



# #YouEU Toolkit

## e-participation in the EU

### democratic life

Good Practices Resources across Europe



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## 1. Project Overview

The **purpose** of the #YouEU project is to reinvigorate the relationship of European Youth with the EU and promote active youth participation in the EU democratic life by harnessing the potential of digital tools and promoting e-participation.

A well-informed young generation confidently engaging with digital democracy tools and making its claims open to the public sphere will foster active EU citizenship and will build a sense of European identity.

The **objectives** of the project are :

1. Enhance the capacity of Youth Workers and CSOS Professionals to support young people on using digital democracy tools so as to better understand and contribute to EU democracy processes
2. Raise awareness and educate youth on e-democracy and participation concepts, tools and their potential
3. Strengthen transnational cooperation among youth and foster an EU digital public sphere
4. Encourage youth participation in the Conference on the Future of Europe
5. Foster understanding and a sense of a common European identity among youth

## 2. Research method & Evaluation criteria

The **aim of the Toolkit** is to identify **Good Practice** cases on **European, national, regional and local level** that try to raise participation of youth using digital tools and/or Social Media.

In order to make it possible to take into consideration initiatives of various types, the research criteria are based on qualitative research questions that try to define what we intend under Good Practise cases.

- We consider in our research all initiatives with the aim to raise participation - this include **digital tools/apps, Social Media** or simply activities that use the **web** in general - we do not have to consider only initiatives that use actual apps!
- Primarily our focus lies on **initiatives focussing on youth**, but we have also included initiatives for other target groups.

We have tried to include in our research **Good Practise examples**. Good Practise examples are, according to a definition of the United Nations:

*“A good practice is not only a practice that is good, but a practice that has been proven to work well and produce good results and is therefore recommended as a model. It is a successful experience, which has been tested and validated, in the broad sense, which has been repeated and deserves to be shared so that a greater number of people can adopt it”*  
( Def. of UN on europa.eu )

The following five **Quality Indicators (QI)** with short definitions and research questions are defining **the framework for the research**. They set the minimum requirements that the project consortium has set towards the investigated and evaluated initiatives. Given the fact that the initiatives are quite different, open and qualitative research questions allow to include individual knowledge about the local/regional and national/European context.

### 3. Quality Indicators (QI)

Starting from the Good Practise definition, the following **Quality Indicators** constitute a main part of the mentioned framework. They can help to identify if an initiative, project etc. meets the expectations of a Good Practise example.

Our **goal** is to include in these Quality Indicators also **key democratic concepts** and **processes** (deliberation, participation). Main emphasis is put on **qualitative aspects** taking into consideration the **usability aspect** as stated in the definition above. We include in our research the **innovative aspect** of the initiative in question, their **effectiveness** and the **impact** that the initiative has created. It is their ability to stand as a **model** that is important to us, to be an example on how e-participation can effectively be put into practise.

Our approach is to keep the minimum requirements open in order to allow us flexibility given the wide range of various activities that we will evaluate. For each Quality Indicator we have defined research questions that guide us through the research phase allowing to define more in detail what we understand under a Good Practise example.

Not all research questions and not all aspects will be applicable to each initiative.

The aspects covered are:

- Innovation/innovative aspect
- Effectiveness/successful
- Impact
- Participation level
- Deliberation level

#### 3.1 Innovation

**Innovation**, is an “*an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption*” (Rogers, 2014,15). **Innovation** can have many different faces. Innovation can refer to a **new idea or method** as the quote above wants to stress out, but also to social aspects, **social innovation** in that way should always be included to technical aspects: “*Fundamental societal changes require the inclusion of social innovations in a paradigm shift of the innovation system*” (Vienna Declaration, 2017).

The research should therefore take into account both technical as social aspects regarding innovation. As definitions are quite generic, we need to set our own definition, this will be done through detailed research questions.

The main question for our research should be if the initiative is **providing something new, creating something that hasn't been there before using new methods or approaches.**

**Research questions:**

### **Innovation in general**

- Does the initiative provide a new method to raise e-participation and e-democracy?
- If so, why is this approach innovative? What are the main characteristics that are innovative?
- In which area lies the innovative aspect and why?

### **Software and usability**

- Are there new and innovative technical aspects (software, design of the app/platform, user-friendly etc.)
- How easy is it for users to communicate and use the application?
- Is the initiative innovative because of their functionality and/or abilities, especially regarding the participation level (interactions, communication...) or functions (different opportunities to participate)?

### **Aim and Goal**

- Is the initiative innovative because of their aim or goal that has not been addressed elsewhere? / insufficiently addressed?

### **Social innovation**

- Does the initiative provide the continuous improvement and integration of the participants?
- Does the initiative facilitate the progressive evolution of the initiative and/or the further development of the tool? Does the initiative have the potential to provoke a long-lasting change in the mechanisms/structures within political and/or social processes?
- Does the initiative have the potential to increase e problem-solving skills of the society/youth?

### 3.2. Effectiveness

As innovation also **success** can have many different faces - and many different definitions. We are analysing the **effectiveness** of the initiative, in the words of the Cambridge Dictionary, **“the ability to be successful and produce the intended results”**.

The United Nations offers a definition that might be useful for this research: *“A “good practice” has proven its strategic relevance as the most effective way in achieving a specific objective; it has been successfully adopted and has had a positive impact on individuals and/or communities.” (Def. of UN on europa.eu)*

Although success can have many different forms, initiatives both on national, regional, local and/or European level can be evaluated through taking into consideration also numbers such as the total number of participants, the amount of social media followers, the number of answers (for example in questionnaires), number of sessions/discussions organised or the number of interactions with politicians. This Quality Indicator takes into account the effectiveness level and the results produced by the initiative.

Due to the fact that the initiatives are all quite different regarding their aim and their level where they are implemented (local/national etc.), the setting of fixed numbers (for example each initiative has to have at least X followers on Social Media) would have been limitative to the research. Therefore, we include numeric results into the research questions, if appropriate.

#### Research questions:

##### Coverage (in relation to European/national/regional/local (youth) population)

- What is the total number of participants/users reached? What is the number of registered users?
- How many participants have used/are using the app/platform/site?
- What is the total number of Social Media followers?

##### Sessions and Results

- How many answers have been recorded?
- How many sessions/discussions (with politicians) have been organised?
- What is the number of interactions with politicians? (if foreseen)
- What is the frequency of sessions/discussions organised (per month/per year)?
- If possible, what kind of reactions of participants has the initiative got?

##### Efficiency of used resources

- How effective is the initiative regarding resources needed (human, material, expenses)?
- Is the app/platform/tool easy to use for participants and easy to manage for organizers?
- Is Social Media used in an efficient way?
- Are there self-evaluation possibilities for participants / evaluation in general?
- Has the initiative the potential to be especially successful among the youth? / How efficiently do they address youth?

### 3.3. Impact

As effectiveness/success and (potential) impact are strongly interconnected with each other, we are focussing in this category, based on the already mentioned definition of the United Nations, on “*positive impact on individuals and/or communities*” (Def. of UN on europa.eu).

In our case, impact refers also to the **level of influence** that an **initiative** can **generate** in a **certain area** or among a **certain group of people/society** - and possible positive effects to political participation. However, this Quality Indicator is closely connected with effectiveness as effective initiatives might also have a higher impact.

#### Research questions:

##### Impact on individuals

- Has the initiative the potential to raise the knowledge of participants also on a long-term scale?
- Has the initiative the potential to make them more familiar with political processes?

##### Impact on youth/society

- If possible, what kind of reactions of participants has the initiative got?
- Is it possible to evaluate possible (positive) results of the initiative to the society?
- Is it possible to evaluate the impact in general due to the fact that many different persons with different backgrounds and occupations are participating? (if applicable)

##### Technological impact

- Is it possible to evaluate the technological impact (importance of the software/tool/app etc.) both to participation and awareness-raising aspects of the initiative?

##### Impact on political participation

- How many proposals, suggestions, recommendations, etc. from users have been forwarded to decision-makers?
- How many of these proposals/suggestions have been taken into account by stakeholders?
- Are there other forms that can show the (possible) impact to political participation?

### 3.4. Participation level

The respective initiatives should be analyzed focussing also on their capacity to generate participation. This means not only how initiatives raise participation in general, but it should take into consideration also the basic aims of Participatory Democracy.

**Participatory Democracy** means that citizens should be **actively involved** towards the various political systems. It tends to advocate more involved **forms of citizen participation** and a greater **political representation** than traditional representative democracy. Participatory Democracy needs a high number of participants and should include a wide variety of different (political) topics (Schmidt, 2019, 227).

Citizens are considered as individuals that can continuously learn to better participate in democratic and political processes and that through these processes of “self-transformation” are transformed through participation and policy-forming into more responsible citizens. They are seen as individuals that can distinguish between the “me”-perspective and the “we”-perspective in order to make decisions not only related to their personal situation but for the wellbeing of others (Schmidt, 2019, 229).

Regarding our research, this means to **consider the level of participation** from multiple perspectives: Firstly from the more **natural perspective**, for example if the initiative in question is able to **foster and raise participation** towards political decision-making processes. But the focus should lie also on considering **key elements of Participatory Democracy** as the mentioned goal to transform citizens to active participants in the daily political life and the ability to consider the “we”-perspective when it comes to political decisions.

#### Research questions

- How does the initiative raise the level of participation of citizens towards political decision-makers?
- What are the main strategies used to raise participation also within the initiative to “train” participation also in a smaller setting? (engagement)
- Does the initiative have the potential to make citizens more responsible about their role within political decision-maker processes?
- How does the initiative facilitate the communication with decision-makers?

### 3.5. Deliberation level

The aim here is to evaluate the deliberative level of the initiative.

**Deliberative democracy** claims that political decisions should be the product of fair and reasonable discussions and debates among citizens. All citizens exchange arguments and consider different claims. Through fruitful debates, citizens can come to an agreement about what procedure, action or policy will be best to produce public good. In that perspective, debates and discussions are a necessary precondition for the legitimacy of democratic political decisions (Schmidt, 2019, 231).

The **key elements** of deliberative democracy are: intensive consultations, both between citizens and the decision-making bodies, unlimited access from all citizens to these consultations and the exclusion of pre-defined decision making processes - the appropriate solution(s) to problems are part of the consultation process, the final result open until the end (Schmidt, 2019, 233; Shabani, 2016, 14).

To sum it up, the deliberate democracy wants to foster citizens to actively participate through intense consultations where all have the same level of power and information in order to be able to decide based on general rules regarding discussion, stories and deliberate-participate leadership. The result is therefore open, discussions are based on arguments and that the group with the best argument in that open discourse will be able to put their plans into practise just because the group has the highest level of acceptance. The discourse is changing constantly and therefore the level of acceptance can change at any time.

#### Research questions

- How does the initiative facilitate decision-making processes with citizens (and especially the youth)?
- How open is the access to discussions? Is anonymity guaranteed at all stages? (important to avoid discrimination because of their private/professional life)
- How are the conversations/discussions organised?
- If possible, do you have indicators about the quality of conversations/discussions, are possible results taken on a common ground or are there still different positions?

## References:

- Rogers, Everett M., Diffusion of Innovation, New York, 2003.
- Schmidt, Manfred G, Demokratietheorien. Eine Einführung, Wiesbaden, 2019 (e-book)
- Good and Best Practise Definition according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2013, <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/iesf/documents/good-and-best-practice-definitions-fao-2013>
- Shabani, Omid Payrow, Democracy, Power and Legitimacy, Toronto, 2016.

# Good Practises across Europe



## 4. Good Practises across Europe

### DemokratieWebStatt Austria



<b>Logo:</b>		
<b>Organisation :</b>	The Austrian Parliament	
<b>Level :</b>	✓ NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	The portal is aimed exclusively at children and young people in Austria.	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Website: <a href="https://www.demokratiewebstatt.at/">https://www.demokratiewebstatt.at/</a>	

<p><b>Description :</b></p>	<p>DemokratieWEBstatt is the Austrian Parliament's online portal for children and young people, focused on political education and the popularisation of democracy. It offers information on topics such as politics, democracy, laws &amp; elections.</p> <p>Some of the activities the portal makes possible include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• virtual walks through parliament and the Democracy Quarter in Vienna;</li> <li>• workshops on politics and democracy for children and young people;</li> <li>• following the activities in parliament;</li> <li>• researching the personalities of members of the National and Federal Council;</li> <li>• participating in chats with politicians on concrete topics;</li> <li>• playing numerous engaging games;</li> <li>• making an appointment calendar from the role of a politician;</li> <li>• proposing an own law based on an example;</li> <li>• following news.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Innovation :</b></p>	<p>The initiative makes use of the techniques and methods of gamification in order to spark an interest in politics and a group that is commonly considered apolitical – children and young people. The main innovative aspect is not technological – gamified platforms are becoming increasingly common – but the content and the way it is presented. The platform is user friendly, and since it requires no registration, it also presents no barriers for entry.</p> <p>Involving young people and presenting a ‘serious’ topic in a fun and approachable way is a significant advantage of the platform.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>The platform was made operational in 2007. Until 2021, a total of 121 000 school children have participated in the workshops. Students who are especially active and participate in numerous workshops are awarded the title of Demokratiewerkstatt-Profi and a medal. A total of 6 000 young people have claimed that status.</p>

	<p>The outreach of the platform is by no means insignificant. On average, 8000 to 9000 students per year take part in an initiative that builds their competences as active citizens. Since a total of 1 132 367 students were enrolled in Austria's schools during the 2017/18 school year (source: Statistic Austria), that would mean a total of less than 1% are exposed to the workshops in a given year. Even given the fact that some children might be too little to participate and others may have an opportunity to take part in another year, there is a distinct possibility for growth.</p> <p>Not all children can be expected to take interest in politics, as it bears relation to other personal interests – those with a social / humanitarian focus are more likely to be drawn by the prospect. Nevertheless, since the platform builds so many competences, participation in it can be beneficial for all.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>On an individual level, the platform builds the competences of its users in three main areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- knowledge: the platform contains approachable information on politics and laws in Austria and the EU, their purpose, goals and structure.</li> <li>- skills: through participating in discussions and workshops, users develop their critical thinking and communication skills</li> <li>- attitude: since users can step into the shoes of a politician, propose their own laws, and discuss their effects with others, they are likely to see politics as an area they can personally influence</li> </ul> <p>Because of the number of young people involved, the platform is also likely to impact the local communities these people live in. People who are accustomed to expressing their opinion in one context are likely to transfer that habit to others.</p> <p>The users are likely to become politically active, not simply as voters, but as activists expressing their values.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>The active participation in workshops and discussions with politicians trains the users in citizenship and participation. Because they have been taken seriously even at their age, they are more likely to see themselves as active participants in</p>

	<p>the political process. Because they have been listened to before and are accustomed to expressing their views, they are more likely to continue expressing them in the future.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>Discussions on the platform are public.</p> <p>Their aim is primarily an educational one, not really the proposal of new political initiatives. Active participation is encouraged through the provision of information and the gamification elements.</p> <p>Every effort is made to present politicians as human beings, persons one could relate to. All these actions serve the aim of bringing politics close to the young people, and empower them to make their personal impact on it.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>This platform is a good example of political education and enabling the active participation of youth. It is specifically aimed at children and youth providing information, games and workshops. It has many specific gamified functions and enables the asking questions to politicians. It has already a significant outreach</p> <p>On the other side, it perhaps hasn't reached its full potential and it is difficult to achieve a good balance of content for children and young people. The platform seems geared towards the former.</p>

# Partizipationsportal der Stadt Wien

Vienna, Austria



<b>Organisation :</b>	City of Vienna	
<b>Level :</b>	NATIONAL	✓ LOCAL
	REGIONAL	EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	Citizens of Vienna, local businesses, community leaders etc.	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Website: <a href="https://www.partizipation.wien.gv.at/">https://www.partizipation.wien.gv.at/</a>	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>The participation portal of the city of Vienna enables citizens, business representatives and employees to contribute and discuss ideas related to local problems. The platform allows citizens to exchange their thoughts, collect ideas and give feedback in dialogue with the Vienna city administration.</p> <p>The portal is very similar to a heavily moderated discussion forum. The city administration chooses the topics and determines for how long they will remain open. Citizens need to register in order to comment. After that, they can leave posts under any open topic of their choosing. Other users can up- or downvote existing posts, and can leave their own comments on them.</p>	
<b>Innovation :</b>	Innovation generally is the weakest part of the initiative. There is nothing particularly innovative about a discussion forum, and the technical way it has been implemented is by no means	

