

YOUTH SHAPING EUROPE'S TOMORROW



Online Training on Advocacy & Lobbying Skills

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1. INTRODUCTION TO ADVOCACY & LOBBYING

Advocacy starts with a problem.

What is wrong? What do we want to be different?



1. INTRODUCTION TO ADVOCACY & LOBBYING

Examples:

- Hate speech online
- Unpaid internships
- Housing for students
- Loss of biodiversity
- Access to mental health support

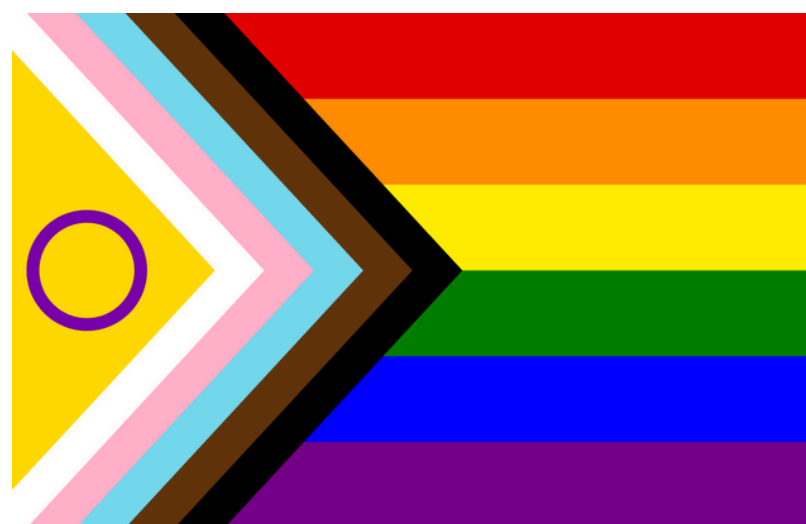
1. INTRODUCTION TO ADVOCACY & LOBBYING

What is Advocacy?

- The process of speaking up for a cause, issue, or group to influence decisions, policies, or practices.
- It transforms needs, experiences, and ideas into messages for change.
- Individual or collective
- Formal or informal

1. INTRODUCTION TO ADVOCACY & LOBBYING

Examples of advocacy:



1. INTRODUCTION TO ADVOCACY & LOBBYING

What is Lobbying?

- Lobbying is a **specific form of advocacy** focused on **direct interaction with decision-makers**.
- It aims to influence laws, policies, strategies, or funding decisions.

1. INTRODUCTION TO ADVOCACY & LOBBYING



In the EU, lobbying is a **legitimate and regulated democratic practice.**

Lobbying can be done by NGOs, youth groups, companies, trade unions –
not only by corporations.

1. INTRODUCTION TO ADVOCACY & LOBBYING

Common lobbying activities:

- Meetings with policymakers
- Policy briefs and position papers
- Public consultations and hearings
- Structured presentations of recommendations



1. INTRODUCTION TO ADVOCACY & LOBBYING

Advocacy vs Lobbying

Advocacy	Lobbying
Broad and long-term	Targeted and strategic
Raises awareness	Influences specific decisions
Engages society	Engages policymakers

➔ Both are complementary and often used together.

2. WHY ADVOCACY & LOBBYING MATTER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

- Young people are often **underrepresented** in decision-making processes.
- Policies directly **affect youth**: education, employment, climate, inclusion, and mental health.
- Advocacy enables young people to:
 - Participate actively in democracy
 - Make their voices visible and credible
 - Influence EU-level policies
 - Build leadership and communication skills

