



YOUTHreach

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Terminology & Abbreviations

In this document, the terms *Communication* and *Dissemination* are based upon the [Glossary](#) on the EU Funding & Tenders Portal and are defined as follows:

Communication

Communication on projects is a strategically planned process that starts at the outset of the action and continues throughout its entire lifetime, aimed at promoting the action and its results. It requires strategic and targeted measures for communicating about (i) the action and (ii) its results to a multitude of audiences, including the media and the public and possibly engaging in a two-way exchange.

For the beneficiaries, communicating their action and its results is an integral part of the Horizon Europe Grant Agreement (Article 17). They “must promote the action and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public), in a strategic and effective manner and possibly engaging in a two-way exchange.”

The purpose of the communication activities is to make the research activities known to multiple audiences (in a way that they can be understood by non-specialists) and the activities must address the public policy perspective of EU research and innovation funding, by considering aspects such as (i) transnational cooperation in a European consortium (i.e., how working together has allowed us to achieve more than otherwise possible) or (ii) scientific excellence or (iii) contributing to competitiveness and to solving societal challenges.

Dissemination

Means to make the results of a project public (by any appropriate means other than protecting or exploiting them, *e.g. scientific publications*).

We will also be using the following terms for *Outreach Channels* and *Materials* throughout this document:

Outreach Channels

Channels refer to the platforms or avenues through which information is distributed to a target audience. These include both digital and in-person formats and are essential for ensuring the message reaches the intended recipients.

Outreach Materials

Materials refer to the content or communication products that are delivered via the chosen channels. These materials convey the actual message or information and are tailored to the needs and preferences of the target audience.

Abbreviations

M:	Month (e.g., project month)
WP:	Work Package
YAG:	Youth Advisory Group
AUMC:	Amsterdam University Medical Centre
SERMAS:	Servicio Madrileño de Salud
UM:	Maastricht University





Executive Summary

Deliverable 4.3 (Outreach Strategy Including Communication Channels) provides the strategic framework for communication, dissemination, and outreach throughout the lifecycle of the YOUTHreach project. It outlines the overall approach to communication and dissemination, including the identification of priority audiences (e.g., youth, researchers, clinicians, policymakers), key materials tailored to each group, and the use of appropriate communication channels (e.g., social media, newsletters, press releases, events). It will also define responsibilities across consortium partners and ensure that dissemination is coordinated, inclusive, and impact oriented. Importantly, Deliverable 4.3 will include measurable success indicators to track progress and effectiveness.





1. Introduction

1.1 What is YOUTHreach?

YOUTHreach is an EU-wide project tackling the growing challenges around youth mental health. Working across 9 countries and 14 research institutions, it is testing three existing promising youth-friendly interventions to support young people facing mental health challenges. The goal is to evaluate if these interventions are cost-effective, safe, and applicable to other populations.


1.2 Mission Statement

Europe is facing a youth mental health crisis that will last for decades, with far-reaching consequences for health, wellbeing, and economic productivity. YOUTHreach exists to tackle Europe's youth mental health crisis by delivering an integrated, evidence-based strategy that improves access, quality, and outcomes for young people. With half of Europe's youth reporting unmet mental health needs and only a third receiving appropriate care, our mission is both urgent and long-term.


At the heart of YOUTHreach is the evaluation of three complementary youth-friendly interventions:

1. Walk-in youth mental health support centres that provide accessible, low-threshold “one-stop shops” for timely help (YEAH).
2. A guided self-help app that empowers young people to manage symptoms early and independently with professional guidance (SELFIE).
3. A digital treatment platform combining therapeutic content, peer-to-peer support, and clinical input, adapted from a successful Australian model to the European context (MOST).


YOUTHreach interventions

Intervention 1 (YEAH)  **Walk-in youth mental health support centres**

Comparative effectiveness and public health impact of walk-in Youth mEntal heAlth support centres: a hybrid (cost-)effectiveness-implementation study in 7 European countries and Australia.
Acronym: YEAH

Intervention 2 (SELFIE)  **Guided self-help app**

Comparative effectiveness and public health impact of SELFIE, a transdiagnostic, blended ecological momentary intervention for improving self-esteem in young people exposed to childhood adversity: a hybrid (cost-)effectiveness-implementation study in 7 European countries.
Name of the app: SELFIE

Intervention 3 (MOST)  **Digital treatment platform**

Comparative effectiveness and public health impact of Moderated Online Social Therapy: a hybrid (cost-)effectiveness implementation study in Europe.
Acronym: MOST

Together, these interventions form the foundation of a new European standard in youth mental health care designed with young people, for young people.





1.3 YOUTHreach objectives

The objective of YOUTHreach is to address the growing mental health crisis among young people in Europe by conducting a large-scale comparative study of three existing youth-friendly mental health interventions. The project seeks to:

- Evaluate the clinical and cost-effectiveness, and real-world applicability of three complementary mental health interventions: YEAH, SELFIE, and MOST.
- Improve access to mental health services for vulnerable youth populations, including those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, ethnic minorities, and the LGBTQ+ community.
- Develop a European youth-centred, multi-stakeholder framework that ensures mental health interventions are tailored to the specific needs of young individuals.
- Generate high-quality comparative research data to inform health policy, clinical practice, and economic decision-making across different European healthcare systems.
- Advance the scientific understanding of youth mental health through data harmonization, open-access research, and the integration of artificial intelligence for personalized intervention strategies.

1.4 Youth involvement and engagement

Within YOUTHreach, empowering young people as citizen scientists in youth mental health research is an integral part of the research process. The project explicitly recognizes young people as partners and stakeholders, not just as participants or subjects of research. Youth involvement is shaped through several layers:

✓ Co-creation in design and implementation

Young people help shape the project from the start: defining aims, priorities, and how the three youth-friendly interventions are adapted across nine countries. Through co-creation sessions with a Youth Advisory Group (YAG), the research reflects real needs and lived experiences. Young people act as peer researchers, co-facilitators, and evaluators, and they co-design study materials, recruitment plans, and communication outputs to keep everything accessible and youth friendly.

✓ Youth Advisory Structure

In partnership with the University of Birmingham, YOUTHreach has established a framework that ensures regular involvement of a recruited Youth Advisory Group (YAG), whilst creating a secure space for sharing experiences, collecting feedback that feeds the study design, safeguarding data protection, and recognising their contributions fairly. The YAG currently has 12 youth representatives who operate on a consortium-wide level. We are actively reaching out to underrepresented countries to further diversify our youth representatives. On a local level (per country) a connection will be made with local youth representatives to ensure inclusiveness.

✓ Project partner AEGEE-Europe

The European Student's Forum (AEGEE-Europe) is one of the largest multidisciplinary youth organizations in Europe. With a network of over 100 local associations across more than 30 countries, AEGEE-Europe has established a broad and diverse platform for youth engagement and cooperation. AEGEE's vision is to contribute to the creation of a socially and economically integrated, democratic, and borderless Europe in which young people actively participate in addressing societal challenges. As a partner in the YOUTHreach project, AEGEE-Europe plays a crucial role in youth outreach and communication. The organization contributes to disseminating project findings, gathering feedback from young participants, and ensuring effective communication of results.





Drawing on its extensive experience and established network, AEGEE-Europe possesses the capacity to effectively engage with young people across Europe, thereby enhancing the project's visibility and impact.

✓ **Capacity Building and Empowerment**

The project invests in training and supporting young people so they can confidently contribute in research and policy settings. Youth involvement is framed as a way to strengthen both research outcomes and young people's own agency and skills.

✓ **Youth-Friendly Dissemination**

Young people co-create communication strategies (e.g., social media content, youth-oriented events, presentations) to ensure findings are shared in ways that resonate with youth aged 12-25 years old in Europe (in particular in the participating countries of YOUTHreach: The Netherlands, The UK, Germany, Spain, Italy, Estonia, Ireland) and Australia.





2. Stakeholders

The YOUTHreach communication and dissemination activities will strategically target a diverse range of stakeholders (Table 1), each critical to the success and impact of the project.

