GUIDE TO
GOOD PRACTICES IN EUROPEAN EDUCATION

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GUIDE TO
GOOD PRACTICES IN EUROPEAN EDUCATION

THE PARTNERS

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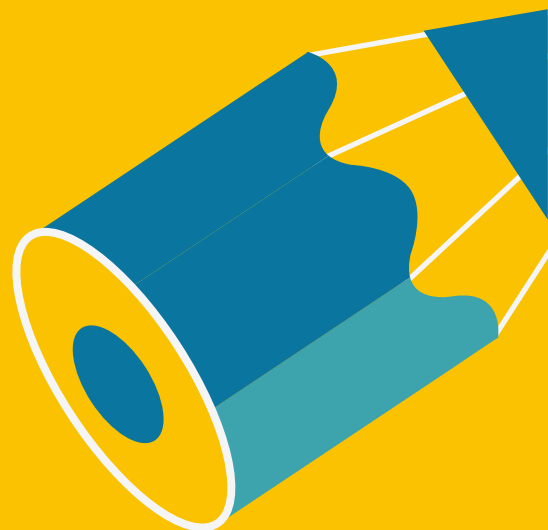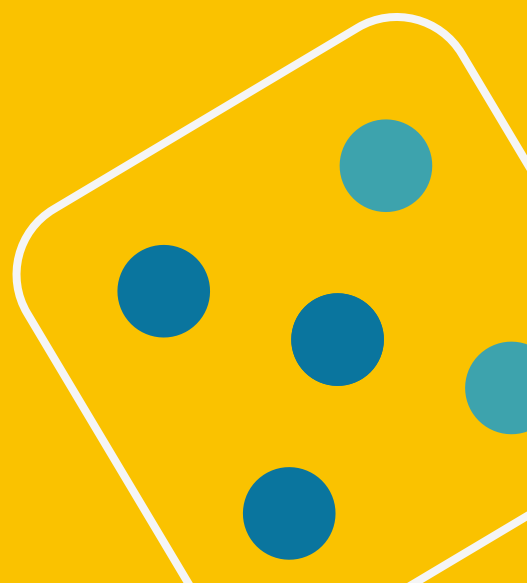(France)

Associacao Juvenil De Deao
(Portugal)

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Asociacion Cazalla Intercultural
(Spain)

Fundacja Centrum Aktywnosci Tworczej
(Poland)

Centre For Capacity Building & Empowerment
(Sweden)

Associazione TDM 2000 ODV
(Italy)

United Societies Of Balkans
(Greece)

More information about the project at myeurope.academy.
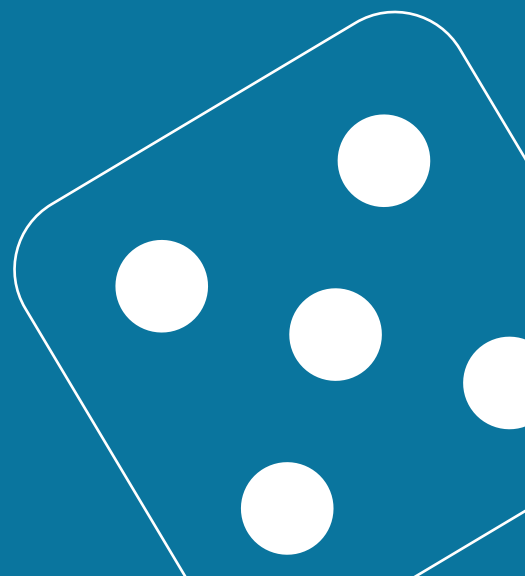Project name: EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP ACADEMY
Project acronym: ECA
Call: ERASMUS-YOUTH-2023-YOUTH-TOG

THE PROJECT
A GENERAL OVERVIEW

A growing number of young people nowadays do not trust the European Union and find it difficult to understand its principles, values and functioning.

In order to tackle this, the European Citizenship Academy (ECA) was developed as a European youth education project, which aims to engage young people and youth organisations in the democratic process and society by offering training, developing exchanges and encouraging meetings, discussions and debates. All these actions aim to help young people identify their link with the EU, its values and its democratic foundations, and accompany them in becoming actively aware of their European citizenship.

As part of the project, a consortium of 8 youth associations of various sizes, both rural and urban, from all over Europe has been formed to develop content and materials for education about Europe in youth work, to implement youth exchanges on the subject, to support local peer education actions and to promote education about Europe in youth work. Designed as a non-formal, hybrid and gamified learning pathway, ECA develops materials that guide young people towards acquiring knowledge about the EU, appropriating their citizenship and finally becoming empowered as European citizens.

Throughout the lifetime of the project 300 young people will be trained, 8 youth exchanges and local training of youth leaders implemented, as well as an e-learning platform about education about the EU in youth field will be created. Young people expectations and proposals, based on the experience of ECA will be gathered in a recommendation paper that will be distributed and presented to key decision makers, politics, and experts at the end of the project. All the results of ECA will be free of use for all.

CONDUCTION OF THE NATIONAL RESEARCH ON GOOD PRACTICES

This document has been prepared as one of the deliverables of Work Package 3 of the project – "Understand: experience your European citizenship".

Objectives of the deliverable

–To analyze the situation in the countries of the partnership on European citizenship education policies and good practices.

–To collect educational tools and good practices of European citizenship in various sectors, such as games and other didactic activities.

–To engage youth workers and other relevant stakeholders in gathering ideas that respond to the educational needs related to European citizenship within youth work.

THIS DELIVERABLE WAS PREPARED BASED ON THE FOLLOWING SOURCES:

Government Agencies and NGOs.

Both government and non-government entities offer valuable and relevant data that organizations can use for secondary research.

Public Libraries.

Public libraries house important research documents and studies that can be utilized for extracting relevant information.

Educational Institutions.

Colleges and universities conduct extensive research, making them a crucial but often overlooked source of data for secondary research.

Sources of Business Information.

Newspapers, magazines, radio, and television stations provide first-hand information on various topics such as economic developments, political agendas, market trends, and demographic data.
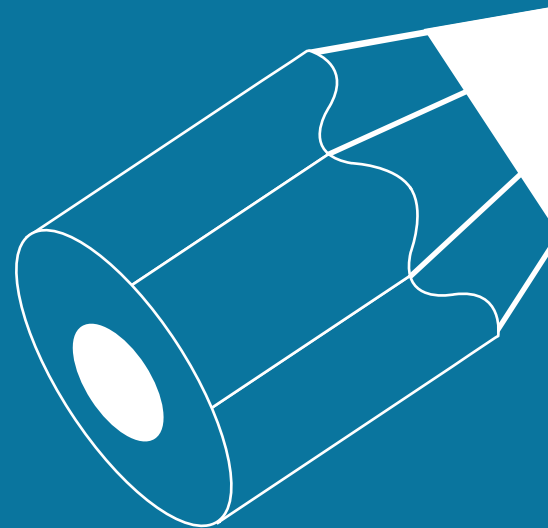
WHAT IS
NON FORMAL
EDUCATION?

Non-formal education refers to organized educational activities that take place outside the formal school system. According to the sources, the concept of non-formal education emerged in the late 1960s as an alternative to the perceived failings of the formal educational system .In 1968, Philip Coombs began discussing non-formal education as a way to address the "world educational crisis" and provide more flexible, relevant learning opportunities.

