

Final report

**“Aware and Active Ideathon
on inclusion of young migrants, refugees and asylum
seekers in youth work”**

29.-30.5.2019, Vienna



Trainers: Alexandra Beweis, Adam Elsod and Henk Persyn

Description of the activity

The project AAA („Aware and Active”) is a three-year action supported by the European Commission in the context of the Erasmus+ Programme: Initiatives for policy innovation – Social Inclusion through education, training and youth. It started on December 1st 2016 and will end on December 31st 2019. The main objectives of the project are preventing violent radicalization and promoting democratic values, fundamental rights, intercultural understanding and active citizenship of young people; and enhance critical thinking and media literacy among young people.

Six National Agencies of Erasmus+: Youth in Action programme from Austria, Estonia, Finland, Italy, Macedonia and Slovenia are directly involved into the project implementation and the project is also supported by the POYWE - Professional Open Youth Work in Europe.

After three years of diverse activities – from local, national and European Idea Labs to supporting young people



to run their own awareness raising campaigns on the issues of inclusion and shared values of them and their peers living in Europe, we were ready to share results, lessons learned and challenges.

It is natural for an inclusive participation project like Aware and Active to aim at more than just distributing our own findings – we wished to share ours, but also learn from yours and together co-create something new for the youth field.

Thus the idea of the Aware and Active Ideathon was born – a DEOR Fair that goes beyond:

The main aims of the event are:

- To share our findings of an intense three year project and compare them with others
- To transfer learned outcomes to practice
- To offer a space for co-creating innovation in the youth field
- To support continuity in activism of young people
- To contribute to a new narrative about young migrants, asylum seekers and refugees

There were 63 participants (and 3 trainers) : the group was composed by representatives of Erasmus+: Youth in Action National agencies, youth workers, trainers and young people involved in inclusive youth work in 6 participating countries (Slovenia, Macedonia, Italy, Austria, Estonia, Finland) and beyond.

Implemented programme

	Wednesday, 29.5.2019	Thursday, 30.5.2019
09:00	Arrival of participants	Wrap up the work on your solution(s) + Last commitments and confirmations of potential partnerships and prepare your presentation
11:00		Presentations Presenting the solutions you found for your Future Directions And strategy's how to disseminate this result
12:00	Lunch	Lunch
12:30	Opening & Welcome	Last personal checking
13:00	Sharing Tools & Experiences Learn about the results of Aware & Active and the #YoungTogether Campaign and share your own findings, results and tools	Evaluation & Closing
14:45	Pains & Gains Collecting and sharing our pains and gains in our action statement on youth work for inclusion	Departure of Participants
16:15	Future Directions What has to happen in the future? We need more of... We need less of.. Sharing our vision of the future and deciding together on the strategic directions we need to work on	
17:15	Get to work! Work with a group of like – minded people on solutions for the future direction you feel most passionate about	
19:00	Buffet Dinner served – help yourself when you are ready	
23:00	Party Break Celebrate that we are still here working on the future	

Description of individual programme segments

Wednesday, 29.5.2019

Welcome activities

Aim: - getting to know each other, official welcome

Activities: we had some first getting to know each other activities like finding out who is in the room and official opening speeches by Mrs Birgit Klausser, Department for International and European Youth and Family, Bundeskanzleramt in Austria and by representatives of the hosting NA.



Bernard Abrignani, member of the Advisory Board of the Aware and Active project and the former coordinator of SALTO EUROMED, seated in the French National Agency Erasmus+: Youth in Action, gave an intro putting the Aware and Active initiative into a wider context of European developments and projects in the past three years.

Sharing the results of Aware and Active

Gerhard Mosshammer, Head of leading NA and Marcela Hajtmankova, the project manager of the Aware and Active project shared an overview of the aims of the project, first conclusions and results and some lessons learned.

Project outcomes

Tools developed: Compendium, Tool kit for trainers, Inclusion strategy on how to include young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers into the project activities

20 trainings and ideas labs in all participating countries

425 young multipliers trained on the issues of the AAA project (of whom 47% had a refugee or migrant background) and actively engaged young people implementing awareness raising activities.

