalities. On the other hand, in a vast majority of the municipalities, young people had very little or no leverage in areas such as spatial development, public transport, creation of municipal development strategies, social assistance or education. They had a somewhat greater impact on decisions concerning the preparation and implementation of international projects in the municipality, cultural initiatives in the municipality and election of their representatives in the local authorities. According to the representatives of Elbląg institutions, the local youth have a significantly lower impact on decisions in the area of social assistance compared to young people in Gdynia, and on spatial planning decisions compared to youth in Telšiai. However, when it comes to choosing their representatives in local authorities and at school or university, young people from Elbląg had a greater decision-making power than their peers in Gdynia and Telšiai. The issue of the real impact of young people on the shape of their immediate environment in the perception of young respondents appeared somewhat more problematic.

The barriers to civic participation lie both on the institutions' side and on young people's side. For this reason, effective reduction of these obstacles requires cooperation between young people and decision-makers representing their environment. According to Lithuanian, Polish and Swedish institution representatives, the majority of the barriers examined are present in all the municipalities surveyed and they have a relatively similar impact. The majority of the institutional respondents from the seven municipalities identified

Protected by PDF Anti-Copy Free

4th Regular Call, South Baltic, Programme 2014–2020

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK

STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

the following major barriers to youth participation to engage youth in public affairs – to the greatest extent in Gdynia, Elbląg, Dzierzgoń and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie; adults’ disregarding the opinions of young people in the decision-making process – to the greatest extent in Gdynia; excluding young people from co-deciding on public issues – to the greatest extent in Gdynia and Hässleholm; young people’s doubts that their participation could change anything – to the greatest extent in Iława and Dzierzgoń; young people’s lack of knowledge and skills to participate fully in the decision-making process, and underrating the knowledge and experience of youth by decision makers – to the greatest extent in Gdynia; lack of formal opportunities for young people to participate in decisions on public matters – in particular in Elbląg; the lack of clear information about the opportunities for youth involvement in local affairs – to the greatest extent in Gdynia and Elbląg and the lack of adults who know how to work and communicate with young people and motivate them to engage in public affairs – this applied to Dzierzgoń in particular. It is worth noting that the restrictions identified as having the greatest impact on youth participation processes were more frequently indicated in the opinions of Polish institutional respondents than their counterparts from Lithuania or Sweden. This suggests that employees of public and non-governmental institutions, particularly in Poland, should undertake intensive and large-scale measures to reduce or eliminate these barriers in order to enhance the civic participation of young people in the long term.

Intensification of dialogue and cooperation with young people and stimulation of their civic participation at local and cross-border level requires meeting the needs of both the institutions and young people. According to institutional respondents, the vast majority of the needs examined that determine the possibilities for increased civic participation of young people in Lithuania, Poland and Sweden were rather necessary or very necessary. The most pressing need for respondents from all the municipalities was to find a good leader able to motivate and engage young people effectively. That problem was identified as the most acute by youth workers from Gdynia, Elbląg, Iława, Dzierzgoń, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie and Telšiai. The relatively least urgent need, in the opinion of those surveyed, was increasing the funds for activities engaging young people in public decision-making. This need was the most pressing for the respondents from Elbląg. One of the major challenges in Gdynia, Elbląg, Iława and Dzierzgoń appeared to be the need for greater openness of decision-makers to involve young people in public matters. A similar opinion was also expressed about the need

Protected by PDF Anti-Copy Free

4th Regular Call, South Baltic, Programme 2014–2020

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK

STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

to exchange experience with other organisations and organisations working with young people in Gdynia, Elbląg and Dzierzgoń. According to a majority of respondents from Gdynia and Elbląg, formal cooperation with institutions to implement youth policies, also in the Baltic Sea region, should be developed and the competences of those responsible for youth cooperation need to be improved in order to strengthen the capacity of institutions to promote youth civic participation. The improvement of knowledge and skills was highlighted by a majority of those surveyed in all the municipalities, with psychology, sociology and pedagogy indicated as the main areas in need of enhancement. Representatives of the institutional environment of young people from Gdynia declared the most extensive requirements concerning competence improvement. This included additional knowledge in the field of politics, sociology, economics and philosophy. In Dzierzgoń and Elbląg the respondents additionally pointed to the need to improve their legal knowledge and coaching skills. In Sweden, there was a need for knowledge of the ways to motivate and inspire young people, and of social media, including effective channels for reaching to and communicating with young people. The respondents from Nowe Miasto Lubawskie reported only the need concerning sports activities. The selected forms of influence on participatory processes were mostly rated as effective or very effective by the majority of institution representatives from the three countries. The following solutions were considered the most effective, in decreasing order: promoting civic participation among young people via the Internet – most effective according to the respondents from Dzierzgoń, Elbląg, Gdynia, Iława and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie; media information about youth civic participation opportunities – most effective according to the respondents from Dzierzgoń and Gdynia; establishment of youth councils in municipalities – most effective according to the respondents from Dzierzgoń and Iława; organisation of “round tables” by e.g. public institutions – most effective according to the respondents from Telšiai and Dzierzgoń; development of youth cooperation in networks at local level – most effective according to the respondents from Dzierzgoń and Gdynia; development of youth cooperation in networks at cross-border level – most effective according to the respondents from Gdynia and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie; opportunity for young people to comment on draft decisions of local authorities – most effective according to the respondents in Dzierzgoń; opportunity for young people to comment on draft decisions of school authorities – most effective according to the respondents from Dzierzgoń; meetings of officials with young people outside the school – most effective according to the respondents from

Protected by PDF Anti-Copy Free

4th Regular Call, South Baltic, Programme 2014–2020

SB YCGN – SOUTH BALTIC YOUTH CORE GROUPS NETWORK

STHB.05.01.00-28-0117/17

Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, youth meetings with representatives of NGOs – most effective according to the respondents from Elbląg; creation of a list of areas where young people can co-decide – most effective according to the respondents from Elbląg and Gdynia; opportunity for young people to co-decide about community budget allocation – most effective according to the respondents from Dzierzgoń and Elbląg; organization of public hearings for young people – most effective according to the respondents from Iława, and promotion of civic participation by youth leaders in their own environment – most effective according to the respondents from Elbląg, Gdynia and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie.

Improvement of youth civic participation depends to a large extent on the institutions' ability to stimulate young people's activity and to integrate them into decision-making processes at all stages, ranging from information, through hearings and dialogue, to the implementation of young people's proposals. Without providing the institutions and young people with the necessary competences, it will be very difficult to effectively stimulate the civic participation of young people. Appropriate civic education is therefore of great importance. The best way seems to be the development of systemic solutions based on multi-level governance. However, it is necessary to take into account the specific circumstances of each municipality, as many problems and their solutions are not of universal nature.