

## Youth Partnership

Partnership between the European Commission  
and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth



# Launch of T-kit 15: Participatory youth policy



Rapporteur: Teresa Ferreira

Pool of European Youth Researchers

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## Summary and key points

The purpose of this report is to describe the [Launch Event of the T-kit 15: Participatory youth policy](#) that took place in Faro, a city located in the south of Portugal, on 18 April 2024.

The present document focuses on the Launch event of the T-kit 15 on Participatory youth policy, with [participants](#) from several countries, sectors and organisations, namely educators in the youth field, youth workers, leaders, policy planners and implementors, young people, youth organisations, local and national public authorities, youth work implementation structures, and funding structures supporting participatory youth policy making.

This report provides insights into this training kit and the practical labs on educational activities of this methodological and educational tool.

The participants welcomed the training kit as a relevant support tool. The theoretical part was praised, and the educational activities were described as valuable for youth groups and to be used also by other actors, such as civil servant capacity building.

To record the event and carry out depth interviews, a media team was on the T-kit launch event. On the webpage of the launch event photo and video recordings are available, as well as illustrations and other publications on the topic.

### 1. Brief introduction

Published in 2023, the [Training kit 15: Participatory youth policy](#) complements and helps to implement the key aims from [About time! A reference manual for youth policy from a European perspective](#), 2021. Along with the relaunch of the [Massive Open Online Course on Youth policy essentials](#) and the continuity of the [Shaping youth policy in practice project](#), the T-kit 15 provides educational support for building youth sector capacity for participatory policy making.

### 2. Launching event

The main aim of the event was to launch and promote the T-kit 15: Participatory youth policy, emphasising the importance of youth participation in policy making and providing stakeholders with valuable resources and tools for effective implementation.

The event brought together policy makers, educators, youth organisations, youth workers, trainers and facilitators who are engaged in policy making on local, national and international levels. The aim was to learn about the resource structure and content of the T-kit and its educational approaches. On the evening of 18 April, the T-kit and [related illustrations](#) was used as a basis of a mingling activity for the participants to get to know each other. On 19 April, the participants were invited to explore its potential to improve practices and policies in their own contexts along with the possibility of disseminating it widely among youth sector stakeholders.

## **2.1 Opening session**

The participants were welcomed by Jorge Orlando, senior officer of the Portuguese Institute for Sport and Youth (IPDJ) and chair of the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ), and Konstanze Schoenfeld, member of the Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ), main statutory bodies of the Council of Europe Youth sector.

Jorge Orlando introduced the co-management principle in the Council of Europe youth sector. He presented the Faro Youth Centre and referred to its ambition of earning the Quality Label for Youth Centres, and therefore becoming the third youth centre in Portugal to be awarded the label, after Lisbon and Braga. Orlando referred to international political events, namely the Georgian *Transparency of Foreign Influence* law, which leads to shrinking space for civil society. The Reykjavík Summit was mentioned as a driver of the youth perspective. He explained that the practicalities of putting this youth perspective into practice at the Council of Europe and national levels is also a challenge that this Summit is committed to meet.

Regarding the Shaping youth policy in practice seminar, Orlando highlighted the national delegation's motivation to continue the project and recalled the Council of Europe support measures to be used by the participants to do so.

To conclude, Orlando congratulated the EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership team, for the T-kit 15. He acknowledged the contributions arising from the collaborative efforts of this small team and stressed the message that “together we are stronger”.

Konstanze Schoenfeld invited the participants to browse the Council of Europe webpage to learn about the representatives of the countries and contact them. She also shared the upcoming events for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Council of Europe. Schoenfeld stressed the importance of

the Reykjavik Declaration as it finally recognises that “investing in young people is an investment in the sustainability of the future”.

Konstanze Schoenfeld celebrated the T-kit 15, calling it an interesting work and praised the theoretical side of the document.

Four ongoing projects and working groups set up in the Council of Europe’s Youth Department were also introduced, namely the research project to inform the European Youth Foundation’s reform; the review of the Council of Europe Youth sector strategy 2030; the draft recommendation on creating youth participation structures for young people; and the [draft recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member States on young people and climate action](#).

## **2.2 The Youth Partnership and the participatory youth policy**

The EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership introduced the background of the training kit and its origin in the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite the restrictions on developing non-formal education activities at that time, the desire and need for them prevailed. Therefore, Youth Partnership designed [About time! A reference manual for youth policy from a European perspective](#), which is accompanied by the [Massive Open Online Course on Youth policy essentials](#), the thematic [E-library of youth policy evaluation, Insights](#), videos and illustrations. It was from these documents and the Shaping youth policy in practice project that the idea of this T-kit emerged.

