IO4: Youth Participation Charter and PBL application Report

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→ LEAP page: www.leap.univie.ac.at/
→ LEAP blog: https://leap2020.home.blog/

→ LEAP on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/LEAPLearningToParticipate/

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Introduction

The current document shows the implementation of activities with young people in the context of the project **LEAP – Learn to participate** (Erasmus + - KA2: Strategic Partnership | Youth). This document has been prepared in order to show the process at the basis of the development of the Youth Participation Charter and the audiovisual guide, which is linked to intellectual output *4,* focused on the development of the definition of Youth Participation, related values and recommendations addressed to several stakeholders. The process was co-created by the partners with young people who participated in local activities and virtual mobility foreseen.

The project

LEAP is an acronym that stands for "Learning to Participate" and it is a strategic partnership co-funded by the Erasmus + programme under the KA2 between three youth organisations and two universities. Its focus, and what brought the partnership together, is the interest in young people's social and political participation. Its goals are to shift the perspective about the perception of youth's role as a societal actor in political processes, and to empower young people in taking ownership over issues that matter to them.

The objectives of the project are to:

- Promote youth-centred pedagogical approaches in non-formal education youth organisations.

- Reinforce young people's empowerment intended as "capacity for action".

For further information, please, check the following link:

- → LEAP blog: https://leap2020.home.blog/
- → LEAP on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/LEAPLearningToParticipate/

About Intellectual Output 4

IO4 is divided in two parts:

1) Part A: a Charter whose main goal is to advocate for the grounding values around youth participation and active citizenship, promoted during LEAP lifetime.

2) Part B, which is an audio-visual guideline on Project Based Learning (PBL) with some testimonials of young people who participated to the project activities at local and international level.

The main objectives of IO4 are:

- To develop young people' skills and to raise awareness of one's role and responsibilities in a given context.
- To encourage young people in taking responsibility for a collective project by applying PBL methodologies.
- To discuss on concept of political participation and of finding a definition of participation that fits young people's ideas.

- To promote social and civic skills development and encourage the exercise of active citizenship and develop sense of initiative between young people.

The expected impact of the IO is:

- Improved self-awareness of their representation of the concept of participation.
- Improved perception of one' skills.
- Ownership of PBL for further use of it after the project end.
- Enhanced understanding of youth definition of participation in the territories concerned by the project.
- Greater knowledge of youth needs and interests in the territories concerned by the project.

How did we work to develop the Io4?

COVID_19 pandemic has affected the implementation of our working activities together with our personal life: mobility's restrictions and strict rules limiting people gathering and actions have been a strong obstacle to overcome. Due to the local or national lockdowns and different restrictions in partner countries, we carried out the activities online allowing us to implement the activities in order to reach the objective of the project.

However, the project has added a value to its own action in this context: to show how PBL can be implemented through multiple channels and can increase the participation of youth also via new tools; or, at the same time, gave an opportunity to work with young people having limits and potentialities in extreme contexts and situation.

The collection of the information from partner countries to develop the chart and the related process was implemented through three main phases (pre-mobility, during mobility and post mobility). Specifically, youth workers with experiences in the non-formal education sector, familiar with the LEAP methodology through previous trainings that took place at the beginning of the project, led these meetings with young people.

The main objectives of these phase were: a) to reinforce intercultural dialogue through different activities and respect for diversity amongst young people in Europe; b) to provide knowledge and skills of youth workers about Project-based learning principles and methods; to understand young people's issues and how we can involve them in the development of their own community.

The following activities were carried out in order to reach our goal and to gather the information to develop the Charter and the related video:

- **Survey**: a survey with open-ended questions was addressed to young Austrians, Croatians and Italians.
- **Pre-virtual mobility:** after the recruitment and the creation of the group of young people at local level, an online meeting on PBL methodology and participation has been organized.

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- **Virtual Mobility:** all the local groups participated in an international online exchange, involving all the young participants of the project.
- **Post-virtual mobility:** a follow-up activity organized after the international mobility, to assess the learning outcomes and provide the final feedbacks to the results of the project

This document describes in details how each partner worked in the different stages of the project before, during and after the international mobility with a particular emphasis on practical and organisational aspects. First part of this document presents ……; the second part of the document presents the general results coming from the reports with the gathered information from the Italian, Croatian and Austrian partner after the implementation of activities addressed to young people.

