

“Here I am;  
for you called me.” (1. Sam 3:5)

## Youth Participation and Leadership in the LWF Member churches



THE  
LUTHERAN  
WORLD  
FEDERATION



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Dr. Carlos Bock, DMD Director

# Foreword

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is a communion of member churches that express the vision of living and working together for a just, peaceful and reconciled world. One important dimension of being in communion is to acknowledge and allow space for the diversity that exists among and within the member churches. Inclusiveness and participation have been very important values also in setting criteria for the way we live and express communion in the LWF, and for the way we work and witness together.

The churches are living bodies that bring together people of distinctive ages and generations that have different needs and expectations, and that bring different gifts and visions for the common living of the faith. The diversity of generations has also been acknowledged as a contribution to the life of the LWF as a Communion of Churches. Since the 1984 Assembly, in Budapest, there is a policy to intentionally promote the youth participation to at least 20% in all LWF events and spaces. Since then this policy has been implemented and improved in the life of the Communion. More recently the youth participation has been included as one of four cross cutting priorities in the LWF Strategy 2012-2017. The Youth Desk, which is based in the Department for Mission and Development (DMD), has the leading role in the implementation of this organizational priority.

As part of the implementation of this strategy, in helping the member churches to strengthen youth leadership in their own context, at the end of 2013 the Youth Desk has developed and concluded a mapping exercise of the youth participation and leadership in the Lutheran Communion of Churches. This survey provides very important information about the youth presence and participation, also at the decision level, in the life of the member churches. With the publication of this survey, the DMD/Youth Desk is offering additional resource for the reflection within the member churches and in the LWF Communion of Churches in order to further improve the youth participation and leadership.

Through this survey the youth have been able to share important messages on how they see themselves and their wish to be fully integrated in the life of the churches. For instance, one participant has shared a very important theological insight, in relating the youth participation in the church life with the work of the Holy Spirit to promote life in the world. *“Youth participation is the work of the Holy Spirit in, with, and through the church-- bringing new ideas and new life to the world”*. (Male respondent, born 1945-1963, Israel, Jordan, Palestine)

Another participant has clearly indicated that the openness and appreciation for youth participation is important, but it needs to also include their contribution in decision making processes at different levels of the church life. *“Acknowledgement and appreciation probably encourage youth participation and leadership. Realizing that young people often can't seriously influence decision-making is frustrating and inhibiting”*. (Female. 1983-1995. Germany)

These two are good examples of voices and visions that have been captured through this mapping exercise. We invite you to read it, reflect on it and to share it back in your respective context. We hope and pray that this publication will help to create further spaces for dialog and for decisions to be taken that will improve the youth participation and leadership in the life of member churches and in the LWF Communion of Churches.

**Dr. Carlos Bock, DMD Director**

# Dialogue

We introduce this publication to you with an intergenerational dialogue between Beatrice Bengtsson, LWF archivist and Caroline Richter, LWF Youth Secretary



Caroline

As a communion of churches we are also a communion of different generations. One could imagine it as a relay team. The crucial moment is when passing the baton to a teammate. The one running his or her 400 meter sprint has to look ahead and be prepared to pass the baton. The one waiting needs to look back and hold fast to the baton, in order to start successfully.

Thus we have decided to speak to you from two generations, keeping in mind the past, present and future of youth participation.



Beatrice

The past engender the future as the Latin American wisdom states: “Un pueblo sin memoria es un pueblo sin futuro”. Paul told the Hebrews “Therefore since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely and let us run with perseverance the race what is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter” ...(Heb 12, 1-2). Because athletes do not want to miss the baton they need to look behind while taking over as Timothy advises: “in the case of an athlete, no one is crowned without competing according to the rules” (2 Tim 5), let’s run the race intergenerationally to be all crowned in the end and celebrate together, in 2017!

## a) Why is youth participation in our mandate as the Lutheran World Federation?



Caroline

The current engagement on Youth Participation comes from the youth delegates themselves! They expressed their wishes and vision in the 2012 Pre-Assembly Youth Message. They endorsed 3 priorities which were presented to the Eleventh LWF Assembly in Stuttgart two weeks later. These priorities lead our work today: 1. Sustainability Gender 2. Justice 3. Visibility of the LWF and Role of the Youth

The LWF Council in 2011 then committed to the goal that “Young people have a place and a voice in all aspects of church and communion life, including decision making and leadership.”

Many examples, such as the LWF delegation to the UN Climate Change Conferences show that by seriously engaging young leaders of the LWF in topics that challenge the entire LWF communion, much progress can be made.

In this “Mapping of youth participation and leadership” we tried to get a global picture of the situation in the LWF member churches and understand more about what we need to do to achieve more qualitative youth participation between now and 2017.



Beatrice

To quote LWF General Secretary Martin Junge, “it is an insight, and a vision. The insight is straightforward: it is not because of who we are, or because of what we do, but because of who God is and what God does that we are saved and redeemed into new life. Justification by faith through grace alone. This is the core of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and this is the core of Scriptures, inviting us to trust less in our own capacities and efforts, and more in God’s work when it comes to find life in abundance”. Not because of history but because of His story: the God of history desires a life in wholeness for all generations. Since biblical times, did not He wake up Samuel as Eli the prophet was getting old and blind: “A third time the Lord called, “Samuel!” And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, “Here I am; you called me.” (1.Sam 3,10-19)

Because the fathers and mothers of the Lutheran World Federation, concerned to keep faithfulness to the Scriptures and to God’s agenda, while launching the LWF in 1947 in Lund, resolved “to create a commission or departments of youth activities”.

The Evian Assembly in 1970 elected the first youth delegate at the then Executive Committee (now called the LWF Council). His name was Christian Kempf, born in 1947, in the Church of Augsburg Confession of Alsace and Lorraine, France. He was 23.

Did he feel lonely at that time, providential, prophetically called like Samuel? Addressing the Assembly, he stated that “he did not yet know what the election meant to him personally but he felt that it did imply a lot for youth and the churches. He expressed his needs to keep in contact with those participants of the Assembly from all over the world who had placed their hopes in his election”.

## b) How can we stay faithful to this calling and commitment?



Beatrice

Because we are liberated by God's grace, because we are a communion in Christ, living and working for a just, peaceful and reconciled world therefore intergenerational reconciliation is at the core of the current strategy of the LWF. Because at the feet of the Cross, it was not the Apostles who were courageous enough to face both the violence of the crucifixion but also the arrogance of the Romans, it was the women and John, the youngest of the disciples while the strong fishermen went to hide, fearful and threatened.

In an article of Lutheran World, a LWF Publication, the same pastor Christian Kempf was wondering some years later: "So what about the young people? Are we still amazed that they are abandoning our parishes?"... In 1970, one of the hopes of the LWF Assembly lay in my own election – as a young man – to the Executive Committee. But this hope, like the others, have proven to be somewhat deceptive...I had very little chance to get through those 'unacceptable measures' put forward by the young delegates at Evian, for example that the LWF would act courageously and radically to promote justice in the world, that it would take up an avant-garde position on theological questions, etc..."

Who are the young people of the regions? Where are they in the churches? How do they live and especially, how do they live their faith? Today there are 21st century ways of making youth voices heard and of acting effectively in Church and society such as through modern communication, virtual conferences and revolutionary media just like Gutenberg multiplied Luther's theses thanks to the printing press. And the Lord inspired Samuel to ask Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?" "There is still the youngest," Jesse answered. "He is tending the sheep." Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives." (1 Samuel 16,8f).

So started the charismatic youth leadership of King David and of his son Solomon granting peace and justice and life in fullness to Israel for many decades.



Caroline

The LWF carries on the responsibility and accountability to more and more involved young leaders in the development and on-going reformation of our churches.

The next step on this pathway will be the "Global Young Reformers Network". This program aims at empowering young leaders in all LWF member churches to rethink Lutheran Identity in the various contexts, discuss contemporary challenges of the LWF communion and be a "global citizen" to deal with societal and political injustices. The outcomes and decisions will directly link to the Twelfth LWF Assembly in Windhoek, as well as many other LWF processes.

But it is not only the Youth Desk and the "Youth Programs" to implement those - if Youth Participation is truly crosscutting, then young leaders need to be included in all aspects of our communion life, including all programs, human resources, events and decision making of the LWF.

*(continued on next page)*



Caroline

How can we make this happen? I will share with you some of our strategic planning and indicators on how we want to achieve youth participation in LWF programs in the next 2 years.

**The objectives are:**

1. Youth participation is strategically integrated in the LWF communion life, on the thematic, programmatic and project level.
2. Full youth participation in LWF decision making bodies and governance is achieved by number and quality.

**Those objectives will be measured by the following indicators:**

- ▶ Number of participants below 30 in an LWF organized program or project to assess the quantitative participation
- ▶ Number of young team members who prepare, implement and evaluate a program or project organized by the LWF to assess qualitative participation
- ▶ Increase in paid staff below 30 in administrative and program positions in the LWF communion office and LWF country programs
- ▶ Evidence of program activity components with a clearly outlined intergenerational perspective and/or intentional intergenerational dialogue
- ▶ Full Implementation of the Youth Quota policy in all LWF decision making bodies is reached by 2016, including the composition of the LWF Assembly, regional leadership conferences and LWF committees
- ▶ LWF Program Staff time spent on preparation and capacity building for and with young members.
- ▶ Evidence of decision making positions of youth and youth actively engaging in decision making processes

Staying faithful to this calling can be achieved if we work on this together and dare to measure our results. In this way, this is a first mapping and will be followed by a second mapping before 2017.



### c) How do we as the LWF envision more meaningful youth participation between now and 2017?



Beatrice

Did you know that the LWF youth desk was established at the Assembly in Dar El Salaam, 1977? The Assembly “resolved to request the Executive Committee of the LWF to consider establishing a Youth Desk with a Youth Advisory Committee by 1978: to identify the following as being among the tasks of the youth desk: - to integrate youth in the work of the LWF- to facilitate within two years international and/or regional consultations which would be part of the process of identifying and meeting the needs of youth and sharing experiences - to assist in developing youth leadership training programs as requested by the churches and - to build a communication network among youth and initiate exchange programs.”

So, in 2017 we can sing: Happy birthday youth desk! 40 years have passed: you have reached adult age!

It was not until the 1984 Assembly in Budapest that the working group on youth in church and society presented special recommendations on youth as an integral part of the body of Christ and of the Lutheran communion: that the LWF youth coordinator become a staff member of the then Department of Church Cooperation with programmatic responsibility, that youth internship be continued, that at the next Assembly a quota of at least 20% of delegates under 30 be introduced and that before each Assembly a youth gathering takes place to help them participate in the decision-making process and also recommendations on youth in member churches, youth in mission, youth and worship, awareness building and a youth newsletter.

Analysing the institutional memory, the reality is that the LWF has only achieved 19% of its youth quota at the last LWF Assembly in Stuttgart in 2010 while in 1984, it was already decided to reach this figure. Did we forget God’s wisdom in calling Samuel, David and Salomon, Timothy and John? Like the Israelites in the desert, we have taken exactly the same 40 years from 1977 to 2017 to finally reach the promised land...Like the Israelites, we could have reached it much earlier as they turned in so many circles while they actually only covered a distance of a bit more than 100 kilometres during these 40 years. It took them one generation but they did reach the Promised Land and so will youth participation!



Caroline

For 2017 I imagine that the LWF Assembly and various Reformation events are prepared, implemented and celebrated with different generations of the communion.

I imagine they will discuss and engage without fear or different status, but with confidence, in mutual respect and trustful relationships with each other.

I imagine we will have many more young professionals who are taken seriously and who engage in their church.

I imagine that one day there is no longer a need for a youth quota, because it is so natural for young people to be included in all decision making processes.

#### **How do we get there?**

Every generation has the chance to contribute to this vision. In every aspect of church life and decision making you can ask yourself: How much you were integrated or how much did you integrate others?



# Introduction

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF), through its strategic commitment, wants to ensure that *“young people have a place and a voice in all aspects of church and communion life, including decision making and leadership”*<sup>1</sup> The Lutheran World Federation (2011). LWF Strategy 2012-2017. The LWF Communion- with Passion for the Church and for the World, pp.22. Youth participation and youth leadership are cross-cutting priorities which require attention and commitment at all levels of church and communion life.

In our ongoing commitment to ensure that young people have a place and voice in the LWF and LWF member churches; that their voices are heard, concerns and hopes are received, and that their needs are served; as well as to ensure that LWF programs remain relevant to young communion members, the LWF Youth Desk conducted a study on youth participation and leadership in all LWF member churches.

‘Mapping of youth participation and leadership’ was developed around the following objectives:

- ▶ Collecting and sharing stories of good practice in youth participation and leadership within the churches of the Lutheran Communion;
- ▶ Promoting meaningful youth participation and leadership;
- ▶ Enabling mutual growth among member churches.

This report presents the findings of the ‘Mapping of youth participation and leadership’. It offers a global ‘map’ of various perspectives, approaches and good practices in youth participation and leadership within the Lutheran Communion of Churches; acknowledges challenges, and poses follow-up questions for improved practice in meaningful youth participation and leadership.

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<sup>1</sup> The Lutheran World Federation (2011). LWF Strategy 2012-2017. The LWF Communion - with Passion for the Church and for the World, p.22.

# 1. Looking back while moving forward

The LWF's commitment to ensuring that young people have a place and voice in church and communion life has a progressive history. Archive materials witness to this commitment from as early as the First Assembly of the LWF in 1947.

The following excerpts from LWF Assembly Reports and Minutes of Executive Meetings make numerous references to this long-standing commitment of the LWF and LWF member churches to ensure meaningful participation and leadership of young people at governance levels. Through the establishment of the Youth Desk, and more focused and coordinated concerns for youth participation and leadership in all areas of LWF life, this commitment extended into programmatic work. Since programmatic work does not feature as prominently in the archives as reports from Assemblies and Executive meetings do, youth participation and leadership in programmatic work is not indicated in the timeline of milestones in youth participation and leadership presented below.

As we read summaries of discussions, votes and resolutions on youth participation in the LWF, we follow the progressive development of, and changing perspectives and practices in youth participation and leadership over the years.



## Laying the foundations of youth participation and leadership in the Lutheran Communion of Churches

1947

First Assembly, Lund, Sweden - The first Assembly resolved “to create a commission or departments of youth activities.”<sup>2</sup> Lutheran churches were called upon by the Assembly to “give continued and increased attention to youth programs”<sup>3</sup> in their churches. Church affiliated youth organizations and young people were encouraged to continue ministering in Christian fellowship to others; to jointly express common faith, and to devote themselves to common tasks.<sup>4</sup>

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1957

Considering youth representation at the LWF Assemblies, the Executive Committee voted that “special seating arrangements be made for the 76 youth present at the [upcoming] Assembly”.<sup>5</sup>

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1961

The Executive Committee voted that “inasmuch as youth are active and responsible members of the church”...member Churches insofar as possible should include “youth representatives among the official visitors in their [Assembly] delegations.”<sup>6</sup> The following recommendation was referred to Executive Officers, that “churches should be informed that place is reserved for a maximum of 45 youth representatives in the Assembly and that one or two additional places may be granted to a church, as necessary, to make such representation possible.”<sup>7</sup>

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2 Lutheran World Federation (1947). Proceedings of the Lutheran World Federation Assembly; Lund, Sweden. pp. 95-96.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 The Lutheran World Federation, Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the Lutheran World Federation, Minnesota, USA, 11-14 August 1957, p. 18.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.



# 1968

The Sub-Committee on Youth, appointed in 1964 by the Commission on Stewardship and Evangelism to plan a pre-Assembly youth conference, made the following recommendations to the Executive Committee: *“that youth not already assigned as delegates [to the fifth Assembly] be given such status and added to the present delegations of their respective churches.”*<sup>8</sup>

The Executive Committee voted to *“increase the total of Assembly delegates to that number required to provide for representation of the 18-25 age group on the basis approximately equivalent to their proportion of the total adult population.”*<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, it was agreed that *“quotas for youth delegations on a continent-by-continent basis in relation to the regular delegations from and relative delegational strength of the member churches of those continents”*<sup>10</sup> be assigned.

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# 1970

Fifth Assembly, Evian, France - The first youth delegate, Christian Kempf (then 23 years of age) of the Church of Augsburg Confession of Alsace and Lorraine (France) was elected to the Executive Committee (now called the LWF Council).