	<p>original. That said, this lack of innovation cannot necessarily be considered a drawback. The simplicity of registration and use of the initiative makes it a very low-entry one – even people with limited digital skills won't be significantly challenged to make an effective use of it. Similarity to other services also enhances usability, as new users do not need to adapt to different on-site mechanics.</p> <p>One aspect that stands out among similar services is the addition of feedback of user suggestions – whether they have been implemented by the authorities and in what manner. This addresses one of the main weak points of public discussion platforms – the feeling that communication is one-way that impacts are often unknown.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>The initiative does not provide information on the exact number of registered users. The most popular topic on the site has attracted about 1500 participants – from that a total number can be deduced in the low tens of thousands of users.</p> <p>Some topics attract hundreds of responses, others – only dozens. The only topic which attracted thousands of responses was the discussion of the budget of the district of Penzing.</p> <p>As of currently, there is only one topic open for discussion, which suggests certain limitations on the potential interest generated by the service. Having numerous topics open at the same time gives a lot more reasons for new users to register on the platform.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>The impact generated by the initiative is its strongest side. Hundreds of suggestions by motivated and active citizens are reaching the authorities on a regular basis. The ability to up- and downvote, as well as comment on posts stimulates the communication between users, and has the potential to improve their suggestions.</p> <p>The local scope of the questions discussed means they are especially close to the citizens, since the problems are neither abstract nor theoretical, but concern many aspects that directly</p>

	<p>impact people's lives. Because of that, users are often competent to meaningfully contribute to the topics user discussion.</p> <p>Presenting ideas supported by arguments in an environment where they will be under the scrutiny of others serves as a motivation to improve the quality of the posts. Since users do not wish to appear stupid or incompetent, they have a strong incentive to research the material thoroughly, building their knowledge and civic competences. The knowledge that one has a real impact on the city life motivates people to be even more active as citizens.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>Since the posts on the initiative reach the decision makers and this have a direct impact on local, well-identified issues, that provides a strong incentive to participate in the discussions. Apart from the potential impact of participation, the initiative doesn't do much else to stimulate the users – there are few mechanisms in the hands of the administrators. Other users can use the voting and commenting mechanics, which stimulate interaction, and thus – further participation.</p> <p>Practical experience suggests that leaving posts for the city administration is a lot more popular than commenting on the posts of other users, especially in significant detail on the changing issues.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>Since the platform requires a registration, it necessitates certain personal data from users. However, when they comment, they are represented by a user name, hiding those personal details. Because of that, the platform is both inclusive and secure. Active moderation takes care of users who abuse the terms of service, and directs users who get lost to the appropriate topic / other comment service.</p> <p>Users have a clear timeframe on how long they can comment, and receive immediate feedback by other users in the form of votes and comments. The platform feedback of whether the suggestions have been implemented by the authorities and in what form. This function is a clear strength of the initiative.</p>

**Summary – General Assessment**

The initiative's strong side is its undeniable effectiveness. It is easy to access and allows thousands of active citizens to express their opinion on matters of public governance.

The fact that these deliberations are often listened to by decision makers and produce a real impact is one more reason to recommend the initiative. It serves to prove that some of the best examples are not necessarily the most technologically advanced ones, but the ones which are simple, clear and produce a real, measurable impact. Thousands of citizens are leaving their mark on their city through a simple discussion forum – that is a point to learn from.

**Tulln Vision**  
Tulln, Austria



**Logo:**

*Gestalten Sie  
die Vision unserer  
Stadtgemeinde mit!*



**Organisation :**

Nonconform

<b>Level :</b>	NATIONAL	✓ LOCAL
	REGIONAL	EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	Citizens of Tulln	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Website: <a href="https://www.nonconform.at/de/tulln-vision/projekt/">https://www.nonconform.at/de/tulln-vision/projekt/</a> Instagram: #VisionTulln	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>The town of Tulln an der Donau has a population of 16 000. The initiative Tulln Vision was intended to enable citizen participation regarding the Tulln Strategy 2030. It took place in the summer of 2020.</p> <p>Citizens are treated as experts in the subject-matter the future development of their community. They are invited to share their ideas online, through social media, and in person, by using a postbox. The generation of ideas is facilitated by workshops, podcasts, a digitally guided walk and short films. As a result, hundreds of ideas are generated for incorporation in the strategy.</p>	
<b>Innovation :</b>	<p>The main innovation of the initiative is the skilful combination of online and offline tools to create an atmosphere where every citizen is invited to contribute. The digital content is meant to enhance the experience, providing information and guidance, but in the end citizens are very much engaging with a live subject matter.</p> <p>As a local, it would be possible to generate ideas in the purely online environment, based on pre-existing experience and views, but the true strength of the concept lies in creating the conditions for a lively dialogue between members of the community.</p>	
<b>Effectiveness :</b>	<p>The initiative posts on its website pages with suggestions made by participants. The vast majority are written by hand, and only a handful are printed ones. What is surprising is that the number of responses is in the hundreds – a staggeringly</p>	

	<p>high amount for the population size of the town.</p> <p>Perhaps 2 % of the total population expressed their ideas – not simply participating in a vote or discussion, but made actual suggestions, which is very impressive, especially given that the initiative was active for a period of only two months.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>The initiative enabled citizens from all ages as walks of life to express their views on the development of their community. It succeeded in granting them a voice, and increasing the motivation for participation. The expert inputs increased the knowledge of participants and helped them refine their own suggestions.</p> <p>Unlike the public consultation portal of the city of Vienna though, the initiative acted more like a brainstorming session – it served to generate ideas, which in turn were incorporated into a strategic document. It did not provide feedback on individual suggestions, and that makes sense – they were ideas for the future, not demands for action now. Nevertheless, the lack of feedback is a weakness of the initiative, potentially reducing the will of participants to follow up on their suggestions.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>Through the digitally guided walk, participants were invited to go to specific places in the city, where they would receive information on the suggestions related to it. Podcasts, film and expert inputs served to provide a basis for deliberation. Gathering of ideas was made easy because it was very inclusive, involving websites, social media, live events and locations. everyone could find a way to contribute depending on their preferences. This variety of channels used for gathering suggestions – both online and offline – is key to reaching different target groups.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>The initiative did much to enable an informed participation of all local citizens, and gave everyone an avenue for participation. Because there were no prerequisites for participation whatsoever, the response rate was very high.</p>

**Summary – General  
Assessment**

The initiative is a great example of mobilising a local community around a specific topic.

Different methods and tools were used: films, podcasts, a digitally-guided tour, workshops – so that everyone could find something they would relate to. Because several different channels were used: websites, social media, on-site postboxes, the gathering of ideas was made easy and approachable, As a result, participation in the initiative was very high, and hundreds of suggestions were gathered in a town of several thousand inhabitants – compared to a roughly same number of ideas for the city of Vienna on their public portal.

The initiative is a good example of local politics done right. It is important to note its limited scope, though – it was active only for a couple of months. It remains unclear if such high levels of citizen participation can be maintained for long.

European HomeParliaments  
Europe



Logo:



<b>Organisation :</b>	Pulse of Europe	
<b>Level :</b>	NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	✓ EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	European Citizens	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Website: <a href="https://homeparliaments.eu/en/">https://homeparliaments.eu/en/</a>	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>The European HomeParliaments are an initiative of the pan European movement Pulse of Europe active in many member states of the EU. A (European) HomeParliament is a private discussion session where 4 to 8 people have the opportunity to discuss current EU policy decisions and general topics, for example European Solidarity or the implications of the pandemic.</p> <p>People can either invite their friends or they can participate in interesting discussion groups directly organized by the organization.</p> <p>Each session has the duration of approximately 2 hours; Pulse of Europe provides instructions for the moderator as well as a list of questions and arguments that can stimulate the discussion. Normally discussions are organized along these leading questions. At the end of each discussion block, the group has to decide if and why they agree or disagree with the question.</p> <p>All the results are collected by Pulse of Europe and forwarded to European politicians (officially called “dialogue partners”); in that way the ideas and wishes of European citizens are being heard by members of the European Commission and the European Parliament.</p>	
<b>Innovation :</b>	The European HomeParliaments are conceptualized as an European initiative with the aim to reach as many Europeans	

	<p>as possible. The main innovative strength is the European dimension, the HomeParliaments have been organized so far in several EU member states, the relevant documents are available in more languages. Given that, the HomeParliaments have the potential to create a map of different opinions, ideas and wishes towards crucial topics of Europe.</p> <p>Another innovative aspect of the HomeParliaments lies in the fact that they are focusing on the private sphere, “simple” citizens in their houses organize the majority of the sessions, and this fact facilitates fruitful and constructive discussions. Unlike public discussions where experts or a panel normally longer speeches, there are no hierarchical elements; all participants of the discussion can equally participate in the debate.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>So far, there have been 4 rounds of HomeParliaments, each round had a duration of approximately 3 to 4 months. The last session was active from April to June 2021, the results are not published yet. The results of the 3rd round in autumn 2020 has brought more than 1200 participants into European HomeParliaments. Participants from more than 12 EU member states have discussed the future of European solidarity, sometimes also in cross-border HomeParliaments with participants from multiple member states.</p> <p>Only in the 3rd session, Pulse of Europe has received 1000 results that have been forwarded to European politicians, “dialogue partners” of the initiative. Many MEPs have participated also in additional organized public HomeParliaments where citizens could discuss directly with politicians – but with the concept of the HomeParliaments.</p> <p>Some European politicians have commented so far on the results of the 3rd round, for example, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has sent a video showing her appreciation towards the project and the results of the European HomeParliaments.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>The innovative concept of the European HomeParliaments has the potential to create a link between European citizens and</p>

	<p>European politicians reducing also the gap between electors and decision makers. Through the European dimension and the network of Pulse of Europe the initiative can not only reach people in different member states, but create fruitful discussions between them – with positive effects towards the European integration process.</p> <p>On an individual level, the format of the HomeParliaments can be positive to raise the innovative affection towards the EU in general and major EU policies issues in particular as it gives individuals the opportunity to participate and discuss – without hierarchical elements that characterize classical discussions with experts.</p> <p>The European HomeParliaments therefore can have a positive impact both on individuals that get the possibility to discuss without hierarchical elements and can help them to develop a sense for the European dimension of current political issues. In addition to that, it helps to raise identification with EU institutions and decision processes, something that is without doubt still a serious problem.</p> <p>Unfortunately, there is no data available in which way results have influenced political decision processes. This is, however, not only a weakness of this initiative, but more a proof for the incapacity of the current political system to interact with (EU) citizens.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>The European HomeParliaments try to generate discussions about crucial EU policies topics, the idea that everyone can participate with his/her opinions, point of views and ideas is close to the main goal of participatory democracy which is to involve citizens more directly into political processes. The organized HomeParliaments bring citizens to discuss various topics, but it also connects them (especially when the sessions are organized with participants from more countries) and confront them with different opinions and point of views.</p> <p>The format therefore can help to raise awareness among the participants that all European citizens are part of political processes – and that they need to actively participate in</p>

	<p>discussions to shape the future of the EU.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>The sessions follow the general principles of deliberative democracy as they eliminate hierarchical structures and imbalances regarding the level of power and information. In contrast to classical discussions, for example panel discussions, there is no division between experts and audience, everyone's points and contributions have the same relevance, regardless of their backgrounds. All participants receive the same information and same questions plus general statements to this topic. Also the result of the discussion for each question – if the group agrees or disagrees to the proposed questions – is open until the end, another key element of deliberative democracy.</p> <p>Participation in all discussions is open to anyone, no matter any prerequisites.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>The European HomeParliaments are an interesting initiative with a high potential towards a more participatory and deliberative democracy. Indeed, the initiative contains a lot of characteristics that facilitate the dialogue between European citizens and decision makers in – and that is important – European dimension. The HomeParliaments are a good way to bring people into contact with important issues of EU politics and an interesting concept of how to politicize the private sphere. However, the impact to decision making processes is still marginal and there are not that many proofs available that show how the results of the 1200 discussions have been taken into consideration by leading European politicians. This is not only the fault of the initiative, but more a symbol for current problems with democracy and participation in Europe.</p>

# Demokratie 21 Podcast/Blog

## Austria



<b>Logo:</b>		
<b>Organisation :</b>	Demokratie 21	
<b>Level :</b>	✓ NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	Teachers (directly) and students (indirectly) of political education.	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Website: <a href="https://demokratie21.at/">https://demokratie21.at/</a>	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>Demokratie 21 is an independent initiative discussing the future of democracy in Austria. It conducts its activities through several channels – a newsletter, blog, podcasts, as well as by organising events.</p> <p>The podcast Richtig &amp; Falsch (True and False) is aimed at Teachers working on civic education. It discusses social controversies that move and polarise the classroom. It aims to bring good ideas to the front of the curtain and make uncertainties discussable. The goal is not to provide ready-made answers, but rather to encourage teachers to share their</p>	

	<p>experiences, to learn from and with one another, to inspire and empower one another. The guests are teachers from all types of schools and subjects, as well as experts from science and practice.</p> <p>Materials from the podcast are also made available in a written form in the blog.</p>
<p><b>Innovation :</b></p>	<p>There are several political initiatives in Austria that aim to increase the competences of citizens by providing high-quality information. The main strength of several of them, including this one, is the skilful combination of different media channels. Podcasts and blogs are types of media that relate especially well to young people, and make complicated arguments accessible.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>So far, there have been 12 events, 52 podcasts, involving 115 Impulse givers. All this is on the side of information provision – there is no telling how many participants actually listened to the podcasts and were made to re-evaluate their opinions. The lack of such feedback, as well as clear participation opportunities for regular users, is a weakness of the initiative.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>High-quality information presented from several, sometimes conflicting points of view, is both informative and helps develop the critical thinking of the users. There is no doubt that the political culture of the users is significantly improved by the initiative.</p> <p>Nevertheless, it leaves the realm of political or activist actions to the people themselves. It does not help them organise or communicate. That has to do with the declared goals of the initiative, although the main one – discussing democracy, certainly would benefit from extra opportunities for discussion.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>The main draw for participants is the fact that the content is catchy, and involves experts in the presentation. In addition, the podcast is a very low entry requirement format – it can be listened to on the move, without the need for registration. That said, it would appear that no particular strategies have been employed to increase the participation of young people –</p>

	<p>explained, once more, with the specific goal set by the creators.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>On the plus side, participation is completely open and unrestricted. On the negative side, the initiative does not facilitate citizen participation in the decision-making process directly. Though improving their competences, it enables them to participate in discussions more ably, and it encourages debates though raising controversy – but citizens need to find a different venue to present it.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>The initiative represents a grassroots movement using appropriate digital tools. It aims at stimulating democracy and opening room for discussions. It uses simple and effective channels such as a blog and a podcast.</p> <p>The quality of the information is very high. Yet, despite being a citizen initiative, it is clearly expert-led, elitist and thus limited in scope. It treats the mainstream user as a consumer, but not as a co-author. So despite its obvious benefits, it can also serve as a warning sign of what to avoid – missing the opportunities for regular citizen participation.</p>

# WeFor Greece



<b>Logo:</b>		
<b>Organisation :</b>	WeFor	
<b>Level :</b>	✓ NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	Greek Youth, University Students	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Facebook, Instagram, Spotify, WeFor Website, Apple	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>WeFor is a student led organization, aiming to redefine the way social and political conversations are conducted in Greece. Their vision is to cultivate active participation in democratic processes and increase the level of deliberation among citizens, especially youth, by raising and shining light to some of the most pressing issues in today’s Greek society. The initiative began in September 2020 and is composed of university students and new graduates, mostly in the fields of politics, law and business, who work towards the implementation of the abovementioned vision. Their values are</p>	

