LTA **MENTAL HEALTH** IN **YOUTH** WORK

Inspirational Event report



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NAVIGATE THE REPORT

Explore the report by jumping directly to the chapters that interest you most. Each chapter tells a different part of the journey, from the project's origins to the co-creation process, the Inspirational Event, and its key outcomes.

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PREFACE

From priorities to practice: why does this format matter and work?

If you have been following our journey - or are just getting started – you have probably noticed that this process was intentionally designed. We did not just want to organise another event; we wanted to explore what happens when European Youth Programmes (and TCA and NET as their instruments) are used to support long-term cooperation instead of one-off outputs.

When working on complex and sensitive topics such as mental health, 'ready-made' solutions have proven not to systematically work and making a real impact simply takes time. It also requires trust, space to experiment, and the ability to adapt to different local contexts. Thanks to the overall process but also by using TCA and NET, we were able to create that space and treat this work as an ongoing process rather than a single activity.

This was also our way to 'walk the talk' of our posture in and view on youth work. If we advocate for meaningful participation, we need to practise it ourselves. For us, co-creation was therefore not just a concept but an approach that shaped how we worked from the very beginning. Young people were involved early on and had a real influence on both the content and the direction of the Inspirational Event. Their participation was not symbolic, and it directly improved the quality of the work.

Of course, this approach was not easy. It came together with uncertainty, sometimes complex coordination, and obliged everyone involved in the core preparation to rethink more traditional roles and responsibilities. But, as the evaluations show, these were all signs that responsibility and ownership were truly shared and made the work more honest and more relevant.

From the outside, this might seem like a significant investment for a single project. But in fact, we were investing in the conditions that make quality work possible:

- We built relationships and networks that will continue beyond the project itself.
- We created a space where young people felt genuinely responsible for what they were building.
- We tested an approach that others can build on, showing that institutional goals can be met through reflective and collaborative ways of working.

This experience shows that when our methods match our values, the results are not only effective but also sustainable. The real success of the Inspirational Event is not just in its outputs, but also, and perhaps foremost, in the relationships, the shared learning, and the strong case it makes for co-creation as a strategic approach.

PART 1 – HOW IT STARTED

Why does mental health and well-being in youth work matter?



If you were asked that question while having a walk, in a chat with a friend or at work with colleagues, what would you say?

One possible answer is that paying attention to mental health and well-being in youth work really matters because it gives young people - and those working with them - the foundation they need not only to navigate their daily lives, with all their ups and downs, but also to handle the rapid, ever-changing world they are part of. When we start connecting, anchoring, mental health and well-being into everyday youth work, we are not just supporting youth workers and young people in 'tough times' but we are also empowering them - and each other, in fact - to grow stronger and to thrive better. In a very concrete way, this is also about building resilience in young people, for them to be better equipped to deal with uncertainty, stress, and change.

For several years now, and especially since the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health and well-being are no longer marginal or less spoken of concerns in youth work. Instead, both became central pillars of how we support young people in navigating an increasingly complex and anxiety-driven world. Mental health and well-being have also gained importance across youth policy and practice, with a growing acknowledgement that they are deeply connected with young people's ability to flourish socially, emotionally, and professionally. This focus also reflects a broader understanding that resilient young people contribute to a more resilient society – one that is better prepared to face collective challenges rather than simply responding to them when they arise.

Moreover, initiatives of networks and at the institutional level since 2020 have shed light on the urgent need for more systemic support, highlighting the triggers that intensify mental health challenges, such as socioeconomic pressures, climate anxiety, digital overload, and more precarious working conditions, among others. As alarming as they are, those insights also allow us to better map out the existing and needed support systems across Europe to guide policy and practice and give mental health and well-being in youth work the attention and the support it deserves. Therefore, strengthening these support systems is also part of being better prepared as a society, rather than 'only' reacting when crises emerge or escalate.

That is for the context. Now, picture this: a room full of young people, each with their own unique stories, challenges, and dreams. From that perspective, focusing on mental health in youth work is not just a 'policy priority', it is caring for the very core of everything we do. It is when young people feel heard, valued, and supported that change happens. The LTA on Mental Health in Youth Work is therefore more than 'just a project about mental health' for it does aim at creating a space co-designed with young people, to nurture their well-being and empower them to thrive. In other words, it is about creating concrete material but also about honouring young people's stories and building a healthier future together and in doing so, about contributing, in a rather practical way, to a better prepared and more resilient society.

What's the story behind?

In June 2022, the first preparation of this LTA or 'Strategic National Agencies Cooperation' project on Mental Health in Youth Work was launched in Kirkkonummi, Finland. From the start, the aim was to recognise the essential role of youth workers in young people's wellbeing, and to move towards seeing mental health as a positive resource, and not just a challenge.

The start of the project was based on each partner country's preparatory work, which included mapping existing services, resources and materials for mental health in youth work, gathering insights from experts and youth work organisations on young people's real-life needs.

The LTA is structured around four focus areas:

1. Raising awareness, normalising the concept of mental health and promoting it as a positive resource.
2. Development of mental health literacy and competences of youth workers.
3. Enabling youth participation and a peer-to-peer approach in the promotion of mental health.
4. Increase the number of projects dealing with mental health topics in the European Youth Programmes.

The partnership includes National Agencies from Finland, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia and Spain.

One of the important milestones this report will focus on is the 'Inspirational Event', co-created with young people. The first one took place in Portugal in May 2023, which brought together youth workers, young people and NAs representatives to share practices, explore mental-health tools and of course, inspire and enrich their network. More will be said about the 2025 edition in other parts of this report, so do not stop reading now

Since the beginning of the project and up to November 2024 (start of the period mostly dedicated to the 2025 Inspirational Event) the LTA has produced and supported several co-created tools and materials, ranging from clear training modules and programmes, tools, exercises to supporting other initiatives such as the 'ID Talks' (articles, podcasts, visuals) series of SALTO Inclusion and Diversity Resource Centre.

As you can see, and as we prepare for the next chapter, the journey so far is characterised by important dimensions such as co-creation, tools rooted in young people's realities and needs, an emphasis on mind-shifting (from problem-focused to resource-focused), and on building further a rich and inspired/inspiring network of practitioners across Europe and beyond.

Curious to read more about the journey towards the second Inspirational Event? Join us at the next Chapter!

Why focusing on co-creation matters?

Involving young people in a project such as this one is not just a nice principle to mention in documents; it is essential. They are, after all, the ones living the realities the project is trying to address. And no one better than participants could express why co-creation matters, which some had the chance to do through targeted interviews. One of them put it rather clearly: “we as young people don’t have many opportunities to really have a say in a lot of things,” and she found it “really surprising to have that much to say” in shaping the event. Her colleague added that many in her generation feel that “we don’t have the power to change something”, so having a real seat at the table left her feeling “empowered”.

Another participant pointed out something fundamental: young people know firsthand “what works, what can be appealing… what affects them the most in regard to mental health”. Their involvement, she said, is essential if the work is going to be meaningful. This was shared by someone else, explaining that including young people “sets the boundary on what we, young people, want to have in the event”. Some workshop ideas, he said, simply wouldn’t exist without young people who “themselves have gone through it” creating them.

As a final note on co-creation, we can underline another layer: young people often remember mental health struggles more vividly and can express them in ways adults sometimes forget. That’s “why they can express it even better”, said one interviewee.

This understanding that young people must be involved from the beginning, not just consulted at the end, fundamentally shaped everything that followed.

Core Values and principles

- Co-creation
- Youth participation & peer-to-peer
- Mental health as a positive resource
- International cooperation
- Tool-development rooted in needs and practice



The milestones in a snapshot

Timeline

June 2022 — Kick-Off preparatory meeting, Kirkkonummi (Finland)

May 2023 — 1st Inspirational Event, Algarve, Portugal

November 2024 — Start of the preparation of the 2nd Inspirational Event

From December 2024 onwards — Formation of the Co-Creation Crews

March 2025 — Facilitators' Prep Meeting in Ostende, Belgium.

May 2025 — Preparatory Co-Creation LAB, Ostende, Belgium

May - September 2025 — The CCCs and facilitators prepared their workshops.

September 2025 — 2nd Inspirational Event, Sevilla, Spain

Post Inspirational Event — Creation of a Mental Health Guide Book for Mentors in European Solidarity Corps; planning and implementation of the Mental Health Training Module for Youth Workers, mapping of Mental Health in Youth Work projects funded by Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, and partners meeting to plan the remaining period until end of 2027 and post 2028.

PART 2 & 3 - DESIGNING TOGETHER: THE 'CO-CREATION LAB'

At a glance - why does this Chapter matter?

- Because that is where you can sense how the Co-Creation Lab turned ideas into concrete, co-created plans for the September event.
- That is how the process-built trust, shared ownership, and practical ways of working together.
- Everyone present there left more confident and better equipped to design meaningful workshops and a truly Inspirational Event.

From inspiration to design

Following a more restricted team preparatory meeting in November 2024, the Co-Creation Lab represented an important moment in the project, where it began to move from a more general idea and inspiration towards more defined and co-created design work. In short, it was where the intentions became an event design, and where a group of people became a team.

The Co-Creation Lab took place in the seaside city of Ostend, Belgium, from 12 to 16 May 2025. It aimed at shaping the content, structure and working principles of the Mental Health Inspirational Event, and brought together all the different teams: the Co-Creating Crews (hereinafter CCC teams), the facilitation team (in charge of accompanying the CCCs and of developing workshops as well), the core team (in charge of the overall coordination of the Inspirational Event), the communication team - also known as Catching Crew - the rapporteur and the key organisers.

During five days, warmly and gently guided by the facilitators, the participants worked step-by-step through a structured yet flexible process that combined peer exchange, expressive and creative practices, and practical co-design tools, which this part of the report approaches as a collective design phase. All the materials produced - notes, workshop drafts, templates, postcards and evaluations - have therefore been compiled into a hopefully clear, transferable synthesis that can convey how ideas took form and how this phase now feeds directly into implementation.

The Co-Creation Lab

The purpose

As said, the Co-Creation Lab was designed to turn the ideas and inspiration shared so far into a collectively owned design of the Mental Health Inspirational Event. The intentions were to:

- Create a shared understanding of goals and roles.
- Explore mental health realities across different national contexts.
- Equip the Co-Creating Crews with practical design tools.
- Co-create the concepts of the workshops and an overall programme structure for the Inspirational Event.

The programme and flow in a nutshell

The Lab's venues - De Grote Post and the Upstairs Hotel – somehow became the places where everyone worked, talked and settled into the rhythm of the five preparatory days. Five CCC teams joined the facilitation team, moving between moments when everyone gathered, smaller mixed-group sessions, and time set aside for each of the teams to focus on its own creation and coordination. Reflection and evaluation were part of the daily flow rather than separate activities, with the intention to give the group enough space to check in and adjust as needed.

The programme followed a simple format, with each session building on the previous one, creating a feeling of a smooth but steady progression. It naturally began with everyone's arrival and grounding, to get oriented, to (re)connect and slowly get into the work. From there, participants shared their realities and perspectives before finally focusing on looking ahead to what the September event could become. This gradually shifted into hands-on co-design and on the early workshops' drafting process (main ideas). The final part of the LAB focused on gathering what had been created, taking stock of the process, and outlining the steps that would carry the work forward

The methods

Throughout the Lab, the team designed different ways of working together to bring the whole group into a 'smooth, creative designing mood'. The team proposed embodied practices, narrative exercises and participatory methods, alongside more practical co-design tools. Storytelling also played an important role, not so much as a space for personal testimony, but more as a way for participants to connect their current experiences with what they hope to create in the coming months.

