Youth Participation as a condition for integrity in Local Economic Development

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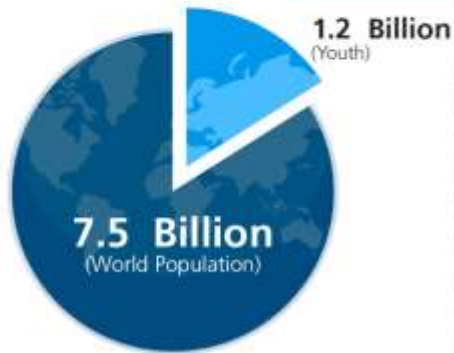*Dept. of International and European Studies*
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Introductory Remarks

Four main pillars of analysis are to be addressed:

1) **Youth** and its dynamics

2) **Local Economic Development** and its aspects

3) **Integrity** and its qualities

4) The **combination of the three pillars** above as a scheme providing a **sound option** in order to achieve added value for the development of local economies

Youth - Population percentage

FACTS
RESEARCH & ANALYTICS
intelligence for informed choices

World Youth Day

1.2 Billion (Youth)

7.5 Billion (World Population)

16% of total population of the world are youth (age 15-24)

Youth Population of Different Regions (mid 2017)

in millions

- 78 Europe
- 49 North America
- 706 Asia
- 240 Africa
- 110 South America
- 6 Oceania

Percent of Youth in the Population

	Ethiopia	Lesotho	Swaziland	Timor-Leste	Afghanistan
Highest	21.8	21.7	21.7	21.7	21.4

	Bulgaria	Slovenia	Spain	Japan	Czech Republic
Lowest	9.1	9.3	9.3	9.4	9.4

Jordan
43

UK
21

Malta
-5

Italy
29.8%
The country has the second-lowest
percentage of under 30s in the world
but recently swore in its youngest ever
prime minister, Matteo Renzi, 39.

UK
37.3%
By 2021, 19% of the UK
population will be pensioners.
The turnout gap between the
oldest and youngest in Britain in
elections is the largest in Europe.

Japan
29.2%
The country with the lowest
percentage of under 30s.

2 Chad
75.8%
Chadians are split roughly
in half between being
settled and nomadic.

4 Afghanistan
74.8%
68% of the Afghan population is
below 25. The political system
– based around patronage – does not
encourage youth participation.

1 Uganda
76.2%
The world's youngest population. The
total population currently stands at
over 33 million. If current birth rates
continue, that could quadruple in the
next few decades.

3 East Timor
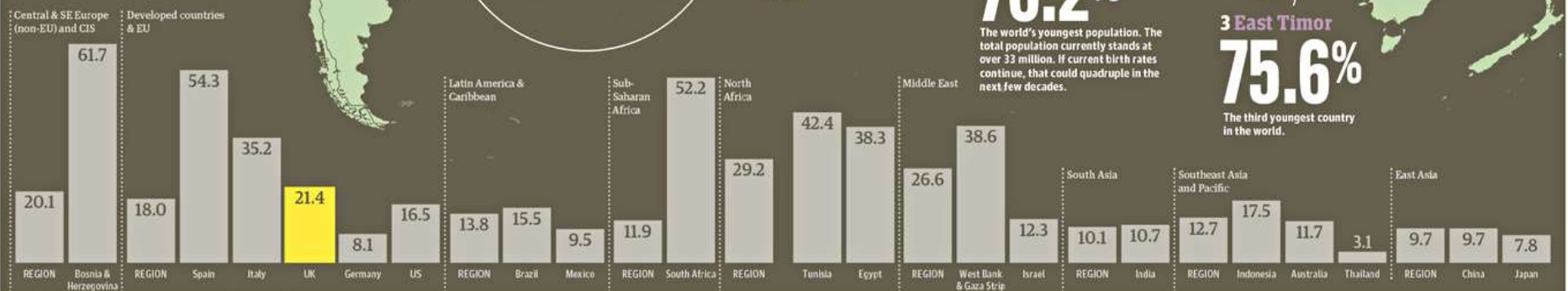# 75.6%
The third youngest country
in the world.

Which countries
Googled these Gen Y
terms most in 2013?

