

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

## **Active Participation Among Youth**

### **CIAC – Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship**

#### **Analysis of the questionnaire in the case of Slovenia**

DRPDNM

Project CIAC - Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship is focused on fostering the active civic participation among young people with the creation of innovative intellectual outputs, supporting the dialogue, exchange, and involvement between them and the policymakers in the field of youth. In order to see how familiar youngsters are with the topic of the project, if they are educated in the fields of active citizenship, if they are interested in the topic, what their opinion is on what can be improved, and what we should put more focus on, we conducted a survey among young people in Slovenia and Bulgaria, that will help us develop the outputs on the project CIAC.

#### **1 Preparation and implementation of the Survey**

The project CIAC aims to write a methodology to later create a toolkit for teaching/learning about active citizenship and encourage them to be more engaged. The first step in writing methodology and later intellectual outputs is to research the present situation, experiences and engagement of youngsters – through the survey we have conducted among young people.

The Bulgarian partner (Omega) has prepared the questions for the survey with the help of the other 2 partners. The survey was then translated in the languages of the partner countries and shared with their target group.

The aim of the questionnaire was to learn more about the attitude of youth towards citizenship, civic education, and youth participation.

#### **2 Methods of collecting information**

The survey on the topic of Active Participation Among Youth was conducted in Slovenia in September and October of 2021. The survey was spread in the digital form (google forms) to make the sharing and analysis easier. For distributing the survey, we mostly used e-mail and Facebook.

*The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

Firstly, we shared the survey with our volunteers and users of our youth centre – we sent it directly to the youth workers and coordinators working with young people within our organisation and later also sent it to the private Facebook group for our youth centre. We have also sent the questionnaires directly to the youth participants/volunteers who have helped with our projects in the past.

The survey has also been distributed to the teachers at the nearby School of Economics and Media, who we often cooperate with, to share it with their students, as well as to the teachers in other schools in Novo mesto (Gimnazija Novo mesto and Grm – Center Biotehnike in Turizma Novo mesto) to distribute it to the students at their institutions. Afterwards the questionnaire was also shared in a Facebook group for (young) people in Novo mesto, and within the social media platforms of a few other youth organisations working in the region.

### 3 Target Group

The target group for this survey were young people, mostly students from local schools, as well as other young people, some of whom are no longer studying. We wanted them to reflect on their knowledge in active citizenship and how they have been taught it. Most of the students who filled out the questionnaire in Slovenia were students in secondary schools, universities, and vocational colleges. Also participating in the survey were young people who are no longer studying, but are still in the target group of “youth” (In Slovenia the definition of “youth” is a person aged 15 to 29 years old), some of them volunteers, members of different youth organisations, youth workers, etc.

65 respondents filled out the questionnaire, most of whom were from our target group – students in secondary and tertiary education and other young people.

The aim of the questionnaire was to learn more about the attitude of youth towards citizenship, civic education, and youth participation.

Below are the results of the survey done in Slovenia, with some comments where we felt additional explanation was necessary.



*The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

#### 4 Description of the Survey

The survey was conducted among the residents of the city of Novo mesto, and also the wider region of South-East Slovenia. Novo mesto is the region's capital and it is where most of the secondary and tertiary schools are located. The students of all region attend secondary schools in Novo mesto, as these schools are in Slovenia located only in bigger cities. Each small town mostly has a local elementary school (Basic education) and for further education, youngsters go to bigger cities. The participants in the survey were thus not only the residents of Novo mesto, but the entire region, and also some from other Slovenian region, if they are attending school here from more distant towns.

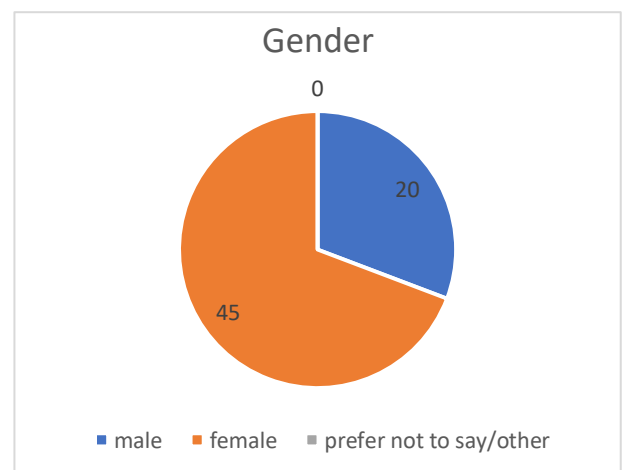
When it comes to the active participation of young people in Slovenia, one of the most important organisations, that we have to mention, is Mladinski Svet Slovenije (Youth Council of Slovenia), which is active on national, local, and European levels, and promotes active participation of young people ... They prepared a [document](#) on the participation of young people in in Slovenia. This is the document that we are referring to throughout this research.

Compared to other Western European democracies, Slovenia's (conventional political) participation of young people is very weak. Two researches conducted in 2010 and 2013 find that young people in Slovenia are less interested in political participation than their peers in the EU and that young people in Slovenia have a markedly negative attitude towards representatives of authorities and public policies.

#### 5 Results obtained from a survey

##### 5.1 Gender

Gender		
Male	20	31%
Female	45	69%
Prefer not to say/other	0	0%



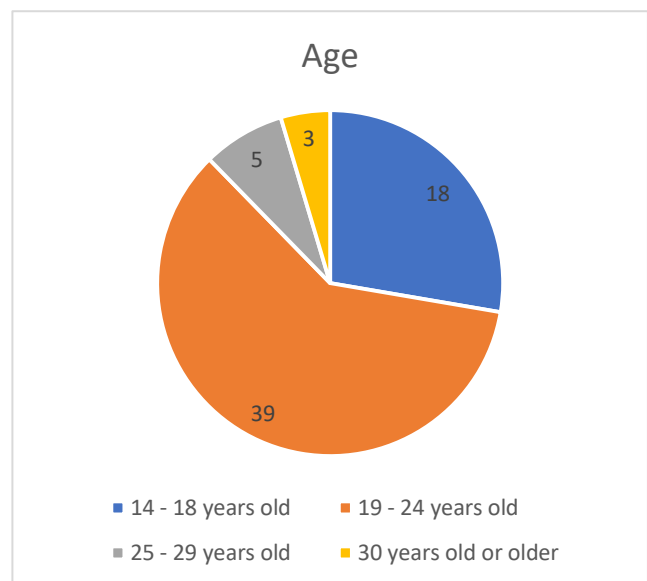
*The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

The survey was filled out by 65 people, the majority of them were women. While this result could be due to any number of reasons, and we do not want to read too much into it, it could also signify, that young women are either more interested in active citizenship and social structures of their countries (maybe because they feel it influences them more), or just more willing to answer questionnaires.

## 5.2 Age

Age		
14 - 18 years old	18	28%
19 - 24 years old	39	60%
25 - 29 years old	5	8%
30 years old or older	3	5%



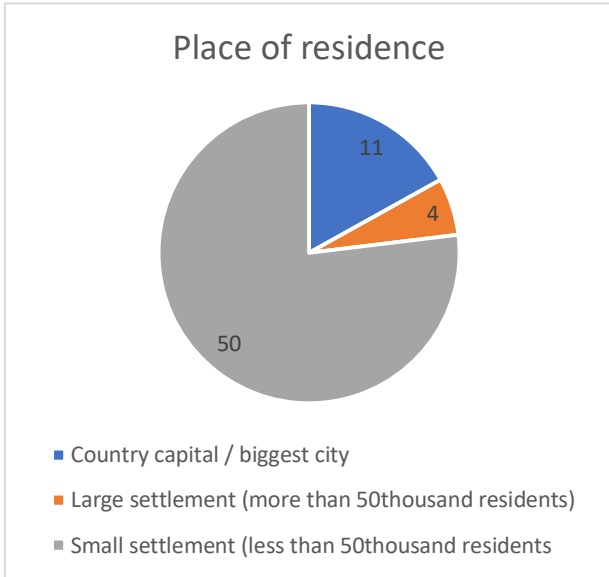
The target group for this survey were young people, especially students in high schools, universities and other types of secondary and tertiary education institutions.

The majority of respondents (60%) were university (tertiary education) students aged between 19 and 24 years old, followed by secondary education students aged between 14 and 18 years old. A smaller percentage of respondents were 25 to 29 years old, and 30 years or older.