Formal education is an organized education model, structured and administered by laws and norms, and subject to strict curriculum objectives, methodology and content. Generally speaking this form of education involves the instructor, students and the institution. Participants in formal education are expected to attend classes, subject themselves to assessment that is meant to take learning to the next stage and it results in the attainment of diplomas and degrees (Todaro, 1995). Unfortunately this system blames students for failures but it takes no account of students' standards and subjectivities. Additionally, students –in most cases-fail to be active participants in the learning process. The teaching methodology is not creative, it fails to consider basic learning principles and the personal growth objectives of students are neglected (9).

Non-formal education is in many ways different from formal education. It is flexible in terms of curricula, and methodology but learning in these settings is not by chance, instead it is intentional and organized. Students' needs and interests are placed in the center and the time frame is lacking.

Additionally, the contact between students and instructors is significantly less and most of learning happens outside class and institutions. While formal education lacks the practical side of knowledge, non-formal education focuses on skills and the development of attitudes such as tolerance (Dib,1988)which are vital to one's future success. Studies suggest that the needs of student are better met by non-formal education which enables them to know themselves and the world better. In general, non-formal education focuses on the student, it is open and flexible to needs and interests of students, and is quick to respond to the changing needs of individuals and societies (10).

Informal Education does not follow a plan, it happens in all settings and learning is unconscious. In informal education the responsibility for learning rests with the individual. Mistakes are valued and are considered vital to learning, more mistakes means more learning. This form of education in most cases happens in friendships, families and work environments (11).

THE KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION, AS DESCRIBED IN THE SOURCES, INCLUDE:

Voluntary and Intentional
Participation is voluntary and learners have intrinsic motivation.
There are clear learning objectives and the learning is intentional.

Flexible and Adaptable
Activities can take place in a variety of settings, not just classrooms.
Programs are flexible and adaptable to the needs of participants.

Learner-Centered
Emphasizes the whole person, engaging thoughts, feelings, and emotions.
Builds on learners' prior knowledge and experiences.
Allows for mistakes and sees them as opportunities for growth.

Collaborative and Accountable
Involves a partnership relationship between participants and organizers. Utilizes the group as a resource for learning.

Participants take responsibility for their own learning outcomes. Non-formal education emerged as a response to the perceived limitations of formal schooling, aiming to provide more relevant, flexible, and learner-centered educational opportunities (4). It has become an important component of lifelong learning recognized by international organizations like the OECD and EU (2,4).However, it is important to note that, even though, non-formal education emerged as an alternative to the perceived limitations of the formal education system, it is not intended to entirely replace formal schooling. Rather, non-formal and formal education are seen as complementary approaches that can work together to provide a more comprehensive and effective learning experience.

APPLYING NEW TOOLS IN EDUCATION
In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, incorporating innovative, game-like tools into the education process has become increasingly crucial. These tools not only enhance student engagement and personalize learning but also revolutionize the way teachers deliver content and assess student progress. New technologies offer unlimited possibilities to make learning more effective, engaging and inclusive. New tools in formal education settings- can reshape the learning experience by making it more creative and innovative. Incorporating new tools and methods in the learning process can have various benefits.

Enhancing student engagement
Digital tools, such as interactive whiteboards, educational apps, and gamified learning platforms, have the power to captivate students and make learning more enjoyable. By incorporating game-like elements, these tools tap into students' natural curiosity and competitive spirit, fostering a more immersive and engaging learning experience.

Personalizing learning experiences

Adaptive learning platforms and digital resources cater to diverse learning styles and paces, enabling teachers to personalize instruction for each student. By leveraging data-driven insights, these tools identify individual strengths, weaknesses, and preferences, allowing for targeted interventions and support.

Streamlining assessment and feedback

Digital tools offer efficient and effective ways to assess student learning and provide timely feedback. Online quizzes, formative assessments, and real-time data analytics help teachers identify areas for improvement, adjust their teaching strategies accordingly, and track student progress more effectively.

Expanding access to resources

The integration of digital tools in education expands access to a wealth of resources, from online libraries and educational software to virtual field trips and interactive simulations. This increased access to diverse learning materials caters to a wide range of interests and learning styles, enriching the educational experience (12).

CREATING
Produce something new or original. (ex. Canva)

Canva

EVALUATING
Judge, assess, and make decisions based on criteria or standards. (ex. Trello)

ANALYZING
Break down information into smaller parts to understand it better. (ex. Tableau)

APPLYING
Use information in new contexts. (ex. Google Sheet)

UNDERSTANDING
Explain ideas or concepts. (ex. Youtube)

REMEMBERING
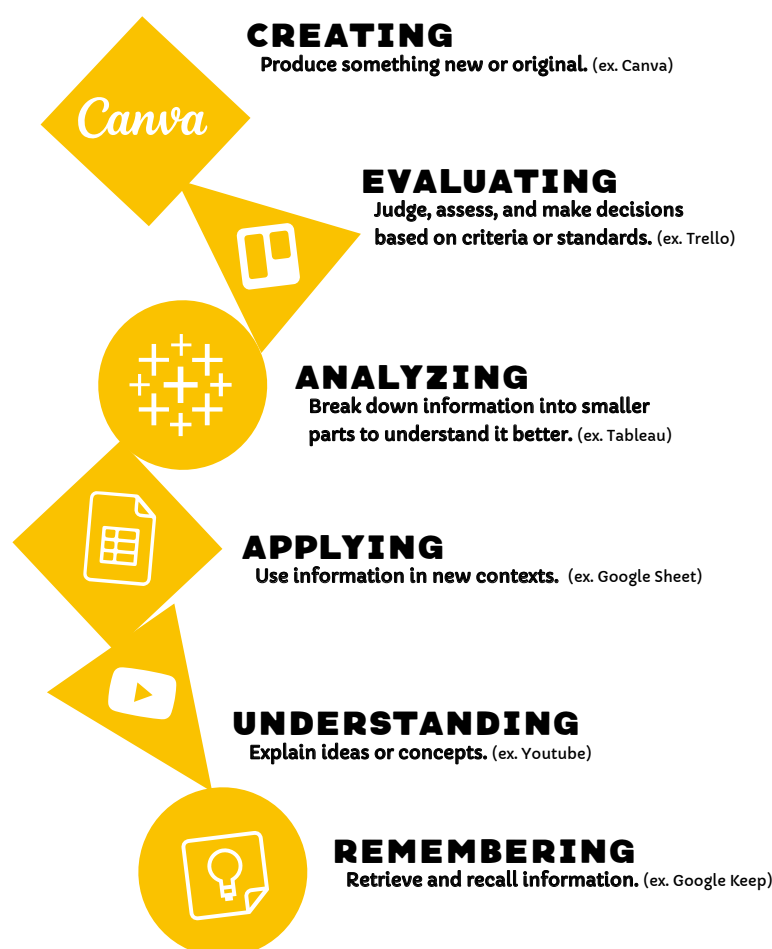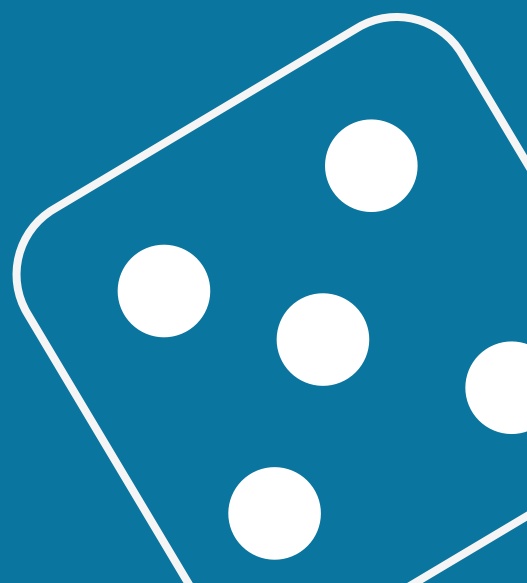Retrieve and recall information. (ex. Google Keep)

