



Deliverable 3.1
**Assessment of EU-level deliberative and participatory
practices through an intersectional lens**

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Main authors	Janette Huttunen, Miikka Korventausta, Mikko Leino, Maija Setälä
Contributors	Dafne Sgarra
Reviewed by	E. Cicognani & UNIBO team
E-mail Contact for queries	miikor@utu.fi
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Table 1. The SINCROny Consortium

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WP5	Piloting enhancement and innovation pathways	ALDA
WP6	Evaluation	U. PORTO
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Table 2. The SINCROny Work Packages

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study develops an intersectional evaluation framework for analysing EU-level deliberative and participatory practices (DPPs) for youth engagement and applies it to 20 DPPs at the EU level. The framework is influenced by the 'Literature Review and Knowledge Integration Report' (D2.1) published as a part of SINCROny Work Package 2 and includes four key dimensions: external inclusion, internal inclusion, intersectional purpose, and output. By using this framework as an intersectional lens, the study introduces a new approach to examining how inclusion and intersectionality measures are implemented within existing EU-level practices for political engagement. The findings indicate that the foremost way intersectionality and inclusion are promoted in EU-level DPPs is by offering support for participation. This finding suggests that the evaluated DPPs strive to empower the young participants as democratic citizens and enhance their civic skills and capabilities. The least common approaches to promoting inclusion and intersectionality were found in the intersectional purpose dimension and inclusion in recruitment. The intersectional purpose dimension entails measures such as "reclaiming the power" by the practice being youth-led or youth-initiated, and seeking institutional changes in public, political institutions, schools, or other organisations. These measures were often absent in the evaluated practices. While the results should not be considered a definitive assessment of each analysed case, the study identifies best practices that could guide the development of new DPP designs. It also provides valuable insights on aspects of inclusion and intersectionality that are generally less acknowledged, suggesting areas where future efforts could be focused to enhance inclusivity and impact.

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1. Introduction and background

As the importance of youth engagement has been emphasised in societies at large, different kinds of participation opportunities for the young have been created, both on local, national, and the EU level, within communities, organisations, schools, and national politics. Different practices and spaces created for youth participation in formal and informal politics have been established, yet there is a lack of scholarship evaluating these practices in how effective they have been in both recognising and addressing young people's intersectional experiences. With applying an intersectional approach, we here examine EU-level deliberative and participatory practices (DPPs) that have involved young people's engagement in different policy issues. In this study, we interpreted DPPs broadly as projects, pilots, events, workshops and guidebooks with the aim of organising, facilitating, or supporting young people's participation. This report details the process and results of task T3.2 in the Sincrony project. The Sincrony project ("The interSectional iNClusion in delibeRation and participatiON with Youth") aims to empower young people, especially those who belong to so-called minoritised groups, by gaining a better understanding of different kinds of -deliberative and participatory processes (DPPs). By applying an intersectional approach, the project aims to open new avenues in the research and practice of youth engagement in Europe.

Young people are typically excluded from political institutions and institutionalised structures for political participation due to their age. The voting age is typically 18 in most countries in the European context, leaving young people under that age outside of formal representative institutions. However, even young people who are eligible voters due to their age continuously participate less in political institutions (Grasso et al., 2018). Since political experiences formed during the so-called formative years of youth have a significant impact on political behaviour and attitudes later in life (Delli Carpini, 1989; Denmark et al., 2016; Dinas, 2013; Quintelier & Van Deth, 2014), young people's political engagement today can have long-lasting effects on our democratic systems in the future. Moreover, they can have a big impact on young people's own lives. An underlying assumption is that politically inactive citizens are unable to defend their interests and are, therefore, rendered invisible in the political process (Marien et al., 2010). Thus, youth engagement is about young people getting their voices heard and their issues on the political agenda. Youth engagement is not only a question of *if* young people participate in different processes, but *who* participates in different processes. Political participation is not equal; marginalised young people's voices are typically less heard in participation and policy processes. By evaluating existing practices, we can show how well they recognise and address young people's intersectional experiences with inequalities and power.

This report details the mapping and evaluation of EU-level deliberative and participatory practices (DPP), as described in WP3 of the Sincrony project. Task 3.2, *Mapping and analysing EU-level DPP*, set the aim to map existing EU-level DPP that are identified as "good" and examine the standards adopted in defining good practices at the EU-level through an intersectional lens. The concrete task was to analyse and revise at least 20 EU-level practices and produce a report of the results. Therefore, in this study, we use the term 'deliberative and participatory practice' (DPP), even though in many parts of the project, DPP refers to 'deliberative and participatory processes'. This report details the research process and the findings.

1.1 Mapping of EU-level DPPs

The mapping of EU-level DPPs started, in accordance with the project description, by defining the criteria for case selection and the intersectional lens, or framework, that is used to evaluate the cases. The task raises three questions that have shaped the evaluation of DPPs: 1) what are EU-level deliberative and participatory practices, 2) what are considered "good practices", and 3) what is an intersectional lens (in the context of evaluating existing DPPs)?

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We discuss the EU-level deliberative and participatory practices in Chapter 2, where we review the reasons why DPPs are created, the purposes they may serve, especially concerning youth participation, as well as their role in the democracy processes of the EU.

“Good practices” are generally understood as practices that have been proven to function well and produce desired results. They are practices that could be seen as a model for how to conduct similar practices in the future. In our mapping and case selection process, we quickly discovered that despite the buzz around youth engagement, there are not a plethora of previous practices at the EU-level engaging specifically young people. In the face of a narrow selection of cases and practices, the focus on especially “good practices” was not possible. Instead, we have opted to select all EU-level cases fulfilling our case selection criteria (see Ch. 4), regardless of whether or not they could be seen to fulfil the criteria of being a “good practice”. In Chapter 4, we also discuss the methods used not only for case selection, but for the mapping and evaluation in general.

We discuss the definitions and difficulties related to an intersectional lens in Chapter 3. We discuss what an intersectional lens can be interpreted to be and the difficulties of amending the concept to document analysis such as conducted in this study. We describe the difficulties but also the solutions we took to overcome these difficulties. We also detail the process of developing the evaluation framework. Following the circular nature of the Sincrony project, Chapter 3 engages in discussion with the knowledge integration report from WP2 by discussing it in connection to the empirical work.

In Chapter 5, we present the results from the mapping. We show the prevalence of the different frames in the EU-level DPPs, provide examples from the practices and discuss the findings in relation to the specific framework theme they relate to.

Finally, in Chapter 6, we discuss the overall findings from our analysis and the process of developing an evaluation framework using an intersectional lens.

2 EU-level Deliberative and Participatory Practices

In our polarised times, with threats to democratic norms (Saikkonen & Christensen, 2022) and fears of democratic deconsolidation (Foa & Mounk, 2016) along with citizens decreasing engagement in democracy—evident, for example, in young people’s lower voting rates (Denemark et al., 2016)—building citizens’ trust in the political system is vital. DPPs are designed to engage citizens in democratic systems, help build social capital, and increase the legitimacy of democratic decision-making (Goodin & Dryzek, 2006; Smith, 2009). The popularity and prevalence of different DPPs stem from the issue of external inclusion within representative democratic systems. External inclusion, meaning that all affected individuals can take part (Young, 2000), is not realised in our current systems. The distance between citizens and decision-making processes undermines the legitimacy of democracy. Deliberative and participatory democracy, through varying practices, emphasises different ideals of how citizens could engage in the democratic decision-making processes. Deliberative democracy emphasises and promotes democratic deliberation—careful consideration and discussion—by average citizens rather than politicians or other representatives (Ryan & Smith, 2015). On the other hand, participatory democracy emphasises direct citizen involvement (Barber, 1984). The idea behind DPPs is to build new channels for citizen participation, bringing them back to politics and amplifying their voices in the decision-making processes. Instead of replacing the current representative system, the different practices are meant to enhance and complement the existing systems.

The issue of external inclusion is especially strong for underrepresented groups. Participation opportunities are unevenly distributed across the population, with individuals possessing more resources and skills participating more actively, especially in traditional politics (e.g. Dalton, 2017; Verba et al., 1995). Political

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inactivity is often not a free choice (Marien et al., 2010; Verba et al., 1995; Young, 2000), but rather a consequence of the unequal distribution of resources and capital that facilitate political involvement (Putnam, 2000). While there are concerns that new forms of participation may exacerbate existing inequalities in participation, research suggests that they may reduce gender and age inequalities (Hustinx & Roose, 2016, p. 98; Marien et al. 2010; Oser et al., 2013; Stolle & Hooghe, 2011). Thus, DPPs could provide one solution to the inequalities in participation.

There are different ways to organise deliberative and participatory practices. In practice, deliberative democracy is typically institutionalised in the form of deliberative mini-publics. Mini-publics are institutions designed to implement the principles of deliberative democracy (Ryan & Smith, 2015), and in a typical mini-public, a randomly selected group of citizens first receive information, whereafter, they deliberate in small groups facilitated by trained moderators (Grönlund et al., 2022). Deliberative discussions entail dialogue and an exchange of arguments and are built on assumptions of free public reasoning, equality, and mutual respect (Michels & Binnema, 2018). On the other hand, deliberative processes can also function in more open ways. In so-called bottom-up deliberative processes, led by civil society and driven by social or grassroots movements, the process can be more open, enabling, e.g., participants to engage in agenda-setting and the direction of the process, and focused on using the practice to bring more disruptive changes in the political and social structures, compared to state-initiated top-down processes with focus on specific design elements (Bussu & Fleuß, 2023). Participatory democratic practices include all kinds of different processes, where citizens participate directly and individually in political decision-making. On the institutional level, these include, for example, citizens' initiatives and referendums. On a non-institutional level, participatory practices can entail a vast range of different types of activities and processes, as long as they aim to engage citizens in politics in an individual, active and more direct manner to shape the society they want to live in (Vromen, 2003, p. 82–83).

