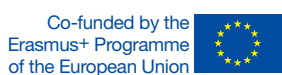


TOOLKIT

Crossroads Experiences to prevent Early School Leaving from an intersectional perspective



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Crossroads





The information you will find in this Toolkit is for informative purposes only, and should be used for the purpose of planning, designing, and publishing research.



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■ References

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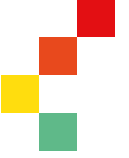
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ISBN

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UVic Publications Service



Introduction

The **CROSSROADS PROJECT** brings together different experiences to empower youths to continue their post-compulsory education from an intersectional perspective. The **PARTNERS** who are involved in this Erasmus + Project are: **Pour la Solidarité** (PLS) from Belgium, **Fundacja Laboratorium Zmiany** (LZ) from Poland, **Udruga za ljudska prava i građansku participaciju** (PaRiter) from Croatia and the **Centre d'Estudis Interdisciplinaris de Gènere** (CEIG) from the University of Vic-Central University of Catalonia (Spain).

We have developed a Toolkit for teachers, which gathers innovative methodologies, strategies and good practices, aimed at reducing early school leaving caused by the impact of the intersection of different axes of inequality (gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, social class, etc.), in the period between compulsory and post-compulsory secondary education.

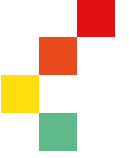
This toolkit is organised in two sections

Our approach

The section called “Our Approach” outlines our principles and our theoretical perspective, focusing on the terms that we discussed in our meetings. These terms are key in our eight Crossroads Experiences. Firstly, we present the concept of **Early School Leaving**. Second, we present the terms of **Internalisation of Discrimination and Empowerment**. Third, **Gender-based Discrimination and Equal Perspectives**. Fourth, **Non-formal Education at School and Sense of agency**. The last term is **Intersectionality**. The concept intersectionality, implemented throughout the Toolkit, is a perspective that originated in feminist and gender theories, and suggests analysing different axes of inequality (gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, social class, etc.) from a holistic perspective. The aim is to understand all these categories as overlapping and mutually constitutive rather than isolated and distinct. Intersectionality provides a complex way to analyse the impact of different axes of inequality in young people and the consequences on Early School Leaving.

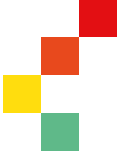
Crossroads experiences

Crossroads Experiences shows a selection of **eight experiences** which have already been implemented in partner countries, which can help to encourage teachers to reflect on the obstacles and sharing factors in the reduction of Early School Leaving with different educational experiences that can help young people to minimise different axes of inequality. The Toolkit includes different kinds of methodologies to promote the empowerment and self-agency of youth throughout the accompanying process that the community can develop to reduce the impact of Early School Leaving. At the end of each experience, you will find a brief section called “Read and Implement” to make easy adaptations in different contexts.



The Toolkit seeks to contribute towards understanding Early School Leaving from a whole school approach using an intersectional perspective. The selected experiences are addressed to different target groups from Primary School (6-12), Secondary School (12-16), and Post-Compulsory School (16-29), to show different ways that teachers and social educators can do to empower children and young people in their educational process. The experiences show a selection of practices to help pupils to strengthen the relationship with teachers and peers and to be more connected with their life school.





Our approach

Principles and Theoretical Perspective of the Toolkit

In this section we want to outline the FIVE MAIN TERMS that comprise our shared theoretical perspective. These five concepts are:

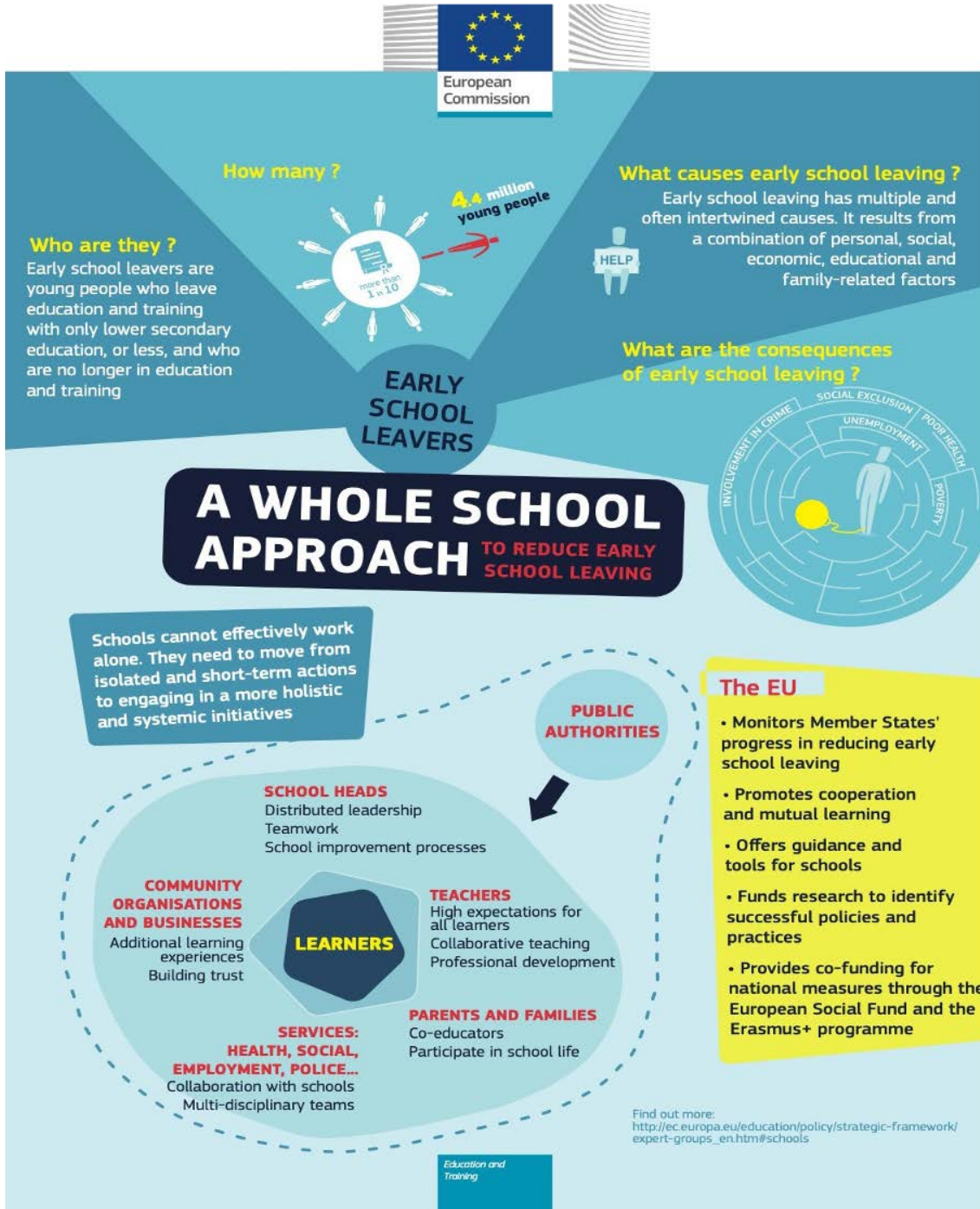
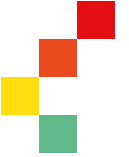
- 1) Early School Leaving
- 2) Internalisation of Discrimination and Empowerment
- 3) Gender-based Discrimination and Equal Perspectives
- 4) Non-formal Education at School and Sense of Agency
- 5) Intersectionality

These terms can be useful to help teachers to gain another perspective on the success opportunities of students. We understand these terms in a complementary way. Firstly, failure in school can be affected by these axes of inequality (gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, social class, etc.) and create discrimination, so an intersectional perspective helps to understand it differently. With this perspective in mind, we offer several experiences where teachers trust in the pupils' possibilities to be connected with and have another role in school.

These experiences show how students can become empowered and increase their sense of agency throughout non-formal educational activities.

Early School Leaving

In 2017, the EU Commission defined the concept of Early School Leaving (ESL) as a multidimensional concept that was linked to unemployment, social exclusion, poverty and poor health. The EU Commission pointed out many reasons why some young people give up education and training prematurely, such as: personal or family problems, learning difficulties, or a fragile socio-economic situation. Since there are often complex, interconnected reasons for children not completing secondary school, policies to reduce early school leaving must address a range of issues and combine education and social policy, youth work and health-related aspects. Some of these challenges are outlined in the following infographic from the Commission.



Source of the diagram: Early School Leaving. EU Commission.



Early School Leaving (ESL) is not an individual problem concerning each pupil. Therefore, in this context, the school environment and teacher-pupil relations can contribute towards encouraging young people to maintain their connection with school.

In 2020, the Covid19 breakout generated a health crisis and a severe socioeconomic crisis for part of the population. Its impact is leading to a loss of educational opportunities for a proportion of children and youth. Again, we can see that dropping out of school is not the result of “bad” individual decisions “by young people or families”. It is the result of systemic obstacles that combine and accumulate, eventually depriving them of educational opportunities. The young people who are most likely to drop out may be young people from disadvantaged social classes and young people with diverse socio-educational needs and problems.

