OP!N

EUᵀᴴ – TOOLS AND TIPS FOR MOBILE AND DIGITAL YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN AND ACROSS EUROPE

2018

CONTENTS

Good youth participation encourages innovative ideas, strengthens democratic competences and also leads to more suitable policies and planning.

Youngsters need opportunities to participate in politics, which go beyond the classical types of engagement. They need participation processes that are appropriate for their age group, their environment and lifestyle. Digital (media) tools offer various innovative ways to connect, discuss issues and take part in decision-making processes.

The project "EUth - Tools and Tips for Mobile and Digital Youth Participation in and across Europe" offers OPIN.me, a toolbox for youth eParticipation projects. In the period of 2015-2018, with the support of the EU research and innovation programme "Horizon 2020", the EUth consortium has gained new ideas on digital youth participation and shares them in this publication.

This brochure gives you an overview on the quality aspects of digital youth participation. Here you will also find insights on challenges in the field of youth eParticipation. Moreover, it presents guidelines for successful digital participation and 15 practice cases from the EUth project pilots. Here you will also learn about the features and experiences of using the OPIN toolbox, and why it will enhance your eParticipation process.

Why you should opt for digital youth participation

Before starting – why eParticipation? Below are seven reasons to convince you:

More participation – irrespective of time and place

Developing opinions, discussing them with others and finally voting on them might take time. Many youngsters do not have the possibility or motivation to take part in formal offline participation after their busy day at school, university or work. Digital tools, however, can mitigate this issue by offering them the possibility to take part whenever and from wherever they would like to engage – online.

Greater transparency – open processes

Digital tools can comprehensively document the entire participation process: from general information and idea collection to voting and the final implementation of the results. They therefore offer an overview of the process – also for people who do not usually actively take part. At the same time, this transparency promotes understanding and trust in political and administrative processes.

Better overview – comprehensible decisions

Good dialogues offer everyone the possibility to share their views on the issue at hand, thus creating a vast number of inputs, which need to be structured and evaluated. Many online tools provide search and filter options. The course of discussion can also be documented and reviewed easily with the help of these tools. Hence, participants are able to keep an overview of the discussion's development, which makes the preparation for decisions easier.

Youth-friendly – targeting the young audience

Almost all young people use digital media on a daily basis. They share photos, videos, information and opinions and also discuss issues. In light of this, it is logical to provide digital participation tools to utilise the digital spaces where young people are already present every day. This increases the acceptance of the process.

More political involvement – reducing barriers

With digital tools, youngsters can easily become active in shaping their own environment, from anywhere in the world. eParticipation projects demonstrate to them that political decision-making can be fun, and that it is actually possible to change something. When experiencing this possibility to achieve something, they are more likely to also start to participate in other, more classical, ways of engagement.

Keeping pace with the times

Young people want to participate. However, decision-makers need to provide attractive, modern, digital opportunities and ways to do so. By doing so, decision-makers will benefit: they become digitalised and participation-friendly. Young people's motivation will increase when they see that their engagement leads to results.

More participation – increasing the network

Digital participation processes can easily be connected with social media in order to increase their reach. Participants can share their arguments with others and motivate them to join and take part. In just a few clicks, friends and acquaintances will be able to participate themselves. Therefore, more youngsters can be addressed with digital participation tools.[1]

Challenges for youth eParticipation

Digital youth participation as a socio-technical innovation is supposed to foster the democratisation and active citizenship of young people, with the aim of increasing their trust in political institutions and creating a better environment for young people through decisions made in their own spirit. eParticipation is of special importance in the field of youth participation, as the internet is an integral part of the youngsters' everyday activities where they share their ideas, beliefs and visions – therefore it's the perfect place for youth participation projects.
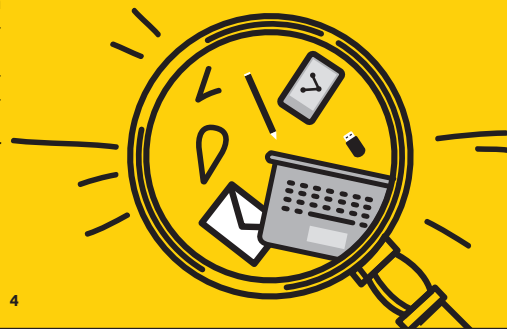
However, the field is still developing, improvements are needed and challenges have to be overcome on various levels.

In essence, youth participation (online and face-to-face) follows the same rules and quality standards as participatory processes for adults: The early involvement of participants is crucial to ensure that there is still enough space to discuss alternatives. Closely connected to this point is the need for genuine influence, meaning that there is the opportunity for realising the ideas and recommendations developed in the participatory process. The participative process should be transparent (i.a. the youngsters should know what the process is about and what influence they have in the process) and inclusive (i.e. different groups of society have the opportunity to participate in the process).

