



## **Deliverable 3.4**

# **Community Labs**

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Authors: Giouli Megagianni, Kleopatra Moditsi (ActionAid Hellas)

Contributors: Giulia Arosio and Corinne Reier (ActionAid Italia), Livia Aninoșanu (CPE), Nele Kelchtermans (UCL), Mara Ghidorzi (Afol)

Supervision: Maria Sole Piccioli Actionaid Italy

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# Executive Summary

This activity report describes the main organization and outputs of the Community Labs organized in the five project communities. Community labs were youth-led discussions hosted in schools with the participation of key community members. The goal of community labs is to allow participants to discuss and find common solutions to priority issues and problems, as identified during the youth-led community needs assessment.

Community Labs were implemented between January – April 2023 in all countries, involving a total of 139 students (87 F, 50 M, 2 O) and 73 community members, including local actors (43 F, 16 M), local authorities (9 F), and parents (3 F, 2 M). In each country, students prepared a presentation of the findings of the needs assessment and invited members of the community to participate in a discussion. During each community lab, students led discussions with local community members about the most prevalent problems they face relating to gender-based and peer violence and together, they came up with possible solutions as well as first steps towards achieving them. In every country, local community members actively listened to students and engaged in meaningful and sometimes tough conversations. Moving forward, a common observation is that young people can sometimes lack the motivation to organise and request change, partly because they often believe that their actions and efforts will not result in real change.

## Introduction

The Youth for Love 2 project, co-funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union, aims to prevent, detect and address peer violence among adolescents (14-18 years) in 5 local communities in 4 European countries (Italy, Belgium, Greece, Romania), by promoting the adoption of positive behaviours and by involving youth, families, educational professionals and community members at large in community-based initiatives developed and led by youth to prevent and address the problem. The project is the consequential continuation of the previous one, Youth for love, realised between 2019 and 2021 in the same Countries, that had a strong focus on gender-based violence and school related gender based violence (SRGBV).

The WHO acknowledges youth violence as a major public health issue. Youth violence can take up many forms including physical, verbal, psychological and sexual. The UNICEF 2018 Report “An Everyday Lesson: #ENDviolence in Schools” shows that half of the students aged 13–15 experiences bullying or physical fights within a year. The Council of Europe Strategy on the Rights of the Child 2016-2021 has identified violence prevention as one of the five priority areas to guarantee the promotion of children’s rights. Research shows that there are numerous risk factors strongly associated with youth violence that occur at different levels: individual level (i.e. personality and behavioural factors), family and close relationship level (i.e. negative peer influence, lack of social ties, poor parent-child relationships, parents’ antisocial behaviours etc.) and community and society level (i.e. low social cohesion, inequality, insecurity, gender and cultural norms) (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, WHO, 2015). As with risk factors, also protective factors can be built at these different levels to reduce the likelihood of youth violence. Therefore, based on this evidence and the lessons learnt from the previous project, the “Youth 4 Love 2” project promotes the adoption of a comprehensive multi-stakeholder approach that involves actors that do not typically cooperate such as youth, parents, educational professionals (school and community), associations, private service providers (private and third sector), public services and authorities (public sector) at local, national and EU level.

# Overview of community labs in all project communities

## 1. Short description of the context

The third phase of the community-based intervention involves the Community Labs. These Community Labs are aimed at discussing and finding common solutions to priority issues identified through the youth-led community needs assessment (i.e. lack of initiatives to prevent peer violence, lack of or limited accessibility to services addressing peer violence, lack of specific policy and procedures on peer violence). The identified solutions will be promoted through the local campaign and advocacy T3.5.

## 2. Overview of implementation

Each partner in coordination with the students and the youth involved in T3.2 and T3.3 was responsible to organise 1 community lab in each area. The aim was to involve at least 35 participants in each community lab [20 youth, 8 local actors (NGOs/CSOs, child protection professionals, gender equality experts), 2 local authorities, 5 parents. (TOT. 100 youth, 40 local actors, 10 local authorities, 25 parents)].

	Date - Time	Nr of students	Nr of local actors	Nr of local authorities	Nr of parents
Italy - Community 1 Community Lab	30/01/2023	20 F, 1 M, 1 O	18 F, 5 M	1 F	
Italy - Community 2 Community Lab	16/01/2023	14 F, 10 M, 1 O	9 F, 4 M	5 F	1 F, 1 M
Greece – Community Lab	13/03/2023	27 F, 20 M	3F, 2M		
Belgium - Community Lab	08/02/2023	17 F, 1 M	4 F, 2 M	3 F	1 F, 1 M
Romania - Community Lab	25/4/2023	9 F, 18 M	9 F, 3 M	0	1 F
<b>TOTAL</b>		87 F, 50 M, 2 O	43 F, 16 M	9 F	3 F, 2 M

## 3. Organization of the Community Labs

Italy - Milan

In preparation of the community labs, students worked with the school (teachers and principal) in order to invite members of the community and to prepare PowerPoint presentations for the community labs. During the community labs, the two classes involved divided the tasks: guest reception, sign-in sheets, presentations, photos. To ensure youth leadership, the project team made sure that students were at the forefront at each step of the activity with teachers and project staff having only a supporting role. In fact, students collected the data from the community, created the presentations, organised and implemented the labs. Another testament to youth empowerment was the fact that members of the community came to listen to young people at the school and actively participated in the discussion. The main challenge in the implementation of the community labs was ensuring participation by young people, whose motivation fluctuated throughout the activity.

Italy – Rome

In preparation of the community labs, students from the two classes were key players in identifying members of the community to be invited to the lab, defining the agenda and preparing the materials for it, as well as carrying out the labs. During the community labs, three representatives from each of the two classes (total of six students) presented the results of previous project activities. Then, participants were split into two discussion tables and students from both classes facilitated the discussions at each table. Members of the community actively listened to students' presentations and participated in the following discussions. The main challenge during implementation was aligning project activities with school timetables and motivating students to participate consistently.

#### Greece

In preparation of the community labs, the project team invited community members, prepared the agenda of the activity and facilitated the discussion in order to allow students to focus on their participation. During the community labs, students presented the results of previous project activities and decided to have one conversation instead of smaller roundtables, as initially planned. This allowed for a wider discussion that offered space for more perspectives and arguments. In fact, students and community members were so engaged in the conversation that the duration of the lab was extended by half an hour. To empower students as young leaders, project staff ensured an open, safe space where students could express their opinions and voice their arguments. The main challenge during implementation was negative comments that students expressed, as many of them have a pessimistic point of view ("nothing will change") or seem to believe that the use of violence as punishment for bad behavior is justified.

#### Belgium

In preparation of the community labs, students and project staff created the material for the community lab based on the material of previous project activities. Then, students decided which stakeholders and policy makers to invite and sent out the invitations. During the community labs, students presented the results of needs assessment activities, decided the topics of the roundtable discussions, facilitated the discussions, and concluded the lab. Students led throughout the implementation with some minimal support from teachers and project staff, as needed. Community members were engaged in discussion, however, policy makers appeared defensive when it came to criticism coming from youth, instead of being open to suggestions and improvements. The main challenge during this activity was the inflexibility of the structure of the activity, which was dictated by the grant agreement, not allowing for much youth initiative.

#### Romania

In Romania we were planning to have the community labs happening in both high schools; however, due to time constraints and different school schedules, we were able to organize it in only one high school, in The Special Technological High School no. 3. However, given the fact that a lot of valuable information was gathered by the students at Elena Cuza National College during the youth-led assessment, we will organize the community lab with this group of students as well, outside the project, in the beginning of the next school year (although we were planning to organize it during the current school year, due to the national teachers strike, we were unable to). Previous to the Community lab, the students carried on conversations dedicated to identifying the specific needs in the case of pre-teenagers and teenagers with disabilities and to understand the type of messages and information that would be needed in order to support not only teenagers, but the entire community of people with hearing and speech impairments to protect themselves against violence. The students decided, during these preparation workshops, to conduct two types of activities: the Community Lab in their school, with representatives from their school community (teachers, pedagogues, students, parents) and to address the larger community of persons with hearing impairments

through the campaign. The Community Lab was dedicated to debating significant improvements that could be made in the school environment, through a collaborative work among teachers, students and parents and to decide on the potential directions to be taken during the following school year. A significant course of actions was proposed and will be carried out in the next school year – a sexual education module with a special emphasis on protecting young people with disabilities from sexual violence and equipping them with positive and protective behaviours and attitudes towards sexuality.

## 4. Outputs of the Community Labs

### Italy - Milan

The key problem identified through the community labs was the insufficient educational opportunities about the issue of GBV for all populations. This became apparent even in the needs assessment activities. It seems that GBV is rarely discussed unless a relevant piece of news happens. The key solution expressed during the community labs was more training for teachers by using existing tools, inviting external experts and peer-to-peer activities. Schools can even use the network built during the Youth for Love project to increase opportunities for training and exchange of good practices. The key constraint in this solution is the need for approval of requests for teacher training by local institutions, which depends on their willingness, time available and other programmes.

Another key problem is the lack of physical and non-physical spaces for student expression, a need that perhaps stems from the lack of social interaction during COVID-19. The main solutions participants offered was to encourage school administrations to offer more space for student expression, for example through self- and co-management weeks at school. The key constraint in this solution is the motivation of students to get mobilised and organise with school representatives.

During the discussion, participants charted a course of action. First, it is important to set GBV prevention procedures in place in the schools. Then, teachers and school administration should encourage students to participate in peer education and take initiatives to the school administration. At the same time, it is crucial to continue activities brought forth by the local government.

### Italy - Rome

A key problem that emerged during discussion was the underestimation and trivialization of the issue by the community, as was evidenced by the ephemeral and sensationalised media attention to the matter. The reason behind this problem is the lack of sustained institutional attention translated into available funds and other resources to implement relevant activities, such as trainings. Key solutions that participants came up with were the recognition of youth leadership in understanding peer violence and solving it through increased experience exchanges among classes (such as older classes listening to younger classes), educational activities (awareness raising and teacher training), gender neutral bathrooms, peer committee made up by students, teachers, and external partners, such as associations and anti-violence centers, and rethinking the school psychology desk. The key constraints to these solutions are a lack of procedures to prevent and manage peer violence, a lack of criteria to create and select the members of the peer committee, as well as a need for monitoring and evaluation. To start towards achieving these solutions, participants stated that it is important to activate teachers and students in order to participate in trainings or awareness raising activities and get involved with the joint committee.

### Greece



The key problems expressed by participants were a lack of support by the school (no school psychologists in many schools), no peer violence interventions, and a lack of the relevant skillset on the part of teachers. In addition, it is observed that sometimes, there is lack of support by the family environment due to the lack of time and relevant knowledge on the part of parents. Some key solutions proposed by participants include increased resources in schools for students, such as creative and athletic workshops and mental health support. In addition, the Ministry of Education should have a more holistic curriculum, while the local authorities should promote safety in neighborhoods (more lighting, clean parks, etc.). Key constraints in the realization of these solutions include no time and space in the school curriculum, a lack of student motivation, and a lack of community support, who sometimes don't even recognise peer violence as a problem. In order to start implementing the proposed solutions, the practice of school psychologists should be encouraged, and peer violence interventions should be designed and organized by teachers and external partners.

