

Concept note inspirational event

creating societies of well-being through community building

Why

The field of youth and volunteering play a crucial role in building more resilient and democratic societies:

- They create spaces where young people and communities develop knowledge, confidence, skills, and active citizenship.
- They nurture values and attitudes such as human rights, democracy, civic engagement, anti-discrimination and tolerance.
- They offer places of support, where individual and collective well-being can genuinely flourish, and where a sense of belonging can take root.

Across Europe, countless organisations, practitioners, and young people contribute to this every day. In times marked by crisis, they help to shift the focus from what divides us to what unites us, anxiety and isolation to hope and belonging, and from apathy to participation, empathy, and solidarity. In doing so, they contribute to creating **societies of well-being**.

Yet no single actor sees the full picture alone: **expertise is not owned but shared**. That's why bringing people together matters. In this conference, we explore how the fields of mental health, inclusion, volunteering, and social sports each contribute to building societies of well-being. The focus on these fields is not accidental—it stems from the work of four Strategic National Agency Cooperations:

- [Mental Health in Youth Work](#)
- [The Strategic Partnership for Inclusion](#)
- [Volunteering](#)
- [YouSports](#)

Although each SNAC has worked with different stakeholders, they have set up a range of trainings, study visits, partnership building activities, and conferences to build capacities, foster collaboration, initiate partnerships, and raise awareness in their respective areas. Together, they have strengthened the quality and recognition of the fields of youth work and volunteering, and promoted the use of Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps as impactful tools for change. Now that the current generation of European Youth Programmes (2021-2027) is coming to an end, this is the right moment to bring together the diverse communities engaged in these SNACs and to harvest together what has been learned.

We are all in.

The conference is grounded in a spirit of **give and take**. By learning from others' practices across different fields, sharing expertise, understanding differences, identifying common ground, and provoking new thinking, we aim to build stronger communities that can carry their learnings back to the local level. It connects to broader strategic thinking while staying grounded in real practices from different contexts. While the SNACs have mainly focused on working with practitioners and create links between practice, policy and programme implementation, this conference places the **youth perspective** at its core. The voices, ideas, needs, and lived experiences of young people will shape both the content and the flow of the programme. By bringing together these three layers of expertise—practitioner, institutional, and youth—we believe we can strengthen the field and contribute to building societies of well-being through youth work and volunteering.

What

This conference aims to harvest the impact of and practices in the field of youth that engage with inclusion, mental health, volunteering and sports. We will create a space...

- to share practices, methods and tools on inclusion, mental health, volunteering, and sports.
- to learn about projects on inclusion, mental health, volunteering and sports in Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps.
- to strengthen learning between the fields of inclusion, mental health, volunteering and sports.

How

The conference uses Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps as tools and levers for recognition of youth work, social sports, well-being, inclusion, volunteering, and community building. It aims to showcase the impact these programmes have had on the topics addressed by National Agencies and other stakeholders, both through relevant data and knowledge and through concrete good practice examples.

The voices of the young people are central. The event will be co-created with young people from different corners of Europe. We will build on the co-creation expertise as used in the Mental Health SNAC's Inspirational Events (2023 and 2025), making sure their voices, experiences and needs are at the centre of the learning process of practitioners.

Who, where and when

- This conference is for practitioners, youth workers and youngsters representing an organisation or informal group that focuses on inclusion, mental health, volunteering or sports and having experience in the Erasmus+ or European Solidarity Corps programmes. We aim to bring together **150 participants for 2.5 working days**.

- The conference will be hosted by JINT vzw in De Grote Post in **Ostend** in **Q3 of 2027**.
- The conference will be prepared and co-created with young people through co-creation labs:

- **National input**

National Agencies will be invited to set up a group of young people who will gather ideas and perspectives from their communities. Each group will be supported by a facilitator, with a designated contact point at the National Agency available throughout the process.

- **International co-creation lab**

All national youth groups will come together for a co-creation lab in the Czech Republic. Based on their collective input, we will shape the conference programme, identify which sessions should be designed and delivered by young people, and determine where contributions from SNACs or practitioners are needed.

- **Designing phase**

Between the co-creation lab and the conference, young people will continue working on their sessions, supported by a facilitator to help them refine content, flow, and methods.

