EUROPEAN SCIENCE FOUNDATION
SETTING SCIENCE AGENDAS FOR EUROPE

Exploratory Workshop Scheme

Standing Committees for Social Sciences (SCSS)

Scientific Report

ESF Exploratory Workshop on

Children's participation in decision-making: Exploring theory, policy and practice across Europe

Berlin, Germany, 16-18 June 2008

Convened by:
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① University of Edinburg, UK and ② International Academy at the Freie Universität Berlin, DE

Executive Summary

An intensive ESF Exploratory Workshop, titled "Children's participation in decision-making: Exploring theory, policy and practice across Europe", was held successfully in Berlin on the 16-18th June 2008.

Over the last decade, the rhetoric of participation has become prominent within policy and practice pertaining to children. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) states that a child's views must be considered and taken into account in all matters affecting the child, subject to the child's age and maturity (Article 12). Childhood Studies has emphasised that children can and should be seen as social agents and not passive subjects, well able and already contributing to families and communities. In line with this, governmental and non-governmental organisations are increasingly seeking to involve children in decision-making issues through a range of participatory initiatives. Such participation has developed in many European countries, both in Western and Eastern Europe; it is a core principle for work by UNICEF and large international NGOs such as Save the Children; the European Commission (2006) has issued a communication on children's rights, including children's participation.

As practice and policy have proliferated, tensions and challenges have been revealed. Even amongst the most ardent supporters of children's participation, there are concerns about tokenism, lack of impact and consultation fatigue. Theoretical work on children's participation has not kept abreast of such challenges. Debates within different academic communities have rarely coincided and, to date, the development studies literature has failed to adequately inform such debates. While the limitations of participatory methods are often discussed, a host of important questions surrounding the precise nature, politics and ethical status of participation remain largely unasked and unanswered.

The workshop addressed these gaps in three ways:

1. Mapping and evaluating current practice, policy and typologies of children's participation, for their strengths and limitations
2. Examining concepts and theorisations from a range of social science disciplines for their potential usefulness for theorising and testing children's participation
3. Capitalising on the diversity and commonalities across European countries, in order to learn from the different theoretical and empirical approaches for mutual challenge and development.

The workshop's scientific content was organised to meet these. For example, contributions used disciplinary approaches from political science, psychology, social anthropology, sociology, social policy, and socio-legal studies. European coverage was excellent, with representation from Scandinavia (countries known as at the forefront of children's participation), Central Europe (countries with contrasting approaches to children's rights and participation opportunities), Eastern Europe (countries that have recently experienced considerable political and civil change), and Southern Europe (countries known for familial policies, with innovative examples of participation). As the workshop was highly participative and intensive, it benefited considerably from the inter-disciplinary and cross-European contributions. Further, newer scholars with leadership potential were invited and took on supported roles as presenters and chairs.

The resulting discussions led to the overarching points:

- 'Participation' is an empty concept, which can be used in different ways and can have very different – sometimes unintended or 'hidden' – outcomes.

- Despite the supposed commonality of the UNCRC (which all participants' countries had signed), there were unexpected differences in approaches to children's rights and in particular to participation or citizenship rights, which were often used synonymously.
- The workshop debated the advantages and disadvantages of the UNCRC as a frame for understanding children's participation. Children's legal rights should not be understood as the end but as the beginning of a dialogue, which can lead to more social acknowledgement of children as a 'social group' and children having more influential roles in society. Participation processes of children can start outside legal frameworks and outside 'rights-based' educational projects.
- Children's rights in Europe are predominantly promoted by adults and not children themselves. The exceptions are worth exploring further, as are the working children movements and their 'protagonism' in Latin America.
- There has been a resurgent interest of children's citizenship, as a way to understand children's participation. Citizenship can be questioned for its emancipatory potential, particularly due to its exclusive and adult-dominated meanings. Yet the discourse of citizenship has potential for acknowledging children as social and political actors.
- Based on empirical research from Norway, the strict distinction between public sphere (politics, community) and private sphere (family), and collective and individual decision-making, was questioned.
- The relationship between participation and addressing/ fighting against discrimination was debated. This is not an 'automatic' outcome of participation, but participation can contribute to more balanced power relations between children and adults.