### Belgium

The key problems identified by student testimonies and the needs assessment were unsafe places on the school campus, in terms of both physical safety and mental wellbeing, unsafe places in the community, such as parking lots or empty buildings. When discussing key solutions, community lab participants proposed a set of solutions in the school and the community at large. In the school, some possible solutions include the improvement of accessibility to mental wellbeing services and increased support for teachers to become more comfortable discussing mental wellbeing. In the community, there could be messages for sensitizing people about their behaviour and the effects of intimidation, as well as ideas for repurposing empty spaces. The key constraints in the realization of these activities is the fact that schools and city administrations are slow institutions requiring long processes for sustainable policy change. This discourages students, some of whom already believe that they can't have meaningful impact. In charting a path forwards, participants agreed to start small, at the school level, by introducing policies such as one hour of mental wellbeing per week in the curriculum and by carrying out a guerilla action at the school playground. Participants also expressed interest in developing a proposal for the school board.

### Romania

In Romania, the main topic approached during the Community Lab was related to improvements in the general atmosphere in the school, which would lead to better relations between students and teachers and between teachers, as well as to a more cohesive environment, more trust and a higher feeling of safety and protection. Both students and teachers expressed and discussed these needs (students – "I would like for teachers to be happy", "I would like to have a good relationship with all teachers and to be united"; teachers – "It is important to listen to their needs and try to fulfill their requirements", "Empathy, self trust and creativity", "Organizing discussions with students, providing explanations that as as close to the truth as possible, explaining situations from daily life", "Organizing workshops for discussing aspects concerning school safety, defining safety together, presenting materials related to what safety is and what it is not, introducing both positive and negative situations", "Identifying the needs of students, their fears, their sources of conflict and lack of safety, organizing activities that would raise awareness on personal resources, on development of abilities to work in a team, on relating to each other, informing them and raising awareness on the differences between bullying and violence, prevention activities concerning violence, intervention procedures in cases of bullying and violence known by all, organizing consultations with parents in order to raise their awareness and provide them with different tools, counselling parents about how to manage the relationship with their own child depending on the age of the child"). Another important aspects brought up by students were related to accessing constant projects such as Y4L, happening all the time in their school, which would provide them with access to new competencies and experience exchanges, as well

as sexual education workshops. Especially sexual education workshops became a significant topic for discussion and planning for the following school year (in close connection with safety, prevention of sexual violence and understanding of consent), with a small working groups of teachers and students being created in order to develop the strategy for the implementation of this initiative.



## **Community Labs in Italy**



# Overview of the Community Labs in Italy

## Community Lab in Milan

### 1. Overview of implementation

Here follow the agenda of the Community lab:

- short introduction made by the educators of the project;
- presentation of the results obtained from youth-led needs assessment made by students;
- division into two working tables: one group works on youth leadership in preventing and combating GBV and peer violence at school; the other one on youth leadership in preventing and combating GBV and peer violence in the community;
- plenary restitution of group work and summary of findings;
- conclusions and sharing next steps.

Date of the Lab	30/1/2023
Location	IIS Oriani-Mazzini – Viale Liguria, 19 Milan
Link to photo/video of the community lab (including the billboards of the working group discussion tables)	Find attached the folder named “Photos taken by students”

### 2. Engagement

Participants in the Community Lab.

STUDENTS	LOCAL ACTORS		LOCAL AUTHORITIES		PARENTS
Number of students involved in the organization/ implementation	Nr of local actors	Roles of local actors	Nr of local authorities	Roles of Local authorities	Nr of parents
20 F, 1M, 10	18 F, 5 M	-headmistress -teachers -NGO representatives -associations -activists - local police force -students movement -researcher -educators	1 F	- Councilwoman city hall	

### 3. Organization of the Community Lab

<p>Please describe the preparation phase of the community lab in terms of <b>youth leadership, group cooperation and engagement</b></p>	<p>Students and teachers were actively involved in organizing the community lab. Teachers supported the students with communications to the headmistress for permission to have the workshop held in school spaces. The students, with the support of the educators, arranged for invitations to be sent to the various people in the community to whom they had done the interviews, to give them a way to receive feedback with respect to the work done. For the return of the survey, the students prepared in groups power point presentations (which you will find attached in the folder in Italian) that a small group of students then exhibited. Both classes worked well in preparing their presentations, working together on analyzing the data collected while trying to synthesize their experiences.</p>
<p>Please describe the implementation phase of the community lab in terms of <b>youth leadership, group cooperation and engagement</b></p>	<p>The students actively participated in all phases of the community workshop, trying to be always protagonists. The two classes divided the tasks: a small group was at the reception of the participants, someone collected signatures from those present, someone made the presentation of the results achieved, and others were in charge of taking photos of the workshop (which you can find in the attached folder). The tasks were divided evenly, and they were quite autonomous in implementation. Some of them left the workshop before the work was completed because they live far from the school. However, they were very active and involved throughout the workshop.</p>
<p>What actions have been put in place to guarantee a strong youth leadership throughout the community lab?</p>	<p>To ensure youth leadership, the objective of the workshop itself and their key role was shared with them early on. The students worked on collecting some very important school- and community-level data, and as citizens they had a duty to share it with the community. The importance and relevance of the workshop as a time to meet with members of the community who came specifically to listen to their considerations was stressed several times. Since the event was held at the school, they were called upon to do the honors. With respect to the roles, they played during the day, each person chose the one they felt closest to them.</p>
<p>What have the main challenges been to guarantee a youth led process?</p>	<p>The biggest challenges in ensuring youth participation during the process and community lab were keeping their level of engagement high, giving them support without imposing our times, and giving them space to create, discuss, and propose. It was one of the first times they found themselves organizing such an event, so they were initially a bit confused. The educators' job</p>

	was also to make them understand that they would be up to the task of handling everything and that everyone would be there to listen to them and learn.
What were the stakeholders' attitudes towards youth? Have they provided the necessary space for youth to express themselves and lead the discussion?	Stakeholders were very good at giving the right space to the students, they really put themselves in a condition of active listening, intervening in a timely manner without taking away the space from the students. They had an attitude of openness and curiosity about them. It certainly helped a lot that some of them were used to working with that target audience and many had already met them during the interviews, so they were interested in learning about the results of the survey. Even in group work, the interventions were balanced overcoming the initial awkwardness on the part of the students partly because they were involved in a small part of facilitation.

#### 4. Outputs of the Community Lab

<b>Problems/needs/issues</b>	What are the problems, needs and issues we want to tackle?	Insufficient training, awareness-raising and information actions on the issue of GBV and peer violence among adolescents, aimed at teachers, educating community and students.
	What data supports this?	The results collected from the interviews conducted with some representatives of the educating community certify a lack of information and knowledge on the subject that is not always considered as a priority. In addition to the evidence of the interviews, there are the results of the questionnaires carried out by students; they are dissatisfied with the preparation on the subject by their teachers; and teachers themselves felt unprepared on the topic, denouncing a lack of tools and adequate training to be able to talk about it the with their students, recognizing the theme as an absolute priority.
	What are the root causes?	In general, probably a difficulty in emphasizing the importance of the subject unless a relevant fact happens. Compared to teachers, in some cases a lack of time as their training on different issues is required, unless they have a personal interest in the topic and in others disinterest in deepening the phenomenon. The students lack a bit of time and space in which to talk about the topic.
<b>Possible solutions</b> -	What is the change we want to see?	We want more training sessions dedicated to teachers; that the topic is considered a priority by local and educational institutions and that students could have more space and opportunities to discuss the topic.
	How can we realize it?	We can use the tools that the school is already equipped with; as far as students are concerned, they can use the spaces for self-management and co-management weeks at school and

		<p>Institute assemblies to organize workshops and trainings on the subject, also relying on external experts and peer to peer activities. Respect to the teachers training, the request can be included in the document of prevention procedures on which a group of teachers is working and take advantage of the various contacts with local associations built with the Youth For Love project and other previous projects or initiatives. To attract the interest of the institutions, meetings can be organized between students and institutions' representatives about this topic or worktables that include all the educating community representatives and students of course.</p>
	Are the solutions also addressing the root causes?	Yes, in part, because we would try to optimize the time and resources already available.
	Who are the involved/relevant stakeholders?	The relevant stakeholders are obviously the institutions, the network of associations and youth movements around the school and of course the school with teachers, students and headmistress.
<b>Constraints and resources</b>	What resources are needed (also not economic)?	The resources we certainly need are time, funds, the care of relationship and the willingness to meet and listen to each other on the part of each stakeholder involved.
	What opportunities/skills do we have? Who can help us?	The willingness and openness of the institutions involved; the team of teachers and the headmistress and the willingness to work on systematizing prevention procedures and trainings on the topic; the tools and spaces for youth participation; and the peer education project active in the school.
	What are the constraints (also bureaucratic) and challenges?	Certainly, the actual approval of the requests, from the point of view of the educational institution regarding the part of trainings to teachers and the topic addressed in the peer education program. With respect to students, their ability to organize with school representatives and their willingness to get active to achieve the goals. From the institutional point of view certainly the willingness, the time and the program and the goals of the council.
	Are there any negative effects? How can we avoid them?	The risk is that if the proposals are not approved and successful, the various actors involved will become discouraged; what we can do is try to nonetheless enhance the emergence work that has been done and keep the network of relationships we have built warm.
<b>Synthesis and priorities</b>	Which solution best responds to the identified needs?	Start with the approval of the internal document of prevention procedures at school; support students in developing activities for the peer education pathway; and keep active the work on the table established by the city administration.
	What are the main points?	The approval of procedures and the activation, participation and involvement of students.
	What priorities to develop it in relation	The approval of procedures and the activation, participation and involvement of students.

	to the available resources (among which time)?	
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<b>Problems/needs/issues</b>	What are the problems, needs and issues we want to tackle?	Lack of physical and non-physical spaces addressed and managed by youth and students, in and out of school.
	What data supports this?	It is an issue that emerged during the workshops in the first year of the project and within both working tables during the community lab.
	What are the root causes?	Probably this demand from students stems from their experience during the covid 19 pandemic period. For obvious reasons, classes were held in DAD and post lockdown. Certainly this situation has, for various reasons, reduced the social moments and spaces among young people, turning them into a strong need.
<b>Possible solutions</b> -	What is the change we want to see?	We want spaces for socialization and discussion among students to be restored, and for there to be special attention from all actors in the educational community in protecting and facilitating them.
	How can we realize it?	Certainly, by presenting the problem and actively involving school governance; making use of the tools of governance and student participation within the school; relying on student movements and collectives in the area; and forging relationships with municipal representatives involved in the management of public spaces.
	Are the solutions also addressing the root causes?	Absolutely, the proposed solutions aim to fill that gap born in the pandemic period and that social distance that has been created among young people.
	Who are the involved/relevant stakeholders?	School governance, student representative figures, institutions.
<b>Constraints and resources</b>	What resources are needed (also not economic)?	The resources we certainly need are time, funds, the care of relationship and the willingness to meet and listen to each other on the part of each stakeholder involved.
	What opportunities/skills do we have? Who can help us?	We need to stimulate student and youth participation, entice them to become active on the issue and claim their own space for discussion within the school, and support them to gain space at the territorial level as well.
	What are the constraints (also bureaucratic) and challenges?	The challenges are to ignite and keep students' interest alive and to be able to continue the dialogue with municipal institutions with the help of the school.