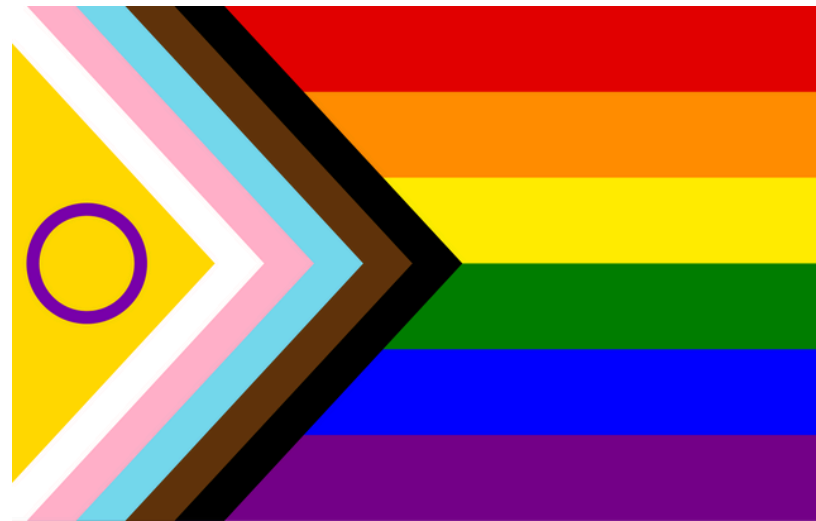
3. EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

What Makes Advocacy Effective?

1. A clear problem
2. A concrete change you want
3. The right target
4. A strategy
5. Allies and persistence

➔ Effective advocacy is not louder – it is smarter.

3. EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY



1. A clear problem
2. A concrete change you want
3. The right target
4. A strategy
5. Allies and persistence

3. EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

Was the Gay Pride movement “successful”?

Legal and policy change

- Decriminalisation of same-sex relationships
- Anti-discrimination laws
- Recognition of same-sex partnerships or marriage (in many countries)
- Stronger hate-crime protections

Visibility became normal

- LGBT people moved from invisibility to public presence
- Pride made it impossible to pretend LGBT people “don’t exist”
- Media, politics, culture had to respond
- Open discrimination became harder to justify publicly

3. EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

Was the Gay Pride movement “successful”?

Unequal reality across countries



- In some EU countries, Pride is protected
- In others, it is restricted, attacked, or banned

Backlash exists



- Political pushback
- Attempts to roll back rights
- Culture-war framing

3. EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY



Advocacy is NOT:

- A single campaign
- A one-time win
- “Mission accomplished”



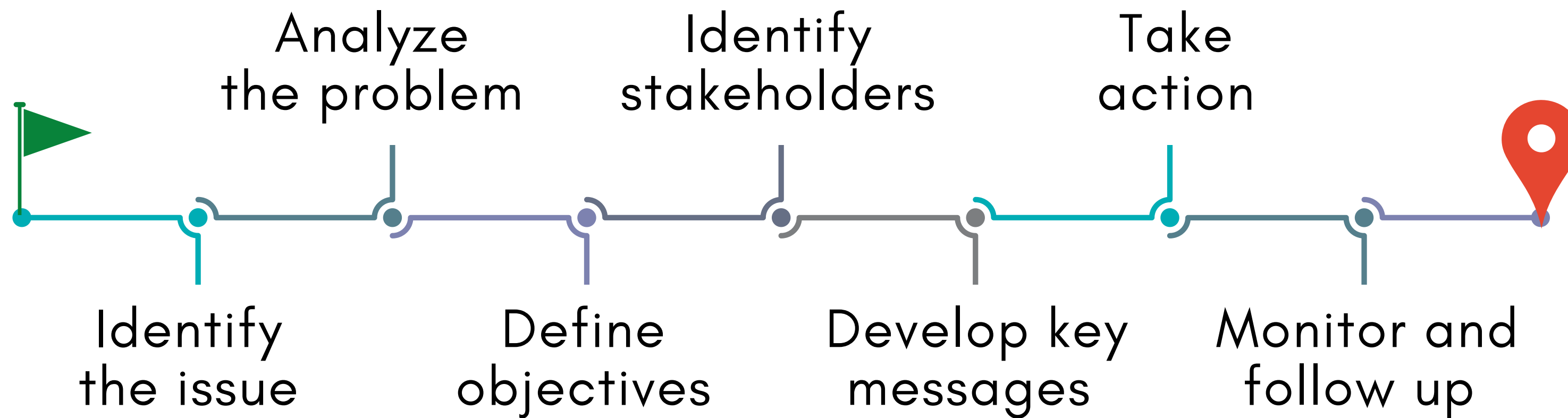
Advocacy IS:

- A process
- A series of partial wins
- Constant pressure to prevent backsliding

➔ Advocacy has goals – but rarely a final ending.

3. EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

Advocacy Cycle



3. EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

From Problems to Solutions

- What should change?
- How can it **realistically** be done?
- Why does it fit existing policies or priorities?
- What difference would it make?

➔ Complaints create noise. Solutions create influence.

4. STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

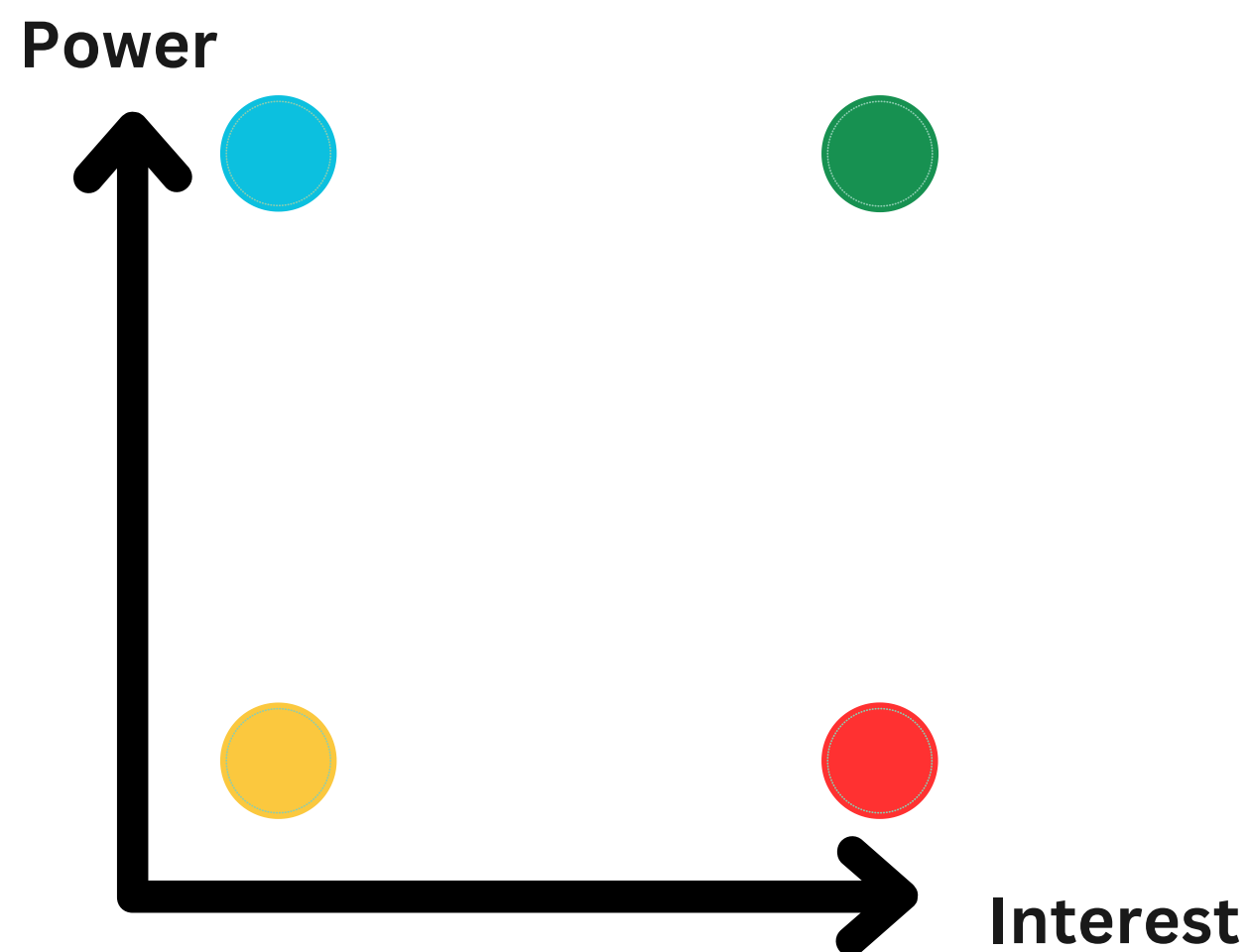
What is Stakeholder Mapping?

- A tool to identify **who has power, influence, or interest** in a specific issue.
- Helps focus efforts where they matter most.


