

# EVALUATION YOUNG LEADERS PROGRAMME

2015-2020



**EFF**  
Eduardo Frei  
Foundation

**ROBERT  
SCHUMAN**  
Institute

# CONTENTS

<b>1. EVOLVEMENT OF THE YLP 2011-2020</b>	<b>12</b>
1.1 Historical background and scope of the YLP	13
1.2 Historical background and scope of the YLP	15
1.3 Participants and contents of the YLP 2015-2020	16
<b>2. CURRENT CONTEXT</b>	<b>18</b>
2.1 Democracy under threat	19
2.2 EFF and CDA's view of the importance of continued democracy support YLP	21
<b>3. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH</b>	<b>24</b>
3.1 Objective of this evaluation	25
3.2 Aims	25
3.3 Surveys	26
3.4 Interviews with participants	26
3.5 Meeting with key-persons	26

<b>4. RESULTS</b>	<b>27</b>
4.1 Summary of the survey answers	28
4.2 Summary from the interviews	35
4.3 Cooperation and complementarity with KAS, NDI and IRI	46
<b>5. SOFT RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE WAY FORWARD</b>	<b>50</b>
5.1 Contents, learning and skills	51
5.2 Way forward	58
5.3 Concluding remarks from dialogue with the EFF board	59
<b>Appendix I</b> Number of participants, countries and parties 2015-2020	62
<b>Appendix II</b> Questions for surveys/personal interviews	64
<b>Video</b>   Young Leaders Summary	

# AUTHOR'S NOTE

This evaluation of the Young Leaders Programme 2011-2020 (with particular focus on 2015-2020) has been a somewhat different experience for me as an evaluator. My evaluation commissions usually involve a longer term, continuous engagement, and takes on a learning approach.

This evaluation process has been going on from June 2021-October 2021 and was commissioned by the EFF and the RSI at the end of the Young Leaders Programme cycle 2015-2020.

The on-going, continuous approach was, hence, impossible to apply this time, but there has been an ambition all along, to maintain reflection and learning about findings and threads together with the managers of the two commissioning organisations. And the evaluation will be concluded in November with a learning dialogue with representatives from the EFF board, and possibly also with representatives from the RSI.

I would like to thank everyone involved in this process: Astrid Frey, Program Manager at the EFF, the Netherlands and Gábor Berczeli, Director at the RSI, Hungary, Karina Squiassi whom we had the pleasure to welcome aboard along the way, last but not least the interviewees: programme managers from the NDI, the IRI, KAS, one facilitator in the YLP and all of the former participants from the YLP who contributed with their time in answering surveys and sharing their narratives in interviews.

***“I would like to thank everyone involved in this process.”***

We hope that findings and analyses from this study will serve to set the way forward for the exciting YLP journey so that this important programme can continue its progress, to the benefit of young leaders, their political parties as well as for the enhanced democratic consolidation and stability in Eastern Europe.



We wish the Eduardo Frei Foundation and the Robert Schuman Institute and all their collaborators the best of luck in their future endeavours.

*2021-12-14*

**Monica Johansson and Karina Squiassi**

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# SUMMARY

This evaluation has been commissioned by the Eduardo Frei Foundation (below EFF) and the Robert Schuman Institute (below RSI).

## **It aims at:**

- 1) reflecting on how the programme has evolved over the years (in terms of content, quality of the trainings, target group reached, but also taking into consideration the political context in which the project has been taking place);
- 2) providing quantitative results of the project from 2015-2020 (number of participants, from which countries and how many took on political positions after graduation from YLP);
- 3) gathering qualitative results of the project (stories from participants about how they used the knowledge and experience they gained during their career);
- 4) describing the unique selling points of this programme compared to other similar initiatives and
- 5) reflecting on the future of the project.

Below we will summarise findings and conclusions related to each of the aims above.

## **The YLP programme 2011-2020**

The Young Leaders programme is organised by the Robert Schuman Institute, with support from the EFF. In addition, the CDA/EFF has been one of the main drivers behind setting up the Robert Schuman Institute in Budapest, founded in 1995 but established already in 1991 as a foundation: Christian Democratic Academy for Central and Eastern Europe.

Since then, the Robert Schuman Institute (RSI) is the European educational centre for politicians and parties belonging to the political family of the European People's Party (EPP).

RSI promotes the idea of a united Europe and the basic values of the EPP/Christian Democracy, supporting the process of democratic transformation, the development of civil societies and of the EPP affiliated parties through education and training. RSI also facilitates the information flow between EU members, accession countries and other European states through building a cross-border network between international participants and speakers sharing the same values and political orientation.

The EPP and the RSF Luxemburg are key stakeholders and their financial support ensures the functioning of the RSI office.

The latest two series of YLP have been running since 2011, and has trained 172 participants from a number of parties.

Each cohort of participants (one per year) 2015-2020 received 15 full days of training. The training was divided into three different sessions:

- I)*** *Basics of a Democracy*
- II)*** *International and Security issues*
- III)*** *Challenges in Economic and Social Life*

The first five years 2011-2015 involved a total of 76 participants from the following countries: Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Armenia, Serbia, Georgia, Croatia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Moldova, Ukraine and 24 different parties.

In 2015-2020, the programme involved youth from: Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia & Hercegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Lebanon, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine, hence all parties of countries that are currently not members of the European Union. The majority of the parties that participate in the YLP are associated with the European political party "European Peoples' Political Party", EPP, (with Christian democratic, conservative, and liberal-conservative member parties).

The total number of participants 2015-2020 was 96, out of which 53 women and 43 men. Youth from approximately 27 parties took part in the programme.

### **Former participants advance in leadership**

A survey was answered by 52 out of 96 participants 2015-2020.

33 (63%) out of the respondents stated they have advanced within their parties and other organisations (mostly NGOs/CSOs) since they graduated from the programme.

Many participants have been able to take up new leadership roles and positions within their parties. Respondents also generally state that their responsibilities and participation in decision making processes within their parties and other organisations has increased.

Examples of positions held by YLP alumni are: Foreign affairs coordinator, International secretary of Party's Youth organisation, International Secretary of the main party, Member of the executive board, Vice president of municipal branch, Member of main board, President of the committee for social media in the youth league, Member of Parliament, Secretary of the Public policy and Legislation department, Vice president of the Youth league (branch), to name a few.

In the material, we also find a few examples of participants who take on strategic roles in politics, outside of party-organisations, in NGOs or CSOs or as civil servants and/or consultants.



### **Narratives about knowledge, experiences and skills from the YLP**

The most commonly mentioned skill, referred to by the YLP alumni is the strengthening of the participants' communication skills and public speaking followed

by negotiation skills. Nearly all participants report to have used the training on communication, argumentation, debate, and negotiation skills in their political life. Many respondents also mention that they have acquired and applied critical and strategical thinking skills.

Respondents also mention: knowledge about minorities issues, improved political argumentation skills in English, leadership, networking and strategic alliances, crisis management, problem solving, theory on geopolitics, security-issues and global political institutions, etc., PR, social media and election processes, knowledge about decision making processes and project management.

**“The total number of participants 2015-2020 was 96.”**

Several participants report to have improved their capacity in networking with likeminded organisations and civil society.

The international perspective on politics was of interest and use to many. As a matter of fact, the possibility to exchange experiences with youth politicians from other countries, allowing them to build great friendships, to learn about politics in other countries and parties in Eastern Europe and to learn from each other’s ideas was the memory most frequently referred to. Many also write about connections with speakers and high-level political leaders from Europe.

Interviewees confirm that personal contacts with other YLP participants (from other countries) live on several years after graduation.

A few respondents refer to the fact that the participation in the YLP opened up for them to participate in new trainings, such as internships in the EU-institutions and other educational programmes abroad.

**How does the YLP differ from other, similar programmes?**

In interviews with youth representing 11 out of the participating 12 countries (2015-2020), we have asked whether participants have attended other training programmes that are similar to YLP.

Most of the interviewees have attended training inside their parties, as well as participated in external courses and events organised by mainly international parties.



Other than the Robert Schuman Institute and the EFF, the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS, Germany), International Republican Institute (IRI, USA) and National Democratic Institute (NDI, USA) as well as the European Parliament and the EPP are most often mentioned as international partners and training institutions.

Interviewees generally relate to the high-level content on relevant issues, the lecturers, but also the link with and reference to the European Union. The concrete and practical approach, and the opportunities to meet politicians and visit political institutions are also highly appreciated among participants. Two of the interviewees mention that NDI and IRI adopt a multi-party approach where they mix participants from more progressive center-left- social democratic parties with center-right conservative-liberal parties.

YLP is described by interviewees as a “comprehensive” and “complete” programme in comparison with others. This view is also confirmed at the evaluators’ short interviews with managers from IRI, NDI and KAS.

***“The international perspective on politics was of interest and use to many.”***

The most prominent differences in the approach of the four organisations mentioned is that NDI and IRI take on a multi-party approach, while the EFF and the RSI have designed their programme for members and prospective members in the EPP. This means that they choose to cooperate with conservative or conservative-liberal parties.

This is generally true also for the approach described by the representative from KAS, working in Montenegro and Serbia with EPP-parties. The KAS does, however actively engage not only the strictly political sphere in their training activities, but involves also journalists, leaders from NGOs and media, etc.

RSI and EFF work with the full range of EPP-member parties in the same programme in EU membership candidate countries Eastern Europe, while NDI, IRI and KAS may concentrate on a few countries and parties at a time.

### **Reflections and soft recommendations on the way forward**

We hope that the findings and results of the evaluation can work as a material to reflect on, for EFF and RSI to decide on future priorities, possible projects and/or trainings targeting the YLP alumni and whether and how to approach and communicate (senior) party leaders.

For EFF and RSI the dialogue in the nearest future will possibly also involve considerations on whether to continue developing the “fundamentals”, i.e. the basic training and/or to add alumni activities and training. The strategic discussion may also involve aspects that relate to the overall objectives and the Theory of Change (ToC) of the programme.<sup>1</sup>

Of course, the final strategic decisions regarding the way forward lies in the hands of EFF and the RSI, hence the observations and soft recommendations above are intended to work as support and inspiration rather than a roadmap.

