



# WHY:



# WE HEAR YOU!

**NEWSLETTER N°1**

This is the first newsletter of the We Hear You Project. In this first newsletter we've interviewed the project coordinator, Ulrika Wennerholm. She helped us understand quite briefly what this two-year project is about, what the project partners will develop and what the rationale behind this project was.

Further on in this newsletter, you'll find:

- a brief description of all the project partners;
- A Focus on the first international meeting in Vasteras;
- Next international meeting;
- EU news

Enjoy the read!



# INTERVIEW WITH PROJECT COORDINATOR

A project to reach at risk and marginalized youth to provide a basis for an improved culture amongst professionals as well as structures that will support democratic dialogue and youth involvement

Funded by the programme Erasmus+ of the European Commission in the 2017 call, the project WHY "We Hear You" aims to promote youth involvement through civic participation and participatory mechanisms, thus preventing marginalization and its negative effects on individuals and society. This project addresses a number of current European issues. A decline in the interest in democratic processes and institutions among young persons is evident, as well as increased discrimination, racism, political and religious extremism. Furthermore the educational systems across Europe have common problems with absenteeism and drop-out. There is a growing sense of frustration amongst teachers and youth workers concerning the low level of youth participation in democratic processes, as well as young people's lack of trust in democratic institutions and values. The youth professionals worry about these perceived democratic deficits and the consequences it has for the youngsters and for society in general, which is particularly concerning when it comes to vulnerable youth at risk of being marginalised in society.



*There is a growing sense of frustration amongst teachers and youth workers concerning the low level of youth participation.*

The Interview with Ulrika Wennerholm project leader and over-all coordinator of the international activities of the City of Västerås educational department provides us further information.

This international partnership is quite lucky since Ulrika has an extensive experience of international projects and has successfully led and/or supported more than 40 European projects, in particular within the programme for life-long learning, Comenius and Leonardo da Vinci, and also some Erasmus+ projects. In addition she is an active representative for the City of Västerås in the ENSA-network since 2004.

As co leader of the project we have: Juan Bergdahl, who is an experienced teacher at Wijkmanska gymnasiet currently leading other Erasmus+ strategic partnerships projects.

**Ulrika, what are the objectives of the WHY project?**

We aim to find new ways of interacting with young persons in order to involve them in democratic dialogue and reestablish their belief in democratic values and the institutions that maintain our democratic systems. In doing so, we intend to enhance inclusiveness as opposed to exclusion, radicalization, early school leaving and alienation to society.

**Who are the partners?**

The eight partners come from all over Europe, representing educational systems, as schools and bodies of higher education, and NGOs. Several of the partners have worked together for some time through the European Network for Social Authorities (ENSA). ENSA is also in itself a partner connecting the project to all its members.

**What are the partners developing?**

One of the core principals of the project is that to obtain our aims we, as professional teachers and youth workers, need to change ourselves and our working methods. In order to do that we will create two on-line courses, one about knowing one-self and raise the awareness of our own prejudice and what we convey, the other on how to use good practice, methods and tools. We will also set up a database with good practice, as well as develop a number of them to even better practice. The second core principal is that there is a need for change and adaptation in an organisational level. As the project progresses we will identify what needs to be done and work towards the embedment of better suited organizational settings for democratic dialogue and the promotion of democratic values.

**What will happen at the end of the WHY Project?**

A major multiplier event will be organized in Brussels in October 2019. The database and the on-line courses will be freely available for everybody on the WHY website. The partnership will go on working with each other, adding new good practice to the database. It will be kept together by the membership in ENSA, and its host organization, and associated partner, the Veneto Region. The results will thus be sustained through the partners, the website, and through the thematic working group for youth and inclusion within the ENSA organisation.

*The youth professionals worry about the consequences it has for society and for vulnerable youth.*

# ZOOM ON THE PROJECT PARTNERS

## Västerås stads Gymnasie och Vuxenutbildning



Västerås stads Gymnasie och Vuxenutbildning is part of the school administration of the local authority of the City of Västerås and organises upper secondary schools, including VET professional training for students between 16–19 years olds and for adults. The city has 143000 inhabitants and is situated approximately 100 kilometres west of Stockholm.

The Västerås stads Gymnasie och Vuxenutbildning provides upper secondary education for ap. 4800 students every year, 1200 of them are in the practical programmes receiving VET training. There are more than 600 teachers and trainers in the different schools within the organisation specialised in different relevant fields. The organisation offers seventeen national programmes and works in close cooperation with the lower secondary schools of the city as well as with other providers of adult training, and the local business community. The city and the local university are working closely together in several fields such as students education, teacher training and research.

