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M.Y. Culture Associazione Culturale

YRCI Youth Rights & Citizenship Initiative

FROM DIGITAL OVERLOAD TO YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

A Learning Experience in Reggio Calabria

Seven days of learning, cooperation and cultural exchange through Erasmus+



Participants in Reggio Calabria, Italy

LOCATION	FORMAT	PERSPECTIVE
Reggio Calabria, Italy	International Training Course	Participant Experience

Seven days in Reggio Calabria offered much more than an international training course. The mobility combined practical learning, cooperation and cultural exchange while opening space to reflect on digital overload and the role youth workers can play in empowering young people.

Understanding Digital Overload

Technology has become an essential part of everyday life, particularly for young people. However, constant connectivity can also affect concentration, wellbeing, communication and the way we interact with others.

During the training, we explored the concept of digital overload through discussions, interactive exercises and group work. Rather than approaching technology simply as something positive or negative, the activities encouraged us to reflect critically on our digital habits and on how youth workers can support young people in developing a healthier and more conscious relationship with technology.

This was one of the strongest aspects of the programme: connecting an everyday challenge with practical methods that can be used in youth work.

From Participants to Facilitators

One of the most valuable parts of the experience was moving from the role of participants to the role of facilitators. We were given the opportunity to design and deliver our own workshops, putting the methods and ideas explored during the training into practice.

This process challenged us to think about how an activity should be structured, how participants can be actively involved and how a facilitator can create an inclusive environment where everyone feels comfortable contributing.

Through this experience, we strengthened practical skills in workshop planning, facilitation, communication, teamwork, activity management and reflection — competencies that can be transferred to future youth initiatives and local activities.

The support of the trainers was particularly important. Their professionalism, guidance and openness encouraged us to take initiative, experiment with new approaches and become more confident in our own abilities.

"Learning is stronger when participants contribute."

Learning by Doing

Non-formal education was at the heart of the training. Energizers, interactive exercises, card games, teamwork, reflection sessions and group discussions created a learning environment in which everyone was encouraged to participate.

From the first activities, we worked together to identify our expectations, fears and possible contributions to the programme. We also developed a shared Code of Conduct based on respect, responsibility and inclusion.

These methods reminded us that meaningful learning happens through experience, communication, reflection and cooperation.

Learning Across Cultures

The experience was not limited to the training room. Meeting participants from different countries created an environment of continuous intercultural learning.

Cultural evenings offered an opportunity to share traditions, food, stories and elements of our national identities. As the Albanian participants, we were proud to introduce aspects of Albanian culture while also discovering the traditions and perspectives of the other participating countries.

These moments showed us that cultural diversity is not a barrier to cooperation. When people listen and exchange experiences, diversity becomes one of the strongest sources of learning.

Discovering Calabria Beyond the Training Room

Our stay also gave us the opportunity to discover Reggio Calabria and its surroundings. A particularly memorable experience was the visit to Scilla, with its distinctive coastal landscape and strong connection to the sea and local fishing traditions.

We also explored important locations in Reggio Calabria, accompanied during part of the visit by the Mayor's Youth Adviser. Experiencing the city beyond the formal training activities added another dimension to the mobility and helped us better understand the cultural and civic environment of the host community.

Bringing the Experience Back Home

"From Digital Overload to Youth Empowerment" was more than a seven-day mobility. We returned from Reggio Calabria with new methods, practical skills, international connections and new perspectives on how youth work can respond to the realities young people face in an increasingly digital society.

The experience reminded us that learning becomes more powerful when theory meets practice, when participants become active contributors and when cultural differences become opportunities for dialogue rather than barriers.

From Mobility to Local Impact

For us, the end of the mobility does not mean the end of the learning process. The knowledge, methods and ideas gained in Reggio Calabria can now be transferred to our local context and future youth activities.

In this way, the impact of Erasmus+ mobility continues long after participants return home — through the methods we reuse, the conversations we start and the initiatives we build together.

"Learning creates impact when it becomes action."

ARTICLE CREDITS

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