

Hotspots

CONNECTING EUROPEAN SUBURBS THROUGH SMART YOUTH WORK

TOOLKIT FOR DIAGNOSTIC AND TOOLS SHARING

Erasmus+


Hotspots



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CHAPTER I • INTRODUCTION

- Project
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WHAT

HOTSPOTS Connecting European Suburbs through Smart Youth Work is a Cooperation Partnership in the field of youth, 26 months long, supported by the Erasmus+ Programme, Italian National Agency and involving partners from Italy, Finland, France, Portugal, Romania and Spain.

AIM

HOTSPOTS aims to develop non-formal education tools and methods within a newly designed pedagogical approach, to enhance both online and offline Intercultural learning - ICL approaches and attitudes among young people coming from suburban backgrounds, and more specifically, in national and transnational Youth Participation Activities - YPA, within the Erasmus+ program.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

In order to achieve the main project's goal, the following specific objectives were set:

Specific Objective 1

to build up, in the suburban dimensions involved, the local **diagnostic** to better understand the situation, needs and profiles of the youth, the challenges faced by educators and youth workers in their everyday work, keeping a specific focus on the subject of Intercultural learning.

Specific Objective 2

to **share the existing tools**, approaches and smart/digital youth work practices, with specific regards to the online and offline dimensions, used by the consortium to boost active participation and raise awareness on Intercultural learning.

Specific Objective 3

to design a new, synthetic and innovative **pedagogical perspective** applicable to smart/digital youth work in the participating countries, including an educational package with tools and methods usable for the online and the offline sphere. The tools designed are conceived also for potential use in local activities and new national and transnational Youth Participation Activities.

Specific Objective 4

to strengthen the capacity-building of **youth workers' digital and offline practices** in order to have them ready to face the nowadays challenges and to offer a wider variety of activities to the young people they work with, motivating them for higher participation and bringing on board those customarily left out from these opportunities.

Specific Objective 5

to **connect, empower and engage young people** from outskirts and

isolated areas in different European outskirts, to equip them with knowledge, tools and competencies to act as agents of change and promoters of new grass-rooted actions.

HOW

The project structure was designed to reach its objectives by implementing several interconnected actions between 2022 and 2024: three Transnational Project Meetings, one Field Research, one International Training Course, one Local Testing phase, different Multiplier Events and a Follow Up phase. The outcomes of the different activities are therefore conceived to lead to the creation of two Project Results, one of those, "*Toolkit for diagnostic and tools sharing*", being the current publication.

PROJECT STRUCTURE

- Transnational Project Meeting - ITALY
- **PROJECT RESULT 1** - TOOLKIT FOR DIAGNOSTIC AND TOOLS SHARING
  - **COUNTRY FIELD RESEARCH**
  - **TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES GATHERING**
  - **FINALIZATION OF THE PROJECT RESULTS**
- Transnational Project Meeting - ROMANIA
- **PROJECT RESULT 2** - HANDBOOK FOR A SMART YOUTH WORK
  - **SUBURBAN HOTSPOTS - DESIGN**
  - **SUBURBAN HOTSPOTS - LOCAL TESTING**
  - **FINALIZATION OF THE PROJECT RESULTS**
- Learning Teaching Activity - ITALY
- **PROJECT RESULT 3** - BLENDED LEARNING BOARD GAME
- **MULTIPLIER EVENTS**
- Transnational Project Meeting - SPAIN

CULTURE

One of the main thematic focuses of HOTSPOTS project is Intercultural learning. In order to reflect upon the concept of Intercultural learning, it is crucial to start with understanding what "culture" is.

The T-KIT 4 on Intercultural learning of the Council of Europe - CoE provides the following food for thought regarding "culture": *"Working in the field of Intercultural learning requires an understanding of the role of culture in shaping individuals and communities. Culture is a very complex concept that can be misused or misinterpreted (consciously or unconsciously). Culture is not an abstract concept; it is embedded in everyday life's realities. In fact, culture cannot be separated from the social realities in which it is developing or from the people who are both influenced by it and are influencing it. Taking into account social realities, and political, geographical and economic aspects, leads to a more nuanced understanding of culture, genuine interactions and avoidance of simplistic interpretations."* (T-KIT 4 Intercultural learning - Council of Europe, 2018, p.15)

Culture has been seen for a long time, as something predefined and static, with fixed characteristics. This interpretation changed in the last decades, being considered too simplistic and inadequate, not taking into account many essential elements and not being suitable to describe something much more complex. In nowadays' societies, where people often migrate from one place to another, move, travel both physically and virtually and live in continuous interaction with other people, it is necessary to have a more dynamic and articulated interpretation of what culture is. Therefore, the current view of culture is that it is something in continuous evolution, multifaceted and coming from the different interactions and exchanges among human beings. Culture is shaped through interactions among people, it is fluid in its expression and continuously evolving and adapting to the realities experienced by its members. Culture is influenced by the interaction of its members with members of other cultures and with their surroundings, and it evolves and reshapes itself throughout the years and the decades.

INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

Once again, the T-KIT 4 on Intercultural learning of the CoE, it is a useful source to clarify the definition of Intercultural learning:

"Intercultural learning promotes the view that no culture is better or worse than the other, that there is no hierarchy of cultures.

It leads to an understanding that the definition of groups of belonging, of in-groups and out-groups, can be superficial and changing (...) Intercultural learning acknowledges that there are general characteristics of a culture, but there is also a multitude of specificity related to how a culture is lived and that cultures themselves are internally heterogeneous." (T-KIT 4 Intercultural learning - Council of Europe, 2018, p.17)

In this perspective, in order to promote an Intercultural learning approach when meeting other people from other cultures, bringers of their own multiple identities, it is crucial to avoid putting those people into boxes. It means avoiding any judgmental approach caused by the false assumption that one culture is better or superior to another. It means avoiding fearless behaviours towards what is different from us, which often leads to mistrust, discrimination, segregation, hate speech and violence as extreme consequences. An Intercultural learning approach, in this perspective, means to be open towards all other human beings, whatever they are born, they are living, whatever beliefs they practice or language they speak. This approach is based on active listening, on the effort to understand others, without putting labels and therefore arriving at a genuine encounter.
"Once we stop categorising the world into "us and them", we begin to see more similarities between people, between their cultures, identities, behaviours and world views. Identities that partly overlap are no contradiction: they are a source of strength and point to the possibility of common ground (Council of Europe 2008b). Therefore, in Intercultural learning processes, it is important to give enough space for people to explore their identities, to create opportunities for self-analysis and self-understanding, both individually and in relation to others. There is no linear relation between learning about us and learning about others. Self and others are interdependent; the better we understand ourselves, the better we can understand others and vice versa." (T-KIT 4 Intercultural learning - Council of Europe, 2018, p.18)

SUBURBS

Another important thematic focus in HOTSPOTS project is suburbs and suburban dimensions. These can be considered both a thematic focus but also the places where the project took place and where the main actions have been implemented. Suburbs are settings where young people can encounter and interact with peers. Still, they often risk becoming the landmark of exclusion and the stage for racism, sexism, bullying and different displays of discrimination. In Europe, these areas are typically marked by quite strong heterogeneity, but there are still common elements such as, for

example, the tendency of being *"artificial ghettos"* for the youth living there, a space where it is challenging to create interactions with the other realities and benefit from external opportunities. They might become the setting for discriminative events, hate speech and harmful rhetoric. Therefore, they can be the places where the extreme right parties and movements are setting their roots, permeating the mind-setting of the young people and leading to extremism and radicalization. In these realities, it becomes more and more relevant to develop actions for raising awareness among young people, to acknowledge the values of cultural differences, the importance of exchanging ideas with peers and having open-minded approaches towards what we do not necessarily know.

SMART AND DIGITAL YOUTH WORK

Last but not least, within the thematic focuses of the project, the concept of Smart and Digital Youth Work. Also, in this case, these concepts can be considered a thematic focus but also the methodological umbrella within the project itself. In fact, the working methods, the tools and workshops developed within the Project Result 2 can be considered to be falling inside the big framework of smart and digital youth work.

The concepts of *"Smart and Digital Youth Work"* are quite innovative and recent, therefore their definitions are not static, but on the contrary, evolving and subject to a dynamic process of being shaped and further developed.

Smart youth work is seen: *"as the innovative development of youth work encompassing digital youth work practice, and including a research, quality and policy component... Smart youth work aims to explore the interactions of young people and youth work with digital media and technologies in order to support and enhance the positive opportunities these interactions create (...) Smart youth work builds upon the ethics, existing principles, knowledge, practices, methods and other assets of youth work and harnesses the full potential of technological developments in the digital society (...) Smart youth work means making use of and addressing digital media and technologies in order to*:

a) enrich the opportunities of all young people for information, for access to youth work, for participation, for non-formal and informal learning, by exploiting new spaces and formats for youth work in meaningful ways;

b) support the motivation, capacity and competence building of youth workers and youth leaders to be able to develop and implement smart youth work;

c) create better understanding of youth and youth work and support the quality of youth work and youth policy

through more efficient use of data-driven developments and technologies for analyzing data.
Smart youth work builds upon the needs of young people, youth workers, youth leaders and other stakeholders supporting youth. It also takes into account the wider societal context, including globalization, networking, e-solutions etc., providing opportunities for experimentation, reflection and learning from these experiences." Council conclusions on smart youth work (2017/C 418/02)

The concept of *"Smart Youth Work"* was used for the first time in Estonia and then has rapidly widespread among Europe: *"Smart youth work is part of the youth field, its activities are based on the principles and general objective of youth policy and youth work and supports its achievement. Smart youth work is not an activity or method itself, nor does it replace existing practices. Instead, using smart youth work, youth and youth workers are able, based on existing experiences and seeking new connections and new means, to create innovative solutions (including digital solutions) to coping with both current problems and new challenges. Smart youth work activities are based on the youths' and youth workers' needs, take into account developments in society and technology, including globalization, networking and e-solutions, and offer alternatives to traditional approaches in youth work and possibilities for experimenting, error and learning from experience. Smart youth work solutions are means of creating content or carrying out activities. The objective of smart solutions is to engage in youth work more effectively and productively than before, i.e. reaching more youths, increasing opportunities to develop youth creativity and self-initiative and cooperative activity, reduce the potential for exclusion of youth, increase engagement of youth and improve readiness for the job market and support their active participation in communities and decision-making. One key possibility of smart youth work is the use of digital media and technology, including in open youth work, youth info, youth participation and other youth work sub-areas and topics. The possibilities of smart youth work can be used in direct communication with youths, in online environments or in both at the same time." (The Concept of Smart Youth work - Estonian Youth Work Center) Republic of Estonia - Ministry of Education and Research*

THEMATIC FOCUSES



CULTURE



INTERCULTURAL LEARNING



SUBURBS



SMART AND DIGITAL YOUTH WORK

The **Project Results 1 - Toolkit for Diagnostic and Tools Sharing** includes two main parts: Chapter II – Country Situation and Chapter III – Research Results can be considered as the main outcomes of the field research run in the participating countries, while Chapter IV – Tools, is the collection of workshops on Intercultural learning used by the consortium members during the activities run on a daily base with young people.

More specifically, *Chapter II – Country Situation and Chapter III – Research Results* include the milestones of the detailed diagnostic run in the participating realities, the analysis of the urban and suburban dimensions where the project took place, and of the main challenges faced by youth workers and young people.

The research was the first action run by the consortium in order to detect the needs youth workers, educators on a larger scale, and organisations are facing in their work with young people, especially in the current sensitive moment still paying the consequences of the Covid-19 widespread. The field research took place in Catalonia, Finland, Italy, Portugal and Romania. It was run from June to September 2022 (4 months), and then during the months of October, November and December 2022 (3 months), all the information was re-elaborated and included in the current publication.

The research has a specific focus on the aspects characterizing the suburban dimensions of the participating cities and allows highlighting the cultural issues more relevant in these areas. Last, this section is clearly providing a detailed picture of the needs, in terms of tools, workshops and methodologies educators have highlighted. Therefore, it is going to be used as a starting point for the design of the Project Result 2 - Handbook for a smart youth work, where the new workshops and activities created have the specific purpose of meeting the identified needs.

Chapter IV – Tools is a Toolkit collection with tools, interactive methods and workshops to raise awareness among young people on Intercultural learning issues and the sub-related subjects. The tools and methods were gathered and selected by a group of experienced trainers coming from all the consortium members. They are normally used by the participating organisations and their local partners to run activities with young people, to tackle Intercultural learning issues and to raise awareness of the importance of respecting and valuing differences among human beings. In this perspective, they have to be considered as a methodological collection of good practices and examples to be afterwards re-proposed in the local work with young

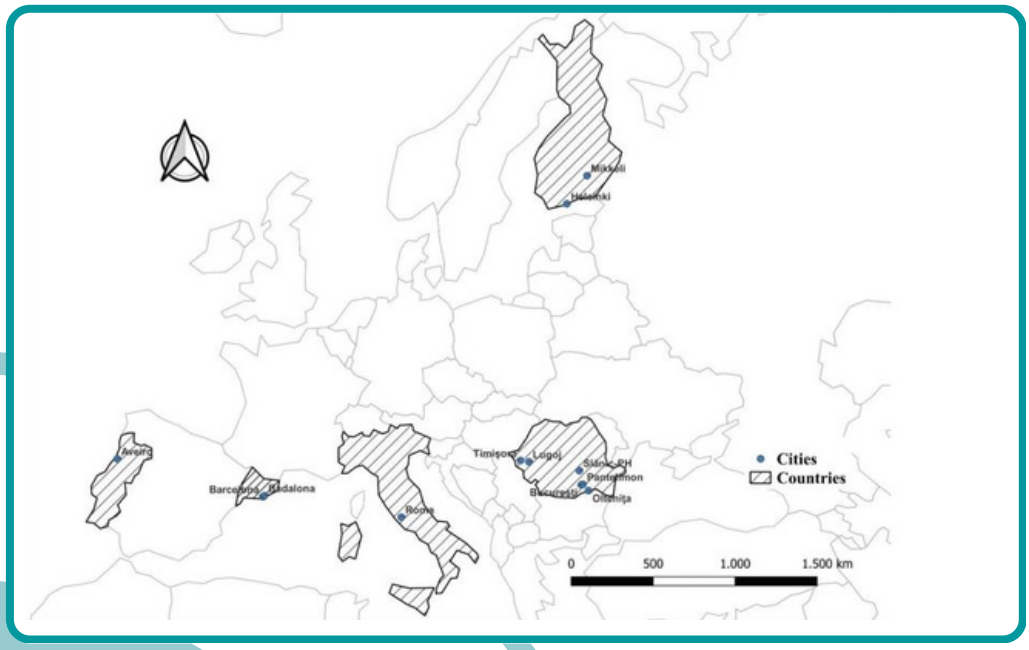
people. Moreover, the consortium members, their youth workers and educators can use them on an everyday base because of their potential adaptability to different contexts and backgrounds. Last, they have to be considered as an inspiring resource, both mapping the state of the art in terms of tools and activities already in use in the involved countries and also a starting point in the upcoming design of the new tools included in the Project Result 2.



CHAPTER II • COUNTRY SITUATION

- Catalonia
- Finland
- Italy
- Portugal
- Romania

COUNTRY SITUATION



- **Catalonia, Spain**
- **Finland**
- **Italy**
- **Portugal**
- **Romania**

CATALONIA, SPAIN

DEMOGRAPHICS (2022)

N. of female
Spain: 24.323.652
Catalonia: 3.951.216

N. of male
Spain: 23.291.382
Catalonia: 3.807.399

N. of inhabitants
Spain: 47.615.034
Catalonia: 7.758.615

EDUCATION

European Union, 2022; World Economic Forum, 2022.

- **Literacy rate** (% of total population) — **97,7%**
- **Population aged 20–24 with at least an upper secondary education (ISCED 3–8), 2021** (% of the population aged 20–24) — **78.8%**
- **Number of pupils per teacher in secondary and post-secondary education, 2020** — **11.5**
- **Education system's ability to meet needs (rank out of 117 countries)** — **64**
- **Out-of-school rate for 16 years-old pupils** (% of the population of the corresponding age) — **4,37%**



POLITICS

PARLIAMENT STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

Catalonia is a region (autonomous community) and exercises its self-government in the Spanish State in accordance with the Constitution of 1978 and the new Statute of Autonomy, approved in 1979 and renewed in 2006 (Generalitat de Catalunya, n.d.-d).

The **Generalitat** is the institutional system around which Catalonia's self-government is politically organised and it dates from 1359. It consists of the Parliament of Catalonia, the Presidency of the Generalitat, the Government (formed by the Executive Council) and Administration of the Generalitat. There are other self-governing institutions such as the Síndic de Greuges (guarantor of the rights and liberties of citizens) and the Sindicatura de Comptes (control of the economic accounts of Catalan public institutions). The Generalitat has extensive competencies in matters such as education, health, citizen security and civil protection, culture, linguistic policy, industry, urban development, housing, regional politics, transport and the environment, among others. Catalonia has its own police force, Mossos d'Esquadra, which has been covering the full territory since November 1st, 2008. Catalan civil law is applied in legal matters of historical tradition, the modification of which is the exclusive competence of the Generalitat (idem).

Specifically speaking, the **Parliament of Catalonia** is divided into bodies, which are specific groups of deputies with specific attributions and functions. The Presiding Board is composed of 7 members (1 president, 2 vice presidents and 4 secretaries), all elected by the Plenary Assembly.
The Presiding Board directs, orders and qualifies the work of the Parliament and its services. The Board of Spokesperson is formed by the spokesperson of each parliamentary group, the President of the Parliament and one of the secretaries. The Parliament has the following functions: the legislative function; the budgetary function; the function of creation, control and promotion of political and government action; and the elective function (Generalitat de Catalunya, n.d.-d; Parlament de Catalunya, 2016).

The **Government of Catalonia** is composed of the President and the Ministers. It is politically accountable to the Parliament, without *"prejudice of direct responsibility each one of its Ministers may have due to his or her own management"* (Government of Catalonia, n.d.)

The Government conducts policy, manages the Government's Administration and holds executive and regulatory powers.
The departments of the Generalitat de Catalunya are: Climate Action, Food and Rural Agenda; Foreign Action and the European Union; Culture; Social Rights; Economy and Finance; Education; Business and Employment; Equality and Feminisms; Inner; Justice, Rights and Memory; Presidency; Research and Universities; Health; Department of Territory (Generalitat de Catalunya, n.d.-b).

YOUTH POLICIES

The National Youth Plan of Catalonia (Pla Nacional de Joventut de Catalunya, PNJCat) is the reference framework for youth policy and aims to be a tool capable of adapting to changes and responding to the new needs and demands of young people and their environment.
Specifically, the current PNJCat 2020 aims to face seven major challenges in order to facilitate the realization of the life projects of young people and to empower the young people as an agent of social change.

The challenges are:
1. Achieving success in the educational career of young people
2. Achieving success in the working career of young people
3. Achieving success in home transition for young people
4. Promote a healthy life for young people
5. Advance towards autonomy, personal development and participation in the collective of young people
6. Universalize culture among the youth population: work so that the cultural offer responds to educational and socially cohesive objectives
7. Advance towards a new model of a cohesive country and society, territorially structured, sustainable and innovative in the forms of collective organization.

Each of these challenges is equipped with certain strategies to deal with them. These strategies respond to a certain plan to intervene in the youth reality and to face the challenges they set. These 7 challenges, together with the 26 strategies that accompany them, as well as the 34 strategic objectives and their respective 180 operational objectives, are the result of the proposals and speeches collected in the consultation process and which aim to improve the opportunities of personal and collective development of young people in Catalonia.

The PNJCat 2020 incorporates and is deployed through the action of the agents involved in youth policies: Generalitat, "Món local " (Local world) and organised youth movement. For this reason, it is articulated on the basis of three major projects: the Government Project, the Youth Project and the Territory Project. Each project includes the development of an action plan for each of the agents, which establishes the specific priorities, with validity of 4 years, adapted to the specific perspective and problems that these three agents have to face. Thus, three action plans emerge from the PNJCat 2020: the Action Plan of the Government of the Generalitat, the Territorial Action Plan and the Youth Action Plan (Generalitat de Catalunya, n.d.-a, n.d.-c) .

It was therefore launched a new approach to the National Youth Plan of Catalonia and the 2021 action plan – COVID and towards the Catalan Youth Congress (Departament de Drets Socials, n.d.).

The circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 have shown that many of the aspects that affect the situation of young people are structural (unemployment, job insecurity, segmentation of the labour market, poverty rate, criminalization of the young group, etc.) and are aggravated in every socio-economic crisis.

The PNJCat had to be drawn up and approved by Government decree in 2021, as established by Law 33/2010 on youth policies. Taking into account the current context, the time devoted to reflection and the construction of the new framework of youth policies will be extended, and it must be used to assess what is the instrument or framework necessary to youth policies.

The objectives of the new process on the present and future of youth policies are:

- Reflect on the fact that there is a systemic crisis that goes far beyond the socio-health or socio-economic situation and on the need to build global solutions.
- Generate a broad and participative social debate on the situation of young people and the impact they receive from the various socio-economic and socio-health crisis.
- Reflect on the need to generate a new social contract with young people or a new framework for youth policies, with the aim of going beyond the PNJCat as an instrument for strategic policy planning.
- Design policies and structural measures that put youth at the centre of public policies.
- Appreciate and make visible the importance of the work of the group of youth policy professionals.

- Promote co-creation, leadership and the participation of young people in the process and in the construction of solutions and alternatives.
- Include new forms of participation adapted to the current situation.
- Generate tools to move towards a less aggressive production model with people and the environment, which deepens and improves the democratic governance of society.

To be able to make this change and work on these goals, they should prepare: Youth action plan 2021 – COVID: transition plan between the current and future PNJCat, which adapts to the needs and situations affecting young people, taking into account the impact derived from the COVID. New process of reflection, debate and participation to build the new framework for youth policies in the current context.

YOUTH WORK

HOW YOUTH WORK IS CONSIDERED AND ORGANISED

A youth worker in Catalonia is the person who is dedicated to the research, design, direction, application or evaluation of plans, programmes or projects intended for young people, from public administrations, private companies or associative networks, in the framework of youth policies.
A youth worker exercises a task in the profession of a pedagogical nature dedicated to generating educational contexts, mediating and training actions that enable cultural and social promotion, understood as opening up new possibilities for the acquisition of cultural goods, which broaden their educational, employment, leisure prospects and social participation of the person.

In this sense, the profession can serve a wide variety of groups and intervene in different areas: education for leisure, day care or residential services, home care, the socio-health field, civic action and community, cultural, justice, social services, socio-labour integration, awareness, networks and support for entities, international cooperation, etc.
Some of the tasks developed by the Youth Worker are:

- To develop an educational task with people at risk or with social difficulties.
- To guide and provide help to people at risk or with social difficulties.
- To acts as a catalyst for socio-cultural activity.
- To organises and manages the activity of the entity or structure in which the services are framed (Ajuntament de Barcelona, n.d.)

About demographic data:

The Catalan Association of Youth Professionals identified in their study "Cens de professionals enl'àmbit de la joventut a Catalunya" 2018 ("Census of professionals in the field of Youth Work in Catalonia"), that the group of youth professionals in Catalonia is markedly feminized, with 67.2% of people identifying with the female gender, 32.1% with the male gender, and 0.7% with others (Guiu & Vila, 2018:22).

About the age, the average of the whole sample of professionals in the field of youth is 37.7 years. The difference of age between men and women is very insignificant, while it is greater for professionals who do not identify in a binary way in the gender (average of 43.2 years). 50% of professionals from the youth are between 30 and 44 years old. In the lower age group, 25% have between 19 and 37 years old, and another quarter of the group is in the upper range between the ages of 44 and 64 (Guiu & Vila, 2018:25).

To the question about whether they have been or are members of any association, collective or social movement, 84.6% answered affirmatively. And for those who have been members of some association, collective or social movement, taking into account the responses in percentages for each type of association, 44.5% of the people surveyed claim to belong or have belonged to a leisure education association, while 29.9% indicate an association of 'social action and 24.8% a cultural and exchange association (Guiu & Vila, 2018:27).

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR YOUTH WORK

The Catalan Association of Youth Professionals, Professionals of Joventut, made in 2018 a study "Cens de professionals en l'àmbit de la joventut a Catalunya" ("Census of professionals in the field of Youth Work in Catalonia") (Guiu & Vila, 2018) which indicates that eight out of ten youth professionals have university degrees. They also analysed the name of the training achieved by professionals in the field of youth for university levels and higher education cycle. Social Education is the first choice, they highlighted Psychology and Other Higher Studies (social area) such as Economics, Administration and Business Administration (ADE), Business Sciences, Labour Relations, Journalism, Tourism, Advertising and Public Relations. Among the total number of professionals who completed the survey, 61.3% answered that they had done some specific training in the field of youth. Of the three answer options that were offered to frame this one specific training, in a multiple-choice question, 8.6% has answered that have studied the Interuniversity Master's in Youth and Society (MIJS), 39.4% have followed the Youth Policy Specialists Course, and 69% have taken other courses, always more than 20 hours.

This last group of other training is particularly rich and varied, as the courses and training proposed by the General Directorate of Youth and the provincial councils, as well as the courses related to children's and youth leisure.
About the position developed by professional people in the field of youth, they realize that the figure of Program Technician is the most chosen as a first option. The second answer more marked was that of Coordinator/Head of Programmes, followed by that of Facilitator, Educator and Informer.

In Catalonia, the **Department of Youth** is part of the Directorate for Children, Youth and the Elderly of the Area of Social Rights, Global Justice, Feminism and LGTBI. Its mission is to influence youth policies related to the academic, occupational, entrepreneurship, housing, associations and health fields. The Department also promotes a catalogue of Youth Services and Spaces aimed at adolescents and young people in the city of Barcelona, which aims to meet their demands based on their interests and adapting to their needs(El Departamento de Juventud, n.d.-a).

The **Servicios info JOVE** have a focus to answer the questions about finding a job or a flat, study itineraries, stays abroad, educational leisure options, alternatives for volunteering, entrepreneurship, associationism (El Departamento de Juventud, n.d.-b).

The **Consell de la Joventut de Barcelona (CJB)** is the platform of associations and groups that represent the organised youth of Barcelona, that works in network to promote associationism, generate discourses on the problems and concerns of young people and contribute to launch proposals and build alternatives (el Consell de Joventut de Barcelona, n.d.).

Another platform is the **Centre de Recursos per a les Associacions Juvenils de Barcelona (CRAJ)**. It goes back to 1994 as a result of the demand of the Consell de la Joventut de Barcelona (CJB) to support the needs of the youth association movement. It was created for youth associations and youth groups in the city with the aim of providing support and facilitating their daily management, in order to enable them to develop their projects and activities (el Consell de Joventut de Barcelona, n.d.).

GENERAL ISSUES IMPACTING YOUTH WORK

The Catalan Association of Youth Professionals also identified in their study "Cens de professionals enl'àmbit de la joventut a Catalunya" 2018 ("Census of professionals in the field of Youth Work in Catalonia" (Guiu & Vila, 2018), that the feeling of pride and satisfaction with one's work and the motivation to do the work are interdependent.

Regarding the training needs, they asked about the areas in what they think they have a lack of training:

- Legislation of interest for the application of youth policies (policy of shows, data protection, etc.).
- Competences and legislation in the field of youth.
- Models and forms of participation of young people today.
- Communication and dissemination techniques of projects.
- Techniques for analyzing youth reality.

On the other hand, based on the interviews done during the project, the general issues impacting the youth work are related to some topics:

- Managing time (it's difficult to balance the hours and tasks) and lack of human resources was something pointed out.
- Establishing limits is difficult and has an impact on the mental health of the youth worker.
- Networking was something pointed out as well as a theme to improve that is connected with the lack of time to connect, to get to know other organizations and create better synergies.
- How to reach and communicate effectively with the young people in general (trying to identify exactly what they need or want to do; create a real connection with them).
- The constant adaptation of young people's reality, and the difficulty to use social media as Tik Tok.

About the content of activities, it was possible to identify that there is a lack of training, or at least youth workers consider it not enough, in topics related with Sexuality (Affective sexual education), mental health, cultural differences (how to deal with other cultural differences and themes as child marriage or different family dynamics where gender issues are badly impacting the young people).

LOCAL BACKGROUND SITUATION
BACKGROUND/S WHERE THE RESEARCH TOOK PLACE

WHERE THE RESEARCH TOOK PLACE

The research took place in a neighbourhood of Barcelona called **El Besòs-Maresme** and in the city of **Badalona**.

DESCRIPTION OF THESE AREAS

Located at the outskirts of Barcelona the neighbourhoods of **Besòs-Maresme** are the result of the urgent and massive construction of houses to respond to the great housing deficit that existed in the 1950s and 1960s. Previously, the land had been irrigated by the ditches of La Madriguera and La Verneda - the remains of an old arm of the river Besòs that ended at the Camp de la Bota - and they were predominantly agricultural. In 1959, the Municipal Housing Board began building the estate. The urban planning of this area reflects the last half century of urban, social and political transformation. The first blocks, which emerged between 1954 and 1964, began to be built in the middle of the cultivation fields, without any urbanization or provision of services or public facilities, which had to be won by long and hard neighbourhood struggles.

El Besòs-Maresme is a neighbourhood physically far from the city centre. Traditionally there have been less skilled jobs opportunities and housing rents have been lower than the city average, as reflected in the 2018 city council report. As a result, migrants with low resources have historically settled in the neighbourhood, as stated in the history of the El Besòs and El Maresme Neighbourhood Plan.

From the point of view of some of the youth workers interviewed, El Besòs-Maresme concentrates a large community from Pakistan, Latin America and "locals". Most of them are people who moved decades ago and are therefore settled in the area since several decades.
The diverse socio-cultural profile of the population and its location on the outskirts of the city are identified as reasons of the lack of visibility of the neighbourhood at the city level, which in the years has generated harmful stigma.

Currently, this inequality is still present, as it is shown by the fact that it remains on the agenda of the Municipal Action Plan for the Sant Martí District 2020-2023 (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2019).

The causes identified are mainly structural and affect different dimensions and areas. According to the 2018 report, mentioned in the previous paragraph, the young foreign population in this neighbourhood represents 42% of the total (the average for Barcelona in 2018 was 32%), of which 14% are of Pakistani nationality. The work for social inclusion is carried out with very good results in schools and support programmes for minors. However, when young people turn 18 and become adults, they no longer have dedicated programmes that help them interact and create a bond with young people from different cultures and backgrounds. Specific youth programmes and policies for the transition to adult life, taking into account the intercultural perspective, are scarce and ineffective. This is one of the causes of the lack of interaction between young people (in this case, adults) from different backgrounds and cultures.

As a direct consequence, the programmes and projects promoted in the neighbourhood fail to reach young people from different backgrounds and cultures, and often end up with a non-representative part of young people participating. Therefore, this leads to discriminatory behaviours and related issues.

We could identify that El Besòs and Maresme are linked by specific similarities:

- Little interaction and bonding between young people of different origins and cultures.
- Lack of participation of young people in organizations and/or projects that motivate and benefit them, especially in a medium-long term participation.
- Lack of knowledge of non-violent tools and strategies to promote initiatives of community transformation.
- Little visibility of what is happening in the neighbourhood or lack of activities. This lack of awareness of what happens in the neighbourhood was mentioned by the local young women who acknowledged the fact that this was generating stigmatisation at city level.

Badalona and El Besòs-Maresme are considered vulnerable areas in the Barcelona Metropolitan territory (Llimós, 2021). Although the Department of Territory has identified these urban areas of special attention throughout the territory, the vast majority are concentrated along the rivers Llobregat and especially Besòs, which brings together almost 70% of the most vulnerable areas of the metropolitan area.

Today, Besòs-Maresme neighbourhood awaits new transformations, derived from the revitalization of the entire environment of the Forum of Cultures 2004 and the neighbourhood of one of the two great sectors of the city.
This area will be the scene, in the coming years, of new residential implantations and facilities, among which the location of a Polytechnic University campus, which is already planned, stands out, and will provide an important daily vitality.

The Generalitat has identified 236 vulnerable areas throughout Catalonia (ARA, n.d.). One of the municipalities is **Badalona**.
Badalona's situation within the Barcelona plain has marked by its continuous economic and social dependence on this city. But at the same time, this coastal town has some characteristics (customs, history, architecture of traditional houses, etc.) that also relate it to the Maresme. The city is made up of different neighbourhoods, some of which integrate old suburbs (Canyet, Pomar de Dalt, Pomar de Baix), and the urbanization of Mas Ram, which from the urban point of view, also extends towards the municipality of Tiana.

