

reBuild



Youth-Led REBUILD Strategy Paper



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Youth-Led REBUILD Strategy Paper

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List of abbreviations

Acronym	Description
EC	European Commission
DG EAC	The Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture
EACEA	European Education and Culture Executive Agency
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
EFJ	European Youth Forum (Youth Forum Jeunesse)
EU	European Union
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UN	United Nations
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

Summary of the Project

The project REBUILD aims to empower youth organisations/informal groups of young people, and underrepresented young people by enhancing their participation, dialogue, civic engagement and networking at local and EU level while supporting the rebuilding of more inclusive and greener societies in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis.

The specific objectives are:

- ❖ to strengthen capacities of youth organisations/informal groups of young people by stimulating an exchange of good practices on social solidarity and green lifestyle initiatives and by developing local and transnational networks;
- ❖ to enhance skills of underrepresented young people by providing them with tools needed to foster innovative forms of civic participation, constructive dialogue and awareness raising campaigning;
- ❖ to empower underrepresented youth to play a key role by engaging them directly in project design and implementation for rebuilding more inclusive and greener societies;
- ❖ to promote new strategies for the inclusion and participation of underrepresented young people by actively engaging in a dialogue with youth stakeholders and policy makers

Activities

In terms of activities, REBUILD empowered youth organisations and informal groups of young people, as well as underrepresented young people, and enhanced their democratic participation, dialogue, civic engagement, and networking at local and EU levels to support the rebuilding of inclusive and greener societies in response to the challenges of the Covid-19 emergency. The action started by mapping social solidarity and environmental/green lifestyle initiatives carried out by youth organisations and informal groups during and after the crisis. Their capacities were strengthened through an exchange of good practices and the development of local and transnational networks. This was facilitated through local round-tables and a Youth-net forum, which brought together 48 members from local networks in six implementation countries. The

representatives engaged through the local round-tables and the Youth-net forum were later engaged as mentors for the young people implementing initiatives.

To foster innovative forms of civic participation, underrepresented young people were trained in project design, implementation, and awareness-raising campaigns. These young people, divided into teams and guided by Youth Ambassadors, were directly involved in implementing their own initiatives and promoting them through the REBUILD Campaigns during National Contests. Local Festivals were organised, reaching out to 100 participants per country, and a winning team was selected in each country.

To foster international dialogue, Online Thematic Foras were organised for young people to engage with their foreign peers. Additionally, an online mobility program was offered to Youth Ambassadors. The culmination of the project was the International Youth Summit, where Youth Ambassadors, winning youth teams, and local network representatives attended. During the summit, the Strategy Paper containing policy recommendations was presented to EU policymakers and stakeholders. Through these efforts, REBUILD connected different youth stakeholders, fostering their sense of belonging to the EU and giving them a voice in the creation of more inclusive and greener societies.

Policy Context

Building an inclusive and resilient post-COVID-19 society poses significant and intricate challenges for public institutions. These challenges encompass a broad range of areas, including public health, employment, education, and social protection. Additionally, these challenges are intertwined with other urgent issues that must be addressed to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These issues include eradicating poverty, addressing climate change, as well as mitigating energy and food crises.

The Covid-19 outbreak has affected all social segments, especially vulnerable social groups, with consequences that need to be addressed to mitigate their long-term effects. Engaging youth, whose prospects and mental well-being have been affected the most, is key to support the recovery of the EU's social fabric after such an unprecedented crisis which has strongly impacted societies across the globe. Before the outbreak, more than 50% of young Europeans perceived themselves as socio-economically marginalised¹ based on geographical or ethnic origin, and sexual orientation, etc.

¹ 12 Ideas for the Future of Europe. Available at: https://europa.eu/youth/sites/default/files/12_ideas_for_the_future_of_europe.pdf

Already excluded from democratic life² youth now faces a higher risk of misinformation and infodemics as an obstacle to their civic participation³. Conversely, a sustainable post-Covid-19 scenario requires the engagement of all sectors of society, particularly youth, whose engagement can provide great support to many other vulnerable segments of society (elderly people, people with special needs, children, students etc.), e.g. by sharing correct information or volunteering⁴.

