YOUTH4VALUES

Youth for Democracy and Values

Non-Formal Education

TOOLKIT

ERASMUS-YOUTH-2024-CB-101185741

13 practical tools for youth workers and young people to build democratic competences through non-formal learning

Designed for youth associations & groups · Ages 14-30

Online Content · Online Activism · Local Activities · Impact Measurement

Co-funded by the European Union

YOUTH4VALUES

BRAVO Sarajevo

YOU IN EUROPE

Mojo de Caña

Prona

ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME · KA2 COOPERATION PARTNERSHIP

Youth4Values:
Active citizenship, starts with you!

This toolkit did not start with a blank page. It started with a question asked to more than a thousand young people across four countries: what gets in the way of you participating?

The Project

Youth4Values is a transnational initiative funded by the European Union under the Erasmus+ Programme. Its central premise: *democracy is not inherited — it is learned.*

A healthy democratic system needs young people who are informed, critical, and equipped with real opportunities to influence public processes. Youth4Values creates safe spaces for dialogue, training and direct civic engagement.

I am used to more theoretical workshops and honestly thought it was going to be more of the same, but it was quite the opposite. The activities made me think about things in the neighborhood and how we can improve coexistence among young people.
— Participant, local activity evaluation

Four Countries

The participating countries represent **heterogeneous political realities**, varying levels of institutional trust, democratic literacy and youth engagement. This diversity enhances the project's pedagogical value.

🇧🇦 Bosnia and Herzegovina — BRAVO project coordinator
🇪🇸 Spain — Mojo de Caña partner organisation
🇬🇷 Greece — YOUinEU partner organisation
🇲🇪 Montenegro — Fundacija PRONA partner organisation

Common trends identified across all countries:

- ✗ Increasing misinformation and digital disinformation
- ✗ Low engagement in formal participation mechanisms
- ✗ Persistent gap between young people and public institutions

What we deliver

- ✓ **National Action Plans (NAPs)** — youth-driven, evidence-based roadmaps for democratic participation in each country
- ✓ **European Recommendations Document** — shared findings addressed to EU, national and regional institutions
- ✓ **International Toolkit** — this document — compiling good practices and non-formal education tools from all four countries
- ✓ **Youth Ambassadors Network** — trained young leaders acting as civic multipliers in their communities
- ✓ **International activities** — mobility exchanges in Athens and Sarajevo for shared learning and co-creation

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Understanding the concept that sits at the heart of this toolkit.

What is Youth Participation in Democracy?

"Youth participation in democratic life means young people having the right, means, space and opportunity to participate in and influence decisions that affect their lives — and to hold decision-makers accountable." — Council of Europe / EU Youth Participation Strategy

Why does it matter?

Democratic participation is not just about voting. It encompasses all the ways in which young people engage with public life — from local community decisions to European policy. When young people are excluded from these processes, democracy itself is weakened.

Young people (14–30) make up o**ver 20% of Europe's population** but are significantly underrepresented in decision-making bodies

Decisions made today — on climate, housing, digital rights, work — will **shape young people's lives for decades**

Participation builds **democratic competences:** critical thinking, civic identity, responsibility and solidarity

Three levels of participation

Informed participation

Young people have equitable access to clear, understandable information about their rights, processes and opportunities to get involved.

Deliberative participation

Through structured dialogue spaces using participatory methodologies — circles, world cafés, assemblies — young people articulate demands and co-create proposals.

Decision-linked participation

Formal mechanisms ensure that every proposal submitted by young people receives an official, public and traceable institutional response.

What participation is NOT

- ❌ **Tokenism —** including one young person on a panel to tick a box
- ❌ **Consultation without feedback —** asking for opinions with no visible outcome
- ❌ **Adult-led "youth" events —** where young people deliver pre-set content
- ❌ **Participation limited to voting —** ignoring community, digital and non-formal channels

✅ **REAL PARTICIPATION IS:**
Voluntary · Meaningful · Inclusive · Influential · Safe · Sustained over time · Recognised and valued by institutions

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About Youth4Values

A transnational Erasmus+ initiative strengthening democracy, youth participation and active citizenship across Europe. Grounded in the voices and data of more than 1,000 young people.

Why this project?

The survey data tells a story youth workers across the 4 countries will recognise. On paper, the numbers look encouraging: +60% of respondents always vote when they can, +70% have participated in civic initiatives, and +75% believe democracy is the best form of government.

But dig further and the picture shifts. Only 25% feel that young people have high influence in decision-making in their communities. About 55% rate institutional transparency as low. Distrust in politicians and institutions was the top obstacle to participation, selected by +60% of respondents.

EXPERT VOICES

"There is a great distance between politicians and young people, and that distance generates distrust in democracy itself."

— Youth worker, Gran Canaria

Strategic Objetives

- **Strengthen** effective participation of young people in local, regional and national decision-making
- **Improve** civic, democratic and institutional knowledge through structured educational processes
- **Reduce** structural, socioeconomic and cultural barriers limiting youth participation
- **Establish** stable systems of coordination, monitoring and accountability for long-term sustainability
- **Co-create** a European Recommendations Document and international Toolkit from all four countries

What young people said

Main obstacles identified

- **Distrust** in institutions
- **Apathy** / lack of interest
- Insufficient civic **knowledge**
- Lack of **representation**
- **Economic** pressure

💬 PARTICIPANT VOICES

"I learned that I don't need to know everything to share my opinion, and that even if I make mistakes, I can still speak up."

— From activity evaluation forms, Youth4Values

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Partner Organisations

Four organisations, four countries — one shared mission for youth democracy in Europe.

BRAVO
Project Coordinator

Bosnian Representative Association for Valuable Opportunities, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Youth organisation with extensive experience in Erasmus+ projects and in promoting democratic values, intercultural dialogue and active youth participation in south-east Europe.

