



# FINAL REPORT ODE



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**“The main hope of a nation lies in the proper education of its youth”**

**“Your library is your paradise”**

**- Desiderius Erasmus**

## Colophon

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*Thanks to all the young participants, decision makers, library employees and libraries, teachers and schools, youth workers and youth organizations, local network partners, Central Denmark EU Office and associated partners, EU Commissionaire Mrs. Marianne Thyssen, Erasmus+, local organizations and programs and many others for participating, cooperating, supporting and, financing Our Democratic Europe.*



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# PREFACE

**This report is created in cooperation with the participating partners in the project “Our Democratic Europe” (ODE) developed in the framework of the Erasmus+ funded cooperation between libraries in Poland (Gdansk), Belgium (Roeselare), the Netherlands (Middelburg) and Denmark (Herning).**

The partners have given their input to the evaluation in order to focus on the achievements of scope and objectives in the application as well as to identify results, findings and recommendations throughout the project.

Through four cases from European libraries, the report presents the results of the project consisting of main findings and general recommendations for intercultural youth exchange and engaging young people in democracy and active citizenship at local and international levels in the framework of public libraries and by establishing and strengthening dialogue and relationship with policy makers and stakeholders.

Additionally, this report identifies approaches for libraries to cooperate locally and internationally, and discusses the risks and challenges that should be taken into account when considering and working with youth projects and/or applying Erasmus+ or other EU programs. Please note that the suggested recommendations do not constitute a checklist, but can rather be used as guidelines for libraries when considering youth projects and/or applying Erasmus+ or other EU programs.

Finally, the report introduces the concrete outcome of the project consisting of a number of youth recommendations in the field of democracy and active citizenship both on local and international levels. These recommendations are collected in a Red Book (symbolized by the project logo “The Red Suitcase”) addressed to the political levels. The Red Book and presented by the young participants to the representative of EU Commissionaire Mrs. Marianne Thyssen at a ceremony in the European Commission, Brussels during the final international seminar in Belgium, January 2018.

## **Reading guide**

*The report is written on basis on the structure of Erasmus+ final reporting: Partly as summaries of the experiences of the previous partner countries, occasionally supported by examples created locally or jointly. On the other hand, the report contains sections describing the experiences made by the individual partner country written by the local project manager. In the latter case, the report may therefore vary in linguistic style and presentation, when it comes to country presentations. These sections are marked in the report.*

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# OUR YOUTH OUR RESPONSE

## **WIND OF CHANGE**

These years European countries are facing complex environmental, social, cultural and economic challenges, as well as an increasing frequency and intensity of hazards, conflicts and disasters, which are partly caused by globalization, climate change, social and cultural dynamics, demographic changes and a growth of nationalism. The changes challenge not only each single country in different ways, but also challenge a coherent and stable European society – not least the European Union (EU). These challenges need to not only be solved, but also handled in a way that take into consideration the future generation.

## **RISE OF CRISES**

Historically speaking, the EU is in itself a response to crises in the past. It is a story of co-creation and the commitment to creating a better world and future on a foundation of structure, cooperation, co-creation and democracy. A belief in that dialogue, openness, mobility, growth, stability, sharing values, cooperation, securing human rights and equality are important keys to solve common problems too big for each single member state to handle itself and maintain a rich and healthy society.

## **EUROPEAN ENLARGEMENT**

The EU was created in the aftermath of the Second World War with the purpose to foster economic cooperation and hereby avoid conflict. Since then the EU has expanded from a few member states to nearly all European countries and has involved various policy areas. Especially in the decades after the ending of the cold war and the fall of the Berlin Wall, which opened access to countries from Eastern Europe as well as the Baltic Area. Today, the EU is based on the rule of law and is governed by the principle of representative democracy, which citizens directly represent at Union level in the European Parliament and Member States represent in the European Council and the Council of EU.

## **NEEDS FOR NEW PROCESSES OF GOVERNING**

However, changes in society and (political) culture in the last decades have led to a demand for new approaches to democracy, governing and policymaking. We must notice that the European Union is – as well states and politics in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in general – formed by a traditional top down approach to governance. It is built on the idea of the sovereign state as the primary body representing the interests of citizens to the outside world, delegating tasks down to underlying levels. This idea has lost both normative and descriptive power during the years. The EU has expanded and societies have become more diverse in terms of culture and religion, people are more mobile and less attached to places. Access to knowledge and free speech is widely spread due to globalization and digitalization. These changes call for more open processes and democratic participation.

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## **OUR YOUTH – OUR RESPONSE**

Future generations and the focus on youth, in terms of their engagement in the democratic arena, are important priorities, when we talk about our future and following the vision of a more united, stronger and more democratic Europe. The present generation of young people belongs to the future and represents the democratic core of tomorrow. Policy, political and decision making of today influence future conditions and therefore must involve and talk to people who will be affected for many reasons:

- It is vital to include the voice of the next generation in creating the future
- It is vital to make them aware of the challenges of today and the impact on the future
- It is important to prepare them for changes to come – known as well as unknown - and provide them with knowledge, tools and social, cultural and human recourses to overcome the challenges
- It is vital to identify needs and challenges from a youth point of view and develop and co-create solutions and responses
- It is important to make young people understand a democratic responsibility and experience the value of taking part in democratic processes
- It is on the other hand important to provide understanding of European history, social and cultural coherence as well as to promote the value of collaboration in the protecting of a united Europe.

## **HOW TO OPERATIONALIZE OUR DEMOCRATIC EUROPE**

The project aims to make use public libraries to support the needs of strengthen young people’s capacity to understand, develop and engage in democracy to ensure a future democratic Europe. The inherent capacities of public libraries seem ideal to establish democratic meeting spaces for dialogue, activities, interaction and development of methods in the field of youth. For instance by offering library services on youth terms even more and by active involvement of young people in planning and facilitating activities. Furthermore, by creating partnerships with local stakeholders like schools and relevant organizations. Likewise, the project is used to create meetings and dialogues between youngsters and decision makers and makes the needs and thoughts of youngsters known. Finally, the project makes use of intercultural exchange to provide international perspective and European understanding from the inside.

This report maps the potential paths, which libraries, decision makers, institutions and organizations can follow and aims at establishing a dialogue with young people on local and international levels. The report reflects different approaches to the task in general as well as to achieve individual goals and support interest and needs of the participating youngsters.

In addition, it points out the possibilities for cooperation with local stakeholders and for establishing strategic partnerships, matching the actual challenges and necessary support to the libraries in unfolding learning programs.

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# GENERAL INFORMATION

<b>Programme</b>	Erasmus+
<b>Grant Agreement No.</b>	2016-2-DK01-KA347-022381
<b>Project title</b>	Our Democratic Europe
<b>Project acronym</b>	ODE
<b>Program</b>	Erasmus+
<b>Key action</b>	Support for policy reform
<b>Action</b>	Stakeholder dialogue and policy promotion
<b>Action type</b>	Key action 3: Dialogue between young people and policy makers
<b>Call</b>	2016
<b>Round</b>	Round 2
<b>Project start date</b>	01-08-2016
<b>Project end date</b>	28-02-2018
<b>Project duration</b>	19 months (total)
<b>Applicant org.</b>	Coordinator: Herning Bibliotekerne, Østergade 8, 7400 Herning, Denmark, PIC: 939264290
<b>Beneficiary org.</b>	Herning Bibliotekerne

## Partner organizations

Country	Library organization	City	Legal representative	Project managers
Denmark	Herning Bibliotekerne	Herning	Director Mrs. Pernille Schaltz	Mr. Mikkel Hartvig Haaning
Poland	Wojewodzka I Miejska Biblioteka Publiczna im. Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego e Gdansk	Gdansk	Manager Mr. Pawel Braun	Mrs. Karolina Wenskowska
Netherlands	ZB Planbureau en Bibliotheek van Zeeland,	Middelburg	Director Mr. Perry Moree	Mrs. Jeanine Naerebout
Belgium	ARhus, VZW Het Portaal,	Roeselare	Managing Director Mr. Yves Rosseel	Mrs. Benedicte Seynhaeve

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# PROJECT SUMMARY

## BACKGROUND

This project was created in our concern about democracy in Europe upon decades of external and internal changes. We need to rethink the future and connect with our citizens – starting with youth. The project was initiated by libraries in Poland (Gdansk), Belgium (Roeselare), the Netherlands (Middelburg) and Denmark (Herning). The project involved about 100 youngsters aged between 14-19 attending schools or high schools and recruited by open call or in cooperation with schools. This group reflected a width in gender, age, social, cultural and economic backgrounds, including youngsters with fewer opportunities.

## THE PROJECT FOCUSED ON FOUR OBJECTIVES

- Enhancing the democratic competences of youngsters 14-19 years old
- Making decision makers aware of the needs and thoughts of youngsters
- Empowering youngsters to find solutions to current local and European challenges
- Using the public library as a framework for creating a European public opinion – starting with the youth

## ACTIVITIES

The program consisted of three stages based on topics from the Europe 2020 Strategy: *Employment & Education, Climate change & Sustainability, Innovation, Fighting poverty & social exclusion*:

1. Implementation of one-year learning courses in each partner library, as 1) voluntary activity in cooperation with local schools or 2) partnership activity with local schools incorporating the learning course in formal education
2. Implementation of four regional seminars organized by the local task forces, inviting fellow youngsters and decision makers for dialogue and co-creation on a Europe 2020 topic
3. Implementation of four international seminars providing intercultural exchange for partner taskforces and accompanying politicians as a superstructure on the domestic regional seminars. Each partner hosted a seminar organized by the domestic taskforce, fitting a Europe 2020 topic

## APPROACH

The program used action-learning and interactional methods to provide products and processes leading to dialogue and dissemination and support of the objectives of Structured Dialogue:

- Publishing the ODE Red Book with youth recommendations expressing the vision for future Europe
- Meeting with representative of EU Commissionaire Mrs. Marianne Thyssen at the EU Commission, presenting the Red Book and visiting the EU Parliament Jan. 22, 2018 (B)
- Public events on the topic Climate change in the streets of Middelburg (NL) May 20, 2017
- Exhibition stand at the Cultural Summit, 2017 Nykoebing (DK) Aug. 24-26, 2017, youth made restaurant on the topic Climate change

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- Animated Movie Production on the topic Innovation released at Oscar Award Show , Nov. 11-13, 2018, Herning (DK) and published on social medias
  - International dissemination, launching Tools Conference Nov. 29-30, 2017 Herning (DK) with contribution from all countries, including one young participant as speaker
  - Various press releases, articles and media coverage

## RESULTS

### *Competences acquired by participants:*

- The local learning courses developed democratic competences by providing knowledge of democratic procedures and policy-making, tools for event making, communication, process facilitating etc.
- The regional seminars developed personal empowerment by providing opportunity to train obtained learning in action, organizing and facilitating events, creating dialogue and interaction with decision makers and youngsters
- The international seminars improved intercultural competences, language development, social and cultural understanding. They developed a European vision by co-creating the Red Book and gained knowledge of how democracy works in European contexts
- The incorporation of structured dialogue between youngsters and decision makers developed relational competences by providing meetings and interaction on equal level. Decision makers gave insight in policy-making and enhanced the awareness of youth culture and the influence of policy-making on young people
- The use of the library as facilitator and meeting place developed innovative competences by providing a training court, giving access to resources and sharing know-how and experience in creating cultural activities, social interaction and public events
- The use of Youthpass provided a certificate of acquired competences

## IMPORTANT IMPACT

- Four youngster became members of a political party, one is running for a political career (local government)
- Others have decided to study e.g. political science after high school
- A group of youngsters became volunteers by meeting an employee of the domestic Red Cross at a regional seminar
- One youngster was empowered by meeting a young professional and is now running a business as piano tuner
- Another youngster participated as speaker at Tools Conference and shared personal experience with the project
- One of the participating decision makers offered an internship to a youngster at her campaign office in the national Parliament

## FUTURE

The partners intend to continue cooperation and are busy with planning a new project building upon the achieved experiences. The new project intends to be a strategic partnership with a more targeted focus upon enhancing the democratic competences amongst youngsters with special needs. In this effort, the partners intend using their national networks and recommend each other for other kinds of cross-country partnerships and projects.

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# PROJECT DESCRIPTION

## STRATEGHIC BACKGROUND

*The context of this project is the current concerning of our democratic Europe. In the last decades, European democracies have faced challenges and opportunities from major changes in their external environment. Partly caused by globalization, climate change, digitalization, crisis, conflicts etc. At the same time, EU has undergone a large-scale expansion from including a few member states to nearly all European countries. Europe have become more diverse in social, cultural, economic and environmental terms.*

Today people are more mobile and less attached to places, and in contrary to past generation's todays Europeans are not necessarily related to the history, traditions, values and communities, which led to the creation of European democracies and a united Europe. In particular, when it comes to young people, who seem not sufficient democratic engaged, interested and included.

Both in Denmark, The Netherlands and Belgium democratic challenges consist of a lack of political self-esteem amongst youngsters and a general lack of interest and participation in formal political processes. In Poland, a relatively new democracy is challenged by identifying new ways of making the strong democratic heritage from the Solidarity movement relevant to young people, and by creating a solid foundation of their own of active youth participation in democracy. These challenges need to be solved to secure a boldly future Europe based on democratic engagement of the next generation.

## AIMS

Our Democratic Europe (ODE) is an Erasmus+ funded project developed in cooperation between libraries in Poland (Gdansk), Belgium (Roeselare), the Netherlands (Middelburg) and Denmark (Herning) as a response to these challenges. The project is concerned with the participation of young people in European democratic life and aims to

- Engage young people in the age of 14 to 19 years old into their future as democratic citizens and active contributors to decision making at local and international levels.
- Create dialogue and meetings between young people and decision makers on different levels in the field of youth democratic involvement.

In this case, the project will make use of the library as a tool to foster youth engagement and empowerment and provide a better dialogue and interaction. Especially when it comes to involving young people and letting them make decisions and organize activities suitable for youth engagement and interaction in policy-making.

The advantage of letting the library the pivotal point in the effort to strengthen youth democratic participation, is primarily that the library is an public accepted, active and neutral player in local community, which provides an including meeting place and access to a various selection of know-based resources. However, libraries are required to rethink how to become more relevant to youngsters in today's society. Public libraries need to develop new methods and competences in order to transform the current passive library mindset of 'making information available' into making the library a center that promotes active participation in democratic life and creates a link between local and European issues.

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## OBJECTIVES

The objectives for the project are to:

- Enhance the democratic competences of youngsters 14-19 years old
- Make decision makers aware of the needs and thoughts of youngsters
- Empower youngsters to find solutions to current local and European challenges
- Use the public library as a framework for creating a European public opinion – starting with the youth

Moreover the local objectives of each project partner are:

**POLAND:** The project meets the needs of the library in Gdansk to become a platform for people interested in democracy and their values. Librarians will become "democracy instructors" and they will expand their competences to become a tutor for future social activist, giving them opportunities and foundation like seminars, meeting with decision makers. The library wants to be a place where one gets not only books about democracy but also showing them how democracy works in real life in developing society.

**THE NETHERLANDS:** This project fits in the aims of ZB| Research Institute and Library of Zeeland by transforming the library into an organisation where people can meet each other. Where themes like EU, safety and issues as freedom and democracy are important in the overall agenda. The project supports that the library is important and is useful for other things than borrowing books. The library is the key to knowledge and information. The EU topics as climate change fits in our policy. This project also presents the building as a neutral open space, where different groups can meet. Local goals are:

- Motivate young people to express their opinion and to empower them to engage actively in the debate
- Integration of students in local political network
- Improving cooperation between institutions in Zeeland
- Development of the library as a place where young people can acquire and share their skills
- Development of knowledge on Europe 2020 Strategy topics

**DENMARK:** ODE in Denmark is a part of Aarhus 2017, European Capital of Culture, and involves participation of five public libraries in the region of Central Denmark: Holstebro, Herning, Randers, Viborg and Horsens. The project aims to expand the library's role as an important institution in sustaining and developing a vivid local democracy at the same time as enhancing the possibilities of young Danish citizens to experience the challenges and reflections of citizens around Europe. The library should to be an open gate to both the Danish and European society – making it easier for each citizen to participate, including young people.

- Through this project, the libraries expect to develop and learn new methods and new roles especially with focus on co-creation methods and the needs and thinking of youth.
- Furthermore, the libraries expect to strengthen the cooperation with local stakeholders in the fields of youth, democracy, culture and education, and aim to establish partnerships and on long-term benefit from the experiences to develop concepts for forming partnerships as library method.
- Finally, the libraries expect the project to expand the international network enabling the libraries to start thinking and acting within a European context.

**BELGIUM:** On the macro level, ARhus engaged in this project because it gave the organization the opportunity to fulfil a particular role in the city of Roeselare and its environment. Partly through Our Democratic Europe, ARhus could play a strengthening role for the community. As an open house for all people, we still struggle to reach every citizen. Youngsters are a particularly hard demographical group to include in our regular activities because of the traditional association with library activities. With this project, ARhus gives shape to two transformation processes that we defined in our strategic plan. In addition, ARhus wants to make a connection between entrepreneurial attitudes and engaging young people in (local) democracy. For this purpose, ARhus can

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activate a network of local schools, politicians, civil servants, and entrepreneurs. For the students it will be enriching to learn good practices concerning entrepreneurship from students of other countries and cultures (incl. migrants living in Roeselare).

- First, ARhus wants to transform our library into a community, a structural platform for citizens where they can discuss, co-create etc.
- Second, the project underlines that the library has a benefit for groups of users that are not necessarily borrowers. Especially in working with young people, it is a challenge for a library to find new ways to stay relevant to them. This process is called 'from borrower to user'. Working on the EU 2020 target 'Fighting poverty and social exclusion', ARhus will focus on entrepreneurship (entrepreneurial attitudes and skills), which aligns with the strategic priority of stimulating entrepreneurship.
- Finally, through this project ARhus gives 'body' to our three core values: ARhus is positioned as an open, neutral place, ARhus is welcoming all kinds of people (inclusion) and ARhus is stimulating citizenship.

## **PARTNER EXPERIENCES AND COMPETENCIES**

**The partner organizations brought several experiences and competencies in the project as announced at the application stage:**

**POLAND:** WiMBP in Gdansk promotes active citizenship among Youth and Young Adults and engages them into politics and its rules. Library's ventures show how important civil participation of young people is in the creation of democracy. The Library is a platform for meetings, debates, discussion panels, which helps to understand rules of politics, pillars of democracy and encouraging active partnership in social debate.

The library staff is great at analyzing and estimating social trends, identifying needs of the society and (with managing important events) – respond to them.

The High School partners involved in establishing the learning course bring in their good practices in organization of projects for young people, their experiences in undertaking similar workshops and contact with parents.

WiMBP includes use of the competencies of European Solidarity Centre by facilitation the international seminar in Gdansk. ESC helped for instance by organizing the event, sharing their museum and a room for workshops, what helped to understand the Polish history of democracy.

**THE NETHERLANDS:** ZB has a direct contact with youngsters and students in Zeeland. ZB work with them, they are active in the library building and there is direct contact with the schools in Middelburg and Zeeland. ZB works together with "YourZeeland", a group of youngsters attached to the Province of Zeeland and is closely involved in the yearly Four Freedoms Award ceremony in Middelburg. In April 2016, Angela Merkel was honored with this award. The four freedoms from President Roosevelt and democracy is a leading theme in Zeeland. The Four Freedoms, the Roosevelt Movement related to democracy and freedom will be the focus in this EU project.

Staff members involved in the project have yearlong experience in co-creation with schools and youngsters and are able to communicate in creative ways with the youngsters here and with the other libraries and youngsters in the EU. Through the work with the Four Freedoms Award, staff members have skills within creating democracy related events in partnerships with external partners such as schools, volunteers and other institutions.

**DENMARK:** Herring Libraries have a long experience in creating and managing projects. We are continuously working together with local schools and youth organizations to facilitate learning processes and events for young people in the areas of digital literacy and reading. In the field of democracy the library is initiator and lead partner on an existing regional democracy and youth project "Pass it on", involving 18 libraries in the region. Through this project, the libraries have gathered experience in engaging young people in democracy and adapting participative approaches leading to youth empowerment and ownership in library business.

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Five of these libraries, which are a part of Aarhus 2017 – European Capital of Culture, want to expand the regional cooperation into a European context by being a part of ODE. Staff members from each library, who are involved in the project as coordinators, contribute with solid experience in project management, youth work and event management. Local employees contribute with experiences in communicating with and making events for young people in the library or at schools. Overall responsible for the project will be Head of development at Herning Libraries, who has long experience as member of boards and project steering groups. On a daily basis, the project will be led by a project manager, who too has long experience with project management, international cooperation etc.

**BELGIUM:** ARhus has a strong collaboration with local schools. Beside our traditional guided tours and loan sessions for schools, we developed in the last two years a new format of collaboration. Our goal is to facilitate and activate projects between schools and partners from our network (profit and nonprofit organizations, media, the city of Roeselare etc.). In doing so, we bring projects to a higher level.

For both students and teachers it means trying out new forms of collaboration (especially also with students from other school associations) and learning. The result is that these projects become known by a much larger audience and have a much larger impact. We focus on enhancing entrepreneurial attitudes and on civic education. Concerning civic education, we have also experience with working together with kids from different cultural and social backgrounds that hang around in our building.

ODE will be implemented by members of our team 'Projecten', who already are responsible for the collaboration with schools, youth, entrepreneurs etc. Overall responsible for the project is the manager of this team, who is also member of the board of ARhus. On a daily basis the project will be led by a project employee with insights from previous projects in the fields of intercultural collaboration, school projects etc.

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# PROJECT ACTIVITIES

## MAIN ACTIVITIES

The ODE program consists of three levels or stages of progressive and coherent learning based on collaborative and co-creating principles that involves young people in the democratic and decision-making process and ensures the meeting/dialogue with policy makers.

A series of activities such as training courses, seminars, event management, study visits, meeting and dialogue with policy makers prepares the youngsters to participate in democratic processes and influence decision making. The progression is:

**1) One-year learning course** established as local task forces (democracy club) of young people (14-19 years old) and facilitated by the local library in cooperation with stake holders like NGOs, schools, local authorities, unions, medias, politicians etc.

