



Reclaiming *youth* Civic Space

**Promoting Youth Civic Space through
Youth Work and Human Rights Education**

Handbook

RECLAIMING YOUTH CIVIC SPACE

Promoting Youth Civic Space through
Youth Work and Human Rights Education

Handbook

Educational Material



* the text expresses the views of the authors and does not reflect the position of the donors, partners and participants involved in training activities.

Reclaiming Youth Civic Space -
Promoting Youth Civic Space
through Youth Work and
Human Rights Education

First Edition

Authors:

Irma GIORGOBIANI
Karen AYVAZYAN
Margarita SPASOVA

Editing:

Irma GIORGOBIANI
Nika BAKHSOLIANI

Visual design and layout:

Nika BAKHSOLIANI

Illustrations:

Hanna HRECHKINA

Proofreading:

Paul Angelo DEANS

Peer review:

Emilia ASTORE
Jelena MILUTINOVIC

© Human Rights Education
Youth Network, 2023
All rights reserved

Human Rights Education
Youth Network
Rue Américaine 11
1060 Brussels, Belgium
email: contact@hreyun.net
ISBN

Preamble

Civic space is an essential element for human rights, democracy and the rule of law to function. It's an arena where citizens can take action and hold the authorities accountable. Unfortunately, civic space in some countries of Europe has to endure restrictive policies and practices from the side of authorities, which threatens the checks and balances system that it should exercise. This publication was produced by Human Rights Education Youth Network, which is an international association of organisations and individuals committed to human rights education. The organisation actively pursues human rights education as an instrument for transformative change and cultivation of human rights culture, and, thus, this instrument was also chosen to tackle the “shrinking civic space” phenomenon, which disproportionately affects youth.



Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Preamble | 5 |
| Acknowledgements: | 8 |
| People behind this publication: | 9 |
| Abbreviations: | 10 |
| Chapter I - Introduction | 11 |
| Publication logic and order | 12 |
| What is Civic Space? | 14 |
| Chapter II - Theoretical Overview | 14 |
| Shrinking Space Phenomenon | 15 |
| Why bring human rights education when talking about shrinking civic space? | 19 |
| What is human rights education and how has it developed? | 20 |
| Goals, principles and models of human rights education | 22 |
| Who is it for? | 23 |
| What is the connection between HRE and Youth Work? | 23 |
| What challenges is HRE facing? | 23 |
| How is HRE affected by the shrinking civic space? | 25 |
| How can HRE address and combat the shrinking civic space phenomenon? | 26 |
| Youth work - definition and essence of the educational practice | 27 |
| Youth Work Domain | 28 |
| Models and approaches | 28 |
| Youth work and its link to the civil society | 30 |
| Summary, why youth work & human rights education? | 34 |
| Introducing the ATA tool | 35 |
| Chapter III - Practical Solutions | 35 |
| ASSESS | 37 |
| TRAIN | 43 |
| Rights for Civic Space | 44 |
| Freedoms at Stake | 46 |
| Barriers to Civic Space | 47 |
| Defining Civic Space | 50 |
| Alternate Reality | 52 |
| Flower of Rights | 53 |
| Problem Tree | 58 |
| Neglected Obligations | 61 |
| From SUPPRESSGRAD to SUPRISEGRAD | 64 |
| Confronting the barriers - moving underground | 66 |
| Etobo vs. Suppressia | 68 |
| Don't Judge a Story by its Title | 72 |
| Went Missing! | 74 |
| ACT | 76 |
| Local Action 1: Needs assessment workshop | 77 |
| Local Action 2: Online platform for asylum seekers | 77 |
| Local Action 3: HRE Workshop | 78 |
| Local Action 4: Exhibition | 79 |
| Local Action 5: Creative workshop on the situation of Ukrainian and Belarusian refugees | 80 |
| Local Action 6: Simulation games on discrimination in sports | 81 |
| Local Action 7: Workshop on shrinking civic space | 82 |
| Local Action 8: Open discussion on the right | 83 |
| to protest and shrinking civic space | 83 |
| Local Action 9: Semi structured interviews and focus groups discussion on the topic of young people's | 84 |
| right to protest and assembly in Italy | 84 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Local action 10: Online webinar on digital security | 85 |
| Local action 11: HRE workshop for future teachers | 86 |
| Local action 12: Exhibition with testimonies | 87 |
| Local action 13: University course on organising NGO projects | 88 |
| Glossary | 89 |
| Reference List | 91 |

Acknowledgements:

This publication has been developed within the scope of the project ‘Reclaiming Civic Space - Promoting Youth Civil Space through Youth Work and Human Rights Education’. The project was implemented by Human Rights Education Youth Network (HREYN) with the financial support of the Council of Europe’s European Youth Foundation.

Training activities were cofunded with the Exchange of Good Practices project “Promoting Youth Civil Space through Youth Work and Human Rights Education” coordinated by Amnesty International Italy with the support of the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Commission. These projects aimed to increase the network’s capacity to address the shrinking space for youth civil society through empowerment, advocacy, and campaigning. In addition, enhancing the participation of young people in democratic and civic life, and to broaden and deepen political, civic, and social participation on various levels. We thank the EYF and involved partner organisations for their support and valuable contribution to the publication. We are also grateful to the participants and educational team of the project who have contributed to the publication with their valuable input, support in testing, and validation of the activities. A special thank you to those who designed and implemented local actions which are now a part of this publication as good practices.

The content of the publication does not in any way express the views of the partners and participants involved in training activities, the Council of Europe, the European Youth Foundation or the European Commission.

‘Reclaiming Civic Space - human rights education enhancing participation, citizenship and access to rights for, with and by young people.’

Project donor and supporter:

Council of Europe - <https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/home>

European Youth Foundation - <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation>

Coordinator organisation:

Human Rights Education Youth Network (HREYN) - <https://www.hreyn.net/>

Partner organisations:

Praxis for change - <https://praxis4change.ge>

Human Constanta - <https://humanconstanta.org/en/>

GrlzWave - <http://grlzwave.com/>

Queers On Move (Droa Community) - <https://www.droa.community>

People behind this publication:

Irma GIORGOBIANI is a practitioner youth worker with experience working on policy-making at the Youth Agency of Georgia. She is a graduate of the MEd programme ‘Adult education, community development and youth work’ at the University of Glasgow. Currently, she coordinates the ‘Inclusive Vocational Education Development’ team at the Skills Agency of Georgia.

Karen AYVAZYAN is a youth worker and human rights trainer with a BA degree in Political Science and an MA degree in Human Rights and Democratisation at Yerevan State University and Belarus State University. He is a civil society advocate and researcher working on the issue of shrinking space for civil society worldwide. He has been a member of the Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe during 2020-2022 and has been actively involved in drafting the CM/Recommendation (2022) 6 on protecting youth civil society and young people, and supporting their participation in democratic processes. He is currently a member of the Council of Europe’s Trainers Pool (TP).

Margarita SPASOVA is a human rights and gender equality advocate and trainer. She holds an international MA in European Union law from Sofia University, and an MA in international migration and ethnic relations from Malmö University. She is also an alumna of the Training of Trainers in Human Rights Education programme of the Council of Europe. Margarita currently works as an Advocacy Officer for women’s rights and gender equality in Bulgaria.

Nika BAKHSOLIANI is an activist, trainer, non-profit manager, and policy consultant. He is the former chair of the board at the Human Rights Education Youth Network and the co-founder of Praxis for Change, a non-profit advocating critical citizenship education. Additionally, he is a former bureau member of the Advisory Council on Youth at the Council of Europe, where he coordinated the Priority Focus Group on Access to Rights of Young People, as well as the Joint Council on Youth Working Group on COVID-19 Response. His focus lies on the analysis of educational, youth, and human rights policies, as well as municipal youth policy development.

Participants of the project who helped reviewing the text and testing the educational tools:

Constanta BOTNAR
Alessandro CARLUCCI
Zofia CEBULSKA
Paul Angelo DEANS
Liliya FASKHUTDINOVA
Maya FENYVESI
Zsofia Nora GILICZE
Giudita GUALANDI
Victoria HALATA
Ilinca Daniela IONITA

Magdalena KOZLOWSKA
Riya MATHUR
David MGELADZE
Alessandro MONTESI
Enrica MURAGLIE
Prokhar NAVITSKI
Jagoda SZEJNFELD
Tekla TEVDORASHVILI
Tatsiana ZINIAKOVA

and our friends who we decided not to mention due to the safety reasons.

Abbreviations:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| ATA | Assessment, Training, Action |
| CM | Committee of Ministers |
| CoE | Council of Europe |
| CSO | Civil Society Organisation |
| EU | European Union |
| ECHR | European Convention of Human Rights |
| ECtHR | European Court of Human Rights |
| EYF | European Youth Foundation |
| FRA | Fundamental Rights Agency |
| GONGO | Government-organised NGO |
| HR | Human Rights |
| HRE | Human Rights Education |
| HREYN | Human Rights Education Youth Network |
| LGBTQI | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex |
| NGO | Non-governmental Organisation |
| PONGO | Party-organised NGO |
| SONGO | State-organised NGO |
| UDHR | Universal Declaration of Human Rights |
| UN | United Nations |
| YW | Youth Work |
| YCSI | Youth Civic Space Index |

Chapter I - Introduction

It has been more than two decades since the shrinking civic space phenomenon has been an increasing tendency throughout the world, affecting countries regardless of their development of democratic institutions, socio-political or economic situation, geopolitical location, or any other factors. The spread of oppressive anti-democratic trends prevents civil society actors from contributing to the process of safeguarding human rights, rule of law, and democracy. In this process, youth civic space is one of the most vulnerable areas. In comparison to other civil society organisations, youth organisations are more vulnerable as a result of their low and unstable funding, high reliance on volunteer work, high turnover of the staff etc. (Dezelan & Yurttagüler, 2019). Adding to their fragile organisational structure, they face challenges and restrictions imposed by governmental bodies both online and offline, such as: unwanted surveillance, smear and disinformation campaigns, digital, and physical threats, governmental interference in their activities, top-down structures of symbolic participation, and restricted access to various funds etc. (European youth forum, 2022). This is the incomplete list of issues youth organisations face while attempting to enhance democracy and safeguard human rights. Moreover, according to Amnesty International, youth defenders are one of the most at-risk groups and face age-based discrimination in addition to other forms of discrimination (Dezelan & Yurttagüler, 2019).

Ideally, youth civic space should be the environment that provides opportunities for young people to engage in critical discussion, dialogue and action; the arena where active citizenship culture and awareness are cultivated among young people. At the same time, enabling them to bring their innovative and fresh perspective; giving them opportunities to develop competencies to become agents of social change and take part in creating a more just and inclusive society (Dezelan & Yurttagüler, 2019). In a nutshell, youth civic space could be considered a significant source of ‘producing active citizens’ and making ‘democracy more democratic’.

In the situation where youth civic space fails to perform its duties, the health of democracy is under serious threat. Moreover, the idea of a more inclusive and just society is at risk. In such circumstances, fighting against the shrinking civic space phenomenon remains the only option. There could be many ways and tools of confronting the trend but one of the most effective means could be education, more specifically, youth work and human rights education as they bear the extensive potential of engaging and empowering young people. Based on these prerequisites, the publication intends to give the reader a comprehensive understanding of the shrinking civic space phenomenon and equip them with the necessary competencies to reclaim civic space through youth work and human rights education. To do so, the handbook elaborates on the key theoretical concepts as well as the practical tools for action.

The publication can serve as a resource or a guide while planning and implementing activities with and for young people to empower them, enhance their participation, and reclaim youth civic space. The publication is for:

- Human rights educators;
- Human rights activists;
- Youth workers;
- Teachers;
- Civil Society organisations;
- Any individuals interested in combating shrinking youth civic space.

Publication logic and order

The publication includes three chapters. **The first introductory chapter** provides information briefly regarding the publication itself, the project within which it was developed, the participant organisations, and publication authors. The section also presents who the publication is for and explains its logic and order.

The second chapter is basically theoretical, defining the key concepts in three main subsections: what is civic space? What is human rights education (HRE)? What is youth work? The first section starts by characterising civil society, construing the meaning of civic space and showing its place between the state, business, and civil society sectors. Also, this chapter introduces the notion of youth civic space to highlight the importance that young people and youth organisations can have on the political agenda through meaningful youth participation.

To gain a better understanding of civil society organisations, the chapter puts them into three categories: **listeners, helpers, and speakers**. After introducing the rationale of such categorisation, the author introduces **the shrinking space phenomenon** and the trends observed within the shrinking space discourse.

It is followed by the second section presenting the link between **human rights education** and shrinking civic space. This section defines human rights education, gives a historical overview of its origin and puts forth its goals, underpinning principles, and three existing models. The reader has an opportunity to get familiar with the challenges **HRE** is currently facing as well as gain an understanding of how HRE is affected by the shrinking civic space. The author shows HRE's capacity to address and combat the shrinking civic space phenomenon.

The third section mainly focuses on youth work; defines its essence despite its diverse nature; and attempts to describe what is the main domain of the educational practice. This section introduces complex models and approaches underpinning the youth work praxis. The author shows how youth work is connected to civil society and how it can contribute to the process of combatting shrinking space.

The final part of the section is a situation analysis of **youth work provision** in Europe. In this part, the reader will find the answers to the following questions: what is the situation of political youth work in Europe, is it thriving or is it oppressed as a potential threat to hegemonic powers? Do European programmes actually address political matters? Is political youth work provision financially supported? Are there any issues related to this domain?

The chapter is summarised by drawing parallels between HRE and youth work, showing its interconnectedness and common characteristics, especially between the critical forms of both educational praxes. It highlights the double negative impact of the shrinking space phenomenon on these two educational practices: on the one hand, the shrinking civic space leaves fewer and fewer opportunities to act for social and political change; to bring social justice back to societies. On the other hand, this tendency hinders HRE and YW which operate through civil society organisations, to meet their crucial role of permanently producing renewed human capital of active citizens, activists, and other actors of civic space.

The third chapter presents practical tools that can help understand the shrinking space phenomenon in different contexts, as well as beneficial HRE and youth work practices that enable youth civil society to protect the youth civic space.

In order to make targeted interventions to fight back the repressions, there is a need to firstly understand how the youth civil society is challenged and what are the areas where interventions are crucial. For this purpose, a new tool (**ATA**) has been elaborated which gives a chance to **Assess** the situation, **Train** young people to **Act** for expanding civic space in their respective countries.

So, in this chapter, the reader has the chance to get familiar with the **Youth Civic Space Index (YCSI)** and its use to analyse and diagnose the existing situation. As part of the second Train step the reader will find the ‘bank’ of educational resources and activities for training young people. Some of the activities are developed by the project members and some of them are adapted from the already existing resources—both adjusted to the shrinking civic space theme. For the application of the last, the third step of Act, the readers will be able to get acquainted with the good practices of actions planned and implemented by the participants of this project.

The flow of the publication from the conceptual to more practical content enables the reader to comprehend the theoretical concepts, and understand the meaning and application of the ATA tool. To plan and implement effective actions to reclaim shrinking civic space requires the reader to follow each step of the **ATA tool** and you will be able to develop evidence-based target-oriented projects.



Chapter II - Theoretical Overview

What is Civic Space?

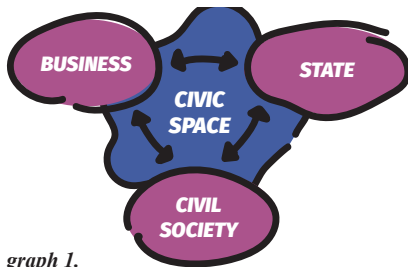
In order to better define the civic space, firstly we need to get a better understanding about civil society. The latter is mostly described as *‘the arena of collective action in society alongside those of the market and the state’* (Strachwitz, 2021, p.6). Over the years the definitions have changed as civil society is viewed as far more than as a so-called third sector which mainly consists of non-governmental organisations.

In recent years, it appears that civil society has grown to include a wider and more vibrant range of organised and unorganised groups; as new actors challenge the boundaries between sectors and try out new organisational forms; both online and offline. Civil society can involve registered organisations, foundations, labour unions, student councils, non-profit organisations, and even non-registered ones which are not formalised and most often formed very spontaneously for a specific cause and then dissolved once the mission is over.

Throughout the development of civil society the distinctions between the different sectors have been blurred. Civil society has ceased being merely a sector sui generis, and instead has become an integral part of other sectors by forming a space where civil society actors can influence the decisions of state actors and the market. The term that is used to describe this space is widely known as “civic space” which is mostly described as a space where the civil society can freely exercise their rights, be part of participatory processes, and influence the decisions.

According to Civic Space Watch *“Civic space is the political, legislative, social and economic environment which enables citizens to come together, share their interests and concerns and act individually and collectively to influence and shape their societies”* (Civic Space Watch 2022).

When talking about civic space one can think that it is the arena within the civil society sector where organisations are operating. However, civic space is characterised as the arena in between all the three sectors where CSOs including youth organisations can engage, act and govern. (see graph 1).



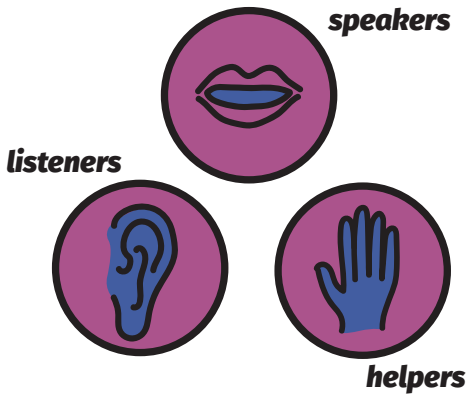
graph 1.

Civic engagement and youth participation are crucial for young people and youth organisations to influence the decisions and shape the political agenda. In recent years, “youth civic space” has been introduced as a new term which is characterised as the arena where, crucially, young people and youth organisations have the space to exercise their fundamental rights, engage in civic and political actions. Youth civic space is therefore referred to *“environments in which youth participation in civic action is fostered – the pathways, structures, and vehicles that provide opportunities for young people to engage in critical discussion, dialogue and action”* (Deželan and Yurt-

tagüler, 2020) The term youth civic space is introduced to highlight the importance that young people and youth organisations can have on the political agenda through meaningful youth participation.

Besides categorising civil society organisations into unorganised and organised, one can categorise them while considering their area of functioning, their aims, services, interests etc.

For the purpose of this publication, civil society organisations (both organised and unorganised) have been put into three main categories: **listeners**, **helpers** and **speakers**.



graph 2.

category as they operate in a certain country to build a resilient society and economy. Philanthropic and charity organisations as well as volunteering organisations can also be classified in this category. Usually those organisations are not challenging the governments in any way and are there by invitation or permission of the authorities. However, they do not necessarily have to be loyal to the authorities.

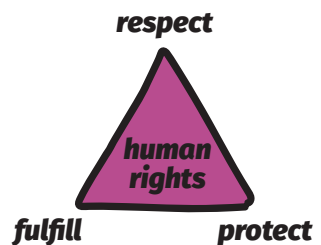
Speakers are the organisations which are vocal about certain causes but which are not necessarily appreciated by the authorities and challenge their political agenda and governance. Usually Speakers are independent youth organisations, human rights organisations, and civic movements which stand up for human rights, such as: freedom of assembly, freedom of expression, freedom of association. These organisations are salient challengers for governments as they are passionately engaged and have a clearly set agenda of actions which are not influenced by the governments in any way.

The categorisation is general and there may be CSOs in each category that can also fit into the other category, e.g. volunteering organisations can also be 'Speakers'.

Shrinking Space Phenomenon

International human rights law (International Bill of Human Rights, 1966) gives a framework for the obligations of which States are bound to act within. As parties to international treaties, States assume obligations and duties under international law to respect, to protect, and to fulfil human rights. **Respect** means that States must refrain from interfering with or curtailing the enjoyment of human rights. **Protect** means that States are required to protect individuals and groups against human rights abuses. **Fulfil** means that States must take positive action to facilitate the enjoyment of basic human rights (International Human Rights Law, 1948).

Despite those obligations, in reality the situation is different. Alongside the development of civil society and its important role in influencing governments in recent years, acts of intimidation by the authorities are also increasing. This results in the repression of civil society organisations in the form of legal and administrative barriers, as well as other repressive prac-



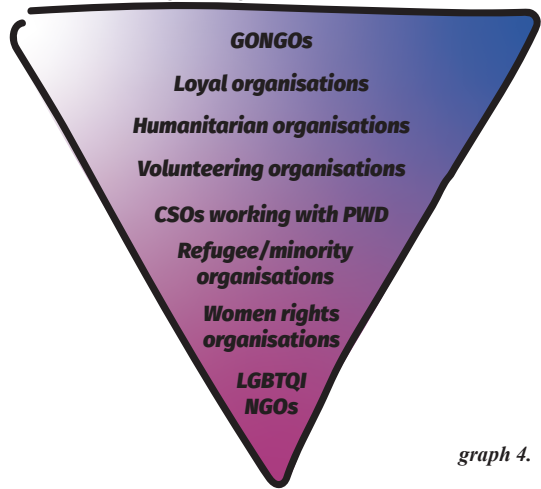
graph 3.

tices which hamper the operation of CSOs. This phenomenon is mostly known as shrinking civic space.

Extensive research has shown that the shrinking civic space is a direct reflection of governments viewing civil society as a threat to their power and authority. On top of the natural heterogeneity of civil society at large, meaning not all CSOs work in a cooperative manner, but sometimes against each other, restrictive methods flowing from governments are used to divide civil society even more. This makes their work even less effective, and reduces their involvement and influence in policy making and public opinion making. Indeed, there is a spectrum whereby some CSOs are less likely to be repressed and have more space for operation, due to the fact that they are not challenging governments but in a way supporting them. Those are mostly the organisations listed in the **listeners** category.

