



YOUTH FOR DEMOCRACY

MAGAZINE



SEPTEMBER 2019



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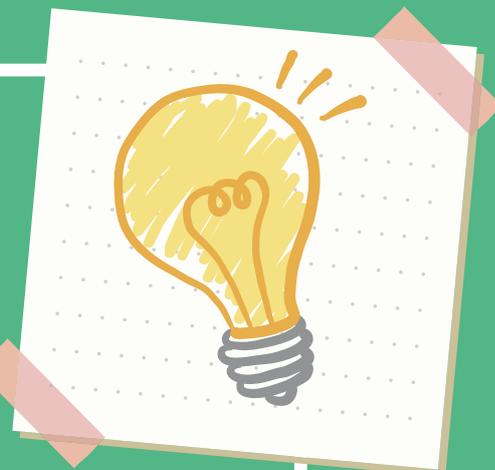
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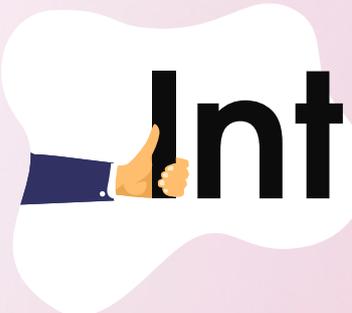
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Introduction

Since the Active Development Association ADA was established, one of its main objectives is promoting participatory democracy, youth participation and structured dialogue between young people and decision makers.

Therefore, through the second edition of our magazine, we wanted to bring in the spotlight projects and youth initiatives meant to create and to develop not only opportunities for young people, but also a sustainable community.

We invite you to learn how young people fight to raise awareness about climate change, through the Fridays for Future initiative, find out more about the first youth strategy of Prahova county or what “social work” means. Moreover, we are happy to share different ADA’s projects and initiatives in which young people with different backgrounds are involved in the community and in decision making.”

Bianca Cristina Butacu

Youth for Democracy coordinator





Interview

ABOUT SOCIAL WORK WITH EDUARD POOT

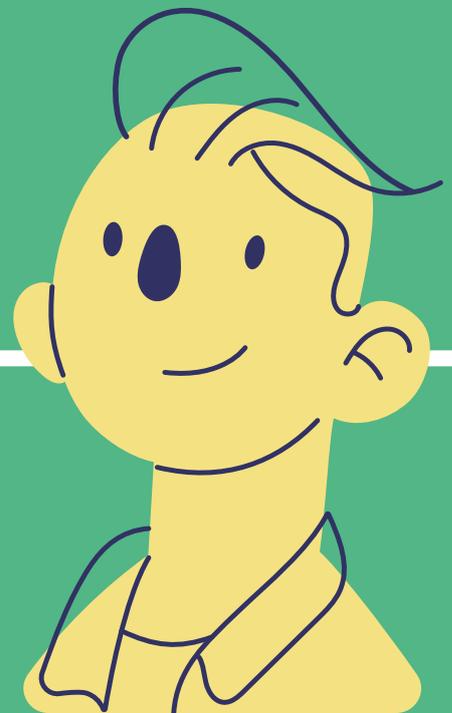
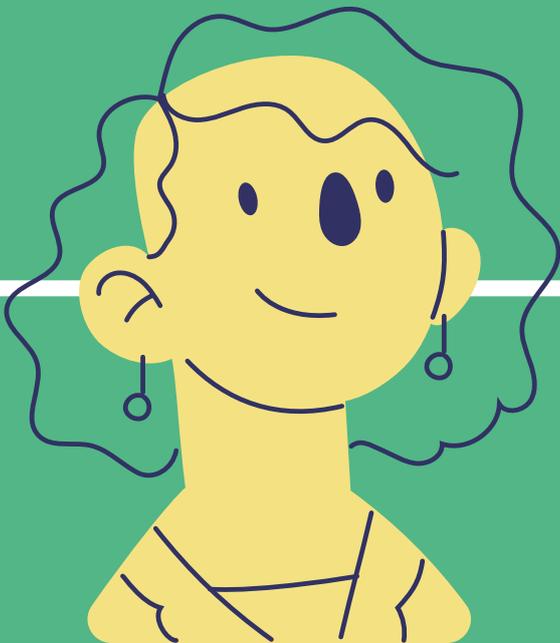
What can you tell us about you?

I was born and still live in a small city in the Netherlands called “Hattem”. My father has his own garden centre where you can often find me when I have some extra time for work. In 2017 I graduated in social work, since then I have been also working as a social worker. But I do not see myself only as a social worker. I believe it is good to do different jobs and see different environments. Besides being a social worker, I also like to do creating things or making things from scratch. For example, sometimes I write stories, actually I released my first book this year. I just like to find out new things and do things most people only think about.

