

# Booklet of Political Literacy Practices

*Get Political – Igniting Youth Active Participation in  
Political and Electoral Processes through Political  
Literacy and Knowledge*



## Project Information

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## Partners

Project Partners	Country
The Municipality of Purchena	Spain
Rightchallenge	Portugal
FR CEPAGE	France
The Municipality of Zoersel	Belgium
CESIE ETS	Italy
Municipality of Kalamaria	Greece
CARDET	Cyprus
MIITR	Slovenia



## Table of Contents

Project Information .....	2
Partners .....	2
Introduction .....	4
Spain .....	6
Escuela de Verano – Consejo de la Juventud de España (CJE) .....	6
European Youth Parliament España (EYPE).....	8
Portugal.....	10
Youth Parliament (Basic and Secondary Education) .....	10
Euroescola .....	12
Italy .....	14
Referendum Debate Simulation – Centro Tau .....	14
The Youth Assembly .....	16
France .....	18
Tous Politiques!.....	18
Parlement Régional de la Jeunesse (PRJ) .....	19
Greece .....	20
Municipal Youth Council of Thessaloniki.....	20
Youth Council of the Municipality of Thermi .....	22
Slovenia .....	23
Moja aktivistična revolucija 7.0 (My Activist Revolution 7.0) .....	23
Glas mladih: Participacija za boljšo prihodnost (Voice of Youth: Participation for a Better Future) .....	24
Cyprus.....	26
Shaping Tomorrow: Youth in Local Governance .....	26
National Youth Conference .....	28
Belgium .....	30
VRT TV programme ‘First Choice’ .....	30
Route Europa.....	32
Conclusion .....	34

## Introduction

Political literacy is a cornerstone of active citizenship. Empowering young people to understand, engage with, and contribute to political processes is essential for the health and future of our democracies. However, political education among youth often faces challenges, ranging from a lack of accessible resources to disengagement from formal structures of civic participation. Recognizing this gap, the current document presents a practical and collaborative approach aimed at enhancing the political perception and engagement of young people across Europe.

The **Booklet of Political Literacy Practices** is a key deliverable of Work Package 2: “**Get Started – Insights on Youth’s Political Literacy and Knowledge.**” Its primary goal is to collect, analyze, and present diverse initiatives, programs, projects, and policies that successfully promote political education among young people within partner countries. The result is a valuable, user-friendly resource designed for youth workers, educators, and other practitioners working to encourage youth participation in civic and political life. The booklet includes a **total of 16 good practices**, with **each partner contributing two initiatives** that reflect local approaches to strengthening political literacy.

A **good practice in political literacy** refers to an initiative, program, or approach that successfully engages young people in understanding and participating in political and civic life. It promotes core competencies such as **knowledge of political systems and institutions**, **awareness of rights and responsibilities**, **critical thinking**, **media literacy**, and the ability to engage in democratic processes. Good practices are typically characterized by **clear objectives**, **inclusive and participatory methods**, and **relevance to the needs and realities of the target youth group**. They are often **innovative in approach** but also **replicable and adaptable** to different contexts. Effective practices demonstrate **positive outcomes**, such as increased political awareness, stronger civic engagement, or enhanced skills for democratic participation. In addition, strong practices provide **evidence of impact**, **sustainability over time**, and the potential to inspire or inform similar efforts elsewhere. They often include **meaningful involvement of young people** in the design, implementation, or evaluation of the initiative.

To ensure consistency in documentation and evaluation, each example is assessed using a set of **common criteria**, including:

- **Presentation** (clarity and structure of information),
- **Implementing organisation** (type, background, and role),
- **Nature of the initiative** (context, format, and scope),
- **Main objectives and activities**,
- **Challenges faced during implementation**,
- **Results and impact achieved**, and
- **Direct insights or lessons learned** that benefit other contexts.

It is also indicated whether the practice is **recent** (e.g., implemented since 2020) or a **long-standing initiative** with a proven positive impact on young people over time.

Each partner in this initiative plays an **essential role**. From **identifying promising local practices** to **contributing insights, testing preliminary materials with key stakeholders**, and **refining the content based on constructive feedback**, partners collaborate to ensure that the final booklet reflects the **diversity and potential** of political education efforts across Europe.

Ultimately, this effort results in more than just a reference document. The **Booklet of Political Literacy Practices** serves as a **tool for empowerment**—a practical resource that equips youth workers and educators to strengthen political literacy in various educational settings. Through this shared work, partners inspire **innovative practices** and foster a **culture of participation and critical engagement** among Europe's youth. All partners are invited to approach this process with **commitment, creativity, and collaboration**. By working together, the final booklet remains not only **informative and practical** but also **meaningful and adaptable** to the evolving realities of youth political engagement across Europe.

## Spain

### Escuela de Verano – Consejo de la Juventud de España (CJE)

- **Implementing organisation(s)**

National Youth Council of Spain

- **Context of the Initiative**

The **Consejo de la Juventud de España (CJE)** is a key institution in Spain that represents youth organizations at the national level. Recognized by the state, CJE plays a strategic role in advocating for youth rights and encouraging democratic participation among people aged 14 to 30.

In 2023, in response to persistent youth disaffection with institutional politics and increasing concerns about social issues like job insecurity, housing access, and mental health, the CJE launched the **Escuela de Verano (Summer School)** initiative. The program was hosted at the **Centro Eurolatinoamericano de Juventud (CEULAJ)** in Mollina (Málaga) from **June 18 to 23, 2023**, gathering more than **80 participants** from across Spain.

The Summer School aimed to **build the political competencies of youth activists and representatives** from youth councils and civic organizations across Spain, preparing them to become more effective advocates within their local and national contexts.

