



Justice Starts With Us

Our Youth Ambassadors in Action

DEFENCE FOR CHILDREN
INTERNATIONAL
GREECE



YOUTH PARTICIPATION — A Guiding Principle in All Our Actions

The establishment of the Youth Ambassadors cluster within DCI-Greece marks a true milestone in our journey. Since 2019, these young **changemakers** have **led powerful awareness-raising and advocacy initiatives**, amplifying the voices of children and youth across Greece and beyond.

At DCI-Greece, **child and youth participation is not just a principle — it is the heart of our work**. We champion **every child's right to be heard and to have their views taken seriously**, as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We are always trying to create opportunities **for young people to come together, connect, and exchange ideas — transforming their experiences into messages that reach communities, institutions, and policymakers**.

Their voices remind us that when children are given space, trust, and support, they don't just speak about change — they become the change.



Children advocating for the trapped children living in Moria Refugee Camp back in 2019 via the Hashtag Campaign #dontleavethekidsalone

YOUTH PARTICIPATION — A Guiding Principle in All Our Actions

We strongly believe that children and youth are not only the rights-holders in need of protection and safety, but are also...

Advocates for their rights

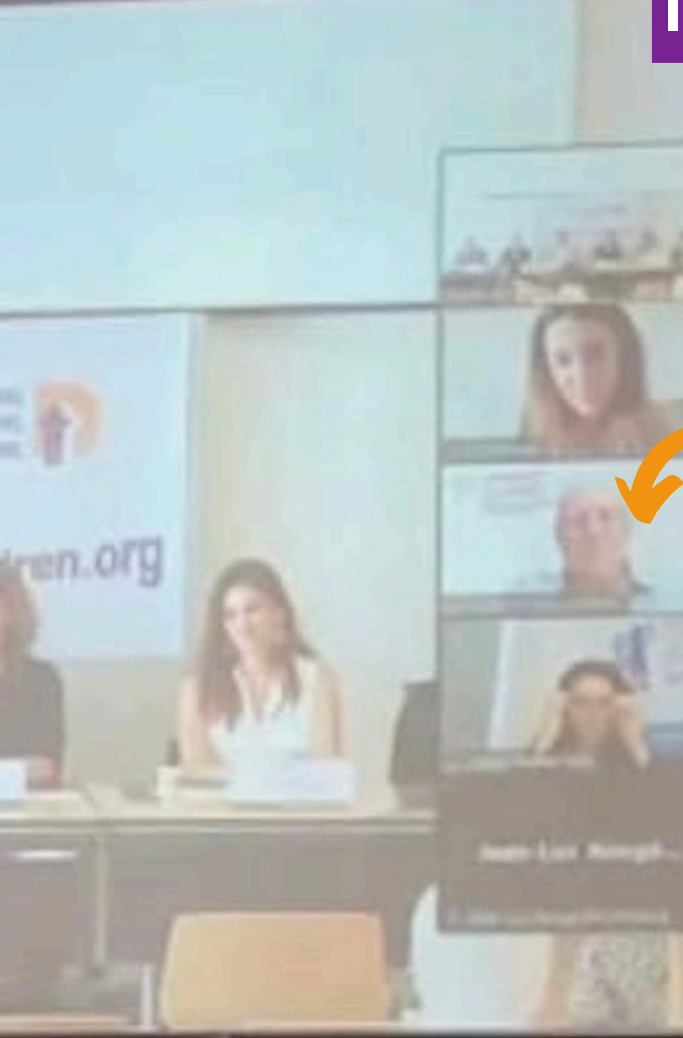
Active members of the
society

Agents of Change



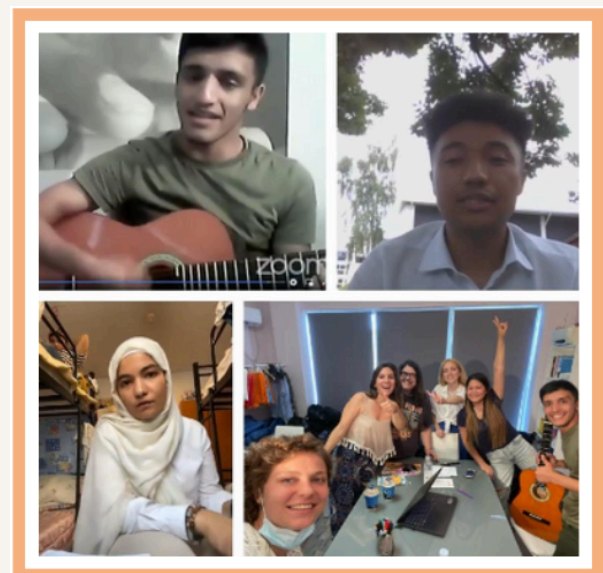
Moments from our workshops with our
youth cluster

JUSTICE STARTS WITH US - YOUTH AMBASSADORS IN ACTION



One of our Youth Ambassadors -
**Rahmat Amiri, former
unaccompanied child on the
move from Afghanistan,**
as a speaker at the panel
‘Institutional Violence against
children on the move, during the
UNHCR 50 Side Event in Geneva.