Figure 2. Bloom's digital taxonomy showing the relationship between technological applications and higher order thinking skills. From "Bloom's Revised Taxonomy," by S. Penney, 2014

WHAT DOES THE MANUAL TALK ABOUT?

The manual is crafted to support youth workers and educators in effectively engaging young individuals with the concept of European citizenship. It serves as a comprehensive resource that outlines best practices, educational tools, and resources aimed at enhancing understanding and participation in EU-related activities.
The manual features a range of interactive activities and exercises that promote discussion and critical thinking on topics related to European citizenship among young people. These activities are developed using a blended and gamified learning a pproach, incorporating interactive workshops that encourage active participation and dialogue among young participants. They also include role-playing and group activities, which enable participants to engage practically with the concepts of EU citizenship, thereby deepening their understanding through experiential learning. Furthermore, the activities are designed to integrate digital tools andvutilize online platforms, making the learning process more engaging and accessible to all participants.

OVERVIEW OF THE COUNTRIES' REALITIES

The consortium of the European Citizenship Academy project created a survey for youth workers in all partner countries. The goal was to understand the reality of education on the topic of European citizenship in the different countries and to see how organizations are addressing this topic in their work.

By collecting good practices, engaging with youth workers, and utilizing various data sources, the project aims to develop effective educational tools that can enhance the understanding and participation of young people in EU-related activities. The collaborative approach ensures that the research is relevant, practical, and aligned with the needs of educators and learners alike.

The survey results offer insights into the strategies used, the challenges faced, and the tools employed by partner organizations to promote active European citizenship.
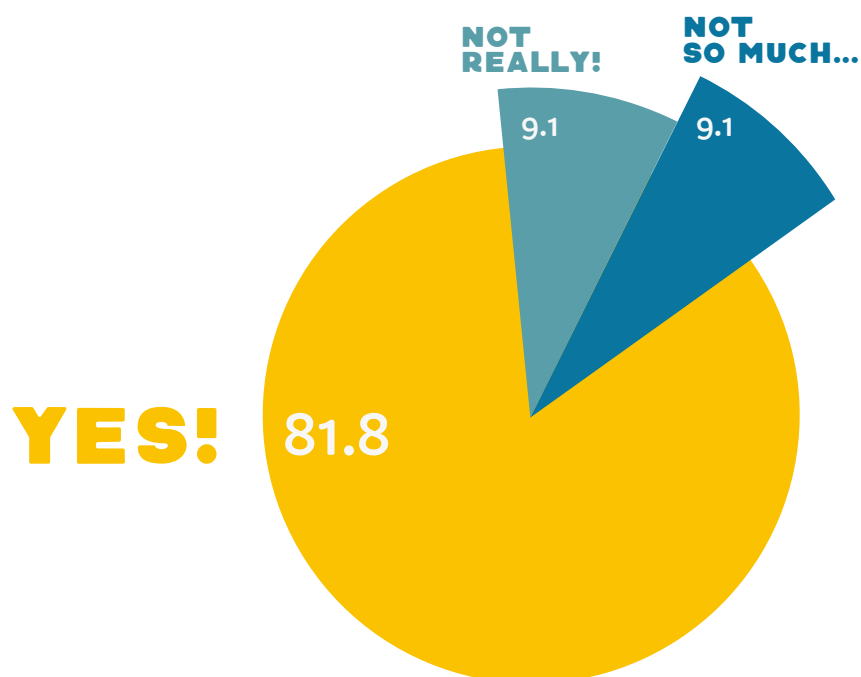
Figure 3. Does your organization actively incorporate the topic of European Union Citizenship into its activities?

Based on the search results, the majority of youth-focused organizations actively incorporate European citizenship topics into their activities and educational programs (81,8%).

The strong emphasis on European citizenship topics within the majority of these youth-focused organizations is a positive sign, as it suggests a commitment to empowering young people with a sense of European identity and civic participation. By consistently integrating these themes, the organizations are likely fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation for the rights, responsibilities, and opportunities associated with EU citizenship.

However, the fact that a significant minority ("not really" – 9,1% and "not so much – 9,1%) are not as engaged in this area highlights the need for continued efforts to promote the importance of European citizenship education. Sharing best practices, providing resources, and training, and encouraging cross-organizational collaboration could help to further expand the integration of these topics across the youth sector (**Figure 3**).

The high levels of knowledge about European Union citizenship reported by the partner organizations (between "7" and "10" combined corresponds 81,8%) is a positive indicator. It suggests that these partners (who gave value of "7" and above) have a strong grasp of the rights, responsibilities, and significance of EU citizenship. This knowledge likely enables them to effectively disseminate information and promote engagement with EU citizenship among their constituents.

While a small minority reported lower knowledge levels (2 -3%, 3 – 3%, 5 - 6,1%, 6 – 6,1%) the overall data points to a solid foundation of EU citizenship awareness among the surveyed partner organizations. This binds well for their ability to serve as informed and capable advocates for EU citizenship rights and participation (**Figure 4**).
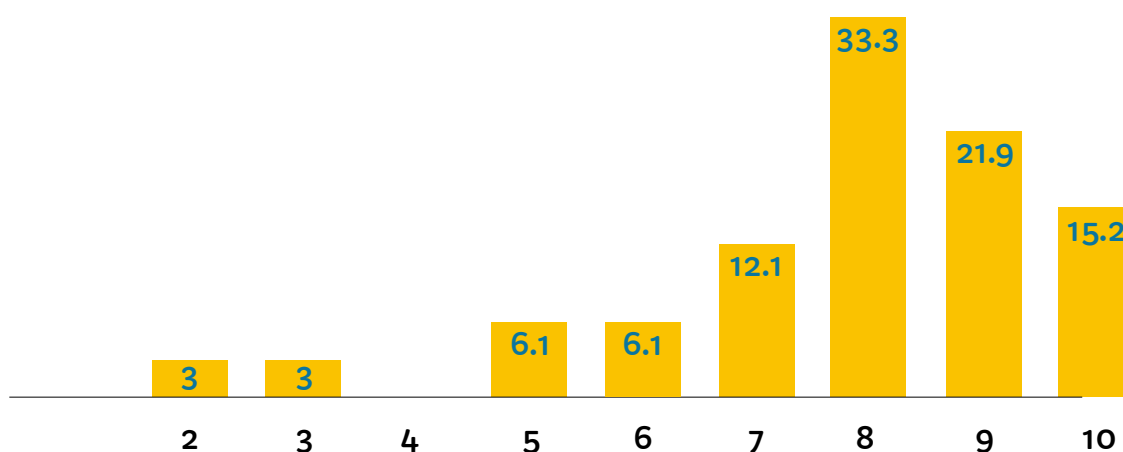

