

SALTO



erasmus+ and
european solidarity
corps agency

„Participation in Democratic Life“ in Erasmus+ for children and youth

TCA Participation in Early Childhood Education 09/10/2025

**Presented by Joana Freitas (SALTO Participation & Information)
& Anne-Mai Runno (EE01 Participation Contact Point)**



HARIDUS- JA NOORTEAMET

ABOUT US: SALTO Participation & Information

- ❖ **Resource Center** mandated by European Commission to guide the implementation the "Participation priority"
- ❖ **Main goal: inform, support, and inspire the usage of Erasmus+ as a tool to promote meaningful democratic participation** guided by EU values
- ❖ **One of 11** RCs (25 years of SALTO!), founded in 2018, active on all sectors since 2023
- ❖ Based in Tallinn, hosted by Estonian NA - working with/for all Programme stakeholders



ABOUT PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC LIFE

Is a **process** through which **citizens** actively **participate in society** to **influence** politics and civil society by:

- **expressing their views** (i.e. voting, contacting your representatives, participating in citizen consultations, being part of a council, etc)

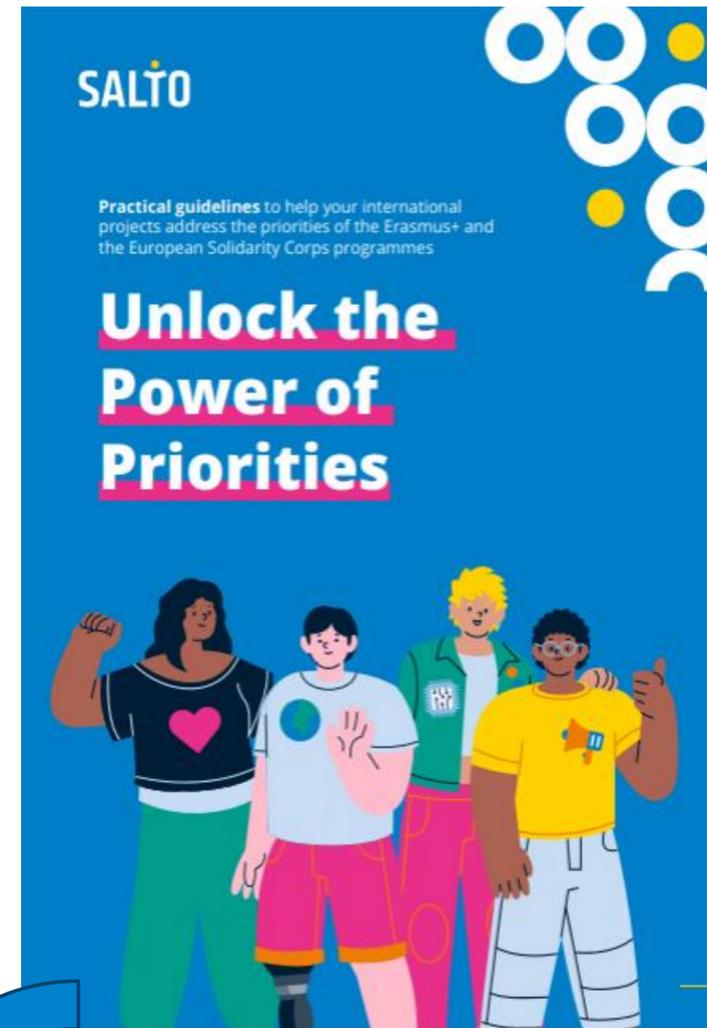
AND

- **engaging** in activities aimed at social change (such as being part of a collective, stand for election as a representative, **volunteering**, protesting, boycotting, wearing political symbols, etc.)



THE "PARTICIPATION" PRIORITY

- "Participation in democratic life, civic engagement and European values,,
- One of the four horizontal priorities of **Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes for 2021-2027**
- Other priorities are Inclusion & Diversity, Green and Digital (find more about them and how the four of them can be implemented in projects in the QR Code)



Published this year!