In Youth4Values, BRAVO led overall project coordination (WP1) and dissemination (WP5), designed the shared methodology and hosted the international activity week in Sarajevo, where the pedagogical approach was put into practice with participants from all four countries.

https://bravo-bih.com/

YOU IN EUROPE
Partner - WP3 lead

ESY STIN EVROPI / YOU IN EUROPE, Nea Moudania, Greece.

European youth organisation specialising in non-formal education, active citizenship, human rights and Erasmus+ mobility.

In Youth4Values, YOU IN EUROPE led WP3 (Implementation), organising the Training Course (D3.1) and the Youth Exchange in Athens (D3.2), and coordinating the Closing Follow-up (D3.3).

Their experience in transnational democratic participation projects shaped the project's core learning methodology.

https://youineurope.gr/

Fondacija PRONA
Partner - WP2 lead

Fondacija za promovisanje nauke "PRONA", Podgorica, Montenegro

Youth foundation promoting civic education, volunteering, democratic participation and critical thinking among young Montenegrins.

In Youth4Values, PRONA led WP2 (Preparation / National Research, D2.1) and co-led the dissemination strategy (D5.1).

With expertise in educational reform processes and international cooperation, PRONA brought a Balkan perspective on the challenges of youth participation and democratic values.

https://prona.me/

Mojo de Caña
Partner - WP4 lead

Asociación Mojo de Caña, Canary Islands, Spain.

Youth and community organisation specialising in non-formal education, youth participation and European mobility projects.

In Youth4Values, Mojo de Caña led WP4 (Impact), taking responsibility for this International Toolkit (D4.2) and the National Action Plans (D4.1).

The organisation engaged young people and youth workers from across the Canary Islands and mainland Spain throughout the project.

https://mojodecaña.org/

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How to use this toolkit

A practical guide for youth workers and young people — no special expertise required.

What is this toolkit?

Thirteen non-formal education tools organised around the four areas young people told us matter most: producing online content, acting online, engaging locally and measuring the impact of their work.

These tools emerged from real workshops with real young people across the four partner countries.

Several were revised because participants found them too passive, too theoretical, or too disconnected from local reality.

Start with Tool 00

The Daily Assembly is the foundational 20-minute routine.
Use it every session before adding other tools. It builds the democratic culture that makes everything else work.

Who is it for?

IYouth workers and facilitators — use as fully guided sessions with step-by-step instructions

Young people (14–30) — adapt independently without a facilitator

Youth associations and NGOs — integrate into existing programmes and projects

Youth workers and technicians — several participants in our evaluations asked for versions they could use directly with other young people in their work

PRACTICAL NOTES

Ages 14–30
Minimal materials needed
Each tool is fully self-contained
·Preferably in-person
(online adaptations noted where available)

How is each tool structured?

Area and competences — which of the 4 areas it belongs to, and which skills it develops (including Youthpass KCs)

Time, group size and materials — practical logistics at a glance

Overview — why this tool exists, what it does, and what to expect in the room

Step-by-step guide — detailed facilitation instructions with timing for each phase

Debrief questions — for reflection and consolidation of learning

Facilitator tip, adaptations and impact indicators — how to make it work for your context and how to measure what changed

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Toolkit at a Glance

13 tools for democratic competences — click any card to go to that tool.

TOOL 00 - TRANSVERSAL - CORE DAILY PRACTICE
The Daily Assembly - 20 minutes - Click here

ONLINE CONTENT PRODUCTION

- **Youth Storytelling Lab** — 90-120 min 8-24 pax
- **Civic Podcast Studio** — 2-31 hrs 6-20 pax
- **Fake News Detective Lab** — 75-90 min 10-30 pax

ONLINE ACTIVISM

- **Digital Campain Canvas** — 2-3 hrs 10-25 pax
- **Online Petition Lab** — 90 min 8-20 pax
- **My Digital Civic Self** — 90 min 8-30 pax

LOCAL ACTIVITIES

- **Community Power Map** — 90-120 min 8-25 pax
- **Forum theatre** — 2-3 hrs 10 -30 pax
- **Local Action Sprint** — 3-4 hrs 12 -30 pax

IMPACT MEASUREMENT

- **Survey Design** — 90 min 8-20 pax
- **Impact Dashboard** — 120 min 6-20 pax
- **Participation Data Map** — 90 min 10-25 pax

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The Daily Assembly

"A living democratic practice — not a one-off activity."

20 min | 5-30 people | All levels | Circle of chairs, optional talking object

From the field:

It showed me how challenging assemblies can be and how much patience they require." — Participant, Youth4Values local activity

COMPETENCES

Active listening
Self-expression
Decision-making
Empathy

This tool wasn't born in a methodology textbook — it came from noticing, session after session, that everything else in a workshop depended on whether people felt safe enough to speak.
The Daily Assembly is a structured 20-minute circle run at the start of every session: everyone checks in, concerns and decisions are handled together. Simple by design — but what it builds over time is a group that has learned to listen, to disagree without chaos, and to decide together.
By week three or four, participants were taking their seats in the circle without being asked

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

OPEN (2 min) — Everyone sits in a circle. A rotating role opens: "The Assembly is open." No screens, no side conversations. The circle is the signal that this time is different..

CHECK-IN (8 min) — Pass a talking object around. Each person answers in one sentence: "In one word or one sentence — how am I today?" No reactions, no comments from others. Just listening. This is harder than it sounds and more important than it seems.

SHARED SPACE (5 min) — Open floor: anyone can raise a topic — something they want to share, a concern about the group, a celebration, a question, something they noticed. Short contributions only. Others listen.

DECISIONS (3 min) — Any group decision needed that day is raised clearly. Use a simple hand signal: thumbs up (agree), thumbs sideways (can live with it), thumbs down (block). Record any decisions visibly — on a board or paper.

CLOSE (2 min) — The facilitator (rotating role) summarises briefly: what was heard, what was decided. Optional: one final word from each person to close. "Assembly closed."

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

How did it feel to be heard without being interrupted?

Was the decision-making process fair? What would make it better?

How is this circle different from how decisions are usually made around you?

