



# **Report from the First Reference and Dissemination Group Meeting for 'Our Voices'**

**December 2014**

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## **Introduction: Our Voices**

In December 2014, the International Centre: Researching Child Sexual Exploitation, Violence and Trafficking at the University of Bedfordshire hosted a meeting in London, generously funded by the Council of Europe, as part of the Oak Foundation funded 'Our Voices' project.

'Our Voices' is a three-year, pan-European initiative and aims to promote the involvement of young people in efforts to prevent sexual violence against children across Europe.

Project elements include:

### **Working together with children and young people**

- Developing and supporting a pan-European network of Youth Advisors
- Supporting a number of youth-led activities that will explore the scale, nature, and impact of sexual violence
- Identifying opportunities and events for young people to share their work and views

### **Working together with projects**

- Collaborating with projects to develop participatory work with children at risk of or affected by sexual violence
- Documenting learning on engaging with young people affected by sexual violence through participatory activities

### **Developing resources**

- Developing a database of projects
- Creating a knowledge bank of resources, models and tools on young people's participation to prevent sexual violence against children
- Promoting learning and debate through online exchanges and workshops

## **Introduction: The meeting**

This meeting brought together members of the 'Our Voices' Reference and Dissemination Group and Advisory Group, alongside country project partners and youth associates from the International Centre.

The Reference and Dissemination Group for 'Our Voices' is made up of representatives from different organisations and networks across Europe. This includes representatives from Terre des hommes, Barnardo's, ECPAT, ENOC, Eurochild, the Children's Society, CARE International, YouAct, Girlguiding and many other organisations working on the issue of sexual violence.

Together 31 participants attended the meeting including frontline staff, advocacy managers, directors, youth associates, academics and others. Participants came from around the UK and from further afield travelling from Bulgaria, Albania, Croatia, Hungary, Thailand, Belgium and Germany (see appendix 1).

### **The objectives of this first meeting were to:**

- Share updates from the 'Our Voices' project
- Hear from other organisations to understand what work is happening on sexual violence prevention
- Learn how others are involving young people in sexual violence prevention efforts

### **This allowed the group to meet the key outcomes of the day:**

- Identify opportunities and priorities for future work and
- Lay the ground for/ develop further collaborative work

## Summary

A number of key points emerged from the discussions, including:

- The need to embed participation within organisations and services. This means ensuring that resources and policies are in place, that children and young people receive consistent support and that there is open and honest communication
- The need to explore creative methods and techniques to involve children and young people in different ways that don't necessarily always mean that young people need to be 'in the room'
- That participatory working is central to all issues affecting children and young people, which includes sexual violence, and that this also means involving and engaging children and young people who have been affected by sexual violence in prevention efforts
- The importance of training and opportunities for exchange and peer support for practitioners engaged in participatory work
- The importance of children and young people defining themselves – particularly in an environment where labelling and 'blaming' are all too common
- The value of talking openly and honestly about sex in society.

## The meeting discussions

### What works well when it comes to involving young people?

During this session participants were asked to individually take a few minutes to write down on a post-it an example of something in practice that worked well to involve young people in an activity, event or process. Following this, participants were asked to, in a group, discuss these examples and share a number of key themes, or models with the wider group.

Elements that were identified to support young people's involvement:

#### Resources

- Funding to ensure that young people are paid for their time and work
- Time
- Workers who are dedicated to child and youth participation

#### Organisational culture

- Embedding participation into the culture of the organisation
- Preparation for/ commitment to participation

#### Process

- Processes and initiatives that are led by young people from the start
- Enabling young people to define their role in different initiatives
- Facilitating peer support programmes
- Motivating young people and showing them that they can have an impact and make a change
- Offering training opportunities for young people

#### Professional skills

- Being aware of power and striving for the 'equality of power'
- Valuing and respecting young people
- Being realistic
- Being open and honest
- Having good communication
- Learning from young people

#### Being creative

- Finding ways for young people to contribute that allows them to stay anonymous - e.g. through the use of cartoons or animation
- Using creative methods and techniques
- Supporting artistic expression – alternative ways for communication that may be non-verbal

Through these conversations a number of challenges were also touched upon including that:

- 'Participation' and the time and costs involved are not always easy to find funding for
- That participation requires a shift of culture from one that excludes young people from decision-making processes to one that embraces them
- That there are challenges around the potential long term stigma for young people who are involved in this work if this identifies them as 'victims'
- That in some societies 'sex' is a taboo, particularly surrounding male victims of sexual violence and that services supporting children affected by concerns about sex may not engage so readily in participatory methods
- Often there is not the commitment from schools or other institutions to lead work on preventing sexual violence

## Update and emerging issues and ideas from 'Our Voices'

### *Updates on 'Our Voices'*

Following the icebreaker exercise, an overview of the 'Our Voices' project was shared along with findings from the consultations with 'Our Voices' Youth Advisors

#### **During year one of the project the following steps have been made:**

*Scoping:* information collected and a database developed of organisations working with young people around sexual violence across Europe

*'Call for information':* a call sent out to all contacts to ask for information on how organisations involve young people in sexual violence prevention work and examples of activities and initiatives. 80 responses from 25 countries collected

*Website and mailing list:* examples and learning from the call circulated through the website and through e-bulletins to the mailing list

*Participation resources mapped:* toolkits and participation resources, specifically those that address working with young people affected by sexual violence identified. Database of resources to be shared shortly with the network

*Consultations undertaken with Youth Advisors:* session plans prepared for phase 1 - identified and worked with partner organisations to facilitate workshop/consultations with young people

