

Youth for social and environmental development in Europe - Youth4development

Work Package 1: Management and stakeholders' consultation

T1.2 Stakeholders' consultations

Deliverable Name:

Report on the Stakeholder's Consultations

1. Introduction

Between **28 November 2024 and 22 January 2025**, consultations with stakeholders from **Romania, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Serbia and Belgium** were organised with the aim of collecting feedback to improve the **Youth4Development** toolkit. These consultations took place in physical, online and hybrid formats, involving relevant actors from the fields of education, civil society, academia, economy and institutions.

The main purpose of each meeting was to assess **the clarity, applicability and relevance of the toolkit**, while providing an opportunity for stakeholders to contribute ideas and recommendations for adapting it to the needs of the targeted communities.

2. The consultations in each country:

Romania

- **Meeting dates:** 28 November 2024, 10 and 12 December 2024
- **Location:** Bucharest (SNSPA, DGASPC Sector 6, University of Bucharest)
- **Participants:** 69 people (12 man and 57 women), including representatives of SNSPA, DGASPC Sector 6 and the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work of the University of Bucharest.
- **Meeting format:** presentation of the project and toolkit, structured discussions on specific topics, open feedback sessions
- **Purpose:** To cover the project plan and methodology, as well as the best strategies for youth involvement. To assess the clarity, applicability and relevance of the toolkit

Czech Republic

- **Meeting date:** December 2024

- **Location:** Vitkova 10, Prague
- **Participants:** 26 participants (19 women and 7 men) including teachers working with youth, volunteers assisting in activities, psychologists providing emotional support, stakeholders shaping policies, and NGO workers facilitating community integration. As regards the Czech Republic, out of the 26 participants, 9 are from countries eligible for the project, while 17 are migrants but have the Czech Republic as their country of residence. Youth Included, the Czech partner, has migrants as its main target group.
- **Meeting format:** presentation of the project, overview of the toolkit, structured feedback sessions and conclusions
- **Purpose:** To cover the project plan and methodology, as well as the best strategies for youth involvement. To adjust the toolkit to reflect the needs and expectations of the target audience, with a focus on diversity and inclusion

Cyprus

- **Meeting date:** 22 January 2025
- **Location:** Mesa Geitonia
- **Participants:** 27 participants (25 women and 2 men) including, teachers, professors, educators and trainers.
- **Meeting format:** presentation of the project, overview of the toolkit, structured feedback sessions and conclusions
- **Purpose:** To cover the project plan and methodology, as well as the best strategies for youth involvement. To adjust the toolkit to reflect the needs and expectations of the target audience, with a focus on diversity and inclusion

Serbia

- **Meeting date:** 23 December 2024 Hybrid (online and offline)
- **Location:** Science Technology Park Niš and online (Google Meet)
- **Participants:** 27 people (6 in situ, 21 online), including civil society representatives, academics, high school principals, companies, start-ups and activists. We have 60% female participants, and 40% male participants. The participants included representatives of various civil society organizations working with youth and within the local community, professors from the University of Niš, principals of secondary schools, representatives of companies and economic institutions, young activists, high school teachers, and representatives of startups. It was important to involve these stakeholders because they represent diverse perspectives and expertise crucial for addressing the needs of the local community and youth.
- **Meeting format:** toolkit and project presentation, structured feedback sessions and open discussions
- **Purpose:** To cover the project plan and methodology, as well as the best strategies for youth involvement. To adjust the toolkit to reflect the needs and expectations of the target audience, with a focus on diversity and inclusion. In addition to gathering feedback, the meeting also served as an opportunity to connect stakeholders for future collaborations

Belgium

- **Meeting period:** 26 November 2024 - 6 January 2025 (several sessions)

