

CHOOSE

Implementing a drug-(ab)use prevention program & shaping youth policies
with disadvantaged young people for psychosocial well-being promotion
101187341



STRENGTH IN SUPPORT, POWER IN CHOICE



Newsletter 1

Choose-Life project

At Choose-Life, we work with young people to prevent rising drug use by focusing on what really matters: participation, well-being, education, and inclusion. From Italy, Portugal, Poland, Greece, Cyprus, Serbia to Belgium we empower teenagers (14-21 years old) who often feel left out, train 120 youth workers to better support them, and involve 240 young people in prevention programs that mix creative learning with hands-on community action. It is worth noting that the large majority of survey respondents were girls, which, according to scientific literature, may partly explain the results observed. The survey is available at: <https://www.chooselife-project.eu/resources/>.

We are creating practical tools that everyone can use: a Curriculum, a Toolkit of fun and healthy activities, a Youth Worker's Manual, and a Manifesto shaped by young people themselves with ideas for real change.

Through youth councils, awareness campaigns, and direct policy engagement, we are reaching more than 7,000 people. Most importantly, we are helping young people build resilience, find their voice, and shape healthier futures for themselves and their communities.





**Co-funded by
the European Union**

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Kick-Off Meeting in Palermo, Italy

On 15-16 January 2025, we gathered in Palermo, Italy, for the first Choose-Life meeting. It was a chance for all of us to come together, share our perspectives, and make sure we are aligned on the project's goals, activities, and timeline.

We exchanged insights about the situation in each of our countries and walked through the upcoming activities, roles, and responsibilities. Together, we agreed on the next steps: running surveys and focus groups with young people and experts, co-designing the Choose-Life Curriculum and Toolkit, preparing the International Bootcamp, engaging youth networks, and rolling out our communication activities.

We also set clear deadlines and feedback points so that we stay on track and keep moving forward smoothly. The energy in Palermo set a strong foundation for the exciting work ahead!

Youth views on drugs and quality of life

“The voice of youth is the compass for a healthier tomorrow”.

Youth perspectives: Risks, awareness, and life standards

The Choose Life survey gathered insights from 357 young people across the countries, revealing that substance use is most often linked to stress, peer pressure, and the desire for fun. While legal substances like alcohol, energy drinks, and painkillers were most common, cannabis use was reported occasionally in some countries, and awareness of newer synthetic drugs remained low.

Young people emphasized that effective prevention should move away from fear-based approaches and instead focus on peer-led initiatives, real-life stories, and mental health support, highlighting the importance of safe spaces, strong relationships, and opportunities for sports, creativity, and community engagement.

**Stay Tuned
for More Updates!**

As the Choose Life project progresses, we'll keep you informed about our achievements, milestones, and future activities.