European Ideas Lab 2018 in Ljubljana - Over 60 participants including young people, youth workers and local partners, NAs and organisations

More than 56 awareness raising ideas in Europe developed by young people

22 interesting activities implemented by local youngsters together with young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers across Europe More than 2000 people reached

Campaign #YoungTogether and Twitter storm

5 campaign videos produced FB page Be Aware and Active www.awareandactive.eu

reached 650 000 people by twitter storm 970 original tweets by 260 contributors Still continues...



Followed by presentations of young people Grace Haki Laaksonen from Finland, Otniel Ghinda and Dennis Climenco from Austria and Dorina Secieru from Italy (all of them have the migrant background), who were involved in the AAA trainings and Idea Labs as well as in several local awareness raising activities and shared their own experiences. This was a good opportunity of first exchange and discussion about their personal lessons learned and experiences gained.

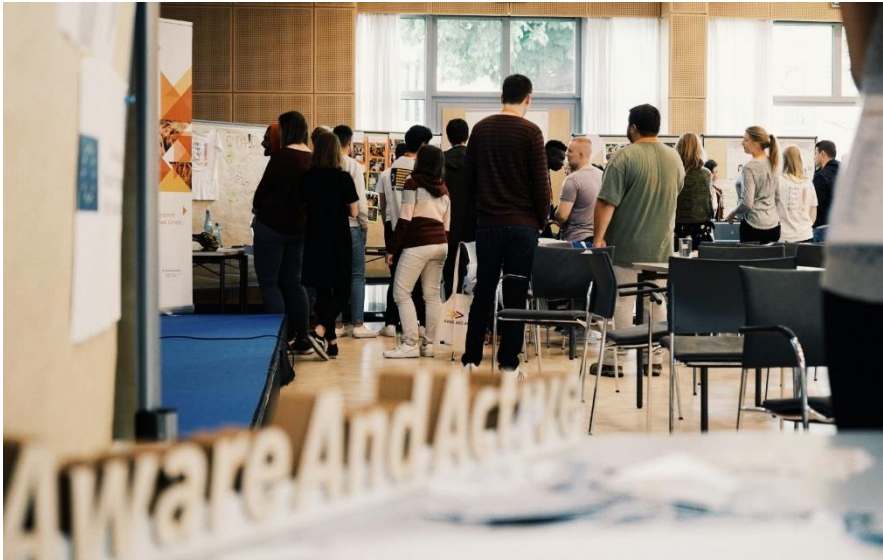


Adam Elsdor, the campaigner of the #YoungTogether Campaign closed this session with some words on the implement Awareness Raising Campaign.

The presentations were followed by a short introduction to the program and technical information.

Sharing Tools and Experiences

All participants had been invited beforehand to bring their own experiences, tools and materials and share them in a market fair. Stands were provided and participants had time to visit the stands of others and share their own results of projects aimed at the inclusion of young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.



Pains & Gains

After the first sharing of achieved results and experiences the participants formed mixed small groups and intensified the sharing by discussing first their pains in their work – what are the challenges, problems, difficulties they faced in this work. After a first round of sharing and collecting they decided as a group on their main concerns and shared them on a provided “padlet”.

In a second round they proceeded with the gains – what do we already have that supports our work, what are the successes already achieved, tools already at our hand. In a similar process they went from a first round of sharing to collecting and selecting their main common.

From there we moved on to discuss in the same process which future directions we see on the basis of the collected pains and gains. Again in smaller groups participants collected and discussed which strategic directions we need to work on and decided together on the main ones to follow.



On the basis of this collection we ended up with 12 future directions that need our attention and now it was time for participants to decide on which of those visions they wish to work and form groups of like-minded people to work on one concrete solution idea.

Get to work!

Once those groups were formed the participants were given the space and the means to work in their own rhythm and pace on their solutions. They had time until Thursday, 30 May, 11:00 am to work out their idea and prepare a short presentation of their solution. They had the room to work, food and drinks provided and for all those still up and around we had a party at 23:00 to celebrate the progress.



Thursday, 30.5.2019

Preparing presentations

During Thursday morning, participants had time to prepare their presentations – flip charts, speeches, videos and power pints were finalised there.



