



Scotland Open Government National Action Plan - Young people

August 2021





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1. Introduction

1.1 Acknowledgments

We acknowledge the active presence of **7 participants** for bringing their insights, knowledge, experience and contribution for the Scottish Open Government National Action Plan in a fruitful, constructive and open exchange of perceptions, opinions and ideas about **young people being involved in decisions, climate & health & social care.**

We would like to acknowledge the organizing team, consisting of Doreen Grove, Amy Watson, Maddie Fleming, all working for Scotland Open Government, Anthony Zacharzewski, Democratic society. We would like to acknowledge the support of Annie Cook and Sophie Kiesouw at Democratic Society, as facilitators team that contributed along the organisation, implementation, selection of participants and carrying out of the workshops.

We would like to thank the great support of Pam Rigby, a government youth officer from Scottish Borders, in gathering the group of young people and motivating them to share their input. Without it we wouldn't have been able to gather this group.

We are thankful for all the help from every individual and organisations that supported us in preparing and reaching out to participants.

We would like to give a special thanks and gratitude to all youth participants of the workshops, for their time, contribution, ideas and inspiration.

1.2 Context & Purpose Scotland Open Government National Action Plan

The Scottish Government is working with civil society to write a new National Action Plan for Open Government. In five idea generation workshops in July 2021, a broadly representative group of volunteers will help shape the new plan with their ideas and ambitions on open government.

The input will lead to making Scottish Government more open, transparent and accountable to its citizens and communities.












The workshop is happening online via a Zoom video conference call and takes about 1.5 hours. Part of the workshops have been organized in the morning, part of them in the evening to ensure people have other commitments during daytime could make it to the evening sessions.

Workshop dates

- Health: 20 July, 9.30 - 12.00, all ages welcome
- Climate: 20 July, 18.30 - 21.00, all ages welcome
- Financial Transparency: 29 July, 9.30 - 12.00, all ages welcome
- Participation: 29 July, 18.30 - 21.00, all ages welcome
- Data: 30 July, 9.30 - 12.00, all ages welcome
- Special event for young people under 18, all 5 themes: 2nd August 18.00-19.30

1.3 Agenda and questions of the workshops

Agenda for the workshop

- 18:00 Intro & icebreaker 
- 18:07 Scotland Open Government intro 
- 18:15 5 main topics (overview) Scotland Open Government intro 
- 18:23 Vote for top 2 topics 
- 18:28 Q&A 
- 18:35 Idea generation round one (25 min) 
- 19:00 Idea generation round two (25 min) 
- 19:25 Next steps, how to stay involved 
- 19:30 End 

Framing questions

1. How do you feel about the way you as a young person are currently involved in decisions around **health & social care** and/or how they are made by the government? (open, accountable, participatory, using data ethically)
2. How do you feel about the way you as a young person are currently involved in decisions around **climate** and/or how they are made by the government? (open, accountable, participatory, using data ethically)



2. Outcomes

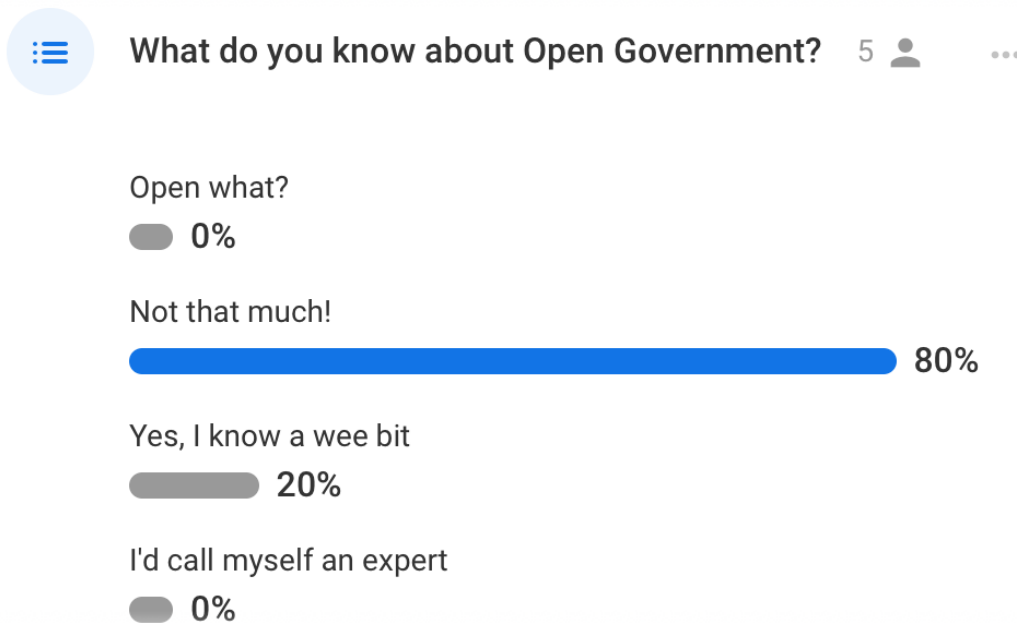
2.1 Description of Participants and Selection criteria

