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Connecting European Youth through Storytelling

CASE STUDY HANDBOOK 2021-2023

Project Number
624723-EPP-1-2020-1-DE-EPPKA3-EU-YTH-TOG

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CONTINUE
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Introduction

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union under the Key Action 3 “European Youth Together” in 2021, CONTINUE supports young people experiencing social exclusion to tackle the specific challenges of post-COVID times in terms of staying connected and integrated into European communities. The project is being delivered by a consortium of 8 NGOs from different European countries who are experienced in youth education and community-based activities.

The present case study handbook describes the main actions and results of the project, offering an overview of all stages from May 2021 to March 2023. Thanks to the transnational cooperation between n.8 youth organisations in Europe and beyond, CONTINUE contributed to European youth policies by bringing up individual experiences and needs and improving the dialogue between young people and European organisations.

Erasmus+ Programme

Erasmus+ is an EU’s Programme to provide citizens with opportunities for personal and professional development supporting education, training and sport, as well as informal and non-formal learning, in Europe for the period 2021 – 2027, as stated in the official documents (www.ec.europa.eu). The programme is designed to equip people of all ages with the qualifications and skills needed for their meaningful participation in a democratic society. It promotes intercultural understanding and successful transition in the labour market, especially for those with fewer opportunities, including people with disabilities and migrants and European Union citizens living in remote areas or facing socio-economic difficulties.

As part of the Key Action 3, the “European Youth Together” projects aim to support the creation of networks and regional partnerships, enabling young people across Europe to set up joint projects, organise exchanges and promote training courses.

Further information about the Erasmus Plus programme can be found on the official website <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/programme-guide/part-b/key-action-3>.

1. Project & handbook overview

1.1 Project overview & partnership

“CONTINUE - Connecting European Youth Through Storytelling” project supports young people experiencing social exclusion to tackle the specific challenges of post-COVID. It has been widely observed that for marginalised youth, COVID pandemic highlighted and reinforced the already existing obstacles: precarious financial situations; lack of a safe space at home that can guarantee the person's well-being; limited or no access to care and health services; loss of existing connections to the institutions and social care system; reduced job opportunities; lack of opportunities for building relationships; lack of some basic skills and capacities in digital communication cutting them from social, educational and economic connections. Indeed, the CONTINUE project represented an answer to the following needs:

- The need to better understand the problems faced by youth as a result of COVID-19.
- The need for young people to find connection to their communities, institutions, policies.
- The need for digital skills and capacities and to improve young people's social inclusion.

The main aim and objectives of the project

In-line with the European Youth Strategy (2019-2027) and referred to the EU Youth Goals ‘Inclusive Societies’, ‘Information and Constructive Dialogue, CONTINUE project aimed at supporting young people suffering from social exclusion to tackle the specific challenges of post-COVID times. In this perspective, the project's objectives were:

- Promoting cooperation between youth organisations at Pan-European and local levels;
- Encouraging young people to actively participate in delivering social actions and creating policy recommendations;
- Promoting the participation of underrepresented youth groups in offline and online modes, by offering them digital solutions and tools for staying connected;
- Offering transnational capacity-building activities to support dialogue and opening of young people towards other communities;

The target groups

The CONTINUE project involved young people living in a situation of vulnerability and the youth workers of participating youth organizations who were facing the following difficulties related to pandemic:

- financial, material and health related vulnerabilities, and a desire to find solutions;
- loss of existing connections to the institutions, social care system, job opportunities and decreased chances for social integration and inclusion;
- lack of some basic skills and capacities in digital communication and difficulties in maintaining social, educational and economic connections.

Groups of young people and youth workers from Italy, Portugal, Germany, United Kingdom, Hungary, Denmark, and Lithuania have been directly involved to enhance the interaction between individuals, their communities and the pan-European levels.

The main project's milestones

1. Implementation of "Community Reporting" activities to support young people to tell their own stories using digital tools and present the problems from their perspective;
2. Implementation of local and pan European participatory and co-design events for discussing needs, local actions, policy recommendations;
3. Implementation of local social actions implemented by young people to address local issues;
4. Development of Pan-European policy recommendations;
5. Creation of CONTINUE platform for sharing tools, exchange and learning;

The main outcomes of the project

Thanks to CONTINUE monitoring and evaluation plan, the following results have been detected:

- Increased awareness of youth workers and organisations about the problems faced by marginalised youth due to COVID-19;
- Reinforced connectivity of young people to each other, their community and local institutions, and policy makers thanks to the participatory actions implemented and policy recommendations developed;
- Empowered digital skills of young people thanks to the online and blended activities.

CONTINUE Partnership

The project is being delivered by a consortium of 8 NGOs from different European countries who are experienced in youth education and community-based activities. These organisations are:

- People's Voice Media, United Kingdom.
- Comparative Research Network (CRN), Germany;
- Active Youth, Lithuania.
- Artemisszió Intercultural Foundation, Hungary.
- Crossing Borders, Denmark.
- Federação Das Associações Juvenis Do Distrito Do Porto (FADJP), Portugal.
- Per Esemplio, Italy (Sicily).
- Youth Europe Service (YES), Italy.

Comparative Research Network (coordinator)

Comparative Research Network is an NGO founded in 2007 that works in the field of adult education. The NGO is specialized in: training activities in the field of intercultural competences, intergenerational learning, mobility and migration; creation and execution of evaluation and dissemination processes; game design in education, storytelling and Community Reporting; evaluation and dissemination of projects; development of digital activities and methodologies. At the moment it employs 3 permanent employees and about 6 freelancers and has a network of over 120 members, located in almost all European countries.



www.crnonline.de

Per Esemplio Onlus

Per Esemplio Onlus is a non-profit organisation created in Palermo in 2011 by a group of young workers with different professional profiles willing to focus their skills on the third sector. Their aim was to blend professional wishes with the will to encourage a positive social change. Per Esemplio mainly works in the fields of education, mobility, volunteering, and migrants' inclusion to put the human being



at the centre of every project, focusing on his full cultural, ethic, political, social, and economic development. Our mission is to increase the level of social cohesion in those territories of interventions, in launching local development actions. Those are aimed at fostering the empowerment of individuals in danger of exclusion, supporting them in the improvement of their skills and knowledge, in order to reduce the degree of social disadvantage.

www.peresempioEsempionlus.org

Youth Europe Service

The association Youth Europe Service (Y.E.S.) was born in 1999 in Potenza (Italy); it is a non-profit association that wants to realise, in the social and environmental field: integration of people with disabilities or disadvantaged (migrants, refugees, etc.); mutual knowledge between people, to develop solidarity and assert the principle of civil living; knowledge and protection of the historical, cultural and artistic patrimony; development of the social, cultural and sports activities to create a European nationality; promotion of annual events among its members, activities such as giving information; realisation of exchanges and voluntary services, organisation of cultural events; development of new entrepreneurs and job opportunities; activities and initiatives in tourism development and promotion.



www.yespotenza.wordpress.com

People's Voice Media

People's Voice Media (PVM) is committed to supporting people to improve their lives and bring about positive social change from the ground up. PVM was founded in 1995 and now works across the UK and Europe in the areas of health and social care, housing, education, research, and anywhere else where people need to share their stories. We developed the Community Reporter methodology in 2007 and this has now transformed into the Institute of Community Reporters, which was established in 2012. Reporters are people who tell their own stories and gather the stories of other people around them to use lived experience to create change in their communities, organisations, and wider society. All Community Reporters are trained in Responsible Storytelling practices as a core part of the



methodology, as well as other areas such as storytelling techniques and digital/media literacies.

www.peoplesvoicemedia.co.uk

FAJDP

The Federation of Youth Associations of the District of Porto (FAJDP), is a non-profit, non-partisan and secular non-governmental organization (NGO), whose mission includes the



fight against all forms of discrimination, the training of young people through of non-formal education and the construction of an active, tolerant, and solidary citizenship. Founded in 1986 by a group of youth associations, the FAJDP has more than 90 affiliated associations, representing more than 25 thousand young people involved directly and indirectly in associative activities. Its main mission is to represent youth associations in the district of Porto with public and political authorities, in defence of the interests of the youth associative movement. Thus, participating in the definition of transversal policies aimed at youth in general and the associative movement. Our main goals are: Representing Youth Associations before public and political authorities; Promote and develop Youth Associations and, in this way, increase the participation of young people in society; Promote exchange experiences between associations at local, regional, national and international level; Affirm and honour the role of young people in the life of the region.

