

“Peers for Equality” – online course for youth workers

INFO-PACK for Partner Organizations and Participants

Description of the project.

In Dec 2018 the Council of the European Union expressed its concerns and manifested its expectations from the European Commission to foster and promote gender equality in formal, informal and nonformal education by taking appropriate steps to ensure that all youth workers and educators are provided with adequate competences in the areas of gender equality and that they can update their competences throughout their careers.

As presented in their description, the partner organisations of this project have declared to face similar situations in their environment:

- youngsters still perpetuating the same stereotypes on gender,
- social pressure and other forms of oppression of women,
- inadequate educational programs to tackle this.

In the existing cultural context, representatives of Ofensiva Tinerilor, European Peer Training Organisation and Y-Peer Kyrgyzstan exchanged their good practices in this field in a Capacity Building project. The main output was the Peers for Equality Peer-to-Peer training programme (<http://equality.ofetin.ro>). The programme embeds work practices through which peer educators can change the mentality of young people for understanding the importance of gender equality and was tested in over 15 communities (both from Europe and Central Asia) and on more than 200 beneficiaries showing great potential for changing the mentalities of young people, especially in terms of:

- developing critical thinking with respect to traditions and stereotypes that contradict human rights, especially in relation to gender
- empowering the participants to face the existing social pressure that fosters this form of discrimination
- making them aware of the negative implications of gender discrimination
- helping them become, in general, more tolerant and more open to diversity

As a member of the European Peer Training Organisation, a network of European youth and youth-serving organisations who adhere to a common vision of supporting “people to enjoy learning from each other how to embrace their differences and realize their unique potential”, Ofensiva Tinerilor is involved significantly in delivering solutions to the phenomenon of discrimination on

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various grounds. For the last 10 years, we have been active in the field of anti-discrimination education, ceaselessly building capacities for peer trainers and youth organisations to tackle prejudice and exclusion in their own environments. Our programs reach over 1000 young people every year, mostly from the Arad region but also from different European countries (as together with other members and partners we aim to contribute to the prevention of discrimination, intolerance and inequality of all kind by unleashing the impactful potential of peer training in creating peaceful spaces of dialogue). Hence, the proposed project is a continuation of our work, focused on the direction of gender-based discrimination.

"Peers for Equality" comes as a response to the identified need in form of a K1 training course for Youth workers with 2 training modules that will take place, the 1st one online and the 2nd in Romania hopefully face to face if the pandemic situation will allow it.

1st module - Thematic Awareness Training (TAT) – a 8-day initial online training for youth and youth workers, tackling the training topic, aiming to stimulate the acquisition of social competences that foster ownership of the fundamental values of non-discrimination and equality between genders.

2nd module - Train the Trainer – a 8-day training for peer trainers who have attended a TAT and wish to improve their facilitation skills so that they can replicate the process back in their local environment, by facilitating thematic workshops on the topic, using the P4E methodology

In the 1st module we will have online a group of 22 participants coming from a total of 11 partners from all over Europe. Each partner will send two participants to the course.

In the 2nd module, the participants that gained some experience will discover how to teach other to be more inclusive in their work. This “Train the Trainer” module will give them the chance to develop their facilitation skills and to learn how to develop a training program that addresses gender equality.

In the 2nd module we will hopefully be able to host the same 22 participants coming from a total of 11 partners. The participants should have participated in the 1st training as well and should be able to use the gained experience in their work inside the NGO.

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Profile/Recruitment/Selection of the participants:

It is very important for partners to select participants that will be able to attend both training modules as well as organize the workshops foreseen in the project between the two training courses.

Participants who commit to this training will have to complete 6 hours of practice (facilitation of activities with their peers) and to fill in a “self-assessment form” between the first and second training module. This form will help them to reflect on the current state of their competences as peer trainers and will be used during the second training module as a basis to assess and improve those competences. Also, the participants in the second training module would need to present a draft idea of their future action plan and to demonstrate their capacity to take action afterwards. Due to the worldwide pandemics and constant lockdowns we face in every country, this local workshops can also be organized on-line.