Stakeholders	Subgroups						
Consortium members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff members of the associated research institutions working for the YOUTHreach consortium (e.g., researchers, research assistants, data managers, clinicians, etc.) Members of the YOUTHreach Advisory Board 						
Stakeholder engagement groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Advisory Group (YAG), representing young people Mental Healthcare Advisory Group (MAG), representing healthcare professionals HTA Advisory Group (HAG), representing policymakers and economists SSH Advisory Group (SAG), representing social scientists and ethicists Data Advisory Group (DAG), representing data related professionals 						
Representatives of interventions (Youth and Staff)	<table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th>YEAH</th> <th>SELFIE</th> <th>MOST</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> headspace (Australia) @ease (The Netherlands) soulspace (Germany) Jigsaw (Ireland) Peaasi (Estonia) PAUSE (UK) Centro Psicossociale Giovani (Italy) </td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	YEAH	SELFIE	MOST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> headspace (Australia) @ease (The Netherlands) soulspace (Germany) Jigsaw (Ireland) Peaasi (Estonia) PAUSE (UK) Centro Psicossociale Giovani (Italy) 		
YEAH	SELFIE	MOST					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> headspace (Australia) @ease (The Netherlands) soulspace (Germany) Jigsaw (Ireland) Peaasi (Estonia) PAUSE (UK) Centro Psicossociale Giovani (Italy) 							
Citizens: YOUTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth aged 12-25 years old in Europe (in particular The Netherlands, Germany, The UK, Spain, Italy, Estonia, Ireland) and Australia Youth with (former) personal mental health experiences, from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and from vulnerable (youth) subgroups National and international youth (mental health) outreach associations, influencers and peer groups of youth 						
Citizens: Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Extended) Family members, legal guardians Educational professionals Patient and family advocacy organizations 						
(Health) Care Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Psychiatrists, psychologists, mental health nurses and other professionals Youth workers / social workers Primary care physicians (Research) Associations for (mental) health professionals 						
Policy makers & lobby organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> European Union (youth health) policy makers National and regional policy makers & municipalities Health economists Mental Health Europe World Health Organisation (WHO) + WHO Mental Health Coalition Public Health Bodies UNICEF's MHPSS Framework Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 						
Companies / Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutions connected to the consortium: Maastricht University, London School of Economics, Fatebenefratelli Brescia, University of Birmingham, University of Barcelona, Ab.Acus Srl, University of Galway, Zentralinstitut für Seelische Gesundheit, University of Melbourne, Amsterdam University Medical Centre, Servicio Madrileño de Salud, Charité-Universitätsmedizin Berlin and AEGEE (European Student Organisation) EU's industries in the digital mental health market Insurance firms Other local (psychiatric) hospitals and (youth) healthcare centres Educational bodies dedicated to youth aged 12-25 years old 						
Researchers outside of the consortium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scientific community in general (mental health, AI, ethicist, social scientist, etc.) Researchers related to other consortia in the same call 						

Table 1. Stakeholder groups of YOUTHreach





3. Communication and Dissemination Strategy

The communication and dissemination strategy of YOUTHreach provides a structured, phased approach to ensure that information, results, and impact are shared effectively with all target audiences throughout the project's lifecycle.

3.1 Goals

Our communication and dissemination efforts aim to reach the following goals:

1. Raise awareness and visibility

Increase public awareness of YOUTHreach by sharing (scientific) knowledge and best practices in clear, accessible, inclusive, educational, and engaging ways contributing to destigmatization and empowering vulnerable youth populations.

2. Promote open and accessible resources

Develop and share open-access resources (including harmonized data, tools, and communication materials) that make research findings widely available and support innovation, transparency, and personalized intervention strategies.

3. Ensure ongoing engagement with stakeholders

Build strong and continuous dialogues with young people and other citizens, healthcare professionals, researchers, and policymakers to ensure co-creation, relevance and impact.

- Youth are engaged not only as recipients of information but also as partners shaping interventions and project dissemination.
- Citizens (including youth) receive accurate information on the 3 interventions in the study and are empowered to take informed decisions about these interventions.
- Healthcare professionals have access to improved guidelines for prevention and treatment.
- Researchers and healthcare professionals benefit from state-of-the-art data, technologies, and best practices to design sustainable interventions.
- Policymakers are informed about the new effective mental health opportunities created for different youth groups and the EU-level cross-country comparability.

4. Support uptake of results

Facilitate the adoption and real-world use of YOUTHreach outcomes ensuring that evidence-based interventions are accessible, equitable, and tailored to diverse youth populations across Europe.

5. Foster collaboration and synergies

Strengthen connections with European and international initiatives and networks to share knowledge, align efforts, and maximise policy and practice impact across Europe.





3.2 Key elements in the communication and dissemination strategy

Our communication and dissemination strategy involves a youth-centred, multi-stakeholder engagement process incorporating the following key elements:

✓ **Efficient internal communication**

We establish robust internal communication practices and tools designed to inform, engage, and support all consortium members while strengthening collaboration across the project. In addition to regular updates and shared communication platforms, we follow a set of internal communication ground rules which outline expectations for clarity, responsiveness, transparency, and respectful interaction.

✓ **Youth-focused**

We are committed to engaging youth throughout all communication and dissemination activities. Through our close collaboration with AEGEE-Europe and the YAG, we ensure that young people play a central role in shaping communication efforts. We use accessible and engaging formats to amplify youth voices and will constantly look for creative ways to create spaces and stages where youth can meet, express themselves, and actively engage.

✓ **Multi-stakeholder approach**

Besides our dedication to reach youth, we will use targeted messages and tools to engage a broad range of stakeholders across Europe and Australia.

3.3 Five-year strategic focus

YOUTHreach recognises that communication and dissemination are not static activities but a dynamic process that evolves alongside the project. The approach therefore follows a temporal logic that aligns communication goals with project milestones and outputs. Each year builds upon the previous one, gradually shifting focus from design and awareness-raising to engagement, uptake, and sustainability. The five-year strategic planning framework is as follows:

Year 1: Preparation & Design

Establishing the foundation for all outreach activities, including branding, website and social media launch, internal communication structures, and development of key materials. The focus is on consistency, visibility, and setting up the channels for later impact.

Year 2: Visibility & Co-creation

Strengthening the project's public profile through active social media presence, newsletters, and events while deepening youth involvement. This phase emphasises participatory communication where young people and stakeholders co-create content, formats, and messages.

Year 3: Mid-term Results & Policy Engagement

Disseminating early findings and preliminary outcomes to the broader scientific community, policymakers, and youth audiences. Communication activities expand to include policy dialogues, public events, and targeted outreach to bridge between research and real-world application.





Year 4: Uptake & Industry Links

Translating results into practice by engaging healthcare providers, (digital) health industries, and educational institutions. The emphasis lies on partnerships and real-world implementation of validated interventions.

Year 5: Legacy & Sustainability

Ensuring that YOUTHreach's impact endures beyond the project's duration. This includes final dissemination of results through press releases, webinars, podcasts, white papers, and youth-led storytelling formats. Long-term accessibility of project outputs (e.g., website, open repositories, and training packages) supports sustained engagement and policy influence.





