

## **A tool for creating purposeful partnerships – AIESEC in Finland YouthSpeak Insights report**

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<p>This thesis is a reflection of part of my work as Director of Business Development in AIESEC in Finland.</p> <p>There was a partnership formed on a global level between AIESEC and the United Nations for contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (also SDGs). The Global Goals are the guidelines for the nations, organizations and individuals of creating a better world by 2030.</p> <p>AIESEC has developed a concept – the YouthSpeak movement that responds to the partnership declaration between AIESEC and the UN. In my work I provide some background information about SDGs, AIESEC, and YouthSpeak initiative to draw a clear picture of the scope of the collaboration and its importance. It is also essential information for understanding how the global partnership can foster creation purposeful partnerships the national level in the future for AIESEC in Finland, and how the global concept can be downscaled and implemented in Finland.</p> <p>Out of entire YouthSpeak initiative in my Bachelor's thesis work I focus only on the second element – YouthSpeak Insights report. The report represents some analysis of young people's opinion about their vision for the future and drivers in live, leadership, education, and ways of engagement. Globally AIESEC has gathered over 160 thousand responses, which by the date is the highest number of young people participated in such a survey. Moreover, the survey will be still run in the future, providing even bigger outreach and ensuring gathering even more insightful information. In my work, however, I focus on bringing the global insight to the national context and reality.</p> <p>From the commissioner's perspective, the report itself is not the absolute final product, but a tool. This tool can be used in creation new partnerships for AIESEC in Finland and opening up more in-depth conversations with various stakeholders. The YouthSpeak Insights report for Finland has a high significance for practical use. The YouthSpeak report for Finland is being published and available for all the stakeholders as a source of insights and ideas how to engage young people in Finland to take an action for improving Finnish society and themselves.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> YouthSpeak, AIESEC, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), United Nations, youth, leadership, global movement, purposeful partnership, collaboration	

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# 1 Introduction

The idea to write my Bachelor's thesis about YouthSpeak movement came to my mind already when I was finalizing my term as Director of Business Development in AIESEC in Finland. Why have I found this topic so interesting to write about?

AIESEC has started a great global movement, the YouthSpeak initiative. This initiative has a purpose of understanding how good intentions can be converted to the good actions. It places confidence in youth that can build a better world and believes in purposeful collaborations across the sectors contributing together to achieving a bigger goal. Being a very purpose-driven person, I strongly believe in this initiative and feel inspired and connected to be a part of it. This is my first reason for taking up specifically this thesis topic – to feel personal contribution to something bigger than a personal or even an organizational goal.

My second reason of choosing this topic – to be able to complement my educational background with the experiential learnings that I have gained while working with multiple stakeholders at my position in AIESEC. My role as Director of Business Development in AIESEC in Finland is to provide the tools, platforms, networks and strategies that can support and improve AIESEC operations through partnerships and external relations. AIESEC core activities have the aim of providing more opportunities for young people to develop their leadership potential and leave a positive impact on society. YouthSpeak Insights report for Finland is a right tool for amplifying these activities through acquiring purposeful partnerships and network of same-minded organizations. Thus, by working on the thesis product creation, I supported fulfillment of my job description.

The mission of Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences states:  
Haaga-Helia educates experts with customer service, strong sales and entrepreneurial skills. Our R&D&I activities focus on innovative products, services and business operations for the benefit of business and society.  
(Haaga-Helia 2014.)

I believe my work on this thesis topic strongly supports fulfillment of this mission. The product created during thesis writing process will be practically used for bringing and added value to its commissioner, future partners, and youth in Finland.

## 1.1 Structure of the thesis and initial product description

The thesis is a product-oriented work including elements of the research. Even though I have contributed to the survey creation and partially for gathering responses, I was not

solely responsible for it, and thus cannot consider as a result of my own work. I rather focus on the data analysis and product creation. The product itself is the YouthSpeak Insights report for Finland. The report aims at comparing the insights on youth opinion in Finland to the data from WENA (Western Europe and North America) and global levels. Globally AIESEC has collected over 160 thousand responses, however due to high diversity, it would not be reliable to equal the global data to the Finnish reality. While the global report focuses on a big data analysis, the YouthSpeak report for Finland aims at identifying topics that shall be further researched and discussed.

In chapter 2 the core of AIESEC as an organization is explained. Even though this part provides a lot of organizational information, it is important for you to understand why the YouthSpeak initiative powered by AIESEC was created at all, what led to its creation and how it was planned to be implemented. Once you understand the bigger picture, I will explain in the following chapters how the same concept and principles can be downscaled and applied in Finland.

Chapter 3 will have a more empirical approach, explaining practicalities of YouthSpeak concept. Chapter 4 will describe the process of creation of the thesis product – YouthSpeak Insights report for Finland. And finally, in the last chapter I will reflect on challenges and key learnings, and make a self-assessment of my work. The most important and the most valuable for the commissioner part of this work is presented in the same chapter – my recommendations where the YouthSpeak Insights report can be used and how it can improve AIESEC in Finland operations. Finally, in chapter 5 I will reflect on my personal learnings and thesis writing process.

## **1.2 Thesis writing methodology**

AIESEC strives to develop young people and AIESEC members through practical experiences. Thus, conducting this thesis as a part of my actual work in AIESEC in Finland, I decided to utilize my practical experiences, personal learnings, and the most up-to-date information at the most. Quite many materials, concepts and strategies created and produced by AIESEC already could be seen as theoretical knowledge of the organization. Persuading the main purpose of this thesis to create the product for my commissioner, I quite often refer to these organizational materials.

One can argue that this approach brings a single opinion and does not provide much space for academic discussions. Yet I would disagree with one's opinion. Firstly, YouthSpeak is a concept that has four main blocks (discussed further in chapter 2), aiming at

raising awareness about global issues among young people, gathering their opinion on various life aspects, and understanding the ways how to engage young people to take an action for a positive change in society. The initiative is a result of complex research and trend analysis, feedback and constant improvement during agile processes. Furthermore, it has multiple stakeholders - young people, educational institutions, employers, non-governmental organizations, and governmental agencies. The opinion of these stakeholders, external consultants, and partner organizations also was taken into consideration on the global level while designing the questions, creating concepts, initiating discussions, and consolidating inputs. Due to the limitations of this thesis, I provide only essential background information omitting the detailed description of the development processes. Therefore, when a reference is addressing to AIESEC, it usually means that AIESEC has only compiled the final output of these processes, transferring it to a concept. Secondly, AIESEC is truly diverse and international organization, embracing practical learnings, global trends, personal experiences, online platforms, multicultural discussions and team work. This thesis mainly uses online resources - such as official reports, articles, information provided on the websites, and e-publications. It is the way also millennials (referred as a generation born between 1982 and 2004) and young people tend to search and analyze information (Howe & Strauss 2000, 231). Thus, describing YoutSpeak whose target group is the young people, it would be an appropriate method to apply practical learning and ability to find the most relevant up-to-date information. I tried to bring you all the original sources, whereas the articles and papers on the same topic, which were not adding any new perspective, were avoided. The reflection on the thesis writing process will also be discussed in the last chapter.

Analyzed data in YouthSpeak Insights report for Finland covers only answers that were gathered within a few months. The YouthSpeak Survey, which is the first element of the initiative, will be continuously open for the responses during the longer period, aiming at reaching over 1 million young people within next year. Therefore, the data analytics in this paper shall not be seen as the final output, but rather as one sprints in the agile methodology, where after gathering a piece of information, the product is re-evaluated and improved based on the received feedback. As an example, currently data is gathered and analyzed from November 2015 until the end of March 2016. Based on the young people's feedback, AIESEC International plans to launch a shorter version of YouthSpeak Survey available on more languages vs. current version of 36 questions plus follow-up open-ended questions and availability on eight languages. To ensure that already collected opinions are not being lost during structural modifications, it is important to analyze them, report, and include its findings into a new sprint of gathering information.

