

February 2025

Youth Activators

TOOLBOX OF NON-FORMAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES FOR
CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION



Funded by
the European Union



НАЦИОНАЛНА АГЕНЦИЈА
ЗА ЕВРОПСКИ ОБРАЗОВНИ
ПРОГРАМИ И МОБИЛНОСТ

Acknowledgements

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Project Summary

“Youth Activators” was a professional development activity - Training course that was organised by Urbano Opshtestvo in Krushevo, North Macedonia from the 18th to the 25th of February 2025 and that involved 29 youth workers and trainers from North Macedonia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Türkiye.

Citizenship education empowers individuals to make informed decisions and take responsibility for their lives and communities. It equips young people with valuable soft skills sought by employers, enhances their understanding of the political, legal, and economic aspects of society, fosters social and moral awareness, and contributes to character development. Despite its immense benefits, citizenship education remains absent from the educational curricula of most European countries. As a result, recent reports highlight concerning trends among Europeans, particularly the youth, on diminished trust in democratic institutions and political representatives, eroding community ties, a lack of interest and knowledge in economic, social, and political matters, reduced voter turnout, and only partial understanding or involvement in decision-making processes. There is also a sense of disconnection from the common European identity and values, visible through the election of far-right populist parties across several European countries that regularly display public xenophobic, anti-immigrant, discriminative and nationalist tendencies.

In communication with our partner organisations, we have recognized the importance and role of our organisations in addressing these issues through our youth work. We all agreed that we have the potential to inspire, educate, train, and engage young people in citizenship education, encouraging their active participation in society, through using non-formal learning and peer-to-peer methodologies. However, we have identified a pressing need to improve our organisations' capacities in this field and equip our youth workers with the necessary skills and tools to design and implement quality activities that promote youth engagement, active citizenship, and participation in democratic and community life, all while nurturing a sense of European identity and values. We have also identified the need to exchange good practices and establish future sustainable cooperation and partnerships between European organisations working in the field of citizenship education, active citizenship and youth participation.

Therefore, the project supported the professional development of youth workers in order to equip them with the right knowledge, skills and attitudes to organize and run activities on local, national or international level that aim to educate young people about citizenship, the European Union and participation in political, economic and social life by promoting European citizenship, European awareness, European identity, European values and active participation.

Project Objectives



The main aim of the project was to train and empower 27 youth workers to become youth activators who will create, advocate and facilitate opportunities and mechanisms for improving youth participation on local, national and European levels through citizenship education and non-formal learning.

To achieve this, the project had the following objectives:

- 1.To educate participants about the concepts, dimensions, meanings and understandings of citizenship education and European citizenship as well as ways how they can be meaningfully transferred to young people
- 2.To analyse and compare current situations and challenges of youth participation in democratic processes in participating countries through case studies and practical examples
- 3.To showcase and provide concrete methods and approaches for encouraging active participation of young people in democratic processes on all levels
- 4.To share and exchange experiences and good practices between youth workers for advancing youth participation and citizenship education in the participating European Union and South-Eastern European countries
- 5.To design, practice and evaluate non-formal learning activities that youth workers can use to improve youth participation on all levels and that are improving young people's awareness to common European issues as well as the feeling of ownership and belonging to Europe
- 6.To provide space to youth workers for strong intercultural learning, improvement of competencies and development of multiplying initiatives that they can implement in their local communities
- 7.To promote the Erasmus+ programme as a provider for youth participation activities and Youthpass as a recognition tool for non-formal and informal learning in youth work
- 8.To establish sustainable international cooperation between 9 organisations working on the promotion of citizenship education, European citizenship and youth participation, which will serve as a base for further activities and projects.

What is Erasmus+ ?

Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe.

Launched in 1987, the "Erasmus" programme was originally established to promote closer cooperation between universities and higher education institutions across Europe. Over time, the programme has expanded and is now referred to as Erasmus+, or Erasmus Plus, combining the EU's different schemes for transnational cooperation and mobility in education, training, youth and sport in Europe and beyond.

The 'Erasmus+' programme concluded its first funding cycle from 2014 to 2020 and is now in its second cycle, spanning from 2021 to 2027.

The 2021-2027 programme places a strong focus on social inclusion, the green and digital transitions, and promoting young people's participation in democratic life.

It supports priorities and activities set out in the European Education Area, Digital Education Action Plan and the European Skills Agenda. The programme also: supports the European Pillar of Social Rights, complements the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027, develops the European dimension in sport ...



YouthPass Certificate

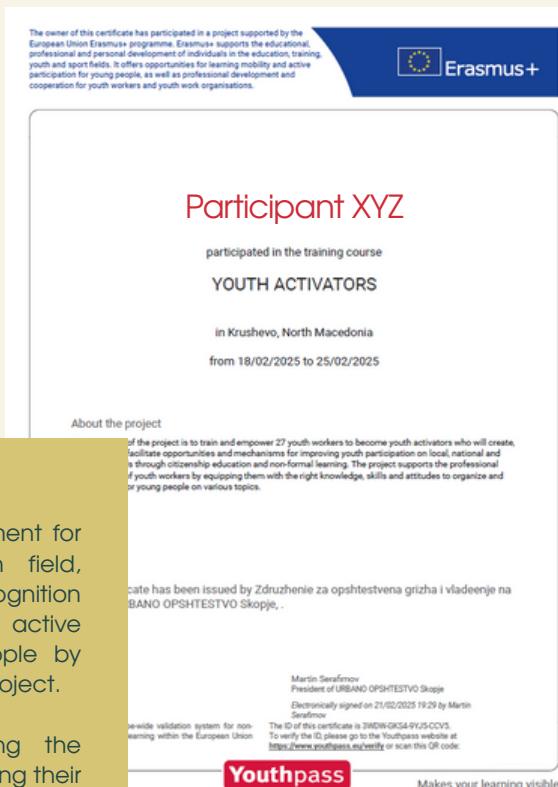
Youthpass is a tool to document and recognize learning outcomes from youth work activities based on non-formal education.

