

COHERENT

CIRCLE OF YOUTH FOR THE EUROPE WE WANT

Deliverable 3.1

PROJECT: COHERENT "A Circle Of youth for the Europe we want" / 624600-EPP-1-2020-1-SI-EPPKA3-EU-YTH-TOG

COHERENT STATE-OF-THE-ART REPORT



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INTRODUCTION

The Project COHERENT “A Circle Of youth for the Europe we want”/ 624600-EPP-1-2020-1-SI-EPPKA3-EU-YTH-TOG is financed under the European Youth Together and is being implemented from May 2021 to November 2022, with EU partners from Slovenia, Greece, Belgium, Italy, Hungary, Spain, Romania, Lithuania, Turkey and Finland. It is contributing to the realization of the EU Youth Goals:

#3: Inclusive Societies

#4: Information & Constructive Dialogue

#10: Sustainable Green Europe

The main aim of the COHERENT project is to **increase youth participation in civic life, to foster cross-border mobility and increase youth cooperation**. COHERENT refers to a comprehensive scope in integrated developed outputs, characterized by high replicability and context customization, with positive socio-economic impacts on youth. Therefore, COHERENT concept is about building a network for youth, promoting participation, civic engagement and EU values, covering innovative capacity building, youth mobility, generating joint projects.



RESEARCH APPROACHES

This deliverable, D1.3 covers the **state-of-the-art analysis**, as result of a **systemic, theoretical and practical elaboration of present conditions with the aim to define the gaps & commonalities**, related to the following topics: **inclusiveness, solidarity, EU values, democratic life, green and sustainable EU, and civic engagement in partner countries**.

Initially, partners prepared and **distributed national questionnaires to define youth competences and then mapped the good practices**. Partners carried out an in-depth analysis of the relevant youth initiatives, projects, decision-making practices, activities in a collaboration with youth in partner countries and identification of best practices regarding youth active citizenship, e.g., non-formal solidarity activities during the “lock-down”, support by decision-makers, the level of youth involvement.

The document in front of you represent the main extract of the extensive desk and field research conducted in 10 European countries, **highlighting the existing competencies among youth** in relation to social inclusion, fostering dialogue and participation in green and sustainable activities, as well as **overview of the corresponding best practice offer** on those topics.



YOUTH COMPETENCES QUESTIONNAIRE

This section represents the results obtained from the competences questionnaires. There were 615 completed questionnaires included in the analysis. Each further section represents Summarised information for country. The section is structured into the following subsections:

1

Socio-demographic profile of young respondents

2

Multilingual competence

3

Digital competence

4

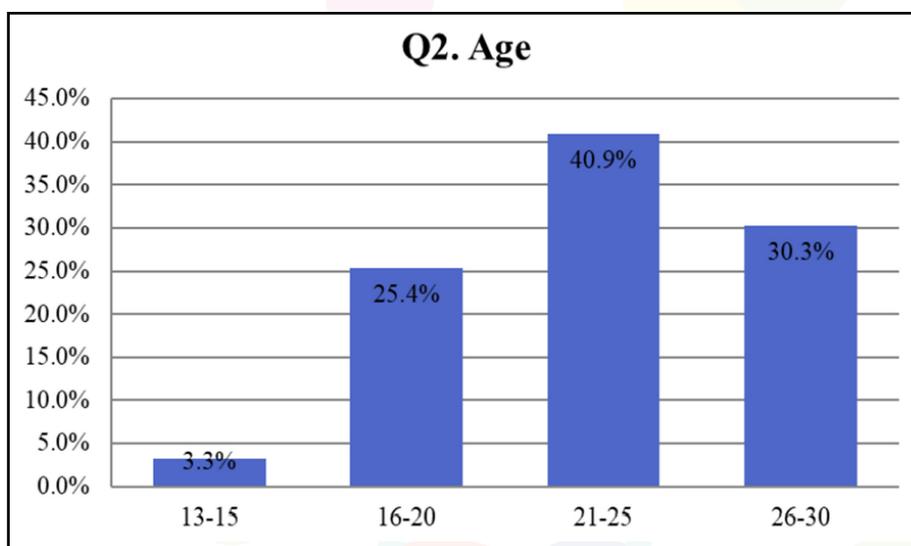
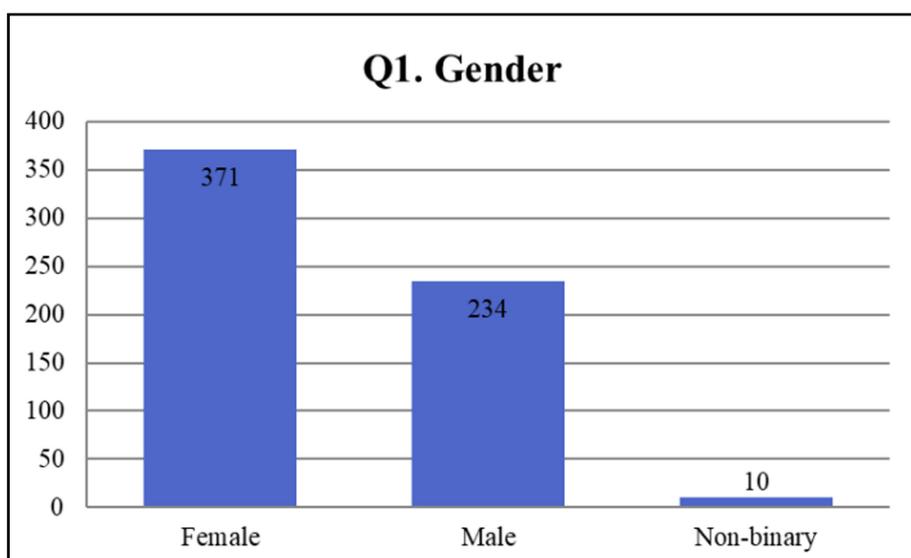
Personal, social and learning learn competence

5

Citizenship competence

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF YOUNG RESPONDENTS

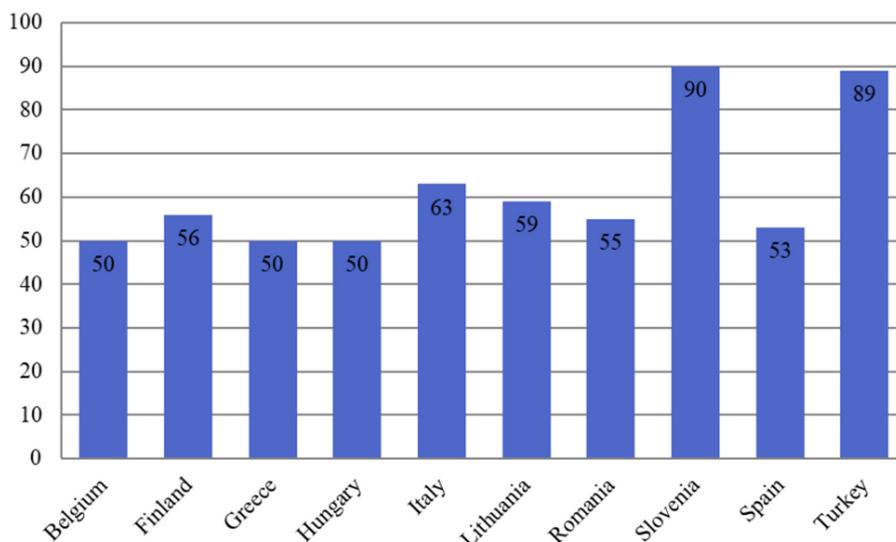
From 615 young people that answered the survey, 60,5 % are females, 37,8 % males and 1,6 % non-binary. Young women seem to be more active in the partners' countries to join their activities as well as answer the surveys. Regarding the age group, the most active seem to be the ones of 21-25 years old, followed by 26-30 years old and 16-20 years old. These are the groups that benefit most of Erasmus+ mobility and ones joined a mobility project and become part of the partners networks could explain the age distribution of the survey respondents and the diminished participation of very young respondents aged between 13-15 years old.



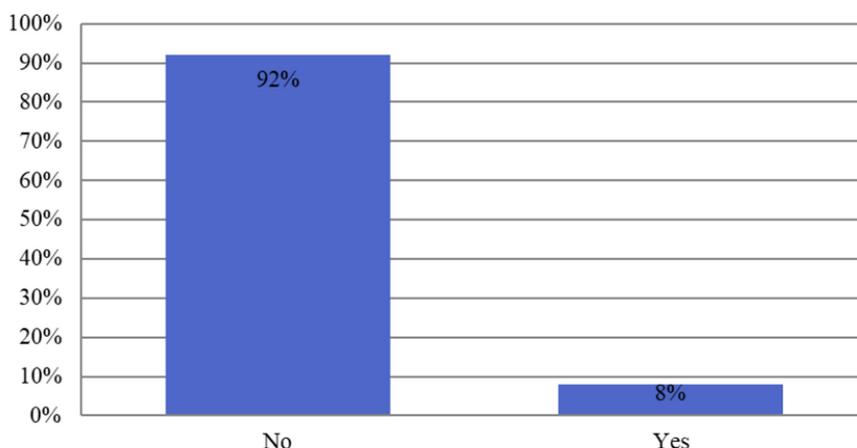
Considering the socio-cultural background, only 8 % of young people come from or belong to an immigration background (have been borne outside the country of residence where they declared to live at the moment).

The rest 92 % are young people from the partners' countries: Slovenia, Greece, Belgium, Italy, Hungary, Spain, Romania, Lithuania, Turkey, Finland. These data reveal a hidden fact about the young immigrants limited access to Erasmus+ mobility as well as their limited participation into the local associative organizations. Their multiple disadvantaged situations in terms of social, cultural, economic, geographical, linguistic situation seem to jeopardize their full engagement. Therefore, all partners countries need more efforts to reach out young people from this group, engage them into their activities and reduce the barriers that they might face to access and join Erasmus+ mobility projects.

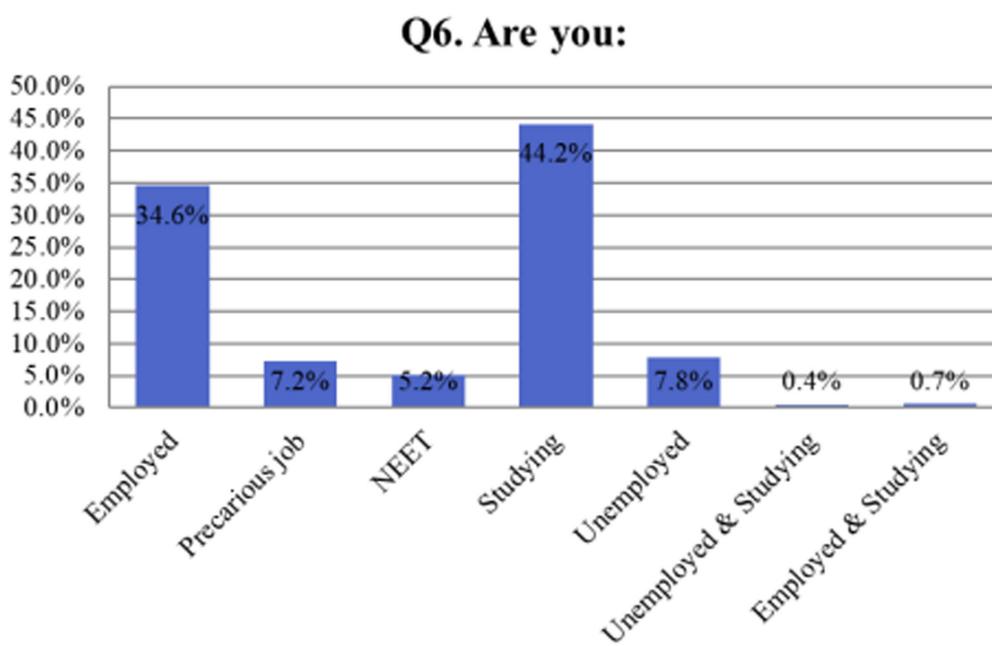
Q3. Country of residence



Q4. Have you been born in a different country than your current residence?



Study revealed that most of young people are active young citizens that try to emancipate and make the best of their life, studying or working or in some cases even both at the same time. Thus, some youngsters that declared to study or work, others although less are both working and studying. However, study also some marginalized and disadvantaged situations that young people face, such as not being able to find a job, or in cases where they managed to access an employment it is a precarious job, others declared themselves outside of the active life belonging to NEET “Not in Education, Employment, or Training”.



Study revealed insights on the kind of disadvantages that young people face, which minor part of them indicated facing some kind of health problems (like depression; use of drugs, alcohol or other substance abuse, obesity). This is not a worrying number, nevertheless, as this is a self-assessment survey it might be the case that the real number of young people suffering this kind of problems to be higher or even less. A similar number of young people pointed out to suffer from the lack of affordable housing and minority face a poverty. These economic barriers do not allow youth to emancipate.

