



Youth in Action programme "Youth for democracy project"

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start your business with us

4th Meeting: Metz/France, July 10-13, 2013

TOGETHER



France

SOLIDARITY TRACKS



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Magazine



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Introduction

The Youth Entrepreneurs Club is a meeting point for young people who are interested in developing an entrepreneurial project. By means of this club, we want to support the future young entrepreneurs by giving them useful information.

It started in Lefkada (Greece) in November 2012. We made the first step by creating the networking among the four partner countries. During those days the group set up the content of the web site and the forum. Both constitute the virtual meeting point for the young entrepreneurs.

In order to broaden the network already created and to continue learning from new experiences of young entrepreneurs across Europe, we organized a second meeting in Baile Tusnad, Romania in January 2013.

For the third meeting, a group of sixteen young people met from 11th to 15th of April 2013 in Palermo, Sicily. There we tried to focus on the spe-

cific group of people with any kind of disability, specially blind and deaf people.

In 2013 July the Youth Entrepreneurs Club arrived to the final meeting which took place near Metz, in France. A new group of sixteen youngsters from four different countries gathered there to discuss further entrepreneurial ideas and to search and share information about policies.

During the four days of meeting, the participants had to finalize the website and the forum. But also, they had to present the whole project to the European Parliament in Strasbourg on our visit there.

This was the end of the first part of our project. The meetings are finished but YouthEclub is still alive thanks to the website and forum we have been creating since last November when we started in Lefkada. So, it is not late to participate. Don't hesitate and join the club!



Getting to know

On the first day of the meeting, we started by getting to know each other with an outside activity in the nice garden. There, all the participants introduced themselves with his/her name and a personal sign. This was an important matter for our future communication because among us it was a deaf participant who could associate the people with their signs. After repeating and playing with the signs, everybody memorized each other sign.



Intercultural Exchange



The intercultural night is a very important part of every project. Thanks to this activity, people get to know each other better from their culture, food and traditional dances. It took place in the first night of the meeting in order that the participant could get on well with each other since the beginning and the work together would be easier next days.

First of all, some of them had to cook. This was very interesting moment because they could see and learn the making process of some of the traditional dishes like the Romanian *polenta*.

After the preparation, every country had to present its culture through food, drink, videos,

music or dance... it is up to the participants.

The first one was [France](#). In the beginning, they had a presentation about French culture in sign language and Julie, the interpreter, was translating for the others. They brought very tasty cheese, salami, biscuits and wine from Bordeaux.

The next country was [Romania](#) who presented their cooked food *polenta* with double fermented cheese. As well, they had homemade sausage, lard with slices of onion and a really tasty homemade chocolate cake as a desert. There were two types of chocolate: white and black.

[Greece](#) concentrated more on

sweets products based on honey. They invited to taste their *halva*, homemade *pasteli* made from sesame and honey, fig in honey and mastic served in a spoon sweet known as "vaníllia". After the sweets, it was the time to try their traditional drink, ouzo.

The last country was [Italy](#). They bought food and drinks from two different regions, Puglia and Sicily. There were two different kinds of cheese, salami, *tarallo* and different varieties of wine.

After tasting all the food and drinks the participants taught their traditional dances. Everybody had really nice time and learned from this exceptional cultural exchange.

Group reflections

The participants had workshops to discuss and reflect about the entrepreneurship field. They worked in group and exchange many interesting ideas and opinions



Divided in two groups, the participants discussed about the meaning of entrepreneurship. Each group had a different subject related with the main topic: what entrepreneurship is? And, how entrepreneurship can be benefit by the society?

Reflections about entrepreneurship

First, the members discussed and shared opinions. After, they explained their conclusions to the whole group through illustrations and creative presentations.

For the first subject, the objective was to go deeper in the meaning of entrepreneurship and to make clear that every participant understand the topic. To present

the results, one of the teams prepared a clear and simple workflow. The other team used a very interesting anagram design for a better approach to the topic.