The more repressed organisations are usually the ones which are putting the authority of governments at risk through their actions which aim to support certain vulnerable groups that are not protected by governments. Depending on the country, certain groups can be more marginalised and restricted than others; however in most cases youth and human rights organisations, particularly ones which centre on women’s rights, LGBTQI+ rights, other national minority rights organisations and movements, workers’ rights movements, trade unions, and grassroots organisations for environmental justice are the ones which get restricted and repressed.

Within the shrinking space discourse the following trends may be observed (Ayvazyan, 2019):



graph 4.

Restrictions regarding international funding

CSOs receiving foreign support are under government surveillance as they are seen as foreign agents and a threat to their authority. Thus, the CSOs who want to get foreign funding are either deprived from getting it or need to notify and get government’s approval in advance. In some countries, CSOs have been subject to forced liquidation for non-compliance with regulations on international funding.

“The authorities arranged an inspection into our organisations. As a result, they did not find anything illegal, but the accounts were blocked. Most of the organisations in our country which receive international funding are registered outside of the country because they are not allowed to receive funding” -Anonymous testimony

“There was a suggestion from a political party in Bulgaria to create a register with organisations receiving funding from abroad and declare them as “foreign agents” -Anonymous testimony

“In Belarus, repression of NGOs getting foreign funding has worsened following the mass protests in the country. The President of Belarus openly announced the liquidation of several NGOs which receive foreign funding. Addressing his speech to international organisations during an interview, he said: ‘We will massacre all the scum that you financed’” - Anonymous testimony

Domestic laws regulating the operation of CSOs more broadly by imposing new rules on registration, accounting, financial and narrative reporting.

The states have possess broad powers to interfere in the internal activities of the CSOs which include: seizure of bank accounts, interrogation of CSOs’ leaders and staff members, tax inspections and heavy penalties, arrests and convictions for leaders of human rights organisations, discriminatory documentary and physical checks of NGO leaders and staff members at the borders, prohibition of civil society members’ travels, and the shutting down of local and international organisations.

“The organisation I am working for faced problems from the very beginning. The team of founders wanted to add words like ‘Human Rights’ or ‘Defence’ in their full name and therefore in the register of NGOs but they were not allowed to do so. There is no official law against such naming but they managed to register their organisation only after they found some very abstract and unclear names. Also, after the political crisis in Belarus started, my organisation was terminated as well as most of the NGOs in our country, and the government established the law prohibiting people from working in non-registered organisations, otherwise the person will face a criminal case.” -Anonymous testimony

“Unnecessary inspections by the national labour agency have been conducted into our organisation after we wanted to employ a gay refugee” -Anonymous testimony

Policies and practices affecting the rights of freedom of assembly and association;

According to law, everyone is entitled to the above mentioned rights. However, in practice, you are hindered from exercising your rights by participating in, or organising, peaceful protests. In some cases it includes non-authorization of peaceful protests held, unofficial prolonged authorization, not guaranteeing protection during the protests, and use of disproportionate force by police etc.

“Even though the constitution of our country gives us the opportunity to exercise freedom of expression, very often the government tricks us by bringing counter protestors, then saying it is not safe for us to protest and that we need to stop protesting. Government does not try to arrest counter protestors or tell them to go home. For the police, LGBT+ activists are “easier” to manage than some radical fascists. Even the secret documents and recordings of the intelligence agency reveal that the government is the one organising counter demonstrations or at least fueling them, especially when the social issue is not politically beneficial for the governing party” -Anonymous testimony

“Though we do not face targeted harassment from the authorities; however in many cases the authorities do not carry out necessary measures during the protests and public actions to protect our freedom to assemble. For example, during the Burgas Pride the police just stayed and watched the aggressors use hate speech and throw objects at us without taking any action to stop them. In other examples, they make us change the time, the location or the route feminist protests/marches use such as the annual women’s rights march on 8th of March or the annual protest against violence against women. Once, they wanted to not allow the women’s rights march to go on the street, but to use the sidewalk instead and forced

our team member to sign a document stating that they will be fined if they do not follow the orders". - Anonymous testimony

Criminalization and stigmatisation of human rights defenders' activities;

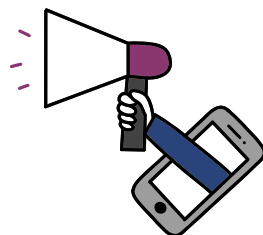
Activists are threatened with criminalisation and stigmatisation for the activities which challenge the governments. Thus, a lot of activists face unlawful detention, as well as criminal and administrative cases solely for their activities related to human rights and democracy.

"A criminal case has been opened against my friend due to the fact that she is engaged in human rights activities and follows peaceful protests". -Anonymous testimony

"We have received threats by some far-right political parties that if they are in power they will ban our activities. For example, one of the candidates for mayor promised during his election campaign that he will ban the Sofia Pride if he is elected as a mayor" - Anonymous testimony

Restrictions of freedom of expression online and offline;

Internet access and telecommunication networks are suspended and arrests occur as a result of political speech online and offline (during protests). Internet connections are restrained, and major social media platforms are blocked, particularly when there are moments of heightened tension during massive protests. Moreover, even if people are allowed to plan and organise a meeting, demonstrations or the picket line, they still have to notify the authorities to get permission to hold the meeting, which are only authorised to be held in specially designated places (commonly known as "Hyde Parks"), often far from centres and governmental buildings which affects the nature and purpose of the meeting.



'Our organisation website had to be switched from .by-domain to .org-domain because it is controlled by the government and they took the domain-name away. The .org-website of my organisation can currently be opened only with a VPN if the visitor is in Belarus. -Anonymous testimony

"On August 9-11, 2020, the internet, home telephone, and mobile lines did not work due to a weak connection. It was the same during the mass protests in different areas - for example, in the centre of Minsk on August 16. They blocked communications on the territory of opposition concerts - Lyavon Volsky's concert was held in the "Sandbox", mobile and internet communications did not work there, later cars with "blockers" were seen nearby." -Anonymous testimony

"We have received threats and organised spam with hate messages (for example, thousands of hate messages being sent to the Sofia Pride page by a bot, organised in a private Facebook group)" -Anonymous testimony

Intimidation and violent attacks against civil society actors;

In some countries excessive force, including live ammunition, has been used against protesters. The most vulnerable members of society such as women' rights defenders, and LGBTIQ+ people are often among the most affected by human rights violations. The activists and their family members are facing intimidation and violent attacks just for the activities that they carry out. The detentions are followed by severe torture and ill-treatment.

“During public actions we have been spat on or eggs were thrown at us. We have encountered hate speech online and offline, blackmailing, throwing of rocks, and black paint.

Most of the attacks aimed to destroy our working space and make it impossible for us to continue doing what we do. When it comes to physical attacks, people are usually attacked and injured when they are alone. I mean that most harm was done when an individual was alone in certain circumstances”. - Anonymous testimony

“During an LGBT-themed event in 2021, one of the organisers received a threatening call saying: “We know where you are and what you are doing, we will come for you tomorrow.”
- Anonymous testimony

Attempts to discredit CSOs;

Government organised NGOs (GONGOs) are established which can crowd out independent organisations and even obtain funding from international organisations. Consequently, international donor organisations increase their financial support for only those organisations with good government relations. Under the guise of so-called constructive dialogue between state and civil society, new GONGOs are being founded, and donors have been seen to support GONGOs with insufficient civil engagement instead of supporting real civil society actors.

Moreover, particular organisations or individuals involved in those are labelled and accused of money laundering by the populist governments which purposefully discredit them and damage their reputation amongst the wider public.

“The narrative of discrediting NGOs is very strong in Bulgaria and part of it is coming from far-right political parties that create the image of NGOs, especially LGBT and feminist NGOs as organisations that want to destroy the Bulgarian society and family values, take Bulgarian children away from their families.”-Anonymous testimony

“Most of the GONGOs are created in the field of Education and Youth as the government labels and accuses particular organisations or individuals involved in those for money laundry, or spoiling “traditional values” by the populist governments in order to discredit them and damage their image amongst the wider public.” -Anonymous testimony

The repressive measures can also be categorised in different ways. In the context of shrinking youth civic space, one can argue that besides some of the measures listed above which can be categorised as **intentional repression**, shrinking youth civic space also can be a result of government inaction, meaning unintentionally undervaluing policies and practices which contribute to the development. This can be classified as **unintentional repression** (due to the failure to ensure the protection and fulfilment of the rights: state obligations) which hinders youth organisations having the opportunity to build up their capacity and resiliency. Not giving priority to the youth work and human rights education, which are essential for the growth and effective operation of youth organisations and young people in general, can also be considered as an unintentional repression.

Why bring human rights education when talking about shrinking civic space?

Civil society organisations and youth organisations play a crucial role in protecting and promoting human rights. One of the instruments they use to achieve that is human rights educa-

tion. As was discussed in the previous section, in recent years there has been a tendency for governments and authorities, including in some European countries, to try to intimidate civil society organisations by imposing legal and administrative barriers as well as other repressive practices. This might be the case because civil society organisations and youth organisations tend to challenge traditional power structures, and this might be contrary to certain states’ interests. Human rights organisations and youth organisations that are often the most vocal critics of authorities have been particularly affected by the shrinking civic space. The chilling effect that certain states’ actions have on human rights organisations has been noted in the European Parliament resolution of 8 March 2022 on the “Shrinking space for civil society in Europe”. The resolution pays attention to the fact that in several Member States “strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs) have also been used to target CSOs, human rights defenders and activists working in the fields of the environment, rule of law, LGBTIQ+ rights and women’s rights.” More examples and testimonials provided in this and subsequent chapters will further demonstrate the connection between shrinking civic space, human rights and human rights education.

On the one hand, civil society organisations have been banned from schools or their access has been restricted, funding has been limited and activists have been threatened, thus directly having a negative impact on human rights education. On the other hand, the Reclaiming Civic Space project and other initiatives show in practice how human rights education can be a strong instrument that civil society organisations and youth organisations have at their disposal to fight the very phenomenon of the shrinking civic space.

What is human rights education and how has it developed?



Human rights education

education, training or informal learning the basis of which is created by human rights and sets to achieve the ideals underpinned in the human rights.

Human rights education for transformative action

education to enable learners to understand the gaps between human rights and actual realities, and empowering them to close these gaps.

Definitions by Human Rights Education Youth Network

The theory and practice of human rights education is diverse and has changed and evolved through time. There has been a transition from activities raising awareness about the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related treaties (Tibbitts & Fernekcs, 2011), to the idea that human rights education is about challenging hierarchies, hegemonies (Toivanen, 2009) and ultimately bringing about social change.

Historically speaking, most researchers trace the origins of human rights education to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its Art. 26 (2):

“Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace”.

Human Rights Education enables people to learn about human rights and how to claim them. Human rights education can be defined as any learning, education, training or information efforts aimed at building a universal culture of human rights.

It encompasses:

knowledge - learning about human rights and human rights mechanisms;

values, attitudes and behaviour - developing values and reinforcing attitudes and behaviours which uphold human rights;

skills to take action - acquiring skills to apply human rights in a practical way in daily life and taking action to defend and promote human rights.

Summarised definition of the UN

This article is also the legal foundation of human rights education as a human right.

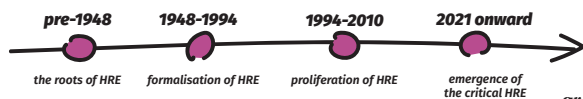
However, it was not until the early 1990s that human rights education gained prominence. In 1993, the Vienna Declaration adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights declared human rights education “essential for the promotion and achievement of stable and harmonious relations among communities and for fostering mutual understanding, tolerance and peace.”

In the following year, the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed the 10-year period beginning on 1 January 1995 the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education. It was followed by the World Programme for Human Rights Education established by the UN General Assembly in 2005 that actively advocates for the integration of HRE into different levels of education and other developmental initiatives.

In 2011 the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training was adopted whose Article 2 (1) provides the most-widely used definition of human rights education: *“Human rights education and training comprises all educational, training, information, awareness-raising and learning activities aimed at promoting universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and thus contributing, inter alia, to the prevention of human rights violations and abuses by providing persons with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviours, to empower them to contribute to the building and promotion of a universal culture of human rights.”*

A year earlier, the Council of Europe adopted the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, which is the basis of its work in the field. It came into existence as a response to the “call by the 7th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth, meeting in Budapest in 2005, for a framework policy document on education for democratic citizenship and human rights education.” (Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, 2010). Even though the document is non-binding, it is an important reference point for practitioners and activists who try to promote human rights education on a national and local level.

At the end of this part, it is important to note that there is an alternative periodisation of the development of human rights education. Zembylas and Keet (2019) differentiate four broad phases: 1) pre-1948 connected with the origins of human rights and moral education; 2) 1948-1994 characterised by the formalisation of human rights education starting from the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; 3) 1995-2010 connected with the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education; 4) from 2011 characterised by the emergence of critical human rights education aiming at regenerating the radical transformative potential of HRE.



graph 5.

Goals, principles and models of human rights education

The Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education stipulates that: *“One of the fundamental goals of all education for democratic citizenship and human rights education is not just equipping learners with knowledge, understanding and skills, but also empowering them with the readiness to take action in society in the defence and promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law,”*

These goals should be achieved by adhering to the principles and values of human rights.

Human rights principles:

Universality and Inalienability - all people everywhere in the world are entitled to them.

Indivisibility - all human rights have equal status, and cannot be positioned in a hierarchical order. Denial of one right invariably impedes enjoyment of other rights.

Interdependence and Interrelatedness - Each one contributes to the realisation of a person’s human dignity through the satisfaction of his or her developmental, physical, psychological and spiritual needs. The fulfilment of one right often depends, wholly or in part, upon the fulfilment of others.

In practice, there are different human rights education models focusing on different aspects of the goals. Tibbitts (2017) distinguishes three main HRE models:

Model 1: Values and Awareness/ Socialisation Model

This model is typically sponsored by government institutions; it is content-oriented and the participation of learners is involuntary, taking place in a formal-education setting. The approach is non-critical; the power dynamics in the host country are not questioned, human rights violations are described as either happening in the past or in other countries. The strategy for reducing human rights violations is passive and does not envisage empowering learners to stand up for human rights.

Model 2: Accountability/ Professional Development Model

This model is sponsored by both government institutions and civil society organisations, learners participate voluntarily or involuntarily and it’s taking place in both formal and non-formal education sectors. Often the target group of this HRE model can include lawyers, civil servants, health and social workers, educators and journalists. Unlike the Values and Awareness Model, this one is oriented towards critical examination of the role of the particular professional in the prevention of human rights violations, and envisages agency through the development of skills and capacity.

Model 3: Activism/Transformation Model:

The model is typically sponsored by civil society organisations, learners participate voluntarily, and the approach is non-formal. Common target groups include young people and marginalised groups. The model is oriented towards transformation and as a result participants are expected to take part in human rights activism and bring positive social change.

Who is it for?

A short answer to this question would be “for everyone”. A longer answer would start with children and young people, continue with parents, and then with the different professional communities including teachers and educational professionals, social workers, youth workers, community organisers, journalists, medical professionals, legal experts, civil servants, military personnel and more. However, HRE practitioners argue that access to human rights education should be guaranteed to everyone regardless of their age, educational, professional, social or other status, and thus the answer to the question should be expanded even further.

According to the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education in the framing of their policies, legislation, and practice, member states should be guided by the “The aim of providing every person within their territory with the opportunity of education for democratic citizenship and human rights education.”

It is essential to highlight the need for making HRE activities accessible to a diverse population of learners, including: women and girls, people with disabilities, members of ethnic minority groups, refugees, migrants, asylum seekers and undocumented people, LGBTQI+ people, rural youth and youth from disadvantaged socio-economic background, as well as other social groups that are at risk of having their rights violated and therefore in need of the emancipatory tools of HRE.

What is the connection between HRE and Youth Work?

Young people, youth organisations and youth policies have an important role in the promotion of human rights and human rights education. The link between human rights education and youth work is the focus on practice and the orientation towards outcomes in terms of attitudes and behaviours.

The two practices share similar goals and approaches, and face similar challenges

in the framework of the shrinking civic space phenomenon. At the same time both of them can be used as instruments to combat it. At the end of this chapter the link between HRE and youth work and what is needed so that they can address current challenges will be addressed in more detail.



What challenges is HRE facing?

The challenges that human rights education is facing are multifaceted and varying from one country to another. Nevertheless, the recent 2022 Review of the implementation of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (Santibanez & Bagrintseva) outlines some issues that are common across borders and practices:

- access for vulnerable groups;
- conceptual controversies;
- contextual factors and the complex political landscape;
- co-operation across and within sectors;
- funding;
- training and professional development;
- COVID-19;
- implementation gap between policies and practice.

According to practitioners, this list can be complemented with the lack of capacity to monitor and evaluate HRE and the subsequent question of the quality of activities; the lack of focus on rural and minority youth when designing and implementing HRE programmes; and the broader issue of the lack of understanding of the need for an intersectional approach in HRE. Finally, there is also the failure of many practitioners to make human rights and human rights education relevant to the reality of individuals on a local level and young people in particular. Another emerging challenge is the slow pace with which human rights education is embracing the climate crisis as a human rights crisis failing young people once again, and leaving many of them with a sense of hopelessness.

However, the above list of challenges that HRE is facing may turn out to be just the tip of the iceberg. It is important to dive deeper in order to understand the big systemic problems and to reveal a critical perspective that, more often than not, is not found in the everyday practice of institutions and civil society organisations.

Joanne Coysh (2017) outlines common themes addressing different challenges that emerge in the work of scholars who are both theoretically critical of the current approaches to HRE but, at the same time, visionary in elucidating how HRE should and could instigate social change if it is put on the right foundations.

The first theme is connected with the limitations of a technical orientation and transmission approach to HRE. This approach includes an understanding of knowledge as fixed and unchanging, and the idea that human rights can be “taught as a clear set of predefined standards” (Coysh, 2017, p. 26). The roles of the educator and the learner are clearly defined and distinguished from each other. This approach can be likened to the ‘Values and Awareness Model’ in Felisa Tibbitts’ categorisation presented above, and is typical for the formal education system and state-sponsored mass educational activities. These often have the purpose of raising awareness of international human rights norms and standards, as well as the mechanisms of enforcement, while failing to challenge the unequal power hierarchies and access to these mechanisms (Coysh, 2017).

Obiora Chinedu Okafor and Sedrack C. Agbakwa (in Coysh, 2017) challenge three dogmas inherent to this type of HRE. The first one is the ‘heaven-hell binary’ that presents the world as split into two: one part, the Western world, which respects human rights, and the other, so-called ‘developing countries’, which violate human rights.

The second dogma is the ‘one-way traffic paradigm’, which is connected to the clearly distinguished roles of the educator and the learner, with the presumption of the ignorance of the learner who must be enlightened by the educator, be it a teacher or a human rights activist. Thus HRE becomes a process of instruction rather than a dialogue.

Why is the lack of dialogue a problem in HRE? In Freirean pedagogy, a pedagogical style created by Paulo Freire, it is argued that the learner should be considered a partner in knowledge creation, for example through dialogue. This is at the foundation of the liberating goal of education. However, dialogue cannot exist without humility, profound love for the world and for people, faith in humankind, hope, constant curiosity, and critical thinking which perceives reality as a process. A process in which the educator and the learner together can transform the world (Freire, 2000).

The third dogma is the ‘abolitionist paradigm’. It refers to a stereotypical notion in HRE that local cultures are obstacles to the full realisation of human rights because they are seen as static and not able to transform. Thus, local cultures are not seen as a potential source of human rights values and practices.

Another important theme in critical HRE scholarship is the importance of acknowledging that HRE is political and part of an ideological struggle. The fact that human rights education is inherently political and value-laden should be taken into consideration and HRE practitioners should be sensitive to the implications of their work. Ely Yamin claims that HRE may be the most groundbreaking form of human rights advocacy because it is aimed at changing people’s views. Exactly because of this political nature and the potential that HRE has to bring about social change, critical scholars emphasise that states’ involvement with and support for HRE cannot be automatically taken as commitment to its values. Moreover, practitioners should be careful not to replicate patterns of abuse that they claim to be fighting (in Coysh, 2017, p. 72).

Despite all the challenges described above, critical HRE scholars do not dismiss HRE as an instrument for social change but suggest that this process should include changes in conceptions and practices. Examples of how HRE can be used to combat the shrinking civic space and empower young people to lead processes of positive social transformation will be presented in the subsequent pages.

How is HRE affected by the shrinking civic space?

Civil society organisations, including youth organisations, have a very important role for the protection and promotion of human rights and subsequently of human rights education. As the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights put it in a 2017 report “just as human rights need civil society, civil society organisations need their human rights to be protected to carry out their work”.

In its submission to the Council of Europe with regard to the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education review (2017-2021), Amnesty International states that in recent years “an increase in legal and policy restrictions on human rights education such as banning it in schools, restricting access of NGOs to schools in order to conduct human rights education, censorship of human rights education (e.g., in sex education, LGBTI+, gender, racism, etc)” has been witnessed. Next follows a case study of the negative impact of the shrinking civic space on human rights education in Hungary:

Case Study - Human Rights Education in Hungary

The situation of human rights education and education for democratic citizenship in Hungarian primary and secondary schools is a matter of concern for many human rights advocates.

The recent Act LXXIX of 2021 on harsher sentencing for paedophilic criminal offences and amendments to certain laws to protect children has made it impossible for civil society organisations working for LGBTI+ rights, and to provide sexuality education in schools.

The provisions of the law ban discussing different gender identities and sexual orientations in schools, television, and advertising in Hungary. This violates children’s rights as laid down in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, as comprehensive sexuality education is part of the right to education and the right to health.

