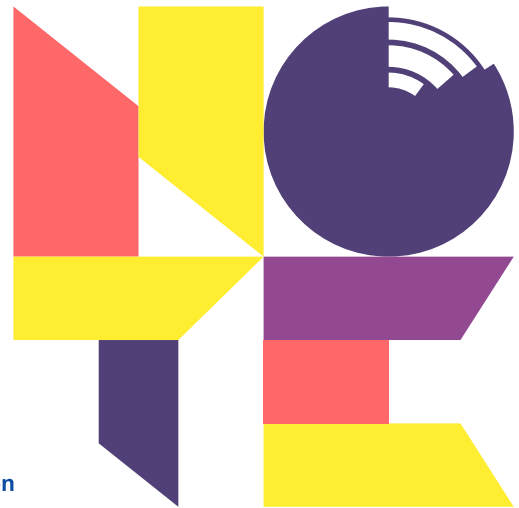




NOTE TOOLBOX

*CONTRIBUTING
TO FREE, INFORMED
AND FAIR ELECTIONS
IN EUROPE*



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NOTE coordination
Evangelista Leuzzi
evangelistaleuzzi@gmail.com

Malgorzata Wochowska
malgorzata.wochowska@gmail.com

Layout, editing, visuals:
Antonio Iaconesso
antonio.iaconesso@gmail.com

Contributors: all Project Partners:
Italy - Fattoria Pugliese Diffusa - Project Leader
Spain - Asociación Amigos de Europa
Lithuania - Vsi Kauno regiono plėtros agentūra
Romania - Asociatia Nameless Art
Bulgaria - International Initiatives for Cooperation
Spain - Ajuntament D'Ontinyent
Portugal - Município do Fundão
Croatia - Town Ludbreg
Latvia - Kurzeme Planning Region
Poland - LAG "Dolina Rzeki Grabi"
Belgium - ECIT Foundation
Germany - Connection:Berlin - Associated partner

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1.
**WHAT IS NOTE? WHY
A TOOLBOX?**

NOTE, standing for the "Network of Organizations and Towns for the European Elections", supported by CERV Programme, is an ambitious initiative designed to foster active European citizenship and bolster democratic participation with the focus on the **2024 European Parliament Elections**. It brings together local governments and civil society organizations from 11 EU Member States under the umbrella of the CERV programme, creating a thematic transeuropean network. The project spans over 18 months, targeting the engagement of young citizens, aged 18-35, who have been identified as pivotal in increasing voter turnout and participation in previous European Elections (2019). **Through NOTE, these towns and organizations collaborate to facilitate a deeper understanding of the EU's democratic values and the significant role that citizens can play in shaping European policies.**

NOTE operates with a strategic focus on three core objectives:

- the creation of a robust network aimed at active citizenship,
- bringing young people into close contact with EU institutions and parliamentarians,
- developing practical tools to ensure free, informed, and fair elections across Europe.

The network employs innovative engagement methods like **Street Debates** and **EP simulation activities**, alongside the production of informative **Podcasts** that aim to demystify the EU's institutional workings and promote an informed electorate ready to participate in the 2024 elections and broader, i.e. in political processes.

As local authorities and partners in the NOTE project, we stand at a critical juncture as the European elections in June 2024 approach. These elections are particularly significant as the newly elected

European Parliament will confront pressing challenges both locally and internationally. Our role as local authorities is vital in sustaining the EU's dedication to democracy, stability, and prosperity. Recent data from a Eurobarometer survey is promising, showing that nearly 70% of EU citizens are prepared to vote, reflecting the robust health of our democratic system and the value our citizens place on these elections.

However, while many express the intention to vote, this does not always translate into actual voter turnout. **This is where our role as local authorities and civil society organisations becomes even more crucial.** Every conversation we initiate about how European decisions impact local lives, every time we underscore the democratic nature of the EU, and each occasion we encourage voting, we help to foster a greater sense of involvement within our communities. It is essential to communicate to our constituents that by abstaining, they allow others to make decisions on their behalf, potentially leading to undesired outcomes. We call on all local authorities to get inspired by this **Toolbox to take action, however small, to spread the word among community members and contribute to free, informed and fair Elections in Europe.** By doing so, we can ensure that every voice counts and contributes to shaping our shared future in the European Union.

This Toolbox is intended for local and regional authorities, as well as local actors engaged in promoting EU values. It is designed to inspire local authorities, local promoters, and civil society organizations across Europe to contribute to fair and equal elections. We aim to highlight both the individual efforts of our project partners and our collective achievements as a network. Additionally, this Toolbox provides concise information on where to find resources that support your efforts to ensure fair and equal elections in Europe, both in the context of the upcoming European elections and for general electoral engagement.

NOTE Partners shared

We asked our project Partners how such projects as NOTE could support your efforts in fostering electoral engagement:

«NOTE can act as a means to reach all those who cannot access places where information is disseminated, allowing them to feel heard. Moreover, it can also reach those who are sceptical about the work of the European Parliament and elections»

Flavia Leopizzi, Fattoria Pugliese Diffusa, Staff member (Italy)

«Sharing knowledge and know-how from other countries, good practices of how to engage the community members, empowering people to act, providing relevant information, connecting people and politicians.»

Kostadinka Todorova, International Initiatives for Cooperation, Project manager (Bulgaria)

«Through the project NOTE our employees gained knowledge on European elections and how to promote them in the best way.»

Mateja Margić, Town Ludbreg, Head of the Department for development projects and social activities (Croatia)

«NOTE project has the strength to engage young people and citizens of European peripheral areas with concrete and simple activities.»

Emanuele G. Rizzello - Fattoria Pugliese Diffusa APS - Project Manager (Italy)

2.

**WHAT ARE FREE,
INFORMED AND
FAIR ELECTIONS
FOR NOTE?**

For NOTE, free, informed, and fair elections encapsulate the essence of democratic integrity and active citizenship within the European Union. These elections are not merely procedural but are fundamental to enabling all EU citizens, particularly the youth, to engage meaningfully in shaping the political landscape of Europe. Free elections for NOTE mean that every citizen has the unimpeded right to vote without coercion or manipulation. Informed elections are characterised by voters who are well-educated about the electoral process, the candidates, and the broader EU policies that impact their daily lives, achieved through strategic dissemination of information and educational initiatives. Fair elections are those that ensure equal opportunity for all voters and candidates alike, free from bias and ensuring that every vote holds equal weight, reflecting the true democratic will of the populace.

