

Rights Matter

A youth exchange on human rights,
active citizenship and civic responsibility



Rights Matter

About this publication

PROJECT

Rights Matter — Youth exchange on human rights and active citizenship

REFERENCE

Erasmus+ KA152-YOU · Project number 2025-1-AT01-KA152-YOU-000297275

MOBILITY

Linz, Austria · 21-29 May 2026 · Sommerhaus Hotel

COORDINATOR

Love Unity (Linz, Austria) · Fomenki Nshita

PARTNERS

Journey to Essence Youth (Niğde, Türkiye) ·
My Voice in Wuppertal und Umgebung e.V. (Wuppertal, Germany) ·

EDITORIAL TEAM

Participants and partner organisations of the Rights Matter mobility

PUBLICATION DATE

[2026]

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



Co-funded by
the European Union



Table of Contents

| | | |
|-----------|--|--------------|
| 1 | Welcome from the partners | 04 |
| 2 | About Rights Matter | 05 |
| 3 | Meet the partners | 06 |
| 4 | The group | 07 |
| 5 | Why human rights matter — our manifesto | 08 |
| 6 | The Universal Declaration of Human Rights | 09 |
| 7 | Human rights in our three countries | 10 |
| 8 | Our outputs — five groups, five formats | 11-15 |
| 9 | Study visits — Rights in the real world | 16 |
| 10 | Erasmusio — expectations, fears, contributions | 17 |
| 11 | What we learned — the eight Youthpass competences | 18 |
| 12 | From words to actions — our next projects | 19 |
| 13 | The numbers | 20 |
| 14 | Voices from the exchange | 21 |
| 15 | How you can get involved with Erasmus+ | 22 |
| 16 | Thanks & contacts | 23 |

Welcome

A note from the three partner organisations

Rights Matter began with a simple observation. Young people care about human rights, but often cannot name them clearly, cannot explain how they are protected, and feel unable to act when they see them violated. Between 21 and 29 May 2026, twenty-four young people from Austria, Türkiye and Germany came to Linz to change that for themselves.

This brochure is what they made together during those nine days. It carries their posters, their short films, their theatre piece, their collage and their digital campaign. It carries their questions to the Austrian Ombud for Equal Treatment and to the JKU Faculty of Law. It carries their own follow-up project ideas, drafted on the last working day. And it carries their voices.

We share it in the hope that it will reach other young people, other youth workers and other communities, and that it will invite them to do what our participants did in Linz: **move from words to actions**.

Love Unity, Austria

Journey to Essence Youth, Türkiye

My Voice in Wuppertal und Umgebung e.V., Germany

About Rights Matter

Rights Matter is an Erasmus+ youth exchange that took twenty-four young people from three countries through nine days of learning, creating and planning around human rights, active citizenship and civic responsibility.

24

YOUNG PARTICIPANTS

Aged 16 to 25, from three countries

9

WORKING DAYS

In Linz, Austria

3

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

Austria, Türkiye, Germany

12

FEWER-OPPORTUNITY PARTICIPANTS

Half of the group

5

CREATIVE OUTPUTS

Poster, film, collage, theatre, campaign

2

STUDY VISITS

Ombud for Equal Treatment · JKU Law Faculty

Themes: Human rights and rule of law · Democracy and inclusive democratic participation

Horizontal priorities: Inclusion and diversity · Digital transformation · Youth participation

Meet the Partners

Love Unity

AUSTRIA · COORDINATOR



Based in Linz, Love Unity works with young people around the values of the European Union: freedom, democracy, human rights and solidarity. The group's name places "EU" at the heart of love and unity.

Linz

EU values

Youth work

Journey to Essence Youth

TÜRKİYE



Based in Niğde, J2EY works on self-awareness, personal growth and emotional resilience in young people. Their approach combines mindfulness, leadership coaching and non-formal education.

Niğde

Personal growth

Non-formal education

My Voice in Wuppertal

GERMANY



Based in Wuppertal, My Voice supports young people from migrant backgrounds and works on integration, education, and multilingual community services in English, French and German.

