Project Journey

Gutenberg Network Incubator for Youth Initiatives 2021 - 2022

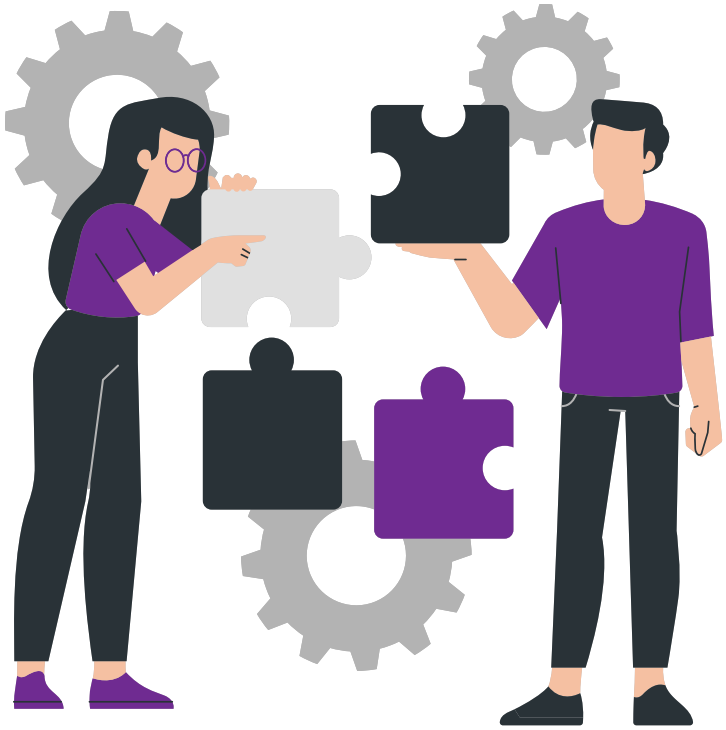


Table of contents

Gutenberg Network in numbers	4
Gutenberg Network 2021-2022	6
Recruiting-Identifying the changemakers	7
Growing stronger as a team	8
Training programmes-Gathering the tools	9
Community events	10
Implementation-Giving back to the local communities	12
The National Network Meeting	16
Reporting and Restarting-Moving in loops	19

The Gutenberg Association is the largest network of German-speaking student organizations and has been organizing projects for young people for 13 years. Our goal is to involve young people in as many activities in German as possible in order to awaken in them the spirit of solidarity so that they want to develop further and make the world a better place.

The first direction of development of the Gutenberg Association is at national level, this year also at international level and consists of the formation of initiative groups of German-speaking young people, who are supported by the Gutenberg Student Association with a range of instruments. This is how the Gutenberg Network was born, with projects that, through the transfer of know-how and financial resources, have a real impact on transforming the communities in which young people live. Young participants are encouraged to become active citizens in their cities by acquiring project management skills and investing time, resources, energy and passion in implementing the initiatives.



