THE CENTRE FOR YOUTH IMPACT

Young People's Participation in Decision-Making: UK 2022 Survey Report

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Table of Contents

Key findings

Building our understanding of participation work

This report discusses the findings from our 2022 UK-wide survey to understand organisational experiences of supporting young people to participate in decision-making. We've compared some of the data collected to a similar survey conducted in 2010 by Children's Right Alliance England (CRAE) to start to paint a picture of how experiences of, and support for young people to participate in decision-making may have changed over the 12-year period. The results of this survey present a snapshot of what is happening across the UK, and we hope that it can support funders, organisations, and young people to better understand where practice is strong, and where more support is needed – to create opportunities that enable more equitable and high-quality opportunities for all young people.

269 organisations responded to the survey. Survey questions were optional, and all figures and percentages used throughout the report correspond to the number of respondents for each question. Whilst in its current size it represents 'proof of concept', we're excited by the potential of this data set and hope that it can be built upon in subsequent years to provide a robust data set that can capture changes in experiences, attitudes, and practice.

The headlines

Support for young people

The **top issues** about which organisations support young people to participate in decision-making are health and wellbeing (79%), youth services/provision (65%), and education (64%).

Young people are supported to participate in decision-making at a **variety of levels**, including at higher levels around 'setting the agenda' rather than just contributing to or commenting on the agenda once 'set', and this has improved since 2010.

The **primary methods** organisations use with young people to enable them to participate in decision-making are through ongoing informal discussions, consultation sessions, surveys, and youth councils or forums.

The **support young people receive** most commonly comes in the form of pastoral support (51%) or training: for specific roles (51%), around procedures and structures (44%), or in specific skills (43%). 12% of responding organisations **do not offer any training or support** for young people as part of their participation work.

Reach and inclusivity of practice

Young people under 11 and over the age of 21 are **less likely to be supported** to participate in decision-making.

There is **good support for a range of marginalised groups** of young people to participate in decision-making, **although 66% of organisations responding think there is room for improvement** in the way they deliver this work.

Specifically, organisations identified that both the **availability and accessibility** of their participation practice could be improved. **Barriers to engaging different groups** of young people centred on: a lack of resources, the ongoing challenge of engaging young people digitally following the Covid-19 pandemic, and the challenge of engaging young people who lack the confidence, skill, or means to participate easily.

Monitoring and evaluation

The majority of organisations **evaluate their participation practice**, most commonly through gathering feedback from young people on their experience.

More organisations appear to be evaluating **the impact of this work on themselves** than in 2010, which is important for highlighting the intended systemic or structural impact of this work.

The majority of organisations (77%) **involve young people** in some way in their monitoring and evaluation work, also an increase from 2010 data.

Resourcing and infrastructure

Over two-thirds of organisations (69%) **have a policy** to support their participation work, but 12% do not.

84% of organisations have this work embedded formally through being included in staff job roles and responsibilities, but **12%** have **not.**

29% of organisations do not have dedicated funding for this work.

Regardless, organisations have **a range of resources available** to undertake participation work, most commonly a dedicated staff member (70%) and money for transport and other expenses for young people (67%).

There is an identified need for **more training around evaluating young people's participation and advocacy and lobbying skills**, to support organisations to deliver their participation work better.

Promoting young people's participation

Organisations' top priority at local and national government level was for **more dedicated funding** for participation work.

Internally, organisations identified that **they needed to focus on:** better promoting of the benefits of young people's participation in decision-making, measuring the impact of young participation, and providing better practical support to enable all young people to participate.

The Centre for Youth Impact is a community of organisations that work together to progress thinking and practice around impact measurement in youth work and services for young people. Our vision is for all young people to have access to high quality programmes and services that improve their life chances, by enabling embedded approaches to impact measurement that directly inform practice. Our work, therefore, is dedicated to three objectives, together with our expanded networks and other organisations from across the youth sector: curating the debate, building the movement and shaping the future.

Find out more about the Centre for Youth Impact at www.youthimpact.uk and follow us on @YouthImpactUK.

1. Introduction

1.1.   The Youth Voice, Influence and Power project

This report forms part of our *Youth Voice, Power and Influence* project, collaboratively funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, BBC Children in Need and The National Lottery Community Fund. The motivation for this work is to support, inform, and influence more meaningful youth voice work in the future, both across the funders' collective vision for young people, and more widely across society. There are four key aims for the project:

- **Increase understanding:** Better understand current youth voice activity in the UK in terms of where and how young people have a voice, which young people access these channels and what they are saying
- **Increase reach:** Ensure more young people, particularly those who are seldom heard, such as excluded or marginalised groups, or groups that are less well known, are listened to and have influence in decision-making processes
- **Enhance equity:** Better understand the barriers to engagement, and evidence priority areas where we need to focus on equitable access for young people to ensure their voices are heard and able to have influence
- **Improve access to information:** To ensure practitioners and young people can access information on national youth voice and insight activity.

As part of this project, we have been lucky enough to work with a steering group of four young people. Together with Finlay, Harman, Naomi and Ardeel, we have settled on a definition of youth voice to guide this work:

> ***Providing support (i.e. the space, skills, and time) for young people to express their views and ideas, and action being taken based on what they say.***
> *This practice intends to result in positive change: in the situation, organisation, or context that the young person is sharing their views about (e.g. the services they or others receive), in the young person's personal development, or both.*

To meet the project aims, we[1]:

- Collected demographic data from the British Youth Council's 2022 Make Your Mark vote via a new online voting platform;
- Undertook a rapid literature review to map current youth voice activity in the UK;
- Developed a typology of youth voice, in conversation with the sector, to provide those working with and for young people with a shared vocabulary for talking about youth voice practice; and
- Facilitated a UK-wide survey of organisations working with and for young people, to better understand how they support young people to participate in, and influence the decision-making of others.

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[1] The outputs of these distinct strands of work can be found on the project webpage: www.youthimpact.uk/our-projects/Youth-Voice-Influence-and-Power

Together, these strands of work support both our understanding of the state of youth voice practice across the UK, and provide other funders, practitioners, and young people with information to support their understanding, and how this might apply to their practice.

1.2. Young people's participation in the decision-making survey

This report discusses the findings from the UK-wide survey. The survey invited organisations to respond to questions about their practice to support young people's participation in decision-making outside of their own organisations, including:

- The groups of young people they work with;
- The type of activities young people engage in to enable them to participate in decision-making;
- The resources and support organisations have available for this work; and
- Perceptions of what is needed to support this work better.

The survey was open for responses between 01 June – 14 August 2022. It captures responses from 269 organisations across the UK that work with young people.

2. Methodology

2.1. Survey design and development

The survey was designed to broadly align with previous surveys conducted to understand young people's participation: by the National Youth Agency in 2004[2] and Children's Right Alliance England (CRAE) in 2010[3]. The 2010 survey questions were used as a starting point, with language altered to reflect changes in context and the way organisations approach young people's participation in decision-making. Questions were then added or removed to ensure the survey supported the overall project aims. Previous surveys were used as a basis to allow for comparison across time points where appropriate.

A note on language

Whilst the overall project talks about *youth voice*, as outlined in the definition (page 5), the survey refers to young people's *participation*. The term participation was used:

- To provide consistency between this updated survey and the previous surveys; and
- Because conversations with the sector have highlighted the multiplicity of definitions that organisations attach to the term youth voice, and participation was deemed to have a more widely accepted definition.

For the purpose of the survey and throughout this report, the College has broadly adopted Treseder's (1997) definition of participation as "a process through which young people can influence decisions about their life and this leads to change".

The design of the survey was supported by a series of sector partners who gave feedback on questions to include and question phrasing. This was particularly helpful when considering things like phrasing and language regarding groups of young people, as well as ensuring response options were reflective of specific contexts.

The survey contains 33 questions divided into five sections;

1. Organisational information
2. About your work supporting young people to participate decision-making
3. Reaching young people
4. Support for young people's participation in decision-making
5. Ways to promote young people's involvement in decision-making

A blank copy of the survey can be found in Appendix A.

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[2] https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/5226/1/RR584.pdf
[3] https://web.archive.org/web/20110802061455/http://www.participationworks.org.uk/npf/publications

2.2. Survey distribution

The survey was distributed online via Microsoft Forms and was open for responses between 01 June and 14 August 2022. The survey was also published in Welsh. It was promoted through:
- Directly emailing appropriate contacts within our network, to respond and share further;
- The College's social media channels; and
- 23 partner organisations who included the survey on their social media channels, newsletter or bulletins, and directly invited organisations in their networks to participate.

Survey partners

We were grateful to have the support of a number of partners in survey promotion and distribution. This was enabled by offering small grants to organisations with established networks at a national, regional, and sub-sector level, and providing them with the appropriate resources and support to share the survey with their networks throughout June, July and August. The aim of working with additional partners to distribute the survey was to broaden the geographic and sectoral reach of the survey, to ensure that responses were representative of organisations working in as many diverse ranges of contexts as possible. 23 partner organisations were engaged, of which six were Regional Youth Work Units in England, three were national partners (infrastructure organisations in Scotland, Wales and England), and 14 were organisations with insight into working with/and or led by specific groups of young people[4]. Whilst the respondents do cover a broad range of locations and sub-sectors, as we did not use a stratified sampling method, the data can only provide generalised insights. A full list of partner organisations can be found in Appendix B.

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[4] Three organisations in Northern Ireland were approached, but unfortunately capacity limitations prevented them from engaging as a survey partner.

3. Key Findings

3.1. Responding organisations

A total of 269 responses were received. Survey questions were optional, and therefore the value is sometimes less than 269 because of missing data.

Responding organisations were geographically spread, although relatively fewer responses were received from organisations in Scotland and Northern Ireland (Figure 1). Overall, this suggests that working with partners to support survey distribution was successful.
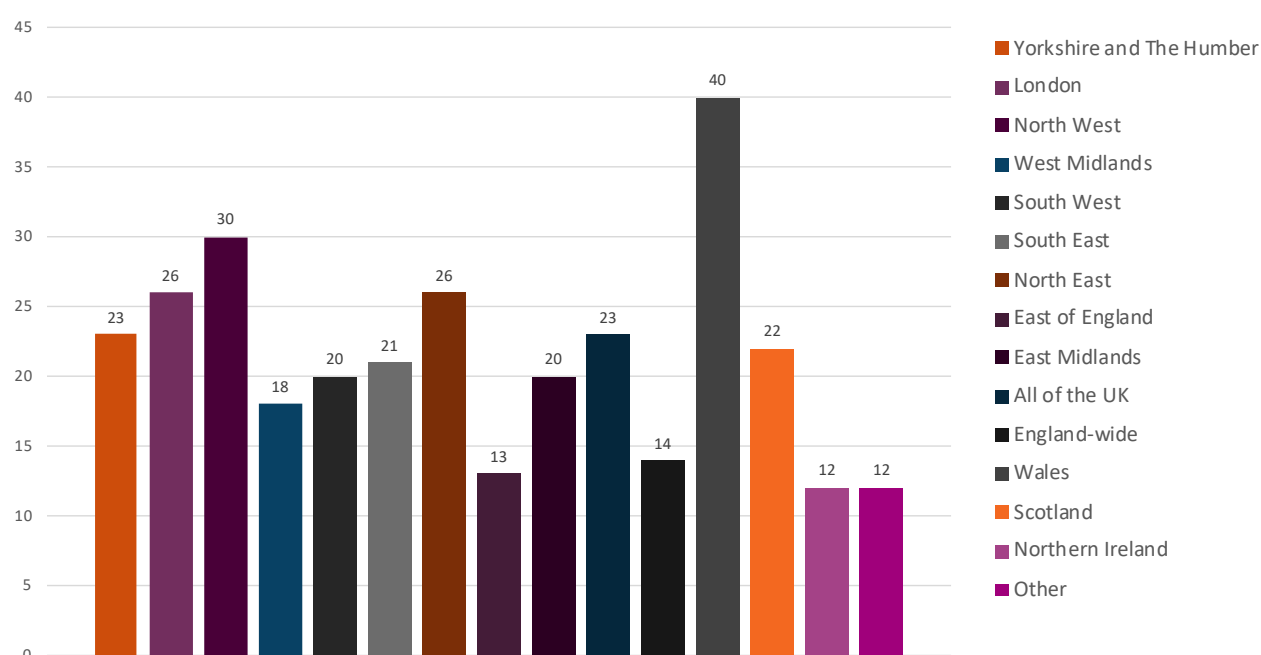

Figure 1: region or country that responding organisations operate in (n=320) (respondents could select more than one option)

More than half of the responses were from voluntary and community sector organisations (64%), with 24% from the statutory sector and 11% identifying as 'other'. It is worth noting that this is a direct contrast to the 2010 survey, whereby 81% of responding organisations were from the statutory sector. More than half of the organisations were operating at the local level (53%), with 25% and 22% operating at the national and regional level. Table 1 shows the distribution of operating levels by sector, identifying a trend for statutory organisations to be much more likely than voluntary organisations to have a local focus. This is most probably a function of survey distribution, whereby the statutory sector was predominantly reached through local authority contacts distributed via the British Youth Council's network of local authority practitioners.

Table 1: Sector of organisations by local, regional or national focus (n=242)

	Local	Regional	National	Total
Voluntary	70	42	45	157
Statutory	55	2	2	59
Other	2	17	7	26

Responses were most likely to come from senior officers or managers (45%) followed by staff working directly with young people (33%). Board members and trustees made up a small percentage of respondents (5%).

