



Report from the project and the Training Course in Borgo Danilo Dolci

30/09/25 - 07/10/25



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Project partnership

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DANILO DOLCI
BORGO DI TRAPPETO



INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

YAP in Brief

The **Youth Workers Against Poverty (YAP)** project (1/1/2025 - 31/12/2025) was designed to address the persistent and complex challenge of **youth poverty** and **social exclusion** across Europe. Poverty is not only a lack of material resources but also a consequence of **social exclusion, inequality, limited access to opportunities**, and insufficient community support. Recent EU data highlighted that **21.4% of the EU population is at risk of poverty or social exclusion**, with Southern and Central regions facing particularly high rates. In some areas, such as Sicily, poverty levels reached **18.3% in 2021**, underlining the urgency for targeted, sustainable interventions.

YAP focused on **empowering youth workers** as **catalysts for change**, equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to **identify local poverty challenges, foster social inclusion, and promote youth entrepreneurship**. The project adopted a **bottom-up, community-driven approach**, acknowledging that effective solutions require the active engagement of those who understand their communities best.

The consortium brought together **six partner organizations** from **Romania, Italy, Croatia, Spain, Luxembourg, and Portugal**, selected based on their expertise, mission alignment, and direct experience with youth and disadvantaged communities. Partners contributed insights from their **national contexts**, including rural and urban areas, high-poverty zones, and marginalized populations, enabling cross-border learning and sharing of best practices. Each organization benefited from increased **capacity, innovative tools, and strengthened European networks** to address poverty more effectively.

At the core of YAP was a **Training Course (TC)** for Youth Workers, designed to enhance **professional and personal competences**.

Participants received practical training in **community development, leadership, project management, conflict resolution, empathy, intercultural understanding, and digital skills**. They were encouraged to design inclusive, sustainable initiatives targeting disadvantaged youth, fostering active participation and social cohesion. The TC also included visits to local communities, such as **Moltivolti in Palermo**, a social entrepreneurship project that allowed participants to interact directly with people experiencing poverty and gain first-hand understanding of local needs.

YAP addressed multiple **target groups**:

- **Direct beneficiaries:** youth workers, who gained advanced skills to develop and manage community projects, engage marginalized youth, and implement innovative anti-poverty strategies.
- **Indirect beneficiaries:** young people and local communities, who benefited from improved youth work practices, inclusive programs, social entrepreneurship initiatives, and strengthened community ties. Partner organizations also gained new ideas, methodologies, and EU-wide networks to enhance their impact.

The project created **lasting impact at multiple levels**:

- **Individual:** youth workers acquired skills, confidence, and leadership capacity to engage marginalized youth effectively.
- **Organizational:** sending organizations improved the quality, sustainability, and reach of their programs, strengthened their European partnerships, and expanded their methodological toolkit.
- **Community:** local initiatives addressed specific needs in

education, employment support, and social inclusion, promoting solidarity and resilience.

- **European:** cross-border collaboration and sharing of best practices fostered European solidarity, enhanced awareness of youth poverty, and encouraged policy support for inclusive youth programs.

Aligned with the **Erasmus+ priorities**, YAP promoted inclusion, diversity, active participation, personal and professional development, digital transformation, and sustainable practices. Special attention was given to youth with fewer opportunities, ensuring tailored support, mentorship, and accessible learning methods. Beyond the Training Course, participants were encouraged to implement community-driven projects that would extend the benefits of the project **well beyond its duration**, creating a ripple effect of social impact across regions and countries.

YAP Objectives

Poverty is a complex and persistent challenge that affects millions of people across Europe. It is not merely the absence of material resources but is closely linked to social exclusion, inequality, and limited access to essential opportunities such as education, employment, and social services. Eurostat data from 2023 shows that 21.4% of the EU population is at risk of poverty or social exclusion, with severe material deprivation slightly increasing from 6.7% in 2022 to 6.8% in 2023. These figures are particularly critical in southern and eastern European regions, where socio-economic disparities are most pronounced. For example, in southern Italy, absolute poverty rose from 5.8% in 2016 to 10.1% in 2017, with Sicily reaching 18.3% in 2021. Such data highlight the urgent need for targeted interventions that promote social inclusion, economic empowerment, and sustainable development.

The **Youth Workers Against Poverty (YAP)** project is designed to address these pressing challenges. It recognizes that effective solutions require bottom-up, community-driven approaches rather than solely top-down policies. Youth workers are uniquely positioned to act as catalysts for change, given their deep connections to local communities, their understanding of local needs, and their ability to engage young people directly in initiatives aimed at combating poverty. The project focuses on empowering youth workers to develop innovative solutions that address both the symptoms and root causes of poverty, emphasizing youth entrepreneurship, social inclusion, and sustainable community development.

The **general objective** of YAP is to enhance the capacity of youth workers to identify, understand, and address poverty-related challenges in their communities. The project equips participants with knowledge, skills, and tools to create meaningful, long-term impact, fostering social cohesion, equal access to opportunities, and local economic growth. The Training Course (TC) provides youth workers with a comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic factors contributing to poverty, along with practical competences to design and implement community-based initiatives. This approach ensures that interventions target both immediate needs and structural causes of deprivation.

The **specific objectives** of the project are as follows. First, the TC aims to increase youth workers' capacity to understand poverty in all its dimensions, including material deprivation, social exclusion, and systemic inequality. Participants will analyze national and regional disparities, study relevant statistics, and reflect on how poverty manifests differently across Europe. Second, the project emphasizes youth entrepreneurship, encouraging youth workers to design initiatives that create new economic opportunities and foster sustainable growth in their communities. Third, the project prioritizes social inclusion, equality, and the promotion of values such as empathy,

solidarity, and social justice. Youth workers will learn to design and implement projects that extend beyond material assistance, fostering resilience and active participation among marginalized youth. Finally, the TC fosters collaboration and networking across countries and organizations, enabling participants from Romania, Italy, Croatia, Spain, Estonia, Luxembourg, and Portugal to exchange best practices, co-develop initiatives, and build lasting professional relationships that extend the project's impact beyond the immediate training experience.

The project is closely aligned with the objectives of the Erasmus+ programme and Youth Workers Mobility, particularly in the areas of inclusion, active participation, digital transformation, and environmental sustainability. Inclusion and diversity are central to YAP, as the project specifically targets regions with high poverty rates and social exclusion, addressing regional disparities and supporting communities in overcoming economic challenges. By equipping youth workers with the skills and tools necessary to engage disadvantaged youth, the project strengthens community bonds, ensures equal access to opportunities, and fosters sustainable social development. Active participation and civic engagement are promoted by empowering youth workers to inspire young people to take part in community initiatives, fostering a sense of responsibility, solidarity, and active citizenship. Additionally, the project integrates digital tools alongside non-formal learning to enhance skills, facilitate knowledge exchange, and ensure long-term sustainability. Environmental sustainability is embedded through eco-friendly practices at the TC venue, promoting responsible consumption and organizational practices. Cross-border cooperation is a further source of European added value, creating networks that support knowledge-sharing, foster best practices, and develop innovative strategies to tackle poverty collectively.

