

October 25, 2017

## Policy makers: Social networks are our line to youths

**YouthMetre research suggests policy makers around the EU see digital platforms and social networks as a must-have when attempting to engage youths in policy-making.**

How important are digital platforms to fostering participation from youths in decision-making processes?

This question was posed to more than 100 policy makers by five young and engaged citizens from all around Europe at European Week of Cities and Regions in October 2017. In the survey's results, one fact stood out.

Local, national and European policy makers alike consider e-tools the most important and popular way for young people to communicate and orient themselves today. And since it is their way to source information and inspiration, it also represents an easy way for policy makers to reach a large number of youngsters.

*"The results of this survey shows that e-tools are clearly seen as a must if they are to involve youth, policy makers identified the use of social networks and digital platforms as their highest priority in seeking to engage youths in decision-making processes,"* says Alessio Lupi, who represented YouthMetre at their interactive workshop for policy makers at the EWCR.

And in fact, the 100 survey responses were collected exactly through such a digital platform. Young interviewers used the GeoCitizen app, developed by researchers in Austria and being used in YouthMetre's initiative. The app lets users collect ideas for change, discuss, vote on proposals and create online surveys on local issues. It is available for Android and iOS phones and tablets.

Mr. Lupi, the secretary general of ARS for Progress of People, explains how all this relates to the general aims of the YouthMetre initiative: *"The purpose of YouthMetre's interactive tools is to enhance the Structured Dialogue between the EU's authorities and the union's young inhabitants. In the end, the aim is to define a better European youth policy."*

Young people, policy makers and YouthMetre's project partners discussed the perspectives of social networks to create dialogue at YouthMetre's interactive workshop at the EWRC on October 12.

For more information about YouthMetre and the workshop, contact the Project Coordinator Karl Donert, President, European Association of Geographers (EUROGEO) — [kdonert@yahoo.com](mailto:kdonert@yahoo.com).