



D4.2 MANUAL OF CLRA-COIL FOR DEMOCRACY

Version 1.0





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DOI - 10.18552/GLEA/2026/0001

Layout

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Versioning Table:

Version control			
Version	Lead Author	Date	Changes
1.0	Katherine Wimpenny	26.03.26	First draft

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Pre-Amble

'Community-Led Research and Action' (CLRA) with 'Collaborative Online International Learning' (COIL) otherwise known as CLRA-COIL democratic methodology, is being used in our YOUROPE project to promote a reciprocal environment of learning and action, recognising the significant role of education institutions in advancing European citizenship and democracy.

This CLRA-COIL Manual for Democracy is intended to provide relevant details, explaining the background, considerations and circumstances which had led to our learning about the use of CLRA-COILs as an innovative pedagogical approach in the context of its use in YOUROPE. The core objectives, philosophies, and research practices that are included in this resource are shared as a means to guide the reader to the scope of this work and how CLRA COILs can be adopted in wider educational contexts.

It is noted at the outset, and in the content that follows, that this Manual serves as Version 1.0.

It is important to note that this first version has been written at a mid-point in the YOUROPE project timeline (month 17 of 36 to be precise). As such, we are reporting on what we have considered, accomplished and learnt to date, knowing that our understanding and scholarship will progress, and we anticipate, in substantial and swifter ways in this next phase of the project timeline. Our learning can accelerate as CLRA practices have been implemented in more widespread ways and youth-led themes are coming forth from which 'Transnational Conversations' and opportunities for cross-contextual learning through CLRA-COILs can be meaningfully employed through our multicultural online learning environments emphasising experiential student collaboration.

We look forward to what we learn next.

In the meantime, we suggest that what is presented in the pages that follow provides some informative starting points.



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Manual of CLRA-COIL for Democracy

Overview of CLRA-COIL for Democracy

YOUROPE aims to address the traditionally low political participation rates among youth, especially underrepresented youth, by tapping into their potential and aspirations through innovative approaches. This innovation includes 'Community-Led Research and Action' (CLRA) methodology.

YOUROPE is exploring how CLRA, as a democratic methodology, can promote a reciprocal environment of learning and action, recognising the significant role of education institutions in advancing European citizenship and democracy. CLRA methodology aims to ensure that innovative strategies employed are grounded in evidence, are sustainable, iterative, extensive in scale, and fundamentally participatory. Educational institutions such as universities are pivotal in this effort, acting as catalysts for democratic engagement. In these settings, youth (aged 16 - 30 years) and their communities are set to collaboratively develop inclusive, participatory democratic spaces and roadmaps.

CLRA understands democracy as 'ecologies of relations' (see Descola, 2013), as living, evolving, entangled systems sustained by reciprocity, care, and shared responsibility. CLRA is a relational practice enacted through everyday encounters between people, communities, and environments. CLRAs are taking place within the formal curriculum within education institutions and within and across communities. As part of YOUROPE CLRAs are engaging university students and youth communities.

Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) has traditionally been a method that enables students from across the globe to engage in "co-taught multicultural online and blended learning environments emphasising experiential student collaboration" (Christensen, Altenreiter & Meixner, 2022, p. 6; State University of New York COIL Center, n.d.). YOUROPE aspires to transform European citizenship and democracy by enhancing youth involvement in hybrid forms of such COIL exchanges related to CLRA iterations.

As part of the YOUROPE ambition, CLRA-COIL aims to establish a lasting, sustainable pedagogical approach that influences democratic practices and evolves the concept of European Citizenship in involved institutions, communities, and regions.

CLRA-COILs therefore are pioneering in striving to create a more inclusive democratic space and process for developing youth-led, youth-informed policies that align with the different needs, perspectives, and ambitions of diverse European youth, especially those who are currently underrepresented.

CLRA-COILs present the potential online-space for deepening the understanding of grassroots notions of European Citizenship and democracy explored by youth and their communities.





From local CLRAs - engaging youth across the partner communities, YOUROPE envisions CLRA-COILs as a pioneering approach to promote youth participative action and research based on collaborative investigation of societal issues, across cultural contexts, that are implicated by European policy. As a key performance indicator (KPI) of the project, 300 youth are expected to engage in CLRA-COILs.

In summary, CLRA-COILs in YOUROPE are used to support pluralised, inclusive networked learning spaces and activities, enabling youth (16 – 30 years old) from all backgrounds and educational experiences to make meaningful contributions in addressing societal issues of importance to them, that can be influenced by EU policies.

This manual serves as a road map for institutions to embark on their own hybridised CLRA-COIL exchanges. It is separated into three parts as aligned to the description of work within YOUROPE Work Package (WP) 4 ‘Partner Community of Democratic Practice’, and in particular tasks (T) T4.3.

1. Part One

Includes a brief introduction of CLRA-COIL and discusses the strategic preparation and engagement techniques for participating and implementing CLRA-COILs, including how we are creating hybridised and specialised adaptations of COIL as part of YOUROPE for cross-partner exchanges and cross-meaning making, including Transnational Conversations.

2. Part Two

Considers how to utilise partner expertise and YOUROPE student / youth assistants for collaborative learning, discussion, analysis and interaction across CLRA-COIL cycles, reflecting on the why, what and how regarding the exchange and the learning and impact it is having. Drawing on Appreciative Inquiry as our guiding approach this section focuses on how we are evaluating and researching the contribution of CLRA-COILs as part of YOUROPE.

3. Part three

Examines strategies for integrating CLRA-COILs into various formats (curricular, extra-curricular, community-led etc...) and by engaging the wider community.

What we are learning about such implementation is in ensuring the sustainability of online democratic spaces in educational institutions as per our YOUROPE objectives.





How to use this manual

Importantly, we, as YOUROPE researchers, wish the manual to have a strong practical orientation as we see it predominantly as a toolkit; a resource to help guide CLRA-COIL rationales, implementation approaches and sustainability in education practice. As such, we encourage you as readers to go to the parts which speak to your needs and interests.

The manual is to be used as a resource, and it is not necessary to read it from cover to cover.

Additionally, this manual is complemented by two sister resources the [‘Manual for Virtual Interaction’](#) and the [CLRA Handbook](#). These sister resources provide in-depth consideration of the pioneering CLRA Methodology and various approaches advocated for when considering access and inclusion as part of democratic online spaces, within which our hybrid approach to CLRA-COILs are situated. A Glossary of Terms also follows, which enables readers to define unfamiliar terms as they read through the manual content.

In summary, this three-part manual with references and appendices with resource links, has been developed as inspiration for educators, researchers, community stakeholders and importantly CLRA youth ambassadors who are engaging in CLRA-COILs to embrace innovation and foster expansion of networked democratic spaces within educational institutions.

Note. As mentioned in the Pre-Amble currently the manual is Version 1.0 and will continue to be edited and added to during the duration of the YOUROPE project. By the end of the project the manual will become a fully formed Open Access Education Resource.





Glossary of Terms

This CLRA-COIL Glossary of Terms has been brought together by the authors and research partners across the YOUROPE work packages. It continues to be added to. The glossary complements the central YOUROPE Glossary of Terms accessible [here](#).

Key terms related to CLRA-COIL for Democracy

Appreciative Inquiry: a collaborative approach to research and change that focuses on identifying and amplifying strengths rather than deficits. Within YOUROPE, it means engaging youth and communities in a positive, participatory process that values their experiences, knowledge, and aspirations. Instead of asking “what is wrong,” Appreciative Inquiry asks, “what works well and how can we build on it?” It fosters co-creation, democratic dialogue, and empowerment by guiding participants through stages of defining purpose, discovering existing assets, dreaming of desired futures, designing strategies, and delivering sustainable actions.¹

CLRA: Community-Led Research and Action (CLRA) understands democracy as ‘ecologies of relations’² as living, evolving, entangled systems sustained by reciprocity, care, and shared responsibility. CLRA is a relational practice enacted through everyday encounters between people, communities, and environments,³ CLRAs may take place within formal curriculum within education institutions. These may engage students across partner universities, and / or it may engage with community youth not as part of formal education. CLRA is based on 3 R’s (relationality, reciprocity, and reflexivity).

CLRA Ambassador: a young person aged 16 – 30 who represents a community group engaged in a CLRA, or who is a university student who has consented to have project responsibility and who is reimbursed in some way for this effort.

CLRA-COIL Evaluation: Knowledge is co-created; lived experience and embodied expertise are not peripheral but central sources of evidence. Research thus becomes a public and collective act, validating everyday knowledge and making interpretation a shared responsibility. Using democratic criteria, such as inclusiveness, accountability, transparency, equity⁴, the CLRA-COIL exchanges will be tested and adapted throughout the project period. This evaluation will feed into the CLRA model

¹ Cooperrider D. L., Whitney D. (2005). *Appreciative inquiry: A positive revolution in change*. San-Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

² Endo, C. (2024). Care, democracy and ‘being a part of the story.’ *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13698230.2024.2397748>

³ Drawn from content Nov2025_CLRA Guide_Naomi van Stapele

⁴ Lalmuansanga, J. & Lalremruata, T. (2024) Democracy and good governance: A study of its significance. *Senhri Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, 9(2), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.36110/sjms.2024.09.02.001>





for establishing sustainable democratic spaces in educational institutions with underrepresented youth and their communities.

CLRA-COIL Exchanges: There is no 'one size fits all' approach about delivering CLRA-COIL activity. However, this flexibility of CLRA-COIL ensures that there is opportunity and ability to tailor and contextualise activities to the needs of students / youth and community participants, especially underrepresented youth.

CLRA-COIL Facilitator: 'academics', 'lecturers', 'CLRA ambassadors', and 'YOUROPE research staff' are terms used interchangeably and refer to any person who facilitates CLRA-COILs. CLRA-COIL facilitators need to also be consciously considering how participants across the exchange can adhere to the 3 R's principles of CLRA.

Community-Led CLRA-COIL: CLRA-COILs that occur within a community setting outside of a university student or youth's formal education and educational environment. These CLRAs build on the 3 R's principles of CLRAs and work to develop connections with local community organisations, individuals, and groups around an area of importance and interest. The exchange may occur synchronously or asynchronously. When CLRA-COIL occurs issues of 'consent' need to be carefully considered by all parties in the CLRA-COIL exchange and made transparent for all participants.

Curriculum CLRA-COIL: Students who are involved in the CLRA-COIL as part of their formal curriculum may have summative or formative assessment linked in as part of the exchange. The exchange may occur synchronously or asynchronously. When CLRA-COIL occurs within formal curriculum for some students but not all CLRA-COIL participants, issues of performativity and 'consent' to engage as the CLRA-COIL may be mandatory or elective, and such issues need to be carefully considered and made transparent for all participants in the exchange.

Extra-Curricular CLRA-COIL: CLRA-COILs that occur within a setting outside of a university student or youth's formal education but are linked to some aspect of involvement the university student has in addition to schooling (i.e. societies, sport, volunteering, work). These CLRAs build on the 3 R's principles of CLRAs and work to develop connections with local community organisations, individuals, and groups around an area of importance and interest related to the extra/non-curricular work. These CLRA-COILs are not linked to any formal assessment as a part of the CLRA or the COIL exchange. The exchange may occur synchronously or asynchronously. When CLRA-COIL occurs issues of 'consent' need to be carefully considered by all parties in the CLRA-COIL exchange and made transparent for all participants.

CLRA Facilitator: 'academics', 'lecturers', 'CLRA ambassadors', and 'YOUROPE research staff' are terms used interchangeably and refer to any person who facilitates CLRAs

CLRA Participation: As both a pedagogical and political practice CLRA redefines participation. Young people and their community members become Co-Researcher





CLRA Project Cycle: During the project lifetime of YOUROPE it is proposed that the CLRA (Community-Led Research and Action) approach aims to involve 630 young individuals through 42 distinct CLRA projects, each specific to a particular locality, spread over the duration of the project. These projects will each span a period of four months. In this framework, each of the seven participating countries will conduct six CLRA projects over a three-year period, with each project / iteration lasting four months. The project cycle follows that of the Appreciate Inquiry phases of defining, discovering, dreaming, designing, and realising (“destiny”) ⁵. This cycle engages young researchers and community members under the guidance of facilitators in exploring issues that connect their lived realities to European policy.

CLRA 3 'R's: There are three guiding principles of CLRA — the 3 R's: Relational, Reciprocal, and Reflexive. Together they articulate CLRA's ethical and ontological stance: democracy must be lived as an embodied, co-created, and regenerative process that transforms both participants and the institutions that host them ⁶.

COIL (Collaborative, Online, International, Learning): A pedagogical model that connects students and educators across countries through virtual collaboration, fostering intercultural dialogue and shared learning experiences.

Collaborative: Activity which should bring students / youth from two or more (European) contexts together to meaningfully collaborate on a negotiated issue or task. This is not a superficial ‘story sharing’ task.

Community: A fluid, political, and context-bound group united by shared locality (e.g., young people in Poland or the Netherlands) and/or common lived experiences of underrepresentation. Democratic spaces often aim to constitute community through collaborative work across local and transnational settings. Community is non-hierarchical, based on shared goals and mutual exchange. In the context of CLRA we see community as characteristics such as geographical locations, interests, identities, sense of belonging, intersectional considerations and backgrounds that link youth together through CLRA iterations.

Co-Researchers: Young people are not objects of study or passive recipients of policy but co-participants, often bringing their lived experience, as well as any formal academic training, to the YOUROPE project as an equal collaborator

Critical pedagogy in virtual spaces: Terms such as digital poverty have become mainstream and access to the internet and ownership of certain types of technology have become a necessity to access learning. Critical digital pedagogy requires the conscious and considerate integration and

⁵ Stavros, J. M., Stavros, J., & Torres, C. (2021). *Conversations worth having: Using appreciative inquiry to fuel productive and meaningful engagement*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.





adoption of technology as it cannot be assumed teachers and learners are all fully equipped and able to do this without any challenge.

Democracy: a pluralistic system of governance emphasising participation, equality and deliberation, resisting authoritarianism and exclusion.

Democratic space: A collaborative environment where all voices, especially underrepresented youth, are heard and influence decisions. It is:

- Inclusive, equitable, and ethically grounded.
- Designed for shared deliberation, decision-making, and action.
- Open to diversity, tensions, and frictions within safe boundaries.
- **Purpose:** Counter dominant power structures and enable communities to shape policies affecting their lives.
- **Features:** Non-hierarchical, transparent, and participatory; policies here are broad, covering conditions for meaningful engagement.

