

COLLECTION OF BEST PRACTICES

ORIENTED RESEARCH ON ONLINE CAMPAIGNS



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INTRODUCTION

Today, online spaces play a huge role in how young people communicate, express their opinions, and take action on issues that matter to them. Social media is often the first place where young people react to injustice, challenge harmful narratives, and support each other. At the same time, these spaces can also be where hate speech, discrimination, and exclusion spread quickly. Because of this, youth led online campaigns have become an important tool for creating positive change and promoting more inclusive communities.

Across Europe, many young people are already using creative and effective ways to respond to these challenges. Through videos, posts, storytelling, and interactive content, they are finding ways to reach their peers and encourage different ways of thinking. However, while there are many strong examples, they are often not documented or shared in a structured way. This makes it harder for others to learn from them and build on what already works.

This research activity was created to respond to that need. The main goal is to collect and analyze real examples of successful youth led online campaigns that have addressed hate speech and promoted inclusivity. Instead of focusing only on theory, this process is based on practical experiences and concrete cases. Each partner organization will explore their national context and identify good practices that can inspire future campaigns.

As part of this process, every partner will collect at least four examples of successful campaigns, resulting in a minimum of sixteen case studies at the project level. These cases will help us better understand what makes a campaign effective, what challenges young people face during implementation, and which strategies help them reach and engage their audience.



In addition to mapping these practices, the research will also look at current social media trends and how different platforms influence campaign success. Since young people use platforms in different ways, it is important to understand how content works on each of them and how campaigns can adapt their approach.

Another important part of the research is direct input from young people and practitioners who are already active in this field. Through a shared questionnaire, youth activists, influencers, and campaign managers will share their experiences, especially when it comes to engaging audiences and creating content that resonates.

The research will bring together insights from different countries, including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, and Serbia. By comparing these contexts, we aim to identify both common principles that work across different environments and specific approaches that are shaped by local realities.

The final results will include national reports, a comparative overview of findings, practical recommendations, and a collection of case studies that can be used by youth workers and organizations when designing future campaigns. The intention is to make this knowledge useful, practical, and easy to apply, so that more young people can create campaigns that are meaningful, engaging, and impactful.



BEST PRACTICE MAPPING AND ANALYSIS

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ACROSS ALBANIA



Left: Ilektra Jole artwork in the city of Lezhe. Right: Drenusha Zajmi artwork in the city of Durres. Photo: UN Women Albania

The campaign “16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence” was implemented in Albania within the global UN-led 16 Days initiative (25 November – 10 December). The context of the campaign reflects the persistent challenge of gender-based violence (GBV) in Albania, including domestic violence, online harassment, discrimination, and harmful gender stereotypes.

Gender-based violence remains a structural social issue that affects women and girls disproportionately, reinforced by patriarchal norms,

silence around abuse, and normalization of discriminatory attitudes. The campaign took place in a national context where raising awareness, strengthening institutional response, and engaging youth and communities are key priorities in preventing violence.

The initiative was led by UN Women in Albania, in cooperation with national institutions, municipalities, civil society organizations, youth groups, and artists.

Official source:

<https://albania.unwomen.org/en/stories/news/2023/01/16-days-of-activism-against-gender-based-violence-across-albania>

Objectives of the campaign:

The campaign aimed to raise public awareness about gender based violence across Albania by challenging harmful social norms and stereotypes that perpetuate violence, promote zero tolerance toward violence against women and girls. Encourage reporting and support seeking behaviour as well as mobilize youth in general, civil society, and institution to take action.

Target Group:

Primary target group was to reach out to women and girls affected by or at risk of gender based violence as well as young people in general, such as students, youth activists, young activists, etc. The secondary target would be the general public across Albania and reaching out to local authorities, law enforcement and justice institutions as well as media and civil society organisations.



Geographical Distribution:

The campaign was implemented nationwide across Albania. Activities were implemented in different cities in Albania like Lezhe, Durrës, etc. Activities were organized in multiple municipalities and public spaces, including urban and local community settings. Public art interventions were created in different cities, ensuring visibility beyond the capital and promoting decentralized engagement.

Media distribution:

Media distribution of the campaign involved different stages such as use of website of UN Women Albania and other UN agencies, including social media platforms.

<https://eca.unwomen.org/en/stories/in-focus/2023/11/in-focus-16-days-of-activism-against-gender-based-violence-0>

<https://www.instagram.com/p/C0H5W7trlyH/>

https://web.facebook.com/unwomenalbania/videos/16-dite-aktivizem-2022/674323537753121/?_rdc=1&_rdr#

The campaign was also shared on traditional media channels.

Youth Involvement:

Youth engagement was a significant part of the campaign. Young people were involved in different stages of the campaign such as participation in the public events, engagement in creative activities and acting as multipliers of anti-violence messages within the schools and communities. By integrating youth participation, the campaign fostered civic responsibility, critical reflection on gender stereotypes, and youth-led advocacy against violence.



The artistic interventions particularly encouraged youth expression as a tool for social change.

Innovation and Transferability:

The campaign innovation was that it integrated with work of art and murals as anti-violence tools as well as combined national advocacy with local activities all around Albania. The campaign was used by the youngsters as a platform to address concerning issue to them in regards to gender based violence. Using murals and artistic expression to address violence represents an innovative communication approach that shifts from traditional awareness campaigns to participatory activism.

In regards to transferability, the campaign is highly transferable as it can replicated for small action in schools, community level but moderate resources, and at the same time it allows for high visibility. The campaign could be easily transfer to other topics such as Hate Speech, Discrimination, Online Safety, etc



JEMI NJË, BLOKO URREJTJEN. FAL DASHURI



As of December 2021 the raising awareness campaign in “Block the Hatred; Share the Love”, is implemented in Albania aiming to inform various local audiences on the danger of hate speech in different communities. Hate speech is on the rise across Europe, jeopardizing social cohesion and putting human rights under threat. In the Western Balkans region hate speech particularly targets members of vulnerable groups, who have already been affected by stigma and discrimination during the COVID-19 pandemic.

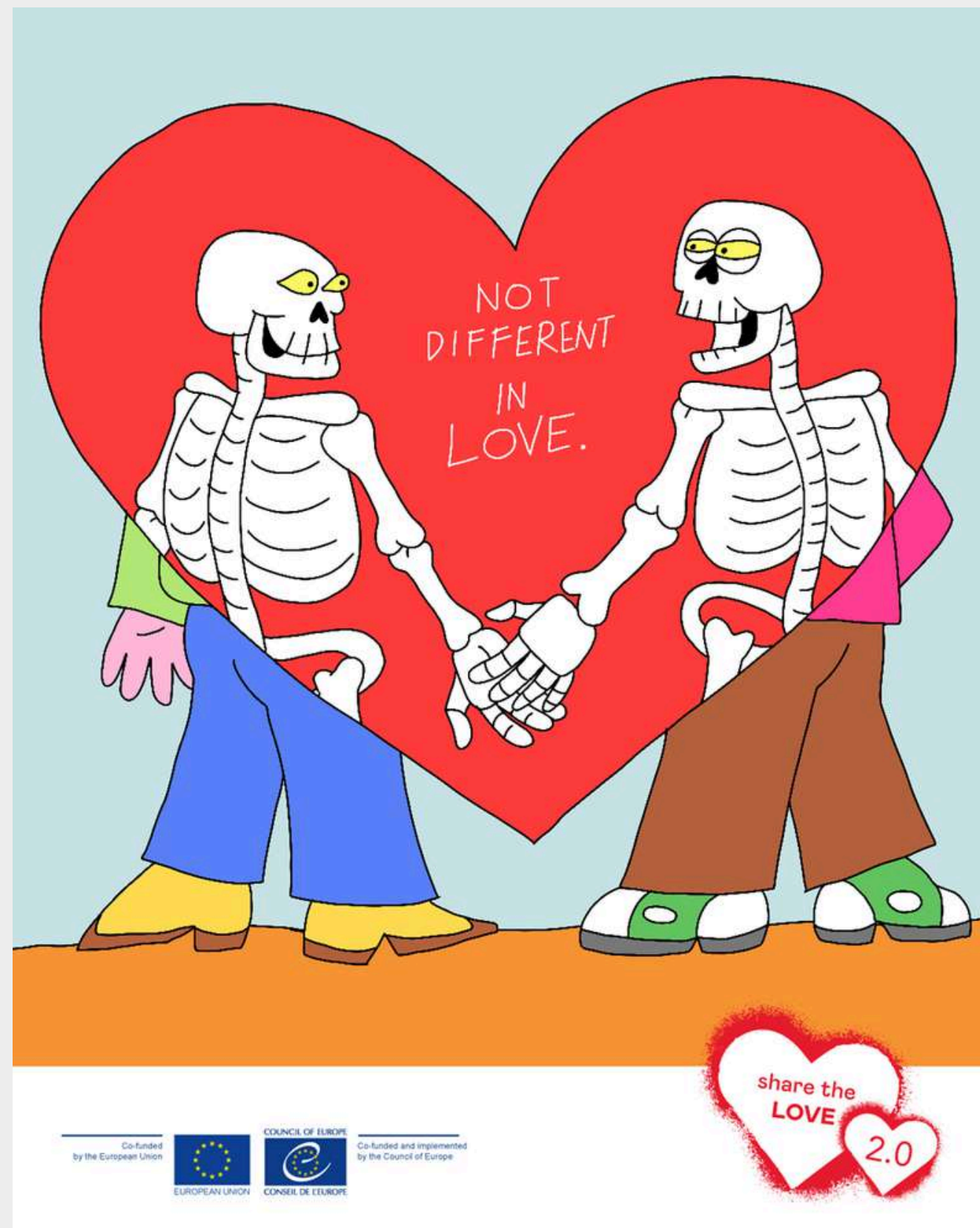
“Block the Hatred; Share the Love”, campaign will reach key target audiences about the risks of hate speech in our society.

The campaign also included a set of ambassadors from each participating country who would act as role models.

The campaign is also having a 2.0 edition which is ack blending online action with real-world events to promote respect and inclusion across the Western Balkans.

https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/horizontal-facility/home/-/asset_publisher/RGaJpmQVF5yF/content/meet-our-no-hate-ambassadors-who-joined-the-block-the-hatred-share-the-love-campaign

[https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/horizontal-facility/block-the-hatred.-share-the-love-2.0#{%22290687033%22:\[2\]}](https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/horizontal-facility/block-the-hatred.-share-the-love-2.0#{%22290687033%22:[2]})



Share the Love! is a joint European Union and Council of Europe awareness-raising initiative to counter hate speech in the Western Balkans. It mobilizes young people, public figures and communities to promote positive narratives and respect for diversity.

Objectives of the campaign:

The primary objective of the campaign was to combat and prevent hate speech in the Western Balkans. It mobilises young people, public figures and communities to promote positive narratives and respect for diversity.

Target Group:

The primary target group of the campaign is young people in general, as they are among the most exposed to online hate speech and since the campaign is online mostly, they are also active producers and consumers of digital content. The campaign also focuses on general public who are also the targeted receivers of the awareness campaign. Last but not least the campaign also focuses in engaging local authorities, educational institutions, public officials and media professionals in strengthening institutional response to hate speech.

Geographical Distribution:

The "Block the Hatred. Share the Love" campaign was conducted throughout the Western Balkans as part of the European Union and Council of Europe's joint Horizontal Facility programme. The initiative was implemented in all six Western Balkan countries, each represented by campaign ambassadors. This broad distribution demonstrates a high degree of transferability and facilitates greater engagement among young people.



Media distribution:

Media coverage of the campaign was primarily facilitated through the dissemination of information on the official Horizontal Facility platform, as well as via the digital channels of the Council of Europe and the European Commission. These institutions played a critical role in ensuring that key messages and campaign updates were accessible to a wide range of stakeholders, including young people, public officials, and the general public. In addition to these formal channels, the campaign maintained a robust presence across various social media platforms, which enabled it to engage actively with its target audiences, foster community interaction, and amplify awareness-raising efforts. By leveraging both institutional websites and social media networks, the campaign was able to maximize its outreach and impact, ensuring that its objectives of promoting respect, inclusion, and positive narratives were communicated effectively throughout the Western Balkans region.

Links to the articles:

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/inclusion-and-antidiscrimination/-/from-awareness-to-action-reinforcing-anti-discrimination-policing-in-albania>

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/tirana/-/anti-discrimination-week-2026-kicks-off-in-albania-promoting-equality-dignity-and-inclusion-for-all>

Youth Involvement:

Youth participation was the core of the “Block the Hatred. Share the Love” campaign. The initiative did not include young people merely as beneficiaries but as active contributors, creators, and multipliers of anti-hate narratives. They were involved in majority of the activities implemented and were included as contributors, designers, etc.



Innovation and Transferability:

Innovation and Transferability - Rather than relying solely on traditional awareness-raising tools (conferences, brochures, policy dialogue), the campaign used public murals as well as digital content as long-term communication tools. Murals served as permanent visual interventions in public spaces and digital content ensure maximum visibility and transferring the message online to the general audience.

Regarding transferability of the campaign, the model demonstrates high potential for replication across Albania and other European contexts.



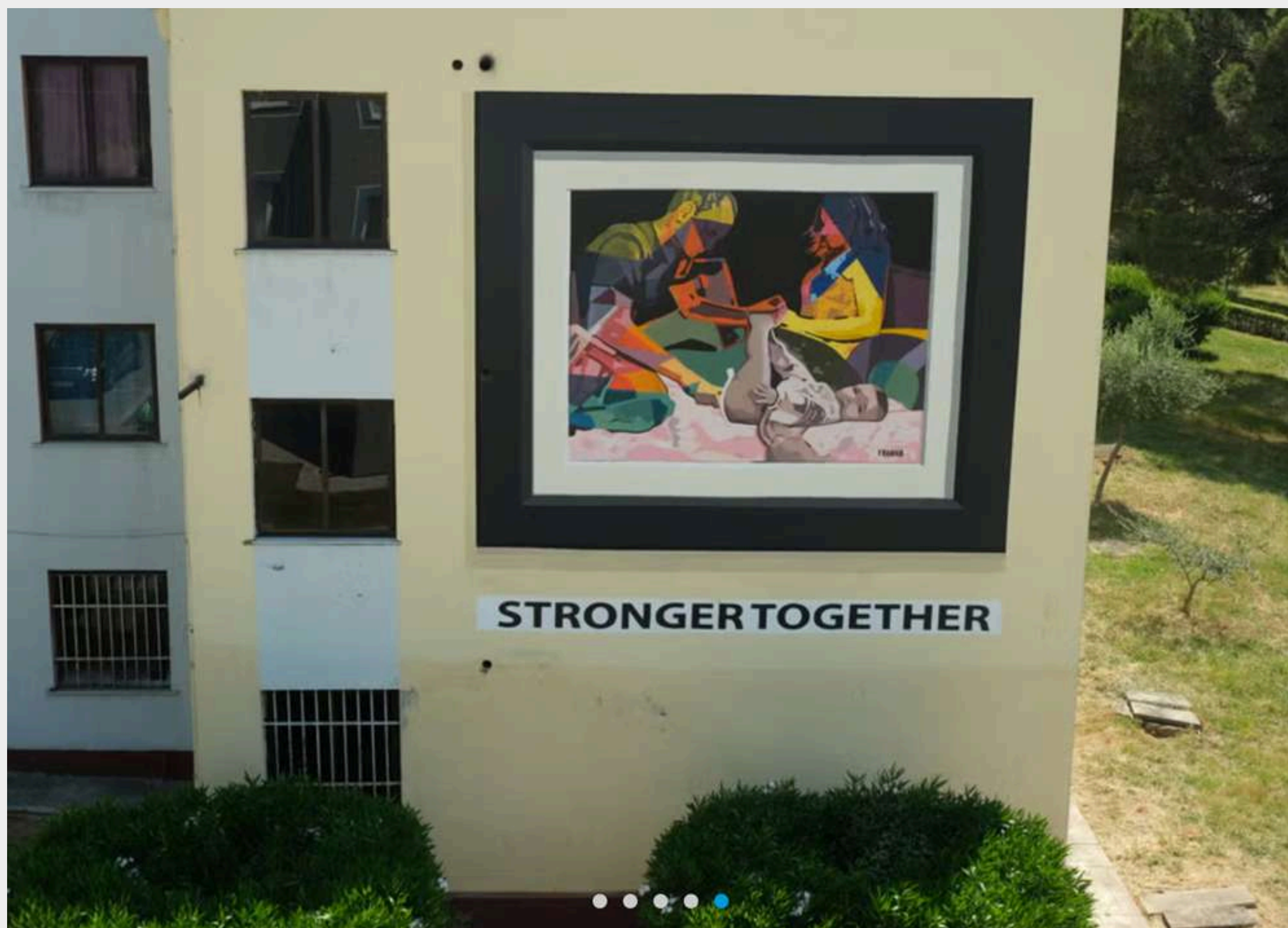
MURAL ARTIVISM: BREAKING THE WALLS OF GENDER INEQUALITY



As part of the Generation Equality campaign, seven distinguished local artists – from Albania, Georgia, Kosovo, Moldova, North Macedonia, Turkey, and the curator of the initiative from the United States of America – are starting a conversation on gender equality through mural art in Europe and Central Asia.

A mural is a painting on the wall in a public space that has the unique power to reach broad audiences and engage citizens in dialogue on social issues that are vital to the city or community. From ancient times until now, vibrant murals promote new urban narratives and social change through art.

To foster a rich dialogue, each muralist selected young aspiring artists to help them with the mural. This intergenerational experience provided the artists with an opportunity to usher the next generation into a more sustainable and just future for all.



<https://albania.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/multimedia/2021/06/mural-activism-0>

Objectives of the campaign:

- To raise awareness about gender inequality through public art
- To challenge harmful stereotypes and discriminatory norms
- To use public space as a platform for equality
- To engage youth and communities in gender equality advocacy

Target Group:

The target group of the campaign is the general public as well as women and girl through the use of creative art and creative youth. The campaign also targets men and boys as allies in gender equality.

Geographical Distribution:

The campaign was implemented in several countries in the Western Balkan as well as beyond the Balkans. In Albania the mural was implemented by Franko Dinaj and Gerald Ago and is located in Tirana.

Media distribution:

The media distribution of the campaign included the official website of the UN Women Albania (<https://albania.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/multimedia/2021/06/mural-activism-0>) as well as their social media channels such as facebook, Instagram, etc.

Youth Involvement:

Youth involvement was a core factor to the campaign. Young artists were involved in the conceptualizing of the mural, designing gender equality messaging and participating in public discussions. They were working together with decision makers and relevant stakeholders in order to encourage youth gender equality narratives as well as built civic engagement skills.

Innovation and Transferability:

The campaign uses an innovative approach as it transforms public space into a platform for social change by combining artistic expression with advocacy, so moving beyond the “traditional” awareness raising methods such as conferences, media statements etc. By engaging young people in creating visible, permanent mural that challenges gender stereotypes and discrimination, the initiative



merges art, youth participation, and institutional support into a participatory model of civic engagement. Transferability of the campaign is very easy as it is simple and adaptable to any model such as youth led mural creation and also for different topics that can be addressed through it. The campaign can be implemented or replicated by municipalities, schools, and civil society organizations with moderate resources.