The provisions of the new law differentiate between employees and partners of educational institutions providing specific programmes, and when these programmes are

provided by others e.g. civil society organisations and external individual experts. If the programme is provided by others, only “a person or organisation registered by the body designated by law shall be allowed to hold, in the framework of the regular curriculum or other activities organised for the students”.

The Act introduces changes to the Act on petty offences, including creating a new petty offence. The person conducting an unregistered lecture, training or workshop, and the head of the institution could be held liable for committing a petty offence which is punishable by a fine or community service.

The legal changes followed a communication campaign that had lasted several months and attacked educational programmes that raise awareness on LGBTI+ related topics. The programme called ‘Melegség és Megismerés’ (Getting to know LGBTI people), provided by two Hungarian LGBTI+ NGOs, Labrisz and Szimpozion Associations, had become the primary target of these attacks in the government-aligned media. Amnesty International’s own human rights education programme was also heavily smeared. In this coordinated campaign, government-aligned media made it clear which programmes should be considered harmful to children. The law does not provide sufficient clarity about the criteria of the registration of the programme service providers, which leads to a lack of legal certainty and allows for discretionary decisions in an undue procedure by the government authorities. If school programme providers are permitted or denied being registered in an unclear, arbitrary and non-transparent way, children will be denied access to information and support that may be vital as part of their comprehensive sexuality education, and consequently their right to access quality education under international human rights law is violated.

(Excerpt from the Amnesty International Report “Hungary: The Russian-Style Propaganda Law Violates Human Rights and Threatens LGBTI People” (2021))

How can HRE address and combat the shrinking civic space phenomenon?

GOOD PRACTICE

An example of how HRE can address and combat the shrinking civic space is the educational programmes on the right to protest that Amnesty International develops.

One of the freely available resources as part of the Amnesty’s Human Rights Academy is the online course *The Right To Protest*. It aims at equipping learners with knowledge and understanding of the scope of the right to protest and how it is protected by international law. At the same time it helps them develop practical skills such as how to develop strategies for staying safe and secure while participating in protests, and how to take action to defend the right to protest.

There are also two micro-learning modules on the basis of emblematic cases of the European Court of Human Rights:

- On the authorisation v notification of authorities for peaceful protests - this 20-minute module examines the case of “Lashmankin and Others v. Russia” where the European Court of Human Rights combined 15 similar complaints submitted by Russian citizens who were denied the right to peaceful assembly, to protest on the streets of their cities and settlements.

- On the protection of protestors - this 20-minute module deals with the case of “Identoba and Others v. Georgia” where the European Court of Human Rights considered complaints from the NGO Identoba and 14 individuals who participated in a peaceful protest against homophobia in Tbilisi. All of the complainants had expected state protection from aggressive opponents but were badly beaten with the acquiescence of police officers.

Both short modules raise awareness about the right to peaceful assembly that is guaranteed in numerous international human rights instruments. In particular, article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights states that “Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others”. The European Court of Human Rights oversees state compliance with the convention.

In addition, Amnesty International Poland has developed the guide Let’s Take A Closer Look At The Freedom Of Assemblies aimed at organisations planning to observe assemblies. Observation of assemblies can have a real impact on respecting human rights by changing assembly policing practices and can increase awareness on the right to protest among the general public, CSOs and their members, media and the police.

Youth work - definition and essence of the educational practice



The term youth work includes a wide variety of activities, covering a broad spectrum of topics, and converging from different disciplines. Youth work relies on a rich methodological arsenal and various pedagogical approaches; taking place in a range of settings and reaching young people of diverse backgrounds.

This diversity is the strength and weakness of the practice at the same time. On the one hand, it allows flexibility in order to respond to youth-related issues, but on the other hand it makes it difficult to grasp its essence and explain it to a wider audience unfamiliar with the practice (Williamson, 2015).

The absence of a consistent, universally agreed definition of youth work contributes to the vagueness of the concept and its diverse perception. At the same time, it is impossible to develop a definition that would fit each country where youth work is being practised. As the nature of youth work in local contexts is shaped based on each country’s existing socio-economic, political, and cultural environment. (Ord, et al., 2018).

Within the abundance of youth work definitions, one can identify both similarities and differences. Gathering commonalities makes it possible to construe the general characteristics (principles, purpose) of youth work as an educational practice regardless of local peculiarity. This way it is possible to develop a conceptual definition instead of an operational one (Cooper, 2018).

One of the first stages of the study ‘The Socio-economic Scope of Youth Work in Europe’ (2006) –which was a joint effort of the European Commission and the Council of Europe and was carried out in 10 European countries –involved a systematic and comparative analysis of the existing definitions of youth work. The results proved the validity of the youth work definition proposed by Peter Lauritzen. His definition was reckoned to be the foundation of the research.

“The main objective of youth work is to provide opportunities for young people to shape their future. Youth work is a summary expression for activities with and for young people of a social, cultural, educational or political nature. Increasingly, youth work activities also include sports and services for young people. Youth work belongs to the domain of ‘out-of-school’ education, most commonly referred to as either non-formal or informal learning. The general aims of

youth work are the integration and inclusion of young people in society. It may also aim towards the personal and social emancipation of young people from dependency and exploitation. Youth Work belongs both to the social welfare and to the educational systems.” (Lauritzen, 2006)

The other definitions more or less follow the same logic, some of them emphasising the significance of certain aspects of the practice e.g., underpinning values, purpose etc. and in doing so giving less importance to the other features. These combinations create a variety of definitions.

During the training seminar held in Turin, the project participants – from 8 different countries – worked to ensure a common understanding of the concept, and came up with their own definition:

***Youth work** is paid or voluntary work that aims to empower young people, give them tools, and build the community through participation, respect, fun, and informal means. The work starts where young people are, and aims to support their social, political, and economic empowerment in the present and future.*

In the scope of this project, the above definition will be used as an expression of the shared vision and understanding.

Youth Work Domain

To comprehend the nature of youth work, we need to locate it on the map of the educational landscape and figure out the domain it belongs to. Primarily, **youth work is an ‘out of school education’** (Panagides, et al., 2020). Though it doesn’t mean youth work provision cannot occur in schools and other formal educational facilities. On the contrary, it can highly contribute to the educational process in such institutions like schools, colleges, universities etc. The expression ‘out of school education’ – suggested by Lauritzen (2006) in his definition of youth work – makes a referral to the **non-formal education** in its broader sense as **an educational sphere** outside the formal educational system. Youth workers rely on the methods of non-formal and informal learning.

The list of settings where youth workers can be found is quite long and could include a variety of institutional, sectorial, and contextual environments. In terms of sectors, **youth work occurs in: governmental, non-governmental, private, and voluntary sectors; ranging from a variety of organisational settings, such as: schools, local municipalities, governmental structures, churches, charity organisations, hospitals, and prisons. Regarding the context, youth workers can be found anywhere young people are;** starting with youth work designated professional facilities such as: youth centres, camps, youth accommodation services, and even ending up in streets, as well as employment, drug and alcohol services, and online spaces (Cooper, 2018); (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2017). Such a diversity of settings where youth work occurs once again emphasises its multifaceted and fluid nature, appearing simultaneously as a strength and weakness of the practice.

Models and approaches

The journey to understanding the concept of youth work inevitably travels through the analysis of **the purpose, values, and principles of the practice**. They are determined based on theoretical frameworks and models underpinning each country’s context. The theoretical foundation is also crucial to explain the value of the practice to a wider audience (European Commission, 2014).

In the section below we will discuss the several theoretical models developed in differ-

ferent countries. We will begin with Ireland. Hurley and Treacy (1993) came up with a youth work model called the ‘**Sociological framework**’, which was intended to provide theoretical guidance to the youth work practice in Ireland. These models are not very well known outside Ireland, but in this country’s context, they are still reflected in contemporary practice. The model by Hurley and Treacy is shaped around the role given to the educational theory in youth work practice. They identify four approaches: **Character Building, Personal Development, Radical Social Change and Critical Social Education (Cooper, 2012).**

The purpose of **Character Building** is to **fit young people into society**, having a control function and intending to tackle young peoples’ deviant behaviours and values. **The Personal Development Model** aims at **supporting a young person in the process of transition to adulthood** by helping them to develop all the necessary competencies. The model is not concerned with societal issues and young people’s awareness about it, and it takes collective action to tackle them. **The Critical Social Education model** stems from the assumption that society is inequitable and power imbalances as well as hegemonic structures hinder the realisation of young people’s potential. Respectively, this model is concerned with **helping young people realise the existing oppressive reality and seeks social change**. The last one – **Radical Social Change** – aims at equality among young people and **fostering solidarity among them (Cooper, 2018)** (Cooper, 2012).

In 1994 Cooper and White published the article on ‘Models of Youth work Interventions’. The piece included six different models clarifying Australian youth work practices. The models were organised based on political ideology. According to them, these models coexist. They identified the following models: **Treatment, Reform, Non-Radical Advocacy, Radical Advocacy, Non-Radical Empowerment, and Radical Empowerment (Cooper, 2012).**

The treatment model has a lot in common with the Character Building model. It is a deficit-based approach and relies on the assumption that young people are problematic and they need to be ‘treated’. **They need to conform to hegemonic societal values**. To fulfil this goal, activities proposed by the youth work based on this model promote a specific set of values and make interventions to manage anti-social behaviour (Cooper, 2012).

The reform model resonates with the idea that **young people are required to fit into societal norms**, but unlike the treatment model, **it attributes their deviant and anti-social behaviour to their disadvantaged backgrounds**. The programmes proposed through this approach are basically educational and **intend to remedy their disadvantaged background and provide social integration (European Commission, 2014).**

According to **the advocacy models (radical and non-radical)**, **young people’s issues are caused by complex and oppressive societal conditions**, and there is no one in their lives empowered enough to advocate for their rights. In this model, youth workers have to be the young people’s advocate, while in the radical advocacy model a youth worker has **to support and empower young people to advocate for themselves and be capable of fighting for protecting their rights (Cooper, 2018).**

This incomplete overview of the existing theoretical models and approaches illustrates that **youth work is not a value-free practice**. Depending on the chosen value system, youth workers set different goals and work to achieve respective outcomes among young people. If the youth work model is based on the values that serve to keep the current social order, the purpose of the practice would be young people’s integration into the adult-led society. In such cases, youth work is more of an instrumental nature and has to provide for young people’s safe transition into adulthood through building the required skill-set and values. While youth work models which have social change at their core are more emancipatory, critical, and revolutionary in their nature, and aim at challenging the existing status quo; bringing about change through empowering young people and supporting them to become critical citizens (Marciano & Merico, 2017). It also high-

| YOUTH WORK MODELS | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|---|--|
| MODEL: | POLITICAL TRADITION: | HUMAN NATURE: | VISION/GOALS: | VALUES: |
| Treatment | Conservative | Negative | Social harmony | Social cohesion |
| Reform | Liberal | Reformable | Social mobility | Equal opportunity |
| Advocacy (non-radical) | Liberal, Social democratic | Reformable | Social contract, individual rights | Rights as due under existing law |
| Advocacy (radical) | Social democratic, Socialism | Positive | Gradual social change towards more just and equitable society | Social justice, positive rights, Law reform to extend rights |
| Empowerment (non-radical) | Classical liberal/- Neo-conservative | Neutral or negative | Small government | Freedom from interference |
| Empowerment (radical) | Anarchist | Highly positive | Self-government, grassroots democracy | Equality of social power |

Table 1. adopted from Cooper, 2018
Cooper and White's model 1994

lights the political dimension of the youth work practice and indicates that **it can not be neutral.**

To make more sense of youth work practice, a Europe wide study conducted by the Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency and the European Commission was published in 2014.

Through this we can give a brief outline of other distinctive features of the youth work practices remarked upon in the study, and that were also identified as more or less common to European youth work. **At the centre of the practice stands young people. Youth work aims to provide support for personal development in terms of empowerment, emancipation, responsibility, and tolerance.** Even though some forms of practice put more emphasis on emancipation and empowerment, whilst others on prevention, one of the significant features of youth work is that **it strives to support participation in democratic societies as well as social inclusion and cohesion.** Methodologically it is rich and encompasses non-formal/informal learning, experiential pedagogy, mentoring, and/or peer support, and relationship-based activities. The practice takes place where young people are and activities are grounded on their needs and interests, instead of the pre-defined curriculum (European Commission, 2014). We can not talk about youth work without mentioning one of its core principles: voluntary participation – whereby young people choose to participate, highlighting the democratic nature of the practice (Council of Europe, 2015).

Youth work and its link to the civil society

In this section, we will briefly discuss how youth work is connected to civil society and its operational dimension: civic space.

Civil society is a crucial dimension for securing strong democracy, protecting human rights, ensuring equal opportunities, and social justice. It is the fertile soil capable of sprouting social change. At the core of its proper functioning stands participation and engagement, solidarity, social inclusion, and collective action (The United Nations Development Programme, 2021).

To discuss the connections between youth work and civil society, we need to mention the latter's foundations: democracy, human rights, participation, social justice, and communities are inherent elements of the former (Henderson & I, 2010). As this educational practice is conceptually aligned with the notion of civil society, in many regards it has the capacity to contribute to its functioning. It particularly applies to the emancipatory, critical, and community-based models of youth work bearing the potential to tackle power imbalances as well as initiate change.

Youth work as a social practice focuses on both individuals and groups. Peer groups are deemed as an essential learning environment where alongside personal development include: raising young people's self-awareness, enhancing their agencies, teaching how to interact with others, and engaging in their immediate communities and social environment. Through informal

learning, which is a dialogical process and engages educators and learners as equally important parts of the process, learning happens by posing problems that have importance for the participants. Critical analysis of the stated problems and finding solutions brings about change that goes beyond individuals and is located in their communities, creating collective consciousness. The process goes through social interactions between actors in the learners' social network. This intensive social process is underpinned by values such as solidarity and inclusion and enhances social cohesion within the communities; making collective action possible to bring about change. The social dimension of youth work supports developing bonds between community members and creates social capital, and through shared norms and networks builds trust and reciprocity which is essential for collective actions. In the neoliberal era, where competitive individualism is encouraged and personal gain is the main driving force, the potential to evoke the collective spirit and organise collective action is a strong advantage of youth work practice (Back & Purcell, 2010). Such collective actions can happen locally, internationally, and globally. **This capacity of the practice to create social capital aligns with one of the three pillars of civic space-freedom of association, which enables democratic processes to happen.**

Another dimension of youth work which is in close connection with civil society has a distinctive **political nature**. According to Paulo Freire 'There is no such thing as neutral education. Education either functions as an instrument to bring conformity or freedom' (Pedagogy of the Oppressed). Youth work is not an exception, it is inherently political and revolutionary. **Not all types of youth work can be deemed as political, but the practices that stand on critical, empowering and radical paradigms and place change at its centre are political.** Youth work operating on critical paradigms on the one hand strives to empower young people's agency by building citizenship competencies, supporting them to use their voice in decision-making processes. On the other hand, using the problem-solving educational approach, it enables young people to engage in the process of conscientization, critically analysing hegemonic processes generated through the everyday activities of the government, major institutions and business, oppressive power imbalances, and act for social or political change (Back & Purcell, 2010).

To reach the desirable outcomes in regard to the political domain, youth workers are equipped with a wide variety of tools, methods, and human rights education. Through this, youth workers aspire to: cultivate democratic culture, citizenship awareness and participation among young people, promote peace-building, tolerance, and combat radicalization, hate speech etc (Youth Partnership, 2017). As a result, young people empowered and equipped with all the necessary skills, values, and knowledge are the ones who actually form youth civic space creating initiative groups, organisations, and councils in order to express themselves, challenge oppression, promote social justice and make a difference. If youth work has the capacity to contribute to the forming and developing youth civic space, it has the ability to combat its shrinking tendency too.

Situational analysis of youth work policy and practice

As discussed in the previous section, the political dimension of youth work can play a crucial role in the process of resistance against shrinking civil spaces. It is interesting to look at what is the situation of political youth work in Europe, is it thriving or is it oppressed as a potential threat to hegemonic powers? Do European programmes actually address political matters? Is political youth work provision financially supported? Are there any issues related to this domain?

First of all, let's take a look at **how the youth work**



community of practice approaches the political dimension in youth work? As it turns out, there is a controversy regarding this matter, and a very cautious attitude can be observed. Certain stakeholders are concerned with the lack of a political dimension in youth work provision, while others are questioning its appropriateness. Surprisingly, youth workers and educators who work on evidently political matters, such as democratic citizenship and human rights education, avoid explicitly admitting that what they are doing is of political nature or that they are dealing with political issues. This leads to the growing tendency towards **depoliticisation** and consequent concern among the community of practice that youth work has to be neutral to ensure the educational mission (Ohana, 2020).

If we try to disentangle the rationale underpinning these theoretical debates on the political aspiration of educational practice, it will lead us to uncovering the structural oppressive influences of hegemonic powers. In doing so we need to rely on the Freirian sociological perspective on societal arrangement. According to him, at the core of such discourse stands hegemonic structures producing oppressive reality through oppressive elites. It happens not necessarily in harsh violent ways, but also through ‘softer’ manners, such as: **indoctrination, alienation, and exploitation**, which are committed in the name of ‘welfare’ (Xavier, 2022). As a result, **the oppressed are labelled as deviants who require treatment and integration into the ‘healthy’ society**. Such logic serves to keep the hegemonic order: instead of changing oppressive reality, the mindset of the oppressed has to be aligned with the oppressive reality. The more aligned and adapted to the oppressive situation, the easier it is to maintain domination (Xavier, 2022).

These kinds of power dynamics and the concurrent rationale of the existing trends can be observed in the youth field. The core normative objective of European youth work practice, explicitly stated in seminal political declarations, is determined as contributing to the development of **‘critical Europe awareness’, democratic citizenship**, cultivating the sense of responsibility, the **understanding of European democracy**, which requires permanent renewal (Ohana, 2020). Even though some youth organisations and youth projects are still striving to achieve such goals, during the past decade it is no longer a priority. More attention has been drawn to such issues as employability, personal development, anti-radicalisation, and solidarity. On the one hand, it is understandable due to the economic crisis and increasing youth unemployment, but on the other hand, it dramatically shifts the direction of European youth work from the emancipatory, critical stance toward the deficit-based approach. This puts an emphasis on treating young people as the ones who need to be ‘fixed’ and bothers less with the societal issues and change-making (Ohana, 2020). Of course, such circumstances work in favour of dominant structures and enhance their status quo, as long as young people have a less critical awareness of how surrounding reality works and are less capable of striving for liberation. The same rationale underpins the shrinking civic space tendency. **Critically minded youth equipped with the competencies of an active citizen, fighting for a better and more democratic society, and aspiring to influence existing political agenda could be a danger to dominant structures and can undermine their power**. This is why shrinking the arena where these fights can take place can serve dominant structures as an ‘effective’ tool for securing the status quo.

Such a tendency of shrinking civic space determines the unfavourable situation taking shape for youth civil society organisations and youth work providers, both on the organisational and individual levels. It explains the above-mentioned youth workers’ inclination to avoid admitting their work is political, because standing out makes them more visible, hence more vulnerable and better targets for threats and oppression (Xavier, 2022). The same applies to the organisations operating in the political domain. **It is harder and harder for them to get funding, sometimes they are accused of overstepping their mandate as educators, and legal barriers are created to reduce the scope of their operation**. Step by step this ongoing process weakens civil society’s

capacity to serve as a watchdog and diminishes their efforts to balance state power in order to ensure democracy (Ohana, 2020).

Securing the status quo of dominant powers is also a hidden agenda behind the debatable opinion that education has to be neutral. According to Freire *‘There is no such thing as a neutral education process. Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate the integration of generations into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes the ‘practice of freedom’, the means by which men and women deal critically with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world’* (2005, p.34). As Giroux argues, the claim of neutrality of education deprives people of understanding the crucial role it plays in forming ideology, power, and social values (2019). Subsequently, it contributes to cultivating ‘the culture of silence’ and keeps young people in a state of naïve consciousness. Such circumstances dismantle the education of its liberating and transformative capacity.

Youth work as a distinctive form of education has the potential to be **the driving force of change (social and political)**. Such provision has the capacity to serve as **a source of liberation and can transform both young people and the environment** to which they belong. But in the current situation when civil society and civic space have been closing and losing their functions, it is not easy to align youth work provision towards social and political change. Moreover, funding opportunities for political education are dramatically reduced (Ohana, 2020).

In connection to change-making, another issue of European youth work has to be highlighted. *‘One concrete result of European youth work not addressing power and power relations sufficiently is that there is an inherent contradiction between what it tells young people they should be able to achieve and what is actually possible for them to achieve’* (Ohana, 2019, p.10). There are situations when participation in youth work projects and programmes give young people skills, knowledge, and values to combat injustice and inequalities but their high hopes are crushed upon seeing how little they can actually do in reality, which results in them feeling powerless instead of being empowered. These issues lead to youth workers and educators needing to be trained on how to put learning into the European context (Ohana, 2020).

The last point to look at is the pedagogy used in youth work. It is worth mentioning that there is quite extensive literature, mostly standing on the grounds of critical pedagogy, which can provide guidance and serve as good educational material (Ohana, 2020). While provisioning **political education two trends** can be observed in the community of practice: **one is underpinned with critical, reflexive, and democratic approaches**, while the other **makes youth work experience consumeristic for young people** by using certain methodologies for achieving specific learning outcomes without clear justification; removing the opportunities for young people to engage in genuine experience. In general, youth work provision seems quite effective in terms of engaging and motivating young people but the same cannot be applied to the more profound processes of co-creation and social transformation (Ohana, 2020).

