

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Project name and acronym:	Youth Embracing Togetherness - YET
Participant:	YOUTHABILITY
PIC number:	880823730

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number :	[1]		
Event name:	[Youth Unites Europe's Towns by Embracing Dialogue and Diversity]		
Type:	[Opening Conference]		
In situ/online:	[in-situ]		
Location:	[Greece], [Kastoria]		
Date(s):	[25-27/05/2025]		
Website(s) (if any):			
Participants			
Female:	153		
Male:	78		
Non-binary:	0		
From country 1 [Greece]:	40		
From country 2 [Spain]:	2		
From country 3 [Slovenia]:	10		
From country 4 [Croatia]:	42		
From country 5 [Romania]:	137		
From country 6 []:			
From country 7 []:			
Total number of participants:	231	From total number of countries:	5
Description			
Provide a short description of the event and its activities.			

The opening workshop for the YET - Youth Embracing Togetherness project was held from May 25 to 27, 2025, in the picturesque towns of Kastoria and Siatista, Greece, hosted by YOUTHABILITY in close cooperation with the Municipality of Voio. The workshop brought together an impressive 217 participants from five European countries Greece, Spain, Slovenia, Croatia, and Romania, including young citizens, educators, youth workers, municipal representatives, civil society actors, and EU project professionals. The large turnout highlighted the project's wide appeal and the growing commitment among European youth to engage with democratic values, sustainability, and shared European identity.

The event began on the afternoon of May 25 with a registration session in Kastoria, where participants were welcomed by local organizers. The atmosphere was vibrant, energized by the diversity of voices and experiences present. The opening remarks were delivered by Ms. Maria Ntelia, President of YOUTHABILITY, who emphasized the importance of youth-led dialogue in shaping Europe's democratic future. Her speech called attention to the need for active participation and intercultural understanding in today's complex political landscape.

Following the welcome, a detailed presentation of the project's agenda and objectives outlined the vision for YET: to build bridges between young people across Europe, empower them to act as agents of change, and strengthen cooperation between municipalities on issues central to youth. Each partner municipality Voio (Greece), Altea (Spain), Podietrtek (Slovenia), Breznički Hum (Croatia), and Victoria (Romania) was then introduced. Representatives showcased their local youth engagement strategies and shared expectations for the collaboration.

A powerful sequence of thematic speeches followed. Ms. Dimitra Fantidou, an experienced EU Project Manager, opened with *"The Role of Voices of Unity in Promoting Youth's Action and Cultural Diversity"*. He explored how transnational youth networks can become engines for social cohesion. After a short break, Ms. Eleni Kasapi, Political Scientist, delivered the insightful session *"How Can a Sustainable and Green EU Be Closer to Young Citizens?"* by connecting EU climate goals with local youth action and educational innovation.

This was followed by Ms. Georgia Tsironi, a distinguished Journalist, who addressed *"The Role of Youth as the Architects of a United Europe"*. She highlighted the necessity of transforming youth from passive observers into active policy-shapers and emphasized the importance of media literacy and representation. The day concluded with a highly interactive round table discussion titled *"EU Myths & Realities: Busting Euroscepticism through Youth-Led Storytelling,"* moderated by Ms. Katerina Solomonidou and Ms. Stefania Zygomani. Young participants courageously addressed disinformation and misconceptions about the EU, sharing personal stories that underscored the importance of truth, solidarity, and mutual respect in building European unity. The evening closed with a welcome dinner, fostering intercultural exchange and bonding in a festive and inclusive atmosphere.

On May 26, participants traveled to Siatista, where activities resumed with an open debate: *"Does EU Enlargement Benefit Youth?"*. Voices from all five countries shared concerns, hopes, and ideas for building a more inclusive Europe. A thematic session on *"Youth Perspectives on Identity and Belonging in the EU"* followed, prompting reflection on cultural heritage, civic identity, and European values.

In the afternoon, the spotlight turned to innovation and problem-solving. Two interactive Youth Power Lab workshops engaged participants in hands-on collaboration. In Lab 1, teams co-designed responses to real-life challenges facing their communities ranging from youth apathy to environmental sustainability. In Lab 2, the focus was on translating local insights into EU-level influence and policy recommendations. The Results & Reflections session afterward gave participants the chance to present their work, receive feedback, and inspire one another with bold, future-oriented ideas.

The evening ended with a social dinner, where music, storytelling, and friendship filled the room. The event had already begun to deliver on its promise of connecting young people not just as project partners but as fellow Europeans with shared ambitions.

On May 27, the final day of the event, participants visited the Municipality of Voio and regional decision-making departments in Western Macedonia. This study visit provided a rare, firsthand look at local policy processes and youth inclusion mechanisms in public governance. It was both educational and inspiring, bridging the gap between theory and practice.

The day continued with an open forum, "Youth & Municipalities on Co-Designing Civic Life in Twin Towns," during which youth participants worked side-by-side with local leaders to propose tangible actions for participatory governance, co-created public spaces, and youth advisory councils. The final debate, "Green Deal or Raw Deal? Youth on Europe's Sustainability Agenda," energized the audience and closed the event on a high note. Participants challenged current EU sustainability policies and proposed bold new ideas for involving youth in achieving climate justice. Many expressed strong interest in following up with campaigns, petitions, and awareness-raising actions upon returning to their communities.

