



Training Design and Methods: International Lobbying Training

1. Training Approach	3
2. Replicability of the Training	4
3. Method Sheets	5
4.1. Overview	5
4.2. Session 1: Getting Oriented in Advocacy & Lobbying	5
Method Sheet 1: Welcome, Introductions & First Reflections on Influence	6
Method Sheet 2: Advocacy vs. Lobbying: What's All About	7
Method Sheet 3: How the EU Works (and Where Youth Fit In)	9
Method Sheet 4: Learning from Practice – Study Visit & Peer Exchange	11
Method Sheet 5: Stakeholder Mapping	13
Method Sheet 6: Reflection Round	16
4.3. Session 2: From Ideas to Strategy	17
Method Sheet 7: Policymaking – The Cycle and Its Entry Points	18
Method Sheet 8: Building an Advocacy Strategy	19
Method Sheet 9: Group Work – Drafting Campaign Plans	21
Method Sheet 10: Peer Feedback	23
Method Sheet 11: Coaching Corners	24
4.4. Session 3: Communication, Media, and Practising Influence	25
Method Sheet 12: Storytelling for Advocacy	26
Method Sheet 13: Working with Media & Officials	27
Method Sheet 14: Lobbying Simulation	28
Method Sheet 15: Action Planning	29
Method Sheet 16: Closing	30
5. Key Learning Outcomes & Conclusion	31
6. Annexes	33

For more information about Youth Voices Rising please visit: youth-voices.eu

Responsible partner organisation for Work Package 3, Training Design:
Subjective Values Foundation

Status of this document: 14.07.2026

The cooperation partnership **Youth Voices Rising: Empowering Through Local and EU Advocacy** is realised in the framework of Generation Europe – The Academy and **co-funded by the European Union**. The views and opinions expressed are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union, the European Commission or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union, the European Commission nor the EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Generation Europe – The Academy is a programme implemented by IBB e.V, funded by:

STIFTUNG
MERCATOR



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

Ministerium für Kinder, Jugend, Familie,
Gleichstellung, Flucht und Integration
des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen



Bundesministerium
für Bildung, Familie, Senioren,
Frauen und Jugend

1. Training Approach

The International Lobbying Training developed within *Youth Voices Rising* was held in Thessaloniki and shaped by the needs identified during the project's research phase. The training design prioritised non-formal and experience-based learning methods over lecture-based approaches. In combined conceptual inputs with activities such as stakeholder mapping, group work, storytelling exercises, simulations, role-play, strategy development, and structured reflection. This format allowed participants to engage actively with the content while strengthening practical skills related to advocacy, communication, negotiation, and strategic thinking.

Connecting advocacy concepts to concrete realities and everyday experiences, the participants worked with issues relevant to their own communities and reflected on how influence can be exercised in different contexts. They analysed power relations, identified stakeholders, explored decision-making processes, and developed realistic advocacy strategies linked to issues they considered important.

Peer exchange brought together participants from different countries and backgrounds, created opportunities to compare experiences, discuss different approaches to participation, and reflect on how advocacy practices vary across contexts. This international dimension contributed to a broader understanding of youth participation while strengthening the exchange of perspectives and methods within the group.

The partnership structure of *Youth Voices Rising* also shaped the methodology, bringing together diverse experiences in youth work, democracy education, civic participation, and community-based advocacy. The project is coordinated by *Internationales Bildungs- und Begegnungswerk e.V. (Dortmund, Germany)*, in cooperation with *Jugendakademie Walberberg (Bornheim, Germany)*, *Stiftung Europäische Jugendbildungs- und Jugendbegegnungsstätte Weimar (Weimar, Germany)*, *Internationales Forum Burg Liebenzell e.V. (Bad Liebenzell, Germany)*, *Associazione Interculturale NUR (Cagliari, Italy)*, *YouthCoop – Cooperativa para o Desenvolvimento e Cidadania CRL (Aguilva-Cacém, Portugal)*, *Sz subjektív Értékek Alapítvány (Budapest, Hungary)*, *KIRKO S.E. (Thessaloniki, Greece)*, and *Irenia, Jocs de Pau (La Nou de Berguedà, Spain)*.

Pedagogically, the training approach relied on active learning, reflection, and practice-based methods. Strategically, it aimed to strengthen young people's ability to engage with decision-making processes and support youth organisations in creating more meaningful participation structures. By connecting international learning spaces with local follow-up potential, the project sought to contribute not only to individual learning outcomes, but also to longer-term democratic engagement within and beyond the partner countries.

2. Replicability of the Training

Although the activities presented in this publication were implemented within a specific international context, the methods are designed to be flexible and adaptable to different groups, learning environments, and local realities. They can be adjusted according to participants' needs, levels of experience, available time, and organisational contexts. Facilitators are encouraged to adapt the activities, examples, and discussion topics in ways that are relevant to their own communities and target groups.

Most of the methods can be implemented with different group sizes and levels of prior knowledge. Activities may also be shortened, expanded, simplified, or combined depending on the objectives of the training. In some cases, exercises originally developed for international groups may be reoriented towards local issues, schools, youth organisations, or community-based participation processes.

Particular importance should be given to facilitation and reflection. Many of the activities rely on discussion, exchange, and collective analysis rather than on obtaining "correct" answers. For this reason, creating a respectful and supportive learning environment remains an important element throughout the process.

This publication should therefore be understood as a resource for inspiration, adaptation, and further development. The methods are intended to support youth workers, facilitators, and organisations interested in strengthening young people's participation, advocacy competences, and engagement with democratic processes.

3. Method Sheets

4.1. Overview

The International Lobbying Training, held in Thessaloniki, Greece, from 14 to 18 January 2026, was a core activity of the *Youth Voices Rising* project. The training brought together participants from across the partnership, creating an intercultural environment for learning, exchange, and discussion.