The **target groups** of the project include both direct and indirect beneficiaries. The direct group comprises youth workers

participating in the TC, who are essential to implementing community-based poverty reduction strategies. The training equips them with skills in project management, leadership, empathy, conflict resolution, communication, and social entrepreneurship, ensuring they can design and implement initiatives tailored to local needs. The indirect target groups include sending organizations, young people, and local communities. Organizations benefit from enhanced capacity, European networking opportunities, and innovative approaches brought back by trained youth workers. Young people benefit from inclusive community projects, skills development, and active participation, while local communities experience tangible improvements in social cohesion, employment, education, and support for marginalized groups. Special attention is given to high-poverty regions such as southern Italy and other participating regions facing severe socio-economic challenges, ensuring interventions are context-specific and impactful.

The **expected impact** of YAP is substantial and multi-level. Youth workers will enhance their professional competencies, improve engagement with marginalized youth, acquire tools for promoting equality and social inclusion, strengthen leadership and project management skills, and gain knowledge of EU programmes such as Youthpass. Participating organizations will see increased capacity to deliver high-quality programs, enhanced credibility and sustainability, stronger EU networks, and improved ability to support disadvantaged groups. Communities will benefit from targeted projects addressing education, employment, social inclusion, and mental health, while young people will gain skills, confidence, and active roles in community development, helping to break cycles of poverty. At regional, national, and European levels, YAP will influence youth work practices, foster policy development, and create transnational networks for long-term collaboration and exchange of best practices.

YAP Methodologies

The **Youth Workers Against Poverty (YAP)** project adopts a wide range of **non-formal learning methods** designed to actively engage participants and ensure effective, meaningful learning throughout the training course. Our approach prioritizes experiential learning, interaction, and participant-centered activities, aiming to equip youth workers with the skills and knowledge necessary to address youth poverty and social exclusion in their communities.

One of the core methods employed in the project is the **World Café**, a participatory approach that fosters open dialogue, collective problem-solving, and the sharing of diverse perspectives. For example, during the “Empowering Youth Work” session on Day 3, participants rotate between tables to discuss different aspects of youth work and poverty, generating ideas and solutions collaboratively. This method not only encourages the exchange of experiences but also strengthens participants’ capacity for reflection and co-creation.

Cooperative learning plays a central role in the project, with participants working in small groups to achieve shared objectives. During activities focused on developing community initiatives, as well as in the final workshops on Day 7, participants brainstorm, plan, and implement strategies together. This group work fosters teamwork, encourages the exchange of innovative ideas, and enhances collective problem-solving skills that are essential for youth workers operating in diverse and challenging environments.

The project also integrates **interactive lectures and group discussions** to provide participants with essential knowledge while simultaneously promoting engagement and reflection. Interactive lectures offer background and theoretical insights on issues such as employment, empathy, and homelessness, while group discussions allow participants to share their perspectives,

analyse concepts critically, and deepen their understanding through dialogue. This combination ensures a comprehensive learning experience that balances knowledge acquisition with active participation.

To build empathy and practical problem-solving skills, the project includes **role play and simulation exercises**. Activities such as “Breaking Barriers – a Community in Line” on Day 5 allow participants to act out scenarios related to poverty and community engagement. By immersing themselves in realistic situations, participants can explore challenges faced by marginalized groups, experiment with solutions, and gain a deeper understanding of social dynamics, all within a supportive learning environment.

Brainstorming sessions are used throughout the training course, particularly in activities addressing barriers and solutions to poverty. These sessions stimulate creativity, encourage collaborative thinking, and allow participants to develop innovative approaches to challenges faced in their work with young people. By generating a wide range of ideas collectively, participants enhance their capacity for strategic thinking and planning in youth work contexts.

Digital literacy is another key component of the project. Participants will integrate **digital tools and online platforms** into various activities, including project planning, collaboration, documentation, and evaluation. This not only improves their ability to manage projects efficiently but also equips them with modern digital competencies that are increasingly relevant in youth work and community development.

A particularly impactful element of the training course is **experiential learning** through a visit to Moltivolti in Palermo. During this visit, participants will observe practical methods of poverty alleviation and engage directly with disadvantaged individuals. This hands-on experience allows participants to

connect theoretical concepts discussed during the course with real-world practices, deepening their understanding and inspiring innovative approaches to their work.

The project also incorporates **Forum Theatre** exercises to enhance leadership skills, empathy, and critical thinking. On Day 4, participants engage in interactive theatre exercises that simulate social situations related to poverty and community work. This methodology allows participants to explore different perspectives, practice problem-solving, and experiment with approaches to social challenges in a safe and supportive environment, fostering both personal and professional growth.

To ensure the quality and effectiveness of the non-formal learning methods, the project relies on the extensive expertise of CESIE and its experienced trainers. With a strong history of delivering innovative non-formal education projects, CESIE ETS brings together a team highly skilled in participatory methodologies and experiential learning. Throughout the training course, digital evaluation tools will be employed to collect participant feedback daily, allowing for real-time adjustments and continuous improvement of activities. This systematic approach guarantees that the methods used remain relevant, impactful, and aligned with the objectives of the training course, while also promoting sustainability through reduced paper use.

Through this combination of experiential, participatory, and reflective learning methodologies, the YAP project ensures that participants not only acquire knowledge and skills but also develop the confidence, empathy, and practical competencies necessary to address youth poverty effectively and sustainably within their communities.

YAP TRAINING COURSE AGENDA

TIME	Tuesday 30.09	Wednesday 01.10	Thursday 02.10	Friday 03.10
9.30	Arrival of participants	Presentation of the project and team, learning environment and hosting structure	Empowering Youthwork - World Café	Youth - Led initiatives - good practices for developing community
BREAK				
	Welcome and accommodation	Expectations, concerns and motivations Introduction to Youth Pass and European Portfolio	Sharing Personal Experience with poverty	Leading initiatives – leadership and empathy 1
13.00 - LUNCH				
15.00	Ice-breaking and teambuilding exercises	Introduction to the project topics	Empowering Youth Work, obstacles and solutions against poverty	Leading initiatives – leadership and empathy 1
BREAK				
	Ice-breaking and teambuilding exercises	Open Space on Poverty in partners' countries	Breaking stereotypes about poverty	Forum theatre – leadership and empathy 3
18.00 - DAILY EVALUATION				
Evening	Welcome dinner	Intercultural dinner 1	Intercultural dinner 2	Free time

