

Skills for youth workers to include minorities and immigrants



Erasmus+

Project financed by European Union



Introduction



The NGO cultural association 'BRANART' has organized a project under the title of "Skills for youth workers to include minorities and immigrants" which will be held for a period of six months and will include a training in the period 1 to 9 October 2016. The participant countries are Italy, Poland, Cyprus, Germany, Turkey, Romania, for a total number of 28 participants .

The project for youth workers was prepared in order to train them and develop their communication skills, the mediation and mentoring in youth work . The objectives of this project are youth workers involvement in the development and planning of activities for youth in the community, promoting non-formal education methods in working with the youth .

In this training the 28 participants work with young people in different institutions: NGOs , youth centers , community projects. The project has a positive impact on the participating organizations as they collaborate in future projects and participants will apply new knowledge in institutions of origin.

As a result of implementation of this project participants achieved the best practices guide "Skills for youth workers to include minorities and immigrants" to help the youth workers in their work .



Youth worker



The formal definition of a youth worker is “ A youth worker is a person that works with young people to engage them in informal education.” But when you look more closely to youth worker profession it appears more complicated.

The role of a youth worker is very difficult and demanding. Not everyone has the personality to do this job. To be a youth worker you must have ‘multifunctional’ skills and features such as;

- positive attitude
 - psychological resistance
 - flexibility
 - ability to balance being a social worker and a human being
 - ability to adapt to different situations and understand the cause of those situations
 - creativity
 - loads of energy
 - be open minded
 - self confidence
 - ability to be a role model
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The relevance of human rights in Youth work and social work .

"The primary conception of human rights is that they are invisible and interdependent, meaning that no single human right is more or less important than another. In practice, however, individual human rights have been anything but equal. Economic and social human rights continuously occupy a second level of human rights, especially below civil and political human rights." (Silvia Staub-Bernasconi - Elisabeth Reichert: Challenges in human rights: A social work perspective ; Page 138)

NGOs acknowledge and treat human rights that were breached in torture, war crimes, but over the time failed to keep focus on problems in fields of poverty, exclusion, segregation, suppression and such. The sheer mass of problems in the sectors of economical and social human rights led society to become numb to these problems .

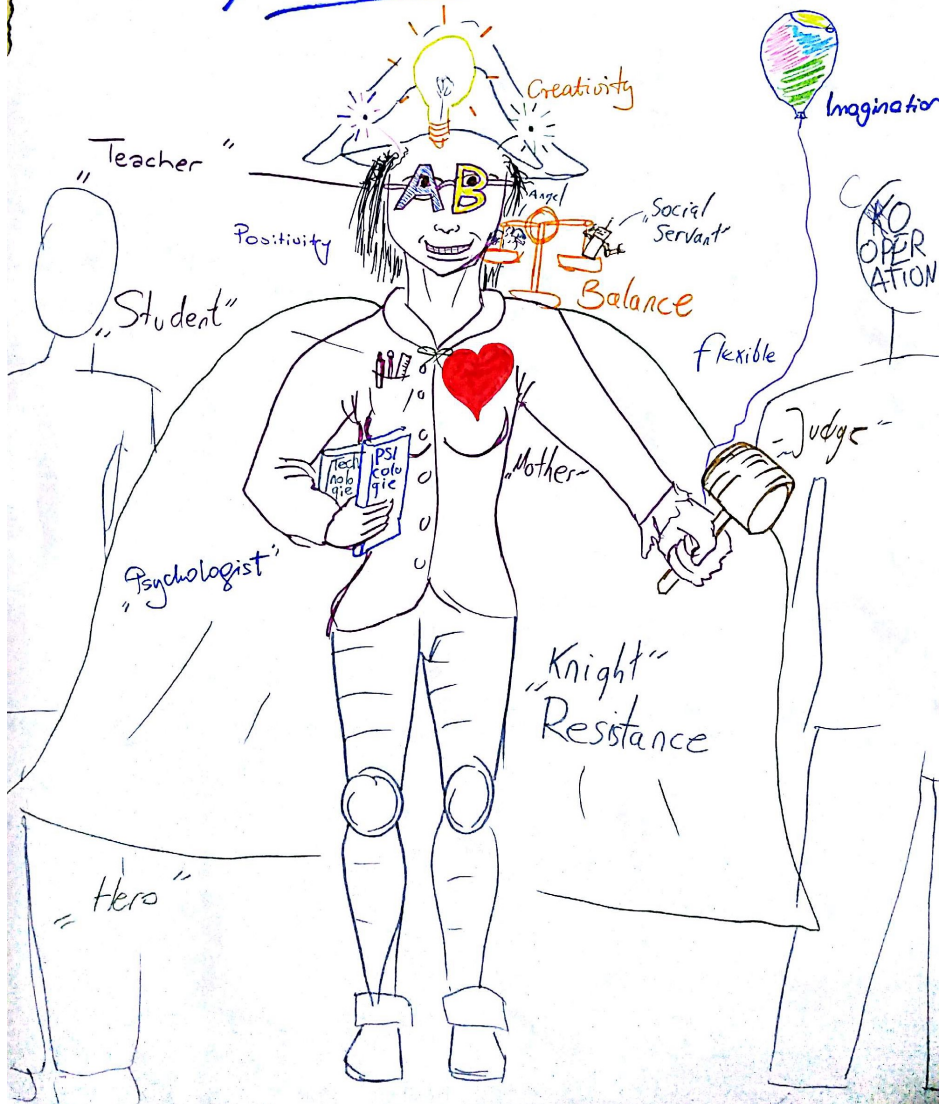
Youth work, as part of Social Work in general, can and should address these fields, and take it seriously. Because if Youth Workers are engaged in the well-being of young people and their ability to lead life successfully, because social and economical outcomes have a direct relation to the success rate of the youth worker. Social and economical inequalities create problems and tensions in a society, under whose youth has to suffer in one way or the other.

