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“Transnational Youth Initiatives” of the Erasmus+ program for the development of the entrepreneurial attitude of young people, based on the example of the “Open Minds Studio” project

The future of Europe depends on young people, and yet the life chances of many of them are limited. The biggest problem of young people are difficulties in accessing the labor market. The European Union sees the need to act to support young people so that they can fully participate in social and civil life. It implements initiatives aimed at strengthening the potential of young people and supporting their individual development, providing them with tools necessary for functioning in a rapidly changing world. The aim of the article is to present the effects of developing the entrepreneurial attitude of young people through non-formal education using one of the instruments implemented by the European Union under the Erasmus + “Transnational Youth Initiatives”.

Youth as a subject and theme of European Union activities

Almost 100 million young people live in the European Union, constituting one-fifth of its citizens. Despite the unprecedented educational opportunities offered by modern Europe, young people face huge difficulties in the access to the labour market. According to Eurostat unemployment statistics, the average youth unemployment rate (up to 25 years of age) in European Union countries in June 2016 was 18.8%, with the unemployment rate of 7.6% among the older active population (aged 25–74). The highest youth unemployment was in Greece (47.7%), Spain (45.2%) and in Italy (37.2%). At the same time, according to the statistics of the Labor Market Department of the Polish Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Policy youth unemployment in Poland was 14.4%, which was 3 times higher than the total unemployment rate (4.5%). Young people tend to have more difficulties finding a job, more often they are covered by uncertain forms of employment, including fixed-term contracts, and the share of income from work of younger age groups is reduced.

Youth not only incurs financial consequences of staying without work, but long periods of unemployment also have a negative impact on future employability, increased risk of poverty, social exclusion and marginalization of its role in society, and their talents and skills may not be optimally used. The high unemployment rate

also has a negative impact on economic growth and productivity and is a serious economic burden on society as a whole [1].

The aim of the European Union policy is to provide young people with equal opportunities in education and employment and enable them to participate fully in all spheres of social life. Youth policy is part of the competence of the member states, the European Union only supports and complements their activities in this area, providing a forum for cooperation and exchange of information and experience on issues of common interest. Various measures are used to achieve this goal, in particular establishing a dialogue with young people and the Erasmus+ program.

Youth, as a group of citizens with specific needs and unique meaning, appeared in official Community documents as a subject of interest and a separate political entity only in the 1990s. Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union introduced the chapter “Education, Vocational Training, Youth and Sport” [2].

It mainly indicated the need to take action to increase the international educational exchange of young people. Over the following years, actions were taken to diagnose the socio-economic situation of young people, the foundations of the European Union’s youth policy, as well as the mechanisms and tools for its implementation were developed. The shape, assumptions and objectives of the EU youth policy was adopted by the European Commission in “A New Impetus for European Youth – White Paper” in 2001 [3]. It was followed by more works, including the “Revised European Charter on the participation of young people in local and regional life” [4] adopted by the Congress of European Local and Regional Authorities in 2003 and the “European Youth Pact and promoting active citizenship” [5] adopted by the European Council in 2005.

The current objectives of youth policy have been set in the European strategy for youth for 2010–2018 [6] and in the “Work Plan for Youth for 2016–2018” [7]. The priority is to create larger, yet equal opportunities for young people in the field of education and the labour market, and to promote active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity among young people.

Youth policy is also included in other areas, including the “Europe 2020” A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth [8]. The strategy places the emphasis on smart, sustainable and inclusive growth as a way to overcome structural weaknesses in the European economy, improve its competitiveness and productivity, and strengthen a sustainable social market economy, and youth issues have been included in almost all its objectives and leading projects, and the “Youth on the Move” program is directly devoted to it [9]. Its aim is to raise the level of education of young people and increase their employability by adapting education and training to the needs of young people, encouraging them to take advantage of opportunities offered by EU scholarships for education or training abroad, encouraging EU countries to take action that will help young people transition from the education system to the labour market.

At the end of 2018, the Council of the European Union adopted a resolution on a new youth strategy [10] that will set the priorities of EU youth policy for 2019–2027 and will be a guide for member states that should implement their youth policies based on its indications. The main assumptions of the strategy are:

- strengthening the potential of young people and supporting their individual development, providing them with tools necessary for functioning in a rapidly changing world;
- encouraging them to actively participate in public life at the local, national and European level, teaching civic and solidarity attitudes;
- effective implementation of youth policies that meet the needs of young Europeans;
- including the most disadvantaged groups in youth activities, preventing poverty, exclusion and discrimination against young people.