- **Location:** Brussels (Diesis Office and other locations)
- **Participants:** 26 participants in total (19 women, 7 men), including:
- **representatives of youth organisations and/or environmental organisations: 7 participants in total, 6 F + 1 M**
 - JEF Europe (1, F)
 - Youth for Inclusive Europe (1, F)
 - Green European Foundation (1, F)
 - Junior College of Cabinet Trainees (2 current members, 1 F and 1 M)
 - Assembly of European Regions - Youth Regional Network YRN-AER (1, F)
 - CAN Europe (1, F)
- **EU institutions and initiatives: 6 participants in total, 4 F + 2 M**
 - European Parliament (2 participants, both F, trainees/APA in training, former members of the Junior College of Cabinet Trainees mentioned above, directly involved in drafting recommendations for youth engagement and policy personally shared with Commission VP Dubravka Šuica in 2024)
 - European Commission (2 participants, both F, temporary agents, former members of the Junior College of Cabinet Trainees mentioned above, directly involved in drafting recommendations for youth engagement and policy personally shared with Commission VP Dubravka Šuica in 2024)
 - European Voluntary Service (2 participants, both M)
- **student unions and associations: 1 participant in total, F**
 - ESU (1, F)
- **vocational, life-long learning and training institutions: 2 participants in total, both F**
 - EVTA (1, F)
 - Life-Long Learning Platform LLLP (1, F)
- **sports associations: 1 participant in total, F**
 - International OPES (1, F)
- **civil society organisations: 7 in participants total, 3 F + 4 M**
 - Centre for Democracy and Technology in Europe (1, F)
 - European Partnership for Democracy EPD (2 participants, 1 F and 1 M)
 - Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) (2 participants, 1 M and 1 F)
 - ECDPM (1, M)
 - European Association for Local Democracy ALDA - Youth Hub (1, M)
- **organisations representing entrepreneurs and professionals with a migrant background: 1 participant in total, F**
 - UNITEE (1, F)
- **and social economy networks: 1 participant in total, F**
 - Social Economy Europe (1, F)
- **Meeting format:** one-to-one or small group meetings (1:1 or 2:1), in-depth toolkit discussions and continuous feedback
- **Purpose:** To cover the project plan and methodology, as well as the best strategies for youth involvement. In addition to the evaluation of the toolkit, the consultations also served to collect good practices in the implementation and preparation of the future Train of Trainers programme.

3. Similarities and differences between consultations

Common elements

- ✓ **The main aim** was the same in all countries - To cover the project plan and methodology, as well as the best strategies for youth involvement and to collect feedback to improve the toolkit, with a focus on clarity, applicability and relevance.
- ✓ **The structure of the consultations** included: a **presentation of** the project and toolkit, **structured discussions** and an **open feedback session**.
- ✓ **Diversity of participants** - all consultations involved actors from different sectors (education, NGOs, institutions, institutions, companies, activists, start-ups), which allowed for a holistic approach to the development of the toolkit.

Notable differences

- ◆ **The format of the meetings** varied:
 - In **Romania, Serbia and Cyprus**, physical meetings took place in educational institutions or community centers.
 - In **Serbia**, the format was **hybrid**, combining online and offline sessions.
 - In **Belgium**, **one-to-one or small group meetings** were organized, providing the opportunity for more detailed discussions.
- ◆ **The type of participants** varied between countries:
 - **Romania**: Academic and social participants
 - **Serbia**: Representatives from education, NGOs, business and activism
 - **Belgium**: environmental and youth NGOs, social networks, entrepreneurs, student unions, representatives of European institutions and flagship initiatives.
 - **Czech Republic**: youth, volunteers assisting in activities, psychologists providing emotional support, stakeholders shaping policies, and NGO workers facilitating community integration.
 - **Cyprus**: teachers, professors, educators and trainers.
- ◆ **Secondary objectives**:
 - **Serbia** also used the consultation to connect stakeholders for future collaborations.
 - **Belgium** included a component on **best practices and strategies for implementation**.
 - **The Czech Republic** has focused on **accessibility for marginalised groups**.

Stakeholders' feedback on toolkit clarity - feasible adjustments with minimal resources

Positive elements

- ✓ Clear and logical structure - No changes required.
- ✓ Useful practical examples - Retained, with minimal adjustments for clarification.
- ✓ Language accessible to most - Improved with minor adjustments to technical terms.
- ✓ Visual elements appreciated - Can increase impact with the addition of a few simple images at no great cost.

Challenges and minimum recommended changes

- ◆ Hard-to-understand technical terms
 - ✓ Impact: Increases accessibility without completely rewriting content.
- ◆ Modules with different levels of accessibility
 - ✓ Impact: Avoid user frustration without changing the toolkit structure.
- ◆ Incomplete task instructions
 - ✓ Quick solution: Adding one or two examples of ready-made questions to activities that require polling or reflection (e.g., "What are the biggest problems in your community?").
 - ✓ Impact: Makes activities easier to use without changing the content in depth.
- ◆ Overlap between modules
 - ✓ Quick solution: Add a short note in the introduction of modules 4 and 5 explaining the link between them and suggesting how they can be used complementarily.
 - ✓ Impact: Clarifies structure without removing content.
- ◆ Favour more visual resources
 - ✓ Quick solution: Insert a simple flowchart created in PowerPoint or Canva to illustrate the decision-making process without changing the text.
 - ✓ Impact: Increases visual accessibility without significant cost.