A CONCLUSION, in that sense, could be that a youth worker should, when drafting a project, combine two levels of work:

1: Drafting an enriching project, in which young people can acquire skills and means to emancipate and lead a successful life. There we should not be afraid of using the youth cultural media to reach the youth where it is the strongest: (Street-)arts, Dance, Theatre and other, to show them the power of their collective potential.

2: Drafting a project that addresses even the subtle breaches of human rights in a society and contributes to enact real political changes, which would help preventing youth to fall into personal, social or economical crisis in the first place. This can be done in a multitude of ways. We should dream big, and we should dream loud. **We should dream in specifically the right places at the right times - to make our dreams turn into reality**

ROLES OF THE YOUTH WORKER





Methods



Game No. 1

Energizer game : Chairs

Objective : To get energized

To stimulate the brain

Material needed : chairs

The chairs are placed in a circle . Half of the participants are seating and the other half are standing behind the chairs. One of the chairs stays unoccupied. The participants who are standing look down. The person who was standing behind the empty chair blinks to one of the seated person. The seated person then has to run to the unoccupied chair without being caught by the person standing behind his chair.



Game No.2

Energizer game : Banana

Objective : To feel energized

To get in a good mood

Movements of peeling, chopping, eating, rolling the banana.

Game No. 3

Energizer game : Follow the leader

Objective : Energize the group

Increase concentration

Everyone forms a circle. One person leaves the room. One person from the circle introduces a movement and everyone in the circle starts mimicking the movement. Then the person from outside the room enters the circle and tries to figure out who is that person that changes the movements.

Introduction games

1. Ties

Objective : learning the names of the participants

Meeting each other in a playful way

Materials : paper ties

Pens

Having everyone write 2 true things about themselves and 1 thing that is a lie on their tie. Let the other people guess which ones are true and which one is the lie.

2. Palms

Objective : Express feelings and thoughts

Get more detail information from one-another

Material : paper

Markers

The participants will draw their partner's palm on the paper . Each finger will represent a different information field. Educational background, their dream, values, embarrassing moments and guilty pleasures.



3. Ball

Objective : Finding about basic information of each other

Material : a ball

One participant throws the ball to someone else in the circle . The person that gets the ball shares her/his name and something about himself/herself .



Game of learning styles

Objective : what type of learning style represent us (visual,auditory,kinesthetic)

First task was for everyone in the group had to follow aural directions in order to draw something. Second task was to copy the picture by looking at it. The third task was to describe it and drawing it simultaneously

At the end of the activity each participant answered a questionnaire to find out which type of learning style they have.

Intercultural games

Questions to express feelings, ideas, tradition, similarities and differences in each culture.

Method: the group was formed in pairs and each pair had to rotate around the room where there were 8 stations with different checkpoints to discuss between them.

Role play: participants are divided in small groups each group consisting of one young person belonging to a minority , one observer, and one youth worker.

The young person has problems of exclusions because he belongs to a minority . This person has the task to discuss his problem with the youth worker.

The youth worker does not pay attention to what the young person is saying and has an unprofessional attitude.

The aim of the game is to aware participants about mistakes we can do when working with young people, mistakes that can be made in a conversation and attitudes to be avoided .

The observer's task was to observe both behaviours and give feedback of the reactions of both participants.