The authors of the resolution emphasize that in order for the above-mentioned assumptions to be implemented, it is necessary to develop a network of contact points where young people could get information about development opportunities and help in implementing their own initiatives. Youth information points are to support young people entering adulthood, starting their careers on the labour market and seeking ways to continue their education and develop their skills in non-formal education.

The European Union pursues the objectives of youth policy through dedicated instruments. Currently, these are:

- the European structured dialogue with young people and youth organizations, namely consultations under the eighteen-month cycles that aim to reflect on the priorities, implementation and monitoring of European cooperation for the youth;
- Erasmus+ program for education, training, youth and sport, which aims to support countries' actions to effectively use European human and social capital, while also consolidating the principle of lifelong learning principle by combining formal, non-formal and informal learning across education, training and working with youth;
- the European Solidarity Corpus – enables young people to participate in volunteering or professional development projects (funded under eight EU programs; currently, works are taking place on the regulation that provides uniform framework for action).

The European Union emphasizes the role of non-formal education (learning within courses, training) and informal (learning outside the organized framework, e.g. by developing interests or solving problems in the organization). This type of education is the domain of non-governmental organizations. Naumiuk (2006) indicates that educational role of such organizations is based primarily on giving people the chance to act, which allows them to develop in the manner, at the pace and conditions that suit them best. And as the social theory and practice prove, people can learn and grow throughout their lives through action and experience. Research of Naumiuk (2003) shows that this science concerns both knowledge and skills, as well as shaping character traits and attitudes.

Educational activities of the ProHarmonia Education Center

The ProHarmonia Education Center is one of the non-governmental organizations operating in the local community in the field of non-formal and informal education.

The organization was founded in 2005 by a group of young university teachers and students of Kielce universities, who have combined the passion for action for the development of civil society. Currently, most of them no longer have contact with the university, perform various professions, in various positions, but are still connected to the Center and are socially involved. In the organization, they use competences and skills acquired in their professional work, exchange their experiences and continue to learn from each other, from beneficiaries of projects, from people cooperating in the framework of the undertaken activities. In response to local needs, they undertake various educational activities, complementary to formal education. In ProHarmonia, learning always takes place through practice and action, and the overriding goal of each project is the harmonious development and continuous self-improvement of all participants. People associated in the organization create and run their own programs, thus fulfilling their passions. These are, among others:

“Future Capital” is a series of classes in economic education for children aged 7–10. Participants learn how value is created, where money comes from, what is earning and what is rational spending, responsible consumption and saving. Classes are conducted in the form of fun, which makes the message attractive, activate children and allow interaction with the educator. The basic tool used in the classes are blocks, enriched with electronic components, motion and colour sensors, and engines. They are also used for the production of films promoting broadly understood “economy”. Participants playing with the blocks and creating framed animations, in a natural way, with curiosity characteristic for this age, get to know the unknown world of economics and finance.

“Around the world” is a program of intercultural education addressed to children interested in the world. A person who knows a foreign country well and can talk about it takes children on a journey. S/he gives them knowledge about the diversity of the world, shows similarities and differences between life in Poland and abroad, supports them in building an attitude open to the world and people with different skin colours, language, origin, religion, tradition and lifestyle. “Around the world” also includes workshops on global interdependence and fair trade.

“Hala Lata” is a program promoting active leisure time with the family in the open air. People associated in the organization realize their passions including their own children and friends, acquaintances and their children. Together, they travel and learn about new places, cultures and people. They often choose places that are attractive in terms of nature, still a little bit wild, but they do not avoid visiting major cities. Together, they roam, ride bikes and ski, go canoeing, organize games, bonfires and camps with tents. Family tourism, recreation and sport allows them to take care of health and physical condition together, strengthen relationships and deepen mutual relations and shape the qualities and attitudes desirable in social life.