What is social work and why did you choose this career path?

Well, “social work” is a very wide term. As a social worker, I could be working in prison, I could be working with old people, people with disabilities, children and everything in between it. You can help them in school, have a productive free time, learn or support them in their working place or in a housing project, where they live with people and a social worker, where newcomers are offered 24-hour per day support, helping with dealing with traumas or addictions.

The specific type of social work you do can be optimized by doing something you are good at, but also like doing.





Eduard is a young 28 year-old Dutch who not so long ago became a social worker in his hometown, Hattem.



Interview

ABOUT SOCIAL WORK WITH EDUARD POOT

In my case, I like doing things with my clients. Working in a garden, cooking food or going to the gym with youngsters. I also enjoy doing creative things, to show emotions in other ways, instead of talking about it, because this is hard for some people.

I started working when people with disabilities followed an internship at my father's garden center. They asked a lot of questions about life, most of them like talking a lot and have interesting stories. They asked questions not because I had the answers, but just to talk. So that was the moment when I started being interested in what I am doing today.

What can you tell us about your experience so far as a social worker? What exactly do you do and in what communities or with what kind of people do you work with?

I started with an internship at a housing group. It was not the best experience, since, most of the time, the young people were at school or work, so I could not do many things. Besides this internship, I also followed another special education.

After my studies, I worked with children (age 12-13) who were sent out of school because of bad behavior. This was an interesting experience, but it was also heavy in some points. The children were trying to manipulate me everyday, so I had to be very alert and careful with trusting them.

What can you tell us about the Dutch social working system?

I believe the Dutch social work is very well organised. There are a lot of opportunities to find the right activities and right social workers for people. The only bad thing is that a lot of young people can fall in a gap. After reaching the age of 18, they do not get help furthermore. Also the Government wants people with disabilities to move to the workforce, but the gap from a social working place to real work is too big a lot of times.

I also believe that the Netherlands can be too soft. Sometimes, it is a lot of pampering instead of motivation. I believe life is hard sometimes so you must beware not to make a person feel too comfortable to ask for constant help and support. So let them try things first before helping or doing everything for them.

Interview

ABOUT SOCIAL WORK WITH EDUARD POOT

Compared to other countries, I know that in some countries it is normal for a family to take care of the elders, such as grandmothers or grandfathers. In the Netherlands, most old people live in flats for old people. I do not know any Dutch people who live with their grandparents, or take a lot of care of them. So we pay for things that in the past we did by ourselves or organisations, like churches.

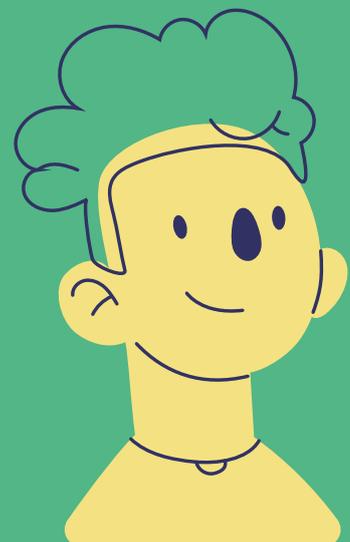
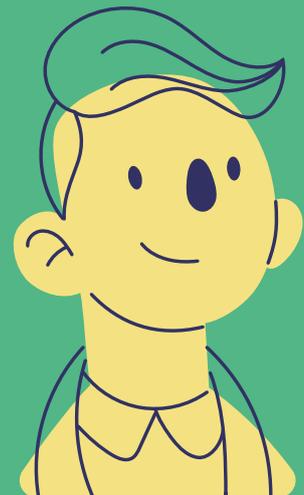
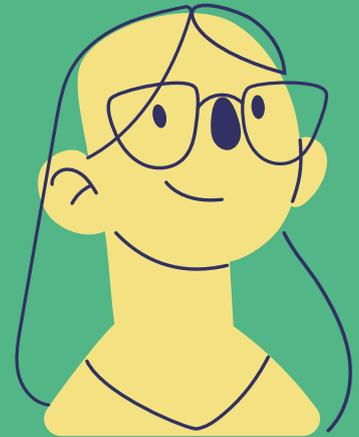
What do you think that people and communities can do to help vulnerable groups?

We can be more sociable. In the Netherlands a lot of old people feel lonely. They sometimes have a lot of cool stories. So young people might put their phones away and go grab a drink at their old neighbour. Maybe they can do little jobs for them, like cutting the gras.

Social work in the Netherlands is sometimes too focused on finances to really care about this idea of connecting different groups of people who can help each other.