Figure 2 shows that the majority of responding organisations have fewer than 50 employees and volunteers, but also confirms that statutory sector respondents are most likely to be local authorities, given that they tend to have over 250 staff and/or volunteers.
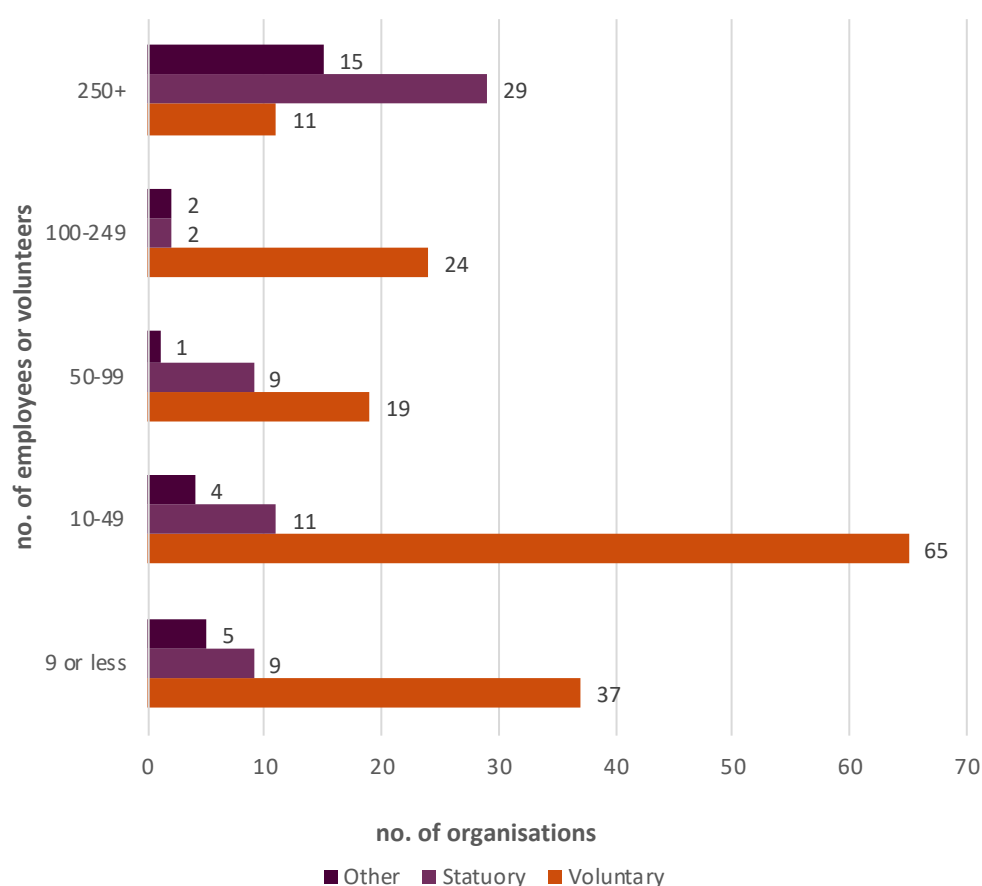

Figure 2: Number of employees and volunteers in responding organisations, by percentage or organisations in each sector (n=243)

Respondents were asked about the focus of their organisation's work with young people, choosing from a drop-down list provided. Overwhelmingly, respondents reported their organisational focus

to be on youth and community work (42%), followed by health and wellbeing (13%), education (12%) and social care (9%), with the rest of the responses being split across a variety of areas. Figure 3 shows the skew towards working with young people between 12 and 21. This drops of a little for young people aged 22 and over, and far fewer organisations work with young people under 5.
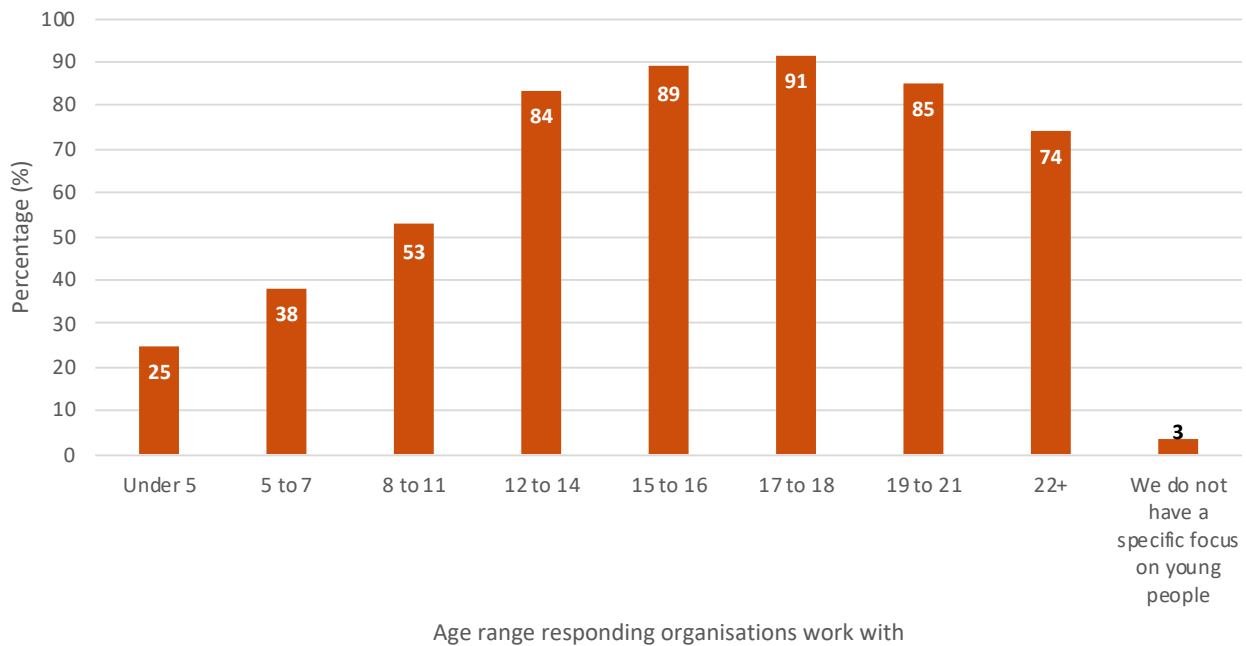

Figure 3: Age range of young people that responding organisations work with (n=244) (respondents could select more than one option)

Finally, respondents were invited to identify if they undertake targeted work with any marginalised groups of young people. Figure 4 shows that, whilst categories were not mutually exclusive, responding organisations are seeking to engage with a wide range of young people. This further suggests that working with partners on survey distribution was successful. Organisations working with young people with disabilities, young people labelled with Special Educational Needs (SEN), or Additional Learning Needs (ALN) were most prevalent. Conversely, organisations working with young people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities, young parents, or young people with experience of homelessness were least common.
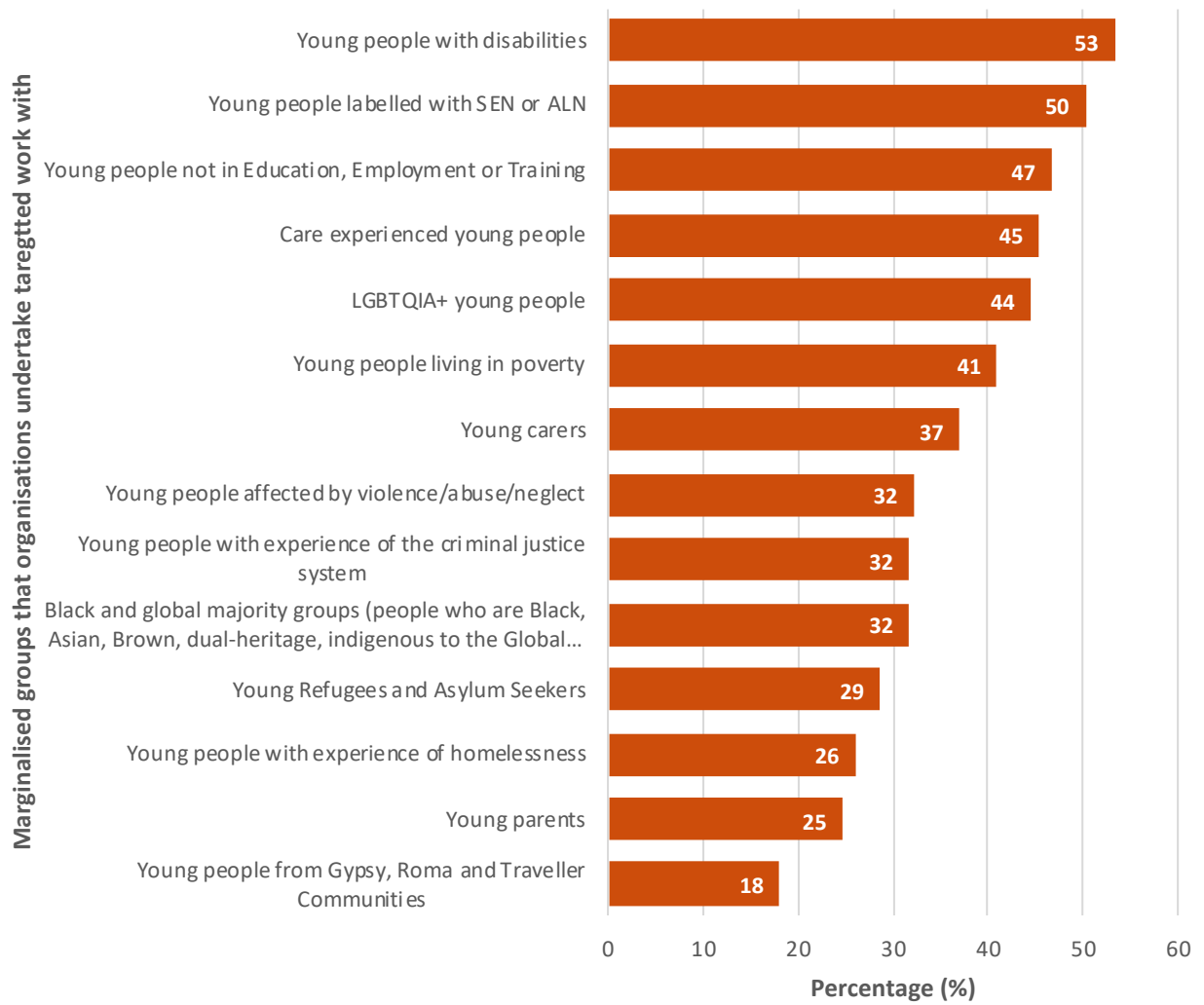
Figure 4: Organisations undertaking targeted work with particular groups of young people (n=227) (respondents could select more than one option)

3.2.   Supporting young people to participate in decision-making

Figure 5 shows the issues about which organisations support young people to participate in decision-making, with health and wellbeing coming out top (79%), followed by youth services/ provision (65%) and education (64%). Whilst these are the top issues, the survey demonstrates that there is a breadth of issues organisations support young people to influence. Young people were least likely to be supported to participate in decision-making around transport, housing, and regeneration of their local area. This mirrors the findings of the 2010 survey and, given the contrasting samples (heavily weighted towards statutory organisations in 2010 vs. voluntary organisations in 2022), suggests that there are some issues about which young people are consistently more strongly supported to participate in decision-making, and some they are not.
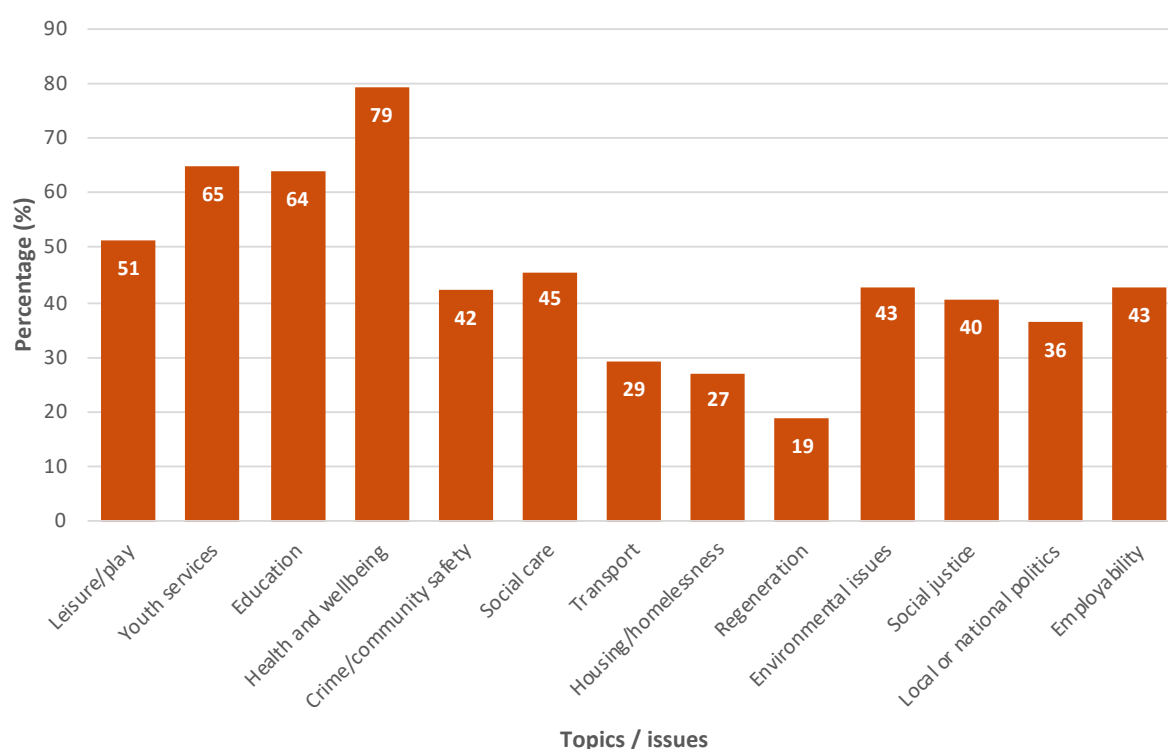

Figure 5: The issues that organisations support young people to participate in decision-making about (n=240) (respondents could select more than one option)

Responding organisations were asked to indicate at which levels they support young people to participate in decision-making. Figure 6 shows, broadly speaking, that young people are supported to participate in a variety of decision-making processes. Whilst it is more common for young people to be supported to participate in decisions being made about them as individuals (i.e. around the services they receive), or around sharing their ideas for changing policies, strategies or services, the data suggests that there are opportunities for young people to be involved at all levels. Figure 7 demonstrates that there is little variation between local, regional and national organisations in the levels at which organisations support young people.

This data differs from that collected in the 2010 survey, which showed a clear trend for young people to be less likely to be supported to participate in higher levels of decision-making around 'setting the agenda' (i.e. identifying policies or services they wish to influence).
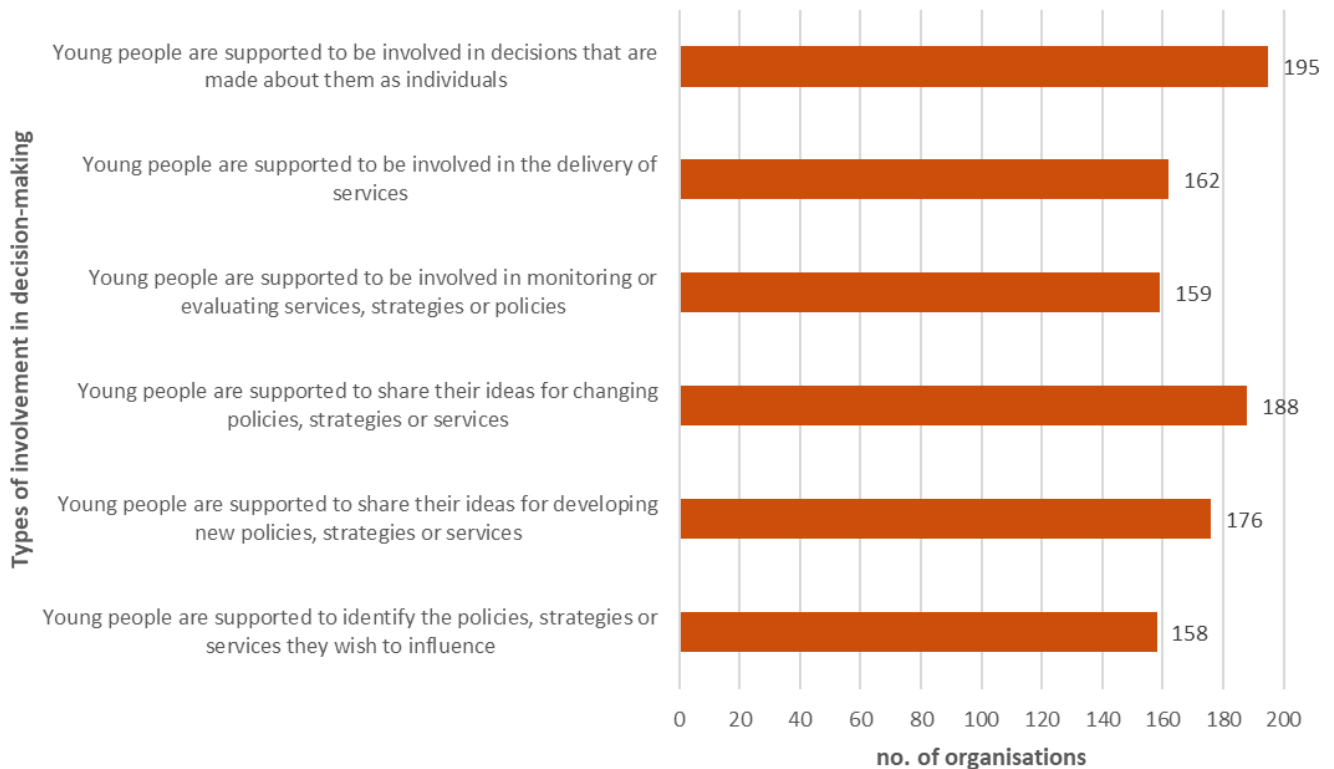
Figure 6: Types of participation in decision-making (n=242)

As shown in Figure 8, the most common methods for enabling young people to participate in decision-making were through ongoing informal discussion, consultation sessions with young people, polls or surveys, and focus groups, with over two-thirds (66%) of responding organisations using these methods. This does differ from the 2010 findings, where making use of public meetings and events was more common (65% of organisations in 2010 vs. 54% in this data set). It is worth noting that ongoing informal discussion was not a category in 2010. The fact that it was both included and selected as the most common method is indicative of the myriad of less formalised ways that young people can be supported to participate in decision-making, and perhaps points to a greater embedding of this practice in organisations' day-to-day work.