There are also some other significant differences between deliberative and participatory practices. The first main difference has to do with the method of recruitment. While participatory practices are, in general, open to all recognised individuals (members of the demos), such as, for example, adult citizens, deliberative practices traditionally employ quasi-random sampling. The quasi-randomness is a mix between random-selection and special quotas that are used to, on the one hand, maintain legitimacy and fairness, but also to ensure the inclusion of different viewpoints and a wide variety of perspectives, while still being aware that all recruitment processes are subject to some amount of self-selection (see, e.g., Leino, 2021). The exact methods of recruitment can still take a wide variety of forms, even in deliberative practices. The second main difference has to do with their relationship with deliberative norms. For practices of deliberative democracy, such as deliberative mini-publics, the fundamental aim is the institutionalisation of deliberative norms, such as equality, openness, mutual respect, and listening. On the other hand, participatory practices can employ these norms to a different extent. Whereas in some processes, such as referendums, citizens' initiatives, and other direct democratic practices, this component can be almost nonexistent, in other practices, such as public hearings, participatory budgeting and other popular assemblies, these norms might be embraced to a great extent. In more non-institutionalized participatory practices, the norms of equality, openness, mutual respect, and listening can be internalised to different lengths as well.

We focus on DPPs organised at the EU-level for young people. Youth-specific DPPs are designed to engage young citizens in democratic processes, recognising that young people typically have less resources or, as is the case for children, limited rights to participate in institutionalised democratic processes. In addition to seeking ways to engage young people in political issues and processes, youth-specific DPPs commonly have **educational** objectives with aims to foster long-term democratic citizenship, political behaviour, and attitudes. The dual role of youth-DPPs is interesting, as it involves balancing between creating spaces for actual political agency and providing education. As researchers in youth activism note, young people are, even despite their political activity, often seen as 'citizens-in-training' and not full political subjects (Neas et al., 2022; Taft, 2017). However, as the paradigms of 'new' socio-cultural childhood studies vocalise,

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children are also active and skilled social actors with competences, rights, and agencies, and they can and should be included in the political processes that concern themselves (Kallio & Häkli, 2011). Yet, all political engagement requires political knowledge and other skills and resources. Therefore, the question of how education and actual youth participation can be balanced in the practices remains important.

The decision-making system of the European Union places a strong emphasis on enhancing democratic governance, including participatory democracy. While EU policies are primarily decided through the interaction of three key institutions, the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, and the European Commission, the EU also promotes citizen participation in decision-making processes through a variety of other mechanisms, such as public hearings and consultations, the European Citizen's Initiative and European Citizen's Panels. These practices aim to ensure that citizens and stakeholders have the possibility to actively contribute to decisions that impact their lives at local, national and EU levels. However, since the focus of our task was to analyse practices that are particularly relevant to young people, the aforementioned mechanisms are not included in the analysis, as they are targeted (mostly) to the adult population in the EU. That said, many of these practices may still concern young people, particularly if youth is understood to include individuals up to the age of 35.

Fortunately, the research and funding frameworks of the EU support the development of new practices and applying democratic decision-making to new fields. The Sincrony project at hand has received funding from the Horizon call *Standing up for Democracy*, and the project aims to develop and pilot new designs for young citizens' participation. Similarly, many of the practices evaluated in this study were designed as part of projects that received funding from the EU instruments.

An interesting aspect of the EU-level practices is the combination of transnational and local. While many initiatives are coordinated at the EU level, the practices often take place in specific local contexts, in certain cities or municipalities. This is especially true for projects where participants engage with issues that are directly relevant to their everyday lives. For example, a project may focus on improving local environmental practices in a specific town, involving residents in local discussions and decision-making processes. Therefore, EU-level participation should not be viewed solely as activities taking place in Brussels or other EU hubs but also as local processes where EU-linked initiatives are brought directly to citizens.

For this study, we understood DPPs broadly as projects, pilots, events, workshops, and guidebooks with the aim of organising, facilitating, or supporting young people's participation. It was evident from the beginning that while all cases shared at least some participatory elements, deliberative practices targeted specifically at young people were still quite rare. Naturally, some form of dialogue or discussion was included in different participatory practices, but deliberation, at least in its institutionalised form, was not a core concept in most of the projects. Therefore, we include all EU-level practices that featured participatory elements without requiring them to be deliberative in essence in our analysis.

3 Development of the Evaluation Framework

3.1 An intersectional lens

Intersectionality is a broad concept that relates not only to the existing identity and power intersections but also to the political process to dismantle existing hegemonies and change the landscape of politics. The concept is derived from Black feminist scholars (such as Sojourner Truth, Anna Julia Cooper, Maria Stewart, Kimberlé Crenshaw, the Combahee River Collective, and Patricia Hill Collins). It is simultaneously an approach, an analytical tool, and a political project seeking to transform power structures to achieve social justice (see WP2 literature review).

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In this task, we define intersectional lens as a framework that highlights *“that the organization of power and people’s experiences of it are not shaped by a single axis or category of social division but by multiple categories, including gender, sexuality, race, class, and disability.”* (Bergold-Caldwell, Ludwig & Subramanian, 2024, p. 7). However, there are no clear methodological guidelines on how intersectionality can be applied or where and no specific methods associated with intersectionality (Anthias, 2013; Hancock, 2013; Hopkins, 2018; Oyewuwo & Walton, 2023). Some scholars have been critical of the application of intersectionality, as they find that practitioners can blunt the critical aspect and the transformative political aim of intersectionality by, for example, delimiting it to descriptive or focusing on single-axis notions of oppression (May, 2015, p. 141). However, others find that the methodological applications of intersectionality are not an issue since it is a tool to address the systems of inequality that the concept illuminates (Smooth, 2013, p. 31) as long as researchers stay true to the philosophy of intersectionality (McCall, 2005, p. 1774).

Evaluating practices through an intersectional lens is not a straightforward or easy process. Since intersectionality is not a fixed method but rather *“an interpretive orientation that leaves these factors as open questions to be taken up, to help expose how subjection and dominance operate, sometimes subtly”* (May 2015, p. 4), there are no established guidelines on how to proceed with the research task. Therefore, it may be more valuable to understand that there are multiple intersectional lenses through which phenomena can be analysed. We apply one such lens in this study to conduct empirical research, which inevitably has trade-offs. To make something measurable or mappable, simplifications of complex real-world phenomena are necessary. Especially when mapping practices, the research opportunities are already limited by which documents and materials the organisers provide to the general public. In response to these challenges, we have adopted an open style in our reporting, aiming to critically reflect on our choices, interpretations, and methods. In the next chapter, we describe the intersectional lens we applied in this study: the intersectional evaluation framework of DPPs. However, we acknowledge that there can be multiple other lenses as well.

We did not want to reduce intersectionality into only a theory of identity categories and fail to take into consideration the structures of inequality (Cho et al., 2013, p. 797), elements that the theory and tool have been criticised for. Yet, there is a connection between identity, experience, and structural power (see, e.g., Crenshaw, 1991): categories, or social locations, shape people’s lives, their political agendas, political engagement, or representation. Thus, social locations, or identity categories, do play a role, and in order to examine practices through an intersectional lens, we need to address them. Solutions for tackling these issues related to categories in intersectional analysis have been proposed, such as McCall’s (2005) suggestion of using anti-categorical, inter-categorical, or intra-categorical approaches. However, since the present task does not entail research with human subjects, these approaches do not fit our purposes. The task of mapping existing practices is constrained by the reliance on documents, which limits research possibilities: Without the inclusion of human subjects, the possibilities to fully capture and understand the numerous intersecting identities and identity categories are limited.

To overcome the constraints related to using an intersectional lens in an empirical practice analysis, three strategies have been employed in the creation of the evaluation framework as well as in the analysis process:

1. Instead of focusing on identities, we focus on inclusion

We acknowledge the importance of identities, as well as the complexity of identities and social locations, while also understanding that different categories can be and are linked and relational (see Misra et al., 2021, p. 12), and often even interlocking (Jordan-Zachery 2007, p. 260). However, we find that focusing solely on identity categories and “what kind of people” participated, or were invited to participate in a practice, would be counterproductive for intersectionality as a theory, since it would never be possible to take into consideration all the intersections of different identities and constraints for participation.

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Instead of focusing on identity categories (man/woman/black/white/young/old, etc.), we aim to consider the broader structures of inequality by focusing on inclusion. Inclusion, the practice of being included (here: in a DPP), shifts the focus from identity features to the political: how well a practice takes into consideration the diversity of identities, needs, and abilities and actively tries to ensure people's access to participation.

2. We examine power building, power structures, and voice

Intersectionality is about power; besides being an analytical tool, it is a political movement to dismantle existing hegemonies and change the landscape of politics. Therefore, we need to reach beyond inclusion and focus on power structures—and whether a practice aims to challenge the existing structures and hegemonies and who it gives a voice to: those already vocal or those who are often surrendered invisible in a political process.

3. We keep a continuous critical perspective in the development process

To build an evaluation framework with an intersectional lens and to analyse existing deliberative and participatory practices at the EU level, a critical perspective towards our own developed framework, internal biases, understanding of intersectionality, and inclusion is essential. Criticism has an important role in challenging the internal biases and preconceived understandings of the complex theories, but also in encouraging creativity in the process.

Following Davis's (2008, p. 79) idea of the intersectional lens as something that encourages complexity and creativity while avoiding premature closure, the creation of the evaluation framework has been a flexible process that has lived and changed even throughout the analysis process. In the next section, we describe the process of developing the evaluation framework.

3.2 The process of developing the evaluation framework

The contents in the evaluation framework were heavily influenced by the section “An intersectional lens for deliberation and participation of youth” in the review and knowledge integration report (D2.1) “Deliberative Democracy, Youth, and Intersectionality: A Literature Review” produced by WP2. The review and knowledge integration report proposes seven elements related to an intersectional lens and deliberation based on the existing literature. We took inspiration from these seven elements, built on them and revised them to suit the empirical analysis at hand and to capture participatory practices as well, in addition to deliberation. Moreover, the evaluation framework was inspired by deliberative democracy theories and practices. In order to explain the intersectional lens used in the evaluation work and the inspiration drawn from deliberative practices, this chapter details the development of the evaluation framework.

