



Key Action: Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices
Action Type: Strategic Partnerships for school education

Project Title

Learning communities for peace

Project Coordinator

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Project Information

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Partners PLACE IDENTITY GR- CLUSTERS (EL) , Stichting Evens (BE) , UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA (ES) , arc resolutions ltd (UK) , UDRUGE CENTAR ZA MIR, NENASILJE I LJUDSKA PRAVA - OSIJEK (HR)
Topics Migrants' issues ; Inclusion - equity ; Integration of refugees

Project Summary

[Context/background of project]The EU faces a complex of crises – a huge influx of refugees, and threats from terrorism and radicalisation. At the same time, many urban areas suffer from structural inequalities and often dysfunctional integration policies. The resulting tensions have intensified the fear of difference. The erosion of trust particularly affects strongly migrant communities and the schools within them. In this context, how can such schools and the communities surrounding them engage in the kind of sustained dialogue, integration and peacebuilding that is so urgently needed? [Objectives of project]This project aims to identify, develop, test and evaluate Learning Communities for Peace (LCP) approaches in four primary schools in urban areas of high tension in four European countries, so as to improve the climate within the schools as well as the ‘living together’ in the wider community. [Number and profile of participants]The five project partners offer a combination of experience in peace education and community-building strategies, and in research/higher education and practice. Overall project coordinator, the Department of Education of the University of Gothenburg (Sweden), is supported by the Evens Foundation (Belgium), a public-benefit foundation that promotes ‘harmonious living together’ in Europe. The Center for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights Osijek (Croatia) has carried out post-conflict educational work in schools and communities. CREA (Catalonia, Spain) describes itself as a ‘Centre of Research in Theories and Practices that Overcome Inequalities’, while Place Identity Gr (Greece) focuses on ‘Clusters for Place Identity and Citizens’ Participation’. Finally, ARC – Alternative Resolution to Conflict (UK), a private company, has experience in school and community mediation. The Cambridge Peace and Education Research Group (UK) is being subcontracted to evaluate the quality and impact of the project. [Description of activities]The project has five phases. Phase 1 consists of peer training: the partners will train each other in their respective methods and approaches. Next (Phase 2), four suitable primary schools in four countries will be identified, and a context and needs analysis carried out. Following a European workshop for pilot-school representatives, the latter will work with their operational partner to develop an action plan for their school. Phase 3 is for implementation and testing. The four operational partners will keep a record of each school’s progress and intervene as trainers if needed. In Phase 4, based on the evaluation, the partners will transform the project learnings into concrete intellectual outputs. Finally, in Phase 5, the project results and outputs will be disseminated to local, regional, national and European stakeholders. [Methodology]Co-creation and equal participation of stakeholders are central to the project’s methodology; target groups will be involved in developing strategies, tools and methods, and strong local networks will be developed. Secondly, a thorough adaptation process involving the target group will help to ensure that any strategy, tool or method will fit local needs. Thirdly, the project will seek to ensure that each partner benefits from the experience and expertise of the other partners. [Short description of results and impact envisaged]This project addresses urgent needs and crucial questions related to integration, multiculturalism and the refugee crisis. It plans to develop new, and re-examine existing peace education approaches and peacebuilding strategies, and adapt them to a new reality. A comprehensive set of strategies, methodologies, tools and actions to help schools to establish and sustain an LCP will be developed. The process of dialogue will develop the social, civic and intercultural competences of the project participants (pupils, staff, families, community actors), improve school climate and increase social cohesion. The project will also benefit educators by offering them a panorama of options for working with diverse learners and their families, and a range of culturally sensitive peacebuilding strategies. The capacities of the partner organisations to promote the LCP concept and to support schools in creating such environments will be strengthened. Information about the project and results will be widely disseminated. The Evens Foundation will communicate with European policy and education stakeholders, and with their network of peace educators.

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