#### Main Objectives and Activities

The Escuela de Verano was part of a broader framework to increase structured youth participation in Spanish democracy. Its objectives and activities included:

- **Capacity building** in youth political advocacy, including training on communication strategies, policy influence, lobbying techniques, and digital campaigning. **Thematic workshops** addressing major concerns for Spanish youth such as climate change, youth unemployment, affordable housing, mental health care, and inclusive education.
- **Peer-to-peer learning spaces**, where participants could share successful practices from their regional contexts and discuss how to replicate them in different territories.
- **Team-based activities**, including simulations of political processes and community action design, are aimed at enhancing practical engagement skills.
- Integration into the **CJE's "Rompe el cristal" ("Break the Glass") electoral campaign**, which sought to position youth demands within the public debate before the July 2023 general elections. Participants were encouraged to contribute to electoral messaging and public actions.

## Challenges Faced

- **Geographic equity and representation:** Despite efforts to promote inclusivity, youth from rural areas or smaller organizations often face logistical or financial barriers to participation.
- **Engagement sustainability:** While enthusiasm was high during school, translating short-term activism into long-term political commitment remained a significant challenge.
- **Limited institutional feedback loops:** There was a lack of direct mechanisms for integrating the outcomes of the Summer School into policy-making processes beyond electoral periods.

## Results and Impact

- More than **80 youth leaders were trained**, creating a ripple effect as participants returned to their regions with enhanced civic capacities.
- Input from the Summer School helped shape the **CJE's youth electoral manifesto**, which was formally presented to political parties and referenced in media and institutional events during the electoral campaign.
- Greater visibility for youth political concerns, particularly around employment precarity and housing affordability, in pre-election public discourse.
- Strengthened alliances between regional youth councils, many of which initiated follow-up workshops or events inspired by the Escuela.
- **National legitimacy and strategic timing:** Being hosted by the CJE, the initiative benefited from political credibility and access to policymakers. Its scheduling before national elections gave youth a sense of real political relevance.
- **Focus on practical skill-building:** Unlike purely theoretical programs, the Escuela offered tangible tools—public speaking, negotiation, campaign planning—that participants could take back to their communities.
- **Opportunities for interregional collaboration:** By connecting youth councils across autonomous communities, the initiative fostered solidarity and knowledge exchange on decentralized youth engagement practices.
- **Momentum for replication:** Given its success and the demand for more, CJE positioned the Escuela de Verano as a model for future recurring editions.

## Direct Insights

- One participant from Castilla y León shared: “I always thought politics was something far away—now I realize I’m already doing politics just by organizing in my community. I just needed tools to be more effective.”
- A facilitator from the organizing team stated, “This school is about breaking the fear barrier. Many young people think they’re not ‘expert’ enough to participate. We’re showing them that they are experts in their realities.”

- Another attendee noted: “The most valuable part was meeting others who share my worries and dreams for change. I didn’t feel alone anymore.”

## European Youth Parliament España (EYPE)

- **Implementing organisation(s)**

European Youth Parliament Spain (EYPE)

- **Context of the Initiative**

The **European Youth Parliament España (EYPE)** is the Spanish branch of the wider **European Youth Parliament (EYP)** network, a pan-European, non-partisan platform founded in 1987. EYPE began operating in Spain in **2006**, responding to the growing need for structured, inclusive spaces for young people to discuss political issues, learn about democratic systems, and engage in simulated governance processes.

Its mission is to promote **political education and intercultural dialogue** through participatory learning experiences that simulate the functioning of democratic institutions, especially the European Parliament. Through sessions that mirror real parliamentary processes, EYPE fosters political literacy, public speaking, and cooperation among youth aged **16 to 27**.

### Main Objectives and Activities

EYPE implements a dual strategy combining experiential learning and civic education outreach:

1. **Regional, National, and International Parliamentary Sessions**

- Youth delegates act as MEPs and form committees to research, debate, and draft resolutions on EU-level topics such as digital privacy, climate policy, migration, and economic recovery.
- These sessions conclude with a **General Assembly**, where proposals are debated and “passed” using parliamentary rules of order.

2. **“Understanding Europe” Civic Education Program**

- Interactive modules are delivered in high schools across Spain by young EYPE-trained volunteers.
- Focused on explaining democratic values, the EU institutional framework, media literacy, and youth rights in accessible, participatory formats.

3. **Capacity Building and Peer Leadership**

- Training conferences for volunteers and coordinators on educational facilitation, intercultural dialogue, and non-formal education methods.

- Alumni often take on leadership roles in organizing future sessions, providing continuity, and peer mentoring.

### Challenges Faced

- **Access and inclusion:** Despite scholarships and outreach, socio-economic disparities still affect participation in some regions.
- **Volunteer dependency:** The success of EYPE relies heavily on a core of committed volunteers, which can affect scalability and consistency.
- **Measuring long-term outcomes:** It's difficult to track whether civic awareness gained in sessions leads to future voting, activism, or public service.

### Results and Impact

- More than **2,000 youth per year** participate in EYPE sessions throughout Spain.
- Hundreds of high school students have received EU and civic education through classroom visits in cities like Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, and Palma de Mallorca.
- A growing network of **alumni** who report improved skills in communication, negotiation, political analysis, and intercultural collaboration.
- Evaluations conducted by EYPE indicate significant improvements in students' understanding of democratic procedures and the European institutional system after participation.
- **Highly engaging, experiential format:** Role-playing and parliamentary simulations bring democratic processes to life, making abstract political concepts relatable.
- **International scope and recognition:** As part of the European network, EYPE offers access to transnational experiences and collaboration, reinforcing European identity and civic solidarity.
- **School integration potential:** The "Understanding Europe" program creates sustainable links with secondary education, embedding civic learning where it's often absent in the formal curriculum.

### Direct Insights

- A 17-year-old participant in a regional session shared: "I came here nervous and unsure, but I left feeling like I had a voice. I didn't expect to enjoy debating so much, or to understand the EU better."
- A civic education teacher in Madrid commented: "When EYPE visited our school, our students came alive. The format was fresh, student-led, and made them reflect on their role as citizens."
- A former EYPE delegate, now a university student, reflected: "EYP was my first taste of politics. Now I'm studying law and want to work in European policy. It opened my eyes to what young people can do."