IMPACT INDICATORS

% of participants who report feeling heard during sessions · Number of group decisions made collectively · Change in facilitator-to-participant talk ratio from session 1 to session 6

FACILITATOR TIP

The talking object is not optional — it's the physical embodiment of "only the person holding it speaks." Use something meaningful to the group. The first sessions will feel awkward. By week 6, they'll remind you if you forget it.

ADAPTATIONS

Online: use the raise-hand function for votes; assign the "talking object" role to whoever the facilitator calls on. Groups over 25: popcorn style instead of a full round. Advanced groups: rotate all roles — opener, timekeeper, note-taker, vote-counter.

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Youth Storytelling Lab: Tell It to Change It

"Your story is your most powerful civic tool."

90-120 min | 8-24 people | Beginners | Smartphones, free editing apps (CapCut, Canva, Instagram ..)

From the field:
"It has allowed me to speak with strangers about topics that I sometimes can't even discuss with my own friends." — Participant, La Palma

COMPETENCES
Digital storytelling
Civic communication
Self-expression
Media literacy

BBefore young people can use digital content as a civic tool, they need to experience making it — not analysing it, but creating something real about what actually matters to them, and publishing it.
One participant in La Palma told us: "It let me speak to strangers about things I sometimes can't even talk about with my own friends." That shift — from private opinion to public voice — is what this tool is designed to produce.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

WARM-UP — ANALYSE (15 min): Share 3 examples of youth-created civic content that had real impact (a thread, a video, a photo story). What did they have in common? Focus on: hook, message, specific ask. Write the pattern on the board.
ISSUE BRIEF (15 min): Each participant completes one sentence in writing: "In my community, [X] is a problem because [Y], and young people can [Z]." This becomes their story brief. Pairs share and give one piece of feedback.
STORY STRUCTURE (10 min): Introduce the 3-part civic story: (1) Problem — make it specific and local, (2) Personal connection — why does this affect YOU, (3) Call to action — what do you want the person watching to do next? One action only.
CONTENT CREATION (35 min): Individually or in pairs, participants create their piece using their phones. Choose format: 60-second video, photo carousel, Instagram story, Twitter thread. Facilitator circulates and gives feedback on hook and call to action — not on production quality.
PEER REVIEW (15 min): Groups of 3. Each person shares their draft. Feedback protocol: "I was drawn in by... / I got confused when... / One thing that would make it stronger..." 2 minutes per piece.
PUBLISH OR SCHEDULE (10 min): Participants post, schedule or save their content. Agree on a group hashtag. Screenshot reach and engagement at end of session for baseline

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

What was harder — finding the story or telling it? Why?

How does digital storytelling differ from talking about an issue face-to-face?

Who is your ideal audience, and what do you want them to do after seeing your content?

IMPACT INDICATORS

Number of pieces of content published (not just drafted) · Total estimated reach/views reported by participants · Number of comments or shares received in 48 hours · % who publish independently within 2 weeks

FACILITATOR TIP

Authenticity beats production quality every time. A shaky phone video with a genuine message reaches further than a polished one with nothing to say. Actively push back against participants who want to spend the creation time making things look perfect rather than saying something true..

ADAPTATIONS

No smartphones: use Canva on a laptop or hand-drawn visuals photographed and uploaded. Advanced groups: create a full 3-post content series with a narrative arc across the week. Schools: focus on a school-level issue first before moving to community or national topics.

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Civic Podcast Studio: Voices That Matter

"Turn your conversation into civic action."

From the field:
"I'd like to learn more about civic participation."
— Participant, activity evaluation

COMPETENCES
Critical thinking
Public speaking
Research
Digital production

2–3 hrs | **6–20 people** | **Intermediate** | **Smartphones with voice recorder, free audio editing app**

Podcasting is one of the most accessible formats for civic communication — all it takes is a voice, a smartphone and something worth saying. This tool walks participants through the full production cycle of a short episode in a single session: pitch, research sprint, script outline, record, light edit, publish.
The result is a real, shareable audio piece that exists beyond the room — and for many participants, the first thing they have ever made for a public audience.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

LISTEN AND ANALYSE (20 min): Play 2 short podcast clips (3–5 min each) on civic or youth participation topics. In pairs, identify: opening hook, structure, tone, what the host wants the listener to think or do at the end.

PITCH YOUR EPISODE (15 min): In groups of 2–3, pitch an episode idea in 60 seconds: "We want to make an episode about [topic] because [reason], and our central question is [question]." Group selects the top 2–3 pitches to develop.

RESEARCH SPRINT (20 min): Each selected group gathers: 3–5 key facts from credible sources, one direct quote from a real person or document, one concrete local example or personal story that illustrates the issue.

SCRIPT OUTLINE (15 min): Fill in the episode template: Intro/hook (30 seconds) · Main content — 3 points maximum, each with fact + example + so-what · Interview question if applicable · Closing call to action (what should the listener do next?).

RECORD (30 min): Record using smartphones in a quiet corner or outside. Aim for 8–12 minutes. Allow one retake per section. Do not try to achieve a perfect read — natural speech is more engaging.

LIGHT EDIT + PUBLISH (20 min): Cut obvious errors using a free audio editor. Optionally add a free intro jingle (Pixabay). Upload to Anchor/Spotify for Podcasters, share as an audio file, or post on social media with a transcript.

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

What surprised you about turning an idea into a piece of media?

How does audio change the way you communicate compared to text or video?

Who is your ideal listener, and what do you want them to feel or do after listening?

IMPACT INDICATORS

Number of episodes produced and published · Total listening minutes reported · Number of plays/downloads in first week · Number of groups that conduct a real interview with an external person

FACILITATOR TIP

The script outline is the most important step — groups who skip it always struggle during recording. Keep episodes to 8–12 minutes maximum: it forces participants to choose what really matters.

ADAPTATIONS

No editing experience needed: record straight-to-publish with one take and minimal cuts. Advanced groups can interview a local decision-maker or community figure and weave it into the episode. Schools: assign each group a different angle on the same civic issue and publish as a series.

