



ACTIVEU “Let’s get active! Incentives for citizens active participation in the democratic life of the European Union”

NATIONAL CITIZENS FORUM

Iasi, Romania, 10 - 12 June 2015

**National recommendations for diminishing the obstacles for active participation/
introducing incentives for becoming an active citizen:**

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Thematic area 1: Main reasons and root causes of not participating in the democratic life of the European Union

/Goal: Deepened understanding of the reasons/ root causes of not participating in the EUs democratic life in respective countries./

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- Mistrust in the political class and decision makers;
- Lack of information regarding European institutions and their role and functioning;
- Excessive bureaucracy;
- Mismatch of the public agenda with people's real needs;
- Lack of effective public consultation methodologies;
- Lack of education, especially in rural areas;
- Issues related to public perception of people with disabilities or minority groups lower their capacity to participate;
- Migration - a sense of not belonging to society is making them less able to participate;
- Failure to inform citizens correctly;
- Lack of opinion leaders and social models to engage citizens to participate actively;
- Lack of promotion of examples of good practice on results of involvement;
- The language used in relation with the citizens is not understandable for them;
- Mentality of not being active promoted during time, and the mentality of not being able to change things at the community level;
- Lack of participatory education: from family and from school at early age;
- Lack of base-needs is reducing the citizens' ability to engage;
- Lack of information is a cause of non-participation;
- Volunteering is low encouraged;
- Lack of trust from family - parents criticize their children more than encourage them to participate - decreases confidence in his own ability to engage at the community life;

- The tendency of young people to remain close to family and to be conservative is lowering their vision and the decisions for change;
- Reluctance to new and to engage in new environments;
- The desire for change exists only declaratively, without having applicability in practice
- Wrong models promoted by the media;
- Mismatch of public policies with concrete needs of citizens - citizens are not seeing themselves in the public decisions;
- The apparent involvement of citizens in debates - citizens' view if they are listened is not taken into account in the final decision;
- Citizens do not believe they have sufficient sources of information;
- There is no information in school curricula – especially regarding the European space and about decision-making at European level;
- The educational system is lacking at enablement young people to participate.

Thematic area 2: The possible incentives, that could encourage the citizens to participate in the European Union's policies shaping.

/Goal: Deepened understanding of the possible incentives for the citizens to play a full part in the EU development and policies shaping in respective countries./

- Developing means to participate: Internet, new media, but also through art (concerts, exhibitions);
- Development of opinion and trendsetters to promote and stimulate the desire to get involved in the community life;
- Development of public events to involve opinion leaders and public persons to encourage participation;
- Public recognition of the results of active participation and of the citizens who contributed to changes for the benefit of the community;
- Promoting the benefits of active involvement of citizens;
- The importance of understanding the opportunities offered by national and international institutions to develop their skills to participate actively in community life;

- Education for participation should begin in primary and secondary school and practice should be assured in educational environments;
- Promoting non-formal education methods to encourage participation;
- To value the availability of young people to get involved in civic issues.

Thematic area 3: Recommendations for diminishing the obstacles for active participation (propositions & ideas)

/Within the 4 topics of the on-line research:

1) Get involved

2) Get active

3) Elections and participation

4)EU and participation/

- Simplification of bureaucracy;
- Establishment of EU facilitators to work with local administration and not only to promote but also to mediate discussions between citizens, civil society and European Union;
- Public authorities should have a greater openness to civil society and the citizens;
- Citizens' consultations on topics of interest and public matters to be discussed with citizens;
- Strengthening justice;
- Developing applications for administration referral directly by citizen - reducing bureaucracy;
- Educational institutions must be prepared to apply for funding to European programs for the educational projects;
- The citizen must have the levers to contact their direct representatives;
- In order to be constructive, the dialogue should start from a base of knowledge, education and mutual trust;
- Understanding that the administration is working for citizen – both by the officials and by the citizens;
- "Humanization" of public institutions;

- Develop tools at administrative level for the development of active citizenship;
- Electronic voting and using technology to participate;
- Developing tools of working directly with citizens.