MURAL FEST



“MURAL FEST,” launched in 2018 by the Agency of Décor from the Municipality of Tirana in Albania, invites artists from across the globe to participate. The festival transforms the city's walls through carefully curated murals created by both local and international talent.



By incorporating contemporary urban art into public spaces, this initiative strengthens the visual identity of the capital, enriching the urban landscape with vibrant color, artistic creativity, and cultural significance. Mural Fest serves as a valuable platform for national and international artists to raise awareness about various social phenomena occurring worldwide.

Links to the articles:

<https://tvklan.al/foto-mural-fest-ne-tirane-hapesirat-urbane-kthehen-ne-vepra-arti>

<https://rtsh.al/nis-mural-fest-tirana-haliti-zbulon-risine-kete-vit-dokemi-me-shume-artiste-vajza-qe-do-pikturojne-muret-e-kryeqytetit/>

<https://abcnews.al/mural-fest-veliaj-tirana-qyteti-i-shumengjyrave/>

<https://a2news.com/mural-fest-artistet-e-huaj-ne-tirane-kane-nje-mision-artin-qe-ndryshon-fytyren-e-qytetit>

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/nNxwsUHcCz4>

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DA-V-hWt1uY/>

MURAL FEST emerged during a period of rapid urban regeneration in Tirana. Historically, many city walls were grey, neglected, or associated with informal graffiti. The campaign responded to the need for revitalizing public spaces, promoting contemporary cultural identity, and engaging youth through creative expression. The festival also reflects a broader European trend of using urban art to foster inclusion, civic pride, and social inclusion.



Objectives of the campaign:

The primary objectives of Mural Fest are to transform public urban spaces into accessible artistic environments, promote contemporary urban art, and support emerging artists. Additionally, the initiative aims to foster cultural dialogue between local or national artists and their international counterparts. Mural Fest also serves as a platform for raising awareness on important social themes, including diversity, gender equality, identity, and sustainability. Another key objective is to revitalize the walls of Tirana, enhancing its image as a vibrant, creative, and youth-friendly capital.

Target Group:

The general target group of the campaign were artists in general with special focus on young artists (local and international) whom are interested in urban art and creative industries. The campaigns also focused on the general public in Tirana and different stakeholders such as cultural stakeholders but not only.

Geographical Distribution:

The campaign originates in Tirana and is physically implemented throughout various neighborhoods of the city. Over time, murals have become visible landmarks across different urban districts, increasing spatial visibility and city-wide impact.

Temporally, the festival occurs annually, allowing sustained visibility and progressive growth in recognition.

Media distribution:

The campaign was transmitted through traditional media such as TV, radio, newspapers as well as digital media such as social media, media outlets, various websites etc.



Youth Involvement:

Youth are actively involved as participating artists, assistants, volunteers, and audience members. The festival provides visibility and professional exposure to young creatives. Although initiated by a municipal body, young people are central contributors to the artistic output.

Innovation and Transferability:

MURAL FEST represents a best practice because it:

- Uses public space as an open-air cultural platform;
- Combines institutional support with grassroots artistic participation;
- Integrates art with social messaging;
- Generates both offline (murals) and online (media/social media) engagement.

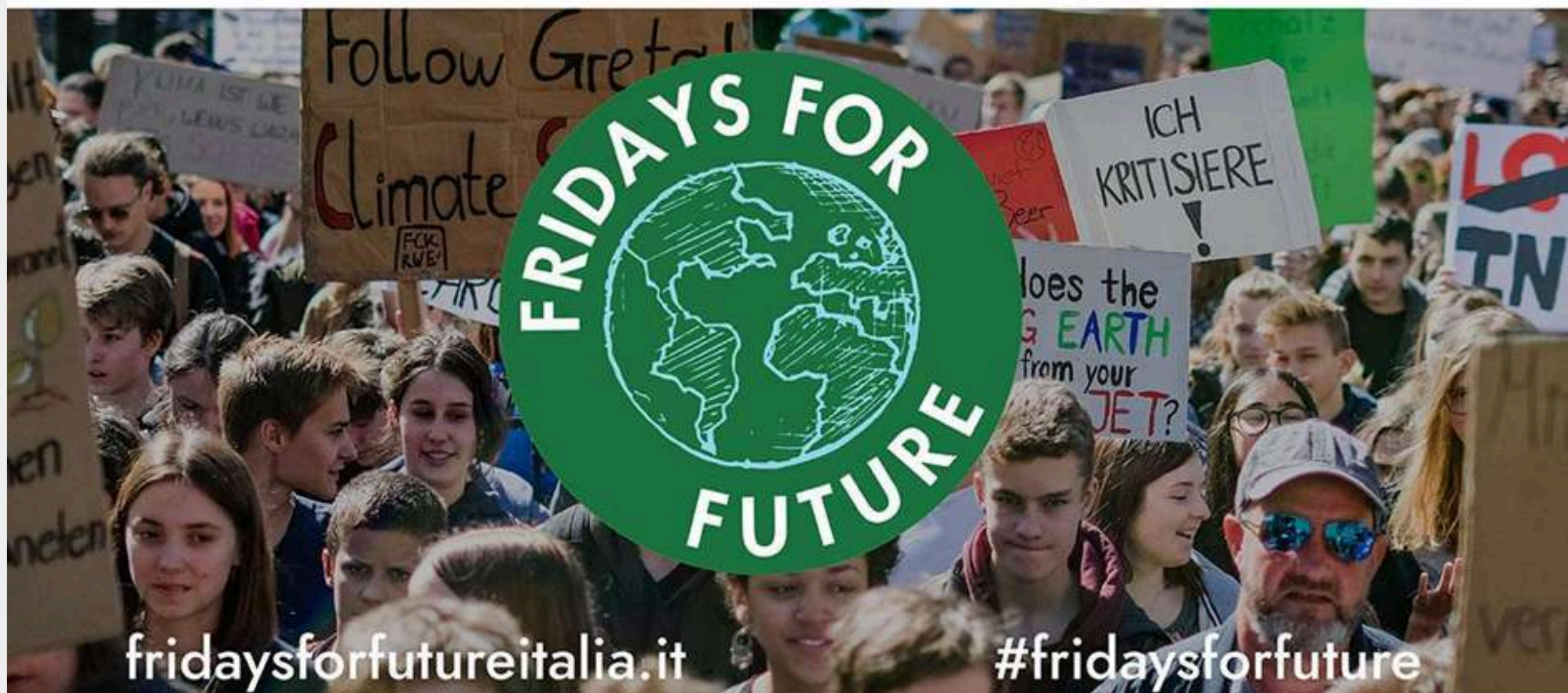
The model is highly transferable. Any municipality with public walls and youth artistic communities could replicate this approach. The key elements—partnership with local government, curated artist selection, strong media strategy, and public accessibility—make it adaptable to other cities and countries.



FRIDAYS FOR FUTURE ITALIA (FFF ITALIA)



SCENDI IN PIAZZA PER IL CLIMA!



In Italy, the campaign is implemented by [Fridays For Future Italia](https://www.fridaysforfutureitalia.it), a youth-led climate movement with national coordination and local groups. It has been active since the late 2010s, with ongoing national and local actions continuing into 2026, and operates mainly through its official website, participation guidance tools, and a Telegram channel for distribution. Fueled by strong climate anxiety among young people, with over 70 percent of Italians under 25 fearing irreversible impacts, the movement responds to the country's key environmental challenges such as recurrent floods, southern droughts, Alpine wildfires, and seismic risks, all intensified by fossil fuel reliance and the dominant role of ENI despite EU Green Deal commitments. Inspired by Thunberg's 2018 strikes and launched later that year following IPCC warnings on the 1.5°C threshold, it challenges cultural denial, political influence, and greenwashing while highlighting intergenerational injustice and promoting coordinated strikes as a key tool for mobilizing local communities.

Objectives:

Mobilize youth and communities for climate justice through structured strikes, local groups, and amplified communication, per FFF's playbook emphasizing autonomous nodes for action announcements and sustained pressure. Demands include Italy's net-zero by 2030/2050 globally, equitable transitions safeguarding workers (e.g., GKN factory reconversion), protection for vulnerable communities (caporalato-impacted migrants), science-driven policies, and holistic economic/lifestyle overhauls for true sustainability - tackling youth-specific fears like disrupted futures, shaped by Thunberg-inspired global waves and Italian pain points like unsustainably heated schools. Aims for policy wins (e.g., fossil phase-outs), cultural shifts, and empowered activism, aligning with education reform for eco-literacy and broader civic empowerment initiatives.

Target Group:

Primary: Young people/students aged 14-25, especially school pupils and emerging activists forming/joining local groups to drive climate justice narratives and actions.

Secondary: Broader civic communities, allied environmental NGOs (e.g., Legambiente), workers, and policymakers - inclusive of all ages but youth-centric for authenticity. Focuses on digitally savvy, sustainability-passionate Italians across regions, from urban Roma to Puglia's Bari activists.

Geographical distribution:

Decentralized national footprint since late 2018 via 100+ autonomous local groups (viewable on interactive map: <https://fridaysforfutureitalia.it/mappa/>), adopting a "create/join locally" ethos for city-tailored initiatives. Cascade-originated from global strikes, it exploded with 2019 peaks (e.g., 100k+ in Milan on



March 15, 1M+ nationwide), sustaining through annual Global Climate Strikes, regional assemblies (Torino, Napoli), and Puglia/Bari hubs - persistent to 2026 amid COP events and domestic floods.

Media distribution:

- Digital HQ: <https://fridaysforfutureitalia.it> for organizing guides, participation calls, social setup tips, and campaign toolkits.
- Coordination channels: Telegram (<https://t.me/s/fffitalia>) for real-time action alerts, content distribution, and inter-group sync - core for 1929+ updates.
- Amplifiers: Instagram/Twitter (#FridaysForFuture, #ClimateChallenge); global FFF platforms; national press/TV strike coverage; specialized kits (anti-ENI campaigns) - fostering viral youth-led virality from local posts to million-view protests.

Youth Involvement:

Quintessentially youth-driven: explicit guidance empowers under-25s to spawn local groups, manage social accounts, orchestrate strikes/assemblies (e.g., 2019 Milan mega-event), and spearhead campaigns like GKN worker-climate solidarity or anti-caporalato - handling full lifecycle from ideation to policy advocacy with adult allies in support roles only.

Innovation:

Masterful federated scaling: local autonomy under unified "Fridays" branding/narrative, repeatable formats (weekly school strikes for disruption, assemblies for frame-negotiation), and hybrid digital tactics (hashtags/kits blending offline masses with online persistence) - sustaining momentum where siloed activism falters.



Transferability:

Effortlessly global: "local nodes + shared toolkit + national/international calendars" with minimal governance - anyone launches via online maps/guides, customizing to contexts (Italy's ENI to coal elsewhere). From Swedish origins to 7,500+ cities, it flourishes in school/youth ecosystems worldwide, low-barrier entry fueling exponential spread.



MABASTA (STUDENT-LED ANTI-BULLYING / CYBERBULLYING)



The campaign is implemented by [MABASTA](#), an initiative launched in 2016 by adolescents and centered on youth protagonism in the fight against bullying and cyberbullying. Active from 2016 to the present, it continues to develop activities and updates, using its website and social media pages as main communication channels. The initiative emerged in response to the widespread issue of bullying in Italian schools, where around 20 to 30 percent of students are affected each year, often treated as a normal part of growing up despite serious consequences such as anxiety, depression, isolation, and even suicide.

With the rise of social media, these forms of violence have expanded into a constant online presence, making it harder for victims to escape and increasing fear of retaliation. Born from a group of high school students who directly witnessed the impact on their peers, MABASTA challenges traditional top-down approaches and instead promotes

peer-driven solutions, aiming to reshape how young people perceive and respond to aggression while supporting mental health and solidarity among students.

Objectives:

Core aims: prevent and eradicate bullying/cyberbullying via youth-led sensitization, providing practical tools like anonymous reporting modules ("MabaTest") and structured interventions to enable safe action, protection, and cultural transformation within schools. The "Modello Mabasta" - six evidence-based actions - equips students aged 9-16 to transform passive "spettatori" (bystanders) into "contro-branco" (anti-pack) agents, directly tackling hidden aggressions, cyber harms, and relational violence identified through student-led surveys of thousands of peers. Shaped by grassroots research revealing systemic failures (e.g., unreported incidents), it seeks measurable outcomes like reduced victimization rates, empowered school climates, and welfare shifts - aligning with broader youth empowerment, anti-violence advocacy, and EU priorities on child safety and mental health resilience.

Target Group:

Primary: Adolescents/students aged 9-16 (elementary to high school), encompassing victims, bullies, bystanders ("spettatori"), and peers in vulnerable school environments nationwide - those experiencing isolation, low self-esteem, or digital pressures.

Secondary: Teachers, parents, school leaders, and communities as supporters/multipliers, enabling holistic ecosystem change without diluting youth protagonism. Tailored messaging uses relatable peer language for max impact on digital natives prone to bullying/cyberbullying across Italy's diverse regions.



Geographical distribution:

Originating in Lecce, Puglia (2016), it rapidly scaled nationally via school adoptions, reaching 800+ classes and 80,000+ students by 2023, with balanced pilots like MabaKit distributed to 27 schools (9 each in North, Center, South) ensuring equitable spread. Ongoing presence in hundreds of institutions, from southern hotspots like Puglia/Calabria to northern Lombardy/Veneto, through visits, trainings, and crowdfunding expansions - demonstrating sustained, decentralized growth without losing grassroots roots.

Media distribution:

- Official platform: <https://www.mabasta.org> as central hub for tools, MabaTest reporting module, manuals, and calls-to-action - referenced by Puglia youth platforms.
- Social reach: Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/mabasta.bullismo/>) for viral shares, live events, and peer stories reaching 10k+ followers.
- Earned media: Crowdfunding successes (Produzioni dal Basso); TV features; newspapers like La Voce a Sud (<https://www.lavoceassociazioneculturaleasud.it/w/2023/10/27/i-ragazzi-di-mabasta-lanciano-un-crowdfunding-per-debullizzare-27-sc>), Binario2, amplifying to 65,000+ students via school networks and organic virality.

Youth Involvement:

Explicitly "student-animated," MABASTA embodies total youth ownership: founded and led by teens (e.g., Mirko Cazzato's inaugural class), who co-designed the 6-action Model through peer dialogues, implement interventions (MabaProf nominations, MabaTest surveys, Bulliziotti groups, MabaClass pacts, anti-branco campaigns, MabaMeter monitoring), train fellow students, and iterate based on real-time feedback - positioning youth as protagonists from inception to daily rollout.



Innovation:

Revolutionizes anti-bullying by fusing awareness with actionable tech/tools: anonymous digital reporting (MabaTest), peer "Bulliziotti" circles, and the scalable 6-step "Modello Mabasta" that flips bystanders into "contro-branco" enforcers of class pacts - backed by MabaKit hardware/software for evidence-based monitoring, proving 40-50% victimization drops in pilots. Bottom-up simplicity + data-driven iteration outshines generic PSAs, thriving on peer authenticity over adult authority.

Transferability:

Plug-and-play "school kit" model excels globally:

- (1) form student teams,
- (2) deploy safeguarding/reporting flows (adapt MabaTest legally),
- (3) run peer workshops/Bulliziotti,
- (4) customize child-protection guidance to local laws

all via free online manuals/resources. Proven national scaling from Puglia proves adaptability; crowdfunding sustains international rollouts, fitting any context's bullying variants with peer-led universality for schools worldwide.



RETE “VOTO FUORISEDE” / “IO VOTO FUORI SEDE” (CIVIC RIGHTS ADVOCACY)



The campaign is implemented by Rete Voto Fuorisede in collaboration with partners such as [The Good Lobby Italia](#) and Will Media. It represents a multi-year advocacy effort, ongoing since 2015, which has included petitions and legislative initiatives, culminating in a popular initiative bill deposited in 2025. The campaign operates through dedicated campaign pages, social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, and YouTube content. It addresses the structural barriers faced by students and workers living away from their registered residence, who often struggle to access voting, leading to inequalities in political participation and representation.

This issue affects an estimated 2 to 5 million “fuorisede,” many of them young people from southern Italy studying or working in the north, and contributes to high youth abstention rates exceeding 50 percent. In this context, the campaign challenges outdated electoral laws that

conflict with constitutional principles of equality, while responding to a highly mobile society and ongoing debates around remote voting, especially in the post-COVID period and within broader national development discussions.

Objectives:

Advocate for a law enabling out-of-town voters (“fuorisede”) to vote more easily; mobilize public support via petitions and coordinated communication. Secure law for distance/off-site voting in national/regional/admin elections via special seats or remote options, reducing barriers/costs to boost youth turnout and representation. Addresses disenfranchisement fueling abstention, driven by student/worker needs and EU peers' norms, aiming for fuller democracy - aligning with youth civic empowerment.

Target Group:

Primary: Young “fuorisede” voters - students (18-25, often south-to-north like Puglia-to-Milano), early-career workers displaced from home communes, under-35s burdened by 200-500€ travel costs per election.

Secondary: Policymakers (MPs/Senate), institutions (Ministry of Interior), general public/opinion leaders to build pressure. Precision-targeting mobilizes digitally native youth via relatable "your vote matters here" framing.

Geographical distribution:

Fully national, mirroring mobility flows: strongest traction among southern-origin students in northern powerhouses (Milano, Bologna, Padova universities), with roots/actions in Sicily (Palermo TAR suits), Puglia origins, and pan-Italy petitions peaking 2020+. 2025-26 Senate bill and referendum drives sustain cross-regional momentum, from Veneto campuses to Calabrian diasporas.



Media distribution:

- Petition nexus: <https://www.thegoodlobby.it/campagne/io-voto-fuorisede/> (50k+ signatures milestone).
- Hub site: <https://www.votofuorisede.it> for resources/calls.
- Social ecosystem: Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/iovotofuorisede/>) & Instagram for amplification; Will Media storytelling videos; YouTube awareness/panels (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SLF9eWHNsPY>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z-n7uLgEc5A>).[8]
- Press ecosystem: L'Espresso (<https://lespresso.it/c/politica/2025/12/15/voto-fuorisede-proposta-legge/58820>),
- Il Fatto (<https://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2026/02/03/referendum-giustizia-voto-fuorisede-appello-notizie/8278478/>),
- Pagella Politica (<https://pagellapolitica.it/articoli/voto-fuorisede-referendum-costituzionale-giustizia>)—viral youth traction via shareable narratives.

Youth Involvement:

Strong relevance to youth: campaign focuses on students and youth rights; youth are mobilized as signatories, storytellers, and public advocates (through a network model). Youth-led: students/workers initiate petitions, strategic litigation (e.g., Palermo suit), lobbying (meetings with MPs), signature drives - direct creators/implementers via The Good Lobby/Rete coordination.