The discussions identified that there was far more diversity amongst leading childhood and children's rights scholars than anticipated, suggesting considerable more interaction would be beneficial to moving this field forward.

Participants committed themselves to joint follow-up activities such as:

Research:

- ✓ developing comparative research projects on such issues as children in cities, children's migration, the history of children's participation;
- ✓ a proposal to the ESF Research Conference, for a conference on quality education*;
- ✓ a proposal for a COST Action on children's rights research network*.

Publications:

- ✓ disseminating workshop papers and/ or abstracts through website and mailbase lists*;
- ✓ exploring the potential for a regular workshop paper series, using the internet for sharing of quality postgraduate papers*;
- ✓ exploring the possibility of a 'European Yearbook on Children's Rights' and/ or textbook on children's rights*.

Networking:

- ✓ developing existing websites for collaborative work*;
- ✓ developing a regional Mediterranean network*;
- ✓ encouraging new researchers to use the workshop network for individual fellowships; developing interactions with policy makers at a European level*.

Action is already being undertaken on the * activities.

Scientific Content of the Workshop

The Exploratory Workshop addressed children's participation in 'public' or 'collective' decision-making. Over the last decade, the rhetoric of participation has become prominent within policy and practice pertaining to children. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) states that a child's views must be considered and taken into account in all matters affecting the child, subject to the child's age and maturity (Article 12). Childhood Studies has emphasised that children can and should be seen as social agents and not passive subjects, well able and already contributing to families and communities. In line with this, governmental and non-governmental organisations are increasingly seeking to involve children in decision-making issues through a range of participatory initiatives. Such participation has developed in many European countries, both in Western and Eastern Europe; it is a core principle for work by UNICEF and large international NGOs such as Save the Children; the European Commission (2006) has issued a communication on children's rights, including children's participation.

As practice and policy have proliferated, tensions and challenges have been revealed. Even amongst the most ardent supporters of children's participation, there are concerns about tokenism, lack of impact and consultation fatigue. Theoretical work on children's participation has not kept abreast of such challenges. Debates within different academic communities have rarely coincided and, to date, the international literature has failed to adequately inform these debates. While the limitations of participatory methods are often discussed, a host of important questions surrounding the precise nature, politics and ethical status of participation remain largely unasked and unanswered.

The workshop proposed to address these gaps in three ways:

1. To map and evaluate current practice, policy and typologies of children's participation, for their strengths and limitations

2. To examine concepts and theorisations from a range of social science disciplines (e.g. political science, psychology, social anthropology, sociology, social policy, and socio-legal studies) for their potential usefulness for theorising and testing children's participation

3. To capitalise on the diversity and commonalities across European countries, in order to learn from the different theoretical and empirical approach for mutual challenge and development

The scientific content of the workshop was organised to meet these three aspects, as elaborated upon below.

1. Mapping and evaluating children's participation

Two elements developed this. First, the convenors prepared an overview paper "Current Theorisations of Children's Participation and Citizenship", which dealt with different definitions of, typologies of and current controversies on children's participation. Four conceptual approaches were then proposed as potential ways for developing theory around children's participation in collective decision-making: children's citizenship, governance and civil society, social capital, and new social movements. This paper was distributed to all paper presenters in advance, as well as all those attending, so as to provide material that presenters could use, react to and challenge.

Second, each paper presenter was asked to address certain questions in their papers. The first two asked for current theorisations and typologies of children's participation within their country context and to consider how these related to current trends in children's participation activities in their country. The later two addressed the next two headings.