	<p>grounded in innovation, social sensitization and continuous evolution, as they believe people are capable of achieving their greatest goals when acting as a collective.</p> <p>WeFor operates by branding itself according to the issue it wants to highlight, actively campaigning for it on all their platforms and organizing events focused on that specific issue. As such, they rebrand their name accordingly, indicating their intent on raising a specific issue. As an example, their first campaign was focused on gender equality, for which they adopted the name “WeForWomen”, discussing the issue from multiple viewpoints, engaging with women from the worlds of politics, art, journalism, technology and entrepreneurship, science and the military. By engaging with women of different backgrounds, their aim was to highlight some of the hurdles faced by modern Greek women, and the way in which we as a society can deliberate to find tangible solutions.</p> <p>WeFor disseminates their message through their social media platforms, their newsletter addressed to subscribed members and Podcasts available in major apps such as Spotify and Apple Podcasts. Through these means, they aim to raise an issue and discuss potential solutions from the individual level, such as changing views and perspectives, to the national level such as suggesting policy ideas targeting institutional change. Through different channels and targeted marketing, the initiative hopes to reach a wide audience that is engaged with conventional and newer forms of media.</p>
<p><b>Innovation :</b></p>	<p>Innovation is a key consideration for the WeFor initiative, as they wish to adapt to new methods of sharing their content and seek new and fresh ideas to approach the issues they highlight. Additionally, rebranding depending on the issue they highlight is an innovative marketing move, as it effectively communicates their goals, by capturing the attention and sparking the interest of a potential follower/user. Their social media platforms are easy to navigate and extremely user friendly, as well as nicely designed and colour coordinated depending on the campaign they are running. In general, the sense of uniformity in their social media puts forward solid messaging and increases the sense of a well-structured</p>

	<p>initiative that pays attention to detail.</p> <p>In terms of social innovation, the organization aims to further conversations in the public sphere and find solutions by engaging with different viewpoints, having difficult conversations and recognizing that change is achieved through tapping into the pulse of the collective. As the growth of civil society initiatives in Greece has increased over the last decade, there is still plenty of space for youth organizations to participate in raising awareness of social and political issues needing reform. The organization recognizes the power of social media in shaping current conversations and the value of e-democracy, disseminating their message effectively through platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. They also have tapped into a recent trend, that of Podcasts, where they invite prominent professionals, including politicians to share their ideas and views on the topic of discussion.</p> <p>Finally, through their live-streamed events, they open participation to those who cannot physically attend their events but wish to engage with the ideas that are exposed or discussed. Participants can also raise points to event speakers and tap on their expertise on a certain issue. With all the information and viewpoints they put forth, the initiative raises the awareness of youth on a specific issue, which will lead them to make informed choices in the future and participate in democratic processes by holding information on the matters that are of importance to them.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>Even though WeFor has been operating for under a year, it has managed to reach many and amass an engaged following through their social media. For example, their Facebook and Instagram followers surpass a couple of thousands, and the views on their live events and videos have exceeded twenty thousand altogether. To put it into perspective, in a country of 11 million people like Greece, that generally has limited involvement in civil society, 2,500 thousand followers on Instagram and Facebook and 5,000 thousand views on their first formal event signifies high engagement with their target group. WeFor has the potential to reach an even broader audience with future campaigns and expose their work to more</p>

	<p>youth, since they have been so successful in doing so in their first year.</p> <p>Additionally, they have managed to attract prominent professionals from different fields and engage in their conversations and campaigns. As an example, they have had representatives from government and the world of politics to discuss gender equality and representation in political life, such as Eva Kaili, Olga Kefalogianni and Nadia Giannakopoulou. They also have the support of the Municipality of Athens and the Mayor, Kostas Bakoyiannis, who supports their vision towards a more participatory society. Their podcast interviews with politicians or other professionals who are knowledgeable on a specific issue are extremely frequent, ranging from 2-3 times per month, to keep their audiences engaged and the momentum of a campaign alive.</p> <p>From their success in engaging with the public, especially youth and thus communicating their messaging, it is evident that WeFor’s strategy and vision is something that resonates with younger audiences, who wish to be informed and participate in democratic problem-solving. WeFor also has contact forms in which followers can directly inquire about their projects/raise issues and discuss potential involvement.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>On an individual level, WeFor has the potential to reach a wide audience and expose them to different issues regarding social and political life in Greece. This exposure of ideas and viewpoints, as well as the participation of followers in such discussions are essential to increasing participation and deliberation in democratic processes. The initiative also showcases the way in which policy-making takes place and how important public opinion is in shaping policy outcomes. Additionally, the impact of the organization on youth is still quite early to gauge, however, it is important to take into consideration the success and engagement the initiative has had since its beginning, which signifies a willingness of youth to actively participate in shaping conversations around social and political issues in Greece. The initiative has had many positive reactions from youth, since they want to be part of an active and engaged society that is involved in decision-making</p>

	<p>processes, especially on the issues that concern them.</p> <p>Social media is extremely effective in increasing societal participation in common issues and as exhibited by WeFor, streaming services, podcasts, Facebook and Instagram have provided a valuable outlet for the organization to get its messaging across. In terms of raising awareness, through events and newsletters, the organization can effectively share their campaigns and content.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>WeFor aims to shape conversations and provide solutions for different societal issues, by focusing on the power of the collective to generate solutions. The organization believes in the “we” rather than the “me”, as exemplified through its name and aspires to societal change. Firstly, the initiative aims to inform and then increase the awareness on pressing issues, because it believes that if one person can change their beliefs to be more inclusive, their participation in democratic processes will reflect and promote the good of the wider public. As such, informed citizens become responsible participants in democratic processes. The role of well-informed citizens is immense in well-balanced, just and inclusive societies, as they spread that knowledge around them, as well as participate in democratic processes with knowledge of the topics that are prominent within society.</p> <p>Engaging youth in democratic processes is extremely important for WeFor, as they aim their discussions and campaigns to be open spaces for open dialogue for all the young persons who wish to join. Participation in these discussions and processes, creates an overall healthy attitude towards common issues and cultivates the idea that through open participation they can be effectively addressed.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>Conversations are at the core of the WeFor initiative, as they aim to shape how conversations are held in Greece, concerning important political and social issues. Their core methods concerning deliberation have to do with exposing participants to different perspectives on the same issue, and aid them in understanding what is at stake in each step. For example, gender equality can be perceived differently by many and ideas</p>

	<p>on what it entails can differ even amongst women, depending on individual properties and characteristics. Discussions, events, and podcasts are open to those wishing to participate. Even if a person does not have social media accounts, the organization makes everything available on their website, to facilitate easy and free access to those wishing to consume their content or participate more broadly in the discussions being had. However, if someone wants to actively participate in the conversations and not only be a spectator, it is unlikely that they will retain their anonymity.</p> <p>In general, WeFor organizes conversations with political leaders or relevant professionals according to the topics they wish to highlight. It is evident that they promote respectful conversations and take some issues as facts, rather than leaving them up for discussion. In particular, they approach the issue of gender equality with the premise that inequalities between men and women exist and manifest clearly in our society. Different policy perspectives on how to tackle these issues are the ones deliberated on, since arriving at a solution may differ for each person in a democratic society.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>WeFor is an organization that saw an opportunity to increase active participation and deliberation amongst youth in democratic processes, by campaigning and using their platform to raise awareness on important societal and political issues. Their messaging is robust and the rebranding of their name according to their current campaign is an innovative marketing move, aimed at attracting more followers to join their conversations and discuss new policy solutions. As a new organization, they have managed to have reached and engaged with many youths, showcasing the desire that exists amongst them to spark and lead change.</p> <p>Perhaps, as they go forward, it would be beneficial to open the floor more frequently to people who want to question and talk to politicians, as well to provide evaluations on their content and ways to improve their model.</p> <p>Finally, through a multi-platform approach, they aim to disseminate their message through a variety of channels and deeply engage with the concept of e-democracy.</p>

# WeSolve Greece



<b>Logo:</b>		
<b>Organisation :</b>	WeSolve	
<b>Level :</b>	✓ NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	Greek University Students	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Website, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Zoom	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>WeSolve is a youth led organization and think tank aiming at increasing public dialogue and public deliberation, mostly amongst university students in Greece. The organization was created by law students from the Athens Law School and launched in January 2020, who envisioned solutions in pressing issues concerning youth should be presented and deliberated amongst youth first and foremost. However, it has expanded to include students from business,</p>	

	<p>economics and more. WeSolve aims to identify the problems afflicting Greek society and find practical solutions through deliberative procedures as well as the practical implementation of these solutions.</p> <p>At the centre of this initiative lie university students and their vision to change the world through finding innovative solutions. For students, being able to expand their horizons, study their subject of choice and enrich themselves educationally, should act as an incentive to grapple with some of the most important issues that affect contemporary society.</p> <p>Through different social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and their Podcasts, they aim to set forward different issues that affect young university students and their lives in universities. Additionally, they conduct webinars on different skills development opportunities for students, to increase their ability to withstand the difficulties of the current day in finding and retaining employment.</p> <p>The think tank employs a holistic approach in getting their messaging across and it aims to highlight the different parameters of being a university student in Greece and the practical issues that entails. Finally, the think tank aims to propose reforms through discussing and speaking with different students, specialists and professionals, who understand the difficulties students face.</p> <p>Finally, by raising these issues and having genuine conversations, WeSolve aims to raise awareness and create responsible citizens in a participatory democracy.</p>
<p><b>Innovation :</b></p>	<p>The think tank’s first campaign is focused on university reform, separating issues that affect public institutions in Greece in five categories: 1. Hospitality, Stay and Academic Prospects, 2. Connection with Job, 3. Adjacent Areas and Security, 4. Disability, 5. Volunteerism. These 5 categories are implemented in the form of 5 working groups that deliberate on the most appropriate solutions for universities. During the first stage, problems will be identified and during the second stage students will discuss the appropriate solutions. Finally, these solutions will be presented in an event and then disseminated</p>

	<p>through social media and WeSolve’s other platforms, as well as be sent out to other think tanks, NGOs and government organizations. Innovation is essential for this organization, since university students form their own working groups on issues that directly affect them. Through deliberation and extensive conversations, the students can speak on their experiences, ideals and beliefs and seek collective solutions.</p> <p>University working groups are innovative, since the university system in Greece can be particularly political, oftentimes resulting in more conflict than good. Unifying students from a variety of perspectives and giving them a common start but presenting them with issues needing reform, this political aspect is obscured and the narrative is shifted towards good, tangible solutions for everyone’s gain. In terms of social innovation, the fabric of university students in Greece is diverse, both in thought and circumstances, hence this platform enables this diversity to be shared and utilized for reform. Additionally, utilizing social media platforms to attract and engage with these students is setting a new precedent on current reform, particularly for youth who want to participate in solving common issues but find it hard to navigate the status quo.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>Despite being a year and a half old, the initiative has amassed thousands of followers on Instagram (1,5k followers) and Facebook (2,5k followers), and many university students have participated in their working groups and online webinars. They began their initiative in universities in Athens, particularly the Athens Law School and the School of Social and Political Sciences, progressively expanding to the Athens University of Economics and Business and Panteion University.</p> <p>Additionally, even though they launched just months before the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and with measures limiting physical presence, they have managed to draw a substantial audience and be very active in their campaign through online events. These online events have been viewed thousands of times, with their newest event on access of people with disabilities in universities, collecting over twelve thousand views.</p>

	<p>Furthermore, through different webinars on skills development, they have attracted a significant portion of young students, who wish to further their competencies. The subjects of the webinars are all based on subjects that are relevant to student and university life. Through their podcasts and initiatives, they have interviewed and spoken to professionals from a wide variety of disciplines, including politics. They have spoken to the Deputy Minister of Education and Religious Affairs, Aggelo Syrigo, as well as distinguished law professors and civil society representatives.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>WeSolve has the potential to initiate and further change and reform in the university space in Greece. Through their interviews and consultations with professionals, their webinars and working groups, they have the ability to bring different voices together and create content that will be disseminated and distributed to government organizations. The initiative follows a true bottom-up approach that starts with the individual and can go up to the institutional level, such as government and national institutions, that can lead to policy change and concrete reform.</p> <p>As said before, the space in university participation and deliberation has been occupied by groups that are inherently political, which may only present the talking points and interests of certain stakeholders. The impact this organization can have in the wider university space can be substantial, since students who do not belong to any particular political group, can partake in conversations that directly affect their university life and that of their peers. Additionally, at the individual level, the think tank can spark important conversations between individuals and make them think about their position within the university reform space and engage more practically in matters requiring common solutions. This has the potential to expand beyond the spaces and matters concerning universities, creating well-informed individuals that can participate in public life.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>The think tank wants to create tangible solutions for problems faced by university students. As such, they opened application</p>

	<p>forms for each person wishing to participate, stating the working groups they want to contribute to. Participating in these working groups is open to university students, who pick their own working-group depending on their knowledge, skillset and preferences. These working groups produce material that is shared in events and with other stakeholders, who are policy makers, or have the capacity to influence policy. Additionally, the think tank opens up applications to university students that want to participate in webinars, aimed at increasing their skillset or offer advice for their future endeavours, including entering the job market and creating resumes, as well as writing cover letters. They are open to anyone wanting to expand their knowledge and skill sets, regardless of what university program they are in. Participation is not anonymous; however, it offers essential information to university students, contributing to success during and after university.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>Deliberation is a key concept of the WeSolve initiative, as they bring together individuals with different perspectives and experiences, to discuss and propose solutions to some issues faced by universities in Greece in the current day. The main method attributing to the deliberation aspect of the organization is the formation of working groups. The working groups enable participants to come together and openly share their perspectives on issues such as safety, the job market, access of disabled students in university spaces and more. The core idea behind this deliberation process is to find solutions reflecting a wide variety of perspectives, as collective thought can be beneficial for students. The materials produced from the working groups are shared with local and national stakeholders, to spark change. Additionally, they spark greater conversations among youth, you deliberate respectfully and towards a common goal.</p> <p>Further, followers of WeSolve can participate and share their opinions on the topics presented in events conducted through Zoom, which present opportunities for wider discussions.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>WeSolve has managed to make an impact in the university space in the year and a half it has been in operation, as it brings</p>

together a diverse group of students that want to participate in reform and create better conditions for themselves and their peers. Through a holistic approach, using social media, skills development webinars and conducting working groups on issues related to university life, they have created opportunities for the creation and dissemination of their policy proposals to relevant stakeholders, such as NGOs, government institutions and more.

These policy recommendations are particularly important, since they reflect the deliberation efforts of students who wish to positively impact universities and all subjects around them. Finally, the participation of such large numbers of students, viewers in events and professionals, showcases the willingness for reform and forward-looking change, as well as the willingness of university students to create a better learning environment, without the influence of political lobbies.