The school administration works closely with other parts of the city administration, in particular with the social sector for youth prevention, working on assignment from the council with youth democracy issues, alcohol and drug prevention, criminal prevention and rehabilitation, neighbourhood development and leisuretime activities for young people. Some of the activities take place within the schools of the city, sometimes with staff placements at the schools. In this context a Leonardo da Vinci transnational exchange of experience project was carried out 2013–2015 with partners in Rotterdam and Flanders SMS.

## ROTTERDAM

Rotterdam is the second large municipality of the Netherlands. The municipality has many tasks for its citizens and youngsters. For example, to prevent drop out from school, child abuse or radicalism, and supporting homeless youth, migrants (unaccompanied minors) or refugees. The motto is 'getting young people qualified for their future'. With the NGO's, youth organizations and volunteers few thousand people are involved for the professional and informal caregiving and welfare support of vulnerable youngsters.



The Youth Desk Rotterdam (Jongerenloket) is part of the city administration of Rotterdam. It is the partner in the WHY project, but will represent the city of Rotterdam in the exchange of best practices. As a public local body, the Youth Desk is able to implement good practices in its local and regional policies of the broader Rotterdam-Rijmond area. The Youth Desk Rotterdam is the gateway for all youngsters from the age of 16 up to 27 who live in the city of Rotterdam. The Youth Desk Rotterdam advises and guides them on their way to independency.

## Erasmus Charter for Higher Education



Erasmus University College Brussels is a Flemish higher education institution in Brussels, offering a wide range of professionally based programs. Its education program is strongly linked to research, art development and services for society.

The department of Education & Pedagogy educates teachers and coaches in an urban context. The Department has a focus on empowering the communication skills of future coaches in an urban context: intercultural awareness and sensitivity, intercultural communication, teaching groups, awareness of poverty issues and building a network with different educational, social and cultural organizations in Brussels. Teachers and educational coaches learn to use benefits of the European capital to enhance cultural, creative and critical skills of youngsters.



Problems related to a multicultural and diverse educational context are often perceived as barriers but offer opportunities to learn from each other. A multicultural environment is a place where different societies interact and strengthen each other, creating intercultural awareness. From this point of view, the centre of expertise 'Urban Coaching & Education' studies practice-oriented issues in schools, kindergarten and day care. By doing so, it focuses on three headlines or tools: urban education, democratic dialogue and digital learning.

## TOPunt vzw

TOPunt vzw In Gent, Belgium, is an NGO that runs several Pupil Guidance Centres in Gent, with the task of contributing to the well-being of students now and in the future. TOPunt Gent takes priority to the guidance of pupils who are educationally challenged due to socio-economic factors. It has good connection and collaboration with local policies and the Flemish students association. The organisation is also working to improve youth mental health care and develop new forms of care/service and new approaches. The active participation of youth is one of the main core values of the organisation. TOPunt employs over 250 pupil guidance counselors, who are responsible for the pupil guidance and support of (care)teachers in over 146 schools. So a large number of students have the opportunity to get in contact with 'House for Youngsters'.



A consortium of partners in mental health care and other care (education, general welfare, youth work) for adolescents, is starting to set up a house for young people (12-25y) in Gent, the 'House for Youngsters Gent' (Huis voor Jongeren Gent). TOPunt vzw partner for the WHY-project will also represent the 'Huis voor jongeren' and most of the activities will be performed in the context and program for the 'Huis voor jongeren'.

## **EQUALITY**



Equality is a social cooperative which has the purpose of pursuing the general interest of the community for human promotion and social integration of people living in conditions of social exclusion and marginalization with special attention to victims of human trafficking, Italian and foreign minors and young adults in specific conditions of vulnerability. Equality avails itself of Mobile Outreach Units reaching out about 800 people a year involved in street prostitution, presumed or potential victims of sexual exploitation and offers them preventive and promotion health care services to bring the exploitation out into the open. Besides, Equality runs residential care houses for non-accompanied minors, minors victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, minors who committed juvenile crimes and are remanded in custody, and vulnerable minors. The organization promotes civic participation, social inclusion and activities leading towards individual autonomy.

## **Double Helix Resources**



Double Helix Resources is a private company that has been set up in 2015, by Brian De Lord, with the intention of providing educational and therapeutic consultancy, accredited training and related resources for those working with troubled and vulnerable children and their families. The company is supported by a network of specialist practitioners and researchers. DHR has a wealth of experience in the provision of effective and transformational educational and therapeutic services for vulnerable target groups including refugee and migrant communities. At present the organisation is supporting alternative education provision in Ealing, London, where local excluded secondary pupils are referred by the Local Education Authority. It is also working on developing a new alternative provision secondary school in London for the London Borough of Ealing. Accredited mentor training is delivered at Brent River College and DHR is intending to initiate a national training centre for practitioners in therapeutic and residential settings, in partnership with the Mulberry Bush Organisation and the Caspari Foundation. The DHR has written and delivered a training course for the Citizen 2020 Project aimed at combatting radicalisation on a housing estate in West London. It is also presently working with Hertfordshire University to support the development of practitioners and policy makers working with vulnerable children and families.