2. To utilise resources from a range of social science disciplines

This process was begun in the overview paper, which utilised ideas from political science (citizenship, governance and civil society), sociology (social capital) and social anthropology (new social movements, particularly from a Latin American context). It continued through the different disciplinary backgrounds of the presenters, for example:

- Socio-legal: Prof Dr Wouter Vandenhole and Dr Rudi Roose, University of Antwerp
- Media studies and psychology: Dr Nada Korac and Jelena Vranjesevic, University of Novi Sad
- Sociology: Dr Giangi Schibotto, University of Bologna
- Political science: Highlight presentation from Dan Rusu, University Babes-Bolyai, Clug-Napoca

3. To capitalise on the diversity and commonalities across European countries

The workshop attracted participants from all parts of Europe (see final participant list) and the programme was deliberately organised to maximise on this. Presentations were given from Belgium, Germany, Italy, Norway, Serbia, and Spain. Because of the number of participants wanting to

present, two highlight presentations (20 minute each) were added to the original programme, from Portugal and Romania.

In this way, the workshop was able to interact with prepared papers on country contexts, trends and challenges, and how theorisations were developing in these countries. European coverage was excellent, with representation from Scandinavia (countries known as at the forefront of children's participation), Central Europe (countries with considerably diversity in their policy contexts and their approaches to children's participation), Eastern Europe (countries which have experienced considerable political and civil change), and Southern Europe (countries known for more familial policies, with innovative examples of participation). This diversity indeed raised productive commonalities (e.g. similar challenges for sustainable children's participation) but also uncovered considerable diversity. For example, attention to children's issues has different academic contexts and theorisations in the different areas of Europe, not all of which sit easily together (see below).

The programme included an 'engagement activity' with young people, who had had concrete experiences of participation. They represented two very different local youth initiatives. One group agitates for refugee children and young people, who have been living in Germany for a long time yet lack an official status and are in danger of being sent back to their 'home country'. The other group develops projects and actions in their surroundings referring to their rights and based on their common interests. This workshop's engagement activity provided an excellent opportunity to contextualise the conceptual and theoretical reflections with the actual experiences and views of young people. It allowed workshop participants to 'test' theoretical concepts, such as the power of the 'invitation' for young people to become involved in participation activities, for the organisational 'governance' beneficial for supporting participation, and the 'trajectory' of children's participation from engagement, to involvement, to moving on.

Assessment of Results and Contribution to the Future Direction of the Field

Contributions from presenters

Following the overview paper and highlight presentations, contributions from Belgium, Norway, Germany, Serbia, Spain and Italy were presented and discussed. The contribution from Belgium was strongly theoretical, revisiting critically the exclusive understanding of children's rights as legal rights and pleading for a contextualised conceptualisation and implementation of participation rights. The Norwegian was based on an empirical study and asked for the spaces of participation in family life and schools to perceive children as differently-equal citizens.

The German contribution gave an overview on empirical studies about children's participation in municipalities, child day-care facilities and schools and discussed the results in the light of different concepts of political participation. The contribution from Serbia was centered on the relations between children and media and asked for the possibilities of participative media education as a tool for improving the status of children. It utilised ideas from child development to consider such media education.

The Spanish contribution traced different legal instruments and organisational contexts by which children's participation is encouraged and framed, and discussed critically their relevance for becoming citizens in a participatory democracy. The contribution from Italy raised the limits and ambiguities of the dominant participation discourse and linked it with the consumer role of young people, and asked for pathways to 'protagonic' participation.

Resulting discussion

All contributions were discussed directly after they were presented and also in plenary sessions, where the group explored how the different theories, disciplines, research results and national contexts discussed can enrich understandings of children's participation. While some contributions took a more individualistic approach, others emphasised the collective right to participation manifested in social movements. There was criticism of (false) dichotomies, e.g. adult rights vs. children's rights; individual rights vs. collective rights; dependent vs. independent participation; decision-making in family vs. public sphere. Certain overarching points can be drawn out of the discussions:

Participants realised that there are very different and even opposing definitions and understandings of participation. *'Participation' was seen as an empty concept, which can be used in different ways and can have very different – sometimes unintended or 'hidden' – outcomes.* On the one hand, more functional understandings see participation as an instrument for 'integration' or 'social inclusion'. On the other hand, normative understandings see participation as a value in itself, as a form of 'self-realisation' or as an expression of movements for 'emancipation'. The workshop participants agreed that the search to create the ultimate definition for 'participation' should be abandoned and that the term should always be understood in a contextualised and localised ways. This includes being aware of the disciplinary bias of all definitions and to look for interdisciplinary dialogue.