My father, for example, hired a guy more than 20 years ago to work at his garden centre. This guy had cancer as a child and he can not do a lot of work. After his internship of special education, the social workers asked if he could stay with us, so they did not have to pay for a social workplace. He lives on welfare, but he is trying to come and work 4 days in the week.

Because of us his network is twice as big. He feels he is part of the team, even though sometimes people make fun of him. He is part of our company even when we can not expect him to work much or hard.





Festival

SASCUT YOUTH FEST





Festival

SASCUT YOUTH FEST

Young people, non-formal education and volunteering were celebrated on 24th and 25th of August 2019 during the first youth festival in Sascut: Sascut Youth Fest!

The event was organized by Active Development Association ADA, with the support of the Sascut Municipality, in the context of the project "Solidarity in Sascut 2019 – European Youth Village", funded by the European Union through the European Solidarity Corps.

In the two-day festival, in the central park from Sascut commune, various non-formal activities took place – Workshops organized by Active Development Association ADA, as well as partners from Bacau county, such as SAL-VET Vet Services, the Program for Young Writers NaNoWriMo, games and activities for kids and young people.

At the end of each day, cultural activities took place, prepared by the young people from the initiative group #Sascut2019 – European Youth Village, young people from Sascut, Delia Lupu, Anisia Colac, Lary, as well as young people from the Kids Palace Bacau and Cantissimo singing school.

"The festival took place in the context of the project Solidarity in Sascut 2019 – European Youth Village, an initiative of the young volunteers of the Sascut 2019 – European Youth Village program, who want to develop opportunities, learning contexts and cultural events for other young people in their community. Through Sascut Youth Fest we aimed to diversify the cultural events for young people in Sascut by organizing an Open Park type event, with cultural activities, and educational workshops both for young people and children in the community."

Victor-Cătălin Toma
President of Active Development Association ADA.



Festival

SASCUT YOUTH FEST

Through this project, ADA aims to:

- Increase the number of opportunities for participating in non-formal education activities for 200 young people aged between 13-30 years from Sascut.
- Fight against discrimination of young people with fewer opportunities from Sascut and promote European principles regarding non-discrimination, tolerance, active participation and cultural diversity among young people.
- Increase the number of young people that assume the European identity and role of European citizens through promoting and informative activities regarding: European Union, the rights, responsibilities and principles associated with the European citizen role, aspects regarding the European institutions and the benefices that the European Union brings to its citizens.
- Develop professional opportunities for young people in Sascut through implementing an orientation program on informing, and career counseling, with the support of the Technological High school „Jacques M. Elias” from Sascut.
- Diversify the cultural events in Sascut and involve 50 young people in organizing an Open Park event with cultural activities, educational workshops and sport activities.
- Involve young people and local authorities in elaborating Sascut’s Youth Strategy.

The project „Solidarity in Sascut 2019 – European Youth Village” is implemented by Active Development Association ADA between May 2019 – April 2020 through the European Solidarity Corps programme.





Festival

GHERĂIEȘTI PARK DAYS



Festival

GHERĂESTI PARK DAYS

From 2014 Active Development Association ADA started their mission as Heroes of Gherăesti Park, promoting the biological and leisure potential of the park in the local community and contributing to the diversification of the educational, cultural and sports activities, through the first open park type festival from Bacău: The Educational Festival „Zilele Parcului Gherăiesti”.





Festival

GHERĂIEȘTI PARK DAYS

The first edition of the educational festival „Zilele Parcului Gherăiești” took place in 2014, within the project „Împreună pentru Parcul Gherăiești”, implemented by ADA through the Youth in Action programme.

Through this project, ADA aimed to promote the leisure potential of Gherăiești Park in the local community, together with a healthy lifestyle among youth. Thus, one of the project’s activities was organizing the first open park type festival in Bacău county: The Educational Festival „Zilele Parcului Gherăiești”!

Year by year, ADA continues to promote the park in the community. With five years of successful editions and activities, they proved the sustainability and the strategic importance for moving volunteerism forward, and the importance of NGOs young people in Bacău county.

Every edition of the festival means work, organization and collaboration between a team of volunteers motivated to leave their mark in the community, NGOs and young people who believe in the Gherăiești Park’s magic and also the creation of new educational, sportive and cultural activities for the local community.

After five previous editions, ADA came up with a new concept for this year’s Gherăiești Park Days: TURN ON THE NATURE, starting from the idea of reconnection with nature and with Gherăiești Park, to bring people back in the park.

For the first time, the activities from the two festival days were split depending on age. Children and parents were expected in the first day, 31st August 2019, starting with 15:00 to various creative workshops, games, face painting and cultural activities (concerts, dances etc.), but also for the two races dedicated to children, for running and for bikes, which already became tradition at Gherăiești Park Days.

