



Active RAINBOW YOUTH EXCHANGE

A SAFE PLACE TO EXPLORE YOUR IDENTITY

BOOKLET

“From personal roots to local actions”

A booklet on social inclusion, personal development and informal educational tools.



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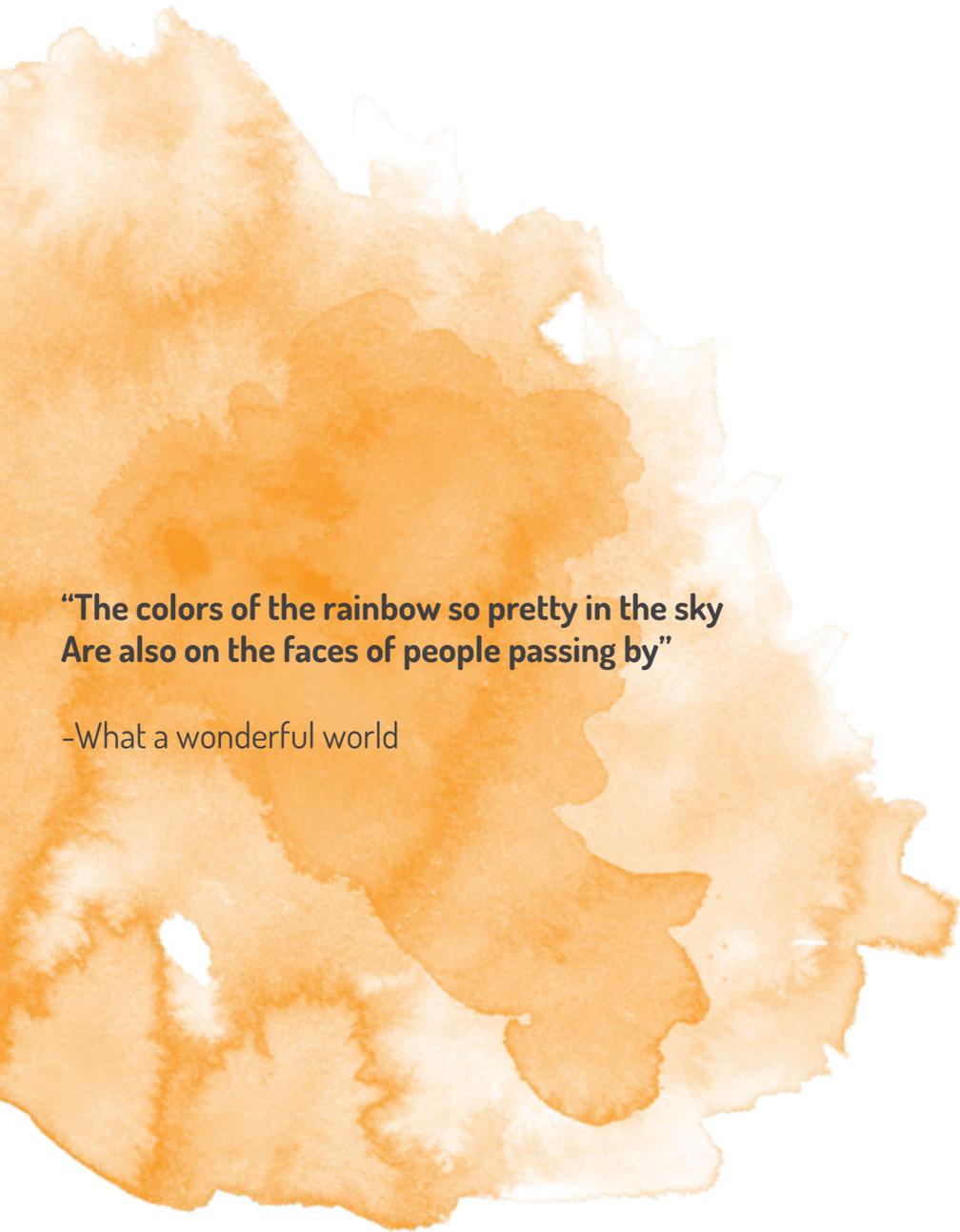
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“The colors of the rainbow so pretty in the sky
Are also on the faces of people passing by”

-What a wonderful world

CREATING *freedom* BY
CONFRONTING THE
GREATNESS
OF PARTICIPANTS

Active
RAINBOW
YOUTH EXCHANGE

A SAFE PLACE TO EXPLORE YOUR IDENTITY

CREATING **INFORMAL EDUCATION** TOOLS
TO **EMPOWER** PEOPLE
BACK HOME

DEDICATION

This booklet was developed as part of the project, Active Rainbow. The project was led by Olde Vechte Foundation and was made possible thanks to the financial support of Erasmusplus Jeugd, the Dutch National Agency of Erasmus+ programme.

The collection of new tools, good practices and lessons learned presented in this publication were developed by the young people who participated in the project and by staff members and volunteers of Olde Vechte Foundation.

We dedicate this publication to all the people who were involved in the colorful journey of the project in all stages of it. Whether you were involved directly or indirectly, it has been a rewarding experience and gratification. We thank everyone who contributed in it with their active participation, openness, creativity, joy and love. The young people, civil society members, volunteers, participants, leaders, representatives of organizations and other stakeholders who participated in the project activities.

Our vision is that it will serve as a valuable memoir and as a fruitful asset on personal growth, social inclusion and foster in the LGBTQIA+ spectrum. We would also like to acknowledge all the partners for their wonderful cooperation and involvement throughout the whole project.

Special thanks go to:

- Olde Vechte Foundation and its volunteers, who supported with the practical arrangements of the project's events (APV & Exchange)
- The director of the foundation, Marco Vlaming, for his constant guidance, care and empowerment.

His shared vision of the Foundation and his work have been an inspiring force all along.

- The youth worker, Eddie Wolters, for his guidance and support during the whole duration of the project. His expertise on Erasmus+ programme has been a particular learning opportunity.

- The graphic designer of this booklet and visual artist of Active Rainbow initiative & all its project, Elina Primaka, for her love, care, involvement and creative support in shaping the visual identity of the projects.

- The graphic facilitator of the Exchange, Daphne Vasila, for sharing her facilitated light and illustrative talent in this booklet. For her passion and care that she put into it.

- The editor of the tools and background information of the booklet, Olga Karageorgiou, for her active contribution in the whole project. For her energy, determination, care and love that she shares and puts into her work.

- To all the Active Rainbow Team Leaders, for their commitment and contribution to the project. The love, expertise, fun moments and great atmosphere that was shared during the Exchange.

- To all the article writers for sharing their experience, insights and opening up to us about the project.

- To all the participants, whom without them, the project would have never been as Rainbow Unique as it was, a thank you for everything that you brought and shared into it.

Enjoy!

Love,
Cathy (Aikaterini) Manousaki



ABOUT

OLDE VECHTE FOUNDATION

Olde Vechte is a training centre for non formal learning and group accommodation since 1966. It was conceived as an initiative of a group of people, who identified a great need for learning that is not provided by the established educational system. Society keeps changing over the years, becoming more and more intercultural. Still, the need of an “out of the school system” education stays around. **The Foundation’s mission is to create a learning environment out of love, care and cooperation for everyone.** Especially for people whose needs cannot be met by formal education methods. Modern approaches of non-formal learning are used in all the activities of the Foundation. Kinaesthetic, auditory and visual senses are involved, bringing about learning by experiencing and enabling the full participation of the trainees.

The Foundation is active in a wide range of fields on local, national, European and international level. From organizing open call educational projects, to cooperating with Erasmus+ on Trainings, Youth Exchanges and EVS projects, to applying for Dutch National Funds and collaborating with other organizations from the Netherlands and around the world, to offering facilities to national and international schools, Olde Vechte is a learning place for everybody.

Our projects approach several topics: coaching, volunteering, personal development, employability, integration, body movement, art, dancing, outdoor education, peace building, facilitation of groups, media, gender, human rights and LGBTQIA+ spectrum.

THE BOOKLET

About this Publication:

The “Active Rainbow Booklet: From personal roots to local actions”, is one of the main tools developed through the project. **It is an educational tool, which documents the methodology, the new informal educational tools, actions and experiences of the young people involved in its main activities.**

It captures the lessons learned and good practices for engaging young people in the promotion of human rights and social inclusion of LGBTQIA+ people in societies.

It promotes youth initiatives, personal awareness, non-formal education and Erasmus+ programme.

The whole publication reflects on the benefits and outcomes of non-formal education, in which learning is happening by doing and by experiencing.

Target Audience:

The publication is addressed to a wide range of people. It is intended for young people (16-30 years old), youth workers, social workers and organizations which work with the LGBTQIA+ community or with formal and non-formal education. It is accessible to be further spread by organizations, educations and anyone who is interested in the topic or struggles with the acceptance of their own identity.

LESSONS LEARNED, GOOD PRACTICES: DEFINITIONS

Lessons Learned: document the experience gained during a project. A lesson learned is knowledge or understanding gained through the experience of an activity or a process. The experience can verify in being positive or negative.

Good practices: are practices that are well documented and evaluated, providing evidence of success or impact. They are practices that have been tested and have produced positive results. Good practices include strategies, working methods and techniques that are worth repeating and sharing.

During the whole duration of the project, a variety of lessons learned were acquired and good practices were exchanged and created among all participatory contributors.

HOW TO USE THE BOOKLET

Inside this publication you will find different sections that include different kind of tools and information. The Structure is the following:

- **Learn** all about Active Rainbow project, its background, methodology and matters on discrimination, social exclusion vs social inclusion in its respective sections.
- **Find** the 10 exclusive workshops which participants created in the Workshops/Toolkit section. Learn how you can use and adjust the activities for your own facilitation and according to the needs of your working group.
- **Read** the Articles of participants and leaders as they share their experience and learning outcomes out of the Exchange.
- **Be inspired** from what participants and leaders got out this international experience for themselves in the Testimonials section.
- **Watch** their Inter-Active Love: Either All or

None Video Campaign and spread their message with them.

- **View** and read all about how participants and leaders empowered and impacted their communities back in their home in the Follow-Up section.
- **Learn** more about the partner organizations involved in this project
- **Get to know** about Erasmus+ programme and what educational opportunities exist

ACTIVE RAINBOW BIRTH

Active Rainbow was born in 2014 and started as a personal life-long project of an individual, Cathy (Aikaterini) Manousaki. It stands as a statement and way of living. The birth of it, was realized after a series of personal and professional events, which played a role as change-makers and grow-contributors in taking a stand and express: **I am an Active Rainbow.** The journey of Active Rainbow is a long and personal one, which led to this moment of understanding, acceptance and own acknowledgements. It was a relieving moment, which became a force of action, inspiration and self – empowerment for contributing in a long-lasting impact in societies.

Educational Portal:

Active Rainbow has grown and is currently an initiative on advocating about Human Rights through non-formal education and digital tools.

Vision:

A world which works for everybody out of respect and love. People live their life with respect, care and dignity of one another,

Mission:

To promote inclusion, equality, unity, diversity and love for all individuals regardless race, ethnicity, color, religion, gender and sexual orientation.

ACTIVE RAINBOW

THE PROJECT, BACKGROUND:
SOCIAL INCLUSION

ABOUT THE PROJECT:

Active Rainbow is a long-term Project with **a mission to promote social inclusion and combat discrimination of Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer Intersex Asexual and + (all other forms of sexual and gender expression) people in society.** The project was financed by the Dutch National Agency of Erasmus+ programme, called Erasmusplus Jeugd and was organized by Olde Vechte Vechte Foundation.

It consisted of 3 main activities: APV (Advanced Planning Visit), Youth Exchange and Follow-Up Period. The APV and Youth Exchange main activities took place in Ommen, Netherlands, in the group accommodations of the Foundation. The Follow-Up activities took place in each partner country accordingly.

The project was endorsed by 7 more partner organizations coming from Lithuania, Latvia, Greece, Spain, Italy, Romania and Bulgaria.

ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES:

APV: The meeting gathered together the team leaders per each partner country, who spent 2 days, exchanging and learning from each other, knowledge and skills on informal and LGBTQIA+ education. It was a preparation meeting for the Exchange. It took place from 15th-16th of January 2016.

Exchange: It was the main activity of the project. It brought together 40 young people, aged between 18 - 25 years old, who were learning, growing and creating together their

own experience for 10 dynamic working days. The Project took place between 15th - 24th of February 2016. During the Exchange participants developed their own informal educational tools, which are workshops and are part of the toolkit of this publication. They also developed a video campaign, raising awareness on identities, which is also included in the booklet.

Follow-Up: One of the main aims of the project, was the organization of workshops activities in the local communities of participants. Therefore, during the follow-up period, participants organized and facilitated a wide range of activities in their communities, promoting actively the project, social inclusion, LGBTQIA+ spectrum and non-formal learning.

ABOUT THE OBJECTIVES OF THE EXCHANGE:

The objectives of the Exchange were reached and were the follow:

- to reach emancipation: for each person to get aware of their own identity, acceptance, self-expression and freedom of choice
- to exchange and identify the LGBTQIA+ needs and issues nowadays and maintain the knowledge on the LGBTQIA+ rights
- to exchange on how to organize an activity in local communities
- to exchange on how to define the needs of LGBTQIA+ youth in the local communities
- to increase participants in cultural awareness, social and civic competences, mathematical and digital competences, learning to learn and self-expression competences.

