INCLUSIVE
PATHways
TO PEACE

Final Report –
Participatory action research

"Youth perspectives on violence incidence, attitudes towards marginalized groups, and solutions for positive change"

Content

1. Introduction

Participatory Action Research (PAR) is a collaborative research approach that actively involves participants in the research process, designed to address issues affecting their lives and communities, combining action and reflection with the aim of achieving social change. While traditional research often approaches target group as passive subjects, observing and studying their behaviors or circumstances, PAR fundamentally shifts this paradigm.

Being fairly unknown in the youth sector in Europe, this methodology provides an opportunity for youth practitioners to bring innovation in their work, and more importantly connect with their youth on a deeper level. Hence, within the Erasmus+ KA2 Strategic partnership project "Inclusive pathways to peace", the partners decided to use this approach at the very beginning, committing to use the key findings as guidelines for future steps. Using the highest level of participation, where youth and decision-makers (*in this case youth workers and researchers*) have equal distribution of power in decision making, provided a unique opportunity to our organizations to improve the quality of our work, coming closer to a perceived ideal youth work setting.

PAR "Youth perspectives on violence incidence, attitudes towards marginalized groups, and solutions for positive change" was implemented simultaneously by **Association Studio B** from Croatia, **YEU** from Cyprus, **Association Light** from Serbia and **Erasmiau** from Spain, from April to July 2025 within "The power of Participation" activity. The research team was made from 5 young people in Croatia, Serbia and Spain and 6 young people in Cyprus, as well as 2 youth workers in each country, that created and conducted the research, did an analysis and created a national report.

Despite being directly affected by these issues, young people are rarely included in formal discussions or decision-making processes that aim to address them. For that reason, this research was made to gain a deeper understanding of how young people perceive and experience violence, social exclusion, and the potential for change within their communities. It focused on youth as the primary target group, including diverse backgrounds and social realities, such as students, members of marginalized groups, and young people actively engaged or interested in social issues.

The main purpose of each PAR was:

- To equip youth practitioners with a new approach in youth research which focuses on social change that promotes democratic values; is context-specific, targeted on the needs of youth; with an iterative cycle of research, action and reflection

- To explore and understand youth perspectives on violence, their perception of inclusion and exclusion in social and institutional settings and attitudes towards marginalized groups

- To identify levels of awareness, empowerment, and willingness to take part in social change and collect concrete ideas on how to promote greater inclusion

Each organization went through similar process while implementing PAR. The first step was to choose 5 diverse young people who showed interest in social issues and research. Youth in Cyprus showed great interest for this activity and 6 of them joined the team. Youth workers, two from each organization, trained them in research methodology and the

topic of the research in order to have a common understanding of all terms used before any decision making took place.

The concept of PAR was explained and all participants were made aware of the full autonomy they had in this process, from choosing the method(s) and specific target group(s) to designing questions and creating reports. A special emphasis was put onto the "action" part of this process and an intervention based on results was implemented in each country. When planning the intervention and deciding on the type of the activity participants drew inspiration from the most surprising findings or the most prevailing answers. Throughout the process youth workers acted as mentors, providing support and guidance when needed, taking care of their needs and specific contexts of each community.

The process included several meetings and workshops held among the national teams, each with clear purpose and goal. Once a common understanding was reached the teams proceeded with setting the specific objectives of each PAR and creating the questions accordingly, followed by distributing the surveys, creating analysis report and finishing with implementing intervention, evaluating the whole process and creating report.

It was interesting to notice that each national team chose the same instrument – an online questionnaire, that was ranging from 15 questions in Serbia and Spain, through 28 questions in Cyprus, to 33 questions in Croatia, explaining their choice as more practical for analyzing purposes and enabling to reach a higher number of participants from broader communities, especially the ones that are usually out-of-reach or hard-to-reach. Their choice also confirms that regardless of which part of Europe youth come from, they share the same everyday life, which increasingly takes place online.

The evaluation carried out in each country confirmed that we achieved the expected results of this activity, both among the young participants of the research teams and among the youth workers. The learning outcomes as well as the main results are presented in the following chapters of this report.

The purpose of this final report is to summarize the national research process and findings, highlight the interventions implemented and present the outcomes we achieved. We aim to encourage youth practitioners all over Europe and beyond to apply this approach and / or use our findings in shaping their future initiatives and activities. We also want to share results, inspire wider adoption of this approach, and potentially influence policy and practice with sometimes concerning, yet very powerful findings.

This final report is followed with a pedagogical and methodological guidebook "Empowering praxis" that serves as a comprehensive guide for youth practitioners, including youth workers, educators, trainers, activists, teachers, and researchers in the youth field, that aims to equip them with the necessary knowledge and tools to confidently implement PAR methodology, thereby fostering a new generation of active citizens.

2. Key findings and comparative analyses

Within the research *"Youth perspectives on violence incidence, attitudes towards marginalized groups, and solutions for positive change"* implemented in Croatia, Cyprus, Serbia and Spain a total of 237 young people aged 13 to 30 were surveyed, which surpassed our expected number of youngsters reached.

Each online questionnaire was designed by the youngsters and youth workers participating in the "Power of Participation" in each country; therefore, the questions were distinctive and the data collected cannot be compared in its entirety.

However, since there was a great level of mutual understanding among the partner organizations regarding the topic and the purpose of the research, quite a lot of the findings are similar and we can draw comparison among them.

Violence

When it comes to experienced violence in all four countries, we found that the number of youths who experienced some form of violence in Spain, Croatia, and Cyprus ranges from 48% to 60%, while in Serbia, where the question was framed differently, the number is even higher and 64 % of the respondents witnessed violence against marginalized groups.

The types of violence most frequently cited in all countries were physical, online, psychological, sexual harassment and discrimination/isolation.

Key findings per country were as follows:

Croatia: physical violence, peer violence, psychological violence, and sexual violence.	**Serbia:** psychological violence, online violence, discrimination/isolation, and physical violence.
Cyprus: verbal violence, discriminatory violence, sexual harassment, and physical violence.	*Spain:* verbal aggression, online violence, social exclusion, and physical violence.

Comparative analyses showed that in all four countries violence most commonly occurs in the *community/neighborhood, schools, and online*. The fact that schools were mentioned in all countries worries us, as there are *"zero tolerance to violence"* policies in all of them, yet violence still happens within school premises. We can draw the conclusion that these policies are insufficient or not implemented properly, and wider community – from decision makers, teachers and other staff to parents and students – should change their approach and implement different measures to ensure schools are a safe environment for all.

Marginalized groups

When comparing the findings on marginalized groups, we found that in most countries migrants, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, LGBTQ and women were mentioned the most. The results by country are:

Croatia: victims of domestic violence, people with mental health issues, women, homeless individuals.

Serbia: Roma people, LGBTQ, migrants, women.

Cyprus: migrants, ethnic minorities, LGBTQ.

Spain: migrants, people with disabilities, people living in poverty.

Solutions for change

When it comes to solutions proposed by respondents in all countries we found that a great majority of youth believe they can make a difference in the society and are interested to do so. They proposed various solutions for reducing violence and enhancing social inclusion, and although the answers were diverse, they can be categorized by type:

Educational workshops on respect, violence (especially prevention), and communication, peer mediation trainings, youth for youth workshops	Creative projects like art, cinema, forum theaters or street activities
Volunteering in vulnerable communities	Safe dialogue spaces for youth meetups and discussions (peer-to peer and with decision makers), cross-community mentorship
Awareness raising campaigns, both online and local; digital hate-speech monitoring.	

Research in all four countries has shown us that young people actively contemplate the environments they live in and that they have concrete ideas on how to improve their communities and the position of marginalized groups. They are sensitive to the problems faced by their peers, aware of institutional barriers and negative forms of behavior, and have developed empathy. The solutions they propose are feasible and do not require high financial investments, however, they require a broad consensus of relevant stakeholders who would act in synergy towards reducing inequality and creating better policies with more effort invested in their implementation.

3. "The power of participation" Croatia

Introduction

The activity involved five young people (Klara, Lara, Ana, Katarina, and Patrik), aged 15 to 25. Four of them (three female and one male participant) are from a rural area, while the fifth participant lives in an urban area. The team also included two youth workers. The implementation involved both in-person and online communication.

The team decided to conduct research using two instruments, an online questionnaire and semi-structured interview. Under the mentorship of the youth workers participants designed the questionnaire questions and collected 64 responses, sharing the survey via their usual communication channels, mostly messaging apps and social networks. They also conducted 4 interviews. The participants then analyzed the results, dividing the work by the survey sections, while two participants focused on the interview analysis. The final version of the national report was created through the collaborative work and comments of the entire team.

The research showed that young people **want change**, but lack the **knowledge** and **safe channels** to act. In the action part, the research team designed and implemented the "Youth loudly without a filter" workshop, using a debate simulation method to promote education and inclusion. Throughout the entire process young people were provided with emotional and logistical support and mentorship. Obstacles were addressed collaboratively, with a strong focus on motivating them to meet deadlines. This process empowered participants by enabling them to actively participate in identifying problems and creating solutions.

3.1 Research Results

Measurement Tools

As a research instrument, an online questionnaire was used. It consisted of 33 mandatory questions divided into categories: demographic data, questions about violence, marginalized groups, and solutions. The questions were multiple-choice, with one being open-ended. The anonymity and voluntary nature of participation were emphasized to all respondents. In addition to the questionnaire, interviews were conducted with young people. These included a total of 5 main questions with follow-up questions that more thoroughly explored the topics of violence, marginalization, their causes, and potential solutions.

Participants

A total of **64 participants**, aged 15 to 30, took part in the online survey. This was a convenience sample. In addition, **4 participants** from the same age group were interviewed.

Procedure

The research was conducted using an online questionnaire. The instructions explained the purpose of the research, the anonymity of the responses, and the voluntary nature of participation. The first six questions collected sociodemographic data, which was followed by questions about violence, marginalized groups, and solutions.
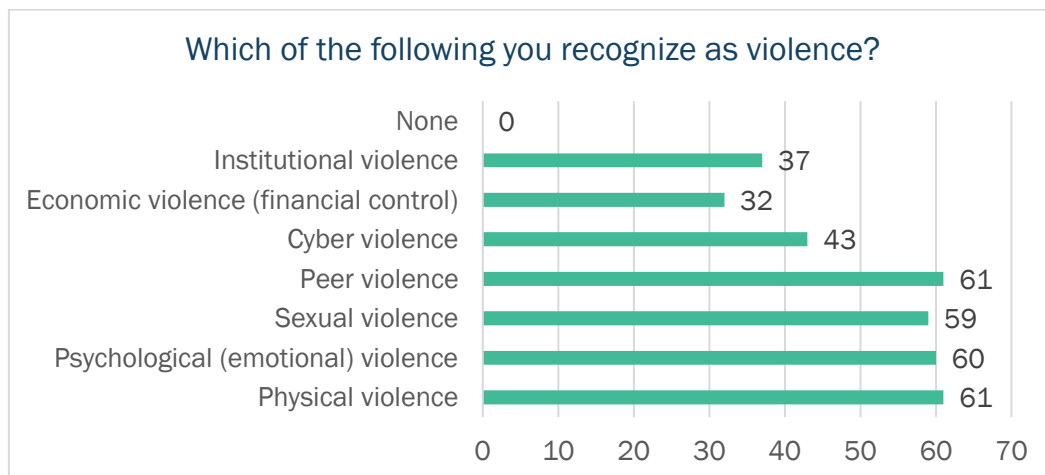
Survey analysis

Demographics

The majority of respondents were in the 25-30 age group (42.2%), while the other two groups (15-19 and 20-24) were equally represented. The research included more female participants (59.4%) than male (40.6%). As for educational status, most respondents had completed high school (48.4%), 25% were high-school students and 18.8% had a university degree. The majority of respondents are employed (43.8%), 26.6% are students, 17.2% are employed on a fixed-term contract, and 12.5% are unemployed (mostly women from rural areas). Over 60% of respondents live in rural areas. 60 respondents were from Central and Eastern Croatia which meant the number of respondents from other regions in Croatia was too small for any meaningful comparison.

Violence

In response to the question, "Which of the following forms of violence do you recognize as violence?", the majority of young people recognized physical (95.3%) and peer (95.3%) violence, as well as psychological (93.8%) and sexual (92.2%). Cyber violence (67.2%) and

institutional violence (57.8%) were somewhat less recognized, while economic violence (50%) was the least recognized form.

Which of the following you recognize as violence?

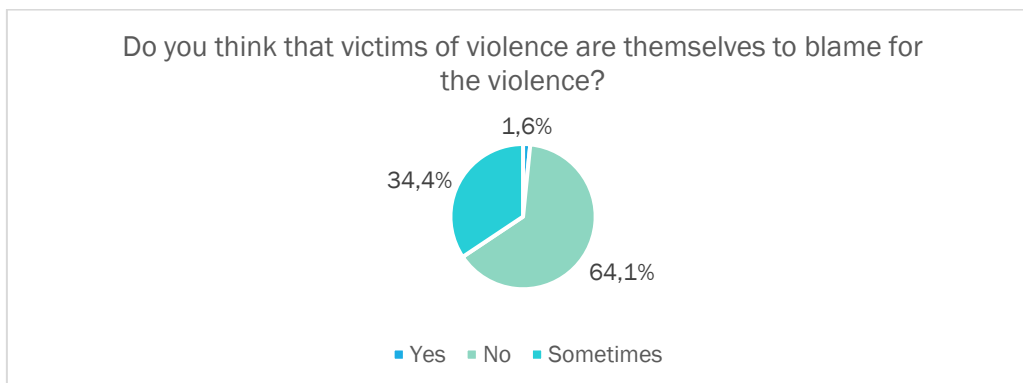| Category	Value
None	0
Institutional violence	37
Economic violence (financial control)	32
Cyber violence	43
Peer violence	61
Sexual violence	59
Psychological (emotional) violence	60
Physical violence	61

Half of the respondents (48.4%) had personally been victims of some form of violence. A more detailed analysis showed that 61.5% of men experienced violence, compared to 39.5% of women. Regarding place of residence, 69.2% of urban respondents experienced violence, while this percentage was lower among rural respondents (34.2%), which may be related to stigma in smaller communities. By age group, 21% of young people aged 15 to 19, 66.7% of those aged 20 to 24, and 55.6% of those aged 25 to 30 experienced violence.