Figure 7: Types of participation in decision-making by operational level

y-axis label: Percentage of organisations by operational level

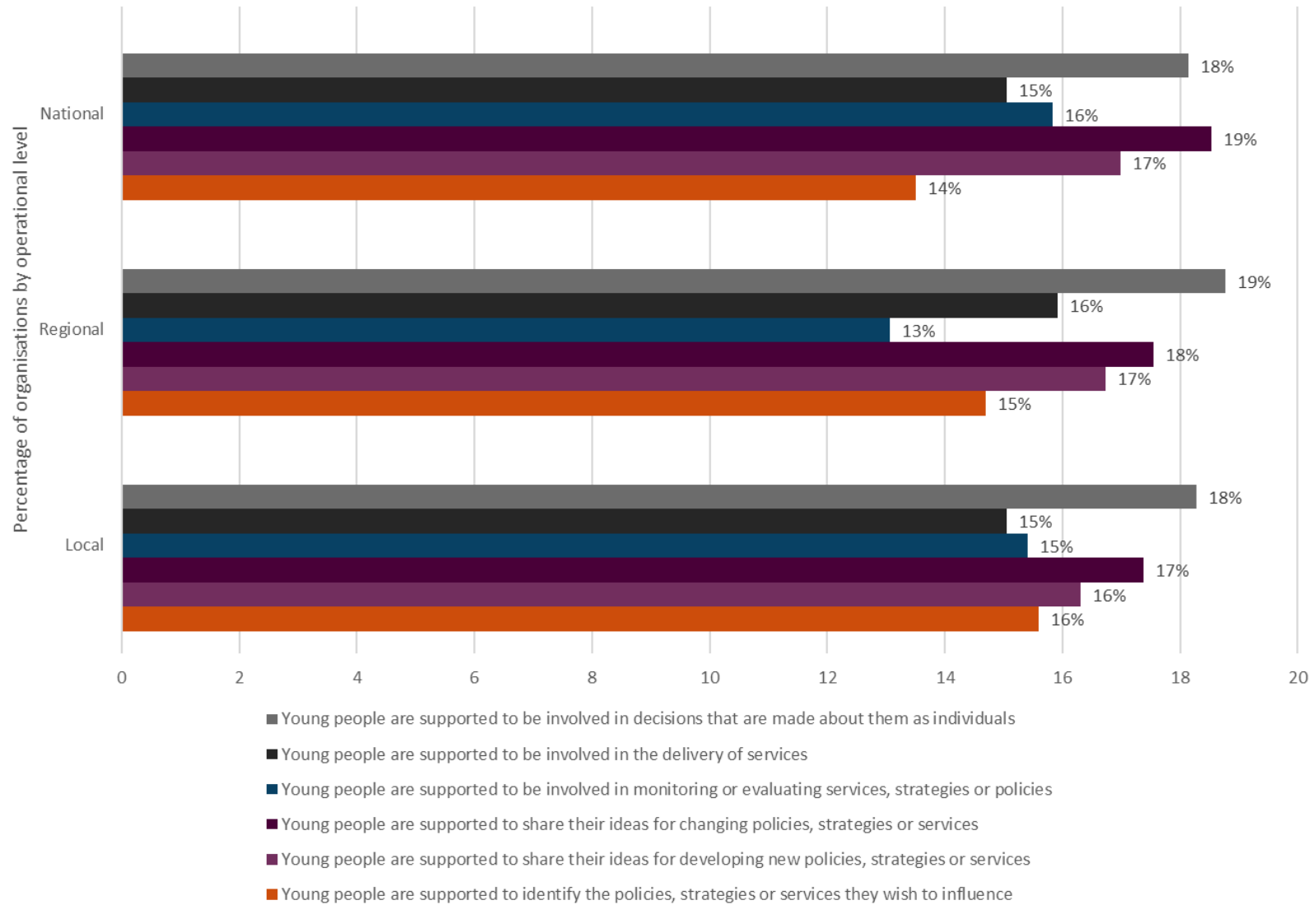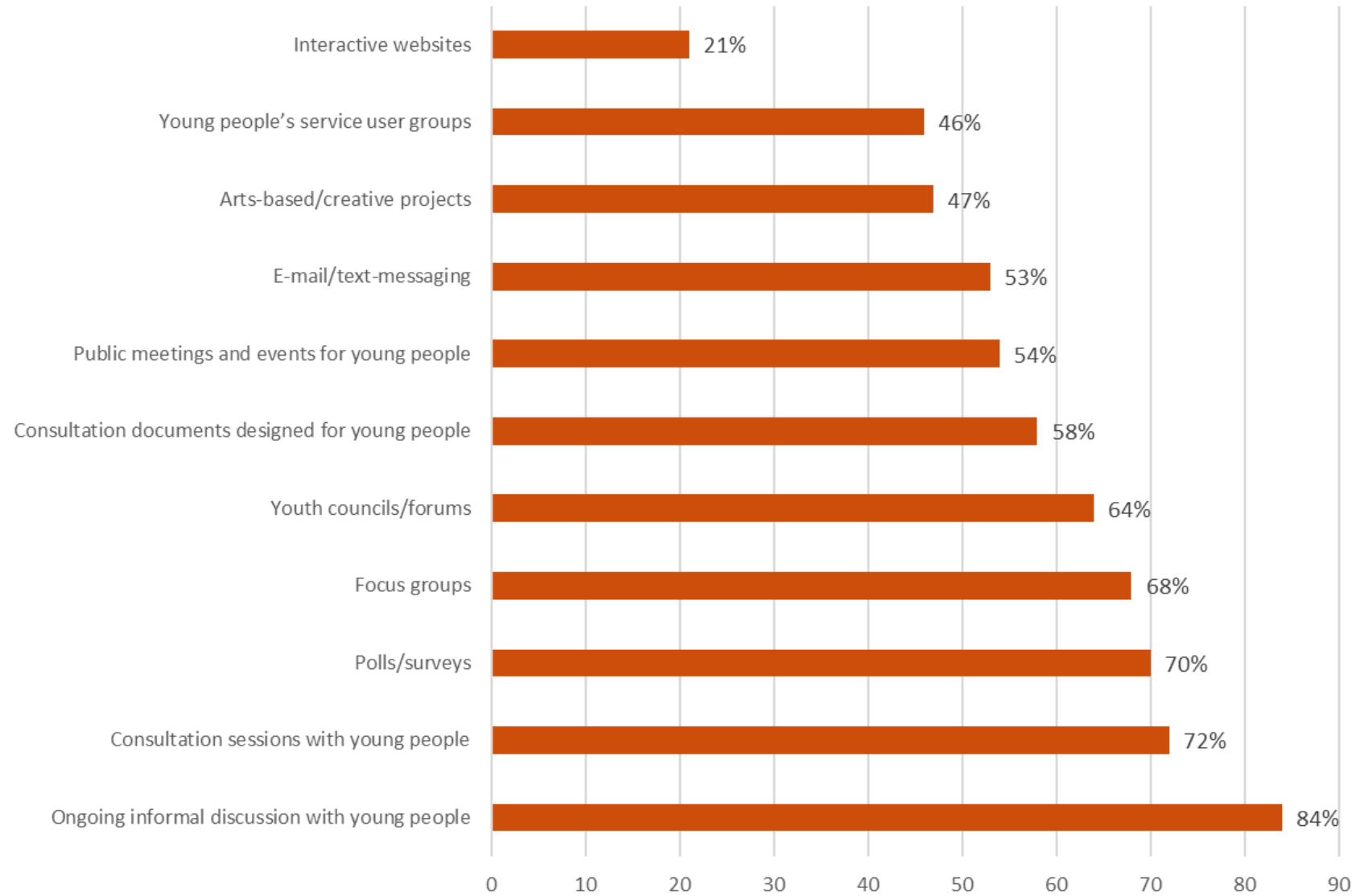**National**
- Young people are supported to be involved in decisions that are made about them as individuals: 18%
- Young people are supported to be involved in the delivery of services: 15%
- Young people are supported to be involved in monitoring or evaluating services, strategies or policies: 16%
- Young people are supported to share their ideas for changing policies, strategies or services: 19%
- Young people are supported to share their ideas for developing new policies, strategies or services: 17%
- Young people are supported to identify the policies, strategies or services they wish to influence: 14%

Regional
- Young people are supported to be involved in decisions that are made about them as individuals: 19%
- Young people are supported to be involved in the delivery of services: 16%
- Young people are supported to be involved in monitoring or evaluating services, strategies or policies: 13%
- Young people are supported to share their ideas for changing policies, strategies or services: 18%
- Young people are supported to share their ideas for developing new policies, strategies or services: 17%
- Young people are supported to identify the policies, strategies or services they wish to influence: 15%

Local
- Young people are supported to be involved in decisions that are made about them as individuals: 18%
- Young people are supported to be involved in the delivery of services: 15%
- Young people are supported to be involved in monitoring or evaluating services, strategies or policies: 15%
- Young people are supported to share their ideas for changing policies, strategies or services: 17%
- Young people are supported to share their ideas for developing new policies, strategies or services: 16%
- Young people are supported to identify the policies, strategies or services they wish to influence: 16%

Legend:
- Young people are supported to be involved in decisions that are made about them as individuals
- Young people are supported to be involved in the delivery of services
- Young people are supported to be involved in monitoring or evaluating services, strategies or policies
- Young people are supported to share their ideas for changing policies, strategies or services
- Young people are supported to share their ideas for developing new policies, strategies or services
- Young people are supported to identify the policies, strategies or services they wish to influence

Figure 8: Methods for supporting young people to participate in decision-making (n=242) (respondents could select more than one option)
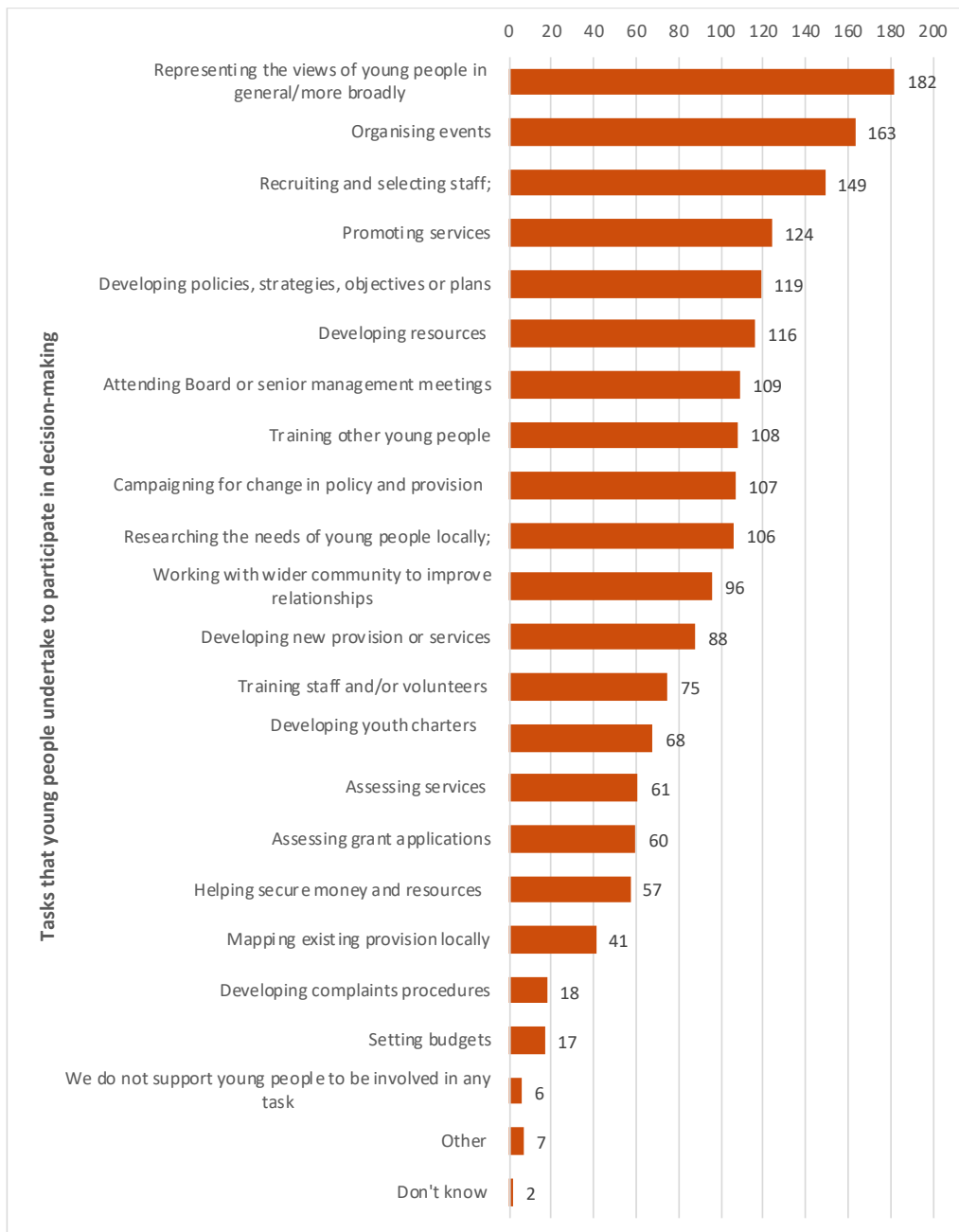
Figure 9: Tasks that young people undertake to participate in decision-making (n=242) (respondents could select more than one option)

In terms of the activities undertaken by young people when participating in decision-making (Figure 9), these are mainly representing the views of young people, young people organising events and recruiting and selecting staff. At the other end of the scale, young people are much less likely to be involved in setting budgets or developing complaint procedures. This mirrors the 2010 findings, and, along with other activities in which young people are less likely to be involved (e.g. assessing grant applications and assessing services) indicates that young people are less engaged in decision-making at a governance level.

Finally, responses suggest that young people receive a wide range of support to enable them to participate in decision-making. The most common of these is pastoral support (youth work alongside the participation in decision-making opportunity, 51%), training for specific roles (51%), training to explain procedures or structures (44%) or around specific skill development (43%). Voluntary organisations are much more likely to offer pastoral support and peer mentoring than statutory organisations. 12% of all responding organisations do not offer any training or support for young people as part of their participation work. The most common incentives offered to young people are CV building opportunities (72%), group events (67%) and certificates (57%).