A total number of **12 young people** registered to the young people’s workshop, among the total number of participants, **7** participated in the event, with **6** from the Scottish Borders and **1** from Glasgow. We aimed to reach young people through social media and network organisations including YouthLink, YoungScot, Scottish Youth Parliament, CLD Standards Council Scotland which has youth workers, Police Scotland.

Because the young people were recruited through a trusted partner, we haven’t captured any data about them in terms of gender, ethnicity and age.

What do young people participants know about Open Government?

We asked participants at the beginning of the workshop “*What do you know about Open Government?*” of **7** participants, **5** completed the sli-do activity with the majority saying they know “*not that much*”.

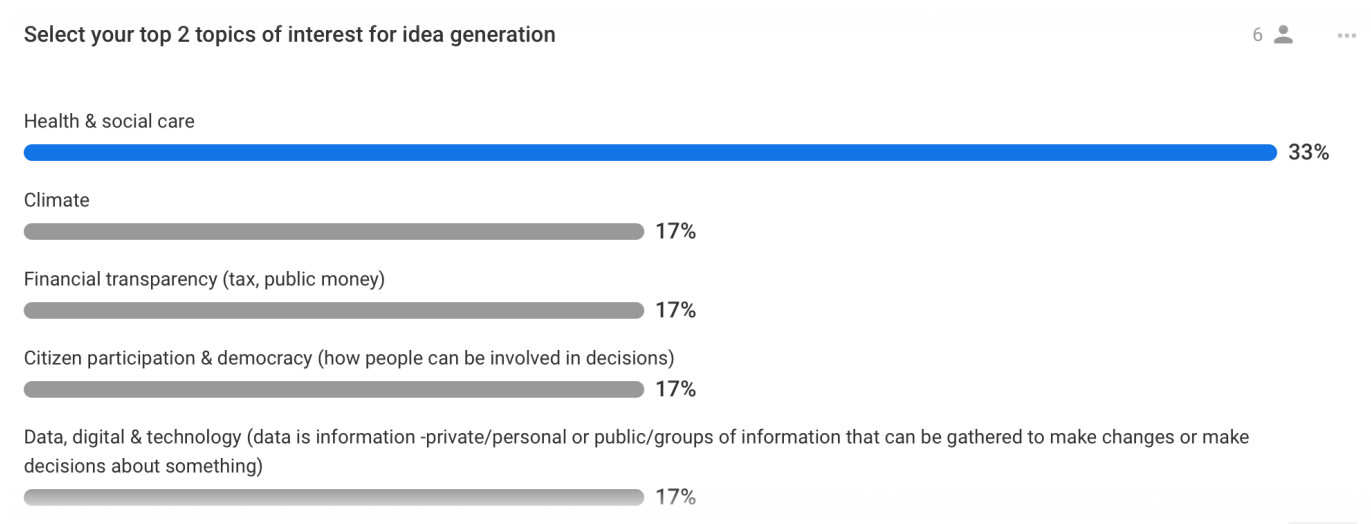




2.2 Outcomes and notes

Health & Social Care & Climate Summary Overview

Participants had a variety of interesting questions and discussions. The next paragraphs will summarize these discussions and key themes that came out of the workshop, while the raw data of the break-out room discussions can be found on the jamboards (see Appendix). We asked participants in this workshop what top 2 topics out of the 5 possibilities they would like to talk about and they chose Health and social care and Climate.



