



Vision 20/20
Ljubljana • Bohinjско jezero



Her mit dem schönen Leben!
Borkow • Hamburg



Koha për NISMA të reja!
Tirana



Share the Light!
St.Petersburg • Turku
Petrozavodsk • Hamburg



Take 5 for Europe
#createyoureurope



e.p.a. • *eu*ropean *pl*ay *w*ork *a*ssociation



Annual Report 2020

In the pandemic year 2020, everyone has certainly come up against personal limits and the limits of their own institution. We have tried a lot and made many efforts to face the uncertainties with a lot of improvisation and creativity. Looking at our annual report, we believe that we have succeeded in doing this in a certain variety, which was very much appreciated by young people and colleagues in many countries. We have learned a lot in that process.

Nevertheless, it is also noticeable that our annual report is somewhat more colourless than usual. However, we have gladly refrained from including even more screenshots of video conferences, through which essentially all our interactions with young people and colleagues from Hamburg, Europe and the world took place. We are glad that these technical applications exist, but we can hardly wait to finally start activities with face-to-face encounters again. These are necessary for all young people and they have a less exclusionary effect for certain young people - despite great efforts to have participation and creating access in mind.

We would especially like to thank our supporters (the Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg) who made it possible to further develop our network work under these unusual conditions with a relatively large amount of freedom. Many of our partners have experienced existential hardship in the shadow of the pandemic! Partner groups constituted exclusively through volunteer work were severely weakened by the loss of secure income for their protagonists. We have purposefully shared our modest material and immaterial resources in some places to send out small signs of international solidarity and to sow a little hope. We still very much hope that the pandemic will not leave too much damage to our partners and that we will be able to use the experiences we have gained with digital communication in a rush can be further developed and applied very fruitfully for future cooperation in our international network.

e.p.a. Team
Hamburg, May 2021

The e.p.a. network was substantially supported and funded by



Ministry for Women,
Youth, Labour and Integration



e.p.a. • european play work association
Palmaille 102
22767 Hamburg
Europe
contact@epa-network.org
www.epa-network.org
+49.40.433 190



Europa JUGEND Büro

All year through e.p.a. provided a youth drop-in centre “Europa JUGEND Büro” in Hamburg, with open access to opportunities for European youth mobility and intercultural youth co-operation, creating local visibility for current European themes, supported youth initiatives, voluntary service, encouraged committed youth workers and organisations to become involved in international youth work, informing them about European funding, training and intercultural methodology. e.p.a is an Active Eurodesk relay centre and partner within the European network.

➤ europajugendbuero.hamburg



Eurodesk Networking



For more than 30 years e.p.a. runs the Hamburg Europa JUGEND Büro as an Active Eurodesk relay centre and is a longterm partner within the European Eurodesk network.

➤ eurodesk.eu



European Solidarity Corps



Michael from Liverpool has joined our team in the e.p.a. office in September 2020 for one year. We are happy for his support and looking forward to continue playing and working with him in the coming months.



Digital: Jahrestagung Eurodesk – Annual Meeting Eurodesk

One of the most important events of the year within the German Eurodesk network is the annual meeting in Bonn. In 2020 the meeting was supposed to take place at the end of April, but had to be cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Instead, the network met online, trying to do the best out of the situation. Although it was not quite the same, we

