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WORKSHOP F on Education for Development

*LRAs becoming drivers for change through development education:
from the challenge to the opportunity*

Co-leaders

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Abstract

The workshop will address the situation of development education in the enlarged Europe and discuss the challenges and opportunities arising from current context, sharing examples of best practices and lessons capitalizing from the research and experience of two ongoing pilot projects financed by the EC (LADDER and Rural DEAR Agenda)

Background information

The UN Sustainable Development Goals adopted in 2015 are considered as being universal, in the sense that the SDGs need to be taken into account by all countries and stakeholders. The experience with the previous global framework (“Millenium Development Goals”) proved that sustainable development for all can only be achieved if all actors and citizens are engaged.

The **sub-national** level has its own share of responsibility. Sub-national actors, starting with Local and Regional Authorities, being the institutional level closest to citizens, have a considerable potential in creating change, paving the way for other actors and citizens to follow. Their role and added value have been recognized at different levels (UN, EU). In this regards, citizens constitute a major “stakeholder” that need to be empowered & engaged, a situation that only be achieved if accompanied by the adequate & sufficient level of information and awareness raising.

Projects:



Co-leaders:



The importance of **global citizenship** has been recognized in the SDGs (see target 4.7). It entails principles such as solidarity, justice and critical thinking and aims at developing not only the curiosity of citizens and stakeholders regarding global development challenges, but also their awareness and engagement at different levels, starting from the daily and local level. Also known as Development Education, it is key to citizens' awareness of the local and global causes of development challenges and inequalities in today's societies that can lead to informed action and participation.

Content

According to the latest Eurobarometer figures (Special Barometer 441 on the European Year for Development), EU citizens believe that the fight against poverty should remain a priority, recognizing the importance of maintaining and increasing Development Aid. On the other hand, figures also show a lack of awareness on the real use of Development Aid, the objectives of the SDGs and other global development realities.

Europe-wide surveys & research carried out recently confirm these trends, pointing out also the level of awareness and engagement of stakeholders at different levels (Global, European, national, local), which remains still considerably low.

On the one hand, empowered local authorities, sufficiently & adequately resourced and acting within national & European enabling environments are needed. On the other, the engagement of a variety of actors ranging from the public and the private sector as well as local communities, academia, civil society is, as a matter of fact, crucial in achieving these objectives through a localized approach.

The role of LRAs in the implementation of the SDGs and the conditions for them to become multipliers at the local level, supporting change and inspiring citizens, will be at the heart of the exchanges. In this regard, promoting and developing decentralized cooperation, in combination with a multi-stakeholder approach that engages all relevant actors at the local level, is an ongoing challenge and opportunity that can support the realization of the desired objectives.

Capitalizing from the research & experience of two ongoing pilot projects financed by the EC (LADDER & Rural DEAR Agenda) that involve a wide spectrum of stakeholders (including a large number of LRAs & CSOs), the workshop will cover both the urban and rural areas, where the challenges & objectives are similar but the situation of LRAs differ (eg: small municipalities in rural areas being overlooked in this kind of studies and policies). It aims at addressing the situation of development education in the enlarged Europe and discussing with the audience on the challenges & opportunities arising from current context, sharing examples of best practices and lessons learnt.

Questions

- 1) *With the current state of play on development in mind, how can LAs become drivers for change, engage & empower citizens to act for development? What is the contribution of decentralized cooperation?*
- 2) *What are the conditions and mechanisms to put in place to develop cross-sectoral cooperation in support of the new sustainable development agenda?*