Despite the supposed commonality of the UNCRC (which all participants' countries had signed), there were unexpected differences in approaches to children's rights and in particular to participation or citizenship rights, which were often used synonymously. While much has been written and discussed about the applicability of children's rights in general, and the UNCRC in particular, in the Global South, the workshop discussion brought out the considerable differences even within Europe.

The UNCRC has been a cornerstone of children's rights in Europe, as well as internationally, and has been a major impetus to children's participation. *The workshop debated the advantages and disadvantages of the UNCRC as a frame for understanding children's participation.* The UNCRC itself was a political compromise. Children's legal rights should not be understood as the end but as the beginning of a dialogue, which can lead to more social acknowledgement of children as a 'social group' and children having more influential roles in society. Participation processes of children can start outside legal frameworks and even outside 'rights-based' educational projects.

Looking across Europe, the legal sphere and political community remain largely adult-dominated. *Children's rights are predominantly promoted by adults and not children themselves (although with notable exceptions, including the groups of young people who attended the engagement activity). The workshop discussed how children's rights can become rights that children articulate and use for themselves.*

There has been a resurgent interest of children's citizenship, as a way to understand children's participation. Just like participation, citizenship can be understood in different ways. Some workshop participants doubted if citizenship was an appropriate notion for children's (political) participation, due to its potential for exclusion and its adult-dominated meanings. Others valued the discourse on citizenship as a chance to acknowledge children as social and political subjects, for its emphasis on

process as well as status. This allows citizenship to go beyond the legal sphere and be understood in a 'lived' way and contextualised to children's different social realities. The daily activities with friends and within peer-groups can be essential for the development of 'lived' citizenship. From such reflections, strict distinctions between public sphere (politics, community) and private sphere (family), collective and individual decision-making, were questioned.

Discrimination is a powerful policy concept, particularly as the European Union is increasingly addressing different diversity dimensions and the power of the European Court of Human Rights. *The relationship between participation and addressing/ fighting against discrimination was debated.* There were no doubts that this cannot be an 'automatic' outcome of participation but participation can contribute to more balanced power relations between children and adults. On the other hand, it was underlined that we have to take into account that children themselves have different life-histories and are living in different social conditions, which make it inevitable to look for special ways how to empower and amplify the space of action for under-privileged groups of children. In other words, equality and difference were seen as key concepts for conceptualising participation.

A cross-cutting issue during the workshop was whether we can talk of children's participation as "under-theorised", as it was done in the overview paper, and how to understand the challenge of its theorisation. It was conceptualised as the creation of a scientific setting to find hidden aspects, to look behind discourses and develop categories for the analysis of actual ideas, spheres, projects and methods of participation. *Theorisation should be understood not as simply a question of broader or better definitions but as a process of research-based reflection on the agency, action and 'protagonism' of children in daily life taking into account their different life worlds and experiences.* Time and space were mentioned as strong analytical devices.

Future directions

In the workshop's final day, participants discussed future directions in small groups – each participant changing from one to another group, enabling all participants to give input in all groups – and in a plenary session on future planning in research, publication and networking.

The main challenges for empirical research identified are: to understand how children themselves experience and conceptualise participation (without necessarily using the term), how and under

which conditions participation really works; and to put the focus on the variety of ways to participate, e.g. its realisation in a 'dependent' or 'independent' way, 'top-down' or 'bottom-up' approach. All this should be understood and analysed as a process, which implies learning, but has or should have other implications and impacts too.

Nevertheless, it remains open what kind of knowledge we want to gather and why we want to do it. After deconstructing the usual notions of participation we once more require a shared understanding of what participation is and how to reconstruct it. The workshop participants agreed that participation is "good" but we also have to look how different disciplines contribute to understanding how and why it can be beneficial for children *and* contribute to more justice in societies.