While creating their Youthpass certificate together with a support person, project participants are given the possibility to describe what they have done in their project and which competencies they have acquired. Thus, Youthpass supports the reflection upon the personal non-formal learning process and outcomes.

As a Europe-wide recognition instrument for non-formal learning in the youth field, Youthpass strengthens the social recognition of youth work. Youthpass supports active European citizenship of young people by describing the added value of their project.

Youthpass also aims at supporting the employability of young people by raising their awareness of and helping to describe their competencies, and by documenting their acquisition of key competencies on a certificate.

More information about Youthpass on:
www.youthpass.eu/en/



Partner Organizations

Urbano Opshtestvo

Urban Society as an NGO aims to empower youth, promote volunteering, support marginalized groups, and foster democracy, inclusion, sports, and healthy living in North Macedonia.



Dream Brave

Dream Brave is a youth non-profit empowering young and disadvantaged groups through training in entrepreneurship, civil society, and culture. Focused on supporting their volunteers.



Udruga DrONE

Working with youth is key to their mission, empowering them while shaping active, responsible citizens. Using a participatory approach, giving youth responsibility, and space to lead change.



Changemakers SZE

Changemakers SZE is a community-driven organization promoting social change and sustainability. They unite diverse people to tackle social, environmental, and cultural issues through projects.



CET Platform Italy

CET Platform Italy, is part of the CET Platform Network across 12 countries. They promote European culture, citizenship, and values through youth work at local, national, and international levels.



Partner Organizations

Debatni Club Grada Nisha

City of Niš Debate Club is an NGO connecting debate clubs in Niš and Southeast Serbia. It promotes education, free speech, inclusion and democracy through formal and non-formal learning.



Asociatia A.S.E.L.

The aim of A.S.E.L. Romania is to promote and support the social interests of its members through public service, focusing on social economy and lifelong learning.



Zavod Aspira

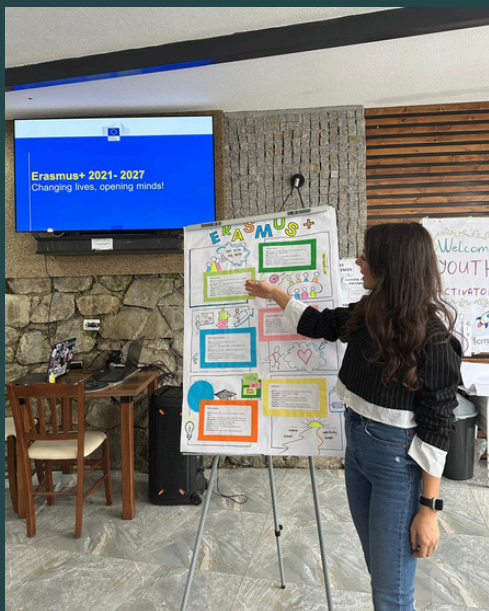
Aspira is a creative space for curious, passionate people to grow and express themselves. They work locally and internationally in IT, education, art, and film, driven by experienced collaborators.



Bosphorus Youth Team

Founded by experts in media, education, marketing, and psychology, their organization supports youth with limited opportunities. Promoting personal growth through inclusive activities.





Youth Activators



Energizers

Short Overview:

Energizers are short, interactive activities designed to boost energy, focus, and group connection. They help participants relax, get to know each other, and feel more engaged. Used as warm-ups, energizers are especially effective for introducing topics like youth participation by creating a fun, open atmosphere that encourages sharing and involvement.

Developed by:
Martin Serafimov (North Macedonia)



1. Citizenship Line-Up

Time: 10 min

How it works:

Call out statements like:

- "I've signed a petition before."
- "I've voted in a school election."
- "I've done volunteer work."

Participants take a step forward if it applies to them.

Goal: Get people moving while showing the many forms of participation and citizenship.

2. Who Am I in Society?

Time: 10–15 min

How it works:

Write roles on sticky notes (e.g., activist, student, mayor, refugee, volunteer). Stick one on each participant's back. They walk around asking YES/NO questions to guess their role.

Goal: Start thinking about different roles in society and how they relate to youth participation.



3. Four Corners – What Would You Do?

Time: 10 min

How it works:

Label each corner of the room: A, B, C, D. Read scenarios (e.g., "You see a local issue affecting youth—how do you act?") with 4 response options. Participants move to the corner representing their choice and explain why.

Goal: Show diverse approaches to participation and decision-making.

4. Pass the Ball – Change-Maker Edition

Time: 10 min

How it works:

Pass a soft ball around. When the music stops, the person holding it answers a question like:

- "What's one way youth can make a difference?"
- "Name a young leader or activist you admire."

Goal: Warm up voices and get everyone thinking about youth impact.

5. Active Citizens Bingo

Time: 15 min

How it works:

Create a bingo card with actions like:

- "Helped a neighbor"; "Joined a protest"; "Attended a youth council"

Participants mingle and find people who match the squares. First to complete a row wins!

Goal: Encourage connection and highlight everyday actions of citizenship.

Ice-breakers

Short Overview:

Icebreakers are fun, simple activities that help participants get to know each other and feel more comfortable in a group. They build trust, ease tension, and create a welcoming space—essential when exploring topics like youth participation and active citizenship. Icebreakers spark conversation, encourage openness, and lay the foundation for collaboration.



Developed by:
Blagica Eftimova (North Macedonia)

1. The Citizenship Suitcase

Time: 30 min

How it works:

Give each participant a paper template shaped like a suitcase (or a blank sheet). Ask them to “pack” it with 3–5 things that represent who they are as active citizens — this can be real (e.g., a voting card, a protest sign) or symbolic (e.g., a heart for empathy, a megaphone for advocacy).

