EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Project name and acronym:	SEED - Supporting European Youth Engagement against Disinformation
Participant:	MONASH UNIVERSITY RESEARCH FOUNDATION ETS (MUERF)
PIC number:	885280492

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number:	WP2 - D2.1		
Event name:	Mapping weak spots and building trust networks #Italy		
Type:	Event		
In situ/online:	In-situ		
Location:	Prato and Pontedera		
Date(s):	• 25/06/2026 - Prato, Officina Giovani • 07/07/2026 - Prato, Monash Prato Campus • 08/07/2026 - Prato, Monash Prato Campus • 15/07/2026 - Prato, Monash Prato Campus • 16/07/2026 - Prato, Monash Prato Campus • 18/07/2026 - Pontedera, Circolo ARCI Il Botteghino • 24/07/2026 - Vernio (Prato), Biblioteca Popolare Petrarca • 27/07/2026 - Prato, Officina Giovani		
Website(s) (if any):	https://icei.it/en/progetti/seed/		
Participants			
Female:	39		
Male:	36		
Non-binary:	0		
From country 1 [Italy]:	75		
Total number of participants:	75	From total number of countries:	1

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

This event constituted the Italian mapping phase of Work Package 2 (D2.1), carried out through eight linked activities between 25 June and 27 July 2026 across three sites in Tuscany: Prato (the principal site), Pontedera (Valdera) and Vernio (Val di Bisenzio). Its purpose was to conduct a needs assessment of "weak spots" in the local information environment and of the trust networks available to counter dis/misinformation among young people aged 16–25 (the compound term is used because participants did not systematically distinguish false content spread without evident intent from content spread deliberately, and the fieldwork could not reliably establish intent), providing the evidence base for the subsequent training and trust-network activities and for the comparison with Germany and the Netherlands in WP3–WP4. The full methodology, data and findings are set out in the accompanying Evidence Report (Annex to this sheet).

The three territories

The mapping was conducted in three contrasting Tuscan settings, chosen to test how the same questions play out across different local conditions. Prato is a large, super-diverse industrial city of approximately 197,000 residents, with a long-established textile and fast-fashion district and one of the highest shares of foreign residents in Italy; it is the principal site. Pontedera is a mid-sized town of approximately 30,000 in the Valdera, a manufacturing and service centre with a dense network of associations and civic institutions. Vernio is a small mountain municipality of approximately 6,000 in the Val di Bisenzio, where community life runs through personal networks and a small number of shared institutions. This range—a super-diverse city, a mid-sized town and a mountain community—allows the assessment to explore territory-specific patterns alongside themes that recur across the three settings.

Activities conducted

Each activity combined up to three components: a short presentation introducing the project and the topic; two structured questionnaires (one for educators and local actors, one for young people aged 16–25); and a focus-group discussion following an ethics-approved guide. The eight activities were: (1) 25 June, Prato, Officina Giovani—launch, questionnaires and recruitment; (2–5) 7, 8, 15 and 16 July, Monash Prato Campus—four stakeholder focus groups with educators, youth workers, psychologists, a journalist and local-authority staff; (6) 18 July, Pontedera, Circolo ARCI Il Botteghino—a mixed youth-and-educator focus group; (7) 24 July, Vernio, Biblioteca Popolare Petrarca—an intergenerational session with young people and library volunteers; and (8) 27 July, Prato, Officina Giovani—a youth-only session built around a participatory "STAND" positioning activity. In total the activities engaged 75 individuals (39 female, 36 male), exceeding the work-package target of 51, and generated 54 valid questionnaires (34 from stakeholders—educators, youth workers and local actors, a group distinct from the young people—and 20 from young people) and seven focus groups, of which five were recorded, transcribed and pseudonymised and two documented through facilitation notes.

Key outcomes

The mapping produced four principal findings. First, on weak spots: for adult participants, the dominant theme is dis/misinformation concerning migrant communities; other themes are school dropout, mental-health self-diagnosis, gaps in affectivity education, and institutional distrust. Young participants also identified additional weak spots, i.e., labour and workplace rights in the textile district and dis/misinformation about young people themselves (for example,

narratives that portray them as disengaged or as unwilling to work). Second, on circulation: according to our participants, dis/misinformation is concentrated on social media (94% of stakeholders; 90% of young people consume mainly short-form videos) but originates offline and is reinforced online, with families and word-of-mouth carrying a substantial role in spreading dis/misinformation. Third, on trust: according to our participants, formal educational settings, such as schools, play a limited role in supporting young people to verify information. Among young respondents (N=20), 10% reported turning to teachers or educators and 0% to youth workers when unsure about information; among stakeholders (N=34), 15% perceived teachers or educators and 6% youth workers as sources young people turn to. Among young respondents, 65% reported trying to verify information independently and 65% reported continuing to scroll past information when unsure. These were multiple-response items, so the percentages are not mutually exclusive. Participants suggested that this limited reliance on formal educational actors reflects a conditional approach to trust: trust is extended on the basis of non-judgement and demonstrated competence rather than professional role, and there is not necessarily a general mistrust of adults working in these roles. Fourth, on mandate: 74% of stakeholders consider cooperation between local actors very important, and the mapping has begun establishing such cooperation at European, regional and local levels. These outcomes directly specify the content of the training phase (understanding of mechanisms, non-didactic methods, a map of reliable sources, and rights-and-work literacy) and the design of the trust-network component.

