

Actionkit for societal engagement

It's not easy to be an activist...



Acknowledgements:

Servizio Civile Internazionale (SCI) Italy as hosting organisation

PeaceWorks Sweden as sending organisation

European Solidarity Corps for the program

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Introduction

Thank you!

Thank you for having participated in a training, volunteering camp or youth exchange with SCI,

Thank you for taking that step to contribute to the local society,

And Thank you for wanting to move forward with your commitment of making a change even after your participation.

This actionkit was created as a personal project of mine during my placement as a European Solidarity Corps (ESC) volunteer in Service Civil International (SCI) Italy. Together with a team of engaged volunteers from three continents, Asia, Europe and Africa, we put together this toolkit of different methods through which you can be active in your local, regional, national or international society.

The material consists of examples from different countries, mostly Europe, where you can get an insight on how active participation in society can look for different people, passionate in making a change in diverse ways. Every way of being active is important, and even though not everyone can do everything, everyone can do something. In fact, the name of the actionkit – It's not easy to be an activist – derives from an inside joke at the place of residence and work from my time as a volunteer at La Città dell'Utopia, a project of SCI Italy. Together with the other volunteers we were active in society in varied ways, and even though it took up some time that we might have otherwise spent discovering Rome, we all enjoyed it because we were active in ways and about topics that inspired us. This is what we, the team writing the material, want you who are reading to feel as well. Being an activist is easy, as long as you are doing it in a way that makes you feel like you are not losing time, but quite the contrary. That you are spending it in a way that gives you energy and hope for all the time in front of you.

And so, thank you again, for spending your time saving time!

All the best of luck,

Tanya Möller Forastieri on behalf of the Actionkit Team

How to use the material

The actionkit begins by providing an example of the importance of societal action with a case study of the Balkan context. Afterwards follow 20 methods through which you can be active in society. These methods are gathered through different types of research, mainly interviews or other input from first hand sources of young people utilising the method to achieve change in their local, regional, national or international context. Other than this, research has also been conducted theoretically. Under each section you can find the sources used for that particular method, as well as if it is an example from a particular context.

Below you will find the index with all the methods presented in order of difficulty to carry out, to facilitate your search for a method that would suit you. You can read the whole material or the specific methods that interest you.

Enjoy!

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CASE STUDY

After the Cold War, Eastern Europe went through big political changes. Countries in the region, from the Baltic states to the Balkans, faced challenges while trying to become democratic and develop their economies. To understand how these countries' politics evolved, we need to look at the actions they took. This research wants to give a detailed look at the political actions in Eastern Europe. It will compare things like elections, protests, political parties, and how countries work together. By doing this, we can find common things, differences, and unique parts in each country's politics. This research will help us understand Eastern Europe better and help policymakers and scholars make informed decisions.

To get a better picture, we'll ask some important questions:

- What different kinds of political actions happen in Eastern Europe and how do they affect how the region is run?
- What things make elections happen and shape how political parties work in Eastern Europe?
- How do protests and groups from society bring about political changes and help democracy?
- How have political parties in Eastern Europe changed their ideas over time, and how did this affect how they run things?
- How do relationships between countries in the region and their connections with Europe and other powerful places shape what they do?

By answering these questions, we'll understand how Eastern Europe's politics works. This can help people who make decisions, researchers, and people interested in the region's politics. It will give them a better understanding and help them make better choices.

To understand Eastern European politics, we'll use a mix of methods. We'll look at research papers, reports from big international groups like the EU and the World Bank, and writings from governments and other groups in the area. We'll also follow trusted news sources for recent news about politics. We'll compare what's happening in different Eastern European countries. We'll focus on places like Poland, Hungary, and Ukraine to see how they're different.

This will help us find things that are the same, things that are different, and things that happen a lot in the region. While we'll try our best, there are some challenges. Eastern Europe's politics change, so we'll focus on new and recent sources. We might not always get all the local information, especially from smaller places. Even though we might miss some small details, we'll try to find the big trends and ideas. We'll be careful to do everything the right way. We'll use proper sources, give credit to others' work, and avoid showing any personal ideas. We'll respect the history, culture, and politics of the region as we study it.



Elections: Elections are super important in Eastern Europe. After communism ended, most countries started having elections with many parties. This lets people choose their leaders in a fair way. But each country does it a bit differently. Some countries have lots of people voting, while others don't have as many. This depends on how much people trust politics, how rich or poor they are, and if they think voting makes a difference. Some places furthermore have parties that work together well, while others have many parties and it's harder to agree. Sometimes, parties need to join up to make decisions.



Protests: People in Eastern Europe have done big protests to change things. They wanted fairness, honesty, and more democracy. These protests have made leaders listen and change some rules. Protests often start because of things like bad government, unfairness, and not enough help for people. These issues upset people. Protests can be big or small, and they use different ways to get noticed. Some protests have changed a lot, while others haven't.




Parties: Political parties have different ideas over time. Some parties used to be in the middle but now talk about their country a lot. They care about culture and might not like outside influences. Some leaders are really liked because they talk against the government. But they also have problems because they might not follow all the rules of democracy.




Being Friends and Neighbors: Countries in Eastern Europe have good relations and work together in groups. They also deal with the European Union (EU) and other countries around them. Being in the EU helps countries become better and more democratic. But sometimes, they don't agree on everything and there are arguments. Moreover some countries are close to Russia and others want to be closer to NATO. They have to balance who they are friends with.


Country specific examples:



Poland: A party called Law and Justice (PiS) became really important in Poland. It started in 2001 and got more popular over time. People liked it because it promised to fix things like corruption and unfairness from the past. PiS also talked a lot about their country and its traditions, which made many people happy. But some of the changes they made worried people and the European Union (EU). When PiS started making changes, some of them were controversial and made people worry about democracy. One big problem was that they changed how the courts work, which made people think they might control everything. The EU got concerned about this and started talking to Poland.



Hungary: Another country, Hungary, had a party called Fidesz that became very powerful. Its leader, Viktor Orbán, changed the party's ideas from when it started. They talked more about their country and were against immigration. But some people were worried about how they used their power and controlled the media. Hungary's leaders sometimes argued with the EU. They wanted their country to make decisions on its own and didn't always follow EU rules. This made people think democracy might be in trouble.



Ukraine: In Ukraine, there were big protests in 2013-2014 called Euromaidan. People were upset because the government didn't want to be close to the EU. They wanted more democracy and less corruption. Ukraine had problems with Russia. Russia took part of Ukraine called Crimea in 2014 and there was a war in another area called Donbass. This made the country very unstable and many people had to leave their homes.

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In these countries, their leaders and changes they made had big effects on how people live and how their countries are seen by others.

Historical Legacy's Role: The past shapes how countries act politically. Eastern Europe's history with communism, changes after communism, and relationships with nearby countries all affect their politics. For instance, Poland's history of fighting against communism and Hungary's time under the Soviet Union influenced the rise of parties that like their own culture a lot.

Socioeconomic Factors Matter: How well people live also matters. Things like corruption, not fair money distribution, and bad social services make people upset. These issues start protests and change how people vote. Money problems can push people to ask for change and share their complaints through politics.

Democracy Issues: Some countries are having problems keeping their democracy strong and following fair rules. Leaders who want a lot of power can hurt democracy. Poland and Hungary are examples of countries where leaders' actions worry others about democracy.

Geopolitics Influence: Many countries are stuck between two strong groups: the European Union (EU) and Russia. This makes their politics hard to balance. The conflict between Ukraine and Russia, as well as issues between Poland and the EU, show how these big powers affect countries' politics and safety.

Different Political Journeys:

Strong or Not Democracy: Some countries are good at making their democracy work and keeping their democracy rules. But others, like Poland and Hungary, are having trouble with their democracy. On the other hand, countries like Estonia and Latvia are doing well in building strong democracies after being part of the Soviet Union.

Populism and Nationalism: Countries have different ideas about these topics. Some, like Poland and Hungary, like their country's ways and want to show that. Other countries, like Slovakia and the Czech Republic, try to be in the middle with different parties.

Being Part of the EU: Some countries are already part of the EU, which helps them grow and have better democracy. Others, like Serbia and Bosnia, are working to join the EU. This affects how they work with other countries and follow EU rules.

These trends show how history, money, challenges, and powerful groups all shape how Eastern European countries act in politics.

Conclusion:

Political actions in Eastern Europe show the region's complex and changing political landscape. By studying countries like Poland, Hungary, and Ukraine, we found common patterns and differences. The past, like experiences with communism, still affects politics. Some countries have nationalist parties due to history and culture. Being close to the European Union and Russia also matters, shaping politics. Problems with democracy and fairness are seen in places like Poland and Hungary. Each country has its path: some are getting stronger democracies, while others still work on it. Some like nationalism, while others prefer being in the middle. To make Eastern Europe stable and fair, democracy needs to grow, laws should be strong, and countries must cooperate. We need to keep learning as politics change and use these insights to help Eastern Europe become even better.

CREATE AN INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT

Interview with **Vesna Jovanovic, Serbia**



Vesna giving a class.

Vesna's instagram account you can find [here](#).

With this action the main motive is to spread knowledge about a topic of your choice. According to Vesna Jovanovic Instagram is a good platform because it is widely used, not only as a way to relax during your free time, but also for business. This makes Instagram a powerful tool to use to influence the people who choose to follow you.