Mix methods meant, for instance, grounding and connection exercises that helped to build trust and a sense of equality within the group. Embodied presencing practices, such as The Village (from the Social Presencing Theater approach), invited participants to slow down, to notice what was happening inside and around them, and develop a shared awareness. Narrative postcard stations, starting with "It all started…" and moving toward "…until September", gave the space to describe the journey ahead in a simple but concrete manner, as concrete as the time in the whole process allowed. Guided visualisations invited the participants to imagine the event through sensory details - what it might feel, smell or look like – which helped to clarify the kind of experience the participants wanted to create.

When the different ideas started to emerge, the CCC teams ran, in turn, rounds of workshop testing to explore different possibilities and strengthen their sense of ownership. The team had designed a template to help participants to turn their ideas into formats that could be

taken forward and used as a basis for improvement until September. Finally, a series of appreciative evaluation tools were used to capture the learning, recognise the strengths of the group and the overall format, and to keep attention on what was already working.

Thanks to its location, the Lab allowed participants to walk by the sea, even if the weather was moody at times. The Eurovision Sound Contest and social time added to the general smooth, joyful and inspirational environment.

Throughout those days, the September event was the shared point of reference, a sort of window into the future that everyone could look through together. It acted as a compass, a direction still flexible enough to allow the design work to stay grounded in present realities while being totally open to what would come next.

The atmosphere and the working structure

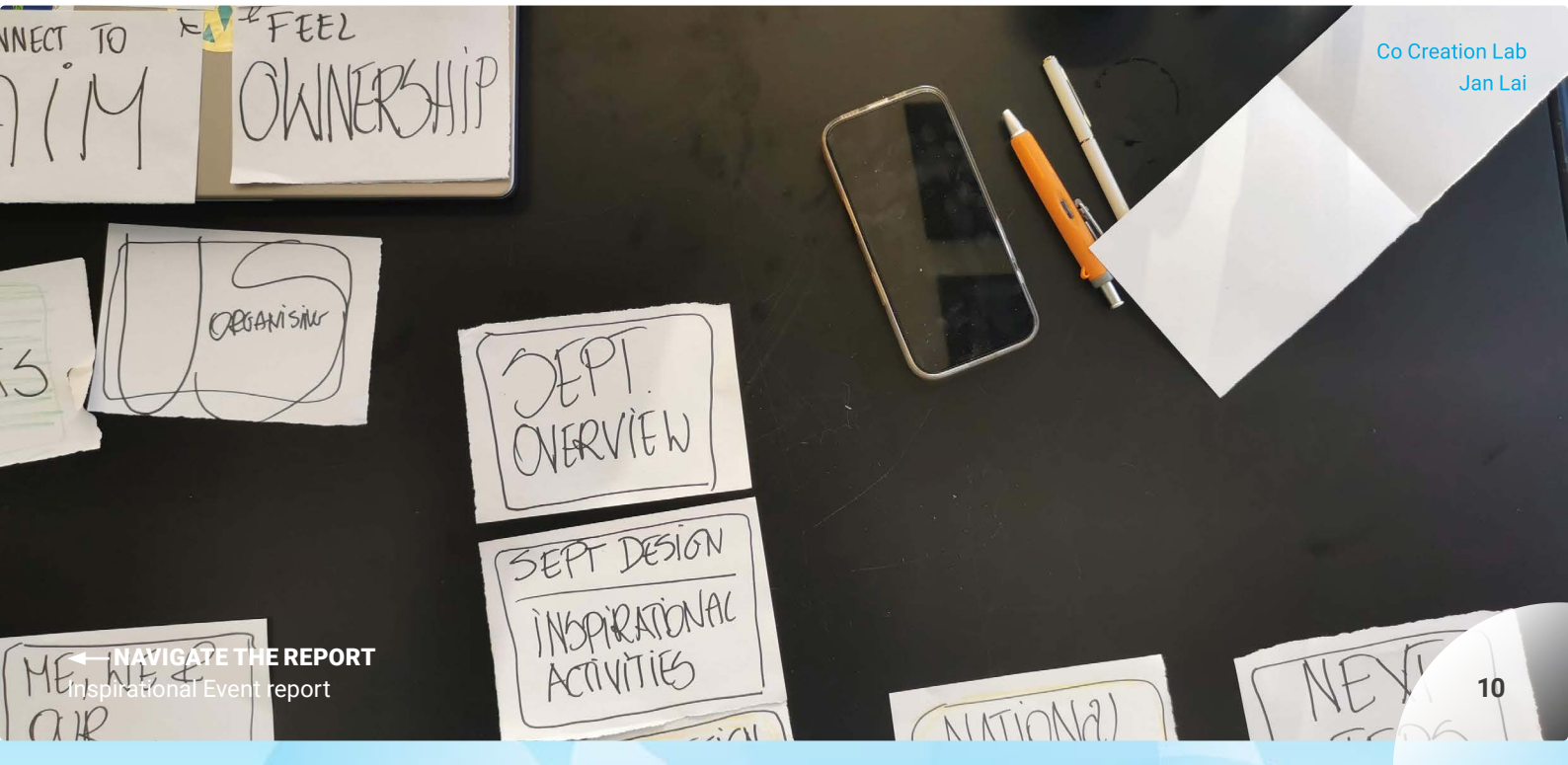
The participants consistently described the Lab atmosphere as warm, trust-based and inclusive. The facilitation balanced clear structure with openness to emergence, allowing all the CCC members to take ownership while feeling supported. Learning-by-doing, peer exchange and informal moments (shared meals, evening activities) reinforced group cohesion and confidence.

Emerging themes

Across the exchanges and the development of the workshops, several cross-cutting themes emerged:

- destigmatisation of mental health and normalising help-seeking;
- agency, empowerment and a sense of control;
- community, connection and not feeling alone;
- inequalities in access to mental health support;
- prevention and early intervention, especially in schools;
- racism and mental health;
- sensory overload and emotional regulation.

These themes directly shaped the content and framing of the co-created workshops.



Co Creation Lab
Jan Lai

Outcomes

Tangible outcomes
Together, we've built real momentum. Highlights include:

- Five CCC-led workshop concepts ready to shine at the September event
- A jointly designed and agreed upon structure of the programme with two workshop rounds and room to adapt as needed.
- A shared workshop design template that all CCCs would be using from then on.
- A clear, coordinated timeline with responsibilities mapped from May through September.
- Fresh engagement ideas designed to make participation easy and inviting for everyone.

Less tangible (perhaps) outcomes
Just as important are the less visible - but equally powerful - results of the Lab collaboration:

- A growing confidence and competences in designing meaningful workshops.
- A shared methodological language that supported thinking and working together more smoothly.
- A stronger peer network that now stretches across countries and teams.
- A design approach to be carried forward and applied to future inspirational events.

Evaluations

From tentative beginnings to moving together

The work toward the Co-Creation Lab began online, through regular meetings over winter and spring. These sessions, supported by the facilitation team, helped to develop the ideas further and the roles to slowly become clearer, even if several things (mostly online meetings) felt rushed. Several people later reflected that there was noy enough space for real exchange, which highlighted the missed potential of the online moments. However, by the time May arrived, there was a shared sense that meeting in person would make a real difference.

And it did! That shift was immediately felt in Ostend. By the end of the Lab, many participants described the experience as 'dancing together', with effort, but also in an attentive, coordinated, and collective 'vibe'. The first days carried some tension, especially given the expectations for the second edition of the Inspirational Event, but the process settled gently and relatively quickly. Compared to the previous edition, this Lab felt smoother and more grounded, with a stronger team spirit and a sense that the group simply worked well together.

For many participants, the experience was both new and surprisingly open.

The feedback voiced and the overall preparation were experienced as truly honest and useful, which supported the programme to grow naturally, almost organically, while leaving space for things to emerge.

Several expressed that they arrived not really clear about what to expect, to find themselves genuinely welcomed and encouraged to speak, propose, and share. The absence of hierarchy was perceivable, participation felt real, and ideas were shared and gathered collectively.

Naturally, that openness also brought moments of uncertainty, especially regarding the roles that remained unclear at the start, in addition to the feeling of responsibility and creative demand that felt challenging at times. Even with social time, the days felt relatively long, and in terms of prior information, the logistics and late information sometimes added pressure. This led to an acknowledgement that the communication could have been clearer.

However, even during those moments, everyone consistently spoke about trust, in the team, in the process, and in each other. Feeling safe made it easier to embrace 'trial and errors', to adjust, and of course, to learn.

In the end, the Co-Creation Lab represented a true testing ground. The first workshop ideas were tried, the ideas refined, the confidence grew, mini training sessions supported the learning, etc. Hence, it is fair to say that being a big group was sometimes complex, but it is also what made the process richer, and what remained a sense of collective ownership and readiness to carry the work forward.

The traces of the collective journey

The Lab ended with a collective reflection using narrative postcards. All participants articulated where the journey started, what shifted during the Lab, and how they envisioned arriving at the Inspirational Event.

Here are some of the statements that illustrate this shared movement:

> **It all started with listening to each other's realities - and realising how much we already had in common.**

> **Somewhere along the way, the ideas stopped being abstract and started feeling possible.**

> **...until September, where we want participants to feel seen, safe and able to act.**

Key takeaways - what do we carry forward?

- That co-creation works when the structure, the approach and the openness are held in
- balance.
- That trust and informal moments matter as much as more formal sessions.
- Having shared tools and 'speaking the same language' (sharing an understanding of what we are talking about) make cooperation easier.
- That the so-called 'September event' became a clear, tangible and common direction, without having everything carved in stone yet (if ever).

PART 4 - FOCUS ON THE CREWS: THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE PROCESS

At a glance – why do the Co-Creating Crews matter?

- The Co-Creating Crews (CCCs) did not just contribute with content; they co-shaped the process, the detection and the structure of the Inspirational Event.
- Their involvement made participation real, and that the process is grounded in their work and their lived experiences.
- Bringing in their perspectives, the CCCs strengthened the project's principles of inclusion, access, and participation, and made their everyday realities visible.
- Youth-led processes and design do strengthen ownership, a sense of belonging, relevance, and trust throughout the project.

And why have them in the first place?

What gave the project its spark - the energy people felt in the room, the emotion that surfaced in unexpected moments - was the presence of the five Co-Creating Crews. They were there from the very beginning, shaping the journey towards the Inspirational Event as it unfolded.

From the first conversations, the CCCs stepped into a space where their ideas really mattered. They explored themes that felt real to them, tested their ideas, challenged each other, and adjusted direction along the way. For many, this was the first time they had been involved in a European project not simply as participants, but as co-authors and, at times, even as participants in their own process.

> **They chose what to work on, shaped the questions, and watched their ideas take form.**

That early involvement completely impacted the dynamic. Instead of simply 'taking part', the CCCs began to feel responsible for what they were building. They cared about the outcome because they had helped define the path. Through working together- and sometimes stepping outside their comfort zones - they developed a strong sense of ownership, thanks to the experience of being listened to and taken seriously.

