



LE PROVENÇAL

EUROPEAN STATE OF MIND EXPLORERS



CULTURAL EXCHANGE



NEW EXPERIENCES AND INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP



Discover Romania: Sustainable lifestyle in Transylvania

Forget about vampires and Dracula for a second and come explore the real Transylvania! Join us in Torockó, a stunning historical village nestled in the mountains, where the sun rises twice a day. Experience the extraordinary Turda Salt Mine, an underground amusement park, and feel the thrill of a 600 m zipline at the Turda Gorge. Immerse yourself in nomadic traditions, set up a jurta, learn local crafts, make homemade bread and soap, and try your hand at traditional embroidery.

If you are looking for a challenge, enjoy a 5-6 hour hike with breathtaking views or opt for an electric bike tour and local farm visit. End your days with folk dances, campfires, and new friends. See you next September in Romania!



Copenhagen - Architecture and Design as a way of life

Looking for a project that combines architecture, sustainability, and urban life? Join us in Copenhagen, one of the world's most forward-thinking cities! Explore the city by bike, like the locals, and discover how tradition meets innovation along the coastline and canals.

Visit the Danish Architecture Center for an overview of past, present, and future design. Wander through the city center to see landmarks like the Opera House, BLOX, and Christiansborg Palace. Step into Freetown Christiania to experience alternative living, and marvel at cutting-edge architecture in Orestad with icons like the 8 House and Mountain Dwellings. Discover how Nordhavn is reinventing urban living with its "5-minute city" model, and learn about Copenhagen's bold vision for the future at City Hall.

Make new friends, explore a vibrant city on two wheels, and experience architecture and culture in a way you'll never forget.





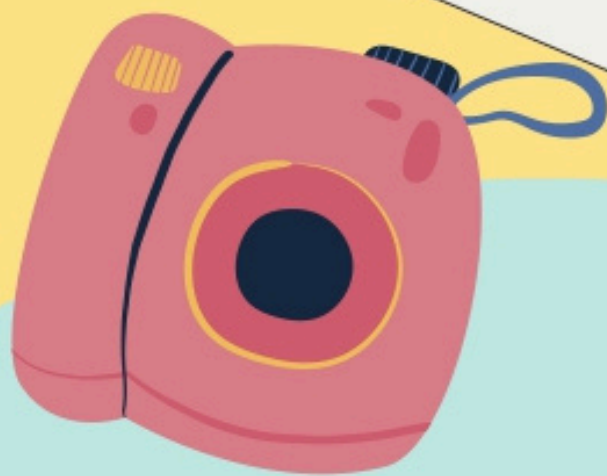
Flavours of Abruzzo

"Flavours of Abruzzo" was born from the desire to tell the story of our land not only with words, but through the tastes, aromas, and traditions that make it truly unique. The journey began with "spaghetti alla chitarra," a typical Abruzzo pasta made with flour and eggs, cut using a wooden frame strung like a guitar, and usually served with ragù and tiny meatballs.

Of course, no Italian experience would be complete without pizza margherita, the worldwide symbol of Italy. With tomato, mozzarella, and basil, it embodies simplicity and beauty, standing beside pasta as one of the great ambassadors of our culture.

The students also discovered the ancient art of cheese-making, where fresh milk and patience create flavors that speak of the land and the skill of expert hands. Another highlight was exploring the world of extra virgin olive oil, the heart of the Mediterranean diet, where each drop carries tradition, passion, and care.

Finally, a tour of Atri revealed medieval alleys, lively squares, and timeless charm. This blend of food, history, and culture offered students a rich, multi-sensory experience of Abruzzo.



Music for Life

"Music for Life" was an experience that showed how music can connect people beyond borders and languages. The mornings were filled with creative energy: students experimented with podcasting, discovering how to tell stories, share songs, and create something new together. Singing activities gave everyone the chance to find their voice, both literally and figuratively, while also learning to listen and collaborate.

But the project was not only about music.

The afternoons opened the door to exploration, with visits that revealed the history, traditions, and beauty of the surrounding region. This balance between creative workshops and cultural discovery made the program unique: a journey that engaged both mind and heart.





Nordic Winter Activities

Nordic winter activities in Finland offered students a unique opportunity to experience the magic of the North in an authentic and adventurous way. Surrounded by snowy forests and frozen lakes, participants took part in activities that combined fun, culture and teamwork.

From sledding along the Kangasala slopes to learning cross-country skiing techniques, the program was a mix of adrenaline and laughter.

In Vesaniemi, the bravest even tried the legendary ice swimming, an experience closely linked to the Finnish sauna tradition. Jumping into freezing waters and then warming up in a cozy sauna was not only a test of courage, but also a way to embrace one of the country's oldest customs.