Stakeholders' feedback on the applicability of the toolkit

Positive Elements

- ✓ Practical approach - Exercises and case studies are useful and well structured.
- ✓ Real-life examples - Advocacy campaigns are valuable and do not require major changes.
- ✓ Flexibility of use - The toolkit can be applied in schools and NGOs without structural changes.

Challenges and Minimum Recommended Changes

- ◆ Assumes an initial level of knowledge
 - ✓ Impact: Provides guidance to users without changing the structure of the toolkit.
- ◆ Lack of a powerful digital component
 - ✓ Quick fix: Add a short section at the end of each module with suggestions on how digital methods can be used (e.g. "This exercise can also be done online via Google Forms, WhatsApp or TikTok Q&A surveys").
 - ✓ Impact: Introduce a digital alternative without changing the core content.
- ◆ Exercises too general or difficult to apply
 - ✓ Quick fix: Add a sample sentence to the activities (e.g. "If you don't have access to a digital mapping platform, try creating a hand-drawn map").
 - ✓ Impact: Provides practical solutions without major modifications.
- ◆ Need examples adapted to local contexts
 - ✓ Quick fix: Add a short paragraph at the end of each existing example, encouraging users to find their own local examples (e.g. "Find a similar example in your community and compare it to this case study").
 - ✓ Impact: Increase relevance without introducing new content.
- ◆ Lack of motivational and attitudinal component
 - ✓ Quick fix: Add an inspirational paragraph at the beginning of the toolkit (e.g. "Change starts with you - regardless of experience, you have the power to influence your community").
 - ✓ Impact: Motivate users without altering existing content.

Stakeholders' feedback on the relevance of the toolkit

Minimum recommended adjustments

- ✚ 1. Integration of short notes for specific groups (migrants, disabled, disadvantaged)
 - ✓ Adding short paragraphs to existing modules instead of creating new sections.
 - ✓ Impact: Make the toolkit more inclusive without changing the structure.
- ◆ How to do it quickly?
 - ▬ Instead of creating a new chapter on young migrants, it can be added in the relevant modules:
 - 👉 *"For young migrants or young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, local resources such as NGOs and community centers can provide support for integration and advocacy."*
- ✚ Adding references to economic and entrepreneurial opportunities
 - ✓ Insertion of a phrase that suggests exploring existing economic resources (e.g. grants, crowdfunding, local partnerships).
 - ✓ Impact: Provides a starting point without adding extensive content.

◆ How to do it quickly?

▬ *Example in the section on civic engagement:*

👉 *"In addition to activism, young people can also explore economic opportunities such as crowdfunding or working with local businesses to support their initiatives."*

✚ Adapting examples for the European context

✓ Instead of removing the US case studies, a phrase could be added that encourages users to search for similar European examples.

✓ Impact: Increases relevance without changing existing case studies.

◆ How to do it quickly?

▬ *Example:*

👉 *"This US example is similar to European initiatives such as [X initiative] Find a local example and compare it to this case."*

✚ Introducing a short section on team management

✓ Instead of a separate module, a short guide on recruiting volunteers and managing challenges could be introduced.

✓ Impact: helps young activists to better coordinate their teams.

◆ How to do it quickly?

▬ *Example in the advocacy module:*

👉 *"For greater impact, create a diverse team and establish clear roles. A simple work plan and effective communication can reduce conflict and improve collaboration."*

✚ Introduction of links to relevant European Organisations

✓ Adding a short list of relevant European networks for young people.

✓ Impact: Connect users with existing resources without creating new content.

◆ How to do it quickly?

▬ *Example in a new section entitled "Additional Resources:*

👉 *"For more opportunities to get involved, see: VOICIFY (young migrants), European Network of Migrant Women, Diaspora Vote, Roma networks and LGBTQ+ NGOs."*

✚ Suggestions for translation and accessibility

✓ Mention the possibility for users to use automated translation tools (e.g. DeepL, Google Translate) to access the toolkit in their own language.

✓ Impact: Improves accessibility without funding professional translations.

◆ How to do it quickly?

▬ *Example in a note at the end of the toolkit:*

👉 "If you need this toolkit in another language, you can use DeepL or Google Translate for a quick translation."

Additional suggestions for improving the toolkit

Minimum recommended adjustments

✂ 1. Creating a list of external digital resources (Instead of a New Platform) - Quick Solution

✓ Instead of creating a complex digital platform, a list of existing digital resources can be added (e.g. EU guides, free YouTube tutorials on advocacy, relevant NGO websites).

