VOTE OUTSIDE THE BOX

**TOOLKIT FOR ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT
BODIES ON AWARENESS RAISING
WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**

PEOPLE &
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and Civil Society
(DG Democracy)
in co-operation with
People Dialogue and Change

Council of Europe

ELECLAB

Council of Europe Electoral Laboratory

URSO

Useful
Relevant
Sustainable
Owned

Council of Europe methodology for electoral cooperation

www.coe.int/en/web/electoral-assistance/overview

Contents

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This toolkit was commissioned by the Council of Europe's Division of Elections and Civil Society (DG Democracy).

Division of Elections and Civil Society (DG Democracy)

The Division of Elections and Civil Society (Directorate General Democracy) at the Council of Europe provides advice and technical assistance to the member states on various aspects of elections, such as capacity building of electoral stakeholders and raising voter awareness.

In the field of capacity building, the Division of Elections and Civil Society works closely with election commissions to ensure that election commissioners are familiar with national election regulations and that they observe voters' rights when performing their duties. The division also works to enhance the capacities of other relevant electoral stakeholders, such as the bodies in charge of oversight of campaign and political party financing (for example, the State Audit Office of Georgia) or media coverage of election campaigns (such as Audiovisual Council of the Republic of Moldova).

In this field, special attention is paid to enhancing the capacities of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in charge of domestic observation of elections (more than 5 000 domestic observers were trained ahead of the 2014 early presidential elections in Ukraine, for example). Furthermore, in order to guarantee access to information for domestic observers, an e-learning course with a certification based on two handbooks on report writing techniques and international standards in elections has been put at their disposal.

The division also contributes to raising awareness of the importance of participating in elections as voters and candidates. It assists national election administrations in developing voter education and information campaigns, with a special focus on women, first-time voters and persons belonging to national minorities (such as awareness raising campaigns for first-time voters in Albania).

In addition, the technical assistance work has been carried out with a view to updating the Council of Europe Recommendation Rec(2004)11 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on legal, operational and technical standards for e-voting. At the 1289th Session of the Ministers' Deputies on 14 June 2017 the Committee of Ministers adopted a new Recommendation on standards for e-voting. The new Recommendation, CM/Rec(2017)5, which follows the previous Rec(2004)11, was developed to ensure that electronic voting complies with the principles of democratic elections, and is the only international standard on e-voting in existence to date.

The Council of Europe Electoral Laboratory (Eleclab) concentrates on the division's research and thematic work in order to innovate and produce useful and relevant guidelines in various areas of electoral matters ranging from primo voters, to better representation of women to modern strategic planning. Since 2019 the division has based its assistance and support activities in line with URSO methodology for electoral co-operation - Useful, Relevant, Sustainable and Owned. The URSO toolkit for strategic and co-operation planning is available online. Its primary audience is national electoral stakeholders who are continuously engaged in electoral reforms, in particular, central electoral commissions.

Toolkit overview

Chapter 1 – Provides an introduction and overview of this toolkit.

Chapter 2 – Helps link this toolkit direction with the Council of Europe's URSO paradigm and ECA assessment tool. EMBs can use this chapter to help understand how awareness raising measures targeted at young people are featured in the General Indicator Database.

Chapter 3 – Provides an introduction to what is meant by awareness raising measures, as well as an overview of the four types and their potential objectives.

Chapter 4 – Outlines how to build a profile of potential youth first-time voters, exploring both their demographic characteristics and knowledge skills, attitudes and values in relation to voting. This is necessary in order to ensure that any awareness raising measures are effectively targeted and designed.

Chapter 5 – Gives an overview of activities to help set appropriate objectives for an awareness raising measure targeted at young people, and select which methods may be most appropriate.

Chapter 6 – Explores how Public Communications and Market Campaigns can be used as forms of awareness raising measures.

Chapter 7 – Explores how Formal and Non-formal Citizenship Education programmes might be used as awareness raising measures.

Chapter 8 – Provides a series of case studies as inspirational practices.

Chapter 9 – Includes key references and citations.

The accompanying training manual provides a set of training activities for a trainer to use to introduce Electoral Management Bodies and their stakeholders to this toolkit.

The Appendices contain tools and documents which support the training activities and other elements of this toolkit.

Chapter 1
Introduction

Rationale and aims for this toolkit

This toolkit is produced for the Council of Europe's Division of Elections and Civil Society (DG Democracy) in support of their role to provide advice and technical assistance to the member states on various aspects of elections, such as the capacity building of electoral stakeholders and the raising of voter awareness.

The toolkit is designed to enable Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) to develop strategic approaches to raising awareness of electoral processes and building electoral knowledge amongst young people as potential first-time voters. However, it may be relevant to other bodies who are interested in this such as Ministries and Agencies responsible for youth policy and other state and non-state actors.

The toolkit builds directly the Council of Europe's URSO paradigm and toolkit for strategic planning and prioritisation of electoral cooperation DG Democracy & ISIG (2019). It is particularly intended for practitioners who have already begun using the Council of Europe's ECA assessment within this toolkit and identified awareness raising measures amongst youth as a strategic priority.

It should also be noted the Council of Europe's aim to enable 'young people across Europe to actively uphold, defend, promote and benefit from the Council of Europe's core values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law' as demonstrated through the Council of Europe Youth Sector's Strategy 2030 which has a commitment to 'revitalising pluralist democracy' and 'enabling young people's access to rights'.

What do we mean by young people and why should we focus on them?

There is no single accepted definition of the age range to which youth refers to. Throughout Europe, various national and supranational policies, political organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Government or public bodies use age ranges that vary anywhere between 13 and 30, and in some cases go even higher.

In simple terms 'youth' can be understood as a transition period between childhood and adulthood. During this transition people move from a period of relative dependence to relative independence. Although this transition varies between cultures and individuals, it might include things like moving from education to employment, taking on housing responsibilities and living independently, and even forming long-term relationships and having children. Most importantly for this toolkit, 'youth' is a period in which a person crosses the age of majority, and experiences the first election in which they are eligible to vote.

Focusing on young people can be particularly important as it is sometimes argued the first election leaves a footprint on the voters behaviour, influencing their habits in future elections. Therefore, someone who starts as a voter is more likely to stay a voter throughout their lives (Aldrich et al. 2011; Dinas 2012; Gerber et al. 2003; Plutzer 2002).

In recent decades, within many democracies youth voter turnout has been at historic lows. This has caused some to argue that young people are disinterested in politics – however, recent research has shown this is not necessarily true. Instead, young people are very politically motivated, but have low levels of trust and belief in formal representative democracy organisations, often preferring to express their political convictions through alternative forms of participation such as volunteering and activism (see Crowley and Moxon 2017; Cammaerts 2013). However, it is important to stress that young people are not a homogenous group – and attitudes may vary widely between nations, subgroups and individuals. The social and political culture within any one nation is also likely to have an effect on the way young people participate and their attitudes towards voting (Sloam 2016).

Chapter 2

Building on the URSO paradigm and Council of Europe ECA assessment tool

Introduction

This toolkit follows the Council of Europe's URSO framework methodology for electoral cooperation and the Council of Europe's ECA assessment tool (see DG Democracy & ISIG 2019). The aim of this chapter is to identify how this toolkit links to these, as well as the specific GID indicators within the ECA assessment tool. Ideally, before using this toolkit practitioners will have already begun using the Council of Europe's ECA assessment.

The URSO paradigm

The URSO paradigm refers to the underlying values and principles that guide Council of Europe actions in designing and implementing tools and frameworks aimed to support member states in achieving better governance systems. The paradigm intends to foster democratic environments, by providing hands-on tools and practitioner-oriented guidelines that are: Useful, Relevant, Sustainable and which ensure Ownership by the public authorities and practitioners that may wish to implement it.

The URSO key elements are described in Figure 2.1 below:

Figure 2.1 URSO key elements

USEFUL
► it provides concrete tools for public authorities to monitor and evaluate the implementation of electoral systems.

RELEVANT
► it strengthens users' capacity in managing existing monitoring and evaluation systems, as well as providing a standard structure for the setting up of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation strategy for electoral systems.

SUSTAINABLE
► it enhances the sustainability of public authorities' interventions by introducing a feedback mechanism aimed at improving existing strategic plans and adapting them to changing contexts and evolving needs.

OWNED
► it guides users step-by-step while allowing for adaptation to national and local contexts, which ultimately empowers users to use URSO independently and within context-specific practices and procedures.

To follow this paradigm this toolkit provides a series of activities and tools to enable EMBs to identify and develop awareness raising, education and capacity building measures targeted at first-time youth voters that are appropriate to their national context. In particular, chapters 4 and 5 will guide the reader through the stages necessary to develop a profile of potential first-time youth voters and design awareness raising measures to target them.

Relevant General Index Database indicators

The General Index Database (GID) (see DG Democracy & ISIG 2019) is intended as a repository of indicators to assess Electoral Cooperation and an easy-to-use companion to practitioners, policy makers and CoE experts to implement effectively both the European Electoral Performance Index (EEPI) and the ECA assessment tool with the aim of improving both electoral processes and overall electoral systems.

The Vote outside of the box toolkit will help practitioners ensure the following GID indicators are met:

Figure 2.2 Internal GID indicators which this toolkit contributes to

Dimension	#	GID indicator	ECA variable	Eleclab parameter
3 – Internal social dimension	5	There are specific programmes for raising electoral awareness among first-time voters	Electoral awareness raising measures targeting specific groups	Awareness raising
4 – Internal human capital dimension	7	There are specific programmes for increasing electoral knowledge among first-time voters	Effectiveness of measures aiming to increase the knowledge of the electoral system and procedures targeting specific groups	Awareness raising

Ultimately it is envisioned that the implementation of awareness raising, education and capacity building measures targeted at young people will have an impact on:

Figure 2.3 External GID indicators impacted on

Dimension	#	GID indicator	ECA variable	Eleclab parameter
8 – External social dimension	3	Percentage of population that votes for the first time	Amount of first-time voters	Inclusiveness

In order to achieve this, it may first be necessary to ensure that the indicators below are in place:

Figure 2.4 Prerequisite internal GID indicators

Dimension	#	GID indicator	ECA variable	Eleclab parameter
3 – Internal social dimension	4	The law foresees specific measures for raising electoral awareness among specific target groups (e.g. first-time voters, elderly citizens, minority groups, etc.)	Electoral awareness raising measures targeting specific groups	Awareness raising
4 – Internal human capital dimension	6	The law foresees specific measures for increasing electoral knowledge among specific target groups (e.g. first-time voters, elderly citizens, minority groups, etc.)	Effectiveness of measures aiming to increase the knowledge of the electoral system and procedures targeting specific groups	Awareness raising
5 – Internal economic dimension	2	The electoral law foresees adequate financing for awareness raising programmes	Measures targeting the availability of financial/economic resources throughout the election cycle for awareness raising activities	Free choice
5 – Internal economic dimension	3	The electoral law foresees adequate financing for education, capacity building activities on electoral procedures	Measures targeting the availability of financial/economic resources throughout the election cycle for capacity building activities	Free choice

Chapter 3

What are 'awareness raising' measures?

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to help the reader develop an overview of the different types of awareness raising measures, their purpose and the possible goals of an awareness raising campaign targeted at potential first-time youth voters.

Education, capacity building and awareness raising (hereafter, 'awareness raising') can include a wide variety of activities. However, the end goal of these activities is typically to promote the learning of young people in order to encourage or enable some form of change in behaviour, such as starting to vote.

Behaviour change is complex, and there are many theories as to how it occurs (see Forest Research 2012). An individual's behaviour is influenced by external social, cultural and environmental factors, as well as internal factors such as their knowledge, attitudes, intentions and capabilities.

Awareness raising measures typically focus on the internal factors. They aim to promote an individual's learning, developing their competencies, in order to enable or encourage an individual's behaviour change. They are based on the theory that learning can lead to behaviour change.

Distinguishing between learning and behaviour changes as the goal of awareness raising measures is crucial for setting strategic, effective objectives; it affects how success of any measure might be evaluated, and what the intended purpose is.

Consider the difference between a university course on political education and a campaign to encourage youth voting.

► **A university course** will teach students about the role of democracy, how democratic processes function and other related topics. It might be evaluated based upon students' results in their final exams, which will measure how much students have learnt about politics. The university is unlikely to pay attention to the effect the course has on students' voting behaviour as a measure of success. The end goal is the promotion of learning.

► **A campaign to encourage youth voting** might include similar content to the university course – educational workshops about the role of democracy and how an election functions. If the participants learn a great deal about democracy, but then still do not vote, it will have been unsuccessful in its goals. However, the campaign will have been successful if it encourages participants to vote. Learning is used as a tool to create behaviour change, and the end goal is behaviour change.

Both the university course and the campaign are valuable to democratic societies, but they serve different purposes. One focuses on learning, the other uses learning to create behaviour change.

In this toolkit we assume that the primary goal of awareness raising measures put in place by Electoral Management Bodies is to create behaviour change in relation to youth voting. However, EMBs will need to recognise that other stakeholders, particularly educational institutions, and bodies responsible for youth or education policy, might be interested in promoting learning as the goal. The two goals are not mutually

exclusive, but clear understanding on the primary goal of any measure is likely to improve effectiveness and co-operation.

What is the change in young people's behaviour that awareness raising measures are trying to create?

This toolkit focused on awareness raising measures where the end goal is to change the *behaviour of young people in relation to voting*. Although other behaviour changes amongst young people might also be desirable, such as standing as candidates or starting to campaign within elections, voting[1] represents a minimum level of participation in an election that can be aspired to for all young citizens.

The *default behaviour* of potential youth first-time voters is not voting. But this is not because all young people are somehow unmotivated, or disinterested in politics, or lack the knowledge of how to vote (in fact, many, perhaps most, are very motivated and knowledgeable; see Cammaerts 2013).

Instead we might think of two groups:

1. Young people who were below the age of the majority at the last election and *were not able to vote*.
2. Young people who were above the age of majority at the last election, and *chose not to vote*.

Both groups did not vote at the last election – so their default behaviour is *non-voting*. This means that if the desired behaviour we wish to encourage is voting, in either group *the behaviour change* we wish to see is a move from non-voting to voting. Those in the first group will not be able to enact this behaviour change until an election takes place in which they are eligible to vote. This may mean several years for some, although there are still strong arguments for targeting measures at people at the younger age range (see Zeglovits and Aichholzer 2014).

Within each of these groups there will be young people with differing attitudes and values relating to voting and different levels of knowledge and skills relating to how to cast a vote. For example, whilst some young people who were too young to vote at the last election might feel very excited to be able to vote for the first time and already know who they wish to vote for, others might not fully understand what voting is. Some young people who were able to vote at the last election and chose not to might be very interested in politics but feel that current candidates or institutions are not trustworthy, whilst others might be disinterested and lack understanding of how elections influence their lives. Understanding the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of potential youth first-time voters, and how they might vary between groups of young people, is important for a successful awareness raising measure – it helps identify what the target group of the awareness raising measure needs to learn in order to encourage their behaviour to change.