DISCRIMINATION

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary: Discrimination is the practice of unfairly treating a person or group of people differently from other people or groups of people.

WHAT WE OBSERVE TO THE WORLD

In our everyday reality, we see people treated unfairly according to a specific characteristic of them, for example their race, gender, nationality, language, economical status, etc. or even their external looks and abilities.

Discrimination can have different forms from mildest version of verbal insult (when a person is excluded from the norms of normal, or called insulting names due to the fact of belonging among "those kind of people"), to the more severe version of legal exclusion (where the rights of these people are not recognized) or acts of hate (physical crimes to murder or other violent and abusive acts).

ACCORDING TO THE DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

by the United Nations of 1948, "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights". (Article 1) As we perceive it, this practically means that discrimination should not exist. Human Rights are the articulation of the need for justice, inclusion, mutual respect and human dignity in all our activity. Unfortunately, not everyone responds or respects the Universal Human Rights with the same way. As it is proven through various statistics, researches and reality, the international law is not applied internationally and is not integrated to the national legal system



of most of the nations across the world. This means that people's human rights are being violated, sometimes in extreme ways, resulting in a severe exclusion of people and sustaining unhealthy societies.

WHAT WE SEE ABOUT LGBTQIA+ RIGHTS

First of all, we acknowledge that LGBTQIA+ rights are Human Rights. In this project we focused specifically on the rights of LGBTQIA+ people and not directly addressing the whole spectrum of human rights. Through our personal and professional experiences, we have observed those rights to be underestimated, unrespected and eliminated in many countries around the world and particularly in the participating countries of the Project.

In order to check the reality related to those rights, we collected information, related to the level of development of the respect of the rights of the LGBTQIA+ people in the participating countries of the project. This collected information occurred during the APV meeting of the Project in January 2016. The research was

done by the participating group leaders and it reflects on the situation that was at the time a reality. (Watch: Video-Challenges & Issues / Video-Positive Actions & Initiatives)

SOCIAL INCLUSION VS SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Social inclusion is the practice of including all the people in the society, regardless their differences. In this practice there is no discrimination upon people upon social, economical, personal and professional characteristics and the whole society is functioning well as one and a whole. In other words, the society accepts all its members with their diverse characteristics and all the members support each other in their pathways of life. All the players of the inclusive society are welcomed to equally contribute in the development of the common well-being and to play their parts as wished.

Social exclusion on the other hand is a form of discrimination. Especially, when people are not accepted in the society as parts of it, due to again a specific characteristic that they have, that is considered to be different or not normal as with the rest of the people. Social exclusion can happen based on gender, sexual orientation, race, colors, culture, ethnicity, religion and other.

The result of social exclusion is the social isolation or separatism. People that get excluded by the society are tending to have lack of self-esteem and belief in themselves or get affiliated to a smaller community that accepts them. The tendency of the human being to belong somewhere, encourages them to create their own societies where they can belong. By creating new communities in which they feel part of and acknowledged, people feel safe, belonging and not alone.

We observe a gap inside societies of Europe today, which stops the common growth of the society as a whole and promotes the creation of smaller independent communities that not necessarily interact with each other.

SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND LGBTQIA+ PEOPLE

Especially, young LGBTQIA+ people are being confronted with social exclusion and discrimination, because of their sexual orientation or gender identity in a daily basis in their lives. In some countries, regions and religions, homophobia, xenophobia and intolerance put a strain on young people's identity-building and self-development.



These phenomena occur both to their personal and professional life, such as: not being able to get a job, not being accepted by their peers, family and society, not being allowed to have a family and get married etc.

Fear has the tendency to close people inside. All around Europe many young LGBTQIA+ people have the tendency to drop out of their societies or stay in isolation. Even more, some of the young people tend to leave their countries and search for inclusive countries and communities, in which they are accepted and considered a mutual and equal part of the society.

This isolation and exclusion has a direct impact in the society itself, since by not providing the same opportunities and equal treatment to the LGBTQIA+ youth, society becomes dysfunctional. It is not healthy anymore, therefore it impacts all aspects of it, including socio-economic, politics, education and more.

THROUGH ACTIVE RAINBOW: SOCIAL INCLUSION & COMBAT OF DISCRIMINATION

Out of this realizations, observations and research on the phenomena and the overall LGBTQIA+ spectrum and human rights, we saw the need for a drastic change on how we address the LGBTQIA+ rights and community. Through this booklet, only a main part of our research and perspective on the phenomena is shared, which still shapes the background out of which the project came to mission.

Out of our long and wide experience, we recognized the adding value and role that non-formal education can play in promoting respect for human rights of all.

In order to further combat the discrimination of the young LGBTQIA+ people in their societies and particularly to support young people in their

personal development and empowerment, we decided to create a series of projects which would work on the topic through non-formal education and involve youth.

Through this project specifically, our focus was the personal development of the young people involved and the creation of informal educational tools, which can be used for expanding the mission of the project beyond.

We provided to participants a safe space and opportunity for them to become aware of their own self-expression, growth and identity. In this way, they could later contribute on their own to support the LGBTQIA+ rights in their own communities. And they did it.



METHODOLOGY - LEARNING PATH OF THE ACTIVE RAINBOW

General working methods:

Throughout the whole project, we were working with:

- **research**, in order to get to know the status of the LGBTQIA+ rights across Europe.
- **personal development tools** in order to support the young people to accept themselves and develop in a way that works for them and the people around them.
- **media tools** (photography and video) in order to promote the message of equality and human rights in all levels (Local-National-European-International).
- **arts, body-movement and self-expression processes**, in order for the participants to be able to express themselves, the issues they are meeting and the solutions they need to find.
- **workshops**, in order to empower our members to spread the message of LGBTQIA+ rights across through their own informal education creations.
- **coaching and mentoring**, in order to support the development of the young people and to empower them to create the life they want to live.

- **reflection groups**, in order for reflection on learning process and acquire support from the peers
- **intercultural learning**: working with diverse groups from different cultures and nationalities

The Exchange itself consisted of 4 main dynamic parts:

- **Introduction** to the topic, getting to know each other, personal and self-awareness.
- **Outdoor part** in Amsterdam and in Ommen: Participants and leaders had the chance to be hosted by IHLIA LGBT Heritage, get in contact with the LGBTQIA+ spectrum of Netherlands and interact with the local and multi-cultural community in the cities.
- **Participant's workshops**, in which they created their own activities and educational tools, either from scratch or by adjusting activities used during previous experiences
- **Closing Part**, in which participants summed up their experiences, learnings and outcomes during the Exchange, planned their next actions and thanked each other for their shared experience.



GRAPHIC FACILITATION OF THE LEARNING PATH



LANGUAGE - BODY - MOOD

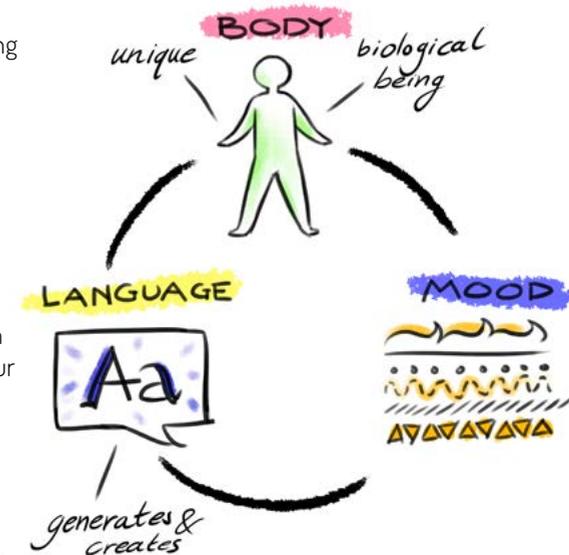
The 3 dimensions with which we worked during the whole Exchange:

Language in terms of communication, feedback and self-expression. When we use our language, we do not only express information. Language is creative. It generates and creates.

Body in terms of body/self awareness through body movement. Getting in connection with our biological being.

Mood in terms of dynamics of different states that we experience.

All 3 dimensions are inter-connected with each other.





THE LEARNING CIRCLE OF ACTIVE RAINBOW

Learning happens in a continuum. Starting point the Value that each individual brings in their own learning, which leads to learning by being involved in the creative process and by experiencing: By doing and acting. At last the reflection process occurs after the experiential learning to evaluate, assess, clarify and create an anchor.

In this learning setting, the individual, participant or leader, is the creator of their own experience.



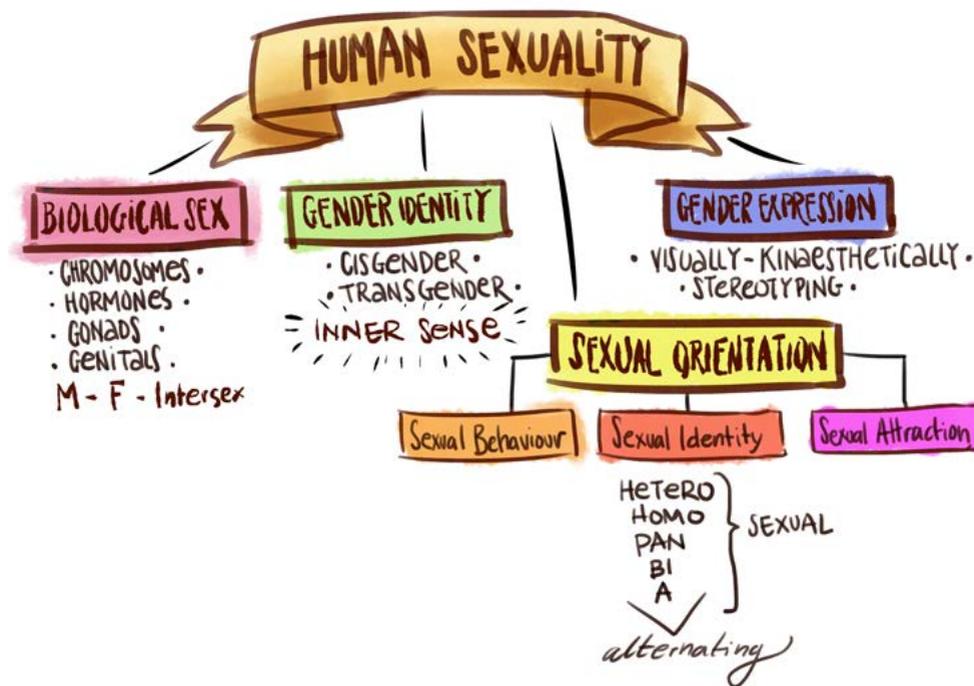
BODY-MOVEMENT

Exploring one's self through body movement and body awareness exercises. Sensing one's deeper connection with their body, how comfortable or uncomfortable one feels in their body and liberating oneself from personal body restrictions.



HUMAN SEXUALITY

We identified the basic terminology on gender identities and sexual orientations. Through an interactive way we explored the many diversities in the whole group.



GOOGLE KNOWS:

"Google is our best friend" is the statement that generates the usage of this online tool, for exploring the LGBTQIA+ history and rights and creating a unique timeline.



FOCUS - INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY - DISCRIMINATION

A series of diverse activities, in which we self-expressed through art.

We worked in small teams on the Intercultural Sensitivity model of Bennet Scale developed by Milton Bennet and we explored real-life situations of discrimination through theater.



RAINBOW SUPPORT GROUPS

for having a support system and reflecting on the learning process in a daily basis.



MATCH DANCE

Energizing each other through matching energy and dancing.



YES OR NO, SOCIETY & STEREOTYPES

Exploring one's view through Yes, No or Maybe activity.

Promoting understanding and acceptance through role-play game. Experiencing Stereotypes as constructed by society. Understanding privilege.

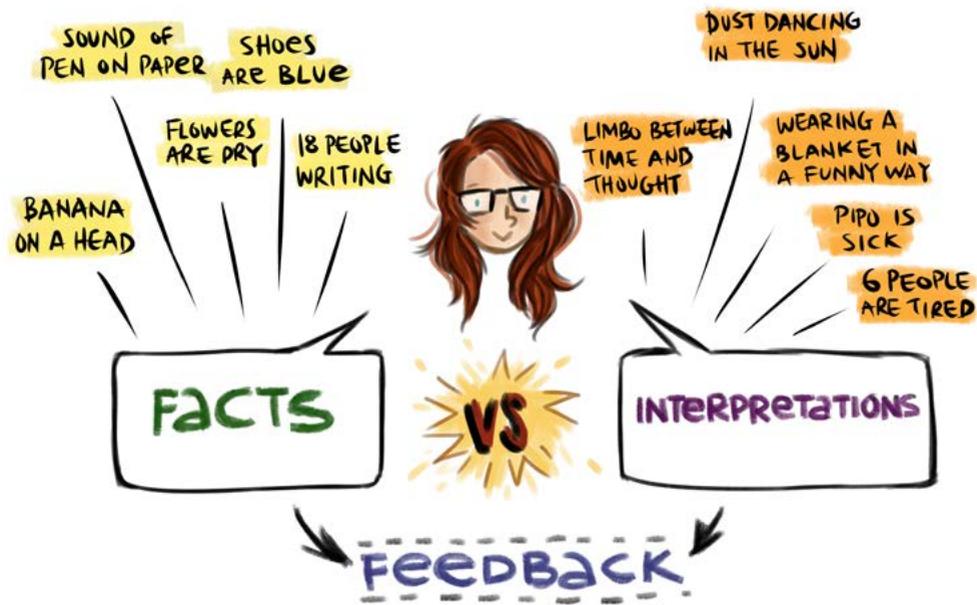


OUTDOOR IN AMSTERDAM:

Visiting IHLIA LGBT Heritage, getting familiar with the large archive of the organization, the biggest one in whole Europe concerning LGBTQIA+ spectrum. Find more info here: www.ihlia.nl and exploring multicultural Amsterdam through a variety of missions.



