



HYPE

Youth unified
in local ecosYstEmS
Promoting Solidarity

D1.1 Report on bottom-up Local Action Plans and Research Findings



Partners

ActionAid Hellas

CREA-UB

Social Platform

WeWorld

Author

CREA-UB, Spain

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Introduction

Sense of Unity anchored in European values

The HYPE project is a CERV-2023-CITIZENS-CIV Action funded by the European Commission, entitled Youth unified in local ecosystems promoting solidarity. The HYPE project aims to nurture solidarity within two EU Member States — Greece and Italy— that have been deeply affected by different crises, including the financial and refugee crises, resulting in the erosion of social ties and a weakened collective identity in these countries. By engaging youth in public dialogue to encourage solidarity and cooperation, the project seeks to build a stronger foundation for EU democratic values and collective identity, countering the disintegration of society and promoting a more united and resilient Europe. To break fragmentation and initiate dialogue among youth from different social groups, the project will establish Local Solidarity Ecosystems.

The project follows a multistakeholder approach by inviting and engaging local CSOs, stakeholders, and authorities in the Local Solidarity Ecosystems to support the design and implementation of youth-led actions fostering collaboration and increasing the potential for extended community engagement in solidarity actions.

To this end, the initial phase of this project builds on a research-based data collection collect the voice of citizens, especially young people, about the perceptions on solidarity. The research will inform the successful construction of Local Action Plans guiding the implementation of the project activities in the different national contexts through youth-led actions.

State of the Art

Solidarity Actions, context and perspectives

Collective action should be understood as an organisation of activities that are developed with a common goal to be achieved, based on the participation of a group of individuals. In some cases, collective action must be a solidarity action to achieve this goal (Chant, 2023).

The HYPE project examines solidarity among young people in the countries of Greece and Italy, due to the fragmentation of social ties that these countries have suffered as a result of their respective crises.

In addition to this particular focus on the two countries, the project has also taken a more EU-wide view of both the conceptualisation and perspectives that are considered among youth people and the population in general.

On the one hand, in the case of Greece, an investigation of the general context of the country in relation to solidarity actions, highlights the low level of initiative due to the general mistrust in this country towards its institutions, which are organised in a hierarchical rather than democratic way, leading to a lack of trust among the population (SOLIDUS Consortium, 2017). This is reflected in the fact that people living in Greece do not tend to be active when it comes to solidarity and there are not many initiatives to create such relationships among the population (SOLIDUS Consortium, 2017).

However, in recent years, new solidarity initiatives have emerged due to widespread social discontent, as economic crises, especially the 2008 financial crisis, and austerity policies, which have created a new social landscape in which many people and certain social groups are directly affected (Prentoulis & Kyriakidou, 2019). This has led to an increase in communities coming together to help each other in the current situation (SOLIDUS Consortium, 2017), and thus to new initiatives promoting solidarity.

One of the most important cases of solidarity in Greece occurred in the context of the Aganaktisemeni protests, which took place from 25 May 2011 until August of the same year, due to a forced evacuation (Pentoulis & Kyriakidou, 2019), and therefore, these protests were due to the situation they were living in that year, as mentioned above.

This movement is considered important in relation to solidarity in Greece, as it forged a strong sense of collectivity and a network of solidarity among the population (Pentoulis & Kyriakidou, 2019), as they came together with the aim of actively seeking a solution to the financial crisis of the time and offering each other the mutual support they needed (solidus). Therefore, thanks to this solidarity network, in just a few months, a greater local participation in these actions was achieved, which is unusual in Greece, as well as the participation of different types of people united by the same cause (Pentoulis & Kyriakidou, 2019).

On the other hand, Italy also finds itself in a context of crisis and cutbacks, with the European impact of the 2008 crisis and the austerity measures that have been implemented, which increased inequalities (Maggini et al., 2011). It should be noted that some research shows that Italian solidarity is strongly rooted in social trust and the social integrity of the individual in the community, and that country's willingness to engage in charitable acts is linked to its religiosity (Maggini et al., 2011).

A clear example of solidarity in Italy was in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, as it affected the country and immigrants developed solidarity initiatives to help everyone collectively in the historical situation they were experiencing (Artero & Ambrosini, 2024). The solidarity actions that were developed, in which immigrants played an indispensable role, were diverse, but we can conclude that they demanded a necessary recognition of this type of collective action and an improvement in the perspective of immigrants who were seen in a negative light by society (Artero & Ambrosini, 2024). It was therefore a way of regaining a sense of belonging to Italian society through solidarity actions (Artero & Ambrosini, 2024). Nevertheless, these actions had little impact, i.e. at the national level there is still no great impact (Artero & Ambrosini, 2024).

Increase participation for successful actions

In the context in which we find ourselves in both countries, we can see the need to increase solidarity initiatives, and therefore the different factors that contribute to solidarity impulse and that have proven to be effective will be explained below.

In this respect, recent research highlights certain issues that need to be considered when promoting solidarity (Bernays et al., 2021).