Presentations of solutions

8 presentations were then held and discussed in plenary. All groups were able to present a concrete solution for the strategic direction they had chosen and the present NAs promised to take all those to the final project meeting and discuss if there are means to support those projects within the ongoing cooperation. In general,

the responsibility for any future steps on these solutions stays with the participating people, which was made clear right from the beginning of the process.



Evaluation

After all presentations were done and discussed we gave room for some feedback and remarks by participants and had a “Kahoot” with evaluation questions – the overall evaluation by participants was very positive. The vast majority thought that this was an interesting new format and would like to see it (with some adjustments – mainly mentioned was more time needed) implemented also in the future in the youth field. Very few really could not warm up with the method and therefore disliked the process.

Closing Remarks

We had a moment of closing remarks from the hosting Austrian NA at the end of activity.

Results

PAINS	
Training youth worker on the asylum procedures requests	
Combating hate speech	
Hard to raise their children.	
Promote and communicate the projects	
Focus on differences	missing focus on binding us
Cultural shock.	
REFUGEE RIGHTS	Refugees lack the right of education and work No housing facilities and accommodation
Media	Fake news Migrants are invisible to the community due to lack of media cover.
Integration	Language Culture Religions
	High egocentrism.
Gender issues	Hard to get female migrants/refugees/asylum seekers in activities.
FINANCING PROBLEMS	Lack of money to finance the projects Lack of knowledge of financing opportunities
Lack of continuity of the work	Lack of funding Lack of monitoring and evaluation of results of the work

Not enough inclusion	There are many variables that make youth work in the field too little inclusive with a specialization on target groups that are too specific and not mixing among them leading to challenges in inclusion in society.
	How to tackle far right? Need for materials, tools.
Motivation (lack of)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the local group • and the migrants • Negative dynamics
ACTIONS, RESULTS AND INFLUENCES	Actions are not sustainable solutions, only temporary relief Funds are not spent correctly and wisely
Two-sided mutuality in the lack of motivation.	
Language barrier	<p>Migrants can have trouble getting education if they are not fluent in the country's language.</p> <p>It is also the reason they cannot get involved in certain activities in society and can not get properly integrated.</p> <p>In some countries, there are not enough/any translators for certain languages. It is a big barrier for people who have just arrived in a country and it results in them having trouble applying for asylum.</p>
Limited mobility	the load of documents needed and how complicated it is to get them limits very much access to mobility projects
Prejudices	Lack of trust and understanding if the refugees. Harsh attitude of the local community. Racism.
Politics	<p>Bad decision made by leaders</p> <p>Issues with inclusion of young people in decision making</p> <p>Segregation of refugees</p> <p>No holistic approaches</p>
Lack of specific knowledge	Young migrants that would like to be involved in youth work many times don't have the same learning background as their local peers and this makes it harder for them (language/cultural barriers, specific youth work tools...)

LACK OF NETWORKING	Lack of communication between NGOs Overlapping work done by NGOs NGO's see each other as competition not as partners
Language barrier	Communication difficulties due different languages.
Lack of knowledge and understanding by the locals	Lack skills of knowledge of the youth workers. Lack of knowledge and fear by the local community. High ethnocentrism
Language - communication	The lack of language abilities and knowledge The lack of methods to communicate without having the same language
Paying attention only on the biggest group of minority	If country has more than one minority it prefers not to pay attention on smaller groups
IGNORANCE	Lack of information to the general public about refugees Uninformed youth about migrants Confusion between the terms refugee, migrant and asylum seeker
Political atmosphere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the lack of foundation • how to support organizations now that the political situation changed • resident permits
Focus only on differences	We can pay more attention on similarities
People don't want to care	People don't think outside of the box Fear of unknown without a try to get to know Fear of losing comfort zone Closing eyes to injustice

