



We thank our partners for their support

Lilly Medtronic



The IDF Europe Youth Platform and the IDF Europe Youth Leadership LaB ('YLL')

The Youth Programme is one of IDF Europe's core activities. It aims to empower young people living with diabetes in their advocacy journeys, improving their leadership skills and encouraging co-creation and connections.

The main objective of this programme is to empower young people to become strong diabetes advocates. This is achieved by showcasing the inspirational works of other peers and equipping them with the skills and knowledge required to be effective leaders. Equally important is the goal of strengthening the network of young diabetes advocates across Europe, so that together, they can drive change and shape the future of diabetes care.

Between 2011 and 2019, IDF Europe organised Youth Leadership Camps (YLC) in collaboration with its member associations in Slovenia, Italy, the Netherlands, Croatia, Cyprus, Romania, the Czech Republic and Turkey. Reflecting the health situation during the COVID-19 pandemic, IDF Europe set up an online leadership training programme, the Youth Leadership Lab (YLL), which acted as a replacement for in-person camps while restrictions for such gatherings were in place in 2020 and 2021.

Whilst participants remained highly engaged online, returning to in-person camps in Poland, in 2022, strengthened interpersonal bonds, enhanced co-creation and played a key role for empowering IDF Europe's youth advocates. Building on the success of a hybrid version of YLL -with two online sessions prior to in-person camp - IDF Europe has since organised the YLL in Bulgaria and Serbia.

This year, the YLL returned to Italy, this time in Parma. The camp took place from July 6 to 12 and was successfully organised in collaboration with the local diabetes associations AGD Parma, ANIAD and Diabete Italia.

The exceptional collaboration with all the stakeholders in organising such an event truly demonstrated the commitment and passion in creating a unique and memorable experience for all the participants. We extend our sincere thanks to Medtronic and Lilly for their long-standing partnership and continued support of the IDF Europe Youth Programme, and to Dexcom and Novo Nordisk for their valuable participation.





This year's YLC welcomed 22 participants, 3 junior mentors and 5 senior mentors, altogether representing a diverse group from 15 countries: England, France, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Ireland, Malta, North Macedonia, Portugal, Scotland, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

This report was co-written with YLL Mentor Martina Mallia.



ONLINE SESSIONS

In preparation for the camp, **two online events** were set up in June for participants to get to know each other and generate enthusiasm for the upcoming week.

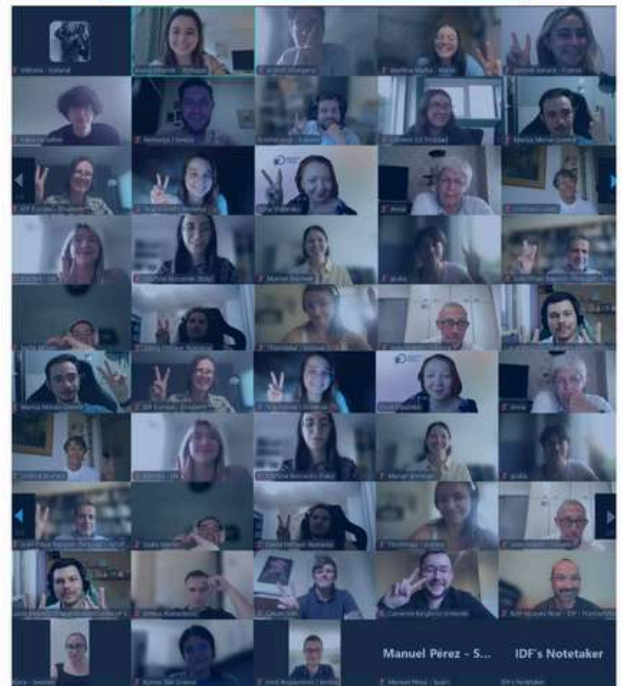
During the **opening session on June 11**, participants had the opportunity to meet each other as well as the Faculty members, their mentors, the hosting associations, the IDF Europe team and the YLL sponsors and partners.

During the **online workshop session on June 21**, participants were formally introduced to this year's four working groups and themes.

