



NEWLETTER REALIZED BY
THE ASSOCIATION EURO-NET AS
EUROPE DIRECT BASILICATA CENTRE

EUROPE DIRECT
Basilicata

Our Europe, Our Future!

Year 21 | Number 2 | Bimonthly Newsletter "Our Europe, Our Future!" 20/04/2026

Newsletter in English

to spread European opportunities and initiatives,
to disseminate the respect of human rights and the awareness about the development of Europe's cultural identity and diversity,
to fight discrimination against minorities, xenophobia, intolerance and racism,
to help, with youth activities, the democratic stability and social inclusion in Europe,
develop active European citizenship and civil society by giving impetus to the training of youth leaders and youth workers working within a European dimension;
to promote European youth activities, such as exchanges, seminars, conferences, debates and training courses,
to encourage exchange of ideas, proposals, experiences and good practises at international level.

Table of contents

PAG.2
Last news from the European Union

PAG.4
Our activities in the last two months

PAG.5
News from other organizations

Newsletter developed with the support of the European Commission Representation in Italy

Founding treaty of EU's predecessor turns 75



On April 18 we celebrate 75 years since the signing of the Treaty of Paris establishing the European Coal and Steel Community

(ECSC), the first Treaty that led to the creation of the European Union. Signed by Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, it paved the way for deepening European economic integration and the establishment of the European Economic Community with the 1957 Treaty of Rome and the European Union with the 1992 Treaty of Maastricht. French Minister for Foreign Affairs Robert Schuman put forward the idea of a coal and steel community in his now famous 'Schuman Declaration' on 9 May 1950. Following the devastating effects of the second world war, he asserted: "solidarity in production thus established will make it plain that any war between France and Germany becomes not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible". A year later the ECSC was launched. The Community's primary aim was to organise the free movement of coal and steel, free up access to sources of production and ensure price transparency. At that time, the choice of coal and steel was highly symbolic: in the early 1950s, coal and steel were vital industries. In addition to the economic benefits, the pooling of French and German resources was intended to mark the end of the rivalry between the two countries. The common coal and steel market was to be an experiment which could gradually be extended to other economic spheres, culminating in a political Europe. This Treaty also laid the foundations of many of the EU's modern-day institutions by setting up an executive known as the 'High Authority', the predecessor of today's European Commission, a Parliamentary Assembly, a Council of Ministers, a Court of Justice and a Consultative Committee.

European age verification app to keep children safe online

The European Commission has announced that a new age verification app designed to protect children online is ready for deployment. In a recent statement, President of the Commission Ursula von der Leyen, confirmed that the technology is ready and will soon be available for citizens to use. The app will allow users to prove their age when accessing online platforms, helping protect children from harmful or inappropriate content. As children spend more time online than ever before, their safety has become a major concern, with widespread bullying and addictive platform design. To prevent exposure to harmful and illegal content, as well as grooming by online predators, the Commission is proposing an innovative European solution. The new age verification app is user-friendly and can be set up using a passport or ID card, enabling users to prove their age when accessing online services. The app is completely anonymous, works on any device, and is fully open source, meaning partner countries around the world can also adopt it. The app is a free and easy-to-use solution to enhance children's online safety, which **online platforms can easily rely on**. Some EU countries are already planning to integrate the app into their national digital identity wallets, and the Commission President called on more EU countries and private sector to follow suit. The EU remains committed to making the digital world safer for children.



Image source: Freepik-<https://it.freepik.com/>



Turning 18? Apply for a free DiscoverEU travel pass

Are you 18 years old, living in one of the EU or Erasmus+ countries, and want to explore Europe? This is your chance! The EU is offering DiscoverEU travel passes to selected young people to travel and explore the EU and countries associated with Erasmus+. You can apply here https://youth.europa.eu/discovereu_en till 22 April 2026. You can travel with a group of friends if they meet the eligibility criteria and you submit the application together. If you are selected, you will receive a travel pass for the most environmentally friendly means of transport, such as trains (or other modes of transport in specific cases). You can travel for up to 7 days within a one-month period, anytime between 1 July 2026 and 30 September 2027. You will also receive a DiscoverEU discount card offering numerous discounts on accommodation, culture, sports, local transport, and other services. If you have a disability or a health problem that makes your travel challenging, you can get assistance and support. Supporting young people is one of the EU's key priorities. DiscoverEU is part of the Erasmus+ programme. It offers 18-year-olds the opportunity to travel and explore Europe's diversity, learn about its cultural heritage and history, and connect with people from all over the continent.