After COVID19 health crisis, these following worrying factors were critical:

1 Digital absenteeism may increase due to a lack of network connection or devices in certain families, or due to the increased stress experienced by more vulnerable households (low incomes, problems with housing, etc.).

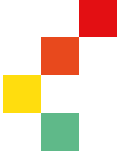
2 The risk of drop-out of pupils who need extra support at school (e.g. remedial classes) in situations that this extra support is interrupted.

3 The breakout of the link with adults who accompany them at school like teachers, tutors, psychologists,.. is critical for their educational continuity.

4 Problematic situations such as: screen addiction, drug consumption, social isolation, behavioural disorders, lack of motivation, have been increased with the closure of the school (Mencía, 2020).

These four factors, among others —prior to Covid-19 and even more so in the current situation— increase the risk of Early School Leaving, closing off educational opportunities to a greater number of young people, because we know that when young people leave school they do so from a place of deep disconnection from the world of schooling (Tarabini, 2015), in terms of cognitive, behavioural and, above all, emotional disconnection.

When systemic obstacles, such as the factors pointed out in the previous section, hinder the educational trajectory of children and young people in schools, the schools need to work on systemic initiatives. Consequently, the role of the school is key to strengthen the network and to help students and families in a process of close educational accompaniment.



Internalisation of Discrimination and Empowerment

According to the definition given in the Cambridge Dictionary, “discrimination” means: “treating a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people, because of their skin colour, sex, sexuality, etc.”

And what happens when the discriminated individual is so convinced by what is said about them and by what people think of them, that they discriminate against themselves?

In this case, can we talk about self-discrimination? For different reasons, the term “self-discrimination” is not unanimously accepted by the academic world or among the stakeholders working on this topic. Why is this?

- Semantic nonsense: “self-exclusion” is more commonly used.
- Legal nonsense: legally it is impossible to be both perpetrator and victim of a same fact.
- Guilt of the victims in relation to their situation.

Thus, we prefer to talk about the internalisation of discriminations. There is little theory about the concept, but social psychology provides some elements that can help us to understand it:

- ✓ A person’s social identity is shaped by their belonging to a social group and consequently by the perceptions that others have of the status and characteristics of that group.
- ✓ The image of the group is mainly conveyed by institutional stakeholders - school, administration, politicians, media...

Finally, the “internalisation of discriminations” encompasses different stakes we must mention:

- ✓ Psychological dispositions, including stereotypes and prejudices, often influence people’s perception of others.
- ✓ Discrimination is internalized because of direct or indirect exclusion, but the person who discriminates against themselves sometimes is not even aware.
- ✓ The sense of belonging to a group (society, school, social class) is also negatively impacted.
- ✓ It generates additional obstacles for young people on their educational path.



The consequences for the individual can be severe. For example, it can provoke:

- Self-disability and parasitic behaviours: inadequate attitude, negative state of mind, anxiety, etc...
- Paralysis: internalisation directly affects motivation.
- Withdrawal and resignation: “School’s not for me”, “It’s useless anyway”, acceptance of the situation.
- Disqualification: loss of skills.
- Disaffiliation: loss of confidence in institutions.
- Identity-related closure: towards a secure subgroup in search of an identity (please note, attachment to the community of origin can also provide positive resources).

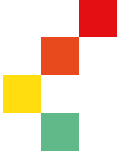
“Empowerment” can help to overcome limiting beliefs and the internalisation of discriminations. But to understand what empowerment is, it is important to define some concepts:

- ✓ Self-confidence is linked to one’s own skills, belief in one’s abilities and potential (“I can do it!”).
- ✓ Self-esteem is linked to self-image, to self-judgment, in correlation with the perception that others have of me (“Am I worthy?”).
- ✓ Most of the time, limiting beliefs prevent a person from reaching their full potential. They influence our behaviours and decisions and often hinder us in our projects, even unconsciously. They can stem from what our teachers, colleagues, and people who influence our environment think about us. It is important to identify them, deconstruct them and replace them with positive aspects.

The verb “to empower” emerged in the 17th century in England. Initially, “to empower” meant to be granted a power by a higher authority. The notion of “empowerment” appeared in the 19th century and meant giving power to someone. The concept was popularized in the 1970s by the Feminist Struggles in the USA. But it is a polysemic and ambiguous term! We can mention numerous deviations, particularly neo-liberal ones, which lead to the individual’s responsibility and guilt.

Although theorized, empowerment is more than a concept! As we understand and use it in the social sciences and socio-professional inclusion field, the concept of “empowerment” is an experience that reinforces or develops the power of an individual or group to act on their social, economic and political conditions. We could talk about:

- ✓ Power over: control over reality.
- ✓ Power to: capacity to act.
- ✓ Internal power: self-esteem and self-confidence.
- ✓ Power with: solidarity in the group.



Gender-based Discrimination and Equal Perspectives

The patriarchal system, understood as the structural and ideological system that perpetuates the privileging of hegemonic masculinities (Fal-Dutra, 2019), is omnipresent in different spheres of our contemporary society.

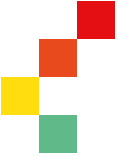
Also, we explore the concept of gender equality. While UN Women defines it as ‘equality between women and men’, we expand this definition in accordance with Fal-Dutra (2019), who pointed out in his blog that “to encompass equality between all people, regardless of their gender, their sexuality, and the degree to which they conform with gender norms and the patriarchal binary approach to gender and sexuality. In essence, gender equality emphasises the gendered aspects of inequality and the groups generally marginalised by patriarchy. Thus, the promotion of gender equality inevitably challenges patriarchy insofar as it fights against gender inequalities. The latter are enabled by the patriarchal system while also contributing to perpetuating it”.

Patriarchal principles were instilled in the educational system in more subtle and latent ways. Consequently, they persist and affect new generations of young people. In many cases we are not even aware of it, so it is crucial to adopt a gender aware approach. From this perspective, we have realised that the formal education system often has structures and curricula which do not incorporate this perspective of gender equality.

Although states have some policies which consider a gender equal perspective within the (non)-formal educational system, they often do not transfer to life in practice. From early childhood, the educational system transfers gender roles and stereotypes which have a strong impact on educational orientation and career choices, resulting in a division of labour into “male” and “female” jobs.

Therefore, if we want to bring about change through education, it is important to recognise the benefit of the principle of gender equality. Educators should also bear in mind that there are different levels of discrimination, and it is important to recognise which vulnerable groups can be subjected to other forms of discrimination in addition to gender-based discrimination (for example, based on disability, ethnicity, social status...) and have a learner-centred approach so they can recognise all the (in)visible obstacles that young people face.

Every programme based on the inclusion and recognition of one’s potential, challenges and strengths, creates a fertile ground for fulfilling the full potential of each young person who will later contribute to a community. If Early School Leaving prevention programmes contribute towards helping individuals to not only continue their education, but also be aware of the importance of creating a society based on equal opportunities, a gender and equal opportunities perspective needs to be incorporated into their agenda.

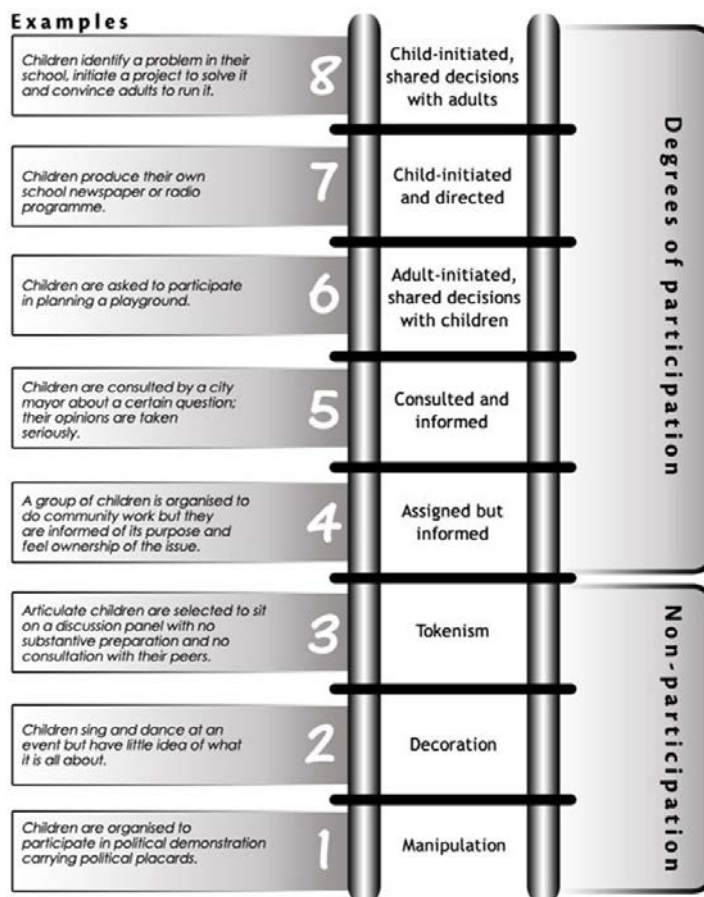


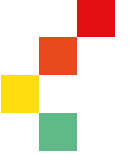
Non-formal Education at School and Sense of Agency

We understand education as a process of accompanying children and teenagers on their journey to acquire the knowledge and skills they need in order to leave school as mature, independent and conscious young citizens. But this is not recognised in all schools through Europe. For instance, the dominant educational system in Poland is based on orders, control and data memorisation. Students are treated as vessels who need to be filled with knowledge, not as gifted individuals who can and should co-create their educational experience.

