



DIGITAL YOUTH DIALOGUE

AND E-PARTICIPATION IN POLICY MAKING

**GUIDELINES AND PROPOSALS FOR
DECISION MAKERS**



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**Erasmus+ Key Action 3
Structured Dialogue Youth**



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DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

"Digital Youth Dialogue and e-participation in policy making" is a project within the Key Action 3 of the Erasmus+ Programme. The general objective of the project is ***to support the active participation of young people in democratic life, encouraging the digital youth dialogue on key issues that concern them closely, following the priorities established by the EU-Strategy 2019-2027, promoting a digital process of participation.***

A cycle of international meetings, seminars supported by local reinforcement and online activities will characterize the 12 months of the project for the achievement of different specific objectives:

- To promote virtual space and e-participation for all, creating conditions which enable young people to fulfill their potential in disadvantaged areas (European islands);
- To provide participants the tools to promote and improve the condition for youth e-participation in their local environment;
- To acquire and develop new skills, knowledge and competences in terms of digital democracy;
- To raise the opportunities for e-participation for young people in local environments.

The project involves 4 NGOs based in 4 different European islands: Sardinia (Italy); Malta; Cyprus and Azores (Portugal).

LOCAL ACTIVITIES:

- Creation of local working groups and local actions to get in contact with the topic;
- Public press conference for the presentation of the project;
- A final conference at the end of the project to present project results at local level.



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ONLINE ACTIVITIES:

- An innovative platform that will collect tools and results of the project;
- Online pools and surveys;
- Creation of 8 info graphics with the results of the online pools;

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Virtual Kick-off meeting;
- International seminar in Italy entitled “(E-democracy) Connecting local and European actions using digital tools in political activities”;
- Final meeting in Italy.

PARTICIPANTS PROFILE. Participants, both youngster and decision makers, will have to fill in an online form in order to gather any special need and help organizers to understand the attitude of the group, their involvement on the field and their motivation, their previous knowledge on the topic of the meeting, their attitude to active participation.

PROJECT RESULTS:

- **Tools and best practices** will be collected in a **final publication**;
- **Online contents**;
- **Results, information from the discussion and from the online pools** will be collected in 8 **info graphics** that we will upload in a specific section of the platform and shared on different levels;
- **Guidelines and recommendations** will inspire Institutions, politicians, youngsters and beneficiaries.



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PROJECT PARTNERS

ASSOCIAZIONE TDM 2000, Italy

"TDM 2000" is an independent no profit organization, that coordinates young people willing to cooperate in the voluntary sector, supporting them in developing personal and professional skills through experiential learning and non-formal education.

TDM 2000 cooperates with different Municipalities, the Sardinian Government, Chamber of Commerce of Cagliari, Association of Young Entrepreneurs of Sardinia and several other entities and institutions at local and international level in the fields of youth, education, training and entrepreneurship/employability.

Role: applicant of the project.

Website: <http://tdm2000.org/>

PLANBE PLAN IT BE IT, Cyprus

"PlanBe, Plan it Be it" is a Non-Governmental, Non-Profit Organization based in Nicosia, Cyprus, managed by a team of youth workers, project managers and volunteers.

The main aim of "PlanBe" is to contribute to the positive societal changes by promoting effective communication between youngsters, intercultural and intergenerational dialogue, by facilitating understanding among people. The mission of the NGO is to develop and support the use of non-formal education, to foster entrepreneurship, to boost creativity, to support environmental consciousness, to foster democracy and human rights and to develop solidarity and tolerance among youngsters.

Role: partner of the project

Website: www.planbe-ngo.com



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ASSOCIACAO JUVENIL DA ILHA TERCEIRA, Portugal

Youth Association of Terceira Island - AJITER, is a non-profit institution that was started in April 2003, starting from the essential objective of promoting and strengthening youth associations in the Azorean community, as an innovative way to promote the integration of integration into the community it is inserted in, and fight against generalized indifference that, at times, is very harmful to our youth.

Main areas of intervention are: education for citizenship, education for health, prevention of risk behavior, solidarity, combating social exclusion, sports, promoting access to the new information society, enhancing the historical and cultural heritage of Terceira Island, among many others.

Role: partner of the project

Website: www.ajiter.pt

ZEJTUN LOCAL COUNCIL, Malta

The Żejtun Local Council (ŻLC) is the government authority which is responsible for the upkeep of the locality of Żejtun, a city in the south eastern region of Malta. We are also responsible and priorities also the social development of our community.

The mission of the ŻLC is to halt the existing threats to the environment within the locality and to find ways and means to rehabilitate the locality's characteristics as a residential area through striking a balance between the need of the residents and the commercial community in an efficient manner.

Role: partner of the project

Website: www.zejtunlocalcouncil.com



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RECOMMENDATIONS

The **recommendations** proposed here have been developed by project participants and are a reflection of the ideas, needs and requirements discussed at the local level and then shared at the European level.

