

# BOOKLET OF PROPOSALS



## ON IMPROVING CIVIC INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG REFUGEES

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# Summary

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# Presentation of the project



The number of young migrants and refugees in Europe is constantly increasing every year: they represent today, according to the United Nations, 10% of the migrants in Europe. It is imperative to accompany these young people qualitatively in their new environment and to help them to appropriate their place in this society.

While citizenship education for young refugees is not new in European Member States, the DiverCity project focuses on several aspects :

- The importance of including non-formal education practices adapted to today's refugee youth, taking into particularly the most vulnerable among them;
- To do so by involving these young people in the entire process, from diagnosis to implementation, including the co-construction of practices;
- The focus on citizenship education outside of school settings;
- The promotion of horizontal peer-to-peer learning to encourage social cohesion among youth and social mixing among youth;
- The support of the local dimension of citizenship education for these young people.

In addition, the DiverCity projet would like to bring together local non-institutional actors who are in contact with these young people outside of school on this theme, which appeared essential to further their work. This dialogue will allow them to enrich and improve their knowledge and practices.

The DiverCity project focuses on the three following goals:



## 1. In-depth diagnosis of needs: Include young migrants and refugees in out-of-school youth education policies

- Identify existing practices in partner countries regarding civic education for young refugees outside of school settings.
- Analyse the practices themselves, the legal and political frameworks and political frameworks in which they take place.
- Evaluate their effectiveness but also their feasibility and their capacity to be duplicated and disseminated widely outside the borders of the territories concerned.
- Assess the extent to which they use methods from popular education and non-formal education.
- Collect the opinions of the actors involved in the sector of civic education of young people to support their civic integration outside of school: youth workers, young volunteers, young refugees and the local authorities responsible for implementing these policies at the local level.
- In a logic of civic integration and encouragement of participation, this is for us the first step to include young refugees in the construction of citizenship education practices at local, national and European level: Consultation.

## 2. Develop and co-construct civic education practices for young migrants and refugees outside of school settings,, including non-formal methods from various fields (art, culture, sport, etc.)

- Address local authorities, young people, volunteers, professionals, etc., and involve them in the construction of new resources to develop civic education taking into account the specificities of young refugees, especially the most vulnerable ones.
- Empower young people by allowing them to discover more opportunities available to them to become actors in their territory, as well as by discovering new ways of expressing themselves and gaining autonomy and self-confidence.
- In a logic of civic integration and to encourage participation, this is for us the second step to include young refugees in the implementation of new citizenship education practices at local, national and European level: Co-construction.



### 3. Training in non-formal education practices to promote the civic integration of young migrants and refugees

- Train in new civic education practices for young refugees outside of school settings
- Disseminate these practices as widely as possible to actors and people active in the field of youth, citizenship and/or inclusion.
- Creation of links between actors in the fields of youth, citizenship and/or education and partnerships at local and European level.

The project brings together a consortium of actors committed to citizenship education for young refugees and migrants, complementary both in their geographical location and their expertise: youth organisations Parlement Européen des Jeunes - France, led by and for young people, and AJ Intercambia in Spain, MSK Lodz, a public cultural centre for the local community in Poland, and the associations Le Tre Ghinee in Italy, involved for the inclusion of vulnerable people, and Hellas for Us in Greece, active on citizenship and inclusion.



**MSK:**



**Le Tre Ghinee**



EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT  
PARLEMENT EUROPÉEN DES JEUNES  
FRANCE



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# How was this booklet of proposals created?