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<sup>1</sup> The ToC is a strategic model of the intervention logic and a framework of how certain actions, tools or activities can be expected to lead to outputs, outcomes and impact.



# EVOLVEMENT OF THE YLP

2011-2020

# 1. EVOLVEMENT OF THE YLP 2011-2020

## 1.1 Historical background and scope of the YLP

In 1990, the Dutch political party CDA (Christian Democratic Appeal) founded the Eduardo Frei Foundation (EFF) with the overall objective to promote international solidarity. One of the catalysts was the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the need to share knowledge with neighbouring emerging democracies on good practice in the fields of democracy, party politics and elected politicians' important responsibilities as representatives of their people. More than 30 years later, this need continues to be highly relevant to CDA and their partners.

The EFF operates mainly in Central and Eastern Europe, and organises party development activities on-demand.

### **The Eduardo Frei Foundation has three main goals:**

- Advocate Christian democratic thinking on the subject of international co-operation in general and especially that of development co-operation and human rights;
- promote continuous awareness in above-mentioned fields among CDA members and affiliated organisations regarding the above-mentioned topics; and
- develop and support initiatives, especially in Central and Eastern Europe and developing countries, aimed at promoting Christian democratic thinking.

Besides its work of the foundation on behalf of the development of democracy in Central and Eastern Europe, the foundation encourages people to debate on issues

related to development aid. The board of the foundation believes it is important to continuously reflect on the future of development aid, based on issue related topics.

The CDA/EFF has been one of the main drivers behind setting up the Robert Schuman Institute in Budapest (founded in 1995, but established already in 1991 as a foundation: Christian Democratic Academy for Central and Eastern Europe). This has had positive spin-off effects, for example the foundation of the Institute of Political Education in Ukraine and EDUCATIO in Lithuania.



In order to facilitate collaboration with Christian democratic parties in Central and Eastern European countries, the EFF Board has determined six categories in which projects can be classified:

- 1) *Education and Training Courses;*
- 2) *Conferences and Congresses;*
- 3) *Regional Projects;*
- 4) *Technical Assistance;*
- 5) *Exchanges and*
- 6) *Orientation Visits.*

The programme component in focus for this particular study is “Education and Training Courses”.

According to the EFF Board, Education and Training Courses is the most important category. It includes training courses (ideology, policy content, communication) carried out by CDA experts in Central and Eastern European countries. The trainers are informed extensively beforehand with regard to the specific local situation.

YLP has been running since 1994. A total of 27 series have been completed.

## 1.2 Historical background and scope of the YLP

The Young Leaders Programme is organised by the Robert Schuman Institute with support of the EFF. In addition, the CDA/EFF has been one of the main drivers behind the establishment of the Robert Schuman Institute in Budapest (1995).<sup>2</sup>

The initiative was taken by László Surján, Vice president of KDNP (Christian Democratic People's Party, Hungary), Gábor Dzsingisz, József Antall, Prime Minister of Hungary, and Wim van Velzen (President of the CDA, the Netherlands), with the support of Wilfried Martens, President of the EPP and Prime Minister of Belgium, and Horst Langes, President of the Robert Schuman Foundation, in Luxembourg.

Since then, the Robert Schuman Institute (RSI) is the European educational centre for politicians and parties belonging to the political family of the European People's Party (EPP). The CDA/EFF continues to hold a seat on the International Board of RSI, while Wim van Velzen is the Honorary President of RSI.

***“A total of 27 series have been completed.”***

RSI promotes the idea of a united Europe and the basic values of the EPP/Christian Democracy, supporting the process of democratic transformation, the development of civil societies and of the EPP affiliated parties through education and training. RSI also facilitates the information flow between EU members, accession countries and other European states through building a cross-border network between international participants and speakers sharing the same values and political orientation.

The EPP and the RSF Luxemburg are key stakeholders and their financial support ensures the functioning of the RSI office.

During 2011-2021 YLP trained 172 participants from a number of parties. The reader will find more information about countries, parties and numbers of participants from the five cohorts trained in the YLP during 2015-2020 below, in section 1.3.

The first five years covered in this evaluation 2011-2016 involved a total of 76 participants from: Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Armenia, Serbia, Georgia, Croatia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Moldova, Ukraine and 24 different parties.

<sup>2</sup> The earlier version of what was later to become RSI was a foundation: Christian Democratic Academy for Central and Eastern Europe (est. 1991).

## 1.3 Participants and contents of the YLP 2015-2020

In 2015-2020, the programme involved youth from: Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia & Hercegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Lebanon, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine,<sup>3</sup> hence all parties of countries that are currently not members of the European Union. The parties that participate in the YLP are associated with, or seek cooperation with the “European Peoples’ Political Party”, EPP, (with Christian democratic, conservative, and liberal-conservative member parties).<sup>4</sup>

The total number of participants was 96, out of which 53 were women and 43 men.<sup>5</sup> Youth from 27 parties took part of the programme.

The opportunity to participate in the programme is advertised through the RSI and in the parties, but the selection is made by senior executives in the political structure. Mr. Gábor Berczeli, Director at Robert Schuman Institute, Hungary states that this recruitment procedure is a quality-check for how participants are selected:

*“There is no way for participants to get accepted to the YLP without support or approval of the party. Youth who are interested in participation can approach their leadership, but the youth league is not involved in the selection process. I think that this is an important quality-check, and also a way of holding party leaders accountable for investing in the right youth. This programme has been going on for 26 years, and there is an awareness in the leadership about the contents and the skills that the young bring back to the party.”<sup>6</sup>*

<sup>3</sup> The focus countries of the EFF are currently (in 2021): Armenia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Serbia, Ukraine, Lebanon, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia.

<sup>4</sup> It is part of the mission of the RSI to work with parties that are associated with the European People’s Party. Since 1991 the RSI has been promoting the idea of a united Europe and the basic values of the EPP / Christian Democracy, supporting the process of democratic transformation, the development of civil societies and of the EPP affiliated parties through education and training.

<sup>5</sup> *“The gender balance is good. In some parties there are more young women than men interested in the training. We are happy about this, since women tend to bring a more sensitive touch to topics such as environmental issues, rule of law, gender and so on.”* says Mr. Berczeli

<sup>6</sup> Mr. Berczeli refers to RSI’s idea of training: Training is not a side line activity in politics. It is responsibility for the formation of politicians, investment in the next generation political party, but also a must for winning the upcoming election. In the EU’s neighbourhood it is about raising the new pro-European elite with centre-right convictions and ensuring their countries keep on track even when the first euphoric moments of transition have passed. Source: [schuman-institute.eu/institute/](http://schuman-institute.eu/institute/).

Each cohort 2015-2020 received 15 full days of training. The training was divided into three different sessions:

- I)** *Basics of a Democracy*
- II)** *International and Security issues*
- III)** *Challenges in Economic and Social Life*

In Appendix I, the reader will find a summary of the number of participants; the countries of origin; the parties (name of the parties, short description opposition/majority, etc.) 2015-2020.

The content has changed slightly over the years, but examples of components from the three different training sessions are:

- I)** Team building, Ideology, Sustainability, Gender issues, Basic Elements of a Democracy, the Political Landscape in My Country (participant presentation), Communication and Presentation skills, Democratic Parliamentary system – Structure and Functioning;
- II)** Cyber aspects in Security Policy, Energy as a Security Factor, Steps towards a Defence - Union in Europe, Conflict Prevention, Managing the International Relations of a Party – Opportunities inside of the EPP family, European Borders and Security, International Crisis Management, Multilateral solutions to Current International Challenges. Migration in Europe and Russian Influence in Central and Eastern Europe – protecting national sovereignty.
- III)** Debating training, Nation states and International Financial organisations, Banking and finance in transition countries, Healthcare systems, Building a genuine civil society, Healthcare systems and reform, Social dialogue, labour relations, retirement systems and employment in Europe, Leadership management training and Economics for politicians. The topics and contents have been adjusted somewhat every year, but the fundamentals remain the same.<sup>7</sup>



# CURRENT CONTEXT

# 2. CURRENT CONTEXT

## 2.1 Democracy under threat

Democratic political institutions are currently under threat, and the number of authoritarian states are increasing at the expense of democracy. Political opposition movements are facing intimidation and violent suppression.<sup>8</sup> Women and youth are generally underrepresented.<sup>9</sup>

In 2020, the pandemic resulted in the withdrawal of civil liberties on a massive scale and fuelled an existing trend of intolerance and censorship of dissenting opinion.<sup>10</sup> Globally, Covid 19 cast light upon the fragility of democracy in times of crisis and the willingness of governments to sacrifice civil liberties and exercise unchecked authority in an emergency situation.

The Annual Democracy Index 2020<sup>11</sup> does not provide an encouraging view on the prospects for democracy in the coming years. The Index classifies states in four different categories: full democracies; flawed democracies; hybrid democracies and authoritarian states. In 2020 there are still no “full democracies”<sup>12</sup> among the YLP participant countries.

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<sup>12</sup> Countries in which not only basic political freedoms and civil liberties are respected, but which also tend to be underpinned by a political culture conducive to the flourishing of democracy. The functioning of government is satisfactory. Media are independent and diverse. There is an effective system of checks and balances. The judiciary is independent and judicial decisions are enforced. There are only limited problems in the functioning of democracies.

<sup>8</sup> European Network of Political Foundations (EnoP): Cooperating with Political Parties – Why Does it Matter? 24 April, 2020: <http://www.enop.eu/cooperating-with-political-parties-why-does-it-matter/> Last visited 2021-11-02.

<sup>9</sup> Background on Democracy Support through PAO, Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023-2027 UD 2021/05665

<sup>10</sup> Freedom House: Democracy under Lockdown – the Impact of COVID-19 on the Global Struggle for Freedom, October 2020, pp. 1-4

<sup>11</sup> [www.eiu.com/n/campaigns/democracy-index-2020/](http://www.eiu.com/n/campaigns/democracy-index-2020/), Economist Intelligence Unit, published February 2021.