## 5.3 Place of residence:

Place of residence		
Country capital / biggest city	11	17%
Large settlement (more than 50thousand residents)	4	6%
Small settlement (less than 50thousand residents)	50	77%

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*



The survey was shared with mainly the youngsters from the South-eastern region of Slovenia, where the partner organisation of this project, DRPDNM, is based. This explains why the large majority (77%) of respondents answered that they come from a small settlement – even Novo mesto, which is the biggest city and the capital of the region is by this standard seen as a small settlement, as it has around 25 thousand residents.

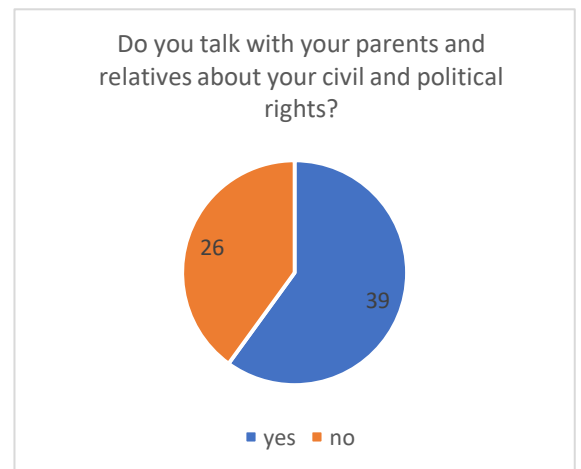
Slovenia is a country with only 2 million residents, therefore even our bigger cities may be small in the international standards. The South-eastern region is largely rural, with some cities and towns surrounded by villages – this is

where most of our respondents likely live.

However, it is common for university students to move to the capital (Ljubljana) or other larger cities, where universities are based (Maribor, Koper, also Novo mesto), for the time of their studies. We can say that the answers of the survey reflect this reality.

#### 5.4 Do you talk with your parents and relatives about your civil and political rights?

Do you talk with your parents and relatives about your civil and political rights?		
yes	39	60%
no	26	40%



According to these answers many young people discuss their political and civil right with their families, yet an alarming percentage of respondents do not talk about it.

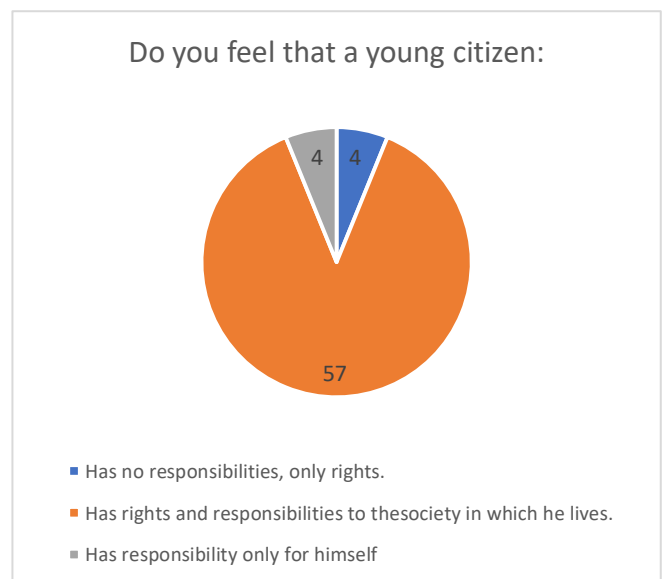
**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

If this result correctly reflects the situation in our country, we must work to improve it. It is important that the young people not only learn about active citizenship and connecting topics in school, but should discuss such matters with their parents and relatives as well – it is important for the adults to be active citizens too. Discussing civil and political rights of each citizen, as well as the current national/world problematic is important, because open discourse can make people more openminded and aware of the situations that influence their lives, it can make them more likely to vote in elections, and even choose who they give their vote to thoughtfully.

Parents should lead by a good example and initiate the conversation with their children / family members. At the same time, they should be patient and open to different opinions, that their younger family members might have. The views of young people are often more progressive that the views of their parents. This can be the reason that they do not discuss the social and political issues with their parents – because they do not want to “fight” with their parents over different opinions. While teaching young people about civil participation, we should also strive to educate adults and teach them about tolerating different opinions.

5.5 What rights and responsibilities do you think that a young citizen has?

What rights and responsibilities do you think that a young citizen has?		
Has no responsibilities, only rights.	4	6%
Has rights and responsibilities to the society in which he lives.	57	88%
Has responsibility only for himself.	4	6%



A large majority of respondents (88%) correctly assume that they have both rights and responsibilities to the society in which they live.

The other 12% might not have thought about the question enough before answering, or their answers reflect the lack of education (both formal, non-formal and informal) on these matters. We can take it as an indication, that we should continue to strive to educate citizens about their rights and responsibilities, as well as other aspects of active citizenship and social / political awareness.



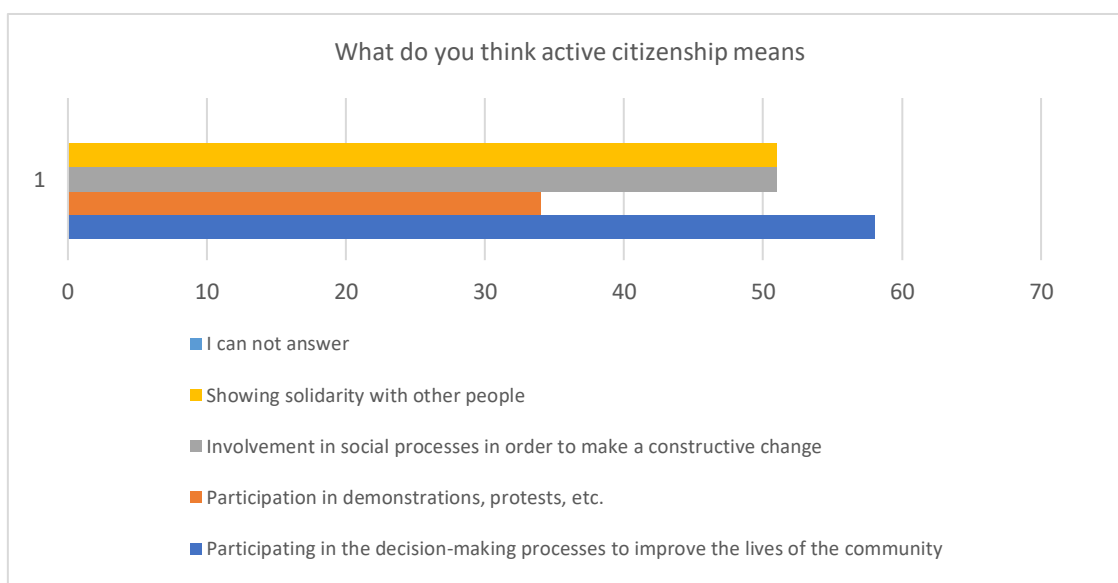
*The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*



**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

5.6 What do you think active citizenship means? (Multiple answers are possible)

What do you think active citizenship means		
Participating in the decision-making processes to improve the lives of the community	58	89%
Participation in demonstrations, protests, etc.	34	52%
Involvement in social processes in order to make a constructive change	51	78%
Showing solidarity with other people	51	78%
I cannot answer	0	0%



The respondents could choose more than one answer to this question. 5 answers were provided to choose from, with one being “I cannot answer”. We are glad to note, that all respondents had some



*The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

opinion on this question, and no one chose that last option. Sadly, we did not give the option “other”, in case some youngsters wanted to provide an additional answer of their own.

89% of participants believe, that active citizenship means “participating in the decision-making processes to improve the lives of the community”. The simplest explanation to this option is voting in election, which most respondents probably assumed. It can however also mean to take a more active part in the decision-making processes; like writing recommendations for decision-makers, participate in public debates, round tables, being a member of a political party, and even stand in elections. According to research done in 2013, which the MSS’s (youth council) program document refers to, in Slovenia the percentage of youth in political parties was only 2 % in 2010. However,

78% of respondents also believe that active citizenship means “showing solidarity with other people” and “involvement in social processes in order to make a constructive change”. Both are very important, and can (among other things) refer to being active in various NGOs and CSOs.