ESN's Nordic winter activities were not just a journey, but a cultural journey- that left each participant with unforgettable memories, new skills and the warm feeling of being part of a diverse and welcoming community.



English Drama Project in Wiesbaden

Would you like to improve your acting skills? If you would, then this is not the perfect project for you. It's even more than that. You get to work with professional Irish actors on the script, which in some cases you even get to write! Apart from that you get to experience the beautiful German fall and fall in love with the amazing architecture and so much more in the city of Wiesbaden. The participants from our school are aged around 13-15, so you should take that into consideration while deciding on whether to go to the project or not, although of course we invite everybody who wants to come.





OPEN AIR

If you are into getting tanned (sunburned) depending if you are used to the sun or not, then you should join us in this amazing week in March-April!

Open Air is one of the two projects that Escola Secundária D. João II offers to international students in a city called Setúbal, located in the southwestern part of Portugal.

Our activities are done outdoors, enjoying our beautiful landscapes, including "Arrabida", a classified UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and our beautiful Sado Baie.

Canoing, spending a day at the beach and playing volleyball are some of the activities included in this week! With a number of more or less 80 people with more than 9 different nationalities, this project is acclaimed for its diversity in every aspect.

Our Portuguese students have created a very strong bond with each other due to our weekly ESN meetings, which allow everyone to feel welcome in this land.

We invite you to the best week of your life, filled with laughter, good food, more friends than you can calculate and of course, sunny weather. If you don't believe it that come join this big family to see for yourself



BLUE WEEK

Colégio Valsassina, a school in Lisbon, Portugal, organises Blue Week every year in early May. This exclusive program brings together a select group of around 20 students for an immersive journey that combines education, culture, and adventure. Blue Week is designed to show the vital importance of ocean sustainability and to showcase the profound connection between Portugal and the sea. The week offers a lot of dynamic activities, including a guided visit to the Lisbon Oceanarium. A thrilling surf lesson on one of Portugal's world-famous beaches. Cultural excursions through Lisbon's historic centre, with visits to museums that explore the Age of Discoveries and the ocean's lasting influence.

Supported by a dedicated team of teachers and staff, every detail is thoughtfully planned to ensure an engaging, safe, and unforgettable experience. Blue Week is more than a program - it is a celebration of learning, exploration, and our enduring connection to the ocean.





Istanbul Maximum

Welcome to a one of a kind projects that unites different nationalities and perspectives. In Istanbul, the iconic Bosphorus Strait, linking Europe and Asia, offers the unique chance to explore two continents in a single week; something few places in the world can offer!

Dive into the daily rhythm of life in Türkiye. From crowded bazaars to peaceful ferry rides across the Bosphorus. Cultural tours will lead you through mosques, lively markets, and historic landmarks, each site telling a story and helping you connect with Türkiye's rich past.

But this journey isn't just about sightseeing. Every visit is paired with history and context, helping you see the meaning behind them.

And for animal lovers, Istanbul, also known as the "Land of Cats," the city embraces its feline residents like no other. Of course, no visit to Türkiye would be complete without its world famous cuisine; from delicious desserts to savoury dishes. We wrap up this incredible journey with a fun and unforgettable dinner party featuring Türkiye's traditional group dance, the Damat Halayı.

Come join us in Türkiye where cultures meet, friendships are born, and every experience becomes a story worth telling!

Art And Nature

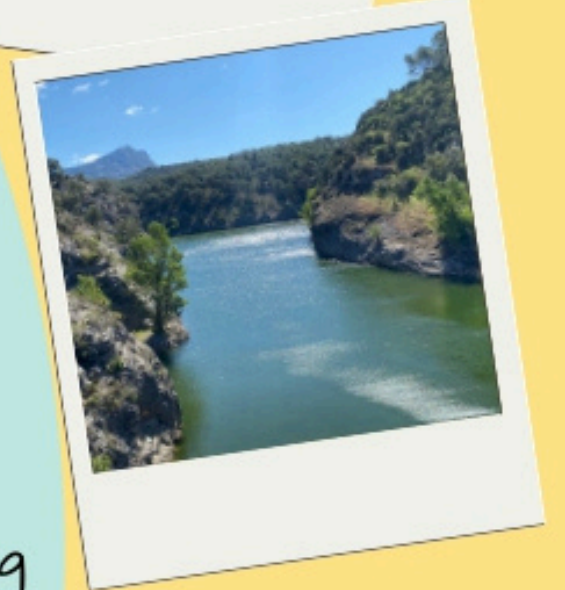
Ready for an adventure that blends nature, culture, and creativity? Imagine spending days surrounded by people from all over Europe.

