



INTERACTIVE  
COLORS  
THE MEETING 2017

# PHOTO REPORTAGE



#BeTheChangeMaker

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## ABOUT THE PROJECT

InterACTIVE Colors Meeting was a 4 days event, which brought together 18 young people, youth workers and activists, to strengthen the quality of youth work and international projects about the LGBTQIA+ Spectrum.

The Meeting was an activity, part of the long-term InterACTIVE Colors project, which main aims were:

- to measure the collective results from a trilogy of Youth Projects addressing social inclusion and LGBTQIA+ Spectrum
- to recognize the contribution and role that non-formal education and Erasmus+ play in shaping healthy and inclusive societies, while empowering youth and promoting Human Rights for all.

The Meeting took place in July 2017, at Olde Vechte Foundation in Ommen, the Netherlands.

Trilogy of Projects: Active Rainbow – Share Your Colors – InterACTIVE Colors.

Participants coming from: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Romania and Spain.

## ABOUT THE PUBLICATION:

The “Be the ChangeMaker Photo Reportage” is one of the main educational tools developed through the Meeting.

Inside this publication you have the chance to:

- Meet the Changemakers
- Get behind the scenes and learn all about the Meeting, through an interactive photographic documentation
- Be inspired from participants perspectives about the importance of Inclusive Education and being active citizens
- Visit the wall that is an “InterACTIVE Map of Results” from all 3 projects
- Read and be part of the Manifesto about the LGBTQIA+ Spectrum

**Note:** The initials LGBTQIA+ stand for: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual and + (all other forms of sexual and gender expression). The initialism LGBTQIA+ emphasizes the diversity of sexuality and gender identities. When referring to LGBTQIA+ Spectrum, we acknowledge the wide range of aspects that relate to the term: community, culture, human rights, gender and sexual diversity, social movements, etc.



# Be the ChangeMaker!

# ACTIVIST PORTRAITS

## Meet our Changemakers

We introduce you to some of the many young people, who took part in one or more of the projects! They are the inspiring souls, who brought this Meeting to vibrant life, sharing their experiences, passions and colors together, while celebrating diversity and love.



Roman  
Czech Republic



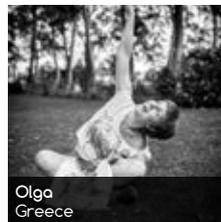
Cathy  
Greece



Dragos  
Romania



Liisgren  
Estonia / Czech Republic



Olga  
Greece



Bretislove  
Czech Republic



Iize  
Latvia



Laura  
Latvia



Juste  
Lithuania



Asele  
Spain



Andrew  
Spain



Gabriel  
Lithuania



Amira  
Bulgaria



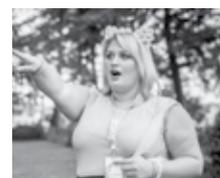
Clelia  
Italy



Erianna  
Greece



Afroditi  
Greece



Kristina  
Croatia / Netherlands



Elena  
Romania



Cristi  
Romania



Annik  
Netherlands



Elna  
Latvia



Camilla  
Italy



Kalib  
Netherlands

# DAY 1

## Connecting & Evaluating

Day 1 of the Meeting was all about getting to know each other, setting learning goals and exchanging experiences. We got the chance to place the seeds for our Tree of Growth, by sharing our contributions and desired outcomes while creating a safe learning environment in which we would be able to interact, play and create. We continued evaluating and measuring results in a personal and organizational level.

Topics addressed during the day:

- LGBTQIA+ Spectrum in all countries involved: current situation in each partner country, positive and negative changes that have happened since 2015 and the first project
- Personal Experiences and Stories from the projects
- Creating the “InterACTIVE Map of Results”, a physical representation and timeline of successes

“Living in an inclusive community gives everyone an equal start in life. As people have proven that everyone can do anything if they want, there is nothing left to say about it. We have to keep giving people a chance to prove that we are all capable of doing what we love. We have to talk to people, in my opinion, talking and creating materials that show how amazing and hard-working the people from the LGBTQIA+ community are, is probably the most important thing that we should do. We have to insist that everyone deserves an equal start in life.