This tool aims to engage young people in all stages of policy making, from development to implementation and evaluation. The T-kit was also designed to support the EU dialogue and promote the co-management principle at national and local levels.

The digital version can be found on the [Youth Partnership website](#) and printed copies of relevant illustrations and other publications can be sent to the participants by the Youth Partnership.

## **3. Introduction to the event and its objectives**

Zara Lavchyan and Ajša Hadžibegović led participants through an introductory round to learn who was representing young people, researchers, civil society, youth workers, educators, and youth centre managers among participants.

The facilitators pointed that the T-kit 15 aims to break down young people's fear of getting involved in a field seemingly reserved for adult professionals and politicians, and in turn, increase participation in policy making and bringing this topic closer to the community of youth work practice.

A guide to the manual was provided and two rounds of practical labs took place showcasing the educational activities described in the T-kit 15.

### **3.1 Presentation of the T-kit 15: Participatory youth policy**

T-kit 15: Participatory youth policy is the result of the collective work of a diverse group of individuals, including facilitators, trainers and other contributors, and was peer-reviewed. Tanya Basarab, Zara Lavchyan and Ajša Hadžibegović are the authors and editors of this T-kit, peer-reviewed by Rita Jonušaitė. Other contributors include Snežana Bačlija Knoch, Gianluca Massimiliano Frongia, Miguel Ángel García López, Inna Popova and Miriam Teuma. Lali Bouche was the co-ordinator of this T-kit's development.

Despite its length, the T-kit is considered a ready-to-use manual, a useful tool to be used by practitioners and trainers.

Its target audience is educators in the youth field, youth workers, leaders, policy planners and implementors, young people, youth organisations, local and national public authorities, youth work implementation structures, and funding structures supporting participatory youth policy making. In short, everyone in the youth field who carries out practical activities and wants to ensure that the activities fulfil the participants' needs. The theoretical part of the T-kit was focused on explaining basic concepts but not covering all theoretical issues on the topic which are already covered in the About Time manual.

All participants explored the T-kit in printed format, guided by the facilitators. The T-kit includes information about principles of effective policy, policy cycle, steps of planning and evaluation and monitoring participatory policy making. There is a specific section focused on educational activities supporting policy making. These activities support the development of learning outcomes, including the necessary knowledge, such as laws and mechanisms; skills such as negotiation and listening; and attitudes that ensure participation, such as internal readiness and

motivation. A list of existing programmes supporting participatory youth policy can also be found in the T-kit 15.

The tool contains five thematic sections. The sequence of these sections was discussed, particularly if the “Vision for Change” section should appear in the beginning or the middle. The five sections are as follows:

- 1) Understanding the Public Policy-Forming Process: the time when the public policy was introduced, the current state of play and the desired objective.
- 2) Principles of an Effective Youth Policy: discovering the principles, as well as actions to take.
- 3) Vision for Change: to understand and imagine what and who changes with the policy.
- 4) Mapping and Engaging Key Actors: who will be influenced by the change, and how.
- 5) Monitoring and Evaluation: to enhance the monitoring and evaluation awareness of the decision-makers as well as practical activities to do so.

The T-kit includes 32 educational activities to start policy making in practice. Each of these activities is based on a different source and has its own respective theoretical foundations. Although it is not possible to cover all types of activities, the T-kit includes a wide enough range. In addition to encouraging readers to put the engagement activities into practice, it is expected that the learning process on this topic will continue.

After this T-kit quick guide, the floor was open to the audience for questions and suggestions. Since there is a belief that politicians do not read existing publications on youth public policies nor will they read this tool, a separate training kit or a poster with part of this information was proposed to draw politicians’ attention to the initiative.

It was suggested that the activities could also be used by civil servants. Ajša Hadžibegović emphasised that these educational activities are not reserved for youth groups, but can be used by other actors, such as civil servant capacity building.

It was requested that the T-kit be translated into languages other than English. Tanya Basarab referred to the possibility that Erasmus+ National Agencies for Youth could carry out such translations. In this regard, the translation of the posters was recommended as a starting point. Lastly, it was suggested that the T-kit 15 should first be implemented at a national level, then monitored and evaluated, and only then disseminated to other stakeholders and levels.

### **3.2 Practical labs: showcasing the T-kit 15 activities**

After a brief introduction to the training kit, two rounds of practical labs were carried out by a group of facilitators to showcase the educational activities previously presented and share partners' practices in this field.

The practical labs, including the names of the facilitators, are described in sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2.

#### **3.2.1 Practical labs – first round**

##### **❖ Reflective journey through policy cycle, with Irena Topalli**

The session provided an opportunity to explore tools of reflective journey to critically examine the impact of fast changing environment and particularly the impact of AI in the youth policy cycle. The participants had the chance to look deeper into power dynamics at play between policy actors and the shifting nature of policies (longer vs shorter term).

