



A Piazza for Europe.
The Youth Taste of Transformation

P **Parma**
*Parma candidate
European Youth
Capital 2027*

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EUROPEAN YOUTH CAPITAL (EYC) | FINAL ROUND APPLICATION FORM

1. APPLICANT

Municipality	PARMA
Region	Emilia-Romagna
State	Italia
Total population	201.644
Population under 35 years old	69.334 (42.506 between 16-36 years old)

2. MUNICIPAL LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

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Address	Street/number	Postal code	City
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Municipal Service Coordinator

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First Name	Pasquale		
Position	General Manager		
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Webpage of the city	https://www.comune.parma.it/it		

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3. SUPPORTING YOUTH STRUCTURE(S)

Name of Organisation	Junior Enterprise Parma		
Address of Organisation	Street/number Via Kennedy 6	Postal Code 43125	City Parma
Phone	+393932932001		
E-Mail	jepparma@pec.it		
Web page	https://www.jeparma.it/		
Contact Person			
Surname	Machet		
First Name	Vittorio		
Position	President		
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Parma's candidacy for EYC27 has been developed through the involvement and empowerment of young people thanks to a close collaboration between the "Youth Commission 27," JE Parma, and various youth associations that are supporting the candidacy. This comprehensive process lasted about a year and became the basis for the active involvement of youth organisations and young people in envisaging the governance of the candidacy and its follow-ups. The choice of JE Parma as the main partner for the candidacy stems from the uniqueness of the association, which has a range of skills for designing, developing, implementing and monitoring actions promoted by the candidacy itself, including the important implementation of the Youth Test. The choice was supported by JE Parma's willingness to act as a collector of local youth associations to foster a dialogue between peers towards the creation of a local youth forum. In addition, in line with what has become the key goal of the bid (reducing the generation gap), JeParma is the leader of 'JGenerational Mentoring', the reverse mentoring project. This is a significant opportunity to promote inclusiveness within companies through collaboration between generations, contrasting differences and prejudices towards young talents. JeParma is also part of the Youth Commission that was formally established by the City Council at the beginning of this journey to ensure a platform of wide and inclusive representation of young people and youth organizations. The Youth Commission is currently responsible for making meaningful the youth participation and to align as much as possible together with the City Council this final application with needs and desire of young people in Parma. But there is more: the numerous youth associations that enthusiastically supported the candidacy are expressions of the various cultural, social, sporting and recreational spheres that will collaborate on the program's objectives from 2025. The Italian National Youth Council, a member of the YFJ, has fully supported the candidacy since the initial phase and has already facilitated connections with both the national government and with national youth organisations. This commitment has provided further positive development by motivating local youth associations, as can be seen by the number of letters of support, already high in the initial phase and further increased till the final deadline. Moreover, Ashoka was designated by the City of Parma in early 2023 to co-design, together with the Youth Commission, innovative pathways to promote youth leadership, facilitating virtuous processes of exchange, dialogue, and action and putting young people at the core of Parma's community development.

4. INFORMATION ON THE APPLICANT CITY

With its 200,000 inhabitants (42500 of whom are between 16 and 35 years old), the city of Parma represents one of the most dynamic urban cities in Emilia-Romagna. It is one of the few Italian municipalities capable of attracting and retaining talent from the rest of Italy and Europe. With its 30,000 students, Parma is also a university city, demonstrating a strong appeal to out-of-town students, who make up almost two-thirds of the total student population. According to [the Youth Progress Index](#), compared to countries with a similar GDP, Italy ranks medium-low for the quality of life for its young people, being particularly disadvantaged in terms of “**generational equal opportunities**”. Parma and its province have embarked on a path of strengthening youth policies by promoting a high level of participation in the various cultural, social, and political spheres of the city. Between 2000 and 2022, Italy focused more on planning policies for young people rather than their direct involvement in urban policy discussions and management.

Instead of a desire for meaningful participation, this led to an attitude of frustration and disaffection among the younger generations. Nevertheless, it was during these years that various important European projects were founded within the city: in 2002, Parma was assigned as the seat of [EFSA](#) (the *European Food Safety Authority*), which provides scientific advice and effective communication on food chain risks. In the same period, the [European College](#) project, founded in 1988 and transformed into a Foundation in 2002, was developed. The first [School for Europe](#) in Italy was opened in Parma and was designed specifically to host the children of citizens from other European nations residing in Parma with a curriculum aimed at enhancing European identity. **Since July 2022**, when the current City Council began its mandate, **youth policies have taken on greater political relevance** and moved towards systemic and ambitious actions. This means going beyond the management, albeit important, of spaces dedicated to young people. In line with the [EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027](#), Parma now places great emphasis on listening to the needs of its young people. Among the first and most significant acts of the new administration was the decision to establish an office dedicated exclusively to the “Youth Community”. The first [Strategic Youth Plan](#), presented on August 30, 2022, is therefore being implemented. The Plan, entirely based on the protagonism and participation of young people under 35, is aligned with the framework proposed by the [Council of Europe’s Youth Sector Strategy 2030](#) and the goals indicated in the [EU Youth Strategy](#). It is divided into five main strands: 1) decision-making; 2) work; 3) well-being; 4) creativity; 5) sustainable cities and communities. The goal of the plan is to make young people protagonists of the local political agenda, imagining them as driving forces for sustainable and quality development. Below are a few insights, some of which already intersect with the objectives of the candidacy, updated on the five key goals of our strategic youth plan:



1. Decision Making | As recommended by the [Charter on Youth and Democracy](#), involving younger generations in local development processes is essential. Direct participation is a crucial means of restoring trust, power,

and tools to young people in order that they change their living environments. The Municipal Strategic Plan has outlined the following key actions:

- On January 17, 2024, following a process that officially began on May 9, 2023 (Europe Day), the City of Parma adopted guidelines for implementing the [Youth Test](#) within its administrative practices. This made it mandatory for the administration to evaluate the impact of public policies on reducing the generational gap. **Parma is the first city in Europe where the Youth Test has become law**. Notably, the initial phase of applying the tool was driven by both municipal civil servants and students from the Junior Enterprise Parma (JEP): a true moment of youth empowerment.
- As part of the candidacy process, a continuous dialogue with the city’s young people has been established through monthly meetings between the city council and local youth. The project, called [ParmaPassePartout](#), is a permanent meeting space aimed at building a structured community where young people are the protagonists of change.
- Thanks to its candidacy to become EYC, Parma has initiated a collaborative dialogue with the [Young Ambassadors Society](#) (YAS), offering young people the opportunity to impact and participate in official decision-making processes at a global level. In May 2024, they coordinated the Youth 7 Summit, attended by the Italian Foreign Minister, enabling young people to propose ideas for Italy’s G7 Presidency.



2. Work | Italy has the highest rate of job insecurity among young people in Europe. ISTAT sources estimate that in the Parma area the unemployment rate for young people aged between 15 and 24 has increased from 12.6% in 2022 to 15.9% in 2023. We see a significant increase for males (from 4.1% in 2022 to 11.7% in 2023), while for females we see a reduction of 10.5% with a current rate of 21.7%. In line with the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#) and the Revised European Social Charter, and to promote policies that guide the city's youth towards informed and mature educational and career choices, the administration has implemented several projects over the past year:

- Connecting Education and Jobs: Parma is creating [structured networks](#) between schools, universities, training institutions, and local businesses to bridge the gap between education, vocational training, and the job market, addressing high youth unemployment and unstable career paths.
- Attracting Young Talent: Strategies are being developed to attract and retain young talent. Under a new regional law, Parma is enhancing the employability of highly specialized young people, helping them find professional or research opportunities, or pursue higher education. The city recently received a € 219.000 [regional grant](#) to create an ecosystem of opportunities for young talent.
- Promoting Youth Agencies: Parma is strengthening soft skills like curiosity, critical thinking, and problem-solving among young people. In early 2024, an information desk for financial literacy and self-entrepreneurship was opened. Additionally, the city hosted the [final of the Italian Youth Entrepreneurship Championships](#), in collaboration with JA Italy.
- Informative Events and Dialogue: Parma organized a four-day event, "[Taking the World – In Dialogue with New Generations on Education, Growth, Work](#)" in collaboration with the Turin International Book Fair. This event involved 50 young people from various educational institutions who managed all aspects of the project, including selecting themes, guests, and communication styles.
- Rethinking Youth Workers: Parma is recognizing and enhancing the [role of youth workers](#). Two national conferences were hosted, with the latest focusing on emerging challenges in youth work. The city is also working with the University of Parma to establish a second-level master's degree program for youth workers.



3. Well-being | Mental health issues and psychological distress among young people are increasing in our country, especially among young women, with numerous national surveys revealing this condition and positioning suicide as the third leading cause of death among young people after road accidents and cancer. The city council has thus decided to invest in this sector from an inclusive perspective, implementing a series of strategic actions:

- A [City Observatory on Youth Well-being](#) to protect, prevent, and combat despair among youth; it focuses on ensuring access to rights and opportunities for vulnerable young people; it conducts surveys on the social and emotional state of those under 35 and promotes best practices.
- Ongoing survey involving around 7000 students in Parma examines areas such as school, friends, leisure, and family to understand adolescents' experiences and needs. The results will be shared with thematic and participatory youth forums.
- Promotion of Healthy and Sustainable Lifestyles through a major University of Parma project in collaboration with the [ONFOODS](#) Foundation aimed to create a shared digital space among university students nationwide.
- The improvement of seven existing youth centres, inspired by the [Charter on Youth and Democracy](#), emphasizing inclusivity and social equity. They will be restructured and given new purposes, including cultural hubs for skills development.
- New spaces: WOPA ([Workout Pasubio](#)): Located in a disadvantaged neighbourhood, focused on creative production and is aimed at younger generations. [IL PUNTO](#): Located in the city's main square, serves as a meeting and activity space for youth that will also be a permanent workshop for the candidacy.



4. Creativity | The international community recognises the role of culture as a driver of sustainable, equitable, and inclusive development. Parma is renowned as a city with a wide range of cultural offerings: music, theatre, art, and entertainment, and it was awarded the title of Italian Capital of Culture 2020+2021. The intention is to enhance and promote the talents and skills of local youth so they can become true leaders of the cultural offering, creating opportunities for professional growth. To this end, the Strategic Plan has focused on the following initiatives:

- Parma, which has chaired the [GAER](#) (Young Artists of Emilia-Romagna) for two terms, has decided to promote, among other activities, “The Art of Crafts,” a training and creative entrepreneurship course for young artists; and the “Culture Moves Europe” project (a €21 million mobility program for artists and cultural professionals, thanks to an agreement between the European Commission and the Goethe Institute). Over the years, numerous young artists have been hosted by various European countries and the Emilia-Romagna Region.
- Parma is also a member of the [GAI](#) (Young Italian Artists) Board of Directors, whose priorities include promoting artistic mobility within EU countries.
- Since 2018, Parma has collaborated with Fondazione Cariparma and LUdE (Free University of Education) to implement [Think Big Parma](#), a project aimed at young people living, working, or studying in Parma to finance their ideas and help them come to fruition. Since 2018, 500 young people in Parma have completed 27 projects thanks to a total funding of €1 million.



