

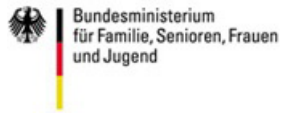
**Eva Feldmann-Wojtachnia
Barbara Tham**

The Structured Dialogue in Germany – added value and safeguarding

Evaluation report on the second phase of
the implementation within the framework of
the EU Youth Strategy in Germany (2014-2015)



Projects of the Research Group Youth and Europe at the Center for Applied Policy Research at the University of Munich are funded by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.



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Eva Feldmann-Wojtachnia Barbara Tham

The Structured Dialogue in Germany – added value and safeguarding. Evaluation report on the second phase of the implementation within the framework of the EU Youth Strategy in Germany (2014-2015)

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Introduction

The research group Youth and Europe at the Center for Applied Policy Research (CAP) of Ludwig-Maximilian University of Munich provided an evaluation report about the resonance and impact of the Structured Dialogue for the first phase of its realization within the realm of the EU Youth Strategy (2010-2013)¹. The current report builds upon this evaluation and directs attention to the realization of the projects concerning the added value and safeguarding of the Structured Dialogue. The Structured Dialogue and its connections to the European dimension are focal points of this evaluation of the overall process of the realization of the second phase of the EU Youth Strategy in Germany (2014-2016).

To this end, the evaluation report strives to provide an analytical account from the point of view of the Structured Dialogue projects' stakeholders. The backgrounds and experiences of the project leaders, young participants, and decision-makers involved in the implementation process of the Structured Dialogue will guide further optimization suggestions for the subsequent phase of implementation (2017-2018). The focus of the analysis is to compile the core elements and qualification needs of the Structured Dialogue projects and to clarify the European dimension in connection with the consultation process. The evaluation points to the importance of the project orientation during the realization of the Structured Dialogue, which can attract and mobilize young participants. In the projects, the needs of young people are considered, and their perspectives can be accordingly considered during policymaking.

As part of the EU Youth Strategy, the Structured Dialogue serves as a policy tool that involves young people in the shaping of the EU's youth policies in a systematic and continuous way. In this regard, the assessments of actors concerning the concrete dialogue projects play an important role, especially when it comes to adapting the European and federal focuses to meet local needs. On the one hand real dialogue with political decision-makers occurs, and on the other the projects provide an open space in which young people can deal with both European laws and issues of local significance, under the guidance of methodical and didactic staff. During the second phase of the implementation, the basic approach to Structured Dialogue could really be formed, especially in terms of the projects' direction. It is clear that participants gained a comprehensive political understanding and insight into European youth policies. This is true of the broad policy term "the EU" and was echoed throughout the implementation of the Structured Dialogue as well.

¹ Feldmann-Wojtachnia, Eva/Tham, Barbara: The Structured Dialogue in Germany - resonance and impact. Evaluation report on the first phase of the implementation within the framework of the EU Youth Strategy in Germany (2010-2013). Munich, 2014.

It corresponds to the subsidiarity understanding of the projects' supporters, through a broad, open understanding of the political and Europe-related dimension in youth work, which is founded on the values of an active civil society. In the dialogue projects, relevant topics in the field of EU politics can be selected, worked on, and differentiated and discussed down to the local level. This applies to those topics pre-determined by the politically formal EU Youth Strategy framework, as well as the content from the EU's Trio-Presidency, and the different interests from youth and political actors on a local level.

The evaluation also seeks to answer the broader question: to what extent have the Structured Dialogue projects, in alignment with the goals of the EU-Youth Strategy, strengthened and sustainably fostered local youth participation? This corresponds to the EU's governance approach, which encourages the interaction between government and civil society.² Young people in particular should receive the tools needed to "actively participate in the decision making process and gain ownership of the European project"³. Concerning the questions about added value and safeguarding, the evaluation considers the perspectives of young people, the assessments of project leaders, as well as the specific perceptions of the implementation of the Structured Dialogue. It examines the ways in which the Structured Dialogue projects enable youth to actively contribute to their social and political environments, how successfully the projects include political actors and public authorities in the dialogue, and how a sustainable transfer of results from the dialogue to the political decision-making level can be made possible. The results of the following study should therefore convey concrete steps to further improve the Structured Dialogue in Germany.

The report is divided into five chapters. In the first chapter the research design and the corresponding scientific projects will be described. The next chapter is concerned with the underlying goals of the Structured Dialogue implemented in Germany. The results from the quantitative and qualitative evaluations will be systematically processed and presented in the third chapter. In the fourth chapter the results in terms of potential challenges arising from the project realization of the Structured Dialogue will be analyzed. In the final chapter a comprehensive summary report and insight into the continued development of the third realization phase of the Structured Dialogue in Germany is provided.

This report is an English version of the original German text.⁴

² European Commission: European governance. A White Paper. COM (2001) 428 final.

³ Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. "The Commission's contribution to the period of reflection and beyond: Plan-D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate." COM 494 final (2005), pg. 3.

⁴ Feldmann-Wojtachnia, Eva/Tham, Barbara: Mehrwert und Verstetigung des Strukturierten Dialogs. Evaluierungsbericht zur zweiten Phase der Umsetzung im Rahmen der EU-Jugendstrategie in Deutschland (2014-2015). Edited by: Center for Applied Policy Research. Munich, 2016.

1 Analytical Approach of the Evaluation

The Structured Dialogue projects, upon which this evaluation is based, took place from 2014-15 within the framework of the EU Youth Strategy in Germany. The EU Youth Strategy for 2010-2018 presents a variety of themes regarding youth policy collaboration in Europe, and the involvement of young people is specifically named as one of eight areas of action.⁵ Youth participation should be promoted at all levels of representative democracy and civil society, as well as more generally within society. To this end, the Structured Dialogue is a European Union format that engages young people in the realization of the EU Youth Strategy. It is “an instrument within the framework for European cooperation in the youth field to involve young people in the development of EU policies.”⁶ The investigative focus of this evaluation is to determine the extent to which the implementation of the Structured Dialogue in Germany is a successful political approach for strengthening youth participation regarding the EU Youth Strategy. The derived research questions correspond to the objectives, operation, and results of the projects, as well as the Structured Dialogue’s place within the greater context of the EU Youth Strategy. Moreover, the youth’s social and demographic data were determined, which provided information about the access and reach of the projects. Building on results of the first evaluation phase from 2010-2013, we determined the following analysis focuses for the second evaluation phase from 2014-2016:

- ▶ Key elements and qualifications of the Structured Dialogue project to further clarify the European Dimension in the project direction
- ▶ Links between the projects of the Structured Dialogue and consultations from the respective EU Presidencies, as well as connections between national consultations within the framework of implementing the EU Youth Strategy in Germany and the overall process of implementing the EU Youth Strategy.

1.1 Evaluation Concept and Methodology

The selected evaluation method serves as a visual representation of the Structured Dialogue projects’ realization and ensures its further development on the basis of the actors’ assessments. Therefore, the research approach follows the basic principles of the participative and process-integrated evaluation and

⁵ Resolution of the Council on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field. Official Journal of the European Union. C 311 (2009), pg. 2.

⁶ Resolution of the Council on encouraging political participation of young people in democratic life in Europe. Official Journal of the European Union. C 417 (2015), pg. 10.

continuously builds upon the approaches of the first consultation phase of the Structured Dialogue. This means that all relevant stakeholders and selected projects involved in the Structured Dialogue are incorporated actively and fairly into this evaluation. The goal is to depict a range of opinions as diverse and wide as possible, and to include them in the Structured Dialogue's continued development. The evaluation focuses on the four 18-month-long operating cycles of the Structured Dialogue in the European Union under the general thematic EU priority of "Promoting young people's access to rights in order to foster their autonomy and participation in civil society."⁷ In Germany, this theme was entitled "[emPOWER- me!] Politik-mitdenken-mitgestalten-mitbestimmen."⁸

Through the systematic, scientific monitoring of the project on-site and through the participatory observation of central national meetings of the Structured Dialogue, the relevant developments could also be fully captured. This includes Politics in Dialogue (JuPiD) 2014, 2015 and 2016, which were conducted by the coordination office for the Structured Dialogue in Germany. Here youth, project managers, decision makers, and further experts engaged in an exchange about the Structured Dialogue in general and discussed the results of the consultation process in particular. A further, scientifically supported central event would be the Networking Meeting on the Structured Dialogue 2015, which was held by the national agency JUGEND in Bonn. At this event, representatives from national agencies, ministries, youth associations, education institutions, and youth work came together to introduce projects, build professional networks, and collect new ideas and suggestions. Finally, at the German Youth Strategy 2015-2018 launch event, a participatory observation took place, and at the Forum for the Implementation of the EU Youth Strategy especially, several connections to the Structured Dialogue were identified.

The research design and instruments were largely taken from the previous evaluation phase and were clarified and adapted based on the questions. In addition to the participatory observations from the central meetings of the Structured Dialogue, the analysis will also focus on the Key Action 3-supported program ERASMUS+: YOUTH IN ACTION.

With regard to the quantitative collection of data, all projects that took place during the research period in 2014-15 were included. 2015 was the first time the survey was distributed through an online-tool. The survey asked young participants to share their experiences and evaluations of the Structure Dialogue projects through both closed and open-ended questions. This information was collected directly on-site, as projects were being conducted. Additionally, some project feedback was collected through an online survey, sent to the young par-

⁷ Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on a European Union Work Plan for Sport for 2011-2014. Official Journal of the European Union, C 183 (2014), pg. 10.

⁸ Hereafter the theme will be identified using the abbreviated terms Empowerment or Youth Empowerment.

ticipants from project leaders. Participation in the survey was voluntary, and information was collected anonymously. In agreement with the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the National Working Group (NAG), six exemplary projects were selected, which made deeper analysis and advanced findings possible. The chosen projects differentiate themselves based on their regional locations, involved target groups, and selected themes as well as their applied methods and prior experience with the realization of the Structured Dialogue. Together these projects represent the diversity contained within the projects, and the desired approaches of Structured Dialogue. Generally throughout the projects, a significant dialogue event between youth and politics was observed, and half- to hour-long individual and group interviews were held with key actors, including youth, project leaders, and policy makers. The interviews were conducted as half-open, standardized questionnaires and logged together. The recordings were then transcribed and evaluated anonymously according to the outlined research parameters. Alongside the central meetings of the Structured Dialogue, individual and group interviews were carried out with relevant actors, who provided additional evaluations, comments, and interpretations that contributed to collected data and further reflected the projects.

1.2 Examined Projects

The examined projects distinguish themselves through various characteristics and approaches, which are detailed below in the form of short profiles collected from the dialogue events. All projects were supported by the Key Action 3 “actions aimed at stimulating innovative policy development, policy dialogue and implementation, and the exchange of knowledge in the fields of education, training and youth” in the EU program ERASMUS+: YOUTH IN ACTION. The following projects were analyzed:

- ▶ The **youth event “Europe goes further”** (Europa geht weiter) is organized by the Association for Cultural Child and Youth Education in Saxony-Anhalt e. (Magdeburg)⁹, and is operated in cooperation with the state chancellery, culture ministry, and Ministry for Labor and Social Affairs as well as with further public institutions involved in youth and education work. Under the title “For a youth-friendly Europe!” (Für ein jugendgerechtes Europa!) the event offers youth the opportunity to work with European themes and developments and exchange ideas amongst each other and with policy makers from youth work, schools, administration, and politics. The goal is to make youth aware of European relations and to actively promote their contributions in

⁹ For more information about the project supporter visit <http://europa-geht-weiter.de>

democratic society. Prior to the regional conference, project days were linked to schools with extracurricular events, in order to formulate the European Citizens' Initiative (EBI) problems and solutions and to compile a common list of demands. Finally, youth had the chance to introduce their requests to representatives from municipal, state, and European politics and to have discussions with them.

- ▶ The **Europe youth conference "Take Five to get Involved and Check it Out"** (Take Five for Europe-Mitmischen und Durchsehen) in Güstrow¹⁰ is a part of a long-term, multi-level cooperation project between the youth councils of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Schleswig-Holstein, Bremen, and Niedersachsen as well as the Agency for Employment, Social Affairs, Family, and Integration in the state of Hamburg. Additionally, the Department for Social Affairs for the Bundesländer Schleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, as well as the State Youth Welfare Office Bremen and European Youth Office Hamburg were involved. During the youth conference, young participants experienced creative theater and media presentations to prepare them for the coming meetings with politicians. They received impulses to self-empowerment and project management and developed their own ideas concerning youth participation. Youth and policy makers met on equal footing within the scope of the project in order to create a common learning arena for everyone involved. The young participants also strengthened their participation skills and gained experience for democratic coexistence. The themes of the project included: information, exchange, and presentations about participation in youth projects in Europe-relevant fields in northern German Bundesländer.
- ▶ The project **"My Rights- Your Rights- Human Rights"** (Meine Rechte-Deine Rechte-Menschenrechte) supported by the esw, evangelical Student and Student Work Association in Westfalen (bk) e.V. Berchum,¹¹ has the goal of investing students in their own rights and the rights of others, as well as human rights more generally speaking. The preparation and the content-related input occur at the local level, which are compiled in three weekend seminars. The project's finale includes an excursion to Brussels, where the young participants gain perspective into the political institutions of the European Union. Using informal and creative methods, the project especially intends to reach educationally disadvantaged youth, often from families with migration backgrounds, in order to develop strategies for self-determination, inform them of their own rights and the rights of others, and to provide background information on general human rights. Through this program youth have the opportunity to improve their language abilities during conflicts as well as their social and creative competencies.

¹⁰ For more information about the project visit <http://www.ljrmv.de/ljrmv/langzeit-projekte/take-five-for-europe/t54eu2014.php>

¹¹ For more information about the project visit <http://www.esw-berchum.de>

- ▶ The project **"Europe is here!"** (Europa ist hier) is supported by the aej, Consortium of Evangelical Youth in Germany, (Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Evangelischen Jugend in Deutschland e.v.) in Hannover in cooperation with the esjd, Evangelical City Youth (Service evangelischer Stadtjugenddienst der Stadt Hannover).¹² It connects two central themes, one of which includes incorporating youth throughout the entire projects as "European ambassadors." They explored the European dimension in depth on-site in Hannover, discovered European sites in the city, met with European policy and decision-makers, and engaged in European youth politics. Through a road trip to Brussels, the young European ambassadors gained insight into the institutional framework of the EU. Based on the knowledge they acquired, the ambassadors also applied their project experiences during the second project component, the local participation action. Here, they worked as supporters to raise awareness for youth's role in the political process and were active in discussion with political actors. The theme of the project centered on the Structured Dialogue focal points "social inclusion" and "empowerment" and their application in Hannover and Europe.
- ▶ The Youth Association Thuringia in Suhl by Erfurt (Landesjugendrings Thüringen in Suhl bei Erfurt) supported project **"Better Together-Youth and Politics at Eye Level Vol.2"** (Better together- Jugend und Politik auf Augenhöhe Vol. 2) is dedicated to the themes inclusion, participation, and empowerment. Through regional events, project participants presented ideas and positions for politics and practice with the goal of social inclusion, while preparing for dialogue with political decision-makers. At the concluding event in Erfurt, the young participants shared their results and discussed them with representatives from the city and surrounding areas. A central object of the project was to bring the dialogue beyond the events and to organize subsequent conversations and to determine the extent of the proposals heard and how they could be implemented. Beyond that, more initiative for local projects was called for and further ideas were collected.
- ▶ The participation project **"What moves us- Youth and Regional Politics in Conversation"** ("Was uns bewegt-Jugendliche und Landespolitik im Gespräch") was led by the state parliament (Landtag) in Baden-Wuerttemberg along with the Youth Council (Landesjugendring) Baden-Wuerttemberg.¹³ The project aims to provide youth with the chance to discuss their concerns, themes, and perspectives with state-level politicians, as well as to provide opportunities to influence the development of the state. To this end, youth conferences were planned in many districts and cities, each of which was attended by the responsible elected representatives from the constitu-

¹² For more information about the project visit <http://www.hier-ist-europa.de>

¹³ For more information about the project visit <http://www.wasunsbewegt-bw.de>

encies. Prior to these conferences, the actors from the municipal-level youth politics were involved in the planning and organization of the project. The results from the exchange between youth and politicians were gathered in Baden-Württemberg's youth council. There, youth representatives from various local youth conferences discussed the developed themes and suggestions and finally voted on their central concerns. They are contained within a final report and should be integrated into other parliamentary work of the state parliament in Baden-Wuerttemberg.

2 The Structured Dialogue

The objective of the Structured Dialogue was to more deeply and more bindingly involve youth in EU politics, especially concerning the matters that impact them directly. As a participation instrument of the EU Youth Strategy, the Structured Dialogue is based on participatory principles. A distinguishing characteristic includes its process-oriented and continuous implementation, which has made it difficult to develop a concise and comprehensive definition for the Structured Dialogue. Therefore, for the evaluation under this policy approach, it is important to keep the origins and backgrounds at the European level as well as the concrete implementation of the Structured Dialogue at the national level in mind.

