

Deliverable D2.2

“Methodological Framework for online and offline youth engagement through action-led initiatives, physical and digital mobility”

Project Title:

@CTJUST: “Youth @cting for climate justice: building a paradigm of online and offline engagement in the covid era”

Project number: 624705

Due date of deliverable:	29/11/2021
Actual submission date:	10/01/2022
Responsible partner:	ActionAid Hellas
Dissemination level:	Public
Revision:	1.1

This publication was co-funded by EACEA/10/2020 Erasmus+ Programme KA3 – SUPPORT FOR POLICY REFORM
EUROPEAN YOUTH TOGETHER

The content of this publication represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility.

The European Commission does not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contain

Methodological Framework

Table of contents

1. Introduction

1.1	EU Youth Policy.....	4
1.2	The ActJust Project.....	4
1.3	The Methodological Framework.....	5

2. Specific activities and diversified opportunities to be provided to youth in the context of the project, defining a mix of online and face-to-face activities

2.1	Mix of online and offline activities.....	7
2.1.1	Physical mobilities/exchanges.....	7
2.1.2	Online mentoring.....	8
2.1.3	Individual mentoring.....	9
2.1.4	Online mobilities/Exchanges.....	9

3. Engagement strategies and processes for the whole recruitment cycle (identification, recruitment, engagement, motivation, mentoring, training, evaluation)

3.1	Engagement strategies.....	11
3.2	Recruitment Cycle.....	12

4. Specific challenges and measures to be taken to promote the participation and motivation of vulnerable groups of young people, as well as internal communication and cooperation tools Youth

5. The role of various stakeholders involved in the promotion of policy dialogue between young people and policy makers;

5.1	Policy Makers.....	17
5.1.1	National level.....	17
5.1.2	Regional/local level.....	17
5.2	NGO's.....	17
5.3	Public Entities.....	17
5.4	Private Sector.....	18

6. Specifications of a training programme according to the youth needs identified and the application of action-led initiatives

7.	Conclusion.....	21
----	-----------------	----

1. Introduction

1.1 EU Youth Policy

The ActJust project is in line with the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027, connecting youth from 7 EU countries, empowering and engaging them in taking action regarding climate justice, while testing the impact of internet communication technologies and external risks (COVID-19 outbreak) on the “ENGAGE, CONNECT and EMPOWER” actions. In line with EC’s Communication on Strengthening the sense of European Identity, the action promotes EU values through digital and physical mobilities, joint projects and mingled trainings with participants and trainers across EU. It contributes to the adoption of the new European Digital Competence Framework 2.0, developing modules on digital communication and collaboration competence. Thematically, it contributes to the implementation of the EU Green Deal, the New Narrative project, and the EU Youth Goal 10 about Sustainable Green Europe.

ActJust directly contributes to the objectives of European Youth Together as it:

1. Creates networks of youth organisations and young people from across Europe (East, West, North and South), encouraging structured and wider participation of youth in civic and democratic life, using digital means and offering opportunities for trainings and large-scale digital and physical mobilities.
2. Contributes to Covid-19 crisis recovery in the youth sector, providing a tested methodology about the right mix of online and face-to-face activities to encourage online youth participation in democratic life and joint projects in the covid and digital era.
3. Supports the implementation of the EU Youth Goal 10 on Sustainable and Green Europe, and the New Narrative for Europe, focusing on youth action towards climate justice.
4. Promotes the participation of young people with fewer opportunities, involving disadvantaged youth linked with partners’ networks and programmatic work.

1.2 The ActJust Project

Digital and smart youth work and mobility has emerged as a new trend and practice in youth field, as the use of innovative digital forms of participation increasingly motivates youth to engage in action-led initiatives and policy making. COVID-19 and its impact on youth sector has further underlined this trend, as a considerable part of activities related to “connecting,

engaging and empowering” youth has been transferred online. This is thus a critical moment to shape the future of online youth engagement in democratic and civic life at EU level. @CTJUST brings together Youth NGOs and youth from 7 EU countries, Greece, Italy, Denmark, Austria, Spain, Lithuania and Serbia, to pilot-test and define the right mix of physical and digital activities needed to enhance youth engagement, focusing on climate justice.

