

# Fostering youth participation through cross-sectoral practices

## **New Power in Youth Study**

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# Executive Summary

This report analyses the key trends, challenges, and best practices in cross-sectoral projects spanning Youth + School Education, Youth + Adult Education, and Youth + Vocational Education. The findings provide insights into how education systems and youth organisations collaborate to enhance participation, skill development, and community impact. The conclusions and recommendations section further identifies the characteristics of good practices and offers recommendations for replication to strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation.

In the first chapter, the mapping identified key trends and challenges in cross-sectoral education projects. In the Youth + School Education domain, several key trends emerged. Many projects focused on integrating participatory approaches within school curricula, linking classroom learning with real-world applications. Projects such as *Participatory Budgeting in Schools* provided students with tangible experiences in decision-making by allowing them to vote on school budget allocations. Another major trend was ensuring the inclusion of disadvantaged groups, with initiatives such as *Democratic Vaccination* expanding debate clubs in vocational schools to promote democratic engagement among underprivileged students. Digital tools were also widely used to increase accessibility, as seen in the *On the Way to Parliament* project, which used interactive debate platforms and live-streamed discussions to connect students with policymakers. Many projects also successfully combined formal and non-formal learning, integrating storytelling, role-playing, and simulations to enhance engagement.

Despite these successes, several challenges persisted. Schools often resisted non-formal methods due to rigid curricula and assessment-driven education systems. This issue was addressed in *On the Way to Parliament*, where debate activities were scheduled outside regular school hours to accommodate academic commitments. Varying digital competencies among students also posed

difficulties in projects that relied on online tools, as seen in *Participatory Budgeting*, where basic digital literacy training was introduced to ensure equitable participation. Maintaining engagement throughout long-term initiatives was another concern, requiring interactive learning methods and incentives. Additionally, schools struggled to balance ambitious projects with resource constraints, leading to the need for clear budget guidelines. Lastly, ensuring inclusivity across diverse student groups required tailored communication strategies and mentorship support.

In the Youth + Adult and Vocational Education sectors, projects emphasised empowerment through co-creation. In *NEETs for NEETs*, young people took on the role of peer mentors, delivering workshops on employability and leadership (NEET = young people Not in Employment Education or Training). Capacity-building for educators and youth was another major focus, as seen in the *TUTOR* project, which provided teacher training on inclusivity. Policy integration and advocacy also played a significant role, with projects such as the *Algarve Regional Youth Action Plan*, involving youth in shaping regional policies. Furthermore, non-formal education methods, including forum theatre and digital gamification, were used extensively to foster engagement, as seen in *Brave New YOU*.

Challenges in adult and vocational education projects included sustaining engagement beyond the initial project phase, which was particularly difficult for NEET participants. *NEETs for NEETs* responded by developing alumni mentoring networks to maintain involvement. Institutional resistance to non-formal learning was another hurdle, especially in traditional teacher training environments, as experienced in *TUTOR*, where role-playing exercises were initially met with scepticism. Finally, scaling initiatives across policy contexts posed difficulties, requiring the adaptation of project methodologies to regional variations, as demonstrated in *Brave New YOU*.



In the second chapter, the mapping identified non-formal education methods in cross-sectoral projects. Across all domains, non-formal education (NFE) methods were instrumental in fostering engagement and skill-building. Structured dialogue and participatory decision-making were used in projects such as the [Algarve Regional Youth Action Plan](#), where youth engaged directly with policymakers. Experiential learning was central to initiatives such as [NEETs for NEETs](#), where young people learned by leading training sessions. Peer learning and mentorship proved effective in the [Model European Parliament](#), where senior students mentored newcomers in debate procedures. Role-playing and simulation games were key to the [Democratic Vaccination](#) project, enhancing students' understanding of democratic processes. Workshops and training sessions provided targeted learning opportunities, as seen in [TUTOR](#), where teachers received inclusive education training. Digital and blended learning models, such as Gather Town's virtual youth exchanges in [Brave New YOU](#), broadened accessibility. Artistic and creative methods, including storytelling and visual arts, were used in [Brave New YOU](#) and Great Minds Meeting. Youth-led campaigns and community engagement empowered participants in the [European Youth & Sport Platform](#), while outdoor and experiential leadership training fostered personal growth in the PEACE Programme.

The third chapter of the mapping assesses the criteria for best practices and the recommendations for replication. The assessment highlighted five core characteristics of good cross-sectoral projects: multi-sector collaboration, integration of formal and informal education, stakeholder engagement, inclusion of vulnerable groups, and long-term democratic impact. Projects that successfully combined these elements, such as [Democratic Vaccination](#) and [Brave New YOU](#), demonstrated significant long-term benefits for youth engagement.

To ensure sustainable replication, the report outlines nine key recommendations. Youth participation and leadership development should be prioritised, involving young people in co-creating materials and leading initiatives. Cross-sectoral and institutional collaboration should be strengthened by engaging policymakers and forming robust partnerships across sectors. Inclusive and equitable

learning environments must be ensured by removing barriers to participation and providing tailored support. Flexible and adaptable learning approaches should be adopted to accommodate different learning needs and schedules. Integration with formal education should be reinforced through structured engagement models that link participation to academic credit and teacher training networks.

Digital innovation and engagement must be leveraged to increase accessibility, utilising online tools and gamification techniques. Sustainable and impactful implementation requires long-term policy alignment, monitoring mechanisms, and adaptable frameworks. Real-world application and community impact should remain a priority, ensuring that youth-led initiatives result in tangible societal improvements. Lastly, skill development and employability should be embedded in project designs, offering mentorship, hands-on experiences, and pathways to professional growth.

**By integrating these best practices, cross-sectoral projects can strengthen youth participation, enhance learning outcomes, and drive meaningful social change, ensuring that young people are empowered as active citizens in education, employment, and community life.**



# 1. Introduction

This report is produced as a result of mapping activity within the framework of the New Power in Youth Strategic Partnership (NPIY SNAC) and provides an analysis of 18 cross-sectoral projects in the domains of Youth + School Education, Youth + Adult Education, and Youth + Vocational Education.

The purpose of this analysis is to identify key trends, challenges, and best practices in the different types of partnerships and provide recommendations for replication as a cross-sectoral practice. The projects reviewed highlight innovative approaches to integrating youth participation in various educational contexts, aiming to foster collaboration, inclusivity, and capacity-building.

## Context

New Power in Youth SNAC is a Strategic Partnership between nine National Agencies for Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps and three SALTO Resource Centres with the aim of fostering youth participation in democratic life. The international activity is part of Work Package 3, focused on supporting cross-sectoral cooperation by creating the space for:

- partnership and capacity-building activities between professionals working in non-formal and formal education sectors to support youth participation in democratic life at national and transnational levels; and
- mapping, developing, and piloting the concepts of and approaches to youth participation in democratic life in cross-sectoral partnerships.

The basis of this report is the [Report](#) and the [Analytical Paper 'Youth Participation and Citizenship Education: A Cross-sectoral Perspective'](#) produced in the context of the Cross-Sectoral Forum on Youth Participation in Democratic Life in 2023. It provided the main insights of the event and the recommendations addressed to all stakeholders interested in advancing cross-sectoral cooperation that fosters youth participation.

## Main aim of mapping

The mapping initiative aimed at collecting, identifying, and analysing the projects done in cross-sectoral partnerships across Europe.

The mapping specifically focused on the practices/projects that:

- have been done in collaboration between the non-formal Youth sector and one (or more) of the four formal education sectors: School Education, Higher Education, Adult Education, and Vocational Education;
- have as target groups either young people or professionals working with young people (e.g. capacity-building opportunities for teachers/educators and youth workers to foster youth participation in democratic life);
- stimulate and promote youth participation in democratic life, addressing the way young people behave and interact with democracy;
- feature inspiring methods, such as experiential learning methods, also referred to as non-formal or alternative educational methods; and
- have the potential to be replicated with necessary alterations.

## Methodology

The implementation of the mapping activity included three stages: designing and disseminating the survey and its accompanying guidelines, collecting data and additional research to complement the information received, and analysing all the information collected through the mapping process.

The practices were collected through a [survey form](#) from June to December 2024. To aid the process of mapping, the survey was accompanied by a [Guidelines](#) document. Both the survey and the Guidelines were developed based on input and inspiration from the [Flagship projects collection](#) developed by SALTO PI and the [Analytical Paper](#) produced for NPIY, which explores the understanding and definitions of youth participation in the formal and non-formal sectors.

The preliminary results of the mapping were announced along with a discussion of two project cases at the SALTO Participation and Information [Participation Forum](#) in November 2024 in Tallinn, Estonia.

The final stage of the mapping included:

- 1) organising and clarifying the collected data into individual project summaries that are included in the annex;
- 2) using the project data to produce the findings, including by identifying key trends, challenges, and solutions, and outline the main types of practices in cross-sectoral collaboration; and
- 3) analysing the project data to produce the characteristics of good practice in cross-sectoral projects and using the projects' recommendations for replication to create clusters of recommendations, thus identifying the main themes.

# 2. Main Findings

This section of the report features the main findings by outlining and providing project examples of the following:

## 2.1. Youth + School Education Projects

### 2.1.1. Key Trends



#### 1. Integration with the school curriculum

Many projects focus on embedding participatory approaches within formal education structures to enhance civic engagement and democratic participation among students.

**Example:** The *Participatory Budgeting in Schools* project enabled students to engage in real decision-making by voting on how a portion of their school's budget should be allocated. Activities included idea development workshops, student-led campaigns, and digital voting using Estonia's digital ID system.



#### 3. Inclusion of disadvantaged groups

Several projects prioritised the inclusion of students from marginalised communities through structured mentorship and targeted engagement strategies.

**Example:** The *Democratic Vaccination* project expanded debate clubs to vocational schools, where students from underprivileged backgrounds engaged in structured deliberations with school leaders and local policymakers, fostering democratic competencies.



#### 4. Use of digital tools

Online platforms are increasingly utilised for student participation in democratic processes, enabling broader accessibility.

**Example:** The *On the Way to Parliament* project used digital tools such as interactive debate platforms and live-streamed policy discussions, allowing students to interact with decision-makers remotely.

**Example:** The *Participatory Budgeting in Schools* project integrated online voting systems to enable students to decide on school budget allocations, ensuring wider participation.



#### 2. Focus on tangible impact

Schools implement hands-on decision-making exercises to foster civic responsibility and leadership among students.

**Example:** The *Model European Parliament* project simulated European Parliament proceedings, where students took on roles as MEPs, drafted resolutions, and debated policy issues.

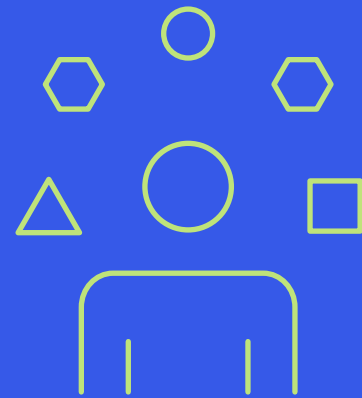


#### 5. Combining formal and non-formal learning

Many projects integrated experiential learning techniques such as role-playing, storytelling, and simulation exercises.

**Example:** The *Model European Parliament* project incorporated simulation-based debates, enabling students to understand policymaking processes in a practical way.

## 2.1.2. Challenges and Solutions



This subchapter of the report must be introduced with an acknowledgement of the fact that it is largely based on the challenges presented in a few projects, since the data available for research has been uneven.

There is an opinion in the expert community that the major challenge in cross-sectoral projects is the lack of them, which is underpinned by the **unawareness of both sides (youth and education) of why we should cooperate in the first place**. Organisations in both sectors are sometimes unaware of the benefits of cooperation (a holistic view of young people and their civic competencies development) and may be reluctant to search for suitable opportunities.

Another major shortcoming experts identify is the **lack of co-management or power-sharing structures**. Often, organisations may not consider this a challenge, but in the context of youth participation, it actually is a struggle. To overcome it, projects such as Brave New YOU emphasise the clear distribution of responsibilities between the partners based on their specific strengths: 'From the very beginning the workload was clearly divided based on the level of work – YEU and OBESSU were working at the European level (with YEU collaborating with Rainbow House Brussels on local activities), while other partners were working at the local level directly with young people. The COVID-19 pandemic caused major disruptions in the work at the local level, but with additional efforts, partners managed to finalise their work and have groups of young people at all of the events successfully.'

Other challenges identified during the mapping are as follows:

### 1. Resistance to integrating non-formal methods within rigid school structures

Schools often struggle to incorporate participatory approaches due to strict curricula and assessment-focused education systems.

**Solution:** In the *On the Way to Parliament* project, schools found it difficult to allocate time for debate activities within packed academic schedules, leading to after-school sessions instead.

### 2. Varying digital competency

Not all students have equal digital skills, which affect their ability to use online voting platforms and digital campaign tools.

**Solution:** To address this, in the *Participatory Budgeting* project, schools provided basic digital training, ensuring that all students could participate effectively in the process.

### 3. Maintaining engagement

Sustaining student interest from brainstorming through implementation proved challenging, particularly in the campaigning phase.

**Solution:** In the *Participatory Budgeting* project, schools responded by making each phase more interactive and connecting PB activities to graded assignments or class discussions, motivating students to stay involved.

### 4. Balancing resources with ambition

Schools needed to balance student expectations with realistic budget constraints. Smaller budgets may limit the scope of projects, while larger budgets often require careful oversight.

**Solution:** In the *Participatory Budgeting* project, schools addressed this by setting clear budget guidelines and supporting students in planning within realistic limits.

### 5. Ensuring inclusivity

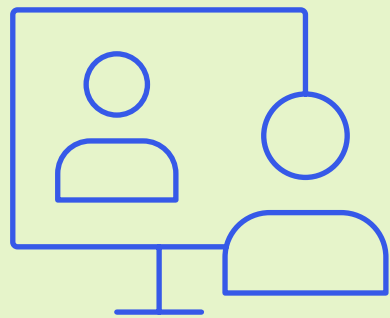
When planning a project that involves young people from different age groups, organisers must be aware that some groups may need more adaptation and support than others. The levels of their contributions may vary dramatically, and yet they must be given sufficient support, attention, and visibility.

**Solution:** In the *Participatory Budgeting* project, engaging younger students proved challenging. Schools adjusted the language and structure of PB phases to suit younger age groups, making processes more accessible and bringing in mentors to help younger students.

# Key trends and challenges in the Youth + School Education domain:

## TRENDS:

- Integration with the school curriculum
- Focus on tangible impact
- Inclusion of disadvantaged groups
- Use of digital tools
- Combining formal and non-formal learning



## CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS:

- Resistance to integrating non-formal methods within rigid school structures
- Varying digital competency
- Maintaining engagement
- Balancing resources with ambition
- Ensuring inclusivity



## 2.2. Youth + Adult / Vocational Education Projects

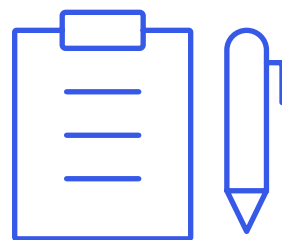
### 2.2.1. Key Trends



#### 1. Empowerment through co-creation

Projects engaged NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) in designing and leading initiatives, ensuring their direct involvement in decision-making.

**Example:** *The NEETs for NEETs* project trained young people as peer mentors, who then facilitated empowerment workshops on self-confidence, employability skills, and community leadership. *The Brave New YOU* project supported youth in developing community-led initiatives that tackled social exclusion through advocacy campaigns and storytelling projects.



#### 3. Policy integration and advocacy

Several projects contributed to regional and national youth policies by engaging stakeholders in policy discussions.

**Example:** *The Algarve Regional Youth Action Plan* project included youth consultations, where young people assisted in drafting policy recommendations that were later presented to local and national government bodies.

**Example:** *The NEETs for NEETs* project engaged young people in shaping employment policies by conducting policy forums with government representatives.



#### 4. Use of non-formal learning methods

Projects incorporated participatory learning methods such as Forum Theatre, storytelling, and gamified digital learning.

**Example:** *The TUTOR* project used simulation-based learning and role-playing exercises to train teachers in inclusivity practices.

**Example:** *The Brave New YOU* project applied Forum Theatre techniques, allowing young people to enact and challenge discriminatory narratives in a safe, interactive environment.



#### 2. Capacity-building for educators and youth

Adult educators received training alongside youth participants, ensuring that both groups gained the necessary skills to foster inclusive education.

**Example:** In the *Brave New YOU* project, youth workers and educators collaborated in training sessions that focused on dismantling harmful narratives and promoting inclusion through intercultural dialogue workshops. *The TUTOR* project developed a specialised teacher training programme on inclusivity, equipping educators with tools to support diverse student populations.



#### 5. Use of digital tools

Online platforms are increasingly utilised for student participation in democratic processes, enabling broader accessibility.

**Example:** *The Brave New YOU* project leveraged gamified virtual youth exchanges through *Gather.Town*, creating an interactive digital space where young people could discuss strategies to counter hate speech and exclusion.

## 2.2.2. Challenges and Solutions

Other challenges identified during the mapping are as follows:



### 1. Sustaining engagement of adult learners and educators beyond the initial project

**Example:** The *NEETs for NEETs* project faced difficulties in maintaining long-term engagement with NEETs after the formal training ended. The project developed alumni mentoring networks to sustain involvement.



### 2. Overcoming institutional resistance to non-formal educational methods

**Example:** The *TUTOR* project encountered resistance from traditional educators in integrating role-playing exercises and digital tools into formal teacher training.



### 3. Scaling successful initiatives across geographic and policy contexts

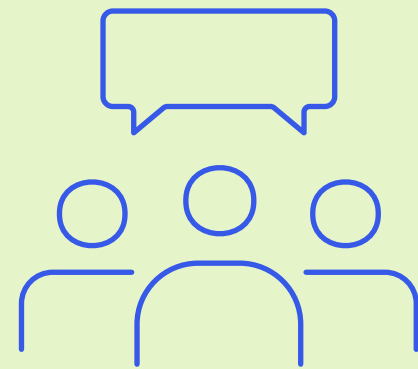
**Example:** The *Brave New YOU* project had to adapt its methodologies when implementing activities in regions with vastly different socio-political landscapes.



# Key trends and challenges in the Youth + Adult Education and Youth + Vocational Education domains:

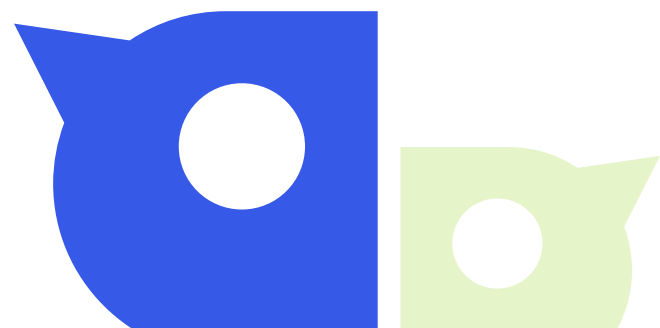
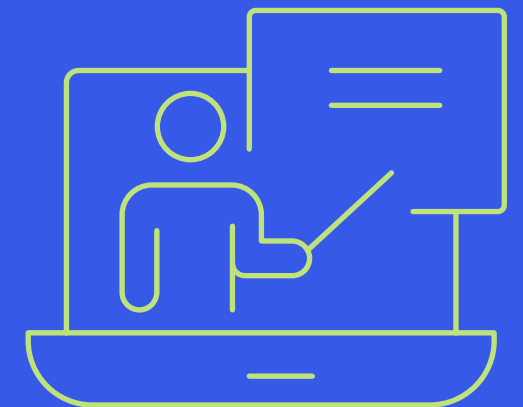
## TRENDS:

- Empowerment through co-creation
- Capacity-building for educators and youth
- Policy integration and advocacy
- Use of non-formal learning methods
- Use of digital tools



## CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS:

- Sustaining the engagement of adult learners and educators beyond the initial project
- Overcoming institutional resistance to non-formal educational methods
- Scaling successful initiatives across geographic and policy contexts



## 2.3. Key Types of Non-Formal Education Methods Implemented in Cross-Sectoral Projects

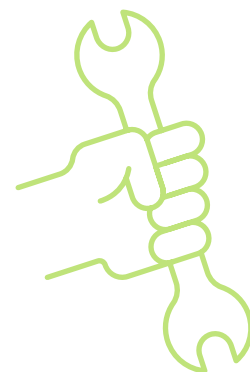
Non-formal education (NFE) methods play a crucial role in the analysed projects, particularly in fostering youth participation, teacher training, and social inclusion. These methods are flexible, learner-centred, and often experiential, making them effective tools for skills development and engagement across educational domains. Below is a list of the key NFE methods used in the projects, along with descriptions and examples of their implementation.