The Methodology

During the preparation of the questions and tools to be implemented in the activities, the partnership has opted for the Action Research Methodology. Quoting the bid, "Action Research is "a set of practices" and "an orientation to enquiry" (Reason, Bradbury, 2013) where the object of enquiry - in this case young people - are co-creators of knowledge; this implies that the result of this IO have been created not only *for* young people, but *with* young people, in a process of co-creation. Action research "calls for **engagement** with people in collaborative relationships, opening new 'communicative spaces' in which dialogue and development can flourish" (Reason, Bradbury, 2013). The choice of orienting the distribution of tasks on the basis of **collaborative work** with young people is a consequence of the fact that in order to expand the definition of participation it is necessary to create a **space for dialogue** with young people"(LEAP Application Package, p. 96).

During the activities before, during and after the mobility projects and with the objective to develop the Charter, youth workers stimulated the engagement of the participants, emphasising the importance of collaboration and dialogue among them. Youth workers had the main role of providing a framework and "putting participants in the mood" and gather the information to allow them to co-create the Charter and have more inputs for the video.

The Participation Learning Path

Survey

Before participating to virtual mobility, young people from Italy, Austria and Croatia were invited to participate in a survey, aimed at sounding out their opinions and thoughts on the concept of participation and to understand their problems during the Pandemic. 123 participants contributed to the survey. Partners used different channel of communications in order to reach their target.

The main questions of the survey were:

1. What does participation mean to you?
2. How has covid affected your daily life?

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3. What do you want to say to other young people that are also at home during COVID19 emergency?

All the answers were collected and analysed, allowing to create a solid basis to be used on the following phase of the project as well as to enrich its final results.

Pre-departure / Before virtual mobility

During the month of December 2020 and January 2021, partners organised a pre-virtual mobility session with young people in their country. Aims of this activity was to define the objectives and importance of the mobility projects, to understand the concept of participation from young people's point of view and to share their experience during the COVID_19. Moreover, it was discussed with them about how PBL can be used in the development of their own community and to support young people who are in difficult situation as well as how to address specific issues.

In order to gather the information, youth workers used a guideline with several questions, provided by CSC Danilo Dolci and developed with the contribution of all the partnership.

The following guideline was used by partners during the pre-mobility phase:

Pre-Departure / Before the virtual mobility	
Questions to be covered (only for trainers as reminder during their activity)	*Questions to be administered to the participants*
Participation	
1. What does participation mean for you? 2. Can you please develop your own personal definition of participation?	- *Let's define how you see the concept of participation!* - What does "participation" mean to you? *You can use any tool or way to describe or represent it.*
3. How do you feel when you participate in something? 4. How do you evaluate your own level of participation? 5. What types of participation do you think exist?	- *Please describe all the moments in which someone can be seen as an active participant in any context.* - *When and where do you think people participate?*
6. How do you think PBL can strengthen your participation in the community?	- *When you want to contribute to your community, what do you do to contribute?*
Youth Participation Values	
1. Can you identify at least 4 values connected to your definition of participation? 2. What kind of grounded values do you think are at the basis of your activities in your community? 3. Which civic and social skills do you think are connected with your being participative?	- *What do you think are the values, the mindset and the skills that are necessary to participate? What motivates you to become active?*

During the virtual mobility

Virtual mobility took place on 22nd of January 2021. 41 young people from Croatia, Austria and Italy met online and discussed on the different aspect of participation, PBL approach, young people's problems and what decisions makers can do in order to support young people. During the event, the partners had the chance to experiment furthermore the project methodology. Moreover, the virtual meeting has been a chance to create a moment of (inter)cultural exchanges, in a context of general restrictions in all the partner countries involved.

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The meeting was organised with several breakout sessions in order to give more space for young people to share their knowledge and opinion. As an example, partners organized a discussion with participants on the topic of how young people participate during the pandemic, and how they are seen by public opinion in their countries. Additionally, the topics of potential initiatives to be taken by youth organisations and policy-makers to improve youth participation were deepened.

Regarding the online activities in the framework of this international mobility, breakout rooms were created taking into account the level of English of the participants, providing the support of at least one trainer in each group to facilitate the process. After these activities, all participants came back in the plenary session, with some representatives for each group sharing the main results and idea developed within the breakout room sessions.