Of course, trust played a key role, as did the relationships that had already started to grow during the co-creation LAB. Even brief moments to laugh, rest, or simply spend time together helped create an atmosphere where people felt safe enough to speak honestly and try new things. And in that kind of space, creativity came naturally. The workshops that emerged were grounded in lived experience and shaped by those who understood the realities they wanted to address.

These five CCCs did more than design workshops; they set the tone of the event, gave real meaning to the principle of co-creation, and helped to create a sense of belonging that stayed with people long after the programme ended. In doing so, the CCCs also gave

concrete meaning to two principles that are perhaps easy to state but harder to put into practice: genuine youth participation and inclusion. Not as boxes to tick, but as ways of working that visibly shaped what the event became.

The following vignettes introduce - as faithfully as possible - the people behind these crews, the ideas they carried, and the care they brought into the heart of the co-creation process.

“I am so proud of you” said Paavo, the coordinator, at the end of the Co-Creation Lab. And he was not alone; we all were, and the CCCs themselves shared that pride - in some cases, perhaps even beyond what they had expected.

Who’s behind those three letters?



Czech Republic - When the world is too much

Workshop: Sensory Hangover
Theme: Overstimulation, self-awareness, grounding, care

The Czech CCC is connected to Nevypusť duši, an established NGO providing preventive mental-health education in schools and universities across the country. The crew was made up of students of psychology, pedagogy, and medicine, many of whom already facilitate workshops for younger peers.

Through their work in schools and internal reflection, the group noticed a recurring theme: many young people feel constantly overstimulated - by noise, expectations, screens, social pressure - yet lack language and tools to recognise or regulate it.

Their workshop invited participants into a carefully framed sensory experience that simulates overstimulation, followed by body-based reflection, small-group sharing, and relaxation. Creative tools such as tactile objects and visual mapping helped to make internal sensations visible and discussable.



Finland - Making the invisible visible

Workshop: Racism's Impact on Mental Health

Theme: Discrimination, mental health, social context, solidarity

The Finnish crew is supported by SAMHA ry, an organisation working with young people from migrant backgrounds through peer support, counselling, and culturally sensitive mental-health services. The group included young adults aged 18–23 who have prior experience in support circles and bring lived knowledge of migration, racism, and systemic barriers.

From their very first meetings, the group framed mental health not only as an individual issue, but as something deeply shaped by social structures. Through discussion and research planning, they identified racism - particularly in school environments - as a major but often invisible factor affecting young people's mental well-being.

Their workshop was structured around a simulation-based psychological game, where participants stepped into roles inspired by real experiences and research. This was followed by guided small-group reflection, allowing participants to process emotional responses and connect them to real-life situations.



France - Nothing about us without us

Workshop: Find Your Umbrella
Theme: Mental-health awareness, emotional literacy, peer support

The French CCC was supported by Nightline France, a student-led organisation offering anonymous night-time listening services and large-scale mental-health awareness actions. The crew consisted of five university students from different cities, many of them studying psychology or already experienced in peer support and volunteering.

Although they did not know each other at the start, the group quickly bonded around shared values: confidentiality, care, and empowerment. Their guiding principle - "Nothing about us without us" - shaped both their process and their workshop design.

Their workshop used an escape-game format where participants move through five themed stations related to mental health (emotions, stigma, communication, self-care). Each activity offers a 'clue' and only by collaborating could participants unlock the final message and their metaphorical umbrella - a symbol of shared protection and resilience.

Lithuania - Co-creating through music and emotion



Workshop title: How does a feeling sound?
Theme: Emotions, music, collective expression, well-being

The Lithuanian CCC brought together young people from two municipalities - a village and a municipal centre - supported by youth workers deeply embedded in local youth policy and mental-health initiatives. The group included students finishing secondary school and young adults who have already spent years engaging in youth councils, school leadership, scouting, and community-based mental-health actions.

What connected them is a shared curiosity about emotions and how young people experience stress, pressure, and connection in everyday life. Through local research involving over 200 peers, they identified music as one of the strongest coping strategies for mental well-being - especially when experienced collectively.

Their workshop transformed emotions into sound, rhythm, and movement. Using everyday objects, group performances, and reflection, the participants explored how the same emotion can 'sound' differently for each person.

Norway - Small steps on the road to well-being



Workshop: The Road (for Better Mental Health)
Theme: Practical tools, everyday well-being, peer learning

The Norwegian crew came from Mental Helse Ungdom, a national, youth-led organisation working to make mental health support visible, accessible, and stigma-free. The participants are members of the organisation's Youth Council, representing different regions of Norway and bringing diverse lived experiences, including neurodiversity.

From the beginning, the group focused on a simple but powerful question: What actually helps in everyday life? Rather than expert-driven solutions, they wanted to collect and exchange small, realistic tools that young people can use immediately.

Their workshop was designed as a game-based journey inspired by the "Five Ways to Wellbeing." Participants moved through stations, completed light physical or reflective tasks, and shared tips with one another. The emphasis was on accessibility, choice, and fun - with all activities being optional and adaptable.

What did we learn through the CCCs?

The learning that emerged from the CCCs did not lie only in the workshops they delivered but also in the way those workshops were imagined, shaped, and held by young people themselves.

For many participants, it was the first time mental health was explored in a way that felt close to their own live: not simplified, not overly clinical, and not detached from everyday experience.

Getting to know our emotions better

Across all CCC workshops, emotions have been seen as something to explore. Music, movement, art, sensory activities, and playful exercises helped participants to tune into what they were feeling and where those feelings showed up in their bodies. Instead of being told what emotions 'should' be, participants were rather invited to notice them, compare experiences, and see how differently a same moment can resonate for different people. This made the 'emotional diversity' feel normal (or even expected) and lifted a bit the pressure to have to react in a certain way.

From the feedback collected, many people left with a clearer sense of their own emotional signals, especially around stress, overload, safety, and calm, and with a new curiosity about how others experience the same emotions.

Seeing mental health as something more than an individual issue

The reminder that mental health does not exist in isolation was one of the strong messages running through all the CCC-led workshops. Indeed, the CCCs consistently brought attention to the wider context: relationships, belonging, identity, discrimination, and expectations. Workshops on racism, overstimulation, or participation supported showing how mental health is shaped by the environments people move through and in every day (schools, communities, organisations, societies, etc). The participants reflected on how exclusion, lack of recognition, or constant pressure can quietly wear people down.

The focus shifted from 'what's wrong with individuals' to 'what needs to change around them.'

Taking practical ways to cope back home

The CCCs offered tools that participants could actually use, such as breathing exercises, grounding techniques, creative expression, sensory regulation, reflection prompts, and other sorts of easy routines that were presented as options. As often, the participants liked the idea of a 'toolbox' rather than more abstract messages or findings. Understanding that what helps one person might not help another was a strongly encouraged way to view and value singularity and being able to choose, adapt, or skip activities reinforced a sense of autonomy and safety.

Growth, confidence, and pride among CCC members

For the CCC members, the learning was probably more personal and profound than initially expected. The fact that to design and facilitate workshops meant taking responsibility, navigating uncertainty, and trusting their own ideas. Several shared that it was one of the first times they felt genuinely trusted in a European-level process. Their ideas were not just heard but they shaped the content, the methods, and, undoubtedly, the atmosphere of the event.

It is fair to say that this strengthened their confidence, their facilitation skills, and their sense of agency, in addition to deepening their belief that young people deserve a real place in conversations about mental health.

A real sense of community

Across all CCC workshops, the participants often spoke about feeling welcomed and connected and the mixed groups of young people, youth workers, and other professionals created spaces where being present mattered more than the roles and 'positions' themselves. Meaningful moments such as laughing together, creating together, feeling discomfort together and finding coping mechanisms together were described as energising and reassuring, being sort of reminders that no one is carrying their struggles alone.

Youth-led methodologies: what made the difference

The CCCs did not all follow a single and similar method and what they opted for was an approach rooted in their experience, care, and shared responsibility.

Most of the workshops began with 'doing' (experimenting) rather than 'talking'. Participants have been invited to move, to listen, to play or to feel before being asked to reflect. This made learning more accessible, especially around topics that are hard to put into words. Those experiences stayed with people longer than inputs or definitions, and the exchanges felt more honest because they were grounded in something everyone had just lived through.

Safety was not a simple check to tick and the CCCs were very careful to apply that principle through explaining what would happen, offering choices, and reminding people they could step back at any time. This allowed everyone to engage at their own rhythm, making deeper conversations possible without pushing anyone beyond their limits.

Games, humour, creativity, and imagination were all parts of the approaches chosen by most teams and playfulness made it easier to share and to feel safe. It also reminded participants that joy, connection, and lightness are part of mental health too.

The facilitators did not present themselves as experts. They shared space, experiences, and sometimes uncertainty with their CCC members and the youth workers and worked side by side. This horizontal approach supported building trust and made participation feel genuine and real rather than symbolic.

With the support of their facilitators, the CCCs could care about what was happening in the room - the energy, the engagement, the listening – more than the results as such. The success was often felt in moments of connection and recognition and such focus on process over outcome aligned naturally with mental health principles: slowing down, paying attention, and valuing people over performance.

Key takeaways - what does this Chapter tell us?

- That meaningful participation happens when young people are fully involved in shaping decisions, formats and contents, and not just activities.
- That youth-led processes strengthen ownership, belonging, confidence, and relevance for the project.
- That inclusion is not only about who is invited or is around the table soto say, but about those whose realities and voices tangibly shape the content.
- That lived experiences do bring depth and credibility to mental health-related work.
- That trust, care, and horizontal ways of working are much more than 'nice extras' to working principles; they do make participation possible.

PART 5 – THE INSPIRATIONAL EVENT

From design to implementation

The Inspirational Event marked the transition from an entire co-creation process into a true lived experience. Five international Co-Creating Crews (CCCs) worked with the organising team to design the programme, shaping its main themes and its format, in addition to their workshops. The event then brought young people and youth workers together to put this work into action through peer-to-peer learning moments, open and practical exchanges. In addition to the CCCs' and facilitators' workshops, participants were invited to bring their own inspiration by sharing workshops, methods or approaches from their own professional or organisational contexts. The event created space to explore mental health in youth work, reflect on young people's needs and take away ideas that could be adapted in different contexts.

At a glance- why does this Chapter matter?

This is where months of co-creation turned into a shared, lived experience.
Young people were not just present at the event, but they shaped it and led key parts of it.
The event created space for honest conversations about mental health, grounded in real experiences.

Participation here was not symbolic: young people had real influence over the content and the process.



The Inspirational Event

Who was the event for and with?

In a few words and based on the above, we can say that the inspirational event was...

For and with young people, to

- Have a say in how mental health is addressed in youth work.
- Take part in peer-to-peer learning, lively discussions and shared exploration of the topic.
- Learn how to offer peer support - or get inspired to promote mental health in their community.

For and with youth workers, to

- Exchange with other professionals and gain practical skills for supporting young people's well-being.
- Deepen the understanding of young people's needs and reflect on their role in promoting mental health.

If we had to tell you what it was like, what would we say?

It is pretty hard to answer that question with a word that would represent everything the inspirational event was, beyond 'amazing!'. And it is hard to narrow it down to a single moment, because it felt like something that had been building for a long time. And it was. It took eleven months of reflection, creation, try-outs, adjustments, calls, preparation, briefings, meetings and here we are! By now and if you have read other parts of the report, you know that among a whole big team, twenty-five young people from Czech Republic, France, Finland, Lithuania, and Norway had been working in their own crews for months, and when they finally came together, it did not feel at all like a 'one shot'; it felt both as a continuation and a culmination.

