

Together we act! Empowering young people's voice

This document is only for use for the project officers and international coordinators from each partner organisation

Project summary

What do you want to achieve by implementing the project? What are the objectives of your project? Please specify from the perspective of youth work practice.

Non-formal and popular education promotes the protagonism of young people in their own personal growth and learning process. The transmission of knowledge and resources that takes place in these types of organisations contributes to the empowerment and development of their critical spirit. We have seen that young people are interested in having spaces where they can reflect and rethink how we educate and how this education influences citizen participation and the active involvement of young people in society. In the last two years we have faced a pandemic that has deeply affected the lives of all of us; but especially young people have seen how they could not take part in society and that their voice was not heard in the decisions that affected them. We want to review our educational practices to address this issue from our youth educational organisations. With this project we want to facilitate a constructive dialogue and creation of ideas that strengthen the democratic and active participation of young people in their society, goals that respond to the European Youth Goals developed from the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027.

Which values accompany our educational practices and processes? What ways do we have of participation and internal democracy so that young people can be agents of change? How can we encourage youth participation and transform society? Do we have a critical attitude and are we truly inclusive? What can we do so young people's voices are heard in society?

We face the need to explore what answers lie behind these questions. We want to reflect and let young people take the reins to explore how they themselves can find ways of real and active participation in their context, whether in their organisations, locally or nationally.

In the framework of this project we offer young people, from different organisations and nationalities, spaces for debate, exchange of opinions, training and personal development through the experience of a Youth Exchange. Our objective is to offer new ways of involvement and participation from non-formal education entities; the active citizenship of young people is essential to build a fairer, more equitable and supportive society.

The project aims to promote intercultural understanding, significant learning, the development of young people's autonomy and to strengthen the network between youth organisations in Europe and the Mediterranean arc. We believe it is essential to continue working internationally to continue promoting shared values such as solidarity and cooperation.

To achieve this, we will organise a Youth Exchange near Barcelona, in a privileged natural environment, in which 25 young people from 4 different countries will participate. It will last 9 days and the project foresees the involvement of the participants in the preparation, implementation and

evaluation phases. It is also planned to carry out a Preparation Visit and to count with the support of youth facilitators from the coordinating entity.

What activities do you plan to implement? What is the number and profile of the participants involved?

1. Preparatory Visit (activity 1):

At the beginning of the project, in June, 2 young people from each partner organisation (1 leader responsible for the group and 1 young participant) will participate in a two-day PV in Barcelona. These young people will be participants selected by the partner entities and validated by the coordinating entity, Esplais Catalans. The leaders of each national group will be at least 18 years old and will have experience in non-formal education activities with young people, experience in youth exchanges and knowledge of the topic. The other participants will be at least 16 years old, will be young people involved in their home organisations and interested in learning and sharing knowledge about democracy, youth participation and non-formal education.

The aim of this activity is that the leaders of each group **get to know each other** and, together with the young participants, start to **familiarise themselves with the project, the topic and with the Youth Exchange**. The aim of this Preparatory Visit is to empower and enable the participants with the right tools to get involved in the project. There will also be a first introduction to the **topic materials and the proposed programme of activities**.

In particular, this activity will encourage participants to reflect on their needs and interests in order to be able to fulfil them during the Youth Exchange and throughout the project. The dissemination of the project and the quality plan will be worked on in order to achieve a maximum impact in the short and long term. This activity is of utmost importance for the project as the participants will be able to have a first contact with the other countries' participants and start to create an intercultural atmosphere.

2. Youth Exchange (activity 2):

It is the main activity of the project and it will be addressed to 25 young people from different European entities and one from Palestine. This activity will last 9 days and will take place near Barcelona in a country house. It will take place from the 22nd to the 30th August.

The participants will be young people over 16 years old and under 30 years old, except for the leaders who will be at least 18 years old. These young people will be active members from their sending organisations who have interest in the relationship between active participation and non-formal education, democracy and education in youth organisations. The diversity of contexts from which the young people come from will be especially valued. The project will facilitate the participation of young people with fewer socio-economic or cultural opportunities. The young people will be selected by their entities and validated by the coordinating entity taking into account gender balance and other criteria. This activity will consist of sessions, debates and recreational activities during one week on education and democracy, youth participation, education and interculturality, learning through experience and exchange of knowledge. The participants will be the protagonists and they will be in charge of

developing and implementing all the activities. There will be free time for games, visits, getting to know the environment, etc. The participants will have worked on the design of the exchange and the themes in their countries of origin before arriving in Barcelona (in the Preparatory Visit and also in previous online meetings).

What results and impact do you expect your project to have?

Taking into account that the main beneficiaries of this project are the young participants of the exchange and the young people of the partner organisations, the main results expected are:

- Increase critical spirit and analytical capacity to be agents of social transformation to get involved in their organisations and local contexts. It is expected that young people feel more capable and prepared to understand how through non-formal education they can undertake actions of active participation.
- A better understanding of intercultural realities through dialogue and meaningful learning to challenge dogmas and prejudices they may have prior to the activity.
- Increased initiative, project management in all its phases and willingness to undertake new projects in the immediate future.
- Meet other young people with similar interests or struggles, with whom to share experiences and understand how despite living in different contexts there is common ground, especially in terms of health and emotional well-being.
- Better intercultural awareness and recognition of diversity. It is expected that young people will embrace the shared values of the European Union and have a greater sense of belonging that makes them get involved in other activities of the Erasmus+ programme.

The partner organisations will also benefit from the project as they will strengthen links with the other organisations and at the same time increase their international activity. The organisations are expected to build bridges between young people and other political and social structures so that the impact reaches the maximum number of young people.

In addition, the whole team of volunteers, facilitators and technicians of the organisations will gather the conclusions and the work done at the Youth Exchange. These conclusions will allow them to have more educational resources and materials to help them to continue improving as organisations in this process of democracy and youth participation. The organisation will also see an improvement in their management of international projects after this experience and from the final evaluations.

Finally, it is expected that the project has an impact outside the participating organisations, reaching as many interested people as possible, whether they are experts, policy makers, young people, or people from civil society. Each association will be responsible for disseminating the results of the project to its local, regional and national bodies, networks and/or federations. Through dissemination activities (social networks, blog, reports, presentations) it is expected that other organisms can gather and use this knowledge to jointly improve in this fight for active democracy and real participation of young people in society.