A lower, yet still very significant percentage of respondents (52%) think that active citizenship also means “participating in demonstrations, protests, etc.”. This can of course be true, especially when the decision-makers do not listen to their citizens when they express their wishes in other ways (debates, recommendations, etc), or when they change the laws in a way that can negatively affect or restrict the rights of citizens. Protests are an example of the freedom of speech and an important part of democratic society. As such they can be an opportunity for citizens to express their disagreements with the governments in a more noticeable way.

Active citizenship can mean many different things, and there is not a single correct answer to this question.

According to the program document of the Slovenian Youth council, Youth participation in political parties is only 2% in Slovenia (2013), which is below the EU average. Young people are more interested in certain forms of so-called unconventional political participation, namely protests and various forms of participation on the global web. Civil society participation or involvement of young people in voluntary activities that are for the benefit of the community is more common among young people in Slovenia than political participation, but remains limited.

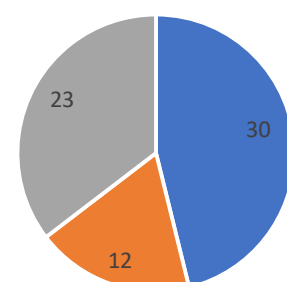
5.7 Do you consider yourself prepared to deal with a situation in which your rights are violated?

Do you consider yourself prepared to deal with a situation in which your rights are violated?



*The European Commission support for the production of this publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the any use which may be made of the information*

Do you consider yourself prepared to deal with a situation in which your rights are violated?



■ yes ■ no ■ I don't know

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

yes	30	46%
no	12	18%
I don't know	23	35%

The respondents were quite divided when it comes to this question and rightly so.

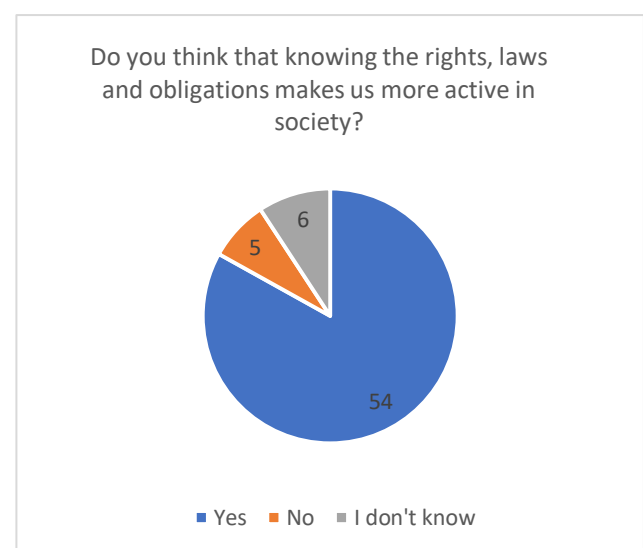
First of all, not everyone is equally aware of their rights, as we can decipher in part from the previous question. The youths generally know that they have rights, but knowing exactly what these rights are and how they can be violated is a bit more complex, and not all are aware of it (lack of civic education in [secondary] schools ...).

And then we come to the actual phrasing of the question – “Do you consider yourself prepared to deal with a situation in which your rights are violated?”. Almost half of the respondents answered “yes”, yet how can anyone be actually prepared to have their rights violated? Many rights were restricted in these times of the epidemic. As an answer, people who disagreed with the restrictions took to the streets, protesting against them. Protesting is definitely one way to deal with it. It would be greatly interesting to have a follow-up to this question and hear, what did the respondents actually mean by being prepared.

Unsurprisingly more than third (35%) of the respondents did not know how to answer this question, as it is indeed a difficult topic that should be discussed in great detail. And 18% feel that they are not prepared to deal with this situation.

### 5.8 Do you think that knowing the rights, laws and obligations makes us more active in society?

Do you think that knowing the rights, laws and obligations makes us more active in society?		
Yes	54	83%
No	5	8%
I don't know	6	9%



**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

83% of the respondents correctly assume that knowing their rights, obligations and laws makes them more active in society. Being aware of rights, laws and obligations means that we can notice when they are being violated, when the laws change (for the better or worse), and that we are more aware of our role in society. It can also mean that we can better see our privilege – or see if we have more rights than other marginalised groups, we can notice if laws come into place that can be harmful to certain groups of people, and we are better prepared to “fight” for our rights and the rights of others. This can indeed make one a more active citizen.

8% percent of respondents feel that it is not necessary to know the rights, laws and obligations to be active in society. This can also be true in some cases. It is nearly impossible to know every law, and most people probably don’t know them, yet they can still be active citizens and active in society. This is especially true in the era of epidemic, when countries impose so many new laws and regulations, that it is incredibly difficult to keep up with them. Nevertheless, we should still educate and encourage people to pay attention to rights, laws and obligations, as it will always be better to be aware of them than not to be. This is the best way to change the society for the better.

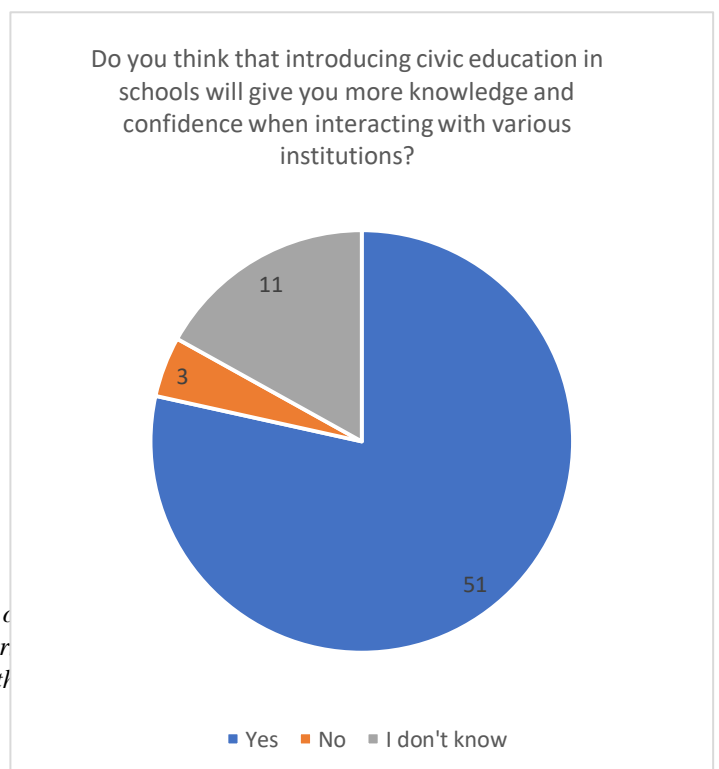
5.9 Do you think that introducing civic education in schools will give you more knowledge and confidence when interacting with various institutions?

Do you think that introducing civic education in schools will give you more knowledge and confidence when interacting with various institutions?		
Yes	51	78%
No	3	5%
I don't know	11	17%

While civic education is currently somewhat present in Slovenian schools (basic level of education), children at that time learn about less complex matters – in grades 7 and 8 there is a subject called Homeland and civic culture and ethics, as well as an elective subject called Civic culture... Yet these subjects cannot teach 12/13-year-old pupils everything they need to know about laws, governments, democracy,



*The European Commission support for the production of the contents which reflects the views only of the author any use which may be made of the*



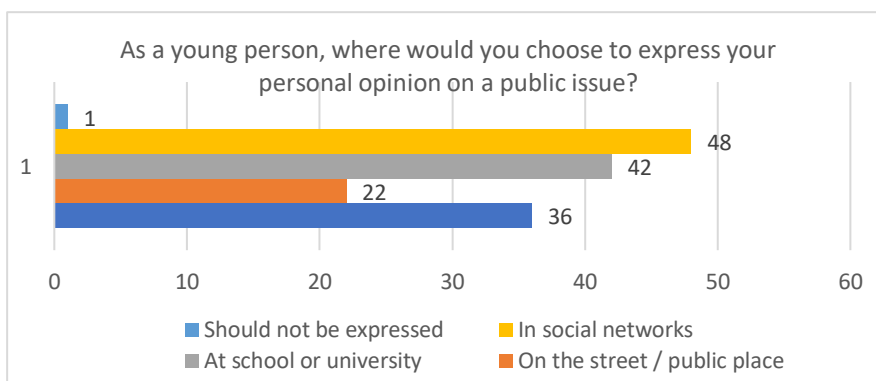
**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

citizenship, etc. Interacting with official institutions may therefore provide somewhat of a challenge to many adults. In secondary education, students learn about related topics in the subject sociology, and perhaps some other subjects (languages, history, philosophy ...) but we should note, that only high schools (Gimnazijas) have all these subjects. Vocational secondary schools do not necessary teach many social-subjects.