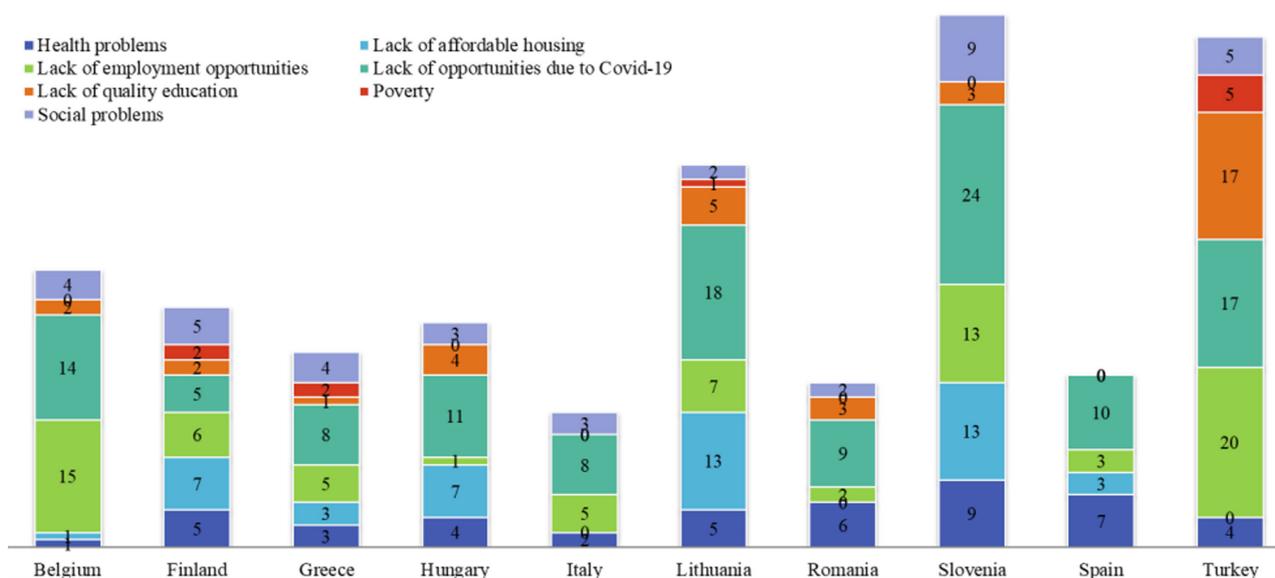
Next thing revealed is that youth face some constrains to access an education of good quality, or they are in a situation that cannot at all access any educational system.

Additionally, young people argue that they face different kinds of social problems, such as family problems, perceive some pressure from peers, are victims of bullying, or perceive some kind of parental pressure.

The most significant effect on youth had the COVID-19 pandemic. Here young people point out to the lack of opportunities (educational, employment, social) particularly due to COVID-19. Therefore, if one young person was already in a disadvantaged situation, the COVID-19 pandemic seems to worsen their situation even more

If looking into each of the indicator (health, housing, employment, poverty, etc.) numbers seem not significant to be worried about, if we sum up, we see that more than a half of young people suffer from a kind or another of above-mentioned disadvantages. This means that at the aggregated level, there is a quite significant number of youths that need additional help or supporting measures and it is particularly here where the partner organizations can fill in these gaps, providing young people with necessary measures.

Q7. Do you face any situation described below?



MULTILINGUAL COMPETENCE

Essential skills for multilingual competence have been assessed on the ability to understand spoken messages, to initiate, sustain and conclude conversations and to read, understand and draft texts, with different levels of proficiency in different languages, and according to the individual's needs and according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The data show that the ability of young people to use different languages appropriately and effectively for communication is quite low and needs improvement.

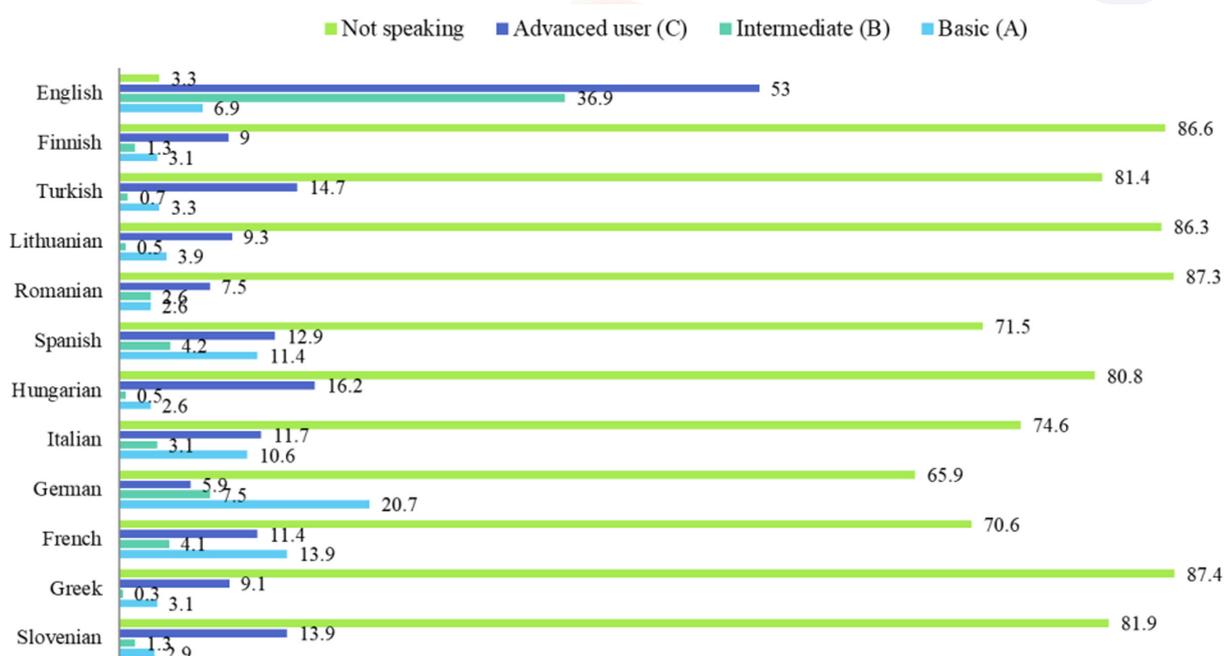
The language spoken most among young people is English, but even here only more than a half assess their level as advanced and 36,9 % assess their level as an intermediate one. The data on the assessment of the 10 languages from the project partner countries reveal a lack of linguistic knowledge for more than 80 % in Finnish, Turkish, Lithuanian, Romanian, Hungarian,

Greek and Slovenian languages. Nevertheless, it has to be mentioned here that the second most known language after English is Hungarian. This case can be explained by the fact that the Romanian partner NGO is situated in an area with a high presence of Hungarian minority and many there speak the Hungarian language. Only, 3,3 % of young people do not speak English at all.

To master several foreign languages, it is a must for the European labor market and young people that joined the survey seem to be aware of this situation. The data collected reveal than less than 1/5 from the young people have some advanced knowledge in Italian, French, Spanish, Turkish and Slovenian.

Nevertheless, the other languages assessed reveal a deep shortage of skills among young people in general. In this line, we have to acknowledge the fact that some foreign languages have a different relevance among young people and especially in today international labor market. Therefore, underlying the data on French or German languages, that have a major projection and consequently are more attractive, the lack of knowledge is lower comparing to the other languages. These data prove that more measures and actions should be implemented to help young people acquire or improve their language competences, considering that young people wish to do so.

With 80 % of young people willing to improve their competences in other foreign languages and with 16 % that are still not sure about it but whose opinion can change if appropriate measures and actions are put in place, this means that more measures should be developed by different actors (project partners, local/regional/national/EU authorities) to support the young people develop or acquire these competences.



DIGITAL COMPETENCE

Comparing with the multilingual competence, the data collected show a quite digitalized young generation, with advanced digital knowledge and skills, where 74,4 % use very often IT devices.

The assessment of the digital competence among young people involved the confident, critical and responsible use of, and engagement with, digital technologies for learning, at work, and for participation in society. Also, it includes information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, media literacy, digital content creation (including programming), safety (including digital well-being and competences related to cybersecurity), intellectual property related questions, problem solving and critical thinking.

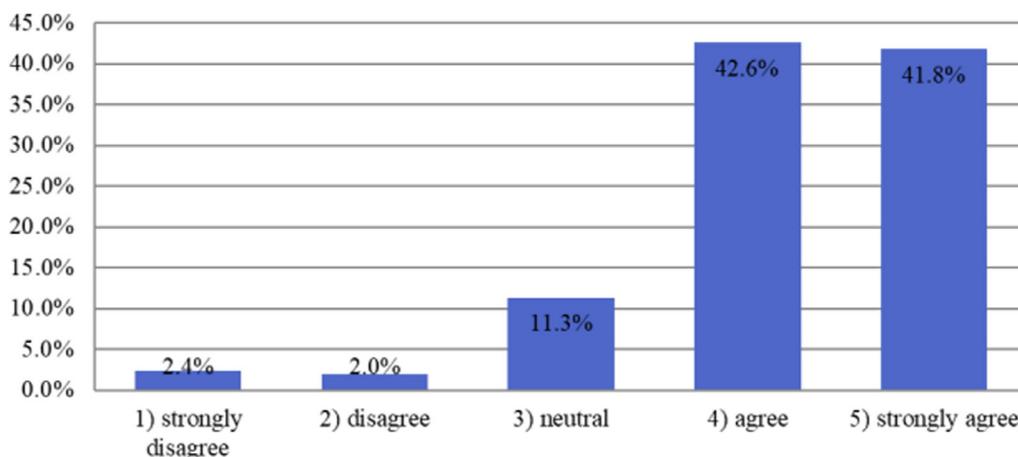
Therefore, while young people are very familiar with the digital devices and digital technologies, their ability to use/ access / share digital content follows a similar assessment. Self-assessment among young people points to a category of youth that has high basic (41,8 %) and some advanced skills (42,6) in using/accessing/sharing the digital content. Nevertheless, the number of young people that could create & program digital content is fewer, comparing with the previous data.

Meaning, while 30,8 % of young people have some skills to create and program digital content, only 15,5 % possess advanced skills in this field. This means that more specific are the knowledge, less youth possess them and in order to advance towards a digitalized society more advanced skills and competences are necessary.

Young people use digital technologies daily for keeping in touch with friends on social media, relaxing and doing homework, etc. They also go online to look for support and sometimes to experiment with different ways of expressing themselves. Because they're online so much young people need to be able to identify acceptable and unacceptable online content independently. They also need to know how to behave respectfully online, avoid online risks and be aware of the digital safety measures.

Only 50,6 % of young people (34,4 % agree & 16,2 % strongly agree) have some kind of knowledge about digital safety. That means that a big majority of young people are exposed to many risks online. Therefore, more efforts should be oriented towards the improvement of their knowledge on digital safety and cybersecurity.