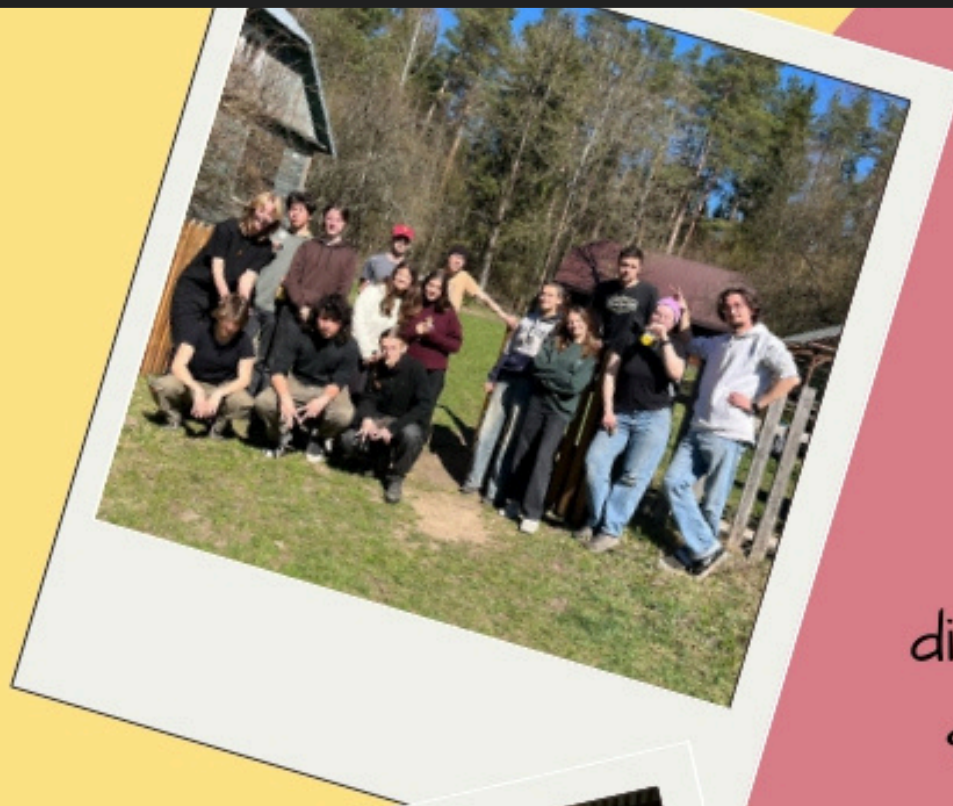
From the wild beauty of Marseille's natural landscapes to its charming streets filled with history. We'll explore ancient churches, wander through the alleys of Aix-en-Provence, and climb the mountains of Le Tholonet for breathtaking views.

For art lovers, we'll visit the very workspace of a past artist and uncover how he brought nature to life on canvas. In the heart of the forest, you'll dive into the secrets of color theory and learn how to imitate nature's magic through your own creations.

You'll learn the power of teamwork while living the local life in Marseille, sharing meals, stories, and laughter. Museums filled with the spirit of past artists will inspire you and fuel your creative journey.

To wrap it up we'll end it all with a fun party to celebrate new friendships and unforgettable memories. Whether you're here for the art, the people, or the experience this project will leave your heart full and your camera roll even fuller.





Best (EKO) Experience of your life!

Are you tired of the big city? Would you like to spend some time away from it, just living disconnected from civilization? Well, you're lucky, since that's exactly what we offer in our ESN project, EKO-EXPERIENCE. You get to live in an old forester's lodge, with a well instead of running water in the tap, a wood-powered stove, and some other "ancient" house accessories. On the spot we put little to no pressure on doing anything, what's most important to us is that you have a good time, and meet some great people. The trip takes place in April, which is the most beautiful month in that region, so hopefully we'll see you then!



Never Again

In our school we think a lot of modern-day problems come from people not knowing enough about history. And we seek to change that. That's why we invite you to join us on a journey through places reminding us of the horror of World War II and the Holocaust. During the 5 days of the project you will visit two Polish cities, museums dedicated to that period in time, the Royal Castle, and the Treblinka concentration camp. It's a great opportunity to learn a lot about politics, history and architecture, so if you're looking to expand your knowledge in these areas, and/or get new perspectives on the history of Europe, this is the perfect project for you.

*Please remember to keep in mind that the information you will learn in the project can be disturbing and hard to process





BE AN ACTOR FOR A WEEK

Looking to escape reality for a while? Corderius College has the solution for you: join us in the creation of a short film. in Amersfoort! Workshops provided by teachers, learning the different styles of filming and exploring the city for a day are some activities included in the program.