The impact of the project consists on the following

- Enhanced civic and democratic youth engagement at local, national and EU level, through action-led initiatives, digital and physical mobility
- Enhanced civic competences of youth with a focus on critical thinking, digital skills, climate justice Increased youth participation in policy dialogue
- Enhanced cooperation among youth NGOs promoting online youth engagement and digital youth mobility at EU level.

1.3 The Methodological framework

To respond to above-mentioned needs and challenges, @CTJUST will provide a much-needed tested methodology and structured cooperation processes about the right mix of online and offline activities that enhances young people’s engagement in civic and democratic life, volunteering and action-led initiatives. The developed methodology and recommendations will support the work of youth organisations and National Agencies in the field of youth across Europe. Based on this methodology, @CTJUST will build online and offline structured cooperation among youth NGOs and institutional stakeholders to bring young people across the EU together, enhancing their competences and EU identity, through a mix of online and face-to-face opportunities, namely digital and physical youth mobilities, mingled trainings (offered by trainers of different EU countries) and joint national and pan-European projects.

More specific this methodological framework has been developed for the effective online and offline youth engagement in civic and democratic life through action-led initiatives and digital mobility opportunities related to climate justice. In order to develop the methodological framework, all partners participated in a 2 days workshop in Madrid, Spain to exchange knowledge based on their extended experience in working with young people and their expertise in areas such as digital democracy, online identification and youth engagement, online youth mentoring techniques and challenges, organization of action-led initiatives, online volunteering, youth empowerment methodologies, participatory and feminist leadership

approaches. The Advisory Youth Committee has also provided input and feedback for the development of the methodological framework. The methodological framework has been developed in the form of an action plan, defining:

a) the specific activities and diversified opportunities to be provided to youth in the context of the project, defining a mix of online and face-to-face activities;

b) the engagement strategies and processes for the whole recruitment cycle (identification, recruitment, engagement, motivation, mentoring, training, evaluation);

c) specific challenges and measures to be taken to promote the participation and motivation of vulnerable groups of young people, as well as internal communication and cooperation tools
Youth

d) The role of various stakeholders involved in the promotion of policy dialogue between young people and policy makers;

e) the specifications of a training programme according to the youth needs identified and the application of action-led initiatives;

All the above sessions include the challenges and risks associated with the online shifting of activities related to engaging, connecting and empowering youth, using digital means and the mitigation plans.

The methodological framework is the basis for the development of the training programme and diversified opportunities to be provided to young people in the context of the project, entailing training opportunities, physical and digital mobilities, a pan-European project linked to localised action-led initiatives, and policy hackathons.

The methodological framework will be translated in all partners' languages.

2. Specific activities and diversified opportunities to be provided to youth in the context of the project, defining a mix of online and face-to-face activities

Below you may find the specific activities to be provided to young people in the context of the ActJust project by defining a mix of online and offline activities. In the end, we conclude the tips and tricks for the right mix of methodology which can support other youth organisations to work with this framework. In order to organise the flow of the

methodological framework we answered to 4 questions, Who (target group), What (aim), Why (reason) and How (tools and methods).

2.1 Mix of online and offline activities

10 young people from each country will create the core National team of each partners in the ActJust project which will participate in the different activities throughout the project cycle. The young people will connect online with mentoring sessions but also offline with physical exchanges in 3 different countries, Italy, Lithuania and Serbia.

WHO: Young People between 18-30 years old
10 per country (70 in total)

2.1.1 Physical Mobilities/Exchanges

Young people will take part in face to face exchanges in order to meet each other, build the team and work together on the Pan European project of ActJust. 4 young people from each core National team together with the youth mentor of the country will travel to Italy, Lithuania and Serbia during 2022. The first exchange will take place in Milan, Italy where young people will meet each other better, understand the scope of the project and start working on the youth led initiatives. In the end of this exchange, young people will create their action plans for climate justice in their countries. The second exchange will take place in Vilnius, Lithuania. Here, we expect the youth groups to present the first reactions and evaluation from their action led youth initiatives. Young people will present the good practices as well as the challenges they faced during the implementation of the initiatives. The last exchange will be organised in Nis, Serbia. This is the moment in which young people will work and create the policy brief on climate justice, considering their whole participation in the online and offline activities.

