

THE EUROPEAN CHARLEMAGNE YOUTH PRIZE 2026



**ECYP 2026 NATIONAL WINNERS
PROJECT SUMMARIES**

**THE EUROPEAN
CHARLEMAGNE
YOUTH PRIZE
2026**



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AUSTRIA – Next Visionaries

Next Visionaries is an educational leadership programme that brings together young Ukrainians living in Ukraine and across EU Member States. Implemented by Internews Ukraine with the support of ERSTE Foundation, the programme equips a new generation of leaders with the skills and networks essential for Ukraine’s European future. Running from October to May, the programme delivered a series of activities **empowering young Ukrainians to actively shape the country’s democratic transformation amid war and uncertainty.**

The first iteration of the project engaged 32 participants and involved institutions in Ukraine and Austria. It targeted recent university graduates aged between 21 and 27, launching their professional paths in public policy, media, civil society, law and innovation. The programme combined online learning, offline events and international study visits, and its curriculum was delivered by leading Ukrainian and European experts, policymakers and practitioners. A core element of the programme was collaborative project work. In teams, participants designed practical initiatives **addressing societal challenges such as gender equality, youth engagement in defence and security, veteran reintegration, cultural diplomacy and vocational education.** These projects were supervised by programme deans and presented to European and international stakeholders during a study visit to Vienna. The programme achieved significant outreach and visibility, reaching over 326 000 views on social media and engaging audiences in Ukraine, Austria, Germany and Poland.

By connecting young Ukrainians living in Ukraine and across EU Member States with European institutions and values, ‘Next Visionaries’ contributed to **democratic awareness, cross-border collaboration and the shared European vision of a peaceful and inclusive future.**

Website:	https://nextvisionaries.org/.
Social media:	https://www.instagram.com/next.visionaries.



BELGIUM – Europe on Track 11 – Intersecting Realities – Youth Redefining Europe’s Inclusive Civic Narrative

Europe on Track is a youth-led educational initiative of the Association des États Généraux des Étudiants de l’Europe, or AEGEE-Europe, empowering young people to become active European citizens through intercultural dialogue, civic education and non-formal learning. The 11th edition focused on **intersectional identities and their influence on political representation and civic engagement**, and explored how overlapping identities such as gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background, disability and sexual orientation shape young people’s access to participation in democratic life.

Over the course of one month, six youth ambassadors travelled across Europe by train, from Spain to Türkiye, stopping in more than 20 cities. They delivered over 40 workshops based on non-formal education methodologies, conducted interviews and **collected young people’s perspectives on identity, representation and civic participation**, in collaboration with local non-governmental organisations and youth organisations. In parallel, two ambassadors led an online route in the form of a podcast, broadening the project’s reach by including academic, policy and professional perspectives. The project concluded with an international conference in Brussels, Belgium, and the co-creation of an evidence-based **Policy Recommendation Statement** addressed to institutional stakeholders, grounded in qualitative and quantitative data collected across Europe.

Implemented in more than 10 countries, the 11th version of the Europe on Track project addressed fundamental rights relevant to young people in the EU Member States through five workshop formats addressing intersectionality, equality, non-discrimination and democratic participation. Through youth-led discussions, interactive workshops and local engagement activities, **the project created safe spaces for young Europeans from diverse and often under-represented backgrounds** to share their lived experiences and perspectives.

Website:	https://www.europeontrack.org/blog-eot11/.
Social media:	https://www.instagram.com/europeontrack.
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Y-_y2mPHjWt_tHMvT6ZU1m5n8VYZcCDC/view?usp=sharing

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BULGARIA – Civic Education for the Development of Democracy in the European Union (Proud in the EU)

Under the Erasmus+ umbrella, the ‘Proud in the EU’ project addressed the civic knowledge gaps and declining youth participation in Bulgaria and Portugal. Led by the Alliance for Sustainable Regional Development in Ruse, Bulgaria, and Omnis Factum Associação in Montijo, Portugal, **350 young Europeans in marginalised regions united to learn about and discuss disinformation, their rights and responsibilities within the EU, and democratic values.**

From September 2024 to August 2025, young people engaged in exchanges, youth sessions, workshops and a closing European Citizens Forum attended by 100 participants. Throughout the project, they **explored core European values, including human dignity, the rule of law, equality, freedom and active citizenship.** Furthermore, project participants developed a joint trilingual digital guide, media literacy campaigns against disinformation and the ‘Star Fellow Citizens’ video contest, **encouraging the participation of young people in democratic processes.** The project’s awareness-raising campaign generated more than 10 000 views on social media, and post-activity surveys showed that 80 % of respondents who participated in the EU citizenship sessions reported improved knowledge of the European Union and enhanced civic engagement skills.

The project brought together young people from two European countries, promoting democratic values, active citizenship and a shared European identity, particularly in the marginalised regions of Ruse and Montijo. As a result, **90 % of participants reported that the project’s activities strengthened their sense of European identity.**

Website:	https://srd4bg.org/gord-in-the-eu .
Social media:	https://www.facebook.com/srd4bg . https://www.linkedin.com/company/srd4bg/ .



