

# TRY DIFFERENT CARDS

Alternative Approaches to  
Common Obstacles



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Policy- and decision-makers from throughout the Alpine space **often reach similar obstacles** when initiating youth participation. With Try Different Cards, we respond to the main obstacles and **propose alternative approaches to common issues.**



Obstacle



Try something different





## **THE YOUNG PEOPLE DO NOT REALLY LIVE HERE.**



Engaging passive young people requires a long-term commitment from several stakeholders. Establish contacts from childhood (e.g. in schools), engage young people on weekends and during summer holidays, create online platforms that reinforce young people's attachment to home town/village or organise events in larger cities where young people study.

Maden in  
Wala stia  
anj idu.





## **YOUNG PEOPLE DON'T CARE ABOUT PUBLIC MATTERS AT ALL.**



Many European studies show they do care (see 'Young people and democratic life in Europe' study by Deželan and European Youth Forum). However, negative experiences often stop them from getting engaged. Make them trust you again by creating new engaging processes for participation that deliver results.





## **YOUNG PEOPLE DO NOT LIKE POLITICS AND INSTITUTIONS.**



Show them not all politicians and institutions are the same! Start with small steps. Build trust and show that their voices matter and lead to results.







**YOUNG PEOPLE  
NEVER EXPRESS  
THEIR VIEWS IN  
FRONT OF  
POLITICIANS.**



Put them on the red carpet – make them feel valued. Dedicate a special time slot for their opinions in the programme.





**YOUNG PEOPLE  
ONLY COMPLAIN,  
BUT GIVE NO  
CONCRETE  
PROPOSALS.**



Establish a process in which your team will help young people to move from complaining to concrete and comprehensive proposals. Consult and involve experts and trained moderators.





## **YOUNG PEOPLE ARE IMPATIENT AND WANT RESULTS THE NEXT DAY.**



Make sure your participatory process achieves some quick small results ('early wins') that will motivate the young people to remain engaged. Clarify the planned timeline at the beginning, so that the young people know when the results will arrive.

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- A teacher in a green and white striped suit stands in front of a whiteboard, pointing to a checklist. Two students, a girl in a yellow shirt and a boy in a blue shirt and cap, are looking at the board. The girl is pointing at the board, and the boy has his hands behind his back.
- Kony mndry t
  - Tu kshra w
  - Mlin kshra b
  - Ma bi dnd d
  - Ane hnd d
  - Dnd d - t b -



**YOUNG PEOPLE  
OFTEN HAVE  
UNREALISTIC  
DEMANDS THAT  
WE CANNOT  
SATISFY; THEY  
EXPECT  
SOMETHING THAT  
IS NOT POSSIBLE  
WITHIN THE  
CURRENT SYSTEM.**



Define the framework at the beginning of the discussions. Let them know what can be influenced and what cannot.

Also, use the participation process as a way of educating them on the political system and legal frameworks.







# **YOUNG PEOPLE NEVER COME TO THE MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS WE ORGANISE FOR THEM.**



Don't wait for them to come. Go to the events they organise, meet them at their meeting places (bus stops, parks, parties, youth centres ...). Make it informal and enjoyable (with soft drinks, snacks, in an informal space). Involve 'cool allies' that will give you credibility.

Start with the handful that come. Any participant is better than none! They might give you more ideas how to involve their friends.





# **YOUTH PARTICIPATION IS ANOTHER DEPARTMENT'S JOB. I DO NOT HAVE TIME FOR ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES.**



All departments deal with topics that are of interest and importance to young people. Involve young people in making good decisions and create an open and cooperative culture. Participation may indeed take more time at the beginning, but prevents problems and lowers the hurdles that might occur later in the process.





# **OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ALREADY INVOLVED IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.**



Participation is a never-ending process. Discuss with young people the possibilities of including them in planning activities, not solely in execution. Are there non-youth sectors (economy, housing, traffic ...) where young people's voices could improve decisions?

Unstructured exchanges of opinions are good, but should gradually grow into open, structured, institutionalised, repetitive, and transparent processes.