



JUST MAPS

SECOND ISSUE

NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the second Just Maps newsletter! Since the launch of the project, students, teachers and partners have been working together to explore their local communities through participatory mapping, research and dialogue with local stakeholders. In this issue, we look back at the activities carried out across the partner countries over the past months, highlighting how Just Maps is helping young people become active citizens while strengthening the links between schools and their communities. We will also share a preview of the next stages of the project as we continue our journey together.

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Building the foundations

A year and a half after the launch of Just Maps – Schools Strengthening Global Citizenship by Mapping Local Communities, we are excited to share the first milestones of this inspiring Erasmus+ journey.

Since December 2024, the project has been bringing together schools, educators and organisations from across Europe and Kenya to empower young people to become active citizens through participatory mapping. By combining Global Citizenship Education with hands-on local research, Just Maps encourages students to observe their communities with a critical eye and identify the social and environmental challenges that affect their daily lives.



The project has already achieved remarkable results. More than **9 schools** across **Spain, Italy, Poland, Ireland** and **Kenya** are actively implementing the Just Maps methodology. This first version of the Just Maps methodology was created by the project partners after a fruitful meeting in Dublin, putting together ideas and experiences from all over the world. The first version of the Methodology was also presented through several cascade trainings in the five countries involved, engaging **over 225 teachers and educators**.

Equipped with innovative tools, teachers involved more than 340 students in project activities, exploring concepts such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Agenda 2030, the participatory mapping and the community engagement.

During the first phase of the project, students, supported by teachers, **investigated their neighbourhoods** using both digital and paper-based mapping tools, including Google Earth, MyMaps, and Padlet. Pupils **identified places** and searched for social inequalities, environmental issues and opportunities for positive changes, developing research, observation and teamwork skills. This process has encouraged them not only to better understand their local realities but also to reflect on **how they can contribute** in making their communities more inclusive and sustainable.

"We realized that what is just a minor inconvenience for us can be a serious barrier for an elderly person or someone with a disability" - students observed while working on the map



"Using maps allows collaboration, active engagement of members and gives a visual representation of the issues under investigation" - a teacher observed after a workshop



"It wasn't an online survey—we had to approach someone, ask questions, and listen to their story. I felt that I was truly participating in the life of the district," one student emphasized



Before turning their research into digital and printed maps, students are meeting **local administrators** to interview them. The **goal** is simple: to understand their role in the community and learn more about the places being mapped.



The next stage of the project will see students transform their research into digital and printed collaborative maps, showcasing the stories, challenges and opportunities they have uncovered. These maps will become powerful tools for **dialogue with local communities** and decision-makers and will be presented during the Transnational Meeting in Zaragoza, scheduled for October 2026. In this occasion, students from the participating countries will also exchange experiences with their peers and discuss their findings on social and environmental justice. This international event will celebrate not only the outcomes of the mapping activities but also the important role that young people can play in shaping more resilient and equitable communities.



Looking ahead, one of the project's most valuable legacies will be the Just Maps educational pathway. The methodology, learning resources, classroom activities and participatory mapping tools developed throughout the project will be brought together in practical online resources. These materials will undergo continuous testing and refinement, informed by ongoing feedback, before their official release.

The Just Maps resources will be freely accessible online, enabling schools and educators beyond the partnership to adopt the Just Maps approach and inspire even more young people to become active global citizens.

Stay tuned as we continue this journey—from mapping communities to creating meaningful change, one map at a time.



Want to read more?

Go to [website](#)



Just Mappers in action



Over the past months, teams of Just Mapper students have been transforming the knowledge acquired during the first stages of the project into concrete research within their own communities. Across **Europe** and **Kenya**, schools have continued implementing participatory mapping activities, encouraging young people to observe their surroundings, investigate local challenges and imagine more sustainable and inclusive futures.



Once the foundations were laid, students stepped outside to explore spaces that form part of their daily lives. From a neglected playground near a stadium in Lanciano (**Italy**) to a bustling neighborhood park in Zaragoza and to the Uribarri neighbourhood in Bilbao (**Spain**), and from the banks of the Vistula River in Warsaw (**Poland**) to the coastal ecosystems, forests and mangroves in Mombasa (**Kenya**) and back to the Pope John Paul II Park in Dublin (**Ireland**), the Just Mappers turned their local areas into living laboratories.



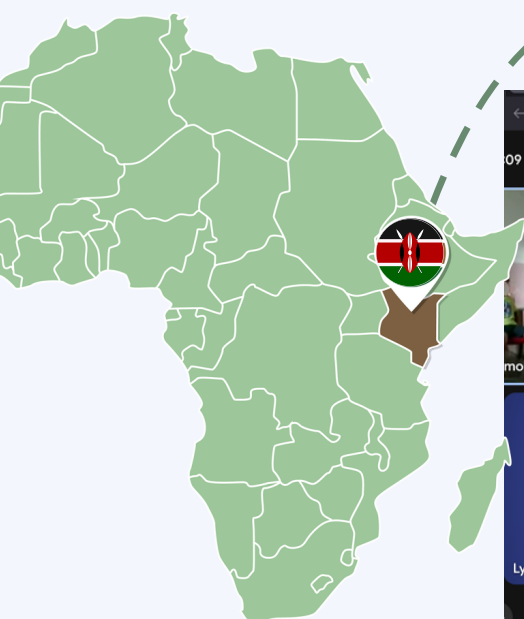
Armed with notebooks, digital tools like Google Earth, and a lot of curiosity, classrooms across all the participating countries carried out direct field observations, designed surveys, conducted interviews with local residents, park users, and family members and participated in environmental initiatives. Rather than just walking through these places, they began asking meaningful questions about accessibility, green spaces, safety, and community needs across different generations.