Reflection about solidarity and entrepreneurship

The second subject about social entrepreneurship took higher interest from the participants. Thanks to the discussions, they thought about real projects and examples focused on the collective entrepreneurship. They had to reflect in group to specify the steps and duties needed in order to realize a social entrepreneur project. They analyzed characteristics and effects of different aspects about entrepreneurship as

the cooperation, the marketing and the managing. The cooperation is the result of the searching partners, besides the sponsoring and the popular support. Marketing is sponsoring through the website and publicity. Finally, the managing includes sharing knowledge, experience and professionalism. As well, participants included the creativity, the diversity and the strategy of the environment as important part of the social entrepreneurship.

In conclusion, the social entrepreneurship is benefited by the society because it's the participation of the people with their ideas of high impact and feedback which produce advanced resources.

A nice day of visits in Strasbourg

Visit to the European Parliament

The main and important activity of the four days meeting in France was the visit to the European Parliament in Strasbourg and the aim was to present Youth Entrepreneurs Club there. The participants explained the essence of the club which is the creation of a network around the world among youngsters who want to start their own business or already have their own, in order to help others with their experience. The club also wants to include politicians who can help in legislative field.

The visit took part on the second day of the meeting. When we arrived to Strasbourg, we were welcomed by our guide, Mr Gkinterso. With him, the members started the presentation of the club and explained in detail everything what has been done till now with 'YouthEclub' project: the website, the meetings and the forum. As well, they shared the future ideas for the club and showed all the promotional materials and the outcomes from previous meetings.

After the Youth Entrepreneurs Club presentation, the participants were guided inside the Parliament. During the tour, it was explained the architectural concept of the building. The basic shape is a circle which wants to show perfection. By observing it from up, it has the shape of an ellipse. The main part of the parliament is the plenary chamber where all the important decisions are made. Here the guide explai-

ned the seating system of the members:

"Members sit in a hemicycle according to their political groups arranged mainly from left to right, although with the non-attached members towards the back and right of the chamber. All desks are equipped with microphones, headphones for interpretation and electronic voting equipment. The leaders of the groups sit on the front benches at the centre, and in the very centre is a podium for guest speakers. The remaining segment of the circular chamber is primarily composed of the raised area where the President and staff sit" (Wikipedia).

After the presentation of the plenary chamber, the group had the chance to ask questions about different topics related to the Parliament, the members, the Council, and the Commission, about their tasks and their function. The guide solved all the doubts, so no questions remained unanswered.

In the end of our tour, they were invited to take promotional materials, brochures and posters in different languages from the European Union. All group enjoyed the tour and they hope that they will come back to this place not as visitors, but as a member.



The second day of meeting, participants went to Strasbourg where they had the chance to visit the European Parliament and the offices of AMSED. But, also, they could enjoy some free time in the city

Meeting with AMSED

AMSED is a team of hardworking people from all over the world that, through international camps for young volunteers, journeys of solidarity, youth exchanges or programs for employed, pursues their vision of a multicultural world of equality of people and opportunities.

After the visit to the European Parliament, the participants met with some volunteers from AMSED and exchanged points of view about the youth entrepreneurship subject and its connection to volunteering. Simone, a

German student who is doing a EVS in AMSED to develop her skills made an interesting presentation that it was followed by a discussion about the impact of volunteering not only on society but also on youth and on their entrepreneurial skills.

The conclusion of the conversation was that volunteering does more than influence the social and humanitarian level of a person's character, but it actually plays a significant role on building up other aspects of the personality of the volunteer, such as

creativity, independence, ability to work in teams, self-confidence, decision-making, planning, organizing, managing and learning to use every tool to make an idea come true.

All the skills mentioned above, that are acquired and/ or developed by volunteer work, are the actual characteristics of a young entrepreneur. So, it becomes clear that the entrepreneurial spirit can be raised and developed through volunteering work. Keeping in mind that volunteering positions are mostly reserved for youth with fewer opportunities, it looks like it's the best way for a motivated person to acquire skills, qualification and experience outside of the formal education and the "classic" employment market. Volunteering programs as EVS constitute a great and essential opportunity for ambitious and creative young people all over the world.



