



VOICE - Voting, Opportunities, Inclusion, and Civic Engagement

Empowering Active Citizenship for Adults
with Cognitive Disabilities

Project Coordinator: IN-RED



The Democratic Promise

Voting and civic engagement as fundamental pillars of the European pillar of Social Rights.



The Civic Gap



Over
800,000
people with cognitive
disabilities in the EU
are legally denied
the right to vote.



Millions more face systemic obstacles: inaccessible voting materials, overly complex ballots, lack of professional support, and restrictive family influence built on the misconception that they lack capacity.

The VOICE Mission



To bridge the gap in electoral inclusion by identifying barriers, developing accessible educational tools, equipping professionals, and influencing European policies.

Moving individuals from passive recipients of care to active citizens shaping their societies, aligning directly with the EU Disability Rights Strategy 2021-2030.

The Four Pillars of Change



Educate

Enhance Competences.

Train educators, social workers, and support staff to guide democratic engagement.



Empower

Increase Accessibility.

Develop easy-to-read tools, pictograms, and digital hubs for complex political processes.



Advocate

Promote Self-Representation.

Encourage active citizenship, peer networks, and community-led initiatives beyond just voting.



Impact

Influence Policy. Drive systemic societal change and legal harmonization at national and EU levels.

The European Consortium



Project Architecture: From Research to Reality



WP1: Steering the VOICE

Seamless execution, quality assurance, and dynamic adaptation.



Multi-Tiered Coordination: Structured leadership between the Coordinator (IN-RED) and Work Package leaders.

Continuous Evaluation: Bi-annual internal impact reports alongside external user-testing feedback.

Risk Management: Proactive monitoring to ensure high-quality, accessible outputs remain on schedule.

WP2: Mapping Participation

Assessing the current state of electoral and civic participation across partner countries.



Investigation: Deep desk research and comparative literature reviews of legal frameworks.



Consultation: Direct interviews with experts, advisory boards, and individuals with cognitive disabilities.



The Output: The VOICE Research Report – a comprehensive, translated synthesis of barriers, facilitators, and best practices across the EU.

WP3: Empowering Changemakers

Translating theoretical research into hands-on, accessible action.



Develop

Creating inclusive educational toolkits with digital elements, easy-to-read guides, and virtual voting simulations.

Equip

Executing Train the Trainers programs for social workers, educators, and psychologists.

Pilot

Running hands-on, hybrid pilot sessions directly with adults with cognitive disabilities to refine and validate the tools.

WP4: From Words to Action

Elevating the voices of individuals with cognitive disabilities to influence systemic policy.



Convene

Hosting collective workshops and advocacy sessions in Brussels, bringing together disabled citizens, support organizations, and policymakers.

Co-Create

Drafting concrete, actionable Policy Recommendations addressing structural and legal barriers

Transform

Turning lived experiences into legislative foresight aligned with the CRPD.

WP5: Spreading the VOICE

Amplifying impact, ensuring accessibility, and building long-term awareness.



Digital Hub:

Building a permanent, accessible home for all project resources on co-production.eu.

Campaigns:

Executing targeted social media strategies and newsletters to engage stakeholders and the public.

Multiplier Events:

Hosting four local events and one major final event in Brussels to showcase achievements and share best practices.

Expected Results & Tangible Outputs



Asset 1: The VOICE Research Report

A definitive cross-border analysis of participation barriers and facilitators.



Asset 2: Inclusive Educational Toolkit

Open-access, easy-to-read guides, digital learning modules, and virtual voting simulations.



Asset 3: Trained Professionals Network

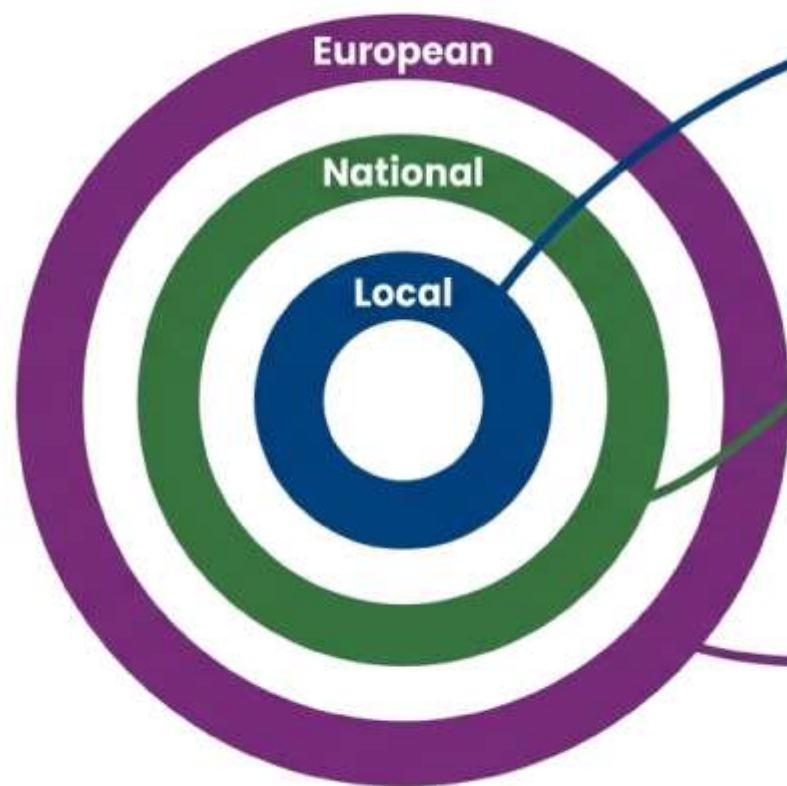
Certified educators and social workers equipped with specialized, inclusive methodologies.