INTERCULTURAL PROCESS



GENERAL ASPECTS I

In the society nowadays the generations are more exposed to intercultural process, because of the globalizations and political context. There is a model called U-Curve¹ which explain the phases about the intercultural process, that can occur when a person is involved in to a new cultural situation that sometimes is mandatory (as is for the refugees) or can be a choice (like in intercultural exchange, European programmes, Erasmus+, etc.). The U-curve highlights 3 specific phases that may go through this process.

- The first one is called honeymoon
- The stage two culture shock
- The third adjustment

The first phase is characterized by the excitement which helps the person to move into the new situation and the positive energy makes everything covered by enthusiasm and curiosity. This helps not to feel the pressure of the changing situation, which arrives in the second phase, when the person realise the changes and sometimes there are unexpected circumstances that occur, relationships that are confusing, code that we can not figure out, ambiguities, differences, change, sense of loss and displacement.

Unfortunately no amount of positive intentions can maintain the person upbeat psychology forever and can bring the person to an alienated mood and homesickness.

But, when the person realise the difficulties he starts to face them, so he reacts to the new situation and this is positive because we arrive at the third phase which is the cultural adjustment. The cultural adjustment is characterized by a typical stress, adaptation, growth process, as a type of concentric circle. And this increases our long term cultural resilience.

MINORITIES

A minority's position involves exclusion or assignment to a lower status in one or more areas of life. This means that the minority is already present in the society, so legally they are at the same level of the rest of the population, legally they are equal, but in the real social relationships they have a lower position and they are not considered. This emarginate them and push them to live in the suburbs (most of the time), and even if they reach high level in the society, they are still identified as the minority which they come from.

First of all we have to clear that migrants and refugees are not the same person. There is not an uniform legal definition of the term 'migrant' does not exist at the international level. The word 'migrant' is used as an umbrella term to cover both migrants and refugees.

Although it is becoming increasingly common to see the terms 'refugee' and 'migrant' used interchangeably in media and public discussions, there is a crucial legal difference between the two. Confusing them can lead to problems for refugees and asylum seekers, as well as misunderstandings in discussions of asylum and migration.

Refugees are specifically defined and protected in international law. Refugees are people outside their country of origin because of feared persecution, conflict, violence, or other circumstances that have seriously disturbed public order, and who, as a result, require 'international protection'. Their situation make them cross national borders to seek safety in nearby countries, and thus become internationally recognized as 'refugees' with access to assistance from states, UNHCR, and relevant organizations. They are so recognized precisely because it is too dangerous for them to return home, and they therefore need sanctuary elsewhere. These are people for whom denial of asylum has potentially deadly consequences.

Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserts the right of everyone to seek and enjoy asylum. However, no clear content was given to the notion of asylum at the international level until the 1951 Convention related to the Status of Refugees was adopted.

The 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol, as well as regional legal instruments, such as the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, are the cornerstone of the modern refugee protection regime. They set forth a universal refugee definition and incorporate the basic rights and obligations of refugees.

The provisions of the 1951 Convention remain the primary international standard against which any measures for the protection and treatment of refugees are judged. Its most important provision, the principle of non-refoulement (meaning no forced returns) contained in Article 33, is the bedrock of the regime. According to this principle, refugees must not be expelled or returned to situations where their life or freedom would be under threat. States bear the primary responsibility for this protection.

Connecting with the U-curve process the refugee situation can be explained like this: 3 The honeymoon phase is characterized by the courage that they feel when they decide to take the risk, or that help them to face the dangerous journey which was not chosen by them. So they have a support from this feeling, and also the dream of the better conditions they can reach (even if they are not sure that they will survive or do not know when they will reach it) helps them.

Then there is the cultural shock, which arrives when the refugees land in the host country. With no doubt, the changes and the new situation lead to a cultural shock, but with the help of associations, local administrative authorities, NGO's it can ends and we can arrive at the third phase, which is the cultural adjustment, so the cultural integration in the society can start.

CULTURAL INTEGRATION

Is important to support projects facilitating the integration of refugees, enhancing mutual cultural understanding and fostering intercultural and interfaith dialogue, tolerance and respect for other cultures.

The host country should manage a number of high-quality consortia formed by bodies working in the creative and cultural sectors that will create and test initiatives designed to support the integration of refugees in the participating countries and share their results.

The specific objectives of this call are to:

- help refugees socialise and express themselves without necessarily speaking immediately the host country language
 - be learning platforms in a wider sense, fostering respect and understanding for diversity, intercultural and civic competencies, democratic values and citizenship
 - give citizens of the hosting country the opportunity to discover, learn from and understand the values and cultures of refugees and
- in the process rediscover and enrich their own
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- support the showcasing and co-creation of cultural and/or audiovisual works
 - offer the possibility of collaboration with organisations in other sectors in order to stimulate a more comprehensive, rapid, effective and long-term response to this global challenge Project results should made widely available at local, regional, national and international levels.
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