**2) A series of four regional seminars** based on four topics from the Europe 2020 Strategy and largely facilitated by the local task force in each country. At each seminar, the taskforce invites and involves fellow youngsters and decision makers to discussions and debate as well as to test methods for co-creation.

**3) A series of four international meetings** - Each partner country hosts a meeting (international seminar) with its own topic priority (Europe 2020 Strategy). The meeting offers intercultural exchange and is a superstructure on the domestic regional seminars and local learning courses. This is where the various countries' task forces meet and bring in local and regional experiences and work together to co-create content for a Red Book which will handed over to the EU Commission at the end of the project in Brussels. Each country invites domestic decision-makers to accompany the youngsters on the journey and participate with them in the seminar as a team.

1. International seminar: Gdansk, Poland - February 4-7, 2017 - Theme: Employment and Education
2. International seminar: Middelburg, Netherlands - May 18-21, 2017 - Theme: Climate change and sustainability
3. International seminar: Herning, Denmark - November 11-14, 2017 - Theme: Innovation
4. International seminar: Roeselare, Belgium - January 20-23, 2018 - Theme: Poverty and Social Exclusion



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## TOPICS

The project address four topics taken from EU2020 Strategy that supports the need of attention to EU Citizenship, EU Awareness and Democracy, Reaching the policy level/dialogue with decision makers and Youth (participation, Youth work, Youth policy).

The topics are:

- Employment & Education
- Climate change & Sustainable future
- Innovation,
- Fighting poverty & social exclusion.

The project steering group invented the topics during writing of the application for Erasmus+. During the project, the young participants transformed and concretized the topics into themes concerning to young people's point of views and understanding the European challenges.

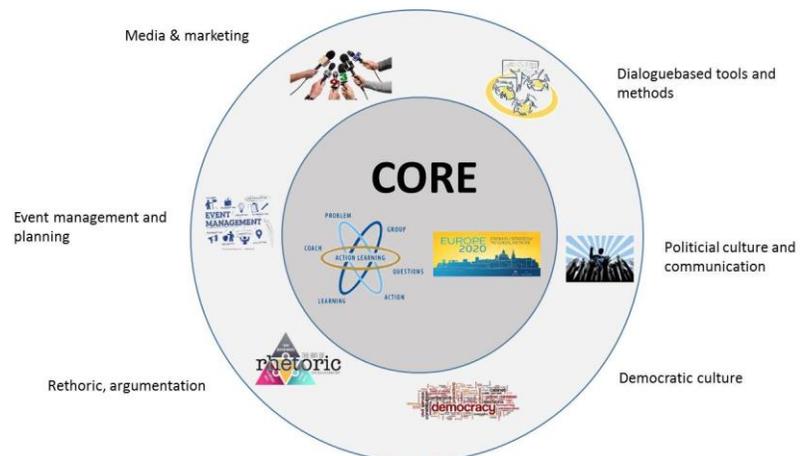
In addition, the project integrates *the White Paper on the Future of Europe by Jean-Claude Juncker* to help steer the dialogue in the project on concrete future matters by offering a series of scenarios to illustrate different approaches. In Denmark, the national elections for Local Government November 2017 (Municipalities and Regions) is incorporated as topic in the learning courses. The occasion is used to promote democracy engagement of youth and to create political awareness and dialogue in the field of youth, democracy and policymaking.

### The educational content is based on:

- Event making and project management
- Rhetoric's and communication
- Process facilitating
- Design Thinking
- Political culture and communication
- Democratic culture and decision making
- Intercultural exchange

### The learning outcome provides:

- European vision, language development, social and cultural understanding
- Knowledge of youth, culture and how democracy works in the European context
- Tools for democracy involvement and co-creation
- Competences in event management
- Awareness of democratic stakeholders
- Knowledge of democratic procedures, decision-making and the importance of working with different values, attitudes and methods
- Greater knowledge and understanding of the library as a platform, venue and opportunity for debate and experience



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## **PARTICIPANT'S PROFILE / RECRUITMENT**

**The project aims at three target groups: 1) youngsters (primary group), 2) decision-makers at local, regional and European level, 3) library professionals.**

### **Young participants**

The young participants are in the age group of 14-19 years old attending public schools, secondary or vocational schools and, and youngsters with connection to youth organizations/NGOs. The exact participant profile depends on the partners' priorities. However, each partner ensures that youngsters from different social and ethnical backgrounds will participate. The participation includes three levels:

1. Local – through exclusive participation in local task forces (democracy clubs) and
2. Regional – through open participation in regional seminars and activities/events arranged by the local task forces.
3. International – through exclusive participation in international seminars. Each partner country forms a delegated group of youngsters (8 youngsters) recruited from the local task force for participation in the international seminars.

Approximately 100 European youngsters have participated in the project as active members of the taskforces.

**Poland:** Youngsters were recruited through partnerships with partaking schools and are to be classified as participants with fewer opportunities.

**Netherlands:** ZB approached the managing directors of several high schools in the province of Zeeland, varying from vocational education to high schools. After that, team managers from the schools had a meeting with the project managers from the library. Teachers were involved and came to the library with their students for an introduction of the project. After that, schools selected students for the project: 1 school entered 2 students, 1 school 3 students, 1 school 8 students. Vocational education and a religious school did not manage to enter students in the project despite numerous efforts on the library's behalf. After the selection, the library was in direct contact with the youngsters. ZB decided with the schools upon Gymnasium 4 and 5 students, since the project covers two school years. These youngsters were mature enough and had enough knowledge to enter. The students from vocational education are in general older, which can be an advantage and is compatible with the Gymnasium students, however, as explained; their workload did not meet ends with the project requirements. An important thing is a homogenous age structure in the group. We decided on 15-17. The combination of 14 and 18/19 year old does not work well. The differences in knowledge and social development influences the learning process too much. Diversity in the level of education however works stimulating in the group. The most important aspect in a successful group is the intrinsic motivation of youngsters involved.

**Denmark:** The Danish participation differs from the other countries by involving five municipalities/libraries, which established learning course/democracy club on individual terms due to local objectives and concerns. Proportion of participants represents a width in gender, age, social, cultural and economic conditions and backgrounds. One specific local partner differs in this matter: Horsens Byskole, which is located in the city center of Horsens. A large proportion of the pupils can be classified as socially vulnerable characterizes the socio-economic profile of the school.

- *In Herning*, the Democracy Club was established as a voluntary leisure activity. The members were recruited by public advertising as well as by meetings and cooperation with local schools and institutions, youth boards, workers and leaders and political organizations. The Democracy Club consisted of 6-8 members in the age of 15-19 years old. The representation reflected not in the same way a variation in backgrounds.

- *In Viborg*, the Democracy Club was established as a voluntary leisure activity with members recruited by public advertising and cooperation with local schools and institution, youth boards and political organizations. The Democracy Club consisted of 10 members (14-19 years old).
- *In Randers*, the library unfortunately did not succeed to establish a permanent Democracy Club although the library attempted to set up different solutions through cooperation with local stakeholders, like Randers Youth School, NGO and Youth Political Parties. Instead, the library changed strategy and cooperated with certain schools and provided single activities for youngsters dropped out of the education system due to social problems, cultural challenges etc.
- *In Holstebro* the Democracy Club was established in cooperation with the local high school Holstebro Gymnasium as an integrated part of the weekly learning course for a class on first grade (I.C Community Line – 16-19 years old). The participation in the regional activities was made voluntary however many students prioritized to participate in the regional activities. The participant representation reflected a width in social, cultural and financial conditions and a mix of gender.
- *In Horsens* the democracy was established in cooperation with the local elementary school Horsens Byskole as an integrated part of the learning course for 8th grade pupils (Community line) with around 6-8 participants. Pupils from Horsens participated in all international seminars.

**Belgium:** ARhus contracted someone with feeling for the youth sector, himself being relatively young and active in youngster politics, to contact schools (varying in level of education) and youth organizations and spread the call for participants. ARhus had a document on which youngsters could enter their preferences on several issues concerning politics and society. This document was distributed widely. The project managers selected out of these application forms and continued in direct contact with the youngsters. Criteria for participation were geographical spread throughout the BRoeRe-region (a regional cooperative bond of libraries), age, political convictions, social background and education level.

### Decision makers

The decision makers are local and regional representatives from the political or administrative system. In some cases representatives from the national parliaments as well as EU. The decision makers participate on three levels.

1. Local: Through participation in local learning courses – for instance as speakers and interview persons.
2. Regional: Through participation in regional seminar as keynote speakers, coaches and interview persons.
3. International: Through participation in international seminars as equal members of the delegated task force and as active contributors to the intercultural exchange and dialogue.

### Library professionals and associated

The project must be imbedded in the organisation and falls under the responsibility of a managing director and/or department head. They form the board and meet at the beginning and the end of the project. The project needs a project manager and a project team. The project managers from the participating countries form a project team and meet before each international seminar. The project manager in each country also has his or her own project team that helps with the administration and organisation of the events. An internship is also a possible addition to the project team.

The employees from the participating libraries are people working in the fields of i.e.g. Education, youth work, project management, event making, public service, democracy and active citizenship. Some employees are involved directly in the facilitating and management of the learning courses, others involved in providing teaching, establishing partnerships, handling practical matters etc.

In some occasions, i.e.g. Denmark, a project management structure was established - grouping the participating employees into different levels depending on responsibility, function and roles, competences and tasks. This resulted in an organization with a steering committee with representatives of managers from the participating libraries, an overall project manager and a project group with representatives of local project coordinators. Occasionally the project group withdrew local partners (for instance teachers in planning and evaluation).

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# ORGANIZING ACTIVITIES

## POLAND

*The following description is written by the local project manager, why differences in style, presentation, weighting and focus on important matters may occur compared to other countries contribution for this section.*

### **One-year learning course:**

Poland established the learning course by involving four high schools from Gdansk and Gdynia as project partners.

- Youngsters were recruited by teachers from partner schools-32 youngsters from 4 schools in age 16-19;
- One teacher from each school as a group leader;
- The meetings took place in schools;
- The topics was connected with Europe 2020 Strategy and event organization;
- Youngsters and teachers had an impact on the organization of regional seminars and international seminar in Gdansk;
- Members have been participating in the international seminars in Poland, Netherland, Denmark and Belgium, and regional seminars.

*The outcome of the learning course:*

- We co-created, elaborated and implemented an “Integration for immigrants” model, in a team headed by the President of Gdansk.
- On the 15th of October during the “National Day of Solidarity with Refugee”, we held a speaking panel about the Refugees situation in Poland.
- “Competences of the future – how to spread your wings?” we organized a debate about young Poles' competences, their fortes and skills which are crucial for national development, personal and professional growth.
- In addition, our staff, responsible for various projects, has gained skills and experience that are helpful in working with Youth and Young Adults – to whom our programming (in all library branches) targets. Because of our active work, we have experience in planning and organizing events and we have improved our staff skills in personal and social communication.

### **Regional seminars:**

- **January 12, 2017: Employment and Education:**The 1st Regional Seminar took place in Main building of Library in Gdańsk. Decision maker: Michał Smętek (Partia Razem). As a mentor in seminar was participated Agnieszka Cichocka- from Inkubator Starter, Gdańsk Business Week coordinator. The youngsters talk about employment and education using the world cafe method. Outcome: Recommendations on the topic.
- **April 20, 2017: Climate change and sustainability:** In the seminar, we used world cafe method but we started with the lecture by Tomasz Bieliński- lecturer at the University of Gdansk. The topic was “New trends in environmental protection”. Decision maker: Dagmara Nagórka - Kmiecik, deputy director of the

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Environmental Department City hall of Gdansk. Outcome: Recommendations on the topic, knowledge about the city's policy on environmental protection.

- **October 5, 2017: Innovation-** Main topic of the seminar was How to be innovative. We started the meeting by three lectures. First speaker was Katarzyna Bąk, she was talking about startups and working in Pomeranian Technology Park. Second speaker was Szymon Węsierski from Creative Agency Efekt. He said what a creative agency is and what it does. As a decision maker, a speech gave a lecture Michał Pielechowski from Department of Social Development in City hall of Gdansk. His lecture was about social innovation and the support that the city guarantees in the development of innovation. After speeches using world café method the youngsters discussed about subtopics.
- **December 2, 2017: Fighting poverty and social exclusion.** The seminar took place in Library in Gdańsk. It was a meeting with Dariusz Falczyński from Polish Red Cross. His speech was about his experience **in fighting poverty in this organization and was an inspiration to discuss about subtopics.**

### **International Seminar: Gdansk, Poland, February 4-7, 2017:**

*Topic Employment and Education*

*Subthemes: Vocational education, Role of hobbies in education, Religion in schools, Sex education*

The Polish Taskforce planned and facilitated the first international seminar on the topics Employment and Education in Gdańsk. Participants chose sub-topics, seminar places, guests and were moderators during the first day of the seminar. Second day took place in the library in city center of Gdansk. The program consisted of a workshop using the 4D process as method including use of Time travelling (mindfulness method) and creative tools like Lego Serious Play.

*Program and activities*

#### **DAY 1: SATURDAY 4 FEBRUARY American Corner (Targ Rakowy 5/6)**

16.30 ARRIVAL - All participant: meeting, small dinner.

#### **DAY 2: SUNDAY 5 FEBRUARY EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CENTER (PL. SOLIDARNOŚCI 1)**

10.00 OFFICIAL WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Good morning and official welcome speech to all participants

Introduction to the program and purpose for the seminar

Practical information

10.15 WELCOME TO OUR DEMOCRATIC EUROPE

Presentation of country videos

Presentation of the Red Book

10.30 WALK'N'TALK THROUGH THE DEMOCRATIC STORY OF POLAND

11.30 COUNTRY PRESENTATION – EDUCATION

13.00 LUNCH TIME

14.00 ENERGIZER

COUNTRY PRESENTATION – EMPLOYMENT

15.35 BREAK INCLUDING REFLECTION TASK

16.05 CLOSING DAY 1 & CONCLUSIONS

17.30 SMALL BREAK FOR A SANDWICH (KAWIARNIA W STARYM KADRZE, GROBLA 1 3/4)

GUIDED TOUR- VISITING THE OLD TOWN (KATOWNIA, TARG WĘGLOWY)

#### **DAY 3: MONDAY 6 FEBRUARY SALA CONRADOWSKA (TARG RAKOWY 5/6)**

9.00 GOODMORNING - ENERGIZER

9.10 GOODMORNING, FOLLOW-UP ON DAY 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM FOR DAY 2 (FOCUS ON THE EUROPEAN VISION)

Focus of the day will be on dialogue, co-creation and forming the recommendations to the red book according to a common European 2020 Vision

9.30 EDUCATION - GROUP WORK - Cross-country groups

12.00 LUNCH TIME

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13.00 WELCOME BACK - ENERGIZER  
13.05 EMPLOYMENT - GROUP WORK - Cross-country groups  
14.35 BREAK  
15.00 EMPLOYMENT - GROUP WORK (PRESENTATION AND FEEDBACK)  
16.00 ENDING & EVALUTATION  
Evening WATCHING A MOVIE- WALESA A MAN OF HOPE

**DAY 4: TUESDAY 7 FEBRUARY American Corner (Targ Rakowy 5/6)**

10:00 DEPARTURE DAY  
10.45 Transport to the airport

## THE NETHERLANDS

*The following description is written by the local project manager, why differences in style, presentation, weighting and focus on important matters may occur compared to other countries contribution for this section.*

### **One-year learning course:**

The educational program and learning activities was carried out thanks to ZB's competences as a partner organization and experience within networking and interact with external partners. The library considered which partners could be involved in the project and add expertise to the learning course. By focusing on cooperation and co-creation, the library could take the role as facilitator and director, whose main job was to convey knowledge to youngsters in unconventional ways. It all comes down to custom-made formats and approaches.

The implementation the project started with a meeting with department heads from four different high schools and one school for vocational education in Zeeland. The library explained the project and asked if the schools wanted to participate. Both school directors and department heads embraced the idea and the next step was a session with schoolteachers and their students. A group of sixty people. The religious school and the school for vocational education were enthusiastic to participate, but in one case the teachers could not apply and in the other case the workload of the students (internships, job related learning) did not add up and they did not join the project. Hereby, the library had three different schools.

During the meeting with the teachers and student the library, the participants got information on the project. Afterwards agreements on different approaches were made with the three schools. School 1 entered two students for the entire project. School 2 entered three students that divided themselves over the three seminars they had to travel. School three entered eight students and draw straws which two students could represent the school at which seminar. In class, all students applied for participation and the schools let the library know which students entered. Then the teachers signed the participation contract for the students and gave permission to miss classes during the project, but that was pretty much it for the schools involvement. The teachers were asked if they wanted to accompany the youngster on the international seminars, but that never seemed to work out one way or another. The schools entrusted the library with the responsibility for the students during the project.

By securing the recruitment for the project, the awareness was on the decision-makers. The library ended up with three politicians, a council member, a mayor and a provincial representative. Two of them were at all regional and international seminars and were a part of the taskforce. The main role of these decision makers was to be a coach for the youngsters, an equal sparring partner in the discussions and a source of knowledge on legislation and democracy in action.

With a university teacher (media, PR and journalism) from University College Roosevelt a teaching program for the youngsters was developed. Dr Anya Luscombe of University College Roosevelt taught them in a couple of meetings about:

- Dialogue based tools and methods
- Rhetoric, argumentation

- Preparation presentations + world café moderation + presenting an event

The youngsters got tips and tricks on conversations, summarizing and recommendation reports. Rhetoric and argumentation, the art of convincing and the importance of dialogue were the main objective of one of the lessons.

Like the project partners in Belgium, Denmark and Poland, the Dutch library had a project team meeting, but in addition, they had internal project team meetings. The project team of the ZB consisted of a project manager (Jeanine), a secretary (Farida), a consulting colleague (Paulette) and the director of the project (Dick). The project team regularly discussed practical and tactical stuff for the project and program. In addition, the team had a meeting to work on a toolkit for the project. For practical reasons only the Belgians and Dutch met up. The project manager had several preparation meeting with the university teacher in order to develop the Teaching Program. Of course, there were the classes in the teaching program with the youngsters. In preparation for either the regional or the international seminar we had 2/3 meetings with the youngsters each time. Either a teaching program session or for filmmaking, preparing the country presentations, practicing hosting/moderating.

The learning course took place in the library and made use of the facilities. For instance, the cinema facility, that was used to get together on a Saturday night, ordering pizza and watching the film “The Flood”, and afterwards discussing the film.

Activity type	No. of Activities	No. of Participants (including Accompanying Persons)
Teaching Program	4	15
Preparation country presentation	4	10
International Seminar M’burg	4	40
Taskforce intro films	4	10
Parent Meetings	3	18

### Regional seminars

The general program of the regional seminars consisted of inspirational talks in the morning and a world cafe in the afternoon. The goal of the regional seminar is exploring the themes and harvesting ideas, broadening and activating knowledge. We invited several experts to give a guest lecture, with a maximum of 20 minutes. Most of the time the experts also joined the youngsters in the world cafe session. This way the knowledge they had, was used in the most optimal way. All experts really loved working with our enthusiastic youngsters. A point of attention for the project managers was to see to it that the youngsters were in charge of the discussions, not the experts or decision makers, teachers in some cases. Youngsters find it very important to be able to ventilate their own opinions, without steering adults. Therefore, politicians only reflected upon the conversation and served as a source of information for the youngsters. The only thing we came to reconsider during the project was the objective to reach a broad audience for the regional seminars. We simply could not comply. In addition, we think it is wiser to join an existing huge event, than to create a new one yourself. Things like that need time to develop over some years.

To explore the topic *Climate change and sustainability* we contracted the organisation *Switch* close to the library. Their main objective is to stimulate behaviour that contributes to a sustainable and righteous world. Now and in the future, *Switch* inspires supports and connects peoples and ideas. They helped the youngsters explore the topic and come up with subtopics, by f.i. watching the movie *National Geographic Documentary Before the Flood* by Leonardo di Caprio. All youngsters from the four countries were to watch this movie, to give them the same framework for the international seminar. *Switch* also led the workshop ‘prototyping, action time and recommendations’ together with *!DROPS*, since both organisations had a lot of experience with these type of workshops. We also hired some experts for a 20 minutes lecture on climate change during the regional seminar. Then the experts joined the world café session to further discussing the subtopic, this in preparation for the international seminar. In addition, we had an offer for a lecture on climate change and thought it might be suitable

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for the regional seminar. If the people who would give the lecture would comply to our means, namely a short interactive lecture with a lot of graphic material. They agreed and for only a bottle of wine and a book. They also joined the world café session as experts on one of the subthemes.

Using the regional seminar as preparation for the international seminar in Middelburg on this topic, the youngsters came together to discuss the program and to watch a film they selected and wanted to be a part of the program for all youngsters in the project. They also went along visiting locations for our international seminar and making arrangements. One of the youngsters even came to work beside the project manager in the library, to make sure everything was in order in time. Finally, youngsters went on excursions outside the library, to gain knowledge on the topics in the project.

*To explore the topic Innovation* we invited some young, innovative designers that somehow combined design with technology. Either in the medical field or in the creative field (fashion) or both. We also joined two existing, mayor events, in both Middelburg and Eindhoven. We learned during the project that we could learn more by visiting existing events, than by creating new events. The turn-up from outsiders for our own events was very disappointing, even though we had invited impressive performers. Considering what you put into it and what the results are, we think it is better to search for existing events and joining them.

One of these events was The Dutch Design Week, which is the most prestigious event on design and technology in the Netherlands and even has an international reach. We went on a Saturday by train. The library bought tickets for both the DDW and the train online. Two project managers accompanied the youngsters and made suggestions what to visit, since it is a huge event. At the event, the youngsters attended inspirational talks on the theme innovation in Europe and they experienced the work of students who combined art, design and technology. The youngsters also attended a Master Class with Daan Roosegaarde, a famous Dutch designer, who was meeting students in Zeeland, and working with them on assignments from actual companies. Our youngsters were to bear witness to the Masterclass, but even managed to get some questions in.

