

## “Empowering European Youth: why and how to engage young people in all their diversity?”

18 May 2022

### Conference in Brussels & online

Wednesday, May 18th, 17:30 - 19:00 (followed by an informal cocktail reception)

Impact House

Address : Rue Joseph II 20, 1000, Brussels

Click [here](#) to go to the [registration page](#)

#### Context:

Three quarters of young people say they would like to have more say over important decisions affecting the EU. Over half of young people said they would like to take part in the activities on the Conference on the Future of Europe. These are the results of a 2021 Eurobarometer study carried out by Kantar Public for the European Commission on a representative sample of Europeans. They show a clear will of young people to participate more in shaping the policy agenda. However, the tools and solutions to engage them also need to be fit for the needs of this audience.

European institutions are aware of the need to listen to the voices of young people. An important example of such European involvement is the European Youth Event (EYE) taking place every two years. The EYE2021 edition last autumn, brought together more than 10 000 young people to shape and share their ideas for the future of Europe. The top 20 most impactful proposals were consolidated into a Youth ideas report, presented to the Members of the Conference and fed into the political debate.

The European Youth Strategy 2019-2027 aims to Engage, Connect and Empower young people. One of its key actions is to boost participation of young people in democratic and civic activities. Consulting young people and giving them space to make their voices heard, creates empowerment and improves decision making.

In the frame of the Conference on the Future of Europe, Make.org organized several consultations involving 100 000 young people in France and Germany. We have seen that the new generation has become more and more engaged in topics such as climate change, democratic institutions, the EU's role in the world, both diplomatic and economic. Nevertheless, recent surveys still show that a significant amount of young people feel that their input is not being acknowledged: 70% feel they don't have much or any say over significant decisions, affecting the EU as a whole<sup>1</sup>.

In two years time, in 2024, Europeans will again elect their representatives in the European Parliament elections. That election will come after a long period of intermittent lock-downs and restrictions of activities during which young people have been heavily impacted. Many have

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/at-your-service/files/be-heard/eurobarometer/2021/youth-survey-2021/key-findings.pdf>

“retreated” from their social bubbles, found themselves isolated, and their alienation from civic and political life has been in many cases exacerbated. It has therefore become utterly important to reconnect with them and also among themselves. After being somewhat in the background as the vulnerabilities of other age groups were being (rightly so) protected, it is important for youth to regain “center stage” and make their voices heard, and for the UE to listen to their ideas for the future of Europe and involve them in the decision-making process.

In 2019, the EU managed to engage more young voters. Now, three years later, we have to find innovative and long-lasting solutions that can better involve them and make their voices heard. Most importantly though, those furthest away from political actions have to be reached, understood and embarked into projects and ideas.

This European Year of Youth is the best opportunity to really engage the ones who will build the world of tomorrow, the young generation. Young people from all areas, from all backgrounds and groups have to be encouraged to participate in societal debates and decision-making processes.

## Objectives:

We want to show :

- **Why** it is today fundamental to involve a diverse group of young people, making sure to also include those who are not part of organized civil society or who are unlikely to proactively come forward and speak up;
- **How** diverse groups of youth can be engaged through innovative digital tools as well as tailored recruitment strategies that ensure large scale, in-depth, engaging and empowering as well as broad participation.

We want to seize the opportunity of coming together to develop our ideas and make our different fields of expertise converge, in order to share solutions to this question: How can the younger generation be better engaged in participatory projects? How can we encourage an intergenerational process of constructive dialogue?

Young citizens are often the first to adopt new technologies and contribute to digital projects. With Make.org, an independent and non-partisan civic-tech platform whose purpose is to catalyze citizen ideas, digital projects can lead to the implementation of actions that will shape the society of tomorrow.

Young people greatly appreciate the possibility to be able to express their views and suggestions in view of policy decisions - in their own words. Being given the floor to speak in a safe and non-exposing context is immediately empowering. Decision makers experience real “aha moments” when giving genuine consideration to their voices. Kantar Public has been listening to and engaging with young people (and other groups of citizens) using a range of qualitative and deliberative approaches throughout the EU and beyond. We translate complex policy issues into approachable and relatable discussion topics. We seek voices of those whom you wouldn't reach otherwise. We listen, reflect and provide you with analysis that enlightens future decisions.

**Axel Dauchez**, president of Make.org, will give insights in our latest projects and concrete success in the framework of the CoFoE or the latest European elections, to show how our digital innovative solutions, with its collaborative and engaging user experience, reaches young citizens wherever they are and enables them to share their ideas to build a post-pandemic future.

**Daniela Ulicna**, Head of Policy Development and Evaluation – Continental Europe Kantar Public will share examples of how qualitative research and participatory actions have been used by European and national decision makers to reveal unique and novel perspectives and improve public realm.

Our **guest speakers** from several EU institutions will explain how they take into account the Youth's will to participate and how they help young citizens engage with them.

Guest speakers :

**Biliana Sirakova**, EU Youth Coordinator at the European Commission

**Ilana Cicurel**, MEP and Member of the Committee on Culture and Education of the European Parliament

Member of the Commission for Social Policy, Education, Employment, Research and Culture (SEDEC) of the **Committee of Regions**

**European Youth Parliament** Representative

Please join us for this conference/webinar in the framework of the European Year of Youth.

Click [here](#) to go to the [registration page](#).

## When & where?

Conference in Brussels & online (Zoom)

Wednesday, May 18th, 17:30 - 19:00

Impact House

Address : Rue Joseph II 20, 1000, Brussels

Following the event, Make.org and Kantar Public will be pleased to welcome you to a cocktail to further exchange and discuss about the topic in an informal atmosphere.

Please note that due to the pandemic, we only have a limited number of places. These will be allocated on a first come first served basis. If you are unable to attend in person, we invite you to join the event via Zoom. The link will be sent to you by email. All admissions will be in accordance with the current Covid-19 measures.