

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

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

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

PROJECT	
Participant:	1 - Asociatia Polylogos (Polylogos)
PIC number:	895397980
Project name and acronym:	Actions Supporting the Participation of Youth through Relevant Education in Europe - ASPYRE Europe

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number:	9		
Event name:	Civic Cafes Romania		
Type:	Workshop		
In situ/online:	<i>In situ</i>		
Location:	Romania, Cluj-napoca		
Date(s):	21 May 2026 22 May 2026		
Website(s) (if any):			
Participants			
Female:	63		
Male:	73		
Non-binary:	0		
From country 1 [Romania]:	136		
From country 2 [name]:			
From country 3 [name]:			
...			
Total number of participants:	136	From total number of countries:	1
Description			
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>			
Summary of the Event			

The Civic Cafés Romania were organised as a series of youth-led public engagement events during *Zilele Clujului* in May 2026. The main dialogue event with decision-makers took place on **22 May 2026** at **Turnul Croitorilor** in Cluj-Napoca, while a public dialogue and outreach event was organised on **21 May 2026** in **Central Park**, Cluj-Napoca. In addition, the Youth Advocacy Groups presented their initiatives and engaged citizens in dialogue at the Polylogos stand throughout the entire *Zilele Clujului* festival (21-24 May 2026).

The Civic Cafés contributed directly to the ASPYRE EUROPE **project objectives**:

- **To train and mentor young people to engage meaningfully in democratic decision-making processes (Objective 3).**
- **To facilitate dialogue and engagement between youth and relevant decision-makers at all levels, around issues raised by youth in the implementing countries (Objective 4).**

More specifically, the events focused on:

- Facilitating meaningful dialogue between youth and local decision-makers;
- Creating opportunities for exchange between young people and the wider public;
- Empowering youth by providing a platform to present their ideas, advocate for their causes, and mobilise community support;
- Encouraging active participation in democratic processes by equipping young people with the tools, confidence, and opportunities to make their voices heard and contribute to community development.

Participants per target group

- Youth (16-24) and Others / the general public: 124
- Teachers, educators and youth workers: 2
- Decision-makers: 10

For the public event on 21 May and the activities conducted throughout *Zilele Clujului*, participant registration was not disaggregated by age. As a result, the reported figure combines young people and other members of the general public who engaged with the Youth Advocacy Groups and project activities.

Overview of activities

The Civic Cafés in Romania were organised in two complementary parts, combining public outreach and awareness-raising with structured dialogue between young people and decision-makers.

Activity 1: Public Dialogue and Engagement

21 May 2026 | Central Park, Cluj-Napoca

The first Civic Café took place in Central Park, Cluj-Napoca, as part of the *Zilele Clujului* festival programme and was primarily addressed to the general public. Representatives of all four Youth Advocacy Groups were present and had the opportunity to present the issues they had identified as most relevant to young people, as well as the solutions and policy recommendations they had developed throughout the ASPYRE EUROPE process.

The four advocacy groups focused on the following topics:

- **OnBoard** – Safety on public transportation and at stations;
- **Future Compass** – Improving access to school counsellors in high schools;
- **Sports+** – Increasing institutional and financial support for emerging and unofficially recognised sports;
- **Fuel for Success** – Improving access to healthy and balanced food during school hours.

As the event was organised within *Zilele Clujului*, the young people had the opportunity to engage with a diverse audience, including residents, families, tourists, students, and visitors of different ages, backgrounds, and nationalities. Throughout the event, participants:

- Presented the issues they considered most important for young people in their community;
- Engaged citizens in dialogue and discussion around their proposed solutions and recommendations;
- Collected opinions, feedback, and reactions from members of the public;
- Raised awareness about youth-led initiatives and the importance of youth participation in public life.

All four initiatives were positively received and generated considerable interest among community members. The activity contributed to raising awareness of issues affecting young people, increasing the visibility of youth-led advocacy, and encouraging civic dialogue between generations.

Participants:

A total of **92 signatures** were collected from individuals who engaged with the youth groups during the event. Due to GDPR considerations, the public participation lists used during the festival included only participants' names and signatures.

The Youth Advocacy Groups continued engaging with visitors at the Polylogos stand throughout the remainder of *Zilele Clujului* (21–24 May 2026), reaching many additional citizens beyond those formally recorded on the participation lists.

Activity 2: Youth-Decision Maker Dialogue Session

22 May 2026 | Turnul Croitorilor, Cluj-Napoca

The second Civic Café took place at Turnul Croitorilor and brought together young people and local decision-makers for a structured dialogue and consultation session. Participants included representatives of the Cluj-Napoca Local Council, the Cluj County School Inspectorate, educators, youth workers, representatives from different political youth parties, and members of the four Youth Advocacy Groups.

During the event:

- Each advocacy group presented the issue they had identified and analysed throughout the project;
- Young people shared their policy recommendations and proposed solutions;
- Participants explained the relevance of the issues from their own experiences and perspectives;
- Decision-makers provided feedback, asked questions, and discussed potential avenues for collaboration and implementation.

The dialogue focused not only on the recommendations themselves but also on the broader challenges facing young people in Cluj-Napoca and the role that local institutions can play in addressing them.

The event contributed to:

- Developing young people's advocacy, communication, and civic dialogue skills;
- Increasing youth engagement with local community issues;
- Facilitating direct communication between young people and decision-makers;
- Promoting solutions developed from the perspective of young people's lived experiences and needs;
- Strengthening democratic participation and civic dialogue at the local level.