Wuppertal

Integration

Migrant youth

The Group

Twenty-four young people, one week, one purpose



28

PARTICIPANTS + 3 LEADERS + 1
FACILITATOR

3

COUNTRIES: AUSTRIA, TÜRKIYE,
GERMANY

12

PARTICIPANTS FROM FEWER-
OPPORTUNITY BACKGROUNDS

16-25

AGE RANGE ACROSS THE GROUP

SECTION 5

Why human rights **matter**

Because every person is born free and equal in dignity and rights.

Because a right ignored is a right lost.

Because human rights are not a favour — they are a foundation.

Because change starts with young people who refuse to look away.

Because words matter, but actions matter more.

— WRITTEN BY THE PARTICIPANTS OF RIGHTS MATTER · LINZ · MAY 2026

The UDHR

Thirty articles, one promise, since 1948

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations in 1948. It is the foundation we worked from during the nine days in Linz. Here are the articles we discussed most.

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all rights without distinction of any kind.

Article 3

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 5

No one shall be subjected to torture or degrading treatment.

Article 7

All are equal before the law and entitled to equal protection.

Article 12

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with privacy.

Article 14

Everyone has the right to seek asylum from persecution.

Article 18

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought and religion.

Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

Article 20

Everyone has the right to peaceful assembly and association.

Article 23

Everyone has the right to work and to just conditions.

Article 26

Everyone has the right to education.

Simplified text adapted from the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Full text: www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights

Rights in our three countries

Human rights are the same on paper across the three countries — signed, ratified, protected by law. But how they work in daily life is very different. On the fifth day of the mobility, each national group looked at their own country with honest eyes: **what works well, and what still needs work**. This is what they wrote.



WRITTEN BY THE AT GROUP

✓ WHAT WORKS

A strong institutional framework for equal treatment. The Ombud for Equal Treatment, which we visited, is a free and confidential service open to anyone facing discrimination. Public awareness is relatively high, and civil society is active in supporting people from migrant backgrounds.

! WHAT STILL NEEDS WORK

Access is not equal for everyone. People who do not speak German fluently, who have recently arrived, or who live outside the main cities often do not know these protections exist. Everyday discrimination is a lived reality that laws alone do not solve.



WRITTEN BY THE TR GROUP

✓ WHAT WORKS

Young people in Türkiye are increasingly aware of their rights and willing to speak up. Civil society, youth groups and independent media keep human rights on the agenda. Access to Erasmus+ has opened new spaces for young Turks to learn, travel and build networks.

! WHAT STILL NEEDS WORK

Freedom of expression and freedom of assembly face pressure. Discrimination against women, LGBTQ+ people, and ethnic and religious minorities remains a serious issue in daily life, even where the law formally protects them.



WRITTEN BY THE DE GROUP

✓ WHAT WORKS

One of the most developed anti-discrimination frameworks in Europe, backed by strong civil society, an independent federal anti-discrimination agency, and a well-funded network of counselling services. Human rights education is part of the school curriculum.