SUPPORTIVE TOOLS FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT & CREATING WORKSHOPS



FEEDBACK / FACTS VS INTERPRETATIONS

Through an exercise and open lecture, we worked on how to give constructive feedback, by understanding the difference between facts and interpretations.



THE VAK LEARNING STYLES

Sharing and exploring for each individual their own preferable learning style.

The VAK Learning Styles were developed by psychologists in 1920's to classify the most common ways that people learn.

VAK styles are supportive to understanding overall personality, preferences and strengths, which is always a mixture in each individual person. Everyone has a mixture of those learning styles. There is at least one that we can say is more dominant.

V/A CHART TOOL

One of the most essential tools for personal development, that we use in all of our projects.

This tool is a learning anchor, which can create a breakthrough in everyone's lives, once used and practiced in daily life. It supports in realizing how a person sees and acts towards the others and themselves. Realizing the course of our actions and providing with a new perspective. It's about acknowledging in which stage a person is and confronting that reality.

It is a powerful tool for taking accountability into our lives and out of it create the results that we want in life.



CIRCLE OF CREATIVITY

A significant tool for planning and being creative in our daily lives.

From checking our reality check, to acknowledging our vision, to setting our goals, to planning and organizing till we ACT and we create the desired results.



WORKSHOPS

WORKSHOP/TOOLKIT
ACTIVITIES FROM PARTICIPANTS



CHAT WITH THE DEAMON

by Petya, Victor, Davide

Indoors: ✓ **Outdoors:** ✗

Materials Needed: Curtains, Lights that can be turned on and off, open space for all the participants to sit on the floor

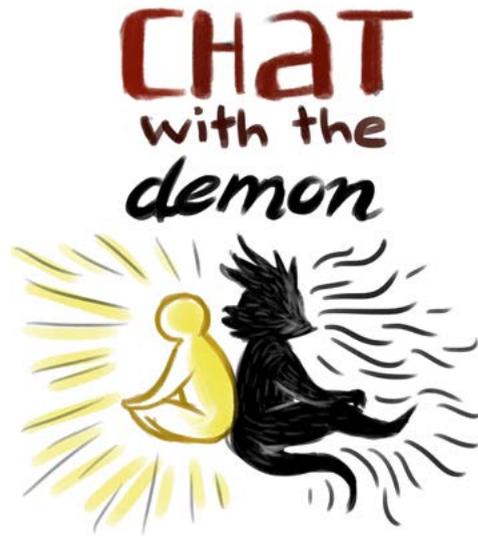
Duration: 30'

PURPOSE:

To get to know our dark sides, in order to learn from it and get to use it.

INSTRUCTIONS:

All the participants are asked to get inside the room in silence and to choose a spot to sit down on the floor. Then the facilitators ask them to lie their back opposite to another participant and close their eyes. The facilitators turn off the lights and/or drop the curtains and facilitate verbal guidance. The guidance is leading the participants to their imagination of their self



as a daemon. For this, they need to research their darkest sides. (By dark here we mean the parts of the person that are looking at getting revenge, offering pain, destroying or stopping something profitable for other or their own selves. Anything that is not used for a good purpose.) As the participants are getting contact with all the black thoughts of them, they are guided to follow them and develop their thought further and see everything that those thoughts have to offer to them.

After around 10' of guidance the participants are to keep their eyes closed and project this dark side to the person in their backs, as if the other person was their dark side. Then they can communicate with that side and talk out anything that comes to their minds without restrictions. No physical violence is allowed. The 2 people are speaking parallel, but focus to their own thoughts and feelings for their dark side. This part lasts for another 5'.

Finally, the participants are asked to keep silent and reflect on what they discovered about their dark sides, their thoughts and feelings towards them, as well as what was the thoughts that they communicated with them in the last part

and how. This part last another 5'. As final step, they are asked to embrace the light back inside them. Parallel to the last instruction from the guidance the facilitators are opening the curtains and the participants are asked to open their eyes.

DEBRIEFING:

The participants are asked to stand up in a circle all together. Then they are offering reflection questions:

How did you feel/ think towards your dark side? What did the dark side say to you? What did it look like? What did you chose to say to it? How easy/hard was it to get connected with your dark side? What did you feel when you open your eyes and the curtains were opened?

CONNECTING PEOPLE

by Lea, Rada, Modesta

Indoors: ✓ **Outdoors:** ✓

Materials Needed: 25 pieces of paper, 25 pens, speakers for music

Duration: 35'

PURPOSE:

Team building, opening up, getting to know each other, empowerment, improving communication skills (verbal and non verbal), cooperation

INSTRUCTIONS:

This workshop is divided in 3 parts:

Part 1: The participants are asked to stand in a circle, holding each other's hands. The facilitator is passing an impulse and each participant has to pass it as well to the person on their right. After the circle goes smoothly for one turn, the tempo is changing to a bit faster and faster and

By the end the facilitators share the purpose of the workshop with the participants.:

The workshop is based on Archimede's principle: The deepest you push a ball in the water, the strongest it comes out. We need to keep the ball on the surface to be in balance with ourselves. Therefore, people should not suppress their dark side, but instead to get to know it better and live with it.

REMARKS:

There is need of a space that can be lighted and get dark. Therefore either curtains or lights to be turned off are needed.

The voice of the facilitator must be low and slow, but hearable and at the same time strict and stiff.



faster and then changing sides and adding more impulses at the same time. This part lasts 5'.

Part 2: Depending on the number of participants, the participants have to count till the number of the amount of people in the group. If the group consists of 20 people, then they are asked to count till 20. The rule is that each person has to say one number, not less, not more and this has to happen without previous communication on

who speaks and when. Finally, the participants are not allowed to say anything else that just one number. If 2 people speak at the same time, they have to start over again from 1. The activity is completed when all the participants have spoken out one number and they have reached the number they were striving for. This part lasts 10'.

Part 3: The participants are asked to sit down on a circle, take a paper and a pen and write on a paper their name. Then they should pass the paper to the person in their right. As everyone has the paper of the person on their left, they are asked to write something positive about the person whose paper they have in front of them. After everyone has finished, the circle can continue and the paper can pass to the next on the write who is going also to write something positive and the next person, and so on, until they finally reach the person to whom they belong. Every person after writing has to fold the paper, so that is not visible the writing from non of the previous participants. As the person gets her/his paper, they spend 5' to read it and see how the other people see them. This part lasts 20'.

DEBRIEFING:

How did you feel about each of the parts of the workshop? Did you find it hard to communicate during first two exercises? What are your



thoughts about non-verbal communication? How often do you use it? What did you think while reading the positive comments from the others about you?

REMARKS:

For the last part, the facilitators need to keep up with the time and to make sure that the process doesn't last too long or get stuck at some parts.

A BRIDGE TO COMMUNICATION

by Pipo, Leonidas, Anna

Indoors: ✓ Outdoors: ✓

Materials Needed: 2 scissors, 2 paper tapes, 2 markers per person, 4 A4 color papers, 4 A4 white papers

Duration: 45'

PURPOSE:

Practice communication skills, understand the difficulties of communication with people with different cultures, sexual orientations, ethics, etc.

INSTRUCTIONS:

The participants are divided in 2 groups. Group A is the group of the Architects, group B is the group of the Citizens. The participants all together are explained that they belong to 2 different civilizations and that they should together build a bridge that will lead their civilizations to better future. So both civilizations want this bridge to be done. The 2 groups are getting into 2 different rooms where the facilitators are giving them the rules they have to work with. Each group has different rules.



The Architects get the instructions to build a bridge. They cannot touch the materials themselves, so they have to persuade the citizens to do so. Therefore they have to give the instructions to the citizens on how to build the bridge.: With the scissors they have to cut lines of white and color paper. With the tape they have to tape them together. For building the bridge there must be an alteration of color and white paper with the bridge starting and finishing with white paper stripes.

The Citizens have different communication rules than normal people do. In their language No is forbidden. In order to deny something they move their head up-down and say 'Yes'. Any other move combined with 'Yes' has the common meaning. Additionally, they can't establish a connection with anyone if the other person doesn't kiss them on the right cheek first. Then they consider the other person not enemy and they can communicate with that person. Finally, each of the citizens can use specific materials and not touch any others. According to the material that the person can touch there are different symbolizations.: Scissors= Gay, Color paper= Lesbian, Tape= Bisexual, Marker= Transsexual, White paper=

Intersexual and finally the Asexual people can't use any materials, but they can speak without first getting kissed at the right cheek. The Citizens are not allowed to reveal those rules to the Architects. They have to find them by themselves.

After the 2 groups have been explained the rules they should follow, they can come together in order to build the bridge. They have 20' to do so. The facilitators are not interrupting the process, except if someone is breaking the rules or the time is up. The participants are free to find their own way of making it in the process. After the time is up the group has to stop the process no matter what the progress is and observe what they have achieved.

DEBRIEFING:

What did you feel during the activity? Was those emotions the same for team A and team B?

LGBTQIA+ FAIRYTALES AND ART FOR CHILDREN

By Amira, Panagiotis, Eleni

Indoors: ✓ **Outdoors:** ✓

Materials Needed: Papers, pens, drawing materials (markers, crayons, colored pencils, etc.), 2 cups, board

Duration: 30'-40'

PURPOSE:

To explore a different, more critical point of view concerning gender and sexual orientation in classical fairytales and stories for children. To boost creativity and alternative out-of-the-box approaches. To have fun.

At which part was the confusion more intense? What did you do to solve it? How do you think this activity could be connected with your personal case? Do you meet this difficulties on communication in your everyday life? Can you draw parallels between this gap in communication among those 2 cultures and the LGBT - non-LGBT parts of the society?

REMARKS:

The 2 groups have different rules, therefore when the rules are given to them and while they are preparing their strategy for how to work, they have to be separated in a way that they cannot hear what each other says. The game of this activity is a variation of the classic game for groups "Kingdom of Dordia". The changes here are made in order to fit better to the needs of the topic of the project.



INSTRUCTIONS:

The participants are separated in groups of 3. Each group gets for themselves some place in the room (or the outside area). Each group has to select one paper from the 2 coups. One coup contains a traditional fairytale's name on a folded paper. The other an LGBTQIA+ character again on a folded paper. The papers are folded so that the participants cannot see what is written inside.

Then the groups are getting some time alone to imagine how to combine those 2 elements and make their own story out of them. They are free to create and express their stories in whichever way they want: comic, drawing, poem, stories, sketches, photographs, etc. This part can take approximately 15-20'. After they have finished with their stories, they have to give them a title and present them to the rest of the group.

DEBRIEFING:

What do you think now about the classical fairytales? Do you see gender diversity in the way the kids are raised? How do you feel for the stories you have created? and the stories of others? What was your education on sexual orientation at school?

REMARKS:

To create a cozy, inspiring and fun environment music can help a lot (for example, disney or kids songs)



STEREOTYPES

By James, Ioana, Evelyn

Indoors: ✓ **Outdoors:** ✗

Materials Needed: Video projector, internet, markers, papers, pillows, blankets

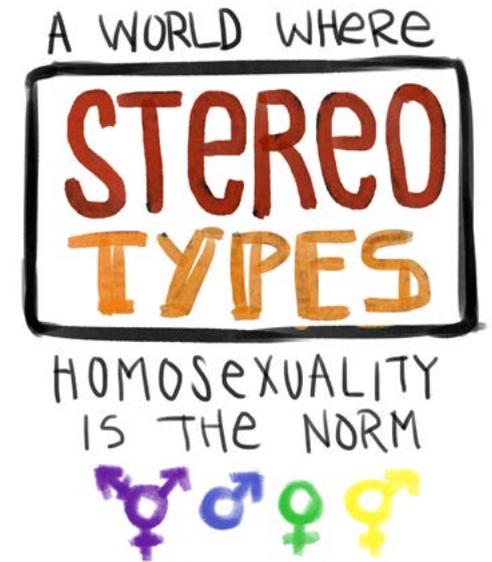
Duration: 45'

PURPOSE:

To make people aware of the stereotypes on the LGBTQIA+ community and start a conversation on this topic.

INSTRUCTIONS:

The participants are invited to take a comfortable position inside the room and they are informed that they are going to watch a video. Then the video plays and everyone is watching. When the film is over, everyone is invited to discuss what they have seen and to



conversate upon the topic of the stereotypes in and about the LGBTQIA+ community. While the topics are discussed, one of the facilitators is writing on a flipchart paper the main ideas of what the rest are saying.