These virtual sessions laid the groundwork for the in-person camp, building anticipation and excitement that was already palpable online.

IT IS OFFICIAL

The Youth Leadership Lab 2025 has started





WELCOMING SESSION

The atmosphere began to ignite on the 6th July, as the participants started to arrive in Parma one by one. Without knowing it they began to form connections that would grow deeply meaningful by the end of the week.

What started with simple greetings quickly evolved into endless conversations. An informal icebreaker game helped ease initial nerves and encouraged a warm and welcoming environment. Through laughter and playful interaction, the first bonds of friendship began to form.

The following day, the Youth Leadership Lab 2025 officially began in Parma with heartfelt and inspiring words from the IDF Europe team, representatives from the Italian associations, AGD Parma, ANIAD, and Diabete Italia, and local institutional leaders.

The first opening remarks were delivered by **Elisabeth Dupont, IDF Europe Regional Manager, Elisa Calzetti, President of AGD Parma, Stella de Sabata, former IDF Europe Board Member and International Relations Advisor to ANIAD, and Jaivir Pall, IDF Board Member.** Together, they shared a warm welcome, introduced the organisation and its youth programme, and shared emotional and motivating words that set the tone for a week devoted to empowerment, collaboration, and youth-led advocacy.

We were also honoured by the presence of local institutional leaders who warmly welcomed the participants: **Dr. Massimo Fabi, Councillor for Health Policies of the Emilia-Romagna Region, Dr. Ettore Brianti, Councillor for Social and Health Policies at the Municipality of Parma, Dr. Anselmo Campagna, General Manager at the University Hospital of Parma.**

Joining the heartfelt welcome were representatives and collaborators of AGD Parma: **Prof. Alessandra Dei Cas, Director of the Complex Structure of Endocrinology and Metabolic Diseases at the University Hospital of Parma, and Director of the School of Specialisation in Food Sciences at the University of Parma, Dr. Brunella Iovane, Head of the Paediatric Diabetes Centre at the same institution, and Ilaria Bertinelli.**

To close the opening moment, **Alessio Fresco, Member of ANIAD's Board of Directors, and Fabiano Marra, Vice President of Diabete Italia,** addressed the group with deeply inspiring reflections. Alessio shared that **"by following your dreams, you'll find your way – as I did,"** and emphasised the power of unity by stating, **"it is by joining forces that we can find solutions for people living with diabetes."** Fabiano Marra also presented the new Italian Republic Law 130/2023, which introduces nationwide screening for type 1 diabetes and coeliac disease in the general population aged 1–17 years.





INSPIRATIONAL LECTURES

Maria Ignacia Montt, known as Ina, from Chile, is a two-time national 100m champion and the first non-cycling national sprint champion in Team Novo Nordisk's history. She has been a Team Novo Nordisk ambassador since 2022. Diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at the age of 11, she shared her journey as an athlete who began running just before her diagnosis and how she quickly adapted to training with diabetes. Ina spoke about how she dealt with the diagnosis and maintained her usual routine by continuing her training. She described her journey and accomplishments running with type 1 diabetes, balancing training, recovery, nutrition, sleep, mental health, sponsorships, social media, diabetes management, building her brand, and using adversity as a differentiator.



The session wrapped up with a lively Q&A, where Ina offered practical tips, advice, and encouragement based on her experience on doing sports while managing diabetes. She closed with a motivational key message being that great things are possible, one step at a time and with dedication, even diabetes cannot stop you from reaching your goals.



Following Ina's session, another motivational speaker from Italy, **Alessio Fresco, a cyclist and triathlon athlete who competed an Ironman**, explored how physical activity and sport impact diabetes. He shared his journey and achievements as an athlete living with diabetes, highlighting the technology that supports him today to facilitate his diabetes management whilst competing in such intense sports, and compared it to how it was in the past prior to technology. Alessio also explained his training routines, methods, and key considerations for managing diabetes while staying active.



THE NEAR-PEER MENTORING APPROACH

The near-peer mentoring approach was formally integrated as part of the IDF Europe Youth Leadership Programme in 2023, providing for a two-way learning opportunity for both the participants and the mentors. Whereas the mentors are present to guide the youth leaders not only with their projects but with their journeys as youth leaders through empathy and by being a guiding light through their own lived-experiences, mentors themselves gain new perspectives from the participants and put what they have previously learnt at YLL themselves to practice.

