



“YoUth PArticipatory budgets empowering  
young people using big Data: YUPAD”



## Project Newsletter No. 3

### About the project

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The project aims to enable young people to understand, practice, and influence participatory budgets across European cities. The project will develop the capacity building of educators and local authorities to implement participatory budgeting and increase civic participation among the youth.

### Partners

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Out of the Box International (Belgium) is the lead organisation and implementing the project with 9 partners: Union of the Baltic Cities (Poland), CESIE (Italy), CSI (Cyprus), SÜDWIND (Austria), RD IKSD (Latvia), OPENS (Serbia), IED (Greece), XWHY and VYTAUTAS MAGNUS University (Lithuania).

### Disclaimer

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## Third Partners' Meeting in Riga



Third transnational partners' meeting was held in Riga, Latvia July 11 - 12, 2023. The meeting served to discuss current achievements in the project implementation, define further targets for dissemination and outreach as well as to finalize YUPAD Policy Brief, particularly when it comes to recommendations to local policy makers, youth organizations, formal education institutions, relevant EU agencies and other relevant stakeholders. Advocacy plans for local and European level were discussed and agreed. The partners shared feedback from young people and other relevant actors that took part in the piloting of developed YUPAD tools (YUPAD Calculator, YUPAD Bees Methodology and YUPAD Curriculum for Educators and Policy Makers). Space for improvement in these tools' development was discussed and identified.

Next transnational partners' meeting is scheduled for February 2024 in Gdansk, Poland.

## Testing the YUPAD Tools in Austria



The YUPAD project has been very busy in the last couple of months in Austria. As a first step, all relevant documents have been translated into German – the YUPAD recipes, the training materials, and curricula, the YUPAD methodology as well as the YUPAD calculator.

On 15 March 2023 the YUPAD training for policy makers was organised. The 9 training participants were very keen to learn about participatory youth budgets. They discussed different funding possibilities and compared different ways of organising participatory youth budgets in Austria. They all agreed that participatory youth budgets are an important instrument to increase civic participation of youth.

On April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023 the first group of youth tested the YUPAD Calculator. For everyone it was exciting to see the priority topics of these young people. It turned out that for them the priorities are sport, youth mobility, health, and wellbeing. Based on these findings, they developed projects which could be funded under participatory youth budgets. One of these projects was an activist youth action to travel by train to Vienna and demand from the Government free train tickets for youth from and to the capital.



In total, 88 Austrian youth tested the YUPAD Calculator by now and in three schools project ideas for participatory youth budgets have been developed.

On 3 July 2023, 10 Austrian educators participated in the YUPAD training. These educators were particularly interested in how to integrate sustainability and climate justice into the school system through participatory youth budgets.

### *Training Seminars for Youth Work Specialists and Educators in Riga*



On May 19 and 26, 2023, training seminars were held in Riga for those involved in work with youth on manifestations of youth participation and involvement in the implementation of participatory budgets. Almost 20 representatives of the youth field participated in the seminars in person and online (youth specialists, representatives of youth centres and non-governmental organizations, consultants of school pupils' councils, active young people, etc.) from various Latvian municipalities - Riga, Ropaži, Ādaži, etc.

During the training seminars, the participants had the opportunity to:

- Get acquainted with various manifestations of youth participation and its importance;
- Understand the participation budget and mechanisms for its implementation;
- Learn methods and tools for finding out the opinions of young people, developing ideas and presenting them to local decision-makers (using the "Bee Methodology" developed within the YUPAD project);
- Familiarize yourself with the use of the online tool "Youth Participation Budget Platform" (yupad.net);
- Share experience and familiarize yourself with examples of good practice in the involvement of young people in participatory budgets in Latvia, etc.



Towards a Permanent Citizens' Participatory Mechanism in the EU  
*by Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs of the  
European Parliament*



This study assesses the EU participatory system and its existing participatory channels against mounting citizens' expectations for greater citizen participation in EU decision-making in the aftermath of the Conference on the Future of Europe.

First, the study systematises and examines each existing participatory mechanism, from the right of petition, the request for access to documents and the complaint to the European Commission and European Ombudsman to the European Citizens' Initiative, in terms of their accessibility, responsiveness and effectiveness.

Second, it demonstrates how these mechanisms' individual and collective ability in helping citizens to contribute to the Union's democratic life remains limited due to a variety of structural factors, ranging from low EU (participatory) literacy and the fragmentation of the EU participatory channels to unequal access to the very same tools.

Third, the study argues that part of these limitations that have historically limited the democratic potential of EU citizen participation might potentially be overcome by the introduction of an innovative representative participatory process, generally embodied by citizens' assemblies. The key feature of this approach is the direct involvement of citizens, who are randomly selected to represent the cultural identities and the diversity of society – beyond partisan divisions, particular interests, and nationalities – in the decision-making process. As such, the representative deliberative model seems particularly fitting for the EU, generally scarcely, unequally populated, and little deliberative, policy process.

Fourth, the study examines what it would take to embed a randomly selected citizens' assembly within the EU legal order. After contextualising this effort within the ongoing, broader debate around the institutionalisation of representative deliberative models, it puts forward a model of an EU representative deliberative process that could be set up without Treaty changes and operate in sync – not in competition – with existing EU participatory channels. Under such a model, a permanent Citizens' Chamber, populated by randomly selected citizens with previous deliberative experience, would regularly discuss novel initiatives generated either from the bottom-up, by citizens through existing EU participatory channels, or from the top-down, by the EU institutions within their prerogatives, with the aim to propose on a yearly basis the convening of



one or more ad hoc EU Citizens' Panels to advise on those very same themes. The proposed model not only intends to provide citizens with a permanent voice in the decision-making process, but also with a systematic monitoring system to ensure they are heard. The aim is to increase accountability and reinvigorate the agenda-setting power of common citizens through the creation of an integrated deliberative and participatory ecosystem of democratic engagement and innovation to be embedded, without Treaty change, into the existing EU decision-making and institutional architecture.

