

Smart up inclusion a training course for youth workers from 10 European countries

The international training course Smart up Inclusion took place during the 5th to 13th of September 2019 in the north of France, Lille outskirts.

The training course brought together 30 participants, 3 from each of the following countries: France, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Greece, Lithuania, the Republic of North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Spain and Turkey. The participants group was diverse in terms of age (we had even more than 40 years difference between the youngest and the oldest participant) and in terms of experience. The great variety of personalities, personal experiences and different background enriched the training, bringing an added value to the final outcome. The participants had all a common aim: to improve their competences in the area of non-formal education and create new professional connections and personal friendships.

The training days were intense and each day brought to the stage different methodologies and experiences. Participants learned from each other, shared good practices from their experience and explored new methods of working with disadvantaged groups of young people.

The course started by fostering up the team spirit, then challenged participants to define personal learning objectives and created a common understanding of the concepts and challenges of youth work. Participants had the chance to share their national realities in the field of youth work and youth policies, discovering they have several common issues to address but also able to get inspired by the good practices of other countries. Participants explored methods of coaching, mind mapping, mentoring tools and digital literacy for youth. During the workshops the participants had the chance to practice their new abilities through simulations and study cases focused on the needs and characteristics of disadvantaged youth. Participants, armed with different non-formal learning methodologies created new youth work methods and strategies focused on the needs of disadvantaged youth.

Participants were also excited to organise an open space, where they were able to share with the others some of their best competences. Among the most successful workshops given by the participants we can mention: business design, non-verbal communication and wellbeing breathing and meditation practices.

Participants also presented their NGOs and developed their network by planning other projects.

Besides their involvement in the training activities, the participants had the chance to share their country traditions and cultures during the intercultural evenings. Participants brought foods, crafts, music from their countries and showed to the other their dances and most unusual traditions. They have also organised quizzes and games that involved everyone and gave the participants the chance to become more united and fight stereotypes.

Participants became friends as well and some of them created new personal networks. At the end of the day, we are all humans and human connections is what drives the most of us. Hopefully, participants will get the chance to meet again somewhere in this world, be it for professional or personal reasons.

Smart Up Inclusion is a Mobility of Youth Workers – Training Course funded by the European Commission – Erasmus+ Programme. The project is coordinated by Sunrise Project – France organisation in partnership with organisations from nine other countries: Cross Culture International Foundation from Cyprus, European Youth Centre Breclav from Czech Republic, I.D.E.A. from Greece, Iniciatyvu klubas Kitu kampu from Lithuania, Association for research education and development marketing gate from The Republic of North Macedonia, Asociatia Oamenii Deltei from Romania, Turkiye Avrupa vakfi from Turkey, Stowarzyszenie Projektow Miedzynarodowych "INPRO" from Poland, ADEFIS Juventud Internacional from Spain.