The second day, 1st September, also starting with 15:00, the young people were expected to participate not only at the workshops organized by the Bacău organizations, games, concerts and other artistic activities hosted by young people from Bacău, the two races (this time for those above 15 years old), but also a creative relaxing zone, where they were waited with hammocks, music, books and especially positive energy.





Festival

GHERĂIEȘTI PARK DAYS



Fridays for future



Fridays for future

August 2018: Greta Thunberg, famous for her activism on climate change, starts sitting in front of the Swedish government each school-day, for three weeks. This was a sign of protest against the lack of action against climate change.

After some weeks, she decided to continue the protest, known now as 'School Strike for the Climate', each Friday until the government decided to take action on climate change. Thus, a new movement raised around the world: FRIDAYS FOR FUTURE.

Young people from Romania did not miss the opportunity to make their voice heard and get involved in fighting against climate change. They ask the Government to take action so that our Planet's future is not compromised.

Therefore, young people from around the country joined the Fridays for Future movement, initiating Fridays for Future Romania. Their mission is to raise awareness and push the authorities into taking the necessary actions against climate change.

For the first time, the activities from the two festival days were split depending on age. Children and parents were expected in the first day, 31st August 2019, starting with 15:00 to various creative workshops, games, face painting and cultural activities (concerts, dances etc.), but also for the two races dedicated to children, for running and for bikes, which already became tradition at Gherăesti Park Days.





Fridays for future

The first Romanian Fridays for Future protest was held on March 8th 2019 by a handful of brave young people who took the initiative to bring this movement in Romania as well. They still continue the protests from University Square, Bucharest, standing up for what they believe in and showing solidarity with young people around the world who fight against climate change.

Therefore, the events from Romania start to become more and more visible, young people are now supported by important actors, from international known organizations, such as Greenpeace, to local NGOs which can have an impact on the local Romanian communities.

The climax of the Fridays for Future protests will be between 20th - 27th September 2019 when the Earth Strike takes place - a global event with local manifestations around the world.

“We want to be the link between science and civil society, we want to inform people about global warming, about its causes, and especially about its effects on the Planet we know today. We are a group of worried citizens who want to give a wake-up call and to determine the authorities to take concrete measurements for reducing the causes which brought us in this situation.”

GLOBAL CLIMATE STRIKE

Earth Strike Week takes place at the same time with the United Nations Climate Change Summit 2019. Anyone can join the strike and protests, from young people to the elderly, NGOs, schools or other institutions!

The objective of the events taking place between 20th - 27th September is to show the Government that those involved in the strike want to see a change in the authorities' role in fighting the climate change. Moreover, the Fridays for Future Romania initiators will ask for declaring a climate state emergency in Romania.

The Strike Week in Romania was promoted by Greenpeace Romania, Declic, Dex online, Girl up Romania and many other local organizations and young activists who believe that it is high time we took action for saving our Planet.





Youth policies

PRAHOVA'S COUNTY FIRST YOUTH STRATEGY

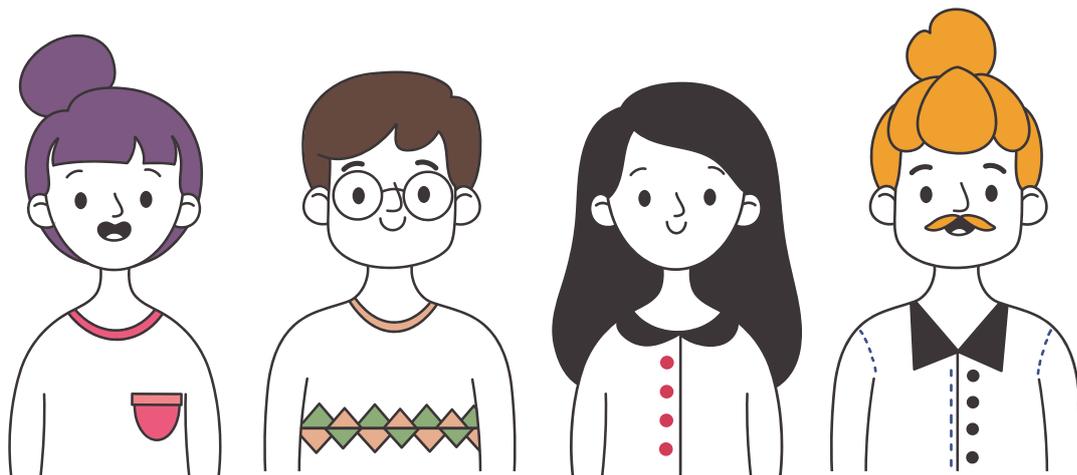


Youth policies

PRAHOVA'S COUNTY FIRST YOUTH STRATEGY

Prahova county will have its first youth strategy with the help of Ares'el Association. Between February 2019 - September 2020, Ares'el Association implements the "TinPrahova" project with the support of the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union, through which they will elaborate the youth strategy of Prahova.