Most respondents (62.5%) witnessed violence in the community (school, work, university), 35.9% online, and 18.8% within the family. As many as 64.1% of respondents believe that violence is not reported enough, and 28.1% are unsure. Only 7.8% believe that violence is reported sufficiently. There are no significant differences between genders, but there are differences by age group: 47.4% of young people aged 15 to 19 believe it is not reported enough, while this percentage rises to 77.7% for those aged 20 to 24 and 66.7% for those aged 25 to 30. Urban respondents (76.9%) are more likely to believe that violence is not reported enough compared to rural respondents (55.3%).

The main reasons why victims do not report violence are **fear of the perpetrator (84.4%), lack of self-confidence (70.3%), distrust in institutions (67.2%),** and **shame or stigma (64.1%).** Dependence on the perpetrator and not knowing whom to contact were cited least often.

Surprisingly, **34.4% of respondents believe that victims are sometimes to blame for violence**, while 64.1% believe they are not. There were significant differences among genders – 46.2 % of male respondents believe that victims cannot be blamed for experienced violence compared to 76.3 % of female respondents. Also, men (50%) are more likely than women (23.7%) to believe that the victim is sometimes to blame. Furthermore, younger respondents (**15-19 years old, 47.4%**) are more likely to believe that victims are sometimes to blame compared to older respondents (**25-30 years old, 18.5%**), indicating a need for better education on violence among younger age groups. Rural respondents (**42.1%**) are more likely than urban respondents (**23.1%**) to believe that victims are sometimes to blame. The trend shows that the older the respondents are, the more they choose the answer that victims are not to blame for violence and fewer choose the "sometimes" answer, **which indicates a better understanding of the issue in line with**

maturity, but also highlights the problem of insufficient information and education on violence among high school-aged youth.

Do you think that victims of violence are themselves to blame for the violence?

1,6%
34,4%
64,1%

■ Yes ■ No ■ Sometimes

Respondents were given a linear scale ranging from none to fully (1 to 5) to rank **trust in institutions** when it comes to reporting violence, and the results show very low trust, especially in the **judiciary (with 62,5 % of none and very low marks) and educational institutions** (68,8 % of none and very low). This poor rating of educational institutions is **very concerning**, given the fact that every youngster is involved in the educational system at some point and we want to draw high attention to this issue.

When asked what would contribute to reducing violence, most agreed on **stricter penalties for perpetrators** and **faster institutional responses**, as well as **education in schools** and **greater support for victims**.

More than half of the respondents (**51.6%**) would certainly recognize domestic violence, and an additional **26.6%** would mostly recognize it.
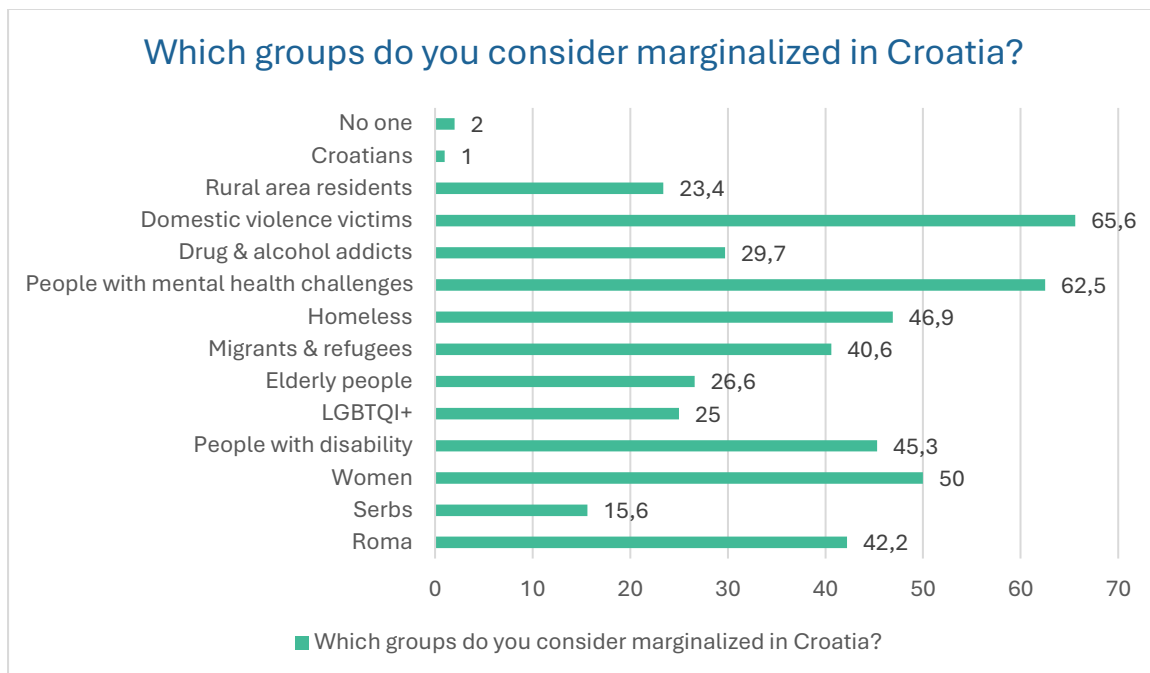
Another **highly concerning finding is that 62.5%** of respondents state that one to four of their **female friends/colleagues have experienced sexual or physical violence**, with **48.4%** reporting 1-2 friends/colleagues and **12.5%** reporting 3-4. Among women, the percentage of "3-4 female friends/colleagues" responses is slightly higher, which may be a result of greater openness to discussing such experiences among women.

The last question regarding violence was: "Do you believe that sufficient support and assistance are provided in Croatia to individuals who have experienced any form of violence?" Over **90% of respondents** believe that help and support for victims of violence are not sufficiently provided, and only **6.3%** believe that they are adequately provided.

Marginalized Groups

This section of the research analyzed young people's attitudes towards marginalized groups. Respondents answered questions about whom they consider most marginalized in society and how they perceive their position.

Vast majority, 65.6% of them, think that the most marginalized are domestic violence victims, people with mental health challenges, women, the homeless and people with disabilities, followed by Roma, migrants and refugees, people addicted to drugs or alcohol, and the LGBTQ+ community. We can see that young people recognize people from vulnerable groups as marginalized.

Which groups do you consider marginalized in Croatia?

Group	Value
No one	2
Croatians	1
Rural area residents	23,4
Domestic violence victims	65,6
Drug & alcohol addicts	29,7
People with mental health challenges	62,5
Homeless	46,9
Migrants & refugees	40,6
Elderly people	26,6
LGBTQI+	25
People with disability	45,3
Women	50
Serbs	15,6
Roma	42,2

■ Which groups do you consider marginalized in Croatia?

We asked them what is their attitude towards the following groups, ranging from extremely negative, to extremely positive. The analysis found that they have an **extremely positive** attitude towards women, people with disabilities, and the elderly. An **extremely negative** attitude was held by 26.56% towards the LGBTQ+ community, 25% towards migrants and refugees, and 23.44% towards people addicted to drugs or alcohol. From the analysis, we can conclude that young people have a positive attitude towards vulnerable and harder-to-employ groups such as women, people with disabilities, and the elderly. However, they hold a more negative attitude towards refugees and migrants, and towards people addicted to drugs or alcohol, as they believe these groups are partly responsible for their own status.

Further analysis shows that 45.3% of respondents have an extremely or somewhat negative attitude towards the LGBTQ+ community, of whom 51.7% are male and 44.8% are female. When we analyzed rural versus urban areas, we found that 65.5% of rural respondents have a more negative attitude towards the LGBTQ+ community than urban respondents. This difference may be related to less exposure to diverse identities in rural areas, more traditional values, or limited access to education on gender equality and human rights.

The next question was: **"To what extent do you agree with the following statements?"** where the offered answers were: **Croatian society provides equal opportunities for all citizens; Marginalized (neglected) groups encounter obstacles in exercising their rights; More education on human rights and inclusion is needed; State institutions adequately protect vulnerable groups;** Young people provided their answers on a scale from 1 - completely disagree to 5 - completely agree.

As many as 68.8% of them completely and mostly agree that more education on human rights and inclusion is needed. 59.4% completely and mostly disagree with the statement that Croatian society provides equal opportunities for all citizens, and 34 young people, which is 53.1%, are disappointed with state institutions and believe that state institutions do not adequately protect vulnerable groups. These data are consistent with previous

youth research (e.g., FES and ISRZ 2025), and we believe they are extremely concerning. However, they can guide CSOs in designing needs-tailored activities. We also believe that these findings are useful for decision-makers and policymakers in developing evidence-based youth policies; and for donors in the youth sector for designing and adopting tender priorities.

Half of young people believe they have faced discrimination, primarily due to gender or gender identity, and out of them, 59,4% are female. Male individuals face discrimination less frequently, but when they do, the more commonly cited reasons are socioeconomic status and place of residence. The ones having faced discrimination due to gender or gender identity are mostly female, 92.86% of answers, of which 38.5% were in the 20-24 age group. Discrimination based on socioeconomic status equally affects female and male individuals, and it is most perceived by those in the 20-24 and 25-30 age groups. This is followed by discrimination based on place of residence, national origin, and mental health. Further analysis revealed that two-thirds of young people from rural areas (59.4%) have faced discrimination. We believe this data indicates that rural areas lag in ensuring equal opportunities for all young people.

When asked **"Can you access basic services such as medical treatment, education, or legal aid?"**, 71.9% of respondents answered **"Yes, without problems,"** while 28.1% of young people said **"Yes, with difficulties."**

The next question was: **"What do you think we can do to reduce discrimination**? (select up to 3 answers)." The majority of young people, as many as **75%**, answered **"Ensure equal opportunities for all,"** followed by **"Include young people in changes and decision-making,"** at **62.5%**. A significant number of respondents also believe that **empathy and understanding should be promoted**, and **friendships and cooperation among different groups should be encouraged**. 50% of young people answered **"education about different cultures and groups."**

When asked **"Have you ever felt excluded from social activities?"**, 60.9% of respondents answered affirmatively. Of the respondents who said they felt excluded, more than two-thirds (66.7%) are female. Furthermore, more than half of young people from rural areas (56.4%) felt excluded from social activities. Among female respondents living in rural areas, this percentage is even higher, with as many as **77.2%** feeling excluded. **According to these results, 4 out of 5 female respondents living in rural areas felt excluded, which is a very concerning statistic. Significant efforts need to be made to ensure outreach and inclusion in social activities for this group.**

When we analyzed by age groups, we observed the highest number of **"Yes"** responses among female individuals aged 15 to 19.

Almost two-thirds of young people experienced a feeling of exclusion from social activities, which indicates a serious social problem. The result suggests that most young people are not fully integrated into social structures, which can have negative consequences on mental health, self-confidence, and development opportunities. Based on previous youth research (e.g., ISRZ), we know that young people lack a lot of social content, especially those in rural areas, and how they perceive a feeling of exclusion in relation to content offered to them but not adapted to their needs and interests.

The last question related to marginalized/neglected groups was: **"What do you think are the biggest challenges faced by marginalized (neglected) groups in your community?"** 71.9% of respondents believe these are **Discrimination and prejudice**. This is followed by:

Lack of support and understanding in society, Isolation and social exclusion, and Access to employment. Most respondents, 76,6 %, recognize that prejudice, ignorance and fear of diversity are key causes of discrimination and they are generally aware of various inequalities.

Solutions

Following the questions about violence and marginalized groups, questions related to proposing solutions and positive changes were asked. In the event of experiencing violence, half of the respondents would likely or certainly participate in a one-on-one conversation and support workshop.

Respondents believe that the activity "Youth educating youth" (*peer-to-peer learning*) would be most beneficial for solving the problems of violence and marginalization, although open forums and the implementation of concrete initiatives were also highly rated. Based on this response, the research team prepared the action part of this participatory action research, i.e., the activity that followed in the action phase.

51.6% of respondents consider *public debates with decision-makers* to be the most effective form of dialogue for solving problems of violence and marginalization, followed by *digital platforms* at 28.1%, and *forum theater* at 17.2%.

Most of our respondents, almost 70%, believe that cooperation with local associations and organizations is important or very important *for solving problems of violence and neglect.* This result encourages the work of CSOs and indicates that young people recognize that through associations, we can solve numerous social problems.

When we asked our respondents *if they would join a youth organization to implement changes in the community,* 43.8% said they would, and another 43.8% said maybe. Eight respondents (12.5%) said they would not join. The percentage of those who would join is high, but it is important and necessary to work on designing activities that would attract even those young people who answered "*maybe*" in order to encourage them to participate more actively. Further analysis showed that male respondents were more likely to answer that they would join an organization (50%), while female respondents were more likely to choose "maybe" (52.6%).

When asked "*How interesting do you find the following workshops for solving problems of violence and neglect*?" with three offered answers; „*workshop on cooperation and inclusion, a creative expression workshop, and a workshop on violence prevention and victim support*; as many as 75% of respondents found the **workshop on violence prevention and victim support** interesting or very interesting, while only 6.3% haven't. Another two also received generally positive responses. These findings can guide youth practitioners in preparing workshops aligned with youth' needs that would enhance their participation.

Interview Analysis

The research on violence and marginalization among young people included an online questionnaire and interviews with four young individuals, asking them five key questions.

Key Interview Findings:

1.Most Common Forms of Violence and Definition: Young people most commonly recognize emotional/psychological, physical, cyber, and sexual violence. They define

violence as any intentional act that causes psychological or physical harm to another person, citing examples from romantic relationships, peer violence, and cyber violence.

2. Most Effective Measures for Reducing Violence: Respondents highlight youth education as the most effective measure for raising awareness and early recognition of violence. They also consider strengthening institutions, campaigns and workshops, anonymous conversations with victims, and stricter penalties and timely reporting as important.