78 % of questionnaire respondents agree that learning about civic education would make them more knowledgeable and confident when it comes to interacting with various institutions. Only 3% disagreed with it, and 17% of respondents did not know how to answer the question, which may have been caused by not knowing what civic education is, and what it teaches.

5.10 As a young person, where would you choose to express your personal opinion on a public issue?

As a young person, where would you choose to express your personal opinion on a public issue?		
In the media	36	55%
On the street / public place	22	34%
At school or university	42	65%
In social networks	48	74%
Should not be expressed	1	2%



In this question, participants could choose multiple answers. Unsurprisingly the highest number of respondents (74 %) say that they would express their opinions on social media. Social media



*The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

platforms are the most popular among young people, they are well versed in using them, and most likely to follow all the changing realities of social media. Various platforms are commonly used for expressing (political) opinions, and are more well-known among young people than older generations. It can also be considered a safe space to express their opinion, it can be done publicly or anonymously, and they can even share opinions that they would maybe not share with their parents ... This can be considered positive, but also something to be vary of. We should also note, that young people have a completely different way of expressing opinions, while some generations may blog or write articles, and even create infographics, the younger generations today often use memes, even for socio-political content.

65 % of respondents think that they can express opinions in schools – which is of big importance. Although we have seen in the previous question that young people feel they could learn more about civic education in schools, they still consider it a relatively safe space, where they can share their opinions. We should strive for this number to be even higher.

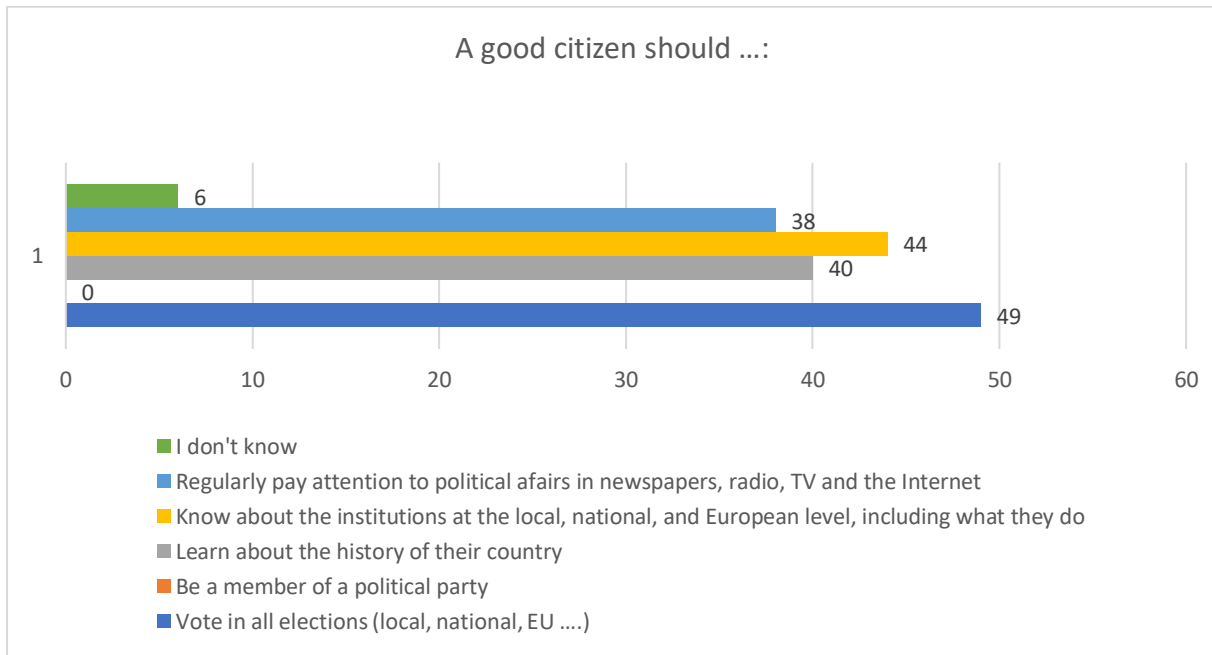
55 % of participants would also express their opinions in the media. This refers to traditional media, not social networks. The number is higher than we expected, because the public generally believe, that young people do not read/watch/listen to traditional media. However, every media usually also has a web platform that young people peruse more than traditional ones.

Only 22 % would express their opinion in the public place or in the street, which can mean that they do not like confrontations. Expressing opinions in the media can be done anonymously, while school can be a familiar, even safe space. Expressing opinion in public, or even on the street, can mean that one puts themselves in a public eye, which can surely be difficult for many people.

5.11 A good citizen should ...:

A good citizen should ...:		
Vote in all elections (local, national, EU ....)	49	75%
Be a member of a political party	0	0%
Learn about the history of their country	40	62%
Know about the institutions at the local, national, and European level, including what they do	44	68%
Regularly pay attention to political affairs in newspapers, radio, TV and the Internet	38	58%
I don't know	6	9%

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*



Another question, where respondents could choose multiple answers. 9% does not know what being a good citizen means – while the number is low, it is still incredibly alarming. No respondent believes that being a good citizen means being a member of a political party. The national percentage of young people in political parties reflects that. It is of course true, a person can be a good citizen without being a member of a political party, but it is nonetheless welcome to have young people in politics. The rest of the answers are predictable, with most people thinking that a good citizen votes in elections. The youth turnout on the elections in Slovenia is however generally low. In the 2018 parliamentary elections, people younger than 30 presented only 13% of all voters, and out of them, only 40,54% actually voted in the elections, which is lower than even the general voters' turnout, which was 52,64%. As a result, several political parties (especially populist and right-wing ones) in the electoral campaigns focus on the older generations.

A large number of respondents also think that a good citizen is familiar with the institutions on all levels, and should also know about the history of their country. While history is a mandatory subject

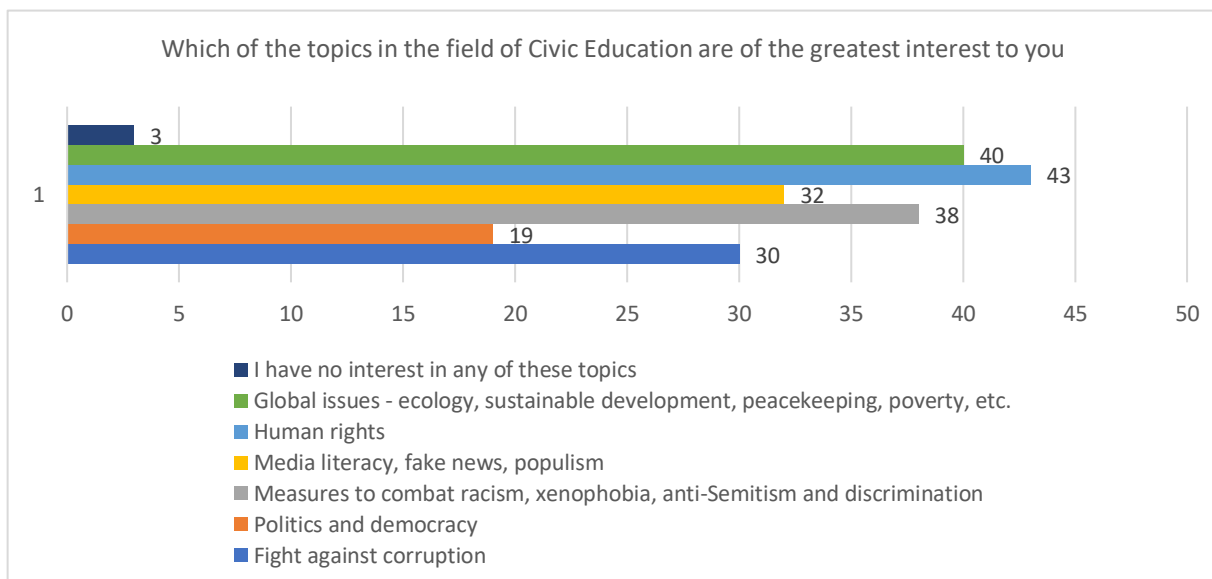
**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

in all elementary and also in secondary education (to a certain extent), people do not learn much in school about governmental institutions.

