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NARRATIVE REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE "EMPOWERING YOUTH CITIZENSHIP FOR EU FUTURE" PROJECT

5TH CROSS MEETING – SCHIEDAM AND ROTTERDAM (THE NETHERLANDS)

The Italian delegation joined the sixth cross meeting in Schiedam and Rotterdam from the 11th to the 15th of December, 2023.

The delegation was composed by 5 people: 1 delegate of the public institution Unione della Romagna Faentina, 2 girls (age 18 and 19) and 2 boys (age 21 and 23).

From the 11th to the 15th of December, we were honored to participate in the fifth iteration of the "YOUth for EU" event held in Schiedam and Rotterdam. This gathering served as a platform to augment the understanding of active citizenship among young individuals, foster an appreciation for Europe's history and values, and underscore the significance of diversity within European society. Central to our discussions was the exploration of EU values, rights, and freedoms, alongside strategies for enhancing civic engagement through the utilization of technological advancements and the resources afforded by the Union in areas such as employment, societal integration, education, and volunteering. Commencing on the 11th of December, the event started with the arrival in Rotterdam at around 9 p.m. Following check-in at our accommodations, we made a dinner, taking the opportunity for participants to acquaint themselves with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds and outline their expectations for the forthcoming proceedings. The subsequent day commenced with welcoming addresses and presentations from each participating country, elucidating the nature of their respective organizations and detailing ongoing initiatives. Participants engaged in a role-playing exercise, envisioning the future of the EU through personas representing various social archetypes. This exercise facilitated discussions on the opportunities afforded by the EU to young, active citizens, culminating in presentations of the group's findings. Networking opportunities followed, fostering cross-cultural dialogue over tea and coffee. Post-lunch, delegates indulged in local delicacies before undertaking a knowledge assessment spanning European citizenship, environmental conservation, public health, cybersecurity, and media literacy. A guided tour of the port of Rotterdam provided insights into the city's industrial landscape, concluding with a convivial dinner in the city center. Wednesday commenced at the European Institute for Diplomacy and Policy, where participants engaged in an Oxford-style debate titled "Tomorrow's Europe, Your Europe," focusing on the impending European Elections. Divided into factions advocating for and against EU actions, delegates deliberated on pertinent issues ranging from environmental stewardship to economic stability. Concurrently, presentations showcased EU initiatives and youth-led projects, enriching the discourse with practical insights. A highlight of the day was the Erasmus from Rotterdam tour, where teams embarked on a scavenger hunt across the city, unraveling clues to iconic landmarks such as the Erasmusburg drawbridge. The concluding day was dedicated to acquainting ourselves with youth policies in Schiedam, encompassing a visit to the Municipality and the National Jenever Museum. An immersive cultural excursion through the picturesque town further deepened our understanding of Dutch youth governance.