3. Causes of Marginalization and Youth Attitudes Towards Marginalized Groups: The main causes of marginalization are poor economic status, discrimination, prejudice, lack of education, and social exclusion. They emphasize that young people are often not in solidarity with marginalized groups, but rather there is a certain indifference. To encourage greater inclusion, they suggest education and promoting dialogue, as well as an individual approach to each marginalized group.

4. Feeling of Personal Marginalization and Recognized Groups: Respondents do not feel personally marginalized, but they clearly recognize marginalized groups: women, national minorities, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people with disabilities. Some cite institutional and legal failures as causes of neglect.

5. Forms of Dialogue and Encouraging Youth Engagement: Educational workshops in schools, digital platforms, social media, protests, and campaigns are suggested. They believe that stricter sanctions for perpetrators and quick institutional responses are needed. Motivation for participation varies, from personal exposure to violence to a general desire for greater youth involvement.

Conclusion:

Interview participants recognize violence as a multidimensional problem, with an emphasis on emotional, psychological, and online (cyber) violence as the most common forms, reflecting the growing influence of digital platforms and interpersonal relationships on young people.

They perceive violence as any intentional act that causes harm to another person, and they recognize early reaction, education, and strengthening of institutions as important components in the fight against violence. The most effective measures for violence prevention highlighted are youth education and strengthening of institutions, while some respondents also advocate for stricter sanctions, faster institutional response, and individualized approaches to victims (e.g., anonymous one-on-one conversations).

Marginalization is most often associated with poorer economic status, discrimination, and prejudice. Participants identify certain groups – women, national minorities, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people with disabilities – as the most affected. Young people are perceived in two ways – while some highlight a lack of empathy and indifference, others emphasize the presence of solidarity, depending on the context and individuals.

Most respondents do not experience personal or collective marginalization, but they are aware of social inequalities. As forms of dialogue for involving young people in social change, educational workshops, digital platforms, and campaigns are most frequently proposed, with an emphasis on the importance of accessibility and closeness to these channels. Young people recognize violence and marginalization as complex social challenges and see education, institutional effectiveness, and open forms of communication as key tools for resolving them. However, passivity and a low level of

personal engagement remain obstacles that need to be addressed with targeted motivational approaches and participatory methods.

Research Conclusion

The research conducted on a sample of 64 young people (aged 15–30) and 4 interviewed participants provides valuable insights into the perception of violence, marginalization, and potential solutions among young people in Croatia.

Young people most commonly recognize physical, psychological, sexual, and peer violence, while economic and institutional violence are less evident, indicating a lack of awareness of structural forms of violence. Almost half of the respondents (48.4%) stated that they had personally experienced some form of violence, with a higher percentage among male individuals (61.5%) and urban populations (69.2%). Differences in age structure (more experiences in the 20-30 age groups) suggest a possible reluctance of younger respondents to admit to violence or a lack of recognition of subtle forms. The majority of participants (62.5%) witnessed violence in the community (school, work), while only 18.8% reported family violence, confirming its taboo nature. As many as 64.1% of young people believe that violence is not reported enough, which highlights the need to strengthen trust in institutions and educate about proper reporting channels.

As key causes of marginalization, respondents highlight **discrimination** caused by prejudices, ignorance and fear of diversity, poverty, and lack of education, along with along with institutional and legal failures. The attitude of young people towards marginalized groups is described as ambivalent: some show solidarity, but indifference prevails, especially towards some groups (ethnic minorities, homeless, migrants and refugees). Given that most respondents come from rural areas, it is very possible that they have never met these groups, and therefore express an indifferent attitude. This result nevertheless points to the need to develop empathy and emotional intelligence in young people so that they can understand the problems and realities even of groups not close to them. About 30% of respondents believe that they or their community are marginalized, most often due to economic (unemployment) and social factors (isolation).

For reducing violence, young people propose comprehensive education (e.g., emotional intelligence programs), awareness campaigns, and reform of the legal system for faster response. The most effective forms of dialogue highlighted are workshops, digital platforms, and artistic initiatives, while protests are perceived as less effective. For the inclusion of marginalized groups, a combination of measures is necessary: strengthening social welfare, anti-discrimination laws, media representation, and encouraging intercultural dialogue. Interviewees emphasize the importance of involving young people in decision-making through advisory bodies.

The research has limitations related to the convenient sample (dominance of rural respondents from Central and Eastern Croatia) and a small number of interviewees, which prevents the generalization of conclusions. Also, there is a possibility of self-assessment bias (e.g., underestimation of domestic violence due to fear of stigmatization).

Final Recommendations

The results point to the need for systematic action on three levels: preventive (education on violence and human rights), reactive (improving the work of institutions), and structural (reducing economic inequalities and discrimination). It is crucial to empower young people through participatory programs, ensure access to resources in rural areas, and promote a

media campaign that will expose "invisible" forms of violence. Further research should focus on regional specificities and the experiences of particularly vulnerable groups.

Report on the Initiative Carried Out – Activity "Youth Loudly Without Filters"

Our research team analyzed the results of the research and came up with interesting data on the basis of which they came up with the idea of what kind of initiative (action) they want to implement. Realizing that young people see a solution to the problem of violence and marginalization in activities in which young people educate young people through public forums and debates (e.g. *using the principle of peer-to-peer learning*), they decided to bring the mentioned topics closer to their peers in an educational and fun way.

They designed the activity *"Youth Loud without filters"* on the topic of violence and marginalized groups, which would use the method of simulating a debate. Three participants prepared the activity program and debate questions; taken from the research' questionnaire, to get deeper answers and influence youth' attitudes.

The activity was held on June 23, 2025, at the Bodovaljci Community Center, and was attended by 22 young people aged 13 to 30.

The participants were divided into two groups, each with 4 members, an affirmation group and a negation group, which discussed the questions posed in an argumentative manner. Since it was a simulation, the participants were explained that they should represent the views in accordance with the group they belonged to, and not necessarily their own, while the division into groups was random. Replies were also allowed. They were followed by the audience, which, after their presentation, voted on which group was better at explaining its arguments. The participants in the audience were also able to share their views and thoughts.

The activity showed that young people already at high school age are extremely aware of the problem of corruption, the inefficiency of the judiciary and systemic obstacles for victims of violence is highly worrying, and indicates the need for intersectoral cooperation and strengthening of trust in institutions.

The activity showed great potential for involving young people in active citizenship. At the end of the workshop, an oral and visual evaluation was conducted. Participants shared that it was interesting, that they learned to debate with arguments, listen to each other, share their views and opinions, think critically, come up with answers in a short time, and discuss peacefully. They found the debate method useful and would like more activities like this.

Evaluation of the Research Team

During the entire implementation process, a continuous evaluation with all involved individuals took place. To adhere with PAR principles the first version of the questionnaire was shared with several test respondents to get feedback regarding understanding, clarity, and use of youth-friendly language. Final evaluation showed that the planned activity outcomes were achieved: all participants felt fully included in decision-making, 80% believe they had a very high level of autonomy, all were very satisfied with how their ideas and comments were included in the research report, and their sense of personal responsibility for implementing activities, especially the action part, increased. Among the acquired skills, they highlighted teamwork, data analysis skills, and decision-making skills. Also, young people developed a sense of ownership over the results, which was particularly evident in the design and implementation of the debate activity.

This process significantly influenced the development of valuable professional and personal knowledge of youth workers, that learned to use new methodology. They expressed very high satisfaction with the application of this method, believing that the independence of young people in decision-making increased and the need for directive guidance decreased. The process had a significant influence in increasing the level of connection and trust with youth. They highlighted handing over decision-making to young people as one of the challenges, as well as achieving balance between providing support and giving autonomy to youth, and maintaining a substantial level of motivation among participants. Also, deadlines sometimes presented a challenge due to existing obligations of the team, so a high level of communication with all participants was necessary. Youth workers believe that with more time for activity implementation, the assessment of participants' competencies in order to distribute tasks more accordingly would be better.

Youth expressed that PAR was useful and empowering for them. They appreciated the opportunity to actively participate in every phase of the research, from designing questions to analyzing results and implementing action. They emphasized the importance of mentorship and support from youth workers, who helped them overcome challenges, such as adhering to deadlines. The process was dynamic and required adaptability.

One of the young team participants expressed in the evaluation: *"This whole process, ...,was a super useful experience for me. **I felt like my voice and my effort really had some value.** I learned how important it is to talk, listen, and be open. I believe that activities like*

*this mean a lot to young people because they don't just teach us about problems in society, but also how **we** can be part of the solution."*

Participants also emphasized how **PAR** has significantly changed their perspective, making them more aware of social problems and more ready for active engagement. They are particularly satisfied with the implemented action and the visible results. Suggestions for the future include dedicating more time for preparation and a better task distribution to ensure equal participation from everyone.

Youth workers highlighted: *"Using this tool (PAR) empowers young people because it's not just about 'collecting data' but also providing space for designing and implementing concrete actions based on the results. As youth workers, we learned that young people should not just be 'listened to' – but given the tools and space to create activities themselves, which changes the paradigm of youth work: from **'providing services' to 'co-creating joint solutions'**. What we would ultimately emphasize as an extremely important outcome of using this tool is **raising the level of connection and trust** with youth, which will strengthen our further work."*

4. "The power of participation" Cyprus

Youth Perspectives on Peacebuilding in Cyprus

Authentic Voices on Violence, Marginalization & Solutions

Abstract

This study examines youth perceptions of marginalization, violence, and peacebuilding in Cyprus through a participatory action research framework. Analyzing 54 anonymous survey responses from youth aged 16-30 (61% female, 37% male, 2% non-binary), including Cypriot and international students, the research reveals systemic exclusion patterns and youth-driven solutions. Key findings indicate migrants/refugees (72.2%) and ethnic minorities (64.8%) are perceived as the most marginalized groups, while youth propose innovative peacebuilding approaches centered on education reform, economic justice, and digital activism. This PAR was implemented by a team of 6 young people and 2 youth workers.

Introduction

Cyprus remains divided along ethnic, linguistic, and political lines decades after conflict. While much research examines adult perspectives, this study centers youth voices, a continuously undervalued perspective when speaking on the *Cyprus Problem* through an anonymous survey conducted in 2025. The research addresses three questions:

1. *Who do young people identify as marginalized groups in Cyprus?*
2. *How do they experience and perceive violence?*
3. *What solutions do they propose for sustainable peacebuilding?*

The methodology prioritizes youth ownership, with respondents co-designing survey questions and analyzing results.

Methodology

Participants

- **54 respondents** aged 16-30
- Demographics:
  - *61% female, 37% male, 2% non-binary*
  - *58% Urban, 42% Rural*
  - *Includes Greek Cypriot, Turkish Cypriot, and international students*

Instrument

Mixed-methods survey with:

- 25 quantitative questions (Likert scales, multiple-choice)
- 3 qualitative open-ended questions

The Survey was presented in a four-section format, with the first one asking for **demographic details** 1️⃣ **About You** (Basic background – no personal details!) of the participants which allowed for codifying respondents answers in groups to allow for a more detailed and deeper understanding of the responses that were given. For example, the difference between Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots and International Students in the Education Industry on both sides of the island.

The other three sections were listed as such with the following descriptions:

2️⃣ **Views on Marginalization** 🚧 (Have you or others faced exclusion?)
3️⃣ **Thoughts on Violence** ⚠️ (Causes & Effects)
4️⃣ **Your Ideas for Change!** 💡 (What solutions should leaders hear?)

Every question was mandatory and the final fourth section required respondents to give ideas based on three prompts on what solutions they believe would best serve healing the division they have seen on the island. Especially when the majority of the respondents responded to have experienced some form of discrimination on a personal level as we will discuss further in the report as well.

The survey was made via Google Forms and promoted through YEU-Cyprus Social Media Channels and sent to Universities across the Island to be shared amongst the student body as well.

4.1 Findings

1. Systems of Marginalization

Question: Who are, in your opinion, are marginalized groups in Cyprus?
Quantitative data reveals:

- **72.2%** identify migrants/refugees as most marginalized
- **64.8%** cite ethnic minorities
- **59.3%** note LGBTQ+ individuals

Qualitative responses expose mechanisms of exclusion:

Linguistic Discrimination
"Teachers punish students for speaking Turkish but allow Greek slang" (Turkish-speaking respondent)

Spatial Segregation

"International students sit separately in cafeterias—not by choice" (University participant)

Religious Bias

"They cross themselves when I enter rooms wearing hijab" (Muslim respondent)

Figure 1 here showcases a divergence in experiences in the respondents' experiences. Their answers become more enlightening when we cross analyze with demographic groupings. With only 24% of survey respondents believing they have adequate opportunities to engage. The data reveals clear generational and identity-based disparities - while 31% of 25–30-year-olds see sufficient participation space; this drops to just 18% among 16–20-year-olds. Turkish Cypriot youth and non-binary respondents report particularly stark exclusion, with qualitative responses describing participation mechanisms as largely tokenistic. *As one 22-year-old noted, "They invite us to meetings but never implement our ideas,"* highlighting how youth are often included symbolically rather than substantively.
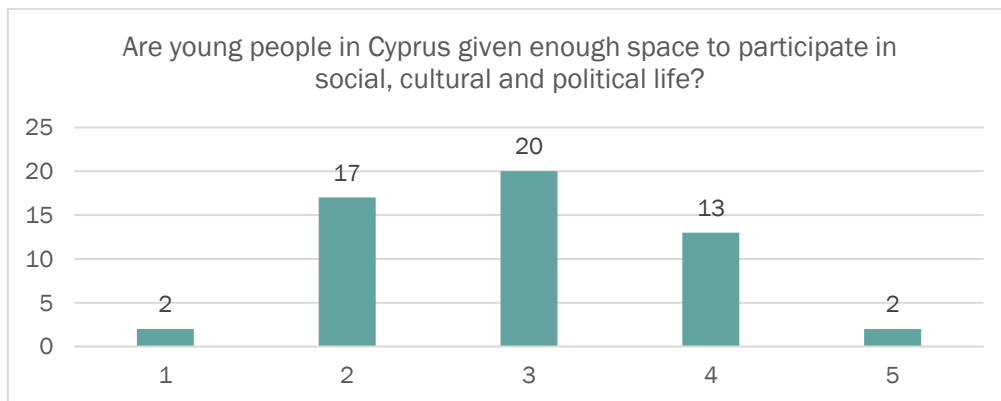
Figure 1 Youth Participation in important realms are low and it seems the Youth itself are unsure about the avenues they are given to participate in important decisions. (1 = Strongly Disagree - 5 = Strongly Agree)

The findings point to systemic exclusion that particularly impacts younger and minority-identity youth. Female respondents report **8% more barriers than males**, while non-binary participants universally describe being shut out of participation spaces. International students report relatively better access through university channels, suggesting institutional settings may offer more structured inclusion opportunities but outside of educational institutions they feel just as ostracized or perhaps more so than anyone else.

