

Negotiating Democracy



*Exploring future relationships between
young people and democracy through the
evolving role of identity and belonging*

Appendices

master thesis Design for Interaction
by Sietske van Bakel
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// Graduation Brief

Original project brief as approved at the start of the graduation project.

Project Proposal form IDE Master Graduation Project

In this proposal the agreements made between student and supervisory team about the student's IDE Master Graduation Project are set out. This document needs to be prepared for the Kick-off meeting and should be submitted in MyCase.

Name student Sietske van Bakel Student number 5047706

Project title Beyond Democracy: Designing Future Relationships Between Youth and Democratic Systems

Please state the title of your graduation project (above). Keep the title compact and simple. Do not use abbreviations. The remainder of this document allows you to define and clarify your graduation project.

MSc programme ☒ Design for Interaction ☐ Integrated Product Design ☐ Strategic Product Design
☐ Other (in case of a double degree outside IDE): _____

Describe the context of your project in the box below; What is the domain in which your project takes place? Who are the main stakeholders and what interests are at stake? Describe the opportunities (and limitations) in this domain to better serve the stakeholder interests. (max 250 words)

The current democracy is not equipped to deal with the growing gap between citizens and politics. Trust in political institutions is declining across Europe and the Netherlands. The OECD and the Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau report that many citizens feel insufficiently represented and heard, which weakens the perceived legitimacy of democratic governance and reduces civic engagement. Thinkers such as Bas Heijne, IJla Leonard Pfeijffer, and David Van Reybrouck examine this development more deeply. They describe how polarization, the erosion of shared truth, algorithmic media environments, and pressures on journalistic independence contribute to what can be understood as the hollowing out of democracy: a condition in which democratic structures formally remain in place while citizens increasingly feel disconnected from their function and meaning.

Organizations such as ProDemos, the Dutch House for Democracy and the Rule of Law, actively work to strengthen democratic awareness and participation, particularly among young people. Through educational programs, simulations, and public engagement activities, ProDemos seeks to help citizens understand how democracy works and why it matters. At the same time, these efforts highlight a broader challenge: younger generations increasingly encounter democracy through digital environments, media platforms, and evolving social contexts that shape how they perceive and engage with democratic systems.

Democracy is therefore not only a political structure but also an evolving interaction between citizens and democratic institutions. This project explores how democracy in the Netherlands may evolve in the future, particularly for younger generations whose relationship with democracy is shaped through digital and educational interactions. By adopting a design perspective, the project investigates how new forms of democratic engagement can be envisioned and materialized beyond current institutional configurations.

Problem Definition

What problem do you want to solve in the context described in the introduction, and within the available time frame of 100 working days? (= Master Graduation Project of 30 EC). What opportunities do you see to create added value for the described stakeholders? Substantiate your choice. (max 200 words)

Democracy is often discussed in terms of institutions, governance, and political processes. However, democracy also exists in the everyday perceptions, interactions, and lived experiences of citizens. As Heijne emphasizes, democracy ultimately relies on citizens recognizing themselves as part of a shared democratic project. // For younger generations, this relationship is increasingly mediated through technology, digital platforms, and new forms of social interaction. Their engagement with democracy is shaped not only by political systems, but by social media and (educational) environments. This means that democracy is not only maintained politically and culturally, but also materially and experientially through designed systems. // At the same time, democratic education primarily focuses on explaining existing systems rather than exploring its possible futures. While society is changing rapidly, there is now limited understanding of how democratic relationships may evolve, and how design can help shape democratic engagement in future contexts. // This project addresses this gap by exploring the future relationship between youth and democracy through design. Rather than analyzing current democratic challenges alone, the project adopts a future-oriented perspective to explore how democracy may be experienced, understood, and enacted by future generations, and how design can support this relationship.

Assignment

This is the most important part of the project brief because it will give a clear direction of what you are heading for. Formulate an assignment to yourself regarding what you expect to deliver as result at the end of your project (1 sentence. As you graduate as an industrial design engineer, your assignment will start with a verb (Investigate/Design/Validate/Create), and you may use the format: (Investigate/Design/Validate/Create) a (what will be the deliverable → prototype/roadmap/process/ intervention /approach/guideline/strategy/...) to (what should it do → create/understand/evaluate/validate/improve/execute/ analyse/...) (the objective → experience/value/process/product/...) for (whom → target group/client/...) in (what context).

Design a future vision together with an intervention and roadmap to explore and strengthen how young people in the Netherlands can experience, understand, and participate in post-democratic systems within an educational context.

Explain your project approach to carrying out your graduation project and what research and design methods you plan to use to generate your design solution (max 150 words).

This project will follow the Vision-in-Product (VIP) design approach. I will first develop a future vision (±2036) that explores how democracy, technology, and youth civic engagement may evolve, informed by literature research, trend analysis, and expert perspectives. Based on this vision, I will create a roadmap that translates long-term insights into present-day opportunities for design. Finally, I will design and materialize a speculative intervention that makes future democratic relationships tangible and experiential. Through prototyping and evaluation with young people and stakeholders, the intervention will explore how design can support meaningful democratic engagement.

The VIP approach is suitable because it enables designing from a long-term societal vision rather than improving existing systems, allowing exploration of new experiential relationships between youth and democracy.

Motivation and personal ambitions

Explain why you wish to start this project, what competencies you want to prove or develop (e.g. competencies acquired in your MSc programme, electives, extra-curricular activities or other).

Optionally, describe whether you have some (max 5) personal learning ambitions which you explicitly want to address in this project, on top of the learning objectives of the Graduation Project itself. You might think of e.g. acquiring in depth knowledge on a specific subject, broadening your competencies or experimenting with a specific tool or methodology (200 words max).

This project allows me to deepen my role as a designer engaging with complex societal and political questions. During my MSc Design for Interaction, I developed competencies in human-centered design, futures thinking, and conceptual exploration. With this graduation project, I want to further professionalize my practice by working at the intersection of design, democracy, and interdisciplinary research. In addition to the general graduation competencies, I have defined the following personal learning ambitions:

- Positioning myself as a designer in interdisciplinary contexts. I want to learn how to contribute meaningfully alongside sociologists, political scientists, and educators, and articulating the unique value of design within these discussions.
- Developing writing as a design competency. I want to strengthen my ability to use writing for reflection, synthesis, and communicating complex societal and design concepts.
- Applying the Vision in Product design (VIP) methodology. A first-hand experience with vision-driven design and learning how to rigorously apply futures-oriented methods.
- Engaging with my own positionality. Consciously acknowledging my subjectivity and practicing being an active stakeholder within my own design process.
- Strengthening reflective practice and professional resilience. Use the Designer Resilience Principles to reflect on my process, decisions, and growth as a designer.



Research activities: Observations, tests and input sessions

TI02 // Observation day at Eindbazen

Observation with ProDemos guide, 19 March 2026; Observation notes and relevant photographs.

- Students start working on the program immediately
- The program consists of multiple short, fast-paced activities
- The first part (values selection and budget allocation) is completed quickly
- Students select personal values during the activity
- Little time is spent discussing why students chose specific values
- Students show confusion about concepts such as “social affairs”
- The concept of “tolerance” is frequently not understood; facilitators revisit it multiple times
- Classroom discussions often shift from content (what is the issue?) to positions (for/against)
- Students call out answers across the room during activities
- Other students often follow these answers
- Some students do not openly express their opinions
- Students in minority positions are less likely to speak up
- The facilitator actively intervenes by asking follow-up questions, giving examples, and introducing extreme scenarios
- Discussions about topics such as fundamental rights and the rule of law occur when prompted by the facilitator
- Students are frequently asked whether they want to allocate more money to certain topics, and often respond affirmatively
- The program includes multiple topics and components within a limited timeframe

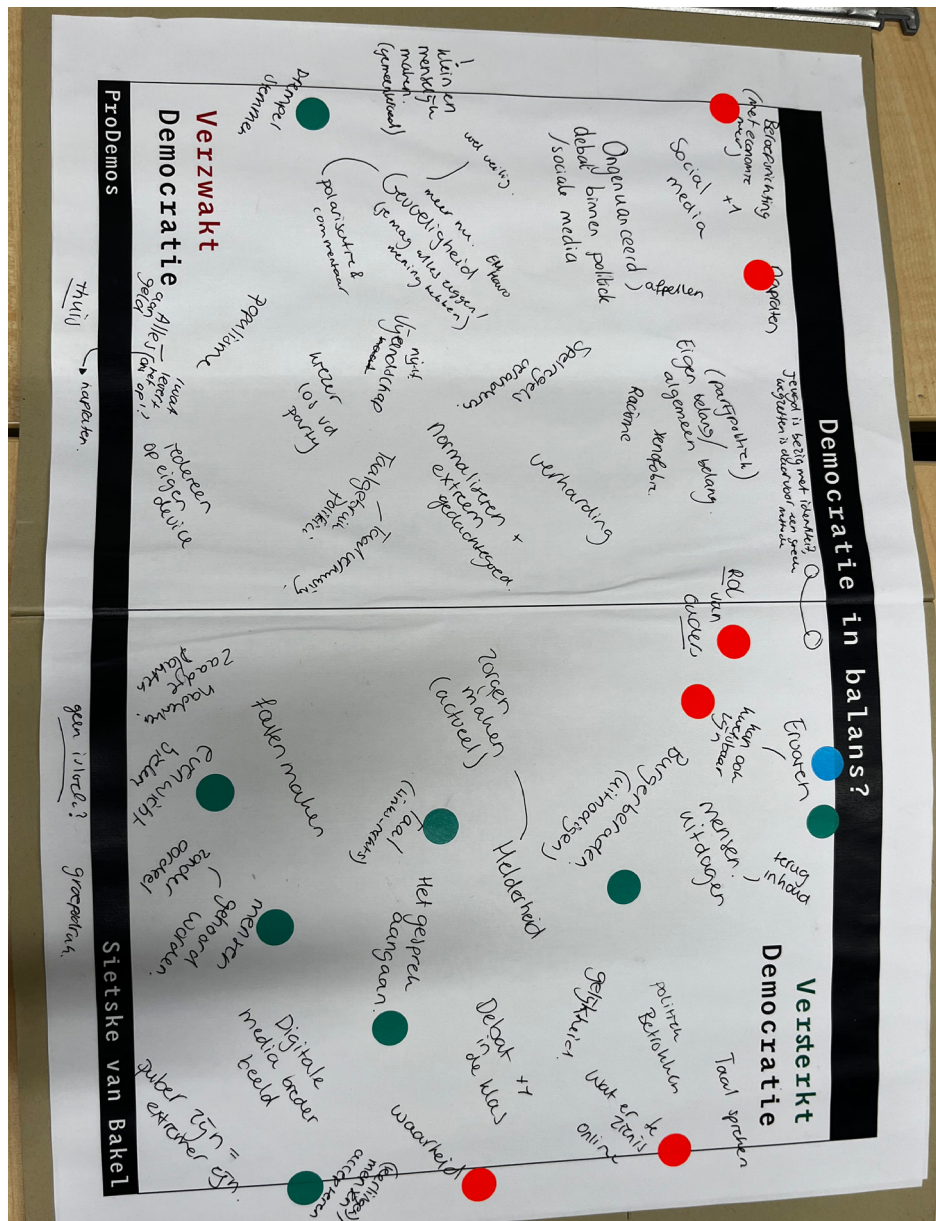
TI03 // Observation of DemocratieLAB

Observation with ProDemos guide, 21 March 2026

Observation notes and relevant photographs.

- Students work through the DemocratieLAB individually on a computer
- Students regularly consult each other during assignments
- Students look at each other's screens and sometimes copy answers
- Some students complete assignments individually
- Students move quickly through the program and click through tasks rapidly
- Students spend little time on each question or assignment
- Students ask few in-depth or follow-up questions during the program
- Results are only shared after the session via email
- There is no visible feedback on results during the program itself
- During the debrief, students give limited responses to questions
- The facilitator actively asks questions and attempts to stimulate interaction
- Teachers present take on a passive role
- Students do not receive explicit feedback (e.g., correct/incorrect) on their answers

Input from 8 civics teachers during the Docentendag Maatschappijleer
Conversation starter, collected responses.



Input session with three young people aged 18–20, 8 May 2026
Full session setup, future scenarios, questions, notes and outcomes.

The session explored how young people responded to the nine plausible future relationships developed from the framework. Each future was presented as a short description of how a young person might experience the world and relate to democracy.

Futures in easy Dutch

De wereld voelt overzichtelijk. Alles lijkt goed geregeld en duidelijk uitgelegd. Wat je ziet op je telefoon bepaalt grotendeels wat je denkt. Je volgt wat populair is en wat anderen vinden. Politiek voelt simpel: je kiest wat logisch of bekend klinkt. Je denkt niet vaak na over waarom je iets vindt en het voelt alsof dat al voor je is gedaan.

De wereld zit strak in elkaar, maar je probeert wel zelf na te denken. Soms pas je je mening een beetje aan, afhankelijk van met wie je praat. Je wilt erbij horen, maar ook jezelf blijven. Politiek voelt als iets waar je slim mee om moet gaan: wat kun je zeggen, en wat beter niet? Je stemt, maar denkt ook na over hoe anderen daar naar kijken.

