

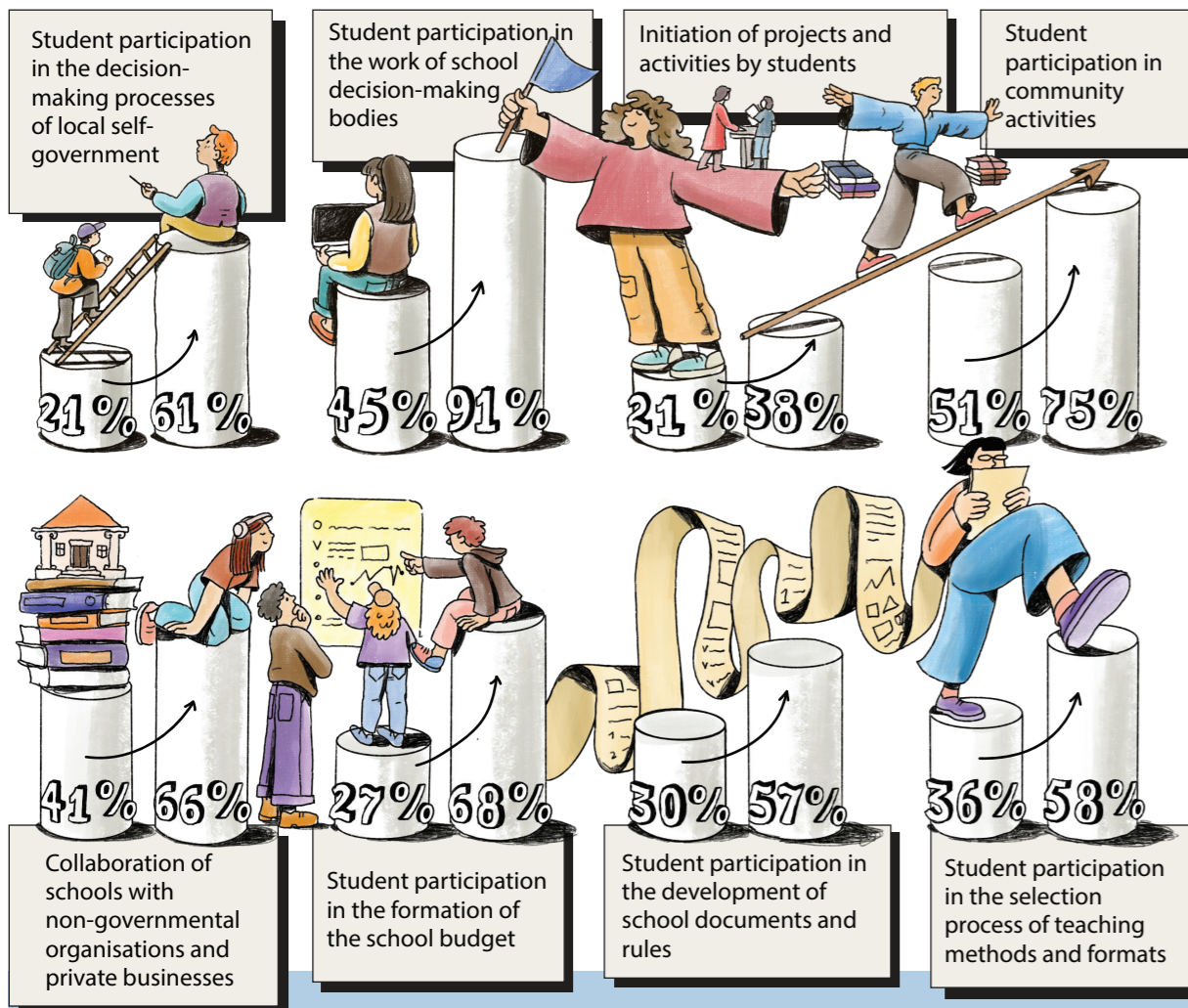
## DEMOCRACY STARTS IN SCHOOLS - ENGAGING SCHOOL CHILDREN IN DECISION MAKING PROCESSES IN SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

In a democratic and strong society, an individual defines their own place and role based on the values formed during childhood and school years. The school is a miniature model of society, and therefore it is essential to create an environment for students where they can freely express their opinions, respect and listen to others' views, make important decisions, take responsibility for themselves, and collaborate with classmates, teachers, and the school administration.

Our project's goal is to promote the development of a democratic culture in schools. We aim to help each student become an active citizen and a fulfilled, strong individual.

### RESULTS PHASE I – 2022-2023 \*

The first phase of the project lasted from March 2022 to December 2023. In the 20 pilot schools supported by the Council of Europe, student involvement in democratic processes has increased across all key components:



\* To measure these results, we conducted a survey in 20 schools before and after the implementation of the activities planned within the project. 1636 school students, teachers, parents, school administration, local municipality representatives and community members participated in the survey before the start of the project activities at schools. 1580 people participated after the completion of the activities.

