

ASOCIACIJA "AKTYVUS JAUNIMAS"

# Let's Turn Discrimination into Tolerance E-booklet

Cases of discrimination and good practices  
plus a strategy towards reducing it

2014



LYGYBĖS 21-86, KAUNAS, LITHUANIA

## Summary:

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**Project title:** Let's Turn Discrimination into Tolerance!

**Financed:** by European Union's Erasmus+ programme

**Website:** <http://tolerant-youth.org>

**Action:** youth exchange in Kaunas, Lithuania

**Dates:** 6<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> of September, 2014

**Participating organizations:** [Asociacija "Aktyvus jaunimas" – Active Youth Association \(hosts\)](#), FuturEurope (Turkey), Scambieuropei (Italy), OportunidadEuropa (Spain), Asociatia "Tineret pentru Dezvoltare Durabila" (Romania), Volim Volontirati - "VoVo" (Croatia)

**E-booklet:** filled by all the 36 participants of the project during its activities. It covers cases of discrimination present in the participating countries, as well as good practices towards reducing it.

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## Introduction & Methodology

This E-booklet was filled by the 36 participants of Erasmus+ youth exchange “Let’s Turn Discrimination into Tolerance!”, which took part in Kaunas, Lithuania in September, 2014. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 30 at the time of the project. They were coming from the following countries: Lithuania, Italy, Spain, Turkey, Romania and Croatia.

The booklet was filled in the last day of the project during a specially designed activity. This allowed the participants to use all their previous experience, as well as things learned throughout the youth exchange. The setting of the activity was as following:

- Participants were randomly divided into 6 groups with perfect gender and nationality balance;
- They were given up to 1.5 hours for the task. It has asked each team to fill-in a pre-made form (given on the right);
- The organisers did not interfere with the work of the participants and only collected the completed forms. Hence, thoughts and ideas reflected in this e-booklet are genuinely created by the participants of the youth exchange;
- The forms did not use any names and also were shuffled after the collection. This was done to keep the anonymity of the authors of certain ideas.

## The Form for Filling

The full form, which was handed to the teams of the participants, can be found here: <http://tolerant-youth.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Ebkl.pdf>

Main tasks from the form for the groups are provided in the excerpts below:

*Firstly, let’s recollect which cases and **types of discrimination** across the participant countries were mentioned the most and were labelled as the most serious during our project:*

Type of discrimination	Where/how it happens?	Which countries are the worst?
<i>E.g. discrimination against LGBT community</i>	<i>Open discrimination in public life, schools, etc. No gay marriages are allowed...</i>	<i>Lithuania, ...</i>

*Secondly, let’s think about the **good practices** that are/were present in your countries or elsewhere in order to reduce the above mentioned types/cases of discrimination or were used to improve the level of tolerance in general:*

What kind of good practice?	How it helped?	Where it happened?	How effective?
<i>E.g. educational videos for LGBT rights involving kids</i>	<i>It has shown them that same-sex partnerships are just as normal...</i>	<i>U.S.A., ...</i>	<i>Reached a lot of audiences.</i>

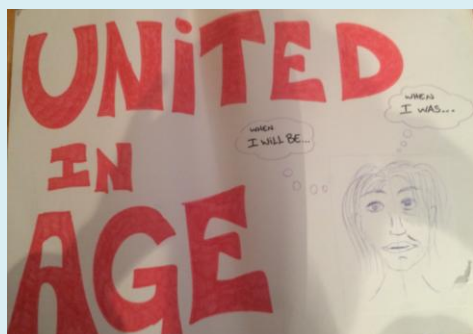
*Lastly, we should think about whether something new could be done in your countries or elsewhere in order to further reduce the persisting discrimination and intolerance towards minorities. Based on your previous experiences, before seen good practices and things learned during this exchange, please think of a **strategy/solution** or certain **action/campaign** that could help to turn discrimination into tolerance. Be creative and put some effort!*

1. *It would regard which minority group/community?*
2. *What kind of action/campaign/activity it would be?*
3. *How it would help to reduce the persisting problem?*
4. *Would there be any follow up actions/campaigns? If so, what kind of?*
5. *In which countries would it be the most relevant/effective?*
6. *How effective overall, do you think, it would be (e.g. would go viral)?*

## Cases of Discrimination

The participants collectively decided to group different types and cases of discrimination according to the certain community/group being affected. This seemed to be more fit for the purpose of this booklet than listing the cases of intolerance by the countries where these are the most severe or any other possible grouping. The summary table of their answers is provided below:

