

y-plan

Youth for Participatory
and Localised Action
in Neighborhoods

NEWSLETTER #1

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A New Chapter for Youth- Led Cities in Europe



Across Europe, cities are changing fast. Streets are being redesigned. Neighbourhoods are evolving. Climate pressures are rising.

But one question remains:

Where are young people in all of this? Y-PLAN was created to answer that question. Launched in September 2025, Y-PLAN is a two-year Erasmus+ project empowering young people in Cyprus, Greece, Serbia, and Belgium to actively shape the future of their neighbourhoods — not as observers, but as decision-makers.

Because urban transformation isn't just about infrastructure. It's about participation.

Learn more about Y-Plan and its project activities at y-plan.eu.



The Official Kick-Off in Athens

On 30 September–1 October, partners gathered in Athens at the inspiring space of URBANA for the official launch of Y-PLAN. Coordinated by [SocialTech Lab](#), together with [OPU Collective](#), [URBANA](#), [Mladi Ambasadori](#), and Toestand vzw, the consortium shaped the roadmap for the next two years. We aligned on one shared belief: Young people are not future stakeholders. They are present-day city-makers.



WHAT WE'VE BEEN WORKING ON

Following the official kick-off in Athens, the partnership immediately moved into development mode. Over the past months, partners have been collaboratively designing the Y-PLAN Training Programme — a structured learning journey that will equip young participants with practical tools to understand, analyse, and reshape their neighbourhoods. The programme consists of ten interconnected modules covering urban planning fundamentals, participatory urbanism, co-creation methodologies, community engagement, digital mapping and urban data collection, problem identification and solution design, sustainable mobility, tactical urbanism, entrepreneurship and innovation, and advocacy for systemic change. Together, these modules form the backbone of Y-PLAN's capacity-building approach, bridging urban theory with hands-on civic action.



What We Heard

The messages were clear and consistent across conversations. The most frequently raised concern was car dominance. Young people described their neighbourhoods as overcrowded with vehicles, difficult to walk through, and unfriendly to cyclists. Mobility, for many, is their biggest daily frustration. They spoke about overwhelming parking spaces, unsafe crossings, and limited bike routes — and proposed practical improvements such as speed bumps, safer pedestrian crossings, reduced kerb heights, and better-connected cycling infrastructure.

Green space was another strong theme. Youth repeatedly asked for more trees, more shade, and more accessible green areas. Large planters, public gardening initiatives, and shaded streets were seen not as aesthetic upgrades, but as essential elements for wellbeing, climate resilience, and everyday comfort. Nature, in their view, is not decoration — it is necessity. Public space also emerged as a major gap. Participants described a lack of parks, gathering areas, and inviting places to spend time. They expressed the need for spaces that allow people to stay, not just pass through. Abandoned buildings, poor waste management, and neglected corners of the neighbourhood were seen as signs of urban neglect that directly affect community dignity.

Safety and accessibility were equally important. Young people highlighted the need for safer streets, especially for children and older residents, alongside more inclusive and accessible infrastructure. Their ideas were concrete and realistic, focused on small but meaningful interventions that could immediately improve daily life.

Beyond infrastructure, youth spoke about community. They envisioned neighbourhoods animated by public art, local markets, social events, and pop-up activities — places that feel vibrant, connected, and alive.

What they ultimately described were neighbourhoods that are walkable, green, bike-friendly, shaded, safe, and full of people. Less car dominance. More life in public space.

Listening First: What Young People Are Saying

Before designing solutions, Y-PLAN started with something simple: listening.

In October, during ErasmusDays, we hosted our first public info session, inviting young people to reflect on what everyday life in their neighbourhoods truly feels like — what works, what doesn't, and what could be better. The discussion quickly revealed not only challenges, but a clear desire to be part of shaping change.

In December, we brought Y-PLAN into the streets of Agioi Omologites during an open-street gathering. In a relaxed setting, young people shared honest feedback, bold ideas, and practical visions for their communities. Across both moments, one thing became clear: youth are ready to contribute — if they are invited into the conversation.





What's Next?

Listening was only the beginning.

Y-PLAN now moves from insights to action. Young participants will soon begin engaging with the Training Programme, building competencies in mapping, participatory design, sustainable mobility, tactical urbanism, and civic advocacy. These tools will enable them to transform their ideas into structured, evidence-based neighbourhood proposals.

A key milestone ahead is the **Youth Camp in Cyprus** (16–20 September), where participants from all partner countries will come together for an intensive week of co-creation, collaboration, and exchange. During the camp, youth will refine their ideas, strengthen cross-country connections, and prepare for local implementation.

Following the camp, co-design workshops will take place in each partner country, bringing young people together with local stakeholders to shape practical neighbourhood plans. The next major step will be the launch of small-scale pilot urban interventions — tangible, youth-led actions demonstrating how thoughtful, community-driven ideas can translate into visible change. Alongside these activities, we will begin building the digital urban archive and developing the replication guidebook, ensuring that Y-PLAN's methods can inspire and support other European cities.

From conversation to co-creation.
From co-creation to concrete change.



Get Involved Today!

Y-PLAN is just getting started — and you can be part of it. Whether you're a young person, municipality, educator, or community actor, we welcome collaboration, ideas, and new partnerships.

- Visit our website
- Follow project updates
- Join upcoming activities
- Get in touch with the team

Let's shape neighbourhoods — together.

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