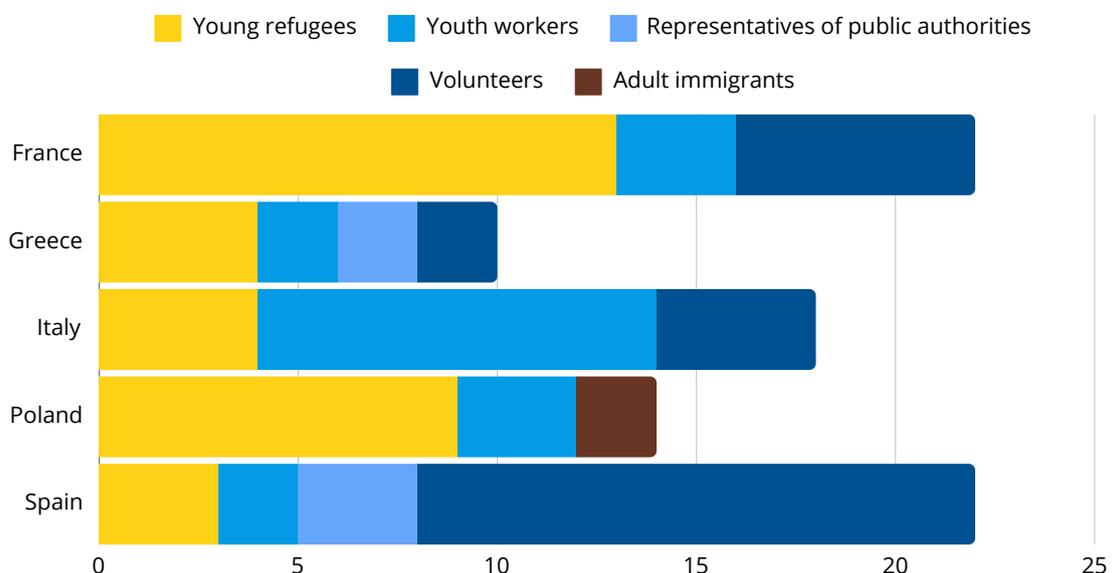
This booklet of proposals was produced based on the results of our field study, published in March 2024, and recommendations formulated during a cycle of Round Tables, organised by the DiverCity partners.

During the spring 2024, all DiverCity partners organised in their countries Round Tables “Think together, do better”, based around reflections on local public policies for citizenship education of young refugees outside school settings. During these Round Tables, relevant local authorities and organisations, young volunteers, young refugees and youth workers discussed and formulated recommendations to improve the support of young refugees in their civic life.

In a logic of civic integration and to encourage participation, this was a new step to include young refugees in the implementation of new citizenship education practices at local, national and European level: co-construction.

## The Round Tables

The proposals in this booklet are the result of 8 Round Tables, that lasted 1 to 2 days each. They took place in Marseille in France, Thessaloniki on Greece, Roma and Cosenza in Italy, Lodz in Poland and Malaga in Spain. A total of 87 participants took part in these Round Tables.



# Proposals

This booklet presents a list of 20 proposals to improve the support of young refugees in their civic life.

They are sorted in 4 main categories:

**Institutions**

**Volunteering**

**Activities**

**Work environment**



# Institutions

## **Establish an Immigrant Council at City Hall**

This would be an advisory body for policy on immigrant integration at local level. The council would be a link between the city's immigrant community and its authorities and administration. It would also liaise with organisations and institutions working in the field of integration and social inclusion of migrants.

## **Ask for help from Mayors**

We would establish contact with Mayors to ask for administrative and financial support. For example, we would ask for support to hire a part time administrative assistant in local youth associations welcoming refugees, in order to provide help to the refugees in their administrative work. We could also ask for authorisation to organise manifestations on the topic of migrations and to be provided with adequate security on the manifestations. We would ask for financial support when organising a poster campagne that will express the opinion of the refugees on European elections.

## **Establish a Plenipotentiary for non-formal civic education at regional authority level**

This Plenipotentiary's main role would be to support the process of adaptation and social integration of refugees by:

- increasing access to information and counselling,
- supporting and coordinating educational processes,
- supporting cultural activities and other initiatives and projects aimed at social integration,
- carrying out needs analyses for the regional authorities in the field.

This person should act as an advisor to both refugees and NGOs in the area of non-formal civic education. This person's office should collect all the information about this kind of education from the region.

## **Improve access to administrative procedures**

This would cover the introduction of a single interview covering all administrative, health and employment details on arrival, instead of several appointments over several months.

This would also affirm the need to establish an obligation to keep the person informed of the progress of administrative procedures. It would also encourage the expansion of information resources on asylum rights for all new arrivals.

## **Create a grant call for refugees' social initiatives**

This would be a competition of small grants from a regional fund, which will support initiatives proposed and implemented by refugees. We want to give refugees the opportunity to come up with initiatives aimed at local people, supporting integration, cooperation and getting to know each other, as well as joint actions for the common good, for local communities. Refugees can carry out educational, cultural, intercultural, (self-)help initiatives, etc.