Differences between the three territories

The three sites produced recognisably different emphases. In Prato, young people themselves raised labour exploitation and working conditions in the textile district, unprompted; in Pontedera, rights in relation to authority (as students and as young workers) were prominent. In Vernio, by contrast, work and labour were not a prominent theme in the session; the Vernio group, intergenerational and the smallest of the sessions, focused instead on hyper-local concerns circulating through personal networks and word-of-mouth, with a single local institution, the public library, serving as young people's main point of reference. This contrast is informative rather than a gap: it suggests that the work-and-labour theme is tied to the productive geography of the larger centres (Prato's textile district, Pontedera's manufacturing economy) rather than being a generic youth concern, while a small community's information environment is shaped above all by proximity and by a few local institutions. Common to all three sites were the dominance of offline and family channels in how information circulates, and a conditional, competence-based relationship to trust among young people.

Changes relative to the original plan, and adaptations going forward

Three adaptations are recorded for the project record. (1) Public schools were not involved in this phase. The activities were conducted at and beyond the end of the school year, when classes were unavailable; participants also described schools as difficult settings for education and participatory activities to counter dis/misinformation (curricular overload, restrictions on in-class use of mobile phones, limited space for current affairs). WP2 therefore worked through out-of-school settings and engaged the school world indirectly, through educators. Going forward, the training and co-design phase will need to be scheduled against the school calendar and to reach classrooms through educator intermediaries and through the two school-facing partners identified during the mapping (Officine d'Orizzonti and the Ordine dei Giornalisti della Toscana programme). (2) The geographical scope was broadened beyond Prato to include Pontedera and Vernio, providing contrasting territorial settings (a mid-sized town and a mountain municipality) that strengthen the needs assessment and the later cross-country comparison. (3) The mapping surfaced work and labour rights as the strongest youth-originated

theme for the 16–25 group; this was not foreseen in the original topic list and will be incorporated as a candidate theme in the co-design phase, tested with young people before adoption. No change to the deliverable's objectives, timing or budget arises from these adaptations.

Full detail, including all figures, the seven focus-group summaries, the instrument-fidelity matrix and the emerging trust-network map, is provided in the accompanying Annex 1: Mapping weak spots and building trust networks (#Italy)

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	27/08/2026	Initial version

SEED — Supporting European Youth Engagement against Disinformation

CERV-2025-CITIZENS-CIV · Project 101252121

D2.1 — Annex 1: Mapping weak spots and building trust networks (#Italy)

Needs assessment: questionnaire and focus-group evidence · WP2, Months 2–5 · Lead beneficiary: Monash University

1 · Executive summary

Between 25 June and 27 July 2026, WP2 carried out the Italian mapping of "weak spots" and trust networks through eight participatory events across three sites — Prato, Vernio (Prato province) and Pontedera (Valdera)—combining a presentation, two structured questionnaires (educators/local actors; young people 16–25) and seven focus-group discussions. 75 participants took part (39 F / 36 M; consortium staff excluded from counts), exceeding the 51-participant KPI. Evidence base: 54 valid questionnaires (34 stakeholders, 20 young people) and seven focus groups (five fully transcribed and pseudonymised; two documented through facilitation notes).

Headline findings. **(1) Weak spots**: dis/misinformation about migrant communities is the territory's master theme, especially for adults. This often focuses on Prato's Chinese, North African and Pakistani communities, and is labelled in Pontedera as "racism as opinion"—prejudiced or unfounded claims about migrants reframed as legitimate personal opinion and so placed beyond factual challenge. In addition to this core theme, participants also highlighted the following issues: school dropout resulting from family-transmitted dis/misinformation; mental-health self-diagnosis—where the dis/misinformation is twofold: inaccurate self-diagnostic content circulating online (for example symptom checklists presented as diagnosis) and an equally inaccurate dismissal of clinical conditions as merely fashionable (named independently by adults and youth: "it's trendy to be ADHD"); sexuality-vs-affectivity gaps; and distrust of institutions. Young people also raised themes that adult participants did not mention: labour exploitation in the textile district; rights vis-à-vis authority; and dis/misinformation about young people themselves, produced offline by parents and teachers. **(2) Circulation**: according to 94% of stakeholders, mis/disinformation is concentrated on social media (90% of youth consume mainly short video) but travels equally through offline word-of-mouth and family networks. In short, dis/misinformation was consistently described by participants as originating offline and being amplified online, rather than the reverse; this is their characterisation of how it moves, not a measured causal sequence. **(3) Trust:** the formal educational network is nearly absent from how young people check information (teachers 10–15%, youth workers 0–6%, from either side); young people mostly verify information alone (65%). The focus groups show that this is not a rejection of adults but a conditional form of trust. **(4) Mandate and action**: 74% of stakeholders rate inter-actor cooperation "very important"; the territory lacks not actors but connective tissue — and the mapping has already begun building it, forming or confirming partnerships at European, regional and local levels (§9). These results specify the training and trust-network phase and seed the three-country comparison in WP3–WP4.