Image source: Freepik-<https://it.freepik.com/>

EC invests nearly €400 million for postdoctoral researchers

The On April 9, the European Commission opened the 2026 call for postdoctoral fellowships under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), with a budget of over €399 million. These fellowships support researchers with a doctorate, offering them the opportunity to conduct research abroad and acquire new skills in various disciplines and fields. Beneficiaries will be able to collaborate with leading international scientific groups, contributing cutting-edge research to the EU's competitiveness. Applications close on September 9, 2026. Since its inception in 1996, over 150,000 researchers have participated in the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, including 23 Nobel laureates, a testament to their enduring contribution to scientific excellence and international cooperation. This call is part of the more than €1.25 billion allocated to the MSCA actions in 2026 under Horizon Europe 2021-2027, with the aim of promoting excellence in research, as highlighted in the "Choose Europe" initiative. Through this funding, the MSCA actions will continue to support research through doctoral and postdoctoral programmes, fellowships, and collaborative research and innovation projects.

Youth4Regions 2026 for Aspiring Journalists Launched

On April 7, the European Commission opened applications for the tenth edition of Youth4Regions, its flagship program designed to support aspiring journalists. From October 10 to 16, 2026, selected participants will spend a week in Brussels, where they will benefit from expert training, gain practical experience in a newsroom, and enjoy exclusive access to EU institutions and leading media organizations. Applications can be submitted at https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/communication/partnership-with-media/youth4regions_en until July 7, 2026. This year's program is accepting applications in four different fields: in-depth journalism, video journalism, audio journalism, and photo journalism. Youth4Regions, which is open to students and young journalists from EU Member States, European Neighborhood countries, and candidate countries, offers a unique opportunity to develop skills, build professional networks, and closely follow the work of correspondents covering EU issues. Since the program's launch in 2017, 300 young journalists have benefited from its support.

Our activities for the general public between April and May

Among the many activities planned for 2026, the Europe Direct Basilicata centre has also planned several large-scale events, with significant media impact and strong citizen participation. Among these, the exhibition on the Founding Fathers of Europe (for which five exhibitions are planned in five municipalities) and the Concert for Europe, the latter intended to celebrate May 9th, are particularly noteworthy. The exhibition aims to raise awareness of the historical path and founding values of the EU, reawakening interest in its history and the work of those who contributed to its creation. It will consist of around thirty 50x70 cm panels with texts in Italian that narrate the lives and actions of the protagonists (Konrad Adenauer, Alcide De Gasperi, Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Nicole Fontaine, Ursula Hirschmann, up to the Lucanian Emilio Colombo and, more recently, Ursula von der Leyen) and panels that demonstrate the strength and relevance of the European project and underline its founding values (peace, democracy, tolerance, inclusion, rule of law, respect for human rights, etc.). The exhibition, which will also feature panels on the milestones in the history of the EU, will be displayed at the Europe Direct Basilicata center, in collaboration with the municipalities of Potenza, Baragiano, Lauria, Pisticci, and Matera. It will be preceded by a public event and a dedicated press conference. It will be an educational and cultural tool that will help promote knowledge of the history of the European Union, strengthening a sense of belonging and active citizenship. The other major event, as mentioned, will be held on May 9th, in collaboration with the Municipality of the regional capital, the Regional School Office, and the Walter Gropius Art School of Potenza. It will include a concert for Europe, featuring performances by young artists from the school. Delegations from all the schools in the capital will be invited to participate. The aim is to celebrate Europe Day in grand style, a holiday celebrating peace and unity on the European continent on the day that commemorates the declaration made on May 9, 1950, by Robert Schuman.



