

**Research-based
analysis of European
youth programmes**

Research project on participation and citizenship education
and learning in European Youth Programmes (RAY PART)

CONFERENCE FOR THE PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF INTERIM RESULTS

(RAY PART CONFERENCE)

18 – 19 OCTOBER 2021

ONLINE¹

FINAL (INTERNAL) REPORT

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ROME, ZAGREB, HELSINKI, VIENNA 20201

¹ The RAY PART Conference was initially planned to be held in Strasbourg but had to be moved to an online space due to the ongoing Corona pandemic and related restrictions.

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1. PROGRAMME

Time (CEST)	Monday, 18 October 2021
13:00	Start of the RAY PART Conference
13:00-14:00	Welcome & getting to know each other
	<i>Break</i>
14:15-16:15	Presentation & discussion of RAY PART findings I & II
	<i>Break</i>
16:30-16:45	Input Youth Participation Strategy (SALTO PI)
16:45-17:00	Conclusions of the first day & outlook
17:00	<i>End of day 1</i>

Time (CEST)	Tuesday, 19 October 2021
10:30	Start of day 2 & Check-in
11:00-12:00	Preparing for the dialogue
	<i>Lunch Break</i>
13:15-15:00	Dialogue between policy makers, youth work practitioners, researchers and National Agencies
	<i>Break</i>
15:30-16:30	Reflection & debriefing
16:30	<i>End of RAY PART Conference</i>



2. AIMS & MEETING MODALITIES

The *RAY PART Conference* aimed

- at presenting and discussing the interim results of the RAY research project on participation and citizenship education and learning in European youth programmes (RAY PART)², which are based on case studies from projects funded through Erasmus+ Youth (in Action) and the European Solidarity Corps programmes (conducted in 2020 and 2021).
- to contribute to the findings with a participatory approach by involving selected participants, project leaders and project team members of the researched projects in the research process during the conference.
- to give recognition to the willingness of the beneficiaries to be part of this research project.

The *RAY PART Conference* intended

- to contribute to the visibility of the RAY Network and its research findings, with a focus on the RAY PART project.
- to provide a space for a dialogue between policy makers, young people, youth workers, researchers, representative of National Agencies and other actors.

The conference was initially planned to be held in Strasbourg but was moved to an online space due to ongoing Corona pandemic and related restrictions. This affected both the programme flow, the length of the conference and the profile of the participants (unfortunately, less young people and less project team members could be recruited by the participating RAY PART partners due to the changing of the format). Subsequently, the conference brought representatives of the eight RAY PART partners (National Agencies of the European youth programmes and research partners), policy makers, other stakeholders of the European youth field as well as a few participants and project leaders of the researched projects together.

The conference was organised and planned by the RAY Network Coordination (at the Finnish National Agency for Education, EDUFI) and the RAY PART transnational research team and facilitated by Domagoj Morić and Anna Peltoniemi. The process was supported by the SALTO Participation & Information Resource Centre.

It was held in Zoom and additional online platforms such as Mentimeter, Padlet and Jamboard were used to harvest and present comments, reflections and discussions during the meeting.

Presentations, discussions & background documents

All presentations, harvested discussions and background documents can be found as annexes to this report as well as in the RAY internal area at <https://www.researchyouth.net/internal-area/> in the sub-section 'RAY Conferences & Events' (password: raymemberme)

² More information can be found here: <https://www.researchyouth.net/projects/part/>

3. SESSION OUTCOMES / SUMMARIES

3.1. MONDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2021

Welcome and getting to know each other

Methodology: plenary, breakout rooms

The session was started with an official opening speech by Carmen Teubl, RAY Network Project Manager & Coordinator (Finnish National Agency for Education), followed by a short introduction of the conference objectives and context by Helmut Fennes, member of the RAY PART transnational research team. The programme of the conference as well as technical instructions were presented by the facilitators. After that, the session concentrated on breaking the ice between the participants and creating an atmosphere to support active participation. A mapping of basic information (using Mentimeter) was done with the participants, followed by break out rooms discussions where the participants had the possibility to get to know each other better. Each group had to find similarities and differences among the group participants.

