RESEARCH
MAKES PERFECT
E-BOOKLET

MANY PATHS,
ONE GOAL.

Lithuania
Celebrates
100

Erasmus+

Contents:

INTRODUCTION

This e-booklet is a product of Erasmus+ training course "Research Makes Perfect", which took place in Lithuania (Kaunas city) on May 18-26, 2018. Project's mission was to provide youth workers with knowledge about the necessity of the research and its different methods.

Inspiration

Organisations/youth workers are successful or unsuccessful in their mission based on the decisions they make. Yet, for the most part, these decisions are based on the intuition or opinions of the youth worker or organisation's managers. Facts and deeper analysis are rarely considered. We deem this to be a costly mistake. Our belief is that organisations/youth works should be run based on research and facts. This would help organisations/youth work to choose the right direction and focus on things that really matter to the local community. There would also be benefits for the organisations/youth workers as they could become more efficient with the scant resources they usually have. Lack of organisational researching for NGOs is a problem that is present all over Europe, and, especially, in the relatively poorer regions such as Lithuania, Latvia, and Turkey. Therefore, youth organisations from these countries with good examples from Italy and France have united for this training course dubbed "Research Makes Perfect" (RMP).

Concept

RMP's main goal was to make research more usable at organisational and youth worker level, and so allow for more focus on the areas/communities that really matter. In order to reach this goal, the project had the following objectives: 1) teach the youth workers the essentials of data researching tools and methodologies; 2) provide them with the necessary skills for researching and passing on that knowledge to others; 3) create opportunities for the participants to practice the gained skills and knowledge while carrying out relevant research in the local area; 4) promote the analysis-based approach to youth work across the participating countries.

Project's Participants

30 youth workers from Lithuania, Latvia, Italy, France and Turkey gathered in Kaunas to learn more about research. The project was designed for youth workers who are: 1) active in youth work or responsible for organising/coordinating various initiatives within youth organisations and/or similar institutions; and 2) keen and motivated to learn new researching tools (and how to use them) and share their existing expertise with their colleagues from other countries. They were socially aware, tolerant to other's opinion and have intentions to transfer the acquired knowledge to youth and other youth workers back at home. These youth workers were managers of youth NGOs, youth trainers, animators, youth lecturers, youth volunteers, etc.

E-BOOKLET

The main intention of this e-booklet is to provide insights on how to organise projects for youth on the topic of research in Europe. Here you will find ideas for workshops and other activities that would help you to make non-formal lecture about research on your own.

RESEARCH METHODS

In general, there are two main different types of research – qualitative and quantitative. In some cases, they can be mixed.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is concerned with human behaviour, and why people act the way that they do.

Common methods used for qualitative research include interviews (one-on-one interactions) and focus groups (group interviews). Both these methods allow researchers to explore a topic in depth with one or two people at a time, or within a small group.

You can also collect qualitative data from interactions with your research subjects, i.e. analyse language-based data. This analysis is almost part of the process of generating the data, rather than something done later on data gathered in a separate process. Gathering of qualitative data is done in research that recognises that the researcher is a key part of the situation, rather than an outside observer.

Quantitative Research

Quantitative research always collects numerical data. If you are not collecting numbers, then your research is qualitative, not quantitative.
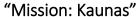
Quantitative research is usually used to quantify attitudes, opinions, behaviours, and other defined variables – and generalize results from a larger sample population.

The first step in quantitative research is to determine your sampling (which data to collect and from whom). You then need to gather data. Quantitative data collection methods include various forms of surveys – online surveys, paper surveys, mobile surveys and kiosk surveys, face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, longitudinal studies, website interceptors and online polls. Other sources of data include observational and secondary data (use of someone else's already-published data).

RMP'S WORKSHOPS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Some of the main activities' descriptions and pictures:

"Mission: Kaunas"

Participants were divided into five groups and had to accomplish various tasks when travelling around Kaunas city. They had to create a team name, motto and to answer many different questions about Lithuanian culture and history. For example, one team was asked what trees were saint in Lithuania in pagan times, to find a place in Kaunas where there are a lot of these trees and to make a picture there. Another team got a question about two Lithuanian heroes – pilots, who crossed the Atlantic Ocean. The participants had to answer who these heroes are, to find their sculpture and make a picture in front of it.

The youth spent the majority of the first day trying to accomplish this mission. That way, they had a chance to get to know Lithuanian history, famous Kaunas places and to bond as a team.

World Cafe

Participants had coffee & discussed in groups in a non-formal environment. Groups changed the topic every 15 minutes so that everyone has a chance to discuss all the topics. Half of the teams went out to enjoy the nice weather while others stayed in the conference room. The discussions were held on four topics:

1. Should research follow some ethic norms (i.e. certain topics should not be touched)? Or research should go into every topic/field possible (for the public benefit)? Perhaps you've heard of any cases where research/surveys/interviews created a scandal or something negative?

2. Do you think that there are intuitive and self-evident things and any research on them is only a waste of effort/time/money? Can you mention any? Or perhaps intuition is not always right (and research can indicate such wrongs)?

3. Research and privacy: think of a recent Cambridge Analytica scandal (50M FB users data leaked). Should researchers be banned from accessing certain personal data? Even if their research produces valuable insights for the public? Maybe you have any ideas on how to safeguard privacy?

4. Making research samples. Why does it often go wrong? Think of Brexit or Trump election – most of the public researches predicted different outcomes. Do you have any ideas how it could be improved?

Afterwards, all the teams shared the summary of their discussions.