Origin and Function

The cornerstone of the Structured Dialogue was put in place by the White Paper "A new impetus for European youth" (2001),¹⁴ which was aimed at giving young people more participation in democratic life. Following the failed referenda to the EU Constitution in France and the Netherlands in 2005, the Commission especially tried to bridge the gap between official EU politics and public perception. These demands were substantiated in 2005 through the Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue und Discussion, which intended to make EU policy more transparent and citizen-oriented. Thereafter citizens were intended to have increased participation opportunities, especially through direct contact with political decision-makers. These plans were especially targeting young people, aiming to give them the instruments they need "to actively participate in the decision making process and gain ownership of the European project."¹⁵ The Structured Dialogue itself was brought to life in 2005 by the EU Youth Ministry as a medium for stronger and more binding youth involvement in EU politics.¹⁶ Through the targeted development of youth participation, the Structured Dialogue should establish itself as an involvement instrument for youth in the EU. The core idea is to promote contact between young people and policy makers at the local, regional, national, and ultimately European level. The following broad objectives were defined:

¹⁴ White Paper from the European Commission: A new impetus for European youth. COM 681 (2001).

¹⁵ Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social committee and the Committee of the Regions. The Commission's contribution to the period of reflection and beyond: Plan-D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate. COM 494 (2005), pg. 3.

¹⁶ Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States on Addressing the concerns of young people in Europe – implementing the European Youth Pact and promoting active citizenship. ABL C 292 (2005), pg. 6.

- ▶ The establishment of forums for dialogue with young people at all decision levels
- ▶ The ascertainment of opinions and concerns from youth through top-down and bottom-up approaches
- ▶ The incorporation of the results of the Structured Dialogue into the design of youth policy.¹⁷

Upon the ratification of the EU Youth Strategy and its renewed framework for youth policy cooperation in Europe (2010-2018), the member states defined two central goals pertaining to youth policy:

- ▶ “create more and equal opportunities for all young people in education and in the labour market”; and to
- ▶ “promote the active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity of all young people.”¹⁸

To this end, the Structured Dialogue was named as a central implementation instrument and platform for exchange in youth policy.¹⁹ During the course of this development, the Structured Dialogue obtained its first basic structure. Within the scope of the Trio-Presidency of the Council of the European Union, 18-month long work cycles were established, within which one common theme would be handled. Each of the presidents were able to set one focus during their six-month term of office. The Structured Dialogue is based on projects and consultations at all levels of the member states and was carried out within the scope of the EU Youth Conferences and during the European Youth Week.²⁰ The member states are responsible for carrying out the themes and implementing the work phases at the national level, as well as for incorporating the results into European processes.

Projects of the Structured Dialogue are supported by the program YOUTH IN ACTION, which has been active in the development program Erasmus+ since 2014. Key Action 3 officially supports the active involvement of young people in democratic society, the dialogue between youth and policy makers, and therefore the activities of the Structured Dialogue.²¹

¹⁷ Resolution of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on implementing the common objectives for participation by and information for young people in view of promoting their active European citizenship. Official Journal of the European Union. C 297 (2006), pg. 7.

¹⁸ Resolution of the Council on a renewed on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018). Official Journal of the European Union. C 311 (2009), pg. 2. Amtsblatt der Europäischen Union C 311 (2009), pg. 2.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pg. 4.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pg. 11.

²¹ European Commission: Erasmus+ Programme Guide. Version 2 (2016), pg. 223-225.

EU-Work Plan 2014-15

Based on the experiences gained during the first implementation year, the original semi-annual consultations were replaced by an evaluation aligned with the entire work cycle. From now on, this evaluation consists of an orientation, consultation, and feedback phase, which are organized and implemented by the member states. Therefore, within each 18-month long work cycle there is now only one consultation, but it can be further discussed and substantiated during the feedback phase.²²

Between July 2014 and December 2015, the Structured Dialogue work cycle with the theme "Empowering Young People" was completed. The focus of the project during this time was the strengthening and supporting of young people, in order to bolster their "autonomy and participation in societal life."²³ Through local participation projects, the existing hurdles to involvement were to be diminished while the dialogue competencies of youth were to be fostered. The overarching goal is to increase youth involvement in current decision-making processes and to put them in a position to discuss their own interests with policy and decision-makers.

Realization of the Structured Dialogue within the Framework of the EU Strategy

In order to implement the EU Youth Strategy in Germany, a federal and state working group was established in 2010, and their aim was to continuously pursue activities in the field of child and youth politics and to coordinate efforts at a regional level.²⁴ The implementation of the EU Youth Strategy intended to always take "aspects of personality development, the teaching of values, democracy education, participation and the strengthening of civil engagement" into account as well.²⁵ With this in mind, the Structured Dialogue plays a key transmission role. It delivers the themes determined at the EU-level, while simultaneously accompanying the EU Youth Strategy's implementation in Germany. The federal-state-AG working group determined the three areas of focus in their so-called Theme Corridors, which were to be central components of the implementation in Germany:

²² Resolution of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States from 20. May 2014 concerning the overview of the Structured Dialogue including the social inclusion of young people. Official Journal of the European Union. C 183 (2014), pg. 2.

²³ Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 20 May 2014 on a European Union Work Plan for Youth for 2014-2015. Official Journal of the European Union. C 183 (2014), pg. 10.

²⁴ To the evaluation of the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy in Germany see: Stephanie Baumbast, Frederike Hofman-van de Poll, Barbara Rink: Wissenschaftliche Begleitung der Umsetzung der EU-Jugendstrategie in Deutschland. Abschlussbericht der ersten Projektphase. Edited by: Deutsches Jugendinstitut, Munich 2014.

²⁵ Youth and Family Minister Conference (JFMK) 07/2013. Circular Resolution from 16. October 2013.

- ▶ Participation,
- ▶ Social integration and transfer into work,
- ▶ Recognition of informal and non-formal education.²⁶

The German Federal Youth Council (DBJR) established a national coordination center in 2010 in order to realize the Structured Dialogue in Germany. Their operative responsibilities include: the informing, advising, and supporting of involved stakeholders, leading of consultations with a self-developed online-tool, summarizing the results of the dialogue processes in Germany, and producing the transfer to the European level, and finally, coordinating the feedback process. The coordination center's homepage serves as a central information platform for the Structured Dialogue.²⁷

In 2010 the NAG was called upon to supervise the Structured Dialogue in Germany, and it was composed of members from the most important fields of youth work and youth policy from various federal levels, including youth representatives, youth research, and the national agency JUGEND. Here, the experiences of the diverse actors were introduced in the Structured Dialogue, and the implementation processes were guided and further developed. In addition to the preparation and processing of consultations, the NAG is also responsible for public relations and lobbying work. The DBJR has the chairmanship, and the BMFSFK has the vice-chairmanship.

In order to address the participation needs of young people, including within the NAG, and to increase youth involvement in the implementation process, three young representatives have been serving in the NAG as of this Structured Dialogue work phase. They are responsible for representing and presenting German youth with the results of the national participation rounds during semi-annual European youth conferences. Along with sharing their first-hand accounts at the conferences, representatives are also able to bring youth concerns about the projects back to the European level.²⁸

The national agency JUGEND is responsible for the facilitation of the Structured Dialogue projects within the context of ERASMUS+ in Germany. The approval of grants for projects is subject to a number of conditions that are geared toward the general eligibility conditions established at the European level; the following, however, are defined according to Germany's national funding strategy:

- ▶ Consideration of existing thematic specifications,
- ▶ Participation in the consultations,

²⁶ Protocol Federal-State Working Group Conference on 5. October 2010, pg. 6. The three "theme corridors" (topics of focus) were also followed in the second implementation phase after the circular resolution JFMK 07/2013 on 16. October 2013.

²⁷ <https://www.strukturiertes-dialog.de>

²⁸ <https://www.strukturiertes-dialog.de/jugendvertreterinnen>

- ▶ Involvement of political decision-makers from various political levels (municipal, state, federal, European),
- ▶ Organization of several diverse events,
- ▶ Involvement of as many youth as possible,
- ▶ Contact with and active support of the public authorities responsible for youth,
- ▶ Cooperation with additional structures and organizations in youth work and welfare and other fields (e.g. schools) and other youth associations and councils,
- ▶ Informing participants about the Structured Dialog and its European dimension,
- ▶ Active press and public relations work.²⁹

Consultation Process Regarding Empowerment

The analyzed work cycle with the theme “Youth Empowerment” is organized in three work stages. In the orientation phase, the focus was on research and discussion of themes of the EU Council of Youth Ministers. The national results of this phase provided input for the EU Youth Conference in Rome (October 2014), where further discussion took place and finally an orientation framework for the further work of Structured Dialogue was determined. Following the conclusion of this Youth Conference, the orientation phase was closed. It provided the foundations for the participation and consultation phases. To this end the coordination center, in conjunction with the NAG, formulated the concrete issues and carried out the consultation process in Germany. The results of the online and offline consultations were compiled with support from the NAG and subsequently integrated into the EU Youth Conference in Riga in March 2015. During the feedback phase at JuPiD in 2015, general recommendations following the Youth Conference were discussed. The results from JuPiD ultimately provided the national input for the subsequent EU Youth Conference in Luxembourg (June 2015). At the end of the work cycle, a council resolution on the promotion of political participation of young people in democratic life in Europe was adopted at the Council’s November 2015 meeting.³⁰ A follow-up event occurred in February in Berlin, where the involved youth had the opportunity to analyze the current status of the implementation of their recommendations and engage in discussion with decision-makers from Germany.³¹

²⁹ National Agency ERASMUS+: YOUTH for Europe: Development strategies for a sustainable use of the resources of the key action 3- meetings of young people with decision-makers within the context of the youth field in the program Erasmus+: YOUTH IN ACTION in Germany.

³⁰ Council Resolution on encouraging political participation of young people in democratic life in Europe. C417 (2015), pg. 10-16.

³¹ Must be added yet.

3 Added Value and Safeguarding from the Perspective of the Project Stakeholders

3.1 Data Sample

In the following chapter the results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the experiences and evaluations of the project stakeholders during the implementation of the Structured Dialogue in Germany will be summarized. The collected data refers to a range of actors at different times.

At the national dialogue event JuPiD in February 2014³² participant observations took place. Interviews with project leaders and young participants were carried out, and surveys were distributed to both groups. 15 youth from seven different projects as well as nine project leaders from eight different projects were interviewed, and 26 surveys by youth and 18 surveys by project leaders were completed. The questions were directed at the expectations and experiences gained thus far with regard to the second phase of the realization of the Structured Dialogue in Germany.

During the JuPiD event in May 2015³³ participant observations were collected as well, through interviews with eight youth, three politicians, and one expert. The discussions were concerned with the general evaluation of the Structured Dialogue in its second realization in Germany, especially with experiences during consultations and feedback processes.

The JuPiD Forum in February 2016 was included in the evaluation, however only selected data could be considered. Here, in addition to the participant observations, a short survey about their assessments of the results achieved during the empowerment participation rounds was distributed and completed by 18 total young participants.

At the Structured Dialogue Networking Meeting in March 2015³⁴ experience exchange and participant discussion was scientifically supervised and evaluated. An interview was also held with three project leaders. The focus of the collected data was on the experiences and assessments of the implementation of the European dimension in the projects.

³² See JuPiD 2014 Youth and Politics in Dialogue. Documentation to the event 23-25.2014. Hrsg. V. German Bundesjugendring, Berlin 2014. https://www.strukturiertes-dialog.de/uploads/media/JuPiD_2014_-_Dokumentation_01.pdf

³³ See JuPiD 2015 Youth and Politics in Dialogue. Documentation to the dialogue event from 7.-9. June 2015. Edited by the German Bundesjugendring, Berlin 2015. https://www.strukturiertes-dialog.de/uploads/media/JuPiD-2015_Dokumentation_web.pdf

³⁴ See Documentation: Network Meeting: Structured Dialogue. 9.-12. March 2015, Bonn. Hrsg. V. d. National Agency ERASMUS+: YOUTH for Europe, Bonn 2015. https://www.jugendfuereuropa.de/downloads/4-20-3707/JfE_Doku_Vernetzungstreffen_end.pdf

During the July 2015 event “Action for a Youth-friendly Society,”³⁵ special attention was given to the forum “implementation of the EU Youth Strategy,” in order to determine relevant reference points concerning the Structured Dialogue. A group interview with one project leader and two youth also occurred at the event.

Finally, all of the Structured Dialogue projects that were supported in 2014-15 by the program ERASMUS+: YOUTH IN ACTION were contacted and the involved youth participants were asked to share their experiences with the Structured Dialogue through an online survey.³⁶ 250 total youth from 20 different projects completed the survey and provided their opinions, assessments, and recommendations regarding the Structured Dialogue. Those surveyed were between 11 and 28 years old, though the majority of participants were between 15-17 years old, with this age range representing nearly 70 % of participants. 40 % of the participants were female, 60 % male. 21 % of those surveyed come from a migration background. With respect to current education level, 64 % of survey participants attend a Gymnasium, 17 % a Realschule/Mittelschule, 8 % a Hochschule/University, and 4 % a Hauptschule/Mittelschule.³⁷ Just 2 % were either in a vocational training program or working, while 1 % attended a Gesamtschule (integrated school) and 1 % was unemployed.

To expand upon the quantitative data in the survey, qualitative data were collected from six selected exemplary Structured Dialogue projects. These projects were scientifically supported, participant observations were led at central events, and individual and group interviews were held with 39 total youth, nine project leaders, and six policy makers.

3.2 Project Implementation

The following section will summarize and analytically detail the experiences, assessment, and opinions of the stakeholders involved in the Structured Dialogue projects through collected data. Below all quantitative and qualitative data collected during the evaluation period 2014-15 will be presented. While the data involve personal, subjective attitudes, the frequency of the responses can provide a meaningful and an intensive look at the realization of the Structured

³⁵ See Youth Strategy 2015-2018 “Action for a Youth-friendly Society:” Documentation of the launch event on 9. July 2015 in Berlin. Edited by the Coordination Office “Taking action for a youth friendly society”, Berlin 2015. https://www.jugendrecht.de/downloads/Dokumentation_AuftKtveranstaltung.pdf

³⁶ See survey results in the appendix.

³⁷ Students who graduate from Gymnasium receive the Abitur (secondary school diploma), the necessary qualification for university admission in Germany; students who graduate from Realschule receive the Mittlerereife (lower secondary school diploma), which they can use towards vocational education or additional schooling that would subsequently qualify them for university admission; a Hochschule refers to a University of Applied Science; and students who graduate from Hauptschule (primary school diploma) are on track for a vocational field.

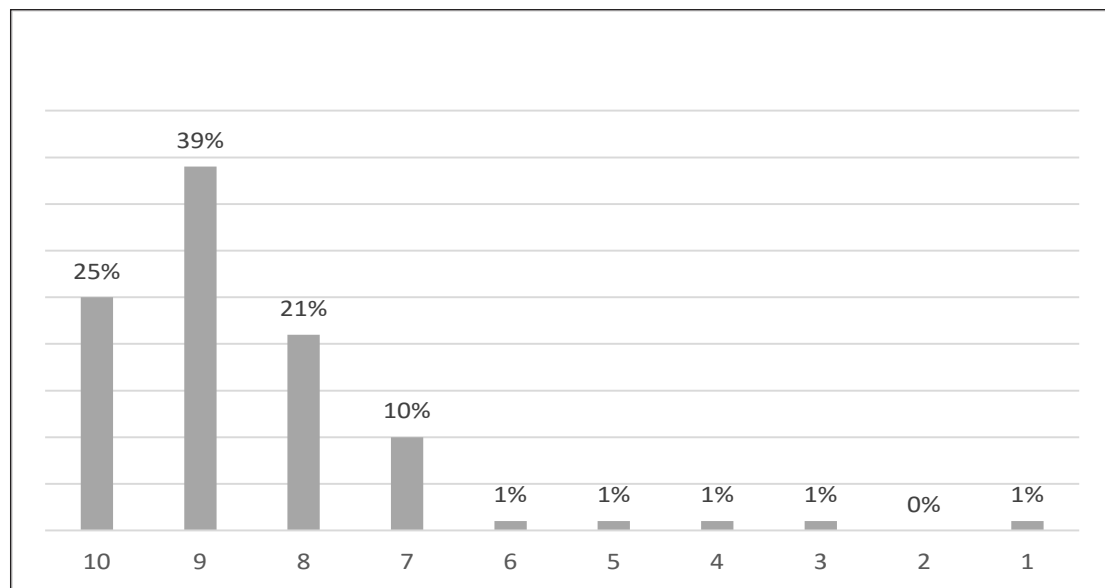
Dialogue in the projects. The quantitative data allow for statements about trends and perspectives, and the qualitative results provide indications of explanation and interpretation patterns.

Project Evaluation

In an online survey, young participants had the opportunity to rate the projects in which they participated on a scale from 1-10. The vast majority of survey participants rated their respective projects overall as good or very good. Nearly two-thirds of those asked gave the rating very good, and just over one third gave the rating good. Only a small number of participants reported that they were less satisfied with the project, rating it with fair, poor, or very poor.