“Fables for **Robots**” are robotics classes, during which participants construct and program robots using special sets of Lego Education WeDo and Lego Mindstorms. First of all, during the classes, the participants have great fun, and in addition they develop interest in science, improve logical thinking, spatial imagination, creativity, and creative problem solving. They create robots in pairs or in three-person teams and learn to organize work, so that each participant had an active part in it, learn the

difficult art of reaching compromises and learn to present and argue their arguments, while listening to others.

In addition to their permanent programs, members of ProHarmonia support young people in the implementation of their projects, e.g. youth exchanges, youth initiatives, European Voluntary Service as part of the EU Erasmus + program, and earlier the “Youth” and “Youth in Action” program. ProHarmonia accepts, following European Union’s educational programs, that youth are people aged between 13 and 30.

International exchanges of young people are meetings of at least two groups of peers from two different countries in order to implement a joint project. The topic of the meeting can be any, chosen and agreed by the participants themselves based on their interests and passions. In ProHarmonia, the youth realized sports, journalistic, radio, photographic, theatre, ecological, painting, as well as civic society and democracy projects. Activities took place in Poland and abroad. The last completed youth exchanges are the “SeeMe” and “Express Yourself!” projects, both co-financed by the European Union under the Erasmus+ Youth program.

Young enthusiasts of street theatre from Poland, Estonia, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Macedonia and Turkey met at the youth exchange “SeeMe” to jointly prepare and stage a performance that deals with the problem of tolerance, encouraging reflection on the stereotypical perception of others and on the diversity and universal equality of all people. Young artists participated in a series of activities developing the actor’s workshop, they worked on the voice and diction, movement expression, body awareness, developed emotional expressiveness, music and sense of rhythm, and learned the interpretation of the text. The effects of the work could be seen on the streets of Zakopane in September 2015, where they appeared with the message of the need to build in themselves an attitude of openness to others, striving to get to know and understand another person.

The “Express Yourself!” project concerned personal development. Young Poles, Macedonians, Romanians and Portuguese took action to build a sense of self-efficacy, self-esteem and distance to each other. They sought self-acceptance and increased self-confidence. They learned to better manage their time and tasks, learned the techniques of arousing and maintaining internal motivation to act. The youth worked on the development of interpersonal communication skills and assertiveness. It learned techniques of coping with stress and achieving inner peace. During the meeting, young people took part in the photo session for the calendar, which was to be a driving force for them to act in 2017. The background of the session was the Holy Cross Mountains, and the theme – the motivation to act, constant striving for a better understanding of themselves, other people and the surrounding world, striving to become better in the selected fields, crossing their own boundaries and overcoming their weaknesses.

The European Voluntary Service (EVS) was a program that helped young people to develop their sense of solidarity with others through participation, individually or in groups, in social work outside their own country. (In 2018 EVS was replaced by a new initiative of the European Solidarity Corps). ProHarmonia was a coordinating organization, sending and accepting volunteers in this program. One of the projects

carried out a workshop in Bolivia, in Cochabamba, two volunteers conducted workshops in management and leadership for local leaders and social activists, classes on European politics and culture for students of the local university and workshops for school youth about cultural diversity. And in Portugal, in Cascais, during the six-week project “The Volunteering Is Calling!” two people from the Association, along with 150 other volunteers from all over Europe, helped organize the World Sailing Championships. They worked, among others, in the accreditation office and press office of a large international event.

National Youth Initiatives were one of the Actions in the “Youth in Action” program. They were directed to those who wanted to change something in the surrounding reality and act pro-socially. The projects were prepared, implemented and coordinated independently by a group of young people with a view of the local community, in which they lived. Acting within the National Youth Initiatives enabled young people to actively participate in the life of the local community, use their ideas, as well as search for their own, independent ways to solve local problems. The center supported young people in the implementation of two projects of National Youth Initiatives within “Youth in action” program, the “Almanac” project and the “Kids with passion” project.

The “Almanac” arose from the questions: How to get involved and start working? What is so great about volunteering? Why is it worth to associate? How to do this? Whom can you join? What youth organizations operate in the Holy Cross province? What do they do? Seeking answers to these questions, the youth conducted research in the environment of youth non-governmental organizations and among young volunteers operating in the Holy Cross province. Collected materials about undertaken initiatives, on the experience and involvement of the members of the third sector, have been developed by young editors, prepared for printing and published in the form of an “Almanac”. In the publication, they promoted peers’ activities for other people, described the benefits of social work, especially in the aspect of self-development. The idea of volunteering and association in the associations was also promoted at the “Festival of Non-Governmental Organizations” organized in order to summarize the project. As part of the project, the youth has prepared materials and conducted workshops for pupils – editors of school newsletters.