However, across all demographics, respondents emphasize the gap between performative youth engagement and actual decision-making power, with a 19-year-old bluntly stating, ***"Political parties only want youth for photo ops."*** These patterns reveal an urgent need to move beyond superficial youth participation toward meaningful shared governance in Cyprus's social and political institutions. These findings are further evidenced by **Figure 2** where participants concern or perhaps mistrust of the education system is only further emphasized.
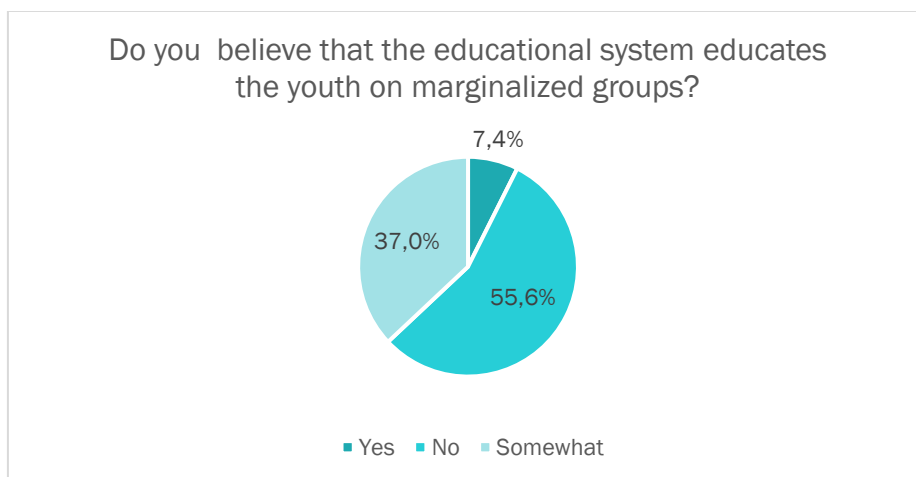
Figure 2 *Cyprus Education Falls Short: 56% of Youth Say Schools Fail to Properly Teach About Marginalized Groups*

This only goes further with how participants responded in **Figure 3**. Only **27.8%** of young respondents believe the media fairly represents marginalized groups, with 35.2% rating coverage as outright unfair. Criticism was strongest among Turkish Cypriot and migrant youth, who described portrayals as *"stereotyped"* or *"villainized."* One respondent noted, *"News either ignores us or shows us as problems—never just people."* LGBTQ+ youth reported particularly negative experiences, with 59% stating media either misrepresents or excludes their communities entirely. While a small minority (7.4%) acknowledged recent improvements in diversity, most agreed that sensationalism and political bias distort coverage of marginalized groups. These findings suggest Cypriot media perpetuates exclusion rather than challenging it.
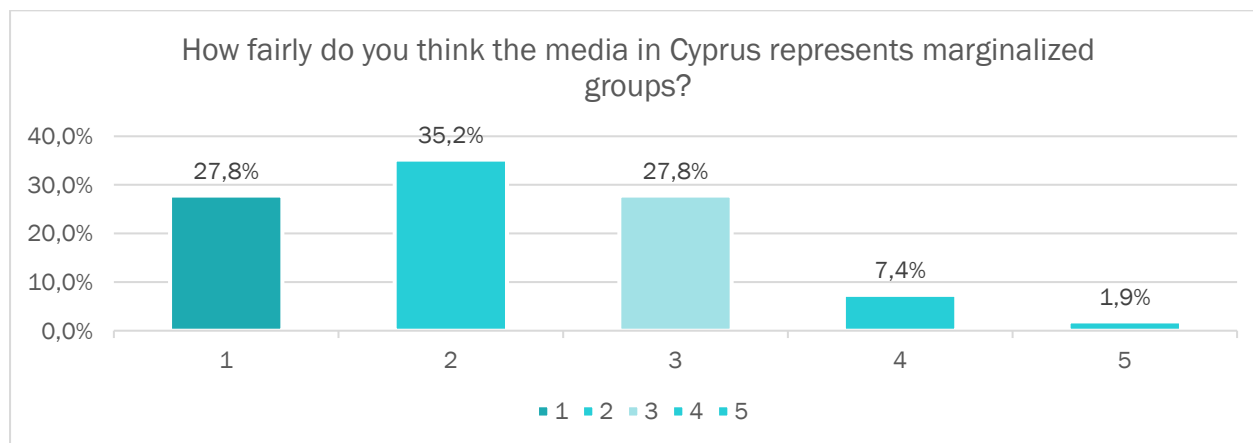
Figure 3 *Media in Cyprus has a largely unfavourable image amongst youth in Cyprus (1 = Very unfairly - 5 = Very Fairly)*

Key Stats:

- *35.2% = "Unfair" representation*
- *27.8% = "Fair"*
- *59% of LGBTQ+ youth report negative portrayals*

Type of Violence Experienced	Percentage	Count
Verbal Abuse	59.3%	32
Discriminatory Violence	35.2%	19
Sexual Harassment	31.5%	17
Physical Violence	27.8%	15
Online Harassment	22.2%	12

The most unfortunate revelation but important to highlight from the findings about this study was that **50 out of 54 respondents** reported to have experienced some form of violence whilst residing in Cyprus. Survey data reveals that **59.3%** of young respondents (32 of 54) have experienced violence, with verbal abuse being most common (reported by 59.3%), followed by discriminatory violence (35.2%) and sexual harassment (31.5%). The findings show stark demographic differences—**female and non-binary youth face higher rates of sexual harassment (47% and 50%, respectively)**, while male respondents report more physical violence (29%). LGBTQ+ youth experience **combined discrimination**, with 68% encountering both verbal and physical attacks.

Conclusion

The findings paint a stark picture of systemic exclusion in Cyprus, where marginalized youth, particularly Turkish Cypriots, LGBTQ+ individuals, and young women, face intersecting barriers to safety, representation, and meaningful participation. From classrooms that erase their identities *(56% say schools fail on marginalization education)* to media that distort their stories *(only 28% see fair coverage)*, **young people are demanding more than token inclusion.** Their solutions, like cross-community mentorship, anti-bias teacher training, and digital hate-speech monitoring, offer a clear roadmap. Cyprus's peacebuilding future depends on centering these voices **now**, not as symbolic participants but as decision-makers. As one respondent warned: *"A system that silences its youth is building another divided generation."*

Social Action Campaign

Social Media Campaign: Amplifying Youth Voices for Peace

The research team decided to run a **7-day social campaign**, based on our youth-led survey, posting one carousel per day alongside interactive Instagram Stories that engaged followers through polls, questions, and quizzes. Our Inclusive Pathways to Peace social media campaign brought youth perspectives on marginalization and peacebuilding to the forefront through a compelling, research-driven Instagram series.

Each post combined key survey findings with real voices - quotes from young people in Cyprus drawn directly from the survey, and refugee narratives featured in stories published by UNHCR Cyprus. For example, the statistic that only 7% of youth believe the education system effectively teaches about marginalized groups was paired with Sadia's story - a Somali doctor and refugee in Cyprus, underscoring the lack of empathy-building in formal education.

We also showcased **youth-identified solutions** highlighted in the survey, such as peer mediation trainings, inclusive events like international bazaars, and the use of social media to amplify underrepresented voices. Each post ended with a reflective question or action prompt, encouraging followers to think critically and share their perspectives. By translating research into human-centered storytelling, this campaign made the data accessible,

emotional, and impactful, sparking dialogue, reflection, and increased awareness about the lived realities of young people and marginalized communities in Cyprus.

Social Media Campaign: Insights

Voices from the survey on what needs to change to build a more peaceful society.
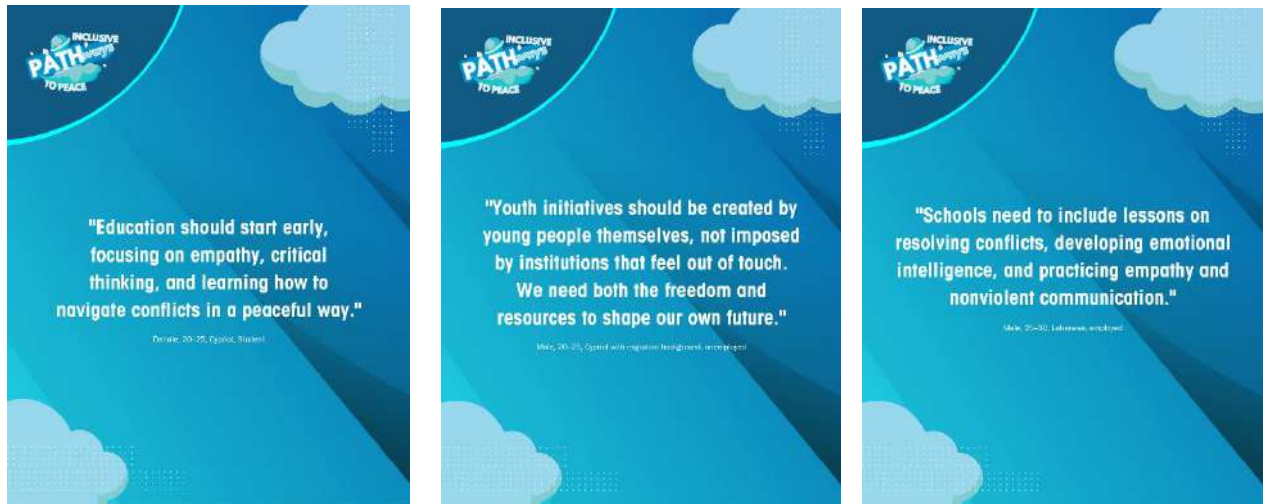

Stats from the survey

What kind of programs or tools would help youth become more engaged in peacebuilding and social cohesion? Voices from the survey.

What do young people in Cyprus really think about marginalization?
From everyday experiences of discrimination to reflections on identity and belonging, our youth-led survey reveals powerful insights. Paired with real-life stories from refugees in Cyprus, this post explored the deep impact of marginalization on young lives.
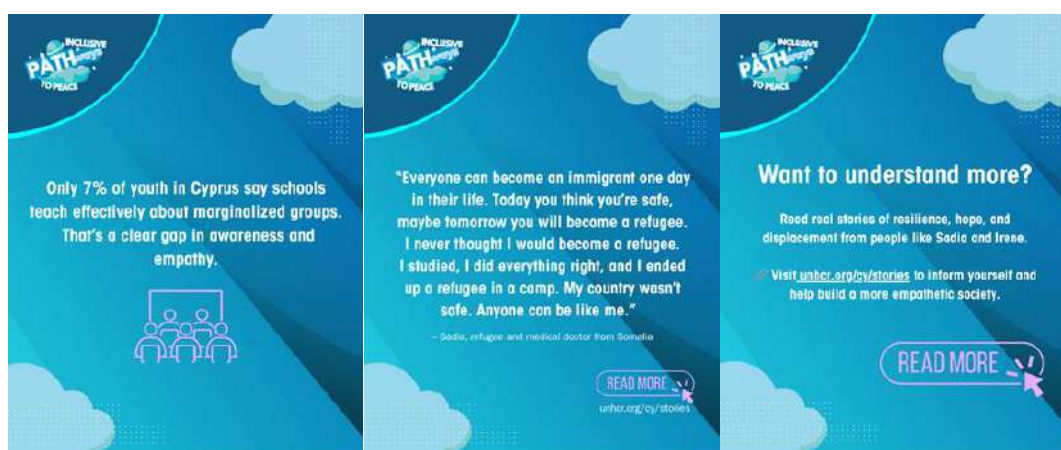
Evaluation from Youth Research Team

The **participants in the PAR generally reported positive experiences**, highlighting the collaborative nature of the process and the value of giving everyone a voice. Many found the teamwork rewarding, though challenges like uneven participation, time management issues, and difficulties recruiting volunteers were noted. *One particularly challenging moment came when attempting to organize a focus group in the UN Buffer Zone at Ledra Palace, Nicosia - despite the unique location, the session was cancelled last minute when 5 out of 6 participants didn't arrive, underscoring the difficulties of short-notice planning.*

Responses showed that while team dynamics were often strong, areas for improvement included clearer planning, better communication, and more balanced workloads. Participants appreciated the methodology's inclusivity, but some felt disconnected due to limited involvement or rushed timelines. The feedback revealed enthusiasm for the project's

goals, with many looking forward to the final showcase event in August and sharing creative ideas like movie nights or panel discussions.

One of the participants emphasized: *What I found most interesting about the PAR process is how it gives everyone a voice and really involves the people who are affected. I liked that it's not just about researching a problem, but actually doing something to help change it. I also found the cycle of planning, acting, and reflecting really useful—it makes the process feel more real and ongoing, not just something you do once and forget.*

Several participants expressed interest in continuing with future project phases, including potential participation in the following activity in Croatia. While the experience with the failed focus group and other challenges, the overall sentiment remained optimistic. Despite any limitations encountered, all team members are excited to continue the project into the summer and build on what they've learned so far.