You will come home with the skills to edit and produce a true Dutch short movie due to the exceptional equipment that this school provides its students.

Choosing between "crimis" (detective/crime-solving), videoclip, interview, black and white theme, or silent movie/miming can be hard, but feel free to also create something truly unique, like a story about a painting that came to life and killed its creator (it has happened before).

We would be delighted to receive you in the Netherlands and share our beautiful city with you



REACHING GOALS

Spain also has an incredible program called "Reaching Goals" organised by the Safa FESD school. This program has the intention to show how important nature is to the world. Students are encouraged to explore the area, connect with nature, and take part in group activities that build teamwork and friendship. The ESN Spain program offers an incredible adventure in the heart of nature, combining culture, fun, and exploration.

Participants will enjoy hiking through the beautiful mountains of Parque Natural de Peñalara, a protected area full of unique flora and amazing views. You can take a refreshing swim in the swimming pool, or spend time in the cabañas shelter, a cosy place where students can rest, share stories, and make new friends. The program also celebrates Spanish traditions. One evening is dedicated to traditional dances, where participants can learn and enjoy local music and movements together.

The highlight of the trip is the big dinner on the last day, where everyone gathers to celebrate the memories made during the program. This closing night is filled with good food, laughter, and the strong sense of community that ESN is known for. Overall, the ESN Spain program is the perfect mix of adventure, culture, and friendship, leaving participants with experiences they will never forget!





PUBLIC SERVICES: THE EUROPEAN REALITY

While we talked about issues in our countries, issues related to the public sector came up with everyone. We are going to focus more specifically on education, healthcare and public transportation, all of which are relevant to us as young people. The public sector works differently in every country and while it is common in the social sector for cheap or free price to mean quality, that is not the universal truth in Europe.

Healthcare

The price of healthcare varies hugely around Europe, depending on the countries' financial situations and governments, as well as the currency used. For example in Romania, the price is around 800-900 € while in Denmark it is over 6.000 € – although you have to take in the factor that neither one of the countries uses Euro. When translated into local currencies, Romania's healthcare prices can go up to 4.000 Leus and the Danish prices go to 45.000 Kroner.

Even though the price in Romania seems cheap and, like we have established, cheap price usually means quality, the state of healthcare is not as good as you might imagine. In theory it seems good and some of the aspects are actually free, but in practice there are long queues for different operations and the services are not good.

And while the prices in Denmark might seem like a lot, they are actually less than the average monthly pay and the public healthcare is basically free for them. You also have to note that Denmark is generally an expensive and rich country.



Public transportation

The state of public transport, including the cost, depends on the country and there are differences between the countries represented in the conference. For example in Spain and Portugal, the public transportation is either cheap or even free for students and the bus services are good. Still it is not all good as in Lisbon the metro is unsafe. In Finland and Germany, on the other hand, the bus tickets can get expensive and the service is low quality due to the small number of bus drivers and the low pay they get.

Like said, Spain and Portugal have cheap public transport with Portugal offering free trips to students. Poland and Turkey are a part of that trend as well with Poland having three-day tickets for less than 10 € and Turkey's public transport being cheap too, despite being crowded. Compared to them, Germany, Italy and Finland have more expensive tickets for public transport: for example a three-day ticket in the Tampere region is 30 € compared to Poland's less than 10 €.

It seems that the low quality of train services, including disobedience of the schedules, is a common issue in all of the countries we interviewed – with Portugal being an exception.

Education

In general there are more public schools than private schools in Europe and the quality between them is pretty much the same. Also in some countries you have to pay for things related to school despite being in public school. In most countries we interviewed, you have to pay for things like your school books. The two ends of this spectrum are Italy, where you pay for everything related to school, and Finland where the high school education became completely free in 2021. In the middle of this spectrum are countries such as Spain and the Netherlands where you do pay for the books and possibly also a laptop that you use.

While the difference in quality between public and private schools is very small, apart from more personalized teaching due to smaller group sizes, they still divide people into social classes. However this issue also exists between public schools as the system in the Netherlands and Germany has the same effect by dividing students into different school types depending on their skills and social status.

Based on this, it would seem that low or completely free price does mean quality in most of Europe. And even though we are from different parts of Europe, we all have the same or similar issues we have to deal with which unites us as European youth.

Piet Mondrian, City Streets Map (1941–1942)

WARS WITHIN AND AROUND US

Nowadays, in the world there are many political conflicts and wars that deeply affect people's lives. Although not everyone is physically close to the current tensions, it impacts all the countries in some way or another.