The target group of this action are the people interested in the topics that you are focusing on. Even topics that at a first glance may not seem political can be framed in a way to make more people learn more about something political. Vesna has an Instagram account focused on teaching Italian, but it has continuously been a focus of hers to also include a political aspect in her classes. An example of this is how she during her classes with her students read or watch things that can be inspirational for them. The classes in other words revolve not only around Italian language and topics related to Italian culture, but also around any topic that is impacting the political landscape at the moment. The important thing is that they speak about it in Italian during the class.

The stories the students take part of can thereby also encourage them to think about new topics and react in new ways than before. At a recent class for instance, she talked with a student about Ultima Generazione. This student didn't know a lot about the group, and at the next class the student said that they read about the group and started to think about civil disobedience and ways of organising societal participation in a wide sense. They also put the action in the context they had in their country even though that specific action does not exist there.

There are some qualities that can make you more prone to enjoying having an Instagram account as a form of societal engagement.

- **You are persistent.** To see some positive things everytime you are down/tired of the job.
- **You have a will to always keep learning.** On socials you need to be present and learn about things that are changing in society and socials.
- **You have a strong passion about the subject in question.** That keeps you driven.

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- **You are organised.** If you start having an Instagram account on a day by day basis, it will take a lot of your time. According to Vesna many people think that it's easy and fast to be active through this method, but it is not. You need to prepare material and text and think about the timing for publishing, how many times a day etc. For this reason it is recommended by Vesna to focus on monthly organisation. Personally she publishes a post around 2-3 times a week, and every day she publishes stories or reels. A post takes around 2-3 hours to make, but it varies depending on the subject. For her, it was draining in the beginning, and still today she does not like social media. Still she keeps it going because she is inspired by what she does.
 - **You are able to see your account from the perspective of your followers.** Don't look at your followers as just numbers, try to build connections with people as well. You want to reach people so they don't feel like they are just scrolling and wasting time on socials.
- You can do this action alone, and it can be suited for a beginner. Vesna didn't even have an Instagram until 2019/20. She was even against social media, but started to look at the positive sides that social media can bring us on a personal and professional level. In the beginning of 2021 she decided to try the method out.
- Some general recommendation for doing this action are:**
- **Be trendy.** The algorithm will eat you if you are not following the trends, so keep yourself up to date.
 - **Always think about the people following you,** what do they find both interesting and useful? Listen to your followers, ask them about their needs and wants.
 - **You can use the Instagram tools to post things automatically according to when your followers are active etc.**
 - **If you promise your followers something it turns into an obligation for you to do it, which can help you finish on time.** If you promise you cannot go back, since it will damage the trust from your followers. For example, Vesna promised her followers a book about Rome, and announced it a long time before she wanted it to be done.
 - **Follow the calendar and general societal trends,** and people's specific expectations for that period of time, i.e. New Year's Eve, Christmas, summer etc.
 - **Think of how you present yourself on social media.** Who are you presenting? Everything will be visible. Involve important parts of yourself in the recordings as well, such as political aspects like manifestations. Make yourself human to your followers, and give them a glimpse of real society.
 - **It is very important to make connections with people from your field.** For example in Vesna's case the language field. You can do collaborations on lives and other things. You can also get inspiration from each other and it can help you to not feel alone. You can see that other people are struggling with the same things as you.
 - **Invest in yourself,** through for example Instagram advertisement, and through education on your subject to develop your own knowledge about it.

CREATE MUSIC

Interview with

Pamela Nyasha Mapedzamombe, Zimbabwe

Mariana (Mary Anne) Mendes , Portugal

With this action we try to touch someone emotionally to obtain reflection within them for different topics, in order to incite a drive for change in society. Music can also help people realise their liberties and rights, as well as being a tool for you as a writer to bring up voices that otherwise do not get heard. Your target group is therefore the general public.

If you identify yourself with any of the following characteristics, creating music might be an appropriate tool for social engagement for you:

- You are able to be in touch with your emotions.
- You are a good listener.
- You have an interest in music (singing/playing instruments/listening to music).
- You have an interest in writing.
- You are interested in learning about new topics.

The time you put into the action is up to you. If you want to make music into a career you need to put more time into it. For example Pamela, after having written music for a while, wanted to develop a project where you study music as a way of reaching out to young people.

The project would revolve around playing a song and then discussing it. In this way the young people can see that they do not need to have a specific degree to make a change, but they can do it in different ways. This is particularly relevant for the youth in Africa where the view is especially present that you need to have a degree to make a change.

Another example is Mary Anne who has been focusing on music since she was very young, and that also has music as her field of study. She started playing violin, which then evolved to playing piano. During her piano studies she got in an accident making it impossible to play piano for about 1,5 years. This forced her to find new ways of expressing herself and with that came singing and songwriting. In the beginning she wrote and sang for herself, but then she realised that she can also inspire other people with her music.

You can do the action alone to begin with, but if you want to record the music you need to involve other people. Pamela for example finds her producer to play an important role in her songwriting and music production, since you both need to create a good sound and have a good text to convey the music to others and for it to have an impact.



Mary Anne in Feira de S. Joao, Évora in July 2023

Mary Annes Instagram account you can find [here](#).

General recommendations for doing the action are:

- Do not follow trends. It goes up and then down, you cannot have an impact on someone's life like that.
- During the writing process, let yourself feel all the emotions you have about something. Don't restrict yourself. Then analyse how you feel about that you are feeling a certain way about a certain topic.
- Do research, from all the spheres of perspectives on a subject, and transmit this into music. In that way you understand the topic better.
- Be a good listener. Everyone has a voice and you need to listen, not only superficially. This applied both to yourself and others.
- Read a lot about everything. If you have an idea about a topic you want to write about but you don't know how, reading can help you sort through your mind and understand what you want to convey with your music.



Above Pamela with her music producer and Senegalese artist Xuman working on a project

Country/region specific recommendations:

Africa

For your music to have an impact you need to write from a reflective standpoint. Reflecting might touch on many angles even political ones. Therefore, for example in Africa, you need to do it in a well thoughtout manner, because it might at times be taken out of context. Hence it is wiser to use parables, humor and other strategies as you tackle topical issues.

Portugal

On the 25th April 1974 there was a revolution in Portugal. The revolution started because of music played on the radio. Since then the country has had a lot of intervention music, which makes creating music a widely accepted tool for political action in the country. In this Spotify List you can find examples of music inspiring revolution, from Portugal: <https://spotify.link/ICi3tTcSeCb>

GET INVOLVED IN A SOCIAL MOVEMENT

Interview with **Maria Jagodzinska, Poland**

According to Maria Jagodzinska who was active in the social movement Fridays for Future for 1,5 years from 2019, the action aims to help politicians to make good decisions, both through informing them and the general public on the topic relevant for the social movement. Fridays for Future brought a lot of information/awareness to society through their actions, and they managed to get a lot of young people on the streets. Actually this was the first big youth movement in Poland. It was very shocking for people, taking into account all the actions and talks with politicians. They managed to show to the world that youth has a voice.

“Actually this was the first big youth movement in Poland. /.../ They managed to show to the world that youth has a voice.”

The target group for Fridays for Future depended on the type of action they did. In general the actions were directed at politicians, but the awareness of the public came with the package, because they had to explain to the public why they were targeting politicians.

If you identify with the following this might be an action suited for you:

- You want to take action on political issues targeting politicians, without wanting to be a part of a political party and thereby being partial. The social movements are often focused on one topic, such as climate, animal rights, migrants rights, children rights etc. If you have a certain topic that interests you and where you want to make an impact this can therefore be a tool for political action that suits you.
- There are not really any prerequisites to be involved. But it is important to understand that you can not expect change to happen over night. You need to have patience and think about the impact you are having, for example what a demonstration can lead to. Even if you don't think you have an impact, you do. Some people prefer to see the outcomes very directly, but for climate most of the impact is indirect. Not that many outcomes will be visible right away. If you have a hard time with this, probably this action is not the best suited for you.



SOURCE: JÖRG FARYS / FRIDAYS FOR FUTURE

The time that it takes to be involved in a social movement depends on how involved you are. You can do very different things in a social movement, since the time you put into it is up to yourself and not restrained though election periods or the like. You can for example drive people with your car or other vehicle now and then to their events, you can manage communication, you can plan an event, you can be involved on an international level coordinating meetings and the structures of the movement... What you decide to do, and on which intensity level, will determine the time it takes. Since you can choose how involved you are in the action and how much responsibility you take, this is an activity suited for you who are a beginner in societal engagement. However, something that is sure is that you need other people to do this action with you. A social movement is precisely a movement starting from the ground, where a part of a community wants to create a change on a particular topic.

General recommendations for doing the action are:

- Don't be afraid to reach out to the social movement groups. They are not as closed as they seem. They also need a lot of people, since often times they are not that many activists. And more activists equals more time to rest for the people involved, which is important for mental health reasons.
- If you have people around you who are also concerned about the same topic as you, you can create something with your friends around this. If your friends are not interested – look for people around you, in your close surroundings. Everywhere there are people who want to get involved. Put a bit of your strength into finding these people.
- Don't take too much upon yourself. It's easy to feel like you are the only one who can do something, but you are not. Remember to rest, take time for that. Take care of yourself.
- Try to get to know your capacities and look for your strengths. Involve yourself in finding what your skills are and how you can use them in your movement. Some specific skills can be very important, such as driving to an event. You don't need to be involved in the movement to drive the car, and still it helps a lot.
- Don't ask for or expect to get paid for your involvement, no matter the type.
- Try to stick to the things you like to do. You don't need to take part in everything, like an interview on national TV after a demonstration, if you are uncomfortable with that.

