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# **Youth- Supportive Communities**

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*A structured, long-term approach to including  
and supporting young people in their communities*

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# Introduction

Youth-Supportive Communities was a strategic partnership funded by the Erasmus+ programme. Funding was granted by the Slovenian national agency for the Erasmus+ Youth in Action programme (MOVIT). The project partners were:

**Coordinator:** Društvo Lojtra, društvo za osebni in poklicni razvoj mladih

**Partner:** Osnovna šola Gradec

**Partner:** Asociația Curba de Cultură

**Partner:** Școala Gimnazială Dumitru Brezeanu

The aim of the project was to establish a cross-sectoral, non-formal educational programme that encouraged teenagers to become active citizens in their local communities; the partners therefore included two youth organisations and two schools. The target group was young people aged between 13 and 15.

A bottom-up, evidence-based approach was employed. The first step involved research to identify the needs, issues and interests of our target group; in the second, we developed a competence model for the active citizenship of young people in their communities. On top of that, we developed a set of learning experiences targeted at guiding young people towards a more active future of greater community involvement. The learning experiences are presented later on in this text and comprise:

- school-based workshops
- school-based projects
- international youth exchanges
- workshops in youth organisations
- projects in youth organisations
- a variety of field trips

We trialled all the learning experiences and adapted the final versions to the outcomes of the trials.



The main motivations behind the project were:

- the experience-based belief that long-term learning experiences are far more beneficial for participants than short-term ones
- the urge to create something that would help to increase support for the target group within its communities
- a need to understand the target group better
- a strong wish to take a step forward and build a youth programme that took account of the actual needs of the target group

We expected to work and to learn, but the project itself greatly exceeded our expectations and became an intriguing and challenging journey. We experienced and learned a great deal, and are highly motivated to continue with our exploration of how to better support young people in their communities. We see this manual as a waystation or milestone rather than a final destination. While it contains a lot of information for the reader, we have decided to summarise some of the most important findings and guidelines at the beginning.

All the content of this manual has a time flow: this means that the original idea was to follow the order as presented here. However, we also believe certain elements can be used independently.

Some of the most important findings are set out below.

Teenagers will NOT come to youth organisations on their own: they don't know them, their friends aren't there, and their parents are unsure about the nature of those organisations. As young people have no motivation to go, youth workers need to come to them. Once that relationship is built, teenagers are more than curious and willing to try these organisations out.

One of the most surprising findings of our research was that the target group had a strong need to feel supported: to be seen, to be heard, to matter, and to have the chance to express itself. While this was not entirely unexpected, we did not expect to find that the only support they perceived was that of family and friends.



Abstract conceptualisation is not particularly attractive to this target group — which is something we learned the hard way. Consequently, most of the learning experiences in this manual tend to be concrete (indeed very concrete) in nature. There were limited debriefings after the learning experience had been completed. Please bear in mind that our target group was young people aged between 13 and 15.

International youth exchanges with minors are different to those involving older participants. It takes longer for the groups to connect, and it is harder for the participants to be tolerant, accepting and patient. However, they do strengthen the connections within a national group to a tremendous degree. A national group becomes, in effect, a team. It takes a long time for the learning to happen, but once it does, it sticks. It is highly beneficial for two youth exchanges to be organised so that each group has the chance to host and be hosted.

In the end, a very great deal depends on the relationships within the group, and between the youth workers, teachers and the group. If there is trust and a feeling of support and mutual respect (as well as fun and joy), then young people will want to continue the experience — meaning that they will want to become active citizens. The greatest potential for building that relationship between all stakeholders lies hidden within international learning experiences.

No matter how inclusive and involving we want to be, some aspects of the program are negotiable, some are not. We are working with minors.

We need to be ready that this way of work will start developing a community of young people around the organization. That is a very warm and pleasant feeling. However it also brings responsibility to take care for that community and resources needed to be planned adequately.

We hope that this manual will inspire you to support young people in your own community.

## The authors

Aljaž Zupan, coordinator of the Youth-Supportive Communities project, is a founder and president of Društvo Lojtra. He is a youth worker, freelance trainer and a member of the trainers' pool at the Slovenian national agency for the Erasmus+ programme. He is a mountain guide certified by the Alpine Association of Slovenia, and holds an academic bachelor degree in Economics. He is inspired by the spark he sees in the eyes of young people when they are in the process of creating something important to them.

Cosmin Catană is the founder and the president of Curba de Cultură. Has been involved in Youth Work for just over 2 decades and is currently managing Curba de Cultură. Freelance trainer and a member of the trainers pool of the Romanian National Agency of the Erasmus+ programme. Believes in young people and their positive effect in and on communities, given the chance and education.



# Parallel Literature that has honed our direction finding efforts

As we sought direction for our research and competence model, we encountered multiple studies that outlined and analysed the social contexts in which young people operated. Here we will summarise or quote those we believe had the greatest impact on our process.

Latvian researcher Pāvels Jurs concludes that: 'Providing civic education as well as the development of civic and social competence is a necessary precondition to develop civic responsibility and capable society. [...] The development of civic competence is a multi-faceted and complex pedagogical process, which can be implemented through civic education, as well as a variety of teaching methods. [...] The model of the development of civic competence requires certain knowledge and skills, civic attitudes and values in the existing social environment, thus promoting the civic position of the individual.' \*1 (Jurs, 2014)

In modern society, adolescents are expected to behave independently and in a grown-up way (like adults); at the same time, they are often treated as children. How do adolescents participate in politics when politics is associated primarily with something only adults can do? Under what circumstances can adolescents become fully fledged political actors?

\*1 Jurs, P. (2014): 'Forming components of civic competence'. Journal of Teaching and Education, p. 275.





Research has shown that, in some circumstances, young people of secondary school age can act as fully fledged political subjects (for example, at anti-corruption rallies). At the same time, in other circumstances (for example, the 'For Fair Elections' movement in Russia), adolescents present themselves as 'immature kids' who are not educated enough to act and to make judgements in the political arena on their own.

What differentiates adolescent participants in anti-corruption rallies from those in the FFE movement is the gradual exposure to politics preceding actual participation. The first group of children begin to deal with 'adult' political issues from the age of 13 or 14. Politics is not reserved for their adult socialisation; on the contrary, it enters their lives in early adolescence, thus making them prepared for mature political participation at the age of 16 or 17 (Erpyleva, 2020).<sup>\*2</sup>

Belonging is an essential need, an active process of forming connections: one that is vital to the full participation and inclusion of all young people and crucial to those with experience as refugees. Bourdieu's theories of habitus and field have provided valuable insights into the power dynamics within school cultures. They highlight how the knowledgeable may protect and further their interests against subordinate groups, building boundaries to belonging (Habib, 2019) <sup>\*3</sup>

One study explored what some Canadian young people thought about belonging within the school community and whether their ideal community included difference. The analysis of 410 student-created essays and posters suggested five attributes that were present when individuals felt that they belonged:

Support for Others, Respect and Care, Dialogue, Healthy Conflict, and Safety.

Together, the young people's submissions also pointed towards one overarching ontology: 'Being-in-Relation'. They believed that community had to include difference. In fact, their essays and posters outlined full integration between individuality and community as a 'way of being'. <sup>\*4</sup>

Some Positive Youth Development (PYD) literature, along with popular conceptions of youth leisure occupations, suggests that youth spaces and activities provide young people with somewhere to go and 'something to do'. Far from being 'bored, unmotivated and unexcited about their lives', an analysis of young people's audio-visual stories strongly suggests that they attend the youth club in order to get away from everyday social divisions and tensions they experience in order to achieve a sense of belonging (Nolas, 2014). <sup>\*5</sup>

<sup>\*2</sup>. Svetlana Erpyleva (2020): 'Active Citizens Under Eighteen: Minors in Political Protests', *Journal of Youth*.

<sup>\*3</sup>. S. Habib, M. R. M. Ward (eds.) (2019): 'Identities, Youth and Belonging,' *Studies in Childhood and Youth*, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-96113-2\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-96113-2_7).

<sup>\*4</sup>. S. Habib, M. R. M. Ward (eds.) (2019): 'Identities, Youth and Belonging,' *Studies in Childhood and Youth*, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-96113-2\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-96113-2_7).

<sup>\*5</sup>. Sevasti-Melissa Nolas (2014): 'Exploring young people's and youth workers' experiences of spaces for "youth development": Creating cultures of participation', *Journal of Youth Studies*, 17:1, pp. 26–41, DOI: 10.1080/13676261.2013.793789 p.3031

Previous research has identified some of the factors that contribute to the vulnerable positioning of truant youth. Truant youth are stereotyped as students who are problematic, unmotivated and incapable of learning. Three concepts – attribution of blame, mattering and student voice – are discussed.

This qualitative study “Mattering; changing the narrative in secondary schools for youth who truant”, which positioned student voice at the centre and celebrated truant youth as active participants, reveals how young people who experience peer support and care enjoy mattering, being part of a family and belonging. When participants relaxed, they were positioned to be who they wanted to be and gained status amongst their friends. Group membership, although not based on blood, provided connections in a similar way to a family of loyal friends; within this family, participants experienced a sense of mattering to other family members. This peer bonding, occurring outside the classroom, had a strong influence on reinforcing participants’ continued truancy. Being part of these families gave them the necessary support, care and friendship to feel better about themselves, and helped them feel secure from the perceived bias and exclusion in classrooms (Baskerville, 2020). \*6

Young people are one of the main groups affected by the employment crisis. Unemployment and precarious working conditions accentuate the transformation of work as a value among the younger generations.

The paper Neither studying nor working: Free time as a solution? engages with the discussion of changes related to social changes and youth studies in order to analyse the importance of individual subjectivity and structural conditions. It is based on two hypotheses: that leisure time and the activities associated with it are becoming elements of identity that help give meaning to the life project of young people when they are neither studying nor working; and that doing these activities allows young people to develop a set of skills and competencies that can have active potential in both training and work. (Moreno Colom et al., 2020) \*7

To keep pace with the development, ‘policymakers are particularly concerned with the young generation and their decisions as to the type and amount of formal education (if any) they choose to take. Educational institutions are often located in urban areas, and therefore, the demand for mobility is particularly noticeable in educational decisions and the key reason for young people to move from the countryside to the city.

\*6. Delia Baskerville (2020): ‘Mattering; changing the narrative in secondary schools for youth who truant’, *Journal of Youth Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/13676261.2020.1772962.

\*7. Sara Moreno Colom, Albert Trinidad, Núria Alcaraz & Vicent Borràs Català (2020): ‘Neither studying nor working: Free time as a solution?’, *Journal of Youth Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/13676261.2020.1784857.

From an early age, rural youth, hence, struggle with the dilemma of whether to remain close to family and friends in their rural communities or to move away for education. This places considerable stress on rural youth, as the decision to stay or to go sets the direction for future choice of profession.

The rural young people's residential preferences can thus be regarded as an interplay with their surroundings, since the 'bright lights, big city' rationale in itself does not seem to attract the rural youth more than the dull, prying rural living pushes them away. Hence, according to our data, it is wrong to view youth out-migration purely in terms of the taken for granted leaving home because of higher education and longing for big city living, since youth out-migration is also the result of a push from dissatisfaction with rural life in their current communities, stigmatisation of those staying behind and the potential associated rub-off on their identity. While education in most cases is the trigger to leave, place-based experiences of aversion, lack of coolness and entrapment are internalised into the youth's identities and influence migration intentions. Hence, migration is also an escape from the societal constraints of the local place, as it represents an opportunity for finding freedom elsewhere.

\*8 (Dalsgaard Pedersen & Gram 2018)

\*8. Helle Dalsgaard Pedersen & Malene Gram (2018): "The brainy ones are leaving": the subtlety of (un)cool places through the eyes of rural youth', *Journal of Youth Studies*, 21:5, pp. 620–635, DOI: 10.1080/13676261.2017.1406071.

# Research

Building activities for young people on the basis of their actual needs, issues and interests is probably the key factor that determines whether youth work is successful and whether it has an impact on its target group. We therefore conducted a three-part survey during the project and based all our subsequent work on it. The survey comprised:

- an informal meeting with the school classes (see [Appendix 1](#))
- focus groups (see [Appendix 2](#))
- an online questionnaire (see [Appendix 3](#))

The aim of the research was to highlight the way in which young people saw:

- their friends
- themselves
- their relationship with local authorities
- their perception of their own involvement in the local community

The informal meetings were aimed at breaking the ice between the project teams and the young people in the two communities. They followed a game-based approach as part of an unstructured exploration of young people's current issues and needs.

The focus groups followed the findings of the informal meetings, and brought more content and structure to the research. The conclusions of the focus groups steered the quantitative phase of research towards the relevant questions.

The questionnaire was aimed at validating the results of the focus groups and drawing clear conclusions for the research and for the competence model that followed.



# Competence model

A competence model is a collection of competences, carefully divided into Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes and Behaviours, that would guarantee successful performance in a given setting. In our case, it would be the collection of competencies needed for the young people to become actively involved in their communities.

We have started from the idea that in our communities young people are definitely present only during school age. When passing on to high School, some of the young people are leaving and becoming members of different communities. Therefore the time to start interacting with them towards building a set of competences that would allow them to be actively involved in their communities is at this certain age of 13 - 15.

It is also the moment when they start developing abstract thinking skills and when they would reach the necessary independence to start performing as members of the agora.

In our case we have based our competence model on the research done in the two communities - Litija in Slovenia and Teișani in România - and on general citizenship competences. The competence model is divided into 5 general competence areas, each one divided into knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours.

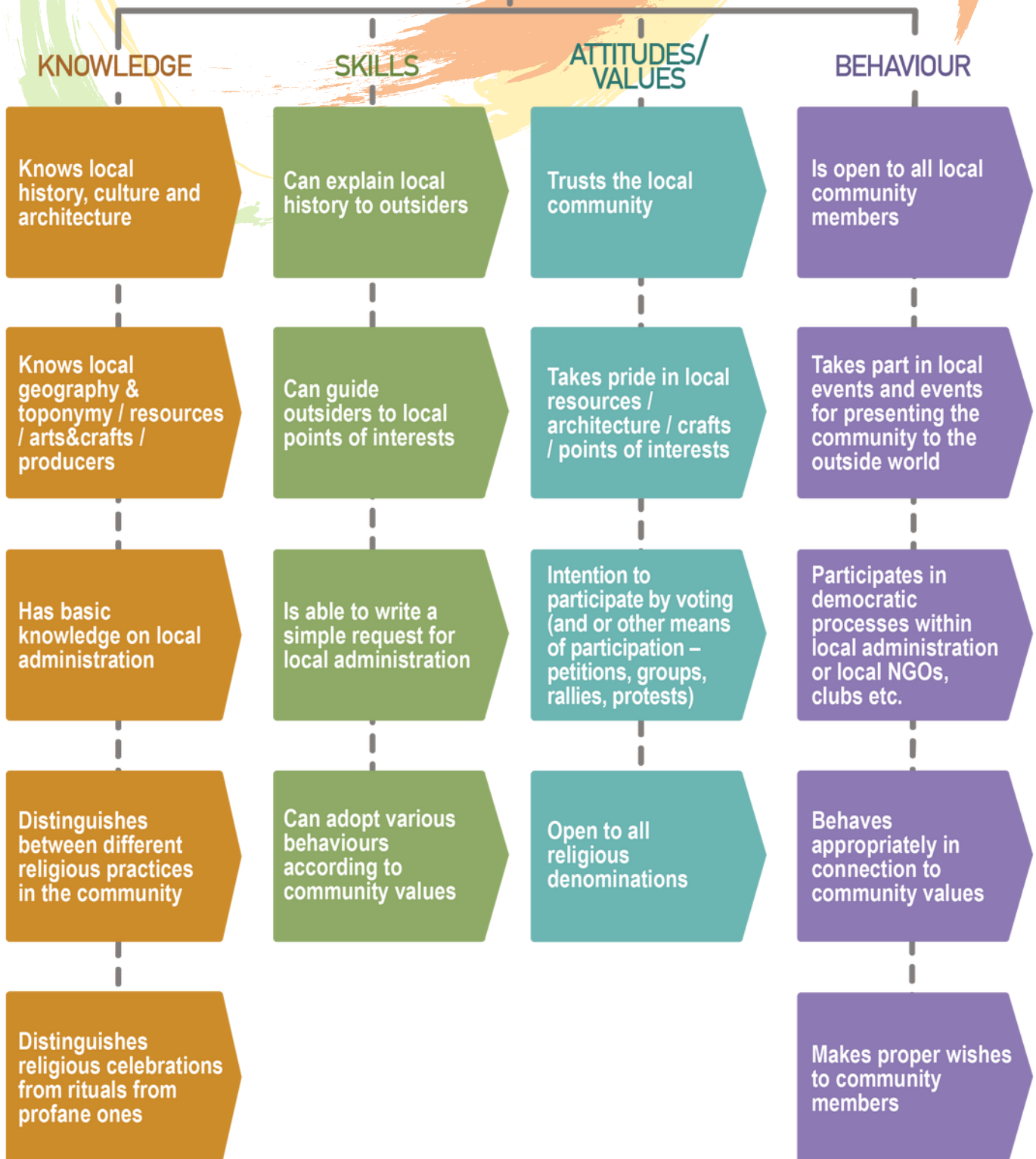
1. Community Identity
2. Self Confidence
3. Local Participation
4. Active Listening
5. Solidarity

The Competence model has been used to develop activities with the young people and may be used further to develop activities for youngsters aged 13.-15 in order to foster citizenship, local participation and care for others.