### 1. Structured dialogue and participatory decision-making

Structured dialogue involves facilitated discussions between young people and decision-makers to ensure that youth perspectives shape policies and initiatives. This method encourages civic engagement, fosters political awareness, and develops advocacy skills.

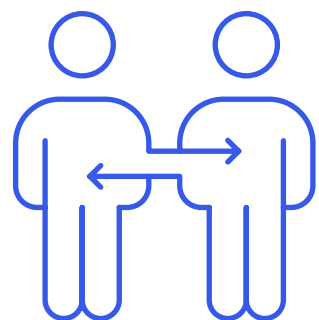
- **Algarve Regional Youth Action Plan (Portugal):** Engaged over 1,000 young people in structured dialogue with policymakers, resulting in a formal youth action plan.
- **European Youth & Sport Platform:** Organised policy consultations with youth sport organisations and EU decision-makers, integrating youth voices into governance structures.



### 2. Learning by doing (experiential learning)

Experiential learning emphasises practical, hands-on activities where participants engage in real-world scenarios to develop skills and knowledge. This method is widely used in youth empowerment, vocational training, and leadership development.

- **NEETs for NEETs:** Implemented a 'Train-the-Trainer' model where unemployed youth (NEETs) became educators, training adult educators and other NEETs.
- **Brave New YOU – Reloaded:** Youth participants co-designed and led community-based activities to counter harmful narratives and promote inclusion.



### 3. Peer learning and mentorship

Peer learning involves participants learning from one another, often facilitated through mentorship, knowledge-sharing activities, and collaborative learning. This method fosters personal growth, leadership, and a sense of community.

- **Model European Parliament (MEP):** Senior student participants mentored new participants in debating and parliamentary procedures.
- **TUTOR Project:** Created 'TUTOR Ambassadors', where trained teachers shared their knowledge on inclusive education with peers.



### 4. Role-playing and simulation games

Role-playing and simulations allow participants to assume different roles, explore scenarios, and engage in decision-making exercises. This approach enhances critical thinking, problem-solving, and empathy.

- **Democratic Vaccination (Croatia):** Used parliamentary-style debates and role-playing exercises to teach youth about democratic processes.
- **Brave New YOU – Reloaded:** Applied Forum Theatre techniques, where youth acted out social issues and explored possible solutions.





## 5. Workshops and thematic training sessions

Workshops and training sessions offer intensive, focused learning experiences on specific topics. These sessions often include interactive discussions, group activities, and expert-led presentations.

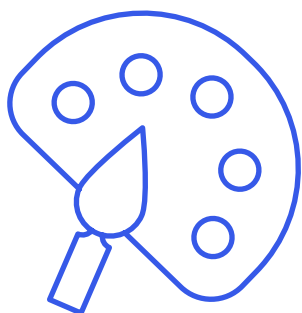
- **TUTOR Project:** Delivered face-to-face and online workshops for teachers on inclusive education strategies.
- **Youth in Action (Cyprus):** Hosted workshops on youth participation in sport governance, equipping young leaders with advocacy skills.



## 6. Digital and blended learning

Digital learning methods incorporate e-learning platforms, gamification, and hybrid learning models. These approaches enhance accessibility and engagement, particularly in cross-border education initiatives.

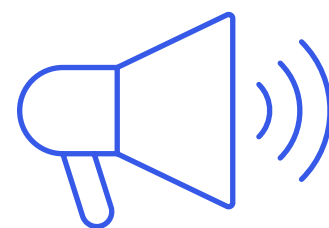
- **E-learning Modules in TUTOR Project:** Trained 800+ teachers through an online platform focused on inclusive education.
- **Gather.Town in Brave New YOU – Reloaded:** Used gamified virtual spaces for youth to engage in storytelling and discussions on social inclusion.



## 7. Artistic and creative methods

Creative methods, such as storytelling, music, visual arts, and theatre, help participants express ideas, explore social issues, and develop communication skills in an engaging way.

- **Brave New YOU – Reloaded:** Used graffiti, photography, and storytelling to foster intercultural understanding.
- **Great Minds Meeting (Netherlands):** Encouraged youth to present their ideas for social change using video storytelling and digital media.



## 8. Youth-led campaigns and community engagement

Youth-led campaigns empower participants to design and implement initiatives addressing social issues. This method builds leadership, project management, and advocacy skills.

- **European Youth & Sport Platform:** Developed youth-driven advocacy campaigns to promote governance reforms in sports organisations.
- **Brave New YOU – Reloaded:** Youth groups created counter-narratives to combat discrimination in local communities.



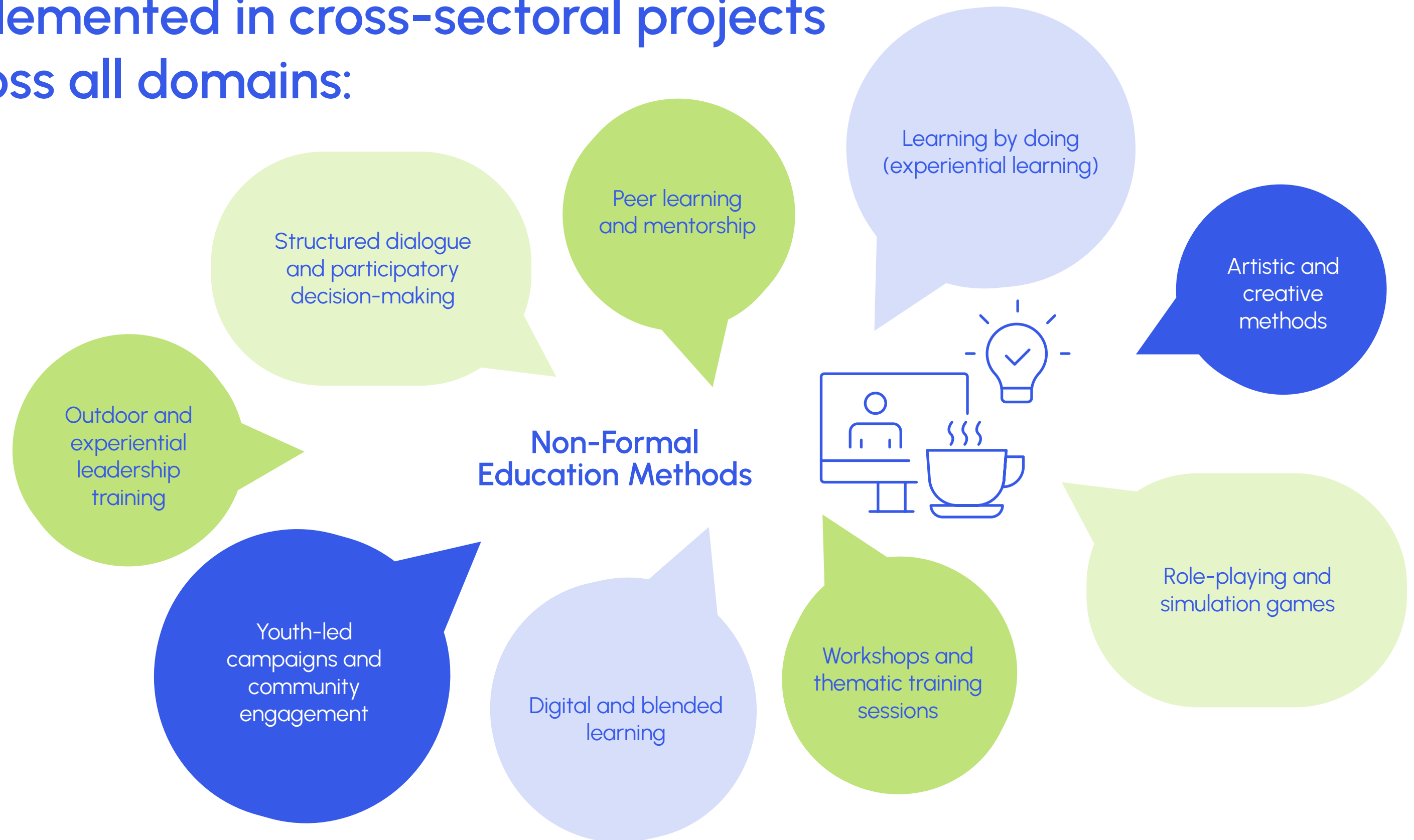
## 9. Outdoor and experiential leadership training

Outdoor learning activities, including team-building exercises, adventure-based learning, and community service, develop personal and social skills through experiential challenges.

- **PEACE Programme:** Included a five-day camp in Belgium, where youth participated in outdoor team challenges and leadership activities.
- **NEETs for NEETs:** Integrated hands-on projects where youth engaged in problem-solving exercises related to employability and social integration.

In conclusion, non-formal education methods are integral to fostering youth engagement, skills development, and cross-sector collaboration. Across the projects, these methods are adapted to different contexts, promoting experiential learning, youth participation, and social impact. The diversity of approaches ensures inclusivity, making learning more accessible and effective for diverse groups. Future projects should continue integrating innovative NFE methodologies, particularly digital tools and peer-led initiatives, to enhance engagement and sustainability.

# Key types of non-formal education methods implemented in cross-sectoral projects across all domains:



# 3. Conclusions and Recommendations

Cross-sectoral collaborations in youth education play a vital role in fostering democratic participation, inclusivity, and skills development. The trends observed in the three domains—School Education, Adult Education, and Vocational Education—highlight the importance of participatory approaches, digital innovation, and policy integration.

To enhance replication and sustainability, stakeholders should prioritise multi-sector partnerships, institutional collaboration, and adaptability to different learning environments. By integrating these best practices, future projects can achieve meaningful and lasting impact, ensuring that young people are equipped with the skills and opportunities needed to thrive in a rapidly evolving world.

Based on the trends and solutions to the challenges in cross-sectoral projects described in the findings, this section highlights the characteristics of good practice in cross-sectoral projects and outlines the recommendations for replication.

## The characteristics of good practice in cross-sectoral projects:

1. Multi-sector collaboration
2. Integration of informal and formal education
3. Stakeholder engagement
4. Inclusion of vulnerable groups
5. Long-term democratic impact



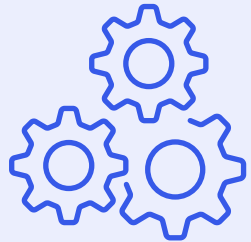
This clustering allows for a clearer understanding of how different recommendations interconnect and how they can be applied systematically across cross-sectoral partnerships in youth education, adult education, and vocational training.

## The recommendations for replication are all taken from the project summaries and clustered around common themes:

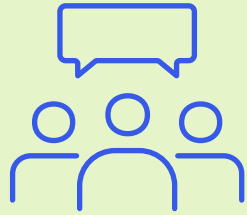
1. Youth participation and leadership development
2. Cross-sectoral and institutional collaboration
3. Inclusive and equitable learning environments
4. Flexible and adaptable learning approaches
5. Integration with formal education
6. Digital innovation and engagement
7. Sustainable and impactful implementation
8. Real-world application and community impact
9. Skill development and employability

# 3.1. Characteristics of Good Practice in Cross-Sectoral Projects

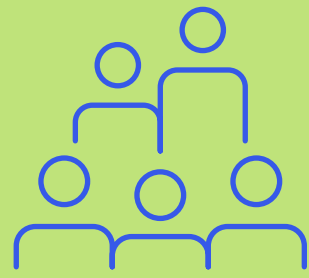
## Characteristics of a Good Practice in Cross-Sectoral Projects



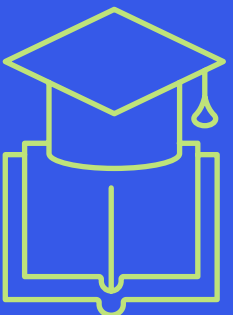
**Multi-sector collaboration:** The project involves partnerships across sectors, such as local governments, the education sector, and international organisations. Such broad and diverse collaboration enriches the project, leveraging expertise and resources from multiple domains to maximise its effectiveness.



**Stakeholder engagement:** The project fosters active interaction between students, teachers, and local decision-makers, such as school principals and mayors. Youth-led solutions to local issues emerge from these interactions, resulting in tangible changes in communities, such as the Democratic Vaccination project, which established a youth space in Knin and organised events such as the first Norijada in Vukovar.



**Inclusion of vulnerable groups:** The project ensures the involvement of vulnerable groups in decision-making processes through a deliberation model tailored for local self-government units. This inclusive strategy ensures equitable participation, amplifying diverse voices and leading to more just and impactful solutions.



**Integration of informal and formal education:** The project combines informal work methods with the formal education system by training teachers and volunteers to implement debate and deliberation models in schools. This approach addresses the limitations of traditional education systems and introduces democratic education methods, particularly in vocational schools where such practices are often absent.



**Long-term democratic impact:** The project emphasises methods and practices that promote democratic participation over time. By embedding democratic education and participatory methods in schools and communities, the project fosters sustained engagement in decision-making and civic activities.

By combining these approaches, projects can demonstrate how cross-sectoral initiatives effectively address complex societal challenges, foster collaboration, and create long-lasting positive impact.

## 3.2. Recommendations for Replication



**Youth participation and leadership development:** Encouraging youth participation and leadership development is crucial in fostering effective cross-sectoral projects. Shared leadership models, where young people and educators collaborate to create training materials, can significantly enhance engagement. Involving young people, such as NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training), in every stage of a project ensures that tools and methodologies remain relevant and impactful. Role reversals, where young people lead training sessions for adult educators, break down hierarchical structures and promote mutual learning. To ensure long-term engagement, youth should be actively involved in project design, for example, through thinktanks that shape the initiative. Structured dialogue platforms, such as regional youth councils, provide young people with permanent channels to participate in policymaking.

**Cross-sectoral and institutional collaboration:** Strong partnerships across sectors enhance project sustainability and impact. Collaborations with policymakers ensure that project findings are embedded into formal structures, creating a lasting influence on youth policies. Schools, local governments, and international organisations must work together to leverage their expertise and resources effectively. Strengthening institutional partnerships, both nationally and internationally, provides diverse perspectives on governance and democracy. Long-term collaborations with schools maintain participant recruitment and teacher involvement, making it easier to integrate projects into formal education settings.

**Inclusive and equitable learning environments:** Ensuring inclusivity in training programmes is vital to breaking down barriers for disadvantaged groups. Marginalised communities must be prioritised by adapting materials and activities to be accessible to all participants, ensuring diverse perspectives in discussions. Language and processes should be simplified for younger students or those with special needs, with mentors available to provide support. Projects should address multiple dimensions of development, including education, employability, gender equality, and social inclusion, to maximise their impact. Additionally, participation barriers such as fees, uniforms, and selective criteria should be removed to ensure equal opportunities for all. A key element in fostering inclusivity is building trust between schools and youth workers, creating an environment where all young people feel welcome and valued.

**Flexible and adaptable learning approaches:** Flexibility and adaptability are essential in implementing sustainable learning approaches. Schools and vocational education institutions often struggle with integrating extracurricular activities into rigid schedules. To address this, project organisers should consider offering sessions outside regular hours or adjusting activities to accommodate participants' availability. Since schools vary in their structures, projects should be customised to suit each institution's unique context and needs. A strong emphasis on resilience and adaptability ensures that initiatives can continue even during disruptions, such as by incorporating online platforms and alternative delivery methods.

**Integration with formal education:** For meaningful integration with formal education, structured engagement models should be developed to link participation to academic credit. Participatory budgeting (PB) activities, for example, can be connected to subjects such as mathematics, social studies, or media studies, reinforcing classroom learning through real-world application. Teacher training networks should be established across borders, bringing together universities, vocational education providers, and advocacy organisations to encourage knowledge exchange. Regular assessments should be conducted to align teacher training programmes with evolving inclusivity requirements, engaging educators as active stakeholders in curriculum development. Additionally, embedding inclusivity-focused coursework in national teacher accreditation standards and facilitating teacher mobility can foster international exposure to diverse education systems.

**Digital innovation and engagement:** Digital innovation is a powerful tool for broadening accessibility and engagement. Secure online voting platforms and digital decision-making tools enable wider participation while providing alternative options for those less digitally proficient. Expanding access to online and blended learning platforms for teacher training enhances flexibility, while interactive digital tools ensure engagement in virtual settings. Media can also be leveraged to increase project visibility and inspire broader youth participation in democratic processes.

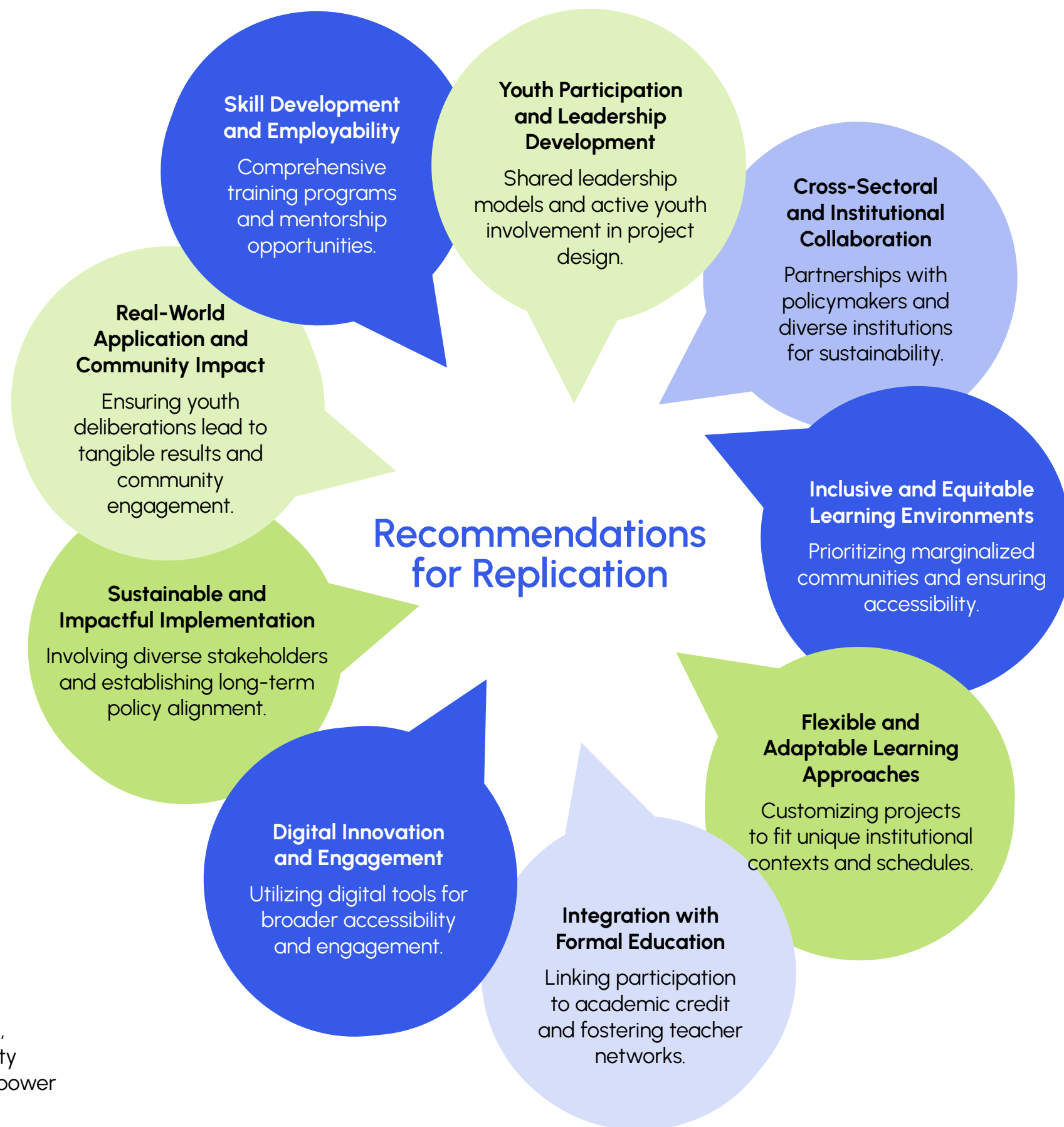


**Sustainable and impactful implementation:** For cross-sectoral projects to have a sustainable and impactful implementation, diverse stakeholders need to be involved. Establishing Teacher Academies ensures that upskilling efforts continue beyond project timelines. Programmes such as the TUTOR Ambassadors create a network of educators advocating for inclusive education practices in their institutions. Long-term policy alignment is key to sustaining the relevance of these initiatives across political cycles. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be integrated to track progress, maintain accountability, and adapt to changing youth needs. Additionally, projects have to be designed with scalability in mind, developing adaptable tools and methodologies that can be applied across diverse contexts.

