

ERASMUS+ YOUTH WORKER MOBILITY PROJECT “ARCHITECTS OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION” Training course

In this document, you will find implemented 6 days (11. – 16.06.2025) training program activities description. Non-formal education training course held in Balvu city (Latvia) gather 26 participants from Latvia, The Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Türkiye, Spain and Italy, two experienced trainers - Sergejs Andrejevs (Latvia) and Tony Virginio Morabito (Italy).

The aim of this project was to empower youth workers by enhancing their ability to create innovative non-formal education methods. Through this project, we aim to provide youth workers with the tools, skills, attitudes, and knowledge needed to develop and implement new non-formal education methods in line with the Erasmus+ program's priorities.

Objectives of the project “Architects of Non-Formal Education”:

- Enhance Youth workers' competences in Non-Formal education,
- Foster adaptability to evolving youth needs,
- Promote innovation in Non-Formal education,
- Facilitate collaboration and competence Exchange.

“Funded/Co-funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union, European Commission or [name of the granting authority (Agency for International Programs for Youth)]. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

More information about the project you can find:

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2024-3-LV02-KA153-YOU-000289870>

Program:

		11.06.2025	12.06.2025	13.06.2025	14.06.2025	15.06.2025	16.06.2025		
Time/Date		Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6		
08:30- 09:30	BREAKFAST								
09:30 - 11:00	Arrival of participants	Getting to know each other	Simulation activity - Intercultural education	Creation of NFE method - learning objectives, exploration	Implementation of NFE method	Improvement of NFE method	Open space	Departure of participants	
11:00 - 11:30		Coffee break							
11:30 - 13:00		Program, expectation, contribution, learning goals	Learning activities	Creation of NFE method - method creation	Implementation of NFE method	Implementation of NFE method	Future action plan and corporation		
13:00 – 14:00		LUNCH							
14:00 - 15:30		Exploring local enviroment, ESC and ERASMUS+ :Youth program priorities and oportunities	Different types of education NFE definition, principles	Creation of NFE method - description of the method and preparation	Implementation of NFE method	Implementation of NFE method	Learning testimonies, Youthpass		
15:30 - 16:00		Coffee break							
16:00 – 17:00		Creating teams - Team building	NFE theories, NFE theories in practice, What is powerfull NFE method	Free time	Implementation of NFE method	Evaluation of group work	Final evaluation		
17:00 – 17:30	Self-reflection	Self-reflection	Self-reflection		Self-reflection				
18:00 – 19:00									
21:00 - 00:00	Welcome evening	Free evening	Table game evening	Intercultural evening	Movie evening	Free evening	Goodbye party!		

Day 1

1.session - Getting to know each other

Learning outcomes

Development of group dynamics

Description of activity

Each participant need to say their name, country from where participants come and their connection to non-formal education

Name game activities to learn each other names - participants working in a group need to prepare small performance about - Don't forget my name.

Speed dating

Each person writes question what participants want to ask others and later they are asking questions and exchanging with those questions. Coming back in circle and sharing with other what they get to know.

Materials needed

A4 paper, pencils.

Comments

2.session - Program, expectation, contribution, learning goals

Learning outcomes

Setting learning goals

Description of activity

Presentation of TC program, rulemaking, asking participants to share their contributions, fears and expectations. After participants need to write maximum 5 what is their learning goals for TC. Than following SMART goals setting to make starting with most important learning goals. Presenting their learning goals.

Materials needed

A4 paper, pencils, Post-it.

Comments

3.session - Exploring local environment, ESC and ERASMUS+: Youth program priorities and opportunities

Learning outcomes

Competence about ESC and ERASMUS+: Youth programs and priorities

Description of activity

Visiting local Youth centre and during visit participants are introduced to ESC and ERASMUS+: Youth programs, participants are asked to share their experience if they were participating in those projects. Presentation of the priorities - how those priorities where implemented in projects where participants was participating. Participants think about which priority they want to create activity.

Materials needed

Comments

4.session - Creating teams - Team building

Learning outcomes

Development of group dynamics

Description of activity

A group of 4-5 participants is tasked with building a spaghetti bridge capable of holding various weights. Using a selection of provided materials (such as spaghetti, A4 paper, tape,

and string), the team has 25 minutes to design and construct their bridge. The objective is to create a structure that can support as much weight as possible without collapsing.

Once the time is up, each team will test their bridge by gradually adding weight to see how well it holds. After the testing phase, participants engaged in a group reflection. They discussed how the teamwork process went, what challenges they faced, what emotions they experienced during the activity, and what insights or lessons they gained.

Materials needed

Spaghetti, A4 paper, tape, string.

Comments

You can add also different extra materials

Evaluation of the day

Participants reflect on their learning outcomes with the help of their Learning Buddies by answering the daily reflection questions:

- What did I learn about myself and the group?
- What did I learn about the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) and the Erasmus+ Youth programme and its priorities?
- What other learning outcomes did I experience?

Each buddies writes their key learning outcome on a Post-it note and places it under the relevant Youthpass competence.