3.3. Reach and inclusivity of practice

Organisations were asked to report on the age, gender, and the type of group that they support to participate in decision-making. Figure 10 shows that a significant proportion of respondents (at least one-third, 33%) do not support young people 11 and under to participate in decision-making. Young people between 12 and 21 are well supported, but this support to participate in decision-making drops significantly for young people aged over 21. This trend is reflective of the age groups that responding organisations work with.
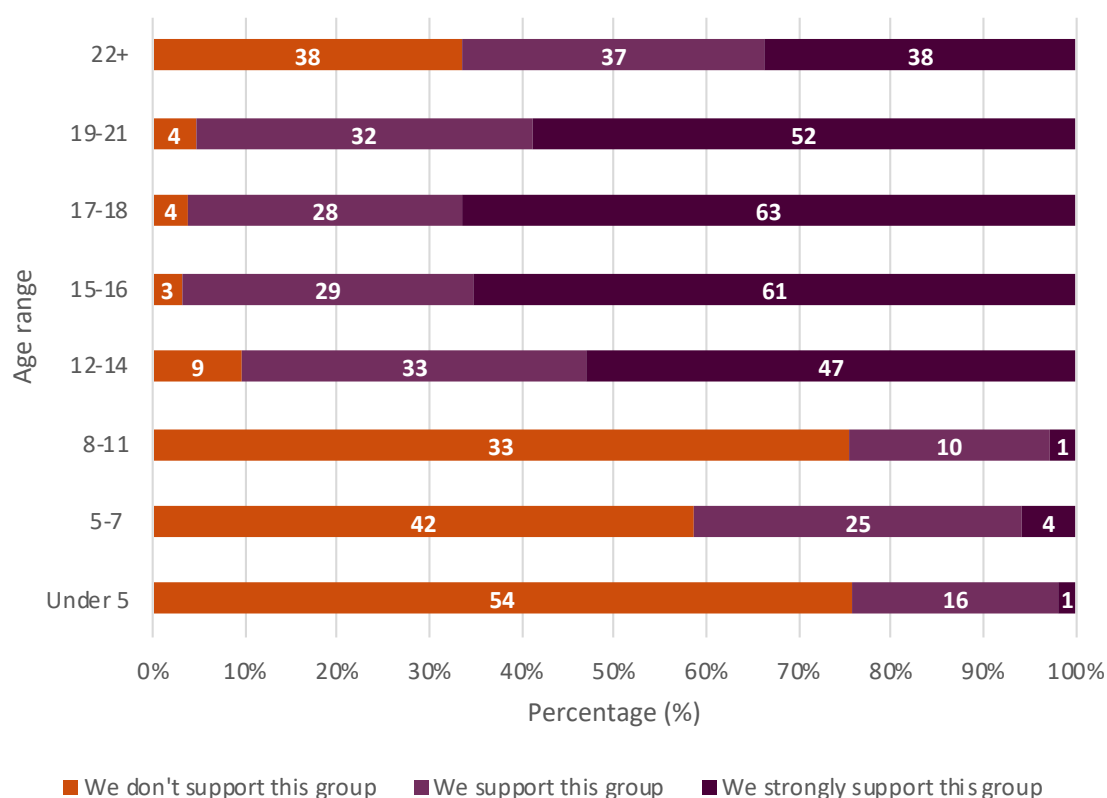

Figure 10: Age range of young people supported to participate in decision-making in the last 12 months (n=241)

In terms of gender (Figure 11), there is good support for young people who wish to self-define, males, and females, with 98% of responding organisations supporting all groups. The picture is slightly less balanced for young people from urban versus rural locations. Figure 12 shows that

97% of organisations support young people from urban locations to participate in decision-making versus 86% for young people from rural locations. It is likely that this is to an extent a function of the location of responding organisations that operate at a local level, but this does warrant further consideration of what the barriers might be for supporting young people from rural locations to participate, and how we can create more opportunities for young people in these locations.
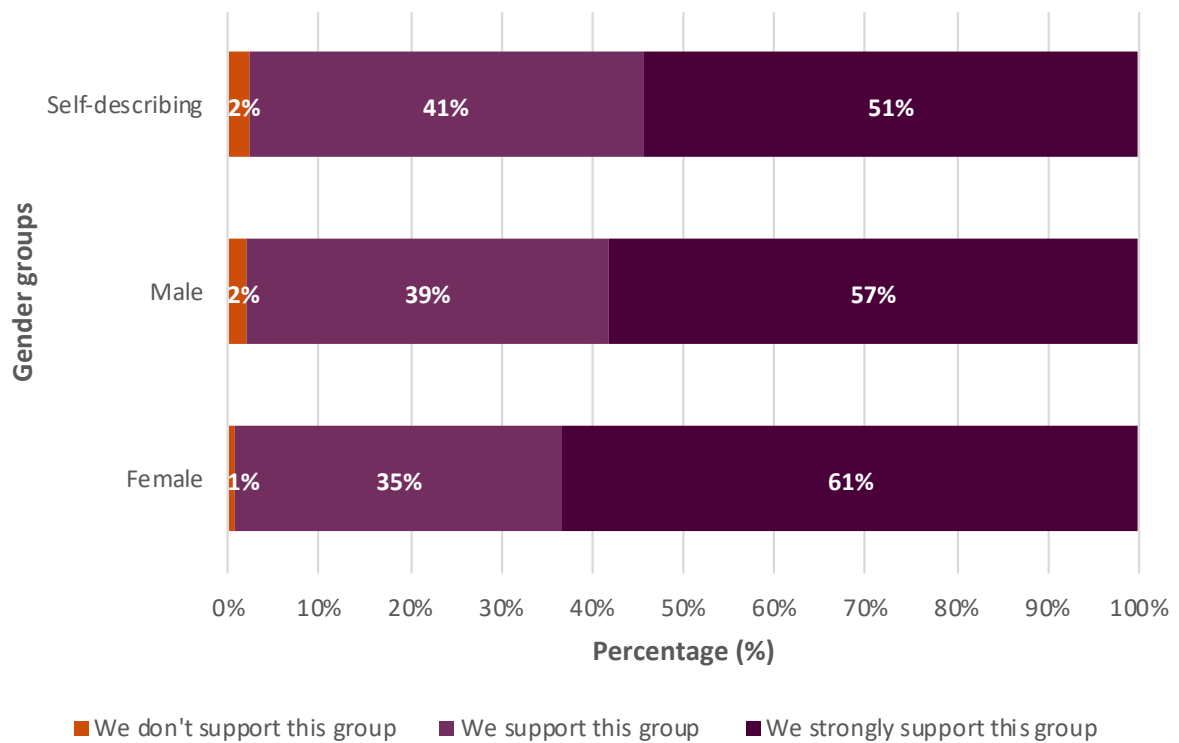

Figure 11: Gender groups supported to participate in decision-making over the last 12 months (n=242)
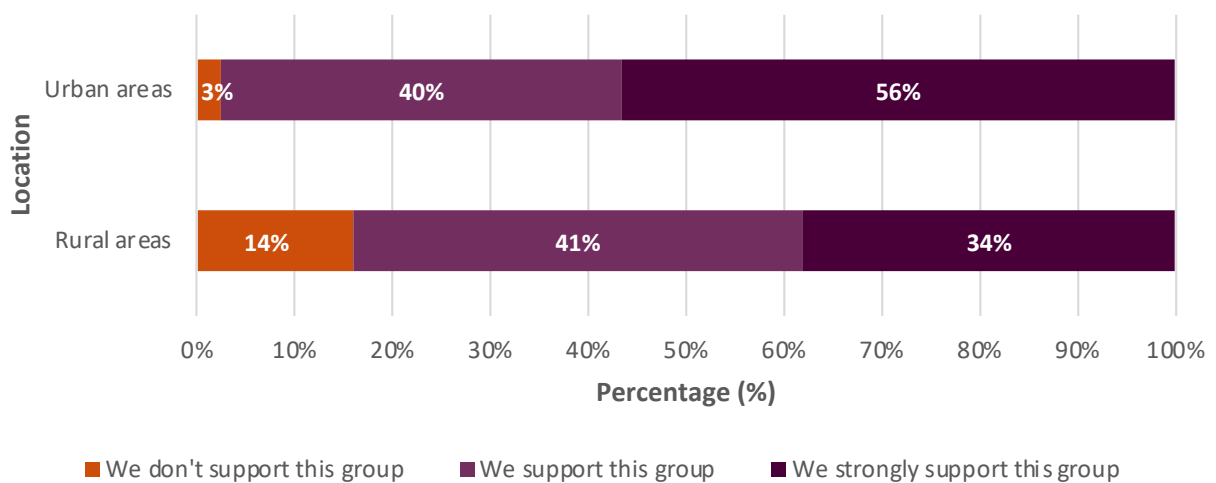

Figure 12: Support for young people from urban and rural areas to participate in decision-making over the last 12 months (n=238)

Figure 13 shows that organisations support young people from a variety of marginalised groups to participate in decision-making. Relatively lower proportions of organisations support young people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller groups, young parents, young asylum seekers, young people with experience of the criminal justice system, and young people with experience of homelessness. It is important to note that the data cannot differentiate between organisations that specifically target these groups, and those that work with them as part of their broader participation work. This makes it difficult to draw strong conclusions from the data.
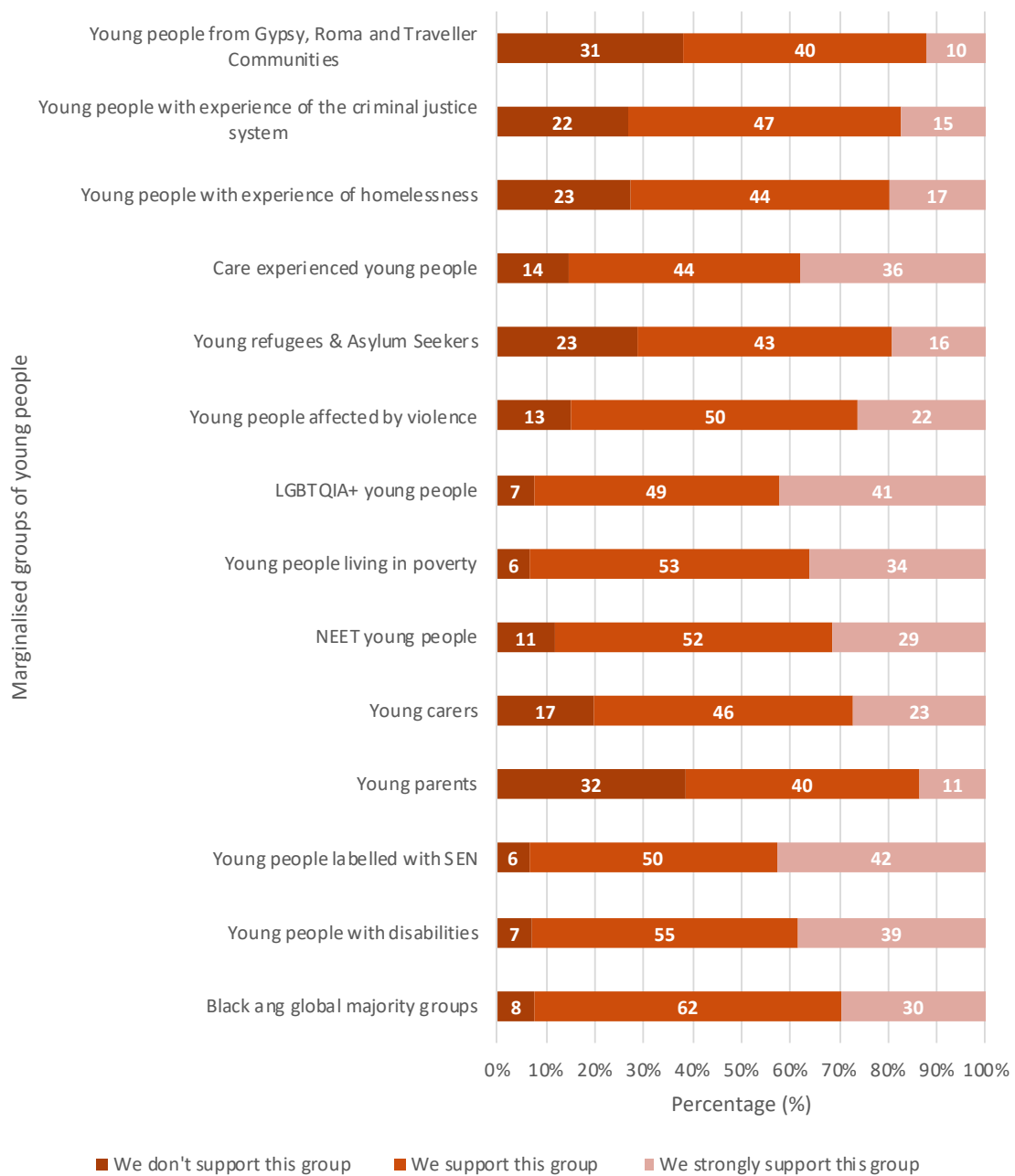

Figure 13: Support for young people from marginalised groups to participate in decision-making over the last 12 months (n=203)

Organisations were also asked to consider the quality of their work with marginalised groups by self-assessing how well they support these groups of young people to participate in decision-making. Figure 14 shows that, whilst almost a third of respondents (32%) think they do this very well, 66% think there is room for improvement, including 13% who think their practice is poor.
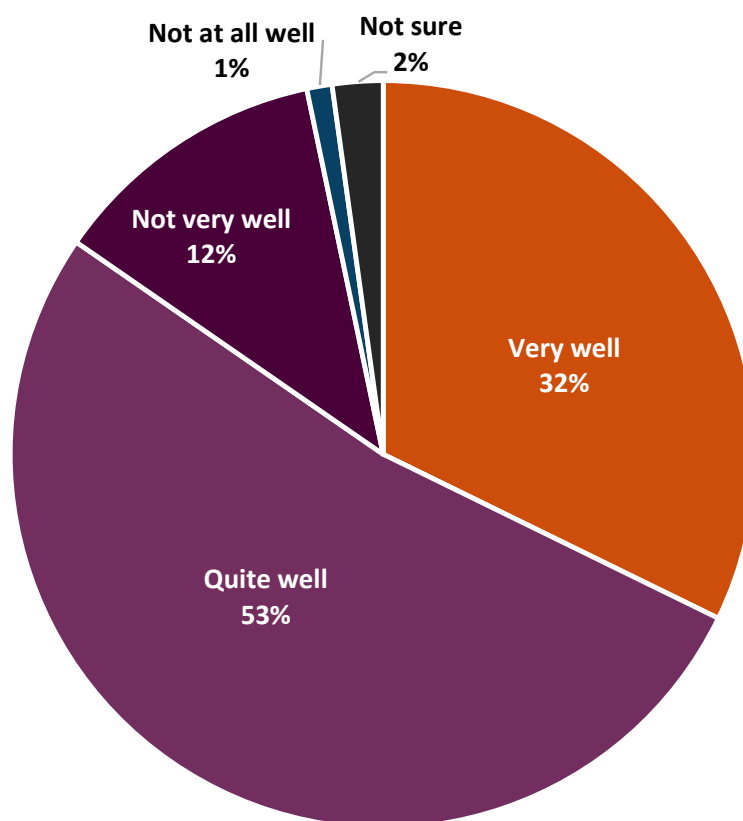

Figure 14: How well organisations think they involve marginalised groups in their participation activities (n=240)

Respondents were invited to explain their responses, considering the main barriers they face when working to support particular groups of young people, and any solutions they have developed. In terms of barriers, there were three primary challenges that respondents identified. The first was related to the limited resources they have available to do this work, in terms of *"staff time to dedicate to building the necessary structures for meaningful participation"*. As one respondent identified, *"a tension often exists between doing things quickly and doing things properly. 'Product' can be prioritised over 'process' when resource constraints are considered".* In terms of engaging particular groups, it was noted that accepted good participation practice that is relatively straight forward for organisations to adopt is often not fit-for-purpose for groups with greater support needs.