Minutes of the Assembly proceedings make reference to the suggestion that a youth and student desk be established at ‘LWF headquarters’. The existence of the Youth Department of the WCC and the World Student Christian Federation were brought to attention, as well as that the World Encounter of Lutheran Youth had refrained from requesting a special youth desk. It was requested that rather than merely establishing a youth desk, youth be directly involved in decision making processes of the LWF.<sup>11</sup>

Addressing remarks to the Assembly, Mr Kempf stated that his election to the Executive Committee *“implied a lot for youth and the churches.”*<sup>12</sup> The minutes note that *“he was aware that this was the first time that a youth delegate had been elected to the Executive Committee and that this was very significant for the change taking place in the LWF.”*<sup>13</sup>

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8 The Lutheran World Federation, Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the Lutheran World Federation, Geneva, Switzerland, 25-31 August 1968, pp. 29-30; Exhibit J, pp. 9-10.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 Lutheran World Federation (1970). Proceedings of the Lutheran World Federation Assembly; Evian, France. p. 48.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

# 1977

Sixth Assembly, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania - To further *“integrate youth into the work of the LWF”*<sup>14</sup>, and considering that a proposal for a Youth Desk made at the Evian Assembly had not been met, the sixth Assembly *“resolved to request the Executive Committee of the LWF to consider establishing a Youth desk with a Youth Advisory Committee by 1978...”*<sup>15</sup> In addition to integrating youth into the work of the LWF, the following were identified as being among the tasks of the Youth desk: *“...to facilitate within two years international and/or regional consultations which would be part of the process of identifying and meeting the needs of youth and sharing experiences; to assist in developing youth leadership training programs as requested by the churches; to build a communication network among youth and initiate exchange programs”*.<sup>16</sup>

It was recommended that *“the LWF take up the global challenge of the alienation of youth from the church and from each other and seek to involve youth fully in the work of the Church”*<sup>17</sup>. The assembly resolved *“to urge the member churches to seriously evaluate youth involvement in all aspects of the life of their churches”*<sup>18</sup>.



14 Lutheran World Federation (1977). Proceedings of the Lutheran World Federation Assembly; Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. p. 208-209.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

# Paving the way to meaningful participation and leadership in the Lutheran Communion of Churches

## 1980

The Executive Committee voted *“to ensure the participation of youth at all levels of LWF work; i.e. through youth internships in all LWF units, including the General Secretariat, and through youth delegates at all LWF Assemblies, Executive Committee and Commission meetings and major consultations, and to make possible effective coordination and administration of youth concerns with the help of a staff person specifically assigned for these tasks.”*<sup>19</sup>

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## 1981

To evaluate youth involvement in LWF programs and decision-making bodies as follow-up to the recommendation of the sixth Assembly, a youth delegation of consultants were invited to report to the Executive Committee. Appreciating the work of the Consultation the Executive Committee voted, in addition to other points, the purpose of a youth pre-Assembly gathering to be: *“to prepare youth delegates and observers for a meaningful participation in the Assembly; to provide an opportunity to share youth concerns and problems from various contexts...”*<sup>20</sup>

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## 1982

Concerning LWF member churches and youth communication, the LWF Commission on Communication submitted following recommendations to the Executive Committee for action. It was recommended *“that the Executive Committee encourage LWF member churches to include youth in decision-making bodies on the national level.”*<sup>21</sup>

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## 1984

Seventh Assembly, Budapest, Hungary - The working group on Youth in Church and Society presented special recommendations on youth as an integral part of the body of Christ and of the Lutheran Communion of Churches. It was recommended that the LWF Youth Coordinator become a staff member with programmatic responsibility of the then Department of Church Cooperation and that youth internship programs be continued. The Assembly resolved *“that at least 20 per cent of delegates be*

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19 The Lutheran World Federation, Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the Lutheran World Federation, Augsburg, Germany, 6-11 July 1980. p. 14.

20 The Lutheran World Federation, Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the Lutheran World Federation, Turku, Finland, 4-13 August 1981 p. 18.

21 The Lutheran World Federation, Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the Lutheran World Federation, Vancouver, Canada, 1982, Exhibit 9.1.1.



youth” and that “there be one young person as a full member of each of the LWF commissions; that these young people be experienced in Lutheran youth work; and that geographical factors be taken into account.”<sup>22</sup> Furthermore it was recommended that youth gatherings take place before each Assembly to enable more meaningful participation of youth in the decision-making processes of the Assembly. Member Churches were urged

- ▶ “to enable young people to take full part in the decision making in their churches, and to fully implement the recommendations of the LWF Assembly regarding the role and participation of youth in the life of the church and of the LWF;
- ▶ To enable young people to take up responsible tasks in the churches at all levels.
- ▶ To provide leadership training and further education for young people on a regular basis,
- ▶ To permit the Youth Desk to communicate directly also with national church youth organizations regarding the nomination of youth representatives to LWF events and meetings, with the understanding that the young people nominated must be involved in youth work in their churches.”<sup>23</sup>

## 1990

Eighth Assembly, Curitiba, Brazil- Minutes of the eighth Assembly indicate that “while the Nominations Committee had been anxious to fill the [youth] quota, the response from the member churches concerning youth nominations had not been so positive.” At the Curitiba Assembly, youth nominations represented only 15%. Youth were encouraged to “continue to campaign for better representation in their own churches.”<sup>24</sup>

## 1991

The following youth-related concerns were brought to the attention of the Council. It was noted that these concerns had repeatedly emerged: “the issue of the level of youth participation in churches’ governing bodies; the lack of response to LWF/DMD Youth Desk initiatives, inquiries and program activities; the need to establish mechanisms for youth exchange; and regional youth networks.”<sup>25</sup>

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22 Lutheran World Federation (1985). Assembly Report; Budapest, Hungary. p. 229-230.

23 Ibid.

24 Lutheran World Federation (1990). Proceedings of the Lutheran World Federation Assembly; Curitiba, Brazil. p. 71.

25 The Lutheran World Federation, Minutes of the Meeting of the LWF Council, Madras, India, 13-23 September 1992, p.17.

Reflecting on her experiences since beginning as Secretary for Youth in Church and Society, Rev. Siv Limstrand shared with the Council that among the difficulties she encountered regarding youth participation were *“the lack of recognition of young people by churches in many areas, and the difficulty of initiating a process leading to change in attitudes and the creation of a community in which all have full recognition.”* In conclusion, *“the importance of churches’ taking seriously and supporting youth programs, and the need for churches to create space for youth expression and creativity was underlined.”*<sup>26</sup>

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## 1997

Ninth Assembly, Hong Kong, China- It comes as a surprise that although this decision had already been taken earlier, the ninth Assembly voted *“that the pre-assembly youth conference (PAYC) be an undeniable part of every future Assembly in order to prepare and strengthen the voice of youth in the LWF.”*<sup>27</sup>

Evaluating their role and service in the Council, young council members shared their joys, as well as challenges at the Council meeting following the ninth Assembly, noting that they were not always able *“to play their full role as council members in as much as their voices had not always been heard by member churches.”*<sup>28</sup>

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## 1998

Reviewing commitments and resolutions of the ninth Assembly, and having learned of difficulties the Desk for Youth in Church and Society (YICAS) and youth had encountered, the importance of effective communication between YICAS and member churches, as well as opportunities for youth participants to report back to their churches after LWF events, were stressed.<sup>29</sup>

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## 1999

Taking up the matter of communication between YICAS and youth organizations of member churches, the Council voted *“to ask each member church to designate a young person to serve as a liaison with the Desk for Youth in Church and Society; and to authorize the Desk for Youth in Church and Society to have direct communication with the person designated regarding youth ministries, including identification of youth representatives at LWF-sponsored events, with the understanding that all correspondence would be copied to the respective church headquarters.”*<sup>30</sup>

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26 Ibid.

27 The Lutheran World Federation, Minutes of the Meeting of the LWF Council, Hong Kong, China, 17-18 July 1997, p. 15.

28 Ibid.

29 The Lutheran World Federation, Minutes of the Meeting of the LWF Council, Geneva, Switzerland, 8-17 June 1998, p. 4.

30 The Lutheran World Federation, Minutes of the Meeting of the LWF Council, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 22-29 June 1999, p. 17.

# 2003

Tenth Assembly, Winnipeg, Canada - The tenth Assembly voted *“to urge strongly the member churches to reaffirm their commitment to ensure and implement 20 percent youth participation at future assemblies, and to urge the member churches to ensure that no less than 40 percent male and no less than 40 percent female youth representation among the delegations within their region at future assemblies”*<sup>31</sup>

Regarding youth in decision-making processes the Assembly voted *“to urge all member churches to encourage the participation of youth in the worship and decision-making processes at all levels.”*<sup>32</sup>

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# 2007

The Council voted *“to ensure that full participation of youth be more fully integrated into the LWF Strategic Plan and that concerns related to gender, including the full participation of women, be named specifically as part of what it means to be an inclusive communion and according to existing LWF policies.”*<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, on the recommendation of the Program Committee, the Council voted *“to change from Youth in Church and Society (YICAS) to LWF Youth, and that more importance shall be given to the advocacy role of the desk.”*<sup>34</sup>

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# 2009

During discussion on the recommendation of the Assembly Planning Committee regarding Youth and Gender representation at the eleventh Assembly, practical difficulties faced by some regions to meet proposed quotas were raised.<sup>35</sup>

The Council voted *“to urge member churches and regions to construct and re-construct the delegations to the Stuttgart Assembly in a way that fully adheres to the commitments regarding the representation of women and young people made at the LWF assemblies in Budapest 1984 and Curitiba 1990; to remind the member churches of the resolution adopted by the LWF Assembly in Winnipeg and encourage its implementation: “to reaffirm their commitment to ensure and implement 20 percent youth participation at further assemblies and to urge the member churches to ensure no less than 40 percent male and no less than 40 percent female representation among their delegations within their region at future assemblies”*<sup>36</sup>

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31 Lutheran World Federation (2003) Tenth Assembly Report; Winnipeg, Canada. p. 20.

32 Ibid.

33 The Lutheran World Federation, Minutes of the Meeting of the LWF Council, Lund, Sweden, 20-27 March 2007, p. 27.

34 Ibid.

35 The Lutheran World Federation, Minutes of the Meeting of the LWF Council, Geneva, Switzerland, 22-27 October 2009, p. 33.

36 Ibid.

# 2010

Eleventh Assembly, Stuttgart, Germany - The Assembly voted *“to adopt the resolution regarding inclusiveness in the Lutheran World Federation.”*<sup>37</sup> Resolutions from the Seventh Assembly on the participation of young people are, as standing resolutions, considered governing documents of the Lutheran World Federation. The seventh Assembly resolved: *“that a balanced key be utilized to decide upon delegates for the next Assembly and that at least 20 per cent of the delegates be youth”; ...“that a young person at LWF meetings and Assemblies normally be under the age of 30”; “that these young people be experienced in Lutheran youth work; and that geographical factors be taken into account.”*<sup>38</sup>

Regarding generational balance the Assembly voted to adopt following LWF principles of inclusivity: *“the LWF Assembly, Council, Officers and all other committees and task forces, including at all regional levels, shall be composed of at least twenty percent young people under the age of thirty at the time of the first meeting of the body to which they have been appointed. Regional balance shall be respected”*<sup>39</sup> Furthermore *“if there is more than one youth representative on a governing body, gender balance among the youth representatives shall be respected on all regional levels. This basic principle shall apply to all activities of the LWF communion office.”*<sup>40</sup>

Noting that *“numerical representation is not an end in itself, but a means for helping us to become a more inclusive communion”* the *“quality of the participation of women, and youth and lay people”* was stressed. *Member churches were encouraged to adopt similar measures and principles of inclusive representation, so as “to ensure full participation in their respective contexts.”*<sup>41</sup>

The LWF Council in 2011 first discussed youth participation as a cross-cutting priority in the new LWF strategy. *“One Council member (...) raised a concern about youth visibility in the three priorities. Youth was a matter for all three strategic priorities, not just one. In that respect it was a cross-*

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37 The Lutheran World Federation (ed.), Stuttgart 2010. Give us today our daily bread: LWF Eleventh Assembly Official Report, (Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation, 2010), p.60.

38 Ibid.

39 The Lutheran World Federation (ed.), Stuttgart 2010. Give us today our daily bread: LWF Eleventh Assembly Official Report, (Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation, 2010), p.61.

40 The Lutheran World Federation (ed.), Stuttgart 2010. Give us today our daily bread: LWF Eleventh Assembly Official Report, (Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation, 2010), p.62.

41 The Lutheran World Federation (ed.), Stuttgart 2010. Give us today our daily bread: LWF Eleventh Assembly Official Report, (Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation, 2010), p.61.

*cutting priority.*"<sup>42</sup> It was then decided that Youth Participation would be one of the four cross-cutting priorities.

No further Council resolutions relating specifically to 'youth participation and leadership', are documented to date. As young council members in the past have supported a move away from terminology that distinguishes 'youth issues' from 'general issues', decisions taken by and regarding young communion members are not easily filtered out of minutes of Council meetings by using search words such as 'youth resolutions' or 'youth issues.' The lack of resolutions on youth participation and leadership in Council Meeting minutes dating 2010-2013 therefore do not indicate a lack of youth participation or leadership at governance level during this period. Neither does it however, indicate that all concerns or challenges faced by young communion members regarding participation and leadership have been addressed.

What follows in this report are opinions and experiences of communion members regarding current experiences in youth participation and leadership in the LWF and member churches. The report reflects progress as well as challenges and obstacles still faced which sometimes hinder active, meaningful participation and leadership of young people in the communion of churches and the churches and congregations of survey respondents.

Listening intently to the voices of communion members, both young and older, both past and present, we are able to identify the next steps that need to be taken along the pathway of more meaningful participation and leadership of young people in our churches and the LWF.



<sup>42</sup> The Lutheran World Federation (ed.), Minutes Meeting of the LWF Council Geneva, Switzerland, 9 - 14 June 2011, p.114.



# 2. Methodology

The mapping of youth participation and leadership survey was developed by a youth intern in consultation with the Youth Secretary and the Transformative Leadership and Good Governance programme team of the LWF Department for Mission and Development (DMD).

In the spirit of intergenerational sharing, young and older members of the communion, church leaders, youth liaisons and participants of various youth programmes, LWF council members and other interested members of the communion, were invited to complete the 'Mapping of youth participation and leadership' survey. They were invited to share stories and photos of good practices in youth participation and leadership in their churches and communities. Church leaders were asked to distribute the survey to selected persons within their churches who engage directly with young people in their church and communities.

Since the idea behind the mapping was not to evaluate youth participation and leadership in member churches, but rather to collect opinions and perspectives on stories of good practice, and identified challenges to meaningful youth participation and leadership globally, the aim was not to receive as many responses from each member church as possible. Rather, select responses from each member church add to the bigger picture of youth participation and leadership as presently perceived and experienced by both young and older members of the communion.

While the Lutheran World Federation is the communion of churches, that is, member churches themselves constitute the Lutheran World Federation, directing the work of the communion office and its employees, a distinction was made in the survey between various youth related programs initiated and owned by member churches themselves, and those initiated and coordinated on behalf of member churches by LWF staff. Such a distinction should not be understood in terms of polarizing the life and work of member churches from that of the LWF communion office, but to enable the acknowledgement of specific challenges experienced in youth participation and leadership in various aspects of communion life. Having identified challenges to youth participation and leadership in their specific locations, relevant steps can be taken to address those challenges more effectively.

Responses were discussed both with the Youth Secretary and the team on Transformative Leadership and Good Governance (DMD), as well as a number of communion office staff from all LWF departments. Such discussion enabled sharing of observations, comments and concerns on the responses received as they affect various aspects of communion life. Considering together the implications of survey results for the work of various LWF departments, youth participation as a cross-cutting priority for the LWF as a whole, and not only for the Youth Desk, was once more stressed.

# 3. Survey information

## 3.1 Distribution dates

The 'Mapping of Youth Participation and Leadership Survey' was administered from 30 October 2013 to 25 November 2013. It was available as a PDF attached to the invitation letter sent, and accessible via the following URL ([https://qtrial.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_2mz6HCiKcONDmNn](https://qtrial.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_2mz6HCiKcONDmNn)) on the World Wide Web.

## 3.2 Survey structure and collection of survey responses

The survey was comprised of a total of 17 main questions. Counting 'sub-questions' that followed specific answers, a total of 37 questions were asked. Open- and multiple-choice questions, as well as sliding-scales were used. Questions referred to youth participation and leadership both in congregations of member churches, as well as the communion of churches at large. Due to the display logic of the survey, certain 'follow-up' questions were only shown when specific responses were received. Respondents completing the survey online were able to leave questions unanswered, and were not prompted or forced to answer in order to be able to continue to the next question. Survey responses could be saved by respondents and returned to at a later stage. Online surveys in process were collected as partially completed responses when the survey was closed. Surveys could also be returned by post.