What sort of learning is required for this behaviour change?

Learning can be defined as the development of competencies in four areas – knowledge, skills, attitudes and values (CoE 2018). Knowledge, skills, attitudes and values are developed interdependently and have the potential to influence each other. For example, gaining knowledge about the way in which a government institution operates might influence your attitude towards it. Values and attitudes are especially closely linked.

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1. This might include spoiled ballots or other forms of protest voting.

Figure 3.1 Learning and competencies

Knowledge

The basic body of information a person possesses. Developing knowledge means gaining information about something such as the date an election is taking place, or more complex ideas such as a theory of democracy.

Skills

The ability to 'do' something. Skills enable an individual to carry out processes and use one's knowledge to achieve a particular end goal. For example being able to critically evaluate the information from electoral candidates to decide which one to support.

Values

Values are general beliefs that individuals hold about the desirable goals that should be striven for in life. They motivate action and they also serve as guiding principles for deciding how to act. A value might include a belief in the value of democracy.

Attitudes

An attitude is the overall mental orientation which an individual adopts towards someone or something (e.g. an electoral candidate, or Government institution). Attitudes usually consist of four components: a belief or opinion about the object of the attitude, an emotion towards the object, an evaluation (positive or negative) of the object, and a tendency to behave in a particular way towards it

The Council of Europe has produced a Reference Framework of Competencies for Democractic Culture (CoE 2018). These are suitable for use if the goal of an awareness measure is the learning of democratic culture. The competencies for democratic culture are designed to ensure learners acquire the competencies necessary to participate effectively in a culture of democracy and live peacefully together with others in culturally diverse democratic societies.

However, if the goal of an awareness raising measure is to promote a behaviour change amongst young people from non-voting to voting, a focus on learning competencies specifically related to voting may be more effective.

In order to become responsible voters, young people may need:

► A knowledge of the electoral process, its functioning and the electoral candidates and parties,
► The skill to cast a vote responsibly,
► Pro-democratic values and attitude – *the desire to vote.*

A suggested framework for these competencies is shown in the table below. A young person, like any learner, may possess some or all of these competencies already and in varying amounts.

Figure 3.2 Suggested framework of competencies to enable and encourage youth voter participation in elections

Knowledge of the electoral process and its functions	The skills to vote responsibly	Pro-democratic values and attitudes
Knowing what an election is		Believing in/trusting/supporting the concept of electoral/ representative democracy
Knowing that you have the right to vote		Believing that you have a responsibility to vote
Knowing what the procedure to cast your vote is and when an election is taking place		
Knowing what the role of an elected body is, and how they operate		Believing in/trusting/supporting that the elected bodies in your country function transparently, accountable and effectively
Knowing what the role of an elected representative is		
Knowing who the election candidates and political parties are	Knowing how to critically evaluate which candidates or parties align with your political beliefs	Believing in/trusting/supporting at least one election candidate
	Knowing how to critically evaluate media and information about political issues	Being interested in and motivated by political issues
Knowing how the outcomes of elections are determined and how your vote contributes to that	Knowing how to decide which candidate to vote for in order to bring about the political outcomes you want	Believing your vote makes a positive difference/impact on the outcome of an election and the functioning of the elected body

Types of awareness raising measures

This toolkit divides awareness raising measures into two categories, each of which can be broken down into a further two subcategories, giving a total of four different types of awareness raising measure. They are:

1. '*Public Communications*' and '*marketing campaigns*'
2. '*Formal citizenship education programmes*' and '*Non-formal citizenship education programmes*'

These four types of awareness raising measures are described below and will be used throughout this toolkit. In practice the four types may not always be so distinct, there will be overlaps between them all and a combination of them is useful in any one strategy. However, keeping a clear separation between the four types when planning can help immensely with setting objectives and clarifying what is intended.

Type 1: Public communication and marketing campaigns

Various other terminologies and definitions[2] can be used when we talk about public communication and marketing or related areas such as information campaigns or advertising. In the context of this toolkit we define public communications and marketing as creating strategies and activities to affect the knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of large populations or large target groups. They can use a mix of methods and channels (such as social media, 'traditional' media, peers, advertisement, events, seminar, self-created content in newsletters,

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2.   In this toolkit, we have generalised some terminology and concepts in order to avoid going into too much detail of the differences and to help guide EMB decision making more effectively. We consider Communication, Information and Marketing cross-linked and supporting each other (including paid and non-paid activities).

blogs, magazines, etc.), all of which combine together with the aim of informing, persuading or motivating behaviour changes in a relatively well-defined and large audience.

Public communication and marketing campaigns take place within a given time period, by means of organised communication activities involving mass and online interactive media, and often complemented by inter-personal activities such as meetings, seminars, promotional events, working with peers and opinion leaders, etc. It is common to measure and adapt the impact of campaigns as they progress, adjusting future activities based on audience responses.

Although communications and marketing campaigns intend to reach a very large number of people, many audience members may only be required to engage with the campaign for a relatively short moment, some-times only a few seconds to read an online post or a leaflet. This can make communication and marketing campaigns effective at reaching people who are not very interested in the content of the campaign. However, to have an impact communication campaigns may need to engage with an audience member multiple times – it is sometimes said a campaign must 'touch' an audience member at least seven times before it has any effect on the audience members.

Marketing is often more bold in messaging with a call to buy, act or not act. The messages can even be manipulative, or very creative and intriguing. Public communication has to be more balanced, checked, not manipulative and messages are usually delivered in a more balanced way. However, influencing still happens because the story and information is designed by the storyteller.

In the best case, the disciplines compliment each other and follow good creative and ethical balance. Within this toolkit, in order to help with decision making, we consider the two fields separated:

Marketing campaigns – aim to affect the values and attitudes of the audience. They give a consistent, clear and simple message about something in order to change an audience member's attitude. An example might be a campaign to persuade young people to vote for one specific party, or the famous 'America wants you for the US army' poster featuring a picture of 'Uncle Sam' which aims to get people to join the army. At its core the marketing approach is based on strategies from the commercial world and sales. Marketing focuses a lot on customers' needs, satisfaction and loyalty, with a clear goal for audience members to 'buy in' to something. 'Buying in' could mean purchasing a particular product, but also feeling affinity for a particular brand or idea. In the context of voting campaigns, this may mean 'buying in' to the value of democracy or supporting a specific candidate. Marketing typically also explores carefully the end user trying to anticipate and predict potential target groups' needs.

Public communication campaigns – focus on increasing the knowledge of the audience. They aim to deliver objective, factual information, and can include a level of complexity as well as multiple views on the same issue. They traditionally focused on balanced information and do not include sales, advertisement and paid content. This can be more reliable and efficient in some cases when information is being shared through journalistic channels, rather than advertisement. Public communications campaigns might also include an element of public relations. This means focusing on building relationships and interests between organisations (such as parliaments or other public bodies) and the public based on the delivery of information through trusted and ethical communication methods. Examples of a public communications campaign could be providing and sharing detailed information about election processes with the public, to build trust and transparency.

Type 2: Formal and non-formal citizenship educational programmes

Citizenship education programmes are typically delivered through direct and extended contact between an educator and participants. Compared to communication campaigns they allow for a high level of two-way interaction between the educator and the participants. An educator can be a professionally trained educator, like a teacher or a youth worker, and they can also be a community volunteer or a youth activist who is willing to take on the role. Educational methods are often delivered in person, but there are approaches to delivering them online. Educational methods give participants the opportunity to explore their ideas, ask questions and discuss things with others. Compared to communication campaigns, they require a higher level of commitment from participants, they might typically need to engage for at least half an hour. This means they usually have a greater impact on the participants, and are more likely to lead to in-depth learning and behaviour change than communication campaigns. However, the increased commitment means that the participants need to be motivated in some way before they will take part. This motivation can come from interest in the topic, the method, or simply because their peers are taking part. In a school setting participation can be compulsory, though motivating participants *to be interested* is still required. Although it can vary, citizenship education measures usually reach fewer people than communication campaigns – citizenship education typically requires

a greater financial investment per person. However, if citizenship education is included within formal educational curricula at national level and taught as part of a country's formal education system, this can dramatically increase the numbers of young people reached.

Education methods can be split into two types (La Belle 1982):

Formal education methods – have a clearly defined curriculum and set of competencies that they intended to develop within the learner. They are typically led by a teacher or lecturer who is seen as an expert in the topic. Formal education is strongly based on learners storing and remembering the knowledge they receive from the teacher or teaching resources. This makes them very effective for building the knowledge of learners, particularly on topics such as how the electoral system functions, or the process for casting a vote. Formal education methods can take place in any setting, but they are typically associated with schools and similar educational institutions such as universities. They represent a traditional approach to schooling, though many modern schools also use other methods. Examples of formal citizenship education can include presentations and politics lessons.

Non-formal education methods – are preplanned and systematic and are able to lead a particular group of learners toward some specific goals. They are typically led by a trainer, facilitator or youth worker. Non-formal education methods focus on promoting informal learning by placing the learner in an environment or situation within which they can learn by the experience they have in that environment. They encourage the learner to reach their own conclusions and judgements, rather than to accept the wisdom of the educator. This means that the competencies each learner develops may vary, but are likely to address the same areas if the environment and process is well planned. As a result, non-formal education methods are particularly well placed to enable learners to develop skills, values and attitudes where it might be important for the educator not to influence the learner heavily – such as when reaching conclusions about which political candidate to support.

Non-formal education methods can take place in any setting, but it is most commonly associated with youth work, youth organisations and other out-of-school settings, as well as environments where learning is not necessarily the sole or main activity. Examples of non-formal citizenship education methods can include group debates, supporting grass-roots youth advocacy campaigns, or educational activities that facilitate direct active engagement between young people and politicians.

Chapter 4

Developing a profile of potential youth first-time voters

Introduction

This chapter outlines how to build a profile of potential youth first-time voters.

This can be used to help identify the target group of any intervention measures, as well as their knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in relation to voting. Doing this will help improve the effectiveness of any awareness raising measure. Young people are not a homogeneous group, and their lives and voting behaviour may be affected by other things such as gender, place of living, or even age. The more an awareness raising measure can be targeted to a particular subgroup and their needs, the more likely it is to be successful

To aid EMBs wishing to build this potential first-time youth voter profile, the chapter covers an introduction on voting data, summarising what data is available and what one needs to be aware of when working with different data sources; explaining the concept of voting turnout and its usefulness in tackling youth election abstention; as well as an introduction to other types of data and their use in tackling voting abstention amongst young people. Further on, concrete examples of both the voting turnout analyses as well as analyses of data from other sources are presented, and a checklist on how to approach exploration of young non-voters demographics is presented.

The basic premise for building a profile of first-time youth voters, is to first identify the social backgrounds of those who *do vote* using available statistical data, then compare this to the overall population to identify groups of young people who are systematically or substantially missing – i.e. those social groups who are voting less – such as people from a particular area or gender. Alongside this it should always be remembered there is a group of young people who have only just become old enough to vote, who will consist of people from all social groups of a certain age.

Once these various social groups of potential first-time youth voters have been identified, their knowledge, skills, attitudes and values can be explored. This can be done through exploring existing research on voter attitudes, or through the use of focus groups. These approaches are covered at the end of this chapter.

To enable improved access to election data the Council of Europe have recently produced the ElecData website[3]. ElecData is a Collection of Electoral Data of the 47 Member States of the Council of Europe. This tool gathers the specificities of each electoral system of the Council of Europe. This collection makes it possible to easily consult the electoral data by means of interactive maps and graphics.

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3.   https://www.coe.int/en/web/electoral-assistance/elecdata

What voter turnout data is there, and how can it be used?

Election turnout is a vital general information for identifying young people's voting behaviour, since it describes a number or a ratio of votes at a given election out of all potential votes, i.e. out of all people eligible to vote[4] in the given type of elections at the time the elections are held (cf. Fiorino et al. 2017: 14). This essential aspect, the act of casting or not casting the ballot during elections, can also be probed in more detail with respect to young people; however, the information is rather limited and does not provide any reasoning behind it.

Apart from election turnout, numerous other indicators on voting behaviour, and often also featuring reasoning behind the voting behaviour, can be found in other statistical data available in open-access mode. The Flash Eurobarometer surveys or World Values Survey, as well as some other international and national initiatives, provide useful data on the voting behaviour of young people. Despite the fact that these data often do not focus solely or primarily on young people, the age groups are usually included and allow for an insight into this particular group of voters.

Each of these information sources is described in more detail below and concrete examples of each are listed to enable good practice examples to be highlighted, as well as to show a direction in which further action on national levels can be taken.

Types of voter turnout information

In order to get voter turnout information, there are two types of data which can be used: official registers and survey data (cf. International IDEA 1999).

▶ **Data from official registers** consist of information provided by governmental authorities and are gathered during elections.[5] An example of such data is general voting turnout, where the number of people eligible to vote (and registered for voting in the given election, if that is required) is compared to either the number of people who came to the polling stations, or to the ballots cast in the election.[6] The result is a ratio of people who either came to elections or cast their ballots out of those eligible for elections.[7] This general information is usually provided in all European countries, but the situation gains complexity in cases where more specific information, such as age or gender, is required, as shown further in the text. An important aspect of the data from official registers is that the data collection is directly linked to the elections as such and therefore its validity and reliability is high (cf. International IDEA 1999).

▶ **Survey data** is a source based on a wider sociological survey in which people are asked on their voting actions and other information. Sources of such survey data vary, but generally any research institution, university, or think tank, and at times also private companies, can be a potential source of such survey data. Voting turnout information in this respect can be found either in primary data resulting from surveys conducted by official state bodies during the election process itself via one-time or repeated questionnaires for the voters; or these can be explored in secondary data of wider sociological surveys which, as part of the inquiry, also include questions concerning voting turnout.

An important difference between these two sources is that data from official registers is based on *actual* voting turnout in elections, whilst survey data is based on the statement of a respondent to a question.

In surveys, people can lie about their voting participation for various reasons, and hence these data are always less reliable than the data from the official registers. In addition, there is an important difference in survey data (usually between the primary and secondary survey data) in terms of question wording: in the case of primary surveys conducted by state authorities at the time of the elections, which are constructed in order to tie their questions directly to the election in question (e.g. Did you vote in parliamentary elections held in

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4. Since eligibility age can differ across countries, the age groups available in the below mentioned information on voting turnout can also vary, as it will also in your respective contexts.
5. For examples on how to conduct such data collection in practical terms, please see International IDEA (1999: 17–18).
6. This can still differ based on what ballots are taken into account. Either all ballots can be counted, with no regard to their value, or only ballots which are valid (i.e. in line with all voting procedures) are taken into account. In the former case, even ballots which do not enter final election count are accounted for; in the latter, these are excluded, and only valid ballots are counted. This can make a difference in countries in which voting is obligatory, as well as in cases where a certain group of electorate casts empty or damaged ballots as a form of protest.
7. Eligibility for elections can also be tricky as it depends on the method of establishing the eligibility. In some countries, people register for elections in a process during which the eligibility of the person is confirmed. In other words, eligibility is assumed automatically by, for example, coming of age. In both cases, the number of people deemed eligible can still change due to unforeseen circumstances, such as deaths.