Innovation:

Clear “policy change” target paired with coalition-based media distribution (advocacy + media partners) and multi-platform storytelling. Dual strategy: mass petitions (20k-50k sigs) + strategic litigation/court challenges alongside closed-door MP advocacy; leverages digital tools for remote mobilization, framing as constitutional right for modern mobility.

Transferability:

Transferable to other countries where “internal mobility + voting barriers” exist: replicate coalition model (advocacy + youth networks + media), plus a clear legislative ask and narrative campaign.

Model's petition-litigation-lobby combo replicable for any disenfranchisement issue; digital focus suits global youth campaigns, adaptable to countries lacking out-of-residence voting (e.g., via EU norms), with open resources for networks.



NO HATE SPEECH MOVEMENT ITALIA (NHSM ITALIA)



**NO HATE
SPEECH
MOVEMENT**

In Italy, the campaign is implemented by [No Hate Speech Movement Italia](#), a youth-led initiative focused on countering hate speech and promoting human rights. It is part of the broader [No Hate Speech Movement](#) launched in 2013, with ongoing national and local activities, and operates mainly through its official website and social media channels, particularly Facebook. The campaign responds to the persistent issue of online hate speech among young people, which is amplified by social media platforms where discriminatory narratives around migration, LGBTQ+ inclusion, and ethnic differences are widespread. Its relevance increased following the 2011 Utøya massacre, which exposed the role of digital spaces in spreading extremist ideologies, and continues in a context where intolerance, populism, and online echo chambers shape youth experiences. With a significant number of young people encountering hate speech online, the initiative addresses gaps in digital rights protection and promotes active, responsible digital citizenship while strengthening youth resilience in increasingly unsafe online environments.



Objectives:

NHSM Italia's core aims include producing and disseminating counter-narratives to drown out hate, equipping young people, activists, and youth workers with training for local campaigns and initiatives, while bolstering national advocacy networks against racism, xenophobia, and all intolerance forms. These goals directly confront youth-specific vulnerabilities like cyberbullying, identity-based harassment, and radicalization pipelines, spurred by post-Utøya solidarity and gaps in Italy's digital policy framework - seeking measurable shifts like increased reporting rates and peer-led interventions. Ultimately, it drives behavioral change toward human rights defense online, aligning seamlessly with EU Youth Goals on inclusion, empowered participation, and non-formal education for democratic resilience.

Target Group:

Primary: Youth aged 13-30, especially online-active "internauti giovani," student activists, and digital natives passionate about human rights, media literacy, and anti-discrimination efforts - those most exposed to hate across urban Puglia hubs to northern cities.

Secondary: Youth workers, NGOs, educators, and the broader online public encountering toxic narratives, enabling ripple effects through trained multipliers. This segmentation tailors content for maximum resonance, from viral memes for teens to toolkits for facilitators.

Geographical distribution:

National scope since 2013, anchored by APICE's coordination and a 55-member National Support Group spanning Italy, with European ties to the Council of Europe's No Hate Speech framework (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/no-hate-campaign>). Key hotspots include Veneto (Padova's Xena Center for regional events), Emilia-Romagna classrooms via school programs, Rome/Milan for advocacy gatherings, and Puglia/Sicily for grassroots actions - spreading through annual "action days," hubs, and sustained momentum into 2026 amid ongoing digital threats.



Media distribution:

- Official hub: <https://www.nohatespeechmovement.it> for toolkits, campaigns, and calls-to-action.
- Social media: Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/NoHateSpeechIT/> and <https://www.facebook.com/nohatespeechitalia> via Agenzia Nazionale Giovani) for viral youth shares and live events.
- Broadcast: RAI TV/radio spots reaching millions; school multimedia contests generating user content.
- Networks: Council of Europe portals; Rete contro l'odio features (<https://www.retecontroodio.org/2021/01/29/no-hate-speech-movement-italia/>); emerging TikTok/Instagram Reels for counter-narratives, amplifying from national broadcasts to hyper-local youth feeds.

Youth Involvement:

Far beyond passive recipients, youth under 35 lead as National Support Group core members, co-creating content like the WeCAN! manual for alternative narratives, spearheading "action days" with workshops, and peer-delivering trainings that position them as change agents rather than hate victims. This activist-driven model ensures initiatives reflect lived digital experiences, with teens shaping everything from viral challenges to policy inputs.

Innovation:

NHSM Italia innovates by prioritizing narrative reframing - crafting empowering counter/alternative stories over mere hate removal/reporting - integrated with hands-on capacity building like digital literacy trainings and content production labs for youth/youth workers. Its four pillars (human rights education, skills training, youth leadership, narrative innovation) deliver via tools like WeCAN!, enabling thousands to produce relatable, viral activism that outperforms top-down PSAs through peer authenticity and multimedia creativity.



Transferability:

Exceptionally adaptable blueprint: replicate by

- (1) assembling a youth editorial team for content,
- (2) designing a counter-narrative calendar tied to local events,
- (3) deploying open-source training toolkits/manuals, and
- (4) forging school/NGO partnerships for rollout.

Proven across Council of Europe's 44 countries, it thrives in Erasmus+ programs or beyond-EU contexts by customizing to regional hatespeech triggers, leveraging free digital resources for low-barrier global scaling.



“TOLERANCE” CAMPAIGN (KAMPANJA „TOLERANCIJA“)



SERBIA



The “Tolerance” campaign (Kampanja „Tolerancija“) is a national awareness raising initiative from Serbia, implemented by the United Nations in Serbia, meaning the UN Country Team in Serbia, and the Council of Europe Office in Belgrade, within the joint EU and Council of Europe programme Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Türkiye. The campaign was launched in Belgrade on 17 June 2025, marking the International Day for Countering Hate Speech, and its duration is six months. It focuses on combating hate speech and promoting inclusion through youth engagement, education, media outreach, and public dialogue, as part of a broader regional effort supported by the European Union.

A particularly important element of the launch was its strong youth dimension, shown through a youth led panel discussion and the unveiling of a large public mural, which symbolized the role of art and young people in challenging hate narratives, encouraging dialogue, and strengthening social cohesion.

Relevant links:

- <https://serbia.un.org/en/296380-youth-and-decision-makers-join-forces-counter-hate-speech-through-dialogue-and-art-%E2%80%93-and>
- <https://www.instagram.com/reels/DLFB68ZtC7z/>

The “Tolerance” campaign was developed in response to the growing presence of hate speech, discrimination, and social polarization in Serbia, particularly in online spaces where young people are highly active. In recent years, public discourse has increasingly reflected divisions based on ethnicity, gender, migration status, and other identity factors, often amplified through social media. At the same time, Serbia, as part of the Western Balkans, carries a complex historical and cultural background shaped by past conflicts, which continues to influence narratives of identity and “otherness.” This context makes initiatives that promote dialogue, empathy, and inclusion especially relevant. The campaign was therefore positioned as a timely intervention aimed at engaging young people in countering harmful narratives, using both digital tools and creative public expression, such as murals, to address hate speech in a way that resonates with their everyday experiences and communication channels.



Objectives:

The main objective of the “Tolerance” campaign is to combat hate speech and promote a culture of respect, inclusion, and dialogue among young people in Serbia. It seeks to raise awareness about the harmful impact of hate speech, encourage critical thinking and responsible online behavior, and empower youth to actively challenge discrimination in their communities and on digital platforms. The campaign aims to bring cooperation between young people and decision-makers, creating spaces for open dialogue and mutual understanding. Through the use of creative approaches, including art and public engagement, the campaign also intends to make messages of tolerance more visible, accessible, and impactful.

Target Group:

The primary target group of the campaign consists of young people in Serbia, particularly those who are active online and are both exposed to and capable of influencing digital communication spaces. This includes youth activists, students, and young creators who can play a key role in spreading positive narratives and countering hate speech. The campaign also indirectly targets a broader audience, including decision-makers, educators, media representatives, and the general public, with the aim of fostering a wider societal shift towards more inclusive and respectful communication.

Geographical Distribution:

The “Tolerance” campaign was launched in Belgrade, which is often the main starting point for national initiatives in Serbia, especially those involving international organizations and public institutions. While the launch event and mural were placed in the capital, the campaign itself is not limited to one location. Through its online activities and engagement with young people, it has the potential to reach different parts of the country, including smaller cities and local communities where these topics are equally relevant.



From our perspective, what makes this approach useful is that the campaign does not stay only in one place but spreads through digital channels and youth networks over time. Since it runs for six months, it allows for continuous visibility and the possibility to expand its reach gradually across Serbia.

Media distribution:

The campaign combines several types of media in order to reach a wider audience. The main communication is done through official institutional platforms, which helps build credibility and ensures that the message reaches national level stakeholders. At the same time, social media is used to connect with young people, especially through visual content that can be easily shared and reposted. An important element of the campaign is also the use of public space as a communication channel. This includes the mural created during the launch, as well as the traveling exhibition “The Tolerance Project” held in Belgrade, where posters with messages of tolerance were displayed in an open and highly visible location. These visual elements function as offline media that can easily transition into online content through photos and sharing, which increases the overall reach of the campaign. This combination of institutional communication, social media, and public visual interventions makes the campaign more accessible and impactful.

- <https://serbia.un.org/en/296380-youth-and-decision-makers-join-forces-counter-hate-speech-through-dialogue-and-art-%E2%80%93-and>
- <https://serbia.un.org/en/301774-global-traveling-exhibition-tolerance-project-returns-belgrade-new-edition>
<https://www.instagram.com/reels/DLFB68ZtC7z/>
- https://www.instagram.com/un_serbia/
- <https://www.instagram.com/councilofeurope/>
- <https://www.instagram.com/eusrbija/>



Youth Involvement:

Young people are actively involved in the “Tolerance” campaign, not only as a target group but also as contributors to its implementation. From the very beginning, youth participation was visible through their role in public discussions, including the panel organized during the launch event where young voices were part of the conversation with decision makers. The campaign creates space for young people to express their views, share experiences, and take part in shaping messages around tolerance and inclusion. The use of creative formats such as murals and visual exhibitions opens opportunities for youth engagement through art and public expression, which is something that resonates strongly with younger generations. While the campaign is initiated by larger institutions, it still relies on youth participation to make the message more authentic, relatable, and impactful, especially when it comes to spreading content online and within their own communities.

Innovation and Transferability:

What makes the “Tolerance” campaign a strong example of good practice is the way it combines different approaches that speak directly to young people, instead of relying only on traditional awareness raising. One of the most innovative elements is the use of public space and visual art, such as murals and poster exhibitions, together with online communication. This creates a connection between offline and online environments, allowing the message to be seen in everyday life and then further shared through social media. Another important aspect is the inclusion of young people in discussions with decision makers, which makes the campaign feel more participatory and not just top down. This combination of dialogue, creativity, and visibility helps the campaign engage young people in a more natural and relatable way.



From our perspective, the campaign is effective because it uses formats that young people already connect with, such as visual content, public expression, and social media sharing, while also giving them space to be heard. At the same time, the structure of the campaign is quite flexible, which makes it easy to transfer to other contexts. Activities like murals, poster exhibitions, youth discussions, and online campaigns can be adapted to different countries depending on local issues and cultural specifics. Organizations in other countries could replicate this approach by combining digital campaigns with creative actions in public space and by actively involving young people in both the development and implementation of activities. This makes the model simple to adapt while still keeping its impact strong.



BLOCK THE HATRED. SHARE THE LOVE!



SERBIA



The campaign “Block the Hatred. Share the Love!” was implemented in Serbia by Council of Europe in cooperation with the European Union, within the Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Türkiye programme, with support from local partners and initiatives such as the Young European Ambassadors. It was carried out during 2022 as part of a wider regional campaign across the Western Balkans. The campaign aimed to counter hate speech and discrimination, particularly in online spaces, by promoting positive narratives, solidarity, and inclusion, combining digital outreach with public events and youth engagement activities. Through social media content, discussions, and local actions, it encouraged young people to actively spread messages of respect and empathy, while raising awareness about the impact of hate speech and motivating individuals to respond in constructive ways, making it a strong example of a youth oriented online campaign.

The campaign “Block the Hatred. Share the Love!” was developed in response to the increasing presence of hate speech and discriminatory narratives across the Western Balkans, including Serbia, especially in online environments where young people are highly active. Social media platforms have become spaces where harmful language, stereotypes, and exclusion are often normalized, particularly towards minority groups and vulnerable communities. At the same time, the region still carries historical and social tensions that can influence public discourse and contribute to divisions. In this context, there was a clear need for initiatives that not only address hate speech but also promote positive communication and solidarity. The campaign was positioned as a response to these challenges, aiming to engage young people in reshaping online narratives and encouraging more respectful and inclusive interaction.

Relevant links:

- <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/horizontal-facility/-share-the-love-campaign-serbia1>
- <https://www.instagram.com/blockthehatred/>

Objectives:

The main objective of the campaign was to reduce hate speech and promote a culture of tolerance, respect, and inclusion, particularly in online spaces. It aimed to raise awareness about the negative impact of hate speech, encourage individuals to reflect on their own communication, and motivate young people to actively counter harmful narratives with positive messages. Another important goal was to empower youth to become agents of change by providing them with tools and opportunities to participate in campaigns, discussions, and public actions. The campaign also sought to strengthen cooperation between different stakeholders, including youth initiatives, civil society organizations, and institutions, in order to create a more coordinated response to hate speech.



Target Group:

The primary target group of the campaign were young people in Serbia and the wider Western Balkans region, especially those who are active on social media and have the potential to influence online communication. This includes youth activists, students, and members of youth networks such as the Young European Ambassadors. The campaign also targeted a broader audience, including the general public, with the aim of raising awareness and encouraging more responsible communication. It indirectly addressed stakeholders such as educators, civil society organizations, and decision makers, who play an important role in shaping policies and creating supportive environments for combating hate speech.

Geographical Distribution:

The campaign was implemented across the Western Balkans region, including Serbia, which means it was not limited to one specific city or area. In Serbia, activities took place in different local contexts such as Niš and Pirot, showing that the campaign aimed to reach young people beyond the capital and include smaller communities as well. This regional approach is important because it reflects shared challenges related to hate speech across countries, while still allowing local adaptations of activities. From our perspective, this makes the campaign stronger, as it connects young people from different areas and creates a sense of joint action across the region. At the same time, the use of online tools allowed the campaign to spread even further, without being restricted by physical location.

Media distribution:

The campaign used a mix of online platforms and on the ground activities to reach its audience. A strong focus was placed on social media, where messages promoting tolerance and inclusion were shared and where young people could actively engage with the content.



One important element was the involvement of public figures, including actors and other recognizable personalities, who helped amplify the campaign's messages and make them more relatable and visible to a wider audience. Their participation increases trust and attracts attention, especially among young people who are more likely to engage with content shared by familiar faces. The campaign included public events, discussions, and interactive activities, which helped bring the topic into physical spaces and direct interaction with participants. Regional platforms and institutional websites were also used to share information and increase visibility. This combination of digital communication, influencer involvement, and local engagement made it easier for the campaign to reach different audiences and encouraged both online and offline participation.

- <https://www.facebook.com/blockthehatred/>
- <https://www.instagram.com/blockthehatred/>
- <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/horizontal-facility/-share-the-love-campaign-serbia1>
- <https://www.coe.int/en/web/belgrade/-/-block-the-hatred-share-the-love-campaign-in-serbia-highlighted-the-crucial-role-of-young-people-in-social-cohesion>

Youth Involvement:

Young people played a very active role in the campaign as direct contributors to its implementation. One of the key examples is the involvement of the Young European Ambassadors, who participated in organizing and facilitating activities such as discussions and public events in cities like Niš and Pirot. Through these actions, young people were given space to lead conversations on hate speech, share their perspectives, and engage their peers in a more relatable way. The campaign also encouraged youth to take part in online communication by sharing content, spreading positive messages, and contributing to the visibility of the campaign on social media. This kind of involvement



is important because it moves young people from passive observers to active participants who help shape the narrative. This approach makes the campaign more authentic and effective, since messages coming from young people themselves are more likely to resonate within their communities and online networks.

Innovation and Transferability:

What stands out in this campaign is the way it builds on visibility and relatability rather than relying only on formal messaging. By involving public figures such as actors together with youth initiatives like the Young European Ambassadors, the campaign creates a mix of voices that can reach different audiences at the same time. This combination makes the message more accessible and easier to spread, especially on social media where recognition and trust play a big role. Another strong element is the regional approach, where the same campaign is implemented across several countries but adapted locally through activities in different cities. This allows for both shared messaging and local relevance, which is not always easy to achieve. In terms of transferability, this model is quite easy to adapt to other countries or contexts. The main elements, such as collaboration with influencers or public figures, youth-led activities, and a combination of online and offline engagement, can be applied in different environments without requiring complex resources. Organizations can adjust the topics, partners, and formats depending on local needs, while keeping the core idea of promoting positive narratives and countering hate speech through visible and relatable communication.



“TRUTHS SHOULDN’T BE DENIED” INITIATIVE (REMOVAL OF HATE MURALS AND GRAFFITI)



SERBIA



The “Truths Shouldn’t be Denied” initiative, focused on the removal of hate murals and graffiti, has been implemented in Serbia by Youth Initiative for Human Rights Serbia. It is an ongoing effort, with particularly intensified activities during 2021 and 2022 in response to the growing presence of murals and graffiti in public spaces that glorify war criminals and spread hate narratives. The initiative combines online engagement with concrete offline action, encouraging citizens to report problematic content by submitting locations and photos through digital platforms. These reports were systematically documented and followed by formal requests for removal addressed to relevant institutions.

Through this approach, the campaign generated hundreds of reports and official submissions, demonstrating how online mobilization can lead to tangible changes in public space. At the same time, it highlights the important role of young people and civil society in addressing sensitive historical narratives, promoting accountability, and strengthening human rights and inclusive values.

Relevant links:

- <https://yih.rs/bhs/kampanja-mapiranja-murala-i-grafita-da-istina-vise-ne-kasni/>
- <https://yih.rs/en/inicijativa-podnela-prijave-za-uklanjanje-vise-od-300-murala-i-grafita-posvecenih-ratku-mladicu/>
- <https://www.instagram.com/inicijativa/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/YIHRsrbija/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/@inicijativamladihzaljudska2602/videos>

The initiative emerged in a context where public spaces in Serbia increasingly featured murals and graffiti that glorify war criminals and promote divisive and harmful narratives. These visual messages are not only present in certain neighborhoods but often highly visible, making them part of everyday life, especially for young people. In a society still dealing with the legacy of past conflicts, such representations can reinforce denial, intolerance, and exclusion. At the same time, there was a lack of consistent institutional response to this issue, which created a space for civil society to react. The initiative was therefore positioned as a response to both the spread of hate in public space and the need to raise awareness about its impact, while also encouraging citizens to take an active role in addressing the problem.