They had designed the programme themselves. They had chosen the themes. They argued about them. They tested ideas that didn't work and kept the ones that did. Each group brought a workshop on mental health, not necessarily as experts (though it often felt like it) but as peers, as people who had spent time thinking and grasping about what actually matters, and how to talk about it without pretending that it is easy.

One person described the challenge as trying to make something "accessible, funny and dynamic - but still academic". That line stayed with us, because it captured the tone of the whole event. Somehow as something serious, but not heavy, or thoughtful, but not distant. You could feel the effort behind every choice.

Some moments were smooth. Others were messy. At one point, someone talked about support and said: "Just let them be. If they want to run wild in a forest, let them run" and it was not meant to be just an image; it was said as a reminder that young people do not always need fixing - sometimes they just need space, and someone nearby who will not disappear.

Another thing that kept coming up was care. Not much as a repeated motto but very practically. "If you don't take care of yourself, you can't really take care of others," one participant said. And then someone else added, almost casually, that everyone has mental health anyway - whether we talk about it or not. Hence, looking back, that is perhaps what the event did best. It did not deal with mental health as a separate topic but as something already present in the room. Talking about it openly simply made it feel less fragile, less taboo.

It is fair to say that when the event ended, there wasn't a sense of closure but more of a movement. People left with ideas, unfinished conversations, and a clearer sense that these discussions do not belong only in projects or workshops. They belong in everyday youth work, and in how people show up for each other.

If we had to say why the whole adventure and the way it was approached mattered, we could say this: the event worked because young people were not participating. They were trusted with it, and we believe that everyone could feel the difference.

Curious to see a bit more of this? You can watch the video of the event here!

What did we do? - The programme

Arrival and welcome

The Inspirational Event started smoothly, giving people time to arrive, check in and get a feeling of the space. A few informal, self-guided activities and a relaxed welcome evening have been organised, which helped everyone to gently get into the topic of mental health, without pressure. It was also a way for the participants to reconnect or to meet each other, find their way into the event and start connecting at their own pace.

Day 1

Opening and grounding

The first morning was the opportunity to gather everyone for an opening session that did allow to set out the aims, values and the co-creation spirit behind the event. A mix of getting-to-know-each-other activities and team-building moments supported creating a sense of safety and openness in the group.

Unpacking mental health

The focus slowly shifted to mental health itself. Through guided discussions and creative exercises, the participants were invited to explore the topic as something concrete and present in everyday life, which helped to build a shared understanding that participants would carry into the next days.

Co-created workshops

In the afternoon, the CCCs took the lead for their workshops representing the main part of the programme. They took place in parallel and offered hands-on learning and peer-to-peer exchange around different mental health themes (see the 'Annexes' and the 'Focus on the crews' part for more detailed information).

Share, Inspire, Network (SIN)

Later, the space for the SINs opened up. Contrary to what their acronym might represent, the SINs were informal, open areas where participants could share their own ideas, practices and experiences connected to mental health in youth work.

Informal and evening activities

Day 1 ended with optional evening activities, relaxed spaces for creativity, conversation or simply slow down after a full programme.

Day 2

Open learning spaces

Day 2 offered a range of other facilitated learning spaces which focused on practical tools and approaches for supporting mental health in youth work. The sessions were tailored to different groups: young people, youth workers and mixed teams, which gave participants the freedom to choose what they needed most.

Co-created workshops (continued)

Another round of the CCCs' workshops followed, giving people the chance to explore a topic they could not take part in the day before, or to try something completely new.

Mental health futures

While the event slowly reached its end, it was time to look at the future. The participants were invited to reflect on what they had learned and to explore how these insights could shape their work going forward.

Reflection, evaluation and closing

The Inspirational Event wrapped up with a collective reflection and evaluation. It was a moment to look back on the shared experience, acknowledge everyone's contributions and bring the process to a meaningful close, ending with a silent disco!



You prefer to have a visualisation? Here it is!

ARRIVAL DAY 23.09.25	DAY 1 24.09.25 TUE	DAY 2 25.09.25 WED	DEPARTURE 26.09.25
	UNTIL 9.00 BREAKFAST		
	09.30 Morning session 1 Event opening Getting to know people	09.30 Morning session 1 Day opening Open Learning Spaces to Inspire Mental Health and Youth Work	
Participants arrival	11.00 - 11.30 BREAKFAST		
Registration	11.30 Morning session 2 Team building Unpacking "Mental Health"	11.30 Morning session 2 Parallel contributions on Mental Health by young people	Participants departure
Optional activities at the venue for early arrivals	13.00 - 15.00 BREAKFAST		
	15.00 Afternoon session 3 Parallel contributions on Mental Health by young people	15.00 Afternoon session 3 Mental Health Futures - Share, inspire, network for Mental Health and Youth Work	

	16.30 - 17.00 COFFEE & SNACKS		
Participants arrival **Registration** **Optional activities at the venue for early arrivals**	**17.00** **Afternoon session 4** **Mental Health Now - Share, inspire, network for Mental Health and Youth Work**	**17.00** **Afternoon session 4** **Evaluation and goodbye rituals** **Closing**	**Participants departure**
	18.00 **Free time and informal activities**	**18.00** **Free time and informal activities**	
19.30 DINER	**19.30 DINER**	**19.30 DINER**	
21.00 **Welcome evening**	**21.00** **Evening activities (optional)**	**21.00** **Evening activities (optional)**	

You can have a look at the Annexes if you want to read more about the different sessions and workshops.

More than a topic, mental health as a shared space

The Inspirational Event opened with a question of purpose, with a simple but still, important question: why does mental health matter in youth work? And this set the tone of the event. From the very beginning, the message was clear: mental health is not a crisis topic, it is not something to hide, it is not a taboo. It is part of being human, it is part of all of us, and it is something that deserves space in our conversations, in youth work, and of course, in our everyday lives.

The start of the event was also the opportunity to shed light on the reality many youth workers face. Their role often goes way beyond their 'job description'. They are listeners, guides, first responders to emotions and experiences that do not fit into a defined checklist. To be able to carry such responsibilities, they need confidence, they need to feel empowered rather than isolated, and they need tools that help them support young people with care and clarity, and within explicit limits.

At the heart of the inspirational event and as repeatedly underlined in this report, was one defining principle: co-creation. This was not an event built for young people but built with them and that distinction changed everything for it meant handing over real influence, real decision-making power, and real trust in young people as co-creators. The process had begun months earlier, when the five CCCs gathered in Belgium. And it continued when others proposed to share a practice, lead a session or host a space to explore together, as peers. Yes, there was an organising team. But it is the young people who decided how mental health should be explored. Therefore, co-creation, in this context, meant creating a space where young people were not just heard but taken seriously.

For many, the experience was transformative. Some participants, and especially the members of the co-creating crews, initially expected a sort of brief consultation, a formal request for ideas. But instead, they found themselves at the centre of the process, building something from the ground and that level of trust completely changed the atmosphere.

As they said, the event became theirs not in name, but in spirit. And of course, there was stress when stepping in front of 140 participants but there was also confidence thanks to months of shared preparation and a space where everyone could be held with care.

Representatives of the INJUVE, the hosting National Agency, also reflected on the significance of this approach. Across Europe, mental health is a priority, but priorities only become meaningful when they are rooted in truly listening. Here, the participants were encouraged to speak openly, connect with one another, take breaks when needed – even if the event was packed - and use the space in whatever way that felt right. And in the end, we know that our work is the strongest when done with young people, not simply for them.

What did they say?

We had the chance to carry out a few interviews during the event and what stayed with people was not one single moment, but a shared sense of surprise. Several young people spoke about arriving with the assumption that the programme would already be fixed, and then realising that it wasn't. As one young participant put it, "I thought the programme would already be decided but instead, we were shaping it!" For another, that shift translated into something deeper: "For the first time, I felt empowered. I felt like someone really wanted to hear my voice."

Again and again, they returned to why this mattered, as stated during the opening of the event: "We are the ones who live these experiences. We know what really affects young people when it comes to mental health." That lived knowledge was not treated as an addition to the process, but as one of its foundations. A member of a CCC pointed out that "some workshops simply wouldn't exist" without young people who had actually been through what was being discussed. This was also seen from another angle, noting that young people often carry these experiences very clearly, and "that's why they can express them even better."

The feeling of being heard was expressed many times and described in concrete terms. One person talked about being involved in all sorts of decisions, large and small: "the programme, what we wanted to do, even the colours." Another described the feeling with a single sentence: "My voice felt the same size as everyone else's." And at some point, roles in the wider team stopped being visible. As one interviewee said, "we were here to help each other".

While it started with the earlier preparation, the impact of the approach and process became most visible during the event itself and several interviewees described the moment when they saw participants engage, asking questions, taking part, making the space their own. For one person, that was the most rewarding part: seeing something they had built begin to live, to take shape beyond or despite them.

They all had moments of doubt, fears of getting or doing it wrong. But those moments were held within a supportive environment. One participant spoke about realising that even stumbling was acceptable, that everyone was there "on the same terms", adding a thought that felt like recognition: "Sometimes things don't go well. Take small steps, and don't be afraid to take some steps back. All your scars have built you."

Taken together, all these voices describe more than a successful event. They describe a process where mental health was approached not as a topic to be tackled or delivered, but as something shared and shaped through trust, responsibility and the space to speak honestly.

As this journey ends, what remains is…



Stella's input at the beginning of the event

Stella opened the event with a deeply personal story about heartbreak. Her idea was not to talk about relationships, but to show how overwhelming emotions can feel when you are young and how easily adults forget that intensity. She spoke about losing herself in someone else, about the pain that followed, and about the slow, difficult process of rebuilding, or reconnecting. It is fair to say that what stayed with the room was not just her vulnerability, but the clarity of her message: young people need to be listened to. They do not need to be dismissed, or to be told that they are "too young to understand"; they need to be genuinely heard in the moments when their world feels like it's falling apart. With her story, with her words, Stella reminded everyone that healing begins with being taken seriously, and that no relationship, no mistake, and no moment of crisis define a young person's worth. Her story was ultimately about finding your way back to yourself and about the power of having someone who truly listens to you while you do.



Blackout poetry

Do you know what blackout poetry is?

Many of us did not, until the 'Catchy Crew' (the creative communication team), Hilma and Laura, accompanied us in this wonderful discovery. A lot in the event and in its preparation was about sharing stories. Here is one way to create one.

Blackout poetry starts with something already written. A page of text. An article. A paragraph that was not meant to be a poem at all. You read it, slowly, and begin to notice which words stand out, resonate, get into you. The rest is crossed out, covered, erased (I like to think about that as having them 'reserved'). What remains is what wants to be said.

In the moment dedicated to blackout poetry, it became less about writing and more about listening - to the page, and to yourself. The participants didn't need to find the right words; they only needed to recognise the ones that felt true. By removing what wasn't needed, something personal emerged. Sometimes quiet, sometimes sharp, sometimes unexpected.