ABOUT US: NA Participation Network



- ❖ Initiative of SALTO PI & European Commission
- ❖ 51 Contact Points in 31 countries
- ❖ National Agency staff supporting the priority's implementation in their NA and country
- ❖ Share knowledge, resources and/or host events for beneficiaries and/or NA colleagues, & act as a liaison for SALTO PI



WHAT DO WE MEAN BY „PARTICIPATION“?



Coordown | No Decision Without Us: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZnq04yP8-I>



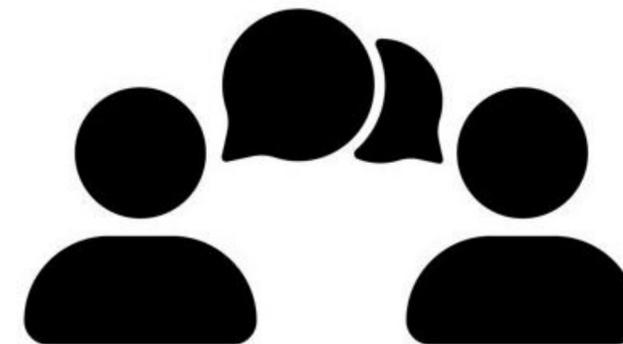
DEBRIEF: PARTICIPATION AS A RIGHT AND SHARING DECISION-MAKING POWER

Does your organisation include...

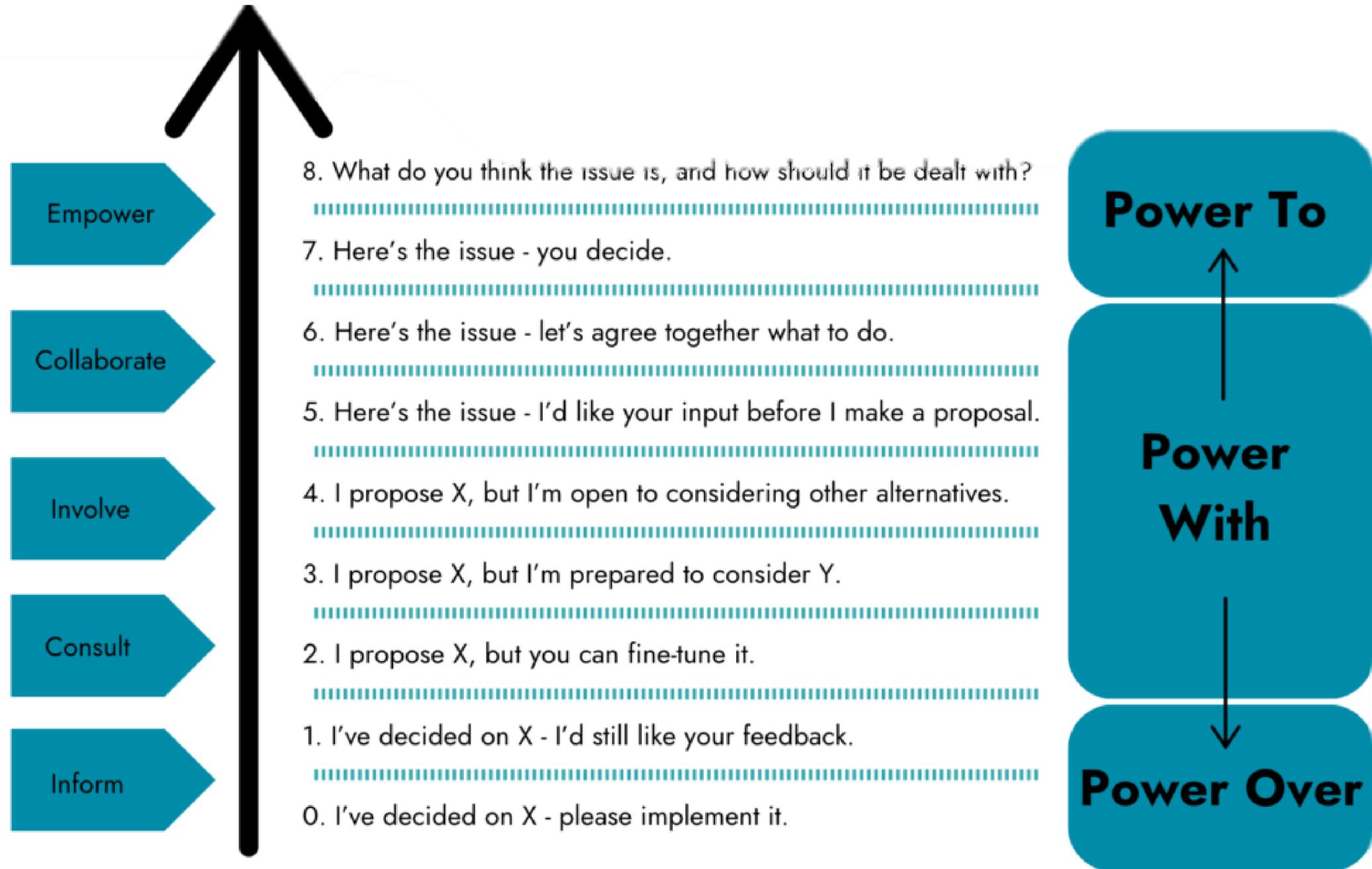
- ❖ Children
- ❖ Staff
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Local partners (other kindergartens, schools, organisations, municipality, etc)

