



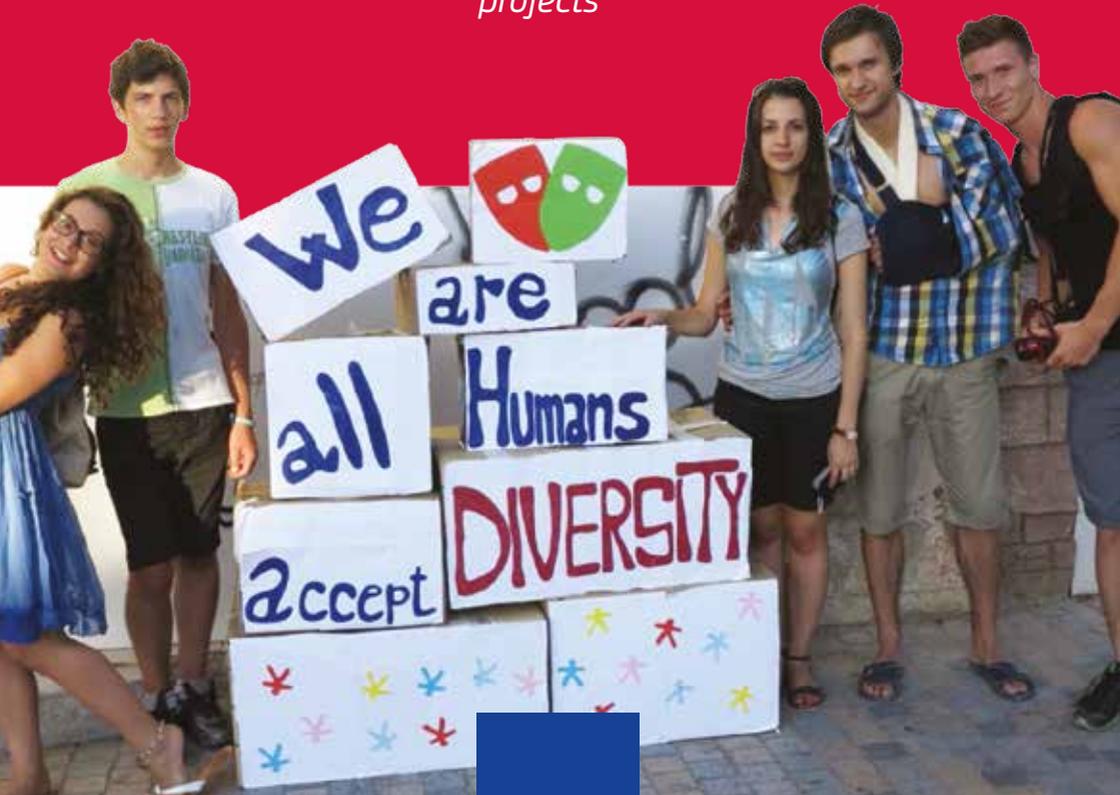
European  
Commission

ERASMUS+  
AND YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMMES

Focus on:

# Empowering young people to participate in society

*European  
good practice  
projects*



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AND YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMMES

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Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2015

ISBN 978-92-79-46640-3

doi: 10.2766/77467

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## Youth participation: *How can Europe help young people find their place in society?*

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**Tibor Navracsics**  
*Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport*

This generation of young Europeans has been hit hard by the economic crisis. The transition from education into the labour market has become more difficult. About one out of five young jobseekers under 25 cannot find work. And many young people believe that their concerns are not taken up by politicians. More than half of them feel that in their country young people have been marginalised and excluded from economic and social life.

Facing this challenge, with social tensions rising and a clear need to tackle radicalisation and alienation, what can Europe offer? As European Commissioner responsible for Youth, I will support young people to help ensure they acquire the skills they need for today's – and tomorrow's – labour market. What is more, I will work to make sure they are equipped with social, civic and intercultural

competences as well as a strong capacity for critical thinking. In these efforts, I want to ensure that particular attention is paid to the needs of disadvantaged youth.

Young people need the opportunity to develop the skills and competences which help them to find their place in the labour market and in society as a whole. The Erasmus+ programme (2014-2020) supports mobility and training for young people and youth workers and provides opportunities for dialogue and joint projects on citizenship, volunteering and youth exchanges.

This booklet presents a selection of youth projects which illustrate the rich variety of non-formal learning opportunities supported by Erasmus+. I hope it can be a source of inspiration for young people across Europe.

# Table of contents

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## EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH MEETINGS WITH DECISION MAKERS

Big 6	8
Raise Youth Voice	10
Have Your Say 4!	12
The Dropouts	14
Active young person = young entrepreneur?	16
European youth collective film-making workshop	18
Empowering Creative, Resourceful, Enterprising Youngsters in Europe - C.R.E.ativeE	20
Entrepreneurship development	22
Have your say! - the sustainable consultation	24
Youth policy - interim review	26
Include to grow	28
European Alcohol Policy Youth Conference	30
Involving children and young people in planning transport and communication	32

## EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH MOBILITY AND OTHER INITIATIVES

3 C: make a Choice to take a Chance to make a Change!	34
Gentle2 - Special Education Center	36
Get Involved in Local Democracy (G.I.L.D.)	38
Active Unit – Social Changes	40
Helping services through leisure education	42
We are changing ... our neighbourhood!	44
Rock in Iasi	46
Together against cyberbullying	48
Young life and experience of the lifetime	50
Hackney - Botkyrka exchange	52
Green Jobs for a Green Europe	54
Why a Youth Council?	56
Voices without limits	58
Inclusive	60

## TRAINING AND NETWORKING OF YOUTH WORKERS TO SUPPORT YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Let me be one of you!	62
Response to the crisis: political changes and social justice in Europe	64
Backpack Journalism for Youth Eco-innovation	66
Fast Forward	68
Advocacy - make yourself heard	70
Non-formal learning in youth work	72
Local democracy in a changing world	74
Fostering social inclusion and employability of institutionalised youth	76

# Big 6



*'Many young people are not interested in politics because they have no interest in the topic or the impression they cannot participate in politics. But with the right topic and the right method, every young person can express their political ideas.'*

## A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in the German-speaking community of Belgium.



Seventy young people from Belgium, between 15 and 25 years old, were actively involved in this project aimed at mobilising young people from different parts of the country on various topics directly concerning them. The purpose of the project was to provide participants with the possibility to meet and exchange information about youth issues in their region and ideas on how best to promote youth dialogue in the different communities.

From March 2013 until March 2014, six different events took place in Bütgenbach, Eupen and Raeren, Belgium: a Structured Dialogue session with young people on the topic of young people not in education, employment or training («NEETs»); a panel discussion on the topic «Prospects for young people in the Euregio»; a prevention congress to foster self-esteem and emotional strengthening of young people; the organisation of a Day of Youth Organisations with the projection of a movie («WERTvoll - so sind wir»); a workshop on the role of human rights in young people's lives; and an intergenerational dialogue «18-81: my age is just a figure».

The project was well received by young people, and its organisers were supported by several regional and local youth organisations and

volunteers who contributed to the success of the different activities. This initiative clearly demonstrated young people's enthusiasm, power and eagerness to carry out a range of actions. The noticeable added value is the fact the Youth Council successfully managed to gather young people and the wider public around a programme that can make things change for young people in collaboration with their peers.

The project actively dealt with values and skills of foremost importance for young people. In addition, the project initiated a process of dialogue between young people and the regional and local communities, which took place on several levels going beyond German Community borders, being intergenerational, and covering themes of great interest to young people such as human rights, youth employment and media competences.

These activities helped the Youth Council of the region to raise awareness about young people's opinions and needs, whilst at the same time encouraging their political participation.

### Activity dates and venue:

17 March 2013 - 22 March 2014,  
in Bütgenbach, Eupen and Raeren, Belgium.



Project carried out by the Council of the German-speaking Youth (Rat der deutschsprachigen Jugend V.o.G.), Belgium.

# Raise Youth Voice



*'We traveled to Brussels to make our voices heard. Indeed, in the «Raise Youth Voice» project, a small part of us visited the European Parliament President Martin Schulz to promote the active participation of young people in the European construction.'*

A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in the French-speaking community of Belgium.



This project, which took place in March 2014 in Brussels, Belgium, involved 350 young people, including approximately a 100 with fewer opportunities, from Belgium, Germany, Spain, France, Latvia, Hungary, Netherlands, Portugal and Romania; The objective was to gather young people before the 2014 European elections to offer them the opportunity to express their views on major societal issues.

Over a six-month period of preparation, partner organisations worked with young people on topics which are important in their daily life (education, employment, participation, European citizenship, etc.), applying non-formal education methods and tools. After different workshops, discussions and meetings with local decision-makers, the participants dubbed videos to highlight their concerns. The videos produced by each participating national group of young people were the starting point of a general debate in Brussels. Spending time meeting their own country's Members of the European Parliament and building their position as a group, helped young people to get used to European institutional and political reality.

In Brussels, the national delegations of young people worked on a common paper handed to the President of the European Parliament, Mr. Martin Schulz - a Manifesto highlighting

the themes which should be deliberated in the European Parliament. They also took part in a session at the European Parliament, and organised a collective and festive activity in one of the open space floors of the building, joining the festival «Ceci n'est pas un Jeune» («This is not a young person»). The group also worked on a flash mob and different posters to deliver its messages during the «Youth Pride» event in the public space area of the European Parliament. Finally, the delegations' media group organised various activities, such as writing the event's diary "Raise Youth Pen", producing videos and managing press contacts.

Young people got acquainted with the European institutional reality, and the various activities helped them develop their creativity, language competences and technical skills. In addition, the project was built in the framework of a larger project focusing, in Belgium, on the potential of young people and the work done by youth clubs and youth work in general. This «Raise Youth Voice» project was presented at several occasions in the country, namely in local communities, which provided an opportunity to young people and general public to raise their awareness about wider European issues.

#### Activity dates and venue:

3 - 8 March 2014, in Brussels, Belgium.