Firstly, it is important to point out that research and study of the concrete case in which we want to promote this solidarity is necessary to generate scientific evidence that can build a strong solidarity with social impact (Bernays et al., 2021). In this way, it is possible to understand exactly what the problem is and to understand the reality. In addition, it is known that obtaining more scientific information on a issue has the power to change certain opinions among those who have the evidence, and thus mitigate misinformation, especially among vulnerable groups (De Botton et al., 2021). Therefore, securing scientific evidence in social context is essential to be able to change the narrative on certain issue and to achieve and increase in participation in solidarity actions.

Secondly, we need to know the context in depth in order to understand certain dynamics and behaviours of the people involved in the study and thus be able to extract more accurate and effective results when it comes to increasing solidarity actions that have a real impact on the population (Bernays et al., 2021).

Thirdly, it highlights the importance and effectiveness of people finding a group of like-minded people with whom they can share their experiences, feel mirrored and thus, depending on the context they are dealing with, strive to achieve their goal through the help they received from each other (Bernays et al., 2021). In other words, when behaviours are shown uniformly among individuals, with similarities between them, they become more connected and identified with the behaviour, thus creating more solidarity and leaving aside individuality (Koudenburg et al., 2015). Therefore, it is very important that this identification with the other and with the action carried out exists to encourage people to participate in actions and form a supportive collective and a

sense of belonging within the group. At this point it is considered relevant to relate it to the great advances that social networks have made in increasing people's connectedness and, therefore, to meeting people with the same concerns and interests that create unity and facilitate action (Bernays et al., 2021).

In addition to the conclusions of the study presented above, there are other factors that are considered relevant for increasing participation and creating successful solidarity actions. One of these factors is democracy, that is, a democratic dynamic in actions when carrying out the necessary decision-making processes (SOLIDUS Consortium, 2017). In this concept, value is placed on the fact that decision-making adopts the framework of dialogue when it is carried out between the participants and actors of the organisation (SOLIDUS Consortium, 2017).

In this sense, the need for transparency also appears as a key element, in the actions of institutions and organisations. In other words, the need to be able to trust this decision-making process and the actors involved, who will also be carry out the collective action.

Transparency means showing exactly how the organisation carrying out the collective action works and how this organisation must make sense of the actions it takes and the objectives it wants to achieve (Baamonde-Silva et al., 2017). It is therefore a necessity for organisations carrying out collective actions to be transparent in order to gain greater trust from the population and thus greater participation (Baamonde-Silva et al., 2017).

Social networks are once again emerging as a means of increasing the transparency of these actions. Internet access apart from its negative consequences that also affect social relations and solidarity between people. It has very positive consequences and allows us to have very beneficial tools for people and the union and connection with others, they also allow us to have access to much information and in this way there is much more transparency and people have more tools both to expand a solidarity action and to have more reach and to know about initiatives through social networks and to get information about them just by using social networks (SOLIDUS Consortium, 2017).

Therefore, transparency can be achieved through open communication to all, which is why it is considered essential that the younger generations make use of new technologies to create a safe communication space, where they are informed about actions and thus encouraged to participate in them (Baamonde-Silva et al., 2017).

In this way, we see the importance of communication between actors for collective action in solidarity to take place. As mentioned above, the most recent form of communication, which has enabled changes and had an impact on social mobilisation is communication through the internet and, by extension, social networks. The potential of social media has been reflected on numerous occasions, one of them being the protests in Greece (Prentoulis & Kyriakidou, 2019).

Therefore, it is very important to have safe spaces for dialogue where communication between the actors of the action takes place, as it has been shown, for example, that non-violent communication increases people's participation in solidarity actions and increases the hope they have in the action (Avichail et al., 2024).

Finally, one factor that influences the population to have more incentives to participate in solidarity actions and to create more communication networks to achieve common goals is that they see the results of their actions reflected, that is, that they can define what the impact of these actions has been at a social and political level. Therefore, the social impact is directly related to the initiative to participate in the lives of the actors (SOLIDUS Consortium, 2017), and it is important that the objective achieved with the work done is recognised. Accountability is also a way of giving recognition and being an incentive to act, not only for economic reasons but also because it is a way of giving greater value to the work dedicated to a solidarity action (SOLIDUS Consortium, 2017).

Methodology

The methodology explained in this section refers to that of Work package 1 of the project, entitled: Development of Bottom-up Local Action Plans. This work package consists of 2 main tasks as described in the Grant Agreement (GA), one based on research and the other one in sharing the results of the research with stakeholders and other agents in order to create new knowledge for the development of Local Action Plans. Therefore, the activities have been: 1) the research survey and the qualitative in-depth interviews and 2) the HYPE Online workshop co-designing bottom-up Local Action Plans. All these tasks have the main goal of identifying the levels and forms of solidarity in the two target countries (Greece and Italy) and mapping existing best practices which will inform the design of bottom-up action plans rooted in solidarity to counter the negative repercussions of diverse crises and reinforce a communal sense of unity anchored in European values. In what follows, details are provided of the activities to be developed with proposed timings and responsibilities following the indications in the GA, with the relevant timings: (M=Month; T= Task)

M1– preparation of WP1 guidelines

T1. WP Leader prepares a document with the main guidelines and schedule for the whole work package which was shared during the kick-off meeting (KOM).