2 · Territorial context

Prato is a super-diverse European city: over 26% of residents are foreign nationals (52,068 of 196,983 at 30 June 2026), with the Chinese community alone about 17%; one minor in three has foreign nationality, though nine in ten foreign-background minors were born in Italy, almost always in Prato (Comune di Prato, Ufficio Statistica). This demographic reality is the ground beneath the mapping's master theme, and it is why disinformation about migrant communities is not an abstract concern here but a daily feature of civic life.

Alongside economic dynamism — participation in work is high and NEET rates low (7% in Prato against 11% in Tuscany and 15% nationally) — the city carries a concentrated educational fragility that the Municipality itself identifies as a primary form of social vulnerability. Only 50% of adults aged 25–64 hold an upper-secondary diploma (18 points below the Tuscan average); tertiary attainment among 25–39s is 23% (against 33% regionally); and at the end of lower-secondary school 49% of Prato students have inadequate literacy — the worst rate in Tuscany — with 40% inadequate in numeracy. The Municipality's 2026 report frames Prato as the archetypal "città-distretto", where a deep permeability between society and the productive system places professional competences above formal study — the structural root of the dropout finding this assessment documents from the ground. On the ISTAT IDISE 2025 index, Prato records 11% of students who abandon studies or repeat a year, the highest of the 24 cities studied (Firenze 7.3%, Milano 7.6%, Roma 5.3%, Napoli 9.8%); separately, more than 500 young people leave education each year without a qualification, the critical moment coinciding with the end of compulsory schooling at 16. 61% of Prato's minors live in the corridor running from the historic centre through Macrolotto 0 to the south-west — exactly the quarters of greatest socio-economic disadvantage, and where the local youth infrastructure (§9) is concentrated.

During the fieldwork itself (July 2026), this educational picture became a national political case: at the presentation of the INVALSI 2026 report the Minister of Education described Prato's dispersion as an exceptional emergency and proposed extending an enforcement decree to the province, while the Municipality and school leaders contested the punitive framing and pointed to chronic under-provision of Italian-as-second-language teaching. The episode is itself an instance of a theme young participants named — national narratives about Prato's young people, produced far from them and experienced as stigmatising — and the enforcement-versus-education dispute maps onto exactly the institutional-trust problem the Prato work addresses. A new inter-institutional Osservatorio sulla povertà educativa had been established in the city weeks earlier.

Two smaller sites complete the three-site design: Pontedera (30,298 residents, a Valdera manufacturing and service hub with a dense associational fabric) and Vernio (~6,000 residents, a Val di Bisenzio municipality where information circulates through personal networks and a single institution — the library — can be young people's principal reference point). Method notes on framing: the project reads disinformation as bound up with trust, belonging and participation, not only as false information — the "narrative resilience" lens is the project's own interpretive frame, not a CERV requirement. Sources: Comune di Prato, Ufficio Statistica (2026), Disagio educativo and pop. data; ISTAT IDISE 2025; INVALSI 2026; Comune di Pontedera; ISTAT.

3 · Participation and method

Event	Date · venue	Activities
1	25/06 · Prato, Officina Giovani	Presentation · questionnaires · recruitment (educators)
2–5	07/07 · 08/07 · 15/07 · 16/07 · Monash Prato Campus	Presentation · questionnaires · four stakeholder focus groups
6	18/07 · Pontedera, Circolo ARCI Il Botteghino	Presentation · questionnaires · mixed youth/educator focus group
7	24/07 · Vernio, Biblioteca Popolare Petrarca	Presentation · questionnaires · intergenerational focus group
8	27/07 · Prato, Officina Giovani	Presentation · questionnaires · youth-only session (STAND activity + discussion)

Participation: 75 counted participants (39 F / 36 M) across Group A (young people 16–25) and Group B (educators, youth workers, local actors) — KPI of 51 exceeded. Not all participants took part in all three activities; questionnaire and focus-group numbers therefore differ from event headcounts. One project-partner respondent is excluded from all analysis counts, consistently with the participant count.

Method: The project was approved by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC) (Project ID 51781). The questionnaire for this project explored topics including participants' educational backgrounds, the type and nature of social media they consumed, and the methods they used to assess the truthfulness of the content they encountered online. The focus groups provided opportunities to provide deeper qualitative insights about mis/disinformation. Typically, the focus groups started off with a discussion on how participants would describe mis/disinformation before exploring existing challenges to counter mis/disinformation. The focus groups typically concluded with a discussion about how youth-led local action could address existing gaps in mitigating mis/disinformation.