Project carried out by the Fédération des Maisons de Jeunes en Belgique francophone, Belgium, in partnership with Förderer und Freunde des Berufskolleg Ehrenfeld e.v., Germany; Europa 2020, Estonia; Confédération des Maisons de Jeunes et de la Culture de France, France; Civil Közösségi Házak Magyarországi Egyesülete, Hungary; Language and Cultural Centre «World at our Home», Latvia; Vrijwilligerswerk Rotterdam, the Netherlands; Bloom Asociaçao Socio Cultural, Portugal and Asociația Hair Redivivus, Romania.

# Have Your Say 4!



*'The «I Know Why I Vote» campaign was included in the League of Young Voters and I became the League's Ambassador for the Czech Republic and this provided me with the opportunity to work with the topic of elections and young people.'*

## A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in the Czech Republic.



The wider objective of the «Have Your Say» project was to offer an opportunity for young people to express their opinions on topics concerning them. It also offered an opportunity to tackle completely new topics, connected with youth. The fourth year of the project was closely connected with the topic of elections. During the 2013-2014 school year in the Czech Republic, there were two important elections: early elections to the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Parliament and elections to the European Parliament.

The project consisted of several activities that took place between August 2013 and October 2014. A website displayed information firstly about the elections, dates, procedures etc., and then about each candidate's party or movement and their candidates and programmes. A few questions from youth (e.g.: What is your opinion on high school fees?) were sent to each party having candidates in all districts of the country and the answers were posted on the site. The site attracted more than 60,000 visitors.

A gathering of around 600 young people, called the «Urban party», was organised to introduce the «I Know Why I Vote» campaign and to identify troubling topics for youth, based on a questionnaire filled in by the participants. In the framework of an information campaign, containing information about elections and candidates, a brochure, leaflets and posters were distributed in public

places such as schools, universities and libraries.

A contact campaign, «I Know Why I Vote on Tour», was designed to inform about the European elections. Thirteen Czech towns were visited with an information tent. The programme always included a public debate with local politicians and candidates. In addition, small concerts with local groups and artists were organised on these occasions; visitors could fill in an interactive quiz; activities were also foreseen for younger children. A closing conference, aimed at summarising both elections and debating about them with politicians and (un)successful candidates, was organised. By using world-coffee-style debates, participants discussed the information campaigns of individual political parties, pros and cons of the campaigns and their public impact.

These various activities offered concrete opportunities for young people to implement tasks providing strong learning experiences. Beyond the impact on those directly involved in the activities, this project provided information about elections to many more young people, giving them opportunities to debate with the candidates.

### Activity dates and venue:

*1 August 2013 - 31 October 2014,  
in Prague and in twelve other towns, the Czech Republic.*



Project carried out by Česká rada dětí a mládeže, the Czech Republic.

# The Dropouts



*'I learnt a lot about myself! I hope the book will help young people realize they are not alone – and not the only ones facing difficult situations - if there are 40,000 young people who drop out, there are 40,000 different reasons for this.'*

A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Denmark.



This project brought together twenty young people from Denmark between the ages of 15 and 20. The project, with activities taking place in Copenhagen between April and July 2014, aimed at giving young people a voice and the opportunity to tell their stories in a professionally published book. The main goal was to engage youth and put focus on the important political subject of young people dropping out of school. The book helped to broaden the understanding amongst decision-makers about the personal reasons for dropping out, and thus highlighted the fact that education should also regard life outside school. Including facts and figures, graphs, analyses and statistics available, as well as personal testimonies, 'The Dropouts' provides true stories of young people.

The intent was to empower, inspire, encourage, and create a feeling of being part of something important to influence political debate about the educational system, with case-based evidence about the challenges and difficulties and to create recognisable images in order to support other young people in the same situation of dropping out of school.

Activities carried out in the project included intensive writing and editing processes for the young participants involved. The 'dropout' participants were further involved in ten-day workshops and a book publishing event. During the project's lifetime, every participant had a personal volunteer and mentor to guide and encourage him or her throughout the action. Included in the project was a training course to educate and provide for the preparation of the involved volunteers to develop their communicative skills, open up for dialogue and talk about what it means to be part of a European project.

The young persons had the opportunity of cooperation across cultural and social backgrounds, developed new competences with regard to learning methods and communication, and a series of practical tools for further use in their personal and professional lives.

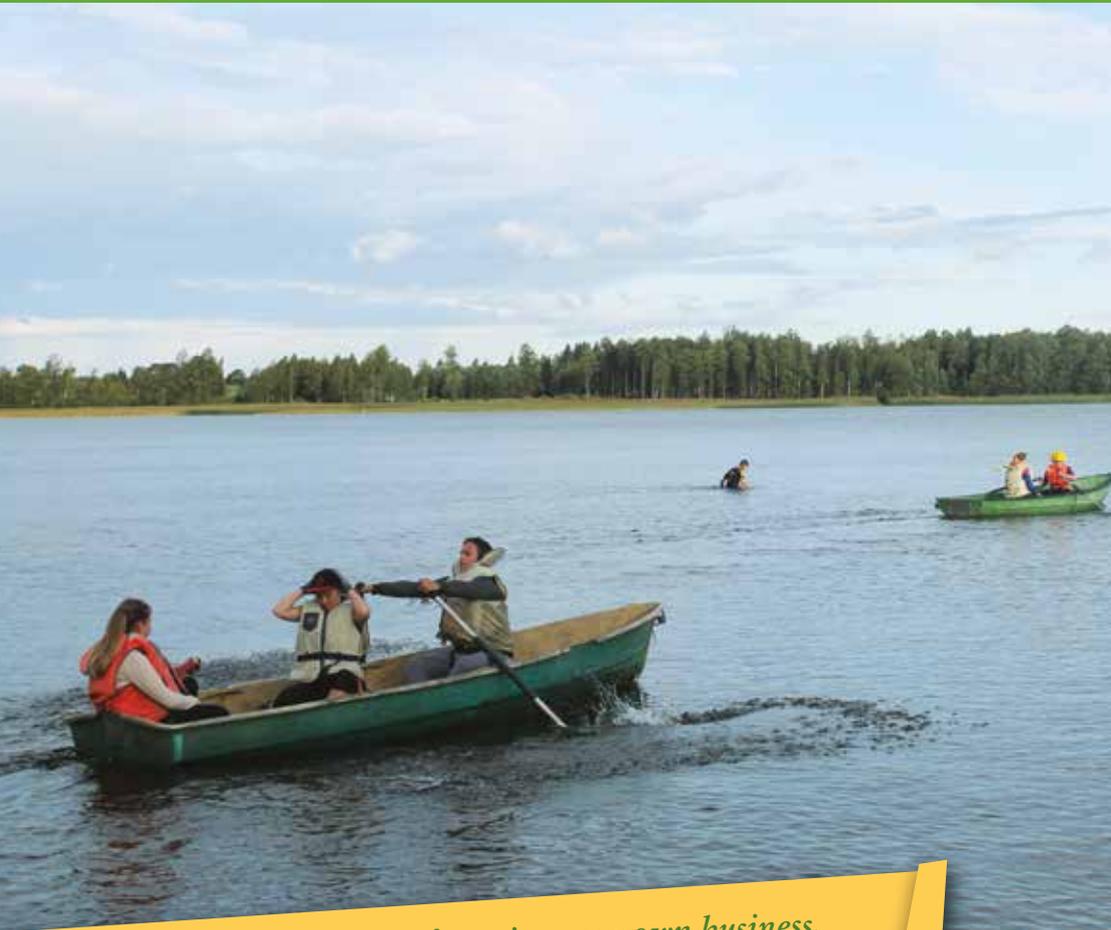
#### Activity dates and venue:

1 April - 1 July 2014,  
in Copenhagen, Denmark.



Project carried out by Ungdomsbureauet (the Youth Agency), Denmark, in partnership with Youth Guidance Centre of Copenhagen, Denmark; Hygge Factory, Denmark and the Danish Red Cross Youth, Denmark.

# Active young person = young entrepreneur ?



*'If you have a clear vision of starting your own business, then the initial lack of ideas or money doesn't stop you. If a person is ready and has big dreams, everything is possible.'*

A project funded by the Estonian Erasmus+ National Agency in the field of youth.



This project took place between August and December 2014 and included over 50 participants in Jõgevamaa, Estonia. The main events consisted in the organisation of two seminars bringing together young people, decision-makers and successful entrepreneurs. Local politicians had repeatedly emphasised that the topic of youth entrepreneurship needed attention - particularly in this small region where the population is aging quickly and career choices for young adults are limited. That gave way to the idea of bringing together all stakeholders and discussing the possibilities of supporting youth entrepreneurship in the county. The main aim of the two seminars was to map the expectations of young people and decision-makers about entrepreneurship, inspire youth with real examples of successful entrepreneurs and offer them practical support with idea development and business start-ups.

Different non-formal methods were used to spark dialogues between all involved. In workshops, the young adults had a chance to talk about their visions for the future and discuss the issues of entrepreneurship with the local governmental representatives. In the first seminar, students in a secondary school took part; the second event, which had a more practical «do it yourself» approach, brought together young people who had taken part in the first seminar and were ready to start

developing concrete ideas for future start-ups.

The project made the young participants aware that being an entrepreneur or having an active approach in society can be a way of life. At the same time, the decision-makers acknowledged that young people do not necessarily think of leaving the county, though they are willing to participate in the community, if active entrepreneurs and decision-makers provide enough support and guidance.

This project shows the importance of cross-sectorial cooperation between different stakeholders in order to view the topic of youth self-employment from many angles. The organisers began accepting non-formal education methods as part of the school curriculum, based on the positive experience gained in this particular project. Secondary school students, who took part in these two seminars, were given credit points for the extra-curriculum activity. In addition, the voluntary subject of project writing was permanently implemented into the school's programme to support youth work in the school context and give young people the necessary instruments to take initiatives.

#### Activity dates and venue:

1 August 2014 - 31 December 2014,  
in Jõgevamaa, Estonia.



Project carried out by Jõgevamaa Gymnasium, Estonia.

# European youth collective film-making workshop



*'Our group discussions before the film-making sessions were interesting, because I was working with young people from different backgrounds and with different experiences.'*

**A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in France.**



The workshop named "European citizens to their cameras!" took place during the year 2013 and allowed about twenty European young people from France, Italy, Portugal, Romania and Spain, living in Ile-de-France (Greater Paris) to meet, express themselves and exchange ideas to make a film while reflecting together on the place of young people in the European Union.

