



Music Session

UKRAINE

Session Information

Date: 07.05.2025

Time: 13:00

Location: Kyiv (Ukraine), Gzira (Malta)

Organising Partner: International European University



Participants

- **Total number of participants: 11**
- **Participant types (e.g. youth, youth educators, social workers, etc.): youth**
- **How did you reach those participants?**

Through internal and external IEU communication platforms; information shared via faculty groups and university learning platforms; special attention was given to students who have academic or personal interest in peace education, intercultural communication, youth activism, music, arts, or creative expression as tools for social change.

Brief description of the session (What did you do?):

As part of the Erasmus+ MY PEACE project, students of the International European University in Ukraine and Malta gathered for a youth-led roundtable dedicated to exploring the transformative power of music in peacebuilding. Bringing together participants from diverse cultural and national backgrounds, the session created a safe and open space for dialogue on how music can act as a universal language in times of conflict.

During the session, students selected and presented songs that, in their view, promote peace, unity, and mutual understanding. They discussed why these songs resonate with them, what messages they

communicate, and how musical expression can influence emotions, shape narratives, and inspire positive social change. Through this exchange, students reflected deeply on what “peace” means to them personally and collectively, emphasizing that peace involves not only the absence of conflict but also empathy, dignity, and the willingness to listen to one another.

This discussion was especially meaningful and deeply relevant for students from Ukraine, who continue to experience the direct impact of war and displacement. For them, engaging in conversations about peace, choosing music that symbolizes hope, and expressing emotions through creative dialogue provided an important space for healing, resilience, and international solidarity. Ukrainian participants highlighted that peace is not an abstract concept but a lived necessity connected to safety, freedom, and the right to a secure and meaningful life. Their contributions brought depth and urgency to the conversation.

This session marks the beginning of the wider MY PEACE journey - a European youth movement that uses music to speak where words fall short. In a time marked by war, displacement, and division, young voices rise through rhythm and melody to reclaim space, identity, and hope. The roundtable serves as an important starting point for fostering cross-cultural understanding and empowering youth to engage in future project activities, including collaborative creative work, documentary storytelling, and peace-oriented initiatives across Europe.

Participant Feedback and evaluation of the session

How did participants respond to the session? (What stood out, any comments or quotes?)

Participants responded to the session very positively, noting that the roundtable format, open discussion, and focus on music created a safe and inspiring environment for honest reflection. Many highlighted that the combination of intercultural dialogue and musical interpretation made the topic of peacebuilding more personal, accessible, and emotionally meaningful. Students appreciated the opportunity to listen to peace-oriented songs chosen by peers and to explain why these songs carried significance for them. Participants expressed that the session helped them better understand how youth from other countries perceive peace, conflict, and resilience. Several students emphasized that discussing peace through music allowed them to articulate emotions that are often difficult to express verbally. The intercultural aspect was repeatedly mentioned as the most valuable, as many participants had never previously engaged in a shared dialogue about peace with peers from different countries. Participants noted that music created an equal platform—regardless of nationality, language, or background.

Selected comments and quotes from participants:

“I never realised how differently we all understand peace - yet the songs we chose had the same message: hope.”

“For me, music is a way to breathe again. It reminds me that peace is possible.”

“We might not change the world today, but conversations like this help us understand each other.”

“Hearing Ukrainian students speak about peace was emotional and eye-opening. It made the topic real.”

“Music connects us immediately. Even if we disagree, a song brings us to the same moment.”

Participants rated the session as highly relevant, engaging, and impactful. Many expressed interest in continuing such discussions, collaborating on creative outputs, and contributing to the MY PEACE project’s upcoming documentary series. The session successfully strengthened cross-cultural understanding, youth empowerment, and the role of artistic expression in peacebuilding.

Educational Method Used

Briefly describe the method or activity used that worked well and could be useful for other stakeholders to replicate

The session applied a youth-led intercultural dialogue method combined with music-based reflective activities, which proved highly effective and easily replicable for other stakeholders working in peace education, youth empowerment, or non-formal learning environments.

- Youth-Led Roundtable Discussion

The session was facilitated in a participatory, youth-driven format where students guided the flow of conversation, selected discussion points, and shared personal reflections. This approach increased ownership, motivation, and authenticity in the dialogue. It also encouraged equal participation, particularly among students who might feel less comfortable in traditional teacher-led settings.

- Music-Based Reflection Activity

Each participant selected a song that, in their view, promotes peace, unity, or mutual understanding. Students presented their chosen song, explained its meaning, and used it as a starting point for discussing broader themes such as conflict, identity, resilience, and hope.

This method effectively connected cognitive learning with emotional engagement, helping participants articulate complex feelings and experiences through a creative lens.

- Intercultural Exchange Through Storytelling

Students from different countries shared how the selected music resonated with their cultural context and current realities. This storytelling component strengthened cross-cultural understanding and helped participants recognise both shared values and unique perspectives on peace.

- Safe and Supportive Learning Environment

Facilitators created a non-judgmental space where students could freely express emotions, personal experiences, and viewpoints. This psychological safety was essential, especially for Ukrainian participants who connected the discussion with their lived experiences of war.