Using the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours described in the competence model, an infinite number of activities may be designed, thus giving the opportunity to youth workers and schools to create the environment of positive learning and positive impact in their communities.

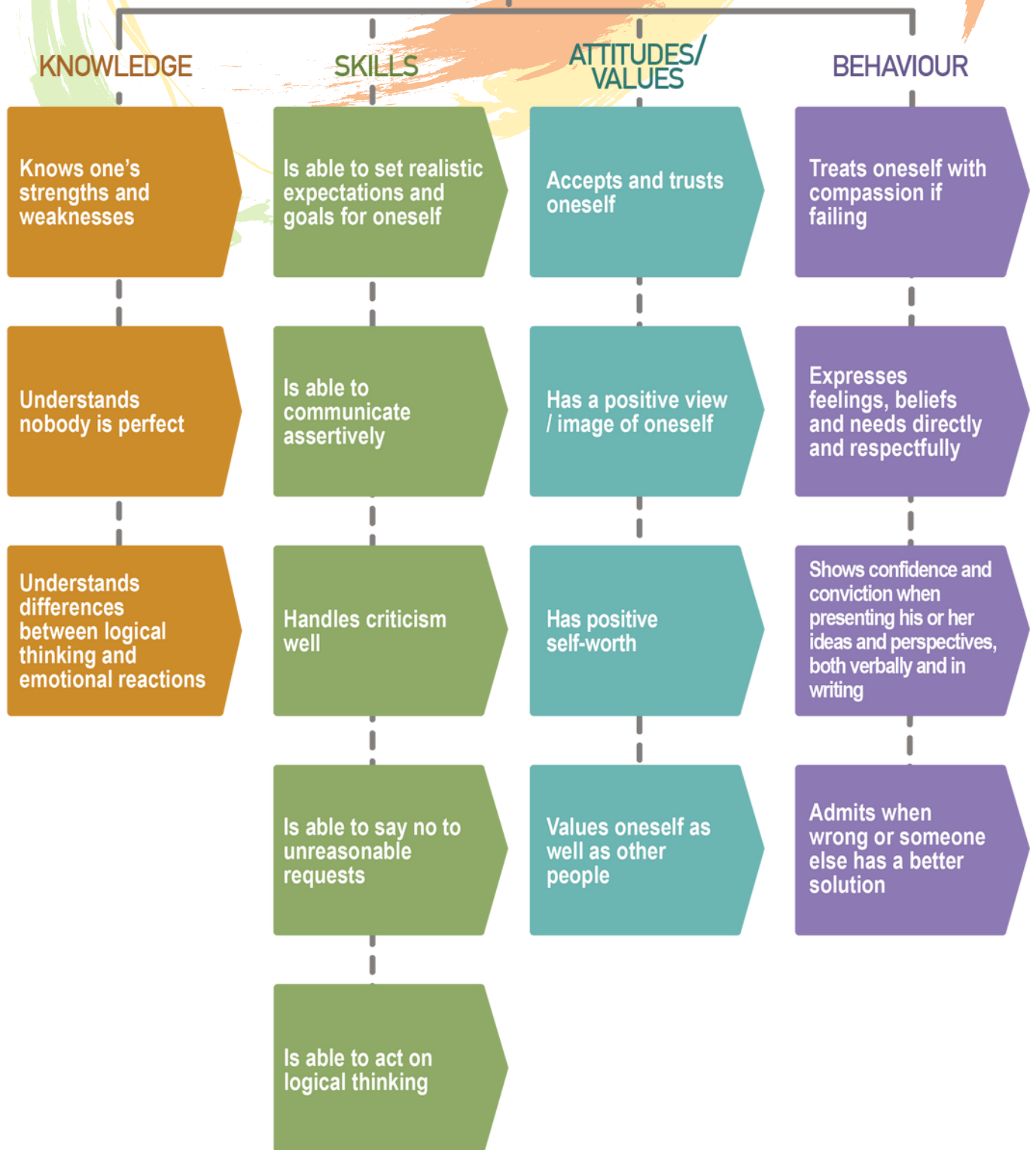


# COMMUNITY IDENTITY





# SELF CONFIDENCE

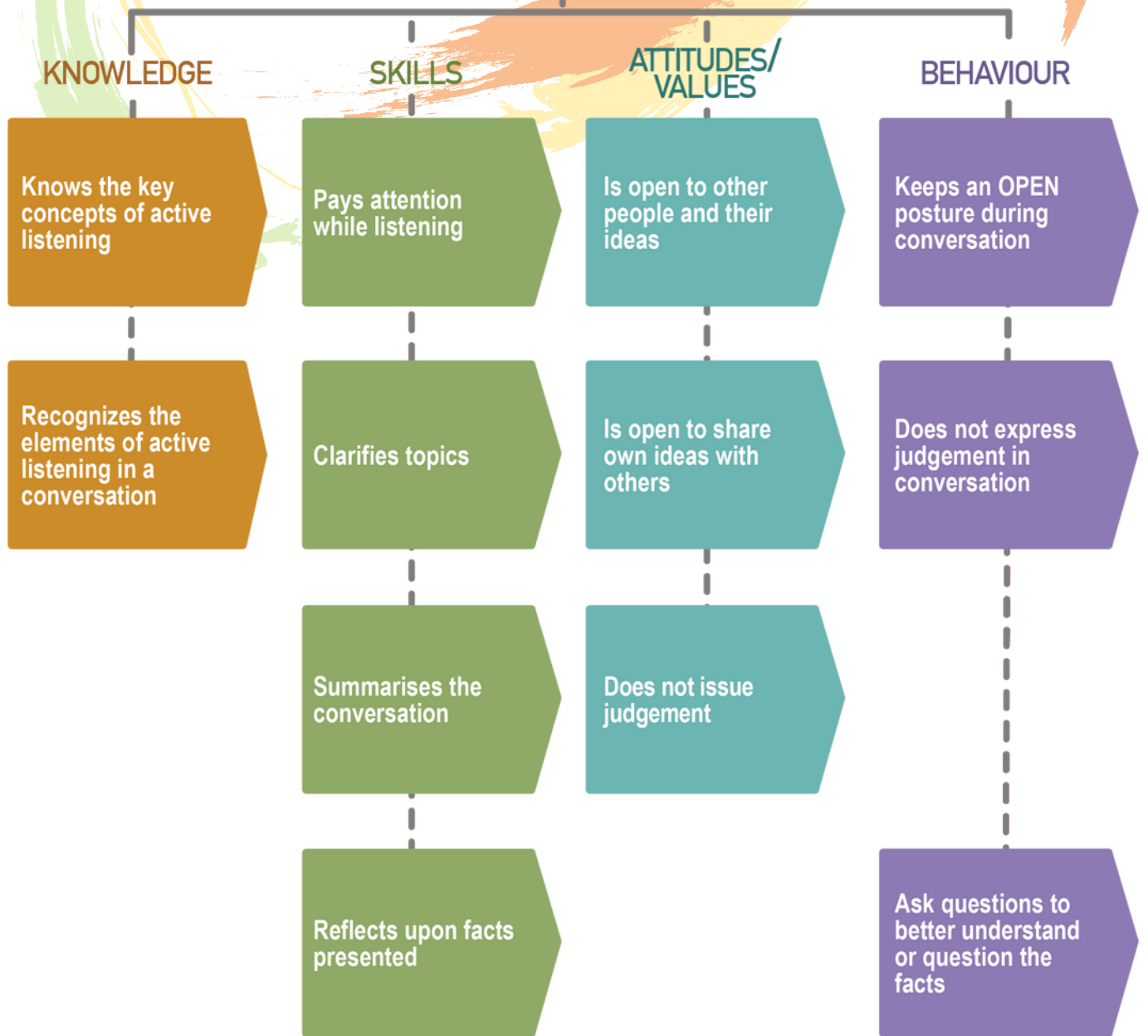


# LOCAL PARTICIPATION

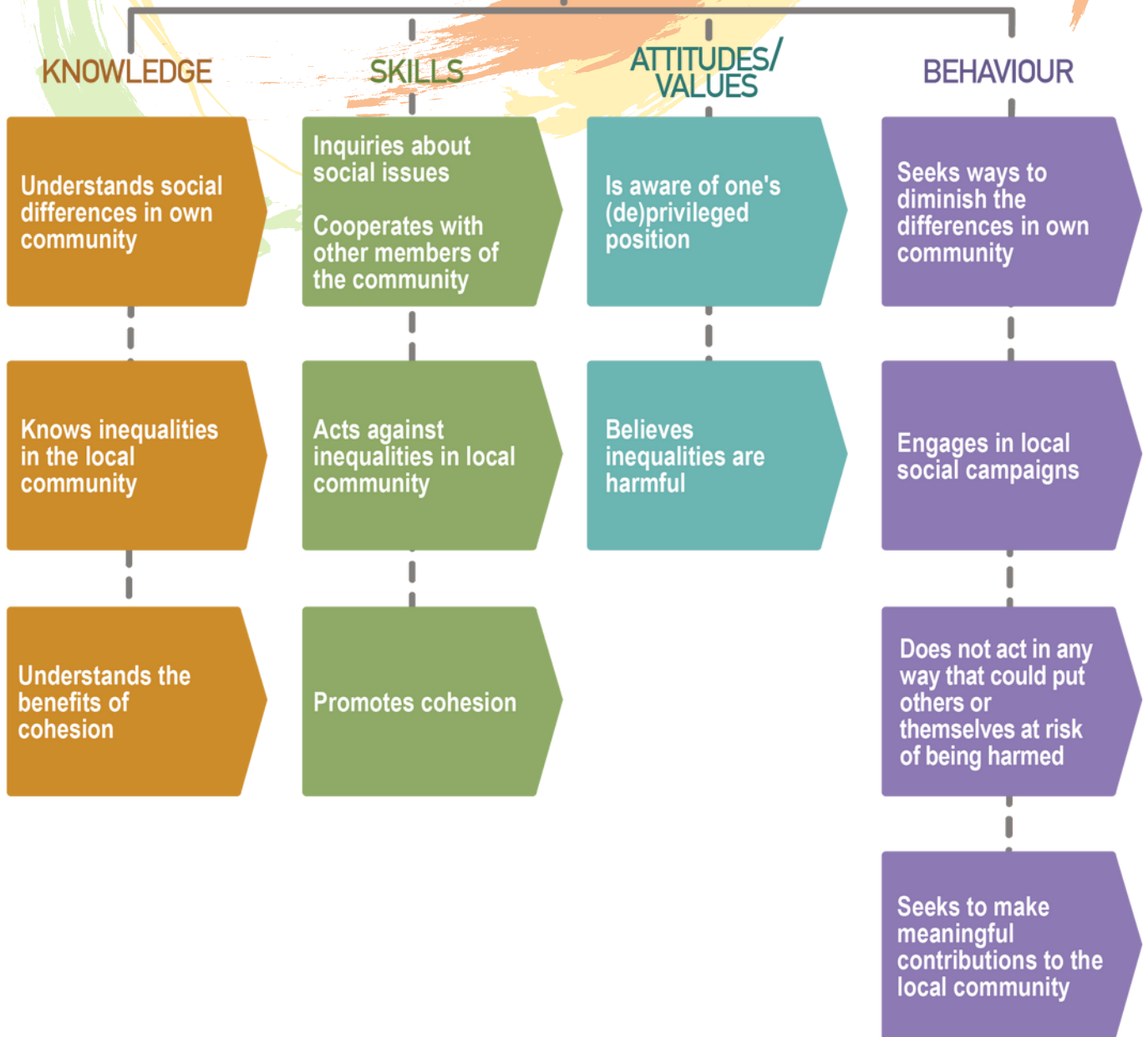




# ACTIVE LISTENING



# SOLIDARITY



# School-based workshops

Teenagers will not come to youth organisations on their own: they tend to be reserved when they enter a new place or environment, integrate into a new organisation or connect with a new idea. This process is much easier for them if we are able to take a little bit of the 'unknown' away, and arouse their motivation and interest at the same time. This is why we decided to establish first contact with our target group in an environment they already knew – their school. Participants would also usually join the programme with one or more friends, which made it easier for them to feel comfortable within the group.

However, some young people join because they are motivated to join. According to them, their motivation comes from spending a week away from school, spending a week with friends and visiting other countries for free.

When we ...

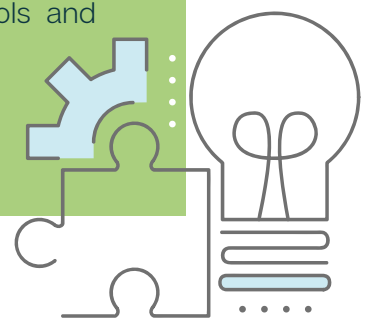
*create an environment that is 'friendly enough'*

*address some of the interests, needs or issues of young people, and*

*communicate that successfully with our target group*

... then young people will appear.

It is vitally important to incorporate teachers into the project: they already have the trust of young people and their parents. They are an important factor at this stage in delivering information on and promoting the programme to young people and their parents. Because of the age of the participants, it is very important that parents support their children's participation in the programme. Youth workers themselves can never attain the level of trust, importance and social value that schools and teachers enjoy. It is therefore vital for teachers to verify and play an active part in the programme.



Cooperation between teachers and youth workers is also fertile ground for qualitative learning on the part of the young people. The inclusion of both professions in every element of the programme is therefore highly recommended.

The programme itself demands considerable investments of time from the participants. It is vital that the approach be discussed in advance between the partners (school and youth organisation) and that answers be produced to at least the following questions:



- *What are the elements of the project?*
- *When and where within the school can a group meet regularly?*
- *Who will communicate with the parents about the programme?*
- *Can young people suggest different projects to teachers and the school board?*
- *If and for how long can young people be away from school because of the programme? When is the best time for them to be away?*
- *Who are the people responsible for the project at the two organisations?*
- *Who runs the financial aspects of the project and what does that entail?*

In our project we decided to work with participants aged 13 and 14. In the case of Društvo Lojtra, for example, that meant that we invited around 100 young people from six different classes to join the project. We started by presenting the project to all of the young people together. Since the number of subsequent applications exceeded the capacity of the project, we asked the applicants to submit a motivational letter, after which we selected 15 participants (the ideal group size is between 13 and 17 young people). The request for a motivational letter already acted as a selection process as not all applicants ended up submitting the letter.

After selecting the participants, we started the first part of the programme, which comprised:

- school-based workshops
- school-based projects

The content of the project is described below. We divided the content into workshops to make it easier to follow and use. Every workshop had a name, number, duration, set of objectives, and required material/content.





## INTRODUCTION

### DURATION



45 minutes

### MATERIALS



A big board or flipchart, A4 papers, markers, soft ball

### OBJECTIVES



- Present the program
- Learn the names
- Select a time for regular meetings
- Provide all the agreements for cooperation in the program

### TARGETED COMPETENCE



- Trusting the local community

### CONTENT



1. Introduction of the mentors.
2. Learning the names of the whole group. Facilitator calls the name of the first participant and pass the ball to him. He needs to call the next person and pass the ball. And so on. The last participant needs to call the name and pass the ball in the reverse order. So eventually the ball comes back to the facilitator.

If there is a need, facilitator can propose another round of names or even name tags.