Maybe for some, it offered distance. Or calmness. Maybe for others, it meant permission. Sometimes, mental health can be a hard topic to speak about directly, and blackout poetry allows people to approach it sideways - shaping meaning without having to explain everything. Often, what was left on the page said enough. And don't hesitate to look on the other side of the page. Sometimes, other words emerge. You might be surprised…

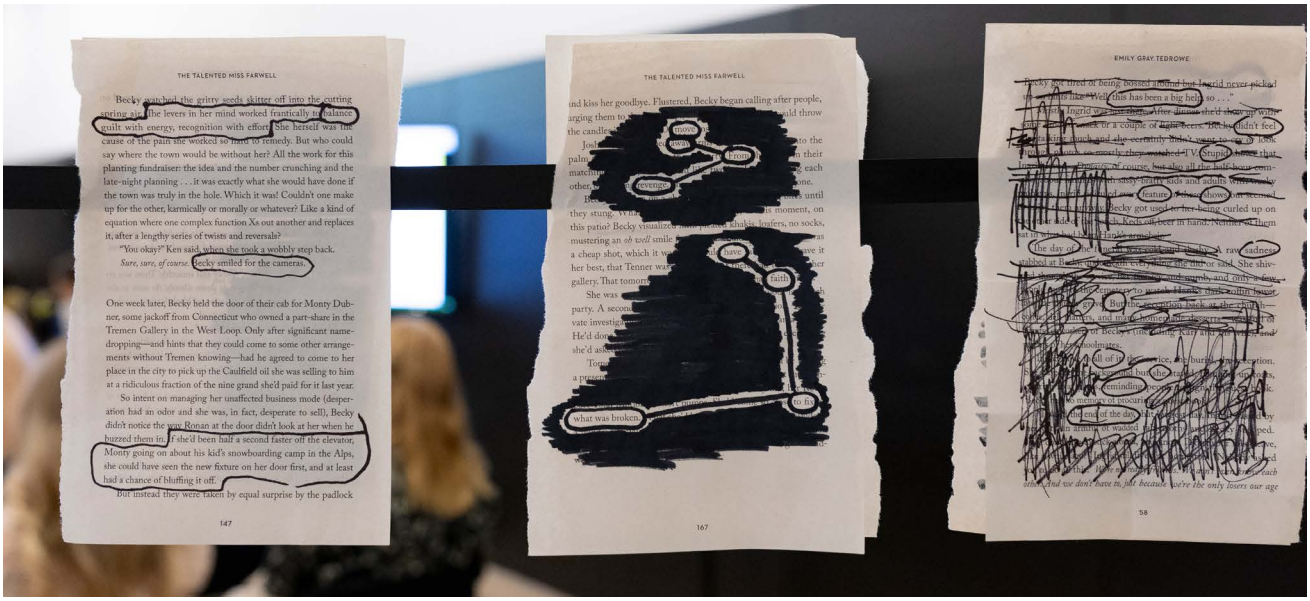
Defining inspiration

It might sound easy, but have you tried?

Here is what Susie, part of the organising team, said about it: “Inspiration is what can give you energy, help you do the normal things better, lift you up, move you, and give you motivation… We hope that these days you really feel inspired, gain fresh perspectives, sense the same problems but in different ways, and feel part of a community. We hope that someone’s powerful story will touch you, help you, and make you think. And we hope that this collective connection and buzz will create something exciting.”

And for you?

If you read all this, if you read the other parts of the report, saw the pictures, the video, and especially if you were there, what still resonates today?



Key takeaways - what do we carry forward?

- Co-creation works! And it works best when young people are heard, trusted with real responsibility, and not just invited to contribute.
- In such a context and project’s format and approach, mental health felt less like a ‘topic’ and much more like a shared space young people can step into together.
- Youth and peer-led processes and activities made the learning experience so rich, much more relevant, accessible, and grounded.
- Care, trust, space and choice contributed to shaping the atmosphere as much as the programme did.
- What everyone seemed to have taken home went way beyond tools and methods; they left with a sense that all the conversations they had belonged in everyday youth work. They left with a sense of community, and they left with a sense that ‘this is possible’.

PART 7 – THE BIG TEAM BEHIND THE INSPIRATIONAL EVENT

Projects like this and in it, events such as the inspirational one do not just happen. They get alive because a whole group of people engage in them with passion, creativity, interest and a true sense of care. From those taking care that everything is running as smoothly as possible to the ones capturing moments, holding space, and building content together, everyone has a unique, essential role to play. This part is for the big team who made it all happen and made it meaningful!

The core team

The core team ensured the cohesion of the wider team, managed (and when needed juggled) deadlines, answered countless questions, and steered the overall process, including the final inspirational event. A huge thank you to them for holding it all together!

- Jan Lai
- Nerijus Kriaučiūnas
- Susie Nicodemi



The facilitators

This work would not have been possible without the team of facilitators. They supported the co-creating crews throughout their design process and, on top of that, organised and delivered workshops during the final event. We are deeply grateful for their dedication, care, and support.

- Árpád Bárnai
- Buzz Bury
- Dagna Gmitrowicz
- Réka Szigeti
- Eliza Zadluzna

The Catchy Crew

It requires talent and creativity to handle the communication around the SNAC and at the same time, to gently catch the mood, vibes and atmosphere in the room, and propose experimenting with selfies and book pages. It also requires care to be ready to share and co-create the way they did. A bit thanks to our Catchy Crew!

- Laura Mellanen
- Hilma Ruokolainen

The first aid duo

An inspirational event on Mental Health in youth work had to have a duo whom to turn to in case of distress or in need of a bit more care. A warm thank you to our two lovely angels!

- Noemí Belmonte Sanz
- Diego Miguel Marín Romera

The Co-Creating Crews

Five wonderful Co-Creating Crews (CCCs) were involved from the very beginning, shaping the journey towards the Inspirational Event and running the workshops they developed. Thanks to them, we were able to truly put the principle of co-creation into practice.

Czech Republic

- Ema Řezníčková
- Aneta Preisslerová
- Adéla Urbánková
- Michaela Barešová
- Sara Monetti

Finland

- Stella Torkamand
- Lina Dreshaj
- Emir Kaytan
- Enni Wahe

France

- Pia Choutet
- Emma Säkkinen
- Grace Kabokola
- Aurore Hulin-Mocca

Lithuania

- Eivė Rimkutė
- Altėja Deimona Palšytė
- Neda Baukytė
- Eva Šimkutė

Norway

- Annbjørg Laugerud Skaug
- Markus Bjørkelund Strand
- Liam J. Oddekalv
- Mats Antonsen

Curious to know more? Have a look at the part of the report 'Focus on the crews: the people behind the process'

The photographers

You may have seen the photos, the video, or the social media posts, and all those moments were captured by our amazing media team. Thanks for preserving the atmosphere, energy, and memories of the event so beautifully!

- Javier Esquivias, Pasolargo Audiovisual
- Quintina Valero

The rapporteur

And as every event comes with a report, this one was in the hands of:

- Gisele Evrard

The organisers and the partners

Host and organisers

The inspirational event would not have been possible the way it was without the support and engagement of the host National Agency, INJUVE, and the following colleagues:

- Maria Cortes Luna Redondo
- Paula González Curiel
- Ana Perez Trueba

Beyond the host, several National Agencies were involved in developing the project, with many more acting as partners within the SNAC. They were the driving force behind the idea and its implementation. A warm thank you to all of them!

Involved in the preparation, we had:

- Paavo Pyykkönen, Finnish NA, Coordinator of the SNAC
- Karoliina Nissinen, Finnish NA and Project Coordinator
- Clara Ghio, French NA
- Yannick De Schaepmeester, Belgium-Flanders NA
- Barbora Schmiedová, Czech NA

In addition to them, many colleagues joined the event and took an active role in it:

- Salomé Abbou, French NA
- Laura Caune, Latvian NA
- Tony Geudens, SALTO Inclusion & Diversity (youth)
- Lea Heuschen, Belgium German-speaking Community NA
- Gry Nesse, Norwegian NA
- Markéta Pica Murgová, Czech NA
- Kevin Verborgt, Belgium Flanders NA

Partners

And last but not least, here are all the partners in the LTA: Belgium Flemish-speaking Community Belgium French-speaking Belgium German-speaking Community, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, and Türkiye, as well as SALTO Inclusion and Diversity.

And of course, a huge thank you to all the other participants!! Eighty-four persons from twenty-one countries made this Inspirational Event unforgettable

PART 8 – ANNEXES: WORKSHOPS AND OTHER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Co-Creating Crews workshops

How does a feeling sound?

CCC: Lithuania

Purpose

To explore emotions through music, sound, and collective creativity, and to reflect on how feelings are experienced differently by each person.

Short description

This interactive workshop invited participants to translate emotions into sound. Through music sharing, group composition, and performance, participants explored how emotions such as joy, fear, anger, sadness, and calm can be expressed without words and understood collectively.

Notes from participants / observers

- Participants selected songs they associate with specific emotions and shared personal reflections.
- In small groups, participants created short melodies representing emotions, which others were guessing.
- Performances highlighted how the same feeling can be expressed in very different ways.
- Group discussions followed, reflecting on how music evokes diverse emotional responses.
- Participants found it enriching to discuss music and emotions with people they had just met.
- Key insight: emotions are universal, but their expression and interpretation are deeply personal.

Racism's impact on mental health

CCC: Finland

Purpose

To raise awareness of how racism affects mental health and to make visible the emotional and structural impact of privilege and discrimination.

Short description

Using an embodied simulation (take a step forward) and structured reflection, participants stepped into fictional roles and experienced how unequal opportunities shape emotional well-being, belonging, and self-worth.

Notes from participants / observers

- The session began by establishing a strong safe space, including the option to leave at any time.
- Participants took part in a role-based 'take a step forward' exercise.
- Statements related to identity, opportunity, and belonging shaped participants' positions in the room.

- Opening their eyes revealed visible inequality, prompting strong emotional responses.
- Group reflections explored links between racism, exclusion, and mental health.
- Participants described the experience as painful, familiar, and confronting.
- The session ended with collective slogans promoting self-acceptance and equity.
- Key insight: feeling connected and belonging is essential for mental well-being; discrimination affects all areas of life.

Sensory hangover

CCC: Czech Republic

Purpose

To help participants understand overstimulation, recognise its physical and emotional impact, and learn practical coping strategies.

Short description

This immersive workshop simulated sensory overload and guided participants through reflection, body awareness, and grounding techniques. The session combined experiential learning with practical mental-health tools.

Notes from participants / observers

- Participants explored personal meanings of overstimulation through image cards.
- Facilitators simulated overstimulation using noise, visuals, interruptions, and tasks (e.g. sudoku).
- Participants marked physical sensations on wool dolls to identify where overstimulation was felt in the body.
- Small-group discussions focused on daily-life triggers and coping strategies.
- The workshop introduced short-term grounding techniques and long-term prevention strategies.
- Relaxation and breathing exercises were practiced collectively.
- Trigger warnings and opt-out options supported emotional safety.
- Key insight: identifying bodily signals of overstimulation is essential for self-regulation.

The Road

CCC: Norway

Purpose

To make conversations about mental health and well-being accessible through play, movement, and shared experience.

Short description

Designed as a life-sized board game, The Road invited participants to move through tasks inspired by the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' combining reflection, action, and humour in mixed groups.

Notes from participants / observers

- Participants played in mixed groups of young people, youth workers, and NA representatives.
- Tasks covered connection, movement, learning, reflection, and care.
- Groups could choose between tasks, supporting autonomy and emotional safety.
- Activities ranged from playful movement to deeper reflection (e.g. crisis plans).
- Gamification reduced fear around mental-health conversations.
- Participants appreciated the freedom to skip tasks if they felt uncomfortable.
- Suggestions included adding clearer game endings and more inter-group interaction.
- Key insight: play creates safe entry points into serious topics.