The second key barrier was the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on young people's participation in decision-making. Respondents observed that this was still a challenge, with some groups of young people being less likely to be able to engage online, or there being a general disengagement as a consequence of moving online. Finally, responding organisations noted the

challenge of engaging those that are less likely to engage anyway, for example, because they lack the confidence or skills, or are from a younger age group. As one respondent commented:

"There tends to be a higher cohort of young people engaging with the service that are either confident and self-advocating, or have parents pushing their participation. This leaves a huge percentage of young people, often with very valuable contribution potential, not being heard from."

Other barriers identified by participants include: accessing young people through gatekeepers or when working in partnership with other organisations or institutions; an organisation's geographical location; and the fact that young people are disenfranchised and do not believe their voices will be heard and acted upon.

In terms of the solutions to these barriers, responses were less clear-cut. The most prominent response was around dedicating additional resourcing to this work or seeking the funding to do so, for example through looking to fund a dedicated staff member. Other solutions were around better meeting young people's needs through:
- 'Mixing up' delivery and providing flexibility in the way that young people are able to engage;
- Building better relationships with young people and supporting individual needs around the participation work;
- Removing practical barriers such as providing transport costs or changing the timing or location of sessions; and
- Going *to* young people, for example through working in partnership with other organisations that work with particular groups or setting up groups in different localities.

Finally, respondents were asked to consider the accessibility of their participation practice across five dimensions. The rating was on a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 = 'not at all', and 5 = 'a great deal'. The domains of accessibility are based on Penchansky and Thomas' (1981) five dimensions of access framework, which is widely applied in healthcare settings and has been adapted to suit youth work participation contexts. The definitions applied to the framework in the survey are:
- **Acceptability:** activities take into account young people's preferences
- **Availability:** adequate volume of activity to meet demand
- **Affordability:** young people who want to participate can afford to
- **Accessibility:** activities are geographically, socially and economically suitable for all
- **Accommodation/inclusion:** activities are offered/delivered to be inclusive for all young people to participate equally.

Encouragingly, the majority of organisations rated themselves four or above across all dimensions. The highest scoring dimension was affordability (84%) and the lowest scoring dimensions were availability (54%) and accessibility (65%). Figure 15 pulls out some nuances in this data too, showing that 11% of responding organisations rated the availability of their support for young people to participate as not adequate (rated one or two out of five). Over one-third of organisations (35%) scored the accessibility of their practice as three or lower, but fewer (27%) scored the inclusivity of their practice as three or lower. This suggests that whilst organisations put mechanisms in place to make their participation work open to all, in practice this is not always successful.
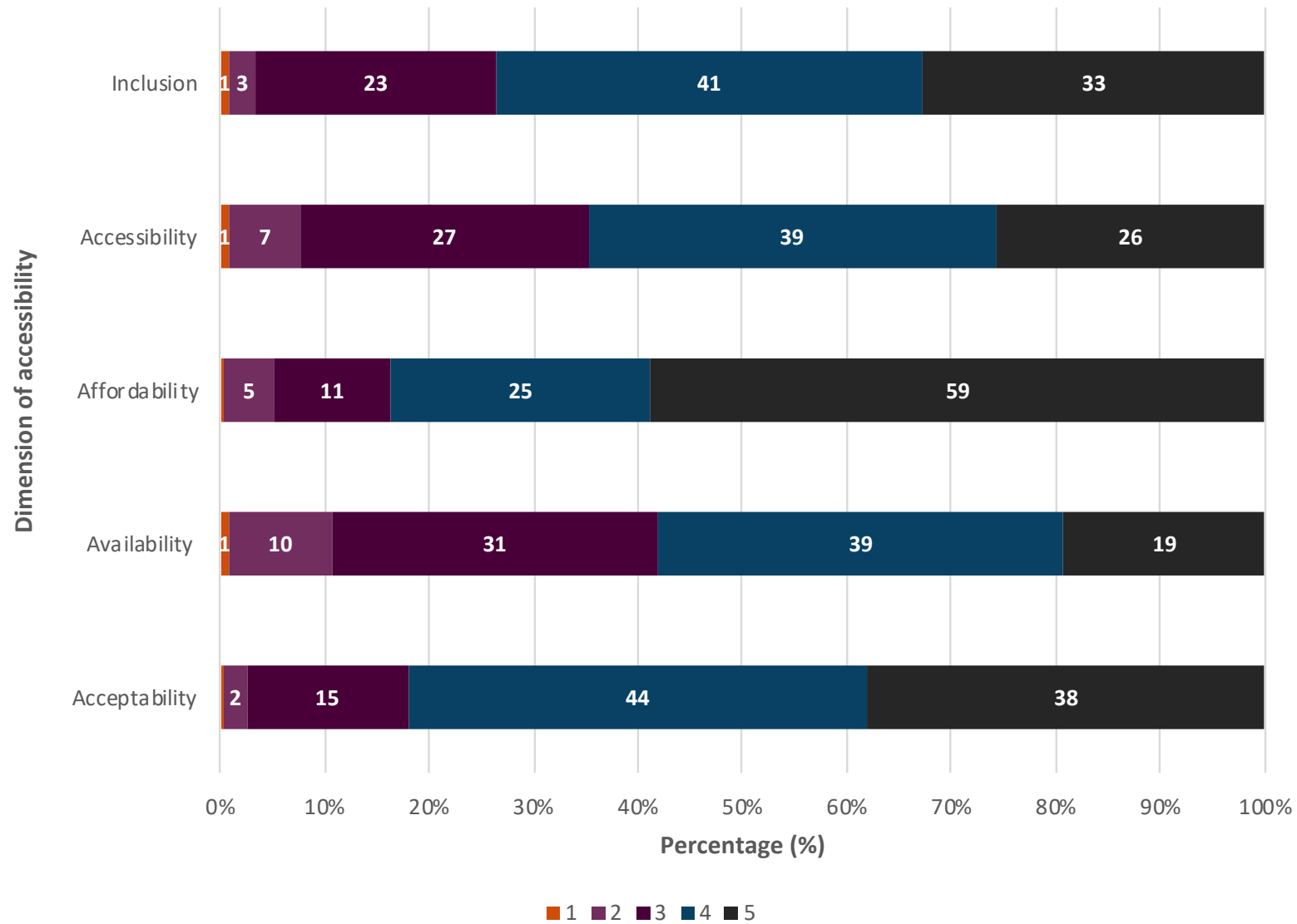
Figure 15: Perceived accessibility of organisations participation practice (n=239)

3.4. Monitoring and evaluating participation work

The majority of respondents monitor or evaluate their practice around supporting young people to participate in decision-making, and this happens in several ways. The most commonly reported method was to gather feedback from young people involved in the process (89%), followed by an evaluation of the impact of participation on the individual young people involved (66%) and an evaluation of the impact of participation on the organisation (49%). Collection and analysis of demographic information was also a frequently used method (46%), whereas independent external evaluations were the least used (10%). The 2010 survey found that evaluating the impact of participation on the organisation was much less common (37%). Whilst the differences in the sample make it difficult to draw strong inferences, it is encouraging that this aspect of monitoring and evaluation is now more commonplace. Organisational impact is important evidence of the value of this work as it highlights the intended systemic or structural impact that young people's participation in decision-making can have.
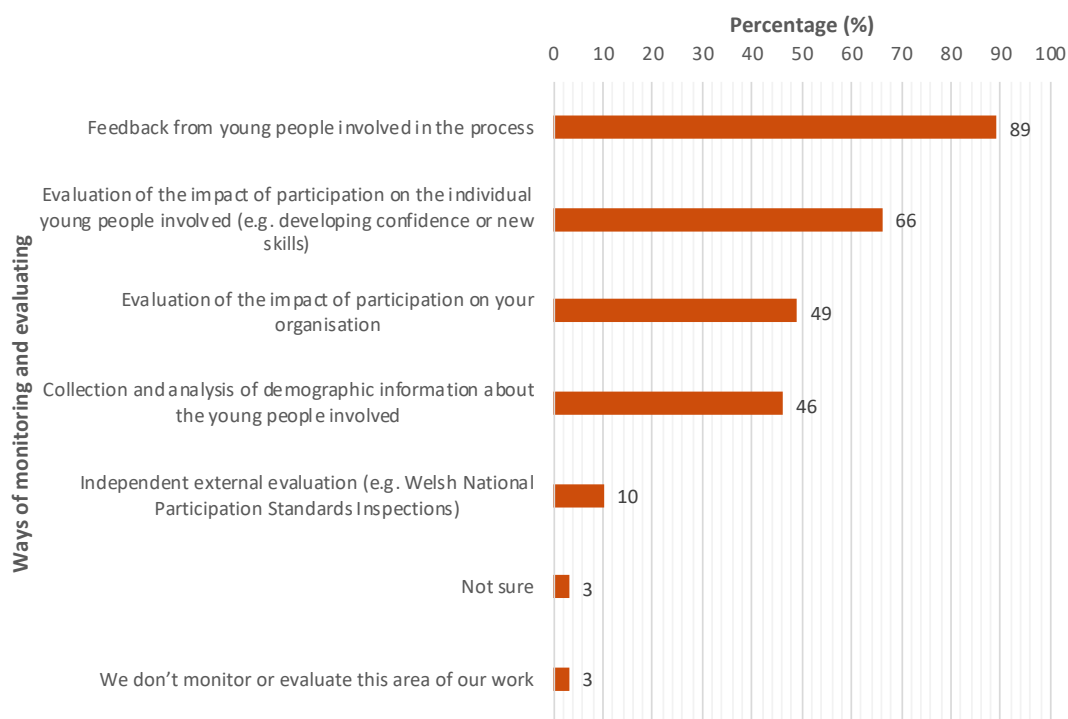

Figure 16: How participation practice is monitored and evaluated (n=244)

Respondents were also asked whether (and how) young people are involved in monitoring and evaluating their participation work. 77% of organisations reported involving young people in the evaluation, for example through completing surveys or focus groups. 36% of organisations involved young people as co-evaluators, although only 16% reported that young people lead the evaluation themselves. Whilst the percentage of organisations within which young people lead monitoring and evaluation around participation practice has not increased on 2010 figures, the number of organisations involving young people, and working with young people as co-evaluators, has (43% and 27% in 2010 respectively). There is a small minority of responding organisations (4%) that do not involve young people in monitoring and evaluating their participation practice.

3.5.   Resourcing for this work

Respondents were asked a number of questions about the resources and organisational infrastructure they have available to support this work. Over two-thirds of respondents (69%) have an organisational policy to support their work, and a further 19% have a policy in development. A small minority (12%) do not have an organisational policy around supporting young people to participate in decision-making. Figure 17 shows that, encouragingly, for 84% of respondents, this work is formally part of someone's job role, with responsibility either resting with a dedicated staff member (40%) or being spread across several roles (44%). 12% of respondents do not have this work embedded formally through staff responsibility.
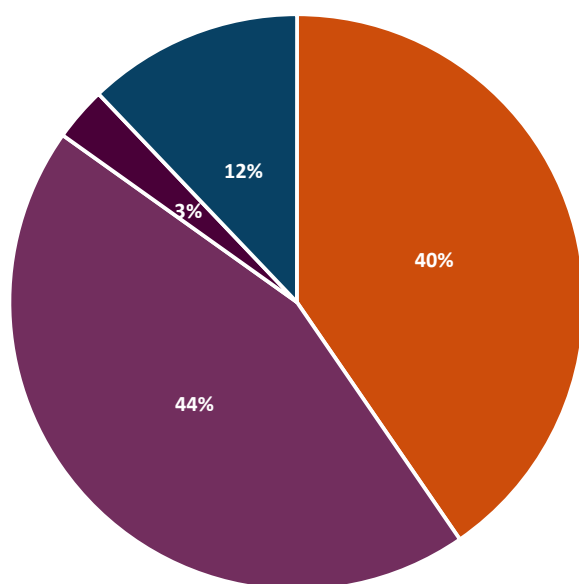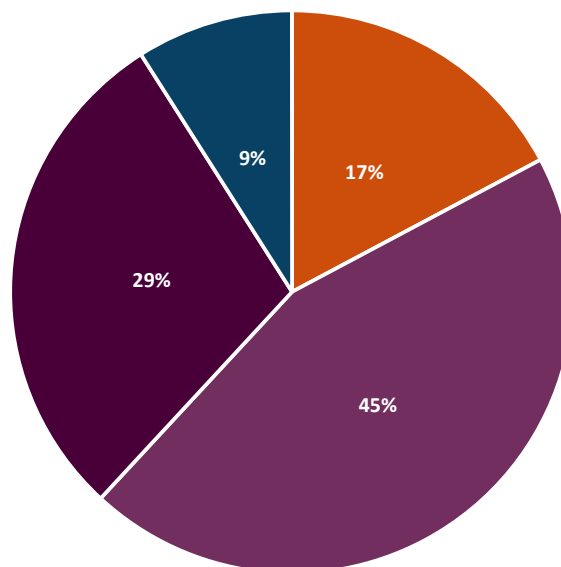

Figure 17: Percentage of organisations who have participation work formally included in staff job roles (n=242)

- Yes, we have a dedicated staff member
- Yes, but it is spread across a number of people's roles
- Yes, but a volunteer leads this work
- No

Figure 18: Percentage of organisations who have dedicated funding for participation work (n=244)

- Yes, a single funding stream
- Yes, it's part of other funding streams
- No
- Don't know

Whilst this work appears to be generally well embedded through a staff job role(s), Figure 18 shows that nearly two-thirds (29%) do not receive dedicated funding for this work. Whilst many do (63%), the fact that the youth sector is often so squeezed to deliver its core work with the funding available, suggests that many will struggle to prioritise participation work if they do not have dedicated funding to do this.
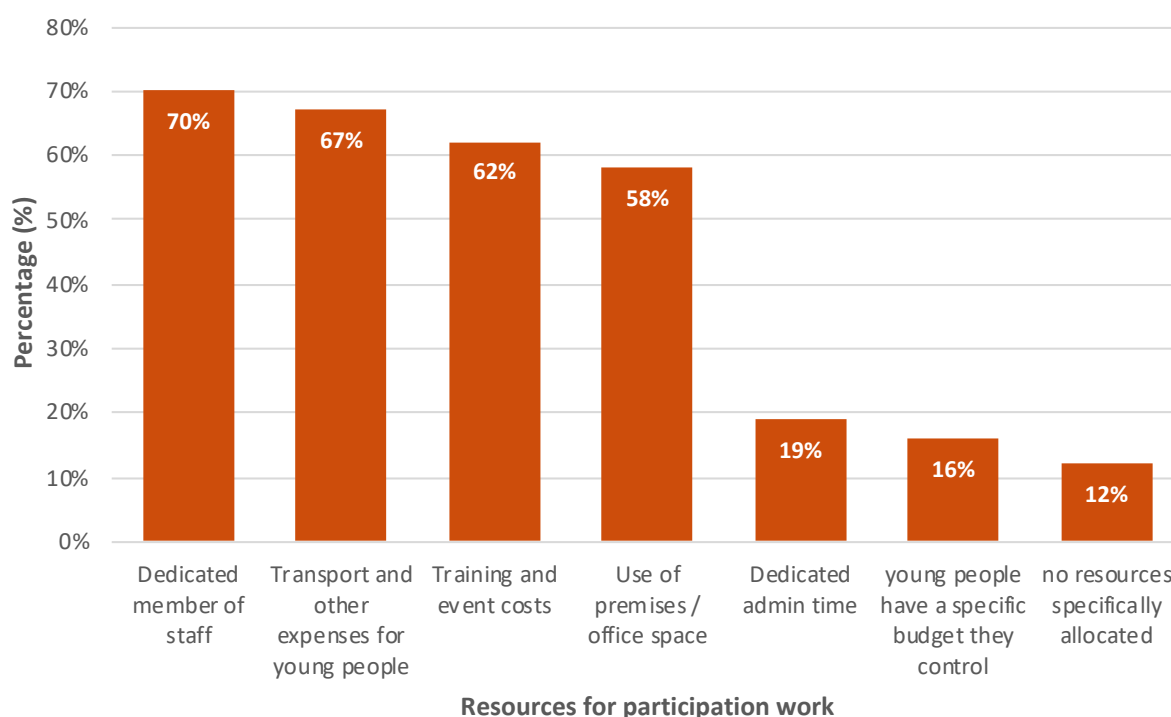

Figure 19: Resources that responding organisations have available to support their participation work with young people (n=238) (respondents could select more than one option)

Figure 19 shows that responding organisations do have a range of other resources available for this work, most commonly a dedicated staff member (70%), which correlated with this work being embedded in a large percentage of organisations through staff job roles. Transport and other expenses, training and event costs, and use of premises are also fairly common. When comparing between organisations, statutory organisations are more likely to have use of premises for this work, but voluntary organisations are more likely to have resources for transport and other expenses and training and event costs. Significantly, just 20% of responding organisations said that they have dedicated admin time for their participation work, and this is similar across statutory and voluntary organisations.