	Are there any negative effects? How can we avoid them?	The risk is that if the proposals are not approved and successful, the various actors involved will become discouraged; what we can do is try to nonetheless enhance the emergence work that has been done and keep the network of relationships we have built warm.
<b>Synthesis and priorities</b>	Which solution best responds to the identified needs?	The creation of spaces for confrontation starting from the school and the opportunities it offers students and students with the help of the collective and movements.
	What are the main points?	Stimulate student participation, create spaces for discussion with key adults inside the school and outside by communicating what their proposals are with respect to this issue of animating and claiming spaces.
	What priorities to develop it in relation to the available resources (among which time)?	Student participation to arrive at the claiming and animating of spaces that are rightfully theirs within the school and at a later stage bringing demands to institutions to obtain spaces in the community.

<b>Problems/needs/issues</b>	What are the problems, needs and issues we want to tackle?	Improvement of well-being at school: small but effective actions to better experience the school environment and enhancement of the school psychology desk service.
	What data supports this?	It is an issue that emerged during the workshops in the first year of the project and within both working tables during the community lab.
	What are the root causes?	Probably this request is one of the consequences always of having lived through the pandemic period in school where relationships with peers were reduced; plus, the inability to handle the stress that school brings and the relationship with teachers. And of course, the need for everyone to experience a space that is welcoming and that considers all diversity.
<b>Possible solutions</b> -	What is the change we want to see?	Mainly the strengthening of school-based psychological support service.
	How can we realize it?	Talking to the headmistress to attention the problem so that she can mobilize to find concrete solutions including allocating funds at the beginning of the new school year. Inquire with respect to active free initiatives offered in the area so that students can learn about them and perhaps start a collaboration with the school.
	Are the solutions also addressing the root causes?	Yes because the goal is to respond to an actual need of students and above all to try to find a solution that is accessible to all without distinction or privilege.

	Who are the involved/relevant stakeholders?	The school principal, area associations and the local town hall.
<b>Constraints and resources</b>	What resources are needed (also not economic)?	The resources we certainly need are time, funds, the care of relationship and the willingness to meet and listen to each other on the part of each stakeholder involved.
	What opportunities/skills do we have? Who can help us?	Certainly the relationships that we also built through the interviews with the municipal AccogliMI desk workers and the school principal who made herself available.
	What are the constraints (also bureaucratic) and challenges?	The challenges are to ignite and keep students' interest alive and to be able to continue the dialogue with municipal institutions and associations with the help of the school.
	Are there any negative effects? How can we avoid them?	The risk is that if the proposals are not approved and successful, the various actors involved will become discouraged; what we can do is try to nonetheless enhance the emergence work that has been done and keep the network of relationships we have built warm.
<b>Synthesis and priorities</b>	Which solution best responds to the identified needs?	Strengthening the counter and reasoning with students with respect to what actions could be put in place to make the school environment more hospitable for all.
	What are the main points?	Stimulate student participation, create spaces for discussion with key adults inside the school and outside by communicating what their proposals are with respect to this issue of well-being at school.
	What priorities to develop it in relation to the available resources (among which time)?	Student participation in structuring the request to strengthen the counter and reporting the problem to the principal and institutions.

## 5. Follow up activities on priority solutions identified

Regarding the first proposal, work with teachers continued writing and approving procedures that were well received by the headmistress. On peer-to-peer activities, one class worked on structuring an activity related to the webgame of the project. With respect to psychological support and well-being at school, the students developed a questionnaire to highlight the need for service strengthening and made a series of requests which they then presented to the school principal. another group worked on some small campaign actions by constructing tampon boxes and structuring the request for menstrual leave to protect the personal hygiene of all female students in the school and ensure their well-being and protection related to the menstrual cycle. With respect to student activism, a group of students worked together with school representatives, with the support of some representatives of the student movement "Unione degli Studenti", on the creation of a collective and an instagram page to disseminate various information and initiatives to all students in the school.

# Community Lab in Rome

## 1. Overview of implementation

The Community Lab has been implemented as indicated in the toolkit with the following agenda:

- Welcome and introduction to the community lab
- Intervention of head teacher of the school
- Intervention of local institution
- Presentation of P2P and youth-led needs assessment by students
- 2 working groups (1 youth leadership in the school and 1 youth leadership in the local community)
- Restitution of working tables
- Plenary discussion

Date of the Lab	16/01/2023
Location	IIS Rossellini, Via della Vasca Navale 58, Roma
Link to photo/video of the community lab (including the billboards of the working group discussion tables)	See annexes

## 2. Engagement

Participants in the Community Lab.

STUDENTS	LOCAL ACTORS		LOCAL AUTHORITIES		PARENTS
Number of students involved in the organization/ implementation	Nr of local actors	Roles of local actors	Nr of local authorities	Roles of Local authorities	Nr of parents
14 F, 10 M, 1 O	9 F, 4 M	Headmistress Teacher Priest LGBT organization Educators CAV – anti violence center NGo	5 F	Education Department Rome Municipality: Assesor an staff Equal opportunities Department Rome Rome Municipality: staff Education Departner Municipality 8 Rome: Assessor	1 F, 1 M

### 3. Organization of the Community Lab

<p>Please describe the preparation phase of the community lab in terms of <b>youth leadership, group cooperation and engagement</b></p>	<p>The groups of young people involved in the project were key players in the preparatory phase of the community lab, from identifying the figures to be invited as territorial stakeholders, to conducting the interviews for the territorial needs analysis, the skills and awareness-building process on the topics addressed during the previous year, the definition of the schedule of interventions and the topics to be dealt with during the meeting, and the methods for presenting the results and holding the discussion. The mixed group of the fifth classes was more participative and constant in its commitment, while the group of the fourth class needed more guidance and support from us, alternating moments of motivation and cooperation with others in which the commitment was more discontinuous. Both groups completed the planned activities and presented their results during the community lab.</p>
<p>Please describe the implementation phase of the community lab in terms of <b>youth leadership, group cooperation and engagement</b></p>	<p>During the community lab, representatives of the fifth grade group presented the pathway they had followed, starting from the previous year's meetings, the experience of the feminist school in Greece and the preparatory peer-to-peer work that had led to an in-depth examination of the topic of consent, which they developed from different perspectives related to peer violence and produced a series of photographs to problematise the issue. Subsequently, representatives of the fourth class presented the work of community-based intervention, making an excursus on the interviews conducted with representatives of the local community (vice-principal, school representative, religious exponent, member of Libera anti-mafia association, president of the International Women's House and the school councillor's office of the municipality of Rome) and the results of the community needs analysis related to peer violence. After dividing into two discussion tables on how youth leadership can prevent and counteract peer violence inside and outside school, the groups of students divided up and actively participated in both.</p>
<p>What actions have been put in place to guarantee a strong youth leadership throughout the community lab?</p>	<p>It was decided to follow a structure consistent with the ideas that emerged from the brainstorming sessions with young people on the subject, and to ensure that some3 representatives of the youth groups took the lead in presenting the project and the activities carried out so far, and to ensure that the discussions in the</p>

	working tables were open to the experiences and ideas of the 3 participating young people.
What have the main challenges been to guarantee a youth led process?	The greatest difficulties encountered in preparing for the community workshop concerned organisational aspects linked to the school's timetable, which caused numerous postponements and changes of schedule, resulting in discontinuity of meetings with classes. In addition, it was necessary to support the fourth class in taking an active part in the process of constructing the workshop and participating as protagonists, motivating them and proposing activities to facilitate this empowerment.
What were the stakeholders' attitudes towards youth? Have they provided the necessary space for youth to express themselves and lead the discussion?	The people who participated as stakeholders showed an interest in the topic, maintained a posture of listening and paying attention to the opinions and experiences shared by children 3, and a proactive attitude in discussing proposals and challenges to preventing and combating peer violence.

#### 4. Outputs of the Community Lab

<b>Problems/needs/issues</b>	What are the problems, needs and issues we want to tackle?	Peer violence at school, in particular in particular the subspecies related to gender-based violence, is often a phenomenon that is underestimated and trivialised by the wider community; there is a lack of focus on preventing incidents of peer violence and discrimination at school and this can lead to investment in ineffective interventions
	What data supports this?	This underestimation is accounted for by the media narrative; often the topic is only traced back to egregious news cases related to juvenile deviance or feminicides;
	What are the root causes?	Lack of systemic actions involving different institutional levels; the absence of specific funding; the scarcity of resources to create continuous and capillary projects; Lack of training even for adults of reference (teachers, parents, etc.)
<b>Possible solutions</b> -	What is the change we want to see?	Recognition of youth leadership in understanding the mechanisms of peer violence and in devising possible solutions and promoting change. Putting the voices, perspectives, desires and needs of* young people means valuing school and educational activities. educational activities. Raising awareness inside and outside school about peer and gender-based violence, to address even the less visible and explicit forms of violence.
	How can we realize it?	One proposal for improvement concerns the possibility of creating greater exchange between classes and between teachers regarding the

		<p>awareness-raising projects that take place, to share the results and promote them among the classes.</p> <p>In addition to this, peer support, a self-help and steering group, where</p> <p>which a group/collective formed by people competent on the issues of violence puts itself in a position of willingness listening for the younger classes for the report situations of violence, in order to subsequently talk about it with the reference adults in the school (teachers, presidency, etc.) with the support of a peer group.</p> <p>Invest in teacher training, which often lacks tools and resources to deal with these issues.</p> <p>Gender neutral bathrooms.</p> <p>Set up a peer committee with representatives from students, teachers, associations, anti violence centers, etc., to provide continuous self-training and deal with cases of gender-based violence.</p> <p>Provide a rethink of the school psychology desk, with staff trained in preventing and combating peer violence.</p>
	Are the solutions also addressing the root causes?	Yes, as they act on several levels to prevent the issue of peer and gender-based violence from being underestimated but rather addressed in a systemic, structured and shared way among various trained and empowered actors.
	Who are the involved/relevant stakeholders?	The school, the educating community, local associations dealing with gender-based and other forms of peer violence, students
<b>Constraints and resources</b>	What resources are needed (also not economic)?	Economic investment and commitment to continuing education for the educating community and peer committee; meeting and counter space; communication and organisational resources for the creation of a supportive peer service.
	What opportunities/skills do we have? Who can help us?	Teachers already trained through the project, student committee sensitive to the issue, several contacts with associations in the area for previous projects
	What are the constraints (also bureaucratic) and challenges?	The need to recognise procedures against peer violence at school level for prevention and case management; definition of selection/choice criteria to compose the peer review commission (what criteria are adopted for its composition? is there a need for a letter of self-nomination? candidature by others?); monitoring and evaluation of the commission