Within one year, young people from Prahova and relevant actors in the youth field, especially decision makers responsible for developing youth policies at local and county level, will collaborate in order to elaborate the young strategy.



"The project supports and facilitates the participation of civic society and NGOs in developing youth policies, promoting youth participation in structured dialogue and sharing good practice examples between NGOs, institutions and public authorities from around the county. But, most importantly, through this project we will elaborate the Youth Strategy of Prahova and we will contribute to the strategic development of the youth sector from Prahova."

Victor Catalin Toma, project's trainer

Youth policies

PRAHOVA'S COUNTY FIRST YOUTH STRATEGY

A series of activities are organized within the project, starting with 13 consultations with young people from both urban, and rural areas. The consultations' results will eventually be used during the youth county level seminar, when the first draft of the strategy will be elaborated. The project's last step will be a public debate on the strategy, which will eventually be submitted to the County Council for approval.



"Prahova does not have a youth strategy, and the county policies which focus in a way or another on young people are not well defined and concentrated on the real needs of the youth. Furthermore, at institutional level, the communication between young people, NGOs, institutions and public authorities is poor.

Youth participation in the democratic life is a key in sustainable development. From our experiences, we were able to notice that young people from Prahova face issues when it comes to trust given by authorities, but also by the community.

We hope that through the Youth Strategy we can shrink this gap between the young people and authorities, and create a partnership between them to develop a community which has a clear view on the youth sector."

Cristina Lunca, president of Ares'el Association



Youth policies

BEST PRACTICES IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION
STRUCTURED DIALOGUE SUPPORT GROUP



Active Development Association ADA prepares six intervention plans for young people with fewer opportunities from Bacau County in the context of the project „Structured Dialogue Support Group – Inclusive Policies and Strategies for young people with fewer opportunities from Bacau County”





Youth policies

BEST PRACTICES IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION STRUCTURED DIALOGUE SUPPORT GROUP

ADA proves the sustainability of its implemented projects through a new edition of the „Structured Dialog Support Group“ project. This time, together young people and representatives of local authorities from Bacau county, ADA will work on the problems and needs of young people with fewer opportunities from Bacau county in order to elaborate the first intervention plans in six key domains: Education, Professional development, Culture and Arts, Sport and Health, Volunteering and Social Inclusion.

Starting with 2015, ADA activities started to focus more and more on young people with fewer opportunities, especially young people from rural areas. That is how Structured Dialogue Support Group _ Support for Bacau's Youth initiatives, implemented between August 2016 - October 2017, came to be. The first edition of the project included a series of consultations with young people with fewer opportunities regarding their needs of information, training and support for active participation in democratic life, identifying a series of problems and needs in the domains: : Education, Professional development, Culture , Sport and Health, Volunteering and personal development and Social.

The final result of the project was a county level strategy to promote active participation of young people with fewer opportunities in structured dialogue.

Through the organized activities and necessary resources to approach the topic of the project, the conclusion was that county level policies do not take into consideration, or do so only briefly, young people with fewer opportunities and their specific situation. Their needs and problems aren't clearly identified and the last study regarding young people with fewer opportunities, especially those from rural areas, was made more than 5 years ago.

Identifying these lacks and problems lead to continuing the project through Structured Dialogue Support Group - Inclusive Policies and Strategies for young people with fewer opportunities in Bacau County.



Youth policies

BEST PRACTICES IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION
STRUCTURED DIALOGUE SUPPORT GROUP

In this way, the project's main objectives are:

To raise with 50% the decision makers' awareness rate upon the young people with fewer opportunities from Bacau County's problems and needs in the 6 key fields targeted by the project, by involving 340 young people with fewer opportunities and the decision makers in assessing the situation.

To improve minimum 50% of Bacau County's existing policies and strategies (regarding the young people and the 6 key fields) by taking into consideration the 8 quality standards in youth policies developed by the European Youth Forum, but also the young people with fewer opportunities' needs and problems.

To address at least 75% of the specific needs and problems of young people with fewer opportunities from Bacau County (identified in the 6 key areas) within 6 intervention plans (1 plan / domain) for their strategic resolution in 5 years, by facilitating the participation of 340 young people with fewer opportunities in the structured dialogue with decision-makers and other relevant stakeholders for each field.

The project's main beneficiary are 340 young people with fewer opportunities from Bacau County.