# Portugal

## Youth Parliament (Basic and Secondary Education)

- **Implementing Organization(s)**

Assembly of the Republic (Assembleia da República)

- **Context of the Initiative**

The Youth Parliament has been implemented since 1995. It was created in response to the need to enhance political literacy among young people and promote their active engagement in democratic life. Developed within the institutional framework of the Portuguese Parliament, this program targets students from lower and upper secondary education (approximately ages 11 to 18). It aims to counter youth disengagement from politics and institutions by offering hands-on experience of the legislative process and democratic debate.

### Main Objectives and Activities

The core objective is to educate young people about the functioning of democratic institutions and to empower them for active, critical, and informed citizenship.

Key activities include:

- **School Phase:** Students debate topics and draft legislative proposals within their schools, under the guidance of teachers.
- **District/Regional Phase:** Selected proposals are discussed at a regional level, with the best ones progressing to the national stage.
- **National Phase:** A final debate takes place in the national parliament, where students simulate the roles of real MPs.
- **Role Diversity:** Students may act as MPs, presiding officers, or journalists, allowing a deeper understanding of the democratic process and the media's role.
- **Annual Themes:** Each year, a relevant and current theme is defined as the basis for all discussions and proposals.

### Challenges Faced

The program faces several challenges, including:

- Ensuring equal participation across schools, particularly in remote or under-resourced areas.
- Motivating and supporting teachers to facilitate the initiative effectively.
- Integrating the program into already tight school schedules.

- Keeping the topics and approach relevant and engaging for young participants.

### Results and Impact

The Youth Parliament has become one of the most significant civic education initiatives in Portugal.

- Nationwide reach: Hundreds of schools across all regions, including the autonomous islands, participate.
- Skills development: Students gain experience in public speaking, argumentation, teamwork, critical thinking, and legislative drafting.
- Civic motivation: Many reports have increased interest in politics and a greater sense of social responsibility.
- Meaningful discussions: Annual themes generate awareness and action around key issues such as gender equality, climate change, mental health, and misinformation.

### Direct Insights

“It’s really rewarding to take part in this project because we leave feeling like our voice matters. Whether or not the proposals are implemented, they were looked at by real Members of Parliament and parties. That alone is meaningful, and we learn a lot from the whole experience. It was a life-changing experience. It was my first time attending the national session in person — it’s a truly powerful experience because you get much closer to people and see how things work.”

Inês Silva, 17 years old, Aveiro.

“At the time, my teacher challenged me to take part. I went, but only participated in the regional session, just like in 9th grade. It was only in high school that I made it to the national session. It’s an incredible experience that can bring value to Portugal. It captivates you from the very first moment. When you pay attention to national politics and get involved, you see a new generation in action. You see a whole different level of argumentation — it’s more modern, more relatable for young people, and it brings a fresh kind of knowledge. The national session is a powerful experience for everyone involved — from journalists to alternates and spokespersons. Even if you don’t speak at the microphone, the conversations in the hallways, the exchange of ideas with brilliant young people with huge hearts — it’s just amazing.”

Manuel Pinto, 18 years old, Vila Real

## Euroescola

### Country

Multinational (Organized at the European Parliament in Strasbourg; includes schools from all 27 EU Member States, applicant countries, and former Member States)

- **Implementing Organization(s)**

European Parliament (Visitors and Citizens Liaison Unit, Directorate-General for Communication), in cooperation with European Parliament Liaison Offices (EPLOs) and, regionally, Alsace (France) and Baden-Württemberg (Germany).

- **Context of the Initiative**

Launched in 1990 by the European Parliament, Euroescola enables hundreds of thousands of secondary-school students to simulate the work of MEPs in Strasbourg. Targets students aged 14 and above, accompanied by teachers, offering a multilingual, cross-border democratic experience. Since January 2021, a regional Deutsch-Franco edition has engaged students from Alsace and Baden-Württemberg, first held in June 2022 and March 2023, becoming an annual event.

### Main Objectives and Activities

Objective: Foster EU citizenship, democratic participation, intercultural understanding, and awareness of European values and institutions.

Activities include:

- Morning session (10:00–12:30): Opening by the Parliament President, Q&A with a Vice-President, Innovation Lab, debate, amendment and voting on real EU issues. Questions can be posed via live video (Interactio) or Slido.
- Afternoon session (in-person only): A simulation game covering the EU legislative process.
- Hybrid format: Since October 2022, participants have joined in person and online through live streaming, with interactive tools integrated post-pandemic.
- Regional crossover edition: France-Germany cross-border sessions have been held regionally since mid-2022, held annually.

### Challenges Faced

- COVID-19 disruptions: On-site sessions cancelled since March 2020; pivot to online format with tools like Interactio and Slido.
- Hybrid complexity: Ensuring equal engagement and technical smoothness for both in-person and remote students.

## Results and Impact

- Hundreds of thousands of secondary-school students have participated in Strasbourg since 1990.
- Hybrid and regional editions attract approximately 1,000 participants per event, with around 500–600 students present in the hemicycle and the rest joining online.
- Promotes democratic engagement, cross-cultural dialogue, and a real-world understanding of EU legislative mechanisms.

## Direct Insights

“Participating in Euroscola was a defining experience. Discussing issues like youth unemployment and solidarity among EU countries with students from different nationalities broadened my perspective on Europe.” — Gonçalo Santos, Portugal.

“Euroscola was an unforgettable experience. Working in groups, developing solidarity projects, and participating in debates on global issues made me realize the impact we can have on the world.” — Student from IES Tháder, Orihuela, Spain.

## Italy

### Referendum Debate Simulation – Centro Tau

- **Implementing Organization(s)**

CESIE ETS and Centro Tau

- **Context of the Initiative**

The initiative took place on June 4th at Centro Tau, involving 4 youth workers and 12 young participants. It was developed in response to the need to engage young people in democratic participation, particularly through the understanding of referendums as political tools. The activity also aimed to foster critical thinking around environmental issues and promote awareness of the value of voting in an informal educational setting.

#### **Main Objectives and Activities**

Main Objectives:

- Promote understanding of referendums as democratic instruments.
- Encourage youth engagement with environmental issues.
- Strengthening argumentation and dialogue skills.