As **we can see the political youth work provision is under pressure**, aligning with the shrinking civil space tendency. There are a lot of gaps that need to be taken care of such as coming up with more meaningful ways of engaging young people, shifting the paradigm from deficit oriented stances towards more critical ones and many more (Ohana, 2020). As Freire suggests, education is a crucial tool to either bring about oppressive and dehumanising reality or generate liberation and humanization (Freire, 1998). So if the community of practice revises existing reality, and renews their practice in a manner that responds to the deviations from the humanising nature of the youth work provision, it will become a powerful instrument to combat injustice, inequalities, and oppression. Henceforth regaining civic space as an arena to make civil society work at its full capacity and by doing so reinvent, reimagine, and co-create a new democracy.

Summary, why youth work & human rights education?

In the previous sections we discussed civic space, the shrinking civic space phenomenon, and the two educational practices to combat it: human rights education and youth work. These two educational pathways share some common characteristics. Both of them employ non-formal education methods (HRE can be part of the formal curriculum as well), take holistic approaches towards young people's development, are value-based, learner-centred and participatory, and employ experiential learning quite extensively.

To make the interrelation between HRE and youth work clearer, we need to mention that human rights are an integral part of youth work professional ethics. As it grounds its practice on recognizing the dignity of every human being, striving to create equal opportunities for all, and cultivating tolerance among young people. Youth work as a social forum, by creating a safe space where social inequalities are not reproduced, enables young people to internalise: equality, equal dignity, and practice democracy, solidarity, and social justice. Such social and educational practice is definitely aligned with human rights education purposes (Gavrielides et al., 2018) (Scherr, 2019).

Critical forms of HRE and youth work can be qualified as political education, placing social change at its heart in order to make societies more just and democracy "more democratic". Such HRE and YW stand on the principles of critical pedagogy. It means both practices are dialogic in nature; through empowering learners, cultivating a critical mindset, making them aware of power imbalances and oppression, equipping them with the relevant knowledge, skills, and attitudes to tackle the issues inflicting their dehumanisation, leading them ultimately to liberation (Xavier, 2022), (Freire, 1998).

This emancipatory nature became the reason why HRE and YW alongside the civic space are experiencing a shrinking tendency. Previous chapters illustrated that reduced financial support, legal restrictions, intimidation, and repression of activists and educators, as well as other forms of oppression are imposed on civic space. It imposes a double negative impact on these two educational practices: on the one hand the shrinking civic space leave less and less opportunities to act for social and political change; for bringing social justice back to societies. In return, this tendency hinders HRE and YW, which operate through civil society organisations in order to meet their crucial role of permanently producing a renewed human capital of active citizens, activists, and other actors of civic space.

Despite incremental suppression and suffocation of operational space, it is crucial for HRE and YW praxis to keep a critical standpoint, instead of deficit-based approaches so to preserve the emancipatory praxis; continue educating and empowering young people; bringing about social justice and to 'make the democracy work'.



Chapter III - Practical Solutions

Introducing the ATA tool

In the previous chapter youth civic space and shrinking space phenomenon have been defined, as well as highlighting the role of human rights education and youth work. This chapter presents practical tools that can be helpful in understanding the shrinking space phenomena in different contexts, and effective HRE and youth work practices that enable youth civil society to protect the youth civic space.

In order to make targeted interventions to fight back the repressions, there is a need to firstly understand how the youth civil society is challenged and the areas where interventions are crucial. This is where analysis/assessment becomes a really important part of reclaiming youth civic space, buttressed by well-planned interventions. For this purpose, a new tool (ATA) has been elaborated which gives a chance to **Assess** the situation, **Train** young people, and **Act** for expanding the civic space in their respective countries.

The ATA tool indicates a process of reclaiming civic space through:

Assessment: To make interventions more targeted it is necessary to: assess the situation of the youth civic space, come up with a **Youth Civic Space Index (YCSI)** in the country, and understand what are the areas where the government fails to ensure that the youth civil society fully enjoys its civil and political rights. Thus, ATA gives the chance to assess the situation in their respective countries through an assessment matrix. Two assessment matrices (see Table 1 and Table 2) are offered to be used which are composed of different categories: (Table 1: freedom of speech and assembly, freedom of association, independent media and equal media coverage, equality and right to be free from discrimination; and Table 2: Safe environment for a sustainable youth civil society, strengthened youth participation in democratic life, young people's access to rights).

The YCSI score gives an understanding of the situation of the country in general and can serve as a baseline, while the assessment matrix highlights the areas where the government fails. The results of the assessments must be the basis of any intervention that the CSOs have to make in order to reclaim the civic space or make it better. Critical areas for interventions will be defined based on the assessment results. Thus, it is essential to assess the situation and clearly highlight the gaps before conducting human rights education to expand the civic space.

Training: The train part of the ATA tool is for tailored-made interventions in terms of educating young people about the shrinking space issue, particularly about the main trends of repressions identified in the assessment. This is to make human rights education and youth work more effective and targeted for reclaiming or protecting civic space. ATA gives some educational activities deriving from the indicators in the assessment matrix, of which can be organised for young people to raise their awareness about the issues, and arm them with necessary skill sets to be able to combat the shrinking civic space. Once young people are aware of the tools and instruments they will have the knowledge and competences to effectively tackle the issues. This is when they start to move to the next step of the ATA cycle.



Act: When you have a clear understanding of the problems, knowledge, and skills, you can further your participatory interventions through well-planned actions. Among other activities, these can include advocacy campaigns at local, regional, and national levels concerning one or another critical issue which contributes to the shrinking space. Once the action/advocacy is done and changes have been made you would need to go back to the assessment stage again to see how your interventions have improved the situation, and finally by conducting the endline assessment using the same matrix.

The effectiveness and efficiency of the ATA cycle highly depends on how well each civil society organisation and actor uses it and refers back to it to monitor the changes. The process of responding to the shrinking civic space is a never ending process and the ATA cycle should be mainstreamed in all of the activities in order to get positive results. One can decide to use the particular matrix with a group of people or with individuals in order to get a better understanding of the situation in a particular community or a country, in turn consolidating more responses. For example, if you want to make an intervention regarding the issues of rural youth you may decide to do a sampling and distribute the assessment matrix among your target group, upon which you would do the analysis based on the collected multiple responses. The tool is not used to give a thorough assessment and accurate data of the shrinking space situation in a particular country, but rather to produce an understanding of particular areas which are more affected and need to be tackled with training and action. The tool is made to be used for educational purposes, thus, the scores are an indication of how the representatives of youth civil society evaluate the situation based on their own experiences and/or observations. After the assessment one can choose a particular indicator or a category which is scored low and build on their interventions in that area, rather than indiscriminately trying to improve the situation in the country in all categories.

In this section we offer the reader two ways of assessing the situation in their localities, using two different matrices. **The first matrix**, which has **19 indicators**, is developed based on the situation analysis of the shrinking space in Europe, whereas **the second matrix** with its **21 indicators** reflects the measures highlighted in the CM/Rec (2022) 6 on protecting youth civil society and young people, and supporting their participation in democratic processes.

In each category, there are subcategories with certain statements which need to be ranked by using 1 to 5 (see the description of scoring below) depending on the situation in the country.

1 Absolutely not true.

2 Not true.

3 Somewhat true.

4 True.

5 Absolutely true.

1. Absolutely not true - meaning that the rights are absolutely violated and no one is entitled to exercise them. There is a tendency for constant violations and the situation is getting worse day by day.

2. Not true - meaning that the rights are violated and not everyone can exercise their rights, but only people/organisations which are loyal to the authorities.

3. Somewhat true - meaning that there are violations of rights but those are not very systematic and occur occasionally when authorities

feel threatened by the civil society organisations.

4. True - meaning that everyone can freely exercise their rights and it is guaranteed by the authorities, however there is a possible risk that civil society organisations can be subject to restrictions, when found necessary.

5. Absolutely true - meaning that everyone can freely exercise their rights and it is guaranteed by the authorities, however there is no significant risk that civil society organisations can be subject to restrictions no matter the situation in the country.

After giving a ranking to the statements of each subcategory an average score of the category should be calculated. Once all the categories have their average scores, in order to calculate the YCSI the following formula should be used:

$$YCSI=(N1+N2+N3+N4)/4 \text{ (Matrix 1)}$$

$$YCSI=(N1+N2+N3)/3 \text{ (Matrix 2)}$$

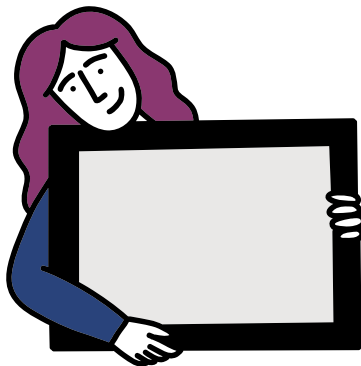


TABLE 1: ASSESSMENT MATRIX FOR YOUTH CIVIC SPACE INDEX (YCSI)

| 1. FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND ASSEMBLY | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
|--|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 1.1 | Everyone (and/or all the organisations) is entitled to the right to protest and express themselves, and are able to exercise this right without any unlawful restrictions. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | evidence: | | | | | |
| 1.2 | Everyone (and/or all the organisations) is entitled to the right to organise, participate in a spontaneous, non-violent civil unrest in a public place of their choice without prior notification or approval. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | evidence: | | | | | |
| 1.3 | Everyone (and/or all the organisations) is free from intimidation, violence, and criminalization for their expressed opinions or any lawful activities which they are entitled to conduct. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | evidence: | | | | | |
| 1.4 | Everyone is free to use social media and other online platforms to express themselves in non-harmful ways without the fear of unlawful surveillance, censorship or prosecution. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | evidence: | | | | | |
| 1.5 | During peaceful protests everyone is free from police brutality and disproportionate use of force, as well as being protected from violent groups. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | evidence: | | | | | |
| AVERAGE SCORE: | | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | |
| 2. FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 2.1 | Everyone is entitled to the right and is not restricted from exercising those rights to form associations/NGOs/etc. or from getting involved in the existing ones. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | evidence: | | | | | |
| 2.2 | No administrative and legal hurdles exist for the registration of an association/NGO etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | evidence: | | | | | |
| 2.3 | Non-registered informal groups can freely operate without any restrictions. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | evidence: | | | | | |
| 2.4 | No administrative and legal hurdles exist for reporting, accounting and implementing activities for the CSOs. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | evidence: | | | | | |
| 2.5 | No restrictions are put in place for foreign funding. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | evidence: | | | | | |
| 2.6 | There are viable and well-organised mechanisms put in place to support (including financially) the CSOs operating in the country. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | evidence: | | | | | |
| AVERAGE SCORE: | | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | |

| 3. INDEPENDENT MEDIA AND EQUAL COVERAGE | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 3.1 | Journalists and other media representatives are free from intimidation, criminalization, censorship and any other unlawful actions imposed solely for their professional activities in the field. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 3.2 | There are opportunities to express critical views against governments without any restrictions and fear. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 3.3 | All the CSOs and HR defenders have access to public media (including participating in TV programmes, giving interviews, getting coverage of their activities etc.) without censorship and smear campaigns. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| AVERAGE SCORE: | | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | |
| 4. EQUALITY AND FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4.1 | Young LGBTQI people and organisations supporting LGBTI people are able to freely express themselves without fear of intimidation and equally exercise their civil and political rights (including participation in decision making). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 4.2 | Young people from ethnic minority groups are able to freely exercise their rights equally and are engaged in policy dialogue and policy making processes. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 4.3 | Young people with disabilities are supported to equally exercise their social, economic, cultural rights, as well as civil and political rights as there are policies and practices in place for their engagement in social, political and economic life. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 4.4 | Young migrants and refugees are provided with necessary support for their integration into society and the exercising of their human rights including the right to work, right to education etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 4.5 | Young people representing different religious groups are able to freely exercise their rights and are provided with opportunities to express their religious views without fear of intimidation and violence from far-right groups. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| AVERAGE SCORE: | | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | |

TABLE 2: ASSESSMENT MATRIX FOR YOUTH CIVIC SPACE PROGRESS INDEX (YCSPi) BASED ON THE CM/REC (2022) 6

| 1. SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR A SUSTAINABLE YOUTH CIVIL SOCIETY | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.1 | Legal frameworks ensure an environment which allows for a strong and independent youth civil society that is able to operate freely. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 1.2 | Best practices on how to enable and expand youth civil society are shared, and synergies with other existing exchange mechanisms in the European sphere are secured/sought after. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 1.3 | Threats to the work of youth civil society concerning living together in peaceful and inclusive societies, and on fostering the Council of Europe's core values of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law are eliminated in order to protect pluralistic democracy. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 1.4 | Simple, flexible, and widely accessible public funding and reporting mechanisms for youth civil society are adopted. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 1.5 | Undue legal and administrative burdens or hindrances to the receipt of funding by youth civil society from private and international donors is eliminated. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 1.6 | Appropriate support for quality youth work, including its digital dimension, that fosters critical youth citizenship and empowers young people from different backgrounds, including those from marginalised and under-represented groups, is ensured to tackle challenges that young people and youth civil society face in exercising their rights and building a democratic and just Europe. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 1.7 | An enabling environment for youth civil society in times of crisis is maintained and supported. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | | | | | |
| AVERAGE SCORE: | | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | |

| 2. STRENGTHENED YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC LIFE | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2.1 | Development of active youth citizenship and building young people's competences for democratic culture, as well as their trust in democratic institutions is supported. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 2.2 | All young people are provided with proper access to means of engagement with public authorities (including digital means) available in minority languages and accessible to young migrants and refugees, as well as to young people with disabilities, to avoid reinforcing existing inequalities or creating new ones among young people from different backgrounds. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 2.3 | Access of all young people and youth civil society (including those from rural and remote areas) to digital tools and internet connections is facilitated and equal opportunities for access and a higher quality of life in the framework of their human, cultural, social, political, and economic development is promoted. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 2.4 | Necessary conditions for the representation of young people's and youth civil society's pluralistic and marginalised views and positions in public debate, without fear of retribution is created. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 2.5 | Participatory spaces are created or existing ones (including formal education spaces) are revitalised where young people can practise, experience, reflect on and learn the theories of democracy and participation. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 2.6 | A strategic approach to consultations and co-operation with young people and youth civil society across different sectors is adopted and multisectoral strategies for youth participation in democratic life is created. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| 2.7 | Direct channels of contact between public officials, young people and youth civil society exist and are accessible for all young people. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | evidence: | | | | |
| AVERAGE SCORE: | | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | |

| 3. YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACCESS TO RIGHTS | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <p>3.1 The rights (enshrined in the ECHR) to freedom of association and (peaceful) assembly (Article 11); freedom of expression – including the right to represent pluralistic and marginalised views, engage critically as young citizens with a variety of issues, and information (Article 10); and the right to privacy (Article 8) for all young people is protected and promoted and any barriers to young people's access to civil and political rights are lifted.</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>3.2 The rights of young people to engage in youth advocacy and to freely express their political preferences is protected by allowing the organisation of peaceful public gatherings and demonstrations by youth civil society.</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>3.3 The right of young people to express their views freely while protecting them from violence and preventing subsequent detention for political reasons is safeguarded.</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>3.4 All young people's access to information is ensured and they are protected from disinformation, manipulation, and misuse of their data by either public or private actors, particularly in the digital domain.</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>3.5 The political and social rights of young people and their privacy in the sphere of artificial intelligence development (for example with regard to possible misuse of facial recognition technology in public spaces, such as AI-enabled mass surveillance) is protected.</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>3.6 Self-expression and the full development of young people's potential is promoted and encouraged, and they are protected from segregation, discredit or marginalisation, reflecting the Council of Europe's core values.</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>3.7 Young people are not exposed to hate speech and other negative phenomena as a result of their views and/or engagement.</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| AVERAGE SCORE: | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | |

Once you are done with the assessment and have already diagnosed the situation of youth civic space, consequently identifying specific areas of shrinking civic space, you are ready to launch the second phase of the ATA cycle – the Training phase. It is the right time to give the floor to human rights education and youth work. It is a crucial phase to enable young people to develop a critical mindset, get familiar with dominant structures, the existing power imbalance and overcome a naïve state of consciousness. Such an awakening will be the starting point on the road to liberation and humanisation. The transformative journey starts with equipping young people with the relevant competencies and critical minds in order to challenge the status quo and transform reality. To synchronise critical pedagogical discourse and the focal point of the publication, we can say that reclaiming civic space equals challenging the status quo.

To make the educational process needs-based and effective, this section provides the pool of educational activities tailored to the issues deriving from the indicators in the assessment matrix. Activities are mostly adopted from already existing resources such as Compass, ‘Have your say!’, Bookmarks etc. and adjusted to the themes and issues of shrinking civic space. After identifying specific issues with the help of an assessment tool, in this section, the reader can easily find the relevant educational activities to use in their practice.

Proposed activities fall into the four thematic categories:

Human rights and civic space in general

- Rights for Civic Space
- Freedoms at Stake
- Defining Civic Space
- Barriers to Civic Space
- Alternate Reality
- Problem Tree

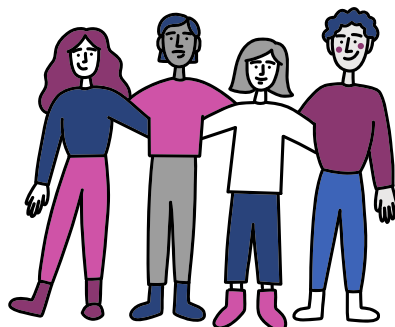
Freedom of assembly and association

- Neglected Obligations;
- From SUPPRESSGARD to SURPRISEGRAD;
- Confronting the barriers - moving underground;
- Etobo VS Suppressia;

Freedom of expression

- Don't Judge a Story by its Title

Prohibition of discrimination



Rights for Civic Space

Introduction:

This activity helps participants make a clear parallel between human rights (particularly civic and political rights) and civic space through small to large group discussions, using the diamond ranking.

Themes of activity:

- Civic and political rights;
- Violation of civil and political rights;
- Shrinking civic space

Groups size:

4-30

Duration:

120m

Preparation:

- Handout of Civic and Political Rights;
- Ranking template.

Materials:

Flipcharts, post-it notes, markers, handouts (1).

Objectives:

- To discuss and emphasise the importance of civic and political rights and how their violation can affect the civic space;
- To create a human-rights-based approach to the problem analysis regarding ‘shrinking civic space’;
- To develop a holistic understanding on enabling human rights factors to civic space.

Instructions:

Introduction:

Introduce participants to what ‘civic space’ is and allow for comments on why it is important for societies to ensure a functioning civic space. Explain that the basis and justification for the functioning of civic space is to create human rights and with this activity you will attempt to make parallels between human rights and civic space, which will give a deeper understanding to the participants on what to TRAIN and ACT.

Brush through the Civic and Political Rights:

Distribute the handout of Civic and Political Rights to the participants and ask them to go through it and think of how civic space is linked to them. Give time for contemplation.

Selecting Rights:

Selecting Rights:

Divide participants into groups of 4-5 and ask them to choose 12 rights which they think are the most important for the functioning of the civic space. Give time for discussion.

Ranking:

Introduce the ranking template, explain to the participants that the goal of the activity is to rank these 12 rights from most important to least important using the “diamond” template. Ask parti-

Participants to prepare a short presentation about the ranking outcome (through flipchart or a slide) and to explain to other groups the logic behind their judgement. Participants perform this task in the same groups.

Presentations:

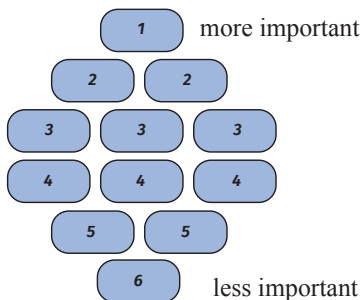
Start short presentations, ask participants to visually present their flipchart (allow reading the ranking only in case of visual impairment) and the logic orally.

Debriefing:

- Was this activity easy or difficult? What made it easy or difficult?
- What general trends did you catch throughout the presentations?
- Which international mechanisms protect civic and political rights?
- Who is responsible for protecting, fulfilling, and respecting these rights?
- Who should ensure that the responsible parties are fulfilling their obligations?
- What can we do/can young people do to ensure the rights are recognised, respected and fulfilled?

Handouts (1)

Civil and Political Rights (from ICCPR):



Article 3 - Right to equality between men and women in the enjoyment of their civil and political rights.

Article 6 – Right to life and survival.

Article 7 – Freedom from torture, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 8 – Right to not be enslaved.

Article 9 – Right to liberty and security of the person, freedom from arbitrary detention.

Article 10 – Rights of detainees.

Article 11 – Right to not be imprisoned merely on the

ground of inability to fulfil a contractual obligation (debt).

Article 12 – Freedom of movement and choice of residence for lawful residents.

Article 13 – Rights of aliens.

Article 14 – Equality before the courts and tribunals. Right to a fair trial.

Article 15 – No one can be guilty of an act of a criminal offence which did not constitute a criminal offence.

Article 16 – Right to recognition as a person before the law.

Article 17 – Right to privacy and its protection by the law.

Article 18 – Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Article 19 – Right to hold opinions without interference.

Article 20 – Prohibition of propaganda for war, national, religious or racial hatred.

Article 21 – Right of peaceful assembly.

Article 22 – Right to freedom of association.

Article 23 – Right to marry.

Article 24 – Children’s rights.

Article 25 – Right to political participation, to vote and be elected.

Article 26 – Equality before the law.

Article 27 – The right, for members of religious, ethnic or linguistic minorities, to enjoy their culture, practice their religion and use their language.



Freedoms at Stake

Introduction:

a group work activity about the repressive measures imposed on civil society by the governments. The participants in a smaller group will discuss specific repressive measures emphasised in the theoretical part of the publication and share their personal testimonies. A plenary discussion is followed after small group presentations.