Once everyone’s done, form small groups (3–4 people) to share what they packed and why. Then invite volunteers to present one object from their suitcase to the whole group.

Goal: A creative, personal way to share identity, values, and experiences while connecting over shared passions or goals. It helps participants reflect on their role in society while getting to know each other in a meaningful way.

2. Community Puzzle

Time: 25 - 30 min

How it works:

Give each participant a blank puzzle piece (cardboard or paper). Ask them to decorate it to represent their role in the community (strengths, interests, values). Then fit the pieces together on a wall or floor to build a "community puzzle."

Goal: Reflect on how everyone contributes to society and visualize the power of collaboration.

3. Walk & Talk

Time: 20 - 25 min

How it works:

Pair participants and give them 2-3 guiding questions (e.g., "What does active citizenship mean to you?" or "What would you like to change in your community?"). Send them on a walk around the venue or outdoors. When they return, they share one insight from their partner.

Goal: Create meaningful 1-on-1 connections while reflecting on key topics in a relaxed setting.

4. ParticipAction Map

Time: 25-30 minutes

How it works:

Give participants a large printed map of their community or country (or draw one). Ask them to mark places where they've participated in youth or civic initiatives (e.g., schools, parks, protests, NGOs). Then discuss the map as a group: What's missing? What needs change?

Goal: Connect participation to real spaces, reflect on impact, and identify gaps or new opportunities.

Team-building

Short Overview:

Team-building activities help build trust, cooperation, and communication within a group. In the context of youth participation, they also encourage shared responsibility, leadership, and collective action. These activities strengthen group dynamics and prepare participants to work together toward social change.

Developed by:
Sara Apostolovska (North Macedonia)

1. Our Ideal Community

Time: 30 min

How it works:

Teams design their “ideal youth-friendly community” using craft materials or digital tools (e.g., drawing, Lego, recycled objects, Canva). They must consider inclusion, participation, sustainability, and access. Each group presents a visual model and explains its values and features.

Goal: Promote creative teamwork, social values, vision-building, and inclusion through hands-on collaboration.

Materials needed:

- Art/craft supplies (paper, scissors, markers, tape, recyclables)

2. Spaghetti Tower – Community Edition

Time: 75 - 90 min

How it works:

Teams build the tallest freestanding tower using only spaghetti, string, tape, and one marshmallow (placed on top). The twist: Each team draws a "community value" card (e.g., inclusivity, sustainability, equity), and they must reflect that value in how they design and build the tower — including how they make decisions together.

After building, teams present both their structure and how they incorporated their value.

Goal: Develop teamwork, creative problem-solving, and awareness of values in group decision-making.

Materials needed:

- Dry spaghetti, string, masking tape, marshmallows, value cards

3. The Civic City Hunt

Time: 75 - 90 min

How it works:

Organize a city or neighborhood "scavenger hunt" where teams complete challenges at various spots tied to civic themes (e.g., take a photo of a youth space, interview a local shop owner, find a piece of public art, collect a flyer about a local issue).

Each task is worth points. At the end, teams return and reflect: What did they learn about youth spaces, inclusion, or public life?

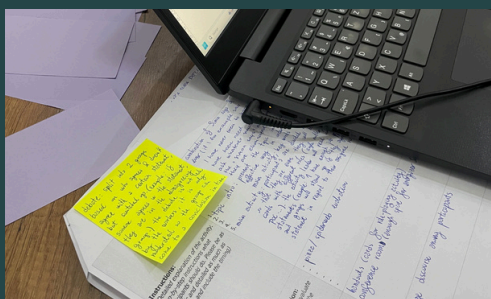
Goal: Strengthen teamwork, orientation, and civic curiosity while discovering their community.

Materials needed:

- Printed task list or challenge cards, map of the area, camera-phones



NFL Activities



1. Situationship

Short Overview:

This activity engages participants in understanding active citizenship by analyzing real-life situations where citizens took action to improve their communities. Participants will discuss case studies, identify challenges, and brainstorm solutions. The aim is to inspire participants to become active citizens by showing the impact of civic engagement.

Developed by:

Roberta Chianelli (Italy), Nivi Murali (Hungary), Luka Erić (Croatia), Nikola Zlenkamenac (Serbia)

☒ Addressed issues:

Active citizenship and civic engagement
Community participation and responsibility
Raising awareness on social and political issues

☒ Target group:

Youth (18- 30)
Educators, youth workers, and civic leaders

☒ Group size:

20 participants (split into smaller working groups)

🕒 Time:

90 minutes

Aims & Objectives

- To raise awareness of the importance of active citizenship.
- To empower participants to identify issues in their communities.
- To develop problem-solving and critical-thinking skills.
- To inspire participants to take meaningful actions in their communities.

Learning Outcomes

- Understand the concept and importance of active citizenship.
- Recognize different ways to engage in their community (e.g., advocacy, volunteering).
- Analyze real-life examples of successful civic action.
- Improve teamwork, communication, and critical-thinking skills.

Instructions

1. **Energizer:** Penguin and Crocodile game (10 minutes)
2. **Introduction:** Briefly explain the concept of active citizenship and why it is important. (10 minutes)
3. **Divide into Groups:** Make 4 groups of 5 by counting 1-5 and assign each group one case study related to active citizenship.
4. **Case Study Analysis:** Make each group pick a chit with the scenario and discuss their case study within their groups. Check groups while discussing, help them focus. Offer paper and flipchart to present specific real life situations. (20 minutes)
5. **Group Presentations:** Each group shares their case study and findings with the larger group. Encourage other groups to ask questions and share their perspectives. (20 minutes)
6. **Action Plan:** Ask the participants to reflect on their own community and personal activity. (30 minutes)

Debriefing and Evaluation

1. What did you learn about active citizenship?
2. How did these case studies inspire you to engage in your community?
3. What is one action you will commit to after this session?