Saturday 04.10	Sunday 05.10	Monday 06.10	Tuesday 07.10	Wednesday 08.10
Breaking Barriers -a community in line	Changing the perspectives - Study visit to Palermo and its "Luxury" and "Real" life	Creating a community Project against Poverty workshop 1 - Conceptualisation	Debriefing and lessons learned from the Local Event	Departure day
Breaking Barriers-a community in line	Changing the perspectives - Study visit to Palermo and its "Luxury" and "Real" life	Creating a community Project against Poverty workshop 2 - Implementation	Introduction of the Erasmus+, and European Funding Opportunities	Departure day
Breaking Barriers - role play on community work	Changing the perspective - Study Visit to "Moltivolti"	Creating a project: Part 3 – Finalisation	Youthpass, European Portfolio for Youth Leaders and Youth Workers	Departure day
Breaking Barriers - role play on community work	Changing the perspective - Study Visit to "Moltivolti"	Creating a project: Part 4 – Presentation	Final Evaluation The suitcase	Departure day
Movie night	Free time	Local Event - Community projects Presentation and intercultural exchange	Farewell dinner	Departure day



Implementation of the activities

DAY 1

Presentation of the project and team, learning environment and hosting structure

The first day of the Training Course was dedicated to welcoming participants, creating a shared understanding of the project's purpose, and setting the foundations for a collaborative and supportive learning journey. The session began with an official presentation of the **Youth Workers Against Poverty (YAP)** project, during which participants were introduced to the central themes, objectives, structure, and expectations of the training week.

This moment allowed the group to develop a common vision of the programme's aims and to understand how each session would contribute to their personal and professional growth as youth workers engaged in the fight against poverty and social exclusion.

The facilitation team—composed of the project coordinator, three experienced facilitators, and one support staff member—was presented in detail. Each member introduced their background, role within the project, and specific responsibilities throughout the training. This transparent introduction helped participants feel supported from the very beginning and contributed to building trust within the group. The team emphasized its commitment to fostering a learning environment based on **horizontal interaction, mutual respect, and active participation**, underlining that each participant's experiences and expertise would be valued as essential contributions to the collective learning process.

The session continued with a shared reflection on the **learning environment** proposed for the training course. Participants explored the key principles guiding the programme: collaboration rather than competition, collective knowledge-building, and an individualized learning process supported by the group. The facilitators introduced the pedagogical approach that would characterize the training—rooted in **non-formal education**, experiential learning, and peer exchange—and encouraged participants to co-create a safe, inclusive space where everyone could express themselves freely. Together, the group established the foundations of a learning atmosphere grounded in openness, empathy, and curiosity, ensuring that every participant felt welcomed and ready to engage.

In the second part of the day, the group was introduced to the **hosting structure, Borgo Danilo Dolci**, a peaceful and welcoming venue located in **Trappeto**, approximately 40 minutes from Palermo. The facilitators presented the features of the venue,

highlighting its vast green areas, outdoor spaces, and the natural surroundings that would accompany the group throughout the week.

This environment played an important role in supporting the training's objectives, offering participants not only comfortable shared facilities but also an atmosphere that encouraged reflection, creativity, and connection with others. The tranquillity of the space, combined with its proximity to nature, facilitated a sense of community from the very first day and helped participants transition smoothly into the immersive training experience.

Trappeto, represents a great example of how the extreme poverty and social marginalization could be turned into hope: the suffering endured by the citizens of the beautiful coastal village would turn this place into an experimentation lab for active participation and political commitment against those who exploit the most marginalized part of the society.

Danilo Dolci, a very important sociologist coming from Northern Italy in 1950', chose this place to be his new home, welcomed by Sicilian people as a person believing in social change and social justice.

In the framework of this important place, the YAP Training Course has followed Danilo Dolci's footsteps in generating community development and be prepared to fight social injustices everywhere.



Expectations, Concerns and Motivations

Following the introductory presentation of the project and the learning environment, the first day continued with a session dedicated to exploring participants' expectations, concerns and motivations. This activity played an essential role in shaping the group dynamic from the very beginning, as it offered a structured moment for participants to express what they hoped to gain, what they felt unsure about, and what inspired them to take part in the Youth Workers Against Poverty Training Course.

The facilitators introduced the session by underlining the importance of transparency and shared ownership in non-formal education. Participants were invited to reflect individually and then collectively on their personal and professional reasons for joining the programme. Through guided prompts and open discussion, they were encouraged to articulate what they wished to learn, what kind of challenges they were ready to embrace, and which aspects of the training they were most looking forward

to. This process helped the group identify common interests and recognise the diverse experiences and perspectives each participant brought to the learning space.

The exploration of **motivations** revealed a strong collective desire to better understand and address poverty in their communities, gain new tools for supporting disadvantaged youth, and exchange practices with peers from different European contexts. Many participants shared their wish to strengthen their competencies in social inclusion, community engagement and youth empowerment, demonstrating a deep commitment to creating positive change in their local environments.

At the same time, participants were invited to express their **concerns**, which ranged from uncertainty about language barriers or the intensity of the programme to personal doubts about stepping outside their comfort zones. The facilitators acknowledged these feelings and reassured the group that such concerns were natural and welcome. The open discussion helped normalise shared anxieties and reinforced the idea that the training course was designed as a safe, inclusive and adaptable environment where each person could learn at their own pace.



The session also addressed participants' **expectations** regarding the structure and content of the training. Through collective sharing and input from the facilitation team, expectations were aligned with the objectives and methodologies of the project. Participants expressed their interest in practical tools, hands-on activities, real-life examples of anti-poverty work, and opportunities for intercultural exchange. As they listened to each other, the group began to develop a sense of mutual support and a clearer understanding of the common path that lay ahead.

By bringing motivations, expectations and concerns to light, this session built a foundation of trust, openness and shared responsibility among participants. It aligned the group with the aims of the training course and ensured that individual needs were acknowledged from the outset. The activity also contributed to strengthening group cohesion, allowing participants to recognise that they were embarking on a collective journey shaped by diverse experiences, shared values and a common commitment to fighting poverty through youth work.

Introduction to project topics: Poverty, Social Exclusion and Marginalization

During the afternoon of the first day, the CESIE team introduced participants to the key thematic pillars of the YAP Training Course: **poverty, social exclusion, marginalization**, and the role of **active citizenship, youth work and community development** in combating them. This session served as an essential conceptual foundation for the entire programme, ensuring that participants shared a common understanding of the issues they would explore in greater depth throughout the week.

The facilitators opened the session by presenting an overview of poverty as a multidimensional phenomenon, moving beyond the notion of material deprivation to explore its social, cultural

and psychological dimensions. Participants reflected on how poverty manifests in different European contexts, recognising that its roots often lie in structural inequalities, lack of access to opportunities and systemic forms of discrimination. The discussion highlighted that poverty cannot be reduced to a single cause and that effective responses must consider the complexity of the lived experiences of young people and communities.

