



Promoting the
nexus of migrants
through active
citizenship

Youth participation and active citizenship: can civic tech truly enhance our democracy?

Closing event of the NEXUS project

Concept note

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Date: 28 June 2021

Organiser: European Citizen Action Service (ECAS)

Location: BeCentral, 12 Cantersteen, 1000 Brussels, Belgium - BOARDROOM

The **NEXUS Event in Brussels** will be the occasion to present the work conducted within the Nexus project and discuss its results.

This stakeholder event will discuss and debate the results of the NEXUS project. Between 2019 and 2022, NEXUS explored the relationship between digitally enabled participatory tools and democracy to build upon the existing literature focusing on empowering students (especially migrants) to exercise their rights, uphold human values and contribute to society. 7 project partners from different European countries came together to further innovate the civic educational process with the aim to increase participation of students in their communities.

NEXUS aimed at innovating the civic educational process resulting in increased participation of students in their communities. A MOOC on Civic education subdivided in micro-learning units and a knowledge-sharing platform (building on open educational resources and practices) for civic educators were developed. The notion of Civics was re-written to version 4.0, connecting students to institutions in the digital age. Finally, an inventory of digital tools for Open Democracy and digital citizenship education has been compiled, together with a handbook for educators on civic education for a digital age.

The event will bring together project partners, civil society, stakeholders working on civic education and civic tech, and policy makers to discuss the potential of technology to enhance young people's participation in European democracy.

AGENDA

9.45 – 10.00 | **Welcoming**

Moderated by Elisa Lironi, Programme Director for European Democracy, ECAS

10.00 – 10.45 | **Young people's participation in democracy: is participation only for the highly-educated or can we be more inclusive?**

- Jasna Maric Krajacic, European Commission, Policy Officer - European Youth
- Timothy Read, Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, NEXUS project
- Andrea Lapegna, Lifelong Learning Platform, Deputy Director

10.45 – 11.15 | **Q&A and Discussions**

11.15 – 11.30 | **Coffee Break**

11.30 – 12.15 | **Civic tech and its appeal to young people: can technology truly enhance democracy in Europe?**

- Ivana Stanojev, Knowledge Innovation Centre, NEXUS project
- Tom Matthew, European Youth Forum, Board Member, Digitalisation
- Bert Hendrickx, CEO Bpart
- Giovanna Tanzi, European Partnership for Democracy, Programme Officer

12.15 – 12.45 | **Q&A and Discussions**

12.45 – 13.00 | **Concluding remarks**

13.00 – 14.30 | **Networking Lunch**

Speakers



Jasna Maric Krajacic is Policy Officer in the Youth Unit of the Directorate General Education, Youth, Sport and Culture and responsible for one of the EU Youth Strategy's core areas - "engage"- which stands for the wish to encourage inclusive and meaningful participation of young people in decision-making. Her main dossiers include the EU Youth Dialogue; the biggest participation tool for young people in the EU, and relations with youth organizations. A special focus is given to young people with diverse backgrounds and to disadvantaged youth. Giving young people the means to become informed and engaged citizens is one of the best guarantees to make our societies more inclusive, resilient, green and digital. Her work also focuses on contributing to efforts in bringing closer policy and programmes mainly through a novel form of activity under Erasmus+ - Youth Participation Activities. She has been working for and with young people for almost 10 years – first in the European Parliament and now in the European Commission.



Timothy Read is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Computer Languages and Systems at the School of Computer Engineering, UNED, Spain. He holds a First Class Honours Degree in Computer Science from the University of The West of England (Bristol, UK) and a Ph.D. in Cognitive Science from the University of Birmingham (also in the UK). He is co-director of the ATLAS research group (Applying Technology to LAnguageS). He has worked on and directed several nationally and internationally funded research projects on the teaching and learning applications of ICT. At UNED he has held the positions of Associate Vice-Rector for Applied Technologies in the Study Centres, Director General of the Centre for Innovation and Technological Development (CINDETEC), Associate Vice-Rector for Emerging Technologies, Founding Director of Open UNED (OERP, MOOCs, etc.) and Associate Vice-Rector for Methodological and Technological Innovation. He is an EDEN Senior Fellow and is currently President of EDEN UK. His research interests include: Educational Technology; Digital Education; Distance, hybrid and blended educational methodologies and architectures; Mobile Learning; OER, OEP & MOOCs; CSCL; Massive Open Social Learning for Social Inclusion; Intelligent Computer Assisted Learning; Social inclusion and activeness. UNESCO codes: 1203-10,-17,-23,-26, 570109.



Andrea Lapegna is the Deputy Director of the Lifelong Learning Platform. Born and bred in Rome, he studied international relations in Italy, Belgium and the Netherlands. Before joining LLLP, he worked in several other civil society organisations in Brussels and developed a career working in communications and looking after awareness-raising campaigns. A true lifelong learner, he is a trained musician and sports advocate.



Ivana Stanojev (Project and Communications Associate, Knowledge Innovation Centre) joined Knowledge Innovation Centre in 2017, where she is involved in Erasmus projects within the education field (equal opportunities, social justice, and access to Higher Education). Before joining KIC, Ivana worked for 10 years as a project coordinator and a researcher for various Serbian and international NGOs and Government agencies, on projects dealing with democratisation, inclusive governance and citizens' participation. Since 2012 she works as election observer for OSCE/ODIHR, and is a 2022/2023 Marshall Memorial Fellow.



Tom is a board member at the European Youth Forum; he leads the Forum's work on digitalisation, and he is responsible for the European Youth Capital project, the Forum's statutory meetings and a co-creation project to build the new European Charter for Youth and Democracy. Tom is an international representative of the British Youth Council and he studies Human, Social and Political Science at Cambridge University. Tom is passionate about youth participation in democracy, leadership, and communication.



Bert is an enthusiastic entrepreneur, triggered by the opportunities digital evolutions have to offer for media, retail and society. After 10 years of research and consultancy at iVOX and GfK, he joined Tree company to later co-found their GovTech spin-off Bpart, where he's on a mission to enable your best participation process with impact.



Giovanna Tanzi is Programmes Officer at the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD). She is a dynamic and motivated professional in the field of EU project management. She has a proven track record of implementation of projects related to education, human rights, digitalization, democracy and civil society support. Her expertise in the field has grown thanks to professional opportunities in different countries and two Master's degrees in Economics for Development and Project Management.



Elisa Lironi is the Programme Director for European Democracy, working at the European Citizen Action Service (ECAS) since 2015. She develops and leads ECAS' European Democracy focus area by implementing EU projects and services related to Digital Democracy, Understanding Populism and Civic Engagement. She conducts research specifically on e-participation practices in Europe and her latest publication includes the book chapter "Crowdsourcing EU Legislation: Harnessing the Power of Digital Democracy" (2021, ECPR Press). Elisa is currently leading the Civil Society Convention's Digital Transformation Cluster that brings CSOs proposals to the Conference on the Future of Europe and will feed into the EU's priority of "A Europe fit for the digital age". Since 2018, she is the ECI Expert and Manager of the European Citizens' Initiative Forum, working with Secretariat-General of the European Commission on developing and implementing this online collaborative platform.