Youth's engagement can also be very effective to encourage the adoption of more sustainable lifestyles in the local community, at a time when attention to the environment is becoming more important than ever to ensure all living beings' health.

With a view to enhance young people's preparedness to respond to such social emergencies, the action addresses these challenges by promoting youth inclusive participation in EU's civic life, networking among youth, stakeholders, policy makers, and fostering youth's sense of belonging to both their local community and the EU, by supporting their project ideas to contribute to the reconstruction of inclusive and greener societies.

The REBUILD activities respond to the EU Inclusion and Diversity Strategy engaging youth with fewer opportunities in European civic action and taking their view and potential into account, centring them as key players. The action enhanced skills and motivation of underrepresented young people to participate in community and European actions through their active engagement in blended mobilities and in the design and implementation of social solidarity and green lifestyle initiatives, in line with EU Youth Goals #3, #9 and #10 of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027⁵. It also follows the European Green Deal by turning new environmental challenges arisen during the pandemic into opportunities aiming at an inclusive transition. The action also follows the recommendations of the European Parliament 2019⁶ on participation of youth by building connections and networks among European youth organisations to support voluntary engagement, mobility and empowerment. By engaging youth into online and face-to-face mobilities, campaigning and skilful use of digital tools, the project draws on the EC's report Developing digital youth work⁷ (2018) and Recommendations

² Resolution on the European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027

– Adoption -Available at : <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14080-2018-INIT/en/pdf>

³ Joint communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/communication-tackling-covid-19-disinformation-getting-facts-right_en.pdf

⁴ 5 Things Young People Can Do to Join the Global #COVID19 Response. Available at : <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/2020/03/5-things-young-people-can-do-against-coronavirus/>

⁵ The EU Youth Strategy 2018-2027, https://youth.europa.eu/strategy_en

⁶ Fact sheets on the European Union. Available at: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/141/youth>

⁷ Developing digital youth work: Policy recommendations, training needs and good practice examples for youth workers and decision-makers : expert group set up under the European Union Work Plan for Youth 2016-2018, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/fbc18822-07cb-11e8-b8f5-01aa75ed71a1>

of EC on Tackling online disinformation⁸ (2022), which stresses the importance of reinforcing youth's critical thinking and digital skills.

The active engagement of youth in sustainable development efforts is central to achieving sustainable, inclusive and stable societies by 2030. The new Eurobarometer survey shows growing youth engagement: today, a majority (58%) of young people are active in the societies they live in and have participated in one or more youth organisations over the last 12 months. This is an increase of 17 percentage points since the last Eurobarometer in 2019. In addition, young people's most common expectation for the 2022 European Year of Youth is for decision-makers to listen more to their demands and act on them, and to support their personal, social and professional development (72%). The same survey also indicates on the main priorities of the youth: preserving peace, reinforcing international security and promoting international cooperation is the very first objective of the EU (37%); the next highest expectations are for the EU to increase job opportunities for young people (33%); fight poverty and economic and social inequalities (32%) and promote environmentally friendly policies and fight climate change (31%).⁹

The World Programme of Action for Youth and the UN Youth Strategy enshrine engagement and participation as key pillars of the UN decision-making and actions related to youth development. The ECOSOC Youth Forum accentuates the role of youth in the monitoring, review and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as its main focus and provides a global platform for youth to voice their opinions, share ideas and think together about the ways to achieve the 2030 Agenda[UN DESA Policy Brief No. 149: Promoting Youth Participation in Decision-Making and Public Service Delivery through Harnessing Digital Technologies, UN DESA Policy UN.¹⁰

The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted young people across the globe. The disruption of their education and job loss have been widespread, and their mental health and safety has been severely affected. Despite these challenges, a considerable number of young people are optimistic and believe that it is feasible to achieve an inclusive, resilient, and sustainable recovery from the pandemic. Through their creativity and perseverance, young people are actively working towards developing solutions that will help their communities emerge from the pandemic even stronger than before. The newly released Global Youth Mobilization progress report[Global Youth Mobilization progress report¹¹ demonstrates the power of collective action and decision-making by