This project is part of a larger project which started with an introductory course in film making using popular education methods (learning through practice and working in turns on every position). The young people were then able to start their collective audio-visual project. Accompanied by audio-visual professionals, they made their own choices regarding filming locations, those to be interviewed, topics to be covered and aesthetics.

Two films were made during this workshop. In a 30' film, the young Europeans reflected on the meaning of being a foreigner, immigration, borders and Europe, and a 15' film was produced with young Romani, addressing the question of the place of young Romani in France and Europe.

The project was introduced through public meetings in April 2013. Afterwards, several

days were dedicated to writing scenarios and preparing film shootings followed by collective screenings of the footage and editing sessions. Making the documentary with the young Romani demanded several trips to their camp, and some screenings were organised there.

The final phase of the project consisted in feedback meetings in order to reflect together with the audience; these meetings were attended by various stakeholders engaged in politics, in organisations supporting migrants or in academics. A DVD presenting the two main films as well as three shorter versions that were made during the project, was edited. A web page on a website where the videos were made public was developed and public screenings and debates in partnership with several associations and institutions were organised.

Through this project, participants learned a lot about Europe, about opportunities for citizens to take action, and about film making. The place of youth in the European Union being the major theme of the workshop, the young participants tried to express common visions and ambitions.

**Activity dates and venue:**

*1 January 2013 - 31 December 2013, in Ile-de-France, France.*



Project carried out by Canal Marches, France.

## Empowering Creative, Resourceful, Enterprising Youngsters in Europe – C.R.E.ativeE



*‘I learnt a lot about young people in other countries, how they work in their communities, how they volunteer in associations as well as entrepreneurship. A great experience for me!’*

A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Italy.



This project took place in April 2013, in Piacenza, Italy, and brought together during 4 days over 40 young people, policy-makers, representatives of different administrations, and experts from Italy, Spain, Poland, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Turkey.

This project aimed to promote youth creativity and entrepreneurial resources in Europe. Young people actively participated in a debate and exchanged their input and proposals with those responsible for drawing up youth-related policies. The idea was that the participation of young people in local and regional life should be part of the global policy of citizens’ participation in the public sector. Local and regional authorities were convinced that all sectorial policies should involve the youth dimension and activate participative forms in the field of youth policies, through the participation of young people and their representatives.

The project’s specific objectives included comparing different experiences and exchanging best practices related to the active citizenship and participation of new generations in public decision-making;

structured discussions about the creativity young persons are able to give in social and voluntary activities; and giving youth policy experts and leaders the opportunity to improve their knowledge of young people’s opinions and needs.

These young people actively participated in discussions of the project’s topics related to promoting and strengthening young people’s creativity and entrepreneurial resources in Europe, through the youth forum, seminar, follow-up activities and the meeting with local policy-making structures. This project reinforced their participation in local and regional life as well as their sense of citizenship, giving them the possibility to influence youth policies and increase their self-awareness. These young people were confronted with their peers and with policy-makers and experts from different countries, reinforcing the mutual understanding amongst people and promoting EU cooperation in the youth field.

**Activity dates and venue:**

16 - 19 April 2013, in Piacenza, Italy.



Project carried out by the Provincia di Piacenza, Italy, in partnership with Ayuntamiento de Vila-Real, Spain; Regionalne Towarzystwo Rolno – Przemysłowe “Dolina Strugu”, Poland; Mölndals stad, Sweden; Aberdeen City Council, the United Kingdom and Giresun Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü, Turkey.

# Entrepreneurship development



*'I learnt how to build a business. If I have any questions, now I'll know where to find answers.'*

A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Latvia.



The project took place between February and October 2013, in the Vidzeme Planning Region, Latvia, with several activities taking place in the towns of Valmiera, Gulbene, Madona, Cesis and Smiltene, and included the participation of 30 young people living in the Vidzeme region.

The overall objective of the project was to contribute to the development of high quality national, regional and local support systems for young people seen as potential entrepreneurs, as well as to promote young people's active citizenship, and their European citizenship in particular, through the development of skills to start up and develop new businesses in innovative, sustainable and green industrial fields.

More specific objectives included promoting understanding amongst young people in the Vidzeme Planning Region and promoting a dialogue between young people and the developers of entrepreneurship support policies in Latvia, about capabilities and challenges that are relevant for young people to start their own businesses - thus also developing the socio-economic and professional growth of participants involved.

Activities carried out by participants during the project included the organisation of four working groups and a two-day seminar in order to meet national, regional and local policy makers. Methods of non-formal education were applied, such as the simulation game «My New Enterprise», in which young people simulated the creation and development of a new company.

Participants developed their business ideas during the working groups, with the support of professional coaches. They also improved their team building, communication, and innovation generating capacities. Furthermore, they produced recommendations - for national, regional and local entrepreneurship development and for obtaining support from policy makers - presented to representatives from Latvian and Swedish municipalities.

#### Activity dates and venue:

*1 February 2013 - 31 October 2013, in Vidzeme Planning Region, Latvia; with particular activities taking place in Valmiera, Gulbene, Madona, Cesis and Smiltene municipalities.*



Project carried out by Vidzemes plānošanas reģions, Latvia.

# Have your say! - the sustainable consultation



*'Debating helped me learn how to stand up for my own opinions, and it also motivated me to start to think about my future.'*

A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Hungary.



This project, held between August 2013 and August 2014, provided the opportunity for ten secondary schools in the seven regions of Hungary to become long lasting regional hubs, knowledge bases and multipliers of the Structured Dialogue process. In line with the aim of Structured Dialogue, it promoted active citizenship amongst young people and supported a dialogue between young people and local decision-makers. This project developed the competences of young people (aged 14-18) through public debates and democratic dialogues by using non-formal techniques.

Every participant and all events in the project were connected to the European level of the Structured Dialogue process. Two teachers per school were trained to be Structured Dialogue trainers, who then reached out to over 150 teachers. In total around 3,400 young people and more than 250 decision-makers took part

in this process through consultation days, teacher training events and Structured Dialogue project weeks in the selected schools. Young people debated issues related to the European Structured Dialogue through community debates.

The participants acquired new skills, their knowledge of the decision making processes were expanded and they gained a better understanding of European citizenship and of their potential roles in shaping it. Moreover, the project built a network of ten pilot schools, with a community of dedicated teachers, who possess a specific level of professional experience in organising local debate events, project management, and whose members are committed to sharing their experiences.

**Activity dates and venue:**

*15 August 2013 - 15 August 2014, in Hungary.*



Project carried out by the Foundation for Democratic Youth, Hungary.

# Youth policy – interim review



© Photo: Dominik Kowalski

*‘Thanks to this workshop, my organisation began a public consultancy with young people. We didn’t only learn new things in theory, but were also able to gain practical experience.’*

A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Poland.



© Photo: Dominik Kowalski

The project took place between January 2013 and March 2014, in Gdańsk, Poland. The 34 direct participants in the project group were students in social sciences, though many more took part in activities developed in the context of the project (workshops, conferences, etc.).

The main objective of the project was to raise awareness on youth policies and their contribution to the development and quality of life young people have, a policy topic insufficiently studied by university and high school students.

Goals were realised through workshops, meetings, a «world cafe», a conference, a publication and the preparation of a website dedicated to youth policies. One of the outputs of the project was the publication, with the status of a scientific publication, of a 200 page book on the European Union youth policy. It is available in digital and paper versions in dozens of libraries throughout the country. The publication was jointly created by the faculty and its students, and participants in the project.

Participants notably prepared a public consultation in cooperation with actors of the youth policy field and with local authorities. The conclusions of the consultation carried out were displayed in exhibitions during youth fairs. Material can be used by everyone interested in the subject of youth policy.

Outcomes of the project are used by the University of Gdansk. At the end of the project, additional activities were launched (such as workshops on youth policy during the European Union Days). During the project, the participants, who often worked in scientific clubs and youth councils, acquired knowledge and skills and gained information that could be used in their own activities and projects, also ensuring sustainability of the project in its ambition to make youth work more visible.

#### Activity dates and venue:

1 January 2013 - 31 March 2014, in Gdańsk, Poland.



Project carried out by Stowarzyszenie Kreatywnej Edukacji z Gdańska (Creative Education Association from Gdansk), Poland.

# Include to grow



*'The project had a major impact on me: it was the first time I had worked so closely with a National Youth Council and in such a big event. I particularly liked playing a role in this project and felt that I have worked for and contributed to the cause of tolerance and mutual understanding.'*

## A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Portugal.



This project, an initiative in the framework of the Structured Dialogue with young people, was dedicated to «Social Inclusion of Young People» and included different activities held between May and December 2013, in Oporto, Estarreja, Cascais and Lisbon, Portugal.

The 13th National Youth Meeting gathered 300 young people from different geographical, social and economic backgrounds, ranging from 15 to 30 years of age. Together with decision-makers, youth experts and youth workers, participants took part in a debate on the social inclusion of young people, and analysed recommendations and actions that could contribute to solving the problems young people are facing. Particular attention was given to the sub-themes of the EU Trio Presidency of Ireland, Lithuania and Greece, namely: youth work quality and its role in the social inclusion of young people; the situation of young people not in employment, education or training, called NEETs, and youth entrepreneurship, as ways to combat exclusion.

As unemployment is an important issue to young people and contributes to their social exclusion, a two-day seminar was dedicated to it, addressing the problem mainly in southern European countries. Several working groups took place, facilitated by a pool of trainers

using non-formal education methodologies. As a result of the seminar, recommendations were made in order to promote social inclusion through youth employment.

The seminar on social inclusion brought together national and regional authorities, as well as experts in the field of youth, employment, education and social inclusion. Online questionnaires were launched and National Working Group meetings took place, contributing to the debate at the EU Youth Conferences and to decision-making in the European Union.

A capacity-building event on social entrepreneurship was an opportunity for young people to get in touch with social entrepreneurs and decision-makers. It was also an opportunity to develop networking and gain new skills on how to develop social projects, and to empower member organisations and other youth associations in the development of projects and initiatives in social entrepreneurship.