Find your umbrella
CCC: France

Purpose
To support emotional literacy, self-care, and stigma reduction through a collaborative and playful learning experience.

Short description
Structured as an escape-game-style journey, participants moved through five interactive stations focused on emotions, self-care, communication, and mental-health awareness, gradually uncovering a shared message.

Notes from participants / observers
- Five stations included drawing emotions, self-care charades, stigma challenges, word puzzles, and case studies.
- Famous personalities were used to challenge stereotypes around mental health.
- Active listening and supportive communication were practiced through role-play.
- The final message introduced the RAIN method for emotional awareness and self-compassion.
- Participants appreciated the diversity of methods and strong facilitation.
- The session balanced humour, depth, and structure effectively.
- Key insight: there are many valid ways to care for mental health, and stigma can be actively dismantled.

Workshops and learning spaces proposed by facilitators

Psychological first aid in youth work
By Árpád Bárnai

Purpose
To introduce Psychological First Aid as a practical, non-therapeutic approach for supporting people in distress, particularly in youth-work contexts.

Short description
The session provided participants with a clear framework for responding to distress, focusing on immediate needs, safety, connection, and hope. It highlighted the role of youth workers as first responders rather than therapists.

Notes from participants / observers
- Psychological First Aid can be provided by non-professionals with appropriate training.
- Psychological First Aid focuses on practical assistance rather than therapy.
- Core aims: reducing distress, mitigating stress impact, processing events, and connecting to support.
- The role of the helper follows four steps: Look – Listen – Link – Follow up.
- Five key elements of Psychological First Aid: safety, calming, self-efficacy, connection, and hope.
- Emphasis on normalising bodily stress reactions and avoiding minimisation.
- Participants highlighted the importance of respecting the person's choices and autonomy.
- Helpers should first ensure their own emotional and physical safety.
- The group expressed interest in accessing the presentation materials afterwards.

Understanding and working with ADHD

By Buzz Bury and Markus Bjørkelund Strand

Purpose

To help participants better understand ADHD through experiential activities and reflection, and to strengthen their capacity to support young people who show ADHD traits by building empathy, awareness, and practical strategies.

Short description

This workshop combined short inputs with hands-on simulations (e.g., distraction, overload, impulse control) to explore what living with ADHD can feel like in everyday situations. Participants reflected together on how ADHD shows up differently across people and contexts, and how environment, structure, and support shape well-being.

Notes from participants / observers

- Experiential exercises (e.g., reading with distractions, multitasking, dice + questions) made overload and distraction tangible.
- Participants noted ADHD shows up differently across people and contexts (spectrum; waves/"roller coaster").
- Environment matters a lot: the right setting can reduce barriers and support focus.
- Links discussed between ADHD and dyslexia/dyscalculia when stimuli pile up.
- Gendered patterns in diagnosis were highlighted; ADHD can present differently and be missed.
- Some participants found it easier to listen while keeping their hands busy.
- Reflections on labelling: diagnosis can help, but can also be misused to avoid support needs or self-management.
- Practical supports mentioned: movement/exercise (dopamine), nature, sleep, routines/habits.
- For participants with lived experience of ADHD, the space felt more about sharing than 'learning about.'
- Key insight: simulations helped build empathy; everyday environments and expectations shape how ADHD is experienced.

Embracing healthy relationships with our bodies

By Dagna Gmitrowicz

Purpose

To support participants in developing a more attentive, respectful, and non-judgemental relationship with their bodies, especially in relation to stress and anxiety.

Short description

This open learning space focused on body awareness and self-connection. Through grounding exercises, reflection, and meditation, participants explored how stress manifests physically and how listening to bodily signals can support mental well-being.

Notes from participants / observers

- The session focused on listening to the body without judgement.
- Grounding exercises helped participants connect with bodily sensations linked to anxiety and relaxation.
- Participants reflected on personal stress triggers and physical reactions.
- The workshop ended with a guided relaxation/meditation.
- Key insight: feeling grounded has a tangible impact on well-being.
- Participants noticed both individual coping mechanisms and shared patterns across the group.
- The space was experienced as safe, calm, and supportive for reflection.

PERMA: Increasing well-being in an organisation

By Eliza Zadluzna

Purpose

To explore organisational well-being using the PERMA model and reflect on how workplaces and organisations can actively support mental health.

Short description

This workshop introduced the PERMA model as a framework for reflecting on organisational well-being. Participants assessed their own organisational contexts through individual mapping and peer exchange, identifying strengths, challenges, and practical ideas for fostering healthier working environments.

Notes from participants / observers

- The workshop introduced the PERMA model: Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment.
- Participants completed a 'well-being wheel' reflecting on their organisation.
- Pair discussions and group debrief helped identify patterns and strengths.
- Participants shared concrete ideas for improving specific dimensions.
- Key insight: mental health is both an individual and collective responsibility.
- The visual nature of the tool supported meaningful discussion.
- Takeaways included feeling inspired, connected, and able to step back and reflect realistically.

Mastering stress

By Réka Szigeti

Purpose

To help participants better understand how stress shows up in different ways (mind and body) and to equip them with simple, practical techniques they can use to cope with stress in everyday life.

Short description

This learning space combined interactive discussions, visual reflection, and practical exercises to explore how stress is experienced physically and mentally. Participants reflected on their own stress levels, mapped how stress shows up in their bodies, and practiced a set of simple techniques (breathing, muscle release, reframing thoughts, scribbling) to reduce or regulate stress. The session ended with a short guided relaxation.

Notes from participants / observers

- The workshop used playful group formation (puzzle pieces) to create mixed groups and thematic tables.
- Participants explored stress as multi-dimensional (mental, physical, emotional) and reflected on personal experiences.
- The 'stress scale' exercise helped people situate their stress levels over the past year.
- Mapping stress on a body outline made physical manifestations of stress visible and discussable.
- Thematic tables (muscle, skin, thought, mouth, hand) helped to structure the different responses to stress and the coping strategies.
- Practiced techniques included abdominal breathing, tensing and releasing muscles, reframing thoughts, and scribbling as stress release.
- The 'lemon juice' example was experienced as memorable and helpful to understand how language and thoughts influence stress.
- The guided relaxation at the end helped participants slow down and leave the session feeling calmer.
- The overall atmosphere was engaging and practical, with techniques that felt easy to try out in everyday life.

Catchy Crew workshop

Deep Selfie studio

By Laura Mellanen and Hilma Ruokolainen

Purpose
To explore identity and mental well-being through creative self-expression, using selfie culture as a starting point for critical reflection, empowerment, and artivism.

Description
The Deep Selfie Studio was a creative workshop that combined selfie photography, creative writing, and collage to explore questions of identity and mental well-being. It was developed in line with the Mental Health in Youth Work project and aimed to strengthen young people's voices through participatory creative communication, raise awareness around mental health, and contribute to reducing stigma, while linking to the yearly theme "Faces & Feelings."

The workshop also reflected ideas and wishes expressed by CCC members during the Co-Creation Lab, in particular the interest in a selfie booth and artistic activities. Working with a practice that is already very familiar to young people - taking selfies - the workshop invited participants to take a step back and reflect critically on selfie culture and on the role of social media in shaping self-image and well-being. Special attention was given to the impact of social media on mental health, especially for young people and young women. Rather than framing social media as something negative in itself, the workshop offered space and tools to question it and to experiment with alternative ways of self-representation.

By creating layered self-portraits, participants were encouraged to look beyond surface images, express emotions, and share personal stories. In the spirit of the Inspirational Event, the workshop sought to inspire participants to promote mental health among their peers, whether through artistic expression, more conscious use of social media, or by getting involved in the itinerant art exhibition.

Other workshops and free time activities proposed by participants

API and mental health support

By Ayman Said and Fardowso Hassan

Purpose
To introduce the role of APIs and their importance in safeguarding mental health and well-being within organisations.

Short description
This workshop introduced the role of confidential contact persons for integrity and their function within organisations. Through discussion and examples, participants explored how APIs contribute to mental health, safety, and well-being at a structural level, complementing individual support strategies.

Notes from participants / observers

- The session started with a Mentimeter check-in using emojis to capture participants' current emotional states.
- The role of the API was explained, including confidentiality and organisational responsibility.
- A strong insight was that having APIs is not optional but essential for healthy organisations.
- Flanders was highlighted as a good practice example where APIs are mandatory, seen as a major advantage.

Step into their shoes

By Morgane Creisméas

Purpose

To explore empathy as a skill, experience it physically and emotionally, and reflect on how people relate differently to others' experiences.

Short description

Using images, movement, and guided reflection, participants explored empathy as an embodied and learnable skill. The workshop invited participants to physically and emotionally step into different perspectives, followed by group sharing on how empathy is experienced and expressed in everyday situations.

Notes from participants / observers

- The group discussed what empathy means and how it shows up in everyday life.
- Participants chose images representing different life situations and reflected on how they would feel in those contexts.
- A physical line exercise invited participants to step forward in response to statements such as feeling invisible or afraid of judgment.
- Each statement was followed by sharing and discussion.
- Key insight: empathy is not uniform and can be learned.
- The small group size allowed deep sharing, although the final reflection felt rushed due to a late start.

The power of participation

By Jenny Lavin, Anna Marie Meaney and Jack Lucy

Purpose

To deepen understanding of meaningful youth participation and distinguish it from tokenistic approaches.

Short description

This workshop combined reflection and practical examples to explore what meaningful youth participation looks like in practice. Participants examined different participation models, reflected on their own experiences, and discussed how participation, ownership, and influence contribute to well-being and a sense of belonging.

Notes from participants / observers

- The session explored differences between tokenistic participation and youth-led processes.
- The Lundy Model (space, voice, audience, influence) and Hart's Ladder were presented as key frameworks.
- Participants reflected that the Inspirational Event itself ranked high on Hart's Ladder (levels 5–8).
- Youth feedback after decision-making was identified as crucial for feeling valued.
- Early involvement of young people was highlighted as essential, late involvement limits impact.
- Participation was linked to belonging, purpose, and self-worth- key factors in mental well-being.

When the clouds speak

By Milica Vasić

Purpose

To build basic mental health literacy and help participants recognise different levels of mental health challenges and appropriate support needs.

Short description

Through a station-based and playful approach, participants explored the mental health continuum, distinguishing between well-being, distress, mental health problems, and disorders. The workshop supported mental health literacy by helping participants recognise signs, understand transitions, and reflect on appropriate forms of support.

Notes from participants / observers

- The workshop included four stations focused on different mental health levels.
- Participants searched for hidden envelopes containing statements and matched them to correct mental health categories.
- Clear distinctions were made between distress, mental health problems, and disorders.
- Key insights included:
- Mental health exists on a spectrum.
- People move between different levels over time.
- Professional support is crucial for diagnosis and treatment.
- The session reinforced the importance of noticing symptoms without over-pathologizing.

Emotions through art

By Spencer Strachan

Purpose

To explore emotions through creative expression and demonstrate art as a tool for emotional processing.

Short description

Participants explored emotions through drawing and creative expression accompanied by music. The workshop offered a non-verbal way to reflect on emotional states, observe changes during the process, and share insights in small groups.

