



**Center Right Youth in Regional Cooperation:**  
Empowering Youth through Policy Development

*“Normally when we need to know about something we go to the experts, but we tend to forget that when we want to know about youth and what they feel and what they want, that we should talk to them”*

***Kofi Annan, Former UN Secretary-General***

**Hotel “Sheraton”  
Tirana, Albania  
January 27-29, 2012**

**Participants:** High representatives (Presidents/Vice-presidents/International Secretaries) of center right youth branches in Southeastern Europe

**Organizers:**

- National Democratic Institute (NDI)
- Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS)
- Democratic Party Youth Forum of Albania (DPYF)

**Goals:** -Exchanging best practices on topical youth policy issues common for the region;  
- Enhancing youth participation in political party/public policy development;  
- Fostering regional network of center-right youth branches.

**AGENDA**

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 27**

Up to 18:00	PARTICIPANT ARRIVAL & REGISTRATION
19:00	EVENT OPENING <i>Ana Radičević, NDI RPI DP Representative KAS Albania Director</i>
20:00	WELCOME DINNER (hotels restaurant, hosted by NDI)

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 28**

09:00 – 10:30

***The current position of the youth wings in Conservative parties in Europe – Best Practice Examples***

-The Role of the Youth Wing in Political Parties

-Why Youth should be engaged in policy making?

Colm Lauder, Deputy Secretary General of YEPP

- The role of the Junge Union in policy making, Mr. Raid Gharib, Representative of Junge Union Germany

Young Conservatives, Norway, tbc

Prochko Prochkov, Member of the National Council, Democracy for Strong Bulgaria (DSB)

*Youth participation must lie at the centre of the creation of policies for youth. Just as the recipient of any policy must be engaged to ensure their concerns are effectively addressed, youth are no exception. They must be viewed as partners in devising solutions to common concerns. Rather than being viewed as a problem or risk to be contained or solved, youth should be recognized as social actors with skills and capacities to bring about constructive solutions to societal issues that directly affect them. Policy makers should not only invite young people into policy discussions but also listen and act upon their advice.*

10:30-11:00

Coffee break

11:00-12:30

From Political Ideas to Public Policies

Overview of Conservative Youth (UN) employment Policies in comparison with two other major ideologies, socialdemocracy and liberalism

Ivan Cerovac, Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, University of Rijeka, Croatia (Philosophy Department, Section for Moral and Political Philosophy)

12:30-14:00

Lunch

14:00-15:30

Most Topical Youth Policy Issues in the Central Eastern Europe: Youth Unemployment

Best practices on policy issues from the EU: Mitigating Youth

Unemployment or Developing a policy response to Youth Unemployment

Example from Junge Union Germany – Tackling youth unemployment, Mr. Raid Gharib

Example from Young Fine Gael – Eight Point Plan to Save Jobs, Colm Lauder

Example from Bulgaria, Prochko Prochkov, Member of the National Council, Democracy for Strong Bulgaria (DSB)

One of the reasons for high level of youth unemployment is believed to be low level of youth participation in developing youth employment policies.

Some studies have identified that the main cause of youth unemployment is not the lack of education but the lack of experience and mismatching of qualifications to the labour market.

For this reason, when speaking of unemployment and ways to work on it, the competences, together with the level of formal education which can be developed through non-formal learning, remain an important issue.

What is the response of the conservative parties to this issue? Do the youth wings see the space for them to influence decision making in their respective parties?

What about introducing a mandatory internships during the third and fourth year of faculty?

15:30-16:00

Coffee Break

16:00-17:30

Policy Workshop I part

Danko Nikolic, NDI Regional Trainer

Developing Policy Response to Youth Unemployment

*Divide participants into two-three groups which would be tasked to identify either one or few policy areas to tackle youth unemployment and develop draft policy paper*

*Some of policy alternatives, which might be further explored in the groups:*

- 1) Volunteering as a way for addressing Youth Unemployment or*
- 2) Introducing Obligatory Internships in third and fourth years of studies*
- 3) Addressing mismatches between the skills young people possess and the skills required by the labour market*

- Volunteering is a creator of human and social capital. It is a pathway to integration and employment and a key factor for improving social cohesion. What can we do to promote volunteering notably in cross border situations? Do we have legal framework that encourages volunteering? Volunteering is providing young people with an opportunity to improve their knowledge and skills within volunteer's engagement in institutions and organizations of civil sector and to get practical knowledge and working experience in that way, which makes them more competent in labor market and help them in getting a job. However, volunteering may offer valuable experience increasing employability but it may also be a way of exploiting young people. Thus volunteer work has to be protected
- In addition to a student's book with good marks the European labour market requires competences and skills developed. In order to have such competences and skills, students need opportunities for practical work during their studies, which has been rarity in our high school system. Introduction of obligatory internships in the third and fourth year of faculties can increase employability of young people
- Although young people today are the most educated generation ever, both industrialized and developing countries are failing to increase employment opportunities for them. The lack of opportunities is of course linked to the general state of the economy and employment situation but it is also a result of the mismatches between the skills young people possess and the skills required by the labour market. All of these factors can lead to long periods of unemployment, job seeking

or low skilled and precarious work, which are not only detrimental to young people but impact heavily on economies and society in general.

- 17:30 Travel reimbursement
- 19:00 Dinner (hosted by Democratic Party?)

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 29**

- 09:00 – 09:15 Summary of the previous day
- 09:15-10:45 Policy Workshop II part  
Danko Nikolic  
Developing Policy Response to Youth Unemployment
- 10:45-11:00 Coffee Break
- 11:00-12:30 Policy Workshop III part  
Danko Nikolic  
Presentation of Policy Responses
- 12.30 -13.30 **Networking Opportunities for Center Right Youth in the Region**  
Networking with youth organizations at the national level
- Participants will consider whether they want to continue networking with one another, and how that would benefit them and their parties. What types of cross-border exchanges would help them implement new projects in their parties or in their women's forums? What kind of impact could they have on policy discussions as a regional voice for center right youth? Can they exchange information and research on the status of youth in the region, or on policy areas that impact youth.
- On the other hand, it would be interesting to explore opportunities for networking with youth organizations at national level on specific policy issues.
- 13:30 LUNCH and departure of the participants