

PhotoVoice - Participation & Empowerment in Youth Work

# VOICE Trainings | Report

C3-C4 Photovoice Trainings in Viareggio (IT), 23-25 May 2022

## Summary

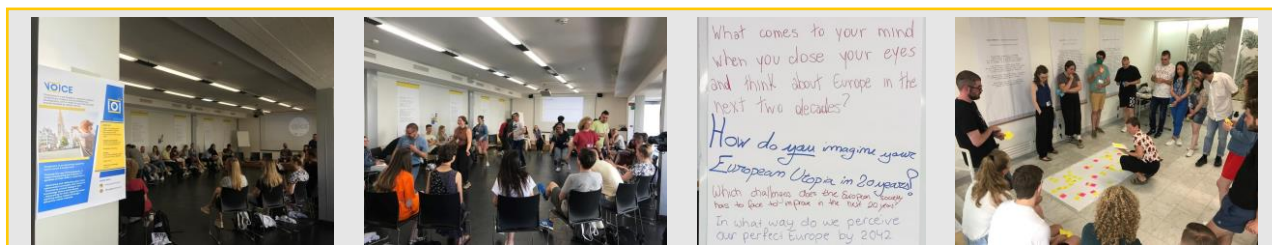
On 23-25 May, students in youth & social work as well as young social workers met in Viareggio to **learn about the participatory research method Photovoice**. They were brought together by the VOICE partners, coming from Austria, Bulgaria, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands

Creative partners from the media sector also joined the event, in order to film the Trainings activities, which will lead to the **creation of a video-tutorial on Photovoice using lively and authentic video-footage**.

## Activities – Learning “How to Photovoice”

Through a mix of presentations and interactive activities, participants learned the ropes of the Photovoice method, a **participatory research method** facilitating self- and collective expression by combining a creative and accessible tool, photography, with a ready-to-use step-by-step process backed by robust theory.

On the first day, they focused on **exploring the theoretical background** of this method originally born in social sciences. They discovered the state of the art on Photovoice in the academic field, reflecting on their own about the **benefits of such a qualitative, participatory, visually-based empowerment tool in the youth & social field**. They also went through the step-by-step method in order to highlight the role of the facilitator and the tips they can apply to implement an efficient Photovoice process up to scientific standards.



On the second and third days, the Trainings applied a **practical “learning-by-doing” approach**. Hands-in sessions invited **participants to experience a Photovoice exercise themselves** to learn about its concrete implementation through non-formal methods, while stepping into the shoes of Photovoice “co-researchers” to make them aware of what they can do as future facilitators to improve their own participants’ experience.

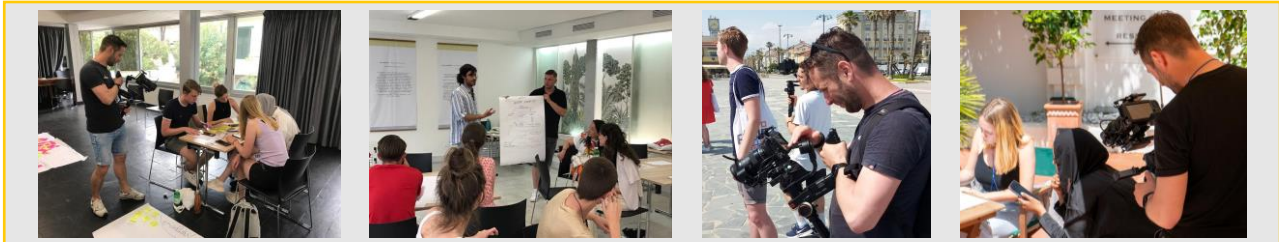
This all led to the VOICE project’s first authentic Photovoice results! The full overview answering the question **“How do you imagine your European utopia in 20 years?”** is [available here](#), and here is a sample:



## Results – Participants’ contribution to the Project Results

Participants learned about Photovoice first and foremost, but also contributed to the future project results in many ways!

They will indeed **star in the future “VOICE movie”, a video-tutorial which will present the Photovoice method** through a catchy, short and lively format. This video will be all the more authentic thanks to video-footage filmed during the Trainings, recording an actual, live Photovoice exercise with young, active participants.



The participants’ own Photovoice results will be useful beyond the Trainings themselves: they will be **turned into a VOICE Photo Exhibit**, online first and foremost but also on-site through local events organized in a few months by the partners themselves. The aim of the exhibit will be to catch the attention of more and more youth & social workers by showcasing the kind of results Photovoice can lead to.

Brainstorming sessions were also held to make the most out of the participants’ own expertise. Together, they **gathered ideas for themes, topics and sample research questions which can be easily transferred** from one local context to another, and therefore fit into international youth projects in the future. The outcome will be incorporated into the future “VOICE Handbook”, providing ready-to-use material to newcomers into the world of Photovoice.

