



# EPALE KONFERENZ

Österreich

**Politische Erwachsenenbildung in Österreich und  
Europa: Ziele, Methoden und Zukunftsperspektiven**

**Citizenship Education in Austria and Europe:  
objectives, methods and future prospects**

# DEMOCRACY AND EQUALITY MATTERS FOR OUR SOCIETY

## Political participation

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&

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VHS Wien



# Democracy and Equality Matters for Our Society - Political participation



# DEMOS

Vienna, 13 June 2019

# Content

- DEMOS project presentation
- Needs analysis- the case of Romania
- Target groups
- Practical activity
- Evaluation

How it all began.

The text below I sent to my European network, means former partners from 27 EU member states.

18 of these partners wanted to join the project.

Now I was sure to work on a topic European interest.

The value of democracy is at stake in Europe. In some countries, a sceptical or negative attitude to democratic processes has emerged. We also see the rise of political parties that reinforce this scepticism as well as the emergence of more authoritarian forms of government. It is becoming increasingly evident that substantial sections of European societies have either lost faith in the democratic process or feel there is no point in participating.

# Voters participation at the elections for the European parliament

**2014**

- Germany 48,10
- Ireland 52,44
- Sweden 51,07
- Austria 45,39
- Finland 39,10
- Czech Republic 18,20
- Poland 23,83
- Bulgaria 35,84
- Romania 32,44
- Europe 42,61

**2019**

- Germany 61,41
- Ireland 49,70
- Sweden 54,65
- Austria 59,80
- Finland 40,70
- Czech Republic 28,72
- Poland 45,68
- Bulgaria 30,83
- Romania 51,07
- Europe 50,97

Examples of  
action  
projects  
leading to a  
higher  
political  
participation

- Bürgerrecht. Akademie Leipzig
- Participatory walk through Viennas 5th district, Margareten
- Workshops for community members addressing gender roles and the traditional household distribution of tasks to promote higher levels of equality between men and women
- Information sessions where the target group is presented with the opportunities existing for them in their community and any support mechanisms available
- Study circles for foreign born women, low educated, registered in Sweden

## NEEDS ANALYSIS - ROMANIA

# Target groups identified

- Young people at risk of social exclusion
- Older people at risk of social exclusion
- Women at risk of social exclusion
- Ethnic minorities: the Roma population



# Needs analysis methodol ogy

Desk research based on secondary data available in various national and European reports.



Exploratory research through one focus group conducted in the rural area on 15 January 2019 with six participants, males and females, aged between 22 and 70 years old.



Development of persona models which implies creating a portrait of a generic target group representative. This generic portrait will comprise the main characteristics of the target group.

# Young people at risk of social exclusion

## **Maria, 20 years old**

- Lives in a small town with no industry;
- Lives with her 2 parents and other 3 siblings in a two rooms small apartment
- Only completed compulsory education (10 grades)
- Currently unemployed – (no high-school degree)
- Spends her days doing household tasks and raising her siblings;
- On state-aid;
- Demotivated and unhappy with her life, does not see identify alternatives;
- Does not know when elections will take place;

# Roma minority

## **Eusebio, 30 years old**

- Lives in a Roma community, approx. 30 km from a large city;
- He completed secondary education, but his wife is illiterate;
- Shares a house with two rooms and no running water and toilets with his wife and four children;
- They do not have a TV or a computer;
- He has no formal employment;
- He takes on occasionally paid tasks in a nearby village for tree cutting or construction works;
- He had an ID card following a campaign of the regional Police, but it expired and does not know what is required to renew it;



Information sessions where the target groups are presented with the opportunities existing for them in their community and any support mechanisms available.



Different workshops for developing skills in information searching, critical thinking, communication, the completion of basic administrative tasks.



Civic education workshops for them to understand how the society is structured, the role and power of every individual in shaping that society.

# Potential approaches

# OUR TARGET GROUPS:

## Franz, 64

- He retired at the age of 61, worked for the City of Vienna as an employee of the department for building regulation (“Baupolizei”)
- Lives in a city-funded apartment with his wife, a dog and a bird
- Graduate of a technical college (HTL)
- Well-off with his and his wife’s pension
- Does not speak a foreign language
- Likes the restaurant near his apartment (Beisl) where he is allowed to smoke
- Spends his holidays or in Austria or in Bibione, Italy
- Says he does not recognize his quarter: Many new buildings, many new inhabitants with strange habits, some new restaurants with a menu he does not understand
- Loves to see Austrian movies like the Sissi-films with Romy Schneider, and the films with Hans Moser
- He voted for our new government at the last parliamentary elections 2017, because the two parties promised to stop migration



# OUR TARGET GROUPS:

## ELISABETH, 30

- She is graduate of a University of Applied Sciences – Media
- Works part-time for a private radio station
- Lives in a new quarter near the central railway station, together with her friend and a two years old daughter
- She did not vote in 2017, as she mistrusts every political party and would never join one
- She is working for a citizen's initiative promoting cycling in Vienna, and a second one against the construction of a new runway at Vienna's airport.



# OUR TARGET GROUPS: ION, 68

- Lives in the rural area;
- Retired early when the factory where he had been working closed;
- Has a chronic health condition with his thyroid;
- Spends his day around the house, in subsistence agriculture;
- Watches the news and discusses politics with his wife and neighbours;
- Quite frustrated because medications are hard to find and he often needs to see a doctor in the town which is one hour away;
- He feels worse off than in communism;
- Supports parties promising to increase pensions



# OUR TARGET GROUPS: LEANA, 45

- She completed professional education as a dressmaker;
- She works at a factory manufacturing clothes in a lohn system. She finds it stressful and tiring due to the high volume of clothing which needs to be completed/day;
- At home she cares for her husband, three children and old mother-in-law;
- She took part in an entrepreneurship course to start her own dressmaking business, but her husband opposed the idea;
- She does not watch the news and relies on her husband to keep her informed if something important happens;
- She does not have time to be involved in the community, her husband represents the family.





It is your turn  
now

- Choose one of our target groups. What are the reasons for their “non-engagement”?
- Tell us your ideas how to motivate your target group to participate in the political life of his/her country
- When did you vote the last time? Or participated in a referendum?
- Did you ever think of becoming a politician? What would be the first step in the democratic system in your country?
- Tell us your ideas to raise the voter’s participation at the next elections in your country

# EVALUATION

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THANK YOU!

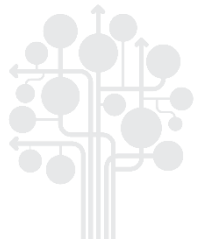


DEMOS

# DEMOCRACY AND EQUALITY MATTERS FOR OUR SOCIETY

## Political participation

For additional information, as well as access to the presentation slides, visit our [EPALE-Blog](#) [Citizenship Education](#) on EPALE.



## KONTAKTIEREN SIE UNS:

**EPALE – E-Plattform für  
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