DEBRIEFING:

What do you think this film is about? What was the most fascinating in it for you? Can you imagine living in a world like that? What did you feel towards the main characters? Do you see similar or opposite situations in your life? Have you ever experienced discrimination yourself? What are the stereotypes of the society about LGBTQIA+ people? Would you like to live in a world like that where homosexuality is the norm?

WHAT IS ART?

By Pavel, Nadina, Gloria

Indoors: ✓ Outdoors: ✗

Materials Needed: Multimedia Equipment and three colorful papers

Duration: 20'

PURPOSE:

To make people aware of the HIV and to ignite their interest towards the topic. To ignite a discussion related to the topic. To fight the stigma around the people living with HIV.

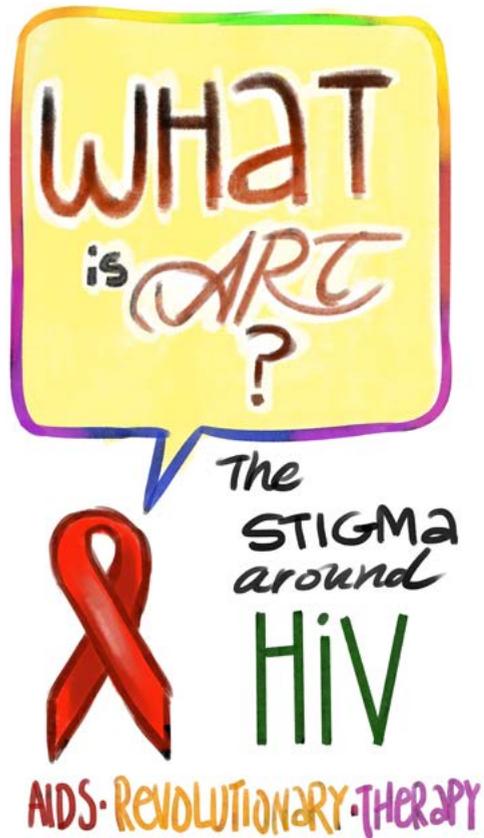
INSTRUCTIONS:

This activity consists of 2 parts.

Part 1: The participants are invited to take a position in the center of the room. Then, they are introduced to the 3 spaces in the room and what they do. Space one is "No, I absolutely disagree". The second is "Yes, I am totally positive" and the third one is "I bare no personal opinion". Then they are hearing a couple of statements and they can answer by moving themselves accordingly to one of those spaces. As they move to those spaces, the facilitators

REMARKS:

After the discussion, the participants are invited to play a little game influenced by the story. It is a storytelling game. One person is saying one phrase of a fairytale and then the rest have to continue the story in a circle. Each person can say only 1 word and they are invited to somehow make sense with what was the phase so far.



ask some of them why they are standing at that position and what is their knowledge related to the topic. After every statement, and the questions, the facilitators are offering the actual facts related to the topic.

Part 2: The participants are invited to sit down on the floor and watch a video about HIV in Europe. (Link here) After the video, the participants are invited in an open discussion related to the topic of HIV and people living with it. The facilitators are also asking questions, but they mainly let the participants to have a conversation.

DEBRIEFING:

In this activity the open discussion can serve as debriefing as well. How do you feel now about people with HIV? How would you feel if somebody you know was diagnosed as HIV positive? What was your previous knowledge on HIV? What is the education at school related to this topic in your country? What do you think should be done in support of the people living with HIV?



REMARKS:

The statements have to be related with the topic of HIV. For example:

- HIV is transferred by saliva
- People with HIV die within a year after the diagnosis
- Lesbian woman cannot have HIV

POWER, PRIVILEGE AND IDENTITY

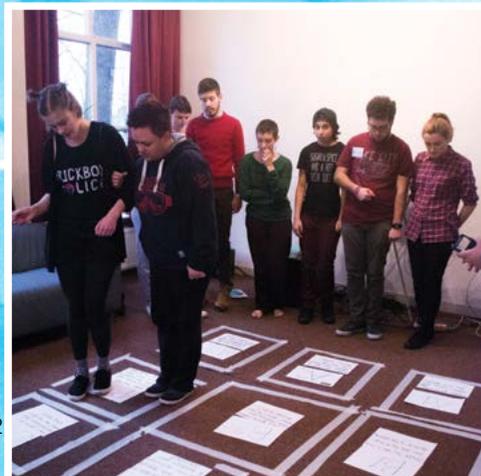
By Erianna, Carlo, Donya, Denisa

Indoors: ✓ **Outdoors:** ✓
Materials Needed: Paper tape, 50 A4 papers, markers, flipchart, 2 boxes
Duration: 30'

PURPOSE:
 To acknowledge the role of identities and how one is considered higher than another, To understand the social roles and how the work inside the community. To sense the importance that choices in the social life have in the living standards.

INSTRUCTIONS:
 This activity consists of 2 parts.
1. Introduction part:

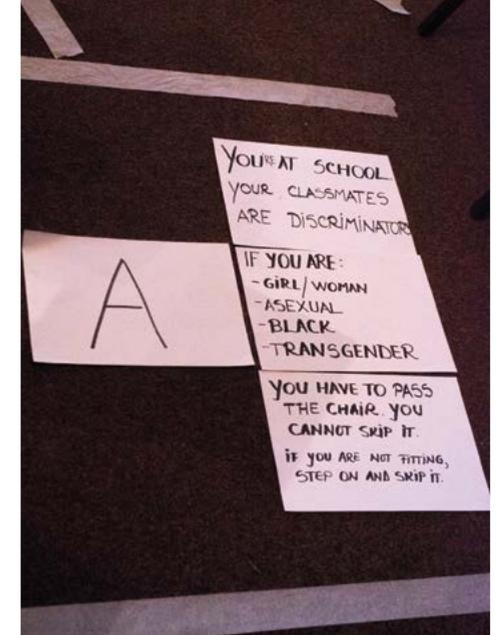
The participants are asked to brainstorm upon the concept of intersectionality. The facilitators are writing down on a flipchart paper all the key terms that the participants are bringing on. Then the facilitators are introducing the definition of intersectionality and they provide some examples in order for the group to understand the meaning. This part last 5'.



2. Game part:

The floor is covered with paper-taped squares, inside each of which there is a paper. The squares represent pathways in life and the papers events in life. The pathways are all leading to the same end and all the pathways may cross with each other. The aim of the game is to reach the "End square", which has the name of "Fulfillment". The representation here reflects that final destination of life is fulfillment and we are all working and walking towards it. In order to play the game the group is getting splitted into 2 smaller groups, each one led by 1 facilitator. The last ones are offering short explanations to the participants and by chance a paper with an identity, which determines several parameters: wealth (amount of money they will take), sex, sexual orientation, race, possible disabilities, etc. According to those parameters can the participants choose their next steps and support their choices. (Some have privileges and some no). They are also informed that they should keep their identities secret until the end of the game. It is only in the debriefing part that

they can reveal it. The participants can choose each time which blog to get in order to reach the end, but they cannot always make it. Some blogs are allowed only to people with specific characteristics and identity, for example white, man, straight, American, etc. Additionally, the 2 groups have different capabilities. Group A are the ones that move in couples (more people, more possibilities, more resources, but sometimes also more restrictions). Group B are moving alone and have to make it to the final square of "Fulfillment" by themselves. There should also exist at least one person (or couple) from each group that will be more than able to make it to the "Fulfillment", one that will make it hard and one that will not make it at all. The number of players (therefore couple for group A and individuals for group B) should be equal. Clearing this out, the couples are acting with common decision, but they have their own personal previous resources and characters. It can be that a couple has one member with 5 stones and 1 with none, or one member straight, male and another lesbian, etc. And still it is important for them to satisfy their fulfillment, while making common agreements. Then the participants are given the money that they should take according to their characters and they can start. Each participant is making their choices on the pathway they are going to follow by free will, but in accordance with the limitations offered by their characters. On the way there are also some obstacles, for example some squares that the disabled people can not go over and they have to choose another square instead. For the sake of the game, the obstacles could also be represented physically, chairs upside-down, wall, etc. If one character is not allowed to go the square of her/his choice, they should choose another one. They can only move one square by turn and they all have the same amount of turns. If a paper says that in order to move on you need to pay, then the participants have to give their money (the ones given to them according to



their characters). If the participant doesn't have this amount of money has to pay. Some of the papers also require that if the participant doesn't have the possibility to pay should go to jail. If one participant goes to jail, has to pay the debt in the next round in order to get out. If the person can not do it, stays in the jail till the end of the game and that is her/his pathway. Jail is not a specific square, but a space out of the game arena. If a participant has reached the end square, then the person stays there until everyone else has finished and doesn't interrupt the processes of the others. The game is a personal process, where everyone is making their own choices and gets the results of them accordingly. When a participant (couple or individual) has reached the final square of "Fulfillment", another facilitator is getting to them, congratulating them and asking them short questions about the experience and how they got there, in order to occupy a bit of their time until the rest are done. After the short questions, the facilitator is asking from them to get to the starting point and see at how the other participants are getting through the game, while being in silence, in order not to interrupt the process of the others.

After everyone has reached the end or used all their resources (have finished their pathways), they can use some time to see around at the whole pathway and what was written on all the papers. The participants are getting out of their roles and give back their papers and coins and they sit all together in a circle for the debriefing.

DEBRIEFING:

How did you feel in this role? Does this role relate to your role in real life? Do you see this privileges and discriminations in your everyday life? What do you find as solution to this kind of inequality? How was the decisions making process for the ones in couples? How did you feel to be alone? in a couple? in a couple with somebody with completely different resources /character? Considering that this game is a parallism to real life, what do you feel about the moment that all the participants can see at the progress of each other? What did you feel as privileged person towards the ones being in jail? What did you feel as less privileged person towards the ones being privileged?

REMARKS:

Some examples of an identity can be: 1. Male, Straight, White, American, 10 coins, 2. Female, Bisexual, White, with Famil y, France, 5 coins, 3. Female, Black, Dutch, on a wheelchair, 3 coins, etc. The distribution of the identities must be such that the participants will get the chance to reflect on diverse discriminations and privileges existing around the world.

The choice of the pathways must be very careful. The ways that the participants are going to follow are more or less determined before the game starts according to the characters. Therefore, the facilitators must create the pathways after they assign the characters and according to them. Some examples of pathways events can be: 1. There is a car crash. If you are have 1 coin, you can go to the hospital and pass to the next

level. If not you have to choose another square. 2. You want to get a PhD degree. If you are white, you can continue to the next step. If not, you have to choose another pathway. 3. You want to get married to your partner. If you are straight, continue and get 1 coin more. If you are not, you cannot continue. The characters must be chosen in a way that the participants can reflect upon real discriminations and privileges in the society.

If the participants cannot go further, the facilitator could encourage them to check the possibilities backwards and to choose another pathway. Is it important for the debriefing that the participants shake a bit, or do some other type of short activity in order to get out of their character. Role play activities may have a strong impact on the person's emotional state. Therefore, the facilitator must be careful with the way the participants get in and out of their roles.



LGBTQIA+ RACE

By Egle, Elena, Anna

Indoors: ✓ **Outdoors:** ✓

Materials Needed: 4 tapes, 1 color paper per person, markers

Duration: 30'

PURPOSE:

To raise awareness on the everyday life of the LGBTQIA+ people in Europe. To reflect upon the discrimination and privileges of the LGBTQIA+ among diverse countries.

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is a role play activity. On the floor there is a matrix of equal and equality spread squares. There is one square per participant. Each square has in front of it 15 other squares, which are the way each of the participants can follow. Then all the participants are going to the starting point, where they are given a label stuck upon their chest. The label is an LGBTQIA+ identity and a country of origin. The facilitators ask if all the participants understand and comprehend their character and their main characteristics. If some things are not clear about the character, they should ask it at that point, because after the start of the activity the participants must react based upon their understanding as if they where their character. The process is also going to happen in silence, therefore no other participant will be able to answer questions of others. Their choices must happen according to their personal knowledge and perception.



After all the questions are answered the facilitator asks from all the participants to hold their hands and step in the beginning of their lines. Then the facilitator is reading some statements. If the character's role agrees with the statement, the person moves forward. Depending on the percentage of agreement the person can move accordingly. Each participant can move only straight forward upon their squares and each time maximum one whole square forward and minimum not at all. All the other options in between are possible. For example: half step, slightly forward, 2/3 of the square. The facilitator is reading 15 statements. During the process the facilitator is reminding the participants that this process is happening in silence, and that now they are acting as their character.



After all the statements are read, the facilitator invites the participants to look around and see where they stand and where the other character stand. The facilitator is making conversation with the character about the positions that they are standing, how they feel in their position, how do they see their character in comparison to the rest of the characters. Finally, the facilitator is asking from all the participants to get out of their characters, by taking their papers, tear them in pieces, dance around themselves 3 turns and then spread the papers in the room. Then they are sitting all together on the floor for the debriefing.