**Real-world application and community impact:** Projects should have a real-world application and community impact, ensuring that youth deliberations lead to tangible results. By actively involving local decision-makers, young participants gain firsthand experience in governance. Projects should align with broader social issues such as sustainability or inclusivity to maximise their societal value. Engaging local communities in project development enhances long-term relevance and sustainability. Direct engagement opportunities with policymakers foster mutual understanding, and a well-structured network of partners ensures the efficient management of school-based exchanges and youth mobility.

**Skill development and employability:** Skill development and employability must remain a core focus of all initiatives. Comprehensive training programmes should be designed for teachers and volunteers, equipping them with the necessary skills to facilitate debate and deliberation activities effectively. Structured learning opportunities should include certification, validating participants' achievements and improving their career prospects. Inclusivity should be prioritised, ensuring that youth from all educational levels and those with special needs are actively included. Offering mentorship, guidance, and hands-on experiences, such as internships in green companies, allows participants to gain practical insights and transferable skills. Sustainability should be a cross-cutting theme in all projects, not only in terms of environmental awareness but also in creating lasting institutional and community impact.

By focusing on these interconnected elements—youth leadership, cross-sectoral collaboration, inclusivity, flexibility, formal education integration, digital engagement, sustainability, community impact, and skill development—cross-sectoral projects can drive meaningful change and empower young people to become active citizens in their communities.

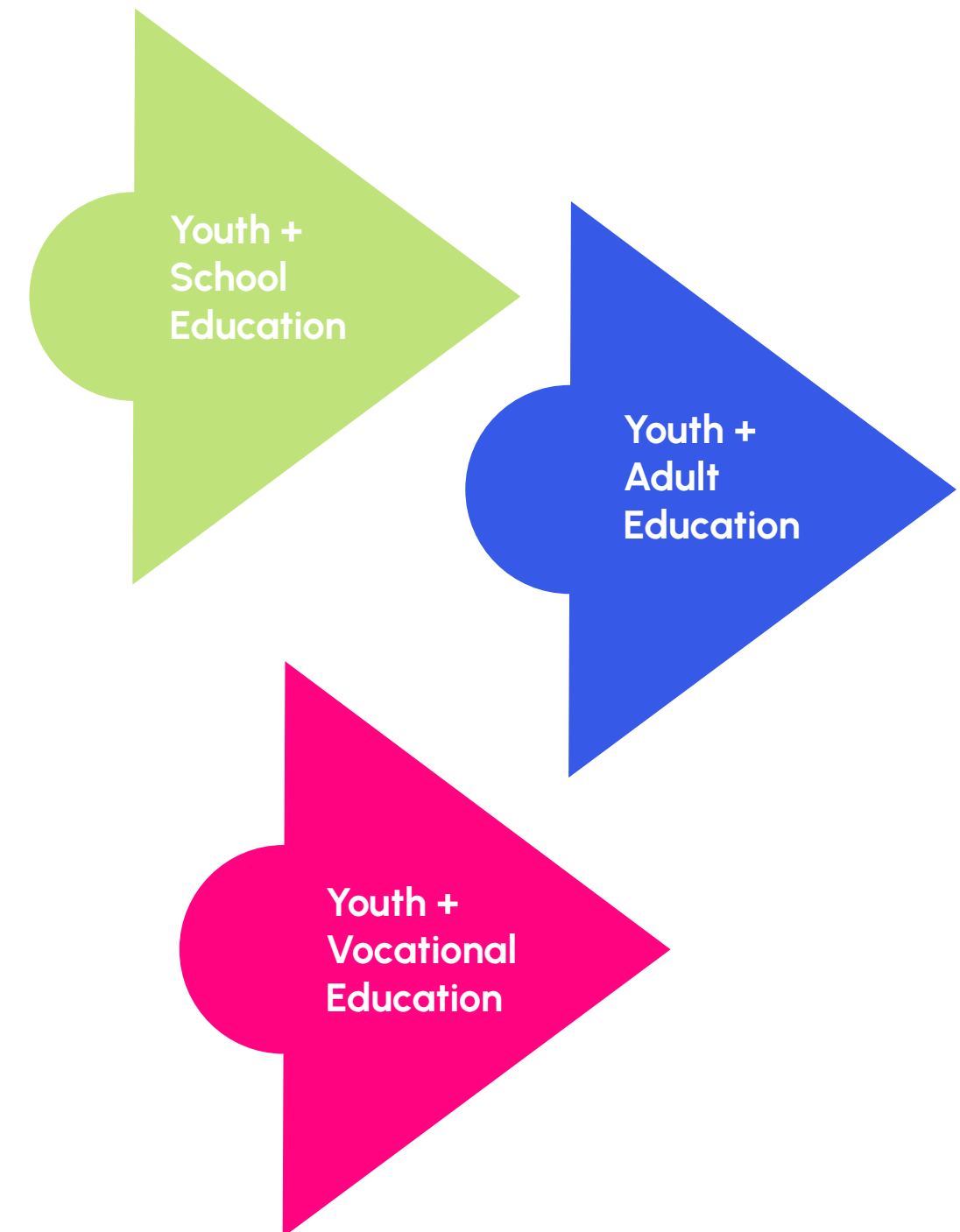


# Appendix: Detailed Project Summaries and Case Studies

The projects in each subchapter are numbered and listed one after the other. Their summaries use the following structure:

1. Main project data & links
2. Introduction paragraph
3. Project objectives
4. Project partners
5. Project activities
6. Project results
7. Recommendations for replication as a cross-sectoral practice

This report section features the summaries of the projects used in the analysis. The section is split into subchapters by project domain:



## Youth + School Education

# 1. Participatory Budgeting

Timeline:	<b>12–18-week cycles yearly</b>
Partners:	<b>Schools across Estonia Estonian Cooperation Assembly (ECA) Transparency International Estonia (TIE)</b>
Key Action:	<b>KA154 – Learning Mobility of Individuals</b>
Action Type:	<b>Youth participation activities</b>
Budget:	<b>€50,000.00</b>

Link to the project: [\(2023–2024\) in the Erasmus+ database](#)

Link: <https://demokraatia.rahvaalgatus.ee/eelarve>

The Participatory Budgeting (PB) project, led by Transparency International Estonia (TIE) and the Estonian Cooperation Assembly (ECA), presents a structured approach to fostering democratic engagement and civic responsibility among Estonian school students by involving them directly in making decisions on parts of their school budget. Since the pilot project in 2020–2021, partners have been running PB in multiple secondary schools across Estonia, giving students real-life experience in democratic processes, budgeting, and project management, ultimately cultivating active, informed citizens with a vested interest in community well-being and participatory governance.

## Objectives

The Participatory Budgeting (PB) project in schools aims to provide students with a hands-on experience of democratic processes by involving them in real-world decision-making. The key objectives are as follows:

1. To develop democratic skills such as teamwork, compromise, critical thinking, and financial literacy among students.
2. To empower students to actively contribute to their school environment, fostering a sense of community and responsibility.
3. To prepare young people for future civic participation by providing practical experiences that go beyond theoretical learning.
4. To ensure inclusivity by engaging students of varying ages, abilities, and backgrounds in meaningful decision-making processes.

## Partners

The PB project was implemented in collaboration with the following partners:

1. **Schools:**
  - a. Leadership and Coordinators: Responsible for initiating the project, setting guidelines, and securing resources.
  - b. Teachers and Mentors: Provided guidance throughout the process, particularly in the idea development and project implementation phases.
  - c. Students and School Communities: Actively participated in all phases of the PB process, contributing ideas, voting, and implementing winning projects.
2. **Estonian Centre for Applied Research (ECA):** Offered digital platforms for secure online voting using Estonia's digital ID system and provided expertise in designing the project framework.
3. **Transparency International Estonia (TIE):** Took care of the general project management and provided general support.



## Youth + School Education / 1. Participatory Budgeting

### Activities

The PB project was structured into a series of well-defined phases, designed to engage students and ensure impactful outcomes:

#### 1. Preparation and management support:

- Schools established a working group to manage the PB process.
- Project budgets ranging from €250 to €2,000 were allocated, with clear guidelines set for project proposals.

#### 2. Establishing guidelines and goals:

- Criteria for project submissions were defined, such as ensuring that projects benefit the entire school, remain within budget, and align with educational goals.
- PB activities were linked to relevant subjects such as social studies, maths, and media studies to enhance educational value.

#### 3. Student engagement and brainstorming:

- Workshops and brainstorming sessions encouraged students to identify projects that could improve school life.
- Tools such as Mentimeter and Google Forms were used to gather ideas, while group discussions fostered community engagement.

#### 4. Idea development and campaigning:

- Students refined their ideas into detailed proposals, including benefits, costs, and potential impact.
- Campaigning activities involved creating videos, posters, and presentations to promote proposals to peers.

#### 5. Voting process:

- Both online and in-person voting methods were used to simulate democratic elections, ensuring broad participation.
- The use of Estonia's digital ID system facilitated secure online voting, while physical ballots provided inclusivity.

#### 6. Project implementation:

- Winning projects were implemented with active student involvement, including vendor negotiations and coordination with school staff.
- For instance, one school negotiated with suppliers to secure additional items within the budget, demonstrating practical financial skills.

#### 7. Evaluation and feedback:

- Feedback was gathered through surveys to assess the process and identify areas for improvement.
- Data from participation rates and satisfaction surveys informed subsequent PB rounds.

### Results

The PB project yielded significant outcomes and impact:

#### 1. Student engagement and skill development:

- A 15% increase in student participation in school activities was reported.
- Participants developed critical skills in budgeting, teamwork, advocacy, and decision-making.
- Students expressed greater confidence in influencing school decisions.

#### 2. Inclusivity and collaboration:

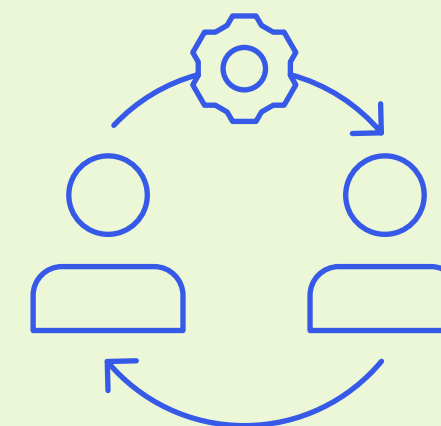
- The process engaged a diverse range of students, fostering inclusivity and community spirit.
- Feedback highlighted PB's role in allowing all voices to be heard and valued.

#### 3. Real-world impact:

- Projects implemented through PB enhanced the school environment and addressed student needs.
- Practical budgeting and negotiation skills learned during PB prepared students for real-world challenges.

#### 4. Democratic awareness:

- Students gained firsthand experience with democratic processes, making civic engagement tangible and relatable.
- Surveys indicated a significant increase in students' understanding of governance and their roles as active citizens.



## Youth + School Education / 1. Participatory Budgeting

### Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

#### 1. Start small and scale gradually:

- Begin with small-scale projects to build confidence and refine processes before expanding to larger budgets and initiatives.

#### 2. Link PB to curriculum:

- Connect PB activities to academic subjects such as maths, social studies, or media studies to reinforce classroom learning.

#### 3. Ensure inclusivity:

- Simplify language and processes for younger students or those with special needs and provide mentors to support their participation.

#### 4. Use digital tools:

- Employ digital platforms such as secure online voting to enhance accessibility and engagement, while offering alternatives for those less digitally proficient.

#### 5. Promote creativity and campaigning:

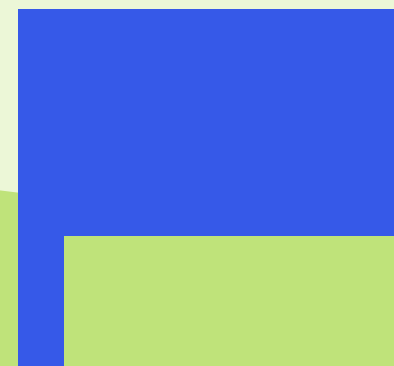
- Encourage students to think creatively and develop persuasive campaigns to advocate for their ideas, fostering communication and marketing skills.

#### 6. Gather feedback for continuous improvement:

- Use surveys and participation data to evaluate the PB process and incorporate feedback into future iterations.

#### 7. Focus on community impact:

- Align PB projects with broader social issues, such as sustainability or inclusivity, to maximise their relevance and value.



The handbook suggests potential expansions for the PB model, drawing on examples from international implementations. In the future, schools could focus PB projects on specific social issues, such as environmental sustainability or inclusivity, encouraging students to address challenges with community impact. Additionally, larger schools might consider giving students even more control over the PB process, allowing them to lead brainstorming sessions, manage voting logistics, and oversee project implementations.

In Estonia, the pilot demonstrated PB's feasibility as a regular school feature, aligning with educational goals and fostering active, aware citizens. The use of PB as an educational tool not only brings immediate improvements to school life but also builds foundational civic skills, ensuring that young people are prepared to engage in democratic processes and contribute positively to society. Through its phased structure, PB offers a replicable framework that other schools, both within and beyond Estonia, can adapt to cultivate an empowered, engaged student body and enrich the school community.

## Youth + School Education

## 2. Connect to Nature

Timeline:	<b>2 years</b>
Partners:	<b>Ekonomška šola Novo mesto (Slovenia) Zentrum Fur Innovative Bildung (Austria) Doga Koruma Merkezi Vakfi (Turkey) Fundacion Universitaria San Antonio (Spain) CIAPE – Centro Italiano Per L'apprendimento Permanente (Italy) Rightchallenge – Associação (Portugal)</b>
Key Action:	<b>Partnerships for cooperation and exchanges of practices</b>
Action Type:	<b>Cooperation partnerships in youth</b>
Budget:	<b>€252,653.00</b>

Link to the project: [\(2021–2023\) in the Erasmus+ database](#)

Link: <https://care.splet.arnes.si/>



## Objectives

The main objective of the project 'Connect to Nature' was to increase youth employment in the green sector by enhancing ecological literacy, promoting green entrepreneurship, and facilitating internships in sustainable companies. The project aimed to equip young people with the knowledge and skills necessary for green jobs and foster a culture of sustainability through training modules, entrepreneurship competitions, and networking opportunities on platforms such as LinkedIn. By implementing this, the project sought to inspire and prepare youth for careers that contribute to environmental sustainability.

## Partners

- **DKM The Nature Conservation Centre (Turkey)** focuses on biodiversity conservation and the sustainable management of natural resources. It was responsible for the training modules on ecological literacy and green entrepreneurship.
- **UCAM Universidad Católica San Antonio de Murcia (Spain)** provides educational programmes and promotes cultural and societal development. It took care of survey design and distribution.
- **Rightchallenge Association (Portugal)** is a youth NGO promoting social inclusion and environmental awareness through education and volunteer projects. Its main role in the project was to run the Green Business competition.
- **Centro Italiano per l'Apprendimento Permanente (CIAPE) (Italy)** promotes lifelong learning and the development of inclusive educational communities. It coordinated the EcoLinkedIn community.
- **Zentrum für Innovative Bildung (IEC) (Austria)** is a non-profit organisation focused on empowering youth through innovative education. It oversaw the entrepreneurship aspects of the project.
- **Ekonomška šola Novo mesto (Slovenia)**, an educational institution offering programmes in economics and media production, was the project manager.

## Youth + School Education / 2. Connect to Nature

### Activities

The project's multi-faceted approach included the design and distribution of training modules, the coordination of competitions to foster green business ideas and workshops/seminars to raise awareness and provide practical skills in sustainability, the provision of internships in sustainable companies, and the management of networking events and opportunities on platforms such as LinkedIn.

In particular, the activities included:

**1. Green business guide:** The project developed a guide that includes successful examples and key topics in the eco-industry and serves as a practical tool for those who want to contribute to a sustainable world. It includes the results of a survey of young people and business founders and is available in English, Slovenian, Spanish, Italian, German, Turkish, and Portuguese.

**2. Online course on ecological literacy:** The project developed interactive, multilingual learning modules that teach young people about sustainability, regenerative life, and organisational leadership for the future green market. The 16 topics are covered in modules available in English, Slovenian, Spanish, Italian, German, Turkish, and Portuguese and provide comprehensive education on the connections between nature and human impact: biodiversity, climate change, ecosystem services, bioeconomy, sustainability, circular economy, green entrepreneurial skills, 3R concept – reduce, reuse, recycle, green business model, natural solutions, eco-design, regenerative living, organisational leadership, sustainable development, sustainable development goals, and technological innovation. For each topic, there is an informative text and a video relating to the text.

**3. Green business internship programme:** The project developed an internship programme that enabled young people to gain practical experience in green jobs.

**4. Green business competition:** The project conducted a competition to create green business ideas and provided mentoring so that they could turn their ideas into a business plan.

**5. Eco-LinkedIn community:** The project built a community on LinkedIn that aims to enable young people to connect with experts in the field of green entrepreneurship.

In addition to these activities, the project held round tables with key stakeholders, was presented to partners involved in various initiatives, and participated in Erasmus+ Sport Projects and the youth project KA220.

### Results

**Ecological competence:** Participants enhanced their ecological literacy through 16 comprehensive online training modules, covering topics such as sustainability, circular economy, and green entrepreneurship.

**Practical experience:** The internship programmes provided hands-on experience in green companies, helping participants apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios.

**Green entrepreneurship:** Through competitions and workshops, participants developed innovative business ideas focused on sustainability, fostering a new generation of green entrepreneurs.

**Impact on the participants:** Young individuals gained valuable skills and insights into green jobs, increasing their employability in the green sector. They also developed a deeper understanding of sustainable practices and green business models.

**Impact on the local community:** The project raised awareness about ecological issues and promoted sustainable practices within the community. It also encouraged local businesses to adopt greener practices and supported the creation of eco-friendly startups.

**Impact on the organisations and stakeholders:** Partner organisations benefited from increased collaboration and knowledge exchange, enhancing their capacity to support sustainable development. The project also strengthened networks among educational institutions, businesses, and non-profits committed to environmental sustainability.

### Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

**1. Use a holistic approach:** Combining theoretical knowledge with practical experience and entrepreneurial skills, the project provides a comprehensive learning journey for participants.

**2. Facilitate collaboration and networking:** Collaborate with a diverse range of partners, including educational institutions and Youth NGOs, to ensure a broad and comprehensive approach to training and implementation. Facilitate internships and hands-on experiences in green companies to provide participants with real-world insights and skills.

**3. Engage with the local community** to raise awareness about sustainability and encourage local businesses to adopt greener practices.

**4. Focus on sustainability:** Emphasising sustainability in all activities not only educates participants but also promotes sustainable practices within the local community and among partner organisations.

## Youth + School Education

## 3. Riga's Pupils Council

Timeline: **approx. 4 months**

Partners: **Riga Student Council and several schools around Riga**

Budget: **Less than €1000 (source: Riga's municipality)**

Link: <https://www.rsd.lv/index.php/lv/zinas/1131-prezidentu-klubs-2024-1-sede>

The project aimed to inspire local pupils to be more active in their local communities and share knowledge about leadership and politics. The activities of the project included four residential meetings with experts on the following topics: communication, leadership, student council documentation, and politics. In total, 20–30 students from different schools across Riga participated in the events. As a result of the project, the local schools became a more united community, and the participants developed their understanding of active democratic life.

### Objectives

The primary aim of the Presidents' Club project was to inspire local pupils in Riga to become more active in their communities and foster knowledge of leadership, politics, and democratic participation. The project sought to:

- equip young people with essential leadership and communication skills;
- foster a deeper understanding of democratic processes and self-governance;
- unite students from different schools to build a stronger sense of community and shared purpose.

Through structured learning and interactive activities, participants gained valuable insights into leadership, student council operations, and political engagement, encouraging them to take on active roles in their communities.

### Partners

The project brought together various stakeholders to ensure its success:

- 1. Local schools:** Participating schools across Riga contributed students and supported their involvement in the activities.
- 2. Experts and speakers:** Renowned individuals such as Andris Pētersons, Ivars Ījabs, and Dace Ribena provided lectures, workshops, and insights, enriching the learning experience.
- 3. Community leaders:** Policymakers and local leaders participated in discussions to connect with and inspire the youth.

These partnerships ensured a diverse and impactful programme, combining theoretical knowledge with practical insights.