At the end of the virtual mobility, partners discussed with participants from their country on the following questions:

During the Mobility / During the virtual mobility	
Questions to be covered (only for trainers as reminder during their activity)	*Questions to be administered to the participants*
Participation	
1. After your mobility/online experience, did your perspective on participation change? 2. Did you have the chance to compare your concept of participation with the one of your "international peers"?	*- Thinking about your mobility/online experience so far, how has your way of participating changed during this experience? What about the other participants?*
3. What has been the added value of this experience on your definition of participation? 4. How will this experience influence your participation at local level?	*- Thinking back to what you thought and knew about participation before your mobility/this online exchange, what has changed? What do you want to take with you for future activities after this experience?*
Youth Participation Values	
5. Based on what you've already defined, do you have other values to add among those ones already identified? *6. Are the civic and social skills of your international peers the same of those ones you've already thought about?*	*- Before the mobility / this online exchange, you identified values and skills related to participation. Do these still fit your understanding of participation or has something changed?* *- Thinking about your mobility / online experience so far, (how) do you think your values have changed? Do you think that you have learned something knew?*

Post mobility

As last step, partners met with the young people one more time at the national level in order to understand their satisfaction from the project experience, and their opinion about participation and PBL after joining the international event. The meeting with young people, after participating the online mobility helped us to understand if the previous opinion about concept of participation and grounding values has been changed. As well as to gather the most useful information to developed the charter.

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Youth workers followed the provided guidelines with the following guiding questions for carrying out a self-reflection activity with the young participants of the project activities:
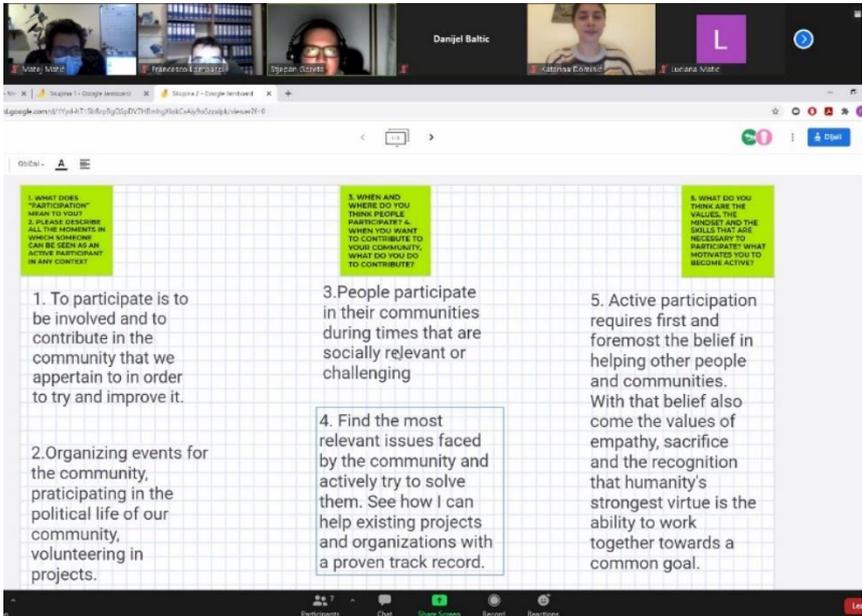
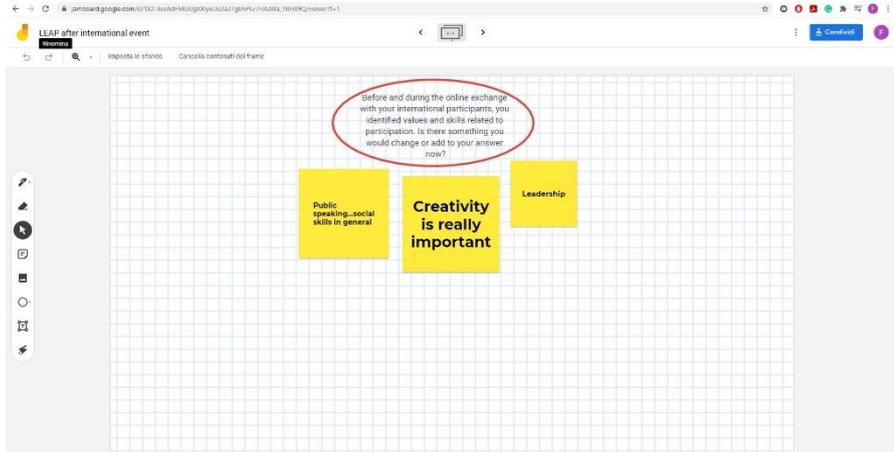| Post-mobility / Post virtual exchange	
Questions to be covered (only for trainers as reminder during their activity)	*Questions to be administered to the participants*
Participation	
1. How can you define your participation during the activities of the project? 2. Can you finally summarize your final definition of participation? 3. How did the local and international experience influenced your concept of participation? 4. How did PBL influence your participation in the local community?	- *Now, take into account all your path in this project: thinking back to what you thought and knew about participation before your mobility / your online experience, do you think your first concept of participation has changed? How?* - *If you had to explain to a 6-year-old child what "participation" is all about, how would you define it?* - *What impact* has *this project and its methodology had on you? Is there something you want to take with you for future activities?*
Youth Participation Values	
5. Do you confirm the previous values you've identified? Do you have others you'd like to add?	- *Before and during the mobility / during the online exchange with your international participants, you identified values and skills related to participation. Is there something you would change or add to your answer now that you're back?*
Suggestions	
6. What kind of initiatives should decision makers take in order to strengthen and stimulate youth participation? 7. What kind of initiatives would you like to see in your community to improve youth participation?	- *In your opinion, what should political decision makers (at any level) do to give young people the motivation and opportunity to participate?* - *Would you like to have more initiative similar to our project? Or something else?* - *Given the new contexts due to the recent pandemic, how do you think this has influenced in the participation of young people? How to bridge the gap created by the digital divide? How can we increase the value of participation in such contexts?*