DEBRIEFING:

How did you feel inside this character? Do you have contact with this characters? Real experience? How are the rights of this character in your country? How was it to imagine/see/feel the possibilities/discriminations/privileges of "this" character in "that" country? Would somebody coming from that country like to give feedback about a specific statement in their countries? What are your thoughts related to the people that stayed in the beginning of their lines? How was it to hold hands with people with from so diverse positions?

REMARKS:

In order for the participants to get into their roles, they can take some time in silence to reflect upon their characters, close their eyes and imagine they are the person whose character name they have. The LGBTQIA+ identity can be Lesbian, Transgender male to female interested in woman, Straight male, Pansexual Polyamorous female, Asexual

male, etc. Take care that the gender, sexual orientation and sexual preferences are described in the roles. The country parameter is added in order to make the differences more visible. For example a gay person in Greece and in the Netherlands are very differently treated. The statements must be related with rights of LGBTQIA+ people. For example: 1. I am treated equally in the health system. 2. I am able to get married to my partner. 3. I am considered a possible HIV positive. 4. I am able to walk hand-by-hand with my partner on the street with no fear. 5. I am able to adopt children with my partner.

Is it important for the debriefing that the participants shake a bit, or do some other type of short activity in order to get out of their character. Role play activities may have a strong impact on the person's emotional state. Therefore, the facilitator must be careful with the way the participants get in and out of their roles.

WHY ME?

Fabiana, Alexandra, Javi

Indoors: ✓ **Outdoors:** ✓

Materials Needed: White papers, markers, flipcharts

Duration: 45-50'

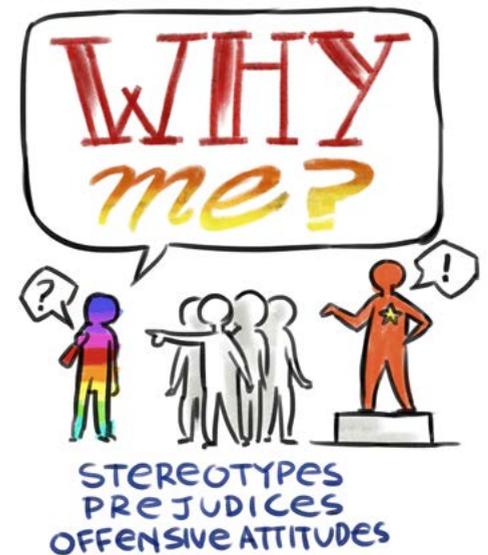
PURPOSE:

To raise awareness about discrimination. To promote collaboration and team work. To distinguish between exclusion, segregation, integration and inclusion. To reflect upon stereotypes, prejudices and offensive attitudes.

INSTRUCTIONS:

The participants are divided into 3 groups, each representing a community. Each group receives a paper from the facilitator, where it is written their community. Then each community is asked to get some space for themselves in order for the process to begin. Then each group is choosing a president and a discriminated person. For the last one, they need to describe in more details what the case is, and how the person is discriminated. Taking care always that the all the people belong in the same society. Then the person that is discriminated has to get in some distance and let the rest of the society to find a way to include the person back in the society in a way that both sides are satisfied (the rest of the society and discriminated person). The process can be repeated many times, until there is a possible solution good enough for both sides, or until an agreement between the 2 sides is reached. After all the societies have reached a certain point of the integration process, all the groups come together and they present to the rest what was their society, the discrimination case, and solution was. The activity is closed by an open discussion.

• DISCRIMINATION •



DEBRIEFING:

How did you feel during the activity? What was the most difficult in the process? What do you think of the case of discrimination in your community? What about the others? Have you meet in your life similar situations? How could dialogue and agreements solve similar issues in your personal life?

REMARKS

Some examples of the types of the society are: 1. Orthodox Christian society - polyamorous gay male, 2. Hippies community - conservative young female.

Is it important for the debriefing that the participants shake a bit, or do some other type of short activity in order to get out of their character. Role play activities may have a strong impact on the person's emotional state. Therefore, the facilitator must be careful with the way the participants get in and out of their roles.

RELATIONSHIPS & CONTROL

Alessandro, Andrea, Lorenzo

Indoors: ✓ **Outdoors:** x

Materials Needed: 1 paper per participant, 1 pen

Duration: 45

INSTRUCTIONS:

This activity is a form of guided meditation. In the sense that the participants have to follow the voice of the facilitator, think and reflect upon her/his/them questions on spot and continue the process according to the guiding of the facilitator.

The participants are invited to find some space inside the room, where there are prepared pens and papers and to sit down in silence. There is music on the background:

Mowgai- Take Me Somewhere Nice

And the facilitator starts the guidance:

- I ask you to reflect on the following questions: Do you care what other people think about you? If you meet someone new, what would you like the other person to know about you? What makes you special, what makes you different? Or what makes us the same?

-Now on the piece of paper in front of you, draw the contour of your hand. On each finger write a quality, one of your best. Something that you would like that everyone new or every person in your life to know about you. In the middle of your



hand, write your biggest flaw, or something that really bothers you about yourself. Take a look at the hand you draw. Do you like it? How would you feel if you'd meet someone that has the qualities you wrote on the paper? Would you be interested to talk to that person? Would you be interested to talk to someone with different qualities from yours? Or with someone that has a flaw? A flaw that seems more challenging than yours?

- And now.. I invite you to pay attention to this place, to walk around, and to look at the people around you, observe them, their faces, their bodies... look at the things around you. You can communicate with each other with eye or physical contact or by speech. What do you think about the qualities they have written on the paper? What about the flaws? Is there anyone or anything that's making you feel particularly attracted to? Go to that person that you feel attracted to and make them know about your qualities and flaws.

- You have a partner now. You're in a relationship. This pen symbolizes your relationship. The facilitators are offering 1 pen per couple. You can take care of this "relationship", you can protect it, provoke it, or defend it. You create a connection by holding it with just one finger per person. And as in any other relationship, there's a dynamic you share. You can express this dynamic in any way you choose, whatever makes you comfortable. You can just look in each other's eyes, you can move, you can touch, you can talk to each other, but keep in mind that in a relationship, every reaction you have, makes the other person react. If you feel the need to do it, move around, explore the room with your partner. Focus on the connection. Are you in this? Which one of you is pushing harder the pen? Maybe one of you is more supportive. Some of you may be afraid to drop it. If you dropped it, how does it make you feel? What changes after this? Do you intend to be more careful? Was it someone's fault that you dropped it? How free do you feel to express yourself, while having this "relation", this connection? Is it difficult? Remember you are in this with the person you chose, a person you felt attracted to.

- Remember this person's qualities and flaw. Do you want to discover more people? How is it to support one of the pen sides? You were on different sides of the relationship, but each one of you had the possibility to control it. How would be if you would love this control? - - Imagine if the hand of the person sitting next to you is a mirror that controls every of your moves. If the hand moves, you move.

- Now you're very angry with the person in front of you. ... Now you admire and respect your partner. Now this person scares you. How is it to do everything that someone wants you to do? How is it to control someone's reactions? What do you do with all of this power? Now you can change the roles, the other person will do the same things you did until now.

The process finishes when the facilitator thanks all the members for their involvement, openness and willingness to follow the guidance.

DEBRIEFING:

How did you feel during the activity? What was the most difficult in the process? What do you think of the case of discrimination in your community? What about the others? Have you met in your life similar situations? How could dialogue and agreements solve similar issues in your personal life?

REMARKS

Some examples of the types of the society are: 1. Orthodox Christian society - polyamorous gay male, 2. Hippies community - conservative young female.

It is important for the debriefing that the participants shake a bit, or do some other type of short activity in order to get out of their character. Role play activities may have a strong impact on the person's emotional state. Therefore, the facilitator must be careful with the way the participants get in and out of their roles.



ARTICLES OF PARTICIPANTS

THE EXCHANGE OF YOUTH

There are many things to be said about a place, crammed to the brim with intrigued though slightly lost individuals, where love is taught, and love is thought.

Yet this place is real, and you cannot find it on a map. There are no coordinates for the words we've spoken, the emotions we've felt and the trust we've, I've entrusted ourselves with. All this, at a youth exchange somewhere in the corner of my country's corner. I didn't find it until I opened my eyes, and saw others looking into me.

The exchange was focused around self-involvement and self-discovery, which might sound vague, and it definitely was at first. The very first day that is. We, roughly 40 people, were gathered in a chilly gymnasium for our initializing workshop. Walking, running, prancing about, we were given different tasks each time, and one of those was to gaze upon the eyes of the person nearest to you. What purpose could I possibly derive from hugging the irises of a - at the time unknown - fellow participant, other than the feel of severe awkwardness and a heaving pulse?

...I forget myself in a matter of moments, and see this person before me, tall and short, beautiful and balancing, their shy mile and bold stance...



I didn't find it until I opened my eyes, and saw others looking into me.

You see, you might try not to expect in life. But you do, otherwise you wouldn't be alive in the first place. This, to me, is a truth. And even though I tried to minimize my envisioning of the program before it should even take place, once it did, one can certainly say I was bewildered, to say the least. So there I stand, searching for my reflection in the other's glance, to make it less confronting. And what do you know, I know nothing, for I forget myself in a matter of moments, and see this person before me, tall and short, beautiful and balancing, their shy mile and bold stance. We laugh, not having uttered a single sound. It's not cold anymore in the room. Maybe it never was. That should give you a glimpse of the adventure I stumbled into, in ten days, in my life. So many cultures, so many languages, so little time! The days were jam-packed with activities and

peanut butter sandwiches, not necessarily in that order. From telling your most kept troubles and tales, to have them carried safely in so many hands, not fallen to shambles like the spirits they might speak of. To the educational fields we walked, of terminology and sciences, the spreading space to dance in and draw ideas, time. To actual dance, the rhythm of many hearts, bleeding thoroughly, breathing too.

Knowing a(nother) body and a soul in succession takes a lifetime, feeling one does not. For everyone, and I do mean everyone, in their own perfectly original way, positioned themselves so, as to be caught, to catch. There were of course many instances of teamwork, intellectual tea times, games for drinkers of

But most of all, it was a union of individuals, ego's so completely vulnerable and so perfectly present.

the night, slow morning breakfasts, trampoline endeavors and yawning chairs, tired with overuse. We spoke of LGBTQIA+ rights, wrongs, and everything in between that which constitutes a person. The philosophical aspects of psychology were ever so painted with opinions and perceptions. We were told to hear and listened instead, on our own incentive to feel so. I was myself, you were yourself. It wasn't about the whole of you, because our shadow takes different shapes

in different losses of light. It was about the freedom to have freedom, for me, and my shadow that sprung around so many different lamps, the switch amidst the conversations I had.

Knowing a(nother) body and a soul in succession takes a lifetime, feeling one does not

But most of all, it was a union of individuals, ego's so completely vulnerable and so perfectly present. With each riddling metaphor, each word we felt, we grew closer. Or rather, we grew, and like trees, the branches extended towards each other. Our minds the birds that called these branches home, but were never afraid to fly away, through the gap of our self-consciousness and into the light of expression.

This text might seem more like an homage to the people than the exchange itself. Does it sound logical when I tell you they are one and the same?

It all sounds like a poet's idealization, it is. That doesn't mean it isn't true. One of the few junctures in our journeys; to have reality be a place you want to live in.

And boy did we live.

Danya



8 OF APRIL

Happiness is to return at home after a long night, to throw your clothes and light up a candle, to want to go to sleep and to be in silence...

...to talk to you while writing, not to expect something special from someone special, to be full of images and flavors and care, to love who you are and not to be ashamed, to dream, to have opinion, to share your drink, to smell the sun even at night, to sing, to be loyal, not to believe, to let go, to read your mistakes, to count them and let them go, not to hesitate, to know, to confess that you don't know, not to be impersonal, not to be too personal, to write what you want, not to care too much, to care only as much as you care, not less, to take risks, to laugh a lot, to be free, to remember, to hug, not to give promises but to vow, to love, not to surrender, not to stop, not to say "enough", to get mad, not too much, to create.

This is where I stand more than one month after my Active Rainbow experience. Maybe these words are enough but maybe I want to thank again all the people, women, girls, men, boys, fairies and angels who stood next to me during this magnificent travel. Hope we meet again and hope our rainbow stays active for as long as it needs to.

Anna



...to write what you want, not to care too much, to care only as much as you care, not less...

DISCOVERY, HOPE AND PRIDE: "ACTIVE RAINBOW"

"Active Rainbow" was the Youth Exchange celebrated in Ommen (The Netherlands) for 10 days in February 2016. In this project, youth from Lithuania, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Bulgaria, Romania, Latvia and Spain were living in the residence of Olde Vechte Foundation. The exchange was carried out by the organizer, the international group leaders and the participants of the EVS program. All of them created a big group and they worked together really hard long hours to satisfy all our needs during the project and to make a change in our lives (at least a little one).

The exchange had the goal to spark our interest and curiosity, making us wonder and it reached that goal pretty well. This was done by meditation exercises, personal and group reflection dynamics, exploration and expression exercises with freedom. And I have to admit that I have lived there the hardest experience of my life according to my story, identity and sexual orientation. Not only by participating, also by working we could learn from all of us. The meaning of the "non-formal education", that Erasmus+ uses, we make it work by creating our own workshops and tools to express, guide and share the ideas and feelings with our mates.