Q11.1 My ability to use/ access/ share digital content

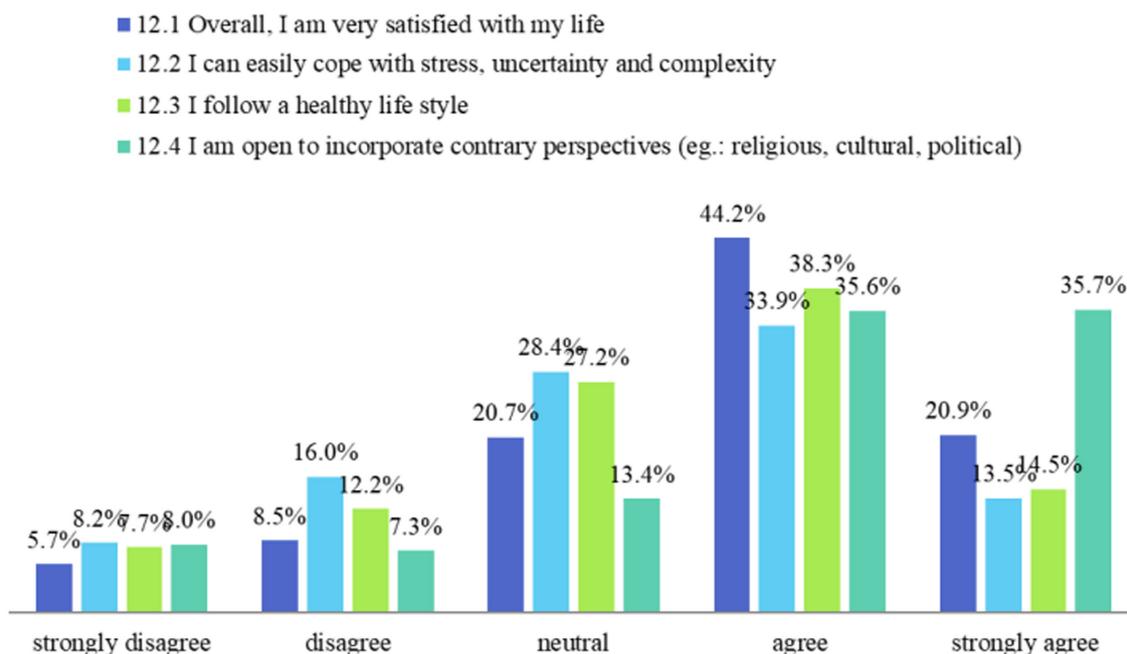


**PERSONAL, SOCIAL
AND LEARNING TO
LEARN COMPETENCE**

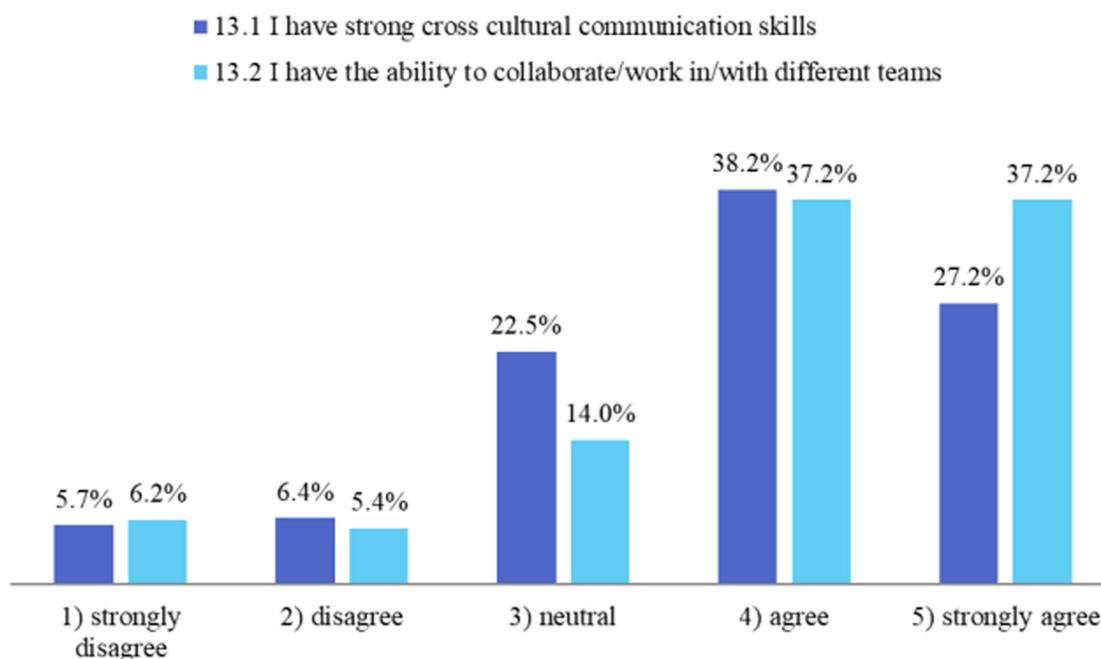
Personal, social and learning to learn competence assessed the ability of young people to reflect upon oneself, effectively manage time and information, work with others in a constructive way, remain resilient and manage one’s own learning and career. It includes the ability to cope with uncertainty and complexity, learn to learn, support one’s physical and emotional wellbeing, to maintain physical and mental health, and to be able to lead a health-conscious, future-oriented life, empathize and manage conflict in an inclusive and supportive context.

The majority of young people seem satisfied with their life (44,2 % agree & 20,9 % strongly agree), can handle easily the stress (33,9 % agree & 13,5 % strongly agree), argue to follow a healthy lifestyle (38,3 % agree & 14,5 % strongly agree) and are quite open to diversity (35,6 % agree & 35,7 % strongly agree). Nevertheless, 19,9 % of young people need some help to follow

a healthy lifestyle (7,7 % strongly disagree & 12,2 % disagree), while others find it difficult to cope with stress, uncertainty and complexity (8,2 % strongly disagree & 16 % disagree).



Additionally, young people are performing well in new intercultural and multicultural environments, stating to have quite strong cross cultural communication skills in interaction with those who are culturally different from themselves (38,2 % agree & 27,2 % strongly agree). A similar picture refers to their ability to collaborate and work with different social, cultural, religious backgrounds teams (37,2 % agree & 37,2 % strongly agree).



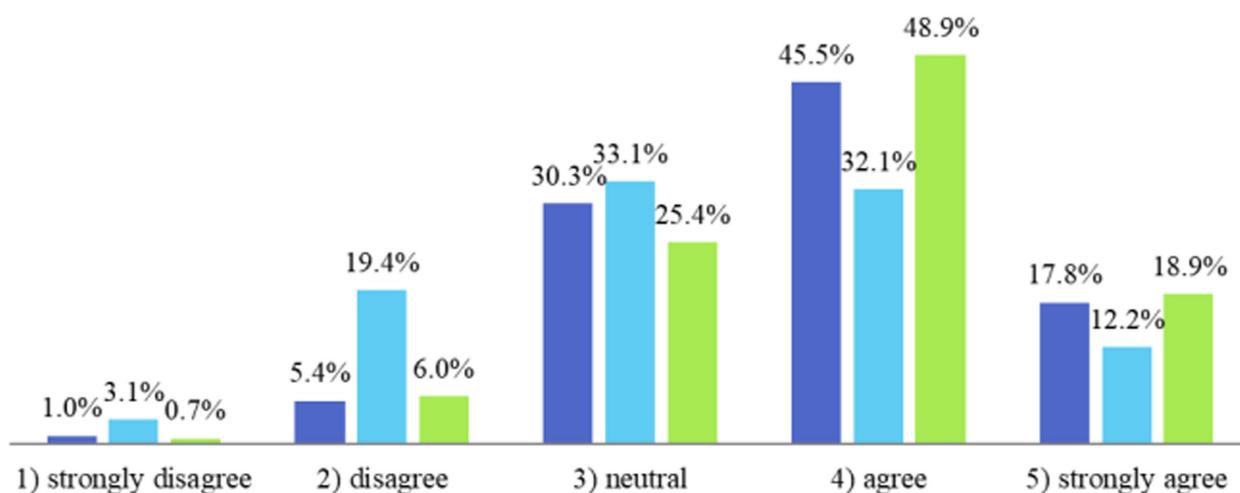
The abilities of young people to solve complex problems is quite good (45,5 % agree & 17,8 % strongly agree). They are also performing well in critically assessing the problems they face and identifying the best solutions (48,9 % agree & strongly 18,9 % agree). Nevertheless, when it comes to the environmental problems and knowledge about EU/ National Environmental legislation etc. they need additional help (32,1 % agree & 12,2 % strongly agree).

Quite similar results, young people declare to have when they refer to their ability to solve different problems and come up with the best solution/s. Young people declare to be able to address complex problems quite well (45,5 % agree & 17,8 % strongly agree), while being able to critically assess different problems and find the best solution (48,9 % agree & 18,9 % strongly agree). However, fewer young people consider themselves being aware of environmental problems and know well EU/National Environmental legislation (32,1 % agree & 12,2 % strongly agree). Considering the environmental problems, this means that more attention should be paid to the development of initiatives in this field.

■ 14.1 I can easily solve complex problems

■ 14.2 I am aware of environmental problems and know well EU/ National Environmental legislation etc.

■ 14.3 I can critically assess any problem and come up with the best solution/s

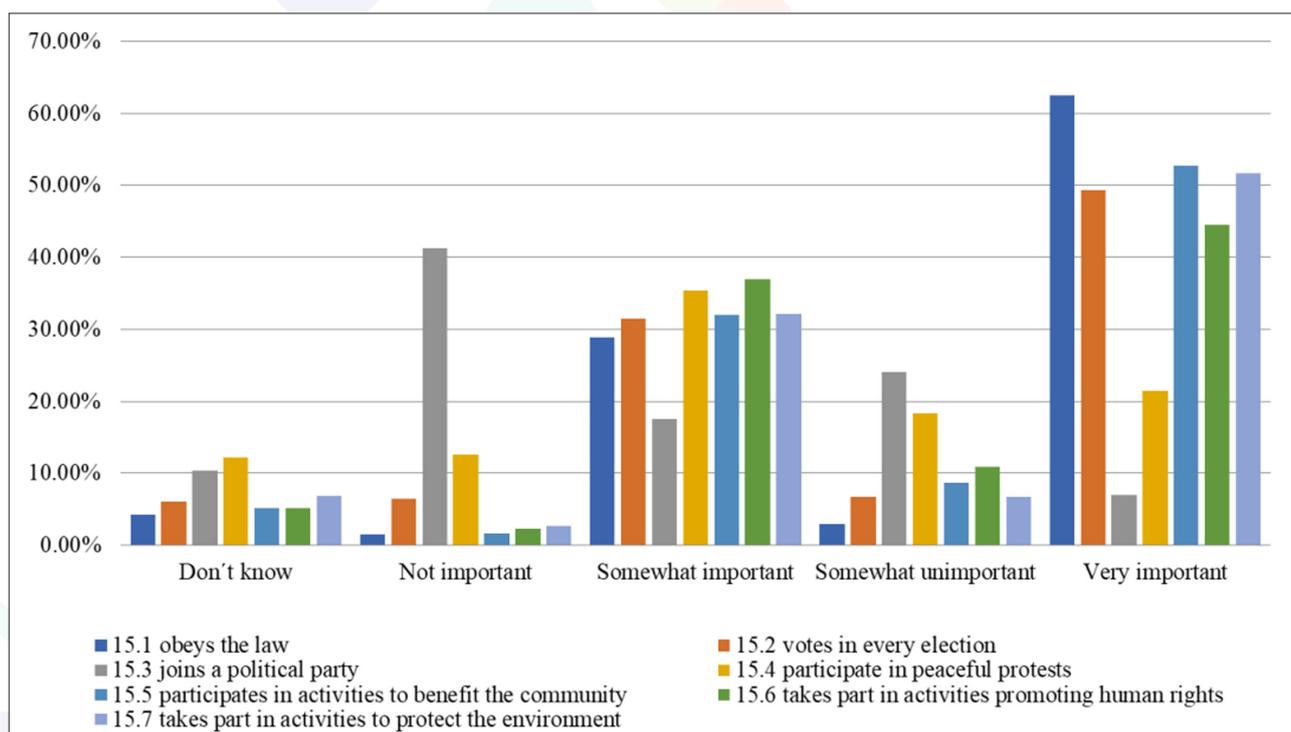


CITIZENSHIP COMPETENCE

The assessment of the citizenship competence focused on the ability of young people to act as responsible citizens and to fully participate in civic and social life, based on understanding of social, economic, legal and political concepts and structures.

The data shows that the young generation has a high respect for the law (62,5 % very important), value their participation during the elections (49,3 % very important), are eager to join the activities that will benefit their local community (52,7 % very important) and put a high emphasis on the promotion of the human rights (44,5 % very important).

However, they consider their direct involvement into the political parties less useful (41,3 % not important) and feel less reluctant to join the political parties' activities. Also, the young people seem to pay less importance to their participation into the peaceful manifestations (35,4 % somewhat important, 21,5% very important).



YOUTH COMPETENCES IN-DEPTH

Both globalization process and the knowledge-based society require the younger generation to be more prepared to be able to make the full benefit from it. It is particularly due to this that the young people that participated in the COHERENT project survey seem to be very aware of their need to improve their competences. This is in line with the previous self-assessment of the young people's competences.

The competences that young people desire to improve or acquire according to the survey data are the followings:

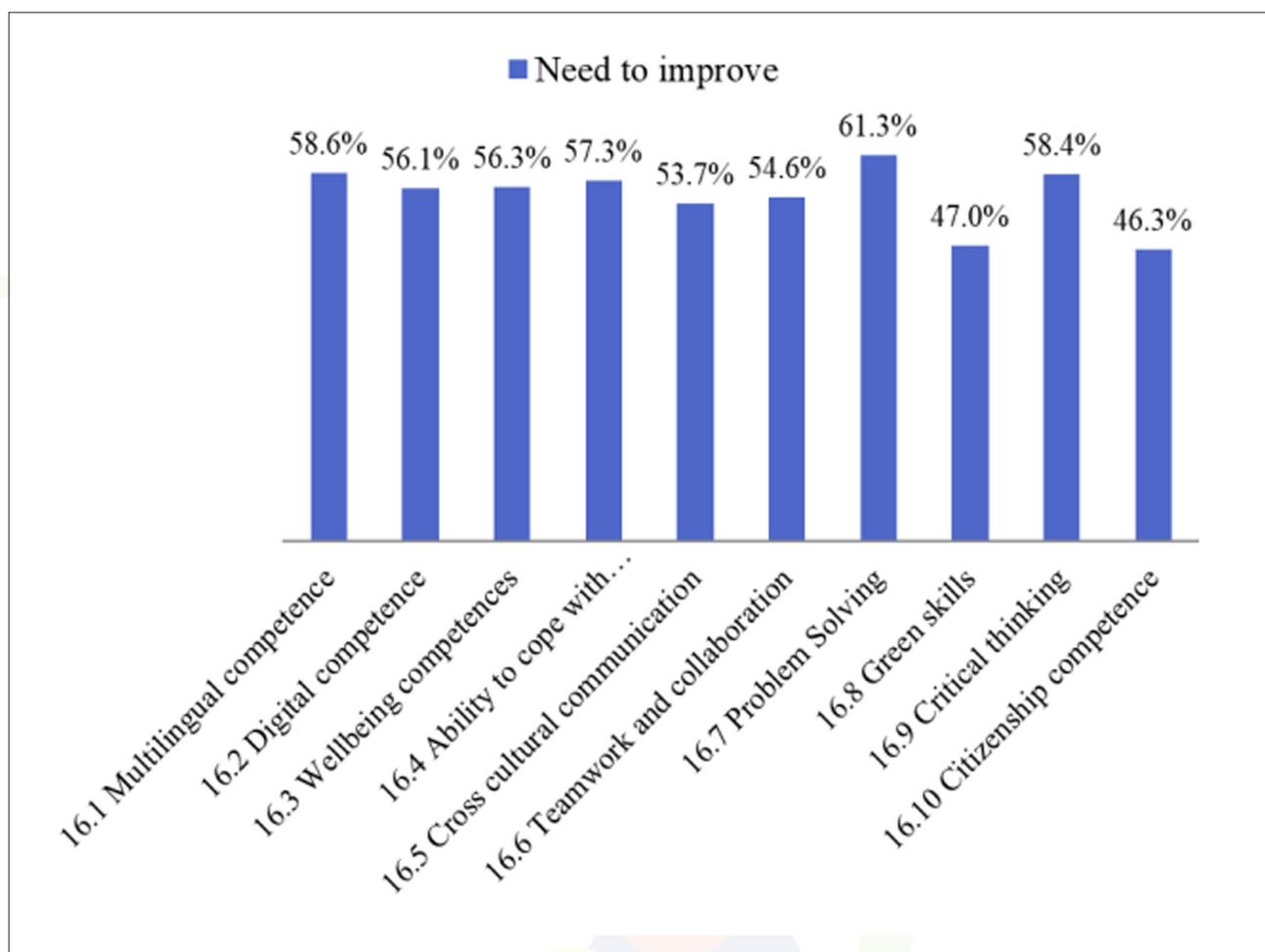
- 1 *Multilingual competence*
- 2 *Digital competence*
- 3 *Wellbeing competences*
- 4 *Ability to cope with uncertainty & complexity*
- 5 *Cross cultural communication*
- 6 *Teamwork and collaboration*
- 7 *Problem Solving*
- 8 *Green skills*
- 9 *Critical thinking*
- 10 *Citizenship competence*

A closer look at the survey data, shows that a considerable number of young people (58,6 %) declares to be in need to improve their **Multilingual Competence**, while 24 % declare to lack it at all or have some basic knowledge.