**Click here to watch
his speech!**



An entirely youth-led
online event
**“We are More Than a
Refugee”**



JUSTICE STARTS WITH US - YOUTH AMBASSADORS IN ACTION

In recent years, through the program “**Justice Starts with Us**”, we have been redefining the way children and young people — whether they experience justice as victims or witnesses of violence, or as individuals in conflict with the law — come into contact with the system.

We create spaces where their voices guide change, where their rights are recognized and protected, and where their perspective is not defined by their experience, but by their ability to participate actively and contribute to a fairer and more humane justice system.

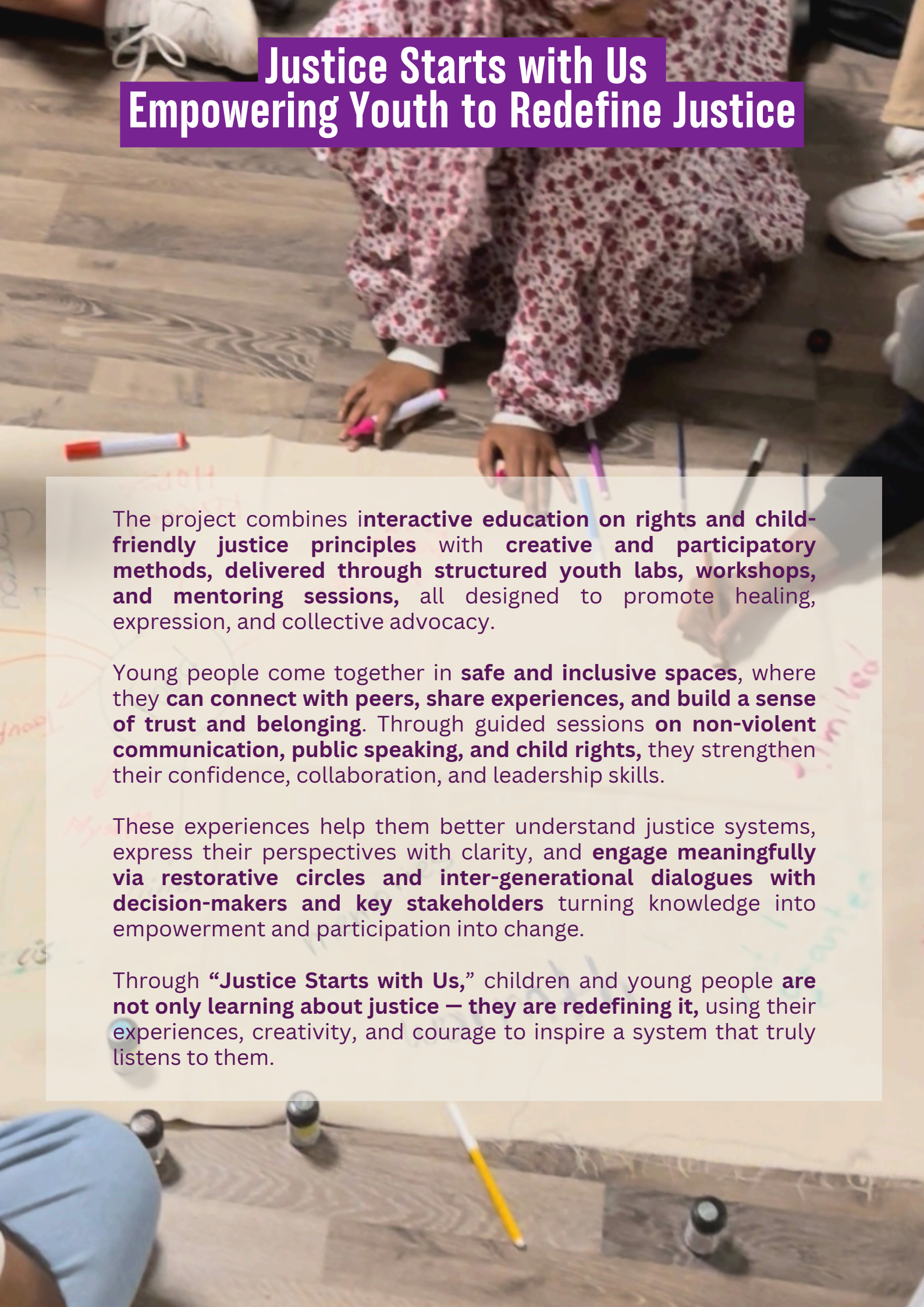
The formation of the cluster was supported by the **Unit for Integration and Support of Unaccompanied Minors of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum** and the **Ministry of Justice**, both of which **embraced the initiative** by **referring children and young people involved in justice processes**.

