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YOUTH SHAPING EUROPE'S TOMORROW

YOUTH WORKSHOP ON MIGRATION, DISCRIMINATION AND INTOLERANCE

YOUTH RECOMMENDATIONS



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Executive Summary

Overview

On the 14th and 15th of November 2024, Clube Intercultural Europeu organized the second Youth Workshop and third event of the U4EU 2.0 project. The Centro de Juventude of Lisbon, Portugal, hosted the Youth Workshop on Migration, Discrimination and Intolerance and welcomed 16 participants of the eight partner countries - Greece, Italy, Spain, Hungary, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium and Bulgaria- together with more than 40 young people living in Portugal. The richness of the event was diversity. In total, there were people from more than 17 countries with varied experience of migration.

The purpose of this Youth Workshop was to reflect on the topic of migration from different points of view in a way that participants could boost their critical thinking, exercise empathy and get inspired by positive examples of inclusion. Through the Design Thinking Methodology, participants engaged in fruitful conversation and participated very actively to fight against discrimination and propose practical solutions and projects to get over the problems that we might find in the migration area for a more inclusive society.

Key Recommendations

In line with the recommendations of the Youth Summit in Athens created for the topic of migration, the workshop gave the chance to reflect, prepare and propose different recommendations summarized below:

- **Fight against disinformation, discrimination and hate speech:** migration is often surrounded by misinformation and prejudices that shape public opinion and influence policy-making. These myths, often based on distorted perceptions or unfounded fears, hinder a balanced and fair understanding of migration dynamics. We debunked some of the most common myths about migration, based on recent data and studies and the participants underlined the importance to improve the accessibility of the information on migration for people of any education and background. Education is also a key for this objective. Several groups of young people discuss on the necessity to promote a paradigm shift in schools for a new intercultural identity (and not anymore the traditional uni-ethnic culture). The composition of the group was symptomatic of this reality.

- **Access to information:** this topic was recurrent and crucial in the discussions. Different groups claimed that migrants need clear and attainable information for their life in their new country, as well as information to know what it is actually happening in the country they are living in and all around the world. This will make the inclusion process easier.
- **Strengthen the capacity of the immigration agencies:** many participants discussed the fact that they are responsible for the integration process but, most of the time, the procedures are unnecessarily complicated or difficult to understand. That is why the group suggestion is to optimize the current processes and to create dedicated work teams composed by data scientists, interpreter, designers, legal officers to guide migrants through the process in an easy and comprehensible way.

Introduction

Background

The **U4EU 2.0** project: **Youth Shaping Europe's Tomorrow** is a collaborative initiative involving nine European NGOs, each dedicated to supporting young people and promoting social inclusion. Building on the successes and lessons learned from the first edition, U4EU: Youth Debating the Future of Europe, this project aims to amplify the voices of young Europeans and foster vibrant discussions about the future of our continent.

The primary goals of the U4EU 2.0 project are to create a platform for young people to engage in meaningful dialogue, share ideas, and to contribute to shaping the future of Europe. By providing opportunities for youth to participate in workshops, trainings and conferences, the project seeks to equip them with the knowledge, skills and platforms needed to lead and inspire change within their communities and beyond.

The **Youth Workshop on Migration, Discrimination and Intolerance** took place in Lisbon, on the 14th and 15th of November 2024 and gathered 57 youngsters from 9 EU countries and more than 19 nationalities. Organized by **Clube Intercultural Europeu**, the activity aimed at fostering understanding and dialogue around migration, discrimination, and intolerance, with the objective of promoting tolerance and inclusion.

Objectives

The specific objectives of the Youth Workshop on Migration, Discrimination and Intolerance were:

- 1. Engage Young Europeans:** Provide a workshop for young people to discuss and debate the topic of migration which affects each and everyone of us at some extent. By facilitating open discussions, the workshop aimed to bring diverse perspectives to the table and foster a sense of unity and purpose among young Europeans.
- 2. Generate Insights and Recommendations:** Collect the views and recommendations of young participants to inform future project activities and policy discussions. The insights gathered during this youth workshop are intended to reflect the collective aspirations and priorities of the youth, ensuring their voices are heard in the decision-making process.
- 3. Foster Collaboration:** Encourage networking and collaboration among young people from diverse backgrounds and nationalities. By building connections and partnerships, the workshop sought to create a supportive network of young change-makers who can inspire and assist each other in their endeavors.

4. Inform about the Project and Future Activities:

Provide participants with detailed information about the U4EU 2.0 project and its upcoming activities. By keeping the participants informed and engaged, the workshop aimed to ensure continued involvement and active participation in the project's subsequent events and initiatives.

Activities

The youth workshop featured 2 days of engaging activities, designed to spark thoughtful conversations and innovative ideas:

- **Welcome and presentation of the U4EU 2.0 project and program.** This is the moment where participants get to know the context of the project, the general objectives and the specific one for the workshop. They also start to know each other.
- **Presentation ‘Portugal and global migration trends’:** the specialist on migration Alexandre Teixeira provided a short presentation to understand the migration phenomenon. Data on global migration was given after a short quiz. The presentation ended after debunking some of the most common myths about migration.
- **Project design activity:** this activity aimed at exploring the challenges faced by migrants, build empathy and create solutions centered on migrants needs and real experiences. Three pillars of Human-Centered Design were used: Empathize, Ideate, and Prototype.