Following the circular nature of the Sincrony project, the Grant Agreement stated that the framework needed to be analysed using “the shared guiding principles identified in WP2 (Task 2.3)” and “The revised and integrated standards of inclusive/intersectional good practices will be applied” in the framework we develop. However, the work to build an evaluation framework for EU-level DPPs started before the shared guiding principles, or the knowledge integration report, was developed.

Since the evaluation framework developed in this study is used to evaluate *deliberative and participatory practices*, the starting point for developing the framework was the concept of deliberation. Participatory practices consist of manifolds of different processes for citizen engagement, with different design and process elements, while deliberative democracy, especially in the forms of deliberative mini-publics, follows certain design elements—making deliberation an easier starting point in terms of making sense of the practices and their parts.

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The initial inspiration was looked for in pre-existing frameworks for evaluating especially deliberative practices, such as OECD's *Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave* (2020) evaluation framework. Deliberative practices, with a focus on random sampling as a method for recruitment, facilitated small-group discussions to ensure equality and knowledge-building by introducing experts and expert knowledge into practice, were the original inspirations for the framework. Thus, in its initial stages, the framework focused very much on factors related to recruitment, facilitation, process, and output (in deliberative and other participatory processes). Since the task was to evaluate existing practices specifically with an intersectional lens, in the early stages' elements related to intersectionality, understood in a broad sense, were combined with the four elements of deliberative processes mentioned above. To build the framework, the team asked questions such as:

Could it be assessed whether recruitment was done by self-selection or open invitation, often leading to the "usual suspects" taking part, or by quasi-random sampling, which tries to ensure the representative participation of a broader range of different socio-demographic groups and equal probability of being invited for every citizen? (**recruitment**)

Could facilitation and process be evaluated from an inclusive and intersectional perspective, by looking at design elements: were there, for example, the use of plain language, was accessibility considered, was interpretation provided for those in need, and did the participants get compensated for their participation? (**facilitation and process**)

Could the output of the practice be evaluated, i.e., how intersectionality aware or friendly the outputs are? (**output**)

However, these questions felt insufficient for the task at hand: to evaluate practices specifically through an intersectional lens. The development phase was characterised by a critical mindset towards the concepts of intersectionality, inclusion, our own framework, and our understanding of the key concepts or the aim of the framework. After receiving the knowledge integration report, the team returned to the concept of intersectionality, and how to use it in analysing documents. This involved acknowledging the complexities in identities without categorising people into identity categories, while also taking into consideration societal power structures and the aim of intersectionality: to not only include different identities, but to challenge existing power structures and bring forth political change.

Intersectionality proved to be a difficult concept to apply to concrete evaluation work. The difficulty of intersectionality as a tool to evaluate practices derived specifically from the nature of intersectionality: the intersections of features, overlapping identities, or factors, instead of being simply about more simple countable identity categories. The manifold mechanisms that cause different kinds of people to face different kinds of disadvantages and, for example, thresholds for participation, cannot be easily conceived into simple identity categories or assessment categories. Counting identity categories would not suffice as an assessment of intersectionality. We understand the concept of intersectionality, originating from Black feminist scholars, as not just about identity categories related to, e.g. gender, race or ethnicity but a more open term with a multitude of potential intersects with varying consequences. Thus, we found, similar to the theorists discussed in section 3.1, intersectionality to be a hard-to-grasp evaluation tool.

The knowledge integration report (D2.1), written in the spring of 2024, discussed the different aspects and theories related to intersectionality and its potential connection to deliberative democracy, but also the apparent friction between the two theories. After the publication of the report, we had critical discussions within UTU and with UNIMAN, the team responsible for analysing community and local-level DPPs, around the concept of intersectionality, and issues with a categorisation of identities. We decided to take a new approach for building the framework: intersectionality is taken as an umbrella concept through which all aspects of the process are examined. Casting aside the idea of focusing on the four elements in deliberative (and participatory) processes (recruitment, facilitation, process, output), the framework was rather built on the intersectional theories while still borrowing from Iris Marion Young and her notions about

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deliberation—particularly the conceptualisation of *external inclusion*, meaning that all those affected can take part, and *internal inclusion* referring to that everyone can participate in deliberations on an equal footing (Young, 2000).

According to Young, the democratic process should be inclusive on two levels, internally and externally. It is usual in democratic societies that decision-making is practically more accessible for those with more power and wealth. Young refers to this by conceptualising external inclusion as a method and considering how each individual should have an opportunity to participate in a given democratic process. This means that there should not be either formal or informal procedures that exclude people from participating in the process. In the context of DPPs, external inclusion thus means that practices should not be targeted only at those already participating or who have more resources to act in society. To tackle these exclusionary practices, DPPs should ideally be designed to consider dimensions such as recruitment procedures and the accessibility of the participatory venue for all people. By internal inclusion, Young refers to the idea that participants in the democratic process should have equitable opportunities to exercise influence on the decision-making process and its outcomes. In order to design DPP as inclusive from this perspective, aspects such as rules for communication, recognition of marginalised positions and plurality of communication should be considered.

In this phase of the framework development, the framework got its form. By relying on existing literature, we gathered various claims regarding external inclusion, internal inclusion, and intersectionality, and integrated them as *themes* into the initial evaluation framework. Using this approach, we built the intersectional lens step-by-step for this study. However, as we reflected on the three-dimensional framework, we realised that focusing solely on the dimensions preceding the practice or the elements occurring during the practice was insufficient. Since, ideally, the political process should transform inputs into (policy) outputs, we decided to add a fourth dimension to our framework, considering the output of the practice.

In its final form, the evaluation framework includes four dimensions, several mappable and codable themes for each dimension, and criteria descriptions for each theme to specify the meaning of each evaluation criterion. The four dimensions are: **external inclusion, internal inclusion, intersectional purpose, and output.**

The first dimension of the finished evaluation framework, **external inclusion**, which we define as procedures ensuring that (young) people have an access and are included in the deliberative and participatory process, was heavily influenced by the second element in the WP2 knowledge integration report:

*“An intersectional perspective is based in the premise that **gender, class, race, migration regimes, sexuality, ability and age are gate-keepers that structure the formal and informal access to processes of deliberation.** Accessibility can be formally and informally restricted: **Formally through nationality and citizenship regimes or age regulations, informally through adult-centred, white, cis-gendered, classed, ability-centred norms of political agency and political participation and communication.** Social barriers such as **language barriers, citizenship status, energy, resources, physical accessibility, perceptions of oneself and other of belonging shape access to deliberation and participation (Ackerly 2007, 48; Yuval-Davis 2006, 2007).**”*

An intersectional lens on youth and the accessibility to deliberation and participation therefore first reflects formal and informal racialized, classed, gendered, heteronormative, ability-centred and age-centered barriers: Who can afford to take part in youth parliaments? Who has physical access to public deliberation formats? Who is able to participate without being afraid of being mobbed in school politics? Who is considered as being eligible for political participation? Moreover, an intersectional perspective scrutinizes the causes of formal modes of exclusion of marginalized youth and how this is related to class, religion, gender, nationality, dis/ability or informal exclusion.

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Furthermore, it also scrutinizes the informal barriers of participation - such as norms or expected behaviors, that hinder some marginalized youth to consider oneself as eligible for participating in democratic practices. Also an intersectional lens centers the necessity of a political solution for overcoming these formal and informal barriers and obstacles and asks if there possibilities to politicize the exclusion on an institutionalized level."

In the external inclusion dimension, the themes were built around the above-mentioned notions regarding identity factors (such as gender, race, class), but also factors related to ability and accessibility in different ways, the cost of participation, and even more general elements related to exclusion. Thus, for external inclusion, the themes are inclusion in recruitment, promotion of inclusion of marginalised identities, accessibility, inclusion of languages, financial compensation, formal inclusion, and informal inclusion.

The second dimension, **internal inclusion**, which we define as procedures enhancing participants' (especially young people) equitable opportunities to exercise influence on the participatory and deliberative process and its outcomes, was heavily inspired by the fourth and fifth elements in the knowledge integration report:

"Fourth, deliberative democracy from an intersectional perspective needs to be based on a plurality of forms of communication. -- Marion Young's approach and in particular her insistence to bring in bodies into the realm of democracy. Based on her embodied phenomenology (1980), Young argues that political communication also must go beyond an androcentric, eurocentric, ability-centred notion of 'rationality' and also include bodily and affective forms of political communication. -- that democracy is not only based on (supposed) disembodied, 'rational' argumentation but needs to include various modes of political communication, such as story telling but also using emotions as political modes of communication

Fifth, from an intersectional perspective, deliberative democracy is tightly related to learning processes. Given that deliberative democracy is embedded in social inequalities and social injustices, and also given deliberation in a structurally unjust society needs to shift the responsibility for change from marginalized people to those who are privileged, deliberation is not based on the aim that the 'most rational' argument will succeed. Rather, deliberation needs to be reconceptualized as processes that allows to learn to listen to those who are marginalized. Deliberation is a learning process – which means for those who are privileged to unlearn their privileges through learning to listen to those who are marginalized (Spivak 1988)."

The internal inclusion dimension was formed around the notions of plurality of communication, hearing those who are marginalised, and the idea of participation as a learning process. In addition, the dimension of internal inclusion was influenced by deliberative democratic practices, where facilitation and discussion rules are an important part of deliberative mini-publics, as well as small-group interactions, and support for participation. For internal inclusion, the themes are facilitation and discussion rules, ensuring plurality of voices, recognition of marginalised positions, plurality of communication, support for participation, shared understanding of the societal problem and agenda-setting.

The third dimension in the evaluation framework, **intersectional purpose**, relates to the power element in an intersectional approach. It was also heavily influenced by element five in the knowledge integration report:

"A crucial element in these democratic learning processes is to invite participants for resisting and talking back hegemonic narratives (Gibson 2020, 443) and for radical imaginaries (Banerjee 2021, 288 and see his argument for decolonial imaginaries). Given that from an intersectional perspective, society is structurally unequal, deliberative democracy needs to open spaces where participants can imagine "the world as it could be" (Gibson 2020, 442). -- Thus, an intersectional perspective on youth and deliberative democracy changes the political setting fundamentally: The

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aim of opening democracy to marginalized youth is not to integrate them into the existing adult-centred modes of deliberation and participation. Rather, it decenters privileged adults and re-conceptualizes democratic politics as processes where marginalized youth gains the potential to be accessed equal political actors from whom also those who are in privileged positions in the adult-centred, androcentric, white democracy need to listen to.”