3. Introduction to the program (meetings, working Saturdays, projects, international exchanges, and follow up).
4. Scheduling the time for regular meetings together with young people.
5. Scheduling the time for the working Saturday together with young people.
6. Presenting the agreements for cooperation in the program and giving them to the young people.



n\*2

## GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

DURATION



45 minutes

MATERIALS



A4 papers, markers

OBJECTIVES



- Start getting to know each other
- Start becoming more comfortable in the group

TARGETED COMPETENCE



- Trusting the local community

CONTENT



1. Repeating the names of the whole group. Facilitator asks participants to choose an adjective which starts with the same letter as their name. A round of names together with the adjectives follows. At the end, the facilitator can ask if somebody knows all the names already and he can say them.
2. Getting to know each other. Facilitator asks questions and prepares possible answers. Possible answers are written on the list of papers A4 and when presenting them the facilitator put them in different corners of the classroom. Participants need to stand at the answer they most agree with.
 

Questions:

  - Which is your favourite part of the day? A: Morning, School, Afternoon, Evening, etc.
  - Which is your favourite TV show? A: Stranger things, game of thrones, big bang theory, house of the dragon, others.
  - If you would be able to choose one super power, what would it be? A: time travelling, mind reading, flying, being invisible, others.
  - What are your favourite places in your community? A: playground, store, park, school, other.
  - Which is your favourite school subject? A: maths, English, P.E., music, history, other.
  - Which is your favourite place to eat in your community? Names of the restaurant and places to eat.
3. Put chairs in the circle and participants need to stand on the chairs and make a line according to:
  - From the person with the brightest eyes to the person with the darkest eyes
  - From the youngest to the oldest person
  - From the person with the most siblings to the person with the least siblings
4. Open a space for the questions about the program. Facilitator announces that parents can call the organisers if they have any questions and that there will be a meeting for parents, before the youth exchange.



n\*3

## TEAM BUILDING

DURATION



45 minutes

MATERIALS



Board or flipchart, markers, spaghetti, paper tape, string, scissors, marshmallows

OBJECTIVES



- Get to know each other
- Be more comfortable in the group
- Start to search for one's place in the group
- Experience the group-work process

TARGETED COMPETENCE



- Knows their own strengths and weaknesses
- Understands that nobody is perfect

CONTENT



1. Marshmallow Challenge: Put participants into groups of four or five. Each group gets 20 long pieces of spaghetti (not cooked!), one metre of paper tape, one metre of string, a pair of scissors and a marshmallow. The task is to build the highest free-standing structure possible, where the marshmallow must be at the top. They have 20 minutes to complete the task.
2. Short debriefing:
  - *How did it go?*
  - *What did you contribute to the process?*
  - *What didn't you like?*
  - *Were your ideas heard by the group?*
  - *What would you do differently next time?*
3. Group agreement: The facilitator explains that we will work together as a team for the next school year. In order to make our cooperation possible, we need to agree on the way in which we want to work together. We divide participants into three groups. Each group represents one colour on the traffic light: green, yellow and red. The green group should put down all the things that are acceptable during the cooperation, the yellow team all the things that are semi-acceptable and the red team all the things that are not acceptable. They then present their work and we draw up a group agreement based on the suggestions that were presented and accepted by the group.
4. After the group agreement, we present non-negotiable rules: No smoking, no sex, no alcohol, no violence.



n\*4

## TEAM BUILDING

DURATION



45 minutes

MATERIALS



Chairs, flipchart or board, markers, mobile phones

OBJECTIVES



- Explore cooperation in a big group
- Provide basic communication guidelines
- Establish a communication channel

TARGETED COMPETENCE



- Is able to communicate assertively
- Knows the key concepts of active listening
- Pays attention while listening

CONTENT



1. Empty chair: Provide one chair more than the number of participants. Chairs should be distributed randomly around the classroom. The facilitator starts to walk towards the empty chair; the participants need to occupy the chair before the mentor can sit on it. Once somebody leaves their chair, they cannot sit back down on it (i.e. they need to find another chair). The participants need to prevent the mentor from sitting for two minutes.

## 2. Short debriefing:

- *Did you succeed?*
- *Why?*
- *Did you cooperate?*
- *What is cooperation for you?*

## 3. Input on communication (as one of the elements of cooperation). How to communicate within the group.

**GENERAL PRINCIPLES:**

- Ask if you need something. We cannot know if you don't tell us.
- Tell us if something is wrong.
- Tell us if you do not feel well.
- Be quiet when other people are speaking.
- Do not listen for the RIGHT or WRONG answers; instead, listen in order to understand.
- Nod if you understand.
- Once somebody stops speaking, be quiet for a second and then start saying what you want to say.
- Look at the others and find your time to speak. Raise a hand when needed.

## 4. Choosing a communication channel, e.g Messenger, and creating it. Making sure everybody has it and it is working for everybody. Try to send the first messages.



n\*5

## PROJECT IN SCHOOL

DURATION



45 minutes

MATERIALS



Flipchart or board, markers, index cards

OBJECTIVES



- Thinking about the concrete change one would like to be part of
- Vocalise the ideas
- Experience democratic process of selection

TARGETED COMPETENCE



- Knows how democratic processes work
- wants to be part of decision-making process
- Is open to share own ideas with others

CONTENT



1. Identifying 1 project idea they would like to work on. All the participants will be suggesting ideas. All of them will have 1 vote to vote for the ideas. At the end 1 idea will be chosen and all of the participants will work on it together. Facilitators have a veto vote, which can be used if they think a certain idea is not realistic enough.

The question for start gathering the ideas: *What would you enjoy to change in your school?*

Participants are quiet and need to put down on the index paper 1-3 ideas. After some time put them in groups of 3 and they need to present their ideas to each other. After that they present their 5 favourite ideas (at least one from each person) to the rest of the class. Once we have all the ideas, the facilitator clusters them together where possible and always asks the participants if its Ok to cluster two ideas together. After that each participant has 1 vote and they vote for the ideas. Three ideas with the most votes go to the final round. Here participants vote again. And again, each participant has 1 vote. The winning idea is the one that will be developed and addressed.

2. Clarifying the winning idea and writing it down.
3. Input about accepting common decisions in bigger groups. The process above can be messy but it's a great representation about accepting agreements in larger groups and its transferable to everybody. The participants are gaining understanding that working in a group needs certain effort. Key words: if you want to go fast, go alone, if you want to go far, go with a group.



n\*6

## PROJECT IN SCHOOL

DURATION



45 minutes

MATERIALS



Computers, board, markers

OBJECTIVES



- Practising to present one's idea to the third person

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Knows how the local administration (in this case the school) works
- Is able to write and address appropriately a request to local administration (the school)
- Is able to communicate assertively

CONTENT



1. Preparing the presentation of the project idea for the school headmaster. Participants need to answer the next questions:
  - *What is the idea? – description needs to be clear enough that somebody who hears it the first time will understand it.*
  - *Why is the idea important?*
  - *What is the plan for the implementation? What is the first step needed in order that this idea can happen? What is the second step? What is the third step?*
2. The process needs to be facilitated by the facilitator. We suggest answering the first question together and then make smaller groups for answering the second and third question. At the end everything needs to be checked with the whole group. And some participants need to take the responsibility to finalise the presentation.

n\*7

## PRESENTATION TO THE HEADMASTER

DURATION



45 minutes

MATERIALS



Computer, projector, screen

OBJECTIVES



- Experience decision making system in the school
- Experience presenting one's ideas to other stakeholders

TARGETED COMPETENCE



- Knows civic instruments for influencing decision making (on the level of primary school)
- Trust in local administration
- Handles criticism well

CONTENT



1. Presenting the project idea to the school master. Idea needs to include an implementation plan. Presentation needs to be done using digital tools. Participants need to present ideas to the headmaster and receive feedback from him. They need to get a clear answer about what is possible to do regarding their project and who they need to talk to.

2. Discussion about the presentation after the presentation:

- *How was this presentation for you? What are you satisfied with? What would you change?*
- *How did you feel during the presentation?*
- *How clear is the project to you? What is the first step? Who is responsible for it? When will it happen? What do you need now?*

Emphasising that they can write to us via communicational channel whenever they would need any support.



n\*8

## WORKING ON A PROJECT

DURATION



45 minutes

MATERIALS



A4 papers, pens, markers, board

OBJECTIVES



- Learn how to put ideas into reality

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Intention to volunteer for local cause
- Works well within a team
- Perception of self as an actor in making a positive change in the community

CONTENT



1. Checking the progress of the project.
2. Clarifying who is responsible for what and what are the next steps in the project.
3. Working on the next steps in the project and supporting participants with their work.

n\*9

## WORKING ON A PROJECT

DURATION



45 minutes

MATERIALS



A4 papers, pens, markers, board

OBJECTIVES



- Learn how to put ideas into reality

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Intention to volunteer for local cause
- Works well within a team
- Perception of self as an actor in making a positive change in the community

CONTENT



1. Checking the progress of the project
2. Clarifying who is responsible for what and what are the next steps in the project
3. Working on the next steps in the project and supporting participants with their work.

When a project is over there need to be a conversation: *How does the change happen?*



Examples of the projects done in the school:

### **Example 1: School hoodies**

Participants decided they would like to have school hoodies. They researched how many pupils would be ready to have it and pay for it. Research showed that there is significant interest for hoodies among the pupils. They choose a hoodie, made a design and acquire the offers for the desired numbers of hoodies. All of this was presented to the headmaster, who supported the idea and helped the participants with technical information about the orders, money, etc. The project was successfully implemented and pupils of the primary school can come to the school in their own hoodies now.

### **Example 2: Movie night**

Participants expressed interest in more socialising in the school after the classes. As an activity for socializing, they choose watching a movie. After presenting a project to the teacher responsible for extra curriculum activities, they got a confirmation. Participants made a promotion, choose a movie prepare a space, went to buy snack and watch the movie together with their friends in one of the classrooms. After that they also cleaned everything.

### **Example 3: Halloween dance**

Participants expressed interest for more socializing in the school after the class. They specifically want something interesting and fun. They choose to organize a school Halloween dance. First, they make a plan with all the elements including: arrangements of the space, equipment, extra activities, target group, list of music, list of games they will play during the dance, etc. The plan was presented to the headmaster, approved and realized.

n\*10

## VISITING LOCAL POIs

DURATION



90 - 120 minutes

MATERIALS



OBJECTIVES



- Getting to know places for young people in the community

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Can guide outsiders to local POIs
- Knows local history, culture and architecture
- Knows local geography & toponymy / resources / arts&crafts / producers

CONTENT



1. Ask participants to name 3 most common places where they go or spent time in their community.
2. Make a list of 5 most common places and visit them.
3. Visit also places for young people in the local community. If possible, also go inside the places for young people and spend some time there, try out some games, activities, have a glass of juice. The point is that young people feel welcomed at the places. With each place for young people, mentor also need to provide short explanation about the place, what is its purpose and what activities young people can attend there.



## WHAT IS A YOUTH EXCHANGE?

### DURATION



45 minutes

### MATERIALS



Board, index cards

### OBJECTIVES



- Present the basic idea about what the youth exchange is
- Explore the possible activities for the youth exchange

### TARGETED COMPETENCE



- Is open to share own ideas with others
- Is open to other people and their ideas
- Does not issue judgement

### CONTENT



1. Facilitator provide an input on what is the youth exchange.
2. Showing videos from the past youth exchanges.
3. Opening floor for questions about the youth exchanges.
4. Asking participants what would they like to experience during the youth exchange? Participants are answering in a circle. Each participant can say one thing at once and then the next participants continue. If somebody has nothing to say, he can just say "pass". Do this so long that we collect all the ideas from the participants. We pay attention to the reaction to different ideas and we can explain that all the ideas are welcomed and that reactions which are helping others to express are: being quiet, nodding, asking clarifying questions.
5. Cluster the ideas together and with each idea we are putting together we check with the participants if they are ok with it.
6. Summarize the ideas.



n\*12

## TRAVELLING

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS

Computers, board, markers,  
mobile phones

OBJECTIVES



- Getting to know how to search for the travel tickets
- Building the feeling of ownership regarding the youth exchange

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Is open to share own ideas with others
- Clarifies topics
- Ask questions to better understand or question the facts

CONTENT



1. Facilitator put participants into pairs and they need to find the best way to travel to the youth exchange (presuming that we now at that time where will we travel to). They need to take into account: the duration of the travelling and the price of the ticket. The travelling goes from their home town to the venue of the exchange. Ideally there is one computer for each pair.
2. Make a big spreadsheet on the board or flipchart and whenever a pair finds a connection put it on the board: starting destination, ending destination, means of transport, duration, luggage allowances and a price.
3. Checking all the options and making a final decision about the travelling together.

n\*13

## WHAT WOULD I LIKE TO EXPERIENCE DURING THE YOUTH EXCHANGE

DURATION



45 minutes

MATERIALS



A4 papers, pens, board, markers

OBJECTIVES



- Design a timetable for the youth exchange
- Experience building a set of activities together with other participants

TARGETED COMPETENCE



- Is open to share own ideas with others
- Does not express judgement in conversation
- Is able to use critical thinking in decision making

CONTENT



1. Creating a timetable for the youth exchange together. Make a timetable (day by day) and bring ideas that participants were expressed two sessions ago.
2. Divide participants into 3 groups and invite them to make a timetable for the youth exchange.
3. All the groups present their work. Make a final timetable for the youth exchange together.

Notice: on the youth exchange there are also other groups of young people, so facilitator needs to tell his group that they have their own suggestions and the other groups will bring their suggestion as well. So, the final timetable will take into account all the suggestions and will also be limited by the money. Also, the opinions of the facilitators on what is safe and beneficial for everybody, will count. Facilitator needs to emphasise that their suggestions will be taken into account as much as possible. It is good to be mindful about the reactions of the participants and when the reactions to other suggestions are too judgemental we intervene and clearly express that suggestions are welcome, that decision making process will be democratic and that judgments are contra productive.



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## CULTURE AND THE YOUTH EXCHANGE

DURATION



60 minutes

MATERIALS



OBJECTIVES



- Thinking about the term of culture

TARGETED COMPETENCE



- Understands social differences in own community
- Reflects upon facts presented

CONTENT



1. Facilitator asks participants to think about the corn. They need to make a clear picture of the corn in their mind. After that they need to describe it. After that show them pictures of the corn which is not yellow and explain that there are many kinds of corn and many kinds are not yellow and not as we know it.

### 2. Discussion:

- *How do we make our opinions? Possible sub questions:*
- *What is an opinion?*
- *How certain are you in your opinions?*
- *What are opinions good for?*
- *What could opinions be bad for?*
- *What effects our opinions?*
- *What are the backgrounds of our opinions?*
- *How do we deal with people with different opinions?*

3. "Once upon a time there was a pretty girl called Abigail who lived in a house with her mother. Every day she would walk across her town, over the only bridge crossing the river to river to see her boyfriend, Tom. Abi thought Tom was lovely! She would skip and sing on her way to see her boyfriend, and they were very much in love.

Of course, Tom also thought Abi was lovely. He too would cross the town and the only bridge across the river to go and see Abi, but he didn't skip and sing, at least when the other boys were looking, he didn't!

They were so in love and would walk around holding hands to show everyone how much they loved each other. Aww

One night a great storm flooded the river and swept away the bridge, the only bridge so the next morning they could only stand on opposite banks of the river and wave to each other, both very sad that they couldn't hold hands.

Abigail cried. She cried and cried and cried and wanted to see her Tom, but it would be months before a new bridge would be built, and there was no other way to cross the river. Then after a few days Abigail saw a little rowing boat tied up on the river, and went to speak to the man who owned it.



## CULTURE AND THE YOUTH EXCHANGE

"Please" Abi begged "Please row me across the river so I can see my Tom". The man who owned the boat was called Sinbad. Not many people spoke to him, and very little was known about him. Sinbad thought about Abigail's problem and offered to help. "I will row you across the river" Sinbad said, and Abi smiled, but she was happy to quickly. Sinbad continued "I will row you across the river, if you sleep with me."

Abigail's smile turned into a frightful scream and she ran off crying. She couldn't decide what to do. She wanted to see Tom so badly, but didn't want to sleep with Sinbad. She felt torn between seeing her boyfriend and cheating on him with Sinbad, and she felt she needed to ask someone for advice, so sat down with mother and explained the whole story.

Abigail's mother listened to her story and when Abi had finished, she looked at her mother, waiting for her advice. "Well," her mother started "you need to sort this one out for yourself". Abigail's mother offered no advice as she wanted Abi to make the decision for herself.

Abi was now more confused than ever and sat in her park thinking over her options. She decided she wanted to see Tom more than ever... he would know what to do, so she jumped up and went to Sinbad.

After she slept with him, Sinbad kept his word and took her on his boat across the river. Abi ran as soon as she arrived on shore to Tom. Tears running her face, she banged on his door and he was very shocked to see Abi, and to see that she was so upset. Abi explained everything that happened to her, and when she told Tom she had to sleep with Sinbad to see her, he went crazy.