This initiative creates a **platform for young people with lived experience of injustice to express their views, share their realities, and advocate for fairer, more child-friendly systems**. Their journey — with meaningful exchanges in Greece, and across Europe — **amplify their voices and highlight the challenges children and youth face when seeking protection, accountability, and justice**.

[Click here to see the video!](#)



Our Young Ambassadors speaking at the Annual Conference of Child Friendly Justice European Network ‘Transforming Justice Systems for Children in Migration’



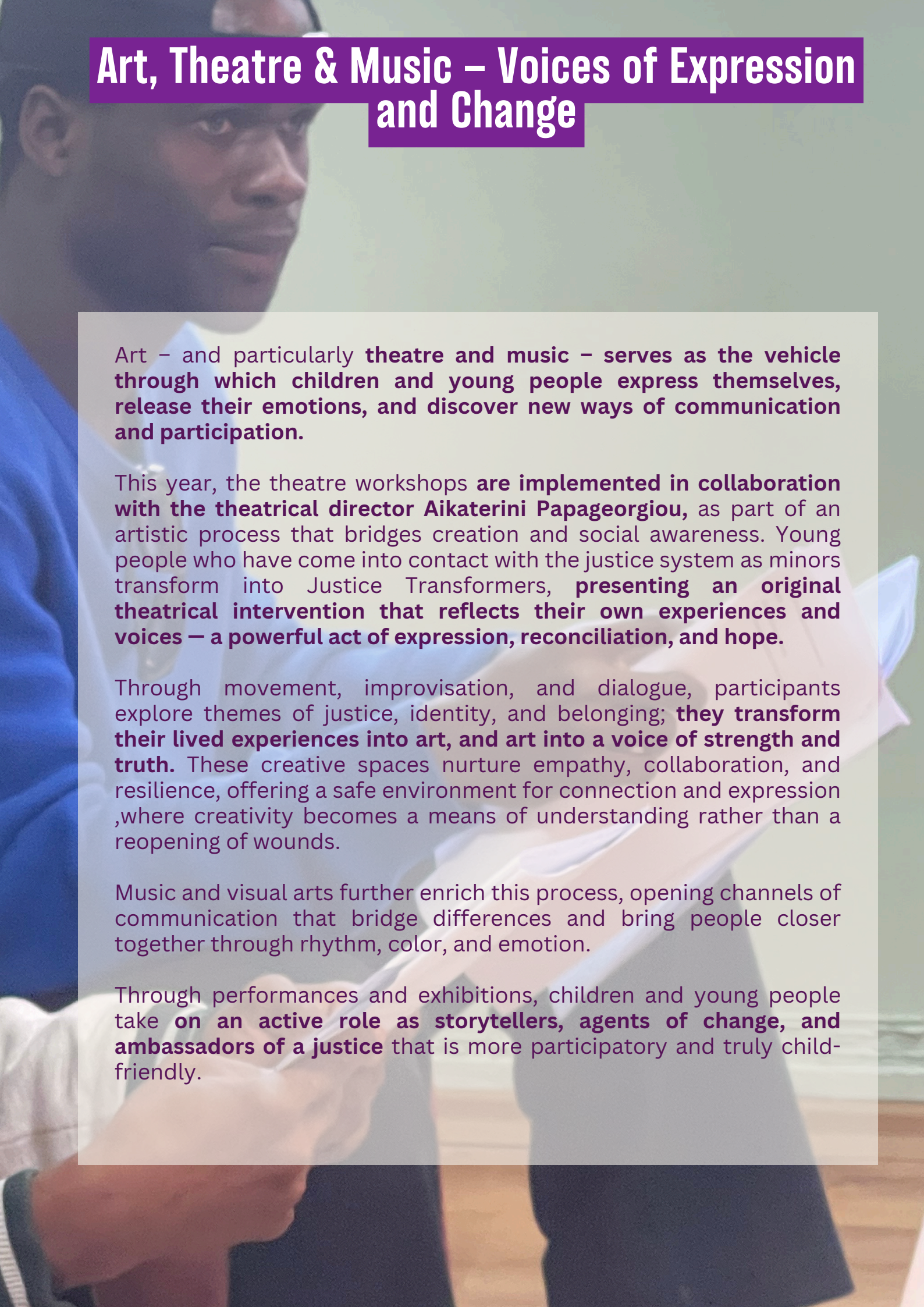
Justice Starts with Us Empowering Youth to Redefine Justice

The project combines **interactive education on rights and child-friendly justice principles** with **creative and participatory methods, delivered through structured youth labs, workshops, and mentoring sessions**, all designed to promote healing, expression, and collective advocacy.