GIVE MONEY TO ORGANISATIONS

Country-specific example from Sweden

The purpose of this action is to support an organisation of your choice to better implement their work, and the target group of this action is therefore the organisation you are sending the money to, as well as the specific target group of that organisation.

Anyone who has some financial resources that they want to put into supporting an organisation that they think are doing good things can be part of this action. This action can especially be an option if you do not have that much time at your disposal for getting engaged, but want to do something for the greater good. This is a quick action in relation to time. You need to put in some time on the research of the organisation to see what they do and how they have spent their money in the past, to know if you trust them. Then you can choose if your financial support to the organisation is a one time occurrence or something you do on a regular basis, such as every month or every year.

You can do this action alone, and you do not need any specific skills other than understanding how a bank transfer functions. Sometimes you can also give the organisation money in cash.

Some general recommendation for doing the action from the Swedish context are:

- Find an organisation that you want to give money to, either by buying products they sell or through simply giving them money.
- To find a suitable organisation you can read their annual report and their activity plan, to understand how the organisation has previously handled their money and how they are budgeting for the upcoming year.
- Make sure the organisation has a 90-account or equivalent in other countries. 90-account (90-konto) is a quality label for reputable and serious fundraising organisations.¹
- Remember that it is not a competition between organisations, all are important and contribute in different ways to society. You just need to find the organisation that works with subjects closer to your heart.
- Go through with the payment.
- Make sure to get a confirmation of your payment.

1. [Svensk insamlingskontroll](#)



SOURCE: PICPEDIA.COM

ORGANISE AN EXPERT VISIT AT A LOCAL LIBRARY

Country-specific example from Zimbabwe

A library is a place that offers a collection of books which therefore also means a place of learning and discovering new things. The purpose of visiting the library is to get more information and develop informal education. The librarians themselves also have a great impact. They are very important for raising awareness of how libraries are significant in every society.

The target group depends on the type of action. If we organise for example a community hub for local events such as book promotions, slam poetry night, book clubbing ecc. we would expand the target group and direct events also towards young people.

You need other people to do the action with you. You can project many things, but for the implementation you need help, otherwise you can experience burnout. Also, people like to help each other and to feel part of the good change, especially in small societies.



SOURCE: BOOK AID INTERNATIONAL

The time it takes to do the action depends on the type of the action. If we are talking about, for example, the organisation of book promotion of the book that the librarian recommended to us two months ago we need to consider the beginning of the action from the moment when we started to read that book. Then we need to speak with librarians, the director of the library, people from the media and everyone who can help us in the organisation. That type of action can be a one time thing, but also something that can become a part of the program during the whole year.

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This action is fitted for someone who wants to take action on cultural development in their local society. This can include making connections with trained librarians and proposing for example extra programs such as English as a second language/Reading english books for kids, especially if in that local community there is no similar program this can be a great action. That impact can cause small changes but still changes. The important thing is that it is something everyone can do and that will have a positive impact. For these reasons this action is something you can do as a beginner, you can choose how involved you are in the action and how much responsibility you take.

Some recommendations for doing the action are:

- Don't be afraid to reach out to people and propose the activities that you'd like to have in your local community. Librarians are very nice people!
- Remember that everything is possible, but don't forget that organisation is a very important thing when we plan some action.
- Look for people around you. Everywhere there are people who want to get involved. Don't take too much upon yourself. It's easy to feel like you are the only one who can do something, but you are not. Remember to rest, take time for that.
- Try to stick to the things you like to do. You don't need to take part in everything. Take care of yourself.
- Enjoy the results! Sometimes it happens that we are too much into the action and so we can not enjoy 100%, but our responsibility is also that – to feel that great moment that lasts and to enjoy positive change!



SOURCE: BOOK AID INTERNATIONAL

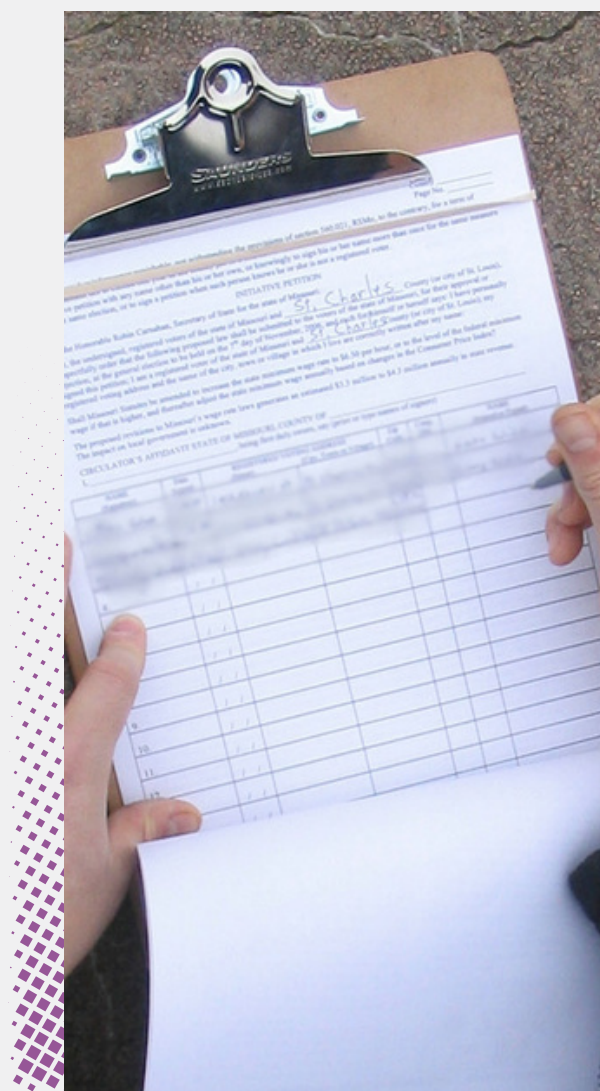
ORGANISE A PETITION

If you are the creator of the petition, you are trying to obtain as many signatures as you can to influence policies and law makers, showing that the issue is a concern held by citizens. It is also a means to bring attention to an issue and indirectly inform as many people as possible about the issue. You are trying to bring a subject into the public debate. If you on the other hand want to sign and spread an already existing petition, you are trying to contribute to increase its influence. Independently of how you are involved, the target group remains the decision makers.

If you can recognize yourself in the following, organising a petition could be a suitable way for you to get involved in society:

- You are organised. You will have to deal with data and think of an efficient way to collect them and transmit them.
- Good communication and writing skills would be great for advocacy: you want people to be convinced to sign the petition.
- Informatic skills could be a plus, to create an online petition that is easy to use and that is trustable.

The time it takes to do the action depends on the way through which you are involved. Purely signing the petition is a very fast action, but you could also try to spread the petition through social media.



SOURCE: ELISABETH JENKINS

ACTIONKIT FOR SOCIETAL ENGAGEMENT

Making a petition requires more time because you need to conduct solid research before initiating the petition, raise the issue before bringing the petition in some sort of social media campaign, and create a media campaign or information campaign to give visibility to your petition. It is an action that can be a good follow-up of other types of actions that give visibility, like creating an instagram account or making a protest. Then when you have enough signatures, in function of the scale you are acting for, you need to communicate the petition and its plaidoyer to the people that have the power to act on it.

You could be involved in this action on your own for the part concerning creating it, but then you need people to spread and sign it..



SOURCE: CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG/



SOURCE: CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG/

Some recommendations for creating a petition are:

- You can use websites to create your petition like "change.org"
- The title and the informations about your petition should be simple and clear.
- You need to know ahead where you want to send your petition once it has gathered enough signatures. It doesn't have to be only one entity, but can be sent to multiple ones.
- Use other actions to give visibility for your petition, especially actions that bring attention and emotion to the public.

Sources:

- Conference with ICAN Austria and the fellowship of reconciliation Austria
- ICAN petitions and international example : the "Free Britney" petition.

WRITE WIKIPEDIA ARTICLES

Interview with
Pamela Nyasha Mapedzamombe, Zimbabwe



SOURCE: [CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG/](https://creativecommons.org/)

Wikipedia is according to Pamela Nyasha Mapedzamombe a good platform to share information around different topics. Writing wikipedia articles is an information sharing method, helping people to achieve change through learning more about a specific topic. Your target audience is the general public.

This is an action appropriate for you, if you love to do research and to gain new knowledge about different topics, as well as if you like to write. It's not difficult to do, it is just a new skill to learn as with any other. You can easily do the action alone.

The time it takes to do the action varies. You need to research on the topic, and then write the article. How much time this takes depends on the subject, your prior knowledge and your translating ability.

The action is very convenient because you can choose how they work on the action.

You can:

- Write about a whole new topic and find all the research yourself.
- Add information to an already existing topic.
- Translate an existing topic into another language. This makes more people start talking about the topic, and in that way it becomes disseminated.