Online Survey 2015

Question 4: Looking back, how would you rate the project/event as a whole? (10 = very positively -1 = very negatively, n =229)



The young participants also expressed positive impressions about the projects during the interviews and the dialogue that took place there with political actors. The projects of the Structured Dialogue presented youth with the opportunity to interact more closely with politics and the political decision-making process, enabling them to formulate their own positions. For many young participants, it is the first chance they have had to engage in concrete discussion with politicians. The projects' participative format and the creative handling of themes and the discussion with peers creates an atmosphere, where it is easier for young people to deal with current political and social challenges. In the projects, they learn to find their own standpoints, to reconcile their viewpoints with others,

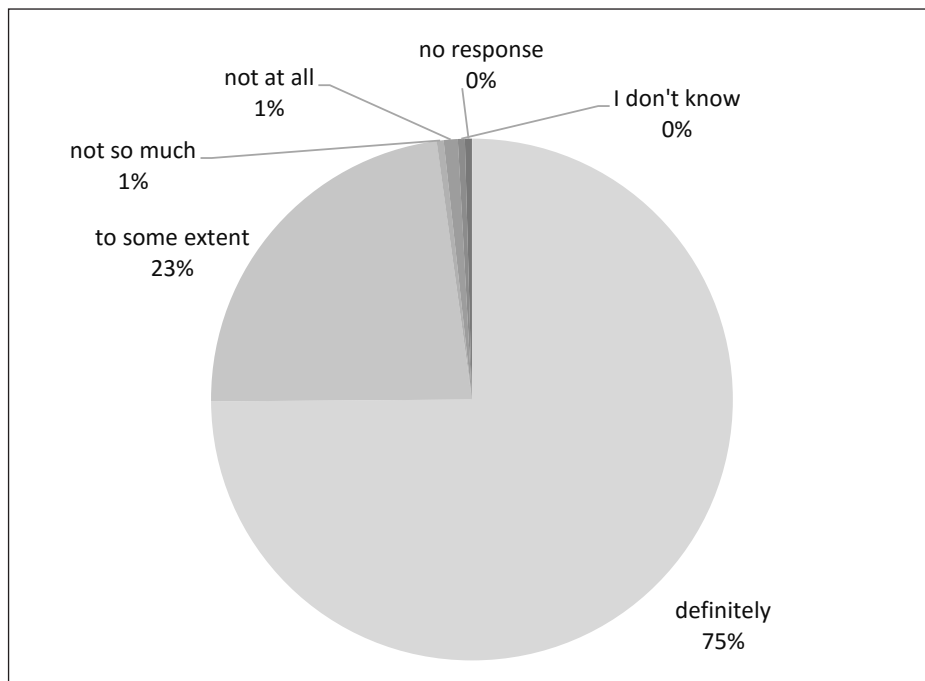
to voice their concerns to dialogue partners from politics and administration, and to discuss their questions and requests. In this way, project participants find active access to politics and political organizations, which pertain to their environment and needs and offer the possibility for cooperation. One participant at JuPiD 2014 described this opportunity with the following words:

As a teenager, I would never have had the chance to participate in such a conversation, and therefore, I think it is an excellent opportunity that we have and that we can experience.

The evaluations of the project were also examined differently using an additional online survey. Almost all participants indicated that they had fun during the project. For three fourths of those questioned, they strongly agreed and for just over a fourth of them, this was at least partially true. Only three youth did not agree.

Online Survey 2015

*Question 5.1: How would you rate the following aspect of the project/event?
The project/event was fun for me. (n=231)*



The enjoyment factor is also important for youth participating in the projects. This is always emphasized during the interviews. Where discussion about politics may often be perceived as more dry and boring, the relaxed atmosphere built through the projects' unique format, focus on youth-friendly methods, and interaction with other people in the same age group, make it exciting and interesting. This atmosphere is similarly seen by project leaders and is inten-

tionally implemented into the projects. They try to bring creativity and emotion into the political themes that often feel rather abstract, in order to reach youth at more than just the cognitive level. This pertains especially to educationally disadvantaged youth, who may have more limited knowledge or interests in politics, and therefore need more low-threshold approaches ensuring a holistic approach to education. Learning with fun is an important form of extracurricular youth work that is determined to share practical, tangible political education with youth in a different way. This approach is implemented in various ways into the projects of the Structured Dialogue, and it is continuously positively noted by young participants. For many youth, it is a requirement to develop an interest in politics and get involved in political issues in the first place. A project leader mentioned the following point:

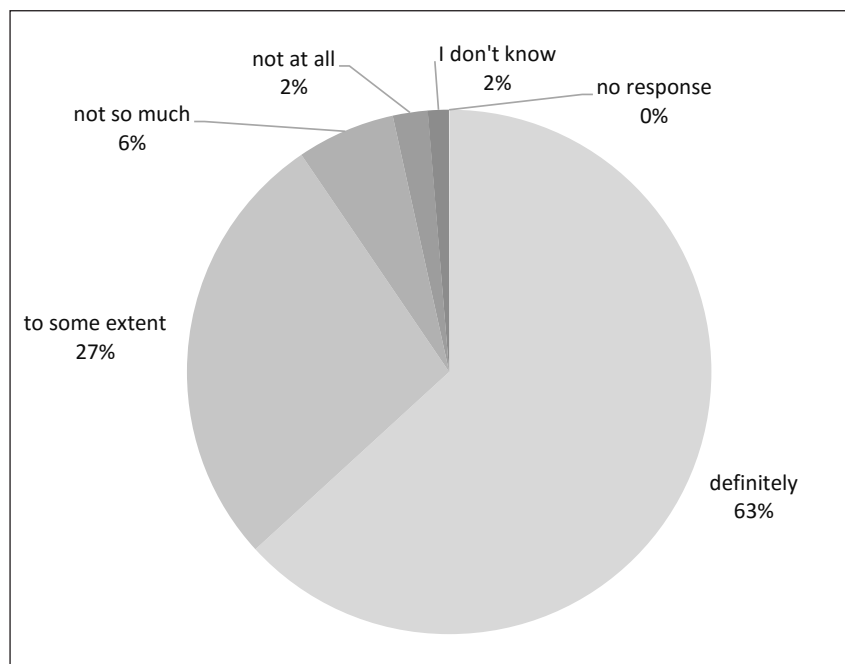
You reach people when you appeal to their emotions, not just their brains.

Participant Composition

63 % of the participants rated that they found the composition of participants to be very interesting, with 27 % reporting that the composition of participants was at least partially interesting. Just 6 % did not find the participant group to be interesting, and only five of those questioned found the group composition completely uninteresting.

Online Survey 2015

Question 5.4: How would you rate the following aspect of the project/event?
The composition of participants was interesting. (n=231)



Youth also reported that exchange and joint activities with peers of the same age were important aspects of the projects for them. It is therefore crucial, that a relaxed atmosphere is created for all participants, so that an open-minded group dynamic can unfold. The incorporation of the themes, the exchange of different opinions within the group, the formulations of common standpoints, as well as the discussions during the dialogue rounds shape the way the young participants interact with one another. Sometimes the contact between the participants remains after the projects have ended. For example, they carry on communication through Facebook or WhatsApp groups and even plan collective projects or events together. During an interview, one young participant explained the importance of peers for collaborative learning:

For me, it is largely a matter of community. You are in a group with different people, that you do not know at all, and you can work together and then actually accomplish something. This makes learning much easier and somewhat more comfortable.

The project leaders also see the direct and personal dialogue between the participants as an essential factor to motivate youth and raise their awareness of politics. This applies especially to youth who have not previously worked close with politics or who have limited knowledge about how political processes function. The projects of the Structured Dialogue establish a very communicative “face-to-face” foundation. The following quote from a young participant describes the value of this personal contact for the dialogue:

Here the person is directly in front of you, which makes it entirely different than when someone is communicating with you just through a survey. You have the personal contact, you can say your opinion directly, and you can ask questions.

The direct human contact between participants is particularly vital for international projects of the Structured Dialogue, where additional intercultural learning experiences and insight into other national contexts is possible. The approaches and formats of the international youth work make it easier to lead dialogue with common themes from transnational and European perspectives. One project leader determined the following within the context of his international work:

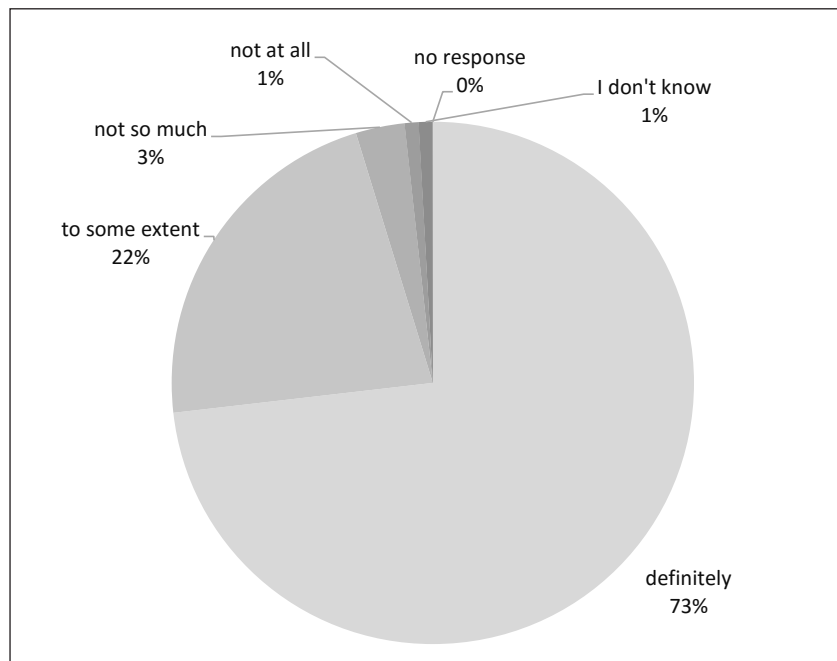
Ultimately, things like participation, involvement, and engagement always depend on relationships. When compared to other age groups, relationships play an especially important role for youth, and they often happen through encounters...A Structured Dialogue can only happen through a structured encounter. Currently a lot seems very abstract, including European politics. We need to continue creating opportunities that make use of personal contact to enable understanding—and to ensure understanding about what is happening in other countries too.

Personal Development

That the project personally benefited young participants was made comparatively clear during the surveys. Nearly two thirds of those asked strongly agreed with this statement, where 22 % agreed at least in part. Seven youth maintained that the project brought them little personal gain, while two participants strongly disagreed that the project benefited them.

Online Survey 2015

Question 5.2: How would you rate the following aspect of the project/event?
My participation in the project/event personally benefited me. (n=231)



During the 2015 network meeting, project leaders wrote the following summary: Projects of the Structured Dialogue make it possible for youth to be independent, to express themselves in words and in a foreign language, and they strengthen youth and create a political consciousness. When considered in this regard, projects of the Structured Dialogue intrinsically contribute to youth empowerment. Accordingly, a project leader plays an essential role in the projects of the Structured Dialogue, as they are there to support—not to parent— young participants on their development into responsible citizens and an active part of society. One young participant expresses this experience with the following:

...generally how you interact with people. Initially I had the craziest respect for politicians, and I thought to myself, how am I supposed to approach them now and so on. And I think this became more relaxed through the project; if you have a question you just go and ask it.

Intercultural experiences and exchange with youth from other countries influences participants' personal development, enables them to broaden their experiences, and tangibly represents the projects' European connection. Being able to experience Europe through personal international contacts and the impact this had on the individual person was described by a participant at the Network Conference (2015):

I really was interested in history, so I knew something about Europe already, but I could not really grasp it the way I am able to now... And I've also learned so much from the other people, about their countries' histories.

One former participant, who is now involved in leading the Structured Dialogue as a teamer, feels that her personal project experience was formative for her further development and her engagement in politics and society:

That also benefited me personally, simply because I could get to know these structures, and I became more aware of how important it is to actively participate in society and to speak with politicians, because they really do determine a lot.

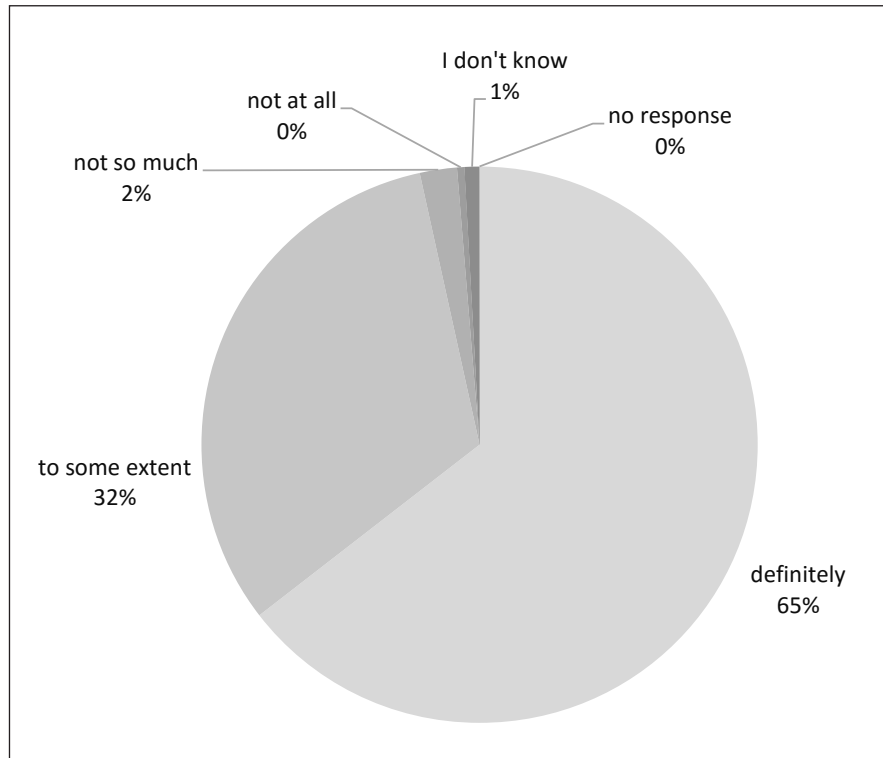
A young project leader, who organized and led an independent, regional level Structured Dialogue project, expressed similar thoughts during an interview at JuPiD 2014:

I believe, that there is also a chance to further develop yourself personally. Exactly. This happens because you are forced to establish direct contact with political decision-makers. This alone strengthens your self-confidence, when you notice that you engaged in conversation and consider your experiences and those of your counterpart. It is a large development process, but also a step forward, that is carried out within the project.

Content and Topics

Youth involved in the projects also approved of the selected content and topics. With regard to both elements, nearly two thirds of the participants strongly agreed that the content was very interestingly presented and discussed. Almost another third agreed that it was at least partially interesting for them. For five participants this was less true, and one participant strongly disagreed with this statement.

In the surveys the young participants listed a variety of topics that they worked with. In addition to the selected topics that aligned with the initial project concept, the participants also had plenty of flexibility to include their own content and questions. This allowed them to consider current and locally based developments and events, such as specific viewpoints and interpretations of provided content. This aligns with the projects' participative approach, which aims to include young people in the planning of project activities and to incorporate their expressed needs and desires as much as possible.

*Online Survey 2015**Question 5.3: How would you rate the following aspect of the project/event?**The topics were presented and discussed in an interesting manner.*

Later during the interviews the young participants elaborated on the topics and content they worked on together, which further strengthened their understanding and provided a solid basis for their discussions with political decision-makers. One participant expressed this with the following words:

We need to get into the topics a little bit more, and because we have more of an idea, we can appeal to the politicians better, which could maybe bother us, could maybe be done better, but it is very important to us.

In order to purposefully support the dialogue, the projects' content and methods were specifically tailored to young people. The invited politicians noticed the solid groundwork done in preparation for the discussion rounds, while this might not have been as obvious to the young participants according to discussions with them. One politician remarked:

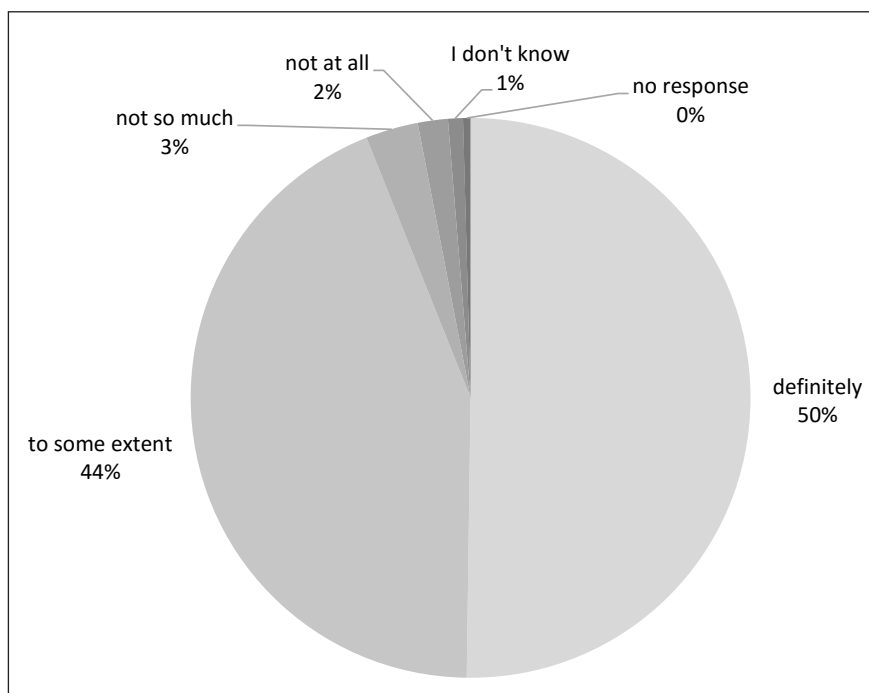
It was obvious here, that everyone was aware of what is possible, what the issues are that can really be addressed and discussed here with one another. They were somehow prepared for the situation, their discussion partner, and that is an absolute quality win for both involved.