Overall, participants felt the most important ideas to take forward in Scotland’s Open Government National Action Plan around **Health and social care** were that there should be more and better ways young people can get involved in decision making as currently they don’t feel listened to or are encourage to get involved which is losing their trust in Government and when they are involved and share their thoughts and ideas, they are not told what is done as an outcome.

Participants recognised the challenges of the pandemic, however felt young people were referred to after the fact, the speed was too slow and by then it might be too late. For example, the Government did a survey on mental health but by then it was way too late to change anything. Participants said that information on the pandemic kept changing and it often left young people unsure



on what next, the Government did not consult with young people on decisions impacting them. Participants called for improved information and confidence-building amongst other young people so that they can be comfortable talking to decision-makers but at the moment it feels too complicated. They also feel schools should be asking them about education and what young people want to talk about as currently there is a culture amongst teachers where young people don't feel listened to, teachers feel young people don't have the responsibility to make change which vice versa negatively consequently feeds on young people who then feel it is not up to them.

Participants also called for activism to be integrated into the curriculum of excellence in education, more children and young people's citizen assemblies where they can make decisions and recommendations to Government and they would like to see the changes from what young people are trying to achieve versus what is being done by Government as a consequence.

Climate Summary Overview

With regards to **climate**, participants felt that the most important ideas to take forward in Scotland's Open Government National Action Plan were being more involved in decisions and actions around climate, also in their schools. Young people feel unheard and left out when it comes to climate. There is a need for more age balance in climate decisions. Give more power to the Youth Parliament, they are feeling the pressure because of their age, sometimes even climate anxiety, the older generation feels less urgency to act. The Scottish Government should focus more on letting people work together on climate action and focus more on climate justice. There is a huge need for more opportunities for youth to get involved, for example in COP26.

Discussions

Round I: Health & social care

- 1. How do you feel about the way you as a young person are currently involved in decisions around health & social care and/or how they are made by the government? (open, accountable, participatory, using data ethically)*

Don't feel listened to/empty promises

- Involved overall very little.



- Felt very left out.
- Need to be reassured that it will actually do something rather than promises that lead to nothing.
- Health survey etc but not heard anything back from that. Limited questions and no proper involvement in it. "trying to make you feel involved but not quite involvement".
- Survey form from school. But schools don't really encourage young people to write in the survey.
- Got involved through pupil council, through a budget- from that there were a lot of gaps for people that haven't been filled.
- People might speak up but they don't feel like they get listened to and I feel like I've been talking for a while on these issues and now a lot of folk feel disheartened about it. Lost faith in the government to do something.

Too late

- Challenging because of pandemic- to refer to young people after the fact it might be too late. Practicality is the speed of things means young people might get left behind.
- I know the government did have a survey on their mental health but it was way too late to change anything.

Uncertainty

- During the pandemic, information about the pandemic kept changing and it often left us unsure on what the next step was going to be. The government did not consult with the young people on the decisions impacting them, this can be seen in the help with young people's mental health, education and more.

Lack of information & confidence

- I want more young people to be comfortable with speaking to people who are making the decisions but not sure how it seems too complicated.
- Schools should be asking young people about education. Young people need to talk about it more. Some of the MSYP's are starting to talk about it but a lot of young people don't know about this.

Teacher & education culture

- Cultural among teachers- young people don't feel listened to. Teachers don't feel young people have the responsibility to make that change (vice versa YP don't feel it's up to them).
- Young people don't feel like they're going to be heard even if they talk about it. What will the teacher do?



- Wellbeing was not a priority for schools. it might have been a priority for the government. Logistics- teachers/admin are more concerned about teacher shortages than the wellbeing of students in school.

Mental health

- Massive impact on mental health - pressure, missed out on school.
- Covid- missed out on school, mental health, mental health service lacking.
- NHS services for mental health- let so many people down. Needs to be changed in the NHS. Government in charge of funding - always gets ignored & pushed back. There properly needs to be a change. It is not suitable for children/YP today. It doesn't function.
- There's a lot of talk around mental health but little to no prevention or help from services.
- For the schools and mental health, at my school they do a lot of check-ins and try their hardest to help but I think that they are overwhelmed.