At IDF Europe we believe that the most effective mentors are those with the most relevant experience and YLC/YLL alumni are best placed to play this role, as they not only gain the necessary confidence and brush up on their own skills as youth leaders but share invaluable insights with the participants.

This year, six YLC/YLL alumni joined the programme as junior and senior mentors.

Junior mentors Konstantina Taki (Greece), Manuel Perez (Spain) and Martina Mallia (Malta) supported participants by acting as trusted guides during group work and by sharing meaningful insights, hands-on advice, and a comforting presence throughout the camp.

The supporting senior mentors, Kristinn Ingi Reynisson (Iceland), Alyssa Faulkner (Scotland) and Lazar Begovic (Serbia) having completed their term as junior mentors, returned to play a pivotal role in shaping the environment and supporting the organisation of the YLL. They guided junior mentors and new participants alike, fostered learning and growth, and offered their experienced support whenever needed.



The near-peer mentoring approach is still a developing strategy, and for the first time this year, the mentors came together for a weekend dedicated to training in Brussels prior to the Youth Leadership Lab. This in-person meeting proved to be instrumental as it allowed them to reconnect, experience-share and gain the necessary skills required to ensure that they are equipped with the right tools to guide the participants as best possible. Beyond the practical preparation, the opportunity to meet beforehand fostered trust and open communication among the mentors, creating a safe and supportive dynamic that carried through the entire camp. As a result, they felt more comfortable discussing challenges, supporting one another, and working collaboratively throughout the week.



ADVOCACY, LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION

Throughout the week, we shared moments of learning and connection designed to strengthen the participants as young leaders. The sessions combined advocacy, leadership, communication, diabetes management, and policy engagement, giving them tools to grow both personally and as voices for their communities. More than just skills, it was about building confidence to speak up, raise awareness, and support others living with diabetes.

How to Run a Project

As one of the first educational sessions of the week, our goal was to equip participants with practical tools and key knowledge to confidently start, manage, and bring their own projects to life. Cameron, faculty and senior mentor, led the session in a clear and engaging way, walking the group through the main phases of project management, from planning to implementation and evaluation. Through real-life examples and interactive exercises, the concepts became easy to grasp, leaving participants feeling more empowered to lead meaningful initiatives within their own communities.



Advocacy in Social Media

Coralie, known as *Coco and the Podie*, a French influencer, YOURAH member, alumna of last year's Youth Leadership Lab, delivered a dynamic session on how to advocate effectively through social media. Drawing from her personal experience, she shared how she started her own journey, highlighting the challenges she faced along the years, and the values that guide her communication online.

The session covered key principles for building a meaningful advocacy presence on social media, including setting clear goals and understanding what to be mindful of when addressing sensitive topics. She also provided the participants with practical tips, such as, how to protect themselves and set boundaries, and highlighted common pitfalls to avoid.

Making the session highly interactive and inspiring, Coralie included real-life examples from her own experience, making the session accessible and relatable for participants. Her story served as both a guide and a motivation for those wishing to raise their voice and create impact in the digital space.



Imposter Syndrome Workshop

One of the first workshops of the week was led by Alyssa, alongside Paco Orengo, Communications Specialist at Medtronic. Together, they delivered a powerful session focused on imposter syndrome, a common but often unspoken barrier in the journey of advocacy. Their aim was to instill participants with the confidence and self-awareness needed to navigate a world where feeling isolated or not "good enough" can sometimes silence our voices. Through thought-provoking questions, the session encouraged personal reflection and group discussion using a post-it note brainstorming method.

Participants were asked to answer questions such as, "Where, when and with whom do you feel confident or like you belong?" These answers were then placed on the table and used as a springboard for open conversation. The result was a safe space where participants could recognise their own experiences, find common ground, and realise that imposter feelings are shared but not defining.

Language Matters and Unites

Martina shared insights with the participants on the strong psychological impact that language has on people living with diabetes, emphasizing how, whilst language can encourage and empower others, it may also contribute to stigma and discrimination, and negatively affect people living with diabetes.