5. Sustainable Cities and Communities | The Strategic Plan’s goal is to ensure that the city is inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable (Goal 11 of the 2030 Agenda), making Parma an urban context that makes spaces more

efficient, digitalised, liveable, interconnected, and attentive to the local community and its resources. There are two transversal and strategic projects that Parma is implementing to address the challenges of a fair and just ecological transition:

- Last June, the European Commission selected Parma as one of the 100 urban areas to lead the way to a zero-emission Europe by 2050. The Climate City Contract of the [EU Mission “Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities”](#) was presented to Parma citizens on November 10, 2023, in the presence of local institutions, the Director of the European Commission Representation in Italy, and the “Youth Commission” that led Parma’s candidacy for EYC.
- The University of Parma recently signed a network agreement with eight other European universities called [EU GREEN](#), aimed at promoting European values and identity and revolutionising the quality and competitiveness of host universities. The Network also reflects the European Union’s ambition to build a European Education Area. On May 23, 2024, the Municipality of Parma [won two awards at the “PA a Colori”](#) event organized by FORUM PA 2024, recognizing top public administration projects. Parma’s **Social Pact** project was awarded for effectively connecting local institutions and stakeholders in welfare policy. The second award, for **energy optimization**, highlighted Parma’s progress towards **climate neutrality** with a 25% reduction in energy consumption and savings of 1.3 million euros in 2023. Both initiatives demonstrate Parma’s commitment to sustainability and community-driven solutions.

In the development of the above-mentioned vision, youth involvement primarily occurred through the work of the Youth Community department and its relationships with schools and youth organisations. In addition to the aforementioned **Parma Youth Test** (see Annex VIII) and following participatory meetings to establish criteria, a call for young people between 16 and 22 years old was launched on May 9, 2023, promoted by the Parma City Council in collaboration with [“Parma, io ci sto!”](#) and [Ashoka](#). Since July 2023, the 27 selected young people have provided feedback on the city’s current youth policies. The Youth Commission is now composed of more than the 27 starters, with representation of young people from different background and conditions and is in act an ongoing process to make broader the Commission itself.

Young people’s perspective needs analysis

Since the event at Open Space Technology where the city’s youth made an initial selection of the themes of the candidacy, numerous consultations with the youth community, both organised and

informal, have continued during these months, as well as regular meetings between decision-makers of the City Council and the Youth Commission. Analysis of the feedback and documents has revealed several urgent needs perceived by the youth of Parma, highlighting critical areas to be addressed to improve the quality of life in the city towards Parma 2027 and beyond. Mapping of indicators and data on these needs and challenges is under development, following the guidelines of YPI and Youth Test.

During this process we learnt that to truly understand the challenges faced by young people today, it is essential to give them a platform to express their concerns, frustrations, and aspirations. While policymakers and institutions often attempt to address youth issues, the solutions proposed may not always align with the real, lived experiences of young people. So, here we present some of the key challenges youth face, articulated from their perspective tracked during all this year and further deepened with several meetings after the feedback to the second dossier:

*First, we desperately **need gathering spaces** that aren't just seen as places for social welfare, but as vibrant, inclusive areas where we can connect, create, and grow. Too often, the lack of accessible, safe, and welcoming spaces limits our ability to host cultural and social events or even just to meet up and engage with our community. The relational difficulties we've experienced, especially after the pandemic, have only made things worse. We need more places where we can freely express ourselves and come together.*

*Another major issue is **public transport**. Many of us feel trapped by the lack of reliable connections between the city centre and the countryside, which restricts our mobility and makes it harder to participate in events or even get to school or university on time. We're calling for night and holiday routes, better services during school hours, and especially improved access for people with reduced mobility. It's frustrating to see that electric platforms and other accessibility tools often don't work properly. Public transport should be for everyone, and right now it doesn't feel that way. This ties in with the request we are in dialogue with the City Council regarding the reduction of cars in the centre, both in terms of traffic and pollution.*

***Safety** is also a big concern, especially for **young women and the LGBTQIA+ community**. Many of us don't feel safe in public spaces, and this perception of insecurity stops us from fully engaging with the city. We want to feel confident that Parma is a place where everyone is protected and welcomed, regardless of who they are.*

*The **housing crisis** is another critical issue, particularly in a university city like Parma. Affordable housing is a distant dream for many of us. The high cost of rent forces us to either stay at home longer or live in precarious situations. We need accessible housing options that allow us to live independently without struggling financially.*

*When it comes to **participation**, many young people feel disconnected from the city's political and social life. Those of us who aren't involved in organisations like the Youth Commission feel that there is a serious lack of engagement opportunities. We're often left out due to poor communication and a social environment that doesn't really motivate us to get involved. We want to be active citizens, but the way things are, it feels like we're being overlooked.*

***Inclusion and social cohesion** are priorities for us across all sectors, but right now they seem to be missing. Moreover, the **shrinking of civic spaces** is really concerning. As noted in the [Civic Space Report 2024](#), these spaces are becoming more restricted, which limits our ability to organize, protest, and express our views freely. Added to this scenario is the likely adoption in Italy of a security decree repressive of peaceful demonstrations. This has a direct impact on our ability to drive change in our city.*

*Lastly, we're deeply invested in creating a more **sustainable future** for Parma. We need more green spaces and strong, visible initiatives to tackle the **climate crisis**. For us, the fight for sustainability isn't just a trend, it's about ensuring a liveable future for ourselves and generations to come, not just in Parma, but across Europe.*

*In short, we want to see and engage for a **real change**: more spaces to gather, better public transport, improved safety, affordable housing, and a commitment to sustainability and social inclusion. We're ready to participate, but we need to be given the space and the opportunity to do so. This candidacy is going in that direction.*

As we can easily grasp, from the youth perspective, the challenges they face are not just external obstacles but deeply personal struggles that shape their daily lives. They seek

genuine engagement, not token representation, and desire policies that reflect the complexity of their experiences. A local approach to reducing the generational gap must involve active listening, co-creation of solutions, and empowering young people to be equal partners in building a present and future that works for all.

The perspective of young people is confirmed and enriched not only by national trends, but also by local data that we are deepening as per the Youth Test mapping. The research-action on [The well-being of young people in Parma](#) presented on 28 May 2024 by the Centre for Social Research of the University of Parma based on 2295 validated questionnaires offers some relevant data including the fact that 3 out of 10 young Parmesans feel the burden of excessive performance expectations both in the educational and professional field. Also that about 50 per cent of the students are fairly or very dissatisfied with the meeting spaces made available to young people in the area. Across the entire domain of well-being, girls and young women express higher levels of dissatisfaction. At the same time, female students consider aspects such as helping others and/or feeling useful (91% vs. 81%), the possibility to travel thanks to work (78.5% vs. 64.6%) and wealth (27% vs. 35%) to be much more important than their male peers. Only 14% of the young people surveyed said they were optimistic about the future. Both exogenous factors (wars, economic crises, risk of new pandemics) and endogenous factors (psychological malaise and personal dissatisfaction) weigh on this figure.

Regional, national and European links - Parma has several collaborations with other European cities in the cooperation, co-design, and exchange of good practices, within European programs such as Erasmus+, CERV, Horizon Europe, JPI Urban Europe, Interreg Central Europe, Interreg Europe, LIFE and [Urbact IV](#). To date, many cities have signed a twinning or friendship pact with the City of Parma. Initiatives have been developed both at the institutional level among representatives of City Councils and informally, with increasingly frequent visits by young people and students from around the world to our city. Our young citizens who have had the opportunity to come into direct contact with different cultural and linguistic contexts, giving a broader meaning to the concept of European citizenship. Current twinings are with: Ljubljana (Slovenia), Tours (France), Worms (Germany), Shijiazhuang (China), Szeged (Hungary) and Bourg en Bresse (France). Friendship pacts and cooperation agreements have been signed with: San Vito Lo Capo (Italy), Guadalajara (Spain), Castel Giorgio (Italy), and Rosario (Argentina). Furthermore, an important partnership for the candidacy process is with the National Youth Council of Italy and the national youth organisations adhering to the platform. Parma is also part of the prestigious UNESCO Creative Cities Network. The Network is divided into 7 different creative fields and currently counts 180 cities from 72 countries. There are 26 UNESCO Creative Cities for Gastronomy, including Parma, in the world. Moreover, the Parma City Council has recently joined the Eurocities Network, the main non-profit network of European cities, founded in 1986 and based in Brussels.

5. HOSTING INFRASTRUCTURE

Located in the centre-north part of Italy, Parma is easily accessible thanks to four airports (Bologna, Parma, Rimini, Forlì) and due to its proximity to major international hubs such as Milan Malpensa and Milan Linate. The excitement generated by the EYC process, and as a result of reaching the finalist stage, has meant that Parma Airport Management Authority is accelerating investment and has announced that **by 2027 it will be directly connected to major European capitals**. This will place Parma even more at the heart of the European inclusion process. The city is also reachable via an **extensive rail network**, situated on the Turin-Milan-Rome-Naples High-Speed Rail axis, and is connected to the country's main motorways. Frequent shuttles are available from the Reggio Emilia High Speed station and these would be further increased were Parma awarded the title. Public and private mobility within the city is well-organised: there are numerous free park-and-ride facilities served by shuttles and an excellent urban public transport network. The website www.busradar.it lists all the major Italian and European companies with which you can travel by bus to and from the city of Parma. All public transport is accessible to people with disabilities. In convention with TEP (Public Transport Company of Parma), a Parma Transport Youth card will be designated to lower the cost, in case of the bid. Parma is a city that

can be easily navigated by bicycle: it features an extensive network of bike lanes (146 km) and 46 [bike-sharing stations](#). Regarding shared mobility, there are services for scooter rentals and a car-sharing service (Allway), both of which will be expanded through an upcoming public tender. In terms of accommodation and hospitality, **Parma offers over 5200 beds**: 37 hotels (for 3747 beds) and 692 extra-hotel facilities (1548 beds). Additionally, there are 9 farmhouses, 341 rental accommodations, 60 B&Bs, 4 holiday homes, and 1 youth hostel. All facilities (3 one-star establishments; 14 three-star and higher establishments; 13 four-star and higher establishments; 2 five-star and higher establishments; 5 tourist residences) guarantee accessibility for the disabled. The regional company [ER.GO](#) has already signed a letter to host young people during the candidature year for the period from July 15 to 31, reserving 90 free beds. For the period from August 1 to 15, the Voltorno residence will be available with 170 single rooms and shared bathrooms for two rooms at a discounted daily rate. A dedicated platform for bookings will be available for this initiative, with operational methods to be shared beforehand. Additionally, the [CSAC](#) will make 40 more places available in its guest house. In 2027, numerous new city spaces will be designated and opened thanks to [PNRR](#) funds, one of which, particularly large, is the **Old Hospital**, located in the historic centre and identified as the **main office for Parma EYC27**. Various spaces dedicated to young people, culture, sports, cinema and exhibitions that can also be used as locations for workshops and events. Furthermore, there are several sports facilities with large capacities: E. Ceresini Sports Facility, Pala Tognolo, Pala Citi, B. Raschi Sports Hall, Pala Lottici, Bellè Sports Facility, and Ennio Tardini Stadium. Parma is also a very green city (the 5th greenest city in Italy) with many public parks that can be used for major outdoor events. Some of the most important are Parco Cittadella, Parco Ducale (with a summer arena organized for 8000 people), Parco Falcone e Borsellino, Parco Ferrari, Parco Bizzozzero, Parco Eridania, and many other smaller green areas. Additionally, Parma University has already declared that it will place its **Campus infrastructure** at the service of the candidature. These include a large green space usable for major festivals and concerts and various conference rooms: the Centro S. Elisabetta with 90 seats, the Science Congress Hall with 182 seats, the Multipurpose Auditorium with 500 seats, the Pharmacy Hall I with 300 seats, the Engineering Main Hall with 341 seats, the University Street Main Hall with 200 seats, the Philosophers Hall on University Street with 200 seats, the K16 Hall on S. Maria Alley with 206 seats. The city also has **numerous other locations for conferences and congresses**: the Parma Open Lab (overall capacity of 147 seats); Paganini Auditorium, immersed in the greenery of city centre park, equipped with various rooms for a total capacity of 1,295 seats; 9 civic halls for a total of 806 seats; 4 historic city palaces (Governatore, Pigorini, Casa della Musica, and Galleria San Ludovico) with significant spaces both for exhibitions and events. Having already been the Italian Capital of Culture 2020-21, Parma's cultural offering is ensured by a unique [theatre system](#). In 2024, work will begin on the renovation and opening of a new structure, the Guareschi Theatre. The city has [seven city council libraries](#) (58 in total), five of which cater to a young audience, and a "Cinema District" (Officina delle Arti Audiovisive), frequented mostly by young filmmakers. There are also numerous [museum spaces](#): one National Museum, five civic museums with free entry, seven city museums and four historic palaces dedicated to exhibition areas. Parma is home to Centro Studi Archivio della Comunicazione (CSAC), one of the world's largest archives of the Italian twentieth century and which attracts numerous young researchers from all over Europe. Parma also boasts 4 cinemas with a total of 21 screening rooms and an important exhibition centre known as [Fiere di Parma](#): the 135000 square metres offer modern and functional pavilions and 900 parking spaces. Also private sector will provide further space (e.g. [Barilla Academy](#)). The most important space for major events in rural area will be the [Fidenza Village](#). For young people, there are dedicated infrastructures called "Youth Centres," which will be crucial hubs for inclusion and participation during the EYC year. Seven Youth Centres are located in different city districts, serving as places of aggregation, creativity, training, orientation, guidance and active participation. Additionally, the Officina di Arti Audiovisive is a youth coworking space based on collaborative processes and creative innovation among young professionals. Parma's Informagiovani constitutes a reference point for young people looking to navigate the job market and seize the opportunities offered by the Youth Centres and the city in general. Finally, responding to requests from the Commission 27's young members, Parma's City Council has