A note on terminology: the report uses "dis/misinformation" because participants did not systematically distinguish false content circulating without evident intent to deceive (misinformation) from content spread with such intent (disinformation), and the fieldwork could not reliably establish intent; "disinformation" is reserved for cases where a deliberate intent was evident, such as monetised falsehood or a deliberately re-edited video. Descriptive analysis of two purposive samples — statistically representative inference is neither possible nor claimed. Counts are primary; percentages are rounded (multi-select items are % of respondents and may exceed 100%). Stakeholder items about youth behaviour are perceptions; youth items are self-report; the two are triangulated, not merged. Focus groups followed the ethics-approved discussion guide (v1, May 2026), used adaptively as it licenses; five sessions were recorded, transcribed and pseudonymised, two were unrecorded and rely on facilitation notes, which support session-level findings only (no verbatim quotes or individual attribution) and are weighted accordingly. Consent was obtained for all participants; minors took part with parental consent. Public schools were not involved: the sessions fell at and beyond the end of the school year, when classes are unavailable, so WP2 worked through out-of-school settings and reached the school world indirectly, through educators — a decision the corpus independently corroborates, participants across sessions describing schools as difficult terrain for this work (curricular overload, restrictions on phones as teaching tools, no space for current affairs). Limitations: small samples; different territorial profiles of the two groups (stakeholders mostly metropolitan Prato, 62%; youth mostly small-town/rural, 75%), which colours adult–youth contrasts; second-pass transcription verification pending; one recording truncated and one opening question preserved only in summary form.

4 · Stakeholder questionnaire (Group B) — N = 34

Profile: A practitioner-heavy sample: youth workers 32%, teachers 24%, "other professionals" 21% (chiefly psychologists, plus a journalist and a trainee lawyer), civil-society staff 12%, local-authority staff 9%. Tenure is bimodal — 41% over ten years, 41% three years or fewer. 62% work in the big city, consistent with Prato-centred recruitment.

Salience and self-efficacy: The theme is unavoidable: none answered "never"; 82% meet it at least sometimes (38% sometimes, 29% often, 15% very often). Confidence is capped: 59% feel only "fairly" able to recognise false content, 6% "very", while 35% feel little or not at all confident. High exposure with modest self-efficacy is the single clearest argument for the training these respondents request below.

Q5 · Where youth meet disinformation	N	%	Q7 · Who youth turn to when unsure (perceived)	N	%
Social media	32	94 %	Amici o coetanei	21	62%
App di messaggistica	9	26 %	Genitori o familiari	4	12%
Notizie online / siti	13	38 %	Insegnanti o educatori	5	15%
Passaparola / gruppi di pari	21	62 %	Operatori giovanili	2	6%
Media tradizionali	4	12 %	Fonti online	22	65%
Non sono sicuro/a	0	0%	Non chiedono a nessuno	8	24%

Weak spots and trust routing: Social media dominates (94%), but word-of-mouth among peers is second (62%) — offline transmission matters as much as any single channel. On trust, the striking result is who is absent: stakeholders believe youth rely on online sources (65%) and friends (62%), while teachers (15%) and youth workers (6%) barely feature and 24% think young people ask no-one.

Q8 · Strategies currently in use	N	%	Q9 · Main difficulties	N	%
Discussioni in classe	18	53 %	Mancanza di tempo	7	21%
Workshop / attività formative	6	18 %	Mancanza di formazione/risorse	12	35%
Conversazioni informali	18	53 %	Difficoltà a coinvolgere i giovani	7	21%
Programmi strutturati	2	6%	Rapida evoluzione dei contenuti	15	44%
Risorse online / campagne	6	18 %	Scarso supporto istituzionale	8	24%
Nessuna strategia specifica	4	12 %	Fuori dal mio ruolo	3	9%

Current responses and barriers: Practice is informal — classroom discussion and informal conversation lead at 53% each; structured programmes reach 6%. Top barriers: the pace of online content (44%) and lack of training/resources (35%).

Q10 · Support that would help	N	%	Q11 · Importance of cooperation	N	%
Strumenti pratici / linee guida	18	53 %	Molto importante	25	74 %
Collaborazione con attori locali	16	47 %	Abbastanza importante	7	21 %
Formazione	15	44 %	Poco importante	1	3%
Tempo e supporto istituzionale	13	38 %	Non importante	0	0%
Supporto dalle piattaforme	12	35 %	Non risposto	1	3%
Altro	1	3%			

Needs and mandate: Practical tools (53%), collaboration with other local actors (47%) and training (44%) lead the demands; cooperation among local actors is rated "very important" by 74% and unimportant by none — a direct mandate for the trust-network strand. Open-text answers (21 responses) converge on six themes: an educational network joining schools,

institutions and associations; continuous professional training; embedding the topic in schools from primary level; critical thinking and source literacy as the goal; a permanent observatory/guarantor body with transparent institutional communication; and AI as an accelerant amid information overload.

5 · Youth questionnaire (Group A, 16–25) — N = 20

Profile: Mostly secondary-school (40%) and university (25%) students, with 20% neither studying nor training; 45% are minors (parental consent on file, including three under-16s retained and flagged). Unlike the stakeholders, the youth sample is largely non-metropolitan: 75% live in a small town or rural area (Vernio, Valdera).

Q4 · Platform use (count of 20)	Mai	<1/sett.	1/sett.	+volte/sett.	Ogni giorno
WhatsApp	0	2	0	0	18
Instagram	4	1	0	3	12
TikTok	6	0	0	4	10
YouTube	1	4	2	3	10
Snapchat	18	0	1	0	1
Threads	18	2	0	0	0

Media environment: WhatsApp is near-universal daily (18/20); Instagram, TikTok and YouTube are daily for about half; Snapchat and Threads are absent. 90% consume mainly short videos. Interests: lifestyle and entertainment (45% each), sport (40%), news/politics a non-negligible 35%.