### Activity dates and venue:

*1 May 2013 - 31 December 2013,  
in Oporto, Estarreja, Cascais and Lisbon,  
Portugal.*



Project carried out by the Portuguese National Youth Council, Portugal, in partnership with the National Working Group of the Structured Dialogue, Portugal; the Oporto Municipality, Portugal; the Municipality of Cascais, Portugal; the Municipality of Estarreja, Portugal and the Youth Foundation, Portugal.

# European Alcohol Policy Youth Conference



*'I learnt many things about the basic parameters of alcohol consumption. Furthermore, through the discussion I learnt about the basic problems facing each country on alcoholism and the impact it has on daily lives, but also some suggestions how these problems can be addressed.'*

A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Slovenia.



The European Alcohol Youth Conference was held in November 2012 in Bled, Slovenia, and was attended by over 80 participants aged 15 to 30 years from almost all EU countries, Norway and Turkey.

The main aims of the Conference were to motivate young people new to the topic to start working on the field of prevention and reduction of harm caused by alcohol, and to empower young people with different skills in the field of research, advocacy, lobbying, evaluation and project development.

The participants of the conference chose between parallel workshops with different difficulties on the following topics: youth research, advocacy and lobbying and project development. The workshops were led jointly by external experts and experienced youth workers. The aim was to inform young people how each of those fields can help preventing and reducing alcohol related harm.

In addition, two plenary sessions took place with decision makers and experts on the topic of alcohol from a wide range of institutions

both in Slovenia and across Europe. A social programme promoted networking among the organisations.

During the conference, the participants had the opportunity to gain a lot of new knowledge on the extent of the problem in Europe. As a result of the conference, the «Bled Youth Paper on Alcohol» was produced. This publication outlined suggestions for action that different types of youth organisations and groups of young people could undertake in order to improve the situation regarding alcohol in Europe.

Organising this event was a first step in mobilising youth across Europe to work in the field of alcohol harm prevention and reduction. Since then, Regional European Alcohol Policy Youth Conferences took place in Chisinau (Moldova) and in Bursa (Turkey), and there are plans to continue the organisation of such awareness raising conferences in 2015 and beyond.

**Activity dates and venue:**

8 - 14 November 2013,  
in Bled and Ljubljana, Slovenia.



Project carried out by Youth Association No Excuse Slovenia, Slovenia, in partnership with United Games of Nations, Austria; European Alcohol Policy Alliance, Belgium; Association of Medical Students in Bulgaria, Bulgaria; Youth for Exchange and Understanding, Cyprus; United Games of Nations, the Czech Republic; Transfer e.V., Germany; Graenseforeningen, Denmark; NGO Viimsi Youth Council, Estonia; Spanish Federation of Medical Students' Association for International Cooperation, Spain; Saga Finland rf, Finland; French IFMSA, France; Institute of Alcohol Studies, the United Kingdom; IFMSA Greece, Greece; Youth Association "Kocka", Croatia; Hello Europa, Hungary; National Youth Council Ireland, Ireland; Italian Youth Forum, Italy; Lithuanian medical students' association, Lithuania; Klubsmaja – Youth for United Europe, Latvia; National Youth Council of Malta, Malta; Dutch Institute for Alcohol Policy, the Netherlands; IOGT Tippetue, Norway; EMSA Warsaw, Poland; AEFML – EMSA Lisbon, Portugal; Romanian Federation of Medical Students Associations, Romania; HassleHus Youth Club, Sweden; Slovak MSIC, Slovakia and Civil Dialogue Association, Turkey.

## Involving children and young people in planning transport and communication



*'First and foremost, we learnt a lot about how the political system in Norway works. We gained a lot of knowledge regarding how to approach politicians when it comes to problems concerning young people and how we could facilitate cooperation.'*

A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Norway.



The project took place between May and October 2013, in Trondheim, Norway, with the participation of 31 young people, aged 15 to 25. The goal of this project was to initiate a dialogue in the transport planning department of Middle Norway, between regional and national authorities, transport planners and regional youth councils. The aim of the project was to change the national guidelines for transport planning, so that young people would have an influence over these processes.

The activity started with a dialogue conference about transport planning, with presentations from transport planners and the youth country councils. Participants then discussed, in groups, different methods to increase youth and children's influence over these planning processes. National policy-makers, youth representatives, the media and officials were invited to discuss ideas to reach this objective. The result was that two young representatives from each youth

council went to Oslo to deliver results of the dialogue conference to members of the Parliament from the local counties concerned. The project received a lot of attention both from the media and national policy-makers.

After the project ended, the Parliament suggested legislation on entities for youth participation. It was also noticed that more officials started to involve young people when carrying out planning activities. The young participants learnt a lot about the processes involved in the political system in Norway, and how to influence politics, both regionally and nationally. Experienced politicians discovered that it is wise to involve youth in transport-planning processes and learnt that young people want to be involved in work that can lead to massive changes in their communities.

### Activity dates and venue:

24 May 2013 in Trondheim and  
17 October 2013 in Oslo, Norway.



Project carried out by Møre and Romsdal Regional Youth Council, Norway.

# 3 C: make a Choice to take a Chance to make a Change!



*'This project helped us become stronger and better in what we do. We really had an opportunity to voice and pass on our opinions.'*

**A Youth Initiative project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in the Flemish-speaking community of Belgium.**



The goals of this project, held between August 2013 and March 2014, in Antwerp, Brussels, Diest, Halle and Leuven, Belgium, were to raise young people's awareness and support them in making conscious choices concerning the situation and the outlook of future generations. The project also encouraged peers to take a stand and support them in their initiatives, as well as reaching policy makers and relevant stakeholders in civil society and the press, ensuring they listened to the opinions of young people.

500 students in Belgium had the opportunity to discuss with peers from Peru and Indonesia during five interactive youth debating events, on how young people can change the world. They are at a moment in their lives where they have to make choices for the future, not only a better future for themselves, but also for others worldwide, for the planet and for the upcoming generations.

«Can we choose whatever we want? Can we choose our passions and dreams? Or do we have to listen to what society demands? How do we deal with young people who don't have the opportunities to choose?» were some of the questions which triggered their reflections. The outcomes of the sessions were disseminated in youth magazines and a movie, as well as delivered to relevant political, social and cultural players.

The general outcome of these events shows that young people know that they are not living on an island, that their lives are connected and that their choices impact the lives of those on the other side of the planet.

**Activity dates and venue:**

*1 August 2013 - 1 March 2014, in Antwerp, Brussels, Diest, Halle and Leuven, Belgium.*



Project carried out by Zuiddag vzw, Belgium.

# Gentle2 - Special Education Center



*'Working with people with disabilities as a volunteer enriched me as a human being. The project has made me more sensitive to people's needs and weaknesses.'*

**A European Voluntary Service project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Greece.**



Between September 2013 and June 2014, two volunteers from Poland and from Spain actively contributed to activities of the Special Education Centre, in Livadeia, Greece, which hosts mentally handicapped persons. This project, with a strong social dimension, helped the volunteers to better understand those with special needs and exchange knowledge and techniques using handicrafts, painting, music, pottery, constructions, energising games, table games, gardening, physical education, and leisure time entertainment.

The two volunteers were also involved in setting-up a network of voluntary organisations working with similarly disadvantaged youth in the framework of European and worldwide programmes. They also contributed to information

and dissemination activities, such as the creation of a webpage with articles on voluntary activities, using digital technologies and video making, designing promotion materials, and organisation of events where they could convey their own experiences.

This project proved to be very enriching for the volunteers, who acquired skills on how to apply practical methodologies adapted to special target groups, and learnt how to cope with their particular needs. They increased their personal communication skills by living in a foreign country and improved their professional skills in the field of social care.

**Activity dates and venue:**

*3 September 2013 - 3 June 2014, in Livadeia, Greece.*



Project carried out by Holy Metropolis of Thiva and Levadeia, Greece, in partnership with Fundación Canónica Autónoma Ede, Spain and Stowarzyszenie Polska Misja Medyczna, Poland.

# Get Involved in Local Democracy (G.I.L.D.)



*'The European Voluntary Service is an experience I recommend to everyone. It is a possibility to meet new cultures, countries, traditions and make new friends. It is also an opportunity to broaden your horizons and improve in so many ways.'*

**A European Voluntary Service project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Croatia.**



Six volunteers from Italy, Macedonia, Poland and Spain, spent 11 months in Brtonigla and Buje, Croatia, in 2012/2013. The project had the ambition of developing and extending previously undertaken activities to promote mobility and multiculturalism amongst local young people. The volunteers were involved in activities run by the Local Democracy Agency and worked closely with local institutions, such as the Municipality, the Tourist Office, the Italian Community and a nursery.

The goals of these activities were to increase the understanding of young Istrians on the nature, role and functions of the European Union in the region, especially in the context of the accession of Croatia to the EU, which occurred during the period of the European Voluntary Service, and to inform them about the challenges and advantages of becoming European citizens. Dedicated promotional materials and a radio programme gave information about European citizenship, the EVS and the volunteers' countries and cultures.

The six volunteers took part in the social life of the community by attending and contributing to international evenings, outdoor activities with youth, local festivals and participation in rural development. They were encouraged to share their experiences and culture by holding meetings and events focused on their cultures, hobbies and interests. All these actions had a significant impact and enriched the local population with knowledge of the diversity of European cultures, languages and traditions.

The volunteers had the opportunity to work in the field they were most interested in; tasks were defined in advance and matched with each profile. This project provided the volunteers with a chance to improve their entrepreneurial skills and competences, to take part into the global workplace, to participate in society and to get involved with local democracy.

**Activity dates and venue:**

*1 September 2012 - 31 July 2013, in Brtonigla and Buje, Croatia.*



Project carried out by Local Democracy Agency Brtonigla-Verteneglio, Croatia, in partnership with AIPC Pandora, Spain; Giovani senza frontiere, Italy; Youth Development and Integration Association, Poland; and Mladiinfo – FEJSK, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

# Active Unit – Social Changes



*'I realised the importance of taking an active role in the life of my community. Participating in many team-building activities, team sports and city games gave me the chance to work together with others, share my ideas and thoughts, and develop mutual understanding.'*

## A Youth Exchange project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Cyprus.



The youth exchange that took place in Larnaca, Cyprus, brought 42 young adults from Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Greece, Croatia, Italy, Hungary and Slovenia together for a week in September, 2013.