However, remember that you need to follow the rules of Wikipedia for writing the article, otherwise your article will be taken down.

Click [here](#) for a Wikipedia article that Pamela did on non violent communication in her language Shona:

A Wikipedia article describing the steps to write a Wikipedia article, you can find [here](#).

CREATE A PODCAST

Interview with **Karin Hellqvist (Ett Hum Om), Sweden**

According to Karin Hellqvist the general purpose with a podcast is to convey some information to people through spoken word. With a podcast you can talk in a way that makes people feel that you are close since the listener is more included through podcasts than some other media. This makes the listener more interested in what you are saying. The podcasters turn into your friends, even though you do not know them.

Karin has started a podcast called "Ett Hum om" as a company together with her friends. They want to be a bridge between the academic world and society. Through the podcast they disseminate the knowledge of the academic sphere to people, with the purpose of making it easy for the public to access the science and make use of the knowledge. The main objective is to reach out with new knowledge, as well as to reach different kinds of people, that maybe you wouldn't have reached if you just produced written text. The target group is thereby the general public.



Recording of an episode of Ett Hum Om

SOURCE: ETT HUM OM



SOURCE: ETT HUM OM

Here you can find the podcast
Ett Hum Om.



SOURCE: ETT HUM OM

If you have some of the following qualities this action might be suited for you:

- You are curious about a particular subject such as history, language, music, nature etc. and have a pre understanding of that subject for example through studies. How much prior knowledge you would need to create a podcast however depends on the subject in question. Since it is important to be able to make people interested in what you are talking about, it also helps to be interested yourself - it shines through!
- You are comfortable with talking on recorded tape (if you do the interviews). You don't need to be super extroverted though, which for example Karin herself isn't.
- You know how to cut the material recorded, or have the money to pay someone else to do it. Editing programs normally have a fee. The cutting part is the hardest with having a podcast.

- You have equipment for recording the podcast, microphones etc. You might be able to do the recording by your phone. In the worst case, the technical parts and sound are not the best, but then you can just work on it and practice.
- You are not too much of a perfectionist, at least to begin with. When you start creating the podcast you need to remember to not make it more complicated than it has to be. As long as no one else is involved, for example sponsors, you don't have anyone else relying on you, and you can do the podcast however you want. Adjust it as you go.

The time it takes to do the action depends on how big your team is, and what part of the creation of the podcast you are working with. Together with Karin there are four people in the podcasting team. Normally they first have a meeting all together to discuss the content of the next episode. Then it takes around 1,5h to record each episode. For this amount of time recorded it takes around 10 hours to do the cutting, which as mentioned is the most time consuming part of the work. Considering this, it is preferable to have a group to do the podcast together with. In that way you can get inspiration from each other for the content, and exchange ideas. You can furthermore be a beginner doing the action, but for the cutting part you need some experience. If you have money you can hire someone to do this part.

General recommendations for doing this action are:

- Do a lot of research, listen to a lot of podcasts and different types of them, and if you have a good idea and the ambition, it will probably work out.
- When you start with the action, try reaching out to people to build a team. If you don't know people who would be interested, try new ways of reaching out like social media, think of a student comrade, maybe someone will want to join. It doesn't hurt to ask around. Maybe they know someone who knows someone who could help you, for example with equipment.
- Be patient. This is not Karin's own strength generally, but in this she kind of is. It has for her felt good to start and then see what it leads to.
- Apply for money. There are a lot of grants or scholarships out there, or if you do not want to do it this way, look for sponsors. With a bit of research you can find a lot to help you on the way. They themselves for example found a grant precisely aimed towards podcasts that they have applied for.
- Sign up for A-Cast. You pay for it, and they give you advantages. You can also sign up for the free version, they themselves are. There are also other platforms than A-cast, which you can find through researching.
- Combine different media, such as podcasts, Instagram and Tiktok. The point is getting close to the listener/follower, and here the combination is a winning concept. People are more interested in following you like that. This also helps to develop your content - It doesn't need to end with the episode, for example if you have an Instagram connected to the podcast you can make a poll both before and after the episode has been published. In this way the involvement with the listeners continues.
- Do polls in the beginning where you can ask people on for example social media to answer questions about your content and your listeners/followers interests.

CREATE A PROJECT TO BRING YOUR COMMUNITY TOGETHER!

Example of webradio (Radio Paradise) –
Interview with **Julien Chil Hagopian, France**

The objective with bringing a community together can vary, for Julien Chil Hagopian and his colleagues at Radio Paradise it is to bring the underground and associative world together to create more exchange, since they do not usually communicate that much between each other. The target groups are the associations and the general public. At one point they also had the cooperative world as a target group through independent shops in the neighbourhood, trying to make all three of them work together. However this objective had to be abandoned, because the purposes of the three fields differed too much between each other, mainly because the cooperative world was in the exchange to make money.



A public talk between Radio Paradise and music producers

SOURCE: PIERRICK GIGLIO / RADIO PARADISE

Here you can find Radio Paradise Instagram account.

If you relate to the following characteristics creating a webradio to create community might be an action for you:

- You know the people you want to involve very well, or you make sure to find out information about them. To have information about the people you are working with is especially important in a community you don't know a lot about.
- You have a local community that you want to target, and that you will be part of for the foreseeable future. For Radio Paradise it was a problem that they lost contact with the shops from the cooperative world because they moved away from the neighbourhood, and since they do the radio as activists without pay it was difficult to find the time and resources to keep in touch when you are not living nearby.
- You are curious.
- You have patience. Radio Paradise started three-four years ago and is still growing and developing at a slow pace. Additionally, the concept is changing, where they for now only have music as a content but for the future want to move to more reflective content. Furthermore, to begin with they created events to bring the associative and underground world together, and they are planning on more similar events in the near future. So you need patience, it takes time to grow the project and to find the right concept for you.
- You have some journalistic skills. You need to have a certain level of refinement, you cannot pose awkward questions during interviews, for example.
- You are sociable.

The action takes a continuous amount of time, Julien puts in around one hour per day. The hardest part is communicating that the radio exists to listeners.

You cannot do this action by yourself, but you need to be a group. For Radio Paradise there are two main people in charge of the organisation, and then five others, one focusing on the visuals, and the rest with their own show at the radio, for example Qui Si Fa Roma, where they present interviews with local artists from Rome on the radio.

Recommendations for doing this action are:

- Be local. Let the project grow organically in the neighbourhood from the people who already know it. It also doesn't need to grow that much, keeping it at the level of the neighbourhood is good in itself.
- Collaborate with an institution, if you want it to grow. You can get the financial support to give the radio freedom, otherwise the radio needs to bring you income through the content. It should in other words not be a work against institutions, but a work with institutions. In order to reach the point of finding an institution that wants to work with you you need time and trust, but it can be done.

GET INVOLVED IN A MUNICIPAL YOUTH FORUM

Country-specific examples from Sweden

Being involved in a municipal youth forum often has the purpose of impacting municipal decisions in some way, if you are a young person primarily on aspects concerning young people's reality in the municipality. The target group of this political action are as a consequence the decision makers of the municipality, such as politicians.

It depends on the youth council what requirements they have to get involved. Normally you do not need to have any specific prior experiences to be involved, but sometimes you need to be involved in a student council or the like to be eligible.

To be involved in this context it is good if you:

- Are interested in learning about new topics.
- Have ideas of what could be changed in your town/municipality.
- Have an interest in talking to young people in your municipality to understand their perspectives better, in order to be a representative of as many young people as possible at the council.
- Are comfortable with expressing your opinion, even with people that you don't know that well.
- Want to learn more about how democratic decision making works on a local level, and possibly have a pre understanding of what this means through for example a student council. You need to conform to an already set model of democratic decision making. This involves, among other things:
 - Create and follow an agenda for the meeting.
 - Work according to a set budget.
 - Respect everyone's right to speak during the meeting and the principle of majority-decision making if nothing else is stipulated.
 - Time keep the meeting.
 - Keeping meeting minutes so that the process does not become dependent upon the individuals in it but can continue with other representatives.
 - Communicate with other young people to gather their perspectives on subjects.

ACTIONKIT FOR SOCIETAL ENGAGEMENT

For this action you need to be prepared to put in a continuous amount of time for the whole time period for which you are elected as a representative, usually a year.

Some recommendations for doing the action are:

- When you have been elected, make sure to understand all of the routines and practices of how it works, so that you can have an impact. You can see some examples of what it means to be involved above
- Remember that you have the right to be heard and listened to, and that your opinions are important! Sometimes involving youth in a youth council can be seen as a way of checking off a box for the politicians, and they might not want to give you real influence. Remember that you have a right to it, and claim it.

Sources:

- "Det här med metoder att bli lyssnad på är nog det vi jobbar på med varje, varje dag"
- En kvalitativ intervjustudie om metoder för ungdomars delaktighet i den svenska representativa demokratin



SOURCES: UN WOMEN

GET INVOLVED IN A POLITICAL PARTY

Interview with **Luca Guidi, Italy**

Involvement in party politics can, according to Luca Guidi, co-spokesperson of the Young Greens of Lazio region, Italy, be seen as the fastest way to have an impact in society. This is because you can achieve change from above, through laws concerning for example taxes, so that the money goes where it is most needed. Through laws you can then achieve a cultural/political change.