⁸ Recommendations of EC on Tackling online disinformation (2022) <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/online-disinformation>

⁹ New Eurobarometer survey 2022 <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/news/new-eurobarometer-survey-shows-growing-youth-engagement>, last accessed 20th of April, 2023

¹⁰ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/publication/un-desa-policy-brief-no-149-promoting-youth-participation-in-decision-making-and-public-service-delivery-through-harnessing-digital-technologies/>, last accessed 20th of April, 2023

¹¹ <https://globalyouthmobilization.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Global-Youth-Mobilization-Interim-Impact-Report-February-2022.pdf> last accessed 26th of April, 2023

young people, for young people with abundant examples of global youth-led projects and conclusions developed from discussions with young people and youth-led organisations in order to help multinational agencies and institutions, governments, policymakers, and the private sector to address and prioritise the needs of young people and future generations.¹²

The COVID-19 crisis has proven that youth organisations and non-organised youth can be partners in rebuilding efforts to follow. According to preliminary data from the OECD Global Report on Youth Empowerment and Intergenerational Justice, almost 7 out of 10 OECD countries have national volunteering programmes and strategies in place (68%). Preliminary analysis also confirms that in countries with a youth volunteering programme, young people are in fact more likely to volunteer. In a similar way, youth workers that engage young people (especially vulnerable groups) in non-formal education and out-of-school activities can be mobilised by governments in building up youth's resilience. Currently, less than half of OECD countries (44%) for which preliminary data is available (OECD, 2020) have youth work strategies in place. Governments should adapt existing strategies and formulate new ones to ensure that the youth sector is ready to deal with the fallouts of the COVID-19 crisis and address emerging areas.¹³

WHY THIS POLICY PAPER?

The aim of the REBUILD strategy paper is to provide evidence-based policy recommendations on lessons learnt from activities and tips on how to replicate the REBUILD model and youth-led initiatives in order to inspire new ones. The REBUILD Strategy Paper addresses the key role of youth and collaborative networks in fostering real changes in attitudes towards stronger social solidarity and green lifestyles, thus contributing to rebuilding society in a more resilient way after the crisis brought by the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹² Powering change: Young people leading the COVID-19 response and recovery, <https://globalyouthmobilization.org/impact/>, last accessed 20th of April, 2023

¹³ OECD Policy Responses to Coronavirus (COVID-19) Youth and COVID-19: Response, recovery and resilience, <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/youth-and-covid-19-response-recovery-and-resilience-c40e61c6/>, last accessed 20th of April, 2023

The strategy paper has been co-designed taking into account the input from young people, youth leaders, youth stakeholders and youth policy makers active on local, national and international level. Consultation activities coincided with the end of youth-led initiatives implementation, and overall presented a chance to collect policy makers' opinion on process and results. Their feedback and expert advice was taken into consideration for the elaboration of policy recommendations on the Youth-led REBUILD Strategy Paper.

The stakeholders noticed the need to recognise the fact that following the pandemic and the recent geopolitical shift brought with itself even more hardships for young people on psychological, social, economic and community life. Defending values such as solidarity, empathy, and social justice has been the key to all the initiatives implemented during the REBUILD project; at the same time, a crucial need for greater sustainability, certainly environmental, but also economic and social was noted upon. In some cases, the interviewed stakeholders noted the need to understand the local context when involving underrepresented youth, and the different hardships they face with concerns to quality of life, engagement and sustainability matters.