! WHAT STILL NEEDS WORK

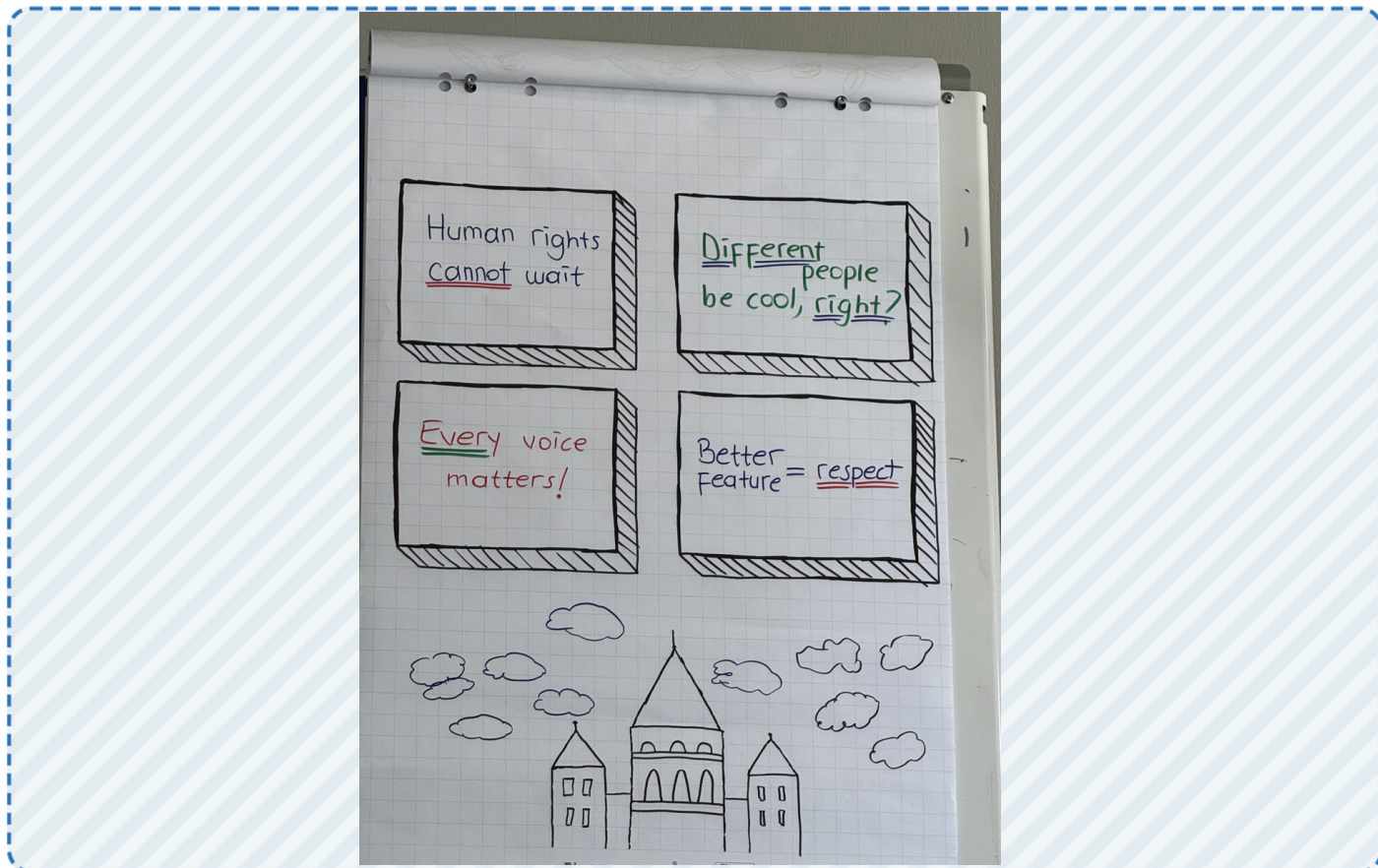
Structural discrimination continues, particularly against people with migration backgrounds and Muslim communities. Access to housing, education and employment is not equal. Young people from refugee backgrounds face additional legal and administrative barriers.

ONE COMMON THREAD

Across all three countries, we agreed on the same conclusion: laws are the foundation, but they are not the finish line. **Rights become real only when people know them, use them and defend them for each other.**

Poster

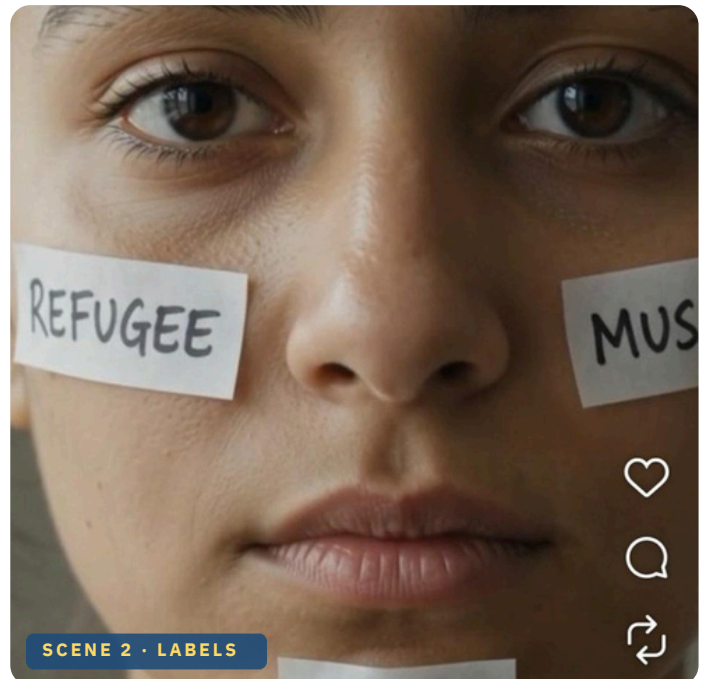
Humanrights,toldin one image



Theme: [Human rights]