# European Youth Council

## Europe



<b>Logo:</b>		
<b>Organisation :</b>	European Youth Forum	
<b>Level :</b>	NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	✓ EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	European Youth	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Website, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>The European Youth Forum is the platform of youth organisations in Europe, representing over 100 youth organisations, which bring together tens of millions of young people from all over Europe.</p> <p>The Youth Forum aims to empower young people to participate actively in society to improve their own lives by</p>	

	<p>representing and advocating their needs and interests and those of their organisations. In the current uncertain political and social context that affects young people, they can be powerful catalysts for positive change and contributors of innovative solutions to Europe’s challenges. The Youth forum seeks to create an environment where youth are guaranteed to create and thrive, thus ensuring that current and future generations participate in democratic processes.</p> <p>The European Youth Forum was created in 1996 and is based in Brussels. It provides a platform for youth organizations all over Europe to come together and advocate for their rights, in a variety of different ways, engaging in exchange of thoughts and ideas, to actively pursuing concrete policy change. Their members include youth organizations from Europe that are both National Youth Councils and International Non-Governmental Youth led Organisations, who become members after an application procedure.</p> <p>Additionally, they allow organizations that work for youth and advancing youth issues to participate as associates. The organization engages with youth in a variety of different ways, such as conducting conferences in different European cities, where local youth are able to showcase their practices and innovative solutions to social and political issues. Furthermore, they work on social and economic issues, sustainable development, democratic participation and more. One of the most innovative tools they use is the Youth Progress Index, which measures the quality of life for Youth Globally. Finally, the organization uses social media extensively to attract followers and advocate for their purpose and vision, including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.</p>
<p><b>Innovation :</b></p>	<p>The European Youth Forum employs a variety of different ways to remain innovative and stay updated on current issues. The pulse on the issues discussed or elaborated upon on their platform has to do with what is pressing and prevalent on youth topics.</p> <p>They can focus on a wide variety of issues from different European countries, stemming from human rights crises in Belarus, to sustainable development policies for all of Europe.</p>

	<p>They disseminate their news in frequent newsletters, they author policy briefs and annual reports on issues from different countries and give genuine policy recommendations to European governing bodies.</p> <p>A good practice they use revolves around their annual summits in different European cities, not always capitals of countries, rather places where youth is engaging with the wider civil society and they have many interesting things to present and discuss. Through this practice, the organization can adopt new and cutting-edge practices from local or national organizations and adapt them accordingly to fit a wider scale of organizations that will ultimately have a wider reach.</p> <p>In terms of social innovation, the Youth Council brings together individuals from different countries and backgrounds and enables them to participate in advocacy for a better, more sustainable and human rights-oriented Europe.</p> <p>This open exchange and flow of ideas is particularly important for youth, as they learn how to engage with others for the common good, as well as engage others in issues pertinent in their countries. This unity is the driving force of Europe and enables the union to strive forward, with this time having youth paving the way.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>The European Youth Forum has over 100 member organizations from all over Europe, representing youth with different goals and aspirations, but a genuine willingness to move Europe forward, by tackling some of the most pressing issues of the current day.</p> <p>They have high engagement in all their social media platforms, with their LinkedIn amassing over eleven thousand followers, their Instagram page over eight thousand followers and Facebook page a staggering 1 hundred thousand and forty-four followers.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>As the Forum has over 100 youth organizations as members, it is evident that they have a wide reach and a wide following across Europe, which enables youth organizations to</p>

	<p>effectively participate in decision-making and policy creation. They have a policy library focusing on Youth Rights Education, Youth Participation, Sustainable Development, Strong Youth Organizations, therefore striving for all levels of policy making to include co-decision and co-creation structures where young people and youth organisations have equal power to decide on issues that affect them.</p> <p>Additionally, the European Youth Forum plays a significant role in nominating a share of the 30 youth representatives to become members of the Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe, supporting, and coordinating with the Advisory Council afterwards. From this, we can infer that the organization has a high level of effectiveness when it comes to engaging with European institutions, placing youth in central aspects of European policy-making, ensuring that youth voices will be heard and respected.</p> <p>Further, the European Youth Forum has organised a number of capacity building meetings for United Nations (UN) Youth Delegates coming from Europe with an aim to ensure more meaningful and effective youth participation in the UN, and to support its member organisations in their efforts to improve the quality of the programmes in Europe. Most European National Youth Councils play a prominent role in the coordination and implementation of the UN Youth Delegate Programme in their countries. Partaking in this advocacy to the UN is particularly important, since voices from all over the world come together to solve some of the most difficult challenges of present day.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>The European Youth Forum believes any youth participation and representation mechanisms in international institutions should abide by the guiding principles: a rights-based approach, democracy and representation, inclusiveness, transparency and accountability, and effective and meaningful participation.</p> <p>In terms of youth participation, the European Youth Forum aims to enable young people to make decisions in partnership with adults. The Forum brings together youth organizations from all over Europe, who wish to advocate on all the issues</p>

	<p>they deem important. Through an application procedure, any European youth-run organization can opt to participate and have a voice in the council. As such, they have the opportunity to discuss and set policy change and participate in decision-making processes at the institutional level, such as partaking in the Council of Europe, or as a UN Youth delegate.</p> <p>Additionally, some of the issues the Forum engages youth in participatory policy-making, advocacy actions to lower the voting age to 16, to European elections campaigns, the focus within the area of participation has varied significantly throughout the years, as young people have also changed the way they engage with politics. This change is mostly attributed to social media, which the Forum embraces and effectively uses to share their message and campaigns.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>The deliberation level at the European Youth Council is high, as they bring together youth organizations all across Europe, to discuss and propose solutions to some of the issues faced by European Youth. As said before, over 100 youth organizations partake in this deliberation and advocacy, all bringing their own views, perspectives and ideas about how to practically contribute to solving youth issues. These deliberations take place during the council of members, where representatives of organizations share their considerations in key policy issues. Additionally, during the quarantine and lockdowns imposed all over Europe, they engage with young people all over Europe and discuss the challenges they face during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Additionally, according to the issues that each organization wants to discuss, they can partake in the EU Youth Dialogue, an initiative that brings together young people and policy-makers across the EU to jointly discuss and feed into youth policy at local, regional and European levels. It is a process that lasts 18 months involving consultations with young people and youth organisations in EU Member States and during EU Youth Conferences. It is estimated that over 290,000 young people have taken part in the EU Youth Dialogue so far from 2011-2020.</p>

### **Summary – General Assessment**

The European Youth Forum is an organization that has many aspects and has enabled many European youth to participate in democratic processes and decision-making. The influence of the organization is partly due to the 25 years of operation; however, good internal structures, accountability and continuous improvement and innovation is a key consideration towards their success. Additionally, smaller organizations can borrow and tailor good practices to their capacities and capabilities, such as the EU Youth Dialogue, and connect policy makers to youth and enable them to have fruitful conversations about pressing policy reform.

However, as with any larger organization, participation and deliberation may become disconnected from the youth, as formal structures may prove to limit direct communication, furthering the gap between the individual and the decision-making process. However, policy recommendations become more refined and can lead to more effective advocacy, since messaging is uniform.

# Hellenic National Youth Council

Greece



<b>Logo:</b>	 <p><b>Εθνικό Συμβούλιο Νεολαίας</b> Hellenic National Youth Council</p>	
<b>Organisation :</b>	Hellenic National Youth Council	
<b>Level :</b>	✓ NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	Greek Youth	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Website, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>The H.N.Y.C. (Hellenic National Youth Council) was founded in July 1998 and is an independent, non-government, non-profit federation of youth organizations. Currently, there are 59 members of youth organizations representing young individuals and their interests all over Greece. The H.N.Y.C. associates with the Greek government concerning current domestic matters and is the official representative of young Greeks in Greece and abroad.</p>	

	<p>The H.N.Y.C. overcomes political, ideological and social commitments in order to seek solutions and proposals, outlining new policy solutions for Youth by young members of society. Aiming at continuously training and informing young people on issues that concern them, the H.N.Y.C. implements workshops, conferences, cultural and other programs, seminars and activities that directly target young people. One of the key principles of the H.N.Y.C. is to defend democratic institutions by engaging with Greek youth to identify solutions to challenges they face individually and collectively. The organization runs webinars, campaigns and many conferences, in which Greek Youth has the opportunity to engage with each other, as well as with relevant professionals, politicians and stakeholders, who collaborate closely with the organization to drive public dialogue forward. The organization focuses on tackling issues from the political and social spheres, and aims to bring together voices representing a wide variety of ideas and beliefs.</p> <p>The organization has a wide variety of means to disseminate and present the issues it grapples with and with the COVID-19 pandemic changing the way discussion on the private sphere is conducted, many of their actions have been moved to the online sphere, with conferences and events taking place frequently, as well as webinars and discussions on topics that are in the spotlight. Additionally, they remain particularly active in social media, where they call for participation for all their actions and initiatives</p>
<p><b>Innovation :</b></p>	<p>The organization employs different means of showcasing its message, such as interfering and collaborating with other organizations towards creating policy solutions. They also establish committees and working groups of youth organizations that deliberate on issues they are interested in, such as youth participation in democratic values and processes, youth unemployment, university reform etc. Additionally, with the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, they have managed to alter their events and programmes using online means, to reach a wider audience and keep their engagement high.</p>

	<p>Further, they engage with youth councils from the rest of Europe, in virtual meet and greets, aimed at exchanging knowledge and experiences on topics that are pertinent to all organizations involved. A particularly innovative aspect of their work is that they run policy competitions for the solutions of different issues, where they invite youth organizations to conceptualize and suggest different policy routes towards a variety of topics that are of close interest to Greek Youth. In terms of social innovation, they provide a platform for the development of new ideas and practices, where different organizations can get together and discuss how to approach a specific issue in practical and concrete ways. Acting as a collective is imperative for the organization, as they wish to bring together organizations of different theoretical backgrounds, experiences and political beliefs.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>As the organization has been operating for the past twenty-one years, it's structure, initiatives and effectiveness on raising participation in common issues is wide-spread. With new technological means, combined with the pressing need to adapt to the new reality brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, more and more followers have the ability to participate in online seminars, policy meetings and discussions with professionals and politicians. Further, they have over six thousand likes and followers on Facebook, where they mostly share their content and initiatives.</p> <p>In the last year, the organization sets up and conducts events at least once a month, with the presence of government representatives and politicians, such as the most recent one, where they spoke to the Deputy Minister of Macedonia and Thrace, discussing issues youth face in that particular region of Greece. Through their two decades of operating, they have also amassed many policy reports, briefs and suggestions.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>With over 50 member organizations and constant webinars and initiatives, the organization has the potential to spark and lead change both in the individual and the collective levels. First and foremost, the individual gains confidence in democratic procedures, as it sees how practical participation</p>

	<p>and deliberation in common issues affect policy change. The individual feels empowered to belong in a group that actively pursues change, thus it feels empowered to participate in democratic processes.</p> <p>Additionally, in terms of collective impact, the organization enables the exchange and flow of knowledge, ideas and perceptions of groups representing a wide variety of beliefs, showcasing a firm commitment to diversity. By expanding their presence online, they also have reached a wider audience of youth and students who wish to participate in e-democracy and participate in an online dialogue around the common good.</p> <p>Finally, through different means of engagement and by employing a holistic approach to disseminating their message, they aim to capture users of different apps, social, media platforms etc. As always, they retain their newsletter, as to share their news and actions to members via email, about upcoming events and past successes.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>By expanding their actions online, they account for the geographical limitations that exist among groups, even in the same country, since participants need not to travel in order to participate in discussion forums, online events with politicians and webinars.</p> <p>By exposing more and more individuals to democratic participation, they cultivate a greater sense of responsibility amongst participants, since they become a part of policy suggestions and fruitful discussions.</p> <p>In terms of communicating with decision-makers, the organization brings together youth with relevant politicians and stakeholders, where the former can actively engage, ask and advocate about specific issues, during online conferences and seminars. Finally, participation in H.N.Y.C manifests in different ways, from small working groups to online conversations, to European discussion forums and events with Greece's politicians. This allows youth to be exposed to a wide variety of participation means and increases their awareness</p>

	<p>regarding the difficulty of raising an issue at the institutional level.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>The H.N.Y.C organizes frequent online seminars, where youth can actively deliberate on an issue and present their point of views, based on their experiences, political and social perceptions. Through this deliberation method, the individuals, as well as representatives of organizations, have the opportunity to learn from one-another, discuss pressing issues, as well as hear the opinions of key political actors and challenge them directly. Discussions are open to those wishing to participate, however member-organizations are the first to be notified, since they are the ones comprising the federation. Anonymity is not directly secured, as a means to prevent any challenging behaviour during a live event.</p> <p>Since the deliberations are the results of group collaboration, with each group speaking about their own perceptions and beliefs, it is somewhat challenging to come to an agreement about every policy issue presented. However, since the organization is independent of any affiliation and belief, tries to reach agreements are frequent.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>The Hellenic youth council presents a unique opportunity for youth organizations all over Greece to come together and engage with some of the most pressing issues faced by youth in the country. As it has been an organization for over twenty years, some of its positives include a solid structure and accountability measures, something smaller youth organizations may lack the capacity in. They also have the possibility to create events and have many discussions on current issues, thus elevating participation in e-democracy and keeping a high deliberation standard.</p> <p>However, as with most larger organizations, it is sometimes difficult to keep the individual rather than the collective as the first priority. Their ability to organize different events, working-groups and forums, presents the opportunity for individuals to be more directly involved with the initiative, rather than remaining at a superficial group level.</p>

# Institute for Internet and the Just Society

## Europe



<b>Logo:</b>		
<b>Organisation :</b>	Institute for Internet and the Just Society	
<b>Level :</b>	NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	✓ EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	European Youth	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Website, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>The Institute for Internet and the Just Society is a youth organization created in Berlin, by students of law, economics and public policy. The initiative works pro bono towards a just democratic society, founded upon respect for law, human rights and democratic participation on the level of multistakeholder digital governance.</p> <p>The organization believes that each citizen of the world can thrive and reach their full potential by participating in active and democratic decision-making in all levels of governance.</p>	

	<p>Their values are democracy, progress, innovation and justice, and through these, they operate their initiatives and actions. Their goal is to drive civic engagement through research and policy creation, by designing and scaling collaborative projects on digital democracy.</p> <p>Their programmes can be separated in the following three categories: law and technology, digital governance and democracy and artificial intelligence and fairness.</p> <p>Further, they run a program called digital policy tracker, where followers can read analyses on digital reform issues, as well as participate in commentary regarding these policies. The organization scans policy development all over the world and gathers information about policy escalations from different countries. At the end of each month, they also provide additional multimedia content to introduce new perspectives and views on tech governance and its major global trends. Some of the policy issues they present and discuss are on climate change, gender equality, politics, sustainable development and more. Finally, what they wish to do as an organization, is inform, educate and increase discussions around how digital means impact policy and shape our society.</p>
<p><b>Innovation :</b></p>	<p>The organization considers innovation to be at its core of operation. Specifically, they identified a need between research and civic engagement and how scientific output was not translating into concrete policy results and outcomes. Through engaging with current research, they aim to translate academic material into concrete solutions, after engaging with the public on how to materialize these findings.</p> <p>The organization believes that the advancement of digital technology is reshaping established power structures of democratic governance, most notably affecting citizens' understanding of making informed decisions about high &amp; low visibility elections. Social media has the potential to change political outcomes, hence they understand how powerful tools they are in shaping public conversations.</p> <p>Through their actions they aim at establishing a direct close link to citizens and policy-makers, where the former could</p>

	<p>express their ideas, beliefs and thoughts on policy reform. Finally, technologies can help governments and bureaucracy to better connect with citizens, listen to their concerns, and make their voices heard. Improving political culture is a key consideration for this organization.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>The organization was founded in 2019 and they have already managed to create space for engagement, by amassing more than fifteen hundred followers on LinkedIn and thirteen hundred followers on Instagram. Their most followers come from Facebook, as they count towards seventeen hundred followers. Finally, their frequent webinars in Zoom collect hundreds of views, thus indicating that individuals wish to participate in conversations concerning digital democratic processes and make policy recommendations on pressing issues.</p> <p>The organization takes submissions from individuals wanting to contribute to some of the most prevalent issues in digital democracy, human rights and innovation, actively engaging the voices of the public to their mission and voice. Additionally, they collaborate with professionals who are experts in digital spaces, such as lawyers, reporters, NGO representatives, often citing case studies in countries around the world, showcasing their practices on digital governance.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>As it has been in operation for two years, the organization’s core purpose can influence impact in increasing civic engagement through digital technologies. As social media have the potential to influence political outcomes and change the minds of voters across the globe, setting regulations that respect human rights. Additionally, as regulating the internet towards forming a just society is a relatively new feat, connecting active citizens with policy-makers can establish a relationship of communication and mutual cooperation.</p> <p>At the individual level, the Institute can inform and educate the public and especially youth, who are the primary users of social media and internet applications, about the challenges in democracy and human rights those means pose. The individual thus becomes more aware and can make informed</p>

	<p>decisions when voting or engaging with public discourse on the influence of the internet in fundamental and political rights. Additionally, through their webinars and frequent dissemination of their messaging on their social media, as well as their digital policy tracker, they can compile and create good practices on digital policies, as they gather and make accessible policies that the public could not otherwise access.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>The Institute opens discussion through their webinars and online events to the public and anyone who wants to join and listen to their content, as well as actively engage with other participants and professionals. During their webinars and events, youth and other participants can actively engage with professionals and public-policy makers, as well with each other and exchange ideas and possible policy outcomes. Additionally, they accept submissions of articles and opinion and research pieces, from their followers and the general public, who want to grapple with some of the most current issues in digital spaces.</p> <p>Further, at both a societal level and an individual level, the organization has the potential to develop amongst their users and followers, an awareness of issues in digital civic participation and democracy, as well as any challenges stemming from these advancements. This creates stronger and more informed civilians, who have a holistic perspective of issues concerning contemporary life</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>Mostly, the primary means of bringing together individuals with the purpose of deliberation is through online events and webinars, in which the participants can engage with each other's ideas, beliefs and knowledge on issues concerning digital civic engagement. These webinars are frequent and have a different theme for each one, discussing parameters of the internet and challenges it poses in human rights and democratic participation.</p> <p>Additionally, the organization produces country reports, where different policy solutions are presented and analysed, in which the Institute, as well as other participants can extensively study</p>

	<p>and present issues at a high level. These reports are shared with relevant policy institutions and have as a goal to influence policy, through the means of research</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>The Institute for Internet and the Just Society identified a pressing need in today’s policy making world, as to increase the level of democratic participation amongst the general public and the youth and set up a direct link between them and decision-makers.</p> <p>Their goal is to inform, educate and have fruitful conversations about regulating the internet to respect human rights and dignity of all citizens across the globe. Their level of research is extremely high and they discuss many current issues concerning the internet and a more just society. This gives their organization a high level of credibility, since their materials are well-written and well-constructed. Additionally, their country reports present issues from many policy perspectives and can advocate for wider change in higher levels of government.</p> <p>However, they could take concrete steps to increase the levels of deliberation, by facilitating and setting up working groups, where youth and aspiring policy makers can exchange ideas, knowledge and policy stances. Uniting individuals from different backgrounds and disciplines may bring a new and elevated level of expertise to the Institute. As they are a youth organization and may have a limited operating budget, there may be more practical issues as to why they have not ventured in this type of deliberation. Strengthening societal awareness on civic engagement through digital means is becoming increasingly relevant in our daily lives, hence an organization that disseminates such materials and advocates for better regulations is essential to exist in the civil society space.</p>

# Café con Europa

## Spain



<b>Logo:</b>		
<b>Organisation :</b>	Café con Europa	
<b>Level :</b>	✓ NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	Young people in Spain	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Website + blog + social media	
<b>Description :</b>	Café con Europa is a space for conversation about Europe for young people organised by the European Institutions in Spain with the aim of raising awareness of the working lines that are being developed in Europe and how they affect young people.	

