



Resource sheet - Event Naples

EU democracy

Participatory tools of the EU, available to citizens

a. Freedom of information request

Any citizen or resident may request access to documents of the EU's institutions, bodies, offices, and agencies.

b. Complaint to the EU Ombudsman

The European Ombudsman represents the interests of the citizens and protects them from EU institutions. Citizens, residents as well as businesses, associations and other bodies registered in the EU can file a complaint.

c. European Citizens' Initiative (ECI)

The ECI enables 7 citizens from 7 different member states to propose new legislation to the European Commission. 1 million signatures from 7 member states need to be collected (initiatives include the Right to Water, Save Bees and Farmers).

d. Petition to the European Parliament

Citizens can present observations or requests to the EU Parliament's Committee of Petitions, asking the Parliament to take a position or to raise its awareness on an issue.

e. EU Public consultation

Citizens can engage with lawmakers during the EU legislative process, submitting observations online.

EU democracy

Participatory tools for citizens

- a. Freedom of information request
- b. Complaint to the EU Ombudsman
- c. European Citizens' Initiative
- d. Petition to the EU parliament
- e. EU public consultation
- f. Refit initiative
- g. EU informal petition
- h. Legal challenge
- g. European Citizens' Panels.



f. Refit initiative

The online Regulatory Fitness and Performance Initiative (REFIT) platform enables you to submit suggestions to the European Commission for reform, adjustment or simplification of EU law.

g. EU informal petition

Publicly collected signature/petition campaigns through platforms such as Avaaz, We Move or Change.org.

h. Legal action/challenge

Legal action/litigation before the European Court of Justice or the European Court of Human Rights.

g. European Citizens' Panels.

European Citizens' Panels are deliberative events, in which European citizens, randomly select debate on specific policy themes. A good example is the recently held Conference on the Future of Europe, in which 800 citizens debated on 9 themes in relation to the future of the EU. The Commission is currently starting three Panels on learning mobility, food waste, and virtual worlds.

Erasmus+ programme

According to the Erasmus+ Programme guide 2022, Erasmus+ 'addresses the *citizens' limited participation* in its democratic processes and their *lack of knowledge* about the European Union, and tries to help them overcome the difficulties in actively engaging and participating in their communities or in the Union's political and social life. *Strengthening citizens' understanding of the European Union* from an early age is crucial for the Union's future. In addition to formal education, non-formal

Erasmus+ programme

A few relevant dimensions for citizen engagement and participation

- a. School education sector
- b. Vocational education and training (VET)
- c. Higher education
- d. Adult education
- e. Youth sector, volunteering
- f. Jean Monnet activities



learning can enhance the citizens' understanding of the European Union and foster a sense of belonging to it.

Some of the most relevant dimensions of the Erasmus+ programme for citizen engagement include:

- a. School education sector
- b. Vocational education and training (VET)
- c. Higher education
- d. Adult education
- e. Youth sector, volunteering
- f. Jean Monnet activities

European citizenship education

In order to reverse a trend of scepticism towards the values of the EU (art. 2 TEU) and counter forms of democratic deterioration, the EU must invest in citizens' democratic competences. In the Paris Declaration of 2015, European governments committed to 'support of fundamental values that lie at the heart of the European Union: respect for human dignity, freedom (including freedom of expression), democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights. These values are common to the Member States in a European society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail'. European citizenship education may play an important role in enhancing the civic and political capacities of European citizens. European citizenship education may include various significant dimensions or

European citizenship education

Focal points

- a. Civic responsibility, equity and democratic resilience
- b. Critical awareness and political literacy
- c. Knowledge of democratic procedures and institutions
- d. Tolerance, intercultural knowledge and awareness
- e. Post-national consciousness and European solidarity
- f. Encourage and equip young people with the necessary resources to become active, critical citizens, agents of solidarity and inclusionary change
- g. Engagement with democracy at the transnational, EU level



components that enhance European democracy:

- a. Civic responsibility, equity and democratic resilience
- b. Critical awareness and political literacy
- c. Knowledge of democratic procedures and institutions
- d. Tolerance, intercultural knowledge and awareness
- e. Post-national consciousness and European solidarity
- f. Encourage and equip young people with the necessary resources to become active, critical citizens, agents of solidarity and inclusionary change
- g. Engagement with democracy at the transnational, EU level