The “Kids with passion” project was prepared and run by a group of young people consisting of future teachers, educators, culture animators and great Lego enthusiasts. Young people, under the supervision of experienced educators, have gained professional experience in working with children, including children with special educational needs. For young Lego enthusiasts, they organized workshops during which they built fantastic constructions and put them into motion with the use of Lego WeDo sets. They familiarized the children with the technique of the frame animation and helped them prepare films with the Lego City heroes. The participants organized an educational trip for children to Lodz, where in the Museum of Animation SE-MA-FOR they got to know the history of animation and created their own episode of “Flapper&Friends” and took children to the Targi Kielce’s International Fair of Plastics and Rubber Processing Plastpol, where they saw how plastic objects are produced.

One of the last projects of the Association was the Transnational Youth Initiative “Open Minds Studio”. Transnational Youth Initiatives (TYI) are one of the possible actions co-financed by the Erasmus+ program, Youth, Action 2 Strategic partnerships [13]. These are initiatives for the local community, co-created and implemented by young people in at least two countries.

The “Open Minds Studio” project as an example of the Transnational Youth Initiative

The “Open Minds Studio” project was carried out for 19 months, in 2016–2018. The ProHarmonia Educational Center was the leader of the project, and the Portugal Escola Técnica de Imagem e Comunicação Aplicada (ETIC) from Lisbon was its partner. It was an extension of the mentioned National Youth Initiative “Kids with passion” which was a huge success for the people involved. According to the information obtained from project evaluation questionnaires, developed data from participant observation and interviews with participants of the “Kids with passion” project, thanks to this project, the participants developed a range of personal and social competences, developed their interests, gained faith in their own abilities, felt important to others. The project was also very well received by the children with whom the youth taught classes and highly assessed by the parents and guardians of the children involved. Completing the implementation of this local project, the youth decided to undertake efforts to be included in the international actions and conduct the TYI project, to test themselves in working in the international team, gain new experiences, establish relations with peers from other countries and develop photographic, IT and pedagogical passions. Young people decided to continue working for children and to carry out activities influencing the development of their personal and social competences, as well as civic competences. It also decided to use the form of work with children established in “Kids with passion” – playing a film studio and producing movies in the frame animation technique. Partnership in the project was proposed to the organization that ProHarmonia met during a study visit – a Portuguese vocational university ETIC, which educates students in arts, including animation and photography, and educates not only at the headquarters of the school, but also in the field, in the activity involving students in projects for the local community and non-profit institutions. ETIC presented a proposal to implement an international project to its students and employees. The initiative gained approval, so an international team was formed, which prepared the concept of the “Open Minds Studio” project and applied for its funding for the Erasmus+ program. After positive evaluation and signing of the contract, the youth proceeded to the implementation of the planned activities.

The creators of the “Open Minds Studio” projects were 20 people, 10 from Poland and 10 from Portugal, aged 18–30, studying in various professions and at different levels (10 vocational school students, 5 high school students, 1 university student), 2 unemployed people and 2 people who performed unsatisfactory jobs below their qualifications and ambitions. The data compiled on the basis of surveys examining the motivations and expectations of participants carried out at the beginning of the

project shows that participants were connected mainly by the desire to experience something new, establish international contacts and try their strength at work in an international team (100%). In addition, the participants strongly combined the willingness to work for the local community, in particular children (100%) and common interests (photography, film, animation) that they wanted to develop and share their skills with others (100%). Participants expected that they would gain professional experience that would enable them to get a satisfactory job (90%) or will facilitate their own business (10%). They wanted to check in practice whether the selected course of study is right for them (40%). They assumed that by implementing the project, they would develop competences, in particular civic (100%) and social (90%), initiative and entrepreneurship (80%), communication in English (65%), cultural awareness and expression (65%) and IT competences (20%).