January 2020?); and in secondary surveys that may base their data on more hypothetical questions tackling voting behaviour (e.g. Would you take part in elections, should they take place in a month's time?).

This seemingly small difference is essential to interpreting such data, since in the first case a real situation is probed, aiming at determining an action of an individual (i.e. something the person did or did not do), while in the second case, it is the attitude of the individual that is explored (i.e. something the person would or would not do).

What to look for in voting turnout data

The general voting turnout information on its own is not enough to give a strong profile of the background of youth voting absentees. Instead, further interpretation and analysis or potentially even further data collection may be required. This section outlines how to utilise and interpret detailed voter turnout information, drawing on examples from several countries. It is produced so that EMBs can use this as a guide to:

a) Support their own analysis and further interpret detailed voting turnout data, if such information is available in their countries,

b) Understand what to consider when establishing data collection mechanisms of the detailed turnout data.

Analysing voter turnout information by age groups

Young people constitute a rather wide age group, which needs to be further explored in terms of narrower age subgroups to avoid homogenisation of the youth and false analytical conclusions. The lower voting age limit is defined by the national law in terms of eligibility to vote in the given election type and as such is pre-set by the national context one works in. However, detailed age groups above this can be divided in various fashion as shown below in an example from a German voting turnout information document (see Figure 4.1).

It is advisable to define and analyse age groups with a potential for comparison to other countries in mind (e.g. in line with age groups used in other countries or on a supranational level by the Eurostat and other international bodies). Comparability of voting turnout data with data on young people from other sources can be beneficial in further steps of unravelling the reasons for youth non-voting behaviours. The categories typically used in Eurostat statistics are shown in the right hand column of Figure 4.1 for comparison.

Figure 4.1 Age groups in German voting turnout statistics compared to Eurostat statistics in 2020

German age categories utilised since 1972*	Eurostat 2020
18–20	15–19
21–24	20–24
25–29	25–29
30–34	30–34
35–39	35–39
40–44	40–44
45–49	45–49
50–59	50–54
60–69	55–59
70 and over	60–64
	65–69
	70–74
	75–79
	80–84
	85 and over

Source: Der Bundeswahlleiter 2014: 6.

A concrete example of the value of analysing official voting turnout information on a national level distinguished by age subgroups and presented in time series can be seen in Figure 4.2. The value of such insight is most visible when comparing the last column, marked as 'All' and presenting overall voting turnout data for all age groups (i.e. for all people eligible to vote in the given elections), to all other columns in different years. While the overall voting turnout seems to have decreased in the early 2000s by about 10–20%, and then started to increase again, the situation is rather more dramatic when looking into the age groups for detailed information.

Voters older than 35 almost precisely follow the overall trend of a 10–20% decrease, the situation of young voters is characterised by an even more profound drop of up to 30% in the early 2000s and subsequently also by a lower rate of increase when compared to other groups in the following years. At the same time, the time series show that the changes in voting turnout from one election to another are much less profound in older voters than in younger ones, i.e. that the older voters are much more reliable when it comes to casting their ballots (a change in single percentage points from one election to the next), in comparison to their younger counterparts who can change their voting behaviour quite rapidly in between elections (changes in tens of percentages). This example from the UK illustrates the value of detailed insight into the voting turnout based on narrow age groups.

Figure 4.2 Official voting turnout information for national elections in the United Kingdom. Age groups, time series, percentages

Estimated Turnout by age							
	18–24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	**All**
1964[a]	76.4%	70.7%	79.5%	79.1%	78.4%	76.7%	77.1%
1966[b]	60.5%	70.8%	80.0%	79.8%	78.0%	75.9%	75.8%
1970	64.9%	66.5%	72.8%	74.9%	74.1%	77.2%	72.0%
F1974	7.02%	77.2%	78.7%	73.1%	82.2%	79.2%	78.8%
O1974	62.5%	69.0%	73.9%	76.6%	76.6%	76.0%	72.8%
1979	62.5%	72.4%	76.3%	81.2%	81.4%	77.7%	76.0%
1983	63.9%	67.6%	76.2%	77.6%	77.2%	73.1%	72.7%
1987	66.6%	74.0%	74.9%	79.9%	78.9%	76.0%	75.3%
1992	67.3%	77.3%	78.3%	81.8%	78.1%	79.2%	77.7%
1997	54.1%	62.2%	70.2%	76.4%	79.9%	77.7%	71.4%
2001	40.4%	45.0%	55.7%	63.2%	64.0%	70.1%	59.4%
2005	38.2%	47.7%	61.6%	65.5%	72.6%	74.3%	61.3%
2010	51.8%	57.3%	64.4%	67.5%	69.8%	74.7%	65.0%
2015	51.5%	52.0%	60.3%	70.1%	74.1%	78.8%	66.1%
2017	64.7%	62.8%	65.6%	68.6%	72.3%	75.0%	68.8%
Notes:							
a. Data for 1964 and 1966 refers to people aged 21-24 as the voting age was 21 not 18							
b. British Election Study data has been adjusted for actual turnout							

Source: Uberoi 2019: 22.

Analysing voter turnout information by gender

Gender is also an important aspect of voting turnout information as it provides for an even more detailed picture of which groups of young people do or do not vote. Currently, unfortunately, the official voting turnout data still limit their gender information to a binary male–female distinction, ignoring any non-binary gender identities. This needs to be kept in mind when reading such voting turnout information and tackled when designing new mechanisms for voting turnout exploration. Nevertheless, there are still insights to be made based on the binary gender distinction, as can be seen in the case of Norway, which publishes data on electoral turnout based on age groups as well as gender categories (Figure 4.3).

The Norwegian data show that while the early 2000s marked a decrease in voting turnout (as was the case in the previous UK example), the situation differs rather widely not only among the age groups, but also between the males and females in each age group. While young males (both 18–19- and 20–24-year olds) showed a rapid decrease in voting turnout even in the late 1990s, young females display a stark fall in voting turnout only in the early 2000s. After the voting turnout drop in both genders, there is, again, a different trend for both males and females in recuperating from the voting turnout decline. While for young males the voting turnout revival occurs in smaller steps, the females seem to have come back to the polling stations rather swiftly after the drop.

FIgure 4.3 Electoral turnout by age and sex, Norway national elections, time series, percentages

Electoral turnout								
		1993	**1997**	**2001**	**2005**	**2009**	**2013**	**2017**
Both sexes	**Years, total**	76.0%	78.0%	76.0%	77.0%	76.4%	78.2%	78.2%
	18–19 years	71.0%	60.0%	60.0%	66.0%	62.2%	70.4%	72.7%
	20–24 years	64.0%	63.0%	56.0%	64.0%	53.0%	63.0%	64.3%
	25–44 years	76.0%	80.0%	75.0%	79.0%	75.6%	75.6%	74.3%
	45–66 years	83.0%	87.0%	84.0%	83.0%	82.7%	82.8%	83.6%
	67–79 years	81.0%	85.0%	83.0%	82.0%	82.9%	87.6%	85.9%
	80 years or older				70.0%		70.7%	69.1%
Males	**Years, total**	74.0%	76.0%	75.0%	77.0%	76.1%	76.8%	76.7%
	18–19 years	70.0%	52.0%	66.0%	57.0%	67.2%	66.4%	67.9%
	20–24 years	62.0%	57.0%	56.0%	63.0%	54.5%	59.5%	59.1%
	25–44 years	73.0%	78.0%	76.0%	77.0%	75.0%	73.8%	71.3%
	45–66 years	84.0%	86.0%	88.0%	83.0%	80.7%	81.6%	82.3%
	67–79 years	85.0%	85.0%	93.0%	85.0%	86.6%	87.9%	86.5%
	80 years or older				76.0%		72.0%	76.9%
Females	**Years, total**	76.0%	80.0%	76.0%	78.0%	76.7%	79.9%	79.7%
	18–19 years	71.0%	69.0%	50.0%	72.0%	57.6%	74.4%	77.6%
	20–24 years	66.0%	69.0%	67.0%	58.0%	51.3%	66.7%	69.6%
	25–44 years	79.0%	82.0%	85.0%	79.0%	76.3%	77.4%	77.2%
	45–66 years	83.0%	88.0%	86.0%	87.0%	84.8%	84.0%	84.9%
	67–79 years	77.0%	84.0%	80.0%	82.0%	79.8%	87.3%	85.4%
	80 years or older				64.0%		70.0%	64.2%

Source: STATBANK 2020.

Note: Table shortened, the original includes data from 1969 onwards.

Analysing voter turnout information by geographic location

Geographical location of young voters is a dimension which describes where the votes were cast, and as such has a potential to pinpoint locations in which young people's voting turnout is either high or low, providing additional information on youth voting absenteeism. This can also give insights into patterns amongst ethnic and religious groups, which may be clustered in particular geographic regions, or other patterns relating to the wealth and education levels of certain areas.

General information on voting turnout by geographical location is often available not only as tables, but also as visualisations, as shown in Figure 4.4 and Figure 4.5 on examples from the United Kingdom. There are also various ways to determine a geographical location of the voters, with Figure 4.4 showing city wards, enabling rather fine geographical distinctions of the voting turnouts, while Figure 4.5 presents wider areas, constituencies, which provide a more general, but also a more easy-to-read picture. This example shows that geographical location can be usually determined as either a rather fine and precise one, or as a wider area, such as constituencies which include larger chunks of the given country. It depends on the purpose of the voting turnout information to determine how subtle the information on geographical location needs to be in order to become helpful.

Figure 4.4 General voting turnout in local elections 2018, London, the United Kingdom, city wards, percentages
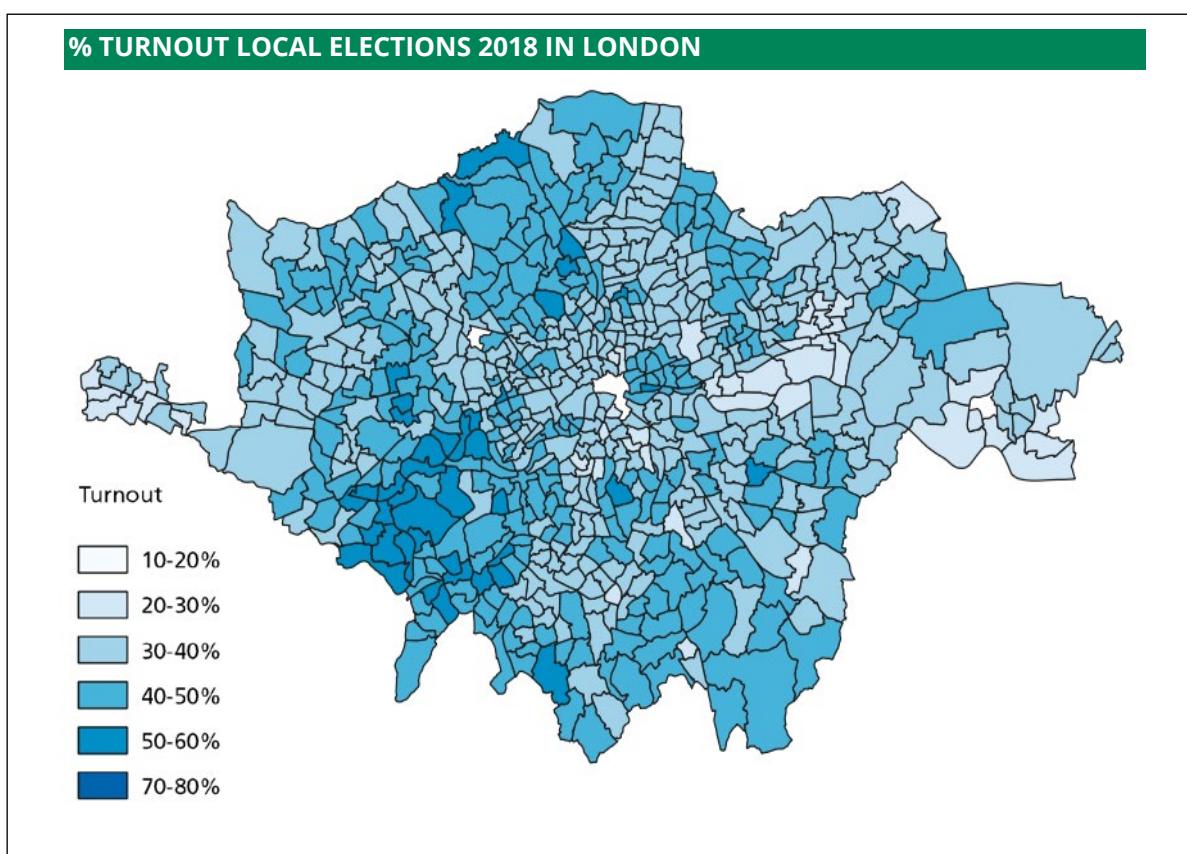
Source: Uberoi 2019: 19. Contains Parliamentary information licensed under the Open Parliament Licence v3.0