Harlem Shake	iPhone 5s
1 Trinidad	1 Laos
2 Indonesia	2 Singapore
3 Puerto Rico	3 Maldives
4 Paraguay	4 Thailand
5 Jamaica	5 Macau
6 Tunisia	6 Cambodia
7 Guadeloupe	7 Hong Kong
8 Honduras	8 Brunei
9 Brunei	9 Kosovo
10 Philippines	10 Uzbekistan

Under 30s as
% of total population

- Over 70%
- Over 60%
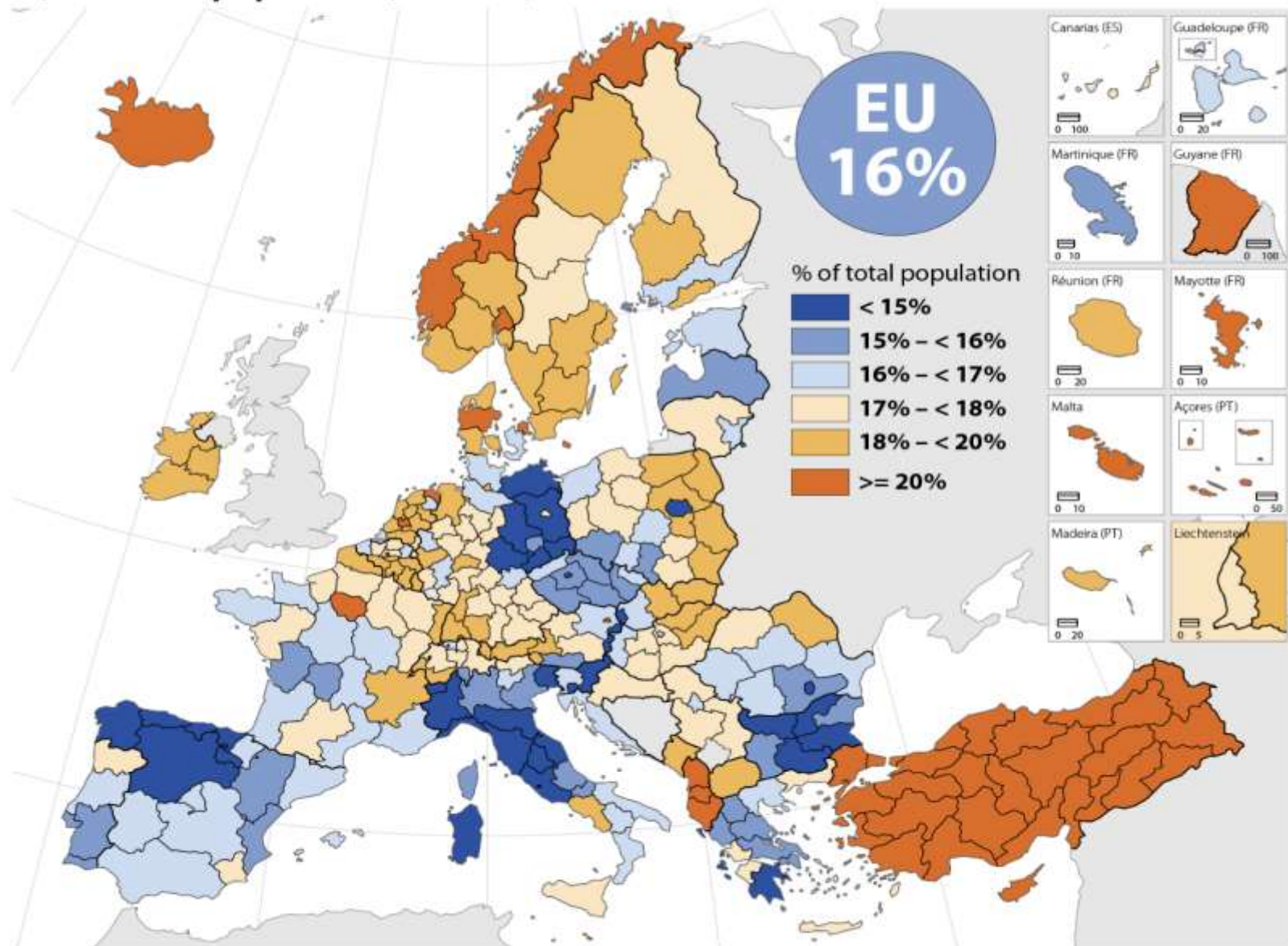- Over 50%
- Over 40%
- Over 30%
- Under 30%