The project was related to the priority of "Promoting healthy lifestyles through physical activities including sport", an important educational contribution to young people's personal development also providing opportunities for enjoyment, for learning new motor skills and cooperating with others. The key of the project was to highlight the importance health and physical activities have in the development of healthy European citizens, physically active in sports that develop teamwork and trust.

The project included team building, outdoor activities and a flash mob to create a strong interaction between those

who took part in the exchange, to break stereotypes and to endow youth with increased confidence, knowledge and greater awareness of the importance of their active participation in civil society. Intercultural evenings gave participants the chance to share their traditions, songs, dances and national food.

The project enhanced the diversity of ideas, ethical awareness, opinions and cultural diversity of participants in a unique framework of experience and activities. Participants learned about each other's culture, acquiring new experiences and knowledge. At the end of the week, a flash mob action in Larnaca gave them the opportunity to share the result with local inhabitants.

**Activity dates and venue:**  
1 - 8 September 2013,  
in Larnaca, Cyprus



Project carried out by 123 Scouts of Lysis, Cyprus, in partnership with Evropské centrum mládeže Břeclav/European Youth Centre Břeclav o.s., the Czech Republic; Developmental Centre of Thessaly, Greece; Rapplektion, Croatia; Associazione Studenti per la Città, Italy; Hungarian Scout Association, Hungary and Povod, Institution for culture and development of the international relations in culture, Slovenia.

# Helping Services through Leisure Education



*'I feel I have grown through the experience because it was really complete and challenging. I had the opportunity to be independent in all aspects of my life, face obstacles and be assertive in my work. My twelve months was a "once-in-a-lifetime" experience.'*

**A European Voluntary Service project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Malta.**



Five European Voluntary Service (EVS) volunteers from Germany, Ireland, Italy and Poland spent twelve months in Marsascala and Bulebel, Malta in 2012/2013. The main objectives of the project related to participation of young people, inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities and promotion of inclusion of young people with a disability, using sport as a tool to promote active citizenship, social inclusion as well as a healthy lifestyle. These young volunteers were involved in providing assistance within the Disability Services of the hosting organisation, including services that were educational, therapeutic and recreational; these services were provided to persons with physical or intellectual disabilities.

Activities carried out by participants included multi-sensory therapy, swimming sessions, human-animal interaction therapy and therapeutic horse riding, arts and crafts and pottery sessions, animal park visits, as well as social interaction activities. The project also involved the provision of assistance with fundraising events.

Volunteers worked together with the professionals running the different services. They were regularly empowered to do specific

tasks requiring the implementation of active decision-making skills, discussion skills, and working in a team, with a specialist supervising the overall running of the task. The participants were encouraged to share their ideas and provide regular feedback to the responsible workers and management, contributing to the improvement of services and best use of resources.

Through this project, volunteers had many opportunities to grow and develop new skills, gaining experience and making them more employable, more active in acquiring social and civic competences and fostering awareness of different cultures, which will in turn lead them to better contribute to their local communities. They developed an interest in pursuing further studies or seeking employment in the fields of social care and disabilities. The project evaluation was highly positive, all participants agreeing their work contributed to improving services offered to the disadvantaged target group with a direct personal impact.

**Activity dates and venue(s):**  
1 May 2012 - 31 December 2013,  
in Marsascala and Bulebel, Malta.



Project carried out by Inspire, Malta, in partnership with VIA e.V. Lüneburg, Germany; Agape Adventures – SAI, Ireland; Xena centro scambi e dinamiche interculturali, Italy and Fundacja Dla Wolności, Poland.

# We are changing ... our neighbourhood!



*'By participating in this project, I have increased my personal skills in public speaking, self-confidence and belief that change is possible. At the end of the project I was able to stand up for my opinion.'*

## A Youth Democracy project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in the Netherlands.



Thirty young people from Amsterdam South and Amsterdam Southwest, Netherlands, and fifty young people from Antwerp and Brussels, Belgium, enthusiastically participated in this initiative from August 2012 to December 2013. The project aimed at enabling young people to carry out changes in their own neighbourhoods resulting in long term reduction of discrimination. The participants were empowered by their own youth centres to identify a specific obstacle, debate it and select a precise aspect they could change.

The youth in Amsterdam South, focused on the public square and advocated for a renovation of their square. They wanted to show a positive side of the young people in the neighbourhood by getting a new and safe square. The youth in Amsterdam South West selected a similar project, but instead of renovating their square, they built a brand new football corner. In Antwerp, they focused on restoring the relationship between young people and the police. And in Brussels, the young people focused on restoring the relationship with teachers and school employees. They pointed out that discrimination in the school was unacceptable and a violation of their rights.

All neighbourhoods went through similar processes: group meetings, analysis of the subject, defining an explicit subject to change, developing an action plan, debating with relevant authorities and three exchange weekends with peers from the other participating cities.

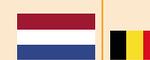
The results in all neighbourhoods exceeded expectations. In Amsterdam, the two neighbourhoods successfully focused on the improvement of the public square to make their areas more attractive and got rid of negative images from the past. In Amsterdam South, tutors coached young people when they were invited by a Member of Parliament and by the local municipality to debate the youth development in the neighbourhood. In Amsterdam Southwest, a group of young people successfully lobbied for the renovation of the square in the municipality.

In Antwerp, the young people organised their own debates with the police and other stakeholders in the fields of youth and security. They managed to discuss problems about ethnic profiling, the lack of transparent reporting mechanisms and the reasons behind stop-and-search actions. A local network of stakeholders who guided this course of action was set up to pursue the process.

In Brussels, the participants organised two debates in the school with teachers and school employees, clearly expressing their ideas on how to successfully resolve discrimination in schools. The participants were also invited to speak to members of the Regional Parliament of Brussels about this subject, effectively managing to place the issue of school discrimination on their agenda.

### Activity dates and venue:

1 August 2012 - 31 December 2013, in Amsterdam, Den Bosch and Gouda, the Netherlands, in association with Antwerp and Brussels, Belgium.



Project carried out by International Debate Education Association, the Netherlands, in partnership with D'Broej vzw, Belgium; KRAS Jeugdwerk vzw, Belgium and Combiwel ondernemend Welzijn BV, the Netherlands

# Rock in Iasi



*'We worked on different projects, created videos, promotional materials, communication strategies and events. The aim was to mix our creativity and personal initiatives. An EVS experience means to change perspective, doing your best, trying and growing.'*

## A European Voluntary Service project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Romania.



This European Voluntary Service (EVS) project involved 12 volunteers from Spain, Italy and Portugal who worked together for three months starting in 2013 for the organisation and promotion of the 9th edition of the Rock'n'Iasi Festival, Romania. The volunteers were interested in art in general and music in particular, and were motivated to take part in an artistic event.

The main goal of the project was to increase awareness of young Europeans on the advantages of volunteer work for personal and professional development. The project provided participants with an intercultural learning experience to help them understand their role in society and how they could contribute, while at the same time developing their musical education and competences required for a better integration into the labour market.

With the support of mentors and in cooperation with Romanian volunteers, the twelve young participants took part in the various activities linked to managing the event, notably the design and implementation of the social media strategy of the festival and the production of videos and other materials. They had the opportunity to improve their musical abilities by practicing instruments; being involved in a music festival also helped them to better

understand how the world of music functions.

The volunteers participated in other local festivals, notably an event including workshops for local artists, educative activities and promotion of sport, and in the most important student festival in Romania where they interacted with locals and other foreigners. In addition, they were involved in activities related to the promotion of volunteering, including movie production, managing a Facebook page and writing promotional material targeting the festival's audience.

The knowledge and skills acquired, both in organising events and in promoting volunteering in general, stemmed from a direct experience of living as a volunteer in a European context. The volunteers benefited from the experience of this project when taking part in the organisation of festivals in their own cities upon their return. This project also benefited some 1,500 Romanians participating in the three-day Festival, who were informed about local, national and international volunteering opportunities and the advantages of getting involved.

### Activity dates and venue:

*1 August 2013 - 1 February 2014,  
in Iasi, Romania.*



Project carried out by Asociatia P.O.D., Romania, in partnership with Asociacion Cazalla Intercultural, Spain; Scambieuropei, Italy and Anime - Projecto de Animação e Formação, Portugal.

# Together against cyberbullying



*'We were very pleased with the inspiring workshops and learnt new practical information about cyberbullying, applicable in real life situations. This project led to further discussions and to many other questions, but it was already a big help raising awareness about the topic.'*

## A Youth Initiative project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Slovakia.



This youth initiative was organised by an informal group of seven young people who worked together for eight months in 2013/2014 in the regions of Trenčín and Banská Bystrica, Slovakia. The main goal was to bring the topic of cyberbullying to schools in order to raise awareness about this issue, create possibilities for reflection and discussion amongst students and provide information and counselling to young people on how to deal with the problem. Students should be equipped with sufficient knowledge in order to identify cyberbullying in the virtual world and prevent its further spread, as well as being able to adapt their own virtual behaviour to minimise this risk.

The young people developed a model workshop involving external experts such as psychologists, policemen, school pedagogical experts and persons experiencing cyberbullying and engaged in discussions and reflections with the students. Such workshops were put into practice in ten schools across both regions. The students learnt not only about the various forms of cyberbullying, but also about its consequences, including legal ones. The workshops were interactive and used non-

formal learning methods.

Information material was created and distributed in the schools as supporting documents for teachers when informing the students about the topic. In addition, a web portal was launched which not only informs young people about the topic, but also offers the possibility to get in touch with an expert, should they be a cyberbullying victim.

The project resulted in the personal development of the members of the informal group of young people and also improved the knowledge of students and teachers about cyberbullying. The model workshop using the non-formal learning methods was inspiring and successful and can be re-used in future initiatives for spreading information about this theme and engaging with young people in more formal environments.

### Activity dates and venue:

*1 June 2013 - 31 January 2014,  
in Trenčín and Banská Bystrica region,  
Slovakia.*



Project carried out by DAIOP, neformálna skupina, Slovakia.