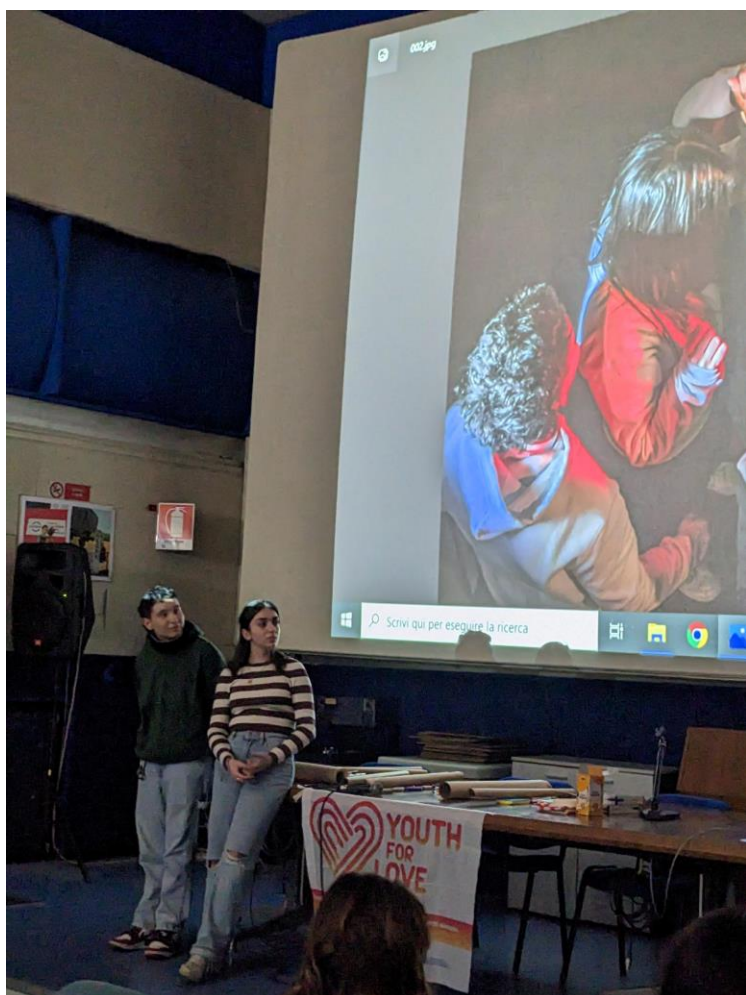
	Are there any negative effects? How can we avoid them?	It is important to consider the characteristics of the people on the joint committee also from an emotional point of view and the collective responsibility of the candidature in order to avoid distortions. Support from external associations could avoid negative outcomes.
<b>Synthesis and priorities</b>	Which solution best responds to the identified needs?	The activation of the teaching staff for the training and implementation of the joint commission. Student activation for the creation of the support service.
	What are the main points?	Raising the awareness of the school community in all its components
	What priorities to develop it in relation to the available resources (among which time)?	A student service for guidance, listening and peer support.

## 5. Follow up activities on priority solutions identified

Subsequent Campaign and Local Advocacy activities worked to realise the identified priorities. One group focused on the development of a communication campaign to promote the self-help service (which was named CON-TATTO ROSSELLINI) and one focused on how to contact and communicate the service, creating a dedicated Instagram profile and email.

PICTURES COMMUNITY LABS IN ROME AND MILAN



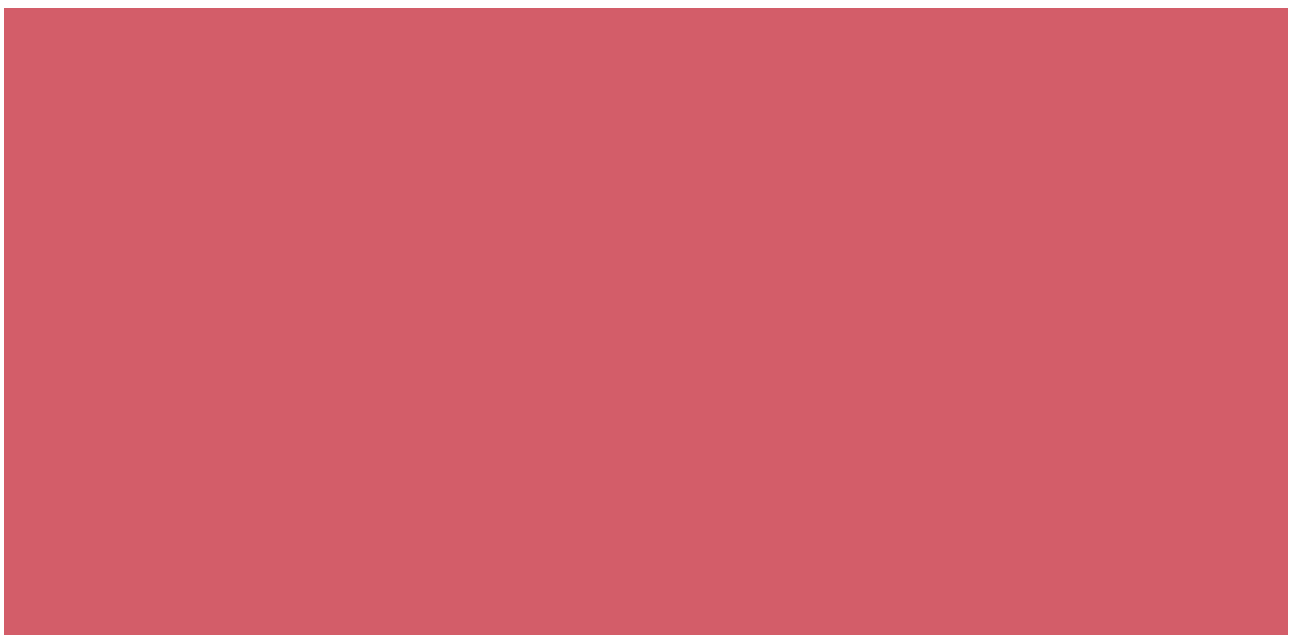








## Community Lab in Greece

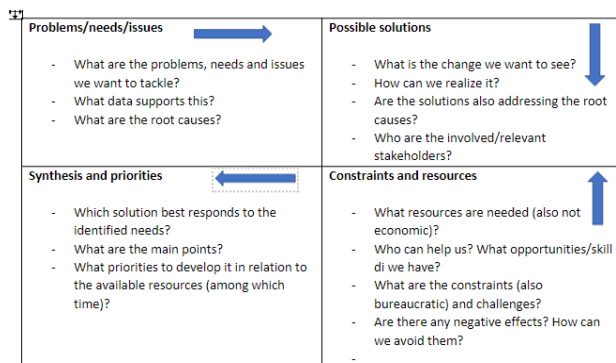


## 1. Overview of implementation

The community lab followed the suggestions of the toolkit, implementing the Word Café activity, but it was enriched with 2 extra activities: the Ice Breaker activity and the Agree - Disagree activity with statements on domestic violence. The implementation of the extra activities was deemed necessary because apart from the group that participated in the mapping and interview workshops, there was another group of the school that wanted to participate in the Community Lab. We decided to give these teens the space and the floor to have their voices heard by allowing them to participate in the event.

With this new composition of the group, we took it for granted that it was necessary to get to know the members and organize an activity that would raise awareness among the teenagers on the topic and especially on the role they can play in the elimination of violence.

For space reasons and to ensure that everyone had time to talk comfortably, we divided the group into two smaller ones and followed the Word Café activity. In each room there were stakeholders and after 40 minutes the groups would change rooms and continue the conversation. So everyone talked about all the topics and met all the stakeholders.



Date of the Lab	13/3/2023
Location	Community Center of ActionAid Hellas
Link to photo/video of the community lab (including the billboards of the working group discussion tables)	See annex 1 below

## 2. Engagement

Participants in the Community Lab.

STUDENTS	LOCAL ACTORS		LOCAL AUTHORITIES		PARENTS
Number of students involved in the organization/ implementation	Nr of local actors	Roles of local actors	Nr of local authorities	Roles of Local authorities	Nr of parents
27 F, 20 M	3F, 2M	Social Worker Lawyer Teacher Teacher Teacher	No, Local		No, parents

### 3. Organization of the Community Lab

<p>Please describe the preparation phase of the community lab in terms of <b>youth leadership, group cooperation and engagement</b></p>	<p>The teenagers participated in 3 3-hour workshops, where together with the facilitator they conducted an online and offline survey and research in the neighborhood/area around the school, and their way from home to school and from school to home. They took photos of the area where they are living and finally made a map of safe and unsafe places in the community regarding violence. Places where potential incidents of violence can occur. Then they interviewed classmates, local authorities, teachers, and a parent about the phenomenon of violence in schools. These finds were an induction of the Community Lab.</p>
<p>Please describe the implementation phase of the community lab in terms of <b>youth leadership, group cooperation and engagement</b></p>	<p>After briefly presenting the content of the 3 workshops and the main conclusions, teenagers decided to conduct the word café activity in their own way. They were all together, rather than at tables and they discussed the topics as defined in the toolkit. At the same time, students asked a lot of questions to both local actors and it seemed that they lacked information about institutional issues and organizations related to violence for adolescents. In fact, there were so many questions and the discussions that followed them that we did not have enough time as planned and the community Lab was extended for an additional half an hour.</p>
<p>What actions have been put in place to guarantee a strong youth leadership throughout the community lab?</p>	<p>Facilitators and all the staff created an open, safe space in which teens feel free to express themselves, to have a democratic dialog, with arguments and counter – arguments.</p>
<p>What have the main challenges been to guarantee a youth led process?</p>	<p>The main challenges of the word café process were 2: -many students do not believe that the world can change, whatever they do. -1-2 students still believe that violence is a way to “punish” bad behaviors. However, many students developed arguments against these opinions. The debate between them was a great win of dialog against violence. In addition, the lawyer intervention about what punishment and the consequences for offender was very useful for the student to understand the legal consequences of violent acts.</p>
<p>What were the stakeholders’ attitudes towards youth? Have they provided the necessary space for youth to express themselves and lead the discussion?</p>	<p>Yes, and as I mention above, they gave information, explain though case studies, they were not judgmental to the student’s opinions or attitudes</p>