Key Activities:

- **Interactive Introduction:** Brief explanation of the referendum topic and its importance, followed by a group icebreaker using a talking object (a small owl) to prompt discussion.
- **Group Division and Role Assignment:** Participants were divided into two groups and given specific roles, ranging from environmental activists to skeptical citizens, to represent “Yes” and “No” positions on a given issue.
- **Team Preparation:** Each group discussed and wrote down arguments on a poster to support their assigned position.
- **Thematic Speed Dating:** Participants engaged in short one-on-one discussions to argue their points, then switched sides for a second round.
- **Reflection Moment:** Final group discussion on what was learned about referendums and personal impressions of the activity.

#### **Challenges Faced**

One main challenge was helping participants shift from expressing personal opinions to embodying and defending viewpoints aligned with their assigned roles. Some initially struggled to step into characters whose views differed from their own.

#### **Results and Impact**

The activity had a strong positive impact in terms of engagement and emotional involvement. The young participants were highly active, and the dynamic format allowed them to explore multiple perspectives. Feedback was very positive, especially regarding the freedom of expression and the theatrical, playful nature of the debate. Some participants mentioned they had changed their views on the meaning of voting and the importance of dialogue.

### Direct Insights

“It felt strange to defend a position I don’t agree with, but it helped me understand why some people think that way.”

“It was cool to play a character—it felt like acting, but we were talking about real stuff.”

“I used to think referendums had nothing to do with me, but now I feel more involved.”

## The Youth Assembly

- **Implementing Organization(s)**

Open Youth Lab & Scuola Aperta Palermo

- **Context of the Initiative**

This initiative was launched in response to growing concerns among educators and youth workers about the influence of social media, data privacy, and online misinformation on democratic participation. Taking place in Palermo, it involved 15 high school students aged 16–18, facilitated by 3 youth workers. The aim was to simulate a parliamentary assembly where young people could explore digital rights and responsibilities in a democratic society.

### Main Objectives and Activities

Main Objectives:

- To increase youth awareness of digital rights and ethical technology use.
- To simulate democratic decision-making through debate and negotiation.
- To develop critical thinking and public speaking skills.

Key Activities:

- **Warm-up Discussion:** Participants shared personal experiences related to digital life—e.g., social media use, data tracking, or cyberbullying.
- **Role Assignment:** Each student received a role as a representative of a fictional youth political party (e.g., Digital Freedom Front, The Data Guardians, or The Offline Movement), each with different views on data privacy, screen time limits, and online censorship.
- **Party Manifesto Writing:** In groups, they created a short party manifesto outlining key policies related to digital rights.
- **Youth Assembly Debate:** The class transformed into a mock parliamentary chamber. Each party presented its manifesto, debated key policy points, formed alliances, and negotiated amendments.
- **Final Vote:** A draft bill on 'Youth Digital Rights' was created and put to a vote.

### Challenges Faced

Some participants initially struggled with the abstract nature of digital rights. Facilitators had to adapt by using real-world examples to help students relate to the issues. Balancing speaking time in the debates also required active moderation to ensure inclusive participation.

### Results and Impact

The simulation increased participants' understanding of how laws are made and how compromise is necessary in democratic contexts. Many reported feeling more confident in expressing their views publicly. Several teachers noted improved engagement with civic education topics in the weeks following the activity.

### Direct Insights

“I never thought about who owns my data. Now I want to read the terms and conditions!”

“We had to fight for our ideas, but also listen. That was new for me.”

“It was like being in real politics, but more fun and respectful.”

## France

### Tous Politiques!

- **Implementing Organization(s)**

La République En Marche! (now Renaissance)

- **Context of the Initiative**

Launched in 2018 by La République En Marche! (now Renaissance), Tous politiques! trains citizens, activists, and local elected officials, with a focus on youth aged 18–30. It addresses the need to boost political engagement among young people, a priority in France and the EU. The initiative equips participants with knowledge of political and electoral systems, promoting a progressive vision for local governance.

### Main Objectives and Activities

Objectives:

- Encourage political engagement among citizens, activists, and local elected officials.
- Provide training to advance a progressive vision for French territories.
- Build networks of progressive actors at the local level.

Activities:

- Training sessions and workshops for citizens and local elected officials.
- Online courses and microlearning resources.
- Events and conferences to connect progressive actors.
- Mentorship for political projects.

### Challenges Faced

Challenges likely include ensuring diverse participation, balancing the initiative's progressive focus with broad appeal, and maintaining engagement in a polarized political climate.

### Results and Impact

Tous politiques! has likely trained numerous citizens and local elected officials, fostering a new generation of progressive political actors. Its training and networking efforts strengthen local political participation.

### Direct Insights

[Tous politiques!](#)'s brochure describes it as “the institute of commitment for those who believe in a progressive vision of territories,” emphasising its role in inspiring political involvement.

## Parlement Régional de la Jeunesse (PRJ)

- **Implementing Organization(s)**

Région Sud : Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

- **Context of the Initiative**

The Parlement Régional de la Jeunesse (PRJ) was established to address the need for greater youth involvement in regional governance, fostering civic engagement among young people aged 15-25, including high school students, apprentices, and those on vocational or health/social training. Operating in a political climate that prioritizes youth participation, the PRJ aligns with national and European efforts to empower young citizens to understand political systems and contribute to decision-making.

### Main Objectives and Activities

Objectives:

- Educate youth on citizenship, decision-making, and public fund management.
- Enable young people to influence regional policies and assume societal responsibilities.

Activities:

- Regular assemblies and workshops to discuss and propose solutions to regional issues.
- Management of a 50,000 annual budget for youth-led projects.
- Implementation of initiatives like the Banque de stage (internship opportunities), ePASS Jeunes (digital benefits card), and eco-ambassadors in schools.
- High-level dialogues with policymakers and educational trips to European institutions.

### Challenges Faced

Specific challenges are not detailed in available sources, but likely include ensuring diverse representation, balancing participation with educational commitments, and sustaining project impacts over time.

### Results and Impact

The PRJ has launched impactful projects like the Banque de stage and e-PASS Jeunes, benefiting regional youth. It has facilitated dialogues with high-level officials, such as the Prime Minister, and positioned participants as advocates for their peers, strengthening civic education and regional policy influence.