The main objective was to strengthen participants' capacity to engage critically and strategically with advocacy and lobbying processes at both national and European levels. Bringing together youth workers, youth leaders, and civil society actors, the programme combined analytical discussions with practical and experience-based activities addressing themes such as policymaking, participation, communication, advocacy strategy, and engagement with decision-making structures. Through this combination of conceptual exploration and applied learning, participants developed a clearer understanding of how influence can be exercised within democratic processes and how advocacy initiatives can be designed and implemented in practice.

The training followed a progressive structure, moving from introductory concepts towards more applied activities, including campaign planning, storytelling exercises, simulations, and role-play. Throughout the programme, participants connected the content to their own local realities and reflected on how the methods and ideas explored during the training could be adapted within their own contexts.

4.2. Session 1: Getting Oriented in Advocacy & Lobbying

The opening part of the training introduced participants to key concepts related to advocacy, lobbying, and participation, while also establishing the foundations for group interaction and exchange. In response to the needs identified during the project's research phase, particularly young people's limited understanding of policymaking and influence, the activities combined conceptual input with interactive and experience-based methods. This structure supported participants in connecting advocacy to their own realities and recognising their existing capacity to influence situations within everyday contexts.

Method Sheet 1: Welcome, Introductions & First Reflections on Influence

Objectives:

- establish an open and respectful group environment
- introduce participants to the topic of advocacy
- encourage reflection on everyday forms of influence and participation
- support initial group connection and exchange

Materials:

- flipcharts or whiteboard
- markers
- sticky notes
- pens

Group Size: 5–30 participants

Duration: 30–45 minutes

Implementation:

The activity begins with a light icebreaker in which participants introduce themselves and briefly share an issue or topic they care about. This is followed by a short exchange of expectations and the co-creation of group agreements focused on respectful interaction, active listening, confidentiality, and shared responsibility within the group.

Participants then reflect individually on the question “Where have you already influenced something?” before discussing their examples in pairs or small groups. Key examples are collected on sticky notes and grouped into categories such as school, community life, online spaces, or personal environments.

The activity concludes with a facilitated discussion connecting these examples to broader ideas of participation, influence, and advocacy, highlighting how engagement often begins in everyday contexts.

Debriefing Questions:

- What kinds of influence appear most often in everyday life?
- Which forms of participation feel most accessible to young people?
- What makes people feel confident or hesitant about speaking up?
- How can small actions connect to broader forms of advocacy?

Learning Outcomes:

Participants develop an initial understanding of advocacy and participation, strengthen group connections, and begin reflecting on their own experiences of influence and engagement.



Method Sheet 2: Advocacy vs. Lobbying: What's All About

Objectives:

- develop a shared understanding of advocacy and lobbying
- explore similarities, differences, and common misconceptions connected to both concepts
- reflect on ethical questions related to participation and representation
- connect advocacy processes to broader structural and political realities affecting young people
- strengthen participants' understanding of youth participation and policy influence

Materials:

- printed cards with statements, examples, myths, or dilemmas
- flipcharts or whiteboard
- markers
- chairs arranged for Fishbowl discussion
- presentation slides or research summaries (optional)
- excerpts from [*Take Power. Handbook to Get Started With Advocacy and Lobbying*](#) (optional)

Group Size: 5–30 participants

Duration: 60–90 minutes

Implementation:

The activity begins with an interactive Fishbowl discussion aimed at exploring participants' existing understandings and experiences related to advocacy and lobbying. Participants exchange perspectives, assumptions, and examples from their own contexts while listening to different viewpoints emerging within the group. The method encourages active participation and creates an open space for comparing interpretations shaped by different organisational, social, and national realities.

Building on this discussion, facilitators introduce key concepts and distinctions connected to advocacy and lobbying using examples and approaches presented in the Generation Europe publication *Take Power. Handbook to Get Started With Advocacy and Lobbying*. Advocacy is explored as a broader process connected to influencing social, cultural, or political change over time, while lobbying is presented as a more focused approach aimed at influencing concrete decision-makers, institutions, or policy processes.

Participants then continue working in small groups using cards containing examples, myths, short scenarios, or ethical dilemmas related to advocacy and lobbying. The groups discuss and categorise the examples while reflecting on how advocacy strategies can differ depending on context, goals, or target audiences. The activity also incorporates a short research-based overview connected to youth participation and policy influence across Europe. Facilitators present selected findings from studies and policy research related to barriers affecting young people's participation, access to decision-making spaces, and the relationship between institutional structures, power, and advocacy opportunities. This helps participants situate their own experiences within wider structural and political realities.

The session concludes with a collective reflection focused on participation, representation, and responsibility. Participants discuss questions connected to who represents young people, how advocacy processes can remain accountable and inclusive, and what challenges emerge when speaking on behalf of others.

Debriefing Questions:

- How do advocacy and lobbying differ from one another?
- Which assumptions or misconceptions emerged most strongly during the discussion?
- What barriers affect young people's access to decision-making processes?
- What responsibilities come with representing other people's interests or experiences?
- How can advocacy processes remain inclusive and accountable?

Learning Outcomes:

Participants develop a shared conceptual understanding of advocacy and lobbying while strengthening their awareness of participation, representation, and policy influence. They also connect personal experiences with broader structural challenges affecting youth participation and gain a clearer understanding of advocacy as a tool for democratic engagement and social change.



Method Sheet 3: How the EU Works (and Where Youth Fit In)

Objectives:

- introduce the main EU institutions and decision-making processes
- explore opportunities for youth participation within the EU system
- strengthen understanding of how policies are developed
- identify possible entry points for advocacy and influence

Materials:

- visual diagrams or slides of EU institutions
- printed cards or timeline materials
- flipcharts or whiteboard
- markers

Group Size: 5–30 participants

Duration: 60 minutes

Implementation

The activity begins with a visual introduction to the main European Union institutions and their roles within policymaking processes. Using diagrams, slides, or visual aids, the facilitator explains how policies are developed and which actors are involved at different stages.

Participants then work in small groups to identify where and how young people can engage with these structures. This may include mapping participation channels, identifying relevant stakeholders, or discussing existing opportunities for influence within European decision-making processes.