Digital citizenship education: teaching young people to navigate digital spaces responsibly and democratically.

Digital fluency: being able to confidently and safely use digital tools (i.e. phones, apps, and online platforms) to find information, create content, and communicate with others. In YOUROPE, digital fluency also means understanding how digital spaces shape young people's opportunities to participate in democracy, organise in their communities, and make their voices heard.

Educational Institution: Predominantly referring to higher education institutions / universities across the YOUROPE partner sites but can also include schools and colleges.

European Citizenship: a dynamic concept linked to rights, responsibilities, and active participation in shaping Europe's democratic future. YOUROPE frames it as inclusive and participatory, beyond formal status.

European Policy: European Policy encompasses strategies and regulations developed by EU institutions to guide actions across member states. In YOUROPE, these policies influence democratic education, youth participation, and inclusion, providing a framework that connects local and national initiatives to broader European goals.

Inclusive platforms: Spaces (online or in person) designed so that everyone, regardless of identity, language, background, or ability, can access, contribute, and participate fully and equally. These platforms prioritise accessibility, flexibility, and welcoming practices that remove barriers to involvement. For YOUROPE, this means creating spaces where young people have real power in discussions, decision making, and research, using tools that are accessible, flexible, and welcoming.

Inclusive policy: Policy-making that uses accessible language for youth, addresses topics relevant to their lived experiences and ensures process that are transparent and participatory.





International: The CLRA-COIL collaboration should be cross-European, bringing together learners from different cultural contexts. This serves as a way to develop intercultural skills, attitudes, and values by encouraging students / youth from different backgrounds to work together. Although it is feasible to have COIL in which there are multiple partners from the same country, at least one should be a wider European partner in order to differentiate the activity for richer learning.

Language and translanguaging: The flexible use of all a person's languages, communication styles, and expressive resources (i.e. speaking, writing, signing, drawing, and digital or visual forms) to make meaning, communicate ideas, and engage with others. Translanguaging recognises that people naturally move between these modes and values and this fluidity enables richer expression and deeper understanding. Within YOUROPE, we see translanguaging as a strength. It allows young people to express themselves in the ways that feel most true to who they are, helping us understand ideas more deeply and democratically.

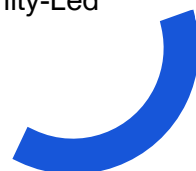
Learning: CLRA-COIL exchanges should be meaningful and relevant to all participants learning. This goes beyond subject knowledge as students / youth will be developing and applying their own competences, skills, values, attitudes and their own communication skills.

Nonlinear pedagogy: a way of learning that does not follow a strict set of organised one-size-fits-all steps and recognises that learning is complex, people learn in different ways and at different speeds. This approach is learner-focused and means that young people and researchers explore ideas together, try things out, change direction when needed, and build knowledge collaboratively rather than following a fixed pre-defined plan.

Online: a virtual space, a platform, used to facilitate exchange between students / youth, without the need for physical mobility. The space enables activities which include synchronous and asynchronous collaboration, and can take place during class time, but also can occur outside the regular contact hours as part of extra-curricular or non-curricular time. Online, digital activities will need to be adapted depending on the nature of the activity and the practical realities of time zones and connectivity across partner sites, as well as participants access to devices and digital literacy.

Partner Learning Community: A Partner Learning Community in YOUROPE is a collaborative, networked space where all 17 project partners engage in a dynamic cycle of learning, action, adaptation, and evaluation. Rooted in the principles of Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) and internationalisation at home, the PLC moves beyond traditional virtual exchange models by creating flexible, inclusive forums for active participation. It leverages local resources and diverse perspectives to co-create globally oriented learning experiences, enabling partners to share insights from CLRA projects, analyse data collectively, and generate innovative strategies for democratic engagement. This continuous feedback loop fosters mutual learning, sustainability, and the development of inclusive approaches to European citizenship and democracy.

Policy: Policy in YOUROPE is understood as an inclusive, participatory, and co-created process that connects underrepresented youth, their communities, and policymakers at local, national, and European levels. Rather than being a top-down directive, policy emerges through Community-Led





Research and Action (CLRA) and iterative dialogue within democratic spaces. It is shaped by lived experiences, intersectional perspectives, and collaborative design, ensuring that policies reflect real needs and aspirations. In YOUROPE, policy is both a process (developing democratic roadmaps and sustaining participatory mechanisms), and a product, resulting in frameworks, toolkits, and actions that strengthen European democracy. This approach aligns with Horizon Europe's emphasis on transparency, sustainability, and empowerment, embedding inclusive policymaking into educational institutions and fostering long-term impact beyond the project.

Students: Youth aged between 16 – 30 in education, particularly higher education

Third Space: a shared collaborative environment (physical or digital), where people bring together their lived experiences, cultural knowledge, and identities with more formal, institutional, or academic knowledge. In this space, traditional power boundaries soften, allowing participants to co-create new understandings, practices, and relationships that would not emerge in either setting alone. Third spaces in YOUROPE are spaces where everyone can bring their full identity and experience.

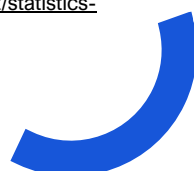
Underrepresented/Minoritised/Excluded/Marginalised: groups systematically denied equal participation or recognition in democratic processes due to social, cultural, or structural barriers.

Virtual: see online

Youth: young people aged 16 – 30 in education, employment, training (EET), or none of these categories (NEET) ⁷. Can vary depending on European context and around different European policy issues. For example, for the European Commission youth are aged up to 35, and in our YOUROPE Transnational Conversations, we have invited youth aged 16-35.

There is not one size fits all for CLRA-COIL and so be prepared to be agile and creative - we are figuring this pioneering practice out together!

⁷ Eurostat (2025). *Statistics on young people neither in employment nor in education or training*. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Statistics_on_young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_or_training





Part One

Brief Introduction and Strategic Preparation and Engagement Techniques

Brief Introduction of CLRA-COIL

Note. Please refer to Appendix 1 for a brief background to COIL

The CLRA methodology (Community-led Research and Action) is the backbone of the **HORIZON YOUROPE project**, which seeks to revitalise European democracy by democratising universities and connecting underrepresented youth and their communities directly with policy processes. Within these **locally grounded, inclusive in participation and transformative in outcome** CLRA projects (van Stapele, 2026), underrepresented youth are creating democratising spaces. To extend the reach and invoke wider impact of these CLRAs and democratising spaces across Europe, the CLRA methodology is linked with COIL.

Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) typically involves the co- development of a set of online tasks and/or a course module by two or more academic staff / tutors from different cultural contexts / countries, where students from different parts of the world learn together on a common area of focus (Wimpenny et al, 2022).

With emphasis on the benefits of an interconnected communicative learning environment and acknowledgement of the digital space, COIL emphasises learners' active interaction and knowledge construction for meaningful learning impact (Wimpenny & Orsini-Jones, 2020).

Attention is focused on how learners engage with the learning community and make sense of their learning considering individuals' experiences viewed in the context of history, social and cultural perspective, and the political sphere (Wimpenny & Orsini-Jones, 2020).

COIL typically occurs in higher education, although it is also known to be used in school contexts (see, for example, Spieler et al, 2025). COIL is also known through a number of other terms such as 'virtual mobility', (Villar-Onrubia & Rajpal, 2016). Where there is more of a specific focus on the intercultural aspect of the interaction, it is also sometimes referred to as 'Online Intercultural Exchange (OIE)', 'telecollaboration', 'virtual exchange' or 'e-tandem learning' (Lewis & O'Dowd, 2016, p.3).



COIL is intended to “experientially stretch students understanding of the world and their place within it” (Rubin, 2017: 76).

1. Examination of societal issues & relationships to local & (inter)national concerns
2. Space for indigenising online learning environments (Nelson and Parchoma 2018)
3. Requires built in space for personal and collaborative reflection

Further, COIL offers opportunity to interrupt a western hegemony (cf. Baumvol, 2019) and open up learning spaces for alternative ways of knowing, being, relating and expressing, which we acknowledge as Third Space learning (Jørgensen et al., 2020; Soja, 1996).

As a Third Space, we, as authors and researchers posit that COIL can offer a productive, dialogic, and reflective space that enables new possibility to redress past inequalities and injustices, to challenge the dominance of western knowledge and pedagogy, and to question the colonial roots of university practices and curricula (du Preez, 2018). As a fertile in-between space, an interruptive and interrogative space (Bhabha, 1994), we suggest COIL offers a Third Space where multiple discourses may be woven together without sacrificing or dismissing the importance of their speakers’ experiences and ways of knowing the world (Wimpenny et al., 2022, p. 281).

COIL as Third Space Learning

COIL promotes:

Opportunity to wrestle with uncertainty, risk & educational challenge (Soja, 1996)

Approaches for sharing knowledge with less territorial approaches (e.g., Algan, 2018)

Critical thinking, hospitality (Potgieter, 2015) and cultural humility

COIL exchanges as cross-border learning communities promotes opportunities for linking knowledge to action for positive change at a local level and beyond (following Freire, 1972) and in a non-hierarchical manner (Perold-Bull, 2020).

Within the YOUROPE project, COILs are adapted to correspond with CLRAs, meaning they may not directly follow traditional COIL practices, but will likely take on newly derived conceptualisations garnered from the CLRAs to further extend their aims and outcomes – not least as CLRA-COILs will engage with youth and their communities beyond the traditional classroom and curricula. CLRA-COILs are therefore expected to play an essential role in enabling locally relevant topics and activities from CLRA to be shared across partner contexts for wider transnational exchange and learning.



Values and Principles underpinning CLRA-COIL

CLRA-COIL is built on three principles. These are not rules — they are ways of being together that make democratic space possible.

Relationality

We work with people, not on them. In CLRA-COIL, no one is a research subject or a data point. We come together as people — with histories, experiences, and knowledge that matter. So, we take time to build trust, listen before speaking, and start from the assumption that everyone in the room brings something worth hearing.

Reflexivity

We keep asking ourselves hard questions. Who is speaking? Who isn't? Whose ideas are shaping what we do? Reflexivity means being honest about power — including our own — and being willing to change direction when something is not working. We will not get it perfect. The point is staying awake to what is happening.

Reciprocity

Everyone gives, everyone gains. What we create together belongs to all of us — we are not here to extract stories or insights from one group for the benefit of another. That asks us to be clear about what each person and community will get from the process, and not only when it is finished.



What kind of space are we trying to create?

CLRA-COIL is more than a meeting format or an online exchange. It's an attempt to create a different kind of space — one where democracy actually happens, where people don't only talk about it.

A space where something is at stake

The best CLRA-COIL sessions happen when everyone in the room cares about the same question — even if they see it differently. We are not here to practice skills or tick boxes. We are here because something matters: an injustice, a possibility, a change we want to see. That shared concern is what holds the space together.

A space that stays open

Facilitators are not here to steer participants toward a conclusion, but to keep the space open — to make sure all voices can be heard, to slow things down when needed, to notice who is not speaking. Authority in CLRA-COIL looks like care**, not control**.

A space where no one has the final answer

In most classrooms, someone already knows the answer. In CLRA-COIL, we are figuring things out together — facilitators and lecturers included, and yes, even the most confident voice in the room.

A space that belongs to everyone in it

This is a space created with and by youth, not for them. That means you have a say in how it runs, what gets discussed, and what happens with what we learn. If it does not feel like yours, something has gone wrong.

Figure 1: an example of a 'post-it' note exercise accessing youth





Who owns what we create — and who benefits?

In CLRA-COIL, we create things together: ideas, stories, questions, artwork, proposals, sometimes policy recommendations. But who do these belong to? And who gets to use them?

It's yours first

What you share in a CLRA-COIL — your experience, your insight, your words — remains yours. No one can use it without your consent. No one can publish or present it without checking with you first. We take that seriously.

Documentation is for us:

We document what we do — through notes, recordings, reflection logs, creative work. The point is to hold our learning together, so we can look back and build on it. Not to capture you for someone else's research.

Visibility is a choice

Some people want their names attached to what they contribute. Others prefer to stay anonymous. Both are valid. You decide how visible you want to be — and you can change your mind.

What leaves the room, we decide together

When something from a CLRA-COIL gets shared more widely — in a report, an exhibition, a policy conversation — that decision is made collectively. We ask: who benefits from this? Does it serve the people and communities who created it? If the answer isn't clear, we pause.

No extraction

Outsiders don't come here to collect stories and leave. If institutions or researchers want to learn from what we do, they do so on terms that benefit everyone involved.



Wider hybrid forms of COILs as part of YOUROPE (linking in WP3 and WP5)

Additionally, and moving into wider hybrid forms of COILs as part of YOUROPE we will be focusing on how COILs can:

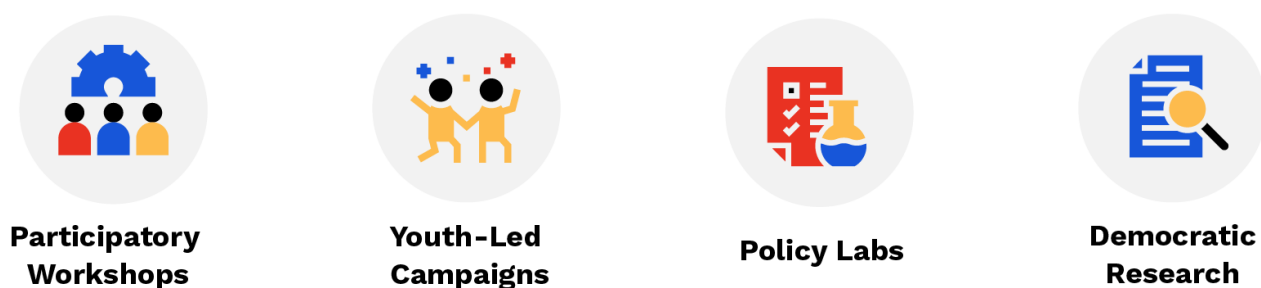
Challenge traditional notions of European Citizenship

CLRA-COILs or wider hybrid forms of transnational exchange will enable the perspectives and experiences of young people and their communities to expand the traditional understanding of European Citizenship, creating a more inclusive and diverse vision of democracy in Europe, reflective of its varied cultures, histories, and experiences.

YOUROPE COILs for Policy Impact

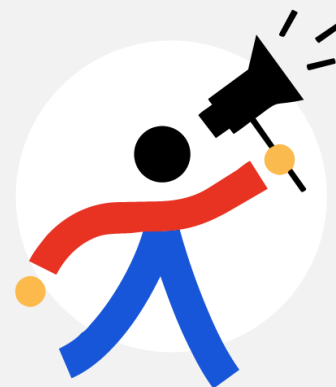
CLRA-COILs or their wider hybrid forms will help define and translate local learnings, actions and insights from youth-led policy initiatives into actionable and sustainable democratic policy roadmaps.