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Fake News Detective Lab

"Before you create content, make sure you know what you are sharing."

75-90 min | 10-30 people | Intermediate | Printed or digital articles , SIFT checklist handout, smartphones/pc's

From the field:
"It helps me with school projects and gives me a better understanding of what's happening in the world." — Participant, Youth4Values

COMPETENCES
Media literacy
Information verification
Digital citizenship
Critical thinking

This tool treats fact-checking not as a defensive skill but as the foundation of credible civic communication — young people who create content have a responsibility to verify what they share.
Participants work as fact-check teams on a mix of real and fabricated articles, using the SIFT method (Stop, Investigate the source, Find better coverage, Trace claims). The session closes with each group producing a short myth-busting post that corrects one false claim — putting verification directly into practice.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

'INTRO — WHY IT MATTERS (10 min): Brief discussion. Ask: "Has anyone shared something online that turned out to be false? What happened?" Show one real example of misinformation that spread on social media and affected a civic decision or election. Do not lecture — let the example speak.
THE SIFT METHOD (15 min): Walk through the four steps with a concrete example on screen: (S) Stop — pause before sharing. (I) Investigate the source — who made this? (F) Find better coverage — what do other sources say? (T) Trace claims — find the original source of any statistic or quote.
TEAM INVESTIGATION (20 min): Teams of 3–4 receive 3 articles — a mix of clearly false, subtly misleading, and genuinely true. They apply SIFT to each and record their verdict and evidence.
VERDICT PRESENTATIONS (10 min): Each team presents their findings for one article. Others can challenge or confirm. Facilitator reveals the answers.
GALLERY WALK (10 min): Post all articles on the wall with each team's verdict. Participants circulate and add "agree" or "challenge" sticky notes.
MYTH-BUSTING CONTENT (15 min): Each team picks one false claim they analysed and creates a short corrective post — a tweet-length correction, a 3-slide story, or a simple graphic. This is published or shared with the group.

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

What made the most convincing fake articles so convincing?

How does misinformation affect elections, public health decisions, or civic trust?

What is your responsibility when you see misinformation shared by people you know?

IMPACT INDICATORS

% of articles correctly identified as true or false · Number of myth-busting posts produced · % of participants who can correctly apply all 4 SIFT steps in a follow-up quiz · Number of participants who report checking sources before sharing in the following month

FACILITATOR TIP

Prepare at least one article that looks completely credible and passes a surface-level check. The moment a group realises they were about to be fooled by something they trusted is the most powerful learning moment of the session. Do not reveal answers until after the presentations.

ADAPTATIONS

Use social media posts instead of articles for groups who live on Instagram or TikTok. For schools: build the exercise around a fictional local issue so the stakes feel real without any risk of reinforcing actual misinformation. Advanced groups can research and produce their own myth-busting video.

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Digital Campaign Canvas: One Issue, One Campaign

"One issue. One target. One campaign. Real pressure."

2–3 hrs | 10–25 people | Intermediate | Campaign Canvas template, smartphones, Canva access

From the field:
"This experience reminded me that even at the local level, our voices can be heard if we come together and organize ourselves." — Participant, Youth4Values

COMPETENCES
Creativity
Advocacy
Agency
Digital tools

The most common mistake in youth civic campaigns is aiming at everything and hitting nothing. This tool solves that with one constraint: one issue, one target, one message. Participants design a complete digital advocacy mini-campaign — strategy, content, publication — focused on a specific, achievable change in their school, neighbourhood or city. The key insight that consistently landed in our sessions: the difference between a complaint and a campaign is that a campaign has a specific person who could respond to it. When you name a target, you create accountability.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

EXAMPLES ANALYSIS (10 min): Show 3 real youth-led online campaigns that achieved change. For each, identify in writing: (1) What exactly changed? (2) Who was the target? (3) What was the core message? (4) Which channel created the most pressure? Keep notes on the board.

ISSUE SELECTION (10 min): Groups of 3–5 choose one specific, achievable change. Critical rule: they must be able to name a specific person or institution who has the power to make that change. Vague targets produce vague campaigns.

CAMPAIGN CANVAS (30 min): Fill in six boxes: (1) What exact change do we want? (2) Who has the power to make it? Name a specific person or body. (3) Who are our audiences — primary (decision-maker) and secondary (public pressure)? (4) What is our core message in one sentence? (5) Which 2–3 digital channels will we use and why? (6) What is our single call to action?

CONTENT CREATION (30 min): Produce the campaign's first 3 pieces: one explainer post (the problem and ask), one call-to-action graphic (shareable), and one direct message to the decision-maker (for email or social media). Use Canva for the graphic.

PEER REVIEW (15 min): Groups swap Campaign Canvases. Review for: clarity of ask, specificity of target, feasibility. Give one specific improvement suggestion.

LAUNCH (15 min): Publish the first post. Send or schedule the direct message to the decision-maker. Set a follow-up date in 2 weeks to report back on responses received.

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

What is the difference between raising awareness and creating real pressure for change?

How would you know in 2 weeks whether your campaign is working?

What would you do if the decision-maker ignores you completely?

IMPACT INDICATORS

Number of campaigns designed and launched · Number of posts published during session · Number of decision-makers directly contacted · Number of responses received within 2 weeks (tracked)

FACILITATOR TIP

The single most important facilitation move is pushing groups until they can name a specific person. "The government" is not a target. "The Head of Youth Services at Las Palmas de Gran Canaria City Council" is a target. That specificity changes everything about how the campaign is designed — and how seriously it is taken.

ADAPTATIONS

Tech-light version: Campaign Canvas only, no content creation in session. Advanced: add a stakeholder mapping step first — who are the allies, opponents and undecided? Schools: focus on a school governance issue and direct the campaign to the head teacher or school council.

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Online Petition Lab: From Signatures to Change

"A petition without strategy is just a list. Let's make it a lever."