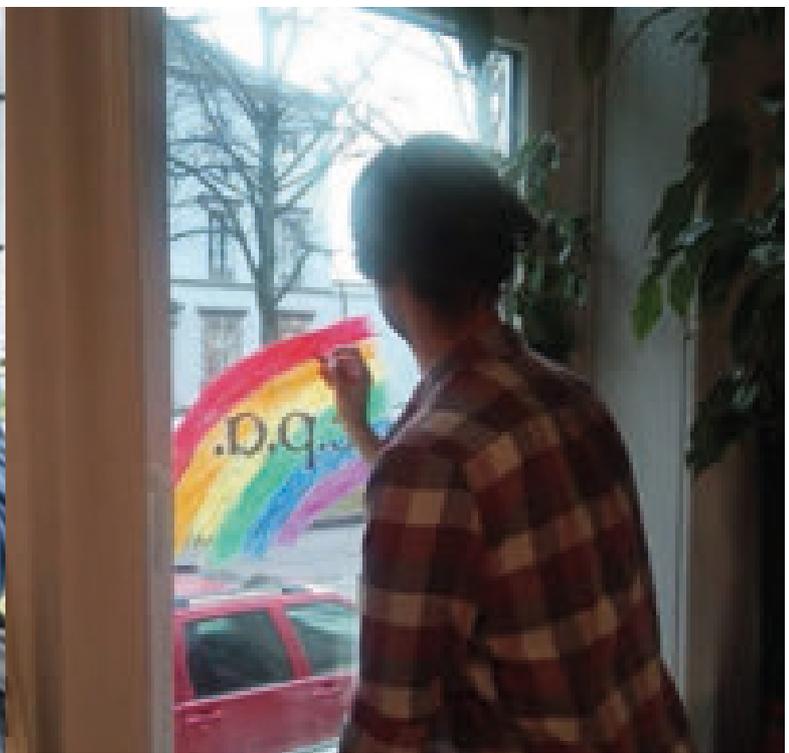


could still update each other on the newest programme developments, exchange ideas, develop good-practice of playful non-formal learning methods in youth advice and information work.

European Solidarity Corps

Volunteer and solidarity activities are good opportunities to include young people into the daily work of e.p.a. and its partner organisations, and increase youth participation within the network. The volunteers support the preparation of local and international youth activities, support the Eurodesk advisory work, support to take care of PR/dissemination activities, work on non-formal learning concepts etc.

For some years, e.p.a. has been accredited as a coordinating, receiving and sending organisation for the European Solidarity Corps programme of the European Union. In 2020 we hosted two volunteers (while waiting for a third to come; due to visa issues, he will be coming in 2021), sent one abroad, gave advice to hundreds and successfully applied as coordinating organisation for 6 more volunteers, who will work in 4 different organisations in Hamburg from 2021. Especially with the pandemic, the ESC with its individual mobility options has become an important addition to the remit of our organisation, as the implementation of our group activities unfortunately had to be much more restricted.



European Week Hamburg

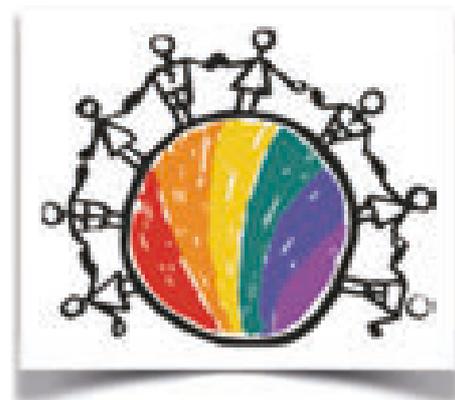
For e.p.a. and especially the Europa JUGEND Büro, the European Week in Hamburg, taking place yearly during the month of May, is a great opportunity to open its doors even wider for young people and invite them to discover more about (European) youth mobility and European topics concerning their lives. Each year we come up with different events to use the stage of the European Week and reach even more (young) people than we normally do.

For 2020 we had a lot of different events planned: A cooperation with Hamburg's central library in the city centre to show an exhibition on mobility programmes, accompanied by an information desk in the library and, at the end of the week, a presentation of the different options available; a barbecue party in our garden for young people interested in getting to know the ESC programme planned by our ESC volunteer; an open counselling day for young people on youth mobility in our office, an event for organisations and NGOs about the ESC programme and how to apply for it.