The most important challenges for youth participation are:

Finding the right communication strategy for the recruitment of young participants. The recruitment of participants is always a crucial challenge for all participative processes but especially for youth participation. Traditional channels of communication often don't work for youngsters. Therefore, it is important to develop a suitable communication strategy right at the beginning of the process to ensure that the correct target group is approached. Depending on the context, this can include peer-to-peer recruitment, the use of social media and the internet, the activation of local networks (e.g. schools, sports clubs etc.), the sending of invitation letters or face-to-face recruitment.

Find a topic that youngsters are interested in or better chose it with youngsters. It is important to find a topic that people in general are interested in and can deliberate on. But this point is of special importance for youth participation processes, as it is the key to attracting young people to a participative process. The topic should not only be interesting for the general public, but it should really be relevant for young people.

[1] CC-BY-SA: www.jugend.beteiligen.jetzt

Short process cycles. The interests of young people change faster than those of adults. It is therefore best to involve them only over a short period of time and make sure that decision-makers react soon after the participative process is over. This can become tricky when working with administrations, as their modus operandi is usually rather slow. In this case, it is absolutely necessary to clarify with the decision-makers in advance when the implementation, or at least commenting from their side, will happen. Adapt your participation project accordingly.

Privacy and data protection have to be guaranteed. This is especially important when it comes to youth eParticipation. The protection includes two aspects: the technical protection of personal data and the user behaviour. The technical requirements must be delivered by the platform or tool, i.e. their providers. Concerning the user behaviour, youngsters are not always aware of potential privacy intrusions and data protection threats. Therefore they need special guidance to ensure responsible behaviour on the internet through active online moderation.

For more information on the challenges of youth eParticipation and how to deal with them, consult the OPIN guidelines on the next page.

High quality youth eParticipation in brief

You should always aim for the highest quality of youth eParticipation when you involve young people in a decision-making process. Otherwise, you are just wasting the young people's time and effort.

But what exactly is high quality youth eParticipation? In the EU[th] partners' opinion, the following 10 recommendations briefly answer this question. If you are willing to let these recommendations guide your project, it shows that you are taking participation seriously - and we thank you for that!

10 recommendations for high quality youth eParticipation

- Keep young people at the heart of what you are doing
- Give the young people ownership of the participatory process and let them leave their mark on the content of the project
- Engage young people as early in the decision-making process as possible
- Have decision-makers on board from the onset and listen to their expectations for the project
- Ensure a high level of transparency in every step of the participatory process
- Be clear about the extent to which the young people will be able to influence the outcomes of the decision-making process
- Combine online features with face-to-face activities in your participatory project
- Ensure a secure environment for deliberations online as well as face-to-face
- Make the results of the participatory process count
- Keep the young people, decision-makers, and the public updated on the developments of the project

These 10 recommendations are of course only a sneak peek into what high quality youth eParticipation entails. If you want to explore the 10 recommendations in further detail, we highly recommend that you check out the OPIN guidelines.[2] They are your helpline to putting these recommendations into practice. If you pay careful attention to the advice given in them, you should then be in good hands and on your way to reaching high quality youth eParticipation as a result.

Features of OPIN – home for your participatory project

This section will tell you more about the third version of OPIN. It will show you how the functionalities that were developed as part of the platform serve its main aim: to make it easy to involve young people in discussion and decision-making through digital tools.

Main features of the platform

OPIN is the only platform that offers an encompassing digital tool box that is dedicated to youth participation.

> OPIN is a new way to think about participation processes: smart, simple and fun.
>
> Monica
> (Bao Blog Plus, Italy)
>
> Simon
> (iParticipate, Malta)

> OPIN is a really interesting and fun tool to use with young people. The young people who participated in the different projects came forward with interesting suggestions and comments.

In order to make successful projects possible, it emphasises three main goals:

1 Youngsters should be enabled to easily participate ("Participate" section on OPIN.me)

2 Initiators should be enabled to quickly set up participation processes ("Create project" section)

3 And support should be provided for everyone who wants to involve youngsters successfully ("Help" section)

> OPIN is a completely new tool for eParticipation, close to young users. We like it because it is quite easy to use and offers different ways to get opinions from youngsters.
>
> Petra (You-P Youth Parliament – eParticipation of Young for Brighter Future, Slovenia)

The centerpiece of OPIN is its toolbox: a wide range of different participation processes from which initiators can choose when setting up their projects and in which youngsters can participate in different ways. This all-in-one solution enables users to run projects that suit their needs and expectations and will be further extended in the future.

> The various participation processes you can set up on OPIN, from setting up the project for a local problem to the election of the class president in a local school is the thing I like the most about OPIN. In our project 'Prilep Youth in eParticipation processes' we use OPIN as a tool for activating and engaging young people in the eParticipation process that is really important and it is the key tool of future youth participation.
>
> Zoran
> (Coalition of youth organisations SEGA, Macedonia)

- The **brainstorming** process enables one to find out what ideas should be discussed e.g. at the next meeting of the youth club.