Opportunities for Participation

Half of the young participants felt strongly that they could bring in their own ideas to the project, and another 45 % agreed at least partially. Just seven participants felt that this was less true, and four saw no opportunities to incorporate their own ideas.

Online Survey 2015

Question 5.5: How would you rate the following aspect of the project/event?
I could include myself and my ideas. (n= 231)



The youth were able to more specifically detail the extent to which they were able contribute to the content and dialogue during interviews. They found it best when the project was arranged as openly as possible, in order to give flexibility for personal ideas and suggestions. It was also important to the youth that they could speak their mind and that everyone had the chance to participate. According to the young participants, the opportunity to bring oneself and one's own concerns into the projects strengthens one's willingness to become active and participate politically. A participant at JuPiD 2014 describes this with the following words:

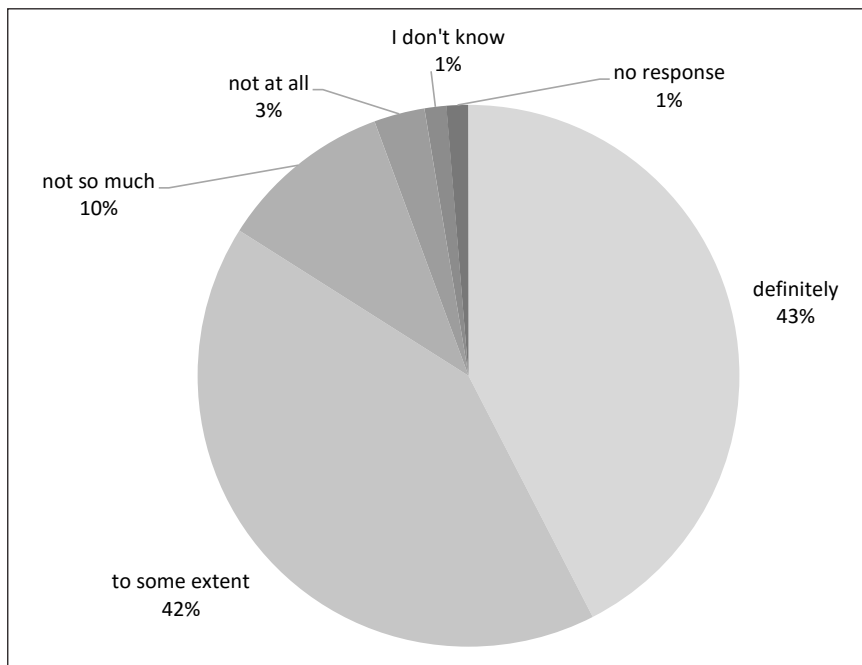
Through involvement in the projects youth notice that their ideas are being included, that they are becoming more politically active and that their disenchantment with politics decreases. They simply see that their voices really matter.

Dialogue

Looking back at the dialogues that took place with political decision-makers, 43 % of the youth are in agreement that the discussions were hugely successful, and just as many participants agree at least in part. In contrast, 10 % of those asked agreed less and five youth were of the opinion the discussions were completely unsuccessful.

Online Survey 2015

Question 5.7: How would you rate the following aspect of the project/event?
The dialogue between the youth and the politicians was successful. (n= 231)



In the interviews the young participants were able to give more detailed accounts of their discussions with politicians and could more clearly describe why they were generally positively rated. They indicated that the format enabled them to engage in direct conversation with political decision-makers and to discuss youth-relevant topics in a purposeful way. Without the project, there would not have been such direct conversation opportunities for the youth. The chance to exchange was especially emphasized by one young participant:

Yes, that was definitely positive. As I mentioned, you can really see, that the politicians are interested in us and the other way around, that we are also really interested in the politicians. It was just positive, to come into the dialogue and to get this feeling that us teenagers aren't irrelevant to the politicians.

The open and respectful contact with each other, the willingness to listen to each other, and the ability to understand the concerns and arguments of those involved in the discussion, and the feeling that participants and politicians were meeting on an equal level all played an important role in the dialogue's success. This was very clearly communicated in an interview with one young person:

For one thing, the politicians were open to our ideas and they always listened to us, and we were open to the issues the politicians said too. I believe that this discussion culture was very important. We... sat in smaller groups... and discussed with politicians there, where it was easier for every individual to contribute to the conversation.

Project leadership similarly saw the discussion culture and general atmosphere as essential for the course of the dialogue too:

In my opinion the benefit of this format, let's say, is that it brings you in direct contact, ideally, with politics and youth. Here I am really convinced that alone through the contact between the youth and politics, that you interact and exchange on equal footing so to speak. The focus is not always on implementing concrete demands, but rather on understanding the other person's perspective. I believe that the Structured Dialogue is a unique or great format, to reduce and get rid of biases and false assumptions on the part of the young people. It is just another way to get a more informed sense of the work and process of politics, and maybe to see politics and even the politicians as a whole. I think that the existing format is already quite good.

Sincerity

When asked if their concerns were seriously considered by the politicians involved, participants reflected a more critical evaluation of the dialogue. Almost 40 % of the youth felt as if their conversation partner took them completely seriously. For a good third of those asked, this is at least partially the case. Another 15 % of participants indicated that they felt like they were taken less seriously, and 4 % of them did not agree at all. 7 % of those asked were not able to answer this question.

The young participants indicated that they like to discuss with politicians on "equal footing," and that it is important that their concerns be sincerely considered during interviews:

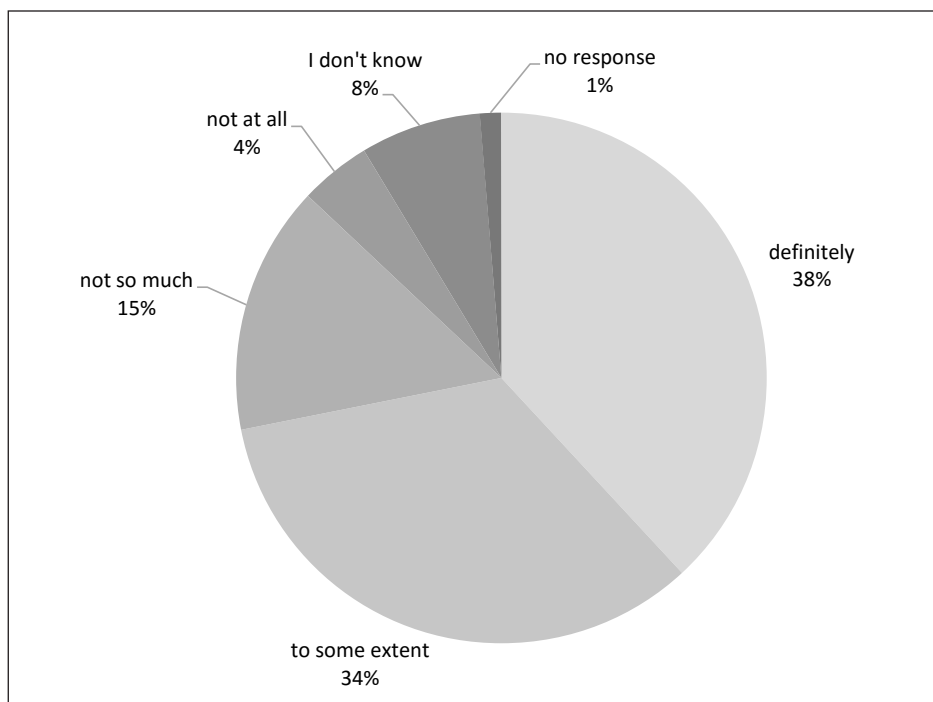
It should not be coming from the "top" down to us, but instead a discussion between teenagers and politicians on the same level. You sit at one table together directly with the people, can look them in the eyes, and simultaneously there was also someone there who brought everyone into their roles, like a moderator.

The dialogue should not be merely symbolic in nature, but rather a concrete discussion with the goal of accomplishing something. This idea was clearly worded by a young participant during an interview:

I also find it important that we are taken seriously, because I know we developed several good ideas during the project. The problem is only that we do not have the ability to implement them ourselves and depend on the politicians. For this reason, it would be cool if they would come back again and ask how it is going and how we could possibly help out.

Online Survey 2015

Question 5.8: How would you rate the following aspect of the project/event?
Our concerns were taken seriously by the politicians. (n= 231)



This concept coincides with the assessments of a longtime, experienced project leader, who critically remarked that the Structured Dialogue is still not taken seriously by the politicians.

It seems it is still more a theme for soap-box speeches and there is really little understanding from the side of the politicians, that you really need to include young people in political processes.

Another project leader describes this with similar words, and feels that the political decision-makers owe the young participants responses to their requests and should continue to deal with the issues following the dialogue.

I have been consistently critical regarding the politicians and their earnestness when it concerns communication with youth. I do not know if they actually include the discussed themes in their work. Unfortunately, you do not hear much about this in the news anymore.

According to one politician, these challenges can be met if all dialogue participants engage themselves enough:

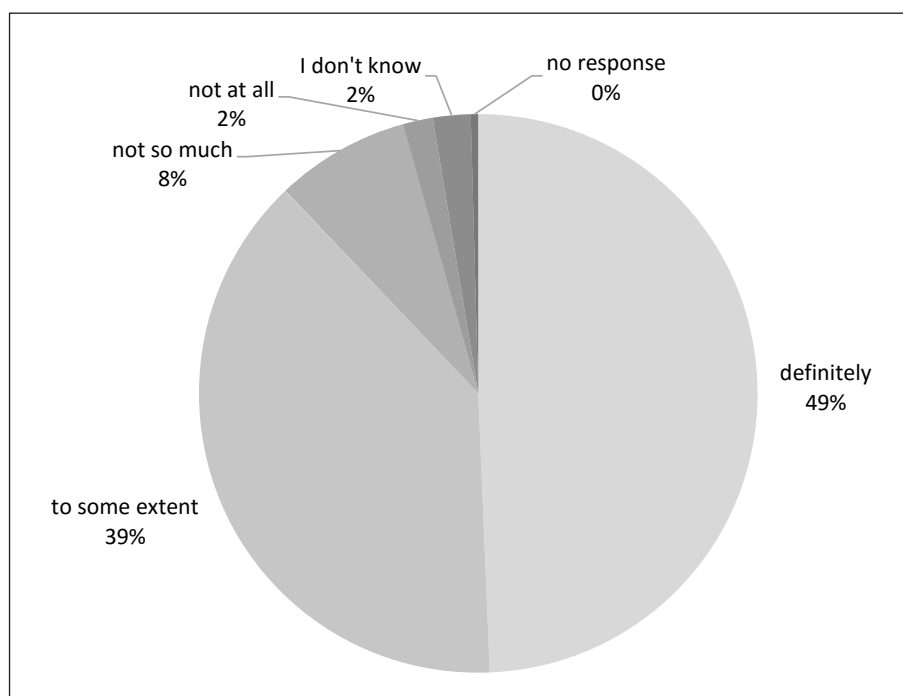
The dialogue can actually provide everything. It depends upon how the dialogue participants... prepare themselves, as well as put themselves in a position to contribute, to withdraw, but also to come forward. With increasing flexibility and trust such a dialogue can spread around the table.

Results

When asked about the project results, the young participants' assessments comprise a positive underlying trend. Almost half of the participants described themselves as fully content with the project's results, and nearly 40 % agreed at least partially. 18 youth reported that this was less the case for them, four indicated that they strongly disagreed, and five did not respond to the question.

Online Survey 2015

Question 5.6: How would you rate the following aspect of the project/event?
I am content with the results of our project. (n= 231)

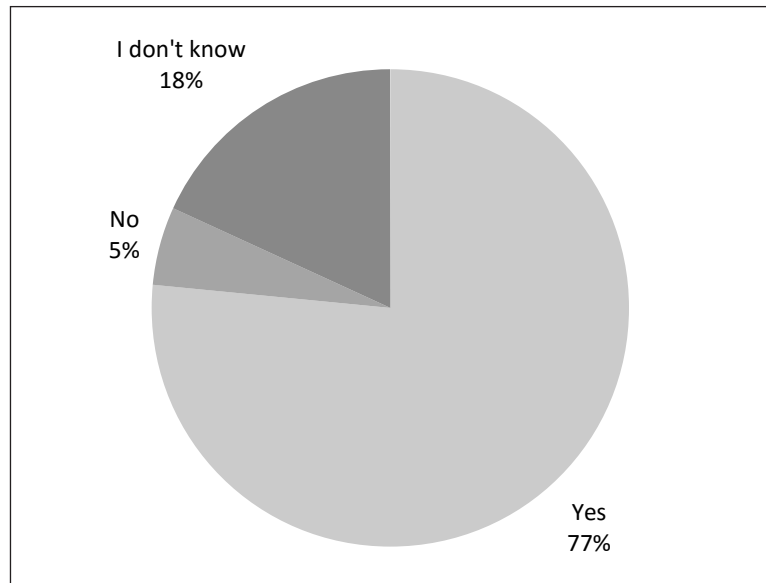


The generally positive perceptions of the achieved results are also reflected in the question concerning the project's overall impact. More than two thirds of those asked are of the opinion that the results of the project can effect the lives of young people, and just 5 % of the young participants disagree. However, 18 %

of the participants did not feel that they were in a position to assess if the project achieved something.

Online Survey 2015

Question 7: Could the results of the project/event bring about something for young people? (n= 231)



When asked about the implementation of their project results, many youth were often critical. They feel that the politicians are actually obligated to include the needs and concerns of young people in their work. One young participant directly asked for a more binding use of the dialogue results during an interview:

Many Structured Dialogue projects have the problem that the politicians are not really held to their responsibility to do something and instead just make suggestions. You need to improve that, that the politicians will be made to implement these things not just make suggestions like "yeah, you could do that," only for it to be eventually rejected.

Project leaders also ask that the project not remain a symbolic measure, but rather that it lead to concrete accomplishments— "real policies must come out of it." During an interview, one project leader summarizes this:

The politicians and administration are also already aware of how important it is to bring youth closer to politics. However, this awareness ends when it comes to a very concrete implementation of the youth's requests. It sort of follows the credo: as long as they do not influence our power or decision-making structures, the youth forums and conferences are a very nice thing. At the regional level, where participants have a closer relationship with politics, youth requests are at least partially implemented. I

actually find that very incredible. It is wonderful to see that small changes can occur because of the youth's requests and ideas, and this also provides a kind of validation for the Structured Dialogue projects. While these changes of course do not happen directly following the youth conferences, they are at least in process.

When the results of the Structured Dialogue can also be implemented in practice and exhibit effects in this way more youth are convinced to actively engage in politics and society. One young participant named the advantages of concrete visible and presentable results from the dialogue:

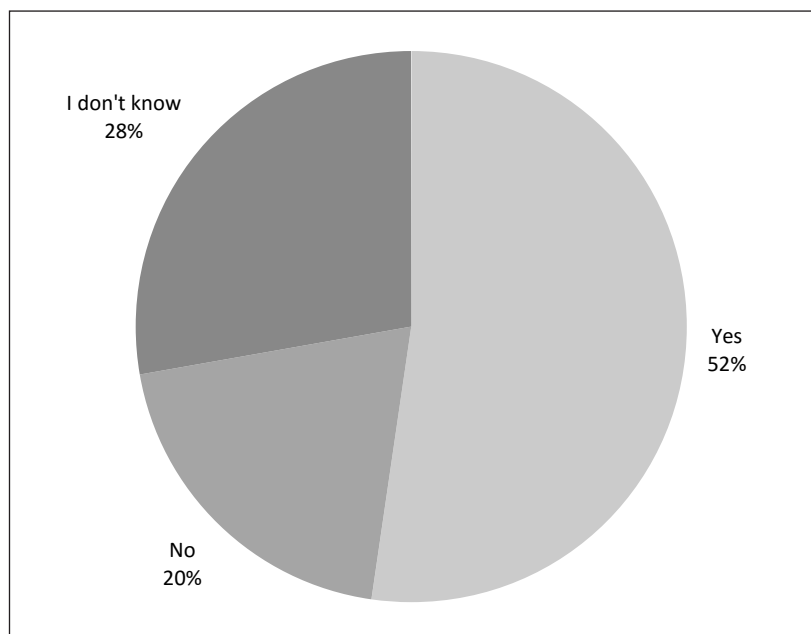
So I would find it really great if this model was not just limited to the Structured Dialogue, but also used as an example to show young people that they have an impact, that something comes out of the results.