www.fajdp.pt

Active Youth

Active Youth is a Lithuania-based for-purpose organisation that unites young leaders, thinkers and doers, those who seek change and those who make



change. Our mission: to create opportunities for youth and sustainable positive impact in the way we treat our planet, health, vulnerable people and online community. Our vision: to be at the forefront of organisations creating an inclusive and sustainable life for communities globally. We focus on: AY Planet seeks to educate fellow earthlings about sustainability and better choices for the environment and climate; Digital Skills and Space. AY Click aims to empower youth and youth workers through media and information literacy and boost their online skills; Equality and Inclusion. AY Human is about educating people to look beyond stereotypes and to create a world where it is safe to be yourself; Health and Sports. AY

Health aims to engrave the idea that sports are not about medals. It's about personal glory, growth and a community.

www.activeyouth.lt

Artemisszió

Artemisszió was founded in 1998 as a charitable foundation based in Budapest, Hungary. We believe in an open, tolerant society, where disadvantaged people are given opportunities and interculturality is valued. We work towards these goals in our home country and abroad as well. We believe that in this current globalised world, the understanding of deeply varied societies is a necessary skill. This is the way forward. Our group has extended its work into two specialized directions: Mira: the intercultural community of Artemisszió Foundation; Artemisszió Kompetencia Központ (Competency Center): focusing on self-discovery and skill development training.



www.Artemisszió.hu

Crossing Borders

Crossing Borders is a non-profit, civil society organization. We educate and empowers young people to become active global citizens. Across cultures and professions, we provide platforms for young people to cross-fertilise ideas and form global associations, networks, and communities worldwide. In a learning environment where all participants are encouraged to grow and learn from one another. Our mission is to educate global citizens and raise awareness of educators on global issues with the aim to contribute to building a peaceful and sustainable world by providing capacity building and dialogue space for the youth to take action toward the world they want to live in.



www.crossingborders.dk

1.2 How to read the handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to offer an overview on the project's results that have been co-created transnationally. Each paragraph refers to a project stage and its relevant results; each of them includes a description of the activities and the link to the resources developed, creating a bridge with the CONTINUE open-source platform (<https://www.continue.community/>). The last section of this handbook playlist n.8 case studies referred to the project experience in each partner country.

2. Community Reporting: The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people lives

Community Reporting is a digital storytelling movement founded by People's Voice Media and supports people to tell their own stories, in their own ways in order to catalyse change within processes, policy and practice. Under the CONTINUE project, the work involved storytelling, social action projects, policy development, knowledge exchanges, an outreach campaign, and the creation of an online platform. The activities have been delivered with young people across Europe to explore their experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic and what can support them as part of the COVID-19 recovery period. This learning has been used in the CONTINUE project to kick-start social actions led by the young people in their communities. The next paragraphs discuss the insight reports of the stories shared by groups of young people in Europe and the results of the Conversation of Change events.

Learn more about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people lives watching the video from the “story gathering” stage (click on the image)



- Find out more information and explore the platform of the Community Reporters:<https://communityreporter.net/>

2.1 Transnational training on Community Reporting in Chester

The 4-days transnational training on Community Reporting led by People’s Voice Media organization involved 13 participants, young leaders and youth workers, from the partner organizations and it took place in Chester (United Kingdom). The outline below reports a description of training programme:

<p>Aim of the training</p>	<p>Day 1 Aim: Introducing participants to Community Reporting, key storytelling methodologies and technical skills.</p> <p>Day 2 Aim: Consolidating skills from Day 1 and the independent task and explore how they can be used in lived experience story gathering activities with young people as part of the CONTINUE project.</p> <p>Day 3 Aim: Introducing participants to the Community Reporting approach to story curation, our analysis model and how to deliver sense-making workshops with young people.</p> <p>Day 4 Aim: Introducing participants to Conversation of Change events and how to facilitate them.</p>
<p>Objectives of the training</p>	<p>To present examples of past Community Reporting activities as examples of how the Community Reporting methodologies and principles are applied, as well as setting tasks to give participants first-hand experience of story gathering and curation. Planning tasks will also be set to give participants a firm understanding of the aims and requirements of the Conversation of Change events.</p>
<p>Description of sessions</p>	<p>Day 1: An introduction to Community Reporting (Welcome and Introduction to the training; Icebreaker storytelling activity; What is Community Reporting?; Recording of Snapshot Stories;</p>

	<p>Dialogue interviews and recording of stories;Recording techniques;Responsible storytelling;Setting of independent story gathering task; Summary.</p> <p>Day 2: Facilitating story gathering activities (Welcome and Introduction;Feedback on independent task;Introduction to using the Community Reporter website; Facilitation techniques and supportive learning environments;Outline of story gathering activities for WP2;Making a delivery plan; Peer feedback on delivery plan;Summary.</p> <p>Day 3: Story curation – Analysis model and sense-making workshops with young people (Welcome and Introduction; Warm-up activity; Story curation and analysis model; Story review task; Identity findings ;Sense-making workshops template plan: outline and discussion;Explanation of outputs and supporting templates for WP2; Summary and overview of WP2 actions.</p> <p>Day 4: Story mobilization and Conversation of Change eventsWelcome and introduction; What are Conversation of Change events and what is their role in CONTINUE?;Core elements of Conversation of Change template plan; Planning for local delivery; Peer feedback on local delivery plans;Report template – overview and discussion; Summary and overview of WP2 actions.</p>
Evaluation	Training was evaluated through a survey conducted by the WP6 leaders
Resources	https://peoplesvoicemedia.co.uk/

2.2 “Pandemic stories” in eight Pan-European countries: The local insight reports & local Conversation of change events

As part of the “Community Reporting”, n.8 local insight reports and n.1 Pan-European insight report have been produced to synthesise the findings from the stories shared by young people between 12 and 15 years old living in Palermo (Italy), Potenza (Italy), Berlin (Germany), Budapest (Hungary), Trafford (United Kingdom), Porto (Portugal), Vilnius (Lithuania), Copenhagen (Denmark). The documents tell about how young people’s lives changed after COVID-19 pandemic, as a result of the following process¹:



1. Story gathering: digital storytelling activities supporting young people to tell and share stories of lived experience;
2. Curating stories: analysis of individual stories, a synthesis of the insights within them and the digital packaging of these collective findings;
3. Mobilising stories: connecting the learning from stories to people, groups and organisations who are in a position to use this knowledge to create positive change.

The key findings of the local insight reports can be synthesised as it follows:

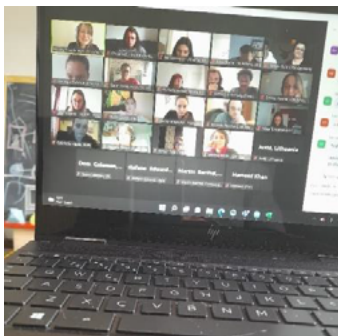
- **Education:** The online classes led to a decrease in motivation towards studying, as highlighted by the young people in Copenhagen and Porto;
- **Social life:** young people in Vilnius, Budapest and Palermo associated the physical distance to a sense of isolation, adding that social networks and technology cannot replace in-person interactions and relationships, while in Berlin young people affirm that pandemic helped them to develop their social skills and experience social life by rediscovering 'the community effect'. Also in Porto, young people say that pandemic made them experienced a sense of community, altruism and motivation towards helping the other;
- **Mental Health:** if in Budapest and Palermo, the majority of the young people interviewed reported a sense of uncertainty, stress and anxiety which affected their mental health, in Trafford, young people talked about the possibility they had to

¹ Our approach, “Community Reporting”, People’s Voice media, <https://peoplesvoicemedia.co.uk/approach/curating/>

practice interests and passions, with positive effects on their relationships with friends and family.