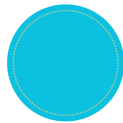
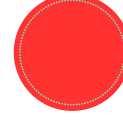

Types of Stakeholders

- Decision-makers (EU institutions, national authorities)
- Influencers (advisors, experts, media)
- Allies (NGOs, youth organisations, networks)
- Opponents or neutral actors
- Beneficiaries (young people, communities)

4. STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

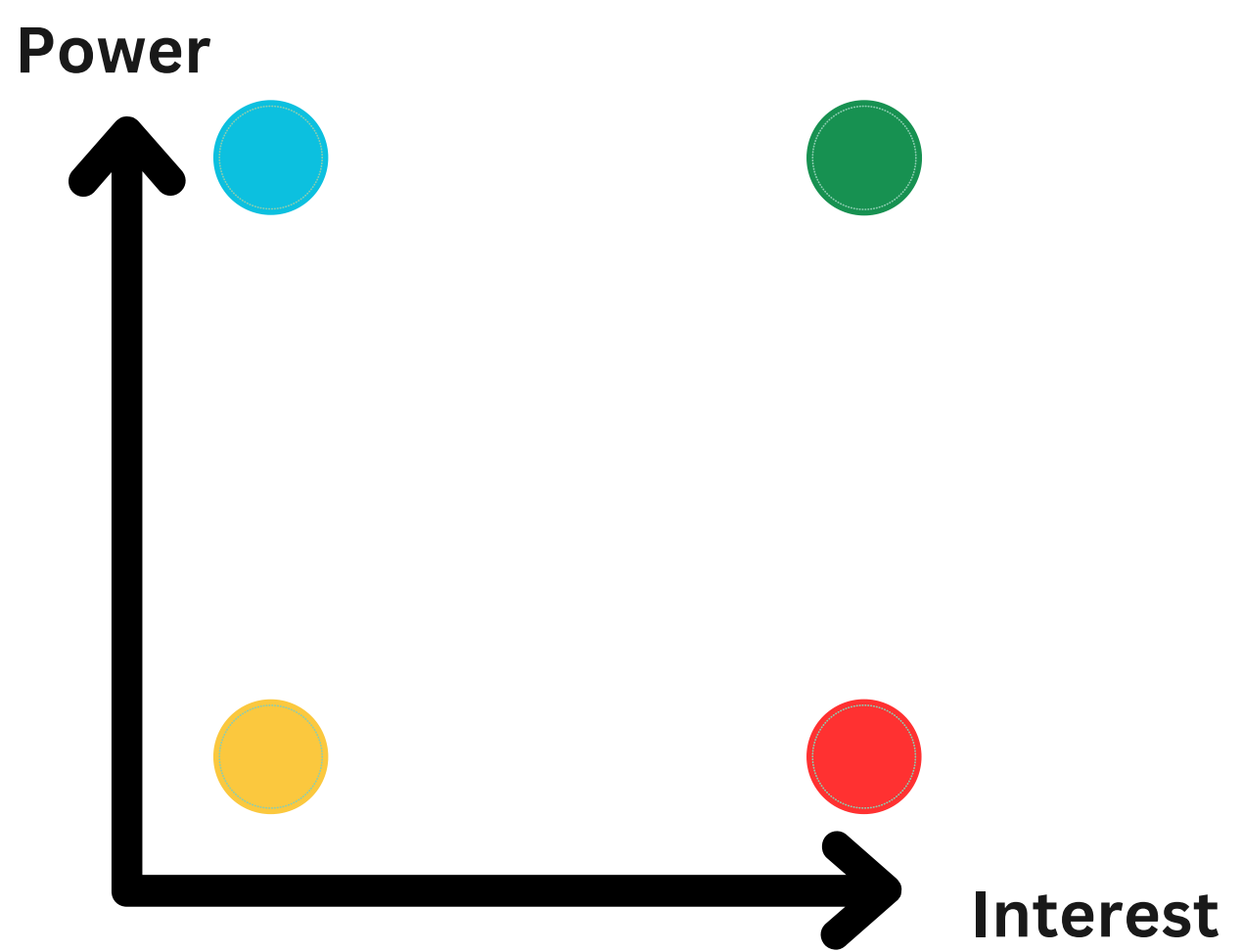


Power-Interest Matrix

-  High power / High interest → Key targets
-  High power / Low interest → Keep informed
-  Low power / High interest → Allies
-  Low power / Low interest → Monitor

4. STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

Gay Pride movement stakeholder map



- National governments and parliaments
Ministries of justice/interior
- EU institutions not focused on equality
- LGBT organisations and activists
Lawyers, academics, journalists
- General public not engaged with the issue
Businesses with no position (yet)

5. PERSUASIVE COMMUNICATION

What is Persuasive Communication?