The recommendations, in fact, are the result of group work and represent the vision of hundreds of young citizens from **four European islands**.

The issues that have been addressed are varied.

As a result of the educational process carried out as part of the project, four key themes are proposed here:

1. Green economy
2. Democracy and right to vote
3. Ethics, youthful well-being, self-determination
4. Digital innovation and youth work



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EUROPE 2050

TITLE

Europe 2050

TOPIC

Green economy and fight against climate change

INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

About the strategy. The European Union aims to be climate: neutral by 2050 -an economy with net-zero greenhouse gas emissions. This objective is at the heart of the European Green Deal and in line with the EU's commitment to global climate within the European Union assigns a direct and active role to young people and representative organization of the youth world so that the adults of tomorrow are protagonist in the construction of the Europe of tomorrow.

CONTEXT ANALYSIS

For every problem encountered, there are always alternative solutions that allow for low impact and help achieve the goals of the strategy. The alternative solutions must, in the first place, start from the bottom and carried out by the youngest group in order to raise awareness of the entire citizenry.

1. UNENGINE VEHICLES ROAD NETWORK

Connect different cities with cycling roads;
Improve cycling roads on urban area;
Support un engine vehicles purchase;
Support healthy wellness.

2. FINES ON ACTION INSTEAD OF CASH

Value time more than money;
Use an rehabilitating approach;
Deter non ecofriendly behaviors;



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From non eco to eco actions.

3. ELECTRIC VEHICLE INCENTIVES

Fill cities with charge station;

Allow cars to give energy to the network;

Ask from which source the energy is coming from;

Power up national energy system.

4. CUSTOMS DUTY BASED ON “STATE/COMPANY ECO FRIENDLY INDEX”

Build a certification system to evaluate eco friendliness;

Accredit states or companies with an eco-friendliness value;

Adapt customs duties to the value of the index;

Reduce the duties for high eco friendliness value;

Update the index on a several year basis.

SOLUTION AND PROPOSAL

- The gas pollution of urban areas is increasing because of an increment of engine vehicles on the streets. The use of un - engine vehicles can reduce pollution while improving health. The possibility of a free circulation on a preferential road for un - engine vehicles can incentivize youngsters and people of all the ages to contribute on the air pollution problematic.
- Because the un - restrictiveness of some laws about good manners on many countries, many citizens just don't care about behaving in a correct way. The applying of a fine not based on money but on time spent for activities toward community, can work as deterrent for the ones who don't feel the loss of money as a problem. It will also serve as a rehabilitation process while making amend to the community and emphasizing the need of manners for the good of society to the younger generations.



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- Because of the pollution derived from combustion engines, the increase of electric driven vehicles will tackle in part the problem. Giving money to buy cars is not an overall solution because of power constraints given by the technology. It is known that the vast majority of street lamps can work also as low speed charge station with a really small change on the urban shape. This modification can also be given to some enterprise that, following a predefined standard can take interest on the action. The imposition on car maker to let the car give back a small amount of energy to the network can allow a reduced strain on the power network in foresight on the technology on becoming mainstream. The possibility of letting customer choose which kind of energy can be used to charge his vehicle also with different price tags.

CONCLUSION

The proposals contained in the recommendation cover the entire European geographical area and are based on the guidelines contained in the long-term Community strategy.

In this specific case, the proposals refer to the mobility sector and therefore encourage the use of alternative and/or electric vehicles. They also refer to the adoption of sustainable behaviors that respect the environment that surrounds us.



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#VOTE16

TITLE

#Vote16

TOPIC

Youth participation, democracy, right to vote

INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

In many states, the extension of voting rights to sixteen-year-olds has been proposed. There are different benefits to lower the voting age to sixteen.

Lowering the voting age can lead to a long-term benefits such as bringing more citizens in touch with politicians and pushing the Institutions to better serve its people.

Research and need's analysis shows that 16 and 17 year-olds have the necessary civic knowledge, skills, and cognitive ability to vote responsibly.

Moreover, strong civics education and a lower voting age would mutually reinforce each other to increase civic engagement.

CONTEXT ANALYSIS

The right to vote is a key element of participation in democratic processes. Participation in the democratic process is of utmost importance for our society and the right to vote and to be elected are key elements of citizenship. Around Europe, Austria became the first member of the European Union, and the first of the developed world democracies, to adopt a voting age of 16 for all purposes. Lowering the voting age encouraged political interest in young people in Austria. Some facts discussed:

- Granting the right to vote to youngsters is highly connected to the educational system policy and more precisely to the political education.
- The right to vote for elections is not the only way to promote political participation and active citizenship among young generations.



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- The voice of the European youth should be heard and taken into consideration at the European level.