Sustainability

The doubts about the actual implementation of the results achieved in the projects can also explain the generally critical response to the question about the projects' sustainability. All things considered, more than half of the participants reported that concrete steps for the continuation of the dialogue were agreed upon. 20 % of those asked indicated that this was not the case, and 28 % of the young participants were not sure.

Online Survey 2015

Question 8: Were concrete steps for the continuation of the dialogue confirmed? (n= 225)



When considering the sustainability of their projects and the implementation of their produced results, the young participants responded rather skeptically:

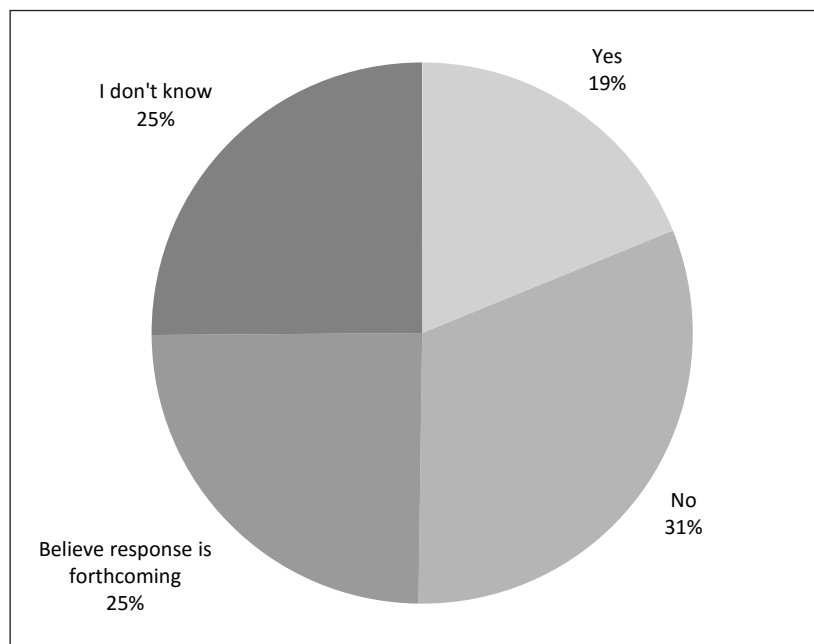
During the meetings, where the politicians came and we spoke with them directly, they seemed really enthusiastic and also reflected on our ideas. In hindsight, I believe it was not super important to most of them, because of their responses to our questions about another meeting or how we could somehow continue what we started with them. I think that a certain disinterest was there.

Feedback

With this background, it is not surprising that just 19 % of the youth surveyed reported that they received a response to their concerns. This was not the case for 31 % of participants, and a quarter are not sure. Another quarter responded that they believe that a response will still arrive in the future.

Online Survey 2015

Question 9: Did you receive a response from a politician regarding your concerns afterwards? (n=223)



It is certainly very important for youth that they receive a response to their projects and their dialogue concerns. From their perspective, feedback is a foundation and an incentive for further engagement in politics and society. Here is how one interview participant formulated her experience:

Well, I would like to see a higher response. We are not doing this off the cuff—it takes preparation... These three projects, three years, as they are now, have not come out of nowhere. We have worked hard and would therefore like to know if what we are doing is working. They always say that young people are lazy when it comes to politics. Then when we get something up off the ground and hear nothing back. That brings the whole process back to a standstill. If this whole thing would come a little faster or with more feedback, then that would be much better.

Project leaders have also recognized a big deficit in this area of the Structured Dialogue. The political actors gladly come to the dialogue events, but have difficulty with prompt responses. Therefore there is the challenge to dig deeper here and seek pending responses. Youth cannot do this alone and need our help here. This task is then directed to project leadership and structures:

But then you need to figure out what is not working, and you need to really investigate and somehow follow through: What came out of this? Is there already something, or is that already included somehow? How will that be received? Here you are always playing catch-up.

To be able to achieve this project leaders maintain that it is necessary to develop firm, consistent structures. For this purpose, participation and the Structured Dialogue should also be legally anchored and accordingly, a legally binding foundation should be established. Only this could move the projects from a “superficial existence” into the desired deep and wide implementation of the Structured Dialogue:

The Structured Dialogue can only be successful if it exists long-term... So, it must be a permanent structure so to speak.

3.3 Alignment of the Structured Dialogue Projects within the European Youth Strategy

The relationship between the Structured Dialogue projects and the official political process on European and regional levels is essential, especially when regarding the respective European and three German federal focus themes. As the instrument responsible for implementing the EU Youth Strategy within the context of European youth politics, the Structured Dialogue is tasked with including youth in regular consultations. Within the projects, there is space for young people to concretely deal with established European and selected themes of local significance and to enter into dialogue with political decision-makers. Through the tailoring of themes and content, the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy was possible in Germany. The transfer of the results and the projects' clear connection with the consultation process were of key sig-

nificance for the successful realization of the Structured Dialogue. The youth questioned in the online survey (2015) reported that according to their own observations, the Structured Dialogue is largely coordinated with the EU Youth Strategy. When compared to the analysis of the first implementation period, this awareness rose slightly and stands at nearly 90 %.

It was also explained there, how it [the Structured Dialogue] works... that youth in the different European countries meet too, and it centers on bringing as many young people in as possible to then jointly develop projects at the European level.

Often, however, young participants' conceptions about the Structured Dialogue's objectives and layout remain rather vague.

Consultations? Now that you say it, it sounds familiar, but unfortunately nothing big has come to mind. In that area, I did not honestly understand much.

Additionally, during the analysis period from 2010-2016 several youth and project leaders also considered the designation "Structured Dialogue" to be a cumbersome and unclear term that is difficult to convey in youth work:

Yes the method was well received, but the name of the program was not, and that is a shame.

The name is bad for publicity. Nobody understands it.

Perhaps "Youth Dialogue" is better than "Structured Dialogue."

From the beginning of the second realization phase, the project leadership consistently took the connection to the consultations into account as they planned projects. Half of the project leaders asked at JuPiD 2014 were undecided, while two thirds of those who planned a concrete Structured Dialogue project considered participating in a consultation. Almost a third of project leaders reported that they previously took part in a consultation, three participated in every consultation to date, but just two out of 17 of those surveyed explicitly suggested a stronger coordination between the dialogue projects and consultations.

It must be clear how the results of the projects will be integrated into the future development of the Structured Dialogue.

The surveys from JuPiD 2014 also indicated that participating in a consultation was not one of the young participants' top priorities. Only four out of ten youth participated in a Structured Dialogue project as well as a consultation process. The majority of the youth surveyed plan to participate in a project in the future. However only 19 youth intend to participate in a consultation. Additionally, the number of survey participants who were undecided was much larger for the question concerning involvement in a consultation than it was for the question about involvement in a project.

JuPiD 2014 Youth (n= 26)/Project leaders (n= 18)

Participation SD Project/Consultation 2014	Yes	No	I don't know	No response
Have you participated in a project of the SD to date?				
Youth	16	10		--
Project leaders	11	7	--	--
Have you participated in a consultation to date?				
Youth	4	21	--	1
Project leaders	5	12	--	1
Are you planning on participating in a project in the future?				
Youth	19	0	7	--
Project leaders	12	0	6	--
Are you planning on participating in a consultation in the future?				
Youth	6	2	16	2
Project leaders	8	1	9	--

Looking back at the project realization in the evaluation period (2014-2015), the project leaders managed feedback during the official consultation processes quite differently. Several projects explicitly dealt with consultation rounds and injected results into the online consultation, while others merely pointed out these opportunities to engage in the consultation process to young participants. All analyzed projects were nonetheless present at JuPiD 2015³⁸, and in this respect, were involved in the official consultation process.

In the 2015 online survey, the young participants were asked about their knowledge of and involvement in the online consultations, which took place within the framework of the Structured Dialogue with the theme of EU youth politics and connected to their respective projects.

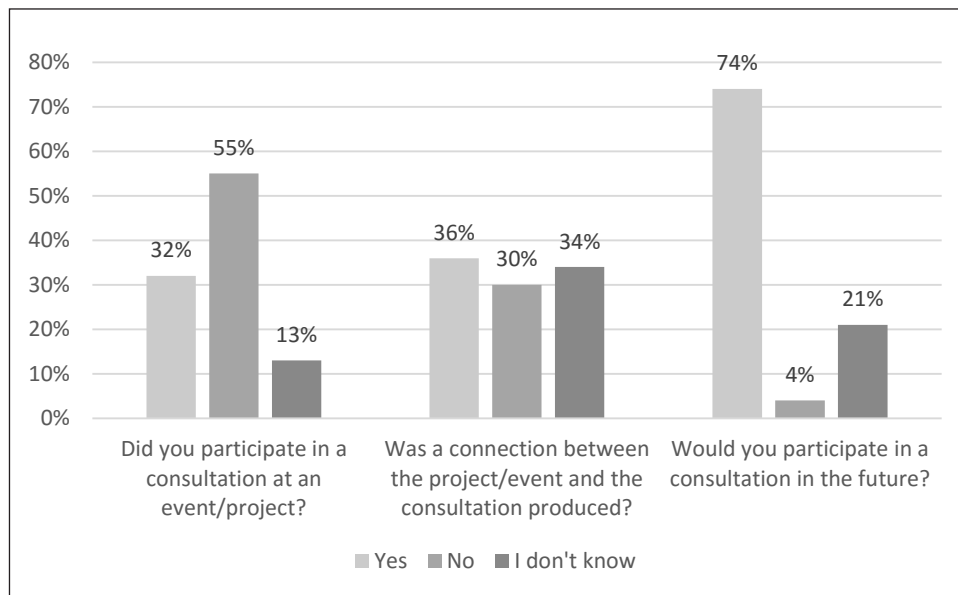
The data shows that just a third of the young participants reported that a link between their Structured Dialogue project or event and the consultation was made. Almost a third indicated that this connection was not made, and another third was not able to answer the question. Within the context of the project or the event, nearly a third participated in a consultation, half did not, and the small remainder did not know how to answer. Interestingly, almost three-fourths of the youth who were involved in a project are prepared to participate in a consultation in the future, and virtually all of the others are not yet sure what they will decide.

³⁸ For details see documentation of the event: https://www.strukturiertes-dialog.de/fileadmin/00-Daten-Strukturiertes-Dialog/01-Downloads/01d_Downloads_Publikationen/JuPiD-2015_Dokumentation_web.pdf

I did not hear about or notice the consultations, otherwise, I probably would have also participated somehow.

Online Survey 2015

Question 3: With regard to the Structured Dialogue’s periodic online surveys (consultations) about EU youth politics, please mark one of the following. (n=224)



One expert of the Structured Dialogue explained the lack of knowledge regarding the projects’ connections to the different levels in the dialogue process with the following words:

My impression is, that the projects conducted locally are extremely well done and produce intense work, usually with a very narrow theme. What I think could be done better, is the connecting of the local projects with the national and European levels. It was not clear... to many people... that the Structured Dialogue is a European process, or even a national process. And that the results, that were collected here locally, could flow wonderfully into the consultation rounds... They see this as a local participation process, but not as part of a larger network. The interest was there, but the know-how was not. That has stayed very clearly in my mind, that there are two very different levels that are considered.

Project leaders did not see missing knowledge about the connection of local projects to the EU Youth Strategy as the only reason for the lack of participation in the consultations. Various causes were named for this. Oftentimes young participants did not have interest in participation in the online processes. From the side of the project leaders, translation and clarification were needed in order to make the issues understandable and manageable for young people.

The level of interest up until this point has been poor. So we made...many advertisements, and in the youth-centered establishments where we were, we directly approached them and said, "here, pass this on to other teenagers." But... I didn't get any positive feedback at all. So that is probably it again, we probably needed a booklet, that we could have to sit down with and filled out together with them.

Yes, that is also two-sided. Some of them just get it... they already had the theme Europe in school. You don't need to introduce it anymore, and they could begin directly working with the topic... Otherwise, I have the suggestion to always break it down again too, to make the information more understandable and to summarize it all again...And there, for example, we were explicitly concerned with the recommendations from Germany following Riga and their potential implementation. So there were also times where we had a clear focus on the European level.

We have a Facebook group with many in it. I also posted about the last online survey, but no one was interested.

In addition to the complex language and abstract themes, project leaders also criticized the consultation's lack of visible relevance to the youth's lives, and this was also seen as a reason why the combination of the consultations with the projects was difficult to implement.

It could be, that we applied the themes more to our own regions and did not really think "European" so to speak..., [then it is not really about] explaining European decision-making structures or something of that nature to the youth. It could definitely be a suggestion, for youth to participate in the consultations at some point. While they are concretely engaged with youth politics,... the issues that the Structured Dialogue presents, are not really those teenagers are itching to get their hands on.

Even with the online survey, none of the youth responded...You see right away that this has something to do with the way the questions are worded. They are so abstract... that I had to hold extra sessions in order to make what was actually being asked, comprehensible.

Yes we do work with the theme empowerment, and we handle the topic "anti-discrimination." It is already difficult enough work, to present the theme in a way that youth engage with it. And now additional themes [from the consultations]... I don't think that is doable.

On the other hand, there was also demand for more referencing back to existing projects during the official Structured Dialogue process:

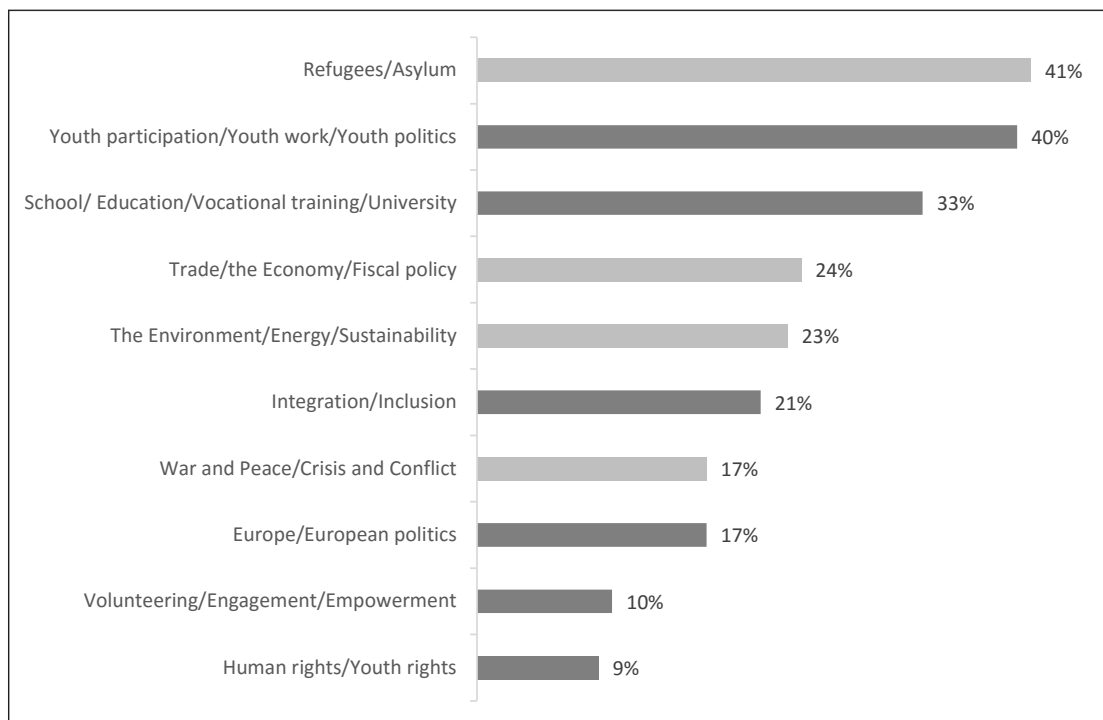
Especially at the EU Youth Conferences, the connection to real, existing projects was missing. They are all there, the politicians, and some of them were never invited to a project. They are just there and created some policy. There are also many students there, who have just completed their degrees, and who have never participated in such a project. I am always left thinking to myself that this doesn't make any sense.

Youth were also asked about the themes they handled in the Structured Dialogue projects in an open-ended question as part of the online survey. Here, it

became apparent, that the EU consultation themes as well as the German-centered topics were clearly familiar to them. Overall, topics concerning youth had high results: 40 % of the young participants responded with youth participation, participation, voting beginning at age 16, involvement online, as well as youth, youth work, and youth policy or youth rights. When considering other consultation themes, 10 % of the young participants stated that human rights, rights, legal-moral laws, and the rights of young people, and 9 % indicated that volunteering, engagement, and empowerment were topics covered during the Structured Dialogue projects and events. Additionally, 33 % of the young participants named schools, education, vocational training, and university as themes that were discussed. Altogether, almost 21 % of those surveyed reported the following topics: integration (integration politics), inclusion, as well as racism, extremism, discrimination, and bullying. For 41 % of the participants refugees and asylum were the most paramount issues, while 24 % indicated that this was true for TTIP/trade/the economy/and fiscal policy, and another 17 % marked the defense industry/weapon exports/war and peace/crisis and conflict.