De wereld is duidelijk georganiseerd, maar jij doet je eigen ding. Je vertrouwt systemen niet echt en maakt liever je eigen keuzes. Je volgt je eigen bronnen en je eigen logica. Politiek voelt als iets van “hen”, niet van jou. Je voelt niet echt de behoefte om mee te doen.

D Ik reageer

De wereld verandert snel en is soms best chaotisch. Er gebeurt veel tegelijk. Je reageert vooral op wat je ziet: nieuws, video's, meningen. Als iets je raakt, doe je mee — bijvoorbeeld door iets te delen of ergens tegen te zijn. Maar vaak is het snel weer voorbij. Politiek voelt als iets waar je op reageert, niet iets waar je echt invloed op hebt.

E Ik probeer het te begrijpen

De wereld is ingewikkeld en je weet dat er niet één simpel antwoord is. Je probeert verschillende kanten te begrijpen en eerlijk te blijven. Dat kost moeite. Soms twijfel je veel en stel je keuzes uit. Politiek voelt belangrijk, maar ook vermoeiend.

F Ik regel het zelf in kleine groepen

De wereld is complex, dus je vertrouwt vooral op kleine groepen om je heen. Met vrienden of communities regel je dingen en maak je afspraken. Dat voelt overzichtelijk. Grote systemen of politiek lijken ver weg of te traag. Je richt je op wat dichtbij is.

G Ik volg wat opvalt

De wereld is verwarrend. Je weet vaak niet wat waar is en wat niet. Er zijn veel meningen en weinig zekerheid. Daarom volg je wat het meest zichtbaar of overtuigend lijkt. Politiek voelt vaag en ver weg — je hebt niet het idee dat je keuze echt ergens op gebaseerd is.

H Ik kies wat voor mij klopt

De wereld heeft geen duidelijke waarheid meer, dus jij kiest zelf wat voor jou goed voelt. Je zoekt naar meningen en informatie die bij je passen. Je probeert open te blijven, maar het is lastig om te weten wat echt is. Politiek voelt persoonlijk: iedereen heeft zijn eigen waarheid.

I Ik leef in mijn eigen wereld

De wereld is zo onduidelijk dat je je terugtrekt in je eigen omgeving. Je volgt je eigen realiteit en hebt weinig met wat anderen denken. Er is weinig reden om samen beslissingen te maken, omdat iedereen iets anders ziet. Politiek speelt bijna geen rol meer in je leven.

Outcomes

A I follow the group

- The lack of choice or possibility to step away feels problematic.
- At the same time, a clear and protected world can also feel comfortable: “the problems of the world are not there.”
- More freedom.
- Boundaries, norms and values are still considered important.
- Question raised whether people in such a situation are actually happy.
- Social security mentioned as something that can provide stability.

B Am I saying the right thing?

- Feels uncertain; strong need to maintain control.
- Group pressure and dependence feel mentally demanding.
- Taking other people into account is seen as positive.
- Being led by what others think is seen as problematic.
- Freedom.
- Support.
- Someone to talk to.
- Help thinking through problems.
- Confirmation that what you say or do is actually right.

C I decide for myself

- Recognition: politics can feel like something that belongs to “them”.
- Politics feeling far away is uncomfortable.
- Complete independence can also feel lonely.
- Having the feeling that you are in control yourself is valued.
- Need for balance / counterweight.
- Support in what goes well and help when something goes wrong.

D I react

- Recognition: reposting and reacting is something participants already do.
- Desire to make more of a difference.
- Seen as a phase or something “we have all been through”.
- Reacting is already seen as a first step towards influence.
- Being heard is important.
- Feeling that something is actually done with your contribution can encourage further action.
- “Every vote counts.”
- Being heard can lead to doing something else afterwards.

E I try to understand

- Strong recognition: "this one is real".
- The amount of information can feel overwhelming.
- Choosing based on what is most visible or popular was recognised.
- Truly understanding an issue is difficult.
- Sensitive topics make this more difficult.
- An investigative attitude is valued.
- Need for perspectives beyond your own.
- Independent journalism mentioned as important.

F I organise things myself in small groups

- Small-scale organisation feels recognisable and can feel good.
- Risk that different groups start colliding.
- Everyone has some form of this, for example within a family.
- Whatever is organised needs to remain realistic.
- Feasibility matters.
- Acceptance matters.

G I follow what stands out

- Recognition of relying on Instagram stories and visible information.
- Risk of ending up with extreme or misleading information.
- You may not know "which trap you are falling into".
- A group can also provide safety and a sense of belonging.
- Need for perspective.
- Basic understanding of how society works and what can be trusted.
- Civics education mentioned as a possible source of this basis.

H I choose what feels right to me

- Feels familiar and easy to identify with.
- Risk that people assume they are forming their own view while not being very critical.
- Something needs to attract attention.
- Feeling powerless was mentioned.
- Structure is needed.

I I live in my own world

- Associated with complete independence from what happens around you and with conspiracy thinking.
- Anger towards politics was mentioned.
- Lack of future perspective among young people was mentioned.
- Having your own space and freedom is still valued.
- Need to talk to other people.
- Need for drive.
- Trying another way.
- Something connecting people.

TI07 // Midterm input session with ProDemos education experts

Feedback session during the midterm presentation

Worksheets, intervention ideas, collected feedback and design considerations.

T108 // Classroom test with young people

Test with a havo 4 class in The Hague

Full setup, individual card, duo card, capacity card, student responses, quotes and findings.

Setup

The classroom test explored whether democratic capacities could help young people move from an everyday experience towards recognising the democratic qualities within that experience. The test took place in a havo 4 class in The Hague during the final lesson before the summer break. Students worked with three consecutive cards. First, they individually answered what they would want to change at school and why. They then worked in pairs, compared their ideas and selected one idea to continue with together. Only after making this shared choice were the nine democratic capacities introduced. Students selected the capacity that best described what had happened during their choice process.

The test focused on whether students could formulate their own position, move from two individual ideas towards a shared choice, and afterwards use a capacity to recognise what that process had asked from them.

Capacity formulations used during the test

1. We see where we do or do not have a choice within the rules of school.
2. We say what we think ourselves, even if the other person thinks something different.
3. We think: if we are part of school, we carry responsibility.
4. We take time before we answer or choose.
5. We make a choice without knowing everything for sure.
6. We ask ourselves: for whom is this fair, and for whom might it not be?
7. We look for something we both stand behind.
8. We discuss what we think differently about.
9. We look beyond ourselves: what does this mean for school and others?

Outcomes

- All students completed the third card and were able to select a capacity that they connected to their choice process.
- Capacities 9 and 7 were selected most often.
- Capacities 6 and 2 were also selected several times.
- Students therefore most often recognised wider consequences, finding a shared direction, fairness and maintaining their own position.

- Most of the activity happened individually or in pairs.
- Limited discussion took place with the full class.
- Written answers were generally short.
- When follow-up questions were asked in smaller groups, students explained their choices in more detail.
- One student described the activity as going “one layer deeper” with each card.
- Some students described the activity as neutral.
- The democratic meaning of the choice process remained less explicit without a stronger collective closing discussion.

Student notes and quotes

- “We chose 2; we do what we want ourselves. It is healthy to have your own opinion.”
- “We chose 9; we look at what this means for school and others. We think that if this change happens, it would make a big difference for students’ stress and possible mental health problems.”
- “We chose 7; we look for something we both stand behind. We both felt best about that.”
- “We chose 9; we look at what this means for school and others. Our idea creates focused students, and that creates a good working environment for teachers.”
- “We chose 9; we look at what this means for school and others. This is important for change in the school.”
- “We chose 7; we look for something we both stand behind. Eventually, we both have to support the same thing.”
- “We chose 2; we say what we think ourselves. We can decide for ourselves which problem is important to solve.”

TI09 // First Lieve Toekomst booklet test

Test with fellow IDE/design students

Evaluation of the first booklet and intended use.

- The purpose of the booklet was not immediately clear from the introduction.
- The sequence between the future research, the capacities and their practical use needed to become clearer.
- The connection to democracy needed to be more explicit.
- Some examples were still too abstract and needed to become more concrete and recognisable.
- Visual not as readable as it could be.
- Nice font

TI10 // Review of the Lieve Toekomst booklet

Review with Anita Rademakers, Education Expert at ProDemos

Main feedback and resulting changes.

- Make the target group clearer: the booklet is for educators/programme makers.
- Define capacities earlier and more clearly.
- Make the two framework questions and their categories visually easier to understand.
- Explain more concretely what a democratic tension is.
- Strengthen the visual hierarchy and readability of important information.
- Add an overview of all nine capacities before the detailed pages.
- Clarify the difference between what the visual shows and what the capacity means.
- Make the examples stand out more clearly from the explanatory text.
- Formulate “when is this capacity relevant?” more as a concrete situation or problem for educators.
- Make the link to democracy more explicit for some capacities, especially contributing to what you use together.
- The illustrations are generally helpful for understanding abstract ideas.

TI11 // Final Lieve Toekomst booklet test

Test with four ProDemos education experts, including Anita Rademakers

Full test setup, feedback, outputs, findings.

Setup

The test explored whether education experts could understand the Lieve Toekomst booklet independently and use it to develop a first democratic practice idea from a capacity. Additional explanation was deliberately kept to a minimum, so that unclear terminology, different interpretations and missing information would become visible.

The session consisted of two parts. Participants first reviewed the booklet individually, looking for what helped them, what was unclear and what they felt was missing. They also considered what they thought the booklet was for, where they would start and what they expected to be able to create with it. Afterwards, participants worked in pairs. They were asked to identify a concrete situation, select a relevant capacity and develop a first activity in which young people could practise that capacity.

Outcomes

- Reviewing and understanding the booklet took more time than expected.
- The distinction between the present and 2035 was unclear. Participants suggested making the logic more explicit: the future research identifies situations young people may encounter, and the capacities are something they can start practising today.
- The term capacity raised questions in relation to skills and required explanation.
- It was unclear how broadly the term young people should be interpreted; participants noted that an activity for a first-year secondary student differs from one for an older student.
- The relationship between the different points in the framework/grid was not immediately clear.
- The future perspective itself was considered useful because it helped educators anticipate rather than only respond to the present.
- The illustrations were generally appreciated for making abstract ideas more accessible, although some individual visuals were difficult to interpret.
- Some capacity formulations remained vague, particularly contribute to the system and the meaning of fairness in capacity 6.

- It was not always clear whether sections such as “where to use” referred to educational formats, assignments or everyday situations.
- Participants liked being able to choose a capacity and situation themselves rather than following one fixed route.
- The shared name Lieve Toekomst was appreciated as an overarching term.
- Participants saw value in showing how separate activities could return over time and suggested giving more examples of how the approach could spread or recur.
- At some points it was unclear whether the booklet addressed the educator or the young person directly.
- Using the booklet to design
- Finding a concrete moment was one of the most difficult steps.
- Once a situation had been identified, the short descriptions underneath the capacities helped participants decide where to look.
- Participants questioned where they should start when moving from a moment towards a suitable capacity.
- Both pairs were eventually able to develop an intervention.
- One idea used different opinions about introducing a rainbow captain's armband at a football club. Capacity 8 was selected and the pair proposed a speed-date format to bring different positions into contact.
- The other idea started from receiving a letter from the Ministry of Defence. Participants explored how young people could investigate the available options, who had formulated them, whether an alternative option existed and what an individual choice would mean for the larger whole.

Reflection

- Participants already felt confident about how to create an educational activity once they had a direction.
- They therefore seemed to need most support in identifying a relevant moment and connecting it to a capacity.
- The capacities were described as inspiring and useful as an “onderlegger” for programme development rather than as a fixed method.
- This openness was considered important: the booklet could offer a different perspective while leaving room for educators' own interpretation and creativity.
- A visual overview/poster of the capacities was considered particularly useful.

// B

Conversations

IN01 // Cees van den Bos

Professor of Organizational Development and Leadership for Societal Transitions, Utrecht University 24 November 2025

During the conversation, Cees van den Bos suggested explicitly reflecting on my own position in relation to the project. This prompted me to formulate the positionality statement below, to make my own position within the research and design process explicit at the start of this research.

This is a personal project. From a young age, I have been fascinated by groups, belonging, exclusion, and the constant negotiation between adapting to a collective and developing an identity of your own. That fascination feels increasingly relevant in a time where conversations about democracy are dominated by polarization, distrust and democratic decline. Much is said about what is falling apart, but far less about what we want as a society, and how to act upon that. Especially among young people, democracy no longer exists only inside political institutions. It lives in their classrooms, their friendgroups, within online communities, in the forming of an identity, and everyday behaviour.

Being part of a younger generation myself, I recognise these places as research themes, but also as factors that shape my world. For me, education plays a crucial role within this shift. As a place where knowledge is transferred, but mainly as one of the environments where young people can collectively practice to disagree, what responsibility means, who you want to belong to, and coexistence in practice. That is why this project was conducted together with ProDemos. The organisation operates exactly at the intersection of education, democracy, and society, while struggling with questions surrounding neutrality, influence, and democratic values.