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National overview

In the section below, results gathered from each partner during the meetings with young people in different stages are presented.

Udruga Mladi u EU (Croatia)

Pre-departure / Before virtual mobility

Pre-departure			
Date	From 16th November to 24th December the online survey. On 8th and 19th January online preparatory meetings	**Place**	Online survey/ 2 online meetings
N° of participants	45	**N° of youth workers**	2
Participation	Participants defined "Participation" as a form of self-expression while they are part of *something* (often define as "community"), working together to discuss and express themselves in some bigger cause/topic/theme which contribute to personal and social well-being. Participation make young people feel as *active citizens*. "Participation" is also the opportunity to learn something new, develop skills and meet other people, going out of the comfort zone (sometimes they mentioned "courage to express themselves"). With participation, young people expect having an impact on personal and community level, as well as reach a personal and a common goal. Young people feel happy when they participate because they have the opportunity to share their opinions and ideas with other peers. In fact, sometimes they also combined participation with "joy", "fun", "enjoy with

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|	
	others". Especially during pandemic times, they look for physical participation. Even if thanks to digital tools, they have several opportunities to participate, the fact they have been attending online school lessons made them bored of digital tools. However, there are some introvert young people who stated that for them it is easier to participate online. They think there are several types of participation. Most of them listed the following types: demonstration, community projects, school discussions about some specific topics, civic initiatives, activism, public services. The results can be summarised with: COMMUNITY, CONTRIBUTION AND FUN.
Youth Participation Value	The four values identified during this first phase are the following: networking, creativity, humanity and organisation. Participants think that at the basis of the activities in the community there is the wish to work with other people for a common goal, which contribute, to help some issues in the community or within their own group. In general, most of them wish to participate when something happens in the community. For this reason, some of them mentioned the earthquake occurred in Croatia at the end of December 2020. Some of the participants said that after the earthquake they saw a raise of participation among young people and within the community in general. The involved participants think that thanks to participation they can develop and achieve some important skills, which are also important for their personal life. They listed down some of them: communication, teamwork, tolerance, empathy and understanding.

Mobility/Virtual Mobility			
Date	22.01.2021		
N° of participants	41 (12 from Croatia)	N° of youth workers	8 (2 from Croatia)
Participation	For the Croatian team the international event was an opportunity for its members to reflect more into deep on participation. In fact, the discussion with other their peers from other countries contributed to expand their perspective. Participation is not only related to political issues but also even in something related to your daily "routine". However, they realised that they can also participate with people from other contexts: people from different countries can have same issues and they can solve those issues all together sharing ideas. The first working session was useful for them to share opinions regarding participation and the role of young people in the society nowadays during the pandemic. They consider the international exchange a benefit. Even the fact they had the opportunity to discuss in small groups through digital tools such as jamboard eased the debate. This experience will influence their participation at local level because they understood that participation is something you "live" everyday.		
Youth Participation Value	Creativity for them become a strong value for participation. How to solve a problem thinking out of the box is a plus for the participants from the Croatian team. However, the international moment made them aware about the importance of networking from people from abroad because together they have the opportunity to share ideas and information to solve some issues.		

