

## Youth Partnership

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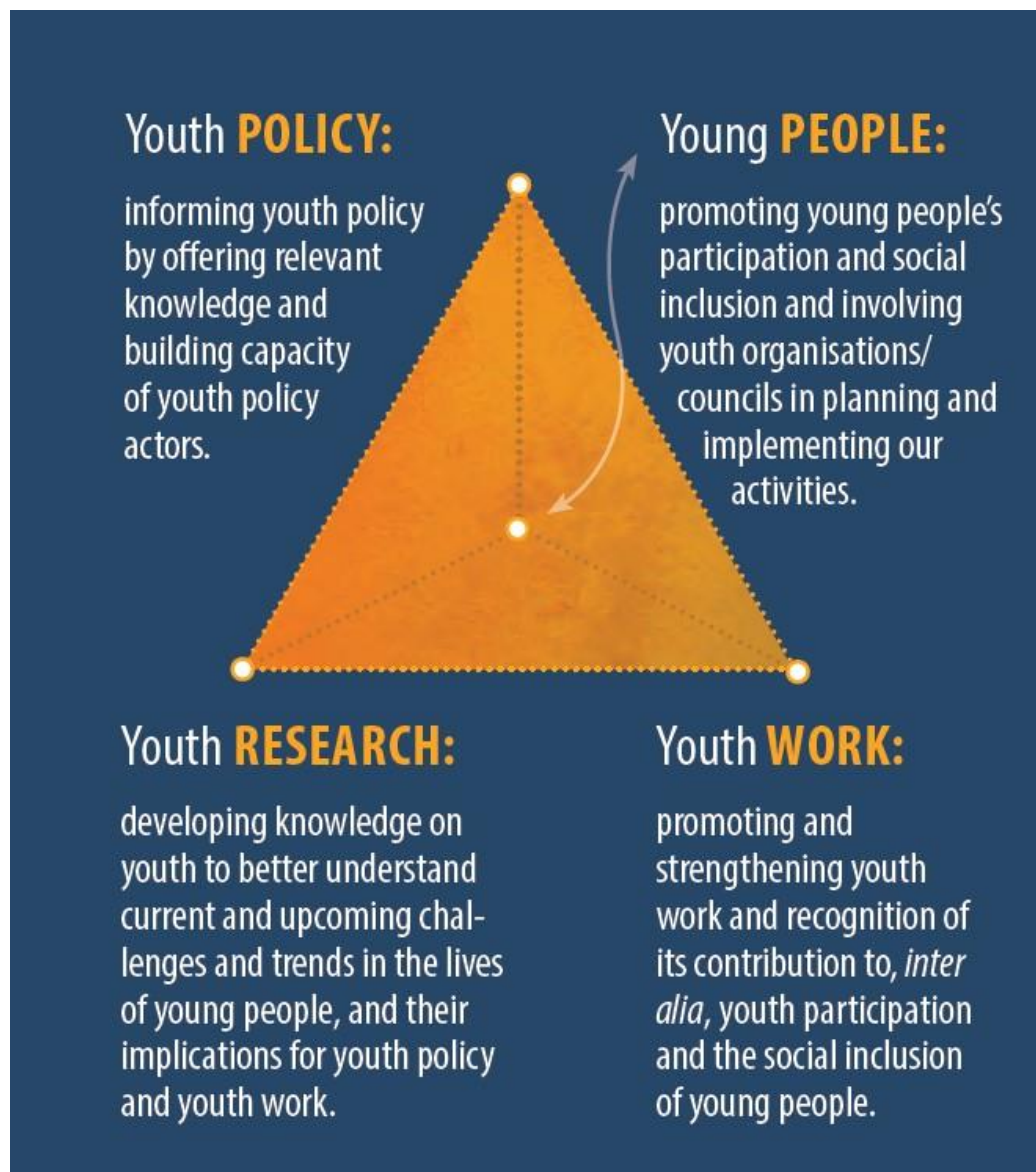
Partnership between the European Commission  
and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth



Strengthening democracy with young  
people: the way forward

## Themes and objectives

1. Participation and democratic citizenship
2. Social inclusion
3. Strengthening youth work





# EKCYP & PEYR joint annual meeting

**27 October  
2020**

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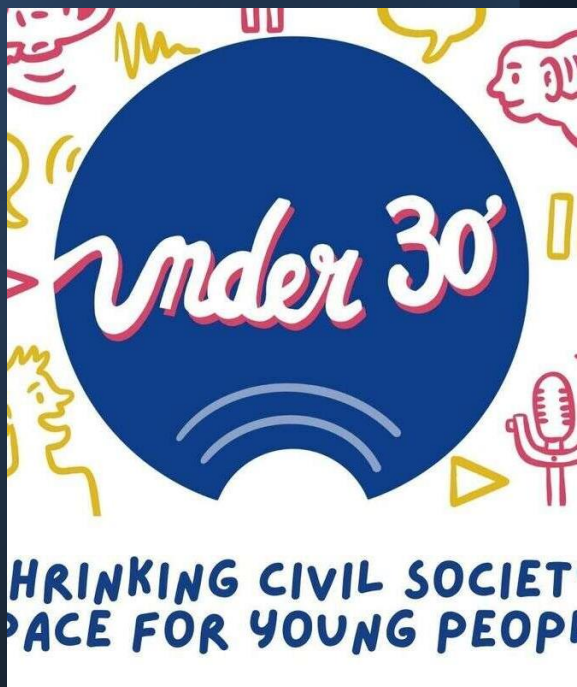