Follow-up activities

The discussion on follow-up activities led to proposals and agreements for research, publication and networking.

Potential research activities:

- Study the effects of training courses in children's rights
- Cross-European comparative studies on:
    - Children in cities
    - Children's experience of migration
    - The history of children's participation
    - Children's biographical trajectories of participation
- Conceptualising children's participation at different levels (such as the individual, the local, the national)
- Research conference on the topic of quality education

Potential publication activities

- To publish the workshop papers in a book
- To create a web-based working paper series, particularly for new researchers to the field, in cooperation with the "European Network of Masters in Children's Rights" (ENMCR) and possibly "Childhoods Today", a new e-journal published through the University of Sheffield
- To create a "European Yearbook" on children's rights, or to elaborate a "textbook" on children's rights, that can be used in MA and training courses.

Potential networking activities

- To create a research network PhD programme on children's rights

- To utilise the European Network of Masters in Children's Rights (http://www.enmcr.net/cms/) as a means of collaboration
- To create a regional Mediterranean network
- To intensify lobby work on a European level
- New researchers have been invited to use the e-mail list of participants, to identify particular opportunities for individual fellowship (e.g. Marie Curie).

For all activities working groups were formed. Action already resulting includes:

- Dissemination of workshop papers and/or abstracts, through www.childhoodstudies.ed.ac.uk. Mailbase lists are being used to notify potentially interested parties of their availability: e.g. European Network of Masters in Children's Rights, Children and Young People's Participation Learning Network.
- A printed version of the papers is being finalised, to go to one participant in each country, to disseminate pro-actively to relevant decision-makers.
- Manfred Liebel, as co-convenor, has had initial discussions with potential publishers about a series, which would include workshop papers
- A draft proposal for a Research conference, with the aim to submit it to the European Science Foundation Conferences in September 2008
- A draft proposal for a COST Action on children's rights research, with the aim to submit it to the European Science Foundation in September 2008
- Proposal by the Babes-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca (Romania) to the Open Society Foundation for a follow-up seminar with early career researchers/ postgraduates
- First steps towards the establishment of a regional Mediterranean network
- Early discussions of a textbook proposal, with two potential editors identified
- Development of a passworded network website for posting papers etc., with a particular emphasis on young scholars and exchange
- Further connections with European lobbying -- participation in Euronet and the forthcoming meeting of the Fundamental Rights Platform

ESF SCSS Exploratory Workshop:
Children's participation in decision-making: Exploring theory, policy and practice across Europe
Berlin, Germany, 16-18 June 2008

Final Scientific Programme

Monday, June 16, Day 1

12.00-13.00 **Arrival, registration and light lunch**

13.00-14.00 **Opening Session**

Welcoming by ESF representative

Introduction to the seminar programme; aims for the day; review of the objectives and programme timetable. (Dr. Kay Tisdall, University of Edinburgh; Prof. Dr. Manfred Liebel, International Academy at the Free University Berlin)

14.00-14.30 **Theme 1: Current Theorisations of Children's Participation and Citizenship**

Overview paper presented (Dr. Kay Tisdall, University of Edinburgh)

14.300-15.00 **Brief contributions on highlights in children's participation across Europe**

Portugal:
Dr. Catarina Tomás and Dr. Natalia Fernandes, University of Minho, Braga

Romania:
Dan Rusu (PhD student), University Babes-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca

Chair: Krista Orama and Maija Mustaniemi-Laakso, Åbo Akademi University Piispankatu, Finland

15.00-15.30 **Tea & coffee**

15.30-16.00 **Plenary discussion**
Krista Orama and Maija Mustaniemi-Laakso, Åbo Akademi University Piispankatu, Finland

16.00-18.00 **Theme 2: Learning from across Europe**

- **contribution from Belgium:** (Prof. Dr. Wouter Vandenhole and Dr. Rudi Roose, University of Antwerp)
- **contribution from Norway:** (Dr. Anne Trine Kjørholt and Håvard Bjerke, Norwegian Centre for Child Research, Norway)