For the regional seminar on the topic Innovation, we went out of our way to invite prestigious designers. First, contact were made to the famous Dutch designer Daan Roosegaarde. We could not afford him for the regional seminar. However, he happened to be in Middelburg the day before the Denmark exchange. We knew he would give a Master Class for students of University College Roosevelt and HZ University of Applied Sciences and we simply asked the organizing party if our youngsters were welcome as well. It took some follow up actions, but in the end, we were welcome to witness the Master Class.

Instead, we used our network intensively and in the end came up with 4 designers, 2 on Creative Design and 2 on Health and Vitality: Dewi Bekker and Gino Anthonisse, who are two young fashion designers from the art collective Das Leben am Haverkamp. They were a tip from the Museum of Zeeland. Alissa Rees is a social and concept designer who was in the news with a more fashionable infuse pole. Furthermore, Nick Mampaey, who is a student Engineering at HZ University of Applied Sciences, Academy Technology & Innovation and has invented a wellness shower in class. The library had contact with teachers in this academy and thus contracted the student. Finally, Arend Roos, who is an entrepreneur, gave a lecture on Health & Vitality: an Innovation Challenge. All four gave a short and graphic presentation for our youngsters and the same amount of time was given to interact, speak to the youngsters. The assignment for the youngsters was to inform themselves and prepare for their part in the country presentation. It was made clearly to the guests that they should aim for TEDX like presentations. This suits the attention span of the youngsters (and adults) better and forces the speakers to be on point. There was no complaints from the speakers afterwards and they were all mostly enthusiastic about the interactive, talks with the youngsters after their presentation.

*To explore the topic Poverty and Social Exclusion* again we tried to combine some activities. For Europe Direct we organised a Human Library. For the regional seminar, the youngster joined one round of this event and spoke to several human books, people who face prejudice in their life. They youngsters were impressed by the stories. After that they had a meeting with a young writer, Lotte Lentens, who came to Middelburg to talk about her book in

which a young Muslim boy plans a terroristic attack in Brussels, and fails. The writer was in Brussels at the time of the actual attack there and afterwards spoke to people in jail about how they came to commit such a crime. It proved to be a very impressive day for the youngsters, politicians and project managers.

Activity type	No. of Activities	No. of Participants (including Accompanying Persons)
Film Before the Flood	1	13
Lecture on climate change by Jorge Sereno and Henk Rietveld	1	13
Dutch Design Week	1	9
Masterclass Daan Roosegaarde	1	7
Dutch Designers	1	11
Literary meeting with Lotte Lentjes	1	12
Human Library	1	12

### **International seminar: Middelburg, The Netherlands, May 18-21, 2017:**

*Theme: Climate change and sustainability*

#### *Introduction /Preparation*

Climate change impacts nature and people. The climate is changing because temperature rises on earth. That is because more and more greenhouse gases such as CO<sub>2</sub> come into the air. Scientists agree that humans – beside nature herself - are largely responsible for global warming. Far-reaching impacts such as ocean acidification, heat waves, severe droughts, and floods are already endangering species and exacerbating poverty, hunger and the spread of disease.

Scientists believe that we are able to control the consequences if we manage to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 to 2 degrees. Climate must best be addressed in an international context. 196 World leaders therefore gathered at the climate summit in Paris in 2015 to discuss these issues. They have formulated binding agreements at the UN Climate Agreement. The agreement aims to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius, with a clear view of 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Which solutions do you see to prevent further climate change? How do we stay below 1.5 degrees temperature rise on earth? What advice would you give to the policy makers of the European Union? Based on four topics, we will use the seminar to explore the theme of climate change and our way to a sustainable future.

#### *Subthemes*

##### *1. Energy, exit fossil fuels: let the sun shine*

The global demand for energy in the coming decades will continue to increase. While the stocks of fossil fuels are getting scarcer and more difficult to exploit. The burning of fossil fuels - currently the most common sources of energy – contributes significantly to global warming and it is climate change. It is important that commercial enterprises and citizens minimize this and switch to sustainable (renewable) energy sources such as solar, wind and geothermal energy.

##### *2. Mobility, change the way we move: cleaner and smarter*

After the energy sector, the transportation sector emits the most greenhouse gases. Goods and passengers for example in the Netherlands together account for 24% of total CO<sub>2</sub> emission. This excludes aviation and shipping, which are even more polluting. In the (near) future CO<sub>2</sub> emission can be prevented by innovative ways of mobility, like electric cars, car sharing, better and faster public transport or take the (electric) bike more often as the Dutch's do.

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### 3. Food, change the way we produce and consume: *plantpower*

The global demand for food and the production of animal products increases. Also in the cultivation of agricultural crops and keeping livestock, large quantities of CO<sub>2</sub> and methane are produced. These gases contribute significantly to global warming. At the same time, food production is also suffering the negative effects of climate change such as severe drought, floods, storms or new pests and diseases. By the consumption of sustainable food, the carrying capacity of the earth increased, and by choosing more sustainable and locally season-produced food, we exploit less from the available resources.

### 4. DIY: Go Green

What can you do about climate change? Every change (in behavior) begins with consciousness and awareness regarding the problem. Awareness can be enhanced by understanding your own actions. For example with the 'footprint test' you discover your own impact of your personal life on our planet Earth.

What solutions do you see to prevent further climate change addressing the first three topics? In addition, what can you do yourself? Perhaps also other topics needs to be addressed in this discussion. Feel free to explore, we like to hear from you.

#### *Program and activities*

#### **Thursday May 18th**

- 17:30h Arrival at ZB| Research Institute and Library of Zeeland  
Welcome dinner and getting to know each other
- 19:30h Youngsters leave with their host families

#### **Friday May 19th**

- 10:00h Official welcome in the Auditorium of ZB| Research Institute and Library of Zeeland Ben de Reu, Provincial Representative, Dick van den Bout, Department Head Programming, Events and Communication ZB
- 10:15h Taskforce introduction films
- 10:30h Country presentations on climate change and sustainability, first by Taskforce, followed by politician/ decision maker
- 11:10h Break
- 11:30h Country presentations (continued)
- 12:30h Lunch (veggie!)
- 13:15h Energizer: Kahoot Quiz
- 13:45h World Café Session
- 15:15h Presentations outcome World Café Session
- 15:45h Closing day 1
- 16:30h Solar energy train trip to the beach in Vrouwenpolder.  
Beach activities & BBQ (sustainable, mostly veggie!)
- 20:00h Transport to guesthouses Research Institute and Library of Zeeland ZB|

#### **Saturday May 20th**

- 9:30h Energizer: dividing groups for the day  
Explanation of visualization by Imke (Switch) and Hendrikje (iDrops)  
Work on visualizations and prototyping in groups
- 12:00h Lunch (veggie!)
- 13:00h Action time. The groups go into town to make their prototypes happen
- 14:30h Gather back in the library!
- 14:45h Recommendations
- 15:15h Closing day 2
- 15:45h Free time in Middelburg
- 18:00h Diner and party at the CycleHub (20 minute walk from the library, we leave at 17:45h from the library)
- 22:00h Transport to guesthouses

#### **Sunday May 21th**

- 9:00h Departure by bus from ZB| Research Institute and Library of Zeeland Research

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## DENMARK

*The following description is written by the local project manager, why differences in style, presentation, weighting and focus on important matters may occur compared to other countries contribution for this section.*

**One-year learning course:** The Danish participation differs from the other countries by involving five municipalities/libraries with a democracy club of its own:

### **1) Voluntary activity:**

#### **Herning**

- The learning course was designed as a Democracy Club, which was established as a voluntary activity. Members were recruited by public advertising and cooperation with local schools and institution, youth boards and political organizations.
- The Democracy Club consisted of 6-8 members.
- The learning course was designed as a “mine-event-training” partly focused on idea generation and treatment of topics in the ODE project (Europe 2020 Strategy).
- The Democracy Club took place at Herning Library with meeting two times a month. The content focused on improving skills in the fields of general event creation, ideological development and evaluation, planning and project management, communication, treatment of media and press.
- The learning outcome was concretized in planning and execution in local actions and events, like the Food Waste events June 3, 2017 on the pedestrian stress in the city center, participation in Kulturmødet Mors 2017 Aug. 24-26, 2017
- The Democracy Club was hosting to regional seminars (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Seminars) as well of the third international seminar Nov. 11-14, 2017.
- Members of the Taskforce participated in Kulturmødet Mors 2017 Aug. 24-26, 2017
- The Taskforce provided the facilitating of the third International Seminar in Herning Nov. 11-14, 2017, where the participants had executive training in facilitating processes, providing service and hospitality.
- Members of the task force have been participating in the international seminars in Netherland, Denmark and Belgium.
- The local project group consisted of library employees Søren Johansen and Brian Nygaard Bruhn.

#### **Viborg**

- The Democracy Club in Viborg was established as a voluntary activity and likewise Herning, the members were recruited by public advertising and cooperation with local schools and institution, youth boards and political organizations. The Democracy Club consisted of 6-8 members. Members from Viborg participated in all International Seminars.
- The local project group consisted of library employees Kjartan Due-Annesen and Line Buhr Skovgaard.

#### **Randers**

- Unfortunately, Randers did not succeed to establish a permanent Democracy Club although the library attempted to set up different solutions. For instance, throughout cooperation with local stakeholders like Randers Youth School, NGO and Youth Political Parties.
- Nevertheless, Randers managed to host the fourth Regional Seminar Dec. 2, 2017 in cooperation with the social economic business “Finderiet” with participation of local youth politicians.
- The local project coordinator was librarian Martin Minka Jensen.

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## 2) Partnership activity with integral learning

### Holstebro

- The Democracy Club was established in cooperation with the local highschool Holstebro Gymnasium as an integrated part of the weekly learning course for a class on first grade (I.C Community Line).
- Around 25 students participated in the learning course
- The participation in the regional activities was made voluntary however many student chose to participate in the regional activities.
- Moreover, a group of student arranged and facilitated the third Regional Seminar on their own. Finally, students from Holstebro participated at all international seminars.
- The local project group consisted of social teacher Mette Karlskov, librarian Rasmus Taagelund Riishøj and librarian Ulla Soon-Ja Jespersen.

### Horsens

- The democracy club was established in cooperation with the local school Horsens Byskole as an integrated part of the learning course for 8th grade pupils (Community line).
- Around eight participants formed the local Taskforce.
- Pupils from Horsens participated in all international seminars.
- In addition, Horsens cooperated with another public school as well as with the Municipality.
- The local project group consisted of librarian Anne Scheyfmann and teacher Birgitte Timmermann

**Regional seminars:** The Danish participation with five libraries/task forces led to another approach for the facilitation of regional seminars. Denmark used the regional seminars to gather youngster from the each municipality together aiming at collecting and sharing the outcome of the local learning courses on the give topics as a foundation for common dialogue and debating. Furthermore, the regional seminars were preparing the delegated task forces for the international seminars coming to bee by formulating national mandates. Finally, the regional seminars were used to develop ideas and plan external activities and events in public involving fellow youngsters as the Danish part of project obtained governmental funding for this purpose.

Each seminar included structure dialogue with decision makers exclusive invited playing the roles as speakers, workshops participants and coaches for the youngsters aiming at finding useful paths for future goals and getting tools to operate and navigate in the political gameplay with certain rules, culture, manners and tactics.

Moreover, each seminar followed (more or less) the 4D-process as a positive, strength-based change approach to problem solving and to create proactive dialogues and frameworks for concrete actions based on the participants resources, needs, goals and ideas. The 4D-process hails from the Appreciative Inquiry method following four stages: Discover – Dream - Design - Deliver. The process customized to each individual topic and program.

- **January 21, 2017: Employment and Education:** The first Regional Seminar took place in Herning (Herning Library). Decision makers: Politician and Minister of Finance Kristian Jensen (Liberal Party), Manager of the department for Children and Prevention Herning Municipality Bo Ulrich Berthelsen, consultant Mia Mulbjerg. Outcome: Recommendations on the topic.
- **April 2, 2017: Climate change and sustainability:** The second Regional Seminar took place in Herning (Herning Library). Decision makers: Consultant Mia Mulbjerg, Event manager Cecilie Dybris Marini. Outcome: The seminar provided a workshop on the subject “Climate change & Future Sustainability” based on a business case for event management. The case was built on the festival “The Cultural Summit 2017”. The task forces were asked to co-create events within the subtopics: *Energy, Mobility, Food and DIY* –

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to be included in the program as youngsters contribution to the democratic dialogue. The workshop resulted in four prototypes for events aimed at The Cultural Summit 2017. The seminar produced four prototypes (Bicycle for a cup of coffee, Exchange and change your clothes, Recycle old furniture, Cook with your waste) and one of were chosen to bring to life: Cook with your waste.

- **August 24-26, 2017: Cultural Summit 2017 (Kulturmødet Mors 2017):** As outcome of the third Regional Seminar the Taskforces from Denmark participated in The Cultural Summit 2017 Aug. 24-26, 2017 – the largest stage for discussing arts and culture in Denmark. An annual festival in the end of August containing almost 80 dialogues and about 300 experiences of all kinds of arts: performing arts, music, film, literature, architecture and visual arts. During the Cultural Summit a number of dialogues among knowledgeable and visionary people from within the Danish spheres of art, culture, business and politics take place. The debates are moved forward by people from the Danish cultural and artistic life, politicians, business people and others, who on a daily basis keep the cultural debate alive – but the audience (around 20.000 visitors) is also encouraged to involve themselves in the debates during the 48 concentrated hours. The main topic in 2017 was "To open up". The Danish ODE Task Forces was expected to contribute to the program with an event or exhibition showing their outcome from the project. The event had to include one or more subtopics (Climate change and sustainable future) and was supposed to facilitate a dialogue between youngsters and decision makers. The budget was 2.000 EURO. The Taskforces participated in the event with great success by making an open restaurant offering self-made dishes of wasted food donated by local supermarkets.
- **September 30, 2017: Innovation:** The third Regional Seminar took place in Holstebro (Holstebro Library). The local democracy club in Holstebro supported by library employees arranged the program. In the preparation, the youngsters participated in a course on Event Making.  
Decision makers: Politician and member of the board of Central Denmark Poul Erik Christensen (Radical Left Party), culture advisor Mikkel Ottow and debater/journalist Jeppe Søe.
- **December 2, 2017: Fighting poverty and social exclusion:** The fourth Regional Seminar took place in Randers (Finderiet). Local library employees arranged the program. Unlike the other seminar the 4<sup>th</sup> seminar was an open activity and took place outside the library at Finderiet – a local second-hand shop organized as a social economy enterprise, driven by mainly flex and job workers sorting recyclable and repairing waste in the community for public sale.  
Decision makers: School Director and author Louise Juhl, Dalsgaard, Director Kim, Finderiet, Politician and teacher Birgitte Zimmermann.

### **International seminar: Herning, Denmark, November 11-14, 2017**

*Theme: Innovation*

Denmark was hosting the third International meeting November 11-14, 2017 on the topic Innovation. Participants were involved in planning and management and had executive training in facilitating processes, providing service and hospitality. For further description: chapter International Seminars. The main library in Herning served as base camp for the seminar, while the accommodation of participants was arranged in Holstebro (private housing). During the seminar, the participants had the chance to visit different locations in the aim of showing different approaches to the daily ODE work with youth, democracy and innovation in the region.

*Topic:* The topic was Innovation as Europe 2020 Strategy calls for innovation in the areas of business, products, services and social processes for the European Union to move forward and develop positively. Looking to the creative and life/health areas, the seminar was concerned about in which ways Europe (especially the young) might bring innovation about in areas such as fashion, art & design, serious gaming, media, vitality, sports, medical inventions, e-health.

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*Objective:* The seminar aimed at providing a workshop coming up with ideas in which subtopics to Innovation can help bring Europe together! Not as a choice between described scenarios nor as a path chosen by the commission, but as choice made by young European citizens in co-creation and dialogue across borders and in the search of new tools for making democratic waves.

*Method:* During the seminar, the participants worked with design thinking as progressive method to handle the main topic “Innovation”. Through presentations, dialogue and co-creation the participants played the roles as designers for future solutions with the decision makers as target group and produce movies as concrete outcome expressing messages, recommendations, ideas and/or statements. The result were presented at the end of seminar at the dinner party on day three. The theme were Oscar Night. .

#### *Program and activities*

##### **Saturday Nov 11<sup>th</sup>**

- 11:30h Arrival, Billund Airport
- 12:30h Brand Tour, LEGO House - How can the LEGO brick inspire us to be creative and develop the future?
- 16:00h Transport to Herning
- 17:00h Welcome to Herning & Central Denmark - Registration & Get together
- 18:00h Dinner & Dialogue - An evening of friends & foods - drinks & dialogue.
- 20:30h Transport to guesthouses in Holstebro

##### **Sunday Nov 12<sup>th</sup>**

- 09:00h Official welcome at Herning Library - Danish Task Force  
Lone Leth, Culture Advisor, Central Denmark EU Office, Aarhus 2017 Capital of Culture  
Sara Jørgensen, Head of Development, Herning Library)  
Presenting the Red Suitcase, Introduction to Day1  
Design Thinking as method (Inspiration, Ideation, Iteration)
- 09:30h Workshop Session on understanding and handle Innovation (Phase: Inspiration)  
A: Getting started - Country presentations, dialogue and  
B: Framing challenges and guiding questions for decision makers  
C: Interviews and observation – data work – storytelling
- 12:00h New Beginnings (Opera)  
Den Jyske Opera TalentU (DK) and Opera North (UK),  
Project by Aarhus2017 European Cultural Capital
- 12:30h ODE & Opera Lunchtime - Reflections and dialogue on the opera feature
- 13:00h Workshop Session on imagine Innovation (Phase: Ideation)  
Michelle Kranot, Filmmaker, producer and interdisciplinary Artist, The Animation Workshop Viborg  
Pitching tomorrow’s workshop and preparing materials and statements
- 16:00h Closing Day and Transport to Holstebro
- 18:00h Slagteriet: Dinner and cultural feature
- 21:30h End of day - transport to guest houses

##### **Monday Nov 13<sup>th</sup>**

- 08.30h Transport to Arsenalet (a creative stronghold in Viborg)
- 09:30h Workshop session on creating and expressing Innovation (Phase: Iteration)  
Welcome to Viborg - Anders Holm, Head of Business and Development, Viborg Municipality  
Introduction and filmmaking - Michelle Kranot, The Animation Workshop Viborg
- 12:00h Lunch
- 12:30h Workshop – continued
- 15:00h Transport to Herning
- 16:00h Exploring the city of Herning
- 18:30h Oscar Night – Dinner Party (Phase: Test) - Pitching & Presentation of today movie productions and award winners - Scaling ideas to create impact  
Closing day 2and 3rd International Seminar  
Host: Johs. Poulsen, Chairman, Culture Committee,  
Herning Municipality & the Danish Task Force

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22:00h Transport to guesthouses

**Tuesday Nov 14th**

08:30h Transport to the airport, Billund

**BELGIUM**

*The following description is written by the local project manager, why differences in style, presentation, weighting and focus on important matters may occur compared to other countries contribution for this section.*

**One-year learning course:**

In Belgium, the learning course was largely integrated in the regional seminars and the preparatory meetings for the international seminars. Youngsters received an intense training by Reinout Van Zandycke from Exposure, a professional communication agency with proficiency in political communication and marketing strategies.

Techniques they acquired during several workshops and presentations included:

- media training (e.g. how to ensure media coverage for your idea/event),
- presentation techniques (e.g. how to capture and keep the audience's attention),
- stress management (e.g. how to stay calm when addressing a group),
- meeting techniques (e.g. how to involve every participant in a meeting).

Aside from the "instruction", youngsters also acquired "on the job" training by the project managers. For instance, they were asked to contact decision makers/entrepreneurs themselves, design communication strategies, moderate debate groups, create and practice presentations and consequently received tailored feedback.

By involving the youngsters in processes like co-creation and design thinking, they got a flavor of what it means to take initiative, instead of passively taking the back seat. We hope this sense of entrepreneurship sticks with them in the years to come. In addition, we greatly value the ability to think critically in this ever-changing society. Raising youngsters to be active and critical citizens is consequently one of the project's objectives that we greatly identify with, and thus have tried to foster in the participants, for instance by stimulating debate and offering thought provoking inspirational talks. Through this project, however, a considerable group of youngsters found their way to our venue and we have to build a structural relationship with them. They got to experience our mission of "enhancing literacy" in person and as such became good ambassadors for our vision as a knowledge center. The very heterogeneous group of youngsters we reached through this project now has a much broader understanding of the role of a library, which is one of the key reasons for our engagement in this project.

**Regional seminars:** Every regional seminar in Belgium (4 in total) had a similar structure and held in the building of ARhus:

1. Welcoming the participants & energizer/teambuilding
2. Inspirational talks by (preferably) young and dynamic entrepreneurs and decision makers, experts in the field
3. Deepening knowledge and interest by in-depth Q&A session with the speakers
4. World café sessions about the chosen subtopics
5. Presentation of the outcome

**International seminar Roeselare, Belgium**

January 20-23, 2018

*Theme: Poverty and Social Exclusion / Subthemes - chosen by the youngsters: Racism and discrimination, Policy on poverty, Refugees, Social exclusion at school)*

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Belgium hosted the final international seminar. Topic of discussion was “fighting poverty & social exclusion”. Aside from having a “normal” international seminar, we also had the added task of closing the project in an official manner. Therefore, we went with the complete international group to Brussels to deliver the recommendations of the youngsters about the future of Europe to the European Commission. Moreover, we arranged a visit to the European Parliament. For more information about the program and activities, see chapter on international seminars. Beside the “normal” program of an international seminar (presentations, discussions etc. relating to the topic), Belgium had the additional responsibility of closing the whole project, both formally and informally. The final day (Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> of January) was reserved for this task.