Democratic institutions and procedures in Central and Eastern Europe are generally described as malfunctioning which leads to popular disenchantment and support for military rule and strongman leaders. Persistent issues with corruption also pose serious challenges to democracy.

As according to the Economist Intelligence Unit in 2020, most of the countries in which EFF is operating through YLP (Lebanon, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ukraine, Georgia, Montenegro, Moldova and North Macedonia), are described as so-called “hybrid regimes”.<sup>13</sup>

Three of them (Serbia, Albania and Kosovo) are characterised as “Flawed democracies”,<sup>14</sup> while Belarus is the one state classified as an “authoritarian regime”.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Elections have substantial irregularities that often prevent them from being both free and fair. Government pressure on opposition parties and candidates may be common. Serious weaknesses are more prevalent than in flawed democracies—in political culture, functioning of government and political participation. Corruption tends to be widespread and the rule of law is weak. Civil society is weak. Typically, there is harassment of and pressure on journalists, and the judiciary is not independent.

<sup>14</sup> These countries (like the “full democracies”) have free and fair elections and, even if there are problems (such as infringements on media freedom), basic civil liberties are respected. However, there are significant weaknesses in other aspects of democracy, including problems in governance, an underdeveloped political culture and low levels of political participation.

<sup>15</sup> In these states, state political pluralism is absent or heavily circumscribed. Many countries in this category are outright dictatorships. Some formal institutions of democracy may exist, but these have little substance. Elections, if they do occur, are not free and fair. There is disregard for abuses and infringements of civil liberties. Media are typically state-owned or controlled by groups connected to the ruling regime. There is repression of criticism of the government and pervasive censorship. There is no independent judiciary.

## 2.2 EFF and CDA's view of the importance of continued democracy support

The current global context indicates that sustained democracy support is, and very likely will continue to be highly relevant in the next few years.

Political parties have several important supporting functions to play in democracies. They give citizens the possibility to organise and make their voices heard. Furthermore, they can serve as a link between government and society. Strong and well-functioning political parties also play an important role in economic development.<sup>16</sup>

For parties to work as vehicles for democracy, they need stable internal structures and systems (such as procedures for electing or appointing representatives within the party, training for members, policies and regulations, communication protocols, etc.)

***“Women and youth are generally under-represented.”***

Political parties and democracies in Western Europe are, of course, not perfect. The democratic support offered by EFF and the CDA builds on the belief that sharing democratic values and ideas with parties in Central and Eastern Europe with a similar mind-set<sup>17</sup> as to that of CDA will contribute to a positive impact in countries and parties that are still constructing democratic institutions.

In 2010, at the occasion of EFF celebrating its first 20 years, a report describing the history and the progress of EFF was published. Some key-persons<sup>18</sup> in CDA and EFF's development presented their view of the most relevant components of EFF's next few years of democracy development work. Some of the most important contents mentioned was to continue to show and sustain international solidarity and work with a long term perspective for democratic change.

<sup>16</sup> Background on Democracy Support through PAO, Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023-2027 UD 2021/05665

<sup>17</sup> Piet Bukman: “If the EFF considers supporting a party, it looks at the mind-set of the group and whether it fits broadly with our Christian democratic views. What matters for fruitful cooperation is a common ideological basis and similar ways of thinking.”

<sup>18</sup> Pieter “Piet” Bukman now retired Dutch politician and diplomat of the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) party and economist and Wim van Velzen, Chairman of CDA 31 January 1987 – 7 March 1994.

Piet Bukman states:

*“What we see in the countries concerned – including the new member states of the EU – is that it takes much longer for them to stabilise than we had hoped. It was naïve to think that a suppressive government that had been in power for several decades would simply vanish without leaving significant scars in society. The absence of active civil societies in all former CIS countries is the biggest social challenge that is left from the communist regimes. However, active civil societies are crucial to being able to influence politics and stabilise the political situation. This stability is still lacking in many of the countries, as is illustrated by the fact that political parties can do well at one point, but suddenly implode and disappear from the political stage.”*

### **Working with the younger generations**

Another relevant aspect that the interviewees emphasise in the report is the importance of encouraging the younger generation, and to ensure that they do not get disillusioned by politics.

Wim van Velzen contributes with the following view:

*“Investing in the younger generation and supporting it in its personal development is crucial. International networks and exchanges between groups of youths are good ways to trigger mutual understanding and an awareness that several solutions to a problem exist. Looking beyond borders is important for Dutch youth as well as for young people in (South) Eastern Europe. At the same time, we should also invest in providing training on selected topics that are important for the country concerned. The fact that projects of the EFF are demand-driven ensures that the country’s challenges are discussed in training sessions. After all, in the end, a country’s inhabitants know best what that country is in need of. We can only support them in this process. This approach should continue to be the most important element of the work of the EFF in the future.”*

The importance of targeting youth is confirmed also by Gábor Berczeli:

*“Through the YLP, youth are able to see the opportunities with the partnership or membership in the European Union. They have the chance to communicate with and exchange experience with other youth from countries that have similar transition challenges. Youth enter in direct communication and readily share their views. It’s a good thing that the younger generations have English as a common language – it has become a prerequisite for collaboration and progress on the international platform that is provided through the YLP.*

*Youth build alliances not only with peers from different countries, but also among youth from the same country. In Bosnia and Hercegovina for instance, we have had participants from five parties cooperating at the same table. Some of these young politicians will take on important responsibilities and positions in their parties, and we know that networks and alliances live on for years after the training has finished. This is a good investment for the improvement of the political situation in Eastern Europe.”*



The need for support to the youth and to parties in Eastern Europe remains, not least as accession negotiations for new member states in the EU are stalled. In addition, soon there will be more countries wanting to get closer to the European Union: Morocco and Tunisia, Jordan and Azerbaijan for instance.



# METHODO- LOGICAL APPROACH

# 3. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

## 3.1 Objective of this evaluation

- To be able to show EFF's donors and supporters what the Youth Leaders Programme means and what it has accomplished.
- To help EFF and CDA to look ahead on how this project might be further developed in the coming 5 to 10 years.

## 3.2 Aims

The evaluation aims at:

- 1) reflecting on how the project has evolved over the years (in terms of content, quality of the trainings, target group reached, but also taking into consideration the political context in which the project has been taking place);
- 2) providing quantitative results of the project from 2015-2020 (number of participants, from which countries and how many took on political positions after graduation from YLP);
- 3) gathering qualitative results of the project (stories from participants about how they used the knowledge and experience they gained during their career);
- 4) describing the unique selling points of this project compared to other similar projects and
- 5) reflecting on the future of the project.

### 3.3 Surveys

A link to an on-line survey has been sent to all participants of the YLP 2015-2020. The survey relates mainly to Item 2 above, although the answers also provide stories as described in Item 3. The questions of the survey can be found in the first part of Appendix II of this report. 53 (29 w/24 m) former YLP participants answered the survey.



### 3.4 Interviews with participants

Semi-structured interviews have been conducted with 6 women and 5 men, representing 11 out of the 12 countries mentioned above. These interviews mainly relate to item 3 and 5 above.<sup>19</sup> The interview-guide can be found in the last section of Appendix II.

### 3.5 Meeting with key-persons

A final dialogue was organised with key-persons from the EFF board 29 November, 2021 as a concluding step in this evaluation. The aim will be to encourage the board members to reflect on results of the programme so far, and the future of the YLP.

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<sup>19</sup> It has not been possible to get interviewees from Kosovo, most likely due to the fact that they are currently in the midst of the electoral campaign.



# 4. RESULTS

## 4.1 Summary of the survey answers

### Summary of the survey answers

The survey aims at answering some of the questions that were posed at the beginning of the evaluation work:

- how many took on political positions after graduation from the YLP;
- gathering qualitative results of the project (stories from participants about how they used the knowledge and experience they gained during their career);
- describing the unique selling points of this project (programme) compared to other similar projects and
- reflecting on the future of the project.

### 54% response rate

52 YLP alumni, 28 women/24 men (approximately 54% of the total) responded to the survey. Respondents represent all of the 12 participating countries and most of the parties. The majority of the responses (32 or 60%) attended the programme in 2018-2019 or 2019-2020.<sup>20</sup> The rest of the answers were evenly divided between 2015-2016, 2016-2017 and 2017-2018.

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<sup>20</sup> In our experience, this is a regular tendency, that we have seen in other similar programmes. Individuals who attended the programme in more recent years, are generally more apt to respond in comparison with participants whose attendance dates back to earlier years.

### **Advancement among the YLP alumni**

In the survey, 33 participants, or 63% out of 52 stated they have advanced within their parties and other organisations (mostly NGOs) since they graduated from the programme. Many participants have been able to take up new leadership roles and positions in organisations and within their parties. Respondents also generally state that their responsibilities and participation in decision making processes within their parties and other organisations has increased.

Examples of positions reached by YLP alumni are: Foreign affairs coordinator, International secretary of Party's Youth organisation, International Secretary of the main party, Member of the executive board, Vice president of municipal branch, Member of main board, President of the committee for social media in the youth league, Member of Parliament, Secretary of the Public policy and Legislation department, Vice president of the Youth league (branch), to name a few.

In the material, we can also find a few examples of participants who take on strategic roles in politics, outside of party-organisations, in NGOs or CSOs or as civil servants and/or consultants.

### **Some left the party – but are still politically active**

Ten of the respondents of the survey report not to be active in the party that they were affiliated with as they attended the training. One reports to have left his/her party “*since the party abandoned its ideology*”. Yet a few refer to “*ideological disagreements*”. Two respondents felt compelled to leave party politics because the political activity became dangerous.<sup>21</sup> Other reasons referred to are: other career interests and new working goals in non-political segments, studying abroad, personal reasons, current job roles do not allow them to engage in political parties, etc.