The event also increased the visibility of the Youth Advocacy Groups and established a foundation for future cooperation between young people, schools, local authorities, and other relevant stakeholders. Concrete plans for follow-up dialogue and collaboration were put in place to continue working on the solutions presented by the Youth Advocacy Groups.

Overall Participation

Across both Civic Café events, a total of 144 participations were recorded, representing **136 unique participants**, of whom **63 were female and 73 were male**. Together, the events created valuable opportunities for young people to engage with both the wider public and institutional stakeholders, ensuring that their ideas, concerns, and recommendations were heard by a broad range of community actors.

Communication and dissemination

To maximise the visibility and impact of their initiatives, the Youth Advocacy Groups took an active role in communication and outreach throughout the Civic Café process. A key strategic decision was to organise public engagement activities within Zilele Clujului, one of the largest community events in the city, allowing the groups to interact directly with a broad and diverse audience and promote their ideas to members of the local community.

Prior to the Civic Cafés, participants shared information about their initiatives within their schools and peer networks, raising awareness among fellow students and encouraging engagement with the issues they were addressing. Young people also invited classmates, teachers, family members, and friends to attend the public events and dialogue sessions with local decision-makers.

In addition to face-to-face outreach, information about the Civic Cafés and the activities of the Youth Advocacy Groups was disseminated through Polylogos' communication channels, helping to further increase the visibility of the initiative and promote youth participation in civic life.

Instagram post, 28 May 2026:

- [Link](#)
- Views (*the number of times post was played or displayed*): 1471
- Accounts reached: 671
- Likes: 48

Outcomes and Impact

The Civic Cafés Romania successfully achieved their primary objective of **creating meaningful dialogue between young people, decision-makers, and the wider community**. The event provided a platform for youth to present their concerns, ideas, and recommendations directly to relevant stakeholders, while also demonstrating young people's capacity to contribute constructively to public debate and community development.

One of the most significant outcomes of the initiative was the **strong engagement and openness shown by local decision-makers**. Representatives of the Cluj-Napoca Local Council, Cluj City Hall, and the Cluj County School Inspectorate engaged in substantive discussions with all four Youth Advocacy Groups and expressed their **commitment to exploring concrete follow-up actions related to the proposals presented**. Importantly, **a framework for continued collaboration was established**, with Polylogos assuming a liaison role between youth and decision-makers to facilitate ongoing dialogue, monitor progress, and support the implementation of selected initiatives.

The public engagement component of the Civic Cafés also generated considerable interest and support. During the activities in Central Park and throughout *Zilele Clujului*, hundreds of citizens had the opportunity to interact with the Youth Advocacy Groups, learn about the issues they were addressing, and share their own perspectives. Many participants expressed surprise at the quality and maturity of the young people's proposals and showed genuine interest in supporting or learning more

about the initiatives. The event helped raise awareness of youth concerns while also strengthening trust and understanding between generations.

A particularly important outcome was the **strong institutional support mobilised around the initiative**. Teachers, school directors, and representatives of the Cluj County School Inspectorate actively encouraged and supported the participation of young people throughout the process. The Cluj-Napoca City Hall and Local Council also played a key role by supporting the organisation of the Civic Cafés within *Zilele Clujului*, the city's largest annual public event. This decision significantly increased the visibility and reach of both the project and the Youth Advocacy Groups, allowing participants to engage with a much larger and more diverse audience than would otherwise have been possible.

The central location of the Polylogos stand in Central Park, combined with the high footfall generated by the festival, ensured substantial exposure for the project and the youth-led initiatives. The visibility extended beyond the event itself, with political representatives and local stakeholders requesting additional information, photographs, and updates in order to share the initiative through their own communication channels.

Overall, the Civic Cafés strengthened young people's **confidence, advocacy skills, and sense of agency** while creating **new opportunities for collaboration between youth, institutions, and the wider community**. The initiative demonstrated that when young people are given meaningful opportunities to participate, they can mobilise support, influence public discussions, and contribute to shaping practical solutions to local challenges.

Gender sensitivity and non-discrimination

The Civic Cafés were implemented in line with the principles of equality, inclusion, and non-discrimination, ensuring that all participants could contribute meaningfully and safely to the discussions. Communication materials, invitations, and facilitation approaches were designed using inclusive and gender-sensitive language, avoiding stereotypes and promoting respect for diversity.

Particular attention was given to creating an environment in which all participants felt comfortable expressing their views, regardless of gender, socio-economic background, disability, ethnicity, or other personal characteristics. Across all activities, participants were given equal opportunities to contribute to discussions, present their ideas, engage with decision-makers, and influence the direction of the conversations. This approach reflected the broader objectives of ASPYRE EUROPE, reinforcing the message that democratic participation should be accessible to all and that diverse perspectives strengthen both dialogue and decision-making processes.

Conclusion

The Civic Cafés Romania demonstrated the value of actively involving young people in identifying community challenges and developing solutions to address them. Through a combination of public engagement, advocacy, and direct dialogue with decision-makers, participants transformed their experiences, concerns, and ideas into concrete policy recommendations aimed at improving the lives of young people and the wider community.

The process highlighted young people's capacity to contribute constructively to public life when provided with the necessary support, skills, and opportunities. The enthusiasm, commitment, and quality of the proposals presented by the Youth Advocacy Groups demonstrated that young people are not only stakeholders in community development but also important partners in shaping it.

By creating spaces for dialogue between youth, citizens, and local authorities, the Civic Cafés strengthened civic participation, increased the visibility of youth perspectives, and contributed to building a stronger culture of democratic engagement at the local level. The relationships and conversations initiated through this process provide a valuable foundation for future collaboration and continued youth involvement in decision-making, at local level and more widely.

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).