Unfortunately, all these events needed to be cancelled due to COVID-19 and we had very little time to prepare alternatives. But we came up with the idea of giving advice and consultation for young people through an online chat on our website, which was so successful that we continued to offer it also after the European Week. And we offered the information about the ESC programme to organisations and NGOs in online sessions.

Rainbow connected

This large-scale statutory meeting discussed about the visions and projects for the coming years and for the current situation caused through COVID-19, such as increasing antidemocratic tendencies and increasing youth poverty and neglect. What are the needs? What do we want to reach? Which topics are important for us in the future? Which steps and projects are important? How is the work on the local level doing and how is it linked with the European level?



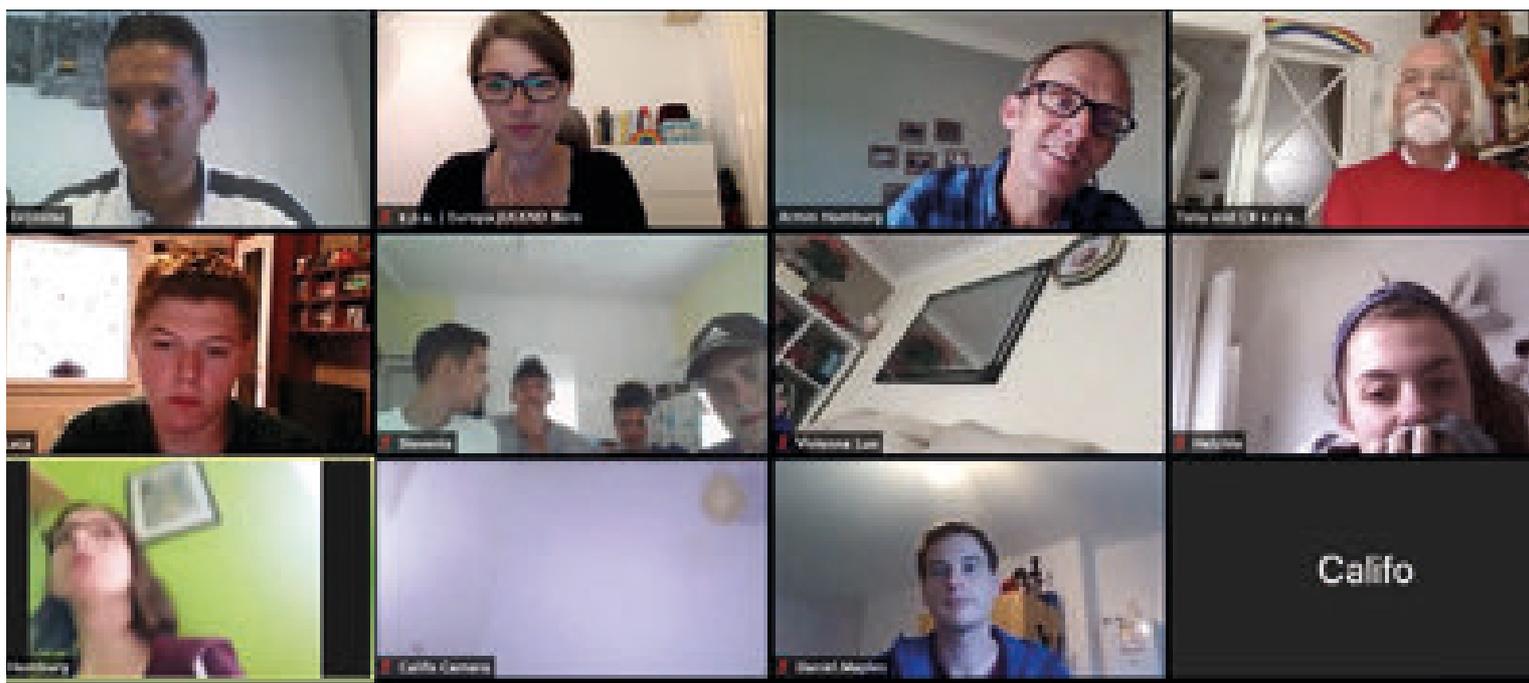
Online Meeting IYE Slovenia

The start of the COVID-19 pandemic meant the beginning of a period of great uncertainty, especially for our international youth exchanges. For both exchanges we planned for 2020 we had already received the grant at the end of 2019 and had started to prepare them in

January/ February 2020. And suddenly, we did not know if we would be able to celebrate them after all.