Why NOTE prioritizes these principles is rooted in its core mission to strengthen the democratic fabric of the EU through enhanced civic engagement and participation. By fostering an environment where elections are free, informed, and fair, NOTE aims to reverse trends of political apathy and disenfranchisement, particularly among younger voters. The initiative recognizes that the vitality of democracy in the EU hinges not only on the act of voting itself but also on the active and informed participation of its citizens. Through various innovative platforms and community-driven activities, NOTE is dedicated to empowering citizens with the knowledge and tools necessary to participate in the EU's democratic processes, thereby ensuring that the upcoming 2024 European elections are a true reflection of the collective aspirations of the European citizenry.

The NOTE initiative is critically positioned to address current challenges in European democratic processes by promoting greater political participation and combating voter apathy, particularly among the youth. Its establishment comes at a crucial time when Europe faces multiple crises—from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to ongoing humanitarian issues triggered by conflicts

such as the war in Ukraine. These challenges underscore the necessity for a renewed commitment to democratic values and an informed electorate that can engage in participatory democracy, making NOTE not just relevant but essential for fostering civic resilience and ensuring the stability of democratic institutions across Europe.

Moreover, NOTE's significance is amplified by its direct alignment with the priorities set forth in the European Democracy Action Plan and the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights. By focusing on education, civic engagement, and the empowerment of young people and marginalized groups, NOTE seeks to create a more inclusive European political landscape.

NOTE Partners shared

We asked our project Partners what they would recommend to other local municipalities in Europe to support their efforts towards free, informed and fair elections at all levels:

«I`m not a professional in this field, but I think that already happens. One thing that I have noticed in Latvia in the Municipality, government, and EP elections not in all cases are the same possibilities. For example, in local municipality elections, the Municipality ensures a free public bus that brings people to the election place from the countryside. But they don't do that in government or EP elections because the government and EP don't give money for that and municipalities are not interested in doing that with their money. That is one of the reasons why local municipality elections have bigger voter numbers than government and EP elections».

Aija Neilande, Kurzeme Planning region, Project manager (Latvia)

«To come closer to its citizens and discuss this not only a few weeks before the elections, but also within the mandates»

Iulia Gabriela Badea, Asociatia Nameless Art, Project manager (Romania)

«To inform citizens using the most popular communication channels to reach young people».

Laura Bas, Ajuntament D'Ontinyent, Project manager (Spain)

«To be supported by an NGO. Creating synergies they and the NGO can get better results and bigger impact if they are working together»

Javier Morales, Asociación Amigos de Europa, President and Project manager (Spain)

«A local municipality should cooperate with the nearest Eurodesk or Europe Direct points and organize activities in different locations: schools and Universities (to reach the first time voters), public squares, NGOs. They could also ask for the support of the national Liaison Office of the EP, who could provide materials and maybe attend local events with its representatives».

Evangelista Leuzzi, FPD, Director (Italy)

«We would recommend if possible for other municipalities to host roadshows that are now being organized by the European Parliament to act directly with the citizens with visual materials and games to interact with the citizens and to clarify directly on the spot with them all questions and doubts».

José Pinto, Fundão Municipality - International cooperation projects coordinator (Portugal)

«To support efforts towards free, informed, and fair elections, local municipalities in Europe can take several actions. Firstly invest in voter education by launching comprehensive voter education campaigns to inform citizens about their rights and responsibilities, the electoral process, and the importance of participating in elections. This can include providing information on voter registration procedures, polling locations, and candidate profiles. Next, promote civic engagement. Local authorities should encourage civic engagement by facilitating opportunities for citizens to become involved in the political process. This could involve organizing public forums, town hall meetings, and debates where voters can engage with candidates and discuss key issues».

Katarzyna Śnieg office manager of the LAG "Dolina Rzeki Grabi" (Poland)

3.
**WHAT WAS DONE IN
THE PROJECT: EP
SIMULATION, STREET
DEBATES, PODCASTS**

Fostering youth participation in the electoral process is central to NOTE's mission, particularly in the context of historically low engagement among young voters in the European elections. The 2019 study by the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance highlighted a worrying trend of absenteeism among young people, with a startlingly low turnout in previous elections, especially among those aged 16 to 24. This disconnect not only impacts the representation and policies that shape Europe but also threatens the vitality of its democratic processes. NOTE addresses this by promoting initiatives that resonate with young voters, such as the development of educational programs that instil a deep understanding of European democratic values and the significant impact of their votes.

NOTE advocates for several progressive strategies to enhance youth electoral participation. These include educating and training a transnational group of **FACilitators for the European Elections – FACEES (youth – 18-35 y.o.)**, selected by each partner; organizing **Street Debates** with the FACEES, in order to collect ideas, opinions and suggestions on how the citizens can contribute to the achievement of the SGD goals, recording Podcasts, where the FACEES interview policy-makers, e.g. the Members of the EU Parliament, discussing how the EU is addressing SGD goals, the role and the tools simple citizens have to democratically take part in the decision making processes at EU level, and engaging participants in the **EP Simulation game**, to better understand the functioning of the only directed elected body in EU. It is imperative that we engage in conversations about the impact of European decisions on local lives, emphasize the democratic nature of the EU, and encourage community members to participate in the democratic process by voting.

European Parliament simulation

As a part of the project, we hosted a simulation of the European Parliament, supported by an Italian association called European People. A **European Parliament simulation** is an educational event in which secondary school students and university students play the roles of Members of the European Parliament, discuss and vote on important European Union issues in a simulation environment. The aim is to provide students with a deeper understanding of EU decision-making processes and how the EU works in general. The simulation was supposed to empower youth through experiential learning of how this European institution functions. It raised awareness on European Citizenship and youth engagement.