Each partner will need to select his own participants and notify the coordinating organization 5 weeks before in case participants were not identified.

For the 1st training module – Peers for Equality – Thematic Awareness Training online:

Part 1 - 06.05.2021 – 09.05.2021 for around 4.5 hours/daily including breaks

Part 3 - 13.05.2021 – 16.05.2021 for around 4.5 hours/daily including breaks

The target group: peers trainers as well as trainers and youth workers who want to explore further and acquire more skills in organising activities and future workshops based on gender equality and anti discrimination through peer education. The common denominator of the participants will be their personal and professional need and honest willingness to deal concretely with the topic and take effective social action after the training.

At the following link you can also find the online application form, which each participant will need to fill in <https://forms.gle/qpbrtzuW45M6PdXw9>

Participants should be involved in youth work, being part of the staff or volunteers of the sending organization.

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Expected Learning outcomes of the training modules:

Each training module will focus on developing specific competencies:

In terms of specific competencies:

At the end of the first activity participants will gain specific youth worker competencies (with respect to the European Training Strategy - "Competence Model for Youth Workers to Work Internationally"), like:

- an open attitude towards acceptance of change (as the whole program is designed to change the attitudes and perceptions of the participant with respect to gender equality)
- knowledge of different educational methods & concepts (as the TAT is a way of experiencing working methods for combating gender based discrimination that the participants are expected to use in their daily work)
- awareness of one's own identity, sensitivity & openness to diversity (in activities like "The identity molecule", "Changing gender roles", "Ideal woman, ideal man", "Concentric circles" etc.)
- openness to expressions of feelings & emotions (one's own & others'), and ability to actively listen given that the whole program is based on sharing reflections that follow different structured experiences. This is also in relation to listening carefully to others, without judgment, interruption &, if possible, in an unbiased manner, which is again a feature that the program is relying on.
- willingness and ability to look at identity, culture and related aspects and dimensions from different perspectives (through "Gender across cultures", "Regrettable quotes", "Is it still a thing?")
- ability to reflect and distance from one's own perceptions, biases, and stereotypical constructions of reality (in all activities of the "Examining prejudice and discrimination related to gender" and "Confronting prejudice related to gender & taking social action" units)
- openness and ability to apply human rights principles (in all activities of the "Confronting prejudice related to gender & taking social action" unit)
- ability to create a safe, inspiring learning environment (in all activities of the "Introduction & Building the foundation" unit)
- ability to stimulate active participation, motivate and empower learners (which is a feature of the whole program)

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- being up-to-date on current concepts & theories with regard to diversity (in activities like "The mechanism of oppression", "Developing a common language", "Erasmus+", etc.)
- ability to speak in another language than one's mother tongue, where needed, as the working language is English, which is not the mother tongue of any of the participants

Participation in A1 is also expected to contribute to the participants' capacity to generate changes in terms of modernization of their sending organisations' working methodologies so that they will be more effective when promoting gender equality in their local contexts.

In terms of transversal competencies (as defined in the E.C. Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning), participants will improve their competencies related to:

1. Communication, especially in English, by expressing through different means and in different contexts, learning terminology related to disability (e.g. Group's glossary), interacting with people from different countries in non-formal and informal environments;
2. Cultural awareness and expression, by interacting with others from other cultures and sharing info about their own culture in inter cultural presentations;
3. Initiative and sense of entrepreneurship, as they will learn to improve their activities to address a wider group, to take social action and educate their peers, to plan a teaching activity;
4. Group management, by learning to lead a peer training process, build group dynamics, asses the outcomes of the learning process
5. Learning to learn, e.g. by self reflection on learning outcomes ("Learning diary"); by self assessment of learning needs ("A better me"), by understanding learning processes ("Kolb cycle")

The second mobility will support participants to acquire both specific competencies for youth workers (in terms of organising youth activities on gender equality), but also transversal key competencies.