✓ Impact: Provide digital support at no extra cost.

◆ How to do it quickly?

📌 *Example in a new section titled "Additional Resources:*

👉 "To learn more about digital advocacy, check out these resources: [Link to free online guides]."

✂ 2. Organize informal online meetings (No costs)

✓ Instead of structured meetings with logistical costs, it can be suggested to create a WhatsApp/Telegram group for participants to exchange ideas.

✓ Impact: Build an active community without formal organisation.

◆ How to do it quickly?

📌 *Example in a final recommendation:*

👉 "Participants can keep in touch and share experiences through a dedicated WhatsApp group."

✂ 3. Simple gamification with challenges and symbolic recognition

✓ Instead of developing a complex gamification system, simple challenges and symbolic recognitions can be introduced (e.g. "Challenge of the Month" - A practical exercise with community group posting).

✓ Impact: Increase youth engagement without technological investment.

◆ How to do it quickly?

📌 *Example in an advocacy activity:*

👉 "Launch an online campaign about a local issue. Post progress in the WhatsApp group!"

✂ 4. Encouraging local partnerships with a short guidance note

✓ Instead of formally organising meetings with authorities, a paragraph could be added suggesting to users how to create their own local partnerships.

✓ Impact: Encourages networking without logistical involvement.

◆ How to do it quickly?

📌 *Example in an existing chapter:*

👉 *"If you want to increase your impact, get in touch with local NGOs and authorities to see how you can get involved."*

✦ 5. Integrating Students from relevant fields at no extra cost

✓ Instead of organising special projects, it could be recommended that students from related fields (design, arts, construction) contribute to the toolkit activities.

✓ Impact: Leverage existing resources without additional funding.

◆ How to do it quickly?

🔑 *Example in the module on community projects:*

👉 *"If you have design or arts skills, you can contribute to community initiatives by creating posters or graphics."*

Toolkit improvement recommendations

1. Minimum recommended adjustments

✦ 1. Simplifying language and improving accessibility

✓ Instead of extensive rewriting, brief definitions can be added in footnotes for technical terms.

✓ Impact: Increases accessibility without changing the main text.

◆ How to do it quickly?

🔑 *Example:*

👉 *"E-participation (digital involvement in public decision-making)"*

✦ 2. Increasing visualization and interactive resources

✓ Instead of creating costly infographics, a recommendation to use simple charts in PowerPoint or Canva can be added.

✓ Impact: Provides an easy-to-use visual tool without external resources.

✦ 3. Introducing practical activities and role plays

✓ Instead of developing new materials, a sentence suggesting interactive exercises for trainers could be added.

✓ Impact: Increases applicability without new content.

◆ How to do it quickly?

🔑 *Example:*

👉 *"For a more hands-on experience, organise a role-play in which participants play the role of a local councillor and an activist."*

✦ 4. Increasing youth motivation and involvement

✓ Instead of creating a complex reward system, the use of digital participation certificates could be suggested.

✓ Impact: Increases recognition of involvement at no cost.

✦ 5. Expanding the digital advocacy component

- ✓ Instead of creating a separate guide, a paragraph on using social media in advocacy could be included.
- ✓ Impact: Introduce digital elements without expanded development.

◆ How to do it quickly?

▬ Example:

👉 "Use Instagram Stories and TikTok to increase the visibility of your campaigns."

✦ 6. Increasing collaboration with NGOs and public authorities

- ✓ Instead of listing NGOs, could add a recommendation that users search for local resources.
- ✓ Impact: Encourages partnerships without additional research.

✦ 7. Developing financial and project management skills

- ✓ Instead of introducing a new module on fundraising, a link to existing resources on grants and crowdfunding could be added.
- ✓ Impact: Accessibility to information at no cost.

✦ 8. Co-creating the toolkit with the participants

- ✓ Instead of a new platform, it could be suggested to create a collaborative Google Drive where participants can upload examples of best practices.
- ✓ Impact: Favors resource sharing without new infrastructure.

✦ 9. Managing the challenges of activism

- ✓ Instead of an extensive chapter, a checklist on managing activist challenges could be added.
- ✓ Impact: Provides quick solutions without major rewriting.

Conclusion:

- ✓ Adding explanatory notes for technical terms.
- ✓ Introduction of quick practical examples in existing activities.
- ✓ Suggestions on the use of free digital tools.
- ✓ Encouraging users to create their own visual resources.
- ✓ Creating a collaborative Google Drive for sharing examples.