Figure 2: Examples of how CLRA COIL can lead support youth-led policy initiatives



RECAP: Why Combine COIL + CLRA?

- CLRA grounds learning in real-world community action
 - COIL bridges local-global perspectives through digital exchange
 - CLRA-COILs can empower youth voices and foster democratic engagement
- Democratic engagement can enhance ability to reach & spotlight underrepresented voices
- CLRA-COILs will support YOUROPE's policy pathways & policy development





We are appreciating that there are multiple ways to accomplish collaboration, conversation, and learning in a democratised networked learning space. This means our YOUROPE virtual interaction is and will continue to take place with various stakeholders and YOUROPE work package (WP) members. CLRA-COILs will likely take many forms but may lead to similar outcomes. Going forward, we will continue to interrogate these relationships and interactions and reflect on their applicability.

- CLRA-COIL is used in YOUROPE to enable collaborative examination of societal issues and relationships considering local to transnational concerns.
- CLRA-COIL offers space for creating pluralised online democratic and networked learning environments.
- CLRA-COIL provides space for personal and collaborative action and reflection including challenging participants' prior held assumptions.





CLRA-COILs for cross-partner exchanges and cross meaning making

YOUROPE project partners and youth need to be equipped with enough information and tools to ensure collaborative learning and discussion can be present in CLRA-COIL experiences.

Further in aspiring to be youth-led, the shape and practice of CLRA-COILs cannot be overly stated but with the guiding CLRA 3 R's – **Relationality** – **Reflexivity** – **Reciprocity** - can only evolve.

Preparing YOUROPE project partners and particularly YOUROPE youth to engage in CLRA-COILs in a meaningful way requires supportive methods of training, guidance and facilitation.

Relationality – Reflexivity – Reciprocity: CLRA-COIL facilitators need to have appropriate intercultural knowledge, skills and ways to sign-post to helpful resources to help scaffold learners' contributions and perspectives so that:

- CLRA-COILs are promoted in ways that students / youth / facilitators can all appreciate their relevance and connection to their learning, and or life more general within their community.
- Students / youth / facilitators can all reflect on their respective biases, privileges and assumptions (Kumagai & Lyson, 2009).

To best accomplish these complex but essential goals in CLRA-COIL exchanges and to strategically prepare facilitators in this work several practical strategies, approaches, and considerations have been developed and networked.

CLRA COIL Co-lab training

As part of our YOUROPE activities, colleagues within work package 4, which focuses on the partner learning community and CLRA-COIL practices, delivered a 'CLRA-COIL Co-lab' over 2 days in April 2025. This was relatively early to start the conversation about CLRA-COILs as for some partners, they were not able to engage in local CLRAs or were only just getting going with their CLRA methodology. Nonetheless, work package 4 colleagues were mindful of how to keep partners cognisant of the COIL relationship to CLRAs, not least so that when partners reflected on their CLRA practices, they could be considering ways forward for how they could envision brining in COILs and that with prior awareness such CLRA-COILs could being feasibly, ethically and innovatively considered in ways that were meaningful within their contexts.

Figure 3 below is an image of break out room reflective conversations from the CLRA-COIL Co-lab on considerations that are needed when doing a COIL and how it can be implemented within the project. Participants utilised a MIRO board and inserted sticky notes with their response.

Note: see the Manual for Virtual Interaction for how we have used various platforms and online tools to encourage participant engagement in diverse ways.



Figure 3: A MIRO screengrab from a break-out room conversation during the CLRA-COIL Co-lab

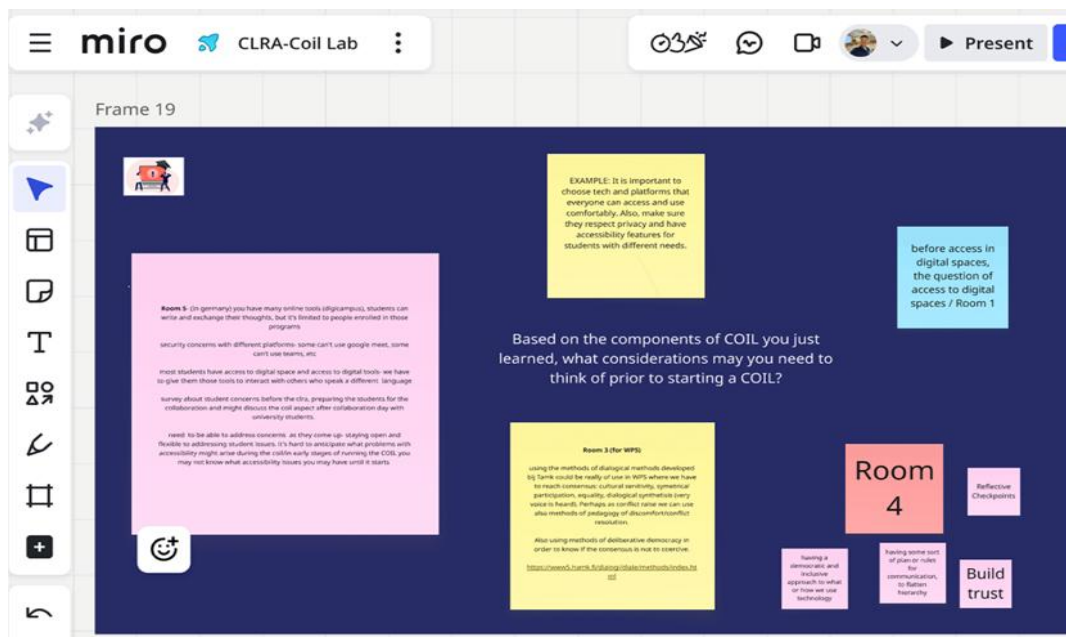


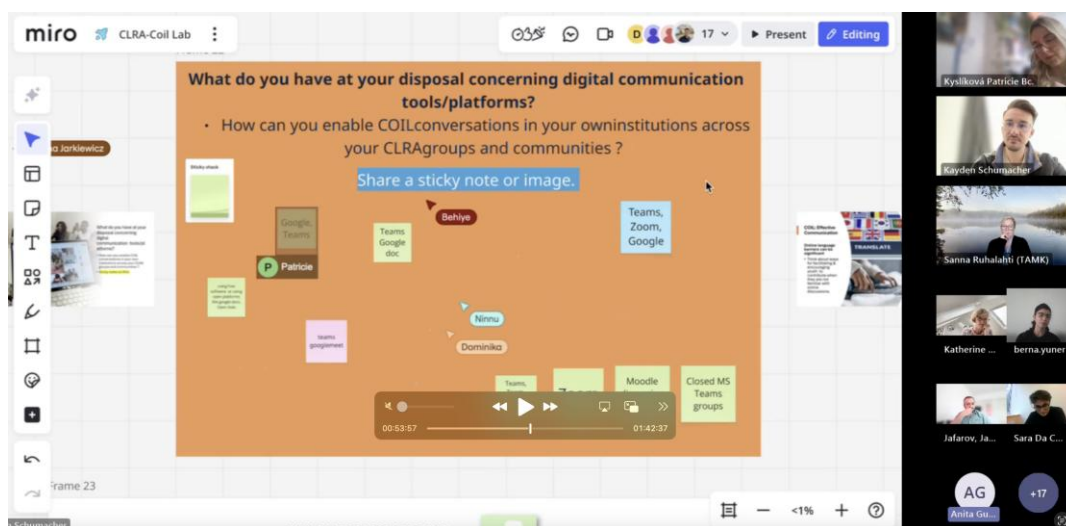
Figure 4 below depicts a few participant's answers at the end of the first day of the project's CLRA-COIL Co-lab. We asked participants to share 1 thing they learned, 1 thing they found interesting and 1 question they still have. Participants had the chance to utilise the MIRO board and insert a sticky note with their response.

Figure 4 :Sticky-note responses on MIRO addressing 3 question prompts



Figure 5 below shows a recording from the CLRA-COIL Co-Lab and how participants were virtually present and could collaborate via several avenues with digital tools. Participants could unmute and speak; type into the chat of the call; share sticky notes on the MIRO board around the question at hand; and also share their responses by writing into a ‘parking lot space’ on the MIRO board.

Figure 5: Screen grab from CLRA-COIL Co-Lab sharing various ways in which



Following the Co-Lab and drawing on the ideas partners generated during the 2-day workshops, YOUROPE work package 4 colleagues were able to start thinking more assertedly about how to start to curate some early CLRA-COIL processes, resources and tools.

What follows is the beginnings of a facilitator-ready toolkit, organised into a clear, step-by-step structure for getting going with, and running, a CLRA-COIL (Community-Led Research and Action - Collaborative Online International Learning) partnership.



CLRA-COIL Facilitator Toolkit: A Step-by-Step Guide to Starting and Running Your CLRA-COIL Partnership

Step 1: Define the focus and scope of the CLRA-COIL exchange

A first step as a facilitator in preparing for a CLRA-COIL exchange is to consider if engaging in COIL would be useful in the context and content of the CLRA.

Ask yourself when is it actually not appropriate, safe, or ethical to engage in a CLRA-COIL?

This point emerged as some of the CLRA themes, individuals and content YOUROPE colleagues shared may be triggering or deemed as confidential or shared in confidence within the local CLRA context. Perhaps there are finite time issues, or the CLRA may be focused on a very local issue which requires very local consideration. Therefore, due to certain instances, not all CLRAs will have a CLRA-COIL.

Define the focus and scope of the CLRA-COIL - a key consideration therefore is why it would be useful to engage in such an exchange.

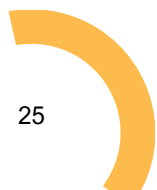
Consider issues of sustainability from the outset - As an outcome of our YOUROPE project is to implement strategies for sustaining CLRA-COILs in education institutions as democratic spaces it is also important to consider the intended and potential learning that the CLRA-COIL is seeking to enable. Considering sustainability from the outset can help reinforce CLRA-COILs contribution and value.

Figuring out the focus and reason to engage in an exchange involves due consideration of who to partner with and why.

Step 2: Finding the Right Partner

Finding the right CLRA-COIL partner facilitator is foundational to the success of your collaboration.

Once you confirm a clear rationale for why a CLRA-COIL makes good sense (which as part of formal curriculum might be termed as the anticipated learning outcomes), the next critical step is to find the right partner and align logistics so your collaboration can function smoothly both synchronously and asynchronously.





Key Logistical Questions

Use these early to clarify aspects of compatibility:

- **Do we start our CLRAs at similar times?** This is not essential but might be important in the context of what has been learnt to date
- **Are our CLRA iterations of similar length?** This is not essential but remember we are suggesting you need to plan for 3 exchanges between partners
- **Can we meet synchronously at least three times and using what platform?** See the following section and ideas for early, mid-iteration, and final sharing

Step 3: Understanding Each Other's Contexts

It is important as facilitators seeking to partner across institutions / contexts that you understand each other's experience, approach, and facilitation style - Using a mapping approach which seeks to capture logistical information can help you in this process

CLRA-COILs should speak to the realities and aspirations of the youth and communities involved - Starting points include the democratic themes of note which youth have voiced would be valuable to share.

Remember to be inclusive. The focus for partnership especially for our YOUROPE project has been those voices which are least heard in social and political debate.

Use guiding questions to help think through ways to organise a CLRA-COIL exchange: For example,

“what and how can we best share local realities for cross learning and what new possibilities can we build together?”

Discuss / think about your students / young people

- What do students/young people expect from CLRAs?
- **How committed are they expected to be—and why?** (credits, financial support, institutional recognition, community-based recognition, etc.)
- What essential information should I share about my students/youth with my transnational partner?

This shift from local actions to co-enactments across European partner contexts, further acknowledges and builds on agency, nurtures hope, and transforms inquiry into a more transnational rehearsal for democratic action.





Discuss amongst facilitators

- **Map key issues from local CLRAs** - CLRA-COIL facilitators typically begin by mapping key issues from CLRA, exploring what democracy looks and feels like in considering the particular issue including local priorities, social dynamics, and existing assets. In doing so, each CLRA-COIL exchange **grows from the ground up**, shaped by the lives and landscapes it inhabits and can cross-fertilise.

 **You can use a CLRA Mapping Document individually and then discuss together.**

- **What is my experience with previous CLRAs?** Previous experience is not essential but as we have learnt in our YOUROPE project, regular meetings with other CLRA facilitators can provide a very valuable support network
- **What challenges have I faced?** Our YOUROPE Partner Learning Community approach has enabled CLRA facilitators to share and exchange and learn from experience together
- What strengths do I bring to this CLRA-COIL partnership?
- How can we combine our strengths for best outcomes?

 **Partnering Template: Aiding in the design and facilitation of CLRA-COILs, the YOUROPE team have created a partnering template.**

Below is a sample of our partnering template used within the YOUROPE project, but we view this template as one which can be adapted and morphed based on partnering needs.





Figure 6: Example section of the YOUROPE CLRA-COIL Partnering Template

Section 1: Partner Organisation Information

Partner Organisation Name	
Primary Contact Person:	
Email Address:	
Phone Number (if applicable)	
Location (City, Country):	

Section 2: Mission and project focus

Briefly describe your CLRA's theme and core activities: <i>(Max 150 words)</i>	What are your key areas of focus (Perspective within theme = helped with links to WP3 and 5 partners)
--	--

Section 4: Availability and Commitment

Preferred timeline for collaboration (when in CLRA process)? ☐ Autumn/Fall ☐ Winter ☐ Spring ☐ Open/Flexible	How much time per week/month can your organisation commit to a COIL project? ☐ 1–2 hours/week ☐ 3–5 hours/week ☐ Other: _____
Any other notes	

Please refer to *Appendix 2* for a full copy of the template, and also a link to a downloadable version.

This template can be used to share:

- different/diverse perspectives from the CLRA groups
- logistical concerns such as the language(s) that are going to be used in the CLRA-COIL
- the disciplinary area and stage of learning (e.g., Year 1 Psychology students enrolled on a Bachelor's or Master's Degree) of each of the CLRA-COIL partners
- How many students would be involved from each partner
- How many exchanges might occur within the timeframe available
- where each partner is at in their CLRA cycle
- and much more...



Note: As these COILs are tightly connected and embedded in the work of the CLRAs, they are referred to and aligned with the work of CLRAs which is predominately within work package 2 of the YOUROPE project.