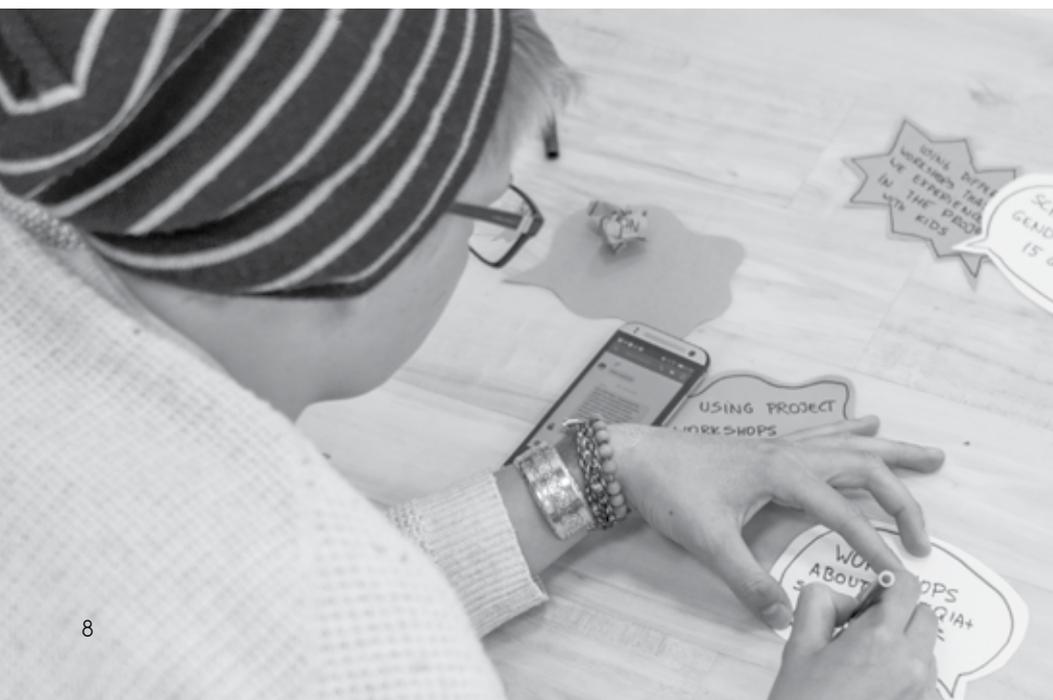
- Amira





“Because I am part of the community and I would like to be included, I will start at myself and make sure I include other people.”  
- Roman





“If we want to build a happy world, we need to start from us. From us acknowledging, and respecting, and accepting our differences as enriching experiences that, put together, make this world beautiful and diverse.

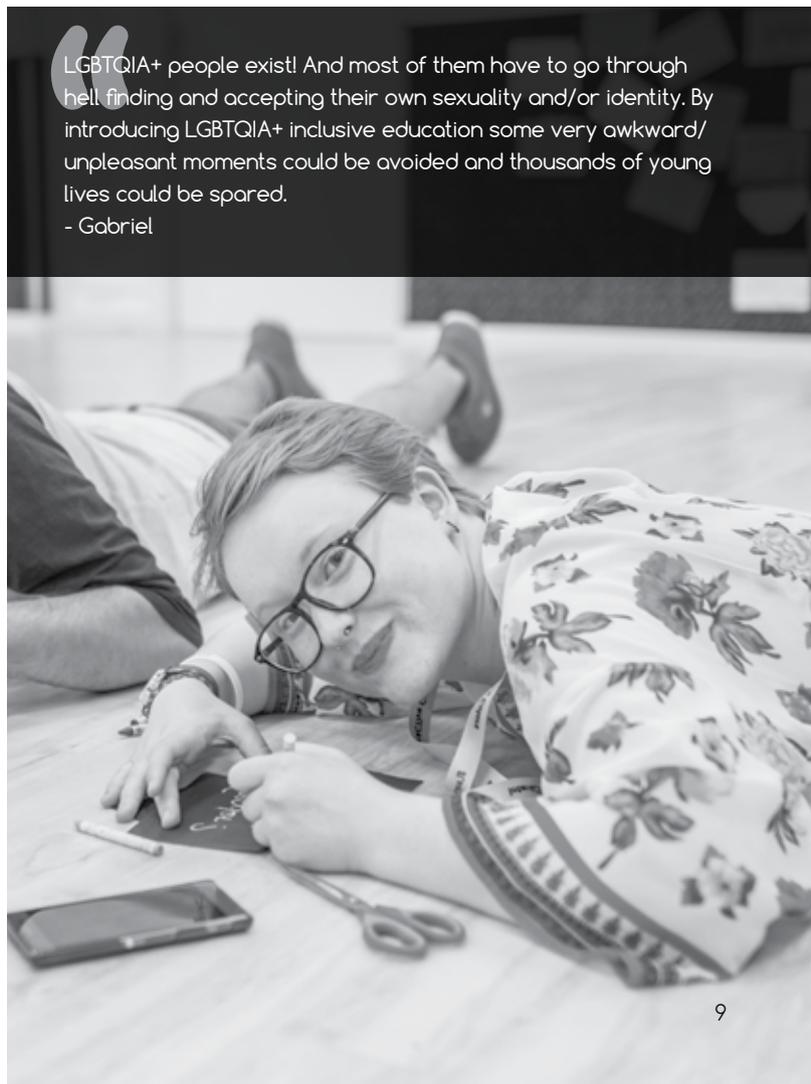
The change is each and every one of us. Every time we meet with our friends, our families, our teachers, the people on the streets, the people we meet online. With every word we speak and every action we take we have the choice to make this world better, for everyone, or not.