Lack of innovation (methods and approaches)	Too much use of old technics of integration Increasing nationalism
Bureaucracy	<p>Lot of bureaucracy and law limitations. Difficult to reach the citizenship. Lack of chances to use the acquired knowledge if there is no clear status in the country. Small chances of recognition of the formal education acquired in the country of origin. Fewer opportunities to participate and be a part of the European community.</p>
XENOPHOBIA	<p>Stereotyping NIMBY mentality Social injustice and prejudice Refugees are not equality treated and are not accepted from the locals</p>
Financial resources	<p>Access to funding Limitation of funding</p>
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political atmosphere is harder. • Topic is hijacked by political parties. • Instrumentalisation of migrants, refugees.
Integration but no inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • terms but no action • raising of sub-cultures
NEGATIVE PROPAGANDA	<p>Fake news, misinformation, manipulation of the masses National politics goals Far-right movement gaining popularity and being tied to patriotism Narrow-minded people who believe everything they read</p>
Life priorities	<p>Practical life issues and challenges affect the level of participation in youth work activities. For instance legal documents, bureaucracy, no stability in terms of economy and of a place to live, lack of interpersonal relationships...</p>
No vision	No anticipation of problems. Trying to solve in hurry.

GAINS	
Public Confessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your individual (About preconceptions)
Motivated young refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hope for improvement Participation
General conditions and helping agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have Europe People who are aware of the problems
Personal gains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Becoming a better person myself. Seeing the process of immigration. The motivation to work with migrants/refugees/asylum seekers and learning from them.
Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge about teamwork
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human rights education is part of youth work curriculum In university
Space for inclusion activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting system who support space (Estonia)
Time:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free time to volunteer, time in life to work on it on long term
Democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing democratic practices. Freedom of speech is increasing. Open discussion in the communities about the topic.
People awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only a small percentage of people in my country (Slovenia) support the far right.
Mutual and common interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interest of relationship we are all humans, we love to laugh and play together, that brings joy
Attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include the migrants and the strong belief that It Is right Combating ethnocentrism and prejudices by diversity
Money and working economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> freedom of speech

Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings Give immigrants job or hobby
Good stories and experience about integration to share	
Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NGO's, personal networks, artists, local networks
Creative approach to the budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To do a big thing with a little budget
Activism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteers. Young activists feel empathy and act in favour. Ability to help. People open their minds and work together.
positive local impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in some cases integration projects can also lead to better well fare even for the locals (i.e. local schools not closing down for depopulation in rural areas) or to higher awareness about basic rights
NAs support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we can feel that NAs care
Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we have understandings of the problem
Concrete tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> nature connection applied art social media Gained skills working for the same goal
Rooms and Localities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spaces to meet and get connected
Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally Internationally
Public bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National agencies, EU, European programs...
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have so much similarities beyond differences
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empowering people Enhancing active citizenship participation

Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young motivated people
MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media impact • Campaigns
Experience and expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share experience with people, who have different backgrounds • Getting new knowledge trough participating in projects • Building of expertise • Learn to see things from other prospective 😊
NETWORKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs collaborating for a common goal • National and institutional network
STATE SERVICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality healthcare • Refugee centres, reception centres for asylum seekers • Quality of life
FUNDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donor support
LEGISLATION AND POLICY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laws, acts, strategies, on asylum, refugees, foreigners • International conventions on refugee/human rights • Local and national politics
CULTURAL PLURALISM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Globalization • Multiculturalism • Unity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking among organisation in the field
Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation and building networks with NGOs and other government Organisations
HUMAN RESOURCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified professionals in refugee rights • Committed volunteers • People's humanity and generosity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-working

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity in find solution
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of media
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual good cases of integration
Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation of individuals to work • Commitment of volunteers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good level of participation and passion from all
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solidarity projects, youth exchange
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers of people touched
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public opinion awareness
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESC (European Solidarity Corps) projects
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of education, many possibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change is a shared concern (again)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest to come to Europe is a gain, mutual benefit
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of free space (empty villages)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESC • Erasmus+ has resources (we have TCA)

Future Priorities	
Financial Resources	e. g. easier applications in ERASMUS + so young refugees can apply or include working money for NGOs which have access to young people with fewer opportunities (refugees), so they can do those projects
Building quality networks	
Language barrier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities • Game • Art • music • food
TRANSPARENCY OF EU FUNDING	via human resources
Inclusive and accessible projects	
Reform E.U. migration policies according to Human Rights	
Rethink the social and inclusion policies	
FIGHTING NEGATIVE PROPAGANDA	via technology and personal stories and experiences if refugees
	FOSTERING INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGES MORE AND MORE
Intercultural education and media literacy in the public education system.	
Reliable media	
BUILDING STRONGER NETWORKS (Nat. and Int.)	via co-operation between NGOs, EU programs, exchanges
	Ensuring continuity strengthen the partnership/to give sustainability to projects/actions