Evaluation Tip: Use a quick "One Word Check-Out" where participants describe their takeaway in one word (e.g., inspired, empowered, curious).

Space Requirements & Training Materials

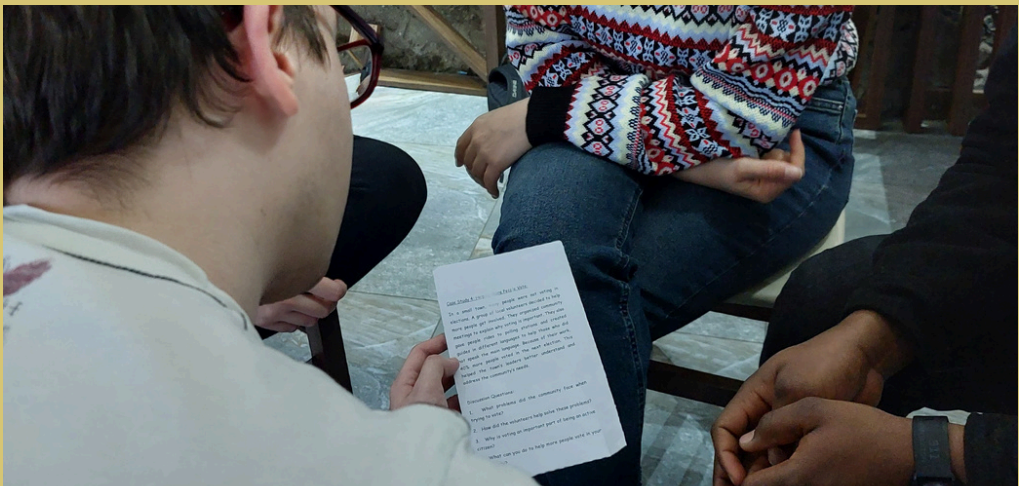
Space: A room with enough space for small group discussions.

Materials Needed:

- Case study handouts
- Flipchart, regular A4 paper and markers for brainstorming.

Tips for Facilitators

- Keep the session interactive, ask open-ended questions to encourage discussion.
- Use local or familiar examples to make the case studies relatable.
- Be mindful of different perspectives ensure all voices are heard and respected.
- Time management is key—keep discussions on track but allow room for deep insights.



Appendix:

Case Studies

Case Study 1: Youth for Climate Action

In 2018, a 15-year-old student, Greta Thunberg, began protesting outside the Swedish Parliament, demanding stronger action on climate change. Her solo strike grew into the Fridays for Future movement, mobilizing millions of young people worldwide to advocate for climate policies. Through peaceful protests, social media, and public speeches, this movement pressured governments to prioritize environmental sustainability.

Discussion Questions:

1. How did their actions influence public policy or societal attitudes?
2. What lessons can we apply to local environmental issues?

Case Study 2: Community-Led Public Space Revitalization:

In a small town, residents noticed that a neglected park was contributing to safety concerns and reduced community interaction. A group of citizens formed a volunteer coalition to clean and restore the park. They partnered with local authorities to secure funding, organized community clean-up days, and created new recreational areas. Within a year, the park became a safe, vibrant space, improving neighborhood well-being and fostering social connections.

Discussion Questions:

1. How did partnerships with local authorities and other groups contribute to success?
2. What similar public spaces in your community could benefit from citizen action?

Case Study 3: Digital Advocacy for Social Justice:

After noticing discrimination in local hiring practices, a group of activists launched an online campaign to promote fair employment policies. Using social media, they shared stories of affected individuals, circulated petitions, and organized virtual town halls with local decision-makers. Their digital advocacy attracted media attention and, after months of pressure, the local government passed new policies enforcing fair hiring practices and increasing transparency.

Discussion Questions:

1. What challenges might arise from using digital platforms for activism?
2. How could digital advocacy be used to address an issue in your community?

2. Step by Step

Short Overview:

The Step by Step activity is a dynamic and engaging workshop designed to raise awareness about the challenges faced by underprivileged individuals while promoting social inclusion and active citizenship. Participants take on different identities and respond to statements by stepping forward if they relate to the given scenario, visually demonstrating inequalities in society.

Developed by:

Caterina Neculau (Romania), Iva Kvesic (Croatia), Kasım Kalaycı (Türkiye), Martin Dimitrov (Bulgaria)

☒ Addressed issues:

Active Citizenship
Raising Awareness
Social Inclusion

☒ Target group:

Youth (16- 35)
Individuals involved in youth work

☒ Group size:

10 - 20 participants

🕒 Time:

90 minutes

Aims & Objectives

- Create an immersive experience that allows participants to step into the lives of others, fostering deeper emotional connections and understanding.
- Challenge preconceived notions and biases by highlighting the invisible barriers people face in society.
- Inspire self-reflection by encouraging participants to question their privileges and responsibilities within their communities.
- Strengthen interpersonal skills by facilitating open discussions and active listening in a diverse group setting.
- Motivate participants to think critically and propose real-world actions that contribute to a fairer and more equitable society.

Learning Outcomes

- Develop a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding societal obstacles and personal experiences.
- Learn how to engage in critical self-reflection, recognizing their role in both shaping and addressing social issues.
- Cultivate the ability to think strategically and creatively when facing challenges, while considering multiple perspectives.
- Build stronger teamwork and collaboration skills, as the activity encourages group engagement and collective problem-solving.
- Enhance their emotional intelligence and resilience by navigating through challenging and thought-provoking scenarios.