Day 2

1.session - Simulation activity - Intercultural education

Learning outcomes

Learning about simulation activity and about intercultural learning

Description of activity

In this activity participants play a simple card game in small groups, where conflicts begin to occur as participants move from group to group. This simulates real cross-cultural encounters, where people initially believe they share the same understanding of the basic rules. In discovering that the rules are different, players undergo a mini culture shock similar to actual experience when entering a different culture. They then must struggle to understand and reconcile these differences to play the game effectively in their "cross-cultural" groups. Difficulties are magnified by the fact that players may not speak to each other but can communicate only through gestures or pictures. Participants are not forewarned that each is playing by different rules; in struggling to understand why other players don't seem to be playing correctly, they gain insight into the dynamics of cross-cultural encounters.

Materials needed

Tables, copy of the rules, deck of cards and popsicle stick.

Comments

Detailed description of the activity, can be found here: <https://ej.uz/ANFEbarnga>

2.session - Learning activities

Learning outcomes

Find answer on question what is educational activity for each person and for group

Description of activity

Participants working in groups of 4 answer on following questions:

- 1) Which are the different steps you can identify when you design/create an educational activity? (i.e. preparation, development...).

2) Which different steps/phases do you see when you organise a debriefing? Translate those steps/phases of debriefing into concrete questions.

3) Identify different external elements and how they can intentionally be used during an educational activity? (For example music...)

4) Where is the “Power” in these educational activities? The “power” to do what?

After discussion all groups come together and in random way chose one group present, other groups have opportunity to choose even – have a question, have something to add, disagree or nothing to say.

Materials needed

A4 paper, pencils.

Comments

3.session - Different types of education NFE definition, principles

Learning outcomes

Be aware about different NFE definitions and NFE principles

Description of activity

On the floor is placed different NFE definitions (<https://ej.uz/NFEdefinition2025>) each person need to stay near to one of them, after all participants find a place they discuss in group definition. After sometimes all come in big group and each group have opportunity to share their thought what for them means NFE.

After each group receive list of NFE principles (<https://ej.uz/NFEprinciples>), they need to think where in NFE activities they saw this principle and how it was implemented. After each group has opportunity to share their group discussion outcomes.

Materials needed

Printed worksheets, A4 paper, pencils

Comments

4.session - NFE theories, NFE theories in practice, what is powerful NFE method?

Learning outcomes

Learning about different NFE theories, finding out where is power of NFE

Description of activity

Participants are given different theories – learning zones, Kolb cycle, NFE - learning by doing, learning to be, learning to be together, learning to learn, reflection methods, group dynamics theory, methods in non-formal education. Participants are asked to present them in interactive way. Participants are asked in a big group to share from there experience What is powerful NFE method?

Materials needed

Different materials

Comments

Evaluation of the day

Participants reflect on their learning outcomes with the help of their Learning Buddies by answering the daily reflection questions:

- What did I learn from the simulation activity?
- What did I learn about the intercultural topic?
- What does a learning activity mean to me?
- What did I learn about NFE (Non-Formal Education)?
- Where does the power of NFE lie?

Each buddies writes their key learning outcome on a Post-it note and places it under the relevant Youthpass competence.

Day 3

1.session - Creation of NFE method - learning objectives, exploration

Learning outcomes

Competence of creating NFE method

Description of activity

Participants based on first day choice making groups to create NFE method based on one of ERASMUS+ priorities. In this session participants firstly explore different method that exist from their experience, exploring SALTO Toolbox or other resources (<https://ej.uz/NFEresources>), sharing it with others in the group. At the end of the session participants are setting up learning goal what will be learning outcome of their activity. In this session they Explore (Research, Brainstorm, Share).

Materials needed

Comments

2.session - Creation of NFE method - method creation

Learning outcomes

Competence of creating NFE method

Description of activity

Participants are creating their NFE method based on previous session results - making activity description. In this session participants Create and Try out.

Materials needed

Google folder with document for each team

Comments

3.session - Creation of NFE method - description of the method and preparation

Learning outcomes

competence of creating NFE method

Description of activity

In this session participants Describe activity and Prepare for activity

Materials needed

Different available materials

Comments

Evaluation of the day

Participants reflect on their learning outcomes with the help of their Learning Buddies by answering the daily reflection questions:

- What did I learn about creation and implementation of NFE methods?

Each buddies writes their key learning outcome on a Post-it note and places it under the relevant Youthpass competence.

4.session - Free time

Free time – it is important for participants to have free time and have some reflection about their learning in non-structured way.

Day 4

1.session - Implementation of NFE method

Learning outcomes

Competence in implementing NFE methods

Description of activity

Participants are implementing their created NFE method, receiving Feedback in Post-it what liked what can be done differently?

Participants activity called - Mission (Im)possible

Comments

Description of activity - <https://ej.uz/mission-im-possible>

2.session - Implementation of NFE method

Learning outcomes

Competence in implementing NFE methods

Description of activity

Participants are implementing their created NFE method, receiving Feedback in Post-it what liked what can be done differently?

Participants activity called - Build Your Sustainable City

Comments

Description of activity - <https://ej.uz/buildYourSustainableCity>

3.session - Implementation of NFE method

Learning outcomes

Competence in implementing NFE methods

Description of activity

Participants are implementing their created NFE method, receiving Feedback in Post-it what liked what can be done differently?