### **Saturday, January 20<sup>th</sup>**

- 12.30 Arrival & lunch in ARhus
- 13.30 Teambuilding
- 14.00 Welcome by director Yves Rosseel
- 14.15 Red suitcase ceremony
- 14.30 Country videos
- 14.45 Country presentations: Belgium
- 15.05 Coffee Break
- 15.20 Energizer
- 15.30 Country presentations: The Netherlands, Poland, Denmark
- 16.30 Free time in Roeselare
- 17.30 Evening program: Dinner in the spirit of the theme
- 20.30 Off to the host families

### **Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup>**

- Morning: Exploring Bruges, city of legends
- 12.30 Lunch in Roeselare (TRAX site)
  - 13.30 Welcome speech by mayor Kris Declercq
  - 13.45 World café sessions
  - 15.15 Coffee break
  - 15.45 Presentation outcome world café
  - 16.00 Evaluation of the whole project and preparing for Brussels
  - 17.00 Free time
  - 18.00 South American Dinner
  - 20.00 Closing of the day: free evening

### **Monday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>**

- 9.00 Departure for Brussels
- 11.00 Getting to know Matongé
- 12.30 Lunch @ community centre De Markten
- 13.30 Walk to European Commission + security check
- 14.30 Meeting with representative of Marianne Thyssen:  
presenting the findings of the youngsters in the form of a Red Book
- 15.30 Visit to the European Parliament with welcome by Parliament Member Tom Vandenkendelaere
- 17.00 Meeting with Flemish Minister of Culture and Youth Sven Gatz
- 18.00 Departure for Roeselare
- 19.30 Closing party with festive reception & Belgian cuisine @ Het Sacrament
- 23.00 Saying goodbye to the Dutch taskforce

### **Tuesday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>**

- 5.30 Saying goodbye to the Danish taskforce
- 9.30 Saying goodbye to the Polish taskforce
- 10.30 Belgian taskforce: final evaluation and saying goodbye

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# PROJECT APPROACHES

## APPROACHES

**The program used action-learning and interactional methods to provide products and processes leading to dialogue and dissemination. For instance, creative approaches, which enables the youngsters to be innovative in handling challenges and find solutions suitable for the dialogue and engagement of fellow youngsters and in the meeting with decision makers:**

### **Storytelling**

One can say a key approach in ODE is storytelling, as a great narrative tool for making impact. The approach is used in many ways during the project. On the one hand storytelling allows the youngsters to write stories, tell stories, share stories, co-create stories and live stories. It can be in spoken words or reading, but images, music, movies and theater can by advantage be used to express messages that can be hard to communicate. In this case, storytelling provides a new common language. Moreover, creativity forces us to stop up and listen, and play together instead of fighting and arguing. On the second hand, storytelling provides a framework for dialogue that involves and creates interaction between the storyteller and the audience. Telling stories also creates a connection between different cultures and people who on the paper are unlike.

### **Design thinking**

Design thinking is another method or approach used in the project. Design Thinking makes the youngster capable of creating ideas, design solutions; make an impact inspired by others' perspectives and needs. Design thinking is a great democratic tool because of the inclusion of opinions and reflections in the dialogue, although those might differ from your own opinion. It enables one to uncover, appreciate and respect differences and lays the foundation for good dialogues. An example is, when the youngsters at the international seminar in Denmark made movies at the Animation Workshop Viborg addressed to the participating decision makers based on personal interviews.

### **Time travel**

Time travel is another approach used to unfold future ideas, thoughts and opinions and provide dialogues aiming at telling stories in the project. It could be Meditation on Future Life & Society combined with use of back casting approaches to travel in time and explore future environments. When envisioning your goal and desired impact before travelling and taking action can sometimes be helpful when designing the steps to get to the destination. For instance, this approach was used at the first international seminar in Gdansk.

### **Event making**

Combining actions and tools from art and the cultural field, storytelling allows the participants the space to examine a given subject through different crosscutting lenses and offers the participants the space to tackle transversal questions in relation to the topics. A useful tool for telling stories is democracy in action understood as facilitated events. In this case, Event making is in combination with storytelling a major method to build stories in the ODE Tool Box.

The ODE project demonstrates on many levels the importance of taking action, and that you can actually make a real change: Through simple actions, you can transform abstract thinking into concrete communication and make difference of great importance. A great tool in telling stories is Event Making. For instance creating guerilla events

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on Climate Change in the city center of Middelburg with only a few Euros on your pocket and getting public attention and dialogue by writing quotes with chalk on the shopping streets. Likewise, the Danish taskforce organized an outdoor restaurant offering homemade dishes made out of wasted food at the national cultural and democratic festival, the Cultural Meeting in Nykøbing Mors in aim of debating food waste and sustainable living.

### **Translation**

Translation is also a key approach used in the ODE project. One perspective in the ODE Program line is to make decision makers aware of the needs and ideas of youngsters, and establish structured dialogues between youngsters and decision makers. However, politics and youngsters often talk two different languages. The decision makers play a vital role in the translation process. As experienced, professionals and grown-up decision makers can support youngsters in matters like - Where do I fit in? What does this agenda mean? Why should I bother?

By meeting up with the youngsters on their terms, on eye-to-eye level, showing interest and engagement, being a part of the dialogue and most importantly: listen to what the youngsters have to say; decision makers can be a vital part of the translation process. Not only by giving the answers, but largely by being appreciative, inquiring and asking questions. This creates connection with the youngsters and provides great elements for the dialogue on equal terms as well as the translation process as such. For instance, the ODE project shows that decision makers can be excellent coaches and mentors for youngsters when it comes to transforming political agendas into a daily life language – for instance the four topics in the ODE program line taken from the EUROPE 020 Strategy. Simply the presence of decision makers in the same room with youngsters must not be underestimated.

However, it is still very important, that youngster are in charge of the discussions, not the experts, decision makers or teachers. Youngsters find it very important to be able to ventilate their own opinions, without steering adults as well as to be treated as equals. In the evaluation of ODE the youngsters emphasized, that this was something they experienced during the project and was one of the main reasons they were so enthusiastic.

### **World Cafe Method**

Drawing on seven integrated design principles, the World Café methodology was used as a simple, effective, and flexible format for organizing large group dialogue. The World Café was used as basic method at all regional seminars during the project. It proved an easy tool for the youngsters in managing processes on their own. World Café can be modified to meet a wide variety of needs. Specifics of context, numbers, purpose, location and other circumstances are factored into each event's unique invitation, design, and question choice, but the following five components comprise the basic model:

- 1) *Setting*: Create a “special” environment, most often modeled after a café, i.e. small round tables covered with a checkered or white linen tablecloth, butcher-block paper, colored pens, a vase of flowers, and optional “talking stick” item. There should be four chairs at each table (optimally) – and no more than five.
- 2) *Welcome and Introduction*: The host begins with a warm welcome and an introduction to the World Café process, setting the context, sharing the Cafe Etiquette, and putting participants at ease.
- 3) *Small Group Rounds*: The process begins with the first of three or more twenty-minute rounds of conversation for the small group seated around a table. At the end of the twenty minutes, each member of the group moves to a different new table. They may or may not choose to leave one person as the “table host” for the next round, who welcomes the next group and briefly fills them in on what happened in the previous round.
- 4) *Questions*: each round is prefaced with a question specially crafted for the specific context and desired purpose of the World Café. The same questions can be used for more than one round, or they can be built upon each other to focus the conversation or guide its direction.
- 5) *Harvest*: After the small groups (and/or in between rounds, as needed), individuals are invited to share insights or other results from their conversations with the rest of the large group. These results are reflected visually in a variety of ways, most often using graphic recording in the front of the room.

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The basic process is simple and simple to learn, but complexities and nuances of context, numbers, question crafting and purpose can make it optimal to bring in an experienced host to help. In addition, there are many resources available for new World Cafe hosts, including a free hosting tool kit, an online community of practice, and World Cafe Signature Learning Programs.

### **Cultural exchange**

Obviously, Cultural exchange is natural method in the project. Upon encountering a group of mixed nationalities, the youngsters get insights in both social and cultural differences but also what is similar and what is in common. Facing fellow youngsters from other countries, cultures and social classes, the participating youngsters reflect themselves and way of living in each other - through dialogue, action and collaboration. In this case, ODE prioritizes in the planning of the international seminars to integrate social and cultural activities within the program. Such activities are great tools in demonstrating national cultures and give insights on personal levels. For instance, a historical city walk in Gdansk, watersports and BBQ at the beach in Middelburg, getting to know the multicultural areas of Brussels such as the Matongé district, or just the taste of a traditional Danish Cake Man.

### **Exhibitions**

Exhibitions have been important for the project in improving democratic understanding and cultural exchange. Museums, business companies, authorities, youth houses etc. were visited to display topics that showcased each countries culture. The visits served to create inspiring frameworks for further dialogue. Highlights were: Poland (Employment & Education) European Solidarity Center and Historical City Walk in Gdansk, The Netherlands (Climate change & sustainable future) - (Bike Garage), Denmark (Innovation) - LEGO House, Belgium - EU Commission (Berlaymount) and EU Parliament.

### **Luggage for life**

The final approach in ODE is to give the participant empowerment and life long experience. By travelling to new destinations, facing unknown environments and meeting up with fellow youngster, the young participants show the courage to leave the known and safeness at home - and cross borders in the hope to find friendship, inspiration and knowledge. Through the meetings with other cultures, ways of thinking, languages, generations, professionals, fellow youngsters, participants crafted their identities as individuals as well as Europeans – but of most importance: a personal baggage to life by encountering themselves in the new perspectives and reflections. They might handed over a Red Book with project recommendations to the EU Commission at the final seminar in January in Belgium, however in the end the Red Suitcase belongs to themselves as a luggage for future participation in Our Democratic Europe.

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# PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

## PARTNER PREPARATION FOR ODE

### Work plan:

Preparation for the project used following work plan, which reflects that the partners have been working transnational with the entire project and ideas as a team.

The strong cooperation was developed through the preparation of the project, and led to coherence and sustainability in the program activities on local, regional and international levels carried out by good organization and understanding of the project and partner perspectives.

### Management planning:

During the application stage, the partner organizations created a steering committee to provide strategic implementation of the project and ensure agreements on priorities, approaches, finance, work plan etc. in achieving the project outcomes. The members were library managers and the library manager from Denmark with the function of Chairman. The steering committee gathered at its first meeting at Central Denmark EU Office in Brussels August 2016 including local project managers as participants and with the project manager from Denmark as international project manager. The meeting was a success, and created an awareness of the great value of meeting in person and building the project and cooperation on strong relations. The steering committee had four other meetings during the project: Skype meeting June 2017, Midterm evaluation in Herning Nov. 2017, Evaluation meeting in Roeselare Jan. 2018. Future co-operation and project meeting, Brussels Feb. 2018. Afterwards the project managers began organizing the project.

### Project planning

**Local level:** In the first place, the project managers started planning the project in cooperation with local partner network stakeholders. Each country formed a project team to organize the project. For instance, the Netherlands appointed a project manager, a secretary, an advisor and department head to take care of the project, while Denmark appointed a steering committee consisting of library managers from the participating regional libraries, and a project team consisting of local coordinators. The project manager supported both. The local project managers carried out several meetings with local stakeholders in the preparation of this project on local level and hereby the basis for international cultural exchange. These meetings were involving schools and educational institutions in the efforts of establishing local learning courses, recruiting participants and if possible created structured partnerships. In addition, contacts were made with youth schools, youth leaders etc. In addition, the learning course as a relevant activity and opportunity for youngsters were promoted locally in the library, on websites and social media and by advertising in relevant places with youth appearance. Finally, project managers had meetings with youngsters showing interest in participation.

**International level:** By researching, the potential of establishing one-year learning courses on local level based on partnerships, the project managers provided in the second place the foundation for the international activities. They arranged a meeting in Gdansk, Poland in Nov. 2016 and co-created the three stages program within agreements on time schedule, learning approaches, preparation, structure, content, evaluation, dissemination etc. Furthermore, they prepared the first international meeting in Gdansk, Poland. From here, the project management

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team had meetings before each of the international seminars: First in Middelburg, The Netherlands Mar. 2017, then in Brussels, Belgium Sep. 2017 and last in Herning, Denmark Nov. 2017. In between, they had Skype meeting quarterly, supported by communication on email and phone as well as using file sharing on the web. In order to address practical and logistical it was vital that the partner project managers prioritized meeting physically before and after the international seminars to secure proper practical and logistical arrangements, evaluation and planning and to share knowledge about learning and dissemination. Email and Skype is nice, but cannot replace the impact of meeting personally and build up trust and common experience. You have to meet in persons to provide dialogue, co-creation and cultural exchange.

### **Project implementation:**

*Activities:* The four international meetings represent the last stage of the program - as a superstructure on the four domestic regional seminars and underlying local one-year learning courses. These activities were organized and implemented by continuing the work plan (taking the project from preparation to implementation), as well as by strong cooperation between the partner project managers and strong involvement of young participants.

Each partner country secured implementation by hosting an international seminar during the project. Each seminar had its own topic taken from the Europe 2020 Strategy.

1. International seminar: Gdansk, Poland - February 4-7, 2017. Topic: Employment and Education
2. International seminar: Middelburg, Netherlands - May 18-21, 2017. Topic: Climate change and sustainability
3. International seminar: Herning, Denmark - November 11-14, 2017. Topic: Innovation
4. International seminar: Roeselare, Belgium - January 20-23, 2018. Topic: Poverty and Social Exclusion

The seminars took place quarterly and invited the various countries' task forces to meet and bring in local and regional experiences and work together to share knowledge and co-create content for a Red Book addressed for the EU Commission. Providing structured dialogue, each country invited domestic decision-makers to accompany the youngsters on the journey.

Each seminar had identical structure developed by the project manager team, with duration of four days: two days of program and two days of travelling. As the project managers showed to manage the transport well (to-and-from the destinations), the program structure was expanded to

- Day 1. Arrival, Country presentations – providing knowledge,
- Day 2. Workshop session - creating structured dialogue and co-creation,
- Day 3. Workshop – continued, Presenting results and feedback, Evaluation,
- Day 4. Departure.

The project made largely use of creative approaches, which enables the youngsters to be innovative in handling challenges and find solutions suitable for the dialogue and engagement of fellow youngsters and in the meeting with decision makers, e.g. storytelling, design thinking, mindfulness, event making, LEGO Serious Play, visiting exhibitions.

*Planning:* In organizing seminars, the actual project manager involved the domestic task force in the planning by inviting the youngsters for a plan meeting. Hereby, they co-created a program proposal and supporting materials, e.g. tasks, thematic papers and movies. The youngster came up with their own ideas on content, interesting locations, how they would like to be involved. In some cases, they made contact by their own to local stakeholder to make agreements or made research on the topic in the preparation of the seminar paper and tasks.

Of vital importance, the youngsters transformed and concretized the given topic into subthemes concerning to their own point of views and understanding the European challenges and fitting how to involve others in a discussion with large appealing. Communication in the taskforce in between was handled by use of channels like email, Skype, social medias and personal dialogue.

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The proposal was discussed on the next international project manager meeting and qualified to specific needs and didactic concerns. Practical stuff like accommodation and transport was handled too. Afterwards the hosting project manager launched the official program, provided information to the participants and made the event public by press release and news on social media in dissemination of the project.

*Preparation:* Before the seminar, the hosting task force had training in facilitation workshops and hosting guests. Agreements were made and the youngsters were been given roles. The project manager made agreements with local stakeholders according to the program and practical needs (e.g. food, location, speakers, study visits, materials) and provided private housing for youngsters and accommodation for adults. Press release were made too, aiming at public attention.

All countries formed a travelling group consisting of about 8 youngster (task force), 1 decision makers, 1 project manager and 1-3 accompanying adults (mostly teachers). The project managers invited decision makers to join the group, either personally or by communicating with municipalities and governments. They explained the role of decision makers in the seminars clearly to secure understanding of the process and the right match of person.

Each domestic project managers booked tickets and hotels for adults and secured agreements with youngsters, families, schools and necessary papers. Each task forces prepared for the seminar and produced a presentation movie. Also, each task force and decision maker prepare a short presentation (PowerPoint) for the group

*Implementation:* During the seminars, the domestic task forces were largely in charge of the program and organizing the activities, while the project managers offered support and took care of the practical arrangements.

### **Project dissemination:**

As vital part of the project dissemination, the Danish part of the project facilitated Tools Conference Nov. 29.-30, 2017 in cooperation with Central Denmark EU Office. In the preparation, all four countries decided to participate and contribute to the program as speakers – including youth participation - and hereby sharing the results of the project. Likewise, the project managers in Belgium and the Netherlands prepared the production and release of the Red Book and made appointments with the EU Commission and EU Parliament.

### **Project evaluation:**

Methods of analysis applied in the project are mainly field study provided by professional observation and experience of the project partners at national and international levels and in-class evaluation and reflections with participants during the project. Relevant information from associated partners, such as teachers, trainers, youth workers etc., is obtained as well.

Moreover, online questionnaire is used to evaluate certain activities such as the evaluation of the second International seminar in Middelburg. In this case all participants: youngsters, parents, politicians, project managers were send an online questionnaire to evaluate the seminar by asking twenty-one open and multiple choice questions on the organization, the program, hosting, results. The outcome of this evaluation was used in preparation for the next international seminar.

Furthermore, we had regular feedback sessions with our youngsters and politicians, face to face, by WhatsApp and email. When something came up during preparation sessions, we adjusted things right away.

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# PROJECT & PARTICIPANTS

## INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE DIFFERENT STAGES OF THE PROJECT

The participants were involved in all stages of the project during the project period. In many cases, participants contributed with suggestions and wishes concerning content, schedule, approaches, events etc. for the learning courses. Likewise, preparation for regional and international seminars was largely arranged in cooperation with the partner task force and hereby directly involving the youngsters in the project management and event making as a vital part of the action-learning program. Seminars were organized with the taskforce as 'event manager', both the regional ones and the international one, whereas the role of the project manager was directive and facilitating. In addition, the libraries in Denmark obtained a high level of external funding from the National Government and were able to give the participants the opportunity to be in charge of creating and facilitating events in public on local and regional levels.

Especially the program for the international seminar was a joined effort of the youngsters and project managers in all partner countries. The role of the project leader was mostly sharing experience and network and the youngster's role was to learn how to realize their ideas and create common understanding for fellow youngsters from different countries. In line with each country, being responsible for hosting a thematic international meeting (according to Europe 2020 Strategy), each domestic taskforce were responsible for unfolding the specific topic to the other countries in the aim of providing coherence and quality to the regional seminars and preparation for following international meetings.

The task force handled this by creating a discussion paper and addressing tasks - like for instance, watching a thematic movie or taking an online test. In addition, the four countries largely made use of the World Café as method to facilitate dialogue and co-creation at the regional seminars. Hereby, each country had the same basis for facilitating the regional seminars on home front. Some task forces also made research by visiting locations for the international seminar and arranging, and even made contacts on their own. One of the Dutch youngsters even came to work beside the project manager in the library, to make sure everything was in order in time. Finally, youngsters went on excursions outside the library, to gain knowledge on the topics in the project.

Before each international seminar participating youngsters from each country made a short film, introducing themselves as a Taskforce and sharing their thoughts upon the country topic. In some occasions, the accompanying decision makers and project managers contributed too. The Taskforce had to come up with an idea for the film, a script and sometimes background images.

For instance, the Dutch youngsters filmed themselves while doing something to improve the environment. A peer youngster (internship) from the FilmLab of the library edited the images into a short film. Likewise the Polish Task force not only took up the idea and the script but with the help of a library employee they took care of editing, choosing the soundtracks and graphics for the video. A group of youngsters from Denmark made on their own hand agreement with the Mayor and went for the City Hall for filming and interview.

These short films were of great value as introductions of the Taskforces upon starting the international seminars. Both in preparation for the seminars by forcing reflections and supporting action-learning based training and at the seminars by putting a face on each participant and secure personalized knowledge sharing.

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Another element of the program for the international seminars were the country presentations. These were the official presentations, given by the youngsters as a team, before the entire group. They used PowerPoints etc., which they prepared and submitted beforehand. Time was very strict, 8-10 minutes for a complete presentation. So practicing the presentation in advance was also a requirement.

For instance, the Dutch youngsters used the schedule: 1,5-2-2-2-1,5 (intro, topics, and conclusion), while the Danish youngsters structured the presentation so each taskforce member had equal time to speak and present. The objective of the country presentations was to present the country theme and its sub-themes. After the youngsters, the decision makers/politician had given 6-8 minutes for a similar presentation from their point of view. They went deeper into legislation matters on the sub-themes. The Polish youngster used on the other hand brainstorming method to choose the most important topics to be in their presentation. On Facebook, they shared graphics that they could use. At the end, they chose two representatives who presented the presentation during the international seminar.

## **MONITORING AND SUPPORTING PARTICIPANTS IN ODE**

In addition to national learnings courses, several task forces received exclusive training on largescale event making, facilitating workshops and group processes, hosting and guest service. Preparing for the international seminars in the Netherlands, Denmark and Belgium, national task forces were trained by professionals on using dialogue based tools and methods.

Each country made use of Facebook (groups) as communication tool and networking platform. It proved to be an excellent tool for knowledge creation, sharing and storage between project partners and participants and between participants within the Task Forces on local and international level. Making use of social media ensured personalization of the project and participants and provided social interaction before and after regional and international seminars. One major value in the project was the opportunity for travelling and hosting participants to connect and building friendships before meeting in person.

Project managers were present during all meetings with youngsters in each country playing the roles of ambassadors of ODE and coaches for the youngsters. A kind of securing the presence of a responsible adult close to the youngsters in whom they could confide - not a formal teacher role – and the youngsters a sense of security. For instance in the Netherlands, they came as a group to a timetable for the meetings and the youngsters for dividing their roles in country presentations, moderation during the world café, etc. themselves. There was a lot of contact in between in WhatsApp groups, an overall group, one for Taskforce Belgium, one for Taskforce Denmark, one for Taskforce Poland. We did this because the participants in the Taskforces for each exchange was different. There was also one WhatsApp group for the adults (decision makers).

Before the international meetings, the project managers provided participants and families with practical and necessary information – for instance, flight information and transportation, private housing, contacts and useful phone numbers, program and activities, rules and expectations, cultural values and norms, tasks etc. In the Netherlands, the project manager had in addition a meeting with the parents (accompanied by the youngsters) before each international seminar. They received practical information on the traveling, program, hosting, insurances and they could see who would travel with the youngsters. The parents appreciated these meetings, and they felt comfortable knowing how to contact us when something was worrying them.