To reinforce understanding, the session continues with a short challenge or sequencing exercise in which groups reconstruct the different stages of policymaking. This can be organised as a collaborative game using cards, timelines, or visual prompts.

The activity concludes with a short discussion connecting EU decision-making processes to advocacy and youth participation.

Debriefing Questions

- Which EU institutions hold the most influence in policymaking?
- Where can young people engage with EU decision-making processes?
- Which participation channels seem most accessible or realistic?
- What challenges make EU institutions appear distant or difficult to understand?

Learning Outcomes

Participants develop a clearer understanding of how the European Union functions, identify opportunities for engagement and advocacy, and become more familiar with policymaking processes at European level.

Method Sheet 4: Learning from Practice – Study Visit & Peer Exchange

Objectives:

- connect advocacy concepts with real-life practice
- expose participants to local youth participation structures and advocacy initiatives
- strengthen understanding of community-based and institutional advocacy processes
- encourage peer learning and exchange through direct interaction with practitioners and young people involved in advocacy work
- explore how local experiences can contribute to broader policy dialogue processes

Materials:

- notebooks and pens
- reflection prompts or guiding questions
- presentation materials provided by host organisations (optional)

Group Size: 5–30 participants

Duration: Half day – full day activity

Implementation:

As part of the training, participants took part in a study visit to the ActionAid Youth Center together with representatives of Municipal Youth Councils from Thessaloniki and Oraioikastro. The visit created an opportunity to connect the theoretical and methodological dimensions of advocacy explored during the training with concrete examples of participation and community-based action.

During the visit, participants were introduced to initiatives related to youth participation, advocacy, and local community engagement. Representatives shared practical experiences connected to collaboration with institutions, mobilisation of local communities, and the development of initiatives responding to the needs and realities of young people.

Participants engaged directly with practitioners and youth representatives, asking questions, reflecting on different approaches, and comparing these experiences with participation structures and advocacy realities in their own local contexts. The exchange encouraged participants to view advocacy not only as a theoretical or institutional process, but also as a practical and accessible tool for creating change within communities.

The activity also introduced participants to the Generation Europe Round Table process, a structured dialogue mechanism bringing together young people, youth organisations, and institutional actors to contribute to discussions related to youth participation and youth work at European level.

Through this exchange, participants learned about the development of the policy paper *Young Voices for Youth Work* and explored how local experiences and youth perspectives can contribute to broader policy recommendations and institutional dialogue processes.

Hearing directly from young people involved in the Round Table process strengthened participants' understanding of advocacy pathways connecting local realities with European-level participation and reinforced their confidence in their own capacity to contribute to democratic and policy-shaping processes.

Debriefing Questions:

- What similarities and differences emerged between local participation contexts?
- How can community-based initiatives influence institutional processes?
- What makes advocacy initiatives sustainable and effective?
- How can local experiences contribute to broader policy discussions?
- What role can young people play within structured dialogue and participation mechanisms?

Learning Outcomes:

Participants strengthen their understanding of advocacy as a practical and achievable process connected to local participation and institutional dialogue. They gain insight into real-life examples of youth-led initiatives, community engagement, and policy participation while expanding their understanding of how local experiences can contribute to broader democratic and advocacy processes.

Method Sheet 5: Stakeholder Mapping

Objectives:

- introduce stakeholder mapping as an advocacy tool
- analyse power relations and influence within decision-making processes
- identify decision-makers, allies, supporters, and potential opponents connected to advocacy goals
- strengthen participants' ability to plan strategic engagement within advocacy processes

Materials:

- flipcharts or large sheets of paper
- markers
- sticky notes
- pens
- stakeholder mapping templates (optional)
- excerpts from *Take Power. Handbook to Get Started With Advocacy and Lobbying*

Group Size: 5–30 participants

Duration: 45–60 minutes

Implementation:

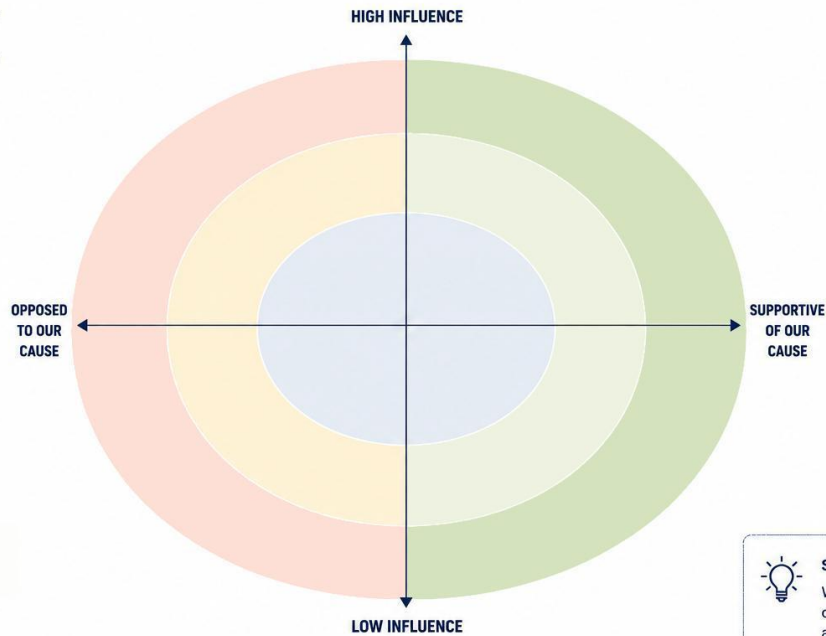
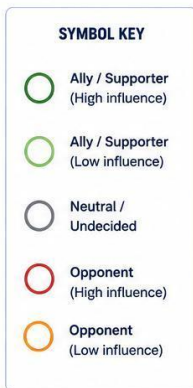
Stakeholder mapping was introduced as a central activity supporting participants in understanding how influence operates within advocacy and decision-making processes. Building on themes explored earlier in the training, participants analysed the individuals, institutions, and groups connected to concrete advocacy issues relevant to their own contexts.