Participants activity called - Bread Therapy

Comments

Description of activity - <https://ej.uz/breadTherapy>

4.session - Implementation of NFE method Feedback

Learning outcomes

Competence in implementing NFE methods

Description of activity

Trainers/facilitators provide feedback on the challenges that need to be addressed for future groups in order to deliver high-quality non-formal education activities. The groups that have implemented their activities then have time to read the feedback from other participants and reflect on potential improvements.

The groups who will be implementing activities the following day are given the opportunity to revise their activities based on the challenges and suggestions mentioned by the trainers/facilitators.

Materials needed

Comments

Evaluation of the day

Participants reflect on their learning outcomes with the help of their Learning Buddies by answering the daily reflection questions:

- What did I learn about creation and implementation of NFE methods?
Each buddies writes their key learning outcome on a Post-it note and places it under the relevant Youthpass competence.

Day 5

1.session - Implementation of NFE method

Learning outcomes

Competence in implementing NFE methods

Description of activity

Participants are implementing their created NFE method, receiving Feedback in Post-it what liked what can be done differently? Trainers/facilitators provide feedback on the challenges that need to be addressed for future groups in order to deliver high-quality non-formal education activities.

Participants activity called - The Hill We Climb

Comments

Description of activity - <https://ej.uz/theHillWeClimb>

2.session - Implementation of NFE method

Learning outcomes

Competence in implementing NFE methods

Description of activity

Participants are implementing their created NFE method, receiving Feedback in Post-it what liked what can be done differently? Trainers/facilitators provide feedback on the challenges that need to be addressed for future groups in order to deliver high-quality non-formal education activities.

Participants activity called - Black Mirror

Comments

Description of activity - <https://ej.uz/blackMirror-1>

3.session - Implementation of NFE method

Learning outcomes

Competence in implementing NFE methods

Description of activity

Participants are implementing their created NFE method, receiving Feedback in Post-it what liked what can be done differently? Trainers/facilitators provide feedback on the challenges that need to be addressed for future groups in order to deliver high-quality non-formal education activities.

Participants activity called - What about tomorrow

Comments

Description of activity - <https://ej.uz/whatAboutTomorrow>

4.session - Evaluation of group work

Learning outcomes

Evaluate group work, competence work in international team

Description of activity

Participants firstly put a mark from 1-10, what mark they give for product/result, for personal involvement and for process. Discussing marks in smaller groups and coming back in big group sharing summary from discussion.

Materials needed

A4 paper, pencils.

Comments

Evaluation of the day

Participants reflect on their learning outcomes with the help of their Learning Buddies by answering the daily reflection questions:

- What did I learn about creation and implementation of NFE methods?

Each buddies writes their key learning outcome on a Post-it note and places it under the relevant Youthpass competence.

Day 6

1.session - Open Agenda

Learning outcomes

Reaching anything what is missing from previous days

Description of activity

In previous day participants was asked come back to their learning goals if there is something missing, if yes than ask somebody lead any activities that can help reach the goal.

Based on participants needs there were two round for each round three topics. First round – LinkedIn, Energizers and Brain Twisters. Second round – How to growth social account?

Developing, managing Youth NGO, write and apply ERASMUS+ projects.

Materials needed

Different materials

Comments

2.session - Future action plan and corporation

Learning outcomes

Setting action plan for future

Description of activity

Participants has list of question and they need individually find answers on those question:

- What non-formal education methods or tools do you plan to apply?
- Why do you believe these methods are relevant or needed in your context?
- Who will be your target group or audience?
- What are the main goals or outcomes you hope to achieve through your activities?
- What concrete steps will you take to implement these methods/tools?
- When and where will your first activities take place?
- Who will support you in implementing these activities (e.g., organizations, peers, mentors)?
- What resources (materials, funding, space, etc.) will you need?
- What potential challenges or obstacles do you anticipate, and how might you overcome them?
- How will you evaluate the impact or success of your non-formal education activities?

Afterward, participants meet in their country groups and share their answers within the group. Later, in the larger group, each country has the opportunity to present a summary of their discussion. Also there is given time for building international collaboration and exchanging ideas.

Materials needed

Available questions in digital format

Comments

3.session - Learning testimonies, Youthpass

Learning outcomes

Learning evaluation

Description of activity

Presentation of Hero's journey video, then asking participants to write in common Google document what are Resolution (what are those thing what will be changed after training and what are competences that will be used in a future). Coming back to Youthpass, time for participants to evaluate about their learning in a framework of Youthpass competences.

Materials needed

A4 paper, pencils.

Comments

4.session - Final evaluation

Learning outcomes

Learning evaluation

Description of activity

Participants fill out online evaluation form. Closing circle with Dixit cards, participants need to choose one or more Dixit cards that describe the best all training and then share with others. Youthpass certificate ceremony.