However, the COIL methodology and practice can, and will be applied in the work of several of the other work packages within the YOUROPE project.

For example, in Work Package 3, COILs can be implemented around designing the EU Citizenship Toolkit and Survey Design and in Work Package 5, COILs will be employed around Participatory Policymaking.

Therefore, the use of COILs is not strictly tied to CLRAs but within this manual, the central focus is around CLRA-COILs.

Summary of considerations when planning to set up and facilitate a CLRA-COIL:

Partnering - who, when, where and what next?

CLRA-COIL facilitators across partners support initial set up:

- When thinking about partners consider a mutually beneficial theme focus Work with WP3 findings as precursor themes of note
- Plan for a minimum 3 CLRA-COIL exchanges - Plan with the end goal in mind
- Weave in how WP5 democratic roadmaps for inclusive policy relate Consider manageable numbers of participants for voices to be heard Think about use of inclusive language(s)
- What online platform will be accessible - Teams, Zoom, WhatsApp
- Be mindful of partner time zones (synchronous & asynchronous activities) Build in time for individual and group reflection and evaluation Consider sustainability - what will you do next?



Step 4: Designing Synchronous (and Asynchronous) CLRA - COIL Learning Experiences

Mutually Beneficial Collaboration and Learning

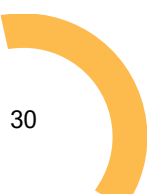
Start from the core question:

WHY are we doing CLRA together as a COIL?

- What unique value comes from international collaboration?

Meaningful collaboration and learning

- What fundamentally are the reasons for learning together?
- Consider how experiential learning activities can be designed and implemented to encourage collaborative learning



Suggest use this framing to co-define the learning outcomes of your CLRA-COIL in four key areas:



Intercultural Learning

- What will students gain about navigating cultural differences?



Community Engagement

- What can students learn from each other's approaches to community engagement?
- Will this help improve their own community practice?



Action & Policy Recommendations

- How will interanational collaboration strengthen the actions and policy ssssrecommendations students produce?
- Are the actions or policies transferable across national settings?



Democratic Spaces

- How will the "democratic space" created in CLRAs benefit from intercultural ssssexchange through CLRA-COILs?
- How can we ensure the space remains inclusive across cultures?
 - Consider language issues
 - Platform of choice
 - Timing of sessions
 - Digital literacy
 - "Listening for understanding" (UNESCO story circle methodology)



European Identity & Democracy

- Will the experience enhance students' sense of European identity and active citizenship?
- How will we measure for this / know this and in what ways?

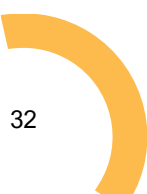


Designing a 3-exchange CLRA-COIL

To gain the full benefit of collaborative online learning, from our YOUROPE learning to date, we suggest plan for at least three synchronous sessions during the CLRA iteration.

Table 1: An example of how to plan for 3 CLRA-COIL Sessions

Session 1: Theme Introductions, Exploration & Community Access	
Learning Outcome	• Student introductions across contexts • Students discuss the (key) issues affecting their local communities and analyse approaches to community engagement used during local CLRAs.
Plan	Introductions and inclusive icebreaker activities: • Remind group of the CLRA 3 'R's to support group etiquette / 'ground rules' • Across the local groups, students present their 'key' CLRA themes: • Why did we choose this topic? What change do we want to make? • In international breakout rooms: • Compare local differences. • Share plans for accessing communities. • Brainstorm new ideas and identify potential challenges using cross-cultural insights.
Output	A shared MIRO board / Padlet gathering: • International perspectives on themes • Strategies for community engagement • Identified challenges and opportunities
Session 2: Process Guidance & the 7 Rs	
Learning Outcome	Students reflect on the CLRA process and deepen their understanding of the 3 Rs.



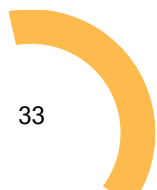


Plan	- Students share their approaches to connecting with/entering communities. - Reflect on the 7 Rs: - Discuss “<i>What is working? What challenges are emerging?</i> “ - In international breakout rooms: - Peer feedback on the 3 Rs - Joint brainstorming on overcoming challenges
Output	Continue to update MIRO board/Padlet with thinking and reflection
Session 3: Sharing Outputs & Empowering One Another	
Learning Outcome	Students recognise their individual strengths as well as collective forces. They discuss ways how they can build together social/political recognition of their communities.
Plan	Groups share the outputs of their CLRAs (short videos recommended). International breakout rooms ask: “Where do we go from here?” discussions - Explore how to continue supporting communities - Consider how actions might influence policy change
Output	Connect policy with CLRA-COIL discussions leading to a collaborative policy output = (e.g. Shared Policy Petition to MEPs)

Asynchronous Shared Interactive International Resource Space

After the CLRA iteration:

- Upload the short videos and other outputs to a shared online space.
- Allow current and future students to explore, interact, comment, and respond with feedback, emojis, or questions.
- Encourage an ongoing international learning community.





Facilitator Reflection & Closing the Loop

After the collaboration ends, schedule time with your partner facilitator to reflect.

Reflection Questions

Learning Outcomes

- Revisit the WHY.
- Did you fulfil the intercultural, democratic, and community-engagement goals?
 - Why or why not?
 - What would you recommend for the future?

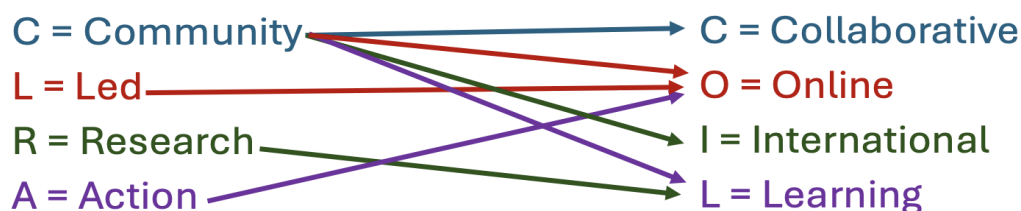
Synchronous Sessions

- How did the sessions go?
- What worked well?
- What should be improved?

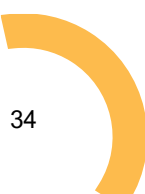
Partnership Learning

- What did you learn about your partner?
- What did you learn about yourself?

RECAP: CLRA-COIL Impacts



CLRA-COIL exchanges prompt more than one meeting between youth participants, thereby following a sequential format, whereby it is emphasised that the exchanges build on each other.





Learning from CLRA-COILs and linked Hybrid Approaches

‘CLRA-COIL Speed Friending activities’

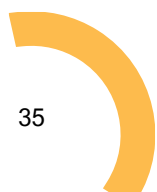
The idea of ‘speed-friending’ was taken from a first CLRA iteration with partners at the University of Lodz where a hybrid meeting was organised with some of their YOUROPE youth representatives. There are several CLRAs in action at Lodz.

In this meeting Lodz students presented their CLRA projects to one another in a few sentences. It was a rich opportunity to share practices and raise curiosity, interest and enthusiasm. Taking this ‘speed-friending’ approach online and as part of Transnational Conversations (which may lead into CLRA-COILs) seems like a good opportunity to build on.

‘Meta-level CLRA-COILs; small conferences across wider contexts’

From what we are learning to date in YOUROPE it seems there is possibility to facilitate meta CLRA-COILs as part of conference activities bringing together facilitators of CLRA-COILs from other cross-Europe. At our Conference event this Autumn in Lodz we will pilot such an opportunity – more to follow!

A focus on **Transnational Conversations**, as a hybrid approach to CLRA-COILs, and their use, is covered in the next section below.





Transnational Conversations

Transnational Youth-Empowering Conversations as a step to CLRA-COILs.

You may wish to consider an additional format of collaboration as part of your thinking and planning and facilitation of CLRA-COILs.

As well as the CLRA-COILs in progress, as part of our YOUROPE project, we conceived there can be **multiple methods of engaging in ‘transnational exchange’ or ‘virtual interaction’**.

Whereas CLRA-COIL builds mutual learning on thematic similarity between projects, Transnational Conversations rely on creating a dialogic context in which key events, dynamics, and processes of youth civic engagement can be examined across diverse contexts and manifestations

Transnational Conversations in YOUROPE emerged in response to identified needs across multiple work packages. This initiative exemplifies how Cross-work package collaboration enables:

- rapid response to contextual developments
- integration of youth perspectives
- creation of novel, cross-cutting solutions aligned with project objectives
- learning about oneself and one’s positionality within processes of social change, from the level of everyday local contexts to the broader arena of European policy.

Rationale for YOUROPE Transnational Conversations

Our collective learning across YOUROPE has surfaced two particularly relevant issues:

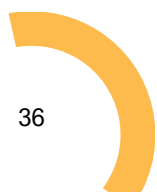
- Varying levels of student interest in engaging with CLRA projects (e.g. concerns raised early on by colleagues from TAMK, Finland);
- Differing motivations for youth participation, including the perception of insufficient financial compensation as a disengaging factor (raised by Czech colleagues).

Building on these observations, we came to understand that, although projects share a common methodological framework, their implementation unfolds within locally specific contexts.

These contextual components significantly shape what young people actually learn through their civic engagement.

For this reason, we consider it valuable to broaden students’ perspectives by exposing them to these contextual differences.

By recognising, naming, and reflecting on such variations, young participants can better understand the diverse ways in which they contribute to sustaining a shared community of European values.





Our ideas for these Transnational Conversations was also prompted by the University of DePaul, in the US and their [“Global Conversations”](#) methodology ⁸.

Transnational Conversations align with Horizon Europe principles of collaboration, inclusivity, and excellence in project implementation.

Students can attend a YOUROPE Transnational Conversation as a standalone activity. Youth can be involved from any stage of their CLRA and may not be linked to a CLRA in order to participate. Transnational Conversations in this way can be considered as a bridge between virtual interaction and CLRA-COILs.

Whatever the case, as with CLRA-COILs, it is important that something mutually reciprocal / collaboratively meaningful is offered to all those participating in the Transnational Conversation.

Transformative Pedagogy of Transnational Conversations

Steps to consider

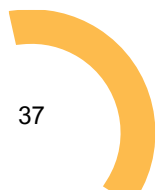
Transnational Conversations are designed to support transformative learning around the characteristics, processes, obstacles, and challenges emerging in youth civic engagement projects. Think about how activities with a shared overarching goal are implemented can foster self-reflective, transformative processes and initiate negotiations of one’s own identity within a field of actions carried out by diverse actors—working toward a common aim yet realising it in varied ways.

Create conditions for transformative learning - during Transnational Conversations dialogic processes stimulate participants to question their assumptions and engage in intercultural reflection on the ethos of research aimed at participatory change. The ethos of participatory research is not uniform.

A shared reflective space in Transnational Conversations allows young researchers to:

- Observe how institutional conditions in which projects are implemented (e.g., remuneration, organisational structures) affect their relationships with participants
- Reflect on what it means to be a responsible researcher-activist in relation to marginalised communities.

⁸ In WP4 exchange with DePaul colleagues we are exploring submitting a proposal for YOUROPE as a Global Conversation as part of their next series.





This approach aligns with the principles of intercultural pedagogy, which emphasises the need to analyse power relations even within emancipatory practices. As Melter (2006) highlights in critical pedagogy, “Power relations must be reflected upon even where action is guided by good intentions”.

Format of Transnational Conversations

Transnational conversations take place in a virtual environment through regular synchronous sessions - this enables representatives from different CLRAs to come together regardless of their thematic focus or stage in the research–action process.

The core objective of Transnational Conversations is to foster an inclusive and flexible environment that connects participants working on diverse topics situated at different stages of the appreciative inquiry and CLRA cycle and embedded within various disciplinary contexts.

Transnational conversations are envisioned as a series of recurring online meetings - in YOUROPE we organised the conversations as open, consortium-wide exchanges, to which young people involved in CLRAs could voluntarily sign up.

The Transnational Conversation space remains open and non-restrictive - with no predefined thematic boundaries, allowing all young CLRA participants to engage meaningfully.

Each Transnational Conversation is structured around a guiding theme or shared concern - providing a common focus for reflection, experience-sharing, and collective sense-making.

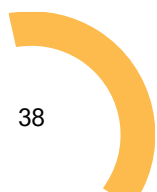
Accessibility and Participation

Young researchers actively shape both the content and format of Transnational Conversations - ensuring that their perspectives and decisions meaningfully guide the learning process.

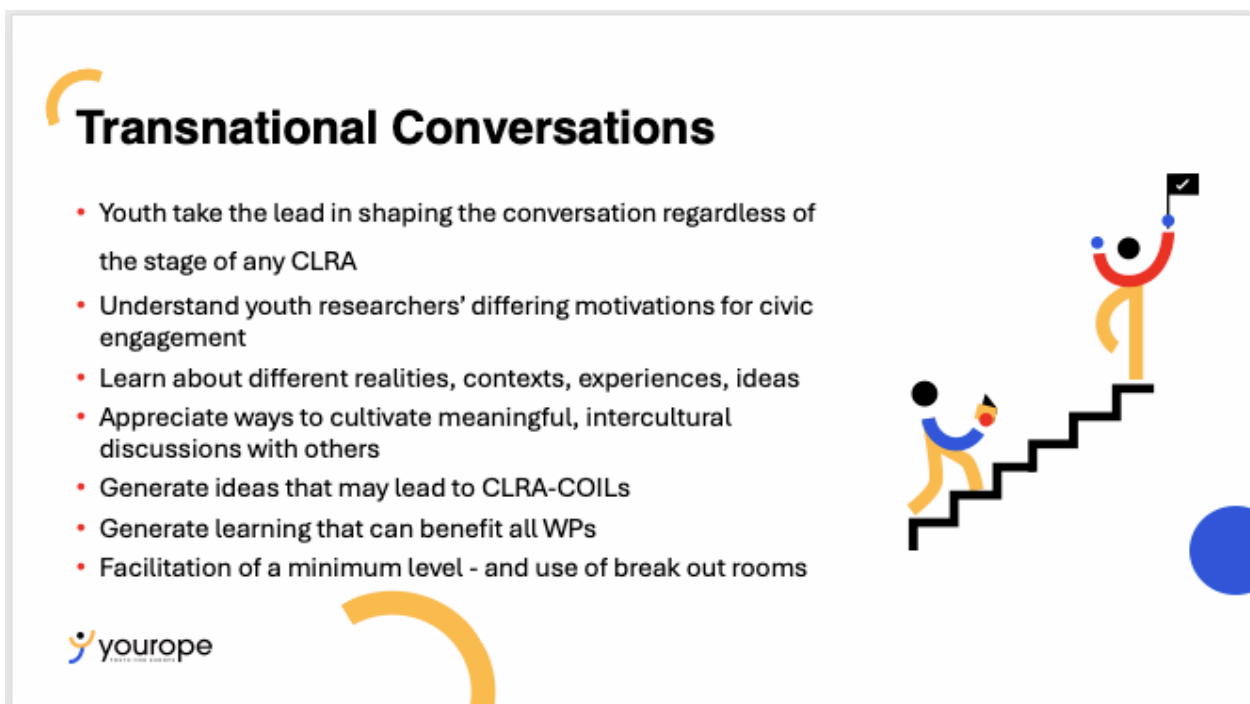
Participation is voluntary and open - with no prerequisite involvement in a specific CLRA and no predefined roles within the conversations.