The session opened by inviting participants to reflect on language that had previously left a lasting impact on them, creating a space for an open discussion and exploring alternative language that may be used to replace current, unfavourable language. The session also highlighted the importance of cultural differences and how not only spoken language can impact others but also actions and body language. In today's digital age where social media plays a major role, the participants were reminded to be mindful of the type of language used online and its impact on their audiences.

Participants were also introduced to the #LanguageMatters movement and to national guidelines readily-available as resources, simultaneously serving as an inspiration for participants in countries not currently adopting the movement.



*"I learned how to speak about diabetes, how to plan projects, and how to help others in my local association. Now I feel more confident to take action and share what I learned."
- Klimentina Dimitrova*



Empowerment Through Doctor Patient Relationship

Konstantina introduced the topic of doctor-patient relationships, drawing on her professional experience as a medical doctor. Through interactive sessions, she guided participants through various scenarios where doctor-patient relationships were less effective, helping them identify the underlying challenges patients face with doctors.

After identifying the qualities in a good doctor, she shifted the perspective, presenting scenarios and prompting the participants to identify challenges that doctors face with their patients, highlighting the importance of record keeping, patterns and full transparency with doctors, so that patients can enable doctors to provide the best possible care.

The session ended by identifying the most common barrier faced by patients, the fear. The fear of being judged or misunderstood, of blame, of emotional vulnerability, of medical language, of changes, of complications. With that, ways were explored on how to mitigate it. Participants were left with one impactful key message: "When we speak, not despite fear but through it, we change the future of diabetes care".



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I learned new ways to speak about diabetes with care and respect, and discovered how different channels of communication can help my association reach and support more people. – Catarina Mégre

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HEALTH ECONOMICS

Anette Mehler, responsible for Government Affairs, Advocacy & Health Care Policy at Dexcom, led an engaging session on health economics and outcomes research (HEOR), illustrating how solid evidence can pave the way for improved access to diabetes care. She broke down complex concepts like market access, advocacy, and HEOR into simple terms, explaining how they all work together to shape decisions regarding diabetes technology. With practical examples, Anette showcased how data and personal narratives can sway policymakers and payers, inspiring participants to view themselves as advocates who can leverage these tools in their own countries.





INTRODUCTION TO YOUTH-LED ADVOCACY: COMMUNICATING WITH DECISION-MAKERS

Maxence Prizzi, IDF Europe Junior Policy and Advocacy Officer, and Alyssa, introduced participants to the core concept of advocacy. The session explored key terminology such as leadership, activism, and influencing, and offered a clear overview of how advocacy operates at both EU and national level, drawing from their personal experiences, including the roles and responsibilities of different EU institutions in the policy-making process. They also outlined step-by-step how young advocates can raise their voice and effectively engage with policymakers.



To put these concepts into practice, participants engaged in a hands-on, scenario-based workshop. Working in groups, they were challenged to develop strategies to persuade various stakeholders, including policymakers and politicians, around specific issues they had identified as meaningful. This interactive activity encouraged critical thinking, collaboration, and a deeper understanding of how to transform ideas into action.

“*The YLL is truly the most unique and enriching experience. It is the perfect opportunity to learn, to connect with like-minded people, and to leave with a great deal of inspiration and determination. I found everything I was looking for and beyond. As I am just starting my advocacy journey, I now feel equipped to become a decent advocate, to help amplify awareness and to participate in giving a voice to people living with diabetes. – Salomé Gérard*”





Partnerships and collaborations

A key session was delivered by Jaivir, IDF Europe board member and mentor leader and Martina, along with Sara Candido, Lilly Corporate Affairs External Engagement Associate, focusing on partnerships and collaborations.

Sara opened the session by defining partnerships and collaborations, with each speaker sharing insights from their own experiences, highlighting the value that can be gained from building these relationships. Martina, with her experience working with her local association, gave them practical examples reinforcing the power of unity to develop and build something meaningful and lasting for communities. Jaivir and Sara focused on the corporate collaborations, how they work, expectations and the importance and strength of these relationships. Whilst partnerships and collaborations are highly valuable, the participants were reminded about maintaining their integrity and staying true to their personal core values and purpose.