CROATIA - Dialogues of the Future

Dialogues of the Future is an Erasmus+ project created by young people, for young people. Students in a debate club of the faculty of economics and business in the University of Zagreb observed a rise in populism and fake news in Croatia. In response, they decided to bring together young Europeans and **empower them to think critically, recognise misinformation, express their ideas with confidence and actively participate in social and democratic life.**

The project took place in Stubičke Toplice, a small town in Croatia. Over 7 days, 30 participants from 5 European countries engaged in a series of non-formal learning activities, such as debates, workshops on argumentation and public speaking, policy simulation, community dialogue, role plays and intercultural discussions, **centred around strengthening life skills, leadership, and critical thinking.** Furthermore, participants connected with local decision-makers during a visit to the Zagreb City Council. These experiences made civic participation tangible, **demonstrating to participants that their voices can bring about change.** By the end of the exchange, they felt more prepared for future educational and professional challenges and more capable of expressing their opinions openly.

Through this project, participants **gained the confidence to express their needs and the tools to adapt, allowing them to take an active role in their communities.** They also learned about EU opportunities for young people and were inspired to engage in civic life back home, creating a multiplier effect with both local and European impact.

Website:	https://dkefzg.hr/
Social media:	https://www.instagram.com/debatniklub_efzg/
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Aeiz-OkgnWo5Hvil7Q4L2nmkff6DgWAK/view?usp=sharing



CYPRUS – Solidarity in Action – A Human Chain of Hope Uniting Europe

The Human Chain of Hope is a student-led initiative dedicated to International Childhood Cancer Day and the memory of a fellow student, Lili Kyriakou. It brought together young people from Cyprus, Greece, Germany and Italy to **promote empathy and solidarity with children who battle cancer every day, as well as active citizenship**. The project combined awareness-raising with concrete support for charitable organisations.

United in the context of the Erasmus+ programme, **750 students and 100 teachers from Cyprus, Greece, Germany and Italy gathered together to form the word FAITH, showing that young people across Europe can come together for a meaningful cause**. Furthermore, through the ‘Human Chain of Hope’ initiative and the charitable activities that accompanied it during the school year, **a significant financial contribution was raised for organisations supporting children with cancer and vulnerable families**. These funds were offered to non-profit organisations such as ‘Mikroi Iroes’, ‘Make-A-Wish’ and PASYKAF, directly contributing to medical, emotional and social support for children and their families. Beyond the financial support, the action fostered a culture of solidarity and empathy, and empowered students to see themselves as active members of society.

This collaboration of students from different European countries gave participants the opportunity to experience **the idea of European unity in practice** and demonstrated that shared values can bring together people from different cultures and who speak different languages. Students saw that they could make a positive impact in their local communities, and bring about change when they act in unison and with respect for others.

Website:	https://www.forum.ac.cy/ .
Social media:	https://www.facebook.com/sxoliforum?locale=el_GR . https://www.instagram.com/forumprivateschool/ .
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/15CROZoamK4kn7t8k0T09jzyimaL1k_oB_/view?usp=sharing



CZECHIA – Academy YPALA Czechia

The Young Public Affairs Leaders Academy, or Academy YPALA Czechia, is an **educational programme aimed at strengthening democratic resilience and civic engagement** among young people aged between 16 and 30 from Czechia and Slovakia. The academy offers participants a practical understanding of how democratic governance works through direct engagement with the political system. It consists of institutional visits and expert-led discussions with politicians and senior civil servants.

The project targets young people interested in politics and public administration, and had 45 participants in 2025. Through a series of workshops, meetings and visits to government institutions, participants learned **how democratic institutions actually work in practice**. They met judges, civil servants and politicians, while also developing practical skills such as public speaking, teamwork and project planning. The graduates gained the confidence to speak up in public debates and many went on to get involved in student councils, community projects or public services. By creating lasting connections between young Czechs and young Slovaks, the Academy built a network of young people committed to active citizenship.

Academy YPALA Czechia demonstrates a European dimension through its programme that includes discussions on European values, the multiannual financial framework, environmental policy and strategic EU decisions. The Academy also creates space for peer learning and **cooperation between Czech and Slovak** participants. It enables young people to compare the institutional environment and democratic processes of different Member States and contributes to the development of a European dimension in civic engagement.

Website:	https://cesko.ypala.eu/.
Social media:	https://www.linkedin.com/company/young-public-affairs-leaders-academy-ypala/. https://www.instagram.com/ypala.eu?igsh=dno2Ym5ocGZ6MGFt.
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/15yW_0Dess2PMFwFcBWD5RJr6dXPac-etQ/view?usp=sharing



DENMARK – AGORA’s youth forum series about Europe’s democratic heroes

The AGORA project was created to **inspire young people to discover the historical roots of democracy in Europe**. The youth forum brings Europe’s democratic history closer to young Danes through a series of monthly meetings dedicated to the people who shaped democratic thought and institutions. Launched during Denmark’s Presidency of the Council of the European Union in autumn 2025, the initiative introduces key historical figures, events and achievements that contributed to the development of modern liberal democracy. By combining historical insight with open discussion, the project makes Europe’s democratic heritage accessible and relevant to a younger generation.