This report does not claim neutrality in the sense of emotional distance or absence of values. I care deeply about the subject and allow that

engagement to shape the project. I am a young person as well, after all. At the same time, I try to approach the research process with critical reflection and awareness of my own position as a designer. Rather than standing outside the system I study, this project starts from the idea that design, education, and democracy are always shaped by the people and their perspectives, behaviour, and choices. Precisely for that reason, relationships and lived experience are placed at the centre of this project.

IN02 // Young people

Interview/conversation with young people

3 March 2026

Summary and relevant insights.

Conversation starter

What currently strengthens democracy among young people?

What currently weakens democracy among young people?

Which of these things can you influence yourself?

Which feel outside your influence?

Notes

- Talking with friends helps to form and change opinions.
- People mostly talk about politics when something directly affects them.
- Social media makes political topics easier to encounter, but also harder to judge.
- What friends think can influence what you are willing to say yourself.
- It feels easier to have an opinion about something close to you than about national politics.
- Politics can feel far away; it is unclear what happens with your opinion afterwards.
- Being listened to makes it feel more worthwhile to participate.
- You can influence what happens in your own group or school more easily than larger systems.
- Rules often feel like something that has already been decided.
- Having different opinions in a group can be uncomfortable, but can also make you think differently.
- Young people can choose what they share, discuss and respond to.
- Larger political decisions, algorithms and institutions feel mostly outside individual influence.

IN03 // Frank Wanders

Researcher at ProDemos

18 March 2026

Interview notes.

- Twin Democracies is developing digital twin models of democracy; contact them when the models are presented.
- Look at the small steps through which democracy can gradually be eroded.
- People increasingly experience their own immediate living environment as most important.
- ProDemos is an educational institution; it cannot prescribe to people how they should be or think.
- Look into the ADKS research.
- Tension within democratic attitudes: people may support the rule of law in principle, while accepting behaviour that conflicts with it, such as insulting others.
- Contact David Muntslag, Privacy Officer.
- The impressionable years are roughly ages 12–21; attitudes are especially susceptible to influence during this period and become more stable afterwards.
- Ages 12–18 also overlap with the period in which young people receive citizenship education.
- Friends become increasingly important during adolescence.
- Look into Self-Determination Theory and psychological basic needs.
- Frank will send additional relevant sources/materials.

IN04 // Abel van Beest

Intern at D66

20 March 2026

Interview notes.

- Expertise matters in democratic decision-making, but political processes are also shaped by external pressure and established routines.
- There is a risk that politics continues “as it always has”; institutions should remain critical of their own functioning.
- The Senate has become increasingly political, while its role should primarily be to scrutinise legislation.
- If the Senate is meant to check laws, its judgement should ideally depend less on who holds the seats and more on the quality of the legislation.
- Parliamentary scrutiny does not always function strongly enough; politics tends to communicate an optimistic story about its own functioning.
- People often want to associate themselves with the winner, which influences political support.
- Electoral success does not necessarily mean a party had the strongest substantive positions.
- Citizens have a democratic right to hold members of parliament accountable and scrutinise their work.
- There is too much distance between citizens and parliament.
- Politics has become increasingly complex, making it difficult for citizens to understand who is responsible for what.
- Media formats such as talk shows can distort democratic debate by prioritising people who generate views.
- Placing a scientist opposite a conspiracy thinker can make the two positions appear equally legitimate, even when their evidential basis differs.
- Consider mapping who holds which position, role or responsibility within the democratic system.
- Explore the system on a more abstract level: politics, media, external advisory bodies and other democratic actors.
- Create a map that clarifies who the design is for and which actors influence that person.

IN05 // Jan Durk Tuinier

Stichting Vredeseducatie

23 March 2026

Interview notes.

- The program is always built around a metaphor to give students a reason to engage in the activity
- In this case, the metaphor is doing research (a “lab” setting)
- The overarching theme is “making peace,” with democracy positioned as something that contributes to this
- The metaphor of a factory or lab is used to frame the idea of “making” something
- The program aims to arrive at factual answers
- Extensive research is conducted beforehand to determine how a program should be designed
- Over time, experience has led to insights into what works and where key triggers for engagement lie
- Limited time for reflection is a deliberate design choice
- The program is intentionally intensive, following the approach of ProDemos
- The intensity of the program is recognized as potentially demanding for participants
- Adolescent cognitive functioning is described as complex, including limited alertness early in the morning (before approximately 09:45)
- Avoiding boredom is considered an important design principle
- School is described as a context in which students often experience learning negatively
- Students bring a “school mindset” with them into the program
- There is a perceived tension between school-based learning attitudes and the learning approach used in the program
- An increasing number of young people are staying at home (e.g., disengagement from school contexts)
- It is emphasized that students should be taken seriously
- The program is described as “surfing on trust”
- Writing things down in a physical booklet is considered more effective than using a tablet or phone
- Writing is seen as beneficial for the learning process
- Learning is described as bridging a gap between what students know and what they need to learn
- If the gap is too large, students may feel like they are failing
- If the gap is too small, students may become bored
- The program aims to calibrate this gap to stimulate thinking
- The goal is for students to reflect on why they hold certain opinions
- Facilitators are intended to take a restrained role
- The program emphasizes student autonomy and peer interaction
- The impact on students is described as significant
- The program is designed to encourage students to investigate the reasoning behind their own opinions
- The research/lab metaphor is directly linked to this investigative approach
- Knowledge acquisition is described as a secondary goal
- “Becoming an adult” is mentioned as an outcome identified in student research
- When activities become too “school-like,” students tend to disengage
- Young people are described as giving limited space to others to share their perspectives, including parents

IN06 // Renate van der Kuijl

Education Expert at ProDemos

30 March 2026

Interview notes.

- Renate is the originator of the program concept and can explain the development process
- Within ProDemos, the educational process is sometimes slowed down due to multiple stakeholders being involved
- These stakeholders also provide direction and ensure safety
- The program emphasizes avoiding one-way communication (“sending”)
- The design aims to connect to the lived experiences of students
- A central guiding question is: “What’s in it for me?”
- The program starts from students’ dreams and perspectives
- Students are asked to imagine how they would organize the Netherlands if they were in charge
- These ideas are later connected to real-world political practice
- The program highlights that politics is complex and differs from initial ideas
- Students are made aware that political choices involve financial considerations
- A “crisis point” is included where students are confronted with the need to reconsider their views
- The program aims to plant a “seed” that influences how students interpret political messages in the future
- The program is designed as a “mini-democracy”
- Students bring in examples from their own experiences
- The visual design (e.g. cartoons, contemporary style) was developed by Sosho
- Group discussions can become active, but this depends strongly on the facilitator
- Facilitators require clear instruction and guidance
- Due to workload, ProDemos staff have limited opportunities to observe or support facilitators, although this is desired
- The physical setup uses an “arena” format instead of traditional desks and chairs
- Some groups are perceived as socially unsafe
- It is considered unrealistic to fully change group dynamics within 45 minutes
- The program emphasizes interaction and intrinsic motivation
- Students are encouraged to think from their own perspective rather than role-play
- The program starts from personal views (“dreams”) and introduces reflection (“the mirror”) afterward
- The program does not focus on right or wrong answers
- Facilitators are expected to explicitly communicate that all perspectives are equal
- The concept of “daring to doubt” is included in the program
- Students are encouraged to reflect on whether their views hold in practice
- The program includes a minority perspective that needs to be explained
- Facilitators are responsible for explaining the minority principle
- The constitution is an important component of the program
- At the end, connections are made to real-world contexts
- The intended impact includes stimulating interaction among students
- The program uses a peer-to-peer approach, involving facilitators or actors slightly older than the students
- Students are encouraged to ask each other why they hold certain views
- The program is designed as a form of process facilitation
- Facilitators may still tend to revert to one-way communication
- The attention span of students is estimated at approximately 20 minutes
- Core values are used as a starting point, which are later connected to the rule of law and the constitution
- The program raises questions about which target groups find these topics relevant
- Students are encouraged to understand that others may hold different perspectives without requiring them to adopt those perspectives

IN07 // Niels Bedijn

Guide at ProDemos

30 March 2026

Interview notes.

- Sees his role as taking young people into the political world of The Hague and showing how they can exert influence themselves.
- Felt a personal responsibility to offer a counterweight to conspiracy theories and misinformation, particularly after the Covid period.
- Uses interactive methods such as “over de lijn” to surface opinions and make young people feel heard.
- Tries to connect strong statements to the underlying worries or experiences behind them.
- Is neutral regarding political preferences, but not neutral about the rule of law.
- Believes guides need concrete tools to set boundaries around unconstitutional or racist statements.
- Encounters scapegoating, for example blaming migrants for a wide range of societal problems.
- Sometimes experiences teachers as stepping back too far and leaving responsibility for the group to the guide.
- Believes the rule of law and protection of the democratic arena should become a recurring thread across ProDemos programmes.

IN08 // Cynthia van Putten

Guide at ProDemos

31 March 2026

Interview notes.

- Sees her role as a connector between young people's everyday world and politics.
- Main aim: transfer knowledge and experience so people understand how the democratic system works.
- Safety within the peer group is essential; young people constantly look for recognition and similarity.
- Physical setting matters: even something like too much distance between chairs can block interaction and a sense of safety.
- Takes a neutral position: encourages young people to form and explain opinions, but does not enter the substantive political debate herself.
- Classroom management is an important challenge: keeping everyone involved and dealing with disruptive behaviour.

- Limited information about the group beforehand can make facilitation more difficult.
- Sees opportunities in the informal setting of youth work, because school programmes can feel compulsory.

IN09 // Ivar van den Brink

Guide at ProDemos

1 April 2026

Interview notes.

- Sees his role as helping young people understand the rules of the democratic game and making them feel alive.
- Does not see his role as “selling” politics.
- Distinguishes different groups of young people, with particular attention to those who feel politics is not meant for them.
- Uses vulnerability and personal stories to establish contact.
- Sees democratic education as “planting seeds”, rather than changing someone's perspective within one day.
- Notices the influence of the manosphere, including figures such as Andrew Tate.
- Housing and financial security contribute to uncertainty among young people.
- Sees a tension between democratic norms taught in education, such as respect, and the much harsher political reality visible on social media.
- Sees potential in representative citizens' assemblies.
- Suggests social service as a way to bring young people from different educational backgrounds into contact and reduce social separation.

IN10 // Tommy Blomvliet

Guide at ProDemos

13 April 2026

Interview notes.

- Many young people know basic political institutions, but struggle to understand how different parts of the political system relate to each other.
- Misunderstanding these relationships can contribute to distrust in politics.
- A guide's role is not only to explain political processes, but also to provoke interest and show why politics matters personally.
- Before young people can gain political knowledge, they first need to feel that politics is relevant to them.
- Some young people feel that politics "is not for me" or "does not concern me"; others question whether democracy works at all.
- Democracy becomes more meaningful when young people realise that political decisions directly concern their own lives, for example debates about school buildings.
- Simulations become more engaging when young people are placed in a role and have to act within a political situation.
- The level and type of democratic education should differ between groups; opinion-forming requires a certain level of prior knowledge.
- In Eindbazen, opinion-forming currently happens after choices are made, while an earlier analogue version encouraged students to think more before choosing.
- Young people are increasingly aware that democracy is not self-evident, partly because of geopolitical developments and examples from other countries.
- Trust among young people seems connected to questions such as: Does politics listen to us? What does politics deliver for us? How much influence do we have?
- ProDemos currently focuses strongly on explaining how democracy works, while Tommy questioned whether more attention should be given to why it concerns young people personally.
- Youth-related political themes could be incorporated more explicitly, for example through approaches similar to NJR's "everything is political" framing.
- The balance between democracy and the rule of law deserves more attention in programmes.
- The rule of law has become a prominent societal topic, but is not yet strongly reflected in current programmes.

- Information integrity and political disinformation are important future themes; current programmes pay little attention to media or helping young people navigate misinformation.

IN11 // Matthijs van Tuijl

Programme Manager at ProDemos

Conversation about experience and the future direction of ProDemos

Interview summary and relevant insights.

- ProDemos is still strongly connected to knowledge transfer.
- Questioned whether knowledge transfer alone is enough to develop young people's long-term relationship with democracy.
- Experience could help young people internalise the democratic rule of law.
- ProDemos can help young people navigate the democratic rule of law, with democracy functioning as a kind of compass.
- Showing how politics and institutions connect to young people's own lives may contribute to trust in democratic institutions.
- Game-based methods and ludodidactics can make democracy more attractive and experience-based.
- Historical and institutional places, such as the Binnenhof, can add meaning and weight to democratic learning.
- Grondwet in de klas shows how abstract democratic principles can be translated to children's direct living world.
- Important to remain close to ProDemos' core strengths rather than moving into areas other organisations are better equipped for.
- ProDemos' strengths lie in educational design, facilitation and translating citizenship and democratic skills into learning experiences.
- Areas such as media production may be better suited to other organisations.
- Suggested speaking with Tom van der Meer to provide scientific grounding for a shift from knowledge towards experience.
- Tom van der Meer's work could be relevant for understanding political confidence, democratic trust and citizenship attitudes among young people aged 12–18.