*Opportunities for young people to get involved and share their views identified:* three of the partners working with young people gave feedback to the Council of Europe on their child-friendly version of the Lanzarote Convention

One partner, Different and Equal, brought together Youth Advisors to develop an article for Tdh's website on preventing CSE

Under 'Our Voices' a trip was also organised to travel to Switzerland for a number of young people who've been involved in earlier projects, with the support of Eurochild and the University, and present films that they've made as part of collaborative projects with the University

*Ethics, sexual violence and participation:* developed an application to run a conference to explore in more detail the ethical implications around participatory working with young people on the issue of sexual violence. This conference will be held at Cumberland Lodge in September 2015

## *Results of the consultations with Youth Advisors*

*Process:* Based on the responses from the 'call for information' five priority countries were selected for Phase 1 - UK, Albania, Bulgaria, Netherlands and Spain. A call for interest went out to those organisations who had responded to the initial call in those countries along with other organisations later identified. Based on a series of criteria, 2/3 partners per country were selected. However, due to changes of staff/capacity issues, partnerships were not formed in the Netherlands and Spain during this period.

*Workshops:* The workshops were planned by the team at the university and aimed to shed light on the following questions

- **What do young people feel the issues are around sexual violence in their communities?**
- **What are the barriers and challenges to young people talking about sexual violence and accessing support?**
- **What do young people think could be done to stop sexual violence?**
- **How could young people be more involved in preventing sexual violence?**



**Figure 1: Map of Europe showing in red the countries where consultations were carried out with Youth Advisors**



Through the presentation, the following themes were shared:

- The Youth Advisor’s hopes and fears
- Forms of sexual violence young people felt were happening in their communities/ societies



Figure 2: Preliminary results of what Youth Advisors felt were the different forms of sexual violence happening in their communities/ societies

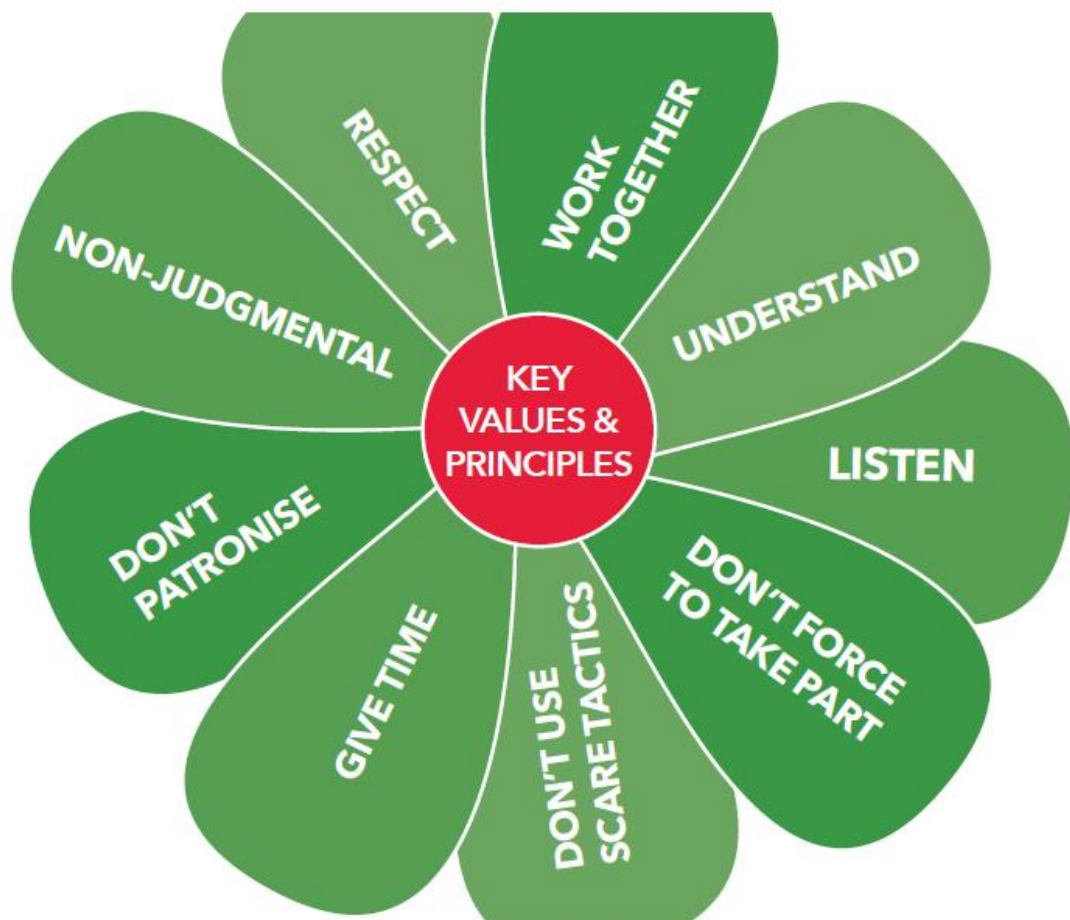
- Why young people felt this was happening



Figure 3: Preliminary findings of what Youth Advisors felt were the reasons behind sexual violence occurring in their communities/ societies

- The barriers to; understanding sexual violence; talking about it; seeking help and reporting sexual violence
- What changes need to happen to prevent sexual violence
- How Youth Advisors thought young people could get involved in sexual violence prevention efforts
- Understanding what would help or prevent young people from getting involved
- Principles and values for engagement