WHO: (4 youth + 1 mentor travelling from each country) Here we recommend that in each exchange 4 different young people from the core team will travel each time, so that more young people have the opportunity to travel. Each time the 4 youth who travel will act as representative of the national team and will have the responsibility to bring the information back to the team.

WHAT: Connect individual behavior with structural change via physical mobilities

WHY: To bring young people in a face to face connection and build the pan European team

HOW:

1. Mobility in Milan, Italy: Setting the basis & teambuilding, Set the first input on the Pan European framework
2. Mobility in Vilnius, Lithuania: Action-led initiatives, exchange of good practices
3. Mobility in Nis, Serbia: Production of Policy brief

2.1.2 Online Mentoring

In order to use the different methodology in our work, young people will participate in online mentoring sessions. The online mentoring sessions will begin in parallel with the training activities and will last until the production of the policy brief and the implementation of the hackathons. Youth mentors from each partner country will support young people to design, structure and organise the action led youth initiatives for climate justice. During the mentoring sessions, young people will have the chance to discuss with their mentors about their projects' progress, risks and challenges they might face, team coordination and conflict issues, cultural issues and networking needs, and find solutions.

WHO: The core team of each country. 10 young people per partner country, 70 in total.

WHAT: Support young people to implement the action youth led initiatives.

WHY: The online mentoring sessions will support the alignment towards youth exchanges since 4 participants out of 10 will be representatives of the broader group.

HOW: The mentoring sessions will have the flow below:

1. *Identify the problem!*
2. *What is our goal and the possible solution to our problem? (Based on youth priorities)*
3. *How do we do that? (Based on youth priorities)*
4. Share or create!
5. TAKE ACTION!
6. Reflection and learning!

2.1.3 Individual Mentoring

Individual online but also offline mentoring sessions are also part of the mentoring process. Youth mentors will support individually the youth of the core team, so as to keep everyone in the same page and solve any problems that the team might face.

WHO: The core team of each country. 10 young people, 70 in total

WHAT: Individual mentoring sessions

WHY: To see in depth

→What works and what not?

→ How are you keep up?

→Get to know each other!

HOW: Online but also face to face if possible in each country

2.1.4 Online Mobilities/Exchanges

Young people - members of the core teams who are involved in the project's design and implementation of the EU joint project and the national action-led initiatives, will have the opportunity to participate in digital youth mobilities, which are associated with two kind of activities:

a) Participation in action-led initiatives implemented in a different partner country from the young person's country of residence. Through digital mobilities young people can undertake online volunteering tasks in order to support the implementation of initiatives in another EU country. Various online volunteering modalities and roles will be allowed to promote the participation of young people facing time constraints;

b) Participation in online mentoring sessions with the support of a mentor from a different EU country. Particularly, mentors within partner organisations will be linked with young people coming from different EU countries and are interested in supporting the action-led initiative implemented in the mentor's country of residence.

Offering opportunities for digital youth mobilities will enable wider exchange of knowledge, cultures and experiences, and will foster European identity among young people, while testing the shift of the recruitment and engagement cycle online, acquiring experience and increasing

understanding of the challenges associated with online volunteering and digital youth mobility among youth organisations, NGOs and National Agencies in the field of youth.

WHO: Young people act as representatives of each core National team

WHAT: Participation in mentoring sessions in other countries

WHY: To contribute and participate in action led initiatives in other countries and exchange views and good practices but also being aligned with what is happening to other countries.

HOW: The youth mentor from each partner country organises different sessions in EU level

→ Based on participants needs, capacities, projects

→ Youth led

→ Participatory & active methodologies

→ Interactive

→ Learning by doing

2.2 Tips and tricks for other NGOs

Here you may find some tips when designing activities with a mixed methodology of online and offline tools for youth engagement and youth participation based on the experience gained through ActJust project.

Tip 1. Balance between offline and online activities

Young people are used to be online many hours during the day for different reasons, either for school projects, reading, social media, gaming etc. Using digital means to enhance youth participation is a very important step to engage youth and motivate them to participate. However, youth work is also an interactive world that needs the physical space. Combining digital means with physical activities will be an asset when designing youth participation activities.