- The [complete version](#) of the n.8 local insight reports are available in the “Community Reporting” section of the CONTINUEonline platform².

2.3 The Pan-European Conversation of Change event: an insight report on how “COVID came in and completely changed everything”



The n.8 local insight reports were used in the planning of eight local Conversation of Change events in each of the partner countries. At these events, young people, local stakeholders and decision makers got together to share insights into the stories and begin to think about actions they might take going forward to support young people in a post-pandemic Europe. The findings from these events were then synthesised and shared in an online pan-European Conversation of Change event in which key stakeholders, decision makers and young people from across the continent listened to some of the stories gathered and shared their own insights, culminating in an exchange of actions that could be taken immediately to support Europe’s youth.

This Pan-European insight report synthesises the findings from the stories, eight local events and the online pan-European Conversation of Change event to share the key insights, and suggested actions. The key insights broadly sit around three main thematic areas of mental health and wellbeing, education and careers, and social issues and inequalities. The stories and comments made during the Conversation of Change events have flagged that there needs to be:

- Support and training for schools and educators to spot gaps in education for young people affected by the pandemic and listen to their needs;
- Support for young people who have fallen behind to catch up without putting them under heavy pressure;

²CONTINUE Platform, <https://www.continue.community/community-reporting/>

- Better support for young people (financial and otherwise) to make societies around Europe more equitable;
 - Training and support for people working with and for young people so they can better understand the social issues facing them.
- The [complete version](#) of the Pan-European insight report is available in the “Community Reporting” section of the CONTINUE online platform.

3. Social actions: Collective actions for positive changes to affect decision-making processes

As reported in the *Social action projects. Making a difference* (2010)³, within the CONTINUE project a social action is a multi-step process in which youth address an issue they care about, learn about it, and generate potential solutions, then take action to create positive change on this issue. We can identify two types of social actions, direct and indirect: the first, direct social action, refers to actions designed to influence decision-makers. The second, indirect social action, is addressing the problem and effecting a positive change. These actions provide great opportunities



to acquire important abilities and dispositions. It helps increase their understanding of curriculum content, enhance their sense of personal and collective efficacy, and contribute to the betterment of society. For example, one of the most famous and successful social actions was created by the #iwill movement. Another recent and relevant example that might be inspiring is the #FridaysForFuture movement. These are examples of actions that grew to a large scale, but a social action can be also small and locally focused, such as posting positive messages in bus stops.

Under the CONTINUE project, groups of young people and youth workers have been guided to learn how to co-create a social action. A transnational training course in Vilnius in 2022 gave them the opportunity to get inspired and organise a social action in their local

³Social action projects. Making a difference, Canadian Teachers’ (2010), https://tc2.ca/uploads/PDFs/Social%20Action%20Projects/IA_Handbook_9-12_EN_FINAL.pdf

community. Here below you can find a summary of the core activities, outputs, and experiences.

3.1 Transnational training on co-creating social actions in Vilnius.

In March 2022, a 2-days training for n.10 youth leaders and mentors led by Artemisszió organization took place in Vilnius to learn how to co-create a social Action . The objectives of the training were to create a common understanding of “Social action” and draft a social action plan to implement in the local community . The outline below reports a description of training programme:

<p>Aim of the training</p>	<p>Learning how to create, test, implement socialactions and go through all of the co-creation of social action processes, as wellas how to support youth as a mentor.</p>
<p>Objectives of the training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a common understanding of “Social action” • Drafting a social action plan to implement in the local community
<p>Description of sessions</p>	<p>Day 0 (arrival day - evening):</p> <p>Name games, Getting to know each-other and teambuilding activities: Name game with a ball, Group scale, Speed dating , Reflection round after the speed dating (see Annex I);</p> <p>Day 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-introduction, review of everyone’s names, outline of the project and program review. At the beginning of the first day it is important to co-build the rules of the training for “a good living together”. - Teambuilding activities are necessary in order to become a group with a common aim; - Problem tree and consequences activities to collect

	<p>problems and consequences brought up in each of the local Conversation of Change events for a better understanding;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning what is a social action about, sharing ideas and connecting with the local community (see Annex I) <p>Day 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Action planning: In action groups start working on your chosen action, incorporating your experiences from the local research; - Planning actions - step by step, roles and responsibilities, create a timeline; - Implementation of action - Evaluation of the action and self-learning reflection (See Annex I)
<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>Training was evaluated through non formal activities and a survey delivered by Active Youth organization. The survey distributed to participants was designed to include both quantitative and qualitative data about contents, methods and organization. The first part of the report present and draw conclusions from the quantitative data received, which are followed by the second part of the report detailing the qualitative data results.</p> <p>Check the impact measurement report Part I to know more about the structure of the survey and results.</p>
<p>Resources</p>	<p>The impact measurement report Part I</p> <p>Annex I – Guidelines:</p> <p>Annex II - Templates and presentations used during the process</p> <p>Annex III – Alternative activities</p> <p>Guidelines to design social actions</p>

3.2 Guidelines on how to co-create youth-led collective initiatives: “Designing and implementing social actions”

In March 2023, a training was organised within the CONTINUE project in order to empower young people and youth leaders to facilitate co-creation processes of Social Actions. The program of the 2-day workshop forms the basis of a Guide. Between May-September 2022, groups of young people from the 8 partner organizations of the CONTINUE project implemented the social Action co-creation processes in their respective local community. This Guide is intended to help in facilitating a co-creation process of organising social actions with a group of young people by providing an overview of the process, hands-on descriptions of activities, and the case studies of the processes experienced. It is meant to be a practical handbook with the help of which you can set off to facilitate a group process. The guide include a description of the co-creation process step-by-step and tips from facilitators. There can be many ways of creating Social Actions, but the main point of CONTINUE’s experience are listed below:

1. Group building and framing
2. Gathering, mapping social issues
3. Understanding the consequences, choosing topics to address
4. Action inspirations
5. Brainstorming about action
6. Choosing ideas and creating working groups
7. Researching on the issue and existing actions
8. Planning Social Action
9. Risk assessment
10. Implementation
11. Evaluation

In the chapters of the guide, these fundamental points of the process are explained and analysed in detail and correlated with concrete examples, which are further developed in the annexes, which are very useful for understanding contexts and situations, the proposed activities and their content.

- The [complete version](#) of the Guidelines “Designing and implementing social actions” are available in the “Social action” section of the CONTINUE online platform.

3.3 Eight youth-led social actions around Europe: Case studies

After the 2-days training in Vilnius, the young people trained took the lead role in the implementation of local social actions putting in practices their learning achievements. The Annex IX of the guidelines “Designing and implementing social actions” reports the case studies of the local Social Action co-creation processes around Europe. Every organisation had different outcomes, some were more related to community and participant engagement, and others were more result oriented. Most of the participants said that the process was extremely successful, more than they had envisioned or hoped for. The participants were extremely engaged, came to most sessions, and have become more involved in their local community. Here below a short summary of the local social actions in Italy, Portugal, Germany, Hungary, United Kingdom, Denmark.



youth who want to be involved.

CB (Denmark): The main social action that was conceptualised and initiated by the participants was the creation of a social actions club called "The Everything Social Club," which was built to meet the needs of two main issues the participants felt were important for them: social isolation and lack of power. The Everything Social Club was created by the participants to be both a community and a source of education and initiative for themselves and other

YES (Italy): The participants could choose a topic related to social problems to work on. They developed pitches based on the Problem Trees and local community problems discussed in the previous sessions. They settled on nine, then selected three and voted on one idea for the group



to develop further in the final session.



People's Voice Media(UK): Young people settled on hosting a showcase event to promote the work Gorse Hill Studios (their partner) does with young people in the local community, they also wanted to write an open letter to the people in their community expressing the need for safe spaces for young people and gather stories exploring people's understanding and experiences of safe and unsafe spaces.