Themes of activity:

- Repressive measures;
- Freedom of assembly;
- Freedom of association;
- Freedom of expression;

Groups size:

20+

Duration:

120m

Preparation:

- Write down the 7 trends of shrinking space identified in the Theoretical part (Chapter 1) on coloured papers (choose 2 colours and distribute the trends based on their nature (legislative and nonlegislative or prescriptive and reflexive);
- Make a padlet where you put all the 7 trends with the possibility of submitting testimonies for each trend;
- Write down a definition of Youth Civic Space (see in the Glossary) on a Flipchart paper;
- Considering the sensitivity of the topic and that participants will share their testimonies, make sure that everyone feels safe to share personal stories.

Materials:

Flipcharts, markers, sticky notes, glue, tape, scissors.

Objectives:

- Introduce the concepts of the shrinking civic space;
- Introduce the prescriptive and reflexive measures/trends used to repress CSOs;
- Initiate discussion regarding the situation of shrinking civic space in Europe.

Instruction:

1. Brainstorm (15 minutes) in a large group, asking the participants to define Youth Civic Space. Open the floor for discussion. After the discussion, sum up the brainstorming by presenting the definition which has been written in the flipchart prior.
2. Put the priorly prepared papers on 7 trends on the floor and ask the group to randomly move to each trend paper and familiarise themselves about the trends (2 minutes)
3. Ask the participants to group around each trend (at least 4 people per trend) which they would like to discuss the most and give testimony about from their personal experience or what their organisations and colleagues may have encountered. Make sure that there are 7 groups.
4. Ask 7 groups to discuss (45 minutes) the trend and testimonies and give them the link of the padlet where 7 trends are mentioned and ask the groups after the discussion to submit the testimonies (at least 1 per group).
5. Present the testimonies collected in the padlet and invite the group to discussion. Make sure that everyone is provided with a safe environment to share their personal testimonies. Safe environment can be ensured by giving the participants a chance to submit their testimonies anonymously.

Debriefing:

- When you were exploring all three types of repression, did something take you by surprise?
- Which of these repressive measures have you witnessed in your own country and community?
- Once we went through all the provided types of repression, would you add another type?
- How would they categorise those measures? Why are they written in 2 colours and what each category means?
- Was it difficult to think of testimonies based on the assigned repressive measure? Why was it difficult?
- How do you see the role of young people in the transformation of societies and particularly in reclaiming civic space and eliminating repressive measures?

Barriers to Civic Space

Introduction:

The activity is based on group work and artistic/performative tasks, aiming to enable participants to get a deeper understanding of the shrinking tendency spectrum of civic space from open to close. Analyse each level of shrinking space, become aware of the roles of key actors and detect possible 'red flags' in their societies.

Themes of activity: | - Shrinking civic space phenomenon

Groups size: | 20+

Duration: | 60m

Preparation: | - Print out the handout.

Materials: | Printed handout (2), flipcharts, markers

Objectives:

- Analyse different levels of shrinking civic space;
- Reflect on the roles of key actors (the state, civil society, private sector, general public);
- Reflect on the implications of the shrinking civic space.

Instructions:

This activity should be performed only after the participants have been introduced to the definition of civic space and its shrinking tendency.

1. Introduce participants to the shrinking tendency spectrum of civic space from open to close.
2. Split the group into 5 small groups and give them one level of shrinking civic space written on paper (e.g. open, narrowed, obstructed, repressed, and closed). You can write the levels on small pieces of paper, put them in a bowl/hat and let each group pick one piece of paper. Distribute the list of barriers to civic space among all the groups. See handout 2.
3. Ask the participants to prepare a short performance/live photo/gif “a snapshot of democracy (society or a civil society)” based on the level they are given and the list of barriers. In the performance they are supposed to take into consideration all the key actors of the process e.g. the state, civil society, business etc.
4. Give them 15/20 minutes to prepare the performance/live photo/gif and have them present on the plenary. Make sure everyone understood what was presented, ask performers questions if needed.
5. Have a thorough debriefing. Analyse each level of shrinking civic space scenarios. Draw parallels to the situation in their home countries.
6. As a summary you can present the current situation by showing the map prepared by Civicus Monitor <https://monitor.civicus.org/>

Debriefing:

- How are you feeling?
- How did you feel while working in the groups? Was it easy? Difficult?
- How does the civic space situation affect human rights, the rule of law and the health of democracy (discuss about each level)?
- What are the implications of shrinking civic space?
- What does it mean for a regular citizen to live in a society where civic space is closed (narrowed, obstructed)?
- What is the situation in your country, which level of shrinkage are you on?
- Based on each level what can be done to make the situation better?

Handout (2):

What if the civic space was shrunk?

Freedom of association

- Barriers to CSOs entering public life and obtaining legal status;
- Excessive interference in CSO's operations, including their activities, structure, and governance;
- Restrictions on civil society's access to resources, including on how they can conduct fundraising, how their income is taxed, and how they can receive and use foreign funding (including caps on administrative costs);
- Excessive demands on CSOs with respect to reporting, supervision, and enforcement;
- Application of pejorative labels, such as 'foreign agent', to CSOs with links to international actors. Restrictions on freedom of association can include laws expressly targeted at CSOs, such as NGO registration laws. However, they can also include laws that apply to everyone – such as taxation laws – but which are enforced selectively against CSOs.

Freedom of assembly

- Restrictions on assembly, including limits on the size of meetings (to as little as five or fewer people), restrictive permitting processes, or excessive responses to unpermitted assembly.
- Incidences of police violence, or failure to protect assemblies from violence by non-state actors.

Freedom of expression

- Bans on speaking out against the government, monarchy (lese majesty), or other institutions or groups;
- Highly imbalanced application of laws related to defamation and slander that discourage free speech on pain of high financial penalties;
- Censorship of the media;
- Web blackouts, including closing down the internet or various social media platforms during major protests or controversies;
- Online discrimination, such as blocked political content; and spying, surveillance, and intrusive government requests for organisational membership and participation.

Human rights protections

- The harassment of individuals and organisations by state actors (for example, the police), paramilitary groups, and other government-associated organisations.
- Failures to prevent the killing of civic activists and other violence directed towards them, or failure to prosecute such attacks when they occur.
- Specific harassment of groups in society, particularly political opposition, minority groups, youth and women.
- The use of 'suspended sentences' to ensure activists remain docile as well as the unlawful expulsion or removal of citizenship of CSO activists.

CIVIC SPACE IS...



Defining Civic Space

Introduction:

The activity is a snowball exercise intending to enable participants to comprehend the concept of civic space through individual and group work.

Themes of activity:

- Civic space

Groups size:

8,16 or 24 participants.

Duration:

60m

Preparation:

Familiarisation with the concept of civic space
(See. Chapter II, subsection: what is civic space?)

Materials:

Flipcharts, markers;

Objectives:

- To verbalise different understandings of civic space;
- To reflect on different understandings, concepts and dimensions of civic space;
- To reflect on participants' experience of civic space.

Instructions:

1. Ask the participants to write down their definition of civic space on a piece of paper (individual work).
2. Individuals find a partner and work in pairs. They each have to present their own definition and then have to agree on a common definition for both.
3. The pairs then form groups of four. Each pair presents its definition and then both pairs have to agree on a definition that will be acceptable for all four members of the group.
4. The groups of four now form groups of eight. All the definitions are presented and a final definition acceptable to everyone in the group has to be agreed on.
5. In the plenary discussion, each of the groups presents its definition, followed by time for comments and explanations.
6. Present some "official definitions" of civic space to compare (Handout 3)

Debriefing:

Discussion about the results (definitions):

- To what extent are the definitions of different groups similar?
- What are the main differences?
- How difficult was it to come up with common definitions? Why?
- To what extent were you ready to make concessions or to abandon parts of your definition in order to come up with a common agreement?

Discussion about the decision-making process:

- What was your role in formulating definitions at the different stages (in pairs, groups of four, etc.)? How did you feel about it?
- Did you have as much space to participate as you wanted or needed? If not, why not?
- What helped you to participate?
- What hindered your participation?

Discussion about applying to reality:

- How does the definition of civic space presented in the plenary discussion relate to your experience of civic space?
- What can we do to protect civic space?

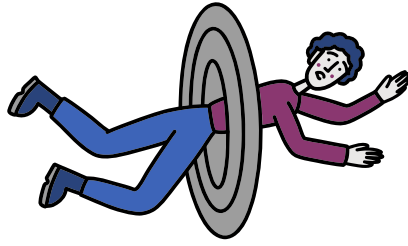
Handout (3):

Civic space definitions:

The arena of collective action in society alongside those of the market and the state (Strachwitz 2021, 6).

According to Civic Space Watch “Civic space is the political, legislative, social and economic environment which enables citizens to come together, share their interests and concerns and act individually and collectively to influence and shape their societies” (Civic Space Watch, 2022).

“Civic space is the environment that enables people and groups – or ‘civic space actors’ – to participate meaningfully in the political, economic, social and cultural life in their societies. Vibrant civic space requires an open, secure and safe environment that is free from all acts of intimidation, harassment and reprisals, whether online or offline. Any restrictions on such a space must comply with international human rights law.” (UN Guidance Note on Protection and Promotion of Civic Space).



Alternate Reality

Introduction:

This activity employs discussions in small and big groups and stimulates participants' imagination and creativity in order to better understand the concept of civic space and the three main actors in it: the state, business, and civil society, and reflect on the dynamic between them introduced in the theoretical section of the handbook.

Themes of activity:

Civic space

Groups size:

10-20

Duration:

90m

Preparation:

Read the theoretical section of the handbook dedicated to civic space.
Prepare the civic space scheme with the 3 main actors (state, business, civil society) on a flipchart or on a screen for group discussion and think of a way to divide participants into 3 groups.

Materials:

Flipcharts, markers, post-it notes.

Objectives:

- To analyse how civic space functions;
- To hypothesise the possibility for civic space to function without one of the three main actors – state, business and civil society;
- To develop a deeper understanding of civic space dynamics.

Instructions:

1. Start by eliciting what civic space is according to participants, or if you are doing the activity as part of a longer educational programme then refer back to previous discussions about civic space. After, show the triangle scheme introduced in the theoretical section of the handbook.
2. Next, explain to participants that they are going to work in 3 groups where each group will have

to imagine a society where one of the 3 civic space actors is missing:

- There is a state and business sector but there is no civil society.
- There is a state and civil society sector but there is no business sector.
- There is a business and civil society sector but there is no state/government.

3. Divide participants in 3 groups and give them 45 minutes to work explaining that afterwards they will have 5 minutes per group to present (this time should be enough for discussing and coming up with a creative way to shortly present their alternative reality).

4. In order to help participants structure their discussion, you can give them some guiding questions (these questions are just to help start the discussion and should in no way limit it):

- How is this society governed?
- How are important decisions concerning the whole society or big groups taken?
- How do citizens participate in this society?
- How are human rights protected in this society?
- Who is responsible for addressing social problems and providing social services?

5. Once participants have discussed how such a society would look and if/how the civic space would function, participants have to present their alternative reality to the rest of the group in a creative way - a short performance, video, poster, storyboard, etc.

Debriefing:

- How do you feel?
- How was the process for you?
- Was it easy or difficult to imagine alternative realities?
- Did imagining this alternative reality help you understand something about civic space dynamics in your context? If yes, what?
- Can you use the learning from this exercise to address shrinking civic space in your context somehow?

Flower of Rights

Introduction:

a group work activity about civil and political rights where participants are asked to choose and prioritise some of their civil and political rights by writing them down in flower petals individually, within smaller groups and larger groups (snowball effect), then present and discuss the Flower of Rights of their group in the plenary.

Themes of activity:

- Civil and political rights;
- Shrinking civic space.

Groups size:

8- 40

Duration:

90m

Preparation:

Prepare a list of civil and political rights as a handout.

Materials:

Flipchart, markers, pens or coloured pencils, A4 paper, list of civil and political rights (Handout 4)

Objectives:

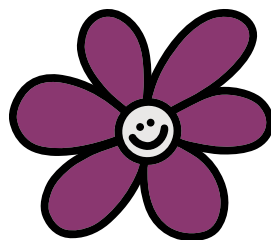
- To introduce civil and political rights;
- To discuss the importance of exercising civil and political rights;
- To discuss the violations of civil and political rights in terms of shrinking civic space.

Instructions:

1. Ask the participants to draw a flower on a piece of paper with 10 petals; Hand out (or send it electronically) simplified descriptions of civil and political rights; (see Handout 4);
2. Give the participants 10 minutes to familiarise themselves with the rights;
3. Ask them to take another 5 minutes individually to choose 5 rights from each category (civil and political) that they find the most important and write them down in the flower that they draw (one right in each petal);
4. Divide the group into groups of 5 and ask them to discuss their flowers, and make a flower of rights for the group with 10 petals;
5. Ask the groups to present their flowers in the plenary.

Debriefing:

- How did you feel when you were asked to prioritise some of the rights individually? How was the process? Was it difficult to think of particular rights that are more important than others?
- How did you come up with the 10 rights? What has been taken into account when choosing those?
- How does your country's context or personal experience influence your prioritisation?
- Was it easy to come up with a joint flower as a group?
- How did you come up with a joint flower? Did you have to sacrifice some of the petals of your individual flowers? How did it feel?
- What do you think are particular rights that are more often violated than the others in your countries? What are those violated rights which more often can be observed in terms of shrinking space phenomenon?
- What needs to be done in order to ensure equal exercising of all the civil and political rights in your country?
- What is the role of young people in it?



Handout (4)

Civil and Political Rights

I. Civil Rights:

1. Right to Life:

The right to life is a basic civil right. Without this right, there can be no safety either for the individual or for society. However, right to life does not mean the right to end life or to commit suicide. Suicide is a crime against the society and the self.

2. Right to Family Life:

Right to family life is of great significance for the continuation of the human race. Every state recognises the sanctity of family life and the institution of marriage. One can marry the person of their choice and produce children. But the state can make some laws for regulating family welfare. These can deal with bigamy, polygamy, polyandry, marriage, divorce, property, rights of family children, succession, etc.

3. Right to Education:

Education for a human being is as essential as air, food, and water. Unless people are educated, they cannot really participate in the workings of society and government. Uneducated persons cannot understand the issues and problems, express their views, and criticise the government. This is the reason that now almost every state gives every opportunity to its citizens to get education. Without the right to education, no citizen can really hope to develop their faculties.

4. Right to Personal Freedom:

Right to personal freedom is essential for the mental and physical growth of an individual. But this does not mean that the individual can do whatever he likes. Right to personal freedom can be enjoyed in accordance with the laws made by the state and in accordance with the interests of society.

5. Right to Religious Freedom:

In a democratic and secular state the right to religious freedom is also given to its citizens. The state does not impose any religion on them, and they are free to adopt any religion, and establish their own religious institutions.

6. Right to Freedom of Thought and Expression:

Right to freedom of thought and expression is also very important for personal development. All people want freedom to express and exchange with others their views and ideas.

7. Right to Freedom of Movement:

Every citizen has the right to move freely throughout the country. Citizens are also given the right to go abroad. However certain restrictions are placed upon citizens in regard to rights to freedom of movement, particularly in the international and cross-border context.

8. Freedom of Press:

The press is considered the guardian of the rights of the citizens. Therefore, in democratic countries, citizens are given the right to get their views printed in newspapers and periodicals. This

right is essential for spreading education and information among the people.

9. Right to Equality:

In a modern democratic state individuals are granted the right to equality. No discrimination is done on the basis of religion, language, caste, sex, colour and the like. Everyone is given equal opportunity to develop.

10. Right to Justice:

To protect citizens r, the right to get justice is also given. If this right is not given, many other rights also become meaningless as they rely on legal enforcement. People are given the right to go to court for securing justice.

11. Freedom to Form Associations:

In order to fulfil their social, economic, political and cultural needs, many form different types of associations and the state recognises their right to do so. For the protection of their interests, individuals are free to become a member of any association. But the state does not permit the formation of such associations which are considered harmful to the interest of the state or society.

12. Right to Cultural Freedom:

In secular democratic countries, citizens are given the right to cultural freedom. They are free to develop their own languages, customs, folkways, literatures, and traditions.

13. Right to Contract:

The right to contract enables the citizens to enter into free contracts with others. This is an essential condition of civilised life as without this social, economic, and political relations cannot be really established.

II Political Rights

1. Right to Vote:

In a democratic state, every adult citizen is given the right to vote. Using this right, citizens elect the government of their choice. This right is given only to adults i.e., persons above a particular age, usually 18-21 years old.

2. Right to get elected:

In a democratic state every citizen is also given the right to be elected to public office. They can be elected to a legislature, municipal corporation/municipal committee or panchayat and work as its member. Some qualifications are however fixed for seeking election.

3. Right to Hold Public Office:

Citizens also have the right to hold public offices after getting elected as representatives of the people. While fixing qualifications no discrimination is made, and proper care is taken that only competent persons may get elected.

4. Right to Petition:

Citizens have the right to petition, and they can send applications individually or collectively to the authorities for the redress of their grievances.

5. Right to Form Political Parties:

In every democratic state, people have the right to form political parties and to participate in the political process through these.

6. Right to Criticise:

In a democratic state, citizens also enjoy the right to criticise the politics of the government. It is through the exercise of this right that the government is made responsible.

7. Right to oppose the Government:

Citizens of a democracy, like India, have the right to oppose the government when it fails to protect their interests. However, such a resistance has to be peaceful and by constitutional means.

Source: Rights of Citizens: Civil Rights, Political Rights and Economic Rights (yourarticlelibrary.com)

Handout (4)

Article 3 - Right to equality between men and women in the enjoyment of their civil and political rights.

Article 6 – Right to life and survival.

Article 7 – Freedom from torture, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 8 – Right to not be enslaved.

Article 9 – Right to liberty and security of the person, freedom from arbitrary detention.

Article 10 – Rights of detainees.

Article 11 – Right to not be imprisoned merely on the ground of inability to fulfil a contractual obligation (debt).

Article 12 – Freedom of movement and choice of residence for lawful residents.

Article 13 – Rights of aliens.

Article 14 – Equality before the courts and tribunals. Right to a fair trial.

Article 15 – No one can be guilty of an act of a criminal offence which did not constitute a criminal offence.

Article 16 – Right to recognition as a person before the law.

Article 17 – Right to privacy and its protection by the law.

Article 18 – Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Article 19 – Right to hold opinions without interference.

Article 20 – Prohibition of propaganda for war, national, religious or racial hatred.

Article 21 – Right of peaceful assembly.

Article 22 – Right to freedom of association.

Article 23 – Right to marry.

Article 24 – Children’s rights.

Article 25 – Right to political participation, to vote and be elected.

Article 26 – Equality before the law.

Article 27 – The right, for members of religious, ethnic or linguistic minorities, to enjoy their culture, practice their religion and use their language.

Problem Tree

Introduction:

Problem tree is a group activity. It intends to develop analytical and problem solving skills among participants by introducing problem/solution tree methods and using it on the example of the case 'Trade unions poor performance in Georgia'. The activity will enable participants to learn how to analyse problems while preparing projects proposals or planning actions.

Themes of activity:

- Labour rights;
- Freedom of association;

Groups size:

10-25

Duration:

120m

Preparation:

Prepare the flipchart with a problem tree. While preparing, please have in mind the learning goals for a specific group. The facilitator can run only the first part of the activity (the problem tree) and adopt debriefing questions accordingly.

Materials:

Flipcharts, markers

Objectives:

- To develop problem analysis skills;
- To find the root causes and effects and identify relationships between them;
- To learn how to identify the core problem among all the existing issues;
- To come up with realistic solutions to the identified problem.

Instructions:

Problem Tree:

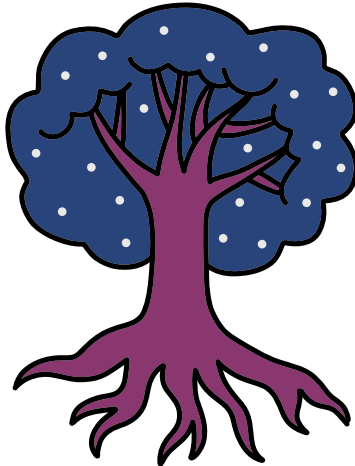
1. Explain to the participants the concept of a problem tree. Use a simple example which can relate to their experience. It can be personal or community/society related e.g. excessive screen time in my day-to-day life; lack of youth centres in the community etc.
2. Split participants in the groups of four or five.
3. Ask them to read and analyse the case (Handout 5).
4. Ask them to develop a problem tree for this purpose. The participants are supposed to draw a tree on a flipchart. The tree trunk is a problem, roots are causes, and the branches are effects.
5. Make sure participants understand that each cause may have its own precursor and they need to note that as well.
6. Based on the given case, the group has to brainstorm the main problem, its causes, and effects. Put each idea on a sticky note and cluster them in an appropriate place.
7. After 30 minutes groups return to the plenary and they have 20-30 minutes overall to present their work and get feedback

Solution Tree:

1. On the plenary, explain to the participants the concept of a solution tree. Use the same example used in the problem tree instructions. Ask them to turn every negative statement into a positive statement that describes a solution to the problem and the results we hope to achieve. We turn causes into outputs—the actions we will take. We turn problems into outcomes—the change our actions will bring about. And we turn effects into impacts—the long-term change we want to help create.
2. Ask them to go back to their groups (30 minutes); draw a solution tree on another piece of paper; this time writing “output” by the roots, “outcome” by the trunk, and “impact” by the branches. Start by the trunk and rewrite the core problem as outcomes, as the problem is solved. And do so with every single statement.
3. As the final stage analyses the outputs, select the ones which can be realistically implemented with the time, resources, and skills the group members have. Choose the best course of action.
4. Return to the plenary and present the final results of group work (30 minutes).