Tip 2. Give opportunity to all the young people of your group to travel

Travelling is a way of connected youth groups from different cultures and countries together. It brings youth in a common space where exchanging, learning and doing are priorities. Giving the opportunity to all the youth of your group take part in an exchange abroad will enhance

the motivation of the group to be engaged and also develop many of their skills and competences.

Tip 3. Identify one youth mentor

The youth mentor is the person who will support young people during the mentoring sessions. The youth groups should acknowledge that this person is present for supporting through the process, overpassing challenges and giving the rhythm in the group. It should be a person who knows about youth work, has communication and management skills as well as crisis management and risk assessment competences.

3. Engagement strategies and processes for the whole recruitment cycle (identification, recruitment, engagement, motivation, mentoring, training, evaluation)

ActJust is a 2 years project starting from May 2021 until May 2023. It is a project that needs dedication from each partner but also from the young people who participate in the project. Young people plays a significant role in ActJust as they are the ones who strives the project, design and implement the action led initiatives, create the policy brief and participate in Hackathons. In the partnership we acknowledge that it is very difficult to engage youth during the 2 years of the project as the duration is long and the responsibilities sometimes high. In order to keep youth engaged from the beginning of the project till the end we have created an engagement strategy which can also be used for other projects in the future.

Who: Young people 18 -30 years old as well as vulnerable youth

What: Keep engagement and motivation of young people high for at least 2 years.

Why: In order to keep the core team of the project engaged and dedicated to the scope

How: With the mentioned engagement strategies below:

3.1 Engagement strategies:

Incentives:

- Travels
- Grants for initiatives

- Possibilities to get extra grants (e.g. ESC program)
- Youthpass/Europass
- Platform for advocacy and campaigning
- Engagement with policymakers and other stakeholders
- New skills/ knowledge/ competencies
- Opportunity to engage with other young people from Europe
- Support from project partners to plan and implement youth-led initiatives
- Regular contact with mentor

Regular communication with young people

- Offline/Online (info sharing feedback and etc.)
- Mentoring sessions
- Contact person at partners' organizations'
- Newsletters
- Social media group?? (for all the pax. Off different activities as a place to share and discuss)

Have your say!

- Possibility to perform at UN
- Networking and collaboration with policy-makers
- Equal partnership with Project partners

3.2 Recruitment cycle

The recruitment cycle presents the ways and methods from which the partners will identify the young people for the different activities of the ActJust Project.

➤ **National/EU discussion**

- Open call (social media, invitations for educational institutions, our own networks)

- Personal invitations (meetings with the relevant youth groups)
- **Trainings**
- Using InfoDay
- Open call
- Personal invitations
- Existing pax. (From previous activities)
- Youth Advisory Committee
- National Youth networks
- **Mobilities**
- Existing pax. (From previous activities)
- Youth Advisory Committee
- Priority for Youth advisory committee members and previous pax.
- **Youth-led initiatives**
- Existing pax. (From previous activities)
- Not a news pax.
- **Hackathons**
- Core groups of youth-led initiatives
- Pax. From trainings/mobilities
- Open call of new already existing youth groups (if needed)
- Personal invitations for policy makers
- **Digital mobilities**
- Core groups
- Advisory committee
- **EU hackathon**
- Core groups of youth led-initiatives from each partner country

➤ **EU Youth team**

- Youth advisory committee members
- Or the core groups of the youth-led initiatives

3.3 Tips and tricks for other youth NGOs

Engaging young people for a long period of time, especially when some projects last for more than one and a half year is very challenging. Keeping the motivation up and the engagement for the whole duration of the project can be accomplished by following some specific guidelines. However, each situation is different and these tips are just recommendations that can support youth NGOs in engaging youth groups in their projects.

Tip 1. Offer travelling opportunities

Travelling is a great way to connect youth together, break the ice and bound the team. It is also a way to connect different youth from different countries together in a multicultural space where all the voices can be heard.

Tip 2. Offer grants for youth initiatives

Young people have great ideas and initiatives but most of the times the process stops just in the idea as there are no funds to implement. Considering and offering grants for the implementation of the youth ideas/initiatives would be a boost for youth creativity and engagement.

Tip 3. Offer certification of attendances

Certifications of attendances are also a must when involving young people in projects, seminars or trainings. This, because it can justify the participation in such initiatives and can be used in CVs.