COUNTRY SITUATION

FINLAND

DEMOGRAPHICS (2022)

N. of female
2.806.207

N. of male
2.747.748

N. of inhabitants
5.553.955

EDUCATION

European Union, 2022; World Economic Forum, 2022.

- **Literacy rate** (% of total population) — 100%
- **Population aged 20–24 with at least an upper secondary education (ISCED 3–8), 2021** (% of the population aged 20–24) — 87.6%
- **Number of pupils per teacher in secondary and post-secondary education, 2020** — 8.6
- **Education system's ability to meet needs (rank out of 117 countries)** — 3
- **Out-of-school rate for 16 years-old pupils** (% of the population of the corresponding age) — 3.45%



POLITICS

PARLIAMENT STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

The Finnish Parliament has two hundred members, elected for a term of four years. Members belong to parliamentary groups, of which there are currently eleven. Each parliamentary group elects its own chairpersons and possibly other organs. There is no legal obligation to join a parliamentary group, but Members usually belong to their own party's group (Parliament of Finland, n.d.).

Seats in the Parliament at the beginning of parliamentary year 2021 were:

- Social Democratic Parliamentary Group: 40
- Finns Party Parliamentary Group: 38
- National Coalition Party Parliamentary Group: 38
- Centre Party Parliamentary Group: 31
- Green Parliamentary Group: 20
- Left Alliance Parliamentary Group: 16
- Swedish Parliamentary Group: 10
- Christian Democratic Parliamentary Group: 5
- LiikeNyt Movement's Parliamentary Group: 1
- Parliamentary Group Power Belongs to the People: 1

The Finnish Government is to be understood, on the one hand, as the body which convenes for the general governing of the country, consisting of the Prime Minister and other ministers, and, on the other hand, the decision-making body for governmental and administrative matters consisting of the Government plenary session and the ministries.

The current Finnish Government comprises 12 ministries. Each ministry is responsible for the preparation of matters within its mandate and for the proper functioning of administration. The Prime Minister chairs the plenary sessions of the Government and the statutory Ministerial Committees.

The Finnish Government is formed by the Social Democratic Party, the Center Party, the Greens, the Left Alliance and the Swedish People's Party of Finland. The Government has 19 ministers (Finnish Government, n.d.).

YOUTH POLICIES

The Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for the overall development of youth work and youth policy. The aim of youth policy is to improve the conditions in which young people grow up and live in and to enhance interaction between the generations through inter-sectoral cooperation. The objective of youth work is to support young people in growing and transitioning to leading an independent life and to promote their participation in society. The Ministry strives to support young people in growing up and gaining independence, promote their active citizenship and social empowerment, and improve the environment in which they grow up, as well as their living conditions (European Commission, 2021d)

The development of youth policy issues is informed by the Government Programme, the National Youth Work and Policy Programme as well as other strategies and implementation plans by the Government (idem).

When planning and developing the national youth policy the work is done n close cooperation with several actors. These include actors as other ministries, Regional State Administrative Agencies, other state agencies, municipalities, and youth organizations that have a significant role in the field of Finnish youth work and youth policy (European Commission, 2022a).

The Regional State Administrative Agencies are responsible for the regional implementation of the Ministry of Education and Culture in the field of education, day care, libraries, sports, and youth work. Municipalities in Finland exercise significant autonomy and have the responsibility on how the youth policy and youth work is implemented at the local level. The expert bodies assisting the Ministry of Education and Culture in matters of youth affairs are the State Youth Council and Assessment and State Aid Commission of which the roles and tasks are defined in the Youth Act (idem).

Another important national public agency involved in youth policy implementation is the Finnish National Agency for Education, which functions under the Ministry of Education and Culture. The organization and tasks are set out in the legislation. It is responsible for the development of early childhood education and care, pre-primary, basic, general upper secondary, vocational upper secondary, adult education as well as for international mobility and cross-border co-operation (ibidem) Youth work centers of expertise form a network that support the implementation of the objectives set out by the National Youth Work and Youth Policy Programme.

YOUTH WORK

HOW YOUTH WORK IS CONSIDERED AND ORGANISED

In Finland, youth work holds a strong statutory position. The role of youth work is not restricted to only offering targeted forms of youth work such as outreach youth work, youth workshops or peer support groups, but rather, it also offers youth work services to everyone in supporting their well being and in having a good life in general. As in formal education, the responsibility of how to organize the services within non-formal learning processes is given to local-level municipalities. The civic society — the non-governmental youth and youth work organizations both at the national and local levels — plays a very active role as well (European Commission, 2021e).

Youth work for all operates both through open access services in free-time facilities (buildings), in mobile spaces (such youth work vans) and in web spaces (self-service use of databases or receiving support from youth workers or/and peers), as a part of multi-sectoral services (one-stop guidance centers) as well as outdoors situated outside a school area, or on school premises after school hours or during the school day, in which case it is considered as 'school youth work' (idem).

Most of the youth work and youth activities are organised in the evenings, on weekends and during the school holiday. They are arranged by municipalities, non-governmental youth and youth work associations, national youth centers and parishes, and these are based on the funding regulations such those in the Youth Act, while young people themselves need to have an active role in planning, realizing and evaluating these activities (ibidem).

Since the beginning of the year 2017 the newest Youth Act has been put into force. One of the differences from the earlier is that it refers to the responsibility of local authorities to consider the content based on the local need. The updated Act describes what the content of youth work can be and traditionally has also been in Finland: educational guidance for young people; facilities and hobby opportunities; youth information and counselling; support for youth associations and other youth groups; sport-related, cultural, international, and multicultural youth activities; young people's environmental education, youth workshop services and outreach youth work (European Commission, 2021g).

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR YOUTH WORK

The Ministry of Education and Culture is the responsible authority for the overall development, coordination and drafting of national development plans on youth issues, including youth work in the central government. In Finland the cross-sectoral cooperation between youth work and other youth policy fields are ensured by both the Youth Act and the National Youth Work and Policy Program (European Commission, 2021f).

GENERAL ISSUES IMPACTING YOUTH WORK

The Ministry of Education and Culture financially supports youth work from the proceeds of gaming activities and budget funding. Proceeds of gaming activities used to promote youth work were in 2020 54,2 million Euros and in youth workshop activities and youth outreach work 23,5 million Euros. Funding for youth work in 2022 was supposed to be 5 million Euros less than what was allocated in 2021. The determining factor behind this reduction is that youth work among others has been funded mostly with gambling revenues and gambling-related harms are now to be reduced in accordance with different kinds of regulations (Allianssi, n.d.).

The forms and methods of youth work have renewed and diversified in the 21st century in all the sectors of youth work (municipalities, organizations and parishes). Along with traditional club and camp activities, mobile and outreach youth work methods and digital youth work are becoming more common in Finland (idem).

General issues impacting youth work are, according to various studies, the consequences of the climate change and other global threats (Covid-19), challenges related to mental health among young people, the marginalisation of disadvantaged young people and the increasing (regional and cross-generational) inequality in the society (idem).

LOCAL BACKGROUND SITUATION

BACKGROUND/S WHERE THE RESEARCH TOOK PLACE

WHERE THE RESEARCH TOOK PLACE

The research was implemented in Helsinki and Mikkeli.

Helsinki is a capital of Finland with 658.864 (2022) inhabitants, of which 10,2% speak some foreign language other than Finnish or Swedish (Sinkko & Mäki, 2021). The interviews (7) and focus groups (2) were operated in the suburbs of Eastern Helsinki near the Kontula area, and in the suburbs of North-Eastern Helsinki near the Malmi area.

Mikkeli is a region centre of the Etelä-Savo region in Eastern Finland with 52 583 (2023) inhabitants, of which 4,3% speaks some foreign language other than Finnish or Swedish (Tietoa Mikkelistä – Mikkeli, n.d.; Tilastokesklis, n.d.). The interviews (3) and focus group (1) were operated in the suburbs of Mikkeli located relatively nearby the city centre (Laajalampi, Peitsari, Tusku).

HELSINKI

Eastern Helsinki: employment rates and level of income in most parts of the Eastern Major districts are clearly below average (Tulotaso. Tutkimus - Ja Tilastotietoa Helsingistä, 2022).
Kontula is one of the largest local centers in Eastern Helsinki. According to the City of Helsinki website: "Kontula is one of the biggest and best-known suburbs in the city as well as in the whole country. Together with its adjacent neighbourhoods, the total population is over 28,000. The central point of Kontula is the 50-year-old shopping mall where some 80 entrepreneurs run their businesses. For years, the mall's reputation was marked with a huge number of bars. In recent years, however, the mall has started to house many diverse restaurants, many of them run by immigrant entrepreneurs. Kontula is a district with a mixed reputation, which might also be the clue to its attractiveness" (Lindroos, n.d.)

North-Eastern Helsinki: Malmi is the centre of North-Eastern Helsinki and its local centre was built in the 1980s. The total population with adjacent neighbourhoods is 30,000. Median income of households in the Malmi area is lower and the unemployment rate higher than average in Helsinki. Jakomäki, which is a part of North-Eastern district, has the highest unemployment rate (18%) among all the sub-districts in Helsinki and there the level of income is 22% below the average (*Tulotaso. Tutkimus - Ja Tilastotietoa Helsingistä, 2022*).

Inhabitants from foreign background in Helsinki: according to the statistics of the City of Helsinki, the proportion of foreign-background residents among the local population was highest – over one-third – in Kontula and Jakomäki sub-districts in 2019. The share of children speaking some foreign language among all the children in Helsinki is higher than the share of foreign language speakers in the entire population. At the end of 2020, 22,1% of all the children in Helsinki aged 0–6 spoke some foreign language (other than Finnish or Swedish), and proportionally the most of them live in those areas of the city that are located along the train lines (eg. Malmi, Pukinmäki) or metro lines (eg. Kontula).

MIKKELI

Laajalampi: Laajalampi is 3,6 km from the city center of Mikkeli and it has one bar, one small grocery store, kindergarten, and youth center. Laajalampi is known as a ''bad'' neighborhood in Mikkeli according to the youth worker interview. Laajalampi suburb has 2263 inhabitants. 10,5% of the Laajalampi population has foreign-background.

Peitsari: Peitsari is 2,6 km from the city center of Mikkeli and it has a kindergarten, a bigger grocery store, and good public transport connections. Peitsari suburb has 5.697 inhabitants and 3,7% of those have a foreign-background.

Tusku: Tusku is 3,8 km from the city center of Mikkeli. It has a small grocery store and a kindergarten. Tusku suburb has 1.401 inhabitants and 5% of those have a foreign-background (Tilastokeskus, n.d., 2022)

The unemployment rate in the city of Mikkeli is 9% and 4,3% of the Mikkeli population has a foreign-background (Suomen virallinen tilasto, 2023)

ITALY

DEMOGRAPHICS (2022)

N. of female
30.235.705

N. of male
28.747.417

N. of inhabitants
58.983.122

Note: only 8% of the inhabitants in Italy come from another country

EDUCATION

European Union, 2022; World Economic Forum, 2022.

- **Literacy rate** (% of total population) — **99.1%**
- **Population aged 20–24 with at least an upper secondary education (ISCED 3–8), 2021** (% of the population aged 20–24) — **83.5%**
- **Number of pupils per teacher in secondary and post-secondary education, 2020** — **10.8**
- **Education system's ability to meet needs (rank out of 117 countries)** — **44**
- **Out-of-school rate for 16 years-old pupils** (% of the population of the corresponding age) — **3.07%**



POLITICS

PARLIAMENT STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

The Italian Parliament has a bicameral structure, Chamber of Deputies and Senate of the Republic, as defined in the Constitution. Both chambers are elected for a term of five years, and cannot be extended except in case of war. When a relationship of trust is not established between Parliament and the government, the practice is for early dissolution by the President of the Republic. Thanks to a reform subjected to referendum and approved with 69.96% of the vote, 400 elected deputies (using mixed-member majoritarian representation) and 200 senators (also using mixed-member majoritarian representation) are in office after the 2022 general elections and the beginning of the 19th legislature.

In the Article 48 of the Italian Constitution enshrines the right to vote to all: *"All citizens, men and women, who have attained the age of majority, shall be voters. Voting is personal and equal, free and secret. Its exercise is a civic duty."*

After the 2018 general elections, the Italian Republic experienced three changes of government until September 2022 when the current Meloni government was officially elected. The Meloni government is supported by the component parties of the canter-right coalition. The current head of the government is the president of the Fratelli d'Italia party, Giorgia Meloni, who is also the first woman to hold the office of Prime Minister of Italy. Fratelli d'Italia party's political stance includes two main themes: rejection of the right to abortion, euthanasia, same-sex marriage and LGBT parenting and the strict migrant policy. This values are in contrast with the values assumed by young Italian people (for example: the 77.1% of 18-24 year old said yes to gay marriage, the percentage is proportionally inverse to the increase in the age of the target population pool).

Regarding the participation in this election and according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 63.9% of Italians voted, lower than the previous one in 2018 (72.9%) and the lowest participation in democratic elections in Italy. In 2018, 55% of youth (18-35 years old) voted and in the recent reports shared, this percentage decreased in 2022 elections to 48% of youth voters. (data coming from the estimation of Livio Gigliuto, vice president of Piepoli Institute, Spaccini & Morsa, 2022).

Even though, through legislative decision the pool of electors for the Senate was increased from over 25 to 18 years old, the youth participation was lower than expected. In addition to the low youth participation, it is evident how low is the youth political representation in Italy, also at the demographic level, considering young people eligible to vote between the ages of 18 and 35 make up 20% of the Italian population (11 million out of 59.7 million total), 48% of them participated in the elections and only 22% voted for the party that now governs the country (Statistiche Istat, n.d.).

It is also important to consider the impossibility to participate for second generation of foreigners young people resident in Italian, called "second generation" (Tomasetta, 2018). This expression refers to the children of foreigners who are resident in the country, who were born in Italy or came to our country in their early years. It's relevant to underline that, for example, nearly one million second-generation young Italians were not able to vote in the 2018 election because of the bureaucratic rigidity and low social recognition of this group. However, there are now projects to be implemented dedicated to them (Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, n.d.).

YOUTH POLICIES

The primary source mentioning youth protection and youth policies is the Italian Constitution in the Article 31: *"The Republic shall facilitate, by means of economic and other provisions, the formation of the family and the fulfillment of the tasks connected therewith, with particular consideration for large families. It shall protect maternity, infancy, and youth, promoting and encouraging institutions necessary for such purposes."*
The main institutional body implementing youth policies in Italy is the Department for Youth Policy and Universal Civil Service, but the promotion of youth rights is not exclusively assigned to the Department. The Ministry of Education, the Ministry of University and Research, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism are called upon to develop specific policies in favor of young people through specific programmes. The Department is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of these youth policy programmes. The programmes address the problem of youth social exclusion through multi-dimensional approaches and by collaborating with several institutional actors.

The main themes of work are:

- Independence and autonomy
- Employment and training
- Integration of migrant youth
- Support for vulnerable families with minors.

The target groups which those programmes aim to join, includes also specific categories like:

- "Second generation of foreigners young people"
- Unaccompanied Foreign Minors (UFM) that defines minors abandoned after entering the territory of a Member State (it is not yet entirely clear whether minors separated from their parents and entrusted to relatives can also be included)
- Minors with fewer opportunities
- Young migrants from Central and Eastern Europe and Africa.

Regarding youth policies at the European level, Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps (ESC) programmes, managed at centralized level by the European Commission, are implemented at the local level by the *"National Agency for Youth"*. At the national level, a framework law on youth policy is not yet set and implemented. Of the 20 Italian regions, 16 have legislation on youth policies in compliance with the constraints of the Constitution, current European and international legislation, and the National Youth Strategy.

In particular, in Lazio region (where the data collection for the research was carried out), Regional Law 20/2007 *"Promotion of instruments of institutional participation of young generations in local political and administrative life"* was adopted. According to the Council of Europe's *"Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life"*, this law recognizes the role and encourages the creation, development and interaction of youth communal councils (targeted to 15-25 years old) and children's communal councils (targeted to 8-14 years old). Furthermore, it established a network of all youth councils with the aim of promoting the exchange of best practices.

A further contribution to the implementation of the youth policy in Italy, is the law L. Aug. 28, 1997, No. 285, "Provisions for the Promotion of Rights and Opportunities for Children and Adolescents". It provides a national fund for children and adolescents aimed to act at the national, regional and local level for promoting human rights, good quality of life, development, individual fulfillment and social inclusion of children and adolescents, based on the rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The way the fund is distributed among regions and provinces can sometimes seem lacking of structured parameters and ineffective to ensure a real social impact, for which these resources were conceived.

YOUTH WORK

HOW YOUTH WORK IS CONSIDERED AND ORGANISED

Since the 80s the youth work in Italy has been developed in connection with the youth policy through L.285/97, the funds provided and also following the European standards. Currently the youth work is implemented through several kinds of projects in several contexts but mainly in primary and secondary schools and youth social places located in buildings owned by the municipality and granted through public tenders (biennial, triennial, or quinquennial). The local and national NGOs apply to these calls by proposing educational projects. Moreover, services and activities offered in these places are financed by extra funds provided by private or public bodies (Dipartimento per le Politiche Giovanili e il Servizio Civile Universale, n.d.).

Therefore, some of these youth spaces ensure more than the services and educational activities financed by the state, according to their involvement in applying to various calls that meet their vision and mission.
This management of the resources is the result of the limited financing that local NGOs can achieve, compared to the funds provided for international NGOs actions.

Main youth cultural places are:

- Aggregation and animation spaces for adolescents, (e.g., CAGs-Centri Aggregativi Giovanili, educational support groups, socio-educational street work, outdoor education, summer camps, multipurpose centers for minors at risk).
- Informagiovani Centres specialized in information and guidance in various fields.
- Youth Centers that involve mostly young people (18-25) and young adults (26-35) and are particularly oriented to support youth initiatives.
- Universal Civil Service, a volunteer experience that is currently accessible to foreign residents in Italy, a change that is seriously contributing to the social inclusion of young migrants.
- EU-funded actions in the youth sector (youth exchanges, volunteer experiences, projects for participation in democratic life, youth initiative projects, transnational mobility of youth workers, strategic partnerships for the recognition of youth work), implemented in Italy through Erasmus+ program, with the technical assistance of the National Agency for Youth.
- Network of ARCI clubs, where young people and adults are engaged in cultural and socially engaged activities in various fields (the ARCI network also includes *"Arciragazzi"*, a consortium of about 80 educational spaces for children and adolescents).

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR YOUTH WORK

In Italy there is no official and common definition of 'youth work'. Currently, an ongoing debate is running at the national level to recognize youth worker as a work figure according to the European role, definition and normative. However, in some regional laws it is already possible to trace an initial framing of professional or voluntary work attributable to youth work.
For example, one of the first official definitions of 'youth workers' can be found in Piedmont Regional Law 6/2019, defining them as "figures who enable young people to develop their personal potential, strengthen their social potential and intervene in any risky behaviors". In the text of this law, the specific mission of youth workers is also defined as, "broadening youth participation, increasing youth autonomy and inclusion in society, and strengthening youth organizations".
The youth worker (mostly defined as 'socio-educational animator' in Italy) is a professional figure that appears in 16 out of 20 regional regulations (Department for Youth Policy and Universal Civil Service, n.d.).
Despite the difficulty of structuring the youth work in Italy, it is mainly a subject within the "Third Sector". The "Third Sector" (or non-profit sector) identifies those entities that operate outside the public sector (the State) and the commercial sector (the Market). It includes non-profit organizations, voluntary associations, social cooperatives, civil protection voluntary associations, social promotion associations, associations of sport's amateur, consumer and user associations, mutual aid societies, non-governmental organizations and social enterprises (Cattaneo, 2001; Wikipedia, n.d.).

GENERAL ISSUES IMPACTING YOUTH WORK

The lack of recognition and clear explanation of the role of the youth worker and a clear functional structure of youth work inside the country, creates difficulties on several levels:

- Devaluation of both educator and youth worker professions that remain marginal.
- Not appropriate recognition of skills and competences acquired through international experiences offered by European programmes.
- Very low economical recognition as professionals.
- Short term and precarious contracts.
- Lack of the presence of specific trade unions to guarantee a national labor contact including minimum earnings.
- Low quality in the social work.

This fragmented structure has to face common huge issues in which youth work should be implemented:

- Social inclusion and integration of minors and young migrants with few opportunities.
- Educational strategies to fight the phenomenon of early drop-out.
- Educational workshops in the schools about: active citizenship, non-formal education, equity and equality, problem solving, anti-racism, gender issues and sexual education.

LOCAL BACKGROUND SITUATION

BACKGROUND/S WHERE THE RESEARCH TOOK PLACE

WHERE THE RESEARCH TOOK PLACE

The main area considered for this research is the metropolitan city of Rome that offers a rich context in terms of interculturality and youth work operating for social inclusion. The research work was focused on six socio-cultural experiences spread in 5 municipalities of Rome and the Municipality of Ciampino town. Geographically, three main areas were taken into consideration: the center, the southern suburbs and the eastern suburbs, in particular Tor Bella Monaca (Municipality VI), Laurentino 38 and Fonte Laurentina (Municipality IX), and Garbatella (Municipality VIII). These areas have in common the social housing interventions in response to housing emergencies in the second half of the 20th century.
The Municipality of Ciampino is a small municipality where not so many educational realities act and network together.
As far as the central area is concerned, two neighborhoods were considered: Esquilino (Municipality I) and San Lorenzo (Municipality II) divided only by the Aurelian walls.

DESCRIPTION OF THESE AREAS

The **Esquilino** district (Municipality I) is very peculiar. Its residents belong to several social backgrounds, in particular: middle-class people and high school and university students. It is a very multi-cultural area where people with several cultural origins (mostly Africans and Central Europe) attend university, activities offered by local shelters and associations, and youth centers, community centers, or squats managed by cultural movement to offer cultural and artistic services. Furthermore, it is an area where several organisations based their headquarters (like Lunaria or ARCI).

As just said, young people can attend many activities in this district because it can offer several possibilities, but on the other hand the extreme poverty and the lack of social inclusion is very visible.
The presence of extra-Europe migrants is very high, as there is a lot of communal housing in the neighborhood, as well as a few shelters. Many of these people are waiting to be allowed to move to another EU country and reach their family. Moreover, many foreign homeless people are reported throughout the area and receive first aid from local associations or big charity organisations.

The districts of the Municipality IX, **Fonte Laurentina** and **Laurentino 38**, are predominantly residential areas with very few commercial services. Both can be considered part of Rome's southern suburbs and originated from housing projects. Laurentino 38 was created in the 1960s in response to the housing needs of those years, and despite the time that has passed, the social discomfort has remained constant compared to the rest of the city.

Tor Bella Monaca district (Municipality VI) has one of the highest concentrations of social housing in Rome and is located to the east of the city. It arose between the 1920s and 1930s as a result of immigration from the provinces and southern regions of Italy.

These neighborhoods very often feature in the crime news, highlighting the link between housing, family difficulties, social exclusion of young people and the risk of falling into criminal networks. All these characteristics are also the reasons why the youth work is extremely urgent to be implemented in these areas.

COUNTRY SITUATION
PORTUGAL

DEMOGRAPHICS
https://www.pordata.pt/
(2022)

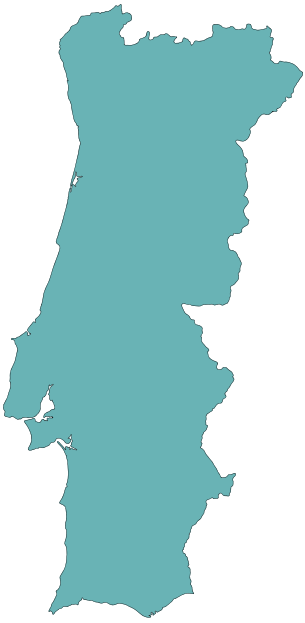
N. of female
5.355.987

N. of male
4.811.936

N. of inhabitants
10.167.923

EDUCATION
European Union, 2022; World Economic Forum, 2022.

- **Literacy rate** (% of total population) — 94.5%
- **Population aged 20–24 with at least an upper secondary education (ISCED 3–8), 2021** (% of the population aged 20–24) — 89.6%
- **Number of pupils per teacher in secondary and post-secondary education, 2020** — 8.8
- **Education system's ability to meet needs (rank out of 117 countries)** — 23
- **Out-of-school rate for 16 years-old pupils** (% of the population of the corresponding age) — 0%



POLITICS

PARLIAMENT STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

The Portuguese Parliament is formed of a single chamber of Members and is called the Assembleia da República commonly referred to as Parliament.
It is one of two elected bodies that exercises sovereign power established in the Constitution, alongside the President of the Republic, and its constitutional role is to be the "assembly that represents all Portuguese citizens".
As a chamber of Members elected by universal, direct and secret suffrage, the Assembleia da República represents all Portuguese citizens, acting in their name and being accountable to them.
Like the other bodies that exercise sovereign power defined by the Constitution – the President of the Republic, the Government and the Courts – it is endowed with sovereign powers of the state, particularly in relation to the political system since its primary function is to represent the citizens. For this reason, it is the main legislative body, the basis for forming the Government, and the body before which the executive is held accountable.
It has exclusive legislative competence for matters determined in the Constitution (as well as being able to legislate alongside other bodies on all other matters, except those regarding the organization and functioning of the Government). It is also assigned the tasks of scrutinizing the activity of the Government and the Administration and ensuring compliance with the Constitution and laws (Wikipedia, 2022).
At the moment, the structure of the Parliament is as follows, out of 230 seats:

- the majority of 120 is for Socialistic Party (PS) that is in power.
- the rest of 110 seats if for the Opposition distributed as follows: 77 to Social-Democratic party (PDS); 12 to Chega, a national conservative, right-wing populist political party in Portugal formed in 2019; 8 to Liberal Initiative (IL); 6 to Portuguese Communist Party (PCP); 5 to Left Block (BE); 1 to People Animals Nature (PAN); 1 to Livre (eco-socialist political party)

YOUTH POLICIES

The youth policy in Portugal has been designed and implemented in an integrated manner, so that it is possible to face, or at least try to face, several challenges that young people encounter, counting on their own participation for the solution of the problems as people with rights, through youth organizations and representative structures. In light of the high unemployment rates, risk of poverty or school failure, inter-ministerial coordination and cross-cutting policy measures are essential, trying to correspond to the necessary transversality of the youth policies. On the other hand, in addition to working to address problems, youth policy in Portugal tries to enhance opportunities aimed at and created by young people, taking into account the energy, innovation and social transformation that young people have as strategic political actors for the development.

The youth policy sector has established and strengthened itself over the years, with the first National Youth Plan launched in 2018, framed in the European priorities and in the needs of young Portuguese, after being sounded out. The second National Youth Plan followed in 2021 and will be implemented until 2024.

In Portugal, the highest authority responsible for youth policy is the Secretariat of State for Youth and Sports (SEJD), which is currently under the purview of the Ministry of Education. The executive and operational body of youth policies is the Portuguese Institute for Sports and Youth (IPDJ, IP).

The cross-cutting approach to youth policy implies the involvement of a large number of actors, both public and private, from different fields related to the lives of young people. There is an identified need for cooperation between ministries for the design, implementation and evaluation of policy measures for young people, which also counts on the participation of young people themselves, through their representative structures and youth organizations. The policy development in a participatory manner is also reflected in the existence of advisory bodies such as the Youth Advisory Council, the Advisory Council of the IPDJ, and, locally, the Youth City Councils, among others. The very existence of the National Youth Council (CNJ), whose legal status indicates that the State has the duty of consulting it *"as an interlocutor on all matters affecting young people"*, emphasizes the commitment to the joint and shared development of youth policies which has been further strengthened. Another cornerstone that is at the root of youth policies is the study and data research so that decision-making is substantiated by knowledge.

The National Youth Plan (PNJ) is the political instrument with the mission of rendering concrete the transversality of youth policies in order to strengthen the special protection of young people's rights, as stated in article 70 of the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic. It was also intended to guarantee the articulation between PNJ and the current national plans and programmes integrated into sectorial or transversal policies that may have an impact on young people, as well as ensure that the youth's dimension is included in those other political instruments(European Commission, 2021b).

There is also a National Federation of Youth Associations (FNAJ) founded in 1996 and counting with about 1.000 member associations. The main goal of the Federation is to represent local and regional Youth Associations before public and political authorities and promotes structured dialogue and the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in society (Federação Nacional Das Associações Juvenis, n.d.).

YOUTH WORK

HOW YOUTH WORK IS CONSIDERED AND ORGANISED

Portuguese law recognizes both "youth association" and "association of a youth characteristics" and much of the youth work is done through these organizations, which is mainly on a grass-root level.

For an association to be recognized as one of those there are certain criteria and once an organization fulfills them, they are able to be registered in RNAJ - National Registry of Youth Associations and therefore to apply for different types of support available for those organizations. Support is channeled via IPDJ - Portuguese institute of Youth and Sports, that is a part of the Ministry of education and is represented in every bigger city in Portugal.

Besides in youth associations, youth work is done obviously at schools, on a more formal level, and in different social institutions (IPSS) with projects focused on youngsters and young adults, especially those with risky behaviors or vulnerable in different ways. These institutions mostly use tools of non-formal education but most of them do not have specialized "youth workers". The role is taken mostly by what is called animators or/and social workers or even psychologists that are more focused on working with youngsters(Associação Portuguesa de Profissionais de Juventude, n.d.-b).

Therefore youth work is not organised on a more official level, nor well defined and described. To change this, the Portuguese Association of Professionals in youth Work was created with the goal of:

- Reinforce and dignify youth professionals in Portugal, as well as their recognition by the Portuguese Republic and by organizations representing young people.
- Propose legislation, as well as actions to help regulate the Youth sector and promote the image of the youth professional.
- Promote Non-Formal Education, as well as social innovation processes, which promotes the active participation of young people in the preservation of a democratic society.
- Promote cooperation and networking actions, as well as the development of educational mechanisms and tools among youth professionals (Associação Portuguesa de Profissionais de Juventude, n.d.-a)

Recently has emerged the need for accreditation as youth worker, so the organism responsible for adult continuous formation (Centro Qualifica - ANQ) has offered a new formative opportunity in "Técnico da Juventude" (Youth Technician).

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR YOUTH WORK

Youth Work in Portugal is developed under several regulations and frameworks of intervention, although the profession itself is not yet regulated in Portugal. All funding from the state is based on laws and regulations with strict observance of public criteria, reports, accountability and follow-up.
Portuguese youth workers are free to attend training courses in the Formar+ program of IPDJ, SALTO trainings, or other recognized institutions in the field of non-formal education, such as the Council of Europe or IPDJ (European Commission, 2021c).
As for the professional profile of the youth worker, it is a level 4 EQF standard, with double certification, allowing access to the 12th grade degree of secondary school education, building bridges between non-formal and formal education. It is built according to the national qualifications requirements and based on important references from the European youth work portfolio, as mentioned before (idem).
The training for *"Técnico de Juventude"* has 1.025 hours of mandatory curricula, and another 100h at the choice of the trainee, which must have field practice included. The curricula include a brief history of youth work, the general organization of the youth sector in Portugal and on the international level, programmes, and initiatives in the field of youth, youth empowerment and citizenship, the institutional structure of participation of young people, project management, among many other topics. The curricula include workshops about facilitation and some already existing training modules from the professional profile of the socio-cultural animator. Thus, the curricula profit from the historical background but aims at an independent realization of this new professional.
An example of good practice is the transnational project "Europe Goes Local – Supporting Youth Work at the Municipal Level", a strategic partnership from the National Agencies Erasmus + Program, that aims to "raise the quality of local youth work, in particular through enhanced cooperation between various stakeholders that are active at the municipal level". The involvement of several Portuguese municipalities in the project must be highlighted, as well as the contribution of committed Portuguese youth workers to the European project. The project has contributed to innovation in Portugal, by disseminating updated trends and knowledge on the field, namely for what concerns quality standards. The second Conference of this partnership took place in Portugal - Cascais (June 2018), during the Youth European Capital, with the support of the main national stakeholders (European Commission, 2021a).

GENERAL ISSUES IMPACTING YOUTH WORK

Although efforts have been made, the main issue is still a lack of recognition which leads to a lack of training, resources, monitoring, etc.
Without frameworks better adapted to the reality and the real needs of youth workers and youth work, often youth workers are left on their own, having to find alternative ways to get trainings, which is thankfully available through different programmes, but quality can be questionable. As for resources, there is a huge lack of financial resources. There is a chance for a project to be funded in the sense of materials etc. but there is no finance for salaries for youth workers as the profession and therefore professionals are often invisible.