Quite similar findings are in relation to the **Digital Competence**, where 56,1 % of young people declares to be in need improve it and other 24% declare not to have it at all or have some basics.

In the situation with the **Personal, Social, Learning to Learn** competence, young people declare themselves in need to improve most of the competence components, such as Wellbeing competence (56,3 % need to improve and 24,6 % need to develop); Ability to come with uncertainty and complexity is also on high demand to improve (57,3 % and 24,3 % do not have it at all); Cross cultural communication goes in the same line with 53,7 % that are in need to improve and 22,8 %; Teamwork and collaboration reaches 54,6 % that need to improve and 25,4 % that need to acquire; and Problem solving is the highest where 61,3 % of young people need to improve this competence and 19,4 % of young people are in need to develop it.

Although, little different than previous competences but still it represents quite a high number of young people that consider they need to develop their **Citizenship Competence** as well, with 28,1 % that declare the need to develop it and 46,3 % of young people that declares that they need to improve this competence.



These data reinforce the findings from the previous sections and give a big room for maneuver to different social actors (public & private) to act and help young people with different training offers.

Young people today need to be better qualified than their peers in the past. This is because of the fact that the competition in the labor markets is bigger than before, it requires some new competences (digital & multilingual) and the ability to cope and adapt to the society changes (environment, diversity, etc.). However, as the above data show most of the partner countries deal with young people that have their competences less developed and require some more measures to address this situation and if possible case by case.

It is encouraging to see how open our young people are and how aware they are of their lack of their own skills, but the most encouraging is their will to improve, to reach higher educational levels, to perform better socially, economically, politically and be a better citizen. Therefore, their will to study and acquire new competences should be sustained and here the COHERET project partnership can make a considerable contribution.

BEST PRACTICES OVERVIEW PER PARTNER COUNTRY

Best practices cover an in-depth analysis of relevant youth initiatives, projects, decision-making practices, activities in a collaboration with youth in 10 partner countries within COHERENT project (Belgium, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey) and **identification of the best practices regarding youth active citizenship, e.g., non-formal solidarity activities during the “lock-down”, support by decision-makers, the level of youth involvement in such initiatives.**

As above mentioned, the aim of this task and COHERENT project in general is to demonstrate a contribution to the Youth Strategy via empower, engage, and connect via the network. The objective is to increase youth participation in civic life related to the youth goals:

#3

Inclusive Societies:

enable and ensure the inclusion of all young people in society;

#4

Information & Constructive Dialogue:

ensure young people have better access to reliable information, support their ability to evaluate information critically and engage in participatory and constructive dialogue; and

#10

Sustainable Green Europe:

achieve a society in which all young people are environmentally active, educated and able to make a difference in their everyday lives.

The objective of the list of good practices is to **build up a knowledge base, and map existing good practices, and it is in a compliance with the following specific objectives of the COHERENT project:**

- raising awareness/knowledge;
- develop and design 3 integrated e-modules, supported by an e-textbook to ensure that learners will acquire skills, competencies and knowledge;

- create training material used at face-to-face workshops, focusing on interaction with peers and decision-makers.

The section is structured into the following subsections per each partner country:

- Country overview.
- Identification of gaps and obstacles.
- Best practice example.



BELGIUM

Belgium is a federal State with three Regions: Flemish, Waloon and Brussels-Capital. There are three Communities based on their language: French, German and Flemish speaking. Belgium is a multicultural country and this generates many issues related to racism, discrimination, diversity and inequality. Several researches and studies carried out in this country regarding young people with an immigrant background, the foreign origin of their family, the bad reputation of their neighbourhood or the school failure have been obstacles to their entry to the labour market, and due to this they suffer from many different forms of discrimination, whether direct or indirect.

The integration of people of foreign origin represents a major challenge for Belgium. The gap between the unemployment rate of nationals and the foreigner is one of the highest in Europe. The policy about the integration is based on the complex structure of the repartition of responsibilities among the Regions and Communities in which each one has own government. Coordination misses and also interaction between the different governments. It would be important to have a regular interaction about their experiences between them in order to reduce the gaps of the different governments and to grant a national integration. Even if it not seemed, there are problems related to education. Education in Belgium remains among the most unequal in Europe.

IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS & OBSTACLES

Young people from Belgium are suffering from mental health problems due to pressure during the Coronavirus crisis. According to a report made by the GEMS we can see that young people aged between 16 to 25 are the most affected. Adolescents and students need a close contact with peers. The report says that there is an increase in anxiety disorders between 18 to 24 years old, while 44 % of 10 to 18 years old reported a low increase in feelings related to depression. As part of the government policies, more outdoor activities in organised youth work and sports and more contact education for primary and secondary school were promised. The Flemish government is providing extra support and reinforcement to children and young people in various policy areas to counterbalance the negative impact of the lockdown and the coronavirus measures on their psychological health.

Young people are the first victims of the Covid-19 crisis on the labour market. In 2020, in Wallonia and Brussels, unemployment among those under 25 has jumped sharply in one year. At the end of July 2020, Brussels had 8.140 young jobseekers with 1.169 more than the previous year. The number of young people registered as jobseekers for the first time has increased even more rapidly: in one year, almost 30 % more in Wallonia, and almost 50 % more in Brussels which are the main Regions in which young are suffering the economic consequences of the pandemic.

One year later, the situation is getting better. In September 2021, the number of unemployed people under the age of 25 fell below the 10 thousand marking 9.311 young people, an 11 % decrease compared to September 2020. The number of young people unemployed almost reached the pre-crisis level (9.262 young jobseekers in September 2019). Young people represent 10.5 % of the total number of unemployed. But, beyond the problem of coronavirus crisis there is another popular issue for immigrant young people which is their difficulty to integrate into the job's world. People with an immigrant background are often condemned to work in precarious or part-time jobs that do not correspond to their skill level. One of the main causes is the "ethno-stratification" of the labor market which is the "ethnic distribution" of jobs in which brings them to a fragile career path and lower wages. The category of young people and women are the most affected by this phenomenon.

The challenge always remains to transform these inequalities by using the skills of people with an immigrant background. They are a considerable force for the society, both economically, socially and culturally.

According to OECD report published in 2018 titled "Equity Education" about equality in school systems in Belgium. The phenomenon of inequalities at school is generated from the socio-economic status of the young person. The family environment plays an important role in school performance. The "ghettoization" of schools is a criterion to show the phenomenon of inequalities at school and the segregation operated by school systems. Strong segregation is popular in Belgium. The 50 % of students from a disadvantaged socio-economic background are concentrated in schools of lower quality, against the 48 % on the OECD average.

In the PISA surveys, it was noted that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and attending high-end establishments score on average 78 points better than those attending less advantaged schools. In Belgium, the gap is particularly strong: students from disadvantaged backgrounds will earn 130 points more in science tests if they attend a so-called “advantaged” school. It is important to reduce these phenomena of inequalities and to give best chances to all students, whatever their social background because they impact on the level of qualification. The best performing students will have between 25 % and 47 % more chances of occupying a job requiring high qualifications than those at the bottom of the scale. And also, this implies that school results during secondary school not only have an impact on future studies, but also on the opportunities that will be offered to young people on the labour market.

BEST PRACTICE: YOUTH INCLUSIVENESS

1. Best practice title

Emploi, jeunes et covid! (Job, youth and covid!)

2. Funding Programme

N/A

3. Best practice thematic field

Inclusive Societies

4. Best practice type

Project

5. Summary of the best practice

In 2019, the Youth Forum consulted some 850 young people regarding their employment situation. Many barriers, which have serious consequences for their future, have been pointed out by young people. Since the pandemic, the problems already encountered by young people have been amplified by this crisis or it has produced new inequalities for young people. In 2021, young people are just beginning to be heard and considered as victims of this crisis, especially in terms of employment.

The Youth Forum needs young people who are motivated to bring the demands of young people to the political world in order to positively change this untenable situation and to give young people prospects for the future. Youth Forum aims to:

1. Interview other young people to understand their reality regarding employment.
2. Meet key players or experts who also have solutions to propose to improve the employment situation of young people.
3. Make links with the results of the survey in order to build an official opinion covering the demands of young people.
4. Carry out political advocacy, that the youth employment is taken into account in the post-Covid recovery and in the policies carries out in the short and long term.

6. Best practice web page

<https://forumdesjeunes.be/actualites/emploi-jeune-et-covid/>



FINLAND

The Republic of Finland has 5,5 M inhabitants, and about 20 % of them are under 20-years-olds. Finnish is the official language, spoken by 87 % of the population. 5 % of Finns are Swedish-speaking, and this proportion of the population ensures the Swedish language constitutional position of a minority language. In 1992, another language Sami was added to the official languages of Finland. These two minority languages gain their official language status only in the regions, where they are spoken by a wide degree of inhabitants: Swedish-speaking Finns live in the coastal areas of Finland and Sami-speaking in the northern parts of Finland, so there you can find bilingual municipalities. Lately the immigration to Finland (for example in 2019 and 2020 about 65 000 people together) has diversified the spoken languages and the cultural complexity (Suomi lukuina 2021¹).

For a large country (square area of 338,465 km²), Finland has a small population density (18,2 inhabitant/km²), which is not evenly divided. Major share of Finns lives in the south of Finland, for example in the capital region lives 1,2 M people. (Suomi lukuina 2021). The UN's final report of World Urbanization states Finland as a high-income country, where communes are officially designated as urban. The same report presents that 84 % of Finns lived in urban areas in 2011, and this volume would increase to 90 % by 2050. In 2015, 77 % of the young people resided in cities. This means that the modern youth live in a more prosperous, urban and multicultural Finland than before. The living standards and health of the youth have improved, mortality has declined, and education has brought more future opportunities. But this well-being has differences, which are affected by gender and family background (Keski-Petäjä 2017²).

1 [https://www.stat.fi/tup/julkaisut/tiedostot/julkaisuluette-
lo/yyti_sul_202100_2021_23490_net_p2.pdf](https://www.stat.fi/tup/julkaisut/tiedostot/julkaisuluette-
lo/yyti_sul_202100_2021_23490_net_p2.pdf)

2 [https://www.stat.fi/tietotrendit/artikkelit/2017/tytois-
ta-ja-pojista-polvi-parantunut-nuorten-vaestokehitys-ja-elinolot/](https://www.stat.fi/tietotrendit/artikkelit/2017/tytois-
ta-ja-pojista-polvi-parantunut-nuorten-vaestokehitys-ja-elinolot/)

IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS & OBSTACLES

From 1921 Finns have been subjects to compulsory education, and it was the reform of comprehensive school in the 1970's that made basic education accessible for all. This referred to gratuitousness of schooling, educational aids, student healthcare, school meals, transport and such like. Finnish educational system contains many excellent features and flexibility: today general compulsory education guarantees basic-level competence for all. In spite of provided flexibilities and modern options in proficiency paths, the reality is this: being disadvantaged is passed down. For example, the livelihood difficulties of the parents influence the future of the children. Educational capital accumulates to the youths, whose parents have graduated with higher degree diplomas. Almost all young Finns pass the comprehensive school, but the effect of the educational background of the family emerges during the studies of secondary education. (Witting 2021³). Recent educational reform, which made all secondary education (both upper secondary and vocational schools) free and the compulsory education extends to the 18-year-olds (from previous 16-year-olds), will show if this obstacle can be resolved. Unfortunately, this reorganization has caused inequality among different schools and different neighbourhoods depending on their wealth, as the public (governmental and council) support has not been sufficient due to low-level budgeting (see Martikainen 2021⁴). The same trend can be observed in the digitalization of comprehensive schools (that is to say educational materials and aids).

The dominance of marginalization's risk has been illustrated especially with NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) portion of the youth, which has risen to 15,1 % (2015) among young Finns (20–24 years old). NEET portion follows the economic downturn like the unemployment rate, but as such it doesn't reveal anything about marginalization. Mental health problems, especially mood disorders become more obvious, when NEET years pile up. They are one of the major risk factors in the process of marginalization. (Gissler et al 2016⁵). In 2020, the unemployment rate of the youth climbed to an all-time high: 21,4 % of the age group was without a job (Kukkonen 2021⁶). For example, there were fewer summer jobs available last summer due to the pandemic situation (Pirainen 2021⁷).