The common goal of international youth activities was to create an Internet platform with materials that can be used in formal and non-formal civic education, as well as to conduct a series of classes according to scenarios developed as part of international cooperation. The youth planned that they would use the game element of a film studio and produce animations referring to active citizenship during classes and organize a film competition for young creators and children will report their animations, and the best ones will be presented at the film festival. The international children’s festival of animated films will be organized and conducted simultaneously in both countries and broadcast through the Internet, so that the youngest participants will also experience the international character of the project. The implementation of these goals and assumptions was aided by all activities planned and undertaken later by the participants.

The project began with an organizational meeting in Kielce, Poland, in October 2016, with the so-called international project meeting. In addition to the representatives of the youth, participants of the project, representatives of the organizations involved took part in it. The team polished the details on project management. Meetings of the international team for management, monitoring and evaluation took place two more times. The next one, in June 2017, was used to evaluate the existing activities and to arrange details of work organization in the next stage. The last international project meeting was organized in September 2017, in Lisbon, to summarize and evaluate the project and to specify cooperation plans within the framework of the partnership aimed at developing innovative education methods in the field of social entrepreneurship in the area of creative industry.

In the first weeks, the youth worked mainly in two groups, separately in Poland and Portugal. Leaders have emerged, participants divided the responsibilities and duties among themselves regarding the performance of individual tasks. Young people took part in project management classes run by practitioners from non-governmental organizations and from the world of business. Once they had gained basic knowledge about managing the international project, the participants organized an online meeting of the entire Open Minds Studio team and commenced joint activities. First, they took part in classes in the field of civic education, which raised topics related to common European values. The cycle of classes conducted in a separate Polish and Portuguese group ended with a joint webinar.

Then, the participants set about creating an educational platform. They searched the Internet resources of Polish and Portuguese institutions in search of interesting proposals in the field of civic education for ten-year-olds. In the “moodle” platform, they established the “Open Minds Platform” and placed links to selected websites with educational materials and project descriptions that have been implemented with children recently. Currently, the platform is open to educators providing classes in civic education, seeking inspiration and materials for didactic work. The platform is a place of information about available materials, implemented projects, a place where educators can place their materials and exchange experience.

After gaining additional knowledge about civic activity and after getting acquainted with good, educational practices of other institutions, the youth started working on their own scenarios of activities for children. The scenarios covered such topics as: active citizenship, attitudes and actions of a responsible citizen, including solidarity, freedom, human rights, equality and globalization.

When working on the platform and creating scenarios, the youth remained in constant contact thanks to social media. When concluding this stage of the project, the participants met for the first time within the so-called mixed mobility of young people. The meeting took place in April 2017 in Łódź, Poland. The choice of the place was dictated by the film traditions of this city and the studios and the SE-MAFOR Animation Museum that provided the opportunity to organize professional workshops in the creation of animation films. In Łódź, the youth worked in a professional studio under the guidance of professional animators. The participants were already interested in animation before and had some experience in film making, they improved their skills in Łódź, which affected the development of their passions and talents, as well as the quality of their later work with children. During this meeting, the youth also participated in activities in the field of intercultural education and European citizenship conducted in Łódź institutions of culture. During the meeting, the youth conducted classes for the first time according to the scenarios they prepared themselves. Members of the project team were both the lecturers and the participants of the classes. As a result of activities, the youth refined some elements of the classes. The meeting and all classes were conducted in English. After the actions, young people translated the scenarios into Polish and Portuguese and conducted pilot classes with children. They exchanged experiences during the Internet conference.

In June 2017, in Lisbon, Portugal, the second international meeting of the youth related to learning took place. During this meeting, the youth participated in the training course to improve their competences before conducting classes with children. Participants developed verbal and non-verbal communication skills, recognizing and communicating emotions, learned persuasive strategies and techniques, practiced assertiveness, learned the secrets of the group process and discovered their own style of working with the group.

From July to December 2017, young people conducted classes in their countries in non-formal and formal education institutions. 250 children aged 8–10 took part in the classes. The classes in the “Open Minds Studio” consisted in the preparation of a stop motion animation film. During the classes, the participants learned the history

of the animated film, the basics of its creation, they learned how to build a script, what a storyboard is, they made the scenography and characters themselves, and later animated the story they invented. They used various techniques, for example, animation made of blocks, cut-out and using modeling clay. Thanks to animation, they discovered new possibilities of expressing their own creative interior, developed their imagination and had a great time at the same time. The subjects of all film stories prepared in the “Open Minds Studio” concerned values that are the foundation of the democratic system. They were inspired by the classes on freedom, solidarity, human rights, equality and globalization, which were conducted on the basis of the scripts written as part of the “ABC of Democracy” project. “Open Minds Studio” was a creative space, so each meeting was different, the final shape was given by the leaders and creatively involved participants.