Figure 4. On a scale of 1-10, to what extent does your organization possess sufficient knowledge about Eurpean Union Citizenship?
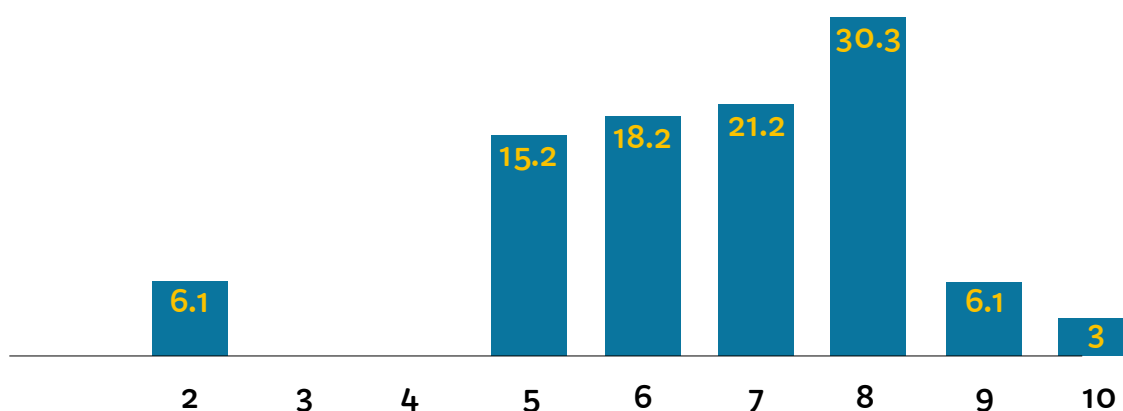

Figure 5. On a scale of 1-10, how does your organization perceive the ease of delivering information about Eurpean Union Citizenship to yourg people?

When it comes to delivering information about EU citizenship to young people, the responses are more varied but still generally positive. The most common score was 8, selected by 30.3% of respondents. Additionally, 21.2% rated the ease at 7, and 18.2% at 6. Higher scores were relatively rare, with only 3% rating it at 10 (very easy), while 15.2% rated it at 5. The lowest score given was 2, by 6.1% of respondents, and no one rated it below 2.

Overall, the responses indicate that most partner organizations incorporate the topic of European Union citizenship in their activities and they feel fairly knowledgeable how to convey this information to young people. At the same time, the survey responses reveal a range of challenges that partner organizations face when disseminating information about EU citizenship to young people. Many young people show a lack of interest in the EU, perceiving it as distant or irrelevant to their daily lives. This detachment is often due to the complexity of EU citizenship concepts. Economic crises and distrust in institutions, particularly noted in Greece, also make it hard to engage citizens with EU-related information. Additionally, disinformation, fake news, and negative political rhetoric contribute to misconceptions and distrust in the EU and its institutions.

Finding the appropriate channels and ways how to effectively reach young people is another significant challenge, which is also increased by limited time and resources for proper preparation and implementation of dissemination activities. Geographic isolation, particularly for organizations located in remote areas or non-EU countries, further complicates it. Cultural differences and stereotypes, along with language barriers, make it more challenging to ensure effective communication and engagement with diverse audiences.

Local issues, such as the impact of EU regulations on rural communities, create additional obstacles, leading to distrust from specific groups like farmers. Organizations based in non-EU countries or regions less highlighted in EU discussions feel a sense of detachment, making it harder to foster a connection to EU citizenship. Despite these challenges, some organizations report having strong connections with national agencies or effective local networks that facilitate smoother dissemination of information about EU citizenship. Overall, the need for innovative, engaging methods and better resources to counteract misinformation and build interest and trust among young people is very evident.

The survey reveals that youth workers face several challenges when communicating with young people about EU citizenship. A major issue is engaging their interest and maintaining attention, as young people tend to display several other distractions in their lives. For example, socio-economic difficulties are often among young people's prioritized concerns, instead of understanding abstract concepts like EU citizenship. Many young people feel apathetic or skeptical, seeing the EU as disconnected from their daily lives and worries. A recurring challenge is the perception that the EU does not respect or include young people, leading to a lack of interest in EU-related topics. This sentiment is compounded by a general lack of awareness about EU values and basic EU information. The legal and bureaucratic language used in EU documents can be difficult for young people to understand, making the topic seem too complex or irrelevant.

Additionally, the mistrust in local political leaders and the influence of older generations in smaller communities make it even more complicated to achieve effective communication. There is also the challenge of misinformation and media disinformation, which contribute to young people's skepticism towards political institutions. Addressing common misconceptions about the EU requires providing clear, factual information, which is not always straightforward.

Maintaining engagement and motivation over time is difficult, as young people are surrounded by numerous stimuli that can distract them from the learning process. Participation in democratic life varies across EU countries, and discussing EU citizenship with a diverse group can be challenging due to varying levels of information and experience in democratic practices.

The partner organizations use diverse tools, resources, and materials to support the delivery of information and content on EU citizenship to young people. The most common methods include the use of digital media, social media platforms, and online tools to reach a broad audience. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are frequently used to share information, success stories, and updates. Many organizations employ non-formal education methods, including interactive workshops, seminars, role-playing, and group activities, to make the information more engaging and accessible to young people. They also organize events such as Europe Day celebrations, information fairs, cultural festivals, and youth exchanges through Erasmus+ projects to promote EU citizenship actively.
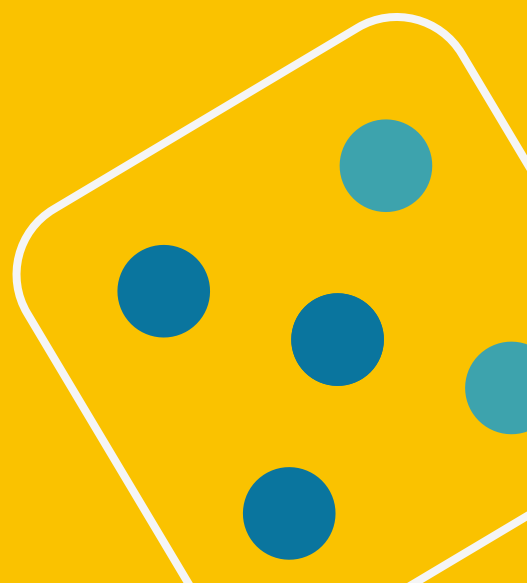
Additionally, physical media and face-to-face activities play a crucial role in incorporating the topic in their daily work. Some organizations use brochures, leaflets, flash mobs, street games, and banners to disseminate information. Collaborations with local NGOs, community groups, educational institutions, and partnerships with Eurodesk and other EU bodies are vital for many organizations. Several organizations mentioned also the development and use of gamified activities, quizzes, board games, and digital tools to make learning about EU citizenship more appealing to young people. Educational resources and materials from national agencies, EU projects, and platforms like SALTO are also commonly utilized.