Objectives:

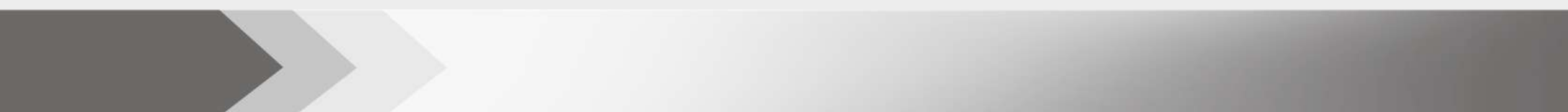
The main objective of the initiative was to challenge and reduce the presence of hate speech and harmful narratives in public spaces, particularly those expressed through murals and graffiti. It aimed to raise awareness about why such content is problematic, especially in relation to human rights and historical accountability, and to encourage public dialogue on these issues. Another key objective was to mobilize citizens, especially young people, to actively report hate content and participate in efforts to have it removed through formal procedures. By combining awareness raising with concrete action, the initiative also sought to put pressure on institutions to respond more consistently and responsibly to such cases.

Target Group:

The initiative primarily targeted the general public, with a strong focus on young people who are both directly exposed to these visual messages and active in online spaces. It also engaged citizens who are willing to take part in reporting and documenting hate content, encouraging a sense of shared responsibility. The campaign indirectly targeted institutions and decision makers, aiming to influence their response to hate speech in public space. With addressing both citizens and authorities, the initiative worked on multiple levels to create change.

Geographical Distribution:

The initiative was implemented across different cities in Serbia, with a strong presence in urban areas where murals and graffiti are more visible and frequent. While Belgrade was one of the key locations due to the high number of reported cases, the initiative was not limited to the capital. Through its open call for citizens to report murals and graffiti, it enabled contributions from various parts of the country, depending on where such content appeared.



This approach made the initiative flexible and responsive, as it followed the actual spread of hate messages in public space rather than focusing on predefined locations. Over time, this allowed for a broader mapping of the issue across Serbia and highlighted that it is not isolated to one city but present in multiple communities.

Media distribution:

The initiative relied heavily on online platforms to collect information, raise awareness, and mobilize citizens. Through digital communication channels, people were encouraged to submit photos and locations of murals and graffiti that promote hate speech, which created a form of crowdsourced reporting. These materials were then used to inform the public and support formal requests for removal. At the same time, the initiative gained visibility through media coverage and civil society communication channels, which helped expand its reach and bring the issue into public discussion. Unlike traditional campaigns that focus mainly on content sharing, this approach connected online engagement with real actions in public space, making the communication more participatory and impactful.

Youth Involvement:

Young people played an important role in the initiative, mainly through their participation in reporting, documenting, and sharing information about murals and graffiti that promote hate speech. Since the initiative relied on citizens to submit photos and locations, many of those contributions came from young people who are active both in their local communities and online spaces. This gave them a direct role in identifying problems and contributing to concrete actions, rather than just being passive observers. Young activists and members of civil society organizations were involved in raising awareness, spreading information about the initiative, and encouraging others to participate. The use of digital tools made it easy for young people to engage, as it fits with the way they already communicate and share content.



This type of involvement is especially valuable because it connects everyday experiences in public space with online engagement, giving young people a clear and practical way to react to hate speech and be part of a broader social response.

Innovation and Transferability:

What makes this initiative stand out is the way it connects something very physical, like murals and graffiti, with digital participation and civic action. Instead of treating hate speech only as an online issue, it shifts the focus to public space and shows how harmful narratives can be present in everyday environments. At the same time, it uses simple digital tools to involve citizens in identifying and documenting these cases, which turns awareness into concrete action. This combination of online reporting and offline impact is a strong and practical approach, especially because it does not require complex resources but relies on participation and coordination. The initiative is effective in engaging young people because it gives them a clear role and visible results. Young people are not only asked to raise awareness but are given a way to directly contribute by reporting content, sharing information, and following the process of removal. This makes their involvement more meaningful and helps them feel that their actions can lead to real change in their communities.

This approach can be easily adapted to other countries and contexts. Any organization can create a similar model by setting up a system for reporting harmful content in public space, combining it with awareness raising and communication campaigns. The focus can be adjusted depending on local issues, whether it is hate speech, discrimination, or other forms of harmful messaging. Because it is based on participation, simple tools, and clear actions, it can be implemented in different environments while still keeping its impact strong.



HATE FIGHTERS PROGRAMME AS A FRAMEWORK FOR YOUTH-LED ONLINE CAMPAIGNS



SERBIA



The Hate Fighters Programme, developed as a framework for youth led online campaigns, is implemented in Serbia by Hate Fighters Network in cooperation with partner youth organizations from the Western Balkans and wider Europe, and was originally created in collaboration with Klub za osnaživanje mladih 018. The programme has been continuously implemented since 2013 through different project cycles, activities, and international collaborations. It represents a youth led approach to combating hate speech, particularly in online spaces, by combining education, creative work, and campaign development. Initially created as a response to the growing presence of online hate speech among young people, it has evolved into a long term programme and international network. Its core idea is to equip young people with the knowledge, skills, and tools needed to recognize hate speech and actively respond by creating their own campaigns, messages, and content.

Activities include trainings, workshops, and local actions where participants develop counter and alternative narratives using creative methods such as video, photography, street art, and other forms of youth expression. Over time, the programme has expanded across multiple countries and has been implemented through numerous international projects, making it a strong example of how young people can be empowered to lead campaigns that promote tolerance, human rights, and inclusive communication.

Relevant links:

- <https://hfn.org.rs/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/hatefighters>
- <https://www.instagram.com/hatefightersnetwork/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/@HateFighters>

The Hate Fighters Programme was developed in response to the increasing presence of hate speech, discrimination, and harmful narratives in online spaces, especially among young people. With the rise of social media, communication among youth has become faster and more visible, but also more exposed to negative content such as cyberbullying, hate speech, and exclusion. At the same time, young people often lack the skills and confidence to recognize and respond to such content in a constructive way. In the Western Balkans context, this is further influenced by historical tensions, social divisions, and stereotypes that are often reflected in online communication. The programme was created as a practical response to these challenges, aiming to move beyond awareness and provide young people with tools to actively engage in creating positive change. It builds on the idea that young people are not only affected by hate speech but can also play a key role in transforming the way communication happens online.



Objectives:

The main objective of the Hate Fighters Programme is to empower young people to combat hate speech and promote human rights through active participation and campaign development. It aims to increase the level of media literacy among youth, helping them recognize different forms of hate speech and understand their impact. Another important objective is to develop skills for creating counter and alternative narratives, enabling young people to respond to harmful content in a constructive and creative way. The programme also focuses on strengthening the role of youth as active citizens by encouraging them to design and implement their own campaigns, actions, and initiatives at local, national, and international levels. It supports networking and cooperation between youth organizations, creating a shared space for exchange of ideas, experiences, and good practices.

Target Group:

The primary target group of the programme are young people, including youth activists, students, volunteers, and young leaders who are active in their communities and online spaces. The programme is especially focused on those who are interested in social change, human rights, and digital communication, but it is also accessible to young people with fewer opportunities who may be more vulnerable to online hate speech. The programme targets youth workers, educators, and trainers who can further transfer knowledge and skills to other young people, ensuring a wider impact. Through its activities, the programme also indirectly reaches a broader audience, including online communities and the general public, as the campaigns and content created by participants are shared beyond the immediate group.



Geographical Distribution:

The Hate Fighters Programme was initially developed in Serbia, but over time it expanded to a wider regional and international level through cooperation with partner organizations. Activities have been implemented across the Western Balkans and in multiple European and partner countries, depending on the specific project cycle. This means that the programme does not focus on one single location, but rather follows a network-based approach where activities are organized locally by partner organizations while sharing a common methodology. In practice, this allows young people from different countries to work on similar topics while addressing issues that are relevant in their own communities. This makes the programme flexible and adaptable, as it can be implemented in different geographical contexts while still maintaining a shared goal of combating hate speech.

Media distribution:

The programme uses a wide range of media channels, with a strong focus on digital communication and content created by young people themselves. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube are used to share campaign messages, videos, visuals, and other materials developed during activities. What is specific here is that the content is not only produced by the organization, but also by participants, which makes the communication more authentic and relatable. In addition to online dissemination, the programme also uses creative formats such as video production, photography, street art, and public actions, which can later be shared online and reach a wider audience. This creates a connection between offline activities and online visibility. The programme also uses its official channels to support dissemination and give visibility to youth-created content.



Youth Involvement :

Youth involvement is at the core of the Hate Fighters Programme and represents one of its strongest elements. Young people are not only participants, but also creators, facilitators, and initiators of activities within the programme. From the beginning, they are engaged through trainings and workshops where they build knowledge about hate speech and develop practical skills, but the process does not stop there. They are encouraged to design and implement their own campaigns, actions, and content, which gives them real ownership over the work they are doing. In many cases, young people take on active roles as peer educators, sharing knowledge with others and multiplying the impact within their communities. They are also involved in creating visual and digital content such as videos, photos, and social media campaigns, which are then used for wider dissemination. This approach makes the programme highly participatory and ensures that the messages come directly from young people themselves. This level of involvement is what makes the programme particularly effective, as it builds confidence, responsibility, and a sense of agency among youth, while also making the campaigns more authentic and relevant to their peers.

Innovation and Transferability:

The programme does not focus on delivering one single campaign, but on building the capacity of young people to continuously create their own campaigns and responses to hate speech. Instead of a top down approach, it works through peer learning, where young people learn by doing and then pass that knowledge further. The use of creative methods such as video production, photography, street art, and storytelling makes the process more engaging and allows participants to express messages in ways that are close to their everyday communication.



Another important element is the connection between education and action, where learning is immediately followed by creating real campaigns and content, which strengthens both impact and motivation. The programme is effective because it gives young people both the skills and the space to act, rather than only raising awareness. This makes their involvement more meaningful and increases the chances that they will continue to engage even after the activities are finished. The fact that it has been implemented through multiple international projects and in cooperation with partners from different countries shows that the approach works in different environments. The model is highly adaptable because it is based on a clear structure that can be applied in different contexts. Organizations can replicate it by combining training, creative work, and campaign development, while adjusting the topics and methods to local needs. Since it relies on non formal education, peer learning, and accessible tools, it does not require complex resources and can be implemented in both local and international settings, making it a strong example of a sustainable and scalable practice.



ORANGE DAY



Celebrating Orange Day: Showcasing Award-Winning Artworks on the Topic "Speak Up Against Violence"

25.08.2025 | 1 READING MINUTE



The Institute for Youth Development KULT has been actively addressing the issue of violence against women and domestic violence since 2020 through ongoing initiatives. Bosnia and Herzegovina was the sixth country to ratify the Istanbul Convention, a key international document that defines violence against women as a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination, obliging states to act through prevention, protection, and education. Despite the adoption of amendments to the criminal code and efforts to align with the Convention, the country continues to face a deeply rooted violent social context shaped by patriarchal norms that normalize such behavior.



State institutions often reinforce this environment through slow responses and limited access to justice, highlighting the urgent need for a collective approach where all actors in society are involved in addressing violence as a shared social issue rather than an individual problem.

The Institute for Youth Development KULT has been highlighting the issue of violence against women and girls for years and marks [Orange Day](#) on the 25th of every month. Through workshops, campaigns, and local initiatives, the Institute raises awareness about reporting violence, supporting survivors, and building a society with respect as a core value. This includes many young people, both as learners and as contributors. As part of this observance, KULT also organizes a competition in a form of public call for primary school students across Bosnia and Herzegovina to submit artistic works but also accompanied by workshops and related activities.

Like all projects or campaigns, this campaign has both direct and indirect target audiences. Those directly involved are young people; for the specific activity: the competition, which is organized around a different theme each time and KULT targets primary school students, addressing the issue at an early stage. In doing so, teachers and school administrations are also included. Indirect participants include social media followers, civil society organizations (CSOs), as well as policymakers, given that the campaign points to a broader, collective issue. The entire BiH school community can be involved, including schools in Sarajevo and beyond.



Young people are directly engaged through activities held on every 25th throughout the year. The campaign is primarily designed for them, and the fact that there are more than 200 applications - with that number growing exponentially - shows how much young people want to be part of the dialogue on this issue.



MIR MIR MIR; RATA NEĆE BITI



The context of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the post-Dayton period is marked by persistent political instability, ongoing hate narratives, ethno-nationalism, and the constant escalation of tensions. War crimes remain heavily visualized in public space, while transitional justice has not been fully achieved. Political actors, particularly right-wing and nationalist figures, continue to fuel hatred through various methods, both online and offline. It is within this environment of heightened tensions and normalized divisive narratives that reactive, citizen-led interventions begin to emerge in public space.

This campaign directly refers to an offline, reactive intervention responding to an active militaristic call. In the second half of 2021, anonymous posters bearing the inscription “I ti si potreban za odbranu BiH” (“[You, too, are needed for the defence of BiH](#)”) appeared in Sarajevo. The context was a political crisis driven by incendiary rhetoric from ethno-political leaders, primarily in Republika Srpska, who were promoting separatist agendas and raising fears over the country’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. The posters were depicting a man in military uniform and beret with the coat of arms of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, pointing directly at the viewer.

Just a few days later, as a critical response to the posters and the broader political climate, a series of stencil graffiti appeared in the centre of Sarajevo: “There will be no war,” “Peace, peace, peace,” and “[I am for peace](#).” The artists, Armin Ćosić and Benjamin Čengiđ, both from Sarajevo, played with the word “mir” (peace), which is identical in pronunciation across all three official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina. They referenced a children’s counting rhyme “Mir, mir, mir, niko nije kriv...” while deliberately omitting the final line, leaving the message open and avoiding direct attribution of blame.

This reaction-as-action was important in raising awareness among citizens through artistic expression. It was not only directed at the general public, but also sent a clear message to nationalist actors - that Sarajevo does not support war. Peace-oriented stencils were written across the walls of the capital, especially in central locations with high daily foot traffic. This form of messaging quickly attracted media attention, with outlets rapidly sharing images and stories of the new messages appearing on Sarajevo’s buildings.



Young artists, who have long contributed to shaping the visual and cultural landscape of the city, played a key role in producing this form of engaged, activist art. On social media, the theme circulated widely, particularly through the posts and stories of young people living in or visiting Sarajevo. It also gained visibility among international audiences, especially younger visitors from both the former Yugoslav region and Western countries

Sarajevo has long been a city of graffiti, inscriptions, and public messages, often of a peaceful nature. However, this form of reactive activism introduced a new dimension of artistic engagement in response to rising militaristic narratives. The visual background of the message, often rendered in the colours of the former Yugoslav tricolour, combined with direct statements or the nostalgic repetition of the word “peace,” evokes childhood, togetherness, and the innocence of play. In doing so, it transforms urban space into a site of reflection: walls that stop passersby, even briefly, to read the word “peace” and confront a clear, almost imperative message: war is not what we want.

Although subtle, the message remained clear to everyone - both local residents and visitors. The walls of buildings still marked by war scarred by bullets and shrapnel, now stand as carriers of peace, with young artists speaking not only for themselves, but also in the name of a conscious generation that refuses the repetition of violence.



BLOCK THE HATRED, SHARE THE LOVE



“Block the Hatred; Share the Love” campaign: Pupils from all over BiH gather in Konjic to condemn hate speech and bullying

🕒 25.08.2022 👤 Press and information team of the Delegation to BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA

More than 100 primary and secondary school pupils and teachers from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina gathered at the old bridge of Konjic on 23 and 24 August to raise awareness of hate speech and bullying and to promote the fight against them.



In March 2022, the awareness-raising campaign “[Block the Hatred. Share the Love!](#)” was launched in Bosnia and Herzegovina, aiming to inform different local audiences about the dangers of hate speech across various communities. Building on the already present nationalist narratives and the rising atmosphere of ethnic tension, this international campaign was introduced in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a combination of online and offline activities, bringing together young people, peers, and experts to jointly promote messages of sustainable peace in the country.

Hate speech has been on the rise across Europe, threatening social cohesion and human rights. In the Western Balkans, it particularly targets vulnerable groups that have already been affected by stigma and discrimination, including during the COVID-19 pandemic. The “Block the Hatred. Share the Love!” campaign was extended to Bosnia and Herzegovina to reach key audiences and raise awareness about the risks of hate speech and ways to counter it.

In August 2022, more than 100 primary and secondary school students and teachers from across Bosnia and Herzegovina gathered at the Old Bridge in Konjic to raise awareness of hate speech and bullying and to promote efforts against them. The event received media coverage across the region, including in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The campaign invites civil society activists, journalists, students, and all those who believe that love can counter hate to take part by following and sharing content, and by responding to different forms of hate in their communities and personal environments. “Block the Hatred. Share the Love!” is an awareness-raising initiative aimed at addressing various forms of hate speech targeting individuals and communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the wider Western Balkans. It is supported by public figures, institutions, and activists who promote diversity and equality through storytelling, testimonies, and the exchange of good practices.