Type of discrimination	Where/how it happens?	Which countries are the worst?
Discrimination against LGBT community	Hate speech & hate crimes; no LGBT rights protection laws; lack of recognition of same-sex partnerships and marriages.	Lithuania, Turkey, Romania
Gender discrimination	In the labour market (salary inequality, maternity/paternity leaves, applying for jobs, sexual harassment); family (traditional gender roles), domestic violence.	All the project countries
Discrimination on the basis of ethnicity/race	Labour market (less chances to be employed), discrimination in schools/universities, hate speech & crimes in public; lack of integration, exclusion from social life	Romania, Turkey, Italy, Lithuania
Discrimination against people with disabilities	Labour market; lack of disabled friendly infrastructure in public buildings/places/transport; isolation from the society	All the project countries
Discrimination on the basis of age	Labour market (no jobs for too young/old); No jobs prior to military.	Spain, Croatia, Italy, Spain  Turkey
Religious discrimination	Lack of protection of religious minorities' rights; Disregard of minority religions; Exclusion from certain public jobs/life; Muslims are depicted as fanatics.	Croatia  Lithuania, Italy Turkey  Spain, Italy, Romania



Posters against discrimination created throughout the project.

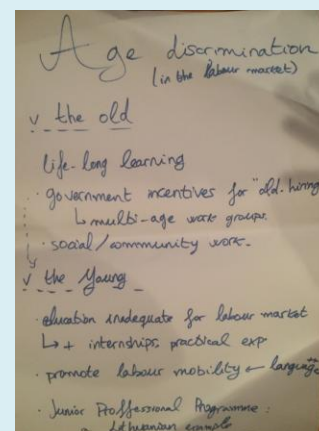


## Good Practices

There were a number of creative and (presumably) effective good practices named by the participants. These were mostly aimed to reduce intolerance towards a specific minority/group in one or more regions/countries. From the summary table given below we can get a picture what has helped and how great was the extent:

What kind of good practice?	How it helped?	Where did it take place?	How effective?
Gay prides; Pride weeks	It gives the necessary visibility to the LGBT community	All the participant countries; Spain + Italy	Effective
Summer camps for Roma community	Free education for kids, while inclusion of parents allowed them to realise the importance of education	Romania	Effective
Multi-cultural classes in schools	Reduces stereotypes	Croatia	Very effective
Parity government	More women in politics	Spain	Partly effective
Interactive museums (e.g. Dialogue in the Dark – feel like a blind person as everything is in absolute dark)	Immersive, first-hand experience - raises awareness, makes one feel oneself in other's shoes	Turkey, Germany	Effective
Quotas for women	Offers women an opportunity for bigger representation and visibility in public	Italy, Spain, Romania	Ambiguous
Reunion of representatives of different religions	It shows that there are no conflicts/big differences	Turkey	Contributes to unity - effective
Representation of Roma in parliament	It gives the community a voice in the legislation process	Romania	Effective
Campaigns against discriminating Roma people	These have shown that intolerance mostly starts in the families	Romania	Partly effective
Movies about certain minority/discrimination	It raises awareness, makes people realise there are problems	U.S.A., other...	Reaches a wide audience
Some jobs are reserved to disabled	Helped to somewhat integrate the disabled into the society	Italy	Partly effective
School supplies for Roma children	Increased school attendance in the community	Romania	Effective

The participants were asked to take these good practices into account when thinking about their own new initiatives, so as to stay within 'good practice' framework.



Various topic related good practices mentioned by the participants.



## Strategy / Follow-up possibilities

Please note that only five strategies are presented in the booklet, as two of the groups had a rather similar initiative proposed. Therefore, we have merged those two into one.

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### Outdoor Festival for Different Cultures

1. Designated in order to improve the situation for: Racial/ethnic minorities \_\_\_\_\_
2. How it would help to reduce the persisting problem: It would reach a lot of people, even the most intolerant ones. People would get to learn about other cultures, food, etc. Wider audiences would be reached through potential media coverage. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Would there be any follow up? The festival would 'travel' from one problematic region/city to another. \_\_\_\_\_
4. In which countries would it be the most relevant/effective? Romania, Italy, Spain, Turkey
5. How effective overall, do you think, it would be: Very effective due to its potential visibility in public and media.