	<p>They use different tools such as a blog, newsletter, social network, and events organised online and face-to-face, all of which can be found on a website.</p>
<p><b>Innovation :</b></p>	<p>This initiative promotes a new method to raise e-participation and democracy, as it has links to conferences and democratic processes of the EU; they have adapted the “Coffee” meetings into a digital format too; they create online material in order to keep young citizens informed.</p> <p>The innovative aspect is found in that they have been able to create many resources from one. It can be also considered innovative, this way of conveying EU policies (something that at first sight could sound non-attractive for young people) in a relaxed and open way.</p> <p>The web is user-friendly, and it provides access to different European initiatives such as the Conference on the Future of Europe in a very easy way. It is quite easy for users to operate on the website, as there are few pathways, but all very clear. It offers different ways to participate, such as assisting to events (mostly online events), reading the posts on the blog, or browsing through the media section.</p> <p>Even if the aim has been addressed in other different ways in Spain, it has never been addressed in this concrete way: it is people from institutions telling what they do through something as informal as a Coffee or hanging out with citizens. Eventually, we can observe that the initiative is always active through social media and the blog is constantly updated.</p> <p>During the pandemic, one of their main activities (the coffee with citizens) was hardly affected as the possibility to make it face-to-face disappeared. They were able to adapt to the new way to organise events, turning these face-to-face meetings into online meetings.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>Regarding how many people attended the online events, as they did it through the European Commission YouTube channel, it can be observed that the amount of people reached</p>

	<p>changes depending on the event. Some of them are near 1,2k views, while others are close to 100.</p> <p>On the other hand, these are the followers on social media: Instagram: 2,076, Twitter: 2,043, Facebook: 4,028</p> <p>Since March 2018, a total of 61 events have been organised, all of them with the participation of a politician or a civil society representative, with a media of 2 events per month. As it can be seen in the videos of the events, most participants look motivated and actively participating and asking questions to the speakers.</p> <p>In addition to this, it can be concluded that social media is being used in a very efficient way, as they use for the events the official YouTube channel of the European Commission, and Café con Europa’s Facebook Live. They promote all the events, new posts and new media through Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.</p> <p>It can be considered that the initiative is efficient as few resources are needed, but it has a high visibility. The website is easy to use, as it is just necessary to subscribe in case you want to receive news or participate in an event. You can easily access all the information through different channels.</p> <p>The initiative is fully oriented to young people, and this is the target reached on each event.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>The initiative has the potential to raise the knowledge of participants also on a long-term scale and to make them more familiar with political processes, as the topics of discussion are always related to a concrete problem in a concrete location, which can involve them in a more committed way.</p> <p>Although there are no surveys or other tools to know how participants assess the initiatives (at least, open to external users), it can be seen on the videos of the event that most of them participate in an active way, showing their interest.</p>

	<p>The technological part is essential in order to reach the participants, even when the events were face-to-face. You can also watch the event after it took place and make your inscription. Without the platform, it would not be possible to carry out this initiative.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>Café con Europa gives citizens the chance to directly talk to decision-makers, raising their participation in European political life. The initiative has the potential to make citizens more responsible about their role within political decision-making processes, as during the conversation they feel part of the process.</p> <p>The communication with decision-makers is facilitated through a dialogue on a concrete topic. Decision-makers talk about it and participants can ask, discuss, and suggest anything to them.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>The access to discussions is completely open to everyone, and now even more because it is 100% online, but anonymity is not guaranteed as you can be seen and also your name.</p> <p>The discussions are organised by the Café con Europa team, they find the key-note speaker, choose a topic that they think can be interesting to the potential participants, and they promote it through social networks and their website, so whoever is interested can subscribe.</p> <p>The subscription is made through an online form in which you need to insert your data to participate.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>It is an initiative that actually connects citizens with decision-makers, it actually gives everybody (mostly young people) the chance to receive first-hand information, make suggestions and ask questions about topics that are interesting for them. It can be considered as a way to increase participation in democracy.</p> <p>Nevertheless, it can be pointed that no assessment tools could be found, although it does not mean that they do not exist at an internal level, so it is hard to measure the quality and the perception from participants on the events, aspects that could be improved.</p>

# Reflecting on Europe

## Europe



<b>Logo:</b>		
<b>Organisation :</b>	European Committee of the Regions (CoR)	
<b>Level :</b>	NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	✓ EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	European citizens (mostly young people)	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Platform + social media	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>"Reflecting on Europe is an initiative of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) that provides a platform for citizens' participation in the ongoing debate on the future of Europe.</p> <p>Using a dedicated online survey and over 210 local debates that have been organised across the EU in cooperation with various local and regional partners, the CoR gives citizens the opportunity to share their views and proposals on how the EU should evolve over the next decade."</p>	

<p><b>Innovation :</b></p>	<p>This initiative promotes a new method to raise e-participation and democracy, as it allows locals to express their opinion regarding the EU and their answers will be taken into account. Thanks to this initiative, local citizens have a say in the future of Europe.</p> <p>In addition to this, what makes this initiative innovative is the high range of options for participation that it offers. Moreover, all its options have been adapted into the COVID-19 situation through an online transformation.</p> <p>The platform offers the opportunity to organise local events, to participate in them, to answer questionnaires about the future of Europe, and also to download relevant documentation. What is really innovative is that this initiative wants to listen to Europeans while respecting their diversity, starting at the local level.</p> <p>On the platform, you can find many call-to-actions that allow you to participate in many ways. You can even find an interactive map in which you can select your city and see which events will take place in it. It is very easy to use, with a clear distribution of content.</p> <p>As mentioned above, although the objective of discussing the future of Europe has already been pursued in numerous initiatives, it is this diversified way of doing so that makes this initiative innovative.</p> <p>The events, which were sometimes organized face-to-face, had to turn into a digital format, facilitating a further development of the tool and a progressive evolution of the initiative.</p> <p>Eventually, it also provides a continuous improvement and integration of the participants, as it offers many alternatives to keep participating, and it makes a follow-up of the ones who have already participated in other events or questionnaires.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>More than 210 local debates have been organised across Europe.</p>

	<p>Their dissemination in social media goes through the European Committee of the Regions' Social Network, which followers are:</p> <p>Facebook: 53,197 Instagram: 5,110 LinkedIn: 35,845 Twitter: 48,200 YouTube: 3,040</p> <p>Between March 2016 and February 2019, more than 210 local events in 30 European countries involving 198 CoR members and more than 21 000 participants have been organized by the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) in partnership with its members and local and regional partners.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>The initiative has the potential to raise the knowledge of participants also on a long-term scale and make them more familiar with political processes, as it is not only a consultation, but it includes a detailed report on the results and many local events with members of CoR.</p> <p>Different persons with different backgrounds and occupations can participate, as it is open to everyone.</p> <p>Moreover, the online consultation is anonymous.</p> <p>The tool is essential for participation and awareness-raising because it is the only way you can register in an event and have access to all the relevant information.</p> <p>210 events took place at a local level involving CoR members (198).</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>The CoR tries to cover all the possible ways to raise the level of participation of citizens towards political decision-makers: events on concrete topics involving politicians, local events involving CoR members, consultations, and so on.</p> <p>This is the way they engage participants: segment the options</p>

	<p>of participation, so that each citizen can choose which is the most suitable for him/her.</p> <p>During most of the events, participants have the chance to have conversations/dialogues with political representatives, becoming more self-conscious about their role within political processes. In addition to this, after the consultations, the results are exposed to decision-makers, so they will listen to citizen's opinions.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>As mentioned above, the initiative promotes different kinds of dialogues, such as: conferences, local events, regional events, consultations and more.</p> <p>All the events and consultations are totally open, and anonymity is guaranteed in consultations.</p> <p>The organisation depends on the kind of action to be carried out, but the last year it has been mostly online.</p> <p>The way to participate is assisting to events, organising one, or answering the online questionnaires.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>The Committee of Regions carries out many initiatives to involve citizens (mostly the youth) into democratic processes. They create a link between decision makers and citizens, giving them the opportunity to share their opinions and ideas.</p> <p>This concrete initiative is about the Future of Europe, and it presents many ways to get involved.</p> <p>The platform is easy to use, and it is interactive.</p> <p>The contra is that it is not so easy to access the results. It is possible to see them through their news section and media, but the section where you can download them does not work properly sometimes.</p>

# Café Babel

## Europe



<b>Logo:</b>		
<b>Organisation :</b>	Café Babel	
<b>Level :</b>	NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	✓ EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	Young European people	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Platform + social media	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>Café Babel is the first multilingual participatory magazine in Europe. Their stories try to present Europe differently than it is represented in the media and depict what Europe is in real life from the young citizens' point of view.</p> <p>This online magazine is a single platform in which a network of volunteer authors, translators, filmmakers and photographers work together to report on the daily lives of young Europeans.</p>	

<p><b>Innovation :</b></p>	<p>This initiative promotes a new method to raise e-participation and democracy, as it allows all professionals from communication, design and translation fields to provide information about Europe and democracy in the world.</p> <p>It can be considered innovative as it consists of a platform that links people and news from all Europe in different languages, and it is a way to approach the information to citizens. Moreover, they promote other different initiatives regarding the social agenda, such as the TransEuropa Caravans, a miniseries about migration, exhibitions, contests in which everyone can participate, and so on. In addition to this, it won the Spinelli Prize.</p> <p>The platform is user-friendly, as it makes it easy to participate, for example pitching an article, or translating one. You can also find the different sections, like society, impact, creative or even podcasts.</p> <p>As mentioned before, it offers different ways to participate, you can choose to be a spectator or to be actively involved. The aim of this initiative is to ensure that everyone has access to information and culture, in order to democratize it. In addition to this, it aims to create a pan-European media space as a common communication platform that involves all European countries.</p> <p>Eventually, we can observe that the initiative is always active through social media and the platform is constantly updated.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>Today, Café Babel has 250,000 visitors a month, 2.5 million page views, more than 50,000 stories published, 15,000 contributors and a team of professional editors and journalists in Paris, Brussels, Rome and Berlin.</p> <p>On Social network: Instagram- 1.920 followers Twitter- 6.199 followers Facebook- 13.643 followers</p>

	<p>It is effective as the work is volunteer, which means that mostly the resources like Internet, knowledge and time are spent on the platform. There are few economic costs, and it has a high engagement.</p> <p>Therefore, it can be concluded that social media is used efficiently.</p> <p>This initiative has the potential to be especially successful among youth as they can collaborate, and the news and other initiatives are related to the topics they usually are interested in.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>The initiative has the potential to raise the knowledge of participants also on a long-term scale as it improves their access to information, and it boosts their involvement and knowledge-sharing.</p> <p>It also has the potential to make young people more familiar with political processes, as there is one section called “impact” where they can read about real initiatives and processes, and even first-hand testimonials about political issues such as green transition, feminism or migration.</p> <p>On the other hand, another interesting aspect is that different persons with different backgrounds and occupations are participating. There can be found people who work as journalists, people who are translators, people who are just interested in news, and from different countries.</p> <p>The format of the platform, a 100% news platform that can be followed through many channels, improving the awareness-raising.</p> <p>On the other hand, as mentioned before, Café Babel has promoted some initiatives such as the TransEuropa Caravans, it won the Spinelli Prize, it created a miniseries about migration, exhibitions, contests in which everyone can participate, and more.</p>

<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>Through all the initiatives already mentioned, Café Babel is able to spread the message of what young citizens want and care about.</p> <p>Café Babel is able to involve the youth into the social issues that they care about, giving them the opportunity to participate in many ways.</p> <p>It is, then, a personalised option to take part in social life. This initiative could have the potential to make citizens more responsible about their role within decision-maker processes, as all their actions are focused on having some kind of repercussion.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>It is participatory journalism, which means that it is completely open to different participants with different backgrounds. It facilitates communication among young citizens, and it allows them to create their own way to tell Europe.</p> <p>The process to participate is to contact the Café Babel editors or section managers, through the platform or via email, and specify your speciality. In general, it is required to fill in a form specifying details on the topic that you would like to talk about.</p> <p>The editors select those who are relevant and innovative enough to be published, and then authors can be part of a community in which it is possible to share knowledge.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>It is an initiative that contributes to democratic processes, but it is not directly related to politics. It mostly contributes to social topics and access to information.</p> <p>This initiative has been included in the research because it is a way to promote the youth involvement through an online platform in which they can share knowledge and their own point of view regarding the EU.</p>

# European Democracy Passport/ European Citizens Initiative Europe



<b>Logo:</b>		
<b>Organisation :</b>	European Economic and Social Committee	
<b>Level :</b>	NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	✓ EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	European citizens	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Platform + social media	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>Since 2012, the European Citizens' Initiative gives the citizens of the European Union the same right as a majority in the European Parliament and the Member States: to set the political agenda for a whole continent.</p> <p>The European Citizens' Initiative constitutes a pre-legislative instrument for agenda setting. Interestingly, the ECI is also an</p>	

	<p>entry door to the future of participatory politics: it is direct, transnational and digital.</p> <p>“This is the reason why the ECI is not just another petition right but is more of an everyday citizens’ activation right regarding the next issues to be put on the agenda of the European institutions.”</p>
<p><b>Innovation :</b></p>	<p>This initiative promotes a new method to raise e-participation and democracy, as it allows citizens to register their initiatives and directly participate in democracy.</p> <p>The innovative aspect is that citizens are the ones who decide their requests, the ones who need to reach a minimum number of people, and the ones who need to organise themselves in order to make an inclusive request: groups of organisers must be composed of at least 7 EU citizens resident in at least seven different Member States, and each initiative is possible in any field where the Commission has the power to propose legislation.</p> <p>It is a user-friendly platform where you can see the different ways to get involved, explore successful requests, you can access the participation toolkit, and so on.</p> <p>It is an adaptable and multifunctional tool, and the ECI is available to nearly 450 million EU citizens across 27 Member States (and across the world, if you happen to live outside the EU as an EU citizen).</p> <p>“An updated and more accessible version of the ECI came into force in 2020. A quarter of the initiatives were rejected due to the strict interpretation and application of the regulation by the Commission. However, under the new rules, the organisers and the Commission are given more time for finding a solution, including the possibility of registering only the admissible parts of an initiative. More time is also given to prepare for the start of the signature collection, as well as all other steps in the process”, providing a continuous improvement and integration of the participants, and progressive evolution of the initiative and/or the further development of the tool.</p>

	<p>This initiative has the potential to increase problem-solving skills of citizens, as this is what they are required to do: they need to find an initiative that solves a current problem/issue that affects society.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>Since 2012, there have been a total of 65 submitted requests, of which 44 were registered, and 21 were refused.</p> <p>On Social network: Twitter- 2,101 followers Facebook- 41,592 followers</p> <p>Each initiative has a different number of followers and participants separately. It is an instrument of agenda-setting.</p> <p>The platform is easy to use for participants and organisers, and social media is used efficiently, although with only 2 accounts. Each initiative can have its own social network, so it can multiply the results.</p> <p>Later, in this research, we will study one of these initiatives in order to show in more detail how they work.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>This initiative, as mentioned, is agenda-setting, which means it makes participants familiar with democratic processes, giving them the chance to reach a minimum number of people to make it work, suggest a relevant topic, find an inclusive organisation's team, and so on.</p> <p>Some initiatives born from this platform are related to the right to water, animal's protection, defending minorities, among others. So, it can be considered that these initiatives create a real and positive impact on society.</p> <p>Moreover, the process to submit requests is 100% online.</p> <p>A total of 65 proposals from users have been forwarded, of which 44 have been accepted.</p>

<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>This is an initiative that allows citizens who reach a minimum number of participants set by the Commission to set the political agenda of the EU, constituting an instrument for agenda-setting.</p> <p>So, it can be concluded that it raises the level of participation of citizens towards political decision-makers submitting different proposals that, if they reach a minimum number of participants, and meet the requirements, can set part of the political agenda.</p> <p>It definitely has the potential to make citizens more responsible about their role within political decision-making processes.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>It is an open process with high requirements to make your proposal successful, as it will affect the EU political life. These are the steps you must follow to participate.</p> <p>First, you have to have an idea/ project that can be translated into European policy. Then it is important to learn everything about your project's legal and political implications. Then it is important to set your initiative's goals and to Design and adapt your initial proposal into different languages and political cultures across Europe. After having registered your request, you have to convince more than one million Europeans from at least 7 different countries to support your initiative. Then you have to dialogue with everyone involved and with people sceptics with your project, disseminating it through social media. Once you have the signatures, you have 3 months to submit the certificates to the Commission. After being acknowledged as a successful initiative, new doors will open to you: in formal talks with the Commission and at a public hearing at the European Parliament. At the end, conclusions with documentation and evaluation in order will be the end of the initiative.</p>

**Summary – General Assessment**

This is an initiative that gives citizens the chance to set the political agenda. It is a tool which analysis is different from the others, as it encompasses many initiatives inside one.