The workshop concluded with a closing lunch and ceremony, filled with emotion, laughter, and a renewed sense of purpose. As participants said their goodbyes, they carried with them not just new

friendships, but also the tools, confidence, and determination to be active European citizens and community leaders. The YET Kick-Off Workshop was more than an event it was a launchpad for transformative action, intercultural dialogue, and democratic participation. With 172 participants actively engaged over three days, the workshop laid the foundation for a vibrant, youth-driven European network that will grow stronger with each future YET event.

The Agenda of the YET Event is presented below:

Opening Workshop Agenda

Date: May 25–27, 2025

Venue: Kastoria & Siatista, Greece

Organizers: YOUTHABILITY & Municipality of Voio

DAY 1 – Monday, May 25, 2025 – Kastoria

Time Slot | Session

15:30 – 16:00 | Registration

Participants arrive, register, and receive workshop materials. The atmosphere is set for warm intercultural exchange.

16:00 – 16:15 | Welcome Address

Ms. Maria Ntelia, President of YOUTHABILITY, welcomes participants and introduces the vision and goals of the YET project.

16:15 – 16:45 | Presentation of Agenda and Project Objectives

Participants are introduced to the overall structure, goals, and collaborative nature of the YET initiative.

16:45 – 17:30 | Presentation of Partner Municipalities

Representatives from Greece, Spain, Slovenia, Croatia, and Romania share their local approaches to youth civic engagement.

17:30 – 18:00 | Thematic Speech: Voices of Unity and Cultural Diversity

Delivered by Ms. Dimitra Fantidou, EU Project Manager, focusing on intercultural cooperation and youth as peacebuilders.

18:00 – 18:15 | Coffee Break

Informal networking among participants.

18:15 – 18:45 | Thematic Speech: Sustainability and Youth in the EU

Ms. Eleni Kasapi, Political Scientist, presents the EU Green Deal and young citizens' role in environmental activism.

18:45 – 19:15 | Thematic Speech: Youth as Architects of a United Europe

Ms. Georgia Tsironi, Journalist, speaks on media, civic engagement, and youth leadership in a democratic Europe.

19:15 – 19:45 | Round Table: EU Myths & Realities

Interactive discussion moderated by Katerina Solomonidou and Stefania Zygomani. Youth participants address disinformation and build EU-positive narratives.

20:00 | Welcome Dinner

Cultural dinner hosted by YOUTHABILITY with local cuisine and music, offering a relaxed setting for bonding.

DAY 2 – Tuesday, May 26, 2025 – Siatista

10:30 – 11:00 | Arrival in Siatista

Participants travel to Siatista and are welcomed by the Municipality of Voio.

11:00 – 12:00 | Open Debate: Does EU Enlargement Benefit Youth?

Participants debate on the challenges and opportunities of enlargement from a youth perspective.

12:00 – 12:30 | Coffee Break

Networking and informal discussion.

12:30 – 13:00 | Thematic Session: Identity and Belonging in the EU

Participants reflect on European identity, inclusion, and common values.

13:00 – 14:30 | Lunch Break

Shared meal for intercultural dialogue and rest.

14:30 – 15:30 | Youth Power Lab 1: Prototyping Local EU Solutions

Group work on community challenges related to youth, democracy, and sustainability.

15:30 – 16:30 | Youth Power Lab 2: Influencing EU Policy from the Ground Up

Teams explore strategies to translate local ideas into EU-level advocacy.

16:30 – 17:30 | Youth Power Lab Results & Reflections

Participants present their findings and reflect on their learning outcomes and shared values.

20:00 | Social Dinner

Hosted by the Municipality of Voio, offering an opportunity to celebrate shared work and community building.

DAY 3 – Wednesday, May 27, 2025 – Siatista

10:00 – 12:00 | Study Visit to Municipality of Voio

Participants explore local governance and youth policy mechanisms in practice.

12:00 – 12:30 | Open Forum: Youth & Municipalities Co-Creating Civic Life

Joint brainstorming session between youth and local authorities on participatory planning in twin towns.

12:30 – 13:00 | Debate Session: Green Deal or Raw Deal?

A youth-led debate on climate policy, sustainability, and EU accountability.

13:00 – 14:00 | Closing Lunch and Ceremony

Final remarks, certificates, and celebration of the successful launch of the YET project.

Project's Results & Conclusion

The opening workshop of the YET, Youth Embracing Togetherness project concluded with resounding success, setting a strong foundation for the collaborative journey ahead. With 217 active participants from five European countries, the event proved to be more than a formal gathering it became a dynamic platform for intercultural dialogue, democratic engagement, and youth empowerment. Through debates, thematic speeches, hands-on labs, and collaborative sessions with municipal leaders, young people were not only heard but equipped to lead. The workshop fostered a sense of ownership and solidarity among participants, who left with strengthened networks, concrete action plans, and a shared commitment to shaping a more inclusive, sustainable, and democratic Europe. These outcomes highlight the transformative potential of youth-led initiatives and reinforce YET's mission to bridge local action with European values in meaningful and lasting ways.

Dissemination and Publication's Links on the organizations/municipalities' websites:

YOUTHABILITY NGO :

- https://www.instagram.com/p/DMsQ7KnMK0_/?igsh=YiY1YTU5dW8zbnNo
- <https://www.facebook.com/youthability.ngo/posts/pfbid0aDKeKvLk1UaTTyC4Bo3wQpioKs5mjBYxzm1XrfC9VrrQtpGMiytY4QvMFCtgYafi>
- <https://youthability.gr/project/>

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