## 3.3 Sample size

A total of 448 survey responses were collected. 431 responses were collected through Qualtrics, the survey program used for the online survey. 17 completed surveys were received via post. Of the 431 responses collected online, 165 completed surveys were submitted by respondents. Thus in total, counting the 17 responses returned via post, 182 completed surveys were received.

The remaining 266 responses collected online include 74 unanswered and 192 partially completed responses which were collected by the survey programme Qualtrics on the date of survey closure. 23 partially completed responses considered statistically relevant are counted in the sample.

The survey sample thus comprises of a total of 205 respondents from 80 member churches.

While responses received and opinions expressed do not represent the current situation of youth participation and leadership in all member churches, they do represent opinions and experiences of communion members from over 50% of member churches, and are held to be representative of responding communion members.



### 3.4 Return rate

The survey was distributed to all member churches, council members and advisors, youth liaisons and various program participants via E-mail, and through the youth blog and Youth Facebook page. Considering that approximately 150 youth contacts received the survey multiple times via various channels; that it was requested that the survey additionally be shared with selected youth and adults of member churches; and that access to the survey could easily be shared by forwarding the invitation E-mail, the exact number of final recipients is not known. It is thus not possible to determine an exact return rate. An estimated number of 1865 people received the survey directly. The return rate is calculated as an estimate, based on approximately 1715 recipients, and is calculated to be approximately 10%.



### 3.5 Geographical spread

Responses were received from every LWF Region and 80 member churches. A Table of participating member churches can be found under section 4.2 'Member Church affiliation'.

### 3.6 Data note

The maximum number of responses per question was 205. Since respondents had the option of leaving questions unanswered, and some respondents dropped out during a session, several questions have fewer responses than the total number of survey responses received. Conversely, some questions allowed for two or more responses per respondent, thus for some questions more responses are received than the total number of respondents answering the question. Percentages are rounded up.



# 4. Survey responses

In this section of the report, findings are presented in tables and graphs, and briefly explained and discussed. The findings are brought to dialogue in Section 5.

## 4.1 Demographics

The following pie charts indicate the percentage of survey respondents that fall within given age and gender categories.

The majority of respondents, 70% were young communion members of 18-30 years. 18% indicated their age to be between 31-49 years; 8% were 17 years or younger, and 4% were 50-68 years old. The question was not answered by 1% of respondents.

Of the 205 respondents counted in the sample, 56% were male, 44% female, and 1% of total respondents did not respond to this question.

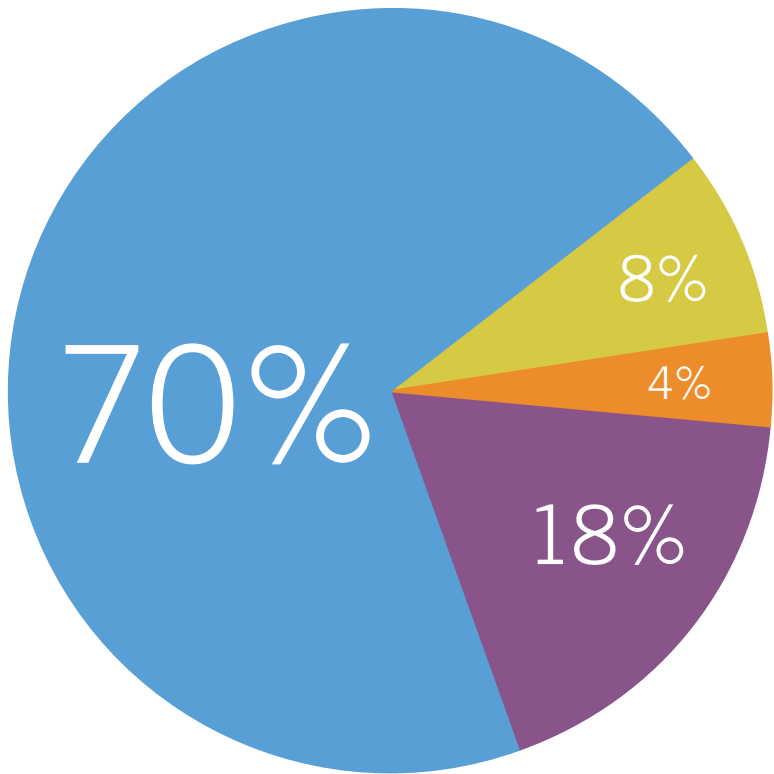


Figure 1: Age of survey respondents

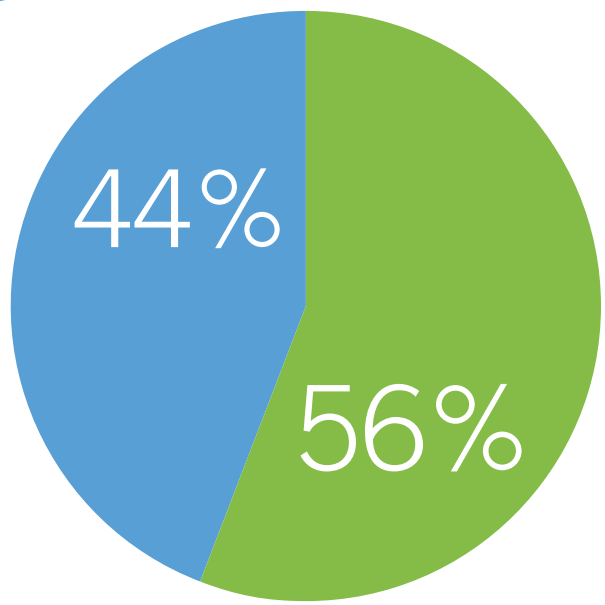
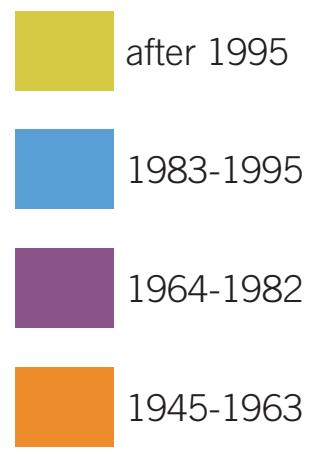
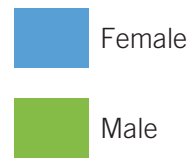
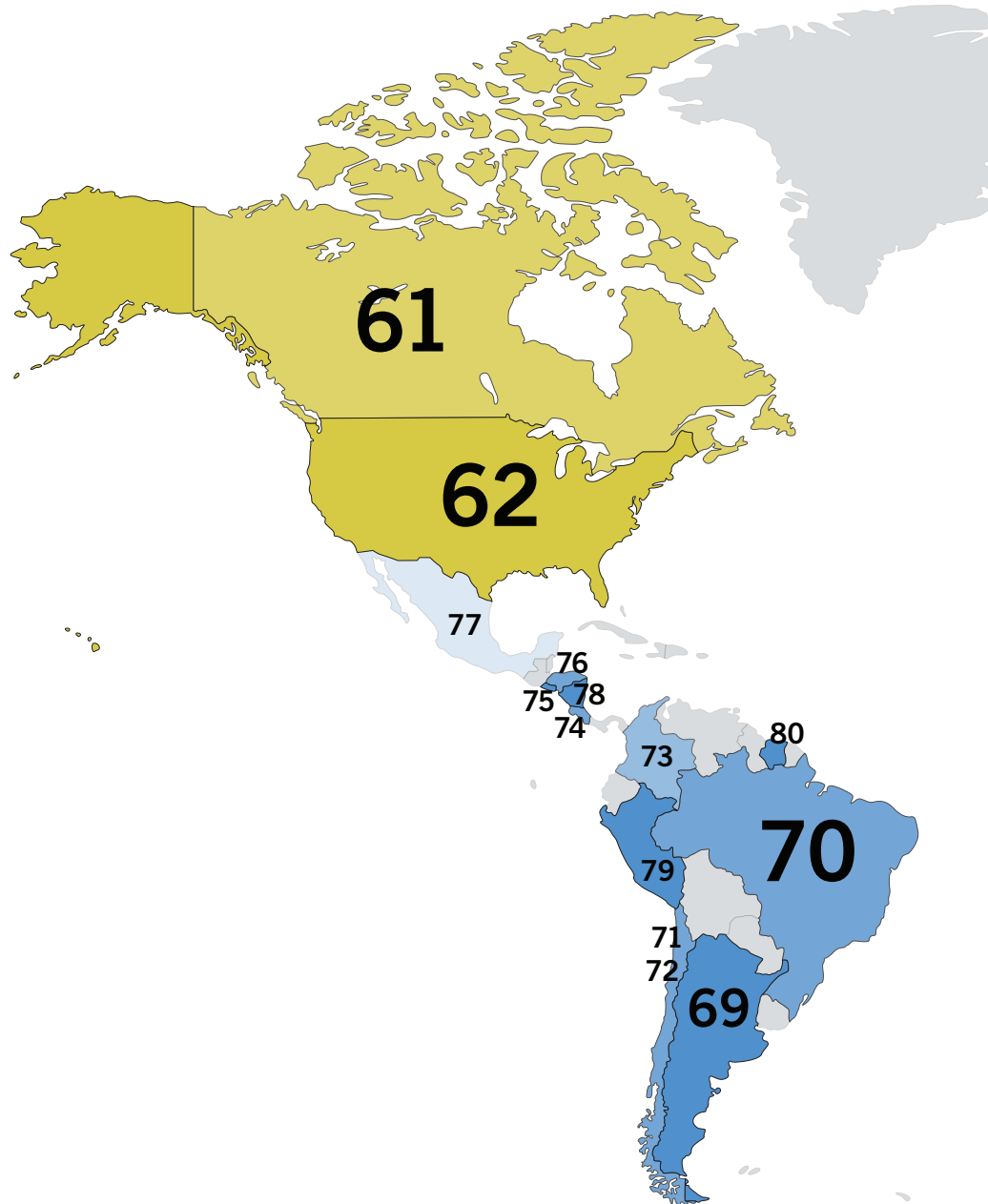


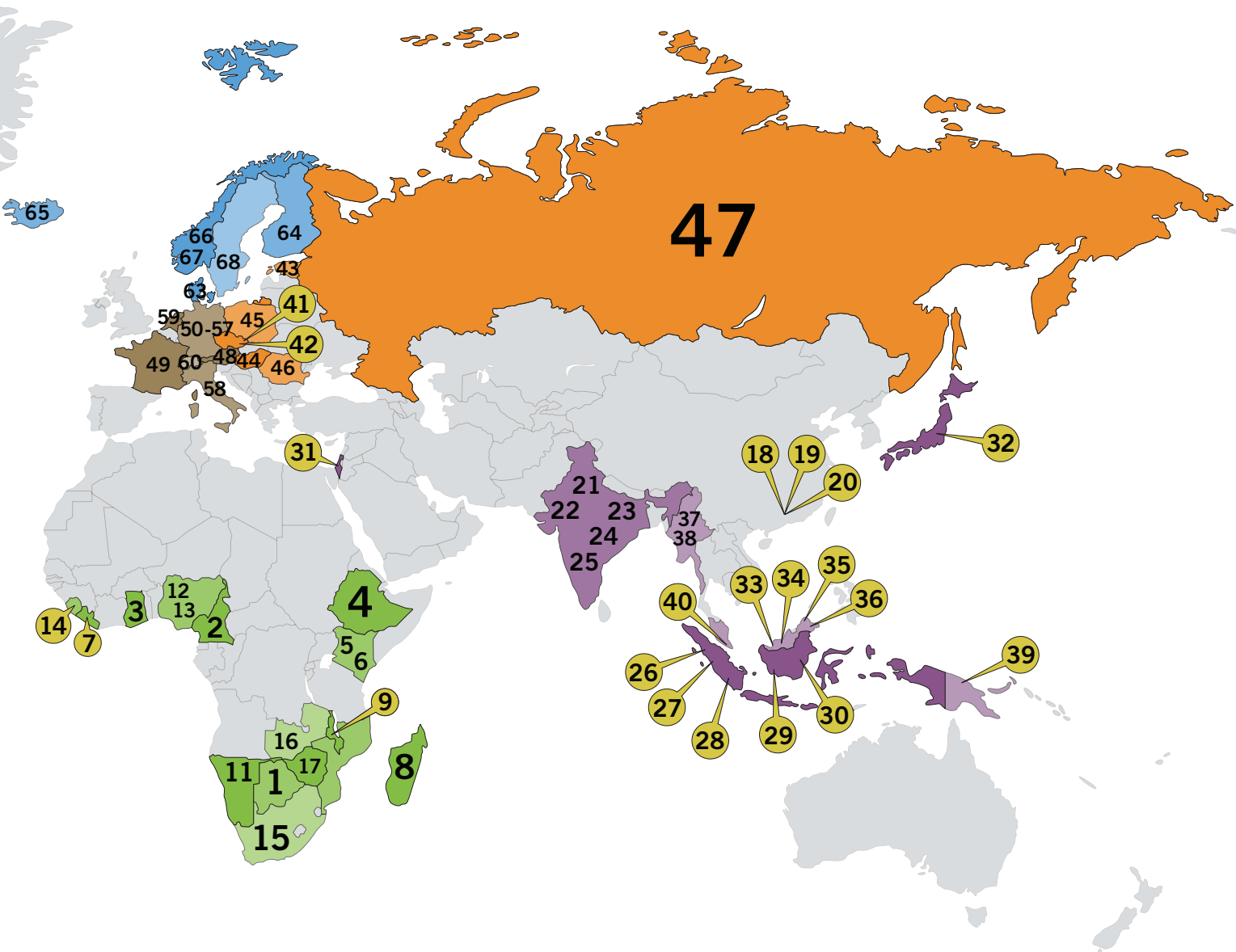
Figure 2: Age and Gender of survey respondents



## 4.2 Member Church affiliation

A minimum of 1 response was received from 80 member churches. The following table shows the total number of responses received from member churches per region, and the number of responses from participating member churches which are counted in the sample. Partially completed surveys not considered statistically relevant were not counted in the sample. Thus not all member churches from whom partial responses were received are represented in the survey findings. 8 respondents did not indicate the member church to which they are affiliated.





