

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

(To be filled in and uploaded as deliverable in the Portal Grant Management System, at the due date foreseen in the system.

 Please provide one sheet per event (one event = one workpackage = one lump sum).)

PROJECT	
Participant:	Municipality of Starachowice
PIC number:	927702084
Project name and acronym:	"Cities 4 YOUth - Next Generation (C4YOU - NEXT GEN),

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number:	2		
Event name:	YOUTH ACTIVITY MAPS		
Type:	Oxford debate, Focus meetings, Survey, Design thinking workshop		
In situ/online:	in-situ		
Location:	Poland – Starachowice and Kielce, Italy – Faenza, Cyprus – Pissouri, Portugal – Valongo, Spain - Alzira		
Date(s):	February - August		
Website(s) (if any):	https://starachowice.eu/pl/dla-mieszkanca/wspolpraca-miedzynarodowa/cities-for-youth-next-generation/mapa-aktywnosci-mlodziezy--wspolna-diagnoza-mlodych-w-europie.html		
Participants			
Female:	487		
Male:	376		
Non-binary:	4		
From city 1 [Starachowice]:	127		
From city 2 [Kielce]:	165		
From city 3 [Alzira]:	145		
From city 4 [Faenza]:	177		
From city 5 [Valongo]:	128		
From city 6 [Pissouri]:	125		
Total number of participants:	867	From total number of countries:	6
Description			

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

The main goal of Work Package 2 was to develop a comprehensive and evidence-based diagnosis of the situation of young people in small and medium-sized towns. This diagnostic exercise is not in itself the creation of local youth strategies, but rather a crucial foundation and analytical tool that can be used by municipalities in the future to design strategies that are evidence-based and inclusive.

At the start of the project, partners lacked systematic knowledge of their youth populations. Without such data, policies remained fragmented and reactive. The most pressing issue, visible across all municipalities, is the outflow of young people to larger urban centres, which weakens the social and economic potential of smaller towns. WP2 provided the first structured step towards changing this dynamic: understanding the drivers behind it and generating solutions together with young people.

Each municipality combined quantitative and qualitative research methods. Large-scale surveys were conducted with more than 3,000 young people in total, complemented by over 150 enterprise surveys. This was followed by participatory activities including focus groups, Oxford-style debates, and design thinking workshops. In total, 867 participants engaged directly in these activities. The resulting Youth Activity Maps combine statistical data with lived experiences and co-created proposals.

Findings by Partner Municipality

In Starachowice, young people pointed to limited educational and employment opportunities, and to the lack of visible, attractive activities that could anchor them in their city. Recommendations stressed the creation of youth-friendly spaces, better communication, and participatory mechanisms that would give young people a stronger voice in shaping local life.

In Kielce, the diagnosis forms part of a larger municipal initiative entitled "Youth in Kielce 2025." Within this broader process, the findings from WP2 will directly contribute to a comprehensive report that is intended to inform the development of a local youth strategy. The diagnosis showed that while Kielce has youth representative structures, they are perceived as not fully inclusive. Young people emphasised the importance of stronger recognition of youth participation, better access to mental health services, and the creation of cultural and creative spaces. The fact that this work is embedded in a larger municipal effort increases the chances of its findings being translated into concrete policy.

In Alzira, the consultations highlighted a clear gap between existing municipal activities and the everyday realities of youth. Initiatives often do not reach their target audiences due to communication shortcomings. Youth called for revitalisation of the Youth Council, for outreach directly in schools, and for more dynamic activities. The diagnosis serves as a reference point for the city to adjust its youth policies and engage more systematically with schools and informal youth groups.

In Faenza, attention was directed towards the younger age group (11–14), which is often overlooked in youth policy. The findings revealed moderate satisfaction with local spaces and opportunities, but also significant gaps in access to information and a need for psychosocial support. Recommendations included age-appropriate communication, early guidance, and opportunities for intercultural engagement. This diagnostic process represents a valuable tool for refining existing youth services and aligning them more closely with the needs of adolescents.

In Valongo, young people identified housing, mobility, and mental health as decisive factors in their decision to stay or leave. The diagnosis showed the strong interconnection between these domains: poor mobility limits access to education and employment, while housing insecurity affects well-being and opportunities. Youth proposed integrated solutions such as co-housing, improved public transport, and stronger youth-led cultural activities. The Youth Activity Map thus provides the municipality with a systemic perspective that goes beyond isolated actions.

In Pissouri, the consultations converged on two key priorities: the creation of a Youth Centre and a Youth Council. These were complemented by demands for better mobility, mental health support, entrepreneurship opportunities, and youth-friendly public spaces. The findings were consolidated into a ten-point proposal formally submitted to the Community Council, positioning Pissouri to take concrete steps towards structured youth participation. Although no strategy has yet been adopted, the proposals provide a ready-made foundation for one.

Overall Results and Impact

The results of WP2 show both commonalities and specific local contexts. Across all six towns, youth outmigration remains the central challenge. Communication gaps reduce the effectiveness of existing initiatives, with schools often being the only reliable entry point. Mental health emerged everywhere as an urgent priority, alongside demands for youth centres, creative hubs, and safe public spaces. Youth consistently expressed interest in entrepreneurship, employability, and housing solutions, provided they are accompanied by mentorship and recognition.

The impact of WP2 is visible in two dimensions. First, it created a new evidence base. Each municipality now possesses a Youth Activity Map that brings together quantitative and qualitative findings in a coherent, accessible format. These maps are not yet strategies, but they are powerful instruments for

future policy-making. They serve as both diagnostic reports and strategic tools, guiding municipalities in designing evidence-based youth policies.

Second, the process itself built capacity and empowerment. Young people were not passive respondents but active co-creators of solutions. Debates, focus groups, and design thinking workshops strengthened their skills in critical thinking, collaboration, and civic engagement. Local authorities, NGOs, and enterprises also gained deeper awareness of youth needs, paving the way for more coordinated action.

In Kielce, the diagnosis is already embedded in a larger municipal process that will lead to the development of a youth strategy. In other cities, while strategies have not yet been adopted, the expectation is that the Youth Activity Maps will be used as essential tools for future policy. The partnership thus not only generated immediate knowledge but also positioned municipalities to act more strategically in the years ahead.

At the transnational level, WP2 allowed small and medium-sized towns to exchange experiences and compare data, validating their findings within a European framework. This reinforced the sense that while local contexts differ, the structural challenges are shared and can be addressed more effectively through mutual learning and cooperation.

The process was concluded with an online partners' meeting, where all results were reviewed and synthesised. The most significant achievement of WP2 is the creation of the Youth Activity Maps – comprehensive diagnostic tools that combine statistical evidence, participatory insights, and practical recommendations. These maps will serve as the backbone for future strategies and as instruments for ongoing dialogue between youth, authorities, and civil society. They are both the culmination of the work carried out in WP2 and the starting point for the next stage of building more inclusive, attractive, and youth-friendly towns.

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	28.02.2025	Initial version (new MFF).