Their message: [HUMAN RIGHTS CAN NOT WAIT!]

Silenced, Labelled, Human



THEME

Freedom of expression and the right to be seen as a person, not a label. A response to **Article 1, 2 and 19** of the UDHR.

TOOLS

AI-assisted image generation, edited in FilmoraGo.
Vertical format for social media distribution.

SYNOPSIS

A young woman stands in front of the camera. Her mouth is covered with tape. Cut. The tape is gone, but her face is now covered with paper labels — **MIGRANT, REFUGEE, MUSLIM, OTHER**. One by one, she peels them off. On the last frame, one word appears: **HUMAN**. No dialogue. Eight seconds. One message.

WATCH THE FILM

Our project video:

youtube.com/watch?v=YPtE4jx4gYA



Rights We Take for Granted

— THE POSTER —

RIGHTS MATTER

08
rights we forget

Rights we take *for granted.*

Every day, billions of people cannot use these rights. We can. That's not luck — that's someone else's fight, still being fought.



EDUCATION



2 in 5



2.2B



FREE SPEECH

4 in 5



LOVE WHO YOU WANT

67 countries



EQUAL WORK

21% gap



MOVE FREELY

visa walls



A SAFE HOME

→ Look at this list. Then look around you.

LINZ · 2026

120M+

THEME

The invisible privilege of living where rights are protected. A response to **Articles 3, 13, 19, 21, 23 and 26** of the UDHR.

TOOLS

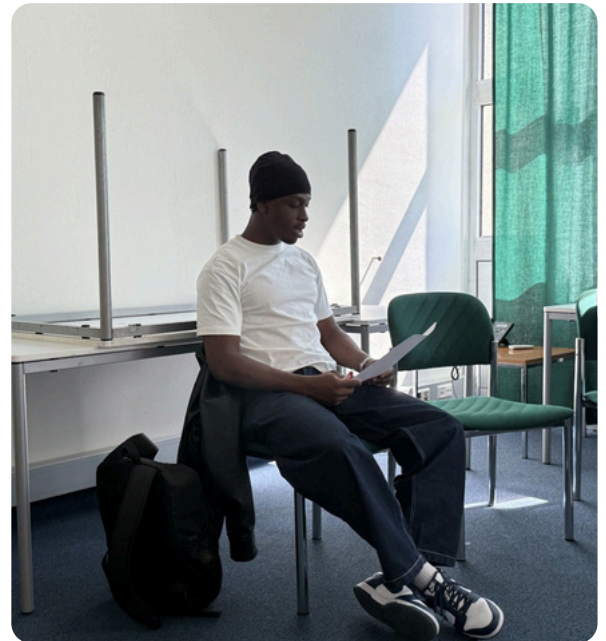
Canva, Google Docs for research, printed as A2 poster for the exhibition wall at Sommerhaus Hotel.

THE GROUP'S MESSAGE

*"We spent nine days talking about human rights. We looked at them everywhere except in our own pockets. This poster is what we found when we finally checked. **The rights we don't notice are the ones we owe the most.**"*

The Labels We Wear

A forum theatre piece on identity, stereotypes and being seen



THEME

Identity, stereotypes and the human being underneath the label. A response to [Article 1](#) & [Article 2](#) of the UDHR.

FORMAT

Forum theatre. A short scene, then the audience is invited to stop the action and suggest what could go differently.

FROM THE SCRIPT

"You decided who I was before I opened my mouth."

“

It was uncomfortable to watch — and that was exactly the point. I recognised myself in the audience, not just on the stage.