Simulation games are a very suitable tool in civic education projects, because they:

- are interactive, thus put all participants into an active role and help to bring a group together
- mean a very intense experience due to active and emotional involvement
- are usually remembered for a long time as a joint memory and thus transmits insights in a very sustainable way.

In the context of teaching and reflecting democracy, they address all three relevant aspects:

- knowledge (about democratic procedures and institutions)
- democratic skills (such as listening, assessing information, showing empathy)

to others, assessing situations, identifying conflicting and aligned interest, developing political strategies, speaking, negotiating, convincing others)

- democratic attitude (fairness, respect for other positions and for procedures)

If you are interested in organising a similar activity, you can contact [European People](#). Alternatively, you may follow a full scenario offered in the publication: "Educational simulation game. European Parliament", designed in 2015 by Civitta Estonia (CPD) and commissioned by The European Parliament Information Office: https://drive.google.com/file/d/15lOmyMBKGSXphDqxxDBHgW_6s3qwwpCX/view?usp=sharing. The publication provides you with step-by-step instructions and all materials necessary to implement the activity.

NOTE Street Debates

As a part of the project, we trained a group of 25 youth (FACEES) to host Street Debates in their towns over the spring and summer months of 2023. The events were organised with the aim to involve the local communities in partner countries in imagining the future of Europe. The task was to collect answers to the question "How can I change Europe?". An alternative to a street debate was to organise any similar type of debate that will serve the purpose, with the support from FACEES. The answers collected served us for the next project step, i.e. producing the Podcasts.

Street debating is a job to bridge social divides by creating a place for open dialogue. This job was originally created as an social alternative to begging on the street for homeless people. Street debaters use a set of scales that raises a question about a topic of public interest to evoke a friendly discussion with the passerby.

Passers-by are invited to stop, engage in discussion, then put their coins on the side of the scale that represents their view. Street debating creates an opportunity for people to break out of their own online social bubble to be challenged by people with different opinions.

Street debating is a unique initiative aimed at bridging social divides by creating spaces for open dialogue. It serves as a means to bring participative democracy to the streets. This initiative engages people who typically might not be involved in such conversations, promoting the value of dialogue in a public forum.

By participating in street debates, we often challenged our own ideas as EU promoters, engaging in dialogue with a diverse array of citizens. The EU extensively promotes citizens' participation, as seen with initiatives like the Conference on the Future of Europe. However, such platforms can often seem exclusive and limited.

In response, we decided to take a bottom-up approach, opening spaces for passersby to engage in meaningful discussions. [Here](#), you can find more information about the format of street debates and the training we underwent within NOTE, which is available as open source. Additionally, you can follow our journey from training to the delivery of street debates across different countries through the accompanying photographs.

What was done in the project: EP simulation, Street Debates, Podcasts



Street debate and activity in Taurisano

What was done in the project: EP simulation, Street Debates, Podcasts



FACilitators for the European ElectionS - FACEES Preparation Workshop - 15-17 March 2023

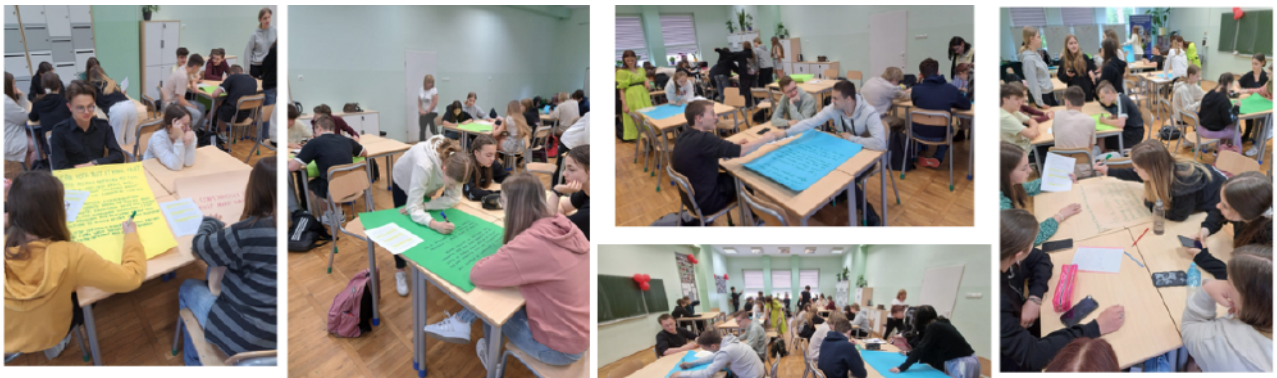
(training delivered by Giovanni Bisanti - Fattoria Pugliese Diffusa and Bastien Fillon- Officine Cittadine)

What was done in the project: EP simulation, Street Debates, Podcasts



ONTINYENT Street Debate (ES) – 26 October 2023

What was done in the project: EP simulation, Street Debates, Podcasts



Kaunas Street Debate (LT) - 9 May 2023

What was done in the project: EP simulation, Street Debates, Podcasts



Kaunas Street Debate (LT) - 9 May 2023



Brasov Street Debate(RO) - July 2023

Learn more about Street Debates

The guideline of the street debate: <https://spacetwinning.eu/#docs>

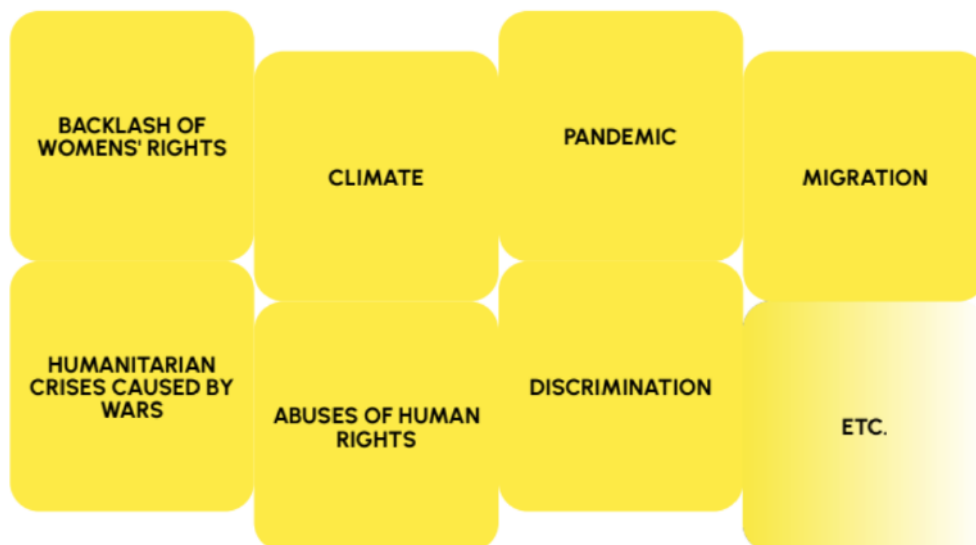
Global Education Agora with information (with games and exhibitions) <https://geagora.eu/>

