

Consultant of youth department

Name of the organisation

Youth Palace of Zugdidi municipality

Website of the organisation

<https://www.facebook.com/mostsavleakhalgazrdobissasakhle>

Location of the organisation

Zugdidi, Meunargia street #6, 2100 Zugdidi, Georgia

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Good practice aspect(s)/themes of youth work

- Participation of young people in decision making

Good practice category

A practice of processes and methods

Good practice aim & purpose

Our goal was to interest young people in the decision-making process and increase their participation. Despite the fact that the involvement of young people has increased in the decision-making process, it is still a challenge to interest young people.

Many young people think that no one will listen to them, that their opinion will be lost and they don't know how to act.

There are many youth in the municipality and it is difficult to provide information to everyone correctly and on time. That is why it is very difficult for us to engage the majority of newcomers, despite our best efforts.

We in the municipality changed the youth policy since the establishment of the Youth Council, which contributed to the implementation of the ideas of young people, their activation and the healthy implementation of the youth policy.

The most important thing in this process was that they saw their own strength, the opportunity to put their abilities into practice, and of course the process was enjoyable for them.

Good practice description

Years ago, the participation of young people in decision-making processes was very passive in Zugdidi municipality.

Many youth projects were implemented, but all on the basis of non-governmental organizations, so young people were less aware of the decision-making process.

In 2021, we established a youth council under the umbrella of one of the non-governmental organizations in Zugdidi, and we selected 12 young people for its main board.

Zugdidi City Hall allocated 10,000 GEL of funding for the council. However, the Council was not subordinate to the City Hall. As a result of the implementation of more than 70 activities at the end of 2021, the City Hall decided to increase the funding for the Council and allocated 20,000 GEL and carried out such activities that were valuable and important for young people of Zugdidi.

In addition to the fact that the council carries out many activities and projects with the financial support of the City Hall, there is also an increase in the involvement of donors and businesses.

In 2022 youth council organised a youth forum, that was held for the first time in Zugdidi, where more than 200 young people participated and the recommendations received at the forum were presented to the City Hall. In 2023, the implementation of the recommendations has already started step by step.

I think that the participation of young people in the decision-making process is a democratic and open process, which will definitely bring positive changes.

Good practice result & concrete effects

The involvement of young people in the decision-making process brought many positive effects to the municipality:

The first and important thing was that the implementation of the youth policy did not take place on a top-down basis, on the contrary, the initiatives of the youth easily reached the decision-makers.

Second, and also very important, the young people saw their own power, but they also saw that their demands must be reasoned and substantiated. They understood that if something needs to be changed, they know why it is needed, how many young people need this change, and they also understood well what the consequences would be.

Thirdly, and perhaps the most important, there was the unification of youth groups by planning joint activities. It often happened that different groups carried out the same activity and the results were less visible, but now the big results are visible because the voices of young people are heard more loudly.

Good practice chapter of the European Charter on Local Youth Work

Organisation and practice