Youth unemployment rate (%)
by region and selected country

Central & SE Europe (non-EU) and CIS
- REGION: 20.1
- Bosnia & Herzegovina: 61.7

Developed countries & EU
- REGION: 18.0
- Spain: 54.3
- Italy: 35.2
- UK: 21.4
- Germany: 8.1
- US: 16.5

Latin America & Caribbean
- REGION: 13.8
- Brazil: 15.5
- Mexico: 9.5

Sub-Saharan Africa
- REGION: 11.9
- South Africa: 52.2

North Africa
- REGION: 29.2
- Tunisia: 42.4
- Egypt: 38.3

Middle East
- REGION: 26.6
- West Bank & Gaza Strip: 38.6
- Israel: 12.3

South Asia
- REGION: 10.1
- India: 10.7

Southeast Asia and Pacific
- REGION: 12.7
- Indonesia: 17.5
- Australia: 11.7
- Thailand: 3.1

East Asia
- REGION: 9.7
- China: 9.7
- Japan: 7.8

This graphic was amended on 20 March 2014 to correct two errors. Japan has the lowest percentage of under 30s in the world, not the second-lowest.
Italy has the second-lowest percentage of under 30s, and not the lowest number of under 30s. (Source: UN)

Young people aged 15-29 years old, 1 January 2020
(% of total population, NUTS 2)

EU
16%

% of total population

- < 15%
- 15% – < 16%
- 16% – < 17%
- 17% – < 18%
- 18% – < 20%
- >= 20%

Canarias (ES)

Guadeloupe (FR)

Martinique (FR)

Guyane (FR)

Réunion (FR)

Mayotte (FR)

Malta

Açores (PT)

Madeira (PT)

Liechtenstein

Note: Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, North Macedonia: single regions at this level of detail. Data are presented at NUTS 2 level accordings to NUTS 2016 classification.

Administrative boundaries: © EuroGeographics © UN–FAO © Turkstat
Cartography: Eurostat – IMAGE, 12/2021

ec.europa.eu/**eurostat**

TABLE 1. PROJECTED POPULATION OF YOUTH AGED 15 TO 24 YEARS IN 2020, 2030 AND 2050

REGION	2020		2030		2050	
	YOUTH POPULATION (THOUSANDS)	PERCENTAGE OF REGIONAL POPULATION	YOUTH POPULATION (THOUSANDS)	PERCENTAGE OF REGIONAL POPULATION	YOUTH POPULATION (THOUSANDS)	PERCENTAGE OF REGIONAL POPULATION
Sub-Saharan Africa	217,653	19.9	282,939	20.2	398,921	18.8
Northern Africa and Western Asia	86,427	16.4	102,436	16.8	110,096	14.6
Central and Southern Asia	362,697	18.0	365,152	16.4	347,206	13.9
Eastern and South-eastern Asia	304,385	13.0	303,162	12.5	261,429	10.8
Latin America and the Caribbean	107,583	16.5	103,483	14.7	93,853	12.3
Australia and New Zealand	3,742	12.3	4,230	12.7	4,467	11.6
Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand)	2,354	19.1	2,689	18.5	3,198	16.9
Europe and Northern America	124,742	11.2	129,786	11.5	119,327	10.5
TOTAL (WORLD)	**1,209,584**	**15.5**	**1,293,877**	**15.1**	**1,338,497**	**13.8**

Source: United Nations (2019c).