3.4 Communication strategy per stakeholder

Stakeholder	Strategy
Consortium members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set up efficient internal cooperation channels (Teams, newsletters, meetings, etc.). ● Align on communication ground rules and branding to ensure consistent messaging. ● Engage members in content planning for (social) media, ensuring visibility of achievements. ● Shape annual consortium meetings to be both informative and inspirational.
Stakeholder engagement groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain regular updates via social media and the website to enhance visibility. ● Provide templates and support for group members to share YOUTHreach content on their own networks (becoming multipliers). ● Organise meetings or webinars where members of the different engagement groups co-present with researchers. ● Spotlight group contributions in newsletters and social media to recognise their role.
Representatives of interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support intervention staff to act as local multipliers of project information. ● Highlight success stories from the interventions (YEAH, SELFIE and MOST) through social media, newsletters, and short videos. ● Provide co-branded communication kits (videos, infographics) for local dissemination. ● Organise peer-learning exchanges for sharing lessons learned.
YOUTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Co-create social media content with AEGEE-Europe and YAG to build critical mass. ● Organise local engagement events with schools, youth clubs, and universities. ● Partner with youth outreach organisations, influencers, and peer networks to spread messages. ● Translate findings into formats that are accessible <i>and genuinely relatable</i> to youth. This means avoiding clichés, forced “youthful” language, or stylised registers that can feel inauthentic or highlight generational gaps. Instead, content will be shaped by young people themselves (through YAG, AEGEE-Europe, and youth creators) so that tone, language, and storytelling reflect real youth perspectives rather than assumptions about them. ● Offer youth-led sessions at conferences and public events to amplify their voices.
Citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop information and training packages on youth mental health. ● Disseminate content via project website, press releases, and parent/educator networks. ● Partner with European family and parent organisations to convey messages.
Healthcare professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Produce a dedicated white paper summarising best practices and clinical recommendations. ● Organise co-creation workshops with youth and professionals for guideline development. ● Disseminate findings via professional associations and open-access publications. ● Present results at key conferences and webinars.
Policymakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Train youth representatives to reach policy makers and public authorities, to make their voice heard through public speaking, advocacy, social media, interviews, and open forums. ● Engage policymakers through HTA Advisory Group, targeted briefings and a dedicated policy workshop to facilitate replication of validated strategies in other EU countries. ● Co-produce a policy-focused white paper with concrete recommendations. ● Disseminate results through HORIZON channels, press releases, and direct policy contacts. ● Position YOUTHreach at international policy events (e.g. WHO-Europe, OECD).
Companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use LinkedIn and professional networks to connect with industry leaders in youth mental health. ● Disseminate results through targeted outreach to psychiatric hospitals, youth care centres, and educational organisations. ● Organise an online event to enhance awareness and engagement with our interventions, and exploring exploitation opportunities. ● Share targeted policy briefs on economic benefits and implementation opportunities. ● Collaborate with local hospitals and youth care centres to integrate findings. ● Develop case studies to showcase economic and health benefits for insurers and industry.
Researchers outside YOUTHreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communication materials are available via the projects’ website. ● Aligning with other EU funded projects via (online) research visits and meetings to discuss synergies, best practices and challenges. ● Ensure all collected data, protocols, and methods are available through open repositories. ● Disseminate results in open-access journals.

Table 2. Strategy per stakeholder





4. Channels and materials for outreach

4.1 Communication and dissemination (outreach) channels

We use different outreach channels for YOUTHreach, ensuring that messages and content are continuously generated and shared based on project results, news and ongoing events. Our strategy distinguishes between internal and external channels: internal channels facilitate collaboration and engagement within the consortium and external channels are used to inform and engage stakeholders beyond the consortium.

4.1.1 Internal (outreach) channels

Teams platform

In order to connect and co-create in our consortium, a secure Teams platform is available for videoconferencing, storage and sharing of project documents.

Project meetings

Various online and in-person meetings are organised to foster collaboration within the consortium. Colleagues within specific work packages meet at least once per month and the ESC Meeting with all PI's takes place quarterly. Meetings with stakeholder engagement groups are planned periodically.

The External Expert Advisory Board offers strategic guidance and expert advice on scientific, technological, and exploitation matters, helping to ensure that YOUTHreach achieves its goals. An annual strategic meeting with this board will be organised.

A consortium meeting is organised yearly. The first consortium meeting served as a kick-off meeting and took place in Brussels on the 4th and 5th of February 2025. The second consortium meeting is planned in January 2026.

Internal newsletter

An internal newsletter is circulated periodically (first edition in June 2025, second edition in September 2025) to keep the consortium informed about project progress, achievements, upcoming plans, best practices and key deadlines. All members of the consortium will have the opportunity to add topics and content to the newsletter.

4.1.2 External (outreach) channels

Website

Our project **website** (www.youth-reach.eu) provides a comprehensive overview of the project's goals and research in an accessible language (including translations in languages of our research partners). It highlights the role of youth, researchers, and other stakeholders. The website will be regularly updated with key study results and relevant news.





Social media

To inform our stakeholders about YOUTHreach and the interventions in our scope, we use social media channels tailored to different target audiences (see also *Annex 1: Social Media Strategy*). From the start of the project, **LinkedIn** (@youthreach_eu) is used to engage a broad audience of researchers, policymakers, and healthcare professionals. **Instagram** (@youthreach_eu) is used to reach citizens (including youth) through a more informal approach. On our [YouTube channel](#) we will post (youth-friendly) explanatory or engaging videos.

To effectively reach younger audiences, it is essential that our tone, style, and content reflect their lived realities and communication practices. This requires the involvement of young people who are experts in social media, such as the members of the YAG and youth collaborators with proven online impact. Collaborating with influencers who already create resonant mental-health content can help ensure that our messaging feels authentic, relevant, and grounded in the registers young people actually use.

The social media content plan focuses on informing and engaging the different stakeholders by sharing updates about the project, relevant output and current developments in the field of youth mental health.

Hashtags, handles and standard text to be used

The following hashtags (#), handles (@) and standard text are included in our posts as much as possible and as appropriate for each individual message:

Interested in our research project? Check out our website via www.youth-reach.eu. We are co-creating our research together with youth and our research partners:

Maastricht University (the Netherlands), London School of Economics (the United Kingdom), Fatebenefratelli Brescia (Italy), Mittetulundusuhing Peaasi (Estonia), University of Birmingham (the United Kingdom), University of Barcelona (Spain), Ab.Acus Srl (Italy), University of Galway (Ireland), Zentralinstitut für Seelische Gesundheit (Germany), University of Melbourne (Australia), Amsterdam University Medical Centre (the Netherlands), Servicio Madrileño de Salud (Spain), Charité-Universitätsmedizin Berlin (Germany), AEGEE-Europe, European Student Organisation (Belgium).

#YOUTHreach	@European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA)
#HorizonEU #researchimpactEU	@EU Science, Research and Innovation
#mentalhealth #MentalHealth	@Publications Office of the European Union
#youthmentalhealth	@Programme Horizon Europe
#MentalHealthAwareness	

Social media support

To support consortium members with social media engagement, a flyer with tips and tricks will be developed. An information letter for social media participation (including a quit claim) has been prepared.





Social media conduct

YOUTHreach partners agree on the following principles for social media conduct:

- Content owner decides what to post and share. No unauthorized sharing of pictures and information about others without prior consent.
- No information leakage to prevent loss of intellectual property.
- No spread of negative messages.
- No posting of EU classified information (e.g., confidential deliverables).
- No fake messages or spam, only accurate news is posted.
- Use of appropriate, inoffensive language.

We aim to share news in real-time, such as project breakthroughs, major publications, or consortium members' participation in conferences and events. All YOUTHreach partners are encouraged to share, like and inform the communication team about any news that can be shared. In addition to announcing that something has been published, we will actively involve the people who created it in explaining its relevance to the public. For example, authors or contributors can record short, accessible videos or messages that highlight the main ideas, spark curiosity, and guide audiences toward the full publication. This approach not only increases engagement but also brings the work to life by allowing audiences to hear directly from the people behind it.

Publication policy, (scientific) papers and lay summaries

The publication policy has been prepared and shared within the consortium. In line with the publication policy of the project, YOUTHreach research and findings will be disseminated through open-access journals, all of which will acknowledge funding from the European Commission. For each scientific paper, a lay summary will be created to present the research findings in accessible language. Both the papers and lay summaries will be shared via the project website and social media channels to enhance the dissemination of results and engagement with the project.

To maximise accessibility and transparency, YOUTHreach will make use of ResearchGate and Zenodo as key platforms for sharing outputs. ResearchGate will serve as a professional network hub to engage directly with the scientific community, stimulate dialogue, and increase the visibility of publications. Zenodo, the EU-supported open-access repository, will be used to deposit research protocols, reports, and lay summaries, ensuring that results are freely available and citable for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners.





Conferences & other (scientific) events

Scientific conferences and events are key opportunities to engage specialized audiences with YOUTHreach results and outcomes. A conference tracker is available for consortium members to share and track participation in relevant events throughout the year. Youth speakers will be invited to participate at conferences as much as possible. Posters and other outreach materials made by researchers to disseminate scientific work will be shared via the YOUTHreach website as soon as underlying papers/publications are published. YOUTHreach participation to conferences will be announced on the projects’ website and if applicable post-conference reflections will be added.