### Direct Insights

The PRJ is a dynamic platform where young people learn to lead and effect change. Participants gain practical experience in democracy and project management, fostering personal and professional growth. Testimonies on the Région Sud YouTube channel highlight their sense of empowerment.

## Greece

### Municipal Youth Council of Thessaloniki

- **Implementing Organization(s)**

Municipality of Thessaloniki

- **Context of the Initiative**

Started by the Municipality of Thessaloniki, informal groups of young people, and the Youth Network of Katerini.

Target Group: 16-30

Main Goals: Bridging the gap between youth and the local government, contributing to youth's first contact with politics, and youth activation

Anyone in the target group can become a member of the MYCT. However, the executive board is elected. Initially members were selected by lottery, but now electoral procedure is used. Each member is entitled to 2 terms.

#### Main Objectives and Activities

- Three pillars (Political Participation-Activism- Volunteering)
- They have 7 committees with different topics each. These committees have an agenda of actions. They manage and implement their projects based on this agenda.
- Regarding their actions, they have regular annual activities (e.g., an event for Women's Day) or additional ones deriving from the needs of their members (e.g., soft skills seminars)

#### Challenges Faced

- Due to the large number of participants, they must meet the needs of the majority. There is difficulty in expressing the needs of the members and the target group.
- There is constant renewal, but since the municipality consists of many students, their stay in the city after graduation is not ensured.
- There is difficulty in how the Youth Council interacts with the municipality and the European programs without complications.

#### Results and Impact

- Increased membership
- Direct collaboration with the Municipality
- Contribution to public dialogue
- Improvement of young people's interaction with politics
- Mobilization through volunteer actions

### Direct Insights

YCT: “There should be meaningful and consistent actions and activities, as well as good information. A stable yet continuously enriched agenda aligned with current affairs is an advantage.”

## Youth Council of the Municipality of Thermi

### Implementing Organization(s)

Municipality of Thermi

### Context of the Initiative

The Youth Council of the Municipality of Thermi follows the model of sociocracy, the dynamic model of governance and decision-making through consensus. More specifically, on the initiative of the Municipality of Thermi in 2020, it was sought to create an innovative decision-making and consensus structure based on specific themes and proposals, responding to the large geographical distances of the communities of Thermi.

The result of this initiative is the Youth Council, local circles in each community of the Municipality and the participation of young people from each community in each circle.

### Main Objectives and Activities

The main goal of the Youth Council of the Municipality of Thermi is to activate young people at the level of their local community, through the circles, to make the Municipality where they live better.

Their organization and activities are structured based on each project, where once the decision to carry out an activity is taken by consensus, a team is created to organize and support it.

### Challenges Faced

The biggest difficulty of the Youth Council and the obstacle it encounters in its daily operation is its membership, as it has few active members. These few members are often exhausted and cannot be creative, as there is no provision for the renewal of members.

This is precisely due to the fear of young people of being 'partisan' which results in them not being political at all, and this is precisely the reason why this dynamic model of sociocracy was chosen.

### Results and Impact

From 2025, and every year the actions of the Youth Council of the Municipality of Thermi will be dedicated to a specific theme, so it is expected that in the future the footprint will be visible.

However, it is particularly evident the change that is taking place within the schools and in the student-teacher relationship, which now has the characteristics of discussion and consensus.

### Direct Insights

By working with sociocracy (...), you don't want to change the way of working or the model of decision-making. At the beginning, it seems like a process that you must study, but in the end, it becomes a daily practice that changes the way you behave.

## Slovenia

### Moja aktivistična revolucija 7.0 (My Activist Revolution 7.0)

#### Implementing Organization(s)

Focus(Slovenia), [Noexcuse](#) (Slovenia), [Legebitra](#) (Slovenia), [Sudwind](#) (Austria), [VHS Dunaj](#) (Austria), [WeWorld](#) (Italy), [CSAPSA](#) (Italy), [BRF](#) (Poland)

The project is co-funded by the European Union – CERV program

#### Context of the Initiative

The project *My Activist Revolution* is aimed at young people from Slovenia, Austria, Italy, and Poland, and is based on encouraging their involvement in shaping a fairer and more inclusive society. The participating organizations seek to provide young people with a space to develop and express their views, engage in dialogue on pressing social issues, and actively participate in decision-making processes. Through international meetings, workshops, and actions, participants openly address topics such as climate change, solidarity, youth participation, and their impact on society.

The initiative is open to all young people aged 15 to 30 who are interested in social change, ecology, politics, and solidarity, or who simply want to meet peers from other countries and express what bothers (or inspires) them in today's world.

#### Main Objectives and Activities

The main objective is to encourage young people to connect, express their views, and drive social change.

The project consists of the following activities: preparation of a pedagogical framework and an e-democracy portal; at least four national workshops; a national conference connecting young people from two partner countries; an international conference in Ljubljana; an international conference and advocacy training in Poland; the creation of a Youth Manifesto; a study and advocacy visit to Brussels including a roundtable at the European Parliament; and a final meeting in Vienna.

#### Challenges Faced

No specific challenges are listed on the project's official websites. However, typical challenges in similar international youth projects may include maintaining active engagement over time, ensuring inclusive participation across diverse backgrounds, and coordinating logistics and communication among multiple partner organizations from different countries.

#### Results and Impact

The first international meeting took place in Ljubljana (8–10 May 2025), where young people explored the future of Europe through creative workshops, joined an activist tour of Ljubljana, and prepared messages and proposals that they will carry into the world. The project is ongoing.

#### Direct Insights

<https://focus.si/projekti/moja-aktivisticna-revolucija-7-0/>

<https://www.noexcuse.si/novice/moja-aktivisticna-revolucija/>

## Glas mladih: Participacija za boljšo prihodnost (Voice of Youth: Participation for a Better Future)

### Implementing Organization(s)

Brežice Youth Center

### Context of the Initiative

The project “*Voice of Youth: Participation for a Better Future*” (co-funded by the European Union) is designed to address the needs of all involved stakeholders, including young people, organizations, local policymakers, and the wider community. It aims to create lasting change by enabling young people to actively engage in shaping the future of their local communities.