As part of the subsequent process, a circular strategy for youth engagement has been designed:

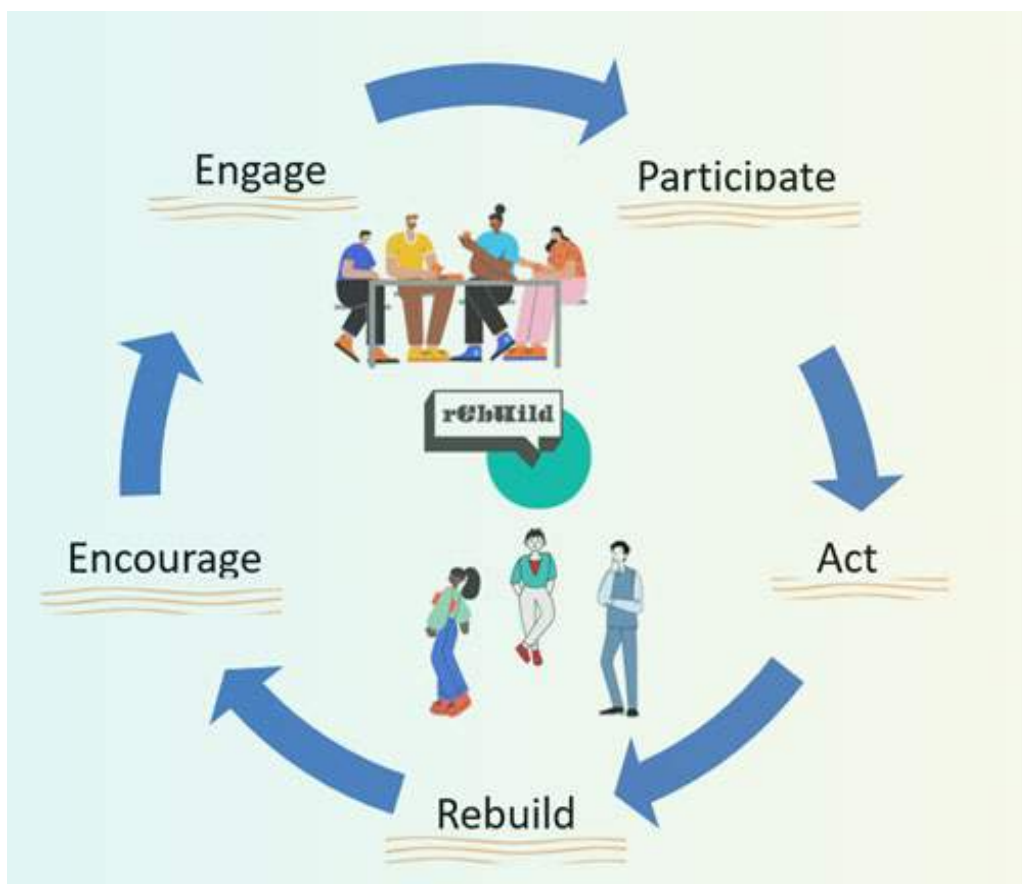


Figure 1. The REBUILD Engagement Cycle

RECOMMENDATIONS

ENGAGE!

Youth organisations and organisations for youth should establish networking and collaboration pathways with actors within and beyond the youth field, such as educational institutions, youth representatives, youth centres, and NGOs, to better outreach and engage young people, particularly underrepresented ones. Policymakers should create a structural engagement process for young people and youth stakeholders on a local, national, and international level by directly involving all stakeholders and supporting them through constant consultations.

PARTICIPATE!

Youth organisations and organisations for youth should act as information hubs and mentorship platforms through participation processes within their communities and beyond to encourage active participation of young people. Local policymakers should involve young people in all stages of participation and create systematic solutions for them to advocate for matters that concern them, tailored to their needs and contexts. European stakeholders should propose evidence-based strategies based on local experiences to facilitate meaningful youth participation on a European level.

ACT!

Youth organisations and organisations for youth should provide training, mentorship and peer-to-peer support to young people, enabling capacity building and competence exchange. They should guide youth through initiative development and execution, providing continuous support for the implementation of youth-led initiatives on local, national, and European level. Policymakers should support and promote young people's initiatives by providing resources, simplifying processes, and creating opportunities for dialogue and exchange of good practices.

REBUILD!