This type of action is suitable:

- If you want to achieve a system change. Because in parliament is where the money spending is being decided on and therefore where the ecological transition can be carried out without putting all the burden on the shoulders of the citizens.
- To help people make a mental shift in how they perceive the problems of today's reality.
- If you want to find a community where you feel a sense of belonging, a sense that you're doing something valuable for the people of your city /region /nation/ continent/planet, at the same time as you have a lot of fun together. The bigger the party the bigger the community.



Luca speaking at an event about the European Union

Because of the nature of the action, the target group is the people. You need them to vote for you to get elected, and afterwards the people are the ones you work for.

Everyone is welcome and can contribute with something to this action. Most of the tasks in the party are in the background. You could do leafleting, organise events, manage the local social media account of the party, create Instagram cards on Canva, make data analysis, manage the newsletter, write articles on the party's newspaper, write speeches, or even bake biscuits that will be distributed in the streets to let the people come closer and talk to them about the party's vision! All in all, every skill is welcome and there is a place for everyone.

If you want to have an officially elected post inside of the party you can keep the following points in mind. It is important to remember though, that you don't necessarily need any specific skill to get involved.

ACTIONKIT FOR SOCIETAL ENGAGEMENT

Just as outside of the officially elected roles, there are many different positions as an elected representative of a party. For example the secretary general is the one managing all the internal dynamics and directions and they should almost never make speeches. The co-spokesperson is the one putting his/her face in front of cameras and representing the party in front of the general public, but there's a lot of background work leading up to that. That being said, the following points could be a good starting point for reflection about which position inside of a party that would suit you the most, as they are all important in politics, especially in an elected position.

- Be able to handle frustration, you can get disappointed a lot. For example if the party doesn't grow as you want it to.
- Be respectful of other people's opinions.
- Be able to compromise. You can never make everyone happy (including yourself).
- When doing public speaking you need to be able to adapt to your audience. What you say, and how, influence how people see you and if you will be elected.
- Be communicative.
- Be able to express your views in a simple yet convincing way.
- it is important not to avoid discussion and dialogue.
- Practise not taking things personally, and being able to let things go.
- Be able to accept your own limitations.
- Be able to tap yourself on the shoulder for the things you actually achieve.
- Be able to prioritise yourself and your mental health.
- Have problem solving abilities.
- Try to not have FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out). You can always do more than what you are doing, but what you actually manage to do is good in itself.
- Have leadership abilities.
- Be able to multitask.
- Be empathetic. This is very important. It can sometimes clash with the mental health aspect.
- Be trustworthy.
- The action could be rather time consuming. You need to gain people's trust, and that takes time. Once you are elected, you are also elected for a specific period of time, for which you are expected to be involved in the party.

Some recommendations for having a representative position inside the party are:

- Have knowledge about the topic and a curiosity to learn more. Don't assume you know everything yourself. You need practical and theoretical knowledge like how to organise events and do leafleting, but also theoretical knowledge about the things you are talking about, economy, culture, society in general etc.
- Be prepared to put in the time for the work, it can be quite time consuming.
- Know your surroundings, and be prepared to build contacts.
- Be able to carry yourself and live a life according to what you are representing. Your actions in private life can have consequences for your actions in public life. You could become your political position.
- Be able to keep your motivations in mind. Why are you doing this? People feel if you believe in what you are saying.

ORGANISE A BOYCOTT

Country-specific examples from USA and Palestine

A boycott generally refers to stopping the consuming a product and organising a collective stop of consumption to change a company policies or create financial damage to this company, sometimes as a way to shut it down. However, the boycott can also be directed toward a person, a political institution or a country. If the boycott is successful it can also bring more awareness to the problem.

The target group is either the object of the boycott / affected by the boycott so that they change their unethical behaviours under the threat of economical damage, or the people that have a power against the object of the boycott, for example international law. Two examples are boycotts of companies that used exploitation of Uighurs for their production, where the objective is for those companies to stop producing in some regions of China, and in the case of boycott of Israël the target is the international organisations and institutions.

Some qualities that could be useful for you as an individual to have in order to participate in boycott as a political action are:

- You're good at communicating and tenacious.
- You're creative and able to find good and funny ways to inform people before the program.
- Being comfortable with talking in public could be a plus.
- If possible - try to find a public figure to represent your boycott. Famous persons or celebrities are very effective in boycott actions or boycott campaigns.

This can be a long action in time, because a punctual boycott without good communication and consistency in a longer time perspective is not going to have enough impact, especially if the target is big. An isolated boycott without a good information campaign before will have little to no impact.

ACTIONKIT FOR SOCIETAL ENGAGEMENT

Boycotting alone can maybe make one feel more coherent with one's own values, but it does not really have a social and political impact if it does not have a significant amount of people involved. To launch a boycott would be easier if you have a big enough group to start the boycott and to communicate about it.

Some recommendations for doing the action are:

- Make a good information campaign either through digital campaign or through using traditional medias, using a network of activists or group/ social movements that could be interested at the moment.
- Advocate specifically and clearly about why this specific product/ subject / entity should be boycotted, and what you want to hold the institution the product belongs to accountable for.
- There are a lot of examples of boycotts in history and nowadays, especially in countries like the USA that have a long tradition of it, some of them failed and some succeeded. Researching on them could help see which strategy worked and what kind of action was made to accompany them and the opposite.
Example : the Montgomery bus company boycott, the free uyghur boycott, BDS boycott against Israël.
- Have the time to put into the action, planning, communicating, going through with it and following it up.

Sources:

- BDS intervention in SCI, BDS website
- Sophie Dubuisson-Quellier, La consommation engagée
- "Strategies against war", an SCI training on antimilitarism funded by the EYF programme



SOURCE: JOHN ENGLART

ORGANISE OR PARTICIPATE IN A PROTEST

Country-specific examples from Spain

A manifestation, protest or march is the public display of an activist group's opinion (economic, political or social), through a congregation in the streets, often at a place or on a date symbolic of and associated with that opinion. The purpose of a manifestation is to show that a significant part of the population is in favour of or against a certain policy, person, law... The success of a demonstration is usually considered to be greater the more people participate. Manifestations can change many social aspects as they are a way to demand injustices. Governments, seeing the complaints, usually react and give the people what they are asking for. It is also a way to make society see the injustices that people live in.

Some advantages of participating in protest can be:

- You can fight for your rights.
- You can meet new people who are in the same situation as you.
- You can find your sense of belonging to a group.
- You can enjoy yourself, as demonstrations are generally safe spaces to be in.
- You can change injustices.
- You can get an immediate response from the government or authorities.

However, it is important to note that not all manifestations end up achieving their objectives, and that sometimes these acts turn violent.



SOURCE: SVENSKA DAGBLADET, FREDRIK PERSSON/TT

ACTIONKIT FOR SOCIETAL ENGAGEMENT

Anyone can organise a protest, but they are usually organised by associations or organisations with a big support base. In the case of Spain, anyone can organise a manifestation. In order for it to be legal, a form must be filled in with the following information:

- Name, surname(s), address and official identification document of the organiser(s) or their representative, in the case of legal persons, also stating their name, nature and address.
- Place, date, time and planned duration.
- Purpose of the event.
- Planned route, where traffic is expected to travel on public roads.

If you recognise yourself in the following you could be suited to creating a protest:

- You have a topic that you would like to raise awareness on/create a change on.
- You are involved in an organisation working with this issue.
- You have knowledge about the legal context of your country - the rules of a manifestation.
- You have organisational skills.
- You have an inspirational spirit.
- You have participated in manifestations before.

Anyone can attend a manifestation, regardless of gender or age. It is generally not advisable to bring children or older people to manifestations because it can sometimes become dangerous.

It takes some time to do the action because of the research involved in finding out the rules for the manifestation, spreading information about the action happening on social platforms, organising the manifestation and following up on the achievements. It is recommended to create a manifestation together with other people, so that you don't need to carry the whole responsibility on your own.



[SOURCE: CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG/](https://creativecommons.org/)

CREATE A COMMUNITY EVENT!

The purpose of this action can not be easily specified. We can realise it first after responding to the question “Why is the event being organised and what do we hope to achieve afterwards?” This question will also help in the planning of the event itself. The purpose and the planning in other words go tightly together. A list of goals with the event have to be noted in the planning stage in accordance with the purpose of the event, for example the number of attendees to be attracted, or if it is a fundraising event, how much fundraising are we hoping to get. As with the purpose of the action, the target group will depend on the type of event you are planning. If you for example plan for a social event where we want to propose cultural activities for youngsters during summer, our target group will be young people. The most important is that it is a group of people that have the same norms, values and objectives in common.

If you want to take action and take part in the development of your local society and are eager to gather a group of people with the same norms, values and objectives you might be inclined to do this action.

You cannot however do this action alone, but need other people around you. The action will also require some time put into it, to plan and execute the event. If you do not have a team to do the action with you, look in your surroundings. Usually you can find like minded people there who can help you. If you decide to open a call for volunteers, make sure that you get training and a proper induction beforehand since this requires some specific considerations. Ask your local branch of SCI/partner of SCI to help you.

Recommendations for doing the action are:

- Lay out the whole plan of the event before the date. It has to be SMART (Specific; Measurable; Achievable; Relevant and Time bond).
- Any event takes a concerted team effort to handle all the details; Consider a team leader, event manager or event chair, as well as sub committees such as venue manager speaker, entertainment, publicity sponsor, volunteer managers.
- Make a plan for recruitment of team members.

