



Newsletter 2

# WHAT THE FUN?!

erasmus+ KA2 project

[www.mapthefun.eu](http://www.mapthefun.eu)

Mapping the opportunities for quality leisure time through service learning



Co-funded by the European Union

# Table of Contents



- 01.** Welcome to our newsletter
- 02.** Training course in Croatia
- 03.** Local workshops using service learning methodology
- 04.** ARTMAPS – the booklet
- 05.** Training course in Spain
- 06.** Mapathons – mapping the local communities
- 07.** Upcoming actions

# 01. WELCOME TO OUR NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the Newsletter #2 of the project 'What the FUN'!

“What the FUN” is an innovative project designed to create a dynamic, supportive environment for collaborative learning and creation among young artists, youth workers, social workers, and youth leaders. **It addresses a significant challenge:** the declining motivation and initiative among young people to seek out and engage in meaningful leisure activities. Our primary **aim** is to raise awareness about quality leisure opportunities while developing a digital tool that helps young people identify and access these spaces.

The team working on the “What the FUN “ project has made significant progress in recent months. We have conducted two international training courses – one in Croatia and another in Spain – and carried out local activities in all project countries: Latvia, Spain, Belgium and Croatia. Furthermore, we have finalised the first project result: the booklet ARTMAPS

This newsletter provides a detailed overview of the project's progress that we invite you to peruse.

Thank you for downloading the newsletter, we hope you find it interesting!

Enjoy the reading!



## 02. TRAINING COURSE IN CROATIA

The training course “ARTMAPS: Mapping the opportunities for quality leisure time through a service learning” was held from the 3rd to the 8th of April 2024, with 25 participants joining in Veli Iž, Croatia.

The aim of the training was to equip youth workers, educators and young artists with the necessary skills to use the artistic approach and service learning methodology to create ARTMAPS - artistic maps of urban and rural communities with and by young people.

During the training course the non-formal education methods were employed based on visual art, including drawing and painting. The sessions incorporated learning by doing, experiential learning, good practices in the field of youth work regarding the quality leisure time, service-learning methodology, and mapping the local community.

## 03. LOCAL WORKSHOPS USING SERVICE LEARNING METHODOLOGY

Following the training course in Croatia, local workshops were conducted in all project countries. A total of 13 workshops were held, with more than 50 young participants working together with youth workers and artists to create artistic maps of their urban and rural communities.



## 04. ARTMAPS THE BOOKLET

Welcome to a vibrant showcase of imagination, creativity, and youth expression!

This booklet presents 20 unique artworks that map our communities in ways traditional cartography never could - through the eyes and artistic vision of young people just like you. **What's Inside?** Over the past months, young artists, creators, and dreamers from urban neighborhoods and rural villages across multiple countries gathered in workshops to reimagine their communities. They asked themselves important questions: Where do we hang out and spend quality leisure time? What spaces matter to us? How can we represent our world in a way that speaks our language? **The result?** Twenty stunning ArtMaps blend artistic expression with practical information about leisure spaces, meeting points, and community resources that matter to young people. Each artwork tells a story about the places that shape youth experiences - from skateparks and music venues to quiet green spaces and cultural centers

## What is the Journey Behind the Art?

These ArtMaps emerged from 13 dynamic workshops where more than 50 young participants collaborated with youth workers and artists.

Working across four countries - from the coastal city of Zadar in Croatia to the historic streets of Valladolid in Spain, from the picturesque town of Kuldīga in Latvia to creative spaces in Antwerp in Belgium - participants transformed their local knowledge into visual artworks. Some used traditional art techniques like painting and drawing, while others experimented with graffiti, digital design, and mixed media approaches. Each workshop became a laboratory for creative expression, where participants learned new skills while contributing their unique perspectives on what makes their communities special.

**Why ArtMaps Matter?** These aren't just beautiful pictures - they're practical tools created by young people for young people. They highlight spaces where you can meet friends, develop new skills, explore creative interests, or simply find a quiet moment. By putting youth perspectives at the center, these

ArtMaps celebrate the places that might be overlooked by traditional maps but are essential to young people's lives.

