

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Participant:	1 - YouNet APS
PIC number:	949011238
Project name and acronym:	YouthDemocrAID: Education, Debate, Action — YouthDemocrAID

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	WP2
Event name:	Implementation in Italy
Type:	Workshop, training
In situ/online:	In-situ
Location:	Italy, Bologna and Bentivoglio
Date(s):	19.03.2025 - 07.04.2025 - 11.04.2025 - 14.04.2025 - 28.04.2025 - 12.05.2025 - 20.05.2025
Website(s) (if any):	https://youthdemocraid.weebly.com/
Participants	
Female:	40
Male:	15
Non-binary:	0
From country 1 [Italy]:	53
From country 2 [Spain]:	2
Total number of participants:	55
From total number of countries:	2
Description	
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>	
<p>The local workshops carried out in Italy under Work Package 2 “Implementation in Italy” focused primarily on two main aspects. The first was to provide young people with the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to actively participate in decision-making processes at local, national and European levels. The second was to develop and implement effective non-formal education methods, including gamification and digital media, in order to offer young people engaging and impactful citizenship education.</p>	

The workshops were implemented by YouNet APS in the cities of Bologna and Bentivoglio (Italy) on the following dates: 19 March 2025, 7 April 2025, 11 April 2025, 14 April 2025, 28 April 2025, 12 May 2025 and 20 May 2025.

The topics covered were:

- “Youth Leadership and Empowerment” (20 May 2025)
- “Youth and Civic Engagement” (12 May 2025 and 7 April 2025)
- “Political Participation and Advocacy” (14 April 2025)
- “Introduction to Democracy and Citizenship” (28 April 2025 and 12 May 2025)
- “Community Action and Grassroots Initiatives” (20 May 2025, 19 March 2025 and 11 April 2025)

The total number of participants for the complete workshop cycle was 55.

These meetings provided a valuable opportunity for dialogue and exchange with young people on various themes, including the meaning of active citizenship, how individuals can contribute to their communities, and why civic participation is essential to safeguard and strengthen democracy.

Dialogue was encouraged through the active engagement of students in non-formal and horizontal learning activities, which were carefully designed in advance by the project partner organisations to foster participation, critical thinking and peer-to-peer exchange.

The workshops were facilitated by an experienced trainer from YouNet, specialised in youth engagement and non-formal education methodologies. The sessions were supported by European Solidarity Corps volunteers hosted by YouNet, who contributed to the organisation of group activities and assisted in creating an inclusive and dynamic learning environment.

The introductory part of each workshop followed a standard structure, organised as follows:

Disclaimer on Ethical Standards. Each workshop began with the presentation of key values and ethical standards guiding the discussions and activities, to promote a positive, respectful and productive environment. These principles also reflect the core values of the European Union within the framework of the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) programme:

- *Respect for human dignity:* every person deserves respect. All voices and perspectives are welcome and listened to with an open mind.
- *Equality:* all individuals are treated equally, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion or background. Discrimination is not tolerated.
- *Gender equality:* all genders are treated equally, with equal opportunities to participate and contribute.
- *Non-discrimination and anti-racism:* diversity is embraced while racism and discrimination are firmly opposed.
- *Freedom of expression:* ideas may be shared freely, always with respect for the dignity and rights of others.
- *Tolerance and understanding:* differences are seen as strengths. Dialogue is based on mutual understanding.
- *Participation and inclusion:* every voice matters, especially those that are often marginalised. Everyone should feel heard.
- *Solidarity and cooperation:* mutual support and collaboration are encouraged to find solutions that benefit everyone.

In addition, our *Child Protection Policy* aims to safeguard children and young people from harm, exploitation, neglect and violence in all activities organised by our organisation, ensuring a safe and inclusive environment for all participants.

Introduction to the CERV Programme. The CERV programme (Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values) is a key European Union initiative that protects and promotes fundamental rights and values as stated in the EU Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights. The programme supports projects at local, regional, national and transnational levels, with the objective of building open, inclusive and

rights-based societies grounded in democracy, equality and the rule of law. These projects promote social inclusion, combat discrimination and protect the rights of vulnerable groups such as minorities and migrants. The programme also addresses issues such as racism and xenophobia, fostering respect for diversity across Europe.