Youth – Potential & Challenges

Globalization, technological advances, and the spread of social networking offer <u>new opportunities for youth</u> to connect and become more active participants in development, while at the same time making their lives more complex and challenging.

The <u>demographic landscape</u> must be a central part of any development policy, one designed to integrate young people more fully in political, economic and social life and enable them to share in the benefits of development.

Throughout history, young people have actively sought to bring social, political and economic change to their countries. In so doing they are sometimes credited with changing business as usual.

Often they are portrayed as rebellious, destructive, reckless or violent.

However, young people are today's and tomorrow's wage earners and entrepreneurs, educators and innovators, health professionals, political and civic leaders, vital to economic growth and wellbeing (**<u>demographic dividend</u>**).

The demographic dividend requires getting more young people into productive employment and income generating activities.

Addressing youth underemployment and unemployment is a matter of worldwide concern. This should also include the NEETs (Not Employed or in Education or Training). Unemployment rates among young people everywhere are higher than among adults – averaging nearly three times the rate of the adult workforce.

Changing this would entail tackling young people's lack of prior job experience and lack of links to professional networks and contacts, or the fact that their education and training does not prepare them for the world of work or is not matched to growth sectors. Furthermore, the prevailing form of employment especially in the regional/local labour markets are informal or part time jobs, generally for a short term, with little job security and few, if any, benefits.

It is therefore increasingly important that programs seek to address both the demand and the supply side of job creation, promote self employment and entrepreneurship, engage youth productively in value chains, and expand access to services for economic success such as financial literacy and information communications technology, banking and credit.

Local Economic Development

Local Economic Development (LED) is development by and for local people. It is a <u>participatory process</u> in which local people from all sectors work together to stimulate local entrepreneurial activity, resulting in a resilient and sustainable economy. It entails creating decent jobs and improving the quality of life for all.

Its characteristics:
- <u>Inclusive</u> : Public, private, civil society, and marginalized groups work together to develop locally based solutions to common economic challenges.
- <u>Local Leadership :</u> Development strategies are developed at the local level (e.g. district, etc.), city or region itself, not imposed from higher levels of government or donors.
- <u>Local Values-based</u> : The values of local people (i.e. what is important to them - poverty reduction, basic needs, local jobs, integrating social and environmental values) drive the process and the solutions.
- <u>Economic drivers :</u> (value-added resource use, local skills training, local income retention, regional co-operation); and
- <u>Development :</u> (the role of structural change, quality of development).

LED is not about "quick fixes" or generating "wish lists." It requires a practical understanding of what the local area does well and what it has to offer; where its weakness and gaps lie, what outside threats and opportunities exist; and, what the local area wants and needs.

Undertaking a LED initiative requires knowledge of a local area's regional economic linkages, including its competitive advantage and cooperation opportunities. Success in LED depends on encouraging a business environment where markets can operate efficiently, but appropriately, within the local context.

In most local areas (especially in developing or transition countries), micro, small and medium-sized enterprises should be strongly supported and encouraged to take the lead as they play a key role in creating new local employment, wealth and tax generation. Visible results can help maintain momentum in the short term, and simply initiating a single project focusing on one critical issue might pave the way for long-term success.

Ultimately, LED is about sustainable development in the long-term, for it takes time to change local conditions and mindsets, build capacity, organise participatory processes and empower stakeholders.

Integrity - Concept

What is integrity? What characterizes the integrity of a person, functionary, or organization?

