



UNLEASH YOUR CREATIVE VOICE THROUGH
THE MEDIA

AN ERASMUS+ YOUTH EXCHANGE PRACTICAL HANDBOOK & BOOKLET

**A unified resource for youth workers, educators and
young change-makers, designed and co-created during
the youth exchange in Eger, Hungary.**

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Section I: Introduction of the Project

The **"Unleashing Your Creative Voice through the Media"** project is an Erasmus+ Key Action 1 Youth Exchange that recognizes media literacy and digital storytelling as powerful tools for youth empowerment and active citizenship. In today's digital era, young Europeans frequently encounter challenges surrounding information overload, pervasive misinformation and a lack of critical digital skills. This project directly addresses these issues by equipping participants with practical competencies in journalism, fact-checking as well as multimedia production, empowering them to become ethical creators and informed voices in their communities.

Project Overview Table

Project Title	Unleash Your Creative Voice through the Media
Activity Dates	February 17 to 25, 2026 (Including travel days)
Venue & Location	Eger, Hungary
Hosting Organisation	Fiatalok Tere Egyesület / Square of Youth Association (SOYA) - Hungary
Partner Organisations	Move2Europe APS - Italy Youth Association Step - Croatia Miejska Strefa Kultury w Łodzi - Poland Asociatia Filmelor Maghiare Din Transilvania - Romania
Total Participants	37 people (30 young participants, 5 group leaders and 2 facilitators)
Participant Profile	Young individuals aged 18 to 30 with a strong interest in media literacy and digital storytelling



Core Project Objectives

- **Practical Skill Development:** Equip participants with hands-on skills in media production, journalism, digital storytelling, podcasting, video creation, writing as well as public speaking.
- **Critical Thinking and Media Literacy:** Train youth to critically evaluate media content, identify biases, discern credible information from fake news or propaganda, also conduct ethical fact-checking.
- **Intercultural Understanding and European Identity:** Boost solidarity, cultural exchange and a shared sense of European citizenship through collaborative international teamwork and dialogue.
- **Empowerment and Active Citizenship:** Enable young people to transition from passive media consumers to proactive, responsible content creators who can express their views and advocate for positive change in their communities.

Section II: The 8 Core Topics & Workshop Methods

This section serves as a practical manual for youth workers and trainers. Each topic represents a core thematic block of the youth exchange program.

Topic 1: Media Literacy – Team building activity: Self-made Code Names – Custom Media Edition

Session Objective: To deepen comprehension of media literacy, expand digital storytelling vocabulary and develop critical communication through game-based learning.

Method: "Media Codenames"

Materials: Small paper slips/index cards, markers, grid sheets/table space.

Duration: 90 Minutes.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

- Introduce the core concepts of media literacy and digital storytelling to establish shared context and key terminology.
- Divide participants into small groups and have them brainstorm topic-related keywords on paper slips, categorizing them by difficulty (easy, medium and hard).
- Subdivide each group into two competing sides (Red Team and Blue Team) and arrange the prepared word slips into a shared playing grid.
- Facilitate a round of custom "Codenames," where designated clue-givers use single-word hints and numbers to lead their teammates to the correct media terms.
- Convene the full group for a debrief discussion to evaluate the game's effectiveness and explore modifications for introducing media literacy to other audiences in the future.

Topic 2: News Literacy – The News Factory

Session Objective: To analyze media framing and sensationalism, practice investigative fact-checking, understand audience-targeted digital content creation as well as debate ethical dilemmas in modern journalism.

Method: "The News Factory Simulation"

Materials: Headline prompt cards, prompt envelopes (topics, audience profiles, platforms), A4/A3 paper, markers, verification rubric sheets, voting slips.

Duration: 150 Minutes.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

- Open with a warm-up activity where participants evaluate sensationalist mock headlines to identify emotional triggers and discuss initial credibility perceptions.
- Instruct small teams to act as editorial desks and produce a concise news story consisting of a catchy headline and 5–7 bullet points.
- Have teams swap articles for an investigative review phase to classify statements as Verified, Unclear, Suspicious, or False and draft a formal challenge statement.
- Stage a live press conference where the reporting teams must defend their articles against the challenging teams' cross-examinations.
- Following a short reflection, assign teams randomized challenge envelopes containing a topic, an audience profile, a delivery platform and a hidden editorial twist to craft based on the given content.
- Host presentations where groups pitch their platform-specific stories followed by a peer vote on engagement and credibility.
- Conclude the workshop with a structured debrief debating ethical dilemmas around journalistic responsibility, viral disinformation and also the impact of influencer culture.



Topic 3: Narrative Skills – Story Circle: the art of storytelling

Session Objective: To identify the core elements of impactful narratives, master fundamental storytelling structures, practice collaborative creative writing under adaptive constraints and reflect on narrative resonance.