Debriefing:

- How do you feel?
- Are you satisfied with the analysis? Did your problem tree comprehensively analyse the issue?
- How was the process? Did you identify the root causes? How?
- Are identified issues too big to be controlled or influenced or can you have an impact on it?
- Did you find solutions? Are they realistic?
- Can you use this method in your actual work?



Handout (5):

The case: Trade unions poor performance in Georgia

The role of trade unions in the protection of labour rights is very important both at the legislative and practical levels. However, their activity in Georgia is not very effective for a number of reasons. For a long period of time, even after the collapse of the Soviet Union, trade unions were perceived as Soviet institutions. In the Soviet times, trade unions were considered strong, with their main responsibility to allocate vacation vouchers among its members. Nowadays they have much more serious goals; they must be able to protect workers' rights and ensure equal participation in the labour market. But their perception as Soviet associations prevents the emergence of trust and positive perception of them.

In the 2010s the Georgian government and business sector held anti-union sentiments, because the trade unions were perceived as an obstacle to the development of the economy. As a result, unions faced serious pressure from businesses and the government, which further prevented their social acceptance. However, they were able to attract the attention of international organisations and increase the number of members. However, in some state organisations, persecution on the grounds of trade union membership continues. A case to illustrate governmental attitudes and repression methods is the situation in 'Georgian Post'. The state fought against the trade union here; creating the so-called "yellow" trade union which reflected its interests and interfered with the activities of the real union. This resulted in the dismissal of the active trade union members, forcing them to leave the trade union and join another one whilst also rejecting the collective agreement, and so on.

Recently governmental pressure has decreased and trade unions have been performing more effectively, but problems related to labour rights are still acute and of course only trade unions alone cannot fix them.

The Georgian labour code is in dire need of amendment. The labour inspection authority also needs an expansion in terms of the rights and authorities it possesses, which has been increased recently but further research is needed as to whether it is enough.

In regard to the legislative and political issues surrounding labour rights, the legal situation for workers in Georgia is quite miserable. There are frequent cases whereby employment contracts are broken without any compensation; people have to work in difficult and dangerous working conditions; perform overtime work; and in many cases without pay. The number of fatal injuries at work is also high. The situation was especially aggravated under the conditions of the pandemic.

Under the pretext of economic problems caused by COVID-19 restrictions, the dismissal of employees without a legal basis became common practice. Often, employers did not explain to employees the grounds for dismissal, and did not observe the period of advance notice and obligations to pay compensation.

To avoid unpaid wages and financial burdens as a result of the pandemic, employers have forced employees to take unpaid leave. Simultaneously, during the pandemic many workers faced the problem of being obligated to go to work. Among the reasons for non-appearance were self-isolation of employees, being in quarantine, and the inability to travel by transport. Despite this, employers continued to force employees to come to the workplace in various ways, often refusing to provide transportation, and in case of non-attendance they reduced wages or fired them.

Due to the restrictions on public transport, employees of supermarkets faced problems coming to work. Employers often refused to provide transportation. Taking a taxi was an unrea-

expense and, in fact, constituted a breach in the essential terms of the contract for the already meagre-paid workers.

Some of the employers did not properly fulfil the obligation to create a safe working environment. Persons employed in different sectors were not provided with individual protection against the spread of the virus. During the pandemic, it has become a common practice to reduce wages for workers, and even increase working hours and work volume without their consent. Employers' reduction of wages (as well as the unilateral removal of insurance and other labour benefits) appeared to be the only possibility to preserve jobs and continue activities.

A clear example of this is the case of the grocery store chain "Spar". In the conditions of the curfew imposed in the country, when it was forbidden to be outside from nine o'clock in the evening to six o'clock in the morning, "Spar" employees were ordered to spend the night at their workplaces in order to maximise the functioning of the store. According to the information provided to the human rights organisations, the employees did not even have a suitable environment for spending the night. The employees had to work 60 hours a week, and the specified work was not subject to overtime pay.

Clearly, the state did not have effective mechanisms to prevent or alleviate the violations of the discussed labour rights and to empower the workers.

Neglected Obligations

Introduction:

In this discussion activity participants position themselves in the space to demonstrate what they think about a series of statements being read to them. The aim is to build a deeper understanding of state obligations to respect, protect, and fulfil human rights when it comes to freedom of assembly and association, and develop the ability to identify cases of violations of these rights.

Themes of activity:

- Freedom of assembly and association;
- Human rights;

Groups size:

Any

Duration:

45m

Preparation:

Prepare the space so that participants can move freely in order to choose their position for each statement.
Prepare the list of statements (modify or add statements in order to make them more relevant for participants and their context and background).
Make sure that the concept of states as duty bearers has been introduced at an earlier stage or do a brief introduction prior to starting with the statements.

Preparation:

The obligation to respect means that states must refrain from interfering with or curtailing the enjoyment of human rights. The obligation to protect requires states to protect individuals and groups against human rights abuses. The obligation to fulfil means that states must take positive action to facilitate the enjoyment of basic human rights.

Materials:

Three papers with “Respect”, “Protect”, and “Fulfil” positioned in different places in the space used for the activity

Objectives:

- To develop understanding of state duties to respect, protect and fulfil human rights;
- To apply the concept of respect, protect, and fulfil to the right of freedom of assembly and association;
- To develop ability to determine when the state has violated its duties to respect, protect, and fulfil human rights when it comes to freedom of assembly and association;
- To stimulate a discussion about what citizens can do to hold states accountable for not fulfilling their duties.

Instructions:

1. Explain to participants that they will hear 10 statements and their task will be to decide which of the 3 state obligations to respect, protect, and fulfil has been neglected.
2. Tell participants that they will have to move close to one of the 3 signs placed in the room according to their decision:
 - Respect
 - Protect
 - Fulfil
3. Read every statement and allow for some time for participants to position themselves. Then ask them why they decided that this particular obligation of the state was neglected.

Statements:

1. The police beats up peaceful protesters (neglected duty to respect);
2. The police does not intervene in a situation where LGBTQI+ activists are attacked while doing a flashmob (neglected duty to protect);
3. The state has not adopted legislation regulating freedom of assembly (neglected duty to fulfil);
4. The government bans all organisations receiving foreign funding (neglected duty to respect);
5. The existing legislation regulating the freedom of association bans foreigners from being members of civil society organisations in the country. (neglected duty to respect);

6. There are no funding mechanisms on local or national levels through which CSOs can apply and acquire financial support (neglected duty to fulfil)
7. Three women forcibly disappear while in police custody following their arrest for leading an anti-government protest. (neglected duty to respect).
8. The authorities issue permission for two parallel demonstrations - one in support of refugees and one against - happening on the same day, at the same time and in the same place. As a result there are clashes between the different groups of protesters and people get injured. (neglected duty to protect)
9. The national legislation on the right to freedom of association envisions only one option for citizens to submit documents for establishing a non-governmental organisation, and it is to be done in person with the documents submitted on paper. (neglected duty to fulfil as the state has not created an enabling environment for civil society)
10. The national legislation regulating the freedom of assembly bans foreigners or minors from organising demonstrations. (neglected duty to respect).

Debriefing:

- How do you feel?
- How was the process for you?
- Was it easy or difficult to decide where to position yourself? Why?
- Does this concept of states having an obligation to respect, protect and fulfil human rights help you identify human rights violations in your context?
- Can you think of examples of the state not respecting its obligations to respect, protect and fulfil the freedom of assembly and association in your context?
- How can you address these violations of the freedom of assembly and association in your country?

Follow up:

Encourage participants to think of ways to address situations in which the state does not implement its duties to respect, protect and fulfil human rights with regard to the freedom of assembly and association. Take some examples for such situations from the debriefing. Refer participants to Amnesty International's campaign "Protect the Protest" and the 2022 publication here - <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act30/5856/2022/en/>



From SUPPRESSGRAD to SUPRISEGRAD

Introduction:

This activity is a simulation about participants visiting the city of Suppressgrad where they witness the worst civic space conditions and lots of repression imposed on young people. They first identify the repressive measures then try to transform Suppressgrad to Surprisegrad where the best conditions exist for young people to freely enjoy their rights.

Themes of activity:

- Repressive measures;
- Freedom of assembly;
- Freedom of association;
- Combating shrinking space;
- Meaningful youth participation.

Groups size:

20-45

Duration:

150m

Preparation:

Prepare small papers where certain groups are written (media representatives, human rights organisations, government, young people, youth activists group, international organisations, business sector representatives)

Materials:

Flipcharts, markers, sticky notes, used magazines, glue, tape, scissors.

Objectives:

- to discuss some repressive measures on freedom of assembly and association and freedom of speech;
- to look for ways of creating a space contributing to meaningful participation of young people;
- to reflect on how these measures can be used based on the current situations in participants' context;



Instructions:

Divide the group into 7 groups.

Stage 1: Visiting Suppressgrad

1. Explain that each of the groups is a group of ‘‘architects’’ that has just visited the city of Suppressgrad, where they witnessed very bad civic space conditions, particularly relating to freedom of assembly and association, and freedom of speech. Now each group needs to share what they saw with the others.
2. Give the groups 45 minutes to prepare a visual presentation on the repressive measures, actions, and regulations that have been imposed on young people in Suppressgrad.
3. Invite the groups of architects to make a report of their visit.
4. Ask the groups to combine what they have seen and make a short story about the situation in Suppressgrad.
5. Once the whole group has the joint story, ask them to report it.

Stage 2: Transformation

1. Ask them to go back to their initial groups.
2. Assign each group with prepared roles.
3. Give the groups 45 minutes to come up with 10 steps to turn the SUPPRESSGRAD to SURPRISEGRAD based on assigned role (e.g, media representatives should come up with good conditions that enable media to operate freely) and ask them to visually put it in the flipchart.
4. Invite the groups to make a report of the transformation of the city and discuss it.
5. Ask the groups to combine what they have come up with and make a short story about the transformative city Surprisegrad.
6. Once the whole group has the joint story, ask them to report it.
7. Ask the group to read two stories (Suppressgrad and Surprisegrad) one by one to show the transformation.

Open the floor in the plenary session for any comments, views, etc.

Debriefing:

- How did you feel when imagining your visit to the most repressive city of Suppressgrad?
- How realistic are the repressive measures imposed there? (How realistic are the measures proposed and presented by the small groups?)
- Ask the participants to think individually about which of these measures have they witnessed in their own country and community?
- How did they come up with transformative measures to turn Suppressgrad into Surprisegrad?
- Was it difficult to think of the measures based on the assigned role? What strategy did they choose?
- Are those measures realistic to be implemented in our countries to combat the repression?
- Is there anything that you would do differently if you had to do the activity again?
- How do you see the role of young people in the transformation of societies and particularly in reclaiming civic space?

Confronting the barriers - moving underground

Introduction:

The activity employs the method of small group discussions creating space for participants to reflect on different mechanisms for restricting the work of CSOs, and identify their likely response to various shrinking civic space scenarios. It develops critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Themes of activity:

Freedom of Assembly and Association.

Groups size:

Any (small groups of 5-6 people)

Duration:

90m

Preparation:

Facilitators should prepare handouts with the different scenarios of threatened civic space. It's also possible to come up with new scenarios based on the context and background of participants and the objectives of the training or if the group is bigger and more scenarios are needed.

Materials:

Flipcharts, markers, tape; printed handouts (6) with scenarios

Objectives:

- To apply knowledge of shrinking civic space and how to combat it;
- To reflect on possible courses of actions in case the state adopts very restrictive measures against CSO and human rights activists in general;
- To identify and assess potential risks when operating in a hostile environment;
- To design possible measures to mitigate the identified risks;

Instructions:

1. Tell participants that they will have to work on possible responses to civic space restrictions and that they will receive different scenarios for every group.
2. Divide participants in small groups (3 to 6 people).
3. Give each group a scenario of restrictive state measures against CSOs and 2 flipcharts.
4. Every group has to discuss the following questions:
 - How would you cope in such a situation? What would you do in order to combat the shrinking civic space?
 - What would be the potential risks and how could they be avoided/ mitigated?
5. The results of the discussion should be written on the 2 flipcharts.
6. Each group presents the results of their discussion

*Afterwards the flipcharts can be put up on the walls of the venue where the activity is taking place if it's part of a longer educational programme.

Debriefing:

- How do you feel?
- How was the process for you?
- Was it easy or difficult to come up with different courses of action?
- Is the scenario similar to something you have experienced or observed in your country?
- Can you think of other ways in which citizens and civil society organisations can cope in such a restrictive environment?

Handout (6):

Scenario 1

The Parliament in the country adopts a “Foreign Agents Registration Act”, which defines as “foreign agents” all legal entities and individuals who have received funds over 1000 local currency during one tax year from foreign funding sources, except for funds received under commercial transactions. The law establishes a black list of foreign agents and envisions sanctions if people fail to declare their connection with foreign agents under the vague definition of the law. In this way the funding opportunities for CSOs are heavily restricted. In addition, all entities and individuals who are declared foreign agents are prohibited from exercising activities at kindergartens and schools, as well as from participating in public procurement procedures or applying for state funding.

Scenario 2

A new law in the country heavily limits the right to freedom of assembly. There is a strict notification regime for any public gatherings with a very broad and vague definition of what is considered a demonstration, and if people fail to notify the authorities two weeks prior to their public gathering they face an administrative proceeding and a fine. In addition, the authorities can easily ban any kind of public gathering under provisions for protecting the public order and security.

Scenario 3

Media outlets that are critical towards the government are regularly subjected to investigations by various institutions such as the tax agency and the data protection agency. Investigative journalists often face SLAPP suits (strategic litigation against public participation) that are lawsuits alleging defamation (claiming that the journalists damaged the good reputation of a politician) while in reality their purpose is to intimidate and burden journalists with the cost of a legal defence so that they can abandon their critical stance towards those in power.

Scenario 4

Police brutality goes unsanctioned in the country and police officers regularly apply excessive use of force including violent repressions of peaceful protesters. Sometimes, in order to disperse protesters, the authorities also involve the military. There have been cases of police officers using their batons against protesters, as well as water cannons, rubber bullets, and big quantities of tear gas used in a manner not proportionate to the potential risk to public security posed by protesters. This excessive use of force has resulted in many people being seriously injured and also in some deaths.

Scenario 5

Human rights defenders, activists, and journalists in the country are under surveillance. The authorities employ surveillance technology that is being indiscriminately used against human rights defenders without proper mechanisms authorising such use and guaranteeing human rights. The cases of hacked phones and social media accounts belonging to people critical towards the government are on the rise. They are being spied on with the aim to be intimidated and silenced.

Follow-up:

Participants can put together all ideas for combatting the shrinking civic space as well as the tips for avoiding and mitigating risks, and create a brochure to be translated into their local languages and be spread among young people and activists.

Etobo vs. Suppressia

Introduction:

A simulation activity that follows a real court case from the European Court of Human Rights (with changed names for the applicant and the state in question) and includes a combination of discussions in smaller and larger groups.

Themes of activity:

- Freedom of assembly;
- Human rights;

Groups size:

Any (preferably a number that can be divided by 3)

Duration:

120m

Preparation:

Make sure that the team of facilitators have basic knowledge about the European Court of Human Rights and how it works. Information can be found on the official webpage of the court here - <https://www.echr.coe.int>
Photocopy and cut out the cards. Everyone will need their own card and you should have equal numbers (or as close as possible) of judges, representatives of the Government of Suppressia and representatives of Mr Etobo.
Number the cards in each group 1, 2, 3, 4 and so on.
You will need sufficient space so that each of the “courts” (3 people) is able to sit apart from the others.

Materials:

- Copies of the role cards;
- Pens and paper for note-taking;
- Information card for the facilitator

Objectives:

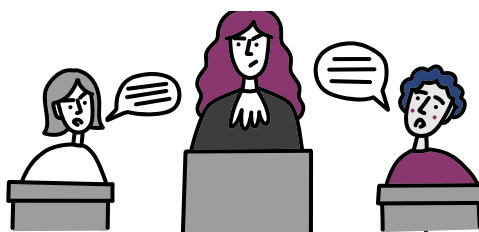
- To develop knowledge about the role of the European Court of Human Rights and about proportionality when it comes to the right to freedom of assembly on the one hand, and the obligation of authorities to maintain public order on the other.
- To develop skills to think critically and make logical arguments.

Instructions:

1. Tell the group that the session will be devoted to a case which came before the European Court for Human Rights. Ask participants what they know about the Court and the European Convention of Human Rights.
2. Read out the information on the case card and make sure that everyone understands that the question is, “Is the dispersal of the flash mob and the administrative fine a violation of Article 11 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms?”
3. Divide participants into 3 equal groups.
 - Group A represents Mr Eboto
 - Group B represents the Government of Suppressia
 - Group C represents the judges in the European Court of Human Rights
4. Hand each group copies of the relevant role card and explain that participants have 30 minutes to discuss and clarify their own positions. Groups A and B should use this time to prepare their arguments and Group C, the judges, should prepare questions for both sides.
5. After 30 minutes tell the participants to re-group: number 1s in a group, number 2s in another and so on, so that each new group comprises one representative for Mr. Etobo, one representative of the Government of Suppressia and one judge.
6. Explain that each of these new small groups represents a mini-court. The courts have a further 20 minutes to listen to the arguments of both sides and for the judges to ask questions.
7. After this time, each judge should come to an individual judgement on whether Article 11 has been violated. Bring the whole group back together and ask the judges to pronounce their decisions, giving their reasons.
8. Offer the representatives of the other two groups the opportunity to respond to the judgements made, and then tell them how the European Court in fact ruled in this case (see the information card below under ‘Handouts’).
9. Ask for participants’ reactions to the decision and then proceed to the debriefing and evaluation.

Debriefing:

- How do you feel after the activity?
- What were the most difficult aspects of the case?
- Did you find it hard to play your role?
- Do you think the “judge” in your small group



- made the right decision? What were the most important factors in the final decision?
- Do you think the final judgement would have been different if the assembly in question was not peaceful?
 - What is the importance of proportionality in this case?
 - Why do we need the European Court of human rights?
 - Do you know of any cases from your country that have come before the court?
 - Can you think of other mechanisms for human rights protection?

Handout (7):

Case card for use at step 2 of the instructions

The Case

Mr. A. D. Etobo is a citizen of Suppressia and currently resides there.

On 31 January 2009 the applicant and 6 other people decided to hold a “flash mob” in front of the Office of the Government of Suppressia, in the capital Suppressgrad. They arrived there at around 1pm on the same day and positioned themselves at the bridge, each holding a blank sheet of paper with their mouths covered with adhesive tape.

At 1.20 p.m. the police ordered the group to disperse. The applicant asked to be informed of the grounds for such an order. He was taken to the police station.

The applicant was charged under Article 20.2 § 2 (breaches of the established procedure for the organisation or conduct of public gatherings, meetings, demonstrations, marches or pickets) of the Code of Administrative Offences (“the CAO”) relating to his participation in a public gathering because the requirement of prior notification under the Federal Law on Gatherings, Meetings, Demonstrations, Processions and Pickets, no. FZ-54 of 19 June 2004 (“the Public Events Act”) had not been respected.

On 11 March 2009 the city court convicted the applicant of the administrative offence under Article 20.2 § 2 of the CAO and sentenced him to a fine of 1,000 Suppressian pari (around 22 euros at the time). The applicant appealed but the district court upheld the judgement.

Mr Etobo claims that his right of freedom of assembly has been violated.

The European Court of Human Rights has to decide the following: **“Is the dispersal of the flash mob and the administrative fine a violation of Article 11 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms?”**

ROLE CARD FOR MR A. D. ETOBO

You are a citizen of Suppressia and you participated in a flash mob that took place in front of the office of the Government of Suppressia on the 31st January 2009. Soon after the flash mob started the police arrived and dispersed it, taking you to the local police station. Later you were sentenced to pay a fine for failing to notify the authorities prior to the flash mob taking place.

You appealed but the district court upheld the judgement.

Your Claim:

The administrative proceedings against you that had resulted in a fine amounted to a disproportionate interference with your right to freedom of assembly. In addition, the administrative proceedings have had a chilling effect on you and would affect your exercise of the right of freedom of assembly in the future.

Article 11 from the European Convention - Freedom of assembly and association

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.
2. No restrictions shall be placed on the exercise of these rights other than such as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. This Article shall not prevent the imposition of lawful restrictions on the exercise of these rights by members of the armed forces, of the police or of the administration of the State.

ROLE CARD FOR THE JUDGES

Mr A. D. Etobo participated in a flash mob that took place in front of the office of the Government of Suppressia on the 31st January 2009. Soon after the flash mob started the police arrived and dispersed it, taking Mr Etobo to the local police station. Later he was sentenced to pay a fine for failing to notify the authorities prior to the flash mob taking place. He appealed but the district court upheld the judgement.

Mr Etobo claims that the authorities' putting an end to the flash mob and his prosecution for an administrative offence violated his right to freedom of assembly, as provided in Article 11 of the Convention.

The Government of Suppressia claims that the actions of Mr Etobo have clearly violated the domestic law as he failed to notify the authorities about the flash mob as required and that the actions of the authorities are justified and proportionate.

Article 11 from the European Convention - Freedom of assembly and association

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.
2. No restrictions shall be placed on the exercise of these rights other than such as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. This Article shall not prevent the imposition of lawful restrictions on the exercise of these rights by members of the armed forces, of the police or of the administration of the State.

Information for the facilitators

The real case on which the exercise is based is the CASE OF OBOTE vs. RUSSIA (Application no. 58954/09). The final judgement was delivered on 19 February 2020 and the Court has decided that there was a violation of Article 11 of the Convention. The Russian authorities have failed to show tolerance towards peaceful gathering despite absence of any risk of insecurity or disturbance, and there wasn't proportionality between the offence and the actions taken against Mr. Obote.