Participation in A2 is expected to increase the participants' capacity to generate a multiplication effect in the field of promoting gender equality, adding to the desired "snowball effect" we work on starting;

Specific youth worker competencies (with respect to the European Training Strategy - "Competence Model for Youth Workers to Work Internationally"):

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- knowledge on the pedagogical notions needed for facilitating a peer training activity (e.g. "Kolb's learning cycle", "DOs and DONT's in facilitation", etc.)
- abilities of working with & on values through the "Peers for Equality" learning approach - ability to facilitate learning experience that increase awareness and capacity for working in the field of promoting gender equality (through specific learning experiences but also by actually facilitating one of the methods for all group during A2);
- ability to generate the necessary group dynamics (through specific group building and communication activities they will learn);
- ability to work in diverse groups, in terms of cultural background (by activities like Identity molecule, Greetings from around the world, etc.)
- ability to manage a learning process for others
- an open attitude for facilitating workshops on the thematic of gender equality; - ability to advocate for gender equality;
- ability to identify relevant partners in different environments (through activities like "spheres of influence")

Responsibilities of the Sending Partners

- The SOs will be providing support to participants during all the phases of the project, including during and after the mobility. Each SO will assign one person to be responsible from its side for this initiative;
- The recruitment of participants will be the responsibility of each partner;
- Each SO will be responsible for the pre-mobility preparation of their participants;
- Each SO will provide support related to travel (buying tickets, preparing participants for the trip, etc.) and also related to health insurance and the conditions associated to it. Upon request, the coordinating organisation can provide support or other relevant information;
- SOs must check that participants have all the necessary travel documents and that they understand the role and importance of each one, also in terms or reimbursement of costs: valid id/passport, travel tickets, visa (if required);
- Each partner will be responsible for gathering relevant evaluation data and for ensuring a proper exploitation of results in each local community and the visibility of the project, including the visibility of the Erasmus+ Program;

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Dissemination of results

Dissemination channels:

The main dissemination channel will be on-line: website, social media pages of partner organisations, social media accounts of participants, on-line media. We all will have to promote the project before, during and after the on-site events (through live-Tweeting, posting picture on a daily basis, publishing quotes from participants on Facebook and Instagram).

In case you don't want to appear and/or be tagged on pictures, you can notify the coordinating organisation and facilitators prior and/or at the beginning of the first training. Anyway, a consent form will be handed out to all participants at the beginning of the first training to ask them whether they allow or not pictures of them to be taken and used.

Dissemination indicators:

- At least one post referring to the program will be published by each partner/participant at each mobility. This will also allow us to capitalize on the newly created cooperation mechanisms and on the associated networking opportunities;
- E-mails presenting the relevant results will be sent to organizations active in the youth field, until the last month of the project. Ofensiva Tinerilor will lead this task. Each partner will also share the resources with their own networks, to at least 30 other NGOs.
- At least 5 on-line resource sharing groups will also be used for the same purpose;
- At least 2 articles about the project will be published in local news websites;
- EPTO will share the results through its own mailing list/newsletter.

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Also, as presented before, the participants will be asked to implement an activity in their local communities (e.g. organizing an anti-discrimination workshop), ensuring the dissemination of the project at community level. Partners will need to support their participants in organizing the local activities.

Visibility of the program:

Each material used in the dissemination will, of course, make reference to the Erasmus+ program, both in the form of the mandatory program logo and, where appropriate (like on the website), further information about it that is relevant to the target group it addresses (objectives, type of support offered, examples of initiatives that are eligible, etc.). Each mobility will include a session for presenting the Erasmus+ program. Each workshop organised by the trained peer educators will include references to the Erasmus+ program.

In case partners need to receive the Erasmus+ Logo Ofensiva Tinerilor can provide it.

Role of partners in the dissemination activities:

Each partner will be equally involved in the dissemination activities, each being empowered to choose the best way to disseminate, taking into consideration the quantitative criteria mentioned above and the need to approach the following channels of dissemination:

- E-mails
- Social media
- Organization’s website
- Mailing groups and lists
- Mass-media

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Each partner will also act as a local multiplier, organising anti-discrimination workshops in their communities, promoting the results of the project and offering information to the ones that request it.