[The report Street Dialogue](#) - this report shares the overview of the nine teams' Street Dialogue Project summary, methodologies used, lessons and takeaways

A video of a worldwide street debate: <https://fb.watch/j8ullOcofH/>

NOTE Podcasts

Between January and May 2024 each project partner of the Network of Organizations and Towns for the European Elections produced at least one episode of a podcast series. The aim was to engage local youth in meaningful conversations with Members of European Parliament, candidates to the EP, politicians, EU experts, policy makers, representatives of civil society organizations around topics which are in the EU agenda and which will become important during the European Elections, such as:



The target audience of the series are young people from partner countries. Therefore, the partners were free to make your interview in their own language.

**Here you will find instructions
on how to produce a podcast step by step.**

[Attachment](#)

**If you decide to prepare one, we will be happy to
add it to the playlist of Podcasts produced within
the project:**

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL-A_5wNOs2ZCcS_
HZkWKtLyiLLyZHm8CP](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL-A_5wNOs2ZCcS_HZkWKtLyiLLyZHm8CP)

<p>Bulgaria / IIC</p>	<p>🗣️ NOTE-EU in podcasts speak up! Youth power or how youth can make a change by Association "International Initiatives for Cooperation" (Bulgaria)</p> <p>👥 Guests Three active young people from the city of Razlog. Aneliya Baltadjieva Deyan Pashkulev Jean-Pierre Smuts</p> <p>👉 Title Youth power or how youth can make a change</p> <p>🗣️ Moderator Ms. Kostadinka Todorova, an experienced youth worker, trainer and chairperson of Association "International Initiatives for Cooperation" (Bulgaria)</p> <p>📖 In this episode: The moderator provokes the youngster to share their perspectives and points of views on a topic related to active civic participation.</p>
<p>Croatia / Town Ludbreg</p>	<p>🗣️ NOTE-EU in podcasts speak up! Pandemic in Town Ludbreg by Ludbreg, Town Ludbreg (Croatia)</p> <p>👥 Guests Students high school</p> <p>🗣️ Moderator Iva Havaić Mateja Margić</p> <p>👉 Title Pandemic in Town Ludbreg</p> <p>📖 In this episode We want to find out how the pandemic has affected them during the pandemic</p>
<p>Latvia / Kurzeme Planning Region</p> <p>EPISODE 1</p>	<p>🗣️ NOTE-EU in podcasts speak up! What opportunities does the European Union offer? by Kurzeme Planning Region (Latvia)</p> <p>👥 Guests Three active young individuals from the Kurzeme region, Latvia: Elīna Lelde Tūbele, a young person from the city of Kuldīga. Ance Edele, a young person from the city of Saldus. Dāvids Skuška, a young person from Kuldīga.</p> <p>🗣️ Moderator Gvido Mēteris, a young individual from the Latvian city of Saldus and a member of the youth multimedia studio "Frekvence".</p> <p>📖 Episode 1 - In this episode: initial associations with the European Union and the European Parliament; opportunities provided by the European Union; opportunities young people plan to capitalize on; additional opportunities the European Union should ensure for its citizens.</p>

<p>Latvia / Kurzeme Planning Region</p> <p>EPISODE 2</p>	<p>🗣️ NOTE-EU in podcasts speak up! What current issues/problems should the European Parliament address? by Kurzeme Planning Region (Latvia)</p> <p>👤 Guests Three active young individuals from the Kurzeme region, Latvia: Elīna Lelde Tūbele, a young person from the city of Kuldīga. Ance Edele, a young person from the city of Saldus. Dāvids Skuška, a young person from Kuldīga.</p> <p>🗣️ Moderator Gvido Mēteris, a young individual from the Latvian city of Saldus and a member of the youth multimedia studio "Frekvence".</p> <p>📌 Episode 2 - In this episode: Themes identified by young people that require attention at the EU and EP levels, with a focus on security issues, climate and environmental concerns, and voting rights for youths starting from the age of 16.</p>
<p>Latvia / Kurzeme Planning Region</p> <p>EPISODE 3</p>	<p>🗣️ NOTE-EU in podcasts speak up! "What do young people know about the European Parliament?" by Kurzeme Planning Region (Latvia)</p> <p>👤 Guests Three active young individuals from the Kurzeme region, Latvia: Elīna Lelde Tūbele, a young person from the city of Kuldīga. Ance Edele, a young person from the city of Saldus. Dāvids Skuška, a young person from Kuldīga.</p> <p>🗣️ Moderator Gvido Mēteris, a young individual from the Latvian city of Saldus and a member of the youth multimedia studio "Frekvence".</p> <p>📌 Episode 3 - In this episode: Initial associations with the European Parliament; young people's knowledge about the institution; their interest in its work and how to cultivate it among them.</p>
<p>Belgium / ECIT</p>	<p>🗣️ NOTE-EU in podcasts speak up! For a statute on European citizenship by Belgium ECIT foundation (Belgium)</p> <p>👤 Guests Maite Pagazartundúa (MEP)</p> <p>🗣️ Moderator Selma Remond (ECIT staff)</p> <p>📌 Title For a statute on European citizenship by Belgium</p> <p>📌 In this episode ECIT pioneered the idea of a statute on European citizenship. The MEP in question has already contributed a video message to a debate we organised on 24 January. She is the main rapporteur on the theme of European citizenship.</p>