Space Requirements & Training Materials

Space: Medium to large room, flexible seating, open area for movement, minimal distractions.

Materials: Pens, markers, paper, flipcharts or whiteboards, floor markers, projector (optional), handouts, timer, evaluation forms.

Tips for Facilitators

Facilitators should prioritize creating a safe, respectful environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their experiences. Setting clear ground rules for respect, active listening, and confidentiality is crucial, as is encouraging openness while discouraging judgment. Since topics like privilege and disadvantage can evoke strong emotions, facilitators should be mindful of participants' emotional responses and offer support when needed. During the activity, facilitators should provide clear instructions for participants on when to step forward or back and allow moments for reflection before each statement. It's important to respect participants' comfort levels, giving them the option to stand still if they are hesitant. In debriefing and group discussions, facilitators should validate participants' feelings, provide space for everyone to share, and ensure the tone remains empathetic and supportive, fostering an open dialogue without judgment. By creating a thoughtful, inclusive atmosphere, facilitators can ensure the activity is meaningful and impactful for all involved.

Instructions

1. Preparation (10 minutes)

Set up an open space with a straight line on the ground using tape or markers. Have participants stand side by side along the line. Briefly explain that this activity explores how privilege and disadvantage shape our lives. Emphasize it's not competitive, but a chance for reflection and awareness.

2. Introduction to the Activity & Mindset Exercise (10 minutes)

Explain the rules: participants will move forward or backward depending on whether statements apply to them. Ask everyone to close their eyes and take a few deep breaths. Guide them to think back to their childhood: where they lived, who supported them, and what kind of access they had to safety, education, or opportunities. This will help set a reflective mindset.

3. Activity Implementation - Combined Activity Round (25 minutes)

Begin the activity with participants on the line. Read one statement at a time, pausing after each. Participants move accordingly. Encourage quiet reflection throughout. After the final statement, ask everyone to stop and notice where they are. Invite them to close their eyes, breathe deeply, and gently step out of the role, returning to themselves.

4. Final Reflection and Discussion (20 minutes)

Gather the group in a circle. Invite them to share how it felt to move—or not move—during the activity. Ask: "What did this reveal about privilege and barriers?" and "What can we do to build a more inclusive society?" Keep the space respectful and open to all voices.

5. SMART Goal-Setting (10–15 minutes)

Encourage participants to set one SMART goal (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) based on the character they embodied. This can be about addressing exclusion, using privilege for good, or making change. Those who wish can share their goals aloud. Focus on real-world application.

6. Conclusion (5 minutes)

Close the session by thanking everyone. Highlight that recognizing inequality is the first step, and action—no matter how small—creates change. Leave them with a reminder: “Carry this awareness into your daily life. You have the power to make a difference.”

Debriefing and Evaluation

Emotional & Personal Reflection

- How did it feel to take steps forward or stay behind?
- Were there any statements that made you feel uncomfortable or proud?
- Did you notice anything about your own identity or experiences that surprised you?
- Was there a moment during the activity that stood out to you emotionally?

Group & Visual Reflection

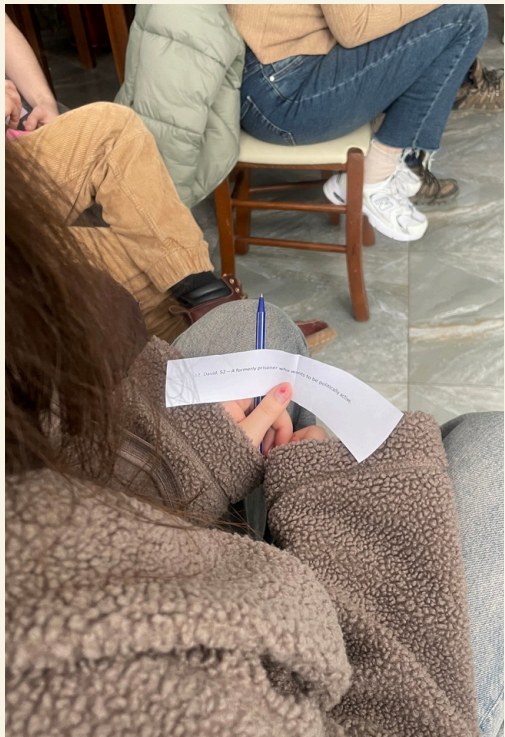
- What did you observe about the group’s final positions?
- How did it feel to look around and see where others stood?
- Did the group formation reflect real-life inequality in any way?

Connection to Society & Inclusion

- What real-world systems or issues did this activity help you think about?
- How does privilege or disadvantage show up in your community or country?
- In what ways can we as young people work toward a more inclusive society?

Activity Evaluation

- What part of the activity was most impactful for you?
- How well did the reflection process help connect the activity to real life?
- What would you improve or do differently next time?



Appendix:

Participants' Roles

Ali, 27 – A university-educated engineer who actively votes and volunteers for environmental projects but struggles to find time for broader civic engagement.

Zeynep, 45 – A single mother working as a nurse, trying to stay involved in her community while balancing work and parenting.

Johan, 70 – A retired politician who now mentors young activists, sharing knowledge about democratic participation and governance.

Marta, 19 – A university student passionate about climate activism but unsure how to navigate formal political systems.

Rahul, 21 – A technology student engaged in digital activism, but faces restrictions on internet access and online expression.

Hassan, 17 – A high school student who has recently moved to a new country as a refugee, learning about democracy but unable to vote or participate in decision-making processes.

Carlos, 38 – An undocumented construction worker who contributes to the economy but has no access to voting rights, healthcare, or legal protections.

Nadia, 31 – A trained lawyer in her home country, but due to immigration barriers, now works as a cleaner while trying to rebuild her career.

Mohamed, 44 – A small business owner who actively participates in local politics but faces societal discrimination and systemic barriers.

