EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

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

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	WP8
Event name:	Final International Conference
Type:	Conference
In situ/online:	in-situ
Location:	Italy, Bologna
Date(s):	10.03.2026
Website(s) (if any):	https://youthdemocraid.weebly.com/
Participants	
Female:	57
Male:	23
Non-binary:	0
From country 1 [Italy]:	63
From country 2 [Poland]:	3
From country 3 [Lithuania]:	1
From country 4 [Slovakia]:	2
From country 5 [Greece]:	2
From country 6 [Portugal]:	2
From country 7 [Belgium]:	1
From country 8 [Spain]:	3
From country 9 [France]:	2

From country 10 [Germany]:	1		
Total number of participants:	80	From total number of countries:	10

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

On March 10, 2026, the international final conference of the YouthDemocrAID project: Education, Debate, Action, was held in Bologna. The event represented an opportunity for gathering and reflection, allowing participants to publicly share the results and insights gained during the implementation of the project. The event took place at the Centro Sociale Montanari in Bologna, Italy, and saw the participation of the local community and project partners from Poland, Greece, Slovakia, and Portugal. The session was moderated by a trainer from YouNet APS, who guided the audience through the different moments of the event, creating an atmosphere of discussion and reflection on civic engagement.

The event was widely promoted through targeted invitations sent to youngsters and participants involved in the project workshops, as well as to policymakers, NGOs, local schools, universities, and activists. It was also open to the broader local community, ensuring inclusive participation. Each participating country was represented by two international participants, contributing to the diversity of perspectives shared during the event.

The event began with an introduction aimed at contextualizing the purpose and objectives of the meeting and reflecting on some of the most significant experiences that emerged during the project's activities. Particular attention was given to direct interaction with young people in school settings, especially through the workshops conducted. One of the most notable activities involved students being invited to create their own political party. To do so, they had to choose a name, define three core values, and present three policy proposals. Through this exercise, students were able to experience, in a simplified way, some fundamental dynamics of democracy, such as dialogue, negotiation, and the search for agreements within a group. The introduction also prompted reflection on some of the responses that emerged during these activities. In some cases, proposals leaned toward greater state control or restrictions on individual freedoms. These observations led to discussions about the sense of insecurity widespread in contemporary society and how it can sometimes translate into a demand for more control and authority. From these reflections, the importance of promoting active citizenship based on dialogue, cooperation, personal responsibility, and the creation of genuinely democratic spaces, where every voice can be heard, was emphasized.

The session then continued with an interview of a woman with extensive experience in local political engagement, who currently serves as a Councillor in her municipality, Bentivoglio, after ten years as a City Councillor with responsibility for Equal Opportunities, a role she continues to hold in her current mandate. In her work, she is involved in numerous community activities and promotes initiatives aimed at encouraging citizen participation and civic awareness. In recent years, she has focused particularly on projects targeting young people who have just turned eighteen, with the aim of introducing them to the Constitution and the values of active citizenship. For her, active participation represents the opportunity for every person to feel part of the community and contribute to its development. It is not only about politics in the strict sense, but also about staying informed, engaging in dialogue with others, and caring for the spaces and people that make up the community. It constitutes a fundamental element of democratic life, as society functions effectively only when citizens feel involved and responsible. Her commitment to active participation has personal roots: she began engaging in politics at the age of fourteen, taking part in student demonstrations in Bologna in 1977. In 1985, during the first direct elections for Neighborhood Councils, she was elected, becoming the youngest Neighborhood Councillor in the city at the age of twenty-four. She further emphasized how social and political contexts deeply influence citizen participation. In today's complex and fast-paced reality, it is essential that institutions create spaces for dialogue and engagement, especially for younger generations. Even though the modes of participation have changed, for example, with the use of social media and digital platforms, the value of civic engagement remains intact. Young generations often show great sensitivity toward social and environmental issues, and intergenerational dialogue is fundamental: the experience and historical memory of adults combine with the innovative ideas and languages of young people, generating more conscious and richer forms of participation. Her message to young people is clear: participation is neither distant nor reserved solely for institutions. Participating means taking an interest in what happens around us, staying informed, expressing ideas, and contributing, even through small actions, to the life of the community. In this sense, active citizenship is fully realized through the commitment to removing obstacles that

prevent equality, freedom, and the full development of every person, as stated in Article 3, paragraph 2, of the Italian Constitution.

