LEARNING PROGRAMME

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

5-DAY COURSE

25 learning hours | Course programme

Student Voice, Participation and Democratic Inclusion (Empowering Learners in Decision-Making and School Life) – 5-Day Course

Introduction and Description

This course responds to a central challenge in contemporary European education: ensuring that all learners, regardless of background, ability, or level of engagement, are meaningfully involved in shaping their learning experiences and school communities. While democratic values, participation, and learner-centred approaches are embedded in European policy frameworks, many schools continue to struggle with translating these principles into inclusive, everyday practice—particularly for marginalised, disengaged, or underrepresented students.

This five-day intensive programme provides educators and school leaders with a coherent framework for understanding and implementing student voice as both a pedagogical strategy and a whole-school approach. Drawing on research in democratic education, inclusive pedagogy, and learner agency, the course critically examines how power, representation, and decision-making operate within classrooms and school structures. Participants explore the conditions under which student participation becomes authentic rather than symbolic and analyse common barriers that limit equitable engagement.

The programme integrates classroom-level practices—such as dialogic teaching, participatory learning design, peer collaboration, and student-involved assessment—with school-level mechanisms including student councils, consultative bodies, participatory policy development, and student–adult partnerships. Special attention is given to inclusive participation strategies that support learners with disabilities, migrant and multilingual backgrounds, socio-economic disadvantage, or previous experiences of exclusion. Digital tools and blended participation models are explored as enablers of voice, with consideration given to accessibility, ethics, and safeguarding.

Throughout the course, participants are encouraged to reflect on their own professional roles and institutional cultures, positioning student voice as a sustained cultural commitment rather than a single initiative. By the end of the programme, participants will have developed realistic and context-sensitive action plans for embedding democratic inclusion within their classrooms or schools, contributing to learning environments characterised by trust, belonging, shared responsibility, and active citizenship.

Methodology and Assessment

The course is delivered through an experiential and reflective methodology aligned with adult learning principles and inclusive education practices. Learning methods include interactive lectures, facilitated discussions, case-study analysis, collaborative workshops, role-play scenarios, and guided reflection. Participants work individually and collaboratively to apply concepts to their own classrooms or schools through practical design tasks and structured action-planning sessions. Digital participation tools are explored through hands-on activities, ensuring relevance across diverse educational contexts.

Assessment is formative and practice-oriented, focusing on professional reflection and transfer of learning rather than formal testing. Participants complete a personal or school-level action plan demonstrating the application of inclusive student voice strategies. Continuous self-assessment, peer feedback, and facilitator feedback support reflective practice and the sustainable integration of course outcomes.

Learning Objectives

1. Student Voice, Democracy, and Inclusion

Participants will:

- Analyse key concepts related to student voice, participation, agency, and democratic schooling.
- Understand the relationship between inclusion, learner engagement, and democratic school cultures.
- Reflect critically on power relations and decision-making processes in education.

2. Equity, Representation, and Inclusive Participation

Participants will:

- Identify barriers that limit the participation of marginalised or disengaged learners.
- Apply inclusive strategies that ensure diverse perspectives are heard and valued.
- Integrate equity- and intersectionality-informed approaches into participatory practices.

3. Participatory Pedagogies in the Classroom

Participants will:

- Design inclusive classroom practices that promote dialogue, choice, and shared responsibility.
- Facilitate co-creation, peer learning, and student-led activities across subjects.
- Create safe learning environments that support expression, confidence, and critical thinking.

4. School-Level Participation and Governance

Participants will:

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

5. Sustainable Implementation and Professional Development

Participants will:

- Use digital tools to enhance inclusive and accessible participation.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of student voice initiatives.
- Develop actionable plans for embedding democratic inclusion in their educational contexts.

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: 400 €

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 (25 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	Power, representation, and participation in schools
Day 2	Inclusive Participation at Classroom Level
09.00 - 09.45	Creating safe and inclusive spaces for expression
09.45 - 10.30	Participatory classroom strategies
10.30 - 11.15	Amplifying marginalised and quieter voices
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Choice, co-design, and shared responsibility
12.15 - 13.00	Classroom application workshop
Day 3	Co-Creation, Assessment, and Feedback
09.00 - 09.45	Learners as partners in learning design
09.45 - 10.30	Peer learning and peer leadership
10.30 - 11.15	Democratic approaches to assessment
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Feedback as dialogue
12.15 - 13.00	Practice lab and reflection
Day 4	Student Voice Beyond the Classroom
09.00 - 09.45	School-level participation and governance
09.45 - 10.30	Meaningful participation vs. tokenism
10.30 - 11.15	Inclusive student representation models
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Student voice in school policies and improvement

12.15 - 13.00	Building a culture of listening and trust
Day 5	Individual support, presentations & Closing
09.00 - 09.45	Action planning for implementation
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.