designated the current IAT, a tourism information centre located in Parma's main square, as the new Youth Hub "Il Punto". As part of the candidacy project, 12 September 2024 saw the **opening of this new creative hub** dedicated to young people under 35. Another key location will be the [WOPA](#), the co-designing process of which is described in the previous paragraph. Also, in the renovation of the outstanding **Chiesi company buildings in San Leonardo**, a participation process is underway which could bring synergies in the use of spaces for innovation in the candidacy year.

A detailed infographic map will help illustrate the vast number of spaces dedicated to youth (see Annex V). In addition to these existing structures, others are being redeveloped. If Parma is selected for EYC, part of their purpose will be oriented towards young people. One significant space is the regeneration of the Freight Yard through the city's General Urban Plan. Furthermore, the San Paolo Complex may revise part of its internal functions in favour of the candidature activities, becoming an increasingly open space for youth. For each of these infrastructures, a monitoring process has been initiated regarding their accessibility. The P.E.B.A. (**Plan for the Elimination of Architectural Barriers**) has begun an inventory of the main structures that will be used for EYC 2027 activities (exhibition/ museum spaces, streets, squares, parks, public buildings, halls, etc.). This will allow for a thorough assessment and for attention to mitigating any accessibility issues found in the infrastructures. This process is overseen not only by public institutions but also by Commission 27 with internal delegates focusing on accessibility. In addition, we are co-designing an inclusion and accessibility matrix together with youth organisations to be used as a quality protocol for all initiatives (see Annex X).






















6. MOTIVATION

We can proudly say that the motivation for the EYC candidacy came from the young people themselves. The following text was publicly read by young people in their open letter during the [presentation event of the candidacy dossier to the city](#) last January 27th:

*Parma is a candidate because we, young people, ask for it, having successfully experienced a leadership role during the candidacy process, starting from the establishment of the 'Youth Commission'. Now we don't want to stop or go back, but to grow this experience, making it structural and continuous, proposing a new model of urban governance that sees young people not as recipients, but as promoters of new models for the development of more sustainable, inclusive, and participatory communities. Parma [...] is a candidate because it is the first city in Europe to have formally decided to apply the Youth Test as a **primary method to evaluate public policies aimed at reducing the generation gap** [...]. Parma is a candidate because it has experienced the strength of collaboration between public and private, between institutions and companies, and wants to offer the European debate a new model ready to take root in daily practices. Parma is a candidate because in an Italy that is aging faster than the rest of Europe and is, according to Eurostat, the oldest state on the old continent, Parma has one of the highest rates of attraction for young people among cities of its size, and therefore it intends to constitute a national and European model of comparison and **generational transition** that is innovative and heartfelt.*

From that **binding motivation** for the candidacy, the involvement of young people and youth organisations is increasing day by day and they are significantly involved by the City Council in defining the key objectives and themes of the candidacy.

This also positively explains the ongoing changes, which are built on the basis of emerging generational needs and challenges, shaping from the youth perspective and need analysis of the previous sections toward the following **specific objectives** of the candidacy, in table with the prevalent youth goal per each.

Need/Challenge	By 2027, we want to	
Youth aggregation centres, events and social distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Co-design and implement a new model of youth centres in the city in collaboration with youth organisations. b. Implement sustainable and inclusive financing for youth organisations. c. Increase youth participation, especially for those with fewer opportunities, in events of all kinds. 	  
Public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Include the voices, needs, and aspirations of young people in transport policies and planning. b. Strengthen connections between all squares, the city centre, and rural areas to promote youth participation, also through temporary innovative solutions. c. Promote the use of public transportation as a more sustainable, healthy and inclusive lifestyle. 	  
Perception of insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Live in a vibrant and positive city for everyone. b. Implement educational programs for young people regarding safety culture, communication in risky contexts, and nonviolent conflict transformation. c. Promote conscious storytelling by local media about young people and deviance. 	  
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop and implement long-term and comprehensive housing strategies that address the needs of young people inclusively and sustainably through cooperation between the public and private sectors. b. Promote co-living spaces and encourage co-housing programs, even with an intergenerational approach. c. Facilitate the exercise of young people's right to housing emancipation in urban and rural areas. 	  
Socio-political participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Protect, promote and foster the civic space of young people with the contribution of all the city and community. b. Improve the understanding, trust and access of young people, with a focus on those with fewer opportunities, in democracy and participation mechanisms at the local, national, and European levels. c. Recognise youth organisations as representatives of young people and treat them as equal partners in decision-making processes at various levels by stakeholders and institutions. 	  
Shrinking civic space, levels of social inclusion and cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ensure equal opportunities and freedom from discrimination for all young people. b. Support young people and youth organisations in improving their skills, knowledge, and confidence through training and sharing of knowledge on inclusion, diversity, and wellbeing. c. Recognition of the rights of young people by the city and stronger mechanisms to protect them. 	  
Urgency to act against the climate crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Localise the 2030 Agenda, adapting its objectives to our community and enhancing its implementation through youth participation. b. Integrate the nexus between climate, peace, and security into public debate. c. Establish a cooperation model for European cities between decision-makers and youth organisations on sustainability and climate policies. 	  

In the latest [generational index of // Sole 24 Ore](#) Parma ranks in the top ten (7th place) for the quality of life of the elderly (over 65), but drops drastically to 21st and 35th place respectively for young people (18-35 years old) and children. At the same time, Parma is the city whose “model” of close collaboration between the Municipality, the University, public institutions, associations, and companies was welcomed by Harvard University in June 2023 as an organisational and collaborative public-private model that makes possible what in many other contexts is extremely complex to achieve. It’s for this reason that the city and its young people, through the process of candidacy for EYC, want to take this model to a higher level towards an intergenerational Parma, capable of raising the quality of life of young people, of being attractive to young Europeans, and of facing the challenges of change, without detracting from what has already been achieved in other fields.

All these insights make substantial the chosen key goal of Parma EYC 2027: Reduce the generational gap! The goal to reduce the generation gap is focused on fostering meaningful interactions, collaboration, and mutual understanding between different age groups to ensure shared learning, inclusivity, and the transfer of knowledge. This can be achieved through: encouraging intergenerational dialogue, promoting joint initiatives, bridging digital and technological divides, enhancing participation in decision-making. This also aligns with the fact that for the first time, a Commissioner is given responsibility for intergenerational fairness and “ensure that decisions are taken with future generations in mind”.

Parma’s candidacy for EYC27 was developed over a year through the active involvement of young people, led by the **Youth Commission, JE Parma**, and various youth associations. **JE Parma** was chosen as a key partner due to its expertise in managing and implementing projects, including the **Youth Test**. The **Italian National Youth Council** supported the candidacy, fostering connections with national organizations and motivating local groups, as evidenced by a great number of support letters. Additionally, Ashoka was involved in early 2023 to co-design youth leadership initiatives, further empowering Parma’s young community. The entire participatory process was based on the principle of “leaving no one behind” with a focus not only on generational issues but also on gender, colonial, and socio-economic dimensions. Despite this, one of the initial challenges was meaningfully including young people from marginalized or vulnerable groups, such as LGBTQIA+ youth, migrants, and Roma. Only through the increasing involvement of the youth community and local associations that have been specifically working with these vulnerable groups for years has it been possible to start addressing this gap. Together with the local, national and European NGOs that are supporting the candidacy the City aims to foster an environment that supports the rights and wellbeing of LGBTQIA+ and Roma youth through educational initiatives, safe spaces, and visibility programs.

The EYC process will take into account all these objectives at every stage and will activate the necessary measures through a continuous monitoring of the Parma Youth Test. We will promote and design actions to achieve the desired results, unlocking the potential of our “Piazza for Europe” thanks to the powerful youth taste for transformation.

7. EUROPEAN YOUTH CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The candidacy program is a continuously evolving laboratory, designed, written, and structured by and for the young people of **Youth Commission Parma**, together with the city and stakeholders who have already committed to transform the community and those who will gradually take part in the preparation process. In a co-design perspective, numerous tools have been used in recent months to increase meaningful youth participation and to ensure that diverse youth groups are heard, facilitating a quality review process of the application.

The primary objective was to collectively imagine how to address the intergenerational gap in the programme (key goal of the candidacy year). To do this, during the last Summer School held by the Youth Commission, an **intergenerational radar** was created (See Annex X) that thus defined the areas considered good in intergenerational dialogue and those to work on. To this, the alignment of two interconnected youth transformation processes was added: the first is the

Localization of the UN agendas (e.g. 2030 and YPS), European documents and objectives and [YFJ strategic priorities](#), thus identifying objectives and methods appropriate to the context and already legitimized by large processes of democratic participation of young people with a strong European dimension; the second is to model what youth organizations, is doing well in Parma for young people, making it attractive also for city councils and European institutions.

How was the program co-created with young people, youth organisation and community?

Feedback Mechanism – We convened from the beginning 91 organisations that had signed letters of support in the first phase, discussing with them in a hybrid assembly format the feedback received from YFJ and how to inclusively showcase the concept of “A Piazza for Europe”. We continued the discussion tables on the development of the project with all the stakeholders listed in the annexes (letters of support), involving more than 200 organizations. Additionally, a newsletter was established to collect input for the program, and the “Stakeholders Meeting” was created as a moment of dialogue on the project between the young members of Commission 27 and the stakeholders.

Thematic Focus Groups – Based on the 10 themes of the first dossier, 20 focus groups were organized (10 within the City Council and 10 externals with NGOs, youth organisations, foundations, companies, schools, and other institutions) whose outcomes were used to articulate the co-design of the EYC27 Parma programme, based on the needs and challenges that emerged. The focus groups were conducted in a hybrid format to facilitate participation and involved more than 50 decision-makers and municipal officials, over 100 stakeholders, and 50 youth organisations, including student movements.

Meetings and Events of the Youth Commission – Both the meetings of the Youth Commission and participation in city events to discuss the candidacy continued regularly. The focus was primarily on broadening youth participation, ensuring representation from young people of diverse backgrounds and conditions, while also identifying the specific needs and goals of the city’s youth for the candidacy. In addition to public events like [Parma Greenweek](#), moments of dialogue were organized between young people and policymakers through the Parma Passepartout initiative. The Youth Commission 27 also focused on intergenerational dialogue to strengthen the candidacy’s objectives.

