



**Suomen
Kotiseutuliitto**

Masters and Apprentices in Participation

Anna-Maija Halme 12 June 2026
Anna-maija.halme@kotiseutuliitto.fi
kotiseutuliitto.fi



**Suomen
Kotiseutuliitto**

Finnish Local Heritage Federation

- The biggest civil society organization on culture field in Finland
- National organization for local heritage work
- Members are around 750 local heritage associations with over 100 000 members, other federations, over 100 municipalities and provinces
- Cherishes and presents heritage, local cultures and cultural diversity – competitions e.g.
- Influences and lobbies

Masters and Apprentices in Participation

Core idea:

A European project aimed at strengthening

- democracy and citizen participation
- youth engagement
- community-based cultural heritage activities



Masters and Apprentices in Participation

Core idea:

- The built local environment offers significant, yet underutilised, potential for democratic participation, civic skills development, and social integration.
- Neighbourhoods and their services are particularly important for residents without access to private transport, especially for many young people.



Masters and Apprentices in Participation

Core idea:

- Local areas are full of opportunities, including underused buildings, when we learn to see their potential
- Building sector represents 21–37% of the total climate change pollution. The best way to tackle the problem is to reuse old buildings and stop building new ones.



Masters and Apprentices in Participation

Participants

- From neighbourhoods with a high proportion of residents with migrant backgrounds and ethnic minorities.

Participants include:

- Active members of neighbourhood and community associations
- Young people aged 18–25 (vocational students, university and applied sciences students), reflecting local demographic diversity and gender balance
- Experts in urban planning and democratic participation



Masters and Apprentices in Participation

All participants are equal

Activities are co-designed with participants,
ensuring that young people and
experienced activists are equal partners in
planning and decision-making



Masters and Apprentices in Participation

Activities (to be further refined with young participants)

- Young participants compile summaries of grassroots methods for influencing urban planning and civic decision-making.

In this process, young people learn directly from experienced community actors and gain practical understanding of participation in urban planning.



Masters and Apprentices in Participation

Activities

- **Methods of civic influence are presented and discussed during transnational meetings**
- **Participants compare local participation practices across countries and neighbourhoods**
- **Young people explore ways to develop participation further by combining proven grassroots models with digital tools commonly used by youth**
- **Discussions (with experts) on the role of grassroots civic action in democracy and its connection to EU values**



Masters and Apprentices in Participation

Activities

- Participants may also choose to implement a concrete local advocacy or participation case during the project
- Develop, based on the materials produced, a model for increasing young people's self-initiated and autonomous participation
- Information campaign designed and implemented by young people themselves, with paid involvement in communicating the results



Masters and Apprentices in Participation

Objectives and aims (to be further refined with young participants)

- Help young people see the potential in their local area and amplify their voices in urban planning processes
- Activate youth participation in civic and democratic processes
- Develop neighbourhood-based participation practices
- Increase youth involvement in local associations
- Improve the understanding of young people's needs within local heritage associations and their umbrella organisations



Masters and Apprentices in Participation

Objectives and aims

- Promote mutual learning and exchange of best practices between countries
- Increase understanding of the importance of an independent and active civil society
- Raise public awareness of the value of civic engagement through project communication
- Strengthen democracy and make EU values tangible at local level
- Support youth internationalisation
- Strengthen cooperation and networks between European civic actors



Masters and Apprentices in Participation

Links to our previous projects

- Builds on the award-winning Masters and Apprentices youth participation model
- Continues the work of the seminars *Sharing Heritage – Citizens Participating in Decision Making and Taking Part in Cultural Heritage Matters* and publication *Heritage Is Ours* (in cooperation with Europa Nostra and supported partly by Creative Europe) (2018)



Local Heritage Work for Sustainable Lifestyle

- Strong roots
- Cultural diversity
- Authentic stories
- Active citizens
- Local Environment
- Loved buildings
- Common places and spaces



#culture #heritage #sustainability #inclusion
#kotiseuturakkaus



kotiseutuliitto.fi
toimisto@kotiseutuliitto.fi
tel. 045 614 0464

Suomen Kotiseutuliitto
Kalevankatu 13 A 5
00100 Helsinki

Photo: Tuomas Uusheimo.