The youth prepared and conducted a competition for children for film animations “ABC of Democracy”. The best productions were watched by the participants, along with the invited guests, during the festival organized during the project – “Open Minds Festival 2018”. The event was broadcast via the Internet, so beneficiaries from Poland and Portugal could participate in it. In February 2018, the last direct meetings of the youth took place, at the same time, with two participants from Poland and from Portugal went to the partner to co-run the Festival and meet with children in class.

The works in “Open Minds Studio” were directed by young coordinators, one in Poland and in Portugal, and they were supported by an international team for project management. Their work was complemented by a team for monitoring and evaluation, which collected and analysed information on an ongoing basis for efficient management and assessed the quality and efficiency of operations. Monitoring and evaluation were carried out at the national and international level. The team acted on the basis of prepared procedures, according to a set schedule, using a variety of tools. (The description of the monitoring and whole evaluation process is not the subject of this article). Both teams has young people supported by experienced representatives of the involved institutions.

During more than one and a half years of work, the youth completed all objectives set at the stage of project preparation, both those related to products (platform, scenarios, classes, competition, festival), and those relating to the development of their key competences [14].

Evaluation of the entrepreneurial attitude of the participants of the “Open Minds Studio” project

The development of entrepreneurial abilities of European citizens and organizations is one of the key objectives of the EU and Member State policy. In 2006, the European Commission recognized the “initiative and entrepreneurship” as one of the eight key competences necessary for a knowledge-based society [15]. Due to the rapid and profound changes in society and the economy, and taking into account lessons learned from the discussion on the future of work at a time of increasing automation and the role of technology and public consultations, the Commission updated

the recommendations on key competences, including entrepreneurship [16] and adopted the "The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework" [17].

Entrepreneurship is a cross-sectional competence, it applies to all spheres of life. It enables citizens the constant personal and social development, facilitates entering the labour market, either as an employee or as a self-employed person and allows them to undertake cultural, social or commercial activities. Entrepreneurial competences include the ability to use opportunities and ideas and transform them into value for others. Entrepreneurship is based on creativity, critical thinking and problem solving, initiative taking, perseverance and the ability to work together to plan and projects that have cultural, social or financial value [18].

The author conducted the qualitative evaluation of the development of the entrepreneurial attitude of the participants based on data collected on an ongoing basis during the implementation of project activities in the form of surveys and individual participant observation cards and interviews conducted with six participants after completion of activities.

The conducted research shows that the participants, when joining the project, demonstrated an entrepreneurial attitude on the intermediate and advanced level, depending on the area and individual component competences. The intermediate level means that the participants were at the stage of building their own independence, took action on their own responsibility and together with their peers took responsibility for it. Young people have discovered and used the opportunity to develop themselves through activities in the Erasmus+ program. They created the project and included their peers in action. While working on the concept of the project, young people analysed the ideas in terms of their purposefulness. They decided to put in a lot of effort to create values for others while implementing their own passions. They developed a plan that allowed them to achieve their goals.

During the implementation, the average participant took actions and demonstrated an attitude at an advanced level of entrepreneurship, that is, he assumed responsibility for the created value that was used to describe products and results in the project. Each participant took an individual part in it and achieved individual effects. Everyone has developed an entrepreneurial attitude, but to a different degree and in different compositional competences. As a group, they transformed their ideas into ready-made solutions, making a number of strategic decisions to make the most of the participation in the project. The participants built an international team of people with different skills and complementary competences. They were able to show their strengths in action and further develop them, e.g. coaching, organizational and communication skills. Young people were able to plan the costs necessary for the implementation of individual stages, and later carried out the adopted budget (e.g. as part of the mixed mobility of young people). Participants included others in the creation of products (e.g. they were able to involve teachers to co-run classes for children). Young people were able to adapt their plans to changing circumstances. They estimated that there is a high risk of failure of the Festival, when cooperation in its performance is based solely on communication via the Internet, so they changed

the date and the program of the last mobility, to watch over the course of the event on the spot.