Thus, the second edition of the project represents an intervention on the policies and strategies at county level that aims at the problems and needs of young people with fewer opportunities by creating 6 clear plans in concrete key domains: Education, Professional development, Culture and Arts, Sport and Health, Volunteering and Social Inclusion.



Youth policies

BEST PRACTICES IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION
STRUCTURED DIALOGUE SUPPORT GROUP

The project's flow:

The project started with a series of consultations with young people with fewer opportunities from Bacău, Onesti, Comănești, Podu Turcului, Buhusi and Sascut.

During the consultations, the existent policies and strategies at county level regarding young people with fewer opportunities were debated on the way those plans reflect reality and the problems and needs of young people with fewer opportunities in the local communities.

Between July 2019 and January 2020 there were organized the #YOUTHPlan Bacau seminars where young people and decision makers developed the intervention plans in the 6 key domains addressed by the project: Education, Professional development, Culture and Arts, Sport and Health, Volunteering and Social Inclusion.

In the spring of 2020 public debates on the 6 plans will take place, during a County level Youth Seminar. At the end of the seminary a gala will take place to recognize the merits and work of those involved in the project.

The most evident impact of the project will be seen in the situation it is based on: the problems and needs of young people with fewer opportunities will be better understood and included in the 6 intervention plans to resolve them strategically.



Youth policies

BEST PRACTICES IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION
#YOUTHPLANBACĂU

What are the #YOUTHPLANBACĂU seminars?

As previously mentioned, between July and October 2019 ADA held the six #YOUthPlan Bacau workshops for elaborating the intervention plans in the domains of: Education, Professional Development, Culture and Arts, Sport and Health, Volunteering and Discrimination and Social Inclusion.

Each workshop approaches one domain, the young participants working together to develop an intervention plan at county level to support young people with fewer opportunities and/or special needs in Bacau County.

The workshops are created as a space for the youth from Bacau County who believe in equal chances, rights and opportunities for all youth, no matter background or special needs.

Young people have the opportunity to better understand and deepen their knowledge regarding the problems and challenges of young people from Bacau County, especially those with fewer opportunities and/or special needs addressed in each workshop. For a week, participants work together on a specific domain to transform their ideas in action plans.

The first four workshops took place in the following periods: 15th - 20th of July, 22nd - 27th of July,

29th of July - 3rd of August and 5th - 10th of August. During these periods, the problems and needs in the domains of Education, Professional Development, Culture and Art and Sport and Health had been addressed.

The next two workshops, on the topic of Volunteering and Discrimination and Social Inclusion, took place in December 2019 and January 2020.



Youth policies

BEST PRACTICES IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION
#YOUTHPLANBACĂU



In the actual context, in this depressive, chaotic and exacerbated movie of everyday life, participating in the workshop from the 29th of July to the 3rd of August was like a breath of fresh air, an emotional, social, intellectual and physical refresh. The implementation of the „Structured Dialogue Support Group – Inclusive Policies and Strategies for young people with fewer opportunities in Bacau County” by Active Development Association ADA had a positive impact among the younger generation.

Therefore, during the workshop, participants managed to develop their critical thinking, creative side, as well as communication, teamwork and opinion-forming skills, in regards to various topics and situations that have been addressed.

Through interactive games, based on non-formal methods used by trainers, we managed to assimilate new terms and information so that to facilitate their practical use in our lives. From perceiving of the “Youth Policy” notion and fully understanding the needs of young people with fewer opportunities from rural areas, to assuming the role of “European citizen” and promoting the culture of minorities through tools developed by participants, the whole workshop represented a base for culture in the hearts of each young person present in this week activities.

I believe that through sustained effort, involvement and young people's wish to be active citizens in their communities we will manage to successfully implement most of the projects proposed during work sessions.

Mădălina Andreea Miron, participant



Youth policies

BEST PRACTICES IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION
STRUCTURED DIALOGUE SUPPORT GROUP





PROJECT'S UPDATES

MAY 2019 | THE CAMPAIGN ON THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS 2019

In May, we continued our campaign on informing young people about the European Elections which took place on 26 May 2019, with other six activities organized in Comănești, Podu Turcului, Dărmănești, Sascut and two in Bacău.

Thus, the Youth for Democracy team managed to reach five cities in less than a month.

„Through the campaign we conducted we planned to inform the young people from Bacău county about the electoral system and the European elections from 26 May 2019, so that they can realize the importance of voting.

Within the 11 activities which took place until 26 May we approached themes such as participatory democracy, the importance of civic involvement and going to vote, as well as the functioning system of European Union.