# Young life and experience of a lifetime



*'The European Voluntary Service experience practically changed my life. I became much more self-confident as I noticed during my stay that I survive abroad without any problems and I would like to continue my life in a foreign country.'*

## A European Voluntary Service project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Finland.



A young European Voluntary Service volunteer from Rautjärvi, a small Finnish community close to the Finnish-Russian border, worked during 2013 for five months in Proyecto Kieu, a local art based youth organisation in the village of Numancia de la Sagra (Toledo), Spain. The main goal of the project was to raise awareness of European reality and global issues within the Spanish community with whom the volunteer was working, while at the same time sharing this experience with Finnish youngsters via the blog the volunteer was writing and via articles in his local newspaper in Rautjärvi.

His main tasks included helping the hosting organisation in office work and assisting the local youth/internet centre, where he organised two IT courses which were very popular and taught English to young people. The European Service Volunteer also helped in all kind of activities in the youth department and local associations: the village festival, cultural week, multinational youth exchange, theatre play, football tournament, different events for children, etc.

Social and civil competences were among the main aspects of the project: the volunteer

«brought the world home» for the people in this Spanish community, as well as a feeling of being part of the same European Union; this increased a sense of self-esteem among the young people and neighbours, given that the young volunteer came from such a far away country all the way to Numancia. Young people in Rautjärvi also became aware of many possibilities and options they have.

One of the noticeable outcomes of the project was that the volunteer managed to create a strong partnership between the sending and receiving organisations and municipalities: after his time as a volunteer, two youth exchanges were organised and new volunteers were exchanged. The Spanish host also managed to send more volunteers to other countries, as a likely consequence of an increased interest in transnational volunteering following the hosting of a Finnish young adult. Moreover, the volunteer learned important social skills himself, as he had to be in social contact with scores of different people each day using a foreign language.

### Activity dates and venue:

*1 August - 31 December 2013,  
in Numancia de la Sagra, Spain.*



Project carried out by Rautjärven kunta, Finland, in partnership with Proyecto Kieu, Spain.

# Hackney – Botkyrka exchange



*‘The experience of the exchange made me feel more competent to meet new people from different backgrounds, not only to access opportunities in the world around me but also to participate and contribute to my own local community.’*

**A Youth Exchange project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Sweden.**



This youth exchange took place in Botkyrka, Sweden, during one week in August 2013, involving 30 young people with fewer opportunities and group leaders from Sweden and United Kingdom. The purpose of the project was to function as a starting point for, and an incentive to, community development with young people’s perspectives in both areas, Hackney in London and Hallunda-Norsborg in Botkyrka.

Young people initiated conversations about their local environment and expressed their concerns about safety in their local areas. Workshops were organised around themes of feeling safe and staying safe and supported young people to formulate their opinions and ideas of problem solving. The process of non-formal learning happened in interactions and discussions throughout the whole project, both during planned workshops and social activities.

The participants wanted to learn and draw upon the experiences gained through this exchange to positively influence their own local youth club and their local area. These young people came from multi-cultural areas; most of them are descendants of immigrants. Both areas are suffering from financial deprivation in comparison with the general society and have challenges regarding social inclusion and other common urban problems as a result of poverty and segregation. Both communities suffer from violent crime which is reaching down in age. There is also, to some extent, hostility and a lack of trust towards authorities. The project was therefore one way to find better ways of involving young people in preventative measures.

The project contributed to the young people’s social and personal development and provided them with opportunities they would not be experiencing otherwise. It made it possible for young people to broaden their horizons by discussing and experiencing differences and common aspects of their everyday life and leisure with a result in peer learning and enjoying an exchange of ideas and multiple cross-cultural experiences. The activities provided an opportunity for young people to express their ideas and have them listened to by professionals and politicians in a strengthened democratic process in the local areas.

**Activity dates and venue:**  
12 - 19 August 2013, in Botkyrka, Sweden.



Project carried out by the municipality of Botkyrka, Sweden, in partnership with London Borough of Hackney, children and young people services directorate, the United Kingdom.

# Green Jobs for a Green Europe



*'The project changed my point of view on many things. I realised how important it is to take care of our environment. I feel now that I can do something personally for this. And I am motivated to do it.'*

**A Youth Exchange project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in the United Kingdom.**



This youth exchange, organised in the United Kingdom, brought together 40 young people in Bristol during one week in September 2013. The young people were from the Czech Republic, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia and United Kingdom. The main goal of the project was to give young people the skills and courage to respond to youth unemployment by opening their own businesses, and at the same time demonstrating the role of young people in tackling the problem of climate change and the transformation of traditional economies in Europe into greener and more sustainable economies.

Young people carried out various activities during the project, which they initiated themselves and which used mainly "learning by doing" and interactive methods. Informative activities such as presentations and discussions were carried out throughout the project, covering topics such as European citizenship, rights and duties of citizens, actions needed when tackling climate change as well as on the functioning of traditional economies and the problems arising from these methods.

Participants also prepared presentations on unemployment in their own countries. Young people in groups had to come up with their own green business ideas and carried out their own research with support from coaches.

They developed these into details, analysed them, prepared a list of resources and drew up a budget. They presented their ideas to the others and received feedback. A series of workshops dealing with entrepreneurship, merging lifestyle and career goals, green job sectors and the structure of the traditional economy, helped them in their reflections.

The project supported entrepreneurship and encouraged creativity of young people by real life examples of how to turn their ideas into action. It showed them how to build their careers based on their green interests, hobbies and lifestyles as well as how to find or create jobs for themselves.

The project also promoted young people's active citizenship and their European citizenship in particular by discussing their duties: the role of young people in tackling the problem of climate change and the transformation of traditional economies in Europe into greener and more sustainable alternatives. It looked at their rights coming from European citizenship: their right to free movement and work abroad and their social and employment rights.

**Activity dates and venue:**  
9 - 15 September 2013,  
in Bristol, the United Kingdom.



Project carried out by Together England, the United Kingdom, in partnership with Together Czech Republic, the Czech Republic; Together Italy, Italy; Europejskie Forum Młodzieży, Poland; Connect, Slovenia and Ad hoc, Slovakia.

# Why a Youth Council?



*'I learned that with the right partner, the right group and motivation, that anything is possible. I also will never forget the feeling of representing my organisation and country and speaking on our behalf in an international conference with politicians and young people.'*

## A Youth Exchange project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Iceland.



During August 2013, this project brought together 30 young people for eight days on a youth exchange in Seltjarnarnes, a small city in Iceland. The idea of the project came from a previous initiative between the two partners where the Youth Councils of Lund, Sweden, and Seltjarnarnes met for the first time.

The partners wanted to discuss what youth councils are, why people take part and why they are important. The groups also wanted to spread the word on how they function because the two councils operate with direct democracy instead of representative democracy, as do many other councils.

One of the key activities of the project was the implementation of video documenting. The Icelandic group had much experience in video making and the Swedish group wanted to learn how to use it in their work. The groups had a film director to teach the youngsters the basics of making a documentary and experienced editors to teach the basics of film editing. A conference included every youth council from Iceland, directors of municipal and national youth work and politicians, to talk about youth councils and the importance of youth

participation in society. Over 100 people came to listen to lectures from both councils and took part in mixed discussion groups.

Participants developed new personal competences, namely in digital and communication skills and in financial project management. Throughout the action, both youth councils learnt new tools and work methodologies which they implement on a regular basis; they are now getting regular visits from youth councils or travel to share their way of working to other councils. After the project, the Seltjarnarnes youth council received a local administration award from the Icelandic government for their approach. Policy makers in the municipalities became more aware of the potential work done by youth councils.

The visibility of the project impacted on the partner organisations of the project, with more young people joining youth councils and older members starting to participate again in council activities.

### Activity dates and venue:

11 - 18 August 2013,  
in Seltjarnarnes, Iceland.



Project carried out by Municipality Youth Councils of Seltjarnarnes, Iceland, in partnership with Municipality Youth Councils of Lund, Sweden.

# Voices without limits



*'The multi-cultural aspect and learning about life and politics in another country was interesting. It was an experience I would really like to repeat!'*

**A Youth Exchange project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Liechtenstein.**



Twenty-four participants from Ireland and Liechtenstein spent eight days together in August 2012 on a youth exchange in Schellenberg, Liechtenstein. The main objective of the project was to support youth participation in both local communities through various activities carried out by the participants.

In preparation of the project the partners organised a feasibility visit in Liechtenstein in September 2011. During this meeting, they discussed the aims and goals of their cooperation and the detailed format of the project. Both groups made efforts to ensure active youth participation by encouraging the young adults to become committed in decision-making processes and entrusting them with dedicated responsibilities for the project's governance.

Participants learned about different forms

of youth participation models in both countries and defined possibilities for future changes which could improve youth participation in their societies. The young people took part in creative workshops for the production of short films about youth participation. They discovered the political structures from both countries through visits to different political bodies and discussions with decision-makers and became familiar with both cultures. The project made it possible to emphasise the importance of youth participation in wider circles, through coverage of the ideas articulated in the various activities of the exchange extensively covered by the press and partner's presentations in public events.

**Activity dates and venue:**  
 5 - 12 August 2012,  
 in Schellenberg, Liechtenstein and Galway, Ireland.



Project carried out by Europäische Jugendbegleiter Liechtenstein, Liechtenstein, in partnership with Youth Work Galway, Ireland.

# Inclusive



*‘Through working and living with other volunteers, I gained intercultural skills, tolerance, patience, and a perspective on European topics that I never could have learnt in my home country.’*

## A Voluntary Service project funded by the Turkish Erasmus+ National Agency in the field of youth.



A Lithuanian and a Spanish volunteer are spending the academic 2014/2015 year in a European Voluntary Service (EVS) project which is taking place in Adana, Turkey, where the Eastern culture meets the Western culture and where people live together regardless of their differences and backgrounds. The project aims to improve the quality of life of disadvantaged people and help their integration into society.

Two different centres are involved in this project. In the Education and Rehabilitation Centre for autistic children where they have musical and sporting activities, volunteers assist the centre's professionals in their social work, developmental classes, and in improving the daily life and social skills of the children. In the second centre supporting and empowering the local deaf community with different occupational education programmes, the volunteers support the courses given, which cover IT skills, web design, cooking, waiter/waitress training, international and American sign languages, and yoga, as well as helping to organise a summer camp. The volunteers began the EVS with an immersion program in Turkish Sign Language enabling them to more easily adjust to the centres and to their environment.