As the covid-19 also affects the young people (Kangas 2021⁸), the restrictions have deeper influence, when there is no work experience to be gained or other important occasions to witness. This can signify the same kind of short-sightedness as in the young people of recession and depression of 1990's. (Pirainen 2021). It is also good to remember that the young Finns' mortality rate by accident or violence (includes suicides) has decreased in the recent years, but it remains on a higher level than on average in EU countries (Keski-Petäjä 2017).

3 <https://www.stat.fi/tietotrendit/artikkelit/2021/lukio-amis-vai-pelkka-peruskoulu-perusopetuksen-jalkeisilla-valinnoilla-on-usein-kauaskantoiset-vaikutukset/>

4 <https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-12135310>

5 <https://www.tilastokeskus.fi/tietotrendit/artikkelit/2016/neet-indikaattori-kuvaa-nuorten-syrjityymista/>

6 <https://www.hs.fi/paivanlehti/05032021/art-2000007839582.html>

7 <https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-11816482>

8 <https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-12048033>

BEST PRACTICE: YOUTH INCLUSIVENESS

1. Best practice title

D-CENT - E-democracy toolkit

2. Funding Programme

N/A

3. Best practice thematic field

Information and Constructive Dialogue

4. Best practice type

Project

5. Summary of the best practice

D-CENT (Decentralised Citizens ENGagement Technologies) is a Europe-wide project bringing together citizen-led organisations that have transformed democracy in the past years and helping them in developing the next generation of open source, distributed, and privacy-aware tools for direct democracy and economic empowerment.

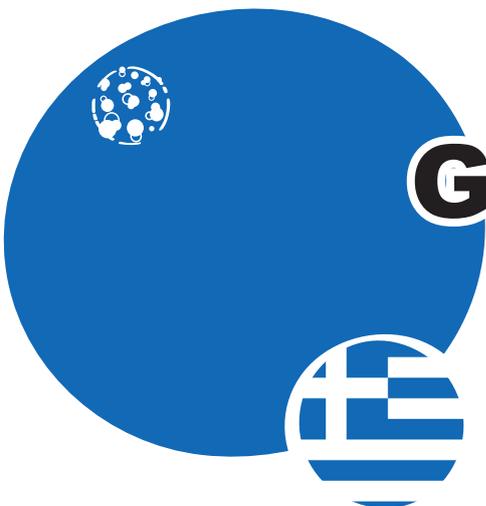
- Online platform: <http://tools.dcentproject.eu/> and <https://decisions.dcentproject.eu/>
- Keyword-based search engine
- Subscription to notifications
- Email updates
- Collaboration par for co-working

D-CENT is a Europe-wide project creating privacy-aware civic engagement tools and applications for direct democracy and economic empowerment. While piloted in Finland via enabling active citizens to follow the decision-making process in Helsinki, it now functions elsewhere in Europe and strives to become popular on a global scale, too. The idea here is to bring citizens together with decision makers and developers, thus creating a new form of a decentralised social media platform which allows large-scale collaboration and promotes active participation in decision making. The platform allows the user to choose exactly those topics/issues that are of interest to him or her and to then sign up for a notification system, which will give the user a 'heads-up' when the city municipality/committee will be handling these issues of interest. What D-CENT is trying to do in this case, is to explore new ways of changing interaction in decision making

processes. It does so by trying to turn the decision made into almost a type of social object, fit for active online interaction via platform. This enables active and like-minded citizens to share their ideas in a more efficient and active manner as well as to hold the officials accountable by following their actions closely.

6. Best practice web page

Teemu Ropponen: teemu.ropponen@okf.fi



GREECE

The historical and cultural heritage of Greece continues to resonate throughout the modern Western world - in its literature, art, philosophy and politics. Situated in the far south of the Balkan peninsula, Greece combines the towering mountains of the mainland with over 1,400 islands, the largest of which is Crete.

The recent economic crisis in Greece has exacerbated the problem of youth integration in the labour market in the EU and Greece has been disproportionately affected. While youth unemployment in the country has long been part of the policy debate, conditions today are very different to those prior to the crisis. The economic crisis, socioeconomic developments, globalisation, and the pervasive effect of information technology and digitalisation have all changed labour market characteristics. Young people's transitions to adulthood and the labour market follow different trajectories and have become more complex.

IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS & OBSTACLES

Last years in Greece, the effects of the pandemic have been added to the financial crisis that is already facing. Both the economic recovery and the return to normality from the measures of Covid-19 appears to be a long way off and the number of people suffering the effects is growing. However, the segment of society that experiencing more pain than most is young people.

Although they tend to be well-educated, well-travelled and politically aware, the opportunities for them to make a positive contribution to Greek society in the years to come are going to be severely limited. The most obvious effects that hit young people is youth unemployment in Greece which has passed 40 %. As a result, a growing number of them are leaving the country. Greece has always a high rate of migration, but the rate of recent years has been observed since 1960s when unemployment was also high. But previous bouts of emigration and the one Greece is facing at the moment are not the same. Those who are leaving or considering leaving are not just unskilled labourers. Greek people aged between 20 and early 30 have education, soft skills and talents that compare favourably with their European counterparts. In fact, many of those who have left recently are university graduates.

Another, more tangible effect of socio-political problems and economics' collapse that society faces is the frustration of young people with the political system. Their trust in social and political institutions is gradually collapsing, resulting in an obvious ideological alienation which affects their political behaviour. Lack of prospects, hopeless job-seeking in an unfavourable labour market, social exclusion, ineffective training, and severe cuts in the welfare provisions define their present and undermine their future. Not surprisingly, these factors serve to broaden and deepen the discredit in which the political system and politicians are held. Young Greeks have to find a political voice. Political alienation of young people leads to lack of representation of the needs and problems of this generation in the political scene and thus non-innovative ideas prevail and are reinforced.

Coherent contribution to the difficulties that young people in Greece society face is very important. Youth have to realize their potential and for this purpose they need Innovation tools, Networking and competences. Via Coherent they can share ideas and information with youth from other countries of partners.

BEST PRACTICE: GREEN YOUTH

1. Best practice title

Make it green Lesvos

2. Funding Programme

N/A

3. Best practice thematic field

Sustainable and Green Europe

4. Best practice type

Event, activity

5. Summary of the best practice

The idea of Make it Green Lesvos, created in April 2021 in order for the young people to be at the forefront of the race to reverse climate change by neutralizing carbon in the environment by 2050. The aim is to empower youth and immigrant youth and to give them the opportunity to work together for a green future, to learn for sustainable development and its applications and furthermore to nurture cooperation and create active citizens. The plan for achieving the above objectives includes:

- Transfer of participants to the headquarters of the farm in rural Lesvos in order to solve the problem of transportation and ensure greater participation.
- Practical activities with nature and environment such as gardening and organic farming.
- Indoor workshop activities will also take place in outbuildings that were built especially for them.
- There will also be discussions using forum theatre activities to give people, especially young people, the opportunity to have their voices and opinions heard.

6. Best practice web page

<https://civic-europe.eu/ideas/make-it-green-lesvos/>



HUNGARY

At the time of the 2016 Hungarian Microcensus, the resident population in Hungary was 9,803,837, which was 1.3 percent lower than at the time of the 2011 national census. The number of young people aged 15-29 in 2016 was 1,717,342, representing 17.5 per cent of the population, which corresponds to the proportion of the young population of the same age within the EU. However, the number of 15–29-year-olds in Hungary was 105,728 less than at the time of the 2011 census. The rate of decline is nearly 6 percent, which is more than 4 time bigger than the decline rate of the total society.

IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS & OBSTACLES

Beside the shrinking proportion of youth in Hungarian society, another important problem can be identified which is the weakening willingness of young people to participate in public life and political dialogues hindering social cohesion and inter-generational cooperation. In this respect, the starting point is a general statement, the so-called “democratic deficit”, i.e., a decrease in the willingness to participate in political, social and public life among the youth age group – both in Hungary and throughout Europe. There are several reasons behind this phenomenon. Young people today face many challenges, such as starting a family, creating an independent existence, the problem of sectoral unemployment that threatens it, and the poverty that comes with it. Therefore, the reason for staying away from public affairs can actually be explained by the specifics of their life cycle.

Young people have repeatedly stated that they are not sufficiently informed about current social, economic and political issues because they do not feel close to the topic. In addition, there is a significant number of students who believe that a citizen, by being entitled to vote, for example, cannot afford not to go to the polls because he or she is responsible for his or her own and the country’s future. Besides that, also the role of the media and internet portals was highlighted by young people in the related surveys. According to the respondents to the online questionnaire, the websites and forums are aimed at only those young people who are already part of the system at some level. This makes it difficult to reach and involve new circles young people. Another concern, according to respondents, is that the media is extremely misinformative. The problem is that most youth people do not get thoroughly informed, even if they look at the news they’re informed adequately. Yet the news focuses on crimes and tragedies, while the growing media and electronic portals would aim to



involve the widest possible range of people in opinion-forming and decision-making processes with “junk information and news”.

According to the respondents, the interests of young people are mostly in the minds of politicians working at the EU level, 36 % of them think that these politicians are more or very interested in the opinions of young people. The same proportion is just over 10 % for national and 22 % for local politicians. However, on the other hand, even if this is surprising, but respondents say EU-related elections have less mobilizing power than national elections that indicates stronger devotion to national politics in certain aspects.

Furthermore, young people also believe as they learn the basics of arguing, they develop skills such as gaining information, developing the ability to select, gathering arguments, developing the ability to doubt, developing the ability to listen actively, fostering tolerant behaviour (on several occasions, students had to take different positions led them to review and change their opinion so far, and if necessary to form an attitude) will help them to establish a more fruitful dialogue with decision-makers. This can ensure a chance for establishing better functioning social ties between youth and adults.

BEST PRACTICE: YOUTH INCLUSIVENESS

1. Best practice title

Prison, Reintegration, Education. Trainings to support social and labour market (re)integration of people in or after detention

2. Funding Programme

Erasmus+

3. Best practice thematic field

Inclusive Societies

4. Best practice type

Project

5. Summary of the best practice

In Hungary, Váltóság Alapítvány (Shift Lane Foundation) has been working on the reintegration of youth in criminal proceedings for more than a decade and a half. The special feature of their methodology is that it can be implemented in many other areas: for example, by organizations working with deviant, disadvantaged, homeless or unemployed people, if they aim to support their reintegration into society. Even if the foundation has been operating since 2002, but its staff has been working with the target group of participants in criminal proceedings since 1997. Over the past decade and a half, a number of social and labour market reintegration projects have been implemented, although they address not only the integration of convicts but also other disadvantaged or marginalized people in their work.

Within this project, Shift Lane Foundation, as a first step, mapped the penal policies of all member countries, their training and education background, and the practices of organizations in penitentiary enforcement centres. This was followed by the compilation of a methodological framework, as part of which the partnership first introduced the method of “Shift Fever - a board game preparing for release”: this game prepares youth prisoners for the tasks that await them in the first month after release. The game reviews these challenges wisely, yet in a sufficiently didactic way and in a manner that is easy to understand. Consequently, the systemic set of values and norms of the majority society can be applied easily and empirically for members of target groups. However, the project partnership has also elaborated another method called “Literary Therapy - Preparing for Liberation”: the goal here is to develop inmates’ self-knowledge and self-esteem skills, as well as their comprehension and creation of texts and their communication

competence. And library therapy is an excellent method for this.

As the project objective requires a complex, holistic approach, it was clear to those working on the project that they were addressing not only the specific target group, but also the indirect circle that affected them. However, it is impossible to find or reach directly the employers or any other member of society as a group who can belong to this broad circle. Thus, the goal of the partnership was to achieve general sensitization results among the indirect target groups that affected as many people as possible. Of course, they focused primarily on the detainees, but they also tried to make lasting effects on those already on release.

The concluding remarks of the project also sought to present program ideas that approach labour market integration in an alternative way. This was aided by the many experiences gained during the project meetings, which the participants coming from the five member countries were able to absorb during their visits in prisons and rehabilitation houses.

6. **Best practice web page**

<http://www.preproject.hu/>



Italy is a country located in Southern Europe comprising the boot-shaped Italian peninsula and a number of islands including Sicily and Sardinia. Neighbouring countries include Austria, France, Holy See, San Marino, Slovenia, and Switzerland. Italy has a strategic location dominating central Mediterranean as well as proximity to Western Europe across the Adriatic Sea. The government system is a republic. The chief of state is the president, and the head of government is the prime minister. Italy has a diversified industrial economy, which is divided into a developed industrial north, dominated by private companies, and a less-developed, welfare-dependent, agricultural south.

IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS & OBSTACLES

Young people have been particularly challenged by the economic crisis. As a consequence, precariousness and decreased job opportunities, with their direct impact on social mobility, constitute just one example of the lived experience of young people in times of crisis, and that their impact very much depends on a number of different factors and the intersections among them. In addition, juvenile condition and collective identities that emerge from the sharing of social practices and lifestyles across four principal domains (sport, music, politics and religion), in order to identify transversal processes through which young people shape new socio-cultural forms. In relation with youth lifestyle and in particular in relation with alcohol consumption in a comparative perspective, social values connected to the family still play a positive key role in preventing excessive drinking. Although this may change in the future due to increasingly individualistic values at a global level as well as growing hardship for youth, making the Italian case more similar to other non-Mediterranean countries.

Italy was one of the first countries hit by Covid-19 and still most affected by the pandemic and its consequences. Especially the northern Italian regions were confronted with a high number of cases and severe restrictions. Following quarantines of whole municipalities in Northern Italy by the end of February 2020, in the beginning of March 2020 all schools and universities in Italy had to close, and a few days later, nearly all commercial activity except food supply was stopped by the Italian government. Although the curve flattened due to these measures and restrictions were eased during summers, universities remained closed for on campus teaching and had to shift to online lessons.