In the preparation of country presentations (movies and PowerPoint), the project managers supported the taskforces in the production process.

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## TYPES OF SITUATIONS FACED BY THE PARTICIPANTS WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT

Throughout the project, all participants were exposed to situations that were new and challenging to their life experiences, which was in particular challenging for the participants with fewer opportunities. These youngsters reflect various disadvantages compared to their fellow youngsters in the ODE project. Among others, they face social and cultural challenges due to ethnicity, divided nationally, limited social skills, living with single parents, broken families, low standard of living, low income, living in urban problem zones etc.

For instance, a large number of youngsters with fewer opportunities were travelling abroad for the first time, even being temporarily integrated into daily life of another culture. Although some had inner concerns before travelling, they expressed relief and personal success by overcoming the challenge and the awareness of own capacity.

Moreover, they were challenged by using English in real life outside the classroom and to interact in a framework of different ways of living, cultural behavior, social and financial conditions. Other situations facing these youngsters were taking the scene in a meeting or at seminar and do a presentation to an audience of fellow youngsters, decision makers or citizens. In many occasions youngsters were supposed to take responsibility for specific tasks, situations, themselves and a group with limited resources and short deadlines of delivering results.

By doing so, participants developed self-confidence and better understanding of differences and similarities by experience another culture and discovered the way of life in another country in person. By transnational cooperation and co-creation, the participants crossed physical and mental borders and discovered new personal aspects and understanding of themselves and others. With this realization came the corresponding knowledge of what it means to belong to your own particular country and culture. During the project friendships, self-confidence, tolerance and European coherence were build up

### Cases:

- *One Danish girl, who had participated in all international seminars, were invited as speaker to the dissemination conference Tools Conference Nov. 29-30, 2017 in Herning and participated in the following debate with the audience. She was also encourage by the project manager to participate in an EU competition and ended up winning. Finally, she was invited for an internship at the office of one of the participating politicians in the project.*
- *One Dutch boy struggled with stuttering, one boy was homosexual and came out right at the beginning of the project and one girl struggled with a burnout. Despite their difficulties, which were sometimes obvious but sometimes not visible, they shared their struggles, which we as project managers could deal with. The boy that stutters was not excluded from any part of the program. He gave presentations and moderated a world café session. Fewer opportunities were social circumstances in our case, not as much economical ones.*
- *One Belgian youngster was learning to become a hairdresser. A teacher came to talk to the project manager, astonished by her participation in this project. It turned out that she was quite the rebel at school: bullying others, running away, not making an effort. However, in the project, she behaved very enthusiastic and motivated, even open to different opinions and people. She mentioned that she did not want to be a hairdresser at all, and in the middle of the project decided to make the switch and become a management assistant/secretary, even though this meant she had to retake the fifth year of secondary education.*
- *One Belgian youngster was very nervous about participating at the international conference in Middelburg. Before departure, he elaborately told the other Belgian participants about his troubled family situation. His father, being a truck driver, was hardly ever at home, while his mother suffered from cancer. This gave him a great sense of insecurity. However, after arrival in The Netherlands, he approached the project managers to tell them how his anxieties were disappearing and how he felt at ease in the group, even though his level of English was not that advanced.*

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## **PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

**This section is concerned about describing the practical arrangements of important issues in the project managements preparing for intercultural exchange activities:**

At the international seminars, the host country was responsible for making housing arrangements for the youngsters - free of charge for the travelling participants. Each country send the partner project manager a list of participants including names, age, gender, interest, special needs, formal data etc. These participants, who formed the travelling domestic taskforce, either applied for participation and/or were appointed by teachers and coordinators in securing a mixed group of youngsters with certain with of backgrounds including youngsters with fewer opportunities.

Afterwards the project manager made agreements with local youngsters and their families and secured the distribution of participants. In some occasions families took one person and in others two or four persons. Project managers tried to make excellent matches with age, gender and hobbies, and dividing the countries equally to avoid cultural formation.

However, housing of the youngsters proved to be challenging. For instance because a participant from one country does not want to be without a fellow youngster from the same country. Otherwise, because some youngsters would like to go out and others did not or were not allowed to. Project managers made several switches upon arrival at all international seminars even though these changes from seminar to seminar were tried to be avoid - for instance by making agreements with the youngsters before travelling. Anyways, some participants tried to make changes upon arrival. Even a few tried to change families without consulting the project managers, however without succeeding. Politicians and accompanying adults stayed at hotels at central places close to the youngsters. The host country did make a hotel suggestion and acquired a group discount if possible. Travelling countries were responsible for booking and payment.

Each country booked their own flights and accommodations. Beforehand the countries coordinated flight schedules to secure arrival and departure at the same time of day and to reduce the practical arrangements for transportation from and to the airport during the international seminar. For instance, the Dutch and Belgian Taskforces booked the same flights to Gdansk and Billund, which was very convenient for not only practical matters but also for strengthening the relations between the youngsters.

The hosting country was responsible for the travelling during the seminar and arranged the transportation to the airport and attractions by bus and train. During the seminars, the hosting families were responsible for bringing and getting the guests to and from the library during the days of their stay. The library shared this responsibility with the parents.

The partner countries handled insurance in different ways. The Belgian participants were insured by the library for civil liability and took a Europe Assistance insurance. For the seminar in Belgium, they took an extra liability insurance in case the youngsters encountered some kind of accident when they were not supervised by the library. In Denmark, the participants were responsible themselves for making insurances - either personally or paid by the schools. In the Netherlands, insurance and safety were discussed with the parents and all youngsters had their own accountability insurance, travel and health insurance. In both Poland and the Netherlands parents and youngsters signed forms, for instance a contract to enter the project, signed by the library, school, youngster and parent and/or an official form on which the parents gave the project managers of the library permission to travel with their child.

Besides from Denmark (due to national law of personal data), all countries brought copy of the personal ID and of the parents. ID, and in case of divorcees, both parents had to sign and hand in a copy of their ID.

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During the international seminars, the project managers were responsible for the youngsters. Day and night. We kept in touch by phone. In few occasions, we intervened and took a youngster with us in the hotel. This way the youngsters could continue in the program.

Finally, the project managers provided the youngsters attestation of participation in the project during school time when needed for participation in the international meetings.

## **PROBLEMS AND DIFFICULTIES DURING THE PROJECT AND SOLUTIONS APPLIED**

**In some ways, the project did not succeed as well as expected:**

**POLAND:** The Taskforce was mostly the youngsters from second class of high school. After one year of the program, they started senior class and became aware of preparation for exams. The youngsters had to choose between school events (proms, mock exams) and program activities.

In 2016, Poland's educational system was reformed. It complicated contact with schools. Three out of four teachers from partner schools had to change their jobs. It required looking for new teachers for the project.

**THE NETHERLANDS:** Sometimes it was a balancing act asking youngsters to skip school for the project or to come in their free time. We wanted to meet both ends. When you needed them for the duration of a morning, they took the entire day off, but they also took their responsibility when there was a test in school or they had to work.

Budget was another challenge. In one case, a teacher, for whom we had to buy an expensive ticket, since he joined us late. However, the day before we left, he called in sick. On another occasion, instead of three persons, six persons joined the Taskforce. The budget had not accounted for this.

Then there were troubles in the housing area. Youngsters that for some reason did not want to stay at their appointed host family and were not that respectful about it to the hosting family and project managers. In both cases, the youngsters were spoken to by the project managers of the countries involved. Before the exchange visit to Denmark, one of the youngsters was diagnosed with a burnout. The parents contacted the project manager and we discussed extra measures to enable the youngster to join the international seminar. She needed extra moments to rest, which we provided for. She stayed in the hotel with the project manager.

**DENMARK:** Three libraries had problems with recruitment by offering the learning program as a free time activity and leisure choice. The main reasons were:

- 1) Difficulties by communicating and making the project understandable. The frame was too restricted to certain objectives and structures or it was too open and the subjects were too abstract to take in.
- 2) The political wrapping did not have a common appeal and the terminology was not adapted to youth language.
- 3) It was confusing to understand the structure and progress with local, regional and international levels. In particular, due to the Danish choice of converting the regional seminars into activities to gather the five democracy clubs and decision makes for dialogue meetings.
- 4) Many were confused about agreeing to be a part of an international project although in the end, only a few of them would get the opportunity to participate in the intercultural exchange.
- 5) Program duration (one year) was too ambitious. In particular, in the expectations of a youth commitment to a program covering two school years. These challenges were handled by rethinking the program and launching it as a learning course in Event Making, still lasting one year with monthly club meetings and occasional events. The program was now an opportunity to develop skills in event making to promote concrete democratic subjects and support public dialogue about challenges with roots in everyday life.

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**BELGIUM:** The main difficulty was to engage the youngsters over a long (1-year) period. The numbers of participants in the regional seminars dropped considerably when comparing the first and last session. Many youngsters had enrolled in the project because they thought they could go abroad, while only 20 of the youngsters were selected for the international seminars. Over time, we tried to increase participant numbers by allowing the enthusiastic youngsters to bring interested friends or by sending reminders to interested youngsters, or by using participants as ambassadors on Facebook. However, the extent to which the youngsters who did participate until the end were involved in the project struck us in a positive way.

A second difficulty is the differences between organizing countries. Perhaps, it would have been interesting to align approaches between the countries beforehand. Now, it was quite clear that there were differences between the countries concerning:

1. Recruitment of the youngsters: Belgium launched an open call, other countries worked with schools or municipalities. This meant that some countries brought teachers while others did not.
2. Number of youngsters with fewer opportunities involved: while we succeeded in attracting a few of these youngsters, not all countries did, resulting in very different taskforces and different levels of English and presentation skills.
3. Communication with parents: while we heard that the Netherlands organized an information session for parents before each international seminar, this did not occur to us until the very end of the project. A final remark from the Belgian project managers: we tried to give the youngsters as much responsibility as possible. However, things did not always work out nicely. When there was a deadline to make (e.g. an upcoming regional seminar or other events) and the youngsters did not take action to contact inspiring entrepreneurs or decision makers, we took initiative ourselves. We learned along the way which responsibilities they were able to handle and which they were not ready for, but this was a learning process throughout the year.

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# RESULTS

The list of competences highlighted in this chapter is based on the project framework for key action and objectives:

- **Key action 3: Dialogue between young people and policy makers**
- **Objective 1: Enhance the democratic competences of youngsters 14-19 years old**
- **Objective 2: Make decision makers aware of the needs and thinking of youth**
- **Objective 3: Empower youngsters to find solutions to current local and European challenges**
- **Objective 4: Use the public library as a framework for creating a European public opinion – starting with the youth**

The developing of competences has to be looked at as a coherent development in line with the progression in local, regional and international activities. Hereby participants gradually develop practical, theoretical and personal skills, behavior and insight by reusing knowledge and competences on new levels. In line with educational content, the learning outcome of the project successfully improved competences within:

- European vision, language development, social and cultural understanding
- Knowledge of youth, culture and how democracy works in the European context
- Democracy understanding, involving and co-creation
- Event making and project management
- Awareness of democratic stakeholders
- Knowledge of democratic procedures, decision and policy making and the importance of working with different values, attitudes and methods
- Greater knowledge and understanding of the library as a platform , venue and opportunity for debate and experience

*Through national learning courses*, the libraries have provided knowledge and improved skills largely. The educational content and activities have been in line with the project description, covering subjects as Event making and project management, Rhetoric's and communication, Process facilitating, Design Thinking, Political culture and communication, Democratic culture and decision-making. The action-learning approach to combine theory with practice proved to be a success when it comes to making subjects concrete and relevant for the participants as well as explore and experience how new knowledge can be transferred into new experiences through practice and actions and hereby improving skills and develop new competences.

*In combination with regional seminars* (playing the role as playground for action and democratic arena for engagement of fellow youngsters and decision makers), project participants have developed skills in democracy involvement and co-creation, creating and facilitating events, building relations with democratic stakeholders and decision makers. Moreover, they have expanded their knowledge of democratic procedures, decision-making and the importance of working with different values, attitudes and methods on local and international levels. Furthermore, they have developed an international vision, improved language skills and have achieved better social and cultural understanding by the meeting with fellow youngsters, different cultures and living democracy in the European context.

*Through the international seminars* participants learned about the Key action in the Erasmus+ program. When it came to traveling abroad, the Taskforce was formed as a group of equal members with representatives of youngsters and grownups (decision makers, partner project managers and eventually teachers). A group, which travelled together and performed together as national ambassadors. During the seminars, participants and decision

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makers gave insights, shared knowledge and exchanged ideas on national conditions regarding to the four topics taken from Europe 2020 Strategy. This knowledge was used to brainstorm and come up with ideas on common solutions and presenting conclusions using various ways of expressions like for instance event making and movies. Chosen methods were inclusive and made provided dialogues and co-creation across borders and between youngsters and grown-ups.

## **MAIN FINDINGS REGARDING KEY ACTION 3: STRUCTURED DIALOGUE – MEETING BETWEEN YOUNG PEOPLE AND DECISION MAKERS IN THE FIELD OF YOUTH**

Overall, this project managed to support the intentions of activity under Key Action 3, succeeded by:

- Giving youngsters from four European countries the opportunity to interact with each other on national and international level.
- Facilitating meetings and dialogue between youngsters and decision-makers on issues of concern to young people and to influence policy and democratic development
- Engaging and putting young participants in charge of activities on several stages of the project from preparation, performing to follow-up (i.eg. workshops, seminars, events and debates)

This is the result of successful establishing of a **one-year learning program** on local levels in the framework of public libraries in all four countries including positive recruitment of youngsters in the age of 14 to 19 years old and involvement of external partners like schools, educational institutions, decisions-makers and experts. Moreover, the result is due to successfully launching of **four domestic seminars on regional level** followed by **four international meetings** (one in each country) supporting intercultural exchange, dialogue and co-creation between taskforces of youngsters and accompanying decision makers from the four countries. Finally, due to the coherent co-creation of contribution of suggestions, ideas and recommendations addressed from young people to the political level (EU Commission) collected and published in the **ODE Red Book (Tool Kit)**.

This success is due to among others: Successful cooperation, good organization and management, hard work, excellent partnerships with local stakeholders, successful external funding, motivated and interested participants and decision makers, relevant and suitable topics, appropriate approaches to learning and programming.

Quite a number of youngsters found the meeting with politicians a great learning experience. Some of them have political ambitions of their own, and aside from learning from the decision makers as experts on the themes, they could also get inspiration from them for their own political careers.

Flexibility is also something the youngsters learned during the project. When faced with social and cultural differences, you should always be respectful and sometimes have to accept something you are not used to. Overall, this was not really a problem and in fact, the cultural exchange part of the project was the most appreciated part.

### **Cases:**

*“The Dutch youngsters were serious, enthusiastic, driven and took pride in their performances throughout the international seminars. Perhaps the Dutch in general are somewhat competitive and added that element to the project. The youngsters did not like it so much if youngsters from other countries seemed to be there out of obligation and did not participate that much. ZB tried to take the qualities the youngsters already had, to the next level. For instance structuring and giving presentations and moderating, taking the lead in a discussion while including everyone. The youngsters took it upon themselves to mingle constantly amongst all participants. No one was left behind!”*

*”Councilman Albert Vader is a Dutch decision maker in the field of youth. He was a real mentor for the youngsters during the project and contributed with many examples from his own practice. He himself entered politics at a young age and*

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therefore could relate to the aspirations of the youngsters, of which several are orientating a career in European politics or business. Both in local level and by participating in three international seminars Albert Vader showed the ability to relate to the youngsters through sharing experiences, which has proven very valuable in the relationship with the youngsters. Both the youngsters and the politician valued the relationship and learned a lot from each other”.

## **FINDINGS REGARDING KEY OBJECTIVE 1: ENHANCE THE DEMOCRATIC COMPETENCES OF YOUNGSTERS 14-19 YEARS OLD**

- **Developing democratic and Intercultural dialogue**

In the project, young people got the opportunity to network, communicate and cooperate with fellow youngsters from other European countries, achieve social and cultural insight such as intercultural understanding and tolerance, strengthen both democratic and communication skills.

Primarily the international activities within intercultural exchange were opportunities to learn and know other countries from the inside and make new friends. It seems that many of these friendships are still lasting through connections and communications on social media. In fact, a major part of these relations was made already before the youngsters even met physically at the international seminars because of natural interest, curiosity and engagement in each other. Likewise, the international seminars were opportunities to get training in collaboration and co-creation with other cultures as a basic democratic skill.

Outside the formal learning environment, another positive dynamic comes into existence amongst the youngsters. This non-formal way of learning has proven itself again in this ODE project. In preparation for making large events and international seminars, the project offered exclusive, practical training courses on facilitating workshops and group processes, hosting and guest service and event making.

**Cases:**

*“A mix of Danish youngsters were trained by a professional trainer from GoProces and developed concrete approaches for strengthening group dynamics which were transformed into action at the international seminar in Denmark.”*

*“One Belgian youngster had noted in her application form that she held strongly rightwing political convictions. The project managers then decided to make her the “president” of the topic “Fighting poverty & social exclusion”, in order to kindle some empathy for minority groups in her. In addition, by allowing her to enter the project, instead of rejecting her based on her not-very-open point of view, we believed that the intercultural dialogue at the basis of this project would help to open her mindset. We believe this had been quite successful, as she could be quite harsh in voicing her opinions at the beginning of the project, but was much more considerate towards others’ opinions in the end.”*

- **Developing Language skills as democratic competence**

The project has been a great opportunity to improve language skills (English) – and hereby strengthen the ability for democratic participation. Mainly when it came to the ones who participated in the international activities. However, the learning programs in each partner country had integrated materials in English. Likewise the communication on social media e.g. Facebook was in English. All in all both youngsters and project members seem to have improved their language skills by visit and communicate with fellows in other countries.

The international seminars were also a great personal playground for many youngsters. After overcoming the qualms they had about speaking in English (with their peers and before large groups of people), the youngsters learned that self-confidence and getting their message across was far more important than being flawless in English. By forced to speak in English, their fluency greatly improved. Moreover, despite

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differences in proficiency levels, the youngsters acquired a respectful attitude towards each other's language skills, whether they were limited or advanced.

**Cases:**

*“A Danish girl was anxious travelling to Poland as being supposed to communicate and eventually give a presentation in English. Only 14 years old, she was one of the youngest participants and still went to primary school. Moreover, the seminar was her first time going abroad. In the beginning, she was shy and quiet. However, fellow youngsters from the Danish Task Force rapidly spotted the situation and her needs and helped her to express her herself by writing key words and supporting her in the common dialogue. When she came back home she said it was awesome and very fun. Her self- confidence increased, she improved her language skills and was eager for further participation. Actually, she did so at the next seminar in the Netherlands - this time with fewer inhibitions and with much more confident. It was clear that ODE made such a difference her – the improvement of language skills was a door opener to a new world of understanding and expression”.*

*“Topics that were raised during the seminars needs specific vocabulary. A polish boy had no problems with communicate in English but he noted that discussion on more complex topics is a problem for him. He asked his English teacher who took part in the project to prepare a list words and phrases that may be useful to him in the discussion. During the second international seminar he had no problems the world coffee session.”*

## **FINDINGS REGARDING KEY OBJECTIVE 2: MAKE DECISION MAKERS AWARE OF THE NEEDS AND THINKING OF YOUTH**

- **Political dialogue**

In the meeting with decision makers the youngster got the opportunity to establish dialogue, share opinions and knowledge across stages of life and present opinions, expectations and recommendation to improve decision and policy making among other by engaging and involving youth in democratic processes.

Ideally, the same politicians are participating during the entire project. This way they can bond with the youngsters and operate as a mentor. They are present at all of the local and international seminars. Local politicians are easier to tackle than national ones. Young and/or down to earth politicians inspire youngster more. However, the advantage of approaching different politicians closer to the upcoming event is that you can perhaps choose someone more relevant for the topic. Either way, experiencing from the expertise of politicians is a very important aspect of the project.

**Case:**

*“In the final evaluation exercise during the seminar in Belgium, some youngsters noted that they prefer developing their own opinions, without being influenced by the ideas of politicians. However, many opposite voices were raised in consequence. The politicians played a major role in equipping the youngsters with some background knowledge on the topics, which they did not always have because of their young age. In addition, many of the Belgian youngsters were greatly inspired by the politicians they met. Some of them already have very outspoken political preferences, but they were open to debating their ideas with politicians from different parties. In the Belgian case, we also found this “neutrality” quite important: as a neutral “knowledge center/library”, ARhus prefers not to be associated with one political party, which would have been the case if we would have chosen one politician for the duration of the whole project. Now, we chose to approach different politicians regarding the topics of the international seminars, so we got to offer the youngsters quite a broad spectrum of political positions.”*

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- **Co-creation and decision-making**

The project underline the importance of engaging young people in decision making and appreciating the effort. Especially by making use of collaborative approaches like co-creation and involving youngsters who are affected by the matter from the beginning of the process. It is not enough to just listen to the demands and wishes of young people, it is vital to make them part of the solution. Doing so might lead to outcomes better tailored to the concrete context, which increases ownership, acceptance and motivation. However, it also requires trust among all parties involved and cooperation on a level playing field. Furthermore, it requires transparency and concreteness in the decision process: Aim, roles, resources, responsibility etc.

**Cases:**

*“Decision makers joined different discussions in the ODE program. They were not to teach and lead the discussions, but they were there to reflect and coach. To share their knowledge in a way that suited the youngsters and as it turned out also the decision makers. Several decision makers became aware of the importance to listen to youngster when they want to share their opinions and ideas. And by treating youngsters as equals they can gain a lot of information and make lasting connection with the youngsters.”*

## **FINDINGS REGARDING KEY OBJECTIVE 3: EMPOWER YOUNGSTERS TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO CURRENT LOCAL AND EUROPEAN CHALLENGES**

- **Active citizenship and participation in democratic life**

The project demonstrates young people are democratically or even politically conscious and interested. However, it is far from the case that they deliver their political and democratic engagement. If so, not necessarily within the established framework and structures that characterize society in the form of, for example, political parties, debate meetings, etc. Instead, participation is a result of engagement in specific cases or matters that relate closely to the life and interests that young people deliver.