Many youth workers involved in the survey emphasize the need to create inclusive environments and facilitate structured dialogues through world café sessions and partnerships with decision-makers. In rural or geographically isolated areas, efforts are focused on local activities that align with EU values and priorities to foster a deeper understanding and engagement with EU citizenship.

Figure 6. The European Youth Strategy (2019-2027) addresses the challenges of effectively reaching young people through several key approaches: **connect**, **engage** and **empower**.

OVERVIEW OF
THE BEST
PRACTICES
IN NON FORMAL EDUCATION
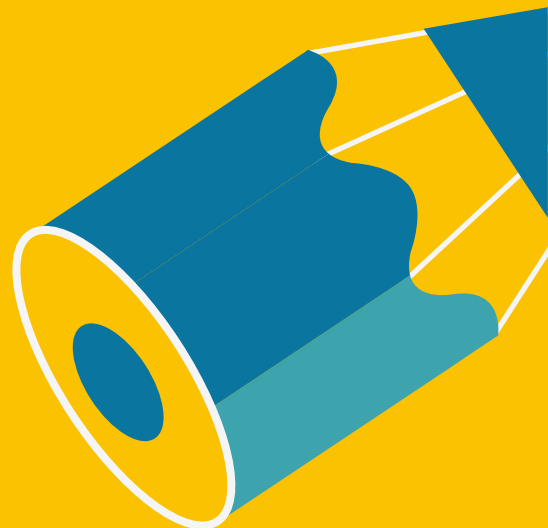
As mentioned above, the partner organizations involved in this project are involved in several activities to promote understanding and engagement with EU citizenship.

Through interactive workshops, innovative activities, educational resources, and strategic partnerships, they aim to equip young individuals with the knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm to actively participate in European initiatives and contribute positively to their communities and beyond.

In the following part of the guide, an overview of tools, practices, resources, and initiatives are gathered that have been selected as the best practices to approaching the topic of European Union citizenship with young people.

INDEX OF
THE BEST PRACTICES
IN NON FORMAL EDUCATION

ACTION – IN BUDGETTOWN!

Entity	Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth
Objectives	· To introduce the concept of participatory budgeting and its application in policy processes; · To develop participants' ability to collaborate and engage in meaningful discussions and decision-making; · To explore innovative and practical approaches to youth participation in democratic processes; · To provide a space for practicing dialogue, collaboration, and negotiation in multistakeholder settings; · To inspire proactive involvement of young people in their communities.
What does it look like?	Role-play simulation activity on participatory budgeting
Target Groups	Young people (16-25 years old)
Brief description	This role-play simulation aims to equip young people with the skills and knowledge to actively engage in democratic processes, focusing on participatory budgeting. The activity takes place in the fictional city of BudgetTown. Start by deviding the participants into three groups, each representing a different neighbourhood – Downtown, Middletown, and Uptown. One participant is assigned the role of the city Mayor, who is independent from the three groups. Each participant is provided with a character card which explains their assigned role and respective neighbourhood (the handouts to the character cards are available in the T-Kit 15 linked below). Throughout the whole duration of the activity, the participants need to perform in accordance with the role that they have been assigned. Invite the participants (apart from the Mayor) to individually reflect on a project proposal idea that they would like to see implemented in their city. Afterwards, the participants must gather in their groups and, following a group discussion, each neighbourhood needs to choose at least two project proposals that they would like to present to the Mayor and other citizens in order to receive funding for its implementation. Provide a space for the three groups to present their proposals (the presentation should be max. 5 minutes per neighbourhood). All the participants have the right to ask questions and express their opinion. Eventually, everyone has to vote for the best proposal. At the end of the role-play, the winning proposal (the one who received the most votes), is announced, together with the overall budget awarded for the idea. More detailed instructions of the activity, as well as the handouts (the description of the neighbourhoods and different character roles) to be distributed among participants can be found in the T-kit 15 linked below.
Resources	Click here!

DISCOVER – THE TWO-WAY POLICY STREET

Entity	Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth
Objectives	· To support participants in discovering the policy-making process at the European level; · To allow participants to connect the links between decision-making at a European and local/national level; · To encourage young citizens to be more engaged in policy-making.
What does it look like?	Group research and discussion, interactive mapping
Target Groups	Young people (16-25 years old)
Brief description	This activity aims to help participants explore the key actors and documents in European youth policy-making, while also reflecting on the connection between European and local/national youth policies. At the start of the activity, the facilitator divides the participants into two groups – the first group needs to research the key actors involved in European youth policy-making, while the other group researches the key documents related to European youth policies. The facilitator prepares a space with flipchart papers spread on the floor. One half of the flipcharts is dedicated to the key actors, and the other half is for the for key documents, with a gap left in the middle. The participants are asked to write down their findings on sticky notes and attach them to the respective flipcharts (key actors or documents). Then, they are invited to make connections between the key actors and documents by linking them together with a rope or a thread. The space in the middle should be kept clear. The facilitator invites participants to reflect on these connections and identify the main priorities of European youth policy, writing them down and placing them in the centre of the map. After that, participants should reflect individually on what is the importance of European youth policy. The facilitator then sets up a flipchart labeled "local/national youth policy," and creates a "street" between this flipchart and the European youth policy flipcharts. This street has two directions: one road moving from European to local/national youth policy, and the other from local/national to European youth policy. The participants are invited to stand on the street. On one side, they should write how European youth policy influences local or national youth policies, considering its impact and benefits. On the other side, they should describe how local or national youth policy contributes to the European level and how individuals can actively participate in this process. In small groups (not the same ones as for the first mapping stage of the key actors and documents – the participants should be mixed in new groups), invite the participants to reflect on these questions, write their findings on sticky notes, and place them on the street. Finally, involve the participants in a debriefing session. You can use the following questions for guidance: · What was the key impression you got from the activity? · How was the process of learning about key European policy documents/institutions/priorities? Have you discovered something new? Has something surprised you? · What are your insights from linking the European level youth policy to the local/national one? How obvious are the links? · How could you engage as well as support young people to bring European policy closer to your reality? More detailed instructions of the activity can be found in the T-kit 15 linked below.
Resources	Click here!

WHERE DO YOU(TH) DIGITALLY STAND?

