

## Empowering Youth – Countering Populism

### Project Information

#### Project aims

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Rising far-right populism and right-wing extremism is characterising Europe's political and civic landscape. While traditional political parties in Western Europe constantly lose members and political support, populist parties on the right-end of the political spectrum gain ground in many European countries, even reaching political decision-making in governments. What is more, the public political mainstream discourse is challenged by alternative right media and radical movements questioning fundamental values of diversity, democracy and political freedom across Europe. This being true for Western Europe, the political landscape in Eastern Europe sees political populism since the independent from Soviet Union, and a rise of nationalistic and chauvinistic narratives and policies that come along.

In this context, civil society has a great role in countering populism and chauvinistic narratives that are anti-European, anti-diversity, and in contemporary Europe especially anti-immigration.

Therefore, the project **aims** to contribute to strengthen the youth sector to counter (right wing) populism and dismantle chauvinistic narratives from a progressive, inclusive and participatory vision for a united European civil society.

The project pursues the following **objectives**:

- To reinforce the competences in supporting young people to lead civic initiatives countering populism and chauvinistic narratives, initiatives and movements
- To create a resource pack for youth workers and youth community leaders on countering political populism
- To foster transnational cooperation and partnerships between youth stakeholders in Europe

#### Project activities

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##### **Activity 1 – Online Training Course I: Understanding Populist Challenges – Framing Civic Responses (18 February – 08 April 2022)**

The training course aims to strengthen the participants understanding of the contemporary populist threat in Europe and to explore potentials for civil society and youth to counter populism and right-wing extremism.

The course will look at reasons for the rise of populism and chauvinism in Europe, analyse the mechanisms that populist parties and movements use to create powerful narratives, and explore concepts, principles and practices of grass-root civic activism for countering populism and right-wing extremism through youth work both in theoretical and practical terms. Additionally, the participants will be invited to plan a research on populism in their community.

##### **Activity 2 – Community research (April-June 2022)**

In preparation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> training course, the participants will conduct a community analysis identifying populist and extremist narratives and/ or tendencies in their community in order to understand the mechanisms and success factors used by populists to gain political and social ground.

The findings of this research will serve as the basis for a community context analysis and to learn tools for designing youth-driven community interventions to counter populism and chauvinism locally.

### **Activity 3 – Training Course II: Designing grass-root civic responses to counter populism and chauvinism (16 – 24 June 2022 Kobuleti, Georgia)**

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> training course, the participants will develop local youth-led interventions in respond to the local realities they have identified through their community analysis. Therefore, a project planning framework for civic movements and grass-root initiatives will be introduced to and applied by the participants. Additionally, they will explore approaches and measures facilitating inclusive and participatory project planning processes with young people.

*FYI: Participation in the residential training course will require from the participants to be vaccinated, recovered or tested against Covid-19. Further the participants shall be aware about the health risks that they take concerning their participation in the activity, and that the organisers do not carry any responsibility for potential infections with Covid-19. It is in the responsibility of the participants to make themselves familiar with safety regulations and restrictions in their own country about travelling internationally. The participants have to commit to the safety rules and restrictions existing in the training course destination.*

## Participant profile

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The training programme is open for participants from Armenian, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Spain and Ukraine.

Applicants should have the following profile:

- Knowledge about the specific context in their communities particularly in view to (right wing) populist and chauvinist narratives, initiatives and movements
- Have at least a basic understanding of nonviolent change-making and civic activism
- Being currently involved in any form of civil society organisation, civic initiative or movement
- Have work experience with young people or being a young activist working in a youth initiative group at local level
- Interested and motivated to support young people in countering populism at community or national levels
- Motivation to take part in a mutual learning process in a highly intercultural setting
- Good level of English to follow the course and to contribute to it
- Wish and ability to participate fully in the entire training programme composed of all educational activities

**The participants are expected to participate in all project activities.**

## Course application

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If you are interested in this programme, please apply via this [Application Form](#) until **November 29 2021**. Applicants will be informed latest on the 9th of December 2021 about if their application was successful.