## Youth + School Education / 3. Riga's Pupils Council

### Activities

The project consisted of four residential meetings, each providing unique opportunities for learning, collaboration, and personal growth, fostering strong leadership and communication skills among participants. The meetings focused on unique themes:

**The 1st Meeting** focused on leadership. Attendees enjoyed a lecture on:

- the characteristics of effective leaders;
- the types of leadership; and
- the differences between leaders and bosses.

An engaging team activity involved analysing CVs to select the best candidate for specific roles, sparking debate and fostering a deeper understanding of decision-making. Participants left with valuable leadership insights and new connections.

**The 2nd Meeting** revolved around communication and was led by Andris Pētersons. Key topics included:

- structuring communication and speeches;
- the dos and don'ts of interpersonal discussions;
- presentation skills; and
- the importance of empathy.

Participants engaged in discussions about local government issues and debated their perspectives, making it an interactive and thought-provoking experience. A playful activity, involving trying on others' shoes, highlighted the significance of empathy in communication.

**The 3rd Meeting** explored self-governance, event planning, and resilience. Topics included:

- the structures of self-government;
- the diverse areas of activity; and

- managing rejection constructively.

Attendees appreciated the in-depth lecture on presenting ideas effectively and enjoyed networking during the coffee break. Activities encouraged collaboration and skill development, preparing participants for future initiatives.

**The 4th Meeting** was a ceremonial meeting featuring discussions with notable guests, including Ivars Tjabs and Dace Ribena, on:

- the importance of youth participation in social, voluntary, and political activities; and
- lowering the voting age to 16.

Speakers emphasised youth involvement in shaping an inclusive society and encouraged attendees to embrace challenges and take initiative. The event inspired participants to contribute actively to their communities.

### Results

The Presidents' Club project achieved significant outcomes:

#### 1. Enhanced skills:

- Participants developed leadership, communication, and collaboration skills.
- Improved ability to address local issues and engage in democratic processes.

#### 2. Community building:

Strengthened ties among students from different schools, creating a united and supportive network.

#### 3 Increased civic engagement:

Participants gained motivation to actively contribute to their communities and participate in democratic activities.

#### 4. Knowledge growth:

Attendees deepened their understanding of politics, governance, and self-governance.

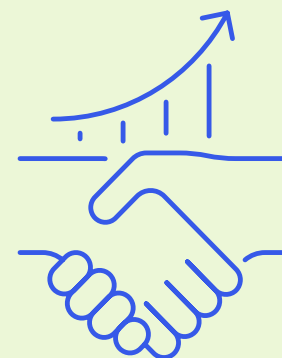
### Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

#### 1. Focus on key themes:

Design activities around essential skills such as leadership, communication, and governance to provide participants with practical and transferable knowledge.

#### 2. Involve experts and policymakers:

Collaborate with professionals and local leaders to provide diverse perspectives and inspire young participants.



The Presidents' Club demonstrated the power of structured and interactive activities in fostering leadership, communication, and democratic engagement among young people. By replicating this model, other organisations can empower youth to take active roles in their communities and beyond.

#### 3. Encourage empathy and inclusivity:

Use interactive activities to build empathy and promote inclusive dialogue.

#### 4. Foster community engagement:

Organise discussions on local issues to help participants connect their learning to real-world contexts.

#### 5. Provide networking opportunities:

Include informal networking sessions to build relationships among participants and with mentors.

#### 6. Evaluate and reflect:

Incorporate reflection sessions and feedback mechanisms to improve the programme and measure its impact.

## Youth + School Education

## 4. Model of European Parliament

Timeline:	<b>8–10-month cycles yearly</b>
Partners:	<b>Het Debatbureau (the Netherlands) the Foundation for the promotion of active National and European Citizenship (BANEB) (the Netherlands) Schools across the Netherlands</b>
Key Action:	<b>Learning Mobility of Individuals</b>
Action Type:	<b>Youth participation activities</b>
Budget:	<b>€59,900</b>

Link to the project: [\(2023\) in the Erasmus+ database](#)

Link: <https://mepnederland.nl/>

The Model European Parliament (MEP) is a simulation of the European Parliament for European schoolchildren. The MEP offers young people from the highest years of secondary education the opportunity to gain experience in devising solutions for cross-border problems within the European Union. In the role of 'MEPs', the young people become acquainted with the complex process of European decision-making and gain insight into the importance of cooperation between the various EU member states.

### Objectives

The Model European Parliament (MEP) aims to provide secondary school students with the opportunity to experience the complexities of European decision-making and foster awareness of cross-border challenges within the European Union. The main objectives are as follows:

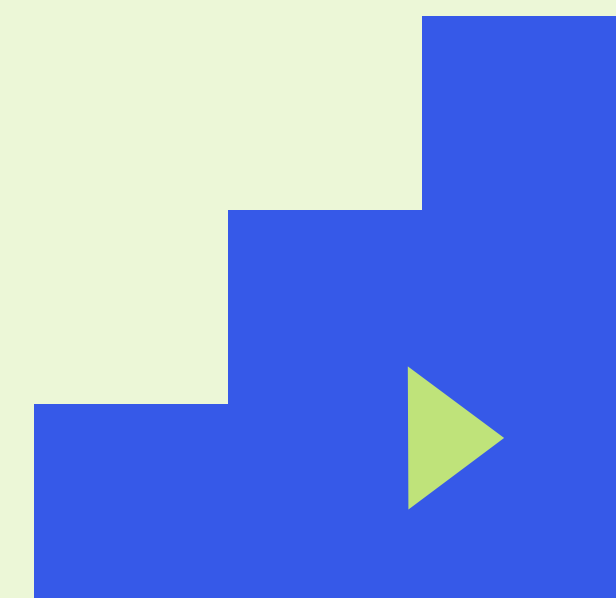
1. Introducing young people to the process of European parliamentary decision-making through realistic simulations.
2. Encouraging the development of critical thinking, negotiation, and collaboration skills.
3. Promoting an understanding of the importance of cooperation between EU member states.
4. Enhancing youth engagement with democratic processes and European issues.

Through the MEP, students gain valuable insight into the functioning of the EU and develop a sense of responsibility as future European citizens.

### Partners

The MEP in the Netherlands is a collaborative effort involving the following parties:

1. **Schools:** Over 135 schools nationwide participate annually, organising school-level conferences and preparing students for higher-level events.
2. **Provincial Organisations:** Fourteen regional and provincial MEP organisations, including dedicated organisations for Amsterdam and Rotterdam, ensure broad participation across the country.
3. **National Institutions:** The Dutch House of Representatives (States General) hosts the General Assembly during the national conference.
4. **International Partners:** Collaboration with other EU member states facilitates the international MEP conferences.
5. **Het Debatbureau:** Manages and oversees the organisation of MEP activities, ensuring continuity and impact.



## Youth + School Education / 4. Model of European Parliament

### Activities

The MEP is structured across four levels: school, provincial, national, and international.

#### 1. School conferences:

- Schools participating in the MEP organise conferences where upper-grade students from havo/vwo engage in discussions and draft solutions for European issues.
- Teachers and school coordinators guide the students in preparing for these debates and resolutions.

#### 2. Provincial conferences:

- Schools send delegations to the provincial MEP conferences, where the European Parliament's processes are simulated.
- The best-performing participants are selected for the provincial delegation to the national conference.
- Amsterdam and Rotterdam have their own regional organisations to accommodate more participants from the Randstad.

#### 3. National conference:

- Held annually in September, the national conference spans a week and is an extracurricular event.

- Provincial delegations represent EU member states and participate in committee meetings held across five provincial capitals.
- Committees draft resolutions addressing specific European issues, which are debated and voted on during a two-day General Assembly in The Hague.

#### 4. International conference:

- The national delegation, comprising the best participants from the national conference, represents Dutch interests at international MEP conferences.
- Together with students from other EU member states, they explore and propose solutions to European challenges.

### Results

The MEP has a far-reaching impact on its participants and broader society:

#### 1. Personal growth:

Participants experience significant personal development, gaining confidence, critical thinking skills, and an understanding of democratic processes.

#### 2. Democratic engagement:

Students develop a greater focus on democratic participation and learn how to navigate societal changes effectively.

#### 3. Career inspiration:

Former MEP participants have gone on to pursue impactful careers, with some becoming members of parliament in the Netherlands.

#### 4. Institutional value:

The MEP has become a highly valued annual event, building institutional knowledge and strengthening youth engagement across the EU.

### Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

#### 1. Structured multi-level approach:

Adopt a tiered structure, from school-level to international activities, to ensure broad participation and progression opportunities.

#### 2. Collaborate with schools and local governments:

Engage schools and provincial authorities to provide a strong foundation and ensure accessibility for students from diverse regions.

#### 3. Incorporate realistic simulations:

Use authentic parliamentary procedures to provide participants with a realistic and immersive learning experience.

#### 4. Promote inclusivity and diversity:

Encourage participation from students of varying backgrounds and abilities, ensuring the project is accessible and inclusive.

#### 5. Foster international collaboration:

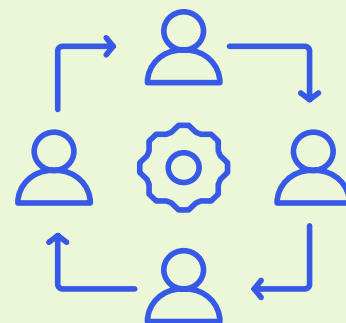
Build partnerships with organisations in other countries to facilitate cross-border exchanges and expand the programme's reach.

#### 6. Provide guidance and support:

Equip teachers and coordinators with the tools and resources needed to mentor students effectively.

#### 7. Measure long-term impact:

Track the outcomes of former participants to demonstrate the programme's influence on democratic engagement and career trajectories.



The MEP stands out as an exemplary initiative for fostering youth engagement in democratic processes, bridging education and international cooperation. Replicating this model can cultivate informed, active citizens prepared to address future societal and European challenges.

## Youth + School Education

## 5. On the Way to Parliament

Timeline:	<b>8–10-month cycles yearly</b>
Partners:	<b>Het Debatbureau (the Netherlands) BNNVARNA (a Dutch public broadcasting association) Schools across the Netherlands</b>
Key Action:	<b>Support for policy reform</b>
Action Type:	<b>Youth Dialogue Projects</b>
Budget:	<b>€49,950</b>

Link to the project: [\(2020–2021\) in the Erasmus+ database](#)

Link: <https://ownhlagerhuis.nl/>

'On the Way to Parliament' (Op weg naar het Lagerhuis) is a national project in the Netherlands that is designed to facilitate active citizenship and participation in democracy by young people and open a dialogue between young people and decision-makers. The project revolves around a well-known national debating format for youth, Op weg naar het Lagerhuis, inspired by debates in the House of Commons. The national final is broadcast annually on national television.

### Objectives

The 'On the Way to Parliament' project aims to promote active citizenship and democratic participation among young people in the Netherlands. By fostering dialogue between youth and decision-makers, the project seeks to:

- encourage young people to engage with topics that affect their future, such as climate change, education, youth policy, and human rights;
- develop critical thinking, debating, and presentation skills among participants; and
- provide a platform for youth to express their views, see issues from various perspectives, and engage with decision-makers in meaningful discussions.

This national initiative leverages an accessible and inclusive debating format inspired by the House of Commons, culminating in a televised national final. It actively supports diversity and inclusivity by ensuring participation from a broad demographic, including young people with fewer opportunities or special needs.

### Partners

The project is coordinated by BNNVARA, a Dutch broadcasting society, in collaboration with:

- 1. Het Debatbureau:** responsible for implementing debating activities; and
- 2. Dutch Provincial Governments:** responsible for facilitating regional events and debates.

This collaboration ensures a cohesive and well-supported project, offering equal opportunities for all participants across the provinces.



## Youth + School Education / 5. On the Way to Parliament

### Activities

#### 1. Provincial debates:

- Over 2,500 young people aged 13–20 from high schools and vocational training participate in debates at the provincial level.
- Debates focus on topics relevant to youth and society, fostering critical engagement and dialogue with policymakers.

#### 2. Innovative debate formats:

- Introduction of the '360-degree debate', where teams switch

positions twice during the debate to encourage diverse perspectives.

- Launch of a speech programme to enhance participants' public speaking and presentation skills.

#### 3. Youth thinktank:

- A group of young individuals deeply involved in the project's preparation, implementation, and evaluation, ensuring that youth voices shape the project.

#### 4. National final:

- The top teams from provincial events compete in the national final, broadcast annually on national television, offering a platform for broader visibility.

#### 5. Erasmus+ awareness:

- Workshops and information sessions introduce participants to Erasmus+ opportunities for personal development and intercultural learning.

### Results

The project has achieved the following results and impact:

#### 1. Youth participation and engagement:

- A total of 2,500 young people participated in debates across the Netherlands, engaging with decision-makers and gaining insights into provincial and national political processes.

#### 2. Skill development:

- Participants enhanced their debating, critical thinking, and presentation skills, gaining unique knowledge through structured activities and debates.
- Supported learning was recognised with certificates, reinforcing the value of their participation.

#### 3. Policymaker insights:

- Decision-makers gained new perspectives on youth opinions and issues, fostering a better understanding of youth participation in democracy.

#### 4. Inclusivity and diversity:

- The project ensured accessibility for all participants, including those with special needs or fewer opportunities, while maintaining gender balance and diversity among participants and decision-makers.

#### 5. Expanded impact:

- Increased awareness of Erasmus+ opportunities for intercultural learning and personal development.
- BNNVARA further strengthened its youth engagement expertise, enhancing the project's potential for lasting influence.

### Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

#### 1. Ensure inclusivity:

- Eliminate barriers to participation by avoiding fees, uniforms, or selective criteria.
- Actively support participants with special needs and those from underrepresented groups.

#### 2. Leverage innovative formats:

- Adopt interactive and creative debate formats, such as the 360-degree debate, to encourage diverse viewpoints and dynamic discussions.

#### 3. Engage youth in project design:

- Involve a youth thinktank to ensure that young people shape the project's design and implementation, enhancing relevance and ownership.

#### 4. Combine local and national engagement:

- Balance provincial-level activities with a national platform to provide equal opportunities and showcase youth talent.

#### 5. Collaborate across sectors:

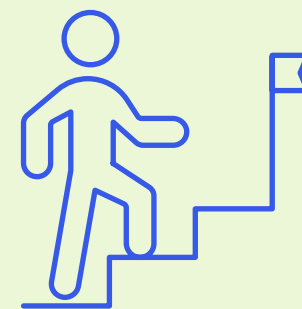
- Partner with educational institutions, governmental organisations, and media outlets to amplify reach and impact.

#### 6. Promote learning and recognition:

- Include structured learning opportunities with certification to validate participants' achievements.
- Highlight international opportunities such as Erasmus+ to broaden horizons.

#### 7. Utilise media for greater reach:

- Broadcasting events can increase visibility and inspire broader youth participation in democratic processes.



'On the Way to Parliament' is a model for fostering youth engagement in democracy through innovative and inclusive practices. By replicating this approach, organisations can empower young people to become active, informed citizens and bridge the gap between youth and decision-makers.

## Youth + School Education

6. **SDG Ambassador project**

Timeline:	<b>1 year</b>
Partners:	<b>Global Exploration Foundation (the Netherlands) Schools across the Netherlands</b>
Key Action:	<b>Learning Mobility of Individuals</b>
Action Type:	<b>Youth participation activities</b>
Budget:	<b>€60,000</b>

Link to the project: [\(2023–2024\) in the Erasmus+ database](#)

Link: <https://www.global-exploration.nl/>

### Objectives

The SDG Ambassador project aimed to empower young people between the ages of 14 and 18 by:

- informing them about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their importance;
- teaching them how to acquire knowledge and share it with their peers through developing and delivering masterclasses;
- encouraging them to use their voice in discussions with specialists related to the SDGs, contributing their unique perspectives to society; and
- inspiring them to reflect on how their ideas and actions can improve the world around them.

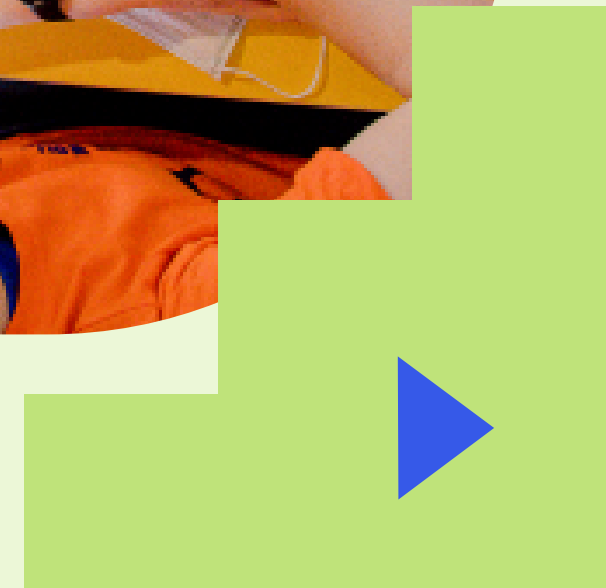
By engaging in this project, participants developed critical skills, made their voices heard, and adjusted their behaviours to align with sustainable and socially impactful values.

### Partners

The project was made possible through long-term partnerships between Global Exploration and schools across the Netherlands. Key partners included:

1. **Schools:** Teachers voluntarily guided students throughout the project, supporting their preparation and participation. These schools also facilitated the recruitment of participants.
2. **Global Youth and Global Exploration:** Responsible for the practical execution of the project, including organising events and providing guidance to participants.

This collaborative model ensured broad participation and effective project delivery.



## Youth + School Education / 6. SDG Ambassador project

### Activities

#### 1. SDG ambassador events:

- Two major events were held on 20 January 2024 and 31 May 2024.
- At the first event, participants were introduced to the SDGs, selected their sub-themes, and began preparing their masterclasses.
- At the second event, participants delivered their masterclasses to peers, Global Youth, and specialists.

#### 2. Participation overview:

- First Event: 411 Dutch/Belgian young people, 25 organisers, 46 youth from South Africa, Indonesia, and Nepal, and 16 specialists.
- Second Event: 398 Dutch/Belgian young people, 19 organisers, 73 youth from Kenya, Nepal, and Mongolia, and 18 specialists.
- Participants were aged 14–21, representing various educational levels (pre-vocational to university education).

#### 3. Masterclasses and discussions:

- Participants formed groups, researched their sub-themes, and designed interactive masterclasses.
- They engaged in discussions with specialists, exploring global issues and exchanging perspectives.

#### 4. Feedback and evaluation:

Surveys and the Youth Pass platform were used to evaluate short-term outcomes and provide certificates to participants.

### Results

#### 1. Impact on participants:

- Skill development: Participants improved their public speaking, confidence, and ability to present complex ideas. One participant noted, 'I never dared to give presentations before, but now I feel confident and even enjoy it.'
- Knowledge retention: Two-thirds of participants retained key knowledge about the SDGs, including their number, origin, and target date.
- Perceived value: Over 70% of participants described the experience as life-changing and valuable for personal and professional growth.

#### 2. Community and specialist engagement:

- Participants fostered global citizenship by discussing global themes with peers and specialists.
- Specialists appreciated the participants' preparation and noted that the masterclasses also provided them with new insights.

#### 3. Areas for improvement:

- Some groups required additional preparation support.
- Feedback suggested the need for more interim contact points and additional physical meetings to enhance readiness.

### Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

#### 1. Foster long-term partnerships:

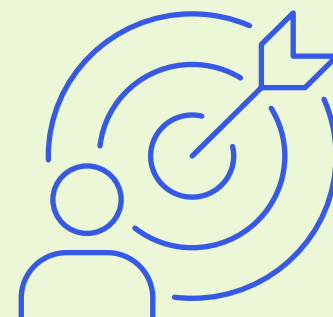
- Develop strong relationships with schools to ensure participant recruitment and teacher involvement.
- Encourage teachers to guide students voluntarily and passionately.

#### 2. Provide inclusive opportunities:

- Actively include youth from all educational levels and ensure accessibility for special needs students.
- Tailor support to meet diverse needs.

#### 3. Incorporate rewards:

- Offer certificates or tangible recognition to participants for their efforts, as this motivates continued engagement.



The SDG Ambassador project exemplifies how extracurricular initiatives can foster youth engagement, bridge formal and non-formal education, and cultivate a new generation of global citizens. By replicating this model, other organisations can empower young people to address critical global challenges while developing essential life skills.

#### 4. Ensure comprehensive preparation:

- Schedule frequent interim meetings and additional support sessions for participant groups.
- Integrate feedback from participants and specialists into event planning.

#### 5. Promote skill-building activities:

- Empower young people to take ownership of their learning by designing and delivering masterclasses.
- Facilitate discussions with specialists to build confidence and deepen knowledge.

