



## NEWSLETTER 4 | April 2026

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### **Empowering Young Carers across Europe: Consultations and Trainings are now live**

**OUR VOICES** is entering a new hands-on phase. WP3 and WP4 are now running in parallel across the consortium: in Italy, Bulgaria, and Belgium, extensive stakeholder consultations have been launched, while the **OUR VOICES** trainings for professionals are being rolled out in all five partner countries.

In this phase of the project, we aim not only to reach young carers, their families, professionals, and policy stakeholders, but also to invite them to actively shape the tools we are developing and the policy advocacy that will further support the meaningful participation of young carers across Europe.

### **WP3 in action: stakeholder consultations launched in Italy, Bulgaria and Belgium**

The consultations will run until 12 May 2026, gathering input from young carers, their families, professionals, and policymakers through two complementary methods:

- Surveys with closed and open-ended questions for young carers, families and professionals
- Interviews with policymakers and other strategic stakeholders

Building on the lessons learned in WP2, which highlighted how young carers remain largely invisible and face significant structural barriers to meaningful participation, the consultations focus on identifying effective engagement strategies and the specific barriers young carers can face when taking part in participation or advocacy efforts.

These insights will directly inform the next step in WP3: the development of a comprehensive Engagement Framework, outlining concrete mechanisms for the meaningful and continuous engagement of young carers in child rights advocacy, in alignment with the EU Child Participation

Platform. Once the consultation phase closes, the results will be analysed and shared through a report, available in all project languages (English, Italian, Bulgarian, Dutch, Swedish, and Slovenian).

## Your input matters: join the consultations

We are reaching out to young carers, their families, and professionals to understand how young carers can have a real say in the decisions that shape their lives at school, in care, and in policy matters that affect them. Tell us what's working today, what's getting in the way, and what would make participation easier and more meaningful. Your experiences, insights, and stories will directly shape the tools and the Engagement Framework and will strengthen the policy advocacy OUR VOICES carries forward at local, national, and European levels.

Within OUR VOICES, we focus on young carers: children and young people up to 18 who regularly care for a parent or loved one, usually at home, because of illness, disability, mental health issues, or addiction. These are the children and young people we want to reach through the surveys. Age thresholds have been carefully considered, all answers are anonymous and handled in line with GDPR, and project partners are available for any clarification.

The surveys for young carers, families, and professionals take around **10 minutes** each, are available in **Italian, Bulgarian, Belgian and English** and stay open until **12 May 2026**.

A note for professionals: we need your reach. Please share the surveys with your team, with partner organisations, and with the schools and services you work with. The more people we hear from, the more representative the findings will be. Thank you!

**Use the link to fill in the survey if it applies to you or to share it with someone it does:**

	Italian	Bulgarian	Belgian	English
Young carers	<a href="https://survey.cjm.si/a/c1b02c0d">https://survey.cjm.si/a/c1b02c0d</a>	<a href="https://survey.cjm.si/a/1719ab90">https://survey.cjm.si/a/1719ab90</a>	<a href="https://survey.cjm.si/a/2859703d">https://survey.cjm.si/a/2859703d</a>	<a href="https://survey.cjm.si/a/8823ed27">https://survey.cjm.si/a/8823ed27</a>
Families	<a href="https://survey.cjm.si/a/10da72c0">https://survey.cjm.si/a/10da72c0</a>	<a href="https://survey.cjm.si/a/980a39a0">https://survey.cjm.si/a/980a39a0</a>	<a href="https://survey.cjm.si/a/801b4e68">https://survey.cjm.si/a/801b4e68</a>	<a href="https://survey.cjm.si/a/588f6bf3">https://survey.cjm.si/a/588f6bf3</a>
Professionals	<a href="https://survey.cjm.si/a/fc9a86f8">https://survey.cjm.si/a/fc9a86f8</a>	<a href="https://survey.cjm.si/a/da6bf052">https://survey.cjm.si/a/da6bf052</a>	<a href="https://survey.cjm.si/a/eae17c6">https://survey.cjm.si/a/eae17c6</a>	<a href="https://survey.cjm.si/a/bea28071">https://survey.cjm.si/a/bea28071</a>

## WP4: First trainings launched across partnering countries

The first training workshops for professionals are now running in all five partner countries. The training materials, developed by the Swedish partner with input from all consortium partners, combine research with practical tools. Each partner adapts delivery to their national context while keeping a consistent, evidence-based approach.

The trainings bring together educators, social and healthcare workers, youth workers, and civil society professionals closest to young people's everyday lives. Participants learn how to recognise young carers, understand the specific challenges they face, and build more inclusive, young-carer-friendly environments in their own settings. To strengthen the project's evidence base, participants are also invited to contribute to the consultation process as part of the training.

## What is coming next?

Over the coming months, OUR VOICES will continue to focus on:

- completing the stakeholder consultations in Italy, Bulgaria and Belgium
- expanding training activities across partner countries
- analysing consultation results from the surveys and interviews
- integrating findings into a Participation Toolbox
- testing and refining tools together with stakeholders
- strengthening advocacy towards national and EU-level policy



For more information and updates on OUR VOICES project, please visit <https://ourvoicesproject.eu/> and follow us on major social media using the hashtag

**# OURVOICES\_PROJECT\_EU**



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