- Using an **idea challenge** gives one the possibility to decide e.g. which of the many proposals for the next charity event should be implemented.

- With the help of the **mapping** tool one can connect ideas and proposals to a specific area and locate them on a map.

- The members of a youth organisation can edit texts cooperatively by using the **text review** process.

- And the **poll** gives initiators the opportunity to get to know what youngsters think in a quick and easy way.

- If you are not sure which process suits your needs best, the **Decision Support Tool** can help you to make this decision.

> Thanks to this project I was able to understand better the school space and what to improve.
>
> Ricardo
> (OPA, Italy)

Supporting features

The core elements of the platform are supported by many other functions offered by OPIN. The three most important ones, which make participation processes with youngsters increasingly smooth, are listed here.

Private and public projects:

Having an account on OPIN enables one to participate in the projects which can be found on the platform. However, there is one exception. Some youth organisations might want to discuss questions that are only relevant to them or which include information that shouldn't be public. For these occasions, OPIN offers the possibility to set up private processes. Only youngsters who get invited via the platform will be able to participate in these.

Social Login:

Registering and logging in to the platform has several benefits: it allows for better community management and prevents spamming and trolling. However, it may act as a barrier for youngsters who do not want to register on yet another platform, they want to have it easier. Therefore, OPIN offers the possibility of a social login: Youngsters can take part in projects by using their Facebook- or Google-accounts, which is easy and makes OPIN much better accessible at the same time.

Connecting online processes with face-to-face events

More often than not, eParticipation processes do not stand alone. They are part of a broader participation culture and probably also part of projects which consist of more than just one step. These steps do not only take place online but also offline – in face-to-face events. To guarantee a successful project, both online and offline elements have to be combined. OPIN does exactly that. It allows online participation as well as integrates face-to-face events. The different steps are connected within one timeline. Furthermore, OPIN makes it possible to transfer the information and data between the different processes.

> I think that this is an excellent tool for eParticipation. It's very easy to use and you can get the transparency over every idea (comment or vote) of the project. I like the fact that there is also a possibility to combine offline and online stages of a process.
>
> Sanja
> (Youth Information Center INFO SEGA, Macedonia)

A unique approach to involve youngsters

Although this already seems quite encompassing, it is not enough just to offer different kinds of processes and functions in order to guarantee a successful eParticipation project. eParticipation is a fairly new approach and needs, at least for the time being, a guide that supports inexperienced users. OPIN calls this its help section. In a user-friendly manner, it offers hints and tricks when it comes to creating and taking part in participation projects.

> The help section as well as information on the privacy policy, code of conduct, etc. is very clear and well-written. … The decision support tool is clear and easy-to-use.
>
> Margaret
> (Cross-border pilot Trieste-Koper, Italy and Slovenia)

The central part of the help section is the guidelines on how to run a successful participation project. They describe all the things that are important and which should be taken into consideration before, during and after a project runs. On top of that, OPIN offers further help that can be expected from a modern online platform: user manuals and FAQs. And last but not least, if more help is needed, OPIN accepts requests for tailored help and counselling through one of the many OPIN partners. Even a whole participation process, including online and offline elements, can be managed by them.

In this sense, OPIN differs from other tools and applications out there. While existing social media platforms like Facebook or Twitter are made for informal communication, OPIN's features provide everything to guarantee organised and well-structured participation processes.

By combining a wide set of participation features and guidelines in one platform, OPIN offers a unique solution. It supports youngsters as well as initiators to make the voices that count heard. OPIN aims to update our participatory culture and bring people together. It contributes to modernising our democratic structures for the 21st century.

> With this project, the students had the possibility to express their ideas; it was a lab for the development of active citizenship skills.
>
> Bruna
> (OPA, Italy)

> It's great, I can vote on ideas at home while I am in New Zealand.
>
> Andrej
> (Active Youth, Slovenia)

OPIN – toolbox for youth eParticipation projects

Why choose OPIN over other online tools? What makes it so special? Here are five reasons why OPIN is the best tool for your eParticipation projects:

1. OPIN is a safe place

Unlike WhatsApp, Facebook etc. OPIN is not commercial. It has been developed with funds from the European Union and is run by a non-profit business (Liquid Democracy). Making money with personal data or with placing individualised advertisement is not an option for us. On the contrary, privacy and data protection has been a fundamental principle from the very beginning. Thanks to the support of data protection officers and professional consultancy from law experts, OPIN actually over-achieves on regulations such as the European data protection legislation or the German Federal Data Protection Act (BDSG). Thus, **by using OPIN, you can stop worrying about this complex topic and avoid discussions with your local data protection officer.**[4]

And what makes it truly unique in the market of online participation tools is that if you want to, in most cases you can combine these online participation activities with other project activities – such as offline events. Few participation projects happen solely online. It has proven to be **more effective to combine online and offline** elements in your participation project **to increase participants' motivation.**

OPIN provides full transparency on such a multi-stage online-offline process and supports continuity:

2. Easy to use

OPIN is easy to use in several ways:

- **Design**: Navigation is intuitive and features are easy to handle. You will not need hours to understand this software. And if questions come up, user manuals provide information with captures of the screen.
- **Devices:** OPIN is provided in responsive design, meaning you can also use it on mobile phones or tablets.
- **Social Login:** Registration is always an issue. However, it increases safety and also the commitment of participants. To lower this obstacle, participants can use Google and Facebook accounts for registration.