In this context, with the pressure of being obedient, a feeling of unworthiness and being expected to only learn how to answer theoretical tests, young people do not feel connected to their schools and see no reason to become engaged in them. Especially because the skills and knowledge they acquire have little relation with the expertise required in the job market.

In our opinion, the main qualities missing in such a system are relationship-building (both between the teachers and students, and among the students themselves) and developing a healthy sense of agency and self-confidence. The former creates a safe space that serves as a stress-free learning environment, and the latter creates opportunities for experiments and mistakes.





Non-formal educational projects are a way to collaborate with schools in order to change this rigid situation. Educational leisure time projects focus on working on a partnership with young people. They consist of making joint decisions and empowering youths to take on as much responsibility as possible, while giving them the necessary support.

In the projects where schools and NGOs work together (such as the case of LZ), many students experience their first opportunity of adults in their schools trusting them with making decisions regarding the workshop topics, their location, invited guests and the rules to follow during the time together. We are certain that being trusted is a crucial experience for young people to be able to develop a sense of agency, responsibility for their own education and an active participation in the social life in their school. In addition, it is essential if we wish to build true partnerships between youths and adults.

Roger Hart's Ladder of Children's Participation (2008) describes **different ways in which young people become engaged in decision-making, school life and matters that concern them.**

It is the adults' responsibility to create a space that promotes engaging and fulfilling cooperation. The lack of this is harmful to both adults and youths, resulting in a lost opportunity to create mutually beneficial and inspiring relationships. As adults, we miss out on a chance to get to know young people's reality, understand their struggles and verify our preconceived notions about both. As young people, we feel limited and restricted, our initiatives are stifled, and we are reduced to trying to "somehow make it through" our school education instead of thriving in it. This lack of space for youths' engagement and self-guided activity may be one of the reasons behind early school leaving.



Intersectionality

Intersectionality is defined as a set of conceptual tools that facilitate the critical analysis of power relations and inequalities, and make proposals to transform them. A situated and relational intersectional perspective is not based on pre-defined categories, but analyses the context to see which categories are relevant in each specific situation, how they interact and what effects of privilege, oppression or resistance are being brought into play.

A key aspect of intersectionality is that it expands the possibilities of analysing power relations to look not only at experiences of discrimination, exclusion and vulnerability, but also at experiences of resistance, agency and privilege. This entails a change of perspective regarding the way we understand social structures and relations, which have traditionally been analysed from the mono-focal perspective of the most disadvantaged positions.

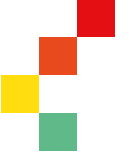
Intersectionality is part of the 1970s tradition to use different concepts (dual systems, double discrimination, multiple discrimination, domination matrix, ...) to refer to experiencing various oppressions simultaneously. The current concept of intersectionality emerged in the late 1990s in the United States, in the work of Black and feminist activists and scholars such as Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), Patricia Hill Collins (2002) and the Combahee River Collective (2012).

Black women in the United States experienced a series of discriminations that could not be answered by feminism or the African-American civil rights movement. The feminist movement adopted the perspective of white, middle-class women in its analysis and policy proposals, while the African-American civil rights movement favoured an androcentric perspective. Analytical and political tools were needed to analyse African-American women's experiences of inequality, taking into account the experience of gender and race simultaneously, and not as differentiated axes of inequality or from additive logics of double or triple discrimination.

The Black feminist activist Patricia Hill Collins (2002) pointed out the different axes of oppression as intertwined in a matrix of relations of domination, where each individual is situated in different and changing positions of privilege and oppression.

Intersectionality allows us to think about the racism of the privileges of white or non-racialised people, to think about the homophobia of the privileges of heterosexual people, to think about the widespread gender violence of the privileges of people socialised as men and of hegemonic masculinity.

From this perspective, interculturality, feminism and sexual rights affect everyone. All of us in the educational community must review what our privileges and oppressions are in different levels and dimensions of life at the individual, structural, institutional, symbolic or material level. And we must do something to foster and accompany processes of resistance, empowerment and transformation.



In general terms, talking about privileges and oppressions in relation to such specific aspects of people's lives as having (or not) access to the goods and resources that are available to citizens (education, health, housing, culture, etc.), we have the possibility (or not) of exercising the fundamental rights (to vote, freedom of religion, freedom of movement, freedom of expression, etc.), to ensure (or not) symbolic and social recognition (respect, consideration, representation, positive evaluation, etc.).

People can have different experiences of privilege and oppression throughout their lives (depending on personal circumstances, and on the political, social, institutional and environmental context). In fact, we can live through different processes of advances, difficulties, oppression and resistance simultaneously. This dynamic and relational view of experiences of exclusion, privilege, agency and empowerment is complex because it confronts us with less developed notions of identity. It also contrasts with social movements and public policies, which have built up inequalities by separating them, structuring the struggle for social rights through identity-related and representation policies (women, young people, migrants, the elderly, the disabled, etc.).

In education, intersectionality offers a way to analyse the inequalities that affect the educational and personal development of students, as well as the educational community as a whole. It also enables us to explore new ways of conceiving subjectivities, relationships and the construction of knowledge. This analysis helps teachers to reflect on new ways of developing empowerment, participation and a sense of agency of youth in educational experiences.





2

Crossroads Experiences

Experience 01 **CAMINS (Pathways) PROJECT** SPAIN

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BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE

Title of the experience

Camins (Pathways), a mentoring project.

Web link to the experience

<https://mon.uvic.cat/camins/projecte/>

Intersecting axes

- Gender/male-female equality.
- Religious diversity and differing beliefs.
- Interculturality/ethnic and racial diversity/racism.

Subject areas

Education
Self-empowerment
Education
Non-discrimination

Target group (Age)

12-17 — 18-25

Innovative methodologies used in the experience

- Empowerment of the individual (young people, women, etc).
- Connecting daily and emotional experiences (drama, arts education...).



Summary

Camins (Pathways) is a mentoring project which, incorporating an intercultural and gender perspective, seeks to promote successful educational paths among young girls of Moroccan origin in the region of Osona. The accompanying process in the final stage of compulsory education as well as the visibility of successful educational trajectories both for family members and within the group of peers is a driving force that encourages and helps to strengthen the orientation of this group to continue with their education.

Moroccan girls, due to gender- and origin-based discrimination, are in a more vulnerable situation in relation to post-compulsory education. For this reason, the objective of the *Camins (Pathways)* project is to empower and bring visibility to girls of Moroccan origin with successful educational paths, as a tool that can allow them to change their beliefs.

Beyond the desire to study and advance in their professional careers, the girls had other aspects in common. All were of Moroccan origin and all lived in the region of Osona. What is notable is that despite this common context (young women, mostly of Moroccan origin, Muslims and students), the project has made room for differences to emerge. Each of these categories is full of nuances that the girls in the project and the people who have accompanied them have been able to listen to, question and respect. The *Camins (Pathways)* project has created a space for exchange, dialogue and intercultural learning.

Main participants

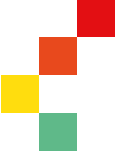
Schools and universities

| Start date | End date |
|------------|----------|
| 2017 | 2019 |

DETAILED INFORMATION

Context in which the experience took place

The *Camins* project took place during 2017-2019 and 2018-2019, and consisted of a mentoring project with an intercultural and gender perspective that involved a total of 75 girls, between mentors and participants. In this mentoring programme, coordinated by the Centre for Interdisciplinary Gender Studies (CEIG) of the University of Vic – Central University of Catalunya (UVic-UCC) and which began during the 2017/2018 course as a pilot, university and vocational training study, students of Moroccan origin participate as volunteers, acting as mentors and becoming role models for young girls of the same origin who are studying between 3rd year of secondary education and 2nd year of pre-university school.



Objectives

To empower and strengthen the skills of young girls as mentors through the design and development of specific training in interculturality, gender perspective and leadership skills.

To contribute towards the construction of a complex approach, from an intercultural and gender perspective.

Based on the experience and personal background of the girls participating in the *Camins* project and their families, to **generate** materials and pedagogical resources aimed at professionals and students of Education, with a view to highlighting the obstacles and factors that facilitate their educational careers.

Description of the action and implementation in terms of innovative methodologies

Unlike other mentoring projects, the *Camins* project incorporates three innovative elements:

1. It deals with relationships between people of the same origin, which facilitates identification and empathy while dismantling the idea that only “autochthonous” people can “help” those of other origins.
2. It breaks with the stereotype that families are always obstacles to the educational path of girls of Moroccan origin.
3. It values the knowledge of girls and gives them the opportunity to convey their experience and perspective related to the educational career.