LOCAL BACKGROUND SITUATION

BACKGROUND/S WHERE THE RESEARCH TOOK PLACE

WHERE THE RESEARCH TOOK PLACE

The research took place in different neighborhoods of two cities located near each other, but belonging to different municipalities: in Aveiro and in Agueda. In Aveiro, were covered most of the inside-the-city-neighborhoods in the interviews with youth workers and youngsters. Some of the youth workers we spoke with occasionally work out of city areas, but not often.
Even if they live out of the city neighbourhoods, young people mostly study or go to school in the city itself so it is hard to strictly define what exactly they consider their neighborhood.
In Agueda were interviewed representatives of the youth center who are working in the area of the whole Municipality of Agueda, including the area where the largest Roma community in Agueda lives.

DESCRIPTION OF THESE AREAS

Aveiro is a coastal city in Portugal of around 80.000 inhabitants, a University center with well-developed industry and tourism. The areas we covered in Aveiro were most of the inside-the-city areas (including social neighborhoods), but some of the focus groups involved youngsters who are living outside of the city and other youngsters who are living in Aveiro temporarily because they are students. The focus groups were not very homogeneous, nor based on the neighborhoods because for example when they were done at school, pupils from different parts of the city joined the group.
Agueda is a city about 30km to the interior of Aveiro, with around 46.000 inhabitants. Agueda is an important commercial and industrial center, located in an extremely fertile area. It has also developed a strong industry, mainly based on the production of motorized and common bicycles and on civil construction. The city is getting more and more known also by its cultural offer including street art and several festivals with a long tradition.

ROMANIA

DEMOGRAPHICS (2022)

N. of female
9.773.407

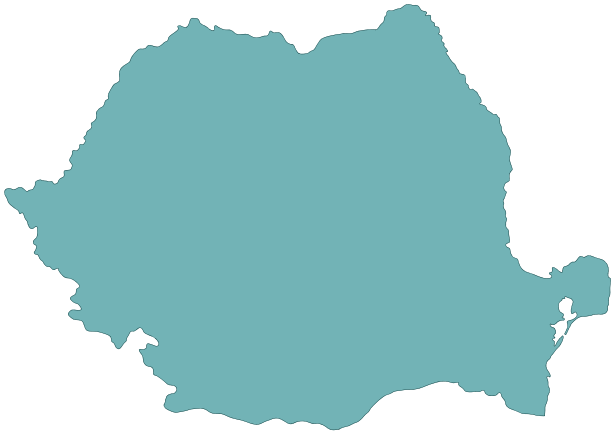
N. of male
9.350.654

N. of inhabitants
19.124.061

EDUCATION

European Union, 2022; World Economic Forum, 2022.

- **Literacy rate** (% of total population) — 98.6%
- **Population aged 20–24 with at least an upper secondary education (ISCED 3–8), 2021** (% of the population aged 20–24) — 83.3%
- **Number of pupils per teacher in secondary and post-secondary education, 2020** — 11.4
- **Education system's ability to meet needs (rank out of 117 countries)** — 94
- **Out-of-school rate for 16 years-old pupils** (% of the population of the corresponding age) — 19.26%



POLITICS

PARLIAMENT STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

Romania is a semi-presidential republic and the power is equally distributed based on the democratic principles into:

- Legislative power
- Executive power
- Judicial power.

The legislative power is represented by a bicameral Parliament, respectively the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. They are the ones adopting new laws for Romania.
The executive power is represented by the Romanian Government and the Romanian State President, the last one being chosen by the population. The President, based on the Parliament's advice, chooses the head of the Government, the Prime Minister. The Government reunites 20 Ministries, each one of them having a main direction for function. In order to reach the objectives provided in the government program, the Romanian Government fulfills the functions of consolidation, regulation, administration, representing and exercising the state authority. The Parliament together with the Government also have the right of legislative initiative. Also, a legislative proposal can be submitted by a group of at least 100.000 persons with voting rights from at least one quarter of the counties of the country.
The judicial power: in Romania, justice is carried out only by the High Court of Cassation and Justice and the other courts, respectively the courts of appeal, and the specialized courts. The High Court of Cassation and Justice is the highest court and has the fundamental role to ensure the unitary interpretation and application of the other courts and the role of guarantor of the supremacy of the Constitution.

YOUTH POLICIES

In Romania, the responsibility for youth policy is shared between the central level authorities and the local authorities. Within the limits of the Youth Law, the local authorities are free to develop initiatives, but the field faces poor coordination at national level.
At the moment, the main responsibility for the youth policies falls under the Ministry of Family, Youth and Equal Opportunities (Guvernul României, n.d.).
However, there is only one department dedicated to youth: "The General Direction of Youth Policies and Housing".
The county offices for youth and sports, as well as the county offices for culture, universities, and schools, have a great deal of autonomy in designing their own programmes and calendars for involving young people.

This plan ensures that a wide number of young people from various regions, cities, towns, and villages have access to youth activities and youth work.
However, people from the suburbs or from the rural area face difficulties in accessing these kinds of activities. The national coordination in the field is very challenging in the absence of strong monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the field of youth activities and youth work.
The National Youth Strategy 2015-2020 (Ministerul Tineretului și Sportului, 2014) included measures in the field of education, culture, volunteering, public and political participation, sports, health, leisure, employment, entrepreneurship and social inclusion. However, it was not supported by an action plan, clear budget allocations and a monitoring plan (European Commission, 2022b).
Until now the Romanian Government failed to adopt a new Youth Strategy for the next period. Therefore, coordination between top-level authorities responsible for youth policy is not systematic, and the responsible central authorities in the field of youth lack control over the timely and full implementation of actions to meet the youth policy objectives.

YOUTH WORK

HOW YOUTH WORK IS CONSIDERED AND ORGANISED

Concerning the general distribution of responsibilities, the main governance approach to youth works is the following: the Ministry of Family, Youth and Equal Opportunities is dealing with the policy design, monitoring and evaluation of the youth policies, in general.

Ministry of Education is dealing with elements of validation of learning including the recognition of non-formal education learning paths.
Non-governmental organizations participate in the policy making in the field of youth work as consultative structures for the governmental through the National Council For Youth (NCFY) created in 2020 as an advisory body for the former Ministry of Youth and Sports, composed by 50 representatives of youth civil society organizations.
The council has a committee dedicated to culture and recreational activities for young people, including youth work activities, and a committee dedicated to infrastructure for youth work (youth centers and youth camp infrastructure etc.); ad-hoc consultative meetings.

Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity is dealing with measures related to social inclusion, social justice and the general framework on youth policies (Ministerul Muncii și Solidarității Sociale, 2022). National Agency for Community Programmes in the Field of Education and Vocational Training is in charge with the youth workers' training through its own local and national initiatives as well as through the international training activities developed on partnership basis with the other National Agencies or supporting their participation.
Unfortunately, there is little cooperation between the above mentioned institutions and the civil society, fact that affects the way in which youth work is managed and delivered in Romania.

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR YOUTH WORK

Status in national legislation: the first reference to the youth worker – but through the activities implemented – comes with the National Youth Law. In 2012, the Occupational Standard for the Youth Workers had been defined. According to this standard, "the youth worker mobilizes young people in order to develop their life skills and behaviors, stimulating the associative life and cooperation among young people, facilitating their participation in the community life".
The practitioners of this occupation represent resources for young people, for NGOs and communities and they carry out activities related to information, guidance and support for young people, facilitating, in the same time, their social insertion and their personal development in the context of enhancing human, cultural diversity and promoting active citizenship.
The youth workers can be either employees of organizations or can be volunteers leading youth groups. In terms of occupational areas covered, the Standard includes the ones trained in social pedagogy, community development specialist, socio-education animators, and social workers.
In order to officially become a youth worker, a person should go through a 5 days course that is being delivered by a private entity - Schultz Consulting, Don Bosco etc. The conditions to follow the course are related to completing at least the high-school studies. After completing the course, the participants receive the Certificate of Youth Worker that is being recognized by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education and the National Authority for Qualifications. The certificate recognizes the skills and competencies required to practice the profession of Youth Worker – COR Code 341205.

GENERAL ISSUES IMPACTING YOUTH WORK

At the end of 2021, the first National Youth Workers' Convention was organised by the Romanian Ministry of Youth and Sport in cooperation with the Romanian National Agency and with the support of DEIS Association, being the first event dedicated to discussions about the advancement and recognition of youth work as a profession in Romania and to discussing about the need for cross-sector cooperation in the field, looking as well as the needs and aspirations of Romanian youth workers (Popescu, 2021).
This year, during the second CoNLucraTin conference, "The statement of youth workers in Romania - supporting the career and activity of youth workers", which includes 3 chapters: career, youth activity, legal and financial framework, was presented.
It is the only public document which states the real challenges the youth workers face, for now.
Some of the identified issues are:

Public structures:

- Social, administrative and political recognition.
- Recognition of the value of youth activity (of working with young people) which can be obtained by demonstrating its positive impact on young people and inherently at community level. For that, an appropriate legal and financial framework is needed.
- The low number of open positions in public administrations (the average of 2-3 youth workers/county is insufficient to carry out activities and services for the several tens and hundreds of thousands of young people).
- Frequent alternation in management positions caused by political interests, as well as the lack of expertise or experience in working with young people.
- A rift between the central and local level highlighted by the lack of clear and unitary procedures for information exchange and data collection.
- The constant refusal to budget, from the central level to training of employees in the territory.

Non-governmental structures:

- Challenges given by bureaucracy, thick documentation.
- Insufficient funds to employ youth workers.
- Limited number of funding opportunities to consider salary expenses eligible.
- The lack of an infrastructure adequate to the needs of young people and implicitly to the activities dedicated to them.

LOCAL BACKGROUND SITUATION

BACKGROUND/S WHERE THE RESEARCH TOOK PLACE

WHERE THE RESEARCH TOOK PLACE

- Pantelimon, Ilfov County
- Slănic, Prahova County
- Oltenința, Călărași County
- Lugoj, Timiș County
- Timișoara, Timiș County

DESCRIPTION OF THESE AREAS

Pantelimon: the city of Pantelimonis is located in the eastern vicinity of the city of Bucharest, being a satellite city of the capital. According to the data found on the town hall website, the total population is 28.400 inhabitants (men: 13.934/women: 14.466). The number is certainly much higher because, in recent years, the city has experienced galloping real estate development. However, the investment by the authorities in the well being of the residents is zero. The cultural infrastructure is non-existent (there is no theater, cinema or center for cultural events). The only activities carried out are sports (football, rugby, tennis, karate, wrestling and handball) and are intended for children and teenagers.

In Pantelimon there is only one kindergarten and one secondary school (grades I-VIII) - which also owns the city's only library, with a collection of 20.000 volumes.

The lack of leisure and recreation spaces, and the absent extracurricular cultural and educational offer prompts residents either to disinterest and abandon (especially the segment of those with limited financial resources) or to look for alternatives and cultural opportunities in Bucharest (the relatively short distance from the center of the capital being an advantage).

The Pantelimon Social Assistance Department's mission is to support, through programmes, services and social aid, children from families with problems, the elderly, people with fewer opportunities and those with special needs (disabilities or handicaps). The funds needed to carry out the activities are provided from the budget of the Pantelimon Local Council and through various humanitarian campaigns. We interviewed their staff members to understand what the challenges are in a state institution where youth workers have to deal with difficult social cases.

The Căsuța Speranței children's day center represents a form of active support given to children (aged between 6-14 years) who come from disadvantaged families, at risk of social exclusion, whose income is insufficient to cover their needs in order to prevent school dropout. The center provides care, education, recreation, socialization and counselling activities for children, but also for their parents or legal representatives, for 5 days a week, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. In the center, children also benefit from one hot meal a day and snacks.

Slănic: Slănic is a town in Prahova County, consisting of the component settlements of Groșani, Prăjani and Slănic (the county seat). According to the 2011 census, Slănic had a population of 6.034 inhabitants, in decline from a demographic point of view. The city is known for its forests and mountain trails accessible to all, for its clean air, for its salt lakes and for its old salt pan, currently used as a recreational spot. It had its greatest development during the communist period, being one of the best-rated spa resorts in Romania. Currently, the city is poorly developed, and the cultural infrastructure is precarious. Access to cultural events dedicated to children and young people is limited by financial resources, lack of interest or inadequate offer for the age and needs of the target audience.
The NGO environment is poorly represented and there are no cultural operators to develop structured, repetitive and regular artistic activities aimed at young people.

Oltenița: Oltenita has a population of 24.822 inhabitants (2011) and represents the second largest and most important urban center of Călăraşi County. Most of the inhabitants are Romanian (84.7%), with a minority of Roma (5.63%). For 9.18% of the population, ethnicity is unknown. From a religious point of view, the majority of the inhabitants are Orthodox (89.76%).
Oltenita has considerable tourist potential, but the vestiges of the Gumelnița culture, the port on the Danube, the settlement at the confluence of the river with the Argeș river and the distance from the country's capital (60 km) remain untapped advantages by the local and central authorities.
Cultural activities dedicated to children and young people are reduced.
The local cinema only plays commercial films and only on weekends. Theatre performances are rare and are usually boulevard comedies belonging to Bucharest independent theaters or troupes with revue repertoire. The NGO environment is poorly developed and associations active in the sphere of education, art and culture are almost non-existent.

Lugoj: Lugoj is a municipality in Timiș County, consisting of the component locality Lugoj (residence) and the villages of Măguri and Tapia.
The population of Lugoj municipality amounts to 40.361 inhabitants (2011): 79% Romanians, 6.82% Hungarians, 2.3% Roma, 1.85% Germans and 1.29% Ukrainians. For 8.33% of the population, ethnicity is unknown. From a religious point of view, the majority of the inhabitants are Orthodox (71.66%), but there are also minorities of Roman Catholics (7.62%), Pentecostals (3.64%), Reformed (3.03%), Baptists (2.5%) and Greek Catholics (1.83%). The religious affiliation is unknown for 8.63% of the population. In the past, Lugoj was considered a true center of the cultural and musical movement in Transylvania and Banat.

Although the cultural infrastructure exists (theater, cinema, museum, library, house of culture, etc.), artistic and educational programmes and activities are limited and lack diversity, and the NGO environment at the local level is poorly represented. Interest in cultural but also sports-recreational activities has decreased considerably in the last period, and among the causes, we can point out: the lack of correlation between offers and current needs and requirements, the lack of specialized human resources, high material costs, lack of free time (busy school schedule), parents' disinterest, but also the promotion of material values at the expense of intellectual/spiritual values.
Thus, cultural consumption practices among children and adolescents are rather interactive and especially in the online environment.

Timișoara: it is located in the west of Romania, close to the borders with Hungary and Serbia, and is the seat of Timiș County, with 319.279 inhabitants, (2011) the third most populous city in the country.
Timișoara is an important industrial, commercial, medical, cultural and university center, and in 2023 it will be the European capital of culture.
The majority of the inhabitants are Romanians (81.36%) and the main minorities found are Hungarians (4.87%), Serbians (1.52%) and Germans (1.31%). Ethnicity is unknown for 8.98% of the population. From a religious point of view, the majority of the inhabitants are Orthodox (74.99%), Roman Catholic (7.11%), Pentecostal (2.05%), Reformed (1.3%), Baptist (1.23%) and Greek Catholics (1.15%). For 9.41% of the population, religious affiliation is not known.

AIDRom - the Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania, began its activity in Timișoara in 1991 with the aim of promoting the inclusion of marginalized people, contributing to the social reintegration of high-risk people, ensuring equal opportunities and fighting against human trafficking persons and discrimination.
AIDRom offers assistance to refugees and migrants who want to integrate in Romania and aims to alleviate segregation in multi-ethnic communities and respect human rights.
The social and community assistance provided by AIDRom in Timișoara, Bucharest and Iași currently focuses on key priorities and programmes such as: gender equality, equal opportunities, refugees, human trafficking, prevention of domestic violence, education, transformation courses and children at risk situations.
Since 2012, AIDRom has implemented over 40 projects with European funding, or from international organizations (European Commission, General Inspectorate for Immigration, UNHCR Romania, Norwegian Funds, etc.). The association also runs Erasmus research projects.

We interviewed 3 of their staff members in order to identify the challenges they are facing since they work with a very different target group than Universitur has worked with – young refugees.

Bucharest: the capital of Romania, Bucharest, hosts 2.162.281 people (July 2022) and over 3 million if we take into consideration the metropolitan area. Even if there are clear discrepancies between the center and the suburbs in what concerns the access to education and culture, the organization decided to organize a focus group for students belonging to the Association of Students Geographers (ASG) who have very different backgrounds and come either from various neighborhoods of the capital city or from other towns and rural areas. Therefore, they provided insight into the issues the wide Romania deals with.

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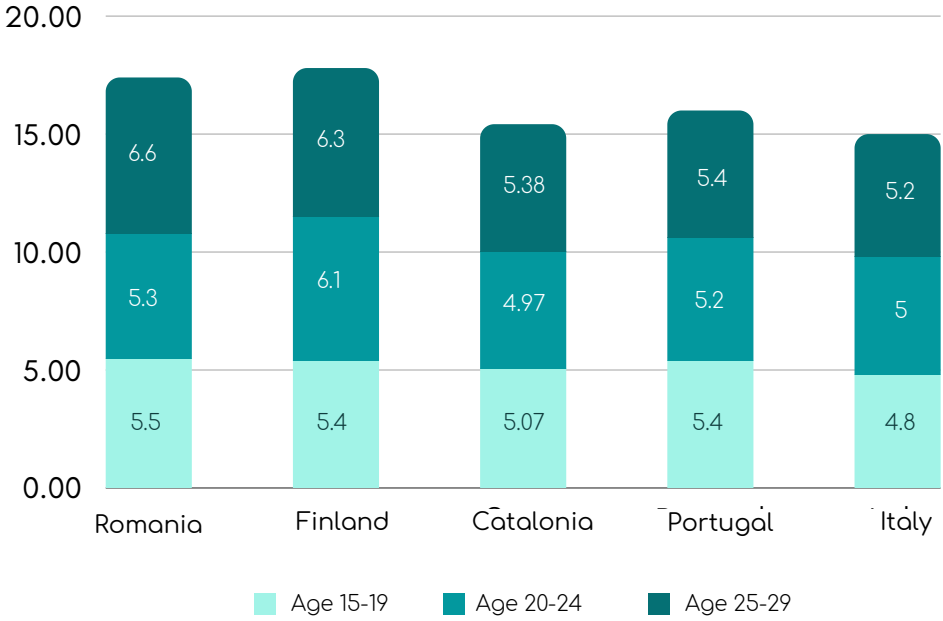
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CHAPTER III • RESEARCH RESULTS

- Research overview: Tools, Methods and Limitations
- Focus groups
- Interviews
- Predominant issues
- Conclusions



- *Youth ratio by age groups*

In order to determine the needs of the target groups in each reality, consistent field research was developed, which consisted in conducting interviews and focus groups. The research was based on qualitative analysis to better identify and understand the specificities of each reality in order to sketch and implement effective workshops. The research team previously agreed on the research structure, setting clear objectives. Therefore, the main aim was to identify the challenges both the youth workers and the young people are facing in their daily work/life.

In this respect, an interview guide was designed for the youth workers and a focus group guide for the young people. The reason behind this lies in the efficiency of these investigation tools adapted to the target groups. The researchers' team considered the face-to-face interview to be more suitable for the youth workers because it gives the researcher the possibility to interact with the interviewee and gain more insight. Moreover, the interview is a very suitable tool for capturing verbal and non-verbal cues. According to body language, for example, one can identify the level of discomfort with the questions or, adversely, the level of enthusiasm for the topics being discussed in the interview. Therefore, capturing emotions and behavioral elements is crucial for the effective decoding and interpretation of the data.

Focus groups were chosen for young people for several reasons. The main one is related to accessing and motivating the target group.

The term "research" is not exactly attractive to young people. Hence it would have been more difficult to reach them than "disguising" a focus group into a workshop dedicated to them. Being in small groups also allows them to interact and become more participative than having individual discussions when some of them tend to be shy or give biased, "correct" answers.

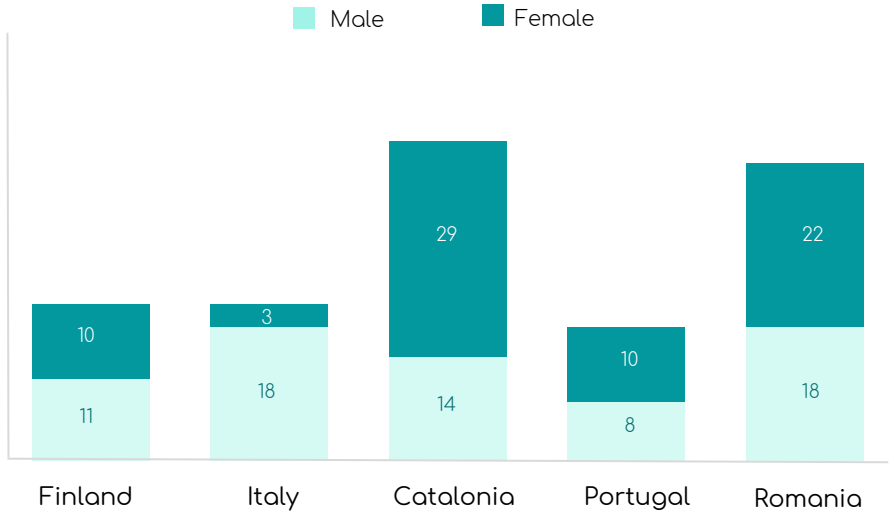
However, the greatest advantage of both research tools is that the researcher can directly interact with the target group, asking for clarification, follow-up questions or probing.
The disadvantages are related to the logistics and the resources involved: both interviews and focus groups are time-consuming, and they need rigorous planning and suitable context to be conducted efficiently.

Limitations of the research mainly refer to the logistics and motivating the target group. All partners faced difficulties in scheduling the focus groups (in youth centres or schools) due to the workload of the beneficiaries, the lack of time and/or of the meeting facilities. Moreover, finding the suitable shape in which to "disguise" the research was also a provocation because it had to be attractive while reaching its objectives at the same time. These obstacles were overcome because of the good collaboration and the professionalism of all the team members and the consortium considers the results highly relevant for assessing the needs of their target groups.

FOCUS GROUPS

The project team managed to organise **15 focus groups** with a total number of **143 participants**, divided by gender as shown in Figure below.
Their ages range between 14 and 24 years old, and they all have very different backgrounds according to the area of intervention of each organisation (see Chapter II).

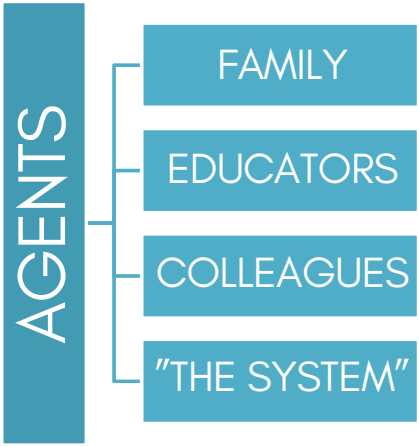
The main aim of the focus groups was to determine the challenges young people face in four different contexts: **school, family, online, and in the neighborhood**. The answers are very complex and heterogeneous, but they all relate to various **agents/actors**, lack of **resources**, to dealing with **deviant behavior**, and **mental health issues**.



- *Number of participants in focus groups*

CHALLENGES IN SCHOOL

When asked about challenges faced in school, young people first think about the relationship with their colleagues, which is normal since the need for belonging is more prominent at this age. However, the climate is in school is also influenced by the teachers who can easily generate tension and pressure according to the way in which they manage their classes. The less direct agents who create challenging situations for young people in schools are their families and the educational system itself.



In this respect, the family pressure that affects the atmosphere at school is mostly related to the parents' need to fulfill their own dreams through their children or to "use" them as an instrument for pride. Therefore, they need to perform well and most of the time to be better than other colleagues. This fact does not help a lot in a context where competition is cultivated through an educational system rather based on control and punishment than on personal development of skills and aptitudes. Many participants in the focus groups mentioned the busy schedule and the overloaded curriculum as factors of stress and de-motivation. Moreover, the lack of perspectives after graduation and the constant push of the parents, many times, lead to confusion and anxiety.

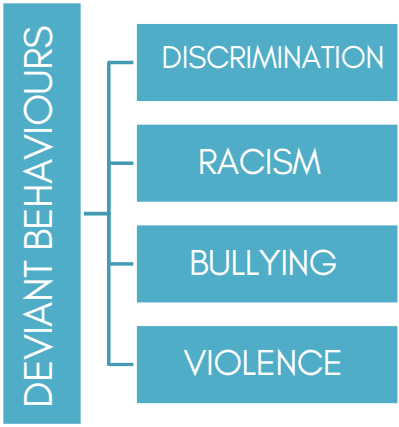
The fact that educators also have difficulties in respecting curricula (as presented in the interviews' analysis) affects the student-centered education process as well as the overall atmosphere in class, since they must focus on teaching rather than on managing conflicts and emotions between classmates. One participant declared *"We miss the freedom to express ourselves and our identity because we have to follow what the system asks us all the time."*

The colleagues are the main agents that influence the well being in school since peer pressure is the one that generates most of the deviant behaviors for this age. The need for belonging asks for conformity and most of the time young people

struggle to fit in by doing things that they wouldn't normally do. That is why all the youngsters in the focus groups mentioned they were subjects or witnesses to cases of discrimination, racism, bullying or some sort of violence.

For example, in Portugal the youngsters mentioned *"praxe"* - an academic tradition in Portugal where older students "train" newcomers for academic life through initiation rituals which often include humiliating tasks, and whoever does not want to participate may be excluded by certain groups of people. One of the subjects from Catalonia said: *"Sometimes, kids from my school make others feel bad to be ´cool´ and that is not funny to me, it should not be like that".*

The large majority also mentioned the mental health issues they have to deal with that prevent them from reaching their potential and live in a harmonious environment. Therefore, all the agents and the context generate anxiety, panic attacks, burnout, fear of letting people down and uncertainty (especially about their adulthood). One of the participants mentioned: *"Being a BA, MA or even PhD does not give us anymore any guarantee that we will have a good life in terms of having a good salary, nice house..."*





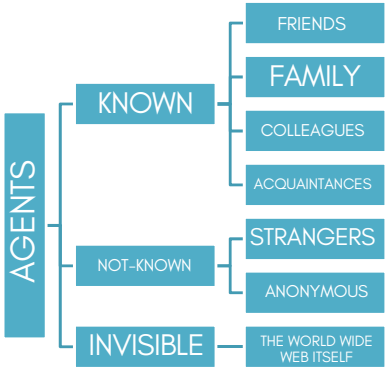
Other factors that lead to challenges in schools are resources. Especially when we speak about youngsters with fewer opportunities, lack of financial resources is always a leading cause for school dropout or for being oppressed/bullied.
The pandemic widened the gap between the rich and the poor by digitalising education in "un-digitalised" communities – lots of youngsters from isolated places were forced to give up school because they had no laptops, tablets or internet connection. Another way in which resources affect the well being in schools is related to the lack of psychological support or career counselors. For example, in Romania and Portugal there is only one person who provides support for all the students of one school which makes it highly inefficient, therefore they feel *"there is no interest for students' health, especially mental health"*. Another issue that affects youngsters from peripheral and isolated areas is transportation and the difficulties that come along with the need to commute.



CHALLENGES ONLINE

Since spending time on internet has moved from communicating to becoming a way of living, online space has maximised its impact on its users. Since youngsters spend more than 6 hours a day connected, they face serious challenges online.

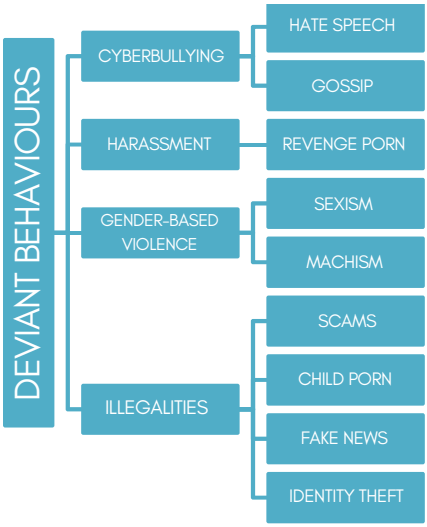
When it comes to agents of influence, the participants in the focus groups identified three main categories – known, not known and invisible/systemic. The agents they know are more or less the same people with whom they interact in offline world as well: friends, family, colleagues and acquaintances. The new, difficult part online is when one has to interact with strangers or face anonymous comments. The world wide web itself is not designed to protect children and young people from harmful experiences and there is no institutional education related to this.



Therefore, they need to face lots of deviant behaviors which can scare them for life, fact that was underlined by participants in the research from all countries involved. The same need of belonging and for conformity can go in the wrong direction when youngsters decide to take part into online challenges and dares, capitalized by unethical app developers (as the following one presented).
The Blue Whale Challenge is an example brought up by the interviewees who described it as an online "game" reportedly consisting of a series of tasks assigned to players by administrators over a long period of time initially innocuous before introducing elements of self-harm and self-depreciation.

It became very popular especially in isolated, rural areas where youngsters have fewer entertainment opportunities. At the same time, they consider it to be a way of standing out from anonymity without understanding the risks. The same motivation lies behind spending a lot of time on social media – preparing, posting and commenting – craving for likes, loves and other positive reactions that most often come with their counterparts – hate speech and bullying, sexism and harassment. The run after online appreciation created new jobs – such as being an "influencer" – a job which many youngsters wish to have, neglecting their traditional professional path in order to focus on generating "likable" content. However, it comes[1] together with the "cancel culture" and the constant pressure of being exposed.

Many participants underlined the fakeness of online content – from fake accounts to fake news, fake information and fake lives – generating a crisis of values where it becomes more and more difficult to tell right from wrong and it is setting the ground for the perfect environment for illegalities.



The health challenges faced by young people who spend time online are both mental and physical. From sedentarism and its effects – obesity, risk of heart diseases etc. to social anxiety. From the inability to have an efficient face-to-face communication to the helplessness generated by the impossibility of managing the amount of information and filtering the news.

Cancel Culture: "a movement to remove celebrity status or esteem from a person, place, or thing based on offensive behaviour or transgression" *(Americans and 'Cancel Culture': Where Some See Calls for Accountability, Others See Censorship, Punishment | Pew Research Center)*



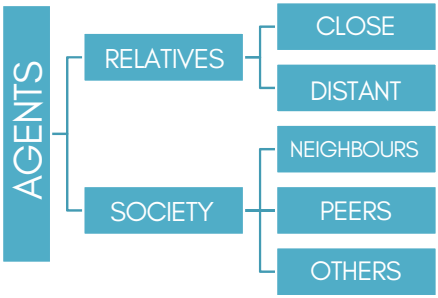
CHALLENGES IN THE FAMILY

Lots of the challenges young people are facing in the family are similar to the ones in school, online or in the neighborhood. The agents identified are the relatives and other members of the society. However, most of the issues mentioned by the participants in the focus groups refer to the behaviors that affect their well being.

Parenting issues are among the most frequent answers encountered, together with the deviant behavior of the parents or other close relatives.

Whether it is about over protection or too much permissiveness, young people find it challenging to deal with the situations generated in their families and most of the times they counteract. If it's about over protection they tend to do extreme things in order to *escape* family control. If it's about too much freedom, they tend to feel neglected and ignored and they take actions to stand out and *be seen*. The relation with technology was also mentioned – in families where there is no screen time management, the youngsters tend to have more communication and adaptability problems.

The pressure that comes along with the parents' exigencies and expectations lead to the fear of not being good enough or not performing well enough (in school, professions, relations or life in general) which causes the above mentioned mental health issues.



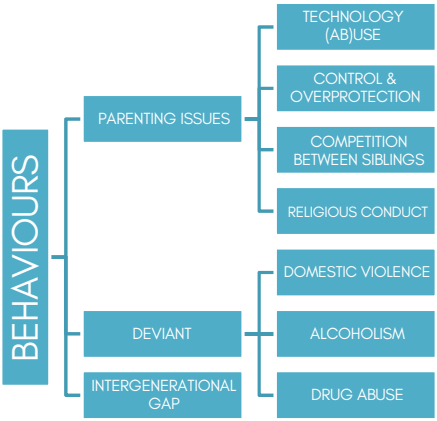
When it comes to resources, the main challenge of families from isolated areas (and not only) is managing the finances. Most of the answers given refer to the implications of not having enough money for the needs of all members and having to prioritize. Combined with poor parenting, this issue materialises in providing poor quality food and too few educational resources, which consequently lead to lack of future opportunities.

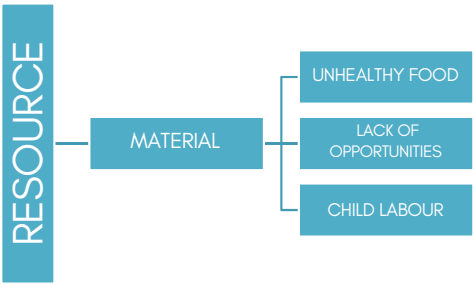
Poverty sometimes materialises into school dropout due to the fact that children/youngsters are asked to help around the household (cooking, cleaning, taking care of siblings) or to work (especially in agriculture in rural areas).