Young people come together in **safe and inclusive spaces**, where they **can connect with peers, share experiences, and build a sense of trust and belonging**. Through guided sessions **on non-violent communication, public speaking, and child rights**, they strengthen their confidence, collaboration, and leadership skills.

These experiences help them better understand justice systems, express their perspectives with clarity, and **engage meaningfully via restorative circles and inter-generational dialogues with decision-makers and key stakeholders** turning knowledge into empowerment and participation into change.

Through “**Justice Starts with Us**,” children and young people **are not only learning about justice — they are redefining it**, using their experiences, creativity, and courage to inspire a system that truly listens to them.

A young man with dark skin and short hair, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt, is looking down at a piece of paper he is holding with both hands. The background is a soft, out-of-focus indoor setting with light-colored walls and a wooden floor.

Art, Theatre & Music – Voices of Expression and Change

Art – and particularly **theatre and music** – serves as the vehicle through which children and young people express themselves, release their emotions, and discover new ways of communication and participation.

This year, the theatre workshops **are implemented in collaboration with the theatrical director Aikaterini Papageorgiou**, as part of an artistic process that bridges creation and social awareness. Young people who have come into contact with the justice system as minors transform into Justice Transformers, **presenting an original theatrical intervention that reflects their own experiences and voices** – a powerful act of expression, reconciliation, and hope.

Through movement, improvisation, and dialogue, participants explore themes of justice, identity, and belonging; **they transform their lived experiences into art, and art into a voice of strength and truth**. These creative spaces nurture empathy, collaboration, and resilience, offering a safe environment for connection and expression ,where creativity becomes a means of understanding rather than a reopening of wounds.

Music and visual arts further enrich this process, opening channels of communication that bridge differences and bring people closer together through rhythm, color, and emotion.

Through performances and exhibitions, children and young people take **on an active role as storytellers, agents of change, and ambassadors of a justice** that is more participatory and truly child-friendly.

Lead the European Stage

**Click here to see
the video!**

Here are our Youth Ambassadors in Brussels **to amplify the voices of young people and share their experiences of navigating justice and migration systems in Europe.**

They met with Marie-Cécile Rouillon, the European Commission's Coordinator on the Rights of the Child, and Anna Schmidt from the Department for Migration and Home Affairs, discussing the need for **safe routes, child-friendly asylum procedures, and better support for youth transitioning into adulthood.**

At the European Parliament, they **engaged with policymakers, Members of Parliament, and key stakeholders**, bringing forward their suggestions and the voices and hopes of migrant children and youth across Europe.





Youth Led Restorative Circle of sharing

A **Restorative Circle of sharing** marked the **International Day of Refugees** (June 2025)

Led by our Youth , **the circle brought together young people and community members, including representatives from the municipality and local organisations,**

Through art, poetry, and dialogue, participants shared their journeys, hopes, and sense of belonging.

The gathering culminated in the creation of our **“Tree of Community” — a living symbol of solidarity, connection, and shared humanity.**



Lead on the International Stage

At the United Nations event “Protecting Children on the Move in Times of **Crisis Cannot Wait**,” organised by Dr. Najat Maalla M’jid, the UN Special Representative on Violence against Children.

Bakary spoke about the importance of child-friendly justice and ***urged policymakers to view every child through the lens of a parent***, ensuring access to care, shelter, education, and protection for all children on the move.

[**Click here to watch his speech!**](#)



Youth Leading at the EU Forum on Restorative Justice – Athens



Restorative Circle with experts, practitioners, and community stakeholders, bringing forward their experiences and visions for child-friendly and restorative justice.

Together, they created a shared space for dialogue, empathy, and connection, where youth voices reminded everyone of the power of visibility, dignity, and inclusion.

“I want to remind you that I’m a human being like all of you, and I need equal opportunities,” one of our young participant shared!

A message that echoed through the circle and called us all to more humanity and community connection.





**“When you truly see us, you help us believe that
change is possible.”
— Youth Participant, Justice Starts with Us**

**Children and youth carry the wisdom, creativity, and vision to
inspire a more just and compassionate world.**

**With guidance, care, and opportunity, their voices become
bridges — their stories, pathways to understanding.**

**Together, let’s keep creating spaces where they are truly seen
and heard.**

**Support youth-led justice!
Stay connected.**

Join us in building systems that listen, protect, and empower.

For more information please contact:

***Ms Tsekeri Nantina (CEO and Founder) at
nantinatsekeri.dci@gmail.com***

***Ms.Iris Pappa (Senior Program Manager)
irispappa.dci@gmail.com***

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