The European elections from this year had the biggest presence rate, both at the European Union and Romania level, being also valid in the case of young people's turnout. We are certain that this wouldn't had happened without the initiatives and the campaigns from different NGOs, institutions or initiative groups, which had the same goal: promoting participatory democracy and the active involvement of young people in the community.”

Bianca Cristina Butacu, project's manager





PROJECT'S UPDATES

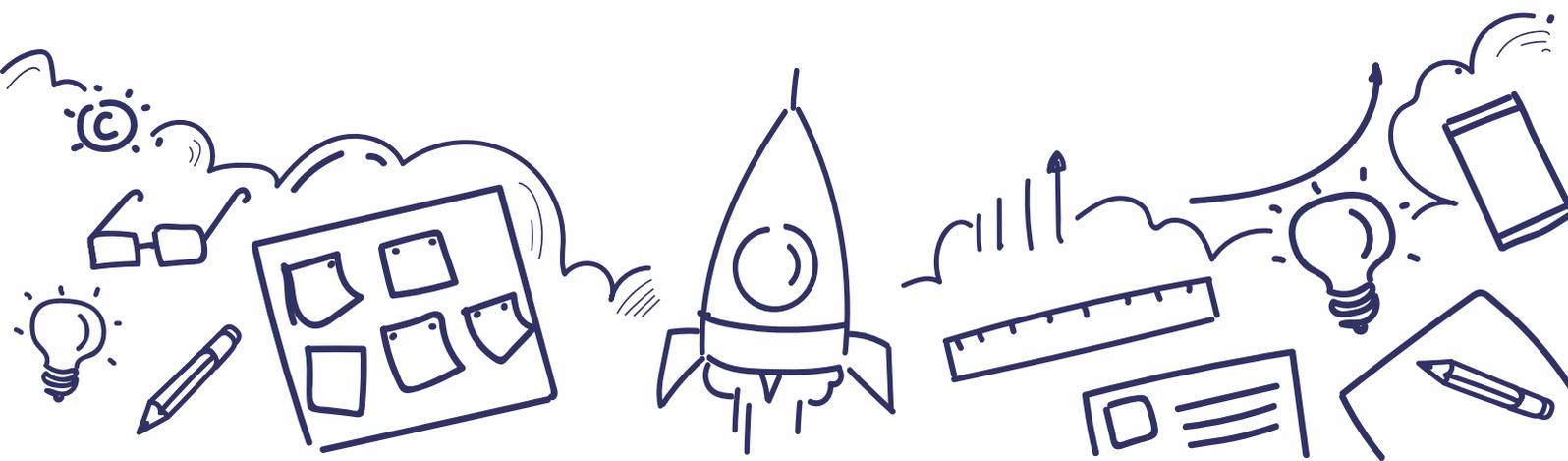
JULY & AUGUST 2019 | EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT SIMULATIONS

The most recent activities within the “Youth for Democracy” project took place between July - August, when we organized five European Parliament simulations in Bacău city. Young people from Bacău county, curious about the way of operation and the role of European Union’s institutions, were able to participate in these activities, through which they had the chance to experiment how the European Parliament really is.

The European Parliament simulations took place on 20 and 27 July; 03, 10 and 21 August. The first four activities were simulations of European Parliament’s commissions, activities through which the young people have discovered how the European Parliament works and how it works with their members in the specialized commissions. Each activity approached different domains, which have an impact towards european young people too.

The domains and subjects discussed within the work commission simulations of the European Parliament were: The sum of children’s allowance & voting at the age of 16 (Education); Youth guarantee & Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs (Self-development); Creative Europe (Culture and art); European health framework & the EU Olympic team (Sports and health).

The results of the first four activities were presented and debated on 21 August 2019, within a simulated plenary sitting of the European Parliament - the highlight of the institution’s activity. Within the simulated plenary sitting, the participants have taken on the role of European parliamentarians and, split into political groups within the European Parliament, debated and voted the proposals prepared within the first four activities.





VOTE



TESTIMONIALS

THE AWARENESS AND PROMOTION CAMPAIGN

”

"The activity from the 21st May had a pretty big impact on me. The level of information given in an attractive way was real and balanced. The subject, based on the European institutions, facilitated the understanding of the activity. Therefore, it was quite easy to understand the activity and I truly think that more projects like this one should take place."

Alexandru, Bacău

„The way through which the project and information about the European Union were presented made me pay attention and eager to get involved as much as possible in the activity. I hope to participate in more projects like this one. It would help me a lot!”

Giulia, Podu Turcului

„The activity was extraordinary! I met great people, who taught me important things which will help me. What I liked the most about this activity was the way we learnt things through games. I loved that we learnt about the European Parliament in a simple and interactive way.”

Mihaela, Podu Turcului.