Materials needed

Dixit cards

Comments

Summary from online evaluation form

In this part there will be presented answers on some questions from the evaluation form:

- Name one or more methods or session, that you liked the most

The Barna activity. Build Your Sustainable City; Forum theatre; Bread therapy and build your sustainability; I love all things I have no complains for anything; Energizers, Creating our own activities; creation of activities; 4F method, group sharing; Open agenda; Bread therapy, theatre of oppressed, survival game; When we have a make NFE activity; The learning of the methods of NFE; Theatre is great way to express yourself; Session with non-formal principles, mission impossible, bread therapy, black mirror; Inclusion and diversity teamwork create a idea discuss a clearly; The hill we climb; The will we climb and what about tomorrow; Theatre of the oppressed; The Theatre of the Oppressed, Bread Therapy; The method I liked the most is the 4F method. The session I liked the most was Black Mirror; Energisers, brain twisters, forum theatre, simulation, group us randomly

- Name 3 most important things you have learned

New resources; digitalisation in terms of education; using theatre for NFE; Work in group, express myself in foreign language, cultural awareness; Managing time, enjoying with different cultures, importance of interaction concrete way; Improving skills, Discuss clearly, Creating new things; Team building, Facilitation of learning through NFE and the importance of communication; Inclusion, the important elements to considerate while creating activities and the challenges to considerate; To thing/look out of box, time managing, types of education; Brain twisters, teambuilding activities, Bread therapy method; 1-NFE Methods and activities, 2- Culture and food of different countries, 3-To work in many different groups; Together work with other people with different perspectives and implement a common project. Language development. The environment is beautiful; Digital tools, team building, managing resources; About different European cultures, Make an activity; Team building, collaboration, using digital tools; Team work, communication, unity and solidarity; Collaborating in teams, designing programmes, managing resources; Managing resources, displaying intercultural sensitivity, being civically engaged; I learned through experience, through role playing and personal reflection; How to properly create and build an activity, the most important things I need to do when I'm a facilitator, and how and how important feedback is; How to lead, or follow, How to express myself in front of others, How to take part; Team building, how to reach others attention and the importance of the feedback; The Theatre of the Oppressed, Different cultures and languages; How to collaborate with different people, how to have successful communication in team and how to have more sense for people who surrounds you in general; What non formal education is, the differences between the types of education and of course, managing my own resources.

- Did you improve your competence (knowledge, skill, attitude) regarding Non-Formal education topic?

100% of participants on this question answered Yes

- Did you improve your understanding of non-formal education methods as a result of this training course?

100% of participants on this question answered Yes

- Do you feel more competent in designing non-formal education activities within the Erasmus+ framework?

95,65% of participants on this question answered Yes

- *Are you able to apply what you learned to address emerging social, cultural, or economic challenges faced by youth?*

100% of participants on this question answered Yes

- *I have adaptability to start incorporating new or innovative non-formal education methods into my daily work with youth?*

95,65% of participants on this question answered Yes

- *Did you create or contribute to the development of any new non-formal education method during the training course?*

100% of participants on this question answered Yes

- *Have you plan to use any new and creative non-formal education methods in your youth work since participating in this training course?*

95,65% of participants on this question answered Yes

- *Did you have opportunity collaborate with other participants by sharing experiences, ideas, or methods during the training?*

95,65% of participants on this question answered Yes

- *Did you improve teamwork and competence exchange with international peers, enhancing your ability to work in diverse, multicultural settings?*

95,65% of participants on this question answered Yes

Learning testimonies

I work in the probation service with young people who have committed criminal offenses. I wanted the opportunity to participate in order to gain experience in cooperation with participants from different countries, learn more about NFE and participate in the development of non-formal activity.

The group work was creative. We learned to do things together. I experienced doubts, embarrassment, and as well the joy of success. Thank you all, because it was your patience and acceptance that allowed me to have this experience to communicate in English.

I have not only deepened my knowledge of the Erasmus+ program and its priorities, but also learned methods and activities that will be useful in my work and help make it more effective. I gained motivation to think and work more creatively.

Aelita (Latvia)

I'm a history teacher working also as a youth trainer in the field of mental and reproductive health, civic education, career development and environmental protection.

Although I already have pretty much experience both in formal and non-formal education, this training course was an opportunity to learn new things and meet wonderful people. During one week, I learned a lot about myself, about others' needs and the mistakes that can come out from the use of stereotypes. Now I'm equipped with new short and effective energizers and brain twisters that I can use in all types of educational activities but I'm also empowered to work on team building which was one of my main goals when I applied for this training course. Sustainability practices were pretty much involved in the organization of the course so that's one more thing I will bring as a take out of the training.

One of the highlights of the training was the moment when we were implementing our own activities tailored in the group work. My group had some obstacles like different levels of English, different levels of previous experience in non-formal education, but we managed to do it. "Build a Sustainable City" was a workshop where we didn't just practice our facilitation skills but we also learned a lot about each other.

In the international environment there were also side moments, but very important, like practicing Turkish, learning some dances from other countries and meeting ESC volunteers who decided to dedicate their time to the Balvi community.

Ana (Serbia)

I have been actively involved in youth work for several years, leading different organizations and initiating various projects aimed at empowering young people. When I applied for the "Architects of Non-Formal Education" training course in Balvi, Latvia, my goal was to deepen my knowledge of non-formal education and to explore innovative methods I could apply in my own youth work back home.