IN12 // Tom van der Meer, first conversation

Professor of Political Science, University of Amsterdam

Conversation about democracy, young people and experiencing democracy

Interview notes.

- Democratic engagement starts with the feeling that democracy is “ours”.
- This sense of ownership should be present throughout the framework.
- The framework includes both democratic skills and values.
- These values need to be practised through acting, negotiating, disagreeing, reflecting and making decisions.
- The framework can remain content-neutral: it does not prescribe political opinions, but focuses on how young people deal with democratic tensions, collective choices and social situations.
- The framework should connect more clearly to majority decision-making, governance, rights, responsibilities, the rule of law and minority protection.
- Democracy includes both participation and limits.
- Citizenship is broader than voting or active political participation.
- Following collectively established laws is also part of democratic citizenship, especially for young people who cannot vote yet.
- Democratic capacities develop through experience and practice.
- Young people need situations in which they can practise influence, fairness, uncertainty and collective decision-making.
- One-off workshops or festivals are not enough for democratic socialisation.
- Democratic development should return at multiple moments throughout young people's lives.
- Three types of moments were discussed:
- Structural moments: recurring environments such as schools, associations and sports clubs.
- Natural moments: life events such as applying for a passport or becoming eligible to vote.
- Moments of the state: symbolic encounters such as Democracy Week, Liberation Festival, Prinsjesfestival or visiting parliament.
- Voluntary activities risk self-selection, mainly attracting young people who are already engaged.
- Democratic practice should therefore also be embedded in places where young people already are.
- Young people have unequal starting positions; democratic moments should therefore be accessible and relevant within everyday

environments.

- Democracy is broader than party politics, elections and parliament.
- Democratic practice can also take place in everyday contexts, such as sports clubs.
- Symbolic democratic moments can be meaningful when young people feel taken seriously and heard.
- Young people's input could be shared with institutions, but this should remain a closing point rather than the main purpose.
- The conversation supported a shift towards a structural, programmatic approach.
- It strengthened the idea of using a content-neutral capacity framework.
- It helped connect everyday democratic moments to formal democratic structures.

IN13 // Tom van der Meer, second conversation

Professor of Political Science, University of Amsterdam

Conversation about the programmatic approach and structural, natural and state moments

Interview notes.

- The proposal was presented as a framework rather than one final intervention.
- The framework connects democratic development to different moments in young people's lives: structural moments, natural moments and moments of the state.
- Tom supported the idea that the project's value lies in a framework that can be used across different contexts.
- The contribution is therefore not one activity, but a structure that connects recurring moments in which young people can recognise, practise and shape democracy.
- ProDemos cannot carry the entire programme independently.
- ProDemos could take the role of facilitator, connector or closing point within a wider network.
- This requires collaboration with schools, municipalities, sports clubs, festivals, libraries, ministries and democratic institutions.

IN14 // Laurens Dassen

Member of Parliament and parliamentary leader of Volt
Interview Notes.

- Democracy is under pressure.
- Democratic parties often react defensively. Less clear what people themselves can do to strengthen democracy.
- Capacities make democratic/citizenship behaviour more concrete.
- Positive about the nine capacities as a language for behaviour.
- Some capacities also relevant for politicians themselves.
- Especially: pause before reacting, build orientation in uncertainty, take a position within a group.
- Could become shared language between young people, educators, institutions and politics.
- Democracy should come back at multiple moments in young people's lives.
- Possible moments: passport, turning 18, elections, citizenship education, public events, moments around collective identity/responsibility.
- Voting age 16 could be interesting because young people then encounter elections while still at school.
- Important that recurring moments do not become obligatory or boring.
- Social media can connect people, but connections can also stay shallow.
- Online environments can make it easier to shift responsibility towards strong leaders.
- Links to responsibility, uncertainty, reacting, group pressure and connection across differences.
- Sees value in a feedback loop towards politics and institutions.
- Stronger democratic behaviour in society can also affect political culture.
- Citizens who feel more democratic ownership may be less accepting of undemocratic behaviour.
- Output should be more than opinions or ideas.
- Also capture experiences, tensions and how capacities appear in practice.
- These could provide qualitative signals about how young people experience democracy.
- Important to show what happens with young people's contributions afterwards.
- Programme should return across several moments instead of depending on one civic education activity.

IN15 // Eric Stokkink

Director of ProDemos
Notes made after conversation.

- Debate Institute, or other ways of getting in contact with other partners
- Looking for something big for the future for ProDemos
- ProDemos is looking for renewal and seems to have room to explore new forms of democratic education.
- Future direction does not have to be something ProDemos carries entirely by itself.
- If you have something, need to be able to 'sell' it

IN16 // Hella van der Velde

Head of the Department Influence and Participation, Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations
Interview notes.

- Sees these everyday experiences as an important foundation for democracy.
- Project seems to have two purposes:
 - developing young people's citizenship/democratic capacities;
 - collecting young people's ideas and experiences as input for the further development of democracy.
- Make this dual purpose clearer, especially the role of the feedback loop.
- Could strengthen the theoretical basis of the capacities by connecting them to different forms of citizenship.
- For example: political citizenship around critical thinking and taking a position, and social citizenship.
- Sees three valuable outcomes that can also stand on their own: future scenarios/framework, capacities, and programme proposal.
- Keep the final product visual and playful; government and education already rely heavily on text.
- Avoid explaining everything through long pieces of text.
- Question: how does the approach connect to young people's online environment?
- Possible direction: could parts of the framework become an online game or interactive format?
- Very interested in the project; suggested presenting it to the Ministry team

working on influence, participation and citizenship education.

- Potential partners: Ministry of Education, association of civics teachers, Houses of Active Citizenship and other organisations working on citizenship.
- Make a one-page/A4 summary or pitch that can easily be shared with organisations.
- Some findings connect to existing political theory, for example exit, voice and loyalty.
- Interesting that these theoretical connections emerged from the research itself rather than being used as the starting point.

IN17 // Matthijs Rooduijn

Associate Professor of Transdisciplinary Social Science, University of Amsterdam

Interview notes.

- Thinks the framework is visually strong and easy to grasp.
- Capacities are relevant beyond young people; could also matter for adults and society more broadly.
- Sees clear links with existing democratic theory.
- Connect across differences is strong because it goes further than tolerance; it is about actually creating connection.
- Feel part of something larger than yourself is essential for a well-functioning democracy.
- Values the focus on contribution and active participation, rather than only knowledge.
- Initially asked about pause before reacting; after explanation around media, information and the pressure to react immediately, saw its relevance.
- Thinks Lieve Toekomst is creative, well thought out and valuable.
- Agrees that democratic education is often still too focused on narrow political knowledge, such as voting and institutions.
- Democracy should also be experienced and practised in everyday life, for example at school or in sports clubs.
- The shared name Lieve Toekomst can help connect different informal learning experiences to the broader idea of democracy.
- Suggests starting earlier than age 16.
- Mentioned an experience with 10-year-olds who were already strongly

engaged with societal questions.

- ProDemos should not try to do everything itself.
- Collaboration with partners close to young people, such as libraries and sports clubs, is important.
- Different partners can bring in different forms of knowledge and experience.
- Sees a connection with his own work on storytelling and strengthening liberal democracy.
- Overall sees the project as a constructive addition to ProDemos' current work.
- Strong point: helping young people connect democracy to their own everyday world, instead of only to politics and the "boring figures in The Hague".

IN18 // ProDemos guides 1 and 2*

**names are anonymised*

- A good democracy needs a balance between the different capacities? (first reaction)
- Enlarge your scope is something Joeri regularly sees young people develop, sometimes even within one lesson.
- Taking a position within a group is also clearly visible in practice.
- Pausing before reacting seems less self-evident for young people than it used to be.
- Lieve Toekomst could potentially extend beyond ProDemos and schools, for example as a broader government campaign.
- Municipalities or provinces could connect democratic practice to tangible moments, such as applying for a passport.
- Libraries and other partners could play a role, but they need tools, training and support.
- Materials cannot simply be handed over to partners and expected to work independently.
- A strong guide is good at interpreting what lies behind a young person's question.
- Young people sometimes ask one thing while actually wanting to understand something else.
- External facilitators need a genuine connection with and interest in young people's everyday lives.
- ProDemos guides are more than process facilitators; they also act as

interpreters who translate democracy to young people.

- Concern about whether external facilitators always have the necessary didactic skills.
- Positive about guides functioning as field listeners who bring signals from practice back to the organisation or policymakers.
- Could combine field listening with digital feedback, for example QR codes.
- Short training sessions on location could make participation by external partners easier.
- Implementing this vision requires a change in mindset/culture within ProDemos.
- ProDemos currently often works reactively, developing programmes in response to events; this approach asks for a more proactive guiding role.
- There is a gap between programme development at the office and what actually happens in the classroom.
- Some developers have not facilitated groups themselves for a long time, so manuals do not always match practice.
- Support from management alone is not enough.
- Project and programme leaders are especially important because they decide how guides' time and capacity are used.



Research analysis and synthesis

C1 // Deconstruction of DemocratieLAB and Eindbazen

Full deconstruction of both ProDemos programmes.

Purpose of the deconstruction

This appendix contains the full deconstruction of two ProDemos programme components: DemocratieLAB and Eindbazen. The deconstruction was used to understand how ProDemos' current instrumentarium creates democratic experiences for young people.

Following the ViP approach, both programmes are analysed through product, interaction and context. This makes it possible to examine how the relationship between human, product and context is constructed in the existing design (Hekkert & Van Dijk, 2009).

The analysis is based on programme materials, observation days at ProDemos (see Appendix A), interviews with guides and the designer of the programme component (see Appendix A), and the educational vision of ProDemos (see Appendix A). This educational vision emphasises informing, activating and encouraging participation, with attention to experiential learning, autonomy and active engagement.

DemocratieLAB

Product

At the product level, DemocratieLAB consists of a series of modular installations placed within a dedicated exhibition space. Participants move through the lab using a phone that functions as a digital guide. The phone directs them through a predefined route of assignments and records their answers.

Each station addresses a theme within democracy and the rule of law, such as the role of government, the separation of powers, different forms

of democracy, political participation, and rights and duties. The structure is sequential and question-driven. Rather than presenting information directly, the system is organised around short questions, dilemmas and prompts. These prompts invite participants to articulate their own opinions about democratic values and political engagement. During the observation day, students were asked to respond to questions individually, while moving through the physical installations in the lab (see Appendix A, observation notes DemocratieLAB).

The phone is the central organising element of the programme. It distributes tasks, structures the route, gives instructions and collects responses. Based on the answers, the system generates a final report that indicates how well participants understand democracy.

Beyond its functional setup, DemocratieLAB expresses a balance between structure and personal reflection. The route, questions and timing are tightly organised, while the content of the answers remains personal. The installation therefore functions as a scaffold for reflection: a structured environment in which participants can explore their own views on democracy. It is relevant that DemocratieLAB was developed by an external developer who has created similar modular installations before. This makes the programme slightly different from ProDemos' usual development process, where educational goals are often defined first and then translated into a programme or commissioned design (see Appendix B, interview material).

Interaction

The intended interaction is centred around autonomous reflection. Secondary school and vocational students move individually through the lab and answer questions on their own device. Facilitators support the process, but their role is relatively withdrawn (see Appendix B, interview with designer of the programme component).

In practice, the observations showed a more social and task-oriented dynamic. Students frequently collaborated, discussed answers and followed each other's choices (see Appendix A, observation notes DemocratieLAB). This collaboration created engagement, but also seemed to reduce individual reflection. When students worked more independently, they appeared to spend more time on the questions.

The fast-paced structure is intended to keep students engaged and prevent them from losing attention, especially within a school-related mindset (see Appendix B, interview material). During the observation, however, students often seemed focused on completing all questions as quickly as possible. This shifted the experience towards task completion rather than reflection (see Appendix A).

Feedback is provided after the session by email. This means that the moment of answering and the moment of reflecting on the results are separated. Observations suggest that students showed limited interest in these results, and the final debrief contributed only modestly to deeper reflection (see Appendix A, observation notes DemocratieLAB). The interaction can therefore be described as guided participation under time pressure. Students are invited to express their opinions, while deeper reflection depends on time, focus and facilitation.

Context

DemocratieLAB emerges from a context of concern about declining political engagement among young people and the need to strengthen democratic awareness through education. Within this context, early exposure to democratic concepts is considered important, both in the interview material and in supporting sources (see Appendix B; Mulder, 2025). Educationally, the programme reflects the idea that learning happens by bridging the gap between students and the subject matter. According to the interview material, this gap needs to be carefully calibrated: close enough to be accessible, but challenging enough to create learning (see Appendix B). Institutionally, DemocratieLAB aligns with the educational approach of ProDemos, where democracy is presented as something individuals should understand and reflect on in preparation for participation (ProDemos, 2025). Participation is therefore situated in a controlled educational context. The “lab” metaphor introduces a conceptual tension. A laboratory suggests experimentation, measurement and verifiable outcomes. DemocratieLAB, however, centres on subjective opinions and personal democratic views. This can implicitly guide participants towards completing predefined tasks, rather than engaging in open-ended inquiry.