Many nations are dealing with economic crises due to the current political situation. For instance, the majority of Europe used to be dependent on Russian energy imports, therefore, after the Russian-Ukrainian war erupted, the whole continent suffered from rising energy costs and general inflation. Countries such as Italy, Germany, Hungary and France were heavily impacted due to the lack of crude oil imports and export losses. Moreover, the states sharing a border with conflict-stricken nations, for example Poland, Finland, Romania and Hungary are directly affected by refugee flow and security risks. As a result of the war, many countries want to be well prepared so they improve their military equipment or implement mandatory military studies. Also, certain countries like Spain or the Netherlands experience minimal impact from these conflicts, either because of their geographic location or because they are preoccupied with domestic issues.

Not only is the Russian-Ukrainian war affecting Europe but also the crisis in Gaza, as it raises moral discussion. Türkiye, as a state, has to keep diplomatic and economic ties with Israel, however, Turkish society mainly supports Palestine, which creates tension within the country. Similarly to Turkey, Germany has to consider its history, especially with Jewish people, when supporting other countries in crisis.

During the ongoing conflicts, we should also ask each other how it affects not only the countries but also the people inside them.

We know for a fact, that even if the war does not impact every citizen directly, it still has some negative effects. It increases stress levels and leads to decline in overall well-being. According to the Eurobarometer survey from 2023, 46% of the EU population had experienced emotional or psychosocial issues, such as depression and anxiety. Just as every country faces its own challenges, the people within them carry private struggles of their own.