#### 4. Outputs of the Community Lab

<b>Problems/needs/issues</b>	What are the problems, needs and issues we want to tackle?	Lack of support from: school (staff and institutional) : family environment
	What data supports this?	For the school: -there are no psychologists in schools. -there are no interventions, workshops (like Y4L) and other creative activities for the students in order to cultivate soft skills -teachers do not have the skills and mostly the time to face efficient the problem For family: -do not have the time to actively participate in the school community -do not have the knowledge, do not know the way to support their kids, either they are victim, or offenders or just observers
	What are the root causes?	For both school and family -lack of time -lack of knowledge
<b>Possible solutions</b> -	What is the change we want to see?	An open, democratic school without violence:
	How can we realize it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More creative activities/workshops</li> <li>- More interventions like Y4L</li> <li>- Psychologists in each school</li> <li>- Community provides more public athletic facilities and art workshop for free for teens and youth people</li> </ul>
	Are the solutions also addressing the root causes?	In order to address the root causes, the ministry of education and local authorities must act. For the ministry: create and promote a more holistic curriculum in which students can develop soft skills and become creative. Community on the other side, should have safe spaces in the neighborhoods (lights, clean parks e.c.t) and should provide opportunities to teens to develop free their hobbies, talents e.tc.
	Who are the involved/relevant stakeholders?	Teachers/school staff, ministry, parents
<b>Constraints and resources</b>	What resources are needed (also not economic)?	The main resource is to find the motivation, willingness and drive to act. Also important is to change the belief that "things can't be changed". This belief was very strongly held by some of the participants.
	What opportunities/skills do we have? Who can help us?	Although teachers and family environment have issues to solve, they are at the same time allies, and they can support students.

	What are the constraints (also bureaucratic) and challenges?	-time and the tight curriculum -lack of motivation for some students -lack of support of the community
	Are there any negative effects? How can we avoid them?	
<b>Synthesis and priorities</b>	Which solution best responds to the identified needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Psychologists in schools</li> <li>- Workshops, interventions, art integration opportunities for students</li> <li>- qualified teachers regarding the theme</li> <li>- more actively participation of parents in school community</li> </ul>
	What are the main points?	- A school environment that promotes values like collaboration, self-esteem, respect, exposes students to democratic culture, create a safe space for students to talk and take initiatives for the whole school community.
	What priorities to develop it in relation to the available resources (among which time)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- psychologists in all schools and not only in some</li> <li>- Workshops, interventions, art integration opportunities for students. These workshops can be implemented by teachers but also by artistic groups and organizations.</li> </ul>

## 5. Follow up activities on priority solutions identified.

*Please list here all follow-up activities done on the proposed solutions. This will be used as a justification for the related indicator set (80% of the solutions proposed implemented). If there is no input before the deliverable submission, please keep in mind to keep track of this until project completion, in order to include this information in the final project report.*

The solutions that were suggested during the community labs by the participants were an indispensable part of the advocacy recommendations that were discussed with the stakeholders (including the competent authorities) in separate meetings. It is apparent that the issues and the gaps that were identified by the participants constitute long-standing challenges of the Greek school system that in some cases are systemic deficiencies that have not been dealt properly by the Greek State over the years. It is also important to note that, as discussed during the community labs, the school environment is not isolated from all the developments that take place in the Greek society making, thus, the need to proceed in targeted and coherent policy activities an imperative.

During the implementation period of Youth4Love 2 the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs introduced a legislative initiative aiming at preventing and combating peer school violence in Greece. This initiative came in the aftermath of severe incidents of violence among groups of school peers in different parts of the country. Following its consistent policy approach and presence in all the similar circumstances, ActionAid Hellas participated in the public consultation that was open for less than two weeks and provided valuable observations, comments and suggestions about the improvements that need to be made. The



comments are available in Greek in the following link: <http://www.opengov.gr/ypepth/?p=6046>. Clear references are made to Youth4Love 2 in the parts where the whole -school approach is suggested as a good practice and an effective methodology to prevent and combat peer school violence.

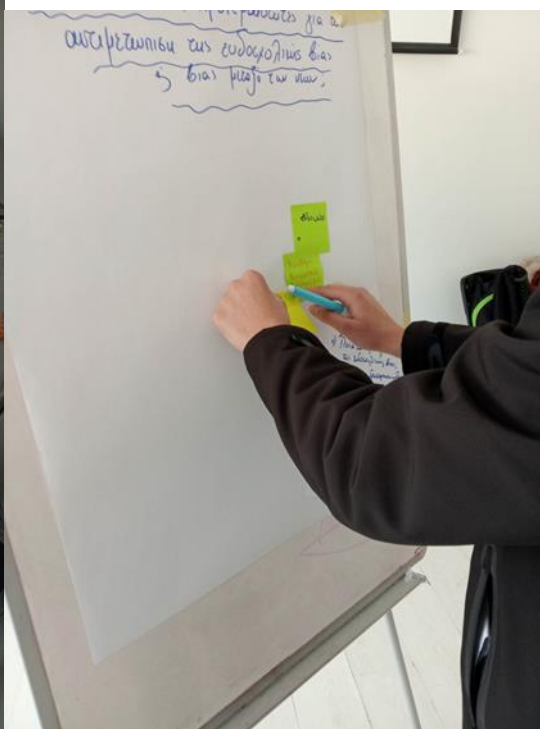
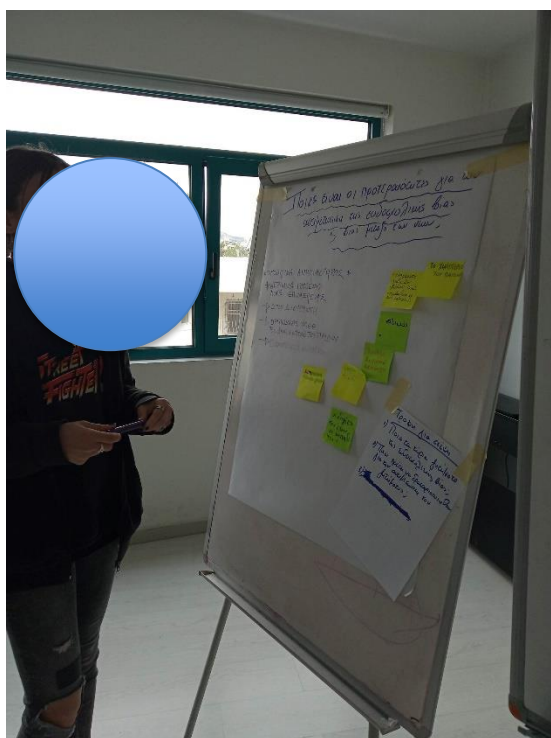
To ensure that the comments submitted by ActionAid will be reviewed and taken into consideration by the Ministry, an ad hoc meeting was asked with the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs. During the meeting, the ActionAid delegation had the opportunity to present the Youth4Love 2 intervention and the key findings that have been derived from the community labs and any other interaction with the members of the school community in the framework of Youth4Love 2. The Ministry was interested in the project and the policy suggestions that were made. Materials that were produced during the project's implementation phases will be submitted to the Ministry with the aim of their being uploaded in the official platform accessed by teachers across the country.

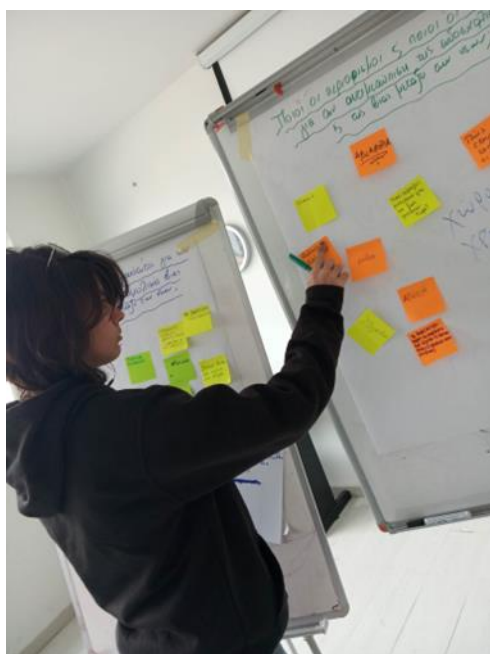
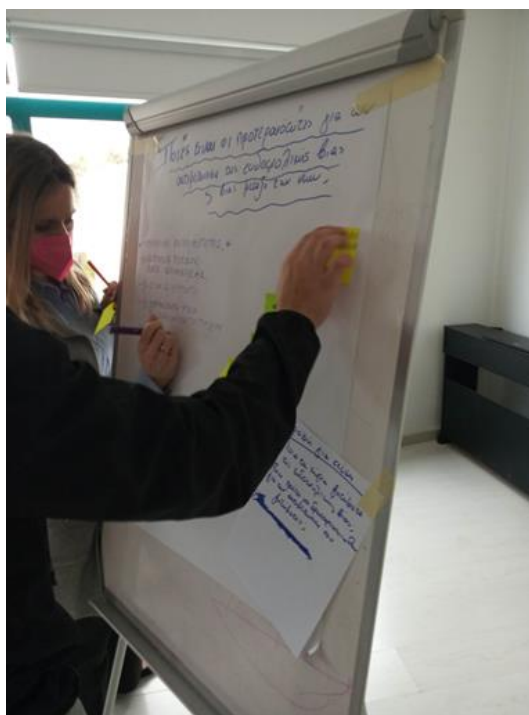
Regarding the main policy recommendations focus was placed on the need to strengthen prevention and engage all the members of the school community as suggested by the Youth4Love 2 intervention. Additionally, strengthening the support provided to the teachers and enhancing the presence of social services and psychologists in schools as suggested by students were also discussed. ActionAid monitors the implementation of this new law and will continue advocating for the policy recommendations submitted in the consultation and presented during the meeting with the Ministry.