Nevertheless, it is a way to let citizens get involved in the EU agenda, not only listening to them, but giving them the chance to bring the ideas they believe in, supported by a minimum of signatures.

The next initiative analysed is part of this process, to show how it actually works.

Minority Safe-pack  
initiative  
Europe



**Logo:**



**Organisation :**

European Economic and Social Committee

**Level :**

NATIONAL

LOCAL

REGIONAL

✓ EUROPEAN

<b>Target group :</b>	European citizens
<b>Platform used :</b>	Online platform (web)
<b>Description :</b>	“It is a package of law proposals for the safety of the national minorities, a set of EU legal acts that enable the promotion of minority rights, language rights, and the protection of their cultures. In short, it sums up our main objectives: safety for minorities and legislative package for minorities.”
<b>Innovation :</b>	<p>Since 2012, if more than one million European citizens from at least seven Member States support an initiative proposed by a group of citizens, the European Commission must engage in the proposal.</p> <p>This is a method to raise e-participation and e-democracy.</p> <p>In this case, the aim of this concrete initiative is to legally support minorities through the European Commission, which has a very specific focus that is different to other kinds of initiatives.</p> <p>The design of the platform includes videos and testimonials that tell a story, which gets the user very easily into the message they are trying to spread. It also makes it very simple, as you just have to fill in a form in order to sign the proposal.</p> <p>The initiative provides knowledge improvement as it warns participants about an issue that maybe was not relevant before, so the participants improve their knowledge.</p> <p>Moreover, it can be considered that it has the potential to provoke a long-lasting change in the mechanisms/structures within political and social processes, as it aims to provide legal support to minorities in order to help them keep their languages and cultures. So, it can affect both politically and socially.</p>
<b>Effectiveness :</b>	The initiative gathered 1,320,000 statements of support with their European petition campaign for the MSPI and they have

	<p>reached the threshold in 11 Member States (Romania, Slovakia, Hungary, Latvia, Spain, Croatia, Denmark, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Lithuania, Italy before the April 3, 2018, deadline (1 million signatures and 7 Member States are required for a European Citizens' Initiative).</p> <p>The Public Hearing in the European Parliament took place on 15 October 2020.</p> <p>The European Parliament organised a plenary debate on the MSPI on 14 December 2020 and voted on a resolution on 17 December 2020.</p> <p>Moreover, the platform is easy to use for participants and easy to manage for organisers.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>The initiative has the potential to raise the knowledge of participants, also on a long-term scale, as it can be turned into real legislation through the European Commission, if they reach enough support.</p> <p>Moreover, it has the potential to make them more familiar with political processes, as this initiative will be included in the European Commission political agenda.</p> <p>The technological impact is evident as the initiative is carried out online in order to participate (you must sign online) and they promote their actions online through different videos and testimonials.</p> <p>It is a way to collaborate in politics through an online channel, although there are face-to-face events as well.</p> <p>Thanks to the signatures of participants, this initiative could present their legislative proposals to the European Commission. You can have access to them <a href="#">here</a> .</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>They had to reach a minimum of 1 million signatures in order to have the opportunity to present their proposal to the European Commission.</p> <p>The strategy was the dissemination of their initiative through</p>

	<p>testimonial videos and events.</p> <p>In this case, the initiative has the potential to make citizens more responsible about their role within political decision-maker processes, as they could see the request they were signing became part of the European agenda.</p> <p>In addition to this, this initiative transfers a popular concern, with its solutions, to decision-makers.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>It is a 100% open process in which everyone can support it, with no discrimination because of their private or professional life.</p> <p>You can find all the information of the initiative on its website, where you can see all the documents and every detail of the activities through the mail list.</p> <p>Then, it is necessary to fill a form in order to subscribe to the mail list, where you will be informed of all the activities that will be organised.</p> <p>Find <a href="#">here</a> the form.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>This is an example of the ECIs explained in the study-case above. Through the European Citizen Initiatives, it is possible to set in the agenda the topics that Europeans are concerned about.</p> <p>The requirements are high, as it will influence citizen’s lives, but everyone is welcome to participate.</p>

# European Digital Bootcamps (EDIBO)

## Europe



<b>Logo:</b>		
<b>Organisation :</b>	European Digital Bootcamps (EDIBO)	
<b>Level :</b>	NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	✓ EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	Young people in the partnering countries	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Website + Social medias	
<b>Description :</b>	The European DIGITAL BOOTCAMPS project (EDIBO) addresses the dramatic problem of youth unemployment by strengthening the digital skills of young people under the age of 30 who are not studying or working, with a special focus on young people aged 25-29 from disadvantaged groups (low-income, women, migrants, youngsters from rural areas). The	

	<p>data show, in fact, a strong demand for IT qualified staff that the market does not satisfy.</p>
<p><b>Innovation :</b></p>	<p>Unemployment is the biggest epidemiological catastrophe and one of the main factors of social marginalization</p> <p>That's why EDIBO is based on an innovative approach that carefully analyzes the needs of the market, to facilitate the training of young people and their employment, covering a strong demand in the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).</p> <p>Share the experience, confidence and motivation gained after their involvement in the digital skills &amp; entrepreneurship training.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>The 2nd European Digital Bootcamp started on the 6th of August, 2020 in Riga, Latvia. 22 young persons started their classroom training, after which they continued practical training in work placements.</p> <p>In a 200-hour intensive training program, young people acquired programming skills in almost all the most popular programming languages.</p> <p>The European Digital Bootcamps are organized under the project EDIBO funded by the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment.</p> <p>The last one Digital Bootcamp in Bulgaria was successfully finished on May 14th, 2021. The Institute for Youth Initiatives and Innovations (IYII) as a national project partner and organizer of all 6th cycles of digital skills training courses officially handed out certificates and congratulations to all 26 NEETs completing the last one course in Varna.</p> <p>Our team wished much success in life and career to all young and motivated young people who we had the pleasure to meet, learn and grow together!</p>

<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>After 36 months of the project duration, EDIBO involved 1050 young Europeans through reactivating their employability.</p> <p>Develop skills with the highest demand in the field of Information and Communication Technologies and Digitalisation, Empower youth for active participation on decision-making policies and make their opinion known.</p> <p>Make an internship in collaborating companies to strengthen the knowledge and know first-hand how to develop the profile personal and professional skills in the near future.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>EDIBO is aimed at young people between the ages of 25 and 29, at risk of social or employment exclusion, who are not currently studying or working.</p> <p>The main objective is to train these young people through free and intensive courses, so they will be able to delve into their digital and transversal skills and achieve a position to get a job, according to their new knowledge.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>EDIBO collaborates with companies committed to the employment of young people, meeting their needs in terms of professional profiles related to the world of ICT.</p> <p>Thus, it is responsible for creating training plans on demand, designing and delivering such courses, with expert staff in this area.</p> <p>Once the training period has ended, the collaborating companies will offer the students a practical period, after which they will be able to hire the students that cover their needs.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>The project promotes youth training and employment and tackles the main factors of social marginalization.</p> <p>Thus, its innovative approach to defining the needs of the market covers a strong demand for improving the digital and transversal skills of young people and achieving a position to get new jobs.</p>

# The YOUTH Bulgaria



<b>Logo:</b>		
<b>Organisation :</b>	YDCMA organization (Youth Development Centre for Mutual Aid)	
<b>Level :</b>	✓ NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	Young people aged 18-30 who are ready to actively participate in the project and willing to learn.	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Web site + Social Media + Blog + Digital Journal	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>The Youth is an initiative to fill-in the gap between current technology education at universities and actual market requirements with the following aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To share ideas and exchange good practices;</li> <li>To think from new angles and widen horizons;</li> <li>To give voice to the youth and engage them in responsible ways;</li> </ul>	

	<p>To help them to develop their qualities and skills; To build our civil society values and make the world a better place;</p> <p>The building of civil society and the support of the development of quality education with practical applicability; The support for the successful European integration of the country;</p>
<p><b>Innovation :</b></p>	<p>The innovation aspect includes the core EU values such as social inclusion and equal participation of youth, preserve of common values, cultural diversity. At the heart of the initiative is eco-awareness campaigns that aim to contribute towards a sustainable and diverse society.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>For years, our organization has used, as a support tool in its activities, to promote and disseminate the results of our projects, the youth “TheVolunteers” Newsletter, which has grown into the Youth Media “TheVolunteers”, through the creation of the <a href="http://www.theyouth.info">www.theyouth.info</a> website.</p> <p>Each week, young people have the opportunity to support and develop youth media, as an active contributor to the dissemination and impact activities of the project. This is another sustainable activity that we cover under this project, launched in 2011.</p> <p>A youth newsletter that is evolving as an online media. The Youth Journal by The(y) Volunteers is a monthly publication with a selection of articles and interviews published on theyouth.info.</p> <p>You can find copies of The Youth Journal in the libraries of Stara Zagora, Kazanlak and Veliko Tarnovo.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>Participants had the chance to grow personally and professionally through organizing local events and getting involved in training, exchanges, local initiatives and international projects as well as creating their own personal projects.</p>

	<p>One of the principles of the European Union is to support young peoples. They need this support, with their education, their jobs and to start a family. That is why the Youth in Action Program was created, which was later called Erasmus + and is now referred to as the European Solidarity Corps.</p> <p>But can the young people’s work in politics on their own? This is a big problem all over Europe. Usually young people need a lot of time to gain the trust of the big political parties. Experienced politicians rarely give younger people a chance. They think that young people are too naive and are not realistic.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>The creation of favourable conditions for the realization and distribution of creative ideas and products, contributing to the encouragement of the understanding and friendship among young people in the region;</p> <p>The encouragement of organizing, financing, development and implementation of events for the promotion of the works of young talents and for the realization of other activities to help discover and support young artists;</p> <p>The creation of favourable conditions for the promotion of the culture and arts of the Balkans peoples and the peoples of Southeast Europe in the rest of Europe and the world;</p> <p>The creation and maintenance of contacts with physical and juridical persons from the country and abroad, conducting activities similar to those of the Association Youth Development Centre – Mutual Aid;</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>The organisation works with various public and private organisations on a national and European level, such as NGOs, public bodies who aid the dissemination and implementation of the project.</p> <p>They explore the needs of the young people in the country and act on the development of policies in favour of youth. Via politics we do not only solve our personal problems, but the problems of the whole society.</p>

	<p>Young people can create political parties themselves and work on what excites them the most. Assist in the exchange of information, policies and practices.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>The creation and development of a dynamic and competitive investment environment; the organizing of alternative youth and civil forms and activities for the free time.</p> <p>The support of the development of quality education with practical applicability; The encouragement of communication, contacts and joint projects in the system of Healthcare as well as the support of health workers in obtaining higher qualifications.</p>

## Youth Pool Bulgaria



<p><b>Logo:</b></p>	
<p><b>Organisation :</b></p>	<p>Know &amp; Can Association</p>

<b>Level :</b>	✓ NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	Young people between 16 – 30	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Website + Social Media	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>Participation in social life is a fundamental right of the young people. This is the opportunity to express opinion and influence the course of developments that affect them and it applies to all areas of their life, from the family, to school, local communities, public services, and wider government policy.</p> <p>Participation is not only about voting once in a 4-5 years period. It is about contributing to the processes that affect our lives, starting with maintaining the local playground for example and including schooling decisions, adoption or divorce proceedings, planning and implementation of youth policies and programmes, consultation and evaluation of policies of overall concern (environment, international relations, economy, etc.).</p>	
<b>Innovation :</b>	<p>Youth Pool directly responds to the Youth Goal #9 on Space and participation for all. The goal identifies that “young people are underrepresented in decision-making processes which affect them although their engagement is crucial to democracy. They need access to spaces in their communities to support their personal, cultural and political development.” Such spaces are youth-friendly mechanisms and structures, physical or virtual that support participation and autonomy for the young people in all areas of society.</p>	
<b>Effectiveness :</b>	<p>Spaces for Participation relate to the opportunities to exercise this right. This means facilitated access, engagement, motivation, acquisition and development of skills and competencies to negotiate and advocate for existing needs.</p> <p>Young people are often represented by somebody else, with no or very limited space for self-expression and involvement.</p>	

	<p>Youth policies at various levels are designed without consultation with the persons targeted, resulting in complete disconnection from the social, political, educational and other processes within their community.</p> <p>The EU Youth Strategy and related activities contribute to achieving the 11 European Youth Goals that resulted from the 2017-2018 EU Youth Dialogue process. These goals represent multifaceted challenges affecting young people’s lives and aim at mobilizing cross-sectoral areas to address them.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>Youth Pool will create a knowledge base for potential bilateral or multilateral projects and activities in the field of youth. Organisations and institutions may engage with each other and collaborate with regard to national needs and future strategies. Mutual learning and intercultural understanding between the Youth Pool participants and the organisations and institutions involved will be achieved.</p> <p>Youth Pool is a process built on three basic principles:</p> <p><b>Relationships &amp; Connections</b></p> <p>Youth Pool gives time for relationships to grow among the participants that share common values, hopes, and visions, while at the same time are driven by common needs. It explores the differences between the young people considering these an asset to each separate relationship, while providing a safe space to debate, discuss and build on these differences.</p> <p><b>Hybridity of the methods</b></p> <p>Youth Pool tries to utilise the possibilities that stem from digital connectivity to raise action for physical spaces. Youth Pool activities are both digital and physical in a way that young people who are interested and motivated will have the chance to participate and have their say on issues that matter to them.</p> <p><b>Promoting the bottom-up approach to participation</b></p>