The forum targets young people and promotes democratic education through monthly meetings organised by volunteers and young academics. Events are held in Copenhagen, often at Vartov, or in cooperation with cultural institutions and embassies, and have already brought together several hundred participants. **Young volunteers from diverse backgrounds help organise the meetings, while academics and guest speakers deliver presentations that connect historical ideas with modern-day democratic values.** Participants explore key moments in European history through discussions about figures such as Cicero, Joan of Arc, Thomas Paine, Sophie Scholl and Jan Kubiš.

AGORA’s youth forum series about Europe’s democratic heroes from antiquity to our time was launched with the hope of enlightening young Danes about European culture and civilisation in relation to the Danish Presidency of the Council of the EU. The European dimension of the project lies in its focus on **shared cultural and political heritage across different periods of European history.**

Website:	https://rahbekshojskole.dk/agora/.
Social media:	https://www.linkedin.com/company/rahbeks-h-jskole.



ESTONIA – ATHENA – Advancing Women’s Leadership in Inclusive Democracy

The ATHENA project helps to **strengthen the democratic participation and leadership of young women**. The initiative supported girls and women aged between 16 and 26 in developing the confidence, skills and networks needed to play an active role in civic life and public decision-making processes. It addressed the persistent barriers that often limit women’s participation in leadership and politics, such as limited access to mentorship, professional networks and institutional spaces. Through local workshops, participants developed public communication, negotiation and advocacy skills, while study visits and dialogue sessions with European and national institutions helped them transform civic motivation into practical participation pathways and build long-term professional networks.

The project targeted girls and young women across Estonia and was implemented through workshops, mentoring and community-led initiatives. More than 700 participants from diverse backgrounds took part directly, including secondary school and university students and volunteers. Through community actions organised by participants in schools, universities and youth councils, the project reached over 2 000 additional young people and **encouraged dialogue about representation, leadership and civic engagement**.

The project was framed around European values and the principle that **young women’s leadership and representation are shared European priorities**. ATHENA involved EU-level institutional perspectives throughout the process, including engagement with the European Parliament and the Permanent Representation of Estonia to the EU, alongside national democratic actors, civil society organisations and industry experts from Germany, Belgium and other EU Member States. This helped participants understand how civic engagement at the local level connects to national- and EU-level decision-making processes.

Website:	https://eunexus.ee/
Social media:	www.instagram.com/eunexus.ee
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/15JwQB2Mvcf4RgE3I-i3MsLtE5sdbNwpr/view?usp=sharing

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FINLAND – EU Youth Summit

The idea of the EU Youth Summit is **to create a platform for young Europeans to contribute to debates about the future of the EU**. The event marked the 30th anniversary of EU membership for Finland, Sweden and Austria. The three-day summit in Helsinki brought together around 80 young participants from across Europe to discuss key political and social challenges facing the continent. Participants took part in a panel discussion on democracy and freedom of speech hosted at the Danish Embassy in Finland.

The summit targeted young Europeans from diverse backgrounds. The 80 participants worked in thematic groups and then came together for a General Assembly to debate and vote on **policy proposals covering five key areas: economy, the environment, foreign policy, social issues and democratic rights**. The final resolution, addressing the five main themes, will be distributed to key decision-makers across Europe and to all participants as advocacy tools, amplifying young people’s voices.

The EU Youth Summit brings **together young people from Finland, Sweden, Austria and across the continent** to envision the future they want for Europe. A panel discussion on democracy and freedom of speech, held at the Danish Embassy, showcased how Nordic countries collaborate. The General Assembly followed the same procedures used in real EU-level decision-making, giving participants hands-on experience of how democracy works at EU level. Beyond creating policies, the Summit built lasting connections, giving young Europeans the chance to network, learn about each other’s cultures and practise finding agreement through discussion and negotiation.

Website:	https://eurooppanuoret.fi/
Social media:	https://www.instagram.com/eurooppanuoret/
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-rXI7Ch_7d1Cb06ytQJf-f7m_GM4Bl_/view?usp=sharing

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FRANCE - Pol - Combating misinformation and strengthening citizen participation through an app!

Pol is a political engagement app that enables citizens to vote on bills currently being examined by the French National Assembly and participate in opinion surveys. Each vote is accompanied by clear contextual information explaining what is at stake in the proposal and presenting the positions of each political group. The platform allows users to compare their votes with those of their elected representatives, by providing national results and outcomes in users' own constituencies. This creates greater transparency and direct accountability between citizens and lawmakers. By **making legislative processes more accessible and understandable**, Pol seeks to address democratic disengagement and combat disinformation through fact-based contextualisation.

The app particularly **targets young people, who are often disconnected from traditional politics**. Since launch, the platform has recorded nearly 7 million votes now has over 300 000 users. In April 2024, Pol conducted France's first national citizen consultation on a legislative proposal concerning single-parent families, gathering more than 100 000 votes and over 1 100 amendment proposals within 10 days, several of which were later incorporated into the bill. The platform has also gained institutional recognition, with many members of parliament and government ministers using Pol to consult their constituents.

Pol aims to address **challenges that are shared across European democracies**, such as declining trust in institutions, the spread of disinformation and the disengagement of citizens. By promoting informed participation and directly involving citizens in democratic decision-making processes, the platform helps to strengthen democratic engagement and foster a political culture in which citizens can follow, understand and influence decisions that affect their future.