Throughout the six-day training, I had the chance to reflect on what non-formal education truly means—not only in theory but in practice as well. One of the most valuable sessions was about design thinking and how it can be applied to create tailor-made educational tools for young people. I particularly appreciated the workshops where we worked in teams to

develop our own non-formal methods based on the priorities of the Erasmus+ program. It was inspiring to see how diverse ideas and cultural perspectives came together in a shared vision.

Personally, the training helped me grow beyond my existing framework. I became more open to letting go of rigid structures and embracing creativity in youth work. It also strengthened my facilitation skills and gave me tools to handle complex group dynamics—skills I already plan to apply in my ongoing work with local youth clubs.

Collaborating with participants from eight different countries was an enriching experience in itself. The intercultural learning simulations and group reflections helped me understand the challenges and needs young people face across Europe. One memorable moment was presenting our newly developed method in front of the whole group—it was empowering to see our ideas come to life.

Looking back, this training course has not only provided me with practical tools but has also reinforced my commitment to innovative, inclusive, and impactful youth work. My next step is to implement the method we created during the training in my local community and involve young people in co-creating their own learning journeys. I am thankful for this opportunity, the connections I made, and the facilitators who made learning both fun and meaningful.

Bence Máté (Hungary)

I joined this project because I wanted to learn more about non-formal education in its different methods and forms. My goal was to learn more about teamwork and how I can empower young people to learn more and do it consciously through experiences. For me, the most interesting part of the project was when it was our turn to create different activities on different topics. It was very interesting to participate in a group and create a final product that could then be used anywhere. Personally, I was able to realize how much I know in terms of skills and different approaches. I was able to learn many little tricks that will facilitate and clean up the process of creating an activity. I will use what I have learned on my direct team of team managers, as my goal will be to create a team that is cohesive and to get them out of the box in which they live and work. It was quite difficult for me at times to work in a team and listen to others without imposing my opinion. This is something that I have come out with once again and will work on. I am extremely impressed by the facilitators and the way they guided us throughout the project. They taught me many new approaches and gave me valuable advice on how to properly facilitate. For me, the difficulties I faced were that sometimes I could not make a constructive sentence and share what I thought because of my difficulties speaking English. Also, when I was in a group with a strong leader, I let myself be led. Definitely my most memorable moments are the card activities, creating activities and sharing experiences. Overall, this training managed to make me turn to myself and what I want and what is important to me in life. I managed to remember why I want to work with young people and what this brings to me as added value and emotions. I will apply much of what I learned with my colleagues and my team. I will do several sessions by the end of the year for 2 to 4 hours in which I will use different methods to convey and learn the specific topics that I want to pay attention to. This training course managed to exceed all my expectations and enrich me in a way that I did not think could happen anymore.

Desislava (Bulgaria)

Beginnings are always difficult... Both in writing and in living new experiences. But in the end the effort is always worth it.

I'm Steff, I'm an artist and art teacher, and I came from Spain to meet Latvia and learn more about non-formal education; you know: how to create activities, how to guide them, tips, energizers, new ideas. Today is the last day of the training and, now I know that tomorrow I will go back home with a backpack full of knowledge and incredible experiences.

Being here has been a privilege that has allowed me to experience NFE methods and also to create them. I have been able to work with people of different ages and countries, with different levels of educational and linguistic knowledge and I have learned as much as I could from them and from the activities we have done. It has not always been easy to understand each other or to reach agreements, but in the end we have always resolved the situation and come out successful. And that's the most important thing.

One of the most fun activities was 'the theatre of the oppressed', a method of performing ideas in which the audience becomes part of the show itself, intervening and changing the situation to make things better. We learned to talk about our emotions while making our own bread and sharing it afterwards at a barbecue. We talked about the environment, technology, inclusion, the importance of participating in society... And we developed gamified activities that not only helped us to understand non-formal education, but also made us learn about the different topics and about ourselves, as individuals, as a group in particular, and as a society. I am glad I had the pleasure to participate in this training because now I go back home with new ideas, methods and activities that will certainly help me to develop future projects, extracurricular activities for young people and adults and... Who knows? Maybe I will develop my own organisation or unite all that I have learnt with art therapy, which is the field in which I work and move nowadays. Art is the basis of everything I know and NFE methods can help me to take it further.

Estefanía (Spain)

I decided to join this training because I was considering supporting a friend with her non-formal education organization, and I deeply believe in the importance of non-formal education methods in our lives.

One of the most informative parts of the training was when we worked on our hypothetical project plans. I learned a lot, not only from the tasks themselves but also from observing the different approaches taken by others. Reflecting on my own mistakes was especially valuable, as it pushed me to grow and become more aware of my areas for improvement. Among the skills I developed, time management stood out as particularly important.

The training was very informative and sparked my curiosity to learn more about non-formal education and Erasmus+ opportunities. Personally, it gave me the confidence to get involved in supporting my friend's non-formal organization, which was one of the reasons I joined in the first place.