Working in small groups, participants selected a real advocacy issue connected to youth participation, social policy, education, community engagement, or other locally relevant topics. Using flipcharts or large paper sheets, they identified key stakeholders linked to the issue, including public institutions, policymakers, municipal authorities, civil society organisations, youth groups, media actors, and community representatives.

Participants then explored the role, level of influence, and relationships between different actors. Particular attention was given to identifying decision-makers, potential allies and supporters, actors with indirect influence, and stakeholders who may resist or block proposed changes. Groups also reflected on where influence is concentrated and how access to decision-making structures can be strengthened.

3. INFLUENCE / STAKEHOLDER MAP

This map helps you identify key actors, their level of influence, and their position towards your issue.



USE IT TO:

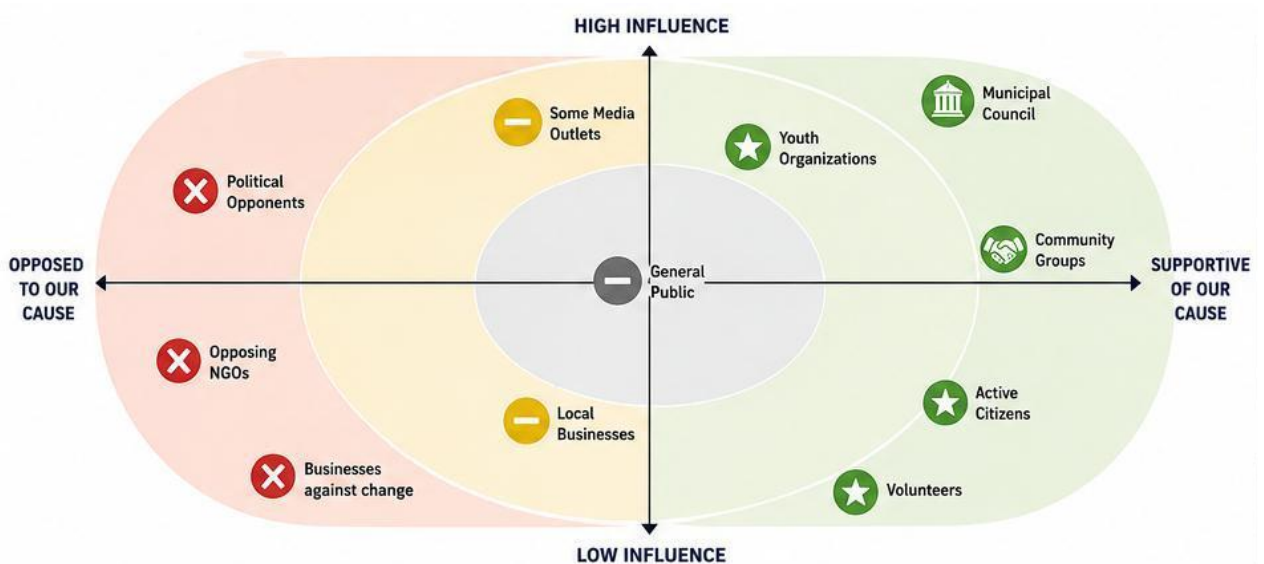
- Identify key decision-makers and influencers.
- Find potential allies and build coalitions.
- Understand opponents and plan engagement.
- Focus your energy on the actors who matter most.



Stakeholders can move!

With the right strategy, you can turn neutrals into allies and increase your support.

Example:



The activity was directly connected to the Generation Europe publication *Take Power. Handbook to Get Started With Advocacy and Lobbying*, which highlights the importance of understanding power structures and strategic engagement as central dimensions of effective advocacy work.

As the exercise progressed, participants discussed possible engagement strategies connected to different stakeholders, including alliance-building, awareness-raising, public communication, community mobilisation, and direct engagement with institutions or decision-makers.

The activity concluded with short group presentations and a collective reflection comparing different stakeholder environments, power dynamics, and approaches to strategic advocacy planning.

Debriefing Questions:

- Which stakeholders hold the most influence over the issue?
- Who could become an ally in an advocacy process?
- Which actors might resist change, and why?
- Where do opportunities for engagement or influence exist?

Learning Outcomes:

Participants strengthen their understanding of power dynamics within advocacy processes and develop practical skills related to stakeholder analysis, strategic planning, and identifying opportunities for influence.

Method Sheet 6: Reflection Round

Objectives:

- consolidate key learning points from the session
- connect advocacy concepts to participants' own realities
- encourage exchange and critical reflection
- prepare participants for the following strategy-focused activities

Materials:

- notebooks or paper
- pens
- flipcharts or whiteboard

Group Size: 5–30 participants

Duration: 30–60 minutes

Implementation:

The activity begins with a short individual reflection in which participants review the main ideas explored during the session. This can be supported through simple prompts related to key learnings, questions that emerged during the day, or possible applications within their own contexts.

Participants then move into a collective discussion where selected reflections are shared and discussed within the group. The facilitator highlights recurring themes, clarifies open questions, and connects the discussion to the next stages of the training.

As an optional extension, an informal “Advocacy Café” or evening exchange can be organised, allowing participants and partners to share concrete examples of advocacy initiatives, campaigns, or participation experiences from their own contexts.

Debriefing Questions

- Which ideas or activities stood out most during the session?
- What aspects of advocacy or lobbying feel clearer after today?
- Which topics still feel challenging or unfamiliar?
- How could the methods explored today be connected to local realities?

Learning Outcomes

Participants consolidate their understanding of the concepts introduced during the session, exchange perspectives with others, and identify connections between advocacy processes and their own experiences and contexts.

4.3. Session 2: From Ideas to Strategy

The second part of the training focused on helping participants transform concerns and ideas into structured advocacy approaches. Building on the foundations introduced earlier, the activities explored how policymaking processes function, where opportunities for influence exist, and how advocacy strategies can be planned realistically and coherently.

The session combined analytical work, collaborative planning, and practical exercises. Participants explored different stages of policymaking, examined possible entry points for intervention, and worked together to develop advocacy plans connected to issues relevant to their own contexts. Feedback and exchange were integrated throughout the process, allowing ideas to be refined collectively and from different perspectives.