— Feedback session, Day 8

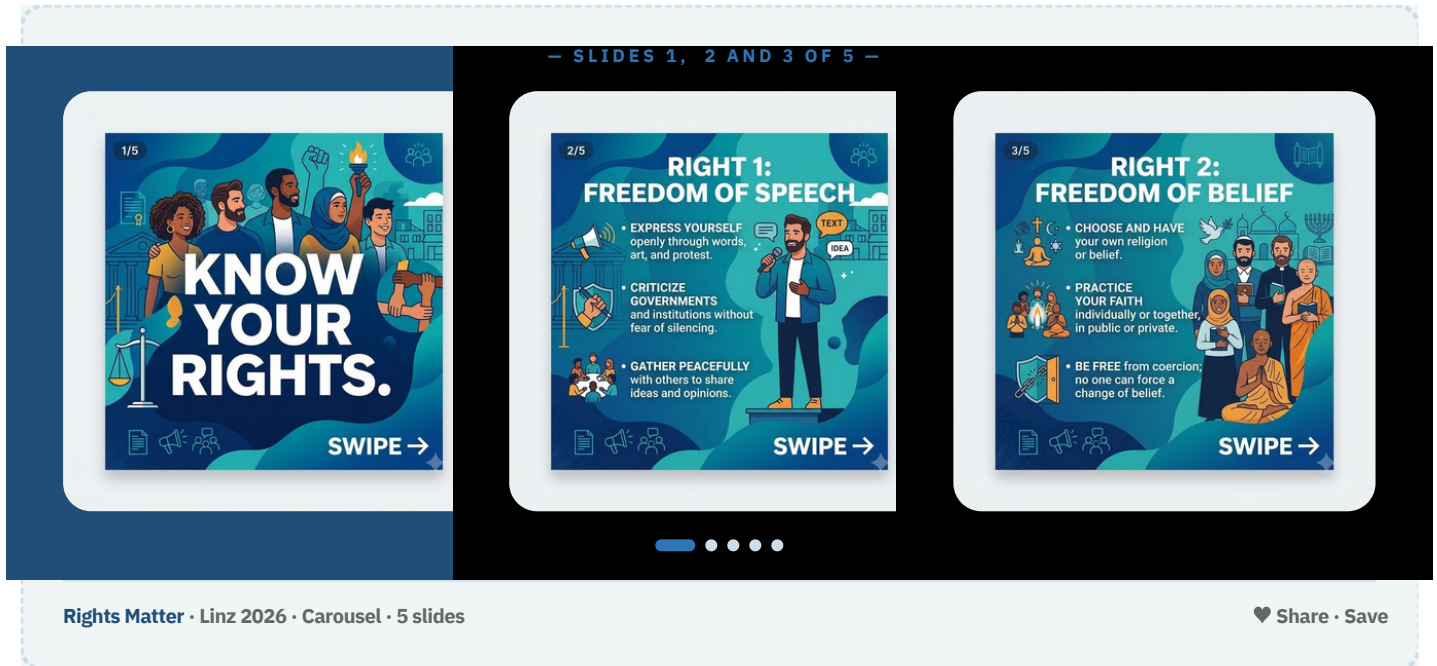
“

The moment they held up the labels, the whole room went silent. You could feel everyone thinking about the labels they carry.

— Feedback session, Day 8

Know Your Rights

An Instagram carousel campaign for young people who scroll fast



Rights Matter · Linz 2026 · Carousel · 5 slides

♥ Share · Save

THEME

Making the Universal Declaration of Human Rights readable for a generation that scrolls. Covers **Freedom of speech**, **Freedom of belief**, **Equality**, **Right to education** and a closing call to action.

TOOLS & REACH

AI-assisted illustration, designed in Canva, 1080×1080 square format for Instagram and Facebook. Published on all three partner accounts.

CAMPAIGN HASHTAGS

#KnowYourRights #RightsMatter #UDHR #ErasmusPlus #KA152 #YouthVoice #HumanRights #Linz2026 #LoveUnity #JourneyToEssence #MyVoiceWuppertal

Rights in the Real World

On the sixth day of the mobility we stepped outside the seminar room. Human rights are not only words from 1948 — they are **institutions, laws and people** working every day to make equality real. We met two of them in Linz.