Youth organisations and organisations for youth should put great importance on following through with young people through all cycles of youth-led initiatives from the planning to follow-up phases

in order to promote and mainstream youth resilience, social cohesion, solidarity and social inclusion. Local policymakers should take critical steps to capture, retain and build on current youth mobilisation to strengthen resilience of local communities. European stakeholders should create and facilitate opportunities for learning, exchange and collaboration between young people and stakeholders at local, national and European level, putting in focus rebuilding of societies hit by current challenges.

ENCOURAGE!

Young people have demonstrated and continue to demonstrate that they are able to anticipate and construct innovative responses to the current challenges. Youth stakeholders (organisations, policy makers) should take into account the great capacity of young people to adapt and respond to challenging realities. They should ensure that the young people can see and feel the positive changes their engagement brings, thus ensuring their ongoing motivation and empowering them to continue rebuilding communities across Europe.

THE

REBUILD

EXPERIENCE

The REBUILD Experience focuses on understanding and meeting the needs of underrepresented young people in civil society. Through activities like associationism, community service, and interdisciplinary projects, young individuals are engaged and empowered. The goal of REBUILD is to drive changes towards social solidarity and green lifestyles, prioritising economic recovery, education, digital infrastructure, community resilience, and sustainability.

In general, the local REBUILD Experience involves engaging underrepresented youth through youth organisations and initiatives. The project provides a platform for creative dialogue and empowers youth to implement their ideas and have their voices heard with the support of policy mechanisms

that can support the continuation of REBUILD initiatives. Successes of REBUILD include involving underrepresented communities, empowering individuals to rebuild and enhance their communities, and promoting social solidarity and green lifestyles through youth networks. Nevertheless, the national experiences of REBUILD provide a very interesting insight into the local realities.

The Cypriot REBUILD Perspective

The Cyprus REBUILD Experience involves a deep understanding of the needs of young people in civil society. Underrepresented youth in communities engage through various activities such as associationism, community service, and interdisciplinary projects with educational institutions. Aligning projects with their immediate concerns is crucial, and there is a need to improve communication and dissemination efforts.

Policy mechanisms at local and national levels support youth engagement through European projects. The mobilisation and coordination of young individuals, along with providing resources and support, are seen as significant successes. Recognising the importance of youth and collaborative networks, efforts are made to drive changes towards social solidarity and green lifestyles. Rebuilding society after the COVID-19 pandemic involves prioritising economic recovery, investing in education and digital infrastructure, strengthening community resilience, and emphasising sustainability.

From the mentor side, the biggest successes and lessons learned during the local activities of REBUILD include embracing democratic dialogue, taking action, and leading by example. Recommendations for project partners include providing mentoring, essential tools like the Youth Manual, and organising helpful training. The REBUILD experience contributes to team formation and inspiration from other teams. The legacy of REBUILD lies in the self-sustainability of initiatives, with plans for future repetition.

The REBUILD project provides opportunities for youth to learn about EU opportunities and expand their understanding of Europe. Lessons learned include understanding Erasmus+ opportunities and building networks through initiatives. Recommendations for project partners involve ensuring continuity of support beyond the funding period. The REBUILD experience supports activities through funding, training, and problem-solving skills. The legacy includes exposure for initiatives and suggests organising mentorship meetings between teams.

From a partner perspective, REBUILD reaches and includes participants through a mentor network and collaborations with marginalised youth groups. Challenges faced during REBUILD activities include keeping participants engaged, effective communication, time constraints, specialised guidance, and supervision. Recommendations for engaging and motivating underrepresented young people include reaching out to them, offering valuable training and tools, respecting their time, embracing differences, and promoting a safe space culture. The REBUILD legacy continues through self-sustaining initiatives, the International Youth Summit, and potential future projects.

The Greek REBUILD Perspective

The Greek REBUILD Experience involves engaging local underrepresented young people through youth organisations and initiatives. While there are no dedicated municipal or regional youth centres, some private youth centres have been established in Athens, aiming to reach and involve underrepresented youth. The REBUILD project provides a platform for creative dialogue and empowers young people to implement their ideas and have their voices heard.