Participation is understood as active engagement in decision-making related to the focus and evolving structure of the Transnational Conversations - While an initial framework supports transformative learning, both content and format remain open to youth input and may be adapted over time through co-creation. As the process matures, responsibility for communication is progressively transferred to young researchers, supported by a gradual reduction in facilitation to strengthen ownership of the dialogue and learning process.

Participants include students and young researchers from YOUROPE partner countries, as well as selected young collaborators from institutions beyond the consortium - External participants

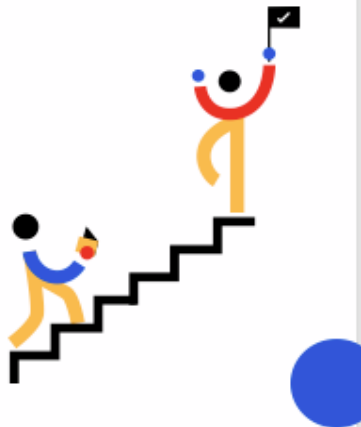


are invited to intentionally introduce diverse perspectives, based on their experience in socially and politically engaged, action-oriented research within non-European contexts.



Transnational Conversations

- Youth take the lead in shaping the conversation regardless of the stage of any CLRA
- Understand youth researchers' differing motivations for civic engagement
- Learn about different realities, contexts, experiences, ideas
- Appreciate ways to cultivate meaningful, intercultural discussions with others
- Generate ideas that may lead to CLRA-COILs
- Generate learning that can benefit all WPs
- Facilitation of a minimum level - and use of break out rooms




Aims of a suggested Transnational Conversation session

- **Share the diverse motivations for civic action and participating in CLRA** (some students are motivated by money, some by volunteer experience, some by ECTS credits)
- Learn about different motivations from experiences of other students (motivate unmotivated students for civic action)
- Provide space for youth to reflect and discuss together 'Who am I in terms of Activism? What change do I want to make for the community and for myself?'
- **Use UNESCO story circles**⁹ for youth to inspire each other
- Collect ideas for wider transnational/international collaborations that come out of the conversations, which may lead to CLRA-COILs

⁹ UNESCO Story Circle methodology. Deardoff, D. (2020): Manual for developing intercultural competencies: story circles <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000370336>

Poster created to promote our first Transnational Conversation



We held our first Transnational Conversations on 12 Feb 2026



Transnational Youth-Empowering Conversations

First Conversation 12th Feb

First Topic

“What is my motivation for changing society around me?”

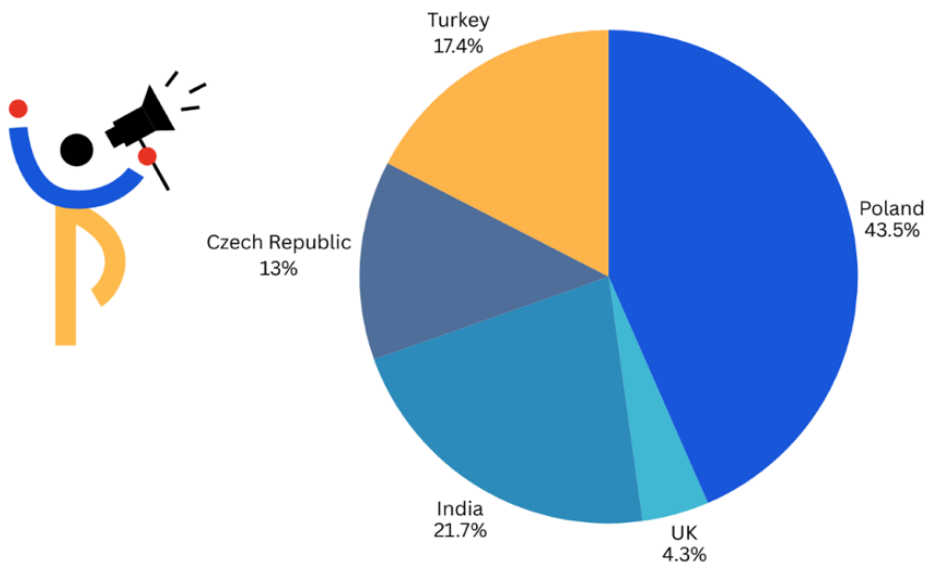
Subtopics:

- Who am I as an activist?
- How is CLRA (or other similar methodologies / participatory research) engaging me in different ways?
- Do I benefit from it, and if so how?



Transnational Youth-Empowering Conversations

Session 1 Participant Makeup



We have already learnt that youth are keen to instigate an interest and enthusiasm to share their local CLRA efforts wider as part of transnational conversations.

Next Conversation – 19th March 4.30pm CET

Topic suggestion: What does democracy mean to you?

Prompts: What do you understand as democratic space and have you found such space(s)

What we learnt already

- Youth may benefit from pre-meeting to help them prepare
- Language issues were noted - use of the zoom translation tool is worthwhile trying out before the meeting
- 60 mins or 90 mins?

(Anita, Berna please share your thoughts)

What we need from all partners

- Motivate your students / youth community to join the conversation
- Circulate the flyer we will create
- Encourage youth to register



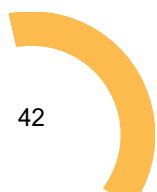
Part Two: Cross-Collaborative Learning

It is not certain if this section should come earlier before the 'Step-by-Step content', especially in how this section continues to detail more content about what makes CLRA COILs valuable and what we are learning to date. We can adjust for this and also we will certainly have opportunity to review the flow of the manual inversion 2.0

This section focuses on what we are learning about how best to utilise partner expertise and student assistants for collaborative learning, discussion, analysis and interaction across our (hybrid) CLRA-COIL exchanges. This involves reflecting on why the exchange was done, the impact it had, the scholarly significance and its relation to future theorising.

Further we include the evaluation and wider research approaches utilised to support ways to capture our continuous cross-collaborative learning.

We are learning together how participant interactions in the CLRA-COIL exchange enable opportunities for cross-meaning making across WPs. This includes how we are drawing on guiding frameworks to support our analysis.





What makes CLRA-COIL different from other online exchanges?

You might have done international exchanges before — Erasmus, virtual mobility, online group projects with students from other countries. So what makes CLRA-COIL different?

It starts from something real

Most exchanges start with a topic chosen by institutions or teachers. CLRA-COIL starts from the work you're already doing — your CLRA, your community, your questions. The exchange grows out of what already matters to you.

Connection, not comparison

In many international projects, the point is to compare: how does your country do X? How does theirs? CLRA-COIL works differently. We share what we're learning to think together across contexts, rather than to measure difference.

You're not representing your country

CLRA-COIL doesn't ask you to speak for your nation or culture. You speak from your experience, your community, and your CLRA. That's more specific and more honest.

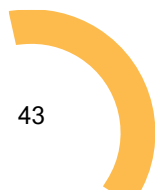
It connects to action

Some exchanges end with a presentation or a report. What we learn in CLRA-COIL is meant to go somewhere: into policy conversations, community change, institutional practice. The exchange is a starting point.

It holds complexity

When something is hard to talk about across contexts — because of language, history, power — we don't avoid it. We slow down and work with it. That's part of what makes it democratic.

Reflection: Think of an international exchange or collaboration you've been part of. What felt useful? What felt shallow or performative? What would you want to be different in CLRA-COIL?





CLRA-COILs and Appreciative Inquiry Background

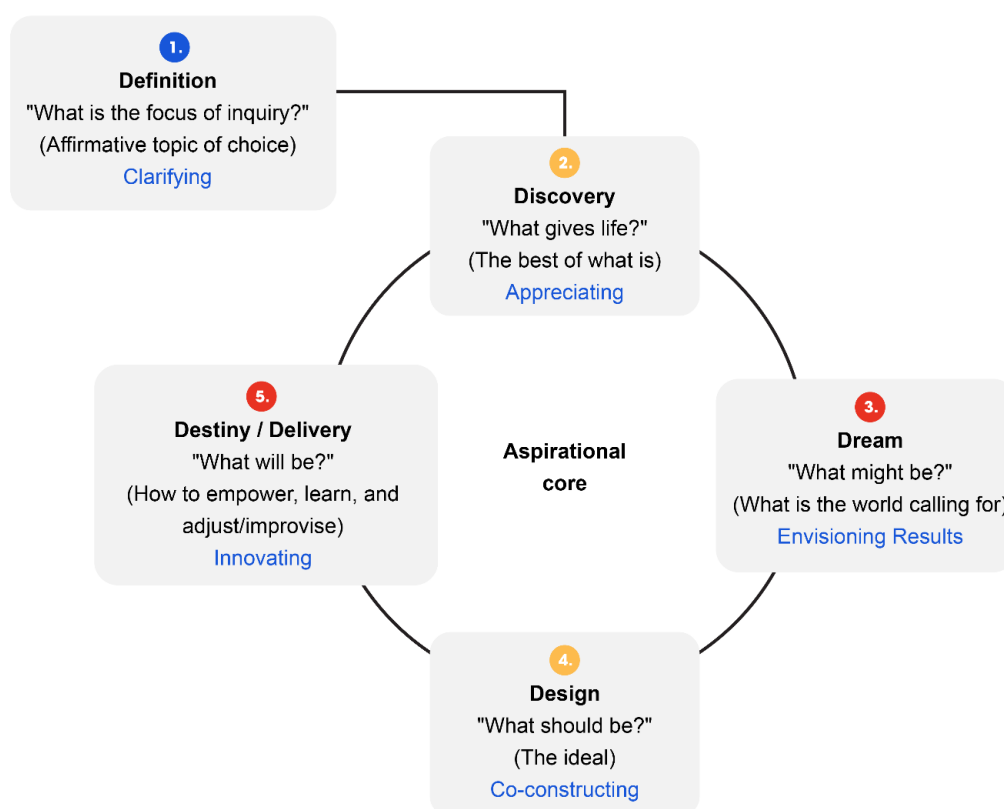
Appreciative Inquiry is a methodology guiding YOUROPE not least through its principles—centered on identifying opportunities, recognising strengths, and focusing on 'what works'—YOUROPE is harnessing this approach to drive change through collaborative action (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Stavros et al. 2021).

Focused on transformative and strategic change, **Appreciative Inquiry serves as an inspirational framework to create inclusive democratic spaces grounded in local concerns and connected to diverse enactments of European citizenship.**

The strength of focus of Appreciative Inquiry is in how it facilitates a shift from a focus on failures to highlighting lessons learned and aspirational aspects, whilst not glossing over complexity and challenges. In pursuit of its transformative purpose, we are using Appreciative Inquiry with our young researchers to navigate CLRA-COIL exchanges surpassing conventional COIL approaches.

As such, within the YOUROPE project, each CLRA-COIL exchange project unfolds through the five iterative phases of Appreciative Inquiry (see Figure 7 below) – Define, Discover, Dream, Design, and Destiny – typically over three CLRA-COIL exchanges or contacts as mentioned earlier. This rhythm ensures comparability across YOUROPE while remaining open to local temporalities.

Figure 7: The five iterative phases of Appreciative Inquiry



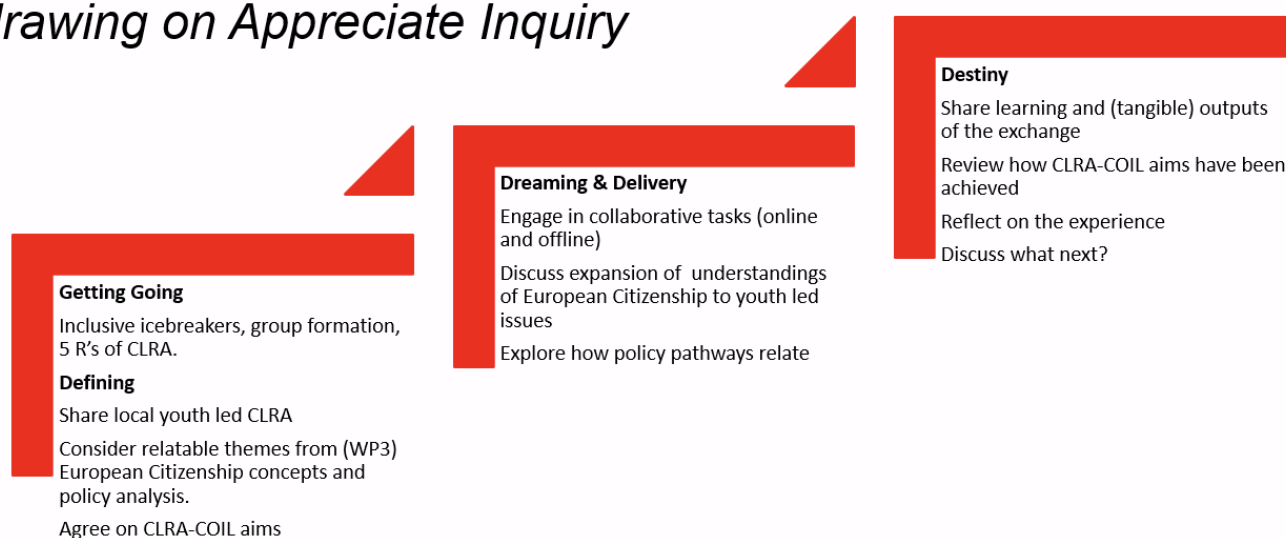


Summary of the 5-Phase approach as used with and by youth within CLRA

1. In Define, participants build trust, explore positionalities, and co-create an ethical charter that frames the inquiry.
2. Discover delves into lived experience through creative, ethnographic, and dialogical methods such as storytelling, research walks, and collective mapping.
3. Dream opens space for imagining inclusive democratic futures.
4. Design translates those visions into interventions, prototypes, or policy concepts.
5. Finally, Destiny focuses on implementation, reflection, and public sharing — often through exhibitions, dialogues, or community events.