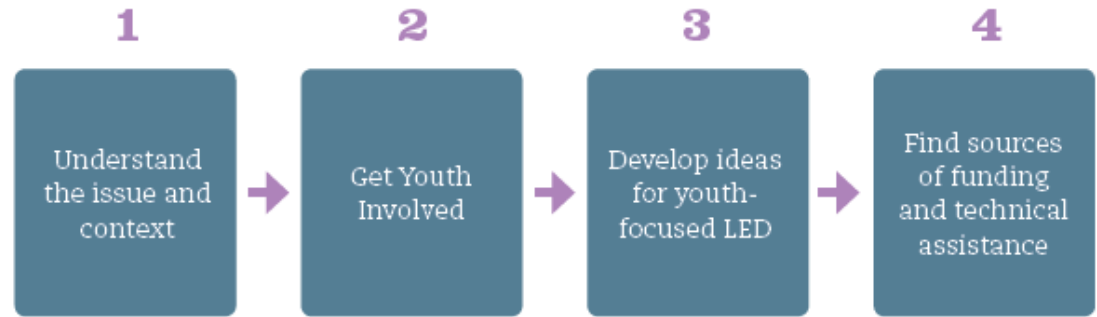In the relevant literature, various approaches may be established.

1) Based on the Latin term "integras": intact, whole, harmony; Integrity refers to "wholeness" or completeness, as consistency and coherence of principles and values.
2) Focusing on professional wholeness or responsibility; Integrity means that a professional exercises his tasks adequately, carefully and responsibly, taking into account all relevant interests.
3) Focus on one or more other specific values; Integrity means incorruptibility, honesty, impartiality, accountability.
4) Focus on morality (what is right and wrong); Integrity is an open reflection on morals.
5) Focus on combination of sets of values expressed by laws and rules; Integrity is an umbrella concept entailing adherence to the rules and laws, as they express constitutional or regime values.

Types of Integrity Violations

1. corruption: bribing
2. corruption: favoritism
3. conflict of interest (gifts, jobs, etc.)
4. fraud and theft of resources
5. waste and abuse of resources
6. break rules/misuse power (also for the organization)
7. misuse and manipulation of information
8. indecent treatment (intimidation, discrimination)
9. private time misconduct

Youth & Local Economic Development

Youth involvement in LED entails the following steps:

1 Understand the issue and context → **2** Get Youth Involved → **3** Develop ideas for youth-focused LED → **4** Find sources of funding and technical assistance

LOW INVOLVEMENT

Youth are key stakeholders at local level. Involving them in the planning process is critical to the success of projects.

Youth and adults may act complementarily in terms of skills, expertise and resources.

It is a challenge to get youth involved.

- Collecting feedback on LED ideas from youth through community meetings or surveys
- Youth participation in planning LED initiatives specifically aimed at youth
- Youth participation in the entire LED planning process
- Youth involvement in all city-planning initiatives, on the same stakeholder level as businesses and community groups

HIGH INVOLVEMENT

There are a number of ways in which young people can contribute to local economic development.

Firstly, they can contribute through their labour. They can work in various sectors of the economy, such as agriculture, manufacturing, construction, and services.

Secondly, they can contribute through their entrepreneurial skills. They can start and grow their own businesses, which create jobs and generate income.

Thirdly, they can contribute through their knowledge and skills. They can use their education and training to develop new products, processes, and services that help to improve the productivity of businesses and drive economic growth.

Finally, they can contribute through their social and cultural capital. They can help to build strong families and communities that provide support for businesses and promote social cohesion.

Youth and Integrity

Youth play a key role in building and strengthening integrity in governance. As a group they have a unique transformative potential to change and reform politics and governance to make it more inclusive, representative and accountable.

Accountability is a major concern of youth. The traditional approach of accountability focuses on the interaction of the different branches and levels of government to ensure political and institutional checks and balances (<u>horizontal accountability</u>). More recently, increased attention is paid to strengthening the voice and capacity of citizens to directly demand greater accountability from public officials and service providers. Thus, the emphasis is on actors outside the State, comprising checks and balances at national, regional, and local levels, involving also civil society and non-governmental organizations, as well as an independent media, watchdog organizations, and influential think-tanks and/or research organizations (<u>vertical accountability</u>).

