INFO PACK

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EMOTiC
European Multidisciplinary Organization for Training and international Consulting

DECODE

Digital Empowerment through Critical Online Dialogue and Engagement

Erasmus+ Youth Exchange (KA152)

Vienna, Austria
2–10 November 2026

(including arrival and departure days)



COUNTRIES

Austria · Bulgaria · Czechia · France · Latvia · Romania

PARTICIPANTS

42 people ·
6 participants + 1 group leader per country

Apply by 28 October 2026

Austria · Bulgaria · Czechia · France · Latvia · Romania

Application form: https://forms.gle/aY3cEa948KMBTscz5

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1. About the Youth Exchange

Young people live a large part of their lives online. News, opinions and friendships run through social media, messaging apps and video platforms – and more and more through content that artificial intelligence creates or selects. These spaces offer real chances to learn and take part, but they also spread deepfakes and misleading content, reward outrage and pull users into filter bubbles. Many young people tell us they feel manipulated by what they see online and are unsure how to tell real from fake.

In needs-analysis sessions with young people in the partner countries, three gaps came up again and again:

- **Skills gap** – few young people have learned practical ways to spot AI-generated content, check a source or verify an image or a video.
- **Wellbeing gap** – endless feeds and algorithm-driven content affect mood, sleep and self-esteem, yet healthy digital habits are rarely discussed.
- **Participation gap** – young people want a say in how AI and online platforms are regulated, but lack spaces to turn their concerns into proposals.

DECODE – Digital Empowerment through Critical Online Dialogue and Engagement responds to these gaps. For seven days in Vienna, 36 young people and six group leaders from Austria, Bulgaria, Czechia, France, Latvia and Romania learn by doing: they test their eye in a Deepfake Detection Lab, play a disinformation game from the inside, race the clock in a Fact-Check Sprint, design counter-disinformation campaigns and draft youth recommendations on AI and digital rights. They go home with practical tools, a campaign to run in their community and friends across Europe.

2. Objectives

The youth exchange aims to:

1. Build AI literacy and critical digital skills, so that participants can identify deepfakes, understand algorithmic manipulation and verify online information.
2. Bridge the gap between digital exposure and digital resilience through peer learning, comparing how disinformation spreads in six European countries.
3. Promote digital wellbeing with practical, evidence-based strategies for a healthier relationship with technology and social media.
4. Strengthen democratic participation: participants draft youth policy recommendations on AI and digital rights in a simulated EU Youth Dialogue.
5. Turn participants into solution-creators who design counter-disinformation campaigns and run them in their own communities.

What you will take home

- At least five verification techniques: reverse image search (TinEye, Google), video verification with InVID/WeVerify, metadata analysis, source triangulation and lateral reading.
- A counter-disinformation campaign co-designed in a mixed-nationality team, with ready-to-use assets made in Canva and CapCut.
- Your own 60-second video story and a youth policy recommendation on AI and digital rights.
- A personal digital-wellbeing goal and strategies to reach it.
- A local follow-up plan, an international network of peers and a Youthpass certificate.

3. Our Learning Approach

The exchange follows the principles of non-formal and experiential learning: you try something, reflect on it, understand the idea behind it and then apply it. Participants are not only learners but co-creators – you present your country at the Disinformation Fair, lead morning energisers and intercultural evenings, and help document the week in a rotating youth media team.

Methods include peer education, design thinking, simulations and serious games – among them the Deepfake Detection Lab, the Bad News Game, the Algorithm Fishbowl, a Fact-Check Sprint, Digital Wellness Body-Mapping and a Policy Hackathon – as well as World Café, moving debates, an expert panel, video storytelling, Mentimeter and Kahoot.

How we support your learning

- **Home groups** – small mixed-nationality groups with a group leader that meet every evening to reflect on the day.
- **Learning buddies** – each participant is paired with a buddy from another country for peer support and short daily check-ins.
- **Learning journal** – your personal record of what you learn, which feeds into your Youthpass at the end.
- **Mid-term evaluation** – on Day 4, so the team can adapt the rest of the programme to the group.

The working language is English. The team uses accessible language and visual materials, and every session offers different ways to take part.

4. Programme at a Glance

Seven activity days, framed by an arrival day and a departure day, in three phases: Understanding and AI literacy (Days 1–2), Analysis and critical thinking (Days 3–4), and Solutions and action (Days 5–7).