Moreover, sometimes parents create an atmosphere of competitiveness between siblings which makes home a place for confrontation.

The atmosphere at home is also essential for the well being of youngsters, therefore many of the responders mentioned addictions as great problems to be dealt with. Whether it is alcohol or drugs, they all lead to tensions and consequently to violence, traumas, and replication.

The intergenerational gap was also encountered among the answers due to the fact that it affects the dialogue between parents and youngsters, sparking conflicts and inconveniences.





CHALLENGES AND BENEFITS IN THEIR ENVIRONMENTS

In order to determine the needs related to the environment the young people live in, we asked them to identify pros and cons of their settings and the answers were very diverse. Therefore, the researchers' team decided to cluster them in three sections: safety, well being, and landscape.

When it comes to **safety**, there is a clear need of knowing how to interact with people with deviant behaviors in public space. Whether it is about drug addiction, alcohol abuse, violence of any kind or criminality, youngsters find it difficult to protect themselves and enjoy the public space (especially at night). Despite these shortcomings, their own neighborhood gives a feeling of familiarity and there are certain places where they feel at home.

The participants in the focus groups highlighted the importance of youth centers and leisure facilities for their **wellbeing**, especially sport facilities that foster inclusion and reduce discrimination and racism. The existing cultural events were also mentioned as important for their life quality. However, the places taken into consideration for research lack lots of things that would make a difference in youngsters' lives, such as: socialization events, better housing/accommodation, respect, intercultural dialogue, hobbies, and places better targeted for them.

When it comes to **landscape** and infrastructure, the thing that affects all the communities is the public transportation system. For suburbs the connection with the center is essential because a poor transportation system and bad conditions of roads sentence their inhabitants to isolation. The environmental issues were also among the most frequent answers – the scarcity of trash bins, the pollution, the traffic jams affect the perception of the areas analysed. The lack of interest of authorities and population in preserving heritage is also contributing to a negative image of the suburbs. However, many participants (both young people and youth workers) appreciated the natural resources as an advantage, underlying the importance of including them in a sustainable development strategy along with cultural and entertainment facilities.

SAFETY

+

- Feeling of familiarity
- There are areas where they can meet without parental supervision
- The youth centres are friendly places with no discrimination
- In the university campus there is community spirit and common activities

−

- Alcohol consumption
- Drug abuse
- Discrimination
- Racism
- Robberies
- Criminality
- Street fights
- Catcalling
- Violence towards homeless people
- Restless atmosphere

WELL BEING

+

SPORT ACTIVITIES

- Basketball and football courts
- Pentaque field
- Nightlife
- Cultural events
- Bike riding

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GENERAL

- Multiculturalism instead of interculturality
- Segregation
- Lack of respect
- Lack of youth centres
- Lack of young people
- Lack of socialisation events
- Lack of hobbies for young people

IMMIGRANTS

- Isolation – no family, no friends
- Poor housing conditions
- Students Insufficient student accommodation
- Too few places dedicated to them
- Library is a place only of silence, instead of being a place of sharing

LANDSCAPE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

+

NATURAL RESOURCES

- The beach, the salt mine and the salt lake, forests, other green spaces
- Walking paths
- Heritage
- The existing cultural infrastructure
- The botanical garden

−

- Poor public transportation
- Not enough cultural infrastructure
- Pollution
- Lack of environmenal education
- Not enough trash bins
- Buildings left in disrepair
- Congested traffic
- Lack of interest to preserve heritage
- Poor management of tourists
- Lots of "under construction" areas
- Poor road infrastructure

YOUNG PEOPLE AND ROLE MODELS

Given the fact that we are facing a shift of paradigm in what concerns the contemporary system of values, the young people were asked about their superheroes in the attempt to identify their role models. As expected, the people they look up to mainly come from their families, with the **mother** being the most frequent answer, along with father, parents, siblings, grandparents and other relatives.
The main motivations included the support and the understanding they provide, making home a safe space.

At this age full of insecurities, it is essential to know you have someone to rely on. When family fails to do that, friends become role models, that is why the entourage can be life changing. Educators are also important, sometimes taking the place of counselors and influencing (at least) the professional parcourse of youngsters.
Young people also appreciate artists, athletes, advocates/activists, politicians, entrepreneurs, and social media influencers for the things they stand up for and promote.



- *Youngsters' role models*

A large number of participants in the focus groups also chose fictional characters (Batman, Spiderman, Ironman, Cat Noire, Deadpool, Songoku etc.) for their main features: humor, speed, agility, rebellion, charm, empathy etc. There were also youngsters who showed confidence affirming:

"I am my own hero and try to be my own role model, the best possible version of myself. It's the only way it can be. No one knows what I have been through, and I only made it thanks to believing in myself and not with anyone's help or superpower. If it was not for me, today I wouldn't be here."



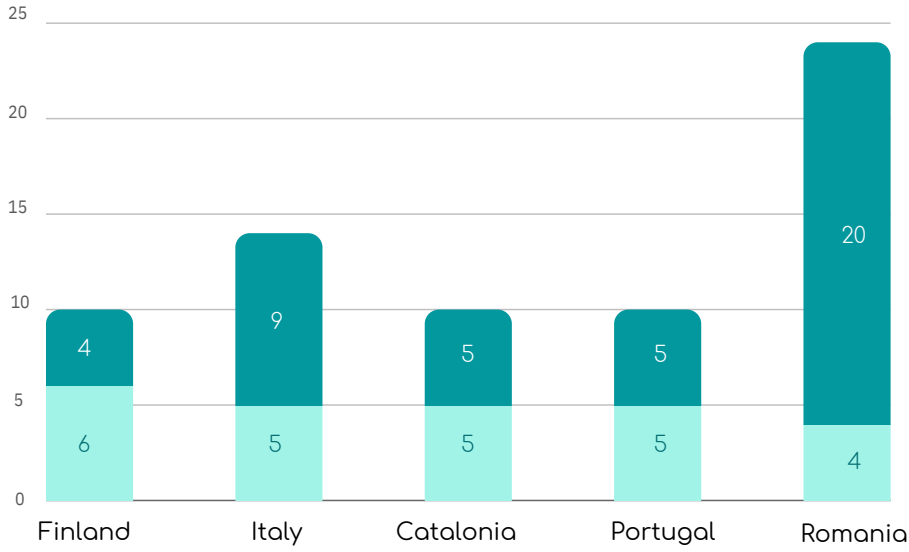
- *Values youngsters appreciate in non-fictional role models*



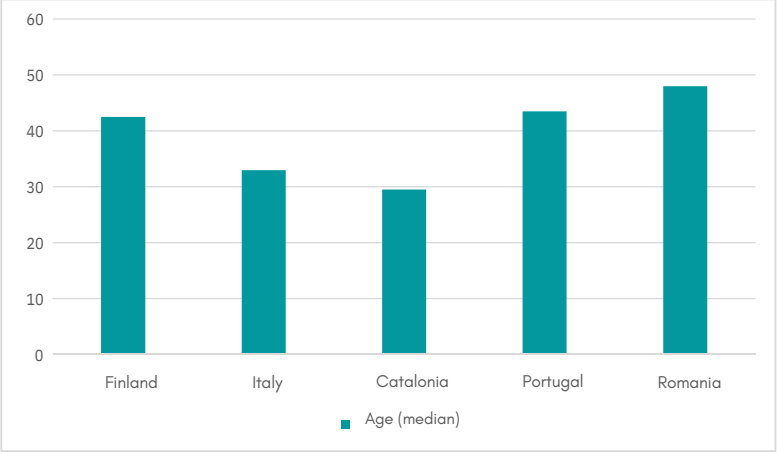
- *Features young people appreciate in fictional characters*

INTERVIEWS

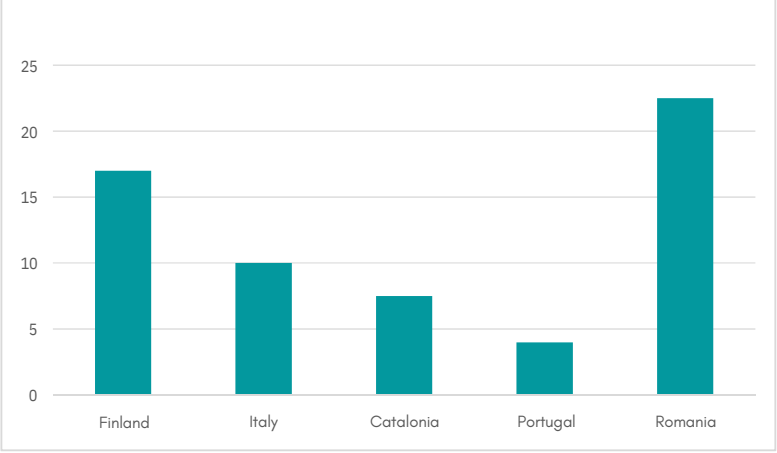
The project team involved **68 youth workers** in the study, divided by gender as shown in Figure.
The typology of respondents varies according to the interests of each organisation and the areas of intervention. Their ages range from 19 years old to 66, with a median of 40 years old, as shown in Figure 2.
However, as it is shown in Figure 33 the interviewees have significant experience in youth work, so we consider the answers relevant for the research.



- *Number of interviewees by country and gender*



- *Median age of the interviewees*



- *Years of experience in youth work of the respondents (median)*

CHALLENGES FACED BY YOUTH WORKERS

The needs assessment also focused on identifying the challenges youth workers are facing while trying to reach their best potential in their professional lives. The answers were overwhelming, both concerning the variety, the specificity and the difficult of addressing them.

While trying to cluster them, 3 main categories of challenges – related to resources, know how, and integration – were identified.

Resources: when it comes to resources, the challenges come from managing time, from managing human resources, from dealing with material issues and from the resources needed for upgrade. Most of the interviewees mentioned the huge workload and the difficulty of finding balance between desk work and field work. In many situations the bureaucracy prevents them from doing more grassroots work, and this applies to workers from the youth centers, but also for teachers. Sometimes this also disconnects youth workers from the reality. Some of the Catalonian respondents mentioned the fact that not spending enough time in the neighborhood turns into the wrong identification of the needs of the target group: *"Sometimes some projects lack realism and its difficult to project in reality what is in the paper".* Juggling with more projects simultaneously (for financial reasons) also reduces the quality of the implementation and the hours spent on the field. The lack of time also affects networking which for the civil society is essential. Time management is also challenging while collaborating with schools. Teachers do not want to spend extra hours for workshops, but at the same time they cannot replace their classes with workshops, so sometimes activities meant to last for 3-4 hours have to be squeezed in 1 hour or 3-days workshops in 1 -day only. The Finnish partner mentioned: *"Youth work in schools is a separate piece in a hectic puzzle, the role of a youth worker is an outsider and more unofficial than the teacher'. Having a group meeting during the school day usually means that the pupils have to skip other classes."*
The challenges related to human resources refer mainly to understaffing and to managing and involving volunteers. *"There are only half of the amount of youth workers in Malmi (Finland) than 10 years ago, it's hard to think where to save resources when the staff amount is already minimum."* Moreover, giving the responsibility of monitoring the educational process to the volunteers can lead to a lower impact of the project due to their lack of experience.

The material resources mentioned by the youth workers take three main different directions: the financial issues, the need for software and the need for quality information free of charge. The limited funding, the difficulty of accessing grants are clear inconveniences in the way youth centers, NGOs, and other institutions function.

The pandemic brought along the "forced" digitisation of youth workers, hence the need for up-to-date hardware and software. Most of them lack the finances for buying subscriptions and are forced to find less ethical solutions (such as illegal downloads) or to choose not to use them at all. A similar issue was highlighted by teachers and has to do with access to international databases and other platforms providing quality information.

A special category of resources that is needed for better youth work is directly linked with upgrading. In this respect, many interviewees mentioned the need for resources for upgrading the curriculum, for developing new skills and for improving visibility. The latter turns to be a very relevant issue for most of the respondents who emphasized the fact that the lack of time, human and material resources leads to a lack of visibility of the youth work conducted, which consequently generates lack of awareness and difficulties in reaching the target groups.

Know-how: there are lots of challenges falling under this category, but we decided to cluster them under communication, knowledge and reaching and motivating the target group.
Communication is the key to efficiency and success in many areas. The youth workers we interviewed believe it would be useful to improve their skills in communicating with their target groups, the parents, with peers, and institutions. Sometimes the lack of the above mentioned resources are the only ones that prevent them from doing so, but they also admitted they need more knowledge related to intercultural dialogue and deviant behavior management. Since most of the youth workers have to deal with persons suffering from different addictions (drugs, alcohol, video games etc.) or mental health issues, they would need more information, exchange of good practices and hands-on trainings addressing these issues. For example, the representatives of Social Assistance Department in Pantelimon, Romania mentioned that they lack the knowledge in managing aggressive people they meet on the field, who prevent them from doing their job.
Better communication skills could also have a significant impact on reaching and motivating the target groups. They are either currently overwhelmed with project opportunities (lots of Erasmus+ exchanges and trainings, local projects developed by NGOs or other institutions), or they are isolated and forgotten (mainly) in rural areas. The interviewees also mentioned the need to deal with the value crisis that affects all the segments of society due to the lack of role models and the promotion of non-values (as the ones sometimes promoted by media and social media).

Integration: another crucial need for youth workers is related to the integration of youngsters with SEN (special education needs) or SLD (specific learning difficulties) in the educational programme without owning the suitable skills. The discontent of the teachers refers mainly to the fact that *"they are slowly becoming social workers instead of educators"*. Another issue is related to the integration of migrants in the educational system and on the labor market due to the excessive bureaucracy and the cultural differences. For example, it appeared that some communities don't allow young female to be involved into educational activities with males or they are forced into early marriage. There are various situations in which their educational and qualification diplomas are not recognized or where the families refuse their access to extracurricular activities.

In conclusion, there are lots of challenges youth workers are facing, that give space for solid interventions. The interviews conducted by our researchers were a good opportunity for them to reflect on this and to even brainstorm about potential solutions.

PERCEIVED CHALLENGES OF THEIR TARGET GROUPS

One of the objectives of the research was to determine the correspondence between the challenges of young people perceived by themselves and the ones perceived by the youth workers. Many of the answers were common, but there are also some differences that give flavour to this study. Therefore, there are four different categories that were identified: behavioral issues, marginalization issues, educational issues, and perspectives for their future.

Under the **behavioural issues** fall many aspects, some related to deviance, others generated by the way in which society works. Therefore, almost all interviewees mentioned the problem of addiction – drugs, alcohol, social media, video games etc., violence - domestic, gender-based, bullying, cyberbullying, and theft – youngsters being robbed or subjects to identity theft online. The pandemic contributed in a negative way to the sedentarism and the individualism which also affect the well being of youngsters.

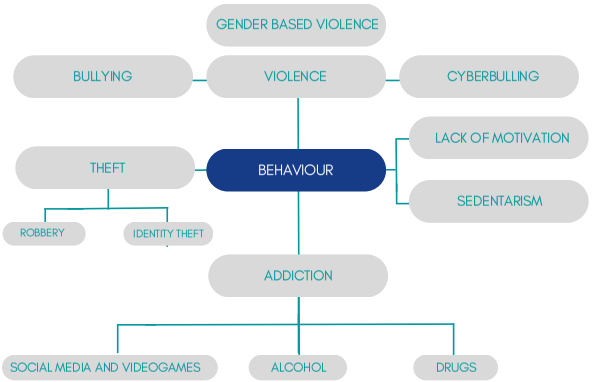
The **marginalization issues** also takes multiple forms and is generated by many causes. For example, youngsters with special needs or the ones with an inferiority complex (caused by fewer opportunities, difficulties in accessing education, bad neighborhood stigma,etc.) are more likely to be excluded.

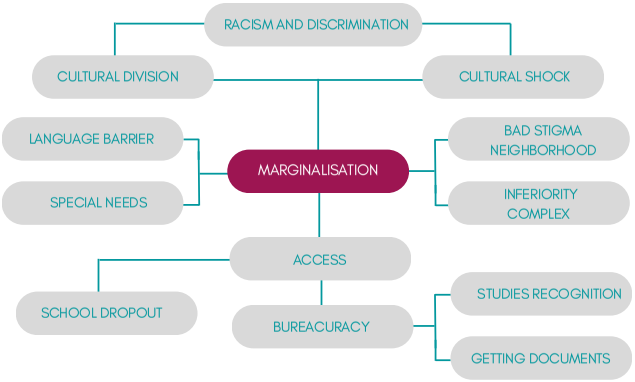
Marginalization is generated also by the cultural division – whether it is linked with the language barrier, customs, traditions, or the meaning of life. For migrants (and especially refugees) the bureaucracy contributes to their marginalization. The problems they face in getting the documents and with their studies recognition very often lead to poverty and exclusion from the community life. Moreover, the tendency of living in enclaves generates stigma and poor access to facilities designed for “general public”.

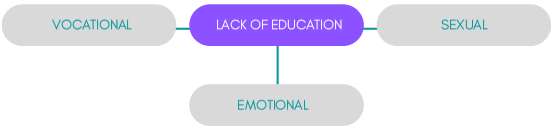
Therefore, they are subjects to discrimination and racism based on their background, race or ethnicity. Many minorities are victims of “covered racism”. For example, in housing, sometimes the owners avoid renting a place to a person with a different background by invoking weird reasons or asking for the rent 6 months in advance. The same goes for the jobs: for example, almost 60% of young Roma people from Portugal reported being discriminated during or after the job interviews.

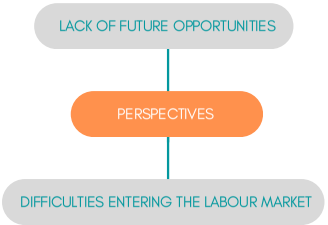
The **educational issues** highlighted by the respondents are mainly related to the lack of vocational, sexual and emotional education and their catastrophic impacts – teenage pregnancies, individualism and social exclusion, anxiety and many other mental issues.

Youth workers also emphasised the challenges of young people in finding **perspectives for their future**. The same aspect was underlined by youngsters themselves during the focus groups. The lack of future opportunities and the difficulties of entering the labour market are also causes of poor professional orientation. Moreover, the value crisis and the lack of role models lead to a copy-paste generation who fails in being authentic, but paradoxically craving for individuality and the need to stand out at the same time.


GENDER BASED VIOLENCE
BULLYING
VIOLENCE
CYBERBULLING
LACK OF MOTIVATION
THEFT
BEHAVIOUR
SEDENTARISM
ROBBERY
IDENTITY THEFT
ADDICTION
SOCIAL MEDIA AND VIDEOGAMES
ALCOHOL
DRUGS


RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION
CULTURAL DIVISION
CULTURAL SHOCK
LANGUAGE BARRIER
MARGINALISATION
BAD STIGMA NEIGHBORHOOD
SPECIAL NEEDS
INFERIORITY COMPLEX
ACCESS
SCHOOL DROPOUT
STUDIES RECOGNITION
BUREACURACY
GETTING DOCUMENTS


VOCATIONAL
LACK OF EDUCATION
SEXUAL
EMOTIONAL


LACK OF FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES
PERSPECTIVES
DIFFICULTIES ENTERING THE LABOUR MARKET

THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON THE YOUTH WORKERS

The pandemic had both positive and negative impacts that were clustered in three different categories: work, relationship with target group, and emotions.

When asked about the way in which the pandemic influenced them as youth workers, the interviewees first spoke about **the workload** that was even more difficult to manage than before. The quarantine forced most of the youth centers and schools to move their activity online, therefore there was a huge challenge in adapting the activities for the virtual space. Discovering new apps and tools was, anyway, a positive aspect that led to a better communication with the youngsters in the period that followed. Visual tools and podcasts proved to be really useful in this respect. In the same time, the absence of a coherent strategy or a plan of action from the governments generated massive confusion and turned into even more bureaucracy in their attempt to look as if there was everything under control.

Another challenge generated by the pandemic was related to the management of private vs. professional space and time.

Having the office at home was perceived in the beginning as a "little luxury", but after a while it became a burden for some of the respondents. Having to be present in calls and meetings with children running around or doing a lot of overtime led to exhaustion and frustration.

The lack of tech knowledge and the lack of infrastructure (no computers, no internet) deepened even more the gap between people with more and fewer opportunities, making inclusion impossible. Furthermore, the youth workers claimed to be missing the skills for dealing with the mental health issues generated by this context.

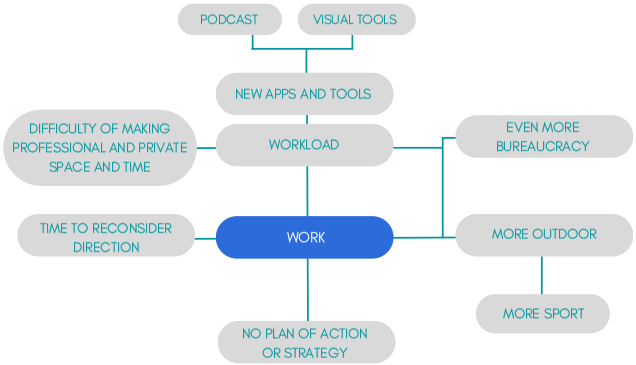
On the positive side, after the quarantine, the youth workers did more outdoor activities and promoted more sports among their target groups. From an organisational perspective, the pandemic became an opportunity to reconsider the strategic vision and, in many cases, reorganize how they operated as agents of change in the community.

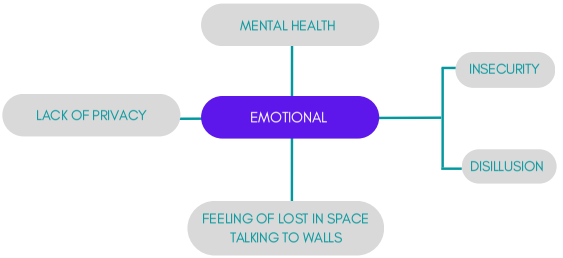
The **relationship with the target group** had suffered many adjustments since most of the activities moved online. Therefore, the respondents mentioned the lack of non-verbal communication and the lack of empathy which are essential especially while working with vulnerable groups. The lack of physical contact and the interaction with other peers lead to even more isolation and introversion. Not being on the field also made it more difficult to reach and motivate the youngsters to participate in the activities, as well as working on group consolidation.

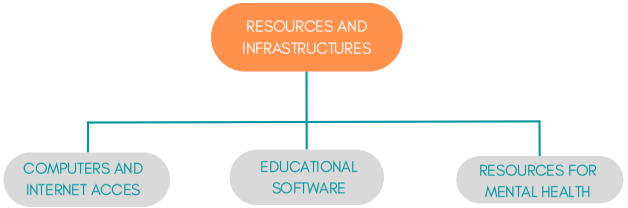
From an **emotional** point of view the pandemic had an overwhelming impact on both youth workers and youngsters. The insecurity and disillusion generated by the novelty of the situation and the overall chaos accentuated or created new mental health issues very difficult to tackle.

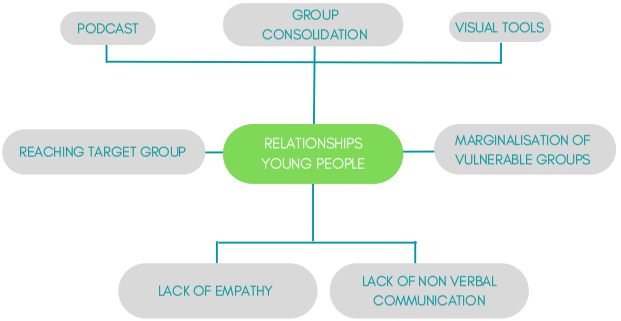
The lack of privacy that came along with the quarantine led in vulnerable families to domestic violence, anxiety, depression, and lack of perspectives.
This situation had also consequences on youngsters' participation in school or extracurricular activities. The teachers admitted feeling discouraged by the way in which the lessons looked like. The following comment is very relevant and offers a clear picture of the general feeling: *"I felt lost in space, as if I was talking to the walls".*

In conclusion, the pandemic had serious impacts on both youth workers and youngsters and has taken everybody outside their comfort zones.
However, it emphasized the need of efficient communication and dealing with mental health issues in order to have an effective educational process.


PODCAST
VISUAL TOOLS
NEW APPS AND TOOLS
DIFFICULTY OF MAKING PROFESSIONAL AND PRIVATE SPACE AND TIME
WORKLOAD
EVEN MORE BUREAUCRACY
TIME TO RECONSIDER DIRECTION
WORK
MORE OUTDOOR
MORE SPORT
NO PLAN OF ACTION OR STRATEGY


MENTAL HEALTH
INSECURITY
LACK OF PRIVACY
EMOTIONAL
DISILLUSION
FEELING OF LOST IN SPACE TALKING TO WALLS


RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURES
COMPUTERS AND INTERNET ACCES
EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE
RESOURCES FOR MENTAL HEALTH


PODCAST
GROUP CONSOLIDATION
VISUAL TOOLS
REACHING TARGET GROUP
RELATIONSHIPS YOUNG PEOPLE
MARGINALISATION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS
LACK OF EMPATHY
LACK OF NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION

TOPICS YOUTH WORKERS HAVE CHALLENGES ADDRESSING

Even if most of the interviewees were skilled and confident in addressing various topics, there were still things they considered. These were clustered under five categories: intercultural issues, sexuality, communication, value crisis, and mental health issues.

The need for **intercultural skills** is obvious in all realities – youth workers do not always feel at ease discussing about religion and politics since they do not know very well the ethnic backgrounds of the youngsters they work with.
In many situations youth workers can reinforce stereotypes out of ignorance and lack the information about the ethnic and cultural background of their target groups: for example, some treat the migrants as "Africans" rather than individualizing them by their country of provenience. So, a better knowledge on the world history and geography would really contribute to inclusion. As well as understanding how the legal system works. There are clear situations in which the youth workers cannot help beneficiaries with vulnerable backgrounds due to the fact that they do not know how things work. Understanding child marriage and other cultural practices that contravene with the principles of the majority are other topics that can be difficult to address. As one of the interviewees said: *"For the youth educators it is difficult to separate what they think (or what they think is logic) and what other cultures think"*. Speaking about racism, stereotypes and prejudices with people who have experienced it is also problematic because of the difficulty in anticipating their reaction.

Another big topic that is challenging is **sexuality**. Whether it's about the basic sexual education that is completely missing from the educational system of some countries (Romania and Italy, for example) or about more specific topics (sexual orientation, gender spectrum, transition, etc.) the respondents are facing challenges in discussing them with the youngsters. The same goes for the generic LGBTQAI+ issues which, in Romania, in many schools is considered to be taboo. The members of the Social Assistance Department in Pantelimon admitted they do not know how to reach the target group about early pregnancies and reproductive health. The need of having a gender-sensitive approach was also mentioned during the research.

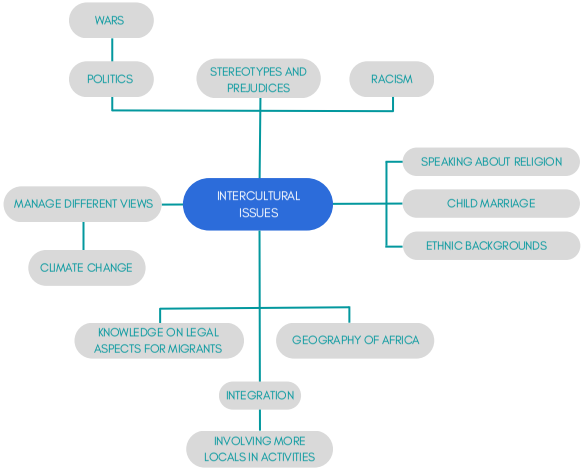
In the large category of **communication**, the youth workers believe they could use better conflict management skills, more knowledge on how to deal with the families of their target group and how to better use social media and online tools to motivate and reach the youngsters.
Moreover, they would like to reflect on the limits of their role as youth workers – to which extent is it okay to listen to the youngsters and give advice on personal matters and when is the moment to recommend them to see a psychologist.

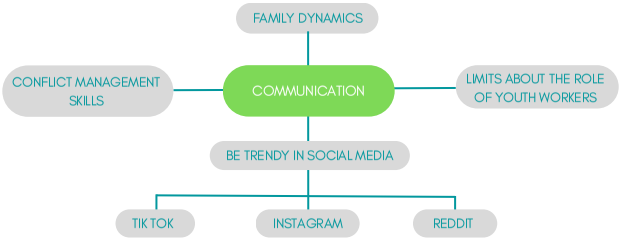
When it comes to the **value crisis** youth workers think they need to be better equipped with information related to media (and mainly with the popular reality shows) and social media (on threads and trends) that influence the behaviour of the youngsters. Moreover, they need to discuss about their roles as models and as substitutes for parents that are not there for their children (geographically or psychologically). One of the teachers interviewed mentioned: *"It is difficult to replace the role of a parent - who is either overwhelmed by the large amount of work, or works abroad, or is uninterested in the child's education and mental health. It is difficult to fight with the mentality of certain group of parents who claim that succeeding in life means making money. Also, it is difficult to promote values such as honesty, honor, true friendship when television channels have big brother programs, formats imported from other countries that encourage licentious behavior."*

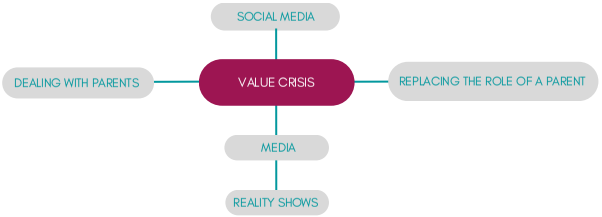
The most frequent topic that came up during this research was **mental health** which highlights the immediate need of improving knowledge and raising awareness about it. Therefore, youth workers need more skills in understanding and dealing with depression and anxiety, the consequences of violence (domestic, gender-based, psychological, verbal, physical, bullying, cyberbullying etc.), and addiction (drugs, alcohol, video games, internet etc.). The sense of belonging and the concept of safe space are also important topics for the ones working with youngsters with vulnerable backgrounds.

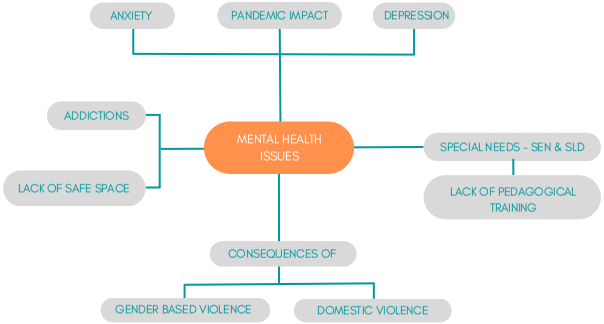
Coming to terms with the impact of the COVID pandemic is also important, since most of the youth workers did not have the chance to discuss, debate and share experiences about it.

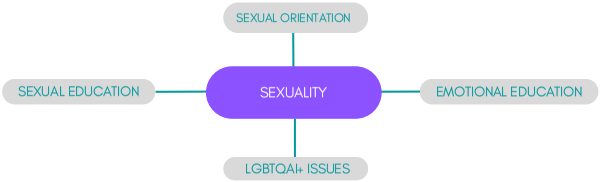
Another category is related to the lack of specific competences on SEN (special education needs) or SLD (specific learning difficulties), that would smoothen the educational process and would contribute to a better integration of youngsters with special needs.