Cooperation with the Italian National Youth Council and its Members – With the support of the National Youth Council (CNG), we strengthened the national dimension and coherence of our candidacy through specific events that they brought to Parma (such as the [Democracy Festival](#)) and by facilitating relationships with their members, some of which are Italian sections of other YFJ’s MOs (ESN, EDS, JEF, Obessu, EBCO, etc.), thereby nurturing the European network and sharing best practices. With the support of the CNG, it was possible to organize a networking event on September 9th between the young leaders of the Italian Youth Capital titles, the “Youth Cities Event”. Together, they created a network to enrich the 2027 program, including national activities.

Open Call and Inclusive Communication – Since the City Council launched a [new Expression of Interest](#), aimed at seeking support for the new phase of the candidacy but also at collecting project ideas and contributions to the program, more diverse young people are engaged with the Youth Commission. Additionally, efforts were made to direct communication, including social media, towards community engagement with more inclusive and diversity-conscious language.

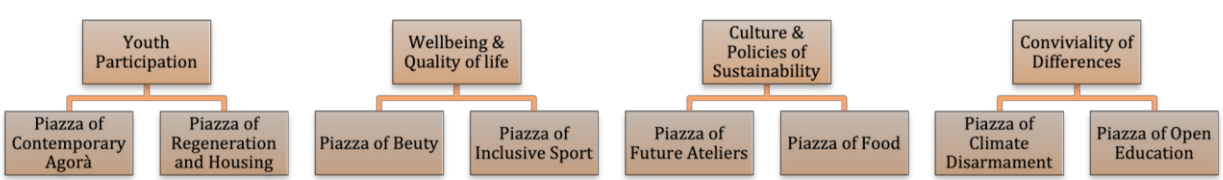
Summer School and Collaborative Writing. During summer, the Youth Commission organized a [two-day retreat](#) dedicated to the collaborative writing of the dossier. It was an opportunity for team building, fostering new relationships, and opening up to new youth sub-targets (second-generation youth, young people with disabilities, and those with migrant backgrounds). During the two-day retreat, the young participants were able to co-create the program and independently decide on the enhanced governance structure they will to adopt.

The program was designed with two dimensions, one European and one Local. The European Dimension is characterized by four cross-cutting themes that will “transform” the youth community of Parma: **The Paths of Transformation**. This PATHS will constitute an element of preparation for that transformative approach that will impact all the initiatives of the Programme, also activating internal and external processes led by young people for capacity building, advocacy, policy making, and campaigns. PATHS of Transformation, as indicated below, will thus be transversal priorities of the program, generating multi- and trans-disciplinary activities.

<p>Youth Participation</p> <p>By recognising their unique perspectives and experiences and providing spaces and opportunities for their voices to be heard, young people and youth organisations will be empowered to become active agents of positive change, promoting a more inclusive, democratic, and responsive society.</p>	<p>Wellbeing & Quality of life</p> <p>We will support the transformative process aimed at achieving positive social outcomes and cultivating a prosperous and sustainable future for both individuals and the youth community.</p>	<p>Culture & sustainability policies</p> <p>We are committed to ensuring that all transformative processes and program activities are sustainable. Being environmentally respectful is our minimum requirement in a city like Parma, which already has the EU mission to become carbon neutral.</p>	<p>Conviviality of Differences</p> <p>We will take all necessary measures to leave no one behind and strengthen the agency of those young people and communities considered marginal. We will consider the achievement of behaviours and policies that make our Parma more open and welcoming as a central part of the results.</p>

These four themes were chosen by aligning the [11 Youth Goals](#) with the main local challenges expressed by the young people of Parma: 1. *Increased meaningful youth participation*, through the creation of constructive and participatory dialogue [#4], spaces for participation accessible to everyone [#9], ensuring equal access to youth organizations and European programs for all young people, regardless of background [#11]; 2. *Promoting a higher quality of life with a strong focus on both individual and social well-being* for all present and future youth by improving mental health, ending social stigma around mental health issues, and promoting greater social inclusion for all young people [#3 and #5]; 3. **Strengthening sustainability policies and culture with an intergenerational approach**, creating conditions that allow young people to thrive in rural areas, starting with sustainable mobility and quality of job [#6, #7 and #10]; 4. **Bridging generational and intergenerational differences**, promoting gender equality and awareness of the issue [#2], strengthening social inclusion across generations and improving the quality of education for all youth, preparing them for the challenges of the future, regardless of their social background [#8].

These priorities are accompanied by 8 Pillars, represented by **thematic PIAZZE**. These piazze are linked to the 8 themes that the young people of Parma identified during their participation process, and they form the “recipe” for **reducing the generational gap** and facilitating young people's access to the city's key activities and opportunities.



The Piazze will be physical spaces where the project unfolds. Each Piazza is the central hub of our program's activities, with physical manifestations in the city (see Annex V), but it extends beyond a single location: these Piazze will symbolise meeting places, exchanges, vibrant social and economic life, openness to others, and political participation.

The 2027 program will be built around 4 transformative paths as thematic areas with a European dimension, which will cross over into the 8 local events held in the 8 thematic Piazze. The program will feature a total of 12 flagship events: 4 with a European dimension and 8 with a local dimension, complemented by 80 additional activities. These activities will be selected through an open call launched in 2026 and will be implemented in 2027, with a total budget of €1,000,000 allocated to projects directly designed and managed by informal youth groups and youth associations, with priority given to young people with fewer opportunities. In addition to these activities, a schedule of opportunities can be found in Annex VII, offered by the youth organizations supporting the candidacy, the National Youth Council, the Italian Youth Agency, the Erasmus+ program, and stakeholders at the local, national, and European levels.

Follow the monthly implementation Plan of the Parma EYC27 Main Programme Events:

Month 1 – Open Ceremony “The Path of Youth Participation” | The first month of the project will be a true Youth Participation Fair. The 8 Piazze, which will serve as the spaces for the city's transformation and intergenerational connection, will present their program of activities. A team of youth workers, selected during the preparatory years (see annex VII), will lead the activities by hosting street debates, presentations of youth association projects, and open meetings and workshops. During this program of activities, the Grand Open Ceremony “Claiming Europe” will be celebrated!

The Event: CLAIMING EUROPE A full-day festival to launch the year, featuring the inauguration of the Parma EYC27 Headquarters and the presentation of the 80 projects selected through the Open Call launched in 2026. The event will also showcase music, art, and culture created by young artists from Parma. Additionally, it will serve as an intergenerational dialogue on the project's key themes: work, well-being, participation, inclusion, sustainability, regeneration, housing, and food. The day will conclude with a grand concert by young musicians from Parma.

Month 2 - Piazza of Contemporary Agorà | An open square for vibrant discussions of the socio-political issues of our time on both a local and a global scale. It is a square for advocating civil and political rights of youth organisations against the shrinking of civic spaces and for promoting new forms of participation for young people during the digital and ecological transition. It will also host campaigns to collectively promote democracy in Europe, starting from the cities.

The Event: OLTRE – “The great event of youth participation that goes beyond the barricades of extremism and populism” | Parma Vecchia, also known as the Oltretorrente, begins west of the Parma River, literally “on the other side of the water.” It is a vibrant, evolving, and popular neighbourhood: authentically Parmigian, yet increasingly multicultural. This is the area of the [Barricades](#), a significant event in the history of Italy's anti-fascist and democratic struggle, led by the working class, particularly young people and women. OLTRE will be a week of initiatives dedicated to the active and meaningful participation of young people in the city's decision-making processes and discussions with policymakers. It will mark the beginning of a participation laboratory, which will see, through the development of the Youth Test, the city of Parma handing over the keys of the city to young people who will lead the year of EYC27. The week will feature open debates as well as artistic, cinematic, and cultural expressions of active citizenship, exploring what it means to go beyond extremism, beyond social injustices, and beyond the outdated notion that young people are incapable of managing local politics.

Parma EYC 2027 primary linked goals	Piazza's specific objective	Legacy
Increase youth participation, especially for those with fewer opportunities, in events of all kinds. Recognize youth organisations as representatives of young people and treat them as equal partners in decision-making processes at various levels by stakeholders and institutions.	Promote lively discussions on local and global socio-political issues, supporting the civil and political rights of youth organizations and new forms of participation in the digital and ecological transition.	New empowered Youth Local Forum Ongoing support for youth organisations and initiatives will be ensured through sustainable funding models and local policy support. The Local Youth Strategy 2028-2034 will be implemented, incorporating feedback and insights from the EYC year.

Month 3 - Piazza of Regeneration and Housing | This is a square dedicated to all the processes of urban and social regeneration. Initiatives and events will focus on the critical issue of housing in a university city like Parma, involving public-private co-design and cultural initiatives aimed at overcoming biases against young people in the housing sector.

Moreover, the theme of living in the city is becoming increasingly relevant for younger generations. Spaces must be reclaimed, participated in, and inhabited by young people. It is the new generations who will be the creators of the places we will live in. For this reason, this piazza will be dedicated to the theme of urban planning as a tool for "visible participation." Accessibility, sustainability, and temporary, non-invasive architecture are the key concepts of the events that will bring this piazza to life.

The Event: Urban ReclamaCtion – Youth participation also involves reclaiming urban spaces, squares, and streets as places for public debate, creativity, and opportunities. This event will be an opportunity to breathe new life into abandoned areas of the city or spaces with unfolded potential. Young people will take the lead in this urban reclamation, creating temporary activities in these spaces, such as artistic showcases and pop-up exhibition areas. It will also be the launchpad for contests on the “houses of the future,” aimed at generating a new housing model for Parma. This will be an “Urban Festival” filled with art, games, food, and music, where streets become parks and a park becomes home.

Parma EYC 2027 primary linked goals	Piazza’s specific objective	Legacy
Develop and implement long-term housing strategies that address the needs of young people. Co-design and implement a new model of youth centres in the city in collaboration with youth organisations Strengthen connections between all squares, the city centre, and rural areas to promote youth participation, also through temporary innovative solutions.	Promote urban and social regeneration processes in Parma through initiatives and events focused on the housing problem in a university city. Involve public-private co-planning actions and cultural initiatives to overcome prejudices against young people in the housing sector, improving integration between the city and its province.	Five years later, Parma will see long-term improvements in urban infrastructure and public spaces, making them more suitable and inclusive for young people. Youth hubs and centres will be youth-led. Intergenerational co-housing put in place.

Month 4 – The Path of Well-being and Quality of Life | This month will kick off the program dimension focused on achieving well-being and addressing youth hardship. Through these activities, the Path will (1) pay greater attention to young people within the framework of the Wellbeing Observatory, establishing it in a structural and permanent way, (2) strengthen our position in the generational index on the quality of life for young people, (3) create a Youth Manifesto on work-life balance, (4) Develop tools, in collaboration with young people and youth organizations, aimed at providing innovative solutions to the challenges highlighted by well-being studies in the city, as well as across Italy and Europe.

The Event: The Circus of Madness | Eliminating the stigma of madness as something negative. Instead, celebrating "good madness," the kind that generates happiness, a good life, art, and creativity. The event will feature a four-day festival of contemporary circus arts, theatre, and music as tools to bring well-being and beauty to younger generations.

Month 5 – Piazza of Beauty | “If people were taught beauty”, the young Peppino Impastato, who was killed by the mafia in Italy, once said, “they would be provided with a weapon against resignation, fear, and silence”. For this reason, we aim to promote pathways of beauty education and make Parma a European model of happy coexistence between tradition and innovation in all fields of art, music, and culture. Beyond personal preferences, the [New European Bauhaus](#) puts a project’s creative process at the centre of what makes it beautiful. A beautiful project emerges when its authors invest collective sensitivity, intelligence, and competences into creating a positive and enriching experience for people, beyond functionality. A project that is genuinely attentive to its context and users encourages mutual care and can be a powerful driver for change.