M2-M3 – Preparation of survey: questionnaires and interviews

T.2. CREA-UB designs and prepares a proposal of questionnaire in English based on the research results to be shared with the rest of partners during the KOM.

T.3. CREA-UB will prepare an outline with the questions to be used during the qualitative interviews. Following the indications in GA, 15 qualitative interviews will be implemented (5 in EL, 5 in IT and 5 at EU level) with members of the civil society and key local policy-makers, stakeholders in the field of social cohesion and solidarity. This document will also be shared during the KOM.

T4. Participating countries will prepare a mapping of potential participants and gather them through a mailing list of 200 participants in EL and IT (AAH-WW) and 50 each at EU level (CREA-UB and Social Platform).

T5. Translation of the questionnaire into Greek and Italian (AAH-WW), will be ensured to promote high participation.

T6. CREA will prepare a strategy for the dissemination of the survey through social networks to increase participation, especially targeting youth

M4- Implementation of the survey.

T7. CREA with collaboration of AAH, WW and Social Platform will launched the survey through the mailing lists and social networks. All partners collaborated in the dissemination.

All consortium members shared through different channels and with different outreach. The major goal was to reach people in Greece and Italy. Below find some details of the actions taken:

CREA used their own channels in X and LinkedIn as so did Marta Soler, Esther Oliver and Mimar Ramis from their personal accounts. Reaching more than 1800 views in Twitter. The project appeared also reference in a daily newspaper on the International Day of Solidarity, see here: <https://daily27.info/2024/12/20/the-importance-of-solidarity-with-social-impact/>. Direct dissemination through WhatsApp groups and potential interested individuals was also conducted.

WeWorld did an intense dissemination campaign that included social media (LinkedIn, 763 reactions), two Newsletter with almost 6000 reactions, and other actions through Whatsapp, email and Infodays with close to 400 reactions. ACTIONAID did also similar actions focusing on emailing campaings, onsite activities and Newsletters with a large outreach of 735 reactions. SP did similar actions including Newsletters, activity in social media like X and Whatsapp, and emails to members with an approximate outreach of above 1000 people. All in all reflects a targeted, intense campaign the reactions of

which showed an interest for the topic and the activities of the project that for different reasons was not reflected in the attendance to the online workshop on the 17th of December.

T8. CREA monitored the responses and regularly informed the rest of the partners to follow up and intensify dissemination whenever necessary. Due to the difficulties in ensuring participation and expected response in the survey, the closing of it was delayed until the 24th of November. You can see below the expected and achieved answers:

1) EU: 66/60

2) Italy: 66/120

3) Greece: 107/120

T9. Parallel to the development of the survey, 15 qualitative interviews took place to further deepen the understanding on the solidarity perspectives and actions in participating countries and at EU level with members of the civil society and key local policy-making stakeholders in the field of social cohesion and solidarity. The distribution of the techniques was as follows: 5 in EL, 5 in IT, and 5 at EU level.

M4-M5– Analysis of survey results

T10. CREA together with all partners have been overseeing the smooth development of the survey. CREA has been in charge of analysing the results and incorporating them in the report (see section Results below). A summary of these results was presented in the first part of the Online Workshop for Local Action Plans (LAP) and discuss in the second part of the workshop together with participants to elaborate guidelines to assist in the co-designing of these strategies.

M5 - Online Workshop for the Design of the Local Action Plans:

T11. CREA-UB organized the online workshop which lasted 2 hours, and all partners collaborated in disseminating and ensuring participation.

The online workshop was attended by a modest number of participants, without reaching the target of more than 300 participants as expected. The dissemination campaign was intense, and the team could collect an interest on the issue. The reasons for little participation need to be further analysed although the fact that it was an English-language event might have been among the reasons that hindered larger participation. Finally, 38 people signed the informed consent and registered for participating in the online workshop. The distribution per countries is: 17 people from Greece, 8 from Italy, 10 from Spain, 1 from Belgium, 1 from Denmark, 1 from Slovenia.

Some of the participants were from the academic domain, but most of them came from CSO and other organisations. 20 women and 4 men took participated in the online workshop.

The workshop resulted in an open participatory space that facilitated debate and discussion on the research results and participants were able to share their insights on the main research topics and findings and elaborate proposals to feed the design of the Local Action Plans. The workshop counted on a participatory event assessment in the form of a Mentimeter that is included as Annex III. Recruitment process: at the end of the survey, respondents were informed about the workshop (e.g. content, date and time of implementation) and invited to participate. Upon a positive response, participants will be re-directed to a registration form which will include more information about the workshop, the link to the workshop and contact details for further information. Participants in the qualitative fieldwork were also invited to take part and disseminate the event. The agenda of the event, and the posters used in the dissemination are also added in the Annex I and Annex II respectively.

M6 – D1. Report on Bottom-up Local Action Plans and Research Findings

T12.CREA-UB has overseen the elaboration of the research report of WP1 which is D1.1, with the input and participation of all partners.

Results

Below are the different results extracted from the analyses carried out in Work Package 1 (WP1).

Participation

The participation of the people is an indispensable element for the implementation of solidarity actions, and this is highlighted by several participants. One of them it here, as we can see in the following quote: *"We make it a priority to have target groups involved in shaping projects; their voices guide the entire process."* (Hype_AAH1).