Final Thoughts

Overall, the PAR project has fostered meaningful collaboration and engagement, with participants valuing the inclusive approach despite facing challenges like recruitment difficulties and logistical hurdles. The feedback highlights both the strengths of team dynamics and areas for growth, particularly in planning and communication. While this evaluation captures key insights, there is much more to explore in the findings—revealing significant potential for expanded research on a nationwide scale to deepen understanding and impact of participatory methodologies. The enthusiasm to continue demonstrates the project's lasting value and the promise of even greater discoveries ahead.

5. "The power of participation" Serbia

Introduction

What is PAR analysis?

PAR (Participatory Action Research) is a process where young people explore issues that directly affect them – such as violence, discrimination, and exclusion – and work together with their peers to find solutions through surveys, interviews, and group discussions.

Five young people from Šabac participated in this Participatory Action Research (PAR). They ranged from 18 to 30 years old, including 3 females and 2 males. Three of them were in their final year of high school. Among the participants, one belongs to a minority group, one is unemployed, and one comes from a background with limited economic opportunities. Two youth workers were supporting the process, one female and one male. A dedicated WhatsApp group was created for communication, mainly used for scheduling meetings and sharing information. Meetings and group work took place in person at the organization's premises, as this was deemed more effective.

Youth workers introduced the participants to the concept of Participatory Action Research (PAR), the process itself, expected outcomes, and timelines. Throughout the process, youth workers took on a supportive and developmental role — allowing young participants to take ownership of the idea, plan, and lead the entire process. Their involvement was focused on mentoring and constructively challenging the participants' ideas by asking guiding

questions and encouraging critical thinking, reflection, and the expansion of their capacities.

Methodology

During one meeting, it was collectively decided to conduct the research online via a Google Form for consistency. The group proposed and revised the survey questions to ensure clarity.

5.1 Results

The questionnaire consisted of 15 questions divided into three thematic sections: *demographic data, questions related to violence, and information and impact*.

It included a combination of single-choice and multiple-choice questions, designed to gather both quantitative and qualitative insights.

Before launching, the form was tested on a small sample of independent individuals to evaluate its functionality and clarity. Based on their feedback, adjustments were made. To target the right audience, the form was initially shared within the organization's volunteer network and later distributed to other suitable participants who had previously engaged in our exchanges and training events.

The final report was developed using a combination of charts and tables to present the data in a clear and visually comprehensive way. The data collection phase lasted for 7 days.

Question 1) The correspondent's gender
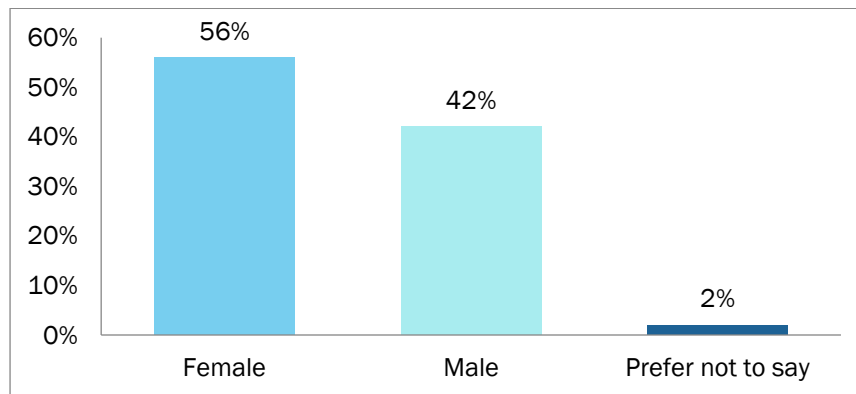
The number of participants was almost evenly distributed by gender: 28 identified as female, 21 as male, and 1 participant preferred not to disclose their gender.

Question 2) The correspondent's age
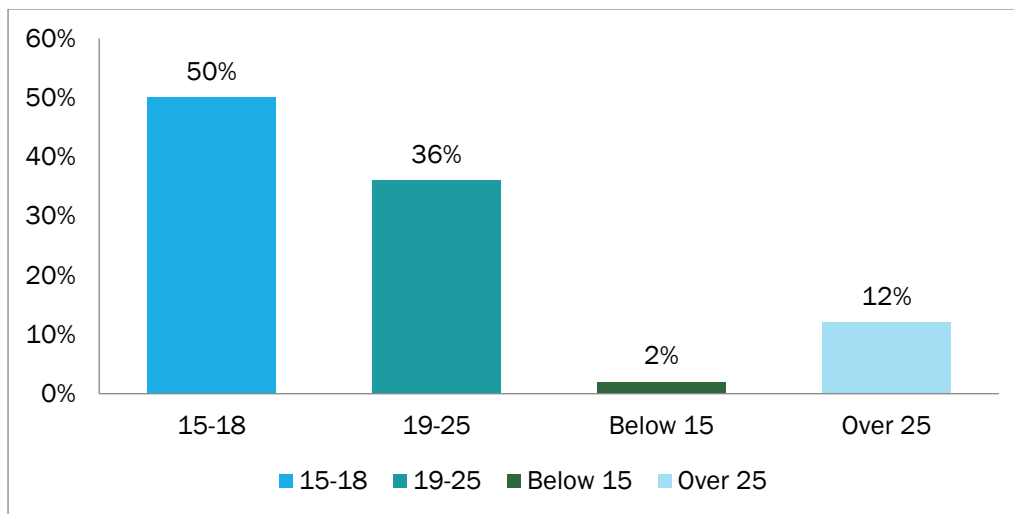
The majority of respondents — 42 out of 50 — were between 15 and 25 years old.

Question 3) The Correspondent's Educational Background
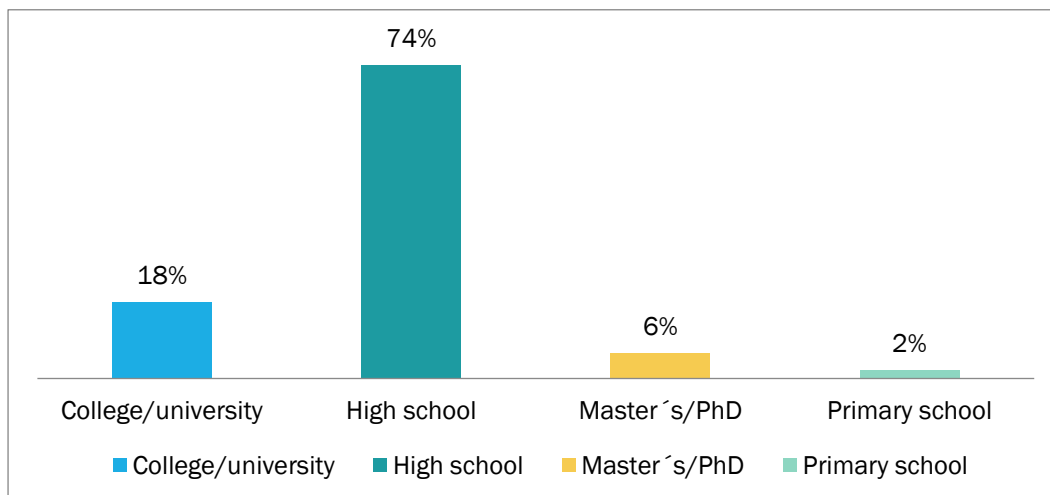
Taking into account the ages of the respondents, where the largest group is as much as 50% in the age range of 15 to 18 years, it follows that most of them are currently attending high school.

Question 4) The residence of the correspondent
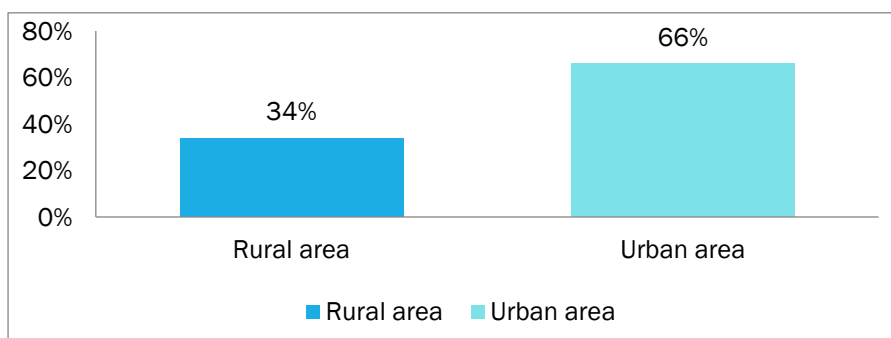
66 % of the respondents come from urban, while 34 % of them come from rural area.

Question 5) Have you ever witnessed violence against marginalized groups? (e.g., LGBT+ individuals, persons with disabilities, Roma people, migrants...)
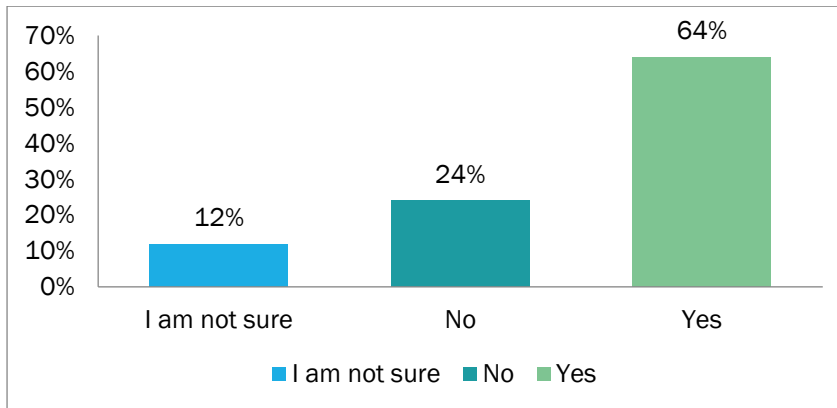
Based on the collected data, it can be concluded that as many as 32 individuals (64%) have witnessed some form of violence directed at marginalized groups.

Furthermore, an additional 6 individuals stated that they were uncertain whether the incident they observed constituted violence, which makes these findings particularly concerning.

Question 6) If yes, what kind of violence was it? (you can select multiple answers)

After determining that 64% of respondents had witnessed some form of violence, we asked our participants what type of violence it was.

The participants were offered the following answer options: Online violence, Discrimination or isolation, Physical violence, Psychological/verbal violence, Other form (e.g., institutional) and I have not witnessed anything.

Respondents reported online violence (52%), discrimination or isolation (50%), physical violence (18%), psychological/verbal violence (64%), other forms (e.g., institutional) (4%), and 28% stated they had not witnessed anything, with percentages reflecting multiple responses.

Further analysis of the data reveals that, according to the respondents, violence does not manifest in only one form. The most frequent answers indicated the presence of multiple types of violence simultaneously.
This leads to the conclusion that violence is becoming increasingly prevalent and frequent, occurring in both online and offline environments.

Question 7) Which groups do you think most often suffer violence and discrimination? (you can select multiple answers)

We asked participants, "Which groups do you think most often suffer violence and discrimination?" and provided them with multiple-choice answers: LGBT+ individuals, Migrants and refugees, Poor people, Roma, Persons with disabilities, Women, and Other

minority communities. The responses were: Roma: 66 %; LGBT+ individuals: 58 %; Migrants and refugees: 40 %; Women: 40 %; Poor people: 34 %; Persons with disabilities: 26 %; Other minority communities: 8%.

Every participant chose more than one group, with most of the answers listing three of those groups. What particularly stands out is that more than half of the respondents recognized violence being directed towards the LGBT+ community and Roma individuals.

Question 8) Where do you think such violence most often occurs?
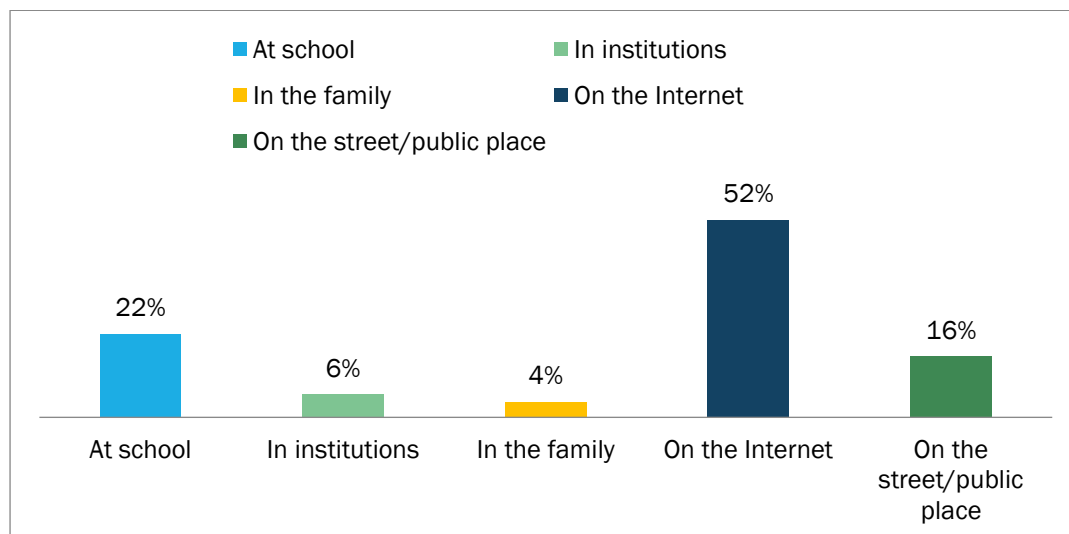
The fact that as many as 22% of respondents identified school as the place where violence most frequently occurs is particularly concerning.

Equally alarming is the finding that 52% of respondents reported the Internet as a common setting for violent behavior.

These insights point to a troubling reality that the **two environments** where young people currently spend most of their time (school and online platforms during their free time) are also the two main spaces where they are most exposed to violence and experiencing violence.