Don't Judge a Story by its Title

Introduction:

The activity uses discussions in small and big groups, creativity, and presentations of the type 'gallery exhibition' in order to show how the same story can be presented in many different ways depending on the actors and their goals. It raises questions about freedom of expression and press freedom as well as the role of media for creating polarisation in society.

Themes of activity:

Freedom of Expression;

Groups size:

Any (small groups of 3 to 6 people)

Duration:

90m

Preparation:

The activity is implemented on any day of a longer training programme or as a stand alone activity. The facilitating team should prepare two handouts (8):

- the events to be described on the front page of the online media outlet;
- the role cards for the different types of online media outlets.

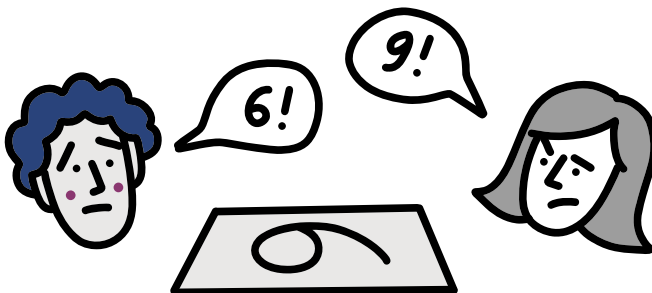
Materials:

For creating the front pages:

- Flipchart paper; colourful markers; old magazines, newspapers and brochures; scissors; glue
- Alternatively participants can work on their laptops or tablets

Objectives:

- To raise awareness about the challenges before press freedom;
- To provoke reflection on press freedom in different contexts;
- To demonstrate how press freedom is connected to the right of freedom of expression;
- To create space for discussion on the role of media for creating polarization in society;
- To stimulate critical thinking;
- To develop creativity.



Instructions:

1. Tell participants that in the next activity they will be divided into groups and they will be editors in different types of online media outlets. They will receive handouts with information about some events that took place in their country and a role card with explanations in what type of media outlet they work.
2. Then tell participants that their task is to prepare the front page of an online media outlet presenting the events described in their handouts from the point of view of the role card they receive. It's up to them whether to include all the events and how to present them.
3. Divide participants into groups and give them the handouts - description of the events + a role card. There are 3 role cards but if the group is larger there can be more than 1 group with the same role card. The result will always be different and it can stimulate an interesting discussion about how the same type of media outlet presented the events differently.
4. Tell participants that they have 45 minutes to work on their front pages and once they are ready they should put them on the wall without indicating in any way what type of media they represented (the facilitating team should designate an area in the room where the front pages to be presented or if participants use their laptops to tell them where to upload the front pages)
5. Once everyone is ready and all front pages are organised in a gallery in the room or online, invite participants to read for themselves and think how the events are represented in the different online media outlets.
6. Then invite participants back to the circle and ask them to share what they have observed and if they can identify the different types of media outlets.

Debriefing:

- How do you feel after the activity?
- Was there anything difficult about the activity?
- How was the process of designing the front page from the point of view of the role card you received?
- Do you see any parallels with the press freedom situation in your context?
- What is the connection between press freedom and freedom of expression?
- Do media outlets have a role in creating polarisation in society?
- Can a certain way of presenting events amount to hate speech?
- What can citizens do to address the problems with press freedom?

Follow-up:

You can follow-up with an activity on hate speech from Bookmarks (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/no-hate-campaign/bookmarks-connexions>), a Council of Europe manual for combating hate speech through human rights education.

Handout (8):

Role Cards

1. You are the editors of the website of the national TV broadcaster that is state funded. The broadcaster is loyal to the government and would not present its actions in a negative light while also maintaining a facade of quality journalism.

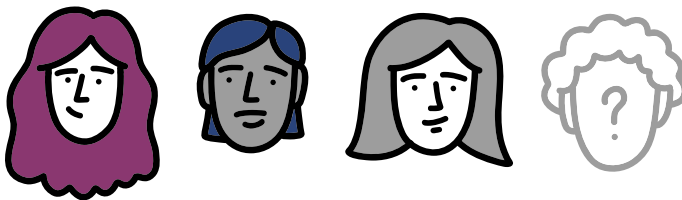
2. You are the editors of the website of the most popular tabloid in the country that is indirectly owned by a tycoon with a criminal past and connections to the government. The language you usually use is sensational and you are mostly interested in increasing your reach and profiting.

3. You are the editors of a small independent online media outlet that exists thanks to the donations of readers and is critical towards the government. You do investigative journalism and provide high quality content.

Today's events in the country:

1. The prime minister left a press conference because independent journalists asked him about leaked audio recordings in which a person who sounds like him is giving instructions to the chief prosecutor to start an investigation against an opposition leader.
2. The Parliament voted against the ratification of an important Council of Europe convention against domestic violence.
3. A group of LGBTI activists organised a flash mob with signs "Love is Love" in the capital's metro.
4. An international NGO published a critical report about the condition of human rights in the country.
5. The national football team managed to qualify for the World Cup after many years of not participating.

NB! The facilitating team can decide to change the events to be presented by participants depending on the specific objectives of the training.



Went Missing!

Introduction:

A storytelling activity about a person who went missing unexpectedly. No one knows who they are, what they have been doing, or how they have gone missing. The participants create a story of the missing person in smaller groups and present it in the plenary.

Themes of activity:

- Repressive measures;
- Protection for all from enforced disappearance;
- Prohibition from torture;
- Prohibition of discrimination.

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Groups size: | 6-30 |
| Duration: | 90m |
| Preparation: | Prepare a ‘MISSING’ poster with a very neutral icon of a person. |
| Materials: | Paper, pens, markers. |

Objectives:

- to discuss repressive measures based on identity and affiliations;
- to discuss the vulnerability of certain individuals representing different groups;
- to reflect on how these measures are reflected in current situations in participants’ context.

Instructions:

1. Put the prepared poster in a visible place and ask the participants to brainstorm who is the missing person.
2. Divide the group into smaller groups and give them a task to create the story of the Missing Person. Who are they? What have they been doing? Why and how did they get missing?
3. Invite the groups to make a presentation of the missing person’s story.
4. (Optional) Ask the groups to combine their stories and make a joint story for a MISSING Person and present it.

Debriefing:

1. How did you feel when you were asked to come up with a story of a missing person?
2. What personal characteristics did you think first when you were asked to come up with a story?
3. Was it easy to come up with a story?
4. Did you reflect on your local/national/international context when coming up with the story? How was it reflected?
5. Do you think that some people are more vulnerable to repression (intimidation and violent attacks)? Why?

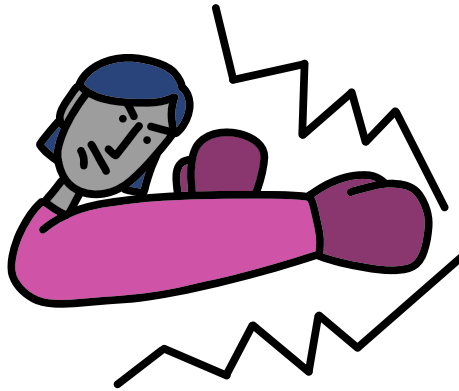
Follow-up:

International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance can be introduced after the activity as a protection mechanism that can be reinforced to eliminate enforced disappearance.

The concluding phase of the ATA tool is to challenge the status quo, act upon the issues, and combat the shrinking tendency of youth civic space. The process could consist of various activities, advocacy campaigns, and different sorts of actions targeted at solving specific issues. The crucial point to consider in the whole process is to make it critical and reflexive; underpinned with democratic approaches and to avoid making young people consumers of the educational activities but rather truly motivating and engaging them to be co-creators of the process.

This section provides a brief overview of the actions organised and co-created by youth workers, human rights activists, and young people in the scope of the project 'Reclaiming Civic Space - Promoting Youth Civil Space through Youth Work and Human Rights Education'. Thirteen local actions took place in eight countries reaching more than 500 young people in the process. The activities in one way or another are related to the indicators highlighted in the Assessment Matrices (Youth Civic Space Index (Table 1) and Youth Civic Space Progress Index (Table 2) which has been used to identify gaps and make tailored-made interventions.

Getting familiar with the activities implemented by the project participants could inspire the reader and possibly give ideas for planning and implementing their own actions to reclaim civic space.



Local Action 1: Needs assessment workshop

| | |
|---|---|
| Link to the indicators of the Matrix of Youth Civic Space Index (YCSI) | Indicator 4.4 - Young migrants and refugees are provided with the necessary support for their integration into society and exercising their human rights including: the right to work, right to education etc. |
| Place | Brussels, Belgium. |
| Target group | youth workers, asylum seekers, queer asylum seekers. |
| Objective | To identify the needs and challenges of queer asylum seekers in Belgium |
| Brief overview of the action | <p>The local team in Brussels organised 4 in-depth interviews with young people who went through the asylum process and a workshop with local youth workers to understand the needs of queer asylum seekers through analysis. During the participatory workshop young people used the problem tree method to identify the violations of human rights of LGBTQI+ asylum seekers and migrants. In addition, the team coordinated interviews with front line workers working with asylum seekers throughout their journey.</p> <p>During the interviews and the workshops valuable information was collected to be used for developing an online platform with useful information for queer asylum seekers.</p> <p>Article on the action here.</p> |

Local Action 2: Online platform for asylum seekers

| | |
|---|--|
| Link to the indicators of the Matrix of Youth Civic Space Index (YCSI) | Indicator 4.4 - Young migrants and refugees are provided with the necessary support for their integration into society and exercising their human rights including: the right to work, right to education etc. |
| Place | Brussels, Belgium. |
| Target group | asylum seekers, queer asylum seekers |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Objective | To improve the accessibility of the asylum process for young queer asylum seekers through a comprehensive and sustainable online platform |
| Brief overview of the action | <p>Building on the information collected through the in-depth interviews during the first local action in Brussels, the team has worked on creating a digital platform for LGBTQI+ asylum seekers to help them prepare for each step of the asylum process. The action strives to build self-resilience and enable young, queer asylum seekers. Thus, empowering them to do the things they want to do upon arriving in the chosen country of asylum, to change things they think need to be changed in their lives, as well as in their immediate surroundings and society.</p> <p>The team has created a comprehensive and sustainable online platform based on the principles of safe space and applying an intersectionality lens. The platform contains up-to-date information for every step of the asylum seeking process, allows future asylum seekers to know what to expect, and prepares them when applying for asylum in Belgium. The platform also includes educational content which can support them to understand, promote, and defend their rights; building their self-resilience and equipping themselves with the tools necessary to make changes in the society.</p> |

Local Action 3: HRE Workshop

| | |
|--|---|
| Link to the indicators of the Matrix of Youth Civic Space Progress Index (YCSPi) based on the CM/Rec (2022) 6 | Indicator 2.5 - Participatory spaces are created or existing ones (including formal education spaces) are revitalised where young people can practise, experience, reflect on, and learn the theories of democracy and participation. |
| Place | Tbilisi, Georgia |
| Target group | Young artists and activists. |
| Objective | The aim of the action was to raise awareness about the shrinking civic space and human rights violations among young artists and activists through promotion of activism |

Brief overview of the action

Within the framework of the workshop, with the help of NFE, the participants were provided with knowledge about shrinking civic space and ways to prevent it.

Young people got the chance to learn more about human rights and the shrinking civic space phenomenon and the ways that art can be used to address human rights violations.

16 activists/artists have participated in a 3-day workshop where 8 art pieces have been co-created.

Some of the artists did not have relevant experience connected to human rights and some of the activists did not use art as a medium or a tool before, but the team turned these challenges into a positive impact equipping young artists and activists with tools, and addressing the shrinking civic space through socially engaged art that advocates on behalf of human rights.

Local Action 4: Exhibition

Link to the indicators of the Matrix of Youth Civic Space Progress Index (YCSPI) based on the CM/Rec (2022) 6

Indicator 2.4 - Necessary conditions are created for the representation of young people's and youth civil society's pluralistic and marginalised views and positions in public debate, without fear of retribution.

Indicator 2.5 - Participatory spaces are created or existing ones (including formal education spaces) are revitalised where young people can practise, experience, reflect on, and learn the theories of democracy and participation.

Place

Tbilisi, Georgia

Target group

Young people, activists, artists, general public

Objective

To raise awareness about human rights violations and the shrinking civic space through art and to create space for young people to reflect and express themselves on these topics.

Brief overview of the action

The action was a continuation from the workshop and shows a very good example how such activities can be combined to amplify their social impact.

The team organised an experimental exhibition in an alternative gallery space in Tbilisi where the people who took part in the workshop got the chance to exhibit their art pieces. The art pieces took different forms (photography, sculpture, installations, etc.) and addressed the topics of shrinking civic space and human rights violations. Some of the installations were interactive and

Brief overview of the action

allowed visitors to become co-creators of the art pieces.

Due to the big interest, a spontaneous follow-up has been initiated in order to do the exhibition in different public spaces (e.g. bars, arts spaces, co-working spaces).

Local Action 5: Creative workshop on the situation of Ukrainian and Belarusian refugees**Link to the indicators of the Matrix of Youth Civic Space Index (YCSI)**

Indicator 4.4 - Young migrants and refugees are provided with the necessary support for their integration into the society and exercising their human rights including: the right to work, right to education etc.

Place

Greifswald, Germany

Target group

Young people, students of the local university, and young activists

Objective

To raise awareness and create understanding towards people forced to flee their home country.

Brief overview of the action

There has been decreasing solidarity with Ukrainian refugees and the misconception that since asylum seekers from Belarus and Ukraine come from European countries there is no need for special measures for inclusion in Germany, which is not the case.

Young people had the chance to visit an exhibition by a Belarusian artist who escaped the Belarusian regime, and join an art workshop during the KUPALA festival. They created prints (T-shirts, bags, paper etc.) to spread a message of solidarity and safe space for people escaping from war and humanitarian crises.

Young people got informed about the challenges of their peers forced to flee their home countries due to the geopolitical situation, and also learned about actions they could take to support this group of people.

Local Action 6: Simulation games on discrimination in sports

Link to the indicators of the Matrix of Youth Civic Space Index (YCSI)

4.1 Young LGBTI people and organisations supporting LGBTI people are able to freely express themselves without fear of intimidation and equally exercise their civil and political rights (including participation in decision making)

4.2 Young people from ethnic minority groups are able to freely exercise their rights equally and are engaged in policy dialogue and policy making processes

4.3 Young people with disabilities are supported to equally exercise their social, economic, and cultural rights, as well as civil and political rights as there are policies and practices in place for their engagement in social, political and, economic life

4.4 Young migrants and refugees are provided with the necessary support for their integration into the society and exercising their human rights including: the right to work, right to education etc.

4.5 Young people representing different religious groups are able to freely exercise their rights and are provided with opportunities to express their religious views without fear of intimidation and violence from far-right groups

Place

Budapest, Hungary

Target group

Young people, students

Objective

To address the issues of racism/sexism/ableism in sports and its effects on the sport fans.

Brief overview of the action

In recent years, the Hungarian government's political discourse has continuously villainised NGOs, their work, and the activists who strive for change in society. In addition, the government has a monopoly over sports, using it to convey nationalistic values. As a result, a growing resistance to the topic of activism and human rights education, and specifically a resistance towards human rights topics among the sport fans can be observed.

The connection between sports and human rights is not always immediately perceived. Sport is an important part of the life of many, yet it remains a closed space that many people belonging to disadvantaged groups do not have access to.

By working in the intersection between sports and human rights,

Brief overview of the action

the team reached out to youth who are not yet involved in activism, and for whom the topic of activism is not interesting, in order to close the perpetually growing gap between the politically polarised Hungarian society.

Participants were invited for an afternoon event during which they could learn about inequalities in sports and the field of sport as a space that can be closed for some due to their skin colour, ethnicity, religion, disability, or other characteristic.

Three stations were established where participants could familiarise themselves with a different form of discrimination in sports.

Station 1: A Football match simulation with two teams: one having a clear advantage which showcases the differences created based on backgrounds and opportunities .

Station 2: A Bingo about the paralympics where teams could brush up and expand their knowledge on the topic.

Station 3: A Quiz game involving questions focused on women in sports.

The activity approached the issue in a creative way; employing human rights education methodologies and having the potential to be further developed and expanded as well as implemented in different contexts.

Local Action 7: Workshop on shrinking civic space

Link to the indicators of the Matrix of Youth Civic Space Progress Index (YCSPI) based on the CM/Rec (2022) 6

Indicator 2.5 - Participatory spaces are created or existing ones (including formal education spaces) are revitalised where young people can practise, experience, reflect on, and learn the theories of democracy and participation

Place

Rome, Italy

Target group

Young human rights activists

Objective

to disseminate the learnings from the Shrinking Civic Space project and to equip young activists with tools for addressing the shrinking space in their realities.

Brief overview of the action

During the workshop the participants were asked to reflect on the core group of rights that are fundamental for young people in Italy, and assess how they are promoted or oppressed. They were divided in 4 groups in order to discuss four topics related to shrinking spaces:

1. Right to abortion;
2. LGBTQI+ rights;
3. Climate change and Human Rights;
4. Open topic regarding violations of HR and present their reflections and solutions to the rights that are most frequently oppressed in youth activism.

With the workshop the team succeeded in reaching young activists and engaging them with the topic of the shrinking civic space. They critically analysed their contexts and came up with problems and relevant solutions. They could understand what a violation of the right to abortion, the right to protest, the right to non-discrimination, LGBTQI+ rights and climate change is. They gave practical examples of such cases in the Italian context and shared their solutions to address the increasing suppression of civic space in Italy.

Local Action 8: Open discussion on the right to protest and shrinking civic space

Link to the indicators of the Matrix of Youth Civic Space Progress Index (YCSPI) based on the CM/Rec (2022) 6

Indicator 3.2 - The rights of young people to engage in youth advocacy and to freely express their political preferences is protected by allowing the organisation of peaceful public gatherings and demonstrations by youth civil society

Place

Rome, Italy

Target group

Young people involved in activism and cultural activities

Objective

To create space for unity and collaboration talking about shrinking civic space in the context of different social struggles

Brief overview of the action

The event took place at a cultural centre created by a young collective in an occupied building in Rome. Participants came from different fields of activism (climate activists, resistance activists, student activists).

Brief overview of the action

The meeting provided an opportunity to create a moment of networking and reflection on how shrinking civic space is a cross-cutting issue that needs to be addressed. Moreover, it created a space to discuss how only through the intersectionality of struggle can we better insist on demanding spaces and persist in countering the shrinking civic space. This includes the need for spaces to gather, confront, as well as spaces of protest and opposition.

Local Action 9: Semi structured interviews and focus groups discussion on the topic of young people's right to protest and assembly in Italy**Link to the indicators of the Matrix of Youth Civic Space Progress Index (YCSPI) based on the CM/Rec (2022) 6**

Indicator 3.2 - The rights of young people to engage in youth advocacy and to freely express their political preferences is protected by allowing the organisation of peaceful public gatherings and demonstrations by youth civil society

Place

Turin, Italy

Target group

Young activists and protest participants

Objective

To get an understanding of young people's perception and thoughts on shrinking civic space in Italy

Brief overview of the action

The action took place during the Global Climate Strike organised by Fridays for Future Italy and several grassroots organisations and groups (Extinction Rebellion, students' unions, squats, informal groups). During the activity the team met with young protesters to discuss with them the meaning of "shrinking civic space" from their perspectives and how the rights to protest and to assembly are ensured in Italy.

The discussions were led through semi-structured individual interviews and focus groups.

The questions included:

"Why are you here?"

"What do you think of the right to protest?"

"What do you think of the right to assembly?"

"Does the notion Shrinking spaces in civil society in English have a specific meaning to you?"

"Do you think spaces for young people are shrinking in Italy? If yes/no, why?"

"What should be done to protect spaces of participation, assem-

Brief overview of the action

bly, protest in your local context?”

The interviews showed that young people grasp the concept of “shrinking space for civil society” even though there is not a literal translation of the concept in Italy. As a result of the activity there is a video.

Local action 10: Online webinar on digital security**Link to the indicators of the Matrix of Youth Civic Space Progress Index (YCSPi) based on the CM/Rec (2022) 6**

Indicators 3.1 - The rights (enshrined in the ECHR) to freedom of association and (peaceful) assembly (Article 11); freedom of expression – including the right to represent pluralistic and marginalised views and engage critically as young citizens with a variety of issues – and information (Article 10); as well as the right to privacy (Article 8) for all young people is protected and promoted; and any barriers to young people’s access to civil and political rights are lifted.

Indicator 3.4 - All young people’s access to information is ensured and they are protected from disinformation, manipulation, and misuse of their data by either public or private actors, particularly in the digital domain.

Place

Moldov (online)

Target group

Young activists and youth workers

Objective

To raise awareness about the dangers of online space and how to defend oneself in the case of targeted attacks or during protests and assemblies.

Brief overview of the action

The webinar addressed a wide range of topics including the difference between free speech and hate speech online, social media hygiene and data protection, types of online threats such as phishing and impersonation, and what red flags users should be aware of.

Young participants received many practical tips on how to secure their data online by making easy changes to the settings of their social media profiles, using a password manager and a 2-factor authentication. They also learned about VPN (Virtual Private Network) and data encryption.

The webinar ended with a Q&A session that gave the chance to participants to ask all their questions and receive concrete and actionable solutions to online security challenges they had encountered.

Local action 11: HRE workshop for future teachers

Link to the indicators of the Matrix of Youth Civic Space Progress Index (YCSPI) based on the CM/Rec (2022) 6

Indicator 1.6 - Appropriate support for quality youth work, including its digital dimension, that fosters critical youth citizenship and empowers young people from different backgrounds, including those from marginalised and under-represented groups is ensured to tackle challenges that young people and youth civil society face in exercising their rights and building a democratic and just Europe.

Place

Chişinău, Moldova

Target group

University students studying pedagogy

Objective

To reflect critically on the relevance and importance of human rights and children's rights in both formal and non-formal education.