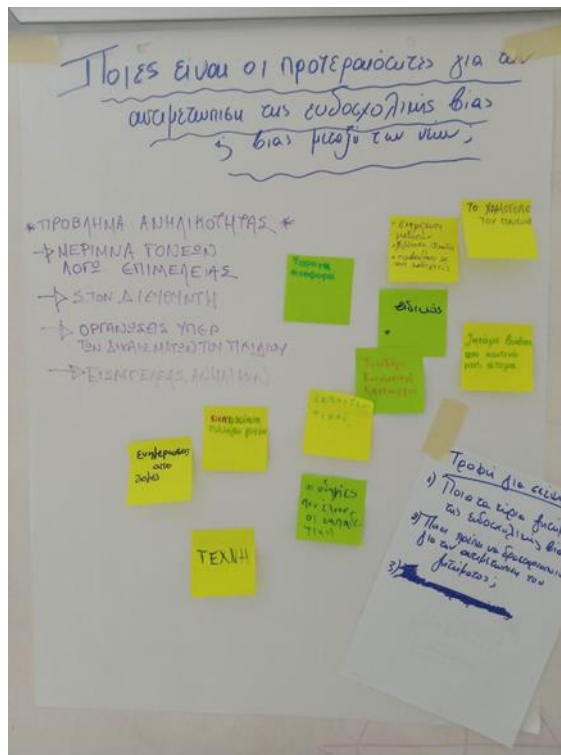
## ANNEX 1





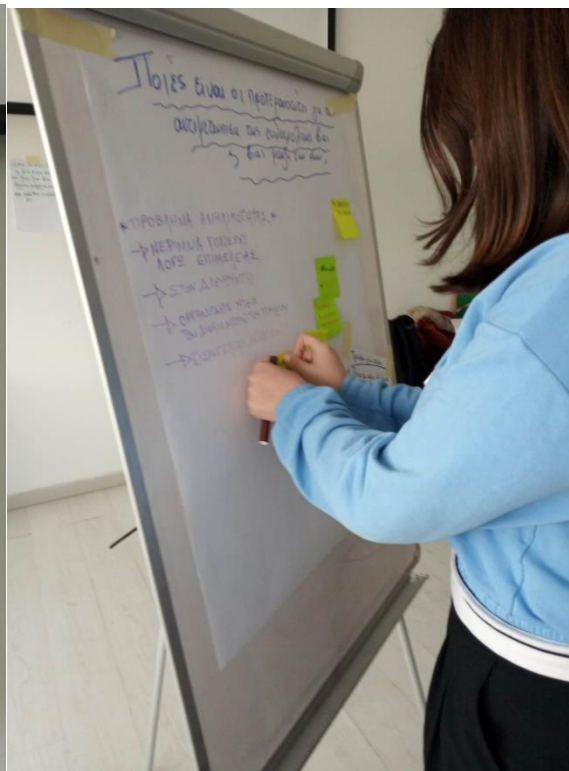
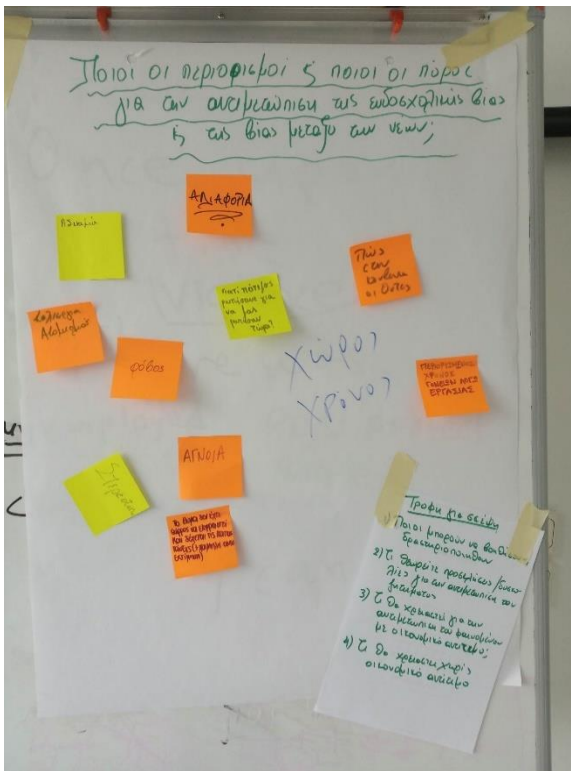














## **Community Lab in Belgium**



# Overview of the Community Lab in Belgium

## 1. Overview of implementation

The activity started with a short presentation by the students of the project, in general the project's activities in preparation for the community lab, and the agenda of the community lab. There was a short round of presentation of the external participants (name, function, reason for participation in the activity, expectations).

Students then proceeded with the presentation of the Youth Led Needs Assessment: the preparation, the process and the results. Students discussed how their plan of action in mapping the problems of their community: places to visit, people to interview and questions to be asked. The results of this mapping and photovoice made for a clear and visual overview of the various and diverse problems identified for the community of Maasmechelen. To conclude this part of the session, participants were able to ask for clarifications or extra information. One participant asked how students had selected their interviewees, which allowed them to elaborate on the need to involve stakeholders from various community groups and levels, such as NGOs, store owners, care takers, peers, wellbeing organisations, etc.

Next, students presented the method of the world café to all participants, along with the two main discussion topics for the discussion tables: (un)safe places in the community and (un)safe places at school. The group – students and external participants – was split in two, with stakeholders, parents and policy makers evenly divided. For each discussion table, the situation was described by the students in that group 'as is', with current challenges and weak spots for the wellbeing and safety of young people. The next question was twofold: what are the possibilities for improving these weak spots and tackling the challenges, and what are the roles put out for the various stakeholders and policy makers in tackling those challenges? Each group had 30 minutes to discuss their topic, after which they switched tables for another 30 minutes of discussion.

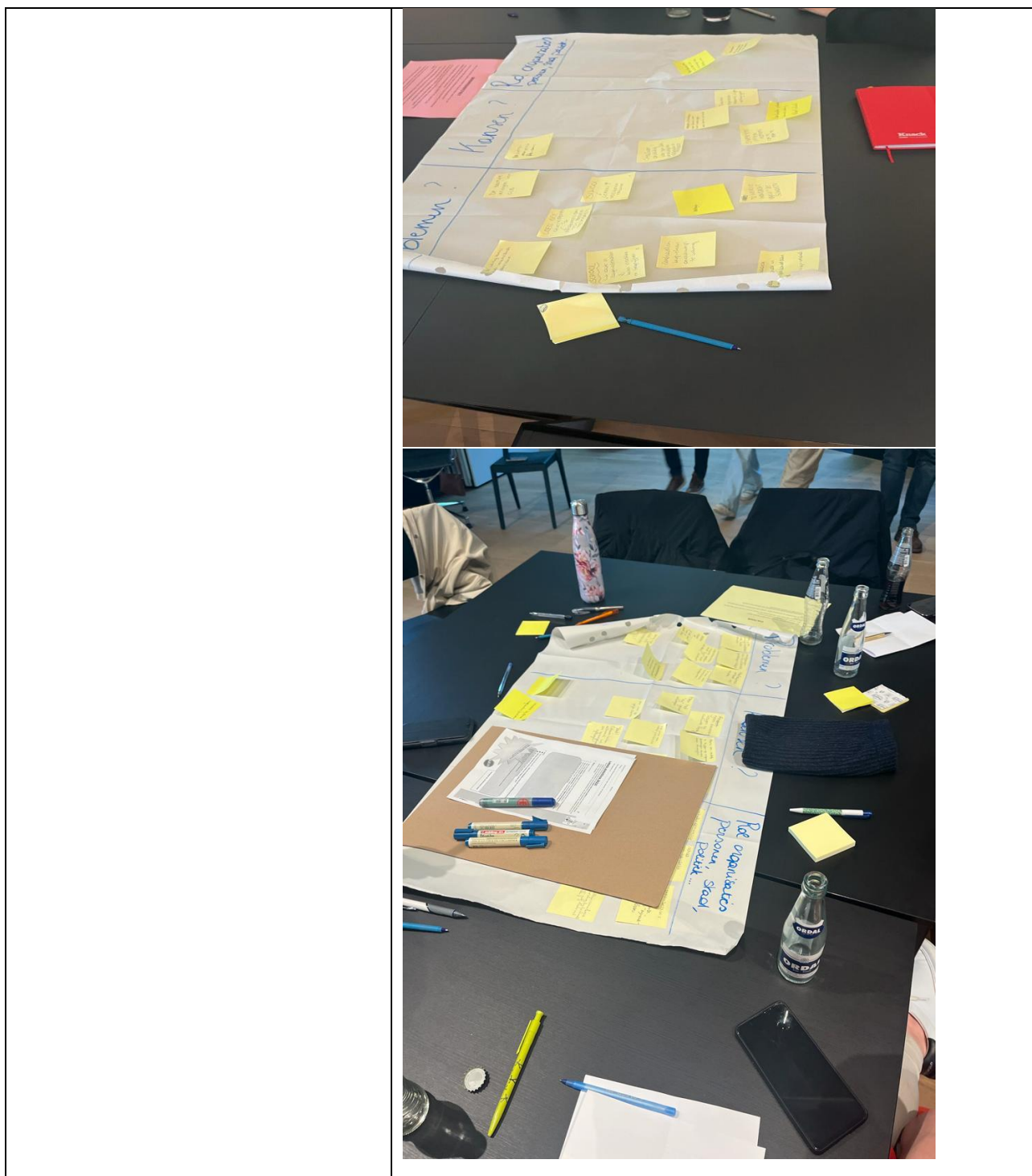
After a break, the session continued in plenary. With the students in the lead, the results for each topic were presented: the actions to be taken and the roles put away for various stakeholders and policy makers. The actions presented were then subjected to the 'smart' method: can each action be formulated in a specific, measurable, acceptable, realistic and in a timely manner? The group worked together on this, in order to prioritize in the actions to be taken by the school and the city council. This resulted in two 'smart' actions to improve the safety and wellbeing of youth in Maasmechelen.

Date of the Lab	8/02/2023
Location	De Helix, Maasmechelen

Link to photo/video of the community lab (including the billboards of the working group discussion tables)







## 2. Engagement

Participants in the Community Lab.

STUDENTS	LOCAL ACTORS		LOCAL AUTHORITIES		PARENTS
Number of students involved in the	Nr of local actors	Roles of local actors	Nr of local authorities	Roles of Local authorities	Nr of parents

organization/ implementation					
17 F, 1 M	4 F, 2 M	President of the Rainbow House 2 members of integration organization 1 member of youth wellbeing organization 1 member of youth advocacy organisation 2 education experts	3 F	City Counsellor for Equal Rights and integration Policy officer for LGBTQ Policy officer for youth and education	1 F, 1 M

### 3. Organization of the Community Lab

Please describe the preparation phase of the community lab in terms of <b>youth leadership, group cooperation and engagement</b>	<p>In preparation of the community lab, students participated in three workshops to execute the youth led needs assessment. In the first workshop, the aim of the assessment was laid out for the students. They created an action plan in which they outlined the places, the people and the content for their quest. This action plan was then carried out during the second session, in which they went out into the streets, visited places and people and recorded their experiences and impressions. These impressions were documented, analysed and discussed during the third workshop. All three workshops formed the basis for the methodology, process and results discussed during the community lab. These were put into a presentation to share with the stakeholders and participants of the community lab.</p> <p>Students also decided which stakeholders and policy makers to invite and were responsible for sending the invites.</p>
Please describe the implementation phase of the community lab in terms of <b>youth leadership, group cooperation and engagement</b>	<p>Students were responsible for the execution of the community lab: preparing and taking the lead in the presentation, deciding the topics for the world café, guiding the participants through the session, keeping the time, wrapping up the discussion tables and the plenary discussion. With some help of the facilitators, this went smoothly.</p>
What actions have been put in place to guarantee a strong youth leadership throughout the community lab?	<p>The framework of the community lab was already there, but the youth provided the contents of the framework. They prepared the presentation, decided on topics and questions to discuss with the</p>

	stakeholders and policy makers. During the workshop, they welcomed everyone and introduced the way of working of the workshop, to have them in charge of the whole event.
What have the main challenges been to guarantee a youth led process?	The fact that the agenda, the aim and the target group of the community lab were already decided.
What were the stakeholders' attitudes towards youth? Have they provided the necessary space for youth to express themselves and lead the discussion?	For policy makers it seems to be rather difficult to give youth the space to be critical of their policy. They are mostly on the defensive, and try to defend their policy by pointing out what is already being done, instead of being open to suggestions or improvements. It is difficult for them to recognize any blind spots there might be in their current policy because they are not open to critique.