Question 9) How do you usually react when witnessing violence against a marginalized person?
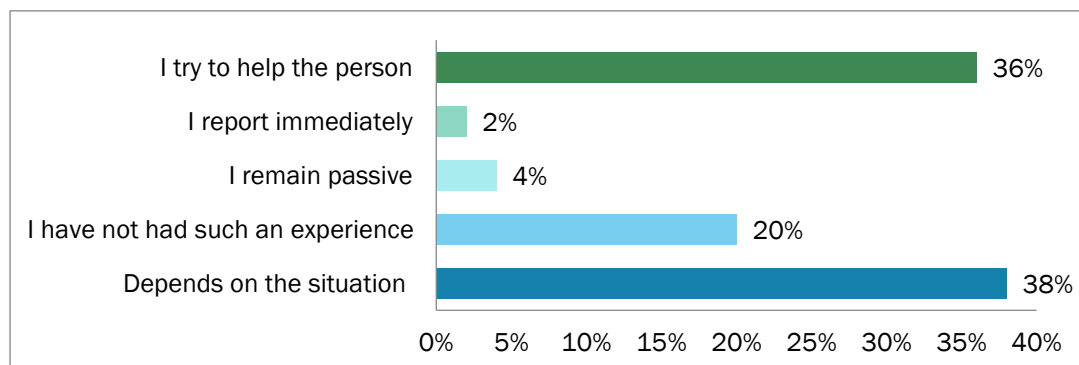
In most cases, participants respond to instances of violence based on the specific situation in which they find themselves.

It is encouraging that as many as 36% choose to offer help to the person experiencing violence. However, it is concerning that only 2% report such incidents to the police.

Question 10) Do you think young people in Serbia have enough information about the rights of marginalized groups?
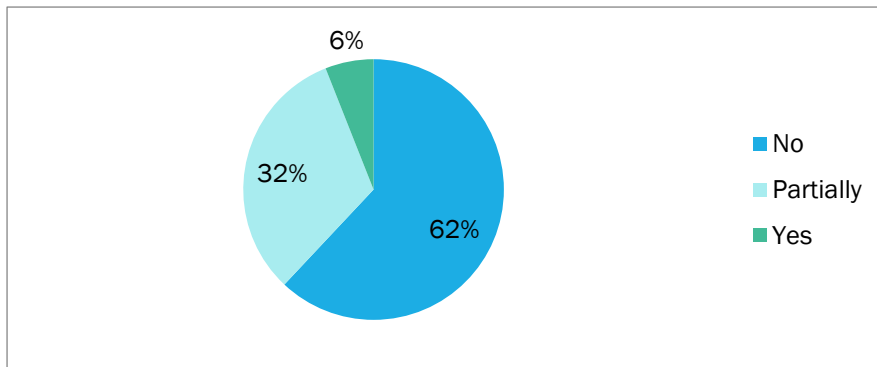
When asked whether young people in Serbia have sufficient information about the rights of marginalized groups, only 6% of respondents answered Yes, while as many as 62% answered No, and 32% believe that young people are partially informed.

Question 11) Where do you most often get information on this topic? (you can select multiple answers)

We asked our respondents where they primarily seek information about the rights of marginalized groups and provided them with the following options: Family/friends, Internet/social media, Media (TV, newspapers), Organizations/workshops/campaigns, and School.

The responses were as follows: Internet/social media: *78%; Media (TV, newspapers): 28%; Organizations /workshops/campaigns: 24%; School: 20%; Family/friends: 12%.*

When asked where they obtain information on this topic, participants most frequently cited the Internet, with 34% identifying it as their primary source.

When combined with other sources such as television and newspapers, this percentage increases by an additional 18%.

The least amount of information is obtained from family and friends.

Question 12) Do you think the system (state, schools, institutions) adequately protects marginalized groups?
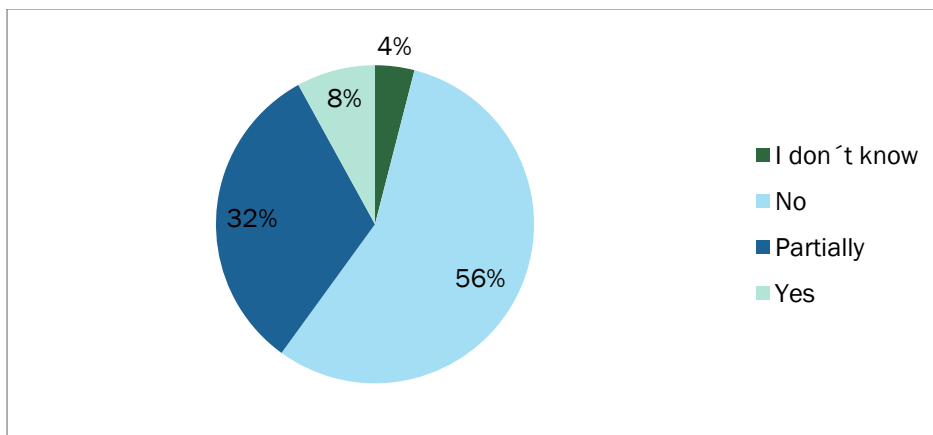
Respondents believe that the state, institutions, and schools are not doing enough to ensure the safety and adequate protection of marginalized groups.

When asked about this, 56% answered No, while an additional 32% responded Partially.

Question 13) What do you think is the best way to combat violence against marginalized groups? (you can select multiple answers)

Participants were offered several methods to combat violence against marginalized groups: Education in schools, Media and social media campaigns, Stricter penalties for perpetrators, Support for victims (psychological, legal), and Strengthening laws and institutions.

Their responses were as follows*: Stricter penalties for perpetrators: 72 %; Education in schools: 60 %; Strengthening laws and institutions: 46 %; Support for victims (psychological, legal): 38 %; Media and social media campaigns: 24 %.*

Participants in the study identify education in schools, stricter penalties for perpetrators, and strengthening the rule of law and institutions as the main ways to address this problem. They also see campaigns on social media as a solution.

Question 14) Would you personally participate in activities promoting equality and tolerance?
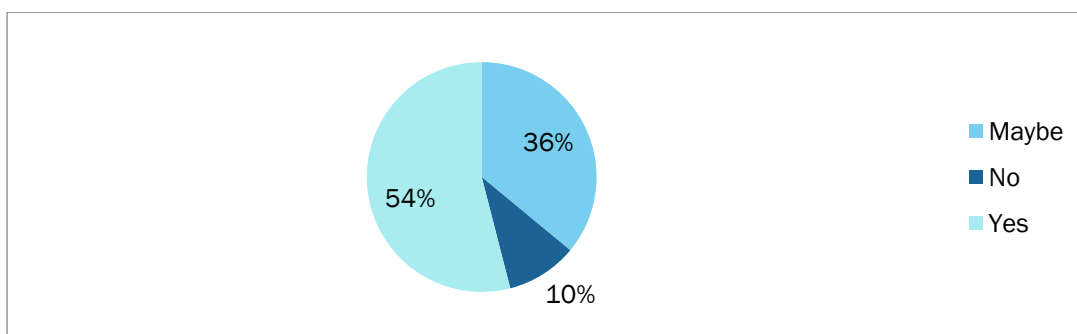
Participants expressed, with 54% of responses, an active willingness to take part in promoting equality and tolerance, while only 10% stated that they do not wish to participate in such activities.

Question 15) Do you believe young people can initiate positive changes in society?
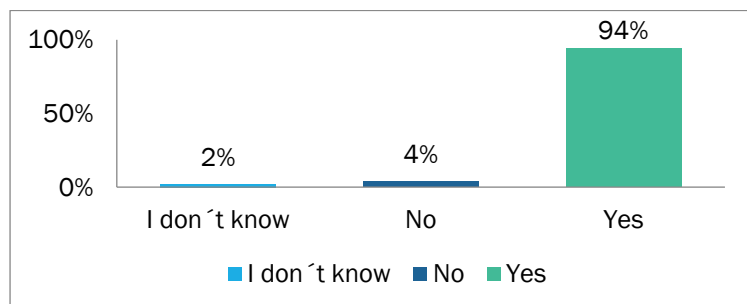
What is encouraging is the fact that as many as 94% of respondents believe that young people can bring about positive change in society.

Summary

This research offers valuable insight into the perspectives of young people in Serbia regarding violence against marginalized groups and their potential role in building a more inclusive and just society.

The majority of respondents (50%) were between the ages of 15 and 18, indicating that most of them are currently high school students. Alarmingly, 64% reported having witnessed some form of violence against marginalized individuals, while an additional 12% were uncertain whether what they observed qualified as violence. These findings point to the increasing prevalence and normalization of violence, often involving multiple forms, both online and offline.

The LGBT+ community and Roma people emerged as the most frequently recognized marginalized groups. In 46% of responses, one or both of these groups were mentioned alongside others, and in 56% of cases, the LGBT+ community was referenced in combination with other categories.

Respondents identified schools (22%) and the internet (52%) as the most common environments where violence occurs, places where young people spend most of their time. While it is positive that 36% of respondents would offer help to someone experiencing violence, only 2% said they would report the incident to the police, suggesting very low trust in public institution.

When asked about awareness of the rights of marginalized groups, only 6% of respondents felt that young people were sufficiently informed, while 62% said they were not, and 32% believed their knowledge was partial. The internet was the primary source of information (34%), followed by a combination of other media like TV and newspapers (18%). Family and friends were the least mentioned.

A significant 56% of participants believe that the state, institutions, and schools are not doing enough to protect marginalized communities, with 32% saying they do so only partially. As key solutions, respondents emphasized the importance of education in

schools, harsher penalties for perpetrators, strengthening institutional responses and the rule of law, as well as running awareness campaigns on social media.

Encouragingly, 54% of respondents expressed a willingness to actively participate in promoting equality and tolerance, while only 15% were not interested. Perhaps the most hopeful finding is that an overwhelming 94% of young people believe they can be a driving force for positive change in society.

Process Summary – Participants and Youth Workers

We held a meeting in our Association, attended by young participants and youth workers who were involved in the design and implementation of this research, as well as other young members of our organization. A total of 15 participants were present.

During the meeting, we presented the key findings of the research and openly discussed the challenges we encountered throughout the process. One of the overarching conclusions is that the significance of this research is now being overshadowed by the **escalating violence** taking place on the streets of Serbia. Peaceful protesters, primarily **young people, students, and citizens**, are increasingly being subjected to police repression and the excessive use of force. This situation is significantly affecting public trust in institutions, yet it is also fueling a stronger desire among young people for positive social change.

The participants of the research emphasized how meaningful this process was for them, as it helped raise awareness of the issues currently affecting our society. They expressed appreciation for the opportunity to independently take part in shaping the research process, to learn new things that will benefit them not only in their education but also in other areas of life, and to receive constructive feedback and suggestions for improvement from their mentors. Participants also reflected on some of the main challenges faced during the project, including coordination among participants and time management.

Importantly, many stated that they plan to remain active beyond this research, continuing to engage in initiatives that aim to improve societal conditions and enhance the safety and well-being of every individual.

Mentors noted that today's younger generations possess remarkable knowledge, motivation, and energy to bring projects to completion. They also highlighted the positive experience of working in intergenerational teams, where participants differed not only in

age but also in technical knowledge and skillsets. This diversity proved to be a strength, enriching the collaboration and overall outcomes.

The research team came to a mutual conclusion that due to the current civil actions and nationwide protests our ability to organize in-person events is very limited which affected our process in the "action" part. Protest organizers have called for unity and discouraged the use of any flags other than the national flag of Serbia, as well as any messaging unrelated to the broader demand that institutions fulfill their responsibilities. Additionally, with the end of the school year, we no longer have access to schools or similar institutions for presenting the research findings.

Therefore, we have decided to shift our focus towards an online awareness campaign, promoting tolerance and equality. We plan to continue sharing the research results and insights through personal conversations and informal channels, ensuring that the findings still reach a broad audience despite the current limitations.

Social media campaign

Here are some screenshots from the implemented campaign.
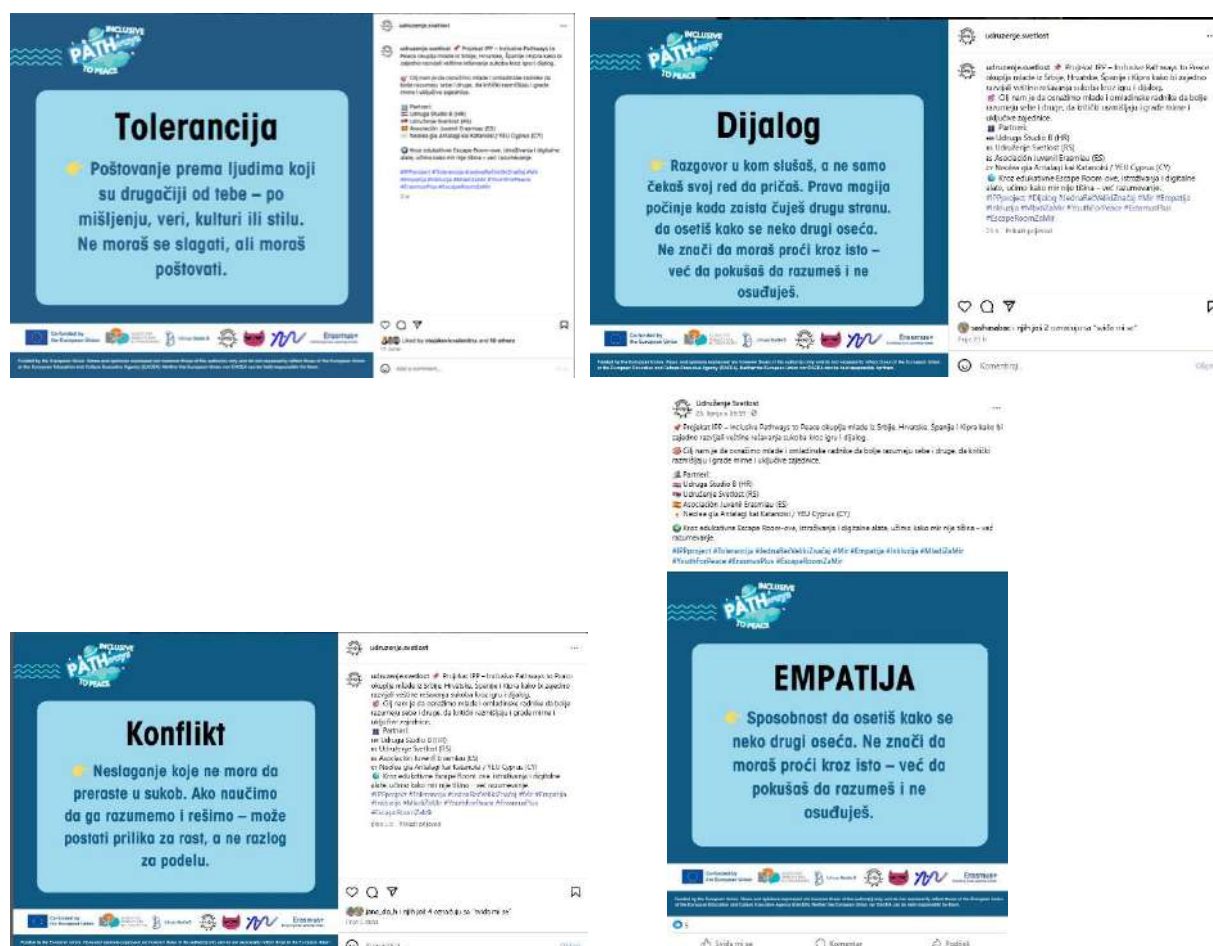
6. "The power of participation" Spain