(Please see PowerPoint and upcoming report for more details on the findings of the consultations)



**Figure 4: The principles and values for engaging with young people that were identified by one group of Youth Advisors in the UK**

Drawing from the findings of the consultations, five key areas were highlighted for the group to reflect on:

### **Barriers to the involvement for young people in sexual violence prevention efforts**

#### Barriers to participation

1. Young people feel that people won't listen to them/ nothing will change
2. Young people feel they may be stigmatised if they are involved in sexual violence prevention work

#### Barriers related to understanding and knowing about sexual violence

3. Lack of education in schools
4. It's a taboo - attitudes of family, community and the police
5. Talking about it and knowing who to talk to

Through group work participants were asked to consider one of these issues and to answer the following questions:

- Is this an issue that you've identified in your own work?
- Are there other problems associated with this?
- How have you tackled this issue/ challenge in the past?

Once the group had thought about one of these issues they were then asked to switch around and add additional comments to the other groups' notes. The groups continued to do this till most groups had reflected on 3 or 4 of the problems.

**Note: below is feedback based on the group discussions during this session**

## **1. Young people feel that people won't listen to them/ nothing will change**

### **Problems associated**

#### *Consistency, commitment and follow up*

- Frequent change of workers
- Need constant and consistent support to develop young people's skills
- There is sometimes a commitment to the process and not the young people - need for more youth to be consulted and for it to be more meaningful
- Lack of follow up support to young people after projects end
- Young people need to be confident that their concerns will be addressed

#### *Understanding the process of change*

- Young people expect immediate impact
- Young people cannot see how their work has affected policy/ society etc.

#### *Organisational policies/ practice*

- Definition of participation – what kind of participation is equal? Too much ad hoc child participation out there
- Lack of skills and professional procedures
- Issues around the lack of equal power in participation work

#### *Parental support*

- Critical attitudes of parents do not enable independence for young people

### **Ideas to address**

#### *Improve communication*

- Feedback to children
- Show good examples of young people having an impact
- Explain why things are or are not happening
- Be realistic
- Manage young people's expectations – explaining procedures, timeframes etc.

#### *Organisational policies/ practice*

- Develop clear organisational policies surrounding participation
- Change power structures!
- Better training for staff –vocation focussed
- Organisations need to be consistent in supporting young people
- Change organisational and societal culture to a culture of being interested in young people's views and wishes

- Develop strategies for children and young people's voices to be heard

#### *Work with parents*

- Raise awareness amongst parents of the importance of participation
- Nurture parents more to support young people having a voice

## **2. Young people feel they may be stigmatised if they are involved**

### **Problems associated**

#### *Labelling and discrimination of young people who get involved in sexual violence prevention work*

- Labelled
- 'Becoming known for it'
- Lose friends, family and whole support system
- Bullying from peers
- If stigmatised and identified as a sexual violence victim or campaigner may be difficult for them to find a job in some contexts

### **Ideas to address**

#### *Provide opportunities for young people to be involved but anonymous*

- Give people the opportunity to define themselves and their relationships with this issue
- Find anonymous ways of contributing (in films – shadows; songs - just voice over; novels with pictures)
- Find ways for young people's views to be shared at events without them being present
- Empower children/ young people to speak safely without identifying themselves

#### *Challenge societal attitudes towards victims of sexual violence*

- Tackle negative attitudes through awareness-raising
- Positive publicity: enabling more people to share experiences
- Involve the Government (healthy attitude change campaigns needed)
- Work with men and boys to challenge negative behaviours and attitudes

#### *Find ways to support young people who do get involved in prevention efforts*

- Learn from the ways that young people support themselves
- Facilitate group activities

- Enable a sense of solidarity through peer support - bring young people together with other young people who have had similar experiences

#### *Other*

- Long term investment

### **3. Lack of education in schools**

#### **Problems associated**

*The reasons why schools and local authorities are not taking on the issue of sexual violence*

- Teachers are uncomfortable talking about sex
- Lack of appropriate resources for teachers and for training
- Not a specialism for teachers
- Parents can be a barrier as they may have their own ideas
- Lack of governmental commitment

*Is school the right environment currently to tackle issues of sexual violence?*

- Do some topics /discussions work in schools?
- Schools aren't currently safe - no whole school approach to preventing sexual violence
- Lack of facilities for girls/young women at schools/ blocking attendance
- Lack of gender awareness in schools
- Violence in schools must be addressed in the classrooms

#### **Ideas to address**

*Bring in specialists*

- Specialists train staff
- External groups go into schools
- Health education/ specialists present in schools

*Use creative methods to provide information in schools*

- Films to give information - online tools and resources in engaging ways
- Facilitating systems of peer support and education

*Provide safe spaces for discussions*

- Space for girls and boys to reflect on gender together just talking about gender needs to happen
- Gender specific spaces for discussion

- Information areas for leaflets and posters to be shared around relationships, sexual health and parenthood

#### *Change policies in schools*

- Whole school policies needed
- Head teachers need to be on board and tackle issues

### **4. It's a taboo - attitudes of family, community and the police**

#### **Problems associated**

##### *The role of religion and the media*

- Religious institutions play a role in creating taboos
- Media representations are not always accurate/ ethical

##### *Gender and ethnicity*

- Parents of male victims embarrassed
- Female workers do not always work with boys
- In some cases not able to speak out about abuse from within ethnic communities

##### *Relationships*

- There is talk about sex but not relationships
- No freedom to choose - forced into relationships