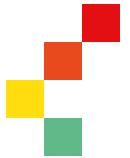
Financing and resources

The project was financed by Obra Social “La Caixa” with the support of the *Institut Català de les Dones* (Catalan Women’s Institute) and DIXIT and with the collaboration of the town Councils of Vic, Manlleu and Torelló and the regional council of Osona.

Results and impact

The main result of the project is the [Camins Guide](#). The activities presented place young people at the centre, to live, experience and share emotional situations about difference, identities, oppressions and privileges in a subjective and interactional way.

It also includes additional resources and a glossary with a selection of the main defined concepts. The authors of the guide propose this material as an aid to teachers to regain their curiosity for self-knowledge and their passion for developing critical and free growth in young people.



Contributions to prevent Early School Leaving from an intersectional perspective

Educational success, in any of its forms, is not neutral in terms of social inequalities, being permeable to axes of inequality such as class, gender and diversity of origin (Sánchez Martín, 2016). In Catalonia, with a foreign population of 13.78% (Idescat, 2017), there are 177 different nationalities, with Moroccans accounting for one fifth of the total foreign population.

Students of immigrant origin have a higher predisposition to drop out of their studies (Mora, 2010), with the dropout rate during the last year of secondary school and the first year of post-compulsory education being double that of the rest (Serra and Palaudarias, 2009). In this context, gender also becomes one of the factors of inequality in the individual sphere. The negative impact of these factors on the educational path ends up translating into inequalities within and outside the education system.

Barriers and challenges

- One of the main barriers is the difficulty finding mentors at the university.
- Difficulties getting families involved in group activities.
- Difficulties getting teachers involved in the perspective of intersectionality.

Lessons learned and how to apply them to other situations

- It is important to rethink the role of teachers in order to foster more democratic relationships, since the teacher is usually the person in the more powerful position.
- Teachers are much more than just transmitters of information. Students learn much more than we consciously teach them.

Read and Implement

Each teacher will review their learning experiences. Each one will answer the following questions:

- One positive memory of their primary/secondary education.
- One negative memory of their primary/secondary education.
- The best teacher in their schooling experience.
- The worst teacher in their schooling experience.

After that, in small groups, teachers will share their most relevant experiences in terms of cognitive, emotional and social learning, and share the lessons learned from these questions.

For children or youths:

After doing this reflection as a teacher, they will adapt these questions to their pupils:

- Students will share their answers in small groups and extract the main aspects of positive and negative learning experiences from school.

References and external links

- <https://mon.uvic.cat/camins/files/2020/06/Guia-Camins.pdf>
- <https://lorelacional.org/2019/02/12/formacio-de-camins-a-masmolab/>



Experience 02

ENXANETA PROJECT

SPAIN

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BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE

Title of the experience

Enxaneta School Mentoring Project

Web link to the experience

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DuCascRCqv8&feature=emb_logo

Intersecting axes

- Social class/socio-economic inequalities.
- School disaffection.

Subject areas

After school programmes

Target group (Age)

6-11

Innovative methodologies used in the experience

- Collaborative learning experiences with others.
- Linking contexts (in & outside school).



Summary

The basic tenets of this model are the following: work with early primary school pupils, mentoring, close and in-depth work with families, and critical processes with teachers to make them aware of their main role in the reproduction of social inequalities in schools. The project contributes to a more complex and global approach towards (unequal) school disaffection and failure.

Once a week, the mentor shares with families the work that parents (or other family members) will develop with the children that afternoon.

The other four days of the week there is a mentor and two children, and the objective is to work “indirectly” on basic skills, based on bonding and the accompanying process, different from the traditional school environment. In 2021, the Enxaneta Project has extended the experience to include secondary schools. A two-year trial with 15-year-old students has begun.

Main participants

School, Mentors, Town Councils, Families.

| Start date | End date |
|------------|----------|
| 2014 | Ongoing |

DETAILED INFORMATION

Context in which the experience is taking place

The *Enxaneta* School Mentoring Project began to rethink the after-school support that had been carried out to date in Osona and that was based on the spontaneous, arbitrary, voluntary response, without any theoretical guidance, that each municipality gave to the need for school support for certain children with disaffection and/or school failure. Thus, arising from a demand from the County Council, several town halls and school leaders, these agents have come together to work with the University of Vic to rethink the school supports that were given and to build a well-founded programme that provides more effective support.

Objectives

- a) To improve the academic results of the students involved in the programme by enhancing their basic skills.
- b) To empower the families of the students in the programme so that they can accompany them in school support independently.
- c) To make students and their families aware of the educational and socio-cultural resources in their environment and to facilitate their daily use.



Description of the action and implementation in terms of innovative methodologies

1. Begin educational support earlier: to prevent culture shock and school disaffection in relation to acquiring basic skills.
2. Professional mentoring: the role of mentoring in the project is carried out by professionals (with degrees in teaching, social education or psychology, with 30 hours of specific initial training on the project and a joint follow-up of 2 hours per month). They do it both in the session with children (one mentor - 2 children for 1'30h week - 29 weeks per course) and in the session of children and families with the support of mentors and teachers (2 hours/week - 29 weeks a year).
3. Working with families: the key is to value linguistic and cultural diversity and promote mother tongues; and to involve parents in all educational processes. The project bridges the gap between families who have abilities and a school world that often does not recognise them as knowledgeable or as capable.
4. Working with schools: students who do not fit in with established school procedures, curricula, pedagogies, time, calendars, homework, or assessments, cease to be considered problematic in a concept that individualises and externalises culture shock. And they become challenges that allow us to re-examine and improve comprehensive school and teaching practices for all students.

Financing and resources

Osona Regional Council and Town Councils which offer this service.

Results and impact

There are three key elements: **1)** high expectations towards children and the outcomes of these; **2)** motivation for knowledge; and **3)** working on basic skills.

During this time, it consists of creating a space so that the mentor can, through the link established, bring them closer to the linguistic and mathematical skills and to the motivation and expectations.

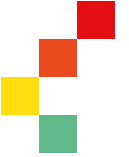
Contributions to prevent Early School Leaving from an intersectional perspective

The *Enxaneta* School Mentoring Project has been designed to work towards recognising and building the “school resilience” of school children, taking into account the work with families that acts as a protective factor against school dropout.

Barriers and challenges

Working with schools is not easy. Consequently, in some schools, teachers were not able to involve mentors, children or families in the project.

There is some risk of dependence with families when collaboration is strong. Schools need to develop this kind of collaboration between families, children and teachers, not only with mentors.



Lessons learned and how to apply them to other situations

- Enhancing students' basic skills (reading, comprehension and writing) as a crosscutting tool for education.
- Addressing basic school contents, avoiding incomprehension and disaffection.
- Teachers need to reflect on how to work with families to increase proximity, comprehension and interaction capacity in relation to everything at school.

Read and Implement

Teachers can promote a critical debate in their schools about their role in the often invisible discriminatory actions that take place every day in school and that contribute to school disaffection in their pupils.

For children:/youths:

Teachers organise school mentors for new pupils. Each new student has a mentor who helps them to become familiar with the space, introduces them to their classmates and teachers, and helps them during the first year with the school timetable and the organisation of homework.

References and external links

Collet, J.; Martori, J.C. (2018) Projecte de suport escolar Enxaneta.
<https://raco.cat/index.php/TempsEducacio/article/view/340846>



Experience 03
100 % JEUNES
BELGIUM

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BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE

Title of the experience

100% Jeunes

Web link to the experience

www.pourolsolidarite.eu/fr/project/100-jeunes-le-parcours-individuel-et-collectif-de-jeunes-neet-bruxelles

Intersecting axes

- Age/life cycles/youth.
- Social class/socio-economic inequalities.

Subject areas

- Non-formal education.
- Group workshops, individual coaching.
- Discovery of the world of work.

Target group (Age)

18-29

Innovative methodologies used in the experience

- Empowerment of the individual (young people, women, etc).
- Connecting daily and emotional experiences (drama, arts education...).
- Experiential learning (projects, learning by doing, creative activities...).
- Collaborative learning experiences with others.

Summary

“100% Jeunes” is a pioneering six-month programme for early school leavers aged between 18 and 29. The programme includes group support focused on overcoming the internalisation of discriminations and on developing empowerment. The young people will be led to develop group projects in which they will help each other. They will then carry out individual introspection work. Through the experience of group activities, empowerment workshops, the discovery of different training places and different professions, the young people will acquire the tools to reflect on their individual project. Once the programme comes to an end, the young people will have the opportunity to sit their driving test, which is a step towards employment.

Main participants

“100% Jeunes” is a partnership project between different associations, employment and support organisations and a social enterprise:

- POUR LA SOLIDARITÉ: project leader, support for all activities.
- MISSION LOCALE DE SAINT-JOSSE: partner in charge of group projects and professional assessment.
- AMO RYTHME: partner in charge of group projects.
- EVEIL asbl: partner in charge of group projects.
- Smart: partner in charge of the initiation to social innovation and group projects.
- Awsa: partner in charge of the empowerment workshops.

