



Newsletter #1

How could we foster young people's participation in democratic life?

The Council of Europe states that participation in democratic life is about more than voting or standing for election. "Participation and active citizenship is about having the right, the means, the space and the opportunity and where necessary the support to participate in and influence decisions and engaging in actions and activities so as to contribute to building a better society." Within this concept, to foster young people's participation in democratic life is to empower them and provide them with the means and ways to become actors of their life and of their world.

#YouEU is a European project aiming 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**. In particular, the specific objectives of the project are to:

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

The #YouEU project involves six partners: **University of the Peloponnese** (Greece), **Family and Childcare Centre – KMOP Skopje** (N. Macedonia), **Die Berater** (Austria), **Know and Can Association** (Bulgaria), **INCOMA** (Spain) and **Be Known** (Greece).

What have we done so far?

First, we identified **Good Practice cases** on European, national, regional and local level that try to raise the participation of youth using digital tools and/or social media. During our research, we have analysed 25 different initiatives throughout Europe, which form the **YouEU Toolkit**. To remain flexible, we 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, only a few initiatives have the potential to reach a considerable number of people. You can access the Toolkit [here](#).

Additionally, we organised **e-design workshops with youth and youth workers** in the partner countries in order to present the Toolkit and shape the scope, objectives and themes of the designed **#YouEU E-course** on participation and engagement in the EU democratic life. The E-course is addressed to youth aged 16-26 and contains four modules; European Union, EU and Youth (in our everyday life, Global Citizenship and Designing the future of EU. In total, it consists of 16 lessons, which you can access [here](#). Moreover, we created **the #YouEU digital platform** for promoting youth e-participation, which will act as the digital transnational public sphere that will bring together youth from the participating countries and ultimately from all over Europe to communicate, share issues and build claims together. You can visit the platform [here](#).

What are we working on now?

Currently, we are in the **piloting phase of the #YouEU E-course and Platform**. After the completion of the online feedback seminars, we will develop the **#YouEU experience: Lessons on e-participation and youth empowerment**. This will present a) lessons learnt as seen from the side of the implementation team (researchers, trainers), b) the #YouEU experience as experienced and evaluated by the end/users/participants in the platform and the e-course, and c) concrete cases of youth e-participation in the course of the project.



Interested in joining the YouEU activities?

Please check the official YouEU website: www.youeuproject.eu



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