Violence, marginalization and solutions for change

Abstract

This study explores youth perceptions of violence, marginalization, and social change in Spain through a participatory research approach. Drawing on 69 anonymous responses from young people aged 15 to 28 (52.2% female, 47.8% male), the research highlights widespread experiences of violence, particularly verbal (80%) and online (65%), as well as a strong awareness of systemic exclusion. Migrants and refugees (72%), people with disabilities (70%), and LGBTQI+ individuals (54%) were identified as the most marginalized groups. While 68% of respondents expressed willingness to take action against discrimination, 55% reported feeling poorly informed about how to recognize or report violence. The findings reveal a clear demand for inclusive education, emotional support, and youth-led initiatives focused on dialogue, creativity, and collective action.

Introduction

Despite being directly affected by these issues, young people are rarely included in formal discussions or decision-making processes that aim to address them. For that reason, this research was made to gain a deeper understanding of how young people perceive and experience violence, social exclusion, and the potential for change within their communities. It focused on youth as the primary target group, including diverse backgrounds and social realities, such as students, members of marginalized groups, and young people actively engaged or interested in social issues. This report centers young people's perspectives, based on an anonymous survey aimed at uncovering young peoples lived experiences, perceptions, and ideas for change.

The main purpose of the research was to:

- Measure young people's exposure to violence, both as victims and observers.
- Explore their perception of inclusion and exclusion in social and institutional settings.
- Identify levels of awareness, empowerment, and willingness to take part in social change.
- Collect concrete ideas from youth on how to promote peaceful coexistence and greater inclusion in their communities.

Methodology

The methodology combined quantitative and qualitative approaches, using a structured questionnaire created via Google Forms as the main instrument. The survey consisted of both closed and open-ended questions, allowing respondents not only to select predefined answers but also to express their personal views, experiences, and suggestions. Data was collected anonymously to encourage honest and authentic responses. All questions were mandatory, ensuring a complete data set for every respondent.

The survey was divided into four main sections:

Section 1: About You – Demographics and background

The first section gathered general information to contextualize participant responses and enable analysis based on key demographic variables. This included age, gender, place of residence, and employment/education status to gain a better understanding on how different backgrounds shape opinions.

Section 2: Experiences and Perceptions of Violence

This section explored young people's personal exposure to violence, as well as their observations and reactions in everyday situations. It included questions about experiences with violence, types of violence in their surroundings and reactions to it. These questions later helped us identify how some violent behaviours were defined as normal in the society.

Section 3: Understanding Marginalization and Inclusion

The third section focused on youth views about social exclusion and the perceived effectiveness of public spaces and institutions in promoting inclusion. The questions asked were about what do they think who are the marginalized groups, the attitude toward these groups and what do public spaces do for these groups of society.

Section 4: Proposals and Engagement – Youth Ideas for Change

The final part of the questionnaire explored young people's ideas for improving social relations and their willingness to take action. Participants reflected on what could help reduce youth violence, better integrate marginalized groups, and whether they would personally get involved in anti-violence or anti-discrimination initiatives.

They also shared suggestions for improving peer relationships in their communities and reflected on whether they believe their voice can make a difference.

Target group

The target group for this were young people between the ages of 15 and 28, representing a diverse mix of social, geographic, and personal backgrounds. The age structure of the group included both adolescents and young adults, with the majority (over 50%) falling in the 19–24 age range. Specifically, 19.4% of participants were aged 15–18, 56.5% were between 19–24, and 24.2% were aged 25–28. This distribution offered a broad overview of different life stages and experiences related to youth development, education, transition to employment, and social inclusion.

Age Group Distribution

Gender Distribution
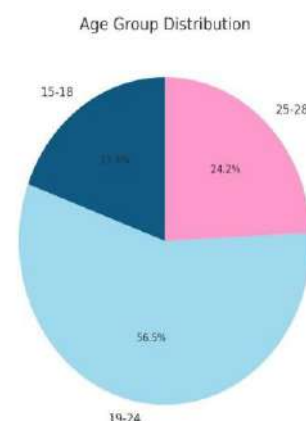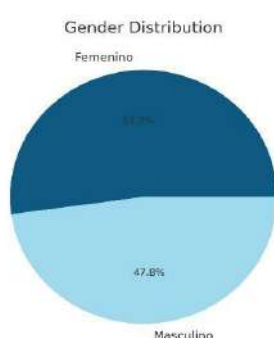
In terms of gender, the sample was nearly evenly split, with 52.2% identifying as female and 47.8% as male. This balance supported the collection of

Participants also came from a variety of living environments, including urban (44.9%), semi-urban (36.2%), and rural areas (18.8%). This territorial diversity allowed for comparative insights into how different community settings shape young people's experiences with violence, marginalization, and access to resources.

Respondents by Location
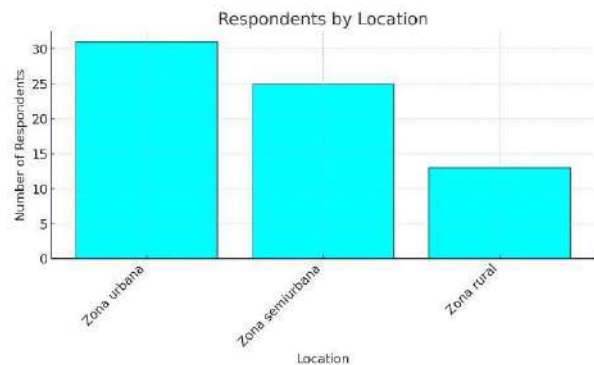
Concerning educational and employment status, the group reflected a range of realities with 31.9% students, 26.1% employed, also 26.1% unemployed and a smaller number of self-employed, freelancers, etc. This socio-professional diversity enriched the analysis, offering a layered understanding of the topic.

6.1 Results

Violence

The first part of the questionnaire focused on understanding the presence, forms, and responses to violence among young people in their communities. The responses revealed concerning patterns that highlight both the frequency of violence and the lack of readiness to respond to it.

To begin with, 58 % of participants reported having personally experienced violence within the past year. This violence occurred in various settings — schools, neighborhoods, peer groups, and especially online. The responses indicate that violence is not an isolated or exceptional event, but rather a common part of daily life for many young people. This is an alarming indicator of widespread insecurity and vulnerability within their social environments.

When asked about the types of violence they most frequently observe, participants pointed to verbal aggression as the most common, followed by online violence (cyberbullying), social exclusion, and physical violence. This reflects a reality where verbal attacks and digital harassment have become normalized. In many cases, these forms of violence are subtle and indirect, making them harder to detect, yet equally harmful — especially when left unaddressed.

As for the spaces where violence most often occurs, young people identified schools and the internet as the most frequent settings. However, violence was also noted in neighborhoods and friend groups, suggesting that young people are exposed to harm not only in public or institutional spaces but also in their closest circles. The prominence of the school setting is particularly striking, emphasizing the need to treat schools not only as educational institutions but as environments where emotional safety and social responsibility must be prioritized.

When it comes to how young people react when they witness violence, most participants admitted that they did not intervene, often because they did not know how to respond or were afraid of the consequences. This illustrates a serious lack of confidence and practical tools among youth to engage in safe and constructive intervention. It also reflects broader systemic issues, such as the absence of supportive institutional structures and fear of retaliation, which discourage active bystander behaviour.

Finally, the data show that most young people feel they are not well informed about how to recognize or report violence. A large portion identified themselves as "little informed" or "not informed at all," while only a handful described themselves as "very informed." This points to a critical information gap: even though many young people are surrounded by violence, they often lack the knowledge or access to safe mechanisms for responding to it. This gap prevents them from protecting themselves and others, and from taking collective action to challenge harmful behaviour.
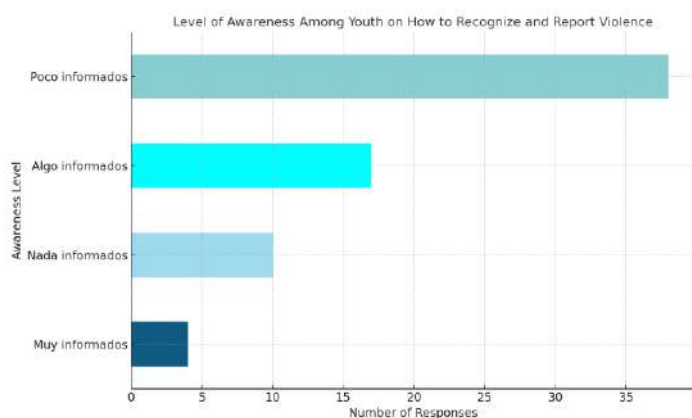

In summary, the responses to these first five questions demonstrate a clear and urgent need for educational, emotional, and institutional support. Young people are aware of the violence around them but feel largely unequipped to respond. Projects addressing this issue must prioritize creating safe spaces, providing practical training, and ensuring clear and accessible pathways for support and reporting.

Marginalization

The second part of the questionnaire explored how young people understand social exclusion in their communities and how they perceive the role of public spaces and institutions in promoting inclusion.

Participants most often identified migrants, people with disabilities, and those living in poverty as the most marginalized groups. LGBTIQ+ individuals, Roma communities, and women were also frequently mentioned, showing that young people are aware of how multiple forms of discrimination often intersect.
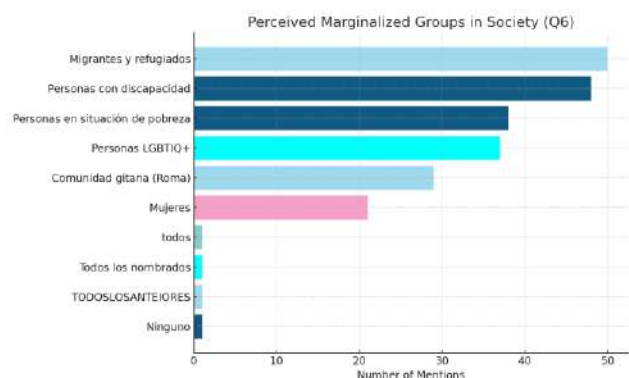
When asked about their peers' attitudes, many described them as "neutral" (40,56 %), suggesting indifference rather than active support or discrimination. Around one-third (30,44 %), perceived generally positive attitudes, while one fifth expressed negative attitudes, pointing out that bias and prejudice still persist. This neutrality may indicate a lack of encouragement or knowledge on how to support inclusive behavior.

Regarding representation in public spaces and events, most respondents believed that marginalized groups are underrepresented or only symbolically included. Some were unsure, reflecting either a lack of visibility or detachment from civic life.

When assessing the role of institutions (such as schools, city councils, and social services), the most common response was "partially" (56,52 %), indicating that while some efforts are recognized, they are seen as insufficient. A significant number of respondents (one third) expressed dissatisfaction or doubt about institutional commitment to inclusion.

Overall, the responses show that young people care deeply about inclusion, but feel that existing structures are not doing enough. There is a need to move beyond awareness and create practical, visible opportunities for marginalized voices to be heard — including through shared activities, representation in decisions, and stronger youth–institution dialogue.

Solutions

The survey's final section explored how young people understand the roots of violence and exclusion, and what kinds of actions they believe could lead to real change. Their responses reflected not only concern, but also a clear desire to be actively involved in building a more inclusive and supportive society.

When asked how to best address violence among youth, participants emphasized the importance of psychological and social support services and better education in schools, both selected by a majority. Many also underlined the value of youth participation in creating solutions, as well as the need for awareness campaigns and workshops. While some also mentioned stricter rules and controls, the overall preference leaned toward preventive and educational approaches, suggesting a generation more interested in understanding and transformation than punishment.

In terms of integrating marginalized groups, the most valued proposals were inclusive activities such as sports, art, and group workshops, spaces where people can interact naturally and equally. Access to education and employment was also seen as essential for real inclusion, followed by public awareness and greater media visibility. Young people clearly associate inclusion not just with visibility, but with equal opportunities and connection through shared experience.

The survey also showed strong motivation for action: 68% of participants said they would personally take part in anti-violence or anti-discrimination initiatives, while the remaining 32% said "maybe," depending on the topic. None rejected the idea outright, indicating significant potential for youth mobilization — especially if they are given the right space, support, and ownership.