The session also provided the participants with tactful strategies for approaching potential partners, emphasizing the need for thorough preparation to effectively communicate their goals and priorities.



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The Youth Leadership Lab was an eye-opening and empowering experience. I gained valuable insights into how different healthcare systems work across Europe and how patient associations collaborate with the pharmaceutical industry. – Carmen Gil Trinidad

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VOLUNTEERING AND FAIR COMPENSATION

Cajsa Lindberg, a former YLL participant, has worked with IDF/IDF Europe, various diabetes associations, and a number of private companies. She is now a Global Health Consultant, public speaker, and advisor to IDF Europe. Based on her experience, she led a session on authenticity, integrity, and partnership in volunteer work. The discussion encouraged participants to critically reflect on volunteering and fair compensation, deepening their understanding of these concepts. This awareness is intended to guide the advocates in approaching future partnerships with greater consciousness and ethical consideration.

The session then took an interactive turn whereby participants were split into two groups, those supporting compensation and those against it. This sparked a lively debate between the groups leading to a remarkable result. Participants passionately defended their positions, then switched sides to explore the opposing viewpoint. The exchange of perspectives was inspiring, showcasing the participants' energy and motivation.

VOLUNTEERING AND RISK OF BURNOUT

As a highly active advocate Cajsa Lindberg experienced, first-hand, the ups and downs of volunteering. She led a session on volunteering and the risk of burnout, emphasising the importance of mutual support, self-care, and boundaries. The session began with a short introduction reflecting on the pressures of volunteering while balancing personal and professional life. Cajsa then created a safe space, shared her personal experiences, and encouraged participants to do the same. In a circle, they shared not only their experiences but also their fears and concerns, supporting one another and exchanging advice and kind words.

"We want our young advocates to feel that their volunteer work should never become a burden. Through their involvement in YOURAH, IDF Europe, and other projects, we want to remind them that they're not expected to be always available, nor perfect, simply to remain who they are. We recognise the pressures volunteers face while juggling personal lives, and how easily that can lead to burnout. It's okay to pause, it's okay to say no, and it's okay to set boundaries, there will always be new opportunities ahead."

"The best way to address the risk of burnout is to have a strong network behind you. When you're part of a group, it's not a problem if you can't show up, because the group is there to support you."

It was a deep and empathetic session, with the key goal of nurturing a collective mindset to prevent burnout while reinforcing the importance of mutual support within the group.



SHOWCASING YOURAH INITIATED PROJECTS

Luca Cappellini, Anna Zamperetti and Martina Mallia, YOURAH Members, previous camp participants and diabetes advocates, presented projects they developed during camps, and the opportunities that arose through the network they built at camps.

Luca reflected on his path since participating in the very first edition of YLL, which included Erasmus experiences, his bachelor's and master's degrees, international conferences, and programmes such as the Young Leaders in Diabetes.



"I truly love what I do, and it has been a path I never imagined I would take," he said, describing how this "unplanned journey" led him to become a Customer Experience Manager where he supports the development of educational programmes to help people make better use of their devices, designs new services such as AI-powered chatbots, webinars, and events, and raises awareness around misinformation in diabetes. To conclude, Luca shared personal insights and mindset reminders, leaving participants with inspiring words to reflect on.

Martina spoke about her journey that began at the 2018 YLL, continued with the YLD programme in 2019, and was strengthened by her return to the YLL last year. She also shared her involvement in both local projects in Malta and international initiatives, including one that was born from the previous YLL and which she has continued to develop ever since. Martina opened up about valuable lessons learned along the way, such as "the art of failing", and the Japanese Proverb, "fall down seven times, stand up eight", reflecting on the long but rewarding road to success.

Anna focused on the podcast project she developed with her group during their YLL in 2023, and how it has grown since then. Her story showed how a simple idea, with passion and commitment, can become something impactful and lasting.

The session served as a motivator, showing participants that their projects can extend beyond camp. It emphasized the unique opportunity they have to connect with people willing to support their growth, only if they take full advantage of every opportunity presented to them.



