

Youth co-design Cities of Learning

Name of the organisation

Cities of Learning Network

Website of the organisation

<https://www.citiesoflearning.net/>

Location of the organisation

Šeimyniškių g. 22C-1, Vilnius, 09312 Vilnius, Lithuania

E-mail address of the organisation

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Good practice aspect(s)/themes of youth work

- Recognition/validation of learning
- Participation of young people in decision making
- Non-formal education/-learning
- Policymaking

Good practice category

A practice of processes and methods

Good practice aim & purpose

Over the last two years, young people, local stakeholders and Cities of Learning partners engaged more than 600 young people in consultations about learning, civic and career pathways. From here, we empowered 40 young people to take part in our Youth Seminar to build on the outcomes of the consultations.

Finally, more than 100 young people, youth workers, educators, policy and decision-makers came together at the Cities of Learning Youth Forum and collaborated to create and confirm these recommendations. Their aim was to respond to some specific challenges across five priority topics which were: Non-Formal Learning, Sustainability, Inclusion, Participation and Mental Health.

Collectively, participants both young and older, created 20 recommendations that we believe are vital and must be addressed in the next 10 years. Now, the Cities of Learning partners will champion them and work towards creating a better future for all, but we cannot do it alone. We need the support of policy and decision-makers across Europe and beyond to make these recommendations a reality.

Good practice description

With this good practice, we empowered young people to voice to contribute to the development of existing and new policies, which trigger modernisation and reforms at European and local levels in the fields of education and youth. Project “Cities of Learning: Youth co-design learning, civic and career pathways”, which was aimed to engage, connect and empower young people to co-design pathways to learning, civic engagement and careers in 8 countries and their cities.

Our approach combined the following activities and methodologies which made it possible to fully empower young people.

Phase 1: Youth consultations on youth learning, civic and career narratives. Partners adapted methodology and tools from “Global Youth skills” and carried out youth consultations and workshops, with the purpose of better understanding young people’s narrative on learning, civic engagement and career possibilities in the future whilst also exploring their role and power in the creation of the future they envision.

Phase 2: Youth pathways to leadership. We invited future youth leaders to join the 3 international leadership courses “Youth Pathways to Leadership”. The activities provided opportunities to acquire skills needed for the future of learning, active citizenship and career development and foster the peer-to-peer approach. The courses involved a combination of individual learning, activities with the local team, and online interaction with young people from other countries.

Phase 3: Youth participation through digital platforms – Cities of Learning and Virtual Exchanges. Young people with the support of project partners co-designed and co-created digital learning pathways (playlists) on Cities of Learning platform on a variety of themes of their interest. For example: Discover Cagliari (Sardinia, Italy), Inform yourself about COVID (in Italian), I am Volunteer, P-action Volunteer!, Naturverbunden durch Sachsen-Anhalt (in German), Podcast series of Live Library (in Serbian), Unge folkevalgte (in Norwegian).

Phase 4: Youth policy recommendations for learning, civic and career pathways. During the project, young people, local stakeholders and Cities of Learning partners engaged more than 600 young people in consultations about learning, civic and career pathways. From here, we empowered 40 young people to take part in our Youth Seminar in Lorca (Spain) to build on the outcomes of the consultations. Finally, more than 100 young people, youth workers, educators, policy and decision-makers came together at the Cities of Learning Youth Forum in Magdeburg (Germany) and collaborated to create and confirm these recommendations. Their aim was to respond to some specific challenges across five priority topics which were: non-formal learning, sustainability, inclusion, participation, and mental health. Each team carried out local advocacy and structured dialogue activities to promote recommendations to local, regional and national youth policy-makers.

Our partnership involved young people in realising the transversal activities: a communication campaign on Cities and Regions of Learning and Networking of Cities and Regions of Learning.

More details: <https://www.citiesoflearning.net/youthcodesign/>

Good practice result & concrete effects

On young people (YP) and youth leaders:

- > More than 600 YP were consulted about their narratives in more than 60 meetings and workshops
- > More than 90 YP developed participation and leadership capacity during 1 online leadership course and 2 residential leadership training activities
- > Within the project, we managed to make our online content on the platforms (e.g. more than 80 playlists for personal, social and career development) accessible to more than 4000 visitors
- > More than 120 YP contributed to supporting policy reforms during 2 structured dialogue events.
- > More than 120 YP participated in European youth meetings
- > 7 youth co-managers in the Cities of Learning co-management team.

On grassroots organisations:

- > With organisations and YP, we collected more than 50 ideas for learning playlists
- > Ensured engagement by involving YP in designing quality learning content with youth leaders
- > Awareness of the project and network for more than 20 organisations

On decision-makers:

- > Developed knowledge about youth realities and perspectives through being reached out during 24 local and European youth-structured dialogue events
- > Local, national and European decision-makers were introduced to 20 recommendations for the future of Non-Formal Learning, Sustainability, Inclusion, Participation and Mental Health.

More info: <https://www.citiesoflearning.net/recommendations/>

Good practice chapter of the European Charter on Local Youth Work

Youth work policy