WARS
POLITICS
STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICES
RACISM
INTERCULTURAL ISSUES
SPEAKING ABOUT RELIGION
CHILD MARRIAGE
ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS
MANAGE DIFFERENT VIEWS
CLIMATE CHANGE
KNOWLEDGE ON LEGAL ASPECTS FOR MIGRANTS
GEOGRAPHY OF AFRICA
INTEGRATION
INVOLVING MORE LOCALS IN ACTIVITIES


FAMILY DYNAMICS
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SKILLS
COMMUNICATION
LIMITS ABOUT THE ROLE OF YOUTH WORKERS
BE TRENDY IN SOCIAL MEDIA
TIK TOK
INSTAGRAM
REDDIT


SOCIAL MEDIA
DEALING WITH PARENTS
VALUE CRISIS
REPLACING THE ROLE OF A PARENT
MEDIA
REALITY SHOWS


ANXIETY
PANDEMIC IMPACT
DEPRESSION
ADDICTIONS
MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES
SPECIAL NEEDS - SEN & SLD
LACK OF SAFE SPACE
LACK OF PEDAGOGICAL TRAINING
CONSEQUENCES OF
GENDER BASED VIOLENCE
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE


SEXUAL ORIENTATION
SEXUAL EDUCATION
SEXUALITY
EMOTIONAL EDUCATION
LGBTQAI+ ISSUES

PREDOMINANT ISSUES

In most of the cases the youngsters and the youth workers had a common vision for improvements that need to happen in their environments in order to enhance the quality of the educational process and their wellbeing. The main difference is related to the perspective from which they addressed the issues – while youngsters focused more on their state of mind and physical condition, the youth workers focused more on the system and the top-down approach. The main category they would improve is **infrastructure**. All of them mentioned leisure facilities – whether it is about spending more time outdoors or making the work/study conditions better, it is obvious that the places we spend a lot of time in should be more user-friendly. For instance, youngsters focused a lot on the need of having more and better sport facilities and competitions. They would like well-equipped gyms, football pitches, basketball courts, and swimming pools, as well as more local and regional friendly matches. The youth workers focused on the intercultural and inclusive role of sport, proposing more facilities for games like cricket or Pétanquein order to facilitate participation and integration of minorities. More **green space** is crucial for a better life, so many answers included this request, together with better care for nature – more recycling facilities, better management of these areas (more trash bins and less vandalised places that "encourage" other deviant behaviour).
More cultural facilities (theatres, multimedia rooms, performance halls, up-to-date libraries) were mentioned by both youth workers and youngsters – teachers focused on their utility for a modern, learner-oriented educational process and the teenagers on the leisure opportunities they could bring along. In the neighbourhoods they live, they would like improved security (through webcams and self-managed community monitoring), more shops and more meeting places. Building shopping malls in the suburbs is proven to have improved the wellbeing of the residents and the de-stigmatisation of the neighbourhoods. More housing available for vulnerable groups and young people were also mentioned by the youth workers who are struggling with the placement of social cases (eg. drug addict, alcoholics, individuals with behavioural problems).

To reduce the gap between the suburbs and the centre **better public transportation** is needed – more lines, better connections, less crowded and cleaner means of transportation.
Dedicated school buses for the youngsters commuting on a daily basis would also reduce aggression, bullying and gender-based violence that happen quite frequently in this context.

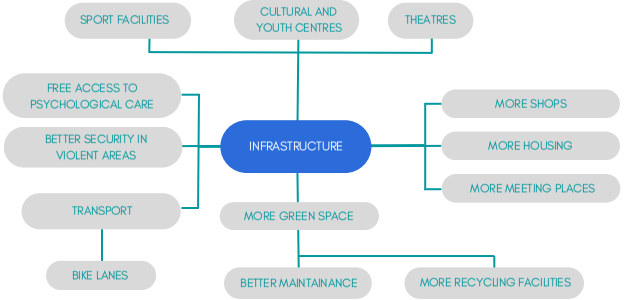
Another common suggestion related to infrastructure is a **centre that provides free psychological care** for the youngsters in need. Moreover, teachers highlighted their need to be able to discuss with specialists (psychologists, social assistants) about particular cases they encounter and that go beyond their pedagogical competences.

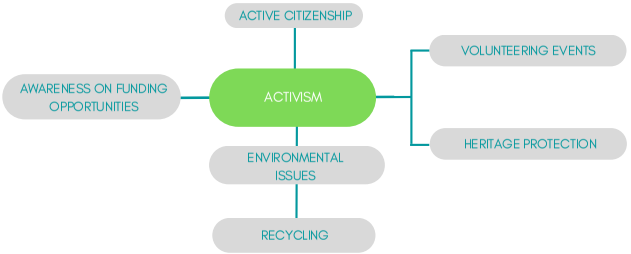
Education is another important category that would need improvements in several respects. Both teenagers and teachers emphasised the utility of implementing more non-formal education tools and methods in schools, changing the curriculum accordingly. The same goes for field work, that should take at least the same space as desk or theoretical work. For students, field work contributes to a better specialisation and preparation for the labour market, while for youth workers it helps identify and address the needs of their target groups. For the same purpose they underlined the urgency of ensuring free of charge, updated training courses. Youngsters also identified the need of better taught English classes (and other foreign languages) since it would help them participate in mobilities and contribute more to the global society.

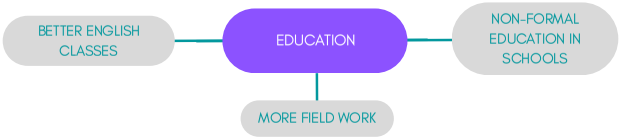
In this respect, **activism** is another field to be developed with more volunteering events (to foster active participation), projects regarding environmental issues (recycling, impact climate change, greening space, etc.). Heritage protection and promotion is another topic of interest, since on one hand could have a positive contribution to the image of the place, and on the other hand could help build and sustain the community's identity.

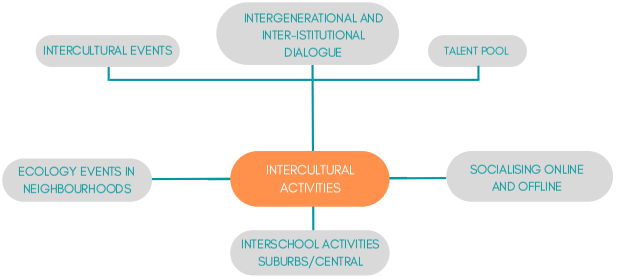
Youth workers should develop more **awareness on funding opportunities** and more **sustainable grants**. In order to maximise the intervention in a community, longer-term grants are needed. Many NGOs and institutions face difficulties in continuing projects after the funding period, ending the positive change prematurely.

The research highlighted the major need for **intercultural activities** to narrow the gaps between suburban and central areas and privileged and less-privileged people. Youngsters pleaded for more interschool and inter-youth centre activities with the "decentralisation" of cultural opportunities. The fact that most of the leisure facilities are in the city centre prevents young people from participating and stigmatises the ones that live in the periphery. Moreover, it segregates them and reinforces stereotypes and prejudices. Another idea that would contribute to this is the creation of talent pools (dancing, singing, playing instruments, etc.) in the suburbs to give the youngsters the opportunity of standing out.
The intergenerational and inter-institutional dialogue is definitely a must for creating a wholesome perspective on the community needs and for addressing them coherently. In fact, many projects have less impact than possible due to the lack of communication between stakeholders.
Intercultural events could contribute to the inclusion of minorities and to a better understanding of their background and vision, creating new perspectives. They should range from local to regional level involving more people from the neighbourhoods by facilitating their access. Socialising online and offline could contribute to the creation of safe spaces and opportunities for cultural dialogue, improving the livelihood and the relationships between the community members.


SPORT FACILITIES
CULTURAL AND YOUTH CENTRES
THEATRES
FREE ACCESS TO PSYCHOLOGICAL CARE
BETTER SECURITY IN VIOLENT AREAS
INFRASTRUCTURE
MORE SHOPS
MORE HOUSING
MORE MEETING PLACES
TRANSPORT
MORE GREEN SPACE
BIKE LANES
BETTER MAINTAINANCE
MORE RECYCLING FACILITIES


ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP
VOLUNTEERING EVENTS
AWARENESS ON FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
ACTIVISM
HERITAGE PROTECTION
ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES
RECYCLING


BETTER ENGLISH CLASSES
EDUCATION
NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS
MORE FIELD WORK


INTERGENERATIONAL AND INTER-ISTITUTIONAL DIALOGUE
INTERCULTURAL EVENTS
TALENT POOL
ECOLOGY EVENTS IN NEIGHBOURHOODS
INTERCULTURAL ACTIVITIES
SOCIALISING ONLINE AND OFFLINE
INTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES SUBURBS/CENTRAL

CONCLUSIONS

The research phase conducted in the five partner countries highlighted similar problems that both youngsters and youth workers have, but also particular issues specific to the target groups of each organisation.

Many of the issues depend on structural changes and massive interventions of authorities (better urban planning, more cultural facilities/institutions, more leisure facilities etc.), but there are also fields where we could easily step in and reach the aim of HOTSPOTS project: connecting European suburbs through smart youth work. After a rough analysis of the research data, the team came to the conclusion that there are five main topics that could be used in designing new tools and methods for youth workers: **mental health issues, stereotypes and prejudices, efficient communication, campaigning for visibility,** and **gender issues** (with a particular emphasis on LGBTQAI+ issues).

Tackling these issues with an intercultural approach would contribute to the creation of a better community of youth workers and more trustful youngsters. As one of the participants in the focus groups stated, "they want to become the best version of themselves". They just need the context.



CHAPTER IV • TOOLS

- Introduction
- Learning
- Toolbox Index
- Toolboxes

INTRODUCTION

WHAT

This section of Project Result 1 is a Toolkit collection with tools, interactive methods and workshops to raise awareness among young people on Intercultural learning issues and the sub-related subjects.

The tools and methods were gathered and selected by a group of experienced trainers coming from all the consortium members. They are generally used by the participating organisations and their local partners to run activities with young people, to tackle Intercultural learning issues and raise awareness on the importance of respecting and valuing differences among human beings.

In this perspective, they have to be considered as a methodological collection of good practices and examples to be afterwards re-proposed in the local work with young people. Moreover, they can be used by the consortium because of their potential transferability to other backgrounds. This will be an essential starting point in the design of the new tools included in the Project Result 2 - Handbook for a smart youth work.

AIM

To equip youth workers, from the consortium member organisations and from different European countries, with tools, interactive methods and workshops to raise awareness among young people on Intercultural learning issues and the sub-related subjects.

Therefore, the main purpose of these tools is to bring on board young people from different sensitive backgrounds, making sensitization on relevant subjects affecting their everyday life and creating the proper stage for enhancing their involvement and active participation.

Moreover, this collection is contributing to a more precise and detailed diagnostic - to be combined with the country situation's analysis included in the Chapters II and II – which will be used to better customize afterwards the new tools and methods designed and included in the Project Result 2, to the different situations, backgrounds and needs.

TARGET GROUP

Youth and social workers, peer educators, facilitators and, in general, people involved in the educational activities targeted at young people. At large, also, their organisations, youth centers and other new associations interested in further developing, among young people, the raising awareness action on Intercultural learning sensitive issues and the related sub-subjects.

DURATION

Most of the workshops proposed in this section have an overall duration between 60 and 120 minutes. We chose this duration because of two main reasons. Firstly, it's easier to have young people involved in workshops with a shorter duration. At this age, the level of attention can be pretty fluctuating and it's better to propose two workshops in a row on different sub-subjects rather than a longer workshop of six hours. Secondly, some consortium members also use these tools in schools and universities where they face time restrictions.

TRANSFERABILITY
The activities and tools proposed in this section can be replicated both at the European and local levels with different shapes and durations, according to the target groups' needs and the local backgrounds' situations. Their potential transferability also stands on the fact they are all using non-formal education techniques and are linked by the same common principles of interaction, participation, and horizontality.

ADAPTABILITY
However, if you decide to use the tools described in this section, we warmly recommend to take into account the situation of the local background/s where you want to implement them and get to know well the target group/s to whom you are proposing the activities.

Please pay attention to the participants you are planning to involve. It's one thing to choose some of the activities to work with youth workers and peer educators (in order to transfer them), and another thing if you are using them to work with young people coming from backgrounds with fewer opportunities and at major risk of exclusion. Moreover, in the work we are doing nowadays with young people, we cannot ignore the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Many young people have been severely affected both directly and indirectly by it. Therefore, youth workers and facilitators should be aware that they cannot use the same approaches as they used before the pandemic.

In conclusion, before to propose any of the workshops below, we warmly suggest you have a clear picture of the target needs and profiles. It will help you bring flexibility in the approach you are proposing, and the required adaptations, if and where they are needed.

METHODOLOGY

All the activities proposed are mainly based on non-formal education. Non-Formal Education – NFE was defined in 1974 as any organised and systematic educational activity, carried on outside the framework of the formal system (schools - universities).
Thus, NFE is the macro-umbrella including any organised educational activity taking place outside the formal academic curriculum.
According to the Council of Europe:

"Non-formal education refers to planned, structured programmes and processes of personal and social education for young people designed to improve a range of skills and competences, outside the formal educational curriculum. Non-formal education is what happens in places such as youth organisations, […] where young people meet […] to undertake projects together […].

(Compass - Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People, Strasbourg, 2012, p.31).

Moreover, *"Non-formal education is an integral part of a lifelong learning concept that allows young people and adults to acquire and maintain the skills, abilities and outlook needed to adapt to a continuously changing environment. It can be acquired on the personal initiative of each individual through different learning activities taking place outside the formal educational system. An important part of non-formal education is carried out by non-governmental organisations involved in community and youth work."*

(Recommendation 1437 (2000) - Parliamentary Assembly - Text adopted by the Assembly on 24 January 2000)

Non-Formal Education should not be confused with Informal Education – IE which is also a lifelong learning process. But here, individuals acquire attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from their environment and daily experience. In fact, individuals learn from family, neighbours, friends and in not structured activities (e.g. through playing, reading, listening music and songs and in sports activities).

Here stands the major difference between NFE and IE: the first one is well organised, and grounded on specific learning objectives set in advance by educators, while in the second there are no clear learning objectives set in the beginning. In both, we are learning, but in the first one we are doing it in a structured way, while in the second, the learning takes place accidentally.
Both, combined with Formal Education – FE, are the medium for an efficient learning of individuals.

The NFE main characteristics and principles are:

- **to be voluntary:** participation is always based on free will to be involved, in any moment participants can choose to leave the learning process, and no one can be forced to participate. At the same time, it's expected that participants will be proactive, taking responsibility for their own learning

- **to be objectives-based:** learning doesn't take place randomly, but it is always based on clear educational, pre-organised objectives and clear methodologies to achieve them

- **to be accessible to everyone:** no learning obstacles or any type of impairment should prevent learners from benefiting from an educational process. It's important to create barrier-free programs, accessible for all, which allow everybody to be fully included

- **to be participatory:** participation and interaction with the others should be constantly encouraged. Learning has to be based on the permanent exchange among individuals, and also the methodologies proposed are conceived to enhance the active involvement of everyone

- **to be learner-oriented:** learners are the centre of the activities; for this reason, even though learning objectives are always pre-set, the sessions and the learning plans should constantly be re-modulated according to the participants' feedbacks, knowledge and experiences. They must be continuously adapted to the different backgrounds, competences, typologies or learners and needs of the target group/s we are working with

- **to be experience-based:** learning is not just something purely theoretical, but it is based on the concrete experience, on the "learning by doing", then supported by the reflection and the more theoretical analysis

- **to be flexible:** contents and the related methodologies chosen have to be flexible. Facilitators should be able to constantly adapt them to the needs and expectations of individuals and groups, ensuring at the same time a coherence with the initial learning objectives set

- **to be holistic and process-oriented:** participants should constantly develop knowledge, skills and values during the learning experience. The most important element is the process and the way they are involved in it, rather than the achievement of the final goal.

NFE MAIN CHARACTERISTICS



VALUES

Inside the Non-Formal Education framework, the main values promoted are the horizontal interaction among trainees and facilitators/trainers and the exchange of feelings, feedback, experiences, knowledge, skills and competences.
These principles and values are then implemented through the application of participative methods, their testing, development, upgrading and the constant learning assessment of individuals, based on permanent monitoring and evaluation.
This on-going process leads the person involved in the learning process to enhance the self-esteem and the self-confidence, getting personally empowered. Moreover, it contributes to the development of their soft skills and key competences that could be afterwards used and applied in different spheres of life.

In this process it's important to remember that we are not alone, but metaphorically, members of bigger communities: each one of us, after having experienced the learning process, has, therefore, the responsibility to share with other people the knowledge and competencies acquired.

TYPES OF LEARNER

In the learning process promoted within Non-Formal Education, we need to remember that human being are different and that in those differences grounds the potentiality of a more coherent and "360° learning experience". We are learning in different ways, using different senses, approaches, mixing them but focusing on some specific aspects.
When, as facilitators and youth workers, we deliver activities, it's very important to keep in mind that each person is different and somehow unique. For this reason, we need to acknowledge that there are different learning styles and consequently different tools and approaches to be used to build the most inclusive learning experience, where everybody is brought on board. Below there are presented the different typologies of learners with their main focus points and instruments to be used to facilitate the learning process. Please, take it as a simplification of the whole, a more complex scenario within the learning process. It can only be used as a starting point to create a coherent, efficient learning experience. Then during the process, do not forget the complexity of human beings and be ready for adaptations and adjustments.

- **Visual learners:** participants who need visual support to acknowledge and understand the contents that are being presented to them. *Tips: we suggest using flipcharts with the main learning messages, pictures, images, symbols and, if possible, to include the graphic facilitation*

- **Auditory learners:** participants who understand and assimilate better through sounds and hearing. *Tips: we suggest using music during the activities, talks, discussions, and oral presentations, reading aloud what is written on flipcharts, changing voice tune and tonalities*

- **Sensory learners:** participants who are more at ease in learning through physical activities, sensory experience, through touching and body contact. *Tips: we suggest using team building, trust building, simulation, role-play games, sculptural and three-dimensional materials*

- **Analytical learners:** participants who learn through reflection, analysis, problem-solving and creating/analyzing models. *Tips: we suggest using case studies, mind maps, models and asking the questions in the debriefing according to that.*

MAIN TYPES OF LEARNERS

- VISUAL LEARNER



- AUDITORY LEARNER



- SENSORY LEARNER



- ANALYTICAL LEARNER



LEARNING ZONES

When we deliver activities as facilitators and youth workers, it's also very important to remember that normally each individual and group might pass through different learning stages. Therefore, also our approaches and behaviours must change, and they need to be adapted/adjusted according to the stage where the individual and/or the group are.

Please remember that in this case, we are simplifying a much more complex process and that the information you will find below doesn't offer the "perfect receipt" working in every context and background. For this reason, we suggest taking it as a guiding path to drive you inside the youth work, remembering that human beings are unique, that things might change, and that you need to be flexible and adaptable.

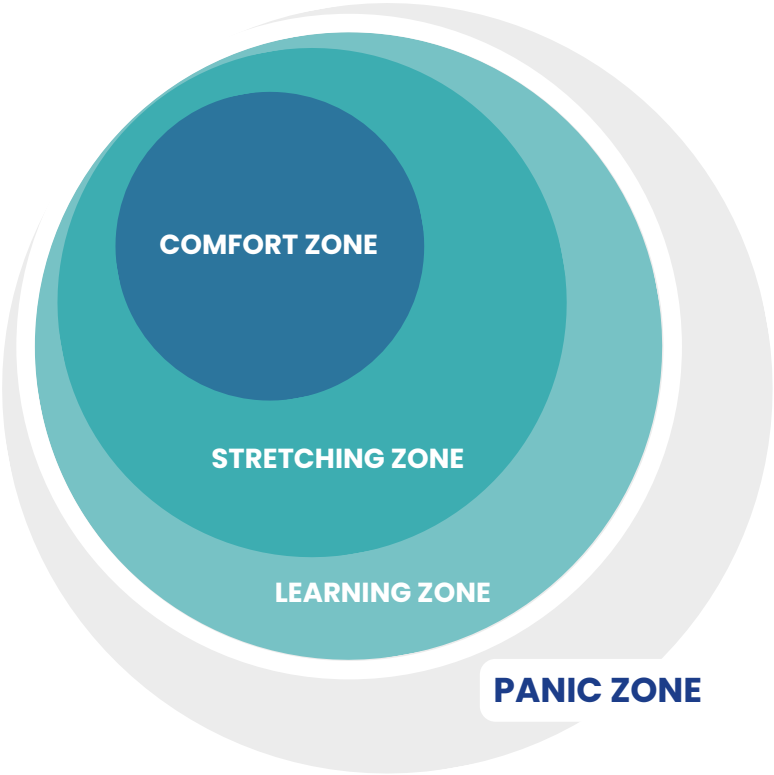
- **Comfort Zone:** here participants do not learn very much because they are in a zone they already know, where they feel calm and comfortable. Therefore, they do not feel highly stimulated or encouraged to learn new things

- **Stretching Zone:** here participants start to get inside the process, to understand how the group works, how team decisions are made, but the relationships are quite blurry, therefore frictions among individuals might appear during their learning process. These frictions should not be considered as something negative, on the contrary, they are integral part of the learning process, and what counts the most is to learn the way "to pass through the storm"

- **Learning Zone:** here participants, after having left the comfort zone, enter an unknown area that might cause self-questioning, fears and taking risks. At the same time, here the learning takes many forms and starts to be more tangible and fruitful

- **Panic Zone:** here participants move too far from the comfort zone and the learning zone. They find themselves in an over stressful situation, they can be afraid and panic because their core values and principles are shaken too much, leaving them with no reference points. In this stage people stop learning and the process is not constructive any more.

LEARNING ZONES



TOOLBOX INDEX

The Index of Activities is conceived to present the activities according to the sub-topic they are tackling within the macro subject of Intercultural learning, then it follows the alphabetic order of the activity (within the topic covered), then including also the reference page number.

TOPICS:

- Stereotypes and prejudices
- Cultural differences and discrimination
- Individual and multiple identities
- Intercultural dialogue
- Communication and active listening
- Inequality and fewer opportunities
- Discrimination and violence

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A WALK IN THE PARK

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Stereotypes and prejudices
TARGET GROUP	Camp leaders or volunteers
AIM	To develop self-awareness of the different ways social norms Influence our assumptions, beliefs, judgements and expectations
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To explore in-depth assumptions, beliefs, judgements and expectations • To exercise open-minded approaches towards people who self-identify differently than us, creating opportunities to better include everyone
DURATION	A total amount of 80 minutes, divided as it follows: • The journey – 5 minutes • The script - 15 minutes • Discussion – 30 minutes • Imagine inclusion – 10 minutes • Debriefing - 20 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. The journey

The facilitator arranges chairs in a circle and invites the young people to sit down.
The facilitator explains that the group is going to visualize being in a park they have never been to before and that on their journey they will meet different people.
During the visualization, they will be asked various questions. Then, the group is to answer these questions in their heads.

Step 2. The script

The facilitator asks the young people to close their eyes if they feel comfortable. If not, then they can pick a spot on the ground to focus on. Then the facilitator reads the script to the young people.

"Imagine you are at the entrance of a park. You take a moment to breathe in. What does it smell like? What can you hear?
You walk into the park, and the first person you meet is the park keeper. You glance at them and say hello. What do they look like? You continue your walk, and you pass a couple sitting on the bench. What are they doing?
You continue your journey, and ahead you see a group of young people.
You are near them. What do you think they are doing? How are you feeling walking past them?
Just as you are about to leave the park, someone passes you and bumps into you. They apologize and say they are in a rush to work.
Who are they?
You walk to the end of the park, take a minute and then leave.
When you are ready, open your eyes and come back into the workshop space."

Step 3. Discussion

Then, back in a circle, the facilitator discusses their visualizations in the park with the group. Revisiting the questions that were asked throughout the visualization, the following questions can be added:

- What gender and age was the park keeper?
- What sexual orientation was the couple?
- What were the young people doing?
- Who was the person going to work?
- Did any of the people you met have different abilities?

After answering the question, some extra time should be left to discuss with the group how their life experiences have influenced what they visualized and how we are all conditioned to think from the perspective of social norms.

Then, the facilitator asks the group what they have learned about their thoughts and influences. It's important to discuss how to become more self-aware, be more open towards others who identify differently from ourselves, and expand how we include people.

Step 4. Imagine inclusion

Following this discussion, the facilitator asks the young people to imagine a more inclusive park. In this case, who would they see and meet in this one?

Step 5. Debriefing

Participants are gathered in a circle and the facilitator asks a series of questions, in order to prompt reflection and debate. Below is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- How do you feel?
- Was it hard to remember and describe an intercultural encounter?
- Did the guiding questions help you think about aspects you did not consider before?
- How did you perceive this particular group before the encounter?
- Did you have any possible stereotypes towards this group?
- Has your perception of a particular group changed because of the encounter or since the encounter? If yes, how?
- Are the encounters presented by the other participants surprising in any way? Why?
- Did the encounters presented by the others further stimulate your reflection on your own intercultural encounters?
- What is your behavior now in an intercultural situation?
- Can you identify, based on this activity, what competencies people need in intercultural encounters?

TIPS

The journey activity explains assumptions, beliefs, judgments and expectations.
The activity is conceived to allow participants to learn how to be more open to people who identify differently than themselves and to widen their perspective towards inclusion.
Tips and possible adaptations:

- Modify this activity to suit the group and context you work in. For example, if a discussion arises on a particular question during the debrief, open it up.
- Self-awareness tip: be compassionate and inclusive with your responses. For example, open the discussion by saying, "we all have assumptions and prejudices". This creates an open, honest space.
- Some people may like to play background noises (such as bird sounds) to create an atmosphere. This is optional as some may find it distracting.

MATERIALS

- Script, paper, pens, chairs

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ICL ENCOUNTERS

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Stereotypes and prejudices
TARGET GROUP	This activity works with all types of groups
AIM	To develop critical thinking by tackling Intercultural learning
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To encourage participants to think about and learn from intercultural encounters they have had • To identify potential stereotypes the participants have about others, or that other people have about them • To understand the complexity of intercultural relations
DURATION	A total amount of 105 minutes, divided as it follows: • Autobiography – 45 minutes • Sharing - 30 minutes • Debriefing – 30 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Autobiography

The facilitator asks participants to think about specific moments when they met someone who was different from themselves in some way.
For example, they were from another country or region, from a minority, had a different skin color or religion or spoke a foreign language.

Then, each participant receives a copy of the handout and the task to answer the questions in the handout, by writing about the intercultural encounter of their choice. In order to fulfill the task, 30 minutes can be allocated.

Step 2. Sharing

Then, participants are divided into groups of 4 and they are invited to tell each other their stories. In order to fulfil the task, 30 minutes can be allocated.
After the storytelling, participants are asked to return to the big group and move to the debriefing.

Step 3. Debriefing

Participants are gathered in a circle, and the facilitator asks a series of questions in order to prompt to reflect and debate. Below is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- How do you feel?
- Was it hard to remember and describe an intercultural encounter?
- Did the guiding questions help you to think about aspects you did not consider before?
- How did you perceive this particular group before the encounter?
- Did you have any possible stereotypes towards this group?

- Has your perception of a particular group changed because of the encounter or since the encounter? If yes, how?
- Are the encounters presented by the other participants surprising in any way? Why?
- Did the encounters presented by the others further stimulate your reflection on your own intercultural encounters?
- What is your behaviour now in an intercultural situation?
- Based on this activity, can you identify what competencies people need in intercultural encounters?

See Handout below.

TIPS

The **Autobiography** is an activity conceived to encourage participants to reflect on their intercultural encounters, from perception to feelings, from language to actions. It can become a personal and intimate experience since participants are invited to go backwards in their memories, thinking about their intercultural experiences. For this reason, we suggest facilitators create a comfortable and pampering environment where participants feel comfortable remembering, sharing and interacting with others.

Sharing: once in smaller groups, participants are invited to share their personal story. However, we never know what a story might have brought in terms of emotions to someone. If we have been touched or hurt by it. For this reason, the facilitators should underline that if someone won't feel at ease sharing the story, they can also avoid it.
The important thing is that the person will actively listen to other people's stories.

Handout: before asking participants to fill in the handout, the facilitators should explain that they do not need to answer questions one by one, but really tell the story of the encounter and try to cover in their writing the questions in the handout.
In this way, they could keep a more narrative and personal approach and bring authenticity to the story itself.

MATERIALS

- Handout of the "Autobiography of intercultural encounters"
- Papers, pens and markers

HANDOUT – QUESTIONS

1. ABOUT THE ENCOUNTER:
   - When did it happen, what were you doing when it happened?

2. THE PERSON YOU MET:
   - Who was it?
   - What did you notice about this person?
   - What did they look like?
   - How was the person dressed?
   - What did the person do?

3. COMMUNICATION:
   - How did you communicate?
   - How was it?
   - Was it easy to make yourself understood?
   - Was it easy for them to understand you?
   - Why or why not?
   - Did you have to change the way you usually communicate?

4. FEELINGS AND THOUGHTS:
   - How did you find this encounter?
   - How did you feel at the time?
   - How did you feel about the other person? Why?
   - Would you like to see the other person again? Why or why not?
   - How do you think the other person felt at the time?
   - Do you think you and the other person felt the same way when you met?

5. LEARNING:
   - What do you think you have learned or discovered from meeting this person?
   - Would you like to meet them again and spend some time together?
   - If you meet them again, would you do anything different from last time?
   - If you meet them again, is there anything you would like to ask them?
   - Do you think meeting this person has changed you in any way?

FILL IN THE GAPS

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Stereotypes and prejudices
TARGET GROUP	Young people (the exercises can be adapted to 12+)
AIM	To identify stereotypes and to challenge stereotypical thinking
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To reflect on the perceptions different participants have of minorities • To challenge participant's stereotypes and prejudices about other people and minorities • To confront the different values and stereotypes of the participants • To raise self-awareness about the limits of tolerance
DURATION	A total amount of 120 minutes, divided as it follows: • Name & Gesture – 15 minutes • Two Truths and A Lie - 15 minutes • Inter-rail trip - 90 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Name & Gesture

Participants stand in a circle. The facilitator explains that each person needs to come up with a gesture that communicates something about the individual. The gesture might show a favorite hobby, sport, activity, or be symbolic of a personality trait, something of significance to the person. The facilitator shows the gesture, and then gives the group a few moments to think about their own gestures. Then, each person in turn says their name, at the same time executing her gesture. The group repeats each person's name and gesture back.

After everyone has shared their name and gesture, the participants play "tag" with the names and gestures. The facilitator states their name and makes their gesture, then says the name and makes the gesture of another group member. That group member who is now "it" does the same: says their name while completing their gesture, then tags any other member by saying their name and making the gesture. The group tries to get through everyone in without repeats, so participants should keep track of whose name and gesture has not been called yet.

Step 2. Two Truths and A Lie

The facilitator explains that all the participants have between 3 and 5 minutes to write down on a piece of paper or on a post-it 2 truths and 1 lie about themselves, without specifying which are the truths or the lie. Once everyone has come up with their two truths and one lie, participants are invited to walk in the workshop room. Every time a participants meet a new person they have to group and show each other their three statements. The person met has to guess which of the three is the lie. Then the activity proceeds in that way until all the participants have met the other group members.

Step 3. Inter-rail trip

The activity includes the following steps:

1. Scenario

As a birthday present, you have received an Inter-rail Pass.
Therefore, you can leave for an inter-rail trip, having the chance to travel for one entire month inside a train, exploring different European countries. You will travel in a couchette compartment, which you have to share with three other people.
Which of the following passengers would you prefer to share it with?

2. Ranking

Participants are then receiving the list of passengers. The facilitator asks each person to choose the three people they would most like to travel with and the three they would least like to travel with.
Once everybody has made their individual choices/rankings, 4 smaller groups (approximately 5 people each) are created. Now the tasks are the following:

- to share the individual choices/rankings and the reasons behind the choices
- to compare the different rankings and reasons and check where there are similarities or differences (and why)
- to come up with a common list (the three people they would most like to travel with and the three they would least like to travel with) by consensus
- to be back in plenary: here each group has to present their conclusions, including the reasons for their common choices.

They should also say in which "cases" there was the most disagreement within the group. A facilitator takes note on a flipchart of the rankings and of the main elements in the discussion.

3. Debriefing and evaluation

The debriefing and discussion will be based on the group's reports. Comparing the different results is a good way to introduce the discussion. Below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- Has anyone in the group experienced a similar situation in real life?
- What were the major factors that determined your individual decisions?
- Which were the most difficult factors to be ranked?
- How realistic are the situations presented?
- How did you picture the characters, and where do you think you got these images from?
- Which stereotypes does the list of passengers evoke?
- Are the stereotypes given in the descriptions or in our minds and imagination?
- If the groups did not manage to reach a common ranking: why did it happen?
- What factors prevented you from reaching a consensus?
- How would it feel to be in a situation in which nobody would want to share a train compartment with you?

See Handout below.

TIPS

The **Inter-rail trip** is an efficient technique to reflect upon stereotypes and prejudices. By making "a simple list" participants are invited to reflect on the way they pictured the characters (according to what inner mechanism), and how this can lead to prejudices and social exclusion.

Characters' list: the facilitator has to be sure that the list of passengers presented is very long and makes it difficult for the groups to come up with a common list. It is also possible to reduce the list to a maximum of 10-14 passengers and to adapt it to the local or national situation of the group they work with. The characters can be adapted according to the characteristics of participants (age, background) and according to the learning objectives. There can be familiar characters from the participants' personal environment or to be "unknown" ones. It is very important that some of the passengers' descriptions correspond to minorities which are familiar to the group including "invisible" minorities such as sexual minorities, people with disabilities, etc.

Consensus: in many cases the groups will not manage to come up with a common list. Therefore, the facilitator has to underline that it is important for everyone to respect each other's opinions and not attack people for their personal views. If some choices seem doubtful it is more relevant to discuss the reasons which lead to a particular choice rather than questioning personal decisions.