Gutenberg Network in numbers

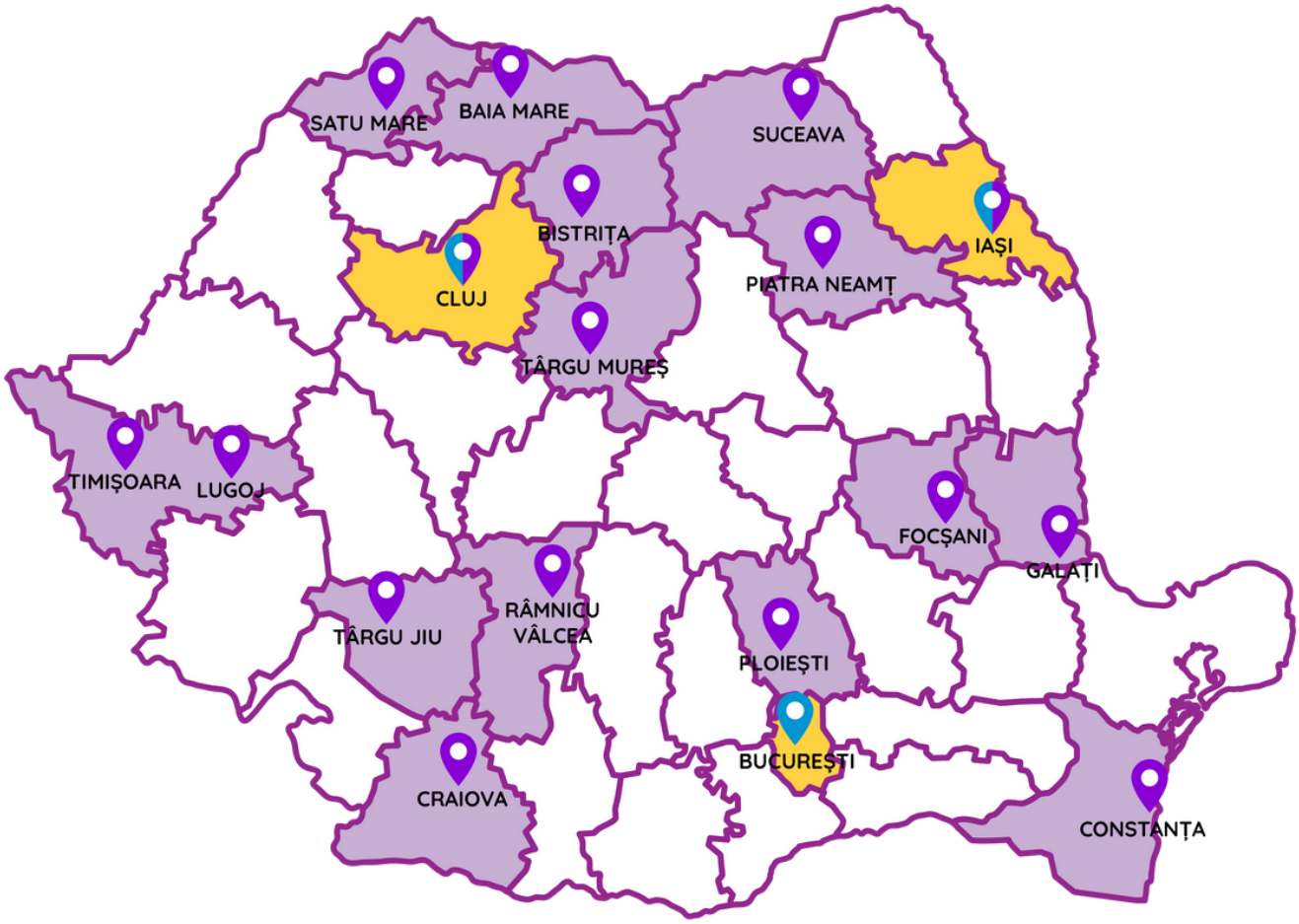


The Gutenberg Network Program 2021-2022 is supported by:

Civic Europe - an incubator for locally rooted civic initiatives, organisations and individuals in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe, implemented by MitOst and Sofia Platform, funded by Stiftung Mercator (www.civic-europe.eu).

The European Solidarity Corps - aiming to promote solidarity, one of the core values of the European Union, mainly through volunteering, to increase the participation of young people and organisations in quality solidarity activities (www.suntsolidar.eu).

Gutenberg Network 2021-2022



The goal of the Gutenberg Network is to equip high school students with the necessary actionable skills and tools to become active agents of positive change in the local community in their respective 17 small- and medium-sized cities in Romania.

We have succeeded in developing the framework for an incubator for locally-rooted civic youth and high school student initiatives and individuals with a total number of 330+ involved beneficiaries, that have impacted over 800 fellow citizens through their local activities.