ACTIONKIT FOR SOCIETAL ENGAGEMENT

- Assign individual roles to team members. That creates a system of accountability and prevents tasks from falling to the wayside. Make sure to also define volunteer roles – types of volunteers needed and tasks to carry out, volunteers may be needed for setting up and taking down the event, parking officer, refreshment distributor, registration team etc. You can also identify volunteer leaders, but be sure to provide them with written guidance or workshops.
- Identify the best channels for putting up volunteer posting such as volunteer sites or social media.
- Establish a budget (Creating a solid budget enables the team to generate ideas within realistic parameters; expenses to be included – venue, food and drinks, entertainment, marketing software, staff miscellaneous etc. Remember that even for the best planned events additional costs will come up).
- Set the date. The date might be preset for a recurring event. There are things to be considered before setting a date, such as the statutory and religious holidays, check the dates with key participants, the speaker and the Master of ceremony).
- Create an event master plan. Creating a master plan will allow you to ensure every aspect remains on track as well as make it easier to coordinate, the master plan should encompass all aspects of the event including venue, logistics, publicity, registration sponsor and volunteers management).
- Choose the Event software (this will make all the difference in streaming the process when planning the event. Different event software that can be worthwhile; registration; ticketing; event website lead tracking tools; attendee management.
- Book the venue. Once the dates have been nailed down, it will be necessary to book the venue; when selecting the venue there are certain things to consider: accessibility, size, parking space, insurance, cost.
- Brand the event. Highlighting the elements that make it special will attract people to attend. Especially on online media platforms this is useful. You can brand your event through; creating a tagline; creating visual identity, designing the logo. These can be used in marketing so that people who are not familiar with the organisation will start to recognize the brand.
- Confirm Speakers and Special guests.
- Identify and establish partnerships and sponsors.
- Create a promotional plan. A promotional plan is to be used to get people to attend the event. Some components that might be needed in the promotional plan includes; marketing, advertising and media relations publicity, printed materials and press and media connections).
- Determine a Day of processes. That is, come up with the full day agenda for the event. The agenda should start from setting up and end with cleaning up. Create a well designed program of the day, which identifies who needs to do what and when.

Source: The ultimate Event planning guide www.wildapricot.com

CREATE A YOUTH VOTER APATHY WORKSHOP!

Country-specific examples from Botswana

With this action we are trying to achieve the following:

- Help the youth make an informed choice about their voting right.
- Promote marginalised groups .
- Create watchdogs of democracy.
- Promote free and fair elections.
- Citizen charter are part of the campaign agenda.
- Achieve responsive and accountable government.
- To help youth understand the electoral process and their rights.
- Create a common platform for media, NGO and governmental agencies.

Workshops for youth on voter apathy are suited for local, national and international context since the reasons are mostly the same in terms of causes and remedial actions that can be undertaken. The research however uses examples from Botswana.

The target groups for this action are diverse:

- Youth in different constituencies/regions/countries.
- Public in general (they will motivate youth to vote, and exercise their democratic right).
- Politicians (they will motivate the youth to vote, and thereby change the policies which will favour the majority).
- Media (through platforms such as radio, local television, Facebook, Bloggers. The platforms help disseminate the voting message on a wide basis).
- Decision makers - including decision makers is likely to influence policy making, especially at the interest of youth, hence increasing youth voter interest.

Youth Voter Apathy means lack of interest among youth generation to make their voice heard / call for political change through general elections

If you can identify yourself with some of the following qualities creating a youth voter apathy workshop might be an action suited for you:

- You are abreast about politics in your own country or region.
- You are politically informed about youth actions, activities and groups in your area/region.
- You know key people such as Community leaders who can help in.
modelling/information presentation to the groups.

The action takes a lot of time. You need to plan, conduct and evaluate the workshop. .

It works better to do the action if you have a team with you. Through this you can have input from each other and share the workload.

Recommendations for doing the action are the ones beneath, divided into the planning, implementing and evaluating stage.



VOTE

SOURCE: ALAN CLEAVER

Planning Stage of Campaign/Workshop on Voter Apathy:

- Mobilising a consultant who is abreast on International Politics as the Lead Moderator for the Campaign/Workshop.
- Find a Youth from Majority party (Leading party in politics).
- Find a Youth from Opposition Movement
- Find a speaker from Independent Electoral Commission (the organisers, monitors and management of country elections).
- Find a venue (seating arrangement of about 50 people).
- Invite youth from youth groups in the community at least 5 per organisation.
- Set a date of the workshop/campaign in the invite.
- Set up tables, microphones for amplifying audio for everyone to hear.
- NB (Mark well): Book a permit with police (in some countries, political actions might need a permit).
- Have the Actionkit for societal engagement with you.
- Make sure to apply for and receive a letter of Endorsement (permission to organise activity). Make sure to do research in your own country about what is needed to acquire it.
- Create name tags to be used during the activity. These should include your name and the organisation you are working for (ex Name, Surname, Organisation).
- Make sure to have a uniform to be identified with during the activity.

Implementation of the Action-Youth Voter

Apathy Workshop:

- Seated arrangement and ready for workshop campaign.
- Have an agenda/flyers on the Topic; things to talk about in the political action e.g. Meaning of Voter Youth Apathy, Causes of Youth Voter Apathy, Remedial Actions that can be done. (All invited need to contribute in each of the actions stipulated above for equality/balance).

Evaluation of the Action-Youth Voter

Apathy:

- Choose a method appropriate for the campaign workshop.
- Choose a tool to use (Questionnaire, Survey, Tests, Interviews, Observation, Focus group discussion).
- Each of the Youth representative of the groups invited will be given a number between 1 and 10 e.g focus group discussion below.
- In each number a representative will gauge how the workshop/campaign went and write the number appropriate.
- The representative will elaborate on the number of the choice eg 1 could be chosen as the Not Satisfactory 5 for Fair and 10 as Good/Satisfactory.
- The representative will look into 3 areas of Evaluation (Organisation – how was it organised) Content Creation (was content discussed under Youth Voter Apathy relevant), Overall action.

Sources:

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- International IDEA,Supporting Democracy Worldwide.2022.Available at www.idea.int. (Accessed on 09June2023).
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SOURCE: THE BLUE DIAMOND GALLERY

CREATE A WORKSHOP ABOUT POLITICAL/SENSITIVE SUBJECTS!

Regional example from Africa

What we try to achieve with this action is to:

- Make a change in the subject matter to be discussed e.g lack of medication in hospitals, corruption in the government sector.
- Create appreciation by the community to their leaders in making a change
- Work towards building a solid community with understanding of sensitive subjects/issues.
- Create a community or focus groups that will meet your values /goals or expectations to resolve the political issue of concern.

The importance of the action lies in its possibility to raise awareness on the issue to be discussed. It has the capacity to make people realise the importance of addressing the issue. Communities tend to take ownership of their concerns and hence make a change through dialogue with their leaders. Leaders will tend not to know community issues they were not aware of, why this action is important.

The target groups are:

- Community focal groups , Youth forums.
- Political groups – opposition and leading political parties.
- Public.
- Media.
- Politicians.

If you can identify yourself with some of the following qualities this action might be suited for you:

- You know the subject well, so that when articulating it to the people, you are abreast with it fully.
- You are an emphatic and civil facilitator.
- You know the definition of sensitive topics in social context, as well as social and cultural norms and values because they differ from country to country.

Some recommendations for doing the action of the different stages of planning, implementation and evaluation are:

ACTIONKIT FOR SOCIETAL ENGAGEMENT

Planning

- Put an organising team together.
- Sort out a budget.
- Get the message out: prepare posters with the relevant message for use in the day of the campaign message.
- Obtain the right licences/permit from your local authorities.
- Have a page pamphlets/leaflets with the message and send to all concerned groups
- Get hold of a microphone and amplifier.
- Organise a venue (multi purpose hall, outdoor area, mall etc.
- Have a speaker who will be leading the discussion such as Youth representative, someone abreast with issue of concern, community leaders, political analyst media houses, local TV station.
- Keep the event simple.
- Have the Actionkit for societal engagement at hand.
- Make sure to apply for and receive a letter of Endorsement (permission to organise activity). Make sure to do research in your own country about what is needed to acquire it.
- Create name tags to be used during the activity. These should include your name and the organisation you are working for (ex Name, Surname, Organisation).
- Make sure to have a uniform to be identified with during the activity.

Implementation

- Send out an invitation to all outlined above.
- Place posters around your community in targeted areas like libraries, shopping malls, human rights groups.

- Hand out leaflets with information on the political subject.
- Event must take at least 2 hours maximum.
- Platforms to comment by community members after deliberation by invited guests.
- Have invited guests to answer questions posed to them.

Evaluation

- The method of questionnaires can be used (can take emails for later distribution online).
- Give out a questionnaire to almost everyone who has come to the event (let's say 30% of the attendance).
- Create multiple sets of questions, preferably Multiple Choice questions about how the event went down.
- Must be used with everyone who comes to the event (usually you can choose handed out on paper or to answer later online).