Tip 4. Offer space for exchanging, advocacy and campaigning

Offering an open space for good practices, new information and also space to act and participate will also support the motivation of youth to be engaged for a longer period of time.

Tip 5. Offer engagement with policy makers

Connecting or discussing with policy makers is most of the times a challenge. There are not few the times that young people feel that the policy makers are far away from the society and themselves and their voices cannot be heard. By offering the opportunity to meet and contact policy makers, is one way to motivate young people to support the project and their initiatives.

Tip 6. Create a regular communication channel

Having a common communication channel with the youth group during the whole duration of the project is a must. Being available also most of the time will support the team to connect also informally and bound the group.

4. Specific challenges and measures to be taken to promote the participation and motivation of vulnerable groups of young people, as well as internal communication and cooperation tools

In ActJust project vulnerable youth will participate in all the phases of the project. However, we do recognise that there are many obstacles that have to be overpassed in order to make the participation of vulnerable youth happen.

Who: Vulnerable groups

- Social and economic challenges
- Migrant background
- Rural areas

What: Support vulnerable youth participate in the project

Why: -to develop young people's skills, knowledge, and competencies

-they are more likely to drop off without engagement strategy

How:

Challenge 1: English skills

Solution: Glossary of some often-used terms, adaptation of the training modules language level to the level of pax.

Challenge 2: Internet connection

Solution: provide space in internet and if needed the equipment (computer, tablet or etc.)

Give a list of nearest public places where internet connection is stable

Challenge 3: Gap between vulnerable groups and other pax.

Solutions: Mentoring, preparation and extra work with young people who needs it, team building activities, extra activities to raise a team spirit (if possible)

Challenge 4: Reaching vulnerable groups

Solution: Partnership with local networks or partners that specifically works with vulnerable groups

Challenge 5: Too many online activities

Solutions: use the budget saved (from the travels) to have some extra national physical activities; organize also physical nation activities; use other possible activities/events your organization is implementing to keep in touch with young people

4.1 Tips and tricks for other youth NGOs

When talking about youth work we mean all young people without exceptions. No exclusions are accepted. Unfortunately not all young people have the same access to opportunities as for instance participating in projects. There are many challenges when including youth with vulnerabilities to a project.

Tip 1. Map the challenges

It is very important to know which are the challenges that you might face when including vulnerable youth in a project. Then it will be easier to adjust your programme to the needs of the youth.

Tip 2. Create an engagement strategy

Keeping the motivation and engagement up for vulnerable youth for the whole duration of the project is also a difficult task as the young people might feel that their skills are not enough to keep going in the project.

Tip 3. Enhance the feeling of belonging

Most of the vulnerable youth feel that they do not belong somewhere and are excluded from many occasions and opportunities. By enhancing the feeling of belonging, youth will be also motivated to continue participating in the projects. This can be achieved by giving responsibilities, using the mentoring sessions, offer travel opportunities and build a coherent team with a great group dynamic.

5. The role of various stakeholders involved in the promotion of policy dialogue between young people and policy makers

In ActJust project policy development is one of the most important outputs. Climate change is happening and young people are present to have their say and involved in the policy making. During the project, young people will create policy brief and recommendations on climate justice. The role of the various stakeholders involved in this policy dialogue is important, starting from mapping the stakeholders as such:

Who:

5.1 Policy makers

5.1.1 National level

- Parliament members
- Ministries
- MEP's
- Committee of the Regions of EU
- National Youth Councils

5.1.2 Regional / municipal level

- Mayor's office
- City Council
- Youth councils
- City planning department staff
- Youth coordinators at Municipality

5.2 NGO's

- Youth Forum EU level
- Youth or Youth environmental org.
- Youth centers/ community centers

5.3 Public entities

- UN Fundamental Rights Agency
- Topic related companies
- Schools
- Universities
- Research centers

5.4 Private Sector

- Companies
- Experts

What: Identify policy makers and involve them in the project implementation

Why:

- Engaging in the policy dialogue
- To give space and voice to youth to present their policy recommendations
- To bring about a change
- Make our project different from others

How:

Youth and Policy makers

- Preparation of youth for Hackathons
- Support youth team before/after hackathons
- Design the TC in WP4 and WP5 in very practical way
- E-participation and policy dialogue

How to engage with policy makers:

- To have a country / partner strategy
- To get in contact with them earlier (the time needs to be decided by each partner)
- Use the personal contacts or invite allies of your organization.