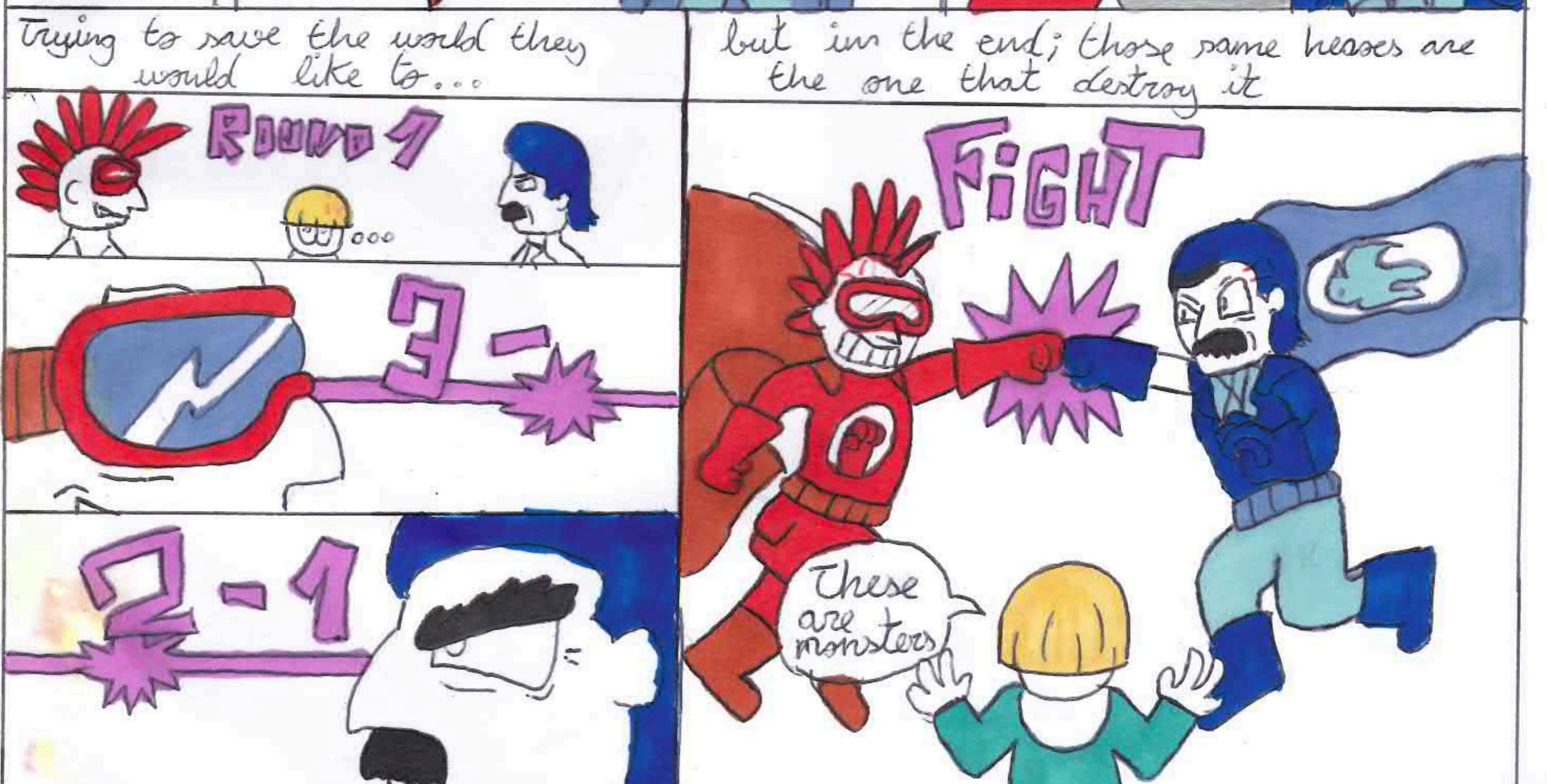
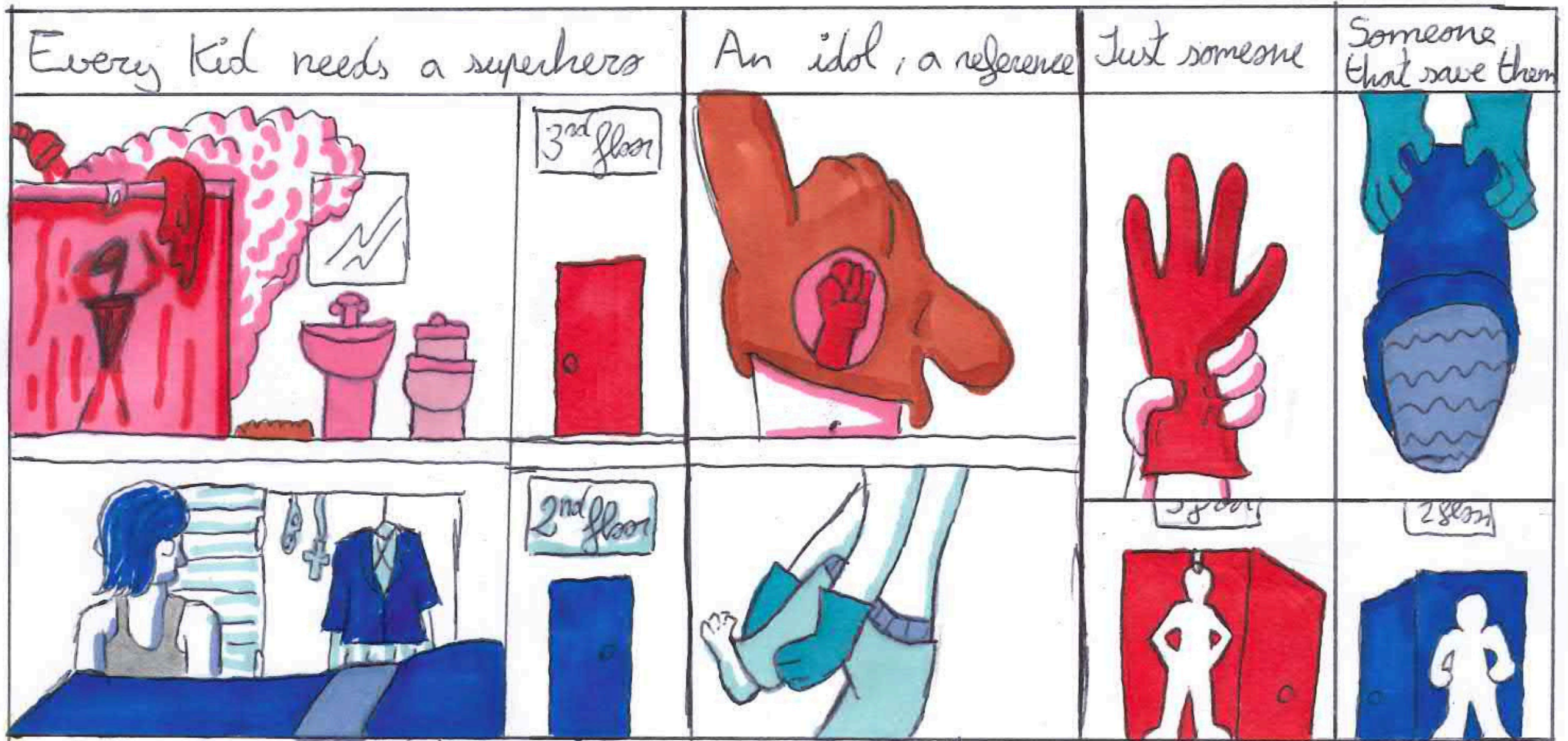
With facing a mental health 'pandemic', there has been a greater need for psychological care. Unfortunately, many states have struggled to keep pace with the growing challenges of mental health services - a study from 2022 shows that 49% of young people living in the EU reported not having access to proper support. For instance, in many public institutions, not only do you have to wait in lines to get an appointment, but the quality is not satisfactory. Also, private psychologists are financially out of reach for many people. Finland however, can be a good example of an effective way of dealing with the issue. They have been working on creating a safe environment in schools, just as in Denmark.