Recruiting-Identifying the changemakers

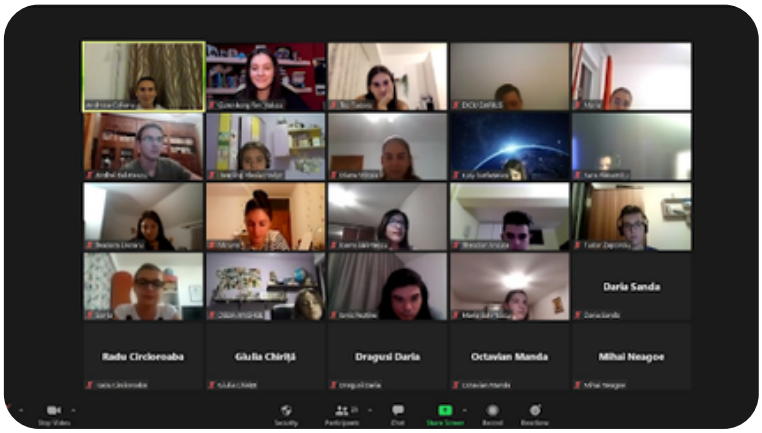
"Gutenberg Network Incubator for Youth Initiatives" Project is making steady progress, which is mainly measured by the number of students who are recruited in the Gutenberg initiative groups, but also by the project activities they are involved in.

In September, preparations for the project were started, the first meetings of the initiative group were held on the planning and preparation of the project. The distribution of well-defined tasks and the division of responsibilities between the members of the initiative group were key points in the preparation of the project.

Since October, the implementation process of the project has started, and the first step consisted of activities to promote the project online. Thus, information and promotion campaigns were carried out to inform the target group about the project.

Also in October, the recruitment process of both students in the existing initiative groups and new teams of students willing to get involved in the project has begun. Therefore, by November, no less than 17 initiative groups have been formed as part of the Gutenberg Student Network. The recruitment process for the National Gutenberg Network remained open until the end of the year, in order to give as many student teams as possible the opportunity to take part in the project.

With the aim of reaching our goal, the next step was to organise the first information session for the 17 local communities to get to know each other better - the meetings took place, online, on platforms such as Zoom and Google Meet.



Growing stronger as a team

Following the establishment of the local Gutenberg teams and the information session, more than half of the Gutenberg teams of students have already started their actual work, organising both internal activities - teambuildings and trainings - and activities with external impact - projects such as film evenings, recycling actions, educational activities for children (German language learning).





December brought students from the 17 Gutenberg initiative groups both the opportunity to further interact in various projects and activities and to take part in Wintercamp, the Gutenberg-branded project that made it possible to facilitate students with workshops on political education and civil society.





Training programmes-Gathering the tools

In the following period of time, the students coordinators of the Gutenberg Network initiative groups benefited from a complex training focused on the theme of Leadership and involvement in civil society from 14-16 January. Within the training programme, 4 trainers and more than 20 students in the position of team coordinators participated and got actively involved.

The Leadership Training organised by the project team for the initiative groups in the 17 cities gave the students the opportunity to learn, in a practical and non-formal environment, innovative ways to manage their teams more effectively and in line with key values such as morality, equality, fairness, solidarity.



During the Leadership Training participants worked both with the trainer and in breakout rooms, simulating the position of a leader and identifying their role and duties both in a team and in the society. In this way, students were able to gain a better understanding of the concept of involvement in civil society, arguing the need for such a contribution from their generation. After the end of the training programme, the participants were involved in a networking session, designed to activate and engage them in "get to know each other" games and discussions on current issues.

Next, young people from the Gutenberg initiative groups benefited from a comprehensive training programme on project management. Through this programme, the students gained more in-depth knowledge about the process of organising a project and were able to put it into practice through applied exercises in groups. These trainings also served as an information base for the preparation of larger projects that the initiative groups will implement in May and June.

Community events

The month of March brought communities in the 17 cities where Gutenberg initiative groups are active an extra boost of change with the success of the "Orașul tău, decizia ta!" event. These Community Events were designed to bring together people from local communities in a pleasant, relaxed and friendly space with the aim of collecting the needs of each town.



As a result, participants: pupils, students and teachers, were able to identify, in dynamic and interactive activities, both the main needs of cities and diverse and realistic solutions to solve them!