Noticing: 90% at least sometimes sense content is intentionally false (40% sometimes, 35% often, 15% very often); 10% say never.

Q8 · When unsure, what they do	N	%	Q10 · What would help them	N	%
Continuo a scorrere	13	65 %	Consigli / checklist	6	30 %
Provo a verificare	13	65 %	Discutere esempi a scuola / negli spazi giovanili	5	25 %
Chiedo agli amici	5	25 %	Parlare di attualità regolarmente	10	50 %
Chiedo a insegnanti / educatori	2	10 %	Capire come/perché nasce la disinformazione	6	30 %
Chiedo agli operatori giovanili	0	0%	Etichettatura chiara dei contenuti IA	9	45 %
Chiedo ai genitori / familiari	5	25 %	Strumenti migliori dalle piattaforme	6	30 %
Scrivo un commento	0	0%	Altro	1	5%

Verification, response, needs: When unsure, young people split between disengaging and checking: 65% keep scrolling and 65% try to verify themselves; asking people is rarer — friends and family 25% each, teachers 10%, youth workers 0%. When convinced a post is false, most disengage (65% keep scrolling), though 35% report it and 20% warn friends; almost none comment (0%) or reshare (5%) — a cautious, non-amplifying stance. What would help: regular current-affairs discussion at school or in community spaces (50%) and clear labelling of AI-generated content (45%) — their most distinctive request — followed by

checklists, understanding how disinformation is produced, and better platform tools (30% each).

6 · Stakeholder–youth comparison

Trust routing — perceived vs self-reported	Stakeholders (N=34)	Youth (N=20)
Friends / peers	62%	25%
Parents / family	12%	25%
Teachers / educators	15%	10%
Youth workers	6%	0%
Online sources (B) / verify independently (A)	65%	65%
Ask no-one (B) / keep scrolling (A)	24%	65%

The central finding. Both groups agree the formal educational network is almost absent from how young people check information. But the shared assumption that youth defer to peers is only half-right: stakeholders expect 62% to ask friends; young people report asking friends far less (25%) and instead verifying alone (65%) or scrolling past (65%). The gap to close is therefore not "peers versus educators" but "solo navigation versus any trusted intermediary". Salience is closely matched between the two groups (stakeholders and young people); on support needs the two converge on practical tools and platform-side measures — youth pushing further on AI labelling (45%) — and divide by role: stakeholders want horizontal collaboration (47%), youth want disinformation woven into everyday school and community conversation (50%). Method notes: the paired items are aligned thematically, not identical; the comparison is directional.

7 · Focus groups — seven sessions, three sites

Session	Site · date	Composition	Evidence
FG 1	Prato (Monash) · 07/07	4 stakeholders (teacher, journalist, youth-work psychologist, Vernio volunteer)	Transcript · ≈1h20
FG 2	Prato (Monash) · 08/07	8 DesTEENazione psychologists/educators + 1 teacher (Mugello)	Transcript · ≈1h13
FG 3	Prato (Monash) · 15/07	3 stakeholders (law/AI, civic education, youth work); partner present, excluded	Transcript · ≈1h07
FG 4	Prato (Monash) · 16/07	4 third-sector educators + Comune di Prato youth policies	Transcript · ≈1h05 (truncated)
FG 5	Vernio · 24/07	5 young people + 4 library volunteers — intergenerational	Transcript · ≈33′
FG 6	Pontedera (ARCI) · 18/07	Youth + educators, two breakout groups	Facilitation notes
FG 7	Prato (Officina Giovani) · 27/07	Youth only (19 attendees) — STAND activity + discussion	Facilitation notes

Sessions followed a common track (territorial themes → circulation → practice → trust → training needs) with deliberate cross-pollination. "Raised in N sessions" below is a convergence signal, not a prevalence estimate.

7.1 · Territorial weak spots (WP2 topic a)

Migration and interculturality — This was the adults' master theme in every stakeholder-inclusive session and included the following subthemes: stereotype cycles around the Chinese community displaced onto North African and Pakistani arrivals; two-way prejudice; racialized

crime attribution (a WhatsApp video recut within minutes to blame a "nordafricano"); slurs newly attached to Pakistani teenagers. Educators stress the prejudice is generational — while mixed classrooms help to counter it, family transmission may exacerbate it; migration is voted the top discussion topic most strongly in ethnically homogeneous classes. Pontedera's formula: "racism as opinion", anchored to the Roma community, is absent from the Prato youth's own shortlist — a question for the co-design phase.

Security (perception vs data) - Prato ranks 7th of 107 Italian provinces for reported offences (Viminale / Sole 24 Ore), yet the trend is flat, and the ranking partly reflects reporting culture— "*smonti la percezione, perché io ti porto il dato*" (“you dismantle the perception, because I bring you the data”).