The following conferences are currently marked as key conferences¹:

Conference	YOUTHreach participation
IEPA 2025 Berlin, Germany	IEPA15 - YOUTHreach
IACAPAP 2026, Hamburg, Germany	To be decided
SAA 2026 Vienna, Austria	To be decided
IAYMH 2026 conference Dublin, Ireland	To be decided
European Public Health Conference 2026, Bilbao Spain	To be decided
EPA Section of Epidemiology & Social Psychiatry, Brescia, Italy 2026	To be decided
World Congress of Psychiatry Stockholm Sweden 2026	To be decided
39th ECNP Congress, Munich, Germany, 2026	To be decided
ESCAP 2027 Athens, Greece	To be decided
One Young World Summit	Trying to be invited
European Planning Meeting 2027 of AEGEE-Europe	To be decided
Level up meetings organized by European Youth Forum	Trying to be invited
Europe on Track	To be decided

Table 3. Key Conferences YOUTHreach

Press releases

Press releases will be created by project partners and broadly shared at key stages of the project: (1) to introduce and promote the study at the start, (2) to inform on the forthcoming results and published papers, and (3) to communicate/disseminate on the project’s final results. The first [press release](#) has been distributed at the start of the project via all project members. An [extra press release](#) has been circulated end of June 2025 focussing on the importance of the Youth Advisory Group.

¹ This list will be updated during the project.





4.2 Communication and dissemination (outreach) materials

To effectively engage project audiences and disseminate results, the YOUTHreach communication team will create a range of tailored materials for distribution across the various channels throughout the project. Whereas the principal language of the project is English, key materials will be translated to languages of the participating research partners (e.g., Estonian, Italian, Spanish, German and Dutch) to minimise language barriers. Materials will be distributed at conferences, public events, education institutions and clinical centres, to convey the general and specific messages of the project.

4.2.1 Internal (outreach) materials

Onboarding package

New members of the consortium will receive an onboarding package with main information about the project, relevant tools and resources. Also, our ground rules for communication are shared. New members will be welcomed and facilitated to connect with other researchers in the consortium.

Training package

In the design phase (see also <https://youth-reach.eu/project-structure/>) of our project different materials are prepared to inform consortium members and engagement groups about the three interventions in our study. The first 'training package' consists of a general PowerPoint presentation, an animation per intervention and different manuals. Version 2 of the information & training package will also include all materials used by the consortium to train the young co-investigators, such as on public speaking, paper writing, review of literature, interviewing of study participants, result interpretation, and impact assessment. Version 3 of the package will be updated with all learning materials, hence becoming a comprehensive resource for a broader audience to enhance literacy, engagement and peer support.

Webinars

On June 11, 2025 a webinar has been hosted regarding the Federated Learning Tool for Data Management. On November 23, 2025 Iñigo De Miguel Beriain (member of the YOUTHreach External Expert Advisory Board) provided a webinar on the new EU legislation impacting data sharing: the EU Health Data Space Regulation. On November 26, 2025 a webinar on the Lump Sum structure of YOUTHreach was organised including a Q&A session for consortium partners.

4.2.2 External (outreach) materials

Social media posts

Social media posts are used to engage a wide range of audiences (from researchers to young people) by informing them about the project in particular and related mental health topics in general. We also aim to feature stories and content created by young people, with support from the YAG and AEGEE-Europe.

To maintain an active online presence, a content planner is in place for social media to help define and diversify content and formats (from video reels to static posts). The planner ensures that the feed is balanced both visually and thematically, featuring youth mental-health quotes, relevant news, tips and tricks for well-being, project updates, contributions from our engagement groups, and introductions of team members.





While we encourage posts from various contributors to reach wider audiences, we also prioritise consistency in style and format, for example, using recognisable templates, colour palettes, and layouts. This consistency helps build a clear, unified identity for YOUTHreach across platforms. More information about the Social Media Strategy is available in Annex I.

Audio-visual materials

Infographics and animations are shared to explain the [project design](#) and the three interventions in our research (Animation on [intervention 1](#), on [intervention 2](#) and on [intervention 3](#)).

In close collaboration with AEGEE-Europe and the YAG, attractive videos about youth mental health and YOUTHreach will be created (see for example [this video](#) on the accessibility of youth mental health support).

PowerPoint presentation

A PowerPoint of YOUTHreach is available to the consortium, ensuring consistent messaging in all external communications.

Flyers

Recruitment flyers for two advisory groups ([Mental Health Advisory Group](#) and [Youth Advisory Group](#)) have been created. Translated versions of these flyers are available on request. Each YOUTHreach intervention will also have explanatory flyer(s) serving as (basic) recruitment materials.

Podcasts

During the project, two podcasts will be delivered by the Youth Advisory Group and project partners. These podcasts are connected to our social media channels and website.

External newsletter

Via the projects' website people can subscribe to the external newsletter of the project. This newsletter will be distributed 2 times per year, with its first edition at the end of 2025.

Webinars

YOUTHreach will organise three educational webinars with hands-on and Q&A sessions for youth, so they can be introduced to the YOUTHreach project, as well as to mental health and intervention frameworks in general.





5. Branding

YOUTHreach embraces a youth-centred approach in all steps of the research including designing the project's identity and branding, which reflects the inclusive nature of the project. The identity and branding is attractive and coherent: the designs, colours and layouts are leveraged to build and exploit the YOUTHreach interventions and results through an attractive, recognisable visual identity, taking into account the diversity across the European public.

5.1 Brand Book

The brand book, including logo and colour palette, informs the consortium about branding guidelines for the project. The brand book of the project is available via this link: <https://heyzine.com/flip-book/11dcdd62a9.html>.

5.2 Standard acknowledgement & disclaimer

According to the Grant Agreement any dissemination of results (in any form, including electronic) must display the EU logo and include the following text:

Funding statement

YOUTHreach is funded by the European Union under grant number 101156514. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Health and Digital Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

5.3 Letterhead

A template is available and can be downloaded from Teams (the projects' internal communication platform).

5.4 PowerPoint templates

PowerPoint templates for different types of audiences are available and can be downloaded from Teams.





6. Organisation of communication and dissemination activities

6.1 Methodology

The development of the communication and dissemination strategy within YOUTHreach follows a co-creative methodology that involves our stakeholder engagement groups, AEGEE-Europe, Principal Investigators (PI's) and other relevant stakeholders. A participatory approach ensures that all efforts are aligned with the needs and preferences of both scientific and other audiences. The selection, design, translation and refinement of channels and materials are tailored to the specific context and purpose of each output. Input is gathered iteratively through collaborative meetings, feedback sessions, and ongoing consultation, allowing for flexible adaptation throughout the project. This co-creative process fosters ownership, relevance, and inclusivity in all outreach activities.

6.2 Involvement of work packages

Three work packages (WP4, WP8, and WP12) share responsibility for developing, executing, and concluding the project's dissemination and communication efforts, each covering distinct timeframes and objectives.

WP4: Initiation and Foundation (Months 1–12)

Lead: AUMC | Contributors: AEGEE-Europe, UM, YAG, All Partners

WP4 sets the groundwork for all communication and dissemination activities. The focus is on creating the core outreach tools and defining the project's strategic direction. Deliverable 4.1 and Deliverable 4.3 originate from this WP, marking the start of both tactical implementation and strategic planning for future outreach.

WP8: Mid-Term Implementation and Expansion (Months 13–48)

Lead: AUMC | Contributors: AEGEE-Europe, UM, YAG, All Partners

As the project enters its implementation and results phase, WP8 ensures the communication strategy remains dynamic, inclusive, and aligned with ongoing project developments.

WP12: Final Dissemination, Exploitation, and Legacy (Months 48–60)

Lead: SERMAS | Contributors: AEGEE-Europe, UM, YAG, All Partners

WP12 is responsible for the final outreach activities and the packaging of results for long-term impact. It plays a crucial role in ensuring that YOUTHreach leaves a lasting legacy across scientific, clinical, policy, and youth communities.

6.3 Dedicated communication team

To ensure a consistent, timely, and strategic dissemination of project activities and results, a dedicated communication professional has been appointed. This professional is a member of the project's Management Team (MT) and is integrated into the regular meeting cycles of all relevant work packages. This structure ensures that the communication lead remains continuously informed about project developments, milestones, and upcoming dissemination needs. Participation in WP-level discussions enables early identification of content opportunities and ensures alignment between technical work and outreach activities.