Entity	Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth
Objectives	· To support participants in exploring the use of digital technologies for participatory youth policy-making; · To enable young people to explore the potential and limits of electronic voting/polling; · To inspire young people to promote the civic use of digital technologies and encourage more active youth participation.
What does it look like?	Simulation activity on policy-making and digitalisation
Target Groups	Young people (16-25 years old)
Brief description	This is a simulation activity focused on policy issues related to digitalisation, where participants display their positions through online voting and engage in a democratic debate. Each participant should download and open the online polling app chosen for the activity (suitable apps could be, for example, Mentimeter or Slido). Before the activity begins, prepare on the app a series of questions that will then appear on the screen for the participants. You might include the following questions: · Does the use of digital democracy make a country more democratic? · Is e-voting a safe option to express your voice and attitude? · Does the use of digital tools increase the connections between citizens and decision makers? Read out the question to be voted on and, if necessary, provide any clarification (if there are doubts about understanding it). Reflecting on each question, the participants now need to cast their votes individually on their device. The results will then be displayed on the screen. Invite the participants to present the arguments supporting their positions, especially encouraging those who voted for the minority positions. The process may be repeated for several rounds depending on how many questions you want to introduce. Afterwards, move on with the participatory policy-making session. On the app, introduce a specific policy issue that relates to one of the voting questions the participants found most engaging or relevant. Some of the policy issues discussed might be as follows: · What should be done to make e-voting safe for people in your community/country? · How can social media become a powerful tool for young people's active participation? Read the issue statement aloud and provide any explanations if needed. Invite the participants to reflect individually about potential solutions or ideas they would like to propose, submitting them through the app. Once the proposals have been submitted, give the participants time to review all of them. If something is unclear, they can use the comment section in the app to ask questions or request clarification. Then, move on to the voting phase. Ask each participant to vote for the proposal they find the most suitable. Finally, announce the final results, including both the digital votes of both the polling and policy-making sessions. The activity includes with a debriefind session. You can use the following questions for guidance: · What did you learn from this simulation exercise? · When was it most difficult to decide on your position? Why? · What happens when we don't know and we choose not to vote? · How meaningful is such participation in important policy questions for you? What could have made it even more meaningful for you? · Would digital participation and digital voting be useful in other (policy) areas that you engage with? More detailed instructions of the activity, as well as handouts with more voting questions and policy issue statements can be found in the T-kit 15 linked below.
Resources	Click here!

NEGOTIATE AND PARTICIPATE!

Entity	DYPALL network
Objectives	· To explore the roles, rights, and duties of relevant actors in democracy; · To develop advocacy skills among young people.
What does it look like?	Simulation activity on policy-making and digitalisation
Target Groups	Young people (18-30 years old)
Brief description	Necessary materials: flipcharts, markers. Aim: the purpose of the activity is to explore the relationships between four "actors" within an ideal democratic society. Duration: 120 min Start the activity by dividing the participants into four small groups representing four relevant actors in a democracy: the government, civil society, media, citizens. Then, ask the participants to think about the role their group has in a democratic society, the main functions they perform – they have to come up with the 5 most important functions and write them on a flipchart. In a plenary setting, each group then presents their main functions as a key actor in democracy. If a group wishes so, they can amend their list after receiving feedback from the other groups. Afterwards, the groups have to think of what they would need from the other groups/actors in order to carry out their own functions; they have to come up with two most important demands to each of the other groups and write them on their flipchart. Introduce the next step of the activity, explaining that each actor will have the chance to discuss their needs with the other groups: the goal is to get their demands accepted. The negotiations are made between pairs of groups/actors in rounds. When making a demand, a group should state the demand clearly and concisely. They should also explain what it involves and why they are making this particular demand, why it is important to enable them to fulfil their own functions (i.e., in order to be active in their community (one of their functions), citizens need media to be objective and not manipulated by political interests). When deciding whether or not to accept a demand, the participants should decide whether what is being asked is fair and whether they would be able to carry it out. If the demand is accepted, the group claiming can "check" it; the accepting group should make a brief note on their flipchart, reminding them of their responsibilities and what they agreed to do. If the demand is not accepted, both groups write down in their flipchart the reason why it has not been accepted. Repeat the negotiations until all demands have been discussed. At the end of negotiation rounds, all groups present in the plenary their flipcharts, which should include: - Their main 5 functions. - 2 demands to each one of the other groups and whether they have been accepted or not. - The commitments they took towards the other groups. After the activity, hold a debriefing session with the following questions: - Was it hard to think of the functions that key actors perform in a democracy? - Were there any disagreements within the groups about which claims should be accepted or rejected? - Which of the claims made on other groups did they not accept as responsibilities? Why was this? Do you think that such cases would cause any problems in reality? - Were there responsibilities that each group accepted but which they had not recognised before? How do they feel about this now? - Did the activity show people anything new about democratic society that they did not know before? Were there any surprises? - Do you think this kind of "negotiation" works in our democratic societies?
Resources	Click here!

ENGAGEMENT TO THE EU CITIZENSHIP TROUGH ART

Entity	United Societies of Balkans
Objectives	• To educate participants about EU citizenship, its rights, and responsibilities; • To develop teamwork and collaboration skills; • To foster a sense of initiative among participants; • To enhance understanding of EU citizenship through artistic expression
What does it look like?	Participatory educational workshop
Target Groups	• Young people (15-25 years old) • Young adults (18-30 years old) • Community groups (i.e. local youth organizations)
Brief description	**1. Introduction** (15 minutes) • **Welcome and Icebreaker:** Begin with a brief introduction to the EU and EU citizenship. This will help to check the level of knowledge among the participants on the topic, so that the facilitator has a clearer idea on how to proceed with the activity. o **Icebreaker Exercise:** Ask participants to share one thing they know about the EU or a country in the EU. • Objective Explanation: Explain the goal of the activity - to learn about EU citizenship through art. **2. Educational Segment (30 minutes)** • Presentation on EU Citizenship: Create an engaging slideshow with visuals such as maps, charts, flags and videos highlighting the following: • **Rights of EU Citizens:** Freedom of movement, right to vote in European elections etc. • **Responsibilities:** Participating in democratic processes, respecting other cultures, understanding EU policies. • **Historical Context:** Brief overview of the formation of the EU and key milestones. Here participants could search and share important figures that have contributed to the formation of the EU over the years. • **Cultural Diversity:** Highlight various cultural aspects from different EU countries. **3. Artistic Creation (1 hour)** **Art Project Introduction:** • **Theme:** "What EU Citizenship Means to Me" • Provide examples of how art can represent citizenship, such as through symbols, colors, or personal stories, creative writing processes and visual materials, such as drawings, illustrations, collage creations. **Art Creation:** • Divide participants into groups or allow them to work individually. • Encourage diverse artistic mediums (painting, drawing, digital art, sculpture, etc.). Here the facilitator can provide the participants with various art supplies, such as paints, colored pencils, markers, paper, canvas, clay, magazine cutouts etc. The facilitators offers guidance and support as needed. **4. Presentation and Discussion (30 minutes)** **Art Presentation:** • Each participant or group presents their artwork and explains the concept behind it. The rest of the group can give feedback on how they perceive the artwork. This part could be set as a mini exhibition, where participants display their work and everyone can go through each other's pieces and interact. • Discuss how their art represents EU citizenship and what they learned from the activity. **Group Discussion:** • Reflect on the different perspectives and interpretations of EU citizenship. Explore how the process of creating art helped participants understand and connect with the concept of EU citizenship. • Discuss how art can be a powerful tool for education and engagement. **5. Conclusion (15 minutes)** • **Summary:** Recap the key points learned about EU citizenship, emphasizing the diversity of perspectives shown in the artwork. • **Feedback:** Ask participants for feedback on the activity.
Resources	Click here!