The initiative continues under the Council of Europe action “Promotion of diversity and equality in the Western Balkans”, with dedicated social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, and X/Twitter), a network of No Hate Speech Ambassadors, videos, and practical resources for schools, civil society organizations, and municipalities. It also provides a platform for young people to present and address issues of discrimination and hate in their communities, while, as an

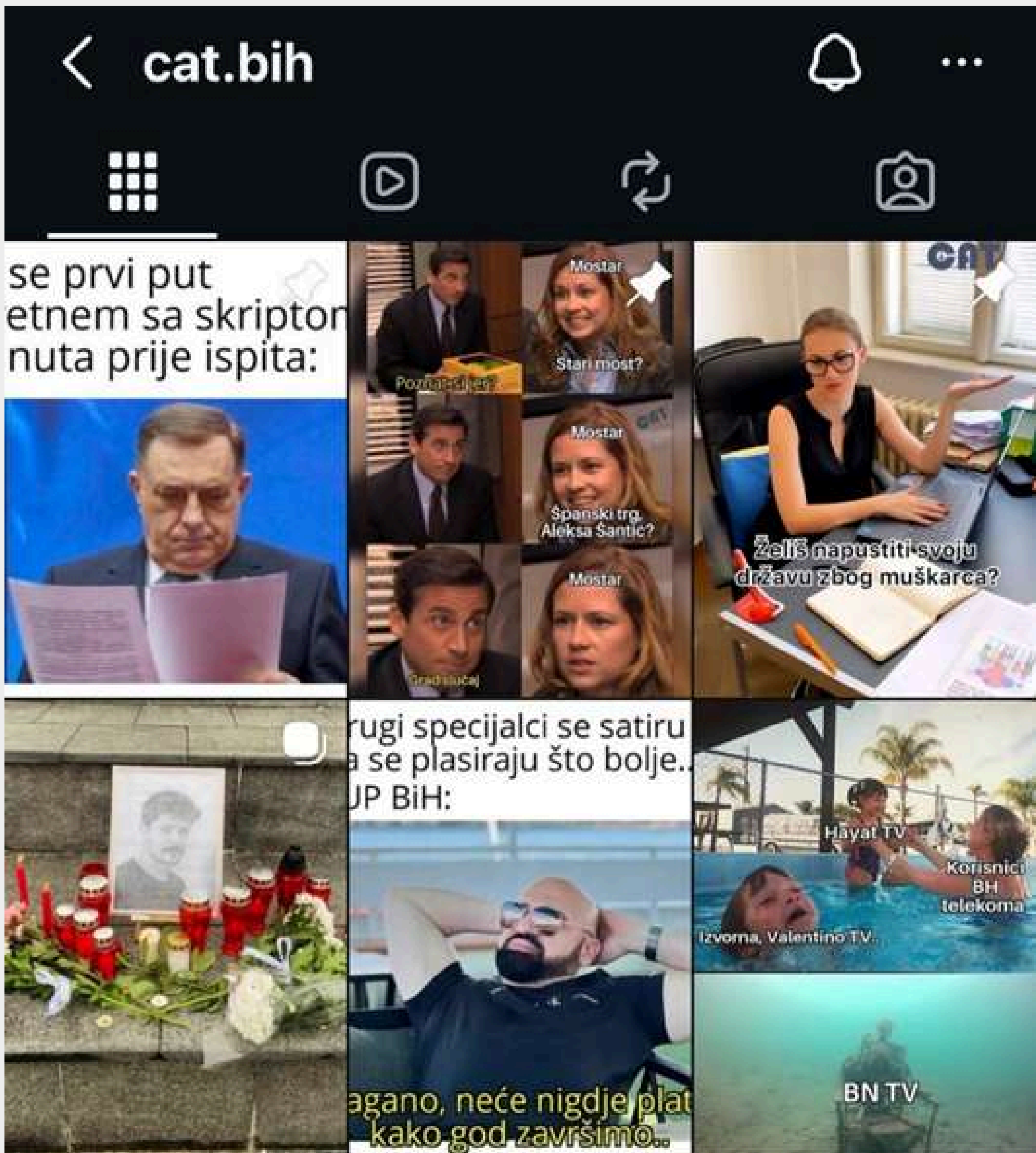


international initiative, it helps map shared challenges across the Western Balkans. Although the term “Balkans” is often politically and historically charged, initiatives like this highlight how similar patterns of inequality and division persist across the region, allowing messages and experiences to resonate beyond national borders.

The initiative also included in-person flash mobs and gatherings of young people from different parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, often separated by hours of travel due to underdeveloped infrastructure. Through shared values and common goals, young participants were given the opportunity to meet and connect with their peers across communities.



CAT (CITIZENS AGAINST TERRORISM)



CAT or Citizens Against Terrorism is a youth-led initiative from northeastern Bosnia and Herzegovina, aiming to use its engagement on social media and direct interaction with young people to contribute

to the prevention of violent behaviour and radicalisation in society. Controversial policies, questionable politicians and their statements, falsified diplomas of officials, brain drain, social manipulation, uncontrolled public spending, and many other aspects of corrupt systems in the Western Balkans, in a dialectical contrast, push creative and innovative young people to present social anomalies in a humorous and engaging way to young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, thereby opposing radical politics. The CAT campaign, started in 2017 and still ongoing, is one of the unusual examples of how a characteristic feature of Bosnian-Herzegovinian society – humor – can be used as an important tool of activism, clearly transforming activism into “artivism”, supported strongly through social media.

On social media (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, X, and even LinkedIn) CAT transforms the absurdities of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s political system into engaging activist content. By using well-known meme templates and directly addressing young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, CAT uses a highly innovative, entertaining, and extremely humorous approach to reference contemporary political realities, exposing the absurdity and manipulation present within the ruling structures of society. While meme templates are globally recognisable and widely used, it is the locally relevant references and satirical creativity that have positioned CAT as one of the most notable profiles of its kind.

Beyond its recognisable meme “X-factor”, CAT has also developed a YouTube series called [CAT Patrol](#), in which, through a carpool-style format, the protagonist Mirela Biković - playing a taxi driver - “picks up” young activists, exploring why young people in BiH are not passive. Through casual conversations and everyday stories, guests are introduced in a way that inspires younger generations to be themselves and to be active.



CAT directly targets young people as its primary audience. The meme format is naturally more appealing to younger demographics, while the pop culture references used in its posts deliver messages that young people not only need to hear, but are also encouraged by. Direct participants also include young activists and influencers featured in the YouTube series, while indirectly, the creators also address political authorities who are often challenged by this form of sharp satire.

As a fully digital project operating across multiple social media platforms, the initiative has reached all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the wider region (the shared language area).

CAT is one of the stronger examples of youth self-initiative, where creativity and information are combined using one of the most powerful tools of mass communication today: social media. Starting from a duo who created the idea, the authors developed a series that engaged dozens of young people directly in the program, while reaching thousands more through its content. A key feature of the initiative is that the audience sometimes contributes its own ideas, showing that this meme-based format has encouraged young people to actively search for connections between humorous creativity and the realities of corruption around them.

CAT has also created a continuous expectation that whenever a political scandal emerges in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a new humorous visual will appear on their profile. The campaign stands as a positive example of how young people can build inside jokes, networks, and creativity by using one defining cultural characteristic—humor as a weapon. Nothing more.



SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS AND PLATFORM IMPACT ON CAMPAIGN SUCCESS

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary European context, social media has become one of the central environments for communication, particularly among younger populations. Data published by DataReportal and Statista consistently indicate that a large majority of internet users across Europe engage with social media platforms on a daily basis, with the highest intensity observed among individuals aged between 15 and 30. This widespread and continuous usage has significantly transformed how campaigns are conceptualized, shifting the focus from one directional information delivery toward interactive and participatory communication processes. Campaigns are no longer limited to raising awareness but are increasingly expected to stimulate engagement, bring dialogue, and encourage active involvement from their audiences. As a result, understanding social media trends and the specific roles of different platforms has become essential for achieving campaign success.

FROM TRADITIONAL COMMUNICATION TO PARTICIPATORY DIGITAL ENVIRONMENTS

The development of social media reflects a broader transition from traditional broadcasting models to participatory digital environments. In contrast to conventional media, where information flows from a central source to a passive audience, social media enables users to actively create, share, and reinterpret content. This participatory nature has important implications for campaign design. Messages are no longer controlled solely by campaign organizers; instead, they are shaped and amplified by users through their interactions. Research conducted by Meta and Google highlights the importance of engagement-based algorithms, which prioritize content that generates immediate interaction. Consequently, campaigns must be designed to attract attention quickly and encourage user responses, as these factors directly influence visibility and reach within platform ecosystems.



KEY SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS IN EUROPE

One of the most significant trends shaping social media use in Europe is the dominance of short form video content. Platforms increasingly prioritize brief, visually engaging videos that communicate messages within a limited timeframe. This shift is closely linked to changing user behavior, including reduced attention spans and a preference for easily consumable content. Short form videos allow campaigns to present key ideas quickly and effectively, making them particularly suitable for awareness raising and initial engagement. However, their effectiveness depends on the ability to capture attention within the first few seconds and to deliver clear, concise messages.

At the same time, there has been a noticeable shift toward authenticity and relatability in digital communication. Users, especially younger audiences, demonstrate a strong preference for content that appears genuine rather than highly produced or institutional. This trend reflects growing skepticism toward traditional forms of advertising and promotional messaging. Campaigns that incorporate real participants, spontaneous moments, or behind the scenes perspectives are generally perceived as more trustworthy and engaging. Authenticity, therefore, becomes not only a stylistic choice but also a strategic necessity.

Another important development is the increasing role of user generated content and co-creation. Rather than relying exclusively on centrally produced materials, many campaigns now encourage participants to contribute their own content, interpretations, and experiences. This approach enhances engagement by bringing a sense of ownership and participation. It also increases the diversity and volume of campaign related content, extending its reach across different networks. Peer to peer communication, which characterizes user generated content, is often perceived as more credible than messages originating from institutions, further strengthening its impact.



The influence of algorithms represents an additional defining feature of social media environments. Platform algorithms determine which content is visible to users, often prioritizing posts that generate high levels of engagement in a short period. This creates a dynamic in which visibility is closely tied to interaction. Campaigns must therefore consider not only the quality of their content but also its ability to prompt immediate responses such as likes, comments, and shares. Consistency in posting and sustained audience interaction are critical factors in maintaining visibility over time.

PLATFORM SPECIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS TO CAMPAIGN SUCCESS

Different social media platforms contribute to campaign success in distinct ways, and understanding these differences is essential for effective communication strategies. Instagram remains one of the most influential platforms across Europe, particularly among young adults. Its emphasis on visual communication makes it well suited for storytelling and for establishing a recognizable campaign identity. Features such as Reels enable content to reach audiences beyond existing followers, while interactive tools within Stories facilitate direct engagement. As a result, Instagram functions both as a channel for visibility and as a space for maintaining ongoing interaction with audiences.

TikTok, on the other hand, has rapidly become a dominant platform for reaching younger demographics. Its algorithmic structure allows content to achieve wide visibility regardless of the creator's existing audience, making it particularly advantageous for new or smaller campaigns. The platform is characterized by fast paced, trend driven content that emphasizes creativity, humor, and relatability. Campaigns that successfully adapt their messages to TikTok's format and culture can achieve significant reach and engagement in a relatively short period. However, this requires a strong understanding of platform specific communication styles and user expectations.



YouTube plays a complementary role by supporting longer form content and more in-depth storytelling. While it may not generate the same immediate reach as short form platforms, it provides opportunities for detailed explanations, documentation of activities, and the presentation of personal narratives. This makes it particularly valuable for building credibility and offering audiences a deeper understanding of campaign objectives and outcomes. YouTube content often has a longer lifespan compared to other platforms, contributing to sustained visibility over time.

Facebook, although less popular among younger users, continues to be relevant in many European contexts, especially for reaching older audiences and supporting institutional communication. It is frequently used for sharing event information, engaging with local communities, and maintaining networks of stakeholders. In many campaigns, Facebook serves as a supporting platform that complements activities on more youth-oriented channels.

INTEGRATING PLATFORMS INTO A COHERENT STRATEGY

The complexity of the social media landscape requires campaigns to adopt a multi-platform approach. Relying on a single platform limits the potential reach and impact, as different platforms cater to different audiences and communication styles. An effective strategy involves combining platforms in a way that leverages their respective strengths. Short form video platforms such as TikTok and Instagram Reels are often used to generate initial visibility and attract attention, while Instagram Stories support interaction and engagement. YouTube provides space for more comprehensive storytelling, and Facebook facilitates community outreach and information sharing.

This integrated approach allows campaigns to reach diverse audience groups and to reinforce messages across multiple channels. It also extends the lifespan of campaign content, as materials can be adapted and redistributed in different formats.



CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

Despite the opportunities offered by social media, several challenges must be acknowledged. The high volume of content produced daily leads to intense competition for user attention, making it increasingly difficult for campaigns to stand out. Additionally, the reliance on platform algorithms introduces a degree of unpredictability, as visibility is influenced by factors that are not fully transparent. Rapidly changing trends further complicate campaign planning, as content that is relevant at one moment may quickly become outdated.

Another significant challenge is maintaining authenticity. As users become more aware of communication strategies, they are more likely to reject content that appears forced or insincere. Campaigns must therefore strike a balance between adapting to trends and preserving their core message and values. Failure to achieve this balance can result in reduced credibility and engagement.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of social media trends demonstrates that campaign success in Europe depends on a nuanced understanding of digital environments and user behavior. Social media platforms are not merely tools for dissemination but complex ecosystems shaped by algorithms, cultural norms, and patterns of interaction. Each platform contributes differently to campaign outcomes, and their effective use requires strategic planning and adaptation.

Successful campaigns are those that combine platform-specific approaches with authentic communication and active audience participation. Integrating multiple platforms into a coherent strategy and responding thoughtfully to emerging trends, campaigns can achieve both broad reach and meaningful engagement, ultimately enhancing their overall impact.



**UNDERSTAND
ENGAGEMENT
TECHNIQUES**

CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

RESPONDENT PROFILE AND PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

To better understand which strategies are most effective in youth campaigns, a consultation questionnaire was conducted among youth activists, social media influencers, political campaign staff, and NGO campaign managers from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, and Serbia. The majority of respondents were directly involved in youth activism or campaign management, with many combining multiple roles such as activism, social media influence, and NGO coordination. Across all participating countries, the most common thematic areas of work included youth participation, human rights, gender equality, environmental issues, and combating hate speech and discrimination. Most respondents reported between three and more than five years of active experience, demonstrating that the consultation reflects insights from experienced practitioners. Raising awareness emerged as the primary objective of most engagement efforts, followed by policy change and community building.

TARGET AUDIENCES AND PLATFORM PREFERENCES

Young people aged 18 to 24 were identified as the primary target audience for most campaigns, although many respondents also aimed to influence the broader general public. This indicates that youth campaigns are often designed both to mobilize young people directly and to shape wider public discourse. In terms of communication platforms, Instagram was overwhelmingly the most widely used tool across all surveyed countries, followed by TikTok, Facebook, and YouTube. LinkedIn and X/Twitter were significantly less prominent and were mainly used by professional or political campaign staff. These findings confirm that visual, fast paced, and interactive social media platforms remain the most effective spaces for youth outreach.



MOST EFFECTIVE CONTENT FORMATS AND MESSAGING STYLES

Short form video content, including TikToks and Instagram Reels, was consistently identified as the most successful content format for driving youth engagement. Personal stories, testimonials, interactive polls, humorous content, and visually appealing infographics were also frequently highlighted. Across all countries, respondents emphasized that campaigns are most successful when they combine relatable storytelling, emotional resonance, visual creativity, and authentic youth voices. Funny, emotional, and highly relatable messaging generated the strongest engagement, while formal or institutional communication styles were commonly perceived as ineffective. Authenticity was considered critically important by nearly all respondents, with real experiences, transparency, and direct youth participation identified as the key elements that make campaigns trustworthy and impactful.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND CAMPAIGN TECHNIQUES

The most commonly used engagement strategies included hashtag campaigns, influencer collaborations, online challenges, community discussions, story polls, and content co creation with followers. Respondents also strongly emphasized the importance of linking digital campaigns with offline activities such as workshops, murals, public events, and creative community actions. Offline components were widely recognized as crucial for transforming digital visibility into deeper, long term engagement. Public art, murals, graffiti, and creative interventions were especially valued for their ability to make campaign messages visible in everyday environments, strengthen emotional connection, and increase public participation. This demonstrates that hybrid models combining online communication with physical action are particularly effective in youth campaigns.



CORE PRINCIPLES OF SUCCESSFUL YOUTH CAMPAIGNS

A strong international consensus emerged around several core principles for successful youth campaigns. Respondents repeatedly stressed that campaigns must be genuinely guided by young people rather than simply targeting them as an audience. Young people should be actively involved not only as participants but also as decision makers, content creators, and strategic contributors. The three most frequently identified principles were authenticity, meaningful participation, and clear messaging. Campaigns were considered most successful when they empower community ownership, consistent communication, and visible real world impact. Maintaining youth engagement beyond individual campaign cycles was strongly linked to networking opportunities, skill development, creative expression, and sustained follow up activities.

CHALLENGES AND COMMON MISTAKES

The consultation also revealed several recurring challenges. Sustaining long term motivation, avoiding burnout, competing with constantly shifting digital trends, and maintaining relevance over time were identified as the greatest barriers to continued youth engagement. Common mistakes included overly formal communication, tokenistic inclusion of youth voices, stereotyping young people as a homogeneous group, and focusing solely on short term online visibility without building lasting communities. Respondents consistently warned that campaigns fail when they speak at young people instead of actively involving them in meaningful ways. The findings suggest that flexibility, ongoing relevance, and authentic co creation are essential to sustaining youth participation.



CONCLUSION

The consultation demonstrates that successful youth engagement campaigns across Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, and Serbia share several universal characteristics. Effective campaigns are authentic, participatory, emotionally engaging, visually dynamic, and strategically adapted to the digital habits of young audiences. They succeed when they combine short form content, relatable storytelling, influencer collaboration, creative offline interventions, and genuine youth leadership. These findings provide an evidence based framework for organizations, activists, and campaign managers seeking to design impactful youth campaigns that address social issues such as hate speech, human rights, civic participation, and inclusion in diverse cultural contexts.



COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

1. COMPARATIVE CONTEXT: FOUR COUNTRIES, FOUR SOCIAL REALITIES

A comparative analysis of youth campaigns cannot begin with the campaigns themselves. It must begin with the social environments in which those campaigns operate, because the context shapes everything: the issues that young people most urgently feel, the communication styles they trust, the institutional actors they approach with skepticism or openness, the historical memories that colour how they read messages in public space, and the practical resources available for collective action. Understanding these contextual differences is the foundation for identifying both what is universal and what must be adapted.

The four partner countries of Creative Canvas are neighboring societies with shared histories of migration, conflict, and European integration ambition, but they present remarkably distinct youth activism landscapes. The table below maps these landscapes across six key dimensions, providing the analytical baseline for the comparisons that follow.

Dimension	Italy	Serbia	Bosnia & Herz.	Albania
General social context	Cohesive school culture; well-established tradition of grassroots civil society; significant youth scepticism toward government and large institutional messaging	Post-conflict society navigating nationalist legacies; visible presence of divisive narratives in public space; active regional NGO ecosystem with strong international connections	Deeply fragmented along ethnic, linguistic, and political lines; institutional weakness and slow state response normalised; extraordinary resilience and creativity developed as survival mechanism	Rapid urban and social transformation; strong visual culture emerging in public space; high levels of gender-based violence still normalised; growing connection to European civil society norms
Primary issues driving campaigns	Bullying and cyberbullying in schools; online hate speech targeting minorities and migrants; civic rights and political participation	Hate murals glorifying war criminals in public space; online ethnic and religious hate speech; political manipulation and radicalisation of youth	Gender-based violence and femicide; war memory and nationalist rhetoric; political corruption and radicalisation; youth disengagement from corrupted institutions	Gender-based violence with deep patriarchal roots; inter-community hate speech; youth civic exclusion; LGBTQ+ discrimination
Dominant youth activism style	Peer-led, school-based, tool-oriented; preference for measurable outcomes and concrete instruments over symbolic gestures	Structured long-term capacity-building combined with reactive public-art interventions; strong NGO-network infrastructure	Rapid-response grassroots activism; humour and satire as political and emotional coping mechanisms; low-budget, high-creativity ethos	Mural and public art as primary medium; internationally supported frameworks; youth as multipliers of partner-delivered methodology



Trust in institutions	Low trust in state and national government; moderate trust in European frameworks; high trust in peer-initiated and student-led projects	Low trust in domestic institutions; moderate openness to internationally facilitated structured dialogue; strong trust in peer networks	Very low institutional trust across the board; EU often perceived as external and slow; deep scepticism of political actors; strong local civil society regarded as genuine	Moderate trust in international partnerships (UN Women, CoE, EU); lower trust in domestic politics; youth want visible and concrete results, not abstract promises
Digital and media landscape	Very high social media penetration; Instagram and TikTok dominant for youth; strong tradition of youth journalism and podcasting	Facebook and Instagram heavily used; YouTube for long-form activism content; strong regional online networks across Western Balkans	Meme culture and satirical social media deeply embedded in youth communication; YouTube series and cross-platform digital satire; humour-driven viral content	Rapid growth in social media use; Instagram and Facebook primary platforms; visual content (photos of murals and public art) particularly shareable
Historical and political sensitivities	Legacy of fascism and anti-fascist resistance still relevant in some contexts; migration debate highly polarised; relatively stable democratic institutions	1990s conflict legacy visible in public monuments and murals; transitional justice incomplete; ethnic nationalism remains politically active in public discourse	War memory physically inscribed in the landscape: bullet holes, destroyed buildings; deeply unresolved trauma; three-way ethnic division institutionalised in governance	Legacy of communism and closed society followed by rapid post-1990 liberalisation; high emigration pressure; persistent patriarchal norms especially in rural areas

Reading this table, several structural differences immediately stand out. Italy presents the most stable and institutionally anchored context, but paradoxically the one where young people are most suspicious of messages that feel official. Serbia sits at a point of tension between a well-organised NGO sector and persistent nationalist narratives that require ongoing counter-speech in both physical and digital space. Bosnia and Herzegovina presents the most complex and fragmented environment, where the sheer difficulty of the context has generated an exceptional tradition of creative resistance and political humour. Albania is undergoing the fastest rate of transformation, with a public art scene emerging as a genuinely new language for social advocacy.