Online Survey 2015

The most important ten themes in the Structured Dialogue projects (according to frequency in %) (n=210)*



*Multiple responses were possible, dark gray= EU Themes

Through this summarized overview of the most popular topics, it became apparent that content centered on the EU, as well as themes introduced by the participants themselves, were equally covered during the Structured Dialogue projects.

Concerning the connection between the projects and the official dialogue process, multiple participants expressed that the themes that were brought in for youth at the regional level should also gain more attention at the European level. According to the participants' assessments, the Structured Dialogue is not valued enough in EU youth policy. More public relations work is necessary in this regard, which could also target youth to a greater extent. This is accordingly true for the Structured Dialogue projects, where more publicity and information-sharing, as well as more reporting on the official political processes, must occur. One expert recommends the following:

The young representatives need to report more about the different levels of the Structured Dialogue during the projects.

According to the surveys from the second phase of the implementation of the Structured Dialogue, the projects adopted the themes of the EU Youth Strategy in addition to the German topics of focus and adapted them to their local contexts.

However, the emphasis and discussion of themes during the implementation varied greatly. Having grouped and discussed the German results gained during the consultation rounds, the JuPiD 2015 concept proved itself as a national format for the discussion of the results of the participant rounds of the Structured Dialogue.

Regarding the connection of the projects back to the consultations, the results of the evaluations suggest that a greater impact and involvement can be achieved if more project results were incorporated into the consultations, and if the two pillars of the Structured Dialogue did not remain disconnected. This would offer the Structured Dialogue more relevance during its implementation.

3.4 European Dimension

The evaluation of the first implementation phase of the Structured Dialogue indicated that the European dimension needs to be more deeply incorporated into the projects. Another issue is that this term has proved difficult to define, often meaning something different to each one of the participants. Experience has also shown that consideration of the European dimension is difficult to realize in the local context.

Project leaders continued to have difficulties putting the European dimension into concrete terms during the second realization phase of the Structured Dialogue.

I think that the EU-Dimension that we would like to share here through the Structured Dialogue, or what the EU would like to share, is in a sense an artificial dimension, given the selected topics for young people. When you would ask a teenager on the street: Say, what is Europe to you? They would not come up with empowerment, social inclusion, and so on.

Generally, all of those asked were supportive of including the European dimension in the Structured Dialogue projects, but for some this is only of secondary importance for the realization. Project leaders find it important to create “more freedom for political, European youth education” within the projects, without “overwhelming the actors.”

The term “European” further complicates the matter, as it does not contain one clear-cut definition, but relies instead upon context and interpretation. Depending on the actor’s interpretation, “Europe” can convey a wide historic, cultural, geographical, and socio-politically based understanding, or on the other hand, a purely political construction, often equated with the European Union.

The project leaders’ policy understanding further reflects the multiple levels of the EU, although the political levels are considered more independently of each other and are not all equally relevant for young people.

I believe that it is very important that youth can share, where their scope is in terms of Europe. Don’t interrogate them about Europe, but look out for the European dimension, and find it in their scope.

Despite the importance of the European Union, project leaders do not feel that the meaning of term “Europe” should be confined to the EU. It is not easy to define or contain Europe on geographical, historical, political, and societal levels. Previously, it always dealt with political settlements, which required discussion. Therefore, “Europe” per se can be understood as an open concept. In this sense, “more Europe” refers to “more” critical debate and discussion of socio-political themes. In an interview one project leader points out:

I am convinced that it is very important to incorporate the European dimension. How that is assessed varies from project to project. The young participants with migration backgrounds really resonated with me, because they expanded the concept of Europe a bit further beyond first, the EU and secondly, beyond Europe geographically speaking.

The normative concept Europe, which reinforces values and active citizen engagement, plays an important role generally in youth work, as well as for the Structured Dialogue’s project leaders. The development of a European identity is also connected here, which contains civic, political, and cultural components. This is understood in terms of a sense of belonging to a European community and the fundamental values of the European Union.

In order to identify with Europe, it is not necessary to give up other collective identities including national identity, for example. There is nothing wrong with having

multiple identities, if they do not conflict with each other. The concept of Europe is accordingly broad.

The goal of including the European dimension in the Structured Dialogue projects according to project leaders is to provide youth with a distinct reflection of European values and how to act based upon these values. In this regard, the projects of the Structured Dialogue fulfill an important educational function for the participants. Regardless of the conceptual vagueness, they are able to grasp the impetus of the European dimension as a fundamental, awareness-generating cornerstone of the project.

From the project leaders' point of view, it is important to bring the European dimension into the projects, while "making it palatable" for youth, through exciting, current political events like the European elections in 2014. Youth want, "natural, not artificial themes." The role of the project leaders, therefore, is to encourage young participants to discover the European elements.

That is the old question: how can I motivate young people to be interested in politics? And how do I make sure not to scare them? Youth... learn here with us, what politics is. They need to understand that, before they can gain any interest in European politics. With this top-down approach, you can try that, but I would not count on it, at least not with our target group.

I believe that the Structured Dialogue absolutely provides an opportunity, where you... can motivate people to grapple with politics. I feel that politics at present would not work without the European dimension... You do not need to communicate this artificially, and that is my problem with the Structured Dialogue, because it always tries to construct this European dimension, but it has already been there for a long time... There are also inter-disciplinary topics, and I actually rarely still find topics that can be worked on without the European dimension.

Many project leaders consider a personification of the European situation as a key factor in the realization of the projects, which could be illustrated through contacts to Brussels, experiences in the European Voluntary Service (EVS), through international youth exchange programs or through bi-national families.

How do I include a European context? It is best and easiest through people.

It is important to young participants and project leaders alike, that young people in the project are able to find their own references to Europe, and that interesting topics for youth are selected, where they can and want to contribute. Enabling independent, and inquiry-based learning through the Structured Dialogue is important to many project leaders. Some of them have also expressed support for the inclusion of the European Union and European topics in school lesson plans.

The evaluation shows that the meaning of the European dimension for the projects is seen very differently among the actors, and some of their assessments are even contrary to one another. This was the case during JuPiD 2014, where

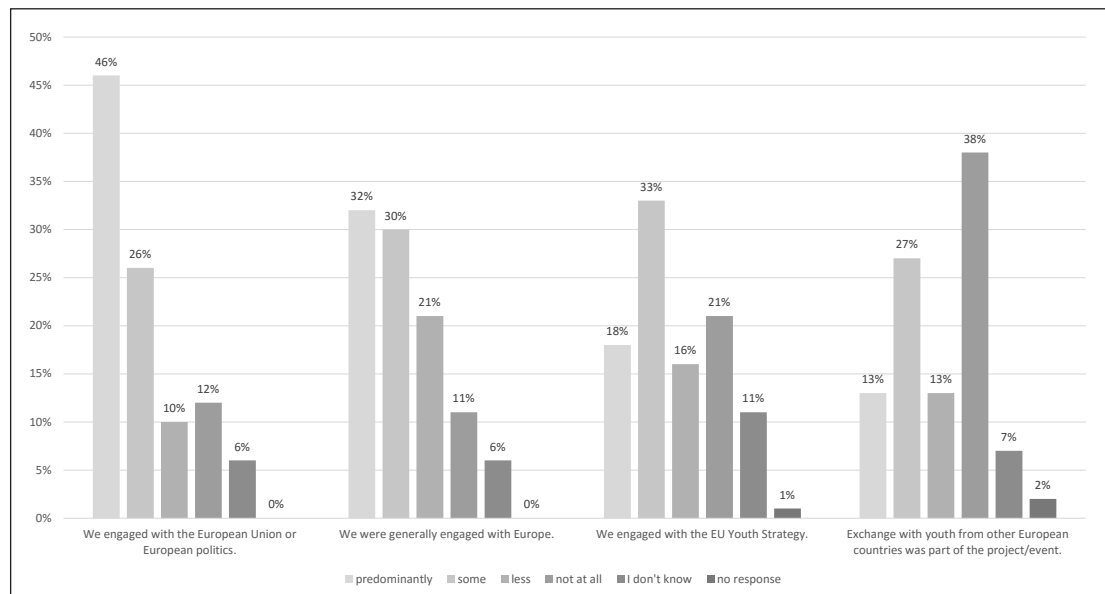
half of the project leaders indicated that the European dimension had a big or very big meaning in the projects, while the other half said that its meaning in the projects was average or even limited. The young participants at JuPiD 2014 were more reluctant in their responses, as less than half of those surveyed stated that the European dimension was meaningful or very meaningful. Only a limited number of project participants and leaders desired a stronger European dimension in the projects. During the 2015 Networking Conference, the content-related work and exchange of experiences with the European dimension were widely discussed. Here it was also made clear that the project leaders perceived the significance and need of the inclusion of the European dimension within the projects quite differently.

Young participants were explicitly asked in the 2015 online survey about which role Europe played in the projects and events in their opinion.

Online Survey 2015

Question 6: Which role did Europe play in the project events?

Please mark below. (n=227)



About one third of the young participants report that they either primarily or partially worked with the European Union, and half of those surveyed indicated that they worked with Europe generally. Altogether nearly half of the youth surveyed reported that they covered the EU Youth Strategy. In the open questions, 17 % of the youth stated that Europe, European politics, or the EU were topics handled during the projects.

According to the evaluations of the majority of the youth surveyed, direct exchange with youth from other countries either took place rarely or not at all.

The development of bi- and multinational projects appears to be an important recommendation for the further development of the Structured Dialogue in its second realization phase.

Direct exchange with youth from other European countries as a part of the project has only been possible for a small portion of the young participants so far. For about a fourth of the youth, this exchange was a component of the project. From the project leaders' perspective, this exchange provides an important means to make Europe more tangible:

I find, that you cannot really include the European dimension without active foreign participants, but we were able to have an international symposium... and the young participants really blossomed there. They did say "I don't speak English," but where the people were,... the whole European dimension was face-to-face. And that was brilliant.

According to further results and interviews, the European dimension seemed to be more of an obvious, implicit part of the projects for many young participants than it was for the political actors at the local level. The youth, for example connected Europe to a discussion on values, the question of togetherness in Europe, and the idea of active citizenship. Within the European dimension they see in part added value in terms of their own personal development.

Participating in the project] made it possible for me to think about the European dimension, and that made my future much broader.

In order to make the European dimension more visible, several project leaders suggested inviting more European politicians to the dialogue. Dialogue often occurs with representatives from the local administration or politics; however, they are often unaware of their scope of action or reference to European politics.

The main problem is, when we get into local politics in the discussions, then it [the European dimension] is immediately gone again. That means, that the students are more genuinely engaged in the European dimension than the local politicians. It is hard to get local politicians into the European dimension, because they do not see it. The kids live it more than local politicians. I find this very hard at the moment.

The young participants also notice that Europe and European affairs are not as present at the local level:

When you ask questions about Europe, you already notice that the answers start to go more in this direction: "That is not my area of expertise, therefore I can't say anything" or "I can't do that."

From the perspective of the youth representatives, the EU Youth Strategy and Structured Dialogue process are especially unknown at the local level:

No one [at the local level] has said to me: "Take that with you" and no one has ever asked: "What is the outcome?"... in my town of 130,000 people. Our European office

had no idea that there was someone like me [a youth representative], because there is not much focus on that.

During the second implementation phase of the EU Youth Strategy, the European dimension gained much more prominence in youth- and education work. First, the 2014 coalition agreement between the CDU, CSU, and SPD for the 18th legislative period stated the following in regard to European and international youth work:

With regard to the configuration of the youth chapter of the EU "Erasmus+" programme, we also want to include non-school-based stakeholders involved in youth work, and especially informal education. We want to strengthen structured dialogue within the framework of the EU youth strategy.³⁹

Secondly, experts and sponsors of youth- and education work reinforced the work with "More Europe" at the beginning of the second implementation phase of the Structured Dialogue in Germany. The European focus "Europe in Child and Youth Welfare" received lots of positive feedback at the 15th German Child and Youth Welfare Day in 2014⁴⁰ (DJHT). Additionally, in 2014 the service and transfer agency YOUTH for Europe published a guide on the "European Dimensions for Child and Youth Welfare"⁴¹, which contains numerous explanations and practical examples, and which could also be interesting for the projects' realization. In February 2015 the Child and Youth Welfare Association – AGJ published the discussion paper "The European Dimensions for Child and Youth Welfare – Relevance and Potential of European Policies for Child and Youth Welfare"⁴² as well.

These developments should make it clear to professionals in the field of youth work, that the fields of child- and youth welfare can be enriched through the European impetus and the Structured Dialogue, so that an even stronger European alignment can be initiated.

³⁹ See: Form Germany's Future: Coalition Agreement between the CDU, CSU, and SPD. 18. Legislative period, Berlin, 14. December 2013, pg. 71.

⁴⁰ Documentation see: www.djht-europa.ed/de

⁴¹ YOUTH for Europe (editor): The European Dimensions for Child and Youth Welfare. A Handbook with Explanations and Examples from Practice. Bonn 2014, available online at: <https://www.jugendfuereuropa.de/downloads/4-20-3564/reader-special-webpubl.pdf>

⁴² See: https://www.agj.de/fileadmin/files/positionen/2015/Diskussionspapier_Europäische_Dimension_dt.pdf

4 The Potential of the Projects for the Structured Dialogue

The projects of the Structured Dialogue fulfill an important societal function. In times where although youth are gaining interest in politics, they remain continually more distant from politicians⁴³, the projects bridge the gap. Politicians are able to learn more about the circumstances and interests of young people through the projects, and youth are also able to see politicians in a new light, while developing a better understanding of the work of political decision-makers. They learn political content and processes, as well as concrete ways to participate, and they can contribute their ideas to the dialogue. This also applies to the inclusion of European issues in the context of the EU Youth Strategy, which would otherwise be difficult for youth to access. The projects of the Structured Dialogue make an important contribution to the promotion of active European citizenship, which is based on participation and engagement, including that of young people in Europe.

4.1 Enabling Youth: Empowerment through the Structured Dialogue

Youth are often times disillusioned with politics. Political parties and decision-makers are often met with a lack of trust, and their work is perceived critically. In the current Shell Youth Study, almost 70 % of 15-25 year-olds agreed that politicians do not care about "what people like me think."⁴⁴

In the projects of the Structured Dialogue, youth have clearly exhibited that they want to have discussions with political decision-makers and have a political impact. In order to achieve this, age-appropriate, accessible political topics are required. Through the approaches and youth work methods implemented in the projects, young people are motivated and made aware of how they can deal intensively with politics.

Creative offerings like art, music, and theater, amongst others, are easily accessible for young people, and give them a different opportunity to express themselves and contribute their ideas. In this way, the often highly complex and abstract matter of politics becomes clear and tangible for young people who may bring little prior knowledge or have not yet dealt with this topic. For these young people, the Structured Dialogue projects are often the first chance they have to

⁴³ Cf. 17. Shell Youth Study: Jugend 2015,. Edited by Shell Deutschland Holding GmbH, Frankfurt 2015, pg. 157.

⁴⁴ Ibid., pg. 179.

discuss and actively engage with political issues and decision-making processes. For project leaders the format of the Structured Dialogue makes it possible to provide political education and youth work, and to promote the participation of young people:

We had the chance to show them, that they have a political opinion and are already thinking about things politically themselves, and that this is valued and recognized.

Working through content along with their peers simplifies the handling of politics within the projects. Youth-friendly language and approaches, as well as practical starting points create an atmosphere where the youth feel comfortable and can dive into politics. The topics handled within the projects were connected to the youth's every day experiences and world. The participative approach in youth work ensures that the interests and concerns of the participants are taken into account. This way the content and objectives of the Structured Dialogue are not perceived as forced or unfamiliar, but rather personal and of local significance for the participants.

Youth were specifically prepared for the dialogues during the projects. This includes the preparation of general skills, as well as specific key qualifications including language ability, communication skills and the ability to take and give criticism, alongside social competencies. The young participants work through the topics, resolve issues, and formulate plans for action. In their discussions with fellow participants, young people explain their own positions and discuss mutual approaches and ideas. They prepare one another for the dialogue, engage with their dialogue partners, and learn how to include themselves in the discussion and to stand up for their concerns. This allows them to experience a lot about the way politics and democracy function, and they better understand the ways in which they too can get involved.

In addition to the dialogue events, the projects also succeed fundamentally in motivating the participants towards further engagement and participation in politics and society. Therefore they contribute to a more active civil society. One project participant expressed this clearly in an interview:

Youth become inspired to change something, and they understand how they can do it.