<p>Italy / Fattoria Pugliese Diffusa</p>	<p>💡NOTE-EU in podcasts speak up! As a citizen how can I change Europe? by Fattoria Pugliese Diffusa (Italy)</p> <p>👤Guests Mario Furore (MEP)</p> <p>🗣️Moderator Giovanni Bisanti</p> <p>👉Title As a citizen how can I change Europe?</p> <p>📖In this episode Mario Furore is a member of the European Parliament. With him we will talk about the European Policies for Youth and the importance of voting.</p>
<p>Portugal / Câmara Municipal do Fundão</p>	<p>💡NOTE-EU in podcasts speak up!Speak to E(YO)U by Municipal do Fundão (Portugal)</p> <p>👤Guests The Vice Mayor Miguel Liliana Reis (candidate do Portuguese Parliament in March elections 2024)</p> <p>🗣️Moderator Eduardo Grilo (FACEES member)</p> <p>👉Title CONTAME CONTAME</p> <p>📖In this episode GeoPolitical aspects, Eurozone, Ukraine war and Political sciences teacher.</p>
<p>Poland / Local Action Group "Dolina rzeki Grabi"</p>	<p>💡NOTE-EU in podcasts speak up! Youngsters have a voice! by Local Action Group "Dolina rzeki Grabi" (Poland)</p> <p>👤Guests Dariusz Cieślak Igor Jędrzejczak</p> <p>🗣️Moderator Anna Doliwa Katarzyna Śnieg</p> <p>👉Title Youngsters have a voice!</p> <p>📖In this episode Dariusz Cieślak is a head of the commune and Igor Jędrzejczak is a young person who is involved in political issues so it can be really interesting to interview this two people to discuss how to encourage young people to vote and make them aware of why it is important.</p>

Spain / Amigos de Europa

🗣️ NOTE-EU in podcasts speak up!
European elections for youngsters by Amigos de Europa (Spain)
👤 Guests
Youngsters
Mercedes Bueno, youth and social wellness councillor of La Rinconada municipality 🗣️ Moderator
A Journalist from Radio Rinconada
👉 Title
European elections for youngsters
📄 In this episode
Abuses of human rights, discrimination.

Spain / Ontinyent

🗣️ NOTE-EU in podcasts speak up!
CONTAME CONTAME by Ontinyent City Council (Spain)
👤 Guests
Jorge Rodríguez (Mayor of Ontinyent Municipality)
Manel Franga (University student)
👉 Title
CONTAME CONTAME
📄 In this episode
What is your position regarding these elections?
How informed are you about it?
The last elections, among voters aged 18-24, only 26% voted. What do you think?
Having the right to vote and the possibility to do so, why do you think they do not use it when they have the possibility of changing the course of Europe?

Lithuania / Kauno regiono pletros agentura

🗣️ NOTE-EU in podcasts speak up!
EP's social media review by Kauno regiono pletros agentura (Lithuania)
👤 Guests
Guoda Ašmontaitė
Ali Sina Icer
👉 Title
European Parliament's social media review
📄 In this episode, Guoda Ašmontaitė and Ali Sina Icer interacted with each other on the European Parliament's social media networks and explored what was behind the posts they publish.

Romania / Asociatia Nameless Art

🗣️ NOTE-EU in podcasts speak up!

United in a World of Fear by Asociatia Nameless Art (ROMANIA)

👤 Guests

Mr. Cristian Ioneascu (Prahova County Councilor and Financial Consultant)

🗣️ Moderator

Ms. Alexandra Cernica (student at the University of Science and Technology Politehnica Bucharest)

📌 Title

Crises and choices: exploring humanitarian challenges and European democracy

📌 Topics:

🌟 youth interests in the political life and what is missing in Romania for making them to be more aware of their power, and how to be engaged in the future elections

🌟 what changed since the war in Ukraine started and what the national government has done for them, how/if they were included in the society and how the EU leaders could continue to support them

🌟 the next elections because in Romania this year are going to be 4 elections (presidential, local for mayors, parliamentary, and European Parliament) and topics/ issues that coexists with the actual EP Elections.

NOTE Partners shared

"We recorded a podcast about how to encourage young people to participate in parliamentary and local elections. To our podcast we invited the mayor of the commune and the Marshal of the Youth Parliament of the Republic of Poland. The podcast recording received positive feedback. We received many messages that this was a very important topic and we discussed it in a very accessible way".

Katarzyna Śnieg office manager of the LAG "Dolina Rzeki Grabi" (Poland)

4. INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS TAKE BY PROJECT PARTNERS

Individual actions take by project partners

This Toolbox is intended for local and regional authorities, as well as local actors engaged in promoting EU values. As part of the project, we asked our Partners to elaborate on the actions, activities, and tools they have implemented to promote free and fair elections in Europe within 2023 and 2024. Here we would like to highlight best practices from the ground in our partner countries that some of our partners have decided to share:



Italy

Fattoria Pugliese Diffusa

Activities organized by the Eurodesk Network

<https://2024elections.eurodesk.eu/>

The website for the 2024 European Elections campaign by Eurodesk is designed to encourage young Europeans to vote. It offers information on the importance of voting, how to register, and the impact of the European Parliament. The site includes personal stories, details about the EP's role, and a video competition to engage youth. It emphasizes the significance of participating in the world's largest cross-border election to influence various critical issues like education, employment, and the environment.



Spain

ASOCIACION AMIGOS DE EUROPA

Euro-lessons in high school with first time voters

"It was an activity that we replied 4 times to reach 400 students between 16-18 years old. It was part of an Eurodesk initiative and we were following the programme of activities that Eurodesk provided. We included two Lithuanian volunteers and it was really interesting for the students because they never reflected before about this topic and the EU and EU elections. They saw from this moment the EU as something closer which is not only in Brussels".