The presentation then expanded to the concepts of **social exclusion and marginalization**, illustrating how individuals and groups become isolated from resources, rights, and social participation. Through examples drawn from the partner countries, the facilitators demonstrated how exclusion can arise from economic disparities, educational barriers, geographical disadvantages, ethnic or cultural discrimination, and limited access to essential services. This broader perspective helped participants understand that social exclusion often reinforces existing poverty, creating cycles that are difficult to break without targeted and sustained interventions.

Building on this conceptual grounding, the facilitators introduced the central idea that poverty and exclusion can be challenged through **active citizenship, youth work and community development**. They explored how youth workers can play a transformative role within their communities by promoting participation, fostering dialogue and empowering young people to engage in local decision-making processes. The discussion emphasised that active citizenship is not limited to political involvement, but also includes everyday actions that strengthen community bonds, promote solidarity and support the well-being of vulnerable groups.

Participants were invited to consider examples of community-based initiatives capable of addressing local needs, from grassroots projects promoting social inclusion to youth-led actions fostering cooperation and resilience. The facilitators highlighted the importance of using non-formal education as

a tool to enhance critical thinking, empathy, leadership and creativity—competencies essential for generating meaningful and sustainable change.

Throughout the session, participants were encouraged to ask questions, share experiences from their home countries and reflect on the specific challenges faced by the young people they work with. This interactive dialogue allowed the group to connect theoretical concepts with real-life situations, reinforcing the relevance of the project themes to their everyday practice as youth workers.

By the end of this thematic introduction, participants had gained a deeper awareness of the complexity of poverty and social exclusion and a clearer understanding of how youth work, active citizenship and community development can contribute to breaking cycles of marginalization. The session effectively prepared the group for the following days, where these concepts would be explored through practical activities, experiential learning and collaborative reflection.

Open space on Poverty, Social Exclusion and Marginalization in partners' countries

The final session of Day 1 was dedicated to an **Open Space** activity designed to deepen participants' understanding of how poverty, social exclusion and marginalization manifest across the different national contexts represented in the Training Course. Participants were invited to work in **national groups**—bringing together youth workers from **Italy, Spain, Romania, Luxembourg, Croatia and Portugal**—to explore the specific dynamics of these issues in their respective countries. This collective inquiry allowed participants to connect the broader conceptual frameworks introduced earlier in the day with the concrete realities faced by communities across Europe.

The session began with a short introduction to the Open Space methodology, emphasising its purpose: to create a flexible, participant-led environment where individuals could explore themes freely, exchange knowledge and engage in meaningful dialogue without predefined constraints. The facilitators encouraged groups to rely on their preparatory research, personal experiences of youth work and understanding of their local contexts.

Once divided into national teams, participants began analysing the three main themes—**poverty, social exclusion and marginalization**—by identifying key statistics, trends, vulnerable groups and structural causes within their countries. Each team approached the task through different lenses: economic, social, geographical, cultural or political. They discussed issues such as unemployment among youth, regional inequalities, educational barriers, homelessness, migration dynamics, Roma inclusion, rural depopulation and the effects of inflation or rising living costs.

- The **Italian group** reflected on the deep-rooted socio-economic disparities between the northern and southern regions of the country, emphasizing how these inequalities have contributed to a steady rise in absolute poverty. Particular attention was given to the long-term consequences of unemployment, underemployment and precarious labour conditions, especially for young people and families, and how these factors limit social mobility and access to essential services.



- Participants from **Spain** highlighted the persistent challenge of high youth unemployment and its impact on life opportunities and future prospects. They also discussed the role of regional inequalities in shaping access to education, employment and social services, with a specific focus on the social vulnerabilities experienced by families living in urban peripheries and marginalized neighbourhoods.
- The **Romanian** team focused on the structural disadvantages faced by rural areas, including limited access to quality education, healthcare and employment opportunities. They also addressed the issue of persistent discrimination and social exclusion affecting communities, underlining how these factors reinforce cycles of poverty and hinder social inclusion.
- Representatives from **Luxembourg** explored the paradox of poverty within a high-income country, drawing attention to the growing gap between wealth and living conditions. Discussions centred on the high cost of living, housing insecurity and increasing socio-economic inequalities, particularly affecting young people from migrant backgrounds who face additional barriers to inclusion and stability.
- The **Croatian** team discussed the interconnected issues of unemployment and depopulation in rural and less-developed regions, highlighting how these trends weaken local communities and economies. They also examined the challenges associated with the social and labour market reintegration of marginalized groups, including long-term unemployed individuals and those at risk of social exclusion.

- Youth workers from **Portugal** reflected on pronounced regional disparities and the phenomenon of youth drain from rural and economically disadvantaged areas. They highlighted the structural barriers faced by families and young people in rural regions and low-income urban areas, including limited access to education, employment opportunities and public services, which contribute to ongoing inequality and social exclusion.



The atmosphere of the session was dynamic and enthusiastic, with each group organising notes, sketching diagrams, preparing short presentations or mind maps, and relating statistical data to real-life cases drawn from their youth work experience. The Open Space format encouraged contributions from all group members, fostering a sense of shared ownership and collective intelligence.



After completing their analyses, groups presented their findings in an informal marketplace-style setting, allowing participants to visit each national “station” and learn about the challenges identified in the other countries. This exchange created a rich comparative perspective, helping participants recognize common patterns—such as regional inequalities, barriers to education and structural discrimination—while also appreciating the specificities of each national context.

Through this collaborative process, participants developed a clearer and more nuanced picture of the complexity of poverty and social exclusion across Europe. The session laid a crucial foundation for the following days, enabling participants to approach the training with a deeper awareness of the diversity of challenges faced by young people and communities, and with an increased motivation to explore shared strategies for meaningful change.



Intercultural Dinner (Italy, Spain and Luxembourg/Armenia)

The first intercultural dinner of the Training Course offered participants an engaging and vibrant introduction to the cultural heritage of three of the represented countries: **Italy, Spain and Luxembourg/Armenia**. Held in a warm and convivial atmosphere, the evening was designed not only to celebrate cultural diversity but also to strengthen group cohesion at the very beginning of the mobility experience.

Participants were welcomed with a rich display of traditional foods prepared or brought by each national group. The **Spanish team** offered a selection of *charcuterie*, featuring emblematic flavours such as cured meats and cheeses representative of regional culinary traditions. The **Italian group** prepared a local dinner inspired by Sicilian home-style cuisine, allowing participants to experience the richness of the hosting region through authentic ingredients, textures and aromas. The team from **Luxembourg/Armenia** complemented the evening with small tastings inspired by Armenian flavours, highlighting the multicultural identity of their group.