Although there is no dedicated Ministry of Youth or Youth Agencies at the regional level, various entities under the Ministry of Education support youth engagement and provide opportunities for underrepresented youth to participate in European activities and develop their skills. The success of the REBUILD project lies in the ability of teams to create and manage projects that respond to local needs, with the support of local authorities and stakeholders.

Youth and collaborative networks play a crucial role in promoting social solidarity and sustainable lifestyles in local communities. It is important for young people to actively participate in impactful projects, advocate for their rights, and engage in constructive dialogues with local authorities. To build a more resilient society post-COVID-19, investment in measures that support proactive and prepared communities is essential, along with collaboration and synergy among stakeholders.

The REBUILD project has successfully engaged the new generation and fostered learning beyond the school curriculum, particularly in areas such as recycling, composting, and sustainable living. Active social media promotion has been instrumental in maximising the impact of activities, and communication strategies should be prioritised. The project has enhanced the understanding of social solidarity and greener lifestyles and plans to continue by collaborating with other organisations, involving more young people, and expanding visibility.

Lessons learned from the project include the importance of teamwork, strong bonds between team members, and engaging local authorities for project success. Developing participants' soft skills, particularly communication, is recommended for effective collaboration and stakeholder engagement. The project's legacy will continue through ongoing efforts and collaborations, such as the "Tree of Life" project, aimed at involving more local people.

During the project, various strategies were used to reach and include participants, including leveraging existing networks, open calls on social media, and providing tools and support during local workshops. Challenges encountered included motivating participants, maintaining engagement throughout the project, language barriers in online forums, organising meetings with diverse youth groups, and time constraints for effective promotion. Recommendations for better engagement include creating a safe space for training and personal development, adapting

materials to participants' profiles, continuous support and mentoring, emphasising personal growth and social change, and offering incentives.

The REBUILD legacy is expected to continue through the implementation and scaling up of initiatives initiated during the project, as well as reaching more people and establishing synergies between stakeholders.

The Italian REBUILD Perspective

In Italy, underrepresented young people engage in their communities through associationism and nationwide community service activities. The REBUILD initiatives have the potential to further enhance this engagement, particularly among underrepresented youth, by providing a structured process that allows participants to share their experiences and improve their position.

There are existing policy mechanisms that can support the continuation of REBUILD initiatives, although they require improvement and implementation. The greatest successes and lessons learned from REBUILD include the involvement of underrepresented communities and the empowerment of individuals to rebuild and enhance their communities. Youth and collaborative networks play a crucial role in fostering tangible changes in attitudes towards stronger social solidarity and greener lifestyles within local communities.

Local underrepresented young people in Italy engage through the formation of volunteer groups, associations, cooperatives, and neighbourhood committees. REBUILD initiatives can contribute to further youth engagement by stimulating creativity, active participation, and peer interaction. Policy mechanisms such as participatory processes, allocation of spaces to civil society organisations, and simplification of allocation processes can support the continuation of REBUILD initiatives.

The importance of youth and collaborative networks in fostering real changes towards social solidarity and green lifestyles in local communities is emphasised. They serve as a foundation for cultural awakening and territorial regeneration, creating community-oriented spaces. Factors for rebuilding society in a more resilient way after the COVID-19 pandemic include creating communities and platforms for debate, as well as facilitating interaction between those implementing successful practices and those setting policy guidelines.

The Lithuanian REBUILD Perspective

The REBUILD experience in Lithuania has been shaped by youth engagement in post-COVID-19 rebuilding efforts and the impact of the Russian war in Ukraine. This has elicited a strong response from various community stakeholders, including individuals, organisations, and the wider public.