Javier Morales, Asociación Amigos de Europa



Bulgaria

International Initiatives for Cooperation

Awareness raising initiatives and workshops on active engagement on the importance the European elections

"The team of International Initiatives for Cooperation decided to work in the direction of raising awareness among young people, especially among those who will vote for the first time this year. We reached out to young people by organising information seminars in the high schools in the city of Razlog, where we are located. We used non-formal education methods to reach young people, to encourage them to express their opinion and help them understand the importance of using their right to vote and that in this way every single person can change the world. The seminars had a positive impact because we managed to engage the audience. In order to strengthen the commitment of young people and to provoke their interest even more, we also invited them to a workshop that was held in our office and to which we had invited young people from various schools from the city of Razlog. It was very interesting to participate in a discussion with young people who had formed an opinion on important topics and who feel that they are citizens of Europe. The workshop was also a prerequisite for creating new contacts and shaping their perspective of Europe. We have also worked with young people who are part of school parliaments and are involved in many extracurricular activities that engage other youngsters and have a strong impact on the local community"

Ms. Kostadinka Todorova



European
Citizens' rights,
Involvement and
Trust

Belgium

ECIT Foundation

A statute on European citizenship, an ECI "I'm going European", a symbolic vote on 26 April near EP

"To ensure free and fair elections in Europe. ECIT Foundation has proposed putting European citizenship centre stage. This involved working with Members of the European Parliament to draft a statute on European citizenship to be incorporated into the Treaties, [which is now available on their website](#). ECIT then submitted an ECI to the European Commission, suggesting that the Treaties be recast to introduce a right to European citizenship education. Successfully registered, it did not have the necessary support and ECIT had to withdraw it officially. Thanks to civil society events such as the NOTE partners' meeting in Brasov, a new version – Teach me Europe – is about to be published on the basis of their advice. Finally, ECIT brought together volunteers from Brussels-based organisations to organise a symbolic vote on the esplanade of the European Parliament. We have also launched an [online version](#) to keep pace with today's communications media. So far, 600 people have voted on ways to extend the right to vote, and a report to the next members of the European Parliament is being drafted to ensure that these opinions are taken into account."

Selma Remond - ECIT advocacy intern, ECIT Foundation



USE YOUR VOTE

#USE YOUR VOTE

SYMBOLIC VOTE

USE YOUR VOTE



#USE YOUR VOTE



5. OTHER RESOURCES AND TOOLS

NOTE Partners shared

We asked our project Partners what resources and tools are especially valuable for local authorities in Europe in order to enhance their role in European elections:

"I would suggest meetings with young people, meetings of the MPs or candidate MPs with young people in a non-formal environment. Also there are tools that non-governmental organisations use to extract ideas from young people through non-formal educational methods like simulation games, consultative meetings."

Kostadinka Todorova, International Initiatives for Cooperation, Project manager (Bulgaria)

"There are many but I would recommend the guide "GOTV campaign" that we developed on the last EU elections campaign in 2019 and that we are still using those ideas to create local actions with the community focused on the European Elections process".

José Pinto, Fundão Municipality - International cooperation projects coordinator (Portugal)

"I think that in Latvia's case, there should be a course in a school about politics, how it changes our lives, and how we can engage like inhabitants. Then next voters will go to all elections where they could participate".

Aija Neilande, Kurzeme Planning region, Project manager (Latvia)

"Aside from social media, where the majority of people are youngsters, the free and informed information related to the EU Elections should be done on TV. In Romania for example, seniors are watching more TV and from there they are getting the information, but there are channels that are misleading the audience with false information. So something should be done in this case".

Iulia Gabriela Badea, Asociatia Nameless Art, Project manager (Romania)



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Aija Neilande
Kurzeme Planning Region
Project Manager

"Being in the European Union I have absorbed all its core values. I am for peace and freedom, preserving nature, and green thinking. I respect and admire its different cultures and languages. In my daily work on various development projects, I cultivate growth and development, both material and educational. That is my contribution to the European Union, its people, and the future as a whole."



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Alexandra Cernica
ANA Volunteer
Romania

"I think that changing Europe starts with the wish of changing something around you and continues with volunteering actions, with being involved in politics and knowing your rights and of course to exercise your right to vote. Europe changed me by giving me opportunities such as ERASMUS, to travel and meet new people, which have broadened my horizons and helped me grow and experience new things, which were crucial to my development both personal and professional."



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André Silva

Europe changed me because of the opportunities that exist. It was through programs born from the European project that I began my career as a youth worker. I created a purpose for myself out of the desire to replicate experiences that did me so much good for other young people like me.



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Ângelo Santos
28 years old

European Union change me for better through its sharing diversity opportunities and taking the opportunity from it, to become a better and respectful person. Taking advantage of Europe is the best we can do for our & Europe 's Future.



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Antonio Melileo
Volunteer
Fattoria Pugliese Diffusa APS

Europe has been guiding me throughout my life thanks to a lot of opportunities making me the citizen i am now. Now it's time to spread a message of european unity and help other people to know and catch the endless world of european opportunities.



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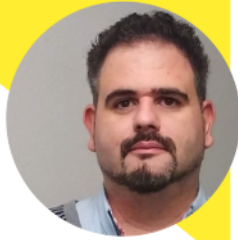


Camila Torgal

I can change Europe by actively participating in its political life, being aware of the decisions taken in European institutions and promoting EU values in my daily life. All together we can change Europe if we are, each of us, an agent of change and promotion of peace, solidarity and inclusion.



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Javier Morales
Amigos de Europa
NGO founder

"Europe changed my life with a big bunch of opportunities that I took advantage of and now I am working using these opportunities to change other lives"



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José Pinto

Europe is part of my skin. I work and breathe European union values and challenges since 2013 every single day. Europe changed me as human, citizen and my beliefs that this is the most amazing common project that we must feed with our action to make him stronger and wider day by day. Thank you so much EU!



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Eduardo Grilo

For me, Europe is a sea of opportunities! It's being outside of Portugal and still feeling at home. Europe transformed my outlook on life, offering me unique professional and personal opportunities. Today, I am dedicated to bringing these same opportunities to other young people, helping them discover and take advantage of the wide range of possibilities that Europe has to offer.



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Laura Homka
Marketing specialist
Kurzeme Planning Region

"We are each like a small, colorful puzzle piece. Through our decisions, actions, and love for our land, together we shape Europe—diverse, vibrant, and strong! Only by changing ourselves does Europe change too!"