Ombud for Equal Treatment

GLEICHBEHANDLUNGSANWALTSCHAFT · MORNING

Austria's independent equality body — the free, confidential office anyone can turn to after experiencing discrimination at work, in public services or when accessing goods and services. The service is free, confidential, and interpretation is provided at no cost.

Gender

Age

Ethnic origin

Religion

JKU Law Faculty

JOHANNESKEPLERUNIVERSITY · AFTERNOON

At Linz's largest university, the Faculty of Law hosted an interactive workshop on how international human rights become national law, followed by a campus tour that showed participants the study paths open to them across Europe.

Human rights law

Campus tour

Future paths



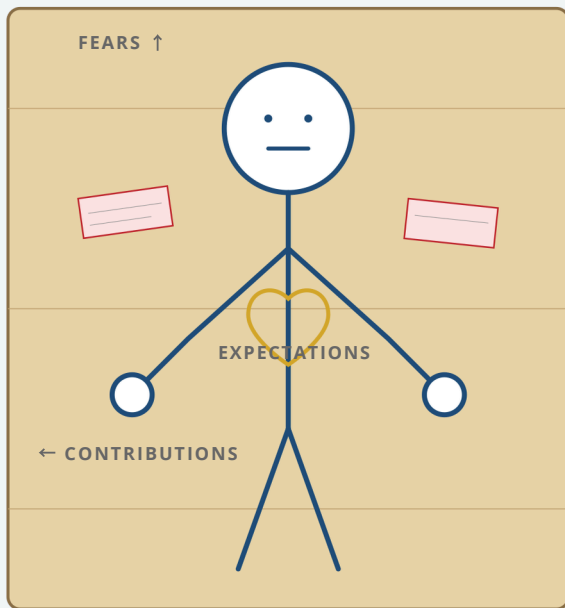
Erasmusio

Expectations, fears, contributions — beginning and end

On the second day, we drew a life-size figure on a piece of cardboard and called him **Erasmusio**. Each participant wrote their **fears on his head**, their **expectations on his heart**, and their **contributions on his hands**. On the last day, we came back to him and read our notes aloud. Here is what changed.

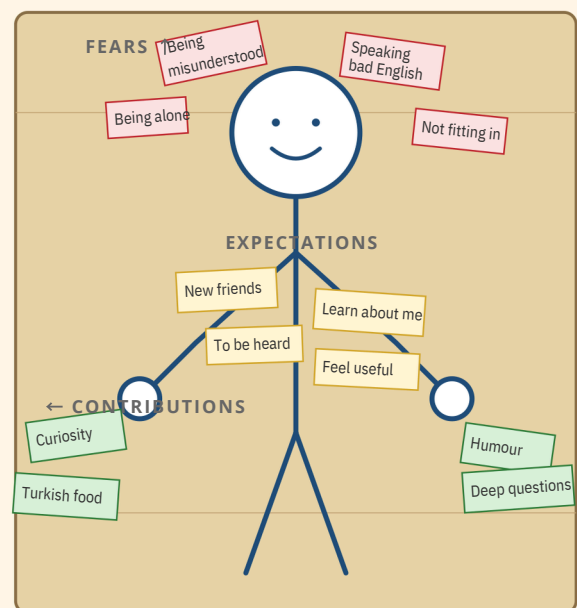
DAY 2 · THE START

Erasmusio, unfilled



DAY 9 · THE RETURN

Erasmusio, covered in notes



HEAD · FEARS

By Day 9, most fears had turned into small stories. "Being misunderstood" became "I found ways to explain myself".



HEART · EXPECTATIONS

Some expectations were met. Some were replaced with things we did not know we were looking for.



HANDS · CONTRIBUTIONS

Every hand added something to the group. Curiosity, humour, food, silence, hard questions. All of it counted.

WHAT ERASMUSIO SHOWED US

When we drew him on Day 2, he was blank. By Day 9, he was almost invisible under the notes. The figure did not change. We did.

What we learned

The eight Youthpass key competences, in our own words

Literacy

Reading, discussing and writing about human rights — from posts to the brochure.

Multilingual

Working across English, German and Turkish every day.