# Knowledge HUB: COVID-19 impact on the youth sector

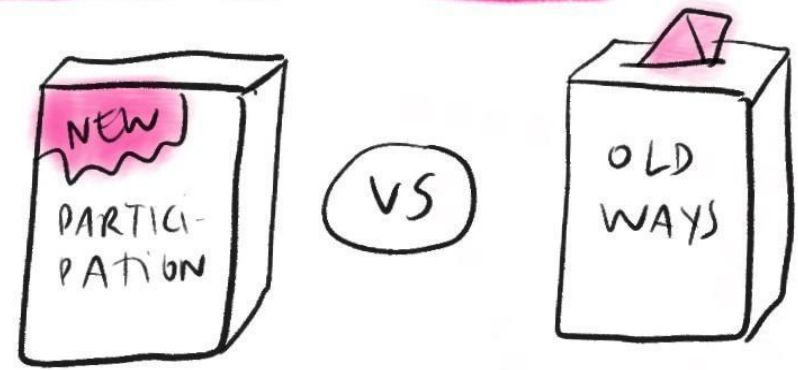


# Main research project and activities



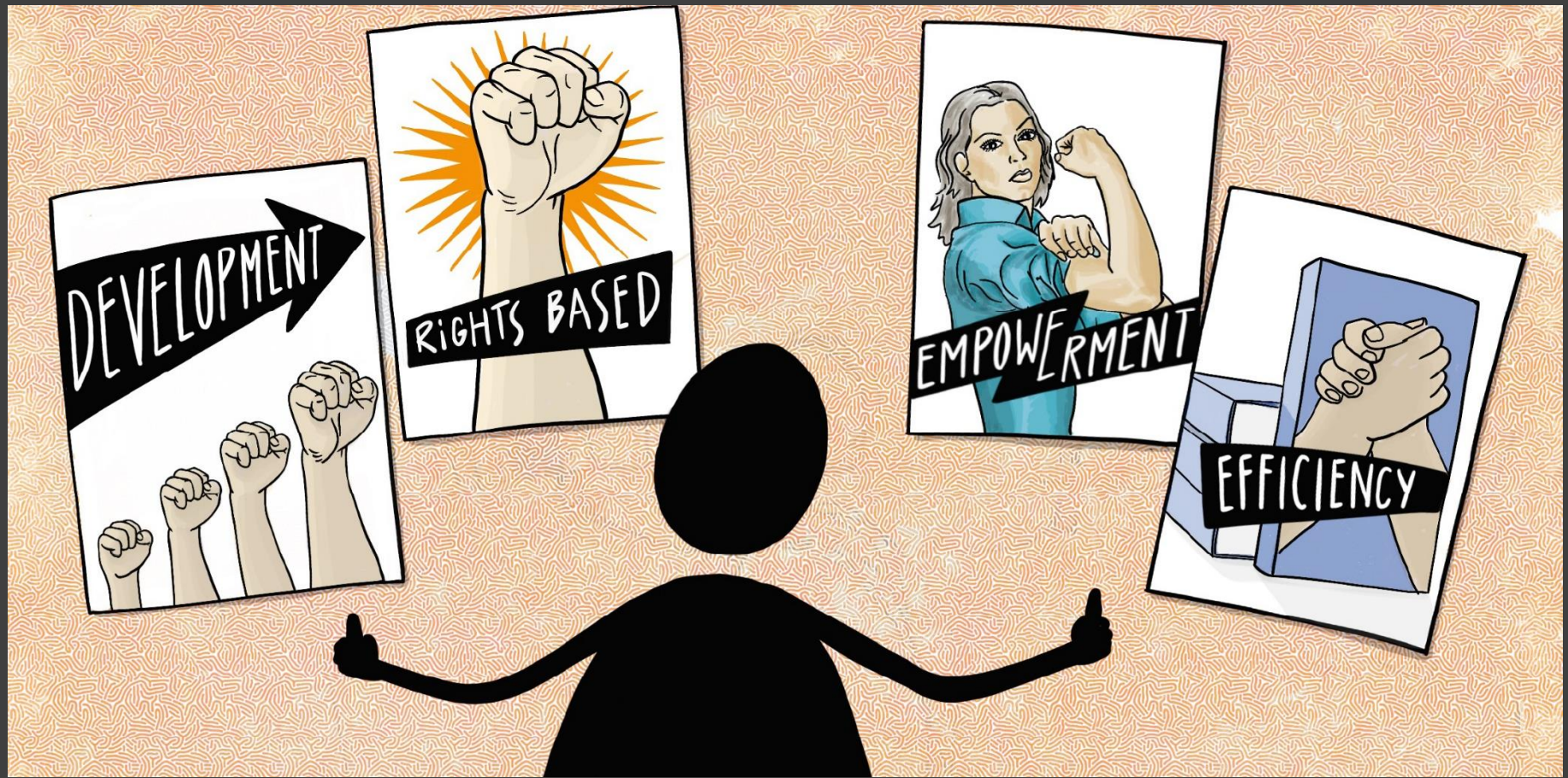
- COVID-19 Knowledge Hub
- Youth political participation and democratic citizenship education
- Contributing to the European Youth Work Agenda
- MOOC on youth work
- European Platform on Learning Mobility (EPLM)
- Perspectives on Youth
- Youth policy – participatory development and evaluation
- Social inclusion and digitalization
- Coyote magazine

# Youth participation in decision-making processes



- Meaningful young people's participation in political, social and economic life is crucial for healthy democracy
- Young people's interest in politics and participation is not decreasing, but changing:
  - 2019 survey shows 77% of young people engage in political movements, parties, unions, volunteering, strikes or protests
  - Engagement is issue-led, short-term and less organised – it is rapidly evolving





Why  
participation?

Aims and justifications for youth  
political participation

# What influences youth political participation?

- Motivation to participate depends on equal treatment and opportunity to be heard and make an impact
- Socio-economic factors
- Gender
- Context and type of democratic environment....





# Context and realities of youth participation

- Limitations on young people's participation
  - Financial obstacles
  - Legal limitations on youth organisations and criminalisation of youth activism
  - Youth spaces (physical and virtual)
  - Young people's right to assembly
  - Selective priorities

# Conventional youth participation in representative democracy

- Voting and elections (and voting age)
- Referendum
- Party membership
- Running for office
- Signing petitions
- Institutional participatory mechanisms
  - Youth councils
  - Student unions
  - Youth parliaments
  - Participatory budgeting

*Young people may refrain from voting, as they feel invisible within the system and perceive that youth issues have low priority on the agenda*