Figure 4.5 General voting turnout in 2017 General Elections in the United Kingdom by constituency, percentages
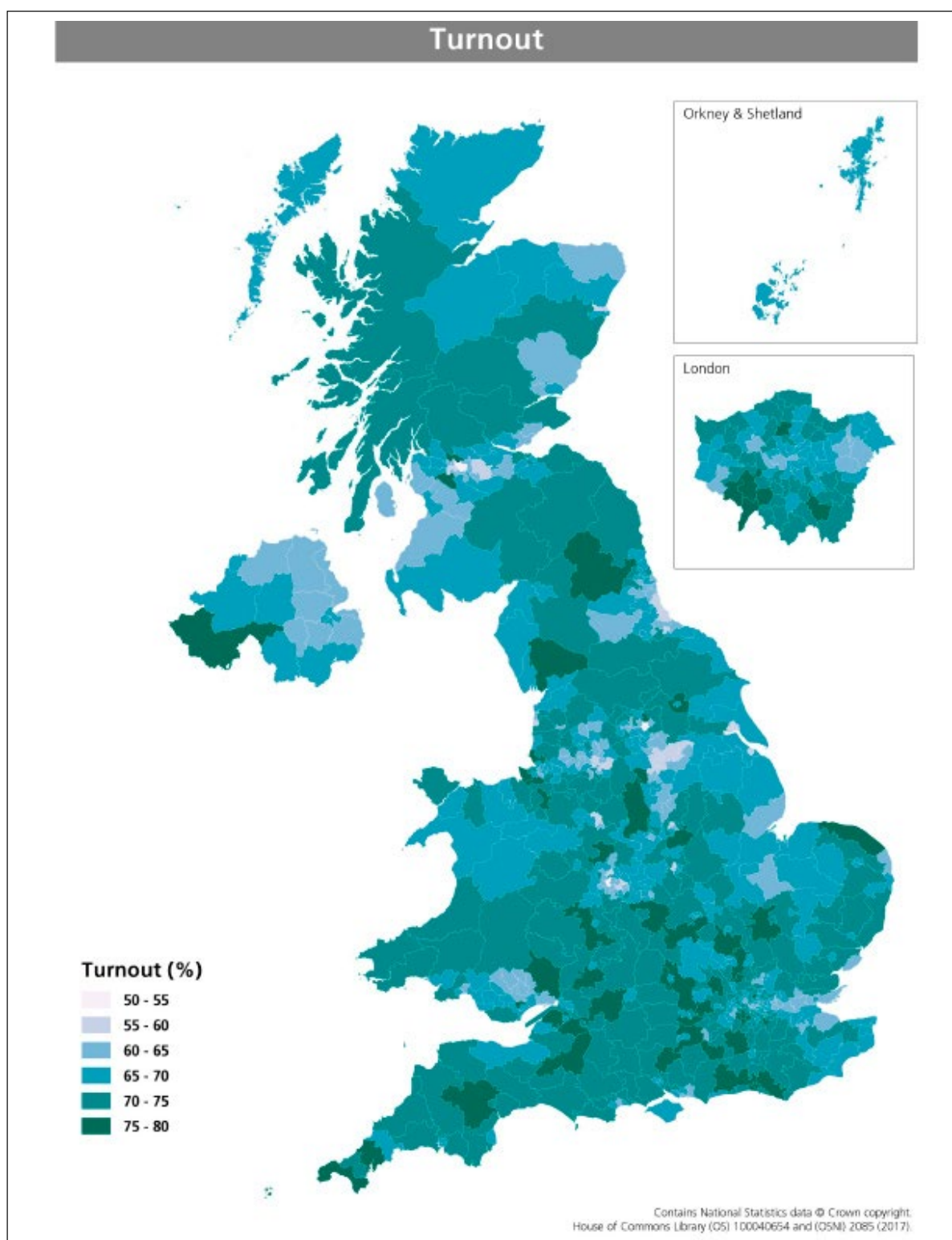
Source: Uberoi 2019: 5. Contains Parliamentary information licensed under the Open Parliament Licence v3.0

Despite the advantage of presenting general voting turnout rates in a visual way, and an ease with which one identifies areas with high and low voting turnout, such visualisation, unfortunately, is not always able to describe a complex reality of youth voting turnout. In order for the geographical location to be useful in bringing more information to the youth voting turnout, as many previously mentioned aspects (age groups and gender) as possible need to stay available as well.

Figure 4.6 compares the differences in voter turnout between the highest ranking geographic areas (Baden–Württemberg) and lowest ranking geographic areas (Sachsen–Anhalt) in the German national elections of 2013. Important details come to light when comparing males and females of different youth groups in different areas. First and foremost, young males in Baden–Württemberg as well as in Sachsen–Anhalt seem to be keener to vote right after turning of age and gaining their voting right, with a subsequent drop in youth voting turnout and a slow increase as young people grow older. This is also the case for Baden–Württemberg females, but not for women of Sachsen–Anhalt who seem to exhibit a pattern of their own. And most importantly, none of the above mentioned is true for young males and females from Hamburg, who seem to display a steady increase in voting turnout as they grow older.

Figure 4.6 Electoral turnout by age, sex and geographical location, German national elections 2013, percentages

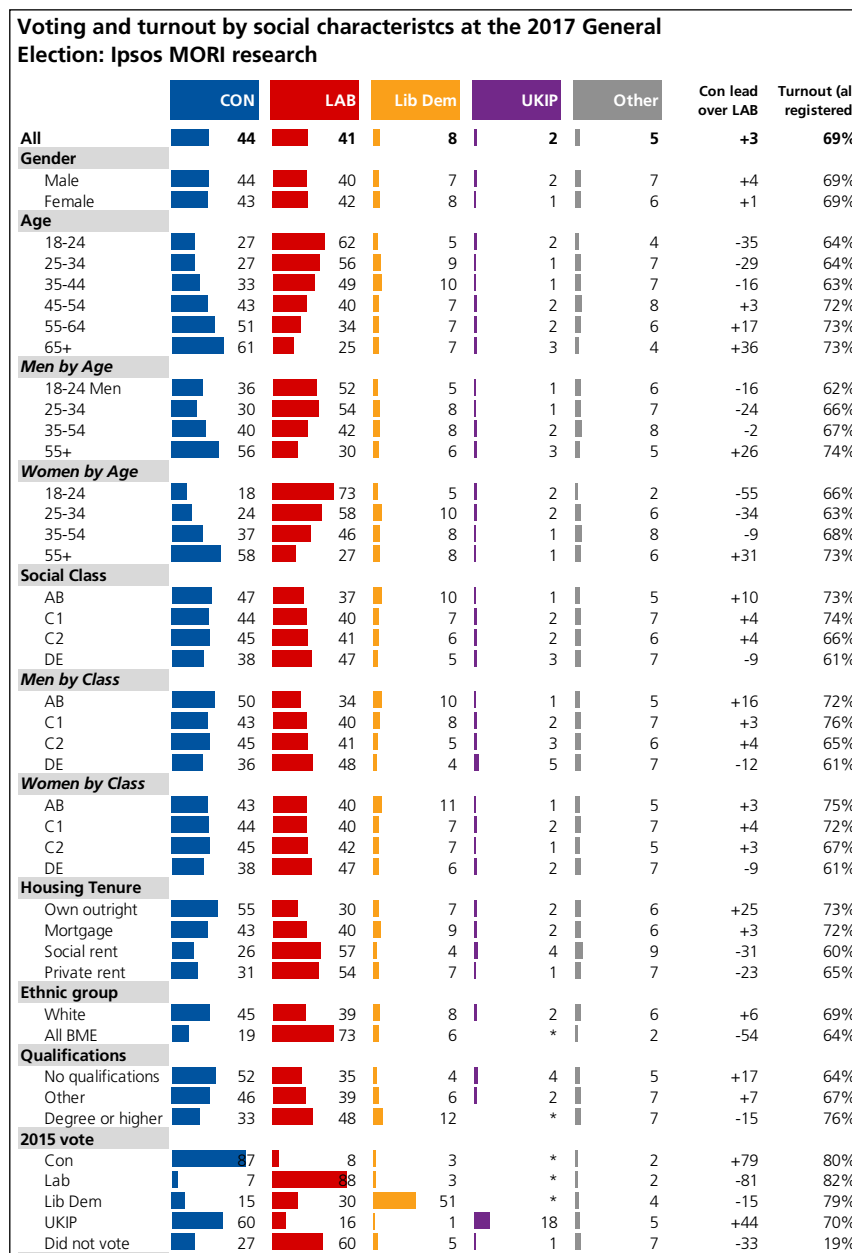|		Baden–Württemberg	Hamburg	Sachsen–Anhalt
Both sexes	**Total**	**75.1%**	**72.1%**	**62.5%**
	18–20 years	68.3%	57.8%	49.7%
	21–24 years	64.6%	63.3%	46.8%
	25–30 years	66.6%	66.3%	47.8%
	30–34 years	69.4%	68.4%	52.0%
	35–39 years	71.6%	71.3%	57.1%
	40–44 years	74.8%	74.5%	62.1%
	45–49 years	77.0%	74.9%	63.3%
	50–59 years	78.7%	75.0%	65.9%
	60–69 years	82.2%	78.5%	71.3%
	70 years and over	76.6%	73.5%	65.1%
Males	**Total**	**75.9%**	**72.0%**	**61.9%**
	18–20 years	68.4%	56.7%	51.5%
	21–24 years	64.6%	62.4%	45.8%
	25–30 years	66.5%	65.7%	46.9%
	30–34 years	68.6%	66.1%	50.0%
	35–39 years	71.7%	69.8%	54.5%
	40–44 years	74.2%	73.8%	59.4%
	45–49 years	76.5%	73.7%	62.0%
	50–59 years	78.9%	74.4%	63.9%
	60–69 years	82.8%	77.3%	70.8%
	70 years and over	82.2%	78.7%	70.1%
Females	**Total**	**74.3%**	**72.2%**	**63.0%**
	18–20 years	68.3%	58.8%	47.7%
	21–24 years	64.5%	64.2%	47.8%
	25–30 years	66.8%	66.8%	48.9%
	30–34 years	70.3%	70.6%	54.2%
	35–39 years	71.5%	72.7%	59.9%
	40–44 years	75.3%	75.3%	64.9%
	45–49 years	77.5%	76.2%	64.7%
	50–59 years	78.5%	75.6%	68.0%
	60–69 years	81.7%	79.6%	71.8%
	70 years and over	72.6%	70.2%	61.7%

Source: Der Bundeswahlleiter 2014: 12.

Note: Table shortened to selected constituencies, columns and rows transposed, totals marked in bold.

Analysing voter turnout: Going further

The information presented above shows that just as the young people are not a homogeneous group, young voters also exhibit varying patterns based on their concrete age, gender or geographical location. All in all, apparently, each additional aspect which helps identify voting behaviour of particular groups of young people increases a potential for concrete, substantiated and well-focused intervention in order to support young people in expressing their opinions via casting ballots in elections.

Figure 4.7 outlines further possibilities of analysing voting turnout in specific groups of voters with an example from the United Kingdom. Despite not providing further information on young people as such, it shows that further aspects can be collected and can contribute to determining the youth voting turnout in even more detail than through the age groups, gender categories and geographical locations presented above. Despite such detailed analyses being rather rare, their value is potentially high as combining more factors shows more precisely groups of young people in which voting abstentionism is more frequent in comparison to the rest of the population.

Figure 4.7 Detailed information on voting turnout in 2017 General Elections in the United Kingdom

Voting and turnout by social characteristcs at the 2017 General Election: Ipsos MORI research	CON	LAB	Lib Dem	UKIP	Other	Con lead over LAB	Turnout (all registered)
All	44	41	8	2	5	+3	69%
Gender							
Male	44	40	7	2	7	+4	69%
Female	43	42	8	1	6	+1	69%
Age							
18-24	27	62	5	2	4	-35	64%
25-34	27	56	9	1	7	-29	64%
35-44	33	49	10	1	7	-16	63%
45-54	43	40	7	2	8	+3	72%
55-64	51	34	7	2	6	+17	73%
65+	61	25	7	3	4	+36	73%
Men by Age							
18-24 Men	36	52	5	1	6	-16	62%
25-34	30	54	8	1	7	-24	66%
35-54	40	42	8	2	8	-2	67%
55+	56	30	6	3	5	+26	74%
Women by Age							
18-24	18	73	5	2	2	-55	66%
25-34	24	58	10	2	6	-34	63%
35-54	37	46	8	1	8	-9	68%
55+	58	27	8	1	6	+31	73%
Social Class							
AB	47	37	10	1	5	+10	73%
C1	44	40	7	2	7	+4	74%
C2	45	41	6	2	6	+4	66%
DE	38	47	5	3	7	-9	61%
Men by Class							
AB	50	34	10	1	5	+16	72%
C1	43	40	8	2	7	+3	76%
C2	45	41	5	3	6	+4	65%
DE	36	48	4	5	7	-12	61%
Women by Class							
AB	43	40	11	1	5	+3	75%
C1	44	40	7	2	7	+4	72%
C2	45	42	7	1	5	+3	67%
DE	38	47	6	2	7	-9	61%
Housing Tenure							
Own outright	55	30	7	2	6	+25	73%
Mortgage	43	40	9	2	6	+3	72%
Social rent	26	57	4	4	9	-31	60%
Private rent	31	54	7	1	7	-23	65%
Ethnic group							
White	45	39	8	2	6	+6	69%
All BME	19	73	6	*	2	-54	64%
Qualifications							
No qualifications	52	35	4	4	5	+17	64%
Other	46	39	6	2	7	+7	67%
Degree or higher	33	48	12	*	7	-15	76%
2015 vote							
Con	87	8	3	*	2	+79	80%
Lab	7	88	3	*	2	-81	82%
Lib Dem	15	30	51	*	4	-15	79%
UKIP	60	16	1	18	5	+44	70%
Did not vote	27	60	5	1	7	-33	19%

Source: Apostolova et al. 2019: 43.

How to get from voting turnout data to identifying non-voters

Having identified who IS voting, identifying the young people who are not voting is relatively straightforward. It is simply a case of comparing this to the overall population within your country. Here we can think of two groups:

Systematically missing is such a group of young voters which exhibits low voting turnout in several data variations in comparison to the population total. For example, 21–24-year-olds in Figure 4.6 are systematically low in voting turnout across all regions and genders, exhibiting lowest voting turnouts in comparison to the totals for each subgroup: for both sexes together as well as for males and females separately (see the bold row labelled 'Total' for each of these groups). Hence, in the case of the German national elections 2013, this group of young voters was, in comparison to others, systematically missing and as such can be considered a group worth further exploration through further data sources.

Substantially missing[8] is such a group of young voters which exhibits notably low voting turnout in one of the data variations in comparison to other data variations. Using, again, the example Figure 4.6, two such groups can be identified for different reasons. Geographically, Sachsen–Anhalt is a region in which young people exhibit, generally, notably low turnout and, as such, this region might well be tackled in further analyses if data are available. At the same time, females in the youngest voter age group of 18–20 years exhibit notably lower voting turnout in comparison not only to other age groups, but also to males and other geographical locations. Given the fact that these young people will move into an older age group in the next elections, it might be worthwhile to explore their particular reasons for not casting their ballots in order to strengthen their voting turnout in the future.

Through this process the 'target group' of an awareness raising measure can be identified. That is to say, the measure can be aimed specifically at groups who are less likely to vote.

Figure 4.8 Summary checklist – Building a demographic profile

1) Try to acquire voting turnout information	
What type of data to look for?	
Official registers – These are preferably data sources, if available, assuring the high validity and reliability of the data.	
Election surveys – These should be linked directly to the election in question and ideally conducted during the election itself to ensure as high validity and reliability as possible.	
How to obtain the data?	
Conduct a desk research of sources such as …	**Contact official authorities such as …**
▶ Official statistical report (e.g. Official Statistics of Sweden 2020) ▶ Official voting reports on particular elections (e.g. Apostolova et al. 2019) ▶ Reports for and by the governmental bodies (e.g. Der Bundeswahlleiter 2014) ▶ University research reports on voting turnout (e.g. Bhatti et al. 2016) ▶ Voting turnout estimates based on surveys (e.g. Ipsos MORI 2017)	▶ National statistical office (e.g. Official Statistics of Sweden) ▶ Specialised governmental commissions or working groups on particular elections (e.g. House of Commons Library in the United Kingdom) ▶ General governmental bodies on elections (e.g. Der Bundeswahlleiter in Germany) ▶ University bodies conducting voting turnout research (e.g. Center for Elections and Parties, Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen) ▶ Research companies conducting voting turnout research (e.g. Ipsos MORI in the United Kingdom)

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8. In this case, as suggested in the previous footnote, the exact opposite can also be of interest for further analysis: 18–20-year-old males and females from Baden–Württemberg exhibit notably higher voting turnout in comparison to their peers from other regions, and as such can be looked at to explore what supports them in their decision to cast their ballots in the elections in order to use such support mechanisms in other regions and potentially even age groups as well.