The intersectional purpose dimension was built on the above-mentioned perspectives of challenging hegemonic narratives, striving for changes in structurally unequal societies, challenging the adult-centred modes of political participation and viewing young people as equal political actors. The intersectional purpose dimension consists of the following themes: structural critique, institutional change, transforming injustice, expanding the political agency, reclaiming the power, and the youth as political actors.

The fourth and final dimension, **output**, consists of themes of policy recommendations, impact assessment, and stated impact. Since we view DPPs as part of the political system and decision-making process, paying attention to the output side in their evaluation is crucial. It is important that young people are not merely involved for the sake of participation itself, as this would be contrary to the nature of intersectionality, which demands a more comprehensive approach. Instead, the practice should aim for real change, and the goal should be to move beyond tokenistic participation and strive for impact. Therefore, three themes were adapted into the framework under the output dimension: policy recommendations, impact assessment, and stated impact.

In the finalising phase, content exchange regarding the framework was done with the UNIMAN team working on a mapping process for community and local-level DPPs. The content exchange led to splitting one original theme within the intersectional purpose dimension into two separate themes; reclaiming the power and youth as political actors; to better capture the different ways young people can be seen in DPPs.

Once the initial complete framework with four dimensions was finished, two coders test-coded five practices each. Overall, the framework functioned well in the analysis, but some adjustments were necessary to make. These changes were mostly related to wording. For example, in the theme considering facilitation and discussion rules (2.1), it was clarified that the people ensuring equality in participation could be referred to as moderators in addition to facilitators. In the theme regarding the development of a shared understanding of the problem (2.6), it was specified that the problem should be societal.

A draft of the framework was presented at the FPSA annual conference in Spring 2024 in the working group “Feminismi, tieto ja demokratia” (Feminism, knowledge, and democracy). After feedback from the conference and internal discussions within the coding team after the intercoder test, the framework was finalised in May 2024. All the EU-level cases (described in detail in 3.2) were analysed in May and June 2024.

The final framework is presented in Table 1. The results from the analysis are presented in Chapter 5.

Table 1: The final framework for evaluation of EU-level DPPs

Dimension	Number	Theme	Criterion
External inclusion	1.1	Inclusion in recruitment	Participants are recruited in a method that aims to include of all people. E.g., are young people included through self-selection, open invitation, or random sampling? How was the invitation disseminated? If representatives are (s)ected,

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			who has the opportunity to (s)elect representatives?
	1.2	Promotion of inclusion of marginalised identities	Efforts are made to reach out to marginalised youth or those who would not put themselves forward. The practice promotes the inclusion of different identities based on e.g. gender, class, race, migration regime, sexuality, ability and age.
	1.3	Accessibility	The practice (whether f-2-f or online) is accessible for people with different accessibility needs, or if the space puts constraints on the participation of different groups due to accessibility, action to mitigate accessibility issues has been taken.
	1.4	Inclusion of languages	The plurality of languages is considered in the practice.
	1.5	Financial compensation	If there are financial costs for participation, they are compensated.
	1.6	Formal inclusion	There are no formal exclusions for participation based on nationality, citizenship, or age regulations.
	1.7	Informal inclusion	There are no informal exclusions for participation, e.g. adult-centred, white, cis-gendered, classed, ability-centred norms of political agency and participation, or exclusions based on language skills, physical condition or perceptions of oneself and others.
Internal inclusion	2.1	Facilitation and discussion rules	There are facilitators or moderators who aim to ensure equality in participation and/or mutual respect.
	2.2	Ensuring plurality of voices	There are smaller groups for interaction.
	2.3	Recognition of marginalised positions	The practice acknowledges existing societal power structures and actively encourages learning from people in marginalised positions. E.g. by inviting people from marginalised positions as witnesses or allowing enclave deliberation.
	2.4	Plurality of communication	The practice recognises the plurality of political communication, e.g., story-telling, emotions, and bodily or affective forms of political communication.
	2.5	Support for participation	Participants gain support, e.g. expert knowledge or training during the practice.
	2.6	Shared understanding of the societal problem	Participants are encouraged to develop a shared understanding of a social phenomenon as problematic or unjust.

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	2.7	Agenda setting	The participants can bring issues and problems into the agenda.
Intersectional Purpose	3.1	Structural critique	The practice questions hegemonic logics, e.g. racialised, postcolonial, gendered, classed, heteronormative, ability-centred or age-centred structures of power, exclusion and violence.
	3.2	Institutional change	The practice aims for institutional changes in the public, political institutions or schools and organisations.
	3.3	Transforming injustice	The practice aims to transform injustice.
	3.4	Expanding the political agency	The practice aims to expand political agency and the political.
	3.5	Reclaiming the power	Participation is youth-led or youth-initiated.
	3.6	The youth as political actors	The participants are seen as political actors, and their participation is not seen as (primarily) an educational event.
Output	4.1	Policy recommendations (on policy agenda or on decision-making)	The practice makes policy recommendations in order to have a policy impact.
	4.2	Impact assessment	The policy impact has been assessed.
	4.3	Stated impact	The project describes the policy impacts that the policy recommendations or goals had.

4 Methods

4.1 Case selection

The case selection was done in two parts. First, an initial selection of potential cases was conducted from repositories Participedia, Politize, and EU Knowledge for Policy - Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy to determine the scope of potential practices for analyses. This stage also served the purpose of gaining an understanding of their nature as well as the realities for case selection criteria. Second, a final case selection was performed once the case selection criteria were determined. We decided that the selection criteria for the projects should be broad enough to capture a sufficient number of relevant cases for analysis.

These three questions guided the initial case selection criteria process:

1. What is youth? Youth-oriented projects, youth-inclusive processes, or youth-focused themes?
2. How is the EU level defined?
3. What type of projects and practices should be considered?

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We started with the question, “What is youth?” To select cases for examining youth engagement in DPPs, a decision needed to be made whether to include cases that target specifically young people (youth-oriented), or that allow youth engagement despite not being targeted to them (youth-inclusive). Additionally, or alternatively, we could include cases that engage with themes that could be seen as youth-focused, such as themes related to youth, schools, the future, climate change, et cetera (youth-focused themes).

Focusing only on youth-oriented cases would have limited the number of cases available for evaluation. Many DPPs organised at the EU level do not specifically focus on young people. Broadening the selection criteria to youth-inclusive cases, where young people have had the opportunity to participate despite the practice not being targeted specifically and only for them, would broaden the pool of potential cases for analysis. Especially since the Sincrony project operates with a wide definition of youth (people up to 30/35 years of age). Individuals aged 18 to 30–35 are typically allowed to engage in all kinds of political projects and activities. Thus, using youth-inclusivity as a selection criterion would allow us to include almost any practices that welcome participants of all ages.

However, as this project aims to examine youth participation in DPPs, focusing on youth-inclusivity or youth-focused themes might have led to the risk of losing the project's youth-oriented focus. Therefore, to accurately map the current situation, practices *specifically targeting young people* must be concentrated on, even if this limits the number of cases available for evaluation.

We continued with the question, “How is the EU level defined?” Issues such as whether a practice would need to be EU-wide, include partners from all/many of the EU member countries, or be funded by the EU were considered. Also, the question of how many different areas, partners and/or countries in the EU should be involved in the practice for the practice to be considered EU-level, was asked. We decided that the practices should include *participants from at least two or more EU countries*.

Finally, the form of the practice raised questions: whether we should choose cases consisting of one-off projects or institutions for youth participation, or both. Since we found in the initial mapping that many of the practices listed in the databases were one-off projects or pilots, we decided to include those in our potential cases. As we were already aware of EU-level institutional processes for youth participation, we decided that it would be appropriate to include both in the pool of cases to be analysed.

In the end, the youth-specific nature of a case was determined as the most important case selection criterion. In order to ensure the youth focus of the project, only practices targeting specifically young people were included as cases in this evaluation task. Since the youth-specific focus limited the number of available cases, more relaxed criteria were applied regarding the second and third case selection questions (EU-level and types of practices).

The project selection was carried out in collaboration with two project partners, UTU and ALDA. We sourced the deliberative and participatory projects relevant to young people from various platforms, databases and portals, including Participedia, Politicize, the European Parliament website, the Council of Europe website, the European Commission website, Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy, EU-CoE Good Practices, CORDIS, Horizon projects, and the Bertelsmann Stiftung website.

We initially compiled a “long list” of projects that met the selection criteria and were potential candidates for analysis. During the selection phase, we focused on identifying DPPs that met the following criteria: a) they must be youth-specific, and b) they must include participants from at least two or more EU countries. Additionally, the selected practices were required to fall within the timeframe of 2014 to 2024, ensuring that they were no more than ten years old. This decision was made in collaboration with UNIMAN to align the timeframe with the task of analysing community and local-level DPPs. This timeframe also aligns with the previous EU Horizon 2020 research program, which was active from 2014 to 2020, making it a logical inclusion in our analysis.

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For each project on the long list, we documented key details in an Excel file, including the source where the project was listed, project name, project type, level in which the project operates, relationship to youth, available documents, and links to the projects. Since we relied on the documentation that was openly available on the internet, the documents to be analysed ended up being quite varied. The EU-funded projects included comprehensive reports and deliverables, which offered a lot of material for analysis. Also, the project websites were formed to be significant resources for analysis together with invitation letters and event programmes. In some of the projects, a concluding final report was utilised as a study material. This type of documentation also included guidelines and suggestions for applying the learnings of the project to other people designing participatory practices for youth. As such, these practical guidelines developed within the projects were considered DPPs, even though they might not have already been tested “in the field”.

After the initial mapping of the DPPs, we conducted a preliminary analysis of the cases on the long list to assess whether the available documentation was comprehensive enough to allow analysis within the evaluation framework. This preliminary analysis went hand in hand with developing the initial evaluation framework, providing us with information about its suitability for the task at hand. We anticipated that not all project documentation would thoroughly address every theme included in the framework, as it was developed relying on previous literature. However, this was not considered a problem since it was thought that if the case documentation did not include mentions of particular criteria, that would be a result itself.