## Contact

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If you have any questions regarding the programme, please feel free to contact is at [eif.germany@googlemail.com](mailto:eif.germany@googlemail.com).

## Practical Information for the Online Training Course

**Duration:** 18 February to 08 April 2022

**Format of the training course:**

The online training course will take the form of a so-called new blended training format. The training will be composed of **7 modules**. Each Module will last a week and is composed of an **e-course and a webinar**.

**Learning modules:**

The planned modules unfold as detailed in the table below.

We expect a weekly workload of **1,5 hours for the self-study** via the e-course platform, and **2 hours for the webinars**. Only the 1<sup>st</sup> Module foresees two webinars, each lasting 3 hours in order to help all of us to get to know each other.

Modules	Objectives and content	Timing
Module 1: Course Introduction and team building	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To foster a good and productive team atmosphere</li> <li>• To ensure the participants are familiar with the project structure and the e-learning platform</li> </ul> <p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team building</li> <li>• Intro to course content and structure</li> <li>• Setting learning goals</li> <li>• Getting to know the e-course platform</li> </ul>	<p><i>Duration: 1 week</i> 18 February - 24 February 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webinar 1 = 18 FEB, 4pm to 7pm CEST</li> <li>• Webinar 2 = 25 FEB, 4pm to 7pm CEST</li> </ul>
Module 2: Populism and chauvinism in Europe I	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To clarify key terms such as populism, chauvinism, radicalism and extremism</li> <li>• To explore contemporary populist threats and movements in Europe</li> </ul> <p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining key terms</li> <li>• Reasons and roots of populist movements/parties/ tendencies in participant countries</li> </ul>	<p><i>Duration: 1 week</i> 25 February - 03 March 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webinar 3 = 04 MAR, 4pm to 6pm CET</li> </ul>
Module 3: Populism and chauvinism in Europe II	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To explore contemporary populist threats and movements in Europe</li> </ul> <p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing information about contemporary populist threats and movements in Europe (e.g., reasons, roots, Covid-19 impact)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Duration: 1 week</i> 05-10 March 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webinar 4= 11 MAR, 4pm to 6pm CET</li> </ul>
Module 4: Civic activism and campaigning	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To understand what civic activism is and what it is not</li> <li>• To explore success factors for civic campaigning</li> </ul>	<p><i>Duration: 1 week</i> 11-17 March 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webinar 5 = 18 MAR, 4pm to 6pm CET</li> </ul>

against populism	<p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defining civic activism</li> <li>Exploring success factors for civic (youth-led) campaigning</li> <li>Examples of civic campaigning in participant countries</li> </ul>	
Module 5: Youth participation	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To understand youth participation and conditions for youth participation</li> <li>To explore forms of participation and non-participation in view to populist strategies</li> </ul> <p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defining youth participation</li> <li>Understanding conditions for youth participation</li> <li>Analysis of conditions for youth participation in participant communities</li> </ul>	<p>Duration: 1 week 18 – 24 March 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Webinar 6 = 25 MAR, 4pm to 6pm CET</li> </ul>
Module 6: Research tools and research plan	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To explore means and methods for community research</li> <li>To develop community research plans</li> </ul> <p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community research – Why and how</li> <li>Planning community researches for all communities of the participants</li> </ul>	<p>Duration: 1 week 25 March – 01 April 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Webinar 7 = 02 APR, 4pm to 6pm CEST</li> </ul>
Module 7: Course Evaluation	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To evaluate the course and assess the learning outcomes of the participants</li> <li>To outline the up-coming steps in the learning cycle and project</li> </ul> <p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation with the participants</li> <li>Up-coming project steps</li> </ul>	<p>Duration: 1 week 02-08 April 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Webinar 8 = 08 APR, 4pm to 6pm CEST</li> </ul>

#### Technical aspects and platforms:

We plan on using the following tools and platforms for the realisation of the course:

- The e-course will be hosted on the [Instructure Canvas](#) platform
- For sharing and presentations we will use Padlet, Google forms, and Jamboard
- The Webinars will be hosted via Zoom