SOLUTION AND PROPOSAL

Proposals are divided in four recommendations:

- **A COMMON AGE FOR EU ELECTIONS:** for a matter of equality EU countries should decide to a commonage to have the right to vote for European elections. For the other elections it remains a question of national sovereignty.
- **YOUNG COUNCILS:** the European Union should actively support the creation of young councils at local level. Their main missions will be to promote active citizenship and the involvement of youngsters in the political life of their country by using different tools and innovative ideas/initiatives.
- **EDUCATION AND POLITICS:** European members should build an educational strategy starting from high school to give political keys on the main questions related to democracy to young people and improve their knowledge and critical thinking mindset.
- **PARLIAMANT OF YOUTHS:** youngsters should be represented at the European level thanks to the creation of an official institution specialized on the questions related to youth where its recommendations will help politicians to vote resolutions on this particular subject.

CONCLUSION



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This set of recommendations proposes a guideline for the adoption or not at European level of a common strategy for the definition of a common age for all member countries for granting the right to vote.



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ETHICALLY SENSITIVE ISSUES

TITLE

Ethically sensitive issues

TOPIC

Ethics, youthful well-being, self-determination

INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

Propose a guideline that states whether ethically sensitive issues related to individual self-determination (gay marriage, abortion, euthanasia) should have a common application to all members of European Union or if, otherwise, are part of decision-making autonomy of each member state. In the first case, define if such themes should be considered fundamental freedoms and human rights.

CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Different opinions and different thoughts emerged from a detailed analysis. The topic is very sensitive and lends itself to different interpretations, which in turn are related to the needs of the youth and the community of which they are a part. What has emerged is:

- Individual self-determination choices should be the same in the European Union;
- Different issues should be addressed on different levels;
- An unique agreement for the European Union is not the solution, since every country has its own cultures and religion;
- Each country needs to be autonomous on sensitive issues;
- These issues should be considered human rights for the European countries.

SOLUTION AND PROPOSAL



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The issue being addressed is cross-cutting and cannot be approached in a generic way, but requires an ad hoc approach. This proposal intends to the weaknesses and then arrive at the elaboration of a common approach where it is clear that:

- The heterogeneity between the European Members cannot asset at the same time the same ethical problem;
- The discussion at European level of this kind of topic will reveal which topics are and are not mature enough to be assessed at international level.

For those reasons we strong recommend if the topic is considered mature enough, to legislate at European level first, at national level otherwise.

CONCLUSION

Based on these considerations and the proposal developed, it is clear that the issue lends itself to different interpretations for which it is difficult to adopt a univocal solution and this shows how it's difficult to take a common decision for different kind of issues where:

- Some topics has to be discussed at local level;
- Ethic and the ways to approach it are different in each country;
- Different countries need different time to settle.



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A DIGITAL EUROPE FOR YOUTH WORKERS

TITLE

A digital Europe for youth workers

TOPIC

Digital innovation, digital skills, youth work

INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

Nowadays, the use of digital tools cannot be excluded from our lives. We live in a highly computerized society where even daily activities are carried out with the help of cell phones, tablets or laptops. Innovation plays an important role in the lives of people and it is strictly connected to active youth participation in terms of tools, methodologies, approaches.

CONTEXT ANALYSIS

A high level of digital literacy is fundamental in a world where so many services and opportunities are in digital form. Because of this the access to digital tools should be ensured to citizens so that economic status won't be an obstacle to online participation, on the other hand too much digitalization could be a problem for our social life and further marginalize those who still have no online access.

In this context Digital youth work is becoming a fundamental tool as young people spend a large part of their time using media content and technology; not by chance online platforms nowadays are usually the place where the biggest social movements are born (e.g. Twitter, Reddit).

SOLUTION AND PROPOSAL

The proposal developed are divided in two branches:



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DIGITAL KNOWLEDGE AND ACCESSIBILITY: A large percentage of young European people still lack basic digital skills. Access to the internet and social media in different EU countries for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds is still not guaranteed. This lack of knowledge and proper infrastructure leads to further marginalization, therefore Policy Makers should put great effort to decrease this "digital gap" so that every young person will be equally able to access accurate information and being able to properly participate and discuss social issues online.

Supporting digital youth work: It is essential for youth workers to develop proper digital and technological skills to continue supporting young people's inclusion into active citizenship and facilitating their personal growth. Policy Makers should integrate digital tools and methodologies into their own youth policies, largely invest in the creation of new ones and supporting initiatives that help to share knowledge about digital youth work best practices and their development.

CONCLUSION

The knowledge and skills needed by today's youth can and should be taught: studies and researches show how an average 17% of the students do not reach the lowest level of their scale and only a small 2% score at the highest level, which requires the application of critical thinking whilst searching for information online. This would seem to indicate the needs for young people to acquire the digital skills need in non-formal and informal environments without formal education and training.

Virtual environments will become more and more prominent in the future, to the point that they will be as equally important as their offline counterparts



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