Somewhat less, 58% think that a good citizen regularly pays attention to political happenings in the news. However, it should be important for people to know what is happening in the world, not only before the elections, or when something big happens, but always. If we only sometimes pay attention to current affairs, we can be easily deceived and misled by the politicians, the media, and the public.

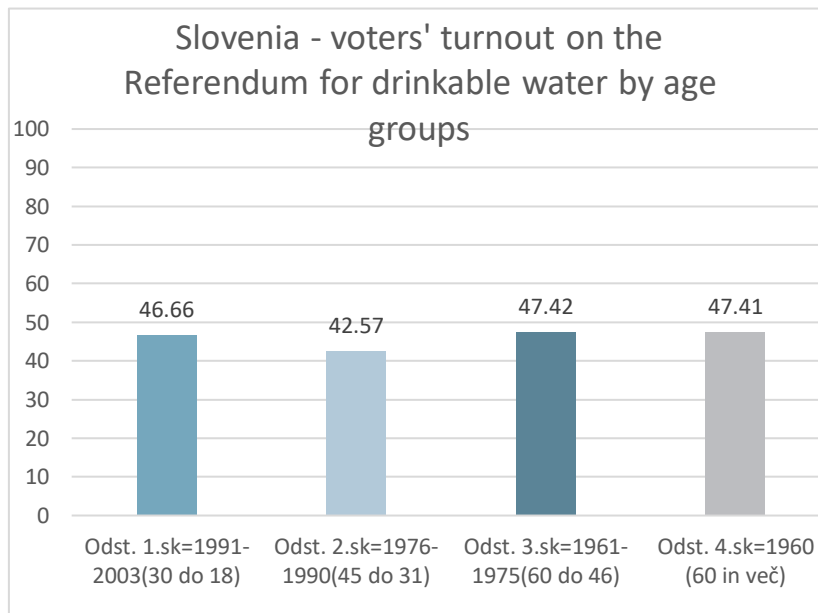
5.12 Which of the topics in the field of Civic Education are of the greatest interest to you?

Which of the topics in the field of Civic Education are of the greatest interest to you		
Fight against corruption	30	46%
Politics and democracy	19	29%
Measures to combat racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and discrimination	38	58%
Media literacy, fake news, populism	32	49%
Human rights	43	66%
Global issues - ecology, sustainable development, peacekeeping, poverty, etc.	40	62%
I have no interest in any of these topics	3	5%



**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

Several issues interest young people in Slovenia – respondents to our survey. They largely care about the issues of human rights (66%), followed by the issues of ecology, sustainability, etc. (62%). The



later was shown in the last referendum we had in Slovenia – on the drinkable water law. The referendum had a strong campaign, and was largely talked about on social media. The overall voters' turnout on the referendum was 45,99%, which is the second higher turnout on any referendum in Slovenia. In the age group 18-30, the turnout was 46,66%. The figures are shown in the graph.

[https://www.dvk-rs.si/volitve-](https://www.dvk-rs.si/volitve-in-referendumi/referendumi/volitve-referenduma/referendum-o-zakonu-o-spremembah-in-dopolnitvah-zakona-o-vodah-zv-1g/)

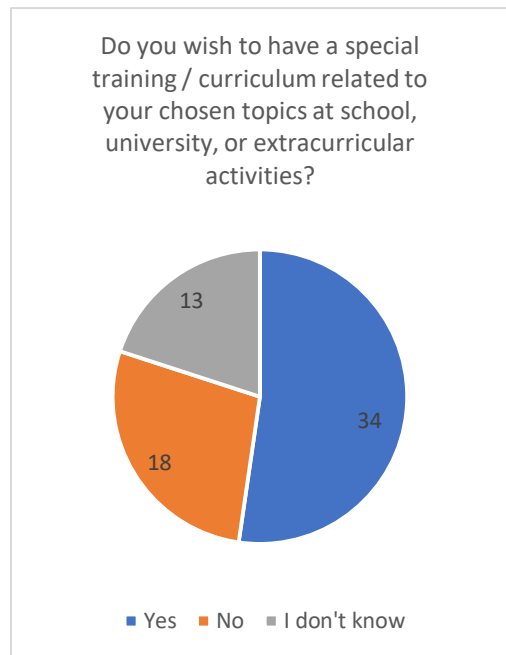
[in-referendumi/referendumi/volitve-referenduma/referendum-o-zakonu-o-spremembah-in-dopolnitvah-zakona-o-vodah-zv-1g/](https://www.dvk-rs.si/volitve-in-referendumi/referendumi/volitve-referenduma/referendum-o-zakonu-o-spremembah-in-dopolnitvah-zakona-o-vodah-zv-1g/)

If we continue with the survey results, youngsters in Slovenia are also interested in the topics related to combating racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and discrimination (58%), which is somewhat connected to human rights issues. A little less than half of the respondents are also interested in issues related to media literacy, fake news and populism, as well as fighting corruption. Only 29% however, are interested in democracy and politics, which is odd, considering in all other issues. Perhaps they think their voice on these issues is not heard enough, especially on elections. Youth participation in active citizenship is in Slovenia underdeveloped, the voter turnout low among young people, and representation of young people in political life is consequentially very low. They are interested in the issues, as we can see, they just do not participate in elections, we can only assume that this is because they feel their voices are not heard, they cannot make enough of a change. 3 respondents answered that they do not care about any of these issues. While low, it is still cause for concern-

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

5.13 Do you wish to have a special training / curriculum related to your chosen topics at school, university, or extracurricular activities?

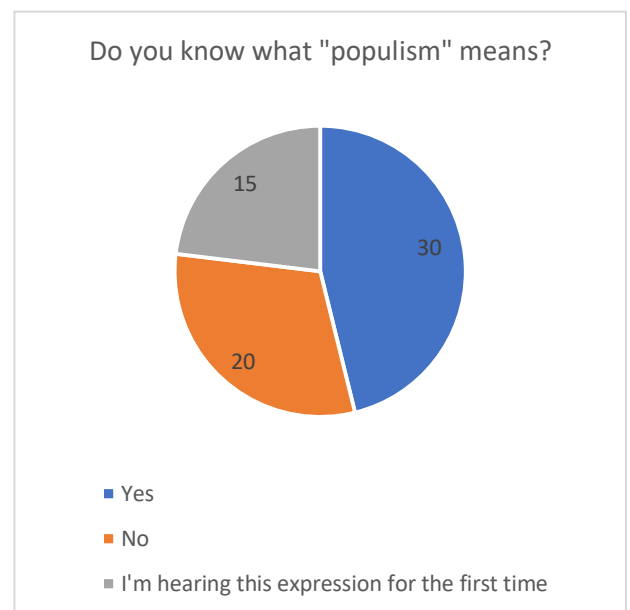
Do you wish to have a special training / curriculum related to your chosen topics at school, university, or extracurricular activities?		
Yes	34	52%
No	18	28%
I don't know	13	20%



Surprisingly low percent of people are certain they wish to learn about the issues that interest them (in the previous question) in schools. Only a little more than half said that they wish to learn about these issues in schools. 20% do not know, and many (28%) don't wish to learn about this in schools. Either they feel they have learned enough, or they think classes should be focused on other things. Or, they feel that their class load is too full as it is, and they do not want to add another subject to it. Either way, the result is disappointing, especially considering Slovenian secondary education schools do not teach a class on active citizenship/civic participation.

5.14 Do you know what "populism" means?

Do you know what "populism" means?		
Yes	30	46%
No	20	31%
I'm hearing this expression for the first time	15	23%



Less than half of respondents are familiar with the expression "populism" and know what it means. 31%



*The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

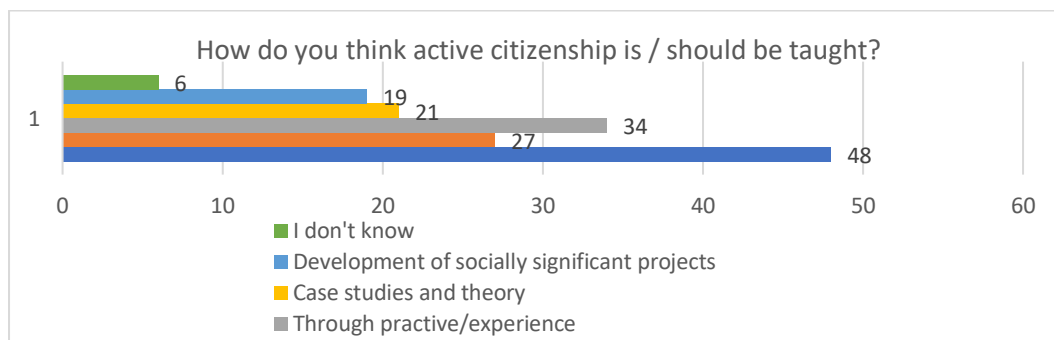
do not know what it means, and 23% have heard for the expression for the first time. All of this is surprising. How can we expect the youth to react to populist governments, or to mentions of populism in the media, if they are not familiar with the word/do not know what it means.