90 min | 8-30 people | Beginner | PCś/smartphones, Change.org or Avaaz account, Petition template

From the field:
"I learned new ways to share my opinions and make sure they are heard." — Participant, evaluation

COMPETENCES
Civic advocacy
Strategic thinking
Digital citizenship
Written communication

Online petitions require no budget, no connections and no institutional permission — but a petition without a strategy for what to do with the signatures changes nothing. This tool teaches the logic behind effective petitions: who the target is, what threshold creates real pressure, how to write a brief that converts readers into signers, and how to turn signers into active supporters. Participants leave with a live petition and a concrete 48-hour promotion plan.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

ANATOMY OF A PETITION (20 min): Analyse 2 real petitions — one that reached its target and achieved change, one that collected thousands of signatures and changed nothing. What was the difference? Focus on: specificity of ask, named target, emotional hook, realistic threshold, what happened after.

ISSUE AND TARGET (15 min): Groups identify their issue and the specific named decision-maker they are targeting. Then: what is the minimum number of signatures that would create real pressure on that specific person? Research their social media and previous responses to petitions.

WRITE THE PETITION BRIEF (20 min): Using the template: Title (under 10 words, action-oriented) · The problem (3 sentences maximum, specific and local) · Our ask (one specific action from the named target) · Why now? (urgency) · Why this matters to you personally (authenticity).

LAUNCH (15 min): Create the petition on Change.org. Add a compelling image. Write a short description. Share the link within the group for the first signatures — internal momentum matters.

PROMOTION PLAN (15 min): Map the first 48 hours. Who will you contact first? Which 3 networks or groups will you reach out to? What message will you send — not "please sign my petition" but "here's why this matters to you specifically"?

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENT (5 min): Set a specific date 2 weeks from now to report back.

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

At what point does a petition become a real political tool rather than a symbolic gesture?

How would you convert someone who signed into someone who actively campaigns?

What would make the specific person you are targeting take your petition seriously?

IMPACT INDICATORS

Number of petitions launched · Total signatures collected (end of session + 2-week follow-up) · % of signature target reached · Number of responses received from named decision-makers

FACILITATOR TIP

The signature threshold is not optional — it creates urgency. Groups that commit to a specific number during the session ("500 signatures by Friday") are far more likely to actually promote it. A petition with no target number is a list without a deadline.

ADAPTATIONS

Younger groups (14–16): start with a school-level issue. Advanced: add a media outreach component — draft a press note to local media once 50% of the signature target is reached. For professional youth workers: focus on a specific youth policy gap in your area.

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My Digital Civic Self

"How do you show up as a citizen online?"

60–90 min | 8–30 people | Beginner | Persona cards, large paper, coloured pens, post-its

From the field:
"I feel that in real life, nobody is really going to ask for our opinion." — Participant, Youth4Values

COMPETENCES
Digital Citizenship
Self-Awareness
Online Rights
Civic Identity

This tool is the entry point to online activism. Before using digital tools for civic change, participants need to examine their current relationship with those tools — and with the platforms that profit from their attention and data.
The session maps their digital civic footprint: what have they already done online, however small? What rights and responsibilities do they have in digital spaces? It closes with a personal Digital Civic Pledge — one specific thing each participant commits to doing differently in the next 30 days.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

OPENING QUESTION (10 min): "What is the last civic thing you did online?" Pair share, then whole group. Define "civic" broadly: signing a petition, sharing a news story, following a local politician, commenting on a public issue. Everything counts.
DIGITAL CIVIC FOOTPRINT MAP (20 min): On a large piece of paper, each participant maps their own digital civic footprint: what platforms they use, what civic content they consume, create or share, which communities they belong to, which actions they have taken. Use different colours for consuming, sharing and creating.
RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (15 min): Introduce the concept of digital civic rights and responsibilities. Key questions: What can you legally do online? What can platforms take away? What is your responsibility when you have influence over others? Small group discussion, then brief whole-group synthesis.
THE GAP (10 min): Each participant identifies: the one civic action they could take online that they are currently not taking. Why not? What is stopping them? Pair discussion.
DIGITAL CIVIC PLEDGE (10 min): Each participant fills in a card: "In the next 30 days, I commit to [one specific action] because [reason]." These are shared with the group and kept as a reference for a follow-up session.
CLOSE (5 min): Brief reflection round: "One thing I will look at differently next time I open [platform]."

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

How is your online civic participation different from your offline civic participation?

Who profits from your civic data, your opinions, and your political engagement online?

What is one specific thing you will do differently online after today?

IMPACT INDICATORS

% of participants who complete and share a Digital Civic Pledge · % who report implementing their pledge at 30-day follow-up · Average self-reported change in online civic activity (pre/post 1–5 scale) · Number of new civic digital actions reported per participant

FACILITATOR TIP

Avoid judging low levels of online civic engagement — many young people, particularly from marginalised communities, have good reasons to disengage from spaces that have been hostile to them. Celebrate non-digital civic acts equally. The goal is to expand the repertoire, not to make anyone feel inadequate.

ADAPTATIONS

Focus on one platform participants already use. Pairs well with Tool A1 (Youth Narrative Lab) for a full digital literacy and creation session. For groups with limited digital access: adapt the footprint map to focus on what civic information they consume rather than what they produce.

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Community Power Mapping

"Map who holds power, then decide where you can act."