Day	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Mon 2 Nov *Arrival day*	Arrivals and registration (10:00–17:30), check-in from 14:00		Welcome dinner nearby, 18:30–20:30 · short welcome circle
Tue 3 Nov *Day 1 · Understanding*	Name games and digital-habits BINGO · Project introduction, expectations (World Café) and Youthpass	Learning goals, home groups and group agreement · Exploring the Digital Landscape	Free evening
Wed 4 Nov *Day 2 · Understanding*	Deepfake Detection Lab · Verification tools: InVID/WeVerify, reverse image search, metadata	Cross-Cultural Disinformation Fair (six country stands) · European Disinformation Map	Intercultural evening: Austria and Latvia
Thu 5 Nov *Day 3 · Analysis*	Bad News Game · Algorithm Fishbowl	Fact-Check Sprint with OSINT tools · Digital Wellness Body-Mapping	Intercultural evening: Czechia and Bulgaria
Fri 6 Nov *Day 4 · Analysis*	Expert panel: AI, disinformation and youth mental health · Moving debate and digital dilemmas	Educational visit to the Europa Experience (democracy simulation) · Mid-term evaluation	Intercultural evening: France and Romania
Sat 7 Nov *Day 5 · Solutions*	Design Thinking Sprint: empathise, define and ideate	Prototype with Canva and CapCut · Test and feedback (gallery walk)	Free evening
Sun 8 Nov *Day 6 · Solutions*	Policy Hackathon: youth recommendations · Simulated EU Youth Dialogue	Digital-detox outdoor team-building · Video storytelling: scripting and recording	Free evening (optional video editing)
Mon 9 Nov *Day 7 · Showcase*	Video editing · DECODE Showcase of the six campaigns	Follow-up action planning · Youthpass and final evaluation · Closing ceremony	Farewell party
Tue 10 Nov *Departure day*	Breakfast (08:30–10:00), closing circle (10:00–11:00), departures from 11:00		

The programme is provisional and may be adapted to the group's needs and to the visit host's schedule.

A typical day

08:00–09:30 Breakfast	**09:30–09:45** Energiser, led by a country group	**09:45–12:45** Morning sessions with a break	**12:45–14:00** Lunch
14:00–17:30 Afternoon sessions with a break	**17:30–18:15** Home group reflection	**18:30–19:30** Dinner	**from 19:30** Evening programme or free time

On Friday 6 November the afternoon is spent at the Europa Experience in the city centre – bring your passport or ID card.

5. Who Takes Part

The youth exchange is for young people who are curious about media, online culture and artificial intelligence, and who want to learn how to deal with disinformation and talk about difficult topics respectfully – online and face to face. First-time participants are very welcome.

Participant profile

- Aged 18 to 30.
- Living in one of the six participating countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Czechia, France, Latvia or Romania (the Austrian group is based in Vienna).
- Able to communicate in English – B1 level is enough.
- Available for the whole exchange, from arrival on 2 November to departure on 10 November 2026.
- Ready to prepare with your national group before the exchange and to run a follow-up activity for your peers at home.
- Open to teamwork in mixed groups and to living together with people from different backgrounds.

Group leaders

Each national group travels with one group leader, aged 18 or older with no upper age limit. Group leaders support their group before, during and after the exchange, take part in all sessions and accompany a home group in the evenings. They register through the same application form.

Group composition

Each country sends 6 participants and 1 group leader – 36 young people and six group leaders in total. National groups are gender-balanced and include at least two participants with fewer opportunities. Together with the team, the group counts 44 people.

Austria	Bulgaria	Czechia	France	Latvia	Romania
6 participants + 1 group leader · host	6 participants + 1 group leader	6 participants + 1 group leader	6 participants + 1 group leader	6 participants + 1 group leader	6 participants + 1 group leader

How to apply

Online application form – deadline: Wednesday 28 October 2026

forms.gle/aY3cEa948KMBTscz5

- **Already selected by the partner organisation of your country?** Fill in the form as soon as possible – it is your registration.
- **Applying on your own?** The same form is your application. Applications are reviewed on an ongoing basis by EMOTiC together with the partner organisation of your country, and you get an answer by e-mail.

Please let the partner organisation of your country know that you have applied. Places are confirmed by the partner organisation together with EMOTiC, based on motivation, profile and the balance of the group.

6. Your Journey: Before, During and After

Before the exchange

- Complete the online application form (forms.gle/aY3cEa948KMBTscz5) as soon as possible, at the latest by 28 October. Within 24 hours of acceptance, confirm your place, sign the participation agreement and send a copy of your passport or ID card.
- Also within 24 hours of acceptance, send your proposed route and its cost to EMOTiC; buy your tickets only after approval.
- Fill in the short pre-exchange questionnaire: your digital habits, expectations, dietary and accessibility needs.
- **Disinformation Fair task:** with your national group, research the most common disinformation narratives in your country – sources, platforms, real cases and how people respond – and prepare an interactive stand.
- **Bad News Game:** play it online at getbadnews.com before you arrive and note what surprised you.
- **Intercultural evening:** with your national group, prepare 15–20 minutes of something interactive from your country – a dance, a song, a game or a mini language lesson – rather than a presentation. Food and drinks to share are welcome.