And to do this, we don't even need education, or theories on human rights; we only need to look deep inside our souls and recognize our needs and our feelings and know that there are so many people that feel the way we feel and need the things we also need: to be seen and to be loved.

- Elena



“LGBTQIA+ people exist! And most of them have to go through hell finding and accepting their own sexuality and/or identity. By introducing LGBTQIA+ inclusive education some very awkward/unpleasant moments could be avoided and thousands of young lives could be spared.  
- Gabriel



# DAY 2

## Promoting non-formal Education through Media

In day 2, we entered a new chapter, in which we reflected about the contribution of non-formal education and Erasmus+ for promoting social inclusion, equity and the LGBTQIA+ Spectrum.

The group was divided in 4 intercultural teams with the aim to produce a video for raising awareness on that matter. By sharing personal stories and experiences from previous projects and practicing their media skills.

Videos produced are:

- recap of the 3 projects with short audio interviews from participants ([video here](#))
- non-formal infomercial promoting Erasmus+ and non-formal Education ([video here](#))
- activism, education and types of activists ([video here](#))
- awareness on mental health of people, especially LGBTQIA+ young people and the role of non-formal education ([video here](#))



“Talk not only to the youth, but also to teachers and parents, so they can be open minded, speak with them about empathy, about how a small thing they can do or say can have big impact on a young person and a young personality.

- Laura



LGBT+ topics are not hypothetical - You can't "protect" children from LGBT+ because some of them ARE in the spectrum themselves.  
- Juste



“Inclusive community makes happier citizens, better life standards, more development and satisfaction.

Inclusiveness is a positive factor under any point of view. I think we should all work on making the society around us more inclusive, make walls fall down, bring light where we see shadows.

I personally would like to experiment the European projects' effectiveness on creating a more inclusive society and I want to do it by writing one of these projects in my own local area and see which kind of impact it may have.  
- Camilla



“Living in inclusive communities creates a safe space in which we can develop ourselves according to our own timing and potential. Also, a multitude of identities and experiences definitely enriches our knowledge of the world.

Regarding the action that I think should be taken in order to ensure social inclusion, the first thing I'll mention is: introducing from the very beginning of education the idea that cisgender heterosexuality is not the rule, or the pattern, that there's a whole range of different identities and orientations among us and that this fact only makes our society better. That would help not only those who are already sure of what they are and what they want, but those who live in fear of rejection or in a never-ending phase of discovering themselves to fully embrace whatever they are and enjoy it.

Secondly, I think it's important to create a sense of shared history among our communities; we need to remind the elder members of society that we are not something rare, or just something of this century: we have always been here and we will always be here, we are just trying to make our lives less risky and make sure that our rights are the same as the ones of any other fellow citizen. We won't change society if activism seems to them like something that doesn't appeal to them as well: in order to change things, we have to go to the roots of the problem, and I think a combination of education and active fighting is what we should do, and commit ourselves to the goal of real, radical change in our societies.

- Andrew





We have to keep in mind that we are all different, beautiful and colorful and that we can shine together in our beautiful different ways!