Asset 4: Co-Created Policy Recommendations

Actionable legislative proposals forged directly with policymakers and advocates in Brussels

The Ripple of Impact



Local/Regional (The Core):

Empowered individuals making independent choices, participating in local councils, and breaking free from undue family influence.

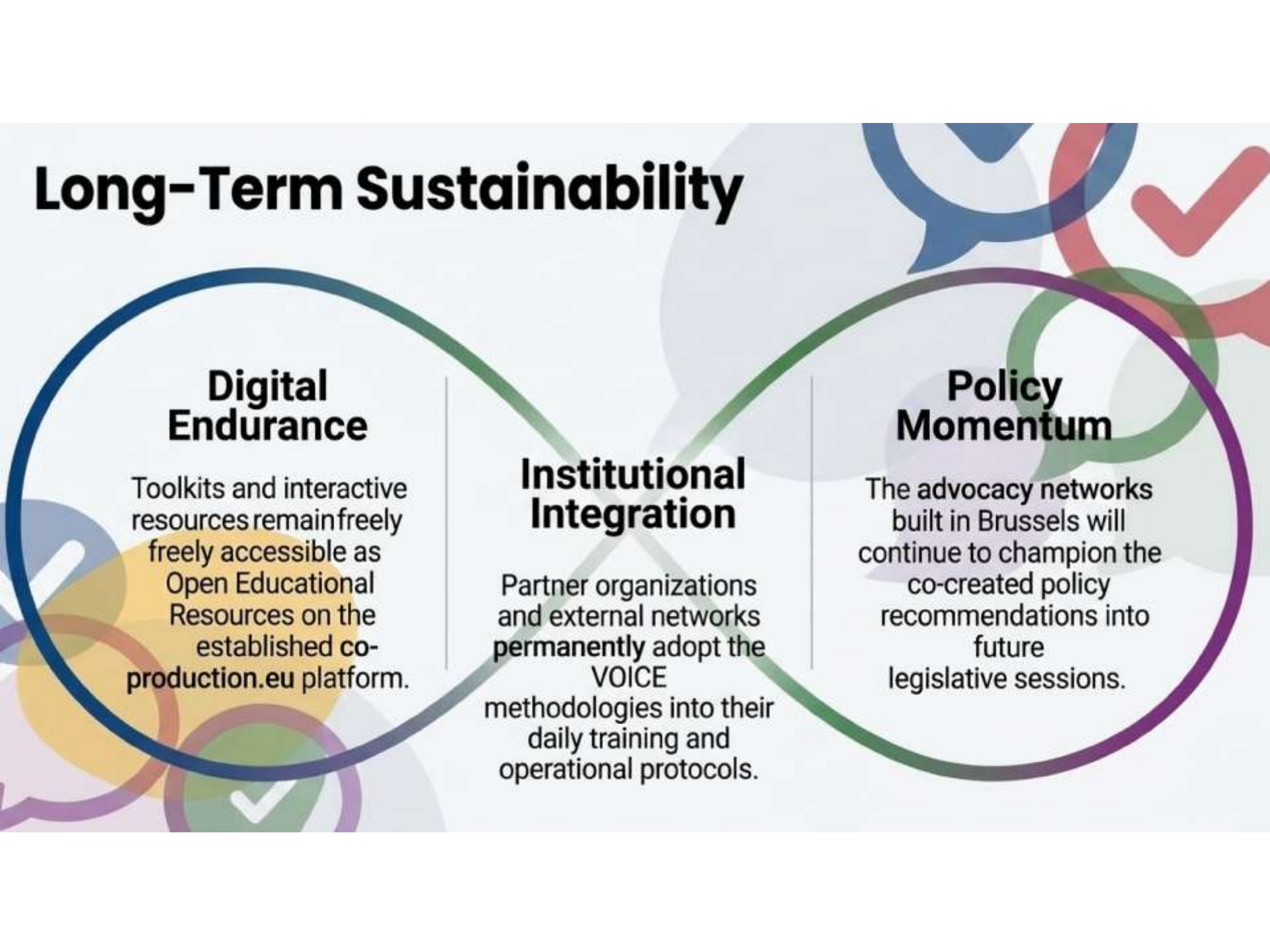
National (The Expansion):

Enhanced professional training standards across disability organizations; scaling best practices across borders.

European (The Wave):

Harmonization of electoral accessibility standards; tangible advancement of the European Disability Rights Strategy 2021-2030.

Long-Term Sustainability

The infographic features three overlapping circles in blue, green, and purple. The blue circle on the left is titled 'Digital Endurance' and contains text about toolkits and the co-production.eu platform. The green circle in the middle is titled 'Institutional Integration' and contains text about partner organizations adopting the VOICE methodologies. The purple circle on the right is titled 'Policy Momentum' and contains text about advocacy networks championing co-created policy recommendations. The background is light blue with faint, colorful abstract shapes and a large red checkmark in the top right corner.

Digital Endurance

Toolkits and interactive resources remain freely accessible as Open Educational Resources on the established co-production.eu platform.

Institutional Integration

Partner organizations and external networks permanently adopt the VOICE methodologies into their daily training and operational protocols.

Policy Momentum

The advocacy networks built in Brussels will continue to champion the co-created policy recommendations into future legislative sessions.

Make Every Voice Count.

Join us in building a truly inclusive European democracy
where active citizenship is accessible to all.

Project Coordinator: IN-RED

Access the Platform: co-production.eu

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