The final part of the event featured a cultural moment with a musical performance by a duo. The group presented a selection of Italian and international songs with strong social and political themes. Through the combination of guitar and bass, the musicians created an atmosphere alternating between more intimate moments and energetic ones, inviting the audience to reflect on issues such as peace, social justice, and civic engagement. The performance demonstrated how music can also serve as a form of political expression and an effective tool for stimulating critical thinking and dialogue.

The pieces performed were as follows:

- **"Apesar de Você"** – Artist: Chico Buarque | Year: 1970 | Album: Chico Buarque (1978). This song symbolizes creative resistance against the Brazilian dictatorship. Written after Buarque's return from exile in Italy, the lyrics address a hypothetical "tyrant" (an authority figure or authoritarian partner), affirming that "tomorrow will be another day."

- **Medley: Aida / Nun te reggae più** – Artist: Rino Gaetano | Year: 1977–1978 | Album: Aida / Nuntereggae più. The medley captures the vices and virtues of Italy during the "Years of Lead." "Aida" is a poignant ballad personifying Italy as a woman living through fascism and postwar struggles, while "Nun te reggae più" lists everything the singer could no longer tolerate in society at the time.

- **"Fortunate Son"** – Artist: Creedence Clearwater Revival | Year: 1969 | Album: Willy and the Poor Boys. The song addresses social injustice. While America was sending its sons to Vietnam, John Fogerty wrote this anthem to denounce how the children of the rich and powerful consistently avoided the front lines through high-level connections.

- **"Andrea"** – Artist: Fabrizio De André | Year: 1978 | Album: Rimini. This folk ballad narrates the tragedy of World War I from the perspective of those left behind. Andrea, a young man who lost his companion in the trenches, decides to end his life out of grief. The song is one of the first Italian pieces to address homosexual love with extreme sensitivity and dignity.

- **"Blowin' in the Wind"** – Artist: Bob Dylan | Year: 1963 | Album: The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan. This song became the anthem of the civil rights movement in the 1960s.

- **"Il mio nemico"** – Artist: Daniele Silvestri | Year: 2002 | Album: Unò-dué. A denunciation of global powers, the arms industry, and Western indifference. The song won an Amnesty International award for its ability to make people dance and think simultaneously.

- **Medley: Redemption Song / I Shot the Sheriff** – Artist: Bob Marley & The Wailers | Year: 1973–1980 | Album: Burnin' / Uprising. "I Shot the Sheriff" represents resistance against law brutality (the sheriff as a symbol of oppression), while "Redemption Song" is a spiritual testament and prayer for mental freedom.

- **"Beppeanna"** – Artist: Bandabardò | Year: 1998 | Album: Iniziali Bì-Bì. This song celebrates friendship, the streets, and cultural resistance through joy, becoming a generational anthem for those who see music primarily as sharing and celebration.

Overall, the final event represented an important moment of collective sharing and reflection on the role of active participation in building more democratic societies. Through the introduction, the interview, and the musical performance, it became clear how active citizenship can take many forms, from dialogue and political participation to artistic expression, all contributing to strengthening democratic life and civic awareness within communities.

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

Social Media Posts about the Final International Conference
YouthDemocrAID Facebook Profile
YouNet APS Facebook Profile
YouNet APS Instagram Profile

Website Article
Article Youth DemocrAID Website
Article YouNet APS Website

EDS publication links:

https://youthdemocraid.weebly.com/news

https://you-net.eu/eu-projects-youth/youth-democraid/

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