Presentation of the Youth DemocrAID Project. Youth DemocrAID is a project developed within the framework of the CERV programme. Its main objective is to support and promote democracy, with a particular focus on youth participation. Young people represent the new generation of citizens whose active engagement is essential to reinforce democracy and make the European Union more inclusive and united. The project aims to prepare engaging educational materials using non-formal education methods, deliver workshops specifically designed for young people and facilitate peer interaction across partner countries through the organisation of an international youth forum.

The following sections present the activities carried out during each workshop in chronological order, grouping together the workshops that followed the same structure.

Community Action and Grassroots Initiatives (19.03.2025 and 11.04.2025)

The workshop “Community Action and Grassroots Initiatives” held on 19 March 2025 and 11 April 2025 in Bologna at the “Liceo Laura Bassi” secondary school involved 20 and 22 participants respectively. The sessions focused on the topic of community action and grassroots initiatives, aiming to enhance young people’s understanding of how local civic participation can drive social change.

The workshops began with a short introduction to the concepts of grassroots initiatives and community engagement. Participants reflected on the difference between citizen-led actions and institutional initiatives, gaining a clearer understanding of how individuals and communities can take initiative to address local challenges. Real examples such as **The Book Bus** in Zambia, **Fridays for Future** and **Critical Mass** were briefly discussed to inspire participants and show the real impact of grassroots activism around the world.

The session continued with the interactive quiz “*Bamboozle*”, which helped reinforce key concepts through teamwork, collaboration and friendly competition. The activity stimulated interest in civic participation and encouraged peer learning in an engaging way.

Participants then worked in groups in the activity “*Map of Change*”, where they identified real problems affecting their communities and analysed their root causes. This exercise helped them develop a deeper sense of responsibility and recognise their potential role as active citizens.

Building on these reflections, the final activity “*Planning a Local Initiative - From Idea to Action*” guided participants through the process of structuring a simple civic initiative. They defined objectives, possible actions, resources and stakeholders, as well as strategies for communication. Each group presented its proposal and received constructive feedback from peers and the facilitator.

Throughout the workshops, participants showed a high level of engagement and motivation. They collaborated effectively, shared local perspectives and demonstrated creativity in proposing solutions to community challenges.

Youth and Civic Engagement (07.04.2025)

The workshop “Youth and Civic Engagement” took place on 7 April 2025 in Bologna at the “Liceo Laura Bassi” secondary school and aimed to strengthen civic education and encourage greater youth participation in social and political life. The facilitator opened with a short introduction highlighting the importance of youth engagement in democratic societies and addressing the current gap in civic education, which often fails to provide young people with practical tools and motivation to participate actively in civic processes.

The session combined interactive methods and non-formal education tools to stimulate participation and teamwork. It began with the ice-breaker “*Counting Done Easy*”, which helped create a positive group atmosphere and build trust among participants. This was followed by the group activity “*My First Political Party*”, through which participants worked in teams to create their own political party, define its

core values and propose realistic policies. The final activity, “*Political Compass*”, allowed them to position their ideas within a broader ideological spectrum and reflect on the diversity of political opinions.

Through group work and role-based activities, participants explored fundamental democratic concepts such as political participation, party representation, values and policy-making. These dynamics helped them reflect on current social challenges and the role of active citizenship in shaping community life.

Participants were encouraged to express their opinions, compare perspectives and work collaboratively on shared tasks. The workshop created an open and inclusive environment where young people could discuss issues relevant to their daily lives and gain a deeper understanding of how political ideologies, civic engagement, and decision-making processes influence society.

The final discussion confirmed the success of the workshop, with participants expressing that they had gained new knowledge about civic engagement, improved their communication and teamwork skills and increased their confidence in sharing opinions in a public setting. Many also reported feeling more motivated to take part in civic initiatives and democratic processes.

Political Participation and Advocacy (14.04.2025)

The workshop “Political Participation and Advocacy” took place on 14 April 2025 in Bologna at the “Liceo Laura Bassi” secondary school and involved 19 participants. The main objective was to explore the importance of political participation as a key element in strengthening democracy and promoting active citizenship among young people. Through guided discussions, participants reflected on different forms of political engagement, both conventional (such as voting or party involvement) and non-conventional (such as activism, protests and volunteering). The introduction also highlighted how digital participation through social media has become an increasingly relevant tool for youth engagement.

The workshop began with the ice-breaker “*Mind Game*”, where participants worked in groups to create a crossword-style acronym based on the phrase “Political Participation”. The activity stimulated collaboration and activated prior knowledge connected to politics and civic values in a creative way.