School dropout as family-transmitted misinformation: the belief "*smetti a 16 anni, vai a lavorare*" (“leave school at 16 and go to work”). Here the dis/misinformation is the false claim that leaving school early still leads to stable employment when the local labour market no longer rewards unqualified early leavers, an inheritance of the textile district, against a labour market that no longer hires unqualified sixteen-year-olds (the rights-and-work strand this opens onto is treated separately below).

Sexuality/affectivity: and mental-health self-diagnosis converge across generations. Here the dis/misinformation is twofold: unreliable self-diagnostic material online, and the dismissive claim that clinical conditions are merely fashionable, a framing voiced by both adults and young people.

Institutional distrust: "l*a denuncia non serve*" (“filing a report won't help”)—contested among the young themselves in the STAND activity; services "*da sfigati*" (“for losers”); participation-washing (consultation that invites young people's input but produces no change, and so leads to disengagement); and "disinformation about young people", produced offline by parents and teachers.

7.2 · Circulation, trust, responses, needs

Circulation: The corpus' single-directional model, from Pontedera: disinformation arises offline and is reinforced online. Entertainment platforms carry information (TikTok for relationship content, monetised falsehood, self-diagnosis; gaming as an unwatched recruitment channel); AI as first answer (Google's AI Overview) and confidant ("*tutti usano ChatGPT per lo psicologo*"); and an offline layer — families named as vehicle as often as barrier, dominant outright in Vernio.

Trust: The conditional-trust economy. Stakeholders converge on a condition, not a category: young people trust "*chi non li giudica*", those who “listen before labelling”: adults must earn what peers get for free. Three registers among the young: constructive triangulation (Vernio — "*mi fido di tutti… poi ti fai la tua opinione*", with first-hand knowledge of AI failure modes); scoped scepticism (Prato youth — "*[I trust] no one*" except for teachers within their subject); and self-exempting confidence (STAND — trust not an issue to start with as it is mainly adults and the elderly who fall for fake news). **Responses and lessons learnt:** Committed but informal: one-to-one work that changes minds; laboratory formats; a local journalist's WhatsApp press review reaching 3,300 subscribers. Barriers in the groups' own words: curricular overload, phone restrictions, funding mortality, Prato's insularity ("c*ompartimenti stagni… manca il rimetto insieme*"), no collaboration even between sibling sites of the same national youth initiative (DesTEENazione). Lesson learnt: the territory lacks not actors but connective tissue.

7.3 · Work and labour politics — the strongest youth-originated strand

Because the target group is 16–25 and Prato is a manufacturing district, one strand deserves separate analysis: disinformation about work, rights and the labour market — the clearest instance in the whole mapping of young people naming a weak spot the adult instruments did not anticipate. It runs through the corpus in four converging forms. First, the Prato youth shortlisted labour exploitation and working conditions in the textile factories, unprompted — no stakeholder session had named it. Second, the Pontedera groups raised the issue of rights in the student–authority relationship, framing school rules and, by extension, early employment as questions of who holds authority over them. Third, the 15 July session produced the most concrete material highlighting the following issues: how to read a payslip ("*nessuno me l'aveva mai insegnato*"); the right to strike (retail workers told in their contracts that they could not, when in law they could); and salary transparency — alongside a two-sided diagnosis unusual in the corpus, of employer-side narratives ("*i giovani non hanno voglia di lavorare*", "*la prima cosa che chiedono sono le ferie*") set against influencer-side counter-narratives ("*fai 5.000 euro al mese*"), each distorting what work actually is for someone entering it. Fourth was the territory's signature dropout belief — "*smetti a 16 anni, vai a lavorare*" — is itself labour-market misinformation, sustained by an extended false picture of what jobs require (that a sixteen-year-old is hired unqualified as an operaio, a cameriere without HACCP, a badante without competence).

This matters for the Prato work in two ways. First, it is anchored in official structure, not anecdote: the Municipality's 2026 report frames the città-distretto precisely as a territory whose permeability between society and the productive system elevates professional competences above formal study — so disinformation about work and disinformation about education are, here, the same problem seen from two ends, and both are entangled with the migration-and-labour narratives ("*i cinesi ci rubano il lavoro*") the mapping documents. Second, and most useful for a 16–25 intervention, work is where the mapping's three headline findings converge: it is a weak spot (false beliefs about jobs and rights), it is the dropout mechanism (leave-at-16), and it is a trust question (who tells you the truth about your working future — not employers, not influencers, not, reliably, schools). "Navigating disinformation about your own working future" may therefore be the single most engaging entry point the mapping offers for this age band, precisely because it is one the young people raised themselves. One design caution, however, is the following: the richest workplace-rights material (payslips, the right to strike) was partner-seeded in the 15 July session before being taken up by a local educator; it is corroborated by the youth's own textile-exploitation point and by Pontedera's rights theme, and so stands as a strand — but the co-design phase should test it with young people rather than assume it.