# Africa

| Country      | Member Church  | Number of responses received | Responses included in sample |
|--------------|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Botswana     | 1. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Botswana               | 1                            | 1                            |
| Cameroon     | 2. Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon               | 1                            | 0                            |
| Ethiopia     | 3. The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus         | 8                            | 4                            |
| Ghana        | 4. Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana                  | 2                            | 0                            |
| Kenya        | 5. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya                  | 2                            | 2                            |
| Kenya        | 6. Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church                     | 3                            | 2                            |
| Liberia      | 7. Lutheran Church in Liberia                            | 1                            | 1                            |
| Madagascar   | 8. Malagasy Lutheran Church                              | 3                            | 1                            |
| Malawi       | 9. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi                 | 4                            | 4                            |
| Mozambique   | 10. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Mozambique            | 3                            | 0                            |
| Namibia      | 11. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN)   | 1                            | 1                            |
| Nigeria      | 12. The Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria             | 1                            | 1                            |
| Nigeria      | 13. The Lutheran Church of Nigeria                       | 1                            | 1                            |
| Sierra Leone | 14. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sierra Leone          | 4                            | 4                            |
| South Africa | 15. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (N-T) | 5                            | 4                            |
| Zambia       | 16. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Congo                 | 2                            | 0                            |
| Zimbabwe     | 17. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe              | 1                            | 0                            |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |  | <b>3 (10%)</b>               | <b>26 (13%)</b>              |

# Asia

| Country                   | Member Church   | Number of responses received | Responses included in sample |
|---------------------------|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Hong Kong                 | 18. Hong Kong and Macau Lutheran Church                         | 6                            | 1                            |
| Hong Kong                 | 19. The Chinese Rhenish Church Hong Kong Synod                  | 5                            | 1                            |
| Hong Kong                 | 20. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong                | 11                           | 1                            |
| India                     | 21. Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church                          | 1                            | 1                            |
| India                     | 22. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Madhya Pradesh               | 8                            | 5                            |
| India                     | 23. Jeypore Evangelical Lutheran Church                         | 2                            | 0                            |
| India                     | 24. The Arcot Lutheran Church                                   | 2                            | 1                            |
| India                     | 25. The Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church                       | 3                            | 2                            |
| Indonesia                 | 26. Batak Christian Community Church                            | 3                            | 2                            |
| Indonesia                 | 27. Christian Protestant Church in Indonesia                    | 2                            | 2                            |
| Indonesia                 | 28. Protestant Christian Batak Church                           | 6                            | 4                            |
| Indonesia                 | 29. The Indonesian Christian Church                             | 1                            | 1                            |
| Indonesia                 | 30. The Protestant Christian Church                             | 4                            | 1                            |
| Israel, Jordan, Palestine | 31. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land | 2                            | 2                            |
| Japan                     | 32. Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church                           | 2                            | 1                            |
| Malaysia                  | 33. Basel Christian Church of Malaysia                          | 2                            | 1                            |

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|                  |   |                 |                 |
|------------------|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| Malaysia         | 34. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malaysia         | 1               | 1               |
| Malaysia         | 35. Lutheran Church in Malaysia and Singapore       | 3               | 1               |
| Malaysia         | 36. The Protestant Church in Sabah                  | 9               | 8               |
| Myanmar          | 37. Lutheran Church of Myanmar                      | 1               | 1               |
| Myanmar          | 38. The Mara Evangelical Church                     | 1               | 0               |
| Papua New Guinea | 39. Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea | 1               | 0               |
| Singapore        | 40. Lutheran Church in Singapore                    | 9               | 9               |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     |   | <b>85 (19%)</b> | <b>46 (22%)</b> |

## Central Eastern Europe

| Country            | Member Church  | Number of responses received | Responses included in sample |
|--------------------|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Czech Republic     | 41. Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren                     | 20                           | 8                            |
| Czech Republic     | 42. Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession   | 3                            | 3                            |
| Estonia            | 43. Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church                     | 2                            | 0                            |
| Hungary            | 44. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary               | 1                            | 1                            |
| Poland             | 45. Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland  | 2                            | 2                            |
| Romania            | 46. Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Romania | 1                            | 1                            |
| Russian Federation | 47. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia and Other States   | 2                            | 2                            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>       |  | <b>31 (7%)</b>               | <b>17 (8%)</b>               |



# Central Western Europe

| Country     | Member Church   | Number of responses received | Responses included in sample |
|-------------|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Austria     | 48. Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Austria                            | 5                            | 2                            |
| France      | 49. Union of Protestant Churches of Alsace and Lorraine                                 | 1                            | 0                            |
| Germany     | 50. Church of Lippe (Lutheran Section)  | 1                            | 0                            |
| Germany     | 51. Evangelical Church in Central Germany   | 9                            | 3                            |
| Germany     | 52. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria  | 10                           | 7                            |
| Germany     | 53. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Northern Germany                                     | 2                            | 2                            |
| Germany     | 54. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Oldenburg  | 2                            | 1                            |
| Germany     | 55. Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hanover  | 3                            | 2                            |
| Germany     | 56. Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony   | 6                            | 1                            |
| Germany     | 57. United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany                                       | 3                            | 3                            |
| Italy       | 58. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Italy  | 8                            | 8                            |
| Netherlands | 59. Protestant Church in the Netherlands  | 4                            | 3                            |
| Switzerland | 60. Fed. of Evang. Luth. Churches in Switzerland & in the Principality of Liechtenstein | 1                            | 0                            |

**TOTAL**    **55 (12%)**    **32 (16%)**

# North America

| Country       | Member Church                              | Number of responses received | Responses included in sample |
|---------------|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Canada        | 61. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada  | 2                            | 2                            |
| United States | 62. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America | 7                            | 2                            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  |  | <b>9 (2%)</b>                | <b>4 (2%)</b>                |

# Nordic Countries

| Country      | Member Church                                      | Number of responses received | Responses included in sample |
|--------------|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Denmark      | 63. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark         | 1                            | 1                            |
| Finland      | 64. Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland         | 4                            | 1                            |
| Iceland      | 65. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland     | 1                            | 0                            |
| Norway       | 66. Church of Norway                               | 9                            | 9                            |
| Norway       | 67. The Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Norway | 1                            | 0                            |
| Sweden       | 68. Church of Sweden                               | 4                            | 2                            |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |  | <b>20 (4%)</b>               | <b>13 (6%)</b>               |

# Latin America and the Caribbean

| Country      | Member Church   | Number of responses received | Responses included in sample |
|--------------|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Argentina    | 69. Evangelical Church of the River Plate                   | 44                           | 34                           |
| Brazil       | 70. Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil | 2                            | 2                            |
| Chile        | 71. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile                    | 9                            | 6                            |
| Chile        | 72. Lutheran Church in Chile                                | 1                            | 1                            |
| Colombia     | 73. Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia                 | 5                            | 4                            |
| Costa Rica   | 74. Lutheran Costa Rican Church                             | 6                            | 5                            |
| El Salvador  | 75. Salvadoran Lutheran Church                              | 1                            | 1                            |
| Honduras     | 76. Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras                   | 1                            | 1                            |
| Mexico       | 77. Mexican Lutheran Church                                 | 1                            | 1                            |
| Nicaragua    | 78. The Nicaraguan Lutheran Church of Faith and Hope        | 2                            | 1                            |
| Peru         | 79. Peruvian Lutheran Evangelical Church                    | 1                            | 1                            |
| Suriname     | 80. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Suriname                 | 2                            | 2                            |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |   | <b>75 (17%)</b>              | <b>58 (28%)</b>              |



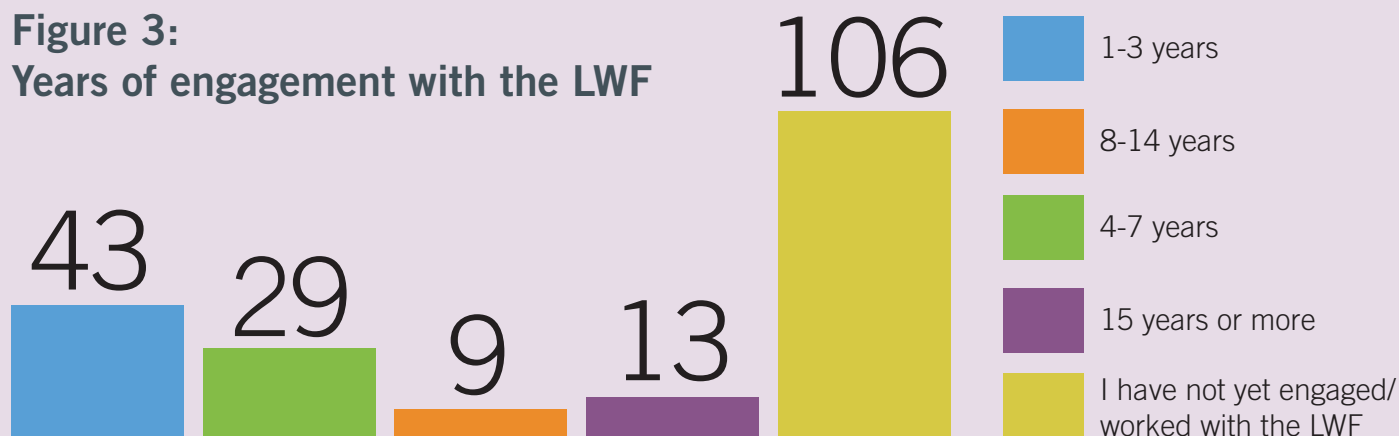
## 4.3 Years of engagement with the LWF

Respondents were asked to indicate how many years they have been engaged/working with the LWF for.

The majority of respondents, 53% indicated that they have not yet engaged/worked with the LWF. 22% have engaged/worked with the LWF for 1-3 years; 15% have been engaged/worked with the LWF for 4-7 years; 5% have engaged/worked with the LWF for 8-14 years, while 7% have been engaged/worked with the LWF for 15 years or more. 2% of the respondents did not answer this question.

It is important to note that more than half (53%) of the survey respondents indicated that they have not yet engaged/worked with the LWF. While due to statement construction and translation into the official LWF languages, this statement may have been understood to mean formal work or employment with the LWF (rather than as intended engagement through various encounters/programmes/events of the LWF), while more than half of the survey respondents have had minimal engagement with the LWF they nevertheless took time to complete the survey in commitment to the vision of meaningful youth participation and leadership in the LWF and the communion of churches.

**Figure 3:**  
**Years of engagement with the LWF**



## 4.4 Nature of involvement/role of respondents in member churches and the communion of churches

Survey respondents were asked to indicate which of the following statements on roles and involvement in church and communion life applied to them.

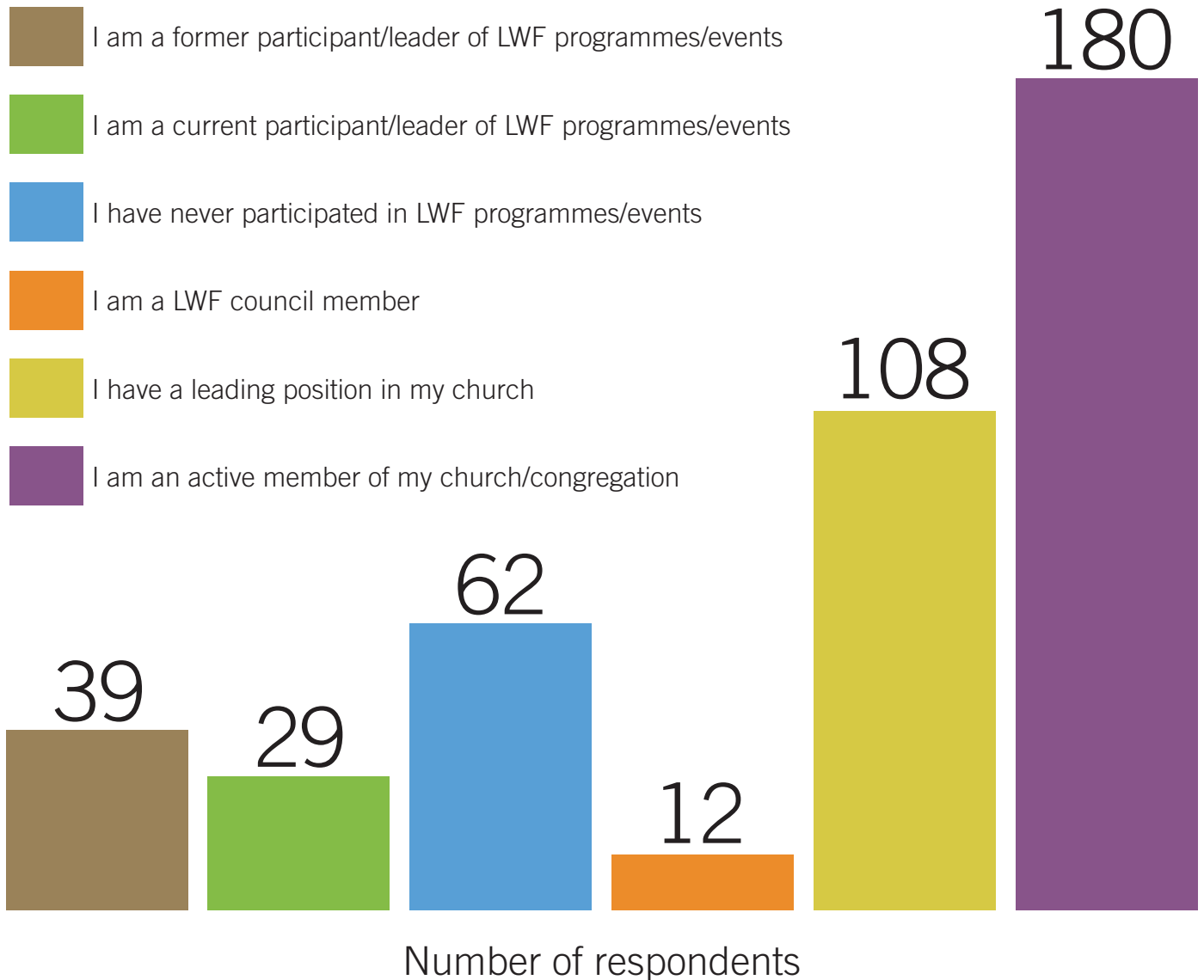
89% indicated that they are an active member of their church/congregation; 53% have a leading position in their church; 6% are LWF council members; 31% have never participated in LWF programmes/events; 14% are current participants/leaders of LWF programmes/events; 19% are former participants/leaders of LWF programmes/events and 1% survey participants did not respond.

89% of respondents, of which a majority are young communion members of 18-30 years, are active members of their church/congregation. Survey responses received can thus

to a large degree be understood to reflect lived experiences of youth participation and leadership in congregations and churches of survey respondents, rather than merely opinion. 53% of survey respondents occupy leading positions in their churches. While one cannot deduce from this response what leadership positions these survey respondents hold, responses to the question 'for me youth leadership is...' point to a broad range of leadership opportunities. While some respondents understand leadership to mean voluntary leading of children's groups or teaching Sunday School, others shared that they are employed as youth coordinator for their church. Survey respondents are participating and leading in different areas and at different levels of church and communion life, as further discussed under section 4.8 and 4.9.



Figure 4: Nature of role/involvement of survey respondents in member churches and the communion of churches



## 4.5 Perspectives on youth participation and leadership

Survey respondents were asked to share their understanding of the meaning of youth participation and leadership. Acknowledging cultural differences in perspectives on youth participation and leadership, as well as the varying, rich resources the communion of churches has to offer, the Youth Desk did not propose a definition of youth participation and leadership.

The definition of 'youth' in the LWF, namely a young person of 18-30 years was shared, after which survey respondents were asked to share their understanding and perspectives on youth participation and leadership in answering the following open questions:

**“For me youth leadership is...?”**

**“For me youth participation is...?”**



The 338 responses received to these two questions point to a reality acknowledged both in theories on youth participation from within the social sciences, as well as the lived realities of young people from which such theories and observations are derived: perspectives on youth participation and leadership vary. Having said this, common perspectives can be identified on a global level. Responses received to the above open questions were coded and grouped under the headings that follow. These responses are briefly summarized below and brought into discussion with definitions on participation and leadership of young people from within the Social Sciences in Section 5.



# 4.51 Youth participation means:

## Index



Female, born after 1995



Female, born between 1983 and 1995



Female, born between 1964 and 1982



Female, born between 1945 and 1963



Male, born after 1995



Male, born between 1983 and 1995



Male, born between 1964 and 1982



Male, born between 1945 and 1963

“I personally don’t see youth participation to be much different than anyone else who participates; everyone has a responsibility to ensure our church runs and that can be done by children, youth, adults, seniors.”



**Male, Canada  
1983–1995**

“Youth participation is the work of the Holy Spirit in, with, and through the church— bringing new ideas and new life to the world.”



**Male, Israel, Jordan,  
Palestine  
1945–1963**

“Being seen as not a “youth member” of a congregation, or Church, but as a member in truth. One whose voice and ideas and values are just as important as adult members (members older than the youth definition).”



**Male, Sweden  
1983–1995**

# Being and Belonging



**Male, Norway  
1983–1995**

Youth of today want to be acknowledged for being who and what they are today. While the necessity of active and meaningful youth participation for the future of the Church was brought to attention with words such as “youth participation is very important for the future of the church; without youth in the churches the churches will be empty in a few decades”, survey respondents clearly stated that although youth are undeniably the future of the Church, they are also its present; “an integral part of Church today”.



**Male  
South Africa  
1945–1963**



**Male  
1945–1963**

The desire to be acknowledged and respected for being who young communion and church members are presently, rather than what they will be in the future, was expressed by a number of respondents with words such as: “youth participation means presence as young church members, because of what they are now” and “being seen not as a ‘youth member’ of a congregation, or Church, but as a member in truth. One whose voice and ideas and values are just as important as those of adult members (members older than the youth definition)”



**Male, Sweden  
1983–1995**

Responses received expressed that young communion and church members want to “have a space” and “feel welcomed” and “at home” in the LWF and its member churches. They want to know and feel that they are included and understood to be “a part of the whole,” rather than



**Female  
Zimbabwe  
1945–1963**



**Female  
Germany  
1983–1995**

being understood to be “a ‘special group’ that is responsible for the fun and for so-called young subjects” or to be “church leaders in waiting”, young communion members request the chance to be full members of their churches.



**Male  
Sierra Leone  
1964–1982**

Youth participation means: “Being one church. Everyone should work together. Youth are not the future, they are the youth of today, and have a say [today] in what should happen in the future of our church”.

Youth participation is a part of “the work of the Holy Spirit in, with and through the Church- bringing new ideas and new life to the world”.



**Male, Israel, Jordan,  
Palestine  
1945–1963**



**Female  
South Africa  
1983–1995**

# Active participation and decision making



**Female, Italy  
After 1995**

Youth participation was furthermore defined to be the active engagement of young people in their churches and societies. Youth participation means “willingly” and “actively participating in congregational activities and the life of the Church”; “engaging in the mission, ministry and life of the church”; “being proactive at all levels, for instance-political, social, religious and economic, irrespective of your age.”