"WHAT!" he shouted "you cheated on me... with Sinbad!" Abi tried to explain why she did it, but Tom was so angry he slammed the door shut and didn't want to speak to Abi again.

Abi cried some more, and now was on the wrong side of the river to ask her mother for advice, but she knew where Tom's best friend, Bob, lived.

She went around to Bob's house and explained everything to him. Bob let her into his house and gave her a nice cup of tea to try and help things. As Abi explained what had happened today, Bob was disgusted with how Tom had acted. So disgusted in fact that he went around to Tom's house and beat him up for treating Abi so badly.

Then Bob left with Abigail.

And this is where our story ends."

Source: [https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/toolbox\\_tool\\_download-file-1291/Abigail's%20Tale.txt](https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/toolbox_tool_download-file-1291/Abigail's%20Tale.txt)



- 4.** After participants finish with the reading, they have 3 minutes to rank the characters from the best to the worst.
- 5.** Put participants in pairs and they have 3 min to rank the characters from the best to the worst.
- 6.** Make a group of 6 and they have 5 min to rank the characters from best to worst.
- 7.** Each group presents their list. Facilitators let them discuss their choices for a few minutes.
- 8.** Facilitator connects the Abigail story with the first part of the workshop (how we make our opinions). He explains that the youth exchange will be a space where different opinions will be present. It is not wrong not to agree, but we need to be able to show respect also to the people we don't agree with. Facilitator and the group discuss whatever is present in the group at the moment and need attention and clarifications.



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## CELEBRATION AND FUTURE PLANS

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



Picnic set

OBJECTIVES



- To celebrate!

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Takes pride in local resources / architecture / crafts / POIs
- Behaves appropriately in connection to community values
- Trusts the local community

CONTENT



Going to eat in a local restaurant or organising a picnic and discuss the plan for future cooperation – this happens at the end of the school year, after the exchange. It needs to be a celebration and relaxed talk, not a structured workshop! We also need to assure the group when we are meeting after the summer, so they have a date to look up to.

# Workshops at organisations for young people

After the workshops at school, projects in school and most importantly after the youth exchanges, the group of young people is connected enough to invite them in the organisation for young people. And they will come. At that point we have strong connections in the group as well as with the youth workers and teachers. We simply offer a space in the community to young people and they will start coming. When this happens, we need to agree with the young people on how our cooperation will look from now on. From our experiences young people will want to “hang out”, “do something together” and “cooperate on more youth exchanges”. That is why we need to make a plan and find out what we can offer to young people, before we meet them. We never promise something that we are not able to deliver. That will kill the established trust between us and our participants.

We are presenting the workshops, which will continue to equip the participants with the competences stated at the competence model. Based on our experience we will need another program of around 20 meetings. After that time the group which was included in the entire program will start feeling part of the organisation. They will start coming on their own. They will start spending their free time in the organisation. They will start suggesting and taking responsibility. They will start to do projects in the community on their own. They will become active citizens. After that our role becomes less active and is not guiding and providing the content any more but supporting and mentoring the participants into the direction they chose. However, to make that possible, transitioning from the school to the organization for young people is very important. Because in school they can just be a certain amount of their life. And the organization for young people is there for the young people regardless of their age.

Another development we noticed is that certain young people will stop coming to our meetings. Or even more often, will come just time to time. It is important to support the participation of young people which suit them. Organisation for young people should be the place where young people are always welcome, even if that is once every two months. On the other side new young people will start appearing, as friends, boy friends, girl friends of our original group. We need to take care to accept all the newcomers and also have clear agreements regarding their cooperation (because they do not know them, since they are newcomers), especially about their participation on the youth exchanges, since sometimes it is just not possible to take everybody on the youth exchange. Young people will understand that. We just need to tell them clearly.

The content is divided in workshops again. Each workshop has its name, number, duration, objectives, targeted competences, material needed and content.





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# RECONNECTED

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



Flipchart, markers

OBJECTIVES



- Reconnect the participants
- Design the framework for further cooperation

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Trusts the local community
- Takes pride in local resources/architecture/crafts/POIs
- Volunteers for a local cause

CONTENT



**1.** Welcoming the group to the youth organisation.

**2.** Speed dating: Participants are divided into pairs. The facilitator provides a question and they have four minutes to answer that question as a pair. After that, the pair changes and a new question follows.

- *What was your summer like?*
- *What are you looking forward to in the coming school year?*
- *What do you remember from our experiences last year?*
- *What would you like to experience in the group this year?*

**3.** Listening to voices from the group. The question could be: What did you talk about?

**4.** Presenting the framework for further cooperation:

- Agreements and rules are to stay the same as last year (naming the agreements and rules from the last school year). Checking them with the group and changing them if needed.
- Explaining to them that we will have 20 organised meetings during the year. Schedule the meetings (every week, every two weeks or differently — it's important that it is clear to everybody when the meetings are to happen).
- Explaining to them that they can use youth organisation premises for socialising and spending free time. Explaining that they will receive some rights on the basis of the trust built during the last school year. Those rights can be extended or taken away depending on their conduct. The rights are:
  - The group will receive one key to the premises and can use it every day between 07:00 and 22:00. Each time they would like to use it, they should send a message to their mentor at least one hour in advance. The premises should be left as they were found.
  - The group will receive a budget of €150 for the whole year for the food they would like to eat while they are spending time at the youth organisation.

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**RECONNECTED**

- The group can use and borrow the youth organisation's equipment, but this needs to be confirmed by the mentor first.
  - The group will be invited to attend another youth exchange if there is the possibility of that.
  - In return, the group should organise two projects in the next 12 months that will also be made available to other young people in the community. The budget for those projects will be discussed, but in general will amount to €100 per project.
  - In return, each individual in the group must carry out five hours of voluntary work for the youth organisation (when needed and when they have the time).
- 5.** Clarifying the framework and talking to participants about it.
- 6.** Obtaining parental consent for the activities (this is mandatory). We suggest that the agreement be drawn up in collaboration with participants and based on the outcomes of the workshop.



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# HISTORICAL PHOTO HUNT PART 1

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



Flipchart, flipchart paper, markers, participants' mobile phones

OBJECTIVES



- Develop research skills
- Build connection with local history
- Build connection with local architecture

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Knows local history, culture and architecture
- Knows local geography and toponymy/resources/arts and crafts/producers
- Takes pride in local resources/architecture/crafts/POIs
- Pays attention while listening
- Is open to other people and their ideas
- Clarifies topics
- Is open to sharing own ideas with others

CONTENT



1. Participants are split into smaller groups of four or five. The groups are then invited to identify 12 historical/old buildings or points of interest (POIs) in the local community, and encouraged to create lists of POIs on flipcharts.
2. The groups present their lists and the facilitator triggers a conversation about these POIs. Sample questions: *What are these POIs? What is their history? Why do you consider them to be POIs? What are people in the community saying about them?*
3. The conversation continues with questions to explore further: *What else would you like to know about these buildings? Do you know who built it? What would people have done in these buildings/POIs 50 years ago? How did they look 50/100 years ago? How have they changed in the last 50 years?*
4. Groups are invited to ask their parents/grandparents/relatives about these buildings. The interview guide may be developed on the spot with the help of the above questions. The task for the groups is to identify the history of the POIs with the help of older people or the local authorities (work time 3 weeks)
5. Groups are then assigned between three and five POIs and invited to divide them between their members. They are then invited to research old photographs of the POIs, from their families, older citizens in the community and/or the local authorities. They will try to recreate the photos using their mobile phones (same vantage point, same angles, same distance).



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## HISTORICAL PHOTO HUNT PART 2

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



Flipchart, flipchart paper, markers, participants' mobile phones

OBJECTIVES



- Develop research skills
- Build connection with local history
- Build connection with local architecture

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Knows local history, culture and architecture
- Knows local geography and toponymy/resources/arts and crafts/producers
- Takes pride in local resources/architecture/crafts/POIs
- Pays attention while listening
- Is open to other people and their ideas
- Clarifies topics
- Is open to sharing own ideas with others

CONTENT



1. Groups are invited to share the results of their research. The photographs, the history of the POIs, local legends, etc. The groups present their photographs (old and new, parallel). They are then invited to summarise the history of the POIs in two or three sentences, and to choose the pictures/POIs they would like to share with the local community.
2. They will create sets of two photos (old and new) depicting the transformation of the community past 50–100 years, with a summary description.  
The sets may be printed and displayed in the local school, town hall, etc.
3. Questions for content debriefing:
  - *What new things have you found out from your research?*
  - *Was there anything that surprised you?*
  - *Out of all the POIs, which one impressed you the most/the least?*
  - *What would you tell friends from other countries/cities when they ask you what is there to see in your town/village?*

Continue with the process debriefing.



n\*19

## ACTIVE LISTENING

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



Flipchart and markers

OBJECTIVES



- Understand what active listening is
- Feel what it means not to listen to somebody

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Recognises the elements of active listening in a conversation
- Keeps an open posture during conversation
- Pays attention while listening

CONTENT



1. Half the group leaves the workroom while the other half stays. Every individual who stays in the room will work as a pair with an individual who has left the room. The participants in the room tell a sad story to the other participant. The second participant should ignore it (look away, ask unconnected questions, make judgements). They do not know each other.

### 2. Debriefing:

- *What happened?*
- *How did you feel?*
- *What can you find out?*
- *What would you change if you were not playing a role?*

3. People who were previously storytellers are now listeners. Again, half the group leaves the room. The storytellers should tell the story by kinaesthetic means only. Speaking is not allowed. The eyes of the listener should be closed. They can use the space (smell, touch, movements).

### 4. Debriefing:

- *What happened?*
- *How was it?*
- *How did your limited senses influence the storytelling process?*
- *What went well and what did not go the way you expected?*
- *What do you need to be careful about?*
- *Would you do anything different if you did the exercise again?*

5. Theoretical input about active listening.

6. Space to ask questions and clarify terms.



# n\*20 BEING ACTIVE IN THE COMMUNITY

## DURATION



90 minutes

## MATERIALS



Post-it notes, flipcharts, markers

## OBJECTIVES



- Learn how to bring one's interest to fruition in the community
- Learn how to come to conclusions when cooperating in larger groups

## TARGETED COMPETENCE



- Knows how democratic processes work
- Has basic knowledge of local issues
- Intends to volunteer for a local cause

## CONTENT



1. Collecting expressions of interest from young people for the projects they would like to be involved in.
  - *What kind of project/activity would you like to do in your community?*

Participants are placed in small groups (three per group). They should find at least nine ideas they are interested in working on. Each person needs to suggest at least two ideas.

- Small teams present the ideas and, as they do so, we put all the ideas on the big board and combine those that are the same or similar enough. Whenever we combine ideas, we check that the participants are happy with the ideas being combined. We should allow enough time to ensure that everybody understands all the ideas.
- Voting. Each person has three votes. They can give all their votes to one idea or to three different ideas. The five ideas with the most votes progress to the next round.
- Each person now has two votes and can give them all to one idea or to two ideas.
- We extract the two winning ideas and discuss with the group whether they would all like to work first on one idea and then on the other, or whether they would prefer to separate into two groups, with each working on one of the ideas.
- We should clearly identify who will work on which idea and write it down.



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## PLANNING THE PROJECTS

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



A4 papers, markers, pens, worksheets

OBJECTIVES



- Learn how to break down big ideas into small steps
- Learn how to work as a team

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Knows how local authorities work
- Works well within a team
- Is able to write a request to local authorities and address it appropriately

CONTENT



1. Each team from the previous workshop should draw up a plan for their project. They should identify at least: name, objectives, tasks in time order, resources required, responsible people for certain tasks. We suggest that step-by-step instructions be provided.
2. Once they are done with the plan and the mentor confirms it, they can start working on the project. They can work on the project during the meetings or in their free time, as they wish.
3. Discussion: Who is responsible for young people in the local community? Who is responsible for the quality of lives of young people in the community? What can young people themselves do to address this topic?



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## ASK THE MAYOR

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



A4, pens

OBJECTIVES



- Learn who is responsible for the life of young people in the community
- Learn to stand up for one's ideas

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Is able to use civic instruments to influence decision-making
- Trusts in local authorities
- Handles criticism well

CONTENT



1. Based on the discussion from the previous workshop, the groups prepare specific questions they would like to put to the mayor/municipal representative.
2. The group takes the questions to the mayor/municipal representative.

### 3. Conversation after the experience:

- *How was it?*
- *What did you find out?*
- *Who is responsible for the life of young people in the community?*
- *How satisfied are you with the answers?*
- *What now?*



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# SELF-CONFIDENCE

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



A4, pens

OBJECTIVES



- Realise that we live in a shared reality
- Learn simple techniques for increasing self-confidence

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Accepts and trusts themselves
- Has a positive view/image of themselves
- Values themselves as well as other people

CONTENT



1. We invite participants on a 30-minute walk. The walk in pairs and discuss the questions given to them. We provide a new question every six minutes. We should make it clear that they only need to share what they want to share.
  - *Who is your role model? What traits/characteristics do you admire in your role model?*
  - *Do you recognise any of them in yourself?*
  - *What do you like about yourself?*
  - *Would you like to change anything about yourself?*
  - *What do you like about the person you are talking to?*
2. Everyone gets a sheet of paper and a pen and writes down the two most important sentences from the last 30 minutes. After that, we sit in a circle and participants share one of the sentences they have written.
3. Discussion:
  - *What is self-confidence for you?*
  - *How self-confident do you feel?*
4. What do you do when you would like to feel more self-confident? Sharing some techniques with the participants:
  - Breathing exercise: Participants are invited to inhale, count to five loudly in their mind, and exhale. They then inhale slowly and repeat this ten times.
  - Power postures: Participants are invited to stand up, place their legs a little wider than their shoulders, put their arms on their hips (elbows out) and make the most confident face as they can. They stay like this for one minute.
  - Anchoring the positive feeling: Participants are invited to lie on the floor, close their eyes and think about one situation in their life that they felt very confident about. First, they need to think about the event in its entirety and then choose the moment at which they were most confident. They should imagine a picture of that moment and look at the objects and colours that were around. Who was there? The sounds that they can remember, the smells that were there. We ask participants to remember the feeling connected with the picture in their head. After that, we invite them to take a few deep breaths and slowly open their eyes. We ask participants to recall that framework whenever they are in need of confidence.



n\*24

## VISITING A LOCAL EVENT

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



Computer, internet

OBJECTIVES



- Learn where to look for events in the local community
- Experience an event in the local community
- Vocalise the experience

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Takes part in local events and events that present the community to the outside world
- Can adopt various behaviours according to community values
- Is familiar with inequalities in the local community

CONTENT



1. The group explores what kind of events will take place in their community over the next month. They compile a list of events.
2. The group agrees on the event they will attend.
3. The group prepares a note for their parents in which they explain the purpose of attending the event, the date and hours of the event, the logistics and the accompanying staff.
4. The group attend the event.
5. After the event (or at the next meeting), the mentor discusses the following questions with the group:
  - *How was the event for you?*
  - *What did you notice?*
  - *What differences did you notice between the visitors?*
  - *Where do those differences come from?*
  - *Would you like to organise events like that?*



n\*25

## IMPLEMENTING THE PROJECT

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



Project-dependent

OBJECTIVES



- Experience how young people can contribute to events in their community
- Learn how to work in a large group

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Seeks to make meaningful contributions to the local community
- Works well within a team

CONTENT



This workshop may take place before or after its place in the schedule. The important point is to give young people the space in which to implement the project they have designed.