Among others, the pandemic has caused severe consequences for the country's economy and

employment. According to Eurofound, 7 % of Italians have become unemployed since the beginning of the pandemic, 45 % report a decrease in working hours, signifying the highest decrease in working hours (-9.7 %) in Europe, and 44 % indicated they were exclusively working from home. Besides, Italy has already been among the European countries most affected by youth unemployment (44.1 %) during the last economic crisis (European Parliament, 2020) and thus is in an especially delicate position when it comes to the economic consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Then there are the usual suspects: excess of bureaucracy, one of the slowest civil justice processes in Europe, high levels of tax avoidance, high levels of corruption, a crippling economic division between North and South, and one of the lowest fertility rates in the world. “All these things, including an underfunded public education, condition the country’s growth.” In the long term, high youth unemployment can lead to loss of skills and human capital. In the short term, youth unemployment shapes the lives of young Italians dramatically. For example, people tend to live with their parents longer – 66.1 % of people aged 18-34 still lived with their parents in 2018, while the percentage in United States is roughly 30 %. Young Italians struggle to reach financial independence. They have children late, which contributes to Italy having one of the worst fertility rates in the world. Many Italians blame the education system, which is chronically underfunded, and favours theory over practice, leading to a very slow school-to-work transition, and to a mismatch between what young people graduate in and the skills needed to find work.

At 27.1 %, Italy has one of the EU’s highest youth unemployment rates. Italy’s Labour Minister Nunzia Catalfo says there are ways the Garanzia Giovani scheme could be improved by introducing additional measures focusing on better training. But attention needs to be paid to other aspects of the youth unemployment problem. “We also have to strengthen social services to take care of these young people and help them through their education and training,” she explains. “No education means being isolated from the labour market and this eventually leads to people being inactive or unemployed.”

In recent years, the media in Italy increasingly addresses the issue of the international migration flows of young people as a phenomenon of brain drain. The high rate of unemployment encourages young citizens to leave the country. In fact, the main reason of the high numbers of young people leaving the country is the prospect of job opportunities abroad. Qualified Italians who choose to emigrate to Northern Europe are able to make between 29 % and 48 % more than their counterparts who remain in Italy (data from 2018). Youth emigration is the results in the Italian government losing its investments in education and a considerable amount of young labour force.

BEST PRACTICE: YOUTH DIALOGUE

1. Best practice title

Monferrato Sottosopra

2. Funding Programme

Compagnia di San Paolo (foundation of one of the main banks in Italy)

3. Best practice thematic field

Information and Constructive Dialogue/active citizenship, youth participation

4. Best practice type

Project

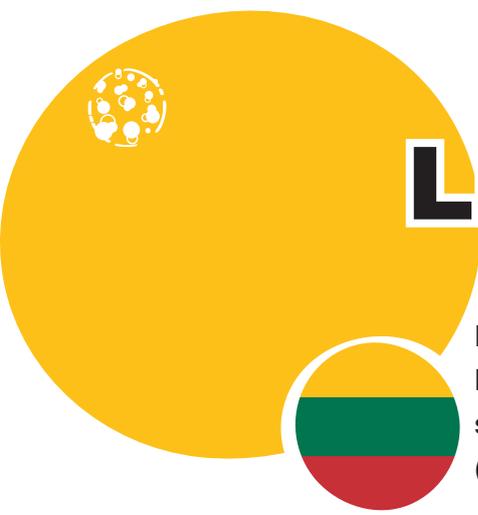
Summary of the best practice

“Monferrato Sottosopra” project was born and was realized thanks to the contribution of the Compagnia di San Paolo and the collaboration between Cooperativa Orso, Aregai Terre di Benessere and the active participation of 12 municipalities in the the Monferrato Casalese territorial area. The project had 2 editions. The first, started in 2016 and had the aim to foster youth ability for active participation in their local community, by learning the basic elements of project management and participatory planning. The scope has been to increase their ability to plan territorial development with local policy and decision makers.

The second edition of the project (concluded with the pandemic outbreak) offered young people opportunities for developing leadership skills and active citizenship and at the same time to acquire skills needed on the labour market. Key words selected by participants were development, participation and action – have been used to guide further activities in the project and generated the slogan “ESCI E VIVI” (go out and live) – trademark of the project’s activities.

5. Best practice web page

<https://www.cooperativaorso.it/progetti/monferrato-sottosopra/>



LITHUANIA

Destination Lithuania, an Eastern European country with a coastline at the Baltic Sea in west. It is the largest and most populous of the three Baltic states. The country is bordered by Belarus, Latvia, Poland, and Russia (Kaliningrad) and it shares a maritime border with Sweden.

Lithuania covers an area of 65.300 km², making it slightly smaller than half the size of Greece. The country has a population of 2,6 million people (in 2020). According to the Lithuanian Department of Statistics, there were 470 662 young people, between the age of 15-29, living in Lithuania in 2020. This represents 16.8 percent of all the inhabitants.

IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS & OBSTACLES

Despite the relatively favorable conditions for the strengthening of the citizenship in Lithuania, the level of youth participation in the social activities remains rather weak and even low in some respects. The recent study reveals that at the civic-social level youths' participation in the activities of non-governmental institutions as well as activities in charities and volunteering is rather low. It can be concluded that the concept of the civil society which is prevalent nowadays is based on the "benefit" in accordance with individual and not public interests. On the other side, the civic-political participation is negatively affected by the criticism of politics and politicians that are creating strong negative attitude towards politics⁹. However, the significant changes in the maturity processes of the civil society are possible during the change of the generations and expecting that the new generation may have enough potential to create the mature civil society. For this reason, it is crucial to take measures to empower youth and support their civic participation, especially, the constructive dialogue between youth and decision makers to strengthen their understanding and relationship and to seek for inclusiveness, solidarity and better understanding of democratic values among youth in Lithuania.

The whole different situation is regarding Green Deal and Circular economy issues. Considering that until 2019 in the Lithuanian Governmental level there were not much focus on the Green Deal and Circular economy topics, there are no strategy on how to integrate those initiatives in the learning

⁹ ASTA VIŠOCKAITE, RIMA URBONAITE. *The Development of Youth Civil Society in Lithuania: the Dimension of the Civil (In)Activity.*

curriculum or non-formal education activities for youth. There are lessons about ecology in pre-school education, biology lessons at schools, Environmental Protection studies in universities, but in general Green Deal and Circular Economy issues are rarely represented in the consistent manner. There are good examples of private, NGOs initiatives and EU funded projects, which are covering gaps in the educational system. However, the centralised approach on the Green Deal and Circular Economy education is missing.

To summarize, the desk research shows, that youth in Lithuania do not have enough knowledge and skills on how to be active citizen. They need centralised support and education, that would encourage them to connect and contribute to building the inclusive and sustainable Europe.

BEST PRACTICE: GREEN YOUTH

1. Best practice title

Let's do it

2. Funding Programme

N/A

3. Best practice thematic field

Sustainable & Green Europe

4. Best practice type

Project

5. Summary of the best practice

“Let’s do it” it is the most know Environmental Cleanup Day, which is organized in May every year since 2000. Hundreds of thousands of Lithuanians join the campaign every year and this is one of the most significant civic projects aimed at combating the waste problem. Annual environmental clean-ups undoubtedly contribute to raising awareness of the global waste problem and, most importantly, to bringing people, especially youth, together with official institutions and businesses in a concerted effort. The vision of this initiative is clean and healthy environment without waste.

Project is being improved every year. Recently, the biggest focus is put on how to engage youth and raise their awareness on the environmental issues. For this reason, free “We Do” mobile app was developed. It increases understanding the scale of the waste problem by visualizing the data collected and planning clean-up campaigns. Municipalities provide recommended areas that need to be cleaned up. Areas are indicated in the digital map, which is available on the “We do” app. On the app users can: i) Mark or upload photos of the littered areas with on the map across Lithuania; ii) Users who see mark areas on the map are able clean them up on their own initiative and mark the area as clean. Otherwise, it is added to the list of places to be cleaned during the annual cleaning campaign; iii) Share the visualisations and locations on the social media to raise the environmental awareness; iv) Compete in the TOP-ranking system, which is encouraging active sharing of photos and clean-up initiatives. Users collect points and compete for the top spot in the rankings table.

Additionally, one of the main novelties in “Let’s do it” initiative that waste is being sorted. To educate the younger generation, on the official project website, you can find the guidelines and recommendations on how to properly sort waste. Organisers of “Let’s do it” are actively looking for new partnerships internationally to adapt innovative green technologies. One of the most recent projects is “Clean cities”, which is being implemented in collaboration with Switzerland

start-up “Cortexia”. Cortexia is a smart camera that captures litter on the street, and the artificial intelligence algorithm identifies up to 40 different types of litter and provides the final systematized results. “Let’s do it” team invited this start-up; thus Lithuania would become first Baltic country that adapted “Cortexia” technology to fight the littering in the cities.

Over the years, “Let’s do it” became a tradition, which is becoming more and more modern and attractive. Project unifies citizens, government, and business to work for the same goal – clean and healthy environment.

6. **Best practice web page**

www.mesdarom.lt



ROMANIA

More than 6 million young people between 15 and 34 years old live in Romania. There is a continuous decrease in the share of the population, from 32.1 % in 2003 to 28.6 % in 2012, of young people aged 15-34, as a result of the combination of several factors: the increase in life expectancy, the decrease birth rate and emigration, the latter phenomenon involving young people in a much higher proportion than other age groups. About 80 % of young people registered as emigrants in 2011 in official statistics are between 18 and 40 years old. Source: National Institute of Statistics (INS), TEMPO Database. Although the share of the young population in Romania is above the EU-27 average, of 25.1 % at the level of the same year 2012, the decrease in the last 10 years is more accentuated in our country. Eurostat projections show that a sharp decline in the share of the young population in the total population is expected by 2060, and Romania is among the countries largely affected by this trend, since 2015 Romania falling below the EU-27 average, the difference later widening to 2060. The fertility rate in Romania was in 2011 at the level of 1.3, considerably below the level of 1.6 registered on average in the EU-27.

IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS & OBSTACLES

More than a quarter of young people between the ages of 18 and 24 are in relative poverty⁶ (28.1 % in 2011), which places Romania among the three countries with the worst situation in the EU-27. The relative poverty rate, according to the Eurostat methodology, measures the share of the population below 60 % of the median income per adult equivalent at national level, therefore it is rather an indicator of inequality and does not inform about the economic resources available to individuals.

Partly due to the high share of the rural population, 43.3 % of young people between the ages of 12 and 17 are severely deprived of housing: they live in an overcrowded home and are affected by at least one other problem, inadequate housing (the roof is poorly insulated, the bathroom / toilet / shower is missing in the house, or the house is inadequately lit). The level of severe deprivation of housing in Romania is over 4 times higher than the European average. Gender discrimination for young people with higher education in Romania is at a level of compensation for known historical imbalances, currently (academic year 2014-2015) 50.90 % are women in state undergraduate education, 55.41 % in undergraduate education and, respectively, 44.48 % for the doctoral university cycle.

At the regional level there are important discrepancies, so the lowest employment rates for young people aged 15-24 are recorded in the West (27.9 %) and North-West (27.6 %) regions, while there are also regions with a significantly better situation, North-East (36.4 %) and South-Muntenia (34.5 %). Young people in Romania have access to the labor market later and to a lesser extent, and the incomes obtained are lower. Thus, Romania has the highest level of poverty of young people aged 18-24 who work: 30.7 % of them were poor in 2011 (the total employed population is 19 %), although they have a job, while in the EU the value is 11.2 %. The wage poverty of young people is even more worrying if we take into account the fact that it is growing: in 2008, at the beginning of the economic crisis, 23.1 % of young people employed were poor.

Beside the shrinking proportion of youth in Hungarian society, another important problem can be identified which is the weakening willingness of young people to participate in public life and political dialogues hindering social cohesion and inter-generational cooperation. In this respect, the starting point is a general statement, the so-called “democratic deficit”, i.e., a decrease in the willingness to participate in political, social and public life among the youth age group – both in Hungary and throughout Europe. There are several reasons behind this phenomenon. Young people today face many challenges, such as starting a family, creating an independent existence, the problem of sectoral unemployment that threatens it, and the poverty that comes with it. Therefore, the reason for staying away from public affairs can actually be explained by the specifics of their life cycle.

According to the vast majority of young people, there are two reasons for this: politicians do not take young people seriously, they do not have the opportunity to have a say in the development of public affairs. This is well reflected in the results of related surveys. Only 12.5 % of respondents thought that politicians were interested in the views of young people, while 87.5 % said no. To the question, “Do you think young people have a say in national public affairs?” 88.9 % answered negatively. The other reason is to be found in the relationship between the individual and the community, which young people say is the root of disinterest, “The problem starts there when individuals place themselves in front of communities.” Self-interest takes precedence, many ask the “but why is it good for me” question if they want to involve either the young or the older generation in something.

Furthermore, young people also believe as they learn the basics of arguing, they develop skills such as gaining information, developing the ability to select, gathering arguments, developing the ability to doubt, developing the ability to listen actively, fostering tolerant behaviour (on several occasions, students had to take different positions led them to review and change their opinion so far, and if necessary to form an attitude) will help them to establish a more fruitful dialogue with decision-makers. This can ensure a chance for establishing better functioning social ties between youth and adults.