Projects follow a timeline where **all elements of the participative project are displayed and accessible.**

This ensures transparency of the whole process. On the one hand, you have an overview over all elements of the process and on the other hand you can easily see what has happened so far, where the process is at the moment and what the next steps will be.

You can **freely add offline phases to the timeline** of your participation project.

Offline phases are optional in OPIN. By adding offline events to an online project, administrators can individualise the project stages to his or her needs.

Here is an example:

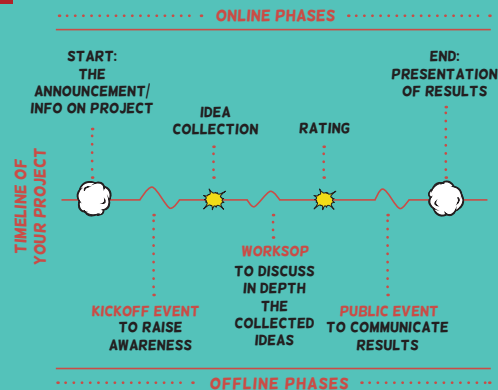## 3. Combination of online and offline participation activities

OPIN offers all main participation features that you can find in other tools and even more:

- Posting ideas
- Commenting on ideas
- Rating of posts and comments
- Map functionality for locating ideas
- Polling
- Private processes

ONLINE PHASES

START: THE ANNOUNCEMENT/ INFO ON PROJECT

IDEA COLLECTION

RATING

END: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

TIMELINE OF YOUR PROJECT

KICKOFF EVENT TO RAISE AWARENESS

WORKSOP TO DISCUSS IN DEPTH THE COLLECTED IDEAS

PUBLIC EVENT TO COMMUNICATE RESULTS

OFFLINE PHASES

[4] If you want to learn about details, check the OPIN guidelines on page 10 or see https://opin.me/en/privacy-policy/

Processing participation results from one stage to the other: OPIN enables the initiators to **download content from online phases** (such as a list of posts) **and upload files from offline phases** (such as pictures from an event).

This helps you to maintain continuity throughout all stages. For example: Download the ideas developed in an online idea collection to use them in a face-to-face workshop, where those ideas are elaborated in further detail. As a next step, upload the elaborated ideas of the workshop to the OPIN platform to let the online participants rate them.

4. Available in 10 languages

OPIN is made to be used throughout Europe. The platform is currently available in 10 European languages: English, German, French, Italian, Slovenian, Danish, Russian, Swedish, Greek and Ukrainian. If your local language is not among those but you have resources to do the translation, we are happy to integrate new languages! Contact us for further questions: info@opin.me

5. OPIN guidelines: Practical support for successful youth eParticipation

A whole lot of participation experts compiled information on how to set up successful youth eParticipation projects.[5] The very comprehensive and practical tips address all stages and topics of youth eParticipation:

- How to get political support
- How to shape the project goal and process
- Which roles and responsibilities need to be covered
- Strategies for recruitment and activation of participants
- Moderation
- Privacy
- Financing
- and many more