1. Implementing the designed project. The facilitator provides support where needed. The projects will be very different, so the support and processes will differ greatly.
2. Discussion after the project:
  - *What were highlights for you?*
  - *What would you do differently next time?*
  - *What are you grateful for?*
  - *Any regrets?*

n\*26

# FEEDBACK

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



Flipchart and markers

OBJECTIVES



- Learn how to provide feedback
- Learn how to express unpleasant emotions

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Understands the differences between logical thinking and emotional reactions
- Expresses feelings, beliefs and needs directly and respectfully
- Is able to say no to unreasonable requests

CONTENT



1. The facilitator opens the workshop with a question:
  - How do you tell somebody that you don't like what they are doing? After the discussion, the next question addresses the difference between a fact and an interpretation. After the discussion, the next question is: When you don't like something, do you have an issue with the person or with what the person is doing?
2. One way to express feedback:
  - *We name the concrete action that we did not like.*
  - *We express how we felt during the action.*
  - *We suggest what would be better for us.*
  - *We check how would that be for the other person.*
3. Discussion about what feelings are. We start with the question: What can we feel?
4. We choose a concrete situation and act it out multiple times.



n\*27

## VISITING A LOCAL EVENT #2

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



OBJECTIVES



- Learn where to look for the events in the local community
- Experience an event in the local community
- Vocalise the experience

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Takes part in local events and events that present the community to the outside world
- Can adopt various behaviours according to community values
- Is familiar with inequalities in the local community

CONTENT



1. The group explores what kind of events will take place in their community over the next month. They compile a list of events.
2. The group agrees on the event they will attend.
3. The group prepares a note for their parents in which they explain the purpose of attending the event, the date and hours of the event, the logistics and the accompanying staff.
4. The group attend the event.
5. After the event (or at the next meeting), the mentor discusses the following questions with the group:
  - *How was the event for you?*
  - *What did you notice?*
  - *What differences did you notice between the visitors?*
  - *Where do those differences come from?*
  - *Would you like to organise events like that?*



n\*28

## WHY VOLUNTEER?

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



Computers, phones, A4, markers, flipcharts

OBJECTIVES



- Build an understanding of why volunteering is important
- Develop an interest in volunteering

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Understands the principles of volunteering
- Volunteers or advocates for a local social cause

CONTENT



1. Dividing participants into groups of three or four and inviting them to identify the five largest volunteering organisations in the country and define what they do (one hour's work).
2. Presenting the results.
3. Sharing inspiring volunteering stories.
4. Discussing volunteering (why, how, where, when, who).

n\*29

## IMPLEMENTING THE PROJECT #2

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



Project-dependent

OBJECTIVES



- Explore how young people can contribute to events in their community
- Learn to work in a large group

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Seeks to make meaningful contributions to the local community
- Works well within a team

CONTENT



This workshop may take place before or after its place in the schedule. The important point is to give young people the space in which to implement the project they have designed.

1. Implementing the designed project. The facilitator provides support where needed. The projects will be very different, so the support and processes will differ greatly.
2. Discussion after the project:
  - *What were highlights for you?*
  - *What would you do differently next time?*
  - *What are you grateful for?*
  - *Any regrets?*



n\*30

## GOING TO VOLUNTEER FOR A LOCAL CAUSE

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



Computer, phones, A4, markers, flipchart

OBJECTIVES



- Build an understanding of what volunteering is
- Understand where volunteering is beneficial in the local community
- Experience helping others

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Volunteers or advocates for a local social cause
- Understands the benefits of cohesion
- Enquires about social issues, cooperates with other members of the community

CONTENT



1. Exploring the possibilities for undertaking voluntary work in the local community.
2. Everyone chooses one option and makes a plan for volunteering there (date, number of hours, type of work).

**3.** Voluntary work for the local cause.

**4.** Group discussion:

- *What happened?*
- *How was this experience for you?*
- *Did your work matter?*

n\*31

# STEP FORWARD

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



Printed material from the link or QR code below

OBJECTIVES



- Think about the different realities in which we live
- Experience social differences

TARGETED COMPETENCE



- Is familiar with inequalities in the local community
- Believes inequalities are harmful
- Seeks ways to diminish the differences in their own community

CONTENT



- <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/take-a-step-forward>





n\*32

## PERSONAL VALUES

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS

Balance wheel worksheet ([Appendix 4](#)), A4, markers

OBJECTIVES



- Decide what is important
- Learn how to prioritise
- Understand the role that beliefs, values and attitudes play in behaviour

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Is able to set realistic expectations and goals for themselves
- Has positive self-worth

CONTENT



**1.** Balance wheel. Write down the eight most important areas of your life. Each area has ten possible points. Ten points means that you are extremely satisfied with that area of your life. Mark your satisfaction with each of the areas on the balance wheel (centre of the circle = 0 points, edge of the circle = 10 points). Connect the marks you have given (look at the balance wheel worksheet in [Appendix 4](#)).

- 2.** Sharing in groups of three.
- 3.** Explaining what beliefs, values and attitudes are.
- 4.** Writing down the ten values most important to you.
- 5.** Writing down three personal goals for the next month.
- 6.** Discussion about the present, starting with: *How do you feel now?*

n\*33

## EXPLORING NATURE

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



OBJECTIVES



- Spend time with young people
- Provide space for non-structured conversations

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Knows local geography and toponymy/resources/arts and crafts/producers
- Pays attention while listening

CONTENT



Taking a walk around the home town. The walk needs to be in natural surroundings and at least 90 minutes long.

n\*34

## ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



Projector, computer, internet

OBJECTIVES



- Inform young people about the options they have in the Erasmus+ and ESC programme

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Is aware of their privileged (or under-privileged) position
- Promotes cohesion

CONTENT



1. Presentation of the Erasmus+ and ESC programmes. Presentation of youth exchanges, volunteering projects and solidarity projects.
2. Space for questions and debates. It is important that young people understand that there are experiences that they can really use and be part of.



n\*35

## CELEBRATION AND FUTURE PLANS

DURATION



90 minutes

MATERIALS



A4, markers, flipcharts

OBJECTIVES



- Celebrate our achievements together with young people

TARGETED COMPETENCE



- Takes pride in local resources/architecture/crafts/POIs
- Behaves appropriately according to community values
- Trusts the local community

CONTENT



1. Making a plan for a celebration with the participants. Opening with the question:
  - *How would you like to celebrate our time and the work we did?*
2. Collecting ideas and deciding which one to use.
3. Preparing and holding the celebration, which might involve spending a night somewhere or having a picnic, or inviting friends and showing them the results of our work. It is an open format, which means that it is up to the young people themselves to decide how would they like to celebrate their work.

# Youth Exchanges

Youth exchanges are settings in which learning happens at an accelerated pace. They provide real-life experiences that enable young people from different countries to spend time together. This programme featured two youth exchanges, each lasting five days. The day-by-day programme, which supports the competence model outlined above, is set out below.

Special attention should be focused on the physical and psychological safety of the participants. Time must be spent gathering all the legal documents that are required for travel with minors to another country. Those documents differ from country to country. We should always remember that young people can find it stressful being away from home in a different country, so attention needs to be paid to what takes place during structured and unstructured time. Be prepared for one-to-one personal conversations as well as group discussions and reflections.

What to do in case of emergency should be discussed between all adult staff in advance, as well as with the young people involved.

The timetable for one youth exchange is set out below, with possible variations and comments added at the end.





## Day 1

## GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

## DURATION



1 day

## MATERIALS



Container for water (10 l), paper cups, string (50 m), scissors, plastic bottles (0.5 l), flipchart, markers, computer, speakers

## OBJECTIVES



- Get to know each other
- Start building a safe space for cooperation
- Get to know the framework in which we will work
- Get to know the facilities where we will work

## TARGETED COMPETENCE



- Can explain local history to outsiders
- Can guide outsiders to local POIs
- Takes pride in local resources/architecture/crafts/POIs
- Behaves appropriately according to community values
- Shows confidence and conviction when presenting their ideas and views, both verbally and in writing
- Works well within a team
- Pays attention while listening
- Does not pass judgement during conversation
- Does not act in any way that could put others or themselves at risk of being harmed

## CONTENT

**1ST SESSION - 120'**

1. Short introduction (to welcome the participants).
2. Round of names. Each participant gives their name and tells everyone what their favourite breakfast is.
3. The project coordinator presents the project, its story, project team, hosting organisation and venue.
4. Energiser: The trainer says the words 'Flee, Fly, Flo' and the participants repeat them and clap in rhythm:
  - Flee*
  - Flee, fly, flu*
  - Cumbala, cumbala, cumbala la vista*
  - O, noo, ana la vista*
  - Ini mini, thada mini, u ap, shuanamini*
  - Ini mini, thada mini, u ap, shua*
  - Bala bibi bongo, bongo shuanga*
  - Bobo shuanga, shuanga, shhh*



## GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

### 1ST SESSION - 120'

#### 5. Sociograms:

Participants form a line in silence (we check the results after each set of instructions):

- from A to Z by name
- by altitude of their home town
- by age
- by brightness of eye colour
- by size of feet

#### 6. Participants are divided into three groups:

The trainer provides the instructions. Since we all function differently, it is important for common guidelines of behaviour to be set. One group focuses on acceptable behaviour (green traffic light), another on acceptable-ish behaviour (yellow light) and the third on unacceptable behaviour (red light).

We then share the outcomes and create common guidelines of behaviour. We also present the non-negotiable rules and the relevant technical and logistical information.

### 2ND SESSION - 90'

We invite participants outside on to a field or court.

1. The facilitator prepares a container of water on one side of the field or court and some plastic bottles on the other side. The number of plastic bottles should match the number of groups that will be formed.
2. Participants are divided into groups of four or five.
3. Each group gets a cup and as many pieces of string (150 cm long) as there are members of the group.
4. Each group needs to fill their own half-litre bottle with water from the big container (all groups take water from the same container). They can only carry the water in the cups, which must be held using string only.
5. Each group has 15 minutes to devise a strategy.
6. All groups start at the same time. The winner is the group that fills the bottle first.

We check the results and let the groups say a few words about the task.

After that we move on to the next activity.

1. Participants stay in the same groups.
2. They then have 30 minutes in which to devise a dance that presents their group. All the dances are then reviewed.



## GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

### 3RD SESSION - 90'

1. The facilitator organises the space into different stations. The stations are:
  - movies
  - music
  - hobbies
  - language
  - my town (presented by the hosting group)
  - habits
2. Participants move between the stations. The rules for moving are:
  - They can change station when the facilitator gives the sign (every ten minutes).
  - There must be a minimum of four people and a maximum of six people at a station at any one time.
  - There must be at least two people from the other country present in each group at all times.

Each group should also put their findings on the flipcharts. At the end, we briefly check the content of the flipcharts, and can also use that content in subsequent sessions.

### 4TH SESSION - 90'

The facilitator takes the group to the town/village centre.

Participants are placed into groups of between three and five; they are then given one hour to explore the town on their own.

After that, we return to the venue and form reflection groups.

#### REFLECTIONS

Reflections always take place within the national groups. Sometimes whole national groups are together, sometimes participants can be divided into smaller groups (depending on the number of accompanying staff and on the topic). The group is together on the first day of the exchange. The focus of the conversation is to open a space for whatever is present in the group. The second focus is on starting to pay attention to similarities and differences in the local architecture, food, behaviour, etc.

Possible questions:

- *How was this day for you?*
- *What specifically made you feel good? What made you feel bad?*
- *What would you change tomorrow? (Here we need to be careful not to just let them change other people, but also think about what they can contribute).*
- *What did you notice in the town/village? What grabbed your attention?*
- *How was the food for you?*
- *Did anybody surprise you? How?*
- *How do you get along with the other group?*

**Day 1****GETTING TO KNOW  
EACH OTHER****COMMENT**

The first day is all about getting to know each other, the venue and the framework in which we will work. There are numerous activities we can do for that purpose. We suggest maintaining a good ratio between doing things and talking about things, meaning that the youngsters should do something together and talk about things as they go along. Make sure that activities include moving, since they will be socially reserved and moving will help them to open up. As the day progresses, make sure that the groups mix; however, the participants should also have enough space in which to express themselves in the safe environment of the national group.



## Day 2

## LET'S LIVE TOGETHER

## DURATION



1 day

## MATERIALS



- Cooking equipment (kitchen)
- Cooking ingredients (list to be prepared in advance)
- Worksheet for exploration of the community (*Appendix 5*)

## OBJECTIVES



- Build trust within the group
- Start cooperating and working as a team
- Taste the culture
- Experience/present authentic living conditions

## TARGETED COMPETENCE



- Expresses feelings, beliefs and needs directly and respectfully
- Takes pride in local resources/architecture/crafts/POIs
- Knows local geography and toponymy/resources/arts and crafts/producers
- Knows local history, culture and architecture
- Can explain local history to outsiders
- Pays attention while listening
- Is open to other people and their ideas
- Keeps an open posture during conversation

## CONTENT

**1ST AND 2ND SESSIONS****MASTERCHEF**

We divide participants into national groups. They have to prepare a traditional/famous dish from their country. All participants together need to prepare lunch for everybody; they and the facilitators have to keep this in mind when calculating the total amount of food required.

1. Before they start, participants should decide what they will cook and make a list of ingredients so that the facilitator can bring them to the kitchen.
2. On the day itself, the kitchen is divided into two sections so that both groups have the same/similar access to the kitchen equipment.
3. The facilitator should sit down with each group and ask them to explain the responsibilities of each member of the team.
4. Make sure that the safety procedures are explained clearly (use of knives, open fire, use of gloves when cooking).
5. Let the people cook!

Before starting the meal, participants are invited to present what did they have cooked for us.



**LET'S LIVE TOGETHER****3RD AND 4TH SESSIONS**

This time is dedicated to a deeper dive into the local community. This is possible in different ways; we suggest some kind of activity in which participants have different tasks, including cooperation within international teams, an exploration of different spaces within the community, interaction with local people, etc. *Appendix 5* contains an example of this.

*SLEEPOVER WITH THE HOST FAMILIES*

The hosting participants take between one and three participants from the other countries for a sleepover at their home. The aim is to give them first-hand experience of being in an authentic environment in another country.

*REFLECTION*

1. Presentation of the outcomes of the exploration of the local community.
2. A discussion about stereotypes within the national groups. What are stereotypes? Are they good? Are they bad? How do we create them? What do we need to be careful about when meeting other people, places, cultures?

COMMENT



We would strongly advise you to do the MasterChef activity. Although it is intense, it demands a high level of cooperation and is an opportunity for the participants to present something from their country of which they are proud. It also tastes delicious. Be ready for one-to-one conversations during and after the activity.

After MasterChef, the participants will need a little relaxation time. Exploration of the environment is perfect for that, and can also be an introduction to the sleepover, since we can put participants who will stay together in the same groups.



## Day 3

**SURVIVING TOGETHER**

## DURATION



1 day

## MATERIALS



Computer, speakers, snacks, decorations for the dance, board games, material for the photo point (photo booth), face paints

## OBJECTIVES



- Explore the capital
- Organise a local event

## TARGETED COMPETENCE



- Can adopt various behaviours according to community values
- Behaves appropriately accordance with community values
- Is open to all members of the local community
- Does not pass judgement

## CONTENT

**1ST AND 2ND SESSIONS**

A field trip to Ljubljana, the capital city. Upon arrival, participants were divided into internationally mixed groups and given two hours of free time in which to explore the city. The meeting point was at Ljubljana castle. The groups needed to stay together.

On the way back to the venue, participants were asked to think about their reactions during their time in the group. They had to find one reaction (theirs or that of somebody else in the group) that they liked or were grateful for.

**3RD AND 4TH SESSIONS**

Preparing a dance at the school. The purpose is to do something in the local community and to meet more young people from that community. Preparations involved the following steps:

- Going to the shop to buy snacks
- Preparing the decorations
- Preparing the speakers
- Preparing the playlist
- Preparing games/activities to help people socialise
- Cooking snacks for the visitors
- Preparing a room with board games
- Preparing a photo point
- Preparing a face-painting point
- Face-painting

## COMMENT



Free time in the capital is so much more than just free time. Locals will want to show off the things they are proud of. The groups will need to orientate themselves, find a meeting place, stay together and take care of each other.

They might be given some tasks, but we believe that being together and exploring the capital is enough on its own.

Preparing and holding a dance for themselves and other young people in the community will be another vibrant and socially very intense moment. Let the young people do the work. Support them only when needed and provide them only with what they are asking for.



## Day 4

## LET'S HAVE SOME FUN

## DURATION



1 day

## MATERIALS

Clothes appropriate for a day  
in the countryside

## OBJECTIVES



- Explore new regions
- Forge stronger bonds
- Use half-structured time to connect better
- Cooperate with others

TARGETED  
COMPETENCE

- Takes pride in local resources/architecture/crafts/POIs
- Can explain local history to outsiders
- Is able to communicate assertively

## CONTENT

**TRIP TO BLEED AND BOHINJ (SLOVENIA)**

Arrival in Bled and a walk to the Instagram photo stop at Ojstrica, followed by exploration of the lake and lunch. After lunch, participants are driven to Bohinj for a kayaking experience.

## REFLECTION

Before starting the journey back, we need time for reflection. Questions:

- How do you feel at the moment?
- What is working well for you?
- Is there anything you would like to tell us?
- Questions connected with what is present and alive in the group

## COMMENT



During the drive we can set different tasks for the group. For example, young people love having music on the bus, so the task could be to get them to organise themselves so that everyone has the same opportunity to hear the song they would like to hear (without getting up from their seat). We can also give them an opportunity to play music and observe whether all the groups and individuals are able to have their song played. We can address this during the reflection.

