

## KA1: Key Action 1: Mobility of youth workers

### Intercultural Nights Vs International Nationalism

***Deadline for expression of interest: 1st of April***

#### IDEA

European youth has been moving around Europe since 1988, with the adoption by the European Economic Community (now called EU) of an action with the name “Youth for Europe”. The current programme “Erasmus+” is the 7<sup>th</sup> programme that the European Community puts in action in order to support youth mobility and learning within the non-formal education context. Since 1988, and before the initiation of the “Erasmus+” era, the budget allocated to youth mobility through the six previous programmes was approximately 2.1 billion euros, showing the great value that is given to youth policies.

One of the issues that those who are active in the youth sector and have experience in designing and implementing youth projects are facing, is the issue of stereotyping and nationalizing the groups. Despite the fact that the design of the projects is quite flexible and inclusive, it turns out that most of the times that a state is represented with more than one participants, it becomes and it is being treated as rather a national group. Therefore, it is expected that those participants will bring something “typical of their countries in order to demonstrate their culture during the intercultural night”.

In the name of these intercultural nights, we come to reproduce stereotypes and prejudice regarding nationalities, national cultures, cultural behaviors, and we deny the visibility to alternatives, either under the so called “tolerance and respect for diversity” or by expecting calm days during the projects. The real problem, though, is not that intercultural nights are a demonstration of youtube videos or – sometimes really creative – presentations of national uniqueness. The real problem is that organizations come to the point to select partners in order to avoid stereotypical behaviors associated with some countries, or even believing that the participants are representing their governments.

As a result, many potential participants are excluded (starting from the call for participants), many countries are excluded (starting from the call for partners), stereotypes become more and more solid in a context of inclusion and acceptance.

The idea of the project is to motivate Programme and Partner Countries organization to rethink their policies regarding both finding participants and partners, and to give the chance to participants to become the means of change in their societies, while enjoying the privilege of being youth in Europe and the neighborhood.

We aim to multiply not only the effect of Erasmus+ mobility projects, but first and most the info that these projects exist, with the purpose to involve youth with special needs, youth facing discriminations for their racial, sexual, national, religious, gender and any other identity.

## OBJECTIVES

- question the “inclusive” and “tolerant” nationalization of the youth projects
- encourage interculturalization of youth organizations
- defy stereotypes regarding national cultures and invite them to reflect on the existence of numerous subcultures in each society;
- increase both awareness of belonging in a multicultural world and the curiosity for the knowledge of different cultures;
- promote inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue in grassroots level;
- promote respect for other religious and faiths;
- provide the participants with knowledge about the vulnerability of individuals who face discrimination due to universal stereotypes and prejudices;
- suggest the replacement of tolerance with caring.

## EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

1. **4-11 October 2015:** KALAMATA, Greece: *Training Course*. Each partner will participate with 2 participants (1 professional youth worker and 1 volunteer).

### Participants' profile

- Age: no age limits
- Nationality: from each group, at least the 1 of the 2 participants must be national of a group other than the main national group of the country
- Gender: no gender discriminations

## CALL FOR PARTNERS

- We are looking for partners from the Programme Countries states and from Partner Countries neighboring the EU.
- Partners shall be registered in the EAC/EACEA Participant Portal and have their PIC number. We can help potential partners to register if they have not done it yet.

### Partners' Responsibilities

- Participate with 2 representatives in the training course;
- Support the participants before and during the training course;
- Prepare the participants for the project;
- Co-operate with the hosting organization for possible extra needs of some participants (visa issues etc.);
- Participate in the evaluation of the project;
- Disseminate the results of the project in the local community;