Alongside resources available for this work, responding organisations were asked about the training and support available to staff in their organisations to help them deliver participation work (Figure 20). Almost all responding organisations receive child protection and safeguarding training (93%). Equality, diversity and inclusion training (80%), training in risk assessments (73%), training for specific roles (62%), and training in participation techniques (61%) are also common. At the other end of the scale, no organisations stated that their staff receive training on children's rights and law, and less than a third receive training on evaluating participation work, advocacy and lobbying skills and research

methods. In open responses it was noted that training and support come in other forms too, for example:

- Reflective practice and monthly supervisions;
- Through a coordinated regional offer; and
- Through play-work, youth work, and related skills.

Some organisations suggested that a wide range of training is available externally and that staff could probably access the training they needed. This raised a key point around awareness and signposting, to ensure organisations not only consider their own training and support offer for staff, but also recognise where there are gaps and ensure staff are aware of opportunities to fill these gaps.
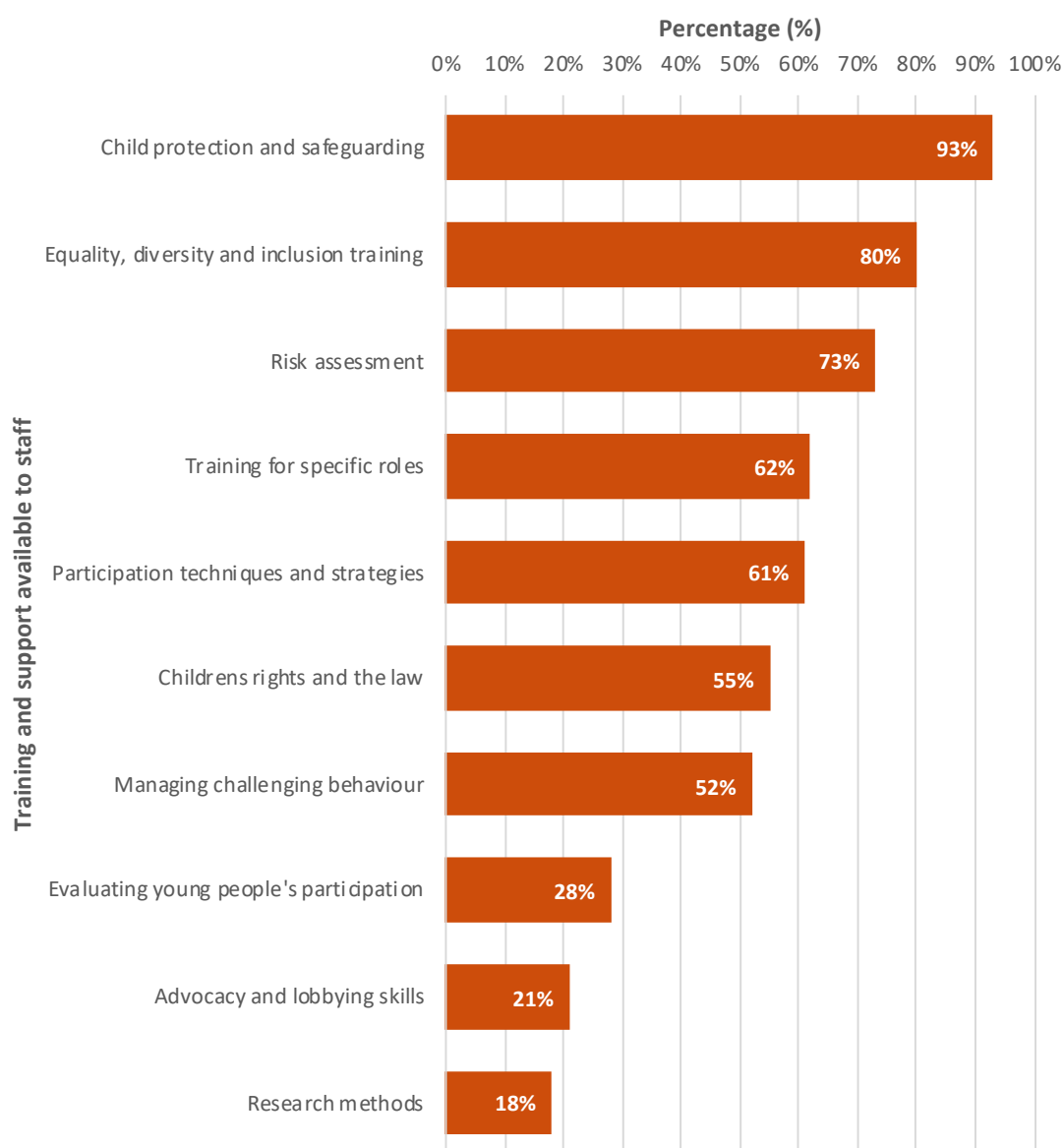
Percentage (%)

Training and support available to staff	Percentage
Child protection and safeguarding	93%
Equality, diversity and inclusion training	80%
Risk assessment	73%
Training for specific roles	62%
Participation techniques and strategies	61%
Childrens rights and the law	55%
Managing challenging behaviour	52%
Evaluating young people's participation	28%
Advocacy and lobbying skills	21%
Research methods	18%

Figure 20: Training and support available to staff in responding organisations to support their participation work with young people (n=221) (respondents could select more than one option)

Respondents were also asked about any additional training and support opportunities they thought should be available for staff in their organisations (Figure 21). The highest priorities for respondents were additional training and support in evaluating young people's participation (60%), advocacy and lobbying skills (57%), and research methods (46%). There was a relatively greater perceived need for training in evaluating young people's participation in statutory organisations. Over one-third of respondents also perceived a need for additional training around participation techniques (43%) and children's rights and law (40%), which suggests a perceived need within organisations for practical training for staff to help them to support young people to be involved in decision-making.
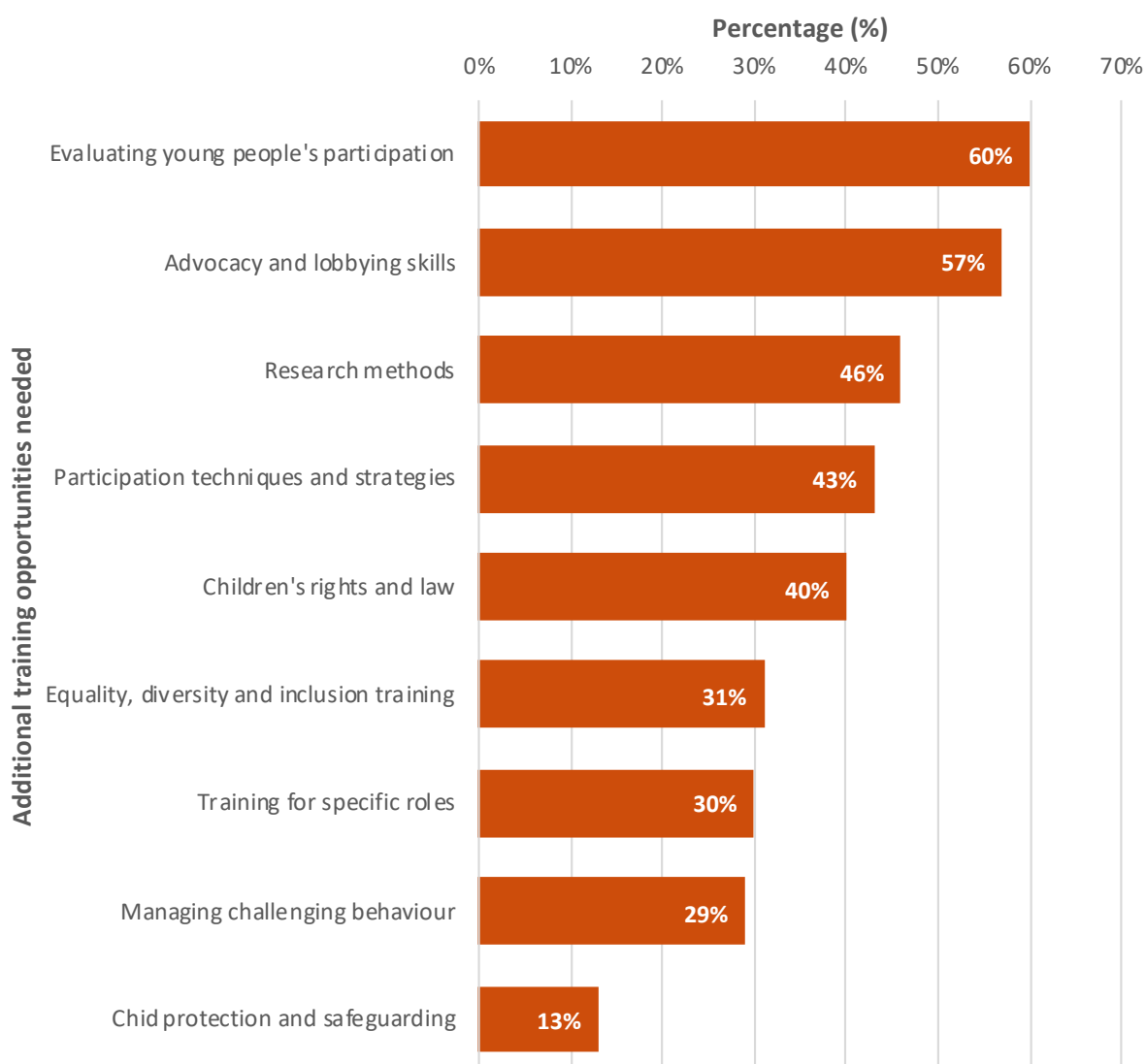

Figure 21: Additional training and support for staff that respondents perceive is needed in their organisations (n=212) (respondents could select more than one option)

3.6. Promoting young people's participation in decision-making

In the last section of the survey, responding organisations were invited to think about what is needed to promote young people's participation in decision-making. In terms of perceived actions needed at an organisational level (Figure 22), the priorities for respondents were better promoting the benefits of young people's participation (62%), measuring the impact of young people's participation (57%) and providing more practical support for young people to participate (55%). The top two priorities mirror those from the 2010 survey, although in 2010 better senior management commitment was ranked as the third highest. This is encouraging as it suggests that general support for young people's participation in decision-making has improved at an organisational level.

For organisations operating at a local level, more practical support for young people and better promotion of the benefits of this work were higher priorities than for organisations operating at a regional and national level. Organisations operating at a national level prioritised a need for training and capacity for staff to a greater extent than local or regional organisations. This may indicate a difference in skill set between organisations operating at different scales, whereby national level organisations are more likely to be infrastructure organisations, and therefore possibly less likely to have the skills or expertise to work directly with young people.
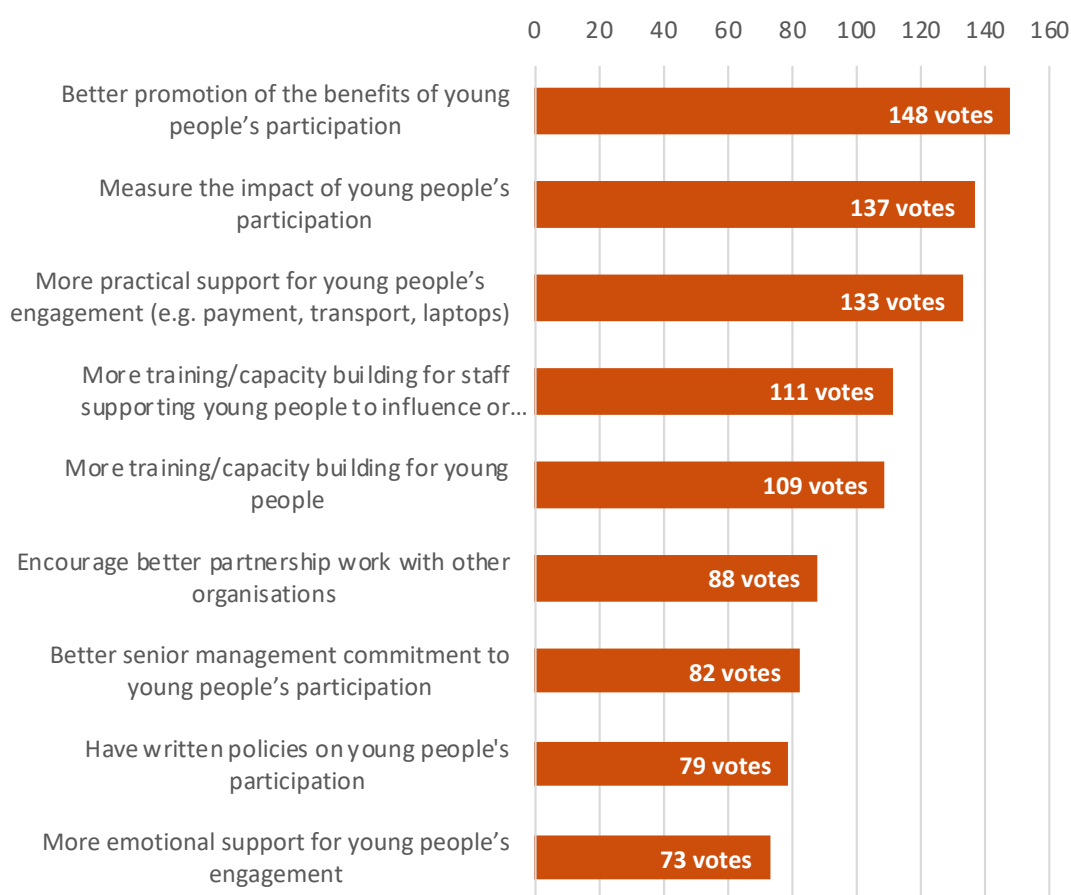

Figure 22: Actions that respondents perceived organisations need to take to better promote young people's participation (n=240) (respondents could select their top three)

Figures 23 and 24 show responding organisations' top suggestions for how local and national governments can promote young people's decision-making. At both scales, the need for long-term funding strongly emerged as the top priority, and this received almost double the number of votes than most other options. In addition, at a national level (Figure 24), organisations are calling for the government to commit to sustaining young people's participation through financial and legislative change. Incorporating requirements to consult young people in all funding streams and targeted funding to support specific initiatives were voted as second and third priorities respectively. Increasing legal requirements for the participation of young people was voted as the fourth priority by responding organisations. This mirrors the findings from the 2010 survey, although it is interesting to note that promoting attitudinal change appears to be a relatively lower priority than in 2010 (although receiving a similar number of votes, 69 in 2010 vs 66 in 2022). This is encouraging as it suggests that organisations that support young people to participate in decision-making perceive that broadly, society has become more accepting of young people's participation.