Website:	https://www.pol-app.fr/
Social media:	https://www.instagram.com/pol.appli/
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1F126kxemKRtB6zM7RQWv2KBsE9jbXDyl/view?usp=sharing



GERMANY - k_einheit (Initiative No-Unity)

k_einheit, a play on the German words for ‘no’ and ‘unity’, is a youth-led initiative giving **Generation Z in eastern Germany a platform to speak for themselves and engage critically with social and political issues**. Many young people who grew up after German reunification often feel overlooked or stereotyped in national debates. The project addresses this challenge by fostering dialogue across generations and between East and West Germany, focusing on memory culture, identity and democratic engagement.

In 2022, k_einheit produced a documentary series featuring ten young East Germans, exploring their socialisation, perspectives on reunification, democratic participation and the challenges of right-wing structures. Beyond the series, the initiative hosts workshops, panel discussions and other formats that brings together students and older generations with experience of the former GDR, as well as multipliers from media, politics and education. The project has reached more than 5 000 people through events and engages with nearly 4 000 followers on social media. Many young participants report that the initiative provides **an important space where they can share their experiences**, engage in debates about democracy, identity and memory for the first time, and even initiate their own projects.

As part of 2025 European Capital of Culture events taking place in Chemnitz, the initiative collaborated with partners in Poland and Czechia to **jointly examine the long-term effects of change in post-socialist societies and the democratic challenges in Central and Eastern Europe**. This exchange brought together young people from different countries to reflect on shared experiences and differences and strengthened the sense of European solidarity. The exhibition created as part of this collaboration is set to travel to Budweis and Warsaw in 2026.

Website:	https://www.keinheit.de/
Social media:	https://www.instagram.com/k_einheit
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Kzat3wyR9qxp0AJ2YNmgLGB0IKHzSQmr/view?usp=sharing



GREECE - From Disruptive Places to Hidden Gems

From Disruptive Places to Hidden Gems is a transnational youth project which was implemented between January and October 2025. It emerged from the everyday reality of young people in Elefsina, Greece, where creativity coexists with limited public spaces and weak institutional support. Inspired by this context and in collaboration with youth organisations in Kortrijk, Belgium and within the Erasmus+ Youth Exchange framework, the project addressed the need to reclaim neglected and underused spaces by enabling young people to **transform them into inclusive places of culture, expression and community life.**

Over 55 young people participated directly through open calls and dialogue, while the initiative connected with more than 700 people through public festivals, workshops and artistic interventions in Elefsina and Kortrijk. Through these activities and collective decision-making processes, participants developed civic skills, creativity, critical thinking and a strong sense of European belonging. Public spaces in both cities functioned as living laboratories for democratic expression, intercultural dialogue and social experimentation. The project reactivated public spaces, strengthened local youth communities and had a tangible impact on democratic participation by **involving young people in collective decision making, planning and negotiation regarding the use of public space.** Participants experienced active citizenship in practice, learning how to express needs, and collaborate and engage with local stakeholders.

Cooperation between Greek and Belgian youth organisations strengthened transnational networks and enabled the exchange of methods. By addressing European challenges through joint action and cultural exchange, the project contributed to a **common sense of European identity based on solidarity, inclusion and participation.**

Website:	https://cultterra.org/
Social media:	https://www.instagram.com/cult_terra/ https://www.facebook.com/cultterrateam/?locale=el_GR
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Kg3ajg1qsFFqyNBJWvV48PAsAgcJwZHx/view?usp=sharing

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HUNGARY – ENTR HU

ENTR HU is a European content creator network that **produces journalistic, youth-focused content with a strong European dimension**, primarily for social media platforms. Operating under Refresher Hungary, the project was launched in response to the growing gap between young people and meaningful public debate about Europe. It focuses on social, political and cultural topics at the local level and places them in a European context, prioritising understanding over outrage.

ENTR uses a hybrid and participatory approach. Through youth-oriented storytelling, long-form discussions and community-driven conversations, it reaches young audiences and centres around European topics that are often missing from youth-focused media. On Refresher’s YouTube account, the project generated around 288 733 monthly views, as well as millions of monthly views on TikTok. These figures reflect consistent audience interest and active participation through comments, shares and discussions. **ENTR’s content regularly sparks conversations on democracy, social responsibility, migration, identity and youth opportunities within Europe.** By encouraging dialogue, critical thinking and openness to different perspectives, the project promotes democratic participation and strengthens a shared sense of European identity.

At the same time, ENTR HU operates as part of a **cross-border network** active in eight European countries. The national teams collaborate closely and support each other with reliable local sources, context and fact-checking, enabling accurate and credible reporting on issues beyond national borders. By working together across countries, ENTR strengthens international cooperation on youth-focused media and contributes to a shared European media space based on trust, dialogue and common values.

Website:	https://entr.net/en/
Social media:	https://www.instagram.com/refresherhu/ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ySnV89YtEsc
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/12P7G-IVB2vXksH-tcUXTembk8OO7hN6l/view?usp=sharing



IRELAND - TU Dublin Food Pantry

The TU Dublin Food Pantry (formerly known as ReFridge) is a student-run initiative aiming to **tackle student hunger and food waste** across the university campus. Studies from 2020 revealed that 46 % of students in third level education are experiencing or have experienced stress regarding access to food. At the same time, Ireland generates over 750 000 tonnes of food waste yearly. The project's idea is to collect surplus food from its partner FoodCloud and to redistribute it to students facing food insecurity.