Volunteer work is a meeting point where people from different languages, nationalities and backgrounds get together and focus on the needs of disadvantaged people. Volunteers work

closely with the local population as part of their project. By working together, the volunteers and the organisation alike have the opportunity to exchange cultural and linguistic experiences. The volunteers have the opportunity to develop innovative ideas while doing their voluntary service and are encouraged to take initiatives for their projects.

The main outcomes of the project, as well as the learning course of action and aptitudes developed by the participants, relate to the support for the children. The volunteers gained experience in working with disabled people and learnt about cultural differences and how to respect them; a former Spanish volunteer who came to Adana in March 2013 to volunteer in another organisation is now working with the Centre after finishing her EVS. She has widespread experience with autistic children and is well acquainted with their needs.

Further benefits relate to learning a different language, to working as a team and experiencing team spirit, taking responsibility and initiatives, as well as decision-making. The European Voluntary Service year clearly makes a contribution to the young people's education and significantly strengthens them in the process of adjusting to different situations and needs.

### Activity dates and venue:

1 October 2014 - 30 September 2015, in Adana, Turkey.



Project carried out by Anything for a smile Association, Turkey, in partnership with Asociación para la integración y Progreso de las Culturas Pandora, Spain and Socialinis veiksmas, Lithuania.

# Let me be one of you!



*'I acquired new competencies to explain my work and to draw evidence-based conclusions. Thanks to this project, I gained an ability to pursue and persist in the non-formal education of rural youth with fewer opportunities. I had really a lot of fun and unforgettable moments.'*

## A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Bulgaria.



The group of 35 youth workers and experts from different European countries, including Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania, who met over nine days in July 2013 in Varna, Bulgaria, and aimed at contributing to the development of a more inclusive and equitable rural society.

The training and networking of youth workers increased their capacity and efforts to support the social inclusion and employability of young people with communication disorders in the rural areas of Eastern Europe. The course was conducted by an international team of trainers using various methods of non-formal education such as presentations, working groups, creative workshops, field visits and group discussions. The experts increased the participants' awareness about the essence and applicability of the latest methods for working with young people with communication disorders.

The working methodology followed the «See – Judge – Act» approach, allowing

participants to analyse young people's difficulties and encourage them to take concrete actions at local and national levels. Throughout the training, participants developed new competencies in cooperation for innovation and best practices in the field. They exchanged ideas and experiences and acquired practical skills to assist youth overcoming the low self-esteem and the social isolation caused by speech and language disarray.

The knowledge acquired was used to encourage active youth involvement in social processes and in the labour market, the participants applying the new knowledge in their everyday work with young people with communication disorders. As a result, various follow-up activities took place in the countries concerned, such as seminars, workshops, round tables and publications by partner organisations committed to helping young people with similar difficulties.

**Activity dates and venue:**  
12 - 21 July 2013, in Varna, Bulgaria.



Project carried out by Youth movement for development of the rural areas in Bulgaria, Bulgaria, in partnership with Estonian Logopedists' Union, Estonia; University of Latvia, Faculty of Education, Psychology and Art, Latvia; Speech-Language Therapy/Support Centre from Lithuania, Lithuania; Education and development, Poland and Association of Specialists in Speech and Language Therapy from Romania, Romania.

## Response to the crisis: political changes and social justice in Europe



*'I learnt about the value of personal storytelling. In the past, I hadn't treated personal stories as valuable or relevant, I always thought they were too biased to show the real history. What I take away from this programme is a lot of knowledge about democracy in other countries; how to handle difficult situations; how to be strongly open-minded.'*

**A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Germany.**



During the training and networking project for youth workers, 28 participants worked with migrants, activists in cross-community work, members of students' interest representations and persons involved in human rights education from four different countries for 12 days in August 2013 in Bad Bevensen and Berlin, Germany. The course members were from Germany, Lithuania, Poland and the United Kingdom. All participants were multipliers, disseminating the information and ideas received throughout the project to young people in the youth organisations they represented.

The goal was to overcome the identity crisis by developing a new sense of «who we are»; the crisis of democracy by defining what we need to make democracy work and actually implementing those rules; the crisis of migration by discovering new approaches on diversity, tolerance and integration; the crisis of the EU and its economy by assuming the roles of politicians.

The participants reacted on those who speak about a crisis of identity by sharing family biographies, telling the history of their countries, describing the traces of politics in their lives. They picked up on complaints stating that there is a crisis of democracy and set up their own rules for making it work

by looking at events where active citizens caused a change. They revealed the intentions of people who insist that migration causes a kind of crisis by meeting individuals who left their countries and started in a new place and by visiting successful projects of intercultural dialogue. They worked with persons who are dissatisfied with the crisis caused by banks and financial institutions: especially in this context, they asked who really is in charge of politics and discussed which problems require global solutions. A simulation game helped to understand global markets and global risks - and what all of this has to do with young people's role and responsibilities in society.

The participants benefitted in many ways from the course, learning to share their specific backgrounds in an international setting whilst developing their presentation and communication skills. The young people involved learnt about tolerance, appreciating diversity, interacting and finding means of cooperation, defining interests, working out compromises and how to use these transversal skills in civic engagement and job qualification upon return to their countries.

**Activity dates and venue:**

*31 July - 11 August 2013,  
in Bad Bevensen and Berlin, Germany.*



Project carried out by Gustav Stresemann Institute, Germany, in partnership with Vilnius University Students' Representation, Lithuania; Angelus Silesius House, Poland and Corrymeela Centre, the United Kingdom.

# Backpack Journalism for Youth Eco-Innovation



*‘Through the various activities I attended, I learnt complex approaches I will re-use, extending my pool of actions. I’ve learnt something new about myself, my personality, my possible future.’*

A project funded by the Spanish Erasmus+ National Agency in the field of youth.



The week-long training and networking of youth workers held in November, 2014 in Arriondas, Spain, was organised with the main objective of inspiring and motivating the use of Backpack Journalism (BPJ) in sustainable grassroots projects. With participants from Belgium, the Czech Republic, Italy, Hungary, the Netherlands, Poland and Spain, 28 participants with different backgrounds, including social studies, journalism, computer sciences, and architecture, were invited to join the course.

The aim of Backpack Journalism is to raise media literacy of young people through their active participation as non-professional journalists. The idea of the methodology is to go to a smaller place abroad with basic journalistic equipment and to explore the local environment; participants from one or more countries take all relevant equipment in their backpacks. The method can be used to motivate and train young people to become citizen journalists. It also includes a learning dimension, not only in the media literacy context but also in terms of intercultural learning, project management, team work and responsible citizenship. This provides young people with new work experience, real contact with organisations and develops their self-confidence, communication skills and entrepreneurial spirit.

During the training course, participants were involved in different indoor and outdoor activities. They carried out media workshops, sharing knowledge and best practices in the field, including expert advice on eco-innovation; creative workshops were organised on the system’s logic by exploring the connections between ecology, economy and society. The participants also attended a wide set of practical workshops on online platforms, IT, edition and other resources used in BPJ. They faced group challenges and created two media projects. The outdoor practical workshops allowed participants to get involved in the cyclic processes of an organic farm, performing actions to compensate the CO2 emitted and reduce our carbon footprint.

The participants successfully applied BPJ skills, creating media projects and sharing their views and resources through a blog. They became able to create new networks and job opportunities and turned out to be more aware of sustainability issues which were extensively addressed in their media projects. They developed a wide range of skills and competences by becoming journalists and living a multicultural experience that focused on the community and on cultural differences, while working together with creativity.

**Activity dates and venue:**

10 - 17 November 2014, in Arriondas, Spain.



Project carried out by Gaia y Sofia SLL, Spain, in partnership with TETRA, Project Deltae, Belgium; Petrklíč Help, the Czech Republic; Cooperativa Sociale Muovimente, Italy; Pandora Association, Hungary; Stichting Youth Exchange Service – YES!, the Netherlands and Fundacja Laja, Poland.

# Fast Forward



*'This week was an eye-opening experience, where I realised how easy and fun it is to work with different people when this takes place in a creative and inspiring environment. We should use more creative methods and techniques in the global educational system, as this is more useful and powerful than what we currently use.'*

**A project funded by the Irish Erasmus+ National Agency in the field of youth.**



This training and networking of youth workers held during one week in Cork, Ireland, in January 2015, was aimed at providing participants from five different countries with the information and strategies needed to create an international and intercultural learning space. The 29 participants on the course were from Ireland, Italy, Hungary, Malta and United Kingdom.

The project also aimed at exploring the connection between creativity and culture as well as at exploring innovative pedagogical approaches on the theme of nurturing useful values and competencies of responsible young change-makers.

The programme comprised various activities, notably experiential workshops, peer exchange, debates and a seminar with policy makers. It included the development of a workshop activity tool-kit and of a publication sharing the reflection and exploration of the themes. It built on the varied experience of the participants, working for example, in a youth art organisation targeting excluded youth from the Roma community, in an organisation focusing on environmental awareness

and inclusion using creativity as a tool for education and participation, in a theatre company running youth engagement projects with a focus on excluded young people and young people in prison.

Participants developed skills in a wide range of areas. Out of the Lifelong learning competences, the programme focused most on learning to learn; social and civic competencies; sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; cultural awareness and expression. The theme of competences was predominant in the programme as a key question concerned the important competences of resilient active global citizens. They also learnt very specific skills as hosting and facilitating conversations and explorations around themes as well as skills in dissemination and using results.

Recommendations to policy makers were made to improve the opportunities of young people to grow up as resilient global citizens, before being shared with those working in the youth sector.

**Activity dates and venue:**  
3 - 10 January 2015, in Cork, Ireland.



Project carried out by Youth Work Ireland Cork, Ireland, in partnership with Mallik Cultural Association, Italy; Colour-Space Association, Hungary; Malta Uesco Youth Association, Malta and Tandem Theatre, the United Kingdom.

# Advocacy - make yourself heard



*'The experience and knowledge I acquired had, and continues to have, a great impact on my professional and personal life. It made me more confident, experienced and reasonable in my work as a youth worker and volunteer.'*

A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Lithuania.



This one week training and networking of youth workers held in Daugirdiškės, Lithuania, in November 2013, was addressed to 27 participants from Bulgaria, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey. The purpose of this project was to empower and build the capacities of local youth NGOs in advocacy in order to effectively influence local and national policies.