Contrary to the classical, schooled political and democratic participation, where dialogue and decision-making take place in formalized structures and processes, there is so much power, responsibility, influence and specific attitudes that motivate young people. It is in the higher opportunity to make a difference, be able to accomplish something needed and makes sense that drives the youngsters.

- **Political Agenda and communication**

It is the experience that a major challenge for the involvement of young people, is related to the fact that young people often experience public debate and news as something that either does not matter to them or is conveyed in a way that speaks to them and invites them in a way they can relate to it. This applies to form, content and dissemination. For instance, young people today express themselves democratically and politically in other frameworks and on other platforms.

- **Leisure section**

The young people who have participated in ODE Democracy Clubs as a leisure offer largely exemplify a group of talented, ambitious and active young people who take a lot of thought about how they can act to make a difference. There is a high level of awareness, reflection and insight behind their attitudes, and in the choices they make. Youth democratic engagement and activity reflect different motivation and driver's i.e. political interest and commitment, friendships, communities, social relationships, passion for a cause, political commitment, curiosity,

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### Cases:

*“In the Netherlands a special teaching program was set up for the youngsters in preparation for the international seminar in Middelburg. Dr. Anya Luscombe of University College Roosevelt taught them in a couple of meetings about Dialogue based tools and methods, Rhetoric, argumentation, Preparation presentations + world café moderation and presenting an event. Similarly, in Belgium, the youngsters were trained by a professional agency (Exposure) specialized in political communication, to acquire insight into political communication, but also to teach them tips and tricks for conducting meetings and giving presentations.”*

*“In Denmark a group of participants in Horsens made contact with a booking agency to hire a celebrity cook for a local event on food waste and sustainability. Unfortunately, it was too expensive and the agency was not keen about the idea. In the meantime, the task force in Horsens had a learning course in event management and trained in thinking innovative and big. Instead of dropping the idea, the youngsters made contact to the cook in person by writing him on Facebook. The response was positive as the cook really liked to support the case, and he ended up offering the youngster his service a cheap price.”*

*“Poland: On the last regional seminar about innovation an employee of Polish Red Cross had a speech about his experience with fight against poverty. The conversation motivated some of the youngsters to get involved in action #poburzy, which helps people whose homes were destroyed during the storm in August 2017 in our region”*

- **Relevance and appeal**

The evaluation with the youngsters enhances the importance and appreciation of suitable topics, which were not chosen by adults. Likewise, they find it positive that the project dissected the topics into subtopics with the aim of concretizing themes and offering choices based on personal interests. Moreover, before each international seminar, the hosting country described the topics by addressing current challenges to everyday life and youth living. By flipping attention to concrete ways of living and giving simple answers, it was possible to work with abstract themes and big questions from Europe 2020 Strategy.

- **Youth certificate**

In the end of the project each youngster receives an official Youth Certificate (YouthPass). It is an internationally recognized document; they can use to add to their resume in pursuit of their future careers. The promise of a Youth Certificate at the end of the project showed to be an important stimulator in participation in the project.

## **FINDINGS REGARDING KEY OBJECTIVE 4: USE THE PUBLIC LIBRARY AS A FRAMEWORK FOR CREATING AN EUROPEAN PUBLIC OPINION – STARTING WITH THE YOUTH**

The project demonstrates that public libraries can play a vital role in providing an open public space for democratic participation, engagement and development in the field of youth. Especially with a particular focus on providing non-formal learning and education, cultural activities and supporting social communication. However, the possibilities for development are different from country to country, depending on culture, history and traditions.

- **Library awareness:** In general, the public library plays a vital role and functions as gateway to knowledge and inclusion in local communities. The challenge is to make youngsters aware of the great value of libraries and make them highly attractive for young people.
- **Library engagement:** When it comes to engaging young people, the library can by advantage promote the position as the unique “third place”. An open and neutral meeting place for youngsters between school and home/work, where they can make use of physical and digital resources to improve democratic skills, find space for studying and working with projects, receive informal consultations from library

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professionals, participate in non-formal courses, participate and co-create events and activities with peers.

- **Library networking:** Moreover, libraries can by advantage make use of the strength of their networks and include partners like for instance schools and other educational actors to provide activities in the field of youth.
- **The library as a democratic meeting-place:** The project has given the library ideas to promote its democratic function, services and facilities as free and relevant meeting places for young people. Especially by underlining the possibilities of supporting democratic participation and user driven activities and content.
- **Developing competences - Library professionals:** During the project, the library and staff have gained insights in to new methods, competences and approaches to work with young people. Among others when it comes to event management, co-creation with youngsters, facilitating meetings between decision makers and youngsters, cooperation with local stakeholders and creating partnerships.
- **Developing competences – locally and internationally:** The project has given the library a local network and competence within cooperation and interacting on local and regional levels. Especially when it comes to the education system by establishing partnership within the learning courses and the recruitment of youngsters for the project. For the libraries, which have participated in the international activities the project has provided access to a network abroad and given competence within project management and co-creation internationally. We hope the libraries will use this network and competences in developing the libraries in to a framework for a European public opinion and a local gate to Europe.
- **Public library as framework:** It is of vital importance to identify the needs and create coherence between needs of libraries and needs of youngsters. The libraries in the project differs in the succeeding in recruiting voluntary participants. For instance, a couple of the Danish libraries struggled with this matter. The project seems to appeal to entrepreneurs: young people who have an interest in creative development and have an innovative mindset. Moreover, cultural exchange and meetings with fellow youngsters from other cultures was of great importance in the recruiting process. For some youngsters the expectation of travelling was a huge driver despite from limited participation for the international seminars.

#### **Cases:**

*“One Belgian youngster, after getting to know another young professional with an own business during a couple of meetings in the library, decided to become student-entrepreneur himself and now runs a business as piano tuner. Youth empowerment in action, stimulated by the library.”*

*“Libraries have in many ways proven to be perfect facilitators for creating a European public opinion by youngsters. For instance in the Netherlands where ZB was able to make a handmade program for and with the youngsters, which schools could not provide. The library showed to have the knowledge on the topics and/or know how to get the knowledge by hiring experts and visiting/organizing external events. The library build bridges between schools, municipalities and partner organizations and provided a cultural exchange program for the youngsters because of the Erasmus+ award. For a school this would take a lot of administration time that the library now invested. Moreover, youngsters have become ambassadors and want to give other youngster the possibility to have an equal valuable experience. For libraries, this project is an opportunity to show the function of a library, which is much more than just lending books. The future of the library lies in these kinds of activities/role. Europe needs the public opinion from the youngsters, since it is their future Europe. If only 1 or 2 youngsters from the project enter European politics or businesses, with their contacts for life they made during the project, it promises to be a bright future indeed.”*

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# OUTCOME & IMPACT

## LEARNING OUTCOME

*The developing of competences was a coherent development in line with the progression in local, regional and international activities. Hereby participants gradually developed practical, theoretical and personal skills, behavior and insight by reusing knowledge and competences on new levels in line with the project plan.*

### **Competences acquired by participants through the project activities:**

- The domestic learning courses developed democratic competences by providing knowledge of democratic procedures and decision-making and introduced tools for event making, project management, communication, process facilitating etc.
- The regional seminars and events developed personal empowerment by providing opportunities to train obtained learning in action, in organizing and facilitating events, dialogue and interaction with decision makers and fellow youngsters.
- The international meeting improved intercultural competences including language development and social and cultural understanding. The participants developed a European vision by co-creating the Red Book and gained knowledge of how democracy works in the European context through the process. In the case, where the task forces in Belgium, the Netherlands and Denmark were in charge of organizing the international meetings, the domestic youngsters received training from professionals and develop competences in facilitating workshops, hosting and hospitality and conference presentation.
- Incorporating structured dialogue between youngsters and decision makers developed relational competences by providing meetings allowing interaction on equal level. The decision gave insight in policy-making and enhanced their own the awareness of youth culture and understanding of how policy-making influences young people.
- The use of public library as facilitator and meeting place developed innovative competences by proving a training court, giving access to resources and sharing knowledge and experience in creating cultural activities, social interaction and public events.
- These competences were gradually developed during the project as the youngsters demonstrated the ability to improve the interaction with each other as wells as with decision makers and project managers. They held up a high standard as it came to produced results on local, regional and international levels. The youngsters took pride in their presentations and input in the discussions by the feeling of growth. The taskforces operated as equals during the project, using each other's competences where and when needed. As the project came along, there was confidence that everyone came into their own and contributed to this project. Gradually the differences went into the background and there was a new awareness in its place: 'They are just like us!' Everyone does that in his or her own way, from the context that the country offers. The insight that they are just like them, and the library can provide this insight, is perhaps the biggest learning outcome of the project.

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### Competences acquired by the participating libraries:

- By in framing the project activities and human interactions the partner libraries developed competences to expand the role as contributor in the effort of engage young people in democracy and contribute to local and European matters. The libraries have obtained insight in youth culture and gained knowledge to develop new methods to involve young people. In addition, the libraries discovered how important it is to involve young people early in the process, show trust and confidence, offer leadership and responsibility, and be supportive and present in all stages.
- By involving local stakeholders in the library business to create collective impact the libraries developed competences to establish valuable partnerships like for instance schools and got insight in the meeting between different work cultures and working with formal and unformal learning. Hereby, the project also created impact in the partner Network schools increasing their level of implement democratic and innovative practice in educational training and use the library as a resource to knowledge, civic empowerment, local and international networking
- By being a part of an international project the libraries developed intercultural competences and an international orientation, which was of vital importance, as it provided an outcome that the single countries would not have received on their own. The libraries added European elements to their businesses, not only in educational content and in facilitating activities, but also in the way of thinking. Especially when it comes to young people, as the ODE demonstrates how intercultural exchange is a great method to reach youngsters, who find this field attractive and motivating.
- The project had a great impact on the participants, especially as quite a number of youngsters found the meeting with fellow youngsters, politicians and professionals in different work areas a great learning experience.

### IMPACT

#### Important impact on the participants provided by the project is following:

- Many youngsters became democratically or politically interested. For our knowledge four youngster from three of the countries have become members of a political party. One of them is running for a political career, nominated as candidate at the election for the local government. Others have decided to study law or political science at the university after high school.
- At one of the last regional seminars, an employee of the domestic Red Cross had a speech about his experience with fight against poverty, which motivated some of the youngsters to get involved as volunteers.
- During the project, one youngster was honest about her rightwing political convictions. The project managers decided to put her in charge of a topic. From being quite harsh in voicing her opinions, she turned out to be much more considerate towards others' opinions in the end.
- Another youngster participated as speaker at the international Tools Conference and shared personal experience with the project and being empowered.
- Several participants showed anxious about travelling and communicating in English. Fellow youngsters helped them out by writing key words and supporting in dialogues. Those participants evaluate that their self-confidence have increased and their language skills are improved.
- One of the decision makers made a good relationship with a participant during an international meeting and invited this youngster for an internship at her campaign office in the national parliament.
- During the project a youngster made friendship with young professional with an own business. During a couple of meetings in the library, this youngster have decided to become student-entrepreneur and now runs a business as piano tuner.
- One youngster made contact to a project manager to become volunteer at the Cultural Summit 2018.

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- By ending the project, several youngsters have made contact to the project managers asking for the project to continue or do other similar projects.

**Important impact on the partner libraries provided by the project is following:**

- The project has affected and impressed the partner libraries largely. For the time being, the libraries on local levels and together are considered with how to go on with the great experience by exploring the role of contemporary libraries as vital centers of democratic engagement of young people and enhancing competences for democratic participation. For instance, ZB in the Netherlands is busy with implementing the project in schools in the entire region of Zeeland.
- For others the project provided a platform for exchange how to work with young people and offered insight and inspiration to engage the local community. Likewise, it provided useful knowledge to add European element to library business and support European orientation in local society. The international meetings contributed with inspiration and insight into new approaches and fields of activities in the work with young people and democratic engagement in the local community. The libraries became not only aware of similarities and differences between countries in the effort of promote and support youth participation and inclusion. They became also aware of the various aspects enabling and limiting the library in handle local challenges:
  - By dialogue with colleagues from others countries and observing their approaches to handle and environments to frame these challenges, the libraries got insight and inspiration to implement new methods and activities locally.
  - By meeting young people from other countries, the libraries became aware of other youth cultures and ways of living, and how this affected on domestic youngsters, and their way of thinking democracy.
  - By meeting decision makers from other countries the libraries became aware of domestic structures, cultures and processes for democratic inclusion and policy-making and how this influence on young people's democratic engagement and empowerment.

This knowledge is valuable for future choices, development of approaches and planning of new Projects, and perhaps the greatest impact on the partner libraries.

**Important impact of the project on youth policy-makers and on youth policies at the local, regional, national, European and/or international levels**

**THE NETHERLANDS:** We regularly got questions from Jouv Zeeland for political orientated events with and for youngsters. One of them was a meeting with the Mayer of Middelburg. Some of the youngsters enrolled in these events. As a partner organization and our most important funder (Province of Zeeland & ZB) it meant a stimulance in our relationship. All decision makers were involved in the project and enthusiastic about the youngsters, the results and the role the library played. One of the results is more understanding for the library and direct contact with youngsters for the politicians. Also the provincial representative who joined us in Brussels.

*Quotes from Albert Vader: There are many things important to this project:*

- *Young people do a lot themselves. They talk about solutions; they meet many different people and subjects, for some it is the first time abroad. It broadens their horizon. Some young people felt inferior at the start of the project. They have grown into that, it has given them self-confidence. There are also very talented youngsters. You help develop them further. Some contacts remain between young people, project managers and politicians.*
- *It is very good that young people stay in host families. The host families open their homes and their hearts for the young people. The young people experience what it is like to stay in a family and see how it functions.*
- *As a decision maker, you come into contact with the libraries in a different way. You do not expect this from a library, you gain insight into the other social function of this institute.*
- *It connects countries with each other.*

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**DENMARK:** The experience of engaging politicians in the project is mixed. Overall, the project succeeded in getting politicians to participate in local and regional activities and hereby providing meetings and dialogues between young people and politicians. For instance, it was a great experience meeting Minister for Mr. Finance Kristian Jensen (Liberal Party) participated at the first regional seminar and having a dialogue about his way into politics. From being involved in youth politics on local level in Herning, to be elected for the National Parliament in a young age, and later on become member of the National Government even as Minister. Likewise, it was great to engage member of the National Parliament Mrs. Annette Lind (Social Democrats) in the international seminar in Gdansk, Poland and receive positive feedback from her. She was really inspired by the youth engagement and recommendations addressed for policy makers. As result of the engagement, Annette Lind afterwards offered a week of internship at her office in the Parliament to one of the participating Danish youngsters – who off course had an experience for lifetime. Likewise, it was positive that EU Parliament Member Mr. Jeppe Kofod (Social Democrats) joined the Danish taskforce at the ceremony at the EU Commission and took part of the official speeches to the youngsters after presenting the Red Book. This support was such a great support and credit for the hard working youngsters.

However, nothing was only straightforward. The project ran on many closed doors. Some politicians did not return on requests, others were not interested or told us the invitation for the seminars was too late. Particularly in the time around the municipal elections in November, it was a challenge to engage politicians who were busy by campaign activities and voter meetings. Some potential interest also made their participation dependent on the presence of an appropriate number of local young people entitled to the individual events in the hope of obtaining votes.

Particularly difficult was engaging politicians for some one of the international seminars extended over four days, including travel days. In addition, the participating politicians were supposed to play a rather unfamiliar role by exposing the young people as part of the Taskforce. At the seminars politicians would be part of the dialogue as part of the joint discussions and coaching youngsters in the collaborative processes. Thus, politicians had narrow time for speaking. Instead, they had to play a listening and supportive role. This role seemed not appeal to politicians who rather would make speeches. Nevertheless, the young participants highlighted in their evaluation of the project the importance of political participation and appearance at the seminars, also when it came to cultural and social program activities. Their devotion was because it emphasized an interest and appreciation of spending time with young people.

**BELGIUM:** The experience of Belgium is that policy makers greatly valued the opinions of youngsters and loved going into debates with them. Many of them told the project managers that it keeps their own mindset young if they know what youngsters deem important. We feel confident that the personal talks between politicians and youngsters during the project activities were inspiring for both parties involved. In addition, the official closing of the project shows that the political world is interested in young people: the group was allowed into the grand meeting hall of the European Commission, where a representative of EU Commissioner Mrs. Marianne Thyssen received the recommendations of the youngsters and ensured us that the Red Book would be given to the Commissioner herself. Also, EU Parliament Member from Roeselare Tom Vandenkendelaere and his staff went to great lengths to receive the group in the EU Parliament and have a very spirited talk with the youngsters about the EU and about life as an EU politician. Furthermore, the Flemish minister of Youth was willing to come to the EU Parliament to meet the youngsters and answer their questions. Even though we had trouble in finding adequate politicians for regional and international seminars, these official visits in Brussels show that the political world is interested in youngsters.

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# RECOMMENDATIONS

*Not every country – nor every city – is the same and not every approach to engage young people in democracy is the same. Therefore, there is no checklist for how to organize the effort. Local context manner, tools and partnerships need to be adapted. Still, the project points towards a number of things that can help libraries in this field.*

In this chapter, the report suggests a number of areas to consider working with youth projects, using the library as framework and/or applying Erasmus+ or other EU programs. Recommendations from the project are also listed in the ODE Tool Kit. The project recommendations in this report are:

## Enhance the democratic competences of youngsters 14-19 years old

- **Taskforce:** Let youngsters sign a contract upon starting the project in which they sign for participating in the project, committing to be present at all meetings and providing a sleeping place for a host youngster during the international seminar. Have the contract co-signed by the parents, school/teachers and project managers.
- **Rulemaking:** Lay down the rules concerning smoking and alcohol use in the participating countries and decide upon how to commit to them during the project.
- **Cultural exchange:** Insist on a respectful attitude during your stay in host families, even if you meet with cultural differences. Be flexible and open to different experiences.
- **Mixing cultures:** Stimulate mixing with the other countries by means of hosting and teambuilding activities.
- **Learning track:** During the project the youngsters learn how to moderate, formulate and present their thoughts and opinions on different matters, they learn how to organize events, how to communicate them to a broad audience. They learn while doing it, however you can also guide it a little bit more by using the methodology/teaching program the Netherlands developed for this purpose.
- **Create Ambassadors:** The young people who have now participated can be used as ambassadors for a new project. Find ways to further involvement and engagement by future projects and/or activities and events

## Make decision makers aware of the needs and thinking of youth

- **Long time commitment:** Ideally, politicians are invested during the entire project. This way they can bond with the youngsters and operate as a mentor. They are present at all of the local and international seminars.
- **Focus on local engagement:** Local politicians are easier to tackle than national ones. Young and/or down to earth politicians inspire youngster more. However, the advantage of approaching different politicians closer to the upcoming event is that you can perhaps choose someone more relevant for the topic. Either way, experiencing from the expertise of politicians is a very important aspect of the project.
- **Clearer language in all public information and political communication.** Words and phrases must be used more suitable to youth as target group and on youth terms.
- **Simplify processes of youth engagement in democratic participation and decision-making:** Increase the use of social media in reaching young people and provide dialogue and communication.
- **Full integration:** Strengthening the dialogue and meeting between youngsters and politicians might happen by letting politicians, project managers and teachers staying in host families with youngsters

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## Empower youngsters to find solutions to current local and European challenges

- **Communication:** Think about how you approach and communicate with this target group. Use a language they will understand, but do not patronize – meet them where they are and where you are. Ask them what they would prefer. We initially started with different ways, only to end up with one method close to the one the youngsters use themselves: Facebook or WhatsApp, instead of e-mail. Young people make extensive use of digital platforms to communicate and organize, and they live their lives especially when it comes to social media.
- **Age difference:** Another important thing is a homogenous age structure in the group. The combination of 14 and 18/19 year olds does not work well. The differences in knowledge and social development influence the learning process too much. Diversity in the level of education however works stimulating in the group. The most important aspect in a successful group is the intrinsic motivation of youngsters involved.
- Identify their interest, motivation and expectation
- **Approach:** Have a friendly approach, be friendly and use humour. Treat them as equal contributors and grown up, do not patronize or talk down, empower them to express their opinions freely. Cooperation with young people needs to be inclusive: Give them responsibility, let them take on real tasks and problems to solve and let them handle it. Show patience and understanding, and create room and open up: for youngsters to act. Consider if you can help them on their way. Some need guides in the form of adults some in form of other youngsters. Encourage them to express their opinions, ask them what they think and acknowledge their replies. Act on suggestions and ideas where possible and if necessary offer alternatives
- **Involve youngsters early in the project** and as far as possible to provide ownership, clarify and match expectation and opportunities. This means youth participation already in the project conception and initiation or at least in the project definition and planning.
- **Be concrete:** Libraries have often many different aims. Often on an abstract level. To reach these aims, it is necessary to be concrete and translate the abstractness into understandable needs in everyday life for young people. Also, look for real problems to solve as young people are motivated by making real changes.
- **Prepare for strategy change:** Be prepared for additional work and plan in sufficient resources including staff capacity
- **Combine the fun with the professional:** It is fun to be involved! To youngsters professional and social aspects cannot be separated. Both are important.
- **Create ownership:** It is crucial that the young people experience their participation makes sense for them and ownership is important.
- **Consider whether participation can be flexible:** Make it easy for young people to participate as they have a busy life with many things that, in addition, require their attention.