One of the two exchanges was planned to take place in Slovenia in July/August under the theme “Vision 20/20: Challenging borders, creating opportunities and embracing solidarity”. Together with our partners, we decided to stay in touch via video conferences regularly throughout the uncertain months of the pandemic and keep updating us on the situation in the communities of the participating countries. During several online meetings we also invited the young people to join. This was a way to keep in touch, for them to still be able to see each other and express their feelings.

During the meetings we played different online games and raised topics such as youth participation, democracy and active citizenship. At the end of the summer, we finally had to decide that we would not be able to go to Slovenia, but still felt privileged because we could postpone the exchange for 2021, without the need for another application.



SDG Workshop with Engagement Global Workshop

“All Days for Future: Wege der Nachhaltigkeit” - this training seminar was aimed at young people, who are interested in the topics environment and climate change. During the workshop, which lasted two days, the participants had learned about SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals), climate change and why it is important to act now and what does it

mean “to practice sustainability”. With playful non-formal online learning methods we learned from each other and exchanged the ideas in a participative way using digital tools. An important part of the workshop was the interviews that were followed by discussions, where participants had a chance to ask questions with two guests, who joined us online, Samuel from our partner “Act for Change” in Accra, Ghana and Charlotte from the Chocolate company “Fairafric” that built a chocolate producing factory in Ghana. In the end, we reflected on already existing initiatives and projects that are making an impact and the participants opinions on them.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



The Spanish Speaking Network Meeting

This meeting brought together partners from Europe and Latin America, created space to exchange and share how people and organisations are doing under COVID-19 and spreading hope to withstand these difficult times.

It has been a while since the last e.p.a. exchange projects with partners from Latin America and the Caribbean took place. At this meeting, the desire to get something going in this direction again became very clear. The first concrete ideas for topics and formats

were exchanged. For many partners, the positive memories of our tri-continental Youth project "A different Triangle", which we carried out in 2007-2011, are still amazingly vivid. The desire to make such a learning experience possible for future generations was passionately expressed in this meeting.



Statutory Meeting

The meeting asked where e.p.a. as a network wants to go and what it wants to reach as its mid to long-term aims. Which topics are expected and desired? Is our target group right? Does our annual vision and projects include the perspectives of disadvantaged young people? Is the approach to work "with" and less "for"? Management, Networking, Participation, Inclusion, Diversity.

Online Meeting organised by Hamburg Group

We kept in touch with the participants who planned to come to our big Youth Exchange in Germany. We organised a workshop to keep connected and to discuss current situations in the communities of participating countries. Such topics as youth participation, democracy and active citizenship were raised. This online meeting was organised by the Hamburg group of participants.

Conference on Youth mobility.

e.p.a. works closely together with the City of Hamburg's Local Authority to provide Youth mobility information in Hamburg (1.84 mil inhabitants) and beyond in order to inform about current topics and projects, to explain funding opportunities on the European, federal and regional level and to discuss the great chances, the qualitative benefits of international youth work - motivating participants (youth and community workers) of the Info day to get /stay involved in it. This year the information day took place online, having a chapter to digital ways of international youth work too. Themes: Youth Mobility Information, Networking, Improvement of international Youth Work.

Preparation Meeting for Seminar "Spielräume - open spaces for youth participation and human rights"

Our international project team travelled to Buch, the northernmost area of Berlin, so that they could meet with the host of the project 'Abenteuer- und Archäologiespielplatz Moorwiese' to go over the details of the programme, look at the venue, iron out the details regarding the accommodation, discuss the travel opportunities of the participants, to plan the project visit day, and any meetings with politicians and further cooperation partners.