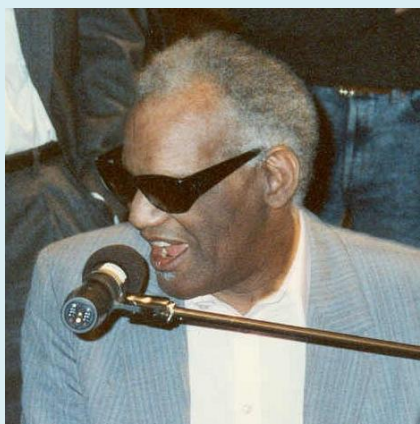
## Social work for high school students

1. Designated in order to improve the situation for: Ethnic/disabled/elderly \_\_\_\_\_
2. How it would help to reduce the persisting problem: Teenagers would get first-hand experience (work in cultural centres, associations, voluntary work), which would make them more aware of the real issues among of minorities and elderly/disabled. It is believed that the impact would be long lasting and it would spread way beyond the participating youngsters (through their social networks, etc.). \_\_\_\_\_
3. Would there be any follow up? \_\_\_\_\_
4. In which countries would it be the most relevant/effective? Every country
5. How effective overall, do you think, it would be: Effects would take some time, however they are much needed.



## Events to show talents from people with disabilities

1. Designated in order to improve the situation for: People with disabilities \_\_\_\_\_
2. How it would help to reduce the persisting problem: General public would see that disabled people are extremely talented in capable in a lot of areas. Would increase the general awareness as well. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Would there be any follow up? Various competitions/events, so that the general public could empathise. \_\_\_\_\_
4. In which countries would it be the most relevant/effective? All the countries
5. How effective overall it would be: Effective due to its potential visibility in public and (social) media.





## Campaign to eliminate labelling of Roma community

1. Designated in order to improve the situation for: Roma community \_\_\_\_\_
2. How it would help to reduce the persisting problem: Without being labelled (as 'Roma' or 'gypsies') in public this ethnicity would have more chances to better integrate within the local majority communities. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Would there be any follow up? A report on the results and progress of this legal change. \_\_\_\_\_
4. In which countries would it be the most relevant/effective? Romania and elsewhere in the EU
5. How effective overall, do you think, it would be: Ambiguous



## Educational videos for equal rights for different genders

1. Designated in order to improve the situation for: Women and (in some instances) men \_\_\_\_\_
2. How it would help to reduce the persisting problem: It would be aimed to change social perceptions/mentality; and show, for example, that men could cook, clean or take care of children; whereas women could do things that are currently perceived as 'manly' in the society. \_\_\_\_\_
3. In which countries would it be the most relevant/effective? Italy
4. How effective overall, do you think, it would be: it would take time to be effective



## Conclusions

There are various types of discrimination existent in the project countries and beyond, that were listed throughout the youth exchange “Let’s Turn Discrimination into Tolerance!”. To be more exact, these could be segmented into discrimination against: 1) lesbians’, gays’, bisexuals’ and transsexuals’ (LGBT) community; 2) certain gender (mostly females); 3) particular ethnicities (e.g. Roma) or non-majority race; 4) people with disabilities or health problems; 5) young and/or old (discrimination based on age); 6) minority religions. The severity of these different types of discrimination found by participants varies across the analysed countries. For instance, Lithuania faces a lot of intolerance towards the LGBT community, whereas females are likely to face the most discrimination in Turkey. The reasons behind this could be associated with different socio-historic factors per each country,

Similarly, the participants have found a number of good practices aimed to reduce the persisting discrimination in the countries of the project and elsewhere. These were subsequently rated by their effectiveness in solving the target problems. The best practices were judged to be those aimed at kids or young audiences. This is because the participants have come to a mutual conclusion that tolerance should be taught from early on. Also initiatives that are able generate wide reach (such as videos or campaigns on social networks) were deemed to be sufficiently effective.

Lastly, new ideas for tolerance-increasing endeavours were created during the youth exchange. These range from basic ones as social work for high school students to an outdoor festival for minority cultures. All of them had to be described according to the following framework: 1) target group; 2) method; 3) possible follow-up; 4) relevant country(-ies); 5) effectiveness.

To conclude, there is substantial persisting discrimination for various reasons present in the European continent. Surely, the situation is slowly getting better, as there are number of good initiatives started to reduce certain problems. However, it is far from perfect and more could be done. With regard to this youth exchange, other follow-up projects would be a welcome continuation. The topics could focus more on specific types of discrimination and more long-term solutions could be produced.



The participants of the project “Let’s Turn Discrimination into Tolerance!”