The TU Dublin Food Pantry project has been able to **save over 2 000 kilograms of food that would otherwise have gone to landfill, prevented more than 3 200 kilograms of CO₂ emissions, and helped support and feed over 1 000 students in a year**. Around 15 volunteer students received food safety training and launched a weekly delivery of food, while the SVP Society assisted by unloading the food items into lockers, where they were made available for students to pick up the following day. Any food that was not collected before its expiration date was donated to the university's culinary section, and remaining scraps were composted at the university's community garden. Furthermore, the project opened an important discussion on food inequality among students.

The TU Dublin Food Pantry has proven highly effective in reducing food insecurity, while being efficient at reducing food waste. Expanding this initiative could help accelerate progress toward the **UN Sustainable Development Goals**. Given its strong national impact, the Food Pantry model presents an opportunity for successful implementation at universities internationally.

Website:

<https://food.cloud/news/tu-dublin-student-pantry>



ITALY - MEP Alumni & Graduates Summer School on Human Rights, Security and Europe

The summer school on ‘Human Rights, Security and Europe’, held in Ventotene Island, is an initiative in the field of youth empowerment and European integration. Organised by Model European Parliament Italia in collaboration with the MEP Alumni & Graduates network, the project took advantage of the MEP Italia’s special consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council. This status allowed the project to become a direct bridge between young European citizens and the highest levels of global governance and to **address the tension between the protection of individual liberties and the increasing demands for collective security** in areas such as counter-terrorism, migration management and digital surveillance.

From 18 to 21 July 2025, the program brought together 40 young Europeans to engage in a high-level conference titled ‘Balancing Acts: Fundamental Rights, Collective Security, and Societal Interests in Contemporary Europe’. The school hosted prestigious speakers, such as the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, the Director of EUROPOL, and former judges of the European Court of Human Rights, **connecting young people directly with the EU’s core**. Participants concluded the event by drafting policy statements for UN bodies, with some even delivering video statements directly to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva.

The project united young participants with a pan-European academic network of experts, ensuring that the debate on security and rights reflected a shared European consciousness. The drafting of policy recommendations demonstrated that **young Europeans can lead the conversation on international challenges**, projecting European values onto the global stage.

Website:	https://mepitalia.eu
Social media:	https://www.instagram.com/mep.italia/?hl=en
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/17yICqxcRoveZ_rOauOkogfr0yyipSqN/view?usp=sharing



LATVIA - Youth Exchange - Democracy Village

The Youth Exchange Democracy Village is a project aiming to promote **democratic values, a common European identity and active civic engagement, particularly where democratic systems face significant challenges**. The initiative's objective is to inspire greater participation in democracy by addressing the growing disengagement of young Europeans from politics and empowering them to become active contributors to their communities.

The project connected young people aged 14-17 from Latvia, Poland, Hungary, Ukraine and Georgia, as well as 5 group leaders. In Ukraine, democracy is under direct threat due to Russia's full-scale invasion, while in Georgia and Hungary, many young people feel disillusioned and disconnected from decision-making. In Poland and Latvia, there is a need to strengthen media literacy and active citizenship. Through non-formal education methods such as democracy simulations, debates, field visits to the Latvian Parliament, meetings with local stakeholders and intercultural dialogue, participants **explored how democratic systems function and how citizens can actively contribute to decision-making processes**. Working in international teams, young participants developed civic skills and confidence and realised that their voice matters.

The project was based on cooperation between organisations and young people from EU and non-EU Member States. This cross-border partnership allowed young people to exchange opinions shaped by their national realities. At the same time, the project promoted European values, such as **respect for human dignity, freedom, equality, human rights and the rule of law**. Participants worked and lived together in mixed-nationality teams, developing a shared European perspective.

Social media:	https://www.instagram.com/laya.latvia/
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VHXECkdGhr4_2OP40Asw-W_jPnNH9ME/view?usp=sharing



LITHUANIA- A Million Voices

A Million Voices – Uniting Through Stories is a cross-border initiative **supporting the mental health and integration of displaced Ukrainians living in Lithuania, Poland, and Germany.** Using art therapy and storytelling, the youth-led project aims to foster belonging and solidarity between displaced people and their host communities. Developed in response to the war in Ukraine, the project supports Ukrainian refugees in rebuilding emotional strength and a sense of home while encouraging host communities to connect with them as neighbours rather than statistics.

Running over 12 months, the project combines creative workshops, community events and public art installations, **enabling refugees to participate as storytellers and co-creators rather than passive beneficiaries.** Through creative and story-based methods, including voice and singing sessions, painting workshops or movement practices, participants can safely process trauma, grief and displacement. Community activities such as storytelling picnics, cooking gatherings and outdoor film nights bring refugees and local residents together through shared experiences, and on an equal footing. The project also leaves a lasting public impact through co-created murals and a storytelling nature walk route where Ukrainian voices can be heard via QR code-based audio formats. Interviews and film documentation capture the stories, lessons and practical methods developed throughout the project, allowing the model to be shared and replicated in other communities.