The dinner naturally evolved into an energetic and joyful cultural exchange through music and dance. Participants from Spain led the group into lively traditional dances, filling the space with rhythm, movement and collective enthusiasm. The Luxembourg/Armenian team shared pieces of Armenian musical heritage, introducing participants to melodies that blended emotional depth with strong cultural identity.

As the evening unfolded, the atmosphere grew more spontaneous and playful. A few participants from the Italian group started an **impromptu rap freestyle in Italian**, transforming the dinner into an informal performance moment and sparking laughter, applause and participation from the rest of the group. This creative exchange broke any remaining ice between participants and reinforced the sense of togetherness that would accompany the group throughout the week.

Overall, the intercultural dinner succeeded in fostering an open, relaxed and joyful environment where participants could connect beyond national boundaries, exchange aspects of their traditions and begin building the intercultural understanding and empathy that underpin the core values of the YAP Training Course.





Day 2

World Café on Employment, Empathy, Equality and the Role of Youth Work

The first methodological activity of the Training Course introduced participants to the **World Café**, a dynamic and highly participatory format designed to stimulate collective intelligence, exchange of perspectives and collaborative problem-solving. The method was particularly suited to exploring complex issues related to poverty and social exclusion, inviting participants to reflect on four interconnected themes: **employment, empathy, equality**, and the **role of youth work**.

The learning space was arranged into **four thematic tables**, each dedicated to one of the key topics. Participants were divided into small groups and assigned to their first table, where they had **30 minutes** to open the discussion, share personal reflections and engage in collective brainstorming. Each table included guiding questions to help participants connect their experiences with the broader context of youth work and anti-poverty interventions.

To ensure the widest possible exchange of ideas, every **10 minutes** two participants from each table were asked to rotate to different stations. This continuous flow of people created a dynamic and evolving conversation in which insights accumulated progressively, allowing knowledge to circulate and deepen across the entire group. As participants moved, they carried with them the contributions from previous tables, enriching each conversation with fresh inputs and diverse national perspectives.



Throughout the activity, participants reflected on the barriers young people face when accessing **employment opportunities**, the importance of **empathy** in supporting vulnerable youth, the structural and cultural dimensions of **equality**, and the concrete ways **youth work** can empower marginalized communities. The rotating structure ensured that every participant contributed to each of the four topics, fostering a holistic understanding of how these themes are interrelated and essential for effective community development.

The World Café concluded with a collective harvesting moment, where key ideas from each table were shared with the whole group. This created a shared pool of insights that informed the upcoming sessions of the Training Course, reinforcing the collaborative spirit and participatory approach that guided the entire learning process.

Empowering Youth Work: obstacles, solutions and breaking stereotypes about poverty

The second day of the Training Course delved deeper into the structural and social dimensions of poverty, focusing on how youth work can contribute to meaningful, community-based solutions. Two interconnected sessions guided participants through a process of analysing the barriers that perpetuate poverty, identifying strategies for empowerment, and challenging widespread misconceptions that affect marginalized communities.

The first session, **“Empowering Youth Work: obstacles and solutions against poverty,”** encouraged participants to critically examine the challenges youth workers face when supporting young people affected by social and economic exclusion. Through group discussions, scenario analyses and reflective questioning, participants explored a wide range of obstacles—from limited access to education and employment opportunities to systemic discrimination, lack of resources, and insufficient institutional support. The facilitators then guided the groups toward developing practical, context-sensitive solutions rooted in the principles of active citizenship and community development. Participants reflected on how youth work can become a catalyst for empowerment by fostering participation, enhancing young people’s agency, and building bridges between communities and local institutions. The session highlighted the importance of combining grassroots initiatives with strategic advocacy to create sustainable paths out of poverty.

Building on this reflection, the following activity, **“Breaking stereotypes about poverty,”** invited participants to unpack the harmful narratives and biases that shape public perceptions of poverty. Through interactive exercises, storytelling and collective deconstruction of real-life examples, participants examined how stereotypes—such as the idea that poverty results from

laziness, personal failure or lack of ambition—distort reality and reinforce discrimination. The session provided space to reflect on the psychological and social impacts of such narratives on individuals and communities, emphasizing how stigmatization can further marginalize those already facing hardship.

By working together, participants identified strategies to challenge these stereotypes in their own youth work practice, whether through awareness-raising activities, inclusive communication, or initiatives that amplify the voices of those directly affected by poverty. The session concluded with a shared commitment to adopt a more empathetic, informed and socially responsible approach in their local contexts.

Together, these two sessions strengthened participants' understanding of the root causes of poverty, enhanced their ability to design empowering interventions, and reinforced the central role youth workers play in promoting equality, dignity and social inclusion.





Intercultural Dinner (Croatia, Portugal and Romania)

The second intercultural dinner of the Training Course celebrated the cultural diversity of **Croatia, Portugal and Romania**, offering participants another opportunity to connect, share traditions and strengthen group cohesion through food, music and storytelling. The evening began with a colourful display of traditional dishes from the three countries, each prepared or introduced by the participants themselves. From Croatian specialties to Portuguese flavours and Romanian delicacies, the dinner table became a space for discovering culinary identities and understanding the cultural contexts from which each group came.

Participants presented their dishes by sharing anecdotes, historical curiosities or personal memories connected to the food they brought. This transformed the dinner into an informal

learning moment, where cultural exchange unfolded naturally around the table. As the evening progressed, participants celebrated with traditional music from the three countries, teaching each other popular songs, dances and cultural gestures. Lively rhythms and shared laughter created an atmosphere of openness and camaraderie, reinforcing the values of diversity and inclusion that underpinned the entire Training Course.

The intercultural dinner concluded with participants freely socializing and exchanging impressions about the cultural elements they had discovered. Beyond the enjoyment of food and music, the evening contributed to strengthening mutual understanding, encouraging intercultural dialogue and deepening the bonds within the group—key components for building a collaborative and supportive learning environment throughout the rest of the programme.





Day 3

Community Development case studies, personal leadership stories and skills for effective Youth Work

The third day of the Training Course was dedicated to strengthening participants' understanding of **community development** and enhancing some of the most essential competences for effective youth work: **communication**, **teamwork** and **problem-solving**. The sessions combined analytical reflection, personal storytelling and practical skill-building, guiding participants through a holistic learning experience that connected real-world examples with their own lived experiences.

The day began with an exploration of **real-case studies of community development projects**, selected to illustrate different approaches to tackling poverty, fostering inclusion and mobilising local actors. Participants analysed each case in small groups, examining the project's motivations, stakeholders,

challenges and impact. This activity allowed them to understand how community-based interventions can be adapted to different contexts, and to identify the elements that make such projects sustainable and transformative. Through these discussions, participants reflected on the importance of listening to community needs, empowering local voices and using participatory methodologies to generate long-term change.