The majority of the respondents who left their parties report that they are still interested in political issues. Some continue to be active in CSOs or NGOs. One example:

*“I’m not currently active in a political party, because my values no longer correspond to the values of any party. However, I continue to work with international cooperation as a political analyst. I write articles for websites on various related topics. I have also worked as a consultant for several candidates during the election campaigns, assisting them in social media management, personal branding and speechwriting. Furthermore, I have been involved in drafting regional strategy in an international setting. My role in politics now is to be a political advisor. Perhaps the role will change in the future.”*

*Participant 14*

### **Most useful knowledge and skills acquired**

The most commonly mentioned skill, referred to by the YLP alumni is the strengthening of the participants’ communication skills and public speaking followed by negotiation skills. Nearly all participants report to have used the training on communication, argumentation, debate, and negotiation skills in their political life. Many respondents also mention that they have acquired and applied critical and strategical thinking skills.

Some participants provide several examples about exercises that improved their argumentation skills and active listening, for instance, one peer mentioned an activity where the participant would hold a stick on his/her/their hands while speaking and the others would have to listen and wait for their turn to hold the stick to be able to talk. Another peer also remembered a training on negotiation skills and how it is important to learn from other parties’ successful ideas to aggregate knowledge and to improve dialogue.

Below is one example of what has just been mentioned:

*“I would not be able to pick one particular experience, but if I had to, that would be the public speaking and debate exercises. One thing that I still remember is the debate exercise where we had to debate on absurd issues and defend even more absurd positions. It was something like blue dogs are better than pink dogs. This was a tough exercise in debating, but it clearly demonstrated the power of rhetorically skilled people. Also something that the trainer said was that in a debate you are not trying to convince the opposing side (who already holds an unchangeable position), but to convince the public. This has allowed me not only to understand the purpose of a debate better and how to be good at it, but also to avoid unnecessary confrontations with unlike minded people.”*

*Participant 19*

Respondents also mention: knowledge about minorities issues, improved political argumentation skills in English, leadership, networking and strategic alliances, crisis management, problem solving, theory on geopolitics, security-issues and global political institutions, etc., PR, social media and election processes, knowledge about decision making processes and project management.

Several participants also report to have improved their capacity in networking with likeminded organisations and civil society.

A few respondents refer to the fact that the participation in the YLP opened up for them to participate in new trainings, such as internships in the EU-institutions and other educational programmes abroad.

### International outlook on politics

The international perspective on politics was of interest and use to many. As a matter of fact, the possibility to exchange experiences with youth politicians from other countries, allowing them to build great friendships, to learn about politics in other countries and parties in Eastern Europe and to learn from each other's ideas was the memory most frequently referred to. Many also write about connections with speakers and high-level political leaders from Europe.

Below is one example from a respondent:

*“What I remember the most from the training are the group workshops and making connections with European speakers, along with having good friendships and memories with the participants. We still have contact, and we communicate very often. I also remember both visits to the Austrian and Hungarian parliaments, and meetings with Members of Parliament and public leaders. Both of them left me speechless.”*

*Participant 41*

As mentioned previously, the training on communication skills and public speaking was appreciated by many. Several responses emphasise the high level of facilitators and speakers.

One example out of several:

*“What I remember most is that lecturers and speakers were highly qualified, and I was able to expand my professional network as well as gain some new friends, who I see in active politics now in different countries and it is helpful to develop international relations based on friendship and professionalism at the same time.”*

*Participant 4*

Most respondents state that they have learned a lot from their experiences. Some remember specific lectures particularly well, such as: democracy, international and security issues, international economic issues, workshops and group work, practical exercises, field visits to other organisations and visits to museums.<sup>22</sup>

### **Needs and requests for additional training for young politicians**

The majority of respondents state that they have access to training also within and/or through their parties. Nevertheless, a few of the participants mentioned the need to improve party engagement with new members, and a more active and open recruitment of newcomers to the party. There are also other organisations, that offer training to political parties, activists and/or young politicians. Other than the RSI, participants mention: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (Germany), International Republican Institute (USA) and National Democratic Institute (USA) as partnering/training organisations as well as the European Parliament and the EPP.

One of the questions in our survey aimed at collecting information on whether the YLP alumni need or request any additional training, and if yes, on what issues.

The overall main **request was for more trainings on communication and networking skills**. Some of the respondents would like to improve their knowledge and skills about **international networking**. Others requested knowledge on how to **connect and communicate with civil society and the public sphere**.

Yet other suggestions and requests were about: **how to reach out to bigger groups**, bring the **political dialogue into civil society/ involve civil society in the political debate**, improve **public speaking skills, increased dialogue with international institutions and experts from other regions**, involve **international partners and potential donors**. Among the answers we also find requests about **strengthening the networking among the YLP participants and continue the work together for democracy in the countries involved**.

Some participants are requesting more training about project management. Answers explain that such training would assist politically active youth in identifying

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<sup>22</sup> There was only one negative memory of an isolated event involving a guest speaker who rudely addressed a participant's mistake regarding the right term to be used in that specific occasion, however there were no further details in that regard.

key aspects to be improved in their communities, how to lobby ideas within the parties, with potential donors and with the public sphere. Youth generally call for better insights and mobilisation from the side of politics and the public sphere, so that issues that are important in civil society and in local communities are prioritised. Political projects can help bridge between societal needs and politics, and mobilise resources to come up with solutions.

Another interesting aspect that was brought up by participants was the need to understand the impact of social media on politics. Respondents suggest that this subject is explored more at depth in future training, since social media are being used for mobilising forming opinion and campaigning. Social media have brought great advantages to politics, not least since political parties and politicians can reach a big audience. Respondents did, however, also mention disadvantages and challenges posed by the digital revolution, such as the importance of learning more about cybersecurity and how to tackle the problem of 'fake news' in social media.

Respondents would also appreciate more knowledge about specific subjects such as knowledge on global transformation processes, geopolitics, foreign policy, internal politics, training on contemporary socioeconomic issues and how to address them and knowledge on how to organise political campaigns. There were also a few requests that emphasised the importance of learning more about security issues in post-communist states.

***“The need to understand the impact of social media on politics.”***

Other singular requests from respondents were: training to address minorities rights, mentorship programs, anti-corruption, how to improve political trust in civil society, more projects at local level in different cities and, continued internships opportunities in the EU parliament.



One citation to close this summary of the survey results:

*“There is always need for support, especially within human and minority rights. Any support to increase political culture, culture of dialogue in a divided society like ours is very much needed. Young leaders and politicians simply do not have any experience in political dialogue, don’t know how to behave, therefore avoiding any discussions and considering any critics as an attack. We simply have to educate a new generation of young politicians in order to differentiate it from older colleagues who, it seems, failed to make all six societies of the Western Balkans more democratic and better places for living. Politicians and politics have to be more connected to ordinary people. Finally, I see Brussels and the EU as the only tool for supporting that. There would not have been and there will be no initiative or reform in my country, Serbia, without EU support.”*

*Participant 28*

## 4.2 Summary from the interviews

5 of the 11 interviewees (randomly selected from the list of participants) had already answered the survey. As this research was prepared, the evaluator decided together with the commissioners that the questions in the survey and those posed in the semi-structured interview would be different, so as to use the time at our disposal as wisely as possible. In the semi-structured interviews, the evaluator had the opportunity to focus particularly on some of the questions that have been posed in the research-design by the commissioners, namely:

- 3) gathering stories from participants about how they used the knowledge and experience they gained during their career;
- 4) describing the unique selling points of this project compared to other similar projects and
- 5) reflecting on the future of the project.

### Similarities and differences among participants, countries and parties in the YLP

One of the questions that the researcher has posed during the interviewee was whether the challenges in the 12 countries were similar enough to make up a good ground for the training. All of the interviewees reported that the challenges were somewhat different, and that the training was well designed to adequately fit the needs of the respective countries involved. As to the question on whether the challenges between political contexts are similar, several interviewees respond that they consider that there are a few things that unite the participants who attended the YLP.

*“Many of the problems that we are facing are similar. We are striving to make our unstable democracies more stable, and our activities and projects also have quite a lot in common, yet we are different enough to be inspired by and learn from each other,”* says one interviewee.

The majority of the interviewees keep in touch with some of the other participants via Facebook and WhatsApp groups. These channels are used mostly to maintain contact and exchange knowledge about what is happening in politics in the countries of other alumni. There is an urge among participants to learn about “good examples”. Below is one quotation from the interviews:

*“We support each other and try to understand the dynamics of the lack of political freedom in some of the more authoritarian states. We would like to find more keys to what one can do to prevent it from happening in other nations. We also try to identify methods that colleagues have used in more successful transitions, such as Moldova,*

*Ukraine or some of the current EU-member states that were previously authoritarian.”*

***“There is always need for support, especially within human and minority rights.”***

The aspects that unite the participants, as according to the interviewees is that: participants and their parties look to the EU as a way to reform the countries in Eastern Europe; most parties are EPP allies, countries have a communist legacy that needs to be reformed. As the evaluator asks interviewees to define what aspects they aim at changing in their own national political systems, many concentrate on the importance of reforming the educational system. Another challenge mentioned by several interviewees is corruption. Here is one out of several similar citations:

*“I think all participants in the YLP would agree on that we strive for better school and educational systems. That is a challenge that we have in common. All of us would also like our countries to be part of the European Union in the economic sense, and take all measures possible to get away from the huge problem of corruption that all of our countries have in common.”*

IP 4

Another quote that summarises concerns mentioned by many of the interviewees:

*“Corruption is our main problem. Even security, but it comes only second to corruption. Other things that I felt that many of the participants were concerned about was how to reach out to, and communicate with society. There is much fake news and conspiracy theories around, and it harms politics, and hinders our possibilities to construct a trustful dialogue with society and – for instance – convince them to vote. Oligarchs buy people who vote for them, and that changes the entire political map.”*

IP 5

Yet another challenge mentioned by several interviewees is the lack of ideological content in politics. Interviewees consider this a general challenge in Europe and globally.