##### **❖ Democracy reloading approach to local participatory policy making, with Laszló Földi**

The session explored tools for supporting the development of local youth policy from the Democracy Reloading strategic partnership project, including examples of policy development from the partner countries of the project.

##### **❖ T-kit activity: Discover – principles!, with Zara Lavchyan**

The session presented an activity from T-kit exploring the principles and identifying ways to translate these principles into practical work. The activity contributed to the ability to translate youth policy principles into practical terms. It was based on analyses of a European approach to youth policy principles and core values.

##### **❖ T-kit activity: Ladder of evaluation, with Ajša Hadžibegović**

The session presented an activity from T-kit focusing on youth participation in policy evaluation based on the “ladder of engagement and participation” model which is sustained in Sherry Arnstein's work. It was about exploring how young people are able to make a meaningful contribution to evaluation and devising creative evaluation methods for different policy cycle stages.

### 3.2.2 Practical labs – second round

#### ❖ **From practice to positive social change: how to use social behaviour change communication methodology, with Lindsay Vogelzang**

The session introduced the method of social behaviour change and how to use it in policy. This methodology focuses on lowering the barriers that hinder people from putting words into practice. From this session was expected an engaged learning hour as well as to observe the meaning of this method to participant's practice.

#### ❖ **From theory to practice: Mapping and engaging key actors in participatory policy making, with Bruno António**

The session enabled participants to explore the methodology that DYPALL Network is using to develop a participatory approach to designing regional and local youth policies. From a very practical point of view, participants had the opportunity to share practices not only to map relevant stakeholders but to keep them engaged along the process.

#### ❖ **T-kit activity: Discover accountability, with Ajša Hadžibegović**

The session presented an activity from T-kit focusing on transparency and the accountability principle in youth policy making. It was about exploring the accountability principle and understanding the importance of the oversight role among the different roles that different stakeholders in the participatory youth policy have.

#### ❖ **T-kit activity: Where are we? And how did we get here?, with Zara Lavchyan**

The session presented an activity from T-kit introducing monitoring and evaluation, as a key approach to learning about the effects, informing future shaping and implementation of youth policy. The focus is on both the evaluation of the process of youth policy shaping and the outcomes of youth policy implementation. The Youth Partnership resources on evaluation were also presented and discussed.

#### **4. Council of Europe project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine”: a bilateral cooperation**

Liudmyla Kindrat, project officer at the Council of Europe Kiyv Office, introduced the current situation in Ukraine. Since 24 February 2022, approximately 40% of young people have been forced to change their place of permanent residence. Two million people are internally displaced. Within this context, Kindrat presented the Council of Europe project [“Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: III Phase”](#) that emerged within the Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine “Resilience, Recovery and Reconstruction” for 2023-2026. It was built on the results of the Council of Europe project "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine" in 2020-2022 and has been implemented over the last four years.

The project has been implemented within the following components:

- Participatory youth policy.
- Recognition of youth work in wartime.
- Increasing the capacity of youth centres and NGOs.

These components are achieved through educational and practical activities to improve the civil servant and local government officers’ competencies in youth participation and youth policy briefly described by Liudmyla Kindrat: training for trainers on participation (50 hours); short-term courses targeting public servants (30 hours); and a five-day training - in person but also online.

#### **5. Practical applications and actions promoting the use of T-kit 15**

The participants were asked for their thoughts and reflections on the T-kit’s educational activities following the practical labs, namely how this tool can be used in their work or institutions. The next step of local youth realities applicability was then discussed. In this regard, the youth workers at youth centres were identified as a preferential group to be trained with this training kit. In addition, it was suggested to use the T-kit with local youth councils as well as with civil servants and decision-makers.

The facilitators shared some T-kit 15 implementation tips that can be used by the participants in their professional and institutional contexts, namely to:

- 1) Translate into national languages, with the support of an NGO.

- 2) Organise training for trainers.
- 3) Share the manual within their networks.
- 4) Include it as a reference in other manuals.
- 5) Include it in national courses on youth policy.
- 6) Introduce it to policy stakeholders.
- 7) Include it in European educational activities.

## **6. Closing**

The Youth Partnership, responsible for the Shaping youth policy in practice seminar and the Launch event of Training kit 15 on Participatory youth policy, used this opportunity to encourage the participants to use and disseminate the T-kit.

Participants were encouraged to visit the [Youth Partnership's](#) website and its social media channels to find updated publications, resources and support tools for youth as well as upcoming events and thematic podcasts.

In addition, detailed information can be found on Youth Partnership networks such as the [European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy](#) correspondents and the [Pool of European Youth Researchers](#).