

European Youth Environment Sentinels



ALDA

European Association
for Local Democracy



Erasmus+



EYES

The Big Picture



EYES AT A GLANCE

The EYES project (European Youth Environment Sentinels) aims to put the civic participation of young Europeans at the service of health and environment. By offering young people from diverse backgrounds an opportunity to interact, share knowledge and debate, the project aims at reducing the distance between citizens and Europe - both as an institution and as a combination of communities and cultures.

The main objective is to train youth workers active in the field of health and environment to become and promote “environmental sentinels” concept at the local level. This is the result of an eight day training course focused on the precautionary principle stated in the Article 191 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. The project aims at bringing the knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired in the training activity back at the local level, to trigger a multiplying effect and create a network of young European sentinels in the communities of the countries involved.

Accordingly with the objectives and goals of mobility projects supported by the Erasmus+ programme, EYES aims at transmitting a strong intercultural and European dimension. The transnational activity was an opportunity to promote intercultural dialogue, mutual understanding and a sense of European identity and citizenship.

Activities:

- 1. Preparatory activities**
- 2. Training course in Vicenza from 21-28 June 2015**
- 3. Capitalisation and multiplying effect**

SUMMARY

EYES AT A GLANCE	3
THE PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE	4
METHODOLOGY - THE ABC'S	6
PARTNERSHIP	10
ARTICLE 191 - LISBON TREATY TREATY ON THE FUNCTIONING OF THE EUROPEAN UNION	11



Erasmus+

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

THE PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE



The precautionary principle enables rapid response in the face of a possible danger to human, animal or plant health, or to protect the environment. In particular, where scientific data do not permit a complete evaluation of the risk, recourse to this principle may, for example, be used to stop distribution or order withdrawal from the market of products likely to be hazardous.

It is detailed in Article 191 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (EU). It aims at ensuring a higher level of environmental protection through preventative decision taking in the case of risk. However, in practice, the scope of this principle is far wider and also covers consumer policy, European legislation concerning food and human, animal and plant health.

RECOURSE TO THE PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE

According to the Commission the precautionary principle may be invoked when a phenomenon, product or process may have a dangerous effect, identified by a scientific and objective evaluation, if this evaluation does not allow the risk to be determined with sufficient certainty.

Recourse to the principle belongs in the general framework of risk analysis (which, besides risk evaluation, includes risk management and risk communication), and more particularly in the context of risk management which corresponds to the decision-making phase.

The Commission stresses that the precautionary principle may only be invoked in the event of a potential risk and that it can never justify arbitrary decisions.

The precautionary principle may only be invoked when the three preliminary conditions are met:

- **identification of potentially adverse effects;**
- **evaluation of the scientific data available;**
- **the extent of scientific uncertainty.**

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES

The authorities responsible for risk management may decide to act or not to act, depending on the level of risk. If the risk is high, several categories of measures can be adopted. This may involve proportionate legal acts, financing of research programmes, public information measures, etc.



COMMON GUIDELINES

The precautionary principle shall be informed by three specific principles:

- ▶ the fullest possible **scientific evaluation**, the determination, as far as possible, of the degree of scientific uncertainty;
- ▶ a **risk evaluation** and an **evaluation of the potential consequences** of inaction;
- ▶ the **participation** of all interested parties in the study of precautionary measures, once the results of the scientific evaluation and/or the risk evaluation are available.

In addition, the general principles of risk management remain applicable when the precautionary principle is invoked. These are the following five principles:

- ▶ **proportionality** between the measures taken and the chosen level of protection;
- ▶ **non-discrimination** in application of the measures;
- ▶ **consistency** of the measures with similar measures already taken in similar situations or using similar approaches;
- ▶ examination of the **benefits and costs** of action or lack of action;
- ▶ **review** of the measures in the light of scientific developments.



METHODOLOGY – THE ABC'S



The whole educational process of the project is based on the non-formal learning approach by building a set of tools aimed at providing participants with knowledge, skills and attitudes required to be a “European Youth Environmental Sentinel”. A summary of the main tools used throughout the project is presented below.

A. NAME GAME/GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER

Presenting each others' organizations can be a very long and quite boring exercise when you gather together a consistent number of partners. Nevertheless, it is key to get to know each other as well as the mission of your organization, its field of work and the main expertise in order to activate a fruitful dialogue. Ask participants to be creative and draw on a flipchart sheet what their organization is all about. Some background music and the liberty of moving around by dressing their creative presentation is all what participants need to get to know each other and their organizations.



B. ENERGISERS

Make sure you always propose funny and refreshing energizers! It is not easy to kick-off a session if participants are not fully motivated and awoken enough. Tailor the activity to the needs of the group, you might need 5 or 30 minutes as long as the conditions to activate a fruitful debate are set.

C. TEAM BUILDING

Breaking cultural barriers is not easy but exchange of knowledge and good practice at transnational level is key. Team building activities in such intercultural contexts are important not for the immediate experience of the activities performed by the team, but also for the group skills, communication and bonding that result. The activity is merely the means to the end: a high-impact learning experience.