In addition, coordination meetings are held between the communication professional, AEGEE-Europe and the YAG. These meetings serve as a tactical platform to review ongoing and upcoming communication tasks and co-develop youth-friendly formats and content (e.g., Instagram posts, press releases).

6.4 Quality management website

The communication manager performs half-yearly, technical quality checks of the website to ensure the website is performing as intended. This includes (among other things) testing links and technical features of the website, updating plug-ins, checking whether there are any error messages coming up, correct display of all graphical elements (including cell phone and tablet views), GDPR notice, and download features.

6.5 Publication process

A publication policy is available for the consortium members. The policy provides guidelines for publishing research conducted within the framework of the YOUTHreach project, or through collaboration with the YOUTHreach project, thus ensuring high standards of project publications and clear expectations for all dedicated authors.

6.6 Sustainability measures after the end of the project

Sustainability measures with respect to the research infrastructure, continued funding and exploitation of the results are described in the exploitation plan. YOUTHreach will try to remain online for an extended period.

6.7 Risk Management

Effective communication and dissemination require anticipating potential risks that may affect project reputation, stakeholder trust, or the clarity and accessibility of project messages. YOUTHreach adopts a proactive, structured risk-management approach covering both strategic and operational risks in outreach activities. The communication team monitors emerging issues throughout the project and coordinates mitigation actions with relevant work packages, the YAG, and institutional partners.

Reputational risks

Risks include misinformation, misinterpretation of study aims, unintended stigma, or public criticism of messaging or interventions. *Mitigation:*

- All content is reviewed by the communication team and relevant researchers to ensure scientific accuracy and ethical alignment.
- Youth-friendly, clear language is prioritised to avoid ambiguity.
- Concerns raised on any platform are acknowledged promptly with factual, transparent responses.
- Sensitive topics are co-checked with the YAG to ensure youth-appropriate framing.

Ethical risks

Risks include breaches of confidentiality, inappropriate sharing of personal stories, or content that unintentionally infringes ethical approval conditions. *Mitigation:*

- No personal data or identifiable information is shared without explicit consent.
- All materials follow medical-ethical guidelines and internal publication policies.
- Youth-generated content is checked to ensure safe and appropriate representation.





Operational risks

These include delays in outreach materials, inconsistent messaging across partners, or lack of capacity for content production. *Mitigation:*

- A clear division of responsibilities across WP4, WP8 and WP12 ensures continuity.
- A content calendar aligns all partner activities with project milestones.
- Regular cross-WP check-ins allow early identification of bottlenecks.
- Youth-created content is encouraged but not relied on when capacity is low.

Platform-related risks

Unexpected changes in platform algorithms, cyberattacks, account impersonation, or negative funnelling can limit reach or distort messaging. *Mitigation:*

- Use a diverse mix of platforms to avoid overdependence on a single algorithm.
- Security settings are regularly reviewed.
- Platforms requiring high production capacity or specialised youth-led content (e.g., TikTok, Snapchat) are avoided until resources allow.

Youth safety and wellbeing risks

Engaging young people publicly may expose them to unwanted attention, triggering content, or negative comments. *Mitigation:*

- Youth participation in public materials is always voluntary, supported, and consented.
- Comments are moderated, and harmful interactions are removed.
- Youth collaborators are briefed on digital safety, boundaries, and self-care.

Crisis communication protocol

In the event of a major issue (misinformation, reputational threat, ethical concern):

- The communication lead convenes a crisis team (project leads, ethics advisors, AEGEE-Europe, and YAG when appropriate).
- A unified, factual public statement is prepared.
- Updates are shared across all channels, ensuring consistent messaging.
- Incidents are documented and reviewed to improve preparedness.





6.8 Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for communication and dissemination

These KPI will be monitored and discussed yearly and may influence the communication and dissemination strategy during the lifecycle of the project.

KPI	Results at M12 since the start	Ambition towards end of project
Papers/ publications	Consortium paper in preparation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 3 white papers describing: (1) best practices for inclusive youth engagement and comparative research designs in youth mental health; (2) context-specific clinical recommendations; (3) policy options for Europe-wide implementation of new interventions. >15 open-access publications.
Scientific conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation at IEPA 2025 in Berlin with multiple talks/symposia. 2 posters at IEPA 2025 in Berlin with YOUTHreach mention or acknowledgment. 2 Sibling meetings with projects in the same call Consortium meeting #1 (Kick-off) in 2025. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures/symposia about YOUTHreach at >15 scientific conferences/events. Posters about YOUTHreach at >15 scientific conferences 4 types of networking activities across funded projects in the same call. 5 consortium meetings (one per year)
Other events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "A Generation's Wellbeing: From Rights to Action in Youth Mental Health", 15 October 2025, European Parliament Intergroup on Mental Health. "Turn the Tide: New Approaches to Youth Mental Health and Early Intervention", 14 November 2025, Nordic Headspace Conference, Danish Parliament Copenhagen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 local engagement events organised in schools (2 per country/7 local events). 2 HTA/policy workshops organised with 20-30 representatives each time. 1 industry-focused online event. 6 local engagement events organised with public authorities (e.g. municipalities, health agencies).
Social media & website	<p>Per 08/12/2025: 430 followers on LinkedIn 96 followers on Instagram 788 new website visitors</p> <p>Continuous updates of website and social media.</p>	<p>> 650 followers on Instagram and LinkedIn > 3000 website visitors</p> <p>1-2 social media posts per month on news and events related to mental health, YOUTHreach and the three interventions. Project website updated at least once every two months with news, links and resources.</p>
Communication materials & channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up of TEAMS, meeting structure, guidelines (including branding) for communication, Publication Policy version 1, 2 Internal newsletters. Launch Website, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube. Flyers MAG and YAG. Press release at M1 (announcement of project) and M6 (announcement of YAG) Animations study design and interventions. Engaging video for youth at M6. Flyers: Intervention flyers for training package. External newsletter. Training package v1. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Set up and launch of internal communication tools ✓ Launch website and social media channels ✓ One promotional video with accessible language for youth and citizens ready by M6 on YouTube. 3 educational webinars organised between M48-M60. 3 press releases describing the YOUTHreach project for young people and the general public, at M6 and at M36 and M60 communicate on the project's results. 2 podcasts organised by the YAG and consortium members at M42 and M56. Information and training package (3 versions) including tutorials and demos for all interventions.

Table 4: Key performance indicators for communication and dissemination





7. Planning

The communication and dissemination strategy follows the planning below. In year 1 ‘preparation & design’ is central, year 2 focuses on visibility and co-creation, year 3 on mid-term results and policy engagement, year 4 on uptake and industry links, and year 5 on legacy and sustainability.

Year	What	When
1 (2025)	Disse	M1
	Project Starting Date: January, 1, 2025	M1
	Prepare and publish the first YOUTHreach press release to announce the project.	M1
	Set up social media channels LinkedIn and Instagram	M1
	Set up efficient internal cooperation tools like TEAMS and internal meeting structures.	M1
	Kick-off Consortium Meeting, 4-5 February 2025 in Brussels	M2
	M1-M12	M2
	Launch page website	M2
	Define project branding	M2
	Publication Policy version 1	M4
	Flyers: recruitment YAG and MAG	M4
	PREPARATION & DESIGN	M6
	D4.1: Outreach materials including project website	M6
	First release of the projects’ website	M6
	First internal newsletter	M6
	Press release introducing the YAG + promotional social media video	M6
	First Training Package: information on the 3 interventions	M6
	Animations on study design and interventions	M7
	Set up Ground rules for communication	M9
	Dissemination at IEPA conference 2025 (<i>conference 1 of 15</i>)	M9
Second internal newsletter	M9	
Flyers: Intervention flyers for training package	M9-M12	
Youth engagement sessions YAG on social media	M9-M12	
Dissemination at Nordic Headspace Conference 2025 (<i>conference 2 of 15</i>)	M11	
D4.3: Outreach strategy including communication channels	M12	
Key publication List	M12	
External newsletter 1	M12	
Network activity with projects in the same call (2)	M1-12	
2 (2026)	M12-M24	M12-M24
	Continuous posting on social media, adding YouTube as new social media channel and updating the website	M12-M24
	Internal Newsletter (4)	M12-M24
	External Newsletter (2)	M12-M24
	Plan Target Conferences (with youth co-speakers where possible)	M12-M24
	CONSOLIDATION & VISIBILITY	M13
	Consortium Meeting #2: Barcelona, January 2026	M13
	Check and discuss our indicators for success + adapt strategy where needed	M13
	Strengthen youth co-creation: run a second round of Youth Advisory Group (YAG) workshops to evaluate communication formats and adapt messaging.	M13-M15
	Expand Instagram/YouTube video strategy: introduce youth-led reels and stories to increase organic engagement.	M13-M24
	Network activity with projects in the same call	M15
	Second Information & Training package: include materials used by the consortium to train young co-investigators (on public speaking, paper writing, review of literature, interviewing of study participants, result interpretation, and impact assessment)	M18
	Publication Open Access Papers (<i>1 of 15</i>)	M24
Consortium paper		