#### **Ideas to address**

##### *The role of adults*

- Adults must take responsibility for conversations

##### *Working with leaders and the media*

- Work to develop commitment of religious leaders/ groups to push for preventing sexual violence
- Legitimise discussions through working with politicians to discuss issues openly
- Encourage celebrities to get involved in prevention messages
- Use champions to articulate the message
- The media has a responsibility – ethical work, sexualisation/ consumerism

##### *Develop the right messages*

- How to communicate the message
- Frame it as children/ young people's rights

*Provide safe spaces for discussions*

- Develop a safe place to discuss
- Try different approaches to sharing experiences (be creative!)
- Listen to victims - do not focus too much on the perpetrators
- Promote sexuality education – body mapping etc, sex positive point of view

## **5. Talking about it and knowing who to talk to**

### **Problems associated**

*Lack of information*

- Lack of education – schools failing on this
- It's difficult to reach young people not yet in school
- Lack of knowledge about services
- Don't have words to describe experiences
- Reliance on peers for information
- Media coverage may not be helpful
- Normalisation of abuse can desensitise

*Issues around confidentiality*

- Fear of confidentiality being broken
- When stories are shared/ timely
- Young people can feel like they lose control of information

### **Ideas to address**

- Protect confidentiality
- Teach children vocabulary and what abuse looks like
- Provide more information in media / radio/ internet/ hotline- advertising hotlines and safe spaces
- Wider information sharing about services
- Training for professionals when children/ young people disclose – teachers/ social services/ police etc. on how to respond
- Stop criminalising young people when they disclose



## **Presentations from participants:**

A number of participants shared experiences and examples of different projects that have engaged and involved young people to explore sexual violence issues.



### **John Crownover from CARE International**

John shared the aims of the 'Young Men Initiative', a programme in the Western Balkans focusing on addressing social norms around what it means to be a man in society. The programme involves life skills education, youth leadership and a lifestyle campaign and involves a number of partnerships. So far over 22,000 have directly benefitted from this programme. John also shared information about the 'Be a man-change the rules' campaign and the success of this and other strategies for engagement and mobilization.



### **Ruth Ennis from You Act**

Ruth shared learning from the YSAV (Youth Sexual Aggression and Victimization) project, a multi-partner research and advocacy project. The project was focused on deepening knowledge on, and collecting recommendations for addressing sexual violence among young people in Europe.

Ruth talked about the advocacy element of the project. This involved training 20 young people from across Europe during a workshop held before the main conference. Ruth highlighted the importance of this workshop or 'youth pre-conference' and other trainings in advance of youth participation in larger conferences where experienced experts are gathered. Ruth recommended that:

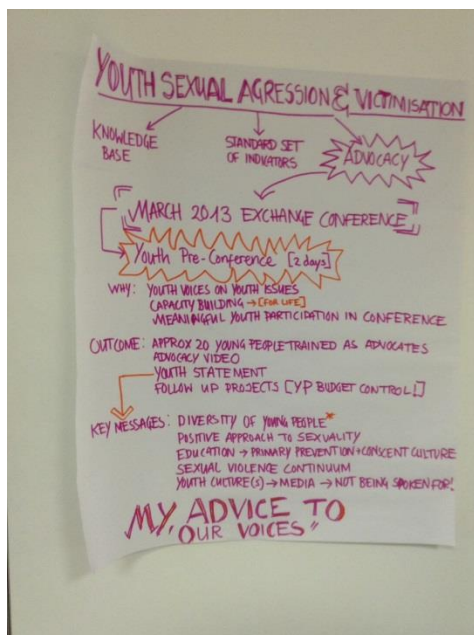
1. Young people should be there to ensure that there are youth voices speaking about youth issues
2. 'Pre-training' is part of capacity building and building life skills for young people for events but also for their futures

3. Pre-training ensures that young people can meaningfully participate in different project and events

Ruth also shared outcomes including a video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4onXwD-L7xl> and details of the statement developed by young people.

Ruth provided recommendations for 'Our Voices' particularly about involving young people in the Cumberland Lodge conference and to consider involving young people in the wider project through peer research.



**Mariana Yevsyukova from ECPAT International**

Mariana gave details about ECPAT's Youth Partnership Project (YPP). She outlined how children and young people were involved in this project as:

- Youth Motivators, Peer Supporters and Youth Advocates;
- Through the Peer-Support Programme;

- and through Youth-Led Micro-Projects designed and run by youth to raise awareness about the sexual exploitation of children and advocate for laws that protect children from exploitation and abuse.

The YPP project has reached in total 20,000 children and young people and 165 Peer Programmes have been established.

The learning from this project suggests that:

1. Small funds are needed to replicate the project in an effective way
2. The project can easily be introduced in shelters and recovery and integration centers but it is more difficult to introduce this programme in schools because of the lack of trained support staff

During her presentation, Mariana also informed participants about ECPAT's on-going activities including a research project on 'Access to Justice and Remedies for CSEC Victims' and an assessment of young people's role in ECPAT Governance.



**Clare Sullivan from SECOS project, Barnardo's**

Clare talked about how the young people affected by CSE at SECOS have been involved in different roles including as Peer Supporter helping other young people to prepare for court. Clare also shared how young people had been involved in a Parliamentary inquiry into the effectiveness of legislation for tackling CSE and trafficking. The young people that gave evidence from SECOS were involved in amending a bill and in turn the Sexual Offences Act 2003 on the topic of grooming.