Citizens turn their backs to politics and cast their votes without reference to evidence or knowledge about the ideological content. This can create fertile ground for populism and short-sighted rather than sustainable and trustworthy political structures and parties. The anchorage in political ideology is, hence, considered as one of the antidotes to populism.

### **Civil society and politics**

Nearly all of the interviewees regard “civil society” as a sphere that is, or should be conceived of as a part of politics. To reach out to civil society is seen as a way of building support ahead of the elections with future voters. Interviewees therefore consider that it is important for politicians, parties and governments to reach out to civil society. Two of the interviewees indicate, however, that also the link between, for instance, cultural associations, should be reformed. Below is one example:

*“Even culture is part of politics here, and we have gotten used to it. The link between the political and civil society is crucial, but we should remember that not only political parties and the political sphere needs to be reformed in our countries. Some of the older, strong parties are too closely tied to, for instance, cultural organisations and institutions, and people are not aware of it. I do not approve of this, and I can say that now, as I have grown older, and I see things clearly. This link between civil society and politics is not sane, and should not be broken, but reformed.”*

IP 4

Another interviewee emphasises the civil society organisations and activism as an important resort for young activists, who want to reform political institutions, but who cannot express themselves within the current (authoritarian) structure in the country. The interviewee says that in his/her country, it is impossible to organise in a transparent manner as an opposition movement to the authoritarian government. Therefore, it is important for activists to think of a way to organise in informal projects with civil society, to try to change things to the better without being blacklisted and putting other citizens in danger.

### **Inclusiveness of youth, women and other potentially marginalised groups**

Descriptions from interviewees (women as well as men) indicate that women and youth are generally well integrated and working together in various activities with other branches of the party. One interviewee mentions that his party is still discussing whether “women’s wings/sections” in parties effectively can be expected to contribute to strengthening women, or whether a “mixed” solution might be better. He says: *“We have an ongoing debate on this. We do not have a women’s wing yet, because we’re not sure. We suspect that a women’s wing might contribute to female members being separated from the main party activities.”* A few of the women emphasise the importance of female empowerment in society and politics, and the alumna quoted below also wishes for a stronger gender focus in the YLP training:

*“Men should pay more attention to the difficulties that women are facing in society, but also in politics. As we have to make resistance to violence and discrimination, how can we be expected to do a good job as activists and politicians? Men should be educated on how to support women in politics. Also the YLP programme could take on a stronger gender focus and train men on how to support women.”*

IP 8

In our interviews, youth seldom raise criticism against “the seniors” for discriminating against the youth as a group. A few of the interviewees do mention that there is a generational gap and a bit of friction between generations. One example:

*“The generational gap can be felt sometimes – but it is really nothing that we cannot deal with. In the end, it’s up to people to sort it out, and we generally do.”* IP 9

*“There is a gap between what young people want to do, and what the seniors in the party want from them – a mental gap between generations one could say. Therefore, it is good that we can get training through the YLP, so that we can approach important issues in politics in a constructive manner.”* IP 4



In the interview, there are two examples of negative connotations in regard to seniors. One is about seniors representing unnecessarily conservative views on LGBTQI+ persons and one is about seniors being tolerant and friendly as long as “we” (the youth) do not threaten their position.

One of the interviewees states that although youth do have important views and insights in important issues, it might be a good thing to think twice before stirring a public debate without thinking of the consequences:

*“The LGBTQI+ topic, for instance. I personally agree that it is a relevant issue indeed, but I also think that everything is about timing. For instance, there might be external interests from Russia in our countries, to start public debates and polarised conflicts among different groups of people. If debates are not framed properly, they can grow violent. It is perhaps more difficult for us as young people to hold ourselves back in front of certain topics, and understand why our political parties or governments are being cautious with raising certain issues in certain moments of time, but I think it is a question of tactics and political experience that we as youth need to learn more about.”*

IP 1

In the interviews there is also a similar reflection about political strategies used by politicians and political movements to provoke conflict and polarise groups, and how this harms the younger generations:

*“Issues related to ethnicity and identity have been brought into politics to polarise people. I think that politics and politicians should focus on more important things than whether minorities should be allowed to keep their language or not. Arguing about this takes attention away from more important matters such as education, EU-membership and economic integration that are highly relevant not least to youth. It is important to steer away from topics that split and create conflict between people, and, instead gear towards constructive issues and debates so that we can keep the young generation that are now leaving because they don't see a future where they are.”*

IP 4

### **The use and the added value of YLP in comparison with other, similar programmes**

The evaluator discerns that parties generally have a “party school” or a training body, where members from various branches of the parties and/or new members can learn more about the party, the history and values of the party, political activities/activism etc. Most of the interviewees have attended training inside their parties, as well as participated in external courses and events organised by mainly international parties. Other than the Robert Schuman Institute and the EFF, the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (Germany), International Republican Institute (IRI, USA) and National

Democratic Institute (NDA, USA) as well as the European Parliament and the EPP are most often mentioned as international partners and training institutions.

*“There is one that has become very popular lately, called ‘Advanced Leadership in Politics’. I think IRI have trained three generations by now. Everybody wants to go to that training. It is quite similar to the YLP actually. One difference is that the Americans work quite multi-party, and you speak with people who are more liberal about, for instance, LGBTQI+. The latter is a matter that is not discussed in the YLP training. It is good that there’s training available that focuses on the young. This mode of education can satisfy their needs and requests. Formal education won’t work for them. Young people need other things.”*

IP 4

\* [https://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/alpi\\_toolkit\\_v2.pdf](https://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/alpi_toolkit_v2.pdf). Promoting Social Cohesion and Youth-Led Collaboration. Across Party Divides.

The evaluator, has, however, only come across one programme that is said to be similar to the YLP:

The YLP alumni are, generally, indeed happy with their participation in YLP. As has been mentioned earlier in this text, several interviewees relate to the high-level content on relevant issues, the lecturers, but also the link with and reference to the European Union. The concrete and practical approach, and the opportunities to meet politicians and visit political institutions are also highly appreciated among participants.

Below, a few citations:

*“The YLP training was very good, and focused on Europe. It was very interesting and useful to hear the speakers from EFF sharing how they do politics, and how they see our countries.” IP 7*

*“The YLP was quite different from others. The most valuable part of the programme was the possibility for young politicians to get together. There was this possibility to go to Europe and Vienna, to visit with institutions and listen to political leaders and professionals who came to lecture at the training. To me, it was really an experience of a lifetime. Most of us would not have had this opportunity without the YLP. We got an insight in the politics of different states of the European Union. RSI opened up their network to us, and provided us with the opportunity to do this political exchange and all of the people.” IP 6*

*“I have been to trainings with IRI, NDI and my party has had some trainers from abroad visiting. We also have a good training within the youth league, but there are not so many people that have first-hand knowledge from the EU in my country. The YLP was the most comprehensive programme of those that I attended. It was three weeks with modules covering an indeed wide area. Then I got to do an Internship in the EPP. I found that very surprising, and did not know that one could get to go there and see how it works from the inside. I got to see how things that we learned about at the programme worked in practice. It was great!” IP 3*

*“I feel that YLP, as compared to other similar trainings that I attended was very real – we had some very good practical debates and did analyses about realistic issues, which trained us for real-life situations, and this has been useful for us afterwards. Also the trainers are politicians or have worked concretely in politics. I was definitely transformed as a politician through the YLP attendance.” IP 5*

*“When I attended the YLP, I was quite new in politics, and it really inspired me to increase my engagement in politics. Now, as I have established myself in my party, I try to send as many as possible to YLP, because I know how much youth can do, if they get that extra boost. Also, the programme is quite all-round and provides important knowledge on a broad range of topics that are useful for us in our roles as politicians.” IP 1*

*“I cannot express how happy I am with the programme. People, including myself, improve a lot. We do not have access to such a training in our party that train youth. This for us is a great added value, that we would not have had without the YLP. I know of several ex participants in the programme who have now become members of*

*parliament. I am very proud of them. Of course not everyone will get the opportunity to become members of parliament, but there is good improvement among people I know, we definitely get the chance to grow in our political roles through the YLP.” IP 9*

*“It was the first training that I went to, and it was an absolute breakthrough for me. I was active in a party, but had never been to such a training, and just seeing how it was effectively possible for other young politicians from other countries and parties to actually work professionally in politics was an eye-opener for me. It made me think of how limited our possibilities are in my country, but also made me dream of reproducing the training for young political activists in my country.” IP 10*

### **Suggestions on what to add or improve in the YLP in the future**

The survey answers referred to in the previous section of this report provided a number of suggestions on what to add and how to improve the YLP. Participants wish to continue and deepen their knowledge in some of the topics that were included in the programme such as communication and networking skills, campaigning, etc. Several interviewees also refer to the impact that “fake news” and social media has, and might have on politics. Cyber security is mentioned as an important issue that could be explored a bit more at depth. Also other security issues (related to power relations and foreign interest that represent potential threats) are mentioned as relevant topics for the training. We understand the latter as a request for deepened knowledge on **foreign policy topic and geopolitics**.