The session continued with a *Kahoot quiz*, designed to assess and expand participants’ knowledge of political systems, institutions and civic processes. Working in teams, participants engaged in a friendly competition that reinforced learning in an interactive and dynamic way. The quiz also encouraged debate within groups and promoted teamwork and strategic thinking.

The final activity, “*Seed Debating*”, was designed to develop critical thinking and argumentation skills. Participants rotated between different debate tables, each focused on a current social or political issue. Topics included environmental sustainability, freedom of expression, social media influence, artificial intelligence and political correctness. Each group contributed new perspectives to every discussion, demonstrating the ability to analyse complex topics, express opinions respectfully and listen actively to others.

Throughout the workshop, participants showed a high level of motivation, actively contributing to debates and discussions. The activities supported the development of democratic values, public speaking skills and the capacity to reflect on political responsibility. The workshop created a safe space for exchanging ideas, encouraging young people to see political participation as a meaningful and accessible way to influence society.

Introduction to Democracy and Citizenship (28.04.2025)

The workshop “Introduction to Democracy and Citizenship” took place on 28 April 2025 in Bologna at the “Liceo Laura Bassi” secondary school and involved 19 participants. Its objective was to provide young people with a clear and accessible understanding of democracy as both a system of governance and a shared responsibility that depends on active and informed citizens.

The workshop began with a short introduction on democratic values, citizenship rights and responsibilities. Participants discussed why participation matters for the health of democratic societies

and reflected on the risks posed by misinformation and disinformation in shaping public opinion and undermining institutional trust. This created a basis for understanding the importance of media literacy and critical thinking in modern democracies.

The first interactive activity, “*How Does Italian Democracy Work?*”, guided participants to reconstruct the structure of the Italian democratic system through a question-based group exercise. Working together, they identified the main institutions and their roles, gaining a clearer understanding of how the executive, legislative and presidential branches function and interact.

The session continued with the activity “*Be a Fake News Content Creator*”, which focused on identifying false information and developing critical thinking skills. In groups, participants examined a series of news headlines and had to decide whether they were true or false. The activity encouraged discussion, collaborative reasoning and awareness of how misinformation spreads, especially online.

Throughout the workshop, participants were actively involved and demonstrated strong interest in the topics addressed. By combining theoretical reflection with interactive exercises, the session helped them connect democratic principles to real-life situations and current social issues.

Youth and Civic Engagement and Introduction to Democracy and Citizenship (12.05.2025)

The workshop held on 12 May 2025 at ARCI UEISS San Marino di Bentivoglio, a small town near Bologna involved 9 participants. Due to the extended session time, two themes were combined: Youth and Civic Engagement and Introduction to Democracy and Citizenship. The aim of the workshop was to promote active citizenship among young people by increasing their understanding of political participation, democratic systems and their role as engaged members of society.

The session began with a discussion on youth participation and civic engagement. Participants reflected on the challenges that often prevent young people from getting involved in public life, such as lack of motivation, limited opportunities and the perception that their voices are not heard in decision-making processes. The introduction encouraged participants to question their own role in society and recognise that civic participation can take many forms, from voting to engaging in community initiatives.

The first non-formal activity, “*My First Political Party*”, allowed participants to work in small groups to design their own political party. Through this exercise, they reflected on values, priorities and political issues that matter to them, such as education, climate change, youth employment or social justice. The activity encouraged teamwork, creativity and public speaking, as each group presented its party to the others.

The second activity, “*Political Compass*”, helped participants better understand different political ideologies and where their own views might fit within the political spectrum. In groups, they answered a set of statements related to economic and social issues and then positioned themselves on a political map. The activity encouraged critical thinking and respectful debate, highlighting the diversity of political opinions and the importance of dialogue in democratic societies.

The second part of the workshop focused on Introduction to Democracy and Citizenship. Through a short interactive presentation, participants explored key democratic principles, fundamental rights and civic responsibilities. The discussion also addressed the growing challenge of misinformation and the importance of media literacy as a tool for responsible citizenship.

The closing activity, “*How Does Italian Democracy Work?*”, reinforced these concepts through a collaborative group exercise. Participants reconstructed the structure of the Italian democratic system by identifying its main institutions and their roles. This helped them better understand how democracy functions in practice and how citizens can engage with public institutions.

Overall, the workshop combined reflection and practice, offering a space for discussion and active participation. The small group size facilitated in-depth dialogue and personal contribution from each participant, who showed strong motivation and growing awareness of their role in democratic life.