...we make it work by creating our own workshops and tools to express, guide and share the ideas and feelings with our mates



The exchange had the goal to spark our interest and curiosity, making us wonder and it reached that goal pretty well.

And not only the work and implication had made us change, also the environment, landscape, citizens of Ommen, company, support and daily affection made the "intercultural learning" happened. Thank you to "Active Rainbow", there had formed support networks so strong that neither the distance will break them after months.

Thank you to Cathy, as the organizer of the Project, for her passion and effort to make us live experiences as incredible as this one was. Thank you also to Erasmus+ and to Ticket2Europe, because of them we have lived stories that we will never forget and for sure, we will repeat them again.

Elena

ACTIVE RAINBOW ON SEXUALITY

During the Active Rainbow exchange program which proved to be the best so far in the life of every participant (well, this is my assumption, but I believe it is true), our days were filled with informative workshops and one of them was about sexuality.

Sounds like a simple topic and what new could I learn, but my gut told me to find a seat in the first row and have my notebook ready. During this workshop I was reminded once again – we are all different and we are all perfect the way we are.

For me the knowledge on how differently can people feel and express themselves is essential in order to have good arguments in discussions. Recently I stumbled upon a small article in a regional newspaper, where a politician has written the following: „There are things that are strictly known to everyone and discussions about them would be silly, for example, that the sun rises in the East and that human beings are divided into males and females.” For this person the fact that people can feel and express differently than what is expected from them by the society, is absurd. Well, it is a pity that for this particular individual the view on the world

...there is the gender identity – it is someone’s inner sense of being male or female, how one feels their own gender, their personal experience.



...we are all different and we are all perfect the way we are.

is narrow and most likely he has not had the privilege to meet anyone who does not fit into this binary division. Uhh, I am glad I am not this person! But do I feel particularly unhappy when reading this because I myself do not correspond to the typical male/female division and it feels that this person is stating that what is true for me cannot be true at all? Let me summarize what I noted down in my notebook from the workshop facilitated by Eva Spinou from Greece (hey buddy!).

Firstly, there is the biological sex and general society labels these groups as male and female, even though the groups are not homogenous. They are characterized by sex determining chromosomes (XX for a female and XY for a male), gonads (female gonad, the ovary and male gonad, testicle, produces gametes – cell that fuses with another cell during fertilization – for a female this is egg cells and for a male – sperm), internal reproductive organs and external genitalia. What the world and me myself currently learning is intersex – these

people are born with sex characteristics (including the above mentioned genitals, gonads and chromosome patterns) that do not fit typical binary notions of male or female bodies. Let me tell you who am I – I look at myself in a mirror and based on the external genitalia there is a female.

Secondly, there is the gender identity – it is someone’s inner sense of being male or female, how one feels their own gender, their personal experience. If a person’s biological sex aligns with their gender identity, they can be called cisgender. If it does not align, they can be called transgender. It seems to me that for some people it is hard to understand what gender identity even means. I found this nice example in a blog: “I’m attracted to women because I’m masculine because I’m a man because I have a penis because I’m a man because I’m masculine because I’m attracted to women”. Makes sense for them, right? But how do I feel? I feel like a female.

Thirdly, gender expression. These are all the expected roles, stereotypes, ways in which people manifest their masculinity, femininity or androgyny, and how they express a particular gender every day – by the way the hair is styled, the clothing is selected, or even the way people stand or walk and talk. These traits can be changed voluntarily. But now here comes the comparison between the identity and expression: let’s say someone’s gender identity is female, and “girl” is what feels right, feels like them. But people keep saying they’re a boy (and they’ve been assigned as such, because that’s what their body looks like), and people keep expecting them to behave as such. Or my own

I would climb trees, paint the fence, chop wood, so the typical things that are “boys” things.

example – my gender identity is female, but my gender expression is mostly androgynous. I never wear a skirt, my bicycle has men’s frame, and I feel like in heaven in men’s/boys clothing section and in hell in women’s (come to Riga and check out for yourself what I am talking about!). I scream and shout (internally of course) when I find a pair of unisex pants that happen to fit me! But I like to work in a garden and talk to my plants on the window sill. In childhood, and I can be very

I never wear a skirt, my bicycle has men’s frame, and I feel like in heaven in men’s/boys clothing section and in hell in women’s.

thankful to my parents that they allowed this, I would climb trees, paint the fence, chop wood, so the typical things that are “boys” things. I did own a Barbie, but only because other girls did. At the same time I want to stress that I am not against the fact that women do things that are considered to be feminine and men do the masculine things, but these should not be forced and should be voluntary.

And last, but not least, sexual orientation! The World Psychiatric Organization has been so kind to recently issue a statement that sexual orientation is considered to be innate and determined by biological, psychological, developmental, and social factors. Sexual orientation can be subdivided into sexual identity and sexual behaviour. Identity is one of the many out there – straight, gay, bisexual etc. Behaviour is what the individual chooses to do – seek for someone of the opposite sex or the same sex. Well, I am happily homosexually oriented and would enjoy looking at the stars with another woman next to me, if you know what I mean.

So much has been written about the topic of sexuality and gender, but there are still so many people, like the man writing his small article in

All it takes is to open one's eyes and look into the eyes of others and speak to them without words

the regional newspaper and I feel that this person has no idea how colourful the world is. All it takes is to open one's eyes and look into the eyes of others and speak to them without words (eye contact, yes, eye contact). I hope you find this useful, either for yourself or to show your parents, or friends. It is also completely fine if you do not wish to label yourself in any way and simply be yourself! The unique and amazing yourself that you are.

Laura



...it's an amazing feeling to just be who you are no matter what everyone else says...

transphobic or you have any other unjustified people-phobia. In this case, maybe you need a bit more reading and therapy. But, if you're on the safe side, there's nothing else in this world that will make you feel lighter, better and happier than this. Regardless of your gender identity or sexual orientation, it's an amazing feeling to just be who you are no matter what everyone else says... because this is your time, your moment, unique and unrepeatable and you definitely want to make the most of it.

DAY BY DAY, LGBTQIA+

Of course that one way or another and to some degree, almost every LGBTQIA+ person experienced situations of harassment, oppression, hate or even violence at least once in their life.

Directly or indirectly, the beliefs of cisheteronormative (and patriarchal) society has affected us to some extent. Therefore, even today, in the 21st century, is not that easy to be an LGBTQIA+ person. Beyond the talk about privileges, the LGBTQIA+ communities are still vulnerable groups and their members, still easy targets. And, of course, there's also the discussion about the oppression inside the LGBTQIA+ communities, that sometimes aren't the safe places that one might expect and dream of.

So, based on my own experiences, readings and "enlightenment" I now present you some insights on how to make it into this world, with a bit more easiness and self love.

#Be unapologetically yourself ('cause everyone else is already taken, someone would say)... if you're not racist, sexist, homophobic/

So, why not enjoy what we have in the present moment, the people and the experiences that are happening to us right in this moment?

#Take care of yourself. Easier said than done, I know but... Eat. Sleep. Read. Have fun. Go to school. Spend time with your friends and/or family and with yourself. Do yoga. Ride a bike. Have sex. Or not. Do all those things that make you feel good and safe and cozy. These are the moments that give you power to go on, day after day after day. I know that maybe your current situation might not be perfect, but I think that that's the trick. Maybe our lives will never be perfect, we don't know that. So, why not enjoy what we have in the present moment, the people and the experiences that are happening to us right in this moment? You never know how the things might turn out. Better enjoy the present and make the best out of each situation.

So, go and ask. No shame, no fear.

#Take care of others. Yes, an important thing and a bit tricky, I might say. There's that saying that goes like that: treat others the same way you'd like to be treated. Uhm, I don't know about that, 'cause people like different things, and what's good for someone might not be like that for another person. So, go and ask. No shame, no fear. It's the most honest and caring thing that someone can do for others. This means that you're interested to find out more about them and to really get to know them. Just make sure to remember which person likes what ;).

#Get informed. For an LGBTQIA+ person it's, like, one of the most important things. Yeah, maybe you'll think it's boring or useless, buuu

you need that because for sure you'll meet people that are gonna say nasty things to you. And then you wanna be prepared to answer. Using the power of words (I'm not omitting that there might be situations where you'll have to use physical force, but let's hope that these won't be that common in our lives. And for that you can always take some self-defense classes;)). And not just for that. It's really good to know more about you, as an LGBTQIA+ person, and about our communities. This way, you'll find out how diverse we are and also that you are not alone and that there are people out there that have similar experiences that might help you. So, my advice would be to read. Read everything. But don't believe everything. Pass it through your

Read everything. But don't believe everything. Pass it through your internal critical thinking mechanism.

internal critical thinking mechanism.

#Build your support group. This is reaaaally important. It's good to know that no matter what happens in our lives, we'll always have some people around that are going to support us. It can be one, two, five, or how many you feel you need. But it's important to have someone out there. Build a sincere, honest and meaningful relationship with someone because 'life gets better together'.

So, there they are. Little things that each and every one of us can do to make life a bit easier and enjoyable. This is not a must. Each person is free to do the things that are good for them. This won't be easy. I know that there are LGBTQIA+ people in this world that won't give credit to anything I said because their situation

Build a sincere, honest and meaningful relationship with someone because 'life gets better together

We are here and we won't give up.

is just critical. I am aware of that. That's why it's important to remember who we really are, what we really want and who are the people we love and love us back. These are the only things that are going to keep us alive.

And don't forget, just because we might be countries apart, we exist in every society, no matter of race, religion/spiritual beliefs, culture, politics etc. and we're closer to each other than we think (thanks to the Internet). We are here and we won't give up. So, trust yourself! Go into the world and shine. And we, the others, we'll stick around to enjoy the show.

Elena

LGL TEAM IN NETHERLANDS

Between the 15th and 24th of February, 2016 the representatives of the National LGBT* rights organization LGL participated in the youth exchange program "Active Rainbow", organized in the city of Ommen, the Netherlands.

Activists from Italy, Spain, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Latvia, Lithuania and the Netherlands gathered in order to discuss and plan actions which would contribute to LGBT* human rights progress in their respective countries.

Through informal educational methods during the youth exchange program Active Rainbow, the participants were taught to identify their own personal strengths and weaknesses and to recognize discrimination experienced by vulnerable groups in society. The participants also learned about various creative means of expression, which could be used to promote respect for fundamental human rights.

An important part of the youth exchange program was a trip to the capital of the Netherlands, Amsterdam. In the Amsterdam Public Library, participants met the representatives from the LGBT* organization "IHLIA Amsterdam", who presented their organization's priorities and introduced the most interesting



publications on the topic of LGBT* owned by the library, including "Amsterdam", the publication which already made history in Lithuania. During the visit, the staff of IHLIA Amsterdam also invited us to visit an exposition of lesbian pulp fiction.

During the stay in Amsterdam, the youth exchange program's participants also had the opportunity to explore historic LGBT* city sites, talk with the residents and city guests, and film a video clip, asking passers-by about their notions of happiness and fulfillment. The participants improved their teamwork skills not only by doing the before mentioned tasks, but also by organizing special workshops on LGBT* human rights issues.

Egle

BEING A LEADER - HARD LIFE

I would have hesitated for a little while if I would have been aware of how serious the team leader work is.

My NGO coordinator proposed me to be a leader believing that it would be relatively easy as it usually is in the most of youth exchanges. However, the Dutch Olde Vechte Foundation is famous for their professional projects, so maybe I should have known there would be more to do.

Basically, team leaders of each countries are special participants, whose main task are being the mediator between the rest of participant from that country and the organizer team of the project. But in Active Rainbow, team leader were simply part of the organizer team.

What is that new job when you become suddenly part of the Team? Firstly, I had to start working two days before the participant started up. And after working 12 hours per day, I felt how time goes by so slowly sometimes. But that is a good sight: it means I'm learning infinitely new things every day.

Among those many new tasks and preparation that we have to deal with, I found one of them especially hard: the Rainbow support groups. Lovely people chose me to tell me their daily experiences, progress and problems. I confess

...the first time I did something similar and dealing with such a diverse sort of people with their own complex and different personalities ...



...I'm learning infinitely new things every day.

it was the first time I did something similar and dealing with such a diverse sort of people with their own complex and different personalities was a real challenge for me. And of course, by using English all time to do it more stimulating.

But in spite of all this work and permanent issues to sort out, the experience was very satisfactory. Not only was Active Rainbow an experience to know and to accept myself as a leader, but also a way to test my professional and personal skills in a magic and emotional atmosphere.

So, if I had to wonder whether to participate in a New Olde Vechte's project or not after being aware how hard it can be, a few seconds later I would have no more doubts. Let's go back to the Netherlands.

Alejandro

ACTIVATE YOUR INNER RAINBOW!

In February young people from eight European countries will travel to the Netherlands to exchange and gain knowledge and skills on LGBTQIA+ rights, history, culture, issues and needs in their countries. LGL's volunteer Justė Miliauskaitė will lead the group from Lithuania. Justė and the other group leaders met to prepare the youth exchange. Here is what they experienced:

From 14th to 15th of January group leaders of eight European countries gathered in the Netherlands, a small town named Ommen. Volunteers from Greece, Italy, Spain, Romania, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania and the Netherlands came to an advanced planning visit for an upcoming youth exchange called Active Rainbow, which will take place in February and will last ten days.