2. How would you like to be involved? (i.e surveys and feedback and information on what happened?)

- Integrate activism into curriculum of excellence.
- Children's climate citizen assembly (group of children making decisions/recommendations on climate). young people's citizen assemblies would be useful.
- Yes we would see the change in what is being done/what they're trying to do.
- Currently standing as candidate for youth parliament & want to participate in a data panel for Youngscot after data OG workshop.

Round II: Climate

1. How do you feel about the way you as a young person are currently involved in decisions around climate and/or how they are made by the government? (open, accountable, participatory, using data ethically) Do you feel you have enough information?

A lot of talk but no action

- Scottish Government still needs to up their climate credentials but otherwise doing well with climate activity. Can understand why it's had more of a push than health and social care. Maybe SG feels they're on top of climate.
- I think that we hear a lot on the news about climate change but don't feel like we're involved in the discussions and decisions.



- Lots of advertisement and voice about it in school but barely any actual action or representation.

Young people not being heard or involved

- I feel left out and unheard.
- This is slightly different from the question but I feel like our voices aren't being listened to and young people aren't always sure on what to do or how to get heard and once you've been overlooked for a while I've noticed that they stop trying to be heard.

Climate anxiety

- People are nervous that it's too late to change it. People stop trying to be heard and they feel overlooked.
- Welfare of people- feel not going to make a difference because it's so big.

Age balance

- YP (Youth Parliament) does have a passion for climate change- no time for saving the planet. Older people might not care because they're not going to be here so it's on the back-burner and that's why YP are so passionate about it.
- General feeling among YP needing to make change but older generation in charge (Greta, groups & individuals) but you can see the hate Greta gets for being young & doing what she's doing.
- There's no trust from the older generation on YP but YP should be making decisions as we're going to have to deal with it.

Working together

- People can do individual things but need massive backing from the Government to listen to what young people are trying to say. There are a lot more discussion groups etc but lacking key links between everyone in Scotland.
- If lots of YP come together you would find key links and trends- a lot of the info YP are getting/researching is all saying a similar thing. I would feel confident that I'm educated enough but there is always more to learn.
- I've been thinking a lot about some of the distressing issues that we are facing collectively. I think at times we feel, or we're made to feel, that we champion different causes. But for me, I see commonality. I think, whether we're talking about gender inequality or racism or queer rights or indigenous rights or animal rights, we're talking about the fight against injustice. We're talking about the fight against the belief that one nation,



one people, one race, one gender or one species has the right to dominate, control and use and exploit another with impunity.

Climate justice

- Everyone can do small things but to make a massive difference- needs to be done in a way that's across the board, needs to be done harder, faster & fairly. Issues surrounding people employed by companies- i.e CO2 emissions- we can't just stop that right away because of redundancy, needs to be sustainable.
- Doing it in a positive and sustainable way.

Youth opportunities

- YoungScot- saw it through MSP facebook. Two sessions with 25 folk ages 11-15.
- YoungScot & Youthlink- ambassadors. Borders - Youth ambassadors for sustainability - open opportunities for Scottish Borders.
- Taking applications from YP to design programmes for COP26 (MSYP's in social channels).

3. Feedback by participants

To conclude the workshop we asked participants through sli-do "**Any learning or reflections from this workshop and thoughts on how you would like to stay involved?**"

7 participants completed the Sli-do whilst a few left some feedback in the chat.

- Just being kept up to date on everything.
- Good but a bit long in my opinion.
- I enjoyed this workshop and hope that there will be more in the future that go over our issues.
- Do you have any jobs going?
- Enjoyed the workshop; perhaps shorter workshops dedicated to 1 topic in a series?
- I'd like to stay involved by getting another opportunity to participate in a session like this and by also spreading this session to schools so young people there can also sign up like I did.
- I can't quite remember but Pam said something about ambassadors.
- I don't have anything to add because I think we all collectively agree that we should work together for a bigger change.

Jamboard- Climate