A valuable lesson learned from the REBUILD project in Lithuania is the significance of scheduling activities outside of school to maintain high motivation among school pupils. The success of the initiative lies in the mentors' ability to drive change in different regions, motivating people to form youth organisations and amplify their voices. Youth networks and collaborations are instrumental in promoting social solidarity and green lifestyles, although individual factors such as social background and status can influence decision-making. The recovery of communities after the COVID-19 crisis and the Russian war in Ukraine requires the support of public organisations, interested decision-makers, and dedicated youth coordinators. It is also important to improve access to psychosocial services for young people, particularly if there is stigma preventing them from seeking help at home.

Throughout the project, the Lithuanian youth ambassadors have been actively involved in their local REBUILD project groups. The biggest successes of the local activities include the broad participation of people from diverse backgrounds, ranging from kindergartens to senior homes, and attracting participants from different regions. In Vilkaviškis, the project achieved success by generating interest among people, even reaching those who couldn't attend activities by taking the initiatives to them. In Šiauliai, the establishment of a public space on a rooftop was time-consuming, at the same time highlighting the need for more streamlined processes in future endeavours.

Looking ahead, the youth ambassadors recommend establishing connections with like-minded individuals to enhance motivation, nurturing dreams and a problem-solving mindset, and emphasising effective communication. The REBUILD experience has contributed to their personal growth, helping them transition from the post-COVID phase, fostering offline engagement in areas with limited extracurricular activities, and enhancing their sense of belonging, self-confidence, teamwork, and communication skills.

The legacy of REBUILD is evident in Švenčionys and Vilkaviškis, where the activities have become ingrained in the community, prompting plans for future events and new projects. In Šiauliai, the public space created through the project will continue even after the completion of REBUILD activities.

The mentors in Lithuania employed various strategies to engage and include participants in the REBUILD project. These strategies included leveraging social media platforms like Instagram and collaborating with culture and youth centres. Personal invitations and utilising existing networks were also effective approaches. However, the mentors faced challenges such as changes in team members and incentives, initial lack of participant awareness and engagement, difficulties in coordinating team schedules during the school year, and a lack of clear explanations and guidelines.

To better engage and motivate underrepresented young people, the mentors provide recommendations such as leading by example, establishing personal connections, organising activities in easily accessible locations and during suitable hours, making information readily available, and actively listening to participant preferences. These recommendations aim to ensure inclusivity and availability for all.

In the end, the REBUILD experience in Lithuania highlights the importance of youth engagement, community support, and policy prioritisation for successful post-pandemic recovery. Through collaborative efforts, personal connections, and strategic planning, the project has had a positive impact on underrepresented young people and has the potential to leave a lasting legacy in the form of strengthened community bonds, the emergence of youth organisations, and the replication of successful initiatives.

The Martiniquais REBUILD Perspective

The REBUILD experience in Martinique involves engaging local underrepresented young people through projects that align with their needs and aspirations. However, the influence and visibility of REBUILD initiatives, particularly among underrepresented youth, require further consolidation. Policy mechanisms at various levels, from local to international, exist to support youth engagement, including civic service programs and youth commitment contracts.

The biggest successes of the REBUILD project include mobilising young people, fostering collaboration among different youth actions, and providing resources and expertise that they may not have had access to otherwise. Youth and collaborative networks are vital in driving changes in attitudes towards social solidarity and green lifestyles, as they serve as effective relays and tools for desired transformations.

To rebuild society in a more resilient way after the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring access to basic rights such as food, housing, healthcare, education, and mobility is crucial. These factors contribute to a more equitable and sustainable society.

During the project, participants were reached through strategies such as open calls on social media, discussions at youth events, and collaboration with a local educational institution. The main challenges encountered during the REBUILD activities include finding participants, scheduling meetings with teams, meeting project deadlines, ensuring quality implementation, and maintaining the quality of awareness-raising campaigns and vlogs.

Recommendations for better engaging and motivating underrepresented young people include allowing them to work on topics they are passionate about, providing role models and mentors, offering guidance and support, showcasing the positive changes their projects bring, and involving the local community.

The legacy of REBUILD in Martinique involves a commitment to continue the initiated actions, expand to other overseas departments of France, and establish connections with national artistic networks. The project aims to maintain its long-term impact and the dynamic momentum created by REBUILD.