The Event: CreaHack | 48 hours of pure creativity. Have you ever participated in a hackathon?



Here, we won't be building start-ups or technological solutions: art will be the star. This will be the first-ever culture hackathon, where young artists will compete on a theme revealed to them only at the start of the event. The participants, all young artists, will have 48 hours to create a piece (whether artistic, musical, theatrical, etc.) that meets the challenge's objective. The general goal of the challenge will be to use the language of art and creativity to bridge generations.

Parma EYC 2027 primary linked goals	Piazza's specific objective	Legacy
Perception of insecurity Live in a vibrant and positive city for everyone. Implement educational programs for young people regarding safety culture, communication in risky contexts, and nonviolent conflict transformation. Promote conscious storytelling by local media about young people and deviance.	Programs to enhance youth well-being and mental health will be implemented, including educational initiatives on personal safety and nonviolent conflict transformation through art & beauty.	Specific initiatives will be developed to support vulnerable youth, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those facing social and economic challenges. Inclusive spaces and programs will be created to ensure that all young people can benefit from EYC activities.

Month 6 - Piazza of Inclusive Sport | A square for promoting psychological and physical well-being and social aggregation against the ideology of elite performance and competition at any cost. This square aims to localize the [Kazan Action Plan](#) and promote the achievement of the SDGs for the city through sports for all.

The Event: Your game is not fair | Combating boredom and hatred through sport and social inclusion. A Palio for everyone, featuring three days of sports initiatives dedicated to inclusion and well-being. The youth of Parma will join mixed teams, alongside Paralympic athletes and local seniors, to compete in inclusive and traditional sports activities inspired by medieval Palios, aimed at promoting intergenerational inclusion and participation. Additionally, an anti-racism night of football, the **EYC27 Trophy**, will be held at Parma's Tardini Stadium (home to the city's Serie A football team), in collaboration with LaPaz. Young people from migrant backgrounds in Parma will compete in this event, fostering unity and community spirit.

Parma EYC 2027 primary linked goals	Piazza's specific objective	Legacy
Localise the 2030 Agenda, adapting its objectives to our community and enhancing its implementation through youth participation. Recognition of the rights of young people by the city and stronger mechanisms to protect them.	Promote the achievement of the SDGs for the city through sports for all.	Programs to enhance youth well-being and mental health will be implemented, including educational initiatives on personal safety and nonviolent conflict transformation. Dedicated services and initiatives will ensure that all young people, regardless of back-ground, can benefit from the activities of the EYC.

Month 7 – The Path of Culture and Sustainability Policies | Through this PATH, we will empower young people in the transformative process of (1) Designing each initiative/event using biodegradable, recyclable, or reusable materials, even for event-related items such as banners, decorations, and various utensils, (2) Encouraging the use of public transport, bicycles, and walking to reduce carbon emissions, (3) Ensuring that all promotional materials and products are produced sustainably and sourced ethically, (4) Providing tools to assess the environmental

*A Piazza for Europe.
The Youth Taste of Transformation*



impact of activities and events and make necessary adjustments, (5) Supporting and developing policies that promote sustainability at local, national, and European levels (through Local Public Transport structures, personal capacity-building programs on the concept of sustainability, and the creation of an EYC27 Parma Sustainable Development Plan).

The Event: Sostienimi | A reflective event on how to support the city of Parma and the climate, within the framework of the Parma Climate Neutral 2030 program. This three-day festival will focus on themes such as reuse, sustainable mobility, regenerative models, and the jobs of the future, with a special emphasis on urban sustainability.

Month 8 – Piazza of Future Ateliers | In this square, a series of discussions and projects will focus on artificial intelligence, digitalization, the right to disconnect, and work-life balance. The aim will be to connect traditional and artisanal jobs offered in Parma with the challenges of innovation, as well as the aspirations and desires of young people in the city and across Europe. The events in this piazza will also address the skills gap, bridging the divide between the demands of older generations' jobs and the expectations and skills of the new generation.

The Event: Imprese OFF | Opening artisanal workshops, promoting youth entrepreneurship, and facilitating the intergenerational transfer of family-run businesses. This event will also showcase new business ideas from Parma's young people, explore themes related to social innovation, and foster a network of opportunities for recently settled youth in Parma, including Roma and migrants.

For an entire week, Parma's companies and artisanal shops will open their doors to young people. The event will offer orientation, training, and employment opportunities, as well as access to research labs, acceleration pathways, and tailored incubation programs. During this week, businesses will be "invaded" by young people, who, through intergenerational exchange, will guide these companies towards open innovation.

Parma EYC 2027 primary linked goals	Piazza's specific objective	Legacy
Implement sustainable and inclusive financing for youth organisations. Ensure equal opportunities and freedom from discrimination for all young people. Facilitate the exercise of young people's right to housing emancipation in urban and rural areas	Match traditional and artisanal jobs offered by the Parma context with the challenges of innovation and the desires and aspirations of the city's and Europe's youth. Promote the growth of skills for the jobs of the future and thus facilitate the work emancipation of young people.	Improved access to educational and job opportunities will be guaranteed through dedicated programs and services for young people with fewer opportunities. Participation of these young people in civic activities and their representation in decision-making processes will increase.

Month 9 – Piazza of Food | Food has been a cultural connector since the beginning of time, bringing together different peoples, cultures, and generations. Parma, a UNESCO City of Gastronomy, is renowned worldwide for its pasta, prosciutto, and Parmigiano cheese. This theme emphasizes the connection between diverse cultures, much like a grandmother teaching her grandchild the tradition of homemade pasta, and underscores the importance of promoting healthy, sustainable food chain. Inclusion, intergenerational exchange, sustainability, and well-being are the key concepts of this theme.

The Event: "The Future Dinner" | This week-long event will focus on youth competition in Food Design, innovation, and sustainability in the kitchen, organized by the top young culinary talents from Parma and across Italy. The week will culminate in the selection of the menu for "The 2027 Dinner". The event will also feature exhibition spaces for start-ups focused on the "food of the future," artisanal pasta-making workshops where new and older generations will collaborate on





culinary traditions and experiment with international culinary influences present in Parma. There will be workshops on becoming a Smart Chef, quick cooking courses, and show cooking demonstrations. The event will conclude with *The 2027 Dinner*, a solidarity dinner where sighted young participants will be blindfolded to encourage empathy with those who have sensory disabilities. The dinner will be prepared by young chefs from Parma with disabilities and autism, creating an event that brings together new and old generations around the most unifying thing: the table and good food.

Parma EYC 2027 primary linked goals	Piazza’s specific objective	Legacy
Urgency to act against the climate crisis Establish a cooperation model for European cities between decision-makers and youth organisations on sustainability and climate policies.	Reducing the generational gap through the culture and tradition of food. Promoting connections between young people from diverse culinary backgrounds and fostering well-being through healthy eating. Redesigning the concept of the city with a focus on the development of sustainable and inclusive nutrition.	Mechanisms for continuous professional development, employability programs, and support for youth entrepreneurship will be consolidated. New local solutions for a more sustainable food chain.

Month 10 - Piazza of Climate Disarmament | It focuses on countering the climate crisis and the promotion of sustainable peace, recognising the inseparable link between them two. As stated in Agenda 2030: “There is no sustainable development without peace, and there is no peace without sustainable development.” It is a square with a strong international vocation, aiming to facilitate connections between Parma’s youth and European movements for climate justice and to make Parma a welcoming, safe and stimulating city for all climate and peace activists.

The Event: FlumenCamp | A training camp focused on ecology, nonviolence, and migration. This three-day event will feature workshops dedicated to cultural exchange and education on nonviolence, with the aim of inspiring young peace activists.

Parma EYC 2027 primary linked goals	Piazza’s specific objective	Legacy
Localize the 2030 Agenda, adapting its objectives to our community and enhancing its implementation through youth participation. Integrate the nexus between climate, peace, and security into public debate.	Focus on countering the climate crisis and promote sustainable peace, recognizing the inseparable link between them	Improving the quality of life for young people across Europe will be promoted through innovative urban planning and inclusive youth policies. Sustainable and inclusive urban spaces that promote youth well-being will be strengthened. Sustainability and environmental considerations will be integrated into the city’s long- term planning.

Month 11 - Piazza of Open Education | This square promotes quality education for all, inclusive, open, and oriented towards nonviolence. It encourages transversal learning models in collaboration with leading national educational agencies, universities, and national and local professional associations and corporations. It aims to empower young people with ownership of educational needs and programmes.



The Event: “La Notte Sfoglia”: The Art of Leaf Through Books and Films | An all-night event illuminated by informal education, celebrating the art of cinema and writing. The city will transform into a widespread symposium, with corners dedicated to reading and discussing thematic books, as well as screening films that foster open and European education.

Parma EYC 2027 primary linked goals	Piazza’s specific objective	Legacy
Implement educational programs for young people on safety culture, communication in risky contexts, and nonviolent conflict transformation. Support young people and youth organisations in improving their skills, knowledge, and confidence through training and sharing of know- ledge on inclusion, diversity, and wellbeing.	Promotes quality education for all, inclusive, open, and oriented towards nonviolence	Mechanisms for continuous professional development, employability programs, and support for youth entrepreneurship will be consolidated. Educational curricula will improve long-term to foster creativity and innovation among young people.

Month 12 – The Path of the Conviviality of Differences | The final month of the program will focus on reducing the generational divide, fostering a sense of unity and collaboration between young people and older generations. Through shared experiences, dialogue, and co-creation, this month will highlight how different age groups can come together to shape a more inclusive and supportive society. It will emphasize the importance of mutual respect and understanding between generations, recognizing that each has something valuable to contribute to the city's future.

This PATH will drive the transformative process towards: (1) *Meaningful participation of young people with fewer opportunities*, (2) *Co-creation and mainstreaming of an Inclusion and Accessibility Matrix*, (3) *The Parma Youth Rights and Intergenerational Manifesto*.

The Final Closing Event – A Piazza for Europe | It will be a grand intergenerational celebration in the symbolic square representing the union of young and older people from Parma and across Europe, Piazza Garibaldi. It will feature interactive installations showcasing the experiences from the thematic piazzas and live-streamed continental dialogue, like a lively Christmas Marketplace. The event will also mark the official launch of the **Parma Youth Rights and Intergenerational Manifesto**, accompanied by collaborative artistic performances and an exhibition of youth-led projects inside the Teatro Regio, with the staging of a theatrical production made by youth and older generations.

In addition to the main events, designed by the Youth Commission to reduce the intergenerational gap in Parma, numerous activities will be proposed by local youth organizations, associations, businesses, and various entities and stakeholders. Moreover, the National Youth Council, the Italian Youth Agency managing the Erasmus+ program in Italy, and the National Department for Youth Policies will bring a series of national-level activities to Parma. All of these activities are detailed in the annex VII.

8. MANAGEMENT

The model we intend to use, already initiated in the candidacy process and strongly recommended in the EU Charter on Youth and Democracy, is **co-management**. This means that young people and youth organizations from the local area, in collaboration with those from the rest of Europe, will manage the EYC 2027 year in all its phases: from the concept phase (already underway) to the definition of the implementation and conclusion phases of the project. To do this, the organisational structure will be set up according to the model identified by the [New European Bauhaus strategy](#) through the drivers of participatory processes and through multi-level approaches.