5.5 Tips and tricks for other youth NGOs

One of the most important stakeholder in a project is the group of policy makers. Policy makers are the ones who can take a recommendation and put it in practice. Through some of the projects young people have the opportunity to open a policy dialogue with people from local authorities, Universities, ministries and other entities from which a policy change might occur. This is an output that shows the fact that there are youth projects where young people have their say and that say leads to change.

Tip 1. Map the policy makers in Local, National and International level

Very important to know to whom you are addressing the policy change recommendation. Mapping the policy makers in different level of decisions can support you to create and organise your strategy.

Tip 2. Keep an open communication with the policy makers

Communicate the project process as well as the project results on time, invite policy makers in open events and give time for them to react.

Tip 3. Involve policy makers in the project

Involve policy makers from the beginning. Starting with the presentation of the project and the expectations you have from them.

6) Specifications of a training programme according to the youth needs identified and the application of action-led initiatives

8 online training workshops will be organized to support young people develop their action led youth initiatives in a constructive and productive way. The workshops will be delivered by the identified training leaders / partners based on their area of expertise. The trainings will be mingled with trainees and trainers coming from different EU countries, and young people can participate in modules of their interest according to the types of action-led initiatives they would like to implement at national level. The seminars will have group and plenary sessions, podcasts, synchronised and unsynchronised training modules discussing about the knowledge received in each thematic area / module, and how it can be applied in the design of the action-led initiatives as part of a pan-European project. Below you may find the specifications of ActJust training programme.

WHO: 30 Young people from each country (210 in total) between 18-30 years old, taking into consideration the following:

- Diversity in the group (intersectional)
- different English levels
- Not necessarily previous thematic knowledge
- transmit concrete tools
- P2P

WHAT: Online Training sessions

- 8 modules
- Hybrid: synchronous & asynchronous
- 6 hours total each module
- 48 hours of training (2 days of 3 hours)

WHY:

- Sets the basis for WP4 & WP5
- Implement by all partners each one contributing with their expertise
- Connect 210 people from Europe in one “space”

HOW:

- Zoom + online repository
- Assign activities to be implement in their local communities either as a group or individually.

- thematic
- learning by doing
- participatory/active methodologies
- interactive online tools

6.1 Tips and tricks for other youth NGOs

When you need to develop and deliver a training for young people, all the partners participate in the designing process. This is a very important stage where the basis of a successful training programme are set.

Tip 1. Map the needs of the young people

Mapping the needs of the young people will help you prioritize the themes and the scope of each module of a training programme. Thus, this will have as a result to create a coherent and to the point training programme.

Tip 2. Share roles considering expertise of each partner

Each partner participate in the project because it brings a different expertise and experience. Identify this experience and share the roles among the partners so that each one is responsible for one specific training module, based on the expertise.

Tip 3. Learning outcomes

Identify from the beginning the learning outcomes from each module of a training programme. This will help you to design the module to the right direction.

Tip 4 Keep the training modules interactive

No one wants to watch a boring training programme. Make it interactive, use different innovative tools and methods, non formal education tools and you will keep youth engaged for the whole training duration.

7. Conclusion

The methodological framework of ActJust is the action plan of the project, defining the diversified opportunities to be provided to youth and the right mix of online-offline activities, the youth engagement strategies suggested, the roles of stakeholders, youth organizations and policy makers in promoting young people's online and offline participation in democratic and civic life, youth training needs related to taking action and participate in policy dialogue, risks and challenges associated with shifting youth actions online. This framework can be adjusted in other realities, projects and needs as it sets the basis for a mixed methodology when comes to youth participation, action led initiatives, online and offline methods and tools. In the sections "Tips for other youth NGOs, other youth organisations can use the tips based on the expertise of the partners of ActJust project and use it in their realities. Of course, this document and the tips might not work in every occasion, however we believe that it can be a basis from which other partners in other projects can take advantage of.

The methodological framework is a public document and it will be translated in all the partners' language. During the second public event of the Actjust project, other youth organisations will have the opportunity to participate in a workshop on how to use this methodological framework in youth work. Enjoy!