...in ANY decision-making processes that affect those people? How?

Share with the person next to you! (5 mins)



PARTICIPATION IS ABOUT SHARING POWER



ABOUT PARTICIPATION: Why does it matter?

- **Participation as a right** (e.g. Treaty of the EU, 1992 and UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989).
- **Increasing the opportunities for participation as one of the goals of education** (e.g., Dewey, Freire)
- **Active citizenship as one of the EU Lifelong Competences and Education and training to contribute to the future of our democracies and the EU** ([Council of the EU Recommendation 2023](#))



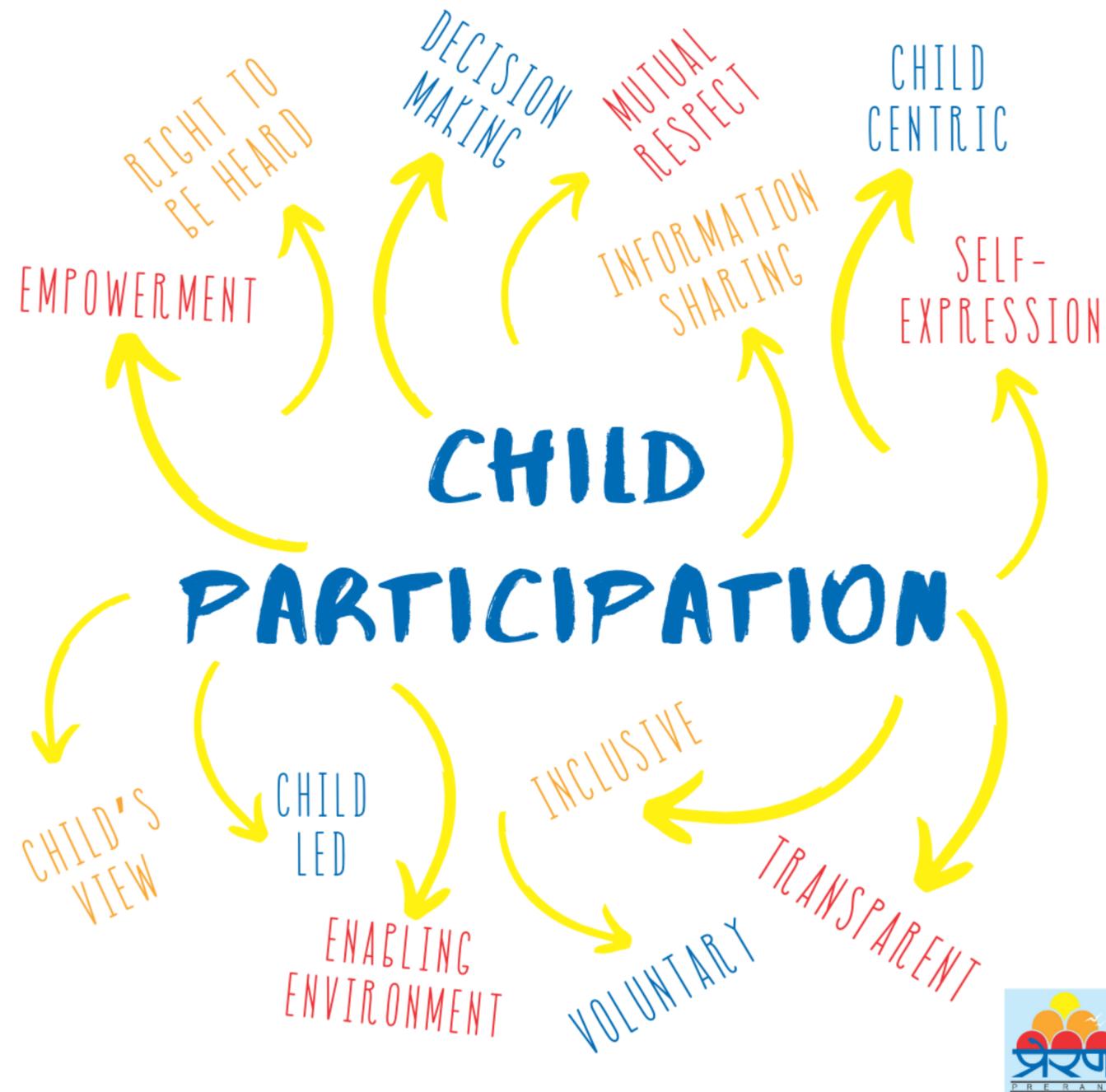
PARTICIPATION IS ONE OF FOUR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