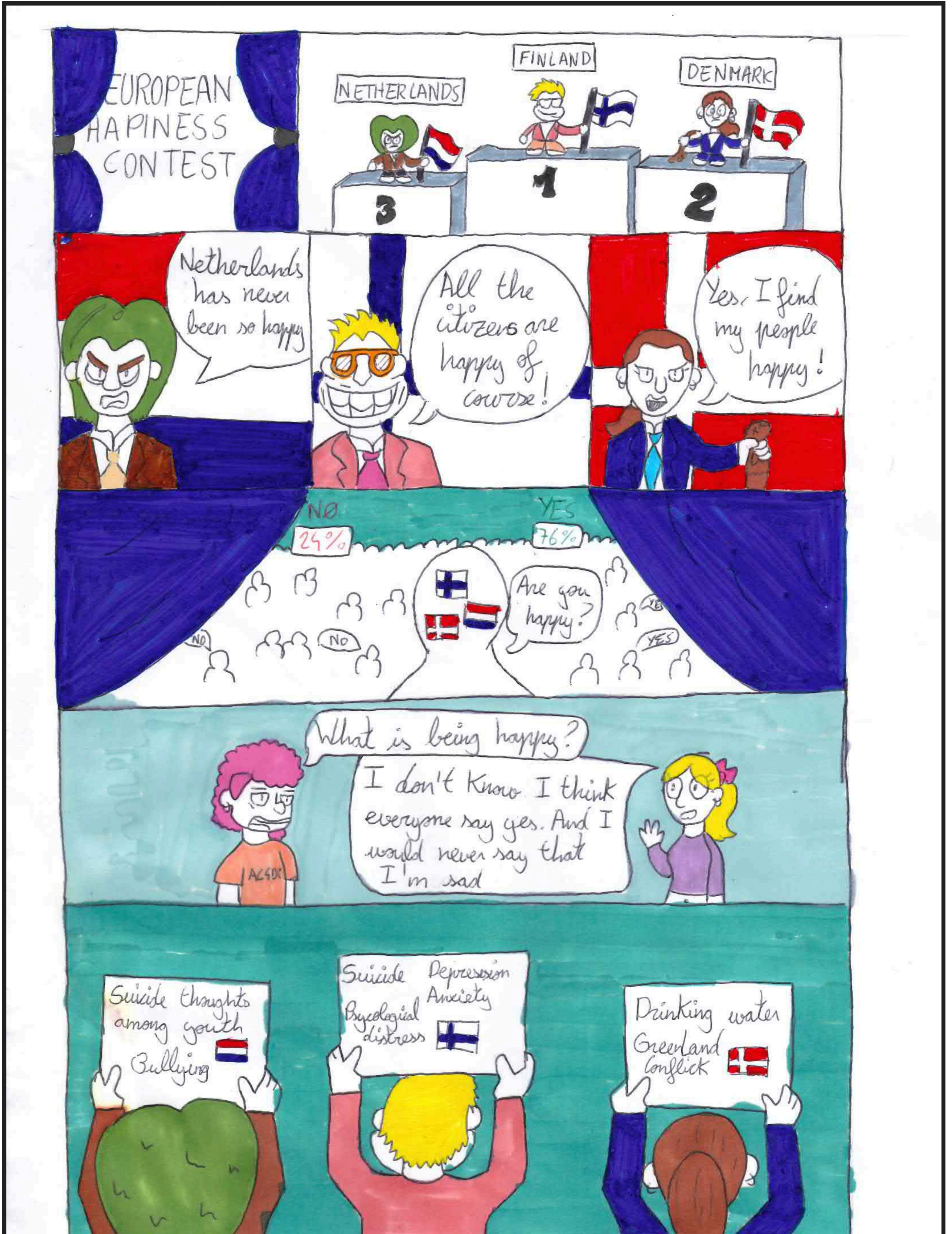
The key part of taking care of citizens' well-being is taking their issues seriously and normalizing getting professional help. It seems that therapy is becoming more and more common, however in some places, like Portugal, it is still considered controversial, especially for the elderly.

We, as the youth, have heard many times from older people: "back in the old days, we didn't care about mental health and everyone survived - we had real issues like war". We are the generation creating the change - we are the ones to spread awareness about mental health problems and normalize getting professional help. We are living through our own wars-both within and around us - but unlike the past, we refuse to ignore the battles inside the mind. We are the generation breaking the barrier, choosing healing and leading the change.