Stereotypes and prejudices: the facilitator has to pay attention so that the discussion does not go into "who's got the fewer prejudices?", but rather to work on the fact that we all have stereotypes and prejudices. It is also important to discuss and explore the fact that the description of the passengers is very brief, we know little about the personality or background of people. But is not that the way we normally react to information in newspapers and television, and in conversations or when meeting people for the first time?!?

MATERIALS

- Paper or post-it, pens, pencils and markers
- White board or a flipchart
- Copies of the scenario
- Copies of the characters' list

HANDOUT - CHARACTERS

ITALIAN INFLUENCER WITH HUNDREDS OF FOLLOWERS AND PLENTY OF EUROS
50 YEARS OLD MEN, OVERWEIGHT SWISS FINANCIAL BROKER
20 YEARS OLD, AFRICAN WOMAN SELLING CLOTHES AND TEXTILE
YOUNG ARTIST FROM GERMANY, WHO IS HIV POSITIVE
ROMA MAN (NOMAD) FROM ROMANIA
RUSSIAN SOLDIER BACK FROM THE FOREFRONT IN UKRAINE
BASQUE NATIONALIST WHO TRAVELS REGULARLY TO HUNGARY
BLIND ACCORDION PLAYER, 45 YEARS OLD, PLAYER FROM AUSTRIA
BANGLADESH MIGRANT WITH NO DOCUMENTS, RISKING TO BE SENT BACK HOME
MIDDLE-AGED CONGOLESE WOMAN WITH NO VISA AND A 1 YEAR OLD CHILD
20 YEARS OLD MAN, FOOTBALL SUPPORTER OF FC LIVERPOOL
SKINHEAD FROM SWEDEN OSTENTATIOUSLY UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL
WRESTLER WOMAN FROM USA GOING TO A WRESTLING COMPETITION
THAI YOUNG PROSTITUTE FROM THE NETHERLANDS
KURDISH REFUGEE LIVING IN GERMANY ARRIVED FROM LIBYA
YOUNG PERSON WITH A MILD INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY
HARD-LINE FRENCH FEMINIST, 50 YEARS OLD
34 YEARS OLD TRANSWOMAN FROM SPAIN
18 YEARS OLD YOUNG MAN GOING TO A RAVE PARTY IN BELARUS
PORTUGUESE ALTERNATIVE FARMER WHO SPEAKS ONLY HIS MOTHER TONGUE

FORGET TO LEARN, QUESTION TO FIND OUT

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Stereotypes and prejudices
TARGET GROUP	Young people (14+, young adults)
AIM	To reflect about prejudices and stereotypes, raising awareness about other related sensitive subjects
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To understand the link between values and culture • To understand the influence of our culture on how our behaviors and points of view are shaped • To initiate the discussion about other sensitive topics such as: gender, sexuality
DURATION	A total amount of 105 minutes, divided as it follows: • Walk Stop –15 minutes • Stella and Alejandro story -90 minutes)

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Walk Stop

The facilitator explains participants they will be following simple instructions:

- when the facilitator says "walk", participants start walking around the space
- when the facilitator says "stop", participants have to stop where they are

Then the following steps can be followed:

- the facilitator calls out "Walk" then "Stop" and repeat as desired
- the facilitator tells everyone they are going to switch those two commands: therefore when now the facilitator will say "Stop", participants should start walking and when they say *"Walk"*, they should stop moving
- the facilitator calls out *"Stop"* then *"Walk"* and repeats as desired
- the facilitator tells everyone that 2 more commands are added: therefore, when now the facilitator will say *"Name"*, participants should say their name out loud and when they say *"Clap"* they should clap once. The other 2 commands stay the same, so *"Walk"* means stop, *"Stop"* means walk, *"Name"* means say your name, and "Clap" means clap
- the facilitator calls out a combination of *"Walk"*, *"Stop"*, *"Name"*, and *"Clap"*, and repeats it as desired
- finally, the facilitator lets participants knowing they are switching the last 2 commands. So *"Walk"* means stop, *"Stop"* means walk, *"Name"* means clap, and *"Clap"* means say your name. Repeat as desired.

Step 2. Stella and Alejandro story

The activity includes the following steps:

1. First ranking

The group is divided in 2 subgroups, one sitting on the left side and the other on the right side of the workshop room. All the participants sitting on the left side receive a printed version of Stella story, while those sitting on the right side, receive a printed version of Alejandro story. In both the side, they have to carefully read the story and make a ranking of characters, from the best to the worst. Facilitators should not explain, at this stage, that there are two different stories.

2. Second ranking

Three smaller groups are created in each side of the workshop room, within each group the individual ranking lists have to be shared and discussed the reasons behind the ranking choices. Then, the group, using the consensus, should arrive to a common ranking of characters, from the best to the worst.

3. Discussion in plenary

Back in plenary, the 6 groups (3 with Stella and 3 with Alejandro story) read the characters' ranking list, while a facilitator keeps note on a flipchart. Each group has therefore to preset the reasons behind the ranking choices. It follows the debriefing, analyzing the different rankings' orders and the reasons behind the choices.
Below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- Why your group did the ranking in such a way?
- According to what criteria was the ranking done?
- According to what criteria did you picture your characters and imagine their lives? Please describe in detail how you imagine your character.
- Had you received the other story, would your ranking be different? (this question has to be asked only after participants have understood that there are 2 different stories)
- What do you think this activity is about?

See Handout below.

TIPS

Stella and Alejandro story is a tale that shows how people view the world from different perspectives, have different values and reach different conclusions out of the same information. It is a valuable tool to tackle prejudices and stereotypes and to explore the links between them, gender role models and Intercultural learning.

This activity can also foresee possible variations:

- Modifying the story to have unisex names and asking at the end what would have happened if that character was a woman or a man
- Asking participants lateral thinking questions like *"would you reorder your list if the characters were underage? And if yes, how?"*

MATERIALS

- Handout with the stories

HANDOUT – STORIES

STELLA STORY

SOMEWHERE, FAR, FAR AWAY, LIVES A BEAUTIFUL GIRL STELLA.
SHE LOVES HANDSOME VITALI WHO LIVES ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RIVER.
IN EARLY SPRING A TERRIBLE FLOOD DESTROYED ALL THE BRIDGES ACROSS THE RIVER, AND HAS LEFT ONLY ONE BOAT AFLOAT.
STELLA ASKS RALF, THE OWNER OF THE BOAT, TO TAKE HER TO THE OTHER SIDE.
RALF AGREES, BUT WITH ONE PRE-CONDITION: HE INSISTS THAT STELLA SLEEPS WITH HIM.
STELLA IS CONFUSED. SHE DOES NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO AND RUNS TO HER MOTHER TO ASK FOR ADVICE. HER MOTHER TELLS HER THAT SHE DOES NOT WANT TO INTERFERE WITH STELLA'S PRIVATE BUSINESS.

IN DESPERATION, STELLA SLEEPS WITH RALF WHO, AFTERWARDS, TAKES HER ACROSS THE RIVER.
STELLA RUNS TO VITALI TO EMBRACE HIM HAPPILY, AND TELLS HIM EVERYTHING THAT HAS HAPPENED.
VITALI PUSHES HER AWAY ROUGHLY AND STELLA RUNS AWAY, BURSTING INTO TEARS.

NOT FAR FROM VITALI'S HOUSE, STELLA MEETS GORAN, VITALI'S BEST FRIEND.
SHE TELLS HIM EVERYTHING THAT HAS HAPPENED.

GORAN HITS VITALI FOR WHAT HE HAS DONE TO STELLA AND WALKS AWAY WITH HER…

ALEJANDRO STORY

SOMEWHERE, FAR, FAR AWAY, LIVES A BEAUTIFUL GUY ALEJANDRO.
HE LOVES HANDSOME MIRELLA WHO LIVES ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RIVER.
IN EARLY SPRING A TERRIBLE FLOOD DESTROYED ALL THE BRIDGES ACROSS THE RIVER, AND HAS LEFT ONLY ONE BOAT AFLOAT.
ALEJANDRO ASKS RAFFAELLA, THE OWNER OF THE BOAT, TO TAKE HIM TO THE OTHER SIDE.
RAFFAELLA AGREES, BUT WITH ONE PRE-CONDITION: SHE INSISTS THAT ALEJANDRO SLEEPS WITH HER.
ALEJANDRO IS CONFUSED. HE DOES NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO AND RUNS TO HIS FATHER TO ASK FOR ADVICE.
HIS FATHER TELLS HIM THAT HE DOES NOT WANT TO INTERFERE WITH ALEJANDRO'S PRIVATE BUSINESS.

IN DESPERATION, ALEJANDRO SLEEPS WITH RAFFAELLA WHO, AFTERWARDS, TAKES HIM ACROSS THE RIVER.
ALEJANDRO RUNS TO MIRELLA TO EMBRACE HER HAPPILY, AND TELLS HER EVERYTHING THAT HAS HAPPENED.
MIRELLA PUSHES HIM AWAY ROUGHLY AND ALEJANDRO RUNS AWAY, BURSTING INTO TEARS.

NOT FAR FROM MIRELLA'S HOUSE, ALEJANDRO MEETS GORETTA, MIRELLA'S BEST FRIEND.
HE TELLS HER EVERYTHING THAT HAS HAPPENED.

GORETTA HITS MIRELLA FOR WHAT SHE HAS DONE TO ALEJANDRO AND WALKS AWAY WITH HIM…

IN OTHER SHOES

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Stereotypes and prejudices
TARGET GROUP	Young people from various backgrounds, (mainly students)
AIM	To reflect about prejudices and stereotypes, raising awareness about inequality and fewer opportunities
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To dig the mechanisms behind the creation of prejudices and stereotypes • To foster empathy with other people who are less fortunate • To develop critical thinking
DURATION	A total amount of 90 minutes, divided as it follows: • Animal Roundup - 10 minutes • One step forward - 60 minutes • De-rolling – 5 minutes • Debriefing and evaluation - 15 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Animal Roundup

The facilitator tells the group members to silently think of their favorite animal. Then participants are informed that, without talking, they need to arrange themselves from largest to smallest animals. Group members can only make gestures and the noise of their animal. After they have finished, the facilitator asks the group members to go around and to say the animal they were supposed to be to see if it was accurate.

Step 2. One step forward

The facilitator asks the participants to stand in one straight line, next to each other.
Each participant is given a piece of paper with a short description of the role (identity) they are going to "play" during the exercise, with a clear instruction that they should not discuss their identity with others. They have some time (3-5 minutes) to imagine the life of that person, their childhood, the difficulties they have faced, the good memories, the choices they have made, etc.
Each identity clearly describes certain characteristics which can be likely reasons for a person to face discrimination or to incur privileges in our current society. After sufficient time, the facilitator starts reading sentences about ordinary events in one's life (for example, "You can afford to buy the ultimate iPhone model" or "You had access to higher education"). If the answer is "YES", the participants should take one step forward. In that way, as the sentences from the facilitator are spoken, social differences become more visible. After about 15 sentences, the participants are asked to take a look around and see their own position and the position of others.

Step 3. De-rolling

When the facilitator stops the activity, participants are called back and asked to stand in a circle, to relax and to keep some big breathing. It is important that participants will steam out from the energies and emotions they felt during the activity and that are back on themselves (if they feel they are still wearing the shoes of the characters performed before, the debriefing will not be effective at all and it will simply generate confusion).

Step 4. Debriefing and evaluation

Participants are gathered in a circle and the facilitator asks a series of questions, in order to prompt reflection and debate.
The facilitator starts by asking participants about what happened and how they feel about the activity. After the first round of feelings, the following key questions can be asked:

- How did you feel stepping forward (or how did you feel not stepping forward)?
- For those who stepped forward often: at what point did you begin to notice that others were not moving as fast as you were?
- How difficult was playing the different roles?
- How did you imagine the person you were playing was like?
- Can you guess each other's roles? (in this moment, the facilitator should let participants reveal their roles during the role play game)
- Did anyone feel that there were moments when their fundamental rights were being ignored?
- Which rights are at stake for each of the roles?
- Does the exercise mirror society in some way? And if yes, how?
- What steps could be taken to address the inequalities in society?

See Handout below.

TIPS

Voice: if you run this activity outdoors, make sure that the participants can hear you, especially if you are doing it with a large group! You may need to use your co-facilitators to reread the statements.

Imagining phase: in this phase run in the beginning before the role play, it is possible that some participants may say that they know little about the life of the person they have to role-play. Tell them this does not matter and that they should use their imagination and do it as good as possible.

Impact: the power of this activity lies in the impact of actually seeing the distance increasing between the participants, especially at the end when there should be a big distance between those that stepped forward often and those who did not. To enhance the impact, it is important that you adjust the roles to reflect the realities of the participants' own lives. As you do so, be sure you adapt the roles so that only a minimum of people can take steps forward (i.e. can answer *"yes"*). This also applies if you have a large group and have to conceive more roles.

Debriefing: during the debriefing and evaluation it is important to explore how participants created their mental image of the character whose role they had to play. Was it through personal experience or through other sources of information (news, books, and jokes)? Are they sure the information and the images they have of the characters are reliable? In this way you can introduce how stereotypes and prejudices work.

MATERIALS

- Printed or handwritten role cards for the role play game
- A hat/bag/box to put the role cards
- Question list for helping participants get into the role
- Statements for situations & events
- Optional: laptop or music player and soft/relaxing music

HANDOUT – ROLE CARDS

UNEMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHER
UNEMPLOYED SINGLE FATHER
16 YEARS OLD ROMA (GYPSY) BOY WHO NEVER FINISHED PRIMARY SCHOOL
DISABLED YOUNG WOMAN WHO CAN ONLY MOVE IN A WHEELCHAIR
SOLDIER IN ARMY, DOING COMPULSORY MILITARY SERVICE
RETIRED WORKER FROM A FACTORY THAT MAKES SHOES
POLITICIAN WHOSE PARTY IS NOW IN POWER
DAUGHTER OF THE LOCAL BANK MANAGER
BOY LIVING WITH HIS PARENTS WHO ARE DEVOTED RELIGIOUS PEOPLE
OWNER OF A SUCCESSFUL ITC COMPANY
YOUNG, UNEMPLOYED UNIVERSITY GRADUATE ARTIST
FASHION MODEL WAITING FOR THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO WORK
33 YEARS OLD HOMELESS
ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT
ASYLUM SEEKER FROM AFGHANISTAN
19 YEAR OLD SON/DAUGHTER OF A FARMER IN A REMOTE VILLAGE IN THE MOUNTAINS

HANDOUT – QUESTION LIST

WHAT WAS YOUR CHILDHOOD LIKE?
WHAT SORT OF HOUSE DID YOU LIVE IN? WHAT KIND OF GAMES DID YOU PLAY?
WHAT SORT OF WORK DID YOUR PARENTS DO?
WHAT IS YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE LIKE NOW?
WHERE DO YOU SOCIALIZE?
WHAT DO YOU DO IN THE MORNING, IN THE AFTERNOON, IN THE EVENING?

WHAT SORT OF LIFESTYLE DO YOU HAVE?
WHERE DO YOU LIVE?
HOW MUCH MONEY DO YOU EARN EACH MONTH?
WHAT DO YOU DO IN YOUR LEISURE TIME?
WHAT YOU DO DURING YOUR HOLIDAYS?
WHAT EXCITES YOU AND WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

HANDOUT – STATEMENTS

YOU NEVER ENCOUNTERED ANY SERIOUS FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES
YOU HAVE DECENT HOUSING WITH A TELEPHONE AND CABLE TV
YOU FEEL YOU ARE RESPECTED IN THE SOCIETY WHERE YOU LIVE
YOU FEEL THAT YOUR OPINION MATTERS AND YOUR VIEWS ARE LISTENED TO OTHER
PEOPLE CONSULT YOU ABOUT DIFFERENT ISSUES
YOU ARE NOT AFRAID OF BEING STOPPED BY THE POLICE
YOU KNOW WHERE TO TURN FOR ADVICE AND HELP IF YOU NEED IT
YOU HAVE NEVER FELT DISCRIMINATED BECAUSE OF YOUR ORIGIN
YOU HAVE ADEQUATE SOCIAL AND MEDICAL PROTECTION FOR YOUR NEEDS
YOU CAN GO ON HOLIDAY ONCE A YEAR
YOU CAN INVITE FRIENDS FOR DINNER AT HOME
YOU HAVE AN INTERESTING LIFE AND YOU ARE POSITIVE ABOUT YOUR FUTURE
YOU CAN STUDY AND FOLLOW THE PROFESSION OF YOUR CHOICE
YOU ARE NOT AFRAID OF BEING HARASSED OR ATTACKED IN THE STREET
YOU FEEL PORTRAYED IN THE MEDIA

YOU CAN VOTE IN NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS
YOU CAN CELEBRATE THE MOST IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS WITH YOUR RELATIVES AND CLOSE FRIENDS
YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN AN INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ABROAD
YOU CAN GO TO THE CINEMA OR THE THEATER AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK
YOU ARE NOT AFRAID FOR THE FUTURE OF YOUR CHILDREN
YOU CAN BUY NEW CLOTHES AT LEAST ONCE EVERY THREE MONTHS
YOU CAN FALL IN LOVE WITH THE PERSON OF YOUR CHOICE
YOU FEEL THAT YOUR COMPETENCE IS APPRECIATED AND RESPECTED IN THE SOCIETY WHERE YOU LIVE
YOU CAN USE AND BENEFIT FROM THE INTERNET
YOU ARE NOT AFRAID OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF CLIMATE CHANGE
YOU ARE FREE TO USE ANY SITE ON THE INTERNET WITHOUT FEAR OF CENSORSHIP

IN OTHER WORDS

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Stereotypes and prejudices
TARGET GROUP	Young people from various backgrounds
AIM	To reflect about stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To reflect upon the role of the media in promoting stereotypes • To understand the potential of media to promote diversity
DURATION	A total amount of 90 minutes, divided as it follows: • Reading and analysis – 30 minutes • Re-writing - 30 minutes • Debriefing - 30 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Preparation

The facilitator has to prepare in advance the handout with the guidelines for each small group of participants (approximately each group will be composed by 4 or 5 people). Moreover, the facilitator has to prepare two articles per each group (the same article can be used twice).

Step 2. Reading and analysis

Participants are informed that they will work in small groups to analyse newspaper articles and rewrite those that promote stereotypes.

Then, smaller groups (composed by 4 or 5 people) are created and participants receive a newspaper article (a dif-ferent article for each group) that presents migrants or minorities in a stereotypical manner. Participants are asked to identify the stereotypes promoted in the article through keywords, phrases, images, biased statistics, lack of context, statements, etc. The facilitator gives to participants the handout with the guidelines for the critical analysis of newspaper articles, in order to help participants in the analysis.

Step 3. Re-writing

Once participants of each group have read and analysed the article, each group is asked to rewrite the article from an intercultural perspective, without stereotypes and promoting diversity. Then all the small groups are back in plenary and participants share their re-written article.

Step 4. Debriefing

Participants are gathered in a circle and the facilitator asks a series of questions, in order to generate reflection and debate. Below it is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- How did you feel when you read the article for the first time?
- What were the main stereotypes you found out in the article?
- Did you have common feelings and impressions inside your group, or not?
- How was to re-write the article?
- What is the role of media in promoting stereotypes?
- What can we do as citizens?
- Can media also promote diversity?

TIPS

The **Reading and analysis** is an efficient technique to reflect upon stereotypes and prejudices, starting from an everyday action as reading news in a journal or on social media. Therefore, it's important, for the re-writing part, to support the groups in not reproducing other stereotypes but in finding away to really overcome them, promoting diversity (keep attention also to the "positive stereotypes" that, even though less evident, they can become dangerous as the other stereotypes!).

Moreover, we suggest before starting the debriefing to point out, through a short brainstorming in plenary run with the group, to well define the difference between stereotypes and prejudices.

Guidelines for the critical analysis of newspaper articles: the main elements below are to be included in the guidelines.

Sources and context:
- Are the sources clearly provided and are they reliable?
- Is there enough information about the context in which the news happened?

Intentions:
- Does the article contain stereotypes about a group or racist remarks or present the group in a bad light?
- Does the article incite hate or violence?
- What is the line between facts and opinions?

Images:
- Look for stereotypical representations and images that do not represent the context of the news

Statistics and data:
- Look for arguments based on statistics or data and whether they come from reliable sources

Representation of diversity:
- Look for diversity of perspectives on the situation (e.g. representation of ethnicity and cultural affiliations that is not relevant for the topic and reinforces stereotypes about a group).

MATERIALS

- Newspaper articles in which stereotypes are present
- Handout printed or written with guidelines for the critical analysis of newspaper articles

DISCRIMINATION CAFETERIA

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Cultural differences and discrimination
TARGET GROUP	High school youngsters, tutoring class
AIM	To set the ground for understanding different realities and to provide a safe space for sharing experience and knowledge about topics
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To develop communication and collaboration • To enhance problem-solving, critical & creative thinking skills
DURATION	A total amount of 100 minutes, divided as it follows: • Cafeteria - 80 minutes • Summary in plenary - 20 minutes

DESCRIPTION

Setting: the space is organised as a cafeteria with 4 tables with chairs, one flipchart in the middle of each table, with post-its and markers. Some of the trainers are dressed up as waiters, possibly with aprons and notebooks where to take the customers' orders.
All the details, being a simulation, are important, so if we want to add flowers, candles or any other staff reminding a cafeteria it is fine.

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Cafeteria

The waiters welcome participants to the cafeteria and ask them to join a table. In order to encourage active participation, it is vital to have groups of equal size per table. Once all the participants are sitting at their table, the table-host (one of the trainers) presents the activity. Participants are informed that they will find a relevant topic to discuss at each table. The topics are not presented before in plenary, but the group members discover the new topic when they join the new table. While participants are discussing, waiters come to the tables and take the customers' orders, bringing them coffee, tea, biscuit, candies and fruit.
At the same time, there is a table host at each table, who is keeping track of the main points in the discussions. After each slot of time of 20 minutes, participants can decide what is the next table they want to join. They cannot stay for two rounds at the same table. The same group can also be kept for the rotation to the next table.

Step 2. Summary in plenary

At the end of the activity, participants are back in plenary and the table-hosts run a small recap of the main elements that appeared in the discussion, a maximum of 5 minutes each.

TIPS

The **Cafeteria** is a very versatile activity. It can be used to discuss whatever subject in an interactive way and with a stimulating atmosphere.
Being a workshop focused on Intercultural learning, below you can find a list of potential subjects (and related key questions for reflection) to be discussed:

- **CULTURAL DIFFERENCES:** do you experiment cultural differences in your local realities? If yes, what?
- **MEDIA:** how different cultural groups and minorities are portrayed by media?
- **EDUCATION:** is the educational system you experimented, taking into account cultural differences, different religions, traditions ...?
- **DISCRIMINATION:** what are the min discriminating events you experimented (directly or indirectly), or you have heard about?
- **ACTIONS:** do you know any action/project/activity in your local reality, conceived to promote cultural differences and Intercultural learning?

MATERIALS

- 4 tables with chairs
- Flipcharts, markers in different colors
- Coffee, tea, cookies, fruit
- Optional: music to create the atmosphere

DIVERSITY IS STRENGTH

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Cultural differences and discrimination
TARGET GROUP	Participants involved in the camp leader training
AIM	To provide camp leaders with different methods on how to encourage diversity within the group
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To encourage the respect of diversity inside groups • To develop empathy toward differences and open minded, respectful approaches towards the other people
DURATION	A total amount of 120 minutes, divided as it follows: • Guided focus – 10 minutes • Self-reflection - 15 minutes • Smaller groups discussion – 20 minutes • Introducing the topic - 15 minutes • Welcome diversity game - 20 minutes • Brainstorming - 20 minutes • Debriefing - 20 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Guided focus

Facilitators have to create atmosphere for bringing back memories from workcamps experiences.
They run the intro/ guided focus: *"Hello, welcome, you can find comfortable position and go back to your memories from the workcamps you have participated in"*, with relaxing background music.

Step 2. Self-reflection

Participants receive pen and a piece of paper, and they have 15 minutes to answer 3 questions (before they have to reflect on their own and then they can answer):

- What made your workcamp a special experience?
- What did you learn from other volunteers?
- How did you contribute to your group life during workcamp?

Step 3. Smaller groups discussion

Facilitator divides participants in smaller group, depending on how many participants there are (we suggest no more than 5 people in each group to favour the discussion and exchange). Then, the facilitator encourages participants to share what they answered during self-reflection. The participants discuss for about 15 minutes and choose together 3 key words for each of the above mentioned questions.
The facilitator collects the key words from each group and writes them on the flipchart. It is followed by a short discussion about what was common and if something unexpected came up.

Step 4. Introducing the topic

The facilitator introduces the concept of "safe space" and how everyone is special and unique. Further, it is discussed how to encourage everyone to be part of the group - why it is important and how to do so. Then, the facilitator gives a short introduction on Marcia Conner learning theory, asking participants to share their feedbacks and ideas about what has been presented.
Marcia Conner.
http://marciaconner.com/resources/learning-styles-intro/

Step 5. Welcome diversity game

Participants are asked to all stand in a circle. Facilitators are welcoming people by saying *"I want to give a special welcome to..."*
Statements can be for example:

- everyone who has relatives abroad
- who faced challenges to come here to this venue
- everyone who experienced work we are going to have here on workcamp
- everyone who is first time on event like this
- everyone who wished they had been born in a different country or era etc...

After each statement the people who for example have relatives abroad come to the centre of the circle and everyone claps. This is to demonstrate the diversity and similarities inside the groups. As soon as the game is over, the facilitator asks the group *"Why was this game played?"* and a round of keywords are collected.

Step 6. Brainstorming

The facilitator encourages the group to go back to the key words gathered and to collect ideas on the tasks that could be shared with individuals inside the group to ensure a good group life with shared responsibilities. While participants are brainstorming, another facilitator takes notes on a flipchart.
Moreover, the importance of getting feedback from the workcamp participants is discussed briefly, because it is important to ask the participants how they feel about the responsibilities they got during the project.

Step 7. Debriefing

Participants are gathered in a circle and the facilitator asks a series of questions, in order to prompt reflection and debate. Below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- How do you feel about organizing the group life?
- How can you give value to diversity in a project?
- How can you give value to the different strengths and weaknesses of people?
- What do you think diversity has in common with inclusion?

TIPS

Guided focus: we suggest facilitators to write the guided focus in advance and practice it to be sure that it fits their own way of speaking. Therefore, this is very important to create the proper atmosphere to stimulate the memories, to accompany participants in the journey, creating the safe space for sharing and opening up.

Marcia Conner learning theory: the main concept in the theory is that a lot of learning is informal and accidental in life and in workcamps, therefore, we can learn a lot from each other in informal ways and "accidentally".

Welcome diversity game: the aim of this game is to give a positive point of view on diversity and support the topic of inclusion. Moreover, the activity goal is to get ideas about why the diversity of the group's members is important and why it brings value to the whole group.

Brainstorming: the tasks proposed can be everyday tasks such as cooking and cleaning. There can also be for example: time-keeper, shopping, alarm person (early bird), king or queen of day, action groups (prepare bigger tasks - prepare intercultural evening, etc.), person responsible for the weekend activity, contact with the local youth club, daily diary (everyday a person collects memories from the day in their own way), organizing their own workshops in what they are good at or interested in trying.

MATERIALS

- Paper, pens, flipcharts, markers
- Projector
- Music for guided focus

INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Cultural differences and discrimination
TARGET GROUP	Ages 21-29 (preferably people who already know each other - usually used as a session of a longer training process)
AIM	To understand and experience the intercultural sensitivity/awareness
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To raise awareness of the fact that intercultural sensitivity/awareness is a process and not something that happens suddenly • To increase team building with an intercultural perspective
DURATION	A total amount of 150 minutes, divided as it follows: • Intro and video – 30 minutes • Role play game - 120 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Intro and video

The workshop starts with the facilitator introduction about the activity and the screening of a short video about the subject of intercultural sensitivity/awareness. Extra time it is left for questions and feedbacks from participants.
All the elements appeared are gathered on a flipchart by one of the facilitators.

Step 2. Role play game

The activity includes the following steps:

1. First ranking

Participants are divided in 3 smaller groups of equal size, corresponding to:

- Group 1: denial
- Group 2: defence
- Group 3: minimization

Then the facilitator hands out to the groups the role play game instructions explaining that the task is to carefully read them and prepares according to the role they have received.

2. Role play first round

Each group acts out their role play in no more than 3 minutes. Other groups watch.

3. Intercultural consultants group meeting

Now each group, takes the role of intercultural consultants. Their task is to recommend strategies for raising cultural sensitivity to the other groups. In order to fulfil the task, the facilitator, assigns to each group the following tasks:

- **Group 1:** hold a group meeting. What advice can you give group 3 to raise out of the minimization stage?
- **Group 2:** hold a group meeting. What advice can you give group 1 to raise them out of the denial stage?
- **Group 3:** hold a group meeting. What advice can you give group 2 to raise them out of the defence stage?

4. Role play second round

The facilitator explains that the task for each group, is to follow the intercultural consultants' recommended strategies, and, more specifically, now:

- Group 1 is in acceptance.
- Group 2 is in adaptation.
- Group 3 is in integration/intercultural competence.

The activity follows as for the step 2 where each group acts out their new role play in no more than 3 minutes. Other groups watch.

5. Debriefing and conclusions

The debriefing starts with the facilitator encouraging each participant to write on a post-it the main thing they learned from the exercise and put them in a visible place in the room. Then all the participants are asked to have a look of the main elements appeared.

Below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- How do you feel?
- What did you learn in the group?
- What did you learn from this exercise?
- What are the benefits of intercultural competence?
- How can we use intercultural sensitivity in our lives?

TIPS

De-rolling technique: in simulations and role play games, the de-rolling is a very important part, integral part of the technique itself. In fact, it is conceived to have the participants get out of the role, relax, steam out and calm down.
It can be run with simple techniques but also having the facilitators simply informing participants that the first part of the activity is finished and asking them, with a calmed and relaxing voice, to step out from the simulation, taking a profound breathing.
The de-rolling allows to avoid confusion, to have the participants answering as themselves, not as the assigned character that were performing and, indeed, to have more objective and targeted debriefing.

MATERIALS

- Tech resources to watch the video: laptop/computer, projector, audio, internet (or video downloaded in a USB)
- Printed copies of the instructions for the role play
- White paper, pens, post-it, markers

THE INTERCULTURAL HISTORY LINE

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Cultural differences and discrimination
TARGET GROUP	Works best with multicultural groups
AIM	To stimulate a critical approach to history, taking into account the intercultural aspects
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To explore different perceptions of history and history teaching • To look for similarities/differences in our education systems • To raise curiosity about and empathy with other people's cultures and histories • To analyse whether historical narratives take diversity into account
DURATION	A total amount of 80 minutes, divided as it follows: • Historical events – 20 minutes • Explanation – 30 minutes • Debriefing and evaluation – 30 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Historical events

The facilitator starts informing participants that this activity will make use of historical events in order to discuss culture. Then, each participant is invited to think about 5 historical dates that are very important for their country or culture and to write them briefly on a sticky note together with their name. Participants will have about 10 minutes to write and then to place the sticky notes on the timeline.

Step 2. Explanation

When everyone has fulfilled the previous task, the facilitator asks participants to explain why those dates are important, what they stand for and why they have chosen them. Each participant can take the flow and explain for a maximum of 2 minutes. While participants are presenting, a facilitator takes note on a flipchart of the main elements appeared.

Step 3. Debriefing and evaluation

Participants are gathered in a circle and the facilitator asks a series of questions, in order to prompt reflection and debate. Below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- Did you find any dates or events surprising?
- Were you familiar with all of them?
- If any events are unfamiliar to some of you – can you explain why?
- How and why do we learn about certain events in our history and not others?
- Among the events that were mentioned, are the different minorities or groups present in them? Why or why not?

TIPS

The **Historical events** is an efficient technique to stimulate a critical approach towards history, taking into account the different intercultural aspects. The technique is mainly based on group discussion so, it is important to have a very interested and motivated group to avoid that the level of attention will start fluctuating.

With groups of young people who need a more dynamic and physical activity, it is possible to add a small variation: after the step 1, participants can be gathered in smaller groups. In each group, participants have to present their historical event and then pick up one event among those presented, creating a short theatre sketch.
Then, in plenary, after all the representations, the debriefing can be conducted with the same key questions. If we choose to add the more theatrical part, it's important to forecast at least 60 minutes more than the initial timing.

MATERIALS

A long sheet of paper in order to draw a timeline (starting with 1500 ad for example), markers in different colors and sticky notes.