The surveys carried out in the quantitative analysis provide information on people's increased participation of people in solidarity actions, as most people claim to have participated at some point in their lives. Among these, participation is mostly grouped into more community and neighbourhood actions. It should be noted that these are the actions that most people respond to, having met them through the community and social networks.

However, solidarity actions do not just happen through people's participation, it is also necessary that they are part of the action, as discussed below:

Make them part of the planning, make them part of the implementation and also make them part of the evaluation and how to go forward (HypeEU_4).

Several actions and reflections are shared when discussing what should be the best strategies to deal with this situation and to try to get more participation and integration in the process, especially when the group involved in the action is a marginalised group. To do this, certain structures and dynamics need to be created in the group:

You have to take care of power structures, that means that you have to provide trainings, information, resources for them to be equal partners so that you are sure they are an active part (HypeEU_4).

We try to make space in our organization for young people to come together (...) because sometimes social issues, or changes or gender things, are so many voices that it takes a profession to get a context in the debate as possible. (HypeEU_5).

Here, therefore, the importance of dialogue and debate between participants is emphasised by the creation of a safe space in which all participants can have a voice.

We host dialogue sessions with end-users to ensure they feel included in the process, and their feedback directly shapes our projects (HypeAAH3).

Creating safe spaces for young people to express themselves ensures they feel empowered and heard (Hype_AA4).

As the responsible of an organisation I think my responsibility is to make sure the dialogue is inside my organization even if it frightens me, even if I sometimes don't understand how important religion is for some people, (...) but let's talk about it (HypeEU_5).

In order to increase the participation of young people, we see that it is necessary to involve them by accepting that they are part of the group, as highlighted below:

That youth felt that they are not burden, when treated by adults, that they are not a burden as someone who needs help. They are someone who has something and they just need the right resources to amplify what they already have (HypeEU_4).

It is also suggested that there should therefore be co-creation with young people and other stakeholders, and that there should also be support from advisory boards to ensure this.

It's the co-creation in the end. Anything that we do is co-created with the persons that come- we don't call them students, but participants because they can participate as much as they want to. Even if we must create some materials for the literacy classes maybe we make a first draft, but this is contrasted, and we end up doing it jointly with the people that are in the classrooms (HypeEU_3).

Youth advisory boards have been a game-changer for ensuring that younger voices are heard and respected in decision-making processes (Hype_AAH1).

Less engagement and involvement

Concerning participation, the elements found that lead to less participation in solidarity actions will be shown below.

The first reason why many people do not feel interested in participating is because they have little relationship with the issue being discussed and the little effect their action has on the process of change, causing a lack of motivation and interest, as they often think that there is nothing they can do to have a real impact.

People in general they will not participate if they don't feel in the first layer if they don't feel related to the action, if they don't feel I have anything to do with it. Or if I don't have any influence in it, they don't believe that actions would lead to an influence (HypeEU_4).

What demotivates is to find yourself alone, and that in your context there is an image of "loser" and what is motivating is having people similar to you with whom you can identify and that you see that they are enjoying it (HypeEU_3).

According to one interviewee, this is particularly the case among young people for the following reason: *"Youth often tell us they don't feel included in organizational plans, so they assume their involvement won't make a difference"* (Hype_AAH2).

The second reason why many people do not get involved in solidarity activities is because there is little influence and motivation in their environment, and this makes them feel uninspired. As the quotes explain:

So, it is the importance of the environment, to know someone, or to have the opportunity to get to know actions that are presented as attractive and be able to participate. And when I say attractive, I mean that you can really see what you will

bring about to it but also what you will receive from it as well. And then having a context, friends, with whom you do it together, because if you are alone maybe it is more difficult to take this step (HypeEU_3).

The third reason found in the interviews is the low identification with the environment due to the current context, where there are fewer social ties with others, more individualism, etc. Several interviewees addressed this issue in the following way:

The limit in our society is the weakening of the bounds (HypeEU_2).

It's not only for being individual, for some people it is, but also that life is complex. And there's a lot of pressure in how to make sure that you get your life organised as well (HypeEU_5).

More than increase in individualism, perhaps there is a structuring of social contexts that push people to be in very high rhythms, to adapt to high performativity. There are no favourable conditions toward solidarity and collective actions (Hype_Ita_3).

This reason, caused by the current context, can often lead to this indifference, which leads to a lower incentive to participate, but also leads to mistrust:

And I have to admit I don't want to know the reason behind this indifference because it frightens me like hell. And other people are frightened, it's too complex. And other people are because they don't trust it: that organization I don't know, there are too many stories, ... (HypeEU_5).

The fourth reason for lower participation is thought to be social media, as it might be taking up people's time that could be spent on solidarity activities.

There's definitely a growing trend of apathy tied to excessive screen time—it's harder to motivate people to leave their homes and engage offline (Hype_AA3).

So, all this shows again: “So a lot of organizations have to rethink how they attract volunteers” (HypeEU_5), adapting to the new needs and the new social landscape in which we find ourselves.

However, some respondents believe that participation is not disappearing, but changing, with organisations doing less and acting differently.