It is possible that they are not familiar with the expression, because it is either not used enough in media, or they do not read the media.

We have checked the Slovenian [text corpus Gigafida](#) to see if the expression is used in Slovenian written media. The text corpus is not the newest, and has the data from years up to 2010. Still, the expression has many examples (concordances) from the written media. 1880 examples of use come from Slovenian newspapers, 822 from the internet, 440 from magazines, etc. We assume that it has been mentioned many more times in Slovenian media since the year 2010. The fact that the youth are so largely unfamiliar with the expression, shows a lack of interest on their part. It is obvious that we need civic education in schools.

5.15 How do you think active citizenship is / should be taught?

How do you think active citizenship is / should be taught?		
Through debates and open discussions on various topics	48	74%
By studying various social processes	27	42%
Through practice/experience	34	52%
Case studies and theory	21	32%
Development of socially significant projects	19	29%
I don't know	6	9%



**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

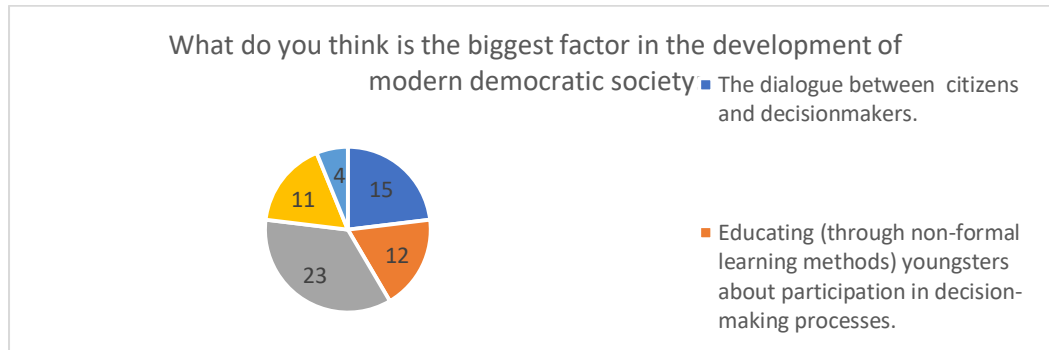
The participants in the survey could choose several answers to this question. The majority (74%) believes active citizens should be taught through debates and open discussions, and more than half of respondents believe it should be taught through practice and experience. This tells us that young people believe it would be better to include non-formal learning methods into teaching active citizenship. Possibly because this way, they would better remember things learned, as opposed to reading in textbooks and learning civic education that way. 42% of respondents believe that active citizenship should be taught by studying social processes, 32% think they should learn it through case studies and theory, and 29% think it should be taught by the development of socially significant projects. 6 respondents do not know how the topic should be taught/ do not have an opinion on it. We should keep in mind that most of the respondents chose several answers, and that most of them feel strongly about learning with the help of non-formal methods of learning, possibly added by some theoretical knowledge.

5.16 What do you think is the biggest factor in the development of modern democratic society?

What do you think is the biggest factor in the development of modern democratic society?		
The dialogue between citizens and decisionmakers.	15	23%
Educating (through non-formal learning methods) youngsters about participation in decision-making processes.	12	18%
Higher awareness of what is happening in the country and Europe	23	35%
New, creative ways of promoting causes, educating the public, and campaigning (using social media platforms, infographics ...)	11	17%
The creation of more youth organizations	4	6%



**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*



Despite the fact that their answers in some of the previous questions showed disinterest in the media and the news, 35% of respondents to the questionnaire believe that the higher awareness of what is happening in the world is the biggest factor in the development of modern democratic society. Also, although youngsters in Slovenia do not show such a big interest in more actively participating in democratic processes, 23% of respondents believe, that the dialogue between citizens and decisionmakers is responsible for the development of modern democratic society. 18% believe that the cause lies in educating young people, and 17% believe that the development of modern democratic society is due to new & creative ways of promoting causes, campaigning and educating the public through social media, infographics, etc. Only 6% believe that youth organisations are responsible for it, which reflects the fact that although several youth organisations exist in Slovenia, they either do not have enough power in decision-making, or it is not their purpose.

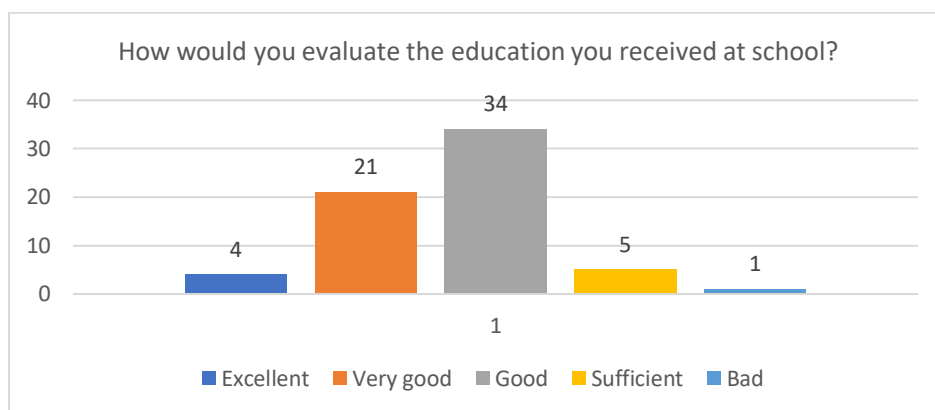
5.17 How would you evaluate the education you received at school?

How would you evaluate the education you received at school?		
Excellent	4	6%
Very good	21	32%
Good	34	52%
Sufficient	5	8%
Bad	1	2%



*The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*



We asked the respondents to use the marks used in schools (1 to 5, with 5 being the highest) to grade their satisfaction with the knowledge they received in schools. However, we did not ask for a specific subject or even level of education, but their education in general. They were not overly impressed with their education. On average they think their education is good (52% of respondents), and 32% think it is more than good – mark 4. Only 6% believe the education they received is excellent, while 8% believe it is only sufficient, they have it the second lowest mark. 1 respondent stated that the education they received was bad.

If we compare the numbers for [Slovenian education to the EU average](#), the success of Slovenian education is above the EU average. Slovenia has very few NEETs, and people who have completed only basic education, or not even that. The EU average for people who have the highest completed education level – basic education, is 21% of population, while in Slovenia it is half of that – 11%. And most of them are people older than 55, while among 30–34-year-olds, only 6% has completed only basic education (or less than that) in Slovenia, in the EU level that number is 16%.

55,5% of Slovenians have completed secondary education, while the EU rate is 45%, and the percent of people with tertiary education is similar in EU and Slovenia – 33%. Women in Slovenia generally are better educated than men, with 55% having completed tertiary education, as compared to 33,9% of men.

However, these numbers only speak about the levels of education, rather than the knowledge gained, or even the satisfaction of students/alumni.