#### 6. Highlight long-term impact:

- Use follow-up evaluations to measure the sustained effects of the project on participants' skills and behaviours.

## Youth + School Education

## 7. Democratic Vaccination

Timeline: **4 years**

Partners: **the Croatian Debate Society (Croatia)**  
**Croatian Cities Association (Croatia)**  
**Association of Croatian Secondary School Principals (Croatia)**  
**Citizens Foundation (Iceland)**

Budget: **€179,310**

Link: <https://hdd.hr/demokratsko-procijepljenje/>

Under the project 'Democratic Vaccination', the Croatian Debate Society established debate clubs and deliberative democracy as a model for the development of democratic competences and participatory decision-making.

Through diverse project activities, debate clubs were expanded as a successful model of civic education (which is not mandatory in Croatia) that develops the skills of argumentation, critical thinking, expression, and teamwork, sensitises young people to diversity and the importance of human rights, and empowers them for informed action.

### Objectives

The 'Democratic Vaccination' project aimed to establish debate clubs and introduce deliberative democracy as a model to develop democratic competencies and participatory decision-making among youth.

The primary goals were as follows:

1. Empowering young people: Equip students with argumentation, critical thinking, expression, and teamwork skills, while sensitising them to diversity and human rights.
2. Civic education expansion: Promote debate clubs as a successful model of informal civic education, particularly in a context where civic education is not mandatory in Croatia.
3. Participation in democratic processes: Provide practical knowledge of democratic processes and collaborative problem-solving to prepare young people for active local, national, and European engagement.

The project directly involved 90 high school teachers and 1,500 students.

### Partners

The success of 'Democratic Vaccination' was built on collaboration between multiple partners:

#### 1. Croatian Debate Society:

- Led the implementation of debate clubs and deliberative democracy models.
- Provided teacher training and ongoing mentoring support.

#### 2. Croatian Cities Association (Udruga Gradova):

- Supported local decision-makers' participation in deliberation events.
- Facilitated connections between students and municipal authorities.

#### 3. Association of Croatian Secondary School Principals (Udruga Hrvatskih Srednjoškolskih Ravnatelja):

- Motivated schools to join the project.
- Acted as a key driver for visibility and dissemination activities.

#### 4. Citizens Foundation (Iceland):

- Conducted training sessions for teachers and youth ambassadors.
- Introduced an online democracy component using their platform, Your Priorities, to enable virtual deliberations.

#### 5. 50 High schools across Croatia:

- Acted as associate partners in hosting debate clubs and deliberation events.



## Youth + School Education / 7. Democratic Vaccination

### Activities

The project employed a diverse range of activities to achieve its objectives:

#### 1. Teacher and volunteer training:

- Three cycles of training sessions for over 80 teachers, equipping them with skills to implement debate-based civic education models.
- Ongoing mentoring to ensure the successful integration of informal methods into formal school systems.

#### 2. Debate clubs and civic education:

- Established debate clubs in 50 schools, directly involving 400 students.
- Regular debate sessions focused on building critical thinking and argumentation skills.

#### 3. Deliberative democracy activities:

- Trained 100+ student deliberation ambassadors in two training cycles to lead local deliberation events.
- Conducted 50 local training sessions to prepare students for deliberation processes.
- Organised 24 deliberation events across 20 Croatian cities, engaging over 1,000 young participants and local decision-makers.

#### 4. Workshops for marginalised groups:

- Hosted specialised workshops for Roma minority youth, focusing on active participation in their local communities.

#### 5. Development of teaching materials:

- Produced resources and materials to support teachers in implementing the debate and deliberation models.

#### 6. Direct engagement with decision-makers:

- Created platforms for young people to present local issues to school principals, city mayors, and other municipal authorities.

### Results

The project achieved significant results in fostering democratic engagement and civic awareness:

#### 1. Youth empowerment:

- Participants developed critical democratic skills, including argumentation, collaboration, and informed decision-making.
- Students gained practical knowledge of democratic processes and their importance in societal problem-solving.

#### 2. Expanded civic education:

- The debate club model proved to be a scalable and effective approach for introducing civic education in schools.
- Established a sustainable network of trained teachers and volunteers to continue implementing civic education activities.

#### 3. Deliberation successes:

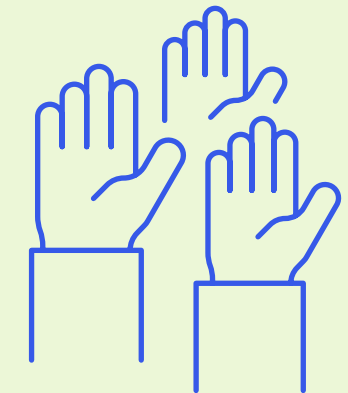
- Developed a deliberative public discussion model tailored for Croatian local self-government, facilitating the inclusion of vulnerable groups in decision-making.
- Led to 10 successful deliberations where local governments implemented students' solutions, such as creating a youth space in Knin and organising the first Norijada (end-of-school-year celebration) in Vukovar.

#### 4. Inclusive participation:

- The project prioritised involving marginalised groups, such as students from underdeveloped regions and Roma minorities, ensuring diverse perspectives in decision-making processes.

#### 5. Practical impact:

- Enabled direct connections between youth and decisionmakers, fostering mutual understanding and trust.
- Increased interest and participation from vocational schools, demonstrating the adaptability of the model.



## Youth + School Education / 7. Democratic Vaccination

### Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

#### 1. Adapting to the local context

- Each community or region will have different educational systems, political environments, and levels of civic engagement. It is crucial to tailor the debate and deliberation models to fit the local context. For example, in Croatia, civic education is not mandatory, so the project had to creatively introduce it through informal methods such as debate clubs. Replicators need to assess how best to integrate similar methods based on local circumstances.

#### 2. Strong cross-sectoral partnerships

- The success of the project relied on collaboration between schools, local government bodies, and international organisations. To replicate this, it is essential to establish partnerships across sectors. Engaging local decision-makers, educational institutions, and civic organisations is crucial for gaining legitimacy, resources, and broader community involvement.

#### 3. Teacher and volunteer training

- A core part of the project was training teachers and volunteers to implement debate and deliberation methods in schools. Replication efforts should focus on building the capacity of educators to facilitate these activities and provide them with ongoing support. Ensuring that educators understand and embrace informal educational methods will sustain the practice.

#### 4. Overcoming organisational challenges

- One challenge faced in this project was scheduling activities in vocational schools, where students have tight schedules due to practicums. Those replicating the project need to be prepared for logistical difficulties, such as organising activities outside of regular class hours. Flexibility and creativity in scheduling will be crucial for involving students in such programmes.

#### 5. Ensuring inclusivity

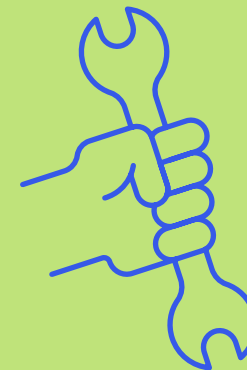
- Replication should maintain a strong emphasis on including vulnerable and marginalised groups in the decision-making process. The deliberation model developed in the project was adapted to ensure their participation, which not only increased the diversity of perspectives but also empowered groups often excluded from democratic processes. Ensuring the model is inclusive and accessible should be a priority.

#### 6. Monitoring and mentorship

- Providing mentorship and ongoing support to educators and local volunteers is vital. The project highlighted the need for continuous guidance, especially when introducing new methods of civic education in schools. It is important to establish mechanisms for monitoring progress and providing feedback to those implementing the model.

#### 7. Real-world impact

- One of the project's strengths was the direct connection between student deliberations and real-world outcomes. Replicators should focus on creating opportunities where students' ideas can influence actual decisions at the local level. This will motivate participants by showing the tangible impact of their involvement and reinforcing the importance of civic engagement.



The 'Democratic Vaccination' project successfully empowered young people through hands-on experiences in debate and deliberation, fostering democratic awareness and active citizenship. By leveraging cross-sectoral partnerships and prioritising inclusivity, the project created sustainable models for civic education and participatory decision-making. Its success offers valuable insights for replicating similar initiatives in other contexts, demonstrating the transformative potential of practical, inclusive, and collaborative approaches to youth engagement.

## Youth + School Education

## 8. MasterPeace

Timeline:	<b>13 months</b>
Partners:	<b>Stichting MasterPeace (the Netherlands) Schools across the Netherlands</b>
Key Action:	<b>Learning Mobility of Individuals</b>
Action Type:	<b>Youth participation activities</b>
Budget:	<b>€59,700</b>

Link to the project: [\(2022–2023\) in the Erasmus+ database](#)

Link: <https://masterpeace.org/>



## Objectives

The project aimed to engage, connect, and empower youth, particularly those from vulnerable areas, to become active citizens contributing to their communities. While initially targeting 50 young participants (25 from The Hague and 25 from Utrecht), the project significantly exceeded expectations by involving 401 participants (188 in The Hague and 213 in Utrecht). The main objectives were as follows:

- 1. Empowering youth:** Build self-esteem and identity among youth to transition from passive participants to active citizens.
- 2. Sustainable development:** Introduce the Doughnut Economy theory to encourage sustainable development within social and planetary boundaries.
- 3. Bridging divides:** Foster intercultural, intergenerational, and social dialogue by connecting youth with local decision-makers.
- 4. Strengthening European citizenship:** Help youth understand and align personal values with EU values, boosting their sense of identity and self-esteem.
- 5. Establishing sustainable structures:** Create frameworks for inclusive and ongoing youth participation in local communities.



## Youth + School Education / 8. MasterPeace

### Partners

The project's success relied on collaboration with diverse partners:

#### 1. National and Local Governments:

- Director National Program Zuid-West: Integrated the project into the national programme to ensure alignment with broader regional and national goals.
- Local Governments in The Hague and Utrecht: The Public Health Department, the Department of Culture, and the Aldermen's offices provided strategic guidance and financial support. Their involvement highlighted the importance of youth participation in shaping city policies and addressing community needs.

#### 2. Youth Organisations:

- The Hague: Organisations such as Wijkz, Block33, School des Levens, Buurtkamer Vrederus, Meion/Ons Pandje, and 'Buurtmoeders' played a key role in recruiting and mentoring youth participants. They provided direct support to the young people, ensuring engagement and addressing individual needs.
- Utrecht: Yunity and AllOne facilitated workshops and provided spaces for activities, ensuring a safe and supportive environment for youth engagement.

#### 3. Educational Institutions:

- DURF! (HU), Gerrit Rietveld College, St. Bonifatius College, and STIP VSO: These schools encouraged student participation by integrating project activities into extracurricular programmes. STIP VSO played a unique role in helping students share their personal stories, fostering empathy and understanding.

- ROC Midden Nederland: This vocational institution joined the project to align its citizenship programmes with the project's goals, promoting active civic engagement among students.

#### 4. Artists and Cultural Organisations:

- Kijklab, The Hague Street Art, Munir de Vries, LessKitchen, Aad van Vliet, and Utrecht in Dialoog: These partners enriched the project by introducing creative tools, such as graffiti, photography, film, and music, to help participants express their ideas and visions for their communities. Their contributions made the learning process engaging and impactful.

#### 5. Housing Corporation:

- Staedion: Supported the project by providing logistical and venue support. Their involvement also encouraged participants to think critically about the housing and urban development issues affecting their neighbourhoods.

#### 6. Youth Workers and Teachers:

- Played an instrumental role in outreach, mentoring, and one-on-one coaching. They bridged the gap between youth participants and the project's broader objectives by providing continuous support and feedback.

#### 7. Community Stakeholders:

- Local decision-makers, including business representatives and policymakers, participated in dialogues and summits, offering their perspectives and gaining insights into youth concerns. Their involvement ensured the sustainability of the project's outcomes.

### Activities

The project's activities were implemented in three progressive streams across The Hague and Utrecht:

#### Stream 1: 'I AM' (building self-esteem and identity)

- Participants explored personal identity, values, and self-esteem through:
- Storytelling workshops: 'Who am I, and what is my dream?' (190 participants)
- EU democratic values: 'I am a European' (73 participants)
- Sustainability education: Learning the Doughnut Economy theory to address environmental and social challenges (222 participants)

#### Stream 2: 'WE ARE' (connecting with peers and stakeholders)

- Activities focused on fostering collaboration and creative expression:
- Visualisation workshops: Sharing dreams for a thriving city (381 participants)
- City assessments: Identifying areas for improvement (244 participants)
- Global perspectives: Understanding shared challenges (127 participants)
- Summit dialogues: Intergenerational dialogue and collaboration (72 participants)

#### Stream 3: 'WE ACT' (empowering community action)

Participants transitioned to active citizenship through:

- Campaign draining: Communication and engagement skills (59 participants)
- Community projects: Initiatives such as neighbourhood cleanups and intergenerational games (218 participants)
- Capacity-building: Training youth workers and teachers (14 participants)
- Knowledge sharing: Creating platforms to disseminate tools and resources (47 participants)
- Stakeholder engagement: Organising summits to share lessons and commitments (47 participants)



## Youth + School Education / 8. MasterPeace

### Results

The project achieved significant outcomes:

#### 1. Empowered youth:

- Participants developed self-esteem, personal values, and confidence.
- Gained skills in project management, advocacy, and community engagement.
- Transitioned into active citizens, contributing to community improvements.

#### 2. Stronger community bonds:

- Fostered connections between youth, peers, and local stakeholders.
- Strengthened trust in governmental institutions and local organisations.

#### 3. Sustainable impact:

- Participants initiated ongoing community actions.
- Local stakeholders gained insight into youth concerns and potential.

#### 4. Recognition and visibility:

- Participants received community recognition, such as coverage in local newspapers and invitations to civic events such as 'Prinsjesdag' breakfast with the mayor.
- Teachers and youth workers became advocates for the project, inspiring further collaborations.
- Feedback suggested the need for more interim contact points and additional physical meetings to enhance readiness.

### Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

#### 1. Integrate creativity and practical skills:

Use art, storytelling, and project management to make learning engaging and impactful.

#### 2. Foster partnerships:

Collaborate with local governments, youth organisations, educational institutions, and artists to ensure diverse input and support.

#### 3. Create safe learning environments:

Leverage schools as safe spaces for youth to explore their identity and develop confidence before engaging with broader communities.

#### 4. Engage stakeholders:

Involve local decision-makers to bridge gaps between youth and institutions, fostering trust and mutual understanding.

#### 5. Emphasise inclusivity:

Tailor activities to reach marginalised youth, ensuring representation and accessibility.

#### 6. Ensure sustainability:

Establish frameworks for ongoing youth participation, such as regular summits and community platforms.



The project successfully engaged and empowered youth from vulnerable areas, fostering self-esteem, community connection, and active citizenship. By combining creativity, education, and collaboration, the project created lasting impacts for participants, local communities, and stakeholders. Its replicable model offers valuable insights for fostering inclusive youth participation and sustainable social change.

## Youth + School Education

## 9. The National Student Council in Bulgaria

Timeline:	<b>18 months</b>
Partners:	<b>Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bulgaria Association (Bulgaria) Schools across Bulgaria</b>
Key Action:	<b>Learning Mobility of Individuals</b>
Action Type:	<b>Youth participation activities</b>
Budget:	<b>€24,200</b>

Link to the project: [\(2023–2024\) in the Erasmus+ database](#)

Link: <https://www.studentcouncilbg.org/>



The National Student Council in Bulgaria is a national body uniting more than 140 student councils and parliaments from all over Bulgaria. Its establishment by Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bulgaria was supported by three consecutive projects funded by the Erasmus+ programme. The first project, 'Establishment of the National Student Council' was implemented between 1 May 2020 and 30 April 2022 under KA3 of the programme, followed by the project 'Meetings of the National Student Council', funded by KA154 of Erasmus+ between 1 January 2023 and 30 June 2024. Its current functioning is supported by the project, 'Capacity Building of the National Student Council', funded again by KA154 for the period between 1 June 2024 and 30 November 2025. This project description focuses on the results of the second project, 'Meetings of the National Student Council', lasting for 18 months.

The project and the whole idea behind the establishment of the National Student Council (NSC) addresses a key issue in youth participation efforts and the formal education sector in Bulgaria: the alienation of student councils, which harms students' interests, limits their voices, and contradicts the European Youth Strategy (2019–2027), which promotes their active civic participation in democratic and public life in Europe.

What the alienation of student councils involves:

- 1. Lack of student councils and parliaments in schools:** Despite the fact that, according to Bulgarian law, every school is obliged to have a functioning self-governing body (student council or student parliament), only about 10% of schools in the country have them (Statistics of the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science, 2022).
- 2. Misunderstanding of the main role of student councils:** Even in the schools where such a body exists, there is a deep misunderstanding about the main role of the student councils. According to the survey 'Quality of student self-government', conducted in 2022 in 130 schools in the country as part of the first project mentioned above, 90% of the respondents agree that the main activities of the self-government body in their school are related to charity events and not to direct participation in decision-making processes. Only 41% of the respondents said that the school management tries to involve the school council in the decision-making process.
- 3. Lack of motivation among students** to set up and run self-governing bodies in their schools.
- 4. Lack of representation of student interests** at a national level and lack of a national student body—before the National Student Council was established in 2022.

## Youth + School Education / 9. The National Student Council in Bulgaria

### Objectives

The project aimed to address significant issues in youth participation and student representation in Bulgaria, aligning with the European Youth Strategy (2019–2027). Specific objectives were as follows:

- 1. Expanding the network:** Growing the National Student Council (NSC) to represent over 140 student councils and parliaments, uniting more than 55,000 students across Bulgaria.
- 2. Electing a governing body:** Establishing the first Board of the NSC and preparing strategic documents for its governance.
- 3. Institutional dialogue:** Facilitating four meetings with representatives from key governmental and educational institutions.
- 4. National conference:** Hosting the Second National Conference of the NSC to bring students and policymakers together.
- 5. Promoting student governance:** Raising awareness about the essence of school self-governance and encouraging the establishment of student councils nationwide.

### Partners

Although the project did not involve official partners, its success relied heavily on the collaboration and support of the following parties:

- 1. High schools:** Schools provided platforms for establishing and supporting student councils and parliaments.
- 2. Regional education offices:** These offices played a crucial role in disseminating information about the NSC and encouraging participation.
- 3. Ministry of Education and Science:** Provided indirect support through engagement with the NSC.
- 4. Local stakeholders:** Headteachers, teachers, and pedagogical advisers who motivated and guided student involvement.



### Activities

The project included a wide range of activities aimed at fostering student engagement, building governance structures, and facilitating dialogue:

- 1. Adoption of the NSC Statute (March 2023):** Formalised the operational framework.
- 2. Elections for NSC board members:** Conducted in March–May 2023 and April–June 2024.
- 3. Virtual meetings:** Held 38 meetings, including General Assembly, Board, and working meetings.
- 4. Institutional dialogues:** Organised four meetings between NSC members and government representatives.
- 5. National conference (November 2023):** Hosted 124 participants, including 88 youth delegates and 28 policymakers.
- 6. Working group participation:** Involved NSC Board members in three national working groups.



## Youth + School Education / 9. The National Student Council in Bulgaria

### Results

#### QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

1. **148 student councils joined the NSC, representing 56,673 students nationwide.**
2. **Four institutional meetings involved 28 representatives.**
3. **The National Conference engaged 124 participants**, including the Deputy Minister of Education and Science.
4. **Initiated the establishment of three regional youth associations.**
5. **Developed four key policy documents**, including:
  - a position paper on student self-governance;
  - a draft proposal for inter-ministerial projects;
  - a report with recommendations from the National Conference; and
  - a declaration to clarify student self-governance in Bulgarian law
6. **Achieved NSC representation in three national working groups.**

#### QUALITATIVE RESULTS

##### 1. Impact on students:

- Gained knowledge of student self-governance and leadership skills.
- Increased motivation for civic participation and advocacy.
- Shifted attitudes towards seeing themselves as active contributors to democracy.

##### 2. Impact on communities:

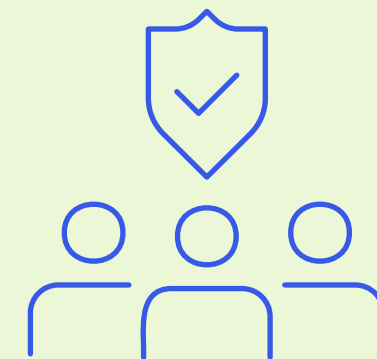
- Strengthened student communities with more motivated and empowered members.
- Fostered greater awareness and support for student governance among teachers and school administrators.

##### 3. Impact on institutions:

- Raised awareness of the importance of student participation in decision-making processes.
- Encouraged local and national policymakers to involve youth in governance.

### Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

1. **Ensure institutional support:** Collaboration with schools and education offices is essential for building trust and facilitating participation.
2. **Foster cross-sectoral collaboration:** Engage policymakers, educators, and youth organisations to ensure broad-based support and resource sharing.
3. **Prioritise youth empowerment:** Focus on building leadership and advocacy skills among students to sustain participation beyond project timelines.
4. **Overcome political challenges:** Persist in engaging national-level decision-makers, emphasising their responsibility to support youth participation as outlined in EU policies.
5. **Create sustainable frameworks:** Develop statutes, strategic documents, and knowledge platforms to provide long-term support for student councils.



The establishment and functioning of the National Student Council demonstrate a successful model for bridging gaps in youth participation and fostering collaboration across sectors. Its achievements provide a replicable framework for promoting student governance and empowering young voices in decision-making processes.

## Youth + School Education

## 10. Nefiks Career Day

Timeline: **5-month cycles yearly**

Partners: **Zavod Nefiks (Slovenia)  
Schools across Slovenia**

Budget: **less than €1000**

Link: <http://talentiran.si/>

### Objectives

The main objective of the project is to encourage young people to take an active role in planning their own career paths. Each year, the project focuses on a significant EU topic: Digitalisation (2023), Sustainability and Green Economy (2024), Intercultural Communication (2025).

Through engaging, non-formal learning activities, high school students are provided opportunities to reflect on their values and goals and how these align with potential future careers. The project also promotes the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) as a valuable step in career development.

### Partners

The project partners are high schools from various regions of Slovenia. These schools play a crucial role by:

- informing teachers and students about the project;
- organising the time and place for workshop implementation; and
- conducting the workshops themselves (teachers and students) or inviting Zavod Nefiks staff and volunteers to lead the workshops.

Collaboration with schools ensures that the project integrates seamlessly into formal education settings, bringing added value through non-formal education methods.



## Youth + School Education / 10. Nefiks Career Day

### Activities

The project's core activities are annual workshops held in over 20 high schools across Slovenia. Key details include:

**Participants:** Approximately 1,000 high school students (aged 17–19) and at least 20 teachers or school counsellors are involved each year.

**Workshop content:** Workshops focus on the selected EU topic for the year, encouraging students to reflect on their career goals, learn about the ESC, and consider how their personal values connect to their future careers.

**Volunteer involvement:** ESC volunteers participate by sharing their experiences, promoting the ESC, and helping students explore career development opportunities.

**Career counselling:** After the workshops, free career counselling is offered to students who wish to delve deeper into their career planning.

### Results

#### Impact on students

- 1. Knowledge and reflection:** Students gain insights into their career paths and learn about opportunities such as the ESC.
- 2. Increased engagement:** The innovative, non-formal approach captures students' attention and makes learning more enjoyable.
- 3. Career readiness:** Students leave with a clearer understanding of their career aspirations and how to achieve them.

#### Impact on volunteers

- 1. Skill development:** Volunteers enhance their project management, non-formal learning methods, and public speaking skills.
- 2. Experience sharing:** Volunteers inspire students by sharing their personal journeys and experiences with the ESC.

#### Broader community benefits

- 1. Youth empowerment:** Young people become more confident in planning their futures and contributing to society.
- 2. Integration of non-formal education:** The workshops introduce innovative methods into formal educational settings, enriching the learning experience for all involved.

### Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

- 1. Foster strong partnerships with schools:** Collaborating with schools is essential but requires time and patience. Schools plan their schedules months in advance, so flexibility and early communication are crucial.
- 2. Customise approaches:** Not all schools operate in the same way; tailor the project to suit each school's unique context and needs.
- 3. Incorporate non-formal methods:** Introducing non-formal learning into formal education creates an engaging and impactful experience for students.
- 4. Include follow-up support:** Offering career counselling after workshops enhances the long-term benefits for students.
- 5. Involve young volunteers:** ESC volunteers not only bring valuable experiences to share but also gain important skills, making the project mutually beneficial.
- 6. Focus on relevant topics:** Align the workshops with current and meaningful EU topics to ensure relevance and engagement.



This project exemplifies how non-formal education can complement formal education, creating a dynamic learning environment and empowering young people to actively shape their futures.

## Youth + School Education

## 11. Minu Riik (My Country)

Timeline:	<b>7 months</b>
Partners:	<b>Minu Riik (Estonia) Schools across Estonia Parliament Riigikogu Estonian Government Bank of Estonia the European Experience Centre</b>
Key Action:	<b>Learning Mobility of Individuals</b>
Action Type:	<b>Youth participation activities</b>
Budget:	<b>€55,000</b>

Link to the project: [\(2023\) in the Erasmus+ database](#)

Link: <https://minuriik.ee/>

### Objectives

The Minu Riik ('My Country') civic education programme aims to educate ninth-grade students about the functioning of Estonia's democratic systems and state institutions. Its primary objectives are to:

- foster a better understanding among youth about how Estonia's state power operates and the role of decision-makers in society;
- bridge the gap between young people and decision-makers by creating opportunities for direct interaction; and
- encourage active youth participation in democratic processes, helping them understand their role in shaping their country and the values of democracy.

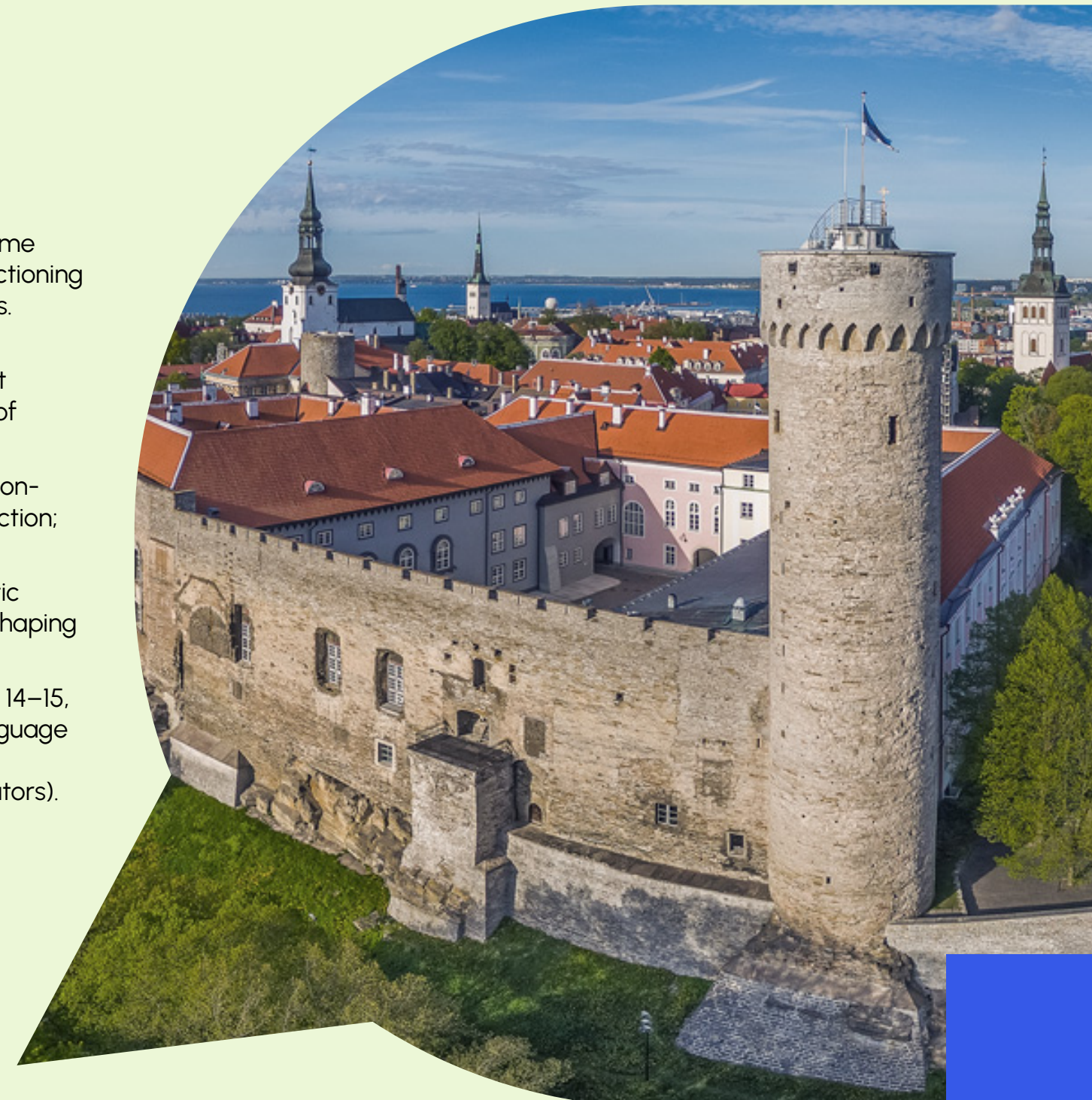
This programme targets ninth-grade students, aged 14–15, from all Russian-language and partially Estonian-language general education schools in Estonia, alongside their accompanying teachers (mainly social studies educators). A total of 4,500 teenagers participated.

### Partners

The project involved several key partners:

- 1. Parliament (Riigikogu):** Hosted students for on-site visits and discussions with Members of Parliament (MPs).
- 2. Estonian government:** Provided insights into governmental operations and decision-making processes.
- 3. Bank of Estonia:** Delivered educational sessions on the history of money, its role in society, and economic decision-making.
- 4. European Commission Representation in Estonia and the European Experience Centre:** Introduced students to Estonia's role within the European Union and the broader context of European governance.

These partnerships ensured a comprehensive overview of Estonia's state mechanisms and enhanced students' direct engagement with key decision-makers and institutions.



## Youth + School Education / II. Minu Riik (My Country)

### Activities

The Minu Riik programme offered a variety of educational and interactive activities:

#### 1. Study days:

- On-site visits to the Riigikogu, Estonian Government, and other institutions.
- Meetings with MPs to discuss democracy, governance, and the role of young people in politics.

#### 2. Educational experiences:

- Interactive simulation games focused on democracy and state institutions.
- Sessions at the Bank of Estonia, explaining monetary history, decision-making processes in economics, and associated risks and opportunities.

#### 3. European engagement:

- Visits to the European Commission Representation and European Experience Centre to understand Estonia's role in

the EU and the functioning of European governance.

#### 4. Essay competition:

- Provided an opportunity for students to reflect on and express their understanding of citizen rights and responsibilities, the role of informed citizens, and their ideas for improving society.

#### 5. Online and non-formal activities:

- Online meetings and non-formal learning sessions to engage students and complement in-person activities.

### Results

#### 1. Impact on participants:

- Students gained a clearer understanding of Estonian statehood and democracy, including the roles of state institutions and decision-makers.
- Direct interaction with MPs and officials made the state feel more accessible, fostering trust and engagement.
- Participants developed greater knowledge of their rights and responsibilities as citizens and the opportunities available for political and societal participation.

#### 2. Behavioural changes:

- Increased interest in societal issues and democratic processes among youth.
- Improved future voter turnout and electoral behaviour due to a better understanding of state functions and structures.

#### 3. Skill development:

- Students enhanced their critical thinking, communication, and civic knowledge through discussions, simulations, and essay writing.
- Gained confidence in raising issues with decision-makers and engaging in societal debates.

#### 4. Community and broader impact:

- Encouraged more active communication between youth and decision-makers.
- Expanded awareness of Estonia's role within the EU and the interconnectedness of local and global governance.
- Fostered a sense of responsibility among youth to contribute to societal improvement and democracy.

### Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

#### 1. Strengthen institutional partnerships:

- Collaborate with national and international institutions to provide diverse perspectives on governance and democracy.
- Engage decision-makers early to ensure enthusiastic participation and meaningful interactions with students.

#### 2. Incorporate interactive learning:

- Use simulation games and non-formal learning methods to make abstract concepts such as democracy and governance more accessible and engaging for youth.

#### 3. Ensure inclusivity:

- Target diverse groups, including Russian-language schools, to promote inclusivity and representation.
- Adapt activities to accommodate varying educational backgrounds and needs.

#### 4. Facilitate direct engagement:

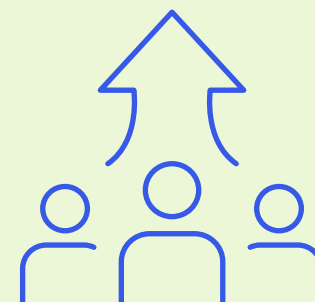
- Create opportunities for youth to meet and discuss with decision-makers to foster mutual understanding and encourage dialogue.
- Include follow-up activities to maintain momentum and deepen the impact of initial interactions.

#### 5. Expand European integration:

- Highlight the role of EU institutions to provide a broader context for national governance.
- Encourage youth to think critically about Estonia's position within the European Union and its global implications.

#### 6. Promote reflection and expression:

- Use tools such as essay competitions to allow students to articulate their understanding and ideas for societal improvement.
- Include evaluation tools such as Youth Pass to assess the programme's impact and provide participants with formal recognition.



The Minu Riik project serves as an exemplary model for fostering youth engagement in democratic processes. By combining institutional partnerships, interactive learning, and direct communication with decision-makers, the programme cultivates informed, active citizens who are equipped to shape the future of their country and society.

## Youth + School Education

# 12. Peace through Exchange and Active Citizenship Education

Timeline: **1 year**

Partners: **European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL) (Belgium)**  
**AFS network**

Link: <https://peace.afs.org/>

The PEACE Programme, or Peace through Exchange and Active Citizenship Education, is a secondary school trimester programme designed to empower and enable young people to become active citizens. Participants stay with host families and attend upper secondary school in a European country. At the end of the programme, all participants gather in Belgium for a five-day camp focused on Active Global Citizenship in Europe. Every year, the programme brings together more than 260 students, all aged between 15–18 years old, and more than 50 volunteers, mostly aged between 18 and 30 years old, to organise the camp.



# Youth + School Education / 12. Peace through Exchange and Active Citizenship Education

## Objectives

The PEACE Programme, or Peace through Exchange and Active Citizenship Education, is a secondary school trimester initiative designed to empower young people to become active citizens. The programme combines intercultural exchange, school-based education, and non-formal learning to foster global awareness and active citizenship.

### The primary objectives of the programme include:

- developing awareness of global issues within the context of Europe and beyond;
- addressing the complexities surrounding European cultures, societies, and institutions in a global context;
- equipping participants with tools to take meaningful action; and
- building a community of young people dedicated to growth as active citizens.

### The specific objectives of the PEACE Final Camp are:

- connecting the exchange experience to the concept of Global Citizenship;
- enhancing understanding of global dimensions and perspectives;
- providing knowledge, motivation, and personal skills to implement Global Active Citizenship; and
- supporting participants in preparing for re-entry into their home countries.

## Activities

The PEACE Programme consists of two main components: the trimester exchange and the PEACE Final Camp in Belgium.

### 1. Trimester exchange

Participants stay with host families and attend upper secondary school in a European country, integrating into local communities and gaining first-hand experience of European cultural and societal diversity.

### 2. PEACE final camp

This five-day residential camp in Belgium brings together all participants to explore Active Global Citizenship through:

- Workshops: Interactive sessions led by volunteer youth workers on topics such as sustainability, artificial intelligence, and more, using non-formal education methods.
- Sharing session: Participants discuss their exchange experiences in small groups, reflecting on personal growth and intercultural learning.

## Partners

The programme is implemented through a robust network of partners coordinated by the European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL), the umbrella organisation of AFS organisations in Europe and the Mediterranean. The EFIL encompasses 24 member organisations across Europe and beyond, providing logistical and strategic support.

### Key roles of the partners:

- **AFS organisations:** Facilitate the sending and hosting of exchange students, ensuring a seamless school-based mobility experience.
- **Volunteer youth workers:** Design and deliver the non-formal education sessions during the PEACE Final Camp, fostering a safe and engaging learning environment.
- **European institutions:** Host visits to locations such as the European Parliament, enhancing participants' understanding of European governance and civic engagement.

- Re-entry session: Structured discussions help participants process their experiences and prepare for reintegration into their home countries.
- Institutional visits: A day in Brussels visiting European institutions, such as the European Parliament, reinforces participants' connection to European citizenship.

The programme also involves over 50 volunteer youth workers annually, primarily aged 18–30, who contribute to the planning and facilitation of the camp.



# Youth + School Education / 12. Peace through Exchange and Active Citizenship Education

## Results

The PEACE Programme has achieved significant outcomes:

### 1. Empowered youth:

- Participants gain enhanced global awareness, intercultural competence, and active citizenship skills.
- They are motivated to take meaningful actions for a just and peaceful society.

### 2. Community building:

The programme fosters a sense of belonging among young Europeans, inspiring them to collaborate across borders.

### 3. Knowledge and skills:

Workshops and activities equip participants with tools and frameworks to address global challenges and implement local actions.

### 4. Engagement with European institutions:

Visits to European institutions deepen participants' understanding of governance and their role in shaping the future of Europe.

### 5. Volunteer development:

The programme develops the skills and leadership capacity of volunteer youth workers, inspiring them to continue their engagement in active citizenship initiatives.



## Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

While the PEACE Programme serves as an exemplary model, replication requires specific conditions and resources:

### 1. Network of partners:

A strong network of organisations capable of managing school-based exchanges is essential. Partners must coordinate the logistical aspects of exchange mobility and residential camps.

### 2. Integration of formal and non-formal education:

Building trust between schools and youth workers is crucial. Teachers should value the informal learning experiences of exchange students, while youth workers must align activities with school requirements.

### 3. Volunteer engagement:

Recruitment and training of committed volunteer youth workers are key to delivering high-quality non-formal education sessions.

### 4. Institutional collaboration:

Partnerships with European institutions enhance the educational value of the programme and foster a sense of belonging among participants.

### 5. Funding and accessibility:

The programme's sustainability depends on participant fees and external sponsorships. Efforts to secure funding from local or national institutions can ensure accessibility for students from diverse backgrounds.

### 6. Cultural and contextual adaptation:

Any replication effort should consider local contexts, adapting the programme's structure and content to align with cultural and educational norms.

The PEACE Programme successfully combines intercultural exchange, formal education, and non-formal learning to empower young people as active citizens. By fostering global awareness, providing practical tools for action, and building a sense of community, the programme inspires participants to contribute to a just and peaceful society. Its model demonstrates the transformative potential of cross-sectoral collaboration, offering valuable insights for similar initiatives across Europe and beyond.

## Youth + Adult Education

# 13. United for Employability

Partners: **OCEANS Network**  
**United Maroc (United Africa)**  
**Laureus SESLA (Sport for Employability and Sustainable Livelihood in Africa) Incubation Hub**

Link: <https://www.esaa-eu.org/news/latest-news/detail/united-for-employability>

The project 'United for Employability', implemented from 8–10 July 2023, was led by the OCEANS Network in partnership with United Maroc (United Africa), and supported by the European Commission.

Held in the Region of Casablanca, Morocco, from 8–10 July 2023, the project aimed to empower youth through basketball and soft skills development. Trained by renowned experts, 17 participants developed their skills through a three-day programme involving lessons and practice.

It targeted diverse participants, both local and international, offering workshops, group discussions, basketball games, and officiating lessons. By promoting social inclusion and equal access to education, this project contributes to addressing youth unemployment and fostering a more cohesive society. Indeed, by utilising basketball as a means of engagement, the programme promotes social inclusion and fosters teamwork, communication, leadership, and entrepreneurship skills.

### Objectives

The primary objective of the 'United for Employability' project was to address youth unemployment by promoting social inclusion and fostering essential soft skills through sports. The project leveraged basketball, particularly Basketball 3x3, as a tool to:

- develop teamwork, communication, leadership, and entrepreneurship skills among participants;
- promote equal access to education and opportunities for diverse youth populations, both local and international; and
- create bridges between communities and generations by fostering mutual understanding, cohesion, and empowerment.

The project aimed to demonstrate the transferability of skills acquired through sports into personal and professional life, using an intersectional approach to education and development.

### Partners

The project was a collaborative effort led by the OCEANS Network, in partnership with United Maroc (United Africa), and supported by the European Commission. Key contributions included:

#### 1. OCEANS network:

- Coordinated the project as a member of the ESAA (Erasmus+ Students and Alumni Alliance).
- Provided funding through the ESAA scheme and delivered sessions on international mobility opportunities, such as Erasmus+ scholarships.

#### 2. United Maroc (United Africa):

- Based in Morocco, specialising in empowering youth through Basketball 3x3.
- Contributed highly experienced coaches and developed tailored activities to meet the project's objectives.