UNDERSTANDING DIABETES REALITIES ACROSS EUROPE

IDF Europe Regional Manager, Elisabeth Dupont, and former IDF Vice President, Iryna Vlasenko, presented on the diabetes landscape in Europe, showcasing data from the [country_profiles](#) developed by IDF Europe in collaboration with its Member Associations and discussed the status of access to diabetes care across European countries. They highlighted various aspects, including the availability of healthy living policies, national diabetes plans and registries, screening for diabetes-related complications and access to diabetes medicines and devices.

Their presentation highlighted the areas where inequalities in access to diabetes prevention, management, and care require improvement and sparked numerous questions, comments, and curiosity among participants, particularly regarding differences in access to diabetes care across European countries, leading to an engaging and insightful discussion among all.



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I would recommend to anyone with diabetes interested in advocacy to attend this camp – it is the perfect place to start and/or strengthen your advocacy, and it introduces you to a wonderful network. – Salomé Gérard

If I wasn't convinced about advocating before the camp, I definitely am now. This experience will help me support my association in its advocacy efforts, and not only within my association, but also motivated me to extend my advocacy activity to a wider scale beyond my country. – Petrișor David

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EVENINGS OF REFLECTION, SHARING AND UNITY

The evening sessions proved once again to be a special part of the camp. In a relaxed and intimate setting, a space was created for participants to open up about their experiences of living with diabetes and the emotions that come with it. The honesty, mutual support, and sense of connection that emerged was truly powerful.

Coming out of your comfort zone

This session, led by Cameron and Jaivir, was a memorable experience for participants, designed to explore the personal boundaries we often set for ourselves and how to overcome them. It encouraged participants to confront their insecurities while realising they were not alone.

A supportive environment was created, fostering growth and self-discovery throughout the Camp and setting a positive tone for the days ahead. By engaging in conversations about common fears and barriers, participants began to build confidence and resilience.



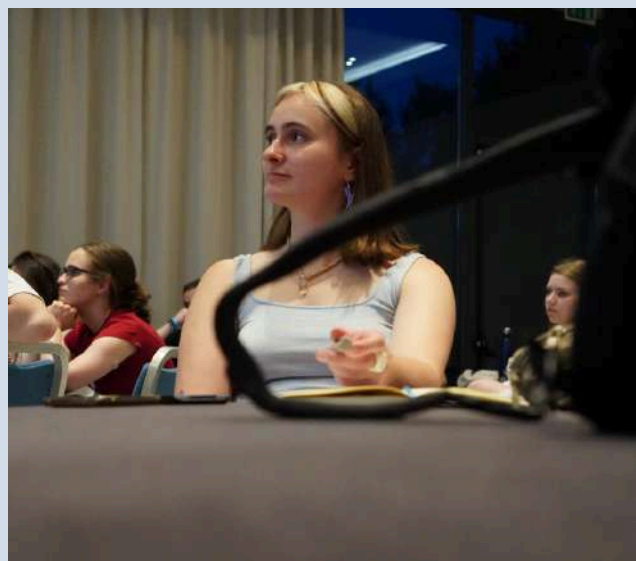
Shared Experiences

This emotional session, led by Cameron and Kristinn, was a heartfelt and impactful part of the Camp. Participants engaged first in pairs, sharing personal stories and experiences that had significantly shaped their lives. This session provided a safe and supporting environment, allowing everyone to express themselves openly and authentically. These meaningful exchanges deepened the connection and understanding between participants, further strengthening the sense of community.



Taboo Session

The traditional taboo session, led by Clinical Psychologist, Cristina Petrut, stimulated open and honest conversations among participants on a series of sensitive topics. Throughout the week, participants anonymously submitted questions, which were then addressed in a session designed to provide a safe and judgement-free environment for discussion. The exchanges were incredibly liberating, as the only rule of the session was that "the stories stay in the room, only the lessons leave". This approach nurtured trust and allowed participants to share their experiences, fears and challenges, further deepening their connections.