The project, which spans Lithuania, Poland and Germany, aims to strengthen Europe’s democratic fabric by taking on the **challenge of strengthening social cohesion even in times of crisis.** By bringing Ukrainian stories into the public sphere and promoting cross-border cooperation, the project shows how cultural exchange can support democratic resilience across Europe.

Website:	https://activeyouth.lt/?lang=en
Social media:	https://www.instagram.com/ay.institute/ https://www.facebook.com/activeyouthlt
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1V8V4W7FGJwVHyEDiqA1xReZV85lhEXA0/view?usp=sharing



LUXEMBOURG - Emblem - Digital Souvenirs - Luxembourg Passport

Emblem: Digital Souvenirs – Luxembourg Passport is a youth-led cultural project that promotes **intercultural understanding through art, heritage and digital innovation**. Developed within UNESCO’s Youth for Peace - Intercultural Leadership Programme, ‘Emblem’ is a free mobile app that allows residents and visitors to collect digital emblems linked to real cultural sites across Luxembourg. In Luxembourg’s multicultural society, where more than half of the population has foreign roots, the project creates a common activity that unites people regardless of the language they speak, where they are from or their political beliefs.

Emblem was created in response to growing social polarisation and the dominance of digital platforms that reward conflict and political division. The project proposes an alternative model – a cultural space where dialogue happens through shared experience. Implementation is based on close collaboration with municipalities, artists, cultural institutions and tourism professionals. **Fifty artists created emblems for fifty cultural sites across Luxembourg**, in the app’s ‘Luxembourg Passport’ collection. Each emblem represents a monument, public space or cultural landmark and includes artistic interpretation and contextual information. By physically visiting places and collecting emblems via GPS or QR codes, users actively engage with Luxembourg’s cultural heritage in an inclusive and participatory way.

Emblem is connected to a global network of young leaders working on dialogue, inclusion and peacebuilding. By empowering artists as cultural ambassadors and connecting people to places through meaningful digital souvenirs, Emblem strengthens European values such as **dignity, diversity, solidarity and peaceful coexistence**, while offering a model that can be replicated across Europe.

Website:	https://www.emblem.lu/
Social media:	https://www.instagram.com/emblem_app/ https://www.linkedin.com/company/emblemlu

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MALTA - NYC's High-Level Ministerial Conferences - Lessons from Malta's Council of Europe Presidency

This youth-led initiative emerged because of a clear gap between young people's participation and their actual influence on high-level European decision-making. Malta's Presidency of the Council of Europe in 2025 created an **opportunity to demonstrate how young people can be involved as policy influencers**, contributing to the New Democratic Pact for Europe.

The project engaged 89 young people, enabling them to **contribute directly to the New Democratic Pact for Europe and to develop concrete proposals** on education, the protection of democracy, innovation and the creation of a shared democratic narrative. Furthermore, it combined national and European participation, linking the Maltese National Youth Parliament with the Council of Europe's Youth Event. The initiative was supported by preparatory work to ensure participants understood relevant policy frameworks and could contribute effectively through workshops, briefings, simulations and meetings. During the Youth Event, participants advocated for youth representatives to share speaking time with ministers at the Council of Europe's Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth, reflecting a shift towards more inclusive decision-making. Through these activities, the project demonstrated that **youth participation can strengthen policy outcomes and set an important precedent for inclusive governance**.

By linking national youth participation in Malta with European-level ministerial processes, the project strengthened connections between local and international democracy. Youth proposals addressed transnational issues like **democratic education, misinformation, digital participation and inclusion, reflecting common European concerns**. This demonstrates that the project outcomes contributed meaningfully to broader European policy debates.

Website:	https://knz.org.mt/
Social media:	https://www.facebook.com/KNZMalta



NETHERLANDS - Our Democracy Report

Our Democracy Report is a **European democracy monitoring report and practical roadmap for strengthening democratic resilience authored by young people**. Conceived as a response to the European Commission’s Rule of Law Report, it complements institutional assessments with the lived experiences, priorities and solutions of young Europeans.

The initiative mobilised 60 young democracy rapporteurs to produce a comparative analysis of democracy across 6 key areas shaping democratic life: **participation in governance, justice systems, digital literacy, equality and non-discrimination, climate transition, and education and economic opportunity**. The selected rapporteurs represented diverse academic and civic backgrounds and received expert-led training and mentorship from Members of the European Parliament, judges and scholars. They later met at a bootcamp in Berlin to strengthen cooperation and consolidate findings. The report gained strong visibility, with over 800 report views shortly after launch and more than 170 000 combined impressions on social media, primarily reaching a young audience. It also attracted media attention and was presented to representatives of all EU Member States and candidate countries at the Network of National Contact Points on the Rule of Law in Brussels.

The project was European by design, bringing together 60 contributors from 17 European countries – Austria, Belgium, Czechia, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and Ukraine – who worked across borders in a continuous comparative exchange. The rapporteurs **identified common democratic challenges and highlighted best practices** in individual countries that can be applied across borders. The inclusion of Ukraine added an important perspective, namely that of a society defending democracy under existential threat.