The project seeks to bring closer to young people a range of topics—such as politics, local participation, sustainable Europe, and active citizenship—that they may find less appealing and often do not engage with. To overcome this, the first phase of the project features interactive and engaging workshops focused on elections, with a particular emphasis on the European elections taking place in June 2024.

In the second phase, the project shifts its focus to active participation at the local level. Young participants will be introduced to opportunities for community engagement through associations and civil society initiatives. Additionally, representatives of local organizations will learn how they can incorporate these themes into their activities and bring them closer to young people, for example, through specially designed events.

### Main Objectives and Activities

- **Youth Education:** To organize workshops, seminars, and similar activities aimed at educating young people about political processes, elections, local governance, and decision-making.
- **Promoting Dialogue:** To foster dialogue between young people, local politicians, and decision-makers to empower youth to express their opinions and proposals more confidently.
- **Active Participation:** To encourage young people to actively engage in political processes—such as elections, campaigns, and expressing their views on key local issues—as well as to participate in other forms of civic involvement.
- **Strengthening Organizations:** To support local organizations and associations in their efforts to engage youth and promote civic participation.
- **Exchange of Experiences:** To enable the exchange of experiences and best practices among various organizations and associations working in the field.
- **Raising Community Awareness:** To inform the wider local community about the importance of involving young people in decision-making processes.

### Challenges Faced

The project did not explicitly list challenges on its official websites. Nevertheless, common difficulties in similar youth initiatives may include limited initial interest in political topics among young people, ensuring long-term engagement, and effectively connecting youth with local policymakers and civil society actors.

### Results and Impact

- **Impact on Young People**

- Raising awareness on elections, politics, EU institutions, and participation;
- Encouraging solidarity, equality, empathy, and inclusion;
- Promoting critical thinking and self-reflection;
- Developing competences, skills, and environmental awareness;
- Improving project quality at all levels;
- Promoting EU values and good practices.

The project will empower young people in citizenship, sustainability, inclusion, and participation, offering space to express ideas and strengthening youth dialogue, NGO involvement, and cooperation with decision-makers.

Participants will gain competences, digital and soft skills, support, and networks for future civic engagement.

It will also impact the local environment by linking stakeholders and introducing new community ideas.

### **Direct Insights**

Youth Voice: Participation for a Better Future

<https://www.brezice.si/sl/novice/2024022014025938/>

<https://www.mc-brezice.si/projekti/glas-mladih>

# Cyprus

## Shaping Tomorrow: Youth in Local Governance

### Implementing Organization(s)

Cyprus Youth Council and Oxygen for Democracy

### Context of the Initiative

In the framework of the European program "You(th) in Local Governance," the Cyprus Youth Council (CYC), in collaboration with the organization Oxygen for Democracy, organised a three-day Conference "**Shaping Tomorrow: Youth in Local Governance**". The Conference was held between **20 -22 June 2025 at Park Beach Hotel in Yermasoyia, Limassol.**

Profile of the participants:

- Young people aged 16 – 30 years
- Youth Workers in the field of Youth Policy, or representatives of youth organizations (16 – 30 years old)
- Representatives of Youth Organizations (16 – 30 years old)
- Young people involved in municipal, community, youth or Youth NGOs
- Young people with fewer opportunities

### Main Objectives and Activities

The main objective is to support and encourage an active youth participation in decision making on all levels, the Youth Board of Cyprus is organising the National Youth Conference.

The last conference took place on Tuesday, November 19, 2024, at 09:30 with the attendance of the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Mr. Nikos Christodoulides. The Conference brought together young people and their representatives from all over Cyprus who had the opportunity to get informed on what has been achieved in the youth sector within the framework of the National Year of Youth, identify gaps, and make proposals to address the challenges, turning them into opportunities. They had the opportunity to take part in co-design workshops and discuss with policymakers, to exchange ideas and opinions with their peers, and come up with practical solutions to implement the goals of the National Youth Strategy that they have set themselves.

The 2024 Youth Conference was the culmination of the participatory processes that have been followed throughout the drafting of the 2nd National Youth Strategy 2030. The new National Youth Strategy, which is being formulated during this period, defines the government's vision for the young people, along with the young people. The design of the Youth Strategy is considered a milestone in the youth policy and the National Year of Youth 2024. During the formulation of the national youth strategy, many consultations with youth took place in both communities and Greek, Turkish, and English around the island.

The main activities were around several topics and key challenges young people face in Cyprus, and have been highlighted during the consultations that were carried out by the Youth Board of Cyprus on the 2nd National Strategy for Youth during the last months. Young people had the opportunity to collaboratively explore these issues with other stakeholders and propose certain actions to address them effectively during the implementation of the 2nd National Youth Strategy.

The topics were: culture, green and digital development, education and training, employment and entrepreneurship, physical and mental health, social inclusion and social justice, active participation, and connecting the EU with youth. After the workshops, the participants were presented with the results and discussed them with policymakers.

### **Challenges Faced**

Some of the challenges faced were ensuring representation of young people of different ages (young school students, university students, and young people from organised groups). It was extremely important to include more young Turkish Cypriot participants, but their participation was low. In addition, it was difficult to include decision-makers in the conference who could discuss the various issues. For example, a representative from the Deputy Ministry of Culture for the topic of culture that was discussed.

Another challenge was the participation of all young people from across the island, and ONEK provided free buses from other cities to transport participants to the capital for the conference.

Furthermore, the venue for the 5th National Youth Conference had limited capacity, and the organizers had a waiting list. Language was a challenge for the conference, and during the event, an interpreter translated into English, while one of the workshops was conducted in English only. Finally, ONEK wanted to ensure the participation of all young people, whether the challenges they faced in participating were geographical distance or disability, and therefore included sign language interpretation during the conference.

