



YOU PART

Engage. Connect. Empower

CHECKLIST

INCLUSION OF DISADVANTAGED YOUNG PEOPLE

INTRODUCTION

12 SUCCESS FACTORS

INFOGRAPHIC

INCLUSION OF DISADVANTAGED YOUNG PEOPLE

INTRODUCTION

For decision-makers, such as politicians, it can seem complicated to involve young people in their work, even more so if the young people do not seem approachable. Many young people in Europe experience social exclusion (for example due to gender, sexual orientation, disability, poverty, migration, etc.) and are therefore disadvantaged, they do not feel that they belong or are relevant to politics. But these young people are not “lost” and in many cases are interested in political issues and do want to participate. They are also sometimes hard to identify, reach out to and/or to be motivated to participate in youth projects - particularly in activities related to policies.

This checklist can help you if you want to know WHAT are the opinions of difficult-to-reach young people on political issues; and HOW to get the opinions of disadvantaged young people, as well as WHAT you need to be aware of.

This advice can work at many different levels: from the municipal level to consultation processes at national or EU level.

12 SUCCESS FACTORS

• IDENTIFICATION OF THE TARGET GROUP

- Develop a plan to identify young people (or groups of young people).
- Potential participants were approached (e.g. through personal contact) and tailored support was found for the participants (e.g. financial and non-financial support, such as covering transport costs for travelling to and from the event - e.g. in the case of poor young people).



• CONDUCTING A SURVEY IS NOT ENOUGH

- Knowledge is required before participation; it is important to ensure that young people understand what it is all about. When working with disadvantaged young people, it cannot be assumed that they already have an understanding of the concepts or functions of the political system.
- Young people have the required background knowledge before they can ask and answer questions about participation.



• CONNECTION WITH THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF YOUNG PEOPLE

- Knowing the reality of young people’s lives and combining political themes with everyday life is very important. It is essential that the young people can connect politics and the environment in which they live.
- The chosen topics are aligned with the everyday life of the young people.



- **SIMPLE FORMULATION OF THE QUESTIONS**

- Clear questions, in simple language, are good for a consultation/survey.
- Specific questions and topics were chosen in simple, age-appropriate language.



- **IN CASE OF EUROPEAN PROJECTS**

- Language skills are regularly cited as a barrier to participation in international youth projects. Young people, who in reality have fewer opportunities, rarely speak English at a level that would allow them to actively participate in international youth projects.
- It was ensured that young people receive help in overcoming the language barrier.



- **USE OF VARIOUS METHODS**

- A questionnaire alone is not enough. If you want to reach disadvantaged young people, use a variety of methods appropriate to their age. The use of leisure activities with relevant information makes it possible to attract the interests of the young people.
- Knowledge transfer and practical discussions were packaged in creative methods.



- **SERIOUS PARTICIPATION AND APPRECIATION**

- Young people quickly realise when their participation is not taken seriously. It is therefore important to explain to them what will happen with the results of their contributions and their work. Young people have many interesting things they can contribute.
- This resource was utilised and young people were taken seriously.



- **VISUALISE PARTIAL SUCCESSES**

- To keep young people motivated and interested, it is particularly important to make the impact of participation visible. Find ways to achieve visible results quickly; this motivates young people when they can see the immediate impact.
- The process is transparent and flexible.



- **THE PRINCIPLE OF VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION**

- Openness and voluntary participation are crucial when working with disadvantaged young people. A classic workshop with fixed times and a stable group can be too similar to school and often fails in this type of youth work.
- Young people feel that they can join and leave the process at any time.



- **COMPETENT COMPANION**

- Participation processes with disadvantaged young people depend on building trust. For this to happen, the young people need a professional, stable figure who "stays with them" throughout the process.
- Professionals from the community have been identified who can act as experts and partners for your participation project.



- **OPEN YOUTH WORK AS A RESOURCE AND SUPPORT**

- These people are the best resource for political participation processes with disadvantaged young people, as in many cases they have good contacts with the target group and access to facilities that can be utilised.
- Experts from youth centres and mobile youth work know the living situation of disadvantaged young people and many useful methods for working with them.



- **EXPERIENCE SELF-EFFICACY**

- Listening to young people can be of great importance for their lives, it can promote their self-confidence and their understanding of democracy.
- Beyond the participation process, it is also important to support young people in strengthening their abilities for self-organisation and self-determination.



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SUCCESS FACTORS

for the participation of disadvantaged young people

1. Identification of the target group

Potential participants were approached (e.g. through personal contact) and tailored support was found for the participants.

2. Conducting a Survey is not enough

Young people have the required background knowledge before they can ask and answer questions about participation.

3. Connection with the everyday life of young people

The chosen topics are aligned with the everyday life of the young people.

4. Simple formulation of the questions

Specific questions and topics were chosen in simple, age-appropriate language.

5. In case of European projects

It was ensured that young people receive help in overcoming the language barrier.

6. Use of various methods

Knowledge transfer and practical discussions were packaged in creative methods.

7. Serious participation and appreciation

This resource was utilised and young people were taken seriously.

8. Visualise partial successes

The process is transparent and flexible.

9. The principle of voluntary participation

Young people feel that they can join and leave the process at any time.

10. Competent companion

Professionals from the community have been identified who can act as experts and partners for your participation project.

11. Open youth work as a resource and support

Experts from youth centres and mobile youth work know the living situation of disadvantaged young people and many useful methods for working with them.

12. Experience Self-efficacy

Beyond the participation process, it is also important to support young people in strengthening their abilities for self-organisation and self-determination.



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