90-120 min | 8-25 people | Beginner | Large paper, sticky notes (3 colours), markers, dot stickers

From the field:
I learned what active participation really means and how I can make a contribution to my community."
— Participant, local activity

COMPETENCES
Civic knowledge
Strategic thinking
Community engageent
Agency

Power mapping produces two reactions: initial scepticism, and — about 20 minutes in — genuine surprise.
In one session in Gran Canaria, a disengaged group became animated when they realised a closed youth space was the island council's responsibility, not the town hall they'd been complaining to for months. They had been sending their energy to the wrong address. The power map showed them where to redirect it.
This tool builds real political literacy — not abstract theory, but specific, local, actionable knowledge about who makes the decisions that affect their lives, who those people listen to, and where organised young people might find leverage.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

SET UP (5 min): On a large piece of paper, draw a circle in the centre labelled "Our Community" (or the specific issue they are focusing on). Explain: actors closer to the centre have more power over this community or issue. Actors on the edges have less.
BRAINSTORM ACTORS (15 min): Who holds power in this community? Each sticky note = one actor. Colour-code: yellow = government institutions, blue = civil society and associations, pink = media and platforms. No limit on notes at this stage.
PLACE AND DISCUSS (20 min): Groups place actors on the map. Discussion is the most important part: why is this institution close to the centre? Who does this person actually listen to? Where are young people on this map right now?
MAP RELATIONSHIPS (15 min): Draw arrows between actors showing relationships: solid lines for cooperation, dashed for conflict, dotted for influence without formal connection. Who talks to whom? Who funds whom?
MARK EXCLUSIONS (10 min): With a red dot sticker, mark: who is most excluded from this power structure? Who is directly affected but has no voice? Where do young people appear — or not appear?
IDENTIFY ENTRY POINTS (15 min): Where could a group of organised young people realistically have an influence? Look for: actors who are responsive to public pressure, institutions with formal youth consultation mechanisms, allies who already have access to.

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

What surprised you most about this power map?

Where do YOU appear? Where do you want to be?

What would it take to shift power toward young people?

IMPACT INDICATORS

Number of power maps produced · Number of entry points identified per group · Number of groups that take action based on the map within 4 weeks · % of participants who can correctly name the institution responsible for a specific local decision

FACILITATOR TIP

Display the map publicly after the session, it becomes a living document. Invite participants to update it over time

ADAPTATIONS

Digitalise using Miro or Jamboard for remote groups or for keeping the map alive between sessions. Focus the map on one specific issue (housing, youth spaces, environmental decisions, school governance) for a more concentrated and actionable result.

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Forum Theatre for Democracy

"Freeze the scene. Change the outcome. Change reality."

2–3 hrs | 10–30 people | Intermediate | Open space, no props needed (optional: simple costumes)

From the field:
"Activities were interactive rather than just listening, and that helped me understand things better."
— Participant, evaluation

COMPETENCES
Empathy
Critical thinking
Problem-solving
Courage to Act

Inspired by Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed, this tool uses performance as rehearsal for real civic action: if you can practise changing a situation on stage, you become more capable of changing it in real life.
Groups create short scenes where civic participation is blocked or power is abused — showing the problem, not the solution. Then the audience becomes "spect-actors": they can shout "FREEZE!" and replace any character to try a different response. The interventions that land hardest are never the most correct ones — they are the most emotionally true.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

PHYSICAL WARM-UP (15 min): Start with movement games that build trust and lower self-consciousness — mirror exercises, slow-motion walks, "yes and" improvisation. The body needs to be awake before the work begins.

IDENTIFY THE ISSUE (15 min): In groups of 4–6, participants identify a real situation from their own experience or community where they felt excluded, unheard, or where civic participation was blocked. This must be real — not fictional. The specificity is what makes it powerful.

CREATE THE SCENE (20 min): Each group creates a 5–7 minute scene showing the situation — the problem, not the solution. Key rule: the protagonist tries and fails to change the situation. The scene ends with the oppression still in place.

PERFORM (10–15 min per group): Groups perform for the whole group. No discussion yet — just observation. The "Joker" (facilitator) asks the audience to watch closely: who has power? Who is silenced? What is the turning point?

SPECT-ACTOR INTERVENTIONS (20–30 min): The Joker invites the audience: "If you think the protagonist could have done something differently, come up, say FREEZE!, and try." Anyone can intervene. The Joker never judges — every intervention is a valid exploration. After each attempt, the Joker asks: "Did that work? What changed? What could go further?"

DEBRIEF (20 min)

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

Which intervention felt most realistic? Most courageous?

What stopped people from acting in the original scene?

How can we apply these strategies outside this room?

IMPACT INDICATORS

Number of spect-actor interventions per performance (indicator of engagement) · % of participants who report greater confidence in speaking up in civic situations (pre/post) · Number of strategies identified that participants plan to use in real contexts

FACILITATOR TIP

The 'Joker' role is key. Train a co-facilitator in advance. Never judge interventions: all attempts are valid explorations.

ADAPTATIONS

For shy or self-conscious groups: start with puppets, objects or drawn characters before moving to embodied performance. This lowers the barrier significantly. Digital version: use comic strip apps (Canva, Pixton) to create the scenes visually. Advanced: invite a real local decision-maker to watch the final performances and respond.

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Local Action Sprint: From Idea to Proposal in One Day

"Do not wait for permission. Just do it."

3–4 hrs | 12–30 people | Intermediate | Local Action template, sticky notes, large paper, access to local council web

From the field:

"Because I want to take part in the Youth Council, and this helps me a lot."
— Participant, workshop

COMPETENCES

Public speaking
Advocacy
Civic Agency
Negotiation

Young people often know things could change but not how to make that happen through formal channels. This tool bridges that gap in a single intensive session. Participants identify a local problem, research who is responsible, design a realistic proposal, and prepare to present it to a decision-maker — all in one day. The emphasis is on formality: not because bureaucracy is good, but because understanding it is a form of power.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

LOCAL PROBLEM AUDIT (20 min): Brainstorm: what are the 5 biggest problems for young people in this specific neighbourhood, town or island right now? Each person writes 1–2 problems on sticky notes. Vote with dot stickers. The top issue becomes the session focus.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE? (15 min): Research online, using the local council or government website: which specific institution, department or elected official has the formal authority to address this issue? Name one specific contact person with their email or social media. This step is non-negotiable, without a target, there is no proposal.