- Clelia

Allow yourselves to be educated. Learn something every day and open your eyes. Teach someone something if you feel like it. Love. Live. Be open. Accept and empower diversity!

- Dragos



# DAY 3

## Pathway to Activism

The next part in our journey was our steps into the future. Through a series of diverse activities, we explored the theme of Activism, defining what it is for us, the qualities and skills of an activist, how it is to be an activist in our countries and we recognized in each other the passionate spirits for action we own. New possibilities were exchanged and created for upcoming projects in local, national and international level.



The “Others” are not strange people that pose a threaten upon us. When we live in societies that divide people in a dual state of “We” and “the Others” the only thing that we achieve is having societies full of discrimination, injustice and hate. The LGBTQIA+ spectrum is placed in this “Other” situation and me being a member of this spectrum I could only work in the direction of taking place in projects that provide inclusion. Last but not least having also the identity of a teacher when working with children my priority is to give them the fundamental way of thinking and acting in an inclusive way.

- Erianna





“In my opinion, it is important to live in inclusive communities because it will bring more acceptance of each other and through it simply more love and positive energy. I know that I will give as much as I can to make sure that the information about LGBTQIA+ will spread to my youngster and to my friends and coworkers.

-Liisgren

WISIA  
HELPING  
A CAUSE  
• KNOWLEDGE  
• BACKGROUNDS  
• Doing Particular  
HAVING  
AN ACTIVE STAGE



“ I have a class where I teach computers to 13-year-olds. This year we practiced making presentations and creating videos. In the process of selecting themes, the LGBTQIA+ community and gender expression came up and we talked a lot. Many of them didn't know that it was ok to talk about gender, sexuality and LGBTQIA+ people and we cleared many misconceptions. The point is that they had questions on their own and wanted to explore the spectrum so that they would be more aware of their actions and for some of them, I think it was a relief being free to ask about themselves in a safe environment.

- Afroditi



“Because we are all human beings, who deserve to feel safe and love. I'm gonna keep fighting as a human rights activist.”  
-Cristi



# DAY 4

## My Manifesto to me and to the world

The last day of the Meeting was filled with unique celebrations in individual and group context. In a ceremony, that stimulated self-awareness and new openings, we shared our personal manifestos, acknowledging ourselves, embracing and inspiring each other.

We completed the planning of our next actions in personal and organizational level when going back home and we identified our outcomes and learnings from the Meeting.

Last step, was the collective creation of the “InterACTIVE Manifesto”, a declaration of the respected views, motives and intentions of the participating individuals for the LGBTQIA+ Spectrum, social inclusion, youth and personal development.

“Inclusion should become basic thing in all of the communities. People would become far less judgmental, they'd be more accepting of people who are in any way different from them, it can improve collaboration.

We should all point out when we see someone is excluding others based on their gender, race etc. and remind them that we are all humans in the end and we should live in cooperation with each other.

- Kristina





“ Sexual orientation is a personal issue.  
Nobody owns to anyone to explain about  
their personal life.  
- Olga





“We need all the letters, all the colors - only then our story can be complete.”  
- Ilze



“For me the gender discussion is a huge revolving step in all of this. To have open definitions and communication on this expanding subject will provide a safer and more inclusive environment. But to assess sexuality as fluid within itself, possibly as much as/just as gender, is the first step. I would make my voice heard, heard more, for my community, and I would strive to reach anyone outside that (that is, persons who do not find themselves to be a part of the community). And I would do it all through the infusion of art, and the spoken word.

It's important because we all deserve a living space where we are free to create, express and discuss. It's give and take.  
-Kalib



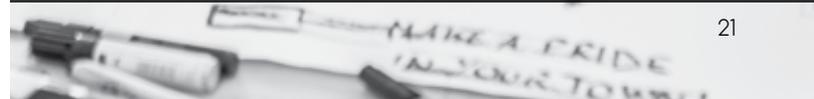
“We, as a marginalized community, have a lot on our shoulders simply for existing. By working towards a (more) inclusive society, we could improve our community’s health and development. We all deserve and need safe spaces. Sadly, for some us there can be very few of those, which can be stressing and lonely. Inclusive communities and societies are vital for LGBT people. There is no way in which someone could not benefit from an inclusive, diverse space. We are all such different human beings, and there is a lot we can learn from each other. Inclusive communities are important not only simply because we are human beings and deserve it, because of the benefits within our own communities; they are also important for the human value they hold for everyone and the benefits that diversity and acceptance bring to everyone.