Finally, the participants also **started reflecting on their own future use of Photovoice in their local context**. As part of their learning experience, as well as to make them ambassadors of the Photovoice method in their local environment, participants will indeed implement a Photovoice exercise themselves with the support of their local VOICE partner. They discussed how to do it in a meaningful way, starting with the opportunities they will have to use Photovoice in a relevant context, such as with refugees they are already in contact with in the context of academic research, or children in a middle-school with which participatory activities are already planned.

## Next Steps

More students in social & youth work, as well as young youth & social workers, will soon join a similar learning experience with the organization of **two additional VOICE Trainings in Vienna on 4-6 July!**

Afterward, the youth and creative organisations involved in the partnership will use the vast wealth of results & material collected through these trainings to take the next steps towards the creation of the planned project results.

A lot of video-making, writing and graphic-design will be involved in order to create visually attractive products, fit to catch the attention of the European youth & social field. **So ... stay tuned!**

# Annex 1 – Programme

## Arrival Day – Sunday 22 May

(...) **Arrivals**

## Day 1 – Monday 23 May

### Welcome & Introductions

- Morning*
- Overview of the Training: Objectives, Programme, Partners
  - Ice-breaker
  - Team-building

### Photovoice Intro – The Photovoice method #1

Presentation of the VOICE project as a whole, progressive introduction to the Photovoice method with a focus on its history, underlying theoretical concepts and main purposes.

### Photovoice Intro – Art & Technics

*Afternoon* A “Beginner intro to Photography” to train participants’ “photographer’s eye” and share basic tips & tricks on how to take impactful pictures with a simple smartphone.

### Photovoice Intro – The Photovoice method #2

A deeper dive into the conceptual framework of the Photovoice method, its detailed step-by-step process with an attention to the facilitator’s role, as well as its “Pros & Cons”.

*Evening* **Intercultural dinner**

Light & chill activities for some intercultural exchanges!

## Day 2 – Tuesday 24 May

### Photovoice Exercise – Step 1, Reflections

*Morning* Introducing the Photovoice exercise as a “learning by doing” experiment, the research question, and starting discussing it in small groups.

### Brainstorming on Research Topics

Some explanations on what makes a good research question, introducing a participative workshop to gather ideas on research topics easily transferable to diverse contexts.

### City Tour

*Afternoon* A stroll in the city for some sight-seeing ... as well as showcasing local social work.

### Photovoice Exercise – Step 2, Fieldwork

Some time for everybody to roam the city freely for their own enjoyment ... and to take pictures for the Photovoice exercise!

*Evening* **Free time!**

## Day 3 – Wednesday 25 May

### Photovoice Exercise – Step 3, Selection process

*Morning* Going through the Photovoice selection process in each small group, with progressive discussions to turn individual pictures into a collective selection.

### Reflections, Conclusions, Celebrations!

Conclusions on Photovoice, reminders of the role of the training in the whole project, brainstorming on the “Follow-up Local Photovoice Experiments” ... and celebrations!