Discovering Strasbourg

Once the visit in AMSED was over, two helpful volunteers who had also presented their association guided the group to the city center of Strasbourg. Unfortunately, the participants had really short time but they still had the chance to admire the beauties of this historical city. They were totally charmed by the small streets, the buildings and the atmosphere.

Strasbourg is the meeting point

of different cultures and architectural styles like German renaissance, French baroque and classicism, eclecticism and a lot of others. Walking through the streets suddenly appears a breathtaking view, where you can see the monumental Cathedral of Our Lady which is built in both: Romanesque and Gothic style. After sightseeing and buying souvenirs, the members tried specific local food called *Flammekueche*

which is traditionally served as a first course or an appetizer with a glass of white wine. The French call it *tarte flambée* – a thin-crust pizza made with *crème fraîche*, sliced onion and smoked lard traditionally baked in a wood-burning oven and served on cutting board. Very tasty!

They had two short hours to discover the city, then, the group returned back and took a well deserved rest.

Our entrepreneurial ventures

During the program, the participants made some business ideas and also, two of them presented existing businesses

Aimilia Tsimini, Greece

Aimilia Tsimini from Greece, presented her family business the Tsiminis Beekeeping. The business is the continuation of a three generations old tradition in apiculture. By high effort, devotion and respect towards the tools and knowledge provided from one generation to the next one, they have managed to evolve the love for the art of apiculture into a family business. The business makes the effort to provide one of the most valuable Greek natural products, the creation of honey. Near numerous kinds of honey, the business also is selling mother bees to other bee-keepers. They have more than 1.500 colonies. The products are sold in local shops in Greece, but also trough their website (www.melisokomia.gr) .

Barna Szőcs, Romania

Management consultant from Romania, presented two businesses where he is working as managing partner. The first one is a pharmacy (www.parafarm.ro), that created a website specially about medical equipments and accessoires directed to medical doctors. (www.clinicshop.ro). The other business is in the art industry. The *Pál Art Gallery* (www.palgallery.ro), is a local gallery and is working as NGO with the mission of promoting contemporary art and artists. The gallery has a monthly exhibition, and also they organize many other activities like discussions with the artists. Every month, the team is editing art catalogues about the running exhibition. The gallery has also freshly started projects, like an online art jewel store (www.bargot.eu) to promote and sell unique jewels made by artists.



Learning sign language and deaf culture

In the group, there was a deaf participant, Justine, who introduced her way of communicating to the rest of the members, one of them was Theo. After the lesson, Justine and Theo expressed their sensation by being teacher and learner.

Justine

"It was the first time in my life to teach French Sign Language for a group of people.

I was very pleased and happy about it and I had a really nice experience. During the class, I advised everybody to try not to talk, so they can really understand the situation and the circumstances of a deaf person. I wanted them to be « deaf » as me.

I know that it was hard for them to understand me in Sign Language. I was using additional elements, like mimicry, drawings and English words too.

In the first part of my class, I tried to introduce the Deaf culture in general so they could discover and see all the beauties of this culture. After, the plan was to teach the French sign language. Almost nobody knew that each country has its own sign language. It exists also an international one, but it is not known by everyone. Finally we discussed in four different languages,

like Greek, Italian, French and Romanian, but of course in sign language.

In the end of my class I showed them on YouTube Giuseppe Giuranna's movie. He is a visual virtual (VV) artist, very famous in the world for his performances. They liked the movie and its idea. I realized that for them it was a really big discovery the culture of the deaf people. I had contradictory feelings: happiness and sadness but the main feeling it was satisfaction because I could give something priceless. In the end participants showed me a Greek song as a sign of their reverence. Thank you all".