The Gutenberg initiative groups in the 17 cities have built, through these events, a solid basis for future projects they will organise in the coming months, projects aimed at improving problematic issues in their cities.

The teams of students together with the participants not only succeeded in collecting the needs of the communities, but also in stimulating the critical thinking of the participants, the spirit of leadership during the activity and the active spirit of citizens involved in civil society and its problems.



Following the Community Events, Gutenberg initiative groups benefited from workshop sessions both online and in person, where they went through the stages of organizing a project and the roles and responsibilities to be shared. The aim was to stimulate each team of young people to implement relevant projects based on the needs identified in the communities.





Thus, following these training sessions, each initiative group had a clearly defined project idea to implement. During the project preparation process, the 17 initiative groups were continuously advised by trained mentors, who supervised the organization of the projects through regular meetings.

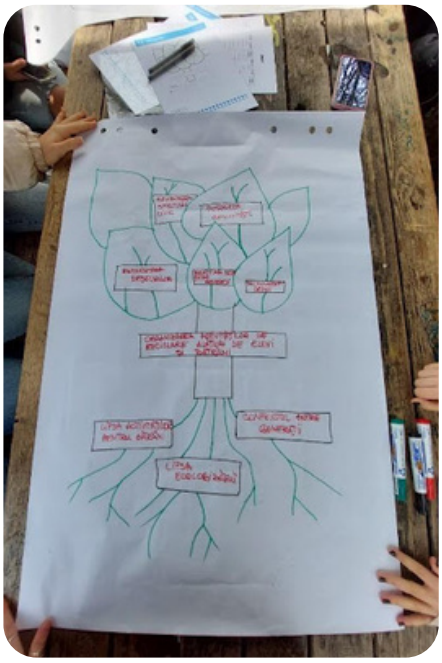




Implementation-Giving back to the local communities

The month of June was welcomed with the implementation of projects prepared during May by youth initiative groups. Throughout the month, young people from Gutenberg associations managed to implement 17 projects involving 350+ beneficiaries, children and young people, interested in the needs of their communities and civically engaged youth teams.

The most successful project themes were educational activities for children and young people on topics such as personal development, sex education, career opportunities, bullying, financial education, cultural activities, environmental and sanitation activities, sports competitions and rehabilitation of sports fields.



All these project ideas implemented by the youth initiative groups followed and were based on the main needs identified in their communities: the need for greening, the need for social and entertainment activities for various target groups, the need for education and information on topical issues, the need for sports activities for the community, the need to promote local and national culture and history.





Of the 17 projects carried out by the initiative groups, most (five) included social, recreational and entertainment activities: The initiative group from Craiova organized a painting competition so that young people could show their artistic talent in front of to a jury of local artists.





In Focșani, young people organized an applicative board game to improve financial resource management skills among teenagers. The initiative group from Râmnicu Vâlcea chose to support one of the local foundations, "Heart for Heart", and chose to carry out creative activities (painting and drawing) with the young beneficiaries of the foundation. At Târgu Mureș, a picnic was organized for children and parents with the aim of creating an opportunity for them to spend quality time together, and in Timișoara, the initiative group organized an art exhibition to promote the talent of young local artists.













Four projects focused on education and personal development, thus the initiative groups from Bistrița, Focșani, Iași and Râmnicu Vâlcea organized workshops on financial education, team management, health education and first aid. Three of the projects promoted sports activities through a football championship (in Suceava) and sports competitions for children (in Galați and Târgu Jiu).

Three projects had as their main goal greening, thus the Baia Mare and Cluj-Napoca local groups carried out waste collection activities in local parks, and the one in Constanța carried out creative activities with collected and recycled waste. Two projects had infrastructure in mind, by redeveloping a sports field in Suceava and equipping a sports hall in Piatra Neamț.




un ONG cu putere
(putearea de decizie
a tinerilor)









The National Network Meeting

July has brought the focus for both the project team and the young participants to the largest Gutenberg project: the Gutenberg Summer School 2022. After 2 years of pandemic, during which the project was organized in an online format, the Gutenberg Summer School 2022 brought together, in Cluj, 100+ participants from both Romania and Southeast Europe and 40+ volunteers and trainers in the organizing team, who contributed to the realization of the project.