The roles and responsibilities during project implementation were also discussed in greater detail, as well as preliminary follow-up discussions, that were distributed and documented. Additional members were contacted to pass the responsibility for additional workshops, and tasks were prepared for other participants.



Since our volunteer, Michael, was new to Germany, the team decided to take advantage of the warm weather and enjoyed a trip to Berlin, visiting the remnants of the Berlin Wall, the parks and waterways, and the political heart of Germany. As well as Berlin's famous nightlife! While in Buch, we also received a tour of the area, and enriched ourselves in the history of the place.

Statutory Meeting

The meeting aimed to collect opinions/feedback, how e.p.a. has reached its aims regarding migration and refugee questions and defending human rights. Does our annual vision and projects include the perspectives of refugee young people and minorities? Is the approach to work "with" and less "for"? Are the project teams representing the diversity of our network? How to expand and improve e.p.a. work in the Mediterranean region and in Arabic communities of Europe and North-Africa? Management, Networking, Strategy, Participation.

The ESC Preparation Meeting with local partner for accreditation supported the local youth work organisations to plan their hosting activities and to coordinate the network.

Time to Move

Time to Move is a series of events taking place across Europe during October of each year, brought up by the European Commission, coordinated by Eurodesk in all countries and executed by the Eurodesk partner organisations. The aim is to create greater visibility for the service for young people provided by Eurodesk. For the special year of 2020, we decided to plan online events only and offered on each Monday of October online chat consultations on our website. In addition, our





volunteer offered two webinars: One invited young people interested in travelling and experiencing something new for a relaxed get-together to gain first-hand insights about the city of Liverpool. The other event was an interview passing on his experiences with the ESC programme and with space for individual questions.

Statutory meeting

This main statutory meeting reported how the year has been for e.p.a. and its members, accept annual reports and receive the annual statement of accounts. Presentation of projects and plans for 2021 and the draft of the sustainability guide. We also took some time to summarise the situation of the network after a year of crisis and collect some ideas to keep the network together in terms of Network, Management, Governance.



Online meeting with Portugal group

In a Kick-off-Meeting together with the partner group in Portugal the e.p.a. team planned and sketched the Hope to Cope campaign and started it with first interviews. The campaign will be continued in 2021.