## **2 AIESEC and sustainable development**

This chapter gives a brief overview about AIESEC as an organization and its development throughout the years that led to cooperation between AIESEC and the United Nations. Additionally, I will discuss what the sustainable development means, and how the Sustainable Development Goals (hereafter also SDGs) were created. This background information would be needed to understand why YouthSpeak initiative promotes the awareness about the Global Goals and tries to engage young people to take an action upon these Goals.

In the subchapter 2.1, the essence of AIESEC is explained. Even though AIESEC has a history of nearly 70 years of existence, the organization is very agile because it is run by young people, whose leadership positions change at least once a year. The continuity of the organizational knowledge is maintained through the global network, internal learning platforms (learning hub, online channels, international conferences, blogs, and publications), and supported from the legal side by the Global Compendium. Thus, most of the materials used as the references in this chapter are created by the working groups or the consolidation teams with the help of the inputs from entire AIESEC network; at AIESEC national presidents meetings; or by AIESEC representatives at the time from national or international boards. These references rather reflect the knowledge of the organization as the whole and not the piece of work of an individual. Understanding of organizational essence is crucial for understanding further discussions in this thesis.

Subchapter 2.2 will discuss the external trends at sustainable development from the perspective of the creation of Sustainable Development Goals. Providing some background information about Sustainable Development Goals will help you to understand the progress that societies committed themselves to in order to solve the world's issues. Due to the thesis limitations, I will not discuss all the global trends that led to the Global Goals creation, but rather take the SDGs as a universal acknowledgment of the world's issues and agreement on striving to solve them.

Finally, in the subchapter 2.3, I will discuss how the pace of the global progress (Sustainable Development Goals) matches with the progress of AIESEC. At the end of this subchapter, you shall form some understanding of the reasons of collaboration between AIESEC and the United Nations towards contributing to Sustainable development Goals' achievement.

## 2.1 AIESEC

AIESEC is global, independent, non-political, not-for-profit youth-run organization (AIESEC International 2016, 3). Founded in 1948 by a few young people from Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden, the mission of AIESEC at the time was to “to expand the understanding of a nation by expanding the understanding of the individuals, changing the world one person at a time.” Throughout the years, the mission of providing friendly relations grew to the vision of “Peace and fulfillment of humankind’s potential”. (AIESEC 2016.) In the current context, peace means the elimination of any conflict based on diversity. Through “Peace and fulfillment of humankind’s potential” AIESEC strives to develop responsible individuals who would be able to fulfill their potential and be the best version of themselves.

To explain the essence of the organization, AIESEC currently is using the Golden Circle theory, popularized by Simon Sinek. The Golden Circle answers to questions Why (why the organization exists, what purpose for the society and individuals it has), What (what is the organization’s product or service; or product’s function that supports fulfilling the purpose) and How (how the organization function). The theory encourages to communicate the Why of the organization or the product first. (Sinek 2011.) Based on the theory of the Golden Circle, organizational understanding, and the external consultancy, the “AIESEC Way” concept has been created by AIESEC representatives working group. According to the AIESEC Way explanation, the *Why* is AIESEC vision – “Peace and fulfillment of humankind's potential”. As long as this vision is not fully achieved, the organization will exist and strive to achieve it.

The *How* – is implemented by placing the confidence in youth and belief that the young people are the once who are the most likely able to change themselves and the future to better by living up to their leadership potential. We believe that fundamental solution to the world’s issues is more responsible leadership in young people. We define responsible leadership as a summary of the following leadership qualities: self-aware, solution-oriented, empowering others, world citizen (González 2016). Specifically these qualities were identified based on the internal AIESEC alumni surveys and external analysis as the most important once to address the global trends. (AIESEC 2016.) An infographic with AIESEC leadership qualities and its descriptor are demonstrated in Appendix 1.

The *What* of AIESEC – is enabling young people to develop their leadership potential through learning from practical experiences in challenging environments. The challenging environments and support system that AIESEC offers ensure that the leadership qualities



mentioned above are being developed in young people. AIESEC facilitates the leadership development through the creation of and participation in cross-cultural exchanges. The cross-cultural exchange is seen as a key to broadening cultural understanding, provide an opportunity to interact with the diverse environment, ability to find the solutions in the challenging situations, and realize personal values and strengths. Thus, offering practical experiences through cross-cultural exchanges, AIESEC strives for engaging and developing every young person in order to enable leadership potential in young people. (AIESEC International 2016, 12.)

Moreover, AIESEC has developed a concept of the fourth circle to the Golden Circle theory – our values, or *Who We Are*. AIESEC values are the guide marks to all the operations and Code of Ethics. The six values are as the following: striving for excellence, demonstrating integrity, activating leadership, acting sustainably, living diversity, and enjoying participation. (AIESEC 2016.) The visual representation of AIESEC Way, created by the working group, is presented in Appendix 2.

## **2.2 Sustainable Development**

This chapter will discuss the definition of sustainability and sustainable development. Shortly I will clarify how the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development reflects on a long-term strategy of Finland for sustainable development.

The precise definition of sustainable development varies from one source to another, usually referring to main pillars and long-term strategic development. According to Sustainable Development background paper prepared for the United Nations, the term “sustainable development” was popularized already in 1987 in the “Our Common Future” paper. According to it, sustainable development means development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (Drexhage & Murphy 2010, 2-3.) Prime Minister’s Office Finland states that the main goal of sustainable development is to ensure a good living environment for present and future generations (Valtioneuvoston kanslia 2016).

The three pillars of sustainable development are economic development (profit), social equity (people) and environmental protection (planet), so-called Triple Bottom Line concept (Elkington 1998). The same is mentioned on United Nation’s Sustainable Development knowledge platform while talking about the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:

“This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity” (Sustainable development knowledge platform 2016a). The triple bottom line concept is demonstrated in Figure 1, where the overlaying part of the circles demonstrates sustainability.

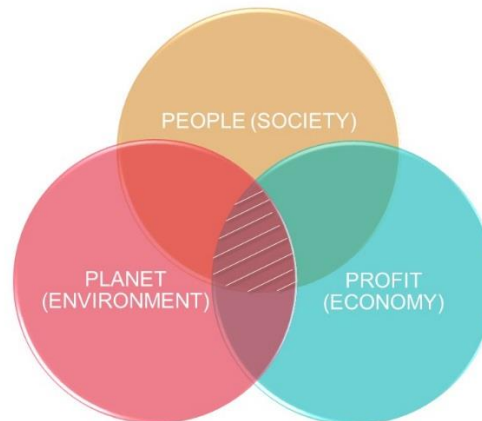


Figure 1. Triple bottom line of sustainability

Earlier mentioned Prime Minister’s Office Finland refers directly to the 2030 Agenda as a main guideline of sustainable development in Finland:

The mandate of the National Commission on Sustainable Development, chaired by the Prime Minister, is to ensure that the international sustainable development goals are included in national policy. The main task of the Commission in 2016–2019 is promote the implementation of the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to integrate it as part of national sustainable development efforts. (Valtioneuvoston kanslia 2016.)

Thus, in this thesis I will focus on understanding the 2030 Agenda as a key guideline and definition for the sustainable development.

Due to the workload limitation, the 2030 Agenda will be presented as a summary. More in-depth information about the creation of Sustainable Development Goals by the members of the United Nations is available on the UN Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform (Sustainable development knowledge platform 2016b). In short, in 2000 the United Nations set 8 Millennium Development Goals (hereafter also MDGs) with an aim to improve human-kinds’ lives by 2015. (United Nations 2016a.) These goals focused on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating HIV and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability, and developing the global partnership for development (see the infographics in Appendix 3). However, the goals were not fully achieved. Despite of that, it had some successes in reducing the issues the MDGs were addressing. The Millennium

Development Goals Report admits that there were many factors not taken into consideration while setting the MDGs, such as economic development, inequalities, human rights and holistic understanding of development. (United Nations 2015, 10-13.) Thus, even though the MDGs had a goal of providing a framework to all the governments, in practice they were applicable mostly to less developed and poor countries (Ford 2015).