Brief overview of the action

The in-person workshop on combating shrinking space through human rights education was organised for university students majoring in pedagogy with the aim to share the importance of introducing human rights values and principles in pedagogy. This action was meant to sidestep and overcome the difficulties of introducing such values for already established teachers whose points of view may be more fixed.

The workshop started with getting to know each other's activities and introducing the project, its aims, and objectives. Then participants had to share one human right that they enjoyed that day, one human right that was violated that day, or one right they wished was respected more.

The workshop continued with the activity "Islanders and Settlers" in which participants were divided into two groups (local inhabitants and settlers), and had to decide what to do in different situations based on the role cards they received. The situations were made complex with mixed marriages between the two groups, children from the two groups studying at the same school, and a person being killed for trespassing the territory of the other group, etc. The activity finished with a debriefing during which students reflected on questions such as "What could prevent one group from dominating over the other?", "Could you draw up a list of principles for peaceful coexistence of different groups of people?"

Local action 12: Exhibition with testimonies

Link to the indicators of the Matrix of Youth Civic Space Progress Index (YCSPi) based on the CM/Rec (2022) 6

Indicator 3.6 - Self-expression and the full development of young people's potential is promoted and encouraged and they are protected from segregation, discredit or marginalisation based on those choices, reflecting the Council of Europe's core values

Place

Poznan, Poland

Target group

Young people

Objective

To address the issue of young people lacking opportunities and spaces to freely express their views and to be their authentic selves

Brief overview of the action

The local action was developed in a few steps that included:

- 1) creating an Instagram page,
- 2) coming up with a list of questions such as "Do you feel you can fully express yourself in Poznan?", "Have you ever experienced discrimination or witnessed someone else experience it?", "Are there any spaces in Poznań where you can share your experiences (both positive and negative)?"
- 3) collecting testimonies,
- 4) and organising an exhibition in a local cultural space.

In addition to the testimonies from young people from Poznan that were printed and curated by the young participants from the Reclaiming Civic Space project, the exhibition included photos of Poznan taken by a local photographer to complement the overall atmosphere representing the youth civic space.

The exhibition created an enabling environment for discussion and new ideas on how to create space for self-expression for youth. It included an interactive element giving a chance for the visitors to get actively engaged and become contributors to the exhibition by brainstorming on the meaning of a person's identity and its different aspects.

Local action 13: University course on organising NGO projects

Link to the indicators of the Matrix of Youth Civic Space Progress Index (YCSPI) based on the CM/Rec (2022) 6

Indicator 2.1 - Development of active youth citizenship and building young people's competences for democratic culture, as well as their trust in democratic institutions is supported

Indicator 2.5 - Participatory spaces are created or existing ones (including formal education spaces) are revitalised where young people can practise, experience, reflect on, and learn the theories of democracy and participation

Target group

University students

Objective

To equip young people with the knowledge and tools about civic engagement and to address the lack of tools necessary to bring about social change.

Brief overview of the action

The team addressed the problems by organising an elective, accredited university course in cooperation with the local university and the local NGO, with a strong practical part (80% of the course focused on practice). The course covered topics such as:

- the essence of non-profit organisations and their characteristics;
- mission statement and strategic planning for non-profit organisations;
- skills for planning and implementing activities with intercultural sensitivity.

It was a two and half month long course and the participants who completed the 4 lectures and 9 practical seminars got credits.

Glossary

Human rights - human rights are standards that recognize and protect the dignity of all human beings. Human rights govern how individual human beings live in society and alongside each other, as well as their relationship with the State and the obligations of which the State has towards them. The governing human rights principles are: 1) universality and inalienability; 2) indivisibility; 3) interdependence and interrelatedness; 4) equality and non-discrimination; 5) participation and inclusion; 6) accountability and rule of law (UNICEF, 2015).

Human rights education - human rights education and training comprises all educational, training, information, awareness-raising, and learning activities aimed at promoting universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Thus, this contributes to—inter alia—the prevention of human rights violations and abuses by providing people with knowledge, skills, and understanding. Thereby, developing their attitudes and behaviours in order to empower them to contribute to the building and promotion of a universal culture of human rights (United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, 2011)

Youth work - youth work is paid or voluntary work that aims to empower, give tools, and build a community by participation, respect, fun, and informal means. The work starts where young people are and aims to support their social, political, and economic empowerment in the present and future (Reclaiming youth, 2022).

Non-formal learning – takes place outside formal learning environments but within some kind of organisational framework. It arises from the learner’s conscious decision to master a particular activity, skill, or area of knowledge and is thus the result of an intentional effort. It need not follow a formal syllabus or be governed by external accreditation and assessment. Non-formal learning typically takes place within a community setting; swimming classes for small children, sports clubs of various kinds for all ages, reading groups, debating societies, amateur choirs and orchestras, etc. Some non-formal learning arrangements become increasingly formal as learners become more proficient; for example, graded exams in music and other performing arts. Adult migrants engage in non-formal language

learning when they participate in organised activities that combine the learning and use of their target language with the acquisition of a particular skill or complex of knowledge (Council of Europe, 2022).

Informal learning – takes place outside schools and colleges and arises from the learner’s involvement in activities that are not undertaken with a learning purpose in mind. Informal learning is involuntary and an inescapable part of daily life; for that reason, it is sometimes called experiential learning. Learning that is formal or non-formal is partly intentional and partly incidental: when we consciously pursue any learning target we cannot help learning things that are not part of that target. Informal learning, however, is exclusively incidental (Council of Europe, 2022).

Critical pedagogy – is a concept found in education which was coined by Paolo Freire. It argues that traditional education—the banking model—oppresses learners instead of producing critically aware thinkers. It reduces them to passive roles and serves wider hegemonic societal expectations that they should comply instead of challenging inequitable power dynamics they encounter. Critical pedagogy supports teachers as they seek to make learners aware of their oppression; it encourages them to support learner identity and voice, and to create optimal conditions for learners to empower themselves and transform their classroom and school experiences’ (IGI global, 2022).

“It views teaching as an inherently political act, rejects the neutrality of knowledge, and insists that issues of social justice and democracy itself are not distinct from acts of teaching and learning” (Giroux, 2005).

Banking model of education - ‘Education... becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiqués and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorise and repeat. This is the ‘banking’ concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing and storing the deposits... Through ‘banking’, teachers impart knowledge and this is legitimated by teacher perceptions of students being ‘ignorant’ and devoid of knowled-

ge, and students' own acceptance of their alienated status and 'ignorance as justifying the teacher's existence' (Maylor, 2012).

Experiential learning - experiential learning is the process of learning by doing. By engaging students in hands-on experiences and reflection, they are better able to connect theories and knowledge learned in the classroom to real-world situations. Experiential learning opportunities exist in a variety of course and non-course-based forms and may include community service, service-learning, undergraduate research, study abroad/away, and culminating experiences such as internships, student teaching, and capstone projects (Kent State University, 2022).

Social inclusion - social inclusion is the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society—improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity (World Bank, 2022).

Social justice - social justice is a communal effort dedicated to creating and sustaining a fair and equal society in which each person and all groups are valued and affirmed. It encompasses efforts to end systemic violence and racism, as well as all systems that devalue the dignity and humanity of any person. It recognizes that the legacy of past injustices remain all around us, so therefore promotes efforts to empower individual and communal action in support of restorative justice and the full implementation of human and civil rights. Social justice imperatives also push us to create a civic space defined by universal education and reason and dedicated to increasing democratic participation (Central Connecticut State University, 2022).

Social capital - '... features of social organisation, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions' (Putnam, 1993, p.167)

Civic space - is the place, both online and offline, where people exercise their rights to freedom of association, expression, and peaceful assembly. It allows the discussion of issues and participation in public decision-making. It allows democracy and society to thrive and is also one of the most important safeguards against tyranny, oppression, and other anti-democratic tendencies (The project Reclaiming youth civic space, 2022).

Civil society - refers to the arena of unforced collective action which centres on shared interests, purposes, and values. In principle, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family, and market. Civil society actors include non-governmental organisations, citizen advocacy organisations, professional associations, faith-based organisations, and trade unions, which give voice to various sectors of society and enrich public participation in democracies. Sometimes less organised actions and activities like movements, community groups, protests, and demonstrations may be seen as civil society actors. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors, and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy, and power. Civil society organisations are understood as being neither part of the state nor the market (Glasius et al., 2004), (Kaldor et al., 2003).

Shrinking civic space - is defined as a phenomenon which is mostly expressed through repression of civil society organisations (CSO) in the form of legal and administrative barriers as well as other repressive practices which hamper the operation of CSOs (The project Reclaiming youth civic space, 2022).

Youth civic space - is referred to environments in which youth civic engagement and political participation is promoted through structures, tools, and mechanisms which provide opportunities for young people to engage in critical discussion, dialogue, and action (The project Reclaiming youth civic space, 2022).

Government-organised non-governmental organisations (GONGOs) – are organisations which can be distinguished by both how they began (organised at a government's behest), and how they are led (of a government's choosing). There are also subtypes SONGOs (state-organised NGOs) and PONGOs (party-organised NGOs) (Hasmatha et al., 2019).

Youth participation – youth participation is about individual young people and groups of young people having the right, the means, the space, and the opportunity and support to: freely express their views, contribute to and influence societal decision-making on matters affecting them; and be active within the democratic and civic life of their communities (Council of Europe, Europe Youth Partnership, 2014).

Reference List

- Amnesty International. 2021. Hungary: The Russian-style propaganda law violates human rights and threatens LGBTI people. [Online]. [Accessed 15 January 2023]. Available from: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur27/4492/2021/en/>
- Amnesty International. 2022. Amnesty International submission to the Council of Europe: Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education Charter review (2017 to 2021). [Online]. [Accessed 12 November 2022]. Available from: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur01/5436/2022/en/>
- Ayvazyan, K. 2019. The Shrinking Space of Civil Society: a Report on Trends, Responses, and the Role of Donors. [Online]. [Accessed 12 November 2022]. Available from: <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-62273-3>
- Back, D. and Purcell, R., 2010. Popular education practice for youth and community development work. Exeter: Learning Matters.
- Central Connecticut State University. 2022. Social Justice. [Online]. [Accessed 30 October 2022]. Available from: <https://www.ccsu.edu/johnlewisinstitute/terminology.html>
- Civic Space Watch. 2022. What is Civic Space?. [Online]. [Accessed 12 November 2022]. Available from: <https://civicspacewatch.eu/what-is-civic-space/>
- Commonwealth Secretariat. 2017. Youth Work in the Commonwealth; A Growth Profession. [Online]. [Accessed 17 January 2022]. Available from: https://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/events/documents/YouthWorkintheCW_9781849291736.pdf
- Cooper, T., 2012. Models of youth work: a framework for positive sceptical reflection. Youth & Policy, Volume 109, pp. 98-117.
- Cooper, T., 2018. Defining youth work: exploring the boundaries, continuity and diversity of youth work practice. In: P. Alldread, F. Cullen, K. Edwards & D. and Fusco, eds. The SAGE Handbook of Youth Work Practice. s.l.:Sage Publication LTD, pp. 3-17.
- Council of Europe. 2015. Youth Work Essentials. [Online]. [Accessed 20 January 2021]. Available from: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-portfolio/youth-work-essentials>
- Council of Europe. 2021. Youth Work. [Online]. [Accessed 14 January 2022]. Available from: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/youth-work1>
- Council of Europe. 2022. Formal, non-formal and informal learning. [Online]. [Accessed 30 October 2022]. Available from: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/lang-migrants/formal-non-formal-and-informal-learning>
- Council of Europe and Europe Youth Partnership. 2014. Analytical paper on Youth Participation-Young people political participation in Europe: What do we mean by participation?. [Online]. [Accessed 12 November 2022]. Available from: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47261980/What+is+youth+participation.pdf/223f7d06-c766-41ea-b03c-38565efa971a>
- Council of Europe. 2017. Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education. [Online]. [Accessed 12 November 2022]. Available from: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-education-youth/edc/hre-charter>
- Council of Europe. 2020. Compass. Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People. [online]. [Accessed 30 October 2022]. Available from: <https://rm.coe.int/compass-eng-rev-2020-web/1680a08e40>

Council of Europe. CM/REC 164 of 17 March 2022 on protecting youth civil society and young people, and supporting their participation in democratic processes. [Online]. [Accessed 12 November 2022]. Available from: <https://rm.coe.int/0900001680a4ef27>

Council of Europe and European commission. 2006. The Socio-economic scope of youth work in Europe, s.l.: s.n.

Coysch, J. 2017. Human Rights Education and the Politics of Knowledge. London:Routledge. [Online]. [Accessed 12 November 2022]. Available from: <https://www.perlego.com/book/1495322/human-rights-education-and-the-politics-of-knowledge-pdf>

Dezelan, t. and Yurttagüler, L. 2019. Shrinking democratic civic space for youth. [online]. [Accessed 4 September 2022]. Available from: https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/59895423/TDLY_CSYP.pdf/cb8643c1-2707-0f1b-3f81-f13704dc9081

European Commission. 2014. Working with young people: the value of youth work in the European Union. European Commission ed. Brussels: ICF GHK.

European Parliament.2022. Shrinking space for civil society in Europe. [online]. [Accessed 10 January 2023]. Available from: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0056_EN.html

European Youth Forum. 2022. Safeguarding civic space for young people in Europe. [online]. [Accessed 4 September 2022]. Available from: <https://www.youthforum.org/files/220428-PP-civic-space.pdf>

Freire, P. 2000. Pedagogy of the Oppressed. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Freire, P. 1998. Pedagogy of Freedom. [online]. Lanham, Boulder, New York, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC. [Accessed 15 March 2022]. Available from: <https://books.google.ge/books?id=X-bOv4eTFSdEC&lpq=PR4&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q&f=false>

Freire, P. 2005. Pedagogy of the Oppressed. [online]. 30th anniversary ed. New York, London:Continuum. [Accessed 15 March 2022]. Available from: <https://www.pdfdrive.com/pedagogy-of-the-oppressed-d177488662.html>

Gavrielides, Th., Nemetlu, G. and Şerban, A.M. 2018. Human rights education and youth work. [online]. [Accessed 10 June 2022]. Available from: https://europanoored.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/HUMAN-RIGHTS-EDUCATION-YOUTH-WORK_PAPER.pdf

Giroux, H. 2019. Interview with Joao Franca. July.

Giroux, H.A. 2005. Border crossings. Cultural workers and the politics of education. New York:Routledge

Glasius, M., Lewis, D. and Seckinelgin, H. 2004. Exploring Civil Society: Political and Cultural Contexts. London:Routledge

Hasmatha, R., Hildebrandt, T. and Hsuc, J. Y. J. 2019.: Conceptualising government-organised non-governmental organisations. Journal of Civil Society. 15 (3), pp. 267–284

Henderson, P. & I, V. 2010. Community development and civil society; Making connections in the European context. Bristol: The Policy Press.

Hurley, L. and Treacy, D. 1993. Models of Youth Work. A Sociological Framework. [Online]. Dublin: Irish Youth work Press. [Accessed 16 January 2022]. Available from: https://www.youthworkireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/models_of_youthwork_a_sociological_framework.pdf

- IGI Global. 2022. What is critical pedagogy. [Online].[Accessed 16 January 2022]. Available from: <https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/critical-pedagogy/6216>
- International Bill of Human rights. 1966. [Online]. [Accessed 12 November 2022]. Available from: OHCHR | International Bill of Human Rights.
- International Human Rights Law. 1948. [Online]. [Accessed 12 November 2022]. Available from: OHCHR | International Human Rights Law
- Kaldor, M., Anheier, H. and Glasius, M. 2003. Global civil society in an age of regressive globalisation: the state of global civil society in 2003.[Online]. [Accessed 12 November 2022]. Available from: (PDF) Global civil society in an age of regressive globalization: the state of global civil society in 2003 (researchgate.net)
- Kent State University. 2022. What is experiential learning and why is it important? [Online]. [Accessed 30 October 2022]. Available from: <https://www.kent.edu/community/what-experiential-learning-and-why-it-important>
- Keutgen, J. and Dodsworth, S. 2020. Addressing the global emergency of shrinking civic space and how to reclaim it: a programming guide. [Online].[Accessed 28 October 2022]. Available from:<https://www.wfd.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/Civic-space-v1-1%281%29.pdf>
- Lauritzen, P. 2006. Defining Youth Work. [Online].[Accessed 16 January 2022]. Available from: <https://www.nonformality.org/2006/06/defining-youth-work/>
- Marciano, D. and Merico, M. 2017. Critical Youth Work for Youth-Driven Innovation: A Theoretical Framework. In: S. Bastien & H. B. Holmarsdottir, eds. Youth as Architects of Social Change. s.l.:Palgrave Macmillan , pp. 43-74.
- Maylor, U. 2012. Key pedagogic thinkers:Paulo Freire. Journal of Pedagogic Development. 2 (3), pp. 24-27.
- Ohana, Y. 2019. What's politics got to do with it? Summary European youth work programmes and the (Ohana, 2019)development of critical youth citizenship. [Online]. [Accessed 18 May 2022]. Available from: https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47262637/Summary_WhatsPoliticsGotToDoWithIt_Ohana_20191205_FINAL.PDF/3ec2ea93-fb23-533c-5ae3-80e289c63d8b
- Ohana, Y. 2020. What's politics got to do with it? European youth work programmes and the development of critical youth citizenship. [Online]. [Accessed 18 May 2022]. Available from: https://jugendfuereuropa.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/download/file/4143?response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DFP_jfe-reader-special-b-10-200303.pdf
- Ord, J. et al., 2018. The Impact of Youth Work in Europe: A Study of Five European Countries. Helsinki: Humak University of Applied Sciences Publications, 56.
- Panagides, P. et al. 2020. Research on Youth Work Studies in Europe. [Online]. [Accessed 16 January 2022]. Available from: https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47262400/KA2-Output1-Youth-Work-studies_Research.pdf/f32e6444-df83-9fe4-fd4d-99db15956ed4
- Putnam, R. 1993. Making democracy work. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. [Online].[Accessed 30 October 2022]. Available from: <https://www.pdfdrive.com/making-democracy-work-civic-traditions-in-modern-italy-d186477635.html>
- Salto-Youth. 2014. European Training Strategy II. [Online]. [Accessed 18 May 2022]. Available from: https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3862/ETS-Competence-Model%20_Trainers_Amended_version.pdf

Santibanez, B. and Bagrintseva, E. 2022. 2022 Review of the implementation of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education. [Online]. [Accessed 12 November 2022]. Available from: <https://rm.coe.int/first-draft-report-review-edchre-charter-2022/1680a61f22>

Scherr, A. 2019. Human rights and youth work. [online]. [Accessed 10 June 2022]. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337783407_Human_rights_and_Youth_Work

Strachwitz, R. G. 2021. What is Civil Society? A Primer. (Opuscula, 160). Berlin: Maecenata Institut für Philanthropie und Zivilgesellschaft. [Online]. [Accessed 12 November 2022]. Available from: <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-76607-1>

The United Nations Development Programme. 2021. Legal frameworks for civic space: practical toolkit. [Online]. [Accessed 17 January 2022]. Available from: <https://www.undp.org/publications/legal-frameworks-civic-space-practical-toolkit>

Tibbitts, F. 2017. Evolution of Human Rights Education Models. In Bajaj, M. ed. Human rights education: Theory, research, and Praxis. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp.69-95.

Tibbitts, F. and Fernekes, W.R. 2011. Human Rights Education. In Totten, S. and Pederson, J.E. eds. Teaching and Studying Social Issues: Major Programs and Approaches. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, pp. 87-117

Toivanen, R. 2009. The politics of terminology: Human rights education vs. civic education. International Journal for Law and Policy, vol. 2009/ 5, no. 1-2, pp. 37-44.

UNICEF. 2015. What are human rights? [Online]. [Accessed 12 November 2022]. Available from: <https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/what-are-human-rights>

United Nations General Assembly. 1993. Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. [Online]. [Accessed 15 January 2023]. Available from: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/vienna-declaration-and-programme-action>

United Nations. 2011. United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training. [Online]. [Accessed 12 November 2022]. Available from: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/resources/educators/human-rights-education-training/11-united-nations-declaration-human-rights-education-and-training-2011>

USAID. 2022. Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index 2021: Poland. [online]. [Accessed 10 January 2023]. Available from <https://www.isp.org.pl/en/publications/civil-society-organization-sustainability-index-2021-poland>

Williamson, H., 2015. Finding Common Grounds. [Online]. [Accessed 14 January 2022]. Available from: https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47262187/FINDING+COMMON+GROUND_Final+with+poster.pdf/91d8f10d-7568-46f3-a36e-96bf716419be

World Bank. 2022. Social inclusion. [Online]. [Accessed 30 October 2022]. Available from: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/social-inclusion>

Xavier, S. 2022. Radical Education A pathway for new utopias and reimagining European democracies. [online]. [Accessed 18 May 2022]. Available from: https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47262637/Radical_education_a_pathway_for_new_utopias_and_reimagining_european_democracies_sergio_xavier.pdf/a4d87fe1-3685-0b14-67ff-ac77ef024c40

Youth Partnership. 2017. T-Kit 7, European Citizenship in Youth Work. [online]. 2nd ed. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing. [Accessed 15 March 2022]. Available from: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013>

/47261290/T-Kit+on+European+Citizenship.pdf/7beade8c-aa21-9855-8fc6-6b53481ece2b

Zembylas, M and Keet, A. 2019. Critical Human Rights Education: Advancing Social-Justice-Oriented Educational Praxes. Cham: Springer

www.hreyn.net

Human Rights Education Youth Network
www.hreyn.net
Rue Américaine 11, 1060 Brussels, Belgium