The first walk is guided and meant simply to allow the young to spend time together.

The second activity is kayaking (we can mix participants or not). Just being on the kayak and manoeuvring around will demand enough teamwork.

Before returning home, we should reflect within the national groups. We suggest that the reflection process be adapted to what is happening in the group.



## Day 5

## FRIENDS FOREVER

## DURATION



1 day

## MATERIALS



Flipcharts, markers, mobile phones, computer, projector, speakers

## OBJECTIVES



- Prepare the promotional results of the exchange
- Present Erasmus+
- Reflect and evaluate the experience

## TARGETED COMPETENCE



- Is able to communicate assertively
- Expresses feelings, beliefs and needs directly and respectfully
- Is able to communicate assertively
- Shows confidence and conviction when presenting their ideas and perspectives, both verbally and in writing
- Admits when they are wrong or when someone else has a better solution
- Is able to act on logical thinking
- Does not pass judgement
- Summarises the conversation

## CONTENT

**1ST SESSION**

Participants are divided into groups of four or five.

They have one hour in which to prepare a video about their experience (between one and three minutes long). All the videos are then reviewed.

**2ND SESSION**

1. Presentation of the Erasmus+ programme and the different opportunities it provides. Presentation of Youthpass.
2. Individual time is provided to allow participants to reflect on their own learning experience (questionnaire used, see ideas in the evaluation section).

**3RD SESSION**

1. Participants are divided into mixed-nationality groups, four or five in each group.
2. They have 20 minutes to answer the question: What would you like to experience on the next youth exchange?
3. The groups present their answers.
4. A draft of the schedule for the next youth exchange is produced in collaboration with the participants.

## FRIENDS FOREVER

### 4TH SESSION

*Final evaluation:*

1. Questionnaire (see ideas in the evaluation section). Expressing gratitude. Each participant gets a blank paper on their back and a pen. They are given time to write whatever they would like to write to each other (final messages).
2. Final circle. We invite participants to share their final words, impressions, thoughts and memories with the rest of the group.

---

We suggest that an activity be devised that helps the participants remember the whole week and the journey they have taken. That will help them appreciate the experience more.

COMMENT



As it is the last day, participants may have some ideas about what they would still like to do together, so they could be given space to do that.

It takes time to say goodbye, so make sure you plan enough time.



## Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluations is to seek value in the activities organised for and with our target group. We suggest that two types of evaluation be produced.

The first, a mid-term evaluation to monitor the learning process and dynamics in the group, is produced after a certain amount of time with a certain group of young people (for example, after 15 workshops).

The second is produced after each international learning experience is completed; it can focus on other aspects, such as food, logistics, programme, etc., in addition to learning and group dynamics. It can also help us, as well as the young people themselves, to improve the organisation of future youth exchanges.



## 8.1 MID-TERM EVALUATION

Various tools can be used to design the evaluation. We would suggest Mentimeter or Google surveys. The questions provided are connected with the competence model presented above and with the general 'feelings' within the programme. The same questionnaire can be offered to the participants across reasonable time intervals (for example, each year). As teenagers are generally not highly motivated to write down multiple complex answers, the questionnaires tend to be short.

Instructions for the participants before they start the evaluation:

"Please answer the following questions. Be honest in your answers. The questionnaire is anonymous. If you do not know something, just write 'I don't know'. If you need additional explanations, a facilitator is there to help. There are no wrong or 'stupid' answers."

### COMMUNITY IDENTITY

1. A good friend from another town is visiting you for a day. Where would you take them?

2. How often do you attend local events?

Never **1** ★★★★★★ **7** *I attend all events if possible*

3. How much would you like to do something positive for Litija?

*I don't feel like doing anything in Litija, other people are paid to do that* **1** ★★★★★★ **7** *It's my town, I need to contribute as much as I can*

### SELF-CONFIDENCE

1. How much do you accept yourself as you are?

*I want to become somebody else* **1** ★★★★★★ **7** *I am happy with who I am*

2. Please write down two of your strengths and one of your weaknesses

3. How often have you said no to your friends in the last month?

*All the time* **1** ★★★★★★ **7** *I have not said no to my friends in the last month*



## 8.1 MID-TERM EVALUATION

### LOCAL PARTICIPATION

1. At what level do you think you can change things in your community?

*I cannot change anything* (1) ★★★★★★ (7) *I can change whatever I decide to change*

2. At what level do you want to be part of events in your community?

*I don't want to be part of anything* (1) ★★★★★★ (7) *I want to be part of events*

3. You have an idea for something you want to do. Who would you turn to for help?

### ACTIVE LISTENING

1. Please write down three things you think are important when you are listening to somebody.

### SOLIDARITY

1. Observing your community, please write down four differences between the people you observed.

2. What thoughts or feelings do you have about inequalities in your community?

3. To what extent do you feel supported in your community? How much do you support others?

4. To what degree do you accept foreigners in your community?

*My community is no place for foreigners* (1) ★★★★★★ (7) *I would like to get to know them*

### GENERAL FEELINGS IN THE PROGRAMME

1. Please write down two things you value most in our programme and one thing that you don't like.

2. What would you change in the programme?

3. How do you feel in the group?

4. Please write down three words that describe the programme for you.

## 8.2 EVALUATIONS AT THE END OF THE YOUTH EXCHANGE

1. In terms of time, this youth exchange was:

	<i>Strongly disagree</i>		<i>Strongly agree</i>
Just the right length		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	
Too long		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	
Too short		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	

2. In terms of activities, this youth exchange:

	<i>Strongly disagree</i>		<i>Strongly agree</i>
Met my personal expectations		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	
Was fun and challenging for me and my friends		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	
Brought me new information		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	

3. Please rate the following aspects relating to the youth exchange.

	<i>Poor</i>		<i>Very good</i>
General atmosphere		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	
Activities		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	
Group		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	
Group leaders		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	

Please add any comments, if any.

4. Please think of the logistics and rate the following:

	<i>Poor</i>		<i>Very good</i>
Accommodation		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	
Food		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	
Field trips		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	
Youth centres		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	
Transfers		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	

Please add any comments, if any.

5. Please rate the following elements relating to the group of participants:

	<i>Poor</i>		<i>Very good</i>
Atmosphere		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	
Dynamics		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	
Accessibility/easy to work with		☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	

Please add any comments, if any.



## 8.2 EVALUATIONS AT THE END OF THE YOUTH EXCHANGE

6. Please rate the following in relation to yourself:

*Strongly disagree*

*Strongly agree*

I was 100% involved in this youth exchange



I gave my best during the exchange



I made new friends and acquired new knowledge during this exchange



Please add any comments, if any.

7. Please write down three words to describe this youth exchange. (word clouds)

8. My favourite activities were... (word clouds)

9. Is there anything you would like to add before we finish?

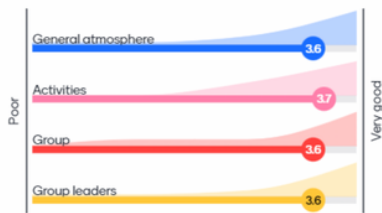
**EVALUATION IN PRACTICE**

SOME RESULTS FROM THE EVALUATION OF THE YOUTH EXCHANGE DONE DURING THE PROJECT IN ROMANIA.

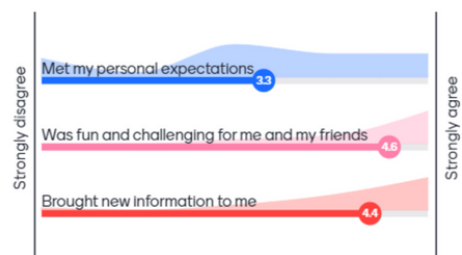
In terms of time, this youth exchange was



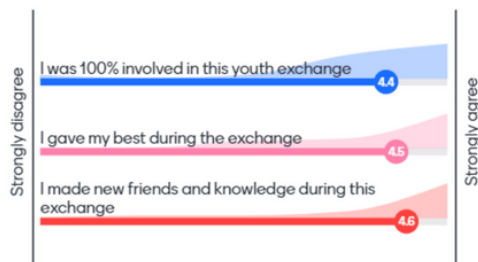
Please rate the following aspects relating to the youth exchange



In terms of activities, this exchange



Please rate the following related to yourself



Please rate the following elements relating to the group of participants



Please write 3 words to describe this youth exchange





# Consent form

---

Working with minors in an international learning environment places a great deal of responsibility on the organisers. Here we list some of the elements of consent we collect from parents before we start working with their children. These are merely examples of the forms we use; it is up to you whether and how you adapt them to your situation. Be aware that you need parental consent for almost everything before you embark on any work with young people aged less than 18 years old.



**DECLARATION OF PARENTAL CONSENT**

The undersigned (parent)

First name ..... last name ....., residing at ....., identified by ID card series ..... no ..... and SSN ....., contact telephone ..... parent/legal guardian of the minor, first name ..... last name .....

I hereby agree that my son/daughter may participate in the learning activity within the project [project name], reference ID [ID number of project], funded by the ERASMUS+ programme of the European Union from [dates of mobility] and organised by [name of ALL partners involved in the project].

During the activity, my child will be accommodated at Hostel XXXXX and in host families in [town/village name, or names if multiple locations, and country]. The contact person on behalf of the organisers will be [youth worker's name], telephone no +xx xxxx xxxxxx and email xxxx@cccc.com.

I give notice of my child's permanent or temporary medical regime, including diet (allergies, special needs, dietary restrictions, etc.), medication and/or the need for hearing or visual aids, as follows:

.....

.....

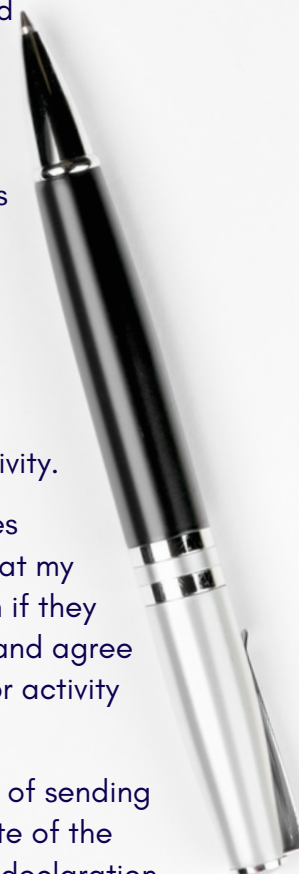
I agree that in the event of an emergency or of an injury to or illness of my child, the project officer will notify me immediately, contact a specialist medical unit, act on my behalf and obtain medical treatment for my child. I am obliged to pay the amount involved if treatment is provided against payment.

I also declare that I have read the call for participants, the agenda and other logistical aspects of the project, and agree that my own child may attend all sessions of the event. (Attendance is compulsory at all sessions during the event and was a criterion for the selection of participants.)

I agree that my own child will behave in a civilised and responsible manner, abide by the rules laid down by the organisers, and accept the consequences if they do not behave as such. I agree and understand that I am responsible for the actions of my child. I absolve the organisers of all obligations and liability arising from this activity.

I understand that the possession and use of tobacco, alcoholic beverages and drugs is prohibited, and have discussed this with my child. I agree that my child will be subject to disciplinary procedures and possible investigation if they consume alcohol or possess/use psychotropic substances. I understand and agree to pay if, as a result of my child's behaviour, damage occurs to training or activity rooms, equipment, etc.

I declare that I am obliged to pay in full the transport costs to the [name of sending partner], within a maximum of 30 days from the scheduled departure date of the activity, even if my child does not attend the activity for any reason. This declaration is enforceable.





I also agree and understand that all personal data collected for the purpose of this project (personal data mentioned in this document and the my child's personal data, consisting of name, surname, date of birth, gender, email address and telephone number) will be mentioned in the Attendance List and Participant Declaration, and that the documents required under the rules of the Erasmus+ programme will be stored and processed by the beneficiary organisations of the programme and by MOVIT Slovenia (the funding agency) in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation, GDPR).

The [name of funding body/national agency] will store and process this data in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data.

Access to personal data may be obtained by written request. For any questions concerning the processing of personal data, beneficiaries may contact the European Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency or the relevant national agency. Beneficiaries may lodge a complaint with the European Data Protection Supervisor regarding the use of personal data at any time.

I understand that promotional photographs and videos will be taken during the activity. I agree that photographs or videos taken during working sessions or during other group activities in which my child appears may be used to promote the project and its results.

Lastly, I confirm that the personal data contained within this document is true, and take full responsibility for the content of this document.

Surname, name: Signature

Date (DD/MM/YYYY) and place:

-----

### **Declaration of the minor**

The undersigned (name and surname of the minor) .....

I have read this form and understand that I must behave in a polite, responsible manner and respect the rules laid down by the organisers, must not consume tobacco, alcoholic beverages and/or drugs, and must not take any action that may endanger my health, safety and security or that of other participants.

-----  
(signature of minor) (date)



# The Ethics of Working with Young People

## CONTENTS:

- 1 THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF YOUTH WORK**
- 2 THE IMPORTANCE OF ETHICS IN WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**
- 3 THE PURPOSE OF A CODE OF CONDUCT STATEMENT**
- 4 A SUMMARY OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**
- 5 THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**

## 1 THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF YOUTH WORK

**1.1** The purpose of youth work is to facilitate and support young people in their journey from dependence to independence, foster their personal and social development, and enable them to express themselves and to exert influence and have a place in their community and society.

**1.2** Working with young people is a set of beliefs that includes a commitment to giving them equal opportunities to become partners in learning and decision-making and to helping them develop their own set of values. Working with young people involves the following:

- offering services in places where young people choose to participate
- encouraging young people to think critically about their own actions and their environment
- helping young people to make informed choices about their own responsibilities within their community
- helping young people reach their full potential, in tandem with the education system
- being responsive to young people's needs, in tandem with other bodies and organisations.





## 2 THE IMPORTANCE OF ETHICS IN WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

**2.1** Ethics is generally associated with human behavioural norms about what is right and wrong. In general, ethical issues are questions of human (or animal) welfare.

**2.2** In a professional context, ethics is about:

- developing the ability to see the ethical dimension of issues, reflect on them, make difficult decisions and be able to justify them
- acting with integrity in accordance with one's duties and responsibilities (this may involve behaving in accordance with professional principles, norms and rules).

**2.3** Everyone involved in youth work and youth services (political and managerial leaders, managers, administrators, staff, volunteers and participants) should endeavour to adhere to basic standards with regard to:

- actual service delivery
- the modelling of appropriate behaviours for young people
- trust between young people and youth workers
- trust between organisations, services, parents and young people
- the willingness of different parties to allocate resources
- trust in the ability of youth work to help young people learn how to make moral decisions and act on them.

**2.4** This requires all those involved to be able to make appropriate judgements about ethical principles in practical situations.

## 3 THE PURPOSE OF A CODE OF CONDUCT STATEMENT

**3.1** The statement in Section 5 outlines the basic principles of youth work with the aim of providing guidance to youth workers and managers. It serves as a starting point for discussing ethical issues in practice, but is not a manual that tells youth workers exactly what they should do in every situation; this would be impossible because of the variety of practical details, age groups and tasks involved. Instead, this statement is intended to be used as a basis for outlining the general principles of ethical conduct, raising awareness of the wide variety of responsibilities of a youth worker (whether employee or volunteer) and of the increased risk of conflict, or at least tension, between these responsibilities, and encouraging and stimulating reflection and debate on ethics.



**3.2** The first part of the statement covers ethical principles, including those relating to how youth workers should treat the young people with whom they work (e.g. by respecting their right to make choices without discrimination) and the kind of values that they should be working towards (such as a just society). The second part of the statement covers professional principles; these relate more specifically to how a youth worker should act in the role of a practitioner who has a range of different responsibilities. The practical principles listed under each general principle are more specific and suggest how a youth worker should broadly apply ethical and professional principles. They are not exhaustive.

**3.3** Note: The term 'youth worker' in this context includes those who work directly with young people, but also those who manage those who work directly with young people. The term 'professional' does not necessarily refer to an individual's employment status, as they may well be volunteers.

## 4 A SUMMARY OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

### Ethical principles - youth workers have an obligation to:

1. Treat young people with respect, valuing each individual and avoiding negative discrimination
2. respect and promote the rights of young people to make their own decisions and choices, except when their own or others' legitimate welfare or interests are seriously jeopardised
3. promote and ensure the well-being and safety of young people while enabling them to learn through challenging educational activities
4. contribute to promoting social justice for young people and society at large, and encouraging respect for difference and diversity and the elimination of discrimination.