- Asel



“Tolerance is not enough. LGBTQIA+ people are valuable members of society and society has to learn not only to tolerate us, but respect us as such. Generally speaking “queer” people have so much to offer and it was proven by many scientific studies that people with “gay” genes have many unique traits and abilities that are so important and beneficial to the majority.

- Bretislove



# TIMELINE

## The InterACTIVE Map of Results

The collective successes of the 3 projects - Active Rainbow, Share Your Colors and InterACTIVE Colors were represented through a physical timeline on the wall, as shown below.

Through a creative process and a celebrating atmosphere, we cherished and evaluated the outcomes of each project and its phases, including also personal inspiring stories. The beginning of the timeline was set at the Gender Unlocked, which activated the venture to the next activities.

2015

2016



Active Rainbow





# MANIFESTO

## The InterACTIVE Declaration

In a moving ceremony, we wrote, draw, painted and declared to the world our own "InterACTIVE Manifesto", addressing the LGBTQIA+ Spectrum, social inclusion, youth and personal growth.

The Manifesto is an invitation to all.

Empower Local Activities

To be an individual is to be IN DIVIDE TOGETHER

Be loud, as loud as you can If they still don't hear you - throw a brick, start a riot Always remember stone wall stone wall stone wall stone wall stone wall

YOU CAN DO EVERYTHING THAT YOU WANT TO DO. ONLY THING IS TO BELIEVE IN YOURSELF I BELIEVE IN YOU.

gender stereotypes are meant to be broken!

I LOVE MYSELF & I LOVE THEM

MAY WE ALL HAVE NEVER ENDING ENERGY TO ACT, CREATE, CARE AND BE THE #CHANGEMAKER!!!

CHARGE THE CHANGE!

ACTION

Don't Die

Break out! The closet is in your mind

You build yourself as beautiful as you want your world to be. Wrap yourself in light and give yourself away with your heart, your breath, your ... , your art, your poetry, your clay. And for every day you paint the war, take a walk and paint the beauty. The colors, the shape of the landscape you are marching towards. Everybody knows what you are against, show them what you are in for. Then become the love that opens that keeps the people hoping. And don't just paint the way. Because the path that leads from there, with everything you... Cause if you're gonna change the world, you get to start with you' - Andrea Gibson

I love every minute of this AND I love you.

SUPPORT ALL OF YOUR SISTERS, NOT JUST YOUR CIS-TERS

Be someone's Active Rainbow

Be yourself a Unicorn!

do, be, go! no matter how small is my step, I'm moving forward, accept who I am and I'm willing to work w I am taking Before this!

Be THE RADICAL ACTIVIST I KNOW YOU ARE

I am respect  
I am inclusive  
I am accepting  
I am learning  
I am doing  
I am promoting  
I am sharing  
I am open  
I am loving  
I am honest  
I am brave  
I am motivated  
I am caring  
I am creative  
I am humble  
I am unique  
I am me  
I am who  
I want to be

Find people that inspire and empower you, share ideas, organize, act, practise self-care, remember your goals and arguments for doing this. INCH BY INCH

be patient growing takes time



your opinion matters

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF FIRST,  
my future revolution

Life is going up and sometimes down. And it's okay  
Just hold on and find others to help you to hold on  
also. You will find way back to up.

SEEING MORE

BE LOUD  
BE PROUD



take the path  
less traveled

The future is Queer

START THE CHANGES INSIDE OF YOURSELF, THEN  
YOU CAN CHANGE ALSO THE WORLD  
IMPORTANT IS NOT TO LOSE HOPE, BECAUSE THERE  
IS ALWAYS SO SO MANY WAYS TO FIND SOLUTION  
BREATHE IN AND OUT AND START AGAIN

Pride is not a celebration, it's  
a reminder that great  
change can only happen  
from brave actions!

I put myself first,  
because I want to  
change the world

BE YOU  
LOVE YOU  
DO YOU.