Training need (as expressed)	**Sources**	**Design implication**
Mechanism literacy: algorithms, echo chambers, LLM statistical answers, hallucination, monetisation	3 stakeholder FGs · Vernio · youth demand	Core module — prototyped live at Vernio; explicitly requested by youth
Practical tools incl. guardrails usable by families	2 stakeholder FGs	Take-home toolkit
Non-frontal methods: movement, music, games, peer formats	4 stakeholder FGs	Method lab, not lecture; co-design with youth
Vetted reliable-source map	2 FGs + youth question	Answers the students' own question
Rights and work literacy: reading a payslip, contract basics, the right to strike, what real jobs require; spotting employer- and influencer-side distortion	Prato youth · Pontedera · 15/07 (see 7.3)	The most immediately deliverable 16–25 content in the mapping — concrete civic/economic-literacy

		workshops; test partner-seeded elements in co-design
Institutional backing, meeting places, co-management of spaces	3 stakeholder FGs · Pontedera	Trust-network governance; cogestione as youth-side counterpart

Stakeholders rated their own confidence in recognising a false story at 30–50%, converging with the questionnaire; the Prato youth rated themselves able recognisers — the third-person gap between the two is itself a training-design datum.

8 · Instrument fidelity and cross-country consistency

All sessions used the ethics-approved discussion guide (v1, May 2026), adaptively as it licenses. Coverage of its seven blocks (● covered · ◐ partial · — not covered):

Guide block	FG1	FG2	FG3	FG4	FG5	FG6	FG 7
1 · Welcome, consent, introductions	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
2 · Disinformation in the territory	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
3 · Youth knowledge & confidence	●	◐	●	●	◐	◐	●
4 · Trust networks & local actors	●	●	●	●	●	◐	●
5 · Existing strategies & obstacles	●	●	●	●	—	◐	—
6 · Youth protagonism	◐	—	◐	◐	◐	●	◐
7 · Dissemination & continuity	◐	◐	◐	—	●	◐	—

Blocks 2–4 — the diagnostic core — are covered near-universally. Block 6 (youth protagonism) is the corpus's thin spot; it will be carried explicitly into the first co-design sessions. This matrix and the shared instruments provide the fidelity baseline for the German and Dutch mapping rounds (WP3–WP4).

9 · Emerging trust-network ties

The Prato mapping was designed not only to diagnose weak spots but to begin building the connective tissue the territory was found to lack (§6.4). By the close of the mapping exercise, three levels were confirmed: European, regional and EUI-Florence training partners, and the local Prato youth ecosystem. These are set out below. Two of them address directly the specific gaps this assessment identified, namely access to schools and content on how disinformation mechanisms work, so the trust-network component is already demonstrating in practice the approach the deliverable proposes.

9.1 European ties

Actor	Status	What it is / brings
EDMO at the EUI	European anchor	The Prato work is networked into the European Digital Media Observatory — the EU's primary counter-disinformation infrastructure, coordinated by the EUI School of Transnational Governance in Florence; EDMO colleagues took part in the SEED kick-off (March 2026). EDMO's own fact-checking network ranks immigration second only to Ukraine among disinformation topics in Italy — the macro-scale correlate of this mapping's master theme, and a channel through which the Prato findings can travel upward.
RESONANT (Horizon Europe, UniBo)	Peer, reciprocal	The Monash team sits on the External Stakeholder Board of RESONANT (GA 101132439; foreign information manipulation and interference targeting diaspora communities), contributing to its Handbook; final event Brussels, October 2026. Thematically

		complementary: RESONANT works the foreign and coordinated layer, the Prato work the offline, community and youth layer — the two ends of the same problem, with the ground-level reading of migration-related disinformation flowing one way and the cross-border picture the other.

9.2 Regional & EUI-Florence training partners

Actor	Status	What it is / brings
Officine d'Orizzonti (EUI-STG)	Cooperation agreed in principle	The active-citizenship laboratory of the Florence School of Transnational Governance, delivering non-frontal civic-education workshops (role-play, class topic-voting, a European Parliament simulation) in Tuscan upper-secondary schools via INDIRE/Erasmus+. A founder took part in the stakeholder consultations; joint work is planned on the autumn training modules and on in-school follow-ups in 2026/27. It answers directly the two gaps the mapping named — access to schools and experiential youth protagonism (the guide's least-covered block) — and its own classroom topic-voting data (migration ranked first or second everywhere) independently corroborate the salience findings.
Anti-Fake News (Ordine dei Giornalisti Toscana)	Initial outreach	A consolidated regional media-literacy programme running in Tuscan secondary schools since 2020 (Firenze, Livorno, Siena, Grosseto), whose 2025-26 modules — how fake news is made, deep fakes, AI-generated disinformation — match the mapping's core training need almost exactly. It has never operated in Prato: the local journalist in the consultations, who does precisely this work, was unaware of it — corroborating the finding that the territory is cut off from regional networks. Bringing it to Prato turns that finding into an action.