**Male, Canada  
1964–1982**

In addition to meaning “meaningful engagement in substantive ways” “at all levels of church and communion life” youth participation was also defined to mean decision making. A survey respondent explained that for him the “key idea behind youth participation is that youth have a chair at the decision making table of the Church.”



**Male  
1983–1995**

Youth participation means “being an active member of your church, helping, learning and participating in activities and campaigns that happen. It is also to be engaged in places not just [reserved] for the youth, such as councils and meetings of the church generally.”



**Female, America  
1945–1963**



**Male  
Sierra Leone  
1983–1995**

As expressed above, young communion members do not want to be perceived to be merely ‘the future.’ They stress the importance of being actively involved now in decision-making in the communion and their churches, for the future of their churches, since the decisions made today influence the church of the future which young communion and church members will continue to lead.



**Female, Brazil  
1983–1995**

# Having a voice and speaking out



**Male, Malawi  
1983–1995**

Youth participation is “a process where youth exercise their rights.” It is about “allowing young people to take leading and decision making positions and let their voices be heard.”



**Male  
Indonesia  
1983–1995**

In addition to having a voice and being represented, youth participation means “having young people’s voices delivered and heard” It is about “showing perspectives from youth and to include thoughts of the youth to adults.” It is “when young people have an influence on today’s society; when their voices and votes have the same weight as those of a senior”.



**Male  
Botswana  
1983–1995**

Young communion members are aware that having a voice and a right to speak means having responsibility. “It is a huge task to be the ones that take the decisions about how our church is going to be in the future. To ensure that “everyone can feel that their meaning is represented”...it is important that our church has leaders in different ages.” In order to hear and represent diverse young voices of the LWF, youth participation is also “about networking and the exchange of ideas, experiences and what we encounter as youth globally. It is to get a deeper understanding about Christian life and what is happening in the Church around the world. It is voicing issues that affect us as youth eg. substance abuse, teenage pregnancy and lack of visionary leaders...”



**Female, Kenya  
1983–1995**



**Female, Sweden  
1983–1995**



**Female  
Argentina  
1983–1995**



**Female, Norway  
1983–1995**

# Receiving and Contributing



**Female, India  
1983–1995**

Rather than being passive recipients of programs and events facilitated by the LWF communion office on behalf of member churches, and those of the member churches themselves, young communion members understand themselves to be active contributors to the work and life of the LWF and their churches and congregations. A survey respondent expressed this with the following words: “Youth should not be thought of as people who are only at the receiving end but the moral agency of the young people needs to be considered.”



**Male  
Malaysia  
After 1995**

Others shared that youth participation means “taking part in working out the vision” and “helping build the understanding of ministry.” In participating young people can be “an active support to the ‘big picture’ of the church, in terms of voicing ideas, helping to carry out the vision by all means possible. This involves giving our opinions, thoughts or criticism to some points.”



**Male  
Malaysia  
1983–1995**

Youth participation was furthermore defined to be “the most important and inspiring issue in the church, the reason is because we feel the church is always young and has the youth spirit, which is the active spirit that wants to work more and more without getting tired, so it is always alive.”



**Female  
Malaysia  
1945–1963**



**Male, Israel,  
Jordan, Palestine  
1983–1995**

# Growing and Building



**Male**  
**Czech Republic**  
**1964–1982**

Meaningful youth participation enables personal, spiritual and institutional growth and development. "It is a key factor for a sound development of the congregation and the church that the youth participate in their lives in that the youth bring in fresh views into their fellowships, further the youth grow in faith as well as regards their personal maturity." Rather than merely bearing fruit in the lives of young people participating, meaningful youth participation is perceived to be "very useful in Church growth. Youth are people who can make church life relevant to people. They help in giving meaning to worship services. In my congregation the youths are strong pillars in the current construction of our church. Their financial blessing and physical efforts on the church activities are of immense help."



**Male**  
**Sierra Leone**  
**1964–1982**

# Intergenerational sharing and sustainability

As already noted, youth understand themselves, and wish to be understood “to be a part of the whole”, to belong to the communion of churches and their own congregations and churches as full ‘members in truth.’ Thus youth participation is also understood in terms of intergenerational sharing, it is “the opportunity to engage and learn about our faith and our organisation in cooperation with grown-ups, so that we all have a common understanding of where we are heading.”



**Female, Norway  
1983–1995**

Making numerous references to the future of our churches, survey respondents express the importance of, and their desire for, intergenerational sharing for the sustainability of the communion of churches and their congregations and churches. The concern was expressed by a number of respondents, that without youth participation “our churches will be empty in a few decades”



**Male, Norway  
1983–1995**

Some young people regret not being able to find opportunities for inter-generational sharing. This was expressed, for example, through the following words- “youth come together to church and are involved in church activities. Of course, they should attend Sunday worship, and moreover, should find some opportunities to attend events for youth and to have a contact with same generations. In fact, they had better have a contact with other generations, but it is a little difficult for me to find such an opportunity”



**Female, Japan  
1983–1995**

Another respondent offers a solution to this problem, in explaining that youth participation means “that we give young people possibilities to participate in all events, not just segregate them to a youth department.”



**Female, Finland  
1964–1982**



## 4.5.2 Youth leadership means:

Many survey respondents did not make a distinction between youth participation and leadership, often using the words interchangeably, thus some responses to the question ‘What does youth leadership mean to you?’ are already categorized under the headings discussed above. The following responses however refer distinctively to perspectives on youth leadership.



**Male, Sweden  
1983–1995**

“For me personally, it has always taken the form of service, towards both those younger than myself, and those of the same age. Being a role model. It’s also about being given meaningful tasks to do. Sometimes young people are asked to be part of congregational or diocesan activities/events merely because this looks good, or because “it’s nice” to have young people active in a church context. But the youth themselves want to do something meaningful; make a difference. This goes for children as well, of course. They should be seen as valued members of the community, with a will of their own, not as decoration.”



**Male, Canada  
1983–1995**

Youth leadership is “no different than any other form of leadership within the church. There have been attempts made by the LWF and its member churches to encourage youth leadership, which helps to battle the potential exodus of youth from the church, but overall, I see youth leadership to be just as valuable, no more, no less, than that of any other demographics leadership.”



**Male, Israel,  
Jordan, Palestine  
1945–1963**

“Youth leadership is an essential component of the church catholic (universal). We need youth in order to thrive-- we need their questions, their struggles, and their vitality in order to keep the message of the Gospel fresh and invigorating.”

# Service and Guidance



**Male, Kenya  
1983–1995**



**Male, Germany  
1983–1995**



**Male, Suriname  
1945–1963**



**Male  
South Africa  
1964–1982**

Youth leadership is both understood to mean the leading of young people (“when you lead the youth”, “Leading and teaching young people to work together for a brighter future”), as well as the leadership and guidance which young people offer others (“to lead and show the way and the courage which youth have”; “to lead by good example, and offer other young people orientation and help, where I myself too have needed it”)

Some understand youth leadership to mean that “youth take leadership” and “are looked upon for guidance and decision shaping” while “we as adults facilitate and give opportunities for youth to participate in all activities/programs of the church”; while others understand it to mean that “youth are trained in leadership roles to take leadership positions within a ministry of a congregation. For example being trained to be a children’s small group leader or a youth leader (i.e. a leader for teenagers)” to in turn be able to “train other young people to become disciples of Christ.” Youth leadership means “engaging young people to gain the skills or knowledge that are necessary to make them empowered and ready to lead themselves and others.”



**Female  
South Africa  
1983–1995**



**Female, Sweden  
1983–1995**



**Male  
Sierra Leone  
1964–1982**



**Female, Ethiopia  
1983–1995**



**Male  
South Africa  
1964–1982**

Youth leadership is thus understood to mean both when youth are led and “equipped for taking age-appropriate responsibility of leadership within the Body of Christ” as well as when “young people use their God-given gifts to lead, locally, nationally or otherwise, in co-operation with others, irrespective of what age the others are.”



**Male  
1945–1963**



**Male, Malawi  
1983–1995**

Youth leadership was furthermore defined to mean when “youth are able to participate in decision-making that affects the whole congregation/or programme and not only in a narrow context where it is only youth leading youth.” It is “being a leader, role model, friend, adviser, counsellor and loving guide who empowers fellow youth and even adults.”



**Male  
South Africa  
1964–1982**

Youth leadership is understood to include “visible leadership (such as speaking, prayer or music); organizational leadership (administration, coordination), Service (work, action, contributions), and decision making through election to formal governing bodies.”



**Male, Canada  
1964–1982**

# Commitment and shared responsibility



**Female  
Singapore  
1983–1995**

Youth leadership is shared responsibility which requires “a group of people who are willing to serve the church at a level that requires a heart for the youth as well as a higher commitment on top of [general] daily priorities.” The “core of youth leadership is taking responsibility and courage in youth ministry and youth activities; leading by example and understanding the pressing and cutting issues that affect the youth in your member church. As the youth are the backbone of the church they need to be nourished, both physically and spiritually through scripture.”



**Male, Botswana  
1983–1995**



**Female, Brazil  
1983–1995**

A young leader is “someone who loves to work for the church and someone that feels happy helping new youth or persons to begin doing activities and feeling good joining the activities.” Young leaders bring together other young people to “organize own interests and raise these to decision-making bodies of the church.”



**Male, Germany  
1964–1982**



**Male, Malaysia  
1964–1982**

Youth leadership is not just about leading but most importantly about “bringing significant change to people’s lives through his/her commitment and also through his/her leadership team.”

## 4.6 Young men and women in church and the Lutheran Communion of churches

Gender Justice is also a cross-cutting priority for the LWF. Since youth participation and leadership can be impacted both positively and negatively by gender issues, one does well to consider how perspectives on gender justice impact youth participation and leadership. Survey participants were asked to indicate their agreement with the following gender-related statements.



**182** respondents agreed (with an average of 77%) that fairness regarding participation/leadership opportunities for both young men and women is of importance to their church.

**171** respondents agreed (with an average of 67%) that fairness of participation/leadership opportunities for both young men and women are constitutionally ensured in their church.

**180** respondents agreed (with an average of 76%) that the views and opinions on participation and leadership of female youth receive as much attention as those of male youth in their church.

**176** respondents agreed (with an average of 63%) that there are as many young women as men leading in their church.

**164** With an average of 47%, 164 respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that young women receive more opportunity to participate and lead in LWF committees/programs than young men.



## 4.7 Definitions and communication of the nature and function of youth participation and leadership in member churches

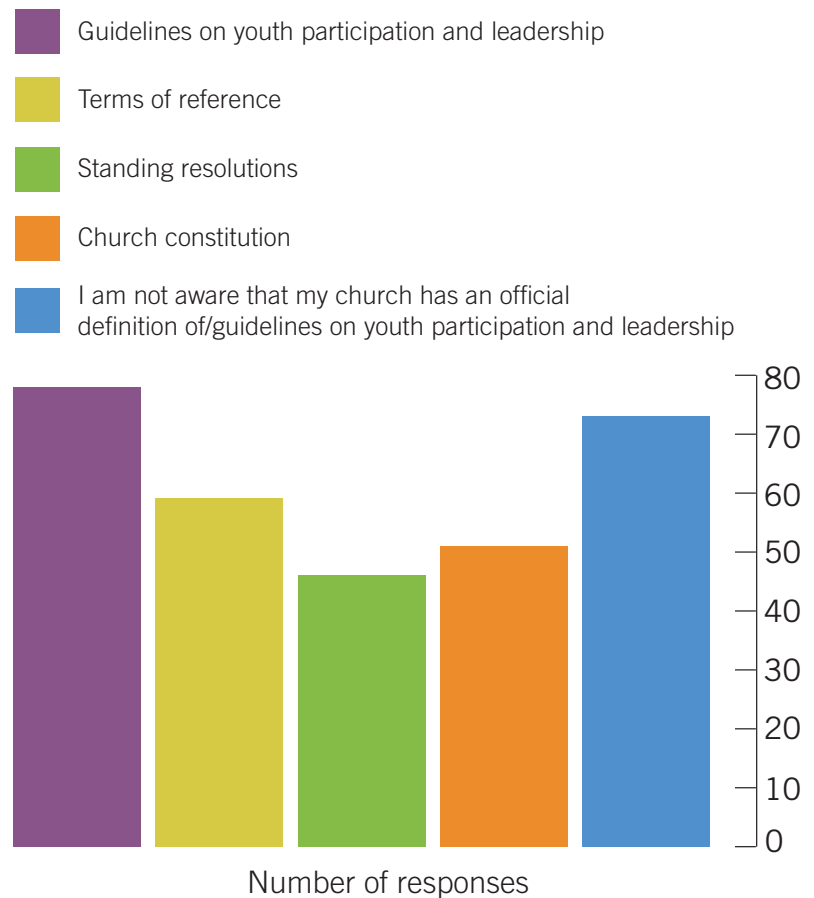
Respondents were asked to indicate through which means their church defines and communicates its understanding of, and commitment to, youth participation and leadership.

As indicated in the graph, **41%** of respondents are aware of guidelines on youth participation and leadership, while **39%** shared that they are not aware that their church has an official definition of/guidelines on youth participation and leadership. **27%** are aware of a commitment to youth participation and leadership in their church ensured through means of the church constitution; **24%** are aware of standing resolutions on youth participation and leadership, while **21%** know of Terms of Reference on youth participation and leadership in their church. **3%** did not answer this question.

While the **39%** of respondents indicating that they are not aware that their church has an official definition/guidelines on youth participation and leadership, do not necessarily point to an absence of such definitions/guidelines, they do prompt the question why, if such definitions/guidelines are available, they are not better communicated and known?

**Figure 5:**  
**Definitions and communication of the nature and function of youth participation and leadership in member churches.**

*\*Total number of respondents to this question is 188*



## 4.8 Levels at which young people are participating and leading

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the validity of the following statements at both congregational and national/synod level, considering the statements in view of different levels of youth participation and leadership.

Since survey respondents could indicate the validity of the following statements at either congregational level, or national level, or if applicable, both. The number of total responses to each statement vary.

**80%** indicated that youth are listened to at congregational level, **66%** indicated this to be true at national/synod level. **8%** did not respond.

**74%** indicated that youth are supported in sharing their views at congregational level; **55%** indicated this to be true at national/synod level. **11%** did not respond.

**64%** indicated that the opinions and views of youth are taken into account in decision-making processes; **54%** indicated this to be true at national/synod level. **20%** did not respond.

**52%** indicated that youth are actively involved in decision-making processes at congregational level; **41%** indicated this to be true at national/synod level. **35%** did not respond.

**55%** indicated that youth share responsibility for decision-making processes at congregational level; **47%** indicated this to be true at national/synod level. **30%** did not respond.

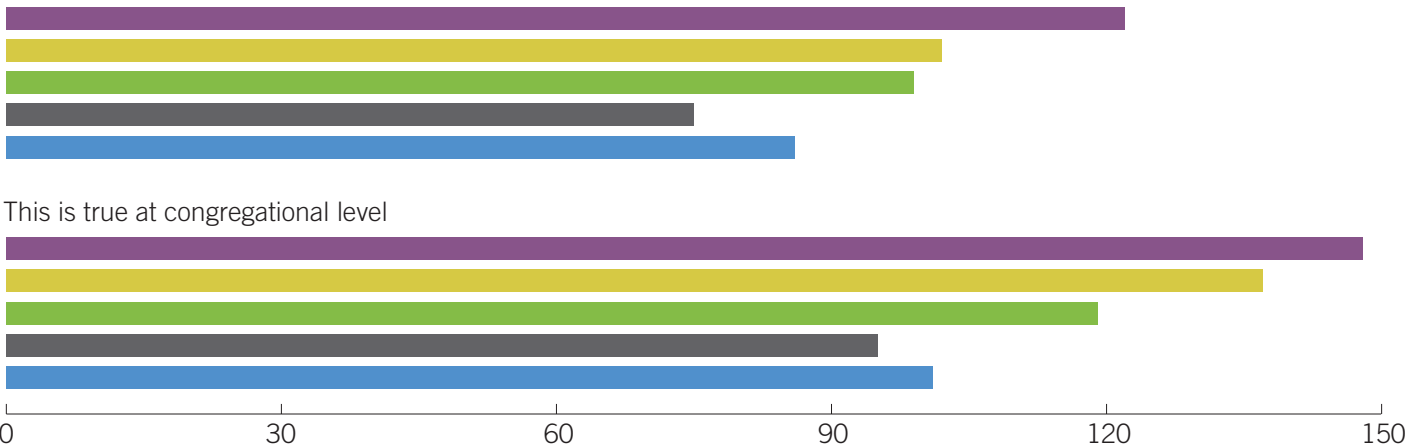
In the graph above, confidence in the various statements decreases from the first statement through to the last, while conversely the number of respondents not answering each statement increases. The total number of responses received to the statements at national/synod level are also less for each statement than as indicated at congregational level. While a possible reason for this may be that the majority of survey respondents answering this question indicated that they are active members of their congregation (**80%** of survey respondents), and not necessarily holding leadership positions may respond in terms of their experience at congregational rather than at governance level, these responses may however also point to lack of opportunity for some young people to participate and/or lead at national/synod level, thus not being able to respond from that



### Figure 6: Levels at which young people are participating and leading

*\*The total number of respondents to this question is 184*

This is true at national/synod level



- Youth are listened to
- Youth are supported in sharing their views and concerns regarding youth participation and leadership
- Youth share responsibility for decision-making processes
- Youth are actively involved in decision-making processes
- The opinions and views of youth are taken into account in decision-making processes

## 4.9 Areas in which youth are participating and/or leading?

Respondents were asked in which capacities and how frequently youth participate or lead, or both participate and lead in their churches and the Lutheran Communion of Churches. They were asked to only indicate applicable options.

