



Key Action 2
Strategic Partnerships in the field of education, training and youth
Strategic Partnership in the field of innovation

AGORA'

Youth Worker's Actions in Public Spaces for Social Change

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

AIM: Agora' is a Strategic Partnership project, in the field of innovation, to develop tools and pedagogical approaches to fight young people social exclusion, and specifically gender-based discrimination, in public spaces settled in isolated areas.

PUBLIC SPACES: they are considered as areas potentially open and accessible to everybody where young people can encounter, gather and socialize. Some human geographers argued that, in spite of the exclusion, innate part of them, they can be conceived as a sites where democracy becomes possible. Nevertheless, even though we potentially agree with the idea, it has to be remarked that often in the most isolated areas, these spaces are still the landmark of exclusion, ghettoisation and the stage for racism, sexism, bullying and of different discrimination displays.

ISOLATED AREAS: this term is quite extensive and it can be applied to a big variety of spaces, normally marked by a quite strong heterogeneity. They can be the suburbs of big cities, "left-out" neighbourhood in a small town, more remote or rural areas. Still there are common elements as the potential tendency of being an artificial "ghetto dimension" for the young people settled there, from where it's challenging to escape and/or to create interaction with the other realities. They might often become the stage for discriminative events, hate speech, harmful rhetoric and populist approaches. They often are the setting where the extreme right parties and movements are setting their roots, permeating the mindset of young people and leading to extremism and radicalization. Here the young people are the most exposed target group to segregation events, not being equipped to understand the reasons behind exclusion and to take action.

Moreover, these areas are often the setting of un-respectful behaves toward the different gender identities, of gender-based stereotypes, sexism and discrimination. Young people are the victims and the perpetrators (aware or not) of these actions. Families and youth workers, part of their closest relational circuit are not always fully equipped to detect the gender-based discrimination symptoms within groups of young people and to then to take action to promote gender justice and equality in public spaces.

YOUTH WORK: for all the above mentioned reasons, we consider crucial to keep enhancing the supporting action to youth workers and activists involved in the grass-rooted work in these isolated public spaces. We are aware of the enormous amount of actions already developed on the every-day base and of the heterogeneity of methods and approaches applied. In the same time we do believe that the work can be always further enriched and fine-tuned. Specifically for what concerns the creation of a pedagogical package (including different tools and methods within a newly designed pedagogical approach) to detect the display (behaves, causes, reactions) of gender-based discrimination within groups of young people and to afterwards raise awareness on gender sensitive issues. This package will contribute to reduce the gender-based stereotypes, to promote fair gender role models and, at large, fight exclusion by enhancing gender equity.

THEMATIC FOCUS: the overall project will be focused on social inclusion, but with a specific focus on gender. Gender is chosen as a transversal topic because it is a quite sensitive issues for young people from 16 (adolescence) to the 30 years old (adult age). In this age, sometimes sexuality and gender can be considered a taboo, the education systems barely offer classes and courses on "sexual education", while it's rare and almost not existing a real "gender education". Groups of peers might thus become the stage where gender-based stereotypes appear, unbalanced gender role are models and sexists behaves promoted. In Europe, the cases of gender-based violence toward young women and women are still actual and the scale of the problem is alarming.

There are extremely sensitive issues rotating around the big umbrella of gender and it's crucial to work with the young people on "gender education" to have them becoming agents of change and active promoters of equity. In order to achieve this goal, it's needed to further equip youth workers and activists with tools and methods to detect the display of gender-based discrimination within groups of young people and then to promote "gender-justice" approaches based on the promotion of equity and the respect of the differences.

METHODOLOGY: the whole project will be developed within the umbrella of the **non-formal education - NFE**. The proposed educational approach will be constantly based on the learning by doing: here the specific learning objectives forecasted in the different steps are conceived in a consequential perspective to better achieve a coherent learning process of all the involved actors and stakeholders.

This approach moreover allows to shape the action/s accordingly to the needs of the direct beneficiaries (young people) and of the indirect (the local communities involved), respecting the specificities, ensuring flexibility to the learning experiences and enhancing the young people knowledge, skills and competences.

Thus a specific space will be dedicated to the tools, methods and approaches testing and up-scaling within a newly designed pedagogical perspective among the consortium members to fight gender-based discrimination and to raise awareness on gender-sensitive issues. Among the methods tested and up-scaled, the **Street Cloning, Body Movement, Labyrinth Theatre** and **Social Cabaret**.

OUTCOMES: the project forecast the realization of two main Intellectual Outputs:

INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 1- Toolkit to Detect Gender-Based Discrimination: to equip youth workers from the EU participating countries with knowledge, information and innovative tools and methodologies to detect the warning signals in the young people gender-based discriminative behaviours and to understand the causes behind the display of discrimination.

INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 2- Handbook for Youth Workers: to provide youth workers from different European countries with an educational package including tools and interactive methods, within a newly designed pedagogical approach, to raise youth awareness on gender issues and to promote gender equity within groups of young people in public spaces.

For more information on the work already implemented till now, please have a look to the:

- **Leaflet** with the synthetic description of the project and the work done till now: https://www.lunaria.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/AGORA_leaflet-DIGITALE.pdf
- **Intellectual Output 1 - Toolkit to Detect Gender Based Discrimination:** <https://www.lunaria.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/AGORA-I.O.1-1.pdf>

PROJECT TIMELINE

<p>TRANSNATIONAL PROJECT MEETING 17th – 19th December 2019 – 3 days Athens, GREECE</p>
<p>COUNTRY FIELD RESEARCH (part of I.O. 1) 01st January – 30th April 2020 (4 months) ALL THE INVOLVED COUNTRIES</p>
<p>INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 1 TOOLKIT TO DETECT GENDER-BASED DISCRIMINATION 01st May – 31st October 2020 (6 months) ALL THE INVOLVED COUNTRIES</p>
<p>TOOLS TESTING THROUGH STREET ACTIONS (part of I.O. 1) 01st May – 30th June 2021 (2 months) ALL THE INVOLVED COUNTRIES</p>
<p>TRAINING COURSE 25th September 2021 – 06th October 2021 (12 days) (24th September 2021: arrival day - 07th October 2021: departure day) Morrano, Orvieto, ITALY</p>
<p>TOOLS HARMONIZATION (part of I.O. 2) 01st – 30th November 2021 DATES TO BE CONFIRMED</p>
<p>TOOLS TESTING THROUGH STREET ACTIONS (part of I.O. 2) 01st December 2021 – 31st January 2022 (2 months) DATES TO BE CONFIRMED ALL THE INVOLVED COUNTRIES</p>
<p>INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 2 HANBOOK FOR YOUTH WORKERS 01st May 2021 – 31st January 2022 DATES TO BE CONFIRMED ALL THE INVOLVED COUNTRIES</p>
<p>MULTIPLIERS EVENTS IN PUBLIC SPACES 01st – 30th April 2022 DATES TO BE CONFIRMED ALL THE INVOLVED COUNTRIES</p>
<p>TRANSNATIONAL PROJECT MEETING May 2022 DATES TO BE CONFIRMED FRANCE</p>