Ban Ki-moon Secretary-General, United Nations, said:

The emerging post-2015 development agenda, including the set of Sustainable Development Goals, strives to reflect these lessons, build on our successes and put all countries, together, firmly on track towards a more prosperous, sustainable and equitable world.

(United Nations 2015, 3.)

A few years before, as an outcome of the Rio+20 summit in 2012, these root problems were acknowledged, and establishing post-2015 goals was mandated to an open working group (United Nations General Assembly 2012). The representatives of an open working group from 70 countries, had the first meeting in March 2013 and published its final draft in July 2014 (Sustainable development knowledge platform 2014). Later in September 2014 the draft was presented to the United Nations General Assembly (United Nations General Assembly, 2014). Moreover, the UN has conducted a series of “global conversations” that included 11 thematic and 83 national consultations, and door-to-door surveys, including My World survey. My Word survey asked people to prioritize the most critical goals for their life areas. The results were also integrated to open global conversations. (MY World 2015.)

Thus, the new Sustainable Development Goals had a great base of learnings. Already in 2014 AIESEC among other organizations was a part of the conversations about 2015-post agenda and expressing an intent for collaboration for youth-oriented campaigns (Hussain 15 October 2014). Finally, on September, 25 the 193-Member United Nations General Assembly formally adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These 17 Goals are focusing over next 15 years on areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet. (Sustainable development knowledge platform 2016a.)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are not legally binding, and they are the guidelines for the further actions. Each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals has 169 targets that make the goal more understandable, specific, and measurable by their indicators. (United Nations 2016b.) The full description of the Goals and the targets are presented at the United Nations’ website (Sustainable development knowledge platform 2016), as well as the list of the Global Goals is in Appendix 4.

In my opinion, sustainable development generally shall mean progress towards improvement without causing any harm during implementation of these improvements.

## **2.3 AIESEC commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

This subchapter would support your understanding of the essence and progress of AIESEC as an organization, long-term vision, and purposeful collaboration. Additionally, I will open up how the both sides are benefiting from the collaboration, and how this collaboration is contributing itself to the 2030 Agenda. Some facts about the connection between AIESEC and some United Nations' agencies will be presented in order to understand the level of collaboration and the scope of the activities.

Personally being a part of ambition statements creation process of AIESEC, I will describe some facts based on the personal experience. This description is supported by collective inputs from the network, hence, can be seen as an objective opinion.

### **2.3.1 AIESEC 2020 – moving forward**

Every five years AIESEC defines a mid-term ambition – the vision of what we want the organization to become within next five years to be closer to engaging and developing every young person in the world. Guided by the mid-term ambition, the annual strategies are created as on the international as on the national levels. The year 2015 was a significant milestone for AIESEC for evaluating the achievements of AIESEC 2015, and creating AIESEC 2020 strategies. During the International Congress 2015 in India, where the representatives of all AIESEC entities were present, the ambition statements for AIESEC 2020 were created. (AIESEC 2020 2016.) The ambition statements represent the starting point of AIESEC 2020 vision creation.

The creation of next mid-term ambition vision was designed in a few stages, using the method of future search (Future Search - The Method 2016). The method was adapted to AIESEC reality and context. The first phase aimed at reviewing the past, analyzing what were the main trends and events that impacted us personally. The second step focused on the present and the external trends. During the third stage, we dreamt about the ideal stage of the organization within next five years. After these steps facilitated for almost 1000 representatives, within three days and the consolidation process, with a good understanding of past achievements, current learnings, and future expectations, the ambition statements were created. Figure 2 demonstrates how the term "youth leadership movement" was defined for AIESEC for next five years. The final strategy, however, is a longer process: based on the created ambitions (the statements), the strategy how to achieve the ambition (the roadmap), and finally define the goals (how do we measure that the ambition is achieved).

Thus, the statements and their descriptors are as the following:

Shaping what we do around **what the world needs**: Being aware of global and local issues we act quickly to respond to them by offering powerful leadership experiences. We collaborate with like-minded organizations that, like us, strive for a better world. Through this, we take part in global and local decision-making processes.

**Growing disruptively**: Doing the same things is not enough to one day engage and develop every young person in the world. Being disruptive means for us to challenge the way we think and act as an organization. We find innovative ways to grow faster and be better. Every AIESECer seeks for solutions and acts upon them every day.

Being **accessible to everyone, everywhere**: Anyone can experience AIESEC, be it physically, virtually, directly or indirectly. We actively break our geographical and social barriers to make it possible for every young person in the world to live an AIESEC experience.

(AIESEC International team 4 April 2016.)



Figure 2. AIESEC 2020 ambition statements (AIESEC 2015)

These ambition statements were worded over a few days; however, its conceptualization started a long time before the International Congress in India. The following subchapter will glance the processes and events that led to understanding and phrasing these statements, as well as how the ambition statements are implemented through various AIESEC projects and activities.

### 2.3.2 AIESEC commitment towards achieving the SDGs

AIESEC started cooperation with some agencies of United Nations as a part of a long-term strategic partnership. AIESEC internationally has two statuses at the UN: 1) a special consultative status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) since

2007, and 2) a DPI/NGO status at the Department of Public Information. However, there might also be national collaborations between AIESEC entities and the UN national offices.

In December 2015 in the United Nations Head Quarters in New York, AIESEC in cooperation with Office of the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth has organized the Youth Action Summit. During the three-day summit the top young leaders with experts, government, business and thought leaders joined a conversation around global issues and the new global agenda. (Yahoo! Finance 2015.) The main learning points were discussed about Millennium Development Goals (United Nations 2016); the role of young people in achieving newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals and importance of cross-sector collaboration for the same purpose. (AIESEC Youth Action Summit 2015.)

AIESEC envisions peace and fulfillment of humankind's potential. If the world becomes a place where all the SDGs are achieved, this is the world AIESEC envisions. Current Global AIESEC President, Ana Saldarriaga, said: "Sustainable Development Goals agenda for us is bigger than it is for any organization. It is our guideline on achieving our vision" (Saldarriaga 19 August 2015.) As AIESEC we place our confidence in youth and believe that youth leadership is the fundamental solution to the world's issues – no matter what problem needs to be solved, there is always a person leading the change. Thus, AIESEC started designing a concept that would bring the combination of these two – leadership development and commitment towards achieving SDGs.

The discussion that AIESEC facilitated during Youth Action Summit was about the importance of young people to be committed to actions for making the Global Goals achieved by 2030. Young people are the once who will be at the decision-making positions in the upcoming years, and with the total global population of 1.7 billion, the young people are a key force on the way to achieve the SDGs in the next 15 years. The UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon said: "Ahmad Alhendawi, the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, says that young people drive change, but they are not in the driver's seat. I agree – and I call for giving them the "license" to steer our future." (AIESEC 18 May 2015.)

Already in December 2015, AIESEC has committed itself as an organization towards the Global Goals for Sustainable Development. The declaration states that AIESEC commits to **"adopt and contribute to achieving the Global Goals for Sustainable Development by mobilizing and developing young leaders who create awareness, foster engagement and take action to implement these goals"**. The description of the declaration

reads that AIESEC through own exchange programs promises to measure the contribution to the SDGs. Thus, the purposeful collaboration for the same goal was started. (Office of the Secretary General's Envoy on Youth 2015.) The declaration release is available in the Appendix 5.

Moreover, the Sustainable Development Goal 17 description is: "Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. Two of the Goal's targets for the Systematic issues, multi-stakeholders partnerships (target 17.16 and target 17.17) are interesting for us in understanding purposeful partnership.

The targets state:

- 17.16: Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries.
- 17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships (Sustainable development knowledge platform 2016c.)

These two targets acknowledge that the different resources lie in different sectors, and point that there shall be the network of purposeful partnerships that support achieving the Global Goals through an own field of expertise. From my conversations about sustainability and strategic partnerships with various companies and associations in Finland, I realized that solely one organization rarely could possess both – practical expertise and the resources for achieving the Global Goals. A corporate sector might have the financial resources, yet usually the civil society partners are the ones who have the experience and knowledge on the actual implementation. Similarly, for achieving such important goals as in the 2030 Agenda, the purposeful multi-stakeholder partnerships have to be established (Beisheim & Simon 2016.)