## Use the public library as a framework for creating a European public opinion – starting with the youth

*The library occupies a unique public space in European society and must be an expression of local communities including youth as an integrated part. This project demonstrates the capacity of using libraries as a fundamental tool to youth and democratic development. As libraries evolve and adapt to the needs of their communities, the skills of library staff will also need to develop. It is crucial that the libraries and all library staff have the skills and knowledge necessary to appeal to young people and provide services suitable for their needs. ODE illustrates different approaches to handle these challenges - some valuable to adopt, others recommendable to avoid. In both ways, it is of great importance to highlight our recommendations for what to do and what not to do.*

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- **Library services and Youth needs:** In general, public libraries contain a large number of the services available for the public. However, the question is “How do libraries make these services better known by youngsters and encourage them to make use of these?” Mainly, libraries must know and meet the multiple needs of youngster. They must be open to young people and therefore must respect and appreciate different and other needs than other user groups. Their opinions, wishes and demands might be different to those the library traditionally handles.
  - **Cooperation:** Activities and services for young people should be designed in cooperation with youngsters or at least with representatives of youngsters as user group. Preferable youngsters should be actively involved in planning, implementing and evaluating activities and services.
  - **Interaction:** Recognize the importance of relationships and communication in the development and implementation of youth activities and services. Be aware of the importance of supporting youth individually (individualist with needs of personal independence and service) as well as in groups (collective of individuals sharing same interest and identity)
  - **Learning Environments:** Provide flexible learning environments that suites and support youth in informal learning activities. Try not to copy traditional school and education environments, but offer alternative and attractive solutions suitable for the life after school.
  - **Learning Experiences:** Work and cooperate with learning professionals and community partners in the field of youth to plan, implement and evaluate learning activities that support young people’s interests. Include the experience of youngsters as well – they know best in the end.
  - **Youth Engagement and Leadership:** Let the youngsters take the lead in as many ways as you can to provide engagement and leadership. Try to respond to all youth interests and needs, and act in partnership with youngsters to create and implement activities and to foster youth ownership, engagement and leadership.
  - **Invitation and access:** Invite the youngsters to the library and for dialogue and cooperation. Present the richness of facilities and services offered by the library. Be open and ensure access to a wide variety of library resources, services, and activities for and with youngsters.
  - **Mean youth by heart:** Prioritize youth and make policies for youth services to ensure action. Follow up by concrete actions and evaluation measuring the impact of the efforts.
  - **Enter formal partnerships:** Libraries can by advantage use the opportunity to collaborate with others to engage, serve and empower youngsters and to enhance the capacity and importance of youth engagement in democracy and policy-making. The ODE project demonstrates different ways to enter formal partnerships and engage partners.
  - **Educational institutions:** Involving schools and high schools in the project opens for the integration of non-formal learning into a formal learning structure. This approach secures recruitment, ownership, structure, stability, and use of mix of competencies between professionals.
  - **Funding and sponsorship:** The ODE project demonstrates value of library effort by seeking and obtaining funding to develop and implement activities.

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# DISSEMINATION OF PROJECT RESULTS

## Project results and activities carried out to share the results of ODE

In this chapter, we present the dissemination activities and results done throughout ODE. Some activities are presented by description due to value and importance, while others are listed.

### Meetings and events

#### Overall

- **Visit to the EU Commission and EU Parliament Jan. 22, 2018**

The moment we handed the Red Book with results of the project to the European Commission was the great dissemination moment that we worked towards for a whole year. Baudouin Baudru, a key staff member from Marianne Thyssen, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, officially received the document and the Red Suitcase, symbol of the project. He listened attentively to the youngsters, who could each present their own international seminar and the respective main findings. In addition, EU Parliament Member Tom Vandenkendelaere and EU Parliament Member Jeppe Kofod were involved in the project and its dissemination, for instance by meeting the youngsters and posting pictures and messages about the project on their Facebook pages. Next, Flemish Minister of Culture and Youth went into an in-depth interview with the youngsters about youth policy and the ODE-project.
- **Tools Conference Nov. 29-30, 2017 in Herning**

As a vital part of the project dissemination Herning Libraries arranged *Tools Conference - Rethinking Culture, Learning and Methodologies Nov. 29-30 2017* together with Central Denmark EU Office and in cooperation with the regional Erasmus+ projects Swinging Europe and Kulturskolen Skanderborg. The aim was to present the results in ODE and encourage institutions and organizations to work internationally and by advantage making use of possibilities in Erasmus+ and other EU programs. The conference provided knowledge and tools to support libraries and cultural institutions with drifting projects in cooperation with other countries in the EU. At the same time, the conference was a framework for future projects and partnerships, as it invited interested and curious people to share ideas, needs, proposals for future projects and seeking partners. All project ODE partners (including young participants) were present and contributed as speakers and dialogue partners, hereby showing the tools developed in ODE and sharing experienced methodologies. In addition, the conference was positively by the public and encouraged wider participation in this Erasmus+. Invitation and program: (<https://centralbibliotek.dk/sites/default/files/dokumenter/Tools%20brochure%2029-30.11.17.pdf>). The invitation was distributed on many platforms: social media like Facebook and LinkedIn and organizational websites. Likewise, Central Denmark EU Office distributed the invitation in the European network of Cultural Managers.

#### Poland

- December 11, 2017- official meeting for managers of 30 branches of Library in Gdańsk. Paweł Braun explained the main task of the program.
- October 10, 2017- Book Fair in Krakow- presentation of the project

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## Belgium

- One school was particularly interested in the project so one of the project managers went there for an extra meeting on the project, to talk about the aims of Our Democratic Europe for the completely international team and directors of the school.
- ARhus gave the project some extra local/regional visibility by giving the participating youngsters the opportunity to select a good cause/valuable project to donate money to. The profit of the annual book sale of ARhus was consequently donated to this cause, giving the youngsters some extra responsibility and giving the project some extra attention.
- For the third “birthday” of ARhus, a day of festivities was organized on the same day as one of the regional seminars, again adding to the dissemination goals of the ODE-project. Youngsters were invited to the public lecture on urban governance and got the opportunity to ask a question to the professor holding the public lecture, thus bringing the project into the spotlight.
- In order to gain more insight into Erasmus+ and making the ODE-project known to the Belgian national agency, one of the project managers attended an info session on international youth work.

## Denmark:

- **Cultural Summit 2017 Aug. 24-26, 2017 in Nykøbing Mors**  
In preparation of the International Seminar in Middelburg (NL), the second Regional Seminar in Denmark provided a workshop on the subject “Climate change & Future Sustainability” based on a business case for event management. The case was built around the festival “The Cultural Summit 2017”. The task forces were asked to co-create events within the subtopics: *Energy, Mobility, Food and DIY* – to be included in the program as youngster’s contribution to the democratic dialogue. The workshop resulted in four prototypes for events aimed at The Cultural Summit 2017 (Kulturmødet Mors 2017): Denmark’s new stage for discussing arts and culture. An annual festival in the end of August containing almost 80 dialogues and about 300 experiences of all kinds of arts: performing arts, music, film, literature, architecture and visual arts. During the Cultural Summit a number of dialogues among knowledgeable and visionary people from within the Danish spheres of art, culture, business and politics take place. The debates are moved forward by people from the Danish cultural and artistic life, politicians, business people and others, who on a daily basis keep the cultural debate alive – but the audience (around 20.000 visitors) is also encouraged to involve themselves in the debates during the 48 concentrated hours. The main topic in 2017 was “To open up”. The Danish ODE Task Forces were expected to contribute to the program with an event or exhibition showing their outcome from the project. The event had to include one or more subtopics (Climate change and sustainable future) and was supposed to facilitate a dialogue between youngsters and decision makers. The budget was 2.000 EURO. The seminar produced four prototypes (Bicycle for a cup of coffee, Exchange and change your clothes, Recycle old furniture, Cook with your waste) and one of were chosen to bring to life: Cook with your waste.

The ODE participation at the Cultural Summit 2017 was a success with lots of people visiting the exhibition and the opportunity to promote the project as well as the effort on food waste and sustainable living. During the preparation, the youngster visited several super market in the city on Nykøbing Mors and made agreements on delivering food for the event. During the event, professional cooks supported the youngster in making dishes and serving food for the audience. The youngsters were dressed as cooks and waiters. One of the days, two participating cooks were serving insects supporting the youngster’s promotion of alternatives to eating conventional meat.

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## Other meetings and events

- **CDEU 10 years anniversary Skanderborg Nov. 3, 2017:** Participation and promoting Tools Conference
- **CDEU Erasmus+ project workshop Herring Dec. 14, 2017:** Presentation of ODE results
- **Library Manager Meeting Central Denmark April 2017:** Presentation of ODE and promoting Tools Conference
- **CDEU Erasmus+ project workshop Viborg Mar. 8, 2018:** Presentation of ODE results

## Public websites

*Project and organizational websites*

### Denmark:

<https://www.herningbib.dk/Our%20democratic%20Europe>

### Belgium:

<http://www.arhus.be/kenniscentrum/internationaleprojecten/democratic-europe/>

<http://idrops.org/en/project/our-democratic-europe/>

## Mentions

### Denmark:

- Bibliotekernes Projektbank: <http://www.projektbank.dk/our-democratic-europe>
- Viborg: press coverage of project support: <http://www.minbyviborg.dk/tag/our-democratic-europe/>
- Project presentation: [https://issuu.com/mikkelhartvighaaning/docs/ode\\_one\\_page](https://issuu.com/mikkelhartvighaaning/docs/ode_one_page)

### Poland

- Project presentation: <http://mutuus.eu/index.php/publikacje/edukacja/69-our-democratic-europe-en>

## Social media

*Facebook*

- **Common Facebook Group:**  
Our Democratic Europe: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1798162187111065/>
- **Partner Facebook Groups (national):**  
Denmark: Our Democratic Europe DK: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1563950703619547/>  
Belgium: Our Democratic Europe: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1825566670997794/>  
Netherlands: ODE Middelburg: <https://www.facebook.com/ODEmiddelburg/>  
Poland: Our Democratic Europe Gdansk: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1093076557457395/>

*Others:*

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- Genvej til Europa (Central Denmark EU Office):  
<https://www.facebook.com/genvejtileuropa/photos/a.1867444976819911.1073741828.1867429056821503/1872568952974180/?type=3>

#### YouTube/videos

##### **Denmark**

- Country presentation – contribution from participant from Horsens - 1<sup>st</sup> International seminar Gdansk:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ksi9KwTVXrs>
- Evaluation on participation at the 1<sup>st</sup> International Seminar Gdansk:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7lpdNrKplbk>
- Country presentation 2<sup>nd</sup> International Seminar Middelburg:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xBpitg6NIE0>

##### **Poland**

- Reportage from the 1<sup>st</sup> International seminar Gdansk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NI1AVNMqdV4>
- Reportage from the 1<sup>st</sup> International seminar Gdansk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2fKrTG9DoOY>

##### **Netherlands**

- Introducing the Dutch Task Force for the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Seminar Middelburg:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IhIVMOVmDec>
- Reportage from the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Seminar Middelburg:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkGPL8I3OqM>
- Reportage from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Seminar Middelburg 22<sup>th</sup> of April 2017:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5F2-\\_atgc78](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5F2-_atgc78)
- Reportage from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regional Seminar Middelburg 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2017:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5qaOa9TwtPM>

##### **Belgium:**

- Promotion video concerning European Day May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMuThWI2ML8>
- Movie made during regional seminar in preparation for the international seminar in Middelburg on climate, for “De Klimaatzaak”: <https://www.facebook.com/ARhus.Roeselare/videos/1458881107507191>
- Movie about leadership: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZxIwNHhvLA4>
- After movie 4<sup>th</sup> international seminar: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aA0Cp2\\_-luQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aA0Cp2_-luQ)
- After movie 4<sup>th</sup> international seminar – short version: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AacFaDIKack>

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**Meetings and visits to key stakeholders etc. ; dedicated discussion opportunities such as information sessions, workshops, (online) seminars, training courses, exhibitions, demonstrations, or peer reviews;**

**Denmark:**

- Invitation for the 4<sup>th</sup> Regional Seminar Randers: [https://issuu.com/mikkelhartvighaaning/docs/invitation\\_ode](https://issuu.com/mikkelhartvighaaning/docs/invitation_ode)

**Targeted written material such as reports, articles in specialized press, newsletters, press releases, leaflets or brochures;**

- We developed a Toolkit, sharing the ins and outs of this youth participation project, aiming at library project managers, teachers and youth workers. The goal is for more libraries in the Netherlands and other European countries to have a second ODE project. Another library should be able to get a good idea of the project and find inspiration how to organize projects improve the format based on our experience.

**Press and media**

**Denmark:**

- Reportage in the local newspaper in Holstebro of local youngsters participation in the 1<sup>st</sup> International Seminar Gdansk: <https://ugeavisen.dk/holstebroonsdag/Politik-paa-polsk/artikel/275820>
- Reportage from the Danish Task Force participation in the 1<sup>st</sup> International Seminar in Gdansk: <https://www.aoh.dk/artikel/unges-demokrati-drmme-fik-vinger>
- Publicity for the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Seminar in Denmark: <http://herningnyt.dk/2017/11/10/unge-europaeere-indtager-biblioteket/>

**Poland:**

- EYIA Interview with Project Manager Mikkel Hartvig Haaning: <http://ourdemocratieurope.vilogdansk.eu/index.php/media/text-en/5-we-have-to-team-up-and-focus-on-the-cooperation-between-countries-interview-with-mikkel-hartvig-haaning>
- EYIA Interview: <http://www.vilogdansk.pl/index.php/homepage/erasmus/207-radio-our-democratic-europe-wywiad-2>
- EYIA Interview with Yves Russel: <http://www.vilogdansk.pl/index.php/homepage/erasmus/206-radio-our-democratic-europe-wywiad-1>  
EYIA Interview with Krzysztofem Adamskim: <http://www.vilogdansk.pl/index.php/homepage/erasmus/208-radio-our-democratic-europe-wywiad-3>
- EYIA Interview with Agnieszka Pomaska: <http://www.vilogdansk.pl/index.php/homepage/erasmus/209-radio-our-democratic-europe-wywiad-4-agnieszka-pomaska>
- EYIA Interview: <http://www.vilogdansk.pl/index.php/homepage/erasmus/211-radio-our-democratic-europe-wywiad-6>
- First regional seminar reportage: [http://lo7gda.pl/erasmus\\_our\\_democratic\\_europe%E2%80%9D\\_w\\_vii\\_liceum\\_ogolnoksztalcacym](http://lo7gda.pl/erasmus_our_democratic_europe%E2%80%9D_w_vii_liceum_ogolnoksztalcacym)
- Information about project <http://mutuus.eu/index.php/publikacje/edukacja/69-our-democratic-europe-en>

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- First international seminar report <http://www.akademickieliceum.eu/wymiana-mlodziezy-w-ramach-programu-erasmus/>
  - Information about first international seminar [http://www.ecs.gda.pl/title,OUR\\_DEMOCRATIC\\_EUROPE\\_%7C\\_Erasmus+,pid,9,oid,61,cid,652,type,timeline.html](http://www.ecs.gda.pl/title,OUR_DEMOCRATIC_EUROPE_%7C_Erasmus+,pid,9,oid,61,cid,652,type,timeline.html)
  - Information about first international seminar <http://www.pomaska.pl/26683/warsztaty-our-democratic-europe-w-gdansku.html>
  - Second regional seminar reportage <http://www.akademickieliceum.eu/ii-seminarium-regionalne/>

## BELGIUM

Newspaper articles:

- Krant van West-Vlaanderen/De Weekbode Izegem, Vr. 18 Nov. 2016, Pagina 26
- Het Laatste Nieuws/Mandelstreek, Ma. 21 Nov. 2016, Pagina 13
- Krant van West-Vlaanderen/Roeselare, Vr. 27 Jan. 2017, Pagina 17
- Krant van West-Vlaanderen/West, Vr. 24 Nov. 2017, Pagina 32

Online article:

- <http://kw.knack.be/west-vlaanderen/nieuws/onderwijs-en-jeugd/roeselaarse-jongeren-denken-na-over-de-toekomst-van-europa/article-normal-296261.html>

Press releases:

- [22<sup>nd</sup> of January 2017 about the start of the project](#)
- [23<sup>rd</sup> of January 2018 about fourth international seminar](#)

**Audiovisual media and products such as radio, TV, YouTube, Flickr, video clips, podcasts or apps;  
Version 1.0: 2017 Uncontrolled when printed**

### Public events

See Meeting and events

### Project branding and logos

To secure visibility and publicity for the project, ODE made use of its own logo inspired by the idea of creating a Red Book for the EU Commission containing project results. The logo illustrates a Red Suitcase containing the mental luggage and processes carried out during the project. It is used in many ways as part of the branding: in printed materials, on websites and social media, digital as vignette in movies, emails, hand-outs, merchandise etc.

Additionally, we have constantly made use of the Erasmus+ logo to provide proper publicity to inform the public of the EU's financial support. Similarly, the individual partner's countries have made use of logos from national and local sponsors where necessary.

Moreover the project were promoted by merchandise like key hangers and key chains, roll up banners, aprons etc.

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Finally we have made use of a real red suitcase which has been brought physically to all international seminars as an active part of the opening program – as a ceremonial gesture for the hosting country and setting the scene for the participants: This is what it is all about: creating content for the Red Book by travelling together.

### Existing contacts and networks.

Central Denmark EU Office is a central partner in the project by offering support for the application and planning. Likewise, the project manager is a board member of an Erasmus+ network in Denmark facilitated by CDEO and has contributed to the dissemination of the project on several occasions thanks to this contact. Furthermore, partner project managers have been using CDEO's office in Brussels three times as a central meeting place for planning and evaluation. Finally, the project cooperated with CDEO on Tools Conference Nov. 29.-30, 2017, including associated Erasmus+ partners as Swinging Europe, Kulturskolen Skanderborg, Kulturprinsen, Styrelsen for Børn og Undervisning (Denmark).

Other partners and contacts within the project are:

### POLAND

- **European Solidarity Centre**
- **Schools:** VII Liceum Ogólnokształcące in Gdańsk, Akademyckie Liceum Ogólnokształcące „Lingwista”, Zespół Szkół Ogólnokształcących nr 6 in Gdańsk oraz III Liceum Ogólnokształcące in Gdynia;
- **Pomeranian Technology Park, Inkubator Starter in Gdańsk, Polish Red Cross**

### DENMARK

- **Holstebro:** Holstebro Gymnasium (1.-2. G Samfundsfag), Holstebro Gymnasium (Medielinje): Producing promotion movie, VIA University College, Holstebro: Facilitating theater event (De Man In Europe), Region Midt (Central Denmark Region), Holstebro Municipality, Udvikling og Erhvervsafdelingen Lucas De Man: Theater play and dialogue on De Man In Europe
- **Herning:** Emilie Celine Ragouet, Jacob Rasmussen: Event Coordinator, Herning Municipality Hernings Ungdomsskole: Recruitment of participants and consulting, Supermarkets: Føtex and Bilka – Dansk Supermarked Group
- **Horsens:** Horsens Byskole, Østerhåb Skole Local super markets: REMA 1000, FAKTA: Sponsors – food waste events
- **Randers:** Randers Produktionskole, SFU Randers: Recruitment of participants, Finderiet: Facilitating the 4<sup>th</sup> Regional Seminar, Unge for Ligeværd
- **The Cultural Summit:** The Cultural Summit, organizer and project management. Demokratistafetten – Aarhus 2017 European Capital of Culture project in cooperation between libraries in Central Denmark  
**International Seminars:** Slagteriet, Kulturdivisionen, Animation Workshop Viborg, Den Jyske Opera and Young Opera Leeds, LEGO House, DOKK I Aarhus Bibliotekerne, Aarhus - 2017 European Capital of Culture

### BELGIUM

- BRoeRe-libraries: regional partnership with other libraries, the call for participants was also spread via their communication channels
- For funding: province of West-Flanders
- !DROPS: organization specialized in social innovation, hired by ARhus to introduce innovative methodologies when dealing with the youngsters
- Exposure: communication agency specialized in political marketing and communication, involved for marketing purposes of the project and training of the youngsters
- Schools: schools that have cooperated by letting youngsters participate in the project are:

- 
- Barnum
  - Burgerschool
  - VTI Roeselare
  - Heilige Kindsheid Ardoioe
  - Prizma Izegem
  - KA Waregem
  - KAI Brugge
  - Sint-Jozefsinstituut Torhout
  - Sint-Janscollege Poperinge
  - International Belgian seminar:
    - Stad Roeselare (vrijetijds punt, TRAX), Legends of Bruges, Mandelcar, European Commission, European Parliament, Office of Tom Vandenkendelaere, Het Sacrament, Ma Kwizien, Hummus The Original, Paolo Meyvis, Dieter Bussche

# PROJECT EVALUATION

Description of methods for evaluation is made earlier in this report. However, in order to measure the level of success and reaching the objectives, the project made use of following evaluation methods:

- Gdansk: In-class evaluation with participants at the end of the meeting
- Middelburg: On-line Questionnaire delivered to the participants after the meeting
- Herning: Personal interviews recorded on video
- Roeselare: In-class evaluation with participants at the end of the meeting
- Observing: Observing processes and outcomes to document behavior and gather information
- Taking notes: Noting participants comments
- Video: participants produced videos evaluating activities
- Project manager – evaluation meetings after and before each international seminar (Project Management Tasks – 4 plan meetings (Aug 2016, Nov 2016, Mar 2017, Sep 2017)
- Ending evaluations in partner countries January 2018

The result of the overall evaluation of ODE is made by ranking important themes and aspects chosen in cooperation with project managers and young participants at the final seminar in Belgium:

OVERALL RATING	++	+	-	--
<b>4 themes</b>	11	24	0	0
<b>Hosting families</b>	28	7	0	0
<b>National seminars</b>	3	28	4	0
<b>Balance Free time and work</b>	5	11	18	1
<b>Politicians/Policy makers</b>	3	19	8	3
<b>Logistics</b>	4	10	13	6
<b>Activities</b>	8	13	9	0
<b>Learning process</b>	20	14	0	0

## 4 Topics (Europe 2020 Strategy) 9/10

GOOD

Daily Topics

Relevant and important topics

The topics were clear

BAD

Sometimes a little bit boring

Not enough choice about the topics

RECOMMENDATIONS

More choice on topics & themes

More active discussions, just like this rating activity

Bigger groups for discussions, debate groups

## Hosting families 7/10

GOOD

Better view of culture

Getting to know new people

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Good organisations - Before: questions about hobbies, .. + houses not far away  
Dinner and lunch together

**BAD**

Some youngsters aren't interested

Better division of Languages & countries

No switching **NEVER**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

No switching

Better matching/description of the people

Longer stay

No People who only say 'I don't know'

### **National Seminars 7/10**

**GOOD**

We learned a lot

Some good speakers

Good efforts from the mentors

Good organisation

Everything was provided

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Smaller groups

Other way to talk about topic f.ex. debate not always world cafe

Actions during national seminars → f.ex. field work, volunteering, ...