Sources:

- Niven, R. 2013. Workshop Evaluation. Available at www.theguardian.com .(Accessed 16 June 2023).
- Available at www.sciencenter.org (Accessed on 20 June 2023)
- Gertz, D. Event Evaluation (Theory and Methods) Available at www.goodfellowspublishers.com .Accessed on 20 June 2023.

DO A GUERRILLA ACTION

Interview with
Katerina Stoyanova (CVS Bulgaria), Bulgaria



SOURCE UNKNOWN

According to Katerina Stoyanova guerrilla actions are suitable when you would like to raise awareness and open the public debate on a topic that is important for the society, but that people avoid speaking about. It uses the strategy of memorable messages which has the purpose of people tending to be impressed and remember these actions for a long time. The debate is initiated by the people witnessing the action and can develop with or without your participation as an organiser. The target groups are the general public and media. The benefits of the action are: It has a fast impact as it uses non-standard, sometimes shocking or artsy means to convey the message to the people. It is memorable and stays in the minds for a longer time. It can be used as a basis for a political civil debate and other actions in the future. It engages wide and diverse audiences and can reach people who usually would not discuss the topic you propose.

CVS-Bulgaria organised a Guerilla action in 2018, which was a part of a project with three actions in favour of the Istanbul convention: The volunteers of the organisation went out to distribute underwear in the public transport, each with an anonymous story attached to the clothing of a woman having experienced domestic violence, for the people taking the public transport to read. This is not vandalism, since they did not destroy anything, and public transport is a public space, meaning that you can utilise it for actions. They did it as an anonymous action, a guerilla action. To be able to do it they bought underwear from second hand stores. The action got a lot of attention in the media already the same day. In the end they revealed that it was them who did it, and they were on national TV talking about the topic. The other two actions, which were part of the campaign, were a video and stickers.

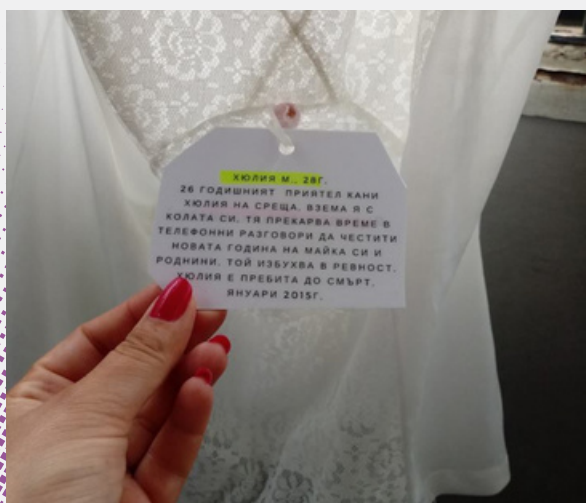
ACTIONKIT FOR SOCIETAL ENGAGEMENT

The organisation produced and published a video with a girl covered in bruises, representing a victim of domestic abuse, the people passing by were asked to show how they would help her.

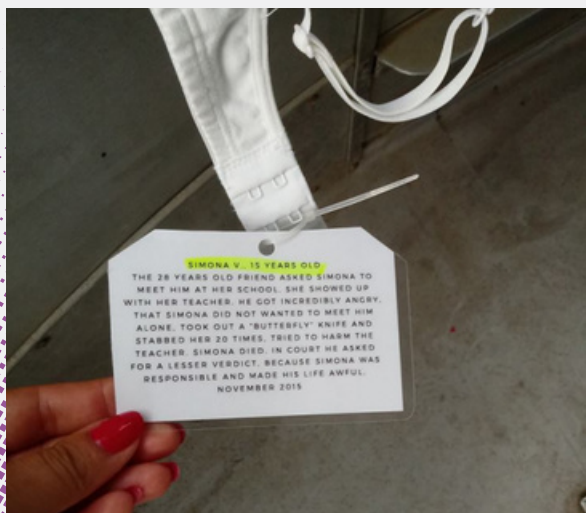
In this video this action is shown:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Etud-2Hzy4&t=2s>

The last part of the campaign were the stickers: they printed an emergency line for domestic violence and spread it. <http://cvs-bg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/%D1%84%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B5%D1%80.png>



SOURCE UNKNOWN



SOURCE UNKNOWN

To be involved in this action it could be beneficial if you identified with some of the following characteristics:

- You need to be brave.
- You need to be prepared to defend your action.
- You should know your rights according to the law. An important recommendation for doing this action is that it is important to check your rights and responsibilities as a citizen, and even make a consultation with a lawyer in order to be clear about this, before going through with an unconventional action like this.
- You should be comfortable with the attention the action will raise - which usually is not so positive.
- You should have an idea of a topic where you want to influence the general debate
- You should have a group to do the action together with.
- You need to make sure your actions do not violate any rights of third parties and also be clear about the risks you take and what the concrete plan of action would be for any risk scenario. Make sure your volunteers are protected and have a person who will undertake the role of emergency contact.

Furthermore, since it can vary a lot what it means to do a guerilla action, there is no easy formula about how to do it. If you are planning on carrying through a similar action, get in contact with people who have done it before or read about how other actions have been carried through to get inspiration.

ENGAGE IN CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Interview with
Ultima Generazione, Italy

According to a representative involved in the group Ultima Generazione, civil disobedience can have a big and immediate effect in carrying your message forward. If you feel a strong sense of urgency and empathy for a topic this can be a way to meet it.

The target group are the people in power. Through the non-violent action you make yourself and your cause visible through disturbing some public function, such as traffic on a selected street, making the decision makers obliged to face the topic. Through this you challenge the power.



SOURCE: [WIKIMEDIA COMMONS](#)

To be suitable to do this action you would need to be comfortable with certain things:

- The point of the action is to let people know the truth; that you have the choice to disobey an order from your country. Making this choice is difficult. It involves being very aware of how serious the problem is, and choosing to suffer in your daily life to solve it. You also might receive judgement from your family, friends, community and the law, where you might go to jail or face other repercussions.
- To get involved in this type of action you need to be ready to commit yourself fully to a cause that you believe in. If you engage in this action you could also have to sacrifice a lot of things such as your career, your dreams, your money, your education and your family. The emotional reward of feeling like you are doing something concrete for the cause can however be rewarding, the representative emphasises.

ACTIONKIT FOR SOCIETAL ENGAGEMENT

- You need to be able to practise non-violence. It is important to not escalate the situation and potential conflicts that might occur both vertically and horizontally. This is something that requires practice, since civil disobedience often is a very emotional experience with people getting angry at you and meeting you with violence. The representative themselves ran away during their first experience with this method because of the overwhelming situation.
- If you get involved truly in civil disobedience, it becomes your lifestyle. The action in other words takes up a lot of your time. You can join it for a single action, but this does not really have an impact.

If you are new to doing civil disobedience you should take the following into consideration:

- Get in contact with a professional, someone who has done it before. Join an established group.
- Always put safety first. It is dangerous to do this, people carry you away and it is emotionally draining.
- Learn your boundaries, get to know how you see violence towards you, and how you feel about you creating "violence" towards others.
- Remember the principle of non-violence.

- Find a spark or a drive for doing what you do. This is very important, since you risk your life for the cause.
- Know the law and your rights. The police do not always know them.
- Be ready to face the consequences of your actions.
- Be in it for the long term, one action does not really have an impact.
- Have clear procedures during actions, for example someone in charge of deciding when an action should be stopped in case of emergency or danger.
- Research a lot about the topic you are active on, both theoretically and on which types of actions that historically have worked to achieve a change.
- The preparation and feedback after an action is as important as the action itself. In Ultima Generazione they have sessions before and after the actions where they talk about their emotions about the action, group-dynamics during the action etc.

GET ELECTED IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Country-specific examples from Zimbabwe

The purpose of this action is to select office holders in the local governments, local village, local towns or local community. To be elected you need to be 18+ years old in Zimbabwe, making the age a separating aspect concerning the target group.

A person eligible for for getting elected at local government should have the following:

- Contestant should have 5 ordinary level (highest academic level in Zimbabwe) and knowledge of English.
- Chairperson, deputy chairperson and committee heads should possess tertiary qualifications.
- Chairperson, deputy chairperson and committee heads should possess a minimum of 3 years experience either in the public sector or private.
- The contestant should be a registered voter on the day of nomination.

This type of action requires a lot of time.

Everything depends on the people involved in the campaign and how they manage to work in a team; being well organised and proactive all the time, especially before and during the elections.

You also need other people to do it with you. You can project many things, but for the implementation you need help. Those people can be part of your political party, as well as activists and volunteers.

After being elected there are also some duties to be carried out:

- Working with the political party.
- Representing the locals.
- Planning and regulations.
- Dealing with intimidation and abuse.

Some recommendations for doing the action are:

- Join the local board or commission.
- Attend city meetings.
- Tune in to local radio station.
- Join the campaign.
- Serve as poll worker.
- Connect with local representatives.
- Donate.
- Run the office.
- Work for a political organisation.
- Support the candidate after election - it's important to support the candidate after the election.
- Attend the rally or protest.
- Join a non profit organisations- to create collaboration campaign to promote the organisation.

Sources:

- /info@local.gov.uk....
www.moray.gov.uk.....go beyond the vote Vishal www.rocksolid.com
department of political and Administrative studies University of Zimbabwe



SOURCE: PAUL KAGAME

JOIN OR CREATE YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGN!