## **Anadrasis Initiative Information**

Anadrasis Initiative Information is a non-profit organization in the Greek Island of Syros. Its main goal is to support and promote activities offered by national youth authorities and to support the integration of young people in society.



Furthermore, Anadrasis wishes to contribute to a complete cultural and social development of the young person. In this context, Anadrasis surveys and analyses available educational opportunities, young people's rights and obligations, opportunities for employment, as well as any occurrences of racism and social discrimination.

All these tasks are achieved with the active cooperation of the young people themselves. In addition, Anadrasis wants to contribute to the development of a European identity, and therefore acts as a receiving organisation for



Erasmus+ VET-mobilities. Anadrasis possesses a range of innovative methods/tools to reach youth at risk of exclusion in a participatory way.

## **ENSA**

ENSA is a network of cities and European Regions coming from 13 member countries that has the aim of promoting international cooperation in the social field. ENSA was established by the Veneto Region in 1999. Since then the network has developed and supported solid partnerships between a wide range of European Regions and has carried out seminars, conferences, study visit programmes and exchanges of operators. ENSA has been active for more than 15 years at international level in the field of social affairs encouraging international co-operation, mutual learning, exchange of know-how, of cultural models and of experiences. Most members of this partnership are members of this network. The ENSA network work in close collaboration with the Veneto Region's Brussels office and with Veneto Lavoro. The co-operation between partners has brought about the opportunity to carry out several projects financed by the European Commission. ENSA represents an excellent opportunity for local and Regional Authorities to participate actively in European policy making and programs. The General coordination of the dissemination activities will be done by ENSA. Furthermore as ENSA is a permanent network the sustainability of the project will thus be ensured after its deadline.



# ASSOCIATED PARTNERS



The **Veneto Region** is one of the associated partner of this project. It is host organisation to the ENSA administration placed in the Veneto Region's Brussels Office.

The other associated partner is the **Kenniscentrum Sociaal Europa**, in Brussels. It is an umbrella organisation for social enterprises/organisations the social sector in Flanders. The two Flemish partners in the WHY project are both members of the Kenniscentrum, and have been included through the support of Kenniscentrum, which has also been a key actor in the creation of the project. Kenniscentrum are also the host organisation of the Youth Care Platform, working closely with ENSA, and are deeply engaged in social knowledge development for youth in Europe. They will support the project when needed.

## FIRST INTERNATIONAL PROJECT MEETING

**VÄSTERÅS 18 TO THE 21ST OF SEPTEMBER 2017**



*The project partners are determined to work together for the development of the two online courses and the data base of good practices till 2019 and beyond in the ENSA network.*



### **First Meeting round-up**

Sadly the low level of youth participation in democratic processes, as well as young people's lack of trust in democratic institutions and values is a fact and this leads to a growing sense of frustration amongst teachers and youth workers within our partner organisations. Since All partners have identified organisational shortcomings concerning youth participation on several levels, both structural and cultural they all decide with enthusiasm to react against it with concrete proposals with four intensive days of work in Västerås. Everyone met at the City Hall to plan the future project activities and management plan.

The objective for coming to Vasteras was mutual learning, seeing how to work together in the most productive way for the next years. In addition the opportunity has been to know which local best practices seemed to work in order to collect them for the data base of the project. Furthermore the interest has been also to see how young people themselves were engaged in them.

### **Among the best practices and success stories! here4U Putting young people first**

here4U started in 2002 at a school in Västerås. A group of teenage students wanted to make the school a safer place for all. They knew what was going on in the corridors and around school. They got help from Nicklas, who worked there - and together they started here4U. The group got bigger, and after a while other schools heard about them and also started their own groups with young people. Today - about 50 schools have active here4U-groups. [nicklas@here4u.se](mailto:nicklas@here4u.se).

Other methods included Democratic and Socratic youth dialogue. The partners even benefitted from an OPERA session an efficient method for working in groups.

# EU NEWS

**On behalf of Emmanuelle GRANGE, Head of Unit "Disability and Inclusion", DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: Provisional date for the 2018 Annual Convention for Inclusive Growth (ACIG): Friday, 27 April 2018.**

The Commission's political agenda, the 2018 ACIG will focus on the following topic: "The European Pillar of Social Rights: on the road towards implementation".

As you all know, on 17 November 2017, the European Pillar of Social Rights was solemnly proclaimed by the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Council of the European Union. At this occasion, President Juncker said: "The Pillar - and Europe's social dimension as a whole - will only be as strong as we allow it to be. This is a joint responsibility and it starts at national, regional and local level, with a key role for social partners and civil society. Therefore, while fully respecting and embracing the different approaches which exist across Europe, we all now need to turn commitments into action. Europeans deserve nothing less".