Most importantly, I will actively use what I've learned in my job as a university orientation leader. In this role, I support new students as they begin their academic journey, helping them integrate into the university community through events, group activities, and guidance. The skills I developed during the training, especially in planning, teamwork, and time management, are directly relevant to this position. Thanks to this experience, I now feel more confident, organized, and equipped to create a welcoming and engaging environment for incoming students.

I appreciated the hands-on nature of the training and the opportunity to connect with people from different backgrounds. The environment encouraged open exchange, creativity, and reflection, all of which made a lasting impression on me. I will carry this experience forward not just in my studies, but also in future initiatives I hope to be part of. Working with participants from different backgrounds was one of the most enriching aspects of this training. It helped me gain new perspectives and learn from others' ideas, mistakes, and solutions. During the group activities, especially the ones where we applied our hypothetical project plans, I became more aware of the importance of collaboration and listening actively. These sessions were the most informative for me, and I will certainly remember the lessons I learned from both my successes and errors.

The facilitators played an important role throughout the training. They created a space that felt safe and inspiring, where everyone was encouraged to reflect and share. Their guidance helped me understand better how non-formal education methods work and why they are so valuable in both personal and professional contexts. One of the challenges I faced was managing time and responsibilities within the group. It was not always easy, but it taught me the importance of organization, communication, and flexibility, yet they all became learning moments that I truly appreciate. This training has made me more curious and motivated to explore the world of non-formal education and youth work, especially within the framework of Erasmus+ opportunities. Personally, it gave me the confidence to get involved in supporting my friend's non-formal organization, which was one of the reasons I joined in the first place.

I now feel more prepared to apply what I've learned in my university orientation activities and future collaborative projects. I've developed skills in planning, teamwork, and time management that will be useful in many areas of my life.

Giulia (Italy)

I decided to take part in this mobility because I'm about to begin writing my own project, and I wanted to gain more hands-on experience in designing and facilitating non-formal education activities. I knew this opportunity would help me grow both personally and professionally, and it truly did.

Throughout this project, I've learned many valuable tools and methods that I will definitely bring with me into future experiences. One of the most impactful things I discovered was the importance of testing an activity before implementing it, how essential inclusion is, both within the organising team and for participants, and I now have a full toolbox of new energisers that can really transform group dynamics. I also learned new debriefing techniques, especially the "4Fs" (Facts, Feelings, Findings, and Future), which provide a clear and meaningful way to reflect and learn after an activity.

What made this experience truly special were the people and the atmosphere they helped create. Thanks to the activities and the openness of everyone involved, I now feel I've developed a deeper awareness of myself and a new lens through which I view the world. The facilitators were really precise, thoughtful, and attentive to each participant's needs, creating a safe and empowering space for learning and sharing.

Some of the highlights for me were moments of genuine connection, like the "bread therapy" activity where we opened up about past experiences, and the BBQ evening that brought us all closer together in a relaxed setting.

This mobility didn't just give me tools and ideas, it inspired me. I now feel more prepared and motivated to take the next step and start building my own educational project with confidence, creativity, and care.

Ilaria (Italy)

One of my biggest aspirations is to create my own youth organization, which is why I constantly seek opportunities for growth and learning. I joined this training because I found the topic incredibly interesting, and I wanted to explore new approaches to leadership, group dynamics, and personal development. I had spoken to many people about it beforehand, and their enthusiasm further motivated me to participate.

Throughout the training, I've learned a great deal about managing large groups effectively, as well as how to address issues like boredom and attention loss in a non-intrusive, respectful way. I was especially intrigued by activities designed to promote deep reflection, which ultimately help participants reach a point of personal evolution. These methods resonated with me both intellectually and emotionally, and I can already see their value for my future endeavours.

The facilitators were truly outstanding—their knowledge, energy, and dedication made a huge impact on me. The group itself was wonderful too, even though there were some differences in age. That diversity actually enriched the experience. One highlight for me was the time spent with my roommate, Ricardo. Our conversations, while sometimes a bit awkward, were intentionally so—and they ended up being really funny and meaningful. Those little moments of laughter and connection stayed with me.

What I take away from this experience is not just the knowledge, but the people, the shared laughter, and the unforgettable moments. Above all, the insights from the facilitators will stay with me. I plan to use everything I've learned here in the organization I hope to build one day.

Iván Jesús (Spain)

I am history teacher in high school. I joined in this training course with hope to learn more about NFE.

I learned to combine non-formal methods with digital tools to make learning more engaging. It shifted my view on education, and I plan to use these skills in online and community-based activities.

The teamwork and open discussions made learning enjoyable. Facilitators guided us well and kept the sessions interactive. A highlight was using digital tools in a group project.

This training helped me grow both personally and professionally. I feel more confident using non-formal methods to engage others. Moving forward, I plan to apply these skills in school workshops. I'm thankful for the experience and the inspiring people I met.

Ivana (The Republic of North Macedonia)

1. Introduction

I decided to join this Erasmus+ training because I wanted to learn more about non-formal education and meet people from other countries. I didn't know exactly what to expect, but I hoped to gain some new ideas and experiences that I could use in the future.

2. Key Learnings

During the training, I learned what non-formal education really means and how it works in practice. I liked that we didn't just listen to theory but also created our own methods and tried them out with the group. It helped me understand the process much better.