Method Sheet 7: Policymaking – The Cycle and Its Entry Points

Objectives:

- introduce the main stages of policymaking processes
- explore opportunities for advocacy and participation
- strengthen understanding of how influence can be exercised
- connect policymaking structures to youth engagement

Materials:

- timeline cards or printed stages of policymaking
- flipcharts or whiteboard
- markers
- sticky notes

Group Size: 5–30 participants

Duration: 60–90 minutes

Implementation:

The activity begins with a short interactive recap of concepts explored during previous sessions. Participants revisit key ideas through keywords, visual prompts, or short group summaries before moving into the policymaking activity itself. Participants then work together to construct a visual timeline representing the different stages of policymaking, including agenda-setting, drafting, consultation, decision-making, implementation, and evaluation. Cards, printed materials, or visual aids can support the sequencing process. Once the timeline is completed, participants analyse where young people, youth organisations, or advocacy groups can intervene during different stages of the process. Concrete examples of youth participation or influence can be added to the timeline to illustrate how advocacy may take different forms depending on the context and stage of decision-making. The activity concludes with a discussion linking policymaking structures to advocacy planning and strategic engagement.

Debriefing Questions:

- Which stages of policymaking appear most accessible to young people?
- Where can advocacy efforts have the strongest impact?
- What barriers make participation within policymaking processes difficult?
- How can young people influence decision-making beyond formal institutions?

Learning Outcomes:

Participants gain a clearer understanding of policymaking processes, identify opportunities for advocacy and participation, and strengthen their ability to connect strategic action to decision-making structures.

Method Sheet 8: Building an Advocacy Strategy

Objectives:

- introduce the main components of an advocacy strategy
- support participants in transforming ideas into structured plans
- strengthen strategic planning and goal-setting skills
- connect advocacy objectives with concrete actions and target groups

Materials:

- flipcharts or large sheets of paper
- markers
- sticky notes
- printed “advocacy tree” templates

Group Size: 5–30 participants

Duration: 75–120 minutes

Implementation:

The activity begins with a short introduction presenting the core elements of an advocacy strategy, including defining objectives, identifying target groups and decision-makers, developing key messages, and considering timing within policymaking processes. Participants then work in small groups using an “advocacy tree” framework to organise and develop their ideas. The roots of the tree represent the underlying causes of an issue, the trunk represents the core problem being addressed, and the branches illustrate possible actions, strategies, or pathways for influence. Leaves or fruits can be used to represent desired outcomes or longer-term changes. As groups develop their trees, they analyse how different elements of an advocacy strategy connect to one another and discuss how these approaches could function within their own contexts. Facilitators may circulate between groups to support discussion and clarify concepts where needed. The activity concludes with short presentations and collective feedback, allowing participants to compare strategies and reflect on different approaches to advocacy planning.

Debriefing Questions:

- Which goals are realistic within the selected context?
- Who needs to be influenced in order to create change?
- Which actions are most feasible or effective?
- How do timing and context affect advocacy strategies?

Learning Outcomes:

Participants strengthen their ability to structure advocacy initiatives, connect problems to strategic objectives, and develop realistic action pathways linked to decision-making processes.

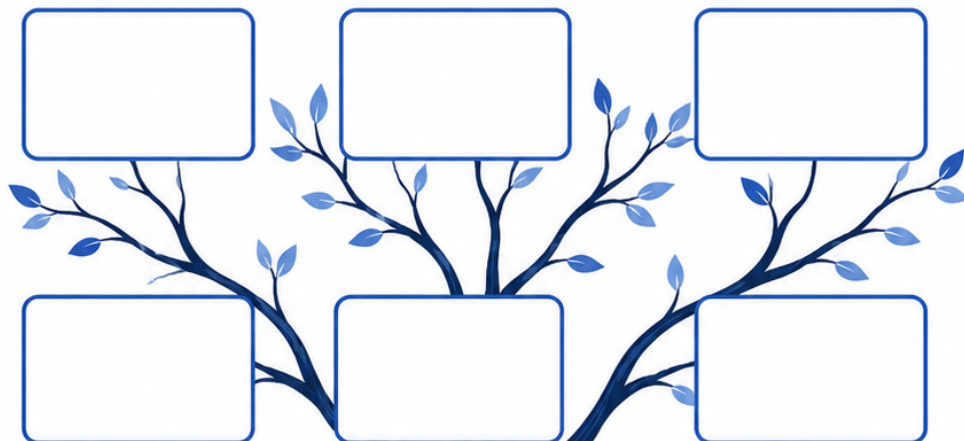
ADVOCACY TREE

Map the causes, core problem, and effects of the issue you are addressing to build a strong advocacy strategy.



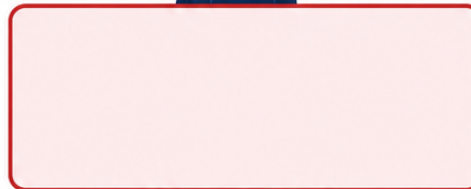
EFFECTS

What are the negative consequences or impacts of the problem?



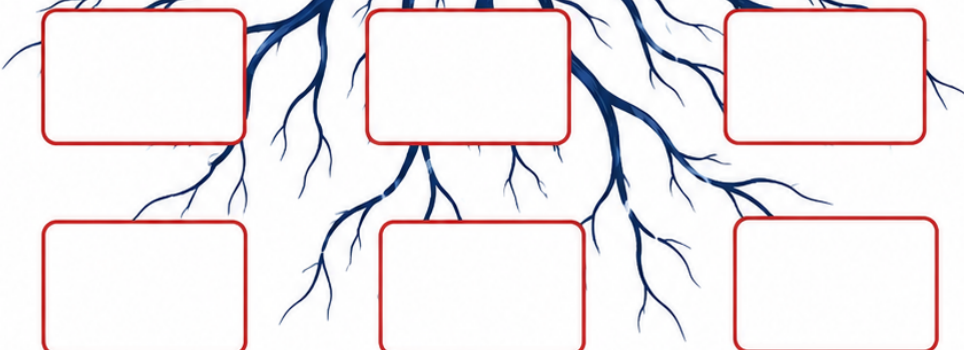
CORE PROBLEM

What is the central issue you are trying to solve?



