



NEWSLETTER

DEMOCRACY STARTS WITH YOU!

IMPROVING CIVIC PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE
FROM MINORITY AND RURAL AREAS IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS REGION



3RD EDITION
May 2011

Members of the South Caucasus Youth Parliament Meet High rank EU Officials

WWW.DSWY.EU



On 2-7 May, 2011 study visit to Brussels for the members of the South Caucasus Youth Parliament took place. Scheduled program was loaded with a number of high rank meetings and informative events that raised the interest of involved youth. Mrs. Andrea Ellen Ostheimer, Director of the program of KAS "Multinational Dialogue on Development Policy" greeted members of the youth parliament on the first day of their arrival.

On 3 May, members of the Youth Parliament had an opportunity to attend the opening ceremony of EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly, initiative of the European Parliament in the framework of Easter Partnership program and observe the process of adopting Constituent Act and Rules of Procedures of EURONEST.

Although it was not officially planned, during the break of Parliamentary Assembly, members of the Youth Parliament had a chance of meeting the President of European Parliament Prof. Jerzy Buzek. Project Manager informed president briefly about the project and purpose of study visit of Armenian and Georgian pupils to Brussels. Prof. Buzek also inquired about the reason of absence of Azerbaijani youth. Next day picture of the President of European parliament together with the members of the South Caucasus Youth Parliament was posted on the official web site of the European Parliament.

(http://www.europarl.europa.eu/president/view/en/press/photo-gallery/photo-gallery_2011_May.html)

The same day pupils had a chance to present the resolution to the representatives of European Youth Organizations in the premises of Konrad Adenauer Stiftung in Brussels. Representatives of YEPP, European Youth Forum and European Democrat Students were invited to the event. Project Manager gave the brief introduction to the project and representatives of each committee made the overview of the resolution. They also prepared presentations about the countries' historical, geopolitical background and democracy status.

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On 4 May, members of the Youth Parliament met with the member of the European Parliament, Mrs. Corien Wortmann-Kool, where they introduced to the initial tasks of the European Parliament and initiatives for Eastern Partnership countries. Mrs. Wortmann-Kool found the resolutions very interesting, especially the resolution of the Committee on Unity for Peace. She was also concerned by the decision of Azerbaijani government.

The same day members of the Youth Parliament had a chance to visit the Secretariat General of the BeNeLux. Secretary General of the BeNeLux hosted the youth of the South Caucasus and made a presentation about the history and idea of creation of union of three countries and functions of Secretariat General of the BeNeLux.

The last meeting of the day was scheduled with Mrs. Jercka-Gomez, Head of the International Relations Department of the EPP Group in the European Parliament. Mrs. Gomez welcomed the members of the Youth Parliament and answered questions raised by the pupils.

On 5 May, members of the Youth Parliament met with Mr. Michel Duray, Head of Partnership Section, Engagement Directorate, Public Diplomacy Division and Mr. Steffen Elgesma, Officer at Cooperation Policy and Programmes, under Political Affairs and Security Policy Division.

Mr. Duray spoke about NATO's current agenda and answered the questions about territorial conflicts in Georgia from NATO's perspective. Mr. Elgersma gave short overview about "NATO relations with the Caucasus" and spoke about possible enlargement of the list of the NATO member countries as well as about the importance of contribution of Georgia to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Both of the meetings were very engaging and informative for the youth.

On 6 May, members of the Youth Parliament had a chance to visit the Embassies of their



countries in Belgium. Minister Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the Kingdom of Belgium Mr. David Solomoniasvili hosted Armenian and Georgian youth at the Embassy. He briefed pupils about the main activities and tasks of the Embassy in Brussels and welcomed the initiative of the KAS to initiate projects like DSWY. Besides presenting the resolution, pupils

also delivered the paper with country codes they observed in Hotel Ramada, where breakaway region of Abkhazia was mentioned as a separate country with a Russian country code. Minister Plenipotentiary thanked pupils for their information and promised to solve the

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issue. On Monday next week meeting with the Administration of Hotel Ramada was scheduled. Pupils were happy to hear the news.

The same day members of the Youth Parliament met with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Armenia to the Kingdom of Belgium H.E. Avet Adonts.

The morning of departure day was devoted to the reflection meeting conducted by the Project Manager. The outcome of the conducted activities was clearly visible from the perspective of pupils' comments and discussion points. The same pupils will be involved in the four day simulation exercises in Autumn 2011 for sharing experience with the next generation of the project.