The final cases analysed in this task are displayed and described in Table 2.

Table 2: The selected DPPs for the analysis

Name	Description	Source
EU Youth Dialogue / EU Youth Conference	A dialogue mechanism between young people and decision-makers within the EU Youth Strategy framework. After national and European activities, results are compiled, analysed, and discussed at the EU Youth Conference, where youth representatives and policymakers collaborate to present a joint message to the EU. These conferences are held twice a year and are hosted by the EU Presidency country.	Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy
Young Citizens' Dialogue	An event held on May 8, 2019, in Sibiu, Romania, bringing together over 300 young people from across Europe and EU politicians to discuss five key areas: engagement, democracy, fairness, digital Europe, and climate change.	Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy
Science and Technology for Pollinating Insects (STING)	Developed under the European Initiative on Pollinators, this project included a work package focused on engaging various citizen groups using co-creation principles. It conducted ten on-site workshops across Austria, Slovenia, Italy, and Croatia, targeting youth and beekeepers, with an additional online workshop open to participants from across the EU.	Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy
YouCount	A Horizon 2020 project aimed at co-creating knowledge and innovations to increase youth social inclusion through ten case studies across nine European countries. Each case	CORDIS

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	focused on different youth groups facing diverse social inclusion challenges.	
UPLIFT - Urban Policy Innovation to address inequality with and for Future generations	A Horizon 2020 project that examined inequalities in 16 urban areas across Europe, particularly those affecting young people. The project involved 15 international partners, including academics, researchers, social workers, and local municipalities, working to centre young people's voices in youth policy.	CORDIS
Confidence in Tomorrow	A youth event was organised to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Council of Europe under Liechtenstein's Presidency. The event focused on renewing and strengthening the relationship between the Council of Europe and young people, emphasising their role in shaping the future of democracy and human rights in Europe.	Council of Europe
CP4 - Europe Strengthening National Child Participation Frameworks and Action in Europe	A resource for adults responsible for planning and engaging children in decision-making processes within local and national authorities. It offers practical guidance and examples of good practices to make participation a regular, safe, and accessible experience for every child.	Council of Europe
SALTO Youth Participation Strategy	A network of seven Resource Centres working on European priority areas in the youth field. The Youth Participation Strategy enhances youth participation in democratic life through the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programs.	European Commission
European Youth Hearing	An event held on June 9-10, 2023, where 8,500 young people took over the European Parliament in Strasbourg to discuss and share ideas on shaping Europe's future. The event featured over 300 in-person and hybrid activities, including debates, discussions, networking opportunities, artistic performances, sports, and workshops.	European Parliament
EU Children's Participation Platform	A platform that works with children and teenagers to amplify their voices in EU decision-making. It includes a general assembly, panel discussions, and surveys.	European Union
EC2U (European Campus of City-Universities) Makeathon	A Horizon 2020 project that organises interactive events bringing together people and local organisations to collaboratively develop creative solutions to local challenges, contributing to a better future.	Horizon 2020 programme
Citizen Jury on New Genomic Techniques	A jury deliberated on the use of New Genomic Techniques in agriculture and food/feed production ahead of the European Parliament and Council vote on the European Commission's regulation proposal. The jury included 24 members, nearly half of whom were aged 18-24, highlighting the importance of youth perspectives.	Participedia
DEEP - Linking Youth Project: E-participation & Active Participation among Young People	A project co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme from 2015 to 2017, aimed at encouraging young people to actively participate in democratic life by utilising digital tools.	Participedia

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SEEDS: How to empower teens to manage their health	A Horizon 2020 project providing information on health in teen lives. It began with four makeathons, which are collaborative challenges where participants from various backgrounds come together to address a single challenge creatively.	Participedia
DEMOGAMES: Analog and Digital Game-Based-Learning Tools for Youth Work	An Erasmus+ Youth in Action project that provides educational tools, methods, and materials for democracy education in non-formal youth work, targeting young people under 25 in Europe and beyond. It aims to include all young people, regardless of their prior knowledge of political, societal, or democratic topics.	Participedia
Global climate strike - Fridays for Future	A global youth-led movement where over 150 countries have hosted protests, rallies, and strikes advocating for climate action.	Participedia
European Local Democracy Week	An annual event in EU member countries promoting civic and political engagement by raising awareness of local democracy and encouraging youth participation through various activities, such as youth councils, visits to local institutions, and mock elections.	Participedia
Youth PB Accelerator	An Erasmus+ project aimed at increasing young people's social commitment and empowerment by providing tools and solutions for youth engagement in local community decision-making, focusing on municipal participatory budgeting.	Participedia
YES: Youth Engagement in Society - Training programme	An Erasmus+ project focused on increasing social inclusion and promoting active citizenship among NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth by developing key competencies and training youth workers to better address NEETs' needs.	Youth Partnership - good practices
Our Life, Our Voice.	An Erasmus+ project focused on youth poverty, exploring the experiences and solutions of disadvantaged youth across Europe through participatory methods. The evidence gathered was used to influence policy development at various levels through the direct participation of these young people in events and conferences.	Youth Partnership - good practices

4.2 Analysis method and process

4.2.1 The coding scheme

Determining the coding scheme was an important part of the case evaluation as well as the framework and its development. Coding, rather than scoring, was seen as the best and most neutral way to evaluate the cases. Practically, the coding within the scheme involved the coders reading the gathered documentation and, relying on the text for each theme in the evaluation framework, interpreting these snippets according to the three-step coding scheme (see Table 3).

We found that the neutrality of coding (versus scoring) was important, especially since the materials available for analysis (documents, policy briefs, tool-kit guidelines etc.) do not necessarily capture

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completely how different principles related to intersectionality and inclusion were realised. Documents are always limited in scope, thus, the potential of missing information concerning intersectionality and inclusion in a practice may be related to reporting, not their lack in the practice. Therefore, scoring could have led to unfair situations where practices get low scores merely due to limited reporting. Assigning practices a sort of “intersectionality score” based merely on documentation could thus paint an untruthful image of the practice. Additional issues with scoring would entail an assessment of how much different criteria in the framework should weigh for the overall score. Would, e.g., being discriminated based on identity be such a strong marker of practice being against inclusivity that other elements of the practice cannot compensate for this? Or if participants were, for example, excluded due to their ethnicity, would having a facilitator compensate, or a voice in the process compensate for this? By using coding, we do not have to evaluate the importance of different themes in the framework but can focus on assessing the different elements in a practice.

The criteria in the framework were structured as statements that could be coded based on how the DPP addressed each criterion. If the DPP promoted the criterion, it was coded as '+1'; if it acted against the criterion, it received a '-1'. If the DPP did not acknowledge the criterion or if its existence could not be assessed via the available documentation, it was coded as '0'. This approach allowed for a nuanced analysis of each DPP's performance concerning inclusivity and intersectionality. The coding scheme is visible in Table 3.

Table 3: The coding scheme

Code	Description
+1	The practice promotes this criterion
0	The practice does not acknowledge this criterion, or the existence could not be assessed via the available documentation
-1	The practice acts against this criterion

The coding and intercoder reliability were tested by two test-coders. Five EU-level practices were cross-coded and the coding criteria were finetuned afterwards to make them as straightforward as possible to allow reliable and consistent coding within each criterion. For example, the initial themes of formal exclusion and informal exclusion were reversed into “formal inclusion” (1.6) and “informal inclusion” (1.7) to simplify the interpretation of the evaluation.

Coding was sometimes difficult, as some of the criteria are more fluid while others are either/or. More concretely, trying to break existing hegemonies is something that either is actively done, or does not happen, whereas evaluating the overall accessibility of a venue is more subjective and complex when relying solely on documentation. For example, if the project documentation highlights aspects that make the practice inaccessible, it is coded as -1, indicating that the practice acts against the criterion of promoting accessibility. If the documentation only reports practices promoting accessibility, it receives the code +1. If the accessibility issues are not acknowledged or they cannot be assessed via the available documentation, the practice is coded 0. This illustrates that while accessibility is an important theme under external inclusion, evaluating its presence in DPPs through numeral coding alone is insufficient. Therefore, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of issues such as accessibility in DPPs, we also present text snippets in the results section as examples illustrating these issues.

5 Results from mapping

In Table 4, all the frequencies of the given codes are presented for each criterion.

Table 4: Results of the coding

Dimension	Number	Theme	Code (n)		
			-1	0	1
External inclusion	1.1	Inclusion in recruitment	8	10	2
	1.2	Promotion of identity inclusion	2	6	12
	1.3	Accessibility	1	12	7
	1.4	Inclusion of languages	1	8	11
	1.5	Financial compensation	1	14	5
	1.6	Formal inclusion	5	9	6
	1.7	Informal inclusion	3	13	4
Internal inclusion	2.1	Facilitation and discussion rules	3	5	12
	2.2	Ensuring plurality of voices	0	7	13
	2.3	Recognition of marginalised positions	7	8	5
	2.4	Plurality of communication	3	6	11
	2.5	Support for participation	0	3	17
	2.6	Shared understanding of the societal problem	0	8	12
	2.7	Agenda setting	6	7	7
Intersectional purpose	3.1	Structural critique	5	4	11
	3.2	Institutional change	12	3	5
	3.3	Transforming injustice	6	6	8
	3.4	Expanding the political agency	5	2	13
	3.5	Reclaiming the power	14	0	6

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	3.6	The youth as political actors	3	0	17
Output	4.1	Policy recommendations (on policy agenda or on decision-making)	0	8	12
	4.2	Impact assessment	0	18	2
	4.3	Stated impact	0	19	1

In the evaluated DPPs, there were clearly many more practices that promote inclusion and intersectionality (1=199) than act against it (-1=85). However, the high number of findings where intersectional and inclusive themes were not acknowledged (0=176) suggests that many of these themes are generally not recognised in the DPPs, at least based on the openly available documentation, and/or that intersectionality and inclusion are difficult to assess via document analysis.