”



TESTIMONIALS

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT SIMULATIONS

”

„Through this simulations I discovered the way the European Parliament works, its structure and its decision-making process. It was an unique experience for me, because I succeeded in experimenting these activities. I even had the chance to be an European commissioner and «play» with the laws which decide EU citizens' future. If I had the chance to repeat this experience, I would do it immediately. Moreover, I want to give this opportunity to as many young people as possible.“

Teodor, Onesti

„In my opinion, these European Parliament simulations offered me and the other participants the chance to analyze certain European issues beyond the «We should do...». Together we looked for answers to the question «Is it possible?» and faced different opinions. In this way, we experienced hands on the difficulty in the EP's decision-making process and the many factors which influence it.“

Alexandra, Bacău

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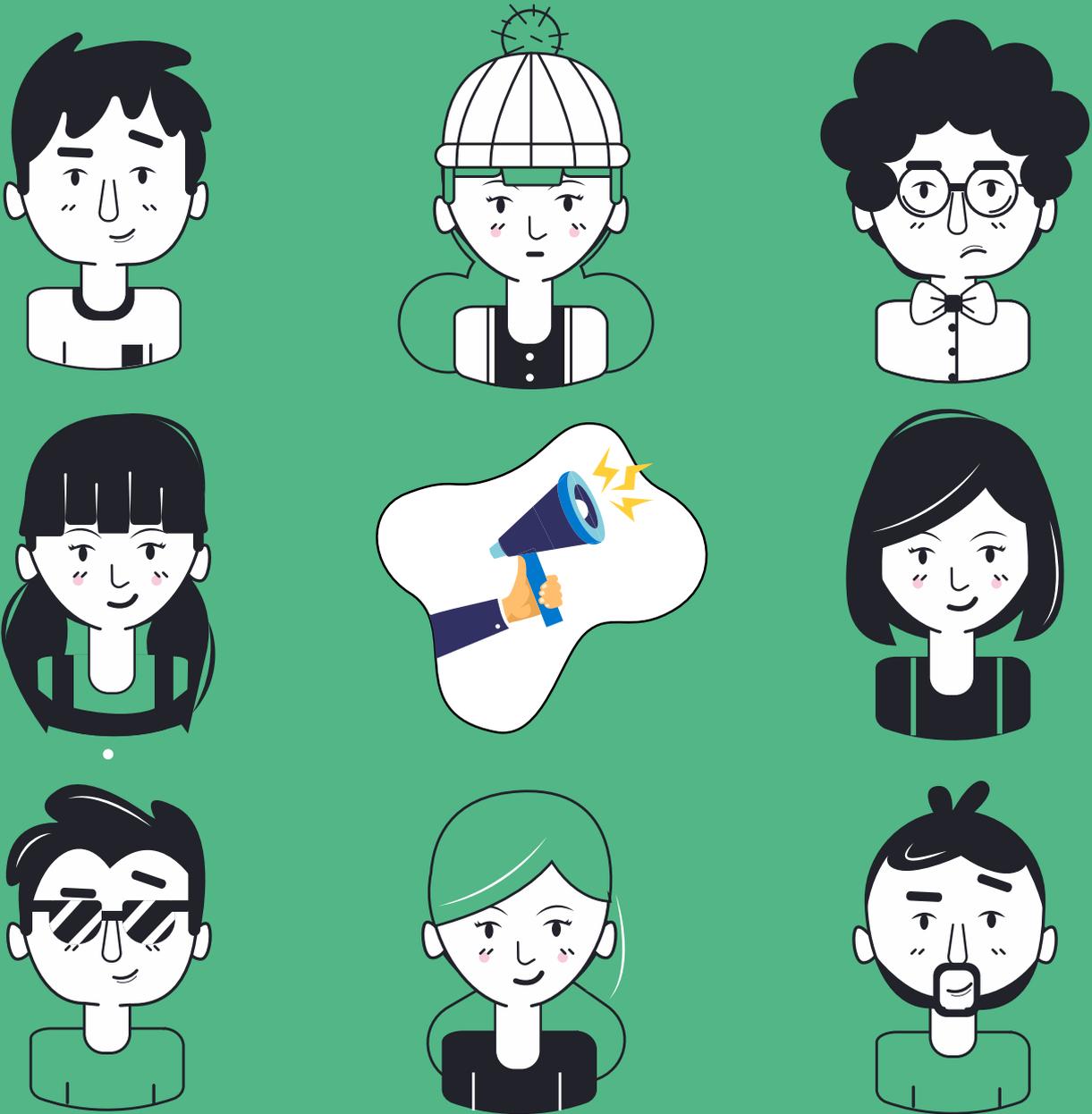
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YOUTH FOR
DEMOCRACY



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