CULTURAL INFLUENCERS

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Individual and multiple identities
TARGET GROUP	Young people, 20-30 years old
AIM	To analyse what has influenced and shaped our own, unique complex identities over a lifetime
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To reflect about what influences our culture and ourselves (individually and in group) • To raise awareness about the diversity or the lack of diversity in our life
DURATION	A total amount of 90 minutes, divided as it follows: • Me, myself… – 30 minutes • Sharing - 30 minutes • Debriefing – 30 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Me, myself ...

The facilitator introduces the activity and asks the participants to think on what might have influenced who they are today, how they behave and what their values and beliefs are.

Some examples can be given.
Then it is shown the Cultural Influencers model and participants are encouraged to individually complete each circle with as many details as they can think of.

Participants are afterwards invited to share their models with a person sitting next to them.

Step 2. Sharing

The facilitator asks participants to tell a story of a person they have just been speaking with, using the influencer's model the person has filled.

Step 3. Debriefing

Participants are gathered in a circle and the facilitator asks a series of questions, in order to prompt reflection and debate. Below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

First part:

- Is the division between layers of your identity clear?
- What consequences does that have?
- Has it happened to you that you were being limited to one of your layers? What happened?
- How did you react? What else could you have done?
- Do the layers stay the same? Or do they change? Is it necessary that they stay the same? What are the advantages and disadvantages?
- What did you learn about yourself by doing this activity?
- How can you apply this learning to your work/school/neighborhood context?
- How can this new insight improve your relationships with other people?

Second part:

- Where are your main influencers from? Are they from the same places or do they have different backgrounds?
- How diverse are our influences/references?
- How do you think culture influences you and all of us?
- What is culture?

See Handout below.

TIPS

Me, myself ... activity is based on the main element that, our individual cultures (or cultural identities) are influenced and shaped by a large number of things with we are often unaware of (they can be called, for example, "cultural influencers"). Therefore, this activity allows participants to analyse what has influenced and shaped their own unique, complex identities over the lifetime. We suggest running this activity when a group already knows each other, so there's no need for presentations nor icebreakers, since the trainers will decide if they are required depending on the other activities.

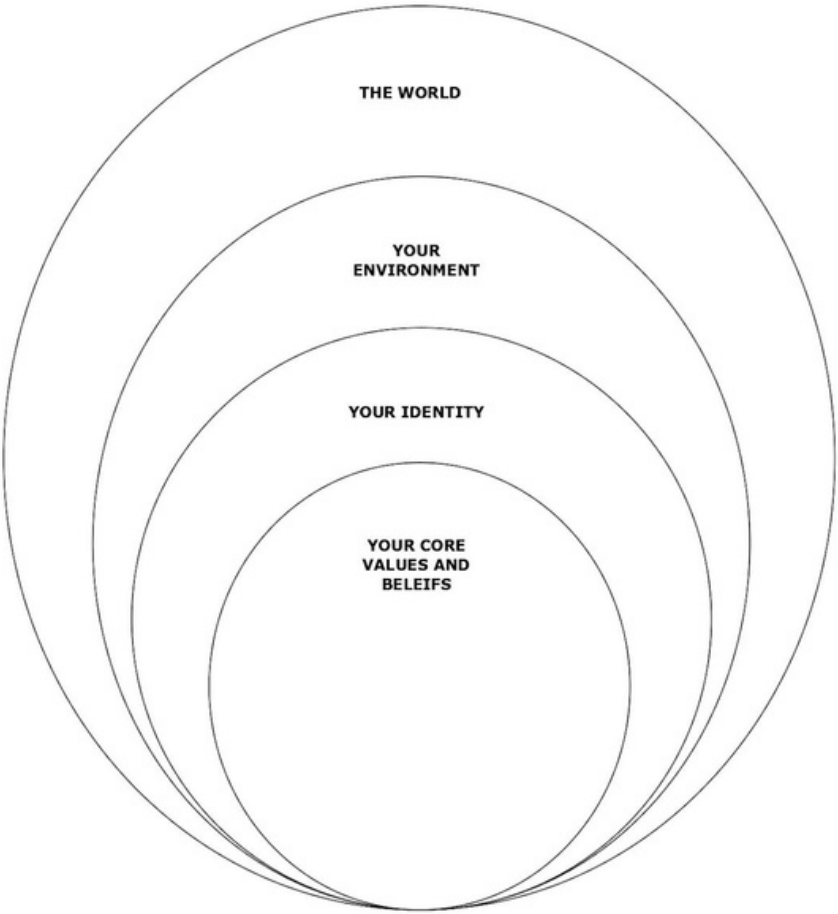
Sharing: for the sharing part we suggest facilitators to create the proper atmosphere and safe space, to have the participants relaxed, and encouraged to share their experiences. Soft music can help, as also colored blanket on the floor where to sit and some pillows.

Online: when doing this activity virtually, we suggest displaying individual slides with one circle of the model on each side. It can be used an interactive whiteboard to allow the participants to write the key words and fill out the circles together. Then the breakout rooms have to be divided to make sure participants have time to reflect on the influencers and the model.

MATERIALS

- Flipcharts o A3 papers, colour markers and pens.

HANDOUT – CULTURAL INFLUENCERS



DISCOVERING OURSELVES

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Individual and multiple identities
TARGET GROUP	Young people (aged from 15 to 30 years old)
AIM	To identify and reflect on the elements that build our own identity
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To use a creative way to identify and register the elements that make up one's identity and to discuss values and beliefs • To demonstrate the value of self-reflection to discover things about ourselves, about who we are, about what we find important • To allocate time for assessing our own feelings and evaluating our own actions on a continuous basis
DURATION	A total amount of 220 minutes, divided as it follows: • Who I am –45 minutes • Sharing 1 - 30 minutes • My T-Shirt - 60 minutes • Sharing 2- 45 minutes • Debriefing – 30 minutes • Closure – 10 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Who I am

The facilitator has to take the group of participants outdoors (the sea side, the forest, etc.) or to some other relaxed setting. Once arrived, participants are asked to find a quiet place, without disturbing each other, to reflect on who they are, and how they perceive themselves. The facilitator can invite to stop thinking, stand still, deal with the silence, feel connected with the present moment (time) and the actual environment (space), to feel their heartbeat and to look into themselves. Participants receive 30 minutes to think about this individually and to write or draw the elements down on the shape of a person. Their notes are for personal use, they do not need to be shared.

Before to start, the facilitator can share few questions to help self-reflection:

- How would you describe yourself?
- How do you feel now, at this precise moment?
- What is making you feel comfortable? What is making you feel uncomfortable?
- What are the elements which build you as a person?
- Which experiences of inclusion and which experiences of diversity were significant in building the person you are today?
- At what times do you usually feel included and/or excluded?

Step 2. Sharing 1

The facilitator asks participants to gather in a circle to share their experience.
Below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- Was it hard or easy? Why?
- Did it feel awkward? Why?
- What were the easiest things to think about? Which were the more difficult?
- What could the benefits be of thinking about oneself?

Step 3. My T-Shirt

The facilitator starts explaining that many young people wear T-shirts to express who they are or what they think/believe in. Therefore, now the task is to create a similar symbolic T-shirt for each participant. Participants are left some time for the reflection (linking that to the previous work done), then, when the thinking about their own identity is done, participants are asked to transfer these ideas in a creative symbolic way onto a blank "ID T-shirt" using a variety of material. When participants have finished their ID t-shirts, the facilitator asks them to put the T-shirt on for everybody else to see. They are invited to walk around the room in silence observing every t-shirt.

Step 4. Sharing 2

The facilitator divides the group in smaller groups of 4 or 5 participants in different corners of the room(s). The different groups are given 4 questions, one at a time, and asked to discuss them in their group, with each person being given the chance to talk. Below the questions:

- What do the symbols on my T-shirt mean?
- What do I love – what am I passionate about?
- What makes me jealous?
- What would I kill for?

Step 5. Debriefing

Participants are gathered in a circle and the facilitator asks a series of questions, in order to prompt reflection and debate. Below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- How was it to reflect about yourself, about your identity?
- Did you discover new things about yourself? About others?
- What can we conclude about identity? What is it?
- How does identity play in contacts with others?

Step 6. Closure

To finish the activity and relax the atmosphere, the facilitator can ask the group to stand up and walk around the room admiring T-shirts and telling each other's about their T-shirts and what they mean to them. Adding some songs or relaxing music can also help create a comfortable atmosphere. Taking time out from day-to-day routine to reflect can be very challenging in our everyday permanent running but can be also very beneficial. It gives people some time to put their lives in perspective. In fact, often people just do this without stopping and thinking what is important for them. The discovering ourselves activity can be used to demonstrate the value of self-reflection to discover things about ourselves, about who we are, about what we find important.

TIPS

Taking time out from day-to-day routine to reflect can be very challenging in our everyday permanent running but can be also very beneficial. It gives people some time to put their lives in perspective. In fact, often people just do this without stopping and thinking what is important for them. The **discovering ourselves** activity can be used to demonstrate the value of self-reflection to discover things about ourselves, about who we are, about what we find important.

For the first part of the activity, in the **"Who I am"** section, we suggest facilitators to create the proper soft atmosphere to encourage the intimate reflection. The place is important, but they can also choose to add extra elements, as for example, soft and intimate music.

The second part of the activity, **"My T-Shirt"** is conceived to offer participants another way of analyzing one's identity and sharing its results with others, visualizing the different elements of our own identity. It is an interesting exercise to put our main reflections on paper and share it with others. They can be a mirror and show their image of you, which does not always coincide with the view you have of yourself. This exercise is about sharing the elements that make up our own identity (as expressed through the T-shirts) and to discuss values and beliefs. Therefore, by talking about T-shirts, instead of talking about ourselves directly, enable most of us more easily to share personal information. In any case, the facilitator has to underline that participants can share only what they want and feel with the others, without feeling obliged to share elements they do not want/feel.

MATERIALS

- Flipchart paper and markers or blackboard and chalk
- "Description, Interpretation, Evaluation" participant handout
- Two "ambiguous objects"
- Paper, white paper, pens, post-it, markers
- Blank papers, pens or markers
- A 'blank' T-shirt for everyone (you can ask them to bring an old T-shirt, or buy some T-shirts without motives/drawings on them)
- Enough pieces of textile or material (cloth, felt, ribbon, etc.) in different colours and textures to stick on the T-shirt or textile pens or paint (or normal markers)
- Utensils to cut and stick the material on the T-shirt: scissors, pins, sowing equipment, velcro, textile glue, stapler

FROM EXCLUSION TO INTEGRATION

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Individual and multiple identities
TARGET GROUP	Young people (15-30 years old)
AIM	To identify and reflect on the elements that build our own identity
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To use a creative way to identify and register the elements that make up one's identity and to discuss values and beliefs • To demonstrate the value of self-reflection to discover things about ourselves, about who we are, about what we find important • To allocate time for assessing our own feelings and evaluating our own actions on a continuous basis
DURATION	A total amount of 220 minutes, divided as it follows: • Who I am –45 minutes • Sharing 1 - 30 minutes • My T-Shirt - 60 minutes • Sharing 2 - 45 minutes • Debriefing – 30 minutes • Closure – 10 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Who I am

The facilitator launches the activity, presenting briefly the interactive acculturation model as one of the models of the Intercultural learning.

The facilitator has to explain well and in detail each acculturation orientation, giving examples, such as the following:

- **Assimilationism:** policies and attitudes that promote assimilation more or less explicitly, requiring immigrants to give up their language, religion, traditions and behaviors and embrace the traditions of the majority culture in order to be accepted as full members of society
- **Segregationism:** situations in which national minorities or immigrants are kept in separate neighborhoods. There are for example some cases where the authorities build walls to separate the neighborhoods. There can be situations in which minorities attend separate schools, enjoy separate festivities, go to separate stores and restaurants
- **Exclusionism:** situations in which politicians or other people explicitly claim that minorities and immigrants should leave the country/city or, even worse, should be murdered or sterilized
- **Marginalisation:** situations in which a person does not feel they belong to any group anymore. They are not accepted as a full member either of the majority or any of the minorities. For example, a Roma girl who comes from a traditional community in which girls do not attend school beyond the fourth grade, but who goes to high school. She might not identify with her co-pupils from the high school, nor with her childhood friends from the neighborhood
- **Integrationism:** situations in which people with different cultural backgrounds live together, interact with each other, learn from each other, have equal rights and are not afraid that these interactions will make them or their culture less authentic.

After the model presentation, it is left extra time for questions from participants and to gather feedbacks/comments about what has been presented.

Step 2. Analysis and preparation

The facilitator distributes the handouts with the description of the acculturation orientations presented, both from the majority perspective and the minority perspective. The group is then divided into subgroups of, approximately, 5 participants each. Each group is asked to analyse for a given context the relationship between the majority and a minority group of their choice by following the questions in the group analysis handout. Participants are encouraged to make the analysis from social, political, economic or educational perspective, based on their own knowledge, and to illustrate their view with as many examples as possible. They might have different opinions based on their lived realities and knowledge of the subject. There are 30 minutes for the analysis and after this time, each group has 15 minutes more to prepare a visual presentation to briefly share the relation they analysed and, specifically, their thoughts on the last question on how relations can be improved.

Step 3. Presentations and debriefing

Participants are gathered in the workshop room and each group will have a maximum of 5 minutes to present the work done. After that, the facilitator asks a series of questions, in order to prompt reflection and debate. Below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- How do people end up having the attitudes of inclusion/exclusion? How are they formed?
- Do you think that being in contact with diverse groups enhances tolerance or fear towards the others?
- How is this model reflected in your own communities? What about the educational system?
- Do you think that people can change their attitudes about others or about themselves?
- What measures should the governments take in order to support the development of integration orientations?

See Handout below.

TIPS

Acculturation model: the facilitator can draw the two axes (identity and communication) and explain how different levels of focus on these two axes represent different acculturation orientations, as, for example:

- high focus on identity + low focus on communication = segregationism/separatism
- low focus on identity + high focus on communication = assimilationism
- low focus on communication + low focus on identity = exclusion/marginalization
- high focus on communication + high focus on identity = integrationism

A good use of graphic facilitation can be very useful to support the upcoming presentation, to have participants clearly understanding the examples and to fully participate in the exchange of feedback/comments part.

Critical approach: as every time facilitators are presenting a model to explain a complex content/theory, we suggest underlining that this is just one among the many models that can be used. Models in fact can be useful to better contextualize something, but sometimes can be reductive and partial. Therefore, it is important to explain that the model presented does not represent "the final truth" and that there could be found different interpretations, approaches and models to deepen the same content/theory.

MATERIALS

- Handout with acculturation orientations
- Flipcharts, markers
- One big workshop room and several small rooms or areas allowing the possibility for group work

HANDOUT – ACCULTURATION MODEL

ACCULTURATION ORIENTATION OF MINORITY GROUPS

Integration orientation

reflects a desire to maintain key features of someone's own culture while also valuing the adoption of key elements of the majority culture

Assimilation orientation

reflects the willingness to give up most aspects of their own culture for the sake of adopting the cultural practices of the majority or dominant group

Separation orientation

is characterised by the desire to maintain all features of own culture while rejecting the culture and relations with the members of the majority culture or other members of the society. The contact between members of different groups is inexistent or minimal/superficial

Marginalisation orientation

characterises individuals who feel ambivalent and somewhat alienated from both their own and the majority culture, thereby feeling excluded from both the groups they identify with and majority community. For example, one can be considered a migrant in their country of residence and a tourist in their country of origin

ACCULTURATION ORIENTATION OF MAJORITY GROUPS

Integration orientation

majority valorises the maintenance of certain aspects of minority identity and accepts that minority adopts important features of the majority culture. There is also a willingness to modify own institutional practices and certain aspects of majority culture to facilitate integration of minority groups

Assimilation orientation

majority desires that minorities give up their cultural/identity characteristics in order to adopt the cultural/identity characteristics of the majority

Segregation orientation

majority manifests an attitude of tolerance of the maintenance of minority culture/identity as long as they live separately, in specific neighbourhoods or regions (e.g. ghettos). Segregationists avoid contact with minorities as they believe this would dilute or weaken the integrity and authenticity of their own culture/identity

Exclusionism orientation

majority is both intolerant with minorities that maintain their culture/identity, but also refuses to allow them to adopt features of the majority culture, as they believe that certain groups can never assimilate within the majority community. Certain exclusionists try to create the conditions to incite minorities to leave the country/neighbourhood.

WHERE I COME FROM

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Individual and multiple identities
TARGET GROUP	Participants involved in the online pre-departure training for a short term voluntary service experience
AIM	To learn about the different cultures we come from
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To understand the value of a diverse group • To make the first step in Intercultural learning
DURATION	A total amount of 60 minutes, divided as it follows: • Padlet introduction – 15 minutes • Individual presentations - 25 minutes • Debriefing – 20 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Padlet introduction

The facilitator explains the rationale of the workshop: we all come from different backgrounds, therefore it's very important learning about each other before the beginning of the project.
Then is introduced Padlet and participants are asked to map their location, adding something they want to share about their culture.
This can be traditional food, scenery, music, something personal, a meme, funny tradition etc.
Participants have 5 minutes to add themselves on the map.

Step 2. Individual presentations

In turns, everyone has to introduce themselves briefly and explain the things they added on the map. The facilitator should start, and then give turns to everyone to make sure all are included.

Step 3. Debriefing

Participants are gathered in the main virtual room and the facilitator asks a series of questions, in order to prompt reflection and debate. Below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- Based on the previous presentation, we can see that we are coming from different cultures and backgrounds, so how should we behave while meeting differences and people from other cultures?
- What does it mean to have a "respectful behavior"?
- What does it mean to create a safe and friendly space for everybody? How to do that?

TIPS

Padlet: https://fi.padlet.com/ is an online tool where everyone can map their location and add something they want to share about their culture.

Tips and possible adaptations: after the step 2, the facilitator can ask participants to think about specific moments, where they met someone who was different from themselves in some way. For example, they were from another country or region, from a minority, they had a different skin colour or religion, or spoke a different language.
Then, each participant receives a copy of the handout and the task to answer the questions in the handout (below), by writing about the intercultural encounter of their choice. In order to fulfil the task, 30 extra minutes can be allocated.

Handout – questions:

- Who did you meet?
- When?
- Where?
- What surprised you the most?
- How was the meeting?
- Would you change something in your behave? If yes, what?
- What did you bring back home from this meeting?

MATERIALS

- Internet connection and pc

COMMUNICATION: HOW AND WHAT?

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Intercultural dialogue
TARGET GROUP	High school students, university students
AIM	To develop skills for intercultural dialogue, discussion and cooperation
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To reflect on verbal communication and the related challenges • To understand that opinions are linked to different intercultural perspectives and values and that they can change any time • To reflect on the important of a fair intercultural dialogue
DURATION	A total amount of 90 minutes, divided as it follows: • Blind Drawing – 30 minutes • Fishbowl - 60 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Blind Drawing

This activity can be used to introduce the topic. The facilitator explains that the group is going to be divided in pairs or teams composed by 4-5 persons. Each team has to appoint a member to be the "artist". The artist cannot see what has to be drawn.
The remaining members have to instruct the "artist" to draw it without saying what the item is.

More specifically, these are the rules presented by the facilitator:
1. The team cannot tell the "artist" what their item is, they can only give instructions.
2. The "artist" cannot ask any questions and can only draw based on the instructions given by their team.
3. There is a time limit of 3 minutes for the drawing to be completed.
Then, each flipchart is positioned to face away from the group so that they cannot see what the "artist" is drawing. At the end of the activity, all the drawings are revealed.
Another round can be proposed in which verbal communication is not allowed, so the group members have to describe the drawing to the "artist", using signs only.

Step 2. Fishbowl

The activity includes the following steps:

1. Preparation

The facilitator has to choose a central topic or text for the group, in order to develop an open-ended question to start the discussion. If using a text, participants may read the text beforehand: for example, sometimes it is possible to use newspaper articles on the subject or articles appeared on social media.

2. Discussion

The facilitator asks for or selects 4-5 volunteers to be in the "fishbowl." Only the persons inside the fishbowl are allowed to talk. The outer circle is instructed to remain quiet, observe and take notes on the content and process of the inner circle's discussion.
In the middle of the circle there is a box with different statements written in pieces of paper. All the time a new subject has to be discussed and a new conversation starts, one of the participants has to pick up one of the papers where the subject to be discussed in the upcoming round can be found.

For each round of discussion, the facilitator should allow the fishbowl discussion to continue, approximately, for at least 15-20 minutes, depending on the participants' level of involvement. The facilitator allows the conversation to progress where participants take it: participants are rotating in and out of the fishbowl throughout the course of the discussion. When a participant from the outsider circle wants to take the floor and enter the discussion, they should touch the shoulder of one of the persons of the inner circle. The person stands up, leaving the chair to the newcomer.

3. Debriefing

After all participants have rotated through the fishbowl, the whole group is divided into small groups and participants are invited to debrief. They can use their observations from the outer circle to highlight strengths of the discussion and make suggestions for ways to engage each other more meaningfully.
Below there is a list of key questions that can be asked:

- What did you observe during the discussion?
- Did you hear anything from the fishbowl that surprised you?
- Can you mention one thing you heard that is similar to your point of view?
- Can you mention one thing you heard with which you disagree?
- How did you feel while on the outside of the fishbowl?
- How did you feel while on the inside of the fishbowl?
- How do you feel knowing that peers were listening to what you were saying?
- What were the main messages communicated?
- Do we communicate only through voice and words?
- In how many ways do we communicate?

See Handout below.

TIPS

The **Fishbowl** is a technique for organising medium - to large group discussions. In fact, participants are separated into an inner and outer circle: in the inner circle or Fishbowl, participants have a discussion, while the rest of the participants in the outer circle listen to the discussion and take notes.
This activity builds comprehension of complex texts/ideas while developing group discussion skills. In the Fishbowl, participants practice responding to multiple viewpoints. Observations from the group in the outer circle provide insight into what makes for effective small group discussions.

Facilitation: the first few times, we suggest the facilitator to be the one who manages the process. Once it becomes familiar, the facilitator can also select participants to take the role of facilitator. In any case, the facilitator does not participate in the discussion, but can ask questions along the way to stimulate deeper discussion and to ensure that everyone inside the Fishbowl has a chance to talk.

Voice: the facilitator, during the whole activity, should pay attention to the voice level: it is important that the people from the external circle hear well what it is said in the inner circle, otherwise the level of concentration will lower, preventing them from entering the discussion.

MATERIALS

- Flipchart, markers, papers, pens
- Box for the statements
- Statements written in a piece of paper

HANDOUT – STATEMENTS

MY ROOTS: THE CULTURE I AM COMING FROM ...
YOUNG GIRLS WEARING THE VEIL AT SCHOOLS ... TO BE ALLOWED OR NOT ...
WE HAVE TO TOLLERATE EVERYONE IN ORDER TO LIVE TOGHETER
SOMETHING YOU CANNOT STAND FROM THE OTHER PEOPLE'S BEHAVIOUR AND WAY OF LIVING
ALL THE CULTURES SHOULD BE VALUED THE SAME WAY: AGREE VS NOT AGREE
WOMEN SHOULD BE MORE PROTECTED BECAUSE THEY ARE MORE VULNERABLE
SOMETIMES WE NEED CENSORSHIP TO RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF EVERYBODY
RELIGION PRESERVES THE COHESION OF SOCIETY
MIGRANTS ARE THE MOST EXPOSED TO DISCRIMINATION
WE SHOULD NOT SPEAK POLITICALLY CORRECT ALL THE TIME
FREEDOM OF SPEECH HAS LIMITS
THE BORDER BETWEEN FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND HATE SPEECH
INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE ... FOR ME ...

ICL COMPETENCES

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Intercultural dialogue
TARGET GROUP	Young people 15-30 years old
AIM	To introduce intercultural awareness, reflecting about the individual and common understanding of Intercultural learning
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To create a common understanding of Intercultural learning • To review different approaches to Intercultural learning • To foster intercultural sensitivity/awareness among participants
DURATION	A total amount of 150 minutes, divided as it follows: • Postcards and competences – 60 minutes • Diamond and ranking - 60 minutes • Debriefing – 30 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Postcards and competences

The facilitator scatters postcards across the floor and asks participants to choose one which reminds them of an intercultural experience where they have learnt something. Then participants are split in small groups, and they are asked to collect intercultural competences which they have recognized, learnt or improved during their intercultural experiences. Each group needs to produce a list. Once back in plenary, the groups present their own lists, and all the intercultural competences developed thanks to the intercultural experiences are shared.

During the presentation a facilitator takes note on a flipchart of the main elements shared and competences appeared, trying to cluster them.

Step 2. Diamond and ranking

The facilitator distributes statements about intercultural competences among participants (below) and, in small mixed groups, participants should form a diamond-shaped model. In the diamond they should prioritize the statements from the most important competence to the least importance competence.
Sample statements:

- I am curious and open minded towards other cultures
- I have to know my identity well (Who am I?)
- I am tolerant to ambiguity (unclear, something is not well defined)
- Once back in plenary all the diamonds are presented.

Step 3. Debriefing

Participants are gathered in a circle and the facilitator asks a series of questions, in order to prompt reflection and debate. Below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- Was it hard or simple to make the ranking within your group?
- According to what criteria did you prioritize the competences?
- Were you surprised discovering the rankings of the other groups?
- Do you think there is a common understanding of Intercultural learning inside the group?
- How could we define Intercultural learning?
- Is Intercultural learning easy or hard? Does experience help?
- How could we define intercultural competences?
- How can we use them to overcome discrimination and boost inclusion?

See Handout below.

TIPS

Diamond: the diamond ranking system is a method used to compare different statements according to prioritization (putting on the top the one you consider the most important and on the bottom part the one you consider the less). The ranking system through a visual support, as in this case, the diamond, can be very useful for participants to categorize, on a first glance, the most relevant elements for them, leaving in the bottom part of the list the ones less relevant. Still, the ranking system, if not fully discussed afterwards, can leave the reflection just in surface, leading to unfruitful generalizations. For this reason, we suggest facilitators to run a strong debriefing after the ranking presentation, in order to dig the real elements behind. In the Handout below you can find two diamond models, one with 5 and the other with 6 levels. You can choose the one more fitting with the way you are planning to implement the activity (if you have more sample statements you can use the one with 6 levels wile if you have less, you can use the one with 5).

MATERIALS

- Postcards, statements for all groups, handout on Intercultural learning
- Glue, paper, white paper, pens, post-it, markers

HANDOUT – DIAMOND EXAMPLES

		5		
	4		4	
3		3		3
	2		2	
		1		

		6		
	5		5	
4		4		4
3		3		3
	2		2	
		1		

WHERE DO YOU STAND?

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Intercultural dialogue
TARGET GROUP	Works the best with groups of young people from different backgrounds
AIM	To develop critical thinking toward the subject of intercultural dialogue
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To develop participants' understanding of the complexity of cultural relations and intercultural dialogue • To foster respect and open-minded approaches towards differentperspectives and opinions • To develop participants' critical thinking and respectful communication skills
DURATION	A total amount of 90 minutes, divided as it follows: • Introduction and brainstorming – 20 minutes • Moving Debate - 40 minutes • Debriefing - 30 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Introduction and brainstorming

Participants are gathered in a circle and the facilitator starts with a brief introduction about the complexity of culture. Participants are invited to give short feedbacks and to brainstorm about the elements composing a culture, adding relevant key words. Another facilitator takes note on a flipchart.

Step 2. Moving Debate

The facilitator explains that several statements are going to be read. These statements are about relations between different cultural groups, with which people may agree to a greater or lesser extent.
Then, the facilitator points out the two extreme positions – with the posters featuring the phrases "I agree" and "I disagree". It's explained that participants may occupy any point along the (imaginary) line between the two signs, but that they should try to position themselves, as far as possible, next to people whose views almost coincide with their own. After the explanation, the facilitator starts reading out the statements (one at a time) and after each, participants are invited to take position, explaining to the others why they took that particular position.
In order to further stimulate reflection and discussion, the facilitator can ask those at the endpoints to explain why they have occupied these extreme positions or ask someone near the center whether their position indicates a lack of a strong opinion or a lack of knowledge.

Step 3. Debriefing

The debriefing will be based on the previous two main activities.
Below there is a list of key questions that can be asked:

- How did you feel during the debate?
- Was it easy to take the flow and explain your point of view?
- Did you strongly disagree with someone else's position?
- Did you change your position, after having heard different points of view?
- What does intercultural dialogue mean to you now?
- Why did we use this activity to tackle this subject?

See Handout below.

TIPS

The **Moving debate** is an efficient technique to boost group discussion and favor the exchange of different point of views. Still, as the majority of discussion-based techniques, after some time it might create tiredness and the participants' level of attention can start fluctuating. For this reason, we suggest facilitators to pay particular attention to the participants' level of involvement, being ready to make the debate more dynamic with a different use of the voice or being ready to close the activity if and when the participation starts to be weaker.

Positioning: participants are allowed to move positions after listening to each other's comments. This action is very symbolic and meaningful because it highlights the importance of having an open-minded approach, being flexible and ready to change opinions after other people have expressed their point of view.

Written statements: we suggest having all the statements also in a written form. In fact, for some people it's easier to remember and learn through the voice, while for others, more visual, it's better to have something written.
Moreover, this can help overcoming possible language barriers.

MATERIALS

- Flipchart paper, sticky tape, two pieces of A4 paper –one with "I agree" and one with "I disagree"
- A big space or workshop room for people to move around

HANDOUT – STATEMENTS

SOME PEOPLE DO NOT WANT TO INTEGRATE
FOR SOCIETY TO SURVIVE, THE RULES PEOPLE LIVE BY COME FIRST, INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM COMES SECOND
SOME RELIGIONS ARE AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS
IN A SOCIETY, MINORITIES MUST ADAPT TO THE MAJORITY
MUSLIMS CANNOT REALLY INTEGRATE INTO EUROPEAN SOCIETIES
RESOURCES ARE LIMITED, SO A SOCIETY CANNOT WELCOME TOO MANY PEOPLE, EVEN IF THEY FLEE WAR IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY
WE SHOULD RESPECT PEOPLE'S RIGHT NOT TO SEND THEIR CHILDREN TO SCHOOL FOR CULTURAL REASONS
LOVE CAN SOLVE ANY PROBLEM
SOME MINORITIES DECIDE TO SEGREGATE THEMSELVES FROM SOCIETY

ASSOCIOGRAM

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Communication and active listening
TARGET GROUP	Any kind of young people, multicultural groups
AIM	To develop critical thinking and intercultural awareness using language
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To reflect on the meaning of words we use on a daily basis • To realize that similar words are not used or understood in the same way by people within the same culture and between languages or cultures
DURATION	A total amount of 80 minutes, divided as it follows: • Associogram – 30 minutes • Presentations –20 minutes • Debriefing – 30 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Associogram

Participants are informed that they have to think about the meaning of common words they use and what they associate with these words. Then participants are divided into small groups of 5 to 6 people each and each group of participants is provided with one word.
The facilitator asks them to create an "associogram" with all the meanings/links/associations they make with that word.

Step 2. Presentations

Back in plenary, each group has to present to the others their "associogram". Each group has a maximum of 5 minutes for the presentation.

Step 3. Debriefing

Participants are gathered in a circle and the facilitator asks a series of questions, in order to prompt reflection and debate. Below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- How easily did you find associations in the words?
- Were you surprised about some associations made by others?
- What did you realize?
- What can we say about language and intercultural communication?

TIPS

The **Associogram** is a technique which allows participants to reflect on the meaning of words we use on a daily basis and to realize that similar words are not used or understood in the same way by everybody.

Key words: we suggest the facilitator to select the words they want participants to work on. For example, words that are used in all languages can be chosen, such as democracy, leadership, tolerance, integration, school, education, etc.

MATERIALS

Flipcharts and markers on tables for each group

DIVERSE COMMUNICATION

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Communication and active listening
TARGET GROUP	Participants involved in the camp leader training
AIM	To provide camp leaders with different methods to encourage open and clear communication during the project
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To develop empathy toward differences and open minded, respectful approaches towards the other people • To develop competences and skills to ensure an open communication for inclusion and Intercultural learning
DURATION	A total amount of 110 minutes, divided as it follows: • Peanut Butter & Jelly game – 30 minutes • Language and inclusion - 20 minutes • Explaining tasks – 30 minutes • Debriefing – 30 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Peanut Butter & Jelly game

In this game, participants have follows written instructions on how to make a Peanut Butter & Jelly game very literally. Instructors are chosen from the participants. Other participants observe. The facilitator chooses between 2 and 4 instructors from the participants. The facilitator should prepare in advance a table with peanut butter, jelly, bread, butter knives and a plate (this activity will be messy so also nice table cloths will be useful).
The facilitator gives the instructors 3 minutes to write down clear instructions. Then each instructor, one at a time, gives the written instructions to participants whose task is to follow them as literally as possible. Participants can have 2 to 3 attempts to prepare a good PB&J. This is followed by a short discussion in plenary, with the following key questions:

- How did you feel receiving the instructions?
- How did you feel giving the instructions?
- Could have been changed something to make the process easier?