Year	What	When
3 (2027) M24-M36 EXPANSION & MIDTERM RESULTS	Continuous posting on social media, adding Instagram as new social media channel and updating the website	M24-M36
	Internal Newsletter (4)	M24-M36
	External Newsletter (2)	M24-M36
	Plan Target Conferences (with youth co-speakers where possible)	M24-M36
	Prepare materials for local communication events at schools (introducing project aims, progress, and intervention models).	M24-M36
	Consortium Meeting #3 2027	M25
	Check and discuss our indicators for success + adapt strategy where needed	M25
	Prepare outreach to policymakers and youth (use training package 2 on public speaking) involving EU youth health representatives	M26-M36
	Network activity with projects in the same call	M28
	Publication Open Access Papers (X of 15)	M36
	Industry engagement: start preparing for the dedicated industry-focused online event in Year 5.	M36
	Press release: advance notice of the forthcoming results of the intervention studies and inform the general public about the stakeholder engagement activities.	M36
	First set of local communication events at local schools (one per country), to promote the mental health interventions and the project results, and to gather feedback from participants (students, educators, and school psychologists).	M36
4 (2028) M36-M48 IMPLEMENTATION & UPTAKE	Continuous posting on social media, adding Instagram as new social media channel and updating the website	M36-M48
	Consortium Meeting #4 2027	M37
	Internal Newsletter (4)	M36-M48
	External Newsletter (2)	M36-M48
	Plan Target Conferences (with youth co-speakers where possible)	M36-M48
	Check and discuss our indicators for success + adapt strategy where needed	M37
	Prepare Industry-focused event (M52): with youth, insurers, and digital health firms; present economic benefits.	M38-M48
	Prepare 3 white papers: publish draft policy and practice recommendations, co-created with stakeholders.	M38-M48
	Prepare Policy workshop (M57): high-level event with EU Parliament, WHO, OECD, national ministries.	M38-M48
	Prepare podcasts with youth	M38-M48
	Prepare 3 educational webinars (3 total): focus on sustainability, integration in local systems, and lessons for future research.	M38-M48
	Prepare materials for second set of local communication events at local schools	M38-M48
	Network activity with projects in the same call	M39
Publication Open Access Papers (X of 15)	M48	





Year	What	When
5 (2029)	Continuous posting on social media, adding Instagram as new social media channel and updating the website	M48-M60
M48	Internal Newsletter (4)	M48-M60
-	External Newsletter (2)	M48-M60
M60	Check and discuss our indicators for success + adapt strategy where needed	M49
	Plan Target Conferences (with youth co-speakers where possible):	M48-M60
LEGACY & SUSTAINABILITY	Including project close-out at a major international youth mental health event (e.g. IAYMH, ESCAP, One world?).	
	Long-term dissemination: ensure website, Zenodo repository, and training packages remain available beyond project's end.	M48-M60
	Industry-focused event: with youth, insurers, pharma, and digital health firms; present economic benefits.	M52
	Organisation of a second set of local communication events at local schools (one per country), to discuss the evaluation results and to gather feedback from students, educators, and school psychologists.	M54
	Launch podcast: led by youth co-hosts with researchers/clinicians as guests and reflecting on collaboration and legacy.	M56
	Policy workshop at M57: high-level event with EU Parliament, WHO, OECD, national ministries.	M57
	Publish 3 white papers: (1) inclusive youth engagement practices, (2) clinical recommendations, (3) policy options for EU-wide uptake.	M60
	Publish and promote 3 educational webinars (3 total): focus on sustainability, integration in local systems, and lessons for future research.	M60
	YouTube documentary-style video: youth-led storytelling about project journey and achievements?	M60
	Open consortium meeting: 2-day final project workshop involving researchers, clinicians, young people, HTA members, and other stakeholders including presentation of the main results by consortium members and panel discussions involving external experts, young people, healthcare professionals, policy advocates, and public officers.	M60
	Press release on results and impact of YOUTHreach	M60
	Third and Final Training Package with all learning materials in WP10, hence becoming a comprehensive resource for a broader audience to enhance literacy, engagement and peer support.	M60
	Publication Open Access Papers (<i>X of 15</i>): please note that publications can also be published after the project duration.	M60





8. Conclusion

The YOUTHreach outreach strategy provides a clear and comprehensive framework to ensure that communication, dissemination, and engagement activities are impactful, inclusive, and sustainable. By combining youth-centred approaches with a multi-stakeholder perspective, the strategy not only amplifies the voices of young people but also ensures that researchers, healthcare professionals, policymakers, and the wider public remain engaged throughout the project's lifecycle.

Through carefully selected channels and tailored materials, the project will maximize visibility, transparency, and accessibility of its results. The strategy also embeds co-creation as a guiding principle, ensuring that communication outputs reflect real needs and lived experiences of young people across Europe.

Looking ahead, the outlined planning and KPIs provide a strong foundation for monitoring progress and adapting approaches where needed. This guarantees that YOUTHreach will leave a lasting legacy in youth mental health research, practice, and policy.





Annex I: YOUTHReach Social Media Strategy

December 2025



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Prepared by:

AEGEE Communications Team

- Mónica Romão, Communications Trainee of AEGEE-Europe
- Petra Gombár, President of AEGEE-Europe





1. Social media strategy

This document outlines the social media strategy for the YOUTHreach project, including audience segmentation, platform usage, scheduling, and risk management. The YOUTHreach social media strategy is part of and provides input into the broader communication strategy of the project (as outlined in Deliverable 4.3). It is designed to inform and engage stakeholders (see *Chapter 3: Stakeholders*) about youth mental health in general and the YOUTHreach project (including the interventions in our scope) in particular.

1.1 Objectives of the social media strategy

The social media strategy directly supports YOUTHreach's overall communication and dissemination goals: raising awareness, promoting accessible resources, ensuring meaningful stakeholder engagement, supporting uptake of results, and fostering collaboration. In addition, social media plays a key role in building pathways for future participant recruitment for each intervention. The following objectives are connected to the social media strategy:

✓ **Objective 1: Increase awareness, visibility, and trust**

Social media will raise awareness of YOUTHreach and its three interventions (YEAH, SELFIE, MOST) by sharing clear, youth-friendly and accessible information. This includes transparent and trustworthy messaging about the purpose, safety and value of the interventions and thus building early understanding and confidence that are essential for future recruitment.

Achieving this objective requires clear and accessible messaging that communicates about youth mental health in general and YOUTHreach in particular. It is important to use everyday language and avoiding technical jargon that might alienate the target audience. Employing multimedia formats such as videos, infographics, and personal stories can vividly illustrate how the project and interventions work and how they can positively impact young people's mental health.

Trust is a critical currency in mental health communication, particularly when engaging young people who may have experienced stigma, institutional mistrust, or privacy concerns. A lack of trust can lead to disengagement or reluctance to participate, undermining the project's impact. Therefore, all content on social media must be transparent and honest, regularly sharing project updates, explaining decision-making processes, and illustrating how youth input influences changes. It is important to clearly communicate who the key players behind YOUTHreach are, including the research institutions, partners, and youth advisory members, thereby demystifying the project and humanizing its efforts (including honesty about project challenges). Privacy and data protection are also fundamental concerns; clearly communicating the project's commitment to confidentiality and safe data handling reassures young people that their information and wellbeing are protected.