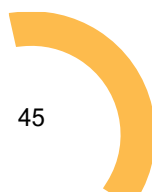
This Appreciative Inquiry ¹⁰ lens is also used to guide CLRA-COIL design phases (*as noted in part one of this manual):

Designing your CLRA-COIL Project Plan *drawing on Appreciate Inquiry*



Our YOUROPE Appreciative Inquiry lens aligns with **internationalisation at home** and **decolonising** perspectives in COIL that theorise the online “**third space**” as a site of multi-perspective knowledge-making and digital inclusion (Wimpenny et al., 2022).

¹⁰ Stavros, Stavros & Torres (2021)





In practice, it means CLRA–COIL cohorts co **investigate** how European (and other) policies structure everyday democratic possibilities and then co design alternatives, a move which both **denaturalises** hegemonic frames of citizenship and **materialises** youth agency.

COIL has been viewed as “a challenging yet fertile liminal and decolonial Third Space (Bhabha & Rutherford, 2006), that can foster intercultural dialogue and transformational learning experiences” (Orsini-Jones et al., 2025 p.238). We already know that COIL takes students out of their comfort zone (of the more ‘traditional curriculum’) and serves to disrupt their expectations relating to their learning experience at Higher Education level. Thus, we are conscious that CLRA-COILs will prompt unease and challenge which needs acknowledgement and due care and attention – links again to our values and the 5 (or 7) CLRA principles.

In YOUROPE, (as we mention in Part One of the Manual) we approach CLRA-COIL as a Third Space, a fluid postdigital space, where participants are not anchored to “places”, but interact in a dynamic “new space” which can trigger the unexpected (ref). Indeed, we are finding that CLRA-COIL affords youth participants opportunities to examine deep-seated beliefs by exposing them to different perspectives.

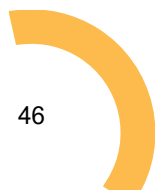
Importantly every CLRA-COIL exchange additionally requires time for built in **collective and individual reflection**. We are interested to appreciate how a subject area can be explored through many different ideas and forms of media, pushing YOUROPE youth out of their comfort zone, inspiring them to work with the ideas and techniques of others, and exposing them to new practices and new cultural openings (Wimpenny & Orsini-Jones, 2020).

We have been exploring appropriate **evaluation tools** we can use to maintain continuity, emotional safety, and shared learning and accountability.

We are piloting evaluation approaches which align with CLRA values, underpinned by our Appreciative Inquiry approach:

- What did we do/discuss?
- What was something we learned or experienced?
- What could our collaboration accomplish?
- What are our next steps? What should/could we do differently next time?

Further, evaluation and reflection should ideally be done more than once as to get a fuller picture of the exchange, as we know that students / youth may not immediately consolidate and make sense of their learning, which can take time to digest (Wimpenny et al, 2018).



- **CLRA-COIL is used in YOUTROPE to enable collaborative examination of societal issues and relationships considering local to transnational concerns.**
- **CLRA-COIL offers space for creating pluralised online democratic networked learning environments.**
- **CLRA-COIL provides space for personal and collaborative action and reflection including challenging participants prior held assumptions.**

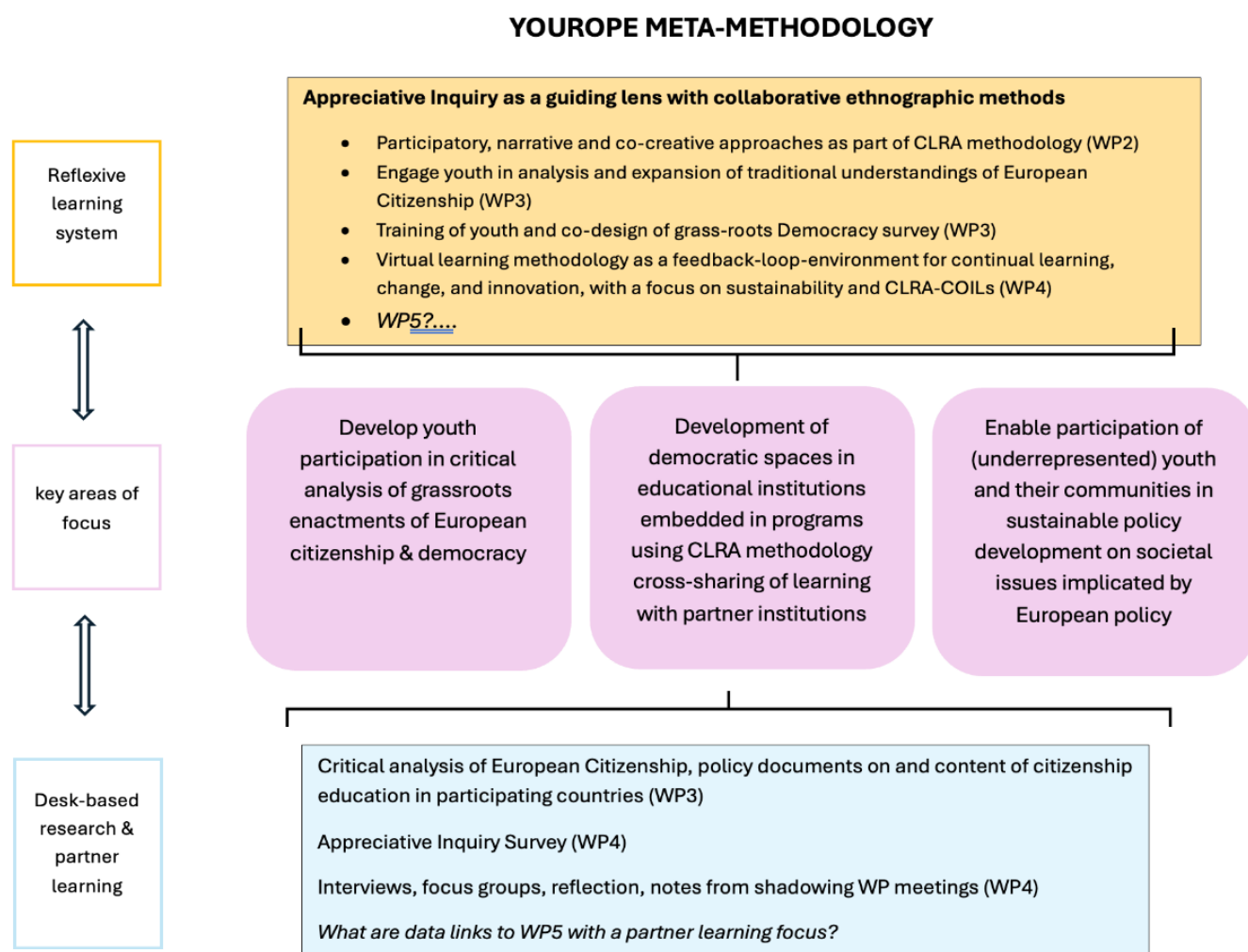
Cross-analysis framework

This section is still in development and in terms of how appropriate it is to share this type of detail in this manual

Cross work package reflection & theorising

Our cross analysis has led us to think carefully about the YOUROPE aims and objectives and how, for example, the contribution of CLRA-COIL can illuminate and address the projects key areas of focus. The figure 8 below was brought together as a means to provide a 'meta framework' 'pulling together the different WP strands and their relationship to the overall mission of YOUROPE.

Figure 8: Our YOUROPE Meta-Methodology



In the next section we consider how the CLRA-COILs fit into our meta-methodology and the analysis and learning across Work Packages.



How CLRA–COIL accomplishes the three core goals

It is not confirmed as yet whether this section may sit better upfront, as it again provides detail on the value of CLRA-COIL and so it could come before the step-by-step guidance

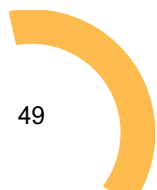
Develop youth participation in critical analysis of grassroots enactments of European citizenship & democracy

Theory of action:

CLRA–COIL situates youth as **co-researchers** who interrogate the **lived experiences** of citizenship in their locales, then make transnational comparisons through COIL teams. Appreciative Inquiry's **Define and Discovery** phases scaffold critical noticing of how policies, institutions, and social norms enable or constrain democratic participation, while collaborative ethnography legitimises youth led data collection and sensemaking. **COIL's dialogic, third space affordances** create epistemic friction making implicit assumptions visible and cultivates **critical digital literacies** (Wimpenny & Orsini-Jones, 2020; Wimpenny et al., 2022). Researchers led data collection and sensemaking. **Space affordances** (Wimpenny & Orsini-Jones, 2020; Wimpenny et al., 2022). **Researcher-led** data collection and sensemaking. space affordances (Wimpenny & Orsini-Jones, 2020; Wimpenny et al., 2022).

Work Package Links:

- **Work Package 3** (e.g., critical analysis of European citizenship, codesigned grassroots democracy survey) equips youth with conceptual and methodological tools to critique and expand prevalent understandings of citizenship. Outputs feed forward as shared datasets and thematic syntheses for the network designed grassroots democracy survey) equips youth with conceptual and methodological tools to critique and
- **Work Package 4** (AI survey; interviews/focus groups; reflective shadowing of WP meetings) doubles as a pedagogy of **meta-participation**: youth analyse not only democracy “out there” but the **project's own democratic processes**, building a reflexive culture that sustains critical **participation**





Why it sustains:

In settings like Coventry's COIL ecosystem, impact has proven durable when critical inquiry is **curriculum embedded** (assessment aligned) instead of an "add - on," ensuring that youth's analytic labour carries credit/recognition and thus persists across cohorts

Embedding CLRA-COIL in educational institutions - Development of democratic spaces for learning)

Theory of action:

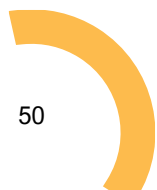
CLRA-COIL treats universities and schools as **sites of democratic practice**. The **Dream & Design** phases require students, educators, and partners to cocreate **institutional democratic spaces** (e.g., youth councils, deliberation forums, policy exchanges, community studios) where inquiry outputs are translated into **collective action** and **policy propositions**. COIL then **cross-pollinates** designs across partner institutions, enabling **design-based implementation** that grow into institutional routines.

Work Package links:

- **Work Package 2/Work Package 3:** training cohorts and codesign studios build **capabilities for facilitation, ethical partnership, and deliberation**; the grassroots democracy survey identifies priority issues to animate these spaces. design studios build
- **Work Package 4:** the **virtual learning methodology** functions as a **feedback loop environment**, continuous reflective dialogue (student/staff/community) + evidence archiving, ensuring that spaces evolve rather than revert to one off events.

Why it sustains:

Large scale COIL networks (e.g., **iKudu**) show that when institutions commit to **capacity building, decolonising curriculum, and appreciative inquiry** methods, democratic spaces shift from pilot curiosity to **programmatic infrastructure**. Similarly, **light touch dialogic formats** (e.g., YOUROPE Transnational Conversations & DePaul's Global Conversations) provide scalable on-ramps that normalise transnational, civic-minded discussion and generate deeper, program embedded spaces.





Enable participation of (underrepresented) youth and their communities in sustainable policy development on societal issues implicated by European policy

Theory of action:

The **Destiny** phase orients CLRA–COIL toward **policy engagement and accountability**. Youth and community partners convert findings into **roadmaps, recommendations, and campaigns**, then test them in **policy actions** with local, national and European decisionmakers. This is theorised as a sort of **democratic coupling** binding classroom inquiry to policy cycles so that participation persists and policy actors receive actionable, context attuned insights. makers. This is theorised as attuned insights.

Work Package links:

- **Work Package 3 → Work Package 4 → policy exchanges:** thematic syntheses from youth analyses (WP3) and the Appreciative Inquiry survey/ethnography (Work Package 4) are mobilised in **policy conversations** and **showcase events**; artefacts/traces (i.e. toolkits, briefs, exhibitions) extend reach beyond single cohorts.
- **Equity mechanisms:** adopting **third space** and **decolonising** design principles reduces participation barriers (connectivity, language, epistemic authority), making policy engagement **realistic** for underrepresented youth.

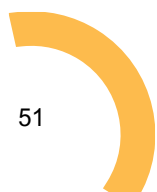
Why it sustains:

Community engaged HE and social work literatures highlight that **reciprocal partnerships** and **local capacity development** guard against extractive participation and help communities leverage policy windows (Allen Meares, 2008; Sugawara, 2025). Mapping these partnerships to **SDGs 4.7/16/17** gives institutions a **shared metric** to justify continued investment after grant cycles (Leal Filho et al., 2023) engaged HE and social work literatures highlight that Meares, 2008; Sugawara, 2025).

Cross Work Package synthesis: a reflexive, democratic learning system

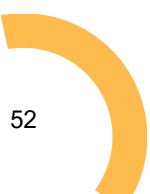
Put together, CLRA–COIL enacts a **reflexive learning system** across WPs:

1. **Work Package 3 cultivates critical analysis (youth as analysts of lived citizenship and democracy), generating shared datasets and problem framings.**
2. **Work Package 2/Work Package 3/Work Package 4 build capabilities and spaces (training, studios, democratic forums) and use the virtual environment as a feedback loop to iterate designs institutionally and transnationally.**
3. **Policy exchanges translate inquiry to sustainable policy participation, keeping underrepresented youth in the room as coauthors of recommendations and as agents of democratic spaces. authors of recommendations and as**





This is a **spiralling praxis**: each cycle reopens assumptions, realigns institutional practices, and **deepens democratic capacity** among participants and partners, precisely the sustainability pathway YOUROPE seeks to institutionalise. opens assumptions and re aligns institutional practices.





Quality Assurance

Cross-Partner Learning and Quality Assurance

Quality assurance (QA) is a reflexive, relational, and cross-partner process and practice. In YOUROPE, we have combined Appreciative Inquiry and collaborative Meta- Ethnography to examine whether CLRA-COILs are aligned with the project ethos, are equitable and accessible for underrepresented youth and reciprocal in community-university interactions. This stance reflects COIL research linking quality to design alignment, digital inclusion and third-space knowledge-making instead of a one-off check-box exercise (Beelen et al., 2021; Wimpenny & Orsini-Jones, 2020).

Use of visualisations to articulate the main aims of each work package within the project and indicate their key deliverables.