**79%** indicated that youth are participating; and **81%** indicated that youth are leading youth specific programs/events. **4%** did not respond.

**85%** indicated that youth are participating; and **50%** indicated that youth are leading worship services and other congregational programs/events. **9%** did not respond.

**77%** indicated that youth are participating; and **46%** indicated that youth are leading youth council/other decision-making/governing bodies of their church. **16%** did not respond.

**63%** indicated that youth are participating in; and **26%** indicated that youth are leading delegations to LWF programs/events. **33%** did not respond.

**63%** indicated that youth are participating; and **22%** indicated that youth are leading various programs/events of the LWF. **36%** did not respond.

**76%** indicated that youth are participating; and **45%** indicated that youth are leading capacity development/leadership training programs of their church. **18%** did not respond.

**52%** indicated that youth are participating; and **23%** indicated that youth are leading capacity development/leadership training programs of the LWF. **45%** did not respond.

**67%** indicated that youth are participating; and **31%** indicated that youth are leading ecumenical or inter-religious programs of their church/the LWF. **31%** did not respond.

In the graph, youth are shown to be participating and leading in various areas of church and communion life. While respondent's experience and understand young people to almost equally both participate in and lead youth specific programs and events, it is indicated that youth are experienced and understood to predominantly participate, rather than lead, in other areas of church and communion life.

It is interesting to consider these responses in view of the definitions of youth participation and leadership received. As noted in Section 4.5, survey respondents often used the words participation and leadership interchangeably when defining the meaning of youth participation and leadership. While this could mean that some respondents do not wish to differentiate

between participation and leadership in defining the meaning of youth participation and leadership, responses to the above question perhaps more adequately represent the lived experience of young people in their churches and communities.

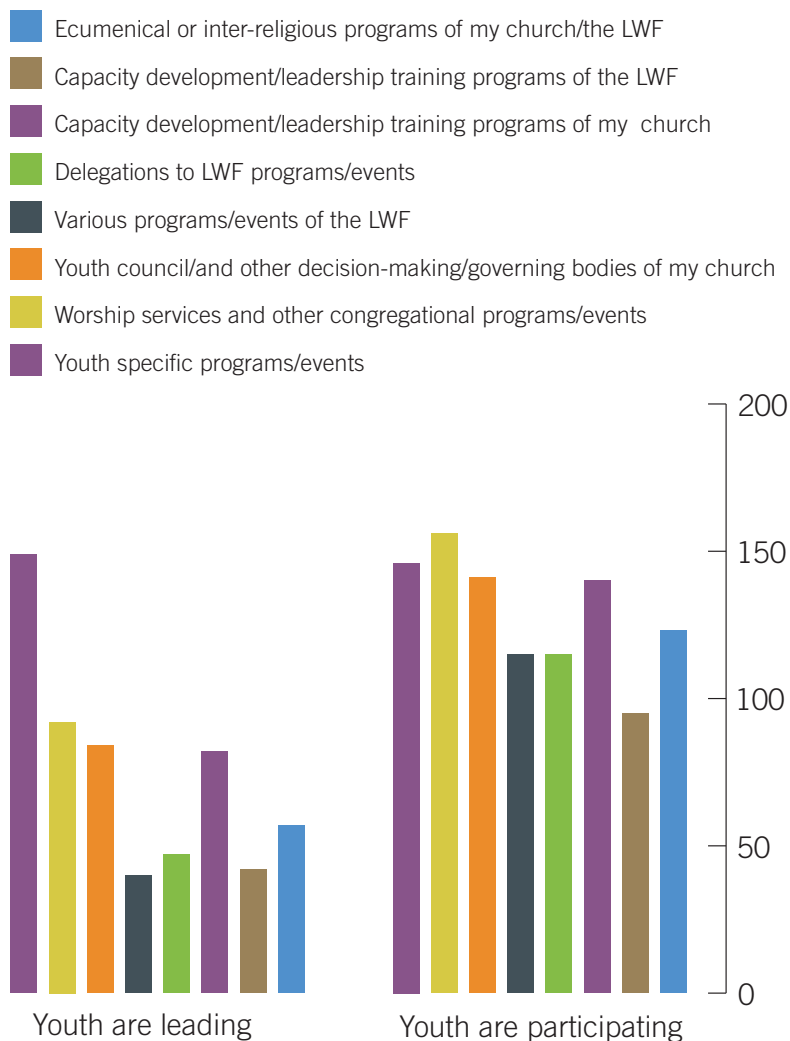
Similar to responses received to the question discussed in 4.8, respondents indicate youth to both participate and lead more frequently at congregational level, than at national/synod level, or within the Communion of Churches. This response may relate to the fact that opportunities to participate and lead at congregational level are more frequently available than at national/synod level or in LWF programmes and events. Furthermore, since **53%** of respondents indicated that they have not yet engaged/worked with the LWF, and **31%** of respondents indicated that they have never participated in LWF programmes or events, these respondents may not be aware of the participation and leadership of young people in LWF programs and events, as they themselves have not yet had an opportunity to participate in LWF programs or events.

This being true, the active participation and leadership of young people in the LWF must become even more visible.

**Figure 7:**

**Areas in which youth are participating and/or leading**

*\*The total number of respondents to this question is 184*



## 4.10 What encourages/discourages meaningful youth participation and leadership in your church?

Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with the following possible reasons for youth participation/leadership or lack of youth participation/leadership in their churches. A total number of 184 respondents answered this question.

With an average of **73%**, 175 respondents agree that youth participation/leadership would improve if more youth were present and interested in participating/leading in their churches. **5%** of survey participants did not respond.

“One of the biggest problems we have is youth participation. There are only a few young people left. It is not encouraging for them to see so very few other young people.”

“Some youth do not make themselves available for the work of the church, some are busy with school or work and some youth do not want to volunteer in the church”.

With an average of **75%**, 178 respondents agree that youth participation/leadership would improve if more adults understood youth to be competent leaders and the best advocates and experts of their own causes. **3%** of survey participants did not respond.

“If youth were taken seriously on a synod level and there was not just talk talk talk and no action, then youth participation and leadership would increase. The older generation is clinging to traditions which exclude youth participation and leadership.”

“Acknowledgement and appreciation probably encourage youth participation and leadership. Realizing that young people often can't seriously influence decision-making is frustrating and inhibiting.”

With an average of **64%**, 174 respondents agree that youth participation/leadership would improve if greater financial commitments were made to enable regular/on-going participation/leadership of youth of their church. **5%** of survey participants did not respond.



**Female**  
**Netherlands**  
**1945–1963**



**Male, Liberia**  
**1964–1982**



**Male**  
**South Africa**  
**1964–1982**



**Female, Germany**  
**1983–1995**

With an average of **67%**, 171 respondents agree that youth participation/leadership would improve if roles and responsibilities of youth in leadership positions were more adequately explained, using language easily understood by youth. **7%** of survey participants did not respond.

With an average of **68%**, 174 respondents agree that youth participation/leadership would improve if more information and resources on youth participation/leadership for youth and adults working with youth were provided. **5%** of survey participants did not respond.

With an average of **69%**, 175 respondents agree that youth participation/leadership would improve if more capacity development/ training opportunities for youth and adults working with youth were offered. **5%** of survey participants did not respond.

With an average of **72%**, 175 respondents agreed that youth participation/leadership would improve if youth received on-going support and training for leadership at governance and decision making level. **5%** of survey participants did not respond.

With an average of **73%**, 175 respondents agreed that youth participation/leadership would improve if youth were shown appreciation, and were provided incentives for participation/leadership (acknowledgement of participation and leadership/certification for capacity development/leadership training etc...) **5%** of survey participants did not respond.

“Adults having power in congregations should appreciate youth work and should support them instead of finding mistakes only. They should support and appreciate youth leaders also instead of ‘pulling their legs’.”

“I think one of the reasons for the lack of participation of young people is the disinterest with which adults in my congregation treat us.”

“One must not forget to create these spaces that include the participation of many young people.”

With an average of **69%** 172 respondents agreed that youth participation/leadership would improve if their church’s recruitment policy provided for greater employment/advancement opportunities for young leaders of their church. **7%** of survey participants did not respond.



**Female, India  
1983–1995**



**Female, India  
1983–1995**



**Female, Argentina  
1983–1995**

Survey respondents agreed that youth participation and leadership in churches and the Communion of Churches would improve if all of the above comments received further attention. Not excluding other possible reasons for active and meaningful participation and leadership of young people, or lack of such, it is interesting to note that the three reasons with the highest average of agreement are related to ideological concerns in youth participation and leadership. Respondents indicate with most agreement that ‘youth participation/leadership would improve if more adults understood youth to be competent leaders and the best advocates and experts of their own causes’; if more youth were present and interested in participating/leading in their churches; and if youth were shown appreciation, and were provided incentives for participation/leadership (eg: acknowledgement of participation and leadership/certification for capacity development/leadership training etc...). While external factors that hinder participation, such as other commitments (school, work, sports, cultural) must be taken into consideration, reading these responses in relation to those received to the questions on the meaning of youth participation and leadership (see 6.5), as well as additional comments and theories on the participation of young people from within the social sciences, one does well to consider how particular perspectives on young people influence, both positively and negatively, the active and meaningful participation and leadership of young people in their churches and communities.

The following questions come to mind (and were raised by survey respondents), and help lead to a deeper understanding of possible reasons for active and meaningful participation and leadership, or a lack thereof, of young people in our churches and communities.

Would young people be more present and interested in participating in church life and activities if they experienced a deeper sense of belonging and appreciation for their being, voice and contributions; or is their absence from church primarily related to external factors such as school, work or family commitments?

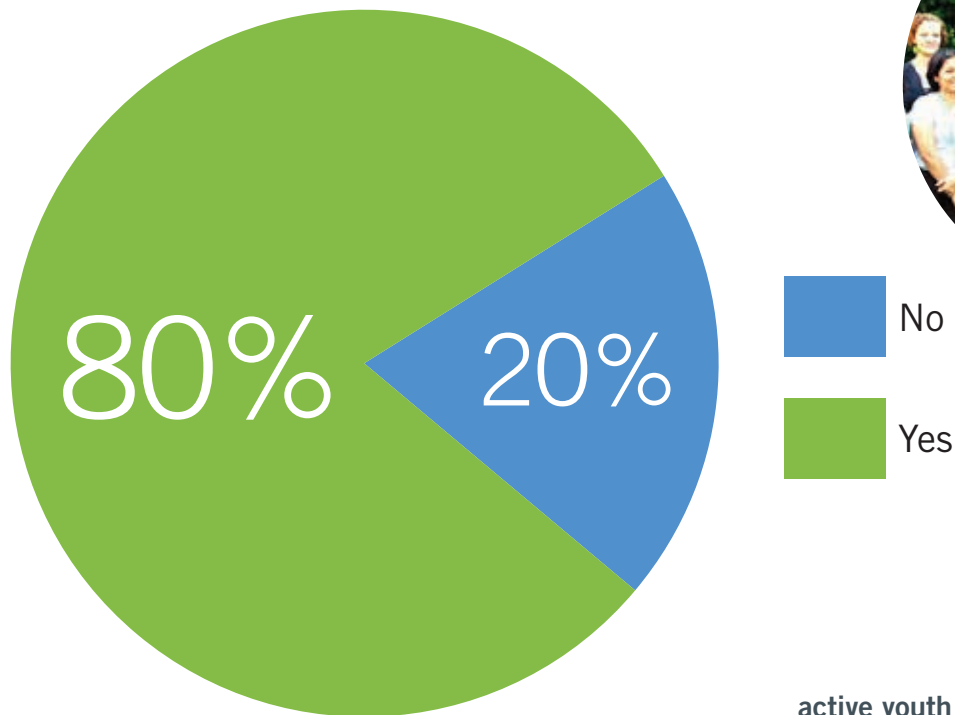
Could the remuneration of leadership and services offered by young people both enable more participation, as well as express desired appreciation and acknowledgement of young people for their contributions to church and communion life? Would young people participate and engage more if they experienced their contributions to be appreciated, taken seriously, acted upon to bear fruits in their church community?

Might it be of benefit to both young and older church and communion members to consider inter-generational sharing and learning to be an important component of capacity development/training relating to the participation and leadership of young people?

## 4.11 Networking and communication

Survey participants were asked whether active youth networks have been established in their church, and to indicate modes and frequency of communication/networking of youth of their churches.

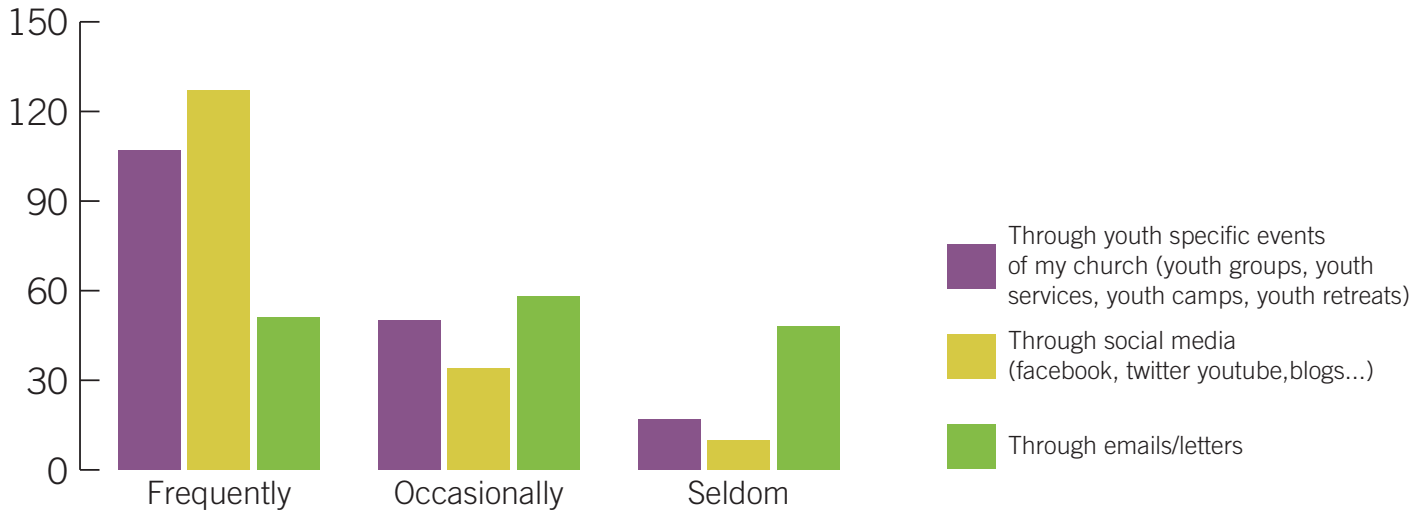
Regarding active youth networks:



**Figure 8: Indication of whether active youth networks have been established**  
*\*The total number of respondents to this question is 183*

**80%** indicated that active youth networks have been established in their church, while **20%** indicated that such networks had not yet been established in their church. **1%** did not respond.