As such, initiatives to enhance the ability of citizens and stakeholders to engage with public officials and policymakers in a more informed, direct and constructive manner receive increased support. This is where <u>accountability intersects with youth</u>.

More specifically, despite the significant progress noted, throughout the world – albeit not at the same degree – in terms of development, young people continue to experience high unemployment rates, limited educational opportunities, low skills development, etc.

Thus a series of questions are asked: To what extent are young people benefiting from progress in human development? What policies are in place at the national and local levels to address the challenges for youth? What can be done to include youth in the countries' vision, planning and decision-making processes? How to promote youth participation in accountability and integrity activities?

The loss of trust in politicians among young people has shaped their attitude and perceptions towards democratic institutions. Young people increasingly believe that elected officials do not have their interests in mind, and therefore their own belief is that they do not have the ability to demand change ("resignation").

THIS IS A MISTAKE!!!!

Although <u>young people do not generally vote in large numbers</u> in national and local elections, <u>they are an important means of political expression</u>. Young people have been at the forefront of many emerging political movements demanding accountability, many of which have focused on issues related to inequality and inclusion.

Advances in technology and social media have facilitated mobilization among young people, however they have not substituted for the institutionalized and active participation that are vital to democratic resilience and renovation.

<u>Civic and social engagement is a key component of youth participation</u>, as it empowers young people and allows them to exercise citizenship, develop life skills, network, and enhance their knowledge and experience to navigate in a complex and multi-dimensional democratic governance processes. Youth are actively involved in social life across many areas through civil society organizations, universities, youth programs, youth-led initiatives and volunteering individually and collectively.

All these provide young people with an enormous potential and expanding opportunities in order to enhance democratic governance, accountability and development in all policy fields.