CAUSES

What are the underlying factors or root causes of the problem?



Method Sheet 9: Group Work – Drafting Campaign Plans

Objectives:

- support participants in developing structured advocacy plans
- connect strategy, stakeholders, and actions within a coherent framework
- strengthen collaborative planning and decision-making
- encourage realistic and context-aware advocacy design

Materials:

- large sheets of paper
- coloured markers
- sticky notes
- timers or printed planning guidelines (optional)
- Templates (See annexes for SWOT Analysis Template, Campaign Planning Worksheet, Stakeholder Mapping Matrix, Action Planning Worksheet, Target, Message & Messenger Table, Assessment Table)

Group Size: 5–30 participants

Duration: 90–150 minutes

Implementation:

Participants work in small groups and select a specific issue connected to youth participation, social challenges, education, community engagement, or another topic relevant to their local context. Whenever possible, groups continue working with issues previously explored through activities such as stakeholder mapping or the advocacy tree, allowing for continuity and deeper strategic development.

The activity is structured progressively through a series of practical planning tools included in the annexes of this publication. These tools support participants in transforming general concerns into more structured and actionable advocacy plans while strengthening strategic thinking and collaborative planning skills.

The process may begin with the SWOT Analysis Template, where participants identify internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats connected to their issue or campaign. This helps participants better understand the environment in which their advocacy initiative would operate and identify possible limitations, risks, and advantages.

Following this, participants may work with the Campaign Planning Worksheet, which supports the definition of the overall advocacy strategy. Using this template, groups clarify the main objective of the campaign, define the desired change, identify key advocacy priorities, and connect their goals to concrete strategic directions.

Participants may then continue with the Stakeholder Mapping Matrix, building on previous stakeholder mapping activities carried out during the training. Through this tool, groups identify relevant actors connected to their issue, including decision-makers, allies, supporters, neutral actors, and potential opponents. Participants analyse relationships of influence, institutional roles, and possible entry points for engagement, strengthening their understanding of power dynamics within advocacy processes.

To further structure the implementation process, participants may use the Action Planning Worksheet, where they define concrete actions, responsibilities, timelines, and expected outcomes. This allows groups to move from strategic ideas towards realistic implementation planning while considering sequencing, feasibility, and coordination.

The process may also include the Target, Message & Messenger Table, supporting participants in developing communication strategies adapted to different audiences. Using this template, participants reflect on who they want to influence, what message should be communicated, who is the most appropriate messenger, and which communication approach may be most effective for different stakeholders.

Finally, participants may complete an Assessment Table, allowing them to reflect on indicators of success, possible risks, evaluation methods, and ways of monitoring the progress and effectiveness of their campaign over time.

Throughout the activity, facilitators provide support through guiding questions, feedback, and short coaching moments, while encouraging participants to adapt the templates according to their own realities and local contexts. Emphasis is placed on feasibility, coherence, and the connection between strategic objectives and practical implementation.

The activity concludes with short group presentations or exchanges, allowing participants to compare approaches, discuss challenges, and reflect collectively on how different strategic components interact within advocacy planning processes.

Debriefing Questions:

- Which advocacy goals appeared most realistic or achievable?
- How did stakeholders influence the structure of the campaign plan?
- Which challenges emerged while defining actions and priorities?
- How can advocacy plans remain adaptable to changing contexts?

Learning Outcomes:

Participants gain practical experience in campaign planning, strengthen their ability to connect objectives with strategic actions, and develop a more structured understanding of how advocacy initiatives can be designed and implemented.

Method Sheet 10: Peer Feedback

Objectives:

- create space for constructive feedback and exchange
- support participants in refining campaign ideas
- encourage critical analysis of advocacy strategies
- expose participants to different approaches and perspectives

Materials:

- campaign plans or group presentations
- feedback sheets or notebooks
- pens
- flipcharts or wall space for displaying group work

Group Size: 5–30 participants

Duration: 30–60 minutes

Implementation:

Each group briefly presents the main elements of its campaign or advocacy plan, including objectives, target groups, and proposed actions. After each presentation, participants provide feedback using a simple framework such as the “plus / delta” method, identifying strengths as well as possible improvements or adjustments.

Feedback focuses on aspects such as clarity, feasibility, strategic coherence, and the connection between actions and objectives. Facilitators support the discussion by helping groups prioritise suggestions and identify areas that may require further development.

The activity concludes with a short reflection on how feedback can strengthen advocacy planning and support collective learning processes.

Debriefing Questions:

- Which elements made campaign plans clear or convincing?
- What types of feedback were most useful?
- Which challenges appeared across different campaign proposals?
- How can constructive feedback improve advocacy work?

Learning Outcomes:

Participants strengthen their ability to analyse advocacy strategies critically, refine campaign plans through collective feedback, and engage in constructive peer-learning processes.

Method Sheet 11: Coaching Corners

Objectives:

- provide targeted support for campaign development
- help participants clarify and strengthen advocacy strategies
- encourage deeper reflection on challenges and alternatives
- create opportunities for direct exchange with facilitators and peers

Materials:

- campaign plans or worksheets
- notebooks and pens
- timers or rotation schedule
- tables or breakout spaces for small-group discussions

Group Size: 5–30 participants

Duration: 45–90 minutes

Implementation:

The activity is organised as a series of short rotating mentoring exchanges between participants and facilitators. Each group presents its campaign plan, or a specific aspect of it, such as objectives, target groups, messaging, or proposed actions.

Facilitators respond through guiding questions, alternative perspectives, and strategic observations rather than prescriptive solutions. Groups rotate between different facilitators or discussion spaces, allowing participants to receive input from multiple viewpoints and areas of expertise.

Participants use the feedback to revise, clarify, or further develop their advocacy plans before moving to the next rotation or discussion round.

