

BUILDING A NATION-WIDE YOUTH-LED MOVEMENT WITHIN AMNESTY FRANCE

YOUTH CASE STUDY: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL FRANCE



SUMMARY

Amnesty International France's annual National Youth Meetings took a twist in 2017 when young people were invited to organise and execute it by themselves with the objective of growing and strengthening the national Amnesty youth movement. Bringing in youth perspectives, they came up with an interactive and engaging session that inspired participants to become more committed human rights activists.



DESCRIPTION

For the past 10 years, Amnesty International France has been holding annual National Youth Meetings to organize its youth movement. These meetings used to be planned and led mostly by staff members, however the youth movement wasn't growing. In response to this, the Section brought together a youth-led organizing team to make the meetings more appealing to young people. They decided to target active and inactive youth groups, and people with no experience in human rights activism to bring them together to learn from one another. To encourage interaction between activists, the organizing team planned a series of interactive activities such as human rights workshops, presentations, speeches by young refugees, and encouraged participants to design and implement actions in support of global campaigns. A total of 120 participants aged 15-25 years old joined for the meeting in October 2017. The most "experienced" activists had a space to share their experiences and inspire other participants. The groups that had been inactive throughout the year reconnected with Amnesty and learned from other group's initiatives. Young people with no background in human rights activism were encouraged to transform their learnings from the meeting into actions by starting new groups in their communities.

"I met other youth activists and they gave me a lot of ideas and boosted me to drive many more actions back home and make a change!" - Adèle, youth activist and participant of the 2017 National Youth Meeting

OBJECTIVES

- Introduce Amnesty International's work to young people with no experience in human rights activism.
- Create an interactive and engaging annual event in which young activists can come together to learn from one another.
- Reintegrate inactive youth groups and encourage them to remain committed to their activism work.
- Strengthen young activists' understanding of Amnesty's campaigns, so that they are better equipped to mobilize for these campaigns throughout the year.
- Create regional and inter-regional youth teams and connections.

IMPACT

- In 2017, as a short-term result of the meeting, Amnesty France saw four new youth groups with 5-6 people each being established by participants and 10 inactive groups became more active. Since then, an increase in youth groups was documented: from 90 youth groups in 2016 (out of which 75 active) to 134 in 2018 (out of which 113 active) with an average of 10-15 members each.
- In 2017, seven Youth Representatives were elected at the National Youth Meeting. They represent the perspectives of young people at the National Council (a youth-led council that advises the National Board in terms of activism and creates a link between staff and the youth groups).
- 3 of the co-organizers of the 2017 National Youth Meeting were elected in June 2018 to be part of the National Board of Amnesty France.

TIPS AND TRICKS

- *Participatory approaches are key to engage youth!* Fun and hands-on activities allow young people to come together and bond more easily.
- *Allow young activists to plan the event!* Young people tend to know what kinds of activities and events are best for youth.
- *Invite people with diverse experiences!* For an annual youth meeting invite active and inactive groups, and people with no human rights experience to interact, learn from and inspire each other.
- *Monitor the success of your annual meeting!* Find out how many groups were formed and how many groups became more active to track the impact of the event.



"I've learnt how to manage my youth group and I realized how many possibilities Amnesty offers to take action." Lisa, youth activist and participant of the 2017 National Youth Meeting

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Léo Tolub (17) a youth activist, regional youth coordinator and co-organizer of the French National Youth Meeting shared: "The National Youth Meeting is a key moment for French youth activists because we can put faces to names and learn a lot about Amnesty. I loved to help organize such an event and to work closely with other young people. I am thankful to all the participants and my friends of the organizing team. Everyone recharged their batteries and we are now more determined than ever to fight for human rights!" After the meeting Léo was elected to become Youth Representative and he now sits at the National Council.

STAKEHOLDERS

- The National Youth Meeting 2017 was organized by
 - 1 staff member
 - 3 youth group representatives (chosen by youth activists to represent the youth movement)
 - 2 regional youth coordinators (volunteers and members of the regional team who help organize youth groups within a region)
 - 1 member of a youth group (groups formed by members under 25 which are usually established in high schools or universities in partnership with a local group).
 - 1 member of a local group (independent Amnesty legal entities formed by activists who are usually over 25)

KEY INFORMATION

- Contact Amnesty International France for more information: chochard@amnesty.fr

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