WORLD CAFÉ METHOD

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Entity	United Societies of Balkans
Objectives	· To gather young people's opinions and experiences related to EU citizenship; · To encourage open discussion on specific EU topics; · To promote collaboration and shared dialogue among participants; · To deepen the participants' understanding of what EU citizenship means in practice.
What does it look like?	Group discussion and reflection
Target Groups	· Teenagers (15-17 years old); · Young adults (18-30 years old)
Brief description	As the facilitator of the activity, begin by preparing the space. Set up several small tables with 4–6 chairs each to create a relaxed, café-style environment. Place large sheets of paper and markers on every table for participants to write or draw ideas. Divide participants into small groups and assign them to different tables. Each table should have one open-ended question clearly written on a flipchart or large sheet. Before starting, briefly explain the World Café method to all participants. Let them know that each table will have a specific question to discuss. In their groups, they should discuss the question and write down their key ideas, thoughts, and insights. Ask each table to choose one person to act as the table host. This person will stay at the same table for all discussion rounds. Once the introduction is done, invite participants to begin discussing the first question at their tables. **Examples of questions for the activity:** 1. What does it mean to be a citizen in today's world, and how do you see your role as a young citizen? 2. How can young people influence political decision-making in their communities or countries? 3. What rights and responsibilities do you think young citizens should have in your society? 4. What challenges do young people face when it comes to participating in democratic processes (e.g., voting, volunteering, etc.)? 5. How can young people contribute to shaping European or global citizenship? 6. What does active participation in your local community look like for young people? 7. In what ways can young citizens advocate for environmental, social, and cultural change? 8. What role does education play in preparing young people to become responsible citizens? 9. How can we encourage more young people to engage with social issues that impact their lives and the world around them? 10. How do you think young people's voices can be better heard in public policy and governance? After a set time, usually 15-20 minutes, participants (except for the table host) rotate to new tables. The table host stays to summarize the previous discussion to the new group/table, ensuring continuity and cross-fertilization of ideas. This process repeats for several rounds, with each new question building on the previous discussions. After the final rotation, all participants gather in a central area where table hosts present key insights and ideas from their discussions. The facilitator captures these main points on a whiteboard or flipchart for a collective overview. **Role of the Host:** The host stays at their table throughout the event and has the following responsibilities: o Summarizes the discussion from the previous group to the new participants. o Ensures continuity of the conversation. o Facilitates the integration of ideas from multiple rounds.

CHANGES IN SOCIAL PERCEPTION OVER DECADES

Organisation	Cazalla Intercultural
Objectives	• To explore and understand the evolution of social perceptions over different decades, focusing on topics relevant to the European Union; • To analyze the influence of historical events, media, and cultural trends on public opinion and societal priorities; • To encourage critical thinking about how information is portrayed and disseminated through various forms of media across time; • To enhance participants' ability to connect past perceptions with current societal attitudes and challenges.
What does it look like?	Group research and presentation activity
Target Groups	Young people (18-25 years old)
Brief description	Divide participants into groups, with each group assigned one decade: the 70s, 80s, 90s, 00s, or the present. (For larger groups, include additional decades such as the 50s and 60s.) Choose a topic relevant to the European Union, such as climate change. Each group investigates how this topic was perceived during their assigned decade. As a guideline, they can explore: - Historical events - How the topic was presented in films and music - The presention of the topic in advertisements Each group should focus on the following questions: - Was it easy to find information, or did you encounter difficulties? - How was the topic addressed? - Was the tone surrounding the topic positive, negative, or neutral? - Was the topic considered significant during that time? After the groups have completed the research and noted their findings, the activity can be concluded in two ways: - Each group presents their findings, followed by a group discussion analyzing the changes in perception across the decades. - Groups create an improvised theater performance where representatives from different decades meet to discuss their perspectives on the topic. After the presentations, invite all the participants for a collaborative reflection session, focusing on the following questions: - How has the perception of the topic changed over the decades? - Were there specific events, movements, or societal changes that influenced these perceptions? - How did films, music, or advertisements shape public opinion about the topic in each decade? - Were there any stereotypes or biases evident in the media representations? - Was the tone around the topic predominantly positive, negative, or neutral in your decade? - In which decade did the topic start gaining more prominence, and why? - How do past perceptions influence the way the topic is addressed today? - Did you notice any surprising or unexpected trends during your investigation? - How might your own perception of the topic differ if you had lived during another decade?

FORUM THEATRE AND THE EU

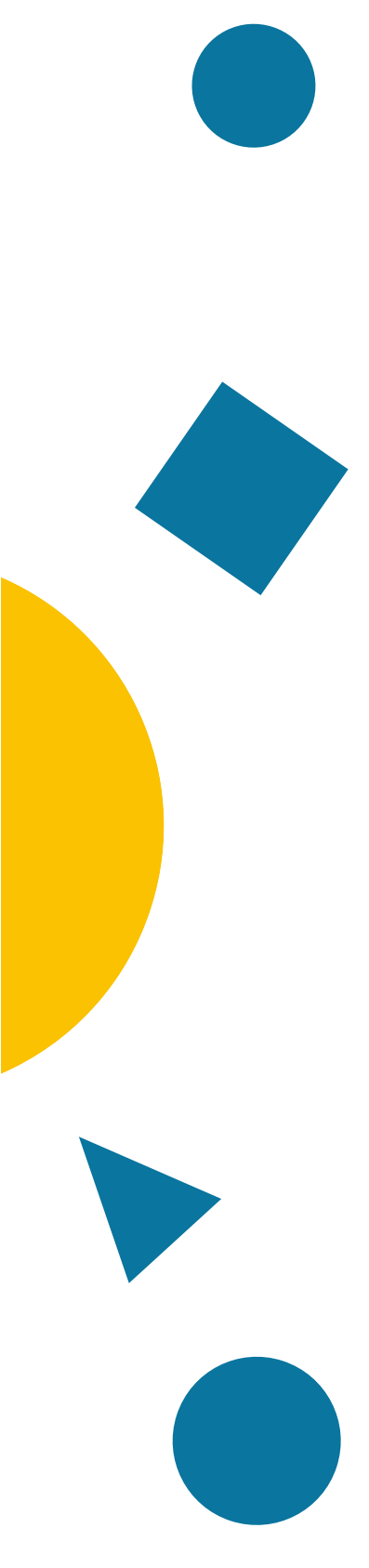|	
Organisation	Pistes Solidaires
Objectives	· To understand the impact of the EU in the lives of Europeans; · To reflect on how EU policies influence mobility, work, study, and communication; · To explore the contrast between life with and without the EU through creative expression; · To encourage collaboration and non-verbal communication within groups.
What does it look like?	Theatre-based role-play activity
Target Groups	Young people (18-25 years old)
Brief description	Divide participants into small groups of 4–5 people. Each group will work with a scenario related to cross-border experiences. You may either allow groups to choose their own topic or assign one to each group to ensure a variety of themes. Possible topics include: crossing a border, visiting a foreign country, calling family from abroad, working or volunteering in another country, studying abroad, or sending/receiving money internationally. The activity is carried out in two phases: **Phase 1 – Without the EU** Each group creates a "living sculpture" to represent their assigned scenario as it might look without the support or influence of the European Union. They should use only their bodies to form a visual representation - no speaking, props, or written elements. The sculpture should express the emotions, barriers, or difficulties involved in the situation. Once ready, each group presents their sculpture to the others. The other participants try to guess what the scenario is and are encouraged to physically add themselves to the sculpture, contributing new perspectives or elements using only body language. **Phase 2 – With the EU** Groups then adapt their original sculpture to show how the same situation might look with the support of the EU. They can reflect on how EU policies, like freedom of movement, roaming-free communication, borderless travel, access to work and study programs, or mutual recognition of rights, would change the scenario. The updated sculptures are then presented. After all sculptures have been shown, wrap up the activity with a group discussion or reflection. You can guide the conversation with questions such as: · What differences did you notice between the two versions of each sculpture? · Which EU policies or rights made the most impact in the scenes? · Were there any scenarios that made you reflect on things you normally take for granted? · How might your personal experiences be different without the EU? · What role does the EU play in everyday mobility, communication, or connection across countries?