Addressability:

- **The family:** The need to foster and educate young parents towards the development of citizenship
- **Educational environment:** Investment in education and accessing European funds to support educational programs
- **Social level:** Strengthening civil society and political systems

Promoting best practice examples and support volunteer centres

At the political level: depoliticizing the system to promote experts in public office

Thematic area 4: Recommendations for introducing incentives for becoming active citizen (propositions & ideas)

/Within the 4 topics of the on-line research:

- 1) Get involved*
- 2) Get active*
- 3) Elections and participation*
- 4) EU and participation/*

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- The development of 'skills for life' among students with a component of active citizenship;
- Models of good practice should be more often brought to public attention;
- Gradual and continuous campaigns to explain European institutions work;
- The introduction of civic education courses and teacher training in this regard;
- To promote the mobility programs;
- To promote the fundamental rights;
- Development of methodologies for public consultation;
- The promotion of participatory methods of education;
- Understanding the multicultural European space will enhance the citizens' awareness and capacity of participation;
- Promoting the European information in rural areas;
- Information must be correct and continue;
- Participation should be taught peer to peer and should be promoted the models of good practice;
- The information must not only be promoted - without feelings and without being personified;
- AGORA or talk markets of advice for the well being and community development;
- Promote information in a friendly way;
- Motivational campaigns should be focused on internal factors and individuals;
- Trend setters on participation;
- Availability of younger generations to get involved more, the desire to be active should be more valued for the benefit of the community;

- Music can be an effective way to convey a message and encourage participation;
- Creating trends that encourage participation;
- To highlight the importance of the opinion leaders in the public life and their presence to show that changes can be made;
- Concerts, shows and events to promote the participation opportunities and highlighting the benefits of active citizenship;
- Participation in seminars and thematic debates - are effective medium for information and debate on participation;
- Involving the media in distributing information to encourage participation;
- Development of "incubators" of motivation for citizens;
- Develop curricular and extracurricular activities to stimulate civic spirit, critical thinking and argumentative capacity among youth;
- Joint efforts of all stakeholders for the development of existing initiatives.

Thematic area 5: What role the Non-governmental organisations could/ should play in fostering democratic participation of the citizens on the EU level (ideas & recommendations)?

- Civil society can become an important factor to make more adaptable the local community;
- Involving parents in the educational activity, including parents' organizations;
- Civil society organisations can have an important contribution for understanding and respecting the rights of minorities as well as their responsibilities for the community development;
- The partnership within civil society and education institution will increase the quality of education, providing the methodologies and space to increase participation;
- Non-governmental organisations can provide space and promote volunteering as training and educational activities;
- Neither organizations involved at the local level decision-making process are not aware and do not know the power they can have at European level;
- Educational institutions must be prepared to provide some of the needed funding through European programs and projects;
- Lack of communication between educational institutions and nongovernmental organizations is reducing the access of youth to educational opportunities;



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- The role of civil society is to bring citizens closer to public administration and decision making level;
- Civil society has the responsibility to highlight best practice models to encourage active participation.

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THE SUMMARY

Activity 3. The National Citizens' Forums designing, conducting and summing-up

The summary of the event

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Participation: The event involved 37 citizens, participants representing 16 cities from 12 counties and 6 regions of Romania (Suceava, Siret – Suceava, Campulung Moldovenesc - Suceava, Constanta, Dragasani – Valcea, Rm. Sarat - Buzau, Bucuresti, Bacau, Lupeni - Hunedoara, Ploiesti - Prahova, Botosani, Campina - Prahova, Bivolari – Iasi, Cristesti – Iasi, Iasi)

Location/ Dates: The event took place in Iasi, Romania, from 10/06/2015 to 12/06/2015

Short description:

The aims of the event was to involve citizens from Romania and to:

1. To sum-up and discuss the results of the open on-line research;
2. To group these results into the main thematic areas;
3. To develop national recommendations for diminishing the obstacles for active participation/ introducing incentives for becoming an active citizen.

Attachments:

1. List of the participants
2. Promotion & impact information + Links to some publications/printscreens/scans; including leaflets, posters, press releases etc.

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