	<p>Youth Pool is a new proposal for youth participation. It is a response to the need to connect, share, build common visions and act.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>In line with the European Union’s developments in the field of youth and our vision for a meaningful Youth Participation, we have designed a new approach for youth empowerment and promotion of hybrid youth work (digital and physical) without geographic and socioeconomic limitations, Inter Alia’s Youth Pool.</p> <p>Youth Pool foresees a series of non-formal (online) activities addressed to and organised by the young people, for the young people. Youth Pool invites young people from diverse backgrounds to come together to share, develop and practice their own ideas for change.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>We foresee 4 virtual meetings (each one building on the achievements of the previous) including non-formal activities, team work, expert consultation, and filed work:</p> <p>Meeting No. 1 (March 2021): Team building and aims Participants meet for the first time and get to know each other. They learn how to do research for local youth and need analysis.</p> <p>Meeting No. 2 (April 2021) – Needs</p> <p>Participants present the outcomes of their research in the form of a need analysis. An interest mapping takes place and the whole Youth Pool is split into working groups based on their interests. Participants will also learn how to search for best practices and solutions to the identified challenges.</p> <p>Meeting No. 3 (May 2021) – Solutions</p> <p>Participants present outcomes of their search. They acquire advocacy skills and learn to draft proposals for local interventions.</p> <p>Meeting No. 4 (October 2021) – Evaluation</p>

	<p>Participants present the interventions implemented and evaluate the process of team work and the outcomes of the interventions.</p> <p>In a period of 8 months, the Youth Pool participants explore the challenges in their community, meet people from all over the world, share knowledge and experiences, collaborate with the local community and implement local interventions to advocate for youth rights and change. Young people are going to connect with other young people, engage with their local communities and get empowered to envision and work for a desired change.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>The EU Youth Strategy (2019-2027) “fosters youth participation in democratic life, supports social and civic engagement and aims to ensure that all young people have the necessary resources to take part in society”. It focuses on three core areas of action:</p> <p>Engage – meaningful civic, economic, social, cultural and political participation of young people.</p> <p>Connect – connections, relations and exchange of experience for solidarity and the future development of the European Union.</p> <p>Empower – encouraging young people to take charge of their own lives and address diverse challenges.</p> <p>Difficulties that might arise during the project are the commitment of the participants in the long term and communication barriers.</p>

# Manager for a Day

## Bulgaria



<b>Logo:</b>		
<b>Organisation :</b>	Junior Achievement Bulgaria	
<b>Level :</b>	✓ NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	Students from high schools to young people in universities	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Website + Social Media + Blog	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>The “Manager for a Day” initiative is designed to provide high-school and university students with the opportunity to experience the personal and academic demands of daily business operations.</p> <p>Furthermore, Manager for a Day promotes experiential student learning and fosters productive relationships among business, education and the community. The initiative enjoys great success all over the world. Each year businessmen, politicians and leaders from all walks of life serve as role models to young</p>	

	<p>people by transferring their knowledge and practical experience through a partnership with students.</p>
<b>Innovation :</b>	<p>The initiative is in full sync with the policy of the European Union to make education practical, so that young people can receive real training for the real world of business, politics, entrepreneurship and economy.</p> <p>Realizing their social responsibility, the hosts immerse their "managers for a day" in their daily work, show them inside how their sector works and inspire them to discover their professional vocation, understand how they can express their opinions and be heard.</p>
<b>Effectiveness :</b>	<p>In 2008, over 220 state institutions and leading Bulgarian and international companies and non-government organizations took part in "Manager for a Day" giving chance to over 1000 students from language, mathematics and professional High schools from all over the country for an excellent start in their future professional career.</p> <p>Young "managers for a day" in previous editions of the initiative have been more than 5000 students with mentors from over 400 different companies and institutions in Bulgaria.</p>
<b>Potential Impact :</b>	<p>A day full of inspiration and opportunities can be key to the career guidance of young people, as well as their motivation for success. The participants had the opportunity to get close to the world of business in various sectors and industries.</p> <p>According to managers from leading companies, the biggest motivation for their development in Bulgaria are opportunities and people, and they advised young entrepreneurs to develop in areas that excite them and in which they can be useful.</p>
<b>Participation level :</b>	<p>During the day of Manager for a Day in Sofia, around 500 students and top-level managers gather at an opening ceremony in the morning. They are to spend the day together and come back in the evening to share their experience from the busy business day. A short - up to 20 minutes - film is being produced during the day to show what happened to some of the participants at their host companies.</p>

<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>The most well-established program for initial career guidance gives rise to the professional realization of pupils and students aged between 16 and 23 and is a trademark of the educational organization Junior Achievement, which is held annually in about 100 countries around the world.</p> <p>The organizers from JA Bulgaria invite more employers to be active and participate, hosting the internship of pupils and students, so that more young people can make their career choices in time. Every year, about 400 host organizations open their doors to a total of 1,000 interns, and nearly 2,800 young people have applied for positions in Manager for a Day last year, for example.</p> <p>The first virtual edition of the Junior Achievement Manager for a Day initiative took place on March 23 this year and proved to be one of the most successful so far. Despite the unusual situation that necessitated the campaign to be conducted online, more than 700 pupils and students became managers in one day in leading Bulgarian and international companies and organizations.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>Through the Manager for a Day campaign, the young people receive the unique opportunity to combine theoretical knowledge with real-life practical experience.</p> <p>They immerse themselves in the activities of a real company / institution, which allows them to look at the "work" from another angle. It is true that they enjoy the meetings with the employees the most, with the new attitude towards them (as great and important people) and, of course, with the gifts they received. They take part in real job search process - to review advertised positions, to write and submit cover letters and to tremble in anticipation of the answer for choosing an employer. They learned how to perform better and learned about their strengths.</p> <p>The downsides are the limited spaces compared to the number of young people who want to participate.</p>

# Handbook “Combating Fake News”

## Bulgaria



<b>Logo:</b>		
<b>Organisation :</b>	Bulgarian Youth Forum	
<b>Level :</b>	✓ NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	Young people on European level	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Website + Social Media + Handbook + Newsletter	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>As a result of the training course “Youth work VS Fake News” a handbook “Combating Fake News” was prepared and published online.</p> <p>The project “Youth work VS Fake News” under Erasmus+ programme aims at exploring the power and role of youth in addressing the fake news issue and analyzing the role and impact of mass media messages to inform them of how</p>	

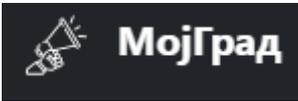
	<p>important their voice is for society and how they can make a change by implementing different social, digital and economic policies.</p>
<p><b>Innovation :</b></p>	<p>The aim of the handbook “Combating Fake News” is to serve as a tool for the youth workers to filter the news that they or their peers consume every day. It is giving answers to what is fake news and how to fight against them, and learning about their rights and privileges by using high quality sources.</p> <p>It provides relevant and effective tools for equipping young people with the knowledge they need in order to improve their lives on a social, economic and digital level. Also, the outdoor and online experiments with subsequent results and statistics are enclosed in the handbook to give more insight for the youth workers on how the problem is relevant and vivid in our days among youth to understand the modern political world. The handbook has been created by the participants of the training course and has been designed by the team of trainers.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>As a result of the training course Fake News vs Youth Work participants improved their competences in how to be more informed about their rights and what opportunities are available for them on a national and European level.</p> <p>Outdoor experiments show that young people are not well-familiar with what the government can provide them with. Online experiment shows that people are more likely to be unaware of the chances they can take advantage of.</p> <p>The Handbook is a useful tool for the youth workers to deepen their knowledge and get an understanding on how important it is for young people to be informed.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>The potential impact lies in the fact that it can equip youth workers with creative tools, activities and methodologies exploring media literacy, digital competences and the promotion of intercultural and diversity competences and understanding. They can share the experience of addressing at the national level among participants. Participants can</p>

	develop skills to analyse and evaluate the power and impact of media images and messages and they can be able to carry out and disseminate handbook for youth workers
<b>Participation level :</b>	19 young people from six European countries gathered to exchange their knowledge about theoretical knowledge regarding fake news. Practical experiment took place during the training course. The participation level is established through the active involvement of young people in fake news campaigns and the exchange of practical experience.
<b>Deliberation level :</b>	The participants have equal participation in the initiative, different points and discussions are taken into account while achieving a common decision about outcomes of held discussions. Open discourse among young people and society has been encouraged with the highest level of acceptance.
<b>Summary – General Assessment</b>	<p>New information communication technologies have enabled unprecedented escalation of the production, circulation and consumption of false content through cyberspace, which has had a huge impact on society. The activities contribute to the objectives of the sustainable development goals by providing young people the knowledge, actions, values and communication skills needed to contribute to their overall development, thereby empowering them to make healthy life choices. These choices, decisions and actions would promote universally shared values, such as respect and dialogue, and help to contribute to our national and European development.</p> <p>Scale of the project could be more widespread in order to optimise the results and reach more people.</p>

# MojGrad

Skopje, North Macedonia



<b>Logo:</b>		
<b>Organisation :</b>	Green Human City	
<b>Level :</b>	NATIONAL	✓ LOCAL
	REGIONAL	EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	Citizens of the City of Skopje	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Web site + Social Media + Handbook + Newsletter	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>MojGrad is an independent platform that enables civic participation in the decision-making process in the Council of the City of Skopje. The platform is a virtual infrastructure for building an authentic local community, promoting a radical concept of direct democracy at the local level. Users of the platform cultivate the spirit of the MojGrad community together, through the collective development of practical solutions to urban challenges, guided by the principles of ecology, sustainable development and solidarity. MojGrad is a digital extension of the coalition of civil associations Green Human City.</p> <p>MojGrad is described as a tool for democratization, in the short</p>	

	<p>term it aims to contribute to ongoing problem solving, continuous control and supervision of the local government by the citizens and increasing the transparency of the work of the City of Skopje. In the long run, the goal is to restore local sovereignty to the citizens through institutional transformation, which will gradually lead to handing over the city management to the community, instead of the political party elites.</p>
<p><b>Innovation :</b></p>	<p>In terms of social innovation, the MojGrad platform enables each user to raise a certain issue on a local level and propose a solution. The proposals should be related to improving the general welfare in the City of Skopje, and address local problems that are of interest to the citizens. They should be ethically and morally sound, with a focus on contributing to a more humane, greener and more beautiful city.</p> <p>All submitted proposals are reviewed and approved by the administrators before they are published, in order to prevent misuse of the platform. Users have an opportunity to express their views on each of the raised issues and proposed solutions by commenting, as well as by voting. The voting option provides the proposals a “public petition” dimension, replacing other websites that have been used in the part for public petitions.</p> <p>One of the main advantages of the MojGrad platform is that some of its founders are councillors in the City of Skopje, which means that they can directly submit the citizens’ proposals to the City Council and present them during sessions. In this way, these councillors act as “messengers” of the expressed will of the citizens at the City Council’s sessions. Thus, the platform aims to further conversations in the public sphere and find solutions by engaging with different viewpoints. Moreover, it creates a direct link between the citizens of Skopje and the City Council.</p> <p>In terms of technological innovation, the platform is very user-friendly and easy to navigate.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>By mid-June 2021 the citizens of the City of Skopje had submitted a total of 37 proposals through the MojGrad platform, addressing a range of issues, including infrastructural, environmental and culture related ones.</p>

	<p>The number of votes for each proposal differs, ranging from 100 to over 1000.</p> <p>The platform has been also utilized by citizens of other cities, such as the city of Bitola, and their initiative for closing the local zoo due to the inadequate conditions and treatment of the animals residing there, has gathered the support of over 4600 users. The users are predominantly young people. The top most voted proposals are submitted before the respective city councils.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>A total of 7 proposals have been submitted to the Skopje City Council. Unfortunately, none of the proposals have been accepted and acted upon by the Skopje City Council. In addition, there has been 1 proposal submitted to the City Council of Bitola, which is still under review.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the platform has stimulated local civic activism, contributing to creating a culture of participation. It has also fostered citizens' knowledge of the local democratic process and decision-making, and served as a channel for awareness raising on key local issues.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>The MojGrad website enables anyone who is interested to create a profile and actively engage in commenting and voting on the existing proposals, as well as in creating new proposals. The proposals already made and the discussions on them are publicly available and registration is not needed. Thus, through this platform citizens can inform themselves on the current problems in their local community and suggested approaches for overcoming them, as well as exchange views and opinions.</p> <p>The MojGrad website has the potential to develop amongst their users an awareness of issues in digital civic participation and democracy, as well as any challenges stemming from these advancements.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>As mentioned, discussions are at the centre of the MojGrad platform, concerning important local issues. Their core methods concerning deliberation has to do with exposing participants to</p>

	<p>different views on the same issue. Online discussions and other events are open to those wishing to participate.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>The initiative represents a grassroots movement for addressing local issues using appropriate and user-friendly digital tools. The MojGrad platform gives citizens the chance to set the political agenda of the local government.</p> <p>Young people’s engagement on this platform can be fostered through the its increased promotion on social media channels. Moreover, this initiative can benefit from in-depth assessment on the reasons for the rejection of the past proposals by the City of Skopje, and thus inform the development of future proposals.</p>

## Zelen Glas

### North Macedonia



<p><b>Logo:</b></p>	
<p><b>Organisation :</b></p>	<p>Kolektiv Z - Young Friends of the Earth Macedonia, in collaboration with SmartUp – Social Innovation Lab</p>

<b>Level :</b>	✓ NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	Macedonian citizens, young people	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Website: <a href="http://www.zelenglas.mk">www.zelenglas.mk</a>	
<b>Description :</b>	<p>Zelen Glas is an online platform/ virtual space that aims to facilitate building people power for intersectional transformative actions to improve the wellbeing of the communities and the planet.</p> <p>This platform offers opportunities for thinking jointly, planning, organizing and building local and regional solutions to socially-just and environmentally-sound future. Platform users can share their visions for the future thorough filling in a form and find useful information on ongoing initiatives and activities in the “Activities” section of the website. This platform has been developed by Kolektiv Z - Young Friends of the Earth Macedonia, in collaboration with SmartUp – Social Innovation Lab.</p>	
<b>Innovation :</b>	<p>The key approach of this platform/virtual space is an intersectional approach by seeing and valuing the various forms of inequality and systemic oppressions when they often operate together in a complex and cumulative way, in order to understand and act towards system change and social justice. Through an intersectional approach to movement building, they are tackling social and environmental challenges by creating platforms this platform for joint visioning and collective transformative action.</p> <p>The platform is based on the need for a strong, united front with a radical vision of the future, rooted in solidarity, justice and care for the communities and the environment. Therefore, this platform aims to facilitate the creation of a national Green Deal, as a pathway to reaching a just and sustainable society as collectively envisaged.</p>	

<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>So, far the Zelen Glas platform has facilitated the collection of over 100 visions for the future, it has over 60 registered individual activists and over 40 organisations. While the Coalition of the Future has more than 200 members.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>The process of collecting visions for the future was closed in July 2021 and the final vision-based policies will be communicated to all relevant national governmental and non-governmental institutions, decision-making bodies and Parliament.</p> <p>The visions shared through the platform will inform the development of the National Green Agreement. The National Green Agreement will also be part of the European Green Agreement, which will be submitted to the European Commission and MEPs and EU bodies working on the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, and will be presented at next year's climate talks in the UK.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>The platform users can submit the visions for the future and comment on the published articles concerning various environmental issues.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>While the platform users can comment on the articles published on the platform, the submitted visions for the future are not published, and thus they cannot be discussed and commented on.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>This platform is based on the need to increase the level of democratic participation amongst the general public and the in particular the youth on key environmental and other interrelated issues. As the “visions for the future” submitted through the platform will be taken into account in the drafting of the national Green Deal, the platform contributes to creating direct links between citizens and policy-makers.</p> <p>Nevertheless, they could take concrete steps to increasing the levels of deliberation on the platform, by creating opportunities for discussions, organising online events open for the general public and setting up working groups, where youth and aspiring policy makers can exchange ideas and policy stances.</p>

# National Youth Council of Macedonia (NYCM)

## North Macedonia



<b>Logo:</b>	 <p data-bbox="810 835 1214 943">National Youth Council of Macedonia</p>	
<b>Organisation :</b>	National Youth Council of Macedonia (NYCM)	
<b>Level :</b>	✓ NATIONAL	LOCAL
	REGIONAL	EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	Youth	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Website: <a href="http://www.nms.org.mk">www.nms.org.mk</a>	
<b>Description :</b>	<p data-bbox="539 1532 1449 1749">The National Youth Council of Macedonia (NYCM) is a representative body for youth organizations in the country. NYCM unites 51 organizations, 17 youth organizations, 20 organizations for youth, 1 union, 7 youth wings of other organizations and 6 associate members, in order to promote and advocate for the rights of the Macedonian youth.</p> <p data-bbox="539 1787 1449 1861">The membership of the NYCM is diverse, bringing together organizations working at national and regional level, rural and</p>	