[5] See p. 10.
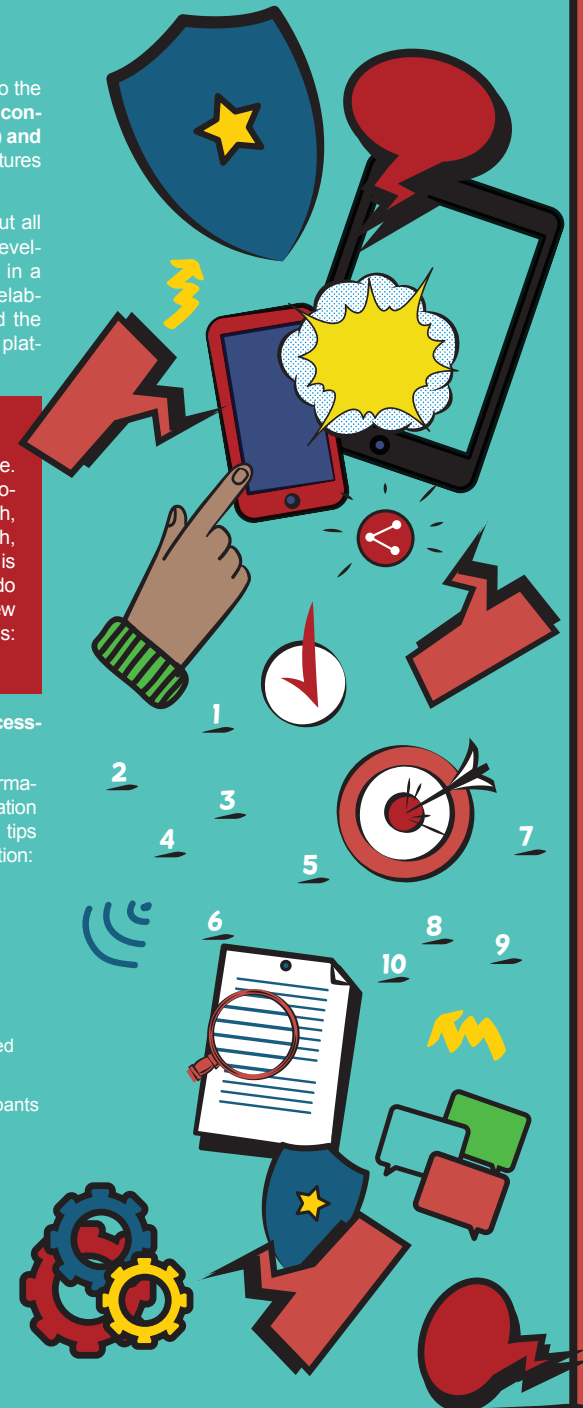
This condensed knowledge provides substantial support. And what is more, it is a nice read. Check it out on OPIN: https://opin.me/en/help/guidelines/

OPIN guidelines: Tips and tricks for more and better youth eParticipation

An eParticipation project is not solely about setting up online participation features. No, there are several building blocks that surround or are an integral part of the actual eParticipation components. You also have to construct these building blocks either before, during or after the eParticipation process is taking place in order to make your project successful. And this is exactly why the OPIN platform doesn't only provide you with software that enables you to set up a user-friendly and appealing online participatory process, it also provides you with support in the form of information. It is exactly this combination that makes OPIN unique and different from other eParticipation platforms.

One of the sources of information is the OPIN guidelines. We will briefly introduce you to this valuable helpline below:

What are the OPIN guidelines?

The OPIN guidelines are designed to assist initiators who wish to carry out youth eParticipation projects. They provide user-friendly practical tips and tricks for setting up youth eParticipation processes from A to Z and direct the initiators' attention to issues they need to consider in order to succeed with their project. In sum, the OPIN guidelines will hold initiators' hand through every phase of a project and enable them to conduct successful eParticipation processes without being pros.

The OPIN guidelines are available in two formats. You can download them as a PDF and read them from A to Z, or you can find them directly integrated in the Help section on the OPIN platform and dive into the tips and tricks which are of particular interest to you.

A glimpse into the topics covered in the tips and tricks of the OPIN guidelines:

- Set realistic goals for your project
- Secure funds for your project
- Integrate evaluation in every phase of your project
- Compose a communication strategy to be publicly visible
- Recruit the young participants
- Prepare online community management
- Keep the young participants continuously activated and motivated online
- Present your results to decision-makers face-to-face
- …and many more!

You can find the OPIN guidelines on: opin.me/en/help/guidelines

Experiences with OPIN – all over Europe: pilot projects

Five pilot projects were launched as part of the EUth project consortium. They have provided direct feedback on the tools developed. This helped to create the unique toolbox OPIN that is based on a "design by participation" approach. Here the variety of cases in which eParticipation processes on OPIN took place is described.

THE DEVELOPMENT CENTRE HEART OF SLOVENIA (HOS)

The Development Centre of the Heart of Slovenia connects local authorities in central Slovenia. Well-known as a qualified development partner, it cooperates with youth organisations. It is a pilot with several participation projects in three different municipalities, and it has been using features of OPIN in combination with face-to-face activities. For instance, in Litija and Mengeš, face-to-face participation outputs were uploaded on to OPIN, which allowed for more participation. In Kamnik, for the European week of mobility, the Municipality of Kamnik received information on how to organise their mobility event for young people according to the feedback they received through OPIN.

Currently, diverse projects are taking place in high schools, social centres and associations in connection with the municipalities.

CROSS-BORDER PILOT

How can we get young people more involved in political decision-making, especially in areas where there is low youth participation? That was the question asked by two pilot projects within the EUth project, the cross-border pilot in Trieste and Koper, and the sub-pilot in the Heart of Slovenia. The cross-border pilot, led by ISINNOVA in cooperation with the University of Trieste, the Municipality of Trieste, the University of Primorska and the Municipality of Koper, was aimed at giving young people on both sides of the Italy-Slovenia border a voice in their communities, and to see how they might be able to work together to make sure those voices are heard by those in power. We focus on empowerment of young people through community management (the YCM programme) and dialogue with decision-makers.