Even though the SDGs are not legally binding, countries and governments are expected to take ownership and establish a national framework for achieving the 17 Goals, based on national sustainable development policies. Taking into account the focus on implementation the Global Goals through multi-stakeholder partnerships, and the importance of involving the young people, AIESEC and UN started their collaboration supported by signed declaration (Youth Action Summit 2015). For AIESEC Sustainable Development Goals are a great compass for the own strategy of AIESEC 2020 - shaping what we do around what the world needs. Furthermore, being a very action-oriented organization that aims at developing leadership potential in young people, AIESEC saw an opportunity within the organization to take the commitment of young people towards the implementation of the SDGs ensuring the global youth mobilization for achieving the Global Goals.

### **3 Youth for Global Goals and YouthSpeak initiative**

This chapter will describe the agile process of creation the YouthSpeak initiative, including Youth for Global Goals campaign. Described activities demonstrate the actions steps that AIESEC committed itself towards the Global Goals for Sustainable Development during the Youth Action Summit.

To increase awareness about Global Goals, AIESEC has run a few social campaigns since autumn 2014 (including #YouthNow social media campaign) aiming at promoting awareness about 2015-post agenda (YouthSpeak 13 October 2015). Youth for Global Goals (#Youth4GG) is the latest campaign powered by AIESEC and supported by some of its partners. The purpose of Youth for Global Goals campaign is to activate the leadership potential of young people around the world by engaging and mobilizing them through purposeful and cross-cultural projects around the globe. Projects are designed to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and to empower youth to take action toward achieving them. (Youth For Global Goals 2015.) This campaign is also a part of the commitment of AIESEC towards contributing to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The following sub-chapters will describe the four elements of the YouthSpeak initiative: YouthSpeak Survey, YouthSpeak Insights, YouthSpeak Forum, and YouthSpeak Projects. All of these elements has the own purpose of nurturing young person's journey from awareness towards an action. These elements are aiming at reaching young people, fostering awareness about global issues, facilitating understanding and encouraging taking actions towards contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The logical flow of Youth for Global Goals campaign and its connection to YouthSpeak initiative and AIESEC vision and operations are demonstrated in Figure 3. It illustrates that Youth For global Goals campaign is an overall umbrella promoting SDGs, and the actual implementation is done through YouthSpeak initiative. All these activities are supported by AIESEC 2020 ambition statements with the description on how they are being supported. The elements of the graph were designed by AIESEC, which I have structured in a logical flow. You might have found yourself quite confusing that I keep mentioning YouthSpeak initiative, and yet it is still a little unclear. Therefore, Youth For Global Goals is easier to remember umbrella, yet it has the same purpose – to drive from raising awareness and seeking for opinions towards further discussions on the topics that matter to young people and engaging them to take an action.



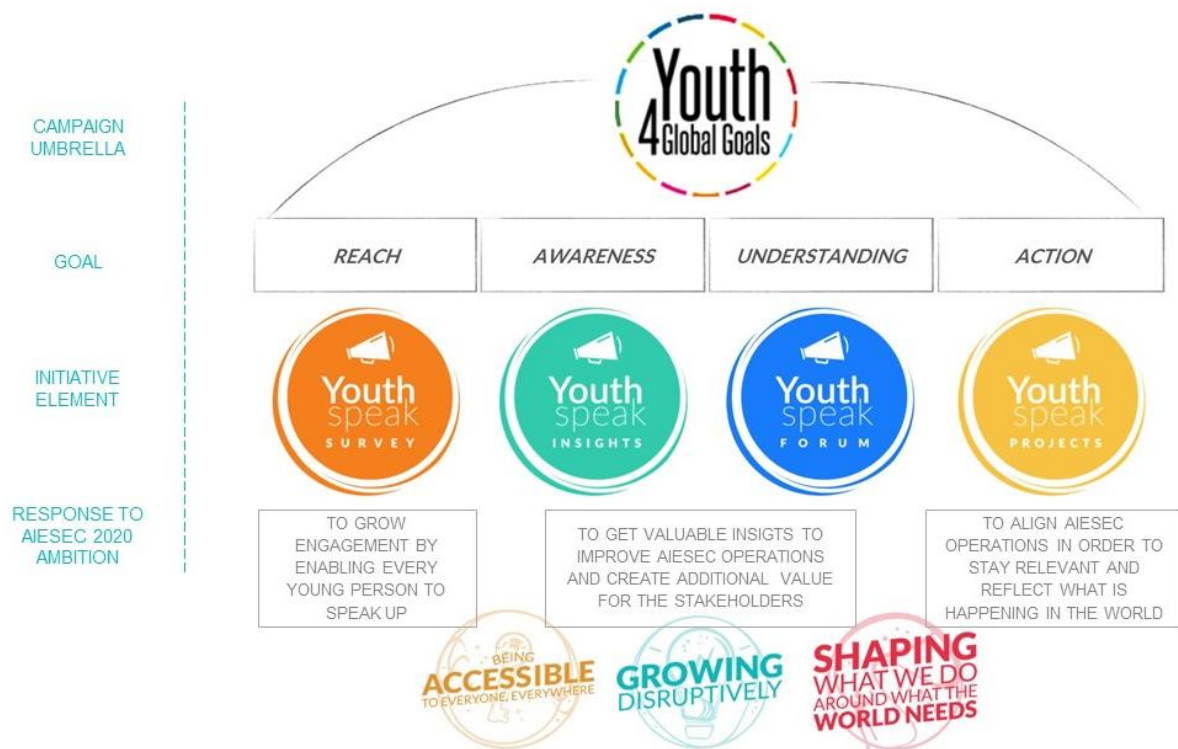


Figure 3. Relation between Youth For Global Goals, YouthSpeak and AIESEC 2020 (AIESEC 2015)

### 3.1 YouthSpeak Survey

The idea of YouthSpeak was born in 2014. AIESEC, being a largest youth-run non-profit organization, wanted to understand the challenges of young people at the transforming stage from education to employment. According to International Labor Organization report, global youth unemployment rate in 2015 was 13 per cent (Elder 7 October 2015). The European average rate is even higher (The Statistics Portal 2016). For example, in Finland as per February 2016, the youth unemployment rate was marked over 20 per cent (Statistics Fin-land 2016). Thus, the issue is topical, and AIESEC wanted to identify the ways to tackle it.

With the help of partners and own international network, over 42 000 responses were gathered globally and published in June 2015 in the YouthSpeak Millennial Report - Improving the journey from education to employment. The insights of this report represented some interesting findings and key learnings about education, employment, and optimized transition of young people between these two stages. For instance, the survey showed

that over a half respondents see the disconnection between what they learn in the universities and skills that they would need in their future career. According to the report over 60 per cent of respondents expressed their plans to be entrepreneurs in next five years. Yet are the employers building environment welcoming entrepreneurial attitude? Do the educational institutions provide necessary set practical skills equipping better the future entrepreneurs? The study also confirmed that millennials do not seek traditional benefits from a future employer, but rather learning benefits and potential personal development. These opportunities for development and creativity, and global opportunities they seek from entrepreneurial environments – even though it was a multinational company. (YouthSpeak 2015, 16-17, 34). One of the most interesting factors were that young people are very purposeful-driven, and look for the practical experiences in order to get relevant skills. (YouthSpeak 2015, 30, 43.) Thanks to these insights, AIESEC understood that it could help different sectors and millennials to bridge the gap at the transition between education and employment; as well throughout own cross-cultural practical experiences equip young people for overcoming their challenges.