This training was organised against the background of major youth problems such as unemployment, ineffective communication, poor involvement in decision making related to young people, lack of quality representation, as well as uncertainty of youth workers' occupation. It was based on a learning-by-doing approach, allowing participants not only to obtain more knowledge about advocacy, but also to be part of different advocacy campaigns based on their community needs from the beginning to the end.

To ensure efficient learning, individual and group learning styles were mixed and balanced methods used, including : national group work to develop advocacy campaigns and tools; small group work to develop recommendations, implement practical tasks;

practical work to produce campaign materials and create and promote online petitions; recordings to develop video campaigns; case studies to analyse best practices from participants and trainer experience; assessment of national youth policies, role plays, discussions and simulation games.

Youth NGO representatives improved skills and knowledge to actively engage in decision making processes at national and local levels but also developed an increased understanding with regards to national and European laws and policies concerning youth. Furthermore, the training helped to establish effective contacts and networks between youth NGOs at an international level.

The training was very successful, as after it was completed, some participants reached out to local and national authorities, became youth representatives in youth councils, took active roles in the Structured Dialogue process or became UN youth representatives.

**Activity dates and venue:**  
4 - 12 November 2013,  
in Daugirdiškės, Lithuania.



Project carried out by Institute for Policy Research and analysis, Lithuania, in partnership with National Youth Forum of Bulgaria, Bulgaria; Youth for exchange and understanding, Cyprus; Participation for All, Latvia; Polish Council of Youth Organisations, Poland; Romania Youth Council, Romania; Mladinski svet Slovenije, Slovenia; Youth Embassy of Slovak Republic, Slovakia and Euromed Centre, Turkey.

# Non-formal learning in youth work



*'You can raise issues and find answers and you ask yourself what you can learn from the approaches of the other country; then you can compare what you learnt with the approaches in your own country; you should transmit this important openness to young people.'*

**A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Luxembourg.**



The training and networking of youth workers that took place in Luxembourg in May, 2014 included five young people from Austria and Luxembourg. The primary goal of the project was to give organisations working in the same field the opportunity to learn about the practices of another organisation in a different country: youth workers from Austria spent ten intensive days in Luxembourg shadowing at the host organisation and in several youth centres. Both partners manage a multitude of youth establishments, especially youth centres, where non-formal education is the key competence.

The two partner organisations have similar tasks, target groups and apply comparable methods to implement their youth work. The main aim of the project was to discover innovative ways to work with disadvantaged and marginalised youth and poor young persons under the age of 18. The strategies of non-formal education used for those with a low education and the opportunities for their insertion on the job market were the main focuses of this project.

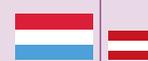
The programme of activities included participation in the open door day of the youth centre, a visit of the youth centres in Luxembourg City and in the countryside,

attending a meeting with the ministry in charge of Youth, the National Youth Service and Youth Information Centres, an introduction to the national legislation for youth matters, comparing it to the Austrian laws and discussions and participation in the preparations of various youth projects as the «Sports Night».

Participants were introduced to some important structures and public bodies and participated in meetings of an expert group responsible for the quality control of youth work. They were also introduced to the activities of the network of youth centres in the east of the country, joined round table discussions about the Youth Guaranty and the employability of young persons. At the end of the project, the host organised a final evaluation with the presence of the press, the Austrian Ambassador, the Ministry in charge of youth and representatives of several youth centres.

An effective network was created between the partners and the participants of the course and plans were made for future projects, namely another shadowing project which will be organised in Austria.

**Activity dates and venue:**  
5 - 16 May 2014, in Luxembourg, Luxembourg.



Project carried out by Entente des Gestionnaires des Maisons de Jeunes, Luxembourg, in partnership with Verein Wiener Jugendzentren, Austria.

# Local democracy in a changing world



*'We strongly believe that every young person should have some international experience. Also, it is our duty not to end the «mission» once the project ends, and that everyone should try, as much as possible, to use the information and skills obtained to positively impact the local society.'*

A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in Austria.



This one week training and networking of youth workers held in Vienna, Austria, in April 2013, brought together over 30 youth workers and youth leaders from the following countries: Austria, Germany, France, Italy, Poland, the United Kingdom, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Lebanon, Moldova, Palestine and the Russian Federation.

In light of recent events, the partners considered more important than ever to bring together young people from various nationalities, cultural backgrounds and religions to give them a space to meet and get to know each other. The main objective of the training programme was to contribute to the empowerment of communities, especially young people, by sharing and learning more about innovative tools in the context of democratic participation.

Participants shared their experiences and got to know new tools which offer the possibility for young people to directly participate in their respective community. They learnt from each other and exchanged ideas on how to improve the participation of young people in society: «What kind of tools supports the idea of an active citizen? How can people use the internet to support their interests and ideas? How to use social media to change the world we live in?» The participants learnt how to spread ideas and set

up campaigns and projects by using the internet and social media tools. They learnt how to make videos by using smart phones or tablets and were introduced to various concepts of crowd-funding.

A bar camp and a flash mob were organised. The flash mob was performed by a whole class of school children and other passers-by spontaneously joined in. The bar camp was open to the public and covered diverse topics like the Arab Spring, social media and democracy concepts, political activism and human rights.

The project promoted young people's active citizenship in general. It contributed to the development of support systems and new tools for youth activities. Participants from conflict zones were able to meet each other in a moment of peace and safety, to discuss, to debate and to develop ideas which they considered to be essential and important to support young people all over the world and their participation in democratic civil societies. Tolerance, solidarity and mutual understanding amongst the participants were key elements of this project and all participants welcomed the spirit of collaboration which this action has engendered.

#### Activity dates and venue:

21 - 27 April 2013, in Vienna, Austria.



Project carried out by Plattform Generation Europa, Austria, in partnership with Bund deutscher PfadfinderInnen e.V. Bundesverband, Germany; Art, culture, sport et civilisations, France; Associazione Italiana Cooperazione Europa Mondo, Italy; Fundacja Projekt: Polska, Poland; Asha Foundation, the United Kingdom; «Intelligent Citizen» enlightenment Center Public Union, Azerbaijan; Belarusian Youth Public Union «New faces», Belarus; Waseela for Training and Development, Egypt; World Vision International in Georgia, Georgia; Together to Palestine, Lebanon; Aer Liber, Moldova; Hayat Center for Civil Society Development, Palestine and Scientific Advisory Centre, Russian Federation.

## Fostering social inclusion and employability of institutionalised youth



*'This project made me aware, as a youth worker, how many cooperation opportunities we can have with institutions for young delinquents. I am now more open for public-private cooperation, both NGOs and institutions, in order to support young persons who have major needs to get back in the labour market.'*

A project funded by the Youth in Action National Agency in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.



Twenty-eight participants from Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Spain, Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, the United Kingdom, Turkey and Macedonia came together for a week in August, 2013 on a training and networking programme for youth workers in Mavrovo and Ohrid, Macedonia.

working with youth at risk: existing institutions, their educational programmes, challenges and opportunities to work with the youth sector. Moreover, the participants had the opportunity to visit local institutions working with young persons at risk: a social work centre, juvenile prison and police council for prevention.

Within the region, cooperation in the youth field with institutions working with youth at risk is very low, thus additional motivation was needed to enhance such partnerships for better re-socialisation. Often young people from groups at risk such as youth with deviant behaviours, young offenders and juvenile delinquents, are missing opportunities to get further support for their re-socialisation process. The goal of this project was to provide an opportunity for youth organisations to consider a system that would involve such young people with fewer opportunities.

Youth workers improved the quality of educational programmes and made them more accessible to the needs of young people at risk. Indirectly, the training course impacted over 100 young people at risk who are taking part in follow-up activities. Local youth organisations initiated cooperation with centres for social work and correctional institutions to develop programmes for inclusion and employment of young people at risk. The training had a strong cross-border cooperation in the regions as participants from South East Europe and former Yugoslavia have many similarities in their institutions and systems.

The training had several stages designed to support experimental learning of the participants and build on their competences and motivation. The first part aimed to provide a theoretical overview of the system for

**Activity dates and venue:**  
16 - 23 August 2013,  
in Mavrovo and Ohrid, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.



Project carried out by Macedonia Centre for Intercultural Dialogue, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, in partnership with YEU ubterbatuibaak, Belgium; CVS Bulgaria, Bulgaria; Kating Noored, Estonia; Concordia international group, Spain; Raplection Split, Croatia; Eygesek, Hungary; Centre for Youth initiatives Horizons, Poland; Youth for future 2006, Romania; KIDPLAC, Slovenia; Global Love Youth Trust, the United Kingdom; International volontaire service, the United Kingdom; Opportunity, the United Kingdom and Toplum Gonnulleri Vakfi, Turkey.

# Changing lives, opening minds



# Erasmus+



## WHY ERASMUS+ ?

Europe must equip its citizens with education and skills and help to develop the creativity which is needed in a knowledge society. Education systems have to modernise and adapt to new ways of teaching and learning and embrace the new opportunities that exist. Education, training and youth non-formal learning are key to creating jobs and improving Europe's competitiveness.

## WHO WILL BENEFIT?

Erasmus+ will provide EUR 14.7 billion over seven years which will enable more than 4 million young people, students and adults to gain experience and skills by studying, training or volunteering abroad. The programme will also support over 125 000 institutions and organisations to work with peers in other countries to innovate and modernise teaching practise and youth work.



Erasmus+

*The European Union programme for education,  
training, youth and sport (2014-2020)*

# The Erasmus+ Programme structure

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In order to achieve its objectives, the Erasmus+ Programme implements the following Actions:

► **Key Action 1 - Mobility of individuals**

Learning mobility opportunities for students, doctoral candidates, trainees, young volunteers and young people in general, as well as teachers, trainers, lecturers and youth workers.

► **Key Action 2 - Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practise**

The opportunity to build partnerships that drive collaboration within and between education, training and youth institutions and organisations, as well as between the worlds of education and work.

► **Key Action 3 - Support for Policy reform**

Supporting the processes of reflection, dialogue and evidence-building needed to deliver reform in education, training and youth policies and systems.

## How to find out more ?

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Erasmus Plus Programme  
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