2) Is voting turnout information available?	
YES – What to look for and how to best analyse it.	**NO** – How to set it up to get the best information.
Age groups: Look for as detailed age group data as available.	*Age groups:* Set them up in line with your needs, but also keep in mind comparability of the age groups across countries or with international data sources, such as the Eurostat data.
Gender identities: Aim at distinguishing gender in each of the age groups as well as to compare them to the total results for all voters.	*Gender identities:* Ensure non-binary identities are taken into account as well and in case other gender identities are recognised in your country or region, include them to allow voters to identify as such.
Geographical area: Explore constituencies or other geographical locators in line with your specific interest and use these data to add another layer, projecting age groups divided by genders for each of the geographical locations separately. Compare the geographical locations and look at what is happening in different areas across gender and age groups.	*Geographical area:* Gather data on small geographical areas, since these smaller areas can always be merged to create larger ones, but not the other way around.
Other aspects: Search for additional information on voting turnout, such as educational background, economic status, and other aspects which can also be added to see more details on the voting turnout of specific groups of voters.	*Other aspects:* If possible, set up additional measures to gather data on educational background, minority background or economic status of the voters.

Identifying the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes of the target group(s)

Once voting turnout data highlights groups of young people who are systematically or substantially missing[9] at the polling stations, the next step in building a profile of potential first-time voters is to explore the knowledge, skill, attitudes and values of these groups. Before launching an awareness raising campaign, it is highly recommendable that EMBs learn as much as possible about the learning that is required amongst young people to encourage them to vote. Is it a matter of access to **knowledge**? Is it a matter of **skills** to evaluate who to vote for? Is it a perception about public institutions and politics, i.e. not in line with their **values**? (see Chapter 3 for more possibilities). The chances are, there is always a combination of all these elements, though one particular dimension may be more important. However, it is important to know which aspect to address in any awareness raising measure and which aims to engage young people in democratic processes, in particular voting.

This can be done by comparing groups and looking at existing data and research, or conducting focus groups to determine potential causes of their voting abstention.

Using existing data and research

After identifying the groups of young people who exhibit voting abstention behaviour, these groups can be further analysed using other data available on young people in the respective country (or even a specific geographical location). The first step in doing so is looking for data sources including information on young people of interest. Nowadays, various sources on both international and national levels provide data on various aspects of everyday life, including voting behaviour. As an example, Eurobarometer data by Eurostat (cf. European Union 2015), or World Values Survey (2020) by an international research community can be seen as valuable sources of information on young people in different countries.

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9. In a more general sense, of course, one can look at groups of young people who exhibit notably different voting turnout in comparison to others in order to explore both the lower and the higher voting turnout groups. Discovering the cause of the higher voting turnout via further analyses of high-voting-turnout groups of young people can create potential for replication of the cause in other groups of young people. Nevertheless, the aim of this chapter is to explore youth voting absenteeism – discovering groups with low voting turnout (i.e. young people systematically and substantially missing at polling stations) is vital to both exploring the reasons for their behaviour as well as in identifying these groups for the purpose of future intervention.

While the Eurobarometer is available as a report and analytical findings from various areas can be found for different European countries and cross-referenced directly with the country and youth group in question, the World Values Survey (and other similar sources) provide data which can subsequently be analysed in line with the specific needs of the given inquiry. Apparently, the Eurobarometer and similar sources provide ready-to-go findings, which can be helpful but do not necessarily cover the specific groups or countries of interest. The World Values Survey[10] data offer the possibility of conducting original analyses focusing on specific countries of subgroups of the population. Each of the approaches can be useful, based on answers to the following questions:

- ► Do the reports fit the target group defined by the voting turnout analysis?
  - – Yes: Use the reports.
  - – No: Look for appropriate data or other reports.
- ► Are the results needed fast?
  - – Yes: Use the reports, if possible.
  - – No: Use the reports as a first step and then utilise further data, if possible.
- ► Are analytical capacities (i.e. experts, software, funding) in place?
  - – Yes: Use the reports as a first step and then utilise further data, if possible.
  - – No: Use the reports only or outsource the analytical work.

As an example of results from further analyses, data from the Eurobarometer survey (European Commission and European Parliament 2019) were used to shed some light on the reasoning behind current voting behaviour of young people. All in all, it shows that, in general, people with more correct knowledge on the elections in question[11] are more inclined to cast their ballots. At the same time, the older the person, the more precise knowledge on the elections s/he will possess. This simple analysis shows that knowledge on the election dates, purpose and other aspects, can be unevenly distributed in society, putting young people at a disadvantage. This raises further questions, of course: Are enough youth-friendly electoral sources available? What range of information do these youth-friendly sources cover? Do these sources differ in content or outreach to sources used by people belonging to older age cohorts? Nevertheless, even this rather simple analysis shows a direction which can be further pursued in each respective country.

Further on, analyses show that, in the case of the European Parliament elections, people with a positive perception of the European Parliament as an institution are more likely to cast their ballots than those whose perception of the European Parliament is a negative one. Interestingly, there are rather large country differences when it comes to exploring whether it is younger or older people who have a more positive or more negative view of the European Parliament, with some countries showing a relationship between the young people and positive views, while other countries exhibit no relationship whatsoever, and in some countries the relationship is quite the opposite: young people tend to be more negative in their views of the European Parliament than their older counterparts. These results not only show an importance of another factor (image of the public institution elections are connected to), but also, the importance of the country differences and the necessity to conduct a detailed national-level analysis rather than assuming that general rules apply universally across all contexts.

Lastly, backgrounds of young people across the European countries were analysed in connection to voting behaviour. Again, the results show a high level of country-specificity, making any general statements nearly impossible outside of the particular national context. Some aspects linked to positive voting behaviour were, however, identified, and these include the following: extent of Internet usage; gender identity; social class background; marital or partnership status; occupational status; size of the settlement; and economic situation.

When analysing further data, some criteria need to be taken into account:

- ► **Use data from the same year as the data of the voting turnout.** If no such data are available, try to stay as close as possible.
- ► If there is a discrepancy between the voting turnout data and the data for further analysis, be prepared for results that do not match precisely as **conditions change over time and yesterday´s absenter can be today's voter**.

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10. Research reports based on the World Values Survey focusing on various aspects of human activity are also available. Unfortunately, they are often for purchase only.
11. Eurobarometer data referred to the European Parliament elections, specifically asking of the date of the upcoming elections.

► **Analyse aspects that are useful in designing interventions.** Even though left–right political inclinations can be linked with the likelihood of young people voting in some countries, it is an aspect which can hardly be exploited in order to increase the voting turnout.

Using focus groups

One of the most effective ways to learn about young people's needs is to either organise focus groups or discussion workshops.

> *A focus group is a small group of people whose views are explored on a particular topic. This occurs especially in market research or political analysis using guided or open discussions about a new product or something else to determine the reactions that can be expected from a larger population.*

Ideally, a focus group should be made up of participants that demographically represent the group of young people you are trying to target. For example, if your statistical data shows that young women are underrepresented at the voting booth, you would conduct a focus group with young women. Focus groups can be used to learn more about elements such as:

► **What are the main reasons that young people in the target group do not vote?** Asking questions, so to understand if it is predominantly an issue of knowledge (about the role of institutions, how to vote, etc.), attitude towards civic engagement, or if they already have a formed opinion about voting and they deliberately choose to which extent to engage (thus, being a matter of values).

► **What type of support would they need in making informed decisions**?

► **What issues they would like to see more debated or would motivate them** to become interested in voting. This is particularly helpful in building any of your campaign/educational programmes content-wise, by making sure you address the topics young people are interested in.

► **What messages and communication would connect with them**?

It can be highly beneficial to work with other partners, such as youth organisations, to run focus groups or discussion workshops. The advantage of having youth organisations leading discussions or focus groups is that young people feel more comfortable and free to speak with their peers, and they are likely to have access to young people.

When in doubt, ask the youth! The golden rule when developing campaigns or educational programmes that aim at changing young people's behaviour is to engage them at every step. Focus groups and partners who engage on a regular basis with young people are a resource to gain deeper knowledge into what your programme or campaign should cover.

Chapter 5

Setting objectives and choosing types of awareness raising measures

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to help Electoral Management Bodies design and develop a strategic approach to implementing awareness raising measures targeted at young people. It is intended to help the reader set appropriate objectives for an awareness raising measure taking into account the target groups and the available resources and then select appropriate methods of awareness raising.

In this toolkit we assume that the primary goal of awareness raising measures put in place by Electoral Management Bodies is to create behaviour change in relation to youth voting (see Chapter 3). The ultimate goal of any intervention is to increase the youth voter turnout.

Alongside this goal, setting specific objectives for your awareness raising measures will help ensure that they are well designed and effective at achieving this goal. The URSO paradigm recommended to following SMART criteria when setting objectives, namely ensuring they are:

- ► **Specific** – target a specific area for improvement.
- ► **Measurable** – quantify or at least suggest an indicator of progress.
- ► **Assignable** – specify who will do it.
- ► **Realistic** – state what results can realistically be achieved, given available resources.
- ► **Time-related** – specify when the result(s) can be achieved.

This chapter is designed to help you set SMART objectives and choose an appropriate awareness raising measure. Three tools are also produced to be used alongside this chapter. They are:

- ► **Appendix 1 Micro SWOT capacity assessment** – a tool to help you assess which types of awareness raising measure you are most well placed to deliver.
- ► **Appendix 2 Decision-making tree** – a tool to help choose which methods of awareness raising measure are most appropriate.
- ► **Appendix 3 SMART Objective planning template** – a tool to record your objectives in SMART format.

When setting your objectives, it can be valuable to work with other stakeholders who might be involved in supporting your work. In particular, working with youth organisations can enable you to work in a participatory manner to develop your awareness raising measures.

Setting objectives: Steps to follow

Step 1: Ensuring the foundations are in place.

As discussed in Chapter 2, before starting to develop awareness raising campaigns targeted at young people, we first recommend that EMBs use the USRO toolkit to ensure these measures are an appropriate strategic priority in the wider context of their work. If the URSO framework issues that other areas of development might take priority it may be preferable to consider developing those instead.

Alongside this it may also be necessary to ensure that electoral law foresees specific measures and adequate financing for the development of awareness raising measures targeted at first-time voters and specific groups. If electoral law prevents such programmes or adequate resources are not in place, it may first be necessary to focus on changing this before proceeding. Although what constitutes 'adequate' resources is a matter of context and objectives, if the end goal is to impact youth voter turnout, this requires sufficient resources to reach enough of the youth population to achieve this. Very small-scale measures may be insufficient to create the level of impact required and represent a 'drop in the ocean'.

Step 2: Defining the target group and the intended learning.

Using the profiling approach discussed in Chapter 2, a precise target group for the awareness raising measure can be decided. One approach is to simply focus on 'any young people', though it may still be useful to define what this means as an age range. Another approach is to focus on a specific subgroup that is known to be less likely to vote, such as young people from a particular geographic community or income background. You might also consider if reaching a particular group, such as young people still in school, might be easier to achieve, or lead to more effective measures.

It is also necessary to think about the numbers of people within this target population you wish to reach with the awareness raising measure. It is helpful to think in terms of both a concrete number and to try to understand roughly what percentage of the target population this represents.

Having identified the target group for the measure, it is then necessary to consider what sort of learning and competencies the awareness raising campaign is intended to help them develop. Knowledge, skills, values and attitudes (see Chapter 3) need to develop in order to encourage them to vote. This decision should, whenever possible, be based on a profile of the target group (see Chapter 4). Different target groups may have different learning needs.

Step 3: Identifying potentially suitable methods of awareness raising.

With a clear idea of the intended learning objectives it is then possible to begin considering what methods of awareness raising measures might be well placed to deliver this learning.

The table below shows how the four different types of awareness raising campaigns relate to the three different forms of learning. In practice the distinction between different types of awareness raising measure might be less pronounced, and forms of learning can overlap more than is portrayed. For example, it is possible to mix both formal and non-formal methods in one educational package, or to combine information campaigns with formal citizenship education programmes. However, the table illustrates the type of learning each type of measure is most well suited to promoting.

Figure 5.1 Types of awareness raising measures linked to learning types

		Type of awareness raising measure that are most suitable	
		Educational programmes	**Communications and marketing campaigns**
Main type of learning needed by target group	**Knowledge focused**	Public communication campaigns	Formal citizenship education programmes
	Values and attitudes focused	Marketing campaigns	Non-formal citizenship education programmes
	Skills focused	N/A	

Step 4: Selecting the best method(s) based on your resources and capacity.

Having begun to narrow down possible methods of awareness raising measures, it is then necessary to consider which method(s) you have the capacity and resource to deliver effectively.

The 'Capacity Assessment Micro SWOT' in Appendix 1 can be used as a tool to help you assess your capacities. It pays particular attention to:

▶ **Access to educational specialists** – in order to design citizenship education methods

► **Access to communications specialists** – in order to design communication campaigns
► **Access and links to educational institutions and youth organisations** – to act as delivery partners
► **Financial resources** – to deliver mass communications campaigns

Having completed the SWOT, and defined your target group's learning needs, the decision-making tree (see Appendix 2) can be used to guide your final selection of methods.

Step 5: Setting evaluation criteria.

Evaluating awareness raising measures is crucial to determining their effectiveness, and informing future work. Defining evaluation criteria and considering how a measure might be evaluated is an essential part of planning intervention measures. It is important that evaluation is considered at the planning stage, so that you can collect the necessary data throughout delivery. If you are intending to work with an external evaluator, you may wish to consult them during the planning stage, rather than waiting until the end of delivery.

Evaluating impact of awareness raising - In an ideal world the impact of awareness raising measures could be evaluated by the extent to which they led to an increased youth voter turnout. However, although awareness raising measures will make a contribution to increasing this, many other factors, not least current political issues and electoral candidates, will both increase and decrease turnout. As a result, any change in youth voter turnout is difficult to attribute directly to the result of an awareness raising measure. Even if youth voter turnout falls it does not mean awareness raising measures have been unsuccessful – there may have been a larger political issue causing the fall, and awareness raising measures might have simply prevented a bigger decrease from happening. Instead, evaluating the impact of an awareness raising measure should focus on considering three dimensions.

► **Extent of reach** – How many people did the measure reach? What proportion of the target group did this represent? How did this compare to the number you intended to reach? How many times did each person participate or have contact with the campaign?
► **Quality of targeting** – What proportion of your audience/participants reached were in your target group?
► **Impact on beneficiaries/audience** – What difference did the measure make to the audience/participants? Did they gain the intended learning? Did they report that they were more likely to vote as a result?

It is beyond the scope of this toolkit to provide detailed guidance on evaluation methods and criteria, and any evaluation will need to be tailored to the design of the measure. However, some basic methods for evaluating educational measures may include

► Monitoring the numbers of participants and their backgrounds
► Self assessment surveys used at the end of the workshop or lesson asking if the measure increased their likelihood of voting.