Method: "The Twist & Tell Workshop"

Materials: Writing paper/notebooks, pens, markers, narrative prompt/twist cards, timer.

Duration: 90 Minutes.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

- Open the session with an interactive brainstorm on what makes a story powerful, exploring emotional hooks, tension and also relatable character journeys.
- Deliver a brief breakdown of core storytelling fundamentals, focusing on narrative arcs, pacing, conflict as well as character motivation.
- Divide participants into small creative teams and establish the baseline writing rules, roles and collaborative framework.
- Facilitate a structured writing sprint where teams craft a cohesive narrative while adapting to two surprise plot twists introduced midway through the writing process.
- Invite each group to pitch, read or dramatically perform their completed story to the room.
- Conclude with a guided reflection on how adapting to unexpected narrative constraints influenced creative choices and enhanced audience engagement.

Topic 4: Active Inquiry – Role-playing game: reporting news

Session Objective: To distinguish between constructive and ineffective questioning techniques, build active listening skills through dynamic role-play, adapt to unexpected conversational pivots and practice composure under pressure.

Method: "The Press Hot Seat"

Materials: Question analysis sheets, scenario/role cards, twist challenge cards, notepads, pens, timer.

Duration: 75 Minutes.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

- Lead an interactive opening analysis comparing "Good vs. Bad" questions, exploring the difference between open, probing inquiries and closed, leading or biased phrasing.
- Pair participants to conduct a baseline interview round, with one acting as the interviewer and the other as the interviewee around an assigned topic or character brief. Make them switch pairs a few times.
- Run a second interview round where a sudden scenario twist or persona shift is introduced midway, challenging interviewers to adapt their line of questioning in real time and the interviewees to adapt their new situation or behaviour.
- Transition to a high-intensity "Hot Seat" segment where selected volunteering participants take turns facing rapid-fire, focused questions from other selected volunteering participants.
- Conclude with a structured group reflection to evaluate how phrasing, tone as well as adaptability directly impact the quality and depth of answers received.



Topic 5: Media Framing & Ethics – Content Critique and Feedback Rounds

Session Objective: To deconstruct linguistic framing and tone bias, practice unscripted public messaging under stylistic constraints, track narrative distortion through news transmission and also critically debate modern media ethics.

Method: "The Framing Lab & Fishbowl Debate"

Materials: Tone prompt sheets (Emotional, Alarmist, Academic, Neutral), note cards, markers, news relay sheets, ethical dilemma cards, timer, inner/outer circle seating.

Duration: 175 Minutes.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

- Conduct the "1 Sentence – 3 Reactions" exercise to analyze how a neutral statement shifts in meaning and impact when framed with emotional, alarmist or academic language.
- Divide participants into five groups and have each team define a public position and an assigned tone (formal, dramatic, humorous, activist or neutral), preparing a 2-minute live pitch using only concise bullet notes rather than full scripts.
- Facilitate the live statement presentations across the room, analyzing how vocal delivery and framing style sway audience perception, followed by a mid-session debrief.
- Run a news creation and passing exercise where stories are drafted, relayed and also edited across groups to observe how facts and narrative focus morph during transmission. Each group has to focus on different elements as well as they have different focuses and goals for the final text.
- Convene a structured Fishbowl debate using targeted dilemma prompts to discuss core ethical tensions in media, including truth vs. harm, clickbait economics, journalistic objectivity, platform regulation or even the rise of AI.

Topic 6: Media Production – TV Showrunner Bootcamp

Session Objective: To understand the fundamentals of TV series development, master audience segmentation and narrative design, practice rapid creative adaptation under market constraints, execute high-stakes pitches and also critically analyze the boundary between creative storytelling and sensationalism.

Method: "The Showrunner Pitch & Market Simulation"

Materials: Showrunner Kit worksheets (concept templates and poster space), creative constraint cards, executive twist cards, flipchart paper, markers, producer evaluation scoring sheets, timer.

Duration: 160 Minutes (2 × 80-Minute Sessions).

Step-by-Step Instructions:

- Open with a discussion on viewing habits and a breakdown of the five core pillars of TV development: genre, target audience, core conflict, main characters and the unique selling point (USP).
- Split participants into six production teams and distribute Showrunner Kits along with randomized creative constraints (e.g., AI involvement, moral dilemmas, budget limits) to outline characters, season arcs, loglines and promotional poster sketches.
- Run a midway checkpoint where each group delivers a one-sentence pitch and answers one critical peer question to refine concept clarity before full development.
- Introduce executive producer market twists (e.g., 50% budget cuts, viral/controversy mandates, Gen Z targeting) and give teams dedicated time to finalize their visual flipchart posters and 3-minute pitch roles.
- Facilitate the formal pitch session where each group presents for 3 minutes followed by 2 minutes of tough Q&A from facilitators and peers acting as executive producers, scoring entries on originality, feasibility, clarity and branding. If teams want to (and have time) they can also act out any parts of their ideas.
- Tally the evaluation scores to announce category awards, followed by a guided plenary debrief on how commercial pressures shape media narratives and where storytelling borders on manipulation.