### Professional principles - youth workers are required to:

1. recognise the boundaries between their personal and professional lives and be aware of the need to strike a balance between nurturing a supportive and emotional relationship with young people and maintaining an appropriate professional distance
2. recognise that young people, their parents or guardians, colleagues, funders, society in general and all those involved in youth work need to be able to rely on them (there may be a measure of conflict between some of these responsibilities)
3. develop and maintain the skills and competencies needed to carry out their duties





## **5** CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

### **► ETHICAL PRINCIPLES:**

#### **5.1.1 Treat young people with respect**

*Practical aspects include:*

- valuing each young person and acting in a way that does not exploit or discriminate against them on the basis of ethnicity, religion, gender, ability or sexual orientation
- explaining the nature and limits of confidentiality and emphasising that confidential information given for one purpose should not be used to achieve another purpose without the young person's consent (except in situations where there is clear evidence of a dangerous situation to which the young person, youth worker, other person or the community may be exposed).

#### **5.1.2 Respect and promote the right of young people to make their own decisions and choices**

*Practical aspects include:*

- raising young people's awareness of the many decisions and choices they can make, and discussing and debating the implications of the choices in each individual case
- providing opportunities for young people to develop their decision-making abilities and confidence by participating in decision-making bodies and by working with youth workers in decision-making
- respecting young people's choices and views, provided that their own or others' well-being or legitimate interests are not put at risk.

#### **5.1.3 Promote and ensure the well-being and safety of young people**

*Practical aspects include:*

- taking responsibility for the risk assessment and safety management of work and activities involving young people
- ensuring that their own skills and those of the employees and volunteers for whom they are responsible are sufficient for the tasks they undertake
- warning the authorities and taking action in the event of the occurrence of work-related risks
- bringing to the attention of their employer (or, if this proves ineffective, of those in power or ultimately to the general public), any activities or policies of that employer that could seriously jeopardise the interests or safety of young people
- being aware of the need to strike a balance between avoiding unnecessary risks, and allowing and encouraging young people to take part in challenging educational activities.

#### **5.1.4 Contribute to promoting social justice for young people and society at large**

*Practical aspects include:*

- promoting fair and just behaviour and condemning discriminatory actions and attitudes directed towards young people, peers and others
- encouraging young people to respect and value difference and diversity, particularly in the context of a multicultural society
- drawing attention to unfair policies and practices, and seeking ways to change them
- promoting the participation of all young people, and especially those who are generally discriminated against, in youth work, public structures and society in general
- encouraging young people and others to work together to solve problems of general concern.

#### **PROFESSIONAL PRINCIPLES:**

#### **5.2.1 Set boundaries between personal and professional life**

*Practical aspects include:*

- recognising the tensions between a supportive developmental and emotional relationship with young people and the need to maintain professional distance
- taking steps not to develop close personal (particularly sexual) relationships with young people with whom you work as this may be against the law, exploitative or lead to preferential treatment; if such a relationship develops, the youth worker concerned should report it to the supervisor for the appropriate action to be taken
- avoiding involvement in activities for personal gain or accepting gifts or favours from young people or those in the community, as it may compromise the professional integrity of the tasks performed
- avoiding behaviour outside working hours that could undermine the confidence of young people and the wider community in youth work.

#### **5.2.2 Be aware of the need for young people, parents, guardians, employers, funders, society in general and others to rely on you.**

*Practical aspects include:*

- being aware that responsibilities to different groups can lead to conflict, and taking responsibility for seeking appropriate advice and making decisions in the event of conflict
- being open and honest in all matters concerning young people, and enabling them to access information and to make choices and decisions on their lives in general and on participation in youth activities in particular
- ensuring that what you do as a youth worker is in line with the law



- ensuring that the resources under the youth worker's control are distributed fairly, in accordance with the principles of youth work, and that the tasks undertaken are carried out as efficiently as possible
- reporting to the appropriate authorities any suspicion that a young person may be at risk of harm or danger, particularly sexual or physical abuse
- actively seeking ways to cooperate with colleagues and professionals in other agencies.

### **5.2.3 Develop and maintain the skills required by the job**

*Practical aspects include:*

- taking on only those tasks or responsibilities for which the youth worker has the necessary skills, knowledge and support
- seeking feedback from beneficiaries and colleagues on the quality of work done, and continuously improving skills and knowledge
- recognising when new skills and knowledge are needed, and seeking out relevant training and education.

### **5.2.4 Encourage and engage in ethical debates in work with young people**

*Practical aspects include:*

- bringing attention to your personal values as a youth worker and how they relate to the ethical principles of youth work mentioned in Section 5.1
- re-examining these principles, engaging in reflection and discussion with colleagues, and contributing to the learning process within the organisation in which they work
- bringing attention to potential conflicts between personal and professional values, between the rights and interests of different individuals, and between the ethical principles set out in this code of conduct
- recognising the importance of ongoing reflection and debate, and seeing this code of conduct as a working document that needs to be constantly debated.

### **5.2.5 Work for conditions in workplaces where these principles are discussed, evaluated and accepted**

*Practical issues include:*

- ensuring that colleagues, employers and young people are aware of the existence of this code of conduct
- being prepared to discuss difficult ethical issues in the light of the principles developed in this document, and contributing to the interpretation and development of practical applications
- being prepared to challenge colleagues or organisations whose actions or policies are contrary to the principles outlined in this document.

**APPENDIX 1****NON-FORMAL MEETINGS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN LITIJA AND TESIANI**

The meetings should last for 45 minutes.

The researchers come to the classroom and start introducing themselves (name, context, connection with the school, why we are here). A short ice-breaking exercise follows. The participants are then ready for the research.

We start off by exploring **what makes community for them**. We divide participants into groups of four or five. The questions include: What do you think about when you think about your home town? They need to draw the answers. After that they present what they have drawn. There should be someone available to transcribe their answers directly as they are talking.

We then dive into the attitudes, values and behaviours they notice and appreciate. We ask them the following questions (again, their answers should be transcribed as they are talking).

- *Who is bringing positive change/anything positive to Litija?*
- *What are these people like? What are they doing? What personal traits do they have?*



**APPENDIX 2**  
**FOCUS GROUPS GUIDELINES**

A few notes before the focus groups:

- Prepare the room in advance, with enough seats for everybody and a small table for the recording equipment.
- Arrange the seats in a circle and give/make name tags for participants.
- Use an assistant moderator to **take notes and to start/stop/monitor the recording equipment**. While taking notes:
  - Listen for notable quotes, the well-said statements that illustrate an important point of view. Listen for sentences or phrases that are particularly enlightening or that express a particular point of view in an eloquent way. Place the name or initials of the speaker after the quotations. As it is usually impossible to capture the entirety of what is said, try and get as much as you can, paying attention to the key phrases. Use an ellipsis (...) to indicate when part of a quotation is missing.
- Use purposeful small talk to create a warm and friendly environment.
- Have a smooth and snappy introduction:
  - Welcome
  - Overview of topic
  - Ground rules
  - First question
- Use pauses and probes:
  - Five-second pause
  - Probes:
    - 'Would you explain further?'
    - 'Would you give an example?'
    - 'I don't understand'
- Control your verbal and non-verbal reactions to participants (head nodding, short verbal responses, but avoid phrases like 'that's good' or 'excellent').
- Before ending the session, ask some wrap-up questions:
  - 'All things considered, what do you think is the most important...?'
- Give a short oral summary of the discussion and check for consistency:
  - 'Is this an adequate summary?'

## APPENDIX 2

### FOCUS GROUPS GUIDELINES

*Example of welcome and introductory address:*

"Good evening and welcome to our session. Thank you for taking the time to join us to talk about community involvement. My name is ... and with me is ... We are both with [name of organisation]. We are running a project in partnership with the local school in order to see how communities can be improved. We would like to know what you like, what you don't like and how communities can be improved. We are having discussions like this with several groups in the community.

You have been invited because you have taken part in some programmes or because you are attending the school here in [name of community].

There are no wrong answers, only differing points of view. Please feel free to share your point of view even if it differs from what others have said. Bear in mind that we are just as interested in negative as positive comments.

You've probably noticed the microphone/phone, etc. We are recording the session because we don't want to miss any of your comments. People often say very helpful things in these discussions, and we can't write fast enough to get them all down. We will be on a first-name basis, but we won't use any names in our reports. You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The reports will go back to the research team to help them plan future programmes.

Well, let's begin. We've given you name tags so that we can all remember each other's names. Let's find out a bit more about each other by going around the table. Tell us your name and where you live."

**Focus group questions (feel free to change the order or to add questions if you feel the group needs it):**

- *Look back over the past year. Have you seen something in the community that you would like to change?*
- *Have things changed? If so, who changed them?*
- *Who do you expect to change things in your community?*
- *What drove your decision to get involved?*
- *What drove your decision not to get involved?*
- *What kind of support did you need in order to change the things you wanted to change?*
- *If you decided not to get involved, what kind of support were you lacking?*
- *Of all the things we've talked about, what is most important to you?*

**If/when adding questions, please consider:**

- *Using open-ended questions:*
  - *'What did you think of the programme?'*
  - *'How did you feel about the conference?'*
  - *'Where do you get new information from?'*
  - *'What do you like best about the proposed programme?'*
- *Be wary of using phrases such as 'how satisfied' or 'to what extent' in your questions.*
- *Avoid dichotomous questions, i.e. those that can be answered with a 'yes' or 'no'.*
- *'Why?' should be asked only on rare occasions. Instead, ask about attributes and/or influences.*

*Attributes are characteristics or features of the topic, while influences are things that prompt or cause action.*

- *Use 'think back' questions. Take people back to an experience and not forward to the future.*
- *Use questions that get participants involved.*
- *Focus the questions in a sequence that goes from general to specific.*



**APPENDIX 3**  
**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Hi there!

In the next ten minutes we would like to invite you to answer a set of questions, divided into six larger themes, in order to help create a better life for everybody in Litija/Teišani.

Some of the questions might be personal, but most of them are not. For this reason, **we will not be collecting your names**. All the information you offer through the questionnaire will be 100% confidential. The results of this analysis will be published on the website of Lojtra/Curba/Litija school/Teisani school, and will be publicly available. You therefore do not need to give us your email addresses.

The questionnaire is part of the research that we are conducting with other partners in the Youth-Supportive Communities project, which is co-funded by the European Commission through the ERASMUS+ programme. The project aims to determine the best way — YOUR best way — of organising non-formal and extracurricular activities for young people in Litija and Teišani.

Thank you for your trust and commitment!

**ME, MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

Please tick one of the following statements — the one that best describes your current situation

**> I live**

- In a flat
- In a house in a neighbourhood
- In a house on a farm
- In the countryside
- Other (please give details)

**> I live**

- With my parents
- With my grandparents
- With both my grandparents and parents
- With one of my parents
- With a distant relative

**> The place I live in**

- Is rented
- Is owned by my parents
- Is owned by my grandparents
- Has been in the family for generations
- Other:

## APPENDIX 3

## ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

**ME, MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

Please tick one of the following statements — the one that best describes your current situation

**> I have (tick one or more)**

- a dog
- multiple dogs
- a cat
- multiple cats
- a large animal as a pet (e.g. horse, goat)
- a small animal/bird/fish/guinea pig/rabbit/hamster/lizard as a pet
- no pets
- other

**> How many friends do you have? (tick one)**

- 1 - 3
- 4 - 8
- 9 - 15
- more than 15

**> What do you think of your friends? (tick one or more)**

- Smart
- High-achieving
- Rich
- Compassionate
- Supportive
- Good listeners
- Trustworthy
- Influential
- Honest
- Punctual/on time
- Fun
- Cool
- Helpful
- Ready to help me achieve things
- Kind

**> What do you believe your friends think about you? (same list as above)****> How do you choose your friends? (same list as above)**

**ME AND MY FRIENDS**

Please rate the statements below on a scale of 1 to 7, where **1 is complete disagreement and 7 is complete agreement**, depending on your current situation.

*complete disagreement*

*complete agreement*

- I like it when they make us work in groups at school ●●●●●●●
- If I had a new idea, my parents would definitely help me put it into practice ●●●●●●●
- If I had a new idea, my friends would definitely help me put it into practice ●●●●●●●
- I often have new ideas for projects or things to do ●●●●●●●
- I often work with my friends on common projects ●●●●●●●
- My friends trust me to do the job ●●●●●●●
- I trust my friends to do the job ●●●●●●●
- I could not do the job without my friends ●●●●●●●
- I like to work in groups because we have fun ●●●●●●●
- My teachers sometimes raise their voices when we work in groups in school ●●●●●●●

**ME, MYSELF AND I**

Please rate the statements below on a scale of 1 to 7, where **1 is always and 7 is never**, depending on your current situation.

*Always*

*Never*

- I find it hard to make new friends ●●●●●●●
- I think my friends are better than me ●●●●●●●
- I have a hard time making my friends hear my opinion ●●●●●●●
- I have a hard time making adults around me hear my opinion ●●●●●●●
- I am reluctant to start a new thing/project because I don't think I'm going to be able to do it ●●●●●●●
- I give up after I've started doing something ●●●●●●●
- I think my opinion matters when it comes to decisions in my town/village ●●●●●●●
- I believe that my contribution is important when decisions are being made in my family ●●●●●●●
- I believe that my contribution is important when decisions are being made in my friendship group ●●●●●●●
- I would rather be online because I can be whoever I want to be ●●●●●●●



**ME AND MY TOWN/VILLAGE**

Please rate the statements below on a scale of 1 to 7, where **1 is complete disagreement** and **7 is complete agreement**, depending on your current situation.

*complete disagreement*

*complete agreement*

- I know where the town hall is ●●●●●●●
- I know who the mayor is ●●●●●●●
- I know what the town hall and local council's roles and functions are in my town/village ●●●●●●●
- I know who represents my neighbourhood on the local council ●●●●●●●
- I am able to send a message to my neighbourhood representative on the local council ●●●●●●●
- I participate in local events as often as I can ●●●●●●●
- I would like to help organise local events ●●●●●●●
- I have no problem talking to people in my town/village who I do not know ●●●●●●●
- I would like to volunteer for a cause in my town/village ●●●●●●●
- I often read the local newspaper/posts in the Facebook groups for my town/village ●●●●●●●

**ME IN MY TOWN/VILLAGE**

Please rate the statements below on a scale of 1 to 7, where **1 is complete disagreement** and **7 is complete agreement**, depending on your current situation.

*complete disagreement*

*complete agreement*

- I know who is on my school council ●●●●●●●
- I feel that my voice is not strong enough when I say that I want a park in my neighbourhood/village ●●●●●●●
- I feel that all important decisions at my school take me into account ●●●●●●●
- I am part of a youth group outside school, and we meet regularly to talk about our problems and interests and pass them on to the school/local council ●●●●●●●
- I know who is on the youth council/who is responsible for youth issues at the local council ●●●●●●●
- I would like to be part of the youth council ●●●●●●●

## APPENDIX 3

## ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

**OTHERS AND ME**

Please rate the statements below on a scale of 1 to 7, where **1 is complete disagreement** and **7 is complete agreement**, depending on your current situation.

*complete disagreement**complete agreement*

- |   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| • My family helps me out when I need it   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| • I know who to turn to (outside my family) if I need assistance on a personal/school project | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| • My friends are there for me when I want to change something in my neighbourhood             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| • There is always someone to help me at school whenever I need help with my studies           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| • I feel listened to at school  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| • I feel listened to at the youth centre  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| • I feel listened to when I am hanging out with my friends                                    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Thank you for filling in all the details. Now please provide us with some **demographic details**.

> What is the name of your village/neighbourhood?

> How old are you?

> How many siblings do you have?

> What is your gender?

> What school do you come from?

**APPENDIX 4**  
**WHEEL OF LIFE**

**WHEEL OF LIFE**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_





## APPENDIX 5

## PHOTO HUNT

Name of the group: \_\_\_\_\_

Try to do as many challenges as you can!

Each challenge gives your group a certain number of points.

The group with the highest number of points wins!

When you take a photo, you should upload it to  
the 'Connection is Key' folder on our drive.

At the end, give this paper, with answers, to the facilitator.