Following this analytical session, the group moved into a more introspective and expressive activity: a **long brainstorming session dedicated to sharing personal leadership stories**. Participants were invited to recall and narrate moments from their own lives in which they had taken initiative, supported others or contributed to solving a problem within their community. These stories revealed a rich diversity of experiences, ranging from small acts of everyday support to more structured involvement in youth organisations, volunteer programmes or

local activism. By sharing these stories collectively, participants strengthened their self-awareness, deepened their appreciation of one another's journeys and recognized the many forms that leadership can take—formal and informal, visible and subtle, individual and collective.

The afternoon focused on strengthening core youth work competencies through a session facilitated by the CESIE ETS team on **communication skills, teamwork and problem-solving**. Using interactive exercises, guided reflections and short simulations, facilitators helped participants explore different communication styles, understand group dynamics and practise strategies for resolving conflicts or navigating complex situations. The session emphasized the importance of empathy, active listening and constructive dialogue when working with young people facing poverty or social exclusion. By practising these skills in a supportive environment, participants were able to reflect on their own strengths and areas for improvement, while learning techniques they could apply in their daily work.

Forum Theatre: exploring oppression, conflict and social inequalities

To conclude the third day, participants engaged in one of the most meaningful and transformative sessions of the entire Training Course: **Forum Theatre**. Rooted in Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed, this methodology offered a powerful experiential space to analyse real-life situations of **oppression, conflict, inequality** and **social tension**, particularly those closely connected to poverty and marginalisation.

The session began with a brief introduction to the principles of Forum Theatre, emphasizing its participatory and democratic nature. Unlike traditional theatre, where the audience observes passively, Forum Theatre invites everyone to become an active part of the performance. Participants were encouraged to step

into the role of “spect-actors,” meaning they could both **watch** and **intervene**, helping transform the course of the scene.

Small groups were tasked with creating short scenes inspired by real situations they had witnessed or experienced—moments where individuals or communities faced injustice, exclusion or power imbalance. The participants used their creativity, personal insights and previous discussions from the day to build scenes that felt authentic, emotionally resonant and socially significant.



Once the performances began, the group functioned as an active audience. At any moment, a participant could **stop the action**, take the place of a character and attempt to change the situation by proposing alternative behaviours, solutions or strategies for empowerment.

This dynamic process allowed the group to collectively explore questions such as:

- How can youth workers respond to discriminatory behaviour?
- What forms of support can be offered to someone facing social exclusion?
- How can dialogue and empathy help de-escalate conflict?
- What structural barriers limit people's possibilities, and how can they be challenged?

Through multiple interventions, participants tested different responses, confronted obstacles and reflected on the complexity of social realities. The facilitators guided the process, helping the group analyse why certain strategies worked or failed, and encouraging deeper reflection on power dynamics and systemic inequalities.

The session not only enabled participants to **experience** and **reinterpret** difficult situations, but also strengthened their confidence, creativity and ability to act in moments of injustice. By embodying both problems and solutions, participants gained a deeper understanding of their own role as youth workers—agents capable of listening, mediating and sparking change within their communities.

Altogether, Day 3 served as a bridge between theory and practice, combining the analysis of real experiences with personal reflection and practical skill development. It strengthened participants' ability to understand community needs, recognise their own leadership potential and work collaboratively to create meaningful change.



Day 4

Breaking Barriers: a community in line

The fourth day of the training course was entirely dedicated to a profound and eye-opening activity called **“Breaking Barriers – a community in line”**, designed to make visible the **inequalities, privileges, and challenges** experienced by individuals in society. This activity invited participants to **step into someone else’s shoes** and experience, even symbolically, the impact of social, economic, and educational disparities.

At the beginning, the facilitators introduced the rules and objectives of the exercise, explaining that participants would respond to a series of statements reflecting life experiences, opportunities, and hardships. Examples of such prompts included questions like: “Was your childhood happy?”, “What kind of house did you live in?”, or “Did you face any problems at school?”

For each statement, participants physically **moved forward or remained in place** depending on their personal experiences. Those who had certain advantages stepped ahead, while those who faced obstacles stayed behind, slowly revealing the **accumulated disparities among participants**.

As the activity progressed, it became increasingly clear how life circumstances, social background, and access to resources could create significant **inequalities**. Standing in line, the participants could **visually perceive the gap** between those who had privileges and those who had faced barriers, making the abstract concept of social exclusion tangible and emotionally resonant.

The exercise concluded with a **reflection session**, where participants shared their feelings and insights about the experience. Many reported that witnessing inequality in a physical, embodied way was powerful and eye-opening, reinforcing the importance of empathy, awareness, and proactive intervention in youth work. Facilitators guided discussions on how youth workers can recognize barriers, empower disadvantaged youth, and foster inclusive practices within their communities.

This full-day activity not only heightened participants' **social awareness**, but also strengthened their understanding of **structural inequalities** and their role in addressing them, preparing them to become more effective and compassionate agents of change.



Movie Night: “Dio delle Zecche”

To conclude the fourth day, participants enjoyed a **movie night** dedicated to the documentary “**Dio delle Zecche**”, which offered an inspiring and insightful look into the life and work of **Danilo Dolci**, a key figure in social activism and community development in Italy.

The documentary traced Dolci’s journey to **Trappeto**, exploring the socio-economic conditions of the town in the 1950s and the challenges faced by its residents. Participants learned how Dolci engaged deeply with the local community, employing a **maieutic approach** that emphasized dialogue, reflection, and learning through questioning. His method consistently **puts children’s ideas at the center**, empowering young people to express themselves, take initiative, and actively contribute to social change.

The film also highlighted Dolci’s collaboration with **local farmers and entrepreneurs**, showing how he fostered cooperation, community solidarity, and sustainable development practices in a context marked by poverty and social exclusion. Participants could see how his innovative approaches not only addressed immediate problems but also encouraged long-term community empowerment.

After the screening, the session concluded with a **brief reflection and discussion**, allowing participants to share their impressions, connect Dolci’s methods with modern youth work practices, and consider how his principles of empowerment, dialogue, and community engagement could inspire their own work in fighting social exclusion and poverty.

This movie night provided both an **educational and emotional experience**, deepening participants’ understanding of historical and practical approaches to community development and reinforcing the values of empathy, active citizenship, and youth empowerment.





Day 5

Field Visit to Palermo: Moltivolti and Ballarò

The fifth day of the project was entirely dedicated to a **field visit to Palermo**, providing participants with a **hands-on experience of social inclusion, community resilience, and grassroots activism**. The day began with a departure from the hosting structure in Trappeto, followed by a journey into the vibrant heart of Palermo.