## **Organise and carry out more inclusive institutional activities and meetings**

It is vital to sensitise institutions to provide spaces to carry out activities in a more horizontal manner. Unfortunately, the spaces where we are accustomed to conducting these activities are sometimes too politicised or institutionalised to make people feel comfortable. We ask institutions to create community spaces and co-organize events involving people from different backgrounds and plan common activities where there can be an exchange such as food, music,...

## **Increase training on gender issues in the healthcare system and the police**

The healthcare system and the police are not competent enough regarding gender issues related to refugees, like human trafficking, sexual violence, domestic violence, ... and do not meet the real needs of young people. We propose to incentivize more training on these issues for the personnel in the healthcare system and the police. Training and peer education should be proposed to a professional category that will then be more able to train their colleagues.

## **Develop access to counselling for young refugees**

Young people suffer increasingly from mental health issues. This is even more true for young refugees that have experienced difficult situations in their country of origin, during their migrations, and in the country they are currently living in. We ask for more free counselling for young refugees, available in more and safer spaces.

# Volunteering

## Support refugee peer volunteering

We believe it is important to increase the support to young refugees who volunteer in their own communities and for the local communities around them, especially voluntary organisations led by young refugees, which play an essential part in improving the social and cultural integration of these young people in society and in their local community.

## Increase community-based support networks

We support the establishment of a supportive community that brings together young refugees and local residents to facilitate social interaction, mutual support, and cultural exchange. These communities will serve as hubs for organising interactive workshops, cultural events, and recreational activities aimed at fostering resilience, happiness, and a sense of belonging among participants.

## Support associations offering language courses to refugees

We ask for increased support to all associations that provide free language classes. This support can be financial, it can also be a communication campaign in the local area to find new volunteers to provide the language classes.

## Create an association called “Asso Help”

The representative of this association will be elected by the other members. This association’s aim is to create some activities which will encourage the participants ( especially the refugees ) to gain self-confidence, so they can speak in front of other people for their rights. There will also be French language classes. The members of the associations can also create activities for the other group members for example if someone speaks Afghan fluently he can give some “fun” classes teaching Afghan.

This association will specialise in helping to represent refugees in the society. Thanks to this association the voice of the refugees will be heard by other people so citizens can take into consideration their opinion for voting in elections because citizens will be aware of their difficulties or demands.

## Create safer spaces for refugees in associative activities

We call for better control of the behaviour of volunteers in associations in contact with refugees, and propose the creation of a discussion space to denounce volunteers who make racist remarks or discriminate against certain people.



# Activities

## Project “Hello Neighbour”

We propose to organise a picnic at which the local community and immigrants living in the area will meet. They can all take part in different activities: listening to music from different countries together, preparing national dishes and sharing them. This picnic would help important conversations arise between neighbours to get them to know each other better: how you live here, how long you have lived here, what I could help you with, ...

## Mixed Football Teams

We support the initiative to create mixed football teams comprising both refugees and locals. These teams will provide opportunities for young people from diverse backgrounds to come together, build friendships, and develop teamwork skills through sports. This initiative will promote social integration, mutual respect, and cross-cultural understanding among participants.

## Afternoon Activities Program

We propose the implementation of an afternoon activities program tailored to the interests and needs of young refugees, offering them opportunities for skill development, creative expression, and social engagement. These activities would include art workshops, music sessions, vocational training, and community service projects, providing young refugees with constructive outlets for their energy and talents while fostering positive connections with the local community.

# Workplace

## Support work integration of refugees within associations

We stress the need to highlight associations offering integration assistance to refugees, and propose that refugees working for associations should be remunerated for their work, even before obtaining a visa.

## Encourage local businesses to hire refugees

We encourage the development of programs and campaigns to promote hiring refugees as a strong integration tool. Administrative paperwork and rules should also be made more flexible and adaptable to help small and local businesses during the process of hiring refugees.

## Develop mentorship programs to connect refugees with local professionals

Mentorship programs specifically addressed to young refugees could help them develop a stronger work network in the area they are living in and in the work sector they wish to work in. This could also help improve the number of job opportunities available to refugees.

## Collaborate with private company for refugees

We ask private company for two kinds of collaborations:

- Financial aids: We ask them to donate money to local, national and international associations and organisations that support refugees, especially young people.
- Advertisement : We ask them to put up poster campaigns created by associations about the opinion of refugees (on European elections for example) on their outlets, stores and offices so that will create awareness of the problems faced. We also would like them to make some content and posts with this information on their social media as they have many people following them.



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