Per Eempio (Italy): They were working on two youth-led social actions: one to raise awareness on gender equity, preparing a collective action for the local Pride Parade, and another one to improve the school's environment through visual art. They were learning about gender equity, developing a better understanding about the Pride Parade, and co-create the banner. They participated in the pride parade.



FAJDP (Portugal): All participants were engaged in the "Escolhas" ("Choices") project: a Portuguese government project specific for socially disadvantaged young people. The chosen topics were Domestic Violence, Cyberbullying, and What to be in the future/what profession to choose.

Artemisszió (Hungary): We organised a series of 4 consecutive workshops in the framework of the Olive program of the CEU. It was offered as one of the courses of the program, so some students of Olive (with refugee backgrounds) came to participate and also we invited some young people with migrant backgrounds from our Mira intercultural community.





AY (Lithuania): They combined all the ideas to problems like decreased socialisation, uncertainty, insecurity, fear of the future + societal pressures on young people, the imposition of a framework of what 'should' be, what 'should' be done by young people. Lack of critical thinking - not knowing about

opportunities, not knowing how to use them, fake news, hate speech. Having in mind these problems, they decided to make a series of social actions under the same name "Gilyn" ("Deepen"), which aims to raise awareness of young people's post pandemic emotional well-being and other issues.

CRN (Germany) conducted the all-day workshop "Get Your Happiness Back," where young people ages 6-27 were reintroduced to a communal atmosphere through art. They experienced painting as a calming, meditative pursuit that gave one free access to creative processes that occurred independent of constraints and social pressures. The power of art to produce one's own has made socializing among themselves a great joy. In the later course the products (canvases, T-shirts, paper works) were put in an exhibition to the show. In addition, the Loesje method was used and slogans were developed in a creative and poetic way, which take a critical and humorous position on the pandemic. These were printed on burlap bags and merchandise and distributed for free.



Impact assessment of the social action process

Positive Feedback: the young people who were actively engaged said that it was an empowering experience for them, which showed them the possibility of really having an impact on society and inspire them to make similar actions in the future. They declared to have gained more knowledge and experience in various subjects; they felt heard and supported. Participants were satisfied with the workshop, and interested in all of the methods. They became attached to their group and to the social action project they were working on.

Challenges: Some of the participants were not as engaged, and there were a few main reasons why: summer, which impacted difficulties to gathering participants and keep their motivation

on the development of their ideas; participants may have not expected time an energy-consuming workshops; or just poor planning by the organisation. It was tough to try to keep all people actively participating and engage in the workshop activities all day long. It wasn't easy to achieve a consistent level of attendance which meant the group members and size were different in each session.

- The [complete version](#) of the Social action case studies are available in the Annex IV of the Guidelines “Designing and implementing social actions” uploaded in the “Social action” section of the CONTINUE online platform.

4. Knowledge exchange & Policy briefing: Recommendations for Policy & Practice at national and Pan-European level

A knowledge exchange is a dialogue and active participatory process in which different people share ideas, experiences, evidence, and skills. Approaches to knowledge exchange vary across different locations and contexts. One way of approaching such activities is to create a Community of Practice (CoP). As Lave and Wenger (1991/1998) define, a CoP is a group of people that have a shared desire to learn about what they do in order to develop. They must have a shared domain (i.e., youth participation in civil society), a community (i.e., different people/perspectives that build relationships through regular contact) and a practice (i.e., be practitioners in the field that can share stories, resources and expertise). The knowledge exchange and Policy briefing activities are based on the emergent learnings from Community Reports and Social Action and connect them with decision-makers at local and pan-European levels. Through establishing Communities of practice at both local and pan-European levels comprising of young people, local governance, and policy makers, on strategic leaders of youth organisations and other stakeholders, it aims to synthesise these learnings into concrete knowledge that is useful for both policy and practical delivery arenas in the field of youth participation in civil society and democracy.

The activities included:

- Meetings with decision-makers: Locally, each group of young people met with 10 local decision-makers to share with them the findings from insight reports and discuss possible concrete actions to take immediately;
- A 2-day knowledge exchange and policy briefing training for partners in Palermo to learn how this Community of Practice can be built upon in the future and provide an

active mechanism for young people to be involved in local decision-making and governance;

- Knowledge exchange events: Using the skills from the previous training, young people with youth workers planned and delivered local knowledge exchange event(s) with decision-makers and stakeholders to discuss the combined findings from Community Report and Social Actions and share ideas for local level policies and their practical implementation.
- Policy briefings: youth workers worked locally with the young people to produce a policy briefing per location based on the outcomes of the local knowledge exchange process.

4.1 Transnational training on knowledge exchange and policy briefing writing in Palermo.



A2-day training on knowledge exchange and policy briefing writing for n.14 young leaders and youth workers led by People’s Voice Media took place in Palermo in July 2022. The outline below reports a description of training programme:

<p>Aim of the training</p>	<p>Learning how to write a policy briefing:</p> <p>Day 1: Introduce Knowledge Exchange Events and how to facilitate them.</p> <p>Day 2: Introducing Knowledge Exchange action plans and how to write policy briefings.</p>
<p>Objectives of the training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To give participants the opportunity to present the findings from stakeholder interview and examine what we want to share in knowledge exchanges; - To present methods for facilitating a knowledge Exchange; - Planning tasks will be set to allow participants the opportunity to plan their event and have these plans peer reviewed. Examples of policy briefings will be given and the guidelines

	on how to produce policy briefings will be presented.
Description of sessions	<p>Day 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overview of the results from interviews with decision makers; - Methods for exchanging knowledge and facilitating dialogue; - An introduction to Communities of Practice; - Summary and independent task setting for Day 2. <p>Independent task (day one pm): generating initial ideas for knowledge exchange events to be presented on Day 2 of the training. Use the template provided to identify: Participants of your knowledge exchange; Key learning from all the project stages; Indicative ideas for techniques or methods you foresee using in you knowledge exchange.</p> <p>Day 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Independent Task results - Knowledge exchange template plan and report template - Knowledge exchange action plans - Writing a policy briefing - tips, techniques and overview of template - Summary (including reminder of WP4 timeframes, tasks and actions) Action planning: In action groups start working on your chosen action, incorporating your experiences from the local research; - Planning actions - step by step, roles and responsibilities, create a timeline; - Implementation of action - Evaluation of the action and self-learning reflection (See

	Annex I)
Evaluation	The training was evaluated through non formal activities and a survey delivered by Active Youth organization. The survey distributed to participants was designed to include both quantitative and qualitative data about contents, methods and organization.
Resources	https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/methods/world-cafe https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/methods/appreciative-inquiry https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/methods/consensus-conference https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/methods/deliberative-mapping https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/methods/feedback-kiosks https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/methods/fishbowl-conversations https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/methods/open-space-technology https://www.nesta.org.uk/toolkit/collective-intelligence-design-playbook/ https://www.nesta.org.uk/toolkit/creative-workshop/ https://peoplesvoicemedia.co.uk/LAYS/ https://collaboration.worldbank.org/content/sites/collaboration-for-development/en/groups/communities4Dev.html https://geincee.act-on-gender.eu/tools/toolkits

4.2 Eight local “Knowledge exchange” events and policy recommendations in Europe

The core sections of the eight local knowledge exchange events in Europe were:



- Opening a space: welcome people to the event, outline the aims, objectives etc. It is important to be clear on what you want to achieve from the event;
- Sharing Knowledge: sharing the insights previously collected and bring your group’s know-how in too!
- Working with the Knowledge: creating recommendations for policy and practice (for your briefings!)
- Creating a CoP (Community of Practices): collective thinking about ‘what next’ for the group of people and establishing a CoP.

Based on the outcomes of the local knowledge exchange process that involved youth workers, young people, decision-makers and stakeholders, eight recommendations for Policy and Practice across Europe were produced, using:

- Data from young people’s stories gathered using Community Reporter methodology, which facilitates people sharing lived experience in order to create social change;
 - Information gathered during interviews with local and pan-European stakeholders;
 - Information gathered from young people and youthworkers during the social action co-creation process;
 - Information shared during Conversation of Change events and Knowledge Exchanges.
- The [complete version](#) of the eight Local Recommendations for Policy and Practice are available in the “Policy briefings” section of the CONTINUE online platform.

