

DIGITAL DEMOCRACY DAY 2017-10-17

“Rejuvenating Europe: opportunities in Digital World”

<http://ecas.org/event/digital-democracy-day-2017/>

Organised by ECAS – EUROPEAN CITIZEN ACTION SERVICE -

Brussels 17 October 2017

Organised in the framework of the Erasmus + project “Deep-linking Youth”, [ECAS](#) launched the Digital Democracy Day conference to explore and discuss about the challenges facing young people today (especially in the field of participation in policy-making) and to share potential concrete solutions to address youth engagement through digital tools.

The conference was organised in two panels, during which experts in the field have been invited to identify and address the most common challenges to youth participation in European policy-making.



1. **Maria Freitas from [FEPS – Foundation for European Progressive Studies](#)**, presented the [Millennial dialogue project](#) a pioneering research project aimed at applying ‘connected research’ technologies to the engagement and understanding of “millennials”, (the most connected of generations) across the democratic world. The empirical research focused on investigating the aspirations, values and ideals of today’s young adults. The survey employed an innovative methodology in order to engage with millennials and to obtain deep initial insights into their attitudes towards politics and existing political systems. It also explored the ways in which political parties, politicians and public officials could start to engage with this generation and, most importantly, to build trust and confidence. The results show that youth are in general happy and ready to engage in political process, also through on-line tools, but they complain about the lack of interest from policy-makers. They ask to be heard, in particular on the issues of: equality, job, health and education.
2. **Isabelle Dochy from [EBU - European Broadcasting Union](#)** introduced the [Generation What Project](#), a survey launched in April 2016, through which nearly a million young people (millennial

generation) from 35 different territories have been given the opportunity by public service media (PSM) to speak up and to be heard. The participants, aged between 18 and 34 have been asked to fill a survey of 149 questions concerning not only political participation and engagement but also family, friend and love issues. The final report with the results of the survey can be found at http://www.generation-what.eu/ebook_generation.pdf?v308.

3. **Roslyn Fuller from the [Solonian Democracy Institute](#)**, international think tank dedicated to researching and promoting form of mass democratic participation. After having presented some research studies about new young generation and their concerns about political participation, she proposed some solutions to foster the young engagement:
 - Pay for participation
 - Lower the voting age
 - Accelerate the outputs of their demands/proposals
 - Political marketing to young people
4. **Freser Handerson from the [ECAS DEEP Linking Youth Project](#)**. The project aimed at exploring how e-participation can foster young people's empowerment and active participation in democratic life. The project tested the functioning of a digital ecosystem for youth engagement by bridging technology and young citizens on a common task with the aim to provide quality input to decision-making in view of producing a sustainable impact. This will include mapping existing youth mobility channels, developing online content and creating different analytical tools to monitor the results. One of the main outcomes is the '[Digital Dashboard](#)', which policymakers will be able to use to understand the concerns of young people and take into account their perspectives in the policy decision-making process.
5. **Anthony Papadimitriu presented [CafèBabel](#)**, a participatory magazine made by and for young people. He manages also the [Ask project](#), an online platform created to foster young people's empowerment and active participation in democratic life within the EU. The ASK platform directly connects young people with decision makers in Europe via Twitter.
6. **Chloé Berthelemy, from the [Young European Federalists](#)**, underlined the issue to take into account when choosing a digital tool for participatory democracy. These risks are: cybersecurity, transparency and the feature adapted to the need of each community. She also pointed out the fundamental role that youth organisations play in fostering participation through: advocating towards public institutions, engaging young people and combining online and offline campaigns. She urged to give the youth the knowledge to meaningful engage and share their idea.
7. **Ekaterina Petrikevich presented the [D21 Project](#)** that is an app aimed at encouraging participation and helping to make better decisions that are based on a wider consensus. It can be used by a municipality, a company or a school by creating a pool for voting candidates / projects / ideas to put in place.
8. **Daniela Vancic from [Democracy International](#)**. She just mentioned the [European Citizen Initiative](#) as powerful tool of direct democracy at EU level.
9. **[Brando Benifei](#), European Parliament member** of PES and contributed to draft the European Youth Guarantee. Very close and interested in youth employment, inclusion and education initiatives. <https://www.facebook.com/benifeibrando/?fref=mentions>



CONCLUSIONS

- Participatory democracy through new digital tools must be complementary (not a substitute) to traditional ways of democratic participation
- **Co-decision, Empowerment and Transparency** are key words for successful initiatives and tools aimed at fostering youth participation.

PROJECTS / CONTACTS / POTENTIAL PARTNERS

- <https://www.euthproject.eu/> and the related event <https://www.euthproject.eu/summit/>
- <http://www.citizensforeurope.eu/>
- <http://www.citizens.is/>
- <https://www.innogage.eu/>
- <http://www.apptivism.org/>
- <https://www.millennialdialogue.com>
<https://www.millennialdialogue.com/media/1072/germany-italy-poland-report.pdf>
- Generation What report: http://www.generation-what.eu/ebook_generation.pdf?v308
- <http://www.cafebabel.co.uk/brussels/>
- <https://opin.me/it/>
- European Youth Network for creativity and Innovation
- <https://www.uxpassion.com/>
- Solonian Institute contact@solonian-institute.com
- GONG (civil society organization based in Croatia, it encourage citizens to actively participate in the political processes. It celebrates dialogue culture, transparency and responsibility in the public domain, while respecting human and civil rights through research, advocacy and education, on its own or in collaboration with individuals and/or organizations that share its values).
- <https://esn.org/>
- <https://www.consultationinstitute.org/>
- <https://www.democracy-international.org/>
- <http://www.slashprod.eu/smartvideos/>