After the arrival there was no time for sitting around and tediously disputing the program of the exchange: The writer and initiator of Active Rainbow, Cathy Manousaki, had already planned a schedule – not only the upcoming exchange, but also for both days of the advanced planning visit! The group leaders exchanged experiences, worries, inspirations and ideas, some of them we brought to life immediately.

During the advanced planning visit each of the representatives had the chance to express themselves not only by being part of the events, but also by organizing workshops on their own.



After returning from the Netherlands it's hard to put my feelings into words – just, wow! It seems we have a really ambitious, enriching and active project ahead of us.

Active Rainbow aims to give human rights activists the possibility to exchange tools of informal learning and thus to involve young LGBTQIA+ and supporting people in discovering themselves, in community building, and in critically approaching actions of oneself and others.

During the two days of the advanced planning visit each one of us took part in more than ten workshops, created three short videos promoting social inclusion of young LGBTQIA+ people in society, and talked about some important topics. After returning from the Netherlands it's hard to put my feelings into words – just, wow! It seems we have a really ambitious, enriching and active project ahead of us.

In March, wait for our team to come back with experience and events! We will try to activate Your inner rainbows! :)

Justė

TESTIMONIALS FROM PARTICIPANTS OF ACTIVE RAINBOW

LAURA, LATVIA

I was able to experience how my positive words, actions and thoughts have an impact on other human beings, how they open up to me and how they appreciate my efforts. Experience, which I will cherish.

PANAGIOTIS, GREECE

I think that AR project made me more self-aware. It gave me a safe space in which I could express myself, without any criticism and with unconditional acceptance, and view a unique sort of a small society that we created. In my daily life now, I can see the difference and sometimes I even feel oppressed, but I know now that it's up to me to change that and even make a difference in my community.

JUSTE, LITHUANIA

Active Rainbow has changed my life, I had never thought that a 10-day exchange could help me grow so much as a person! It's been a month, I feel like everything happened just yesterday, or last week. I am calm, for me the experience of Active Rainbow did not end. I hope I can have this feeling forever. Thank You so much!

ELENA, ROMANIA

The Active Rainbow Project had a really important impact over me. It was an amazing experience to be in such a multicultural environment, to discuss about LGBTQIA+ issues from different perspectives and to find out more information about these issues in other European countries. Moreover, the project gave me the opportunity to practice my skills and

competences and to also gain and develop new ones. The most important thing for me was that the people involved in the project gave me so much energy and ideas and I feel now much more empowered and sure about the things I wish to do in this field of human rights for LGBTQIA+ people.

ELINA, LATVIA

Active Rainbow for me was a unique possibility to continue exploring myself as individual and as a member part of the team. I learned new insights regarding my own personality while being in discomfort situation. Nerveless, updated knowledge regarding the topic and expanded

...the people involved in the project gave me so much energy and ideas and I feel now much more empowered and sure about the things I wish to do ...

new&trustworthy friend list.

DONYA, THE NETHERLANDS

The project had a huge profound effect on me, and it gave my ego much reflection and introspective thought and emotion. The workshops we had were all so supportive, surrounding and yet spatial. In combination with my many learning moments, of culture, of biology, of myself, I should say the intention of this project was more than achieved. The fundamentals of its philosophical nature have captured my and everyone else's body and mind. We were truly connected through it, and beyond. Everyday I

flicted limitations let go. The pursuit of yourself. This pursuit was re-initiated in that project. And I wasn't even aware I had halted looking.

JAMES, THE NETHERLANDS

This is simultaneously the most beautiful and the weirdest exchange I've ever been part of. Beautiful because of the people who took part in it. Weird because I never thought I could live under a roof with so many other people and like them all. I learned from these people. I learned language doesn't have to be a barrier. I learned about other European cultures, things I would never have known otherwise. I learned to take feedback with a thank you (and a smile maybe) instead of responding to it immediately. I learned you can start a film project with a big group of people who all have different thoughts and still have a result everyone likes. Sure a lot of the stuff we did was horribly cheesy, but that made it sort of great. Active Rainbow meant family to me.

Everyday I feel the aftertaste of borders crossed, self-inflicted limitations let go. The pursuit of yourself.

ANNA, GREECE

For me Active Rainbow was the proof that people in this world are just one huge family. Now after the exchange I can say that this was a marvelous experience for me. I shared time, food, knowledge, feelings and thoughts with a lot of people. I realized that my actions can be significant in this world. I am thinking of developing some kind of project in order to share with the rest of the world my experience. More specifically I have realized that all people have many things in common. We share the same fears and hopes. And in some way similar

things make us happy. So my next plan is to travel around the world, meet lots of different people and understand what makes them happy. The Active Rainbow experience is probably the beginning of this plan. Finally...one more thing that I would like to share is that...no matter how we are, what we believe, where we live, we are all beautiful when we share our love. Exploring yourself through the others and learning from the others by yourself. Communication is a difficult process and sometimes we forget to be simply there with each other. We are so busy to answer that we forget to listen. The exchange helped me to understand better my feelings and to look inside myself and also to understand that, firstly, people need to be listened - it doesn't matter if we understand them, their feelings, their problems but their need to tell.

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GLORIA, BULGARIA

Exploring yourself through the others and learning from the others by yourself. Communication is a difficult process and sometimes we forget to be simply there with each other. We are so busy to answer that we forget to listen. The exchange helped me to understand better my feelings and to look inside myself and also to understand that, firstly, people need to be listened - it doesn't matter if we understand them, their feelings, their problems but their need to tell.

EVA, GREECE

Active Rainbow was a fulfilling experience for me. It inspired me to be more creative in my work and spread the message of love and equality to as many people as possible.

Exploring yourself through the others and learning from the others by yourself. We are so busy to answer that we forget to listen.

ANNA, LATVIA

It was a big challenge for me to be there. 10 days is a long time, but it flew by so quickly. The experiences I had definitely will stay with me forever and the people, of course. I met some amazing people with some who I still carry on having conversations with, sadly no longer in real life, but facebook is a good platform. I love referring to some moments from the exchange, it seems like yesterday, it seems like I will return there someday with all the amazing people that I met. I definitely became more accepting of myself in many ways. Not just in the project, I feel like the biggest differences came after it when I analyzed everything that happened. I feel more comfortable with who I am and expressing that to other people. I care less about what other people think of me, I put myself as a

priority. That is a big step for me, not just thinking this way, but also living it. Thank you!

ELENA, SPAIN

Empathy and humanity are the tools to deal with oppression and discrimination of diverse identities and sexualities.



EGLE, LITHUANIA

During the exchange I was able to identify my own personal strengths and weaknesses and to recognize discrimination experienced by vulnerable groups in society. I have also learned about various creative means of expression, which could be used to promote respect for fundamental human rights. In participating in the youth exchange program I also had an opportunity to explore historic LGBT* city sites, talk with the residents of Amsterdam and city guests, and film a video

Our lives are full of choices. Most of them we are just too scared to accept

clip, asking passers-by about their notions of happiness and fulfillment. During the exchange I improved my teamwork skills in organizing special workshops on LGBT* human rights issues.

It shined so bright that it healed us, took away the darkness and gave us hope for the future.

ALESSANDRO, ITALY

A complex and intense experience with beautiful and colorful people!

NADINA, LATVIA

Before I came I had nothing to do with this topic in my daily life. I had no experience in this field. And that was the reason why I came – I wanted to develop my knowledge about this. Of course, to learn something new as well. When I came I saw people. The same as me. During the project it made me thought how people are treated in society. If you are not like the majority, you are nothing – you are excluded. And for what? For seeing things widely? For being open-minded? For being comfortable with yourself? The problem is – people are trying to avoid what they can't understand. They are not even trying. And that is how our society is living. And people I met in Active Rainbow project – it's amazing how in couple of days you can get such good friends. And then it's not important – what is your sexual orientation, who are you in society, what is your religion or from where you are coming from. You are getting to know the person not the background. It comes itself. And it is up to you to accept it or not. Our lives are full of choices. Most of them we are just too scared to accept, because we are always thinking what others will think. But it is not about them. It is about ourselves. It is the thing we always need to remember!

PETYA, BULGARIA

Active Rainbow was to me a one of a kind social experiment which proved beyond doubt that we create the change we want to see in the world through our actions and our zeal. It brought together so much diversity, all the colours of the rainbow were amalgamated to create a light that shined over all the prejudice and bigotry of the world that we were so used to. It shined so bright that it healed us, took away the darkness and gave us hope for the future. In these 10 days we created the society we'd like to live in and convinced ourselves that there is a better world waiting for us, if we stay true to ourselves. This unique combination of people was a true inspiration – so passionate, so clever and so determined. People that were, at worst, overwhelmed by their own goodness. We laughed, we cried, we dreamed and took action. This whole experience created the message I want to pass on to the rest of society in hopes that it will make more people open their eyes, minds and hearts. Accept and embrace the diversity, because the only identity you own is yours.



MODESTA, LITHUANIA

During the exchange, I had the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of workshops, which broadened my perspective, gave a chance to learn about different people and working practices, and inspired me for the future work.

ERIANNA, GREECE

The days have passed and now I can still feel the energy I got from every experienced lived during AR project present. Those days made me stronger and more conscious, made me feel free to be active and interactive. It was the crucial button I was waiting to push to get in a fresh new world. I am not embarrassed anymore of showing aspects of myself, including my vulnerable ones. So for this reason I am sharing my testimonial in my own way, the one that right now I prefer • here it is;

Strange,
I am a strange among strangers
Some of us are blond, some of us are brown
Despite everything, we are all world's pacers
We've arrived here or there under a snowy cloud

First hours with a group of new people in my life
and I feel them like they are my birthday's ground
The rocks and soil, the trees I smell since the day I was given the paradise's knife
are blossoming inside my heart• a treasure is here to be found
The sun started to fill us with warmth
and my body since then has been released of shadows and mind ties

Some of us feel red, some of us feel green
We are diving into an ocean full of corals, hesitations and pink
We can fearlessly now let our greatness to be seen
Out of our comfort zones getting stained with mud and ink

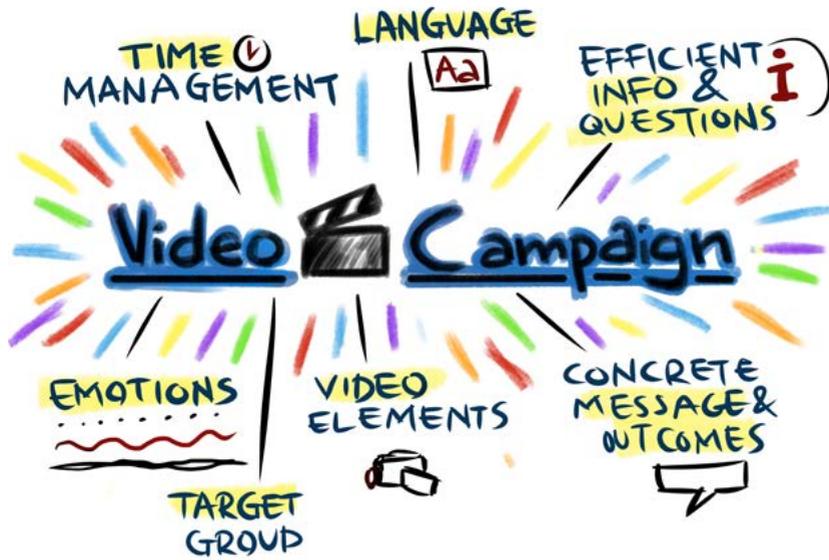
We've let our souls free to learn the unknown, grow next to each other
So my spirit flourished when the rainbow suddenly appeared
It reflected into my eyes, ready to share its glow with any passenger, friend or lover
I am standing here and there, creator of my own life and fulfillment
Every fear disappeared.

ELEN, LITHUANIA

During the exchange, I learned about various working practices, which can be used both for organizing and participating in various workshops, had the opportunity to practice public speaking and teamwork skills.