In 2015, being a part of launching the Sustainable Development Goals, AIESEC saw a bigger potential in YouthSpeak Survey that could embrace wider topics and building the connection between own vision – leadership development, and activating young people in taking action towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Based on the Millennial Insight Report finding, commitment to activate young people towards achieving the SDGs and leadership development, AIESEC has launched the YouthSpeak Survey 2.0. The theme of the survey was “The way the world will be shaped by 2030 depends on us”, and YouthSpeak Survey 2.0 main research question for the year was “How can we engage Millennials to take action?” (Global Youth Movement and Youth Insight Survey 2016). The updated survey contained the knowledge and experiences from the first one. It was aiming at understanding underlying factors through more open and reflecting questions. There were more open-ended questions added to the survey in order to lead the respondent towards reflecting and analyzing personal thoughts and opinion.

The structure of the YouthSpeak 2.0 was designed in the blocks of questions: drivers in life, world and the future, leadership, engagement, education, Youth for Global Goals, country-specific questions, and demographics (AI Team 3 December 2016). These blocks will be open up in the following subchapter – YouthSpeak Insights.

For the YouthSpeak Survey 2.0 each of the AIESEC entity could add five additional, country-specific questions in the part of demographics.

While running projects for volunteering internship exchanges, AIESEC in Finland faced a challenge of young people seeing Finnish society as one of the most developed societies without social issues. Therefore, we asked the questions aiming at understanding the perception of young people about social issues in Finland, as well to understand what project themes are the most interesting to them. Additionally, we wanted to verify what the term “leadership” means for young people in Finland. The assumption was that “leadership” in a term used in English had rather managerial characteristics and not the leadership qualities. Initially, we aimed at a higher number of responses, therefore, added a question identifying a university or a school where a young person got the education. The full list of the added national question is in Appendix 6.

In August – September 2015 AIESEC International has designed the first draft of the survey. Throughout gathering feedback, inputs and suggestions from the network and a task force group to finalize the wording and statements, and in October 2015 the YouthSpeak Survey 2.0 was live.

The main purpose of YouthSpeak Survey 2.0 is to *reach* as many young people as possible and to gather their opinions.

### **3.2 YouthSpeak Insights**

The YouthSpeak Insights is a report that is compiled from analyzed raw data from the Youth-Speak Survey. The term “insight” for the YouthSpeak report shall mean an accurate and the deep understanding of the data gathered from the survey that is applied to the context of the particular country or community. (AIESEC International 2016).

Taking into account a few factors, the survey and the insights were designed and analyzed by the blocks, as it was mentioned earlier. The questions had six different blocks:

1) Drivers in life - What is the decision-making process for the millennials? What do they consider first? What drives them in life? The questions dedicated to this block in the survey are questions 2, 3 and 14.

2) The World in 2030 - How do young people envision their future? What is the state of the world in 2030? What is important for the young people in next 15 years? The questions in the survey are 1, 12, 16, and 20.

3) Youth For Global Goals - Global Goals Agenda is the plan for humanity to build the better world in the future. Do young people know about this plan? If yes, from where? What is their attitude towards the SDGs? Questions in the survey – 13 (drop-down), 17, 18, and 19.

4) Leadership - To mobilize young people to take an action, certain type of leadership is needed. What are the characteristics young people want to see in leaders of today? Questions in the survey are number 6 and 7.

5) Education - Education is the most important issue for young people and millennials prefer to educate themselves through experiential learning (based on YouthSpeak 1.0). What experiential learning means for young people and what sources of information they trust? Questions dedicated to this block in the survey – 4, 5 and 22.

6) Engagement - Where do we find millennials, whom they trust the most? What is their attitude towards the technology? Questions 8, 9, 10 and 11 in the YouthSpeak survey 2.0.

This logical design of the questions allows to break down the data and analyze it based on various influencing factors. There are a few levels of the data used during analysis:

- primary data: analysis of the answers from anchor questions, or the key questions within the blocks. In the sequence order for the data blocks mentioned earlier the anchor questions are 2, 1, 18, 7, 5, and 10.
- secondary data: analysis of the questions within the same blocks of questions.
- tertiary data: analyzing the questions across the blocks.
- additional data: analysis which cross-checks earlier answers with the demographics and diversity.

In more practical examples this structure will be applied in chapter 4 for the full YouthSpeak data analysis description and to the report itself.

The main purpose of YouthSpeak Insights is to make the young people and multiple stakeholders *aware* of the gathered opinions.

### **3.3 YouthSpeak Forum**

This subchapter has the aim to demonstrate you the logical flow of YouthSpeak initiative. What does AIESEC do with the opinions of young people and gathered insights? How the information from YouthSpeak Insight report will be used in the future for engaging young people for taking actions towards achieving SDGs and their personal development?

The format of the YouthSpeak Forum agenda has elements of inspiration (keynote speeches on the topic), engagement (practical workshops hosted by the partners), and acting (defining the action point to bring the ideas to real projects). Throughout all of these elements AIESEC makes aims on igniting more in-depth discussions with young people by inspiring them with the keynotes and their expertise on a chosen topic, and to define actionable ideas.

Ideally, the insights presented in the YouthSpeak report would define the topics of the YouthSpeak Forum. I provide some suggestions on the theme and topics creation for YouthSpeak Forum in the following chapter.

The main purpose of YouthSpeak Forum is to help the participants *understand* in more depth the topic and apply it to the context of the local reality, as well as engage them with the topics that matter to themselves. Therefore, defining the purpose of my thesis product – YouthSpeak Insights report, I have mentioned that the product is an essential element for inviting various stakeholders for further discussions.

### **3.4 YouthSpeak Projects**

The YouthSpeak Projects initiative is the way to provide young people opportunities to contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals, or any of its targets by taking an action on an issue that matters to them. AIESEC provides an opportunity to create or participate in a project that would tackle this particular issue.

One might say that AIESEC uses an umbrella of SDGs to promote own operations. Yet isn't it a responsibility of any NGO, and stakeholder to find the own way of contributing to the better future? As per the discussion in subchapter 2.3.2, AIESEC has committed itself to supporting the UN in spreading awareness about the Global Goals, foster engagement by facilitating local discussion that generates actionable ideas, and mobilize young people around the world to take action to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The YouthSpeak Projects is a “sweet spot” where AIESEC by supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also persuades own mission of developing leadership potential in young people through practical experiences in cross-cultural environments. By the same YouthSpeak initiative, AIESEC persuades own AIESEC 2020 statements – being accessible to everyone and everywhere, growing disruptively, and shaping

what we do around what the world needs (AIESEC International 2016). Answers to the question “Why AIESEC has YouthSpeak initiative” in the co-relation to the ambition statement are demonstrated in Figure 3, displayed earlier.

The main purpose of YouthSpeak Projects is to encourage young people to take an action on their personal contribution to the SDGs, no matter on how big or small is the scale, and whether there is an exciting opportunity through AIESEC exchange programs or a project still needs to be created.

Thus, YouthSpeak initiative is the way of fulfilling the commitment of AIESEC to adopt and contribute to achieving the Global Goals for Sustainable Development by mobilizing and developing young leaders who create awareness (YouthSpeak Survey and YouthSpeak Insights), foster engagement (YouthSpeak Forum) and take action (YouthSpeak Projects) to implement these goals.

## 4 YouthSpeak Insights report for Finland: product creation

In this chapter I describe how my product – YouthSpeak Insights report was planned, designed, implemented, and assessed. This chapter uses the framework and background information used discussed earlier in chapter 3 about YouthSpeak initiative.

AIESEC International with the help of Global Support Team (AIESEC members from various entities working with AIESEC International team for a particular project in a defined time frame) compiles the Global YouthSpeak Insights report.

This Global Report will be finalized by AIESEC in May 2016, and its findings will be first time presented at The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Forum (#OECDwk) on May 31 – June 1, 2016 in Paris. The main responsible for Global YouthSpeak Survey and initiative for AIESEC is Dmitry Dubovik, Global Vice President of Digital Marketing. However, in order to bring a global perspective to a local reality and utilize the information in the most relevant way, AIESEC International has mandated compiling the national and sub-regional reports to the national entities. In AIESEC in Finland for the term 2015 - 2016 it was my responsibility. The analysis guidelines are also provided by AIESEC International after a YouthSpeak Summit that was held in Brazil in April 2016. Based on these guidelines and access to the raw data and filters, each AIESEC entity can make a comprehended YouthSpeak Insight report. Operating with smaller numbers on the national level, AIESEC in Finland could not use the external tools or companies for big data analysis, and had to use own resources. For instance, for the open-ended question where they keywords needed to be identified, the analysis was done by grouping the answers to the themes and presenting the final outcome based on the frequency of the similar answers.