CONSEIL PARISIEN DE LA JEUNESSE (CPJ)

CPJ is an exchange and concertation body between Parisian youth and councilors. Composed of 100 members between 15 and 30 years-old, randomly selected, it enables young people to get involved in municipal policies. The plan is to use eParticipation to broaden the spectrum of participation beyond the members of CPJ, especially to include youngsters who applied but were not selected. So far, CPJ members proposed to the CPJ candidates (more than 600 young people) to take a survey on the use of Bastille square by young people. The answers allow CPJ members to adapt their recommendations to the practices and customs of young people in Paris. The Paris Youth Council's recommendations were sent to the Mayor of Paris and the three borough mayors in March 2016.

UNEF-DAUPHINE

UNEF Dauphine is a representative organisation that participates actively in the decisions of Paris-Dauphine University. Its three missions are to protect, defend and inform students of Paris-Dauphine University. UNEF-Dauphine joined the project in June 2017 and is eager to create a participatory culture within their association and their university. The last idea, to get ideas and statements on the well-being of students: What is in it for students? How could it improve? Then to create and disseminate a report.

AEGEE – EUROPE

AEGEE is an association gathering 13 000 European students, in more than 200 local organisations.

Between the local antennas and the European board, networks make this big structure flow and the Network Commission facilitates "Network Meetings" in several countries. We used OPIN during the Network Meeting (NWM) in Alicante in early November 2017. Some activities addressed both local and European levels, and it was thus interesting to compile the ideas of all NWM to see if there are some commonalities between members. We therefore set up brainstorming projects on OPIN and we are currently waiting to see if the tool is assimilated. One activity required an individual and secret voting to avoid group interests. We used OPIN to face those challenges.

BAO-BLOG PLUS (ITALY)
Run by: Open Group

Bao Blog Plus (now BB+) is a participative newsroom in which 15 young journalists (16-29 year olds) use Web2.0 tools to tell their peers news and stories about the local community of San Lazzazaro di Savena (Italy). A series of on and offline participation activities have been organised to ensure that young people from all kinds of back-grounds are involved in the whole process and help decide the direction of the newsroom. The journalists met with a local administrator to discuss the ideas that have emerged for the local community.

OBIETTIVO PARTECIPAZIONE ATTIVA! (OPA!) (ITALY)
Run by: Centro Studi per la Democrazia Partecipativa

This project by a school in Milan was about testing the practice of a hybrid Participatory Budgeting in a school field. This cultural project aimed to involve students between the ages of 15 and 19 years in a decision-making process, which is related to their everyday life. Together with their teachers, they were engaged in proposing, discussing and selecting the top priority projects for the community to be funded and realized with the support of the school. At the end of the project, students voted for courtyard renovation and a recording studio.

OPIN ELBA (ITALY)
Run by: A.P.S. Legambiente Circolo Arcipelago Toscano

The objective of this project is to develop a local action plan for the sustainable development of the Italian island Elba, involving students from high school. Young people are involved in ensuring the functioning of ecosystem services and improving life quality on the island. OPIN is used to discuss and vote on the priorities for the island. This will be followed by a debate where students will take on the role of public administrators, entrepreneurs and environmental stakeholders. The result will be presented to the public.

ACTIVE YOUTH (SLOVENIA)
Run by: Municipality of Lukovica

After setting up a youth club, the Municipality of Lukovica has been using OPIN to consult the young people from the club on various different topics, such as the kind of activities and events it should organise, and what is missing for young people in the municipality. After multiple meetings, the youth club has gathered valuable information about what young people want and collected their ideas for different projects in the town.

iPARTICIPATE (MALTA)
Run by: Aġenzija għażagħ

Using OPIN, Aġenzija għażagħ has started to launch some ideas online, such as raising the questions of legal-izing marijuana, Vote 16 and topics that youth workers should tackle at Agenzija Zghazagh youth hubs. The results of such consultations are presented to policy makers and in EU structured dialogue debates. OPIN makes the participation process dynamic, by allowing young people to engage in debates and see their ideas and feedback in real time.

ENGAGING YOUTH IN THE CYPRUS NATIONAL YOUTH STRATEGY (CYPRUS)
Run by: Youth Board of Cyprus

The Youth Board of Cyprus (YBC), as the competent authority on youth affairs, is coordinating the development of the National Youth Strategy (NYS). The project engages youth in the finalisation of the objectives of the NYS and the preparation of its 1st Action Plan (AP). This project guarantees youth participation and impact, both in developing and in implementing the youth policy, but also in general policies affecting youth. A series of offline and online participation activities including National Youth Conferences, surveys, joint meetings with the Steer-ing and Cross-sectoral Committees and Advisory Body, local and online consultations (via OPIN) with youth and relevant stakeholders have been used.