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Mariana Vieira
24 years old

To change Europe, go participate in social movements, support inclusive policies and take advantage of student and professional mobility programs. Europe changed me by offering me a multicultural education and opening me doors to new experiences and opportunities.



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Rodrigo Pedro

Traveling and learning across Europe transformed me profoundly. I discovered new cultures and stories that expanded my views. Thanks to European Union initiatives, and in addition to having the opportunity to intern at an association linked to these same programs, I visited and learned about various topics that I never imagined!

There are some reliable online resources which would be especially valuable for local authorities in order to enhance their role in the future European Elections. Use these tools to spread the word among community members and contribute to free, informed and fair Elections in Europe:

<https://2024elections.eurodesk.eu/>
Eurodesk portal dedicated to the European Elections 2024,
with reasons to vote, how to vote, etc.

Together.eu

Sign up to receive a reminder to vote at the European elections.
Sign up here to join the community that promotes the European elections.

YouthEP

the official Facebook page of the European Youth Event

Your Europe

Information and advice on the electoral rights of EU citizens and their families (also on IG)

Democracy and electoral rights

The Commission's activities to safeguard European democracy, promote free and fair elections and uphold electoral rights of EU citizens.

Beyond the EP Elections

The EU has issued [a directive](#) which explains in detail how the right to vote and stand as a candidate in local and municipal elections in the country in which you live works. It includes some limited exceptions, principally

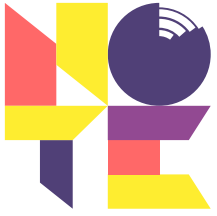
- national governments may decide that the leaders of local and municipal governments (mayors, heads of local authorities etc – this is defined in the directive) can only be one of their own nationals.
- national governments may require a minimum period of residence for EU citizens to participate in local elections if more than 20% of the voting population are non-nationals – this is very rare

The Commission publishes reports on the implementation of EU law in local and municipal elections and ways to promote electoral rights.

Taurisano, Italy 2024

**This Toolbox has been realised
in the framework of the CERV project
“Network of Organizations and Towns for the
European Elections”**

Project ID. 101091293



NETWORK OF ORGANIZATIONS
AND TOWNS FOR THE EUROPEAN
ELECTIONS



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NOTE PODCASTS INSTRUCTIONS

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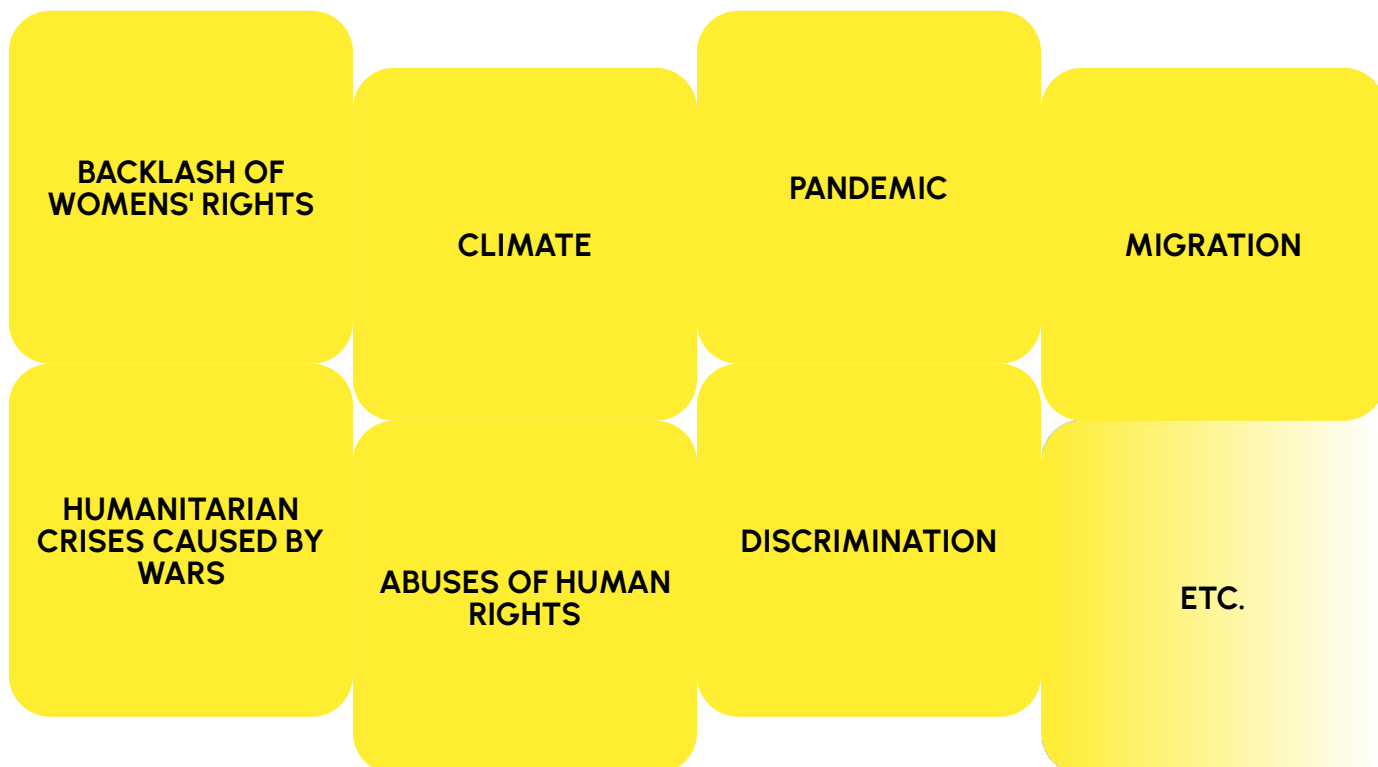
Name of the series

European Union in podcasts – speak up! Podcasts by partners of the Network of Organizations and Towns for the European Elections in the run up to the elections to the European Parliament 2024.

Between January and 31 March 2024 each project partner of the Network of Organizations and Towns for the European Elections is expected to produce one episode of a podcast series. Each episode should be min. 10 of and max. 15 minutes long.