Examining all the dimensions and themes in the framework, we find that the most prevalent ways in which the practices promoted inclusion and intersectionality were by providing support for participation (n=17) and seeing the youth as political actors (n=17). The least prevalent ways were stated impact (n=1), impact assessment (n=2) and inclusion in recruitment (n=2). The foremost ways in which the practices acted against the different dimensions of inclusion and intersectionality were found in the intersectional purpose dimension: reclaiming the power (n=14) and institutional change (n=12). The most significant lack of information was related to the DPPs' impact assessment (n=18), stated impact (n=19), and financial compensation (n=14). All the findings are discussed further with examples, organised by four dimensions, in the following sections.

External inclusion

First is external inclusion. External inclusion in the DPPs was examined through a focus on seven themes: inclusion in recruitment (1.1), promotion of inclusion of marginalised identities (1.2), accessibility (1.3), inclusion of languages (1.4), financial compensation (1.5), formal inclusion (1.6), and informal inclusion (1.7).

The results show that the most prevalent way in which external inclusion was promoted in the different practices was the promotion of identity inclusion (n=12), followed by the inclusion of languages (n=11). Identity inclusion is about whether there “are efforts made to reach out to marginalised youth or those who would not put themselves forward” and whether “the practice promotes the inclusion of different identities based on, e.g., gender, class, race, migration regime, sexuality, ability and age”.

In the practices, the promotion of identity inclusion was done in, for example, in the selection of participants, when the selection process aimed to promote the inclusion of typically underrepresented groups. For example, in the Citizen Jury on New Genomic Techniques, the participants were selected to promote inclusion of genders, young age groups (nearly half 18-24-year-olds, nearly half 25-34-year-olds), geographical spectrum, nationalities, and fields of study (Purnhagen & Molitorisová, 2024). DEEP-linking YOUTH targeted young people who do not engage in decision-making, and specific groups following into this category were identified based on age, gender, social environment, and education based on research (Participedia, n.d.a). YES targeted young people outside of education and employment (YES: Youth Engagement in Society Project Consortium, 2021), whereas the EU Children’s Participation Platform’s participants were, among others, children from vulnerable backgrounds, such as those living in or experiencing alternative care, (history of) living in violence or with poverty, children from ethnic minorities, urban/remote rural areas or with disabilities, or asylum seekers and refugees (Janta et al., 2024). In SEEDS, the interventions were done by adolescents of low-socioeconomic areas (Murray & Riemenschneider,

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2022). In *Our Life, Our Voice* (2017a, p. 11), participants in the team in Great Britain came from “a range of different ethnic backgrounds, including white British, African, Middle Eastern and South Asian, and also have a variety of living arrangements, some living at home with parents, others with their partners and some in temporary accommodation.”, while in Romania, the participants, despite all being Romanian citizens, were “of varying ethnicities, including eight young people of Romanian ethnicity, four of Hungarian and five of Roma ethnicity” (Our Life, Our Voice, 2017a, p. 15). In CP4 Europe, the project involved, among other participants “31 children from 15 countries, some of whom come from vulnerable families and communities” (Verweijen-Slamnescu, 2023, p. 8).

Many of the practices highlighted the importance of inclusive identity promotion, exemplified here by the Youth PB Accelerator, which reflected that:

“Being inclusive through the process of PB means that we bring together different voices, celebrate our differences and are prepared to learn from each other.-- Equity underlies the design of PB processes. It is important to find a way of improving the ability, opportunity, and value of people, when disadvantaged on the basis of their identity, to take part in society. We seek to elevate everyone to enjoy the opportunities enjoyed by the most fortunate.” (Youth PB Accelerator, 2022a, p. 86)

SALTO reflected on the factors that may lead to the exclusion of young people of various identities in projects:

“For example, deliberate exclusion occurs as a result of prejudice or hate speech directed towards young people belonging to particular groups. Exclusion also occurs when the design of a project makes it harder for some young people to take part, even if this was not the intention. For instance, a project that only takes place on Saturdays might exclude young Jewish people who wish to observe the Shabbat as a day of rest. Or, young people with autism could be excluded if they do not receive clear information about the order of activities within a project meeting. Identifying which groups of young people have fewer opportunities in your context is a crucial first step towards working inclusively.” (SALTO, n.d.)

The mapping shows the prevalence of the promotion of identity inclusion in the EU-level DPPs, and the in-depth examination of the practices shows that different practices highlighted different sources of identity-based exclusion of young people and had different tactics to promote identity inclusion.

Only two practices were coded as acting against the promotion of identity inclusions. In EC2U Makeathon and Science and Technology for Pollinating Insects (STING) no efforts to promote identity inclusion were made according to available documentation (EC2U, 2024; Tokarski et al., 2023). In recruitment for political engagement, research shows that when efforts to balance recruitment are not conducted, so-called usual suspects (people with higher education and better socioeconomic background) are likely to participate. Recruitment and the effort to promote identity inclusion is thus important for engaging especially those who are marginalised in societies.

In the evaluated DPPs, language inclusion, referring to whether the plurality of languages is considered in the practices, included, for example, usage of user-friendly language(s) (SALTO, n.d.), or notions of the importance to consider the languages in which the activities are organised in and how translations are provided (highlighting Braille, sign languages and languages spoken by ethnic and national minorities) (Verweijen-Slamnescu, 2023). Language inclusion also included, e.g., the use of several languages with simultaneous interpretation (Confidence in Tomorrow, 2024, February 13) and using a language translator for a digital dashboard (DEEP-linking YOUTH, 2017a).

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The least prevalent way to promote external inclusion was inclusion in recruitment (n=2), which was also the foremost way in this dimension, where the practices actually acted against the criterion (n=8). Inclusion in recruitment was considered in two practices by the following measures:

UPLIFT: *“To ensure a diverse and heterogeneous Youth Board, it is recommended to involve a wide range of organizations, groups, institutions, and individuals in the recruitment process. The more varied the recruiting organizations are, the more diverse the Youth Board is likely to be. -- Tailor-made strategies may be necessary to reach specific demographics or groups that are outside the reach of institutional stakeholders and/or NGOs (e.g. snowball methods, recruitment in specific locations, advertisement in social media groups). (Hoekstra & Gentili, 2022, p. 5)*

CONFIDENCE IN TOMORROW: *“The Council of Europe will select up to 100 participants based on the profile outlined above, ensuring a balance between genders, geographical regions, different types of experiences, cultural backgrounds and organisations, institutions and projects.” (Confidence in Tomorrow, 2024, February 13).*

In Uplift, the practice emphasises the importance of involving different actors in the recruitment process to ensure diversity as well as suggests some recruitment tactics to better ensure a heterogeneous recruitment result. In contrast, in Confidence in Tomorrow, the practice focused on balancing the participant pool, taking into consideration several factors, i.e., ensuring that, for example, gender and cultural backgrounds are considered in the recruitment.

Out of the different elements of external inclusion, the practices acted least often against accessibility, inclusion of languages, and financial compensation. In each of these themes, only one act against was conducted per theme. Concerning accessibility, the evaluation led to the conclusion that in Science and Technology for Pollinating Insects (STING), no accessibility issues were considered from the perspectives used in the framework according to the available material. Concerning the inclusion of languages, in European Youth Hearing, all program points were organised only in English, even though some program points discussed languages and plurality of languages (European Youth Event, 2023b). For financial compensation, the Fridays for Future movement states on their website that *“Fridays For Future is unlikely to be able to provide legal support should problems occur, so if they do, we would advise liaising with NGOs in your area who know local lawyers, well versed in protest situations.”* (Fridays for Future, n.d), which was interpreted as that the movement is also very unlikely to pay for its activists if they fall into legal trouble, since they cannot provide other assistance either.

Finally, financial compensation was most often not disclosed in the documentation (n=14), followed by informal inclusion (n=13), which was defined in the framework as *“There are no informal exclusions for participation, e.g., adult-centred, white, cis-gendered, classed, ability-centred norms of political agency and participation, or exclusions based on language skills, physical condition or perceptions of oneself and others”*. Document analysis on practices reveals that these two themes are often not disclosed or potentially observed from this type of material.

Internal inclusion

The examination of internal inclusion in the EU-level DPPs was also done through seven themes: facilitation and discussion rules (2.1), ensuring plurality of voices (2.3), recognition of marginalised positions (2.4), plurality of communication (2.5), support for participation (2.6), and shared understanding of the societal problem and agenda-setting (2.7).

The most prevalent way of promoting internal inclusion in the DPPs was providing support for participation (n=17), which entailed that participants gain support (such as expert knowledge or training) during the practice. Support for participation was also a factor that was least often coded as “0” (n=3), indicating that it was the easiest to evaluate from the available documentation. We interpret this to mean that in designing

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youth-specific DPPs, support mechanisms are being prioritised, likely because the target group consists of young people who may lack participatory skills and competencies. For instance, the YES project aims to build participants' self-esteem and confidence through various exercises highlighting that *“developing self-confidence and showing to youth that they are worthy and their voice matters, it is fundamental in the pathway of becoming an active citizen.”* (YES: Youth Engagement in Society Project Consortium, 2021, p. 23). However, support for participation is not always linked to the participants' age. In the Citizen Jury on New Genomic Techniques, participants learn about the topic from experts in the field to enable them to make informed decisions, aligning with the general principles of deliberative decision-making (Purnhagen, & Molitorisová, 2024).

Some examples of how support for participation was provided in practice include providing participants with training, instructions and the help of media students (DEEP-linking YOUTH, 2017a), providing information on the playing cards and via a QR code to participate in a game (DEMOGAMES, n.d.), expert panels that participants can ask questions from and discuss with (EU Children's participation platform, n.d.), and by supporting young people to apply the competencies they build through the practice in order to create change (SALTO, 2020). In *Our Life, Our Voice*, different country partners provided different types of support for their participants: for example, in Great Britain, the young participants *“collected written evidence from experts, analysed evidence from interviews with young people living in poverty, analysed data from a survey conducted by The Children's Society, and contributed their own experiences of school life and poverty.”* (Our life. Our voice, 2017a, p. 11), while in Romania, the project focused especially on the marginalised Roma community, and the participants visited, watched a documentary, and read official government documents about the segregated community, as well as *“spoke with a number of professionals, including human rights experts and professionals working with Roma communities to gain an understanding of the work being done by individuals and organisations to advocate for and support Roma communities”* (Our life. Our voice, 2017a, p. 15). These examples highlight how differently the participants could receive support for their participation. In addition to supporting the participation in the practice the young people were engaged in, some projects wanted to support young people more generally in life. For example, YES: Youth Engagement in Society (2021) aimed to build participants' self-esteem and confidence through different exercises to promote active citizenship and democratic empowerment.