## **Second European Vocational Skills Week launched:**

From 20 to 24 November 2017, the European Commission has been organising the second European Vocational Skills Week, building on the success of last year's initiative.

## **New Skills Agenda for Europe:**

The new Skills Agenda for Europe, adopted by the Commission on 10 June 2016, launched 10 actions to make the right training, skills and support available to people in the EU. The goals and actions on the Agenda are set out in Communication: A New Skills Agenda for Europe

## **2018 Erasmus+ Call and Programme Guide published:**

€2.7 billion in funding available for education, training, youth and sport projects, more than ever before. Organisations wishing to bid for funding in 2018 can now start to prepare their grant applications.

## **Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Work Programme 2018-2020 published:**

the European Commission has adopted the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Work Programme 2018-2020. More than €2.87 billion will be available to fund research training and mobility.

# PARTNER'S NEWS

## **WHY meeting, Brussels 14- 15 December 2017**

Erasmushogeschool Brussel  
dept. Management, Media & Maatschappij  
Zespenningenstraat 70 | B-1000 Brussels



**“WHY” Second international meeting hosted and organized by the city of Rotterdam 22 to 24 January 2018 (starting in the morning of the 22/01- ending the 24/01 at 5p.m**

## **ENSA**

Ms Christine Gaschler-Andreasch and mr Stefaan Van Mulders are pleased to invite you for the next meeting of the European Youth Care Platform and ENSA thematic working groups. Date: 16th and 17th of April 2018(10:00 - 16:00)Venue: Flemish Agency for Youth Welfare Ellips Building, Koning Albert II-laan 35, 1030 Brussels.

17th of April will also be the kick off meeting for the partners in the **‘A Way Home’** project.

### **On the agenda of Youth Care Platform-meeting:**

- Discussion and adoption of the new working plan 2018 - 2020, proposed by the new leadership
- Youth Care Platform as advisory board of the **‘A Way Home’** project funded by the European Union’s Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020). Information and discussion on next steps.
- Main topic: Training and employment: strategies for guidance of NEETs. Why and how for NEETs (‘youngsters Not in Education, Employment or Training’) are more affected than other youth, what is already happening at regional/national level, can Europe help with its actual policies (and do they also deliver on NEETs)?
- Follow up on Europe’s social policies (with special focus on the ‘European Pillar of Social Rights’-strategy).
- Next steps in the development of the Platform (including strategy for extending ship the Platform).

• **Final conference of European project: “Talking about Language and Emotions at home”**. A project aimed at empowering multilingual families. The Conference will be held in Brussels on the 8th of May, 2018 and an Expert Meeting on the 9th of May.

The main topic: Members of multilingual families sometimes struggle with the multilingual context they live in. They harbour negative feelings towards one or some of the languages spoken at home or in society. This affects their well-being and language learning abilities. TALES@home aims to support multilingual families by creating an open atmosphere in which decisions on language maintenance/shifts are considered and become debatable. The tool wants to foster mutual understanding between generations, so that families are able to deal with negative attitudes and might reinforce a more positive approach.

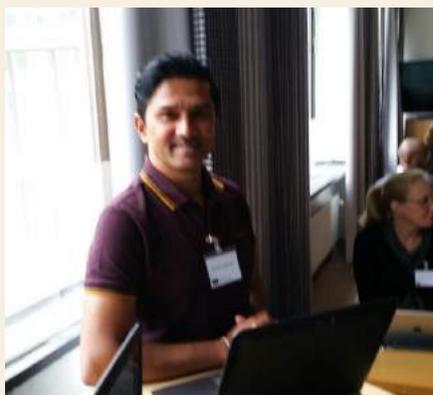
Those wishing to participate in the Expert Meeting are invited to submit short 500 word abstracts for papers or posters relating to the general topic. Abstracts are to be submitted using the aforementioned links. Presentations, abstracts, posters and papers must be in English. (see link expert meeting). The organizing committee welcomes your proposals.

More information about the project: [www.talesathome.eu](http://www.talesathome.eu)

For further questions, please contact Hilde De Smedt: [hilde.desmedt@foyer.be](mailto:hilde.desmedt@foyer.be)

• **Next ENSA General Assembly September 2018, Vänersborgs kommun Sweden**

# "WHY" PARTICIPATION



**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE GO TO THE WEB SITE  
[WWW.WHYWEHEARYOU.EU](http://WWW.WHYWEHEARYOU.EU)**

**Editors: Veneto Region's Brussels Office, Director Marco Paolo Mantile.  
Ensa Team: Elena Curtopassi and Valentina Faraone**