See [Annex 1_RAY PART Conference 181021 general slides](#) (pdf 0,5MB)

See [Annex 2 Mentimeter warm-up results](#) (pdf 1MB)

See [Annex 3 Jamboard Let's meet each other results](#) (pdf 0,6MB)

Presentation of RAY PART Findings I & II

Methodology: plenary, breakout rooms

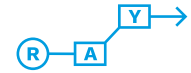
The preliminary research findings were presented in the plenary by Susanne Gadinger, member of the RAY PART transnational research time. First, she gave a general overview of the research findings as well as on the methods fostering participation and citizenship competence and practice. Secondly, the findings were divided into three thematic blocks and each block was presented separately (block one 'methods' was presented with the general overview). After each block the participants were offered an opportunity to reflect on the findings as well as to contribute to them based on their own experience.

Thematic blocks for the presentation of the research findings

1. Methods fostering participation and citizenship competence and practice
2. Project designs, settings, methodologies fostering participation and citizenship competence and practice
3. Youth work competences for participation and citizenship education and learning.

See [Annex 4_RAY LTE PART_Research Conference 2021_research findings_general_methods](#) (pdf 0,1MB)

See [Annex 5_RAY LTE PART_Research Conference 2021_research findings_designs](#) (pdf 0,1MB)



See [Annex 6_RAY LTE PART_Research Conference 2021_research findings_competences](#) (pdf 0,1MB)

After the first and the second block the participants were assigned into breakout rooms where they had the possibility to discuss the findings based on some guiding questions.

Guiding questions

- Which of the findings were surprising or unexpected? Why?
- Which of the findings reflect your experiences or were as you expected? Can you provide an example of your own experience?
- Can you describe any personal experiences which are not covered by these findings and could complement them? Can you add anything to the findings?

Each breakout room had its own host, who guided the discussion as well as a notetaker. The notetakers documented the discussion in Padlet. Following, the participants were brought back to plenary and the notetakers presented the highlights of the discussions in plenary.

Hosts and notetakers

- Alexandre Fonseca (host) and Andreas Karsten (notetaker)
- Susanne Gadinger (host) and Johanna Böhler (notetaker)
- Helmut Fennes (host) and Andrea Horta (notetaker)
- Carmen Teubl (host) and Eva Feldmann (notetaker)
- Adele Tinaburri (host) and Marko Kananen (noteteaker)

See [Annex 7 Discussions breakout rooms_research findings](#) (pdf 0,2MB)

After the third thematic block, the participants were invited to reflect individually on the findings using Mentimeter.

See [Annex 8 Individual reflection Mentimeter_research findings](#) (pdf 0,7MB)

Conclusions/outcomes/recommendations

from group discussions following the presentation of interim RAY PART research findings during the RAY PART Conference

A summary of conclusions and outcomes from the group discussions on the interim research findings as well as recommendations for the final research report was compiled by Helmut Fennes. Please note, this part will be also included in the final RAY PART Research Report and can also be shared externally.

See [Annex9 Conclusions_recommendations_group discussions RAY PART interim findings](#) (pdf 0,2MB)



Input about Youth Participation Strategy

Methodology: plenary

Alexandre Fonseca, coordinator within the SALTO Participation & Information Resource Centre, presented an overview of Youth Participation Strategy.

See [Annex 10 Youth Participation Strategy and Research \(Aim 4\) for RAY PART](#) (pdf 0,5MB)

Conclusions of the first day and outlook for the second day

Methodology: plenary

First, general feelings and main reflections of the day were collected via Mentimeter: The participants stated that they received good information and that it was quite intense. On the other hand, some people said it was interesting and the day was good for an online format. Several participants expressed their feeling of missing Strasbourg and suggested to organise a physical meeting for the overall conclusions and when the final report is finished. Furthermore, participants stated that they will take the importance of context and power relations with them, but also stressed on the importance of ensuring more opportunities for young people to participate. For some participants, it was nice to meet colleagues and to network.

After the reflections, the instructions for the second day were given. The aims and objectives of the dialogue with the policy and decision makers were presented. The participants could choose the policy or decision maker they wanted to meet and registered their preference by using Padlet.

Video message by Dr Othmar Karas

Dr Othmar Karas, Vice-President of the European Parliament, who was invited to take part in the dialogue but had to decline due to other duties, sent the participants of the conference a video message emphasizing on the importance of the participation of young people in civic life and political processes in Europe. The video message can be accessed here: [Dr Othmar Karas video message](#) [mp4]

The day was closed by giving the participants a small homework for the next day: they were asked to come up with ideas and suggestions for the discussion with the policy makers.