STEM & logic

Six Thinking Hats, decision games, structured problem-solving.

Digital

FilmoraGo, Lumen5, Canva, shared drives, publishing.

Personal & social

Daily reflection, feedback, managing time and energy.

Citizenship

UDHR, study visits, drafting our own follow-up projects.

Entrepreneurship

Leading a full day, running group work, pitching ideas.

Cultural expression

Intercultural evenings, theatre, music, visual arts.

All twenty-eight persons in the exchange received a Youthpass certificate at the end of the mobility, written on the basis of their own daily diaries and reflections.

From Words to Actions

On the ninth day, each participant used a simplified Erasmus+ application template to draft their own follow-up project. Some worked alone, some formed small international teams. Four of these ideas are already being taken forward with the support of the sending organisations. [Here they are.](#)

01

Neighbours, Not Numbers

KA152 · YOUTH EXCHANGE · AUSTRIA

Team: Manuela Adei Kotey Lefebvre (AT), Kardelen Temizer (TR), Ghazi Shabo (DE)

A 7-day exchange in Linz on **everyday discrimination** against people with a migrant background, using storytelling and street interviews. The project turns anonymous statistics into neighbours' names, faces and voices.

✓ IN DEVELOPMENT

SUPPORTED BY LOVE UNITY

02

Voices Between Two Worlds

KA210-YOU · SMALL-SCALE PARTNERSHIP

Team: Nasim Shabo (DE), Coşkun Selim Solak (TR), Faith Obanor (AT)

A cross-border project for young people from **refugee and second-generation migrant families**. The output is a shared podcast series in three languages, produced in Wuppertal, Niğde and Linz — one story per episode.

▶ DRAFT SUBMITTED

MENTORED BY MY VOICE

03

The Right to Speak Up

KA152 · YOUTHEXCHANGE · TÜRKIYE

Team: Zeynep Aslı Deveci (TR), Ayça Kurnaz (TR), Ekhatör Christian Osaobo (AT)

A youth exchange in Niğde on **freedom of expression for young people**, combining journalism workshops, debate training and creative writing. Focus on how young people use their voice in different European contexts.

✓ IN DEVELOPMENT

SUPPORTED BY J2EY

04

Under the Same Sky

ESC · VOLUNTEERINGACTIVITY

Team: Ayoub Tousif (DE), Zedan Tousif (DE), Samuel Victory Njoku (AT)

A local volunteering programme where young people from three countries commit to **one small human rights action per week** in their community for six months. Actions are shared through a simple shared platform.

▶ CONCEPT PHASE

GUIDANCE FROM ALL THREE PARTNERS

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Every follow-up idea drafted on Day 9 was collected and shared with the sending organisations. Participants who want to move forward are matched with a mentor at their partner organisation and supported through the application process.

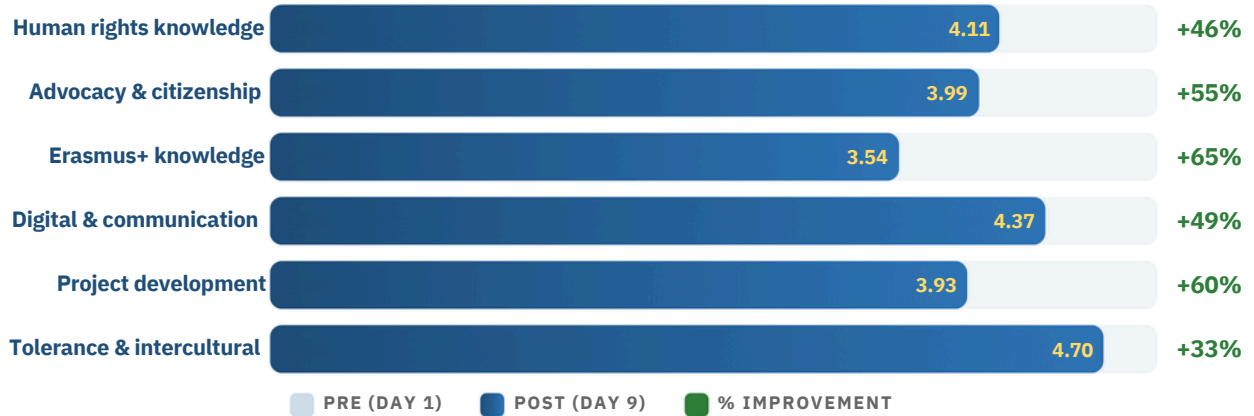
Rights Matter does not end when the mobility ends — it begins there.