4.3 The online Pan-European “knowledge exchange” event and policy recommendations

The youth workers and young people involved in each partner country delivered a pan-European knowledge exchange event online to share the European level learnings from Community Reporting and Social actions processes. This exchange event took a similar format to the local events, albeit online, and from it both a set of pan-European policy ideas

and their practical implementation around youth engagement in civil society and democracy were co-produced. Based on the results of the online European-level knowledge exchange event, People’s Voice media produced a pan-European policy briefing. The core recommendations in this briefing focus on the EU Youth Goals of :



- Space and Participation for All
- Inclusive Societies
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Quality Learning
- Quality Employment for All

➤ The [complete version](#) of the Pan-European policy briefing is available in the “Policy briefings” section of the CONTINUE online platform.

5 The Reach Out campaigns: social campaigns to maximise the impact of social actions

Within the project CONTINUE Crossing Borders and Active Youth were co-responsible for the campaign to raise awareness and measure implication. As co-leaders they co-created an impact measurement and reporting framework, organised and hosted training on the campaign, created guidelines, coordinated local campaigns, created a pan-European campaign. The Reach Out campaigns were created in order to pursue the objectives of: training young people in campaign planning and implementation; disseminate the project's main results and messages to a wider audience; to develop an impact measurement framework to assess the correct activities and target groups; to assess the concrete impacts of the project.

In total, n.8 Local and n.1 pan European Reach Out Campaigns were implemented online and offline to raise attention on the project’s main results and issues of people, stakeholders and organisation not directly involved into the project activities.

The Impact measurement was implemented with the help of videos, questionnaires and interviews, based on a set of quantitative and qualitative indicators. Online surveys helped to get the feedback from stakeholders and beneficiaries of Community Reporting;

Participants of Conversation of Change events; Participants of Social Actions; Attenders of Pan-European knowledge events and participants of Reach Out Campaign.

5.1 Transnational training on how to co-create a Reach Out campaign in Copenhagen

In the framework of CONTINUE project, a 2-days transnational training on how to co-create a Reach Out campaign for n.25 young leaders was organized by Crossing Borders in Copenhagen. The outline below reports a description of training programme:

<p>Aim of the training</p>	<p>Day 1 Aim: This session aimed to introduce the participants to the topic of Reach Out campaigns. The guest speaker Alex Sabour, a media professional, taught a strategy on how to “Go Viral” by creating strong, attention-generating messages for your target audience;</p> <p>Day 2 Aim: The second session aimed to teach the participants the basic rules of content creation on social media. Tom Hyland a TikToker from Ireland spoke about authenticity, originality and how to make the most out of the tools you already have.</p>
<p>Objectives of the training</p>	<p>- To teach young people how to create their own Reach Out campaign to promote their social actions. Also, to give them skills for analysing and enforcing the impact of their campaigns. Provide them with knowledge based on their needs and interests. Inspire them to plan their own Reach Out campaign.</p> <p>By The end of the two workshop days participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand what a Reach Out campaign is. • Be able to create strong messages to attract attention to a social issue. • Be able to plan a long form Reach Out campaign video. • Be able to adjust a campaign to a certain target audience. • Be able to use social media as a tool for Reach Out campaigns.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand short-form content creation • Be able to create their own campaign
Description of sessions	<p>Day 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction + Icebreaker Activity - Training on Steps of a Reach Out Campaign led by Alex Sabour of Gorilla - Media Lunch Break How to make a long-form video (activity in social actions groups) - Coffee Break Q&A session with Alex Sabour of Gorilla Media - Practical Information - End of Day <p>Day 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction + Icebreaker - Training on the steps of creating online content led by Tom Hyland - Coffee and Snacks Break - How to make short form content (activity in social actions groups) - Coffee and Snacks Break Q&A session. - Next Steps + Practical Information - End of Day
Evaluation	<p>The training was evaluated through non formal activities and a survey delivered by Active Youth organization. The survey distributed to participants was designed to include both quantitative and qualitative data about contents, methods and organization.</p>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Go Viral” presentation by Alex Sabour - “How to make short form content” presentation by Tom Hyland

5.2 Eight local and one Pan-European Reach Out campaigns around Europe

Following the 2-day transnational training held in Copenhagen, n.8 local and n.1 online Pan-European Reach Out Campaigns have been organised taking in consideration the results of social actions implemented before, consultation with young people and in close interaction with the project dissemination. The aim of these actions was to spread the main learnings of the project in the form of easily understandable, symbolic messages. The form and ways of expression for articulating these messages was identified by each local group of young people including short storytelling videos, pictures, tags, actions, written and audio messages. These messages were spread towards the wide public through different online and offline channels: the project web site, the FB channel, Instagram, and offline in local public spaces. In each locality the campaign was created in the local language by the local young people, coordinated and supported by youth workers involved.

A Pan-European Campaign has been co-created by all partners for the attention of the European public, stakeholders and decision-makers. The following n.4 contents related to the main topic of the project have been published and spread online via the project Facebook page⁴ and partner organizations' social media (Instagram, TikTok, etc.).

Content 1 - [Mental health and wellbeing](#)

#5 Mental health and wellbeing



Due to poor mental health and high levels of anxiety among youth, we raised the recommendation to introduce peer-led mental health services available in schools, colleges or other youth services across Europe. The goal would be to provide more immediate support while reducing

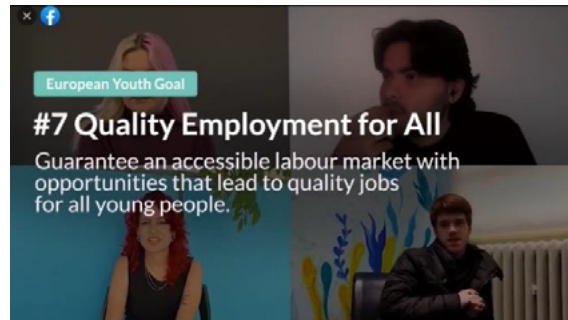
waiting times for formalised mental health services.

⁴CONTINUE E+ Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/continue.eu>

Content 2 - [Career guidance](#)

#7 Quality employment for all; #8 Quality learning

Due to damaged career prospects, lack of support in developing it and increased anxiety about the future among youth in Europe, we raised the recommendation to overhaul the careers guidance within education systems to include an outlook on career guidance, career advisers and/or employability mentors, practical work experience, regular online and offline careers events and entrepreneurship training. The aim of this would be to engage young people in their own futures and take responsibility for their own employability.



Content 3 - [Safe spaces](#)

#9 Space and participation for all



Due to young people falling off the radar and becoming unable to be reached by support services, lack of spaces for youth voices to be heard and challenges faced with being socially active, we raised the recommendation to allocate funding towards the creation of safe spaces for young people.

While these safe spaces would provide local-level engagement, they would also be conduits for European-level dialogue with youth and provide opportunity.

Content 4 - [Inclusive societies](#)

#3 Inclusive society

Due to exacerbation and amplification of existing inequalities and social issues, we raised the recommendation to introduce social action training in school curriculums and make it accessible to all young people across Europe. Social action training would allow



young people to shape the inclusive society they wish to live in, while also engaging them in local decision- and policy-making.

Find out more about the Reach Out campaign exploring the CONTINUE online platform, YouTube channel⁵ and Facebook page.

5.3 Reach Out campaign’s guidelines: a compilation of tips, procedures and strategies

A Reach Out campaign guideline in all project languages was produced as a result of the local and Pan-European Reach Out campaigns. These Guidelines are a collection of tips, procedures and strategies for those who want to design awareness-raising campaigns to maximise their scope and implication of their social actions. The document is a follow-up to the training on awareness-raising campaigns received by more than 20 young people from different NGOs across Europe, who were taught all about awareness-raising campaigns, how to develop ideas, how to post on social media, how to create video content and how to interact with the audience.