Mapping was not just an internal classroom exercise: it quickly became a bridge to active civic engagement. In Italy and Poland, students from the **IC Umberto I**, from **Artxandape** and from the **Prus High School** took their findings straight to the people who hold the power to make real changes. The Just Mappers sat down with local administrators like city councils and mayors to share their observations, present their findings and propose ideas for making public spaces safer, greener and more welcoming for everyone. The rest of the Just Mappers will join in before October 2026. This activity gives students a real taste of community life—showing them that their voice can make a genuine difference.





Beyond their local neighborhoods, students also opened windows to the wider world through **international exchanges**. Pupils from the IC Umberto I had the opportunity to connect with the students from the **Matinyani DEB School** and the **St. Peter's Kindu Senior School** (both from **Kenya**). Sharing their experiences with Just Maps and also some insights into the local culture and language, allowed the young students to discover different realities and see their own communities through a different lens. These international exchanges reminded everyone that while local contexts differ, the desire to improve our living space is universal.





Just Mappers also used new exciting hands-on tools like the famous **Lego® bricks**. Some students built colorful models to explore what “mapping” is, as was the case at the Irish schools **Ard Scoil na Mara** and **St. Catherine’s School**, at the **Prus High School** in Warsaw and at the **Artxandape** school in Bilbao, through some of the activities introduced in the first version of the [Just Maps methodology](#) (the [Handbook](#)), while others had the chance to be part of a series of creative LEGO® Serious Play® activities.

Through play and visual storytelling, participants turned big ideas — global citizenship, environmental sustainability, social justice — into models you could hold, share, point at. This was the case of the workshop lead in Italy where more than 260 pupils of the **IC Umberto I** of Lanciano, took part in a session called “Building ideas: thinking with your hands”. Furthermore, another LEGO® Serious Play® workshop was held at the **Aga Khan Academy in Mombasa**, Kenya. Unlike the workshop in Lanciano, which involved students, this session—entitled “Transformative bricks: learning by doing, thinking with your hands before your words”—was specifically designed as a training activity for teachers and educators. It engaged approximately **78 participants** and was organised through the joint efforts of the lead representatives of GAP ES and InEuropa.





Through this journey, combining hands-on **research**, **digital tools**, **teamwork**, and **genuine community dialogue**, students are developing much more than geographical knowledge. They are sharpening their analytical abilities, practicing critical thinking, and building deep empathy for the people around them. Most importantly, they are discovering their own voice as active citizens who can shape the future of their towns and cities.



Just Mappers representatives from the 5 countries will meet in Zaragoza in October. Who knows what they'll come up with... follow Just Maps!!!

Want to know more? You can visit the **Just Maps official website** to discover the **Just Mappers activities** and their **first maps**.



What's next for Just Maps?



After months of research, fieldwork and participatory mapping, **Just Maps** is entering a new and exciting phase. Across Europe and Kenya, students are now ready to transform what they have learned into concrete action, becoming active contributors to their local communities.

What will Just mappers do?

1

They will meet with local authorities to present the project, share the maps they have created and discuss the environmental and social challenges they have identified in their neighbourhoods. These conversations will allow young people to compare their observations with the perspectives of local decision-makers, making the mapping process even richer and more meaningful.



2

Before travelling to Zaragoza and partake in the Council of Just Mappers, in their classrooms they will undertake an election process. This will assist in deciding who will represent their Just Mappers project in Zaragoza. This will give the students a taste of public speaking and the mechanisms of democracy, valuable experience before they meet their local council officials to discuss their findings. They will complete their collaborative maps, highlighting global issues identified at local level, bringing together the information collected through research, interviews and field visits. These maps will highlight not only local strengths and critical issues but also the first ideas for creating more inclusive, sustainable and welcoming communities.



3

They will gather in Zaragoza in October 2026 (Council of Just Mappers, groups of representative students from each of the school involved) Delegations of Just Mappers from Spain, Italy, Ireland, Poland and Kenya will come together to share their findings through the maps created, exchange experiences and explore solutions on global challenges affecting their local areas. By working together, students will gain new perspectives and discover how ideas developed in one country can inspire solutions in another.

4

They will work and publish an International Manifesto of Just Cities, a shared vision of what fair, inclusive and sustainable communities should look like from a young person's perspective. The international exchange will encourage dialogue, creativity and mutual learning, reinforcing the idea that local challenges are often connected to wider global issues



5

After Zaragoza, Just Mappers will continue developing their digital maps and use them as the starting point for local advocacy campaigns. By engaging classmates, families, local communities and public authorities, they will promote actions that encourage participation and inspire positive change.

In this final stage, Just Maps will move beyond mapping places to empowering young people to shape the future of the communities they call home.



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