Chen, 33 – An independent journalist advocating for freedom of speech but often faces censorship and government restrictions.

Amina, 26 – A member of LGBTQ+ community and a human rights activist working on LGBTQ+ issues, experiencing legal risks and social discrimination

Fatima, 60 – A religiously observant individual who wishes to express personal beliefs in public spaces and wants to wear burka

Appendix: Statements

1. "You can vote in elections."
2. "You can volunteer for a cause you care about."
3. "You can attend a protest without fear."
4. "You can openly share your opinions in public."
5. "You can run for a leadership position in your community."
6. "You can apply for any job without discrimination."
7. "You can travel freely to other countries."
8. "You can access free healthcare when needed."
9. "You can afford to donate money to a charity."
10. "You can get a bank account in your own name."
11. "You can walk alone at night without fear."
12. "You can attend school without financial difficulties."
13. "You can own property without restrictions."
14. "You can report a crime without fear of consequences."
15. "You can join or create an organization for a cause you believe in."
16. "You can speak your native language in public."
17. "You can access the internet freely and safely."
18. "You can receive financial help from the government if needed."
19. "You can marry whoever you choose without restrictions."
20. "You can get legal help if your rights are violated."

3. What privileges do I have?

Short Overview:

This initiative aims to cultivate a deeper understanding of socioeconomic disparities and the impact of privilege through facilitated dialogue and experiential learning. By engaging participants in structured discussions and role-playing exercises, we seek to foster empathy and encourage critical self-reflection.

Developed by:

Svea Jelić (Croatia), Saša Borštnar (Slovenia), Delia Tutu (Romania), Inusah Kulchirie (Hungary)

☒ Addressed issues:

Inequality and poverty, Effects of privilege
Social status and unequal access

☒ Target group:

Youth (18- 30)
Employed and unemployed - diverse group

☒ Group size:

10-30 participants

🕒 Time:

90 minutes

Aims & Objectives

- Raise awareness about privilege and opportunities in life
- Teach about kinds of privilege & provide space to showcase inequality in society
- Platform to discuss social consequences

Learning Outcomes

- Gain Knowledge of key concepts such as privilege, inequality, and systemic barriers, and better understand diverse socioeconomic realities.
- Develop Skills in empathy, critical thinking, respectful dialogue, and navigating difficult conversations.
- Shift Attitudes by challenging stereotypes, becoming more open-minded, and feeling motivated to promote fairness.
- Build Competences in interacting with people from different backgrounds and understanding their role in social justice.

Instructions

1. **Energizer:** Never have i ever (e.g. If i say “Never have I ever participated in a project”, those who HAVE participated or the statement ISN'T true for them, have to squat/be seated)
2. **Topic intro:** Present the topic in a simple and effective way in order to introduce the main activity, key words and good atmosphere
3. **Main activity:** Participants are divided into even groups, they'll be assigned cards with different roles and the activity leader will read out some statements (e.g. “I have enough job opportunities”) and groups will stand up if they agree for the statement in regard to their assigned role.
4. **Debate:** The debate will focus on one chosen previous statement from the main activity, offering participants the opportunity to present and defend their perspectives with well-structured arguments. We will start by asking who agrees and who disagrees with the topic, dividing participants into Pro and Con teams accordingly. Teams will then switch sides, with the Pro team becoming Con and vice versa, to encourage critical thinking and adaptability. Each team is required to develop at least three strong arguments to support their new stance. Participants should present their arguments clearly, maintain respect during discussions, and engage actively in the question-and-answer session at the end.
5. **Debriefing & Reflection:** This process should commence with a structured reflection period, allowing participants to articulate their immediate emotional and cognitive responses to the exercises. Facilitators should guide this reflection, prompting participants to consider how their perspectives may have shifted and what specific moments resonated with them. Subsequently, a facilitated discussion should delve into the underlying dynamics observed during the role-playing and debates, exploring the systemic factors that contribute to socioeconomic disparities. Participants should be encouraged to share their insights, while facilitators provide context and clarify any misconceptions. Crucially, the debriefing must emphasize the importance of applying these insights to real-world interactions and fostering a commitment to equitable practices.

Debriefing and Evaluation

- What were your initial reactions to the activity (e.g. interesting, boring, amused)?
- What moments stood out to you the most (e.g. positive/negative moment)?
- How did the roleplaying exercise make you feel?
- What were your key take-aways from the debates?
- What was the “aha!” moment during the activity?
- How did this activity impact your understanding of socioeconomic status?
- What new perspectives did you gain and what feelings arose during the activities?
- How did the different activities change your perspective?



Space Requirements & Training Materials

Handouts, Conference room (enough space for energizer and activity)

Tips for Facilitators

Always have energizer before a heavy topic and always end with a fun and creative evaluation, encourage discussion among participants. There are a few proposal statements, however feel free to add more according to the topic or group you're working with.

Appendix:

Roles & Statements

Maria: A single mother with a physical disability, working a low-wage job. She struggles with accessible childcare and transportation.

David: A gay man from a low-income background, facing workplace discrimination and limited access to affordable healthcare.

Aisha: A single mother who is also a lesbian, trying to provide for her child while battling societal stigma and financial instability.

Carlos: A person with a learning disability from a less fortunate background, facing barriers to education and employment.

Lena: A transgender woman who is also a single parent, navigating legal challenges and discrimination in housing and employment.

Jamal: A man with a mobility impairment, raised in a low-income neighborhood, who experiences limited access to community resources and job opportunities.