- The [complete version](#) of the Reach Out campaign guideline is available in the “Reach Out campaign” section of the CONTINUE online platform.

⁵CONTINUE YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/@continue-community5252>

Case studies: CONTINUE - staying connected in a post-COVID-19 world.

CONTINUE in United Kingdom

People’s Voice Media



Country and city	Trafford, Greater Manchester, United Kingdom
Contact and Email Address	Sarah Henderson / sarah@peoplesvoicemedia.co.uk
Profile of the beneficiaries involved	We worked with young people at Gorse Hill Studios, a youth arts charity in Trafford. The young people were school-aged and lived in the local area. Several had experience with the care system.
Key impacts of COVID-19 on young people	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health and wellbeing – high levels of anxiety, poor mental health, decline in physical health; 2. Education and careers – disengagement with education, damaged career prospects; 3. Social issues and inequalities – exacerbation and amplification of existing inequalities (e.g., poverty and disability) and social issues.
Objectives of intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To understand, through lived experience storytelling and Conversation of Change events, the impacts of COVID-19 on young people in Trafford and, by extension, the wider UK; - To carry out social actions that would allow the young people to benefit themselves and their local community while further

	<p>understanding how the impacts of COVID can be tackled;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To understand, through stakeholder interviews, the impact of COVID-19 on young people and on the services they access; - To hold Knowledge Exchange events and Reach Out campaigns to share the knowledge gathered; - To use the findings to produce policy recommendations in order to produce tangible, long term impacts.
<p>Activities and method</p>	<p>On WP2 (Community Reporting), PVM began by training the CONTINUE partners in Chester in the Community Reporter methodology and the facilitation of Conversation of Change events. We then worked with young people at Gorse Hill to gather their stories of how the pandemic has affected them. Using the Community Reporter methodology these stories were curated by the young people and a local insight report was drawn up by PVM, based on the findings of this session. This insight report was used to inform the Conversation of Change event, co-facilitated by the young people and held at Gorse Hill, which saw young people, youth workers, local politicians and other stakeholders come together to discuss the effects of the pandemic. The results of this session were then synthesized with the results of the Conversation of Change events across Europe to plan an online pan-European Conversation of Change event, facilitated by PVM. The results of this event were compiled by PVM in the pan-European insight report. The stories from the UK and Europe were also edited into a short film by PVM for dissemination by project partners.</p> <p>For WP3 (Social Actions), we sent a youth mentor to the training in Lithuania and have been preparing to deliver the social actions with the young people at Gorse Hill. The social actions were then co-created and delivered with the young people, with the group choosing to host a showcase event to promote the work Gorse Hill does in the local community, they also wrote an open letter to the people in their community expressing the need for</p>

safe spaces for young people and gather stories exploring people's understanding and experiences of safe and unsafe spaces.

Some of the group members had been working on a film project, during which they explored the theme of loss of safe space in their community following on from the COVID-19 pandemic. They have created a film which touches on the topic and invites people to think about what it means for young people to have access to safe spaces. They used some of this content in the Reach Out campaign (WP6).

For WP4 (Knowledge Exchange & Policy Recommendations), we recruited and interviewed local and European-level stakeholders regarding the findings of WP2 and their own experiences in order to compile local and pan-European synthesis reports which fed into the next stages of the work package.

We planned and delivered Knowledge Exchange and Policy Brief Training to be delivered to project partners in Palermo in July. This was followed by us planning and delivering our own local Knowledge Exchange at Gorse Hill, attended by young people and local stakeholders. The results of this session were used to produce a set of local Policy Recommendations, and to plan an online pan-European Knowledge Exchange, facilitated by PVM. The results of this event were synthesized and used to produce the pan-European Policy Recommendations. We have been disseminating the Policy Recommendations to influential stakeholders.

Meanwhile, the young people and youth workers at Gorse Hill have been planning and producing their Reach Out campaign, sharing the findings of the project through dynamic content they have produced. This content revolves heavily around the concept of the loss of safe spaces, which has been a serious issue flagged

	by the project.
The impact of CONTINUE project in the UK	<p>Thanks to the CONTINUE Project, Gorse Hill Studios is now in the process of arranging a regular surgery with their new Member of Parliament specifically for young people. This is as a direct result of disseminating the local Policy Recommendations to them. Local Councillors are also getting involved and this will produce more engagement between young people and democratic systems in the UK.</p> <p>At People's Voice Media, we are also working with the Policy Recommendations to examine how we can implement the findings in our future work with young people.</p>

CONTINUE in Portugal

FAJDP – Porto Federation of Youth Associations



Country and city:	Portugal, Porto
Contact and Email Address:	Cláudia Ferreira – Claudia.ferreira@fajdp.pt info@fajdp.pt
Profile of the beneficiaries	Young people between 13 to 30 years old, living in Porto district. Some of them are active in social projects involving

involved:	Youth Associations
Key impacts of COVID-19 on young people	<p>Key impacts of COVID-19 on young people in Porto:</p> <p>a) Being Connected: Internet access was very important to keep in touch with their friends and to attend school classes during lockdowns. However, all this online exposure has also increased their vulnerability to a “new” type of violence: Cyberbullying.</p> <p>b) Self-Reflections: In these two years, they realized how fragile life can be, how things could change very quickly and how we are all connected – one’s actions have impact in others’ lives, and everybody should look for each other. The future (particularly the professional future) is something that they referred more as something totally unknown, and they will feel more adjust if they can reach the professionals they want to become.</p> <p>c) Dualities: On one hand, they were sad to be at home, without social events, friends, or school. But, when the lockdowns ended, they were afraid to be again around other people. Also, they appreciate the time at home with their close family, although they miss other distant relatives. They have experienced these mixed feelings, more isolation, anxiety, and other mental health issues who need to be addressed by professionals.</p>
Objectives of intervention:	<p>After co-creation with young people, we understand that COVID left them more sensitive to and concerned with violence between them. Specifically Cyberbullying and violence in romantic relationships. Also, they are afraid of the future, and they would like to approach some professionals in a way they can understand a little bit more about how to become a</p>

	<p>successful worker in that field. And, as an umbrella covering all of these, they are more aware of mental health issues, and they want to be heard and understood in their hopes and fears.</p>
<p>Activities and method:</p>	<p>After some reflection and brainstorm, these were the topics they want to address as Social Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Domestic Violence 2) Cyberbullying 3) What to be in the future/what profession to choose <p>And these were the chosen tools to make it happen:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Domestic Violence ==>> making a video to spread around social media 2) Cyberbullying ==>>> awareness action for other young people 3) What to be in the future/what profession to choose ==>> direct contact with professionals from different areas.
<p>The impact of CONTINUE project in Portugal.</p>	<p><i>Thanks to CONTINUE project we could approach young people and work with them – co-creating – not only knowledge but also tools and methods to deal with post-pandemic COVID-19 reality. Because of these project, young people had a chance to share and reflect with FAJDP what their major concerns about are the present and the future and, together, co-create strategies able to help them to be a more active and engage person in their community.</i></p>

CONTINUE in Germany

CRN - Comparative Research Network



Country and city:	Germany- Berlin
Contact and Email Address:	Anja Söyünmez asoeyuenmez@crnonline.de
Profile of the beneficiaries involved:	Young people between 14-30 years old Social Action: people between 7- 50 years old
Key impacts of COVID-19 on young people	<p>Education and careers - dissatisfaction with education, diminished career prospects, the feeling of having lost the future.</p> <p>Social problems and inequalities - duplication of poverty and abuse (mental and physical), isolation, Frustration with the system, feeling left alone, helplessness.</p> <p>To be left alone, helplessness. These feelings depended in many cases (not exclusively) depended on the social status of the parents.</p>