D. EXPECTATIONS AND FEARS

Tailor the programme of your activity to the expectations and fears of the participants. Getting to know these at the very beginning of the process is key to move on successfully. Here an example: put a chair in the middle of the room and all participants set in a circle all around. Ask participants to share one of their expectations and fears by getting up the chair and shouting it out loud. All those who have hold the same expectation or fear will move towards the proponent and hug him/her as a group.



E. INTERACTIVE GAMES AND DEBATES: PRESENTATION OF THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION IN LOCAL TERRITORIES WITH PHOTOS

Keep presentations as interactive as possible. Here an example: ask participants to gather in national groups and make a bricolage of the main environmental problems of their territories by trying to be creative and appealing. Dispose the presentations on the floor according to the geographical position of the groups' countries. Bring the whole group around an imaginary journey of environmental issues across Europe.

F. IN-FIELD VISITS

Participants actually retain a great deal of factual information from in-field visits and when they have the possibility to observe a successful practice and its positive effects for the local community. The concept of Circular Economy based on the principle of "reduce, reuse, recycle" as key factor for environmental sustainability was effectively introduced to many participants for their first time during the in-field visit at the Cooperativa Insieme Sociale, in Vicenza (Italy).





G. STEPS TO SET THE ENVIRONMENTAL SENTINELS

Setting up environmental sentinels might be extremely different from country to country, given the differences on legislative constraints, the specific environmental problems of the territories, the support of public authorities and many other factors. International groups exchanged to identify common responses to five key issues: the role of environmental sentinels and their objectives; how sentinels can raise their communities' awareness on environmental issues; how to mobilize youngsters effectively; how to set up a supportive network; how to train youngsters.

H. STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL FIELD

To be effective as Youth Environmental Sentinel, one need to know how to position himself/herself within a network of multiple actors. Divided into international groups, participants developed a "stakeholder analysis matrix" by considering civil society organizations, public authorities, the scientific community, non organised civil society, the business world, the media and the educational system under three main pillars: their interest and how they are involved in the problem(s); capacity and motivation in making changes; possible actions to be developed to meet needs and to satisfy interests.

I. PROBLEM AND SOLUTION TREES TO IDENTIFY AND TACKLE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

A problem tree provides an overview of all the known causes and effects to an identified problem. This is important in planning a community engagement or behaviour change project as it establishes the context in which a project is to occur. Understanding the context helps reveal the complexity of life and this is essential in planning a successful change project.

A problem tree involves writing causes in a negative form. Reversing the problem tree, by replacing negative statements with positive ones, creates a solution tree. A solution tree identifies means-end relationships as opposed to cause-effects. This provides an overview of the range of projects or interventions that need to occur to solve the core problem.



J. DEVELOPING FOLLOW UP PROPOSALS

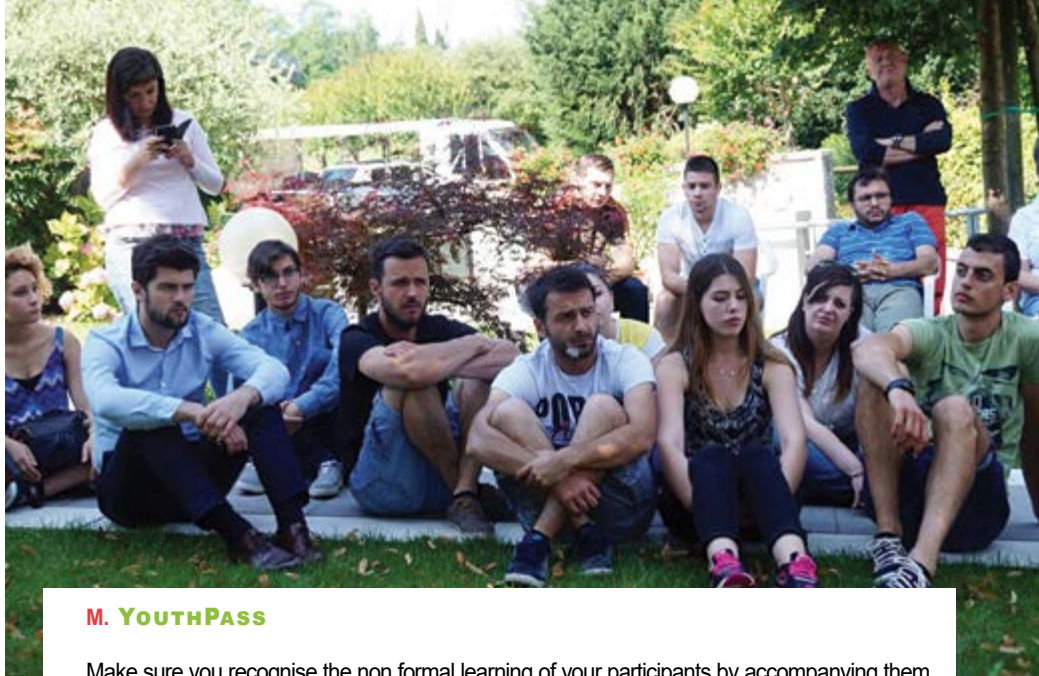
No learning experience is successful if not able to be applied at the local level. Throughout the transnational activity, the focus was put on the capacity to replicate and re-adapt the knowledge acquired to the local communities' needs. The session was key to plan the multiplying effect and increase the impact of the action.