I have not perceived a decrease; the modalities have changed (Hype_ITA4)

I see very much in the younger generation a concern and at the same time a visionary capacity that drives young people to take political and solidarity actions to transform the world (Hype_ITA3)

Motivations for solidarity actions

This is why it is necessary to motivate solidarity actions, and one interviewee, for example, comments on this by giving the example of refugees, saying that it is the target group itself that must help to mobilise by expressing its needs and what people can contribute.

When it comes from the target group itself, statements like we need your support in this and this, you can contribute in this and this, we help to mobilize (HypeEU_4).

In addition, the fact that people who participate often feel encouraged to do so because they identify with others and feel motivated to help plays an important role.

I think there is something very important which is identification. If I identify myself with the other, I help him/her, if I depersonalize, I don't help him/her (HypeEU_2).

Another way to motivate is through the creation of meaning, that is, that people who carry out an action see their results reflected, which is related to the fact that when

people see their actions reflected, they feel more fulfilled and more motivated to continue contributing to the solidarity action. As the following quotes illustrate:

Our success comes from showing clear, tangible outcomes and using data to prove that the effort works—this keeps volunteers engaged (Hype_AA1).

I think it is when there is meaning creation, when you feel that what you do has an impact to say it somehow, in improving something, and that you have a real role, not just being asked and you contributing a bit but then something else is done, right? (HypeEU_3).

New generations more than ever are driven by something very individual, by a healthy selfishness. If I think about me too, it started from an individual need to feel like a better person, fulfilled, etc. (Hype_Ita_2).

This result is also confirmed by the questionnaire, which shows that most people would like to be informed about the impact of their actions and therefore believe that this is a way of encouraging people to get involved. In addition, there are many responses to the fact that the organisation they know makes their impact public.

Importance of scientific evidence

The result found in the interviews is the importance given to scientific evidence, that is, that the information is true, on the specific issue being addressed, as a particular narrative can change the discourse and influence greater participation.

We need researchers to come to tell the truth to the people to show them by facts by data that this is a false information (...) because we have the truth: we have the passion, we want to be part of this society, we want to contribute and build (HypeEU_4).

For example, there is talk of the need to find academic scientific evidence in the refugee field to refute the lies and misinformation that exist and to show the potential and the need for action, as those researchers who have already contributed evidence

and information have been able to show the reality of refugees in cities and their needs, thus changing the narrative and sending a more positive message for action, motivating solidarity between people. This is highlighted by one of the respondents in the fieldwork who in this case is a person with a position in an EU organisation:

We went out to universities ourselves asking researchers to come to tackle these issues the lies about refugees as a cost and show the potential, show the need (HypeEU_4).

Furthermore, the importance of having reliable information and scientific evidence at our disposal arises from the need to study the participation in solidarity actions that benefit society and the factors that motivate people to participate. In this way, if these issues are also investigated, a lot of valuable information can be gained in order to promote solidarity actions in more effective way. This is emphasised by another respondent who is the coordinator of a CSO:

[talking about the importance of truthful information and scientific evidence] I think it is important because sometimes I heard conversations between two people working in social action saying “people don’t participate” “because they don’t want to” “too few people come” ... Well then let’s have a look at what the scientific evidence about participations is saying and what actually works for promoting participation because maybe it’s not that people don’t come it is that we are not doing what needs to be done (HypeEU_3).

The fieldwork has also revealed the difficulty of giving meaning and credibility to information today, as there is a lot of information circulating that reaches people, and it is difficult to highlight the true information in the large amount of news that is out there.

What happens is that communication is a jungle (...) there is a lot of noise that mess things up (HypeEU_2).

It is also said that the polarisation that exists today affects scientific evidence because, in the end, there are many points of view, and each one projects them.

Some of it is frightening. When the word “goodist” becomes fashionable, it has become very polarized at the macro level. There are different views even according to political orientation (religious - pietism, right-wing - in one world), everyone paints it in their own way and puts projections on it that are also distant from the act itself (Hype_Ita_4).

In the questionnaire on solidarity actions, we can also see that, although the type of knowledge that organisations value most for carrying out their actions is the experience of professional staff and the ideological/political point of view, in third place, they recognise the importance of scientific evidence for carrying out actions.

Recognition, appreciation & attractiveness

The findings, highlight the importance of giving recognition and appreciation to those who take part in solidarity actions: *“I feel in general people who are part in solidarity actions are underappreciated” (HypeEU_4)*

It is striking how this lack of recognition sometimes goes to the extreme of making undervaluing comments that aim to create mistrust and ridicule people who are involved in solidarity initiatives. In the following example, one CSO worker points out that: *“migrant communities there are not only underappreciated, but they are also sometimes called stupid or that they are getting something under the table (HypeUE_4)*

In the same line, another participant expressed similar views. In this case, this lack of recognition may be due to the monetary value that is often attached to our actions, giving less value to those actions that do not have a monetary value.

I found myself sometimes with comments like when something is free, that means that it is done with volunteers, then people take away value of the activity... or that something should be paid because otherwise it is not valued (...) And I think that it is not related to this lack of recognition when in the end what should have recognition and importance is those actions that have an impact, and if this is through solidarity actions even more (HypeEU_3).