## 4. Outputs of the Community Lab

Core thematic: general safety and wellbeing

<b>Problems/needs/issues</b>	What are the problems, needs and issues we want to tackle?	<p>Unsafe places at school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The boys at the technical campus who use intimidating language, signs and posture for the younger, often female students. These students sometimes choose a different way to school just to avoid this place.</li> <li>- Wellbeing in general: students don't feel that their school/class group is a safe space to discuss their wellbeing. They feel that teachers are not interested in what they have to say or in anything that is personal.</li> <li>- Support organisations at school: students feel they are not approachable for everyone. Only students who have 'real' or diagnosed problems go there, but there is also a need for students to talk about everyday problems, to share their thoughts and feelings in a comfortable way, without receiving the label of 'problematic'.</li> </ul> <p>Unsafe places in the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parking lots where young people gather to fight</li> <li>- Empty and abandoned buildings</li> <li>- Alleys</li> <li>- The market place with bars</li> </ul>
	What data supports this?	<p>Students' own experiences</p> <p>Interview with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NGO</li> <li>- Youth wellbeing organization</li> <li>- School psychologist</li> <li>- Police</li> <li>- Hospital</li> </ul>

		- Supermarket owner
	What are the root causes?	<p>Unsafe places at school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Traditional gender norms for masculinity</li> <li>- Teachers who don't care about wellbeing and safety</li> <li>- Wellbeing organizations that are not accessible to all students</li> <li>- Wellbeing as a topic that is not considered important enough by the school</li> </ul> <p>Unsafe places in the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of social control</li> <li>- Alcohol and drugs</li> <li>- Peer pressure and group dynamics</li> </ul>
<b>Possible solutions</b>  -	What is the change we want to see?	<p>More attention for students' wellbeing, accessible support to wellbeing services and wellbeing</p> <p>Students feeling safe and having the freedom of being themselves at school</p> <p>Young people feeling safe while moving in their community</p>
	How can we realize it?	<p>At school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wellbeing organizations at the level of young people, without thresholds</li> <li>- One hour of time a week to talk about mental health and everything that concerns young people, so that everyone has the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings in a safe space, not only those students who are referred to the specialized wellbeing services.</li> <li>- Supporting teachers in becoming comfortable in talking about wellbeing, mental health and social issues with their students</li> <li>- Messages for sensitizing students as well as teachers about their behavior at school and the effects of intimidations</li> </ul> <p>Outside of school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Messages for sensitizing people of the community about their behavior at school and the effects of intimidation on the safety of young people</li> <li>- Ideas for the repurposing of empty spaces</li> </ul>
	Are the solutions also addressing the root causes?	<p>At school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The proposals would work on more involvement by teachers in the topic and more awareness for teachers and students alike. It would put the topic of wellbeing and feeling safe at school higher on the agenda, to make it a priority.</li> </ul> <p>Outside of school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Broader societal problems are hard to tackle, but these proposals would target concrete problems such as lack of social control and the repurposing of abandoned spaces in the community.</li> </ul>

	Who are the involved/relevant stakeholders?	<p>At school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students and peers</li> <li>- Teachers</li> <li>- School principle</li> <li>- School board</li> <li>- School psychologists</li> </ul> <p>Outside of school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community members</li> <li>- Policy makers</li> <li>- Youth wellbeing organizations</li> </ul>
<b>Constraints and resources</b>	What resources are needed (also not economic)?	<p>At school:</p> <p>Outside of school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financial measures</li> </ul>
	What opportunities/skills do we have? Who can help us?	For the past years, the school has invested in working on topics as equality, gender and lgbtq rights, for example by participating in IDAHOT actively and introducing a gender and equality seminar. These actions are a logical consequence of that mission and vision, which can convince the school board to go along with the ideas and maybe even to take up an active role.
	What are the constraints (also bureaucratic) and challenges?	A school system and especially a city policy are both very heavy and slow institutions, where new actions or policies have to pass through a very long process. This might discourage students and reinforce their idea that they don't have a real impact on higher policy.
	Are there any negative effects? How can we avoid them?	If the actions are refused by the policy makers at school and outside of school, this might reinforce the idea with young people and students that their ideas and commitment are not valued. This might be avoided by starting with the more realistic and feasible proposals, as to avoid the disappointment that can often be part of activism that is not followed up by policy makers.
<b>Synthesis and priorities</b>	Which solution best responds to the identified needs?	The group concludes that the proposals to work on the identified needs at school, are the most 'smart' or realistic at the moment. The idea is to start in their own personal community, with measurable and achievable proposals, and then look at the possibilities outside of school, with the experience they have built with the project at school.
	What are the main points?	<p>The group identified two main action points for this school year for the students to elaborate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduce one hour of 'wellbeing and mental health' a week in the standard curriculum for all students.</li> <li>2. Do a guerilla action at the school play ground, with a message and information for peers to sensitize them about the effects of verbal intimidation</li> </ol>
	What priorities to develop it in relation to the available	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work on a proposal for the school board</li> <li>2. Present ideas to the school board and ask for permission to carry out the ideas</li> </ol>

	resources (among which time)?	3. Timing: this school year, to implement next school year
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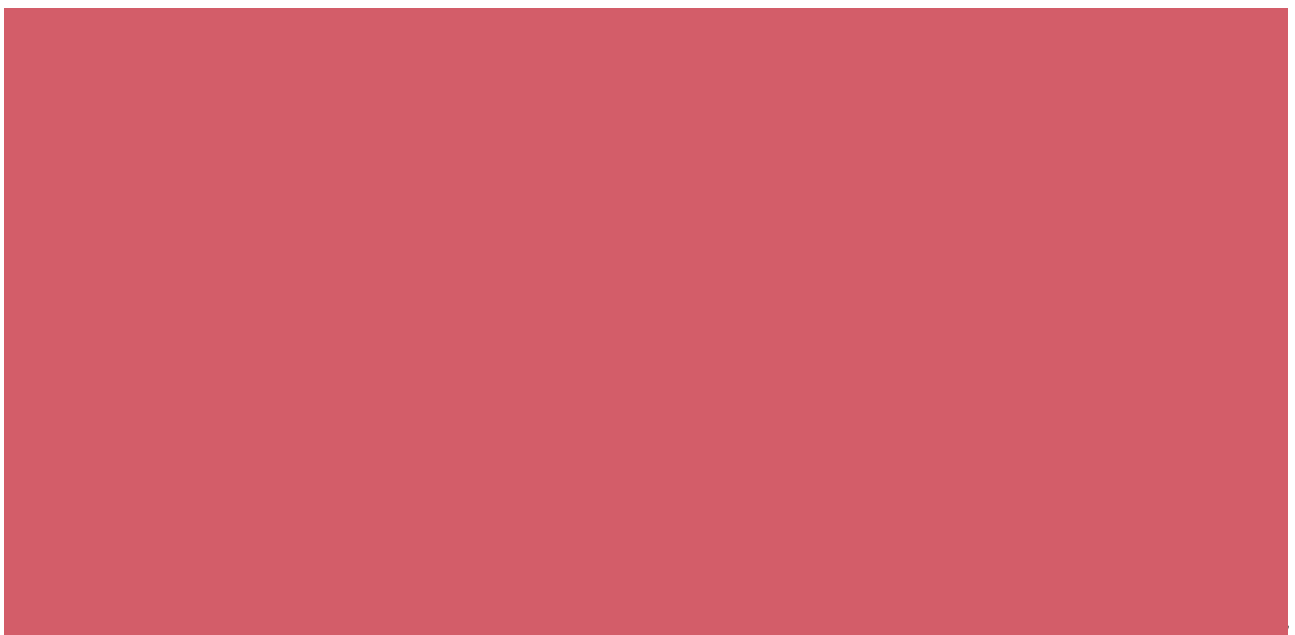
## 5. Follow up activities on priority solutions identified

Students will present their two proposals to the school board on 09/05/2023. Depending on the decision made by the board, they will be able to actively implement their action. Regardless of the fact if their proposals will be implemented, this will be a moment of informing and sensitizing an important level of policy at their school. Even if their actions are not implemented, it might lead to other changes or actions concerning students' wellbeing and safety at school.





## **Community Lab in Romania**



# Overview of the Community Lab in Romania

## 1. Overview of implementation

In Romania we were planning to have the community labs happening in both high schools; however, due to time constraints and different school schedules, we were able to organize it in only one high school, in The Special Technological High School no. 3. However, given the fact that a lot of valuable information was gathered by the students at Elena Cuza National College during the youth-led assessment, we will organize the community lab with this group of students as well, outside the project, in the beginning of the next school year (although we were planning to organize it during the current school year, due to the national teachers strike, we were unable to). Previous to the Community lab, the students carried on conversations dedicated to identifying the specific needs in the case of pre-teenagers and teenagers with disabilities and to understand the type of messages and information that would be needed in order to support not only teenagers, but the entire community of people with hearing and speech impairments to protect themselves against violence. The students decided, during these preparation workshops, to conduct two types of activities: the Community Lab in their school, with representatives from their school community (teachers, pedagogues, students, parents) and to address the larger community of persons with hearing impairments through the campaign. The Community Lab was dedicated to debating significant improvements that could be made in the school environment, through a collaborative work among teachers, students and parents and to decide on the potential directions to be taken during the following school year. Due to the specific of the school, the community lab was adapted to the school needs and the students interests and capacities. One significant idea arised related to the need of having sexual education in the school, with a particular focus on protecting young people with disabilities from all types of sexual violence.