The report is built by the logic of the survey, which is a combination of 6 blocks (earlier explained in subchapter 3.2 YouthSpeak Insights). AIESEC in Finland has collected 299 responses from November 2015 until March 2016. These 299 are the fully completed responses with quite a few open-ended questions, based on which AIESEC in Finland hoped to make more qualitative research. In the previous chapter was argued that YouthSpeak report is not an outcome from an academic scientific research, but rather aims at demonstrating the tendency in young people's opinion in a specific context.

The report is designed in a visual way, using infographics and charts. Each of the infographics is followed by an explanation of a specific phenomenon, based on cross-checking with other statistics and relevant data. Furthermore, the report provides some

examples of the topics and issues to be discussed more in depth during YouthSpeak Forum.

#### **4.1 Methodology and tools**

Earlier in chapter 3 I described briefly what the process of data gathering and analysis was. In this subchapter I will explain how I worked with the data and what tools were used.

The tool used for the data gathering before February 2016 was QuestionPro platform (QuestionPro Online Surveys 2015) and was FluidSurveys (Fluidsurveys 2016). Due to the change of the platforms, all the data from QuestionPro was exported into Excel files and shared through the network. The answers collected after February 2016 was stored directly at FluidSurveys platform. Access to the raw data was granted by AIESEC International to the national boards of AIESEC entities. Thus, having access to this information, I could analyze it for the country and based on the question of my interests. For the analysis I have merged the data, preserving the order and the relation of the questions. However, I have faced some challenges while analyzing open-ended questions. Using the exported data, I have categorized them in a context that I understood from the answer. It definitely could have caused some error in the data analysis, yet these open-ended answers require more close examination and more detailed further research.

The structure and logic of the questions were described in the sub-chapter 3.0 YouthSpeak Insights. The analysis of the data was done with the same logic.

Firstly, I have analyzed the statistics based on the majority of the answers to the anchor questions in each of the six blocks. This information states the majority of the opinions. Based on these replies, I could make assumptions and research questions, which would be later proved right or wrong through cross-checking through the question blocks.

Secondly, I looked at each of the blocks and analyzed all the questions within the same block to discover relations in the answers.

Thirdly, I was looking for the tertiary set of the data - cross-checking the relations throughout different blocks of the questions. For this step, I have also analyzed the tendency in the open-ended questions that AIESEC in Finland had added.

Lastly, I have checked the demographical background, external trends and other factors that might have influenced the results.



For the primary and secondary set of the data, I mostly used Excel formulas, charts, and graphs. For the data that had to be cross-checked within the blocks to identify the relations, I have used IBM SPSS statistics where the individual variables were identified.

The research questions, framework, and the findings, as well instructions how to use the insights as are presented in the YouthSpeak Insights Report for Finland.

## **4.2 Recommendation on use of the product**

Firstly, I would remind you here the YouthSpeak Insights report structure. There were questions analyzed in the following blocks: Drivers in life, World in 2030, Youth For Global Goals, Leadership, Engagement, Education, and country-specific questions. In the case of Finland, I have integrated insights from country-specific questions into the blocks of Engagement, Education, and Leadership. The target audience was young people. AIESEC in Finland received most of the responses from young people 16 - 25 years old whose current occupation is mostly studying.

In this subchapter, I will firstly provide some recommendations of YouthSpeak Insights report use for marketing, sales, partnership management and government relations operations of AIESEC in Finland. The report does not distinguish only one topic. It rather encourages to mix the insights, add more expertise on the discussed topic, apply to the context of a particular community, and ignite more detailed discussions. Here are just a few examples how the insights can be used.

I suggest to the national team of AIESEC in Finland for tem 2016 -2017 to get acquainted with the ideas of the report. Organizing up to five national conferences per year for its members, AIESEC in Finland starts every conference with a session about the relevance of our operations. Discuss the question raised in the report with the members.

Having a perception that Finland does not have any severe social issues as in many other and more developing countries, AIESEC in Finland has a tendency to focus on providing leadership experiences to young people by sending them to the projects outside of Finland. YouthSpeak Insights report, however, showed that majority of the sample see racism and intolerance, stress and depression, and youth unemployment as top-3 issues that they are concerned about. At the same time majority of young people had an opinion that education and international experience can help them to solve these problems. Adding even more, you might take into the consideration the facts that awareness about global

issues and solution-oriented attitude were named as two the most important skills in order to grow personally and professionally. The majority of the points for quality of a great leader were given to empathy. Can young people in Finland acquire more empathy in order to eradicate intolerance in the society through international experiences? Through what projects AIESEC in Finland could support them? I suggest the national board of AIESEC in Finland to facilitate the discussion with its members during the national conferences around this topic or any other insights from the report.

For the same logic the topics for YouthSpeak Forum can be defined. For instance, almost half of the respondents admitted that they see Finnish society worse in next 15 years. At the same time, they expressed fear of not succeeding and not reaching their potential, as well as the observed lack of humanity. What is the root of their more pessimistic view to the future, even comparing to the global data? The majority of the respondents, already enrolled in the universities, assessed that the skills that they get from their studies do not quite equip them personally and professionally for the future life. Taking into consideration the context of Finnish education system which is recognized as one of the best in the world, what made young people form this opinion? Similarly: young people feel that they need more positive and solution-oriented behavior in order to succeed in life, whereas currently youth unemployment is still a topical issue. They expressed that if they were paid for anything, they would still learn, explore, and create. How can the society nurture their passions for learning and exploring in order to make young people more solution-oriented and reduce youth unemployment? In the same way bringing the context of Finland and applying to one or a few insights from the report, the most relevant topics can be identified for the further discussions during YouthSpeak Forum.

For acquiring purposeful partnerships, I suggest to identify a topical question within the same block of the question set and look for more relevant stakeholders that specialize in this field or issue. For example, identifying that majority of young people as in Finland as globally indicate SDG 4 – Quality Education as one of the most important, and the one that young people are committed the most. At the same time, they value practical experience (specifically identifying international exchange). There is already a great variety of various exchange programs offered by universities and other organizations. What kind of partnerships still can be established to provide more practical experiences through exchange?

### 4.3 Work assessment

Evaluating the report, I could agree that it met its purpose. Unfortunately, due to low number of responses for YouthSpeak Survey 2.0, I did not have a big data to operate with. However, the initial purpose of the product creation was entirely fulfilled.

Referring back to the product's initial description, by creating the YouthSpeak Insights report for Finland I aimed at:

- providing the insights on earlier conducted survey, raising some questions for the further discussions;
- creating a tool that potentially can be used for acquiring new partners for purposeful collaboration between AIESEC in Finland and its stakeholders;
- analyzing the data and provide some findings and learnings for the second sprint of YouthSpeak initiative implementation.

In November 2016 AIESEC in Finland will organize YouthSpeak Forum in Turku. The theme and the topic of the forum are not identified yet. However, the questions discussed in the YouthSpeak Insights report for Finland will be taken into consideration. According to the flow of YouthSpeak initiative, the YouthSpeak Forum is the following element. It is exactly the right platform to take into consideration the insights from the YouthSpeak report for Finland, involve experts on the topics that were discussed there, and create the space for the discussion and creating actionable ideas.