- Communicating ideas in a way that **influences attitudes, decisions, or actions.**
- Combines logic, credibility, and emotional connection.

Key Elements of Persuasion

- **Clarity:** Simple, structured messages
- **Credibility:** Evidence, experience, consistency
- **Relevance:** Connect to the audience's priorities
- **Emotion:** Human stories and real-life impact
- **Call to action:** What should happen next?

5. PERSUASIVE COMMUNICATION

Structuring a Persuasive Message

- The issue (What is the problem?)
- The impact (Why does it matter?)
- The solution (What needs to change?)
- The recommendation (What do you ask for?)

5. PERSUASIVE COMMUNICATION

Gay Pride Movement Persuasive Communication

1. Key Message:

LGBT people deserve equal rights, safety, and dignity.

2. Audience awareness:

- **Decision-makers**
 - Human rights obligations
 - Equality before the law
- **Local authorities**
 - Pride as peaceful assembly
 - City reputation and openness
- **General public**
 - Love, families, everyday life
 - Stories, not legal texts

5. PERSUASIVE COMMUNICATION

Gay Pride Movement Persuasive Communication

3. Credibility

- Consistency over decades
- International human rights standards

4. Emotion + reason

- Anti-discrimination laws
- Evidence of harm caused by exclusion

5. Clear ask

- Change discriminatory laws
- Adopt equality strategies

6. ENGAGEMENT WITH DECISION-MAKERS

Who Are Decision-Makers?

- EU institutions (European Commission, European Parliament, Council)
- National and local authorities
- Policy advisors and civil servants

How to Engage Effectively

- Be prepared and well-informed
- Respect time constraints
- Use clear and concise language
- Adapt your message to the audience
- Be constructive and solution-oriented

6. ENGAGEMENT WITH DECISION-MAKERS

Do's and Don'ts

DO	DON'T
Be confident and respectful	Use overly technical language
Support arguments with evidence	Be confrontational or vague
Follow up after meetings	Overload with too much information

7. LINKING ADVOCACY TO VOICE & PRESENCE

- Advocacy is not only *what* you say, but *how* you say it.
- Voice, body language, and presence shape credibility.
- Effective delivery helps messages be remembered and taken seriously.

➔ This is where **public speaking, voice, and stage presence** become key advocacy tools.

8. ETHICS & RESPONSIBILITY

How we advocate matters as much as what we advocate for.

- Be honest – use facts, not disinformation
- Respect people – even when you disagree
- Do no harm – don't exploit fear, trauma, or hatred
- Be transparent – about goals, methods, and interests
- Take responsibility – for the impact of your actions

➔ Ethical advocacy builds trust and long-term change.

9. WHAT IS SUCCESS (AND FAILURE)



- An issue becomes visible and taken seriously
- Decision-makers respond or engage
- Policies or practices shift partially
- New allies join the cause
- Harmful decisions are delayed, softened, or stopped



- Disagreement or backlash
- Slow progress
- Partial results
- Needing to change strategy



- No clear goal
- No target
- No follow-up
- Giving up at the first obstacle

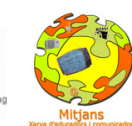
10. REALISM



Advocacy is powerful – but not magical.

- Not every effort leads to immediate change
- Power is uneven – decision-makers don't all listen
- Backlash and resistance are normal
- Progress is often slow, partial, and fragile

➔ Keep going!



CLOSING



Strong advocacy combines:

- Clear ideas
- Strategic thinking
- Persuasive communication
- Confident delivery

This training supports young people in turning their recommendations into **visible, impactful contributions to EU policymaking.**





**THANK YOU FOR
YOUR ATTENTION!**



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