EUROPE CLOSER TO YOU

Organisation	AJD, Viana do Castelo Prison
Objectives	To promote active civic participation and engagement; To foster a sense of appreciation and connection to Europe; To encourage informed voting and participation in democratic processes.
Target Groups	Young people (aged 16-25). It can focus on socially marginalized groups or other vulnerable communities (e.g., this activity was initially conducted with prisoners at Viana do Castelo Prison).
Brief description	Start with an icebreaker/energizer to engage the group. For example - without talking, ask the participants to organize themselves by age. This energizer will help the participants to get to know each other and set an informal tone for the session. Once the icebreaker is complete, begin the session which will invite the participants to answer questions about the European elections. Encourage dialogue and reflection. If needed, provide hints or multiple-choice answers to help the group engage with the topic and provide answers to the questions. 1. What are the European elections for? 2. Is it important to vote in these elections? 3. Do you know the length of the mandate in the European Parliament? 4. Do you know how many members form the European Parliament? 5. Can you list some of the countries that are part of the European Union? After the group has had time to respond, provide them with the correct answers if needed. The answers can be given as statements, and they can be used to guide further discussion. Solutions (answers to the questions): 1. To elect Members of the European Parliament who will represent us when it comes to drafting new laws. The decisions made by MEPs will contribute in many ways to our daily lives, on issues such as the economy, the environment, security and rights. 2. Democracy is not simply given. It is a collective achievement and a collective responsibility in which we all have a role to play. It is by participating that we are shaping what will happen in the future. 3. Every 5 years. 4. In June 2024, 720 MEPs were elected. 5. The EU currently consists of 27 member states: Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland and Sweden. Next, move on to the "Agree/Disagree" activity. Set up a line in the room, marking "Agree" on one side and "Disagree" on the other. Read out the following statements, and ask participants to position themselves along the line based on their opinion. After they've positioned themselves, encourage them to explain their reasoning, promoting discussion. 1. There should be greater control of immigration in Europe. 2. Whenever any country in the European Union enters into conflict, Portugal should send military personnel. (you can adapt this to the country where the activity will be set) 3. There should be less control over the passage of goods between countries. 4. The electoral system should be changed. 5. Portugal should give up the Euro currency. (you can adapt this to the country where the activity will be set) Encourage participants to explain why they have chosen their positions on the line. This will generate discussions and provide different viewpoints on important European issues. Conclude the activity with a final reflection on the importance of voting. Explain that throughout the activity, participants have expressed their opinions - just like they do when voting. If we don't vote, we risk having representatives elected who do not reflect our values or interests. Voting is the way we ensure that our voices are heard and that the decisions made in the European Parliament align with our views. It's essential to participate in the democratic process to shape the future.
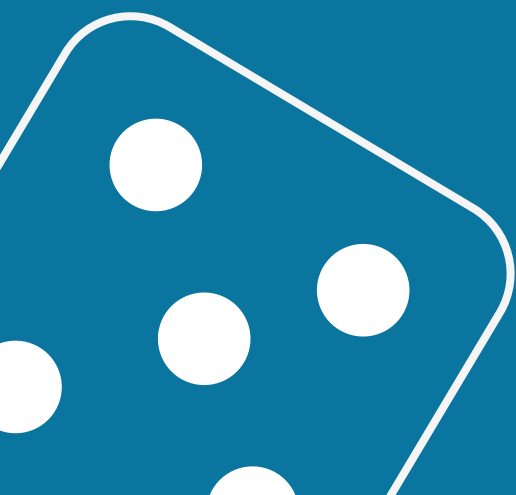
CONCLUSIONS
& CONTINUATION

In conclusion, this guide has provided an overview of the current state of European education in the youth sector on the topic of European citizenship. By exploring best practices and analyzing current trends, it equips youth leaders with the necessary tools to educate and raise awareness among young people about Europe. It also encourages local initiatives and underscores the significance of European education to political decision-makers at both the European and local levels.

The survey conducted among youth workers in partner countries offers valuable insights into the reality of education on European citizenship. While many organizations successfully integrate European citizenship into their programs, challenges remain. Many young people still lack a clear understanding of their EU rights and find the concepts abstract or irrelevant to their daily lives. Furthermore, misinformation and the complexity of EU legal and political systems pose additional obstacles.

The survey results identified common challenges such as engaging youth, logistical issues, and a disconnection between EU policies and local contexts. Addressing these challenges requires innovative strategies and targeted interventions, including the use of digital platforms and interactive activities to boost engagement.

To tackle these issues, organizations are adopting a variety of tools and resources. These include interactive workshops, accessible brochures, social media campaigns, and participation in Erasmus+ projects. Celebratory events, personalized counseling sessions, and the use of technology through games and apps further enhance the learning experience and promote active engagement with EU citizenship.

This guide highlights the need for specialized training programs, specific tools and creative communication methods to effectively spread information about European citizenship. By applying good practices and addressing specific challenges, organizations can cultivate a deeper understanding and appreciation of European citizenship among young people.

Additionally, it is essential for organizations to continue adapting and innovating their approaches to remain effective. Ongoing feedback from participants and regular evaluations of educational initiatives can help refine methods and ensure that the information remains relevant and engaging, especially among young people. Collaboration among partner organizations and sharing of successful strategies can also enhance the overall impact.

By fostering a sense of community and shared purpose, these efforts can significantly contribute to a more informed and engaged youth population, ultimately strengthening the European Union's future.
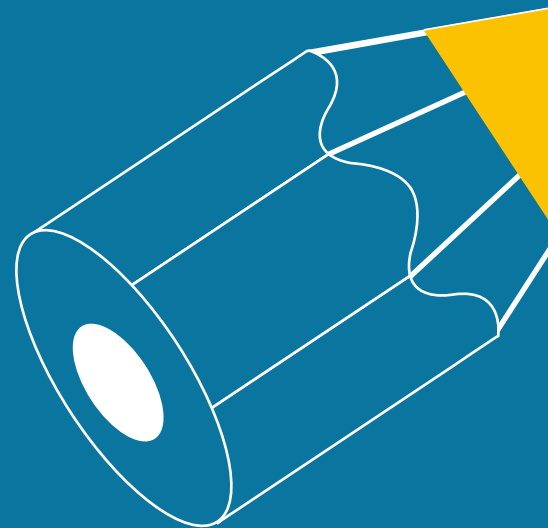
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More information about the project at myeurope.academy.
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Project acronym: ECA
Call: ERASMUS-YOUTH-2023-YOUTH-TOG

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