The citations below summarise what has just been mentioned:

*“I would say that any contents that are specifically created for a younger population would be more than welcome. Society is undergoing very quick changes and when it comes to, for instance, **crisis communication** we are living a very bad situation. So, maybe more of social media, networking and communication would be useful for us to learn how to approach new challenges related to, for instance **threats and crisis**.” IP 4*

*“I would like to have more training on how **Internet and social media has changed political communication and dialogue**. I would like to have better tools, and to be able to understand, navigate and participate in political communication and debate for instance in social media. **Cyber security** is something that most of us probably would*

like and need to learn more about. It would also be interesting to continue to study **security and defence issues**. It is important to understand how we can improve security and defence in relation to Russia and Turkey.” IP 4

“There are some new tendencies in politics that I would like to see more of – for instance I would have liked more training in **defence and security**. Would it be possible to have someone from the Hungarian government, department of defence for instance to come talk about that? Another thing that I believe most of us would need to know more about is **Internet and the impact it has on politics**, and how to deal with it. For instance, most of the youth don’t watch TV, they go for YouTube or some **social media**. What implications does that have to politics? And what should we do? Is it time for use to start YouTube channels? I’m not so into social media, but understand the value it may have, so maybe that would be something to look into for the continued YLP training?” IP 3

“It would be interesting to look a bit deeper into aspects related to **money and politics**. In my country, and in our neighbouring countries, democracy is not stable because of the big impact of money. Maybe it would be good also if the facilitators in the YLP used even **more practical examples** and cases of good, as well as not **so good political institutions**, systems, governments, and so on. The current **situation in Belarus** - it would be interesting and useful if we could discuss how come they ended up there, and what could possibly be done in other societies to avoid that this situation is not repeated in other countries. Another suggestion would perhaps be for trainers in the YLP to stress the importance of **young people training other young**. That way there is less risk that the knowledge only stays with the few people who attend, and RSI and EFF would reach more youth, and possibly also have a greater impact on politics through these networks and the training of trainers.” IP 2

“Perhaps the training would be even more useful to participants if facilitators could give examples from more than a few of the countries, and if facilitators would come from some of the other among the participants’ countries as well.” IP 5

### 4.3 Cooperation and complementarity with KAS, NDI and IRI

In what way does EFF's and RDI's work differ from that of some of the other organisations mentioned by the YLP participants? and How do representatives of the organisations describe their work in comparison to that of the EFF and RSI?

In an attempt to answer the two answers above, we have conducted short interviews with three representatives from organisations that are active in the field of democracy cooperation and development issues, and that target youth in partly the same countries and/or parties as those of the YLP: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), National Democratic Institute (NDI) and International Republican Institute (IRI).

*“I cannot express how happy I am with the programme.”*

Among other things, we asked interviewees from these three organisations whether and how they cooperate with the RSI and/or the EFF. We also attempted to understand whether, and if yes, in what way the various donor organisations manage to complement each other.

As the interviewed participants from the YLP spoke about other training opportunities for youth in politics that they knew of, or that they had been participating in themselves, we also asked them to describe the differences between the trainings conducted by the IRI, NDI and KAS as compared to that of YLP. As we have seen, several interviewees relate to the high-level content on relevant issues, the lecturers, but also the link with and reference to the European Union as some of the features that stand out in the YLP as compared to other programmes. The concrete and practical approach, and the opportunities to meet politicians and visit political institutions are also highly appreciated among YLP participants.

In participants' narratives and descriptions of similar programmes, we have only found one that appears to be a somewhat competing programme, namely “The Advanced Leadership in Politics” managed by the IRI. This training is different from the YLP in that it stresses cooperation across party-divides. The latter is not an objective of the YLP, where the parties are generally associated to the European

People's Party, hence positioning themselves on the conservative and liberal-conservative (and Christian democratic) political divide.

As a matter of fact, as we have seen in the narratives of a few participants, NDI and IRI work quite "multiparty" and are less targeted towards a certain ideological political grouping. This is a characteristic that is confirmed by the interviewees representing NDI and IRI below.

Mrs. Ana Radicevic, NDI:

*"We have taken a strong stand, and decided that we will work with everybody for democracy. We are not aligned neither to the left, nor to the right. We have built alliances with other donors and organisations that work where we work. We try to see synergies and possibilities to cooperate. One example of when we have cooperated with EFF is when we organised an anti-corruption and integrity training for the parties that we work with in Eastern Europe. EFF would bring in trainers from their secretariat and from their party. We have also collaborated with the EFF and the RSI when we assisted parties in North Macedonia in designing candidate criteria for sister parties in local elections. EFF and RSI can also help influencing who is being selected to go to the trainings through speaking to the right people in the parties that they work with."*<sup>23</sup>

Mr. Thibaut Muzergues, IRI:

*"We are non-partisan. We collaborate with parties to the right as well as to the left, even with a few Social Democratic parties that are useful to us. I would say the big difference between us and the YLP is that we work multiparty, I would also say that our training in general is geared more towards the geopolitical and security issues. Over the years, we have worked less with campaigning for instance. Where we see that there are some parties that work close to the outer fringes (like in the EPP for example), we work multiparty and let these parties hear and understand how they are perceived by others during the training and through cooperation. We cooperate well with the EFF. One example of collaboration is when they help us recruit facilitators for our trainings. We are also currently discussing the possibility to expand our collaboration in the Euromed area."*<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> C Mrs. Ana Radicevic, Program Director at National Democratic Institute (NDI) based in Bosnia and Hercegovina

<sup>24</sup> Mr Thibaut Muzergues, Europe Program Director · International Republican Institute. It should be mentioned here that Mr. Muzergues works with the Euromed area, i.e. the European Mediterranean. Mr Thibaut is, hence, not in charge of the programme "Advanced Leadership in Politics" referred to earlier in the report.

The interviewee representing KAS has a somewhat different take on the political training that they do in Eastern Europe.

Mr. Norbert Beckmann, KAS:

*“We do youth training in some of the countries that you mentioned, and where the YLP works too. The office that I manage, works in Montenegro and Serbia, but we (KAS) have offices in all of the countries in Eastern Europe. We put an effort in working with the personal political views of the new leaders and the ideological roots of Christian democracy. We take care also to follow up on them after they leave the training. Other things that we value is that participants get more international experiences, and that they are encouraged to debate in a safe environment, in a group that they can trust. Our task is more of delivering the tools than to help youth or the political parties with their objectives in politics. To help participants to get a more comprehensive understanding of society, we often involve not only politicians, but also leaders from other spheres of society, journalists and media for instance, but also civil society in general. We have also done some socio-political projects that included art.”<sup>25</sup>*

One example of a concrete collaboration with EFF is the “PolitiKAS educational program”, which KAS has been organising for 12 years. The program was attended by activists who underwent careful selection and interviewing and made up a group of up to 25 people.

Examples of topics facilitated during the training:

- *“Church-state relations in modern society”,*
- *“Brain drain: The most important migration question”,*
- *“The Future of the Political Scene and Democratic Institutions”,*
- *“Understanding the EU: Introduction to Institutional frame and Decision Making Process”* and
- *“The Process of Creating Common Policies and Lobbying in the European Union”.*

In 2020-2021 the programme had to be adjusted to answer to the conditions during the pandemic. PolitiKAS debates were open to a wider audience, not only to representatives of political parties close to KAS. The ambition was to encourage a wider social and political dialogue.

The debates covered themes such as: “30 Years of Multiparty Politics in Serbia”, “Public Hearing as an Institution of Parliamentary Practice”, Youth and Entrepreneurship - experiences of Serbia and the Netherlands” and “The Importance of Lobbying - examples from the practice of Serbia and the Netherlands”. The EFF contributed with facilitators/moderators in six out of eight debates.

### Similarities and differences

The most prominent differences in the approach of the organisations mentioned above is that NDI and IRI take on a multi-party approach, while the EFF and the RSI have designed their programme for members in the EPP. This means that they choose to cooperate with conservative or conservative-liberal parties and Christian democrats.

Also KAS targets EPP-member parties, and work in Western Europe with EPP-parties. The KAS does, however take on an active approach when it comes to engaging not only the strictly political sphere in their training activities.

RSI and EFF work with the full range of EPP-member parties in the same programme in EU membership candidate countries Eastern Europe, while NDI, IRI and KAS may concentrate on a few countries and parties at a time.

We can conclude that all of the interviewees are generally familiar with the activities of the other actors on the field, and that EFF (and partly RSI) is involved in the work of the other organisations, especially as a provider of facilitators from the Dutch Christian democratic party, but also as a partner when it comes to designing projects, conferences or trainings.

From what is possible to comprehend when analysing the interviews, there does not seem to be any serious overlap, but rather a framework of activities and programmes that complement each other.

This is nicely said with the words of Mr. Beckmann, KAS:

*“We are a Christian democratic foundation, so we often work with EPP-associated parties, just like the EFF and the RSI. I would say that we all know about each other’s activities in the regions where we work though, and I do not think that any of us considers the others as “competitors”, but that we generally agree on that there is a great need for support to political parties, not least to their youth.”*



# SOFT RECOM- MENDATIONS

AND THE WAY  
FORWARD

# 5. SOFT RECOMMEN- DATIONS AND THE WAY FORWARD

Although we are external evaluators, hence not fully aware of the dynamics within the EFF or the RSI and between the two organisations, we would like to contribute with a few findings and soft recommendations. We hope that they can serve as food for thought in the future development of the YLP.

## **5.1 Contents, learning and skills**

In this evaluation, we have shown that participants are indeed happy with what they learn in the YLP. The most commonly mentioned skill, referred to by the YLP alumni is the strengthening of the participants' communication skills and public speaking followed by negotiation skills. Nearly all participants report to have used the training on communication, argumentation, debate, and negotiation skills in their political life. Many respondents also mention that they have acquired and applied critical and strategical thinking skills.

Other examples: knowledge about minorities issues, improved political argumentation skills in English, leadership, networking and strategic alliances, crisis management, problem solving, theory on geopolitics, security-issues and global political institutions, etc., PR, social media and election processes, knowledge about decision making processes and project management.

Several participants also report to have improved their capacity in networking with likeminded organisations and civil society.

The international perspective on politics was of interest and use to many. As a matter of fact, the possibility to exchange experiences with youth politicians from other countries, allowing them to build friendships and networks, to learn about politics in other countries and parties in Eastern Europe and to learn from each other's ideas was the memory most frequently referred to. Many also write about connections with speakers and high-level political leaders from Europe.

As we have seen, a few respondents refer to the fact that the participation in the YLP opened up for them to participate in new trainings, such as internships in the EU-institutions and other educational programmes abroad.

### **Would like more of the YLP**

When the evaluators ask if the participants have suggestions on how to improve the training, the overall main request is for more training on communication and networking skills. Some of the respondents would like to improve their knowledge and skills about international networking (also with potential donors).