#### 3. Laureus SESLA (Sport for Employability and Sustainable Livelihood in Africa) incubation hub and local organisations in Zenata:

- Facilitated community engagement and logistical arrangements, contributing to the local economy and ensuring the project's success.
- Contributed to various sessions of training and study visits in South Africa to improve our organisation and to sustain the programme.



## Youth + Adult Education / 13. United for Employability

### Activities

The project featured a variety of interactive and engaging activities designed to enhance participants' skills and foster social inclusion:

#### 1. Workshops and discussions:

- Sessions focused on performance objectives versus result objectives.
- Presentations on international mobility opportunities to expand participants' horizons.

#### 2. Basketball training and practice:

- Practical activities on the court, including team games and officiating lessons.
- Emphasis on mutual trust, teamwork, and individual skill development.

#### 3. Community engagement:

- Interaction with local children to create a safe and cohesive environment.
- Activities were conducted in Zenata, an eco-city near Casablanca, ensuring meaningful community involvement.

#### 4. Pilot implementation:

- The programme gathered 17 participants from four countries, representing six nationalities.
- The initiative combined theoretical and practical elements to demonstrate the applicability of skills learned through sports.

### Results

#### 1. Impact on participants:

- Participants gained key soft skills, including communication, teamwork, and leadership.
- Increased awareness of international mobility opportunities and career pathways.
- Positive feedback highlighted the effectiveness of sports in fostering personal and professional development.

#### 2. Community benefits:

- Local children and families in Zenata engaged with the programme, promoting inclusion and cohesion.
- Collaboration with local organisations supported the local economy and strengthened community ties.

#### 3. Programme expansion:

- The successful pilot project laid the groundwork for scaling the programme into a long-term initiative. United Maroc (United Africa) joined the Laureus SESLA (Sport for Employability and Sustainable Livelihood in Africa) incubation hub to enhance organisational capacity and expand the programme's reach.

### Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

#### 1. Leverage sports as a tool for development:

- Use sports such as Basketball 3x3 to foster essential soft skills, promote inclusion, and bridge societal divides.

#### 2. Prioritise community engagement:

- Involve local communities and organisations to ensure the relevance and sustainability of the initiative.
- Focus on creating safe, cohesive environments for participants to learn and grow.

#### 3. Promote partnerships:

- Collaborate with local, national, and international organisations to pool resources and expertise.
- Engage experienced coaches and trainers to deliver impactful sessions.

#### 4. Integrate educational components:

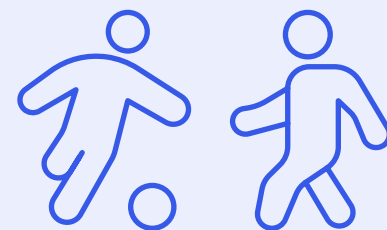
- Combine theoretical workshops with practical activities to demonstrate skill transferability.
- Include sessions on international mobility and career opportunities to expand participants' future prospects.

#### 5. Scale through pilot projects:

- Start with small-scale pilot initiatives to test the model, gather feedback, and refine approaches before expanding to larger programmes.

#### 6. Focus on intersectionality:

- Address multiple aspects of development, including education, employability, gender equality, and social inclusion, to maximise impact.



The 'United for Employability' project exemplifies how sports can be harnessed to empower youth, promote social cohesion, and build essential life skills. By replicating this model in diverse settings, organisations can create inclusive and impactful initiatives that contribute to individual and community development.

## Youth + Adult Education

## 14. NEETs4NEETs

Timeline:	<b>2 years</b>
Partners:	<b>Region Västra Götaland Administration of Folk High Schools The Baden-Württemberg Adult Education Association Oslo Adult Education Centre Rosenhof The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Agency (NAV Bjerke) Borås Municipality Stuttgart Municipality Support Group Network (SGN) Save The Children European Association of Regional &amp; Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning (EARLALL)</b>
Key Action:	<b>KA2 – Partnerships for cooperation and exchanges of practices</b>
Action Type:	<b>Cooperation partnerships in adult education</b>
Budget:	<b>€296,271</b>

Link to the project: [\(2020–2022\) in the Erasmus+ database](#)

Link: <https://www.earlall.eu/project/neets4neets/>



This project was aimed at young people who are not involved in any kind of education or training or are unemployed (NEETs). The project arose from the realisation that the number of NEETs has remained at a high level, yet the problem-solving process around this issue does not include NEETs themselves. To change this narrative, the NEETs for NEETs project aimed to develop inclusive methods to empower young adults, therefore improving conditions for NEETs. To do so, project partners involved Adult Educators to co-create and design training sessions with and by NEETs. The project involved partners from Sweden, Germany, Norway, and Belgium. Based on an existing example of good practice, the project will broaden and modify the ReAct Self-Empowerment model, developed by the refugee organisation Support Group Network (SGN) and implemented by Save the Children (Sweden).

## Youth + Adult Education / 14. NEETs4NEETs

### Objectives

The NEETs for NEETs (N4N) project sought to empower young people not engaged in education, employment, or training (NEETs) by placing them at the centre of the problem-solving process. Traditional approaches often exclude NEETs from discussions about their challenges, leading to solutions that lack relevance and impact. N4N aimed to shift this narrative by:

- 1. Empowering NEETs:** Involving NEETs as co-creators of tools and methodologies, enabling them to become trainers and leaders in their communities.
- 2. Building capacity:** Enhancing the skills of NEETs and adult educators to collaboratively address issues facing disadvantaged youth.
- 3. Encouraging structural change:** Developing scalable, sustainable tools and methodologies to create long-term systemic impact in adult education and youth work.

The project focused on adapting the ReAct Self-Empowerment Model, initially developed by the Support Group Network (SGN) and Save the Children Sweden, to support NEETs in becoming active participants and contributors to their communities.

### Activities

The project activities were structured into key phases to maximise engagement and impact:

#### 1. Adapting the ReAct Self-Empowerment Model

- The model was tailored to meet the specific needs of NEETs, incorporating the tools and exercises developed through focus groups and workshops.
- Key features included communication training, social media engagement, and personal growth activities, all designed to be interactive, youth-friendly, and intensive.

#### 2. Local pilot trainings

- Each partner conducted pilot sessions where NEETs and staff were trained in the adapted ReAct model.
- Pilots were opportunities to refine tools and methodologies, ensuring their effectiveness and relevance for both NEETs and adult educators.
- Participants gained practical experience in using tools such as forum theatre and strategic planning.

#### 3. Train-the-trainer workshops (Learning, Teaching, Training activities – LTTs)

- Two LTTs were held:

### Partners and Their Roles

#### 1. Region Västra Götaland – Administration of Folk High Schools (Sweden):

Served as the project manager, overseeing coordination and implementation.

#### 2. Baden-Württemberg Adult Education Association (Germany) & Oslo Adult Education Centre Rosenhof (Norway):

Engaged NEETs as trainers and provided training for adult educators.

#### 3. Norwegian Labour and Welfare Agency (NAV Bjerke), Borås Stad, and Stuttgart City:

Contributed staff members who received training from NEETs, fostering a role reversal that empowered young people.

#### 4. Save the Children Sweden & Support Group Network (SGN):

Provided expertise in capacity building for NEETs, supporting the adaptation of the ReAct model and mentoring participants.

#### 5. EARLALL (European Association of Regional and Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning):

Handled dissemination and communication strategies, ensuring that project outcomes reached a wide audience.

- Stuttgart, Germany: NEETs trained staff from partner organisations, fostering role reversal and promoting co-creation.
- Borås, Sweden: Experienced NEETs trained new participants, further enhancing the tools and building confidence among trainers.

#### 4. Multiplier events

Dissemination events were held in Sweden, Germany, Norway, and Belgium, sharing findings and best practices with organisations and policymakers across Europe.



## Youth + Adult Education / 14. NEETs4NEETs

### Results

The project produced several key outputs and achieved significant impact:

Outputs

#### 1. Toolkits and resources:

- A comprehensive toolkit for Train-the-Trainer workshops tailored for NEETs.
- Three compendia detailing training methodologies at local, expert, and European levels.
- A handbook offering guidelines on implementing reverse training concepts with NEETs.

#### 2. Recognition as best practice:

- Listed as a 'best practices project' by CEDEFOP for its innovative approach to youth empowerment.

#### 3. Scalability and accessibility:

- Tools and methodologies are designed for broad application, ensuring their sustainability and adaptability for future projects.

### Impact

#### 1. Empowered youth:

- NEETs transitioned from passive participants to confident trainers, taking ownership of their learning and sharing knowledge with peers and educators.
- Participants reported increased self-confidence, improved social skills, and a greater sense of agency in addressing challenges.

#### 2. Cultural shift in adult education:

- Adult educators and staff experienced a shift in perspective, recognising the value of co-creation and the insights NEETs bring to the table.
- Role reversals during training sessions highlighted the potential of youth-led initiatives.

#### 3. Community engagement:

- Local events, including intercultural days and forum theatre workshops, engaged over 500 community members, fostering dialogue and breaking down stereotypes.

#### 4. Ripple effects:

- Participants applied their training beyond the project, organising workshops, creating local initiatives, and even drafting their own Erasmus+ project proposals.

#### 5. Promotion of green travel:

- Partners highlighted the social and environmental benefits of sustainable travel, showcasing its role in building strong interpersonal connections.

### Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

#### 1. Engage NEETs as co-creators:

Involve NEETs in all stages of the project to ensure that tools and methodologies are relevant, impactful, and empowering.

#### 2. Foster role reversals:

Encourage NEETs to lead training sessions for adult educators, promoting mutual learning and breaking down hierarchical structures.

#### 3. Utilise design thinking:

Apply design thinking principles to adapt tools and training methods, ensuring they are accessible, engaging, and tailored to participants' needs.

#### 4. Promote scalability and sustainability:

Develop tools and methodologies that can be easily adapted for diverse contexts, ensuring long-term impact and wider reach.

#### 5. Emphasise resilience and adaptability:

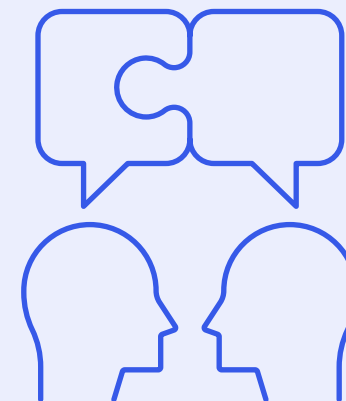
Prepare for challenges by incorporating flexible strategies, such as online platforms, to maintain engagement and continuity during disruptions.

#### 6. Leverage partnerships:

Collaborate with diverse stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, and community organisations, to enhance resources and amplify impact.

#### 7. Promote green practices:

Highlight the social and environmental benefits of sustainable practices, such as green travel, as integral to project design and execution.



The NEETs for NEETs project exemplified the power of co-creation, resilience, and innovation in addressing the challenges faced by marginalised youth. By empowering NEETs to lead and collaborate with adult educators, the project not only transformed the lives of participants but also influenced structural changes in adult education practices. Its outputs, including toolkits, compendia, and policy recommendations, provide a replicable framework for fostering youth empowerment and inclusivity across Europe. The project's emphasis on dialogue, adaptability, and community engagement sets the benchmark for future initiatives in youth work and adult education.

## Youth + Adult Education

## 15. Algarve Regional Youth Action Plan

Timeline:	<b>2 years</b>
Partners:	<b>ECOS – Cooperative of Education Cooperation and Development (Portugal), Municipal governments, 93 other organisations (local youth organisations, academic institutions, regional associations and NGOs)</b>
Key Action:	<b>Support for policy reform</b>
Action Type:	<b>Dialogue between young people and policy makers</b>
Budget:	<b>€32,370.50</b>

Link to the project: [\(2014–2016\) in the Erasmus+ database](#)

Link: <https://algarve2020.ecos.pt/plano-de-acao-regional-de-juventude-do-algarve/>

The 'Algarve 2020: A Youth Contract' project developed the 1st Regional Action Plan for Youth Policy in Portugal's Algarve region, addressing high NEET rates, unemployment, and school dropouts. Through structured dialogue and collaboration, 93 organisations and over 1,200 youth contributed to 255 concrete actions across key areas such as education, employment, and social inclusion. The project strengthened regional youth councils, introduced the Youth Agenda 2020, and enhanced knowledge of the Erasmus+ programme. By fostering youth participation and creating a co-management model for policy monitoring, the initiative empowered young people as key partners in regional development and policymaking.



## Youth + Adult Education / 15. Algarve Regional Youth Action Plan

### Objectives

The 1st Algarve Regional Youth Action Plan was developed to address the challenges facing young people in Portugal's Algarve region by fostering their active participation in public policy and decision-making. It aimed to bridge the gap between youth and local authorities through a structured, participatory process. The initiative had the following objectives:

1. **Promote youth participation:** Establish structured dialogue spaces between young people and local government leaders across Algarve's municipalities, ensuring consistent and accessible opportunities for engagement.
2. **Support youth-centric policy formulation:** Incorporate youth perspectives into policy design to address their specific challenges and needs effectively.
3. **Create a legislative youth agenda:** Develop the 'Youth Agenda 2020', presenting youth-centric priorities to political parties during the 2015 elections.
4. **Develop a comprehensive action plan:** Produce a strategic roadmap with concrete proposals in 10 thematic areas, including education, employment, health, and social inclusion.
5. **Establish the Algarve Regional Youth Council:** Create a permanent body to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan and maintain its relevance across the region.

### Activities

The Action Plan's development and implementation involved an inclusive, multi-phase process:

#### 1. Consultations and workshops:

- Youth consultations used non-formal educational methods to engage over 1,000 young people across the region.
- Workshops facilitated discussions on regional challenges and priorities, fostering collaboration between youth, experts, and local authorities.

#### 2. Youth meetings and working groups:

- Regular meetings brought together youth representatives from all municipalities to prioritise issues and develop actionable proposals.
- Thematic working groups, involving youth, educators, policymakers, and experts, refined these proposals into a structured plan.

#### 3. Project meetings and conferences:

- Local and international conferences allowed stakeholders to exchange ideas, learn from other regions, and incorporate best practices into the Action Plan.

#### 4. Regional monitoring meetings:

- Three meetings were held at critical phases (preparation, implementation, and evaluation) to ensure accountability, monitor progress, and adapt to emerging youth needs.

#### 5. Establishment of the Regional Youth Council:

- The council was formed to oversee the plan's implementation and foster long-term youth engagement in regional governance.

### Partners

The success of the Action Plan relied on a robust network of stakeholders who contributed to its design and implementation:

#### 1. ECOS – Cooperative of Education Cooperation and Development (Portugal):

Led the initiative, facilitating collaboration between young people, local authorities, and other stakeholders.

#### 2. Youth organisations and representatives:

Played a central role in consultations, ensuring the voices of young people were heard and reflected in the plan.

#### 3. Municipal governments:

Supported structured dialogue and the implementation of action proposals across the region's 16 municipalities.

#### 4. Academic institutions:

Provided expertise in policy analysis and supported research on youth priorities.

#### 5. Regional associations and NGOs:

Contributed to consultations and implementation efforts, fostering diverse perspectives and resources.

#### 6. Local and international experts:

Shared best practices and insights during conferences and working group sessions.



## Youth + Adult Education / 15. Algarve Regional Youth Action Plan

### Results

The 1st Algarve Regional Youth Action Plan achieved several significant outcomes:

#### 1. Policy and governance impact:

- Transformed youth recommendations into a formalised strategic document that continues to influence regional policy.
- Established structured consultation mechanisms, increasing youth visibility in policymaking processes.

#### 2. Youth engagement:

- Fostered a cultural shift towards youth-inclusive governance, with young people reporting increased motivation and confidence in influencing policy.
- Provided a platform for meaningful dialogue between youth and local authorities, bridging generational and institutional divides.

#### 3. Cross-sector collaboration:

- Built a regional network of over 90 partners, including government bodies, NGOs, academic institutions, and youth organisations, to sustain and implement the plan.

#### 4. Sustainable structures:

- Created the Algarve Regional Youth Council to ensure ongoing monitoring, coordination, and adaptation of the plan.

#### 5. Thematic action proposals:

- Addressed pressing youth issues in education, employment, mental health, housing, and sustainable development, ensuring both immediate and long-term benefits.

### Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

The development and implementation of the 1st Algarve Regional Youth Action Plan provides valuable lessons for other regions seeking to enhance youth participation:

#### 1. Emphasise inclusivity:

Use non-formal educational methods to engage diverse youth populations, including those from rural or underrepresented areas, ensuring that all voices are heard.

#### 2. Foster structured dialogue:

Establish permanent dialogue platforms, such as regional youth councils, to maintain consistent youth participation in policymaking.

#### 3. Build robust partnerships:

Collaborate with diverse stakeholders, including government bodies, youth organisations, and academia, to pool resources and expertise.

#### 4. Tailor approaches to local contexts:

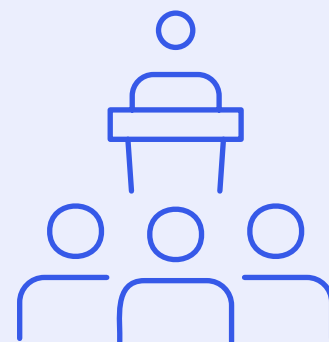
Recognise and address the unique challenges faced by different municipalities, ensuring that solutions are adaptable and relevant.

#### 5. Integrate accountability mechanisms:

Incorporate monitoring and evaluation strategies to track progress, maintain accountability, and adapt to changing youth needs.

#### 6. Align with long-term policy goals:

Collaborate with political leaders to ensure alignment with broader regional and national priorities, sustaining the plan's relevance across political cycles.



The 1st Algarve Regional Youth Action Plan represents a pioneering approach to youth engagement in Portugal. By emphasising participatory governance, structured dialogue, and cross-sector collaboration, the plan has created a sustainable model for youth involvement in public policy. Its success highlights the transformative potential of youth-inclusive initiatives and offers a replicable framework for other regions seeking to foster active citizenship and responsive governance. Through its enduring impact, the plan has set the benchmark for empowering young people to shape their futures and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

## Youth + Adult Education

## 16. Brave New YOU – Reloaded (BNY)

Timeline: **2.5 years**

Partners: **Youth for Exchange and Understanding (Belgium)**  
**Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions (OBESSU) (Ireland)**  
**Fryshuset (Sweden)**  
**Open Youth Centre of Sauga (Sauga ANK) (Estonia)**  
**Culture Goes Europe (CGE) (Germany)**  
**ADEL Slovakia (Slovakia)**  
**Mladinski Center BIT (MC BIT) (Slovenia),**  
**Center for Intercultural Dialogue (CID) (North Macedonia)**  
**ActionAid Italia (Italy)**  
**MOJU- Associação Movimento Juvenil em Olhão (Portugal)**  
**United Societies of Balkans (USB) (Greece)**

Key Action: **Support for policy reform**

Action Type: **European Youth Together**

Budget: **€384,752**

Link to the project: [\(2020–2022\) in the Erasmus+ database](#)

Link: <https://www.bravenewyou.org/en>

Launched in January 2020, this project sought to enhance the involvement of disadvantaged and underrepresented young people across Europe. Implemented amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the project aimed to bridge divides among diverse youth communities by empowering them to identify and dismantle harmful narratives, build positive ones, and become active participants in societal issues. The project's foundation was built on creating trust and dialogue at the local level, providing tools for self-expression, and fostering inclusivity. The project brought together 11 partners from 10 countries, each working with youth in disadvantaged communities to develop locally driven solutions and promote social cohesion.



## Youth + Adult Education / 16. Brave New YOU – Reloaded (BNY)

### Objectives

The Brave New YOU – Reloaded (BNY) project aimed to bridge gaps between diverse youth communities across Europe by fostering trust, inclusivity, and participation. Its primary objectives were as follows:

- **Empowering disadvantaged youth:** Providing marginalised young people with tools and platforms to identify and deconstruct harmful narratives, build inclusive ones, and actively engage in their communities.
- **Promoting inclusivity and social cohesion:** Encouraging collaboration among diverse groups to address stereotypes, hate speech, and societal divisions.
- **Creating long-term impact:** Developing adaptable methodologies, educational tools, and policy recommendations to sustain inclusive youth engagement across Europe.

The project also responded to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, adapting its activities to maintain engagement and impact during unprecedented times.