Structure and Roles of Parma EYC 2027 Management | The decision-making process was the result of numerous meetings held with the Youth Commission 27. The model's development is based on an analysis of Italian laws and existing models such as the National Youth Council, Regional Forums, and Municipal Youth Councils, but also thanks to several meetings with awarded EYCs like Tirana and Ghent. The Youth Commission will be at the heart of this process, forming the **Advisory Youth Council EYC27**, which will facilitate the participation of Parma's youth in the decision-making process for EYC 2027. This process is supported by the [Participation Regulation of the Parma City Council](#), which will be updated through a *lex specialis* to officially recognize, in accordance with local and national laws, the *Advisory Youth Council EYC27* as a crucial decision-making body for the youth of Parma. The detailed management structure is outlined below.

NAME	COMPOSITION	ROLE
ADVISORY YOUTH COUNCIL EYC27	Members of the strengthened Youth Commission; All the young people and youth organizations interested in the EYC27 year	Decision-making owner of the EYC 2027 year, a forum with role of guidance and strategic advising.
EYC27 Board Steering Committee	1 representative from JEParma, the Lead Youth Organization; 1 representative from National Youth Council, 2 members elected by the Advisory Youth Council, 3 representatives from the Municipality of Parma (including the PMO) <i>Criteria:</i> Gender balance and non-binary approach; internally elected members through a democratic process.	Executive Decision-making and project direction for Parma EYC 2027 Risk mitigation Implementation of guidelines provided by the General Assembly
PMO Office	1 PMO (Project Management Officer), appointed based on Call to Application, 8 Parma Youth Makers, the project managers of the 8 thematic Piazzes, selected through an open call 1 Intersectoral Manager	<i>Operational coordination and co-design of activities.</i> The PMO will coordinate all operational phases, act as Program Manager, and lead other Project Managers in implementation phases. The Parma Youth Makers will be young project managers leading the 8 thematic areas of the project. The Intersectoral Manager will guide the implementation of cross-thematic areas identified in the "Paths of Transformation" of the program
ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD	1 Treasurer appointed by the Municipality, in accordance with National Law; The PMO 1 Accounting Manager selected through an open call	Management of accounting, financing, fundraising, and sub-grant administration

Monitoring Group – Youth Test Group	Youth Test management group within the Municipality of Parma 1 representative from each previous European Youth Capital and finalists for the year 2027 Stakeholders Group	Impartial monitoring of the Parma EYC 27 project using the Youth Check tool Representatives from national organizations, private companies, enterprises, entities, and others interested in the project’s implementation will monitor the activities carried out.
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The decision-making process will follow the workflow presented in the Annex VIII to guarantee the concrete participation of youth.

9. COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

A Piazza for Europe. The Youth Taste of Transformation. The communication plan for Parma EYC 2027 already starts with the title. The Plan aims to highlight three key messages proposed in the project: Piazza, Paths, and Taste. These symbolic elements will be used to promote the re-appropriation of public spaces and counteract the growing phenomena of social isolation and individualism, which, from the analysis of needs conducted at both the local and national levels (data from the [CNG WELLFARE](#) Observatory and the Well-being Observatory of Parma), are increasing post Covid-19. The Piazza represents a place of openness where social life and participation are at the core. It is a symbol of inclusion and community, a space where youth can gather, exchange ideas, and create meaningful connections, meeting other generations. In Italy especially, the Piazza has had significant meanings throughout history: as a place of decision-making and public participation, as a market, as a place of demonstration for obtaining fundamental rights, and as art and architecture place. The Paths represents a path of transformation and mobility. It symbolises the journey toward new opportunities, innovation, and collaboration between different disciplines and cultures, the importance of European mobility, and the impact of the Erasmus generation on the transformative process toward the construction of European citizenship. Taste, in its Italian sense, represents a love of good food, the sustainability sought in food and its production processes, the taste for the environment as well as the taste for beauty as a fundamental element of harmony between human-city-nature. The concept of taste promotes conviviality and aesthetics as tools for connection and wellbeing. Together, **Piazza, Paths, and Taste** create a holistic framework that promotes **social engagement, transformation, and wellbeing**. This triad encourages the **re-appropriation of public spaces**, the **breaking of social isolation**, and the **strengthening of communities**, making EYC 2027 not just a celebration of youth, but also a **cultural revival** that connects past traditions with future aspirations.

The key messages of the EYC2027 Parma communication campaign will serve to achieve the main objective “reduce the generational gap” and the following objectives:

- *Increase awareness of Parma EYC 2027 activities among the general public:* Inform the community about the initiatives, events, and opportunities offered by the project.
- *Ensure transparency during the implementation of the project:* Ensure that all phases of the project are accessible and understandable to all generations and stakeholders.
- *Raise awareness among stakeholders about the benefits of the project:* Communicate the positive impact of the project on young people, businesses, and institutions.
- *Ensure efficient coordination and cooperation among the structures and actors involved:* facilitate collaboration between public, private, and youth organisations.
- *Ensure compliance with EU regulatory requirements for advertising and information:* ensure that all communications comply with European regulations.
- *Define dissemination activities throughout the duration of the EYC 2027 year:* Plan and implement effective dissemination strategies.

- *Provide a roadmap for promoting and disseminating activities:* establish clear timelines for communication and promotion activities.

To achieve these objectives, the communication strategy will be divided into **Internal and External components**. The **internal** communication strategy aims to ensure effective coordination among all members of the management team, ensure transparency and sharing of information throughout all project phases, and facilitate collaboration among the various units and actors involved. Group meetings will be organized regularly for brainstorming, event organisation details, and management of youth activities. The use of shared online communication tools, such as Slack and other cloud platforms, will allow for efficient management of documents and activities. Emails and WhatsApp groups will be used for faster and informal communications, while internal monitoring and evaluation reports will keep leadership structures informed and monitor project progress. The main activities of internal communication will include weekly meetings to discuss the progress of activities, monthly email updates to the entire team, and the implementation of collaboration platforms to facilitate access to information. The **external** communication strategy aims to increase awareness among the target group about EYC 2027 activities, engage stakeholders and the general public, and ensure compliance with EU regulatory requirements for advertising and information. **Young people are always the primary target group** of the communication plan, but the messages will reach a broader audience, based on the needs of each group as follows: (1) Young people will be represented across various subgroups, including marginalized youth or those at risk of exclusion, migrants, young people with disabilities, and low-income youth, LGBTQIA+ and Roma Youth; (2) Youth NGOs and citizenship; (3) Public-Institutional and Private Stakeholders; (4) Project Partners and Donors; (5) Business Community; (6) European Youth Forum and International Organisations. To ensure a thorough analysis of the target audience in the communication plan, youth associations in Parma and across Italy that already work with the target groups will be involved. These organizations have experience engaging marginalized youth, migrants, young people with disabilities, and low-income youth, ensuring that the communication strategy is inclusive and effective. E.g., Arcigay, the most well-known organization in Italy, with a branch in Parma, dedicated to defending the rights and raising awareness of the LGBTQIA+ community, will play a key role in supporting the inclusive communication plan. Similarly, social partners for each of the subgroups of young people are envisaged.

To reach these target groups, various communication tools will be used, based on the different declinations and needs:

- Implementation of the website parmagiovani2027.eu and creation of a dedicated app to provide detailed and updated information on all activities;
- **Branding and Visual Identity** of EYC 2027 with key messages, images, and videos will be visible on billboards, roll-ups, and screens throughout the city and at main entry points, always using the official EYC logo.
- As for **traditional media**, agreements will be made with local free distribution newspapers, as well as major local and national newspapers;
- Regarding **social media**, a tailored strategy will be implemented through the collaboration of youth organisations;
- **Radio and web radio**, with the support of “RadUni”, a network of university radios, a dedicated radio program will be structured to tell the story of the EYC 2027 project during its preparatory and implementation phases;
- **Gamification**, thanks to the collaboration of Orso Ludo (a local gaming company) a Parma Giovani 2027-themed game will be created to support the local, national, and European outreach.

To enhance outreach efforts, particularly towards young people from marginalized backgrounds, the following methods will be employed:

- **Youth Workers and Youth Organizations:** Dedicated youth workers will collaborate with

local youth organizations to engage directly with marginalized groups, such as youth from migrant backgrounds, low-income families, and those with disabilities. Workshops, social events, and community-based initiatives will be organized within neighborhoods, ensuring accessibility and relevance to these groups.

- **Peer-to-Peer Outreach:** Engaging young people as peer ambassadors will be key in reaching marginalized groups. Through peer networks, we will ensure that communication is authentic and relatable, increasing participation among groups that may otherwise feel excluded.
- **Digital Outreach:** Social media campaigns, online platforms, and targeted digital advertising will ensure that hard-to-reach youth, including those in rural areas, are informed and able to engage.

The communication outreach strategy will be managed by "**The Parmigianers**" the official **Ambassador group** for Parma EYC2027. This group of youth workers will be dedicated to spreading the project's messages through a *peer-to-peer* approach, utilizing photography, videos, and other digital skills. Young people with an interest in these areas can join the project's Communication group to help disseminate the project's themes and results among their peers, amplifying its reach and impact within the youth community.

External Communication Strategy will be divided into **information and dissemination activities** as well as **exploitation activities**.

- **Information and Dissemination Activities:** These will focus on raising awareness and providing clear, accessible information about EYC 2027, the goals of Youth Commission 27, and the various projects and events being organized. The content will highlight key messages related to youth participation, sustainability, and intergenerational collaboration. The dissemination will be done through social media platforms, local and national media, community events, and partnerships with schools and universities to ensure widespread reach.
- **Exploitation Activities:** These will aim to maximize the impact and visibility of the projects developed by Youth Commission 27 and young people in the community. This phase will showcase successful outcomes and innovative ideas to a broader audience, including policymakers, businesses, and international partners. Activities such as exhibitions, workshops, and conferences will serve as platforms to demonstrate the value of youth involvement and the sustainability of the initiatives beyond 2027.

The strategy will involve **both young people from Parma and older generations**, in order to support the goal of reducing the generational gap, also through storytelling. By encouraging dialogue and shared experiences between generations, the communication plan will highlight common values and foster mutual understanding, ensuring that both groups play an active role in shaping the narrative of the project. This strategy will lead to the implementation of the list of actions:

- **The corresponding physical squares** of each theme will see permanent installations that will make its main features visible to all.
- **Artistic showcases**, communicating the project through the artistic setting of empty and/or unused shop windows to embellish abandoned parts of the city;
- **Edicolando**, the recovery of old kiosks in Parma, bookable online by project partner organisations, to communicate youth organisation activities to young people;
- **Open Mic - Viva Parma 27** in the "Piazza for Europe", in Piazza Garibaldi, a permanent radio space will be set up where young speakers will alternate in empowering the voice of young Europeans in Parma through their peers.
- **Informative sessions**, will be organized in the project's Piazzas and Paths, to provide more information to citizens about related program activities and provide them with the opportunity to ask questions about how to get involved and create more networking opportunities.
- **Temporary Events**, moments created by young people for young people, launch events, and work-shops of the various project phases.

- **Parma PassePartout**, keeping alive the beautiful participatory experience that has been created in the first candidacy phase and that continues to develop in this second phase, each month will be dedicated to a particular theme of the project, a direct debate between young people and local, national, and European institutions. A moment of comparison and of participatory and meaningful dialogue.

During the implementation phase of the Project, in order to communicate an effective storytelling of the concepts of **Piazza** and **Paths of Transformation** to an international audience, visual tools and supports will be developed to make the architectural metaphor associated with the re-appropriation of urban spaces more accessible. These tools may include:

- **Videos and Animations** that demonstrate the transformation of piazzas into spaces of interaction and active participation, visually depicting the shift from static places to dynamic hubs of social engagement.
- **Infographics and Interactive Maps** that illustrate the "Paths of Transformation," highlighting the journey of change throughout the city, connecting various projects and thematic piazzas.