- **Visit to AIMA: Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum:** meeting the Portuguese agency working for the integration, migration and asylum to know its functioning and to understand the problems connected to it.
- **Visit to different entities working with migrants:** in this part, participants met different associations working on social inclusion through art, education and several activities based on non-formal methodologies. It was the opportunity for them to get to know innovative projects and to network for future collaborations.
- **Interactive Youth Workshops:** participants worked in groups for a debriefing on the visits of the previous day, and concluded the session with a presentations on best practices on inclusion.
- **Youth Recommendations on Migration:** in the last session, participants brainstormed practical ideas and solutions related to the topic of migration. These workshops allowed them to develop recommendations to improve the current policies on migration. Participants brainstormed practical ideas and solutions related to the discussed topics. These workshops allowed the sharing of ideas, collaboration with peers, and the development of concrete recommendations for future project activities and workshops.

Youth Recommendations

The Youth Workshop on Migration, Discrimination and Intolerance generated a full range of insightful recommendations on the topic of migration. Below, a summary of the challenges identified and the recommendations proposed by the participants during the activities.

Migration

Challenges:

1. Disinformation / Discrimination / Hate Speech: discussions on migration without data are often based on subjective perceptions, leading to misconceptions and myths. The impact of this phenomenon on migrant communities (marginalization), on society (hampered integration) or on the individual level (emotional and psychological harm) is potentially very dangerous.
2. Access to information for migrants.
3. Education and Language Barriers: migrants often struggle to find adequate language and cultural support.

4. Lack of Common Ground / Budget Distribution among governments: the lack of common ground and equitable budget distribution are critical challenges in managing migration effectively. These issues often lead to inadequate support for migrants and strained relations between countries and communities.

5. The projects, activities, and initiatives oriented towards migrants led by governmental institutions and entities from civil society lack consistency.

Recommendations:

- To fight against misinformation, people need to consult data and facts from reliable, evidence-based sources. To do that, some groups suggested to promote media literacy and make information more accessible. Thus, reports and statistics should be available on websites on a regular basis and made accessible for the general public.
- Simplify and systemize the processes and procedures. For instance, the participants learnt during their visit to AIMA (Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum) that in many cases the studies that migrants do in their home country are not recognized in their new country. This is why they suggest revising the validation of the education system in the hosting country.

- Reinforce the capacity of the staff in the immigration departments. They need more people and increased training for their staff.
- Increase the number of intercultural mediators to address the challenges faced by migrants. Their experience would facilitate the integration process: mediators would provide guidance on legal systems, education, healthcare and employment opportunities.
- Moreover, these mediators could provide support for the linguistic and cultural domains. At the same time, young people are pointing out the need for more representation of immigrants in decision-making bodies.
- Foster social inclusion by investing on intercultural education for everyone. Participants agreed that educational programs are essential to promote a culture of empathy, respect and inclusion.

- Create tools to support integration such as platforms or apps to connect people, create networks, strengthen collaboration. These tools would focus on the integration and inclusion on different points of view. For example, it could provide useful reading material, contacts and information about associations or organizations working for inclusion, private initiatives and more generally a space for people to be supported and to support.
- Engage local communities in activities promoting social cohesion and cultural understanding.

Key Topics Addressed

- **Definition of migration**
- **Types of migration**
- **Main factors driving migration**
- **Global migration data**
- **Migration myths / Fake news**
- **Intercultural education**

Outcomes, Conclusions and Next Steps

The Youth Workshop on Migration, Discrimination and Intolerance brought together more than 50 participants from the nine partner countries. We consider the event successful because of the engagement, the enthusiasm and the curiosity showed by the participants. The activities carried out not only encouraged deep reflection but also inspired meaningful conversations around some of the most pressing social issues we are facing nowadays. In fact, youngsters worked together on group projects, which allowed them to exchange ideas, strategies, and innovative solutions to the issues of migration and discrimination.

The workshop culminated in a series of actionable recommendations that the participants developed to address migration-related challenges, fight discrimination and foster more inclusive societies.

At the end of the workshop, participants gained a deeper understanding of the complexities around migration, felt more aware of the topic and understood the importance of empathy. They also gained experience in project creation, from brainstorming to a proposal. Finally, the workshop

underscored the potentiality of young people in shaping public opinion, influencing public policies and drive social change.

Following this Youth Workshop, the U4EU 2.0 project will continue to build on everything that was generated by this event. The next phases of the project are designed to further engage young people and translate their recommendations into actionable outcomes:

Youth Workshops: We will organize a series of four more youth workshops across different countries to address other interesting and important topics, fostering further discussion and collaboration.

Training Sessions: Three training sessions will be held to equip young people with essential skills in areas such as youth participation, democracy, and advocacy. These will include both in-person and online components.

Online Roundtable with EU Policymakers: An online roundtable will provide a platform for participants to present their youth-generated policy recommendations directly to EU policymakers.

Final Conference: The project will culminate in a final conference in Greece, where the outcomes of the previous activities will be reviewed, and further strategies will be developed to implement the recommendations.

All the team of Clube Intercultural Europeu wants to thank all the participants, speakers and partners who made this Youth Workshop so inspiring and powerful.

We hope that the network that has taken shape in Lisbon can be fed and expanded over time.

We are very happy that young people will have the chance to participate to the next workshops and in the end, see that their engagement can have a real impact.

Appendices

- **Agenda of the Youth Workshop**
- **Project's website**