**Challenges:**

1. Take a photo of the statue of a boatman and say why was it important for Litija (a town in Slovenia). (2 points)
2. Take a group photo in front of the school; everyone should have their feet in the air. (1 point)
3. Interview someone from Litija (someone you don't know) and ask them what the best thing about living in Litija is. (2 points)
4. Write a short wish or a joke on a piece of paper and tape it to the terrace of the local youth club for the students to find. (2 points)
5. Take a panoramic photo of Litija from Pokopališka pot. (1 point)
6. Find the war memorial commemorating the people who died in national liberation battles and take a photo of it. Who designed it? (2 points)
7. Find the sundial on Farbarjev Turn, a building on Valvasorjev trg. (1 point)
8. When you are hungry, find the headquarters of the Društvo Lojtra organisation and have a second breakfast! (1 point)
9. Take a photo of a mining cart and write down which ore they used to mine in Litija. (2 points)
10. Take a photo of at least two monuments of important people in Litija. Write down their names and why were they important to the town. (2 points for every additional monument)
11. Find as many sports facilities (sports halls, pitches, playgrounds) as you can. (1 point each photo)
12. Take a photo of the Sava river from the bridge.
13. Make a funny video of at least 20 seconds inviting tourists to visit Litija. (3 points)

# Results of the research in Slovenia

Our research began after the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. We held meetings with young people in local schools in Litija under strict Covid-19 rules and with the supervision of school management.

## NON-FORMAL SESSIONS IN SLOVENIA

We held a total of five non-formal sessions with young people in Slovenia. These featured 90 participants aged 13 and 14.

Question: *What do you think about when you think about your home town?*

There were 92 different answers. The answers that were mentioned more than five times (i.e. from at least five different people) were:

- forest (6 times)
- playground (8 times)
- shops (different ones, 12 times)
- Sava river and its bridge (15 times)
- own home (house or apartment, 18 times)

Question: *Who is bringing positive change/anything positive to Litija?*

There were 40 different answers. The answers that were mentioned more than five times (i.e. from at least five different people) were:

- dog (6 times)
- sister (7 times)
- cat (7 times)
- grandfather (8 times)
- neighbours (9 times)
- brother (9 times)
- grandmother (11 times)
- friends (40 times)
- parents/family (69 times)

Question: *What are these people like? What are they doing? What personal traits do they have?*

There were 67 different answers. The answers that were mentioned more than five times (i.e. from at least five different people) were :

- They buy me things, they give me money or what I need (7 times)
- They take care of me (10 times)
- They drive me where I need to go (10 times)
- They cook for me (10 times)
- They help me (13 times)
- They spend time with me (15 times)
- They support me (21 times)
- They are fun or I can have fun with them (28 times)
- They are kind (34 times)



**FOCUS GROUP**

We ran a total of four focus groups with 42 participants in November 2020. All focus group participants had previously attended the non-formal meetings.

Question: *Look back over the past year. Have you seen something in the community that you would like to change?*

There were 72 different answers. The most common answers can be clustered into the following themes:

- more and different places to get food (restaurants, fast food, street food)
- improvements to the school (bigger school, better classrooms, newer equipment, less demanding programme, less stress at school, more work with the body not just the brain, less demanding school process)
- more places where young people can hang out (parks, playgrounds, pools)
- a cleaner and more organised town

***Have things changed?***

There were 30 different answers. The most common answers can be clustered into the following themes:

- renovations at the school (kitchen)
- renovations in town (new bus station, renovated buildings, new water pipes, new gas station, new playground, better Christmas decorations, flowers on the bridge)
- changes at the school (new teachers, worse meals)
- coronavirus

***Who changed them?***

There were 13 different answers. The most common answers can be clustered into the following themes:

- mayor
- people (of the town)
- headmaster
- workers
- employers

***Who do you expect to change things in your community ?***

There were 22 different answers. The most common answers can be clustered into the following themes:

- mayor
- headmaster
- local council
- people in the town
- president of the country
- large companies
- school



*When you decided to get involved, what are the things that drove that decision?*

There were 45 different answers. The most common answers can be clustered into:

- friends (spending time with friends)
- personal interest (something of interest to young people; answers were very varied)
- great teachers/mentors
- physical attraction to other participants
- feeling of contribution
- feeling of acceptance
- food

*What drove your decision to get involved?*

There were ten different answers. The most common answers can be clustered into the following themes:

- people who are there
- teachers/leaders
- cigarettes, alcohol, drugs
- time of meetings/events
- price
- no food

*What kind of support did you need in order to change the things you wanted to change?*

There were 16 different answers. The most common answers can be clustered into the following themes:

- support of friends
- support of family
- likeminded people
- mentors who are there when needed
- material support (money)

*If you decided not to get involved, what kind of support were you lacking?*

There was just one answer:

- lack of support from friends; not going with the person concerned or not accepting somebody's company.

*Of all the things we've talked about, what is most important to you?*

There was an answer directly provided by one of the participants that summarised all the focus groups. The answer was: 'It is all important to us, from beginning to end, but we do not know how to express ourselves/vocalise, which is something the teachers also told us. The field of discussion is so wide that we do not know what we want. We would need examples or something to start from. We don't want to stay just at the level of words; we really want to change something. It is important to ask what to change, because maybe something will change. We adapt to everything and if we don't like something, we do not say it.'

**SLOVENIAN ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

The questionnaire was conducted in December 2020. There were a total of 192 respondents aged between 13 and 18 (42% identified as male and 58% as female).

Ten per cent of respondents lived in a flat, 36% in a house in a neighbourhood, 13% on a farm, 41% in a house in the countryside, 57% with their parents, 32% with parents and grandparents, 6% with one parent, 1% with grandparents and 4% with other people.

Six per cent had no siblings, 51% had one sibling living with them, 29% had two siblings, and 14% had three or more siblings. They lived in homes owned by their parents (61%) and by their families (26%). Only 9% lived in a new or almost new home, 3% lived in a rented house, and 2% chose the 'Other' option. Only 18% had no pets.

If we look at the answers for friends, it is obvious that life was about friends for these young people: 32% said they had more than 15 friends and 14% said that they had between one and three friends they hung out with.

The most commonly valued trait for friends was fun (83%) and trustworthiness (73%), followed by supportiveness (72%) and honesty (60%).

When choosing friends, trustworthiness was the most important trait (75%), followed by fun (71%) and supportiveness (65%).

Sixty-seven per cent of respondents agreed that they liked group work in schools, 81% could count on their friends to put their new ideas into practice, and 68% could count on their parents for this.

Sixty-four per cent declared that they often got new ideas for projects, but only 41% said that they often worked together with their friends on projects or ideas to put into practice.

Thirty-seven per cent said that they would mostly not be able to finish their projects without their friends' help and 68% said that they liked working in groups because they had fun doing so.

**> Decision-making**

Fifty-seven per cent of the young people stated that it was not hard to make new friends and 79% that they did not have a hard time making their friends listen to their opinions. Twenty-one per cent considered it hard to make adults around them listen to their ideas/opinions.

Around 22% of the young people had low self-esteem when it came to starting new projects/ideas.

Seventy-three per cent believed that their opinions did not count when decisions were being made in their community and 21% believed that their opinions did not count when decisions were being made in their families. However, 83% believed that their opinions were important and taken into account when decisions were being made in their peer group.

**> Local authorities and identity**

Almost all the young people involved (98%) knew where the town hall was, 81% knew who the mayor was, 26% knew what the tasks and responsibilities of the local authorities were, 35% knew who their local parliamentary representatives were, and 67% said that they did not have the option of sending ideas or suggestions to their local representatives.

Twenty-eight per cent of the respondents participated in local events as often as they could, 21% expressed a wish to help organise local events, 37% wanted to volunteer for a local cause, 68% said that they did not read local news or information on social media groups and or in the local press.

**> Participation**

Seventy-three per cent of the respondents did not know who their school representatives were, 60% felt that important school decisions did not take them into account, and 52% felt that their voice was not strong enough when it came to asking for a park in their area/neighbourhood.

Eighty-three per cent of the respondents did not take part in/belong to an initiative group to talk about their problems and debate solutions, 86% did not know who the local MP with responsibilities for youth was, and only 14% said they would like to be part of a local youth council.

**> Support**

Eighty-seven per cent of respondents received help from their families when they needed it, 83% knew who to turn to for help outside their families, and 65% were confident they could turn to a friend to help them out. Seventy-six per cent felt that they got the help they needed with their studies from school staff and 90% felt listened to within their peer group. However, 32% did not feel that they were listened to at school.



# Results of the research in Romania

Our research began after the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. We held meetings with young people in local schools in Teisani under strict Covid-19 rules and with the supervision of school management.

## **NON-FORMAL SESSIONS IN ROMANIA**

We held a total of four non-formal sessions with young people in Romania. These featured 59 participants aged 13 and 14. Due to the novelty of the activity for most of them, the focus was on gameplay and ice-breaking. The most common answers given by the young people were: we don't have outdoor spaces in which to hang out, our community is dirty and we have no information at all about local authorities.

## **FOCUS GROUPS IN ROMANIA**

We ran a total of four focus groups with 29 participants in November 2020. All focus group participants had previously attended the non-formal meetings. The answers are combined and the answers relating to the Covid-19 pandemic were filtered out.

Most of the answers to the 'what has changed in the past year' question revolved around how the pandemic had affected their lives: masks in schools, no more sports (significant number of answers), no more meetings. One answer referred to the opening of the youth centre in Teisani.

### *What bothers you in the community?*

- derelict parks
- rubbish on the streets
- lack of spaces to meet

### *What CAN you change?*

- nothing, nobody listens to us
- nothing, we have no power

### *What support do you need to change what you want to change?*

- adult support
- money
- support of the local authorities
- motivation

### *Would you get involved in changing things around your community?*

- Yes, of course. With what we can.



**ROMANIAN ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

The questionnaire was conducted in December 2020. There were a total of 69 respondents aged between 12 and 18 (43.5% identified as male and 49.3% as female, while five respondents chose not to answer or identifies as a different gender).

All respondents lived in a house in a village: 66.7% with their parents, 27.5% with both parents and grandparents, 4.3% with one parent and one respondent with their grandparents.

Eighteen per cent had no siblings, 60% had one sibling living with them, 14% had two siblings and 8% had three or more siblings. They lived in homes owned by their parents (62.3%) and by their families (34.8%), with only 8.7% living in a new or almost new home. It is worth mentioning that none of the respondents lived in a rented house. Only 4.3% had no pets.

If we look at the answers for friends, it is obvious that life was about friends for these young people: almost 32% said that they had more than 15 friends and 21.7% said that they had between one and three friends they hung out with. The most common trait for friends was trustworthiness (71%), followed by helpfulness (70%), fun (58%) and supportiveness (55.1%).

When choosing friends, trustworthiness was the most important trait (88.4%), followed by helpfulness (61%) and being a good listener (55.1%).

Seventy per cent of respondents agreed that they liked group work more than individual work at school. Almost 74% could count on their friends to put their new ideas into practice and 72.5% said that they could count on their parents.

Over two-thirds (68.1%) said that they often got new ideas or projects, but only 34% said that they often worked together with their friends to put projects or ideas into practice.

Nearly sixty-one per cent (60.8%) said that they would mostly not be able to finish their projects without their friends' help, and 82% said that they liked working in groups because they had fun doing so.

**> Decision-making**

Sixty-one per cent said that it was easy for them to make friends and 74% that was easy to make their friends listen to their opinions. However, 31.8% of the respondents believed that it is hard to make adults around them listen to their ideas/opinions.

About 20% of respondents had low self-esteem when it came to starting new projects/ideas.

The majority (56.4%) of the respondents believed that their opinions did not count when decisions were being made in their community and 30.4% believed that their opinions did not count when decisions were being made in their families. However, 58% believed that their opinions were important and taken into account when decisions were being made in their peer group.

**> Local authorities and identity**

Every young respondent knew where the town hall was, 98% knew who the mayor was, and 58% said that they knew what the tasks and responsibilities of the local authorities were.

However, 53.6% did not know who their local parliamentary representatives were and 52.1% said that they did not have the option of sending ideas or suggestions to their local representatives.

Less than half (44.9%) of the respondents participated in local events as often as they could, 59.4% expressed a desire to help organise local events, 66.6% said that they would like to volunteer for a local cause, and 43.4% said that they did not read local news or information on social media groups and or in the local press.

**> Participation**

Only a little over a third of respondents (37.6%) knew who their school representatives were, 44.8% felt that important school decisions did not take their ideas or opinions into account, and 53.5% felt that their voice was not strong enough when asking for a park in their area/neighbourhood.

Even so, 59.3% of respondents did not take part in/belong to an initiative group to talk about their problems and debate solutions, 68.1% did not know who the local MP with responsibility for youth was, and 52.2% said they would like to be part of a local youth council.

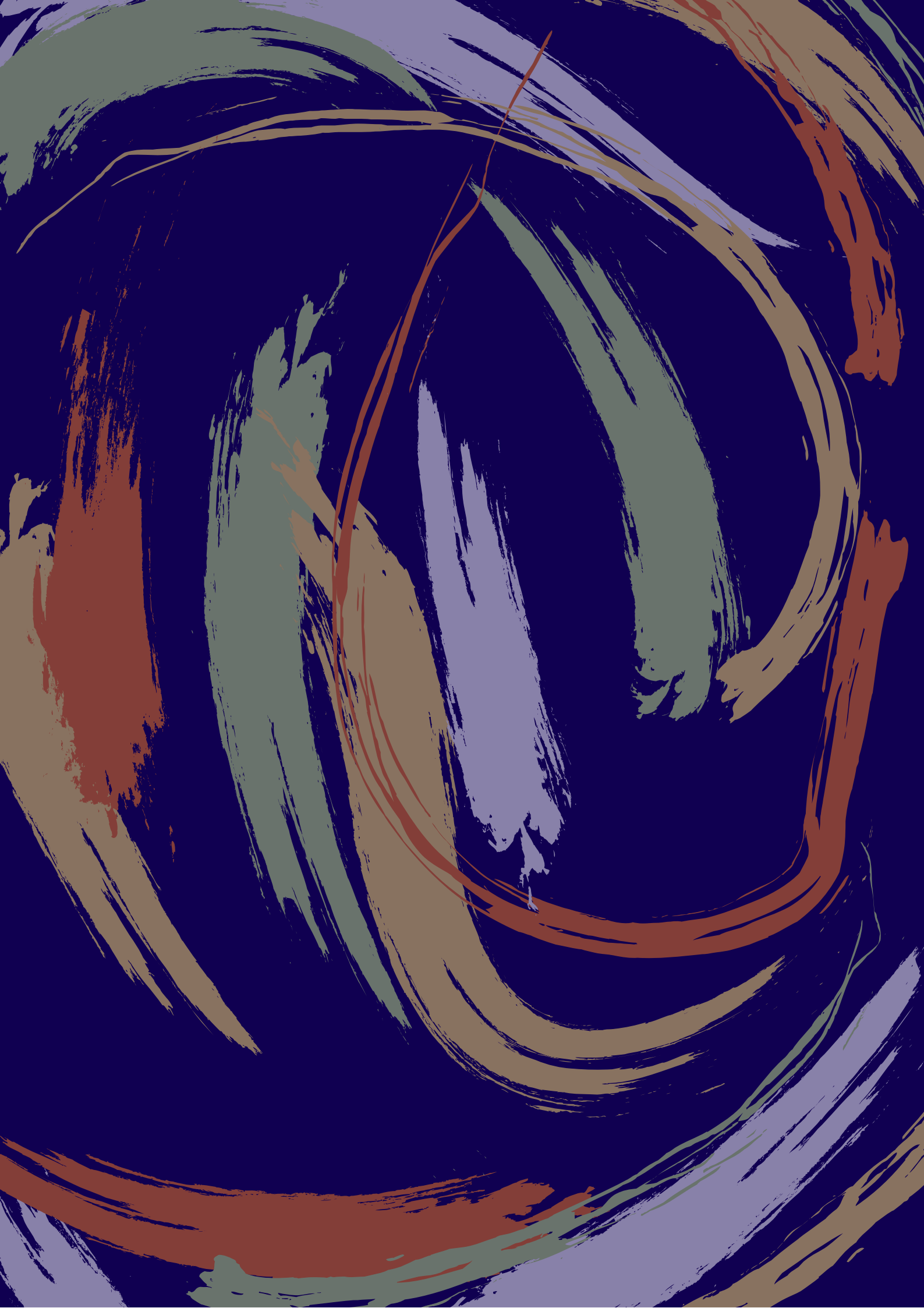
**> Support**

A large majority of the young people surveyed (89.8%) received help from their families when they needed it, 85.4% knew who to turn to for help outside their families, 65.2% were confident that they could turn to a friend to help them out, 68.1% felt that they got the help they needed with their studies from school staff, and 79.6% felt listened to within their peer group. However, 26% did not feel listened to at school.











# Youth-Supportive Communities

*This document has been prepared for the European Commission however it reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*



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*Šola s srcem*

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Școala Gimnazială  
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