**Kathryn Dawson from Rape Crisis Scotland**

Kathryn screened a recording of the dress rehearsals of a short play developed by young people at a school in Leith in Scotland that addresses sexual violence.

## **Group work**

Participants were asked to work together to consider how to move forward the following identified priority areas for 'Our Voices' in year 2 and 3.

### **'Our Voices' priority areas in year 2 and 3 (2015/2016)**

1. Sharing learning/ messages from consultations
2. Developing specific ideas from children and young people involved in the consultations and working with Youth Advisors now
3. Formalising and developing the 'Our Voices' network - developing it into an active network
4. Developing standalone training guides for practitioners around participatory practice and preventing sexual violence
5. Reviewing opportunities for young people to feed in to policy

Each group were given a priority and asked to reflect on the following questions:

- How useful would this be to the wider sector?
- Is it already being done by others?
- Are there opportunities for collaboration?

### **1. Sharing learning/ messages from consultations**

#### **I. Useful?**

- Useful for front line staff and decision-makers particularly the messages about the police
- Useful for other young people to hear what Youth Advisors have done/ have to say
- Useful for professional training courses – the findings could feed into training for social work, teachers and the police. It's integral not an add on - prioritise issues of emotional wellbeing along with academic areas
- Outcomes are not very surprising but very important

#### *Making the report of the consultations useful!*

- Useful if not another long report!
- An accessible and engaging version
- The first paragraph is important!
- Short visual representation alongside a simple document themed and linked to other levels UNCRC, CoE etc.

### III. Opportunities?

- Can we link to other projects/ consultations where messages are similar or projects that are tackling similar issues?
- Identifying more progressive individuals and organisations – champions within systems
- Is there a way of feeding messages to the police along with offers of support consultancy/ training to help them change?

## **2. Developing specific ideas from children and young people involved in the consultations and working with Youth Advisors now**

### I. Useful?

- Yes – unethical not to work with Youth Advisors

### II. Existing initiatives?

- 'Be healthy' project (<http://www.ayph-behealthy.org.uk/>) - led to the development of media guidelines and resources around effectiveness of young people who have experienced CSE coming together
- Blast Project (<http://mesmac.co.uk/blast>) - working on sexual exploitation with LGBT community
- Comic Relief (<http://www.comicrelief.com/>) and Children in Need (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/corporate2/childreninneed>) fund projects to empower young people to empower other young people
- Parents Against Child Sexual Exploitation (PACE) (<http://www.paceuk.info/>) – projects working with families

### III. Opportunities?

- Use volunteer networks
- Use existing networks
- It's effective to have partnership between projects – working with young people and with organisations

### Potential next steps:

- Develop Youth Advisors' skills
- Analysis of findings by Youth Advisors
- Facilitate an advocacy campaign run by Youth Advisors
- Feed into the UN General Comment on Adolescence
- Go to CATS conference
- Feed into EU action plans on children's rights, EU directives on sexual violence, victims, trafficking and the EC Lanzarote Convention

### **3. Formalising and developing the ‘Our Voices’ network - developing it into an active network**

#### I. Useful?

- No - assess at end of project

### **4 .Developing standalone training guides for practitioners around participatory practice and sexual violence**

#### I. Useful?

- Yes!
  - Because:
    - Consultations with young people have to be safe
    - Young people must have had time to reflect on their experiences and no longer pose a risk to themselves or others
    - There are gaps - boys and young men/ gender issues young people with learning disabilities
- But:
- What is the definition of a guide?
  - Guides have to start at different levels/ recognition of cultural needs

#### III. Existing initiatives?

- Is there guidance on risk assessments regarding participation?

#### III. Opportunities?

- Develop instead an E-learning course – with videos explaining how, what to do
- Include the guide as part of the course
- Work with Youth Advisors to develop course/ guide
- Develop booklet as well as E-learning module
- Look at where/ how courses could be developed with Open University / HREA

#### *What to include in the course/ guide*

- Examples of what can be done and what has worked well
- Information on regional level influencing
- Information around social media - direct engagement
- Learning from the frontline – decision-makers, police, other young people
- Examples from young people on what is working
- Learning from the global south from child and young people led work around protection and prevention
- Information on young peoples’ role in educating/ developing services that young people are involved in

*As part of the course/ guide*

- Include mentoring/ coaching around effective supervision
- Ensure that any risk assessment that organisations do is supported by a coach
- Involve the police