Others request knowledge on how to connect to, and improve communication with civil society and the public sphere. Among the answers we also find requests about

***“Some of the respondents would like to improve their knowledge and skills about international networking.”***

strengthening the networking among the YLP participants and continue the work together for democracy in the countries involved.

Some participants are requesting more training about project management. Answers explain that such training would assist politically active youth in identifying key aspects to be improved in their communities, how to lobby ideas within the parties, with potential donors and with the public sphere. Youth generally call for better insights and mobilisation from the side of politics and the public sphere, so that issues that are important in civil society and in local communities are prioritised.

Another interesting aspect brought up by participants was the need to understand the impact of social media in politics. Respondents suggest that this subject is explored more at depth in future training, since social media are being used for

mobilising, forming opinion and campaigning. Social media have brought great advantages to politics, not least since political parties and politicians can reach a big audience. Respondents did, however, also mention disadvantages and challenges posed by the digital revolution, such as the importance of learning more about cybersecurity and how to tackle the problem of 'fake news' in social media.

Respondents would appreciate more knowledge about specific subjects such as global transformation processes, internal politics, training on contemporary socioeconomic issues and how to address them and knowledge on how to organise political campaigns. There are also several requests that emphasise the importance of learning more about security issues in post-communist states.

There are also some requests for deepened analysis on some of the situations and examples of "good transition practice" as well as crisis (such as that in Belarus) and how to prevent that the same situation is repeated in the other countries. A few interviewees have mentioned that they would wish for facilitators from more countries. The analysis on, for instance, the security situation and political crisis could then be dealt with at more depth by a facilitator from the country or countries concerned.

### **Fundamentals first**

We would like to stress here, that participants are very happy with the content as it is. The YLP may be the first full political leadership programme that the participants take part in. The evaluators have discussed participants' suggestions with Mr Berczeli, who welcomes suggestions on improvements, but stresses that it is important to keep to the fundamentals, and to offer all participants the same basic training, and to help them navigate in an ever changing world:

*"We are working in conflict zones, and in a world that is changing very quickly. It is an unstable environment. Our approach is to lecture some of the fundamentals before we get to the more hands-on practical training. I understand that youth want us to head towards more practical exercises. Maybe the RSI methodology is a bit conservative, but we feel that it is important to frame the training by providing a solid background to help them grasp concepts first. After all, participants all come from different backgrounds. In the group you will find law-students, historians, economists, etc. It is a dilemma for us to start practice, before making sure that we*

*are on the same track. Sometimes we also have requests from students regarding “fashionable” issues and there is an expectation that we should be following the trend, but we insist on focusing on the fundamentals.”*

### **Comments and soft recommendations:**

The evaluators agree about the importance of maintaining the fundamentals at the core of the training, especially since participants find them so useful. Most suggestions above can be considered as more of a wish-list on what participants would like to learn more about, than suggestions on improvement of the current programme design. We would, however recommend the EFF and RSI to read the suggestions from participants closely, since they can be a source of inspiration and renewal of the “fundamentals”. In particular, we are thinking of issues related to social media and communication/advocacy/mobilisation with target groups outside of the party, involving civil society.

### **Support and training also after graduation**

Participants want more of the YLP, and we have discussed the importance of monitoring and giving support to the youth also after graduation with the commissioners. The aim would not only be to answer to the requests of the youth, but also to monitor individuals and party groups who have been trained and empowered through the YLP. A third aim would be to communicate gradual outcomes of the training.

We know that the RSI already does this. As a matter of fact, all of the 11 interviewees confirm that they stay in touch with the RSI, and that they have been offered new opportunities via correspondence with RSI-staff and information via RSI social media (such as the Facebook page).

We understand that the suggestion about continued training, not only of new participants, but also of alumni is a request that needs to be discussed within the EFF and the RSI, but it is a soft recommendation that EFF and RSI pose themselves the question of whether they can support YLF participants in a more structured and continuous way also after graduation with some monitoring and more advanced (alumni) training.



As for the request for more training about security issues, since it is already part of the “fundamentals” in the basic YLP programme, we assume that this could be added as an advanced training at alumni level, finances allowing of course.

We have discussed the request for more security training with one of the facilitators, Mr. Jan Mulder who teaches exactly this topic in the YLP and in other similar trainings. He suggested that the invitation to the participants of one sub region, the Caucasus for instance, would be extended also to more countries and to more parties<sup>26</sup> and that the analysis could be deepened and concentrated on the specific threats and challenges that countries in the sub regions have in common.

Our comment here is that such a training would likely have to be offered as an “add on”, or “advanced alumni training” since it probably would not fit into the already comprehensive programme. Earlier in this report we have mentioned several examples of topics that could be trained at more advanced level, but as a continuation of the YLP programme.

**“We are working in conflict zones, and in a world that is changing very quickly.”**

Another request that participants have is to get more training in project management. We would suggest that this topic is linked to another request, namely the issue of civil society and how to reach out and make projects together with people outside of the strict political (party) sphere. We would suggest that EFF and RSI discuss whether political parties and their relation to civil society could be facilitated more at depth.

Youth are generally close to local communities. As stated by Gábor Berczeli: *“They are on the ground, and have detailed and local country information. They also have an extended network that they mobilise to face practical challenges and crisis. One example of this is how youth organised together for peaceful demonstrations as they predicted the risk of violent upheavals ahead of the Maidan in Ukraine, and stood together across conventional political alignments.”*

Youth could organise projects that would contribute to increasing the interest in political engagement and work to approach challenges in civil society. Political

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<sup>26</sup> Some of the youth in our study have requested meetings with parties representing other ideological orientations. A few of the interviewees indicate that the political debate is more dynamic when parties with more progressive ideas are involved.

projects organised together with actors from civil society can, hence, help bridge between societal needs and politics, and mobilise resources to come up with solutions. These projects can also have positive side-effects, in that they may attract new members and/or voters to the party.

One tool that has been used in other international training programmes that we have evaluated, are so called “mini-projects” or “change projects”, where a team of participants work on a topic or a policy question.<sup>27</sup>

In some of the other international training programmes that we have evaluated, a Training of Trainers (ToT) module has been developed, with the objective of making knowledge and skills facilitated in the programmes available to youth or other groups in- and outside of the parties.



EFF and RSI already put great effort into supporting youth in the parties and countries where they are active. As we discuss this report with the commissioners in October 2021, we learn about how RSI invites former participants to come and speak about their experiences at meetings with parties or other organisations. EFF has also worked on a prototype version of a “mentorship” programme that would bridge between party leaders and aspiring youth.

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<sup>27</sup> In our experience, this is generally a highly appreciated tool, with the disadvantage that it becomes administratively heavy because of book-keeping and verifications if it involves a small project budget. On the other hand, it combines project management training with training in strategy and communication, team work as well as accountability among other things.

So far, there has been much focus on individual empowerment and career, but we suggest that EFF and RSI also train and encourage participants to make an impact in their party structures and/or in society. Change can, of course, be achieved by individuals as they take on responsibilities and positions, but if EFF and RSI want to harvest more from what they have sown, it might be a good idea to encourage more of teamwork and cooperation in-and outside the parties.

### **Communication with party leadership about young leaders as a potential**

Last, but not least, the good results from the YLP so far, should be shared with leaders of the parties that have sent youth participants to the programme. We suggest some of the most important results described in this report to be presented on-line or in a brochure, to make the information more appealing and easy to comprehend.

Earlier in this report, Mr. Berczeli stresses the importance of having party leadership at various levels involved in the selection process of the YLP participants.

- The “fundamentals” of the training are well functioning and have proved to be useful to participants. We suggest that you keep them. EFF and RSI might find it useful and inspiring though, to take a closer look at the requests of the interviewees and respondents. There may be small adjustments to the contents that can be done without changing the fundamentals.
- Participants want more of the YLP. Our soft recommendation here is that the EFF and the RSI maintain the contact and continue to provide advanced training on some selected topics for YLP alumni.
- Maintaining the contact and monitoring alumni, does not only contribute to the empowerment and support of the alumni themselves, but will potentially have a positive impact on the party organisation (shared knowledge, skills, networks, project work within the party, and so on). We suggest that RSI continues to follow up on and communicate with alumni in a more structured way.

- The promotion of the YLP alumni, their progress and activities will attract party leaders' attention to the young generation and their important contribution to the party. The party leadership is an important stakeholder and a target group for communication about any positive impact that youth may have on the party and/or in society.
- We suggest the most important results from the YLP 2015-2020 are extracted and presented by the EFF and the RSI for dissemination purposes. If possible, we also recommend EFF and RSI to maintain a more continuous and strategic communication with the leadership of the parties, with the aim to shed more light on the young leaders as the true resource that they are.

To demonstrate to (senior) leaders in the party how trained youth contribute to their parties by sharing their new or enhanced knowledge and skills with other youth or members of their mother parties is an important focus. It can help make youth and the issues they promote more visible and influential in the party structures.

Perhaps there would be opportunities for the EFF and RSI to maintain a more continuous and strategic communication with the leadership of the parties, with the aim to shed more light on the young leaders as the true resource that they are? It is important though, that the full responsibility of this communication is not put solely on the RSI. The EFF board and the leaders of the Dutch Christian Democrats should also contribute.

## 5.2 Way forward

In this last chapter we have provided some suggestions for what the way forward for YLP could look like. Our soft recommendations encompass five main foci:

We hope that the findings and results of the evaluation can work as a material to reflect on, for EFF and RSI to decide on future priorities, possible projects and/or trainings targeting the YLP alumni and whether and how to approach and communicate (senior) party leaders. For EFF and RSI the dialogue in the nearest future will possibly also revolve around whether to continue developing the "fundamentals", i.e. the basic training and/or to add alumni activities and training.

The strategic discussion may also involve aspects that relate to the overall objectives and the Theory of Change (ToC) of the programme.<sup>28</sup>

Of course, the final strategic decisions regarding the way forward lies in the hands of EFF and the RSI, hence the observations and soft recommendations above are intended to work as support and inspiration rather than a roadmap.