According to UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989



- Source: <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10154547294747579&id=119527857578&set=a.467014542578>

INGREDIENTS FOR PARTICIPATION



Promoting child and youth participation requires providing:

- (understandable and child-friendly) **information**
- (adequate and sufficient) **means**
- (safe and welcoming) **spaces**
- (timely and diverse) **opportunities**
- and, where necessary, **the support**

... so children and young people can **voluntarily and freely** express their views, and by being heard **contribute** to and **influence** societal decision making on matters affecting them.

TAKING THIS FORWARD

CONCLUSIVE REMARKS BY MEMBERS
OF EUROCHILD'S CHILDREN'S COUNCIL



ABOUT THE PRIORITY: How can Erasmus+ help promote democratic participation?

TELL ME

AND I WILL FORGET

SHOW ME

AND I MAY REMEMBER

INVOLVE ME

AND I WILL UNDERSTAND

- Erasmus+ can **provide funding** for creating the adequate contexts and opportunities for participation and training for staff
- Projects can lead **to increased social and intercultural communication competence and feeling of a European identity**
- Activities can be designed for **experiencing a democratic culture, and developing** critical thinking and media literacy and other **skills**



ERASMUS OPPORTUNITIES – KA1 LEARNING MOBILITIES



ERASMUS OPPORTUNITIES – KA2 COOPERATION PARTNERSHIPS

	<p>RAISING AWARENESS OF PARTICIPATION</p> <p>Development of training programs, tools etc Organization of webinars, seminars, Resources etc</p>

	<p>FOSTERING INCLUSIVE WORKING CULTURE</p> <p>Co-creation curricula, diuigelines, tools Support systemic change</p>	

CROSS-SECTORAL COLLABORATION:
 innovative solutions,
 diverse insight,
 community involvement..



GROUP WORK – 1, 2, ALL

00:00

- *In reality, **we can only work with what we have, and a bit of creativity...***
- So first, look around and find **one object (anything goes!)** that is related to what participation looks like for you **in your work right now** (*can be a story, a practice, something real or a concrete goal*)
- **Do this exercise without speaking**
- You have 2 minutes!