<p>Objectives of intervention:</p>	<p>Project shows need for action to create structures that reach all people and help them to overcome their fears and anxieties, that have developed during the pandemic. It also shows that the needs of young people are not being taken into little consideration in the decision-making process.</p>
<p>Activities and method:</p>	<p>The CONTINUE project is based on non-formal education methods. The non-formal Education is open to all ages, backgrounds and personal interests. It is a voluntary form of education that is not a degree, but a learning experience. Learning experience. The main idea of non-formal education is experiential learning, which is an engaged learning process. From lived experience, qualitative Discussions, hands-on pilots and knowledge sharing to provide recommendations on how to support adverse impacts post-pandemic.</p> <p>Method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Reporting: Video Reporting - Conversation of Change Event - Social Action: Art and Painting Workshop next step street Exhibition - Loesje Campaign: creative writing workshop - Loesje's announcement of results on social media
<p>The impact of CONTINUE project in Germany</p>	<p>“Thanks to this project I learned how seriously young people take the world and their lives. I am a social worker and I have never felt so close to the problems of young people in a practical sense. When young people are given the chance and responsibility, they make the best use of it. Mutual trust is the best tool to reach people. The continue project was a project that gave young people trust and a voice. I was happy to be part of this project.</p> <p>Thank you CONTINUE”</p>

CONTINUE in Italy (Potenza)

Youth Europe Service Potenza



Country and city:	Italy, Potenza
Contact and Email Address:	imbesi.anto@gmail.com
Profile of the beneficiaries involved:	Young people who attended international Youth Exchange in Italy, age from 17 to 27 living in Poland, Romania, France, Belgium, Turkey even China during the Pandemic, and young people from local community of Potenza and the region.

<p>Key impacts of COVID-19 on young people</p>	<p>The main problem that faces youth is social exclusion. Social isolation on youngsters refers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Isolation in context of home, family; - No safe space for more vulnerable youth like children and teenagers; - Isolation in context of relationships because of no face- to-face settings; - Negative Impact on self-confidence, no personal growth; - Education opportunities; - Working opportunities; - Promote forms of aggregation with associations; - Promote voluntary work; - Involve cultural bodies to co-create safe space;
<p>Objectives of intervention:</p>	<p>The core recommendations in this briefing are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More counselling and mentoring for young people and their families; - More cooperation between youth and teachers, as well as between school institutions and policymakers; - More co-creation between youth; - More dialogue between youth and their parents and teachers.
<p>Activities and method</p>	<p>We collected 16 stories using the Community Reporting method. The stories reflect a diverse range of experiences and illustrate how the pandemic affected the opportunities and well-being of Youth.</p> <p>We organize workshop in face-to-face settings on Conversation of Change with a group of sixteen students, age under thirty. Participants was listening with empathy</p>

the stories that they also experienced on their own skin.

To address these issues, we can:

- Perform activities building the self-confidence of youth and children; Make creative workshops and training projects for inclusiveness; Offer psychologists and counselling services for youth; Increase the dialogue and co-creation between different actors: public administration, school, youth, and parents.
- We passed to co-creation process with 15 young people from Potenza to implement some social actions. In co-creating pandemic-recovery social actions with young people, our key learning was that young people wanted to focus on actions involving peer support, such as a petition for gender-neutral bathrooms and a creativity wall. Young people are receptive to support by and for each other.
- Used the insights from European young people's stories gathered using Community Reporter methodology, the Conversation of Change and local Knowledge Exchange events and stakeholders meeting reports, also findings from co-creation processes all carried out as part of theCONTINUE project to produce this policy briefing, which focuses on three thematic areas:
 - Mental health of young people
 - Social problems and inequalities
 - Education and employability of young people in post-COVID landscape
 - Education and employability of young people in the post-COVID landscape.

<p>The impact of CONTINUE project in Potenza.</p>	<p>From the stories have been emerged some positive aspect like seizing opportunities despite the inconveniences like adaptation, looking for new professional and educational solutions and pathways, looking for own real needs, be resilient, planning own future in different way, flexibility, changing own attitudes because, last minute actions. The important themes was rising mental health, social problems and pathology in family and inequalities in education and employability.</p>
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CONTINUE in Lithuania

Asociacija “Aktyvus jaunimas”



<p>Country and city</p>	<p>Lithuania, Vilnius (<i>this is where our office is</i>) / Kaunas (<i>this is where our official registration address is</i>)</p>
<p>Contact and Email Address</p>	<p>Evelina Lekešiūtė, evelina@akt.lt</p>
<p>Profile of the beneficiaries involved:</p>	<p>Participants of Local Conversation of Change event: youth workers, representatives of youth organisations, young teachers, psychology students - and participants of Meetings with decision-makers - members of VJOSAS - Vilnius Union of Youth Organizations "Apskritas stalas", Prezident of LiPSA</p>

	<p>- Lithuanian Psychology Students Association, Vilnius Chapter Coordinator of Lithuanian Youth Union "Žingsnis", Chairman of JKL Vilnius - Young Conservatives League, Chairman of Vilnius City Youth Council, President of LiJOT - Lietuvos jaunimo organizacijų taryba (Lithuanian Youth Council), Vicepresident of LSS - Lietuvos studentų sąjunga (Lithuanian Students' Union), Chairman of the Anykščiai District Municipality Youth Council and the youngest Councillor elected there, as well as the Chairman of the Vilnius Youth Organisations Union "Apskritas stalas" - gaining knowledge of what is happening, what are COVID-19 effects on youth and what might be done to help.</p> <p>Participants of Local Knowledge Exchange event - youth, youthworkers, teachers, professors, people from the Ministry, various organisations working with career development or mental health - gaining knowledge about youth COVID-19 experiences and their lessons learnt while creating the social actions, problems noticed, gaining knowledge about what is happening in Lithuania regarding mental health and career development topics, what are the good practices and further plans.</p>
<p>Key impacts of COVID-19 on young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - short-term experiences like fear or feeling hopeless and missing in-person socialization; - longer-term impacts like anxiety, anger, depression, boredom, and lack of motivation to do anything; - feeling miserable, less brave and confident; - experiencing self-esteem deviation; - struggling to communicate face-to-face and feeling physical discomfort or even pain to be between people; - finding it difficult to be self-motivated; - feeling uncertainty and anxiety about the future in general; - changing their career paths.

Objectives of intervention:	<p>We took part in the CONTINUE project because when initiated the project, COVID-19 was still ongoing and directly and visibly effecting our lives. When we started the implementation, the lockdowns were still common, but we were slowly starting to come back to “normal”. But actually what we needed to do is create the new normal together and that is what we gave to the participants and stakeholders joining our events - the understanding that it will never be as it was and that we cannot forget all of the things we had to go through during the pandemic as it is still affecting our everyday life and among these there are major issues, such as more problems with mental health. COVID-19 shook the people in general - the way they are thinking, the way they are seeing the world - therefore CONTINUE project was a space to explore those changes and accept them in ourselves and others.</p>
Activities and method:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Reporting workshops - Story curation workshop - Mentors training in Vilnius - Local Conversation of Change event (<i>with World Cafe method included</i>) - Interviews with policy makers: one event and three individual interviews (<i>with Lego Serious Play method included</i>) - Co-creation and implementation of Social Actions (<i>with World Cafe and many other from the guidelines methods included</i>) - Local Knowledge Exchange event - Co-creation and implementation of LocalReach Out Campaign - Co-creation and implementation of Pan-European Reach Out Campaign
The impact of	<p>Thanks to CONTINUE project we created new connections</p>

**CONTINUE
project in
Lithuania**

with various organizations, youth workers, teachers and other stakeholders.

We raised awareness among various groups of people about the importance of youth COVID-19 experience to their daily life now.

We provided young people with the opportunities to learn and grow by participating in the project, learning to work in a team, organize events, co-create social actions, co-create Reach Out campaign - we are happy to be part of their growth as people.

We managed to spread the knowledge with the help of stakeholders and raise awareness on what is happening in Lithuania regarding mental health and career development topics, what are the good practices and what else needs to be done by creating local Policy-briefing and disseminating it to all people who participated in CONTINUE project activities throughout all of the project implementation.

Although, to push the local policy-briefing recommendations forward into action, there would be a need to continue working on that with another project. As in this sphere we hope we were able to make a bigger impact.