BEST PRACTICE: YOUTH INCLUSIVENESS

1. Best practice title

The Inclusive Cluj

2. Funding Programme

Cluj-Napoca City Hall and City Council

3. Best practice thematic field

Inclusive Societies

4. Best practice type

Project

5. Summary of the best practice

The project “Inclusive Cluj” is aiming to create a favourable climate to integrate in society young people from vulnerable groups, through art and creativity and to sustain the cooperation between the NGOs and to change the public perception about vulnerable groups. Using different activities, the project envisages to highlight the artistic and creative potential and to change the public perception on the part played by these persons in the community. Also, it promotes the interaction between different organisations that work with young people from vulnerable groups and it contributes to the strengthening of the financial sustainability of the involved NGOs through training and courses in field of marketing, fundraising and financial management.

The target-group of the project includes on the one hand young people from different vulnerable groups: young people in/out the child protection system, disabled, with artistic, creative potential but with lower education level and on the other hand: experts from the centres that work with young people from vulnerable groups, teachers, students, pupils, NGOs representatives, organisations and institutions for professional training, authorities, employer’s associations, unions, artists, mass-media, public at large. The main activities of the projects:

- **Sale exhibit of** objects made by young persons from disadvantaged groups,
- **Theatre, music and dance show** held by the beneficiaries of several organisations in charge with social inclusion,
- **Trainings and courses** in field of marketing and financial management.

6. Best practice web page

<https://inclusivecities4all.eu/pledges/cluj-napoca/>



SLOVENIA

Slovenia is a small European country covering an area of 20 273 km² between the Alps, Adriatic Sea and Pannonia Plain. Slovenia shares land borders with Austria, Italy, Hungary, and Croatia. The capital of Slovenia is Ljubljana. At the beginning of 2019, Slovenia had a population of 2 080 908 and a population density of 102.7 people per square kilometer. Slovenia is one of the European countries with the most pronounced ageing of the population, which is due to a low birth rate and increasing life expectancy. The main language is Slovene. Due to the influence of past historical ties, Croatian (37 %) is the most widely used second language, followed by English (34 %), German (27 %) and Italian (7 %).

IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS & OBSTACLES

In each of the three identified youth goals (#3, #4 and #10), we tried to highlight the main two bigger practices with a long-term impact on youth and within those highlighted thematic areas, since those are the kind of “accelerators” for all the smaller, local, new initiatives and individual projects throughout Slovenia. We have seen that the key organizations and initiatives in the field of youth, youth work and youth activation do raise positive attitudes for the needed changes, transition toward more sustainable environment and inclusive societies. And where the system failed (for example: Climate Action), youth made their own statement to be heard, so therefore, in general, they do have a strong sense of rightfulness, empathy and community.

Our national overview showed various initiatives, youth activities and on-going opportunities across the country. However, there are still some barriers, that can only be properly addressed by the system, and not by the NGOs only, neither via short-term project work or even by youth themselves. This taken into a consideration and regarding the national statistical data, that in Slovenia, we currently have 197.605 young people, aged 15-24, which also represent our main target group in the COHERENT project, we need to foster such bridging between youth and the decision-makers, in order for the authorities to change, empower or spread some of the existing approaches, youth participation methods and tools and their activation programmes, whether this be via formal or non-formal education processes.

The most successful approach for tackling this mission seems to be the public-private partnerships with NGOs, as they mostly have a lot of experience working with youth, up-to-date insight into their everyday challenges and innovative engagement, fuelled by practice. Therefore, the opportunity

of the COHERENT project is communicating our findings to a larger audience, not just among youth but also to the youth workers, decision-makers and general public in order to close the gaps and wholesomely address the needs of youth in this ever-changing 21st century and the various challenges we are facing with a collaborative and open-minded statements.

By the end we also posed ourselves this important question: *What are the mechanisms, good examples, cases e.g. changing the mentality of the main actors in the labour market, employer and employees on people from vulnerable groups?*

Changing the mentality on hiring people from vulnerable groups are mainly done by positive, good real-life practices from bigger companies that acknowledge their efficiency, creativeness and added value. Employment centres mostly offer various additional trainings, where certificates or confirmation of attendance or competencies gained are issued in order to enrich a person's CV and improve their stand in the labour market. But since the economic factors also plays a big role in this decision-making process, special stimulations/grants for hiring the people from vulnerable groups are sadly, still one of the best stimulations.

BEST PRACTICE: YOUTH DIALOGUE

1. Best practice title

Active citizenship, a secondary vocational education course

2. Funding Programme

Ministry of Education, Science and Sport

3. Best practice thematic field

Information and Constructive Dialogue

4. Best practice type

Educational course, activity

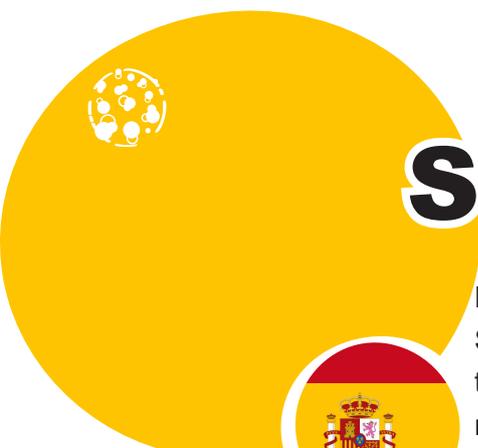
5. Summary of the best practice

Course is offered as an interdisciplinary course, combining sciences such as sociology, philosophy, politics, history, geography and others. Its main aim is to provide interested secondary students with skills to be active, informed and responsible in matters of democratic citizenship processes. Within the course, they discuss the importance of human rights, role of media, political system of the Republic of Slovenia, European integration processes and much more. The course highlights the four key aspects of citizenship: personal, social, national and global one. This course curricula is published in the "Knowledge catalogue", prepared by the National Educational Institute Slovenia.

Comment: This course should be mandatory, not only in secondary vocational schools but also in general high schools in order to foster active citizenship among young people, that are entering their adulthood and consequently society as well. Secondary school students should receive a formal and wholesome educational offer, proper guidance and information on those topics, before reaching out for other channels, such as web, where they should already have developed their critical thinking, receive a baseline understanding of prejudice, respect and empathy.

6. Best practice web page

http://eportal.mss.edus.si/msswww/programi2021/programi/media/pdf/aktivno_drzavljanstvo_spi.pdf



SPAIN



Destination Spain one of the two nations located on the Iberian Peninsula. Spain has a coastline along the Atlantic Ocean to the north and the Mediterranean Sea to the southeast. The country borders Andorra (a micro state in the Pyrenees), France, the tiny British Overseas Territory of Gibraltar (UK), Portugal, and Morocco (at the Spanish exclaves of Ceuta and Melilla on the North African coast). Spain shares maritime borders with Algeria and Italy. The country occupies an area of 505,992 km², making it the fourth-largest in Europe and the second-largest in western Europe. The Kingdom of Spain has a population of 47.1 million people (in 2020), the capital and largest city is Madrid; Spain's second city is Barcelona, the capital city of Catalonia. The official and national language is Spanish, co-official languages are Catalan, Galician, Basque, and Occitan.

Youth in Spain has some specific characteristics that make this group distinguish from other EU countries. A first point to be considered is the general demographic ageing of the Spanish population, which implies that the number of young people is numerically, very low. From the mid-1990s to 2020, the number of young people has fallen by almost three million. Based on this figure, Spain has the second lowest percentage of young people in the whole of the European Union and has the same young population as it had in 1960 (Injuve, 2017¹⁰). The cohort of 15–29-year-olds in Spain is 10.8 % of the male population and 10.5 % of the female population (INE, 2019¹¹).

A second aspect, characterising today's Spanish youth, is its transformation in terms of diversity of origin. From the 90s to the present day, Spain has experienced a significant economic growth, which has translated into a greater attraction of people from other countries. Although in Europe this phenomenon has been occurring for many decades before, in Spain it occurred later and accelerated especially in the first decade of the 2000s. The changes in this regard have been quite remarkable. While 20 years ago the number of foreign-born residing in Spain was 1.2 million, today it is estimated at 6.8 million.

10 La juventud en cifras, INJUVE <http://www.injuve.es/observatorio/demografia-e-informacion-general/juventud-en-cifras-poblacion-marzo-2017>

11 INE. Estadísticas del padrón continuo. 2019

IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS & OBSTACLES

COVID-19 is the second major crisis experienced by the current generation of young people in Spanish, when the wounds of the financial crisis of 2008 still are open. This has taken away many projects, certainties and expectations of Spanish youth. Almost 40 % believe it is unlikely that they will find a job in the next year and the hope of emancipation has fallen by 15 points (Instituto de la Juventud, 2020¹²). Another important aspect of Spanish youth is their emigration from the country. According to INE data 23,000 young people aged between 20 and 35 left Spain in 2019 and less than half returned (around 10,000).

Therefore, “few, foreign and jobless” are the words that characterise best the current youth in Spain. Employment is among the main obstacles that young people face. A new study released by Eurostat shows that Spain’s unemployment for the under -25’s is a record 40,7 %. This puts Spain firmly at the top in EU and with the highest unemployment rate in Europe. Spain has also registered the second highest rise in unemployment year on year, with 2020 figures representing a 2,5 % increase since 2019 (Eurostat, 2021¹³). According to figures from the INE, Spain has the highest percentage of precarious temporary contracts in Europe, 90 % and also remains dedicated to an employer focused employment law, making hiring and firing much easier (INE, 2021). To address the job market obstacles, young people need to diversify and increase their skills and competences. For this reason, education can help best.

The experts highlight that young people educated during the pandemic may have a handicap when it comes to competing in the labour market with other workers who have been trained face-to-face in earlier or later stages. The youth educated during COVID-19 are facing different gaps, among which the socialising effect of education. Social psychologists point to the importance of direct contact between learners for the development of social skills and education in community values. NGOs can play a key role in this process by providing more learning opportunities for youth to grow up and sharing learning opportunities with diverse cultures and countries. The absence of this common space that promotes education in empathy could mean both an underdevelopment in the youth competences and a handicap for society as a whole when it comes to combating new challenges in the future.

The young people usually are considered to be the least involved in the affairs of the community, due to their low electoral participation, low involvement in political parties, and low interest in public affairs. However, it has been observed that young people are more likely to join the strikes in the streets to protest and are more likely to use “creative” forms of participation, such as political consumption or the use of art to express themselves politically. On the one hand, there are some positive political predispositions, such as young people level of interest in politics, which could result

12 INJUVE, Instituto de la Juventud. 2020. INFORME JUVENTUD EN ESPAÑA 2020

13 Eurostat, Quality report of the European Union Labour Force Survey 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/7870049/12843519/KS-FT-21-003-EN-N.pdf/ode-7faf6-43e0-4bfd-99fo-f92777b86a28>

in greater participation and a mature and critical citizenship. However, the economic difficulties, employment instability and other challenges faced by younger people could also result in a more politically unequal generation than previous ones.

The employment gaps and obstacles faced by youth, both locals and immigrants, can be addressed by green education and the development of green industries, where youth could play an active role. Since 2018, climate change has been a particularly politicised issue. However, if one element has stood out in the protests on climate issues, it has been their strong generational character. For example, in April 2019 there were major protests across Spain demanding stronger policies to stop global warming¹⁴. The Injuve research from 2019, argues that the young people that consider themselves belonging to the right and centre are less interested in environmental issues and being left-wing increases interest in environmental policy. It is possible that this is connected to the Spanish context, where the left has more often absorbed the representation of the green agenda (Rovny and Polk, 2019¹⁵). Lastly, the older the young person's municipality of residence is, the more interest in green issues is reported. Therefore, the role that political parties and public authorities can play a huge potential to engage young people in green topics, while in the same time become a platform for youth employment, dialogue and inclusiveness.

14 Los jóvenes contra el cambio climático intentan reavivar su movimiento con docenas de marchas por todo el país: https://www.eldiario.es/sociedad/fridays-for-future-abril_1_1580304.html

15 Rovny, J., y Polk, J. (2019): "New wine in old bottles: Explaining the dimensional structure of European party systems", *Party Politics*, 25(1), 12-24.

BEST PRACTICE: GREEN YOUTH

1. Best practice title

Consuma Conciencia

2. Funding Programme

Extremadura Youth Council

3. Best practice thematic field

Sustainable and Green Europe

4. Best practice type

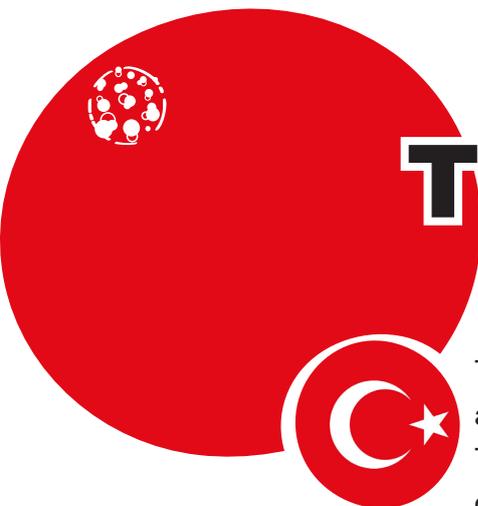
Project

5. Summary of the best practice

Consuma Conciencia is a project carried out in collaboration with the Youth Council of Extremadura. Through this program, several actions have been carried out aimed at young people between 14 and 30 years of age in order to raise awareness about the negative impact of current consumption over the planet and with the hope to create a socially and environmentally responsible youth.