Project Participants	Direct		Indirect	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
School Administration	60	0.37%	296	1.86%
Teacher	458	2.80%	296	1.86%
Student	1256	7.68%	4664	29.20%
Parent	368	2.25%	406	2.54%
Other community members			507	3.16%

## DEMOCRACY STARTS IN SCHOOLS

### PHASE II – 2024-2027

The goal of the project in the next phase is to further increase student participation in schools and communities. Based on the results of the first phase, we will place greater emphasis on strengthening participatory governance and democratic culture within schools. 60 new schools will participate in the project.

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

- 1 Educational decision-makers and professionals support participatory school governance and a democratic culture.
- 2 School community members and civil society organisations facilitate school children's participation in decision-making processes.

### PLANNED ACTIVITIES:



#### GAP ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN SCHOOLS:

All project activities will strive to address the needs of the school, be based on real data, and be supported by evidence. Therefore, at the initial stage of the second phase, it is crucial to conduct an in-depth analysis of the policies and practices of democratic governance in schools.



#### DEVELOPMENT OF TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN SCHOOLS:

We will create practical tools that promote the development of a democratic culture within schools, strengthen democratic governance, and enhance student participation. We will develop effective tools for parents and the community, mechanisms necessary for active student support in the school authorization process, child- and adolescent-friendly digital resources, and more.



#### CREATION OF A MODEL FOR ENHANCING STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND DEMOCRATIC CULTURE:

We will support 60 schools in implementing a model for democratic culture and student participation. This model is unique and entirely based on a whole school approach, meaning that the school administration, teachers, students, and parents will work together as a team to develop an action plan tailored to their own schools' needs.

With this model, the project will support all school actors to make decisions in a collaborative manner that will benefit the schools in the long term.



#### CREATION OF AN 'EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY' SCHOOL NETWORK:

We will provide education professionals with strategies for managing democratic processes and practical tools. Additionally, we will create a platform where these individuals can access modern digital resources, share their experiences with representatives from other schools and receive reciprocal advice.



#### SUPPORT FOR CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

To achieve long-term results, continuous support and professional development for school leaders and administration representatives are crucial. This approach ensures that, in the future, these beneficiaries will be able to apply the new knowledge and skills in practice.



#### USE OF A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH:

Within the pilot programme, we will provide teachers with practical tools necessary for involving students in school processes.



#### CREATION OF A DIGITAL PLATFORM FOR PARTICIPATION:

To promote student involvement in the decision-making process at school, we will develop digital tools and a platform.

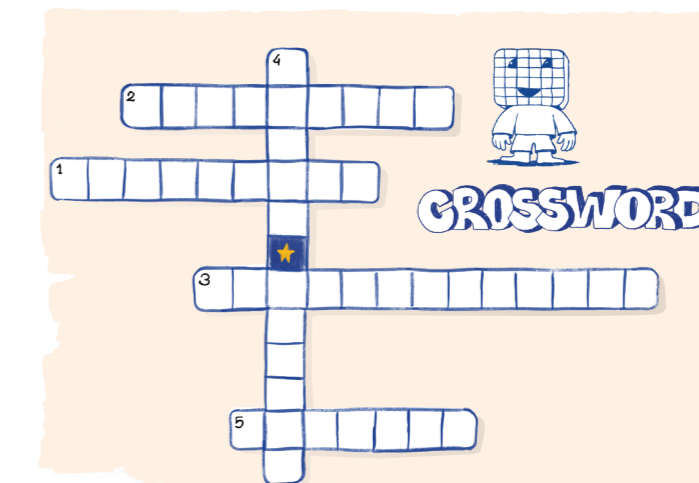


#### IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECTS:

We will support civil society organisations to implement school and community-based projects to support student participation and student voice.



The project "Democracy Starts in Schools – Engaging School Children in Decision-Making Processes in Schools and Communities" is implemented by the Council of Europe in 2024 – 2027 in co-operation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia and the National Center for Teacher Professional Development, and funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation (SDC). The project is part of the Council of Europe's Action Plan for Georgia (2024 – 2027) and aims to support fundamental reforms in education and promote a culture of democracy and human rights in schools.



1. A form of political government in which citizens actively participate in state governance;
2. Ensuring equal access to opportunities and resources for all individuals, regardless of their differences;
3. Ensuring the involvement of individuals in decisions that affect their lives;
4. Standards and values that recognize and protect the dignity of all individuals, regardless of their characteristics;
5. A member of the school community who is actively engaged in school life.

