WORKSHOP MANUAL

Digital Active Citizenship in Local Communities

————— **by Davit Manukyan**

Content

1. Introduction

Digital platforms, such as social media, constitute an easy and accessible way for most people to express their views and voice opinions, which can be easily transferred into an inclusive tool for making one's voice heard and exercising active citizenship. When looking at possible democratic participation of young people (aged 15 to 25) in digital spaces, we need to consider several important factors. Firstly, most young people use social media in their everyday life and are familiar with all of its peculiarities. Secondly, many young people have the willingness to be more politically active, but lack understanding and capacity to utilize the opportunities provided by digital spaces. Providing a workshop on democratic participation in digital spaces will help reach the objectives of:

- Understanding what democracy is and how one can participate
- Empowering youth to exercise their democratic rights and responsibilities
- Utilizing the potential provided by digital platforms
- Providing youth with specific ways and tools to get involved via platforms they are used to

The workshop will start with an exercise that builds a basis for what democracy means, followed by participants reflecting on the social relevance of active citizenship and understanding their individual social impact as such. In the next stage, participants will identify the key stakeholders and decision makers in their community and analyse where an intervention in social action is needed. At the end, participants will get insights into what tools different digital platforms offer for political engagement, based on previous examples such as the Velvet Revolution in Armenia.
The workshop was developed to be interactive and inclusive, -incorporating aspects of gamification to match the interests and lives of young people. Overall, the workshop is estimated to last two hours and can be conducted both in-person and online, using Zoom.

DURATION
approx. 120 minutes

TARGET GROUP
students and young people aged between 15 and 25

MATERIALS
digital or on-site

→ **All materials can be downloaded here**

2. Schedule

DURATION	MODULE	TOOLS	DESCRIPTION
10 min	**Introduction and ice breaker**	"2 truths, 1 lie" activity / open source guidebooks for teambuilding online	Starting with a name game and ice breaker, introduction to the workshop
30 min	**MODULE 1** **Democracy and Social Roles**	Flipchart and sticky notes (for in-person version) Mural (for online version)	Coming up with definitions for "democracy" and "civic activism"
20 min	**MODULE 2** **Identifying Key Stakeholders**	Printed cards (provided)	Getting to know key stakeholders by playing a guessing game
20 min	**MODULE 3** **Tools for Digital Active Citizenship**	Printed information cards (provided) * Need to be printed beforehand for each student	Information on learning and sharing on digital tools that can be used for making one's voice heard
30 min	**MODULE 4** **Creation of Digital Campaigns**	Printed blueprint checklist (provided)	Coming up with a digital campaign to address a relevant issue in respective communities
10 min	**Feedback and conclusion**		Feedback and survey about the workshop.

3. Implementation

The whole workshop resembles a game with levels. The levels are visualized with a drawing of an active citizen, which is not visible at the beginning of the game. After completing each level, a part of the drawing is added as a reward. At the end, once the students have successfully passed through all of the levels, the drawing of an active citizen is complete.

The workshop is developed in a way that can be easily transferred to an online space, should there be challenges to host the workshop on-site.

Introduction — 10 min

During the introduction, the participants and the workshop facilitators introduce themselves, play a round of ice breakers and explain the concept and procedure of the workshop to the participants.

The module starts with a name game where each participant has to say their name and a word that in their opinion describes democracy. Every participant that follows needs to repeat all of the previous names and associated words before saying their own. This way the participants and the workshop leaders get to know each other's names, as well as form a first impression of each other's understanding of democracy.

Example: My name is Davit and I associate democracy with freedom.

For the second activity, the workshop facilitators play an ice breaker, which is a great tool to lighten the mood and help participants to bond and feel more comfortable around each other. An example of an icebreaker game is "2 truths, 1 lie", where all participants say three facts about themselves, one of which should be false. Then the other participants guess which one of those three facts is the lie. Other icebreakers can be found online in our open source teambuilding guidebooks.

As a third activity, the workshop facilitators introduce the concept of the workshop, explaining the different levels that they are going to overcome as a group and the final output that they are going to have.

At the end of the introduction, you draw the legs of the figure. If the workshop is online, the drawing can be drawn on Mural.