Overall, DemocratieLAB can be understood as a form of preparatory and mediated citizenship. Young people reflect on democracy within a controlled environment, while their role remains oriented towards future participation.

Eindbazen

Product

At the product level, Eindbazen consists of a game-based installation organised around a central projection of a map of the Netherlands. Students collectively build and govern a country. They interact through individual phones, while a facilitator controls the experience with a tablet. The programme consists of three phases: building the country through values and budget allocation, responding to dilemmas and events, and reflecting on the outcome. Choices are made through voting and translated into immediate visual changes on the map.

The design is fast-paced, collective and simulation-based. It translates complex societal processes into discrete choices that can be made quickly and visualised directly. This aligns with the intention to move away from one-directional teaching and connect to students’ own perspectives, values and motivations (see Appendix B, interview material).

Beyond its functional setup, Eindbazen represents a simplified and accelerated model of governance. Students are placed in the role of decision-makers and experiment with values, resources and consequences within a safe educational setting.

Interaction

The interaction in Eindbazen is collective. Students make decisions together, vote, respond to dilemmas and see the consequences of their choices appear on the projected map. The facilitator plays a central role and can be seen as part of the designed instrumentarium.

Students were quickly engaged by the game format. The first phase, in which values are selected and budgets are allocated, created energy and participation (see Appendix A, observation notes Eindbazen). The selection of values connected to students personally, because they were asked to decide what they found important.

At the same time, observations showed that this engagement often stayed relatively surface-level. Students moved quickly through the assignments and spent little time discussing why they chose certain values (see Appendix A). Some concepts, such as “social affairs” and “tolerance,” were not immediately understood and had to be revisited by the facilitator. Group dynamics strongly shaped the interaction. Students called out answers across the room, and other students often followed those answers. Some

students did not openly express their opinions, and minority positions were less visible (see Appendix A, observation notes Eindbazen).

The facilitator was crucial in creating depth. By asking follow-up questions, giving examples and introducing extreme scenarios, the facilitator helped students connect their choices to broader democratic principles (see Appendix A). Discussions about fundamental rights, the rule of law and consequences emerged especially when prompted by the facilitator. This means that reflection and deeper discussion were often triggered by facilitation rather than embedded in the programme structure itself. The system encouraged decision-making, while critical consideration of trade-offs depended strongly on the facilitator's interventions.

Overall, the interaction reveals a tension between engagement and reflection. Students actively participated, while deeper reasoning, minority perspectives and critical reflection needed more explicit support.

Context

Eindbazen emerges from a context in which democratic education is expected to be engaging, accessible and relevant to young people. The programme responds to the idea that students should experience decision-making rather than only learn about it.

The programme translates complex democratic and societal processes into a short, interactive and visual format. This makes the experience accessible and energetic. It also simplifies complexity into quick choices.

According to the interview material, the aim is partly to “plant a seed”: to encourage students to reflect on their own ideas and later recognise how political decisions work in practice (see Appendix A). The programme is not only aimed at immediate understanding, but at creating an experience that may become meaningful later.

This is especially relevant for the target group. Designed for vmbo students, the short and accessible format helps maintain attention. At the same time, the number of components and the pace can restrict opportunities for deeper discussion (see Appendix A).

The organisational context of ProDemos also shapes the programme.

Educational programmes are developed with input from multiple stakeholders. This can slow down innovation, while also providing structure, guidance and safety (see Appendix A).

Overall, Eindbazen reflects a model of engagement-driven citizenship education. Participation is prioritised, while depth depends on facilitation and the ability to connect the simulation to real-world complexity.

Comparing the deconstructions

When comparing DemocratieLAB and Eindbazen, a shared design intention becomes visible. Both programmes aim to stimulate reflection on democratic values and decision-making. They invite young people to participate actively and to form their own opinions.

The programmes do this through different formats. DemocratieLAB focuses on individual reflection through a modular route and personal questions. Eindbazen focuses on collective decision-making through simulation, voting and visual feedback.

Both programmes also show a similar tension. They create engagement, but deeper reflection depends on time, facilitation and group dynamics. In DemocratieLAB, students often moved quickly through tasks and collaborated in ways that reduced individual reflection (see Appendix A). In Eindbazen, students participated energetically, while critical discussion and minority perspectives depended strongly on facilitation (see Appendix A). The facilitator is therefore a crucial part of the instrumentarium. Guides help students slow down, articulate reasoning, connect choices to democratic principles and recognise consequences. This means that the democratic depth of the experience is created by both the designed format and the way it is facilitated.

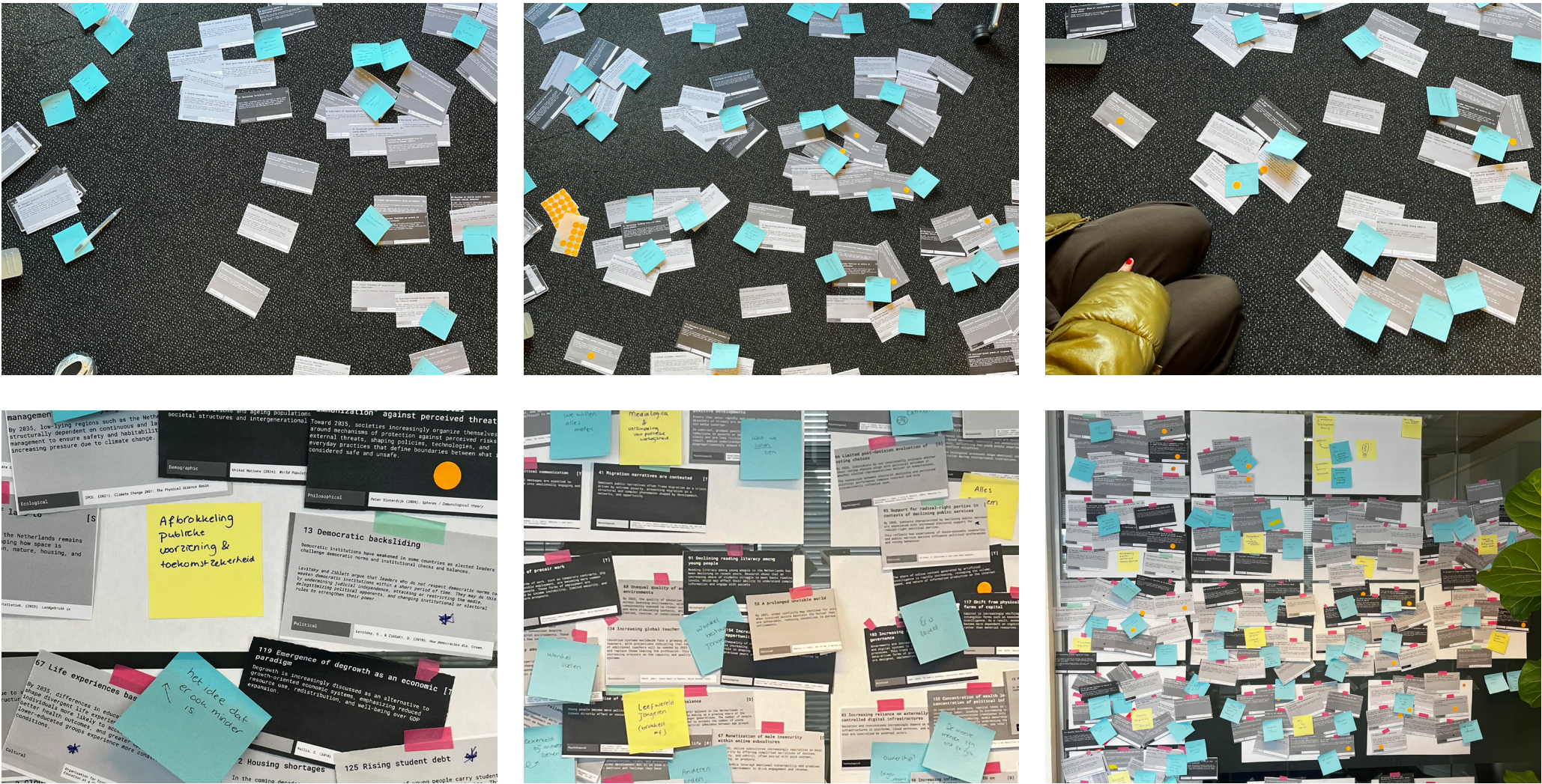
This comparison suggests that ProDemos already has a strong basis for creating democratic experiences. The design opportunity lies in using this instrumentarium more fully and connecting separate experiences into a more recognisable and recurring practice of experiencing democracy.

C.2 // Complete context factor collection

All 159 context factors, including factor number, type, field, source and relevant activity code.

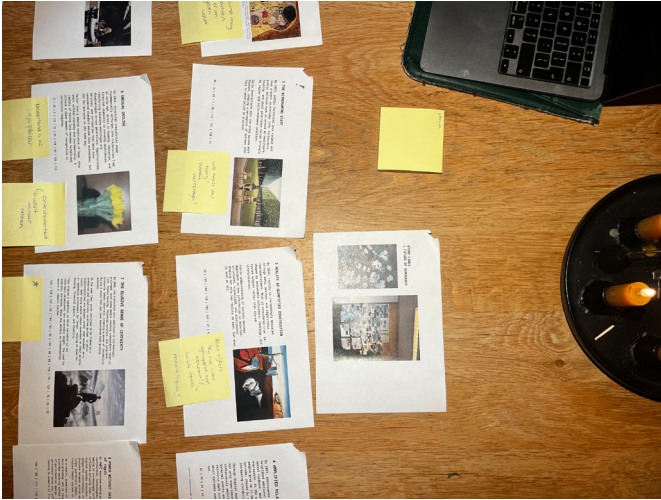
C.3 // From context factors to clusters

Overview of how the context factors were grouped into clusters.



C.4 // From clusters to the two framework axes

How clusters were translated into the two dimensions of the future framework.



C.5 // From future relationships to democratic capacities

Complete synthesis table. Copied from word.

Future	Plausible future	Missing quality	Sustainability mission	Mechanism (Ford & Nichols)	Schwartz values	Interaction analogy	Qualitative characteristics
	<i>What is the likely future now?</i>	<i>What is missing from that future?</i>	<i>What is the goal (behaviour/relationship transformation)?</i>	<i>Which human concern makes that possible?</i>	<i>Which social values drive that change?</i>	<i>Which interaction creates the same effect?</i>	<i>Which qualities can I use from that interaction? (what is characteristic of the means?)</i>
A	Systems increasingly guide behaviour automatically	Conscious awareness of individual choice	Young people actively experience their own role within democracy	Self-determination, understanding, responsibility	Self-direction, universalism	Standing on a moving walkway that suddenly stops	Interruptive, awakening, activating, confronting, denying
B	Social norms increasingly determine acceptable behaviour	Safe space for visible individuality	Young people feeling able to express without getting excluded	Belongingness, self-expression, social confidence	Self-direction (benevolence?)	Playing 'I'm on a trip and I take with me...'	Supporting, inviting, expressive, collective
C	Institutions feel dominant, predictable, and closed	Awareness of mutual dependence	Young people experience that collective systems require active contribution	Agency, autonomy, understanding	Security, self-direction	Rowing together in one boat	Dependency, collective, exposing

D	Society constantly reacts to rapid stimuli and news cycles	Space for reflection	Young people learning to pause before reacting	Understanding, tranquility, reflection	Universalism, security	Surfacing for air while swimming underwater	Slowing, grounding, reflective, restoring, regulate
E	Systems feel too complex to fully influence or understand	Confidence to act despite uncertainty	Young people collectively act without needing full certainty or understanding	Agency, unity, social responsibility	Universalism, benevolence	Climbing a mountain step by step (father and son)	Trusting, reassuring, persevering, Shifting focus,
F	Democratic experiences differ across social realities	Mutual understanding between unequal positions	Young people remain open to realities beyond their own	Equity, accessibility, understanding	Universalism, benevolence	Two sisters borrowing each other's clothes	Exchanging, creative, empathetic, softening boundaries
G	Truth and orientation become unstable and fragmented	Shared reference points	Young people collectively create orientation	Understanding, orientation, psychological	Security, universalism	Choosing a movie together despite endless options	Limiting, simplifying, orienting
H	Individuals increasingly construct separate realities	Temporary commitment to shared perspectives	Young people collaborate without needing full agreement	Belongingness, understanding, unity	Universalism, benevolence, self-direction	Playing football with strangers on one team	Cooperative, temporary, connecting, flexible
I	Young people retreat into personalized worlds	Desire for collective imagination	Young people reconnect to a shared future	Unity, belongingness, social responsibility	Benevolence, security, universalism	Looking for shooting stars together	Contemplative, collective, calming, connective, accepting

// D

Final Design

D1 // Final Lieve Toekomst booklet
The complete final booklet.
Presented in spreads.

Front

Back



52

Jongeren komen democratie tegen in hun dagelijks leven. Als zij zich tot een groep verhouden, keuzes maken binnen bestaande regels, omgaan met verschil en samen verantwoordelijkheid moeten dragen.