6. Best practice web page

<https://www.adenex.org/index.php/proyectos>



TURKEY

The Republic of Turkey is located on the Anatolian peninsula in western Asia and a small enclave in Thrace in the Balkan region of Southeast Europe. Turkey has a coastline on the Mediterranean Sea in the south and east and on the Black Sea in the north. It borders Armenia, Iran, and Azerbaijan (at the exclave of Nakhchivan), Georgia, Bulgaria and Greece, and Iraq and Syria. Turkey covers an area of 783,562 km². Turkey has a population of 83.2 million people (in 2020), the largest city is Istanbul, the national capital is Ankara. Spoken languages are Turkish (official), Kurdish by Kurdish people, and Arabic by Turkish Arabs.

Youth population constituted 15.4 % of Turkey's population. According to the results of Address Based Population Registration System (ABPRS), while the total population of Turkey was 83 million 614 thousand and 362 by the end of 2020, the youth population at the age group of 15-24 was 12 million 893 thousand and 750. Youth population constituted 15.4 % of total population. While males constituted 51.3 % of youth population, females constituted 48.7 % of it. It was seen that 31.3 % of the youth population was in the 20-22 age group. When the youth population was examined by age group, it was seen that 28.6 % of the youth population was in the 15-17 age group, 19.8 % in the 18-19 age group, 31.3 % in the 20-22 age group and 20.4 % in the 23-24 age group in 2020. It was seen that the proportion of Turkey's youth population with 15.4 % was higher than that of 27 EU member countries.

IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS & OBSTACLES

According to the results of life satisfaction survey, while the proportion of young people at the age group of 18-24 who declared that they were happy was 56.7 % in 2019, it was 47.2 % in 2020. This proportion was 41.1 % for young males while it was 53.2 % for young females in 2020. According to the results of life satisfaction survey, health ranked first with 48.0 % among the values that are the source of happiness for young people in 2020.

This was followed by success with 24.6 % and love with 15.6 %. When the source of happiness was analysed by sex, health was the first value as a source of happiness for young males with 41.9 % and it was followed by success with 28.0 % and love with 12.7 %. For young females, health was the first value as a source of happiness with 54.4 %, and it was followed by success with 21.1 % and love with 18.6 %.

While unemployment rate for young people was 25.4 % in 2019, it was 25.3 % in 2020. While unemployment rate for young males was 22.5 % in 2019, it was 22.6 % in 2020. While this rate for young females was 30.6 % in 2019, it was 30.3 % in 2020. "When youth employment was analyzed by sectors, it was seen that 17.7 percent of young people were employed in the agriculture sector, 28.2 % in the industrial sector and 54.1 % of them were employed in the service sector," TÜİK¹⁶ noted. According to the results of information and communication technology usage survey in households, the proportion of Internet usage among young people at the age group of 16-24 was 93.0 % in 2020 while it was 92.4 % in 2019. While the proportion of Internet usage of young males was 96.1 % in 2019, it was 95.0 % in 2020. While this proportion for young females was 88.6 % in 2019, it was 91.0 % in 2020.

Considering this production volume, the importance of Turkey's need for green technologies becomes clear. In this context, the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK) organizes various programs to support green entrepreneurship among young people. One of these programs is the Individual Young Entrepreneurship Grant. This program is carried out with intermediary institutions such as NGOs, universities, private and public institutions. In recent years, it has been using the green initiative theme.

Program Details:

- Within the concept of "Green New Growth", at the prototype stage, for young people who do not have a partnership with any company and who seek public funding for their R&D studies to reach the final product.
- Opportunity to work together with Istanbul Technical University (ITU) Teknokent mentors on the commercialization of their projects.
- You can benefit from the network of ITU and ITU ARI Teknokent, besides the 200,000 TL fund

16 <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Youth-in-Statistics-2020-37242&dil=2>

support of TUBITAK, the chance to benefit from the award and investment pool in the Big Bang competition.

- Subjects of Individual Young Entrepreneurship Grant.
- Climate Change, Environment and Biodiversity: Studies to Contribute to the Regulation of Climate Change, Carbon Emissions and Greenhouse Gas Emissions.
- Clean and Circular Economy.
- Clean, Accessible and Secure Energy Supply.
- Green and Sustainable Agriculture: Sustainable Agriculture from Farm to Table
- Sustainable Smart Transportation.

BEST PRACTICE: YOUTH INCLUSIVENESS

1. Best practice title

Youth Camps

2. Funding Programme

Ministry of Youth and Sports of the Republic of Turkey

3. Best practice thematic field

Inclusive societies

4. Best practice type

National project

5. Summary of the best practice

Youth Camps are facilities and activities established by the Ministry of Youth and Sports of the Republic of Turkey to enable young people to spend their free time with various social, cultural and sports activities. With an innovative, principled, rational and responsible approach, they act with the awareness that every young person has the right to camp, believing that Youth Camps are an important milestone in the material and spiritual development of young people. In this direction, to create youth-oriented, modern youth camps that respond to social, sportive, cultural and personal needs; They are working to disseminate their numbers throughout the country. While arranging all these, these rights are given to young people of all ages, genders and financial status, by giving priority to disadvantaged groups.

Youth Camps include badminton, aqua park, yacht trip, street games, social and cultural excursions and activities, theatre, music, volleyball, basketball, football, reading, folk dances, handicrafts, climbing wall, high rope track, flyfox, adventure track, paintball, canoeing, mountain biking, orienteering, archery, horse riding, mini golf, rafting etc. activities are included. Youth camps are organized under the name of “Free Sea Camps” for 12 - 15 age groups and “Free Nature Camps” for 16 - 22 age groups. The transportation, accommodation and food needs of the young people participating in the camps are met by the Ministry of Youth and Sports and no fee is charged from the youth.

Purpose of youth camps:

- To ensure the social, cultural, mental and physical development of young people living in Turkey and abroad, especially young people with limited financial means, and to help them make the most of their free time.

-
- Supporting young people in gaining a sense of self-confidence and planned living habits.
 - Contributing to young people's acquaintance with various emotions of sports.
 - Carrying out studies to protect young people from harmful habits.
 - To raise awareness of young people about national and spiritual values, ethical and human values.
 - To increase the awareness of the richness of intercultural differences.

6. **Best practice web page**

<https://genclikkamplari.gsb.gov.tr/>

CONCLUSIONS

By carrying out national state-of-the-art analyses on the youth challenges via desk and field research and reviewing the existing best practice offers for young people available, we can conclude the following gaps, synergies, similarities and differences:





BELGIUM

- Young people from Belgium are suffering from mental health problems due to pressure during the Coronavirus crisis.
- Young people are the first victims of the Covid-19 crisis on the labour market. In 2020, in Wallonia and Brussels, unemployment among those under 25 has jumped sharply in one year. At the end of July 2020, Brussels had 8.140 young jobseekers with 1.169 more than the previous year.
- The phenomenon of inequalities at school is generated from the socio-economic status of the young person.
- In Belgium, the gap is particularly strong: students from disadvantaged backgrounds will earn 130 points more in science tests if they attend a so-called “advantaged” school.



FINLAND

- In spite of provided flexibilities and modern options in proficiency paths, the reality is this: being disadvantaged is passed down.
- The dominance of marginalization’s risk has been illustrated especially with NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) portion of the youth, which has risen to 15,1 % (2015) among young Finns (20–24 years old).
- Mental health problems, especially mood disorders become more obvious, when NEET years pile up.
- As the covid-19 also affects the young people, the restrictions have deeper influence, when there is no work experience to be gained or other important occasions to witness.
- The young Finns’ mortality rate by accident or violence (includes suicides) has decreased in the recent years, but it remains on a higher level than on average in EU countries



GREECE

- Although youth tend to be well-educated, well-travelled and politically aware, the opportunities for them to make a positive contribution to Greek society in the years to come are going to be severely limited.
- Greece has always a high rate of migration, but the rate of recent years has been observed since 1960s when unemployment was also high. However, migrate young people, aged between 20 and early 30s who has education, soft skills and talents that compare favourably with their European counterparts.
- Youths trust in social and political institutions is gradually collapsing, resulting in an obvious ideological alienation which affects their political behaviour, leading to lack of representation of the needs and problems of this generation in the political scene and thus non-innovative ideas prevail and are reinforced.



HUNGARY

- Youths' lack of willingness to participate in public life and political dialogues hindering social cohesion and inter-generational cooperation.
- Young people feel that they are not sufficiently informed about current social, economic and political issues because they do not feel close to the topic.
- Young people are mostly in the minds of politicians working at the EU level, 36 % of them think that these politicians are more or very interested in the opinions of young people.
- Young people also believe as they learn the basics of arguing, they develop skills such as gaining information, developing the ability to select, gathering arguments, developing the ability to doubt, developing the ability to listen actively, fostering tolerant behaviour (on several occasions, students had to take different positions led them to review and change their opinion so far, and if necessary to form an attitude) will help them to establish a more fruitful dialogue with decision-makers.



ITALY

- As youth represent a smaller demographic group within an aging population, they are easily oppressed by the gerontocratic society and a slow labour market turnover. As a result, they struggle to make their way out of segregated and marginalized conditions to get established in the public sphere.
- Young people have been particularly challenged by the economic crisis. As a consequence, precariousness and decreased job opportunities, with their direct impact on social mobility, constitute just one example of the lived experience of young people in times of crisis, and that their impact very much depends on a number of different factors and the intersections among them.
- Italy has already been among the European countries most affected by youth unemployment (44.1 %) during the last economic crisis and thus is in an especially delicate position when it comes to the economic consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The high rate of unemployment encourages young citizens to leave the country. In fact, the main reason of the high numbers of young people leaving the country is the prospect of job opportunities abroad. Qualified Italians who choose to emigrate to Northern Europe are able to make between 29 % and 48 % more than their counterparts who remain in Italy.



LITHUANIA

- The lack of professional qualifications is one of the main causes of youth unemployment in Lithuania. In 2020 among young people registered with the Employment Service, aged from 16 to 19, the majority (68.7 %) did not have the qualifications or specialty. The unemployed and unqualified youth of 20–29 years made 32.1 %.

- Despite the relatively favorable conditions for the strengthening of the citizenship in Lithuania, the level of youth participation in the social activities remains rather weak and even low in some respects.
- Until 2019 in the Lithuanian Governmental level there were not much focus on the Green Deal and Circular economy topics, there are no strategy on how to integrate those initiatives in the learning curriculum or non-formal education activities for youth.



ROMANIA

- More than a quarter of young people between the ages of 18 and 24 are in relative poverty.
- Partly due to the high share of the rural population, 43.3 % of young people between the ages of 12 and 17 are severely deprived of housing: they live in an overcrowded home and are affected by at least one other problem, inadequate housing (the roof is poorly insulated, the bathroom / toilet / shower is missing in the house, or the house is inadequately lit).
- At the regional level there are important discrepancies, so the lowest employment rates for young people aged 15-24 are recorded in the West (27.9 %) and North-West (27.6 %) regions, while there are also regions with a significantly better situation, North-East (36.4 %) and South-Muntenia (34.5 %).
- The weakening willingness of young people to participate in public life and political dialogues hindering social cohesion and inter-generational cooperation.
- Young people have repeatedly stated that they are not sufficiently informed about current social, economic and political issues because they do not feel close to the topic.
- According to the respondents, the interests of young people are mostly in the minds of politicians working at the EU level, 36 % of them think that these politicians are more or very interested in the opinions of young people.
- Furthermore, young people also believe as they learn the basics of arguing, they develop skills such as gaining information, developing the ability to select, gathering arguments, developing the ability to doubt, developing the ability to listen actively, fostering tolerant behaviour (on several occasions, students had to take different positions led them to review and change their opinion so far, and if necessary to form an attitude) will help them to establish a more fruitful dialogue with decision-makers.



SLOVENIA

- The key organizations and initiatives in the field of youth, youth work and youth activation do raise positive attitudes for the needed changes, transition toward more sustainable environment and inclusive societies. And where the system failed (for example: Climate Action), youth made their own statement to be heard, so therefore, in general, they do have a strong sense of rightfulness, empathy and community.
- In Slovenia 197.605 young people, aged 15-24, require fostering bridging between youth and the decision-makers.
- Public-private partnerships with NGOs, as they mostly have a lot of experience working with youth, to overcome challenges and ensure innovative engagement, fueled by practice.
- Changing the mentality on hiring people from vulnerable groups are mainly done by positive, good real-life practices from bigger companies that acknowledge their efficiency, creativeness and added value.



SPAIN

- Spain has the second lowest percentage of young people in the whole of the European Union and has the same young population as it had in 1960.
- Spain has experienced a significant economic growth, which has translated into a greater attraction of people from other countries.
- The labour market has been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the most affected group has been the youth.
- The youth educated during COVID-19 are facing different gaps, among which the socialising effect of education.
- Young people are more likely to join the strikes in the streets to protest and are more likely to use “creative” forms of participation, such as political consumption or the use of art to express themselves politically.



TURKEY

- The results of life satisfaction survey, while the proportion of young people at the age group of 18-24 who declared that they were happy was 56.7 % in 2019, it was 47.2 % in 2020. Health ranked first with 48.0 % among the values that are the source of happiness for young people in 2020. This was followed by success with 24.6 % and love with 15.6 %.
- While unemployment rate for young people was 25.4 % in 2019, it was 25.3 % in 2020.
- The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK) organizes various programs to support green entrepreneurship among young people.