Start date

April 2019

End date

December 2023

DETAILED INFORMATION

Context in which the experience is taking place

Youth not in employment, education or training (Young NEETs) are often seen as a homogenous group, but in reality, they have very different profiles. According to Eurofound, there are five main NEET subgroups. The “100% Jeunes” project focuses on the category of “disengaged” or “discouraged” young people. However, this subgroup is not homogeneous either. There are common risk factors such as educational level, immigration, ethnic origin, income, family situation and residence, but these young people have different backgrounds and experiences. It is important to take this into account in the construction of the “100% Jeunes” programme. Moreover, these situations are partly the result of the internalisation of discriminations. These young people generally experience mistrust of institutions, a negative state of mind, low self-esteem, resignation and/or a decline in motivation. Developing a specialised pathway for these young people means raising awareness, valuing, awakening desires, empowering and above all, opening doors that often seem closed for them.

Objectives

The main objective of the “100% Jeunes” project is to achieve a professional project that is consistent with the values and personal aspirations of young people. Thus, the objectives of the project are:

- To overcome the multiple obstacles faced by using the concept of intersectionality.
- To help the participants to define their project, and what interests and motivates them.
- To introduce the young people to partners who could help them (strength of the group).
- To help participants to become more employable.

Description of the action and implementation in terms of innovative methodologies

Practically, the methodology developed includes:

- Group of max. 15 young people.
- 6 months of group and individual coaching.
- 6 months of coaching in positive exit (stable position for at least 2 months).
- Possibility of sitting the driving test for young people who are starting a positive exit.

During the activities, we work with the concept of empowerment. Empowerment is an experience that can boost self-confidence and self-esteem, and reconnect the individual with themselves and society. Thus, we are trying to change the negative image that the young person has of themselves and of society. Becoming aware of the internalisation of discriminations is the first step in the process.

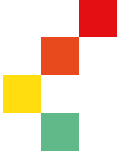
To do so, we address this concept both at group (open discussion about attitudes, qualities and abilities; improve self-esteem and self-confidence; discover new opportunities) and individual level, by setting up mentoring and coaching (personalised accompaniment; a trusting relationship based on listening and sharing).

During the programme, we work on the different facets of empowerment with the young people:

- Power over: going to school, attending a training, getting a job is my reality.
- Power to: I can put things in place to succeed.
- Internal power: I can do it, I'm good enough to succeed.
- Power with: I belong to the group, and the group can help me succeed.

Financing and resources

The project is funded by Actiris (the employment organisation in Brussels) via the Youth Guarantee European Structural Fund (€96,455.68 per year).



Results and impact

The results of the first three groups are very encouraging. A year and a half after the project started, we have observed that there are very few dropouts during the programme, despite the fact that we are working with young people who are removed from studies and employment. Similarly, more than half of the young people have regained the motivation they lacked to start a professional project. To date, about 50% of the young people have had a positive outcome (training, employment, internship).

Contributions to prevent Early School Leaving from an intersectional perspective

Applying intersectionality to early school leavers means recognising that a young person can be affected by multiple factors or discriminations which led them to a situation of school drop-out. Those factors do not simply overlap. They interact with each other and can multiply. When a young NEET person joins a group, all these aspects are taken into account: social background, educational background, family relationships, self-confidence, etc. To study the crossovers that may exist between them and to understand their impact on the young people concerned, all these aspects need to be identified. Working individually and as part of a group helps the young person to become reconciled with themselves, with the group and to start a specific and tailor-made professional project.

Barriers and challenges

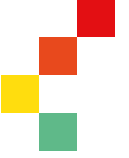
The project has been established and active in the Brussels region for a year and a half. But we have already identified two important issues.

1. A young person does not have to go back to school at all costs

The school experience and the social status of the young people are aspects that must be taken into account. In the 100% Jeunes project, we never force a young person to return to school, because we are aware that some students have broken their ties with the system. We therefore offer them other options: an internship, a job, a short vocational training course, etc. Our objective is for the young person to become aware of their strengths and to develop resources to overcome difficulties, despite a context that we never deny.

2. Consider all aspects of the young person's life

Sometimes, the young people join the project and feel completely lost. Even if the 100% Jeunes project is focused on the training and vocational path, we sometimes have to accompany the young person in other aspects of their life: looking for an apartment, administrative help, relationship with parents, etc. It is impossible to ignore these issues, and consequently, in order to reach positive results, we work with trusted external partners.



Lessons learned and how to apply them to other situations

- Some inequalities are so deeply rooted in the reality of young people that it is very difficult to overcome them. There are also structural inequalities that persist in families and communities.
- The concept of empowerment will not make economic difficulties or racism disappear. But it allows us to become aware of these difficulties. Becoming aware of them is the first step to overcoming them, or even to turning them into a strength. For example, when a young person realises, they have the power to choose, they will learn more about the social support that exists and they may find out about scholarships that could allow them to return to school.
- The idea of empowerment is that the young person becomes the protagonist of their own journey. If their parents force them to go to school, if a teacher punishes them for not doing their homework, they will not feel involved. But if they regain control over their life, they are more likely to put concrete things in place.

Read and Implement

The experience does not take place on school grounds. It is carried out by the associative sector. In order to adapt it, an educator is required to take charge of the group and organise the activities. Activities can be organised week by week and external service providers can be used. A lot of equipment is not needed, but it is essential to have a room where the group can meet.

Young people learn group work and solidarity while being monitored individually. They can develop a group project and reflect on their personal needs and desires.

Experience 04 INTRA-MUROS BELGIUM

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BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE

Title of the experience

"Intra-Muros" Project

Web link to the experience

<http://www.forest.irisnet.be/fr/services-communiaux/prevention/lempreinte-scolaire>

Intersecting axes

- Social class/socio-economic inequalities.
- Age/life cycles/infancy/adolescence/youth/elderly people.

Subject areas

Sport, education, free expression.

Target group (Age)

12-17

18-25

Innovative methodologies used in the experience

- Empowerment of the individual (young people, women, etc).
- Connecting daily and emotional experiences (drama, arts education...).
- Group learning experiences with others.
- Linking actors to the community (social support networks).
- Linking contexts (in & outside school).



Summary

Intra-Muros is a project led by “L’Empreinte scolaire”, the school mediation service of the municipality of Forest in Brussels. The project is based on the observation that when a teacher in vocational education is absent, the pupil has no classes and is offered no activities. As a result, thousands of students in vocational education in Brussels are at risk of dropping out of school. Moreover, relationships of trust within the school are sometimes disrupted. Thus, the project provides a service outside formal education to be present in schools and to offer sports and leisure activities during pupils’ break times. These activities help students to stay in the school, and to understand that school can also be a comfortable place for learning, socialising and personal development.

Main participants

The Intra-Muros project is carried by the “Empreinte Scolaire”, which is the school mediation program of the prevention service of the Commune of Forest. The service’s animators are present in the schools full time and work in collaboration with the young man, his family, teachers, school directors and, if necessary, other social workers.

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Start date | End date |
| 2016 | Ongoing |

DETAILED INFORMATION

Context in which the experience is taking place

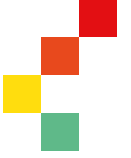
The project is the result of a local consultation cell, a meeting where the participants involved in the school met and discussed the school environment, building reflections on how to improve it.

Today, the project is present in three Brussels secondary schools: André Thomas and Victor Horta (vocational education) and Saint-Vincent-de-Paul (general and technical education).

The project aims to respond to two needs:

1. In vocational education, there is a lot of absenteeism from the teachers. When a teacher was absent, pupils did not stay in class for long hours, and very often went home and did not return to school afterwards. No solution was offered to them on the school premises.
2. Street social work is present in the municipalities, but sometimes it arrives too late. It is important to prevent young people from ending up on the street. There was therefore a desire to redirect this social work and to act upstream.

The project makes sense because it emphasises the school as a place of socialisation, adopting the opposite perspective of dropping out. During school time, pupils do not only need to work; but they also need to increase their interest in staying and blossom.



Objectives

The aim of the project is to promote staying in school in some schools of the municipality of Forest through collaboration between the different stakeholders involved. The project tends to pay particular attention to the expression of the pupils' needs and group activities to prevent young people from finding themselves in the public space when classes are suspended.

Description of the action and implementation in terms of innovative methodologies

Through the permanent presence in schools of programme staff, the Intra-Muros project offers different types of activities which are adapted to the needs and desires of young people on a day-to-day basis.

- Sport is an activity that speaks to all young people, allows them to exercise and clear their minds.
- Board games are an alternative that allows everyone to find an activity they enjoy. Indeed, sport is not suitable for everyone from a hygienic point of view because young people do not always have access to a shower.
- Viewing documentaries helps to create a link with courses and to enhance the value of certain pathways (practical experiences presented in documentaries later on in class).
- Talking circles allow young people to discuss current topics. They are important moments to be comfortable speaking in groups.

These different activities allow students to focus on themselves and give them the opportunity to express themselves, while highlighting the importance of group activities and solidarity.