	<p>urban areas, student organizations, branches of international organizations and other types of organizations. In the process of achieving their goals, NYCM represents the interests of young people in the country regardless of their social and economic status, gender, race, ethnic and cultural background, political and religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity or any other type of difference.</p> <p>From 29 November 2015, the NYCM is part of the European family of youth organizations called the European Youth Forum (EYF).</p>
<p><b>Innovation :</b></p>	<p>The NYCM employs a variety of different activities to successfully meet its goals, including through encouraging processes for tailoring appropriate policies that provide social and personal development of young people and organizing campaigns and activities to raise public awareness in areas that are important to young people. In addition to that, they offer advocacy and action on behalf of the interests of young people and youth organizations through representation of their interests before the institutions. They organise Capacity building of member organizations and youth, meetings, consultations, seminars and other forms of educational activities in the field of youth policy. They try to improve the position of youth in society by promotion and action for strengthening youth participation in the process of decision-making, promotion of youth activism, youth information and active citizenship among young people.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>The NYCM has 51 member organizations, including youth organizations, organizations for youth, unions, youth wings of other organizations and associate members, representing diverse stakeholders in the youth sector, but also youth with different backgrounds. They have significant engagement in their social media platforms, with their Facebook page amassing over twelve thousand followers, their Instagram page over eight hundred followers and LinkedIn page with a hundred and fifty followers.</p>
<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>The NYCM enables youth organizations to effectively participate in decision-making and policy creation at a national</p>

	<p>level. In addition, they projects tackle a number of areas of interest to young people, including professional development and economic independence of young people through a sustainable system for skill and competence building tailored to the needs of the labour market, fostering youth entrepreneurial opportunities and strengthening the employment prospects of young people, empowering motivated young people with skills to work within their communities, enabling the youth to participate in the public life and the decision-making process on matters that affect their lives, communities and the Macedonian society overall, etc.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>As the biggest youth representative body, NYCM has been included in the working groups for development of youth-related legislation, national strategic documents, policymaking processes and implementation of programs related to youth participation, policy, activism and employment.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>NYCM organizes frequent online and in-person events, where youth can actively deliberate on an issue, present their point of views, engage with each other's ideas, beliefs and knowledge. Through this deliberation method, the individuals, as well as representatives of organizations, have the opportunity to learn from one-another, discuss pressing issues, as well as hear the opinions of key political actors and challenge them directly.</p> <p>Mostly, the primary means of bringing together individuals with the purpose of deliberation is through online events and webinars, in which the participants can engage with each other's ideas, beliefs and knowledge on issues concerning digital civic engagement. These webinars are frequent and have a different theme for each one, discussing parameters of the internet and challenges it poses in human rights and democratic participation.</p> <p>Additionally, the organization produces country reports, where different policy solutions are presented and analysed, in which the Institute, as well as other participants can extensively study and present issues at a high level. These reports are shared with relevant policy institutions and have as a goal to influence policy, through the means of research.</p>

<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>As an umbrella organization, the National Youth Council of Macedonia presents a unique opportunity for bringing together youth organizations which work on different areas to engage with some of the most pressing issues faced by youth in the country. NYCM had a solid internal management structure and a capacity to organize both offline and online events focused on different areas of interest to young people, thus elevating participation in e-democracy and keeping a high deliberation standard.</p>
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## CSO Dialogue – Platform for Structural Participation in EU

### North Macedonia



<p><b>Logo:</b></p>		
<p><b>Organisation :</b></p>	<p>Foundation Open Society – Macedonia; Reactor - Research in Action; Center for Civil Communications and Eurothink - Center for European Strategies.</p>	
<p><b>Level :</b></p>	<p>✓ NATIONAL</p>	<p>LOCAL</p>
<p><b>Target group :</b></p>	<p>REGIONAL</p>	<p>✓ EUROPEAN</p>
	<p>Civil society organizations, including youth organizations</p>	

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<b>Platform used :</b>	Website ( <a href="http://www.dijalogkoneu.mk">www.dijalogkoneu.mk</a> ), Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter
<b>Description :</b>	<p>The project CSO Dialogue – Platform for Structural Participation in EU Integrations aims to facilitate meaningful and structured participation of the civil society that expresses the views of citizens, to impact key sector reforms in the EU accession process.</p> <p>Project implementation started on 1.4.2019 and will end on 31.3.2022. In particular, the project is focused on attainment of three objectives, as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish a platform that will structure participation of civil society organizations in consultations and decision-making process related to the country's accession in the EU The project will establish a platform for structural participation of the civil society in institutional consultation mechanisms, thereby increasing availability of information and support for participation in policy-making related to the EU accession process.</li> <li>2. Enhance formal consultation mechanisms with the civil society  At the same time, the project aims to increase the civil society impact on sector reforms in the EU accession process and will work on all institutional consultation mechanisms between the Government and civil society.</li> <li>3. Increase the civil society impact on the country's accession in the EU The project strives to increase the civil society impact on policies related to the EU accession process by means of evidence-based policy creation, development of policy documents (shadow reports, policy briefs, position statements) in key sectors and reform policies under the EU accession process.</li> </ol>
<b>Innovation :</b>	The project is being implemented through several groups of project interventions/activities that include: designing a functional web-platform as central point for information

	<p>dissemination for civil society organizations and institutions; conducting research to measure involvement and participation of the civil society; organizing events and public consultations; monitoring the work of sector working groups by developing analyses and reports; designing visual charts on key conclusions from work of sector working groups in order to improve information dissemination to citizens about this process; production of video materials, educational videos, tutorials, and the like; drafting a declaration on transparency of the negotiations process; streaming meetings of the Council for Cooperation between the Government of RNM and Civil Society; and organizing annual conferences around the issue of civil society participation in sector policy creation and implementation.</p>
<b>Effectiveness :</b>	<p>Over 290 civil society organizations working in different fields have registered on the platform. By registering, organizations gain access to the most up-to-date information on negotiating teams, sectoral working groups, and the Civil Society Development and Cooperation Council.</p>
<b>Potential Impact :</b>	<p>Implementation of project activities is expected to increase the scope of available and relevant information to citizens about the EU accession process, but also to ensure better information dissemination and to increase capacity for civil society participation in policy creation. In particular, project activities will establish a formal mechanism for civil society networking, increased transparency of institutions in the EU accession process, and active participation of the civil society in decision-making that will ensure its greater impact on policies.</p>
<b>Participation level :</b>	<p>Organisations registered on the platform have an opportunity to participate in consultations, workshops, conferences, public forums and other activities that are directly related to EU accession and the creation of sectoral policies and activities that are directly related to EU accession.</p>
<b>Deliberation level :</b>	<p>The platform includes different sector working groups in the following policy areas: agriculture and rural development; competitiveness and innovation; environment and climate</p>

	<p>change; education, employment and social policy; health; home affairs; justice; public administration reform; public finance management; regional and local development; Roma integration and transport. Each sector working group is comprised of civil society organisations active in the respective field, public authorities and other relevant stakeholders. Each sector working group holds online meetings on topics of interest, where deliberation takes place.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>The project CSO Dialogue – Platform for Structural Participation in EU Integrations enables meaningful and structured participation of diverse civil society on key sector reforms in the EU accession process. The platform brings together an impressive number of civil society organisations that can contribute with their experience and foster knowledge exchange, and builds direct communication links with government institutions and other stakeholders. As they move forward, they can consider approaches for ensuring sustainability beyond the initial funding period.</p>

# Western Balkans Youth Cooperation Platform

## Western Balkans



<b>Logo:</b>		
<b>Organisation :</b>	<b>Cooperation and Development Institute, National Youth Congress of Albania, National Youth Council of North Macedonia, National Youth Council of Serbia, High School Students Union of Montenegro, Central Youth Action Council of Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina Association for United Nations</b>	
<b>Level :</b>	NATIONAL	LOCAL
	✓ REGIONAL	EUROPEAN
<b>Target group :</b>	Western Balkan Youth	
<b>Platform used :</b>	Website, Facebook, Instagram	
<b>Description :</b>	WBYCP stands for Western Balkans Youth Cooperation Platform.  WBYCP is a grassroots regional youth platform implemented by Cooperation and Development Institute (CDI), together with the umbrella youth organizations of the six Western Balkans Countries - National Youth Congress of Albania, National Youth Council of North Macedonia, National Youth Council of Serbia,	

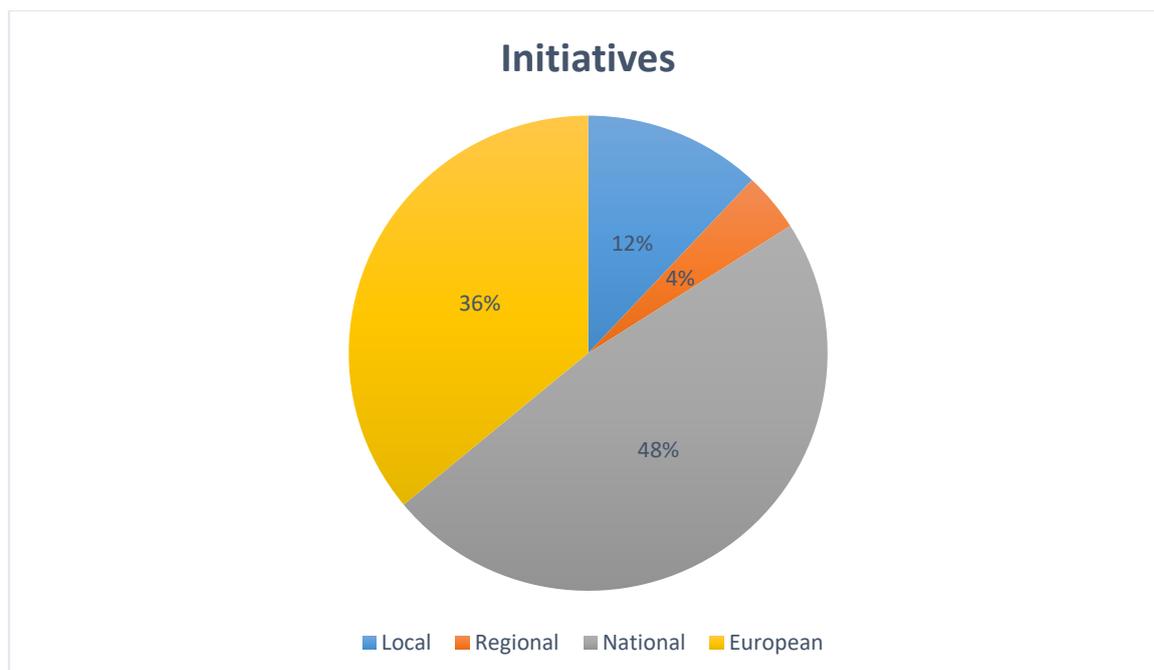
	<p>High School Students Union of Montenegro, Central Youth Action Council of Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina Association for United Nations, and with the support of Hanns Seidel Foundation.</p> <p>With the aim to promote youth connectivity in the Balkans, WBYCP offers a unique and tailor-made space to youngsters from the region where they meet, plan, organise, implement and voice up their action.</p> <p>In WBYCP youngsters can find partners for joint activities, design and implement joint initiatives, exchange ideas, consult a youth library, and built and carry outreach and lobbying action. WBYCP is designed to function as a resource centre for youth in the Western Balkans. WBYCP also offers a wide array of existing initiatives, national, regional and EU-supported that target youth and cover the Western Balkans.</p>
<p><b>Innovation :</b></p>	<p>The platform provides the functions of: repository of organisations - youth organisations, movements, informal groups, young researchers, etc, who can register their profile and promote their activities; searching for partners: all users of the platform who need to find contacts in one of the countries for their next project, can use filters to find the right partner for their idea; ideas space: users can consult all project ideas submitted by the platform members; and information Resource Center regarding the upcoming activities in the youth sector.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness :</b></p>	<p>WBYCP was created in 2017 with the aim to connect and empower youth organizations in the Western Balkans Six. Throughout the five years of operation, WBYCP has created the first bottom-up youth cooperation structure, provided a platform of communication and coordination and empowered Western Balkan youth with the aim of reaching out and involving them in the regional policy making process. WBYCP counts more than 300 Youth Friends in the Western Balkans region. Regarding the engagement on their social media platforms, their Facebook page has over three thousand followers, while their Instagram page has over five hundred-fifty followers.</p>

<p><b>Potential Impact :</b></p>	<p>WBYCP Platform and its partners are actively involved in the monitoring of youth related policies, as well as presenting the youth perspective in the development of new policies. Throughout their work they aim to pave the way and create the environment where the EU development agenda projects for the region for the period are planned and monitored by youth. Moreover, WBYCP facilitates a spectrum of capacity building opportunities for youth organisations and their role in decision-making processes.</p>
<p><b>Participation level :</b></p>	<p>WBYCP promotes a bottom-up regional cooperation model, actively contributing to fostering collaboration between youth organisations in the Western Balkan, and their communication with political decision-makers on a national, regional and EU level.</p>
<p><b>Deliberation level :</b></p>	<p>The deliberation level at the WBYCP is high, as they bring together youth organizations all across six Western Balkan countries – N. Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, to discuss and propose solutions to some of the issues faced by the youth in the region. As said before, over 100 youth organizations partake in this deliberation and advocacy, all bringing their own views, perspectives and ideas about how to practically contribute to solving youth issues. These deliberations take place during the meetings of the WBYCP member organisations, other events involving wider audiences and stakeholders’ meetings, where views on key policy issues are shared and discussed.</p>
<p><b>Summary – General Assessment</b></p>	<p>WBYCP successfully connects youth organizations from the Western Balkans and fosters collaboration between them, stimulates discussions on issues faced by the youth in the region and advocacy on youth related policies. Its bottom-up cooperation structure ensures that this initiative is indeed youth-led and thus informed on the needs and priorities of young people. Perhaps, as they go forward, it would be beneficial to provide evaluations on their website content and ways to improve their model, as well as to enhance the engagement of their social media channels to achieve greater visibility of their work.</p>

## 5. Conclusion

During our research, we have analysed 25 different initiatives throughout Europe to raise the participation of European citizens, with particular attention to young people. To remain flexible throughout the research, we have decided to include tools or platforms that enable participation from citizens and initiatives that use social media or other means of digital communication for their purposes. Even though e-participation is not a new phenomenon, the research has shown that in almost all countries in question (Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Northern Macedonia, Spain), only a few initiatives have the potential to reach a considerable number of people.

To identify the distribution level, we have classified each initiative as active on local, regional, national or European levels. Of 25 initiatives, most are engaged on a national level (12), followed by nine initiatives operational on a European level. Only three are active on a local level and one on a regional level.



Initiatives active on the local level are focusing in all three cases (two in Austria and one in Northern Macedonia) on the possibility for users to participate in a constructive way on the improvement of their city, quarter or village, to report malfunction and help local authorities to manage the city in a better way.

Initiatives on the national and European level, the large majority (21 from 25 investigated cases), are focusing on topics that try to motivate (young) people to take a more active role in society (Active Citizenship). Many of them are not offering simple tools or platforms but try different activities to inform youth about the EU's possibilities. The range of activities goes from informal conversations about EU topics (Café con Europa, Spain) and innovative discussion platforms (European Home Parliaments) to initiatives based on projects, for example, from youth organisations (for example, the National Youth Council of Macedonia or the Hellenic National Youth Council).

Although many of them try to use innovative ways to tackle the topics of Participatory and Deliberative Democracy, the success of initiatives in terms of putting ideas, concepts into concrete results through the involvement of political decision processes is limited. In all countries and on the European level, there is still a lack of a structured form of (e-) participation, as tools and elements of Participatory/Deliberative democracy concepts are still not a part of the political decision-making process.

Those as mentioned above indicate that there is still a long way to go before the aim of active youth participation in the EU democratic life can be reached. Youth people have a lot to contribute to society, and they can shape healthier democracies. More specifically, the active participation of (young) citizens in democratic structures will foster the legitimacy, credibility, and operation of democratic systems and bring global change and innovation. The latter demonstrates why it is essential that they should be able to use digital tools and be engaged in e-participation. Meaningful democracies need youth participation. To this end, this toolkit's primary objective is to support young people and youth organisations to identify initiatives according to their needs and bring them closer to the EU democratic life.