Communication campaigns can be much trickier to evaluate, as it is not always clear who has seen the communication material, and there is not always an immediate way to get feedback on it. However, online campaigns are increasingly able to track and monitor who has clicked on adverts if set up effectively, and to target short online polls at the audience. Alongside this information campaigns typically 'test' their materials with focus groups made up of a sample of their target audiences.

Evaluating other aspects – As well as evaluating impact, it might also be useful to consider other elements of an evaluation such as:

► **Audience/participant satisfaction an**d **experience** – What do people like or dislike about taking part in the awareness raising measure? How could it be improved in the eyes of the beneficiaries?
► **Process and quality** – How effective are you and your partners at delivering the intended activities? Were they delivered on time and on budget? What were the key barriers and challenges?
► **Cost effectiveness** – Compared to other options, how much does this measure represent a good investment of resources?

Chapter 6

Implementing public communication and marketing campaigns

Introduction

This chapter outlines how public communication and marketing campaigns might be implemented in practice. The chapter first outlines some key principles and considerations, before exploring how to develop key messages, choose the delivery channel and the roles various actors might play during implementation.

Before implementing a public communication or marketing campaign you should

▶ Define and develop an understanding of your target audience (see Chapter 4.) As much as possible, you should be familiar with who they are, and what their knowledge, skills, values and attitudes are.

▶ Identify clear objectives for your campaign that can be achieved with your resources and through a public communication or marketing campaign (see Chapter 5).

Key principles and overview

Communicating about elections with young voters can be both a challenge and an opportunity if the right strategy is employed. Young people vote if and when their vote makes a difference on the issues they care about. To influence voter behaviour, it is not enough to create out of the box messages, but instead it is necessary to start authentic conversations on how the elections relate to young people's lives. When it comes to communications, execution is everything. In an Internet-dominated world where information circulates at a fast pace, it is a true challenge to create content that engages and motivates young people. However, some of the successful campaigns have some elements in common.

This section gives an overview of what is involved in delivering public communication and marketing measures (Figure 6.1) as well as a series of dos and don'ts to consider when developing a campaign.

DOs – Things that will help your campaign be successful.

▶ *Let young people take ownership* of the campaigns by inviting them to create content. Whether that is starting the process with focus groups to create the main message or organising social media takeovers, young people can be highly effective trusted communicators with their peers.

▶ Know *where your target group is engaging online* – do not assume that young people are on one specific social media platform just because it's familiar to you. Do your research on where each age category spends most of the time online.

▶ If the budget allows, it's always a good idea to *work with a creative agency* and get professional advice on communication.

▶ *Be consistent* in the way you communicate and the message you put out. Repeating the same core message in various contexts is desirable.

▶ Be aware of *what is going on in young people's lives* and connect your online message with humour and wit. Whether it's a reference to a movie, music, popular meme or a topic that is trending/sparks controversy or debate, seize the moment and connect it with your topic.

▶ Try to *engage the audience* by ending your posts with a question inviting them to contribute with their own perspectives.

▶ **Visualise your messages** – with graphics, design and video.

▶ **Be authentic** – showcase real people and real stories. Emphasise values and belonging through real-life examples in an inspirational way (e.g. showing how making decisions or voting changes policies and creates opportunities, etc.).

► **Be bold and original** – try to stand out from other typical campaigns. Consider humour and/or creative word play in promotional materials (memes, posters, flyers, stickers, gadgets, etc.).

DON´Ts – What to avoid in communications about voting and political participation.

► *Never take sides or communicate ambiguously* a politically related message.

► *Don't assume that people* who have a different opinion than you, or your instruction are wrong or foolish. Remember that political participation is a sensitive topic, make it clear with every occasion that EMBs are objective and everyone is invited to vote, regardless of their political opinions. Use differences of opinion as opportunities to provide information.

► **Don't assume your target group will come to you** or proactively chase information.

► Don't try to communicate **too many messages** at once.

► **Avoid** giving any promises or making any claims that you can't back up.

► **Don't underestimate** the target group's critical thinking.

► **Don't assume** your target group trusts your words automatically.

► *Don't make it sound complicated, patronising or unrelatable*. Communicating about voting and democratic participation should always be about empowering and giving a voice to (young) citizens.

► *Don't try to copy* something just because you believe it's trending among young people. A message that is not authentic is likely to backfire.

Figure 6.1 Public communication and marketing – implementation at a glance

	Public communications	Marketing
Typical objectives	Offer unbiased information on topics such as: ► Who are the candidates? ► Where/how can you vote? ► How does voting impact the makeup of the Government? This helps the target group build up their knowledge of the electoral process.	To influence attitudes and values of young voters towards elections and voting. Such as: ► Increasing trust in institutions ► Increasing commitment to voting and democracy ► Building belief in candidates. This helps persuade the target group that they should vote (and in some campaigns who/what they should vote for).
Possible Organiser	Non-partisan organisations and institutions, mass media, Electoral Management Bodies.	Public institutions, civil society organisations, Electoral Management Bodies, mass media, political parties.
Other potential stake-holders	► Electoral Management Bodies ► Youth NGOs ► Mass media ► Schools/Universities	When aiming to influence young people's behaviour to cast their ballot, without influencing any political opinion: ► Electoral Management Bodies, youth NGOs, mass media, schools, universities, other trusted public figures. When also aiming to influence political opinion: ► political parties, elected officials.
Common methods	It usually implies classic information methods: from using mainstream media channels (TV, radio, newspapers) to new media (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Tik-tok) as well as materials such as leaflets, booklets, websites. The messaging is objective, offering information.	This may include techniques to draw target groups attention, make them curious, engage them in conversations (on topics of their interest) showing them *how their action of voting can have an impact*. As part of the marketing strategies, you may consider: running adverts, collaborating with influencers (or trusted public figures), adapting your messages, combined with many of the methods used in public communications.
Typical time frames	Beginning, three months before the elections, with the last month before the election being intensively promoted.	Four to six months before the elections. This allows enough time to become curious as to what elections are about and follow enough news or candidates to make their decision.

How to: Develop key messages

Key messages are the foundation of the communication strategy and should be used in all communication activities. To ensure you get your point across, it is essential to establish your key messages before any communication with the target audience.

Key messages are the core messages we want our target audience to hear and remember. They are not only advertisement slogans but help you to inform, start a conversation and keep a focus. Keep in mind that the key message is not a campaign slogan but a basis for developing a slogan. The key messages have to be rather short, clear and simple. They are not meant for memorising and to be repeated word for word but should rather be used as guidelines so they can be included naturally into communication and conversations. Strong key messages are concise, simple and memorable. They correspond to the strategy of the campaign and are tailor-made, relevant and relatable to your target audience.

There are a number of things to keep in mind when developing key messages:

► **Find a unique selling point –** You have to come up with something powerful, unique, newsworthy or have a strong message which is relevant to your audience.

► **Make your message believable –** Make sure that statistics or personal stories support what you are saying. Claiming something if it's not accurate or true will not make your messages appear authentic and honest. You also have to consider the attitudes – if the trust for politics and state is low, it is not going to be efficient just to claim that 'Your vote is in good hands.'

► **Keep it simple –** Key messages have to be short and clear. Determine the most important core messages you wish to convey and make them simple and interesting to offer food for thought and/or create an emotion that would encourage action.

► **Focus on your strategy –** Make sure your message represents your agenda coherently. Think about the main purpose of your communication. What would you like to achieve with your messages? You might want to increase awareness about the opportunities for voting, inform how to vote or boost participation among specific groups. You might want to inspire people to think about social problems and their role in finding solutions and impacting life around them.

► **What are the triggers that would make the target audience act?** Which messages are the most important for them? What do they believe in? Where are they spending their time? What social media channels are they using? Who do they follow and trust?

► **What tone of language do you want to use?** – Is it humorous? Is it official and presenting authority? Is it friendly? This links to how you want your communication to be perceived – Is it inspiring? Is it trustworthy? Is it professional? Is it political?

Figure 6.2 Three phases to create communications messages

Phase 1: Brainstorm draft key messages with internal stakeholders

Gather an initial team for brainstorming key message concepts. As a starting point, it may include only the team of your organisation but involving external stakeholders, PR experts, or young people from the target group. During brainstorming:

► **Keep your target audience in mind.** What do they need and want to hear from you? Tailor different messages for each group.

► **Focus on the impact, benefits and belonging or other key values** the target audience will consider important. Think about 'what's in it for me?' for the target audience – focus on what they want, believe and will be motivated by rather than what you think they should hear.

► **Consider the barriers, fears or challenges** that keep your audience passive or may prevent them voting? Develop the positive messages to take away fears and to encourage.

► Aim to identify **five key messages** and have supporting arguments/statements or messages for each of them.

► Consider how you could **substantiate your messages** with supporting details which are unique and add credibility. It might be presenting facts, figures and statistics but additionally also incorporate validating quotes by opinion leaders/peers or other influential authorities.

► Consider how your **messages should be supported visually** – Which photos do you use? Which designs and colours? This also includes telling stories and using visuals that help to make the supporting details more effective in supporting your key messages.

Phase 2: Refine draft key messages

After the brainstorming, refine the draft versions of the key messages by reviewing them with the following questions in mind:

- ▶ Do they support your objectives?
- ▶ Do they sound conversational? Would you discuss them with your friends?
- ▶ Can you simplify the language or make the statements more concise?
- ▶ Would your target audience understand how you want them to act? Would they feel motivated?

Phase 3: Test with wider stakeholders, finalise and constantly update

After you refine the draft versions of the key messages, **test those messages** to ensure that they resonate with the internal team and external target audience.

- ▶ **Incorporate feedback** from internal and external audiences and finalise the key messages.
- ▶ Over time, as you **routinely re-analyse** your target audience and review the key messages.

How to: Choose delivery channels

Once you've tested and defined your key messages, it is necessary to identify the channels you will use to make them heard and create impact. For a successful campaign, your messages have to be heard simultaneously, across various channels during a concentrated time period. This includes offline and online communication, a wide range of traditional media and through spokespersons. They also need to be on channels which your target group uses. Channels can include:

- ▶ The most popular **social media channels** and **influencers** in your country (through targeted and promoted content, active interaction with the followers, games and playful activities, storytelling, cooperation with celebrities and other influencers, etc.).
- ▶ **Traditional media** – paid content such as TV ads before the most popular shows and non-paid communication content such as interviews or articles on TV, radio, newspapers, etc.
- ▶ **Schools, universities** – presentations and talks or distribution of leaflets or posters.
- ▶ **Youth organisations and youth movements** – presentations and talks or distribution of leaflets or posters.
- ▶ **Public spaces & outdoor advertisement** – such as cinemas, event venues, creative spaces, shopping centres, streets, skateparks, etc.
- ▶ **Events and happenings** (such as festivals, forums, concerts) – This could also mean you organising events and happenings to 'step out of the office' and go to meet young people.
- ▶ **Networks** – working with reliable peers, forming co-operation and trust between organisations or people that have access to relevant networks, etc. This works especially well with groups that don't trust the government or are marginalised in some way – e.g. young people who are not in school nor working, etc.

Budget consideration and resources will be a key part of choosing your channels, as well as which channels are most likely to have impact. Both of these things will vary depending on the context you are working in.

How to: Involve other stakeholders

Considering that *a variety of actors* can play an important role in implementation, it is important to have a clear understanding on how to involve them, and the roles they might play.

Figure 6.3 Roles for other stakeholders in public communication and marketing campaigns

Youth organisations or other civil society organisations		
Role they can play	*How to involve them*	*Elements to consider*
Reaching out to young people and giving a voice to young pro voting role models with whom other young voters can identify, in order to promote a positive voting behaviour. Mobilising youth to be interested in political participation.	Involve them in advising on the design of campaigns, e.g. ask them what are the most used social media channels by young people and consider those for running ads there. Ask their support with identifying youth activists who can be the pro-moters of the marketing campaign. Ask them to distribute communications materials to young people.	They often have limited resources to run marketing campaigns, both financial and expertise in marketing. Be aware that some organisations may support a particular political perspective or party, or be perceived to.

Schools, universities and other education institutions		
Role they can play	*How to involve them*	*Elements to consider*
Distributing communications materials to young people. Providing access to a large number of young people in order to host events/activities on voting.	Ask them to distribute communications materials to young people.	Messages coming from schools or educational institutions may be perceived as coming from 'authority'. The extent to which young people trust messages distributed by educational institutions will depend on how educational institutions are perceived by young people.

Public institutions for which elections are held		
Role they can play	*How to involve them*	*Elements to consider*
Support initiatives which aim to communicate transparency or trustworthiness about the institution itself, or raise awareness and interest in the working of the institution amongst young people.	Publicly livestream work-ing sessions or debates within the institution. Use social media and encourage representatives of the institution to hold live sessions explaining how things work from the inside. Create opportunities for young people to interact directly with existing representatives. Hold debates on topics that the institution deals with.	It's important to ensure public institutions maintain a neutral, informative tone and are open to answering questions about their work. There may be resistance to using or being part of very bold, disruptive campaigns.

Mass media/new media actors		
Role they can play	*How to involve them*	*Elements to consider*
Distributing key messages to young audiences through their media content. Shaping/hosting large-scale public conversations with young people about voting.	Invite non-partisan media actors to join the campaign and produce content based around the messages. Consider using paid-for content and advertising if budget allows. Identify and partner with new media actors (e.g. online influencers) who address similar issues to your campaign or can connect their content effectively to voting.	Work with media actors whose audience aligns with your target group. Work with the media actors which are perceived as politically independent, have the same values as your campaign and are trusted by young voters. Just because an actor has a large youth audience, does not mean they will add value to your campaign. Work with influencers with whom young voters are likely to identify with and trust.

Political parties and election candidates		
Role they can play	*How to involve them*	*Elements to consider*
Parties and candidates will likely run their own campaigns encouraging young people to vote, but likely to have a biased position. However, they can still be involved in campaigns which do not aim to encourage young people to vote for a particular party or candidate. Initiatives can focus on building opportunities for interaction between candidates and young people. Involving them should focus on building trust in political candidates as a whole group and demystifying representatives.	Invite candidates/representatives of the party to engage in policy conversations with young voters, either in person or through online events. Create spaces for youth-friendly open debates among political representatives from across the political spectrum. Use messaging which encourages young voters to interact and debate directly with the candidates they have to vote for. This will offer young voters a sense of empowerment and themselves as citizens with political candidates who have the role to serve their interests.	In order to maintain neutrality, ensure all political parties are represented in the conversations/debates/meetings with voters.

Chapter 7
Implementing citizenship education programmes

This chapter outlines formal and non-formal citizenship education campaigns that might be implemented in practice. The chapter first outlines some key principles and considerations, before signposting other resources on designing citizenship education and exploring the roles various actors might play during implementation.

Before implementing an educational programme you should

► Define and develop an understanding of your target participants (see Chapter 3.) As much as possible, you should be familiar with who they are, and what their knowledge, skills, values and attitudes are.

► Identify clear objectives for your programmes that can be achieved with your resources and partnerships (see Chapter 5). In particular, how many young people you aim to reach.