3.2. TUESDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2021

Start of the day and warm-up

Methodology: plenary

The day started with an overview of the agenda of the day as well as a short warm-up energizer.

See [Annex 11_RAY PART Conference_191021_general slides \(pdf 0,3MB\)](#)

Preparing for the Dialogue

Methodology: breakout rooms, grid for hosts and notetakers

The session started with an overview of the goals of the dialogue and the role of the participants in it. The participants were also provided with a summary of all the RAY PART research findings to assist them in formulating discussion points for the dialogue.

See [Annex 12_Handout for the preparation for dialogue \(pdf 0,2MB\)](#)

The participants were then divided into breakout rooms, according to their respective selections of the policy makers, in order to prepare their statements and recommendations for the dialogue. Eventually, there were four rooms, as two policy makers on national level, Ms. Birgit Klausser and Ms. Miriam Teuma, were put into the same group. Each breakout room had its own host to guide the preparation of the dialogue and a notetaker to document and harvest the discussion. A grid was prepared for the hosts and notetakers to facilitate their task of guiding the group towards comments, statements and recommendations. After a 45 minutes discussion in breakout rooms, the participants were brought back to the plenary and they shared the main reflections and most important points from the discussions.

Hosts and notetakers:

- Inge Linne (host) and Andreas Karsten (notetaker)
 - Gwyneth Tanti (host) and Helmut Fennes (notetaker)
 - Alexandre Fonseca (host) and Johanna Böhler (notetaker)
 - Carmen Teubl (host) and Andrea Horta (notetaker)
-



Dialogue between policy makers, youth work practitioners, researchers and National Agencies

Methodology: plenary, breakout rooms

The dialogue was kicked off by opening words from Helmut Fennes who presented a quick overview of the main RAY PART findings discussed during the previous day. After that the policy and decision makers introduced themselves. The facilitators provided a step-by-step instructions for the dialogue. The policy and decision makers and the participants had 40 minutes for the dialogue after which they were brought back to plenary. Each policy maker presented the main points of discussion in their respective groups as well as possible concrete steps to take the findings and/or recommendations forward in their own work. The dialogue was wrapped up by closing words.

The following policy and decision makers took part in the dialogue

- Mr Victor Negrescu, Romania
 - ✓ Member of the European Parliament
 - ✓ Vice-chair CULT (Committee on Culture and Education)
 - ✓ Promoting European Agency for Citizenship Education
- Mr Niklas Nienaß, Germany
 - ✓ Member of the European Parliament
 - ✓ Member of CULT (Committee on Culture and Education)
 - ✓ Member of the Youth Platform of the European Parliament (EP Youth Platform)
- Ms Birgit Klausser, Austria
 - ✓ Deputy head, Department European and International Family and Youth Policy, Federal Chancellery
 - ✓ Member of the Programme Committee
- Ms Miriam Teuma, Malta
 - ✓ Chief Executive of Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ, Malta's National Youth Agency, Ministry for Education and Employment
 - ✓ Chairperson of the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Youth
- Ms Biliana Sirakova
 - ✓ EU Youth Coordinator
 - ✓ European Commission, DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture

Conclusions from the dialogue

The four groups came up with the following conclusions and recommendations³:

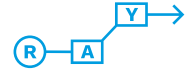
- The participants of the RAY PART conference support the establishment of a European Agency for Citizenship education. The findings of the RAY LTE and RAY PART research projects could very well inform the development of this Agency, in particular with respect to educational approaches, designs and methodologies to be promoted by this Agency.

³ This is still a draft version of these conclusions and recommendations, which will be edited for the external communication about the conference.



Thus, it is recommended to draw on RAY LTE and PART findings when establishing such an Agency.