**We invite you** to explore communities with fresh eyes. Maybe you'll discover a new hangout spot in your neighborhood inspired by what you see here. Perhaps you'll be motivated to create your own ArtMap. Most importantly, we hope these 20 artworks remind you that young people's perspectives matter - that your unique vision of your community deserves to be seen, shared, and celebrated.

**Welcome** to our creative journey through communities - as seen, felt, and imagined by young people just like you!

You can download the ARTMAPS booklet from the following link:

[mapthefun.eu/artmaps-the-booklet](https://mapthefun.eu/artmaps-the-booklet)



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## 05. TRAINING COURSE IN SPAIN

From December 3–8, 2024, the historic city of Valladolid, Spain, played host to an innovative international training course: What the Fun! (WTF-ARTMAPS). The training course united youth professionals and educators from across Europe to foster digital and creative skills aimed at empowering young people to engage with their communities.

The WTF-ARTMAPS course blended theoretical learning with real-world application, offering participants a hands-on approach to understanding youth needs and creating solutions.

During the training course, participants ventured into the streets of Valladolid to engage with local youth, gather insights, and identify leisure spaces that promote quality leisure time activities. A highlight of the training was the introduction of the mapathon — a collaborative methodology where young people contribute to mapping their local communities, identifying key spots, and sharing their perspectives through digital media. The street work in Valladolid and the mapathon methodology provided valuable insights that contributed to the development of the [mapthefun.eu](https://mapthefun.eu)



platform, which is currently being developed by the project team. Furthermore, the participants of the training course worked on refining the digital platform that is under development, focusing on accessibility, relevance, and user – friendly design.

As part of the training course, an exhibition of ARTMAPS created by young people from the involved project countries was displayed in Valladolid from 4th to 15th December.

Following the expo, the ARTMAPS will be exhibited in partner countries, where they will engage local communities and inspire further contributions to the platform [mapthefun.eu](https://mapthefun.eu).



The exhibition is still available on a virtual tour:

<https://visit.virtualartgallery.com/artmaps>

## 06. MAPATHONS MAPPING THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Currently, the project partners are organizing local workshops, known as mapathons, in their communities in Latvia, Spain, Croatia and Belgium. The workshops are being organised between February and April 2025.

The objective of these workshops is to engage young people in the creation of the mapthefun.eu platform. This will allow them to express their opinions on its functionality and provide them a space where they can discuss what is quality leisure time. They will also be able to place quality leisure time places and activities that they like to visit on the platform.

# 07. UPCOMING ACTIONS



- Check the **mapthefun.eu platform** and join us in developing this interactive online tool, that will be bringing artistic flair to digital exploration. This will be a useful tool for exploring quality leisure time spaces across Europe.
- Join the **local mapathons** that are being organised in partner countries until April, 2025. These are fun, collaborative events where you and your friends can explore new areas, identify more quality leisure spaces, and add them to our growing collection. These mapathons combine adventure, creativity, and community service as you help build a comprehensive resource for other young people.

- The project team will be working on developing Quality Badges and the Standards for Quality Leisure time places with the aim to create a recognition system for identifying exceptional youth leisure opportunities. Furthermore, we'll have a gathering in Belgium where you can learn about quality badges, test the platform with youth from other countries, and contribute to making our project sustainable long-term. Your feedback during this event will shape the final version of our platform!
- Exhibitions of ArtMaps will be organized in local community centers, youth spaces, and cultural venues in Belgium, Spain, Croatia and Latvia. These exhibitions will showcase youth creativity to the wider community, helping more young people discover quality leisure opportunities while appreciating artistic vision.
- Meanwhile, you are welcome to explore the online exhibition of ARTMAPS: <https://www.mapthefun.eu/artmaps/>



Follow the latest updates on the What the fun?! project through our newsletters, website, and Instagram. We'll keep you informed about our progress and upcoming activities.



[mapthefun.eu](https://mapthefun.eu)

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