INTER-ACTIVE LOVE: VIDEO CAMPAIGN

EITHER ALL OR NONE

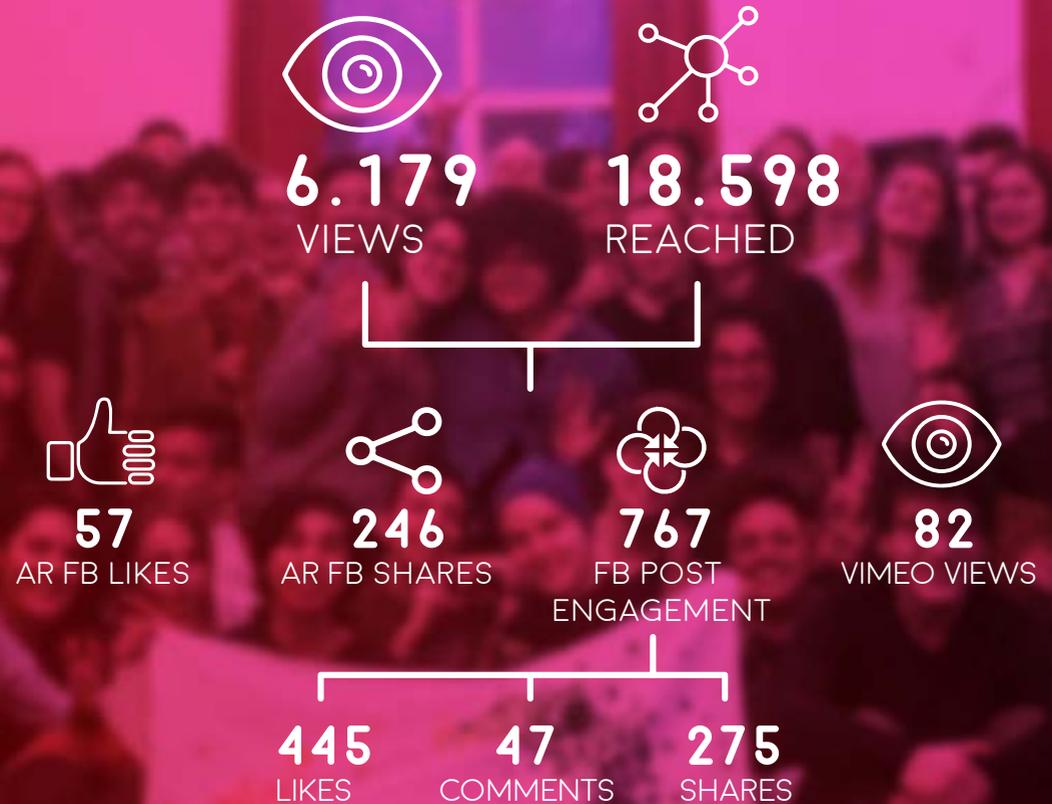


WATCH VIDEO



INTER-ACTIVE LOVE : EITHER ALL OR NONE

VIDEO CAMPAIGN PRODUCED BY ACTIVE RAINBOW PARTICIPANTS



You're our target and you can't ignore us. We exist. We're spreading our message.

We want to share with you our video that we made as members of Active Rainbow Project 2016. We are all here in a world that we can make it better, if only we would share the message that everyone is so unique. In the end love is always love.

Inter-Active Love : Either All or None is a video campaign created by participants of the Active Rainbow Project, which took place between 15th - 24th of February 2016, at Olde Vechte Foundation, Ommen, The Netherlands.

FOLLOW-UP

IMPLEMENTATION OF WORKSHOPS BY PARTICIPANTS & PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS



“CONNECTION BRIDGE”



PASAKA (FAIRYTALE)



WORKSHOP



4TH SEXUALITY FESTIVAL

Our goal was to give participants a chance to reflect on their communication “habits”/styles, to find for themselves how they can make communication with others more effective. For us, we missed each other and tried to have fun. I think we did well.

The purpose was to spend some quality time with our community and have fun and we really did! This workshop was much better, everyone were so engaged in creating the fairytales and drawing and that was a success.

Through this follow up workshop, we wanted to spread the message for social inclusion of LGBTQIA+ people and also to inform people about privilege and discrimination. I believe we achieved the purpose, mostly because people who came were interested about the subject even though most of them did not belong to the LGBTQIA+ community and didn't have a lot of information before about sexual orientation and gender identity.

Our purpose was to make people look at things from a different perspective, be more open minded and experience discrimination in a safe space, so that they can understand how some groups of people are privileged and some others not so much. Another goal of course, was to make people have fun. I think we were able to achieve our goals at a great extent. After all the activities we were having discussions with the participants about how they experienced the whole process and most of them found it very interesting and enlightening. We had people of different age groups (some of them were even 70 years old) and sexual orientations, so I think

we managed to show them different points of view. We hoped for more people to attend, but for those who attended, it was very valuable in the end, since the information which was shared was new to them and clarified very well.

We hoped for more people to attend, but for those who attended, it was very valuable in the end, since the information which was shared was new to them and clarified very well.

The purpose was to put ourselves in the game, try to show what we learned during the Project and involve, give info and tell people something that they didn't know. We achieved this purpose.

The team put all the efforts on making the activities understandable and to create a great atmosphere for children to feel comfortable to share and reflect as a group.

The idea was to talk about Pakistani culture, in relation to general LGBTQIA+ themes, to and with people of Pakistani background, and those who are/aren't and are interested/educated on these topics. To ever so slightly uncover the possible veil that could rest on the questions surrounding this theme. And to portray an actual view of life within said community in Pakistan. Of course, there was not nearly enough time to delve as deep as one would have perhaps liked to, but we got the point of conversation across, so in that sense it is a success.

We discussed how LGBTQIA+ people are represented in the media in Romania: newspapers and TV. And also in United States, in movies and TV series. And we also had a practical activity, for the participants to create their own media representation of LGBTQIA+ people, how they imagine it.



WHAT IS ART



RAINBOW DAY



TRANS AND INTER SEX AWARENESS JOURNEY



CULTURE NIGHT: PAKISTAN



QUEER IMAGES IN THE MEDIA

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS



National LGBT* Rights Organization LGL advocates for the rights of LGBT* individuals in Lithuania. LGL fights against homophobia and transphobia, discrimination and social exclusion and it is inclusive of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and expressions within its advocacy work.

LGL has been registered with the national authorities in 1995, thus rendering it one of the most mature NGOs in the country. In addition to this, LGL is the sole civil society organization in Lithuania that is working exclusively on LGBT* issues.

The main objectives of the organization are as follows: (1) to challenge the application of the "anti-gay propaganda" legislation (2) to introduce comprehensive procedures on legal gender recognition and medical gender reassignment; (3) to introduce legal recognition of same-sex relationships through the registered partnership scheme.

LGL is open to everyone despite their age, sex, background etc., however, our organization seeks to involve and encourage participation of LGBT youth and youth in whole in organization activities. We believe that learning from each other and exchange of knowledge is very important for changes in society to happen. This is why upon the initiative by the organization, the sole LGBT* community center in the country was established in Vilnius in 2005. In 2015 more than 50 events took place in the LGBT* center and the total number of participants within these activities amounts to app. 1000 individuals.

More information on LGL and its activities can be found on website.



Ticket2Europe is an NGO established in 2015 and based in Pontevedra, Spain. From the beginning, the aim of the organization has been to empower and support youngsters on their search for future opportunities in two different ways.

On one hand, it focuses its work on spreading different types of academic and professional opportunities around Europe (scholarships, internships, job vacancies, grants, Erasmus+ projects). The target group being youngsters aged 18 to 35 years old, the organization puts

special attention to the use of social media through their website www.ticket2europe.eu and social networks (Facebook and Twitter, mainly) to present and spread the activities.

On the other hand, Ticket2Europe also manages numerous educational, training and social projects at different levels (local, regional, national and international), aiming at improving the competences (that is to say, knowledge, skills and attitudes) of youngsters from different communities towards topics such as human rights, social inclusion, peace building, LGBTQIA+ rights, conflict resolution, youth employability, entrepreneurship and many others.

The main mission of the organization is to open up new paths and possibilities for young people, always making a strong effort to contribute to the construction and development of the European identity and active citizenship.



Vagamondo is an informal group founded in September 2013 in the town of Roletto, Italy, by young people coming from different associations and work experiences related with youngsters (involvement in youth organization in Italy and abroad, schools and social services).

The vision of the group is to contribute to the development of our society and to promote the values of equality, freedom and care for the environment. Based on these values the target group of Vagamondo's activities is youngsters (province of Torino and Piedmont region at first) with fewer opportunities. Especially the ones who drop out of school, coming from broken families, facing geographical isolation, social exclusion, discrimination based on country of origin, religion, sexual orientation and self expression or having disabilities. As contribution to society's development we consider the employability level as a dominant element. Therefore our activities aim to create learning and growing opportunities for youngsters in order to give them the chance to increase competences that are needed in order to enter the labor market. Youngsters with fewer opportunities are the ones who are more exposed to the risk of unemployment, that's why we choose to focus first of all on that target group: to fill the gap they accumulated with the ones who had more opportunities in life.

Vagamondo is part of the International Synergy Network [<https://web.facebook.com/groups/InternationalSynergyGroup/>]: a group of more than 25 organizations and informal groups based in different European countries which share similar visions and values that connect in the general vision: to create a world out of love and care which works for everyone. The network is coordinated by Olde Vechte Foundation (Netherlands), it has a strong focus on coaching and self-coaching and a specific methodology based on non-formal and informal education which have been developed during the past 15 years.



Hellezic Youth Participation (based in Athens, Greece) stands for intercultural dialogue, non-formal education, mutual understanding and solidarity.

The main aim of the group is to inspire and stimulate European citizens to become active parts of their local and European community. We wish to motivate young people to become involved and to raise awareness about current values like equal opportunities, social inclusion and cultural diversity. Through our projects we aim at the promotion of non-formal differentiated learning and the importance of personal development. HYP is active on a local, national and European level.

The main activities of the organization are to organize trainings and sessions with young people through non-formal education techniques. We organize projects of different disciplines to make sure that everyone is involved.

More specifically, we organize seminars to address the constant raise of racism and stereotyping in Athens. From the first years of our establishment, HYP organized a 3-day conference in Athens about democracy and non-formal education called "Identify. Realize. Change". This conference was as a follow-up activity of a Youth in Action 1.3 project about democracy, held in Kaunas, Lithuania.

This seminar has inspired us to work in different aspects of human rights such as the rights of people that are discriminated due to their sex, race, age, sexuality and origin. We have a constant collaboration with the Municipality of Athens which supports our initiatives.



ACCEPT is a human rights organization and the first Romanian non-governmental organization that defends and promotes the rights of LGBT persons at national level.

The Association's mission is to improve the situation of LGBT people in the Romanian society, to decrease the level of discrimination and stigmatization for this group and, at the same time, to advocate for equal rights for all Romanian citizens. Our main objectives consist of the following:

- Defending, by all legal means, the persons whose fundamental rights and liberties, as guaranteed by the Romanian Constitution and the international treaties ratified by Romania, were infringed upon
- Educating the public and the media on LGBTs
- Organizing activities to promote the observance of the rights and liberties of LGBT people;=-
- increasing group solidarity among the LGBT community members
- Collaborating with other organizations that promote the rights of minorities.

ACCEPT was officially registered as a nongovernmental organization in 1996, when homosexuality was still criminalized in Romania. We have therefore been in existence for an average 20 years.



Association of LGBT and their friends MOZAİKA is a membership-based organization, with a board elected by the general assembly.

It was founded in 2006 and is currently the only non-profit NGO in Latvia working in the field of LGBT rights. The organization has grown from 16 founders in 2006 to more than 150 members in 2014, currently employing 4 people within various projects.

MOZAİKA has established itself as an advocacy and lobbying organization as well as the community building and strengthening force. Since 2009 MOZAİKA has a strategic partnership agreement with Amnesty International.

MOZAİKA'S main goals :

- Harmonization of Latvian laws with the International standards in the area of human rights and fundamental freedoms
- Raising society's awareness and promoting education and information about various sexual orientations and gender identities and gender identity expressions
- Creating per-requisites for ending discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity and expression
- Promoting gender equality
- Promoting society's awareness and understanding of various family models and promoting their legal recognition



Bulgarian Youth Association is a Youth non-profit/non-governmental organization established in Sofia, Bulgaria in 2014 when a group of young people decided to unite their efforts for causes that are important to all of us, although we come from different backgrounds.

The idea of this organization is to be the point from which to obtain a common vision for the important aspects of our lives. We wanted it to be the means by which our ideas are born, to materialize, to see the real result. Because we realized that an idea will never see the light of the day, if you do not find a collaborator who believes in it, supports it and gives it the strength to survive.

Bulgarian Youth Association aims to support the active involvement of young people in various areas of public life; to promote personal development and democratic citizenship, volunteering and youth mobility; sport and healthy lifestyle; to support the development of the abilities and potential of young people from different social and ethnic groups, and young people with disabilities. The path to this is participation in various national and international projects, implementation of joint activities in partnerships with other organizations or networks; organizing advocacy campaigns; development and implementation of strategies and programs at local, national and international level. Members of the organization are involved in developing, evaluating and managing various programs and projects in the social sector, education and the media.

One of the main priorities of the Bulgarian Youth Association is developing international partnerships with similar organizations, active exchange of ideas and best practices, creating a rich network of European partners. We stand for the basic human rights and follow the European motto "Unity in Diversity" by promoting European values. We want to be the change for a better future, it's up to all of us! Our motto is VIA JUVENIS (The path of youth, The way of the young).



Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. Its budget of €14.7 billion will provide opportunities for over 4 million Europeans to study, train gain experience, and volunteers abroad.

Set to last until 2020, Erasmus+ doesn't just have opportunities for students. Merging seven prior programmes, it has opportunities for a wide variety of individuals and organisations.

Detailed information on these opportunities, including eligibility criteria, is available in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide. An indicative funding guide for some centralised opportunities is also available. Erasmus+ has opportunities for people of all ages, helping them develop and share knowledge and experience at institutions and organisations in different countries.

Erasmus+ has opportunities for a wide range of organisations, including universities, education and training providers, think-tanks, research organisations, and private businesses.

[Click here to find more information.](#)