This follows to the fulfillment of the second purpose – acquiring partners for purposeful collaboration. The partners can be involved either in YouthSpeak Forum participation or to any other project that tackles the issue discussed and reflected in the YouthSpeak Insights report for Finland. Already a few months back while meeting with various companies and stakeholders for my position as Director of Business Development, I have already started a discussion about YouthSpeak Initiative. As one of the examples, my meeting with the United Nations Association Finland led to the mutual agreement about further collaboration for our operations. As for an upcoming event, on June, 17 I will have a chance to present the Global Insights report, as well as my personal findings from YouthSpeak Insights report for Finland to up to 30 company representatives during the "breakfast roundtable" event organized by Project Management Institute Finland. Foremore, my report will be published as an attachment to AIESEC in Finland public annual report for term 2015 -2016, as well being presented to the Board of AIESEC in Finland. Thus, I will continue exploring more opportunities that the insights of the report can lead me to. To conclude, the scope of applying the YouthSpeak Insights report for Finland to operations of AIESEC in Finland is broad. The most important that the report will still be just a first

step towards creating a bigger movement and finding the ways how to use it in the most practical way.

Finally, this is the first time that AIESEC in Finland compiled a national report for external use. Earlier in my work I mentioned that this report it is just the first sprint of YouthSpeak initiative implementation. As for my commissioner, AIESEC in Finland, I suggest to learn from my work and based on the recommendations to start improving it already now. During my research on the same topic about millennials and their engagement, education, leadership and views on life, I came across with some interesting studies conducted by PwC, Universum, and Deloitte. For me, it was great to see some confirmation for my personal conclusions. It is true that AIESEC in Finland could have gathered a bigger sample of the responses, in order to form more detailed explanation of the insights. However, I realized that some of these professional companies with higher resources that I had, formed their opinion on even smaller sample of respondents in Finland. While developing my product and analyzing the data, I realized the importance not only to have a bigger sample but of also the ability to find the connections and tendencies in the responses.

With that to be said, I am personally satisfied with my work. It met the requirements and interests that I defined at the beginning of my work – to be able to apply my knowledge to creating something useful and valuable for the future use.

## 5 Reflection of thesis writing process

In this chapter I will reveal my challenges during the thesis writing process, make an assessment of own work, and identify the key learnings. This is the final chapter; therefore, I would advise you to be acquainted with the product first – the YouthSpeak Insights report – before continuing with the personal assessment.

### 5.1 Challenges

AIESEC is a truly international organization, currently presented in 126 countries and territories, with the annual membership over 70 000 young individuals. The entire network consists of separate legally registered associations yet each one of them obeys the Global Constitution and Global Compendium, as well as follows various guidelines. The main decision power is held by the Presidents of the Member Committees (Presidents of the National Board of each of the AIESEC entities). The top leadership positions can be held by the same person only during one term (equals one year). I am giving this brief structural description to give the reader an idea of the nature of the operations in AIESEC. With all accumulated knowledge, yet changing experiences; a number of the members; diversity; different realities; truly international, yet relatively flat-structured organization; with the available tools and systems, AIESEC progresses in a very agile way. The sprints of the operations, for instance, might happen on local, national, regional or international levels during conferences, summits, working groups by AIESEC representatives. Therefore, I have faced a few challenges in the thesis writing process.

The first challenge was to reflect objectively what the original source of information is, and what is my personal contribution to the accumulated network knowledge. Moreover, the majority of the materials are used for the internal purpose, which helps AIESEC members to educate themselves and keep themselves aligned with the global strategies. I tried to overcome this challenge by downscaling the global perspectives to the national level, based on the experience that I have had during my position in AIESEC in Finland. In 2016 AIESEC is the only organization that has been featured on the #WorldBlu List of Freedom-Centered Workplaces consecutively for the last ten years. The organization was recognized for the AIESEC values that each of the thousands of members in more than 120 countries and territories. (WorldBlu: Freedom of Work 2016.) That fact proves the freedom and agility of the organization, and that every member is a contributor. (AIESEC 12 May 2016).

The second, the pace of the progress as in AIESEC as in the campaigns and materials for Sustainable Development Goals. By the time I finish a brief description of the current stage, there is always a piece of new information is coming up. Therefore, there are not many typographically printed materials used, rather than online materials, blog posts, online articles, etc. Taking into account the digital transformation also in the sources of information, I personally do not see it is an obstacle, but as a way of keeping up with the fast pace of information management. For instance, the Global YouthSpeak Insights report will be presented to the network at the beginning of June, whereas my work is being finished. The findings from the Global report might have influenced my personal findings from the report comparison and forming the right conclusion. Whereas in my work I operated with the preliminary global results, published in March 2016.

The third challenge was to narrow down the topic. The 2030 Agenda, developed and agreed by the United Nations, is a long-term global development plan. There are many different ways how countries and territories, organizations, households, and individuals will contribute and commit themselves to making the Global Goals being achieved by 2030. At the same time AIESEC has the own purpose and business model, thus combining these two broad topics to one specific point was a challenge. The line shall be drawn very carefully because AIESEC does not work for the United Nations in promoting awareness about Sustainable Development Goals. Both of the organizations saw the acknowledged the value of working together for achieving the same goals, even though the roadmap for these goals varies from organization to organization. Additionally, AIESEC has developed own concept how to fulfill the promise of contribution to the Global Goals – the YouthSpeak initiative, which might have brought some complexity in understanding its co-relation.

Due to the challenges of proper identifying the topic, broad scope of the partnership and YouthSpeak initiative on the global level, my thesis topic has slightly changed already during thesis writing process. Originally it had a name “Managing Meaningful Campaign – YouthSpeak case”, while I had an idea to focus on the YouthSpeak Survey and identify how to establish partnerships for fulfilling the purpose of the survey. However, on the global level it was decided to simplify the survey, and run another sprint of modified questionnaire from May 2016 onwards. Due to lack of time and the structural change, I have decided to utilize already gathered information, identify the general tendencies and raise questions for further discussions by compiling the YouthSpeak Insights report. Because of a relatively insignificant number of responses, I planned to combine the data and make analysis for all Nordic countries because of matching realities. However, the questions asked in open-ended questions could have provided more valuable information for the

country where it was asked. Thus, after minor modifications, the thesis topic was defined as “A tool for creating purposeful partnerships – AIESEC in Finland YouthSpeak Insights report”. I recommend the national board of AIESEC in Finland get acquainted with my work in order to improve the second spring of YouthSpeak initiative implementation).

## **5.2 Assessment and key learnings**

The thesis writing process was rather intense; I would personally agree that it could have been planned and implemented in a more stable way. In the subchapter 1.1, I have discussed a method that I consciously have chosen for producing the final product – to use as much as possible personal practical experience and learnings from my position as Director of Business Development, to use the most up-to-dated sources, as well as utilize accumulated knowledge from AIESEC network. Because of usage of this method, the more time I could have spent, the more out of date information and sources I could have used. Thus, I personally assess my work as a real-time project with a strict deadline where an expertise of own position, network resources, and the most updated information is used to make the project relevant and valuable for the commissioner as possible. This project is also done for a purpose of complementing Business Development operations and bringing additional value to the stakeholders (please refer to the subchapter 4.3 where I provide recommendations on a use of the YouthSpeak Insights report). Therefore, this real-time project is a demonstration of a project that can be carried out by me in future work. In the introduction part, I have quoted Haaga-Helia’s mission statement about focusing on innovative products, services, and business operations for the benefit of business and society. I believe that my work on YouthSpeak Insights report is an example of fulfilling this mission statement for a real-time work project.

My key learnings were firstly about the thesis writing process, and secondly about the data analysis itself. During my work I have been creating the proposals, partnership agreements, compiled reports and did content management. However, bringing writing skills back to the academic format made me realize that it is rather challenging to start thesis writing process after a long break.

During the data analysis and designing the YouthSpeak Insights report for Finland, I made some findings that might be useful in my future career and allow me understanding youth opinion better. I could say that throughout interaction with AIESEC members, I could understand their concerns, thoughts, and ideas. However, also bringing external perspective – from the young people who have not heard about AIESEC – was an exciting learning. I see AIESEC as a great organization that provides young people opportunity to become

more solution-oriented, self-aware, with acknowledging the ability to make a difference for a better in the world, and be able to communicate in the diverse environment. Thanks to the work on this project and analyzing the gathered data, I could once more realize how truly relevant organizations such AIESEC could be.