### **Results and Impact**

A total of 206 young people participated in the workshops. As a significant outcome of the National Youth Conference, ONEK developed a detailed report encompassing recommendations related to each thematic area addressed during the event. These recommendations will serve as a valuable contribution to the formulation of the National Youth Strategy 2030.

### **Direct Insights**

<https://onek.org.cy/en/youthconf2024/#:~:text=The%20National%20Youth%20Conference%20constitutes,5th%20National%20Youth%20Conference.>

<https://youthpolicy.onek.org.cy/e/>

## National Youth Conference

### Implementing Organization(s)

ONEK

### Context of the Initiative

The National Youth Conference constitutes the most participatory consultation event between youth and the state, and started in 2015. In 2024 the 5th national youth conference was held.

### Main Objectives and Activities

The conference aims to empower youth participation in democratic life, with a particular focus on decision-making processes at the local and regional levels. It seeks to strengthen the role of Municipal and Community Youth Councils, as well as other youth-led structures, in shaping local governance and policies that affect young people's lives.

Through a three-day participatory and interactive dialogue, young people from across Cyprus have the opportunity to discuss common challenges and needs, share good practices, develop key skills, and co-create policy proposals that meaningfully enhance youth engagement in local governance.

The conference aspires to generate concrete policy recommendations that can contribute to the development of strategic frameworks at both national and European levels. This process aims to support the revitalisation of democracy, the promotion of active citizenship, and the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy, the EU Youth Goals, and broader alignment with Recommendation Rec(2001)19 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, as well as the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, adopted by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

### Challenges Faced

Some of the challenges of the event were identifying stakeholders and the target group for engagement and participation. The new law that changed the structure of municipalities and merged many of them created challenges for the organizers in terms of communication and identifying active municipalities.

In addition, young people are reluctant to participate in events either because they believe it is "youth propaganda" or because their participation will have no impact overall.

## 7. Results and Impact

The event was attended by 60-65 young people from Cyprus. The organizers provided a section in English for participants who did not speak Greek. The event was attended by representatives of the Municipality of Kourion, which implements the Municipal Youth Council and involves young people in decision making. Also, the municipal youth council of Paralimni and the Youth Advisory Council of the Council of Europe participated with a representative.

The Cyprus Youth Council will develop policy recommendations based on the three-day conference and present them at their general meeting and maybe to ministries etc.

## 8. Direct Insights

<https://onek.org.cy/en/youthconf2024/#:~:text=The%20National%20Youth%20Conference%20constitutes,5th%20National%20Youth%20Conference.>

## Belgium

### VRT TV programme 'First Choice'.

#### Implementing Organization(s)

The Flemisch Radio- en Television broadcaster, abbreviated VRT, is the public broadcaster for radio and television in Flanders.

#### Context of the Initiative

The TV programme 'First Choice' on VRT is an informative and political youth programme aimed at young people who can vote for the first time.

The programme aims to engage young people between 16 and 22 - the so-called first-time voters - in politics and help them make informed choices in elections.

It responds to their lifestyles, concerns and questions on social issues. It also has a strong focus on youth participation in democracy, especially in response to the lowered voting age in Belgium (16 for European elections).

It aims to teach young people how the political system works and how elections are conducted.

#### Main Objectives and Activities

The main goals of this programme are:

- Informing young people about politics and elections.
- Familiarizing young people with the political landscape and electoral process.
- Stimulate critical thinking and opinion-forming.
- Make politics accessible and understandable to young people.
- Motivate them to use their voice and engage socially.

Activities:

- Young people engage with politicians on issues of concern to them (e.g., safety, climate, racism).
- The program is shot in secondary schools, close to young people's living environment.
- Short, visually attractive episodes with clear explanations and recognisable situations.
- Excerpts and polls on Instagram and TikTok to reach young people beyond the TV screen.
- Teaching packs and assignments for teachers to use the programme in the classroom.

#### Challenges Faced

Shaping a fresh, innovative format and ensuring depth of content without scaring off the young people. The logistically intense settings with a mix of politicians and unprecedented youth also provided a major challenge. The shaky start coincided with a deliberate choice of direct confrontations that carried both opportunity and risk.

#### Results and Impact

- Great reach: More than 800,000 viewers, with strong representation of young people.

- Increased youth engagement: Young people felt heard and thought more actively about their voting behavior.
- Political interaction: Politicians engaged directly with young people, including in schools.
- Educational value: Used in civics and citizenship lessons; increased political literacy.
- Long-term effect: Lasting influence on voting behaviour and continued interest in politics.

### **Direct Insights**

Presenter:

"The youth turned out to be hugely interested in politics. Not so much in party politics, but in what matters to them."

→ He stressed that young people know well what affects them, even if they don't know the political jargon...

Political journalist:

"From all directions, came very informed questions. Young people had strong opinions on topics like affordability and the headscarf debate."

→ He was impressed by the substantive maturity of the young people

## Route Europa

### Implementing Organization(s)

Route Europa was developed by the non-profit educational organization Europahuis Ryckvelde at the request of Europa Direct Province of Antwerp, Europa Direct East Flanders, Europa Direct Flemish Brabant, and Europa Direct West Flanders. It was co-financed by the Liaison Office of the European Parliament in Belgium, the Representation of the European Commission in Belgium and eight Europe Direct centers (Europe Direct Province of Antwerp, Europe Direct East Flanders, Europe Direct Flemish Brabant, Europe Direct West Flanders, Europe Direct Brussels, Europe Direct Province de Liège, Europe Direct Luxembourg Belge and Europe Direct Ostbelgien).

### Context of the Initiative

The European Union has a major impact on young people's daily lives. Through a classroom workshop, the makers of Route Europa aim to inform young people about current European issues and the workings of the European institutions. In this way, they discover and deepen their interest in the EU, which contributes to active citizenship. After all, well-informed and engaged young people form the basis for a well-functioning European democracy. The reason for developing the game was the European elections of June 2024, in which Belgian young people were allowed to vote in European elections for the first time from the age of 16. In 2025, the material was updated and separated from the elections to create a “timeless” version.