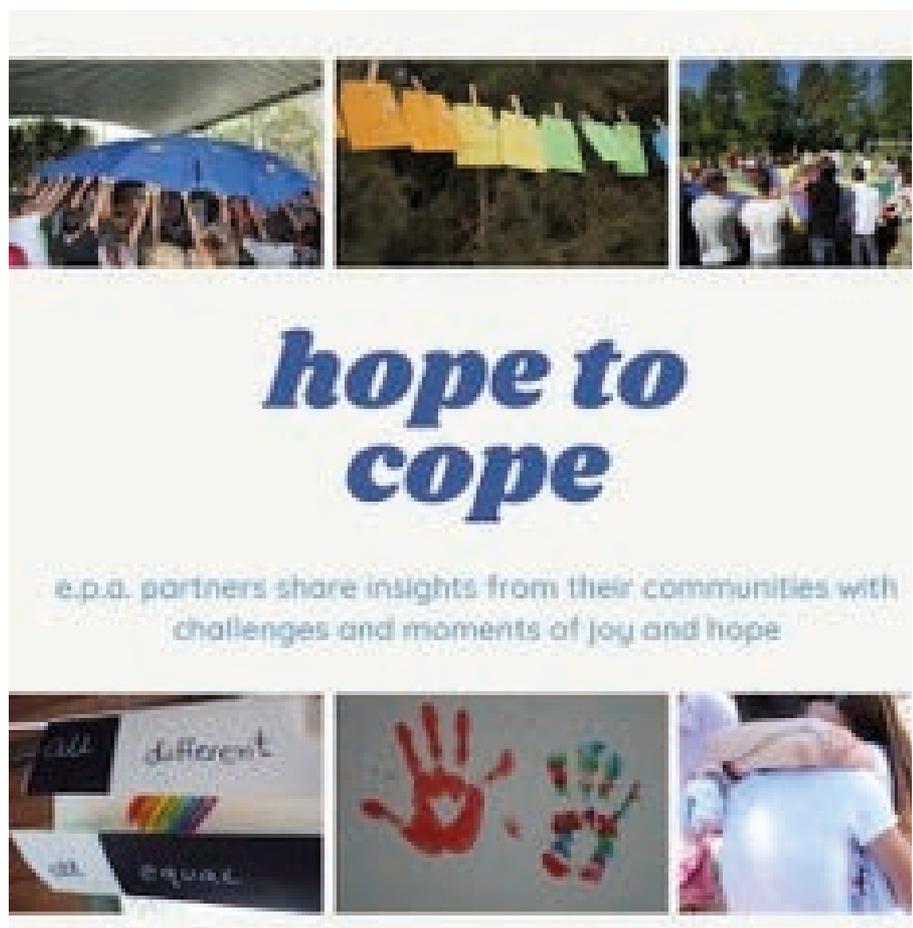
Campaign Week #InternationalHeart

e.p.a. and it's Hamburg project Europa JUGEND Büro organised an online panel discussion that brought politicians from the Hamburg regional parliament, representatives from the authorities and professionals from (international) youth work organisations based in Hamburg together. The dialogue with politicians had the aim to promote international youth work under the COVID-19 crisis and beyond and present its benefits and outputs. The event supported the implementation of the campaign week #InternationalHeart.

Hope to Cope

In November 2020 we started our campaign "Hope to Cope" as our reaction to the pandemic, where our partners share insights from their communities with the aim to collect the voices during these difficult times and spread hope and solidarity within our network. Once a week there is a post on our website with a small interview with one person from our partner organisation.

This partnership action wants to remind us of the power of the network and the importance of local work in communities and it would like to share hope!



These Partners started with our campaign:



Samuel Lamptey works with Act for Change in Jamestown, Accra, Ghana



Montse works in ABC Allentie Welzijn, Amsterdam, Netherlands



Bruno Batista works with Eco-Estilistas in Lisbon, Portugal



Ana works for NISMA Arsis, Tirana, Albania

Digital meeting: "European movement"

Each year in December, Hamburg's Senate Chancellery invites us to the meeting of the "European Movement", bringing together youth organisations, civil society, schools and state stakeholders with interest to spread European values together through actions, events and projects especially during the European Week. This platform is used by the Hamburg Senate Chancellery to pass on the main details concerning the next Year's European Week, such as dates, motto, and for the organisation to meet and network. It is a great opportunity for inspiration, networking and finding cooperation partners. The digital meeting could not quite keep up with the "real" meeting, but it was still a great opportunity to gain insights and start the process of planning.

Take V Youth conference

Take V is a network of youth organisations and the state youth authorities from Bremen, Lower Saxony, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Hamburg and Schleswig-Holstein. Since 2010 we have been organising youth conferences to bring young people and politicians together. Participants have the opportunity to voice their opinion and thus help shape political processes.

The Northern German youth conference "Take 5 #createyoureurope" was planned to take place from the 20th to the 22nd of November on the beautiful seashore of Scharbeutz,

NORDDEUTSCHE JUGENDKONFERENZ TAKE V

1. 11. 2020
15:00-18:30



DIGITAL



Informationen und Anmeldung: www.Take-V.EU

Germany with about 120 participants from the North of Germany. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic the conference was postponed to take place in 2021.

