LEARNING PROGRAMME

Student Voice, Participation and Democratic Inclusion (Empowering Learners in Decision-Making and School Life)

10-DAY COURSE

50 learning hours | Course programme

Student Voice, Participation and Democratic Inclusion (Empowering Learners in Decision-Making and School Life) – 10-Day Course

Introduction and Description

This course addresses a growing priority in European education: the meaningful involvement of learners in shaping their learning environments, school culture, and institutional decision-making processes. While democratic values and participation are core principles of European education systems, research and practice consistently reveal that many students—particularly those from marginalised, vulnerable, or disengaged groups—remain underrepresented in school-level dialogue and decision-making. This course responds to this gap by equipping educators with inclusive, participatory, and learner-centred strategies that strengthen democratic school cultures and promote equity, belonging, and agency.

Grounded in contemporary theories of democratic education, inclusive pedagogy, and learner agency, the programme explores student voice as both a pedagogical approach and a whole-school commitment. Participants critically examine power relations in classrooms and schools, reflect on whose voices are heard or silenced, and explore structural, cultural, and attitudinal barriers to participation. Particular attention is given to inclusive participation models that engage learners with disabilities, migrant and multilingual backgrounds, socio-economic disadvantage, or prior experiences of exclusion.

The course combines classroom-level practices—such as dialogic teaching, co-creation of learning activities, participatory assessment, and peer leadership—with school-level approaches including student councils, consultative structures, participatory policy development, and student-adult partnerships. Digital tools for participation, ethical considerations, and accessibility are also explored as part of contemporary democratic engagement. Throughout the programme, participants are encouraged to view student voice not as a one-off initiative but as a sustainable cultural shift requiring alignment between pedagogy, leadership, and school policies.

By the end of the course, participants will have developed concrete action plans for embedding inclusive student participation in their own educational contexts. The programme supports educators and school leaders in fostering democratic learning environments where all learners are recognised as active contributors, co-creators, and partners in school life, thereby strengthening inclusion, engagement, and social cohesion across the school community.

Methodology and Assessment

The course adopts an experiential, reflective, and practice-oriented methodology aligned with adult learning principles. Learning activities include interactive seminars, case-study analysis, collaborative workshops, role-play scenarios, and guided reflection. Participants engage in peer exchange and apply concepts directly to their own school contexts through micro-design tasks and action-planning sessions. Digital tools are explored through hands-on practice, ensuring accessibility and relevance across diverse educational settings.

Assessment is formative and reflective, focusing on professional growth rather than formal testing. Participants produce a personal or school-level action plan demonstrating the application of inclusive student voice strategies. Ongoing self-assessment, peer feedback, and facilitator feedback support continuous reflection and ensure the transfer of learning outcomes into sustainable professional practice.

Learning Objectives

1. Understanding Student Voice and Democratic Inclusion

Participants will:

- Analyse key concepts related to student voice, participation, agency, and democratic schooling.
- Examine the relationship between inclusion, belonging, learner engagement, and democratic practices.
- Critically reflect on power, representation, and decision-making in educational settings.

2. Inclusive Participation and Equity

Participants will:

- Identify barriers that limit the participation of marginalised and disengaged learners.
- Apply inclusive strategies that amplify diverse student perspectives.
- Integrate intersectional and equity-focused approaches into participatory practices.

3. Classroom-Level Participatory Pedagogies

Participants will:

- Design and facilitate inclusive classroom practices that promote dialogue, choice, and shared responsibility.
- Implement co-creation, peer learning, and student-led approaches across subjects and age groups.
- Foster safe and supportive environments that encourage expression and critical thinking.

4. School-Level Structures and Democratic Governance

Participants will:

- Evaluate student councils, assemblies, and consultative bodies for inclusiveness and impact.
- Develop meaningful student-adult partnership models that avoid tokenism.
- Support learner participation in school policies, improvement processes, and leadership structures.

5. Sustainable Implementation and Professional Practice

Participants will:

- Use digital and blended tools to enhance inclusive participation.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of student voice initiatives.
- Develop realistic action plans for embedding democratic inclusion in their schools.

Preparation

After registration participants will receive a pre-course questionnaire which will be used by the trainer to learn about participants' teaching backgrounds and to assess their exact needs. Before the beginning of the course a basic reading list will be suggested to participants to prepare for the training. Participants will also be asked to prepare a presentation about themselves, their professional context and their culture. The presentation will be presented on the first day of the course to facilitate networking opportunities. Participants will receive information about the country they are going to visit in order to prepare them for their cultural experience.

Follow up

After the course participants will be asked to share what they have learned with the rest of the staff in their schools. Further books and articles to deepen the topic and contacts with some other practitioners all over Europe and in the world will be suggested by the

trainer. The methods shared and explored and the bibliography given will allow the participants to complete and improve their educational path.