### 5.3 Concluding remarks from dialogue with the EFF board

A final dialogue was organised with key-persons from the EFF board 29 November, 2021 as a concluding step in this evaluation. The aim was to encourage the board members to reflect on results of the programme so far, and the future of the YLP. In our concluding remarks in section 5.3 of the report, we have reflected on, and responded to some of the questions and thoughts that came to the fore at that meeting.

#### Reflections from the board members:

*The report contains several examples on theoretical and practical skills, but less about how Christian democratic ideology is conveyed and emphasised through the training. The ideological aspect is important to us, and one of EFF's objectives.*

**Comment:** Participants give examples of the importance of democratic reconstruction and progress. The parties in the EPP and the European are their ideological references to democracy. In our material, there are no specific quotes identifying that Christian democracy is passed on to participants.

Youth do, however, not ignore the importance of ideology. As a matter of fact, several interviewees recognise the challenge of lack of ideological content of politics. There is a risk that fair knowledge and interest in facts and evidence create fertile ground for populism and short-sighted, rather than sustainable and trustworthy political structures and parties. The anchorage in political ideology becomes, hence, one of the antidotes to populism.

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<sup>28</sup> The ToC is a strategic model of the intervention logic and a framework of how certain actions, tools or activities can be expected to lead to outputs, outcomes and impact.

However, if the EFF board find it important to stress and enhance the Christian democratic ideological content in YLP, this aspect might have to be emphasised in the training.

We recognise that ideology might be a sensitive question that the EFF board would like to reflect on in the future. Some of the young politicians ask for more exposure to young politicians with more progressive views. We assume that these interviewees refer to youth from parties that are not part of the EPP at European level. These are all strategic positioning aspects that are not in the hands of the evaluators, hence a comment that may be brought into the dialogue within the board in the future.

EFF and RSI might also want to look into the one IRI programme that has been indicated as the most similar to YLP – “Advanced Leadership in Politics”. The aim would be to strive for complementarity between the two programmes.

*We have kept the basic contents quite intact, without any big changes through so many years now. What do the evaluators think, is it time to change now?*

**Comment:** It is difficult for us to recommend wisely here. We find that the board members must ponder on what (if anything) should or could possibly be changed.

We agree with Mr Berczeli as he states that the fundamentals contribute to provide youth with a solid set of knowledge and skills, and that this base should not change too much over the years.

Interviewed alumni do, however, have many ideas on possible extra components that could be integrated in the training, not least after they have graduated from the basic YLP training.

The connection to civil society and training communication skills in practical projects, together with the opportunities and threats related to social media and cyber security are some of the most noticeable. There is also a plea for deepened training in geopolitics and security issues.

We recognise that the programme appears to be quite comprehensive and full already. Perhaps the social media part (including the disadvantages and threats of it) and cyber security is one component that could be inserted into the fundamentals?

Again, we find it difficult to give valid suggestions on what to take out from the fundamentals, in order to leave space for new content.

*The gap between the younger generations and the senior leaders is a dilemma. Do the evaluators have any good suggestions on how to bridge between the two?*

**Comment:** Just now, we are working on another evaluation assignment, where several interviewees (representatives of parties or political movements) speak about the importance of organising some kind of structured intergenerational dialogue. Maybe in the form of “round tables” or the like?

Another example of an activity that is being tested by one party that we have analysed lately is to train the “intermediate” age-group, of party members of all sections 35-55 years of age for instance. These are likely to need continuous training, and probably you could do a pilot with one or two of your sister parties to see if it works for you.

One last “tool” that can make alumni from training programmes play the roles as the important assets that they are, is the Training of Trainers, where youth and women are trained to share what they learned from their own training with other youth and sections within their party.

We acknowledge that the EFF might raise concerns here, related to how the collaboration with the parties is structured. Perhaps this is beyond EFF’s scope of intervention?



# APPENDIX I

## EVALUATION YLP 2011-2020

Number of participants, countries, parties

Country 2025-2020	No of participants w/m	Parties
Albania	4 w	<b>Democratic Party of Albania</b> To Be Announced, but has organised protests against the inertia and undemocratic practices of the government. Has seats in Parliament (2021)
Armenia	6 w / 5 m	<b>Republican Party of Armenia (HHK)</b> Extra parliamentary opposition party <b>Heritage Party</b> The party decided not to participate in the 2018 Armenian parliamentary election
Belarus	5 w	<b>Belarusian Christian Democrats (BCD)</b> Part of an Independent coalition united against Lukashenko. <b>Belarus Security Blog</b> Opposition movement <b>United Civil Party</b> Extra parliamentary (2019) <b>The Movement for Freedom</b> Resistance and opposition movement
Bosnia & Herzegovina	1 w / 7 m	<b>Croatian Democratic Union BiH (HDZ BiH)</b> Part of Majority – representing Croats <b>Party of Democratic Action (SDA)</b> Part of Majority representing Bosniaks <b>Serb Democratic Party</b> Opposition party in Parliament
Georgia	7 w / 3 m	<b>United National Movement (UNM)</b> Opposition Parliamentary party (2020) <b>European Georgia - Movement for Liberty</b> Opposition in Parliament (2020)
Kosovo	3 w / 1 m	<b>Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK)</b> Opposition Parliamentary party

<b>Lebanon</b>	5 w / 1m	<p><b>Kataeb</b> Part of a Unity Government (National Assembly) led by 20 ministers (2018)</p> <p><b>Lebanese Forces Party</b> Part of a Unity Government (National Assembly) led by 20 ministers (2018)</p>
<b>Macedonia</b>	2 w / 5 m	<p><b>VMRO-DPMNE</b> Opposition Parliamentary party</p>
<b>Moldova</b>	2 w	<p><b>Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova (PLDM)</b> Did not get into parliament in 2021</p> <p><b>The Action and Solidarity Party</b> Earlier Opposition party, now (2020) the party leader (Maia Sandu) is the President of Moldova but she can not stay party-affiliated.</p>
<b>Montenegro</b>	3 w / 3 m	<p><b>Bosniak Party (RSI)</b> Opposition Parliamentary party (2020)</p>
<b>Serbia</b>	1 w / 8 m	<p><b>Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMSZ)</b> Government supporters in Parliament (2020)</p> <p><b>Serbian Progressive Party</b> Majority in Parliament (2020)</p>
<b>Ucraina</b>	14w/10m	<p><b>Batkivshchyna</b> Opposition in Parliament (2019)</p> <p><b>Democratic Alliance</b> Opposition, did not participate in the elections of 2019</p> <p><b>Petro Poroshenko Bloc – Solidarnist</b> Opposition in Parliament (2019)</p> <p><b>Narodni Front</b> Did not participate in the PE 2019. Extra Parliamentary Opposition</p> <p><b>Samopomich Union (Self-reliance union)</b> Opposition (1 seat in parliament 2019)</p> <p><b>Hungarian Party in Ukraine</b> Extra parliamentarian minority party.</p>

53 w / 43 m = 96 participants

**27 parties**

# APPENDIX II

## EVALUATION YLP 2011-2020

Surveys/personal interviews

*If the interviewee has already answered the survey, I will refer to it, and we can immediately skip to question number 6.*

**Your name:**

**Country:**

**Party:**

**Which year did you participate in the Young Leaders Programme**

2015-16

2016-17

2017-18

2018-19

2019-20

**I am a:**            Woman            Man

**I am currently active in:**

main party

youth wing

both

NGO/civil society organisations

I'm no longer active in politics

**About your political activity****1) Are you still active in politics? If no, please comment on why.**

*Also, if you are no longer active in politics: Are you active in NGOs or civil society?*

**2) Have your position and your tasks in politics changed since you participated in the Young Leaders programme? If yes, for what reasons, and in what way?****3) What knowledge, skills and experience from the Young Leaders programme have been most useful and relevant in your political work? Please describe in what way, and on what occasions you have been using them?**

*Have you had the opportunity to share knowledge and skills with others inside or outside of your party afterwards?*

**4) Please describe which have been your most important political projects/ activities/focus after your participation in the Young Leaders programme and up until now?****5) Is there any support that you and other young politicians in your party/ in your country need in order to develop and grow in your political role (in terms of knowledge, skills, training, networks etc.)? Where can you get such support (through your party/through other organisations)?**

The above has already been answered in the survey.

*Notes for Monica: even if the interviewee has already answered the survey, it might be good to go back and refer to this central question:*

**What knowledge, skills and experience from the Young Leaders programme have been most useful and relevant in your political work? Please describe in what way, and on what occasions you have been using them? *Have you had the opportunity to share knowledge and skills with others inside or outside of your party afterwards?***

6. **Please tell me a bit about why you joined politics. What are the most important areas for you to change and influence in your role as a young politician?**
7. **In your national political context, what are the biggest challenges/opportunities to democracy now and in the next few years?**  
*(similarities/differences/challenges and solutions in common with other participants)*
8. **Do you feel that you have actually had the opportunity and influence to change things to the better/face the challenges with political means?**  
*If yes: how/If no, why not?*
9. **Do you feel that your political party actively supports you?**  
*(youth/women are generally discriminated in politics)*
10. **Who were the people who supported you the most in your political activity (other youth/other members/leaders in the party, etc.)?**  
*Do youth organise with other youth inside and/or outside the party? Do the networks among participants in YLP live on after the programme ends?*
11. **Have you gone through programmes similar to the “Young Leaders”? If yes, how was “Young Leaders” different from the other/s?**  
*(added value YLP) Is there any similar training available to you and other youth also within your party? (party schools or the like).*
12. **If there would be another edition of the young leaders’ programme, and you were one of the organisers – could you think of anything that should be added or taken out?**



**EFF**  
*Eduardo Frei*  
*Foundation*

ROBERT  
SCHUMAN  
Institute

A red, curved graphic element resembling a stylized 'S' or a swoosh, positioned behind the text "ROBERT SCHUMAN" and extending under "Institute".