Dit boekje* helpt makers van educatieve activiteiten om van zulke alledaagse momenten een democratische oefening voor jongeren te maken.

Het introduceert negen democratische capaciteiten: concrete manieren van handelen die jongeren helpen om bewust om te gaan met regels, groepsdruk, verschil en gedeelde verantwoordelijkheid.

Per capaciteit zie je wanneer jongeren deze nodig hebben, wat je als maker kunt toevoegen en wat jongeren daardoor concreet doen en oefenen.

*Dit boekje komt voort uit een toekomstonderzoek naar wat jongeren in 2035 nodig hebben om in zulke momenten democratisch te kunnen handelen.

2

3

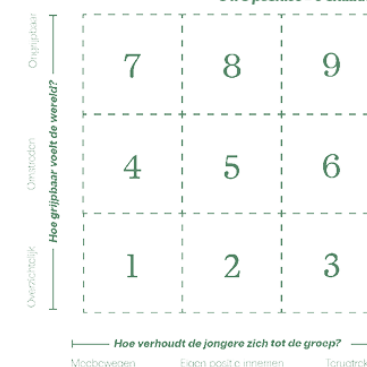
Wat hebben jongeren nodig om democratisch te kunnen handelen?

De toekomst is onzeker. Juist daarom kan toekomstonderzoek helpen om zichtbaar te maken welke situaties jongeren later kunnen tegenkomen en wat zulke situaties van hen kunnen vragen. Vanuit het toekomstonderzoek zijn negen mogelijke situaties richting 2035 ontwikkeld. Om die situaties te onderscheiden zijn steeds twee vragen gebruikt:



Beide vragen hebben drie mogelijke posities. De combinaties vormen negen situaties. Iedere situatie vraagt iets anders van jongeren om democratisch te kunnen handelen. Per situatie is bepaald wat zij daarvoor nodig hebben. Dat vormt de bijbehorende democratische capaciteit.

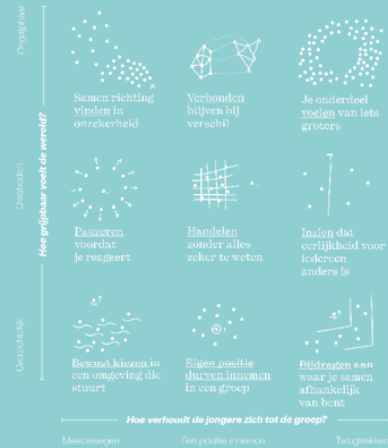
2 vragen, 3 posities per vraag
3 x 3 posities = 9 situaties



6

Democratisch handelen met deze 9 capaciteiten

Deze negen capaciteiten komen voort uit de negen mogelijke toekomstsituaties. Ze beschrijven wat jongeren nodig kunnen hebben om daarin democratisch te handelen. Door deze capaciteiten nu te oefenen, bereiden jongeren zich voor op verschillende situaties die zij in de toekomst kunnen tegenkomen.



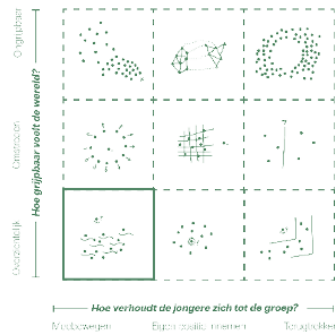
Hoe kunnen jongeren deze capaciteiten oefenen?

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11

1 Bewust kiezen in een omgeving die stuurt

Jongeren herkennen hoe hun omgeving hen stuurt en onderzoeken of zij daarin willen meegaan, of anders willen handelen.



Wat kan een jongere met deze capaciteit goed?

Jongeren herkennen dat keuzes niet neutraal worden aangeboden. Zij onderzoeken welke richting een vraag, regel, of systeem geeft en onderscheiden deze sturing van hun eigen voorkeur.

Waar kunnen jongeren deze capaciteit gebruiken?

Op een moment of in een situatie waarin jongeren een keuze maken. Denk aan dilemma's, stemopdrachten, quizvragen, schoolregels, digitale keuzes en opdrachten met vaste antwoordopties.

Wanneer wordt deze capaciteit relevant?

Wanneer de opdracht weinig aanleiding geeft om de keuzemogelijkheden zelf te onderzoeken. Bijvoorbeeld wanneer veel jongeren vanzelf bij dezelfde optie uitkomen, een regel als gegeven wordt aangenomen of mogelijke alternatieven niet ter sprake komen.

Wat kun je als maker concreet toevoegen?

Laat jongeren vóór het kiezen bekijken hoe de vraag en de antwoordopties zijn opgebouwd. Vraag welke mogelijkheid ontbreekt, wie de opties heeft bepaald en welke richting in de formulering zit. Geef daarna ruimte om een optie te veranderen of toe te voegen.

Wat doen en oefenen jongeren?

Jongeren oefenen om sturing te herkennen, te benoemen wat hun keuze beïnvloedt en hun eigen voorkeur daarvan te onderscheiden. Vervolgens onderzoeken zij welke andere mogelijkheden er zijn en bepalen zij bewust of zij volgen, bevragen of aanpassen.

Voorbeeld: Op een school geldt de regel dat telefoons de hele dag in een kluis blijven. Jongeren onderzoeken wat deze regel van hen vraagt, welk gedrag daardoor vanzelfsprekend wordt en voor wie de regel goed of minder goed werkt. Daarna bedenken zij verschillende manieren om ermee om te gaan: de regel volgen, vragen stellen over de reden erachter of een aanpassing voorstellen.

2 Een eigen positie durven innemen in een groep

Jongeren bepalen wat zij zelf denken of nodig hebben, maken dit zichtbaar en blijven verbonden wanneer anderen anders kiezen.



Wat kan een jongere met deze capaciteit goed?

Een groep beïnvloedt welke posities zichtbaar en bespreekbaar worden. Jongeren onderzoeken eerst hun eigen afweging, voordat zij reageren op wat anderen zeggen. Daarna maken zij hun positie zichtbaar en blijven zij luisteren wanneer er verschil ontstaat.

Waar kunnen jongeren deze capaciteit gebruiken?

Bij groeps gesprekken, debatten, stellingen, stemopdrachten, samenwerkingsopdrachten, simulaties en andere momenten waarop jongeren in het bijzijn van anderen reageren of kiezen.

Wanneer wordt deze capaciteit relevant?

Wanneer de groep snel tot één antwoord komt of enkele stemmen veel invloed hebben op het gesprek. Verschillende posities zijn dan niet allemaal even zichtbaar, bijvoorbeeld doordat jongeren eerst afwachten wat anderen kiezen of doordat één reactie de toon zet.

Wat kun je als maker concreet toevoegen?

Laat jongeren vóór een groeps gesprek individueel een voorlopige positie bepalen. Maak de verschillende posities daarna gelijktijdig zichtbaar, bijvoorbeeld met kaarten, een anonieme stemming of plekken in de ruimte. Onderzoek eerst de afwegingen achter meerdere posities voordat de groep reageert.

Wat doen en oefenen jongeren?

Jongeren oefenen om zelfstandig een positie te bepalen, hun afweging toe te lichten en naar andere posities te luisteren. Zij onderzoeken of zij hun eerste positie willen behouden of herzien en blijven na een verschil onderdeel van de groep.

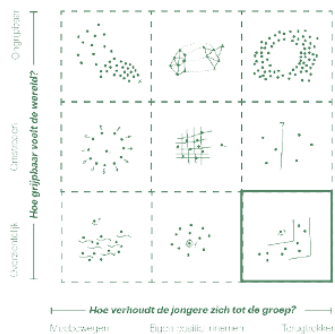
Voorbeeld: Een groep jongeren denkt mee over het nieuwe tijdstip van de wekelijkse training op de sportclub. Sommige jongeren willen eerder trainen, anderen kunnen dan nog niet vanwege werk of reistijd. Iedereen kiest eerst individueel een voorkeur en noteert de belangrijkste redenen. Daarna worden de antwoorden tegelijk zichtbaar en bespreekt de groep welke omstandigheden achter de verschillende keuzes zitten.

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3 Bijdragen aan waar je samen afhankelijk van bent

Jongeren zien wat een gedeelde plek of voorziening nodig heeft en onderzoeken welke bijdrage zij zelf kunnen leveren.



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Wat kan een jongere met deze capaciteit goed?
Gedeelde plekken, voorzieningen en systemen blijven alleen werken doordat mensen afspraken maken, taken uitvoeren en verantwoordelijkheid dragen. Jongeren onderzoeken waarvan zij afhankelijk zijn, wie daarvoor zorgt en welke bijdrage bij hun eigen rol past.

Waar kunnen jongeren deze capaciteit gebruiken?
Bij een bibliotheek, buurthuis, sportclub, buurttuin, openbaar vervoer, online gemeenschap of een andere plek of voorziening die mensen gezamenlijk gebruiken.

Wanneer wordt deze capaciteit relevant?
Wanneer vooral wordt besproken wat een plek of organisatie moet bieden, maar minder zichtbaar is wie daarvoor zorgt en welke inzet nodig is. Het kan ook relevant worden wanneer taken bij dezelfde mensen blijven liggen of onduidelijk is wie ergens verantwoordelijk voor is.

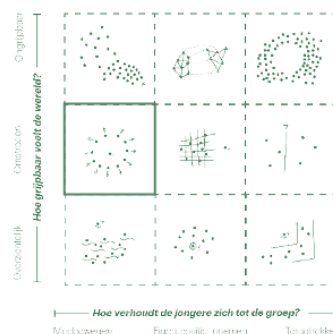
Wat kun je als maker concreet toevoegen?
Laat jongeren in kaart brengen wie de plek gebruikt, wat nodig is om haar goed te laten werken en wie nu verschillende taken uitvoert. Vraag vervolgens welke kleine bijdrage jongeren zelf kunnen leveren en wat bij de organisatie of beheerder hoort te blijven.

Wat doen en oefenen jongeren?
Jongeren oefenen om onderlinge afhankelijkheid te herkennen, zichtbaar te maken wat een gedeelde plek nodig heeft en verschillende verantwoordelijkheden te onderscheiden. Zij formuleren een haalbare bijdrage zonder het werk van de organisatie over te nemen.

Voorbeeld: Jongeren onderzoeken wat zij nodig hebben om prettig in de bibliotheek te kunnen studeren, zoals voldoende stilte, stopcontacten, beschikbare tafels en duidelijke afspraken over belen en eten. Daarna bekijken zij wat de bibliotheek kan organiseren en wat bezoekers zelf kunnen doen, bijvoorbeeld plekken niet onnodig bezet houden, afval opruimen of elkaar aanspreken op afgesproken regels. Samen met een medewerker kiezen zij één of twee afspraken om tijdelijk uit te proberen.

4 Pauzeren voordat je reageert

Jongeren merken op wat een snelle reactie bij hen oproept en kiezen bewuster of, hoe en wanneer zij reageren.



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Wat kan een jongere met deze capaciteit goed?
Gebeurtenissen en reacties van anderen kunnen druk geven om direct iets te vinden, te delen of een kant te kiezen. Jongeren maken ruimte om eerst te onderzoeken wat zij zien, aannemen en voelen, zonder hun betrokkenheid weg te drukken.

Waar kunnen jongeren deze capaciteit gebruiken?
Bij een conflict in een groepsspel, een virtueel filmpje, een sportwedstrijd, protest, herdenking, verkiezingsuitslag of nieuwsbericht waarop veel mensen tegelijk reageren.

Wanneer wordt deze capaciteit relevant?
Wanneer jongeren snel op elkaar of op nieuwe informatie reageren en weinig tijd nemen om te voelen, aannemen, gevoelens en mogelijke gevolgen uit elkaar te halen. De snelheid of de reacties van de groep bepalen dan mede wat logisch lijkt om te doen.

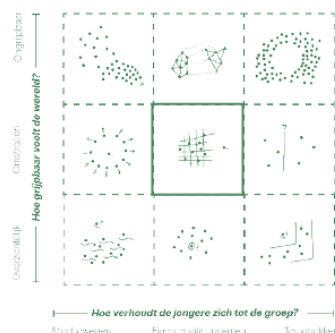
Wat kun je als maker concreet toevoegen?
Bouw vóór de reactie een korte pauze in. Laat jongeren benoemen wat zij waarnemen, wat zij erbij denken en wat zij op dat moment willen doen. Laat hen daarna twee of drie mogelijke reacties en de mogelijke gevolgen daarvan vergelijken.

Wat doen en oefenen jongeren?
Jongeren oefenen om hun eerste impuls te herkennen, waarnemingen van aannames te onderscheiden en een andere positie te bepalen. Daarna bepalen zij bewuster of zij reageren, op welke manier en op welk moment.

Voorbeeld: Tijdens een bezoek aan ProDemos laat de begeleider een kort filmpje zien dat online veel reacties oproept. De jongeren zien eerst alleen het filmpje en enkele reacties, zonder verdere context. Vervolgens geven zij hun mening, noteren zij wat ze ik daadwerkelijk, wat vul ik zelf in en wat zou ik nu willen doen? Daarna krijgen zij aanvullende informatie en vergelijken zij mogelijke reacties, zoals direct delen, een vraag stellen, wachten op meer informatie of helemaal niet reageren.