Theo

"The whole procedure of learning sign language was very interesting and pleasant. Justine was very good at teaching, explained us all and answered our questions. The participants were very interested and liked the night lesson.

During the project, also she explained us the problem that deaf people face today. They can have only 200 hours access to interpreters so many difficulties in communication.

Overall, it was a great experience to get to know a person with hearing difficulties and it raised my wish to attend a school to learn Sign Language".



Working on the forum

The forum always was the most important part of the whole project. That's because it will be the place where all members will be in touch to continue discussing about entrepreneurship. For this reason, in this last meeting, the participants were working hard on the forum in order to improve its information and its topics

Searching and uploading policies and resources on the forum

As it was said in every meeting, one of the objectives of the forum is to provide useful information about creating a new business. Also, the relation between politics and business was a recurrent subject in the meetings. For these reasons, it was necessary that the participants worked on policies and shared the information in the forum.

In one of the activities, the participants had the task to search on

Internet in order to find the source for policies in different levels: international and national. At the beginning, the mission seemed to be easy, but, once they started, they found a huge amount of information which they had to organize. The hardest part was to select from this amount the most important and useful ones for the club.

The way how they did was by working in groups.

First, divided in big mixed countries groups, they concentrated on International stage.

Later on, they joined a group made up just by their compatriots and worked on the national level. They gathered and analyzed all the information before to upload it to the forum. This was made with one clear objective that was to help existing and future members of the club from all over the world.

Action plan for the forum

The participants started to upload materials, contents to the already existing forum. The forum will be an online meeting place, but also a knowledge base for the young entrepreneurs, for the club members.

By using management consulting models, the team analyzed the current situation of the forum, and they build up an action plan for the future to develop the forum. They defined clear targets to reach the optimal level of the club in one year, like the developing and uploading of the contents. After that, through personal connection and using the social media, the club members will promote the forum and also they will invite experts, entrepreneurs, business owner to make a much professional plat-

form for the club.

In this way, the Youth Entrepreneurs Club also is a social, collective entrepreneurship – because the active members will develop and will run together. The value for them is the participation, the information and the value of the

advanced networking. This is a good possibility to receive useful information and to make new connections and new business partners. Another important objective for the club is to make real job opportunities by the entrepreneurial members of the club.



Open space for future projects

On the last day of the entrepreneurship project in Metz, we gathered together in order to express our ideas about future plans. There were many interesting ideas that showed us that there is a lot of open space for future projects.

Angela from Italy suggested that we should organize a meeting that will collaborate on women's rights in Europe. For example, participants would try to find similarities and differences between the countries. This could help people and especially women to know their rights and, therefore, to promote equality between men and between countries.

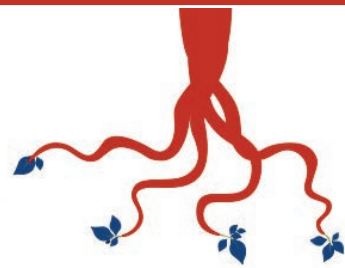
Barna from Romania proposed that there could be meetings about developing entrepreneurship games and tools which would help many youngsters, as well as adults, to understand better the entrepreneurial world. Moreover, he suggested to plan a meeting where participants could draw up guides for country's laws, policies and opportunities.

Justine from France proposed a partnership with the EUDY (European Union of the Deaf Youth). The partnership would make the Youth club bilingual and consequently would raise the popularity all over the Europe. By cooperating with people with hearing problems, the deaf community benefit being informed about entrepreneurship.

“All the ideas were very interesting and concrete. We hope that we will see them come to life in the future.”



Partners



Municipality of Lefkas - DEPOKAL (Greece)



Fédération Familles De France Moselle (France)



Together (France)



Istituto dei Ciechi "Florio e Salamone" (Italy)



Work in progress (Italy)



Solidarity Tracks (Greece)



Asociatia de Tineri din Ardeal (Romania)



PIHE- Association for Youth and Students in Partium (Romania)

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