### Main Objectives and Activities

Route Europe implies an active game board methodology where students are introduced to key European themes, discover how the European Union affects their lives, and how European decision-making works. Processing content through a game is an appealing learning methodology that is particularly effective. A class discussion follows, where the conclusions of the game are repeated in a fun quiz.

In addition, the inspiration sheets provide information to explore one of the European themes in more depth on their own. In the second part, pupils engage in a debate with each other. As a teacher, you get the option between two debate formats. Pupils start working on the themes covered in the game board. They are given a position that they prepare in a group and then defend in the debate. The pupils learn to take a stand, to listen to each other, and to respect other opinions. It teaches them that their voice counts.

### Challenges Faced

- With a large and diverse partnership (in terms of background, constraints and languages) - as described under 3. Implementing organisations - it was not easy to quickly align both in terms of content and finance.
- In addition, the development and roll-out of the project had tight timing due to the date of the European elections: 9 June 2024. The development of the didactics, production and distribution of the game boxes, teaching the game guidance to the teachers, playing phase with the youngsters themselves, ... could only succeed with well-considered back planning.
- Reaching an oversubscribed target group (teachers, schools, teaching staff, ...) requires a phased multi-approach: multiple channels, multiple messages, reminders, ...

- Finally, there were external factors we had to take into account such as the long-standing ambiguity about voting rights vs compulsory voting at 16.

## Results and Impact

### KNOWLEDGE

- The young people can list some European issues that have an impact on their own lives.
- The young people know some of the priority cases on the European agenda.
- The young people can cite examples of exactly what EU citizenship means.
- The young people know European values.

### ATTITUDE

- Young people are aware of the importance of their voice.
- The young people see the importance of the European policy level.
- The young people respect the opinions of their classmates.

### SKILLS

- The young people can cast their vote correctly and thoughtfully.
- The young people can form their opinions in an informed way and debate with each other.
- The young people have strengthened their democratic skills.
- FIGURES Province of Antwerp
- More than 270 game boxes ordered by 192 unique schools
- 62 teachers followed a refresher course
- reach of approximately 10,000 young people/students

## Direct Insights

Teacher comments:

- 'Varied, nice, attractive design, instructive and very informative in an approachable way!'
- 'Playful structure, gradually pupils came into contact with all kinds of EU initiatives, which brought European politics closer to their living environment.'

## Conclusion

**In conclusion**, the collective efforts of all project partners are essential to the creation of a comprehensive and effective **Booklet of Political Literacy Practices**. Through the careful identification and documentation of diverse initiatives, programs, and policies, this project not only highlights existing best practices but also fosters a **culture of collaboration and mutual learning** among participating countries.

The initiatives featured in the booklet—**16 in total, with two contributed by each partner**—reflect a wide spectrum of approaches to promoting political literacy among young people. While they differ in format, scope, and target groups, they share several **core similarities**: a commitment to inclusive participation, a focus on experiential and civic learning, and a strong emphasis on empowering youth to become informed, critical, and active citizens. Common elements such as **interactive workshops, peer-led discussions, simulation of democratic processes, and use of digital tools** highlight a shared understanding of what engages young people in meaningful political education.

Among the initiatives presented, several countries highlighted **municipal youth councils** (e.g. Greece and Cyprus), while others focused on **local initiatives** replicating the work of national assemblies, such as in **Portugal, Spain, France, or Italy**, or the **European Parliament** (e.g. Euroscola), aiming to help young people understand how **legislative and electoral processes** work. Other partners mentioned **events and activities** specifically designed to bring youth closer to politics (e.g. in Spain, France, and Italy). There are also more **creative and out-of-the-box** ways of involving young people in political life – like in **Belgium**, where traditional media such as **TV shows** with politicians and youth are combined with **board games**. Thousands of young people across Europe have been and continue to be involved, helping build **interest and trust** in politics and institutions.

The main challenges identified by the partners include difficulties in ensuring **inclusiveness and geographic equity**, especially in **rural or under-resourced areas**, where **logistical and financial barriers** often hinder participation. **Sustaining engagement** beyond the duration of individual events is a common concern, as **enthusiasm** does not always translate into **long-term political involvement**. Many initiatives depend heavily on **volunteers**, which can affect **consistency and scalability**. Several partners reported a lack of **structured mechanisms** to integrate **youth input** into formal **policy processes**.

**Educational constraints** also emerged, such as integrating programs into **tight school schedules** and maintaining **teachers' motivation**. In some cases, **abstract topics** like **digital rights** required significant **adaptation** to be relatable for participants. **Low levels of political interest or reluctance to appear partisan** further complicated recruitment and long-term retention of young members, particularly in **youth councils**. In addition, **structural or administrative challenges**—such as **municipal reforms** in Cyprus or the pressure of **tight election timelines** in Belgium—also affected implementation. Finally, **hybrid or online formats** introduced by necessity (e.g. due to **COVID-19**) presented **technical and engagement-related hurdles**, especially in **multinational or large-scale events**.

At the same time, these practices demonstrate **distinct contextual adaptations**, shaped by the specific social, political, and educational environments of each country. For example, some initiatives focus on engaging marginalized youth or rural communities, while others target schools, youth councils, or NGOs. This diversity underscores the importance of tailoring methods to local realities while remaining aligned with **shared European values** of democracy, participation, and human rights.

By presenting these varied yet complementary practices, the booklet becomes more than a catalogue it acts as a **strategic framework** for understanding how political literacy can be promoted across different contexts. It encourages practitioners to reflect on what works, adapt successful models, and develop new strategies suited to their own environments.

Through the **engagement of youth workers, educators, and stakeholders** in testing and refining the booklet, we ensure that the final product is both **practical and responsive** to the real needs and experiences of young people. The **guidelines** presented in this document provide clarity and structure to each phase of the project, from data collection to dissemination.

As a result, the completed booklet will serve as more than just a reference; it will be a **living tool for empowerment** a resource that promotes **political literacy, civic engagement, and active citizenship** across Europe.

**Ultimately, this joint endeavor represents a meaningful contribution to strengthening democratic participation among youth**, equipping the next generation with the **knowledge, confidence, and skills** needed to shape their societies and uphold the democratic values of the European Union.

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