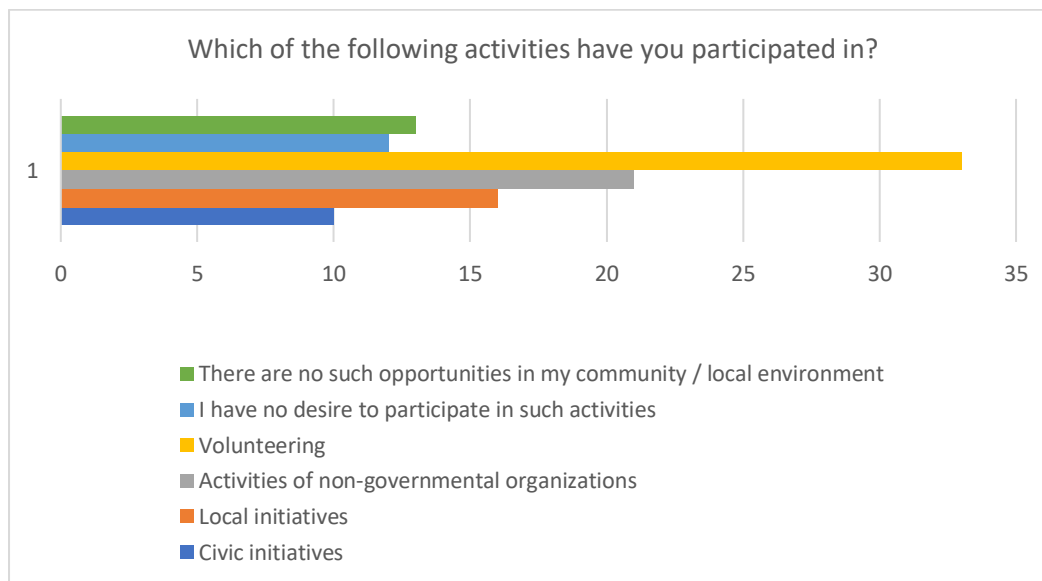
5.18 Which of the following activities have you participated in?



*The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

Which of the following activities have you participated in?		
Civic initiatives	10	15%
Local initiatives	16	25%
Activities of non-governmental organizations	21	32%
Volunteering	33	51%
I have no desire to participate in such activities	12	18%
There are no such opportunities in my community / local environment	13	20%



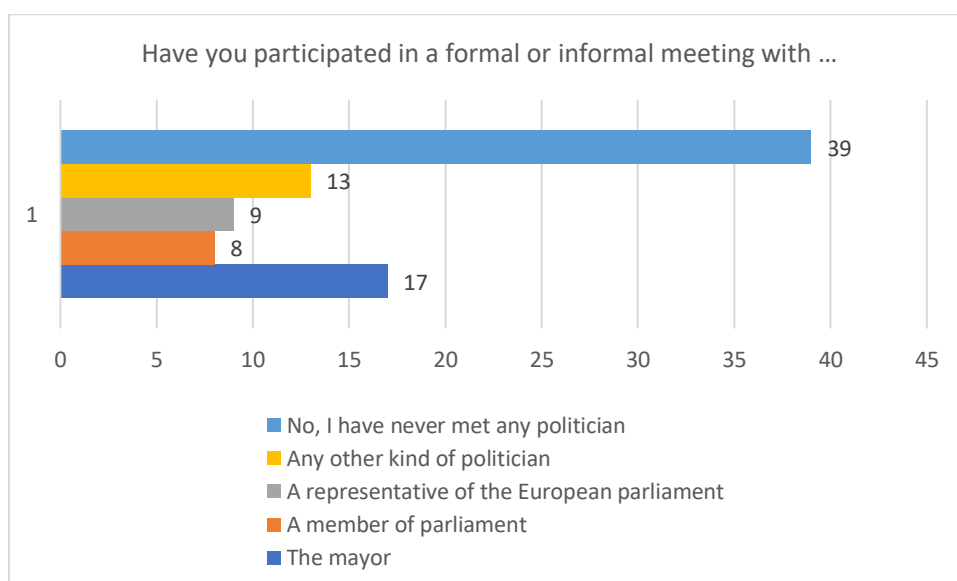
The respondents could choose several answers to this question, while also many of the answers are similar / connected to each other. Most of the respondents have participated in various volunteering activities (51%), and 32% said that they participated in activities of NGOs. The answers are almost the same, but maybe some respondents are not familiar with the term “non-governmental organisation”, or they have been volunteering in organisations, that do not have the status of a NGO. 25% say that they participated in local initiative, and 15% in civic initiatives. A rather high number, 20% said that they do not have such opportunities in their local environment. The reality is probably, that there are opportunities, but they are not well known enough, maybe they do not promote their work enough, or youngsters do not know them due to some other reason. As a part of DRPDNM there is also a [NGO hub for ALL non-governmental organisations in the South-Eastern region of Slovenia](#), and we found that there are nearly 1,700 non-governmental organizations (associations, organisations, societies, clubs, private institutes and institutions or foundations) registered in the

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

database of non-governmental organizations, which operate in twenty municipalities of the SE Slovenia region. The answer that there are not such opportunities, can thus not be trusted, but it is likely, that the people who chose this answer are just not aware of these organisations. These organisations should work more on promotion, and perhaps try to be more present in schools, etc. 12 respondents (or 18%) do not wish to participate in such activities.

5.19 Have you participated in a formal or informal meeting with \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Have you participated in a formal or informal meeting with ...		
The mayor	17	26%
A member of parliament	8	12%
A representative of the European parliament	9	14%
Any other kind of politician	13	20%
No, I have never met any politician	39	60%



60% of respondents have never met a politician in either formal or informal meeting. Considering the lack of interest of Slovenian youth when it comes to actively participating in electoral processes

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

(representation in politics, members of political parties ...), the number is not surprising. Especially before any elections, the politicians go to every city, and have formal meetings with their constituents, and especially local politicians (mayors, municipality council members, etc.) have even more often meeting with the voters. On local elections they tend to visit not only bigger cities in each region (like in parliamentary elections), but sometimes every village in the municipality. The fact that so many of the respondents have never met a politician therefore states, that they never used the opportunity to meet them, rather than the fact that they did not have the opportunity. However, we should also note, that the opportunities to meet politicians might not be promoted properly – they are often targeting older people (maybe because the politicians are old?), and promoting such meetings via printed flyers that people receive in the mail, etc. The politicians should definitely try harder to target young voters, because if we asked the same question to other generations, the results would surely be much different.

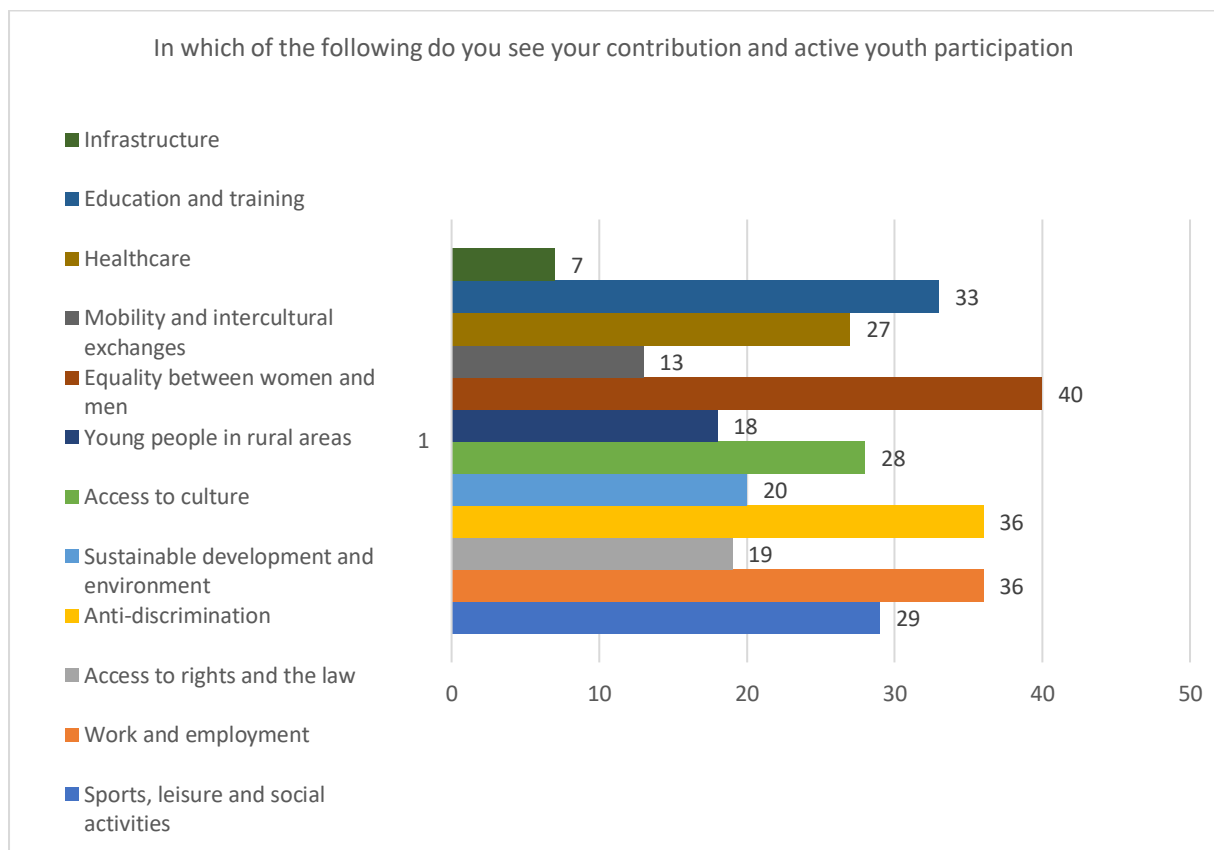
26% of respondents have met a mayor, and 20% some other kind of politicians. This is understandable, as local politicians are usually closer to the local population, especially in smaller Slovenian municipalities, the mayor is often not as distanced from the citizens. Surprisingly more people (1 more) have met a representative of the EU parliament, as compared to the representatives in the national parliament. If we judge from this survey, the EU parliament is doing more to be closer to their voters, even if they are geographically further away, than the national parliament members.