The WP4 Group developed a range of visualisations of cross-work package (WP) activities to support a shared understanding and theorising of jointly emerging ideas across the project. These visual tools were designed to be accessible to all project partners, including those who were not actively involved in cross-WP activities, those who did not participate in the original project drafting, and partners who joined the project after its commencement. One such diagram was developed over the course of the first project year and was presented at the second in-person project meeting. The intent of this diagram below is to visually articulate the main aims of each work package within the project and indicate their key deliverables. In this way, project partners are able to see the inter-relationships of the project and how work package 4 is attempting to theorise the inter-connections.

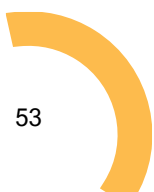
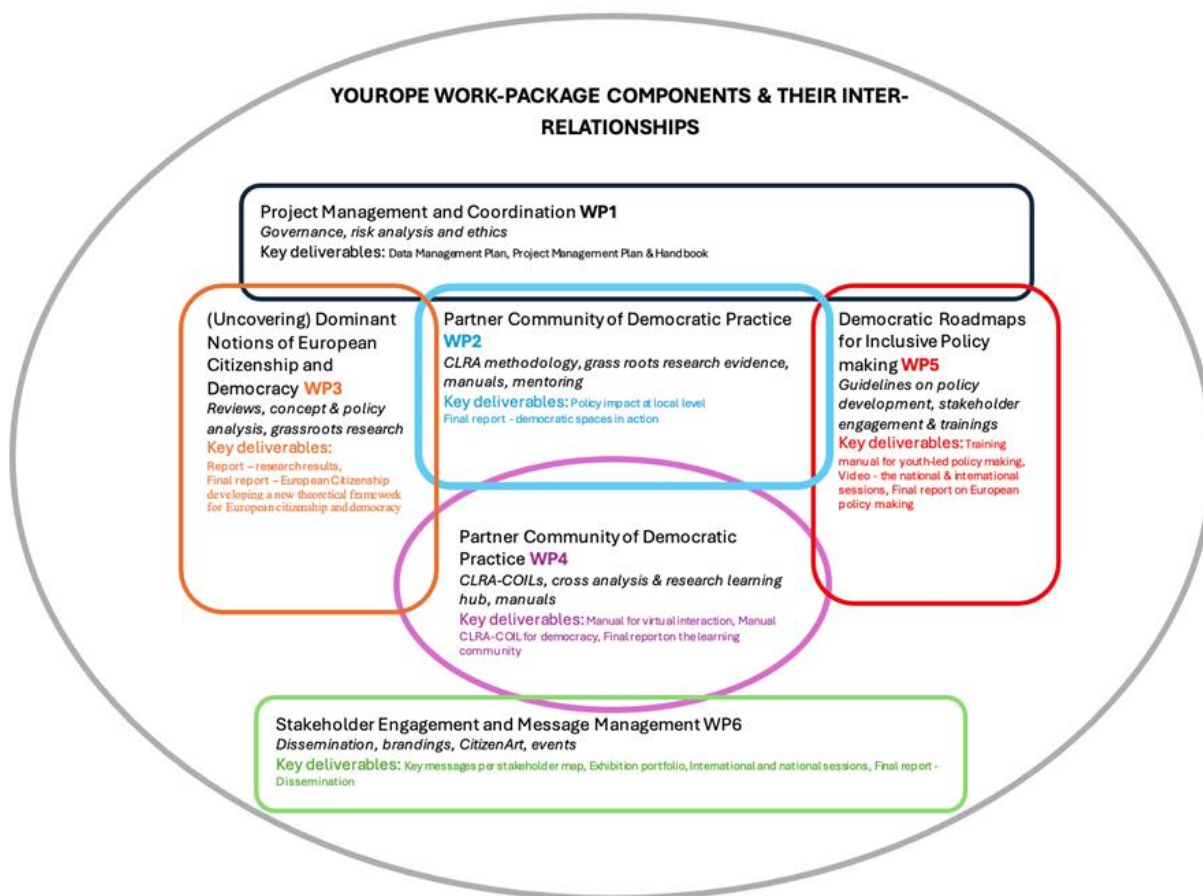


Figure 9: YOUROPE Work-Packages and their Relationships



CLRA-COIL Analysis: Reflecting on CLRA-COIL Cycles as Democratic Networked Learning Spaces

We are learning how each CLRA operates as a **living networked ecosystem**, made up of interconnected layers that sustain one another⁸. (see WP2 CLRA Handbook)

- At the **community layer**, underrepresented youth, their peers, families, and community organisations bring their lived experiences to the centre of the CLRA inquiry.
- The **institutional layer** (e.g., educational establishment) provides continuity, legitimacy, and long-term anchoring (e.g., through curricula or extra/non-curricula spaces), allowing democratic learning to take root.
- The **facilitation layer** — educators, researchers, CLRA Ambassadors and community facilitators uphold ethical integrity, emotional safety, and connections to policy and institutional transformation.
- Finally, the transnational layer weaves these local ecosystems together through YOUROPE's CLRA-COIL exchanges and European Learning Hubs⁹, allowing knowledge to travel horizontally and relationally



Designing a CLRA-COIL exchange therefore means **aligning these various layers** so that democratic practice can flow fluidly between the local, institutional, and European levels — each nourishing the other.

Over the course of the CLRA-COIL cycles to date, we have found that CLRA-COIL projects thrive when designed as collaborative ecosystems which bring diverse actors into conversations on equal terms.

With emphasis on the benefits of an interconnected communicative YOUROPE learning environment, we are focusing on the inherent learning available within and across the CLRA-COIL ‘network’.

From a social constructionist perspective, and with acknowledgement of the digital space, emphasis is placed on the learners’ active interaction and knowledge construction for meaningful learning impact (Smith, 2022). Attention is thus also focused on how learners engage with the learning community and make sense of their learning considering individuals’ experiences viewed in the context of history, social and cultural perspective and the political sphere (Gergen, 2003).

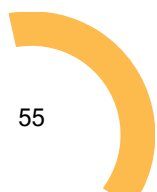
We can already see how CLRA-COIL provides YOUROPE youth with opportunities to develop a series of attributes, qualities or capabilities that may enable them to address the challenges of living and working in contemporary societies as citizens and professionals, and to assume associated responsibilities.

For example, we are seeing how CLRA-COILs prompt youth across formal education and in-formal community learning contexts to become more resilient through greater awareness of how to negotiate and discuss local issues across transnational contexts with awareness of the needs of others.

We are also seeing the considerable role of the facilitator in this space.

Here we share from our learning to date about CLRA and what might work well and what needs to be considered when thinking about CLRA-COILs:

- **Facilitators:** may be educators, social workers, or community organisers, tht guide the process through care and attentiveness rather than control.
- **Institutional allies:** lecturers, administrators, or programme leaders, help embed insights into curricula or governance.
- **Community partners:** NGOs, local government actors, and cultural or civic organisations, connect the work to broader social and policy arenas.
- **Youth researchers:** ideally 10 to 15 young researchers aged between 16 and 30, form the heart of the process. They are recognised and compensated as co-researchers and knowledge-holders.
- **Community co-researchers:** ideally 3 to 5 co-researchers to each young researchers with whom they share a lived experiences of underrepresentation and/or with whom the young researchers share a social justice objective.



A CLRA-COIL project is ready to begin once the following elements are in place: a clear thematic and democratic focus, confirmed co-researchers, partners and roles, ethical and institutional approval, accessible spaces and materials, and a transparent plan for communication, documentation, and fair remuneration where applicable.

When embedded within a course, this remuneration may take the form of course credits and vouchers for community co-researchers; when extracurricular, youth researchers may be compensated for their work in line with university standards for student researchers.



Part Three: CLRA COIL & Sustainability Issues

Strategies for Sustainability

We are early in our exploration about tested approaches evidencing ways to sustain CLRA–COILs beyond individual projects. We appreciate this will require moving from isolated developments to **institutionalised, community anchored practices** which align numerous policies, curriculums, partnerships, staff development frameworks, student supports, evaluations, and ethics considerations with a larger democratic mission.

We are focused on how COIL pedagogy, within YOUROPE, when combined with the CLRA methodology and practice can provide a youth and community-led, appreciative inquiry cycle (Define–Discovery–Dream–Design–Destiny) (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Stavos, Stavos & Torres, 2021) linking local lived experiences to cross-European learning spaces thereby leaving traces which aid in creating durable democratic spaces across institutions and regions.

However, to date, our way in to considering sustainability issues is to draw on / acknowledge what research has been conducted on this with regards to COIL.

How will sustainability issues for CLRA-COIL practice be considered / integrated into formal / informal (university) learning?

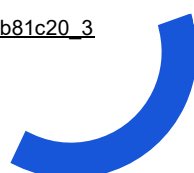
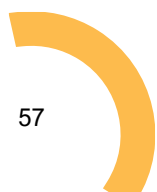
Use “COILing Careers” survey and impact tool:

- Currently in development
- SUSTAINABILITY WILL BE ADDRESSED IN PART III OF THE MANUAL)¹¹

Policy and governance: from pioneers to institution-wide practice wide practice

Universities that have mainstreamed COIL demonstrate that sustainability is achieved when internationalisation at home is explicitly positioned as “**everyone’s business**” in corporate plans and education strategies, supported by central coordination and enabling structures.

¹¹https://www.ufs.ac.za/docs/librariesprovider66/default-document-library/ikudu-evaluation-toolkit.pdf?Status=Master&sfvrsn=5ab81c20_3





Embedding CLRA–COILs in university and council approved policies (e.g. teaching & learning; civic and EDI strategies), makes the democratic purpose (i.e. youth inclusion, community voice, and policy engagement) visible and resourced, which aligns with YOUROPE’s objectives.

Implications for practice:

Adopt an institutional statement linking CLRA–COIL to graduate attributes (e.g. intercultural competence, digital collaboration, civic agency) and to evidence informed, participatory democracy aims.

Assign leadership to align with these aims (e.g., a CLRA–COIL lead and cross faculty steering group with student/community co chairs). (Beelen et al., 2021; Wimpenny & Orsini Jones, 2020).

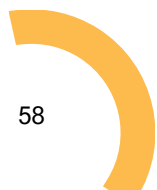
CLRA-COILs and curricular embedding: ‘Integration not standalone’

Evidence from Coventry’s decade of practice shows that COIL’s impact scales when it is **curriculum aligned** (credit bearing modules, capstones, work integrated learning) and **cocurricular** (badged/micro credentialed experiences), rather than episodic addons (Wimpenny & Orsini-Jones, 2020; [Coventry University, n.d.](#)).

Beelen, Wimpenny and Rubin (2021) argue that constructive alignment of learning outcomes and assessment with intercultural, decolonising, and action learning goals is essential to ensure students “make sense” of COIL within their wider programmes (not merely as enrichment) (see also the “third space” emphasis on equitable meaning making across positionalities) (Wimpenny et al., 2022).

Implications for practice:

Position CLRA as the **inquiry spine** of COIL activities (e.g., community co designed projects following Define–Discovery–Dream–Design–Destiny), with assessments that evidence community benefit and civic action as well as intercultural teamwork.





Partnership ecosystems: reciprocity, scale, and policy connection

Sustainable CLRA–COIL hinges on **reciprocal, long-term partnerships** with youth organisations, schools, NGOs, municipalities, and policy actors.

Community engaged higher education and social work literatures emphasise asset based, mutually beneficial partnerships that strengthen local capacity for community development and avoid extractive engagement (Allen Meares, 2008; Sugawara, 2025).

Multi-institution consortia like **iKudu** show how capacity building, curriculum decolonisation, and staff development can institutionalise COIL across diverse universities and reach large student cohorts, while using appreciative inquiry to align with local contexts ([University of the Free State, n.d.](#)).

As “**light touch**” **on-ramps**, DePaul University’s **Global Conversations**, facilitated, 90minute, multi-institution dialogues, normalise international, community relevant exchange at scale and often seed deeper CLRA–COIL collaborations ([DePaul University, n.d.](#); [DePaul University Global Engagement Staff, 2026](#)).

YOUROPE’s focus on **policy pathways** further connect youth/community findings to local and European decisionmakers, building motivation and institutional legitimacy for continuity. **Term partnerships** engaged higher education and social work literatures emphasise asset-based, mutually beneficial partnerships that strengthen local capacity for community development and avoid extractive engagement (Allen Meares, 2008; Sugawara, 2025).

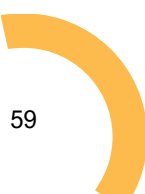
Multi-institution - consortia dialogues - relevant exchange at scale and often seed deeper CLRA–COIL collaborations building motivation and institutional legitimacy for continuity.

Staff development and enabling infrastructure

Sustainability requires **enabling hubs** that broker partnerships, support ethics and safeguarding, provide templates/MOUs, and offer digital tooling (paired with workload recognition and promotion criteria for CLRA–COIL leadership).

Tiered professional development should encompass:

- CLRA facilitation; (b) inclusive online pedagogy; (c) intercultural/decolonising design; and (d) community partnership skills.
- DePaul’s long running **virtual exchange** trainings offer a replicable model for scaling capacity across institutions. running
- Adopting a “**third space**” **stance** in academic development cultivates equitable, plural knowledge production and digital inclusion, central to Global South–North collaborations (Wimpenny et al., 2022).





Student pathways, wellbeing, and recognition

To widen participation and sustain engagement, institutions should offer **micro-credentials/transcript recognition** for CLRA–COIL competencies (e.g. intercultural teamwork, community research ethics, policy engagement), make participation visible to employers, and provide **wraparound supports** (i.e. accessibility, trauma informed practice, safeguarding, technology access) so underrepresented youth can participate meaningfully ([Coventry University, n.d.](#); Wimpenny et al., 2022).

Evidence from iKudu and follow-on work highlights the linkage between COIL participation and transversal/employability skills development when experiences are formally recognised ([Coventry University, n.d.](#); [Coventry University, 2025](#); [Haug, 2024](#)). **Credentials/transcript around supports** informed practice, safeguarding, technology access) so underrepresented youth can participate meaningfully (on work highlights the linkage between COIL participation and transversal/employability skills development when experiences are formally recognised

Evaluation, evidence, and impact narratives

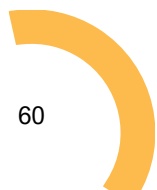
Evaluation should track **democratic impact**, community outcomes, policy influence, and the persistence of youth led democratic spaces, alongside student learning. YOUROPE's output model (roadmaps, toolkits, policy recommendations, public showcases) is a template for institutional KPIs and public reporting.