The Spanish REBUILD Perspective

Local underrepresented young people in the community can engage through various ways such as youth, social, or cultural associations that address their interests, as well as through their territorial proximity. Public administrations, like the Malaga City Council and the Regional Government of Andalusia, promote Sectorial and Territorial Councils that contribute to youth engagement.

The influence and visibility of REBUILD initiatives in further engaging underrepresented young people are considered crucial. Initiatives that promote civic participation among youth, particularly those from minority or excluded sectors, are a priority for promoting social inclusion and a sense of community belonging.

Policy mechanisms are in place at the local and regional levels to support the continuation of REBUILD initiatives and youth engagement. Citizen participation bodies provide a platform for ongoing work and consolidation of the initiatives and objectives achieved through REBUILD, ensuring their long-term continuity.

The biggest successes of REBUILD include giving young people a voice in important matters like social change and environmental sustainability in their immediate area. The project has also

provided opportunities for training in these subjects and the development of valuable social skills such as teamwork, debate, and assertiveness. Participation in other projects and activities, similar to REBUILD, can give the possibility to many young people to develop and acquire new key competences useful for their personal and professional life.

Youth and collaborative networks play a crucial role in fostering real changes in attitudes towards stronger social solidarity and green lifestyles. By creating synergies among young people of different backgrounds and abilities, these networks contribute to a deeper understanding of the diversity that exists in society and enable the development of these issues at various levels.

Factors contributing to rebuilding society in a more resilient way after the COVID-19 pandemic include flexibility and adaptability, staying connected through existing and new relationships, finding purpose and setting short-term goals, and maintaining hope by seeking new opportunities.

Conclusion

Over the last 2 years the REBUILD project has successfully achieved its goal to empower youth organisations, informal groups of young people, and underrepresented youth by enhancing their participation, dialogue, civic engagement, and networking at local and EU levels. The project has contributed to the rebuilding of more inclusive and greener societies in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis. Through various activities, such as mapping initiatives, capacity building, training, and implementing youth-led initiatives, REBUILD has strengthened the skills and motivation of young people while actively engaging them in project design and implementation. The project has also fostered dialogue with youth stakeholders and policymakers to promote new strategies for the inclusion and participation of underrepresented young people. By connecting different youth stakeholders and fostering their sense of belonging to the EU, REBUILD has provided young people with a voice in the creation of more inclusive and greener societies.

The policy context of the project highlights the challenges faced in building an inclusive and resilient post-COVID-19 society, emphasising the need to engage youth in the recovery process. The active involvement of young people is crucial for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and addressing urgent issues such as poverty eradication, climate change, and energy and food crises. The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected young people, making their engagement even more vital in supporting the social fabric and promoting sustainable lifestyles.

The recommendations put forth in the strategy paper emphasise the need to engage, participate, and empower young people. It calls for networking and collaboration among youth organisations, educational institutions, and NGOs, as well as involving young people in all stages of participation and creating systematic solutions tailored to their needs. The paper also highlights the importance of providing training, mentorship, and support to young people, as well as promoting their initiatives through resource allocation, simplified processes, and opportunities for dialogue and exchange of good practices. The focus is on rebuilding communities, strengthening resilience, promoting social cohesion, and recognizing the innovative capacity of young people.

The REBUILD Experience focused the needs of underrepresented youth by engaging them through various activities such as associationism, community service, and interdisciplinary projects. It focused on driving changes towards social solidarity and green lifestyles, emphasising economic recovery, education, digital infrastructure, community resilience, and sustainability. Through youth organisations and initiatives, REBUILD successfully empowered young individuals to implement their ideas, have their voices heard, and continues to promote social solidarity and green lifestyles, while also providing valuable insights into local realities.

The REBUILD project and its strategy paper provide a roadmap for promoting youth engagement, inclusion, and sustainability in the post-COVID-19 era. By empowering young people and involving them in the decision-making processes, we can work towards a more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable future for all.



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