Country Workshops

The participants in their country teams had to prepare interactive presentations on one of the following topics:

- Researching youth online and in social media.
- Researching the public: surveys.
- Researching the public: interviews.
- Focus group research.
- Planning research.
- Analysing the data and presenting the results.

The youth did a great job preparing and presented some really interesting things: the team which chose planning research did an acting performance and the one with researching youth online theme created a picture game.

Social research: planning, running, documenting and presenting

During the middle of the project, the youth started planning their social research. In new teams, they had to decide on what social issue they would like to tackle and delve deeper into through their to-be-conducted research. Problems turned into question and methods of asking these questions were brainstormed during the sessions.

Finally, the teams went out and conducted their research. At the same time, they had to document all the process. Before proceeding with the research, participants got a lesson on video making. All in all, the teams had to accomplish four tasks: run a research online and offline, film the process and to present the collected data in a PowerPoint format.

PROJECT'S RESULTS

According to the participants themselves, activities, described above, helped them to get a better look at conducting research and using the data for youth organisations. During the activities, they were not only very eager to share their knowledge and their thoughts but also to listen to what others have to say as well.

> *Before this project, I thought that research is made only by scientists in lab coats. I didn't have a clue how widespread can it be!*
>
> *A participant from France*

The project proved to be successful not only by its educational programme but also it was a valuable experience to start a multicultural dialogue. The participants assured, that the knowledge they gained will be useful in their future work.

The training took place at the same time as Kaunas Hansa Days, Street Music Day, so the participants had a chance to take part in the spring festivities of Kaunas and to immerse themselves into Lithuanian life.

To sum up, the project made a positive impact on the participants and organizations on many levels. As it was mentioned before, the participants are strongly motivated to make a change and to better youth organisations' work, as well as to continue spreading their newly gained knowledge. We believe that participants included in the project "Research Makes Perfect" will promote akin projects across the EU.

PROJECT'S SCHEDULE, ACTIVITIES AND EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

- Info pack of the training course, with all the information for project participants;
- Current knowledge assessment, which was done at the beginning of the project;
- "Mission Kaunas", with information on how to do the task;
- World Cafe, topics for discussions;
- Guest speaker's presentation;
- Country workshops;
- Dare challenge task;
- Pop quiz.
- Social research presentations:
    - group no. 1;
    - group no. 2;
    - group no. 3;
    - group no. 4.
- Social research video:
    - Group nr. 1
    - Group nr. 2
    - Group nr. 3
    - Group nr. 4
- Project's website
- Facebook photo albums:
    - Project activities album.
    - Participants' album

ABOUT TRAINERS

Milda Derenčiūtė

I am very open and positive person. My life MOTO is to leave something meaningful after myself so I am trying hard to make it happen. I can totally say that I have experienced so many various things in my life from criminal investigation studies to refugees integration in Lithuania. These things led me grew up as person and build more expectations for the future! I love to cite one song of Michael Jackson: "If you want to make the world a better place, take a look at yourself, and then make a change."

Alvydas Opulski

I am a creative person and usually I work with multimedia, but after few youth exchanges / trainings I fall in love with Erasmus+ programmes and started to train in them. I realized that the more I train the more I feel richer inside. In a short period I meet a lot of different cultures, characters and I have to try to understand them, be tolerante and to find how to connect them. These are the challenges that moves me forward.

ABOUT ORGANISERS

"Active Youth" Association (Asociacija "Aktyvus jaunimas") is a non-profit organization based in Kaunas that unites young leaders from Lithuania willing to work on a voluntary basis to facilitate an intercultural dialogue and enhance the competence of the European youth. We cooperate with organisations of a similar profile from all over Europe (more than 400 partnerships) to organise events and trainings using non-formal education as a powerful instrument to encourage youth to take an active part in a society. By doing this we help young people to improve their skills and social awareness, share experiences and ideas, integrate them within the multinational environment of the EU, facilitate cooperation, create new joint initiatives, increase their social awareness, and promote a healthy lifestyle. In particular, we concentrate on youth (18-30 years old) that have fewer opportunities and/or disadvantaged backgrounds. Generally, our aims are to: (1) enhance entrepreneurial, social, leadership, communication skills, self-esteem, as well as multilingualism of youth through non-formal education; (2) help youth increase their social awareness, be tolerant towards others, be aware of the persisting social and environmental problems and help solve them; (3) educate youth workers and youth on how to join volunteering initiatives, cooperate with each other, and get employed more easily; (4) organise joint campaigns, projects and activities, where young people and youth workers can get involved in an intercultural dialogue, be a part of the decision making process, develop the spirit of volunteerism, facilitate youth cooperation and social values; (5) raise awareness about EU citizenship among young people, educate about social responsibility and work towards reducing youth unemployment in the EU; (6) organize youth seminars, exchanges, trainings for youth workers, conferences and discussions on relevant social topics, promote healthy, active, and ecologically friendly lifestyle in order to increase the well-being of youth. Inform about similar actions organized by others in Europe; (7) defend and promote human rights, universal values of tolerance, active citizenship, democracy, equal opportunities and work towards the elimination of discrimination in order to build a better integrated society; (8) organise Erasmus+ projects and spread information about the opportunities that lie behind it in order to further facilitate youth development. Apart from other activities, we have also hosted Erasmus+ youth exchanges and youth worker mobility projects in Lithuania addressing key social topics for youth. As of July 2018, we have implemented 22 Erasmus+ projects.

If youth organisations, youth workers or youth would like to know more about research within youth organisations or how to lead a similar project, don't hesitate to contact us at info@activeyouth.lt

Please note that the contents of this e-booklet represents only the views of its authors (see last section) and not those of the European Commission, Erasmus+ or related European bodies/institutions.