Appreciative and participatory evaluation approaches, as applied in iKudu, have proven feasible at multi-institution scale and support contextualised improvements (Beelen, Wimpenny & Rubin, 2021). Mapping university-community partnerships to the **SDGs** (e.g., 4.7, 16, 17) provides a language that resonates with institutional sustainability agendas and external funders (Leal Filho et al., 2023).

Ethics, inclusion, and decolonising commitments

Ethically, CLRA-COILs should ensure **equitable crediting, data sovereignty, fair compensation, accessibility, and safeguarding** especially where young people share lived experiences. These ethics of care are found within the literature when discussing re-balancing power towards community leadership and decolonising knowledge production (Woensdregt et al., 2022). For example, within the iKudu project, researchers considered decolonisation a pillar of curriculum transformation (Woensdregt et al., 2022).

Wimpenny and Orsini-Jones (2020) advocate a “holistic blend” integrating critical digital literacies, interactional communication, and openness to plural knowledges, which helps partnerships mature and endure.





Synopsis: CLRA-COILs as a holistic blend

To date we have explored with our work package 2 partners in particular how designing a CLRA-COIL exchange means **thinking through possibilities of how** democratic practice can flow fluidly between the local, institutional, and European levels — each nourishing the other.

Work Package 4 Partner Community of Democratic Practice

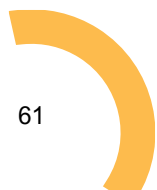
Main Work Package 4 RQs:

1. What are we learning about ways to effectively facilitate a democratic partner learner community of practice?
2. How can we use a specialised adaptation of Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) with CLRA Methodology to facilitate an effective and accessible networked learning environment?

Sub questions

3. Work package 4 question to work package 2: how can CLRA-COILs focusing on locally relevant topics and activities from CLRA be used as democratic spaces for cross-European learning?
4. Work package 4 question to Work Package 3: how can CLRA-COILs be used to facilitate co-design of a new theoretical framework for European citizenship and democracy with youth?
5. Work package 4 question to Work Package 5: how can CLRA-COILs help define and translate learnings, actions and insights into actionable and sustainable democratic policy roadmaps?

As examined, CLRA-COILs can be used to promote students learning across a multi-faceted skillset including respect, self-awareness, critical cultural adaptation and relationship building. The findings of our studies to date include how youths experience of CLRA-COIL is found to impact on their intercultural sensitivity within their disciplinary practices through the promotion of peers' cultural approaches, epistemic knowledge and through a process of discovery and adaptation. Also, EUROPE youth are seen to appreciate how a subject area can be explored through many different ideas and forms of media, pushing them out of their comfort zone, inspiring them to work with the ideas and techniques of others, and exposing them to new practices and new cultural openings.



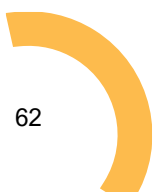


Concluding Remarks

This manual has aimed to provide a background and context to the practices of YOUROPE CLRA-COIL to date with cross-European partners. As well as the practical considerations of working with hybrid forms of COIL pedagogies, we have shared the learning to date about CLRA practice examples of innovative approaches to COIL being carried out, with particular emphasis on the holistic blend of learning YOUROPE youth and our partner stakeholders stand to acquire from engaging in such networked learning spaces.

We are also aware there is still much to learn from researching our practices. Such research involves examining how CLRA-COIL can be sustainably embedded within the wider internationalised curriculum, including how CLRA-COIL offers greater scope for inclusivity of marginalised groups. With this in mind we also need to understand more about how best to incentivise and support both youth and academic staff in the design and delivery of CLRA-COIL practices, including the facilitation skills required as part of intercultural learning, co-existence and diversity.

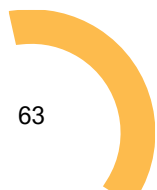
In continuing to evolve our understand of CLRA-COIL as a democratic learning space our interest is in wider hybrid forms of CLRA-COIL pedagogies and methodologies for engaging learning communities with and beyond HE, into our wider cities and communities, led by youth.





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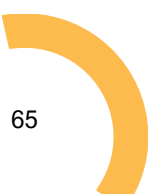
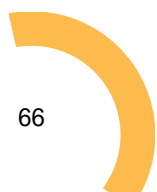




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Appendix 1

In this section we provide additional content about the practice of Collaborative Online International learning (COIL).

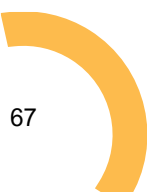
What is COIL?

COIL as part of curriculum internationalisation



Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) around the globe are under pressure to strategic demands to internationalise their curricula and ensure that their students acquire intercultural capabilities as global citizens and as global graduates. The challenges we face – from climate change to economic inequality – are inherently interconnected, transcending national borders and demanding collective action. In this context, COIL offers education institutions a powerful networked framework for equipping educators and students with the skills, knowledge, and perspectives needed to thrive in an interconnected world.

COIL also offers opportunity to promote openness to knowledge pluralisation through diverse learners interacting and sharing knowledge perspectives. When considering the role of education in preparing students / youth for a world that is increasingly interconnected, independent and diverse, COIL offers multiple opportunities to learn how to form and maintain relationships and work co-operatively with people across different backgrounds (Krutky, 2008).



COIL has potential to offer a 'holistic blend' of values, skills and attributes with the goal of transforming how students make sense of and understand the world they live in. (Wimpenny & Orsnin-Jones 2020)

COIL and infrastructure considerations

Research into COIL has identified with the importance of an infrastructure of technical and pedagogical support for students and educators, and that specific attention should be given to approaches that stimulate creative ways of mentoring students, not least in their interactions and dialogue with others (Rogers, Mulholland, Derald et al., 2011; Wimpenny et al., 2018). Research indicates that the design of such learning is not simply a case of academic staff transferring teaching and learning materials used in face-to-face interactions onto online platforms. Nor should it be assumed that being able to facilitate communication in face-to-face exchanges, results in such skills being equally effective in virtual learning environments (Yang, Kinshuk, Yu et al., 2014).

Indeed, an important additional value of effective COIL models is that they engage, develop, and support the internationalisation of teaching staff ¹² as much as they do that of students (Wimpenny et al 2024).

COIL is a means to provide students with opportunities to develop a series of attributes, qualities or capabilities that may enable them to address the challenges of living and working in contemporary societies as citizens and professionals, and to assume associated responsibilities (Villar-Onrubia & Rajpal, 2016).

COIL prompts students to develop problem solving skills whilst also requiring them to take responsibility for organising their own learning and that of others.

COIL requires effective time management skills, and working to overcome obstacles, offering students space to become more resilient through greater awareness of how to negotiate and complete learning tasks with awareness of the needs of others (Dugdale, 2009; Wimpenny et al., 2018).

¹² There is work being carried out on the training of COIL teachers in Europe: the EVE (Erasmus + Virtual Exchange) initiative <https://eve-impact.eu/>, that provides online courses on COIL facilitated by COIL (Virtual Exchange) mediators and awards EVE 'badges' to the tutors who complete the course.



With emphasis on the benefits of an interconnected communicative learning environment and acknowledgement of the digital space, COIL emphasises learners' active interaction and knowledge construction for meaningful learning impact.

Attention is focused on how learners engage with the learning community and make sense of their learning considering individuals' experiences viewed in the context of history, social and cultural perspective and the political sphere (Wimpenny & Orsini-Jones, 2019).



Why do COIL?

Benefits for Academic Staff

- Bring subject knowledge to life through global activities
- Draw from networks to create internationalised activity
- Build and strengthen relations with partners which may lead to further opportunities
- Enrich and enhance teaching and learning practices that transcend subject knowledge
- Reflect upon and adapt own teaching and learning practices by experiencing co-creation of content with academics from around the world

Benefits for students

- Interact, engage and collaborate with peers they would not otherwise have chance to study / work with
- Problem-solve in different, perhaps unknown and uncomfortable contexts to prompt new learning and growth and potentially challenge previously held attitudes and beliefs
- Share subject knowledge as well as inter and transdisciplinary ways of knowing, being and expressing, including learning about wider culture, ways of living and working, as well as learning about other people (and as a consequence about oneself).
- Develop communication styles and approaches including exposure to different languages, non-verbal communication, and body language
- Develop digital literacy skills as key to working and participating in action and reflection with partners from across the world

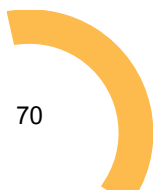
Adapted from iKUDU COIL Handbook 2024 ¹³

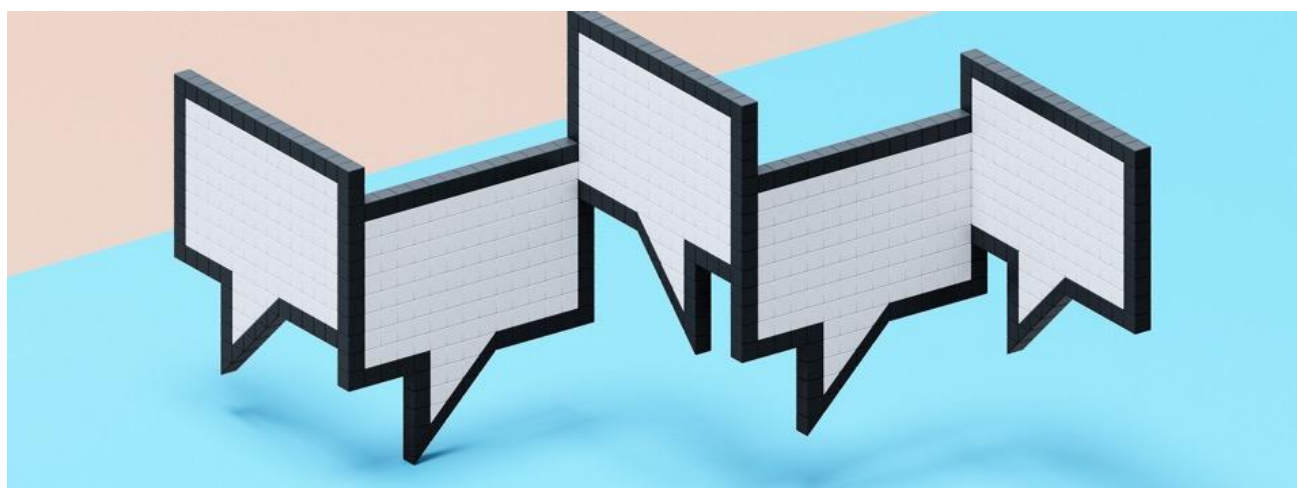
COIL and plural ways of knowing and expressing

Engaging the diverse viewpoints and epistemic knowledge of learners and academics within COIL requires not only critical thinking, but also intercultural attitudes and skills such as valuing diverse perspectives and managing one's anxiety, as well as effective online interactional skills (Orsini-Jones & Lee, 2018).

This type of education practice can at times take academics and students outside their comfort zone (Wimpenny, et al. 2018).

¹³ [iKUDU COIL Handbook](#) (edited by Haug, E. 2024)





COIL & exchanges across time zones

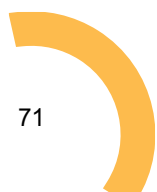
Although the educational content may be relatively easy to create, there are a number of practical considerations to consider when running COIL activity including issues such as subject area match and working across potentially different time zones. Communication means with the partners, for example, via synchronous and asynchronous activities needs consideration. Examples of synchronous activity are real-time conversations, seminars, and debates where COILing participants are able to contribute at the same time. Asynchronous interactions may be required where there are large time differences and often include activities such as sharing pre-recorded videos and forum debates (Villar-Onrubia & Rajpal, 2016). Such asynchronous interaction enables students to take time to not only review content posted but to reflect and discuss their reactions and response to the COIL activities. Furthermore, student reflection in relation to the subject area is an essential component of COIL activity, as well as meaningful ways in which student learning can be gauged and assessed as linked to specific intended learning outcomes (Deardorff 2011, p.77).

COIL and consideration of the disciplines

With regards to consideration of the disciplines, producing and delivering COIL teaching and learning outcomes can be aligned to a subject area, but equally can benefit greatly from students working across interdisciplinary boundaries.

COIL and digital literacies

In relation to digital literacies, students may be expert at using social media in their social networks, but they do not always translate this use to their formal or informal learning spaces without support. The importance therefore of digital pedagogy, is to enable students to engage in intellectual exchange, find one's voice, engender reflection, and be confronted in ways of working in the open and may also help students to rethink their learner role as active agents rather than passive recipients of information (Wimpenny et al. 2024).



COIL and language issues



Speaking different languages can create barriers to effective communication. Think about encouraging use of 'plug-ins' and captions to support translations. Be open to use of translanguaging. Break out rooms linked to languages of choice and use of 'chat function' can also be useful ways to consider ways to facilitate confidence and encouragement for participants to share views in the online space.



Appendix 2

CLRA-COIL Partnering Template

Please also refer here to the downloadable [partnering template](#).

Section 1: Partner Organisation Information

Partner Organisation Name	
Primary Contact Person:	
Email Address:	
Phone Number (if applicable)	
Location (City, Country):	

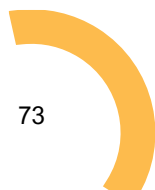
Section 2: Mission and project focus

Briefly describe your CLRA's theme and core activities: <i>(Max 150 words)</i>	What are your key areas of focus (Perspective within theme = helped with links to WP3 and 5 partners)

How many students would be involved in this CLRA-COIL? (approximate range): ☐ 1–5 ☐ 6–10 ☐ 11–20 ☐ 20+ ☐ Open/Depends on project design	
--	--

What is the level of the students involved? ☐ Undergraduate (Year 3–4) ☐ Graduate/Postgraduate ☐ Mixed levels ☐ Open to discussion	
---	--

Which subject area(s) would your organisation be most aligned with for collaboration?	
--	--





Section 3: Interest in COIL Partnership

Why are you interested in participating in a COIL initiative with a CLRA focus? (Max 150 words)	What types of collaboration are you open to? ☐ Synchronous ☐ Asynchronous ☐ Shared output (report, event, etc...) ☐ Providing local knowledge, data, or context ☐ Campaign ☐ Public engagement (stakeholders) ☐ Collaborating with Policymakers ☐ Other: _____
---	--

Preferred collaboration language(s)	English
Stage of CLRA cycle:	Beginning Middle End

Section 4: Availability and Commitment

Preferred timeline for collaboration (when in CLRA process)? ☐ Autumn/Fall ☐ Winter ☐ Spring ☐ Open/Flexible	How much time per week/month can your organisation commit to a COIL project? ☐ 1-2 hours/week ☐ 3-5 hours/week ☐ Other: _____
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Any other notes	
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