**Project Summary (MORE YOUTH IN DEMOCRACY)**

**Background**

In Istria (Croatia), the youth participation in the local political life and decision making process is low. Despite some efforts have been made in Brtonigla/Verteneglio and nearby towns in the past years, the youth is still not involved. In fact, initiatives such as the Youth Council did not succeed due to lack of temporal continuity. Thus, it is necessary to revive these actions to tackle the low youth participation rate by using a European perspective. By participating, the youngsters can enhance the democracy quality as well as let the local decision makers know their needs and proposals.

The project will involve 25/30 participants from 5/6 countries (4 youngsters and 1 youth leader per each country). The target countries (except Croatia) are Belgium, Luxembourg, The Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria. The main idea is to combine very heterogeneous countries: on the one hand, Belgium and Luxembourg are among the EU founders and the participation rate in the European Elections is very high (approx. 90%). On the other hand, the other countries joined the EU in the last 15 years and the participation rate in the European Elections is very low. The partner organisations from such countries should face the same problems in their communities.

The project is expected to last 8 months (from July 2020 to March 2021) and the activities week will take place in Brtonigla/Verteneglio in early October 2020. During the activities week, all the participants will gather knowledge about democracy and decision making process at both theoretical and practical level. Indeed, seminars and meetings with the mayor and the municipal councillors will be useful to understand what democracy means and how it works locally. Moreover, the participants will have the opportunity to experience in person the decision making process during the simulation of the Youth Council. They will also speak with the Brtonigla/Verteneglio inhabitants to explore the local community needs. After the end of the project, the participants should replicate the activities in their local communities to encourage youth participation.

**Needs:**

* Lack of youth participation
* Lack of temporal continuity in Youth Council initiatives
* Lack of knowledge concerning democracy

**Objectives:**

* Encourage youngsters to participate actively in local democracy
* Explain what democracy is and how it works
* Experiment decision making process

**Expect results:**

* An Increased awareness of participation in local democracy
* A better quality of democracy through a higher participation
* Replicate initiatives to favour youth participation in every partners’ local community after the end of the project