In order to measure and evaluate the method used to assess communication effectiveness, a specific evaluation model will be employed: **Netnography Analysis**. This analysis will be integrated into the EYC 2027 communication plan to better understand the needs, perceptions, and behaviours of young people and other target groups, especially their online interactions. At this technique, **indicators and KPIs** will be associated to help in identifying the objectives achieved throughout the year and in monitoring progress post-2027. These metrics will track engagement levels, intergenerational participation, and the effectiveness of the storytelling efforts, ensuring that the project's long-term impact can be assessed and sustained.

10. PREPARATION FOR THE EUROPEAN YOUTH CAPITAL

The preparation process for the European Youth Capital year began with the City Council's willingness to adopt a Strategic Youth Plan and with the establishment of the Youth Commission. Following the previous phases of the candidacy, a Youth Summer Camp was organized in Parma on the 5th and 6th of September. This camp had the aims to involve the members of the Youth Commission and city young people U35 from different backgrounds in defining the objectives, values, and structure of the Commission itself, serving as a preparatory phase for establishing the project's Advisory Council and **ensuring sustainability over time**. Several activities will be implemented to strengthen the project's communication and to activate a robust community engagement strategy. This will be led by JE Parma as the consortium's lead youth organisation supporting the candidacy. Young people themselves will be the main narrators of the project to the City and beyond. Various events for discussion, information, and project reinforcement will be organized to increase active and meaningful participation. Moreover, as identified in other sections of this candidacy, the Youth Test will be an essential element in developing and monitoring activities. After the candidacy presentation phase, if the title is awarded, Parma will initiate the warm-up phase leading up to the EYC year.

Preparation Phases for Parma 2027

Objective: Coordinate the team and establish an independent youth structure to manage the year, involving youth organisations and key stakeholders. Prepare the city for the themes that will be addressed in the year of EYC and start the process of intergenerational dialogue that will be the basis for its reduction. The preparatory phases will be divided into the two years preceding 2027, led by the Youth Commission and will be schematically structured as follows:

2025

- ESTABLISHING MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES
- COMMUNICATION & COOPERATION
- DEFINING INTERNAL AGREEMENTS AND ROLES
- ENGAGING YOUTH AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

Kick-off of the Parma EYC 2027 project – 2025

- **Establishing Management Structures** | Immediately after winning the EYC27 title, the candidacy team, guided by the Youth Commission, youth organisations, and with strong support from the Parma City Council, will begin working together to create the afore-mentioned independent structures to manage the year. The selection process will be based on inclusive criteria.
- **Defining Internal Agreements and Roles** | After selecting members for these bodies, the working group will draft regulations, assign tasks, and responsibilities. Brainstorming sessions will be organized to gather suggestions from various experts on how to efficiently prepare for the title year.
- **Communication and Cooperation with past, current and upcoming EYCs** | During this phase, communication and cooperation channels will be established with current EYCs to create a more inclusive program. Additionally, other shortlisted candidates will be given the opportunity to become “co-actors” in the preparation process, through the exchange of good practices to strengthen the program.
- **Engaging Youth and Vulnerable Groups** | Beyond schools and universities, young people in the city will be reached through a network of youth organisations, making it possible to engage many young people from vulnerable and diverse socio-economic backgrounds.

2026

- CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE TITLE YEAR
- COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

NEXT STOP... PARMA – 2026

- **Capacity Building for the Title Year** | Partners will host ongoing training sessions for young volunteers and technical staff to enhance their skills and ensure the implementation team meets the demands. Training will be organized in collaboration with previous EYC cities, both in those cities and by bringing experts to Parma to include more people in sharing best practices, while simultaneously strengthening partnerships and networking.
- **Community Involvement** | The community will be invited to contribute, fostering a more welcoming environment for youth. We intend to create interest in the citizens and especially in the older generations towards the 2027 activity program. We intend to update to 2026 what are the main elements that distinguish the generation gap, if they are in line with what was analysed at the date of writing this dossier and if there are corrective actions to be carried out.

11. EVALUATION

With the City Council resolution No. [GC-16/2024 dated 17/01/2024](#), Parma became the first EU municipality to officially adopt the Youth Test as an official tool for ex-ante evaluation, monitoring, and consultation with the youth sector to implement potential mitigations.

During the candidacy year, we will work on two evaluation tools: (1) one to assess the impact of public policies implemented to foster active and meaningful youth participation, and (2) a systemic evaluation of the project using the "performance framework" tool. The first tool (1) will be the systemic application of the Youth Test. This tool, highlighted by the YFJ as a key tool for evaluating and assessing the impact of public policies on youth, will also ensure a scalable evaluation across other European contexts, guaranteeing an unbiased assessment. The group responsible for implementing this process is the Youth Test Group (YTG) within the management structure. This group will be operational from the start of the preparatory phase in 2025. It will include members of the Youth Commission, who are currently involved in defining this activity.

This will ensure clarity regarding the KPIs used for identifying impact values and monitoring activities. The areas of impact and evaluation phases are outlined on the basis of the Youth Progress Index Report and according to YFJ's recommendation "[Youth Test, a guiding framework for practical implementation](#)" ensure a comprehensive evaluation by involving the primary target group, the younger generations, in defining and evaluating activities:

1. *Impact on Youth Education*: This includes access and effectiveness of education, training, and research pathways for young people, as well as school-to-university transition rates.
2. *Impact on Youth Employment*: This includes effects on access to the labor market, social security conditions as established by the European Pillar of Social Rights, levels of self-employment, and youth entrepreneurship.
3. *Impact on Inclusion*: This includes social inclusion levels, housing conditions improvement, and achievement of targets 8.6 and 8b of the 2030 Agenda, with attention to an inclusion matrix for disadvantaged and disabled youth.
4. *Impact on Wellbeing*: This includes the psycho-social conditions of young people.

The YTG will also be the group responsible for monitoring and evaluating the actions outlined in the EYC27 Program. This process will be managed with the support of the PMO Group and representatives of stakeholders interested in assessing the project's impact, as well as delegates from the youth organizational structures of previous EYCs. These delegates will provide critical evaluations based on their prior experience with the candidacy process, helping to mitigate any unforeseen situations that could arise in Parma and were not addressed in the Contingency Plan.

The primary evaluation tool for the project will be the **Performance Framework**, a set of physical and financial indicators derived from EU Regulation 1303 of 2013. During the preparatory phase, the YTG will prepare a set of indicators, as well as intermediate (milestones) and final targets, which will be subsequently reported. During the monitoring phase, once the indicators are set, the following cyclical phases will be applied to each activity for evaluation:

Phase 1 - CAWI Questionnaire - Administer to a sample of young people from relevant youth organizations to gather their assessment of the activity's impact on themselves, with scores from 1 to 5. **Phase 2 - Focus Groups/Workshops** - Organize focus groups/workshops between youth and the administration to present data from the questionnaire and stimulate constructive dialogue for improving the final evaluation. **Phase 3 - Communication Activities** - Use youth-targeted channels and organize public events with key stakeholders to stimulate debate and indirectly engage as many young people as possible in the activities carried out.

Environmental Sustainability Check of the EYCs Programme: To evaluate the project's environmental sustainability, the YTG will assess activities based on how the management group plans them using the [NEB Compass](#) as an organisational and evaluation metric. This tool, developed by the European Commission through the JRC, will be an integral part of the sustainability evaluation process for project activities. Finally, the YTG will also develop the Final Report in collaboration with the PMO group and the Steering Committee. The results/suggestions of the Final Evaluation Report on the EYC27 program and year will form the basis for implementing the subsequent Seven-Year Youth Strategy 2028-2034, in line with European Programming and associated operational plans.

12. IMPACT AND LONG TERM LEGACY

Parma's journey towards 2027 has already produced numerous positive and lasting effects during the application phase, which have already been mentioned in other parts of the application and which we will not go into here (e.g. Youth Test, Youth Commission, cooperation with CNG and past, current and upcoming EYCs, strengthening of the public-private model).

Immediate Effects of European Youth Capital on Parma and its Youth

One year after hosting the title, Parma will see a significant increase in youth participation in civic and social events, promoting a sense of belonging and community involvement. Young people will be more engaged and empowered through the creation of co-designed urban youth centres and sustainable funding for youth organisations. Educational programs and career opportunities will improve immediately through workshops, training sessions, and peer learning exchanges. Awareness of and participation in non-traditional educational paths, such as short courses and international projects for young people, will also increase. Programs to enhance youth well-being and mental health will be implemented, including educational initiatives on personal safety and nonviolent conflict transformation. Dedicated services and initiatives will ensure that all young people, regardless of background, can benefit from the activities of the EYC.

Immediate Effects on Young People with Fewer Opportunities

Improved access to educational and job opportunities will be guaranteed through dedicated programs and services for young people with fewer opportunities. Participation of these young people in civic activities and their representation in decision-making processes will increase. Specific initiatives will be developed to support vulnerable youth, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those facing social and economic challenges. Inclusive spaces and programs will be created to ensure that all young people can benefit from EYC activities.

Legacy of the European Youth Capital for Parma and its Youth (Five Years Later)

Five years later, Parma will see long-term improvements in urban infrastructure and public spaces, making them more suitable and inclusive for young people. Youth hubs and centres will continue to serve as focal points for youth activities and services. Ongoing support for youth organisations and initiatives will be ensured through sustainable funding models and local policy support. The Local Youth Strategy 2028-2034 will be implemented, incorporating feedback and insights from the EYC year. Mechanisms for continuous professional development, employability programs, and support for youth entrepreneurship will be consolidated. Educational curricula will improve long-term to foster creativity and innovation among young people.

Integration into the City's Long-Term Development Vision

The experiences and best practices of the EYC year will be integrated into the city's long-term development plans, ensuring that youth perspectives are considered in all future policies. Continuous evaluation and adaptation of youth programs will address the evolving needs of the youth population. Sustainable and inclusive urban spaces that promote youth well-being will be strengthened. Sustainability and environmental considerations will be integrated into the city's long-term planning.

Sustaining Youth Activities Beyond the EYC Year

A sustainable funding model will be created to support youth programs and initiatives beyond the EYC year. Partnerships with local and international organisations will continue to provide resources and support for youth activities. Local authorities will commit to prioritizing youth policies and programs in future budgets. A dedicated platform of services for young people will be created to address various needs, including employment, education, and social activities.

Connecting the Legacy to the European Dimension

Networks and partnerships with other European cities will be established to share best practices

and collaborate on youth initiatives. Participation in European youth programs and projects will strengthen Parma's role in the broader European context. Parma will contribute to a more inclusive European youth policy by sharing successful practices and insights derived from the EYC experience. Other cities will be encouraged to adopt similar youth-focused initiatives, promoting a pan-European approach to youth engagement and development.

Legacy for Other Cities in Europe

Parma will provide a successful model that other European cities can replicate, focusing on inclusive urban development and sustainable youth engagement. Lessons learned and effective practices will be shared through European networks and forums, promoting a collaborative approach to youth development. Improving the quality of life for young people across Europe will be promoted through innovative urban planning and inclusive youth policies. European solidarity and cooperation will be strengthened through exchanges and partnerships initiated during the EYC year.

The title of European Youth Capital 2027 for Parma could have a transformative impact on the city, reshaping its cultural, social, and economic landscape. Here's how cross linking the impact to the programme activities and paths of transformations:

Youth participation: The title will provide young people and youth organizations in Parma a prominent platform to influence local policies and drive initiatives that matter to them. By actively involving youth in decision-making processes, the city could bridge the generational gap, foster intergenerational dialogue, and position young people as key agents of change in areas such as education, employment, and urban planning. This empowerment could also lead to greater civic participation, addressing the current disengagement many young people feel.