The main topic approached during the Community Lab was related to improvements in the general atmosphere in the school, which would lead to better relations between students and teachers and between teachers, as well as to a more cohesive environment, more trust and a higher feeling of safety and protection. Both students and teachers expressed and discussed these needs (students – "I would like for teachers to be happy", "I would like to have a good relationship with all teachers and to be united"; teachers – "It is important to listen to their needs and try to fulfill their requirements", "Empathy, self trust and creativity", "Organizing discussions with students, providing explanations that as as close to the truth as possible, explaining situations from daily life", "Organizing workshops for discussing aspects concerning school safety, defining safety together, presenting materials related to what safety is and what it is not, introducing both positive and negative situations", "Identifying the needs of students, their fears, their sources of conflict and lack of safety, organizing activities that would raise awareness on personal resources, on development of abilities to work in a team, on relating to each other, informing them and raising awareness on the differences between bullying and violence, prevention activities concerning violence, intervention procedures in cases of bullying and violence known by all, organizing consultations with parents in order to raise their awareness and provide them with different tools, counselling parents about how to manage the relationship with their own child depending on the age of the child"). Another important aspects brought up by students were related to accessing constant projects such as Y4L, happening all the time in their school, which would provide them with access to new competencies and experience exchanges, as well as sexual education workshops. Especially sexual education workshops became a significant topic for discussion and planning for the following school year (in close connection with safety, prevention of sexual violence and understanding of consent), with a small working groups of teachers and students being created in order to develop the strategy for the implementation of this initiative.

Date of the Lab	25/04/2023
Location	Bucharest/Special Technological High School no. 3
Link to photo/video of the community lab (including the billboards of the working group discussion tables)	Will be included below.

## 2. Engagement

Participants in the Community Lab.

STUDENTS	LOCAL ACTORS		LOCAL AUTHORITIES		PARENTS
Number of students involved in the organization/ implementation	Nr of local actors	Roles of local actors	Nr of local authorities	Roles of Local authorities	Nr of parents
9 F, 18 M	9 F, 3 M	Teachers Pedagogues and support staff	0	-	1 F

## 3. Organization of the Community Lab

Please describe the preparation phase of the community lab in terms of <b>youth leadership, group cooperation and engagement</b>	During the preparation phase, the students discussed among themselves the potential needs they may have to express in order to achieve a feeling a safety, protection and good relationships in their high school for all students involved, no matter their status, disability or capacity to express their needs. They were also carrying informal conversations with their teachers on these topics and were involved in the gathering of information for the community lab.
Please describe the implementation phase of the community lab in terms of <b>youth leadership, group cooperation and engagement</b>	The cooperation and engagement were high before as well as during the community lab among most students. However, due to the fact that there is a wide range of disabilities, sometimes there are students who are more at the margin of the process, due to the fact that it is more difficult and it requires more time and effort to involve them. This is why during the community lab we made sure teachers were supporting all students to express their opinion and finally everyone was able to contribute with ideas. For the actions to be taken next year, we also made sure that the students would vote for their favourite ideas by sticking a smiley face to the post-it that contained an initiative that they found valuable.

What actions have been put in place to guarantee a strong youth leadership throughout the community lab?	All of the students were involved in the process and were coming up with ideas about how the school environment and their own lives could be improved. The students were placed in the room so that they have benefited from 1-2 teachers at each table, who would be able to provide explanations, if needed, to make sure the students were active and that everyone had a chance to express their idea. The leadership of the students in this case translated into making sure each perspective was taken into account during the event and at the end we gathered a series of ideas that would be representative of the group and not of the most active students. Also, at the end of the community lab we were able to come up with a youth-expressed and supported need, that we will implement during the next school year.
What have the main challenges been to guarantee a youth led process?	The students were mixed, with students who have participated previously in the project and students who were not there before. Since the students have a mixture of disabilities (hearing impairments, autism, intellectual and developmental delays, Down syndrome etc.), the process had to be simplified in order to be inclusive for all of the students and to make sure all students have an opportunity to express their voice. Some of the students were more active in the process, while others were less able to express themselves and needed more time and support to do so.
What were the stakeholders' attitudes towards youth? Have they provided the necessary space for youth to express themselves and lead the discussion?	The teachers, school directors, pedagogues and support staff were very committed to supporting this action and to listen to the needs of student. They have provided the space for the community lab to take place in and also participated in a high number and participated in the conversation with the students, listening to the students finding and needs and contributing with their own ideas and perspectives.

#### 4. Outputs of the Community Lab

<b>Problems/needs/issues</b>	What are the problems, needs and issues we want to tackle?	<p>Although more issues were discussed, we will mention the most advanced one and the one we have decided to tackle in depth during the next school year – <b>sexual education with a focus on the protection of young people with disabilities from sexual abuse.</b></p> <p>The lack of sexual education classes, discussion groups, serious information sources and safe spaces for students to open the conversation and to express their concerns about these issues were at the center of the students conversations. It is particularly important for students (and also adults) with</p>
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		disabilities to have access to awareness-raising about sexuality, especially given the fact that there are many aspects that are particularly important: people with disabilities of all ages are subjected to violence and sexual violence that are, in most cases, even more underreported than in the case of the population not having a disability; conversations about what is sexual violence and how it can impact a teenagers are very scarce; there are no conversations and explanations concerning consent and the importance of consent in all issues related to sexuality.
	What data supports this?	In Romania, sexual violence against all categories of population are underreported; however, in the case of minors and persons with disabilities the situation is even worse. In 2022, 70% of the cases of sexual acts with a minor were not sent forward for trial. According to official data, out of the total number of cases of sexual violence against a minor, 93% of the victims are girls. There is still a lot of stereotyping in cases of sexual violence and sexual violence with a minor, at all levels: in families, in schools, in the legal system, among its representatives etc. Romania is also in the top two countries in the European Union concerning pregnancies among teenagers; 45% of the births among teenage girls in the EU are reported in Romania. Also, in Romania in 2021, over 2.500 girls from 11 to 14 years old became mothers, according to the National Institute for Statistics. In spite of this situation, there is a lot of opposition related to sexual education in schools; sexual education classes can only be done with the explicit, written consent of parents. However, this leaves teenagers exposed to exploitation, abuse, sexual violence and to the lack of information concerning their bodies and how to maintain sexual and reproductive health, among many others.
	What are the root causes?	The lack of information and practice concerning sexual education for children and teenagers, as well as a high level of social opposition, alimanted by certain political figures, allows for the perpetuation of a high level of stereotypes and prejudice against the introduction of a serious sexual education curriculum in school, that would talk about body development, health, consent, sexual violence and how to be protected against sexual violence etc. With certain difficulties among many families when it comes to discussing with their children about sexuality, this leaves children and teenagers alone in front of misinformation and abuse. In most cases, their curiosity is channeled, from an early age, towards the information of their peers or to Internet sources, which arent either filtered or safe.
<b>Possible solutions</b> -	What is the change we want to see?	Building a sexual education program for teenagers with disabilities that is consistent and protective, that is build through consultations with students, teachers and parents

		and that starts from the intention of protecting teenagers from abuse and making sure they are aware of how to maintain their sexual and reproductive health throughout all life cycles.
	How can we realize it?	During the following school year, experts from CPE will meet with the school psychologist and with other teachers, as well as with a small group of students, in order to better explore the students needs and to see what the basis of such a program would be. The program would have to be designed in a more specific way and to introduce it later on to parents who can also express their concerns about it and provide added value to it. Further on, we will ask for the specific, written consent of the parents to pilot this sexual education program with a limited number of students (no more than 15-20 students). After the pilot, we will insert the lessons learnt into the structure of it and improve it and in the end we will ideally provided to the entire school, with the specific consent of parents.
	Are the solutions also addressing the root causes?	Through the consultations with parents, the program will also address some issues related to sexuality being taboo in many families. We will also try to inform the families about the additional risks that exists with regard to the sexual lives and protection of young people with disabilities, this way talking in the open about an important subject that is often ignored or avoided. Many parents of children with disabilities may be overprotective and in many cases their children may be completely unprepared to the sexual violence that may occur during their teenage years – since there were no words about it from their parents, it would be in some cases very hard for them to know what is appropriate and what is not, what consent means, what types of sexual violence exist, how they could protect themselves and/or ask for help, which ways they could go in order to report a situation of sexual abuse etc.
	Who are the involved/relevant stakeholders?	The parents are essential in understanding the benefits and supporting such a program. Such a program could not be implemented without their explicit, written consent, but this is not only a formal requirement. Parents are an essential ally in the implementation of such an initiative and their opinion would be very valuable for the entire process.
<b>Constraints and resources</b>	What resources are needed (also not economic)?	Experts, spaces, materials. All of these already exists, since the partnership between the school and CPE will continue pro bono on behalf of CPE for the implementation of this program in the next school year.
	What opportunities/skills do we have? Who can help us?	The school will provide the expertise of the school psychologist, who will work with the psychologist and psychotherapist at CPE in order to develop and facilitate the program together. We can further on present and provide the materials and approaches developed to other schools who



		are also working with students with different disabilities or with students who do not have a disability.
	What are the constraints (also bureaucratic) and challenges?	The constraints are related to time (making sure we allocate enough time for the program during the next school year) and to also finding a way in which such a program could be implemented with the same impact for students with a varied range of disabilities. Finding a way in which we can adapt the information so that all students may equally benefit from it will be a challenge, but it is not impossible.
	Are there any negative effects? How can we avoid them?	There may be parents who may oppose such an initiative due to the fact that generally sexual education programs are unfortunately associated with the oversexualization of children and teenagers and to the promotion of the sexual minorities as the most desirable sexual path. This is also because of the multiple misinformation sources the parents may have access to and we will need to invest the time to discuss it in depth with the parents and provide transparency and the possibility for parents to have a good knowledge and understanding about what will happen during such a program.
<b>Synthesis and priorities</b>	Which solution best responds to the identified needs?	A program on sexual education that is built on the efforts of the experts (psychologists) from the school and CPE, of students, parents and teachers, the entire school community who will contribute to the development of such an initiative.
	What are the main points?	<p>The following activities will happen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developing a structure for the program by the experts psychologists</li> <li>- Validating the structure with a small group of students, with parents and other teachers</li> <li>- Developing the contents for at least 5 meetings of the program</li> <li>- Presenting the contents to the parents and gathering their approval for the participation of their children</li> <li>- Implementing the contents with a pilot group of students (15-20)</li> <li>- Evaluating the program and inserting the lessons learnt</li> <li>- Promoting the program to other schools where students with disabilities are enrolled from all over the country</li> <li>- Presenting the program widely</li> </ul>
	What priorities to develop it in relation to the available resources (among which time)?	The program will be implemented throughout the next school year. It will start in October and we will be implementing it step by step until June 2024.

## 5. Follow up activities on priority solutions identified

The students proposal related to developing a sexual education program in their school in a partnership between the school and the experts from CPE that were involved in the project, with the involvement of the parents as well, will continue and materialize in the next school year. Already there were discussions among the school psychologists and the experts from CPE about the steps to be taken in order to develop and implement the program, with the intention of creating a curriculum that would build on and meet the specific needs of the students with hearing impairments and other associated disabilities. A small group of students who would support the project and contribute to the creation and validation of the curriculum was also created. The program will be tested with the support of a pilot group of students.