This lack of recognition is also reflected in the results of the quantitative study, as they indicate a low sense of recognition in solidarity actions, as most respondents, to the question ‘Did you feel recognised?’ answered firstly ‘partly’ and secondly ‘a little’, both answers with little difference between them. Furthermore, in response to the question ‘Do you think that recognition is important for the increase of solidarity actions?’ We can also see that the option with the most responses was ‘a lot’, which means that these respondents attach importance to the recognition of solidarity actions.

It should be noted that the recognition obtained is usually focused on the national level and not so much on these small local organisations.

Media often highlights national organizations over small, grassroots ones. Volunteers at the local level rarely get public acknowledgment (Hype_AA2).

Local efforts often receive gratitude from residents but no acknowledgment at higher levels of government, which demoralizes workers and volunteers (Hype_AA5).

Therefore, it is important that there are recognised, although it is sometimes thought that this is not so important depending on the action, as expressed by the following participant: *“the issue of recognition matters to those who want to bring home results (e.g., asylum seekers), better conditions. Otherwise, it is not something that matters too much to associations” (Hype_Ita_3)*, linking it to the importance of solidarity actions with social impact.

This fieldwork participant, who works for a CSO, points out that there are certain strategies that organisations use to promote recognition:

We emphasize the real-life stories of those helped—this has been a powerful way to attract and retain new volunteers (HYPE_AA3)

However, to achieve this recognition, it is necessary to make these actions more attractive. For example, one participant commented that one of the ways is through the use of social media:

But they are also a great way to increase solidarity, and positive narratives, it always depends on how you use it. The problem is in all that there is before, there is during and after social media (Hype_Ita_2).

So, with social media we can change the narrative by focusing on it in the following way:

Some forms of volunteering are attractive because they are presented as forms that can change pieces of society. For example, ecology theme and migration theme, where you understand that the stakes are high and you can do something, they feel it is important to be there (Hype_Ita_3).

With regard to the attractiveness of solidarity actions today, the respondents think that it needs to be improved, as many of them answer “in part” or “a little” to the question “do you think doing good actions is seen as attractive today?”.

Results of the HYPE Online Workshop

The results of the HYPE online workshop on co-design of bottom-up Local Action Plans are presented in summary form. In all three cases, the Local Action Plans were discussed using six questions and the results are as follows:

Firstly, the debate focused on how to encourage young people to participate in the Local Action Plans. On the one hand, the Action Plans need to focus on the specific needs of young people, so that they feel attracted and motivated to participate. To do this, it is proposed to use the tools provided by social networks to create campaigns that are attractive to young people, for example, by opening a space for dialogue between people so that they can share their different points of view. However, they also need to be able to identify with the issue in some way, so that they have more incentive to participate and feel more motivated. This means including different voices, such as migrants, without excluding anyone, to achieve a fundamental diversity of viewpoints. On the other hand, it is proposed to approach young people through cooperation with schools, for example by starting different projects. Therefore, some

activities should be compulsory at the beginning, in order to facilitate the continuity of these people in the activity.

They also talk about the importance of communication in activities and that there should always be feedback and that different types of activities can be combined to increase the possibility of participation, in relation to the interests of said activities.

Secondly, with regard to creating spaces for dialogue and increasing the diversity of voices, they believe that an event should be created where people can meet and where people's concerns are collected, involving local authorities and organisations, to ensure that young people's voices are heard and then taken into account in decision-making. They also believe that political ideologies should be put aside when it comes to achieving greater diversity in local action.

To this end, they propose a consultative role in which the diversity of voices is included in the Local Action Plans, for example: associations of immigrants, people with disabilities, etc., and the presence of a mentor or the creation of commissions to ensure the support and safety for all participants.

Thirdly, in order to disseminate evidence-based information and avoid misinformation and the spread of fake information among young people in relation to actions, they suggest holding workshops for young people where they are given tools to identify false information and how to know when information is based on scientific evidence, as well as creating creative and interactive campaigns, through digital platforms, that address common misconceptions, in addition to countering fake news with content on social networks, which could be linked to having youth information ambassadors who promote truthfulness and verified information.

In addition, in order to achieve a high level of impact and benefit for the target groups and citizens, it is considered necessary to know the specific needs when acting, as well as to replicate previous plans that have been shown to have had a positive impact.

Furthermore, in terms of ways of demonstrating impact with evidence so that the community can see its actions reflected, it is suggested to share the record of actions

and information on the impact made with other local organisations and to use tools offered by social networks, such as the use of podcasts, or a similar format, which can share the results of the action can be shared in a more attractive way and therefore have a greater reach.

Finally, on the question of whether they think there are resistances and obstacles to the implementation of local actions through elements such as transparency, dialogue, etc., young people think that if there are, it is necessary to define precisely what the working measures are, that is, what is acceptable and what is not, in order to avoid them. In addition, a contingency plan should be drawn up to deal with any resistance that may arise. They also believe that there should be a budget that can guarantee better organisation and resistance to these obstacles.