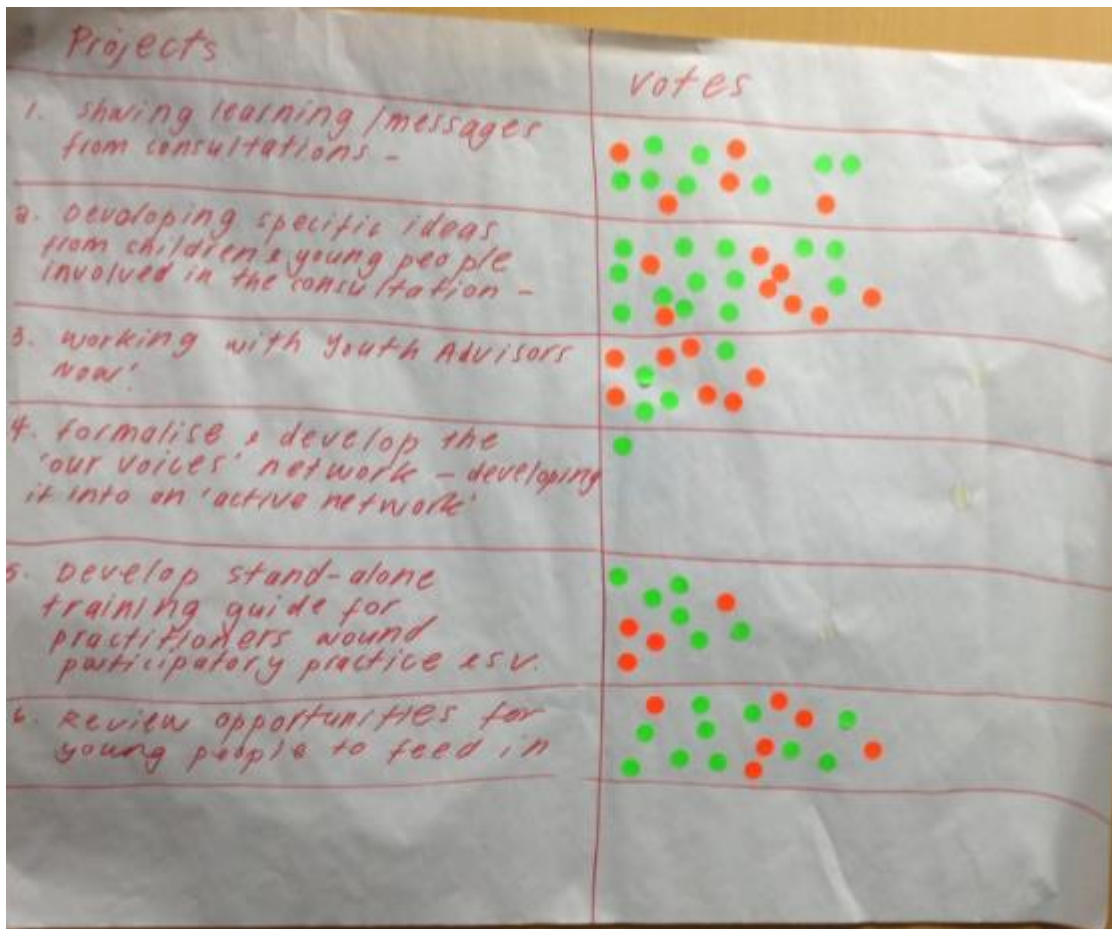
## **5. Reviewing opportunities for young people to feed into policy**

I. Useful?

III. Opportunities?

- Through the Council of Europe - could facilitate access to policy makers, politicians, promote young people's role in monitoring the Lanzarote Convention
- Raise awareness of 'Our Voices' in participating countries - be guided by the countries
- Campaign on a regional basis – link to other similar groups of young people
- Use social media across borders
- Collaborate with the Council of Europe, Oak Foundation etc.
- Work with organisations within the participating nations

Participants were asked to take three stickers and to 'vote' on the initiatives they felt should be the priority for years 2 and 3.



<b>Sharing learning/ messages from consultations</b>	13
<b>Developing specific ideas from children and young people involved in the consultations</b>	21
<b>Working with Youth Advisors now</b>	11
<b>Formalising and developing the 'Our Voices' network - developing it into an active network</b>	1
<b>Developing standalone training guide for practitioners around participatory practice and sexual violence</b>	10
<b>Reviewing opportunities for young people to feed in to policy</b>	16