It can be helpful when planning strategies to think of formal and non-formal approaches as completely different types of programmes. However, during implementation an educational programme may still have some elements of both approaches. It could be said that they might be primarily formal or primarily non-formal. Similarly, whilst some education stakeholders may be associated with one particular type of approach, they might also blend elements of the two. For example, schools are thought of as delivering formal education, but it may still be possible to deliver non-formal education in schools, by using non-traditional approaches.

Key principles and overview of this type of measure

There is nothing like in-person engagement with young people, especially in an era dominated by online interaction. And there is nothing like an honest conversation where young people have the chance to interact directly with the 'faces of the institutions', or the ones who they are expected to give their vote to. Building trust with institutions and representatives can often be done by creating opportunities for interaction and honest conversation. So when planning in-person activities for young people, here are some elements one may want to consider:

DOs – Things that will help your education programmes be successful.

► Be *clear about the objective* of the events or what young people should expect. It is ultimately their decision if they attend and engage in the conversation.

► Choose wisely *the space* where you want to invite them for political conversations. If you meet young people in their spaces, in places where they *choose* to spend their time, there are higher chances that the conversations about elections would flow naturally. Usually, these spaces can be anywhere from cafes, parks, shopping mall areas, sports centres, youth centres. Classrooms are another option, but you may want to consider a different setting.

► Make sure that young people *feel safe* and comfortable to speak about political participation and elections. If you're having a debate or conversation, you may just ask a simple question to the audience like '*Is everyone here comfortable to speak about politics?*'

► Use *high quality education methods*. If in doubt, reach out to youth organisations, teachers, schools or trainers who are familiar with the methodologies.

► It is rare that young people have the chance to meet and discuss directly with decision makers or the ones who ask for their vote. Use the in-person activities to *invite politicians in the spaces where young people are* and encourage conversations among them. Ultimately, that is how young people get to *trust institutions*, by being empowered to learn that they are the ones sending representatives to seat in the Parliament or Local Councils.

► **Keep it simple!** Young people would show interest to speak about issues they care about, not necessarily to learn about institutional design and policies. Abstract conversations will not do and neither a patronising tone when engaging in conversations with the youth.

► **Make it relatable!** Young people will be more inclined to attend an event which is, for example, moderated by other young people. They will need to feel that they control the situation and that they are empowered. Give young people as much space as possible to be involved in organising the events or activities.

► **Keep it fun** – nobody wants to attend events with no sense of humour or entertainment. Especially as young people have an entire entertainment world at their fingertips, when planning events, make sure there are moments that keep their attention engaged. Whether it's an artist/influencer coming up to give a gig or an activity which involves giveaways, always plan something fun!

DON´Ts – What to avoid in educational programmes about voting and political participation.

► **Do not underestimate** the intelligence or capacity of young people to see the real intentions of an event. The best policy is always honesty, so do not organise an event with a hidden agenda.

► **Do not tokenize young people** – probably one of the worst experiences of a young person related to political participation is being invited just for a picture and not truly being heard. That is the shortest way to disengagement and not voting.

► **Do not have a patronising approach** when organising events dedicated to young people, especially if aiming at influencing attitudes about political participation.

Figure 7.1 Citizenship education programmes – implementation at a glance

	Formal citizenship education programmes	Non-formal citizenship education programmes
Objectives	Provide knowledge related to participating in elections, electoral processes, democracy and democratic institutions.	Contribute to developing active engagement in civic and democractic life, build skills and understanding of the impact of their participation or non-participation.
Who can run it?	Most commonly run by schools, colleges or universities as part of the curricula.	Most commonly run by youth organisations, civil society organisations, training centres/institutions.
Time frames	Ongoing, as this is part of educational curricula and /or sustained NGO's programme.	Typically shorter-term programmes ranging from one-off events to two-to-three month projects.
Where (delivery sites)?	Mainly in schools, universities or any other formal learning setting.	More likely to take place in youth centres, training centres, camps or any other space where young people feel comfortable to engage in discussions about citizenship, though can be delivered anywhere.
Actors / stakeholders to consider	Schools, educational institutions Youth NGOs Elected officials	Electoral Management Bodies Training centres/institutions Youth NGOs, Youth workers

Useful resources

The Council of Europe has produced a wide variety of resources that can be used for citizenship education, available from their website. These include:

EDC/HRE Pack – A set of tools for promoting democracy and human rights through education was developed by the Council of Europe based on its member states' experiences and expertise in this area, and is now known as an 'EDC/HRE Pack'.

Taking part in democracy - Lesson plans for upper secondary level on democratic citizenship and human rights education – This is a manual for teachers in Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) and Human Rights Education (HRE), EDC/HRE textbook editors and curriculum developers.

Curriculum Development and Review for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (2015)

Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People

COMPETENCES FOR DEMOCRATIC CULTURE Living together as equals in culturally diverse democratic societies

Campaign "Free to Speak, Safe to Learn" Democratic Schools for All

How to: Involve other stakeholders

Considering that *a variety of actors* can play an important role in implementation, it is important to have a clear understanding on how to involve them and the roles they might play.

Youth organisations or other civil society organisations

Role they can play	*How to involve them*	*Elements to consider*
Many youth NGOs and civil society organisations have extensive educational expertise, typically in non-formal education. They are well placed to help design and run programmes based on methods and concepts they use regularly which are recognised or accredited by national and/or international public institutions. Often, they represent a trusted actor by young voters themselves.	Involve them in the design and development of programmes. Offer support with grants and specific educational materials for use with young people. Help them make links to other actors to provide support when they run a citizenship educational programme.	Youth organisation and civil society organisation often have limited resources, and are funded on a project basis. This means their non-formal citizenship education programmes highly depend on intermittent resources available and are unlikely to fill a gap for conscious citizenship education through schools or other institutions.

Schools, universities and other education institutions

Role they can play	*How to involve them*	*Elements to consider*
Provide constant citizenship education. Offer a safe space for young voters to learn and develop critical thinking, through non-formal methods, about citizenship engagement.	If the programme is run by another actor than the school, the partnership will prove useful in ensuring outreach to young people.	All citizenship educational programmes run in schools, regardless of the methodology used or promoter, should be politically unbiased.

Training centres and organisations

Role they can play	*How to involve them*	*Elements to consider*
Training centres are structures focused on delivering learning and educational programmes. They can be a good institution to combine the two educational approaches (formal and non-formal) and some centres may specialise exclusively in citizenship education. They typically deliver their programmes for shorter terms and in a variety of different settings.	Collaborate with training centres to develop materials. Invite experts/trainers to design part of your programme. Offer ongoing support with grants and informational materials especially during electoral years.	These are bodies that can easily be supported by EMBs or other public institutions and an effective way to put resources into a continuous approach to offering citizenship education to young citizens.

Elected representatives		
Role they can play	*How to involve them*	*Elements to consider*
Elected officials can be directly involved with key events during citizenship education programmes. Educational programmes can encourage young people to directly contact their elected representatives as an outcome of the programme.	Invite representatives to have issue-based conversations as part of the citizenship educational programmes/classes. Invite representatives to give practical insights on how institutions work, when explaining, for example, the theoretical decision-making processes. Design citizenship education programmes that encourage young people to write to/email their representatives.	If the exercise you are inviting them for is having an issue-based debate, ensure that more than one political party is represented. Maintain the neutrality of the space so that all young people would feel comfortable in expressing their opinions. Recognise that elected representatives have limited time, so may not be able to commit to all programmes.

Chapter 8
Inspirational practices

Introduction

Across the Council of Europe Member States it is understood that Electoral Management Bodies constantly increase their efforts to educate young voters about the electoral process and also encourage them to vote. In addition to this, many other actors also run campaigns and programmes to encourage voting. This chapter contains examples of inspirational practice gathered during the creation of this toolkit both from EMBs and NGOs.

However, there is no '*one size fits all*' approach or perfect example to be copied; rather, the right combination needs to be found, based on the available budget and needed actions. The examples below are meant to highlight how different approaches were successful, but they should not be considered examples and adapted to local realities, respectively scaled up depending on the challenges you may identify.

Practices led by Electoral Management Bodies

Election Administration of Georgia

Election Administration of Georgia has a comprehensive, holistic approach to young voters' education, combining both in-person training and media outreach. Increasing young voters' turnout is one of the strategic objectives and is reflected in the 2015–2019 Strategic Plan of the Election Administration. The institution is successful in collaborating with various stakeholders, such as educators, NGOs, mass media and political parties themselves. The objective is to tackle low youth turnout over the long term, mainly by: a) raising awareness and information and b) developing activities to encourage civic engagement. The main challenge is reaching out effectively to first-time voters, especially by using social media channels.

What makes their approach special?

▶ Coherent and systematic approach to tackle youth absenteeism: from training programmes, to online courses and working with other stakeholders;

▶ They have strong partnerships with the Ministry of Education and Science in Georgia, which allows them to implement activities in schools, in between electoral cycles, in order to form pro-democratic attitudes;

▶ They use non-formal education methods to engage with young people, such as organising election exhibitions and debate clubs;

▶ They partnered up with higher education institutions, delivering a course in elections law to the students of political science, social science and law faculties;

▶ CEC Georgia has set up a distance learning programme related to elections;

▶ CEC Georgia has a grant system, supporting NGOs to increase civic engagement in the electoral process.

Key learning for others:

▶ Having a strategic approach to youth voter engagement means adapting the tools and messages to young people as well as understanding their specific profile;

▶ Partner-up with the ones who have access to young people on a daily basis (e.g. educators, NGOs).

Link to read more: http://cesko.ge/eng/static/1602/akhalgazrda–amomrcheveli

The Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Moldova

The Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Moldova has a strategic approach to educating and engaging on a constant basis with the young voters. Benefiting from various grants from international donors and a civic unit which manages the public relations and media outreach campaigns, young voters represent a specific target. CEC Moldova is constantly partnering up with multipliers and they aim to form civic attitudes from ages as early as 12 years old. One key element is related to the spaces where they meet young voters: from schools to libraries and youth centers, the team of multipliers under the guidance of CEC Moldova goes where young voters feel most comfortable to engage in debates about political participation.

What makes their approach special?
- Constant civic education delivered at grass-roots level, through a team of multipliers and using non-formal education methods, to training young people as observers for elections;
- They partner-up with Ministry of Education and organise simulations of elections, for young people under 18, in order to practically teach them the democratic exercise;
- They use non-formal education methods and informal spaces to meet with young people and engage them in debates about elections;
- They have a strategic approach towards young voters and they reach out to the most vulnerable groups.

Key learning for others:
- Delivering activities in spaces young people are already using and in spaces where they feel safe – or 'Going where young people are' – helps engage in positive conversations, with a diverse range of young people;
- Reaching out to grass-roots level, by using a network of multipliers, can increase the numbers of people contacted, especially in rural areas.

Link to read more: https://a.cec.md/ro

The Central Election Commission of Ukraine

The Central Election Commission of Ukraine mainly has a case-by-case approach to engaging young voters and focuses on communication campaigns and raising awareness about elections. They reach out in traditional ways, by placing external ads on big boards before the electoral campaign, but also engage in online spaces. CEC Ukraine is more focused on the communication aspect of young voters participation, but also plans a long-term approach by developing a toolkit for multipliers.

What makes their approach special?
- As part of their communication strategy, CEC Ukraine creates special messages for young voters and they test the messages in focus groups with the young people themselves;
- They do collaborate with influencers (e.g. singers, artists) to reach out and promote elections and voting among young people.

Key learning for others:
- Engaging with young people when creating messages for campaigns can be highly valuable. The target audience are the ones who can tell you if they relate to a message, if it sounds authentic and it is likely to make a difference;
- Be strategic when choosing the influencers you may want to use to reach out online to young voters: you want someone who is relatable enough, but with a diverse and strong base of followers. When in doubt (who these influencers should be), ask the young people who they connect with whilst developing the campaign.

Link: https://cvk.gov.ua/en/index.html

Practice led by other actors

I Choose Europe – initiative by Young European Federalists (JEF)

JEF is a non-governmental, youth-led organisation which uses mainly non-formal education methods to engage young people in political debates and participation. The initiative addressed young voters participation in the European Union elections in 2019 and combined a series of European events, local actions and a social media information campaign. The key element was a promotional bus tour in 13 European cities: its pit stops were used to reach out to young people across the European Union, spread information about the elections and importance of voting and attend local events in very diverse spaces (e.g. from parks to mall shopping areas or universities). The initiative also aimed at developing critical thinking and offered information on how the (European) institutional systems worked, so young citizens would know how to influence decisions (also beyond voting). While being EU funded, the project mainly used non-formal education and peer learning to engage young voters in issue-based political conversations. The methodology varied from organising debates with political candidates, to using digital tools for quizzes about elections or employing arts to express political participation.

What makes their approach special?

► It was a youth-led initiative, organised and carried by young people themselves, which made it easier to relate with the target group;

► They reached out to young people who are not usually exposed to information about elections, in particular by being mobile and traveling with a branded bus that drew attention;

► They combined fun, entertaining activities (which attract young people) with providing serious information about elections;

► They offered a space for young voters to meet directly with the ones they could vote for, humanising institutions and influencing young people's attitudes towards political representatives and thus political engagement.

Key learning for others:

► It can be valuable to reach out to young people who are usually not exposed to information related to politics and voting;

► Try to work out what draws attention and learn about what draws the attention of young people;

► Maintaining a fun, relaxing atmosphere when organising events for young people is important. Elections and voting can sometimes be perceived as a dry topic, so make sure that when you speak about these topics, the space is comfortable and friendly for young people.

Link to read more:
https://jefbelgium.eu/i–choose–europe–jef–belgium–promotes–the–european–elections–2019/

If You Give A Sh*t, #GiveAVote – European Youth Card Association

The initiative aimed at mobilising young voters to the polls for the EU elections 2019. Having an issue-based approach, the initiative gave young activists a platform to be vocal on the topics they care about, promote voting among their peers and run local activities to educate young citizens about the power of voting. The concept and messages of the initiative were entirely designed with young people, ensuring the target group relates to the way election-related messages were communicated. In order to reach a large audience, influencers were brought on board and adverts were paid and targeted at first-time voters.

While EYCA is not a youth-led organisation but an NGO which offers services to young people, the initiative was entirely youth-led and the youth activists were leading the campaign on the ground.

What makes their approach special?

► They made the initiative all about young people by giving them the platform to put forward the election themes youth care about (issues-based approach);

► From a communication perspective, the initiative used a fresh, bold, fun style, creating messages which are shareable by young people;

► They reached out to influencers with whom young voters actually relate (e.g. not big stars, but actually influencers who are authentic about their causes and lifestyle);

► Created promotional materials (giveaways) which are cool enough for young people to actually wear (e.g. tote bags, pins, stickers).