Local Action Plan

Introduction

The Local Action Plan (LAP) for Greece/Italy aims to enhance citizens' participation by fostering youth-driven solidarity initiatives that address pressing societal challenges stemming from financial and refugee crises. This LAP seeks to mitigate the effects of social fragmentation, promote cohesion, and strengthen democratic values within the EU. The primary focus is on empowering youth, aged 18 to 35, from diverse backgrounds, including marginalized groups such as migrants, refugees, and people with disabilities. This plan aspires to create platforms for collaborative solutions, enabling participants to design, implement, and disseminate solidarity actions tailored to local needs while fostering dialogue on EU values and solidarity mechanisms.

Context and Needs

Greece/ Italy has been profoundly affected by financial and refugee crises, leading to social fragmentation, polarization, and youth disengagement. Young people often feel excluded from civic and solidarity initiatives, which exacerbates mistrust in institutions and limits their participation in collaborative problem-solving. Findings reveal that only 19% of EU youth consider solidarity with vulnerable groups as important, highlighting the need for initiatives to shift these perceptions. Additionally, successful solidarity actions emphasize inclusivity, transparency, and evidence-based design. The LAP seeks to address these gaps by providing structured opportunities for youth to engage in meaningful dialogue and co-create solutions that resonate with their lived experiences.

Implementation Strategy

The implementation strategy is divided into four phases to ensure a systematic approach to achieving the objectives. Visual elements such as flowcharts and diagrams

will be used to illustrate the process and enhance understanding. Each phase will be guided by a detailed timeline, specifying milestones such as:

- Research completion: Month 3
- Info Day: Month 6
- Public dialogue: Month 8
- Final policy workshop: Month 24

These dates are formatted consistently to ensure clarity and ease of tracking.

Phase 1: Research and Awareness

Inclusivity workshops were organized to ensure that all participants felt welcome and understood, fostering an environment of collaboration from the outset. Surveys targeting 200 youth participants in Greece and Italy gathered data on their attitudes towards solidarity, while five in-depth interviews with local CSOs and policymakers identified barriers and opportunities. The results were analyzed and presented during an Info Day event, which engaged 100 to 125 participants, including youth from marginalized communities. This event marked a pivotal milestone in fostering a shared understanding of solidarity's importance at both the local and EU levels. Additionally, it served as a platform to introduce the Local Solidarity Ecosystem and lay the groundwork for subsequent phases.

Phase 2: Dialogue and Co-Creation

A two-day public dialogue event was conducted to engage participants in small group discussions facilitated by experts. These discussions focused on challenges such as climate change, refugee integration, and youth inclusion. Following this, workshops were held where youth collaborated with CSOs to design three localized solidarity actions. These actions addressed themes such as social inclusion, climate resilience,

and community support. Detailed action plans were developed during these workshops, outlining objectives, timelines, and anticipated impacts.

Phase 3: Implementation of Youth-Led Solidarity Actions

Participants implemented the designed projects, which included community interventions like public space revitalization, awareness campaigns, and direct support initiatives for vulnerable groups. These activities were documented in a video created by the participants, amplifying their visibility and inspiring broader engagement. Engagement metrics were tracked, including pre- and post-activity assessments, to measure the skills and knowledge gained by participants. Approximately 50 to 75 participants were involved, showing improvements in areas such as collaboration, project design, and implementation.

Phase 4: Awareness and Policy Integration

An EU-wide awareness campaign was developed to showcase solidarity initiatives through social media and partners' networks, aiming to reach 800,000 individuals. A policy workshop convened local stakeholders, youth, and CSOs to discuss the integration of youth-led solidarity actions into local governance. The workshop also showcased best practices and success stories from similar projects across the EU to inspire and guide participants. Recommendations from these discussions informed future policies and initiatives.

Key Success Factors

The success of this LAP relies on several critical factors:

- Inclusivity: Ensuring that marginalized voices, including those of migrants and people with disabilities, are actively involved.

- Youth Leadership: Empowering young people to take charge of decision-making and implementation processes.
- Evidence-Based Design: Informed by research findings, ensuring that initiatives are rooted in the realities of participants and communities.
- Transparency and Communication: Open communication with stakeholders to strengthen trust and engagement, creating a foundation for sustained collaboration.

Anticipated Outcomes

The anticipated outcomes of this LAP are multifaceted:

- Immediate Benefits: Increased civic engagement, improved community relations, and tangible improvements in social cohesion and inclusivity within local communities.
- Skill Development: At the individual level, 130 youth participants gained valuable skills and knowledge in designing and implementing solidarity initiatives.
- Broad Awareness: An EU awareness campaign reached over 800,000 individuals, fostering a deeper understanding of solidarity as a response to societal challenges.
- Policy Recommendations: The policy workshop produced actionable recommendations for integrating youth-led solidarity into local governance, ensuring long-term impact.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation were integral to the LAP's success. A structured feedback mechanism was established, incorporating surveys, suggestion boxes, and regular feedback sessions for participants to share their experiences and provide input throughout the project phases. Additionally, a risk management plan was developed

to identify potential challenges, such as low participant engagement or logistical issues, and propose mitigation strategies to address them effectively.