Notes from participants / observers

- The facilitator shared personal examples of processing emotions through drawing.
- Participants engaged in two drawing exercises: free drawing and drawing emotional shapes.
- Reflections were shared in small groups.
- Participants observed changes in their emotional states during the session.
- The facilitator actively supported each group during the exercises.
- The session ended with strong appreciation and applause.
- Key insight: creative expression can be a powerful and accessible emotional tool.

Mental health, stigma and us

By Jovana Vecic, Igor Dzalto & Dunja Adamovic

Purpose

To explore how stigma around mental health develops and identify practical ways to challenge it in communities.

Short description

Using visual prompts and group discussion, participants explored how stigma around mental health develops and how it affects individuals and communities. The workshop encouraged reflection on taboos, stereotypes, and practical ways to foster more open and supportive conversations.

Notes from participants / observers

- Participants selected Dixit cards representing their associations with mental health.
- The concept and history of stigma were explained, including its social roots.
- Discussion focused on taboo topics and reasons behind silence and shame.
- The group explored the vicious cycle of stigma (fear, shame, isolation, delayed help).
- Practical steps to reduce stigma included awareness-raising and mental health literacy.
- Key insight: open conversation breaks silence and strengthens communities.
- The session was short but impactful and informative.

Theatre for all

By Zuzanna Maciejewska

Purpose

To explore expression, inclusion, and emotional experience through theatre-based methods.

Short description

This session used theatre-based methods to support expression, participation, and inclusion. Participants were invited to engage creatively and explore emotions and experiences through movement and performance.

Year abroad and mental health

By Anna Mäkinen & Esther Rasmussen

Purpose

To explore mental-health challenges during a year abroad and identify how youth workers can support young people before, during, and after international mobility experiences.

Short description

The workshop explored mental health challenges linked to international mobility experiences. Drawing on lived experience and youth work practice, participants reflected on preparation, support during a stay abroad, and reintegration, as well as the role of youth workers throughout the process.

Notes from participants / observers

- Participants explored common mental-health challenges linked to stays abroad.
- Topics included loneliness, adaptation, responsibility, culture shock, and identity.
- Attention was given to both departure and return phases.
- Youth workers' roles included mentoring, expectation management, empowerment, and referral.
- Emphasis on maintaining connections across home and host countries.
- Self-care strategies for youth workers were also discussed.
- The session highlighted the importance of recognising limits and knowing when to seek additional support.

Youth work and therapy
By Eva Hejcmanová & Robin Tomíků

Purpose
To clarify the roles and boundaries between youth work and therapy and explore how they can complement each other when supporting young people in distress.

Short description
Through case studies and group discussion, this workshop explored the boundaries and complementarity between youth work and therapy. Participants reflected on ethical dilemmas, crisis situations, and cooperation with families and mental health professionals.

Notes from participants / observers
- The workshop presented real-life case studies involving a young person in distress.
- Discussions focused on trust, confidentiality, and safeguarding responsibilities.
- Participants explored when and how to involve parents or authorities.
- The importance of stabilisation and crisis management was highlighted.
- Youth workers were recognised as first points of contact, not therapists.
- Cooperation between youth workers and therapists was emphasised as essential.
- Key insight: youth workers play a crucial role in guiding young people toward appropriate support while maintaining relationships.

Open Learning Spaces

Weather Station - Young perspectives about mental health
By Laura Mellanen
Join the weather forecasters and give your contribution to the communication. Artmaking by combining Japanese suminagashi floating ink technique and collage.

Gratitude Journal
By Magdalena Sierotnik
This workshop will help individuals understand the benefits of gratitude and guide them in establishing a regular gratitude journaling practice. A gratitude journal is a tool that helps individuals focus on the positive aspects of their lives, acknowledge the good things, and foster a sense of appreciation.

Music therapy
By Abdulkadir Ergun
Ney is a wind instrument that bears the traces of our past and which we can accept as our ancestral heritage. This instrument, which will enchant you from the first moment you hear its voice, will fascinate you with its unique sound and timbre. You will love this musical instrument that touches the depths of a person with a burning sound, which will take you away from your environment and the life you carry on your shoulders.

Storytelling activity
By Liga Silina
This method is a tool to empower people to talk with each other, listen and train different skills. Each "Tell your Story" card has one sentence that starts with "Tell…". Come and listen and share stories together.

Trauma-informed approach
By Árpád Bárnai
New understandings about how trauma can affect us and how we can be sensitive to it. We will look at the importance of asking 'what happened to you' rather than 'what's wrong with you'.

Self talk and positive affirmations
By Buzz Bury
A journey in exploring how we can tame and train our inner 'Self Talk'.

Recognising the signals of burnout
By Jurgita Bernotienė
An introduction on how to recognise the signals of burnout and examples of several short practical exercises on how to manage anxiety.

Choose your learning path to nurture your mental health
By Monika Bolsckei
In this healing corner you will have the chance to stay in silence and only reflect on your thoughts and emotions with the lead of 12 powerful questions. If you are tired to talk but would like to integrate your learnings of the day, and heal your wounds, feel free to join for this session.

Free time activities

Calligraphy
By Aurore Hulin-Mocca

Purpose
To offer a calm, individual, and creative moment during free time, allowing participants to slow down and experience care through a simple artistic gesture.

Short description
This informal activity invited participants to have their names written in calligraphy. The focus was not on learning a technique, but on the experience of being seen, named, and offered something personal and tangible.

Notes from participants / observers
- The facilitator offered to write participants' names in calligraphy.
- The activity functioned as a quiet, one-to-one moment within the broader event flow.
- Due to overlapping sessions, the observer did not stay for the full activity.

Juggling
By Árpád Bárnai

Purpose
To promote grounding, focus, and stress regulation through movement, play, and embodied learning.

Short description
Participants were introduced to a range of juggling and flow tools and encouraged to try them freely. The activity emphasised exploration, curiosity, and physical engagement rather than performance or mastery.

Notes from participants / observers
- Participants were introduced to kendama, poi, kaleidoscope, diabolo, and juggling balls.
- Kaleidoscope was presented as the easiest entry point, while kendama attracted most participants.
- Some participants experimented with more challenging tools such as poi and diabolo.
- The facilitator highlighted how these tools can support focus and grounding, especially for young people.
- A spontaneous moment occurred when the cameraman demonstrated advanced diabolo skills, adding to the playful atmosphere.

Aroma Therapy
By Liga Silina, Samanta Gertnere and Sintija Balta

Purpose
To explore sensory awareness and emotional responses through scent, and to introduce aroma therapy as a complementary well-being practice.

Short description
Participants engaged in a guided sensory experience using essential oils, reflecting on how different scents affected their mood, memories, and sense of self.

Notes from participants / observers
- Twelve essential oils were passed around among participants.
- Participants guessed the aromas and noted emotional and physical responses to each scent.
- Everyone selected their favourite scents, followed by an explanation of their mental-health benefits.
- Participants compared scent descriptions with their own sense of identity.
- The activity was perceived as a gentle and effective alternative approach to well-being support.

Inclusivity Game
By Réka Szigeti

Purpose
To create awareness around inclusivity and inclusion dynamics in a playful, accessible format.

Short description
This activity was designed as an informal game focusing on inclusion and exclusion, encouraging participants to reflect on social dynamics in a light but meaningful way.

Poetry and Storytelling / Poetry Jamc

By Delia Montali, Adele Puccinelli and Leo Baldaci

Purpose

To use poetry and storytelling as tools for emotional expression, connection, and collective meaning-making.

Short description

Through guided imagination, rhythm, writing, and group creation, participants explored emotions such as happiness, excitement, and fear. The process emphasised experience over outcome and demonstrated that poetry is accessible to everyone.

Notes from participants / observers

- The session began with an introduction to the concept of a poetry jam.
- A children's story was read aloud to evoke emotional imagery and reflection.
- Participants wrote words in their own languages associated with emotional states.
- Rhythm and sound were introduced through repetition and clapping.
- Guided breathing and visualisation exercises supported emotional immersion.
- Participants worked in small groups to create collective poems based on shared emotions.
- The poems were shared and discussed in plenary.
- Key insight: anyone can write poetry through instinctive expression.

EVALUATIONS

In a nutshell: what did this process show us and that the evaluations sustain?



Co-creation really supports shifting the usual approach, structure and responsibilities. When young people are trusted with real decisions over content, methods and direction, participation stops being symbolic and becomes a driver of quality, relevance and commitment.



The conditions, principles and approaches matter as much as the content. Trust, psychological safety, low hierarchy in terms of creation and decisions and time to build relationships were not seen as 'nice additions' but were what made learning, risk-taking and a meaningful and honest cooperation possible.



Learning is much stronger when the processes are real, experienced, and go beyond a nice design or concept on paper. This is about trying things out, reflecting together, and adjusting along the way. All this created a deeper learning, beyond what fixed plans or predefined outcomes would have allowed.



Let's be clear: co-creation is demanding! And this is what partially contributes to its value. Looking at what teams and participants said, the intensity, the sometimes uncertainty and the need for constant coordination were not seen as challenges emerging from the approach and principles but more as signs that real responsibility and shared ownership were happening.



Participation does work when it is something continuous, not just a one shot event-based. What made the process so rich and meaningful was the full long-term journey (online preparation, Co-Creation Lab, Inspirational Event, and closure), more than a single moment of involvement.



Some would say 'we knew it' but this has proven once more that youth participation strengthens the whole system. When young people actively, effectively contribute to shaping the process and the content, the teams also learn to work differently: more openly, more reflectively, and more in line with the realities they (all) aim to address.

More detailed information is available below, exemplifying all those key elements.

The co-creation Lab

Atmosphere and team dynamics

At the end of the Co-Creation LAB, the team shared a strong sense that everyone had been "dancing together". If the start was felt as a bit tense- mostly because expectations for the second Inspirational Event were high - once things got started and going, the group settled in. Ostende turned out to be a good place for this stage: calmer, more grounded and easier to work in than last time. The team worked well and the collaboration felt natural.

Co-creation in practice

Both the team and participants felt that the co-creation was genuine. The physical, organisational and mental space supported real collaboration, and the preparation and feedback processes were seen as honest and helpful. The Lab truly worked as a place where the plan could grow naturally rather than being imposed.

Compared to the previous edition, the process felt more authentic, with a better balance between planning and letting things emerge. Participation was central, and young people played a significant role. Many noted a strong sense of equality and very little hierarchy. Although disagreements arose at times, trust and professionalism helped the group handle them smoothly.

Co-creation, continuous support, really hearing young people's voices, and autonomy supported by mentoring are not innovations specific to this project. They are core principles of quality youth work – principles that youth workers apply in many different contexts and with many different groups, every day – grounded in the idea that youth work is, at its core, about creating the space and conditions for young people to shape things for themselves. What this process showed is what those principles look like when they are genuinely put into practice. This project is one illustration of why that matters.

Roles, learning and safety

Some people were not sure about their role at first, especially those who were rather new to this way of working. Questions around when to step in or step back were common. Over time, moments of uncertainty became learning opportunities, for example in understanding different workshop formats or specific roles within a LAB context. Despite occasional confusion, participants consistently reported feeling safe. Being pushed out of the comfort zone was largely seen as positive, and the LAB helped build confidence. For some, it also provided a concrete model to take back to their own organisations. At the same time, the need for clearer role definitions earlier in the process was highlighted for the future.