I also discovered more about myself – how I work in a team, what role I usually take, and how I can improve. Some activities pushed me out of my comfort zone, but in a good way. I now feel more confident to lead or take part in similar projects.

3. Experience with the Group

Being in a group with people from different cultures made everything more interesting. Everyone had their own stories and perspectives, and I learned a lot just by listening and sharing.

The facilitators did a great job – they were supportive, clear, and open. They gave us space to try things on our own but were always there if we needed help.

One challenge for me was the tight schedule – sometimes it was hard to stay focused all day. But the group energy and regular reflection moments helped me stay present.

One of the best moments was the intercultural evening – it was fun, relaxed, and really brought us all together.

4. Final Reflections

This training gave me new ideas and motivation. I see more clearly how non-formal education can be useful in youth work and personal growth. I hope to use what I learned in local projects or maybe even organize something myself one day.

I'm thankful for this experience, the new friends I made, and everything I learned. It was a meaningful and positive week that I won't forget.

Jāzeps (Latvia)

1. My name is Kristijan, I'm a teacher in High school.

2. I joined in this project/training to learn some new methods and techniques about NFE.

I learned something new different which help me to implement in my FE.

3. Collaboration, interaction was on top level, everyone sharing some knowledge, experience, different views, working in groups was very perspective, It was fun and relaxed.

4. Training was successful, I learned good things.

Right now I have different view about education and working with young people. This training/project help me and motivated me to do something creative about education

Kristijan (The Republic of North Macedonia)

1. I'm computer science teacher in high school. I joined this training with the hope of gaining new tools to include NFE in FE.

2. The most useful activities was the team building, developing communication and leadership skills, collaboration, using digital tools,

I learned how to include NFE activities to break away from the monotonous daily lessons, I incorporate a class structure that includes an introduction, main part, and conclusion, which leads to greater student engagement.

3. Through these experiences, I've developed strong facilitation skills, a deeper understanding of experiential learning, and a belief in the importance of lifelong learning beyond the classroom.

4. My experiences in non-formal education have shown me that meaningful learning doesn't always happen in a traditional classroom. It happens when people are actively engaged, feel safe to express themselves, and are encouraged to think critically and creatively.

Marija (The Republic of North Macedonia)

When it comes to Key Learnings, I believe that I have learned the following things - in which ways I can approach my target groups both during and outside of workshops and actions, then with the help of which techniques I can maintain and attract the attention of participants in workshops and actions when necessary, and I also believe that I have learned how those participants who are more withdrawn and less active, among whom I would include myself, can interest and encourage them to have a really high-quality and productive period during the workshop/action/exchange/training with which they are really satisfied.

When it comes to my experience, I believe that with the help of this training I have become a more flexible person who is able to adapt to a new environment and new people in a short period of time. I also learned that it is extremely important that I constantly try to look at things that are out of my sight and to think out of the box, which is not typical for me in my everyday life - if I see that something is going well for me in a certain way, I will not try to change anything, I will not have the need for something new. When it comes to the work sphere of my life, I like when something is established, when it is predictable. At this training, I had the opportunity to experience things in a completely different way and from a different angle - the presence of the trait of static, i.e. immutability, can often be a brake on our success. Staying in the comfort zone and insufficient readiness to take action are the key entities that divide either to stay in the same place, or to go back. After all the workshops and activities, I can say that it became clear to me that for success, however you define it and whatever you mean by it, the following is necessary - attempts, innovations, observation, facing and accepting both yourself and our environment. We need to face and come forward - I think that this is the key to success both in non-formal education and in life in general.

Natalija (Serbia)

I am a volunteer at a cultural centre in a small town, where I do activities with youngsters. I work in the healthcare sector and with IT specialists. I came to this training course, because I needed inspiration and some new ideas to apply in my work.

I have learned a lot of new things and can immediately apply some team building activities, energizers and brain twisters. I will also try some online applications.

I attended many diverse and valuable workshops created by other participants and I am about to reflect on them and introduce some elements into my work.

On a personal level I am extremely grateful to Sergey for his efforts to show us more from Latvia. Also I would like to mention the intercultural events that brought a lot of good emotions and multicultural understanding.

The training program was very well balanced and the participants were very nice people. I had the opportunity to visit Balvi Youth Centre and to spend a few hours in the local library. I felt very good here and although the language and nature are a bit different than in my country, somehow I also felt a lot of things in common.

Rali (Bulgaria)

I work as a volunteer in an association that provides free teaching of Italian basics for foreigners in my city.

I truly appreciated the deep focus on NFE of the training, in its practical use but also its theoretic nuances. Furthermore, I have the chance to comprehend how NFE does not pertain younger people only (<18), but it can successfully apply in the formation of young adults too, if properly.

I managed to explore teaching techniques I hadn't considered so far in my experience, and doing so in such a multicultural environment has profoundly enriched the training.

I truly hope I will be able to put this new knowledge to the test not only in my volunteering activity (the classes will restart in September), but in other fields as well.