The first stop was **Moltivolti**, a project dedicated to social inclusion, civic engagement, and the empowerment of marginalized communities. Participants were introduced to the organization's activities and **hands-on approaches to tackling**



social exclusion. They could see in practice how local initiatives address the complex realities of poverty, unemployment, and social marginalization, while simultaneously fostering **community solidarity, creativity, and social entrepreneurship.** The team at Moltivolti shared insights into their methodologies, illustrating the combination of practical support, advocacy, and innovative community-driven solutions.

Moltivolti, thanks to the project “Ballarò through my eyes” offered a very interesting tour of **Ballarò**, one of Palermo’s most iconic neighborhoods. Ballarò is historically known as a **melting pot of cultures, commerce, and social challenges.** The neighborhood embodies both the difficulties faced by marginalized communities—such as poverty, social exclusion, and inequalities—and the **incredible resilience and vitality of its residents.** Participants could observe the dynamic social fabric, where local markets, grassroots associations, and informal

networks coexist with innovative social projects.

Special attention was given to projects like **Barconi**, which exemplify how **social entrepreneurship and community-led initiatives can drive tangible change**. Through these examples, participants witnessed how local organizations transform challenges into opportunities, promoting education, cultural expression, and economic empowerment, while creating strong bonds within the community.

The visit was designed not only as a **learning experience but also as a reflection on real-world social dynamics**. Participants were encouraged to engage actively, ask questions, and analyze the intersection of poverty, social exclusion, and resilience in an urban context. This immersive experience provided a vivid contrast to the theoretical and simulated exercises of the previous days, showing how **youth work, activism, and community development interact on the ground**.



By the end of the day, participants had gained a **profound understanding of the complexities of social exclusion**, the challenges faced by vulnerable communities, and the innovative ways local actors address these issues, equipping them with new ideas and inspiration for their own work in combating poverty and marginalization.

This day was a crucial bridge between **learning in the training course** and **experiencing real-world applications**, reinforcing the project's core objective of empowering youth workers to implement meaningful, community-driven change.





Day 6

Designing and presenting group projects: fighting poverty, marginalization, and social exclusion

The sixth day marked a **pivotal moment in the project**, as participants moved from reflection and learning to **active creation**, designing their own group projects aimed at tackling poverty, marginalization, and social exclusion. The entire day was dedicated to a comprehensive activity titled **“Creating a community project”**, structured to guide participants through all the stages of project development, from initial ideas to final presentation.

The process was divided into **four main phases**.

The first phase, **Conceptualisation**, encouraged participants to brainstorm and identify a social challenge they wanted to address. Working in small groups, they drew on the knowledge and insights gained throughout the training course, including theoretical frameworks, real-case examples, and experiential activities. Groups were encouraged to **think critically and creatively**, ensuring that their projects were both innovative and responsive to the needs of vulnerable communities. Facilitators provided guidance and support, prompting participants to consider target groups, local context, and potential barriers to inclusion.



In the **Implementation** phase, participants translated their conceptual ideas into concrete actions. They defined clear objectives, identified necessary resources, and outlined step-by-step strategies for putting their project into practice. This stage emphasized **practical feasibility**, requiring participants to think about timelines, roles, and responsibilities within the group, as well as potential partnerships and collaborations.

During the **Finalisation** phase, groups refined their projects, integrating feedback from facilitators and peers. They worked on **project coherence**, ensuring that every component—from the methodology to the expected impact—was aligned with the overarching goal of reducing poverty and social exclusion. Creativity was encouraged not only in project ideas but also in **visual aids, presentations, and storytelling techniques** to make their projects compelling and engaging.

Finally, in the **Presentation** phase, each group shared their project with the rest of the participants and facilitators. This moment allowed participants to **practice public speaking, communication, and advocacy skills**, while receiving constructive feedback from their peers. Presentations highlighted not only the **practical solutions** each project proposed but also the **innovative approaches, collaborative dynamics, and empathetic perspectives** developed during the course.



Day 6 exemplified the core principles of the training: **non-formal, experiential, and participatory learning**. By actively designing, discussing, and presenting their projects, participants consolidated their skills in **teamwork, leadership, problem-solving, and creative thinking**, while simultaneously strengthening their commitment to **fostering social change in their communities**.

This day served as both a **culmination of learning** and a **launchpad for future action**, equipping youth workers with practical tools and experience to **implement community projects that address poverty and social exclusion effectively**.

Local event - Community projects presentation and intercultural exchange

The local event has represented the best outcome of the project, as **Borgo Danilo Dolci** served its primary function, to be a unique community learning space dedicated to fostering creativity, participation, and European cooperation. Thanks to an extensive network and targeted outreach efforts, **CESIE ETS** successfully brought together a diverse audience including **youth workers, local authorities, young people, educators, and trainers**.

During the event, participants were invited to discover the **community projects created by the four international groups** earlier that day. These projects addressed pressing local and European challenges, with a particular focus on:

- **Revitalising green public spaces** through community-driven actions aimed at increasing sustainability, environmental education, and youth engagement in ecological stewardship.
- **Strengthening youth political participation**, proposing tools and initiatives to empower young people to engage in local decision-making, foster dialogue with

institutions, and advocate for inclusive democratic processes.

- **Stimulating job creation in rural areas**, with ideas centred on social entrepreneurship, circular economy opportunities, and innovative community services to support local development.

Each group presented its concepts and methodologies, sparking constructive discussions and offering practical examples of how intercultural collaboration can generate fresh, impactful ideas.

Throughout the day, the facilitators emphasized the strategic importance of **Borgo Danilo Dolci** as a space where European opportunities become tangible and accessible. Its environment nurtures creativity, experimentation, and cross-cultural learning—key elements that make the co-creation process both dynamic and meaningful.

The event ultimately strengthened connections between international participants and the local community, showcasing how European initiatives can empower young people while contributing to more sustainable, participatory, and resilient territories.





Day 7

European Opportunities and Youthpass

The seventh and final day of the Training Course was dedicated to **consolidating the participants' ability to transform ideas into actionable projects at a European level**. The day began with an in-depth session on **European opportunities for designing and implementing community projects**, focusing on the range of financing programs available. Participants explored various EU funding instruments, such as Erasmus+, European Solidarity Corps, and other relevant initiatives, gaining practical knowledge on application procedures, eligibility criteria, and strategic project design. This session emphasized not only the technical aspects of project submission but also **how to align projects with European priorities**, ensuring they are sustainable, impactful, and replicable in different local contexts.

Following this, participants engaged in a session dedicated to the **Youthpass certificate**, a tool designed to **recognize and validate non-formal learning outcomes**. Facilitators explained the importance of documenting skills and competences acquired during the Training Course, from **leadership and teamwork to intercultural communication and social inclusion strategies**. Participants learned **how to reflect on their personal learning journey**, map their achievements against the competences outlined in the Youthpass framework, and formally request their certificate.