Pablo Picasso, Guernica (1937)







MARSEILLE, FRANCE



SPECIAL EDITION



3.10.2025

YOU CLOSE YOUR HEART

YOU CLOSE YOUR MIND



Mottos

**National Mottos from Esn students,
But first, what is a national motto?**

**A national motto is as a short phrase that shows the main idea,
values or a spirit of a country.**

**We asked Esn students from 12 different countries their national
motto and these are what we have been told**



An apéro is the French term for an apéritif, a drink, and sometimes snacks, consumed before a meal to stimulate the appetite and facilitate social gathering. The food culture and the French cuisine are really important for the local people and a big part of their identity.

"The Polish man can do it." This saying reflects a national self-stereotype of Polish resourcefulness, ingenuity, and capability to overcome difficulties. The phrase can be used to express confidence in a Pole's ability to solve a problem or achieve a goal, especially in challenging circumstances.



The Finnish sisu is a mental trait that the Finnish people have. To have sisu means to have great inner strength and courage. It symbolizes the rough living conditions and the hardships the Finns have been through and the courage to keep on going forward. Sisu is also a name in Finland.

Mottos



Plus ultra means going beyond the limit. The phrase has become a symbol of aspiration, encouraging individuals and the nation to explore, innovate, and achieve excellence.

"He who does it for himself does the work of three people". The saying suggests that a single person's efforts when done alone are often more effective than the combined efforts of several people. It is used to emphasize the value of self-reliance.



A quote from a work published in 1572 called "Os Lusíadas". It is widely regarded as the most important piece of Portuguese-language literature. The work celebrates the discovery of a sea route to India by the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama.

Mottos



Gud bevare
Danmark

The saying translates to "God preserves Denmark." The quote was created by the King Fredrik IX in his New Year's speech in 1909. It was later continued by Queen Margrethe II and King Frederick X.

Translates to do not look at the teeth of a gift horse. The saying means that you should be grateful for what you have.



Ajándék lónak ne
nézd a fogát

Translates to "the water runs, but the stones remain". The water represents the temporary things, the problems, the troubles, but also the events or periods in life that pass by. The stones symbolize permanent values, good deeds, quality work, legacy, the memories left behind, or even the necessary foundations that endure over time.



Apa trece,
pietrele rămân

Mottos



Vorfreude

"Anticipation", it reflects the German love for planning and looking forward to experiences — vacations, festivals, holidays. The pleasure isn't only in the moment, but also in the expectation.

"The devil will ruin what you are doing if you do it faster than needed". The proverb encourages a methodical and patient approach to life and work, suggesting that thoughtful planning and careful execution are essential for achieving success.



Acele işe şeytan
karışır



Doe maar
gewoon dan doe
je al gek genoeg

The rough translation is "Be normal, you'll be weird enough". The saying doesn't necessarily imply that being normal is oppressive. Instead, it reflects a common attitude in Dutch culture that values moderation and practicality.



CONNECTION

SNIKEPRITENIEJ
 AKUAMOREHIOW
 UTISZTELETUIK
 DAHIEINUTIOTV
 ATEMPATHIEYIE
 DIJELIFOGUMR
 EKETAHITKEAS
 AMABILIDADBT
 RYHMÄTYÖNNIÄ
 IVERENIGINGLN
 NSTØTTENUAID
 STORTDIENIDN
 TWORETOLLAI
 YNZAUFANIEDS

1. Friendship - PRIETENIE 🇧🇪 2. Family- AILE 🇹🇷 3. Love- AMORE 🇮🇹
 4. Teamwork - RYHMÄTYÖ 🇫🇮 5. Union - VERENIGING 🇳🇱
 6. Trust- ZAUFANIE 🇵🇱 7. Empathy - EMPATHIE 🇫🇷
 8. Respect - TISZTELET 🇭🇺 9. Support- STØTTE 🇩🇰
 10. Understanding - VERSTÄNDNIS 🇩🇪 11. Kindness - AMABILIDAD 🇪🇸
 12. Longing - SAUDADE 🇵🇹



AMANDA, NINNA, SISU, SUSANNA (FROM FINLAND), EDITH (FROM THE NETHERLANDS), ANNA (FROM ROMANIA), LUISE (FROM GERMANY), STANISLAW, TYMOTEUSZ, OLA, HANIA (FROM POLAND), FRANCESKA (FROM DENMARK), ÖYKÜ, YAMAN (FROM TÜRKIYE), BEATRIZ, GUILHERME (FROM PORTUGAL), CRISTINA, MATTEO (FROM ITALY), GONZALO, JAVIER (FROM SPAIN), FRUZSINA (FROM HUNGARY), EVA, MANON, LÉONIE (FROM FRANCE)