These differences are not merely interesting background detail. They are the analytical core of the comparative task. Any campaign methodology that ignores these differences risks producing a document that speaks fluently to young people in one country while remaining distant, tone-deaf, or inaccessible to young people in another. The remainder of this analysis builds systematically on this contextual foundation.



2. UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES: WHAT MAKES YOUTH CAMPAIGNS WORK EVERYWHERE

Across sixteen campaigns documented in four distinct national contexts, a set of recurring structural features consistently distinguishes effective campaigns from ineffective ones. These are not surface-level similarities but deep principles about how youth activism generates genuine engagement, sustains momentum, and produces lasting change. They apply whether the campaign uses a spray can in Sarajevo, a meme template in Tuzla, a school reporting system in Lecce, or a large-scale mural in Tirana.

It is important to note that no single campaign satisfies all eight principles perfectly. Real-world campaigns involve trade-offs, resource constraints, and contextual compromises. However, the campaigns in this collection that are most widely regarded as effective satisfy the majority of these principles, and do so in mutually reinforcing ways. The principles are therefore best understood not as a checklist but as a design language for youth activism.

#	Universal Principle	Evidence and Cross-Country Analysis
1	Authentic youth ownership and leadership	The most consistently powerful finding across all sixteen campaigns is that youth engagement is highest and most sustained when young people are not merely the target audience but the actual authors and decision-makers of the campaign. MABASTA (Italy) was initiated by a group of first-year high school students in Lecce who decided independently that their classmates' suffering from bullying required a response from themselves. CAT (Bosnia and Herzegovina) was created by two young people in Tuzla who began producing politically satirical memes and grew into one of the most recognised youth advocacy voices in the country. MIR MIR MIR (Bosnia and Herzegovina) was made by two young Sarajevo artists who responded to militaristic posters with their own stencils within days. The Hate Fighters Programme (Serbia) has since 2013 systematically built the capacity of young people to design, lead, and deliver their own campaigns rather than simply participate in adult-managed ones. What unites all of these is the experience of creative and political ownership: young people making something that is genuinely theirs, that reflects their own reading of their world, and that they take pride in sharing with their peers. This quality of authenticity is what generates peer trust, arguably the most valuable currency in youth communication.
2	Practical tools that enable immediate action	Campaigns that give young people something concrete to do (a specific tool to use, a clear action to take, a skill to practise) consistently outperform campaigns that only attempt to raise awareness or change attitudes through information. This principle is perhaps most clearly demonstrated by MABASTA's six-action methodology, which provides students with a named reporting system (MabaTest), a specific peer mediator role (Bulliziotti), and a measurable monitoring mechanism (MabaMeter). Each of these tools is immediately usable: a student can fill in a form, nominate a mediator, or participate in a class pact on the very day they are introduced to them. The same principle appears in the 'Truths Shouldn't Be Denied' campaign (Serbia), which gave young people a specific action, report and photograph hate murals, submit formal removal requests, that connected their outrage at a public harm with a concrete civic procedure. The Graffiti ABC guidebook itself is built on this principle: it should be a book of tools, not a book of arguments.

3	Emotional resonance over rational persuasion	Young people, like all people, are moved by emotion before they are moved by argument. But the specific emotional registers that activate youth engagement vary significantly by context. MIR MIR MIR worked in Sarajevo because it touched the deep collective fear, still alive in a city visibly scarred by siege, of renewed conflict, and offered in its place a feeling of collective tenderness, childhood memory, and stubborn peacefulness. CAT works in Bosnia because it channels the very real exhaustion, absurdity, and dark humour that young Bosnians use to survive a political system that has failed them generation after generation. MABASTA works in Italian schools because it speaks directly to the isolation and powerlessness that students feel when they witness bullying and feel unable to stop it. The 16 Days of Activism works in Albania because it names gender-based violence - often a silenced and hidden harm - and transforms it from a private shame into a collective public problem. The emotional trigger is always specific and local. The universal principle is that there must be an emotional trigger at all.
4	Public space as a communication medium	Across all four countries, the most memorable and community-building campaign moments happened not on screens but in physical space. The stencils of MIR MIR MIR appeared on Sarajevo's bullet-marked walls, a choice that made the contrast between war and peace almost unbearably immediate. The 'Truths Shouldn't Be Denied' initiative targeted murals that dominated real city streets where young people walked every day. The 16 Days of Activism created public murals across Albanian cities that remain visible for months and years after the campaign event that produced them. The 'Tolerance' campaign's mural in Belgrade became a shared point of reference for youth, decision-makers, and media alike. In every case, public space did something that digital communication cannot easily replicate: it made activism physically present in the shared environment, creating a community claim on the landscape and forcing even non-participants to encounter the message in the course of ordinary life.
5	Online-offline integration as a force multiplier	No campaign in this collection succeeded as a purely online or purely offline initiative. The most effective campaigns designed their activities so that each domain amplified the other. Offline art actions (murals painted, stencils applied, exhibitions mounted) generated photographic and video content that spread on Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube, bringing the physical action to audiences far beyond those present at the event. Online mobilisation (reporting tools, petition platforms, social media calls to action) translated digital engagement into measurable real-world impact, as in the 'Truths Shouldn't Be Denied' campaign where crowd-sourced online reports led to hundreds of formal removal requests for hate murals. CAT's social media content drew young people into a digital community that then fed real-world connections between activists. Block the Hatred, Share the Love operated simultaneously through social media content and in-person flash mobs. The design principle here is simple but powerful: plan the offline action with its online afterlife in mind, and design digital content so that it drives people toward offline action and community.
6	Visible and measurable results that build credibility	Campaigns need to be able to show that participation leads to change. This a psychological necessity for the young people involved. If a young person takes an action and nothing visibly changes, they are unlikely to take another. MABASTA's documented 40-50% reduction in bullying victimisation rates in pilot schools was not simply a good evaluation outcome: it became the primary driver of organic spread, because students and teachers could see and feel the difference. The 'Truths Shouldn't Be Denied' campaign counted and publicised the growing number of murals removed through its reporting system, giving participants the experience of effective collective action. The 16 Days of Activism produced murals that young people could return to and point at. The Hate Fighters Programme gave participants a Youth Pass certificate documenting their competencies. In each case, the visibility of results provided the fuel for continued engagement and natural expansion of the network.
7	Low threshold for participation	Campaigns that make it easy to join by sharing a post, submitting a drawing, signing a form, or picking up a spray can consistently reach larger and more diverse audiences than campaigns that demand significant prior commitment or expertise. Orange Day (Bosnia and Herzegovina) welcomed any primary school student to submit an artwork to its annual competition, requiring nothing more than artistic effort and a postal address. Block the Hatred, Share the Love invited anyone to participate simply by following and sharing content. The 'Truths Shouldn't Be Denied' campaign asked only that people photograph and report murals, something achievable with a phone in seconds. Fridays For Future's local-group model allowed any young person anywhere in Italy to start their own chapter using freely available online resources. This principle is especially important for reaching young people who are not already part of activist networks and who may not initially identify as 'activists' at all. Low entry barriers widen the tent; strong content and community keep people inside it.
8	Designed for scalability from the start	The most enduring campaigns in this collection were not built for a single event or a fixed audience: they were architected to grow. MABASTA began in one classroom and had reached 80,000 students across Italy within seven years, not because it was pushed by large institutional investment, but because it was built on a replicable model (the six-action methodology) that any school could adopt with minimal outside support. The Hate Fighters Programme has operated across multiple project cycles and partner countries since 2013 because its model (train young people to design their own campaigns) generates its own perpetuation. MIR MIR MIR scaled from two artists in Sarajevo to a national media moment not because it was planned to, but because its visual language was simple enough for anyone to understand and powerful enough that people wanted to share it. For the Graffiti ABC guidebook, this principle implies that every tutorial, template, and technique included should be designed so that a young person with no prior experience can begin using it immediately and, in time, teach it to others.

3. CULTURALLY ADAPTED STRATEGIES: WHAT WORKS WHERE AND WHY

Universal principles explain the shared logic of effective youth campaigns. But translating those principles into practice requires a different kind of knowledge: an understanding of what specific approaches resonate within a given cultural, historical, and social environment. The same message can land powerfully or fall entirely flat depending on how it is framed, who delivers it, what emotional register it uses, and what associations it carries in a particular context. This section analyses the strategies that each of the four partner countries requires, drawing directly from the documented campaigns and from the contextual analysis in Section 1. For each country, a narrative overview is followed by a structured analysis of the four key adapted strategies. Together, these analyses form the cultural adaptation guide that will inform how the Graffiti ABC guidebook is designed to be used differently across the consortium.

3.1 ITALY: THE SCHOOL AS SOCIAL LABORATORY

Italian youth campaigns are most effective when they work with (rather than outside of) the school environment, treating the classroom as a social system with its own dynamics, loyalties, and potential for transformation from within. This orientation is not accidental: Italian schools function as unusually cohesive social communities. Unlike many northern European contexts where school is primarily an academic institution, Italian students spend the majority of their formative social lives in fixed class groups that stay together across multiple years. The resulting bonds of loyalty and identity within a class create both the vulnerability that bullying exploits and the solidarity that can be mobilised against it.

At the same time, Italian youth activism has a strong tradition of grassroots, bottom-up initiative. Young Italians are historically skeptical of messaging that comes from above - whether from government, large international organisations, or official institutions.



The Italian campaigns documented in this research all reflect these principles in different ways. MABASTA is the most textbook example: born entirely from student initiative, built on practical peer-to-peer tools, and spread organically through the school network rather than through institutional channels. NHSM Italia navigates the tension between European framework and local youth ownership more carefully, keeping international branding in the background while foregrounding the voices and content of young Italian activists.

Strategy	What the Adapted Approach Looks Like	Why This Specific Adaptation Is Necessary
Peer-to-peer tools designed for classroom dynamics	Design and deploy practical instruments that work within the specific social structure of the Italian classroom: anonymous reporting systems so students can flag problems without social risk; elected student mediators (like MABASTA's Bulliziotti) who carry authority without being positioned as informants; class pacts that transform passive bystanders into active participants; and measurable monitoring tools that let the class track its own progress. The methodology should feel like students regulating themselves, not being regulated from outside.	Italian school classes function as tight-knit social communities with strong internal loyalties and informal hierarchies. Any intervention that disrupts these dynamics by appearing to import external authority - whether from a teacher, an NGO, or a government programme - will be resisted. Interventions that work within the class's own social grammar, using peer influence and collective responsibility, are experienced as natural rather than imposed. This is the fundamental design logic that has allowed MABASTA to scale to 80,000 students without ever requiring a government mandate.
Evidence-based methodology with documented outcomes	Build measurement of impact into the methodology from the outset, not as an evaluation afterthought. Track specific, observable changes: reduction in reported bullying incidents, increase in student willingness to intervene, improvement in classroom climate scores. Make these results visible to participants during the campaign so that students and teachers can see and feel the change. Use documented outcomes (such as MABASTA's 40-50% victimisation reduction in pilot schools) as the primary argument for adoption by new schools, rather than relying on normative arguments about why anti-bullying work is important.	Italian youth activists, school administrators, and the parents who influence school culture respond strongly to evidence. A programme that can show concrete, measurable improvement in student wellbeing carries institutional credibility that abstract campaigns cannot achieve. More importantly, visible results within the student community itself, experienced as a genuine change in the classroom atmosphere, are what motivate sustained engagement. Young people who see that their actions produced real change are far more likely to continue and to recruit their peers.
Peer-initiated identity, not institutional branding	Position the campaign visually and communicatively as something young people created for themselves, not something delivered to them by adults or organisations. Avoid leading with EU logos, ministry endorsements, or NGO branding in materials aimed directly at youth. Keep institutional acknowledgements in the footnotes. Prioritise student voices, student-created art, and student testimonials in all public-facing communication. Where partnerships with schools or municipalities are necessary, negotiate for programmatic support without requiring institutional co-branding on youth-facing materials.	Young Italians have a well-documented and historically grounded scepticism of top-down institutional messaging. This scepticism is not apathy but often a sign of political awareness. It means that campaigns perceived as government initiatives, EU projects, or NGO programmes are filtered through a lens of distrust before they have even communicated their message. Campaigns that successfully disguise or downplay their institutional origins - or that genuinely have none - access an entirely different level of peer credibility and organic spread.



<p>Single-issue focus with daily-life relevance</p>	<p>Frame the campaign around one specific, clearly named problem that Italian young people encounter in their daily lives rather than around broad value-based themes. 'Bullying in our school' rather than 'a culture of respect'. 'The right of out-of-town students to vote' rather than 'democratic participation'. 'Countering racist comments in the comment section' rather than 'fighting online hate speech'. The specificity of the problem should be the specificity of the solution offered.</p>	<p>Italian youth respond to campaigns that address something they recognise from their own daily experience. Abstract values campaigns, no matter how well-designed, consistently generate lower engagement than campaigns tied to a felt problem. The power of MABASTA comes entirely from the fact that every Italian high school student either has been bullied, has witnessed bullying, or has been a bully and recognises the problem immediately. The specificity of the issue creates an immediate sense of relevance that broad campaigns about tolerance or inclusion cannot manufacture.</p>
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3.2 SERBIA: STRUCTURED ACTION AGAINST PERSISTENT HISTORICAL TENSIONS

Serbian youth campaigns operate in a social environment defined by two seemingly contradictory forces: on the one hand, a well-organised and internationally connected civil society sector with considerable experience in youth activism and human rights education; on the other hand, a public landscape where the visible legacy of the 1990s conflicts (in the form of murals glorifying war criminals, nationalist rhetoric in political discourse, and incomplete transitional justice) creates daily encounters with the very narratives that campaigns seek to counter. This tension between a strong activist infrastructure and a persistently hostile public environment gives Serbian youth campaigns a distinctive character: they tend to be simultaneously structured and reactive, principled and tactical.

The four Serbian campaigns documented in this research navigate this tension in different ways. The Hate Fighters Programme represents a long-term investment in building young people's capacity to recognise and respond to hate speech, creating a generational infrastructure that persists across individual project cycles. The 'Truths Shouldn't Be Denied' initiative represents the opposite end of the spectrum: a rapid, direct, citizen-mobilisation response to a specific and visible public harm. Together, they illustrate the two modes that effective Serbian activism tends to oscillate between: patient capacity-building and sharp reactive intervention.



Strategy	What the Adapted Approach Looks Like	Why This Specific Adaptation Is Necessary
Long-term capacity-building over single-event campaigns	<p>Invest in multi-cycle, multi-year programmes that build transferable skills in young people rather than staging one-off awareness events. Design training curricula that give young people the knowledge to recognise hate speech, the technical skills to produce counter-narrative content, and the organisational confidence to lead their own local campaigns. Build in peer-facilitation and peer-educator roles so that trained young people pass their skills to others, creating a self-perpetuating network. Accept that results in terms of measurable social change may be slow to accumulate: the goal is building an activist infrastructure that outlasts any single project.</p>	<p>In Serbia, trust is built through consistency and presence over time. Young people who have participated in the Hate Fighters Programme across multiple years develop a fundamentally different quality of engagement compared to those who attend a single workshop. Short-term campaigns can raise awareness but rarely change the underlying competencies and social networks through which sustained activism is maintained. The post-conflict social context also means that young people are familiar with empty symbolic gestures; what differentiates impactful initiatives is the demonstration of ongoing commitment.</p>
Direct counter-speech in physical public space	<p>Respond to hate speech and harmful narratives in physical public space via murals, posters, graffiti, with direct visual counter-speech in the same physical space, using the same medium. When war criminal murals appear on streets where young people walk daily, produce counter-murals, stencils, or public interventions in those same streets rather than retreating to online advocacy. Work with young artists and activists to develop visual responses that are local in their references, emotionally resonant, and designed for the specific physical context in which they will appear. Document these interventions photographically and distribute the documentation through social media to maximise reach.</p>	<p>The presence of hate murals and nationalist imagery in Serbian public space is not a peripheral or sporadic problem but a daily feature of the urban environment that young people inhabit. Online counter-speech, however well-designed, does not address the experience of walking past a mural of a convicted war criminal on the way to school every day. Physical counter-speech in the same space claims territory, demonstrates that civil society refuses to cede the public environment to nationalist narratives, and creates powerful visual juxtapositions that generate media attention and social media content simultaneously.</p>
International legitimacy combined with authentic local youth ownership	<p>Build campaigns that use the credibility and resources of international organisations as the structural framework and funding base, while ensuring that the visible face of the campaign is entirely composed of local young people, local artists, and local civil society voices. International partners should appear as enablers and co-signatories, not as the primary communicators. Design campaign materials so that the human stories, the visual language, and the political arguments all come from within the Serbian youth community, using references and cultural codes that resonate locally.</p>	<p>Serbia shows a particular openness to structured processes facilitated by internationally respected organisations, partly because the post-conflict transition has made international oversight feel like a guarantee of legitimacy and impartiality. The 'Tolerance' campaign succeeded in part because the UN and Council of Europe provided a framework that gave young people permission to engage with sensitive topics in a setting that felt safe and credible. But the campaign's genuine resonance with youth came from the content that young people themselves created and the panel discussions in which their voices were centred. The international framework opens the door; local youth ownership is what makes people want to walk through it.</p>
Content production skills as core activism competency	<p>Treat the ability to produce high-quality video, photographic, and social media content not as a supplementary communication skill but as a core competency of youth activism in the Serbian context. Build dedicated content production modules into training programmes such as video editing, visual design, photography, social media strategy, podcast production. Ensure that young people leave training courses able to produce campaign content independently, without relying on organisational support. Frame content creation as a political act: making your own media is an exercise of power that counters the monopoly of nationalist narratives in mainstream communication.</p>	<p>Serbian young people are highly active digital communicators and media consumers. Giving them technical production skills transforms them from consumers of activist content into producers of it, a shift that is simultaneously empowering at the individual level and strategically powerful at the campaign level, because peer-produced content consistently outperforms organisationally produced content in youth digital spaces. It also creates a distributed activist capacity that is more resilient: when individual projects end, young people retain their skills and continue producing.</p>



