

Youth Participatory Budget

Name of the organisation

Câmara Municipal de Cascais

Website of the organisation

<https://op.cascais.pt/orcamento-participativo/op-jovem201920>

Location of the organisation

Alameda dos Combatentes da Grande Guerra, nº 247, 1º Piso, Sala 102, 2750-416 Cascais, Portugal

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Good practice aspect(s)/themes of youth work

- Participation of young people in decision making
- Non-formal education/-learning
- Active citizenship/activism

Good practice category

Concrete tool

Good practice aim & purpose

Cascais started developing its Participatory Budget (PB) in 2011 as a tool to promote citizen's participation, being today the largest in Portugal counting with a maximum of 75.357 voters in one edition.

Education performs an essential role in promoting fundamental values of democracy, participation and citizenship and, through it, we raise fully-fledged citizens with social intervention and conscious decision awareness.

Education towards citizenship participation aims to sensitize, train, inform and put in practice the behavioural development essential for the exercised defence democratic rights and obligations, ultimately reinforcing the promotion and protection of democracy.

Youth Participatory Budget (YPB) is a project designed in 2016, as a tool to promote young people's participation, aiming to develop the interest for participatory democracy by establishing a closer connection between young people and political decision-makers, promoting personal and social development towards a citizenship oriented education, enhancing the relation between culture, school and community among students, providing the opportunity to locally identify similar values between peers, developing management, decision and motivational skills with practical simulations and strong financial education knowledge.

YPB's pilot project in 2016/2017 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4EAK4tPn7_Y) was recognized by Rede de Autarquias Participativas (RAP) with the Good Participatory Practices Award in 2017 (<https://op.cascais.pt/orcamento-participativo/noticias/5ae35eb76d95f69e00161ae2>).

Good practice description

YPB is a pedagogical process promoting awareness for the citizen's rights and obligations, and aiming to raise more participative citizens, in which students are called upon to decide on public investment

and its allocation.

It was designed by a multidisciplinary team and an external consultant in a bottom-up logic based on Sherry Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation, being classified on the 6th degree. Schools have elected a "YPB class" composed by students and teachers with a non-formal education training provided by an external entity.

The 1st edition began with 4 schools, 4 classes (aged 13-14) and 8 teachers. Its norms were defined by students through a collaborative game whose results were presented, debated, and approved in a Municipal Meeting together with the Mayor.

Currently YPB counts with a dedicated team working with an external non-formal education entity to implement the project in 15 schools, 15 classes (aged 12-18) and 28 teachers.

Structurally it is divided into 3 cycles:

1. The decision cycle includes:

- Preparation – designing the edition, identifying the YPB's classes and teachers responsible for the implementation, assembling a "management council" composed by 5 students, 1-2 teacher(s), 1 school board member and 1 municipal technician who defines the specific procedures for each school;
- Revision of the rules – meeting with representative students with previous experience in the project from each school to assess the need for a change in specific aspects to better suit the current edition;
- YPB classes' training in classroom environment – 12 sessions about youth leadership, representative, participative and collaborative democracy, sustainable development goals (SDG), gender equality, children and young people's rights and financial literacy. These sessions aim to develop skills like leadership, communication, autonomy, empathy, problem solving and teamwork;
- Teachers' training – in citizenship participation;
- Bootcamp – promote teamwork among YPB classes;
- Participatory Public Sessions – all students are invited to participate in the public sessions to present ideas for their schools and for the community, that will integrate the main PB. The organisation of the event is responsibility of the YPB class;
- PPS's winning proposals' technical analysis – the proposals for the schools are conducted by the YPB classes and their representative teacher with the support of the municipal YPB team;
- Final voting – all students are invited to vote for the proposals they find of most importance, being the process as similar as possible to the electoral government's;
- YPB's Festival – YPB classes and teachers gather to celebrate the success of the edition.

2. The implementation cycle includes:

- Financial attribution and implementation – funds are assigned to each school to implement their winning projects (10.000,00€ per school);
- Community's winning projects integration in PB (maximum of 350.000,00€ per project) – taking part of the Cascais PB's technical analysis process, where the community proposals' winning authors are called upon to better explain their idea.

3. The monitoring/evaluation cycle includes:

- Monitoring – comprehend the potential, limitations, results and impacts of the process;
- Evaluation – analysis of the reports coming from the external consultant, non-formal education entity, students, teachers, and municipal technicians to improve and orient the process.

Good practice result & concrete effects

YPB has an innovative character that encourages the youth's civic and political participation, giving recognition to young people's role as citizens. The YPB classes that receive training for the development of the previously referred skills exit the YPB process with tools that are applicable in their academic and their future professional curriculum, being more able to adapt to, and comprehend the society in which they are included and in future challenges that they may face in the job market.

The democratic awareness raised in the process enables a better understanding of the political and financial system of their country and their municipality, encouraging young people who were involved in the process to be more active as fully-fledged citizens.

YPB's participation promotes the engagement in other participatory practices, such as the main Cascais' PB, Voz dos Jovens, Scholas Occurrentes, Reinvente o Seu Bairro and Voluntariado Jovem.

The effects and impact of YPB in schools and community is verifiable in both environments' physical space and daily life and by a more present and interested availability from these citizens, that have already decided upon 492.500,00€ for schools and 3.902.950,00€ for the community.

Good practice chapter of the European Charter on Local Youth Work

Youth work policy