## Feedback from the participants

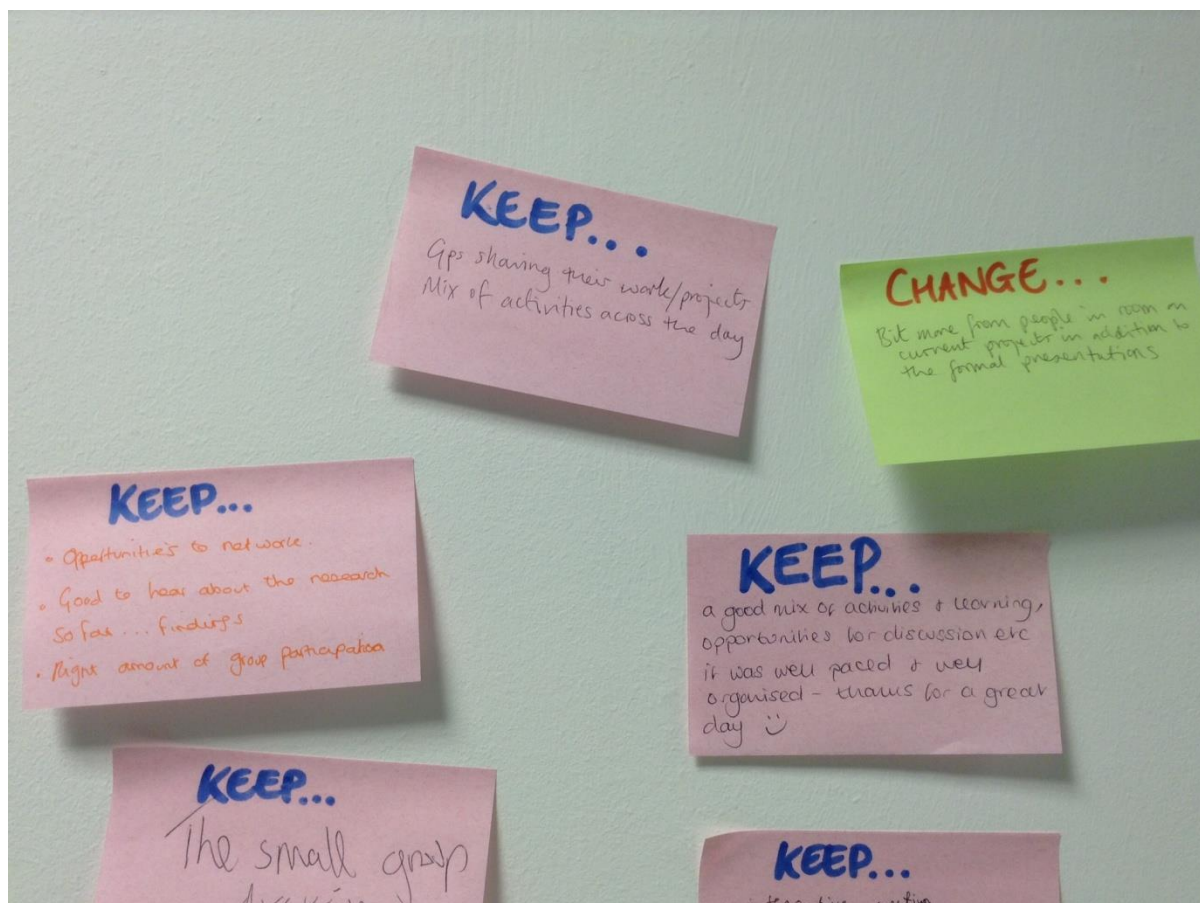
### Messages for Youth Advisors

- Dear youth leaders I have really enjoyed hearing about all the brilliant ideas you have come up with
- Continue to campaign and fight 4 your rights to sexual and reproductive health and more support and to be heard! You are the future and change is inevitable
- For change we need a collective movement of young people. Keep listening to other young people, learn from each other
- Was brilliant to hear the information from the consultations. It is so interesting to hear similar messages coming from different groups of young people in different countries. It was really powerful and thought provoking
- Thank you for sharing your views, opinions and thoughts. We will endeavour they help change things for other young people
- Thank you for sharing your experiences. I will discuss your experiences and solutions on how to raise awareness about how to involve children and young people in combating sexual violence within our organisation
- What we have to say will really help me and my colleagues in Scotland to involve the young people we are working with – thank you!
- Change happens! Don't give up – your voice counts. Thank you for being brave – you deserve so much respect!
- Really strong messages and honest comments – thank you
- Thank you for sharing all of your thoughts. It's helpful to hear that young people across Europe are dealing with similar issues and interested in similar opportunities to be involved
- A very big and warm thanks to all Youth Advisors in the UK and Albania for helping the Council of Europe to design and draft a child-friendly version of the Lanzarote Convention. It has helped us a lot in rethinking our work and we look forward to present and share with you the end result. We hope we can ask your advice again in the future

- Dear Youth Leaders! It was interesting to hear your ideas regarding work against sexual violence towards children. Very comprehensive advice, Please keep on going, continue your activism in this area – it is so important - you are those who share valuable knowledge with your peers, you are the ones who make a change
- Well done for your fabulous contributions so far. We can learn so much from you and I am determined to help you continue to have your voices heard and make the changes happen!
- Dear Youth, Thank you very much for all your great ideas and contributions. I promise to share your views and opinions through our regional website and projects even in Albanian and Bulgarian languages.
- Dear YA, Thank you for all the great and useful information you provided. Your input will be helpful in planning our next steps in the Balkans. I will share your ideas when back home throughout the Balkans region.
- Hi Youth Advisors, your thoughts and views chimes with views we've heard from Girlguiding members here in the UK and the key message about talking about the issues more and openly is something we aim to do in our work
- Thank you for your opinions we took them very seriously we agreed with many of them – it is good to know we are all thinking along the same lines. I hope we move on from words to action
- Dear Youth Advisors, in your work I'm sure that you are pushing for meaningful youth participation within these efforts. Please always remember that young people don't all have the same sexual or gender orientation, ability, ethnicity etc. so their diversity needs to be representative also that youth participation does not equal volunteering necessarily, but you can also be hired as experts
- You have such great ideas so keep working on implementing them! Your energy and motivation is what is needed!
- Thank you! I will do my best to support youth participation to make a real difference and end violence against young people.

## Messages for the 'Our Voices' team

Feedback on what to 'keep' and what to 'change' in the next Reference and Dissemination Group meeting



### Keep...

#### Participants

- Opportunities for networking -Thank you!
- Contacts with this group
- Presentations from participants
- Hearing about others' work with young people in other countries - how issues are being addressed
- Meeting people and chewing the cud (with a view to making links in the future)
- Presentation of projects
- Opportunities to chat with representatives from other countries/ organisations
- Opportunities to share what is working in different places
- Sharing good practices
- Meeting international groups and sharing ideas about what works and what doesn't
- Opportunities to network
- Diversity of attendees – front line practitioners and policy and strategic leads = good balance
- International perspective

- Meeting and exchanging good ideas and information
- Keep in touch

#### **Content and structure**

- 'Informal approach'
- Feeling of productiveness ☺
- Mixed methods and participatory format
- Opportunities for sharing and collaboration
- Group work
- Small group discussions
- Developing ideas
- Focus on group activities
- Learning from children's consultations
- The small group discussions
- The dynamic way of organising the work through the day
- Sharing their work/projects
- Mix of activities across the day
- A good mix of activities and learning, opportunities for discussion etc. it was well paced and well organised – thanks for a great day ☺
- Interactive meeting
- Good platform to exchange information and experiences
- Group dynamics
- Sitting at tables and moving around – breaks good!
- Good balance of presentations and group work
- Relaxed atmosphere (felt welcome even though not quite in box)
- Group work
- Presentations
- Energisers
- Group work went well
- Discussion of recommendations from young people (as young people can't be here)
- Good to hear about the research so far...findings
- Right amount of group participation
- The ideas
- The voices of young people
- The work in small groups

