

**DEMOCRACY
HERE NOW**



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Strasbourg, 17 October 2022

Conference
Evaluation and follow-up of the
Democracy Here | Democracy Now youth
campaign

30 January – 3 February 2023

European Youth Centre, Strasbourg

Under the patronage of the

**PRESIDENCY
OF ICELAND**

Council of Europe
11/2022 – 05/2023



**PRÉSIDENCE
DE L'ISLANDE**

Conseil de l'Europe
11/2022 – 05/2023

Rationale
Call for participants

Rationale

Initiated by the Joint Council on Youth, the youth campaign [Democracy Here | Democracy Now](#) aimed to restore the mutual trust between young people and democratic institutions and processes, focusing on three key themes: access to rights, meaningful youth participation and digitalisation.

The campaign placed an emphasis on activities to be organised at local and national level and had a democratic approach. Young people, youth civil society and other stakeholders in the youth sector explored the challenges of the democratic system at local and national level, particularly for young people, identified proposals for action and tested interventions. The work at national level was supported by national contact points, nominated by the member states, and with the role to mobilise and coordinate the campaign at national level. Several national campaigns are still running activities in the end of 2022 and in 2023.

To support the work of youth organisations for democracy, the European Youth Foundation supported the implementation of 34 pilot activities and 7 international activities in the framework of a special call. The projects are being implemented until the end of the 2022 and cover all three of the campaign's themes.

The flagship activity of the campaign and of the 50th anniversary of the youth sector was the Youth Action Week: Democracy Now! that took place in Strasbourg between 28 June and 1 July 2022. The Youth Action Week brought together 450 participants from Europe and beyond (Canada, Morocco, Tunisia and Palestine), many of whom were attending their first Council of Europe activity. The Week was organised with the patronage of the Irish Presidency of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers and in partnership with the City of Strasbourg, the European Youth Forum, and in co-operation with the World Forum on Democracy. The Youth Action Week resulted in a [Call for action comprising 50 priority actions](#) addressed by the participants to young people, youth civil society, the member states and the Council of Europe to be implemented in the framework and follow-up of the campaign.

In October 2022, the Joint Council on Youth adopted a proposal for a follow-up project to the campaign, building on the results achieved in 2022 and to be implemented between October 2022 and December 2023.

The follow-up project remains grounded in the Youth sector strategy 2030 which defines revitalising democracy as one of the key priorities and takes into account the changes in the political, social and economic context in Europe since the beginning of 2022: ongoing war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, the economic and social crisis, the consistent decline of trust of citizens in democratic institutions and processes all over Europe, as well as the persistent challenges faced by youth civil society.

The project aims to continue to strengthen the mutual trust between young people and democratic institutions and processes.

The objectives are:

- ✓ provide support to young people, youth civil society and national and local authorities to uphold and expand the standards and practices of democratic youth participation, particularly at local and national levels;
- ✓ develop and support activities of democratic citizenship and human rights education that respond to the current challenges faced by democratic systems (e.g. the need to develop digital citizenship competences) and integrate new developments (i.e. digital participation);
- ✓ raise awareness of the barriers to youth participation, particularly the discrimination and racism faced by minority youth, and advocate for equality and inclusion of all young people.

The foreseen activities are organised on the following directions:

- ✓ support and networking between different stakeholders involved in the project
- ✓ capacity building, notably through a training of activists for democracy
- ✓ seminars on the topics of youth participation at local level (possibly in cooperation with the Congress) and on political youth participation (with the possible cooperation of PACE)
- ✓ joint actions combining online and offline activities around key dates in the human rights calendar, such as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March) International Day of Youth (12 August), International Day of Democracy (15 September) and the International Day of Human Rights (10 December)
- ✓ elaboration of educational resources on democracy and youth participation, as well as digital citizenship.

Aim and objectives of the conference

The Evaluation and follow-up conference aims to take stock of the results of the youth campaign Democracy Here | Democracy Now and to plan the follow-up project in all its aspects together with main stakeholders and partners.

The objectives of the conference are:

- To take stock of the results of the Democracy here | Democracy now youth campaign at local, national and international level, with a particular attention to the key issues and good practices emerging from it.
- To facilitate networking, sharing and learning from each other.
- To develop a shared understanding of the follow-up project and the role each of the participants can play within, along with relevant communication channels and support measures.
- To further develop the plan of activities in the framework of the follow-up project, with a particular view to the activities at national and local level and their synergy with the activities foreseen at European level

Expected results

The Evaluation and follow-up conference should result into:

- Evaluation and stocktaking of the results of the Democracy here | Democracy now youth campaign;
- A shared understanding of the aim, objectives, rationale of the follow-up project within the Youth for Democracy programme;
- A plan of activities for the follow-up project, comprising both activities at local, national and international level taking into account the Call for Action by the participants of the Youth Action Week;
- An understanding of the roles and expectations placed on each stakeholder, including the Secretariat.

Programme and methodology

The programme of the activity is being developed and will be shared with participants. The activity is conceived to be an experience of participatory approaches characteristic to non-formal education and youth work. The programme will feature both plenary sessions, networking and sharing practices moments, as well as planning working groups around the key elements of the follow-up project.

An evaluation study of the campaign will be carried out in advance of the seminar, so as to inform the discussions on the follow-up.

Participants' profile and selection

All the interested candidates must fulfil the following profile:

- Be resident in a Council of Europe member state, exceptions can be made if duly justified.
- Be able to attend the activity for its entire duration.
- Be able to communicate independently in English or French.
- Be motivated to be involved in the follow-up of the campaign and be in a position to do so.
- Belong to one of the following categories:
 - o National contact points for the campaign.
 - o Activists at local and national level in the campaign, including former participants in the Youth Action Week.
 - o Representatives of projects funded by the European Youth Foundation in the framework of the campaign.
 - o Representatives of youth groups, youth organisations, youth centres, or civil society with work relevant on the key themes of the follow-up project.
 - o Representatives of national and local authorities with responsibilities concerning youth participation.
 - o Representatives of youth centres in the Council of Europe Quality Label for Youth Centres network.

Application form

All interested candidates should duly complete the application form at <https://youthapplications.coe.int> by **28 November 2022**, 14:00 CET.

The Council of Europe welcomes applications from all candidates who fulfil the specific profile of the activities, irrespective of gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial, ethnic or social origin, colour, religion, belief or sexual orientation.

Practical aspects

Board, lodging and venue

The conference will take place at the [European Youth Centre Strasbourg](#), where participants will also be accommodated and have meals.

Travel

Travel costs will be reimbursed for all participants in the conference via bank transfer after the activity, provided the rules of the Council of Europe are duly respected. Participants are expected to arrive on 30 January and depart on 3 February 2023.

Language

The conference will take place in English and French with simultaneous interpretation.

COVID-19 sanitary protocols

Participants are required to follow the rules in place in France in respect to COVID-19 prevention valid at the time of the event.

Further information

For further information, please contact the secretariat at youthdemocracy@coe.int