Examples from Germany

A campaign is built around different actions that aim towards the same goal: persuading others to take action on a specific, achievable objective, for example the ICAN campaign that aims to ban nuclear weapon, or Ultima generazione's campaign that aims to suppress the Italian government investments in fossil energies. Therefore, campaigning is not just about educating or raising awareness but to reach a concrete goal. It is coordinating different types of actions and tactics, such as for example some actions suggested in this toolkit. The order of the actions is thought ahead to have a coherency and be more efficient, organised to reach the goal set.

The target group is ultimately the decision makers, either policy makers or heads of company. The target group to reach are people that have an interest in the issue, as well as people less familiar with the issue to inspire them so then they can contribute to bring more people to join the action.

We can see that it is a bit like a snow-ball effect.

If you are creating the campaign you should:

- Have time to involve yourself and plan ahead.
- Be organised and good at planning. These qualities are a plus to identify strategies and distribute tasks and actions to the people that add themselves on the way of the campaign.
- Be at ease with working in a group and creating coherency.
- Be patient.
- Be able to compromise and discuss with your adversary.
- It would be preferable to have some experience in activism and taking actions.

If you are joining the campaign you should:

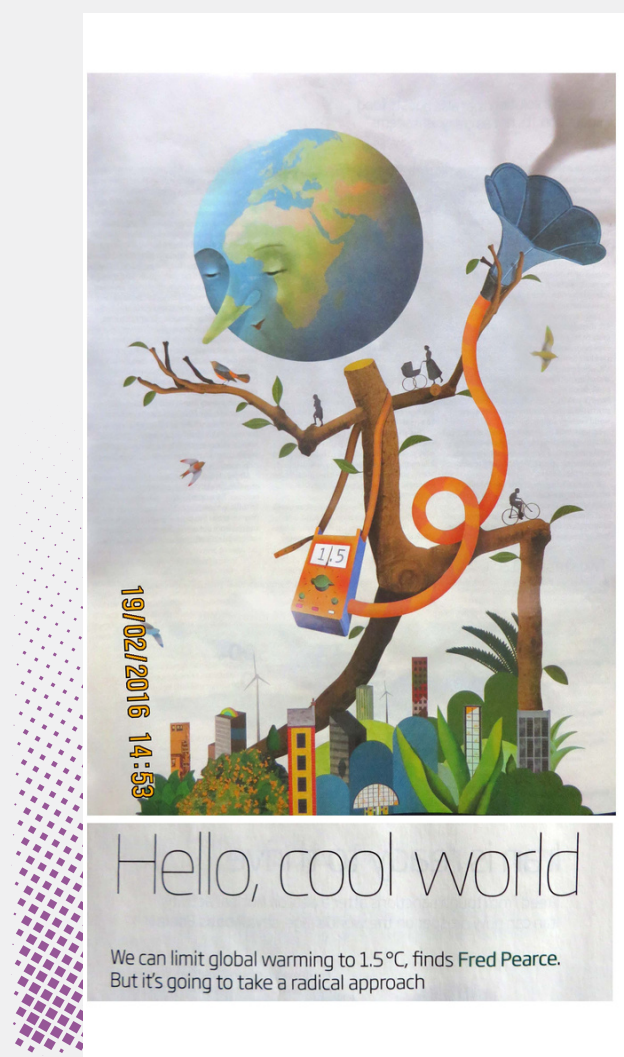
- Be motivated and ready to involve yourself in a long time action.
- You could also join a one-time action from a campaign.

Creating an environmental campaign is a long action, since it involves different actions and planning ahead of time. It needs preparation and follow-up, because you need to know what you are doing after each action. That way you can give clear directions to the people that want to join the campaign. You need to create coherency and consistency to put a continuous pressure on your target group. The time depends on the difficulty of the goal.

It's not recommended to do the action on your own. It's better if you launch the campaign with a solid group, even if it's small. The group does not always have to be very big at first (see for example the campaign to prohibit fur in the Breuninger company) because you could also use strategies that make you very visible (ex with prohibiting fur: nudity, zombie walk) and relayed in the media. Then, if you want to bring in more people as the campaign continues, to put more pressure, you also have to think about the type of actions feasible in big groups and small groups as well as how to use the number of individuals to your advantage. For instance, a lot of individuals in a protest is more impressive. but a small number of individuals in negotiations could be more efficient.

Some recommendations for doing the action are:

- Research on previous campaigns and on their strategies.
- Identify an issue that is creating a conflict by framing it as a conflict between everyday people/activists and decision makers (for ex fossil fuels companies interest against environmental protection interest) that you want to bring and gather a few people to start.
- Develop the issue and develop a campaign goal by doing some research.



[SOURCE: CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG/](https://creativecommons.org/)

ACTIONKIT FOR SOCIETAL ENGAGEMENT

- Try to talk to your target and negotiate (example before campaigning both Ultima Generazione and the group doing the campaign against fur both tried to ask the government and Breuninger respectively to stop investing in fossil fuels/stop using fur).
- If your target refuses, then launch the campaign to put pressure on the target group : launch it publically, recruit allies and volunteers.
- Have an achievable objective, it has to be very clear like prohibiting a certain thing or investing in another thing.
- Find a good title for your campaign (Use the KISS guideline - Keep It Simple Stupid). You should be able to explain your campaign in three minutes and people should understand it when they read the title.
- Create consistency and coherency through a good storytelling and identity (type of actions or good visual identity for example). People should be able to see the connections between the actions, that they belong to the same campaign, what's next.
- Have a concrete timeplan for achieving their objectives and have a strategy for fulfilling the timeplan. Build momentum and keep pressure overtime by having the next action planned already when implementing the first ones. It will be easier for people to join the campaign since they will know what they have to do to act: offer specific responsibilities to stay involved. You can also offer to activists or people to join a one time action.
- Be progressive. Do not start directly with a difficult action like civil disobedience or guerilla action but go progressively and escalate in function of the response you get.
- Use many different kinds of tactics and actions.
- Create a Power map: identify who can help you, who is against you, who has influence or not and study them, what kind of media they use, what could make them decide to get involved, what are their interests etc. What kind of criticism will you face? Anticipate the counter-arguments. Preserve yourself by having a good-support system and anticipate negative feedback or views.

Sources:

- Strategies against War, a training funded by EYF and organized by SCI
- " Non paghiamo il fossile", ultima generazione campaign against fossil fuels investments
- Germany anti-fur campaign against Breuninger to make them stop using fur in 2020



SOURCE: [WIKIMEDIA COMMONS](#)

WRITE A PROJECT APPLICATION

Interview with **Hamza Al-Shayeb, Jordan**



SOURCE: CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG/

A project application is a way of putting your own ideas into practice about solving a specific issue of society. Hamza Al-Shayeb has been writing many project applications. According to him this is the first step to get recognition politically, and by the government. After getting the recognition it is easier to start impacting political decision making.

When you write a project application the target group is firstly the donor that can give you money for your project, and secondly the group that your project is aimed at.

The following qualities could make you enjoy this type of political action:

- You are an initiative driven person, a social entrepreneur.
- You have a mindset of wanting to change something.
- You are active in your community. This is important to understand the people in the community. Be organic. In this way the project will have an impact, and it gives you a bond with and builds trust/empowerment to/from the local community.
- You have writing skills.
- You have communication skills both in communicating the project once written and communication with people in your community.
- You have facilitation skills and competences. For example if you hold a workshop or focus group.
- You believe in yourself.
- You are patient. It can take time to get funding and the project might not turn out as big as you want it to be right away. This can be annoying. But the recognition you get and the achievement has a bigger impact than other actions might have that are quick to realise.

ACTIONKIT FOR SOCIETAL ENGAGEMENT

Working on a project application is something that will demand some time from you, since the procedure is extensive. However, writing a project application is not chaotic but structured and systemised. You need to plan the application, write it, carry out the project and finally write the final report. This is therefore a commitment of more or less one/two years, but the time you put into it will be rewarded since a project application is a sustainable way of making an impact. You can also build on a project already written and through that elevate the project's impact.

Furthermore, when you are writing and implementing the project you need a network of like minded people, both professionally and privately. With that said, the actual project writing can be done alone, but with the support and upbacking of other people.

Other than the above mentioned, you need to keep in mind that when you are writing project applications you are working in a field established by the common values. To succeed you need to get to know them, believe in them and practice/live them. The common values are such things as every human being's equal worth, justice, human rights, Sustainable Development Goals, mobility and education. If you don't believe in this you will not be able to write projects that will be supported by funding organisations like the EU.

Steps for doing the action are:

- Start by having a dialogue with your local community to understand what type of gap your project can fill.
- Write a concept note with the key outline of your project.
- Find partners to work with. Stay in touch with your sending organisation and see what they can help you with. Or find other Community Based Organisations (CBOs, smaller than NGOs), as well as contact other branches of SCI.
- Write the application. Keep in mind to diversify the project. Make it relevant for different people. Don't use just one method like seminars for the project, but include other methods like art as well.
- Send the application to a donor.
- Implement the project!
- Write the final report.

Two general recommendations for working with project applications are finally:

- Emotionally, don't have too high expectations, especially on the funding you can get from the project.
- Keep the project small and local, then you can expand as you go, together with activists and according to the outcomes of the project.

Sources:

- [5 Steps to Consider When Writing a Grant Proposal for EU Funding](#)