Post Virtual Mobility

Post-Mobility			
Date	01.02.2021	Place	Online meeting
N° of participants	7	N° of youth workers	1
Participation	For all the participants from Croatia the participation in the project was interesting because they felt connected with problems, feelings and ideas of young people from other countries. Some of them stated that thanks to this project they had the opportunity to reflect on the meaning of the word "participation" and change their perspective about that concept. Youth workers involved in the evaluation observed that something changed more into deep as emotion. Comparing the beginning of the learning path of the participants with the last step, youth workers noticed more enthusiasm regarding the discussion. The outcome was more or less the same but with a strengthened European feeling. Participants changed their perspective about participation, believing that it is something inclusive, not necessary connected to their being active in a political purpose but more in terms of being part of a community.		

For them, participation means to be part of a group and solving problems in a community, all together. Then, as the project took place in an international environment, they think that participation also means sharing ideas and practices from other countries, as well as try to solve common issues all together.
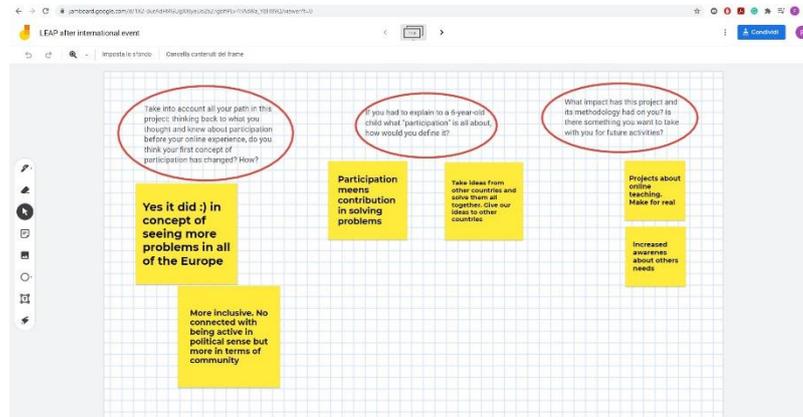
For the Croatian team PBL was a good opportunity to learn how to work with people from different backgrounds. The fact that they discussed with people who didn't know before and they were coming from different contexts improved their understanding oflistening to the needs of other people.

Youth Participation Value	In general, they do confirm the values identified before the international event. In addition, they mentioned **empathy** as new value. In fact, the Croatian participants understood how it is important to listen to others, trying to understand the contexts they are coming from. They also mentioned the leadership as a value. In fact, they believe that in a group/community should it is important to identify a person in charge to try to coordinate people in a group/community to achieve specific objectives.
Suggestions	Due to the new pandemic situation, the participants would like to have more youth friendly content from the municipality. For example, they mentioned that during this period the local Institutions didn't seek for the young people opinion as well asthey didn't inform well the youth community. They also suggested them to improve the content within their social media channels to reach more young people. They also mentioned the debate regarding vaccines. They complained about the fact that Institutions are not making efforts to provide right information among young people. However, they also suggest to use some web platforms where the decision makers provide young people the space to give them inputs, ideas and/or discussing about some rules/laws within the community. From the discussion, it came out there is already something like that (https://esavjetovanja.gov.hr/ECon/Dashboard) where people can

	discuss about laws in Croatia. However, people are not well informed about it. In general, they ask for more transparency and more information from the decision-makers.