LOCAL ACTION CANVAS (40 min): Fill in six sections: (1) The problem, described in 3 sentences with any available data (2) Who is affected and approximately how many (3) What we propose — specific, realistic and costed if possible (4) What it would require from the institution (5) Who supports us; allies, signatures, other organisations (6) How we will measure success in 12 months.

WRITE THE PROPOSAL (15 min): Convert the Canvas into a 1-page formal proposal: title, context paragraph, specific ask, expected impact, list of supporting organisations or signatures. Use clear language — no jargon, no "youth speak."

PITCH PRACTICE (20 min): Groups present their proposal in 3 minutes as if to the decision-maker. Others role-play as sceptical councillors or civil servants and ask tough questions: "What is this going to cost?" / "Who else supports this?" / "Why is this better than what we already

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

What surprised you about how local decision-making actually works?

What is the difference between a complaint and a proposal? Which is harder to ignore?

What would make a local councillor or civil servant take your proposal seriously rather than filing it away?

FACILITATOR TIP

The "who is responsible" step is the most important and the most often skipped. Groups that identify a specific named person are significantly more likely to actually send the proposal. A proposal sent to "the town hall" goes nowhere; one sent to Councillor X for Youth Services with a copy to the local newspaper gets read.

IMPACT INDICATORS

Number of formal proposals written · % submitted to the named decision-maker within 1 week · Number of institutional responses received · Number of follow-up meetings secured

ADAPTATIONS

Rural areas or small islands: focus on the island council or regional government. Advanced version: book the meeting with the decision-maker before the session ends

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Survey Design: Measure What Matters

"If you cannot measure it, you cannot prove it, or improve it."

90 min | 8-20 people | Intermediate | GoogleForms access, Survey Design template, smartphones/Pc

From the field:
"I have a clearer idea of my role as a citizen, not only in Spain but also in Europe."
— Participant, evaluation form

COMPETENCES
Data literacy
Research methodology
Critical thinking
Civic communication

96% of young people in our project evaluations said civic education should be part of formal schooling — a single number, collected systematically, worth more in a policy conversation than any number of anecdotes. Young people can learn to produce evidence like that about their own work. Without it, youth participation remains invisible to the institutions whose support is needed to sustain it.
This tool teaches the fundamentals of quantitative measurement in a youth participation context: how to write clear questions, choose the right scale, avoid bias, and analyse findings. The output is a live survey ready to deploy in their own community projects.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

WHY MEASURE? (15 min): Discussion, not lecture. What is the difference between knowing something changed and being able to prove it changed? Show one real youth project impact report — what data made it convincing to funders or institutions? What was missing?
WHAT ARE YOU MEASURING? (15 min): Groups identify: what specific behaviour, knowledge, attitude or perception do they want to track? At what two points in time — before/after an activity, or baseline now vs. follow-up in 3 months?
SURVEY DESIGN CANVAS (25 min): Map out: (1) Who are the respondents? How will you reach them? (2) What 5–8 questions will reveal whether change happened? (3) What scale — Likert 1–5, yes/no, multiple choice? (4) How will you distribute it? (5) What minimum number of responses do you need for the results to be meaningful?
BUILD THE SURVEY (20 min): Create the survey on Google Forms. Apply three plain language rules: one idea per question, no jargon, no leading questions (avoid "Don't you agree that..."). Keep it under 8 questions maximum.
PILOT TEST (10 min): Swap surveys with another group. Complete each other's survey as if you were a real respondent. Flag any confusing questions, ambiguous wording or questions that could be answered in multiple ways. Revise.
LAUNCH PLAN (5 min): Launch.Share.Follow up. Deadline.

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

What is the difference between a question that measures knowledge and one that measures attitude or intention?

How many responses do you need before your results are meaningful rather than anecdotal?

How could you use these survey results to make a case for more support, funding or institutional recognition of your work?

FACILITATOR TIP

The most common mistake is too many questions. A 5-question survey with 80% completion is far more valuable than a 20-question survey with 20%. Impose a strict maximum of 8 questions and require groups to justify each one — if they cannot say what they will do with the answer, it gets cut.

IMPACT INDICATORS

Number of surveys designed and launched · Average number of responses collected per survey · % of surveys that include a measurable before/after comparison · Number of groups that use survey results in a formal presentation or report

ADAPTATIONS

No internet access: design the survey on paper and collect responses in person.

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Impact Dashboard: Tracking Youth Participation

"What gets measured gets taken seriously."

2 hrs | 6-20 people | Intermediate | Google Sheets, Impact Indicator template, data previous activities,Pc

From the field:
"The methodologies used can be replicated in youth work and youth engagement settings."
— Youth worker participant

COMPETENCES
Data literacy
Research
Strategic thinking
Civic communication

Youth participation work produces real change that goes unrecorded because no one was tracking it. This tool teaches participants to build a simple impact dashboard — a living document that tracks quantitative outcomes over time — introducing indicators, baselines, targets and results in a practical rather than academic way.
A format note: all indicators use percentages rather than fractions, following the European standard. "40%" not "2/5" — this makes results immediately comparable across groups, projects and funders.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

INPUTS, OUTPUTS, OUTCOMES (15 min): Clarify the difference with a concrete example. Inputs: what you put in (time, money, people). Outputs: what you produced (number of sessions, participants, posts). Outcomes: what actually changed (% who report greater confidence, number who took civic action). Most youth projects track outputs but not outcomes. This tool focuses on outcomes.

CHOOSE YOUR INDICATORS (20 min): Using the template, groups select 6–8 indicators across four categories: (A) Reach: how many people did we engage? (B) Engagement: how deeply did they engage? (C) Behaviour change: what did people do differently? (D) Institutional response: did decision-makers react to our work?

SET BASELINES AND TARGETS (15 min): For each indicator, record: current baseline value / target value / deadline. Express all values as percentages. Example: "Increase from 30% to 60% of participants reporting high confidence in expressing their opinion in group settings."

BUILD THE DASHBOARD (30 min): Create a Google Sheet. One row per indicator, columns for: indicator name, baseline %, target %, current result %, % of target achieved, notes. Use conditional formatting: red = below 50% of target, yellow = 50–80%, green = above 80%.