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This camp showed me that I'm not alone, that it's a safe space where we are understood, empowered, and reminded that diabetes does not define us. – Catarina Mégre

At the YLL, I particularly liked how it was a safe and inclusive space that enabled us, young people, to open up about topics that are often difficult to share. This was something I had never experienced before. – Calum Skye

It was comforting and encouraging to connect with others who understand the challenges of living with diabetes. – Sadie Moran

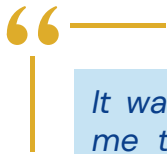
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PARTICIPANT PRESENTATIONS

Amongst the many highlights of camp is the participants' presentations, whereby all the participants introduce themselves and their countries, discuss their involvement in their community, the activities of the association and the diabetes care provided in their respective communities. They also have the opportunity to share with the group and express their future plans as diabetes advocates.

This approach of exchanging experiences allows participants to not only get to know each other and create a strong network of people with diverse backgrounds, but also to inspire one another through shared experiences. This session often fosters future collaborations, as participants consult and learn from each other's knowledge and areas of expertise.



It was the other participants who taught me the most. Hearing their stories and learning about their projects was deeply inspiring; it was a true gift that broadened my perspective and made me feel grateful and hopeful – Salomé Gérard

I heard many inspiring stories from people with diabetes from different countries, which changed my perspective on living with diabetes and contributed to my personal growth. – Teja Horvat





GROUP WORK

During the course of the camp, participants had the opportunity to work on a group project based on the themes they chose prior to camp and were assigned to thereafter. The group work commenced during the online workshop, and continued daily during the week-long camp. With the support of their mentors, each working group came up with a realistic project idea to work on during and after camp, as they take on their youth leadership journey.

The themes this year were specific themes covering a number of areas in diabetes youth advocacy, namely awareness and policy, but also supporting the organisation of current initiatives such as the Youth Forum and International Youth Day.

By the end of the week, each group prototyped and/or presented their project-ideas to the rest of the participants, each with the key takeaway to continue developing their projects in their home countries.

Presenting their ideas to the group not only provides the participants an opportunity to come out of their shell and gain confidence, but also allows them to reflect on the week, all their hard work on the project and also encourages them to reach out to the networks they created for additional support on their projects. This left the participants motivated, passionate and empowered to continue with their projects and the execution thereof in the near future with the assistance of the IDF Europe network.



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It was an amazing experience where I met incredible people and gained a deeper understanding of what advocacy is, as well as what can be achieved in this world when people join forces. – João Cabrita

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AMPLIFYING AWARENESS

The group pitched the idea of creating a campaign through numerous photos and videos, visually and emotionally conveying the daily struggles and thought processes of individuals living with diabetes behind seemingly simple tasks. By doing so, people who do not live with diabetes will understand the mental weight and internal dialogue associated with managing diabetes, and through such awareness, people with diabetes will feel seen and validated in their everyday challenges.



YOUTH-LED ADVOCACY: DESIGNING A WORLD DIABETES DAY EVENT AT THE EU LEVEL

The group focused on designing a youth-led event in the European Parliament in Brussels, to mark World Diabetes Day 2025. The objective was to create an event fully led by young people – from format to content – offering a young to young platform. The event combines health policy and youth policy, demonstrating the real-life challenges young people living with T1D across Europe encounter while giving them a direct voice in shaping solutions.



A central theme of the event will be mental health, a topic particularly close to the hearts of the YLL 2025 participants. The event will bring together key European Commission policymakers and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), with each panel including two people living with diabetes to keep youth perspectives at the centre.

As part of the preparation, the group developed a teaser video to announce and promote the event, as well as another to be shown during it. This dynamic approach aims to engage participants and stakeholders alike, amplifying youth voices. Action-oriented by design, the event will also present concrete initiatives co-created in advance with MEPs for each panel. This collaborative approach highlights the potential of youth engagement in policymaking, ensuring solutions that are both innovative and grounded in the real needs of young people living with T1D.