Additionally, my learnings regarding the YouthSpeak Insights report are not finishing once my work is submitted. It continues with further report presentations, initiated discussions, and the projects' implementation (that hopefully will be created around the topics to tackle the issues) already soon.



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# Appendices

## Appendix 1. AIESEC Leadership Qualities

AIESEC 2014

LEADERSHIP QUALITIES



**EMPOWERING OTHERS**



**SOLUTION ORIENTED**



**SELF AWARE**



**WORLD CITIZEN**

QUALITIES DESCRIPTORS

**COMMUNICATES EFFECTIVELY** IN DIVERSE ENVIRONMENTS

**DEVELOPS & EMPOWERS** OTHER PEOPLE

ENGAGES WITH OTHERS TO **ACHIEVE A BIGGER PURPOSE**

ADAPTS AND SHOWS **RESILIENCE** IN THE FACE OF CHALLENGES

TRANSMITS **POSITIVITY** TO MOVE FORWARD **THROUGHOUT UNCERTAINTY**

TAKES **RISKS** WHEN ITS NEEDED

UNDERSTANDS AND LIVES **PERSONAL VALUES**

**FOCUSES ON STRENGTHS** OVER WEAKNESSES

EXPLORES ONE'S **PASSIONS**

BELIEVES IN THEIR ABILITY TO **MAKE A DIFFERENCE** IN THE WORLD

INTERESTED IN **WORLD ISSUES**

ENJOYS **TAKING RESPONSIBILITY** FOR IMPROVING THE WORLD



## Appendix 2. AIESEC Way – Our Why, What, How, and Who

AIESEC 2015

**THE AIESEC WAY**

It all started after the

**SECOND WORLD WAR**

WHEN A GROUP OF

*Young People*

determined that **cross-cultural understanding** was essential to prevent similar conflicts.

**WHY**

WE STRIVE TO ACHIEVE

*Peace*

&

*Fulfillment of Humankind's Potential*

**HOW**

WE PLACE OUR CONFIDENCE

IN

*Youth*

AS THE KEY TO UNLOCK A BETTER FUTURE.

WE BELIEVE THAT

**LEADERSHIP**

IS THE

*Fundamental Solution*

AND IT CAN BE DEVELOPED IN ANYONE.

**WHAT**

WE ENABLE YOUNG PEOPLE TO DEVELOP THEIR

**LEADERSHIP**

THROUGH LEARNING FROM

**PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES**

IN

**CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENTS.**

WE DO THIS THROUGH



**CROSS-CULTURAL EXCHANGES**

& BY CREATING THESE OPPORTUNITIES.

CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT HAPPENS TO THE WORLD WHEN WE

*Engage & Develop EVERY YOUNG PERSON?*

THIS IS THE QUESTION THAT

DRIVES US AS WE STRIVE TO ACHIEVE WHAT WE ENVISION:

*Peace*

&

*Fulfillment of Humankind's Potential*

OUR VALUES

STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE

DEMONSTRATING INTEGRITY

ACTIVATING LEADERSHIP

ENJOYING PARTICIPATION

LIVING DIVERSITY

ACTING SUSTAINABLY

THE LEADERS WE DEVELOP

EMPOWERING OTHERS

SOLUTION ORIENTED

SELF AWARE

WORLD CITIZEN

AIESEC IS A GLOBAL, INDEPENDENT, NON-POLITICAL, NOT-FOR-PROFIT YOUTH-RUN ORGANIZATION.  
AIESEC DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF GENDER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, DISABILITIES, CREED, OR RELIGION, NOR ON THE BASIS OF NATIONAL, ETHNIC, OR SOCIAL ORIGIN.

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## Appendix 3. Millennium Development Goals

United Nations 2010





## Appendix 4. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

United Nations with collaboration of TROLLBÄCK + Company



## Appendix 5. AIESEC declaration for the Global Goals commitment

### AIESEC and United Nations



#### AIESEC Youth Action Summit

In December 2015, AIESEC's young global leaders and representatives from 126 countries and territories gathered at the United Nations Headquarters to promote and drive youth participation in the implementation of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development.

Taking into account:

The desire of AIESEC's global membership and strategic partners to adopt the Global Goals for Sustainable Development;

AIESEC's goal to engage and develop every young person in the world - a milestone towards achieving its organizational mission and vision of Peace and Fulfillment of Humankind's Potential;

AIESEC's 2020 ambition to shape its operations around the needs of the world, increase its reach and scale up positive impact in communities around the globe by mobilizing more young leaders through its global volunteer and internship programs;

**AIESEC hereby declares to** adopt and contribute to achieving the Global Goals for Sustainable Development by mobilizing and developing young leaders who **create awareness, foster engagement and take action** to implement these goals.

#### 1. Create Awareness of the Global Goals

AIESEC commits to create awareness of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development among its members, partners, collaborators and young people worldwide, as the first step towards their achievement.

#### 2. Foster Engagement around the Global Goals

AIESEC commits to gather and amplify youth opinion on issues that matter to them, and facilitate global and local discussions that generate actionable ideas on young people's contribution to the implementation of the Global Goals.

#### 3. Take Action on the Global Goals

AIESEC commits to align its global volunteer and internship programs with the Global Goals to contribute to achieving them; and to mobilize its members and young people around the world to take action to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

December 11<sup>th</sup> 2015, United Nations Headquarters, New York City, New York

## Appendix 6. YouthSpeak Survey added questions by AIESEC in Finland

	Question	Choose from a list options:	Type of insights you are looking for with this question
1	What university have you studied in?	Choose from the drop-down list of Universities and Universities of Applied Sciences Other: please, specify	Appeal with the data to the certain universities, because the information might differ crucially. Use the data in the University Relations development for AIESEC in Finland operations for on-campus activities and enhancing collaboration for AIESEC exchange programs for students
2	What are the current biggest issues in Finnish society that youth can tackle?	Alcoholism Bullying at studying and working places Demographic change Domestic violence Financial illiteracy among youth Health and well-being Immigration for work and studies Inequality Infrastructure Lack of awareness about global issues Lack of awareness and opportunities for companies to become international Lost youth Nationalization as political focus Racism and intolerance Readiness of youth to enter the work market Refugees and asylum seekers Social gap Stress and depression Unemployment Work-life balance Youth unemployment Other: please, specify	Justify how well the youth is aware with the issues, adjust AIESEC in Finland operations to what society needs the most
3	What do you see as a solution to these top three issues?	Entrepreneurship Donations Education Extra curriculum Informal education International experience Social project Volunteering Other, please specify	Justify if youth feels ownership in solving the issues, indicate the perception of young people what is the root for the solution
4	Please choose top three qualities that you can acquire through international volunteering internship that support your future plans and contribute to your personal development?	Awareness about global issues Belief in ability to make a difference in the world Demonstrate resilience in a face of challenges Effective communication in diverse environment Empowering others Engaging with others for achieving a bigger purpose Exploration of personal passions Focus on strength over weaknesses Positive and solution-oriented attitude Responsibility for improving the world Taking risks Understanding of personal values	Use the descriptors of leadership qualities of AIESEC Leadership Development Model. Identify what is the most appealing and relevant to the young people in Finland
5	What does word "leadership" mean to you?	Open-ended question	Finnish people tend to put negative hue on the word "leadership" (also in Finnish). By this question we want to understand the general meaning of the word.

## **Appendix 7. AIESEC in Finland YouthSpeak Insights report**

The product initially was published from the personal profiles on Issuu and Slideshare.

Issuu, URL: [https://issuu.com/mariastrelkova/docs/aiesec\\_in\\_finland\\_youthspeak\\_insigh](https://issuu.com/mariastrelkova/docs/aiesec_in_finland_youthspeak_insigh)

SlideShare, URL: <http://www.slideshare.net/MariaStrelkova/aiesec-in-finland-youthspeak-insights-report-62897819>