3.3 BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: CREATIVITY AS SURVIVAL, HUMOUR AS RESISTANCE

Bosnia and Herzegovina presents what is arguably the most complex activist environment of the four partner countries. The country remains institutionally and socially fragmented along the ethnic lines established by the Dayton Peace Agreement, with separate education systems, separate public broadcasters, and a political structure that routinely uses inter-ethnic tension as a source of electoral power. Trust in public institutions is among the lowest in Europe, and for good reason: institutions have repeatedly failed to deliver on promises of justice, reconciliation, and development. Youth emigration is high and accelerating. The daily reality for many young Bosnians is one of navigating a system that offers limited opportunity and frequent humiliation. And yet, from within this context has emerged some of the most creative, agile, and emotionally powerful youth activism documented in this project. MIR MIR MIR produced a national media moment with two young artists, some spray cans, and a children's rhyme. CAT built a significant political commentary platform from a meme format and a YouTube series, with no institutional support and minimal budget. Orange Day created a steady monthly pulse of anti-violence activism that has accumulated more than 200 student submissions per cycle. Block the Hatred, Share the Love provided a rare opportunity for young people from ethnically separated communities to meet each other in person. The explanation for this creative vitality in conditions of institutional failure is cultural: Bosnian society has historically used humour, art, and collective irony as coping mechanisms for situations that cannot be changed by conventional political means. This is a form of political intelligence. Understanding and working with this cultural dynamic is the most important insight for any campaign methodology operating in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Strategy	What the Adapted Approach Looks Like	Why This Specific Adaptation Is Necessary
Rapid-response artistic interventions triggered by specific events	<p>Design campaign infrastructure with trained young artists, material stockpiles, decision-making protocols, so that creative interventions in public space can be produced and deployed within days of a triggering political or social event. Develop a pool of young people who are ready to act quickly, know how to make stencils or paste-ups, have mapped suitable locations in their cities, and have agreed in advance on the decision-making process for what to respond to and how. Create a system where the emotional urgency of a moment becomes the creative fuel of an intervention rather than being dissipated waiting for institutional approval.</p>	<p>The Bosnian political context generates crises on a frequent and unpredictable basis (nationalist rhetoric escalates, militaristic imagery appears in public space, political scandals explode). In this environment, a campaign that operates on a planned quarterly or annual cycle will almost always miss the moment of maximum public attention and emotional resonance. MIR MIR MIR was powerful precisely because it appeared within days of the militaristic posters, when the fear they generated was still fresh and the need for a counter-message was viscerally felt. Reactivity in this context is a strategic advantage.</p>
Humour and satire as primary political communication	<p>Build humour, irony, and political satire into the core communicative strategy of campaigns rather than treating them as optional add-ons or light relief from serious content. Invest in the skills of young people to produce satirical content - meme formats, satirical video scripts, absurdist visual commentary - that engages the specific cultural codes and political references of Bosnian youth. Develop a house style that is unmistakably Bosnian in its references and sensibility, so that content feels like it comes from inside the community rather than from an external organisation trying to speak the language of youth. Use humour not to trivialise serious issues but to expose their absurdity, which in Bosnia is often the most powerful political act available.</p>	<p>Bosnian culture has an exceptional and historically rooted tradition of using dark humour to survive impossible situations. This is not a superficial youth cultural trend - it runs through the literature, cinema, music, and everyday conversational culture of Bosnian society across generations. Campaigns that understand this and engage with it gain immediate credibility and emotional access. Campaigns that ignore it in favour of serious, solemn advocacy risk being perceived as external, naive, or disconnected from how Bosnians actually process their political reality. CAT's extraordinary reach and loyalty is essentially a testament to what happens when a campaign speaks fluently in the cultural language that its audience actually uses.</p>
Cross-community messaging that speaks to shared humanity across ethnic lines	<p>Design campaign messages and visual languages that are legible and emotionally meaningful to young people from all three major communities (Bosniak, Serb, Croat) without requiring any of them to suppress or compromise their identity. Prioritise shared references (childhood memories, common music and pop culture, the physical landscape of shared cities) over politically neutral abstractions. Use multilingual design strategies where a single word or image means the same thing regardless of which language the viewer uses. Avoid framing campaigns around the language of reconciliation or inter-ethnic dialogue (which carries political baggage and invites cynicism) in favour of campaigns that simply demonstrate shared values in action.</p>	<p>Bosnia and Herzegovina's deepest structural challenge for youth activism is ethnic fragmentation. Campaigns that address one community but not others, or that are perceived as representing a particular ethnic or political position, immediately lose a significant portion of their potential audience. MIR MIR MIR navigated this with extraordinary skill by using the word 'mir' (peace) that is phonetically identical in all three official languages and etymologically rooted in shared regional culture. This was not a small linguistic choice: it was a strategic and political decision that allowed the campaign to speak simultaneously across ethnic lines without requiring anyone to make concessions. This kind of cross-community design thinking should be embedded in every Bosnian Creative Canvas activity.</p>
Sustained monthly rhythm combined with accessible entry points for participation	<p>Create campaign structures with a predictable, repeated rhythm rather than relying on single large events. This regularity creates a background presence in young people's lives that grows gradually rather than spiking and disappearing. Combine this steady rhythm with very accessible entry points: an art competition that welcomes all primary school students, a social media format that anyone can contribute to, a stencil template that anyone can print and use. The combination of regularity and accessibility builds the sense that the campaign is a living community rather than a project with a start and end date.</p>	<p>In a country where cynicism about institutional commitments is well-founded, the experience of a campaign that simply keeps showing up on the 25th of every month, every year is itself a form of activist statement. Orange Day's power is not only in any individual event but in the accumulated experience of its regularity: it has become part of the calendar of Bosnian youth civil society. This regularity also has a practical benefit: it keeps the issue present in public consciousness in the intervals between political crises, ensuring that activism is not entirely dependent on dramatic triggering events to be relevant.</p>



3.4 ALBANIA: PUBLIC ART IN A RAPIDLY TRANSFORMING LANDSCAPE

Albania presents a distinct activist context characterised above all by velocity: the country is transforming at a rate that few European societies have experienced in recent decades. Cities that were defined by communist-era grey concrete are becoming visually vibrant urban spaces, with a growing tradition of public art and mural culture that has emerged as one of the most visible expressions of the country's opening. Young Albanians growing up in this environment are acutely sensitive to the aesthetics of public space - they notice when a wall speaks and when it is silent, and they are increasingly interested in making walls speak for them. At the same time, Albania faces some of the most deeply entrenched structural barriers to gender equality in the Western Balkans. Patriarchal norms remain powerful, particularly in rural areas, and gender-based violence continues to affect large proportions of the population, often in silence. International organisations such as UN Women have played a significant role in Albanian civil society's response to these issues, providing both resources and legitimacy frameworks. This international partnership orientation is a structural feature of Albanian activism that is neither a weakness nor a shortcoming: it is a realistic and often highly effective strategy for organisations operating with limited domestic resources in a context where international credibility genuinely opens doors. The Albanian campaigns documented in this research all reflect this combination of public art culture, international framework, and focus on gender and rights issues. Their particular strength lies in creating lasting physical presences in the urban landscape rather than fleeting events, and in positioning young people as creative contributors to the visual transformation of their cities.



Strategy	What the Adapted Approach Looks Like	Why This Specific Adaptation Is Necessary
Large-scale murals as permanent advocacy infrastructure	Treat murals not as campaign events but as campaign infrastructure - physical presences that continue to communicate the campaign message for months and years after the painting action that produced them. Plan mural actions with long-term visibility in mind: choose high-traffic locations in multiple cities (not only Tirana), work with young local artists to create images that are visually compelling enough to resist being painted over, and document murals photographically as a systematic archive that can be used to demonstrate the campaign's geographic reach and visual impact. Design the mural programme as a growing map of the country's commitment to the campaign's values.	The particular power of murals in the Albanian context comes from the visual transformation that the country has been undergoing. Public art has become a culturally resonant medium that connects Albania's growing urban identity to broader European and global artistic traditions. A well-executed mural in a central Albanian city is a statement about what kind of country Albania is becoming and what values are being written into its landscape. This gives murals a symbolic weight that is substantially greater than their communicative function alone. Young Albanians who contribute to painting these murals are participating in the visual definition of their public culture, which is a powerful motivational driver.
International partnerships as enabling infrastructure, not as campaign identity	Use partnerships with international organisations (UN Women, Council of Europe, European Union) as the structural and financial enabling layer that makes campaigns possible – providing resources, institutional access, legal frameworks, and international media attention, while designing all youth-facing communications and activities to reflect local Albanian identity, language, and cultural references. International partners should be named and acknowledged, but should not be the primary visual or communicative identity of the campaign. Youth should experience the campaign as Albanian activism that has international support, not as an international project that involves Albanian youth.	International partnerships in Albania bring genuinely important practical benefits: funding, access to high-level institutional actors (municipalities, police, government bodies), connection to global campaigns like the 16 Days initiative, and a legitimacy framework that makes it harder for harmful actors to dismiss the campaign as naive or marginal. At the same time, a campaign that is experienced as externally imposed or primarily European in identity loses a significant portion of its potential resonance with young Albanians who are proud of their culture and identity. The most effective Albanian campaigns use international frameworks as scaffolding, not as walls.
Systematic geographic decentralisation beyond the capital	Build geographic reach beyond Tirana into the campaign design from the outset, not as an afterthought. Establish dedicated points of contact, local coordinators, and activity plans in secondary cities (Lezha, Durrës, Shkodër, Elbasan, Vlorë, Gjirokastër) before the campaign launches. Prioritise secondary cities for high-visibility activities such as mural actions, since the symbolic value of a campaign appearing in a provincial city is often higher per capita than in the capital, where civil society activity is already relatively dense. Use the geographic distribution of the campaign as a communication strategy in itself - document and publicise the map of where activities have taken place to demonstrate national reach.	Albanian civil society activism has historically been concentrated in Tirana, reflecting the broader centralisation of public and cultural life in the capital. This means that young people in secondary and rural communities have proportionally less access to campaign activities, fewer opportunities to participate as activists rather than just audiences, and often face more entrenched patriarchal norms and less exposure to counter-cultural messaging. At the same time, activities in secondary cities tend to receive proportionally more local attention (media coverage, community engagement, institutional notice) precisely because there is less competition for public attention. Decentralisation is both an equity imperative and a strategic opportunity.
Youth as multipliers trained to carry campaigns beyond the core team	Invest systematically in training young people who participate in campaign activities to function as multipliers able to teach the campaign's methods, replicate its activities, and adapt its tools to new contexts with minimal external support. Build this multiplier function explicitly into the design of activities: every mural painting event should include a skills transfer component; every workshop should end with participants equipped to lead the same workshop for their peers; every training should produce young people who can train others. Create lightweight resource packages (stencil templates, facilitation guides, social media toolkits) that multipliers can take with them.	Albania's geography, uneven infrastructure, and concentration of civil society resources in Tirana mean that a campaign that relies exclusively on the core team to deliver all activities will always have limited reach. The multiplier model addresses this structural constraint by creating a distributed network of campaign advocates who extend the campaign's reach organically into their own communities. This model is already embedded in successful Albanian campaigns used young people as multipliers in schools and communities across the country. The Creative Canvas training model (WP3) is itself built on this principle: participants from Albania return home with skills and action plans for local implementation.

4 ALBANIA: CROSS-COUNTRY TRANSFERABILITY: WHAT TRAVELS AND WHAT REQUIRES REDESIGN

A core practical question for the Creative Canvas project is: which elements of the campaigns documented in national research can be adopted across partner countries with minimal modification, and which require substantial local redesign? This question directly determines the structure of the Graffiti ABC guidebook. Techniques and approaches that transfer easily across all four countries can be taught universally; those that are deeply context-dependent require a 'translate for your context' framework to ensure they do not become either ineffective or actively counterproductive when moved from one national environment to another. The analysis below distinguishes three levels of transferability: high (applicable across all four contexts with minor adaptation), partial (applicable in some but not all contexts, or applicable universally but requiring significant local redesign of content while retaining structural method), and limited (deeply context-specific and liable to lose effectiveness or generate unintended consequences when directly transplanted).

Element / Technique	Transferability	Detailed Analysis
Stencil graffiti as rapid counter-speech	High transferability	Stencils require no institutional permission, minimal budget, and little prior technical training. They can be produced and deployed rapidly in response to specific events. They generate immediate visual impact in physical space and highly shareable photographic content online. MIR MIR MIR demonstrated this in the context of ethnic tension in post-conflict Sarajevo; the Banksy model has demonstrated it in commercial and political contexts globally. In all four partner countries, young people already understand stencils as a medium with activist associations. The only content that needs adaptation is the message itself, the visual form and production method are universally accessible.
Peer education and train-the-trainer models	High transferability	The principle of equipping young people to teach other young people is effective in all four national contexts because it addresses the universal finding that peer credibility consistently exceeds adult or institutional credibility in youth communication. Whether it takes the form of MABASTA's Bulliziotti mediators, the Hate Fighters Programme's peer facilitators, or the 16 Days campaign's youth multipliers, the underlying structure is identical. The content must of course reflect local issues, cultural codes, and specific forms of hate speech. But the methodology of peer teaching, with its associated benefits of credibility, ownership, and self-perpetuating spread, requires no national redesign.
Online-offline content loops	High transferability	The strategic practice of designing offline actions with their online afterlife in mind, creating murals and public art that generate shareable photographs, mounting exhibitions that produce Instagram content, staging public events that become YouTube videos, is applicable universally because social media penetration is high in all four partner countries and because the combination of physical presence and digital reach addresses the limitations of both media individually. What varies is which platforms are dominant in each country (Instagram and TikTok in Italy; Facebook and YouTube in Bosnia; Instagram and Facebook in Albania) and therefore how content should be formatted for maximum reach. The strategic principle, however, is identical.

Meme and satirical content creation	Partial transferability	Meme-based political satire, as exemplified by CAT, is highly effective in Bosnia and Herzegovina because it draws on a deeply embedded cultural tradition of dark humour as political coping mechanism. The format is also effective in Serbia, where a similar ironic cultural sensibility is present. In Italy, satirical content can work but must be more closely tied to specific, recognisable daily experiences (school bullying, voting barriers) rather than broad political commentary, which Italian youth are more likely to filter through existing political identities. In Albania, where the primary activist medium is visual public art rather than digital satire, meme culture exists but does not carry the same political resonance. The Graffiti ABC can teach meme creation as a technique while noting the cultural contexts in which it is most powerful.
School-based structured intervention models	Partial transferability	MABASTA's six-action model works in Italy because the Italian classroom functions as a unusually cohesive and persistent social unit. This specific social structure is less pronounced in Serbian, Bosnian, and Albanian educational contexts, where schools may be more ethnically divided, less structured around stable cohort groups, or under greater resource pressure. However, the underlying principle is transferable. The Graffiti ABC should adapt this principle to reflect the specific social environments of schools in each partner country, providing locally appropriate peer tools rather than directly transplanting the MABASTA model.
Campaigns led by international institutional frameworks	Partial transferability	Campaigns anchored in international institutional frameworks (UN Women, Council of Europe, EU) benefit from credibility, resources, and global narrative connections. This works particularly well in Albania, where international partnerships provide genuine added value in terms of access and legitimacy, and in Serbia, where structured international facilitation creates safe spaces for sensitive dialogue. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the same frameworks can feel external and slow. In Italy, EU branding can actively undermine youth credibility of a campaign. The strategic lesson is to use international frameworks as enabling infrastructure, not as primary campaign identity, in all four contexts.
Humour-driven political commentary with highly local references	Limited transferability	CAT's specific combination of Bosnian-Herzegovinian political references, local cultural codes, and darkly ironic sensibility cannot be directly transplanted to other countries without losing almost all of its resonance. The format (memes, YouTube series) can travel; the content cannot. An attempt to replicate CAT's style in Italy, Serbia, or Albania without rebuilding the content from scratch using locally resonant references and cultural sensibility would produce something that reads as superficial imitation. The Graffiti ABC should acknowledge CAT as a model of humour-as-activism while making clear that its application in other countries requires rebuilding the content layer entirely from local materials.
War-memory and post-conflict visual symbolism	Limited transferability	The power of MIR MIR MIR depends entirely on its specific geographic and historical context: the words appear on buildings still marked by the Sarajevo siege, in a city where the memory of war is physically present and emotionally immediate. The same visual strategy in a city without that history would be incomprehensible or bathetic. However, the underlying design principle is universally applicable. Every partner country has its own collective emotional landscape that can be drawn upon for similarly resonant visual communication. The task for Graffiti ABC is to help young people identify their own version of that landscape.

4.1 THE THREE-QUESTION TRANSLATION FRAMEWORK

Based on this transferability analysis, the Creative Canvas project proposes a practical three-question framework that partners and participants should apply whenever adapting a campaign activity for a new national context. This framework is intended to be simple enough to use in a workshop setting while being analytically rigorous enough to catch the most common errors in cross-cultural campaign adaptation.



The Translation Framework

Question 1: What is the local emotional trigger?

Identify the specific feeling (fear, anger, humour, solidarity, pride, grief) that connects the campaign's theme to something young people in this country experience directly and regularly. The emotional trigger is not the campaign's message; it is the feeling that makes people care enough to listen to the message. Without a genuine local emotional trigger, even a technically excellent campaign will feel distant and irrelevant.

Question 2: What is the local communication style?

Identify how young people in this country actually communicate with each other about things they care about. Do they use dark humour and irony (Bosnia)? Peer-to-peer practical tools and measured evidence (Italy)? Structured training with peer facilitation (Serbia)? Visual public art that claims physical space (Albania)? The campaign should speak first in the communication style that young people already use, not the style that adults or organisations prefer.

Question 3: What is the main barrier to participation?

Identify the specific obstacle that prevents young people from participating in activism around this issue. Is it distrust of institutions (Serbia, Bosnia)? Fear of social consequences within the peer group (Italy)? Economic insecurity and competing priorities (Albania)? Physical distance and inadequate infrastructure (Albania, Bosnia)? Social fragmentation along ethnic lines (Bosnia)? The campaign design must directly address its primary barrier, not assume that young people who care about the issue will overcome the barrier by themselves.