Statements:

1. "The cost of daycare is a constant burden, limiting my ability to save or invest in my future."
2. "I've experienced social exclusion and prejudice, which has impacted my mental health and well-being."
3. "I've had to work twice as hard to get half as far, simply because of where I come from."
4. "I've grown accustomed to living paycheck to paycheck, with no room for unexpected expenses."
5. "The ability to afford legal representation can drastically affect legal outcomes."
6. "Juggling work, childcare, and household responsibilities alone leaves little room for financial advancement."
7. "The cost of daycare is a constant burden, limiting my ability to save or invest in my future."
8. "Discrimination in the workplace has limited my career opportunities and earning potential."
9. "Finding inclusive and affordable healthcare that understands my specific needs is challenging."

4. Unicorn Hats

Short Overview:

Participants examine active citizenship from different perspectives and learn to think critically.

Developed by:

Bojana Bozicic (Serbia) Gabriel Angheluta (Romania) Beyzanur Taş (Türkiye) Marco Montagnani (Italy)

☒ Addressed issues:

Decision-Making & Problem-Solving
Innovation Risk Management & Crisis Handling
Team Collaboration & Communication

☒ Target group:

Youth (18- 30)
Educators, youth workers, and civic leaders

☒ Group size:

21 participants (3 per group - small groups)

🕒 Time:

90 minutes

Aims & Objectives

1. Enhancing Critical Thinking

- Encourages individuals and teams to analyze situations from multiple perspectives before making a decision.
- Reduces biases and emotional decision-making by ensuring structured thinking.

2. Developing Problem-Solving Skills

- Helps participants identify risks, opportunities, and innovative solutions effectively and encourages a step-by-step approach to solving complex problems.

3. Encouraging Creativity & Innovation

- The Green Hat promotes creative thinking and alternative solutions.
- Helps teams generate unique and practical ideas by shifting perspectives.



Learning Outcomes

By taking part in the activity, participants will better understand concepts like privilege, inequality, and systemic barriers. They will develop empathy, critical thinking, and communication skills through dialogue and role-play. The activity will help challenge stereotypes, increase self-awareness, and promote openness. Participants will become more confident in engaging with diverse groups and feel motivated to support equity and social justice.

Instructions

1. Introduction: Explain the Six Thinking Hats method and set up the stage.

Step 1: Briefly introduce the topic or problem the group will work on.

Explain that they will use the Six Thinking Hats technique to explore different viewpoints systematically.

Step 2: Explain the Six Hats, introduce each hat and its function. Hand out printed hat descriptions or display them on a board.

Step 3: Assign Hats: Either assign specific hats to participants or allow them to rotate through all hats during discussion.

2. Main Activity: Apply the Six Thinking Hats method to analyze a problem.

Step 1: Present the Issue, define a real or hypothetical scenario.

Example: "Should our company launch a new product?"

Step 2: Structured Discussion. Start with the Blue Hat → The facilitator explains the process and keeps discussions structured.

Move through each hat one by one:

- White Hat (Facts): What do we know? What data is available?
- Red Hat (Emotions): What are our gut feelings? Any concerns?
- Black Hat (Risks): What could go wrong? What are the weaknesses?
- Yellow Hat (Benefits): What are the positive outcomes? Why will it work?
- Green Hat (Creativity): What innovative ideas can we explore?
- Blue Hat (Wrap-up): What's the final decision? What's the next step?

Step 3: Capture Key Insights

Write down key points under each hat. Encourage participants to share different viewpoints.

3. Debrief & Conclusion: Reflect on the process and make final decisions.

Step 1: Review Insights, summarize findings from each hat, discuss if any new perspectives changed opinions.

Step 2: Discuss Takeaways and ask participants:

- Which hat was most useful? Did they discover anything unexpected?
- How can they use this method in daily decision-making?

Step 3: Action Plan Decide on next steps based on the discussion. If solving a problem, determine who does what and when.

Debriefing and Evaluation

1. General Reflection

- What was your overall experience using the Six Thinking Hats?
- Did this method help you see the issue from different perspectives?

2. Specific Hat Insights

- Which hat was the easiest for you to use? Why?
- Which hat was the most challenging? Why?

3. Decision-Making & Problem-Solving

- How did this method influence your final decision?
- Did switching hats help you uncover new ideas or risks?

4. Team Collaboration & Communication

- Did this method improve the way the group communicated?
- How did structuring the conversation with hats help avoid conflicts or bias?

Tips for Facilitators

They have to explain the rules very clearly.

Space Requirements & Training Materials

Conference room, markers for the purple team to evaluate the team's flipchart for the rules, papers for the writing staff.



5. Problems in Rural areas

Short Overview:

Building a stronger community involves fostering connections and collaboration. It addresses local needs and creates a sense of belonging. Engaging youth is key to shaping the future. Providing mentorship and opportunities helps develop their skills. Together, community building and youth engagement create a thriving environment.

Developed by:

Viktória Heilman (Hungary) Basak Kalyon (Türkiye) Laura Osenjak (Slovenia) Igor Nenadovic (Serbia)

☒ Addressed issues:

Active citizenship and civic engagement
Community participation and responsibility
Raising awareness on social and political issues

☒ Target group:

Youth (16- 30)
Familiar with Youth Work

☒ Group size:

20 participants (split into smaller working groups)

🕒 Time:

60 minutes

Aims & Objectives

- To build a stronger community and to connect people in it
- Better involvement in youth decision making, more active youth and social inclusion

Learning Outcomes

- Deeper knowledge and awareness of the social-economical problems that young people are suffering from
- Better sense of collaboration with diverse social groups (fewer opportunities)
- Improving creative thinking with different methods of art
- Gaining self-confidence through interactive activities in diverse groups
- Encouragement to take part in local community and also speaking up for resolving the problems

Instructions

1. **Energizer:** Counting without knowing who will be the next and not saying the same number at the same time, otherwise we must start it from the beginning
2. **Introduction:** Facilitators will ask some questions about problems in rural areas: "Who lives in a rural area, or in a small town? Do you think you have a strong community in your area? Do you think those people have fewer opportunities, bigger problems?" As well as "What problems do you think you have in the rural areas? How do you solve these problems?" Ideally, participants would need to connect to the website on the internet and answer these questions. And after we would divide the people in groups - we'll count in another language.
3. **Group work:** "How do you build a stronger, more connected community?" will be the question given to participants, along with small papers containing the following topics.
 - one part will be for the way of presenting the problems through artistic expression/creativity: rap song, theatre, comics, puppet show, comedy sketch, dance
 - the other part will be for the topics of the problems: lack of education, youth unemployment, politics involvement, pollution, engagement in sports, safety preparation.
4. **Debriefing:** We'll summarize the completed tasks with some guiding questions and discuss them as a group.