Sapere Aude (Austria)

Pre-departure			
Date	02.-13.12.2020	**Place**	**Vienna, Wieselburg (online)**
N° of participants	6	**N° of youth workers**	4
Participation	1. Most of the participants understood participation as a form of contributing, something of relevance to society. Participation was mostly understood in a political or legal sense or in the form of influencing the own preconditions of everyday life. 2. Participation is seen as a way of influencing society on basis of the democratic right to participate and on basis of your own values and beliefs. 3. When young people are involved in the action of participating, participation contributes to the self-empowerment and self-consciousness of the young people (i.e. getting a form of respect towards personal opinions). 4. According to the participants, very different forms of participation exist. Especially in the situation of a pandemic, participation was also understood in a health policy-way, for example to take into account health care measures in order to protect others. 5. When PBL is seen as a form of realizing different youth projects together, there was a big desire among young people to act and to work on projects together with other young people (even in the virtual sphere only).
Youth Participation Value	The main 4 values identified and connected to the concept of participation were: ▪ Equivalence of young people's opinions ▪ Diversity of opinions and people participating ▪ Interactivity of different formats ▪ Freedom of opinion and freedom of speech

Regarding what kind of civic and social skill participants think are connected with them being participative, they identified the following one:

- Immediate dismay of issues or political decisions
- Media literacy
- Balancing your own needs and the need of other people (or the society in total).

Virtual Mobility

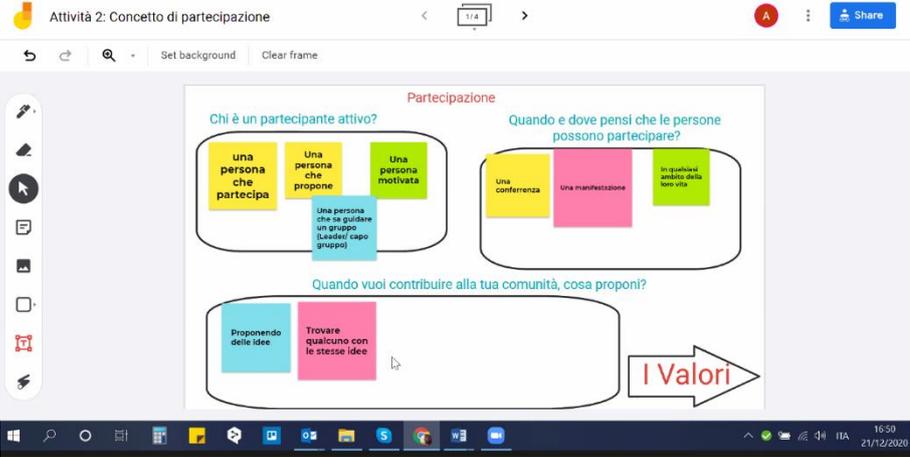| Mobility			
Date	**22.01.2021**	**Place**	**Vienna (online)**
N° of participants	**6**	**N° of youth workers**	**2**
Participation *is*	Participants appreciated the comparison of their concept of participation with their international peers. Moreover, there was an Increased interested in the exchange with other young people, as well as an increased interest in listening to views and opinions from their peers from other countries, regions or social and educational backgrounds. 4The virtual mobility did foster youth participation as the young people were finding support for their views and personal situation among their peers going through similar situation in their country during the COVID-19 emergency.		
Youth Participation Value	Compared to what has been expressed before, participants added a further value to their list, specifically: conveying a common European identity They appreciated the fact that their peers from other countries had the same idea regarding those civic and social skills at the basis of participation.		

Post Virtual Mobility

Post-Mobility			
Date	**23.01.2021**	**Place**	**Vienna (online)**
N° of participants	**6**	**N° of youth workers**	**1**
Participation	The internationality of the participants/project was seen especially positive by the young people, although the contact was virtual only. In times of the pandemic it was one of the few ways to "break-out" of the young people's everyday life with less social contacts. The mobility gave them a feeling of "internationality" and "European spirit", when regular travel or regular European exchanges are not possible. Finally, the ideas and attitudes of PBL (thriving questions, form of collaboration…) have also been realized and valued during the online mobility.		

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Youth Participation Value	Participants confirmed all the values previously identified.
Suggestions	Participants would like to have formats and projects that aid young people to fight personal isolation together with other people from their peer-group. Moreover, they think it could be useful to have – from the public authorities - the promotion of some initiatives helping to integrate young people' opinion in an obligatory way, when important political decisions need to be made.

