

To Whom it May Concern,

An international team, composed of four Organizations from Poland, Romania, Italy and Cyprus, worked together for a year to discover the reasons of low democratic participation on the European Union's level as well as to explore the possible incentives that could encourage EU citizens to be more democratically active. In the frame of the project ACTIVEU "**Let's get active! Incentives for citizens active participation in the democratic life of the European Union**" (Ref. Nb. 558379-CITIZ-1-2014-1-PL-CITIZ-CIV) co-funded by the **Europe for Citizens Programme** of the European Union, the team has conducted an international open on-line research, implemented four National Citizen's Forums and concluded with the realization of the International Citizens Forum.

The number of **citizens indirectly reached** by the project, among others through developing and conducting dedicated information campaign, exceeded **160 000** of Europeans and even non-Europeans.

The goal of the **open on-line research** was to create a space where the European Union's citizens could share their opinions, needs, expectations and ideas concerning active participation in the democratic life of the European Union. **701 citizens** representing **40 countries**, took part in the research.

The goals of the **National Citizens Forums** were to sum-up and discuss the results of the open on-line research, to group these results into the main thematic areas and to develop **national recommendations** for diminishing the obstacles for active participation and introducing incentives for becoming an active citizen. The National Citizens Forums took place in: Nicosia, Cyprus; Bielsko-Biała, Poland; Iasi, Romania and Jesi, Italy. **130 citizens** participated in these Forums.

The goal of the **International Citizens Forum** was – on the basis of all the results gathered – to develop recommendations for relevant European Union's and National Institutions/ Organisations/ Authorities – that, if introduced, could increase the citizens' participation in the democratic life. The **Structured Dialogic Design Methodology** was applied. The International Citizens Forum took place in Nicosia, Cyprus with **25 citizens** from different European countries participating.

As a result, a list of **Recommendations**, to give **suggestions on active democratic participation of the EU citizens**, was developed, and is now being sent to the EU Parliament Members, the European Commission Representation, the European Ombudsman, National Parliament members and other wide public.

We consider that raising awareness on a phenomenon as the democratic participation in EU, is one of the most important steps in order to create solutions at the European level for democratic duties and challenges. Informing citizens, Authorities and Organizations on the dimensions of active citizenship as well as on ways to promote it, it is a step forward towards the settle in of democratic life activities.

We would highly appreciate it, if you endorse this initiative and the Recommendations.

On behalf of the ACTIVEU Team

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MORE ACTIVE DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION CITIZENS

Based on the results of the year-long international research and consultations process, including over 850 direct participants and reaching over 160.000 indirect addressees from all over Europe, the recommendations for more active democratic participation of the European Union's citizens are to:

- 1) Enable the steps that would strengthen the link between social intelligence and civic participation.
- 2) Focus on creating centers for training civic leaders and thus addressing the need of people to be more informed about civic engagement.
- 3) Making the process of the decision on public matters taking more transparent, by disclosing the positions and funding sources of lobbyists.
- 4) Promoting independent thinking and limiting media propaganda by promoting the idea of having live coverage (TV, Web) of parliamentary discussions.
- 5) Strengthen and support independent media.
- 6) Strengthen the importance of Non-governmental Organizations and thus making them an internal part of the governing process.

By making progress in the above mentioned areas we will be able to tackle the roots of limited participation in the democratic processes and achieve changes in many other areas enhancing active citizenship, such as:

- ✓ Developing legislation to protect active citizenship from political pressures;
- ✓ Making participation appealing by using marketing tools and rewards;
- ✓ Creating more mechanisms for effective accountability;
- ✓ Creating more bottom-up channels for active participation;
- ✓ Integrating simulation of active participation and experiential civic education throughout schooling;
- ✓ Ensuring equal representation of all age groups in politics; better accessibility of information;
- ✓ Showing the benefits of being active; funding political campaigns only through controlled crowd-funding;
- ✓ Introducing loose forms of direct democracy with the use of technology;
- ✓ Creating on-line platforms that enhance interactions and questions between citizens and politicians;
- ✓ Protecting and promoting freedom of speech.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. The International Open On-line Research Report;
2. The National Citizen's Forums reports for 4 countries: Poland, Romania, Italy and Cyprus;
3. The International Citizens Forum Report.

For further information please visit: www.letsgetactive.eu





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