Certificate

Certificate complies with the guidelines of the Erasmus+ programme and includes the topic, number of didactic hours, dates and location of the course. We can list the record of learning outcomes on the Europass Mobility Document on request of participants. In case a participant requires a specific format of certificate we can accommodate that if requested at least one week before the start of the course. It is necessary to attend at least 80% of the hours in order to receive the certificate.

Accommodation

We do not directly offer accommodation and subsistence and participants are responsible for organizing it by themselves.

Paperwork

We also provide all the support with paperwork you might need for your Erasmus+ project documentation such as mobility agreement and registration letter.

Fee: 800 €

Cancelation policy

We have a flexible cancellation policy in force at the moment and you can cancel your registration up to 30 days before the course and receive a full refund. In case you don't cancel the registration more than 30 days before you will not receive any refunds, but you will be able to choose to attend any other confirmed course session later (within 6 months) without any additional costs. In case you are not able to travel, your school can send someone else to take instead of you and you can change the details of the participant any time before the start of the course at no additional cost.

TENTATIVE PROGRAMME (50 didactic hours - 5*45min per day) Monday to Friday	
Day 1	Foundations of Student Voice and Democratic Education
09.00 - 09.45	Introductions & Icebreakers
09.45 - 10.30	Course Overview & Learning Agreement
10.30 - 11.15	Student voice, participation, and learner agency
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Why student voice matters for engagement and equity
12.15 - 13.00	Mapping participation in our own schools
Day 2	Inclusion, Power, and Representation
09.00 - 09.45	Power dynamics in classrooms and schools
09.45 - 10.30	Marginalised, disengaged, and underrepresented learners
10.30 - 11.15	Intersectionality and inclusive participation
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Adult roles in participatory learning
12.15 - 13.00	Reflective practice workshop
Day 3	Student Voice at Classroom Level
09.00 - 09.45	Creating safe spaces for expression
09.45 - 10.30	Participatory classroom strategies
10.30 - 11.15	Inclusive questioning and listening techniques
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Choice, co-design, and shared responsibility
12.15 - 13.00	Classroom application lab
Day 4	Participatory Learning and Co-Creation
09.00 - 09.45	Learners as partners in learning design
09.45 - 10.30	Project-based and inquiry-based approaches
10.30 - 11.15	Peer learning and peer leadership
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Creativity, arts, and expression as voice

12.15 - 13.00	Micro-design workshop
Day 5	Student Voice in Assessment and Feedback
09.00 - 09.45	Democratic approaches to assessment
09.45 - 10.30	Self-assessment and peer assessment
10.30 - 11.15	Student-generated success criteria
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Feedback as dialogue
12.15 - 13.00	Mid-course reflection and sharing
Day 6	School-Level Participation and Governance
09.00 - 09.45	Structures for student participation
09.45 - 10.30	Meaningful vs. symbolic participation
10.30 - 11.15	Inclusive student representation models
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Adult-student partnerships in governance
12.15 - 13.00	School case study analysis
Day 7	Participation Beyond the Classroom
09.00 - 09.45	Student voice in school policies and rules
09.45 - 10.30	Participatory school improvement processes
10.30 - 11.15	Community engagement and civic participation
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Student-led initiatives and campaigns
12.15 - 13.00	Designing a school-level participation initiative
Day 8	Digital Tools for Student Voice
09.00 - 09.45	Digital participation and democratic inclusion
09.45 - 10.30	Inclusive digital tools for expression
10.30 - 11.15	Accessibility and ethical considerations
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Blended and online participation models

12.15 - 13.00	Digital practice lab
Day 9	Whole-School Culture and Sustainable Change
09.00 - 09.45	Building a culture of listening
09.45 - 10.30	Leadership for democratic inclusion
10.30 - 11.15	Professional collaboration and staff engagement
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Monitoring impact and evaluating participation
12.15 - 13.00	Action-planning workshop
Day 10	Individual support, presentations & Closing
09.00 - 09.45	Reviewing key concepts and frameworks
09.45 - 10.30	Preparing the final presentations and individual support
10.30 - 11.15	Final presentations and feedback
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Evaluation & Reflection
12.15 - 13.00	Validation of learning outcomes and certification

*This is only a tentative timetable. The exact hours or the course might differ and will be announced for each session 2 weeks before the start. However, there will always be a total of 5 didactic hours per day and all will be in line with the Erasmus+ quality standards. The trainer might slightly modify the content in response to the needs of the group.
**Cultural and social programmes will be organized in addition to the academic programme. The exact cultural and social programme depends on the location, season, weather, etc.