Democracy and Social Roles
— 30 min

AIM   The students come up with a common understanding of what democracy and civic activism means to them, realising the interconnectedness of those two concepts.

For this module, the workshop facilitators divide the group into two smaller ones (5–10 people each). Each group gets sticky notes and a flipchart. The first group has the word "Democracy" written on the flipchart and the second group has the word "Civic Activism". The groups get five minutes to brainstorm words associated with the concept assigned to them, write them on sticky notes and attach them to the flipchart.

Once everybody is done, each group gets 10 minutes to discuss the words that they have on their flipchart and come up with a definition of democracy and civic activism respectively.

After that, each group gets 10 minutes to introduce their definition to the other group, followed by a collective discussion. Each group can change or modify their definition based on the discussion. The outcome is that the group has developed two definitions for democracy and civic activism.

At the end of the introduction, you draw the body of the figure.

Online: *Flipcharts can be substituted with a digital whiteboard on platforms such as MIRO. Small groups can be moved to breakout rooms.*

Identifying Key Stakeholders
— 20 min

AIM   The students will have an understanding of the key stakeholders that have decision-making power and how to address them when wanting their opinions and concerns voiced.

Participants are given cards, each one having a key stakeholder (who has decision-making power and impact on matters affecting their communities) on it. Each participant takes a card and describes the stakeholder written on it to everyone else in the group without saying its name or any synonyms. The cards only include a name of the stakeholder, but there is also a sheet with explanations for each stakeholder in case the student doesn't know the stakeholder. Facilitators may add or change the cards of the key stakeholders to adapt to their local context.

Once successfully finished, you draw the head of the figure.

Online: *In the online version, the trainer can send the info cards via personal message.*

MODULE 3

Tools for Digital Active Citizenship
— 20 min

AIM   The students learn about digital tools that can be used to make their voice heard by seeing how these tools were successfully used before.

The participants are divided into three groups and each group gets two information cards, each containing information on a specific digital tool that can be used to voice their opinions, make campaigns or exercise their active citizenship on online platforms. Each paper also includes information and examples on how those tools were used previously during various civic activism occasions. Future trainers can also add or change the examples to fit the context of their country to make those more relatable. Each group has 5–10 minutes to read the information on the cards, after which an assigned person from each group will tell the rest of the group about the digital tools that they have learnt about. Facilitators might change or add information cards to adapt to their local context.

Once successfully finished, you draw the hands of the figure.

Online: In the online version, small groups can be moved to breakout rooms and have the information card there, after which they will return to the general call and introduce what they have learnt.

MODULE 4

Creation of Digital Campaigns
— 30 min

AIM   The students get practical understanding of how to use digital tools for civic activism by practicing what they have learnt during the previous modules of the workshop.

The participants are divided into three groups and each group has 15 minutes to come up with a relevant occasion in their community on which they'd like to have a say, and create a digital campaign based on everything that they learnt during the previous modules. They will also be given blueprint checklists containing information on potential tools (students can use as many points from the checklist as they see fit), which they will have to follow when creating their digital campaign and can take home later to be able to use it long-term. At the end, each team has five minutes to present their digital campaign to the other groups.

Once successfully finished, you draw the megaphone in the hands of the figure and finish the drawing of the active citizen.

Online: In the online version small groups can be moved to breakout rooms, where they will get the blueprint checklist. They can visualise their campaign on a digital whiteboard on platforms such as MIRO.

Feedback and Conclusion — 10 min

In the last part of the workshop, the participants will do a round of reflection on their experience and will fill in a survey about the workshop.

AUTHOR
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Davit Manukyan is a youth worker and communications specialist from Yerevan, Armenia. He has been actively involved in the European Youth Parliament (EYP) for six years, and serves as a board member in the national committee of EYP in Armenia. Davit has been involved in many youth projects including the Understanding Europe network in the capacities of Coordinator and Peer Educator. He is a co-founder of the youth NGO BIL:Armenia and a member of the advisory council on youth affairs to the Mayor of Yerevan.

5. Imprint

4. Sources

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→ https://www.ejmste.com/download/a-proposal-based-on-social-media-networks-for-the-development-of-active-citizenship-competencies-5365.pdf

→ http://proc.iscap.info/2018/cases/4776.pdf

→ https://www.azatutyun.am/a/29744146.html