Young people learn how politics works and how and where they can bring in their own interests and concerns through the project. They also receive information about which opportunities exist for youth to engage with society and become politically active. This fundamental awareness raising and motivation for politics is necessary in order to spark youth's interest in European politics as well as their understanding for how they are impacted by European policies and where they can have an influence. As questions during the projects are connected to youth's everyday experiences and environment, personal and local reference points are established, that make it possible to work with European themes. Grounding the themes in the projects in this way makes European

youth politics accessible for young people and piques their interest in contributing to youth politics in the future. One young participant described this opportunity to contribute as both positive and unique:

Young people are not usually asked when it comes to international topics, but the Structured Dialogue is an opportunity for young people to share their opinions and shape politics.

Project leaders also see the distinctive character of the Structured Dialogue projects contributing to political participation in Europe:

Over the course of our many years in this work, I have not come across a more fitting instrument than the Structured Dialogue.

In light of this positive feedback about the realization of the Structured Dialogue projects, it has become more than clear that it has the potential to empower young people in Europe and to achieve something for European politics. Nevertheless, it is very important to the project leaders that the Structured Dialogue be sustainably structured, especially regarding implementation of results and the connection to politics. Above all, these remarks and suggestions show just how many future development chances lie within the Structured Dialogue projects, and how the Structured Dialogue can be an effective participation instrument for youth across Europe.

4.2 Including Politics: Activating the Decision-Making Level

In order to ensure that the Structured Dialogue projects can reach their full potential, it is important that the necessary support comes on behalf of politicians. For the Structured Dialogue approaches to actually resonate and have an impact, political commitments must be made. The dialogue between youth and political decision-makers is not a given and does not function automatically. Just as the youth prepare themselves for the discussion rounds, the politicians also need to consider what they expect from the meetings and how the results of their work can be incorporated or passed on further. In accordance with the EU's governance approach⁴⁵, which involves its people in the decision-making process, it is also important to consider how youth can be more deeply included in the formation of policy that impacts them.

Along these lines, Caren Marks, Parliamentary State Secretary of the BMFSFJ, established the following about the Structured Dialogue during her welcome address at JuPiD 2015:

I am convinced that politics will be better, when young people can speak up and have a say... Therefore, it is important to us that policy is made alongside children

⁴⁵ European Commission: European Governance. A White Paper. COM (2001) 428 final.

and teenagers and not down behind their backs. We want to listen to young people, learn something, and discuss with them.⁴⁶

Representatives from politics and administration are called upon to join in discussion with youth, and to experience their attitudes and views on political topics. This way, they can gain insight into the living situation of young people and develop a sense of their requests. This interaction and opportunity to be listened to is of great significance to young people, as they generally do not have any contact with politicians:

...that they came here, and took the time to talk to us in detail...because that is rather rare that you can more or less get to know a politician... you also go to know about the office they held, and what they requested from youth more or less. That you can have a proper conversation with politicians, and that they were receptive to the teenagers.

Generally, the projects require concrete support for the Structured Dialogue from politicians. In order to make the youth's suggestions and requests more meaningful and potentially applicable, political actors need to identify more with the youth's requests and make them a matter of concern. One young participant formulated this in the following way at JuPiD 2014:

Many of the things that we worked on should not just be assumed by the community and the projects alone, but rather they should be brought even further at the federal level. And if the federal government does not take part, then you do not have this legal foundation for some things.

Project leaders have also criticized the fact that the Structured Dialogue is not valued enough, and that many politicians from the local to the European level are not familiar with it at all. It is therefore important to inform selected politicians about the Structured Dialogue's goals, which would improve its opportunities and resources and make them publicly known. This is also seen as a requirement for a deeper and wider continued development of the Structured Dialogue. One concrete suggestion in this regard, is to attract politicians as ambassadors or leaders for the Structured Dialogue projects, thereby gaining sustainability and increased possibilities for the implementation of the targeted results.

Looking back at the direction of the conversations, youth expect that the politicians open up to them and show both interest and understanding for their stated concerns. When politicians have the ability to take the young participants seriously and give them the feeling that their conversation is taking place on equal footing, they validate the discussion rounds and make it possible for young people to move closer to political engagement and contribute their voices to the political process:

The politicians really were interested in what we had to say. You do notice the difference when someone is completely disinterested, and when somebody really wants

⁴⁶ See Documentation JuPiD 2015, pg. 34.

to listen. And when we had something critical to say, he also embraced that. Then he also tried to explain to us how we could change something and what not. Plus it was also fun to talk to the politicians. Otherwise, when you see them during elections they can come off as presumptuous, that they just want your vote.

Dialogue participants also desire authenticity from their discussion partners. They also have the uncanny ability to detect when politicians explain something in order to cast themselves in a certain light and do not intend to have a reciprocal exchange with the young participants. For this reason, it is especially important that the political decision-makers explain why they are interested in working with young people and come prepared with concrete questions for the young participants when possible.

Those responsible in politics and the administration are therefore called upon to seek contact with young people, to engage in discussion with them, and to recognize their opinions, questions, and suggestions. In this way youth participation can be increased, and the interests and concerns of young people can be considered within the EU Youth Strategy. According to project leaders, the politicians' willingness to engage in consequential discussion determines how successful the Structured Dialogue projects can be. This aspect was made especially clear during an interview:

If I were to briefly summarize it all together, I would always say that the willingness on the side of the politicians was there. The willingness to open up to the process, and to work with the requests and outcomes after the conference was there..., so when they really took the process itself to heart instead of viewing it as an event where you take a quick look around and then leave again, then you can say that the likelihood that the projects will succeed is much higher. I do have to say, that this willingness to engage is a lot simpler at the local level than at the higher federal level, which is clear; however, for me it is really about a serious inclination from the political decision-makers to somehow follow this process and then actually include the requests and outcomes of the political discourse. What comes out of this process will always remain a question, but at least there is something to think about. This sincerity was always the determining factor for the success of the event in my opinion.

When politicians are honest and authentic in their conversations with young people, when they present concrete opportunities for engagement with politics and allow the results to impact the formation of policies, then an effective basis for the mutual formation of politics and society in Europe can develop.

4.3 Added Value and Safeguarding: Sustainability

In the second phase of the realization of the EU Youth Strategy, it has become clear that project leaders increasingly recognize the desired value of the Structured Dialogue projects and that effects continue to unfold. Moving from the dialogue level to the action level and attaining sustainability, which could lead

to the continuity of the Structured Dialogue in Germany, remain central concerns for projects leaders.

Project leaders view the sustainability of project realization as a key factor for the added value and safeguarding of the Structured Dialogue. Young people and project leaders alike find it important that the projects have the ability to positively impact participants' competencies and personal development, as well as socio-political contexts more generally.

Project leaders continue to reiterate how essential it is for words to lead to action. Many have cited the Structured Dialogue projects as a key component for the sustainable involvement of youth in politics. Project leaders feel that this continuity is essential for maintaining the positive developments already achieved by the projects during the initial development period. Sometimes these projects are understood as short-term events taking place within a specific time period, but when you consider the goals of the Structured Dialogue, which includes the development of youth participation through the concrete dialogue between young people and political representatives, then they carry a long-term significance for those engaged in youth work and for the communities.

Safeguarding does not just mean the repeated introduction of singular projects. On the other hand, it points to maintainable and consistent frameworks and structures for the operation of the projects, so that project actors do not need to start from scratch each time the Structured Dialogue is realized. For all parties involved, the safeguarding of the Structured Dialogue means securing and stabilizing processes. Transferable local structures, sufficient personnel capacities, and a continuous quality management are vital for the realization of individual projects. In this regard, the establishment of partnerships and cooperation between local actors plays an important role for project leaders. The conceptual involvement of the Structured Dialogue in respective decision-making processes locally would also be instrumental here. Furthermore, a competent appointed contact person, who could serve as a "caretaker" for the political structures, would also be considered helpful for the dialogue process.

The Structured Dialogue projects are of value for all political levels. The European Union, for example, has the opportunity to gain results from the consultation processes in diverse and relevant ways, and to deliver the topics of EU youth politics through real dialogue, where young people can actually be reached. Top-down and bottom-up processes work hand-in-hand during the projects. For local politics, the Structured Dialogue offers a fitting space for youth to voice their opinions about relevant questions in federal, state, and community contexts, and to discuss creative solutions.

Given their connection to official political processes and their place in the larger framework of the EU Youth Strategy, the Structured Dialogue projects are increasingly relevant, which allows project leaders to see more value in

their work. Through the Structured Dialogue, many project leaders also earn additional euro-political qualifications, and receive recognition for their international youth work. It is also more feasible for them to build up relevant networks and connections in the field of youth work, leading to local or regional political cooperation, and resulting in a spillover effect in other youth work projects.

It [the Structured Dialogue] can certainly support youth work, also regarding political education, because youth work has become such a broad field with so many demands and expectations that it is not even possible to do it all. Here, the Structured Dialogue is a great tool that helps youth become responsible citizens... not by telling them exactly what to do and when, but by supporting them in the process.

Young people also notice a big improvement in the quality of their political discussions, when they occur as part of the Structured Dialogue projects, as opposed to other general encounters with politicians.

This led to the idea to make a project that is a little bit more specific. So to create a platform, where you can engage in conversation with politicians and where politicians can also simply pose questions that usually are not asked at the normal political events.

When it comes to the fundamental effects of the projects, the involved actors feel that the projects result in higher empowerment and fulfill an educational purpose. The value in terms of improved participation competences is obvious for the project leaders. According to the 2015 online survey, the majority of young participants were of the opinion that their projects and events accomplished something for young people. They believe that it is really important that the projects of the Structured Dialogue enable exchange between young people and politicians, include young people in politics, and ensure that youth-friendly decisions are made. This allows youth politics to be further developed and to include young people's perspectives.

In a survey at JuPiD 2014, project leaders expressed the hope for the second phase of the realization of the Structured Dialogue that the concrete results from the local projects would be included in the further development of the Structured Dialogue, and that local projects and themes would gain additional consideration in the realization process. They believe it is crucial that the Structured Dialogue projects enable political influence, so that they can actually impact something. The Structured Dialogue projects can be understood as a creative impetus for politics, where ideas can be collected and discussed.

If they work together, the Structured Dialogue and the European political youth education have even more potential.

So that the projects can have sustainability and a continual impact, several Structured Dialogue actors feel that the following actors are essential:

- ▶ In order to ensure the sustainability of the projects, the dialogue partners cannot just come into contact with the young participants one time, but continually, and they need to keep track of the discussed themes and provide responses regarding them.
- ▶ The project leaders expect more concrete feedback concerning their results from the Structured Dialogue projects. For them, sustainability means “to experience results,” but also to develop a beneficial feedback process for everyone involved. Political decision makers should include young people more in concrete policy creation, not just “collect demands.”
- ▶ To better involve political representatives more than in the individual dialogue events, the Structured Dialogue needs a greater presence, so that more politicians can participate out of their own interest.
- ▶ According to assessments from those involved, the Structured Dialogue’s impact would be even greater if there was a network between the projects and politicians, which would result in a more functional feedback system that could be familiar to contact persons. In order to achieve safeguarding, regional coordination centers should be constructed.
- ▶ The Structured Dialogue projects could also have a greater influence if they cooperated with existing participation structures, such as youth organizations, youth parliaments, and youth councils or school administrations, and if they supported the establishment of youth representatives within communities. In this regard, a legal anchor⁴⁷ for youth participation structures would be especially beneficial.

⁴⁷ Such as the 2015 revised §41a of the municipal code in Baden-Wuerttemberg, see: <http://www.landesrecht-bw.de/jportal/uelle=jlink&query=GemO+BW+SS+41a&psml=bsbawueprod.psml&max=true>

5 Results and Outlook

At the end of the first implementation phase in Germany the actors involved ascribed high significance to the Structured Dialogue and identified several “conditions for success” for its further development.⁴⁸ These conditions include a clearer alignment and better connection between the projects and the consultation process, as well as stronger content consideration regarding the European dimension within the Structured Dialogue projects, among others. By the end of the second phase of the realization most project stakeholders have clearly and explicitly named the necessary “puzzle pieces” for the optimization of the Structured Dialogue.⁴⁹

The existing evaluations can reveal that the Structured Dialogue is now regarded as the participation instrument in the EU in the field of youth work. The placement of the projects within the larger context of the EU Youth Strategy was also seized upon by project leaders, who were able to incorporate their own work contexts in a youth-friendly way. Through the projects youth also find active entry into (European) politics. Project leaders recognize the value of their work and desire the safeguarding of the initiated processes and continued development, both quantitative and qualitative in nature, for the last phase of the realization of the EU Youth Strategy (2017-18). In particular, they refer to a strengthening of the political commitment to the concerns expressed in the Structured Dialogue and an improved feedback process.

Acceptance and Relevance

During the second phase of the implementation, the previously often critical and distant attitude towards the instrument of the Structured Dialogue in youth work has shifted in favor of a more critical and constructive stance. The involved project leaders increasingly recognize and value the Structured Dialogue’s ability to fulfill a high motivation and empowerment function for youth. However, they continue to identify the involvement of politics and politicians as a clear weakness of the realization that could be improved in the subsequent implementation phase. Stakeholders also desire even broader participation beyond the existing “inner circle” and greater resonance and publicity in order to give the concerns of the Structured Dialogue more “weight.”

⁴⁸ See Feldmann-Wojtachnia/Tham *Ibid.*, pg. 41 f.

⁴⁹ See summary in appendix “Factors for the Further Development of the Structured Dialogue Project Realization”

Participation

Increasing youth participation already played a key role in the first phase of the implementation, in practical as well as the thematic direction of the projects. The project leaders regard the promotion of the inclusion of youth as one of youth work's essential duties, which has an old tradition in Germany, existing long before the advent of the EU Youth Strategy. Nevertheless, actors still report a clear jump in quality in the second phase of the implementation. The federal topic "participation" has become even more precise and gained greater significance, given that "empowerment" was named as the consultation topic for the EU Youth Strategy. With the instruments of the Structured Dialogue, the projects were able to open participation opportunities for youth, which extend to the local and regional levels up to the European level. With previous experience in mind, the young participants were prepared for the dialogue situations with politicians and their participation in political processes with specific and purposeful content and methods. It is essential that the next phase of the implementation build upon the existing and specialized expertise in youth work gained through the Structured Dialogue projects. So that this progress will not have been made in vain, the willingness of politicians to concretely include youth in decision-making processes must be clearly increased and strengthened.

Impact

Involved stakeholders described the projects' impact only as partially positive and more often as too weak during the first phase of the implementation. Upon identifying the essential factors for the Structured Dialogue's further growth, actors included a more binding agreement with participation opportunities on behalf of the politicians, securing relevant politicians for the dialogue, increasing political commitment, and clarifying local participation procedures. In the current implementation phase, the effects are considerably stronger and more positively evaluated. From the perspective of the project leaders, progress has occurred here. Long-term projects, which have successfully built political networks and made use of the synergy, exist. However, stakeholders still demand a clearer political volition for the next implementation phase. To anchor the projects of the Structured Dialogue they feel that more political traction and legal commitment are necessary, ideally with the backing of a high-level political patronage. The Structured Dialogue projects can only have a sustainable impact with more marked support from the side of politics and the politicians. In this regard, project leaders believe that it is essential to familiarize politicians with the EU Youth Strategy's participation instruments and to make them aware of the issue of (more) youth inclusion. According to the EU Resolution on Empowering Young People for Political Participation in the Democratic Life in Europe,

more concrete and tailored qualification opportunities should be developed for political decision-makers.⁵⁰

Consultations

In the first phase of the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy, projects were rarely or sporadically connected back to a consultation process. Project stakeholders felt as if the top-down established themes concerning EU politics and the bottom-up developed approaches were not well enough connected to each other during the Structured Dialogue. A constructive collaboration with the political levels was also called for. A transfer of the projects' results rarely occurred and was met with limited resonance. In the second phase of the implementation several project leaders undertook increased measures to produce a transfer, and they also tried to connect the projects with the official consultation process. However this required a great "translation effort" and did not always correspond to young people's interests. Promising approaches have now been developed, and they must be built upon, further developed, and maintained in the coming phase. Youth and project leaders view JuPiD's new format as a national meeting of the Structured Dialogue with a clear connection to the EU consultations positively in terms of contributing their own results into the process. This approach proved that it is helpful to integrate projects of the Structured Dialogue within the official process. In their opinion, this direction should be pursued in the next phase and extended to other projects and participants. This new format would make it easier for the Structured Dialogue projects to consider the European level, as the prepared and moderated information exchange can more easily connect back to the EU level, a process that is often perceived as "cumbersome." Youth also positively assessed the newly established JuPiD Forum (2016) at the end of the 18-month dialogue phase. In their opinion, it is a good format for the feedback process to directly link the projects with the consultation while they are in direct contact with political decision-makers.⁵¹

Feedback

The stakeholders have identified the widespread lack of feedback as an important factor for the further development of the Structured Dialogue in the future. In many projects, a clearer and more transparent feedback process has been demanded. In the second phase of implementation little development has taken place in this area, and many players are not satisfied with the feedback, which they assess as too limited or lacking. The response to the previous methods of

⁵⁰ Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on a European Union Work Plan for Youth for 2016-2018. Official Journal of the European Union. C (417) v. 15.12.2015, pg. 12.