5 Handelen zonder alles zeker te weten

Jongeren zetten een doordachte eerste stap, terwijl nog niet alles duidelijk is en zij later kunnen bijsturen.



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Wat kan een jongere met deze capaciteit goed?
Bij nieuwe keuzes en verantwoordelijkheden is niet alle informatie vooraf beschikbaar. Jongeren onderzoeken wat zij al weten, wat nog onzeker is en welke eerste stap haalbaar is. Het gaat niet om zomaar risico nemen, maar om beginnen met voldoende steun en ruimte om later opnieuw te kijken.

Waar kunnen jongeren deze capaciteit gebruiken?
Bij voor het eerst stemmen, een stage of baan beginnen, een contract lezen, zelfstandig iets regelen met een organisatie of overheid, een nieuwe rol aannemen of een voorstel doen waarvan de gevolgen nog niet helemaal duidelijk zijn.

Wanneer wordt deze capaciteit relevant?
Wanneer informatie onvolledig is, gevolgen moeilijk te overzien zijn of jongeren het gevoel hebben dat zij eerst alles moeten begrijpen voordat zij iets kunnen doen. Onzekerheid kan dan leiden tot uitstel, afhaken of het volledig overlaten aan iemand anders.

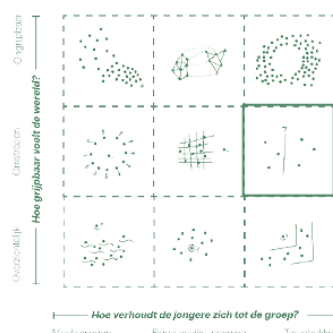
Wat kun je als maker concreet toevoegen?
Laat jongeren vier vragen beantwoorden: wat weet ik al, wat weet ik nog niet, wie kan mij helpen en wat is een haalbare eerste stap? Laat hen ook bepalen wanneer zij opnieuw naar die stap kijken.

Wat doen en oefenen jongeren?
Jongeren oefenen om onzekerheid te benoemen, te bepalen welke informatie zij nodig hebben en ondersteuning te zoeken. Zij kiezen een haalbare eerste stap en houden rekening met de mogelijkheid dat zij hun aanpak later moeten aanpassen.

Voorbeeld: Rond hun achttiende verjaardag krijgen jongeren een kaart thuisgestuurd. Daarop staat dat er vanaf hun achttiende veel nieuwe zaken op hen afkomen, zoals stemmen, een zorgverzekering, DigiD en geldzaken, maar dat zij niet alles tegelijk hoeven te begrijpen of regelen. Het kaartje helpt hen om te bepalen wat nu als eerste aandacht nodig heeft, welke vraag zij daarvoor hebben en welke kleine stap zij kunnen zetten. Ook staan er plekken genoemd waar zij hulp kunnen krijgen, zoals een inloopsprekruur of bijeenkomst in de lokale bibliotheek.

6 Inzien dat eerlijkheid voor iedereen anders is

Jongeren onderzoeken hoe dezelfde regel of verdeling voor verschillende mensen anders kan uitpakken.



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Wat kan een jongere met deze capaciteit goed?
Iedereen hetzelfde behandelen leidt niet altijd tot dezelfde mogelijkheden of gevolgen. Jongeren bekijken hoe tijd, geld, positie, toegang of ondersteuning invloed hebben op wat een regel of keuze voor verschillende mensen betekent.

Waar kunnen jongeren deze capaciteit gebruiken?
Bij deadlines, selectieprocedures, uitzonderingen op regels, toegang tot voorzieningen en de verdeling van geld, tijd, taken, plekken of kansen.

Wanneer wordt deze capaciteit relevant?
Wanneer één oplossing sommige mensen helpt en anderen juist belemmert. Ook wanneer een uitzondering voor de één nodig lijkt, maar door een ander als oneerlijk wordt ervaren, of wanneer mensen verschillende betekenissen geven aan het woord eerlijk.

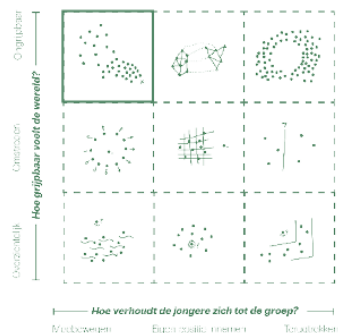
Wat kun je als maker concreet toevoegen?
Laat jongeren een regel of verdeling vanuit enkele verschillende posities bekijken. Vraag wie voordeel, nadeel of extra moeite ervaart en welke omstandigheden volgens hen relevant zijn. Laat hen daarna twee mogelijke verdelingen vergelijken.

Wat doen en oefenen jongeren?
Jongeren oefenen om vanuit verschillende posities te kijken, gevolgen zichtbaar te maken en onderscheid te maken tussen iedereen hetzelfde behandelen en rekening houden met omstandigheden. Zij leggen uit welke verschillen volgens hen wel of niet moeten meetellen.

Voorbeeld: Een gratis workshop in het buurthuis heeft twaalf plaatsen, maar er zijn twintig aanmeldingen. Jongeren vergelijken drie manieren om de plaatsen te verdelen: op volgorde van aanmeldingen, loten of voorrang geven aan jongeren die niet eerder konden deelnemen. Zij bekijken wie bij iedere methode voordeel of nadeel heeft en bespreken welke verdeling zij in deze situatie het meest verdedigbaar vinden.

7 Samen richting vinden in onzekerheid

Jongeren ordenen samen wat zij weten, wat nog onzeker is en wat nodig is om verder te kunnen.



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Wat kan een jongere met deze capaciteit goed?
Wanneer bronnen en verhalen elkaar tegenspreken, is enige gedeelde grond nodig om samen verder te kunnen. Jongeren vergelijken informatie, maken onzekerheden zichtbaar en formuleren een voorlopig startpunt zonder te doen alsof alle twijfel verdwenen is.

Waar kunnen jongeren deze capaciteit gebruiken?
Bij tegenstrijdige nieuwsberichten, een gerucht, een moeilijk te begrijpen brief, een gezondheidsclaim, een mogelijk door AI gemaakt beeld, crisisinformatie of een plan waarover verschillende verhalen rondgaan.

Wanneer wordt deze capaciteit relevant?
Wanneer bronnen elkaar tegenspreken, onduidelijk is welke informatie betrouwbaar is of mensen verschillende versies van dezelfde situatie gebruiken. Een gesprek kan dan vastlopen of vooral gaan over wie gelijk heeft.

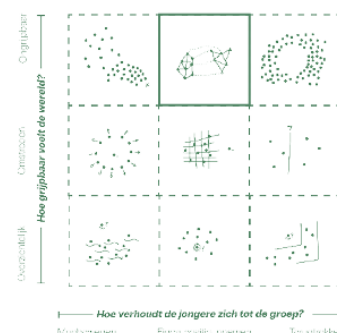
Wat kun je als maker concreet toevoegen?
Maak drie vakken: wat weten we, wat denken we en wat willen we nog weten. Laat jongeren informatie hierin ordenen. Formuleer daarna samen één open vraag en bepaal waar of bij wie aanvullende informatie gezocht kan worden.

Wat doen en oefenen jongeren?
Jongeren oefenen om feiten, aannames, meningen en vragen van elkaar te onderscheiden. Zij vergelijken bronnen, benoemen wat nog openstaat en formuleren een voorlopig startpunt dat later aangepast kan worden.

Voorbeeld: Er versijnt een nieuwsbericht waarover in de klas veel commotie ontstaat. Leerlingen verwijzen naar verschillende filmpjes, berichten en uitspraken. In de mentorles gaat het niet om welke inhoudelijke positie juist is, maar om hoe de groep houvast kan vinden. Jongeren ordenen uitspraken onder drie kopjes: dit weten we, dit wordt beweerd en dit willen we nog uitzoeken. Daarna vergelijken zij enkele bronnen en formuleren zij samen één vraag waarop nog een betrouwbaar antwoord nodig is.

8 Verbonden blijven bij verschil

Jongeren maken samen een keuze, terwijl verschillen en bezwaren zichtbaar blijven.



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Wat kan een jongere met deze capaciteit goed?
Een groep moet soms een besluit nemen zonder dat iedereen dezelfde voorkeur heeft. Jongeren onderzoeken hoe een keuze tot stand kan komen en wat er gebeurt met wensen of bezwaren die niet in de uitkomst terugkomen.

Waar kunnen jongeren deze capaciteit gebruiken?
Bij het verdelen van een budget, kiezen van een gezamenlijke activiteit, maken van teamregels, uitvoeren van een groepsopdracht of nemen van een besluit in een jongerenraad, vereniging of buurtgroep.

Wanneer wordt deze capaciteit relevant?
Wanneer een groep verschillende wensen heeft, geen enkele optie voor iedereen ideaal is en toch een beslissing nodig is. Het is ook relevant wanneer een stemming wel een winnaar oplevert, maar weinig zichtbaar maakt over de bezwaren van anderen.

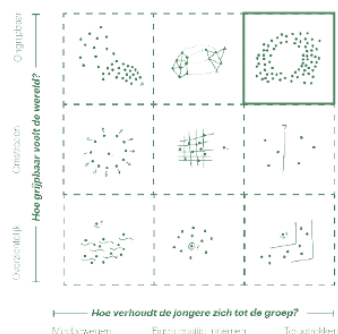
Wat kun je als maker concreet toevoegen?
Laat jongeren eerst hun voorkeuren, zorgen en grenzen benoemen. Bespreek daarna hoe het besluit wordt genomen, bijvoorbeeld door stemmen, loten of zoeken naar een optie waarmee iedereen voorlopig kan leven. Leg vast welke bezwaren blijven bestaan en of het besluit later opnieuw wordt bekeken.

Wat doen en oefenen jongeren?
Jongeren oefenen om hun voorkeur en grenzen te verwoorden, naar de zorgen van anderen te luisteren en een besluitvormingswijze te kiezen. Zij ervaren dat samen een richting kiezen niet betekent dat alle verschillen verdwijnen.

Voorbeeld: Een sportvereniging vraagt de jeugdcommissie om de afsluiting van het seizoen te organiseren. Een deel wil een toernooi, anderen willen een barbecue of een gezamenlijke activiteit buiten de club. Het budget en het aantal vrijwilligers zijn beperkt, waardoor niet alles kan. De jongeren benoemen tijdens een bespreking eerst wat voor hen belangrijk is en welke bezwaren zij hebben. Daarna spreken zij af hoe zij kiezen, nemen zij een besluit en leggen zij vast welke wensen niet in het plan passen.

9 Je onderdeel voelen van iets groters

Jongeren verbinden wat zij zelf belangrijk vinden aan een groter verhaal of een gedeelde toekomst.



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Wat kan een jongere met deze capaciteit goed?
Samenleven gaat niet alleen over afzonderlijke keuzes en regels, maar ook over wat mensen met elkaar willen behouden of veranderen. Jongeren onderzoeken hoe hun eigen ervaringen, zorgen en verwachtingen zich verhouden tot die van anderen.

Waar kunnen jongeren deze capaciteit gebruiken?
Bij een herdenking, jubileum, buurtfeest, nieuwjaar, klimaatactie, toekomstgesprek of een moment waarop een buurt, organisatie, stad of land vooruit- of terugkijkt.

Wanneer wordt deze capaciteit relevant?
Wanneer mensen persoonlijke herinneringen, zorgen of wensen delen en er een gezamenlijk verhaal ontstaat. Het is ook relevant wanneer een sterk wij-gevoel zichtbaar wordt, maar onduidelijk blijft wie zich daarin herkent of wie erbuiten valt.

Wat kun je als maker concreet toevoegen?
Laat jongeren benoemen wat zij willen behouden, veranderen of doorgeven. Breek daarna overeenkomsten en verschillen samen in een boodschap, beeld, ritueel of toekomstvoorstel. Vraag ook wie nog niet in dat gezamenlijke verhaal zichtbaar is.

Wat doen en oefenen jongeren?
Jongeren oefenen om verder te kijken dan hun directe ervaring en een persoonlijke zorg of wens te verbinden aan een gezamenlijke toekomst. Zij onderzoeken wat hen met anderen verbindt, zonder verschillen weg te laten.

Voorbeeld: Een gemeente wil een plein in de buurt opnieuw inrichten. Jongeren verzamelen wat buurtbewoners aan de plek waarderen, missen en in de toekomst nodig denken te hebben. Zij voegen hun eigen ervaringen toe en maken een gezamenlijk toekomstbeeld met punten waarover overeenstemming bestaat én punten waarop bewoners verschillen.

Hoe draag je bij aan een groter verhaal voor de toekomst?

Een oefenmoment krijgt meer betekenis wanneer het niet op zichzelf blijft staan. Gebruik Lieve Toekomst als overkoepelende naam om verschillende momenten, makers en ervaringen met elkaar te verbinden.