Step 2. Language and inclusion

The facilitator shares with the participants why thinking about language and communication in a project is important. Facilitator can include own experiences and examples, but most importantly the following key-elements:

- Workcamps do not require a high level of language: focus usually on manual work
- Great chance to get international experience without strong language skills
- Organisations are motivated to offer workcamps for everyone regardless their abilities

Then, the facilitator launches a brainstorming about different methods and tricks for utilizing inclusive ways of communication in a group. They can be written on a flipchart.

Step 3. Explaining tasks

The facilitator shares with the group the following scenario: *"This is the first day of the workcamp. Tomorrow morning you will start doing some traditional wood work. The camp leader has to explain the work to the volunteers beforehand to make the start of the workcamp smoother, as the local technical instructor does not speak any English. The techniques and the names of the tools used in workcamps tend to be unfamiliar to many volunteers and camp leaders, but the camp leaders should find ways to explain the activity nevertheless."*

Then participants are divided into five groups. One participant from each group should be the camp leader and other volunteers. The volunteers are asked to go to another room and the camp leaders to stay. The camp leaders are instructed that they would have to explain the upcoming video to the volunteers so that they have a clear picture of the work ahead. The camp leaders are encouraged to already think about some strategy for explaining while watching the video, and to think about the tips from the previous activity.

Then, the video is shown to the camp leaders (or any other similar short video that is not in a language they understand):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WMCeVhpcCUw

After the video, all participants gather in their groups. The camp leader has 10 minutes to explain the activity to the volunteers. The volunteers can ask questions if they do not understand or need clarification.

After this step, the facilitator has to allocate extra 10 minutes to discuss the activity afterwards. The activity can be repeated with some other video and another camp leader if there is time and participants are eager to do so. The following key questions can be used for the discussion:

Camp leader:

- What was your strategy in explaining the video?
- How did it feel to instruct?

Volunteers:

- Did you pick up any strategies used by the camp leader?
- Did you understand what was said?

Step 4. Debriefing

Participants are gathered in a circle and the facilitator asks a series of questions, in order to prompt reflection and debate. Below there is a list of key questions that can be asked:

- Compare first and second game - how did you feel?
- Do you think language is a barrier for including everyone in workcamps?
- What ideas did you get to overcome the barrier?
- Misunderstandings are normal and will happen. How would you manage them?

TIPS

In the **Peanut Butter & Jelly game**, the aim is to learn concrete, simple, direct and clear communication. It is based on an internet challenge. The activity might feel frustrating for participants, which also demonstrates frustrations that might arise when camp leaders face difficult communication situations in the work camps.

Possible adaptations: if there is no access to peanut butter, jelly and bread, this activity can be done as a simple drawing activity. Participants are paired up: one draws and other instructs. The facilitator has to give the instructor a picture of a very simple drawing. The instructor's task is to give clear verbal instructions to the drawer (without explaining what the end-result should be). The one who draws follows the instructions literally. The roles can be switched and the task repeated with a different drawing.

Language and inclusion: the aim of this activity is to learn about the importance of open communication and understanding for inclusion processes. As direct outcomes, participants will learn some concrete tips and tricks for more inclusive communication.

MATERIALS

- Peanut Butter, jelly, bread, knives, plate
- Paper, pens and flipchart

MAN/MOUSE

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Communication and active listening
TARGET GROUP	It can be used with any type of groups
AIM	To reflect about diversity
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To become aware about our different ways of perceiving the world and reality • To realize that there is not just one "right or wrong" reality
DURATION	A total amount of 60 minutes, divided as it follows: • Drawing – 30 minutes • Debriefing –30 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Drawing

The facilitator asks all the participants to group in pairs at a table and provides each pair with a sheet of paper and a pencil.

Participants are informed they will be shown an image and will then be asked to draw the image together, holding the same pencil simultaneously.

In each pair, the facilitator is then asking participants to identify who is "A" and who is "B".

All the "As" are asked to close their eyes.

The facilitator shows all the "Bs" the mouse image for about 30 seconds, then puts the image aside. Now the "Bs" are asked to close their eyes.

The facilitator shows all the "As" the man image for about 30 seconds, then puts it aside.

Now the facilitator tells all participants that he/she will show them the image again for 30 seconds before they start drawing together.

The facilitator shows all participants the man/mouse image and all the participants are asked to start drawing

Step 2. Debriefing

When all groups have finished, participants are invited to return in a circle for debriefing, with the following key questions:

- What happened?
- What did you see (let A and B describe what they saw and show the man/mouse image again)?
- How did you proceed to draw together?
- How did cooperation and communication work?
- What could have been done differently?
- What does it have to do with Intercultural learning?
- What is the role of predefined images or stereotypes in the process of seeing something in daily life?
- Do you face similar situations in your daily life? When?
- How can we deal with those situations?

See Handout below.

TIPS

The **Drawing** technique can be used more as awarm-up activity, to introduce alonger activity about the same subject. In this case it can take between 30 and 45 minutes.
At the same time the technique can be also used to start going more in depth on the given subject. If extra drawings are added for example, it is possible to have the analysis in different rounds and with a more structured debriefing. In this case the analysis of the activity, the upcoming debate and debriefing will be longer, too and the activity could easily last 90 minutes.

MATERIALS

- Tables, A4 paper, pencils or crayons for all participants
- A printout of the three pictures (man, mouse, man/mouse)

HANDOUT – DRAWINGS



SAFER SPACE AGREEMENT

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Communication and active listening
TARGET GROUP	The activity works with any new group
AIM	To create agroup agreement that is based on the needs of everyone in the group in order to establish a safer space for all
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To develop a basis for creating and maintaining a safer space within a new group • To reflect with participants about the importance of safer space
DURATION	A total amount of 50 minutes, divided as it follows: • Reflect and answer – 10 minutes • Clustering - 10 minutes • Group agreement – 30 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Reflect and answer

The facilitator starts explaining why creating a group agreement is important for group dynamics, for feeling safe, and for everyone to be able to participate fully.
Then, the group is asked to think about and answer the following questions for themselves as individuals and to write their answers on sticky notes (one response per sticky note).
They can have more than one answer for each question.

- What do you need to participate/learn well?
- When do you feel respected?
- What do you need to feel included?

Step 2. Clustering

The group members stick their answers onto 3 flipchart sheets or hands them to the facilitator. The facilitator reads the responses out and places similar responses into themes. For each theme it should be asked: 'How can we all try to meet these needs?'

Step 3. Group agreement

Together as a group, it should be created a group agreement as a list of statements that includes all the needs mentioned. If necessary, can be added some of the most important principles in maintaining a safer space (see additional reading).
Before closing, all the statements have to be read it out together and checked if anyone wants to add something. If everyone agrees with the agreement it becomes a common promise for the group and it is expected to be respected by everyone. The facilitator concludes, pointing out that things can be added to the list and that the group can refer to the agreement if needed.
To make it official symbolically, everyone signs the agreement.

TIPS

Tips and possible adaptations:

- The Group Agreement should always be visible in the group space
- Every time a new person enters a process it means that is a new group, meaning it should be repeated the process and made a new agreement
- The facilitator should refer to the group agreement regularly, when working with the same group for some time
- When the group component remain the same for some time (e.g. a training course), the facilitator should remind that the group agreement is not static but it can be adapted if necessary
- It's important to be aware that creating and maintaining safer space is apractice that requires more than just this activity. It requires constant work and commitment. This activity can support this process

MATERIALS

- Flipchart paper, pens, sticky notes/post-its

50 SHADES OF A CONFLICT

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Communication and active listening
TARGET GROUP	Young adults
AIM	To encourage participants to develop critical thinking towards the subject and open minded approaches
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To critically analyze the subjects to be discussed • To acknowledge that there are different points of views and that they need to be respected • To improve communication and active listening skills
DURATION	A total amount of 120 minutes, divided as it follows: • What's different? – 30 minutes • Canadian box – 90 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. What's different?

The facilitator divides the group into two teams and lets them line up to face each other. One team is the Observer team and the other one is the Canva team. The Observer team has to look at the Canva team and visually record all the details. After this they have to close their eyes or turn around, while the Canva team has to change things about themselves (eg.: they can switch places, they can exchange clothes, untie their shoes, switch their watches from one wrist to the other etc). Once the other group turns around, they have to spot all the changes that they can see.
The facilitator asks if all the differences have been found. Then the roles are switched and the Observer becomes now the Canva team. At the end of the activity the facilitator has to ask the two team members about the differences they found out and the way the activity was performed. Another facilitator keeps note on a flipchart of the main key words and elements appeared in the discussion.

Step 2. Canadian box

Participants are divided into two groups, ideally with an equal number of members. If the number of participants in the groups is not even, one member from the facilitator team can join that group. If no one can join, the activity can still be implemented with
two groups, one with one more participant than the other. One facilitator from the facilitator team acts as the moderator of the debate/discussion, and another acts as the timekeeper. The activity includes the following steps:

1. Introduction and rules

The moderator welcomes everybody to an international conference/debate and asks the two groups to stay in two lines, facing each other.
The moderator shares the rule of debate with the groups: there are several rounds of debate. Each round, the facilitator reads one statement and assigns a position to each group: one group agrees with the statement, and one disagrees. Each group has two minutes to discuss within their group to find the arguments to support their position.

After that, one representative from the group should stand up and express the group's opinion to the other group. Additional rules for each round might be added. No matter what the rules are, every group member must speak at least once.
Possible additional added rules – not explained by the facilitator in the beginning of the activity, but before to start each new round of discussion:

- Free style: the group members of the two groups take the speech when and how they prefer
- Ping pong: one person from a group takes the floor, then one from the second, then the floor goes back to the first and then to the second ...
- Time constraints: each person from each group has a maximum of twenty seconds to express their opinion. When the time is over, a person from the opposite group should start
- Body gestures: while expressing their argument, the person has to take a step forward from the line and use their body to explain their point of view the facilitator decides who speak
- Free style: three minutes maximum for the discussion are allocated in addition to the "ping-pong" rules, but this time, no specific time is allocated for each intervention. Therefore, every person can choose how long to explain their argument.

Then, the moderator checks one more time if everyone is clear about the general rules of the debate and introduces the role of the timekeeper, who is appointed to inform the group/speaker when time is up.

2. Discussion
When everyone is clear, and no more questions about the rules are raised, the moderator starts reading the first statement. It is also recommended to write down the statements on A4 paper so everyone can also see and read to avoid any misunderstanding.
Then the moderator assigns one group to agree with the statement and the other group to disagree and the activity starts. The activity continues in this way until all the statements are read.

3. Debriefing
After the activity finishes, participants are asked to form a circle in order to have a debriefing on the activity. Below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- FEELINGS: How did you feel through the activity?
- INTERPRETATION: What were the most challenging statements to defend or to contrast?
- ANALYSIS: Was it easy to find common arguments within your group?
- LEARNING: What did you learn from the activity?

See Handout below.

TIPS

The Canadian box can be a very powerful activity to stimulate the discussion and critical thinking, but because of its structure, participants can feel very touched and affected. In fact for some people might be hard to defend a statement they really do not believe in and that are really going against their own personal values. For this reason, after the discussion and before to start the debriefing, we suggest facilitators to accompany participant through a "steaming out moment". When the facilitator stops the activity, participants are called back and asked to stand in a circle, to relax and to keep some big breathing. It is important that participants will steam out from the energies and emotions they felt during the activity and that are back on themselves, otherwise the debriefing will not be effective at all and it will simply generate confusion.

MATERIALS

- Paper or post-it, pens, pencils and markers
- White board or a flipchart

HANDOUT – STATEMENTS

WOMEN ARE MORE VULNERABLE AND NEED MORE PROTECTION
POOR PEOPLE CANNOT AFFORD TO BE DEPRESSIVE
MEN ARE MORE RACIST THAN WOMEN
LOVE CAN SOLVE ANY PROBLEM
YOU CANNOT STAND FOR LGBTQ+ RIGHTS IF YOU DO NOT BELONG TO THE COMMUNITY
IT IS BETTER TO GET OUT SLAMMING THE DOOR THAN EMERGING INTO A CONFLICTUAL DEBATE
CONFLICT IS INEVITABLE BUT COMBAT IS OPTIONAL
EMOTIONAL VIOLENCE IS LESS IMPACTING THAN PHYSICAL VIOLENCE
IT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO HAVE A HOME, FOOD AND BASIC NECESSITIES THAN TO BE ABLE TO SAY WHAT YOU LIKE

COOKING CULTURES

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Inequality and fewer opportunities
TARGET GROUP	Young people aged between 18 and 30 years old (the activity can be run also with adolescents 14 – 17 years old)
AIM	To analyse the link between food, culture and the potential arise of inequalities
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To experiment how culture is linked with food • To deepen the links between food and inequalities • To experiment how food, can be used as a tool for inclusion and active participation
DURATION	A total amount of 240 minutes, divided as it follows: • Proposals and groups creations – 30 minutes • Cooking - 180 minutes • Debriefing – 30 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Proposals and groups creations

The facilitator explains the group that the following workshop will be centred around food and dishes preparation.
Participants receive 5 minutes to think about different plates they would like to propose. The different proposals are then written on post-it, gathered by the facilitator.

The facilitator is then reading loudly the different proposals and, in plenary, participants are asked to pick up 4 dishes they are mostly interesting to prepare. Once the 4 dishes are identified, they are written on 4 pieces of paper and put inside a box.

Then, 4 groups are created and each group has to pick up one piece of paper from the box. In that way the dish to be prepared is assigned randomly to the group. The last 5 minutes are left for the facilitator to bring small adjustments to set the group composition (e.g. if it is a youth exchange and the group is composed in majority by the people of the same country where the dish is coming from, participants can be asked to further mix, in order to ensure a bigger variety). Then each group has to prepare a list with the ingredients needed.

Step 2. Cooking

One facilitator is assigned to support each group during the dish preparation. Moreover, the cook of the project has to be present to support the group members during the activity, proving tools, ingredients and advice.
Then, the preparation of the dishes starts and each group has a maximum of 3 hours at disposal.

Step 3. Debriefing

After the activity finishes, participants are asked to form a circle in order to have a debriefing on the activity. Below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- How do you feel?
- What has surprised you the most?
- Was it easy to perform the task?
- Did you encounter any type of challenge and, if yes, what?
- Do you feel everybody was equally involved in the activity? Why?

- Do you think culture is linked with food? If yes, how?
- Do you see any links between food and inequalities?
- If yes, how?
- If yes, how to overcome these inequalities?
- How food, can be used as a tool for inclusion and active participation?

TIPS

Cook role: in this case, it's very important that the cook of the project, who is also supporting the activity, is experienced of group dynamics and non-formal education techniques. In fact, in this activity, the cooking part is used with a pedagogical purpose. Therefore, the cook has to know well the specific learning objectives of the activity, being able to implement them, with the support of the other facilitators.

Shopping list: before the activity it's not possible to know what participants will propose. For this reason, we suggest facilitators to run this activity in two different days. The step 1. can be implemented the day before, in order to give the cook the time to go for shopping, being ready with all the ingredients for the upcoming day.

Eating together: after the debriefing is over, it's nice to organise a group meal with the different dishes prepared. It's away to bring back the feeling of community, to give value to the group work and to emphasise the importance of food as a tool for inclusion and active participation

MATERIALS

- Flipcharts, color markers
- Pens, post-it
- All the kitchen tools that can be needed to prepare the different dishes

FREAK LOVE

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Inequality and fewer opportunities
TARGET GROUP	Young people aged from 18 to 30 years old
AIM	To reflect on social exclusion and to connect it with personal experiences
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To reflect on your own stereotypes and prejudices • To learn how to fight for social inclusion • To open up the debate on how to change behaves to boost inclusion
DURATION	A total amount of 160 minutes, divided as it follows: • Video and discussion – 40 minutes • Video shooting - 60 minutes • Videos and Debriefing - 60 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Video and discussion

The facilitator starts introducing the activity and showing a short video about inequality and exclusion. It is followed by a debate on the themes covered in the video and participants are encouraged to share what they sow and if they have felt excluded.
The initial video can be found on the following link:
https://vimeo.com/79468615

Step 2. Video shooting

Participants are then divided into small groups and they are asked to write a script of a video through which they would like to tackle the topic of inequality and exclusion in order to make a difference. Once in group, participants start sharing and presenting ideas, then selecting the one they want the video to address. The scripts have to be fine-tuned and the video shoot according to the scripts prepared by the participants. Maximum time per video: 3 minutes (or less, the time can be adjusted according to the number of participants/groups).

Step 3. Videos and Debriefing

Back in plenary, the videos are projected. Participants are gathered in a circle and the facilitator asks a series of questions, in order to prompt reflection and debate. Below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- What did you see?
- What types of inequalities and exclusion have been shown/tackled?
- Does this video represent a situation you encounter in real life? For example?
- Did you feel excluded at any time?
- How do you act when you see that someone gets excluded?
- What does social inclusion mean for you?
- What could you improve to work on social inclusion?

TIPS

Tips and possible adaptations:

- Get to know your group in advance. Prepare the room where the online video can be shown (ensure that internet is working properly or download the video in advance to avoid problems).
- When watching the video, the youngsters may at some point seem a little embarrassed and uncomfortable. When starting the debate, they open up quite easily and give examples. It may be difficult to get them started about personal experiences, but there is always one of them who opens up.
- The video is shot in a place where everything is possible and accepted. It helps to stimulate the participants and makes it easier to invite them to work on a follow-up, such as creating their own video. For that, it would be great to have creative materials at your disposal e.g., clothing, make-up, paper, pencils, paint, etc. It also helps to ask the participants to step in the shoes of one of the characters that suffers exclusion so that they feel what it is like.

MATERIALS

- Pens and papers for writing
- Cameras and phones for video-making
- Projector to display the initial video

EQUAL INEQUALITIES

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Inequality and fewer opportunities
TARGET GROUP	Young adults
AIM	To raise awareness on inequality and access to resources
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To develop critical thinking on the resources' distribution • To experience the consequences of competitiveness and inequality • To foster collaboration and cooperation
DURATION	A total amount of 130 minutes, divided as it follows: • Octopus – 10 minutes • Fantastic Nations – 120 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Octopus

The facilitator calls for a circle and takes 4 teddy octopus (each of a different color). First, the facilitator sends one of them to the right and name the person to their side.
Then, the facilitator sends a second octopus to the left.
The third octopus is sent by the facilitator to the person that is in front of, so that a circuit is made.
The fourth is then sent all the way back. After each participant has memorized for a bit which people they have to name, they can start to walk all around the place and paying attention to the people they might receive and the people they should send away the octopus related to the color, direction and name.

Step 2. Fantastic Nations

The group sits facing outwards in a circle of chairs. On a flipchart the facilitator gathers real/imaginary names of countries for each person. The activity includes the following steps:

1. First round

Once instructions are told and sticks spread around them (around 20 per participant) on the floor (sticks are thrown unequally in front of the participants), participants are encouraged to get them. When the facilitator says "stop!", it will be then time to count the results. One facilitator will write the results (sticks collected). Those participants who have less than 4 sticks are eliminated, and the facilitator tells with big grief.

2. Second round

After the results are communicated to the groups, all the sticks they have collected are taken (participants did not know it in advance). Only the sticks still on the floor remain. The new round, using only the sticks remained on the floor starts with the same rules of the previous one.

3. Third round
The next phase starts, again with all participants. The rules are the same of the first round, but after each round the trainer will throw again on the floor half of the sticks the participants took. Different rounds are played and after the "stop!" is said, it's counted how many countries survived, how many died. It's taken note on the flipchart. 4. Fourth round
In the final phase the countries are put in pairs of "federations" and must work together, in fact only they can only survive if they have enough for both, otherwise both will die.

4. Debriefing
After the activity finishes, participants are asked to form a circle in order to have a debriefing on the activity. Below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- What were the results of each phase? (How many countries have survived until the end? - How many survived at least 2 phases? – Any phase with all surviving?)
- Did anybody try to change their behavior? - If yes, what happened then?
- Did you notice any dynamics of cooperation in the different moments?
- What did the sticks represent to you?
- What is the factor motivating the death of the countries?
- Which alternatives could have arisen? (collaboration-solidarity, cooperation, sustainable consumption, equal sharing of resources ...)

TIPS

The Fantastic Nations workshop can be very versatile: it can be used to reflect upon distribution of resources, inequalities an also to tackle subjects related to sustainability and education for sustainability.

Facilitation style: the facilitator of this workshops should act theatrically, encouraging participant to be involved and to compete. Facilitators neither encourage nor discourage participants to do collect more or less sticks and they don't share more instructions than the ones given. Despite this, the facilitator has to adopt the tone of a contest, to stimulate the participants' attitude and interaction.

Outcomes: at the end of the activity it might appear, as a group feeling, general frustration and sadness. Reflecting about the unequal distribution of resources and how it can be linked to social exclusion can be a rough message to digest. For this reason, during the debriefing it's important to underline that, as human beings, we can do something to change the state of art of the situation. This is our responsibility, and we can play an active role on that. Only by sharing this message we can turn the bitter taste of the reflection into a genuine desire to act and be more active in our everyday life.

MATERIALS

- Octopus in different colours (or any other plush animals)
- Flipchart, marker, sticks (15-20 * participant)

BEHIND A PICTURE

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Inequality and fewer opportunities
TARGET GROUP	Young people aged from 15 to 30 years old
AIM	To become aware of the differences between description, interpretation and evaluation in Intercultural learning
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To allow participants to become familiar with the concept of description, interpretation and evaluation • To raise awareness towards the impact of judgements • To show personal and cultural relativity of interpretations and evaluation
DURATION	A total amount of 120 minutes, divided as it follows: • Something about the object… – 30 minutes • Description, interpretation and evaluation - 30 minutes • Photo analysis - 30 minutes • Debriefing – 30 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Something about the object …

The facilitator asks participants to select one of the ambiguous objects among the ones collected in the middle of the workshop room. Then, the group is asked to tell something about the object (its purpose and use, and the first elements popping up in their mind when they sow the object). In this stage it's very important the way the facilitator is asking the question: "Tell me something about this" works well, while questions as "What do you see" or "Describe the object" do not work for the purpose. Participant can be also allowed to touch the object they are talking about, if they want.

While participant share their comments, one of the facilitators has to write down the answers on aboard in three columns clustering them according to: description, interpretation, and evaluation. These 3 terms should not be written before on the board, the facilitator should simply divide the responses into these 3 categories. The facilitator explains in plenary to the whole group, the main differences between description, interpretation, and evaluation (what I see – what I think about what I see – what I feel about what I saw). Then the facilitator shows how their previous statements were divided into the 3 columns.

Step 2. Description, interpretation and evaluation

Then, the facilitator uses the second object and asks them first to describe only what they see. The answers are chartered in the "description" column. If participants make any interpretations or evaluations, the facilitator should encourage them to remain, in this stage, only in the description part. As next step, the facilitator asks the group to make the "interpretation" of the object, noting down their responses on a flipchart. Finally, the facilitator asks them to "evaluate" the object, and participants are free to include both a positive and a negative evaluation for each interpretation.

Step 3. Photo analysis

Participants are divided into smaller groups, each one receiving a photography and a form with the answers already written. Each group has to discuss and fulfilling the following tasks:

- to agree on a single description
- based on the description, to suggest two interpretations
- for each interpretation, to suggest both a positive and a negative evaluation.

INCLUDE HERE THE A PHOTO	DESCRIPTION: I can see a person from xxxx origin doing that ...
	INTERPRETATION: in this moment the person should feel in this specific way ...
	EVALUATION: this is my personal evaluation toward the photo and what the person is doing ...

Back in plenary, the groups present the work done.

Step 4. Debriefing

Participants are gathered in a circle and the facilitator asks a series of questions, in order to prompt reflection and debate. Below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- How was describing the object?
- According to what parameters have you described the object?
- How was describing the photo?
- According to what parameters have you described the photo?
- Do you see any links or differences in the ways the smaller groups have described/interpreted and evaluated the photo?
- What was the most difficult aspect of the exercise? Why?
- Do you see any link with our way of approaching other cultures?
- Where might these distortions bring us and what could be the consequences?
- Do you see any links with discriminating events and violence in the nowadays society?
- How could we overcome those discrimination?

TIPS

The **Behind a Picture** activity is conceived to allow participants to become familiar with the concept of description, interpretation and evaluation, to practically experiment personal and cultural relativity of interpretations and evaluation, therefore raising awareness towards the impact of judgement.
Before running the activity, facilitators need to select pictures of cultural scenes from cultures other than the culture of the participants. The best pictures are the most ambiguous ones, as, for example, imagines describing a scene which is not familiar to participants. Captions to the pictures should be retained, since participants will be eager to know the "real" description after the exercise. Moreover, facilitators have to select two "ambiguous objects" to use for the opening of the exercise. Any object which is unknown to all participants can be used for this demonstration. For example, they can be objects from unusual hobbies, objects from other cultures, or unusual hardware or kitchen tools.

MATERIALS

- Flipchart paper and markers or blackboard and chalk
- "Description, Interpretation, Evaluation" participant handout
- Two "ambiguous objects"
- Paper, white paper, pens, post-it, markers

IN MY COMMUNITY

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Discrimination and violence
TARGET GROUP	Young people 18-30 years old
AIM	To have the group practically experimenting, and then reflecting about the feeling of belonging
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To deepen the issues of "feeling of belonging" and specifically: how it is structured, causes and effects, different manifestation • To analyse the links between the "feeling of belonging" and the discriminative behaves that can arise from a wrong interpretation of the concept
DURATION	A total amount of 95 minutes, divided as it follows: • Community building – 30 minutes • Practicing - 15 minutes • Visitors – 20 minutes • Debriefing – 30 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Community building

Participants are divided in three different groups and the facilitator explains they have to perform the following task: they need to design their imaginary new community, defining within each group, the following elements:

- Name of the community
- Language
- Greetings
- Flag
- Habits
- Social structure
- Taboo
- Sanctions if the taboo is not respected

Step 2. Practicing

Once the community is built, each group is left 15 minutes to practically rehearse their community (trying out the language, the way of greetings, the habits, and to represent the social structure, the taboos and the sanctions).

Step 3. Visitors

Then, the facilitator informs the 3 communities that they are going to receive visitors in different rounds:

- **First round of visitors:** from each community a person should be identified. This person should join another community and spend there 5 minutes trying to get as many elements as possible from the hosting community
- **Visitors reporting:** once the time it is over the visitor has to be back home to their own community and has 5 minutes to report to the community's members what was understood from the other community visited
- **Second round of visitors:** from each community a person should be identified (not the same visitor as before). The person has to join another community (not the one already visited) and, spending there 5 minutes, should try to get as many elements as possible from the hosting community
- **Visitors reporting:** once the time it is over the visitor has to be back home to their own community and has 5 minutes to report to the community's members what was understood from the other community visited.

Step 4. Debriefing

Then all the 3 communities' members are invited to be back in plenary and the facilitators involves all the group's members to run a de-rolling. It follows a debriefing, below there is the list of key questions that can be asked:

- One word to describe your feelings (from all the participants, possibly)
- Visitors from the first round: what did you notice about the hosting community?
- Visitors from the second round: what did you notice about the hosting community?
- Community members: please now present the elements of your community
- How did you build up your community?
- Did you face challenges building it?
- Did you feel you belong to your community?
- How was receiving visitors?
- Did the visitors well understand your community?
- Did you feel or experiment any type of discrimination while you were visiting the other communities?
- Did you feel or experiment any type of discrimination while receiving visitors in your community?
- If yes, what type of discrimination?
- What are the potential links between the "feeling of belonging" and the discriminating behaviors that can arise from a wrong interpretation of the concept?
- How can we overcome them?

TIPS

De-rolling technique: in simulations and role play games, the de-rolling is a very important part, integral part of the technique itself. In fact, it is conceived to have the participants getting out of the role, relaxing, steaming out and calming down.
It can be run with simple techniques but also having the facilitators simply informing participants that the first part of the activity is finished and asking them, with a calm and relaxing voice, to step out from the simulation, taking a deep breath.
The de-rolling allows to avoid confusion, to have the participants answer as themselves, not as the assigned character that they were performing and, indeed, to have a more objective and targeted debriefing.

MATERIALS

- Flipcharts, color markers
- Three different working rooms

PORTRAYING VIOLENCE

MACROTOPIC	Intercultural learning
TOPIC	Discrimination and violence
TARGET GROUP	Young people 14-30 years old
AIM	To foster discussion on the causes and consequences of violence
SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES	• To identify the main causes of the violence • To understand the manifestations of violence • To analyse the different behaviours of the victims and how they impact the consequences of violence
DURATION	A total amount of 240 minutes, divided as it follows: • Strip Cartoons – 30 minutes • Representation and Analysis - 90 minutes • Brainstorming - 15 minutes • Discussing and Presenting - 45 minutes • Situation Analysis and Discussion – 60 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The workshop includes the following steps:

Step 1. Strip Cartoons

Participants are divided in small groups of 4-5 persons. Each group has 20 minutes to discuss about violence against minorities (ethnic, sexual, religious, gender…) they know/heard about, or they directly experimented. During this time they also have to agree on one issue they want to share with the whole group.
Then, each group has 15 minutes to prepare a minimum 3 images - using the technique of Image Theater. This means, they have to tell the story through different body images and postures. Each image has to be created with their body movements and keeping the silence.
All group members are encouraged to be part of the images. Each image should be paused for a few seconds before they switch to another one.

Step 2. Representation and Analysis

When everyone is ready, the groups gather in the workshop room or a safe open space. Everyone stays in a semi-circle to leave space for the stage. The groups take turn to show their images on the stage. After each group finishes their images, the facilitator asks the audience the following key questions:

- FACTS: What did you see from the images?
- INTERPRETATION: How did you understand those images?
- ANALYSIS 1: Which type of violence was represented?
- ANALYSIS 2: Which are the characters and the setting?

After the audience has shared their thoughts, the group on the stage can share their story and the meaning behind the images they have chosen. It follows a group discussion where different proposals are shared in order to mitigate and prevent violence.

Step 3. Brainstorming

The activity follows with a brainstorming in plenary where participants are asked to define what they consider "violence", explaining why. The definitions and keywords are then collected on a flipchart and might be then enriched with the extra definitions of violence.

Step 4. Discussing and Presenting

The whole group is divided into 4 subgroups to share and discuss the types of violence they have observed or experienced in their everyday life. After sharing and discussing, the groups choose one issue and represent this issue to everyone in the plenary with a short play, no longer then 3 minutes.

Step 5. Situation Analysis and Discussion

When each group finishes the scene, participants (the audience) are asked to analyse the situation, identifying the following elements:

- What is the situation about?
- What type of violence is portrayed in the scene?
- Who is/are the oppressor/s?
- Who is/are the victim/s?
- There are bystanders?

During the analysis, a facilitator takes note on a flipchart of the different elements appeared.

Then everyone is invited to suggest an alternative reaction for the victims or the bystanders. It is followed by a brief discussion on the main issues raised by the group and the alternatives suggested.

TIPS

The **Strip Cartoon** technique, even though it might appear quite simple, is a complex and articulated technique which is conceived to incorporate different theatrical aspects: it allows the work on the body and emotions, it can be used to present a story and to tackle sensitive subjects from the socio-cultural point of view.

Technique: participants rapidly sculpt their own or each other's bodies to express attitudes, emotions and a story, using different frames. These images are then placed together and can be afterwards analysed in a group context. The technique is very impacting because it is based on the evocative messages that can be transmitted through our body and facial expression. The method can be used to explore internal or external oppression, exclusion, discrimination and violence and to detect unconscious thoughts and feelings.

Silence: during the representation, no voice or words are allowed, but it is only possible to transmit the message using our body and expressivity. During the representation, we are really trying to build a collective vocabulary of telling stories through your body. The stories can be verbalized later but it is a conscious decision to avoid words during the representation. This is for two main reasons: firstly, sometimes words are covering excessively the story and bring the messages to be misinterpreted or misunderstood. Secondly, because it is important to remember that a big percentage of human interactions are based on non-verbal communication (our body, eyes, movements, gestures...) and only a small part on words and language.

Target: this technique is a flexible tool for exploring issues, attitudes and emotions both with groups who are confident with drama/theater techniques and those with little or no experience. No one has lines to learn or has to 'act' in front of others. Therefore, everybody is equally performing, without different roles, skills or competences applied and following a more horizontal perspective.

MATERIALS

- Pens, paper, markers, flipchart, a big workshop room

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