FIRST DATA ENTRY (20 min): Enter data from activities already run. Calculate first results. Identify which indicators are on track and which need attention.

PRESENT YOUR IMPACT (10 min): Each group prepares a 3-sentence impact summary using only numbers: "We reached X people, Y% reported [specific change], and Z decision-makers responded to our proposals." Practise saying this out loud.

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

What story do your numbers tell? What important things do they leave out?

Which indicator surprised you most, positively or negatively? What does that tell you?

How would you use this dashboard to make the case for more resources, recognition or institutional support?

IMPACT INDICATORS

Number of dashboards built and actively maintained · Number of indicators tracked per group · % of groups that update their dashboard after 4 weeks · Number of groups that present dashboard results to an external audience (funders, institutions, partners)

FACILITATOR TIP

Use percentages for everything — not "3 out of 5 participants" but "60% of participants." This is the European standard for Erasmus+ reporting, it allows comparison across different group sizes, and it carries more weight in institutional conversations.

ADAPTATIONS

No spreadsheet experience: start with a paper version on the wall, then transfer to digital. Advanced: add a data visualisation step — simple bar or pie charts from the dashboard data using Google Sheets, ready to use in reports, presentations or social media.

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Participation Data Map: Who Participates?

"The data tells you who is missing. You decide what to do about it."

90 min | 10–25 people | Beginner | Large paper, Data Cards with local/national participation statistics

From the field:
"We talked about barriers that affect young people like us."
— Participant, Youth4Values local activity

COMPETENCES
Data literacy
Inclusion
Critical thinking
Civic knowledge

Our survey found that only 10% of respondents rated young people's influence in local decision-making as high. Across all four project countries, the pattern was consistent: participation is not equally distributed — young people from rural areas, with migrant backgrounds, or in economic precarity all face higher barriers than aggregate numbers suggest. This tool makes those inequalities visible through data and prompts participants to design one concrete measure to reduce them. The most important step: use local data. Participants need numbers that reflect their actual reality, not generalised European averages.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

DATA REVIEW (20 min): Groups receive Data Cards with local or national participation statistics:voter turnout by age, composition of local youth councils by gender, membership of civic associations by income level, etc. Each card has one figure and its source. Groups read and discuss: does this match what you expected? Does it match what you see in your community?

MAP THE GAPS (20 min): On a large paper, groups organise the data into four categories: by gender / by age / by geography (urban vs. rural) / by socioeconomic background. For each category, calculate: what is the participation gap between the most and least represented groups? Express as a percentage difference.

WHY THE GAPS? (15 min): For the 2 largest gaps identified, brainstorm 3 structural reasons (not individual blame or motivation). Use data or research to back up explanations where possible. Structural reasons include: economic barriers, transport access, working hours, institutional language, lack of representation in leadership, historical exclusion.

DESIGN ONE MEASURE (20 min): Groups choose the gap they consider most urgent and design one concrete, affordable measure to reduce it by at least 10 percentage points within 12 months. The measure must: name who is responsible for implementing it, specify what resources are needed, and include one indicator for how success will be measured.

CHALLENGE ROUND (10 min): Groups present their measure. Others ask one tough question: "How would you actually measure whether that worked?"

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

Which gap surprised you most? Why do you think it exists at that scale?

What is the difference between equal participation (same access for everyone) and equitable participation (different support for different starting points)?

How would you know after 12 months whether your measure worked?

IMPACT INDICATORS

Number of participation gaps identified and quantified with specific percentages · Number of concrete measures designed with named indicators · % of groups that apply findings to change something in their own project design · % of designed measures that include a specific 12-month numerical target

FACILITATOR TIP

Prepare the Data Cards using real local statistics — composition of the municipal youth council, voter turnout by age, membership data from local associations. The more local and specific the data, the more engaged the conversation. Abstract European averages feel distant; data about the participant's own town makes it urgent.

ADAPTATIONS

No local data available: use national statistics or Youth4Values project survey data. Advanced: participants design their own mini-survey to collect the missing local data — combine with Tool D1 for a full research and measurement workflow.

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External Resources & Links

Essential references for youth participation, democratic education and non-formal learning.

🇪🇺 EUROPEAN UNION — OFFICIAL FRAMEWORKS

EU YOUTH STRATEGY FRAMEWORK 2019–2027

EU YOUTH PARTICIPATION STRATEGY



🧰 TOOLKITS & PRACTICAL RESOURCES

YOUTH PARTICIPATION TOOLKIT

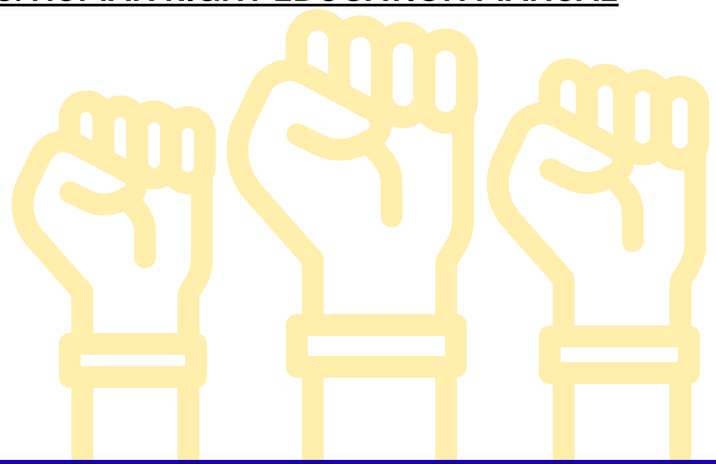
SALTO YOUTH PARTICIPATION RESOURCES CENTRE

COMPASS: HUMAN RIGHT EDUCATION MANUAL

📎 FURTHER READING

YOUTHPASS COMPENTENCE MODEL

ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME



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YOUTH4VALUES

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