Communication and workload

Communication was seen as crucial, though more clarity would have been beneficial, in some occasions. Late or incomplete information created avoidable stress and took energy away from other tasks. Nonetheless, the team felt supported and valued being able to rely on one another. There was also a sense that existing communication tools and joint meetings could be used more consistently.

The workload was heavy, with long days, many details and significant logistical demands, especially for the core team. At the same time, people recognised that large teams naturally require more time and coordination. As the process went on, the collaboration improved and this became pretty visible during the Lab. Flexibility in the room helped, and while some wished for a more fixed programme, this had to be balanced with leaving space for initiative and emerging ideas that could be useful in the future.

Testing ground and learning

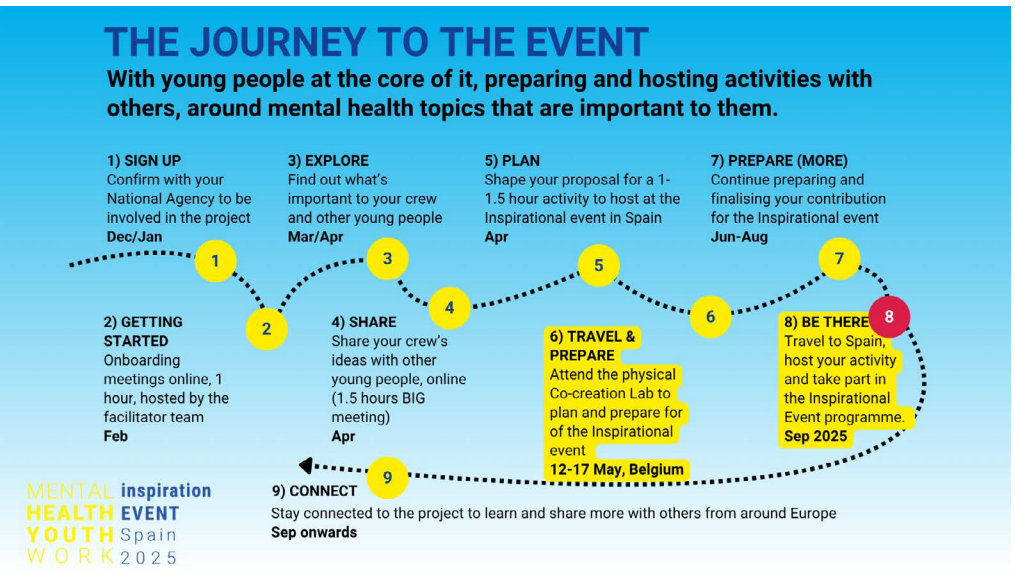
The Lab was widely appreciated as a genuine testing ground. Everything that was tried was considered useful for future phases, even when the main outcome was 'simply' learning. It was relatively easy to observe the improvements from earlier stages and despite some pressure, the progress was positive, and everyone valued how feedback and reflection were built into the work. For many, this way of working was completely new, which made the learning especially rich in a safe environment.

Trust, adaptability, a sense of togetherness and pride looking at the collective work and results was mentioned several times. The participants trusted each other to do their part. Working in a large group had its challenges, but it was also seen as a real strength.

Working with young people

Working with young people was a highlight. The group was diverse, and those differences were handled well. The lack of hierarchy was appreciated. Some suggested having more ongoing conversations with participants to reduce distance between them and the wider team - ideas like letting them 'shadow' parts of the process came up, though that would need clearer roles and timing.

The Inspirational Event – Reflections of participants



Looking back

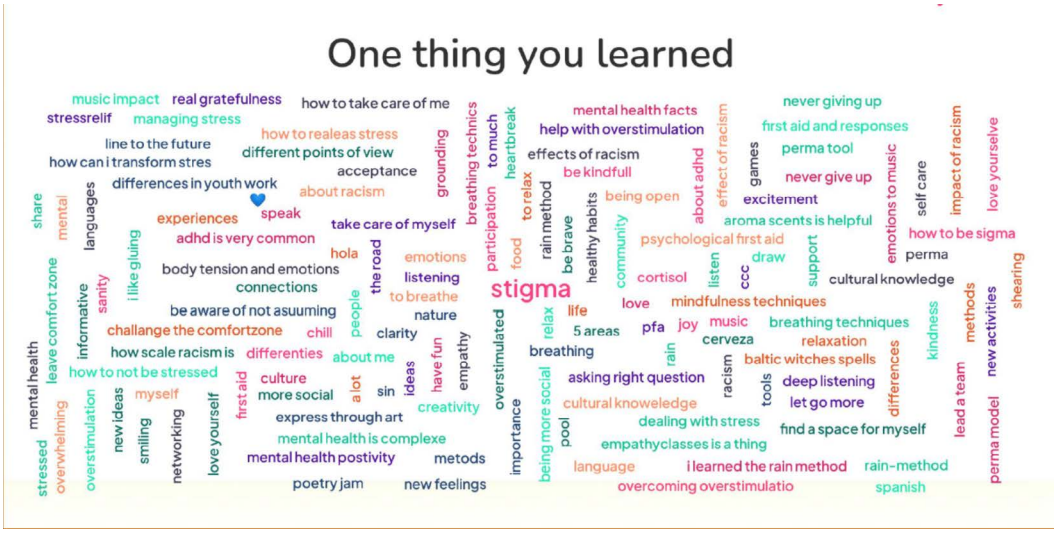
Participants valued taking time to look at the whole journey. Seeing the steps, roles and decisions laid out helped them recognise what they achieved. Running workshops was something many felt proud of.

Meaningful moments

Workshops, learning moments, personal connections and teamwork stood out. Many said they felt part of something bigger and appreciated the supportive atmosphere.
Two of the main reflective questions (word clouds) received a high number of responses:

ONE THING YOU LEARNED
223
RESPONSES

ONE THING THAT MADE YOU FEEL GOOD
226
RESPONSES





The insights collected illustrate pretty well what came out during the other revaluation meetings: people valued the sense of being part of something meaningful and of playing a role within a collective process.

Participation and ownership

Most participants felt they had a real say in planning, running and evaluating the event. Being taken seriously, proposing ideas and having ownership made a big difference. Support from youth workers and cooperation across groups were important.

The conditions that helped participation included:

- a safe, welcoming environment
- co-creating workshop themes early
- regular updates and feedback
- strong support structures
- collaboration within and across groups
- familiarity from earlier phases
- time to connect
- access to quiet spaces and structured breaks

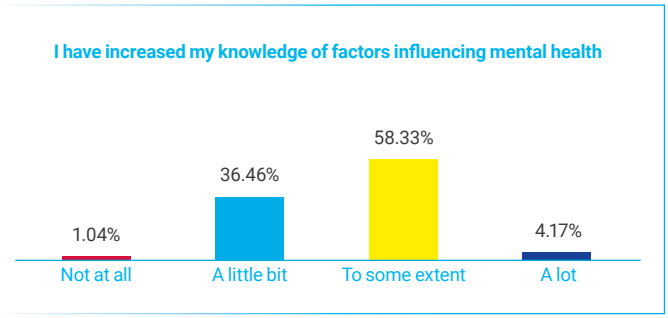
Online preparation

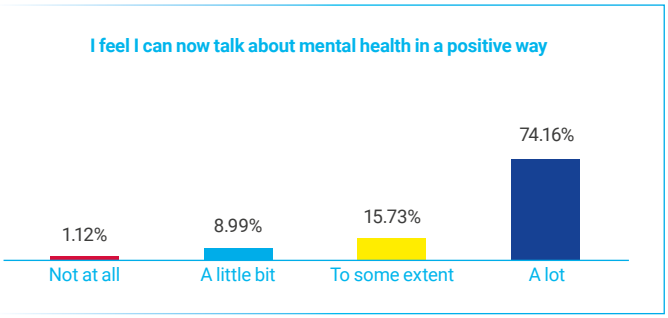
Opinions on the online phase were mixed. Some felt the meetings were rushed and did not leave enough room for conversation, which highlighted how valuable in-person work was. Improvements for larger online meetings were suggested.

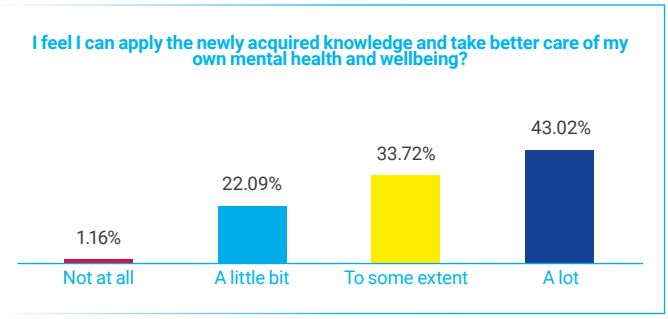
Learning and next steps

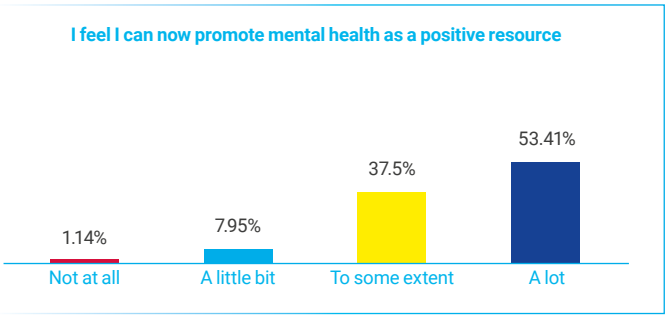
Participants said they learned more about mental health, peer support and their own well-being. Many want to stay involved and develop new initiatives, including international follow-ups. The final online meeting helped wrap up the process and look ahead.

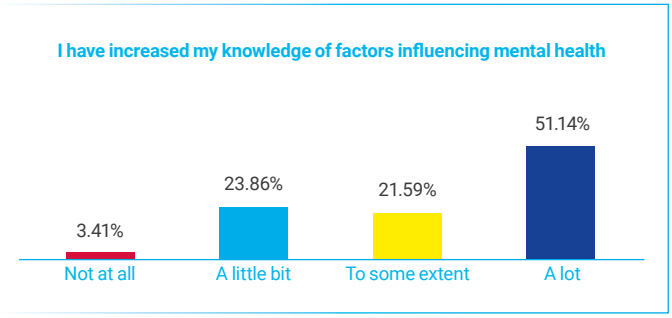
Here are some visualisations of the evaluation responses (each question had between 86 and 95 responses):











Regarding a possible follow-up, more than half of the respondents expressed their inspiration to create an international project focusing on mental health and young people.

This also illustrates the purpose of the closing online meeting with CCCs: to reflect, close the process, and prepare for future steps.

The Inspirational Event – wider team reflections

Team reflections focused on sustaining the sense of community over time, with recognition of the important role participants can play. Their contribution was highly valued, and ideas emerged around deeper involvement, such as earlier arrival or participation in welcoming activities.

Co-creation was described as fulfilling but demanding, requiring patience, trust and the ability to let go of fixed plans. Despite the intensity of the schedule and long days, the process was seen as energising and worthwhile. Suggestions for the future included clearer role definitions earlier on, slightly longer timelines and more space to slow down, including time outdoors when possible.

Throughout informal discussions, interviews and evaluations, a shared sense of learning, respect, belonging and fulfilment clearly emerged. Even when challenges were present, the overall experience was described as meaningful, creative and strongly connected to shared values.