Financing and resources

Initially, the project was supported by the Safety and Prevention Programmes and the BPS (Brussels Prevention and Security). Today, it is financed by the Brussels Region via an OIP (public interest organisation): the Service "Ecole de perspective.brussels". Concerning the human resources allocated to the project: 3 FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) are deployed.

Results and impact

Thanks to the project, 6,000 pupils per semester did not end up on the street and were looked after in the three schools where Intra-Muros is present.



Contributions to prevent Early School Leaving from an intersectional perspective

This project was set up by stakeholders from outside the school: the prevention service which has dedicated facilitators in each of the schools. This methodology enables the prevention service to maintain a link with the school and to anticipate risk situations, particularly among young people who are particularly exposed to the risk of dropping out because of their previous school or family experience or other factors.

At the beginning of the year, the project is presented to the teaching staff of the various schools, and then an environment of trust is created on a daily basis. It is a project that must be long-term to be effective. The players must work together and exchange information in order to defuse conflicts and the risk of dropping out beforehand.

L'Empreinte Scolaire and its facilitators are a link between the school, the young person and the family. Good collaboration between the various players makes it possible to move quickly and be effective.

Barriers and challenges

The greatest difficulty lies in the stakeholders' understanding of the project. Initially, the relevance of the project has been questioned strongly. For example, why put educators in schools where educators are already present? It is not the same work; however, these educators are not mandated in the same way (less administration and more action). It is therefore important that the facilitators of the Intra-muros project distinguish themselves; this has been done by wearing a specific sweatshirt.

It was therefore difficult to establish an environment of trust between the public authorities, teachers, other social workers, young people, their families, etc. But once these relationships are established, the results are highly positive.

Lessons learned and how to apply them to other situations

- The project, which is set up in Forest, should be extended to other municipalities in the Brussels region, but for the moment it is the only municipality to have set up such an initiative.
- Care and attention will be required for relationships of trust to be built with stakeholders.

Read and Implement

Teachers will discover other ways of working with students. Students will be more relaxed and realise the value of school. If teachers do not want to be involved in the activity, it will still be effective. But ideally, teachers will have to work with educators to provide comprehensive support for the students.

Young people will have another interest in staying at school separate to the academic side. They will learn values such as solidarity, empowerment and self-development. They will learn to be part of a group. They will also learn to express their fears and needs. Dialogue is key. If all stakeholders work together, the results will be positive for all.

To implement this activity, educators need to be a little creative but no equipment is required. Ideally, a few games and sports equipment can be interesting.



Experience 05

SCHOOLS OF DIFFERENT EQUALITIES

CROATIA

CONTACT

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BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE

Title of the experience

Schools of different equalities.

Web link to the experience

http://ss-ekonomska-vu.skole.hr/eu_projekti/kole_jednakih_razli_itosti

Intersecting axes

- Migration/origin/refugee.
- Religious diversity and differing beliefs.
- Interculturality/ethnic and racial diversity/racism.
- Social class/socio-economic inequalities.

Subject areas

Multiculturalism, identities, stereotypes and prejudices, community.

Target group (Age)

15-18

Innovative methodologies used in the experience

- Empowerment of the individual (young people, women, etc).
- Linking contexts (in & outside school).



Summary

The project aims to strengthen the capacity of school students (and staff included in the project) by improving multicultural literacy to facilitate the resolution of cultural conflicts, conflicts, discrimination, stereotypes and prejudices and to promote multiculturalism, tolerance and acceptance of diversity with one goal in the future – interculturalism.

Main participants

- Nikola Tesla primary school.
- College Studium.
- Secondary schools:
 - Vukovar School of Economics.
 - Ivan Domac Vinkovci School of Economics and Trade.

Start date

30.11.2017

End date

30.11.2019

DETAILED INFORMATION

Context in which the experience took place

In international tests, Croatian students show average and below-average results in almost all types of literacy, and lower results are achieved by students with disabilities and students from families of lower economic, social and cultural status and students from schools that are less equipped with information and communication technology and with poorly equipped libraries. The geographical area of schools involved in the programme itself is specific and multicultural because it teaches in the language and script of national minorities - Serbian national minority, Ruthenians, Hungarians and other nationalities. It is a multicultural environment in the true sense of the word. Since this area (eastern part of Croatia, near the border with Serbia) was heavily affected by war in the 1990s, and since the past has not been completely resolved, it affects the everyday life of young people, leaving a fertile ground for intolerance and hatred between Serbians and Croats.

The activities of the project addressed this specific problem, seeking to develop intercultural skills and build a school community in which no one feels excluded and unwelcome.

Objectives

The project aims to strengthen the capacity of school students (and of institutions and staff included in the project) by improving multicultural literacy to facilitate the resolution of cultural conflicts, conflicts, discrimination, stereotypes and prejudices and to promote multiculturalism, tolerance and acceptance of diversity with one goal in the future – interculturalism.



Description of the action and implementation in terms of innovative methodologies

The extracurricular activity “Interculturalists” is designed as a series of workshops aimed at learning about prejudices and stereotypes, personal/family histories, encouraging and fostering dialogue and cooperation among young people of all nationalities, promoting cultural diversity as a wealth shared by the community and learning about different cultures and traditions.

The methods used included guided discussions, pair and group work, presentations, plenary discussions, debates, film projections. Students marked special dates such as Roma day, remembrance of holocaust victims, remembrance of victims in Vukovar. Students also went on various field trips (visit to another school, city or a museum) during which they learned about multiculturalism. The particular context of the former Serbian-Croatian war conflict area was taken into account and the fact that different national minorities live there, with Serbian being the largest.

Financing and resources

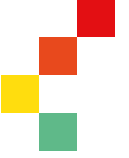
European social fund.

Results and impact

The results showed that students had the opportunity to talk about their own and other students’ identities and personal and family history. Students learned to recognise, compare and analyse different identities and their dimensions (personal, group, ethnic, social, cultural, etc.). They adopted a more inclusive attitude towards others and developed the skills of a critical and multi-perspective reflection on history. Students learned about stereotypes and prejudices, the importance of interethnic dialogue and cooperation and learned about other cultures and traditions. In addition, they have learned how to connect prejudices and stereotypes with online hate speech and its consequences and how to prevent and recognise it.

Contributions to prevent Early School Leaving from an intersectional perspective

The project activities focused on creating supportive and inclusive environments in schools so that discrimination based on national, ethnical or religious background would be resolved. A discriminatory and exclusive environment and hostile relationships between peers can lead to hatred and violence which cause students to feel unwelcome in their schools, especially individuals from different national minorities. It helped students to learn about the importance of living together and fostering a culture of tolerance and friendship by accepting and respecting cultural and national differences and human rights, which created a more pleasant working and learning environment in school for all future generations of students, professors and professionals of all cultures and nationalities.



Barriers and challenges

There were no barriers for working with young students. Since the project also had a series of exercises for teachers and educators, the problem was finding people interested in participating in the exercises because of a lack of interest.

Lessons learned and how to apply them to other situations

- The project can be applied to different multicultural environments which have a specific problem with intolerance towards different national, religious or ethnic minorities.
- It enables students to learn about differences and similarities and helps to create inclusive environments.

Read and Implement

The experience can be adapted as a project activity for students, or several activities can be implemented. The project consisted of several workshops for students and these can all be implemented, or just some of them in regular class time or as an afterschool activity. The duration can be adjusted.

Activities:

Identity: a group of students writes answers to the question “Who am I?”; they add and remove identities according to the relevance for them, and brainstorm about the groups to which a person can belong. At the end, each group creates a castle of paper and each group can decide to do whatever they want with the other groups’ castles. After each task, the teacher leads a discussion with specific questions which can be adjusted according to the group and specific context.

Family history and migration: this activity seeks to raise awareness of multicultural communities. The students present their family tree and they trace back the migration lines in their family, detecting similarities and differences between each other. At the end, a map with all the migration lines is created and the teacher leads a discussion with specific questions.

Stereotypes and prejudices: this activity consists of a task to find a group by imitating animal sounds. The main part consists of moving along a line – each student gets a card with a role and moves back or forward on the line depending on the statements read by the teacher. The statements and roles can be adjusted to the specific context. The teacher also asks questions to encourage discussion about the feelings that were triggered during the exercise and to connect the exercise with stereotypes and prejudices.

A film was also screened as part of the project, and different (short) films can be shown in order to address certain topics and start a discussion with specific questions.

Debates included some of the topics: marriage between different religions, positive discrimination of minorities, hosting to Roma families and others. Topics can vary according to the problems the teacher wants to address.



In addition to the workshops that include research on family history and community history on a smaller scale, the project can be expanded with some broader research, according to the students' age and interest, the time provided for the implementation of the activities and the technical skills and abilities of students, teachers and schools. Some examples included: researching some of the oldest houses in the town and who lived there, why people changed, what was their social status, what they did in the community, etc. Students can also create a video documentation on the topic or collect photos to create a family tree, with more in-depth research into the tradition and customs of that time, bearing in mind different times and different cultures.