On the 21st November 2020 we organised an online dialogue with young people as a substitute. There was a wide range of topics to discuss: digitalisation, education, environment, and, of course, the pandemic and life within the restraints of lockdown. Our guests were representatives of authorities and politicians from local, regional, federal and European parliament. All young participants had a chance to ask a question or share their opinion on the mentioned topics.

In the first part we worked in smaller theme-related groups and then presented the results to a bigger circle. The second part was an open discussion, where young people and politicians expressed opinions and exchanged their points of view.

We are looking forward to continuing with the project and meeting the participants and politicians face-to-face to elaborate on the produced results and proceed with the discussions.

➤ europajugendbuero.hamburg/take_5



How did we start the online seminars

In cooperation with five partner organisations we offered an interactive series of online training seminars for partners, friends and anyone, who would be interested to take part, reaching out beyond our partner network to such faraway places as Australia. What in the beginning was thought as transitional tool for our networking turned out to be quite effective measure not only to keep the existing network active, but also to make it bigger and even more diverse. While working on the concept for the seminars we stayed open for new ideas and were flexible for any changes and ideas that the partners would come up with. We could observe that such format provides a great opportunity for getting every participants voice heard, as during the seminars, we kindly asked the participants to make comments by speaking out or writing in chat during the online event and afterwards filling an evaluation form, so that we could reflect and improve our future digital events.

"I have learned a lot of new games and activities that we can do with our children even during these particular times. Was great to learn from each other and hear the experiences of others too. And also about different technical tools that can be used during the work and can be helpful, about which I have never heard before".

Dominika, Slovakia

"So many emotions... First of all I felt really happy to see faces I missed the past year. The seminar provided me comfort since we are all facing similar changes, difficulties and especially challenges. The group shared so many great ideas that automatically helped me "restart" my projects during the current lockdown. Thank you all very much! I look forward to the next step!"

Elena, Greece

Seminar "Let's find a way to care & play"

Coping with challenges, creating opportunities for play work in times of Corona. We tried out what participants proposed themselves and Played online. We developed a collection of ideas and games, which we can all enjoy – even in times of Corona, Play-fully!

In partnership with our dear friends Augusta and Bruno, from Lisbon, Portugal, we set about the task of reinventing the hug, during these difficult times of 'social distancing'

and lockdown. We also needed to adapt the rules for some of our games, as to abide by current corona restrictions.

During the first session, we looked at the basic aspects of 'play', such as; communication (verbal and non-verbal), play for inter-cultural understanding, play to overcome anxiety and fear, and play as a tool for community connections. During the second session, which occurred the following day, we began the process of 'soustvarjanje' (which is the Slovenian word for "co-creating" ... 'creating together'), and used this inspiring principle to create new games and reinvent our old ones. We used our joint experiences, and took into consideration what the kids and young people in our communities need during these times, to best find a way to care & play during corona!

"Every one was so amazing and welcoming hence I felt very secure in sharing my ideas."

Elena, Slovenia

I feel excited knowing that distance and the corona pandemic did not stop us from connecting to work and play.

Mauton, Nigeria



It was amazing a beautiful collection of wonderful people from all around the world. It was great to meet old friends and get to know new friends, even from other side of the world.. Thank you so much for this.

Dominika, Slovakia

It was a very interesting experience. ... Each participant, with his features, gave a contribution to others.

Marta, Italy



It was fun, interactive and very educative.

Collins Seymah , Ghana

Seminar Social Circus

Circus as a tool. Social circus creates environments where young people can feel safe to develop their creativity and life-skills, they can proudly share their new skills and caring responsibility with children in the community, it connects the community and people have access to quality arts and learn how to share their skills to their community.