During the exchange

- Take part in all sessions – at least 90% attendance is required for the travel refund and the Youthpass.
- Co-lead a morning energiser, join your home group every evening and take a turn in the youth media team.
- Keep your learning journal and give honest feedback in the mid-term and final evaluations.

After the exchange

- **Local follow-up:** with your national group, run one local follow-up activity by 31 January 2027 – for example a media-literacy workshop for peers in a school or youth centre, a public event or a social-media campaign.
- **Policy:** submit your group's youth recommendations to a local or national youth council or youth dialogue platform.
- **Documentation:** send an attendance list, 3–5 photos and a short report (template provided), and publish at least one post about the exchange.

7. Key Dates

When	What happens
as soon as possible, at the latest Wed 28 Oct 2026	Application form – registration of selected participants and group leaders, and open applications
ongoing	Applications reviewed as they arrive; answer by e-mail
within 24 hours of acceptance	Place confirmed, participation agreement signed and ID copy sent
within 24 hours of acceptance	Route and cost sent to EMOTiC; tickets bought only after approval
Mon 2 – Tue 10 Nov 2026	Arrival on Mon 2 Nov, youth exchange Tue 3 – Mon 9 Nov, departure on Tue 10 Nov
by Tue 24 Nov 2026	Travel documents sent to EMOTiC
by Sun 31 Jan 2027	Local follow-up activity implemented and documented

> **Need support to take part?**
> If anything could make your participation more difficult – accessibility, health, dietary needs, travel or personal circumstances – tell us in the pre-exchange questionnaire or write to emotic.org@gmail.com. We will look for a solution together with you and your partner organisation.

8. Venue and Accommodation

Jugendgästehaus Wien Brigittenau
Adalbert-Stifter-Strasse 73, 1200 Vienna, Austria
Sessions, accommodation and meals all take place at the same venue, about 15 minutes from the city centre by public transport.

- Shared rooms with participants of the same gender, mixed with participants from other countries. **Participants from Vienna sleep at home** and join all sessions and meals at the venue; EMOTiC buys a Wiener Linien weekly ticket for those who need one (request it with your signed agreement).
- Full board from the welcome dinner on 2 November to breakfast on 10 November. The welcome dinner is at a restaurant near the venue, 18:30–20:30, for those who have arrived by then – it cannot be arranged for later arrivals.
- Please tell us about dietary requirements or allergies in the pre-exchange questionnaire.
- Check-in from 14:00 on the arrival day; check-out after breakfast on the departure day.
- Towels and shampoo are not provided by the hostel – bring 2–3 towels, your own toiletries, a reusable water bottle and a mug.

House rules

- Smoking is not allowed anywhere inside the building. The hostel charges a €700 penalty for smoking in the rooms.
- Quiet hours in rooms and corridors start at 22:00. Please respect the other guests of the hostel.
- Alcohol and drugs are not permitted during the activity at the venue.

9. Travel and Reimbursement

There is no participation fee. The programme, accommodation, meals and materials are covered by the Erasmus+ Programme. Travel to and from Vienna is reimbursed on the basis of actual costs, up to the limits below per person for the return journey. Any costs above these limits are carried by the participants themselves.

Country	Distance band	Maximum refund	Note
Austria	–	**no travel grant**	Vienna group, sleeps at home
Bulgaria	500–1,999 km	**€309**	–
Czechia	100–499 km	**€285**	green travel
France	500–1,999 km	**€309**	–
Latvia	500–1,999 km	**€309**	–
Romania	500–1,999 km	**€309**	–

Distance bands follow the official Erasmus+ distance calculator. The Czech group travels green – by train, bus or car-sharing in both directions; if green travel is not used, the limit is €211.

Booking and reimbursement rules

- Travel dates are Monday 2 November (arrival) and Tuesday 10 November 2026 (departure). Other dates must be agreed with EMOTiC in advance; extra nights are at your own cost.
- Send your proposed route and its cost to emotic.org@gmail.com and buy your tickets only after approval. Send your route within 24 hours of acceptance.
- Only international travel to and from Vienna is reimbursed. Local transport – between the airport or station and the venue, and within Vienna – is your own contribution.
- Keep all e-tickets, boarding passes (outward and return), invoices and proof of payment, and send them to emotic.org@gmail.com by 24 November 2026.