This final day provided both **strategic insights and practical tools**, enabling participants to confidently translate the knowledge, skills, and ideas gained throughout the course into **real-life projects** within their communities. It also reinforced the value of recognition and reflection in youth work, ensuring that the learning outcomes of the Training Course are **documented, transferable, and acknowledged at both local and European levels**.

By the end of the day, participants left not only with **actionable project ideas** but also with **the skills and official documentation** to continue driving social change and combating poverty, marginalization, and social exclusion in their communities.

Energizers and debriefings

An essential component of the **Youth Workers Against Poverty Training Course** was the consistent use of **energizers at the start of each day** and **debriefing sessions at the end**. These activities, facilitated by the support staff member, played a crucial role in **maintaining participants' energy, focus, and motivation**, ensuring that the intensive program remained dynamic, interactive, and engaging throughout the week.

Energizers were designed to **wake up both body and mind**, creating a positive and inclusive atmosphere for the day ahead. Using a **speaker to blast lively, inspiring music**, participants were encouraged to move, interact, and connect with one another. These short but powerful activities helped break the ice, stimulate creativity, and foster a sense of **team cohesion**, preparing participants for the more demanding and reflective sessions that followed. Energizers also acted as a tool to **reset focus between intense sessions**, keeping attention levels high and reinforcing the **collaborative and horizontal learning environment** that the course emphasized.





Debriefing sessions, conducted at the end of each day, provided a complementary function. They created a structured space for **reflection, discussion, and emotional processing**, allowing participants to **share insights, challenges, and achievements** from the day's activities. Debriefings helped consolidate learning, ensured that any tensions or misunderstandings were addressed promptly, and reinforced the **sense of community and shared purpose** among participants. By reflecting collectively on experiences, participants were better able to internalize lessons, understand different perspectives, and integrate new knowledge and skills into their personal and professional practice.

Together, energizers and debriefings were **crucial to the overall success of the Training Course**, ensuring that participants remained motivated, engaged, and prepared to actively contribute throughout. They supported a **balanced rhythm of activity and reflection**, fostering both **wellbeing and learning effectiveness**, and ultimately strengthened the impact of the program on both individuals and the group as a whole.



Free time

An often underestimated but essential part of the **Youth Workers Against Poverty Training Course** was the deliberate inclusion of **free time**, which served as a powerful tool for **social bonding, informal learning, and intercultural exchange**. While structured sessions provided knowledge, skills, and practical methods, free time allowed participants to **connect on a personal level, build trust, and strengthen relationships**—foundations that are crucial for collaborative youth work

During these moments, participants naturally engaged in **casual conversations, shared meals, and explored the surroundings together**, fostering friendships that went beyond professional networking. Informal discussions often led to the **exchange of personal experiences, insights from different countries, and reflections on social challenges**, creating opportunities for participants to **learn from each other in a relaxed, pressure-free environment**.

Free time also encouraged **creativity, spontaneity, and team spirit**. Activities such as walks in the green surroundings of the hosting venue, music sessions, or even playful group games allowed participants to **experiment with communication, collaboration, and leadership** in a fun and organic way. These interactions strengthened **interpersonal skills and empathy**, reinforcing the learning from formal sessions and energizers.

By integrating periods of unstructured time, the project recognized that **relationship building is a form of non-formal learning** in itself. The bonds formed during free time helped create a **supportive and open learning environment**, where participants felt safe to share ideas, challenge assumptions, and collaborate effectively on group projects. Ultimately, free time was not just a break from structured activities—it was a **strategic space for networking, cultural exchange, and emotional growth**, deeply enhancing the overall impact of the Training Course.

Evaluation of the activities

A crucial element of the **Youth Workers Against Poverty Training Course** was the implementation of **daily evaluations**, which served as a fundamental tool for **monitoring, reflection, and quality improvement** throughout the week. Each day, participants were invited to provide feedback on the sessions, activities, and overall experience using **Google Forms**, allowing the team to **systematically collect and analyze their insights** in a structured and efficient way.

These evaluations played a dual role. First, they allowed the facilitators and CESIE ETS staff to **identify what worked well and what could be improved**, enabling **real-time adjustments** to ensure the course remained highly relevant, engaging, and responsive to participants' needs. This flexibility was essential in maintaining the quality and effectiveness of the non-formal learning methods, guaranteeing that every session met the objectives of both the Training Course and the Erasmus+ programme.

Second, the daily evaluations fostered a **sense of collaboration and mutual respect**. Participants appreciated being **actively listened to** and felt their opinions truly mattered. This approach strengthened the **cooperative and horizontal learning environment** that CESIE aimed to create, making participants more engaged, motivated, and invested in the outcomes of the project.

By combining **digital tools, structured feedback, and a genuine commitment to listening**, the daily evaluations became more than just a monitoring instrument—they were a **mechanism for empowerment**, ensuring that the Training Course evolved in real time according to the participants' experiences, and reinforcing the values of **participation, inclusion, and co-creation** that underpin high-quality youth work.



Conclusions

The **Youth Workers Against Poverty (YAP) Training Course** was a comprehensive and transformative experience that successfully combined **learning, reflection, intercultural exchange, and practical application**. Throughout the seven days, participants engaged with **critical topics such as poverty, social exclusion, and marginalization**, while simultaneously exploring strategies to **empower young people and strengthen community development**.

The course's methodology—rooted in **non-formal and experiential learning**—ensured that participants were not only recipients of knowledge but **active co-creators of solutions**. From **World Café discussions and Forum Theatre exercises to hands-on community project design**, each activity promoted critical thinking, empathy, collaboration, and creativity. Participants were encouraged to



step into others' shoes, reflect on inequalities, and brainstorm innovative approaches to social challenges in their own countries and communities.

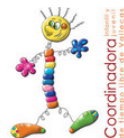
Intercultural experiences, such as **shared dinners, traditional music and dances, and international team activities**, fostered **mutual understanding and cooperation**, creating a **supportive network of youth workers across Europe**. Study visits and real-life case analyses, including exposure to **Danilo Dolci's work in Trappeto and social projects in Palermo**, allowed participants to connect **theoretical concepts with practical interventions**, reinforcing the tangible impact of youth work on social change.

By the end of the Training Course, participants not only **enhanced their professional skills**—in leadership, project management, communication, and problem-solving—but also



gained confidence and motivation to implement meaningful initiatives in their local contexts. The focus on **European funding opportunities and the Youthpass certificate** further equipped them to **sustainably apply their learning**, strengthen their organisations, and contribute to broader networks of youth workers committed to social inclusion and poverty reduction.

Overall, the YAP Training Course successfully **empowered youth workers to become agents of change**, fostering both **individual and collective capacity to tackle social inequalities**. It laid the foundation for **long-term impact**, inspiring participants to continue developing projects that support marginalized youth, promote active citizenship, and build more inclusive and resilient communities across Europe.



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