As an optional extension, the day may conclude with an informal documentary screening related to youth activism, participation, or advocacy, followed by an open discussion connecting the themes explored in the film to participants' own contexts and experiences.

Debriefing Questions:

- Which aspects of the campaign plans required further clarification?
- What types of questions or feedback were most useful?
- Which challenges emerged repeatedly across different groups?
- How can mentoring and dialogue strengthen advocacy planning?

Learning Outcomes:

Participants refine their advocacy strategies, strengthen their ability to respond to feedback and questioning, and gain greater confidence in presenting and developing campaign ideas.

4.4. Session 3: Communication, Media, and Practising Influence

The final part of the training focused on communication within advocacy contexts and on applying previously developed strategies through interactive and practice-oriented activities. In response to the need for stronger confidence in public communication identified during the project's research phase, the session explored how advocacy ideas can be translated into messages that are clear, persuasive, and adapted to different audiences.

The activities combined storytelling, media-related exercises, and simulations, allowing participants to test communication strategies in realistic situations. Across the session, participants worked with personal narratives, practiced adapting messages to different stakeholders, and explored how to respond when engaging with journalists, public officials, or decision-makers.

The sequence moved progressively from individual expression to more complex interaction scenarios, including role-play and lobbying simulations. By the end of the session, participants had strengthened their ability to present arguments, communicate strategically, and respond to challenges in dynamic advocacy settings.



Method Sheet 12: Storytelling for Advocacy

Objectives:

- strengthen communication skills within advocacy contexts
- explore storytelling as a strategic advocacy tool
- support confidence in public speaking and self-expression
- connect personal experiences to broader social issues

Materials:

- notebooks or paper
- pens
- timer or stopwatch
- optional prompt cards or storytelling examples

Group Size: 5–30 participants

Duration: 45–75 minutes

Implementation:

The activity begins with short interactive exercises that encourage spontaneous storytelling and personal expression. Participants may respond to prompts connected to issues they care about or briefly share experiences related to participation, community issues, or advocacy. The facilitator then introduces key elements of storytelling within advocacy contexts, including message structure, emotional connection, audience awareness, and linking personal experiences to broader social issues. Participants prepare a short personal pitch of approximately one to two minutes connected to an issue explored during the training. The pitch should include a clear message, a personal or relatable element, and a connection to a broader advocacy goal or concern. Participants then share their pitches in pairs or small groups and exchange feedback focused on clarity, structure, emotional impact, and audience engagement. The activity concludes with a short discussion on how storytelling can strengthen advocacy and public communication.

Debriefing Questions:

- Which elements made messages more engaging or convincing?
- How can personal experiences strengthen advocacy work?
- What challenges emerged while communicating complex issues?
- How can messages be adapted to different audiences?

Learning Outcomes:

Participants strengthen their ability to communicate advocacy messages clearly and confidently, use storytelling strategically, and connect personal experiences to broader social and political issues.

Method Sheet 13: Working with Media & Officials

Objectives:

- strengthen communication skills in advocacy settings
- practice adapting messages to different audiences
- develop confidence when interacting with media and decision-makers
- improve responsiveness during public or institutional exchanges

Materials:

- role cards or scenario descriptions
- campaign plans or advocacy proposals
- notebooks and pens
- optional microphones, name tags, or table signs for role-play setup

Group Size: 5–30 participants

Duration: 60–90 minutes

Implementation:

The activity is organised as a role-play exercise simulating interactions between advocacy groups, journalists, public officials, and other actors involved in decision-making processes. Participants are divided into groups and assigned different roles. Some groups represent advocacy organisations presenting campaign proposals, while others take on the role of journalists, policymakers, or institutional representatives responding to questions and proposals. The exercise can be structured as a mock press conference, public hearing, or stakeholder meeting. Advocacy groups present their messages and proposals before responding to questions, criticism, or requests for clarification from other participants. Throughout the activity, participants are encouraged to adapt their communication style depending on the audience, defend their positions clearly, and respond to challenges in real time. The role-play concludes with a group debrief focused on communication strategies, audience engagement, and challenges encountered during the exercise.

Debriefing Questions:

- Which communication strategies were most effective?
- How did messages change depending on the audience?
- What challenges emerged when responding to questions or criticism?
- How can advocacy groups communicate effectively with media and public officials?

Learning Outcomes:

Participants strengthen their ability to communicate advocacy messages in public settings, adapt arguments to different stakeholders, and respond confidently during interactions with media representatives and decision-makers.

Method Sheet 14: Lobbying Simulation

Objectives:

- apply advocacy and lobbying strategies in a realistic setting
- strengthen negotiation and communication skills
- practice responding to decision-makers and institutional challenges
- connect strategy, messaging, and public interaction within advocacy processes

Materials:

- campaign plans or advocacy proposals
- role descriptions or institutional scenarios
- tables or breakout spaces for meetings
- notebooks and pens
- timers or rotation schedule

Group Size: 5–30 participants

Duration: 90–150 minutes

Implementation:

The activity is organised as a structured lobbying simulation in which participants present advocacy proposals to “decision-makers” represented by facilitators or other participants. Working in groups, participants present their campaign plans, focusing on objectives, proposed actions, expected outcomes, and arguments supporting their proposals. During the meetings, decision-makers respond with questions, concerns, limitations, or alternative perspectives similar to those encountered in real advocacy settings. The simulation is organised in rotating rounds so that groups engage with different actors and institutional perspectives throughout the exercise. Participants are encouraged to adapt their communication, clarify arguments, negotiate priorities, and respond strategically to feedback and criticism in real time. Following the simulation, participants take part in a collective debrief focused on communication strategies, negotiation dynamics, institutional constraints, and lessons emerging from the exercise.

Debriefing Questions:

- Which advocacy approaches were most effective during the meetings?
- What challenges emerged when negotiating with decision-makers?
- How did groups adapt their communication in response to feedback or criticism?
- Which elements strengthened or weakened the credibility of proposals?