Website:	https://www.ourruleoflaw.eu/
Social media:	https://www.linkedin.com/company/our-rule-of-law/ https://www.instagram.com/ourruleoflaw/
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1n4V2XILZeipkcWybFNmjoF9zZFw4_1YS/view?usp=sharing



POLAND - UkrainEU – Towards the European Future of Ukraine

The UkrainEU project **brought together students from Poland and Ukraine to work on Ukraine’s path to European Union membership** through practical learning and exchange. Created in response to the war in Ukraine, the initiative was developed after Polish students met representatives from the Kyiv School of Economics during a 2024 study visit to EU institutions. The project consisted of three main parts: a Model European Union simulation where 40 students role-played as national ministers negotiating European legislation, a week-long cultural exchange programme in Warsaw featuring workshops on intercultural communication and rule of law, and interactive educational workshops for secondary school students introducing them to European cooperation and Ukraine’s accession process.

Over 140 young people participated directly in the project. The Model European Union simulation, held during Poland’s Council Presidency, replicated real decision-making processes and was opened by the First Secretary of the Embassy of Ukraine in Poland. The summer exchange brought together **students from Kyiv and Polish universities** for workshops, meetings with officials and activities at the Europa Experience Centre.

The project demonstrated **cross-border cooperation through partnership between Polish and Ukrainian students**. Ukrainian students were involved in planning the project and took part in all activities alongside Polish students. The Embassy of Ukraine in Poland provided support as an international partner. By creating space for dialogue between students from both countries, the project built practical understanding of European institutions while establishing connections that continue through ongoing collaboration.

Website:	https://eusociety.info/projects/ukraineu
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jyjp2KK6TO0uJzqcGAceA9aA0MlxYwvU/view?usp=sharing

THE EUROPEAN CHARLEMAGNE YOUTH PRIZE 2026



PORTUGAL - European Para-Surf Tour

The European Para-Surf Tour is organised **by young people to promote inclusion and accessibility through sport**. The project uses surfing as a tool to bring together people with disabilities from across Europe, creating opportunities for participation that are often unavailable in their home communities. It is implemented through cooperation between European youth organisers, disability associations, volunteers and local communities. The tour demonstrates how sport can effectively promote European values of inclusion, solidarity and non-discrimination in practice.

The tour has directly involved over 300 people with disabilities across its previous editions. **For many participants, it represents their first experience of the sea and surfing.** It delivers a measurable impact including increased confidence, autonomy and a sense of belonging. Participants and communities receive information about EU disability rights and inclusion policies.

The tour brings together participants and disability organisations from multiple EU Member States. The flagship stage in Viana do Castelo gathers people from four countries, while future stages are planned in Spain and Africa. The organising team includes young people from 10 European countries. By creating structured opportunities for cross-border participation and cooperation, **the project strengthens European identity and youth engagement while demonstrating practical implementation** of inclusion policies across different countries and communities.

Website:	www.europexxi.org
Social media:	https://www.instagram.com/europexxi/ https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100067551377110
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fa8rcVOX5KvMFpb3N0pYFAdP7w3qrJL/view?usp=sharing



ROMANIA – European Digital Citizenship Education Week 2025

The aim of the project is to **help young people understand, practise and promote democratic values in the digital world**. European Digital Citizenship Education Week 2025 was a European educational campaign organised with and by young people as part of the European Year of Digital Citizenship Education 2025. The initiative focused on media literacy, digital rights, online safety and responsible participation online. The campaign mobilised schools, youth centres, libraries and community organisations to create over 115 activities addressing media literacy, digital rights, online safety and how to participate in democracy online. It also encouraged local organisations to create their own activities.

The project targeted young people and aimed to bring digital citizenship education closer to communities that often have limited access to such learning opportunities. Between 15 and 21 September 2025, schools, non-governmental organisations, libraries and youth centres organised more than 115 events in different formats. Preparatory work included a ‘Training of Trainers’ in Bucharest, webinars and mentoring for local coordinators. In total, 3 802 people took part directly, with an online reach of over 180 000 people. Participants reported greater **awareness of digital rights, safer online behaviour and a stronger sense of responsibility when engaging with information and in discussions online**.

The campaign demonstrated **European cooperation through coordinated action across 15 countries**. It had a dedicated website featuring a live European map showing all registered events, helping participants see their local work as part of a wider European movement. Implemented during the European Year of Digital Citizenship Education 2025, the campaign brought together young people from different countries around shared digital challenges. The project fostered a sense of European belonging and showed that democratic participation also takes place in the digital space.

Website:	https://edceweek.prisma-network.eu/.
Social media:	https://www.instagram.com/geyc.ro/. https://www.linkedin.com/company/geyc/?viewAsMember=true.
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1r4SGD9lX8uo2rQCFklyxiux43Ur4ne03/view?usp=sharing.

THE EUROPEAN CHARLEMAGNE YOUTH PRIZE 2026



SLOVAKIA – European Rural Youth Summit 2025 (ERYS)

The European Rural Youth Summit (ERYS) is a European initiative created to **strengthen the voice of young people from rural areas** in discussions about Europe’s future. ERYs responds to long-standing inequalities between urban and rural regions, particularly in terms of participation, access to opportunities and the representation of young people in decision-making processes at both national and European level.

