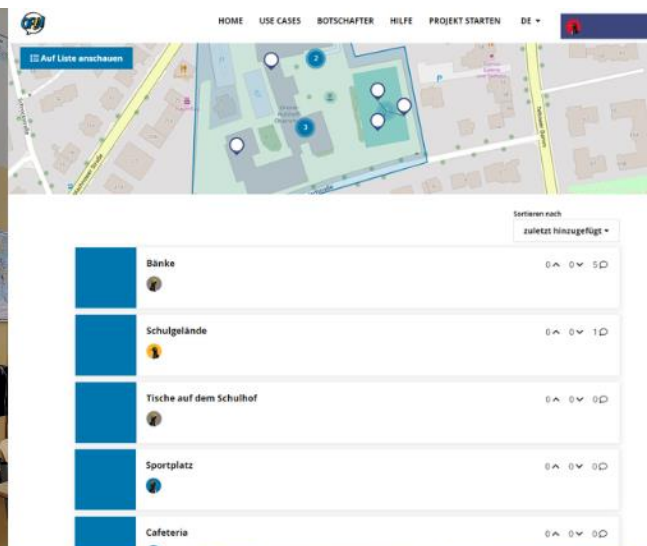


CASE STUDY:

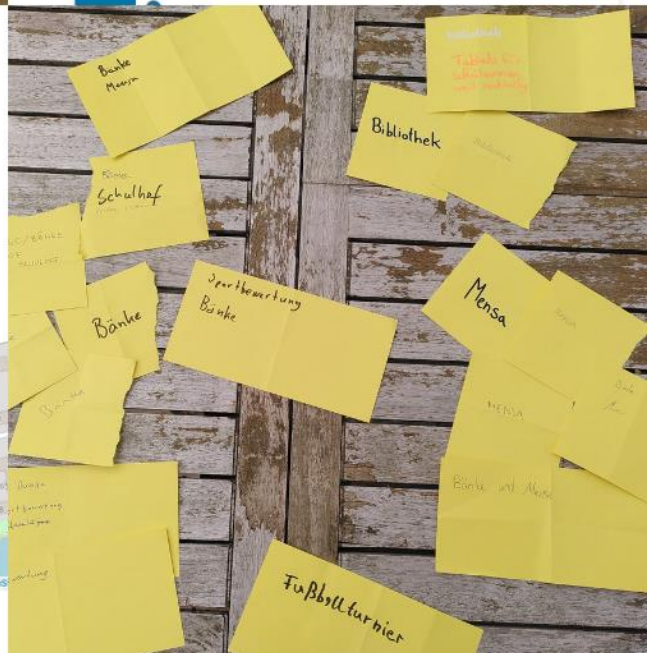
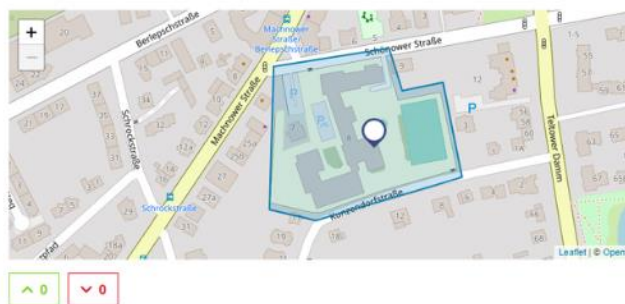
# DigiPAC piloting in Germany



Workshop with students for digital youth participation and active citizenship in Droste-Hülshoff Gymnasium



- Schulgelände**
- ein paar kaputte Bänke ersetzen
  - günstigere Preise in der Drosteria
  - mehr Wandertage
  - Klassenräume renovieren (neu streichen)
  - größere Klassenräume oder kleinere Klassen
  - längere Pausen





## Executive summary

Upon invitation from the Droste-Hülshoff Gymnasium student council, the [nexus institute](#) was asked to tailor the workshop to the needs of the students, with a focus on the themes of democracy, civic skills, and participation. For this purpose, training activities were selected from modules of the DigiPAC training programme.

The workshop at Droste-Hülshoff Gymnasium took place on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June, 2022 with a mixed group of students from 7<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grade. In this workshop young participants became familiar with the topic of democracy building and youth participation. **The goal of the workshop was for young people to understand what the participation of citizens in society actually means in a democracy, and then deal more intensively with the topic of youth participation.**

The DigiPAC training programme enables and empowers youth to take up role model positions, spread what they have learned to their peers, and thereby positively influence their own social groups. Therefore, nexus worked on motivation and initiative of young people to participate and engagement of young people to improve their school environment.

The **platform for digital youth participation “OPIN”** was used in order to develop projects to improve and actively shape life at school.

## Case study

nexus institute implemented the workshop at Droste-Hülshoff Gymnasium on the 29 June 2022. The participants consisted of a mixed group of students from 7<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grade. The topics covered during this activity were democracy building and youth participation. The goal of the workshop was for young people to understand what the participation of citizens in society actually means in a democracy, and then deal more intensively with the topic of youth participation.

The specific objectives of this activity were:

- to motivate and initiate young people to participate
- to increase engagement of young people to improve their school environment.

Using the spatial brainstorming tool on the digital youth participation platform [OPIN](#), students were able to gather ideas as to how they could improve their school environment. This resulted in widely variable recommendations, which reflected the individual needs and perspectives of the students. This allowed students to critically reflect upon other students' recommendations and perspectives, leading to productive and at times controversial discussions. Additionally, the spatial brainstorming tool provided a pragmatic way for students to visualize and interact with the proposed ideas (for example, by placing pins for each suggestion on the map of their school).

## Trainers' experiences using DigiPAC

DigiPAC provided a solid basis for the training that was carried out. An additional benefit of the DigiPAC training modules was that individual exercises were able to be implemented according to the ability and needs of the students.





Additional feedback from the teachers involved in the project day was very positive and reflected the collaborative and educational environment that was developed throughout the day. One critique was related to the theoretical level of input that was delivered, which was seen as providing less than expected on the topic of democracy education. However, it was the experience of the implementers that the level of understanding for students is often highly variable and dependent upon both the age groups and type of school in which the training is being conducted.

**As such, a key learning from the pilot activity is that it is always necessary to customize the DigiPAC materials for the target group.**

The activity “Stairs to youth participation” (DigiPAC, Module C), in which students were asked to take on the roles of each step of youth participation and present their step to the group, was a personal highlight. The activity worked very well and was a positive example of how to solidify concepts and engage a group of mixed-age students in the content.

An added benefit of using OPIN is when initiators would like to gather suggestions over a longer period, and when it is not possible for participants to meet in person.

## Young people’s recommendations for the school environment

Primarily, recommendations from the students concerned tangible additions to the school, such as the addition of benches and/or tables in the school courtyard or a library. Other recommendations were more conceptual or rule-based, concerning the regulated usage of the sports facilities, longer breaks, and more hiking days. Additionally, one recommendation concerning the equality/fair treatment of boys and girls in sports sparked a controversial and productive discussion within the group with regards to perceived gender equality and social justice.