Key Indicators: Engagement rates in events and activities, participant satisfaction, and the application of newly acquired skills in community projects

Mixed Methods: The monitoring and evaluation framework incorporated both qualitative measures, such as participant testimonials and success stories, and quantitative metrics, like attendance, project outcomes, and skill acquisition rates, to capture a comprehensive picture of the project's impact.

Continuous Feedback: Surveys and focus groups conducted post-events provided qualitative and quantitative data on these metrics. Continuous feedback loops allowed for real-time adjustments to enhance the effectiveness of activities.

Target Outcomes: Achieving a 90% satisfaction rate among participants and ensuring that 70% of them applied their knowledge in solidarity initiatives.

Sustainability

The sustainability of the LAP was ensured through institutional partnerships and dissemination of best practices:

- **Scalable Toolkits:** Specific successful actions, such as youth-led public space interventions, were documented and packaged into scalable toolkits to enable replication in other local and EU contexts.
- **Engagement with CSOs and Authorities:** Local CSOs and authorities were engaged to integrate solidarity actions into long-term community plans.
- **Clear Communication Channels:** Monthly meetings, quarterly newsletters, and an online forum were established to ensure consistent and sustained collaboration and alignment of objectives.

- Regular Feedback Sessions: These were organized to maintain ongoing communication, ensuring sustained collaboration and alignment of objectives.
- EU Multistakeholder Conference and Transnational Transferability Event: These events provided platforms for sharing outcomes and methodologies, encouraging replication across other EU regions. Toolkits and guidelines were developed to facilitate the scaling of successful actions, ensuring that the impact of this LAP extended beyond its initial implementation phase.

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Annex I. Agenda of the Online Workshop



Online workshop codesigning bottom-up Local Action Plans - 17th December 2024, 3-5pm

AGENDA

3-3.05pm: Welcome and Introduction

3.05-3.35: Keynote addresses

Research on Solidarity with Social Impact, Marta Soler-Gallart, Doctor by Harvard University. She is full Professor of Sociology at the University of Barcelona and Director of CREA (Community of Researchers on Excellence for All). Her work focuses on the analysis of communicative acts, as applied to social and gender inequalities, and gender violence prevention. Among other projects, she has been the IP of the SOLIDUS H2020 project funded by the European Commission on the analysis of solidarity acts during the crisis in Europe. She has published extensively and is among the 10 most cited authors worldwide on gender violence and social impact according to Google Scholar.

Elements of Success of Local Action Plans. The case of La Verneda-San Martí, Carla Jarque is lecturer at the Sociology department of the University of Barcelona. Current manager of Agora Association and Heura Association, at the School for Adults at La Verneda-Sant Martí an experience that has been showcased internationally at the Harvard Educational Review. She has extensive experience developing and implementing social programs and Erasmus+ projects in the social sector, where she has worked empowering vulnerable adults on social participation.

3.35-3.45: Introduction to the dialogic debates

3.45-4.30: Dialogic debates on LAP with social impact, in small groups

4.30-4.50: Sharing take-aways from the small groups

4.50-5.00: Closure



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Annex II. Dissemination poster/flyer



HYPE Online Workshop

co-designing bottom-up Local Action Plans

HYPE Youth unified in local ecosYstEms Promoting Solidarity project organises this event involving youth from across the EU in public dialogue, to **foster solidarity, strengthen EU democratic values** and build a more **resilient Europe**

We are gathering young people's views on solidarity to co-design **Local Action Plans** and drive youth-led initiatives.

SIGN UP!

for our ONLINE WORKSHOP and co-create actions for the future.

17th of December 3 to 5pm CET



HYPE
Youth unified in local ecosYstEms
Promoting Solidarity



https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1IXhVdsz_OldEM_CDO_6sdmjpu5WSeoKqYaH7hAFNPiPo/viewform?edit_requested=true












Annex III. Online workshop feedback collected (Mentimeter).



HYPE Online Workshop Take-aways

Use language of desire instead of language of ethics in the communication strategies addressed to young people

Sharing the activities to increase the social impact and making them accessible to every member of the local community.

I consider that it is important to reach very diverse people. To achieve this, it might be a good idea to have a very diverse commission of people, to reach more people and different collectives.


The keynote on the experience of the La Verneda San Martí local plan was very inspiring, combining scientific evidence and community participation in decision-making.

Using a language of reciprocity: each person can give something to other and can receive back something else.

To invite diverse people and population which usually do not participate in order to create co-creation spaces with real diversity of people that ensure egalitarian dialogues with all voices

Very inspiring conference. I appreciate knowing successful strategies to engage youth in solidarity actions. Listening to their voices, and drawing on their diversity are key issues

I believe this dialogic spaces are very important in order to share different experiences and knowledge based on scientific evidence. Thank you!



HYPE Online Workshop Take-aways

Very nice to discuss with people from different countries and ages!

The data about what makes solidarity actions attractive and the elements of success will be very useful to increase the impact of social actions we are or will be involved in

It was inspiring to get to know the experience of La Verneda, it is certainly a best practice that needs to be shared.

Very useful to have inspiring dialogues to share ideas, specially regarding the ways to include young people into Local Action Plans



HYPE

Youth unified
in local ecosYstEmS
Promoting Solidarity

Project's coordinator:

ActionAid Hellas