I am here  
THE POWER IS IN YOU

OMNEN

IM IN PEACE WITH MYSELF  
IM BEAUTIFUL AND FULL OF POTENTIAL  
IM HERE AND IM HAPPY  
AND NOONE CAN TAKE IT FROM ME

stick together  
We are the WORLD

the fight for human rights and  
equality is a "single fight"  
it'sy makes us stronger

Stick together

do not conform to what THEY say  
it's "normal". Ask for ~~respect~~ ask  
for equality, demand a real change  
Start for the small goals at first,  
celebrate each step and create  
a solid foundation for the fight  
to reach bigger goals.

Don't forget your history  
THE FIRST PRIDE WAS  
A RIOT  
♀

IT GETS BETTER #YouWillBeFound

Too fabulous for your binaries

Now that  
out of  
your closet  
it's time to  
BREAK  
the window



MAKE A PRIDE  
IN YOUR TOWN!

Cherish the  
present moment!

You'd better  
bring your A-game,  
honey

YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL  
LIKE YOU ARE



you deserve to be  
loved. I  
DON'T FORGET A

ifn that  
ing care of myself,  
ing care of others.

BEING REJECTED  
IS NOT A BASIC  
TO GIVE UP. I GATHER  
MORE STRENGTH AND  
DO AGAIN UNTIL I  
MAKE IT HAPPEN.

I ALWAYS FIND TIME TO TAKE CARE  
OF MYSELF  
I DON'T NEED YOUR APPROVAL  
TO BE VALID  
I'M A LIVING PROOF THAT  
THERE'S NO ONE 'CORRECT'  
WAY TO LIVE  
I DESERVE TO BE LOVED,  
TO BE HAPPY, BE TREATED  
WITH RESPECT

MY INDIVIDUALITY, SEXUALITY,  
GENDER IDENTITY, AND EXISTENCE  
ITSELF IS NOT A TREAT TO YOURS  
I'M STRONG AND CAPABLE OF  
ACHIEVING MANY VICTORIES  
IT'S OK TO TAKE BABY STEPS

EVERYDAY I TAKE  
A STEP TOWARDS MY  
GOAL, EVEN THE SMALLEST  
ONE.

Accepting myself and focusing on my self-development  
as an outsider of the society is radical in itself

When you have been denied basic rights - anger  
is a valid response. Keep being angry Collect it,  
direct it, use it to heal and repair. STAND UP!

My activism is not only directed  
towards the aggressors, but  
survivals of these inequalities  
make exits feel unimportant and  
survivors empowered

when tired  
take a rest,  
don't quit

freedom  
of  
expression



#Capture the  
Rainbow

TA DEN MI SOLEDAD  
BOAWA A KAI

SCREAMY  
LOUDER

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## Dedication

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

We dedicate this publication to all the people who were involved in the colorful journey of the project and especially to our Changemakers, present in this book, for offering their active participation, openness, creativity, playfulness, joy and love to themselves and to each other.

A warm thank you to all our partners, for their wonderful cooperation and involvement throughout the trilogy of the projects. For being magnificent contributors in our shared vision and paying forward in their organizations and countries the successes and experiences from the projects.

## Special thanks to:

- Olde Vechte Foundation and its volunteers, who supported with the practical arrangements of the projects and especially for the Meeting.
- The director of Foundation, Marko Vlaming for his constant guidance, care and empowerment. His shared vision of the Foundation and his work are an inspiration.
- The graphic designer, member and visual artist of the Active Rainbow community, Elina Primaka, for her love, care, involvement and creative support in shaping the visual identity of the projects.
- Again, to all the participants, whom without them, the projects would have never been as extraordinary as they were, a big thank you for everything that you brought, created and distributed beyond.

Our dream is that the “Be the Changemaker Photo-reportage” will serve as a fruitful asset on fostering inclusive education and the LGBTQIA+ Spectrum.

Love,  
Cathy/Aikaterini Manousaki



# OLDE VECHTE FOUNDATION

Olde Vechte Foundation was conceived as an initiative of a group of people, who in 1966 identified a great need for learning that is not provided by the established educational system.

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.

Throughout the years it has developed site specific methodologies that have been adapted to different projects. Every year it approaches various social and cultural topics through projects run by professional trainers and international teams.

The Foundation is open to anyone who is motivated to improve their personal and professional skills in order to create a better society and a higher quality of life. Striving to bring spirit and energy to each individual, the trainings and projects of Olde Vechte Foundation take learning as an organic process coming from the diversity of talents and motivations of the people involved.

Learn more about the Foundation [here](#).