With regards to modes and frequency of communication/networking of youth:



**Figure 9: Modes and frequency of communication/networking of youth**  
 \*The total number of respondents to this question are 182

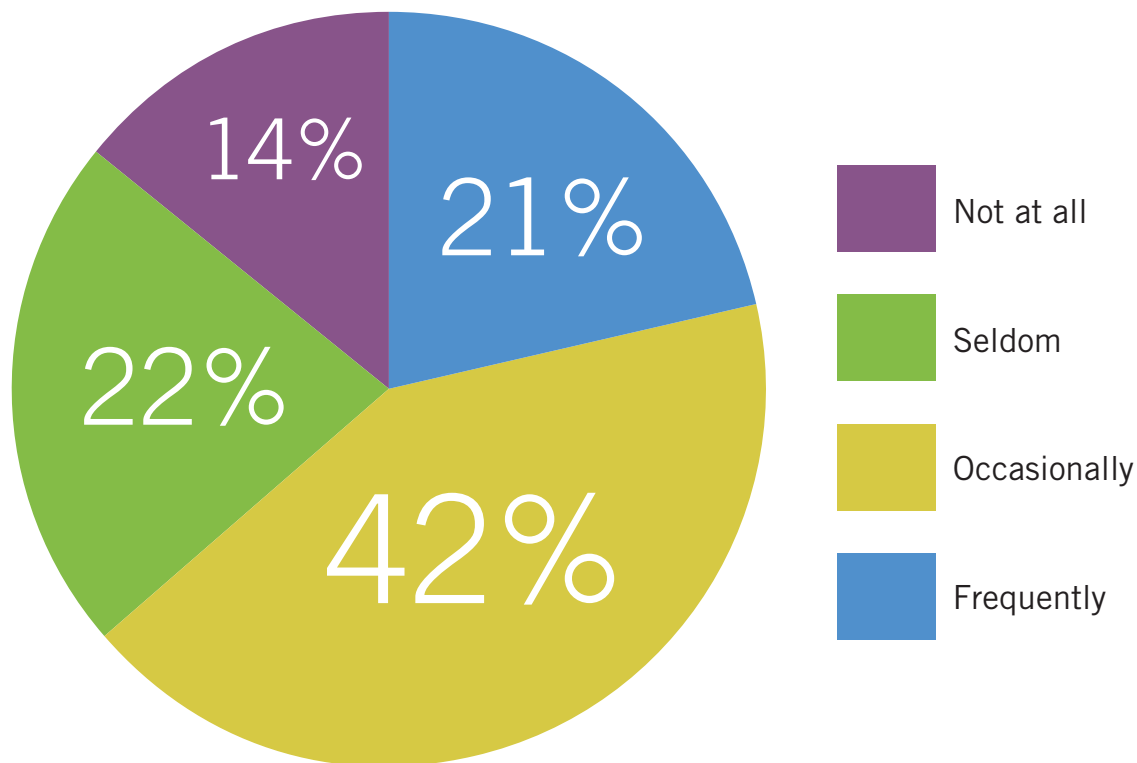
**59%** of 176 respondents indicated that youth frequently network/communicate through youth- specific events of my church (youth groups, youth services, youth camps, youth retreats...), **27%** indicated that this is true occasionally; **9%** indicated this to be true seldom; **1%** indicated that youth do not network/communicate through youth specific events of their church at all. **3%** did not respond.

A majority of **70%** of 178 respondents indicated that youth frequently communicate via social media (Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, blogs etc...); **19%** said this to be true occasionally; **5%** said this to be true seldom, and **4%** said this is not the case at all. **2%** did not respond.

**28%** of 174 respondents indicated that youth communicate/network through emails/letters frequently; **32%** said this to be true occasionally; **26%** indicated that youth use this mode of communication seldom; **9%** indicated that this is not at all true. **4%** did not respond.



Survey respondents were asked how frequently, in their opinion, youth of their church make use of available youth networks to share knowledge and resources gained through leadership training/capacity development programs and engagement in LWF programs/events.



**Figure 10: Frequency with which youth make use of available youth networks to share knowledge and resources gained through leadership training/capacity development programs and engagement in LWF programs/events**

**21%** of 177 respondents indicated this to be true frequently; **42%** indicated this to be true occasionally. **22%** indicated this to be true seldom; **14%** said this was not the case at all. 3% did not answer this question.



# 5. Discussion

While it is possible to identify common understandings and perspectives on youth participation and leadership on a global level, definitions are culturally specific and vary. Thus a variety of definitions and perspectives on youth participation and leadership exist, both within the social sciences and the various contexts from which the social sciences draw.

## 5.1 The age of ‘youth’

The LWF defines ‘youth’ to be those young communion members between the ages of 18-30 years. Responses received to the questions “For me youth participation is...?”; “For me youth leadership is...?”, as well as some comments on age distinctions received, however indicate that in various contexts and in many churches the term ‘youth’ is also used to refer to church members younger than 18 years. In this case, these members are defined both to be youth and children (according to the United Nations definition by which a young person until the age of 18 is considered to be a child). This dynamic must be kept in mind when considering issues of youth participation and leadership. For the purpose of this survey and report however, youth are understood to be young communion members between the ages of 18-30 years, while both some survey respondents, as well as resources from within the social sciences consulted, often refer to young people below the age of 18 when speaking of youth.

## 5.2 Social or political participation?

Different ‘strands of thinking’ about or ideologies on, the nature and function of the participation of young people have been identified. Sociologists explain that one can “distinguish two ways of looking at what goes on when (...) young people participate: one that sees it in terms of social relations and another which sees it in terms of political relations. There is a discourse of (...) participation that is predominantly social-that speaks of networks, of inclusion, of (...) relations [between adults and young people], and of the opportunities for social connection that participatory practice can create. Alongside this there is an alternative discourse that is more or less overtly political – that speaks of power, and challenge and change.”<sup>43</sup>

Both social and political discourses are of importance to the youth of the LWF. This is expressed in comments received from survey respondents. Young communion members want to ensure that their voices and views are represented and respected at the decision-making level in their churches and communities. In those contexts where such representation has not yet been achieved, the discourse of participation may

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<sup>43</sup> Thomas, N. (2007). Towards a theory of children's participation, *International Journal of children's rights* 15, p.206.

be more political than social. Conversely, in contexts where such representation has been achieved, the discourse may focus more on ‘networks, inclusion, relations (between adults and young people)...’ Furthermore while these alternative discourses may “relate to different versions of participatory practice...they may also be describing the same practice from different perspectives.”<sup>44</sup>

## 5.3 Models and Pathways to Participation

Various typographies of participation have been developed to evaluate the participation of young people in schools and organizations. These models help young people and adults working with them, evaluate their own perspectives and practices in participation.

The most well-known of these models is Roger Hart’s ‘ladder of participation’ (1992), which is an adaptation of Arnstein’s ‘Eight rungs on the ladder of citizen participation’ (1969).

As seen on the next page, Hart classifies participation of young people in the following way: the first three rungs of the ladder represent ‘Non-Participation’ (Manipulation; Decoration; Tokenism). Climbing the ladder of participation young people are either ‘assigned, but informed’ or ‘consulted, and informed’. Towards the top of the ladder, while adults initiate decisions, youth share in the decision-making process. If one further continues climbing the ladder of participation one finds ‘youth initiated and directed’ activities, and on the highest rung ‘youth initiated and shared decisions with adults.’

While Hart’s model was to serve more as a rhetorical device, it became a model for practice, and a focus in discussions on the participation of young people. One main critique of the use of Hart’s ‘ladder of participation’ as a model, made both by Treseder (1997), and Hart himself (1992), is that “different kinds of participatory activities and relationships are appropriate to different settings and circumstances, and practitioners (or...young people) should not feel that they are in some way failing when they work in ways that involve lesser degrees of power or engagement, or that the aim in every situation should be to achieve the highest possible level of ‘[youth]-directedness’ or ‘joint-directedness’.”<sup>45</sup>

The resolution on inclusiveness the Lutheran World Federation adopted at the 11th Assembly, 2010, in Stuttgart offers guidance in establishing what kind of participatory activity and relationship is appropriate to different settings and circumstances in the communion. Regarding generational balance the Assembly voted to adopt following LWF principles of inclusivity: “the LWF Assembly, Council, Officers and all other committees and task forces, including at all regional levels, shall be composed of at least twenty percent young people under the age of thirty at the time of the first meeting of the body to which they have been appointed. Regional balance shall be respected.”<sup>46</sup> Furthermore “if there is more than one youth representative on a governing body, gender balance among the youth representatives shall be respected on all regional levels. This basic principle shall apply to all

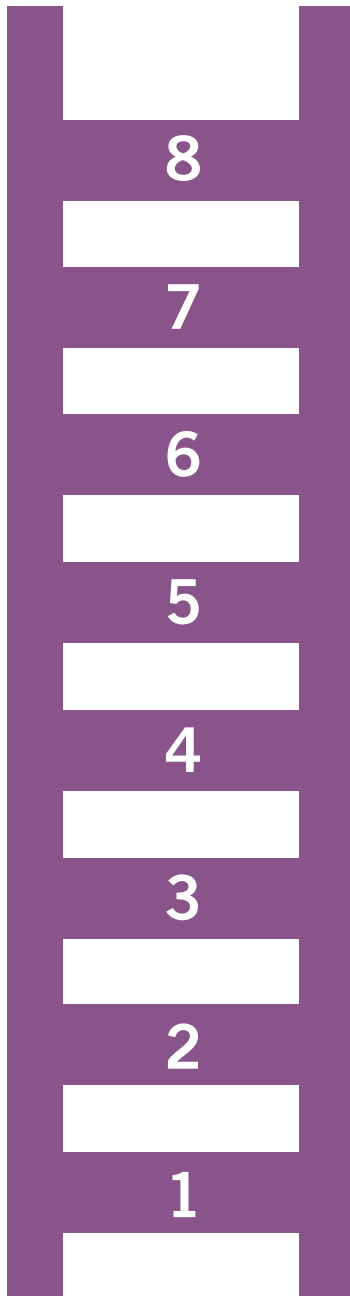
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45 Thomas, N. (2007). Towards a theory of children’s participation, *International Journal of children’s rights* 15, p.205.

46 The Lutheran World Federation (ed.), Stuttgart 2010. Give us today our daily bread: LWF Eleventh Assembly Official Report, (Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation, 2010), p.61.

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44 Ibid.



**RUNG 8** Youth initiated shared decisions with adults: Youth-led activities, in which decision making is shared between youth and adults working as equal partners.

**RUNG 7** Youth initiated and directed: Youth-led activities with little input from adults.

**RUNG 6** Adult initiated shared decisions with youth: Adult-led activities, in which decisions making is shared with youth.

**RUNG 5** Consulted and informed: Adult-led activities, in which youth are consulted and informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of adult decisions.

**RUNG 4** Assigned, but informed: Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, decision-making process, and have a role.

**RUNG 3** Tokenism: Adult led activities, in which youth may be consulted with minimal opportunities for feedback.

**RUNG 2** Decoration: Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, but have no input in how they are planned.

**RUNG 1** Manipulation: Adult-led activities, in which youth do as directed without understanding of the purpose for the activities.

**Figure 11: Hart's Ladder of participation adapted from Hart, R. (1992). Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship. Florence: Unicef Innocenti Research Centre**

activities of the LWF communion office.”<sup>47</sup> Member churches were encouraged to adopt similar measures and principles of inclusive representation, so as “to ensure full participation in their respective contexts.”<sup>48</sup>

Harry Shier, drawing on Hart’s ‘ladder of participation,’ developed what he called ‘Pathways to Participation.’ Shier’s modified ladder which provides “graduated series of pathways to participation” is found to be useful by practitioners and managers in helping them think about strategies to develop and strengthen organisational practice in participation.<sup>49</sup>

Survey respondents were asked to indicate, using the levels of participation which Shier identifies, levels at which young people are participating and leading at both congregational and national/synod level in their churches. (see 4.8)

As noted at 4.8, it is interesting to see that confidence in the statements related to each level of participation decreases as one moves up the levels from youth being listened to, to youth sharing responsibility for decision-making processes. What does this tell us about experiences of participation and leadership of young people at both congregational and national/synod level?

The purpose of using such models of participation as a tool is not to force participation at any particular level, but to enable self-evaluation and the identifying of steps that may need to be taken to increase the level of young people’s participation. In reality, it is unlikely that both adults and young people will position themselves at the same level, even within the same groups of people working together in the same organizations. This should not be understood to mean failure, or lack of participation, but rather serve as an encouragement to further continue together along the ‘pathways to participation’ to more meaningful participation.<sup>50</sup>

Shier has not added ‘levels of non-participation’ (‘manipulation’, ‘decoration’, and ‘tokenism’) to his model, as found on Hart’s ladder. Thus one cannot identify ‘false types of participation’ using Shier’s model, as one can using Hart’s model. Shier instead introduces three stages of commitment at each level of participation, namely ‘openings, opportunities and obligations’.<sup>51</sup> These three stages of commitment, and the accompanying questions which Shier proposes, are helpful in identifying possible next steps to take in our congregations to ensure that “*young people have a place and a voice in all aspects of church and communion life, including decision making and leadership*”.<sup>52</sup>

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47 The Lutheran World Federation (ed.), Stuttgart 2010. Give us today our daily bread: LWF Eleventh Assembly Official Report, (Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation, 2010), p.62.

48 The Lutheran World Federation (ed.), Stuttgart 2010. Give us today our daily bread: LWF Eleventh Assembly Official Report, (Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation, 2010), p.61.

49 Thomas, N. (2007). Towards a theory of children’s participation, International Journal of children’s rights 15, p.205.

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50 Shier, H. (2006) Pathways to Participation Revisited retrieved from: [http://www.harryshier.comxa.com/docs/Shier-Pathways\\_to\\_Participation\\_Revisited\\_NZ2006.pdf](http://www.harryshier.comxa.com/docs/Shier-Pathways_to_Participation_Revisited_NZ2006.pdf), p.16-18.

51 Ibid., 17.

52 The Lutheran World Federation (2011). LWF Strategy 2012-2017. The LWF Communion- with Passion for the Church and for the World, p.22.

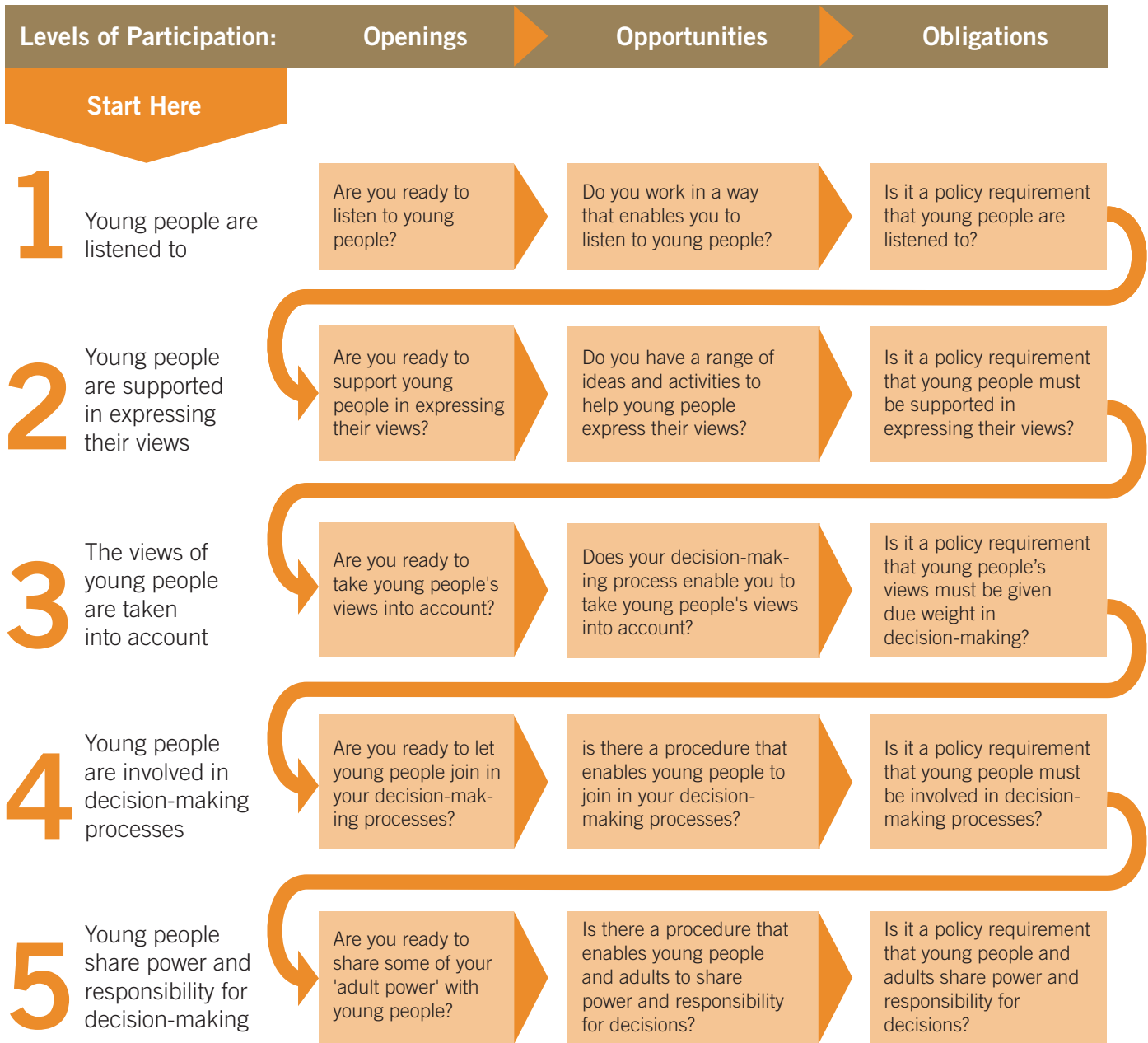


Figure 12: Harry Shier (2001): Pathways to participation: Openings, Opportunities and Obligations.