PIMP YOUR TOWN! (GERMANY)
Run by: Politik zum Anfassen e.V.,

Pimp Your Town! realises simulations of local politics in schools, offering young people the chance to put their ideas on the municipal agenda and gain a better understanding of local politics. Each simulation lasts 3 days and involves up to 120 students. They pretend to be local politicians, write their own proposals, discuss and vote on them, while receiving help from city councillors who are involved in the entire process. Part of the group acts as journalists who report about the simulation. During these processes, OPIN comes into play at all stages. It has also provided the opportunity to keep discussions between politicians and students on-going – even after the simulation.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP PROGRAM (GEORGIA)
Community Leadership Program (Georgia)

This project aims at promoting youth participation at local level. The objective is to empower youngsters to become agents of change. During workshops they gain competences, learn about their rights and opportunities and are encouraged to develop project ideas in groups and publish the proposals on OPIN. The ideas will be discussed by other youngsters, representatives of the municipality and members of the local community and subsequently revised by the group. The final proposals will then be voted on. After the participation process, youngsters will meet with local officials and NGOs to discuss their project ideas.

PRILEP YOUTH VOICE IN EPARTICIPATION
Run by: Coalition of Youth Organisations SEGA

The objective of this project is to involve youngsters in local decision-making in Prilep. The project started with a large-scale promotion of and information about the eParticipation process, through school workshops. The goal of this process is to collect creative ideas on how the quality of life in Prilep can be improved for youngsters. Using OPIN, young people have shared their ideas with their peers, the general public and municipal administra-tors, as well as voted on the proposals. In a final event the young people will present the results to and discuss them with representatives of the municipality's Youth Advisory Body and the Local Self-Government. At least two of the ideas shall be included in the municipality's mid-term planning and subsequently put into practice.

YOU-P YOUTH PARLIAMENT - EPARTICIPATION OF YOUNG FOR BRIGHTER FUTURE (SLOVENIA)
Run by: Slovenian Association of Friends of Youth

YOU-P involves youngsters at national level, culminating in a public event in the Slovenian National Assembly. The project advances and upgrades the well-established National Children's Parliament (NCP), in which young-sters take part in and adopt conclusions every year. For the first time and with the help of OPIN, teenagers have now become active participants in the dialogue and have been given the opportunity to comment and vote on the conclusions of the NCP. Another novelty is that the youngsters have presented concrete suggestions for pol-icy changes to the Slovenian Government at the end of the participation process.

Open summit: 12 recommendations for the development of eParticipation

OPEN SUMMIT
YOUTH ePARTICIPATION IN EUROPE
FUTURE IS NOW!

7-8TH DEC 2017, BERLIN

Over 130 attendees from all over Europe attended the EUth Open summit on youth eParticipation in Europe "The Future is Now". Here they discussed four main aspects of eParticipation: Development of digital youth participation, synergies between general citizen and youth participation fields, impact by integrating eParticipation into decision-making processes and tools for merging online and offline methods of youth participation. The inputs for discussions were collected in open online brainstorming sessions on OPIN. These 12 points should inspire and give ideas for the general development of the youth eParticipation field.

DEVELOPMENT

- CHANGE OF MIND-SET WITH REGARDS TO EPARTICIPATION AND DIGITAL METHODS: CONVEY TO POLICY-MAKERS THAT E-TOOLS ARE A WIN-WIN SITUATION

- MAP AND REACH INTERMEDIARIES WITH A MESSAGE THAT WILL CONVINCE THEM

- THE TOOL IS IMPORTANT, BUT THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS AND THE PARTICIPATORY CULTURE ARE KEY

IMPACT

- INCLUSION: PROMOTE INCLUSIVE PARTICIPATORY CULTURE THROUGH DIVERSI ED VIRTUAL & PHYSICAL CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION WHICH ENSURES ACCESSIBILITY FOR EVERYONE

- POLICY MAKING: USE DIGITAL PARTICIPATION TOOLS TO ENSURE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES ARE MADE OPEN, TRANSPARENT, RESPONSIVE, EASY, ACCOUNTABLE AND CLEARLY LINKED TO OUTCOME AND FUN

- FOLLOW-THROUGH: DELIVER CONCRETE RESULTS QUICKLY, SHARE THEM ON AN OPEN PORTAL, BROADCAST TO WIDER SOCIAL MEDIA AND POTENTIAL ACTIONS TAKEN

SYNERGIES

- IN ANY CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PROJECT, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EXISTING SUPPORTING YOUTH STRUCTURES SHOULD BE INVOLVED FROM THE VERY BEGINNING - IN A PROJECT THAT HAS A CONCRETE TIMEFRAME - START YOUNG!