K. MEETING LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Local authorities can play a strong role in youth sentinels' capacity to carry out effectively their mission. Meeting them and obtaining their support can be a key component. A successful community is the one able to make all its stakeholders cooperate for a common cause such as the environment.

L. INVOLVE THE MEDIA

Multiplying effects are stronger with a well-planned communication strategy. Media have the power to transmit your message across the whole community and above. Be creative on how you deliver your message and make it attractive. Youth environmental sentinels need to be recognised in this role by all stakeholders and having the media on your side is a strong added value.



M. YOUTHPASS

Make sure you recognise the non formal learning of your participants by accompanying them throughout the process and identifying with them what their achievements have been.



PARTNERSHIP



ALDA – the European Association for Local Democracy (France)



Istituto di Sociologia Internazionale di Gorizia I.S.I.G (Italy)



Center for Research Cooperation and Development (Albania)



Fundación Privada Indera (Spain)



City Assembly Of Subotica (Serbia)



Birgu Local Council (Malta)



RAM Central Stara Planina (Bulgaria)



Associazione Per L'ambasciata Della Democrazia Locale A Zavidovici (Bosnia Herzegovina)



Comune di Ravenna (Italy)



Local Democracy Agency foundation (Armenia)



Gruppo Europeo Di Interesse Economico: I Teatini Institutional European Network (Italy)



Mountain Community Iezer Muscel Association (Romania)



Association Centre for sustainable community development (Macedonia)



Istituto Scientifico Biomedico Euro Mediterraneo SCPA – ISBEM (Italy)



Local Democracy Agency Georgia (Georgia)



Foundation for partnership and civil society development (Croatia)



Coalition of youth organizations SEGA (Macedonia)



Center Women and Modern World (Azerbaijan)



Yasar Universitesi (Turkey)

NGO Horizont (Albania)



THE TREATY ON THE FUNCTIONING OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

ARTICLE 191

1. Union policy on the environment shall contribute to pursuit of the following objectives:

- preserving, protecting and improving the quality of the environment,
- protecting human health,
- prudent and rational utilisation of natural resources,
- promoting measures at international level to deal with regional or worldwide environmental problems, and in particular combating climate change.

2. Union policy on the environment shall aim at a high level of protection taking into account the diversity of situations in the various regions of the Union. It shall be based on the precautionary principle and on the principles that preventive action should be taken, that environmental damage should as a priority be rectified at source and that the polluter should pay.

In this context, harmonisation measures answering environmental protection requirements shall include, where appropriate, a safeguard clause allowing Member States to take provisional measures, for non-economic environmental reasons, subject to a procedure of inspection by the Union.

3. In preparing its policy on the environment, the Union shall take account of: available scientific and technical data,

- environmental conditions in the various regions of the Union,
- the potential benefits and costs of action or lack of action,
- the economic and social development of the Union as a whole and the balanced development of its regions.

4. Within their respective spheres of competence, the Union and the Member States shall cooperate with third countries and with the competent international organisations. The arrangements for Union cooperation may be the subject of agreements between the Union and the third parties concerned.

The previous subparagraph shall be without prejudice to Member States' competence to negotiate in international bodies and to conclude international agreements.



ALDA – the European Association for Local Democracy (France)



Istituto di Sociologia Internazionale di Gorizia I.S.I.G. (Italy)



Center for Research Cooperation and Development (Albania)



Fundación Privada Idera (Spain)



City Assembly Of Subotica (Serbia)



Birgu Council (Malta)



RAM Central Stara Planina (Bulgaria)



Asociatione Per L'ambasciata Della Democrazia Locale A Zavidovici (Bosnia Herzegovina)



Comune di Ravenna (Italy)



Local Democracy Agency foundation (Armenia)



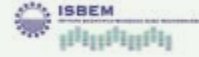
Gruppo Europeo Di Interesse Economico: I Teatini Institutional European Network (Italy)



Mountain Community Iezer Muscel Association (Romania)



Association Centre for sustainable community development (Macedonia)



Istituto Scientifico Biomedico Euro Mediterraneo SCPA – ISBEM (Italy)



Local Democracy Agency Georgia (Georgia)



Foundation for partnership and civil society development (Croatia)



Coalition of youth organizations SEGA (Macedonia)



Center Women and Modern World (Azerbaijan)



Yasar Universitesi (Turkey)

NGO Horizont (Albania)