CONTINUE in Hungary

Artemisszió Foundation



Country and city	Hungary, Budapest
Contact and Email Address	Olga.irimias@Artemisszió.hu
Profile of the beneficiaries involved	Young adults with migratory and refugee backgrounds
Key impacts of COVID-19 on young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Isolation, missing social contacts - Anxiety, depression, passivity and other mental difficulties/problems - People with migratory background suffered from lack of information - Some youngsters started to learn or create something more actively
Objectives of intervention	<p>As seen from the above, some of the main challenges for the youngsters were: lack of information on Hungarian regulations (on healthcare, employment, etc.), social isolation and loneliness, and mental health issues. To tackle these, the youngsters divided in two groups to realise two separate social actions.</p> <p>One was the initiation of a podcast for foreigners living in Hungary about essential information, such as access to healthcare or finding a job.</p> <p>The other group organized in event with the objective to raise awareness of mental health, to help participants feel included and connected in a group, where they can freely express their values and ideas in an accepting environment.</p>

<p>Activities and method</p>	<p>For the podcast, the process started with a very thorough needs assessment in the form of a questionnaire which was filled by about 50 people. A plan for the podcast was outlined and during the workshop process, youngsters arranged the background needed (technicalities, online platform, planning content, organizing possible experts to interview, etc.). The podcast series was kick-started during the 4 workshops sessions of the co-creation process and continued a few months later in the framework of the Reach Out Campaign, complemented by the launch of a dedicated Facebook page.</p> <p>The other working group organized a public event with the title “Dare to print it”, where people were encouraged to come up with slogans that are important to them and represent their beliefs and wishes, especially about topics of mental health and social change. Participants could print their messages on T-shirts or tote bags with silkscreen printing, with their own hands.</p>
<p>The impact of CONTINUE project in Hungary</p>	<p>Thanks to CONTINUE project, two groups of young people with migratory or refugee backgrounds planned and realized Social Actions to tackle the issues that they found the most relevant in the post-COVID period. Some of the young people have been involved in the project from the first (story gathering) phase, through the sense-making and discussion events, the social actions and the Reach Out campaign. The project has helped to engage them in longer processes and it has helped us as well to build meaningful relationships with young people and other stakeholders alike.</p>

CONTINUE in Copenhagen (Denmark)

Crossing Borders



Name of Organization:	Crossing Borders
Country and city:	Denmark, Copenhagen
Contact and Email Address:	Josephine Fröhlich josephine@crossingborders.dk
Profile of the beneficiaries involved:	Young student between the ages of 21-28 with different migratory background attending university: psychology students, anthropology students, environmental science students, as well as some recent graduates and unemployed youth.
Key impacts of COVID-19 on young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased sense of community and self-empowerment - Reinforced connections between participants
Objectives of intervention:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To create open spaces for community-building where people can create relationships and reference points - To create learning experiences in which young people can work on their self-empowerment and respond to the feelings of social isolation and lack of power.
Activities and method:	The main activity was the creation of the youth-led activity "The Everything Social Club", an opportunity for community building

	<p>and self-development. A club that met twice a month to learn about a topic of their choice and act on it afterward. In the belief that everyone has a story to tell or knowledge to share the club focused especially on including everyone's perspectives and building a strong community. Food Waste was their first topic of choice, so our young people decided to have an event, where people shared their take on the problem. Two weeks later TESC went to an organization that saves food from being thrown away, to help them with their mission.</p> <p>The process began with exchange of intentions and the drafting of a timeline. After we drafted the programme with our trainers and held our workshops. We made sure to include a communal dinner at the end of each workshop, which was hugely influential in creating a close-knit community amongst our participants. Each session was impactful and was met with a significant level of enthusiasm from our participants.</p>
<p>The impact of CONTINUE project in (name of the country).</p>	<p>Thanks to CONTINUE project the young people involved increased their level of participation in the local community. They also begun to search for funding to continue this social actions club after the project finishes</p>

CONTINUE in Italy (Palermo)

Per Esempio Onlus



Name of Organization	Per Esempio Onlus
Country and city	Italy - Palermo
Contact and Email Address	Emanuela Firetto e.firetto@peresempionlus.org
Profile of the beneficiaries involved	Young people attending the high school in Palermo, aged between 15 and 17 years old. Some of them are involved in the student committee of Regina Margherita high school in Palermo. Others are students from other schools of the city. Most of our participants showed since the beginning the desire to be involved in collective initiatives. For others it was the first time attending a project activities.
Key impacts of COVID-19 on young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contactless society: relationships are the aspect on which COVID had the biggest impact for young people. They miss the opportunity for socialization and experiencing the world which seems not to be replaceable by the virtual life. - Fear and anxiety: Fear and anxiety are the most recurrent emotions in the participants' story - Alternative activities: For many young people, pandemic was an opportunity to experience new activities, practicing passions already known a left a part due to the so called "lack of time", reinventing relationship.
Objectives of intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising awareness on how on lives changed due to pandemic through storytelling and story curation activities - Learning and improving social action skills to organized collective initiatives at school and have back the possibility to experience the world after pandemic; - Improving the school's environment through visual art and obtain a youth-led space at school

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promoting equal opportunities in the frame of gender identity and offer peer-to-peer support
<p>Activities and method</p>	<p>Youth workers and young people met once every one or two weeks to build the “ground of collective social actions”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Reporting workshops - Story curation workshop - Mentors training in Vilnius - Local Conversation of Change event (with World Cafe method included) - Interviews with policy makers: one event and three individual interviews (with Lego Serious Play method included) - Co-creation and implementation of Social Actions (with World Cafe and many other from the guidelines methods included) - Local Knowledge Exchange event - Co-creation and implementation of LocalReach Out Campaign - Co-creation and implementation of Pan-European Reach Out Campaign
<p>The impact of CONTINUE project in Italy (Palermo)</p>	<p>Thanks to the CONTINUE project the young people involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strengthened and built up news relationship; - they have been given a classroom at the school to self-manage during and after the regular school hours. <p>Per Esempio:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - built connection with schools and professors, an important achievement for the long-term sustainability of the project experience; - youth workers developed a better understanding of the

	<p>main difficulties of vulnerable youth during COVID-19;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- acquired new tools for non-formal education and improved digital competences in youth work;- improved competences in accompanying young people to delivery local social actions;- strengthened local ad European network.
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Conclusions & Lessons Learned

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities across communities in Europe. Young people have been adversely affected by the global crisis, experiencing challenges with their health and wellbeing, disengagement with education, barriers to their careers, and are being further disadvantaged by pre-existing issues such as poverty and disability due to lack of support. Young people's voices (particularly those facing varying degrees of marginalisation) are not regularly present in the political or decision-making sphere on a European level. Working alongside young people to co-create relevant policy and practice is one way to address this.

The Key impacts of COVID-19 on young people in Europe can be summarised as it follows:

- Mental health and wellbeing – high levels of anxiety, poor mental health, decline in physical health;
- Education and careers – disengagement with education, damaged career prospects;
- Social issues and inequalities – exacerbation and amplification of existing inequalities (e.g. poverty and disability) and social issues.

Responding to these key impacts and thanks to CONTINUE project, it is evident that young people need more Co-creation opportunities to make societies (local, national and international) more equitable, particularly for those in marginalised communities. They must have a place at the table at a European and local level to co-create what the 'new normal' should look like for them. Support is needed for young people who have fallen behind, and support for schools, educators and youth workers to provide opportunity and early intervention. Easier access to mental health support, safe spaces and funding is vital to reach all young people; Young people need more support in developing their careers to give access to a full range of opportunity.

Learn more about CONTINUE watching the video-story of the project (click on the image)



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CONTINUE

CONNECTING EUROPEAN YOUTH THROUGH STORYTELLING

Case study handbook

2021 / 2023

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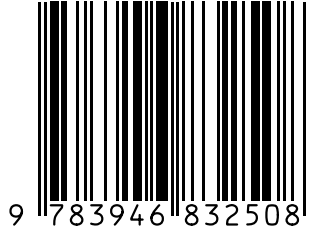


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