



# Empowerment of Mobile Youth in the European Union (EMY)

## What we know

- Young people are the most mobile group within the EU living in large numbers outside their home countries, especially for studying.
- They do not fully exercise their rights to engage in political life in their host country.
- Mobile students are often well connected through (social) media and may be engaged using new tools of online participation.
- There is a trend of activation among young people in societal processes (e.g., climate change activism).

## Background

Under the Treaty on the European Union all EU citizens have the right to vote, and to stand as candidates in elections to the European Parliament in their home country or, alternatively, in any other country in the EU where they reside ('host country'). And yet, most EU citizens are not making use of these rights. A public consultation conducted in 2015 revealed that only 22% of so-called 'mobile EU citizens' (citizens of an EU member state who live in another EU member state) had voted in European Parliament elections in their host country.

A broad support of mobile EU citizens, e.g. by providing individual information letters, online registration for elections, and e-voting services would be desirable. This is where EMY comes into play.

EMY will concentrate, initially, on conducting pilots in two EU member states:

- Austria has been the first EU member state to grant its citizens the right to vote in all elections (including EU) at the age of 16.
- Estonia is a pioneer in promoting the use of online voting ('i-voting').

## Our mission

EMY is looking to identify the reasons why mobile EU citizens are not exercising their voting rights and to find ways to encourage more active democratic engagement and participation.

## What we want to achieve

- Increased awareness among mobile youth in the EU about opportunities for democratic engagement. Build a self-sustaining community to spread the topic of participation among European Mobile Youth.
- Better understanding of their preferences and attitudes, including improved knowledge and understanding of the role of digital technologies.
- Recommendations for policymakers, authorities and social and political communities to better meet expectations, needs and preferences of European mobile youth for engagement at the EU and local level.

## Target Groups for Community Building

- Mobile EU citizens aged 16-29 from other EU member states, who live and study, or work, in Austria and Estonia.
- Institutions and community leaders linked to mobile youth in Austria and Estonia.
- European, national and local policy makers and administrations dealing with elections, citizen engagement and education.

## Who we are (Project Partners)

**AIT** - Austrian Institute of Technology (lead partner)

**CEPA** - Centre for Economics and Public Administration Ltd. UK

**eGA** - e-Governance Academy, Estonia

**Politikos** - Wir müssen reden! (NGO), Austria