✓ **Objective 2: Facilitate engagement and co-creation**

Social media will create interactive spaces where young people, YAG members, clinicians and other stakeholders can ask questions, share experiences and co-create content. This two-way communication fosters relevance, authenticity and stronger relationships with audiences who may later participate or act as referral pathways.

By driving participation, the project aims to empower specifically young people and to give them agency in shaping mental health solutions that improve their lives.





To achieve this, the social media strategy must embrace inclusive messaging and representation, consciously using images, language, and narratives that reflect the diversity of Europe's youth across dimensions such as age, ethnicity, gender identity, socioeconomic status and disability. The calls to action must be clear, simple, and meaningful, reducing barriers by clearly explaining how young people can get involved in the project, what participation entails, and the possible benefits they can expect. It is equally important to acknowledge and address potential barriers such as limited digital access, stigma around mental health, language differences, and mistrust toward institutional initiatives, tailoring communication to help overcome these obstacles.

✓ **Objective 3: Support recruitment pathways across countries**

While not a standalone recruitment tool, social media strengthens recruitment by:

- presenting the interventions in relatable ways;
- directing youth, families, and clinicians to local contact points;
- sharing (anonymous) testimonies from young people and professionals with their consent;
- highlighting the interventions' evidence base and youth involvement;
- and amplifying the work of local partners, schools, clinicians, and organisations.

✓ **Objective 4: Ensure consistency and continuous improvement**

Social media offers a shared communication space that supports coherent branding and aligned messaging across countries, while allowing for local adaptation. By monitoring engagement and gathering youth feedback, the project can continuously refine its messaging and improve its reach and impact over time. YOUTHreach is committed to being a dynamic and responsive project that evolves based on the lived experiences and insights of its target audience. Thus, social media platforms must be leveraged not only as broadcast channels but as interactive spaces where young people (not exclusively research participants) feel invited and empowered to share their opinions, experiences, and suggestions.

1.2 Content Strategy

The YOUTHreach social media strategy focuses on youth-friendly, accessible communication that reflects the project's ethical standards and commitment to co-creation. All messaging will use clear, relatable language, with translations added where needed to ensure inclusivity across participating countries. Content will be created in close cooperation with the Youth Advisory Group (YAG) and aligned with the approved medical ethical documents for the three interventions. To maximize reach, multiple platforms will be used, supported by organic posting² and (when appropriate) paid advertising. Recruitment efforts may be boosted with paid posts, and visibility will be amplified through connected researchers, universities, and institutions who support dissemination by liking, sharing, or jointly posting content. Partnerships with local and well-known gatekeepers (such as schools, NGOs, and care centres) further strengthen the outreach strategy.

In addition, co-branded and co-created posts with universities and other collaborating stakeholders can significantly expand our audience. Publishing joint content, such as shared posts, reels, or short interviews featuring both YOUTHreach and partner organisations, allows us to tap into their existing, trusted communities and enhances both visibility and credibility.

² Organic posting is the content you share for free on your own channels to build relationships, trust, and long-term visibility over time. Paid ads are targeted, paid placements that boost your reach quickly by showing your message to specific audiences beyond your existing followers.





Content Approach

The strategy prioritizes engaging, authentic, and youth-co-created content. A diverse mix of formats will be used to maintain attention and ensure accessibility:

- Explainer videos: Short clips introducing the project and its benefits.
- Testimonials: Stories from stakeholders (with consent and anonymous if needed) to build trust.
- Live Q&As: Interactive sessions with project representatives or youth ambassadors.
- Challenges and campaigns: Activities that encourage user-generated content.
- Infographics and carousels: Visual summaries tailored for platforms like Instagram and LinkedIn.
- Behind-the-scenes content: Showcasing collaboration with the YAG and increasing transparency.

Tone and Style

All content will be:

- Youth-friendly: Conversational, accessible, and free of technical jargon. The goal is not to oversimplify or “infantilize” young people, but to communicate in a register and style that resonates with them, respecting their ability to engage with complex ideas.
- Inclusive: Reflecting diverse ages, identities, backgrounds, abilities, and experiences.
- Ethical: Fully aligned with ethical commission standards, ensuring safety, privacy, and informed participation.

Accessibility and Multilingualism

While English is the project’s primary language, translations will be used selectively to support national contexts. Key materials such as infographics, short summaries, or social media posts will include local-language versions where necessary. More extensive products (e.g., reports or long videos) will be made in English.

Visual accessibility measures include:

- High contrast and readable fonts
- Alt text for images
- Mobile-first optimization
- Screen-reader compatibility

Content accessibility measures include:

- English versions for all core content
- Plain-language summaries in local languages
- Subtitles and transcripts for long-form videos
- Avoidance of complex or exclusive terminology

Inclusive representation:

- Diverse imagery reflecting age, gender, ethnicity, ability, and geography
- Culturally neutral, brand-aligned visuals (per the project brand book)

Ambassadors:

Collaborating with creators who are already well known for their mental-health content could significantly strengthen YOUTHreach’s outreach efforts. By inviting such creators to become YOUTHreach ambassadors, we can ensure that our messages are translated into formats that genuinely resonate with their followers (such as short videos, co-created posts, or interactive content). Having one ambassador per country could further enhance cultural relevance and allow messages to be tailored to local contexts, increasing both reach and impact.





2. Target audiences

The social media strategy will support the communication and dissemination towards all stakeholders of the YOUTHreach project. When supporting recruitment pathways for the interventions in our study, three key groups are specifically targeted:

Young people

- **Why they matter:** Young people are the direct beneficiaries and participants of the YOUTHreach interventions. Their engagement is critical to achieving the project's goals of improving youth mental health and well-being.
- **How we reach them:** Youth-friendly content, relatable visuals, peer-led messaging (YAG, AEGEE-Europe), and platform-specific outreach (Instagram, YouTube Shorts) are tailored to their digital habits and preferences.

Professionals:

- **Why they matter:** these stakeholders (healthcare professionals, policymakers, researchers, funders, and partner organizations) are trusted messengers and referral drivers. Their endorsement lends credibility and helps identify youth who would benefit most from the YOUTHreach project. Often, they are able to directly reach out to youth.
- **How we reach them:** Professional channels (LinkedIn) and targeted materials that explain the aim and clinical relevance of the YOUTHreach project and each of its three interventions studied.

Family members

- **Why they matter:** Families often play a crucial part in supporting young people's mental health. They may hold care responsibilities, offer emotional support, and influence whether young people engage with interventions. Recognising families as active partners, not only as gatekeepers, can strengthen the impact and acceptance of youth mental health initiatives. For children under a certain age (depending on the country) parental consent or co-consent is required for young people's participation in research projects. Also consent is needed for the social media accounts of youth.
- **How we reach them:** Use clear, reassuring messaging that highlights the safety, benefits, and evidence behind each intervention. Channels such as Instagram and Facebook are suitable for reaching both young people and families. LinkedIn may also be partially effective, as it appeals to adult audiences with a more professional interest. Communicating through these channels can help inform and empower families to support young people's participation and wellbeing.





Intervention	Audience
<p>YEAH</p> <p>For the walk-in centres, the social media strategy will largely depend on the local strategies already in place at each centre. These centres often have established connections with schools, youth organisations, and community partners, and they know best how to reach the young people in their area. The role is to support and complement these local efforts via our channels and with our materials. The goal of all activities will be to invite local youth to discover and use walk-in centres.</p>	<p>Youth (Primary) and family members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform about key assets of the walk-in facilities; • Explain why and how it can be supportive; • Guide towards local YEAH's; • Break prejudices on mental health in general. <p>Professionals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research & best-practises underpinning the YEAH's.
<p>App-based training (SELFIE)</p> <p>For SELFIE, the strategy will rely strongly on the involvement of clinicians and professionals who can directly refer young people to the program. Because SELFIE combines an app with in-person support, trust and credibility are essential. Clinicians are in a unique position to identify suitable participants, explain the benefits, and encourage engagement. Alongside this clinical pathway, we will complement recruitment with youth-friendly outreach (e.g. social media and maybe peer ambassadors) to raise awareness and create interest, but the clinician link will remain the central driver for enrolment. The goal of all social media activities will be to attract young people and clinicians to use the app and training.</p>	<p>Youth (Primary) and family members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform about key assets of the SELFIE intervention; • Explain why and how it can be supportive; • Guide towards participating. <p>Professionals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement and training package; • Research & best practises underpinning this intervention.
<p>MOST online platform</p> <p>While social media and youth-friendly online campaigns will help raise awareness and interest, the involvement of clinicians is key to building trust and encouraging young people to take the step to register and engage. Clinicians can introduce the platform as a safe and supportive space, explain how it works, and motivate participation. Alongside this, partnerships with schools, universities, and youth organisations can further strengthen recruitment pathways. This dual approach: clinicians guiding youth towards the platform, supported by digital visibility will be central to engaging participants.</p>	<p>Youth (Primary) and family members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform about key assets of the MOST intervention; • Explain why and how it can be supportive; • Guide towards participating. <p>Professionals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement and training package; • Research & best practises underpinning this intervention.