The Numbers

Before and after, measured against what we promised

On the first day of the mobility, all **28 participants** completed a pre-project survey. On the last day, they completed the same survey again. Six sections, 29 questions, one scale from 1 to 5. Here is what changed.

AVERAGE SCORE PER SECTION (PRE → POST, SCALE 1–5)



85%

IMPROVED UNDERSTANDING
OF HUMAN RIGHTS

TARGET: 80% · MET ✓

85%

INCREASED COMMITMENT
TO ADVOCACY

TARGET: 70% · MET ✓

85%

EXPANDED ERASMUS+
KNOWLEDGE

TARGET: 60% · MET ✓

89%

SKILLS

TARGET: 75% · MET ✓

OUTPUTS AND REACH

28 / 28

YOUTHPASS
CERTIFICATES ISSUED

24

FOLLOW-UP
PROJECT DRAFTS

5

CREATIVE
GROUP OUTPUTS

100%

ACROSS 9 DAYS

Every KPI set at the application stage was met or exceeded. Six sections, 28 participants, one clear direction of change.

ALL KPIS MET

Voices

What participants said, in their own words

Numbers show what changed. **Voices show why it mattered.** These six quotes were shared during the daily feedback sessions and the final evaluation on Day 9.

“ I came here thinking human rights were something big countries talk about in big rooms. I am leaving knowing they are something **I talk about, with my neighbours, every day.** ”

M Manuela · Austria
PARTICIPANT · DAY 9

“ On Day 1, I was afraid to open my mouth in English. On Day 8, I led our group presentation. **I did not learn English in nine days – I learned that being understood does not depend only on words.** ”

K Kardelen · Türkiye
PARTICIPANT · DAY 9

“ When I walked into the room at Sommerhaus, I saw people who looked nothing like me and everything like me at the same time. **That is a strange feeling. A good one.** ”

N Nasim · Germany
PARTICIPANT · DAY 3 FEEDBACK

“ The visit to the Ombud for Equal Treatment changed how I see my own city. **I walk past that building every week. Now I know what is inside.** ”

E Ekhatör · Austria
PARTICIPANT · DAY 6

“ My little brother is fifteen. When I go back to Wuppertal, I am going to sit with him and **tell him everything we learned here.** That is my follow-up project. ”

A Ayoub · Germany
PARTICIPANT · DAY 9

“ I wrote on Erasmus's head that I feared being invisible. On the last day I wrote on his heart that **I found people who see me.** Same figure. Different me. ”

Z Zeynep Aslı · Türkiye
PARTICIPANT · DAY 9

Twenty-four participants. **Twenty-four different reasons** why Rights Matter mattered.

Your turn

How you can get involved with Erasmus+

Rights Matter is one project among thousands. If it inspired you, here is where to start:

KA152

YOUTH EXCHANGES

Groups of young people from different countries meet, learn and create together. 5–21 days. This is what we did.

KA153

YOUTHWORKER MOBILITY

Training courses and study visits for youth workers, trainers and facilitators.

ESC

EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS

Volunteering, solidarity projects and traineeships for young people aged 18–30.

Where to find opportunities:

- SALTO-YOUTH — www.salto-youth.net
- Eurodesk — www.eurodesk.eu
- European Youth Portal — youth.europa.eu
- Your National Agency — youth.europa.eu/national-agencies

Thank **you**

To OeAD, to Jugendgästehaus and Sommerhaus Hotel Linz, to the Ombud for Equal Treatment, to the JKU Faculty of Law, to every family who supported a participant, and to every young person who trusted us with nine days of their life.

Love Unity

Linz, Austria loveunity-group.blogspot.com

Journey to Essence

Youth
Niğde, Türkiye

My Voice in Wuppertal

Wuppertal, Germany
<https://myvoice-wupper.com/>

Rights Matter.

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.