#### **Organisation prior to the event and during**

- Very well organised – good combination of group work and listening
- Facilitation skills, you did a great job!
- Very well organised!
- Who is Who was very useful doc!
- 'Who is Who'

#### **Change...**

##### **More concrete**

- Try to work more concretely on how to implement the messages of the children that took part in the consultations – though we did do some of it
- Actions to take away for group

### **Specific to activities**

- Difficult to place dots (voting stickers) – because the categories are very general (necessarily at this stage) they could all go in different directions – or overlap
- Postcards (related to several activities)

### **Venue**

- Need more fresh air
- Opportunity to move rooms?

### **Participants**

- Add more countries e.g. organisations who work on sexual violence from Moldova, Ukraine, Russia, Turkey, Germany (there are active ECPAT groups)
- Invite young people to the meeting
- Have children and young people involved
- If funds available include young people
- Have young people here! It's crucial even in 'professional' settings!<sup>1</sup>
- Explore cultural/ geographical differences

### **Time/ length of meeting**

- More time for exchanging experiences and lessons learnt
- Perhaps make it a day and a half so that we all have the opportunity to 'network' during the evening - sadly I had no time in rest of my diary this week and can't stay ☹️
- Little time to engage with everyone
- Make meeting two days to go more deeper into some issues
- Start later for those from a distance (i.e. North UK/ international?)

### **Sessions**

- Nothing except - moving around tables
- The people on the tables
- Focussing on project/collaborative brainstorming late in the day as many participants were too tired at the stage and lacking motivation
- Ensure short snappy presentations keep to time
- Short presentations to time
- Mix up structure for the day – different ways of presenting
- Fewer presentations – or maybe structure as discussions instead – keep afternoon interactive
- Bit more from people in the room on current projects in addition to formal presentations
- More opportunity to focus on presentations
- Nothing
- Possibly less time reporting back from each group?
- Provide some kind of organogram to show how network members/individuals are connected to 'Our Voices' – I didn't quite understand everyone's role

### **Language**

- Reliance on English

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<sup>1</sup> A number of participants spoke about young people not being present at the meeting, however a number of youth associates who have worked with the Centre on previous participatory projects were present. However, we understand that they may have been referring to the Youth Advisors who took part in the consultation who were not present at this meeting.

## Conclusions

The meeting provided an opportunity for participants to share and exchange information and learning from their own projects and to respond to the messages from Youth Advisors. It provided the space to reflect on the barriers, challenges and solutions Youth Advisors voiced through the consultation process.

Through exercises and activities the participants were able to build on, add to and provide their own knowledge and ideas to the discussions relating to the key themes identified by Youth Advisors. Participants from the group were also able to help shape the next phase of the 'Our Voices' project.

Following the meeting the 'Our Voices' team explained that they would:

- Write up the discussions from the meeting
- Collect back the final feedback from Youth Advisors and write up the full findings from the consultations and
- Develop a plan of action, talking on board the suggestions and recommendations from both the Youth Advisors and members of the Reference and Dissemination Group.

The plan will prioritise the following tasks:

- Getting the messages from the Youth Advisors out to policymakers and practitioners
- Continuing to support Youth Advisors to be heard and to be active in sexual violence prevention efforts
- Supporting practitioners in Europe to further develop their own participatory practice through the development and dissemination of resources, exchange and learning opportunities
- Seeking funding to resource and equip young people to develop their own prevention resources, activities and initiatives.

Please contact Claire Cody to find out more about the next steps and for any further details about the 'Our Voices' Project [claire.cody@beds.ac.uk](mailto:claire.cody@beds.ac.uk)

Keep up to date by visiting <http://www.beds.ac.uk/research-ref/iasr/centres/ourvoices/news>

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## Appendix 1

### List of participants

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Georgia Johnston	Brook
Kathryn Dawson	Rape Crisis Scotland
Ruth Ennis	YouAct
Stela Stansfield	Children's Society
Hannah Marsden	Barnardo's
Elli Moody	Girl Guiding Europe
Tam Baillie	Children's Commissioner for Scotland representing ENOC
Hilary Willmer	PACE
Bharti Patel	ECPAT
John Crownover	CARE – Young Men Initiative/ Men Engage Alliance
Gordana Berjan	Council of Europe
Sendrine Constant	Tdh Regional Office/ Mario Project
Mieke Schuman	Eurochild
Jashmin Patel	MsUnderstood
Presiana Manolova	Oak Foundation
Gerison Lansdown	Independent Consultant
Clare Sullivan	Barnardo's SECOS
Abbie Mitchell	ENGAGE
Denisa Ndreka	Different and Equal
Zdravka Karagerova	Pulse Foundation
Gergana Encheva	Gavroche
Hugh Salmon	Family for Every Child
Mariana Yevsyukova	ECPAT International
Sheila Brotherston	Lucy Faithfull Foundation
Lindsay Starbuck	AYPH
Asaybi Snape	Youth Associate
CJ Hamilton	Youth Associate
Claire Cody	University of Bedfordshire
Camille Warrington	University of Bedfordshire
Jenny Pearce	University of Bedfordshire
Helen Veitch	University of Bedfordshire