### Partners

The project gathers 11 partners from 10 countries around Europe with expertise in working with diverse groups of youngsters from disadvantaged and marginalised areas and providing space for their participation:

1. **Youth for Exchange and Understanding (Belgium) – the coordinating partner.**
2. **At the local level, the partners around Europe work with youth in disadvantaged neighbourhoods—** those young people who feel invisible, unheard or unloved, with no hope for the future and no tools to influence their own development or the development of their communities:
  - a. North: **Fryshuset** (Sweden), **Open Youth Centre of Sauga** (Sauga ANK) (Estonia)
  - b. West: **Culture Goes Europe** (CGE) (Germany)
  - c. Central: **ADEL Slovakia** (Slovakia), **Mladinski Center BIT** (MC BIT) (Slovenia)
  - d. South: **Center for Intercultural Dialogue** (CID) (North Macedonia), **ActionAid Italia** (Italy), **MOJU-Associação Movimento Juvenil em Olhão** (Portugal), **United Societies of Balkans** (USB) (Greece)
3. **At the European level, the Organising Bureau of European School Students Unions** (OBESSU) and **Youth for Exchange and Understanding** (YEU) give a voice to young people from schools, youth organisations, and informal groups. By communicating youngsters' needs and passions to decision-makers, they were involved in the development of new tools and approaches to make young people more active, visible, and heard around Europe.

The partnership balanced diverse capacities, working cultures, and local realities, which, while challenging, resulted in meaningful collaboration and cross-learning. The solidarity and adaptability demonstrated by partners ensured the project's success despite disruptions caused by the pandemic.

### Activities

BNY was structured into three main flows, each addressing specific goals:

#### 1. Flow 1: Creating Brave New communities:

- Local engagement: Youth groups formed in disadvantaged communities to identify harmful narratives and create counter-narratives.
- Workshops and training: Participants engaged in activities focusing on prejudice, hate speech, and gender-based discrimination.

- European collaboration: Local activities were complemented by youth exchanges and discussions at the European level.

#### 2. Flow 2: Creating Brave New approaches:

- Methodology development: Insights from local work and best practices from partners were used to create adaptable tools for schools, youth centres, and other contexts.
- Educational tools: Co-created resources included online and offline modules on topics such as racism, inclusivity, and societal engagement.

#### 3. Flow 3: Creating Brave New Europe:

- Policy recommendations: Based on experiences from Flows 1 and 2, partners developed actionable recommendations for policymakers, educators, and youth organisations.
- Dissemination event: A final event in Brussels showcased project outcomes and gathered feedback from stakeholders.

The project utilised innovative digital tools such as Gather.Town to create interactive virtual spaces during COVID-19 restrictions, fostering engagement despite physical distancing.

## Youth + Adult Education / 16. Brave New YOU – Reloaded (BNY)

### Results

The BNY project achieved significant outcomes across multiple levels:

#### 1. Empowerment of youth:

- Over 1,000 young people gained tools to counter harmful narratives, with increased self-confidence, social skills, and civic engagement.
- Participants organised local events, such as intercultural days and reading corners, engaging over 500 community members.

#### 2. Educational resources:

- Co-created materials on inclusivity, hate speech, and community engagement were made available for use in various settings, ensuring long-term impact.

#### 3. Community impact:

- Strengthened bonds between diverse groups, fostering understanding and breaking stereotypes.
- Events and activities promoted dialogue on societal challenges, inspiring collaboration and empathy.

#### 4. Policy influence:

- The project contributed to European youth policies by offering practical strategies for engaging disadvantaged youth.
- Recommendations included strategies for creating supportive environments and promoting inclusive participation.

#### 5. Resilience and adaptability:

- Despite pandemic-related disruptions, the project successfully transitioned to online formats while maintaining its goals. This demonstrated the adaptability of methodologies and the resilience of both youth participants and partner organisations.

### Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

#### 1. Adapt to local contexts:

Tailor methodologies and activities to reflect the cultural, social, and political realities of target communities. Flexibility ensures greater relevance and engagement.

#### 2. Strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration:

Build partnerships across diverse sectors, including youth organisations, schools, policymakers, and community groups. Collaboration fosters shared ownership and maximises impact.

#### 3. Focus on inclusivity:

Prioritise the inclusion of disadvantaged and underrepresented groups by designing accessible activities and addressing barriers to participation.

#### 4. Leverage digital tools:

Utilise innovative platforms to enhance engagement, particularly during crises or for reaching remote communities.

#### 5. Provide ongoing support:

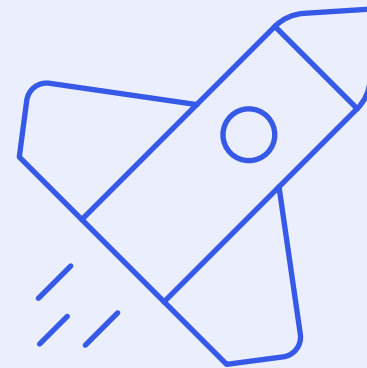
Offer continuous mentorship and resources to young participants and educators to sustain engagement and ensure long-term impact.

#### 6. Emphasise policy integration:

Develop actionable policy recommendations to influence systemic change, ensuring that project outcomes extend beyond individual initiatives.

#### 7. Celebrate diversity:

Use storytelling, intercultural exchanges, and creative activities to foster mutual understanding and appreciation of diversity.



Brave New YOU – Reloaded demonstrated the power of cross-sectoral partnerships in fostering youth empowerment and social cohesion. By addressing divisive narratives, promoting inclusivity, and adapting to challenges, the project created meaningful change at both local and European levels. Its innovative approaches and co-created resources provide a replicable framework for engaging marginalised youth and building more inclusive communities across Europe. The project's legacy lies in its ability to inspire young people to take active roles in shaping their societies, ensuring a more equitable and participatory future.

## Youth + Adult Education

## 17. Youth Participation in Sport

Timeline: **5 years**

Partners: **ENGSO Youth – European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation Youth,  
Country of ENGSO Youth Secretariat: Lithuania**

Link: <https://engsoyouth.eu/>

While this example is referred to as a 'project', it is a long-term initiative uniting various activities aimed at increasing youth participation in sport governance. Starting with research in 2021, so far it includes one approved project (Erasmus+ European Youth Together call), one International Activity (funded by the CoE via EYF), a position paper, several workshop presentations, and long-term communication with youth and sport partners, organisations, and institutions. Spearheaded by ENGSO Youth and supported by diverse partners, the project addresses the underrepresentation of youth in sport governance by fostering meaningful participation through research, advocacy, and capacity-building activities. It is estimated to have reached, both directly and indirectly, 15,000 young people engaged in youth and sport organisations. Key initiatives include the European Youth and Sport Platform, workshops, and the development of youth councils within sport organisations. By promoting cross-sectoral collaboration, sustainability, and inclusion, the project seeks to establish sport as a catalyst for youth empowerment and active citizenship.



## Youth + Adult Education / 17. Youth Participation in Sport

### Objectives

The project aims to address the lack of youth representation in sport governance by establishing mechanisms for youth participation and leadership within decision-making processes. Its key objectives include:

1. Supporting the creation of youth councils, committees, or boards in sport organisations.
2. Building a network of European youth and sport organisations to strengthen youth representation in policy and decision-making.
3. Organising the European Youth and Sport Platform (EYSP) as a flagship event to bridge the youth and sport sectors.
4. Empowering youth leaders with knowledge and skills to foster active citizenship.
5. Mainstreaming issues such as sustainability, social inclusion, and mental health in youth and sport policies.
6. Raising awareness of EU institutions, youth, and sport opportunities.

### Partners

The project involves a diverse range of partners, including ENGSO Youth, European and national sport organisations, and youth networks. Key partners include:

- **International Olympic Committee Young Leaders Programme**
- **European Youth Forum**
- **Portuguese Sport Confederation**
- **Finnish Olympic Committee**
- **OPES (Organizzazione per l'Educazione allo Sport)**
- **Sports Austria**
- **Panathlon International**
- **Youth Sport Trust**
- **Swedish Sports Confederation**
- **Lithuanian Union of Sport Federations**

These partners contribute to research, event organisation, capacity building, and advocacy for youth engagement in sport governance.

### Activities

The project incorporates a range of activities:

#### 1. Research and policy advocacy:

- Analysis of Eurobarometer surveys on youth and sport participation.
- Semi-structured interviews with ENGSO Youth member organisations to assess youth participation mechanisms and challenges.
- Development of the ENGSO Youth position paper on 'Youth Participation in Sport Organisations', proposing

recommendations for improving youth involvement.

#### 2. European Youth and Sport Platform (EYSP):

- The flagship event gathered 100 young leaders from across Europe to discuss key topics such as good governance, digitalisation, and sustainability in sport.
- Participants designed solutions to address the youth participation deficit and developed recommendations for fostering youth engagement in sport governance.

#### 3. Workshops and international activity:

- An international activity in Cyprus (funded by the Council of Europe via the European Youth Foundation) trained

young leaders on youth participation and advocacy in sport organisations.

- Workshops and consultations facilitated dialogue between youth and sport stakeholders, fostering cross-sector cooperation.

#### 4. Youth advocacy:

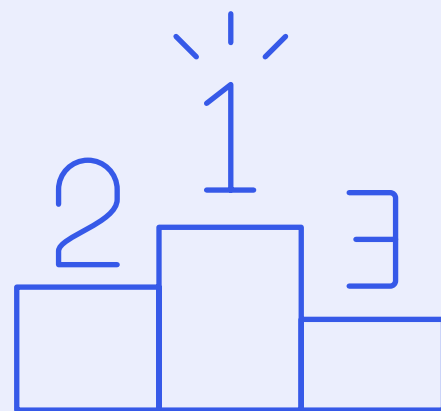
- Participation in the EU's 'HealthyLifestyles4All Youth Ideas Labs' initiative and implementation of youth labs in Portugal and Austria.
- Development of youth strategies for sport organisations, including the Finnish Olympic Committee and Portuguese Sport Confederation.

## Youth + Adult Education / 17. Youth Participation in Sport

### Results

The project has achieved significant outcomes:

1. **Establishment** of youth-friendly democratic spaces for meaningful engagement.
2. **Recommendations** for creating formal youth engagement mechanisms, including youth committees and co-management practices.
3. **Enhanced cooperation** between the youth and sport sectors, fostering knowledge-sharing and capacity building.
4. **Empowerment** of young leaders, equipping them with skills to influence sport governance and policy.
5. **Development** of strategic frameworks for integrating youth participation into sport governance structures.



### Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

1. **Cross-sectoral collaboration:** Build partnerships between youth and sport organisations to leverage expertise and foster shared objectives.
2. **Youth leadership development:** Invest in capacity-building programmes to equip young leaders with advocacy, governance, and organisational skills.
3. **Formal mechanisms for engagement:** Establish youth committees or councils within sport organisations to provide formal representation and decision-making roles for young people.
4. **Awareness and advocacy:** Promote youth inclusion in sport governance through targeted advocacy campaigns and accessible information.
5. **Sustainability and inclusivity:** Integrate themes such as sustainability, mental health, and social inclusion into youth and sport policies to address broader societal challenges.

This initiative demonstrates the potential of sport as a platform for youth empowerment and civic engagement, setting a precedent for integrating youth perspectives into governance at local, national, and international levels.

# Youth + Vocational Education

## 18. TUTOR Project

Timeline:	<b>2.5 years</b>
Partners:	<b>EVBB (European Association of Institutes of Vocational Training)</b> <b>EVTA (European Vocational Training Association)</b> <b>AKMI (Greece)</b> <b>Maynooth University (Ireland)</b> <b>ASPETE (Greece)</b> <b>die Berater (Austria)</b> <b>National Education Directorate of Serik District (Turkey)</b> <b>IGLYO (Belgium)</b> <b>ÖJAB (Austria)</b> <b>Symplexis (Greece)</b>
Key Action:	<b>Partnerships for cooperation and exchanges of practices</b>
Action Type:	<b>Teacher Academies</b>
Budget:	<b>€1,490,696</b>

Link to the project: [\(2022–2025\) in the Erasmus+ database](#)

Link: <https://tutor-project.eu/>

The TUTOR project is a 36-month initiative aimed at enhancing inclusive education by upskilling secondary school teachers across Europe. Through research, curriculum development, and innovative training methodologies, TUTOR equips educators to support migrant students, LGBTQI+ youth, and socioeconomically disadvantaged learners. The project fosters international collaboration, implementing teacher exchanges, digital learning tools, and Train-the-Trainer programmes. By promoting tolerance, acceptance, and inclusivity, TUTOR transforms traditional classrooms into equitable learning environments. With a strong policy alignment and sustainability strategy, the project establishes Teacher Academies and TUTOR Ambassadors, ensuring long-term impact in education systems across Europe.



## Youth + Vocational Education / 18. TUTOR Project



### Objectives

The 'TUTOR – Teachers' upskilling aiming at a holistic inclusivity in learning' project is a 36-month initiative aimed at transforming teacher education policies and practices across Europe. By fostering an inclusive learning environment, the project seeks to develop a forward-looking upskilling strategy for secondary school teachers, equipping them with the knowledge and tools necessary to support diverse student populations.

The specific objectives of TUTOR are as follows:

**Enhancing teacher education:** Strengthening policies and practices to make teacher training more inclusive.

**Developing an upskilling strategy:** Identifying and addressing skill gaps in inclusive teaching.

**Promoting international collaboration:** Facilitating cooperation among educational institutions to modernise teacher education.

**Fostering inclusive learning environments:** Addressing issues of discrimination, tolerance, and flexibility in the classroom.

**Aligning teacher skills with future needs:** Ensuring teachers are equipped to support students from migrant backgrounds, the LGBTQI+ community, and socio-economically disadvantaged groups.

**Ensuring long-term impact:** Widespread dissemination and sustainable use of project results after completion.

### Partners

The TUTOR project is a collaborative effort involving a diverse consortium of educational institutions, universities, teacher training organisations, and social advocacy groups from across Europe. Key partners include:

#### Education and Vocational Training Providers

- **EVBB (European Association of Institutes of Vocational Training):** Leads dissemination and engagement with VET providers across Europe.
- **EVTA (European Vocational Training Association):** Supports lifelong learning strategies for teachers.
- **AKMI (Greece):** One of the largest VET providers, offering accredited training programmes.

#### Universities and Research Institutions

- **Maynooth University (Ireland):** A renowned centre for teacher education and research.
- **ASPETE (Greece):** Nationally recognised provider of initial teacher education.
- **die Berater (Austria):** Specialises in teacher training and professional development.

#### Government and Public Education Authorities

- **National Education Directorate of Serik District (Turkey):** Organises and supervises teacher training in the region.

#### Social Inclusion and Advocacy Organisations

- **IGLYO:** The largest LGBTQI+ youth and student network in Europe, ensuring inclusive education policies.
- **ÖJAB:** Promotes education, training, and integration of vulnerable communities.
- **Symplexis:** A non-profit dedicated to social inclusion, supporting disadvantaged students.



## Youth + Vocational Education / 18. TUTOR Project

### Activities

TUTOR employs a multi-phase approach to improving teacher training and fostering inclusive education.

#### 1. Research and needs assessment

- Conducts a comprehensive study on teachers' current skills and inclusivity gaps.
- Identifies best practices for fostering inclusivity in secondary schools.

#### 2. Development of an inclusive teaching curriculum

- Designs an innovative Joint Curriculum on Inclusivity for teachers.

- Creates three specialised training courses focusing on:
  - supporting students from migrant backgrounds;
  - the inclusion of LGBTQI+ students; and
  - addressing socioeconomic disadvantages through an intersectional approach.

#### 3. Pilot training and teacher exchanges

- Face-to-Face (F2F) and Online Trainings: Equipping 800+ teachers across multiple countries.
- Train-the-Trainers (ToT) Programme: 40 senior educators will train new teachers in inclusivity practices.

- International Mobility for Teachers: Establishing the 'TUTOR Teacher Academy's Internationalisation Office' to facilitate 400+ teacher exchanges.

#### 4. Dissemination and sustainability

- Engages stakeholders from education ministries, teacher associations, and policymakers to ensure sustainable impact.
- Establishes TUTOR Ambassadors, promoting inclusive teaching at national and EU levels.

### Results

The project's expected outcomes include:

#### 1. Strategic upskilling plan for teachers

- Comprehensive needs assessment to define inclusivity standards.
- Development of a teacher upskilling roadmap.

#### 2. Curriculum on inclusive education

- Specialised training programmes focusing on inclusivity for marginalised students.
- Introduction of an Internationalisation Toolkit for Teacher Mobility.

#### 3. Teacher training and knowledge exchange

- Over 800 teachers trained through e-learning.
- 80 teachers trained through in-person mobility programmes.
- 40 educators trained in the Train-the-Trainers programme.
- 400+ teachers engaged in international exchange programmes.

#### 4. Structural impact on education policy

- Nine new Teacher Academies created for sustainable knowledge sharing.
- Promotion of a co-management model for monitoring inclusive education.

### Recommendations for Replication as a Cross-Sectoral Practice

The TUTOR project serves as a model for inclusive education reform that can be adapted and scaled across Europe. Key recommendations for replication include:

#### 1. Policy alignment with teacher needs

- Conduct regular assessments to align teacher training programmes with evolving inclusivity requirements.
- Engage teachers as active stakeholders in curriculum development.

#### 2. Establishing teacher training networks

- Develop cross-border partnerships between universities, VET providers, and advocacy organisations.
- Encourage peer-to-peer learning and mentoring programmes.

#### 3. Integrating digital and blended learning approaches

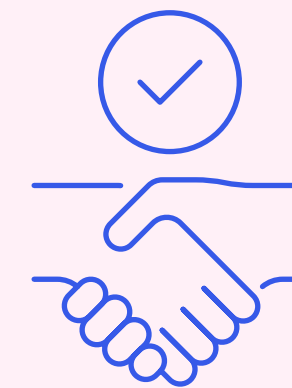
- Expand access to online and blended learning platforms for teacher training.
- Utilise interactive training tools to facilitate engagement in virtual settings.

#### 4. Embedding inclusive education in teacher certification

- Advocate for the inclusion of inclusivity-focused coursework in national teacher accreditation standards.
- Encourage teacher mobility and international exposure to diverse education systems.

#### 5. Ensuring sustainability and long-term impact

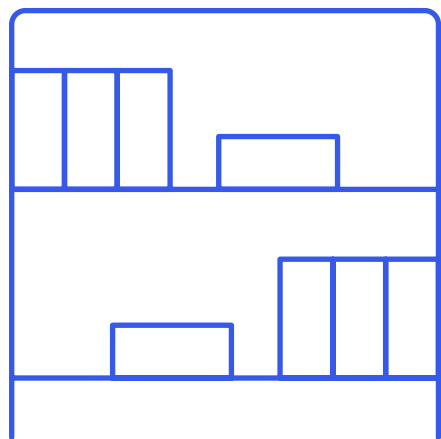
- Establish Teacher Academies to continue upskilling efforts beyond the project timeline.
- Create 'TUTOR Ambassadors' who advocate for inclusive education practices in their institutions.



The TUTOR project advances teacher education by embedding inclusivity at the core of teaching methodologies. Through a combination of research, curriculum development, hands-on training, and international cooperation, the project enhances teachers' ability to support migrant students, LGBTQI+ students, and socioeconomically disadvantaged learners.

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1. NPiY analytical paper 'Youth Participation and Citizenship Education: A Cross-sectoral Perspective' <https://participationpool.eu/resource/analytical-paper-youth-participation-and-citizenship-education-a-cross-sectoral-perspective/>
2. Report 'Cross-Sectoral Forum on Youth Participation in Democratic Life' <https://participationpool.eu/resource/cross-sectoral-forum-on-youth-participation-in-democratic-life-report/>



# Acknowledgements

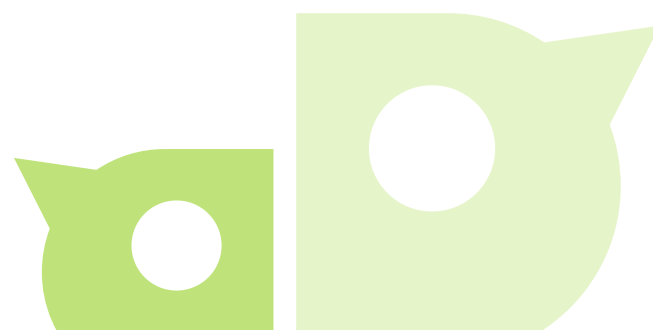
This report would not have been possible without the contributions of numerous individuals and organisations, whose support, expertise, and dedication played a crucial role in its completion.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the National Agencies for Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps for their funding, which enabled us to conduct this research.

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Finally, we express our appreciation to all those who, directly or indirectly, supported the development of this report. Their collective efforts have contributed to advancing knowledge and fostering stronger cross-sectoral partnerships in education and youth engagement.





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