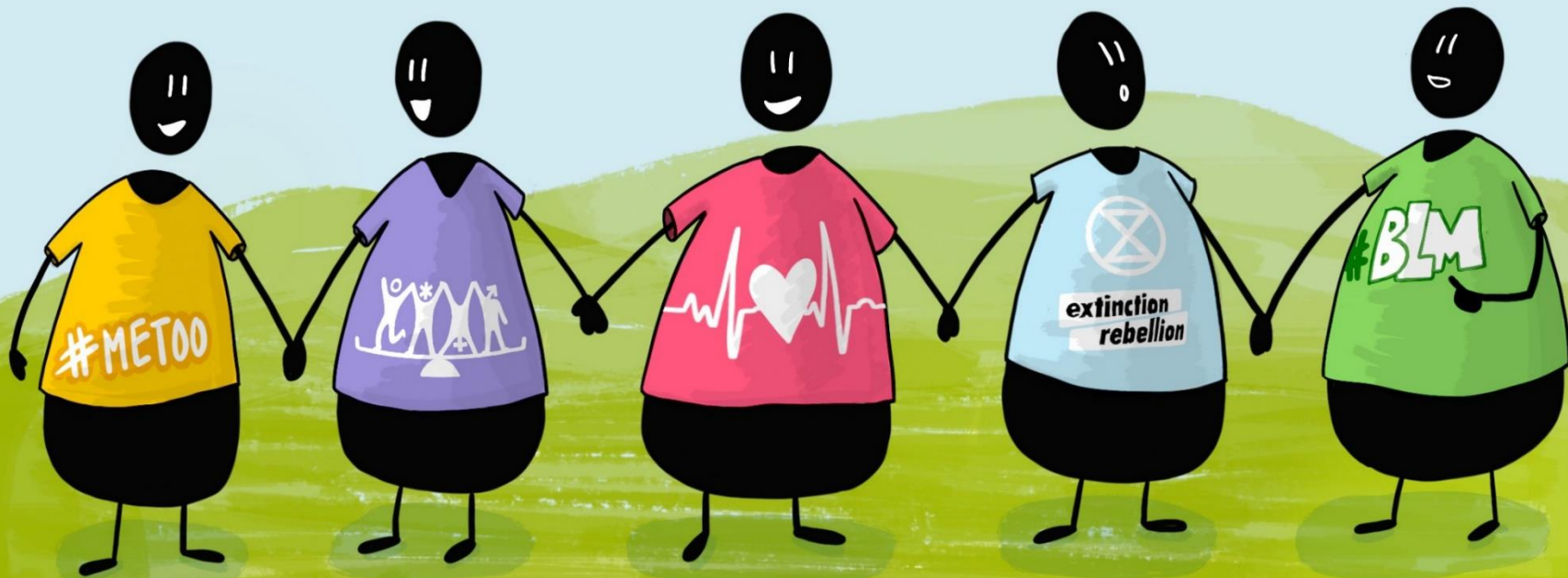


# YOUTH COUNCIL



**Establishment of youth councils at local, regional and national levels sends an important message from public authorities regarding the commitment towards including young people in decision-making**





## Unconventional youth participation Do-it-ourselves (DIO) politics

- Social movements
- Boycotts and buycotts
- Protests, marches and demonstrations
- Petitions
- Disruptive actions and refusal to cooperate with authorities
- Occupation of public property
- Flash mobs
- Climate change
- Gender equality
- Racial justice
- Students' rights

Trust

## Transparency and accountability

Young people's voices need to be heard and respected by other stakeholders in the political participation processes

### Authority and voice

### Material support and

Young people should be supported to safely engage in youth political participation activities with no regard to their background, status, or identity

## Meaningful Youth Political Participation

Up-to-date  
information

Youth-focused  
 conferences

Youth-friendly  
communication

**Open information and communication**  
channels between young people and adults

Young people need to be able to make decisions, either on their own or jointly with other stakeholders, under transparent conditions known to all involved actors

## Power sharing

**non-material support**

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# Meaningful youth participation in decision-making...

- Transparency and accountability; authority and voice; open communication channels; power-sharing; material and non-material support;
- Need for safe spaces for young people (physical and virtual)
- Particular attention to young people and especially young women in the conventional representative democracy (political parties, parliaments)
- Inclusion of youth movements into discussions
- De-stigmatisation and de-criminalisation of youth activists



# References: EU-Council of Europe youth partnership research on youth political participation

- [Study on youth political participation \(2021, upcoming\), by Barta, O. Boldt, G. and Lavizzari, A.](#)
- [Insights on youth political participation \(2021, upcoming\), by Barta, O. and Lavizzari, A.](#)
- [Young women's participation \(2021\) - video](#)
- [Young people's access to right to assembly \(2020\), Maria Carmen Pantea](#)
- [Shrinking democratic civic space for youth \(2020\), Dezelan, T. and Laden Yurttaguler](#)
- research on the [impact of covid-19 on youth people \(2020\)](#)
- [Symposium "The future of young people's political participation: questions, challenges and opportunities" \(2019\)](#)

## Animated videos:

- [What is political participation](#)
- [How to engage marginalised young people in politics?](#)
- [How can we meaningfully engage young people?](#)

# Youth Partnership

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<http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int>

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