Centro per lo Sviluppo Creativo Danilo Dolci (Italy)

Before virtual mobility

Pre-departure			
Date	22/12/2019	**Place**	**Palermo Italy**
N° of participants	**22**	**N° of youth workers**	**2**
Participation	Participants defined the concept of participation in following ways: - Participation means to be active for the society through volunteering or being involved in community through an active dialogue. - Participation helps to share the knowledge between young people, providing new ideas for the community. - Participation can be voluntary - Participation means to take part in an activity all together for a common goal. - Participation means to express own ideas during a conversation or debate with other people. Participants stated that when they participate in something, they feel included. Most of the participants mentioned that be in a community means also to be part of the decision-making process. Different features connected to participation were identified: ▪ listening; ▪ contributing; ▪ to attend specific events ▪ to show public attention ▪ To organise something together with others; ▪ To become part of a community; ▪ To criticise on something ▪ To share cultural experience. Most of the participants complained about the difficulty to participate in something that there is less opportunity to participate during the pandemic situation. Although, they would like to do something for the

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	society, help other people but now they cannot go outside of home. Some of them mentioned that they used to participate in social activities, awareness campaigns in the past. Regarding the PBL approach, they mentioned that it can be implemented in different field, such as within the community where you live, in youth centre, in the school.
Youth Participation Value	During the meeting with young people, we also discussed about youth participation value and they identified few values which are following; - Confront - Knowledge - To have clear ideas from different point of view - To know how to express yourself - To be included - To be able to lead the group Most of the participants who participated to the pre-mobility, think that being part of the group helps to develop the carrier in personal and professional level. Before participating in something, they would prefer to have clear ideas on what they are going to be involved, how they can contribute, what will be the impact for the society. To lead some initiatives in the community it is important to have certain skills such as, leadership, work in group, listen others etc. Participants stated that when someone participate in something, they have opportunities to listen other, so they can have different opinions. Participating in something makes people to think more, to be present, it can help develop personal competences. The use of PBL allowed us to analyse our own context and identify new skills and how to use them in order to improve the local community. When we discussed about the initiative by using PBL, their idea was to launch an awareness campaign in order to reduce the pollution and to raise awareness on the environmental issue.

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Virtual Mobility

Mobility			
N° of participants	23	**N° of youth workers**	2
Participation	For most of the Italian participants it was the first international experience of this kind and they were really satisfied of this opportunity. Given the involvement on this kind of activity, they worked on the development of the definition of participation, following the previous definition agreed on the first online meeting. In fact, the concept of participation this time was meant as "actively taking part in a confrontation or an activity", which in the case of a confrontation with another person means expressing one's own opinion, which does not necessarily have to be the same as that of the person we are confronting. While in the case of an activity it means to engage and cooperate actively to achieve a common goal. During the event, participants could share their opinion about the concept of participation; at the same time, they listened different views from other participants, so they could compare their definition with their peers. During the mobility, most of the Italian young people expressed their interests to join a real mobility in future. They also would like to carry out some activities to support young people in this difficult situation.		
Youth Participation Value	They wanted to add more values after participating the event - adding to the ones already identified - which are: - To be creative - To Experiment - To listen to They have certainly gained more confidence in relating to others, and in this case the virtual mode has facilitated the lowering of certain barriers. Young participants understood better how much their role is important and how they can really intervene in their community. After participating to the project activities, most of the young people expressed that they feel more responsible for their community.		

Post-Mobility			
N° of participants	**23**	**N° of youth workers**	2
Participation	Participants showed their satisfaction from the virtual mobility. They have mentioned that they could confront with their ideas with others. They had opportunities to discover new ideas about participation from other participants and to propose activities during the group sessions. For them the most important part of the session during the mobility was to share young people problems in different countries and discuss how to overcome with these problems. They found out most of the problems young people are facing are common also in other countries (such as unemployment, less opportunities to participate in something, decisions makers are not listening their issues etc.). - M Participants mentioned that concept of participation with the situation of COVId-19 has changed in the ways of how it happens. Participants agreed that after participating to the online mobility, the concept of PBL has influenced their opinion. Now they have more comparisons and points of view which help them to think differently. They feel more open to listen to others, bringing more ideas that can be implemented to the community.		
Youth Participation Value	Participants confirmed the previously identified values during the first 2 steps of their involvement.		
Suggestions	Participants provided several feedbacks and recommendations for policy makers and youth organisations which can help to answer young's people current problems: - Change their point of view towards young people and bring them closer to politics - To be listened by decision-makers - Young people need to be more involved in the projects - In order to understand young people's needs, it's important to involved them in specific action to allow them to contribute in the growth of the community. Finally, regarding the initiatives for the community, participants stated that they would like to have their community with more digitalization, thus allowing all citizens to participate and contribute equally, specifically in such difficult contexts as the current one.		