Leg na afloop kort vast welke capaciteit centraal stond, wat jongeren opmerkten, kozen of toevoegden en welke vraag nog openstaat. Zorg dat iemand op hun bijdrage reageert, deel wat je hebt geleerd met andere makers en gebruik dit bij een volgend oefenmoment.

Terugkerende vragen, spanningen en ideeën kunnen via ProDemos worden gebundeld en teruggebracht naar gemeenten, ministeries en andere democratische instellingen. Zo groeien kleine, lokale momenten uit tot een groter verhaal waarin jongeren democratie niet alleen oefenen, maar ook mee vormgeven.



D.2 // Final Lieve Toekomst booklet - 'tussenpagina'.

Overview card as the 'heart of the book'

D.3 // Final Lieve Toekomst booklet - picture



Nog één keer in het kort

Van alledaagse situatie naar democratische oefening

1. Vind een alledaagse situatie

Waar maken jongeren een keuze, krijgen zij met regels of verschil te maken, of dragen zij samen verantwoordelijkheid?

2. Kies een capaciteit

Welke capaciteit helpt jongeren om in deze situatie bewuster te handelen?

3. Maak de capaciteit oefenbaar

Hoe kan een vraag, handeling of tussenstap maakt deze capaciteit oefenbaar maken?

4. Leg hun bijdrage vast

Wat merken, kiezen, vragen, vertellen of stellen jongeren voor?

5. Zorg voor een reactie

Wie kan op hun bijdrage reageren? Wat gebeurt er mee en wanneer horen jongeren daar iets over?

Zo wordt een alledaags moment een democratisch oefenmoment. Jongeren oefenen niet alleen hoe zij zich tot democratie kunnen verhouden, maar leveren met hun ervaringen, vragen en ideeën ook een bijdrage aan hoe de democratie van de toekomst vorm krijgt.

D.4 // Nine examples from practice

The complete set of nine example interventions, one for each democratic capacity. Working illustrative.

Analogie
Swimming in a lane

Key Moment
School, daily classes (Structural moment)

Affordances
1. Structured (Key moment)
2. Condition-driven (Capacity layer)
3. Guided, rule-based, repetitive, grounding, conscious, maintaining (Analogy)

Capacity
Choose consciously within guided systems

Question
How might we help young people recognise when systems shape their behaviour, so they can take a more conscious position within democratic life?

De regel

This poster is one example of how an everyday school rule can become visible in a structured key moment. Placed around the clock, being on time becomes part of a guided, rule-based and repetitive interaction. Students are invited to consciously relate to the rule by following, carrying, or questioning it.

More posters could be added around other school rules or routines.

Feedback Loop

The QR poster creates a small feedback loop by collecting how the rule is experienced in practice.

Analogie
Swimming with clothes on

Key Moment
Sports club (Structural moment)

Affordances
1. Structured (Key moment)
2. Condition-driven (Capacity layer)
3. Social, collective, embodied, ritualised, belonging, expressive, informal, carrying (Analogy)

Capacity
Dare to take a position within a group

Question
How might we create spaces where young people can express their own position without losing connection to the group?

Clubdraggers

This intervention uses a bulletin board in the sports club to make visible what young people already carry as part of a group: the shirt, the club, the activities, the atmosphere, and the responsibilities that come with belonging. The board shows what members wear, what they help organise, and what holds the club together.

A small tray with flyers invites young people to organise something themselves. The flyer acts as a simple guide to what they may need to carry when taking initiative, such as responsibility, listening, fairness, care, and commitment.

Feedback Loop

The Flyer...

Analogie
Watertrappen

Key Moment
Library (Structural)

Affordances
1. Structured (Key moment)
2. Condition-driven (Capacity layer)
3. Maintaining, dependent, collective, stabilising, continuous, exposing

Capacity
Contribute to the system you depend on

Question
How might we let young people experience that democratic systems only keep working when people actively contribute to them?

What keeps you afloat?

This intervention is a table in the library during exam weeks. It starts with a personal question: "Wij jij graag je toets halen?" On the table are study objects such as pens, paper, post-its, chargers, books, planning sheets and quiet-study signs.

These objects make visible that passing a test is not only an individual achievement, but depends on many shared conditions: good education, teachers, time, money, sleep, wifi, silence and public space. Young people can add what they need, what they miss, and what they can contribute so others can also stay afloat.

Feedback Loop

The QR poster creates a small feedback loop by collecting how the rule is experienced in practice.

Analogie
"Kopje onder"

Key Moment
Big sport event/ WK Olympics (Natural)

Affordances
1. Natural (Key moment)
2. Relation-driven (Capacity layer)
3. Slowing, grounding, regulating (Analogy)

Capacity
Pause before reacting

Question
How might we help young people create space between impulse and reaction?

De Oranje Massa

During large collective moments, such as a World Cup, a memorial, a protest, or Pride, colour can suddenly create a mass. Orange at football, black in mourning, rainbow colours in celebration or recognition, or another colour used to show collective concern. A colour makes belonging visible: I am part of this.

But it can also raise immediate questions: who does not belong? What am I actually reacting to? Am I moving along with the group, or am I choosing consciously?

The intervention uses the orange mass as a recognisable starting point, while subtly opening up a broader reflection on colour as a collective signal. It does not take a position on any specific cause, but shows how visual symbols can accelerate emotion, belonging, and reaction.

Feedback Loop

???

Analogie
Going through the hole

Key Moment
Turning 18 (Natural)

Affordances
1. Natural (Key moment)
2. Relation-driven (Capacity layer)
3. Trusting, reassuring, persevering (Analogy)

Capacity
Act without knowing all possible consequences

Question
How might we help young people act within democracy, even when they do not yet fully understand what adulthood, citizenship, or responsibility will mean?

A card from the Netherlands

This intervention is a letter from "the Netherlands" to a young person turning 18. Instead of presenting adulthood as something they should already understand, the letter recognises uncertainty as part of becoming a citizen. It explains that turning 18 does not mean knowing everything, but entering a new position from which you can start acting, asking, choosing, and taking responsibility step by step.

The letter includes a small card that the young person can give to someone else as a first civic act. The card says: I am turning 18. What is one thing you think I should know, ask, or carry with me? In this way, the intervention turns uncertainty into a relational action: the young person does not have to enter adulthood alone, but can actively invite guidance, stories, or advice from others.

Feedback Loop

A link to a website where they can find more info/

Analogie
Turning

Key Moment
Liberation day (State)

Affordances
1. Natural (Key moment)
2. Relation-driven (Capacity layer)
3. Exchanging, reorienting

Capacity
Understand that fairness feels different for everyone

Question
How might we help young people experience that freedom and fairness depend on where someone stands?

Freedom festival

This intervention uses Liberation Day to turn freedom around. Young people first choose a freedom that feels important to them, such as safety, self-expression, movement, belief, privacy, or speaking freely. Then they turn the card around and answer one question:

For whom is this freedom less self-evident?

By physically turning the card, the intervention makes perspective-shifting simple and concrete. Freedom is no longer only something personal or national, but something relational: it changes depending on someone's position, background, safety, or access.

Feedback Loop

A link to a website where they can find more info/

Analogie
Swimming on your back

Key Moment
Collecting passport/ID/ (State)

Affordances
1. State (Key moment)
2. Direction-driven (Capacity layer)
3. Orienting, positional, stabilising, reflective (Analogy)

Capacity
Build shared orientation within uncertainty

Question
How might we help young people orient themselves within democracy when formal systems feel distant or abstract?

Paspoort card

This intervention uses the moment of collecting an official document as a small civic orientation point. When receiving a passport, ID card, or driver's licence, young people also receive a Citizen Compass card. The card asks simple orientation questions: What does this document give you access to? What does it ask from you? Where do you stand in relation to the state?

Like swimming on your back, the intervention creates a moment of orientation rather than immediate action. Young people do not have to choose a political direction yet; they first become aware of their position within a larger democratic system.

Feedback Loop

On the backside more information about that we organised this in NL very well

Analogie
Swimming on your front

Key Moment
Election times (State)

Affordances
1. State (Key moment)
2. Direction-driven (Capacity layer)
3. Directional (Analogy)

Capacity
Commit to a shared perspective without full agreement

Question
How might we enable young people to choose a shared direction, even when they do not fully agree with each other?

Elections package

This election package can be used by the student council to organise elections during uses a voting method called "I can swim with this." Young people do not only vote for their favourite proposal, but also indicate which direction they are willing to temporarily carry together.

Each proposal receives three possible responses: I swim for this, I can swim with this, or I go under with this. The chosen direction is the one most people can swim with, not simply the one with the strongest preference. This helps young people practise temporary commitment without requiring full agreement.

Feedback Loop

Analogie
Floating

Key Moment
New Year / annual municipal democratic week (State moment)

Affordances
1. State (Key moment)
2. Direction-driven (Capacity layer)
3. Directional (Analogy)

Capacity
Desire to a shared future

Question
How might we help young people imagine a shared democratic future beyond their own individual reality?

Elections package

This intervention turns New Year into a recurring democratic ritual. Each year, a municipality organises a week called Nieuw Nederland, Nieuw Rotterdam, or Nieuw Den Haag, where young people are invited to imagine what their city or country should carry into the new year.

Through schools, libraries, youth work, sports clubs, and public spaces, young people respond to one collective question:

Wat moet Nederland meenemen naar het nieuwe jaar?

They can contribute a rule, wish, ritual, concern, promise, question, or future idea. Like floating together, the intervention creates a calm moment in which young people temporarily stop reacting to their own realities and imagine a shared future.

Feedback Loop

D.5 // Additional Lieve Toekomst materials

One-pager and other final communication/design materials included in the project.

Lieve Toekomst

democratie in het dagelijks leven

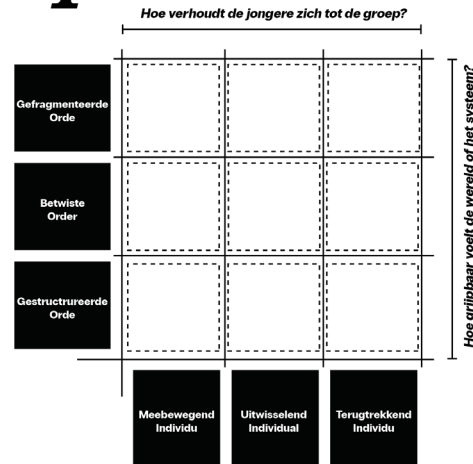
1

Een Framework **Begrijpen hoe jongeren zich tot democratie kunnen verhouden**

Het framework helpt organisaties begrijpen hoe jongeren zich in de toekomst tot democratie kunnen verhouden. Het laat twee spanningen zien: hoe jongeren zich positioneren ten opzichte van een groep, en hoe grijpbaar of gefragmenteerd de wereld om hen heen voelt.

Wat kunnen wij hier als organisatie mee?

Het framework kan gebruikt worden als gespreks- en ontwerpinstrument. Het helpt om te zien in wat voor situatie jongeren zich bevinden, welke spanningen daarin zichtbaar worden en wat dat vraagt van democratische educatie, beleid of participatie.



2



Samen houvast vinden als iets onzeker is



Verbinden met anderen zonder het helemaal eens te zijn



Je onderdeel voelen van iets groters



Pauzeren voordat je reageert



Handelen zonder alles zeker te weten



Inzien dat eerlijkheid voor iedereen anders is



Kiezen in een omgeving die stuurt



Eigen positie durven innemen in een groep



Bijdragen aan wat je samen gebruikt

9 democratische capaciteiten **Wat jongeren moeten kunnen herkennen, oefenen en versterken**

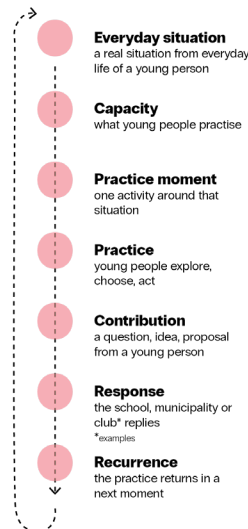
De capaciteiten vertalen de toekomstscenario's naar wat jongeren nodig kunnen hebben om democratisch te handelen. Ze helpen te herkennen wat een situatie van jongeren vraagt en wat zij daarin kunnen oefenen.

Wat kunnen wij hier als organisatie mee?

De capaciteiten helpen om abstracte democratische waarden te vertalen naar concreet gedrag. Ze kunnen worden gebruikt bij het ontwikkelen (of controleren) van educatieve programma's, participatieprojecten of beleid.

Lieve Toekomst **Een programma om democratie te oefenen in concrete momenten**

Lieve Toekomst is een programma waarmee ProDemos en partners concrete momenten kunnen maken waarin jongeren democratie oefenen. Het vertrekt vanuit situaties die jongeren al kennen: regels, eerlijkheid, conflict, invloed, verantwoordelijkheid en vragen over de toekomst.



Wat kunnen wij hier als organisatie mee?

Lieve Toekomst biedt een praktische manier om van analyse naar actie te gaan. Het helpt organisaties om democratie uit te leggen, en terug te brengen naar herkenbare situaties waarin jongeren kunnen oefenen.

De uitleg gids dient als hulpmiddel hiervoor.