Aim

Engage local youth in meaningful conversations with Members of European Parliament, candidates to the EP, politicians, EU experts, policy makers, representatives of civil society organizations around topics which are in the EU agenda and which will become important during the European Elections, such as:



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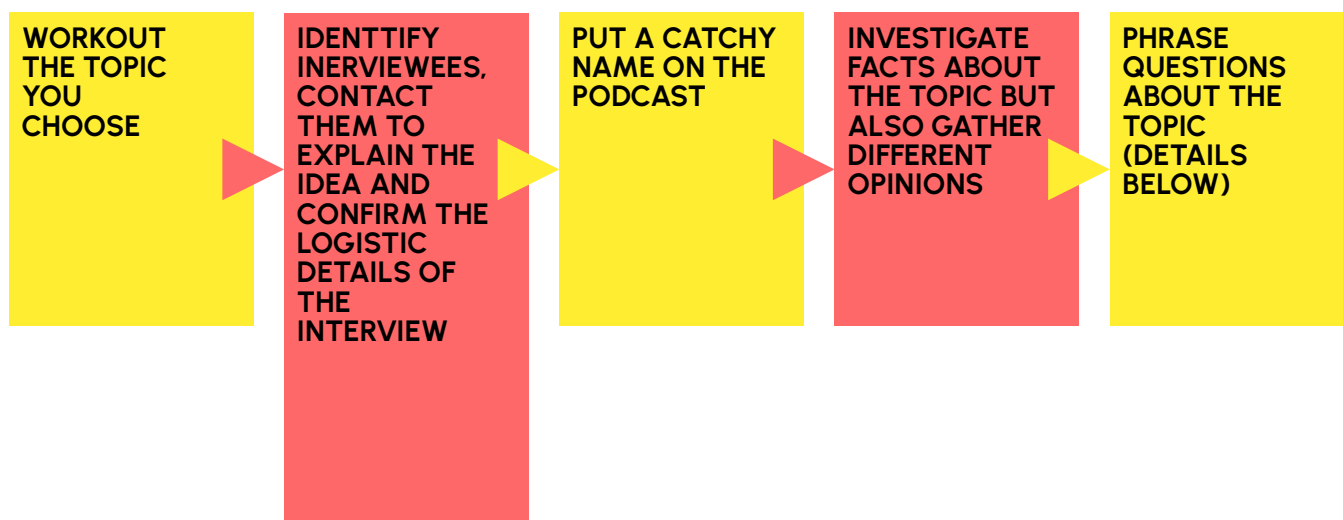
The target audience

of the series should be young people from partner countries. Therefore, you are free to make your interview in your own language.

Interview

The host of an interview podcast will invite relevant guests to their show and facilitate a conversation with them. This is the most popular podcast format and is useful for getting new listeners as guests can bring in new audiences and exposure. However, take into account that you need to do some outreach and planning to set up your interviews.

How to prepare for the podcast?



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The NOTE project team will provide:

01 - The *pich*

A short text you can use to convince potential interviewees to take part in this initiative:

"Dear...,

We would like to invite you to take part in an interview (online). We represent a Network of towns and organizations for the European Elections. It is an initiative of 12 towns from 10 EU States.

NOTE involves towns and organisations in the run up to the elections to the European Parliament. Within the project we organise Street Debates, an EP simulation activity and collect ideas and suggestions in the form of podcasts. Between January and March 2024 each project partner of the Network will produce one episode of a podcast series. **The aim of the podcasts to engage local youth in meaningful conversations with Members of European Parliament, candidates to the EP, politicians, EU experts, policy makers, representatives of civil society organizations around topics which are in the EU agenda and which will become important during the European Elections, such as: to achieve the objectives set by the EU documents policy papers as well as by the UN Sustainable Development Goals (backlash of women rights, climate, pandemic, migration, humanitarian crises caused by the wars, etc.).**

Therefore we would like to interview you and make it become one of the podcast episodes. "...

02 Intro and outro music

Start and end your podcast with a theme song.

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03 Intro graphic

04 Scenario

Scenario for each episode to keep them united in the format:

- Episode introduction: Introduce yourself, your podcast name and what your show is about.
- Guest intro: Share your guest's name and add some context regarding their background and expertise. Make it clear to listeners why this guest is on your show and what they can learn from that individual.
- Episode main content (interview) : Discuss the episode's topics in detail. Make sure to ask 3-5 questions: **personal** (what is this person's relation to the discussed issue), **factual** (what are the main aspects to consider about this topic, related phenomena), and one about the ideas this person has to change Europe, an ideal change this person would like to see in the EU
- Wrap up: Summarize the key takeaways from today and thank any guests you might have had on the show. Also, thank your listeners for tuning in.
- Call-to-action: This is your chance to ask listeners to vote in the European Elections
- Outro music: Play an ending song to symbolize your episode has finished.

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05 Promotion

Publication of the podcasts the platform that best suits our goals.

Step 1 - Get info from partners

Antonio needs each partner to provide this kind of information: Title of their podcast, due date, abstract, name of podcasters and people who will be interviewed, etc.

Please provide it all here: [NOTE - Podcast details for the communication plan \(google.com\)](#)

Step 2 - Creating graphics (video cover), intro and outro music

Antonio creates a post to promote podcasts for each partner (in a unified format).

The podcasts will be published first on FATTORADIO's channels: YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and Spotify. The links will be then shared by the partners on their websites and Social Networks. Partners receive materials and they have to post on their social media with the tags (mandatory). It's important to explain to tag others accounts (personals, guests) to spread the voice and reach more engagement

Step 3 - Publishing on social media and personal accounts:

Spreading posts and sharing them. The podcasts will be published first on FATTORADIO's channels: YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and Spotify. The links will be then shared by the partners on their websites and Social Networks.

For coordination reasons, each partner is requested [to commit to the due date](#) until which they can prepare their podcast, starting from February 12th. The plan of promoting the podcasts will be based [on this table](#).

Publish your ready videos here: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1tt04exXZ6LkcJl_vCPRb3oR-EV6ZPuMz

They will be edited by us - we will add the intro and outro.