References and external links

- http://ss-ekonomska-vu.skole.hr/eu_projekti/kole_jednakih_razli_itosti
- <https://view.genial.ly/5edfadf1e97c880d835ee797/presentation-govor-mrznje-na-internetu>

Experience 06

“STEP FORWARD” PROGRAMME

CROATIA

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BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE

Title of the experience

Step forward (Korak dalje), a programme for empowerment, education and support in the employment process and social inclusion of NEET youth and other young people at risk of social exclusion.

Web link to the experience

<http://www.ambidekster.hr/hr/pocetna/>

Intersecting axes

- Interculturality/ethnic and racial diversity/racism.
- Functional diversity/disability.
- Social class/socio-economic inequalities.
- Age/life cycles/infancy/adolescence/youth/elderly people.

Subject areas

Education and social policy, social inclusion, employment of youth.

Target group (Age)

15-29

Innovative methodologies used in the experience

- Empowerment of the individual (young people, women, etc).
- Experiential learning (projects, learning by doing, creative activities...).
- Collaborative learning experiences with others.
- The volunteer mentors who work individually with participants are young employed people.



Summary

The “Step forward” (Korak dalje) programme is designed to empower young people, especially youths with NEET status to develop professional careers by acquiring skills to cope in the labour market or to stay and/or return to the educational system or retrain through comprehensive expert support.

Main participants

- Centre for social welfare Zagreb.
- Croatian Employment Service.
- Vocational schools - Industrial-technical, Veterinarian, School for graphics, design and media.
- Croatian Association Alliance for youth and students with disability.
- Local entrepreneurs (occasionally).

Start date

2014

End date

Ongoing

DETAILED INFORMATION

Context in which the experience is taking place

Croatia is among the countries with the largest proportion of young people who are neither employed nor in the education and training system. Dropping out of the education system, as well as unemployment, significantly reduces the opportunities and life prospects of young people, and leads to addiction, dissatisfaction, self-doubt and doubt in other people, social institutions and systems.

In the case of young people whose life circumstances are further aggravated by disability or insufficient support from family, friends, school and the local community, or due to behavioural problems (hyperactivity, disregard for authority, aggression, poor school performance, or anxiety, depression, withdrawal, etc.), if they are young people in conflict with the law, continuous professional support needs to be provided for them, to help them to return to education or get a job and cope in a new business environment.

Therefore, in addition to activities aimed directly at NEET youth, the “Step Forward” programme also includes preventive activities of informing, educating and empowering young people at high risk of social exclusion, as mentioned above.

Objectives

The general objective of the Step Forward programme is to encourage young people at risk of social exclusion and the general population of young people aged 15 to 24 to acquire knowledge and skills that will help them increase their chances of employment.

- Increase the level of information (or knowledge) of young participants of the Employment Club.
- Acquire knowledge about writing CVs and job applications in accordance with the terms of the job offer.



- Improve communication skills with an emphasis on self-advocacy and self-presentation skills.
- Increase the level of knowledge of users about active and productive research of business opportunities and offers on the labour market.
- Empower young people to recognise their own capabilities, resources and strengths.

Description of the action and implementation in terms of innovative methodologies

During the work with the participants, each young person is addressed individually, emphasising and encouraging their strengths and abilities, and respecting their wishes regarding the choice of professional career. Users' are encouraged to participate in all parts and activities of the project, from expressing their needs and interests, to acquiring knowledge, to learning skills and to assessing the effectiveness of the project (evaluation).

Young users are encouraged to participate in activities to promote the project and to raise awareness among the public and employers, with the intention of acquiring additional knowledge and skills, maintaining the motivation and interests of users and encouraging an active approach and taking personal responsibility in job-hunting.

Financing and resources

At present, the project is financed by the Ministry for Demographics, Family, Youth and Social Policy. The donor will change according to grant calls.

Results and impact

Young mentors have been educated for their mentoring role and they are put in contact with young (NEET) participants to give them support. Peer support and the support of volunteer mentors is extremely motivating and has a positive effect on both the users and the volunteer mentors themselves.

Participants have learned to create a CV, apply for a job vacancy and/or prepared for/stayed in the educational system to increase their competitiveness in the labour market.

They are also informed about possibilities of increasing their competitiveness in the market through the acquisition of knowledge and skills related to employment and/or return to/stay in the education system or training.

Contributions to prevent Early School Leaving from an intersectional perspective

The programme targets young people who are at risk of early school leaving and it provides them with proper support to empower them and motivate them to continue their education. It aims to include young people from different groups which can be at risk of social exclusion, such as people with a disability, young people with behavioural problems or who are in conflict with the law. It takes into account different axes of possible social exclusion and adopts an individual approach towards each participant.

Barriers and challenges

There is no database or record of NEET youths in Croatia. The process of including and recognising them is challenged through outreach, cooperation with other institutions from the local community and recognition of the programme in the local community.



Lessons learned and how to apply them to other situations

- The involvement, networking and cooperation with the local community in the form of reaching out to the beneficiaries and the inclusion of young members of the NEET population in the community is extremely important.
- For quality work with young members of the NEET population, a comprehensive and individualised approach is necessary to increase social inclusion and use all possible resources and capacities of the young person involved in the project.
- The results show that peer support and the support of volunteer mentors is extremely motivating and has a positive effect on both the users and the volunteer mentors themselves.

Read and Implement

In this project, cooperation with different stakeholders is important and it includes cross-sectorial cooperation. An association focused on youth work is the main stakeholder. It connects a centre for social welfare, different secondary schools, the national employment service, an alliance for youths and students with disability, as well as local entrepreneurs. The programme can be adapted to include stakeholders that are relevant to a local context, for example cooperating with small local businesses or different employers or youth associations. In short, the implemented activities include:

Educational and development activities including workshops / trainings for communication skills, presentation skills, self-advocacy / assertiveness skills and personal growth and development workshops - strengths and resources, motivation, personal responsibility, development of professional identity and path.

Active labour market research, finding business opportunities, (proactive approach to sending open applications, applying for competitions, going to interviews), help and support for young people from the NEET group to stay in and/or return to primary or secondary education; establishment of a social support network; continuous support of volunteer mentors (students and/ or young employees interested in volunteering through providing support to young people in their job search), individual consultations and cooperation with employers. There is also counselling and support for families or guardians of young people at risk of social exclusion and exchange of information and networking with other stakeholders (associations, institutions, employers, etc.) from the local community. Since different stakeholders participate in the project, each school or association can choose which stakeholders are relevant in their community to help young people to stay in school or to find a job. The importance of this project lies in the crucial cooperation between stakeholders and the continuous support to young people combined with education, but if it is not possible to include all of them, each school or association can choose which are most relevant for them and with whom cooperation is possible. It is also possible to implement just some of the activities such as workshops or consultations if each part of the project cannot be implemented.

References and external links

<http://www.ambidekster.hr/hr/programi-i-projekti/korak-dalje/>



Experience 07 JOIN THE GAME POLAND

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BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE

Title of the experience

Join the game

Intersecting axes

- Gender/male-female equality.
- Social class/socio-economic inequalities.
- Age/life cycles/infancy/adolescence/youth/elderly people.

Target group (Age)

12-17

Innovative methodologies used in the experience

- Empowerment of the individual (young people, women, etc).
- Experiential learning (projects, learning by doing, creative activities...).
- Linking actors to the community (social support networks).

Summary

The aim of the experience is to increase the interest of girls aged 15-16 in masculinised professions when choosing their career path. The reasons for the low participation of women in masculinised occupations are beliefs about their own abilities and poor knowledge about the labour market. 15-16 years of age is the age when they make a decision about their secondary school profile/career path decision.

The solution is to involve the girls in activities where they have the opportunity to experiment, acquire knowledge, ask questions, define their strengths. The main part of the experiment is to create their own city game about masculinised professions and meetings with Superwomen (women who work in masculinised professions).



Main participants

- Schools.
- Career advisors.
- Superwomen - (women who work in masculinised professions).

Start date

01.04.2018

End date

30.07.2018

DETAILED INFORMATION

Context in which the experience took place

Based on research in Poland, gender segregation in the labour market is very visible. It can be seen in the fact that at each stage of formal education, there is a significant difference between the choices made by young women and men, which correspond to the different career paths that followed. However, even in the case of women and men graduating from similar fields of study, there are characteristic differences between the professional roles undertaken after graduation.

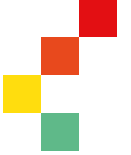
The effects of this segregation are higher unemployment and lower wages among women. Despite the equal (according to the law) access to various fields of education, girls still decide to choose a career of a “shop assistant” instead of a “digger operator”. For girls in a difficult socio-economic situation, self-support is of great importance. If they are not convinced that education will allow them to achieve higher earnings, in a difficult situation (pregnancy, lack of financial support from the family) - they decide to leave education.

Objectives

The main aim of the experiment is to increase the interest of girls aged 15-16 in masculinised professions when choosing their career path.

Objectives:

- Changing girls' beliefs about their own skills and the role of women in society.
- Increasing the knowledge among girls about the functioning of the modern labour market.
- Increasing a sense of agency among girls.