- As for designs and methodologies of European youth projects, reflection is a key element for creating awareness of participants for their learning processes and outcomes resulting from their project experiences, thus contributing to the sustainability the projects. Therefore, reflection needs to be an integral element of European youth projects and of youth work at large, and it should be promoted through respective training of youth work actors.
- The criteria for participation projects funded through European youth programmes should provide opportunities for follow-up participation projects developed and implemented by participants, thus contributing to the sustainability of the original projects and of the learning outcomes for participants. and creating a multiplying effect of participation projects.
- Special emphasis should be given to promoting participation and active citizenship of young people with fewer opportunities. This could be achieved through the European youth programmes by specifically addressing youth work actors working with young people with fewer opportunities and providing additional funding for respective activities.
- It is recommended to promote participation of young people in the development of European youth policies and programmes so that they reflect the needs and interests of young people. In this respect, there should be an effective dialogue between the youth field and policy makers in the European Union, in particular involving the European Parliament more intensively. At the same time, it is recommended to develop an ongoing and ‘real’ dialogue between policy makers and young people and youth workers at all levels – contrary to big ‘token’ events taking place once a year. In this respect, it is suggested to develop the European Youth Week and link it with local participation initiatives and grass-root participation all over Europe. As for the latter, it is recommended to offer specific training to youth workers and local policy makers in order to promote this dialogue at local level.
- It is recommended to establish youth work as a distinct profession in the European Union and to develop professional educational pathways for youth workers contributing to the professionalisation of youth work. This should include the validation of youth work competences developed through informal and non-formal education and learning. Similarly, the recognition of Youthpass should be promoted, including outside the youth and non-formal education field, in order to demonstrate the learning processes and outcomes of young people participating in European youth projects.
- It is recommended, to review European youth policies and programmes in the light of the RAY LTE and RAY PART research findings. In particular, these research findings should be used to review and further develop the evaluation criteria of project applications. Furthermore, these research findings could also contribute to the development of participation and citizenship education and learning in the other chapters of Erasmus+.
- It is recommended to extend research on participation and citizenship education and learning to contexts outside European youth programmes and to feed the respective findings into the European youth programmes. In particular, such research should address the participation of young people with fewer opportunities in society and political life. In this respect, this topic could also be addressed in the forthcoming RAY EQUAL research project.



- It is recommended to translate the RAY PART findings into specific recommendations for youth work at large.

In principle, the policy makers involved in the dialogue agreed to promote the recommendations developed during this conference and specifically during their dialogue with youth work actors, researchers and National Agencies.

Reflections and debriefing

Methodology: plenary

The conference was closed by a short session in which the participants evaluated the experiences, and the RAY Coordination gave a short overview about the next steps in relation to the research as well as dissemination activities of RAY PART.

In the evaluation, participants said it was interesting to participate in the conference. It was a good experience for them to share thoughts with different stakeholders, and they particularly liked the second day, which consisted of the dialogue with policy and decision makers. This was also confirmed with high grades (on a scale from 1 to 5), where participants gave the average of 4,4 for the dialogue process. It was mentioned that it was a good thing to have a preparation for the dialogue and that the whole process should be shared and replicated in the future. However, they wished that the conference would have had more participating young people and project leaders (*see above, unfortunately due to the changing of the format and the uncertainty, it was not possible to acquire more beneficiaries by the RAY PART partners*). Also, they would have liked to have some of the research materials upfront in order to be able to study them. In the end, participants also thanked the organisers and indicated that the team was professional and that everything was implemented well.



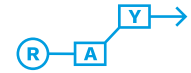
4. RESEARCH PROJECT ON APPROACHES TO PARTICIPATION AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AND LEARNING (RAY PART)

Promoting participation in civil society and democratic life as well as active citizenship of young people are objectives of European youth policies and European youth programmes (Erasmus+ Youth and of the European Solidarity Corps).

The RAY Network conducted a research project on long-term effects of Erasmus+ Youth in Action on participation and active citizenship (RAY LTE) between 2015 and 2019. The main findings of the transnational analysis of this research project included a number of recommendations referring to the development of promoting participation and active citizenship.

As a result, the present research project was launched, focusing on how competences and practices for participation and democratic citizenship could be developed in European youth programmes.

More information here: www.researchyouth.net/projects/part/



5. ANNEXES

List of Annexes (can also be found in the internal area of the RAY website in the sub-section 'RAY Conferences & Events')

[Annex 1_RAY PART Conference_181021_general slides \(pdf 0,5MB\)](#)

[Annex 2_Mentimeter_warm-up_results \(pdf 1MB\)](#)

[Annex 3_Jamboard_Let's meet each other_results \(pdf 0,6MB\)](#)

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[Annex 8_Individual reflection_Mentimeter_research findings \(pdf 0,7MB\)](#)

[Annex9_Conclusions_recommendations_group discussions_RAY PART interim findings \(pdf 0,2MB\)](#)

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