Figure 23: Actions that respondents perceived local government needs to take to better promote young people's participation (n=240) (respondents could select their top three)
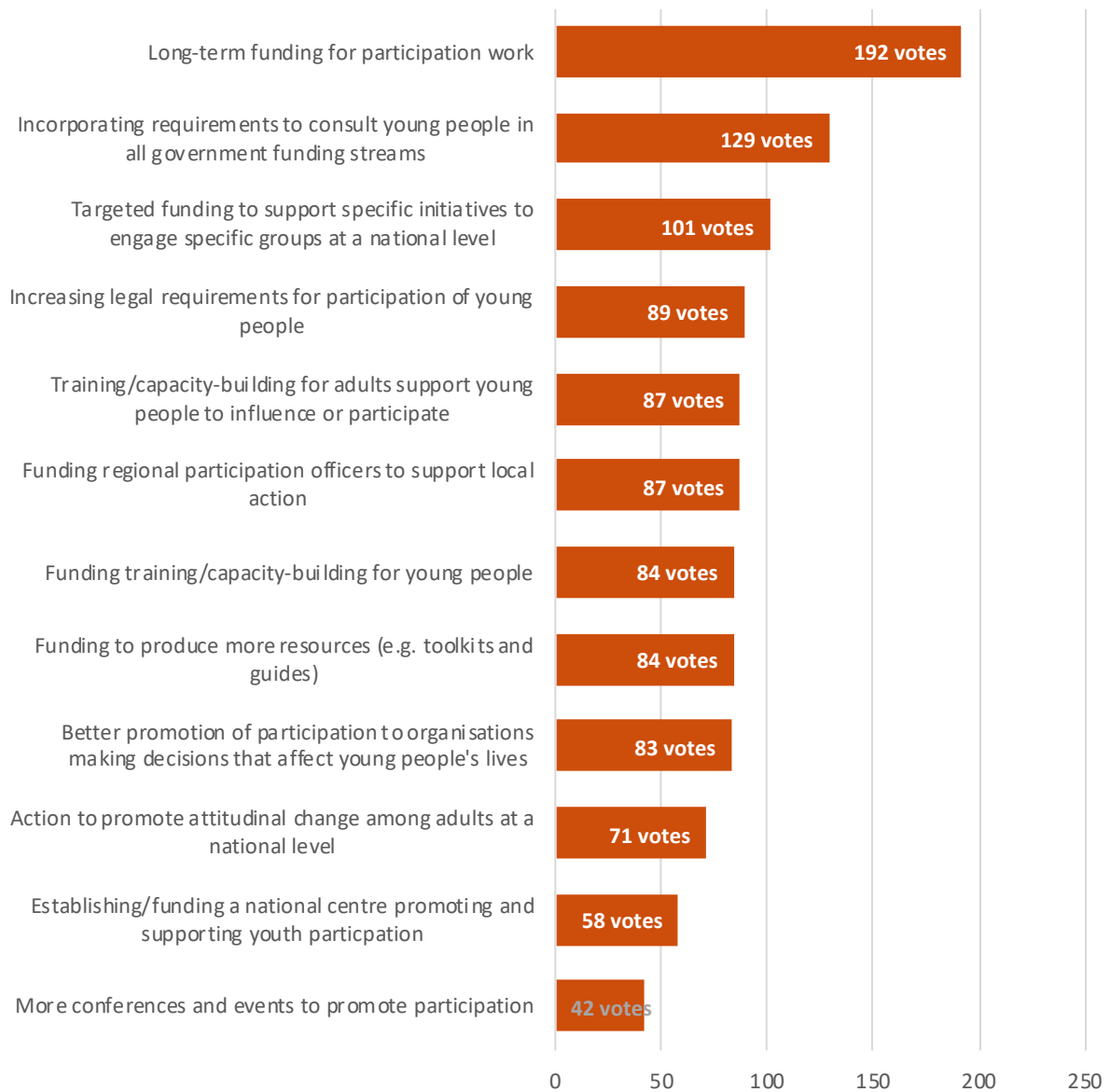
Figure 24: Actions that respondents perceived national government needs to take to better promote young people's participation (n=237) (respondents could select their top three)

Chart data:
- Long-term funding for participation work: 192 votes
- Incorporating requirements to consult young people in all government funding streams: 129 votes
- Targeted funding to support specific initiatives to engage specific groups at a national level: 101 votes
- Increasing legal requirements for participation of young people: 89 votes
- Training/capacity-building for adults support young people to influence or participate: 87 votes
- Funding regional participation officers to support local action: 87 votes
- Funding training/capacity-building for young people: 84 votes
- Funding to produce more resources (e.g. toolkits and guides): 84 votes
- Better promotion of participation to organisations making decisions that affect young people's lives: 83 votes
- Action to promote attitudinal change among adults at a national level: 71 votes
- Establishing/funding a national centre promoting and supporting youth participation: 58 votes
- More conferences and events to promote participation: 42 votes

4. Concluding comments

The survey aimed to better understand how young people are supported to participate in decision-making in the UK, in terms of who is supported to participate, how, what resource is available, and what else might be needed.

Supporting young people to participate in decision-making

Overall, the survey suggests that there is strong support for young people to participate in decision-making. Organisations suggest that young people participate in decision-making at a range of levels and decision-making processes. In particular, a significant number support young people to be involved in 'setting the agenda'. Over two-thirds of organisations have an organisation policy around young people's participation, and over three-quarters embed this work through staff job roles.

Levels of support are variable across groups of young people. Notably, young people under 11 are much less likely to be supported to engage in decision-making, and to a lesser extent young people from rural communities. This was expressed in both the quantitative and qualitative data – for younger young people, the challenge was deemed to be around their confidence and skills to participate, and for young people from rural locations the barriers we perceived to be more practical and logistical. Across marginalised groups of young people, there were no groups that appear to significantly lack support to participate in decision-making. However, as noted in Section 3.3, the data cannot differentiate between organisations that target these groups specifically and proactively, and those that work with them as part of their broader participation work. Organisations did allude to the challenge of adapting their participation practice to work with groups of young people who may have higher support needs (particularly when there is also a lack of resources available to enable this), and this likely accounts for the lower support for some particular groups of young people.

Whilst the broad picture is positive, the data also shows us that there are some areas that organisations recognise that need improvement, with 66% identifying that their ability to reach marginalised groups in their participation work could be improved. Accessibility (delivering activities that are geographically, socially, and economically suitable for all) and availability (providing an adequate volume of activity to meet demand) were highlighted as particular areas where organisations feel they can improve. Understanding what good accessibility is and the availability of participation practice looks like for different groups, will be an important next step to support organisations to improve their participation practice.

Resourcing participation work

One of the top barriers highlighted in participation work was insufficient resourcing to do this work well, and this theme continues throughout the data set. Notably, 29% of responding organisations do not have dedicated funding for this work and only 19% report having dedicated admin time. Our previous work in this area[5] suggests that listening and responding to young people takes significant time and resourcing, and that this is often an underestimated factor when

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[5] Our work on the Listening Fund revealed that the time and resource needed to get young people's buy-in can be underestimated, and that organisations need to set aside realistic timeframes and resources to do this. Read the full evaluation reports here: https://www.youthimpact.uk/listening-fund-evaluation.

approaching participation work. The potential consequence of not properly resourcing participation work is that it ends up being rushed, risks feeling/being tokenistic, and does not lead to meaningful action. This is possibly more damaging for young people than not participating in decision-making at all, as it is likely to be experienced as a disempowering and disenfranchising process. Given this, it is concerning that many organisations appear to not have adequate resourcing to undertake participation work. Future work should focus on better understanding what a minimum level of resourcing might look like, to help organisations understand both what they need, and what they should be advocating for, to support them in this work.

Clearly, the lack of financial resourcing is recognised through the perceived need on the part of local and national governments to prioritise long-term funding. There is also a recognition of the need to improve the of young people's participation in decision-making, which we would suggest is closely linked to creating a stronger evidence base for the value of participation work through measuring and communicating its impact. In this vein, whilst the majority of organisations undertook some form of monitoring and evaluation of their participation practice, respondents also indicated that there is a need for more training and support around evaluating young people's participation. It appears that alongside understanding what it means to adequately resource participation work, capacity building for impact measurement will be useful for organisations to make the case for better funding and wider resourcing.

References

Penchansky, R., & Thomas, J. W. (1981). The Concept of Access. *Medical Care,* 19(2): 127-140. DOI:10.1097/00005650-198102000-00001.

Treseder, P. (1997). *Empowering children and young people: training manual*. London: Save the Children and Children's Rights Office.

Appendices

Appendix A: Young people's participation in the decision-making survey

As part of our Young People's Voice, Influence and Power project, the Centre for Youth Impact is conducting a UK-wide survey of organisations working with and for young people. This survey aims to better understand how organisations support young people to influence the decision-making of others – those working across areas that affect young people's lives or on issues that matter to young people. We want to find out how this takes place, which young people take part and how they are supported to do so.

If you are an organisation that helps young people to engage in decision-making or supports them to influence others, then this survey is for you. This is an opportunity for your organisation to share your views on what works, what barriers you are facing, and what support you think is needed for young people's voices to be heard.

This project is collaboratively funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, BBC Children in Need and The National Lottery Community Fund. The aim of the project is to generate better insight into the scale of youth voice practice in the UK, including understanding more about the activities that support young people to have their voices heard, and which young people are reached and engaged in this process (and conversely, which are not).

About the Survey
The following survey includes 36 questions and is divided into five sections:

1. Organisational information
2. About your work supporting young people to participate decision making
3. Reaching young people
4. Support for young people's participation in decision-making
5. Ways to promote young people's involvement in decision-making.

The survey should take no more than 10-15 minutes to complete. The questions are designed to elicit information about how you support young people to have their voices heard and participate in decision-making on issues that affect their lives across the UK.

The survey closes on 31 July 2022.

What do we mean by participation?
We recognise that whilst 'participation' is a commonly used term in work with young people, there is no one fixed meaning or definition that has a universal agreement. There are also many different words used to refer to 'participation', including: involvement, empowerment, consultation, codesign, co-creation, co-production and youth voice.

For the purposes of this survey, we have adapted Treseder's (1997) definition, taking participation to mean **a process where someone influences decisions about their life and this leads to change**. This will likely cover many of the terms you are familiar with and use to describe your work, listed above.

Why complete the survey?

Whilst we hope that this survey will aid your reflective practice, we are also aiming to create a new data source for the sector, and we would love for you to contribute. This is an opportunity for your organisation to share your views on supporting young people to influence or participate in decision-making: what works, what barriers you are facing and what support you think is needed.

The data collected will be anonymised, collated and presented as a publicly available interactive resource, to support practitioners, funders and young people to understand the picture of youth voice practice across the UK. Your data will contribute to a national picture of youth voice, which can act as a springboard for improving the work that we are collectively doing in this area.

We anticipate that data insights generated through this project will:

- Enable funders to take a more informed approach to supporting youth voice activity across the UK;
- Allow organisations to understand how their practice compares to the national picture;
- Help practitioners understand how they can support diverse groups of young people to have a voice and influence, particularly those whose voices are least heard/acted upon and;
- Enable young people to understand the breadth of youth voice opportunities available to them and request different types of opportunities.

In addition, all organisations that complete the survey will be **entered into a prize draw** to receive a free online training session with a member of the Centre for Youth Impact team. Find out more here: https://bit.ly/3LR3akr

Section 1: Organisational information

1. **What is your job title?**
   o Board member/Trustee
   o Senior officer/manager
   o Staff working directly with young people
   o Volunteer
   o Other

2. **Is your organisation a:**
   o Charity
   o Community Interest Company
   o Charitable Trust
   o School
   o Local Authority
   o Voluntary
   o Other

3. **Location of your organisation:**

    a. If your organisation is part of a larger organisation with a regional/local delivery structure, what is the postcode of your head or national office?

    (e.g. YMCA, Scouts, a Trust or Federation)

    b. What is your organisation's local operating postcode? If applicable

4. **What level does your organisation operate at?**
- o Local
- o Regional
- o National

5. **What region/country do you operate in?** *Please tick all that apply*
- o Yorkshire and The Humber
- o London
- o North West
- o West Midlands
- o South West
- o South East
- o North East
- o East of England
- o East Midlands
- o All of the UK
- o England-wide
- o Wales
- o Scotland
- o Northern Ireland
- o Other

6. **Please indicate the age range of young people that your organisation works with/develops policies and services for:** *Please tick all that apply*
- o Under 5
- o 5 to 7
- o 7 to 11
- o 11 to 14
- o 14 to 16
- o 16 to 18
- o 18 to 21
- o 21+
- o We do not have a specific focus on young people
- o Don't know

7. What is the primary focus of your work?
- o Youth/community work
- o Education
- o Social care
- o Health and wellbeing
- o Crime/community safety
- o Employability

- o Housing/homelessness
- o Civic and political engagement
- o Volunteering/social action
- o Social justice
- o Environment
- o Other

8. Does your organisation undertake targeted work with any of the following? *Please tick all that apply*

- o Black and global majority groups (people who are Black, Asian, Brown, dual heritage, indigenous to the Global South, and or have been racialised as 'ethnic minorities')
- o Young people with disabilities
- o Young people labelled with SEN or ALN
- o Young people not in Education, Employment or Training
- o Young parents
- o Young carers
- o Young people living in poverty
- o LGBTQIA+ young people
- o Young people affected by violence/abuse/neglect
- o Young Refugees and Asylum Seekers
- o Care experienced young people
- o Young people with experience of homelessness
- o Young people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities
- o Young people with experience of the criminal justice system
- o Don't know
- o Other

9. How many employees and volunteers do you have in your organisation? *Please include full-time and part-time staff, plus volunteers*

- o 250+
- o 100 to 249
- o 50 to 99
- o 10 to 49
- o 9 or less

Section 2: About your work involving young people in decision-making

10. Supporting young people to participate in decision-making:

a. Does your organisation work to support young people to influence or participate in decision-making about policies, strategies, or services that influence a young person's life? *This includes those which the young person may or may not engage with personally*