Space Requirements & Training Materials

Space: A room with enough space for small group discussions.

Materials: Flipchart, regular A4 paper and markers for brainstorming.

Tips for Facilitators

You need to adapt to different situations and lead discussions to encourage critical and proactive thinking about problems in the participants' experiences.

Debriefing and Evaluation

- Did you find the activities interesting and relevant to your life and concerns and what are your opinions of the different methods that you used?
- Has your understanding of local political issues or community challenges increased as a result of this activity? If yes, how would you implement them in your life and community?
- How do you feel about what you did, did you learn something new?
- What new perspectives or knowledge did you gain about your community during the activity?
- What aspects of the activity could be improved to better engage youth in the future?



6. You matter, animals do as well

Short Overview:

This workshop is about mobilizing young people who are interested in protecting the environment and wildlife by engaging them in different related topics to plan out effective strategies and measures to protect the environment and wildlife.

Developed by:

Alexandra Dimitrova, Maria Zordanova (Bulgaria) Francesco Canepa (Italy) Jan Drnovšek (Slovenia)

☒ Addressed issues:

Environment and Wildlife
Non-formal Education
Politics & the Environment

☒ Target group:

Youth (18- 30)

☒ Group size:

20 participants (into smaller working groups)

🕒 Time:

120 minutes

Aims & Objectives

- To inform and raise awareness about environmental issues;
- Actual positive impact on the environment and wildlife;
- Mobilization and political engagement of people who share the desired impact.

Learning Outcomes

- Knowledge about current, relevant and less known environmental issues and endangered species;
- Recognition of the importance of preserving the wildlife, especially the species that are less spoken of;
- Organization and planning of political action;
- Performing goal-oriented group research.

Instructions

1. **INTRODUCTION:** Introduction of the organizing group and its members, participants and their level of experience, and an energizer (30 minutes)
2. **EXPOSITION:** Introduction to the topic - Preservation of environment and wildlife. It's importance, the impact humans (including industry and economy), and long-term impact on our current existence on ecosystems and humanity. (20 minutes)
3. **TOPIC PRESENTATION + INSTRUCTIONS:** The presenter will present 4 to 5 different topics or issues - that the participants will be able to choose from and divide themselves into groups (10 minutes)
4. **GROUP RESEARCH:** Groups will perform their own research to create a presentation that will include a) reasoning behind the choice; b) relevant and important information about the topic, raising awareness; c) possible political and environmental action people can take to tackle presented issues effectively. (20 minutes)
5. **PRESENTATIONS:** Each group will present their research (20-30 minutes)
6. **ENDING STATEMENTS and KEY TAKEAWAYS:** The participants can make final statements about their tasks and finalize the activity (5 minutes)
7. **EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK:** Questions and discussion (15 minutes)

Debriefing and evaluation

1. What was the most important or interesting thing that you've learned?
2. What do you plan to do with the information you've received?
3. Would you raise awareness in your community about the topic?
4. Can you share one thing you would like to learn more about from the workshop?
5. What did you like/dislike about our workshop?
6. Is there anything else you'd like to share with the group?

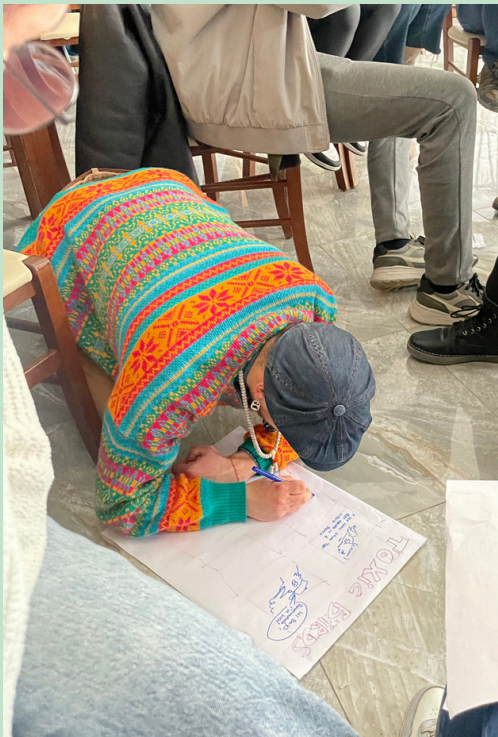
Space Requirements & Training Materials

A conference room with enough room for all groups to work in peace, pens, papers, phones and stable internet connection.

Tips for Facilitators

Try to be informal, relaxed and confident and informed on the topic in order to answer potential questions that may appear.

We recommend energizers that stimulate the participants' energy and willingness to discuss ideas (e.g. by using dixit cards and trying to interpret then discuss the meaning of each card) or energizers that get participants to build a sense of familiarity quickly (by getting them to act a bit silly).



Youth Activators Toolbox

For additional information or inquiries, please
reach out to us.



urbanoopstestvo@gmail.com



youthactivators.urbanoopstestvo.com



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ЗА ЕВРОПСКИ ОБРАЗОВНИ
ПРОГРАМИ И МОБИЛНОСТ