Chair: Dr. Karl Hanson, University Institute Kurt Bösch, Sion, Switzerland

19.00 **Welcome dinner**

Tuesday, June 17, 2008, Day 2

09.00-11.00 **Theme 2 cont.: Learning from across Europe**

- **contribution from Germany:** (Prof. Dr. Manfred Liebel, International Academy at the Free University Berlin)
- **contribution from Serbia:** (Dr. Nada Korac and Jelena Vranjesevic (PhD), University of Novi Sad)

Chair: Dr. Louise Hill, University of Edinburgh

11.00-11.15 **Tea & coffee**

11.15-13.00

- **contribution from Spain:** (Dr. Lourdes Gaitán/Marta Martinez, University Complutense, Madrid)
- **contribution from Italy:** (Dr. Giangi Schibotto, University of Bologna)

Chair: Prof. Dr. Maria Roth, University Babes- Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca

13.00-14.00 **Lunch**

14.00-15.30 **Conceptualising children's participation**
Whole group discussion to explore how the different theories, disciplines and national contexts discussed can enrich understandings of children's participation.

Chair: Dr. Ruth Farrugia, University of Malta-

15.30-16.00 **Tea & coffee**

16.00-17.30 **Engagement activity**

Discussion with local young experts on participation. Initial links have been made with

- Representatives of the youth initiative *Hiergeblieben!* which takes action for refugee children and young people, who have been living in Germany for a long time yet lack an official status and are in danger of being sent back to their "home country".

- "K-Teams", children's rights teams who actively participate in developing measures and projects in their interest (locally)

Engagement with young experts is critical for a project on children's participation and citizenship. The timing of this session will depend on the children's schedule- it may take place earlier in the day).

Moderation: Julia Justl, International Academy at the Free University Berlin

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20.15 **Dinner**

Wednesday, June 18, 2008, Day 3

9.00-9.30 **Theme 3: Developing collaborative work**

Overview of publication, networking and research opportunities

Chair: Rebecca Budde, Free University Berlin

9.30-10.30 **Small group development of opportunities,**
a) Publication: Manfred Liebel (International Academy at the Free University Berlin)
b) Networking: Jacobijn Olthoff (University of Amsterdam)
c) Research opportunities: Lourdes Gaitán, (University Complutense, Madrid)

10.30-11.00 **Plenary discussion of opportunities**

Chairs: Dr. Virginia Morrow, Institute of Education, University of London and Dr. Kay Tisdall, University of Edinburgh

11.00-11.30 **Tea and coffee**

11.30-13.00 **Future planning and identification of action points**

Chairs: Dr. Virginia Morrow, Institute of Education, University of London and Dr. Kay Tisdall, University of Edinburgh

13.00-14.00 **Light lunch, departure**

Venue:

Freie Universität Berlin
"Silberlaube"
Habelschwerdter Allee 45
14195 Berlin
Tel: +49-(0)30-52734
Room Number: L 201

Statistical Data on Participants

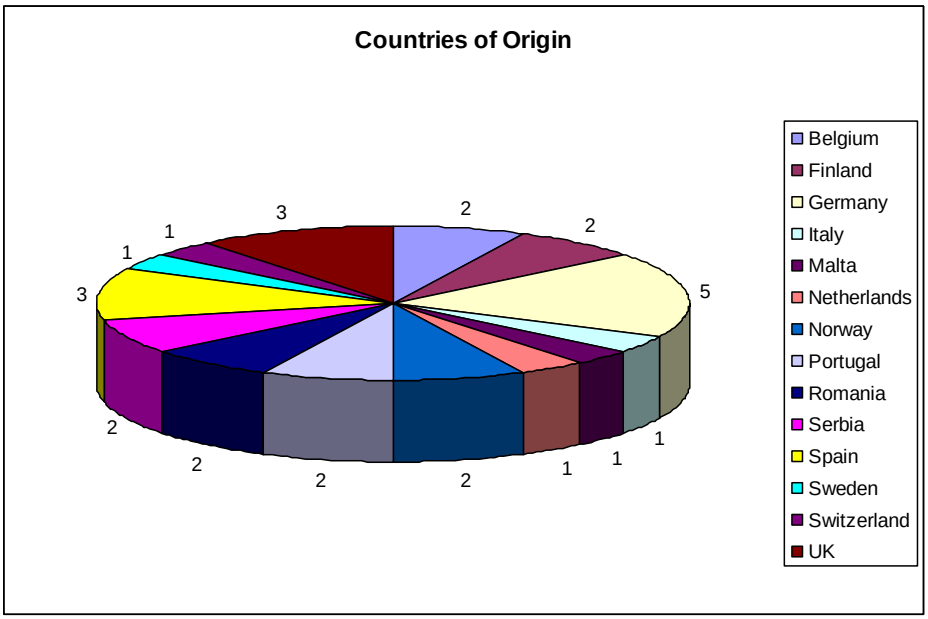
Number of participants:
28 participants and one representative from ESF
6 young people representing different NGOs and child rights initiatives were present during the third day of the workshop.

