

E-Booklet: Let's Digitalize Youth Organisations

Erasmus+ training course (youth workers' mobility) in Kaunas, Lithuania
Duration: 6 days (August 9-14, 2016) + 2 travel days (8 & 15 of August);
Participating countries: Italy, Poland, Latvia, Romania, Lithuania;
Total number of participants: 27.



Erasmus+

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Introduction

Nowadays we are witnessing a social media revolution - e.g. Facebook added over 200 million users in less than a year, Instagram has about 400 million monthly users, while Snapchat has 100 million daily ones! At the same time apps such as Pokemon GO storm the whole world in just an eyeblink. As Erik Qualman from a movie [Social Media Revolution 2016](#) said:

“We don't have a choice on whether we do social media, the question is how well we do it?”

All this made NGOs from Lithuania, Italy, Poland, Romania, and Latvia unite and create a project for youth workers to share their experiences on the best ways to use digital tools in youth organizations. As a result, a Erasmus+ youth worker mobility “Let's Digitalise Youth Organizations” was held in **Kaunas, Lithuania** on August 8-15th, 2016.

The main goal of the project was to grow digital communication professionals, who could effectively communicate with youth and help NGOs be more visible in EU. The project intended to promote the concept of effective digital communication amongst youth workers and young people in Europe as well as the general public.

The project also aimed to help the participants grow professionally, keep them active, involve them in multi-cultural discussions, develop a number of skills and competences, and create partnerships across Europe.

In order to achieve these objectives, a range of non-formal education methods developed by all the partner organizations were employed. Main activities identified benefits of digital communication, teach the competences needed, and create the means of spreading information about the concept to the public.

Participants

There were 27 participants in total, coming from 5 different countries: Lithuania, Italy, Poland, Romania and Latvia. Most of them were young leaders of student associations, youth NGOs, volunteers of local youth councils, similarly involved into youth work, nearly everybody worked before for youth organisations and took part in the youth exchanges, so they had experience and knowledge to successfully share with each others. They could compare how youth organisations are functioning in different countries and had discussions about improving their organisation's visibility in the social media using methods and tools from workshops.



Workshops and activities

The participants had workshops on social media usage for NGOs (Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.), cloud services and file sharing (e.g. Dropbox, Google Docs, WeTransfer), Digital Art (Photoshop) and Sports (Xbox Kinect), Website / Blog creation, and many more. They also had an opportunity to talk with social media expert Mantvydas Leknickas, who has ran social media by storm (has more than 60,000

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followers on FB) and is running successful marketing agency Cocos (<http://www.cocos.lt>). The event with M.Leknickas was available for public to join and was also streamed online. The participants also visited startup hub Blaster, where they met IT specialists and got broader knowledge about digital tools used by professionals. Apart from many other activities related to the topic, the participants could also get into the Pokemon world by catching them in Kaunas! Other non-formal education methods used during the project were, among other things, interactive “Brain Battle” quiz and Digital Dance Battle. During free time they played games, which required using digital tools, like Gossip Box, where they published anonymous gossips and Killer (by a kiss) game.

Full schedule can be seen at the **Concept & schedule** section below.

Results

While learning, participants created a lot of entertaining digital materials that will help other youth workers and youth across Europe get to know more about digital tools and their usage in NGOs. Materials can be found in a site created during the project: <http://activeyouth.lt/en/lets-digitalise-youth-organisations/>. One of the best materials created during the project were the following video, which really represent the fun part of the project: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oDltnoUvXXk>

One of the participants task's was to create and run for a while their own youth organisation. They were divided into 4 groups and they were supposed to prepare digital communication plan for youth organisations. They invented:

- Turtles MOVE <https://www.facebook.com/turtlesmove2016/>
- Pole Dance Supporters <https://www.facebook.com/PD-Supporters-301132903573768/>
- Interactive Youth <https://www.facebook.com/interactivetyouth/>
- IEIYO (International Emotional Inteligence Youth Organization) <https://www.facebook.com/IEIYO/>

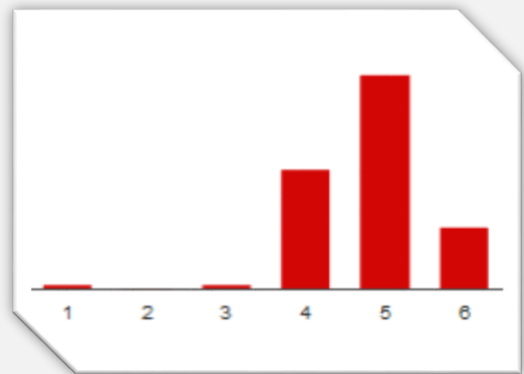
Project evaluation

The increase of participating youngsters' knowledge on the topic was a key objective of the project. To assess that in numbers, we have provided a [current knowledge assessment](#) on the first day, where the participants were asked (among other questions) anonymously to self-grade their initial knowledge. On the last day, they were similarly asked to give a grade to their then knowledge. The results are shown below.