Topic 7: Field Journalism – City Voices

Session Objective: To investigate local public perspectives on media habits and cultural realities through field reporting, develop practical video interviewing and mobile journalism techniques and capture authentic multimedia footage for subsequent digital video editing.

Method: "The Street Reporter Fieldwork"

Materials: Smartphones or video cameras, portable microphones (optional), question planning sheets, clipboards, pens.

Duration: 120 Minutes.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

- Brief participants prior to leaving the accommodation on street journalism ethics, active consent, intercultural communication and basic mobile video composition techniques.
- Instruct participants to form small production teams and formulate 3–5 open-ended questions focused on their specific interests regarding the host country's culture, daily information habits and local media trust.
- Deploy teams into public spaces to approach locals, conduct live on-camera video interviews and also record supporting contextual footage (B-roll).
- Have teams catalog and back up their recorded audio-visual files, noting standout perspectives, key quotes and recurring themes.
- Reconvene the full group to share initial fieldwork impressions and organize the collected edited videos that everyone can watch together.

Topic 8: Interactive Discovery – Media Treasure Hunt

Session Objective: To reinforce media literacy competencies, sharpen critical problem-solving skills and encourage dynamic teamwork through experiential, station-based learning challenges.

Method: "The Decoders' Treasure Hunt"

Materials: Station task cards, clue envelopes, route rotation maps, scorecards/stamp sheets, smartphones (for photo/video tasks), pens, timers, master puzzle pieces.

Duration: 90–120 Minutes.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

- Set up distinct thematic challenge stations across the venue and outdoor area, each staffed by a station helper managing a specific interactive task (e.g., bias detection, photo-framing analysis, viral headline debunking or ethical dilemma solving).
- Divide participants into small teams and provide each group with a distinct route map and staggered schedule to ensure teams rotate through the checkpoints along separate paths without bumping into each other.
- Dispatch teams to navigate between locations, collaborate under time constraints to complete station tasks as well as collect validation points, tokens or clue fragments from the station facilitators.
- Have teams assemble at the central base once all stations are completed to combine their collected clues and solve a final overarching media riddle or master challenge.
- Convene the entire group for a debrief and point tally to review key learning moments from each checkpoint and reflect on the collaborative strategies used throughout the trail.



Section III: Evaluation & Reflection

To ensure high-quality learning outcomes, structured self-assessment and group reflection were built into the program.

The Three-Step Project Reflection

- **Individual Reflection:** Participants engage in dedicated quiet self-assessment using self-evaluation forms to track their learning progress across the 8 key European competences. They reflect on their individual growth in areas such as digital content creation, multilingual communication or ethical reasoning, documenting tangible media skills and achievements to construct their final Youthpass certificate.
- **Small Group Dialogue:** At the end of each day, participants gather in small mixed groups (that are fixed for the duration of the whole project) to process the day's activities, challenges as well as emotional takeaways. Supported by their group leaders, this safe peer environment allows youth to share feedback openly, discuss teamwork dynamics during production tasks and also to reflect collectively on the day's collaborative experience.
- **Facilitator-Led Learning Debrief:** Immediately following practical sessions and simulations – such as the news desk exercises etc. – facilitators guide a structured debrief focused on specific learning objectives. Through targeted reflection questions, participants critically analyze their storytelling approaches, fact-checking methods and ethical editorial choices, directly linking hands-on media production back to the core objectives of media literacy and critical thinking.

Youthpass Integration

On Day 1, participants are introduced to the Youthpass framework. On the final day (Day 7), participants evaluate their personal growth against the European Key Competencies, culminating in a celebratory Youthpass ceremony where learning is formally recognized.

Section IV: Project Summary & Legacy

Impact and Sustainability

The “**Unleash Your Creative Voice through the Media**” project goes beyond short-term youth exchange activities. The methods presented in this booklet are designed to be shared, replicated and scaled up by other organizations across Europe and further.

- **For Participants:** Acquisition of practical media production, critical thinking, journalism as well as digital literacy skills, boosting self-confidence, long-term employability and active European citizenship.
- **For Organizations:** The project strengthens sustainable European partnerships and enhances organizational capacity to integrate media literacy and digital storytelling methods into their youth work practices.
- **Dissemination:** This booklet, as the practical handbook material is made freely available on the SALTO platform to maximize local, national as well as international impact.



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