Table 5: Interventions & social media audiences





3. Channels, formats and frequency

3.1 Social media channels

The strategy leverages the following mix of digital channels to reach diverse audiences:

Instagram

Instagram is one of the most strategically relevant channels for engaging youth in Europe, particularly those between the ages of 13* and 25. From a strategic standpoint, Instagram allows YOUTHreach to combine storytelling and interactivity. Ultimately, Instagram is not just a broadcast tool; it is a community-building space where YOUTHreach can meet youth on their own terms and create authentic engagement through regular, informal, and creative touchpoints.

* Although the official age to create a social-media account (Instagram's being 13) can differ from country to country, a majority of young people will still be online regardless of these national age limits.

YouTube

YouTube is a critical channel for both depth and discoverability. It allows YOUTHreach to serve two different communication needs. On the one hand, it acts as a central archive for long-form, informative content - such as intervention explainers, recorded webinars, behind-the-scenes stories, and project milestones. This supports users who actively seek more detailed, structured, or contextual information, including educators, youth workers, and highly engaged youth participants.

On the other hand, YouTube Shorts opens up a powerful discovery mechanism. Shorts are pushed algorithmically into users' feeds based on interests and trending content, which allows YOUTHreach to reach new youth audiences beyond existing followers. YouTube is also accessible across devices and doesn't require account login for viewing, which lowers access barriers. Additionally, content shared on YouTube can be embedded on the website and presentations, multiplying its utility.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is used to engage institutional audiences such as policymakers, researchers, healthcare professionals, funders, and partner organizations. It is a key space for positioning YOUTHreach as an innovative, evidence-based project in the European mental health landscape. The platform features project updates, policy relevance, research milestones, partnership highlights, and co-branded content to foster credibility and professional collaboration.

Website

The YOUTHreach project website is the central source of in-depth and verified information. It provides clear explanations of each intervention, participation instructions, downloadable resources, profiles of partners and YAG members, event listings, and research updates. All digital campaigns ultimately drive traffic to the website as the authoritative, stable landing space where audiences can explore and act on what they've seen on social media.





TikTok, Snapchat, and Facebook

We are not using TikTok and Snapchat for YOUTHreach communication and dissemination because these platforms algorithms rely heavily on *funneling*: it quickly narrows content to specific niches, making it difficult to reliably reach a broad, diverse youth audience. In addition, TikTok and Snapchat posts are highly time-consuming to create and require youth-centred formats, which means they must be produced *by* young people to feel authentic and effective. At this moment, we simply do not have the capacity needed to generate the volume and style of content TikTok and Snapchat demands.

For YOUTHreach, Facebook is used primarily to reach parents and family members who play an important role in supporting young people's mental health. Our approach focuses mainly on targeted, paid campaigns, as Facebook's advertising tools allow us to reach specific demographic groups efficiently and ensure our messages appear in the feeds of those most likely to engage. However, we will only use Facebook when necessary to boost recruitment, rather than as a core communication channel.

3.2 Content formats

The strategy uses platform-specific formats that match both user behaviour and algorithmic preference. These formats are not about the content itself but how content is packaged and delivered.

Posts

Standard feed posts (including static images and carousels) are the most versatile format, suitable for announcements, visual explanations, inspirational quotes, and campaign participation calls. Carousels (multiple posts that you can swipe) are effective for step-by-step guides or storytelling sequences and are widely used on Instagram and LinkedIn.

Stories

Stories provide a 24-hour format, ideal for interactive and casual communication. They are used to share quick updates, behind-the-scenes moments, polls, countdowns, quizzes, and direct links to participation forms or resources. Because of their short lifespan and top-of-feed placement, they're ideal for sustaining daily engagement and immediacy.

Reels and Shorts

Short-form video formats on Instagram (Reels) and YouTube (Shorts) are designed for quick, high-impact viewing. These are particularly effective for storytelling, showcasing moments from events, highlighting key intervention benefits, current challenges and trends. They support discoverability due to their prominence in platform algorithms.

Live Sessions

Live video streams on Instagram or YouTube allow for real-time engagement with audiences. These sessions can feature project leads, clinicians, or YAG members answering questions and discussing topics related to mental health, co-creation, or youth engagement. They offer transparency and direct communication, fostering a sense of trust and authenticity.





3.4 Frequency

Content will be scheduled around project news and milestones, mental health awareness days, school calendars and holidays, and YAG meeting outputs. A structured content calendar will guide publication across platforms, balancing consistency with flexibility for real-time engagement:

Ideal Frequency	Content type	Platforms
1 - 2x/week	▶ Informational posts, testimonials, stories.	▶ Instagram, LinkedIn.
1x/week	▶ Reels, carousels.	▶ LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube.
Quarterly	▶ Campaigns, challenges, Q&A sessions.	▶ All platforms.
Quarterly	▶ Co-creation showcases, milestone recaps.	▶ Website, LinkedIn.





4. Risk management for social media

Effective communication requires anticipating and mitigating risks that could undermine trust, participation, or project credibility. The YOUTHreach social media strategy incorporates a proactive risk management framework to address common challenges in youth engagement, digital outreach, and public-facing messaging. We see the following potential challenges:

Misinformation or misinterpretation

Risk: Youth, parents, or professionals may misunderstand the nature of the interventions, confuse YOUTHreach with unrelated services, or misinterpret research goals. **Mitigation strategies:**

- Create clear communication materials that exclude complex terminology, using language and visuals tailored to youth audiences.
- Make the project website link highly visible and use agreed project hashtags consistently to guide audiences toward reliable information.
- Create FAQ sections, myth-busting posts, and explainer videos for the project in general and the interventions in particular.
- Use trusted messengers: clinicians, YAG members, and local gatekeepers to deliver key messages.
- Ensure all content is aligned with ethical and scientific standards and reviewed by the communications and research teams before publication.
- Monitor online comments to detect and correct misinformation and delete comments if inappropriate.

Low engagement or reach

Risk: Content may fail to resonate with youth or reach intended audiences due to poor targeting, platform mismatch, or lack of relevance. Young people's engagement with social media varies widely by age group and country, which could limit the effectiveness of a uniform communication strategy.

Mitigation strategies:

- Conduct audience research with YAG members to understand platform preferences, content formats, and tone. This way, the social media strategy will be tailored to reflect both age- and country-specific preferences. Youth Advisory Group (YAG) members and local youth collaborators will provide insights on platform usage and engagement patterns, ensuring content is shared where young people are most active. Platform-specific approaches, including choice of format, tone, and posting style, will be adapted to maximize relevance and reach across different groups and contexts.
- Use A/B testing to compare post-performance and refine messaging.
- Implement platform-specific strategies (e.g., reels on Instagram, trends, carousels on LinkedIn).
- Schedule content around youth activity cycles (e.g., after school hours, weekends, holidays).

Negative feedback or public criticism

Risk: Content may receive backlash due to perceived insensitivity, exclusion, or misunderstanding of youth needs/the aim of the project. **Mitigation strategies:**

- Establish a content review process.
- Monitor sentiment using analytics and comment moderation tools.
- Respond to criticism with respectful, transparent communication, acknowledging concerns and offering clarification.
- Escalate serious issues to project leads and involve external advisors if needed.
- Use feedback as a learning opportunity to improve future content and strengthen trust.