- IMPROVE THE EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT TO BOOST PARTICIPATORY CULTURE FROM AN EARLY AGE AND EMPOWER INDIVIDUALS TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY IN THE SOCIETY

- THE DIGITAL PARTICIPATION PLATFORM SHOULD BRING ALL AGE GROUPS TOGETHER

TOOLS

- TO THE DEVELOPERS: TOOLS NEED TO BE MORE ACCESSIBLE BY ALLOWING ORGANISATIONS TO PERSONALISE THEM AND MAKE THE RESULTS MORE VISIBLE

- TO DECISION-MAKERS AND PRACTITIONERS: PARTICIPATION PROCESSES SHOULD START AT LOCAL LEVEL AND AT THE EVERYDAY REALITY OF YOUTH

- TO PRACTITIONERS AND DECISION-MAKERS: WE ALWAYS SHOULD MEET IN PERSON FIRST WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AND FOLLOW UP WITH THE RESULTS

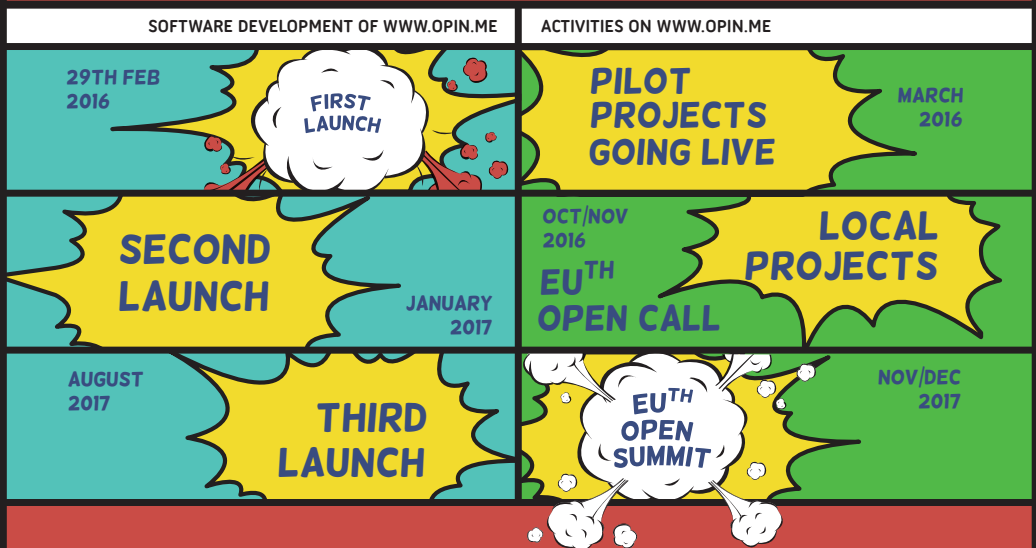# Project "EU^th - Tools and Tips for Mobile and Digital Youth Participation in and across Europe"

EU^TH - TOOLS AND TIPS FOR MOBILE AND DIGITAL YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN AND ACROSS EUROPE

The aim of EU^th is to get more young people involved in political decision-making and increase their trust in European political institutions. For this we need:

- youth-friendly digital and mobile participation tools
- to set up attractive participation projects

The solution is created within the EUth project: OPIN.me, an all-in-one proven digital and mobile participation toolbox, ready to be embedded in web presence of youth organisations or administrations.

SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT OF WWW.OPIN.ME

ACTIVITIES ON WWW.OPIN.ME

29TH FEB 2016 — FIRST LAUNCH

PILOT PROJECTS GOING LIVE — MARCH 2016

SECOND LAUNCH — JANUARY 2017

OCT/NOV 2016 EU^TH OPEN CALL — LOCAL PROJECTS

AUGUST 2017 — THIRD LAUNCH

EU^TH OPEN SUMMIT — NOV/DEC 2017

PROJECT COORDINATOR:
nexus Institute for Cooperation Management and Interdisciplinary Research, Germany

nexus

PROJECT PARTNERS:

Alfstore

AEGEE EUROPE — European Students' Forum

RAZVOJNI CENTER SRCA SLOVENIJE

y eryica — youth information

IJAB — International Youth Service of the Federal Republic of Germany

ISINNOVA

LiquidDemocracy e.V.

MISSIONS PUBLIQUES

KTH

FONDEN TEKNOLOGI RÅDET — DANISH BOARD OF TECHNOLOGY FOUNDATION

Alfstore, France

AEGEE - European Students' Forum, Belgium

Development Centre of the Heart of Slovenia, Slovenia

European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERYICA), Luxembourg

IJAB - International Youth Service of the Federal Republic of Germany, Germany

ISSINOVA - Institute of Studies for the Integration of Systems, Italy

Liquid Democracy e.V. (Liqd), Germany

Missions Publiques, France

Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Sweden

The Danish Board of Technology Foundation (DBT), Denmark

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