GROUP WORK – 1, 2, ALL

00:00



- *Sharing is caring!*
- **Show and tell** about your object to the person in your right (one person, maximum 3!)
- You have 5 minutes (take at least 2 for each person)



GROUP WORK – 1, 2, ALL

00:00

- *The more we share, the more we all have*
- Together, in a duo, **combine your objects or add more** to create something that represents **what you think participation could be if you worked together** (with both your knowledge, structures, organisational practices and resources, etc)
- Put it in front of you
- You have 5 minutes



GROUP WORK – 1, 2, 4, ALL

00:00



- *Team work makes the dream work, right?*
- Now, **find another duo and combine your objects** (you can add more) to represent your shared „participation dream“ in your work
- What would you create in your kindergarten/school? How would be involved? How would they feel?

Put your creation in your table in front of you

You have 10 minutes (5 + 5 mins)



GROUP WORK – 1, 2, 4, ALL

00:00



- *You have to dream before you can do it*
- Go around the tables and check out all the things created
- **Don't try to understand/explain** the meaning of the objects, reflect on **what feelings, curiosity or ideas**, the creations spark in you
- **Go back to your table and write any word or sentence** that comes to mind
- You have 5 minutes



GROUP WORK – 1, 2, 4, ALL

- *Participation is a process!*
- Who is willing to share?



EXAMPLES AND RESOURCES



Yes to Migration, No to Extremism: A European Educational Journey

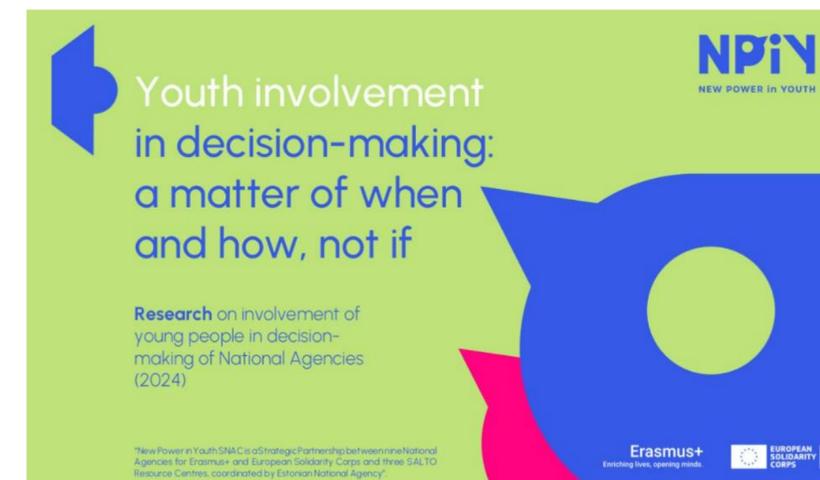
Check out this inspiring project on:
<https://participationpool.eu/project/yes-to-migration-no-to-extremism-a-european-educational-journey//>



2025 | INFO LIBRARY

Promoting democratic participation in schools

Explore articles and tools:
<https://participationpool.eu/resource/>



Tips for involving young people on decision-making:
<https://participationpool.eu/resource/a-matter-of-when-and-how-not-if-research-on-involvement-of-young-people-in-decision-making-of-national-agencies/>

Explore further: [Module 12 Planning for Participation](#)
[Module 04 Learning by Doing](#) and [Module 05 Young people leading projects](#) of the Youth Participation Toolkit

DIVE INTO PARTICIPATION!

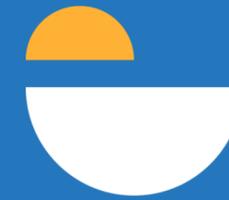
Scan to find all links!



Find SALTO PI on:

- PARTICIPATION RESOURCE POOL (participationpool.eu)
 - Tools and methods
 - Articles
 - Reports and mappings
 - Inspiring projects
 - Training and thematic events
 - Youth Participation Toolkit (<https://participationpool.eu/toolkit/>)
- **Social media** (LinkedIn, Facebook, @saltoparticipation on Instagram)
- **Share your materials, send any questions/request for physical materials** to participation@salto-youth.net

SALTO



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Thank you!

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