The least prevalent way of promoting internal inclusion in the practices was the recognition of marginalised positions (n=5), which entailed that the practice acknowledges existing societal power structures and actively encourages learning from people in marginalised positions. This was not only the least promoted dimension of internal inclusion but also the only one where the DPPs acted most against it (n=7) and where the criteria could not be evaluated in the existing documents (n=8). Recognition of marginalised positions, in the framework defined as *“The practice allows and encourages learning from and listening to those who are marginalised, e.g., by inviting people from marginalised positions as witnesses or allowing enclave deliberation”*, appears to be either not present in the existing practices, or at least difficult to assess via documentation of existing practices.

When the practice recognised marginalised positions, it was done in different ways. Sometimes, by acknowledging the different types of existing societal power barriers, such as in YouCount, where it is noted that:

“All kinds of obstacles can hinder (young) citizen scientists in participation of not only the case-related tasks, but ultimately also the evaluation-related aspects. Those include language barriers, socio-economic barriers, time constraints, lack of incentives, and overall motivational hurdles, but also feasibility struggles/overburdening and misunderstandings on the professional researchers' side” (Borgström et al., 2024, p. 157).

By this, YouCount suggests tactics to overcome these obstacles, such as the use of translators and interpreters or student assistants to overcome language barriers. In *Our Life, Our Voice*, and especially in

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Romania, a part of the activities was acknowledging the marginalised Roma people and their struggles, as well as learning from this group.

In other practices, the recognition of marginalised positions was addressed in a very practical manner. In the YES project (2021), one activity was the “Step forward game”, where participants either take steps forward or stay put based on how many privileges they have. The game acknowledges existing power structures and mechanisms for marginalisation and makes them visible to the participants. In CP4 Europe (Verweijen-Slamnescu, 2023), the project listed various means to help engage with children from marginalised positions, while in EU Youth Dialogue, one program point in the conference was a slot for sharing practices of social inclusion, allowing participants to exchange knowledge on the topic (EU Youth Conference, n.d.).

Thus, the recognition of marginalised positions could be done either by recruiting young people from marginalised and disadvantaged backgrounds through different socio-demographic measures or by bringing awareness of marginalisation and privilege to the participants with the help of gamification or knowledge-sharing activities.

The second least prevalent way of promoting internal inclusion in the DPPs was agenda-setting (n=7), defined as “The participants can bring issues and problems into the agenda”. As with recognition of marginalised positions, agenda-setting was the second most prevalent way the practices acted against internal inclusion (n=6). The results indicate that a practice’s agenda is typically not participant-led but rather formed by the organisers (or other decision-making bodies), and the young participants engage in topics chosen by adults.

No practices acted against ensuring themes of plurality of voices, support for participation, or promotion of shared understanding of the problem.

Intersectional purpose

The examination of internal inclusion in the EU-level DPPs was conducted through six themes: structural critique (3.1), institutional change (3.2), transforming injustice (3.3), expanding the political agency (3.4), reclaiming the power (3.5), and the youth as political actors (3.6).

The most prevalent way to promote intersectional purpose was fulfilling the “youth as political actors” theme (n=17), which entailed that the participants were seen as political actors and their participation was not seen as (primarily) an educational event. This criterion was also where the DPPs acted least against its fulfilment. The result is expected as youth-specific DPPs naturally tend to view youth as political actors, given that these participatory practices are specifically targeted at young people.

In the Citizen Jury on New Genomic Techniques, the young participants formulated recommendations that gave input for the policymaking process (Purnhagen & Molitorisová, 2024). In the Youth PB Accelerator (2022b), they engaged in participatory budgeting. In both the EU Youth Dialogue and the Young Citizens’ Dialogue, the participants were considered political actors influencing EU policies (EU Youth Dialogue, 2024, April 5; European Commission, 2019). SALTO (2020) acknowledged young people as actors who are involved in decision-making but also in civic action and youth activism. In the activism realm, in the Fridays for Future (n.d.) movement, the activists were/are not only seen as political actors, but the whole movement is a youth-initiated, youth-led, and youth-empowered practice, where “Greta and fellow school strikers decided to continue their strike.” and were successful in getting climate change into political discussions across the globe (de Moore et al., 2020; Wahlström et al., 2019).

Some practices acknowledged young people being political actors in the “creation and implementation of ideas that solve local challenges and contribute to a better future” (EC2U Makeathon, n.d.), while YouCount recognised that despite that young people are political actors, involving young people in decision-making

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is not easy, and they had to employ various tactics to encourage the active involvement, facilitate interaction opportunities and empower young people within their communities to overcome difficulties (Borgström et al., 2024). Acknowledging young people as political actors, or talking about involving young people in decision-making processes, may be popular, but as YouCount wrote in their documentation, “*but actually doing it is leading us to more murky ground.*” (Borgström et al., 2024, p. 41.). This highlights the importance of other factors in youth engagement. Such as what was conducted in STING, where the focus of their workshops was on capacity building by providing peer-to-peer learning opportunities, interactive methods and a lot of space for the young participants to show their own knowledge and skills. As is written in STING’s documentation, these kinds of efforts were done in addition to “*Young participants [being] also from the start considered as active citizens who would eventually carry out similar activities on their own.*” (Tokarski et al., 2023, p. 5). These examples highlight that in addition to recognising young people as political actors, educational and empowering elements are seen as important for real youth engagement in politics.

There were only three practices that did not fulfil the theme of “youth as political actors”, and these were all purely educational practices. In DEMOGAMES (n.d), the participants learn about democracy and democratic culture via games. In YES, the participants learn about democracy with a focus on non-formal education and experimental learning to build active citizenship (YES: Youth Engagement in Society Project Consortium, 2021). In the European Local Democracy Week (n.d), young people learn civic education by, for example, visits and mock-elections. In contrast to the other practices, these practices highlight more of one prevalent perspective, which can be understood as youth as citizens-to-be perspective, where young people are not yet seen as full political actors with the power to change things but people who are learning about becoming a citizen, for example, via democracy and civic education.

The least prevalent way to promote intersectional purpose was fulfilling the criteria “institutional change” (n=5), which entailed that the practice aimed for institutional changes in the public, political institutions, or schools and organisations. This was also the theme where practices acted the second most often against promoting intersectional purpose (n=12).

Practices that aimed for institutional change include the Young Citizens’ Dialogue, which proposes a revised European citizens’ initiative and a platform for public input (European Commission, 2019). The Youth PB Accelerator (2022) focused on promoting participatory budgeting for more youth engagement in their local politics. UPLIFT introduced a new method called Reflexive Policy-making which aims to change how young people are heard in the political process through a dialectical process involving research practitioners, young people and institutional stakeholders (Hoekstra & Gentili, 2022). Lastly, the EC2U Makeathon (2024) aimed to find solutions for equal educational opportunities for people living in small towns with few young people.

The finding that institutional change was the least often promoted theme is understandable since projects related to, for example, the EU institutions operate with and sometimes within established institutions. Therefore, it would be against their inherent nature to act against the status quo.

The DPPs acted most often against the promotion of intersectional purpose in reclaiming the power, meaning that the participation is youth-led or youth-initiated (n=14). Thus, 70 percent of the DPP activities were coded as adult-led and -initiated. The only practice that was truly from the start youth-initiated is the Fridays for Future movement, started by then 15-year-old Greta Thunberg in 2018. However, since it is extremely uncommon that EU-wide practices are initiated by young people, here the practices that had elements of co-creation of activities or the research process as part of the practice, or if the practice entailed young people conducting activities for their peers were also seen as reclaiming the power. These practices gave young participants a broader role, where they could not only participate in activities and tasks determined by others, but also engage in the planning and executing activities for themselves and their peers and forming the practice further. The following five other practices were considered to reclaim the power.

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SEEDS was “a science project by teenagers for teenagers”. The project had so-called leader adolescents in all the research processes, and all interventions the project planned in schools concerning supporting teenagers with a healthy lifestyle were teenager-led (Murray & Riemenschneider, 2022). In YouCount, young people also had an important role in the research part of the project. The so-called young citizen scientists were treated as experts by stakeholders, and the practice created a handbook on how to conduct co-creation with young people, highlighting that young people’s involvement should also be included in the planning of co-creation, not only realise other people’s plans (Borgström et al., 2024).

In UPLIFT, policies were “*made with the target group (based on a deep understanding of their needs and strategies) and not for the target group. This means that young people are actively involved in the creation, development, implementation and evaluation of new policies and tools.*” (Hoekstra & Gentili, 2022, p. 3). In SALTO (n.d.), the documentation stated that “*Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps encourages projects that are led by young people throughout all stages of preparation, implementation and follow-up. Young people participating in decisions about how a project is run and being able to shape and create projects for themselves is a key part of youth participation.*” In STING, “*Three young experts, who were already members of youth organisations engaged in environmental activities, were contracted to design and implement a series of workshops.*” (Tokarski et al. 2023, p. 5.). Young people thus had broad and critical roles in these practices in the creation, development, and implementation.