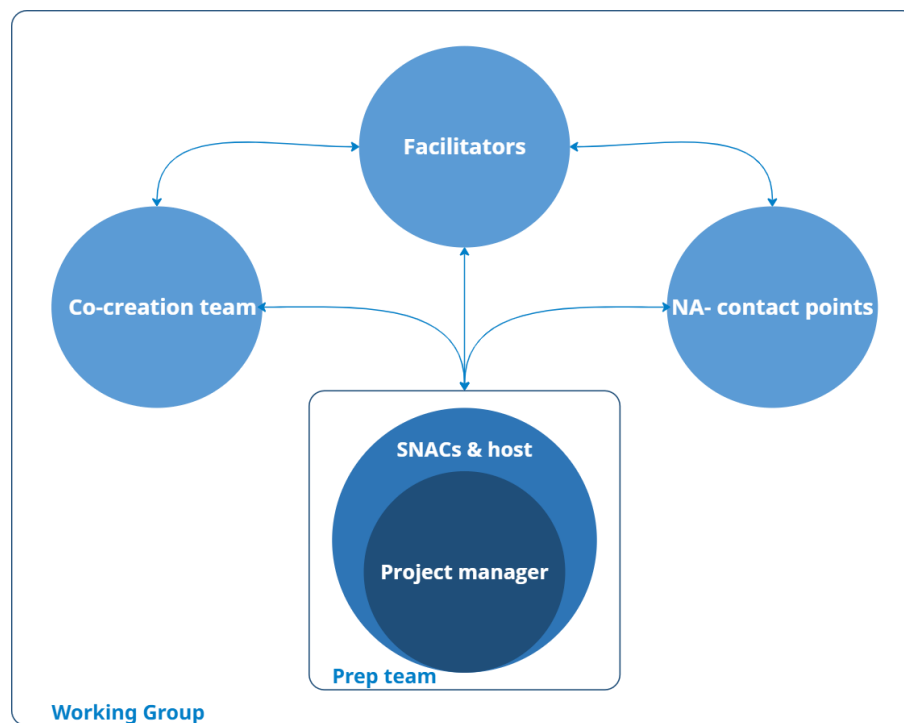
Roles & organisational structure

Role	Description	Who	SNAC-link
Project manager	- Drives the overall process and ensures coherence and connection between all work strands. - Maintains the general overview and coordinates timelines, deliverables, and communication and stakeholder engagement. - Ensures the vision, objectives and youth – centred approach remain visible through whole process - Leads and supports the different teams involved in the conference preparation. - Logistical support together with the host.	To be decided	Pieter-Jan
SNACs & host	- Hold final responsibility for the conference and its strategic direction. - Support the project manager in planning, decision-making, and implementation. - Ensure alignment with the objectives and priorities of the four SNACs. - Monitor progress	Irina, Paavo, Pieter-Jan, Susie, and Yannick	
Facilitators	- Co-develop the programme and shape the flow of the conference. - Create a coherent participant journey for the different roles that will take part - Facilitate sessions and support participant engagement. - Liaise closely with the co-creation team to integrate youth-driven inputs.	To be decided	Susie
Co-creation team	- Design, Lead and facilitate the co-creation process with young people. - Support national youth groups throughout their preparation, contribution and participation in the Event. - Ensure that youth perspectives are meaningfully embedded in the programme content and approach.	To be decided	Paavo

NA contact points	- Identify and recruit young participants in their respective countries. - Support, accompany and follow up with national youth groups throughout the co-creation process. - Serve as the link between national realities and the European-level process. - Encourage engagement between the local co-creation groups and the rest of the SNACs processes.		Irina
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The project manager is the driver of the process and is supported in this role by the SNACs and the host. Together, they form the **prep team**, which sets the strategic direction of the conference and oversees key decisions, including the overall timeline and the selection processes. The facilitators, the co-creation teams, and the NA contact points, together with the prep team, make up the **working group**. This working group is responsible for the conceptual development of the conference, with each actor contributing their own perspective and expertise to shape a coherent, meaningful, and youth-centred programme.

Figure 1: visualisation of the organisational structure



Visual summary

Disclaimer: This visual summary was created with the support of Chat GPT, based on the information above and the notes from the prep-meeting. While it may not capture every detail, it reflects the overall spirit and key ideas behind the conference.



We are all in.