When invited to suggest ideas for improving relationships among peers, responses centered around five main themes:

1. *Educational workshops on respect, violence, and communication*
2. *Volunteering in vulnerable communities*

3. *Creative projects like art, cinema, or street activities*
4. *Safe dialogue spaces for youth meetups and discussions*
5. *Awareness campaigns, both digital and local*

Temáticas propuestas para mejorar relaciones entre jóvenes
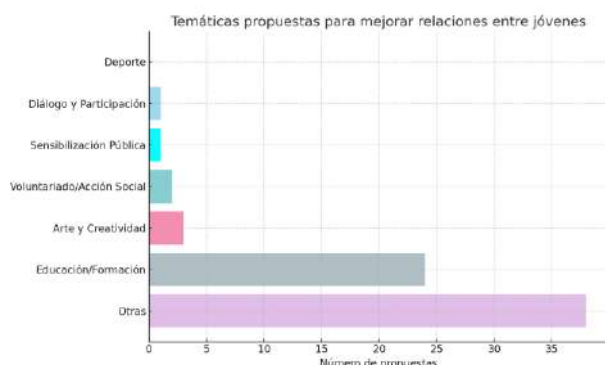
These ideas confirm that young people are not only critical observers, but also solution-oriented, and ready to contribute through creativity, collaboration, and community work.

Finally, when asked whether they believe their voice can make a difference, nearly half responded yes, while a large group remained unsure. This uncertainty may reflect a lack of previous opportunities or visibility in decision-making processes—highlighting the need to create pathways where youth participation leads to real impact.

Action Plan Activity Report

World Cafe Youth Dialogue on Community Issues

Our PAR team organized a discussion session on the 26th of June 2025 in Youth Hostel, Puente Genil, that was attended by 20 young people (aged 14–30)

A participatory Action Plan activity was made in the format of a World Cafe, as the young people, based on their community and previous experience, felt that it was the easiest and most comfortable way to express their opinions about topics that can be difficult to discuss. The session gathered many youngsters who, besides helping us with the project, also had a good time and made some new connections.

The World Café method provided a relaxed but structured setting for participants to rotate between discussion tables and share their views, experiences, and ideas on the following key topics.

Each discussion round was dynamic and inclusive, and at the end of the session, participants presented their key takeaways and ideas. The following *main conclusions* emerged from their presentations:

1. *"When you hear 'violence,' what comes to mind?"*

Participants highlighted that violence is not only physical but also emotional and digital. They stressed the importance of recognizing micro-aggressions, cyberbullying, and peer pressure as forms of violence affecting young people.
Conclusion: There is a need for more education and open spaces for dialogue in schools and youth centers to help recognize and prevent different forms of violence, especially subtle or normalized ones.

2. *"Who's often forgotten or left out in your town?"*

Discussions revealed that LGBTQ+ youth, migrants, and individuals with disabilities often face invisibility or exclusion in smaller towns. Participants emphasized the need for representation, visibility campaigns, and allyship.

Conclusion: Local initiatives should include inclusive language and accessible formats, and actively engage marginalized groups in project design and implementation.

3. *"Have you ever felt unheard because you're young?"*

Many young participants expressed frustration that when they share ideas, especially creative or meaningful ones, they're often met with polite smiles from adults, but little to no follow-up. This recurring experience leaves them feeling ignored or tokenized, as if their voices are welcomed in appearance but not in action. They emphasized the need for more transparent and consistent feedback, such as follow-up meetings or public updates, so they can see which ideas are being considered, which are not, and why. This, they believe, would help build trust and keep them engaged in shaping their community.

4. *"If you had a magic wand..."*

Young people expressed a strong need for spaces, both in school and in the community, where they can talk openly about mental health, identity, race, and sexuality. They feel these topics are often ignored or treated superficially. Online, they want more than entertainment—they're asking for youth-led content like having live discussions where they can ask and get clear info about opportunities they can have. They also highlighted a lack of practical education in activism skills, such as grant writing, event planning, and social media campaigning, which they see as essential for meaningful participation.

5. *"What's missing in school, town, or online for real talk?"*

Young people feel there is a lack of safe, open spaces to discuss topics like mental health, identity, race, and sexuality—especially in schools, where these issues are often avoided or addressed superficially. They suggest integrating such discussions into regular classes, not just workshops. They also want youth-led online content that goes beyond entertainment, including Q&As and updates about local opportunities. Lastly, they highlighted the need for practical skills like event planning, project writing, and campaigning, to help them turn ideas into real community action.

Reflection

This World Café was a strong example of active youth participation in a small Andalusian town. The discussions revealed that young people in Puente Genil are highly aware of the challenges within their community and eager to be part of the solution. They recognize violence in its many forms—beyond the physical—including emotional harm and digital aggression, and they call for more open education and safe spaces to address these issues. They also identified several groups who are often excluded—such as LGBTQ+ youth, migrants, and individuals with disabilities—and called for greater visibility, accessibility, and genuine inclusion in local initiatives.

A recurring frustration among participants was the feeling of being unheard. While their ideas are often welcomed in theory, many experience a lack of follow-through or feedback, leaving them disillusioned and disengaged. Young people want decision-makers to take their input seriously and communicate transparently about outcomes.

Furthermore, they expressed a strong need for deeper, more frequent conversations on mental health, identity, and social justice—both in school and in their everyday

environments. They're looking for more youth-driven digital content with real content, and they want to build skills that empower them to take action, event planning, and leading community initiatives.

Overall, these young voices show not only a deep understanding of the issues but also a readiness to participate, lead, and co-create a more inclusive and dynamic local community—if they are given the tools and trust to do so.

Reflections from the Research Team

Members of the youth PAR team reported an overall positive experience throughout the process. They appreciated the opportunity to contribute not only as respondents but also as active collaborators in designing, analyzing, and reflecting on the findings. Many described this as the first time they had been genuinely invited to express their views on key issues such as violence, exclusion, and the role of youth in driving change.

Participants highlighted that this activity helped them recognize that violence takes many forms — not just physical, but also verbal, digital, and social. Activities encouraged them to speak openly, challenge assumptions, and learn from one another in a safe and supportive setting. For many, the interactive group work allowed them to connect with peers from different backgrounds, break stereotypes, and find common ground.

The inclusive methodology and peer-led approach were especially valued. Young people felt heard and respected, and the sense of ownership over the process strengthened their engagement. Several participants expressed interest in continuing their involvement in similar initiatives, either by organizing follow-up actions or contributing to new phases of the project. There was also a clear call to involve teachers, families, and local institutions more actively in future efforts to ensure a broader and more sustainable impact.

While the overall experience was positive, the team also noted some challenges. These included time constraints, limited availability due to academic or work obligations, and occasional difficulties with coordination and planning. Some activities, particularly in-

person follow-ups, had to be adjusted due to logistical limitations. Nonetheless, these were seen as learning experiences, and the group remained motivated and solution-focused throughout.

Looking ahead, team members suggested creative ideas for sharing the results, such as youth-led public events, artistic presentations, or interactive community discussions. Many expressed an interest in expanding the process to other regions in Spain or even at the European level, ensuring that more young people have the chance to be part of similar participatory initiatives.

In conclusion, the process strengthened youth capacities, built confidence, and demonstrated that when young people are given the tools, trust, and space to act, they are ready to engage — not just in dialogue, but in shaping real solutions for their communities.

Final thoughts

This participatory action research enabled a group of young people in Spain to actively contribute as researchers and facilitators. Their role included supporting data collection, interpreting results, and sharing perspectives on youth violence and exclusion. Despite minor challenges in coordination and planning, the group worked effectively and showed strong commitment throughout the process.

Participants highlighted the value of being involved in a project that takes youth voices seriously and promotes collaboration. Their feedback suggests a strong interest in continuing this kind of work and expanding it to reach more communities.

Overall, the experience confirmed the importance of youth-led approaches and demonstrated the potential for future actions based on what young people observe, experience, and propose themselves.

7. About the project

The project "Inclusive pathways to peace" is approved by Agency for mobility and EU programmes and cofunded by European Commission via Erasmus+ programme KA2 Cooperation partnerships in youth. The project is being implemented from February 2025 until September 2026. The partner consortium consists of Association Studio B from Croatia, YEU from Cyprus, Association Light from Serbia and Erasmiau from Spain.

The core issue that we are addressing is conflict, which can turn into a war, where media narratives contribute to an atmosphere of fear and tension, that finally, without appropriate and well-timed peace-building activities, results in prolonged conflicts within and between countries.

Our primary objective is to raise awareness of the value and importance of innovative peace education as a form of civic engagement and as a tool that promotes common values, prevents radicalization and combats social polarization.

The project will strengthen the capacities of the organizations involved through creating innovative OERs. It aims to engage and empower 181 youth with conflict resolution skills through game-based educational resources and to increase the quality of youth work by equipping 130 youth practitioners with new skills, approaches and tools.

We foresee the development of 4 outputs. The project goes beyond traditional learning to address critical socio-political issues, equipping participants with conflict prevention, critical thinking and communication skills, improved engagement of youth, development of inclusive and sustainable OERs, and broader adoption of innovative peace education methodologies. We anticipate contributing to the promotion of democratic values, social cohesion, and the prevention of radicalization in Europe and beyond.

The Participatory Action Research will be followed by the development of 8 interactive educational Escape Rooms with digital elements such as 360-degree video and Augmented Reality. OERs will be created in 6 languages to facilitate widespread access. Peer-to-peer mobilities, Training of Trainers, e-learning and dissemination will further enhance the impact.

All of the outputs created will be widely disseminated to multiple target groups and accessible for free on the projects website.

8. Final thoughts

The "Inclusive Pathways to Peace" project, through its Participatory Action Research (PAR) initiative, has underscored the profound value of placing young people at the heart of discussions and actions concerning violence, marginalization, and social change. As youth workers, we have witnessed firsthand how PAR fundamentally shifts the traditional research paradigm, moving beyond viewing youth as passive subjects to empowering them as active agents of change. This methodology, while still relatively unknown in the European youth sector, offers a transformative opportunity for practitioners to innovate, connect deeply with young people, and foster social change that promotes democratic values.

The Implementation Journey

The PAR was simultaneously implemented by partners in Croatia, Cyprus, Serbia, and Spain between April and July 2025, involving a dedicated research team of five youngsters and two youth workers in each country. The process across all nations followed a similar iterative cycle of research, action, and reflection, ensuring a common understanding of the research topic and full autonomy for the young participants in designing questions, selecting methods, and creating reports. Youth workers consistently served as mentors, providing essential emotional and logistical support, and guidance tailored to the specific contexts of each community.

Key Achievements

A significant achievement across all countries was the empowerment of young people, enabling them to actively identify problems, design research instruments, analyze findings, and create solutions. For instance, the research in Croatia revealed that young people possess a desire for change, and the "Youth Loudly Without a Filter" workshop demonstrated how debate simulations can effectively promote education and inclusion, fostering critical thinking and peaceful discussion. Similarly, the Spanish study highlighted a clear demand for inclusive education, emotional support, and youth-led initiatives.

The PAR successfully gathered diverse youth perspectives on violence incidence, attitudes towards marginalized groups, and concrete ideas for positive change. In all four countries, findings showed that violence commonly occurs in communities, schools, and online, with

verbal, online, psychological, and physical forms being most cited. Young people demonstrated sensitivity to peers' problems, awareness of institutional barriers, and empathy, proposing feasible solutions that do not require high financial investments.

Based on their findings, national teams implemented context-specific interventions. Cyprus's team launched a 7-day social media campaign, "Amplifying Youth Voices for Peace," which effectively translated research data into human-centered storytelling, sparking dialogue and awareness by pairing survey findings with real voices and refugee narratives. In Serbia, despite limitations posed by current protests and unrest, the team successfully shifted to an online awareness campaign promoting tolerance and equality.

Participants, both young researchers and youth workers, reported positive experiences, gaining new skills in research methodology, critical thinking, and collaborative work. The process fostered increased awareness of societal issues and the potential for active citizenship.

The findings are crucial for youth practitioners, policymakers, and donors, providing evidence-based insights to shape future initiatives, develop better policies, and design needs-tailored activities.

Identified Limitations

The research faced limitations due to convenient sampling and, in some cases, a small number of interviewees, which restricts the generalizability of conclusions. For example, in Croatia, the dominance of rural respondents meant limited comparison across regions, and the potential for self-assessment bias was noted. Similarly, the Cyprus team faced difficulties recruiting volunteers and cancelled a focus group due to participant no-shows, highlighting challenges in short-notice planning.

While a mutual understanding of the research purpose existed, the independently designed questionnaires in each country meant that data collected could not be compared in its entirety.

External socio-political contexts significantly impacted implementation. In Serbia, escalating violence and civil actions limited the ability to organize in-person events, necessitating a shift to online campaigns.

Challenges such as uneven participation, time management issues, and coordination among participants were noted across the teams. The Croatian research also highlighted that while young people want change, they often lack the knowledge and safe channels to act effectively.

When it comes to reducing violence and ensuring higher inclusion level a recurring limitation identified across all countries was the low trust in institutions reported by young people, particularly concerning reporting violence and ensuring protection for marginalized groups. There was also an indication of insufficient information and education on violence among younger age groups and a lack of awareness of structural forms of violence like economic and institutional violence.

Despite the challenges, the overall experience unequivocally demonstrates the immense potential of Participatory Action Research in youth work. The insights gained from this project are not just data points; they are a powerful mandate for action. Young people across Europe are actively contemplating their environments, identifying issues, and proposing concrete, feasible solutions to foster inclusion and reduce violence. They are

willing to participate in activities that promote equality and tolerance and overwhelmingly believe they can be a driving force for positive change.

We invite youth practitioners, organizations, and decision-makers to embrace and integrate the PAR methodology into their work. This approach offers a unique pathway to connect with youth on a more profound level, fostering true collaboration and ownership of initiatives.

This approach ensures that programs and policies are genuinely needs-based and context-specific, reflecting the lived realities and creative solutions proposed by young people themselves. By involving young people in decision-making and research processes, we can collectively strengthen their trust in civic participation and institutions, cultivating a new generation of active citizens.

This report, accompanied by the "Empowering Praxis" guidebook, provides the foundational knowledge and tools necessary to confidently implement PAR. Let us use these insights to promote democratic values, social cohesion, and prevent radicalization, creating inclusive pathways to peace for all. The power of participation is real, and it is in our hands to unleash it for a better future.

Impressum

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