Conviviality of Differences: The title would be a catalyst for inclusion, enabling Parma to build on its ongoing efforts to engage marginalized groups like young people with fewer opportunities, LGBTQIA+ youth, migrants, and Roma communities. Through youth-led initiatives and collaboration with local, national and European associations and stakeholders, the city could foster greater social cohesion and ensure that all youth, regardless of background, feel represented and supported in local policies and cultural activities.

Wellbeing and quality of life: European Youth Capital status could boost the local economy by attracting investments, increasing tourism, and creating employment opportunities for young people. It would put Parma on the European map, drawing attention to its cultural heritage while also encouraging the development of sectors that cater to the needs and talents of youth, such as tech startups, creative industries, and green jobs.

Culture and Sustainability policies: As a Youth Capital, Parma could lead Europe in youth-driven sustainability initiatives. The title would give young people the chance to take ownership of climate-related policies, driving the city's efforts toward a greener, more sustainable future. By localizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and involving youth in climate action, Parma could become a model for how cities can engage young people in tackling global environmental challenges at the local level.

Parma EYC27 programme of events: The title would spark a renaissance of cultural and social activities tailored to young people, further enhancing Parma's reputation as a cultural hub. Through festivals, concerts, workshops, and conferences, the city would foster creativity and collaboration, allowing youth from Parma and beyond to contribute to and benefit from a dynamic cultural scene.

In summary, the title of European Youth Capital 2027 could serve as a powerful force for change, elevating youth voices, driving social inclusion, and positioning Parma as a leader in intergenerational policies, youth empowerment and sustainability across Europe.

13. BUDGET INDICATIONS

The overall budget dedicated to the preparation, implementation and follow-up phases of the EYC 2027 title will be approximately 12 million euros (of which 9,5 million are ensured). After the first and second selection phase and thanks to our arrival on the Short-List, many other organisations, public and private, have confirmed their participation in the budget, both directly, with liquidity that will be transferred to the organizing committee, and indirectly, through the implementation of project activities with strong economic value. During this phase the project management was committed to interacting with all public institutions, economic and social actors, donors and foundations, organizing meetings and consultations to guarantee the economic sustainability of the project. The enthusiasm found in public and private actors has made it possible to gather the certain availability of the contribution of some shareholders, highlighted in the following tables.

Total EYC budget (EUR)	From the public sector EUR	From the public sector (%)	From the private sector (EUR)	From the private sector (%)
12.000.000 EUR	5.000.000 EUR	41,6%	7.000.000 EUR	58,4%

The public part consists of a guaranteed budget from Parma City Council, as well as forecast contributions from the Emilia-Romagna Region, the Italian Youth Agency of Erasmus+ Programme and the National Youth Policy Department. Moreover, with the contribution of the National Youth Council and the other National Youth organizations involved in the project, we'll prepare a fundraising strategy to apply in European Calls for Proposals close with the objectives to the candidacy.

The public sector EYC budget	EUR	%
EU	500.000,00	10%
National Government	1.000.000,00	20%
Regional Government	1.500.000,00	30%
Municipality	2.000.000,00	40%

The part of the contribution from the private sector constitutes an ensured budget if Parma will be EYC, given written commitments by the various shareholders. The budget thus composed is reasonably structured in order to cover all the various categories necessary for the implementation phases. The part of the contribution from the private sector constitutes an ensured budget if Parma will be EYC, given written commitments by the various shareholders. As the numbers clearly show, private sector participation is objectively greater than that of the public sector. This demonstrates the strong motivation generated around the candidacy and the concrete willingness to invest in a generational shift, particularly from the private sector, which has faced increasing challenges in recent years in fostering intergenerational dialogue that supports the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises. For this reason, major private institutions in Parma have shown a strong commitment to contributing. International companies such as Chiesi and Barilla, as well as business association like "Parma Io Ci Sto", banking institutions such as Crédit Agricole and Cariparma Foundation, and many other entities, including companies, service providers, retailers, and public transport companies, have all been part of this investment. This effort is reflected in Annex IX, which contains letters of support. The budget thus composed is reasonably structured in order to cover all the various categories necessary for the implementation phases.

Programme Budget (EUR and %)	Communication s and outreach budget (EUR and %)	Salaries, office, administration budget (EUR and %)	Other chapters (EUR and %)	budgetary (%)	Total Budget	EYC
7.500.000,00 62,5%	1.500.000,00 € 12,5%	1.500.000,00 12,5%	Preparatory Phase	1.000.000 8,34%	12.000.000	
			Contingency	500.000 4,16%		

The detailed cost structure is provided in Annex VII. The budget allocation has been structured around the following drivers: the program is conceived as the set of activities that will take place in 2027, with €6.5 million dedicated to the activities, including the Open Ceremony, the Final Ceremony, and YFJ events, and €1 million allocated to the 80 local projects that will be selected through an open call process. The preparatory phase for the years 2025-26 is allocated under "other costs," along with the reserved portion for the contingency plan. As for communication and salaries, we aimed to maintain a balance, considering that (1) the communication expenses will cover the strategic communication development, visual and brand identity, and all activities aimed at promoting the project; (2) the printing costs for materials related to individual events are instead budgeted under the Program expenses. Further crowdfunding systems and fundraising strategy will be put in place in order to increase the potential of the implementation phase. In order to guarantee the effectiveness of the contingency plan, almost 7% of the budget will be allocated as a reserve for risk mitigation. Capitalization and/or construction/renovation activities are not foreseen in the application budget.

14. EUROPEAN YOUTH FORUM EVENTS

Should Parma win the title of European Youth Capital 2027, it commits to hosting the European Youth Capital award ceremony and, in agreement with YFJ, hosting the Statutory Assembly. Regarding accommodation capacity, infrastructure, and spaces dedicated to culture or large events please refer to Chapter 5. Parma has numerous indoor venues available to host large-scale events such as the YFJ's Statutory Assembly and the EYC award ceremony. Among these are the Paganini Auditorium and other facilities in the city centre, which possess all the technical resources and spaces necessary for organising such events. The city will provide all public spaces and resources for organising the activities and events related to the program. Additionally, necessary connectivity services will be provided for all members, delegates, and visitors, including accessible facilities for people with disabilities and other vulnerabilities.

15. CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Through a detailed SWOT Analysis initiated during the listening phase with the target group and stakeholders, we identified the main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats necessary to create a risk management plan that increases the likelihood of success for the Parma EYC project through the identification, assessment, and mitigation of risks.

STRENGTHS

Strong involvement of the Municipality in the preparation of the project; Youth Commission; Strong economic investment in young people from a public/private point of view; Diversification of themes; Bottom-up approach; Co-planning; Involvement of the social fabric; Institutional solidity; Spaces suitable for young people; Stakeholder participation in budgeting and co-planning

WEAKNESS

Greater demand for appropriation of spaces by young people; Request for greater inclusion; Difficulty in reaching all youth target groups, especially those with fewer opportunities due to economic-migratory contexts; Communication towards young people

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Economic attractiveness for Parma; Launch of Urban Regeneration projects; Activation of new projects for young people; increase in training offerings; Participation in other projects under; European Union programs; Events external to the program to be managed	Increase in inflation with consequent increase in project management costs; Technical difficulties in completing regeneration works in time for 2027; Institutional-political change at local, regional and national levels; Economic crisis of the companies that support the project; External risks (pandemics, war conflicts, climate crises, etc.); End of term in 2027 of local and national government

From this analysis, we found that the project has numerous **strengths**. The strong involvement of the City Council ensures a solid institutional foundation. Additionally, there is significant economic investment in youth from both the public and private sectors. The diversification of themes and the bottom-up approach, which includes co-design and engagement promote active and inclusive participation. The spaces are designed to cater to youth, and there is high stakeholder involvement in the budget and co-design process. Despite these strengths, the project presents some **weaknesses**. There is a strong demand from young people for the re-appropriation of public spaces and a growing need to improve inclusion. Reaching all youth target groups, especially those with fewer opportunities due to economic or migratory contexts, remains challenging. Additionally, communication efforts towards young people need improvement to ensure broader and more informed participation. The project offers various **opportunities**, such as the potential to increase Parma's economic appeal, particularly for young people and young families, and to launch urban regeneration initiatives, including the repurposing of certain spaces. There are also opportunities to initiate new projects for young people and expand the educational offering. Participating in projects funded by EU programmes and national tenders represents another significant growth opportunity if the title is secured. The project also faces key **threats**. External events, such as pandemics, conflicts, or climate crises, could negatively impact the project. Rising inflation might increase management costs, and technical difficulties in completing regeneration projects by 2027 pose a risk. Potential institutional and political changes at all levels also present challenges. Lastly, the economic crisis affecting companies supporting the project, as well as the end of the local and national government's mandate in 2027, could undermine support and continuity. From this analysis, we have identified **the main risks**:

- *Youth Communication*: Ineffective communication could jeopardize youth participation in the EYC project.
- *Difficulty Reaching Target Groups*: Young people with fewer opportunities may not benefit from the initiatives if not adequately involved.
- *External Events*: Pandemics, conflicts, and climate crises could impact the implementation phase.
- *Economic Problems*: Inflation could raise management costs, and companies may withdraw their financial support.
- *Political Change*: Shifts in local and national government may alter the project's support.

Each risk has been evaluated based on **probability** and **impact**, using the following scale:

High probability (60-99% likelihood)	Medium probability (30-59% likelihood)	Low probability (1-29% likelihood)
High impact (potential to significantly hinder the project's outcome)	Medium impact (potential to alter some aspects of the project)	Low impact (potential for minor deviations or delays in the project's implementation)

As a result of the analysis, the following outcomes were identified:

Risk	Evaluation
Youth Communication	Medium probability, High impact
Difficulty Reaching Target Groups	Medium probability, High impact
External Events	Low probability, Medium impact
Economic Problems	Medium probability, High impact
Political Change	Medium probability, Low impact

For each identified risk, specific responses were planned:

Communication towards youth: Implement a targeted communication campaign using channels popular among youth with professional support. This action will be managed by the project’s Communication Team, entrusted to JE Parma in the second and third application phases, along with partnerships from other youth organisations. Additionally, the communication plan outlined in point 9 of this application addresses risk mitigation if the title is awarded.

Difficulty in reaching target groups: Collaborate with local associations to reach young people in challenging economic and migratory conditions. This action will be managed by Commission 27 and the project’s Executive Board.

External events: Emergency plans for adverse events will be established during the kick-off meeting, managed by the PMO in collaboration with Youth Managers (Parma Makers) to evaluate potential corrective actions for project implementation.

Economic issues: An administrative team will be dedicated to monitoring, communicating with stakeholders, and risk analysis. Contingency actions will be initiated with a budget reserve for inflation-related risks, and a fundraising system will be activated to increase revenue and address potential reductions in financial resources.

Political changes: The project currently enjoys bipartisan political support. The local and regional governments, aligned within the same centre-left coalition, support the bid both in terms of engagement and economically. At the national level, the Ministry for Youth Policies, part of a centre-right political group, supports the bid through an official letter (attached). Such bipartisan support will be strengthened through an internal lobbying strategy initiated during the early project presentation phases to reinforce the link between the bid and Parma’s role as an Italian model within Europe for youth. By applying the Youth Test as a tool for evaluating and monitoring public policies impacting youth, an institutional dialogue has been initiated, leading to conferences where the municipal administration and ministers with reform mandates have been able to discuss and strengthen their institutional bonds. 2027 will be a year of local and national government renewal. The probability of renewing the institutional framework is medium, but the actions taken to make Parma’s bid as national, all the measures foreseen in the kick-off phase, as well as the independent and non-partisan support from the National Youth Council, the only legally mandated body representing national youth organisations, ensure the political support necessary for the project’s implementation.

Finally, continuous monitoring and control of risks will be essential to ensure the effectiveness of mitigation and response measures. Regular checks will be conducted, and monthly reports on the main risks and actions taken to manage them will be produced.