Riccardo (Italy)

I am an education activist from Algeria. I still remember how the week started with quite a dramatic moment! I got stuck in an elevator in Riga for one hour, and I thought to myself, "Wow, I really hope this training goes well." Luckily, that rough start turned into one of the most meaningful weeks I've had in a while.

From the very first day, I got the chance to meet people from different countries and cultures. It wasn't just about learning professionally; it was also about connecting on a personal level, sharing laughs, stories, and experiences that helped me grow in many ways.

Throughout the training, I explored several non-formal education (NFE) methods and discovered how powerful they can be when designed to meet the real needs of a target group. I especially appreciated learning about the different types of NFE, the theories behind them, and how to align them with specific learning objectives. It helped me reflect on how I currently deliver activities and how I can improve them by making them more engaging, inclusive, and learner-centered.

My main goal was to become better at using NFE approaches in my work, and I believe I've achieved that. I now feel more confident in choosing and applying the right methods, and I understand how to create a safe and meaningful learning space for others. This experience reminded me that even after a rough beginning, something beautiful can unfold. And that's exactly what happened to me in Latvia.

Salim (Spain)

I joined mainly because I was curious to experience how it all works. Being in a foreign country, discussing a specific topic with people from all around the world, learning new things, and exploring my own limits were all part of what drew me in. My main expectation was to have a meaningful and enjoyable time while gaining new insights and skills.

In formal education, most activities tend to stay on paper and don't really translate into action. As a result, we often forget what we learned because we were doing things just to get them done, not because we truly wanted to learn. But here, even if a topic seemed boring at first, it turned into something engaging and memorable through interactive activities and group dynamics.

We did so many things in a short period—playing games together, brainstorming as a team, building group spirit, giving presentations, and much more. I believe we gained incredibly useful tools, especially in terms of soft skills, which will help us achieve our goals and make our future work much smoother and more impactful.

During the first few days, I mostly observed. But soon, I started noticing communication problems within my group and others, so I tried to create connections between people to help bridge those gaps. I think this made everyone feel more comfortable and encouraged them to focus their energy on personal growth and shaping their ideas.

The schedule was quite intense, and waking up early every day was a bit of a challenge at first. Balancing our responsibilities also felt difficult initially, but we managed to adapt. Since we were spending most of the day at the project site, managing our time and energy became really important—not just for ourselves, but also for keeping in touch with our families and friends back home.

As for unforgettable moments—what really stood out to me was how relaxed and open everyone was. We were genuinely focused on learning and enjoying the process together. Activities like the role-plays made that even easier, and they became some of the moments I'll never forget. And of course, our group chant “oioioi” will always bring a smile to my face!

This project provided a solid foundation for developing new personal and group management skills. From simulations and new methods to simply communicating more effectively, I gained a lot. In the future, I plan to use and improve these skills through my university and local organizations, and hopefully help others gain them too.

It was an intense but incredibly rewarding week that truly contributed to my personal development. We learned so much in such a short amount of time. I may not remember everything right away, but I'm sure that, with time, I'll reflect on it more deeply and fully absorb what we've experienced. I'm genuinely thankful for this journey.

Selda Gül (Türkiye)

Hi, I'm an Events Coordinator at the American University in Bulgaria, where I get to dream up competitions, learning academies, and mentorship programs for high school students. My world revolves around non-formal education, which is actually what led me to join this project in the first place. I wanted to dive deeper, pick up fresh ideas, and discover new approaches to education beyond the classroom. I expected to learn about non-formal education in theory, but what truly amazed me was how hands-on everything turned out to be. We didn't just talk about the methods—we lived them. Now, I feel like I have a toolkit overflowing with resources, fresh perspectives, and creative methods. I was especially struck by how NFE principles can breathe life into even the most traditionally “formal” topics. It really turned my assumptions on their head. Who knew serious themes could be explored in

such a fun, engaging, and safe way? I'm already daydreaming about using all the energizers and brain twisters in my upcoming academies. They're going to love it.

The entire experience was incredibly positive. I learned so much—not just from the training, but from the amazing people I got to meet. We exchanged cultures, stories, and a whole lot of laughter. The facilitators were absolute stars: kind, patient, and always ready to support us no matter how many questions we fired their way. The training itself felt seamless and well-paced, with just the right mix of emotion and reflection. Some activities hit me right in the feels, but in a good way—emotions have a way of showing us what really matters.

And I can't not mention the BBQ evening—it was pure magic. Calm, cozy, and one of those moments you just want to bottle up and keep.

Now I'm heading back to work feeling recharged, confident, and more sure than ever that I'm on the right path. With three academies just around the corner, I can't wait to test out everything I learned in Balvi, add my own spin, and keep creating spaces where learning feels like an adventure.

Sofiya (Bulgaria)

This was my first experience here and it was transformative for me. Unlike formal education, where the emphasis is more on the transmission of information, in non-formal education I learned through experience, through role-playing, simulations and personal reflection. This allowed me to develop practical skills such as communication, empathy, critical thinking and adaptability.

Non-formal education opened up new perspectives on personal and professional development for me. I understood that learning never stops and that the most profound lessons often come from direct interactions with people and from the challenges we encounter outside the classroom.

Vulpe (Romania)