In all strategies aiming to promote accountability and integrity, the involvement of youth can make a huge difference. Many young people have the desire and capacity to transform the world and they have a potential to positively affect future anticorruption efforts. As the new generation of politicians, entrepreneurs and civil society actors, they have an important role to play in bringing a new culture of accountability and integrity to all levels of the society, since their own aspirations and hopes for a better future can provide the impetus to improve policy and outcomes.
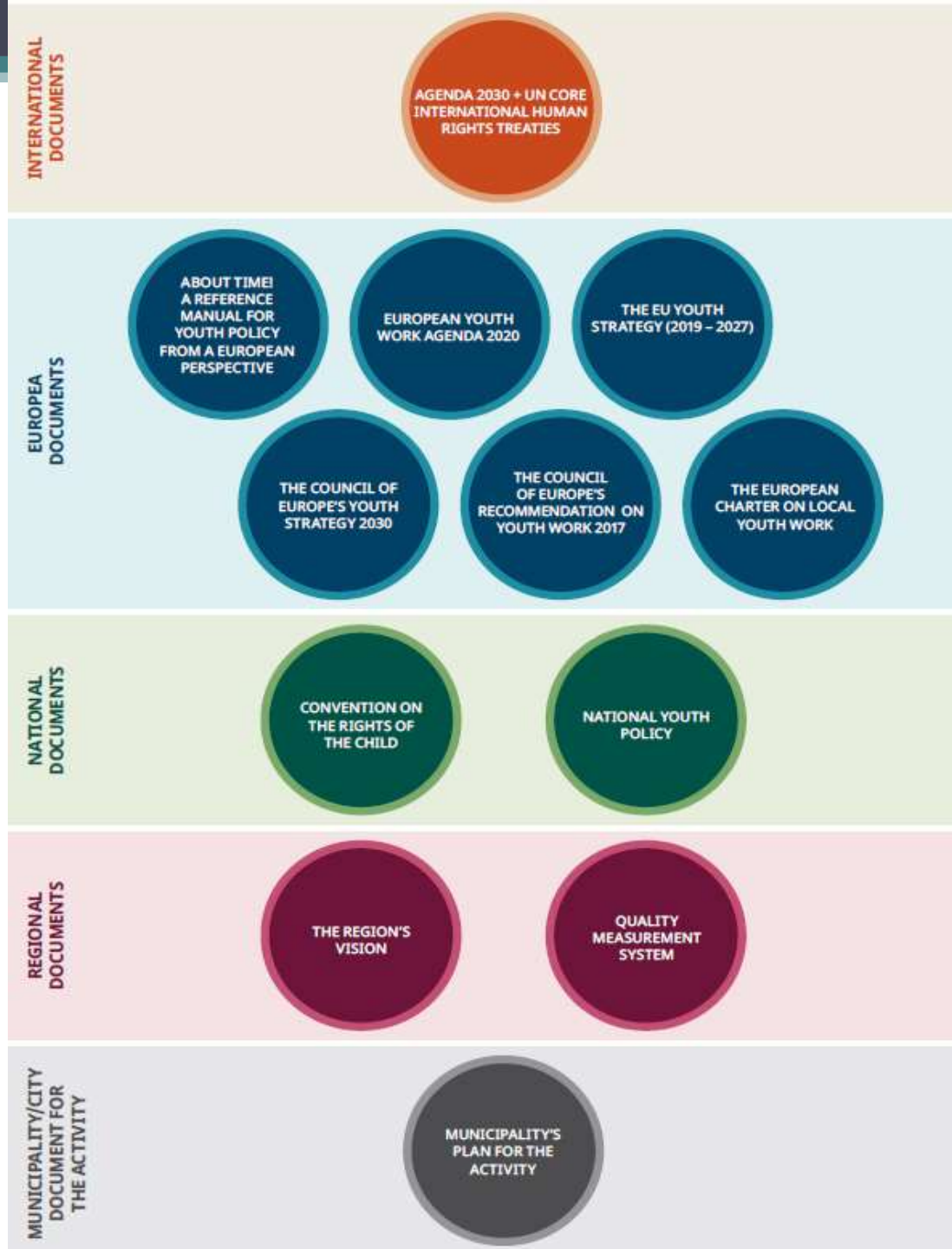
Involving young people in democratic policy making results in developing active democratic citizens who can play a role in securing a better future for themselves. Most importantly building the capacities of youth in accountability and integrity is a long-term investment, because as adults they will continue to support and encourage young people's involvement in accountable democratic governance and policy making.

Youth can bring optimism, energy, vigor, diversity and fresh ideas to policy deliberations, but through accountability they can also be the strategic link in the value chain of accountable governance and in <u>generating a virtuous cycle for a culture of integrity</u>, resilience and sustainability of democratic governance and development.

Building a culture of integrity in society necessarily begins with the education of young people. The knowledge, skills and behaviors they acquire now will shape their country's future, and will help them uphold public integrity and accountability, which are essential for preventing corruption.

Therefore, investing in youth leadership to build their capacities to effectively detect, prevent and fight corruption is crucial.

And there are several policy tools and funding instruments to achieve that.

A word of caution

Funding programmes are not a panacea for addressing youth policies. The risks involved in using – for instance – EU policies and funds in supporting youth policies has been notably shown in the case of the MENA region:

Although the MENA regimes have been increasingly and painfully aware of the political instabilities that result from high youth unemployment and disengagement from formal politics, they have demonstrated no interest in empowering genuine youthful democratic citizenship or autonomous civil society, but rather have used the European (and other international) initiatives as pathways for legitimation, rent-seeking, and incorporation of selected and compliant communities of young people.

The Euro–Mediterranean Partnership fostered new policy discourses around youth and provided toolkits for design and implementation, networks, funding, and opportunities for youth organizations and associations in the MENA to develop grass-roots, bottom-up, and even transnational activism.
But actual policy formulation and implementation for youth remained profoundly obstructed by the broader structural impediments to development in the region which could not accommodate the conceptual shift from governance as discipline to governance as multi-stakeholder decision-making.

Thank you for your attention!!!