Age Structure:
The youngest participant was 25, the oldest participant 68 years of age
The medium age was 40 years

The young people were age 18-30
Their medium age was 22 years

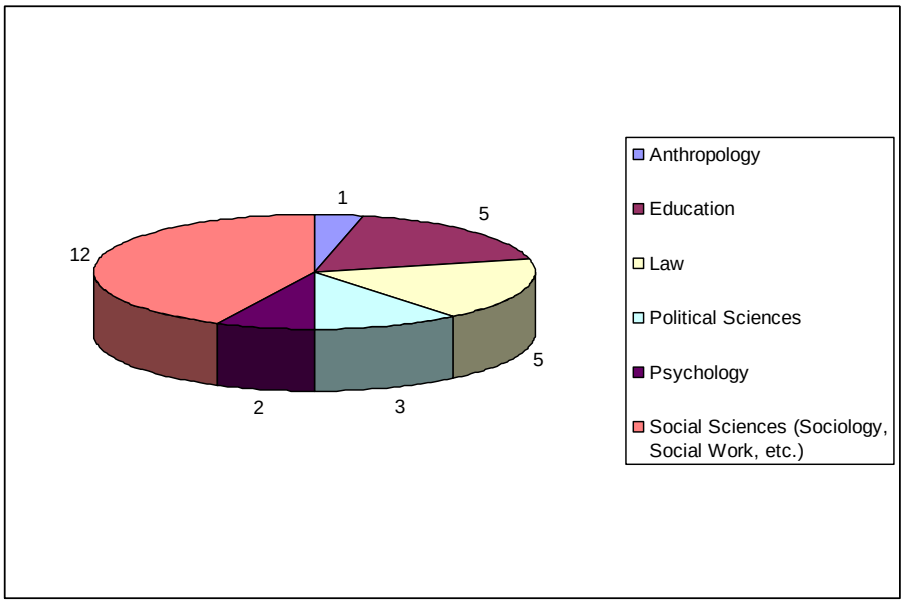
Gender Repartition:
19 female
9 male

Countries of Origin:
Participants came from 14 European countries



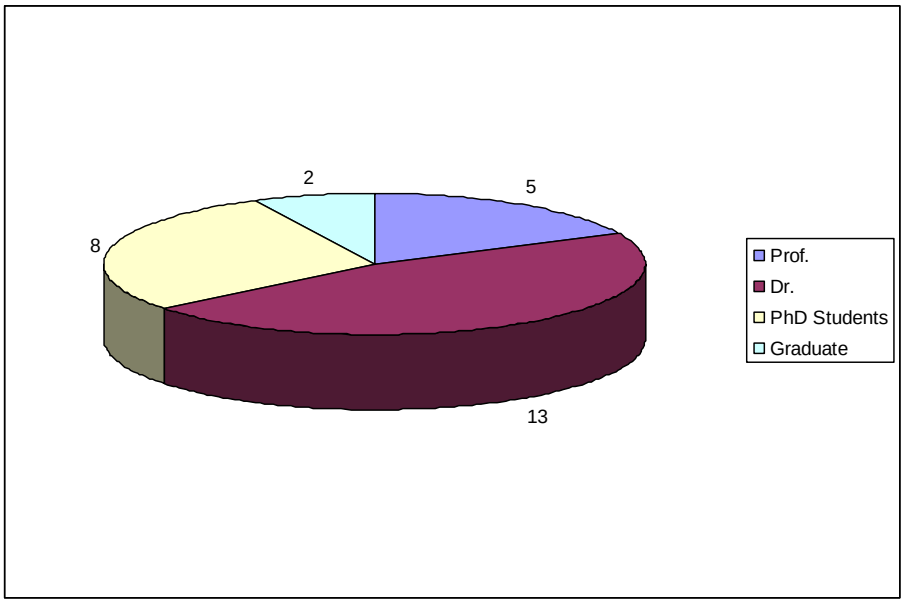
Academic Fields

Participants came from different academic fields, underlying the multi-disciplinary approach adopted by the organizers to addressing children's participation.



Academic Position:

Participants held different academic positions. The group included university graduates, PhD students, Doctors and Professors.



Final List of Participants

Participants	Affiliation
Dan Rusu, PhD student	Universitatea Babeş-Bolyai Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of Sociology and Social Work,
Daphne Gross, PhD student	Internationale Akademie gGmbH an der Freien Universität Berlin
Dr Kay Tisdall	University of Edinburgh, School of Social & Political Studies, Reader in Social Policy, Course leader M.Sc. Childhood Studies, Scotland, UK
Dr Rudi Roose .	Department of Social Welfare Studies, Ghent University,
Dr Ruth Farrugia	Faculty of Laws, University of Malta
Dr. Anne-Trine Kjorholt	Norwegian Centre for Child Research; NTNU
Dr. Carlos Villagrasa Alcaide,	University of Barcelona, Faculty of Law
Dr. Catarina Tomás	Universidade da Beira Interior, Departamento de Psicologia e Educação
Dr. Frank Kuhn	European Science Foundation Science Officer for the Social Sciences EUROCORES coordinator
Dr. Jacobijn Olthoff	Universiteit van Amsterdam, Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences
Dr. Karl Hanson	Institute Universitaire Kurt Bösch, Children's Rights Unit
Dr. Lourdes Gaitán Munoz	Universidad Complutense Madrid, Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociología, Departamento de Sociología II - Ecología Humana y Población
Dr. Nada Korac	University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Sciences
Dr. Natalia Fernandes	University of Minho, Braga, Portugal

Dr. Virginia Morrow	Institute of Education at the University of London, School of Early Childhood Education, England, UK:
Giangi Schibotto	Università Degli Studi di Bologna, Faculty of Education Sciences
Håvard Bjerke. PhD student	Norwegian Centre for Child Research; NTNU
Jelena Vranjasevic, PhD student	Teacher's College, University of Belgrade
Julia Justl	Freie Universität Berlin, EMCR
Krista Orama	Human Rights (Abo Akademi University) in Finland
Louise Hill, PhD student	University of Edinburgh, Centre for Research on Families and Relationships University of Edinburgh
Maija Mustaniemi-Laakso ,	Human Rights (Abo Akademi University) in Finland
Monika Sarajärvi,	Save the Children, Sweden
Prof Dr. Wouter Vandenhole	University of Antwerp, Belgium Faculty of Law UNICEF-Chair in Children's Rights
Prof. Dr. Manfred Liebel	Formerly Technical University Berlin, Internationale Akademie für innovative Pädagogik, Psychologie und Ökonomie gGmbh an der Freien Universität Berlin, Germany
Prof. Dr. Maria Roth	Universitatea Babeş-Bolyai Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of Sociology and Social Work,
Prof. Isaac Ravetllat Ballesté	University of Barcelona
Prof.Dr. Viola Georgi	Freie Universität Berlin, EMCR
Rebecca Budde, PhD student	Freie Universität Berlin, EMCR