Lack of tools & knowledge	We need to network, pool and share resources to facilitate access to learning experiences for involving migrants into youth work (use also NAs support)
Negative narrative to be contrasted	Media and social media play an important role in spreading a negative view of migration. Fake news should be contrasted with true news telling also positive stories. True news need big numbers and great efforts to be effective
NAs supporting mobility	Use the NAs support to overcome the limited access to mobility projects
	Preparing the new inclusive generation of stakeholders (taking into account the geopolitical, religious, economical picture of the world)

Solutions

Eight different solutions were presented at the end of the event – most of the groups had prepared creative presentations using posters, pdf, power point and videos – the results and all related links to digital material can be found here on our padlet: https://padlet.com/mhd_alsaud/7hy2wan5fbvq



Methods

During the “Ideathon” we were using as our basis youth work and non-formal methods - creating a safe space to learn and contribute, participatory methods. Everybody had a chance to express himself or herself, working in small and bigger groups, taking care of language and other barriers, participants had a chance to co-create the programme and experience many hands on planning of a campaign.

However, more specific in this event we combined elements based on “Hackatons” (as they are common in the environment of software engineering and ICT in general) and design thinking. Thus, the methods differed from usual youth work settings and participants had more freedom in their way and pace of working. The whole event was designed as a get-together of like-minded, passionate and active people, who come to share their knowledge and in a short time and with people new to them are open to create something new.

Main conclusions of the activity

The event showed that the Aware and Active project managed to create an impact on the participating National Agencies and communities. Most of all involved participants and followers – those young people, trainers and youth workers, who were with the project from the beginning and also joined the “Ideathon” in Vienna expressed clearly that they could see a journey they had made from where we started three years ago to this event of sharing results. We think that this can be as symbolic for the whole project: it was not without struggle that this whole initiative was implemented, but despite all challenges and obstacles faced, the Aware and Active project reached its goal and objective. Even in this last international event could demonstrate that the input, ideas and participation of young people – wherever they come from – is at its core and heart. A new format is always also a risk taken, but we believe this risk was worth it for enabling a much more elaborated exchange of experiences and ideas than a classic DEOR Fair could ever have provided.

Evaluation

Summary of the evaluation by participants.

General impressions of the participants were very good: they felt welcomed, they said the event was well organized, the atmosphere was good, that the trainers were clear, fun and approachable, that they had a lot of opportunities to share and discuss with their peers and that they enjoyed the experience of a new format that also challenged them. Some very few could not warm up to the whole concept of an “Ideathon” and therefore did not benefit or enjoy the experience as much as others enjoy. Main concern raised was the too short period of the activity and many expressed the feeling that even much more could have been achieved with half a day more.

Short evaluation by trainers.

Team of trainers cooperated very well before and during the event. We supported each other when need, held preparation and evaluation meetings. We also collaborated for the very first time on this new format and were required to work “24 hours” – as if we asked our participants to do. We share the feeling of many participants that another half day or day would have been very beneficial to be able to give the group some more time to “grow together”, add some flavour of the place where we meet and/or allow some more breaks during the very intense work on pains, gains and future directions, which we had to get through rather quickly. We feel that this format is very promising and would all three like to develop it a bit further, adapt some bits and pieces and use it in many more occasions.

Last addition – short conclusion after the partners meeting of the AAA NA consortium:

(Formulated in June, approx. one month after the “Ideathon” event)

"Considering the AAA budget left and the remaining eligible period of the AAA implementation, it would not be feasible to support the ideas as specific projects developed during the “Ideathon” in the scope of the AAA. The “Ideathon” participants will be informed about the AAA contact persons in all participating countries and discuss specifically the possibilities for implementation of the proposed activities, or where to apply for financial support.

If the proposed activities would be implemented, they could be considered as follow-up of the AAA project."