Description of the action and implementation in terms of innovative methodologies

The experience is an opportunity for the participants to test their beliefs about their own predispositions and to learn about the contemporary labour market by themselves, with a particular focus on masculinised occupations.

It consists of two components:

1. Getting to know “role models”, whom we call “superwomen”; in other words, women performing masculinised professions - in order to dismantle stereotypes, learn about their “career path”, find out what their work looks like on a daily basis.
2. Creating their own group field game about masculinised professions in order to independently gain information about these professions, experiment, experience failures and successes in safe conditions, try new skills (soldering, etc.), strengthen the sense of agency and self-confidence, notice and name their skills, and learn what stereotypes are and how to make them less influential. The game is created during workshops, where we use the design thinking method (to develop an idea and test the game itself) and during which participants are able to practice and define their skills, strengths, etc. The game is created for their peers - from school or their immediate surroundings.

Financing and resources

ESF – innovation for labour market

Results and impact

Girls:

- Learn about the modern labour market, and in particular about masculinised professions and how much they can earn. They practise how to search for information about the labour market.
- Confront their beliefs about their own predispositions/skills while acting.
- Define their talents, strengths, skills and potentials.
- Increase their sense of agency.

Contributions to prevent Early School Leaving from an intersectional perspective

We assume that the more girls know about the labour market and options/behaviours, the higher their chances of being employed. However, if they have fewer beliefs about skills that are “typical” for women/men or beliefs about the role of women, then they will not limit their career choices.

Formally speaking, there are no obstacles for the girls to choose any profession they want. Unfortunately, the way they are brought up in our culture means that they do have a limited choice, usually encouraged towards social/humanistic subjects/tasks, and have no experience in learning about the technical ones. They also have ideas about the social role of women, which can strongly influence their choice. For example, they can decide to finish secondary school when they want to marry and start a family. The sense of agency and the sense of education is very important when girls are dealing with economic or life changing (like pregnancy) situations.



Barriers and challenges

1. Low level of motivation. Solutions: meetings in a friendly atmosphere between workshops, conversation with the group and setting new rules/direction of cooperation, maintaining relationships: e-mails/messages regularly summarising what we experienced/learned/discovered.
2. Unreal idea for the game; its individual elements will seem impossible to implement. Solutions: testing the idea/element as quickly as possible.
3. Girls do not see any benefits ("it's not for me") - appropriate language during recruitment, messages that are understandable for potential users. Checking whether what we communicate is understandable.

Lessons learned and how to apply them to other situations

- The ability to identify discriminatory mechanisms in the professional and also social field.
- Expanding the range of passions.

Even if girls do not decide to compete in male-dominated professions, the possibility of organising an event on their own, when they have more responsibility than usual, may affect their sense of agency, self-confidence and be an impulse to develop in another field, taking on new challenges that they would not have decided on earlier.

Read and Implement

For teachers + youths

A) Teacher must prepare flipcharts and markers.

The task of each of the students is to draw their own figure on a flipchart, then supplement it with information about what the individual drawn parts of the body can literally and metaphorically contribute to their career path - e.g. legs - I will go and do it, eyes - I will see, check the information, etc.

Each of the students presents their profile, and the teacher adds it to the database and informs them that the profiles will be updated from time to time after the next meetings.

Discussion: Tell students that through this activity we know what each of them is capable of at the moment, we identify what might be useful, but we will continue to look at it, test it and discover new skills.

B) The teacher must prepare 30 cards with descriptions of different people who work in different jobs. On the picture should be a photo of a person, name of the occupation and short description.

Rules: gender balance, unusual occupations (e.g. dietician, industrial climber). The teacher gives cards to the students and when they read the description, asks them the following questions:

1. What do you think? What surprised you?
2. Pick one person and tell them how you imagine this person's career path?
3. What obstacles must this person overcome? Were they related to gender?



Experience **08**
"CAREER SIGNPOSTS"
POLAND

CONTACT

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BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE

Title of the experience

Drogowskazy kariery / "Career signposts"

Web link to the experience

<https://www.facebook.com/FundacjaJestemTu>

Intersecting axes

- Social class/socio-economic inequalities.
- Age/life cycles/infancy/adolescence/youth/elderly people.
- Career counselling.

Target group (Age)

12-17

Innovative methodologies used in the experience

- Experiential learning (projects, learning by doing, creative activities...).

Main participants

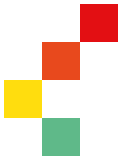
Students of the 7th and 8th years of Primary School No. 1 in Pszczyna as well as the last students of the classes of the now closed Middle School No. 1 in Pszczyna and the Middle School in Pawłowice.

Start date

01.09. 2017

End date

31.07.2018



DETAILED INFORMATION

Context in which the experience took place

The idea of the “Career signposts” project was the result of the need to involve young people in activities for the benefit of the school community, to improve their attendance at school and to trigger their own agency.

The closing of the gymnasium (middle school) and the transition to a completely different form of education caused a lot of confusion in the educational choices of young people and caused a noticeably increased level of fear and uncertainty about their future. This directly translated into a reduction in school attendance among young people.

The activities were targeted at people who had poor grades and attendance problems. Recognising one’s own potential and talent could have directly contributed to a greater willingness and meaning in coming to school, to integrating participants and reducing the fear of change.

Objectives

The activities were aimed at stimulating, recognising and developing their interests and talents by familiarising students with selected professions, and shaping positive attitudes towards work and education. Support was provided in the process of preparing students to consciously and independently choose the next stage of education and profession, taking into account their interests and talents.

Description of the action and implementation in terms of innovative methodologies

The project included several areas:

1. Individual consultations and a support interview with a career counsellor. Goals: support and motivation to act, identifying one’s professional predispositions, supportive conversation.
2. Monthly group workshops. Through their own experience, students discovered their strengths, received positive feedback from the group, practised self-presentation, discovered resources, set their career goals, etc.
3. Meetings with employers organised as part of the October National Career Week, which encouraged participants to pursue their passions at school and to open up to new experiences.
4. The final stage of the project - for those willing to do so - is to create their own real company, where the talents of individual participants were to be used.

The tasks were carried out by teachers dealing with career counselling.

Financing and resources

The entire project in Pszczyna was part of the school career counselling activities and was financed by the Pszczyna Board of Education. In Pawłowice, the project was carried out in the form of volunteering.



Results and impact

The project lasted from September to June and within the framework of this project, students of the final years of primary and middle schools came together as a group. Those who had noticeably poor attendance significantly improved their attendance at school. The advisory interviews showed that this was due to a greater awareness of the benefits of completing primary school in general. Students who became more aware of their strengths and talent participated in school activities to a greater extent because they wanted to finish school.

Contributions to prevent Early School Leaving from an intersectional perspective

The activities were targeted at people who had poor grades and attendance problems. Most of them were people who came from the poorest parts of the town and people from families with problems. Some people had behavioural problems. Due to previous school experiences (poor grades, lack of self-confidence) as well as personal problems, they were at risk of dropping out/not graduating from school.

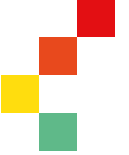
During interviews and classes, the team of career advisers encouraged students to look at their abilities and talents in a broader sense, not only through the prism of school grades. Together, they discovered a sense of meaning in learning and developing strengths.

Barriers and challenges

The greatest difficulty in implementing the project turns out to be the very activity within the school structure. The number of other extracurricular activities for the students made it difficult to meet regularly.

Lessons learned and how to apply them to other situations

- The realisation that students are mainly motivated to attend school by a sense of agency. These people, despite poor results, difficult home situation, etc., who were aware of their strengths, talents or a clear professional goal (e.g. becoming a bricklayer, stonemason, hairdresser), more willingly participated in school life than those who did not know why they actually study and do tests.
- Application in the future: work using the Projects and Workshop Method, learning through experience.
- Teachers need to focus on students' strengths and discovering their talents instead of grades and writing tests.



Read and Implement

For teachers + youths

Teacher starts discussion with students about life goals. Every idea is written in a visible place (e.g. board). Tips to moderate:

- Educational goals, e.g. graduation.
- Interpersonal goals, e.g. reconciliation with a close person.
- Interpersonal goals e.g. being more punctual.
- Professional, economic, financial goals, e.g. getting a job for a holiday.
- Health goals, body, e.g. weight loss.
- Hobby/recreational goals, e.g. winning a sport championship.
- Reading and cultural goals, e.g. going to the theatre once a term.
- Spiritual goals, e.g. being a good Hindu.

Then the teacher distributes the worksheets with questions:

NEXT WEEK, I WANT TO:

1.
2.
3.

NEXT MONTH I WANT TO:

1.
2.
3.

NEXT YEAR I WANT TO:

1.
2.
3.

WITHIN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, I WANT TO:

1.
2.
3.

WITHIN THE NEXT TEN YEARS, I WANT TO:

1.
2.
3.

Every student fills in the worksheet individually. After that, the teacher asks:

- What do you need to achieve those goals?
- What can you learn at school/ from your colleagues/ teachers to achieve that?
- Do grades have an impact on your goals?

Option: teacher can explain the SMART theory before distributing worksheets.



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Crossroads
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Leaving from an
intersectional
perspective