Key learning for others:

- ► If planning to have a strong social media presence, create messages which can be shared by young people. The safest way is to always make sure the content is created by young people themselves. Also, make sure you use the social media channels which are popular among young people. Research or ask young people, do not assume;

- ► Collaborating with influencers is a great way to reach out to young people who are not exposed to information about voting and elections. If budget allows, collaborate with an influencer's marketing agency. If not, just ask young people who are the popular influencers;

- ► Young people's behaviour is influenced when they understand that voting impacts their life on a daily basis, in different areas. Having an issue-based approach in explaining why voting is important is one way of keeping young people engaged in the conversation.

Link to read more: www.giveavote.eu

Chapter 9

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Vote outside of the box: Trainer's guide

A set of training resources to enable trainers to run short training for Electoral Management Bodies on the Vote Outside of the Box toolkit.

Introduction

This training guide gives a set of workshop outlines for an experienced training to introduce Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) and their stakeholders to the Vote Outside of the Box toolkit.

It provides enough content for half a day's training divided into 45 minute sessions and is designed to be used alongside the accompanying presentation and the various tools from the Appendices of the Vote Outside of the Box Toolkit.

The aims for the training are:

▶ To introduce the Vote Outside of the Box toolkit and its link to the Council of Europe's URSO paradigm.

▶ To develop understanding of the types of awareness raising measures covered by the toolkit that can be used with young people.

▶ To introduce the idea of 'target groups'.

▶ To introduce the idea of learning as a tool for change in voting behaviour.

▶ To develop understanding of how awareness raising methods may deliver different types of learning.

▶ To enable participants to make strategic decisions and choices about the types of awareness raising measures they wish to develop.

Trainers Script

Workshop 1: Introduction to the training and overview of toolkit	**Time length:** 45 minutes

Resources required:

▶ Projector / computer and copy of training presentation

▶ Flipchart paper and pens

▶ Copies of the Vote Outside of the Box toolkit

Learning objectives:

▶ To set expectations of the training course and outline the programme for the day

▶ To develop participants' understanding of the contents and purpose of the toolkit

▶ To explain how the toolkit links to the Council of Europe's URSO paradigm

Methodology

Step 1 – Host a round of introduction between participants asking them to introduce themselves and their roles.

Step 2 – Ask each participant to share three expectations they have for the day. List these on flipchart at the front of the room.

Step 3 – Using the slides, outline the aims of the training and give an overview of the programme for the training.

Step 4 – Present the section of the presentation titled 'Introduction to the toolkit'.

You can use Chapter 1 of the toolkit to support you with this.

Step 5 – Present the section of the presentation titled 'The URSO paradigm'. You can use Chapter 2 of the toolkit to help you do this. Emphasise that this paradigm is about enabling EMBs to make strategic choices and decisions that fit their own context.

Step 6 – Lead a short discussion allowing participants to ask further questions on the content of the day. Reflect which expectation will and won't be covered.

Workshop 2: What are awareness raising measures?	**Time length:** 45 minutes

Resources required:
- ▶ Projector / computer and copy of training presentation
- ▶ Flipchart paper and pens
- ▶ Copies of the Vote Outside of the Box toolkit

Learning objectives:
- ▶ To develop participants understanding of the the two types and four sub-types of awareness raising measure covered by the toolkit
- ▶ To introduce participants to the idea of 'target groups'
- ▶ To introduce participants to the idea of learning as a tool for behaviour change

Methodology:

Step 1 – Ask participants to work in pairs, and between them to brainstorm how many different types of awareness raising measure they can think off. Take feedback between the pairs.

Step 2 – Present the slides 'What do we mean by awareness raising measures?' and 'Types of awareness raising measures'. You can use Chapter three to help with this.

Step 3 – Using the slides introduces the concept of a target group. Explain to participants that the more clearly they can focus on subgroups of young people the more likely their measures will be effective. Signpost them to Chapter 4 of the toolkit which outlines how to build a profile of potential first-time youth voters.

Step 4 – Lead a discussion amongst the group, focused on the following questions:
- ▶ In their reality, which are the groups of young people who are less likely to vote?
- ▶ What data do they have access to that will give them information on this?
- ▶ What do they know about the attitudes of young people in these groups towards voting?
- ▶ How do they know this? Are they guessing or have they undertaken work to explore these areas?

During this discussion, challenge any assumptions that young people are disinterested or disengaged from politics. Highlight that, although it varies in different realities, across Europe, most sociological research indicates young people are highly politically motivated, but that their trust in representative democracy and public institutions is low.

Step 5 – Present the slides on 'Changing non-voters behaviour using learning'. You can use Chapter 3 to help with this.

Step 6 – Lead a short discussion on what participants know about the learning needs of the target groups? Highlight the value of holding focus groups to explore this (see Chapter 4).

Workshop 3: Choosing methods and understanding capacities	**Time length:** 45 minutes

Resources required:

- ► Projector / computer and copy of training presentation
- ► Flipchart paper and pens
- ► Printed copies of the Micro SWOT appendix
- ► Copies of the Vote Outside of the Box toolkit

Learning objectives:

- ► To develop participants' understanding of how each type of awareness raising measure may deliver different types of learning amongst the target group
- ► To enable participants to begin assessing what capacities they have to deliver each type of measure using the Micro SWOT

Methodology

Step 1 – Present the slides on 'Linking methods to learning'. Use Chapter 5 to help with this. Outline that:

- ► The fours (2x2) different types of awareness raising measures are each better suited to delivering different types of learning.
- ► If you know what the learning needs of your target group are, this can guide you in choosing the measure that is more likely to be effective.
- ► Acknowledge that this approach is useful for making strategic choices – but make people aware that it deliberately over-simplifies things to help with setting strategic goals. In practice the distinctions between different types of measure and different types of learning will not always be so distinct.

Step 2 – Split participants into groups of three to five, and give each group a flipchart. Ask each group to spend time discussing:

- ► What are their experiences of each type of awareness raising measure?
- ► What resources would they need for each type of measure?

Take feedback between the group. If necessary you can use the case studies in Chapter 8 to support this discussion.

Step 3 – Explain to the group that it is important to consider what capacity they have to deliver each type of measure, in their working context. Distribute the Micro SWOT tool to participants and ask them to assess their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as a team/organisation to deliver awareness raising measures.

Workshop 4: Deciding on objectives	**Time length:** 45 minutes

Resources required:
- ► Projector / computer and copy of training presentation
- ► Flipchart paper and pens
- ► Printed copies of the decision-making tree and smart objective planner from the toolkit
- ► Copies of the Vote Outside of the Box toolkit

Learning objectives:
- ► To enable participants to develop their competencies to make strategic decisions and choices about the types of awareness raising measures they should run in different scenarios using the decision-making tree

Methodology

Step 1 – Prior to the workshop

This session involves beginning to design awareness raising measures and setting strategic objectives. This can only be done effectively if participants already have a clear idea of their target group and their target groups learning needs. As most groups may not have a clear target group when the training takes place, the trainer should prepare one or more hypothetical target groups that can be used within the training. This can be done by answering the questions below, which form the first part of the SMART objective planner. You should define a group that is realistic to the country context in which you are working.

- ► *Who is the target group of your awareness raising measure?* Consider defining an age range, ethinic backgrounds, genders or living location. E.g. young women aged 16–25 living in Novi Sad.
- ► How many people in the target group do you hope to reach? Choose between hundreds, thousands or tens of thousands (e.g. 5000).
- ► *What percentage of the target group population does this represent?* This only needs to be a rough but semi-realistic estimate (e.g. 5%, 30%, 50%, etc.).
- ► *What competencies (knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) are you hoping the target group will develop as a result of the awareness raising measure?* Choose 2–3 from Table 3.2 within Chapter 3 of the toolkit. Focus primarily on one category.

Alternatively, if the participants already have a good understanding of their target group, you can run this activity based on their real world scenarios.

Step 2 – Introduce the participants to the concept of SMART targets using the slide, as well as the decision-making tree, and SMART objective planner. You can use Chapter 5 to help with this.

Step 3 – Split participants into groups of four. Explain that you will ask them to use the decision-making tree and SMART objective planner to design an awareness raising campaign. Explain that this should be a campaign they could realistically be able to implement in their realities, and using their Micro SWOT may also be helpful. If they do not have a clear target group already, give each group a hypothetical one.

Step 4 – Allow the groups to work for an extended period on their awareness raising measure designs, before taking feedback and critique between groups.

Appendix 1
Micro SWOT capacity assessment

T his micro SWOT is designed to help you assess the internal and external factors that influence and impact on your capacity to deliver awareness raising measures. It helps assess your current situation, paying particular attention to the resources, assets, partnerships and networks you have access to. It is most effective when completed by your whole team during a group discussion. It's true value is in enabling your team to think critically and strategically about the capacity of your organisation. Using the SWOT to facilitate this sort of team discussion can be more valuable than producing finished documents. Completing one is straightforward, simply use the template overleaf.

A SWOT has two dimensions, internal and external. The **internal** dimension – this relates to the things *within* your organisation/team[12] or things primarily within your organisation/teams control. It can include:

► Human resources – such as staff, volunteers or particular individuals with key attributes.

► Physical resources – your location, building, equipment.

► Finances or budgets.

► Activities and processes – programmes you already run, systems or processes you have in place.

► Past experiences – building blocks for learning and success, your reputation in the community.

The internal dimensions are divided into two halves: Strengths and Weaknesses. **Strengths** are things that your organisation has or is good at. **Weaknesses** are things that you lack or are poor at. The **external** dimension relates to things that are outside of your organisation/team and primarily outside of your organisation/team's control. It can include:

► Partnerships and networks – people or organisation/team you have or could make links to and collaborate with.

► Resources within other organisations/teams – this could be human resources, skill sets or physical assets.

► External funding – such as grant funding.

► Activities or processes run by other organisations/teams – things that may be relevant to your work.

► Key experts or political figures.

► Upcoming political or strategic changes that may affect you – such as a new policy or law.

The external dimension has two halves: Opportunities and Threats. **Opportunities** are things which could potentially help you achieve your goals. **Threats** are things which could prevent you from achieving them.

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12. For large organisations it usually makes sense to focus the SWOT on one team or department, and treat other teams or departments as external.

	Strength	Weaknesses
I N T E R N A L	Tick the ones that apply ☐ Having access to a communications specialist ☐ Having access to an education specialist ☐ Access to existing demographic profiles of non-voters ☐ Access to existing attitudinal research into non-voters ☐ Having access to a youth participation specialist ☐ Experience (and learned lessons) from previous campaigns or programmes for young voters ☐ Clear objective and goals for youth voter strategy ☐ Budget List any other relevant strengths:	Tick the ones that apply ☐ Not having an in-house communications specialist ☐ Not having access to existing demographic profiles of non-voters ☐ Not having access to an education specialist ☐ Not having access to existing attitudinal research into non-voters ☐ Not having a youth participation specialist ☐ No experience (and learned lessons) from previous campaigns or programmes for young voters ☐ Not having a strategy to address and engage young voters ☐ Lack of budget List any other relevant weaknesses:
	Opportunities	**Threats**
E X T E R N A L	Tick the ones that apply ☐ Good links to youth organisations ☐ Good links to schools and other educational institutions ☐ A good relation to mass media ☐ The possibility to collaborate with other Government campaigns ☐ The ability to commission external communications or education specialists ☐ The ability to commission research institutes or youth organisations to build non-voter profiles List any other relevant opportunities:	Tick the ones that apply ☐ Poor links to youth organisations ☐ Poor links to schools and other educational institutions ☐ No relation to mass media ☐ Lack of relationship with Government ☐ No possibility to commission external support List any other relevant threats:

Appendix 2
Decisions making tree

First time youth voters electoral awareness raising measures: Decision making tree

Does electoral law foresee specific measures and adequate financing for awareness raising, capacity building, and/or education programmes amongst specific target groups of first time voters?

— NO → **Consider** if legislative changes may be needed before proceeding.

— YES → Does the ECA assessment tool indicate developing education and/or awareness raising measures targeted at first time voters is a priority?

— NO → **No measures** targeting young people should be prioritised.

— YES → Have you developed a profile of potential first time youth voters?

— NO → **Consider:** Developing a profile of potential first time youth voters before committing further resources.

— YES → What does the profiling indicate about the target group of young people?

→ The target group has sufficient electoral knowledge and skills, as well as pro-democratic values and attitudes.
Consider: Revising the ECA assessment: Measures targeted at young first time voters may not be an appropriate strategic priority

→ The target group of young people has insufficient knowledge of the electoral process and its functions
Do you have links with educational providers and youth organisations?

— YES → Do you have access to a communications specialist?
— YES → **Develop:** 1) A public communication campaign distributed to young people through educational providers and youth organisations. and 2) A formal citizenship education programme delivered to young people through education providers and youth organisations.
— NO → **Develop:** A formal citizenship education programme delivered through education providers and youth organisations.

— NO → Do you have sufficient budget for a mass communication campaign, and access to a communication specialist?
— YES → **Develop:** An public communication campaign using mass communication aimed at young people in the target group (e.g. online adverts, billboard posters etc)
— NO → **Consider:** 1) Increasing your budget, and/or 2) Developing links with education providers and youth organisations, before proceeding.

→ The target group of young people has insufficient skills to vote responsibly.
Develop: A non-formal citizenship education programme delivered to young people through education providers and youth organisations. You will need links to schools and youth organisations, as well as educational specialists to do this.

→ The target group of young people does not have pro-democratic values and attitudes.
Do you have links with educational providers and youth organisations?

— YES → Do you have access to a communications specialist?
— YES → **Develop:** 1) A marketing campaign distributed to young people through education providers and youth organisations, and 2) A non-formal citizenship education programme delivered to young people through education providers and youth organisations.
— NO → **Develop:** A non-formal education package delivered to young people through schools and youth organisations.

— NO → Do you have sufficient budget for a mass communication campaign, and access to a communication specialist?
— YES → **Develop:** A marketing campaign using mass communication aimed at young people in the target group.
— NO → **Consider:** 1) Increasing your budget, and/or 2) Developing links with education providers and youth organisations. before proceeding

SMART Objective planning table

Specific	Who is the target group of your awareness raising measure?	
	How many people in the target group do you hope to reach?	
	What percentage of the target group population does this represent?	
	What competencies (knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) are you hoping the target group will develop as a result of the awareness raising measure?	
	What method of awareness raising measure will you use?	
Measurable	What evaluation criteria will you use?	
Assignable	What actors will be involved? What will their roles be?	
	Who will take responsibility for leading?	
Realistic	What resources are required and where will they come from? (e.g. financial, human, physical)	
Time bound	What is the timetable for development, delivery and completion?	

In recent decades, within many democracies youth voter turnout has been at historic lows. This has caused some to argue that young people are disinterested in politics – however, recent research has shown this is not necessarily true. Instead, young people are very politically motivated, but have low levels of trust and belief in formal representative democracy organisations, often preferring to express their political convictions through alternative forms of participation such as volunteering and activism. The toolkit is designed to enable Electoral Management Bodies to develop strategic approaches to raising awareness of electoral processes and building electoral knowledge amongst young people as potential first-time voters. Also, this publication may be relevant to other bodies who are interested in this such as Ministries and Agencies responsible for youth policy and other state and non-state actors.

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