9.3 Local Prato youth ecosystem

Public schools were not partners in the mapping: the sessions fell at and beyond the end of the school year, when classes were unavailable, so young people were reached through out-of-school settings and educators taking part in a personal capacity. This is not incidental. Participants across sessions described schools as difficult terrain for work of this kind — curricular overload ("altri 87 argomenti"), teachers wary of letting pupils use phones as teaching tools, no room for a monthly current-affairs hour, external professionals kept out of sexuality education, and the blunt verdict "*la scuola non fa quello che dovrebbe fare*" — a picture the questionnaire's 6% structured-programme figure confirms numerically. Yet schools remain the only universal point of contact with young people that none of the actors below can substitute for. The conclusion the Prato mapping draws is therefore deliberate: the out-of-school ecosystem is the realistic operating terrain for the months ahead, while the school system is the boundary the co-design and training phase must be equipped to cross — not by assuming direct classroom access, but through educators carrying materials across it, through the two school-facing ties named below (Officine d'Orizzonti's in-class model and the Ordine dei Giornalisti's school programme), and through institutional channels the Prato work is already adjacent to: the Consulta degli Studenti and the school-leaders' network (RISPO), both embedded in DesTEENazione's governance and in the new municipal Osservatorio sulla povertà educativa. Schools are thus present in this mapping as its central unmet access question, with the means to answer it already identified.

Actor	Status	What it is / brings
Officina Giovani (Comune di Prato)	Host setting & municipal hub	The Municipality's youth hub in the converted ex-Macelli complex (Piazza dei Macelli), and the setting for two of the mapping events. As the coordinating point for youth policy, cultural production and European initiatives, it is the natural physical anchor for the co-design and training activities to come.
DesTEENazione (Società della Salute Area Pratese)	Core partner, deeply present	The €3M, three-year Ministero del Lavoro initiative for ages 11-21, led by the Società della Salute Area Pratese, which relocated to its definitive home at Officina Giovani in spring 2026. It is the single most present actor in the consultations — the affiliation of most focus-group educators and much of the stakeholder sample — and its governance already connects schools, the Consulta degli Studenti, the third sector and the health authority, making it the readiest local vehicle for the trust-network strand.
Save the Children — Punto Luce, MacroZero Hub, Digital Academy	Prospective; forward interest	A multi-programme anchor in the Macrolotto Zero corridor (the quarter this analysis identifies as most educationally disadvantaged): Punto Luce (Via Mameli, ages 6-16, already delivering 'uso consapevole dei nuovi media', 3,630 reached in 2025); the MacroZero Hub of social innovation (ex-Mercato Coperto); and the Digital Academy at PrismaLab (ages 14-24, digital skills, with Cooperativa Con Voi). Contacted during the mapping; end-of-year timing precluded participation, but forward interest in the coming phases was confirmed.
UNICEF 'Città Amica dei bambini e degli adolescenti'	Governance context	Prato has been a UNICEF Child-Friendly City since February 2024 (accreditation 2024-2026), with a Consiglio Comunale dei Ragazzi and a statute change adopting UN CRC Art. 12 on child participation — the municipal governance layer above the service providers, and the institutional counterpart to the connective tissue the mapping found missing. Framing context rather than a formed tie.

Read top to bottom, this is the connective tissue the mapping identified as absent, now under construction at three altitudes at once: the Prato work linked upward to the EU level, sideways to the EUI-Florence and regional-journalism training worlds, and downward into the local youth ecosystem, with schools as the acknowledged boundary and the means to cross it already in hand. Naming of external partners follows their stated willingness; pseudonymised focus-group participants are never linked to named organisations.

10 · Conclusions and hand-off to the next phase

WP2 mandated topic	Headline finding
(a) Episodes of dis/misinformation	Migration/interculturality as adults' master theme; dropout, self-diagnosis, sexuality/affectivity, institutional distrust around it; youth add rights-and-work and "disinformation about us"; hyper-local offline themes in Vernio/Valdera
(a) Where it circulates	Social media (94%) and short video (90%) — but it arises offline and is reinforced online; families and word-of-mouth carry half the load
(b) Strategies to counter false narratives	Committed but informal and ad hoc (structured programmes 6%); youth cautious and non-amplifying (35% report; ~none reshare)
(c) Past experience / lessons learnt	Barriers: content pace (44%), training gaps (35%), funding mortality, compartimenti stagni; one-to-one and laboratory formats work

(d) Keywords / local-challenge themes	Coded bank established for the three-country frame — from rete educativa, pensiero critico, autodiagnosi to razzismo come opinione, cogestione, effetto terza persona
Young people's lived experience	Conditional trust, self-verification, AI-labelling demand, current-affairs discussion at school (50%), explicit request to learn how AI works; work and labour rights as their own strongest-owned theme and a likely entry point for the 16–25 band (7.3)

These findings guide and support the implementation of the WP2 activities foreseen for D2.1 — the training build, the trust-network strand and the co-design sessions with young people. The September–October training build will centre on mechanism literacy, non-frontal methods and a vetted source map; the trust-network strand will invest in horizontal bridge figures, co-managed spaces and connective tissue between the many actors already active — a process that, as §9 shows, has already begun, with ties formed or confirmed at European (EDMO, RESONANT), regional (Officine d'Orizzonti, Anti Fake News) and local (Save the Children; UNICEF Città Amica framework) levels, two of them answering directly the school-access and mechanism-literacy gaps this assessment identified. The co-design phase opens with the questions this mapping could pose but not answer — whether inter-community prejudice is "their" disinformation, and what youth-led action (the guide's least-covered block) should look like.

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