

EUROPEAN ACADEMY ON YOUTH WORK - WORKSHOP REPORT

Everyday Life of LGBTIQ+ Individuals: Connecting Research and Youth Work

Nina Perger and Mateja Morič, Pride Parade Association, Ljubljana, Slovenia
Contact: mateja@ljubljanapride.org

TOPIC ADDRESSED

The workshop focused on the research done as a part of the youth dialogue project for all LGBTIQ+ young people between the age of 16 and 30 and implemented in 2017. By participating in a youth dialogue process, young LGBTIQ+ people were empowered with the skill of creating joint proposals needed to tackle and solve problems they face, as well as with the know-how needed to present and defend their proposals. The research, which focused on the daily lives of LGBTIQ+ individuals and their experiences of violence and discrimination, offered us an insight into the on-the-ground state of experiences of violence and discrimination among young LGBTIQ+ people in Slovenia. The research also serves as an advocacy tool and an instrument of needs assessment of the LGBTIQ+ community in Slovenia.

The main objectives of the workshop were to 1) understand the use of research in youth work, and how the youth sector can benefit from it; 2) recognise LGBTIQ+ youth as a competent political actor; 3) gain knowledge of LGBTIQ+ specifics and needs in youth work.

APPROACH/ METHODOLOGY

The structure of the workshop followed the same logic. The beginning focused on introduction of the group, the project done and the workshop itself, during which the participants expressed their interest in LGBTIQ+ topics and the use of youth dialogue with marginalised groups. The project was presented as an example of the creative use of youth dialogue, with the aim to include and hear the voices of those who are traditionally excluded, especially when it comes to participation in decision making processes: young LGBTIQ+ people.

In order to be able to go deeper into the content, we took a step back and reflected on the importance of the participation of the marginalised, a statement often mentioned but rarely reflected on. We continued analysing it by discussing what are the challenges of their participation, and how can we ensure it. The answers given by the participants were a great start for further discussions, as they already came across many good practices: using inclusive language, diverse trainers and youth workers, etc.



Before presenting the research findings, participants were asked to reflect on the situation of the LGBTIQ+ community in their contexts, and to assume the findings. There were a few factors of the research we focused on: level of disclosure of identity, feeling of safety, feeling of acceptance, spaces where LGBTIQ+ youth experience violence and discrimination, stakeholders they recognise as relevant, the role of youth organisations. When reflecting on their assumptions, the participants had quite different expectations, probably coming from the different contexts they were from, but also their level of knowledge on the LGBTIQ+ community. Often it would happen that a result would in reality be much worse than assumed (which would provoke comments like „is this for real? They feel so unsafe? I cannot even imagine it! “) or on the contrary, it would be much better („oh, I thought they would face more discrimination from their friends “).

After considering the results, there was a discussion on the needs and specifics of LGBTIQ+ people, especially LGBTIQ+ youth, and what the youth sector can offer to them.

The workshop ended with additional questions about the situation within the LGBTIQ+ community and a discussion on what are the mechanisms of their inclusion as well as on the rule: „nothing about us without us “. The workshop itself was based on work in pairs and discussion in the big group, with short inputs from the facilitators.

KEY ISSUES RAISED, INNOVATIVE RESPONSES AND IDENTIFIED TRENDS

Key issues raised as a challenge were the questions already mentioned of how to ensure the participation of marginalised groups, how to ensure their voices being heard and listened to, how to approach them and how to truly live the rule of „nothing about us without us “.

Some of the innovative responses to those challenges were to utilise the already existing instruments (in this case youth dialogue), to include people from marginalised groups in the whole process – from planning and the first drafts until the end, together with evaluation and follow up, and to include them in different levels and positions.

Key trends identified were a general interest in the topics of people who belong to marginalised groups (like LGBTIQ+ youth), but the lack of a structural approach to actually involve them, lack of knowledge on the specifics of different groups and segmentation of the youth sector. The latter was discussed a lot throughout the workshop: As some existing organisations are focusing primarily on a specific marginalised group, other relevant stakeholders sometimes use their existence as an excuse for not striving to include that marginalised group, thus putting those who are marginalised once again on the margin of the youth sector. This kind of thinking is dangerous, and not connected with the intersectional reality, in which young people belong to multiple groups and have different needs. It also does not reflect the values of youth work.

KEY ISSUES RAISED AS A CHALLENGE WERE HOW TO ENSURE THE PARTICIPATION OF MARGINALISED GROUPS, HOW TO ENSURE THEIR VOICES BEING HEARD AND LISTENED TO, HOW TO APPROACH THEM AND HOW TO TRULY LIVE THE RULE OF „NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US “.





MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT

More about the project:

<http://www.ljubljana pride.org/en/project-view/strukturirani-dialog/>

Full research (only in Slovene language):

<http://www.ljubljana pride.org/en/research/>



European Academy on Youth Work



AGENZIA
NACIONALE
PERI GIOVANI



FINNISH NATIONAL
AGENCY FOR EDUCATION



AGENCY OF
INTERNATIONAL
YOUTH
COOPERATION



JUGEND
für Europa
Nationale Agentur Erasmus+



Österreichische
Nationalagentur
Erasmus+ Jugend in Aktion &
Europäische Solidaritätskorps



The views and opinions expressed do not necessarily express the official view of the European Commission or the partners behind the European Academy on Youth Work. Reproduction of texts and pictures is authorised.

Published by MOVIT, Ljubljana, Slovenia
October 2019

Design and layout: AIKO, Maja Cerjak s.p.

More information about the EAYW:
www.eayw.net