Our social circus trainers Konstantina and Alberto, from Thessaloniki, Greece, who for many years have worked as youth/play workers and educators and have been involved in many social circus projects, were more than happy to spread the message of the power and potentials of social circus for the participation of children and young people. The first session revolved around the theory of social circus, and its use as a tool for transformation, discipline, creativity and artistic expression. For those who have no experience with social circus, it can be described as a transformational power, that connects education, physical art, and social development. During the second session, our participants focused on the practical elements of social circus, such as juggling and clowning. They learned how to create their own equipment using household materials, and the basic principles of these skills in a playful setting.

The energy, informations ...
Konstantina and Alberto were really well prepared. I was so tired at the beginning but now I'm full of energy.
Tjaša, Slovenia

It was well organised, interactive, open atmosphere and good balance between the theoretical and practical part. The way it was explained (also with the support of some links/videos) was very encouraging to me to use social circus with the kids at my workplace.
Melanie, Germany

Theatre as a Tool of Youth and Community Work

The workshop presented interactive theatre as a powerful educational tool and provided ideas how to use it in the community and in youth work.

Our partners and friends from “Act for Change” in Accra, Ghana, kindly hosted and presented a workshop on interactive theatre. They discussed with us the origins of interactive theatre, with Augusto Boal’s ‘Theatre of the Oppressed’ who used this as a means of promoting social and political change. This is accomplished by allowing the audience to influence the outcome of the play, by critiquing and changing the decisions of the characters after the fact, to hopefully result in a better outcome for them.

The example that was used was extremely relevant for the situation we find ourselves in today, a global pandemic. It began with two friends debating the necessity of wearing face masks, only for the friend arguing against their use, to unknowingly pass the virus to his friend, who later died. Our participants changed this outcome.

All was enjoyable and well organised, but the final part when theory was put into action, was the most fascinating for me. Despite the distance and connection challenges, we felt the effort, the interaction and the results that came out through interactive theatre method.
Agapi, Belgium

It could be a useful tool when a conflict arises - especially when it regularly arises. Children might be more prepared to play the conflict rather than to be "told off" and not to be heard. Children feel then listened to, their opinion and their needs are respected.
Karin, Germany

Big thanks to everybody involved, it was really nice to meet so many people from different countries :)

Emil, Germany

The international Kick-off Meeting

The international Kick-off Meeting of “Update International Youth work” created space to get to know each other and sketch a plan how to continue this youth exchange project between Russia, Finland and Germany. We met with responsible young people from our partner organisations for the first time online and decided on the aims, cooperation work and outlines of the project.

The project later got the name “Share the Light! Young People Come Together to Exchange Ideas and Learn from Each Other”. “Share the Light!” is aimed at developing an open discussion on the current state of the participating communities from young people’s perspective, building new friendships and partnerships and having an exchange on different topics that are important for young people.

The first online seminar for the young people was planned for January 2021. Because of the pandemic all planned seminars are taking place online, but we are very inspired and hopeful to meet each other face to face and continue the cooperation when the pandemic is over.



e.p.a. in brief

e.p.a. is an international network of youth and community initiatives and associations with partner in over 40 countries: in Europe (including Middle-, Eastern and South Eastern Europe) in South America, CIS countries and Africa.

e.p.a. is an INGYO, registered and based as a “Freier Träger der Jugendhilfe” and charity (e.V.) in Hamburg – Germany.

e.p.a. aims to highlight, confront and challenge the problems of young people living in some of the most disadvantaged cities, areas and regions of Europe. e.p.a. endeavours to provide an opportunity for these young people to discover their potential, experience international friendship and fight against apathy, poverty and neglect.

e.p.a. achieves these aims through the activities of International Youth Exchanges, Study Visits, Training workshops, Seminars, Voluntary Service and International Meetings and in the publication of papers and activity sheets as well as advocacy of the local, regional and national governments of Europe and Europeans Organisations. e.p.a. has been involved in international Youth Exchanges for over 40 years and was one of the first to instigate the EU YOUTH programmes.



© 2021

The e.p.a. network was substantially supported and funded by



Ministry for Women,
Youth and Integration