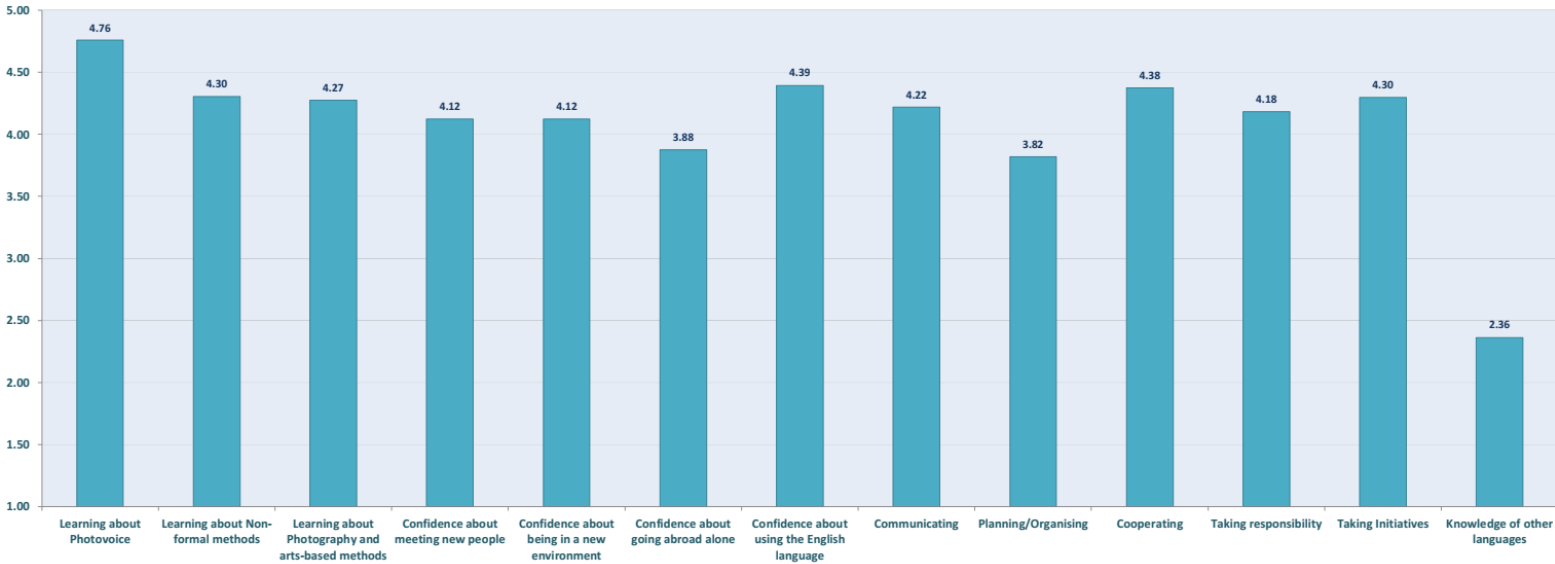
### Departures

*Afternoon* Bonus: a VOICE Photovoice Exhibition was organized on site to present the participants’ results to YES Forum members coming for the General Assembly which followed the VOICE Trainings. This on-site exhibit promoted the Photovoice method by showcasing the results it can lead to.

## Annex 2 – Evaluation by participants

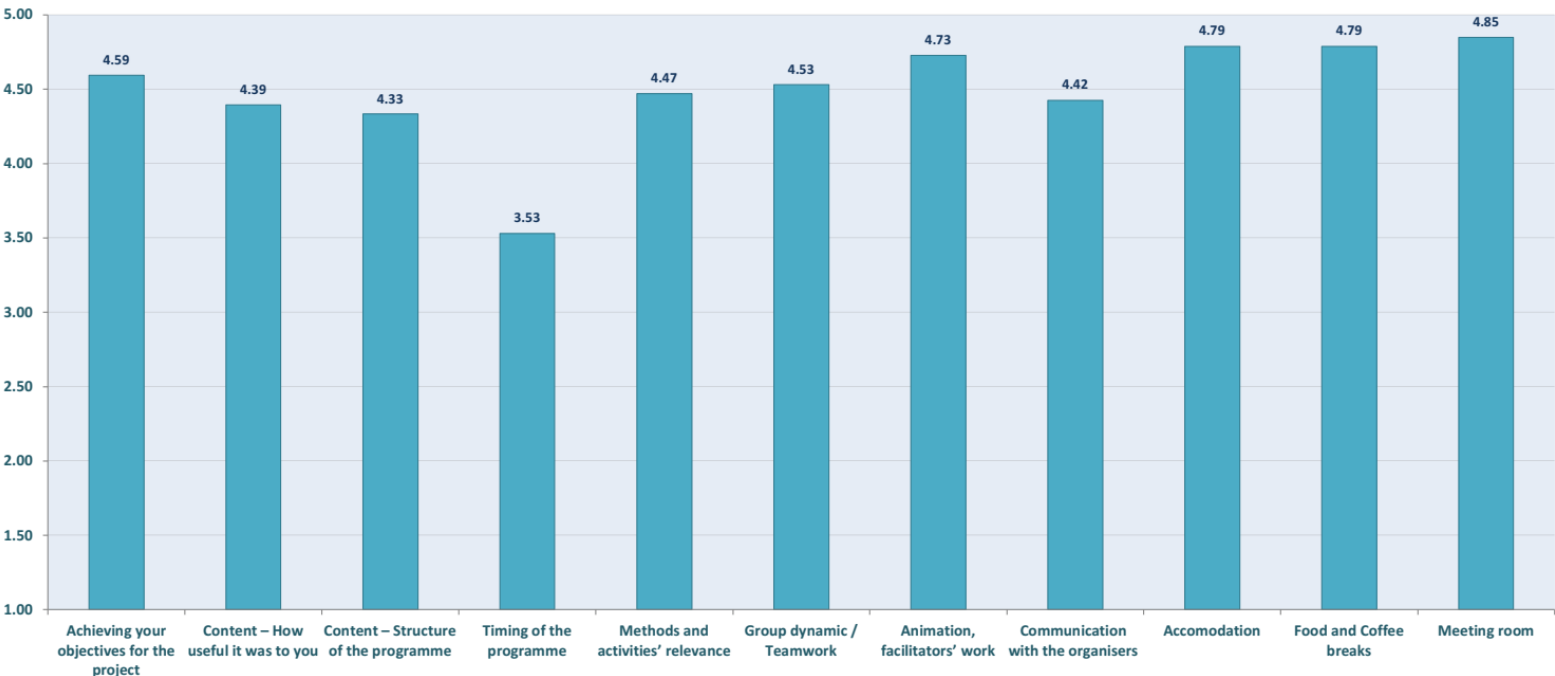
As shown by the summary of participants' feedback below, the VOICE Trainings in Viareggio **clearly achieved their objectives!**

Two questions highlight this success. On the one hand, participants reported an average **4.76 out of 5 for “Since the project start, how much have you learned about Photovoice?”**. On the other hand, they also reported an average of **4.59 out of 5 for “Achieving your objectives”**.



Participants Knowledge and Skills Self-evaluation

(5 – Very good | 1 – Not good at all)



Average answers to the Evaluation - "Project Organisation"

(5 – Very good | 1 – Not good at all)