5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE GRAFFITI ABC GUIDEBOOK AND CREATIVE CANVAS CAMPAIGN

The comparative analysis developed across the preceding four sections generates a set of concrete, actionable recommendations for the Graffiti ABC guidebook (WP2, Deliverable D2.2) and the broader Creative Canvas training and campaign activities (WP3 and WP4). These recommendations are grounded in evidence from the sixteen documented campaigns and structured by the universal principles and culturally adapted strategies identified in this analysis.

Each recommendation is accompanied by a detailed explanation of how it should be applied in practice. The recommendations are presented in order of structural priority, from the most foundational (the design logic of the entire guidebook) to the most specific (individual session designs and communication choices).

#	Recommendation	Detailed Application for Graffiti ABC and Creative Canvas
1	Anchor the guidebook in universal principles, not national case studies	Every chapter of the Graffiti ABC should open with a statement of the universal principle it is teaching (emotional resonance, practical tools, public visibility, peer ownership, etc.) and only then introduce case studies as illustrations of that principle in action. This structure ensures that young activists from all four partner countries experience the guidebook as teaching something that applies to their own context, rather than describing what works in someone else's country. Case studies should be selected to include at least one example from each partner country for each major principle, ensuring geographic diversity of representation.
2	Include a 'Translate for Your Context' reflection prompt in every practical tutorial	Every how-to section should end with a structured reflection exercise using the three-question translation framework (What is your local emotional trigger? What is your local communication style? What is the main barrier to participation in your community?). This exercise should be presented as a creative design challenge rather than an evaluation task, and should be accompanied by a worked example showing how a young activist in each partner country might answer the questions differently. This activates the universal technique within local conditions.
3	Develop a set of culturally adaptable base templates	Produce a set of stencil and poster templates that carry the core anti-hate visual concept without pre-filling the text element with any specific language or cultural reference. These base templates should be designed so that young activists in each partner country can insert their own text, local symbol, or country-specific visual element to make the design their own, while the underlying graphic quality and activist association of the template does the baseline communicative work. Include instructions for adapting templates for different languages, reading directions, and cultural colour associations.



4	Design all workshops to end with immediately shareable content	Every practical workshop in the Graffiti ABC should include as a structural component a documentation and sharing phase lasting at least fifteen minutes at the end of the session. Participants should photograph their outputs, write a brief caption using the campaign hashtag, and post to at least one social media platform before leaving. This habit must be built into the workshop methodology from the first session so that the online-offline content loop becomes automatic rather than occasional. Include guidance on how to photograph graffiti and murals for maximum visual impact on different platforms.
5	Embed the three-question translation framework as a named tool in the guidebook	The translation framework (emotional trigger / communication style / participation barrier) should appear explicitly in the Graffiti ABC as a named methodology for campaign design adaptation. Include a dedicated one-page spread presenting the three questions, explaining the reasoning behind each, and providing examples of how different partner countries would answer them for the same campaign theme. Present it as a tool that young activists can use independently to design their own campaigns beyond the specific activities taught in the guidebook.
6	Ensure the guidebook explicitly names and teaches the universal principles	The eight universal principles identified in this analysis (authentic ownership, practical tools, emotional resonance, public space as medium, online-offline integration, visible results, low participation barriers, scalable design) should appear in the Graffiti ABC as an explicit conceptual framework, not only as implicit structural features of the content. Young activists who understand why certain approaches work universally are equipped to design effective campaigns independently, beyond the specific techniques the book teaches. A dedicated introductory chapter or visual infographic presenting the eight principles, with brief examples, would serve this function.
7	Use the comparative analysis as a structured cross-cultural exchange exercise in the WP3 training	The six-day training course in Durrës (June 2026) should include a dedicated half-day session in which participants from each of the four partner countries share their national context using the format established in this analysis: what are the main issues, what is the dominant activism style, what are the main barriers, what works and what does not. This comparative conversation, grounded in real experience rather than theory, will generate insights that no document can replace. It will also build the cross-cultural understanding that is the social infrastructure of the consortium's long-term collaboration. The session should produce a co-created summary document, authored by participants, that becomes part of the living documentation of the Creative Canvas project.
8	Position stencil graffiti and mural painting as the connective tissue of the entire campaign	Of all the techniques and approaches documented in this comparative analysis, stencil graffiti and mural-based public art are the most universally applicable across all four partner countries. They are low-cost, high-visibility, emotionally resonant, and physically present in the shared environment. They generate organic social media content. They can be produced by young people with no prior training. They leave a lasting mark. For these reasons, the Graffiti ABC should treat stencils and murals as the primary creative medium of the Creative Canvas methodology, the technique that holds the campaign together across different countries, contexts, and issues. Other techniques (paste-up, tag-style lettering, digital design) are valuable additions, but the stencil and the mural are the universal language.



CONCLUSION

The sixteen campaigns documented across Italy, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Albania collectively demonstrate that effective youth activism against hate speech, discrimination, and gender-based violence is simultaneously universal and local. It is universal in its underlying logic, successful campaigns everywhere share the same deep structural features: authentic youth ownership, practical tools that enable immediate action, emotional resonance, physical presence in public space, the intelligent integration of online and offline action, visible results, accessible participation, and scalable design. These are not optional enhancements to an awareness-raising campaign; they are the conditions under which campaigns generate genuine engagement and lasting change.

At the same time, how these principles are translated into practice is inseparable from context. The school-as-social-laboratory approach that makes MABASTA transformative in an Italian classroom would be structurally incoherent in a Bosnian school divided by ethnicity and language. The reactive stencil graffiti that makes MIR MIR MIR powerful in a city still physically marked by siege would lack its specific weight in a context where war memory is not written into every wall. The satirical meme culture that makes CAT a genuine political force in Bosnia requires cultural codes so deeply local that exporting the format without rebuilding the content produces hollow imitation. These are not failures of universalism but necessary acknowledgements that campaigns work through people's lived experience, and lived experiences are always locally shaped.

For the Creative Canvas project, this dual insight universal in principle, local in practice is the central design challenge and the central opportunity. The Graffiti ABC guidebook must be a document that any young activist in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, or Serbia can pick up and immediately use in their own context, while also being a document that teaches principles rather than just techniques, so that



what young people carry away is not only a set of skills but a way of thinking about how creativity, presence in public space, and peer solidarity can be weapons against hate. The walls of our cities are already inscribed with the marks of violence, division, and indifference. The work of this project is to help young people learn how to answer back with clarity, with beauty, and with the confidence that their voices belong on the walls of their own communities.



COMPARING INTERNATIONAL APPROACHES

**UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES AND
CULTURALLY ADAPTED STRATEGIES**

The analysis of youth campaigns from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, and Serbia shows that successful campaigns often share similar foundations, even when they respond to very different social, political, and cultural contexts. Across the mapped examples, campaigns addressed topics such as hate speech, discrimination, gender based violence, climate justice, bullying, civic participation, youth rights, and public memory. Although these issues appear in different forms from country to country, the comparison makes it possible to identify both universal principles that can be applied widely and culturally adapted strategies that respond to local realities.

UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES ACROSS COUNTRIES

One of the clearest universal principles is the active involvement of young people. In almost all examples, young people were not only treated as a target group, but also as contributors, creators, peer educators, campaign promoters, artists, organizers, and public advocates. The Hate Fighters Programme from Serbia is a strong example of this approach, as young people are involved in trainings, workshops, content creation, campaign development, and peer education, which gives them real ownership over the process. Similar patterns appear in Italy through Fridays For Future Italia, where young people create local groups, manage communication, organize strikes and assemblies, and lead advocacy actions.

Another shared principle is the combination of online communication with offline action. Campaigns across all countries use social media to increase visibility, but the most effective examples also connect digital outreach with public events, murals, workshops, petitions, school activities, discussions, and community actions. In Serbia, the “Tolerance” campaign used institutional communication, social media, public murals, and poster exhibitions, creating a connection between offline visibility and online sharing. In Albania, public art and murals



were repeatedly used as communication tools, showing how physical space can become part of campaign communication and social dialogue.

A third universal principle is the use of creativity and visual communication. Across the mapped campaigns, creative formats such as murals, videos, photography, storytelling, memes, public art, and social media visuals were used to make complex topics easier to understand and more emotionally engaging. This is especially visible in Albania, where MURAL FEST transformed public walls into accessible artistic spaces and connected urban art with social themes, cultural dialogue, and youth participation. It is also visible in Serbia, where the “Truths Shouldn’t be Denied” initiative connected online reporting with the physical presence of hate murals and graffiti in public space.

The consultation with youth activists, influencers, and campaign managers also confirmed these findings. Respondents from Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, and Albania emphasized authenticity, meaningful youth participation, clear messaging, visual creativity, and relatable storytelling as key elements of successful youth campaigns. Short form video, personal stories, interactive formats, social media engagement, and offline activities connected to online campaigns were identified as especially effective techniques.

CULTURALLY ADAPTED STRATEGIES

Although these universal principles appear across countries, each national context adapts them differently. In Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, campaigns often respond to the legacy of conflict, hate speech, nationalism, social polarization, and public narratives connected with memory and identity. For example, the “Truths Shouldn’t be Denied” initiative in Serbia focuses on murals and graffiti that glorify war criminals and spread harmful narratives in public space. Its strategy is based on citizen reporting, documentation,



formal requests for removal, and public awareness raising. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the “MIR MIR MIR; RATA NEĆE BITI” action used public space and artistic expression to respond directly to militaristic messages and rising political tensions.

In Italy, several campaigns show a stronger focus on civic rights, climate justice, bullying, and digital citizenship. Fridays For Future Italia uses decentralized local groups, national coordination, Telegram channels, global strike formats, and climate justice narratives to mobilize young people around environmental concerns. The Voto Fuorisede campaign focuses on voting access for students and young workers living away from their registered residence, combining petitions, advocacy, media storytelling, and political pressure. These examples show how Italian campaigns often connect youth engagement with policy advocacy, civic participation, and structured public pressure.

In Albania, the strongest cultural adaptation appears through public art and urban visibility. Campaigns such as Mural activism and MURAL FEST use murals as tools for public dialogue, inclusion, gender equality, and civic pride. This approach reflects the value of transforming public space into an accessible communication platform, especially in urban environments where art can reach audiences beyond formal institutions. The 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence campaign also combined national advocacy with local activities and artistic interventions in different cities, which helped decentralize engagement beyond the capital.

Bosnia and Herzegovina shows a strong emphasis on peace, dialogue, and collective responsibility. Campaigns such as Orange Day by the Institute for Youth Development KULT address violence against women and girls through monthly activities, workshops, competitions, and school engagement. This approach is adapted to a context where



patriarchal norms, institutional weakness, and social silence around violence require continuous awareness raising and early education.

ONLINE ENGAGEMENT AND PLATFORM ADAPTATION

Across countries, social media is a universal tool, but the way it is used depends on the target group, campaign objective, and cultural context. The consultation results showed that Instagram was the most commonly used platform, followed by TikTok, Facebook, and YouTube. Respondents highlighted short form videos, personal stories, interactive polls, memes, and visually strong content as the most effective formats for youth engagement.

However, platform use is not enough by itself. The consultation also showed that young people respond best to campaigns that feel authentic, honest, and close to their reality. Respondents repeatedly stated that campaigns should avoid overly formal language, top down communication, and messages that only pretend to be youth friendly. Instead, campaigns should include young people in planning, content creation, and decision making. This finding connects directly with the mapped best practices, where the strongest campaigns are those that give young people a real role, not just visibility.

COMMON ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

The comparison shows several engagement techniques that appear across different national examples and can be considered transferable. These include storytelling, peer communication, influencer or ambassador involvement, public art, workshops, petitions, social media challenges, user generated content, and linking online actions with physical events. In Serbia, the Block the Hatred. Share the Love campaign used social media, public figures, youth initiatives, local discussions, and public events to promote positive narratives and counter hate speech.



In Italy, the No Hate Speech Movement Italia used counter narratives, youth trainings, action days, and digital content production to strengthen youth responses to hate speech.

At the same time, these techniques must be adapted to the issue being addressed. A petition model may work well for voting rights, as seen in Voto Fuorisede, while murals and public interventions may be more suitable for campaigns dealing with public memory, gender equality, inclusion, or hate speech in public space. For climate activism, decentralized local groups and repeated public mobilization are more appropriate. For bullying and cyberbullying, school based peer models and anonymous reporting tools may be more effective.

UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES IDENTIFIED

Based on the comparison, several universal principles can guide future youth campaigns. Campaigns should be authentic and based on real experiences. Young people should be involved from the beginning, not only in promotion but also in planning and decision making. Messages should be clear, visually strong, emotionally engaging, and easy to share. Online communication should be connected with offline action whenever possible. Campaigns should provide young people with a concrete role, whether through content creation, reporting, public events, peer education, artistic expression, or advocacy. Finally, campaigns should include follow up mechanisms so that engagement does not end after one event or one online action.

CULTURALLY ADAPTED STRATEGIES IDENTIFIED

Culturally adapted strategies depend on local history, social problems, media habits, and institutional context. In post conflict societies, campaigns may need to focus on peace, memory, anti nationalism, reconciliation, and public space. In countries facing strong youth civic barriers, campaigns may focus on rights, policy change, petitions, and institutional advocacy. In contexts where art has strong public



visibility, murals and creative interventions can become powerful tools. In communities where young people are highly active online but distrust formal institutions, campaigns should use peer voices, informal language, and participatory formats. In contexts where social issues are sensitive, anonymous storytelling, safe spaces, and careful moderation become especially important.

CONCLUSION

The international comparison shows that there is no single campaign model that can be applied everywhere without adaptation. However, there are clear principles that appear consistently across successful examples. Youth campaigns are strongest when they are authentic, participatory, creative, visually engaging, and connected to both online and offline spaces. At the same time, each campaign must be adapted to its cultural and social environment. The most effective approach is therefore a combination of universal principles and local adaptation: campaigns should use shared methods such as storytelling, youth participation, social media, and creative expression, while shaping their messages, formats, and actions according to the specific needs and realities of each community.



ERASMUS+ **PROGRAMME**

ERASMUS +

Erasmus+ is the EU Programme in the fields of education, training, youth and sport. Education, training, youth and sport are key areas that support citizens in their personal and professional development. High quality, inclusive education and training, as well as informal and non-formal learning, ultimately equip young people and participants of all ages with the qualifications and skills needed for their meaningful participation in democratic society, intercultural understanding and successful transition in the labour market. Building on the success of the programme in the period 2014-2020, Erasmus+ strengthens its efforts to increase the opportunities offered to more participants and to a wider range of organisations, focusing on its qualitative impact and contributing to more inclusive and cohesive, greener and digitally fit societies.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The general objective of the Programme is to support, through lifelong learning, the educational, professional and personal development of people in education, training, youth and sport, in Europe and beyond, thereby contributing to sustainable growth, quality jobs and social cohesion, to driving innovation, and to strengthening European identity and active citizenship. As such, the Programme shall be a key instrument for building a European Education Area, supporting the implementation of the European strategic cooperation in the field of education and training, with its underlying sectoral agendas, advancing youth policy cooperation under the Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 and developing the European dimension in sport.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The Programme has the following specific objectives:

- Promote learning mobility of individuals and groups, as well as cooperation, quality, inclusion and equity, excellence, creativity and



innovation at the level of organisations and policies in the field of education and training;

- Promote non-formal and informal learning mobility and active participation among young people, as well as cooperation, quality, inclusion, creativity and innovation at the level of organisations and policies in the field of youth;

- Promote learning mobility of sport staff, as well as cooperation, quality, inclusion, creativity and innovation at the level of sport organisations and sport policies.

WHO IMPLEMENTS ERASMUS + PROGRAMME?

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

The European Commission is ultimately responsible for the running of the Erasmus+ Programme. It manages the budget and sets priorities, targets and criteria for the Programme on an on-going basis. Furthermore, it guides and monitors the general implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the Programme at European level. The European Commission also bears the overall responsibility for the supervision and coordination of the structures in charge of implementing the Programme at national level. At European level, the European Commission's European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) is responsible for the implementation of a number of actions of the Erasmus+ Programme.

More information about Erasmus + Program at:
https://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/index_en

THE NATIONAL AGENCIES

The implementation of the Erasmus+ Programme is mainly implemented as Indirect Management, meaning that the European



Commission entrusts budget implementation tasks to National Agencies; the rationale of this approach is to bring Erasmus+ as close as possible to its beneficiaries and to adapt to the diversity of national education, training and youth systems. National Agencies promote and implement the Programme at national level and act as the link between the European Commission and participating organisations at local, regional and national level. It is their task to:

- Provide appropriate information on the Erasmus+ Programme;
- Administer a fair and transparent selection process for project applications to be funded in their country;
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Programme in their country;
- Provide support to project applicants and participating organisations throughout the project life-cycle;
- Collaborate effectively with the network of all National Agencies and the European Commission;
- Ensure the visibility of the Programme;
- Promote the dissemination and exploitation of the results of the Programme at local and national level.

More information about Erasmus + Program at:

https://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/index_en

MOBILITY PROJECTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE - "YOUTH EXCHANGES"

Under this Action, organisations and informal groups of young people can receive support to carry out projects bringing together young people from different countries to exchange and learn outside their formal educational system.



OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTION

Erasmus+ supports non-formal learning mobility of young people in the form of Youth Exchanges, with the objective to engage and empower young people to become active citizens, connect them to the European project as well as to help them acquire and develop competences for life and their professional future.

More specifically, Youth Exchanges aim to:

- foster intercultural dialogue and learning and feeling of being European;
- develop skills and attitudes of young people;
- strengthen European values and breaking down prejudices and stereotypes;
- raise awareness about socially relevant topics and thus stimulate engagement in society and active participation.

The Action is open to all young people, with a special focus on those with fewer opportunities.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES

Youth Exchanges are meetings of groups of young people from at least two different countries who gather for a short period to implement jointly a non-formal learning programme (a mix of workshops, exercises, debates, role-plays, simulations, outdoor activities, etc.) on a topic of their interest, seeking inspiration from the European Youth Goal. The learning period comprises preparation phase before as well as evaluation and follow-up after the exchange.

The following activities are not eligible for grants under Youth Exchanges: academic study trips; exchange activities that aim to make financial profit; exchange activities that can be considered as tourism; festivals; holiday travel; performance tours, statutory meetings, training courses by adults for young people.



SETTING UP A PROJECT

A project is implemented by at least two organisations. Organisations involved in a project should benefit from their participation; the project should therefore be in line with their objectives and fit their needs. Organisations involved assume the roles of “sending” participants and/or “receiving” i.e. hosting the activity. One of the organisations takes also the role of coordinator and applies for the whole project on behalf of the partnership.

A project consists of four stages: planning, preparation, implementation and follow-up. Participating organisations and young people involved in the activities should take an active role in all those stages enhancing thus their learning experience.

- Planning (define the needs, objectives, learning outcomes, activity formats, development of work programme, schedule of activities etc.)



Creative Canvas



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