The defining theme for the Gutenberg Summer School is project management, with the aim of training young people to be independent and actively involved in the civil society and the community in which they live.



Within the framework of the Gutenberg Summer School project, The Meeting of the Gutenberg Network, an integrated program designed for young people from Gutenberg student associations, was also held.

50 young people from the Gutenberg initiative groups participated in the program offered by the Meeting of the Gutenberg Network, and more than 20 trainers, assistant trainers and volunteers were involved in running the workshop sessions, as well as other activities such as Challenge Night, Discover Cluj, Talent Show, social evenings and more.





The main topics covered during the training sessions were Project Management, Civic Engagement, Design Thinking, Roles and Responsibilities, Money Heist, and Advertising, these representing the informational basis for a better integration of young people from
Gutenberg associations in the sphere of civic engagement and the organization of projects based on real needs. Also, the topics chosen were tailored to the needs and desires of young people in Gutenberg initiative groups, our aim being to deliver quality workshops on topics of interest to participants.





During the Gutenberg network meeting, the young people from the associations managed to put into practice the knowledge they had gathered during the year and during the program, managing to implement, at the end of the camp, projects for which they had followed all the previously assimilated steps. Also, the Gutenberg Network Meeting, within the framework of the Gutenberg Summer School Project, was a great opportunity for the young people to get to know each other better, to interact on topics of interest and to form links between associations, which will contribute to the quality of their future external relations.





The Gutenberg Summer School 2022, together with the integrated Gutenberg Network Meeting program, was a real success for the organizing team and a fantastic opportunity to welcome even more enthusiastic young people into the Gutenberg Family!





During the month of August, the project team together with the young people from the 17 initiative groups evaluated the results and the impact on the community of the 17 projects carried out by them, based on the needs identified and analysed at the Community Events. At the same time, the project team collected feedback from the young active volunteers on the activities carried out during the year, their implementation, the communication between the project team and the young people, and the methods of mentoring the latter. The collected feedback was centralised and analysed by the project team through a SWOT analysis.





Reporting and Restarting- Moving in loops

The month of September started with a new session of recruitment in the National Gutenberg Network, thus carrying out recruitment campaigns and presenting the activities of the Gutenberg initiative groups in each of the 17 cities. Therefore, the young volunteers continued the process of promoting their youth associations on social networks such as Instagram, Tik Tok, Facebook and carried out various activities, workshops or presentation sessions in schools, in order to increase their impact and to make themselves known at community level. Interviews and organized discussions on different topics of interest were held with potential new recruits.

During the month of October, Gutenberg initiative groups in the 17 cities were formed, with the reception of new recruits. Mentoring sessions and presentations of the organisation, as well as thematic workshops delivered by members of the project team, were organised in the 17 cities. The workshops were held in both online and physical formats and aimed to both introduce and familiarise new recruits with basic concepts in the organisational environment, but also to create bonds and trust between members of the initiative groups. Some of the workshop topics were: Volunteer Management, Effective Team Communication, Team Roles and Responsibilities.

Also, in October, the project team organized 3 Regional Meetings in key cities in Romania: Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca and Iasi. These Regional Meetings aimed at bringing young people from different cities together, socializing, sharing knowledge and best practices, but also developing skills on Fund Raising. Fund Raising was the main topic of the workshops during the Regional Meetings, and outdoor teambuilding activities were also part of the programme.

November has been dedicated to harvesting and collecting the feedback regarding the ending Gutenberg-Network year. The learnings and improvement opportunities where gathered and centralized to be passed on to the following generation. This last month was also used for summing up and reporting the activity of the year. It has been a fruitful year!

Gutenberg®
VEREIN

INFO@GUTENBERG.RO
WWW.GUTENBERG.RO