Output

The output dimension consists of three themes: policy recommendations (4.1), impact assessment (4.2), and stated impact (4.3). In this dimension, it was clear that the most prevalent way to promote output was to make policy recommendations, while especially stated impact was almost non-existent. The only practice that stated impact was YouCount, which also included a policy impact assessment. The practice notes about the difficulties of impact assessment, as over the course of a project, it might be too early to observe the impacts:

“However, when analysing whether CSS in YouCount managed to co-create social innovations and policymaking, some findings indicate that the direct effects on policymaking are not immediately apparent, because it is either too early to observe changes, that require more time to materialise, or because the direct attribution on policymaking has not been identified beyond the described recommendations and proposals. Nevertheless, several cases have reached a stage where the potential effect on policymaking affecting young people is foreseeable (see Lorenz et al., 2023).” (Franco, Lorenz & Norvoll, 2024, p. 26)

In addition to expecting policy-making effects, YouCount did state some impacts:

“1. The acknowledgement of the contribution of YCS [young citizen scholars] to collect, structure and examine systematically the most important information about the research topic. 2. The collaborative work with stakeholders has started, that can lead to changes in the sphere of their institutions. 3. The implementation of youth-led processes where youth are at the centre of many of the decision including the agenda setting, the development of the research method (creation of questionnaire survey, and choosing the most relevant and pertinent questions), analysing data, drafting conclusions and findings, and not only young person-focused but young person-led dialogues. 4. The establishment of more democratic decision-making processes 5. A more empowered YCS in terms of an enhanced ability to access to an expanded social network (stakeholders, community) 6. Changes in social relations and power relations. -- Another change observed is related to social relations and dynamics that reflect changes in participants interactions and relationships. 7. With new relational dynamics, based on equality and new gender roles.” (Lorenz et. al., 2023, p. 33—34).

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The YouCount's stated impacts were thus related to the acknowledgement of young people's work and leadership in the research process, establishing a more democratic process for decision-making (within the project), as well as to new relational dynamics with consideration to equality and new gender roles that impacted the participants' relationships. Therefore, the impacts were related to the project itself and the young people's lives that engaged in the practice as co-creators, not necessarily society at large. However, from an intersectionality standpoint, the new relational dynamics are likely to support the participants' understandings of different existing social divisions and power, and how people's differing experiences shape their perspectives on power.

The other project that had an impact assessment was SEEDS. The evaluation of the impacts of the intervention made in the makeathons was done in the form of a questionnaire on healthier habits among school students.

“Evaluation questions from the final questionnaires showed that most adolescents (56.4% – 91.9%) participated in at least one of the activities from the intervention. When asking adolescents about their wish to maintain certain activities, answers were mixed. Cooking workshops, a sports day, drinking more water and leaflets about healthy lifestyle decisions were most popular and students wish to maintain those activities at school.” (Wargers, Mölenberg, & Jansen, 2022, p. 33.)

SEEDS thus assessed the impact of the project on the goal of promoting healthy lifestyles among teenagers.

The most prevalent way to fulfil the output dimension was to give policy recommendations (n=12), often in the form of a policy recommendation report. Examples of the practices include the following:

In the Citizen Jury on New Genomic Techniques, the jury produced 18 final recommendations with the aim of contributing to informed decision-making (Purnhagen, & Molitorisová, 2024). In DEEP-linking YOUTH (2017b), recommendations were given to improve the ERASMUS program by getting stakeholders, politicians, and organisations involved with the Digital Dashboard (produced in the practice) to create continual engagement between them and young people. DEEP-linking YOUTH (2017b) recommends using the Digital Dashboard as a way to aid policy-making by allowing the reaching and understanding of the perspectives of those who do not participate in the decision-making processes. In Our Life, Our Voice (2017b), a policy recommendation report developed by the young participants was made, as was the case in the EU Children's Participation Platform (2023) and in Confidence in Tomorrow (2023, May 16), where the participants' ideas and wishes were summarised to Council of Europe duty bearers. In the EU Youth Dialogue, the practice explained that the conclusions are presented to the Council of the European Union, which may then adopt the policy document (2024, April 5).

Policy recommendations were thus common, as 60 percent of the practices entailed recommendations for policies. However, without impact assessments it is unsure how much of an impact the recommendations had/have in the policy-making processes.

6 Discussion

In this study, we have developed an evaluation framework for analysing EU-level deliberative and participatory practices. The framework is heavily influenced by the section “An intersectional lens for deliberation and participation of youth” in the review and knowledge integration report (D2.1) “Deliberative Democracy, Youth, and Intersectionality: A Literature Review” produced by WP2. We have utilised the framework as one intersectional lens, providing a new method to examine how inclusive and intersectional measures are implemented within the existing EU-level DPPs. Although the framework is used in this study for analytical purposes, we believe it can also offer possibilities for designing new practices that acknowledge important intersectional principles. While we recognise that the framework may lack some important themes that we were not aware of during its development, we consider it as a

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suggestion that can be further defined within the Sincrony project as part of the forthcoming “Task 3.4 Overall integration of recommendations for best inclusive practices in an intersectional lens”.

Our findings indicate that the foremost ways in which intersectionality and inclusion have been promoted in the EU-level DPPs are by providing support for participation, by, e.g., expert hearings and training, and by seeing the young participants as political actors (instead of merely subjects of education). The evaluated DPPs seem to strive to empower the young participants as democratic citizens and support their civic skills and capabilities.

The foremost ways in which the practices acted against the different dimensions of inclusion and intersectionality were found in the intersectional purpose dimension. This included reclaiming the power by having the practice as youth-led or youth-initiated, as well as aiming for institutional changes in the public, political institutions, schools, or other organisations. The finding is most likely due to the nature of how these practices are structured—based on predefined ideas and topics regarding how and in which issues young people are going to engage in. In this study, we understood institutions from the perspectives of political decision-making and structures. Since many of the EU-level DPPs operate within or in close proximity to existing political institutions, pursuing institutional change is often not part of their agenda.

Inclusion in recruitment was also often lacking in the DPPs. Efforts to balance recruitment are a vital part of ensuring that those who are less likely to engage in politics participate in the practice. Self-selection in political participation feeds into the typical societal patterns, where those who are better off engage more actively in political decision-making. Alternative solutions for balancing recruitment are, for example, quasi-random sampling or using multiple (also atypical) recruitment channels to reach those who are not natural recipients of the invitations to mobilise in different processes. Quasi-random sampling especially allows recruitment based on population share.

In deliberative democratic literature, a common concern regarding the practices of deliberation, most often conducted in the forms of deliberative mini-publics, is that they are not meaningfully connected to traditional arenas of power, such as parliaments, which limit their impact (Curato & Böker, 2016). Similar concerns can be lent to other forms of DPPs as well, especially when the practices are not institutionalised. The least prevalent ways in which the evaluated practices fulfilled our framework were in stated impact and impact assessment, and here the analysed documents also showed the most significant lack of information. The lack of impact appears, unfortunately, to be typical for different types of non-institutionalized DPPs. Some evaluated practices are connected to the different actors in the European Union, which allows the practices to make recommendations directly to EU institutions. Similar institutional links could enhance the impact. However, even institutional links may not be enough, and none of the evaluated practices with ties to the EU institutions had done impact assessment, leaving the impacts unknown. Also, from an intersectional perspective, strong connections to institutions may not serve marginalised voices as institutions closely linked to the status quo, which has pushed their voices into the margins.

One key finding within this task has been the difficulty of evaluating intersectionality and inclusion in practice based on documentation. Evaluators can only work with the material that the practices have produced, and some practices and cases have provided more detailed reports while others have done so much more minimalistically. As a result, it is fully possible that some projects have been miscoded within the framework due to the lack of documentation addressing the dimensions and themes in the framework. For this reason, the results of this study should not be interpreted as a definite assessment of each case selected for analysis. We recognise that some of the themes in our evaluation framework may have been considered in the practices but were not reported in the documentation. Similarly, even if a theme appears to have been promoted based on the documentation, we cannot be entirely certain how it was experienced by the participants themselves. Nevertheless, we believe that our analysis has been able to highlight some best practices in the field of DPPs, which can be applied in developing new DPP designs. This study also

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provides insights into which themes of intersectionality are generally less acknowledged and where more focus could be directed.

We decided to evaluate the practices based on what they themselves tell about the practice in the available documentation (and information from, e.g. Participedia), not from what we know from critical research, such as could be possible with the case of the Fridays for Future movement. The reason behind this decision is that we wanted our analysis to be coherent and equitable for all the cases in the analysis. By focusing on the open documentation provided by each practice, we aimed to ensure that our evaluation criteria were applied consistently across the cases, regardless of our prior knowledge. This approach helped to maintain objectivity and fairness, preventing any single case from being unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged due to the availability of external research or additional information. However, we acknowledge that this method may overlook some critical insights that could have been gained from a more in-depth analysis consisting of observations or material gained from the people participating in the practices. Despite this limitation, we believe that the strategy to rely on existing documentation was the best possible to provide a balanced and systematic evaluation, especially, since many of the practices have already been implemented some years ago.

The practices selected for the analysis varied in nature, ranging from large conferences to small workshops, from participatory games to comprehensive strategies, and from citizen juries to protest movements. It is natural that different types of DPPs operate under different preconditions. For instance, large conferences initiated by EU institutions may have more resources and the potential to produce policy recommendations with significant impact, but they may struggle with promoting institutional critique as the institutional projects are implemented within the established institutions. Similarly, participatory games might engage individuals through innovative communication methods but face challenges in influencing actual policy-making. In comparison, the strategy documents offering guidelines for youth participation may acknowledge important themes such as financial accessibility. However, they don't have to confront the resource challenges associated with implementing these types of inclusivity measures. Therefore, it is understandable that pursuing "a perfect" DPP considering all themes in our framework would be an ambitious endeavour requiring thoughtful reflections of the preconditions under which the DPP operates.

In conclusion, the framework we have developed serves as one intersectional lens that can be applied to the planning, execution, and evaluation of DPPs to better engage marginalised communities. The framework can potentially also be used on other levels of government than the EU. While the framework provides guidance, it is crucial to acknowledge that promoting intersectionality and inclusion requires more than adhering to its elements. Commitment to critical reflection, openness, and willingness to constantly learn and critically reassess the practice at hand is needed to better implement intersectionality and inclusion in practice. To truly enhance the inclusions and intersectionality in practices and to improve the DPPs planned for citizen engagement, document analysis, and the documentation of the processes by the organisers, need to be complemented with the lived experiences and perspectives of the participants—particularly those who are disadvantaged and marginalised.

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