Shorter speeches

### **Balance Free Time and work 7,5/10**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

It would be better if we could have some breaks in between and not always after 'work-blocks'

We want to see the country we're visiting

Different locations

Rest-day after traveling a night

Dinner together

### **Politicians /Policy makers 3/10**

**GOOD**

Thank you for coming to the seminars

Thanks for sharing your knowledge (facts)

Thank you for answering our questions

**BAD**

We believe that politicians change our point of view and that's not good because Europe wants to know what the youngsters think

The speeches were too long sometimes

NOTE: Many youngsters did appreciate the input of politicians!

### **How much did we learn? 5/10**

**SUGGESTIONS**

A specialist in the field we are debating should give a lecture about the topic before the debates

More controversial topics, provoke debate and disagreement

Bigger emphasis on doing things in multi-national groups

Age gap between youngsters (15 – 19) should be smaller

### **Activities 6/10**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Take the starting hour more into consideration  when groups arrive late or have to travel the night

Oxford-debate-like experience: make a conflict (grouping people not by country)

Divide more work & free time

Maybe delete breaks and finish work faster and all the drinks & snacks should be available all the time

Energizer/teambuilding  mix in the countries

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Give advise to hosts about free time (for the evenings)  
Renting a bus for sight seeing

**Logistics 6/10**

**GOOD**

Intersting history and places

Mostly good food

Great with the hosting idea

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Less sandwiches

Eating at the host-families some of the days

Make the youngsters from host-country help decide what to see

Getting the national dish from the country we visit

*This is the summarized outcome of what the youngsters said when we evaluated during the project:*

What were the nice things about this project?

- 1) meet other young people;
- 2) approach socially relevant themes in an in-depth manner (climate, sustainability, innovation);
- 3) motivated young people;
- 4) do it yourself;
- 5) provide young people with the opportunity to participate in a democratic way.

Which points of interest can you mention?

- 1) a maximum group size of approximately 15 young people
- 2) deal honestly with who is allowed to go abroad
- 3) really do things yourself
- 4) chatting with people at home is good, you do not necessarily have to go out when you are in a host family

*The biggest compliment we received as project leader was that the youngsters said they learned more in a couple of days in the project, than in a whole year at school! Further quotes from participant can be found on Facebook consisting of several films uploaded during the project.*

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# TO TRAVEL IS TO LIVE

## YOUTH RECOMMENDATIONS

Intercultural exchange between European youngsters and the structured dialogue with decision makers are vital instruments within the framework of ODE to involve young people in the democratic processes and decision-making. By using these tools, the project presents a concrete and useful outcome. This outcome primarily is based on the results achieved by the four international seminars where youth representatives together with decision makers from partner countries have gathered to discuss and co-create solutions on “Europe 2020 Strategy” aiming at the engagement, enhancement and empowerment of young people with regard to inclusion, participation and influence in/on the democratic life in Europe.

The work has turned into a Red Book containing recommendations and approaches on future perspectives concerning four topics from Europe 2020 Strategy. However, instead of publishing a traditional paper, the project presents the results in the framework of a suitcase – a red suitcase.

The Red Suitcase (project logo) symbolizes the project on many levels. Besides collecting the outcome of the project, the suitcase symbolizes the journey the youngsters are taking as participants, as individuals and as team, throughout the project. A journey where the luggage is expanding with new thoughts, ideas, actions, skills and friendships.

*The symbol shows that you may have to travel to the outside world to explore*

On a journey, you will have to pack something to take with you, maybe to share with new friends – and upon return your baggage will be different – new items will be added, and things you brought with you may be left behind.

.. As the famous Danish authors H.C. Andersen express writes:

***To move, to breathe, to fly, to float,  
To gain all while you give,  
To roam the roads of lands remote,  
To travel is to live.”***

*(H.C. Andersen, The Fairy Tale of My Life: An Autobiography)*



**The recommendations on the topic Employment and Education were co-created at the 1st International ODE Seminar Gdansk, Poland, February 4-7, 2017**

The outcome was a result of story telling by travelling in time. Tools like Meditation on Future Life & Society combined with use of the back casting method to time travel and explore future environments. Placing yourself in the goal and experience the success and impact before start travelling and getting to action is effect full in designing the steps to get to the destination. First the youngster created the future vision on topic (2030) and worked backwards to present time to co-create recommendations for the ODE target groups: Decision Makers (addressed for EU), fellow youngsters and libraries.

**Group 1**

**Vision 2030**

- Equality (skin colour, LGBT, immigrants, gender)
- Critical people – through good education
- Less nationalistic, more global
- Progressive governments
- Don't judge people from their backgrounds (equal chances for education)
- Trust each other – less fear
- Less religious influence

**Recommendations**

<b>EU</b>	<b>Youngsters</b>	<b>Library</b>
Gay marriage should be legal – everywhere in Europe (LGBT)	We want to postpone the decision about our future careers	More (international) projects
Youngsters have to learn at school about adult life (paying taxes, healthcare and insurance)	Raising more awareness, especially in school and at home, for disabilities bullying and all kinds of differences	Free wifi in every library so people come to it (for example for educational reasons)
Everyone should get the chance to get at to know different jobs in your early puberty		The less wealthy people who have a talent could go here and practice their talent for free
A general minimum wage in Europe	Active in politics (aware of problems)	
More exchange programs and more transparent		More exchange programs and more transparent

**Group 2**

**Vision 2030**

- High quality of language education in every country
- Ability to get certificates at school
- LGBT is accepted
- All degree in Europe are equal – every job should be accepted
- World peace
- Good balance between knowledge and skills
- Students have to chose their school direction later than today
- Start earlier with a 2<sup>nd</sup> language

- Dialogue between youngsters and decision makers – many international or national projects, meetings
- A more serious influence from youngsters in national problems
- A wide range of extracurricular activities, creative tasks, trips, students exchange projects
- More responsibility on the student
- No more discrimination, stay open minded and free
- Media supports education (subtitles for TV programs)
- Flexible workhours
- Equal bathrooms in public spaces
- Equal possibilities for students in Europe
- Freedom of speech all over the world
- Appropriate technology supporting business – the hardest, less paid jobs are done by machines, people just control them

### Recommendations

EU	Youngsters	Library
Stronger collaboration and support	Think less about yourself, be more open, take responsibility for your actions, connect with people	Organize events like: debates, meetings with interesting people
More equal rules and regulations	Learn languages at a young age	Take part in international programs
The same value of university degrees from different countries universities, similar job policy	Take part in projects, student exchange	Collaborate with institutions abroad: exchange programs for students
Teenage European Parliament/council	Don't be afraid to show your opinion	Organize extracurricular activities, classes for students: language courses, subjects courses, music classes
European school system: the same structure, years of schooling, donations (so as not only students in Denmark will have Grants)	Collaborate, talk and dispute with others	Study time
High level of language education from young age	Don't wait for the future to come – create it	Meeting between students: University students meet highschool students (advice, stories about how studying their subject is like)
Free universities (lower fees)	Do creative thinking – find things you enjoy	
The same possibilities for EU citizen to find a job in different countries	Be more involved in what is happening around you, read, listen, explore	
Equal mother-leave	Ask for help, ask questions, learn from others, respect others	
Investing in a youth sector of economy: IT, technology, social media	Travel	
More information about European history at school (European level of history)	Stop complaining – start doing!	
EU media (streaming): TV channel which will provide common	Believe in yourself and others	

knowledge about what is happening right now and can make the sense of unity		
Exchanges in every school	Take risk	
	Be positive	
	Find your own path	

### Group 3

#### Vision 2030

- World wide language
- More integrated EU
- Elastic working hours
- More freedom and less judging
- Less unemployment rate
- Global acceptance of sexuality and gender
- Higher educated people

#### Recommendations

<b>EU</b>	<b>Youngsters</b>	<b>Library</b>
More socially, engaging projects	Free 1 month interrail ticket for every 18-years old EU Citizen	Cafés in libraries attract people
Common curriculum in school, supplemented by national level curriculum	More accessible extra courses	Take students to library
Possibility to go to boarding school abroad	Political groups	More books in other languages
	More education about politics	Tutoring

### Group 4

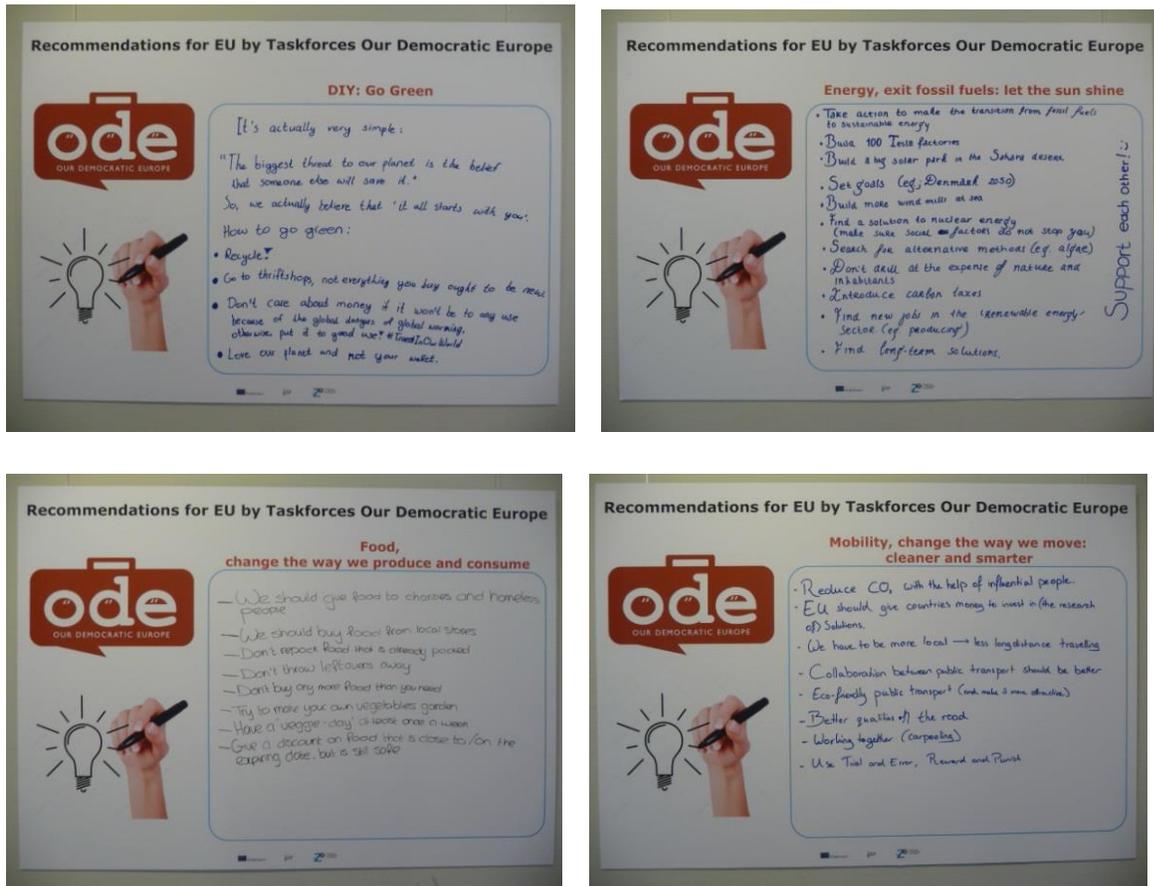
#### Vision 2030

- No Judging
- Free choice of gender roles
- Enabling the choice
- Human right in every country
- Open minded society
- Fighting air pollution and global warming
- Open borders – freedom of movement
- 1) country manage their major issues 2) Help is given to countries in need (fairness)
- Gap between rich and poor is closing
- Working for society rather than for money (people still get paid, but is not the focus)
- Flexibility, balance, equality
- Healthier society leads to more general knowledge leads to more understanding leads to respect

## Recommendations

<b>EU</b>	<b>Youngsters</b>	<b>Library</b>
Different system of wages for politicians (a base wage + bonuses for achievements)	Raised awareness of the EU Parliament (workshop, presentations, projects etc.)	Changed image
Open borders and free trade	Voluntary work for youngsters (raised awareness of possible options)	More adjusted to young people's needs
Higher education, diplomas should be free and be respected	Participation in solving current issues (raising awareness)	More promotion
Unified educational system	Fighting Taboos	New technologies vs stereotypical image of libraries
Evolution rather than revolution (stabilization, experiments, no rapid changes)	Be more responsible about you career choices, gather information yourself, don't wait for people to tell you what to do	Engage more (in social, political and economic issues)
Police should focus on bigger issues rather than petty crime	Your actions influence your future	Should include: places to talk, board games, music instruments, places to listen to music, playgrounds for kids (parents can relax)
Strengthening the European Union through collaboration (e.g. Unified policy against terrorism)		
Work centers for immigrants (languages/education)		
Mediations from UN to solve the problem in the Middle East and stop immigrant crisis		
Spread of immigrants through the country		
Introducing a unified EU system of sexual education (in middle school, professional approach, raising self-awareness, focusing in physical health and family training among other things)		
Unified policy against corruption and consisting of providing legal framework and rights, financial information – policies against racism in the workplace		

The recommendations on the topic **Climate change and sustainability** were co-created at the **2nd International ODE Seminar in Middelburg, Netherlands** May 18-21, 2017



The recommendations on the topic **Innovation** were co-created at the **3rd International ODE Seminar in Herning, Denmark** November 11-14, 2017

The outcome of the seminar is expressed in short movies created on a workshop based on Design Thinking as method and support by professionals from the Animation Workshop Viborg. Each movie express a group of youngsters work and recommendations on the topic Innovation addressed to decision makers. Throughout the workshop, the groups presented and shared individual opinions on the topic and on this basis created a common challenge. This challenge was discussed with the participating decision makers using customer interview as methods. The outcome of the dialogue was used to formulate a storyboard with build in recommendations. The movies were presented at the end of the seminar for decions makers with feedback to the youngsters on the products and effort.

**Group 1: Supporting creativity in school system**

How can we prepare youngsters for the future?

The education system need to support developing creative skills even more and in new ways:

Facts no. 1: Humans only use 1,5 pct. for their creativity. Fact no. 2: Believe in yourself to be more creative. Fact no. 3: A new school subject could be creativity aiming children to become more creative.

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### **Group 2: Fighting fast fashion culture**

Fast fashion makes you crazy and might lead to stress, anxiety, claustrophobia, loneliness  
Wearing clothing 50 times instead of 5 (fast fashion) reduces carbon emission by 400 pct. Per item,  
Fast fashion is not free, somewhere someone is paying. It could be you.

### **Group 3: Supporting creativity and innovation in school system**

Creativity is thinking new things. Innovation is doing new things.

### **Group 4: Understanding technology and creating public facilities to engage people in culture and real life**

Simple things like reading a book has become a problem in our society because of social media, which leads to distraction, and as a result, there is a huge innovation gap in the problem of depression of young people.

The movie address the question: When was the last time you left your home without your phone? The movie illustrates, that it is hard to tell, most of us is bringing our phone with us constantly.

One of the solutions could be creating facilities for people in all ages to meet and engage in culture.

For instance, libraries could be developed to such a place – as a public living room with free access. Another solution is creating an app, which shut down your phone when you are together with your friends and socialize.

Otherwise create social animators who help local communities to work with achieving a common goal – they offer legal advice and help obtaining funding from the government.

The point is not to demonize the technology but to understand all the advantages and disadvantage that it brings.

We should work together on engage people in culture and art to create happier societies.

### **Group 5: Investment in innovation on global challenges and youth engagement**

Climate change is something everyone has heard of. It is a fact the climate is changing and thanks to human. The situation will cause problems in the future – we have to act now. Let young people work with professional scientists. Suggestions for future solutions could be for instance a smog cleaner (smog cleaning tower) – reducing smog in cities and cleaning the air.

### **Group 6: Supporting real life matters and less cyber living**

Be aware of the risk that technology changes the focus on real life matters.

### **Group 7: Supporting ideamaking and youth creativity**

One single message in a bottle can be spread to thousands of stories, people and places.

### **Group 8: Investement in health care innovation**

Build up as story about the famous Dutch painter Vincent van Gogh get's a new ear by help of a 3D printer, the movie express how we by advantage can use technology to improve health care.

### **Group 9: Using the library to create European coherence**

The movie address the question: How can we support European coherence when it comes to supporting democracy, citizenship, society development? A recommendation is strengthening the possibilities for using the library as framework to handle the challenge. Like we do in the project ODE.

### **The recommendations on the topic Poverty and Social Exclusion were co-created at the 4th International ODE Seminar in Roeselare, Belgium January 20-23, 2018**

On the first day, the participating youngsters and accompanying decision makers started by giving insights, sharing knowledge and exchanging ideas on national conditions. First, by showing pre-made movies from each country presenting the delegated participants and personal reflections on the topic. Afterwards by giving country presentations. Before dinner, the participants interacted in a gameplay illustrating differences between poor and

rich by been giving envelopes containing different amounts of money to be used for buying seats and dishes at dinner tables of various prices and level of exclusiveness. On the second day, youngsters from the Belgian ODE Task Force invited everyone for a world café (or knowledge café). The world café was used as conversational and co-creating process during the seminar, in which groups of youngsters discussed four subtopics on the topic at several tables. The conclusions were presented at the end of the workshop. Presented as recommendations for EU, youngsters and libraries (addressed for the ODE objectives).

<b>Group: 1</b>		
<b>Sub topic: Refugees</b>		
<b>Recommendations</b>		
<b>EU</b>	<b>Youngsters</b>	<b>Libraries</b>
Provide better conditions for refugees in Europe. Every country should accept refugees  Refugees should be spread across Europe by appointing and not by choosing themselves. On national levels refugees should be spread between cities to avoid centralizing.  Stimulate psych. help to stop trauma  Stop ghetto's, live in mixed neighborhood  Offices to help to find jobs, anonymous solicitation  Don't look at refugees as numbers  Don't evict them after five years  Language is important  Prepare more easy jobs for people who don't know the language  Education: learn about refugees, other cultures and religions – refugees vice versa  Signs (like in shops) should be in an international language  Check if refugees behave well, if not be strict  Burka should be illegal	Should organize activities for refugee youngsters and national youngsters    Let them integrate in normal sport clubs and youth movements	Organize activities between refugees and local i.e.g. cooking for each other    Help to learn the language by book recommendations
<b>Group: 2</b>		
<b>Sub topic: Social exclusion and education</b>		
<b>Recommendations</b>		

<b>EU</b>	<b>Youngsters</b>	<b>Libraries</b>
<p>Local government should receive extra money from EU for awareness campaigns</p> <p>Open borders for EU students and support exchange programs and make them less expensive</p> <p>Stimulate similar school system in EU to secure you are not delayed in your educational program as well as securing the same level and quality of your education</p>	<p>Create group feeling in school – focus on team building, bounding activities in class like fundraisers, bullying is not OK</p> <p>Teachers should invite for dialogue between the one being bullied and the one who does and also include parents for a constructive conversation</p>	<p>Create a chill zone in the library – everyone is welcome if they behave properly – not only for studying</p> <p>Organize group studying in the library with the help of teachers and specialists on topics</p> <p>Establish partnerships with schools</p>
<b>Group: 3</b>		
<b>Sub topic: Racism and Discrimination</b>		
<b>Recommendations</b>		
<b>EU</b>	<b>Youngsters</b>	<b>Libraries</b>
<p>Organize more campaigns to raise awareness and stimulate equality</p> <p>Prioritize international youth projects and cultural exchange i.e.g. like ODE</p> <p>Lay pressure on the media to be more positive in the approach on discrimination – don't blow negative things up</p>	<p>Stand up for each other</p> <p>Let go of old thinking – form your own opinion and do not take over others</p> <p>One weekly hour at school should be spend on talking about incidents in recent news</p>	<p>Organize exhibitions about other cultures</p> <p>Promote books about equality</p> <p>Arrange meetings to inform and to change views</p> <p>Let refugees tell their story at the library</p>
<b>Group: 4</b>		
<b>Sub topic: Fighting poverty</b>		
<b>Recommendations</b>		
<b>EU</b>	<b>Youngsters</b>	<b>Libraries</b>
<p>More control on how people spend their money</p> <p>Support poor people by giving special prices (invisible)– variable price setting after financial possibilities</p> <p>Support poor people to let their children take part in more social activities by reducing the prices</p>	<p>One weekly hour at school about how to spend money</p> <p>Support recycling and give old stuff to poor people</p>	<p>Host meetings to discuss money spending with others</p> <p>Encourage people to start with an easy job – more confidence to get a real job</p>

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# FUTURE PLANS AND SUGGESTIONS

The project partners have already started the planning of a new project building upon the experiences from ODE.

The dialogue was initiated at the ODE Tools Conference Nov. 29-30, 2017 in Herning. The partners were positive, and decided to continue the discussion at the fourth international seminar Jan. 20-23, 2018 in Roeselare, Belgium. Afterwards, the project partners decided to meet in Brussels in February 2018 to qualify the project plans by evaluating Our Democratic Europe and making use of results and experiences.

The new project is intended to be in the form of a strategic partnership with a more targeted focus upon enhancing the democratic competences amongst youngsters with special needs.

The project partners in ODE plan the new project together, but they are also using their national networks and recommending each other for other kinds of cross-country partnerships and projects.





**- We need to rethink the future and connect  
with our citizens – starting with youth**

Our Democratic Europe is an Erasmus+ funded project (2016-2018) initiated by libraries in Poland (Gdansk), Belgium (Roeselare), the Netherlands (Middelburg) and Denmark (Herning) in their concern about democracy in Europe upon decades of external and internal changes.

This final report describes the results of the partner's collaborative and intercultural teamwork in empowering young people to democratic participation at local and international levels.