- o Yes, we are currently supporting young people to influence or participate in decision-making
- o Yes, we have supported young people in the past
- o No, but we are planning to
- o No, and we have no plans to do so

b. **If yes, how and at what levels does your organisation support young people's views to influence or participate in decision-making about policies, strategies or services?** *Please tick all that apply*

- o We support young people to identify the policies, strategies or services they wish to influence
- o We support young people to share their ideas for developing new policies, strategies or services
- o We support young people to share their ideas for changing policies, strategies or services
- o We support young people to be involved in monitoring or evaluating services, strategies or policies
- o We support young people to be involved in the delivery of services
- o We support young people to be involved in decisions that are made about them as individuals
- o We do not support young people to share their views or have influence around any of these issues
- o Don't know
- o Other

11. Which issues do you support young people to influence or participate in decision-making about?
Please tick all that apply
- o Leisure/recreation/play
- o Youth services
- o Education
- o Health and wellbeing
- o Crime/community safety
- o Social care
- o Transport
- o Housing/homelessness
- o Regeneration
- o Environmental issues
- o Social justice
- o Local or national politics
- o Employability
- o Don't know
- o Other

12. Is supporting young people's participation in decision-making supported by an organisational policy or strategy within your organisation?
- o Yes
- o No
- o It's in development
- o Not sure

13. Is supporting young people's participation in decision-making formally part of anyone's job role/responsibilities?
- o Yes, we have a dedicated staff member
- o Yes, but it is spread across a number of people's roles
- o Yes, but a volunteer leads this work
- o No
- o Don't know

14. Which of the following methods and activities does your organisation use to enable young people to influence or participate in decision-making? *Please include all methods that are currently being used or have been used in the past 12 months. Please tick all that apply.*

a. Methods of enabling young people's participation
- o Informal dialogue (opportunities for adults working directly with young people on a day-to-day basis to listen to their views as part of regular interaction)

- Facilitated dialogue (structured and intentional conversations with young people where the adult has specific lines of enquiry they want to explore)
- Open feedback (methods that allow young people to share their views and feedback in their own time, and with broad parameters on topic or theme)
- Surveys (questions aimed at eliciting specific information about young people's views, ideas and experiences)
- Creative exploration (activities that allow young people to express views, ideas and experiences through creative methods, usually in response to broad themes set by adults)
- Q&A sessions (young people are able to meet with decision-makers and ask questions they design or respond to questions from decision makers)
- Testing/simulation (young people testing or assessing a service)
- Youth platforming (young people able to share their views, ideas and experiences around a particular topic determined by the young people themselves)

b. **Activities that young people can engage in as part of decision-making:** *Activities may be youth-led*
- Consultation documents designed for young people
- Interactive websites
- E-mail/text-messaging
- Polls/surveys
- Public meetings and events for young people
- Youth councils/forums
- Ongoing informal discussion with young people
- Focus groups
- Arts-based/creative projects
- Young people's service user groups
- Consultation sessions with young people
- Other

15. **What specific tasks that enable young people to participate in decision-making are undertaken by young people in your organisation?** *Please tick all that apply. Please note these options all refer to opportunities outside your organisation.*
- Representing the views of young people in general/more broadly (i.e. beyond the young people directly participating)
- Attending Board or senior management meetings
- Recruiting and selecting staff
- Organising events
- Promoting services
- Assessing services (e.g.: mystery shopping, inspections)
- Assessing grant applications
- Training other young people (including peer education or mentoring)
- Developing policies, strategies, objectives or plans
- Researching the needs of young people locally
- Working with the wider community to improve relationships
- Helping secure money and resources
- Campaigning for change in policy and provision
- Training staff and/or volunteers
- Developing youth charters
- Mapping existing provisions locally
- Developing new provisions or services
- Developing or using existing frameworks for assessing services (e.g.: kite-marking,
- Wales National Participation Standards Kite Mark)

- Developing complaints procedures
- Setting budgets
- Developing resources (e.g.: toolkits or best practice guides)
- Don't know
- We do not support young people to be involved in any tasks like those listed above
- Other

16. How has your practice to support young people's participation in decision-making been monitored or evaluated? *Please tick all that apply*
- Feedback from young people involved in the process
- Monitoring of attendance/engagement in the participation process
- Evaluation of the impact of participation on the individual young people involved
- (e.g. developing confidence or new skills)
- Collection and analysis of demographic information about the young people involved
- Evaluation of the impact of participation on your organisation
- Independent external evaluation (e.g. Welsh National Participation Standards Inspections)
- Not sure
- We don't monitor or evaluate this area of our work
- Other

17. How does your organisation involve young people in evaluating decision-making practices specifically? *Please tick all that apply*
- Young people contribute to evaluation by completing surveys etc.
- Young people are co-evaluators (i.e. young people lead the evaluation alongside adults)
- Young people lead the evaluation themselves
- National Young Inspectors assessed our organisation on our adherence to the
- National Participation Standards in Wales (Welsh organisations)
- Local Young Inspectors assessed our organisation on our adherence to the National
- Participation Standards in Wales (Welsh organisations)
- Not sure
- We don't involve young people in evaluating participation practices
- Other

18. How do you inform young people of the contribution their views and feedback have made?
Please tick all that apply
- 'You said we did' boards
- Emails / letters
- Text / phone call / WhatsApp
- Newsletters
- Informal conversation
- Social media
- On your website
- Not sure
- We don't inform young people of the contribution their feedback has made
- Other

Section 3: Reaching young people

19. **In the past 12 months, which age groups of young people have your organisation supported to influence or participate in decision-making?** *Please note this question differs from those in Section 1, which asked about the young people that you work with in your organisation. This question is asking about the young people you support to influence or participate in decision-making.*

	We don't support this group	We support this group	We strongly support this group
Under 5	○	○	○
5 to 7	○	○	○
7 to 11	○	○	○
11 to 14	○	○	○
14 to 16	○	○	○
16 to 18	○	○	○
18 to 21	○	○	○
21+	○	○	○

20. **In the past 12 months, which gender groups of young people have your organisation supported to influence or participate in decision-making?**

	We don't support this group	We support this group	We strongly support this group
Male	○	○	○
Female	○	○	○
Self-describing young people (e.g., non-binary, gender fluid, agender)	○	○	○

21. **In the past 12 months, has your organisation supported young people from urban or rural locations to influence or participate in decision-making?**

	We don't support this group	We support this group	We strongly support this group
Urban areas	◯	◯	◯
Rural areas	◯	◯	◯

22. **In the past 12 months, which marginalised groups of young people has your organisation supported to influence or participate in decision-making?** *Please note this question differs from those in Section 1, which asked about the young people that you work with in your organisation. This question is asking about the young people you support to influence or participate in decision-making.*

	We don't support this group	We support this group	We strongly support this group
Black and global majority groups (people who are Black, Asian, Brown, dual-heritage, indigenous to the Global South, and or have been racialised as 'ethnic minorities)	◯	◯	◯
Young people with disabilities	◯	◯	◯
Young people labelled with SEND or ALN	◯	◯	◯
Young people not in Education, Employment or Training	◯	◯	◯
Young parents	◯	◯	◯
Young carers	◯	◯	◯

Young people living in poverty	○	○	○
LGBTQIA+ young people	○	○	○
Young people affected by violence/abuse/neglect	○	○	○
Young Refugees and Asylum Seekers	○	○	○
Care experienced young people	○	○	○
Young people with experience of homelessness	○	○	○
Young people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities	○	○	○

23. **In your opinion, how well does your organisation involve marginalised groups in participation activities?**
    o Very well
    o Quite well
    o Not very well
    o Not at all well
    o Not sure

24. **Have you experienced any barriers to supporting young people, or particular groups of young people, to influence or participate in decision-making? If so how/please tell us more**
    ………..
    ………..
    ………..

25. **Have you identified effective ways to address this / made any adaptations to make young people's participation in decision-making more accessible? If yes, please explain how**
    ………..
    ………..
    ………..

26. **How would you rate the accessibility of your practice that supports young people to influence or participate decision-making? Please rate accessibility across these five domains below:**
    The domains of accessibility listed are based on Penchansky and Thomas' (1981) five dimensions of access framework which is widely applied in health care settings, and have been adapted to suit youth work participation contexts.

	1 – not at all	2	3	4	5 – a great extent
Acceptability (activities take into account young people's preferences)	○	○	○	○	○

Availability (adequate volume of activity to meet demand)	○	○	○	○	○
Affordability (young people who want to participate can afford to)	○	○	○	○	○
Accessibility (activities are geographically, socially and economically suitable for all)	○	○	○	○	○
Accommodation/inclusion (activities are delivered to be inclusive for all young people to participate)	○	○	○	○	○

Section 4: Support for young people's participation in decision-making

27. **Does your organisation receive any funding dedicated to supporting young people to influence or participate in decision-making?**
    o   Yes, a single funding stream
    o   Yes, but it's part of other funding streams
    o   No
    o   Don't know

28. **What resources are available to support young people to influence or participate in decision-making?** *Please tick all that apply and if possible give details of the budget that young people control, or any resources in kind, if applicable.*
    o   Dedicated member of staff (e.g. a participation lead)
    o   Transport and other expenses for young people
    o   Training and events costs
    o   Use of premises/office space
    o   Young people have a specific budget that they control (please give details below)
    o   Dedicated admin time
    o   No resources specifically allocated to participation
    o   Other (please specify):……….…………………………………………………………………

    Additional details of budget or resources where applicable:……………………………………

29. **Do adults involved in your organisation receive training and/or support related to supporting young people to influence or participation in decision-making?** *Please tick the response that applies to the different types of staff*

	Yes	No	Not sure	N/A
Board members/trustees	○	○	○	○
Senior staff member	○	○	○	○

Staff working directly with
young people   ◯   ◯   ◯   ◯

Volunteers working directly
with young people   ◯   ◯   ◯   ◯

30. If adults in your organisation receive training/support, what form does this take? *Please tick all that apply*
- o   Training for specific roles, e.g., training to support young people to be involved in recruitment processes
- o   Child protection and safeguarding
- o   Equality diversity and inclusion training (e.g. how to support young from particular groups or backgrounds)
- o   Participation techniques and strategies
- o   Risk assessment
- o   Children's rights and the law
- o   Evaluating children's participation
- o   Managing challenging behaviour
- o   Research methods
- o   Advocacy and lobbying skills
- o   Don't know
- o   Other

31. What additional training opportunities do you think there should be for staff in your organisation?
- o   Training for specific roles, e.g., recruitment
- o   Child protection and safeguarding
- o   Equality, diversity and inclusion training (e.g. how to support young people from particular groups or backgrounds)
- o   Participation techniques and strategies
- o   Risk assessment
- o   Children's rights and the law
- o   Evaluating children's participation
- o   Managing challenging behaviour
- o   Research methods
- o   No more training
- o   Don't know
- o   Other

32. What training and support do young people involved in influencing and decision-making activities receive relating to their participation? *Please tick all that apply*
- o   Training for specific roles they may take, e.g., recruitment or inspection
- o   Training to explain organisational procedures and structures
- o   Training on democratic procedures and/or skills training
- o   Peer mentoring
- o   Youth work/ pastoral support
- o   Pairing /mentoring by adults (including staff, board members/trustees)
- o   Access to staff training
- o   Other

33. What incentives and/or recognition do young people involved in decision-making receive?
   Please tick all that apply
   o   Providing paid employment for young people to promote participation
   o   Cash payment for involvement in specific projects/activities
   o   Gift vouchers or incentives for involvement in specific projects/activities
   o   Expenses for travel
   o   Group events (meals, bowling etc.)
   o   Accreditation
   o   Certificates
   o   Ceremonies or celebration events
   o   References/CV building
   o   Other
   o   None of these

Section 5: Ways to promote young people's involvement in decision-making

34. How significant do you perceive the following potential barriers to involving young people in decision-making?

	Major barrier	Minor barrier	Not a barrier
Lack of funding	○	○	○
Lack of incentives for staff to promote young people's participation	○	○	○
Support from other organisations	○	○	○
Young people often don't recognise the benefits of participation so are not willingly engage	○	○	○
Lack of training opportunities for participation workers to help them meaningfully engage with young people	○	○	○
Lack of written policies on young people's participation within my organisation	○	○	○
Negative public attitudes towards young people	○	○	○

Problems keeping young people interested in participation work	○	○	○
Lack of senior management commitment to young people's participation	○	○	○
Staff availability to support participation	○	○	○
Difficulty recruiting appropriate young people	○	○	○
Hard to effect tangible change as a result of young people's participation	○	○	○
Young people are too busy (with learning, work or caring, for example) to sustain their engagement in participation activities	○	○	○
Young people need more specialist emotional support to engage than my organisation is able to offer	○	○	○
Young people need more practical support (e.g.: transport or access to laptops) than my organisation is able to offer	○	○	○

35. **What can organisations do to promote young people's What can organisations do to promote young people's involvement in decision-making? Involvement in decision-making?** *Please tick the THREE actions you think are most important*
    o Measure the impact of young people's participation
    o Better promotion of the benefits of young people's participation
    o Better senior management commitment to young people's participation
    o More training/capacity building for young people
    o More training/capacity building for staff supporting young people to influence or participate
    o Encourage better partnership work with other organisations
    o Have written policies on young people's participation
    o More practical support for young people's engagement (e.g.: payment, transport, laptops)
    o More emotional support for young people's engagement
    o Other

36. **Governmental support for young people's participation in decision-making**

    a. **What should Local Government do to promote young people's involvement in decision-making?** *Below is a list of nine approaches that Local Government could take to improve young people's effective participation in decision-making. Please tick the THREE approaches which you think are most important.*
       o Long-term funding for participation work
       o Appointing champions or local lead infrastructure organisations to support young people's participation activity
       o Action to promote attitudinal change among adults in the local area

- Targeted funding to support specific initiatives to engage specific groups in local issues
- Better promotion of participation to organisations making decisions that affect young people's lives
- Training/capacity-building for adults supporting young people to influence or participate
- More resources (e.g. toolkits and guides) to help organisations support young people to influence or participate in decision-making
- Training/capacity-building for young people to support their participation
- More local conferences and events to promote participation
- Other

b. **What should National Government do to promote young people's involvement in decision-making within organisations?** *Below is a list of twelve approaches that Local Government could take to improve young people's effective participation in decision-making. Please tick the THREE approaches which you think are most important.*
- Long-term funding for participation work
- Incorporating requirements to consult young people in all government funding streams
- Increasing legal requirements for the participation of young people
- Action to promote attitudinal change among adults at a national level
- Targeted funding to support specific initiatives to engage specific groups at a national level
- Better promotion of participation to organisations making decisions that affect young people's lives
- Training/capacity-building for adults supporting young people to influence or participate
- Funding to produce more resources (e.g., toolkits and guides) for supporting participation work
- Funding training/capacity-building for young people to support their participation
- Funding regional participation officers to support local action
- Establishing/funding a national centre promoting and supporting youth participation
- More conferences and events to promote participation
- Other

Appendix B: Survey partners

- Children in Wales
- Coram Voice
- Consortium
- Council for Disabled Children
- EP:IC
- Ethnic Youth Support Team (EYST) Wales
- The Foyer Federation
- Just Like Us
- National Participation Forum
- Stonewall
- Ubele Collective
- Voice from Care Cymru
- Voices of Young People in Care (VOYPIC)
- We Belong
- Who Cares? Scotland
- Young Focus North East
- Young Focus North West
- Young Focus South West
- Young Focus West Midlands
- Young Leicestershire
- Youth Employment UK
- YouthLink Scotland
- Youth Work Unit Yorkshire & Humber