

CASE STUDY:

DigiPAC piloting in North Macedonia



Strengthening youth work in enhancing digital youth participation and active citizenship in three regions in North Macedonia





Executive summary

In the period from June 2022 – June 2023, [Coalition of youth organizations SEGA](#) implemented a piloting phase within the ACTIon project, with focus on **strengthening capacities of youth workers in enhancing digital youth participation and active citizenship in Pelagonia, Skopje and the Eastern regions in North Macedonia**. The objective was to pilot the methodology with the involvement of youth workers and practitioners for the activation and digital participation of young people at the local level.

The DigiPAC methodology was introduced to youth workers from these regions in order to support **youth initiatives and increase their knowledge of digital youth participation, whereby a total of:**

- **20 youth workers** piloted the DigiPAC methodology at the local level
- **412 young people** took part of the **follow-up activities** and were familiarised with digital youth participation and the [OPIN tool](#) for digital youth participation.
- **26 projects were created on OPIN based on the needs** of the young people, in which they had a chance to comment and participate in the process.

These capacity-building activities provided the youth workers and youth organizations a unique chance to discover the DigiPAC methodology that they can use in their work programmes and non-formal activities.

Furthermore, through the OPIN project implementation, the experience made them aware of the importance of collaborating **with decision-makers on some initiatives and projects proposed by young people**.

Case study

Objective: SEGA implemented a DigiPAC piloting project to build the capacities of youth organization for activation and digital participation of young people at the local level.

The pilot project activities focused on the collaboration with youth organizations, motivation and support of youth initiatives, and collaboration with local decision-makers. The collaboration was established in the preparatory phase of the trainings in Pelagonia, Skopje and the Eastern region.

- August 2022: First DigiPAC training for youth workers from Pelagonia region
- October 2022: Second DigiPAC training for youth workers and high school teachers from Skopje
- April 2023: Third training in Shtip for youth workers from the Eastern region.

After the collaboration and conducted trainings, trained youth workers realized follow-up activities - workshops with young people introducing digital youth participation using OPIN and motivating them for active participation on the local level. After the workshop and collecting ideas on the OPIN platform, the organisations collaborated with decision makers in order to realize the initiatives and ideas developed by young people.

SEGA supported the youth workers during follow-up activities.



Trainers' experiences using DigiPAC

The programme that we have created for DigiPAC trainings was based on a variety of non-formal methods that were used from the toolkit and simulated with the youth workers. Almost all the DigiPAC modules (Parts A-B-C) were covered in a three-day training programme created by SEGA.

While all three parts attracted the interest of youth workers, Part C for youth participation and the special practical session for using the OPIN tool was particularly emphasized in the training programme as it has the best potential for future implementation by youth workers.

OPIN, as an innovative online tool for e-participation, was introduced to all youth workers and each of them were asked to create profiles for their own organizations on the platform to motivate them to use this tool for their projects in the future.

Outcomes, impact and sustainability

The introduction of the unique methodology of DigiPAC to youth workers engaged and motivated them to organize **local follow-up activities** with young people (workshops). Their feedback regarding DigiPAC shows that they find this methodology easy to use and they are willing to integrate it in their daily practices regarding youth activities and programmes.

As a result of the piloting activities in North Macedonia, a total of:

- **20 youth workers** piloted the DigiPAC methodology at the local level
- **412 young people took part of the follow-up activities** and got familiar with digital youth participation and the OPIN tool
- **26 project ideas** were created for improving the local environment, such as opening youth centres where young people can spend quality time, more sport parks, building bike and walk roads, indoor pools. Additionally, the topics of media literacy, fake news, and human rights were created on OPIN, commented on and participated in by young people.

Some examples of project ideas: [Youth Council Prilep](#), [Victori](#), [Hidden Hero in Each Kid](#), [Network of European Citizenship and Identity-North Macedonia](#)

What do youth workers think?

"The DigiPAC manual offered a simple and very subtle methodology with a set of exercises that were quite interesting and understandable for both the facilitators and the participants of the workshops. The topics covered were easily applicable to the target group and contributed to the development of a fruitful mutual interaction between the participants. Getting to know each other through social networks, video discussion, and youth participation dimension proved to be the most attractive exercises among the participants. We use the DigiPAC manual as an excellent tool in continuity with our daily work during the realization of workshops and trainings with young people."

Marija Tashkoska, Youth worker, Youth Council Prilep



"The methodology from the DigiPAC manual is quite useful and easy to apply, it inspires new ideas among young people on how to build themselves as digital citizens. The topics of the handbook deepened the young people's understanding of digital participation and in a way enabled them to apply it in their everyday life. For the young people, the most interesting part was the digital tool OPIN, on which they created their own profiles, set up projects that relate to their needs in the local community and had the opportunity to give their comments, opinions, views regarding the projects that were set up. We will continue to use the DigiPAC manual in our daily work when implementing activities with young people."

Stefani Mazucanec, Youth worker, Youth Council Prilep

"The methodology that was provided in the manual was interesting and useful for young people. The way it was used by the piloting groups was a unique experience showing the interest in cooperation and interaction. The topics were carefully chosen and were relevant for the youth. Using the manual itself was easy for me as a youth worker and I will use it further in my daily work with young people."

Ivana Atanasovska, Youth worker, Together Macedonia, Bitola

"Using the manual was not difficult at all, on the contrary, every step was well explained and it was easy to follow the procedure. The methodology was interesting and useful, and the topics themselves were carefully selected in order for the young people to show interest, be motivated to participate and cooperate on the workshops themselves".

Dimitar Atanasovski, Youth worker, Together Macedonia, Bitola