SHAPING THE NEXT YOUTH FORUM

The third working group had the opportunity to generate ideas and assist with the organisation of the Youth (YOURAH) Forum as organised by IDF Europe for YLL/YLC alumni who are passionate or interested in European advocacy and policy-making. They came up with the theme of celebrating 15 years of YLL (in 2026) through attracting ex-camp quinquennial participants, and exchanging stories and key moments from their experiences. They also proposed the idea of having a reminiscent boardwalk of 15 posters, one from each year. In such a way, the Youth Forum would attract not only active members but also the new YOURAH members and inspire members who are no longer as engaged.



CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY

The theme stipulated by the United Nations for International Youth Day 2025 was that of "Local Youth Actions for the SDGs and Beyond".

The fourth working group focused on contributing to SDG 3, ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being, by promoting the right to health and information among youth with diabetes. They aimed at achieving this through the creation of a safe and youth-friendly online space by collecting anonymous questions online and posting biweekly answers via stories and posts. This will promote factual information based on real-life experiences, growing an online community and empowering youths through accessible and reliable information.





SPORTING ACTIVITIES

This year's camp once again highlighted the vital role of physical activity in diabetes management. Guided by Kristinn, Alessio, and Iryna, participants took part in daily sessions that combined movement, energy, and fun. From early morning stretches to team sports such as a basketball tournament, football, volleyball, and pétanque, along with refreshing swimming breaks, these activities were not only a way to stay active but also to strengthen bonds and teamwork within the group.

Beyond the more traditional elements, one of the most memorable moments was the preparation of a flashmob, later performed in the town square of Parma, a creative and joyful way to raise awareness about diabetes while stepping out of our comfort zones together. We are especially grateful to the Mayor of Parma for his support and presence during this unique moment.



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From the camp, I gained the motivation to continue my sports activities with even more dedication than before. – Petrișor David
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Cultural Immersion

During the camp in Parma, the participants could not leave without a classic Italian cooking class which was organised for them, recognising the importance of a balanced diet in daily life, for people living with diabetes but even for those who do not live with diabetes. The participants learnt how to make tortelli d’erbetta, by an Italian chef, Ilaria Bertinelli, who has a background in nutrition, providing the group a true immersion into Italian cuisine. It was a fun and engaging experience whereby the participants had the opportunity to make the tortelli from scratch.

After a demonstration and explanation by the chef, participants, faculty and mentors worked in teams to prepare their dishes, guided by Ilaria herself. The session ended with everyone enjoying the fruits of their labour at dinner, and the tortelli d’erbetta were truly delicious.



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After an intense week of learning about advocacy, awareness, and leadership, we left feeling prepared, inspired, and more united than ever. And the best part? We know this is only the beginning. – Carmen Gil Trinidad

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CLOSING

As the saying goes, all good things must come to an end. While goodbyes are always bittersweet, many participants emphasized that this was not a farewell, but the beginning of a new chapter as they embark on their advocacy journeys, empowered and motivated by the network they had created.

The emotional evening began with a certification ceremony, celebrating the efforts and participation of all attendees. Joana, camp coordinator, former participant, and diabetes advocate, along with Alyssa,, organized a nostalgic quiz game. The activity sparked laughter, tears, inside jokes, and friendly competition, as they played a 'most-likely-to' game and a 'guess the participant' quiz.

Following the game, participants proudly displayed their flags, signed them, and captured a few group photos before the final send-off, which included dancing the night away.

The evening concluded in classic camp fashion, with late-night chats by the pool, reminiscing on the shared experiences, and making plans for where they will meet next.





The Youth Leadership Camp was truly a sweet life experience, as it gave me the opportunity to meet motivated young diabetes advocates who together want to change and improve life with diabetes. I gained a new sweet family I can always turn to for support on my advocacy journey.

- Teja Horvat



The YLL is a great platform to take your first steps into T1D advocacy, not matter how big or small you want to go. - Thorhildur Kristbjornsdottir



There was no other place in the world where I felt as encouraged by my peers to be comfortable in my own skin. - James Coughlin

Not only did the YLL give me useful tools, it also gave me confidence, and this wonderful sense of community. - Salomé Gérard

There is a big sense of community that brings everyone very close, all united by the goal of improving lives for people living with diabetes - Kamala Dixon



It will make you grow on a personal level, make you more confident and strengthen your voice for your advocacy. - Hakaroa Vallée



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