## 5.4 Openings, opportunities and obligations

Shier explains that “the first stage at each level is when an opening occurs”.<sup>53</sup> An opening is understood to mean when interest and willingness is expressed to “make a personal commitment or statement of intention to work in a certain way”.<sup>54</sup> Shier proposes asking the following questions at each level of participation to ascertain such commitment: “Are you ready to listen to [young people]? Are you ready to support [young people] in expressing their views? Are you ready to take [young people’s] views into account? Are you ready to let [young people] join in your decision-making processes? Are you ready to share some of your ‘adult power’ with [young people]?”.<sup>55</sup>

The second stage is when an opportunity is available that makes it possible to live out the above commitments. This could mean that necessary resources, professional skills and knowledge are made available for meaningful participation. The following questions are helpful to ask in identifying opportunities to live the above commitments: “Do you work in a way that enables you to listen to [young people]? Do you have a range of ideas and activities to help [young people] express their views? Does your decision-making process enable you to take [young people’s] views into account? Is there a procedure that enables [young people] to join in decision-

*making processes? Is there a procedure that enables [young people] and adults to share power and responsibility for decisions?”.*<sup>56</sup>

The third and final stage is “when consensus establishes an obligation, and this becomes the agreed policy” on participation.<sup>57</sup> Concerning obligations one must ask the following question at each level: “Is it a policy requirement that [young people] are listened to? Is it a policy requirement that [young people] must be supported in expressing their views? Is it a policy requirement that [young people’s] views must be given due weight in decision-making? Is it a policy requirement that [young people] must be involved in decision-making processes? Is it a policy requirement that [young people] and adults share power and responsibility for decisions?”.<sup>58</sup>

Using the ladder analogy, Shier explains that “sometimes we use a ladder to climb to the top and move on, but very often we just want to get to a rung some way up so as to work at the correct height for the job we are doing, for example painting a window frame. This may be only half-way up, but if this is the right height for the job in hand, it would be counter-productive to climb higher. Without the ladder however, it would be impossible to climb to the appropriate height for the job. A set of rungs, however well-crafted, is of little use without the frame that connects them together”.<sup>59</sup>

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53 Shier, H. (2006) Pathways to Participation Revisited retrieved from: [http://www.harryshier.comxa.com/docs/Shier-Pathways\\_to\\_Participation\\_Revisited\\_NZ2006.pdf](http://www.harryshier.comxa.com/docs/Shier-Pathways_to_Participation_Revisited_NZ2006.pdf), p.17.

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid.

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56 Ibid

57 Ibid

58 Ibid

59 Ibid., 18.



## 5.5 Connecting perspectives on participation and leadership

If we consider *'the frame that connects the rungs of participation together'* to be the shared understanding and cross-cutting priority of youth participation and leadership which ensures that *"young people have a place and a voice in all aspects of church and communion life, including decision making and leadership"*<sup>60</sup>, what changes in perspectives on youth participation and leadership might we have to consider to enable more meaningful participation and leadership of young people in our churches and the communion of churches?

Survey respondents have provided some answers to this question, and echo some of what is reflected within contemporary discourses on the participation of young people. Noted below are considerations brought to attention numerous times by survey respondents:

- ▶ Young people are not only the future of the church, they are already its present, and wish to be acknowledged as such. It follows that the purpose of capacity and leadership training for young people be understood not merely in terms of capacity development for the future (considering young people to be 'future church leaders in the making'), but the strengthening and further equipping of young people in their talents and skills, some of which they already employ for leadership roles which they already occupy.

"The understanding that youth are the 'Present' and not the 'Future' is lacking, and a lack of respect or faith in the youth to be capable and efficient is seen widely".

"Many youth are put off by what they see as archaic/irrelevant/old-fashioned/boring programmes such as the forms of Sunday services etc. Often the youth programmes are seen by the congregation to be a "holding tank" until the youth are "mature" enough to see the value in the way the "real" church, i.e the adults are doing things."



**Male, India  
1964–1982**



**Male  
South Africa  
1964–1982**

<sup>60</sup> The Lutheran World Federation (2011). LWF Strategy 2012-2017. The LWF Communion- with Passion for the Church and for the World, p.22.

“Sometimes youth are not given responsibility or delegations of authority in the church. Then most youth leave their mother church to look for where they can be accommodated and [are given] opportunity to participate in the church activities.”

- ▶ The expectation that young people would work voluntarily without consideration of compensation for their time and efforts was critiqued by some survey respondents as being one reason for a lack of meaningful youth participation and leadership in churches. Since young people offer valuable services and work of benefit to churches and the communion of churches, rather than taking for granted that they always offer these services and talents voluntarily and freely, remuneration for services offered and payment of costs incurred for such services should be considered. This applies both to young people and those working with them. Furthermore, since young people are an integral part of church and communion life, a budget should be allocated for the work of and with young people in churches.

“Youth participation and leadership would improve if “more full-time employees (and pastors) would be employed who bring along experience in modern youth work”

“Young people would participate more in youth leadership and participation, if there were more full-time employees in children’s and youth work, so that the hours of work needed to promote such engagement would be adequately covered.”

- ▶ Young communion members must be interested in participating and leading in their churches and the communion of churches, and be willing to take on responsibility. Survey respondents noted that in addition to ideological and external factors and time constraints that hinder active and meaningful youth participation and leadership, while many are eager to do so, others are not interested in participating or taking on leadership responsibilities in their churches. In respect of many deliberations made, and opportunities provided for young people to be active participants and leaders in their churches and the communion of churches, an attitude of gratitude and willingness to participate meaningfully should be fostered. Only when both older and young church and communion members equally engage in issues of youth participation and leadership can inter-generational sharing and learning be meaningful.



**Male, Denmark  
1964–1982**



**Male, Italy  
1945–1963**



**Male, Germany  
1983–1995**

“Some youths do not make themselves available for the work of the church. Some are busy with school or work, and some youth do not want to volunteer in the church.”



**Male, Liberia  
1964–1982**

“There needs to be more interest of young people for leadership.”

- ▶ Young people are competent to express their views, opinions and hopes regarding the present and future of the church, and to make and follow through on decisions relating to these. While they are concerned about and represent their generational cohort, they also speak on behalf of their churches and the communion of churches at large. It follows that young people want to be understood to be an integral part of church and communion life today, and want to be accepted and respected as full members in truth, rather than be understood to be responsible merely for ‘youth issues’ and be segregated to a youth department.



**Female  
Costa Rica  
1983–1995**

“I feel that youth are always provided a “token” role in leadership and very seldom are actually valued for their opinions and abilities. Overall, with my experiences I have had within [my church] and the LWF, I find that people take me seriously for what I have to say as a delegate, and not a “youth delegate”. Making this distinction is important as I think that many youth get discouraged when the Church says “we value youth and your ideas” but then don’t give us full clout when we provide it. In my case, people take me seriously because I have had a large number of opportunities with the LWF, but I would say I am an exception, not the rule.”



**Male, Canada  
1983–1995**

“Church could be open to the concerns and interests of young people, and try understand the world of young people, rather than just expect the youth to implement today what was decided 30/40 years ago.”



**Female, Austria  
1964–1982**

# Conclusion

This report presents shared perspectives on, and contemporary experiences in, youth participation and leadership in the LWF and member churches of the Lutheran communion of churches.

Global perspectives and opinions of both young and older communion members from 80 member churches on the participation and leadership of young people in church and society are presented.

The history of youth participation and leadership at the governance level in the LWF is traced and 'areas' and 'levels' of youth participation and leadership in churches and the communion of churches explored. Factors that encourage meaningful participation and leadership, or lead to a lack of such are addressed.

Diversity and cultural specificity of definitions and perspectives on youth participation and leadership are acknowledged, while common and shared perspectives present the global, 'bigger-picture' of youth participation and leadership in the LWF and LWF member churches. Changes in perspectives on youth participation and leadership that need to be considered to further enable good practices in participation are discussed.

In dialogue with the social sciences, and considering the 'ladder of participation' analogy, we note that while certain tools

are needed to do specific jobs, each of us may use these tools in slightly different ways to achieve a desired outcome. Having said this, and as Shier states, "*without the ladder however, it would be impossible to climb to the appropriate height for the job*".<sup>61</sup> Thus, appreciating the richness of varying perspectives on youth participation and leadership from within the social sciences and the Lutheran Communion of churches, while it is not necessary to find one common discourse on the meaning and nature of youth participation and leadership, structures and policies that ensure that "*young people have a place and a voice in all aspects of church and communion life, including decision making and leadership*"<sup>62</sup> should be in place.

While different kinds of participatory practice and relationships are appropriate to different contexts and circumstances, and definitions on youth participation and leadership are culturally specific, and thus not shared by all member churches unanimously, LWF member churches are encouraged to adopt measures and principles of inclusiveness that 'ensure full participation [of young people] in their respective contexts'.

Shier's 15 questions that lead along the pathway of par-

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61 Shier, H. (2006) Pathways to Participation Revisited retrieved from: [http://www.harryshier.comxa.com/docs/Shier-Pathways\\_to\\_Participation\\_Revisited\\_NZ2006.pdf](http://www.harryshier.comxa.com/docs/Shier-Pathways_to_Participation_Revisited_NZ2006.pdf), p.18.

62 The Lutheran World Federation (2011). LWF Strategy 2012-2017. The LWF Communion- with Passion for the Church and for the World, p.22.

ticipation, and the two discourses on participation of which Thomas speaks, namely social discourses- “that speak of networks, of inclusion, of (...) relations [between adults and young people], and of the opportunities for social connection that participatory practice can create”, and political discourses- “that speak of power, and challenge and change”<sup>63</sup> offer guidance on the journey along the pathway to meaningful participation and leadership of young people.

We do not walk along the pathway of participation alone. As baptised members of the Christian family, brothers and sisters in Christ and the LWF communion of churches, we walk alongside each other and alongside Christ, who welcomes all to belong as full members in truth. In addition to social and political discourses on youth participation and leadership, we engage in a spiritual discourse on participation; a discourse that speaks of redemption, belonging and inclusion. Thus, rather than being our work, “youth participation is the work of the Holy Spirit in, with, and through the church-- bringing new ideas and new life to the world”.

Allowing this spiritual work in, with and through us, and raising the issues and questions expressed through the mapping of youth participation and leadership, we look ahead and ask what next steps need to be taken in our respective churches and contexts to ensure that “young people have a place and a voice in all aspects of church and communion life, including decision making and leadership?”<sup>64</sup>

63 Thomas, N. (2007). Towards a theory of children’s participation, International Journal of children’s rights 15, p.206.

64 The Lutheran World Federation (2011). LWF Strategy 2012-2017. The LWF Communion- with Passion for the Church and for the World, p.22.

“This is a useful activity for our church; to reflect on youth participation and to encourage the necessary structures that enable youth participation.”



**Male, Romania  
1964–1982**

“It is important to have spaces where young people can share and express their experiences. It is important to create spaces where we can offer information regarding many doubts about big issues of importance to us. With all faith I can thank my church for making it possible that these spaces are available so we can reach more young people with information, especially as they create their own identities both within and outside the church.”



**Female  
Costa Rica  
1983–1995**

“Thank you very much for this participation!”



**Male  
Costa Rica  
After 1995**

## FACT SHEET: LWF youth participation and leadership

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF), through its strategic commitment, wants to ensure that “young people have a place and a voice in all aspects of church and communion life, including decision making and leadership.” (LWF Strategy 2012-2017) In support of this commitment the LWF conducted a study on youth participation and leadership in all LWF member churches. LWF history witnesses to a long standing commitment to, and progressive development in, meaningful participation and leadership of young people in the LWF and the Lutheran Communion of Churches.

A questionnaire was sent to various institutions and persons within the communion, with the aim to not evaluate, but rather to collect opinions, perspectives and stories of good practice in youth participation and leadership from communion members. Responses were received from 80 member churches from all LWF regions.

### Of the respondents

- ▶ 70% are young communion members considered to be youth (up to the age of thirty)
- ▶ 44% are female and 56% are male
- ▶ 89% are active members at congregational level

Survey respondents were asked to share their understanding of the meaning of youth participation and leadership.

### Young communion members:

- ▶ Want to be understood to be, and acknowledged for being, who and what they are presently - ‘an integral part of Church today’.
- ▶ Understand themselves to be active contributors to inter-generational work and life of their churches and the communion of churches.
- ▶ Stress the importance of being actively involved in decision-making, since today’s decisions influence both the present and the future of the church which young communion members continue to lead.
- ▶ Know that having a right to speak also means bearing responsibility.
- ▶ Experience meaningful participation to enable personal, spiritual and institutional growth and development, not merely for young communion members themselves, but for all members of the Lutheran communion of churches.

The report shows that survey respondents acknowledge gender justice to be an important cross-cutting priority. Furthermore, survey responses indicate that young members of the communion participate more frequently in decision-making and leadership at congregational level than at national/synod level. Participation and leadership opportunities decrease at national/synod and international level.

Respondents have identified various challenges to meaningful participation and leadership, some of which are listed below:

- ▶ Ideological concerns linked to societal traditions which exclude young people from decision-making processes
- ▶ Lack of appealing spiritual offerings for young people in some churches
- ▶ Lack of interest/motivation in participation of young people in some contexts
- ▶ Insufficient or non-existent financial resources available for work of/with young people
- ▶ Insufficient guidance/accompaniment by older church members and/or church employees
- ▶ External factors and additional commitments such as school, work and family

In addition to social and political discourses on youth participation and leadership, as baptised members of the church catholic, we engage in a spiritual discourse on participation. This discourse speaks of redemption, belonging and inclusion. While different kinds of participatory practice and relationships are appropriate to different contexts and circumstances, and definitions on youth participation and leadership are culturally specific, and thus not shared by all member churches unanimously, LWF member churches are

encouraged to adopt measures and principles of inclusiveness that 'ensure full participation [of young people] in their respective contexts'.

Allowing this spiritual work in, with and through us, we look ahead generally, and towards the next Assembly, and ask what steps still need to be taken in our respective churches to 'ensure that young people have a place and a voice in all aspects of church and communion life, including decision making and leadership'?







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We finish our dialogue with a prayer of the LWF Executive Committee (Vancouver, 1982) that has been modified into a prayer for youth participation:

*O God, our heavenly Father,*

*We praise you that you have justified us by liberating us from the bonds of sin through the life, death and resurrection of your son, Jesus Christ, In Him we are reconciled with you from generation to generation.*

*We praise you, Lord, that you have led us to rediscover in our time the unity of your people, older and younger generations, the image of that unity which exists in you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We remember with gratitude all the young Lutherans, men and women who were sensitive and open to your gift of intergenerational unity. They helped to bring us together in the Lutheran World Federation a community of mutual assistance, of worship and praise and common witness and service to the world.*

*We remember especially before you the first youth LWF Executive Committee members, the first LWF Youth Secretary, the first LWF Youth President and all the young Lutherans who served and are serving the Communion, be it in its committees, commissions, member churches, national Committees, Geneva staff or in some remote village or refugee camp in Africa, Asia or Latin America and have helped to make us a worldwide communion faithful to the calling of Samuel, of David and Salomon and of the mission of John.*

*We pray, Lord, keep us faithful to the heritage of the founders and servants of the Lutheran World Federation but above all to your Gospel which gathers us together, young and old, men and women, rich and poor, and sends us out to be messengers of the hope which is in your Son Jesus Christ. Bless this communion of Lutheran Churches, especially its young members.*

*Strengthen it through your Holy Spirit, cleanse it from its weaknesses and failures, deepen its community and continue to use it as your servant in your world.*

*Amen*



THE  
LUTHERAN  
WORLD  
FEDERATION