- The refund is paid by bank transfer after the exchange, once your local follow-up activity has been implemented and documented.
- **Cancellation:** after you sign the participation agreement, a compensation fee applies if you cancel, drop out or are absent – €500 for participants travelling from abroad, €300 for participants from Vienna – because costs are paid for you in advance.

Getting to the venue

- **From Vienna Airport (VIE):** take the ÖBB S7 or REX7 train towards Floridsdorf and get off at Handelskai, then walk about 8 minutes to the venue. Trains run every 30 minutes; buy an ÖBB ticket at the station machine or in the ÖBB app.
- **From Wien Hauptbahnhof (trains and buses from Czechia):** take the U1 to Praterstern, then any S-Bahn towards Floridsdorf two stops to Handelskai.
- **From the Erdberg bus terminal (VIB):** take the U3 to Landstraße/Wien Mitte, then any S-Bahn towards Floridsdorf to Handelskai.

For live connections, use the WienMobil or ÖBB app, or Google Maps.

10. Practical Information

Vienna in early November

Expect cool autumn weather, typically between 3 °C and 11 °C, often grey and with rain possible. Bring warm layers, a waterproof jacket and comfortable shoes for the outdoor afternoon and for walking in the city. Shops are closed on Sunday 8 November; some supermarkets at the large train stations stay open.

What to bring

- Passport or ID card – also needed on Friday 6 November for the security check at the Europa Experience.
- Your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) – please show it on arrival. Travel insurance is recommended.
- Materials for your Disinformation Fair stand and for the intercultural evening.
- A smartphone with a charger for the verification tools and video storytelling; a laptop is useful but not required.
- Towels, toiletries, a reusable water bottle, a mug and any personal medication. Power sockets in Austria are type C/F, 230 V.

Get your devices ready

Before you arrive, install the free apps CapCut and Canva on your phone and, if you bring a laptop, the free InVID/WeVerify browser plugin. All sessions use free tools – nothing needs to be bought. Within the EU, mobile roaming costs the same as at home.

Money

Austria uses the euro (€). Cards are widely accepted, but some small shops and cafés prefer cash. Tap water in Vienna is excellent to drink.

Safety and wellbeing

A safety briefing is held on the arrival evening. A designated support person from the team is available throughout the exchange for any personal, practical or health-related concern, and group leaders stay close to their groups. On free evenings, tell your group leader where you are going. In an emergency, call 112 (European emergency number), 144 (ambulance), 133 (police) or 122 (fire brigade).

Recognition

All participants who take part in at least 90% of the programme receive a Youthpass certificate documenting their learning – for example digital, citizenship and intercultural competences.

11. The Team and Contacts

EMOTiC (European Multidisciplinary Organization for Training and international Consulting) is a youth-led non-profit organisation founded in Vienna in 2020. It works in non-formal education, training and international cooperation, runs a youth learning hub in the city centre, coordinates Erasmus+ and CERV projects for young people and youth workers, and develops educational games and simulations. DECODE builds on earlier EMOTiC projects on media and dialogue, such as “Embracing Diversity and Inclusion” and “Echoes of Environment and Digitalisation”.

The team

- **Mohamed Sakr – lead facilitator (EMOTiC).** Project manager, trainer and expert in social innovation, entrepreneurship, digitalisation and innovative learning methods; active in Erasmus+ since 2014.
- **Hajer Hechmi – project manager and facilitator (EMOTiC).** Youth trainer in social cohesion, community change and conflict transformation; your first contact for practical questions.
- **Six group leaders** – one from each partner organisation, supporting their national group throughout the exchange.

Contact	Role	How to reach
EMOTiC	Routes, travel documents and all questions	emotic.org@gmail.com Rauhensteingasse 7/18, 1010 Vienna
Hajer Hechmi	Project manager	emotic.org@gmail.com
Mohamed Sakr	Lead facilitator	emotic.org@gmail.com

12. Checklist Before You Travel

☐ Application form submitted	☐ Participation agreement signed, ID copy sent
☐ Pre-exchange questionnaire completed	☐ Route approved by EMOTiC before buying tickets
☐ Tickets bought and itinerary shared	☐ Bad News Game played
☐ Disinformation Fair stand prepared with your group	☐ Intercultural evening prepared with your group
☐ Passport or ID card, and EHIC	☐ Smartphone and charger
☐ Towels, toiletries, water bottle and mug	☐ Warm, waterproof clothes and comfortable shoes
☐ All tickets and boarding passes kept for the refund	☐ Venue address and contacts saved on your phone

We look forward to welcoming you in Vienna!

Please read this info pack carefully and keep it at hand while you travel. If anything is unclear, contact your partner organisation or write to us at emotic.org@gmail.com.