5.20 In which of the following do you see your contribution and active youth participation (indicate up to 5 answers):

In which of the following do you see your contribution and active youth participation		
Sports, leisure and social activities	29	45%
Work and employment	36	55%
Access to rights and the law	19	29%
Anti-discrimination	36	55%
Sustainable development and environment	20	31%
Access to culture	28	43%
Young people in rural areas	18	28%
Equality between women and men	40	62%

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

Mobility and intercultural exchanges	13	20%
Healthcare	27	42%
Education and training	33	51%
Infrastructure	7	11%



A question that is somewhat similar to question 12 – by asking them where they see their contribution, the respondents probably answered in terms of what interests them. However, we can hope that the answers also reflect that they are interested enough in the topics to be actively participating in civic society. Once again, the respondents could choose several options for their answer.

40 respondents see their participation in topics related on gender equality, 36 believe they can contribute and be active when the focus is on anti-discrimination issues, and the same number of

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

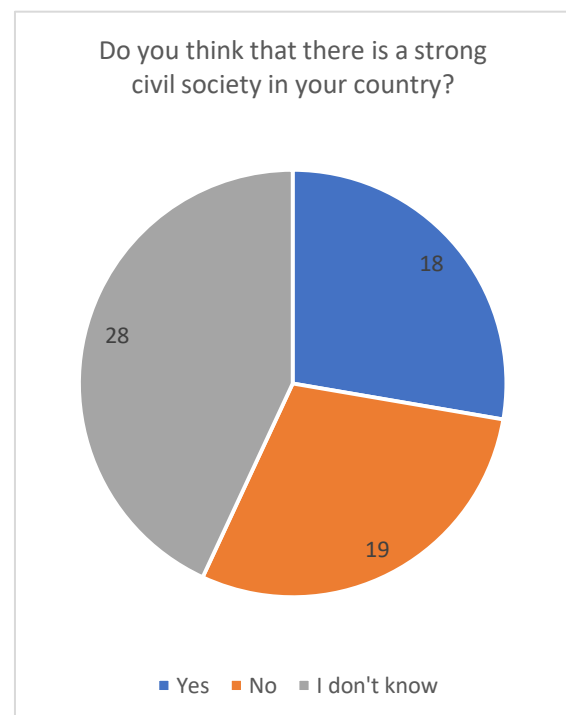
respondents feel strongly on issues of work and employment. 33 believe that their contribution to a more active society can be through education and training, and 29 believe that they can contribute through sports, leisure and social activities. While it may seem that these (sport, leisure, social activities) do not necessarily contribute to active participation, in reality, people who are organised in sport / leisure organisations are much more likely to be active in other organisations as well. The worse is when youths are not organised in any organisations.

28 think they can contribute to a more active society through access to culture, and 27 through healthcare.

While young people in Slovenia are generally interested in environmental issues, only 20 respondents think that this is how they can actively contribute to society. 19 chose the answer “access to the rights and law”, and 18 think they can contribute to the issue of young people in rural areas – which is hopeful, because young people in rural areas often have less opportunities than those in urban areas. However, it depends on how secluded the rural areas are. Only 13 said that they can be active because of participating in intercultural exchanges, which means that more people should be aware of this opportunity, or maybe they do not consider it a contribution. Only 7 respondents think they can somehow contribute on the issue of infrastructure.

5.21 Do you think that there is a strong civil society in your country?

Do you think that there is a strong civil society in your country?		
Yes	18	28%
No	19	29%
I don't know	28	43%



Almost half of the respondents did not know how to answer this question. Mostly likely they do not know what civil society refers to. The rest of the respondents were almost equally divided between the answers yes (18%) and no (19%).

To answer the question: the civil society in Slovenia is relatively strong, meaning that many civil society organisations exist. As we have stated in question



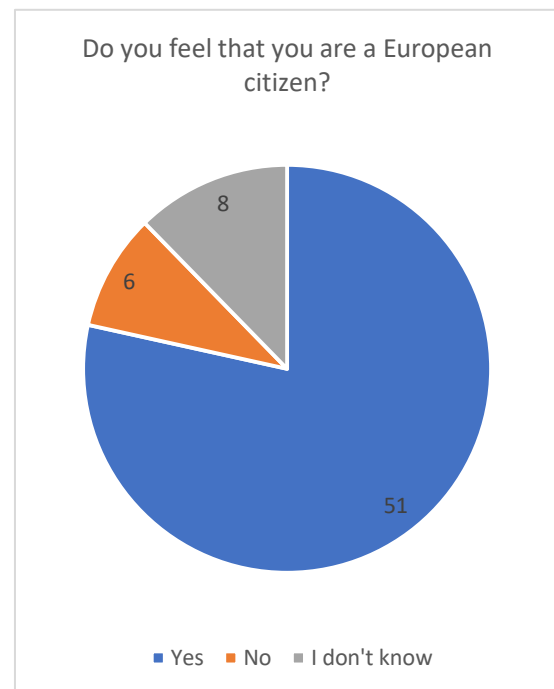
*The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

18, only the region of SE Slovenia has approximately 1700 organisations. However, once again, it seems that they are not developed enough. Many of them have very few members, and are not at all promoted in their communities. To conclude, the civil society in Slovenia exists, but is not strong enough, because most of the citizens are very likely not familiar with them.

## 5.22 Do you feel that you are a European citizen?

Do you feel that you are a European citizen?		
Yes	51	78%
No	6	9%
I don't know	8	12%



The majority of the Slovenian youngsters participating in the survey feel that they are European citizens. We should mention, that this survey did not ask the respondents of their nationality. It is likely, that some of the youths who participated in the survey in Slovenia, are actually immigrants, and do not have Slovenian / EU citizenship – but they are instead the nationals of countries outside of the EU. Some of the respondents who answered “no” or “I don’t know” are probably them. But there are possibly also a few who are technically the citizens of the EU and do not know it, or they do not feel it. Or maybe they have never heard / considered it in such terms.

Also worth noting is the fact that despite many efforts by the EU to raise the rate of voter turnout among youth in the EU elections, in Slovenia, it has been almost unchanged in the 2019 elections. The youth turnout has in Slovenia still been very low. The [voter turnout in Slovenia in the 2019 elections into the EU parliament](#) was 28,89% of all voters, and in ages 18 to 30 the voter turnout was only 17,57%.

## 6 Summary and conclusion



*The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

**Project:** 2020-2-BG01-KA205-079486 Creativity and Innovation for Active Citizenship (CIAC), *co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union*

To conclude, the Slovenian youth is interested in various topics that are related to active citizenship and civic education, however, their participation in the civil life is very low despite their interest.

The reason we need civic education in Slovenian schools is not due to their disinterest in the topics, but rather to encourage them to participate more in the active citizenship. It also seems that Slovenian youth is not all that satisfied with the quality of their education, which means we can improve it.

Another conclusion from the research is that the youth in Slovenia do not necessarily connect the socio-political topics with the democratic participation. They care about human rights and global issues, etc., but mainly show no bigger interest to connect with politicians, or become more active in the political life. While education on these topics is definitely important, a more active citizenship is the expected result of the education on these topics.

On the other hand, more can be done to promote non-formal learning, and especially the civil society organisations in Slovenia, including what they do, and opportunities for young people. Concluding from the survey results, many youths in our community are not familiar with the civil society organisations, either not knowing what they are, or not knowing which exist in their communities. The lack of active citizenship can also be due to not being active in civil society organisations, which often promote active participation as well as educate on these topics.