Youth Leadership and Empowerment and Community Action and Grassroots Initiatives (20.05.2025)

The workshop held on 20 May 2025 at ARCI UEISS San Marino di Bentivoglio, a small town near Bologna involved 10 participants and combined two thematic areas: Youth Leadership and Empowerment and Community Action and Grassroots Initiatives. The aim was to help participants understand how young people can take active roles in society, develop leadership skills and contribute to local change through community-based initiatives.

The first part of the workshop focused on Youth Leadership and Empowerment. Through an open discussion, participants explored the challenges faced by young people today, such as climate change, social inequality and misinformation, and reflected on the importance of youth engagement in addressing these issues. The concept of empowerment was introduced as a process through which young people gain confidence, skills and the ability to influence decisions that affect their lives. Leadership was presented not as a position of power, but as a responsibility to inspire others, encourage participation and promote social inclusion and equity.

The main activity of this session, “*Social Project Simulation - Initiatives for Change*”, allowed participants to apply leadership principles in a practical group exercise. Each group selected a social issue from a list that included topics such as bullying, climate change, youth unemployment, access to education, mental health and discrimination. They then analysed the causes and effects of the chosen issue, defined a realistic solution and developed a simple action plan. The activity helped participants develop teamwork, problem-solving and project planning skills. At the end, each group presented its proposal, demonstrating initiative and commitment to social change.

The second part of the workshop focused on Community Action and Grassroots Initiatives, emphasising how citizens can work together to respond to local challenges without relying solely on institutions. Participants discussed the value of bottom-up initiatives in strengthening communities and promoting social cohesion. Examples from real community movements were shared to show the impact of collective action.

To reinforce these concepts, the interactive game “*Bamboozle*” was used. Working in teams, participants answered questions related to grassroots movements at national and international level. The activity created a dynamic and engaging learning environment, encouraged group collaboration and helped participants consolidate their understanding of civic action through play-based learning.

Throughout the workshop, participants showed strong engagement and a high level of participation. They demonstrated critical thinking, creativity and an ability to collaborate constructively. The combination of reflection, teamwork and practical exercises helped them gain a deeper understanding of how young people can lead positive change in their communities.

Following each event/workshop, all participants were promptly provided with essential project data and a link to access the EUSurvey platform.

The workshops were very well received by both students and teachers, who expressed strong interest in the themes addressed and the interactive methodology used. The positive feedback highlighted the relevance of the topics, the clarity of the proposed activities and the stimulating learning environment created during the sessions. Interest also came from other organisations and educational institutions, which recognised the value of the approach in promoting youth participation and civic awareness. Due to this high level of engagement, the activities continue to be implemented by YouNet during the current school year (2025/2026), expanding their impact within the local community and reaching an increasing number of young people.

Social media posts about the workshops implemented in Italy:

Community Action and Grassroots Initiatives (19.03.2025)

[Facebook Youth DemocrAID](#)

[Facebook YouNet APS](#)

[Instagram YouNet APS](#)

Youth and Civic Engagement (07.04.2025)[Facebook Youth DemocrAID](#)[Facebook YouNet APS](#)[Instagram YouNet APS](#)**Community Action and Grassroots Initiatives (11.04.2025)**[Facebook Youth DemocrAID](#)[Facebook YouNet APS](#)[Instagram YouNet APS](#)**Political Participation and Advocacy (14.04.2025)**[Facebook Youth DemocrAID](#)[Facebook YouNet APS](#)[Instagram YouNet APS](#)**Introduction to Democracy and Citizenship (28.04.2025)**[Facebook Youth DemocrAID](#)[Facebook YouNet APS](#)[Instagram YouNet APS](#)**Youth and Civic Engagement and Introduction to Democracy and Citizenship (12.05.2025)**[Facebook Youth DemocrAID](#)[Facebook YouNet APS](#)[Instagram YouNet APS](#)**Youth Leadership and Empowerment and Community Action and Grassroots Initiatives (20.05.2025)**[Facebook Youth DemocrAID](#)[Facebook YouNet APS](#)[Instagram YouNet APS](#)

- https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02WbPJJMfh5w25BTfiU9pQdEtUruBXFg6L8rsewuYzdRTUJqxUhyYbwNHZimLGUf4ul&id=61561181339531

Website articles:

- <https://youthdemocraid.weebly.com/news/empowering-students-through-community-action>

EDS publication links:<https://www.you-net.eu/youth-democraid.htm><https://youthdemocraid.weebly.com/news>

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).