The project targets young people living in rural communities across multiple European countries. Through workshops, discussions and meetings with experts and decision-makers, participants **develop practical skills, build confidence and realise their opinions actually matter**. Participants return home more actively engaged in public life, often starting local initiatives and bringing back inspiration and good practices from across Europe. The international network built during the Summit continues through the creation of new projects and partnerships.

By **connecting young people from villages and small towns across multiple countries**, the ERYs builds bridges between local rural life and European decision-making. It empowers young people to see themselves not only as members of local communities, but also as active European citizens capable of influencing the future of Europe. The project creates a lasting network of engaged young people in rural communities who contribute to making Europe more inclusive, showing that strong communities exist everywhere, not just in big cities.

Website:	https://vpms.sk/
Social media:	https://www.instagram.com/erysummit/ https://www.instagram.com/oz_vpms/
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dUxoNOW9o2P-zqmjKVwL93bY-zyKCVky/view?usp=sharing



SLOVENIA - Zlet Zveze tabornikov Slovenije 2025

Zlet Zveze tabornikov Slovenije 2025 is a youth project organised by the Scout Association of Slovenia that brought together over 1 200 young people and volunteers to **create a temporary ‘Youth City’**. During the ten-day event, young people and volunteers lived together and shared responsibility for daily life, programme activities and community decisions. Young people took active roles in planning activities, leading groups and solving practical challenges. Inspired by the scouting tradition of learning by doing, the project combined volunteering, non-formal education and outdoor living to create a safe and inclusive space.

The project involved young people and volunteers from Slovenia. Activities included workshops on sustainability, social inclusion and civic engagement, as well as joint community tasks and outdoor learning. **Young people were directly involved in leadership, organisation and decision-making**, which helped them develop practical skills such as teamwork, leadership, communication and critical thinking.

About 10 % of participants came from other European countries. They solved challenges together, made collective decisions and built community, practicing **European values of solidarity, democracy and respect for diversity in concrete ways**. The project created new partnerships between youth organisations and encouraged participants to bring the knowledge and experience gained at the event back to their local communities and to future international youth activities.

Website:	https://zlet.taborniki.si/
Social media:	https://www.facebook.com/taborniki/?locale=sl_SI https://www.instagram.com/taborniki_si/
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1arucNM2QUHq4uaDgDHeGtJieemod00cr/view?usp=sharing



SPAIN - European Guanxi

European Guanxi is a network founded to **strengthen informed European analysis on China and relations between the EU and China**. Created by young Europeans in response to the absence of a Europe-wide platform connecting young people engaged with China, the initiative provides a structured space for policy discourse, research and dialogue. The network enables young Europeans to produce analysis that contributes to the field and shapes societal understanding of relations with China. The network brings together over 500 members from more than 60 countries, primarily from EU Member States but also globally, reflecting that these relations are both a European and international issue.

Since 2020, European Guanxi has published over 250 analytical articles and produces a regular newsletter and podcast. It also publishes the European Youth Perspectives on International Relations of China, a peer-reviewed annual journal led by young professionals. The network organises expert panels, career events and its flagship European Guanxi Youth Conference held annually in Brussels, where **young Europeans present research and engage directly with policymakers, diplomats and senior experts**.

European Guanxi demonstrates a strong **European dimension by connecting young people across borders in order to build a shared European perspective on China**. At a time of rising geopolitical tension and diverging national approaches, the network provides space for joint European policy discussion. Its activities link European youth with experts and institutions across the continent. It strengthens European cohesion on China, supports democratic participation and contributes to a more coherent European voice on international affairs.

Website:	https://www.europeanguanxi.com/
Social media:	https://www.linkedin.com/company/european-guanxi/ https://www.youtube.com/@europeanguanxi
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ABXGtojphYVnWz7-7HsqgcxvTge7Czx1/view?usp=sharing



SWEDEN – The Brussels Effect

The Brussels Effect is an online platform that **publishes EU policy articles written by students and young professionals**. Founded in January 2025, the project aims to engage young people in EU policymaking and bring diverse perspectives to policy debates, while helping contributors build professional credentials through the publication of their work. It was created to address a common barrier faced by young people: gaining credentials requires opportunities, yet opportunities often require prior credentials.

By curating, editing and publishing submissions, the platform offers young contributors both a **public platform to reach an engaged audience and credentials that demonstrate their expertise and help them advance their careers**. Since its launch, The Brussels Effect has featured 24 writers from 8 EU Member States and 4 non-EU countries with diverse academic and professional backgrounds, and has managed to bring diverse perspectives into EU policy debates. The project has achieved significant visibility, reaching over 56 000 impressions on LinkedIn and 17 000 article views on Substack. Several young writers have since secured positions in think tanks and non-governmental organisations working on EU policy, suggesting that the platform may help young people in demonstrating their capabilities to potential employers.

As contributors write about their views on EU policy and exchange ideas through their posts, the platform has created a space for the exchange of **different perspectives on EU issues** and has brought together young authors and readers from across Europe. By encouraging young people to participate in public cross-border debates, the project contributes to a shared European identity.

Website:	https://brusselseffect.substack.com/.
Social media:	https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-brussels-effect.
Attachment:	https://drive.google.com/file/d/18hLoA6b2X1_jS9fmkZ1qygPqqM_1kq3I/view?usp=sharing