After 20 years, the Europe Direct Basilicata has opened a new office in Potenza

After more than 20 years at its headquarters on Vicolo Luigi Lavista in Potenza, it's time for the Europe Direct Basilicata center to renew itself. Located at Via Atene, 6/B (just a few hundred meters as the crow flies from the Basilicata Regional Government building), the new office offer new spaces to European citizens, particularly young people, who increasingly desire places to meet, discuss, engage in dialogue, develop activities, and promote actions and initiatives of all kinds. Building on its experience in European programs for young people and adults since 1998, and having served as the official information centre of the European Commission since 2004, EURONET has decided to take on yet another new challenge, investing all its efforts (as well as new capital) in the goal of becoming not only the reference centre for community information but also a key point of contact with the youth of Potenza. To this end, the association has set up up a youth centre (scheduled for inauguration soon) equipped and suitable to provide the necessary spaces for the younger generations, in a style that clearly reflects their needs but also features the latest technological innovations. Therefore, the Europe Direct Basilicata centre has moved its headquarters to the new, much more modern, innovative, and smart facility. This new facility, in the absence of public administration support, will address the needs of Potenza's young people, who have long complained about the lack of dedicated spaces. Once again, the EURO-NET association strives to do something more for the younger generations of Basilicata, soon providing a professional facility capable of sparking creativity and inspiration among young people from Basilicata. They will have the opportunity to take advantage of coworking spaces, video recording areas, TV and video game rooms, business rooms, event rooms, and reading rooms for organizing a wide variety of activities. The new facility will soon be inaugurated in the presence of the highest local, regional, and European authorities, who will be invited to attend the important event. However, the association's work will not be limited to Potenza alone. Its annual program includes the opening of four additional European information desks in Baragiano, Lauria, Marconia di Pisticci, and Matera, in agreement with several local governments and private and public entities.

NEURO-YOUTH exchange begins

The Youth Europe Service working group has completed all seven scripts for the animated web series celebrating the European DiscoverEU program, thanks to the project "EUTRAIN - A Journey to Discover Europe." The first character images and some general backgrounds for the animations have already been created (one of which is attached to this article). The 1st episode of this initiative, co-funded by the European Commission under the COMM/IT/GRANTS/2025 call for proposals, is expected to be released shortly. The initiative aims to promote communication and media initiatives to strengthen dialogue about the European Union in Italy. Before the first episode, short promotional spots will be produced to publicize the launch of the web series and to increase interest, especially among younger audiences, in the series and in the European values about which the animated series aims to foster greater understanding. In addition to the web series, the EUTRAIN project also includes the development of other innovative communication products (in particular an electronic game and a national competition) aimed at making learning about what the EU does for its citizens more effective and interactive and encouraging them to be more active European citizens



EUTRAIN Project Scripts ready

The youth exchange program for the "Neuroscience & Youth Work - Enhancing Emotional Intelligence in Digital Spaces" (acronym "NEURO-YOUTH") project, funded by the Turkish National Agency under the Erasmus+ program - KA153-YOU - Mobility of youth workers, begins on April 23 in Potenza. The exchange, like the previous preliminary visit, will take place in Italy and will now involve 25 young people and three youth workers from the five partner countries: Turkey, Italy, Finland, the Netherlands, and Spain. The Potenza-based association Youth Europe Service will organize the induction activities, which will have a larger group of participants than the other partners, having had to fill some vacancies left by the Spanish partner (Asociacion Divergimientes). The other partner organizations, in addition to those already mentioned, are Stichting Platform for Media and Information (Netherlands) and Puntland European Associations Network (Finland). All participants, coordinated by the Turkish organization Digital Access and Competence Association (holder of the contract with the European Commission), will be hosted, starting this evening, at the Grande Albergo located in the historic center of the Lucanian capital, with full board and double and triple rooms. During the exchange, supervised by three professional trainers, participants will be introduced to new digital skills and the more informed use of artificial intelligence to navigate the internet more safely.

Latest activities of the SLERA project

The partners of the "Social learning in rural areas" (SLERA) project, an initiative in which the Basilicata Chamber of Commerce is a partner, are working hard to organize the planned training courses for the project's target group. These activities of the project, co-financed by the Erasmus+ NA INAPP under KA210-VET – Small-scale partnerships in vocational education and training program as ref. No. 2024-2-IT01-KA210-VET-000281051, are particularly crucial to the success of the entire partnership initiative. From this perspective, the partners, coordinated by LINAE association, are well underway and expect to complete this phase of the project by June. More information about the project is available both on the initiative's official website <https://slera.thewebbuilders.net/> developed by the German partner, and the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/share/1DctyfKN6T/>, which recently surpassed 3,100 followers, demonstrating the considerable interest the project's theme has, especially among citizens of rural areas.