For the initial knowledge assessment, the average self-grade given by the participant was: **3.48 out of 6** (or 5.8 out of 10).

Yet, the final knowledge assessment has shown the average grade had gone up to **4.86 out of 6** (or 8.1 out of 10). This entails an **increase of 2.3 points** on a 10 points scale or **40%** in relative terms. Such a hike can be considered as a success of our workshops and activities (which can be found below at [Educational material](#)). The distribution of answers can be seen at the figure 1.

Final evaluation has also asked to grade the project in general (considering the learning outcomes, fun, etc.). As we can see in the figure 2, the average was standing very high at: **5.28 out of 6** (or 8.8 out of 10).



1: What grade would you give to your final knowledge of the topic?



2: Grade for the project

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The score straightforwardly reveals that the project was both useful (learning wise) and enjoyable for the participants. Some of their reflections after the project:

"The project could not have been better! I learned so much in such an entertaining way!"

"Thank you! It was an amazing experience. One of the best of my life!"

Their detailed answers and testimonials can be found here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Tgvc5htzaNq79WKT1ZPxpq5Qedeq4d5XW0laS4N5Ek/viewanalytics>

Concept & schedule

The main objectives of the project were to:

1. teach youth workers how to effectively use digital communication tools in youth organisations (NGOs);
2. develop new ideas for better digital communication in NGOs;
3. share the knowledge how to reach a clear and appealing image of a NGOs through digital tools;
4. set the most effective ways for cooperation between NGOs through digital tools;
5. connect digital tool theoretical and practical learning methods through NFE methods.

To achieve these objectives, Asociacija "Aktyvus jaunimas, the trainers and the participants themselves have created a number of unique activities. Involvement, creativity and initiative of all the participants were encouraged throughout these workshops/games/sessions, which included:

- interactive workshops on different digital communication tools: Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc., cloud services and file sharing (e.g. Dropbox, Google Docs, WeTransfer), Digital Art (Photoshop) and Sports (Xbox Kinect), Website / Blog creation,
- digital tools usage practice in youth organisations,

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- discussions in non-formal environment (World Café Discussions),
- meeting IT & communication professionals (social media expert Mantvydas Leknickas, visit in the startup hub Blaster),
- creative country presentations,
- application of digital art and sport as NFE methods,
- analyses of relevant video materials,
- quizzes, specialized group exercises,
- digital feedbacks, self-reflections, evaluations, etc.
- cultural evenings, ice-breaking and socializing activities.
- Since the project goal is to reach the public and disseminate the results effectively: special videos, photos and website were created.

Full schedule of the project can be found here: [Schedule of the Training Course](#).

Educational material

Some of the activities/workshops of the project can be found in the list below:

1. [Info pack of the Training Course](#) with all the information for project participants.
2. [Teambuilding game](#), where one has to complete certain fun small tasks with different people.
3. [Current knowledge assessment](#), which was done in the beginning of the project.
4. Open discussion with a social media expert M.Leknickas, which was open to public and streamed online ([Part 1](#); [Part 2](#)).
5. [Free time activity – Killer \(by a kiss\) Game](#).
6. [Free time activity – Gossip Box](#), where participants could write anonymous gossips of the project.
7. [Free time activity – Project's Nominations](#) where participants nominated each other.
8. [World Cafe Activity](#) – list of topics & answers for non-formal discussions;
9. [Reflections](#) that were made in a digital way for participants to provide feedback each day.
10. Interactive activity for [creating youth organisations](#) in mixed country teams.
 - Created organisation #1 – [Youth Decide](#);
 - Created organisation #2 - [International Emotional Intelligence](#);
 - Created organisation #3 - [Turtles Move](#);
 - Created organisation #4 - [Interactive Youth](#);
 - Created organisation #5 - [Pola Dance Supporters](#).

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11. Digital Tools for youth work & volunteering workshop.
12. Creativity Seminar to help participants think out-of-the-box.
13. Introductory workshop on digital tools.
14. Videos related to the topic that were shown in a non-formal video afternoon for the participants.
15. Fun team quiz created for the evening activities of the training course (could be used in any other similar project).
16. Session to introduce video creation for beginners (includes an Erasmus+ example).
17. Reimbursement sheet for participants to fill in their travel details (could be used in any other similar projects).
18. Learning Agreement that the participants sign before the project (could be used in any other similar projects).



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 competence of the European



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youth. We cooperate with organizations of similar profile from all over Europe (more than 50 partnerships) to organize 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 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) organize 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. Firstly, we organised a youth exchange on tolerance for minorities ("Let's Turn Discrimination into Tolerance"), where young people gathered to help the minorities across Europe integrate easier to the society and get better opportunities both in social and work life. Secondly, we have organised both youth worker mobility and a youth exchange on the topic of Social Entrepreneurship ("More than Money: Social Entrepreneurship Heroes"). Since then we have hosted 7 more Erasmus+ projects (as of July 2016).

More on us: <http://activeyouth.lt/en> or <https://facebook.com/activeyouthlt>