Learning Outcomes:

Participants strengthen their ability to present advocacy proposals, negotiate with institutional actors, respond strategically in dynamic situations, and apply communication and lobbying skills within realistic decision-making scenarios.

Method Sheet 15: Action Planning

Objectives:

- support participants in defining concrete follow-up actions
- connect training content to local realities and priorities
- encourage realistic and achievable advocacy planning
- strengthen commitment to future engagement and implementation

Materials:

- action planning worksheets or templates
- notebooks or paper
- pens
- optional timeline or planning tools

Group Size: 5–30 participants

Duration: 30–60 minutes

Implementation:

Participants complete a structured reflection focused on identifying how they will apply the knowledge, tools, and methods explored during the training within their own contexts.

Using a simple planning template or worksheet, participants define a specific issue they would like to address, outline possible first steps, identify relevant stakeholders, and consider potential challenges, resources, or opportunities connected to implementation.

The activity may begin individually before continuing in pairs or small groups, where participants exchange ideas, discuss plans, and provide mutual feedback or suggestions.

The session concludes with a short collective exchange in which participants share selected next steps or priorities for future action.

Debriefing Questions:

- Which advocacy goals feel most relevant within your own context?
- What first steps are realistic after the training?
- Which challenges could affect implementation?
- What kinds of support, partnerships, or resources may be needed moving forward?

Learning Outcomes:

Participants consolidate their learning, define realistic next steps for future advocacy work, and strengthen their ability to connect training outcomes to concrete local action.

Method Sheet 16: Closing

Objectives:

- provide space for evaluation and final reflection
- recognise participants' engagement and contribution
- support closure and group connection
- introduce possibilities for follow-up and continued collaboration

Materials:

- evaluation forms or feedback tools
- certificates of participation
- flipcharts or whiteboard
- optional materials for closing activities or circle reflection

Group Size: 5–30 participants

Duration: 30–45 minutes

Implementation:

The training concludes with a collective reflection and evaluation activity in which participants share impressions, key takeaways, and final thoughts connected to the learning experience.

Participants may complete a short written or verbal evaluation before joining a closing circle or group reflection. This creates space to revisit important moments from the training, recognise personal and collective progress, and acknowledge the contributions of the group.

Certificates of participation can be distributed during this stage. Facilitators may also introduce follow-up opportunities such as mentoring, networking, or online exchange spaces connected to the wider project framework, including WP8 online sessions. The activity concludes with final remarks and a collective closing moment.

Debriefing Questions:

- Which elements of the training were most meaningful or useful?
- What learning or experiences will participants take forward?
- Which challenges or questions remain open?
- How can participants continue developing their advocacy work after the training?

Learning Outcomes:

Participants reflect on their overall learning experience, consolidate key takeaways from the training, and identify opportunities for continued engagement, collaboration, and advocacy work beyond the programme.

5. Key Learning Outcomes & Conclusion

The International Lobbying Training supported participants in developing a stronger understanding of advocacy, lobbying, and democratic participation within European contexts. Through a combination of analytical exercises, collaborative work, and simulation-based activities, participants explored how decision-making processes function and how young people can engage more strategically with institutional structures and public debates.

Throughout the programme, participants strengthened their ability to analyse stakeholders, identify opportunities for influence, and transform concerns into structured advocacy strategies. Activities related to policymaking, campaign planning, and lobbying simulations contributed to a more practical understanding of how advocacy initiatives can be designed, communicated, and adapted to different contexts.

A significant area of development was communication. Participants improved their ability to formulate arguments, adapt messages to different audiences, and use storytelling as part of advocacy work. Role-play exercises and simulations also supported confidence in public speaking, negotiation, and interaction with media representatives and decision-makers.

The training further encouraged participants to connect European-level discussions with issues affecting their own communities and realities. By combining conceptual understanding with practical application, the programme strengthened participants' confidence, strategic awareness, and readiness to engage more actively in advocacy and participation processes.

The International Lobbying Training demonstrated the importance of combining conceptual understanding with practical experience when exploring advocacy, lobbying, and democratic participation. By connecting policymaking, communication, strategy development, and simulation-based activities, the programme created opportunities for participants to engage with advocacy not only as a theoretical concept, but also as a concrete and dynamic process.

A central element of the training was its connection to participants' own realities and experiences. Throughout the programme, participants linked European-level discussions to issues affecting their communities, explored different forms of influence and participation, and reflected on how advocacy strategies can be adapted to specific social and political contexts.

The combination of collaborative work, role-play, storytelling, and lobbying simulations allowed participants to test ideas, negotiate perspectives, and strengthen their confidence in engaging with public debates and decision-making processes. At the same time, interaction with peers from different countries contributed to the exchange of experiences and the exploration of diverse approaches to participation and advocacy across Europe.

Overall, the training contributed to strengthening participants' strategic awareness, communication competences, and understanding of democratic engagement. By encouraging active participation, critical reflection, and practical application, the programme supported young people in developing the confidence and tools needed to engage more actively in advocacy and civic processes within their own contexts.

6. Annexes

The following templates were used throughout the training to support participants in structuring advocacy campaigns and transforming ideas into realistic action plans. Facilitators may adapt the tools according to the experience level, group size, available time, and thematic focus of the activity. The templates can be used individually or combined progressively as part of a larger campaign planning process.

SWOT Analysis Template

Strengths (internal) What do we already have that can support the campaign?	Weaknesses (internal) What internal challenges could limit the campaign?
Opportunities (external) Which external conditions could support the campaign?	Threats (external) Which external risks or barriers could affect the campaign?

Campaign Planning Worksheet

Type	Objective (what change?)	Who needs to act?	Deadline	How will you measure success?

Stakeholder Mapping Matrix

Audience	Supporting message (what they need to hear)	Call to action (what should they do?)

Action Planning Worksheet

Action	Description	Target audience	Timeframe	Location	Responsible person

Target, Message & Messenger Table

Audience	Messenger (person/organisation)	Why are they credible?	Support needed (briefing, facts, training, etc.)

Assessment Table

Indicator	How will you measure it?	When will you check?