The development of the entrepreneurial attitude of the youth implementing “Open Minds Studio” was influenced by their initial attitude, previously shaped by life experiences, family, school and out-of-school environments, including the activities in the ProHarmonia Educational Center. The development depended primarily on self-awareness and participation of the youth in the process, and the role of the involved institutions was supportive.

Summary

The conducted research and direct experience of the ProHarmonia Educational Center show that Transnational Youth Initiatives in the Erasmus+ program are an effective route leading to the development of participants, but at the same time very demanding, both for young people and for the organizations involved. They are suitable for young people who already have experience in working for the benefit of the local community, e.g. the work in non-profit governmental organizations, undertake cooperation with non-profit institutions in the form of volunteering or voluntarily engage in school initiatives for its environment. If it did not undertake such activities in the past, it shows a very open attitude towards new experiences and has strong relationships with someone who already works and joins the project. The strong interpersonal relationships that give the effect of inclusions into action are the easiest to gain in peer environment, but the inclusion can also take place through the direct contact of an experienced employee of the institution (without age limits) with the youth. In this case, the position of this person in the youth environment is important. It is crucial that it is a person perceived by young people as open to them and their needs, charismatic and acting with passion.

Because the project is created on the basis of common interests of the participants, so young people who want to create an initiative, already have their own hobby, want to develop it and share it with others. Therefore, it is necessary to create conditions for children and young people to discover talents, search for and develop interests, and this should be a task not only of the family home, but also of the school and its surroundings.

Young people get involved in the activities of the organization, which they know from previous cooperation or which is recognizable and well perceived in the youth environment and offers young people institutional and personnel support at a high level. Such an organization has a network of contacts with environmental institutions, thanks to which young people receive additional support during the implementation of tasks, e.g. substantive help in conducting classes, promotion of activities, access to infrastructure. It conducts activities in a cross-sector partnership and uses the experiences of other entities. It maintains contacts with organizations abroad and helps to choose a trusted partner suitable for a given group of young people. The organization involves a person whose task is to support young people in the implementation of their project. This person assumes responsibility for providing help from the moment the idea for the initiative is created, through looking

for a partner, preparation of the application, implementation of activities, to the report and the final evaluation of the activities. Such a person is characterized by high personal and social competences and constantly strives to acquire knowledge and self-development. He has extensive experience in working with non-formal education methods and is able to apply them in the implementation of various topics. This skill can be gained, e.g. by carrying out local activities and shorter international projects, such as youth exchanges, which gather a few partners and give the opportunity to see them in action and learn from them. He can also benefit from the support offered by the Erasmus+ program, i.e. take part in thematic webinars, foreign trainings, and study visits dedicated to youth workers. A person supporting young people can find the necessary information in the “Erasmus+ Program Guide” and knows the formal requirements and procedures related to Action 2 of the Strategic Partnership. He has experience in project management, including the international project, even as a partner. International experience can also be gained by implementing less complex undertakings, e.g. trainings, study visits or the already mentioned international exchanges of young people. Of course, there is no need for one person to have all this knowledge and all the above-mentioned skills. The organization can build a team in which people complement each other with the desired knowledge and skills and pass them on to young people.

Transnational Youth Initiatives Action should be available for as many young people as possible, especially for those with lower competences, at risk of social marginalization. Their participation will be possible if they advance the need for self-development earlier. They can be supported by the school which is a basic educational environment as well as specialized non-governmental organizations.

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“Transnational Youth Initiatives” of the Erasmus+ program for the development of the entrepreneurial attitude of young people, based on the example of the “Open Minds Studio” project

Abstract

The paper presents the idea and objectives of the youth policy of the European Union and one of the instruments of its implementation, namely Erasmus + Transnational Youth Initiatives. The main aim of the article is to present the effects of developing the entrepreneurial attitude of the “Open Minds Studio” project participants. The results of the implemented initiative show that such initiatives are an effective form of non-formal education and can be applied in various areas of youth activities depending on its needs and expectations.

Key words: youth, youth initiatives, entrepreneurship, non-formal education, non-governmental organizations

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