⁵¹ See appendix for detailed results of the surveys from the JuPiD Forum 2015.

the NAG and the Federal-State-AG are rather restrained, and are also too little known to project leaders in part. During the dialogue youth often complain that they receive no response to their requests or ideas. Therefore project stakeholders believe that a clearer understanding of feedback must be defined and a transparent, binding (mandatory) procedure must be developed (moving forward), concerning not only the official consultations but regional concerns as well. The demand for meaningful feedback and answers to the concrete results of the projects on regional, national, and European levels within the context of the Structured Dialogue and the establishment of a binding process, which allows for satisfactory transfer between the levels, can be seen as challenges. The development of both written and youth-friendly feedback formats also play a role in this regard.

European Dimension

The topics of the EU Youth Strategy and the consultations, including the explicit involvement with EU politics, received little to no consideration during the first phase of the implementation of the Structured Dialogue. Likewise, most of the projects were nationally oriented. Project leaders exhibited several different opinions, and at times perplexity, concerning how the European Dimension should function in the projects. In the second phase, an increased awareness of the European dimension in the projects was achieved through increased information and training opportunities. In this context, the content focusing on the European dimension at the 2015 Networking Conference was regarded as particularly helpful. Project leaders feel that they have succeeded in identifying relevant points of reference for the project contexts through methodological and didactic concepts as well as creative approaches. However, the potential of the projects in terms of conveying the European dimension is far from being exhausted. In the next phase additional experience should be gathered, and new ways and creative approaches should be tried. In terms of setting the topic, project leaders indicate that the projects need to have enough space to introduce their own “burning” themes, which could also be worked on with regard to Europe. In particular, current European policy issues such as the refugee crisis play a role for young people. Additional experience should also be collected about the projects’ internationalization from participants from other European countries. To this end, project leaders report that more information and a targeted exchange of experiences are necessary.

Need for Qualifications

In order to ensure the further development of the Structured Dialogue in the next phase of its implementation, the evaluation of the Structured Dialogue in Germany, drawing upon the assessments and findings of the examined ac-

tors, indicates a number of concrete suggestions for optimization and needed qualifications for the projects' local realization in youth work. It is essential to create youth-friendly approaches to politics and Europe, particularly through low-barrier offerings, creative methods and new media, target group-specific and youth-friendly approaches, linking the EU issues to the everyday lives and environments of young people, a participatory project design, and the use of peer learning. With the "multiplier pool"⁵² established during the analysis phase, an additional step forward for the didactic and methodological qualification has taken place.⁵³ However, it is still too early to assess what effect this supportive approach in youth work has on-site.

Added Value and Safeguarding

The goal of the evaluation of the second phase of the implementation of the Structured Dialogue is to examine the extent to which an added value and a safeguarding of the processes could be achieved in the projects. Particular emphasis was placed on the realization of the European dimension and the link to the consultations. Essentially, it has shown that great potential resides within the realization of the Structured Dialogue in the projects, and that they can fundamentally contribute to the empowerment of young people in terms of their involvement within the EU Youth Strategy. This makes it possible to generate substantial youth opinion on current political issues in EU youth politics. However, the two "pillars" of the Structured Dialogue, the online consultation process and the project work, need to be better connected and harmonized moving forward.

In general, it has been made clear through the analysis period (2014-2016) that the European dimension has been successfully strengthened in the projects. In the future it is necessary to establish these approaches with regard to the life situations, interests, possibilities of expression, and methods that encourage young people to connect with Europe and European issues. For this purpose, references to everyday life, individual experiences, and the youth relevance of Europe can be utilized. This means including and validating personal experiences and interactions of Europe, presenting Europe as an interdisciplinary theme, and merging the national youth work with the euro-political approaches in the projects.

In light of the concerns of the consultations, it is important to strengthen the link between the local projects and the national and European level. Projects should become more a part of a European process. To achieve these objectives, stronger impulses are needed, where youth representatives can play a more pivotal role in the transfer between the levels, as authentic individuals involved in the official process.

⁵² The group of young participants able to disseminate information about the Structured Dialogue

⁵³ <https://www.strukturiertes-dialog.de/news/archiv/artikel0/datum/2015/10/16/startschuss/>

Conclusion

In conclusion, the evaluation shows that the project direction of the Structured Dialogue satisfies the subsidiarity and participation understanding of the actors in the fields of youth work and education. The projects of the Structured Dialogue provide an excellent opportunity to reach a wide range of youth, who are not politically inclined, and spark their interest in political and societal issues as well as motivate them to participate. The projects contribute to the empowerment of youth and make young people aware of the content and concerns of the EU's youth policies in a lasting way.

In general, the projects of the Structured Dialogue are on the right path. The evaluation has made it clear that the project leaders are key actors for the realization of the EU Youth Strategy, and that the policy approaches pursued by the EU through the Structured Dialogue are now increasingly familiar and met with positive response. For the final implementation phase (2017-18) of the current EU Youth Strategy however, project leaders consider more binding commitment in terms of feedback and the involvement of political actors as important conditions for the success of the Structured Dialogue in Germany.

For the scientific monitoring of the Structured Dialogue projects, this means placing focus on the transfer of results between projects and the European process during the third phase of the implementation. It is also necessary to examine the active involvement of the political level and the implementation of the feedback process as well as the achieved binding commitment of the process in more detail.

6 Appendix

6.1 Factors for the Further Development of the Structured Dialogue Project Realization

6.2 Survey Results from JuPiD 2014/Youth

6.3 Survey Results from JuPiD 2014/Project leaders

6.4 Results from the Online Survey 2015

6.5 Survey Results from the JuPiD Forum 2016

6.1 Factors for the Further Development of the Structured Dialogue Project Realization

Access to Politics and Europe

- ▶ Low-barrier opportunities
- ▶ Creative methods and new media
- ▶ Target group-tailored and youth-friendly approaches
- ▶ Connection of EU themes with youth's everyday life and environment
- ▶ Participative project concept
- ▶ Youth as multipliers and peer learning

Qualification for Participation

- ▶ Creation of an open and encouraging event atmosphere
- ▶ Development of skills
- ▶ Provision of key qualifications
- ▶ Strengthening of dialogue- and communication skills
- ▶ Forming of a positive and constructive discussion culture

Conditions for the Impact and Sustainability of the Projects

- ▶ Political commitment of the involved decision-making levels
- ▶ Concrete organization requests and more participation offers from the political level
- ▶ Political responsibility for the dialogue results
- ▶ Legal regulation and binding of the processes
- ▶ Transfer of results to the relevant decision-making levels
- ▶ Solidifying the feedback procedure
- ▶ Long-term structures, resources, and support opportunities for youth participation
- ▶ Firm and stable networks for youth and politicians
- ▶ Efficient public relations work

6.2 Survey Results from JuPiD 2014/Youth

Question 1: To date have you (n = 26)			
	Yes	No	No response
participated in a Structured Dialogue project?	16	10	
participated in a consultation process?	4	21	1

Question 2: In the future do you plan to participate in a (n = 26)				
	Yes	No	I don't know	No response
project?	19	0	7	
consultation?	6	2	16	2

Question 3: Based on your experience, how do you evaluate the impact of the Structured Dialogue? (n = 25)	
	Number
1 (very negatively)	
2	
3	
4	5
5	4
6	4
7	5
8	4
9	3
10 (very positively)	

Question 4: What meaning does the European dimension have for you within the Structured Dialogue? (n = 25)	
	Number
1 (very negative)	
2	
3	1
4	
5	5
6	8
7	2
8	4
9	1
10 (very positive)	4

Question 5: How do you evaluate the Structured Dialogue regarding the promotion of youth participation? (n = 25)

	Number
1 (very negatively)	
2	
3	1
4	1
5	2
6	2
7	6
8	7
9	4
10 (very positively)	2

Question 6: Which of the following suggestions do you consider to be important for the second phase of the implementation of the Structured Dialogue? (multiple responses are possible)

	Number
Mobilization of political actors	10
Regular national youth events	8
Incorporation of schools	7
Wider publicity	6
Greater participation	5
Clear feedback procedure	3
Linking of the projects to the consultations	2
Regional coordination bodies	2
Stronger European dimension in the projects	2
Further development of the information opportunities	1

Sex (n = 25)

	Number
Female	17
Male	8

Age (n = 23)

	Number
15	2
16	5
17	3
18	3
19	4
20	1
21	2
23	1
24	1
29	1

Nationality (n = 23)	
	Number
German	19
German-Polish	1
Austria	1
Other	1

Educational Attainment (n = 23)	
	Number
I attend Gymnasium	10
I attend university currently	5
Primary school diploma	1
Lower secondary school diploma	2
Secondary school diploma	4
University degree	1

6.3 Survey Results from JuPiD 2014/Project leaders

Question 1: Which age group do you belong to? (n = 18)	
	Number
Project leaders	15
Teamers and workshop leaders	2
Student, colleagues at the project	1

Question 2: To date have you (n = 18)		
	Yes	No
participated in a Structured Dialogue project?	11	7
participated in a consultation process?	5	12

Question 3: In the future do you plan to participate in a (n = 18)			
	Yes	No	Not sure
project?	12	0	6
consultation?	8	1	9

Question 4: Based on your experience, how do you evaluate the impact of the Structured Dialogue? (n = 16)	
	Number
1 (very negatively)	
2	
3	2
4	1
5	2
6	4
7	2
8	5
9	
10 (very positively)	

Question 5: What meaning does the European dimension have for you within the Structured Dialogue? (n = 17)

	Number
1 (very negative)	
2	
3	2
4	
5	3
6	2
7	
8	7
9	1
10 (very positive)	2

Question 6: How do you evaluate the Structured Dialogue regarding the promotion of youth participation? (n = 17)

	Number
1 (very negatively)	
2	2
3	
4	2
5	
6	2
7	2
8	7
9	1
10 (very positively)	1

Question 7: Which of the following suggestions do you consider to be important for the second phase of the implementation of the Structured Dialogue? (multiple responses are possible)

	Number
Mobilization of political actors	7
Greater participation	6
Regular national youth events	6
Incorporation of schools	4
Further development of the information opportunities	2
Scientific discourse on the Structured Dialogue	2
Linking of the dialogue projects with a clear feedback procedure	2
Clear feedback procedure	2
Regional coordination bodies	1
Stronger European dimension in the projects	1
Wider publicity	1

Sex (n = 17)	
	Number
Female	11
Male	6

Age (n = 17)	
	Number
19	1
20	2
21	1
22	1
24	2
25	1
27	1
29	1
32	2
33	1
41	1
43	1
62	1
64	1

Nationality (n = 17)	
	Number
German	17

Educational Attainment (n = 18)	
	Number
I currently attend school	2
I currently attend university	6
I do not have a diploma	1
Lower secondary school diploma	2
Secondary school diploma	1
University degree	6

6.4 Results from the Online Survey 2015

Question 1: How did you hear about the project/event?

Please mark one or more answers. (n = 250)

	Percentage
Friends/acquaintances	19 %
School/university/job	49 %
Internet	5 %
Radio/television/newspaper	0 %
Youth group/youth organization	25 %
Other	3 %

Question 2: The project or event in which you participated is part of the Structured Dialogue, an initiative from the European Union. This is an attempt to encourage interaction and discussion between young people and political decision-makers on issues of the EU Youth Strategy. Were you aware of this? (n = 225)

	Percentage
Yes	89 %
No	11 %

Question 3: Within the context of the Structured Dialogue, regular online surveys (consultations) occur regarding topics of the EU youth policy. Please mark below. (n = 224)

	Yes	No	I don't know	No Response
Did you participate in a consultation at an event/project?	32 %	55 %	13 %	0 %
Was a connection between the project/event and the consultation established?	36 %	30 %	34 %	0 %
Would you participate in a consultation in the future?	74 %	4 %	21 %	0 %

Question 4: Looking back, how would you evaluate the project/event as a whole? (n = 229)

	Percentage
1 (very negatively)	1 %
2	0 %
3	1 %
4	1 %
5	1 %
6	1 %
7	10 %
8	21 %
9	39 %
10 (very positively)	25 %

**Question 5: How would you evaluate the following aspects of the JuPiD Forum?
Please mark below. (n = 231)**

	Definitely	To some extent	Not so much	Not at all	I don't know	No response
The project/event was fun for me.	75 %	23 %	1 %	1 %	0 %	0 %
My participation in the project/event personally benefited me.	73 %	22 %	3 %	1 %	1 %	0 %
The topics were presented and discussed in an interesting manner.	65 %	32 %	2 %	0 %	1 %	0 %
The composition of participants was interesting.	63 %	27 %	6 %	2 %	2 %	0 %
I could include myself and my ideas.	50 %	44 %	3 %	2 %	1 %	0 %
I am content with the results of our project.	49 %	39 %	8 %	2 %	2 %	0 %
The dialogue between the youth and politicians was successful.	42 %	42 %	10 %	3 %	1 %	1 %
Our concerns were taken seriously by the politicians.	38 %	34 %	15 %	4 %	8 %	1 %

Question 6: Which role did Europe play in the projects during the event? (n = 227)

	Definitely	To some extent	Not so much	Not at all	I don't know	No response
We dealt with the European Union or European politics.	46 %	26 %	10 %	12 %	6 %	0 %
We dealt with Europe generally.	32 %	30 %	21 %	11 %	6 %	0 %
We dealt with the EU Youth Strategy.	18 %	33 %	16 %	21 %	11 %	1 %
Exchange with youth from other European countries was part of the project/event.	13 %	27 %	13 %	38 %	7 %	2 %

Question 7: Could the results of the project/event bring about something for young people? Please mark below. (n = 226)

	Percentage
Yes	77 %
No	5 %
I don't know	18 %

**Question 8: Were concrete steps for the continuation of the dialogue confirmed?
Please mark below. (n = 225)**

	Percentage
Yes	52 %
No	20 %
I don't know	28 %

Question 9: Did you receive a response from a politician regarding your concerns afterwards? Please mark below. (n = 223)

	Percentage
Yes	19 %
No	31 %
Believe response is forthcoming	25 %
I don't know	25 %

Participant age. Please mark below. (n = 220)

	Number
11	1
12	0
13	2
14	15
15	43
16	56
17	49
18	22
19	7
20	5
21	6
22	4
23	5
24	0
25	0
26	2
27	1
28	2
29	0
30	0

Nationality (n = 219)	
	Number
German	192
Turkish	5
German/American	2
German/Russian	2
Italian	2
Swiss	2
German/Canadian	1
German/Italian	1
Algerian	1
Afghan	1
Bulgarian	1
Russian	1
Moroccan	1
Kurdish	1
German/Uzbek	1
German/Norwegian	1
Human	1
Liechtensteiner/Dominican	1
European	1
Serbian	1

Sex. Please mark below. (n = 224)	
	Number
Female	89
Male	135

Migration background. Please mark below. (n = 208)	
	Number
Yes	43
No	165

Currently I am... Please mark below. (n = 212)	
	Number
Attending Hauptschule	8
Attending Gesamtschule	3
Attending Realschule	36
Attending Gymnasium	136
Attending university	17
In vocational training	5
At an internship	1
Working	4
Unemployed	2

6.5 Survey Results from the JuPiD Forum 2016

Question 1: Have you already participated in the Structured Dialogue before? (n = 18)

	Number
Yes	14
No	4

When yes, in what format? (Multiple responses are possible)

	Number
In a Structured Dialogue project	9
In a Structured Dialogue consultation	2
In a JuPiD event	9
Other	2

Question 2: How would you evaluate the JuPiD Forum as a whole? (n = 18)

	Number
1 (very negatively)	
2	1
3	
4	
5	1
6	
7	3
8	4
9	5
10 (very positively)	4

**Question 3: How would you evaluate the following aspects of the JuPiD Forum?
(n = 15)**

	Definitely	To some extent	Not so much	Not at all	I don't know	No response
The JuPiD Forum is very important for the Structured Dialogue.	7	7	1			
I could include myself and my ideas.	8	6		1		
The topics were discussed in an interesting manner.	7	7	1			
The dialogue between youth and politicians was successful.	7	7	1			
JuPiD is an appropriate form for the feedback procedure in the European-wide dialogue process.	8	4	2		1	
JuPiD is a good platform for the linking of projects with the consultation process.	9	5		1		

Participant age (n = 18)

	Number
16	3
18	5
19	1
22	1
23	5
25	1
26	1
27	1

Nationality (n = 17)

	Number
German	16
Georgian	1

Sex (n = 17)

	Number
Female	10
Male	7

Migration background (n = 17)	
	Number
Yes	2
No	15

Currently I am... (n = 18)	
	Number
Attending Hauptschule	
Attending Gesamtschule	1
Attending Realschule	
Attending gymnasium	5
Attending university	9
In vocational training	1
At an internship	1
Working	
Unemployed	1