

MANUAL



Youth
in Action



Disclaimer: This project was financed with the support of the European Commission. The content of the publication is the sole responsibility of the publisher and the European Commission is not liable for any use that may be made of the information.

CONTENTS

Introduction.....	3
Chapter I: CoexEast 2013.....	4
(...)	5
Artur Kraja: Overcoming fears.....	7
Milos Matic: A-SMYLE Alumnus Participates in the CoexEast Project in Poland	8
Theo Mavrosavva: Auschwitz Visit: Overwhelming Experience.....	10

INTRODUCTION

While preparing my first project, using non-formal education methods I struggled to choose a tool that would not only summarize participants' knowledge, and would be universal, but also could be a way of making our work sustainable. The sentence, the answer, that was in my head was clear: "it all depends". Depends on the participants, on the topic, etc. But then I started to question that reasoning And what I noticed is that it only depends on one thing - my own, trainer's, flexibility. So I decided to jump into deep water, giving participants' a lot of freedom, and labeling that freedom – "manual".

What?

"Manual" is an educational tool designed and created as a way of summarizing the knowledge and experience gained during an event, which can serve in the same time as a great medium also for promoting an action and transferring its results. It is flexible enough to cover the needs of various activities and trainers, being usable in youth exchanges, trainings, PBAs, summer schools, conferences, etc. All depends on imagination and the will of the educator, who becomes in it a moderator and a guide, while the task lies in the hands of participants.

How?

Participants are divided into smaller groups of maximum 6 people, and work in them for 4 sessions (4 times 90 minutes). First session is for building teams, general briefing to the exercise, and giving more specific tasks. The whole group, with the help of the facilitator, has to recognize the most important problems discussed during the project (as many problems as we want to have smaller groups), and then to sign into particular topics - this way creating working teams for the rest of the work on manual.

Participants have free hand in both, choosing their topic and the way they want to discuss it and present, the form may vary from a set of pictures, multimedia presentation, video, theater movie, an educational game, mindmap, etc. The most important thing is for teams not to go off topic, and create something which can be understandable for people from the outside of the project.

Why?

I see "manual" as an ultimate tool of summarizing any project or educational course, and also an assessment tool. It's potential is as vast as the amount of individuals, working on it. The freedom it gives is it's biggest strength, but also a threat for the inflexible educators.

This "Manual" You just opened is a compilation of works from projects, that used the presented method, and been conducted under the umbrella of SMIT "Creator". Over time new chapters-events will be added. I hope You will enjoy materials prepared by our participants.

Łukasz Kosowski
SMIT "Creator"

Chapter I

CoexEast 2013

The Project CoexEast was a Training Course held in Bielsko-Biala, Poland, between 13 - 20 March 2013. It is a transnational co-operation project focused mainly on anti-discrimination and anti-xenophobia issues in a globalized world. Together with it, other subjects will be brought up, such as: inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue, democracy, European awareness and citizenship or human rights.

Project's goals were clear. To provide wider perspective on the topics of discrimination and xenophobia to youth leaders, trainers, youth workers, project managers, and volunteers from participating countries. To expose the diverse ways discrimination and xenophobia are perceived in different countries. To broaden participant's knowledge of diversified and complicated history of Eastern Europe by workshops and field trips. To give the ground for sharing our experiences from so different environments. To improve participants' competences in using rights-based approaches to tackle

situations of discrimination and xenophobia in their own surroundings. To share materials and familiarize with non-formal education methods that might be used after in education and work with youth and adults. To equip educators with skills needed to design and implement discussions on the topics of discrimination and xenophobia. To expand a network of qualified trainers and youth workers able to work in the fields of human rights (with focus on discrimination and xenophobia) in Europe and Caucasus region.

On the following pages You will find materials prepared by the participants from ten countries, who have proven that cooperation above prejudices is possible.

The boys came into the bus. Silence was spread instantly.

"Dude! We kicked their asses today on the field. I can't wait for Sunday to show them who is the boss," said one of the boys.

"You are damn right; our boys were like killing today men! Those guys definitely deserve some tattoo next to my heart," said the other boy.

"Yeah man, just make sure it looks better than that old fossil's tattoo sitting over there," said Andrew pointing to Mrs. Schmidt's left forearm. The boys burst out laughing.

"Young man, if you knew what that tattoo means, you wouldn't be laughing right now. In fact you would be ashamed of yourself!" said Peter who was sitting behind them.

"Gimme a break jerk! We know what it means. That's why we are laughing."

"Yeah, you tell him dude!" said the other boy, "You'd better mind your own business!"

The bus stopped and the boys got off. Mrs. Schmidt approached the man still sitting on the bus, "Thank you for

raising your voice for me. That doesn't happen very often nowadays".

"It's OK!" said the man, "I just did what everybody should have done..." trying to avoid further questions.

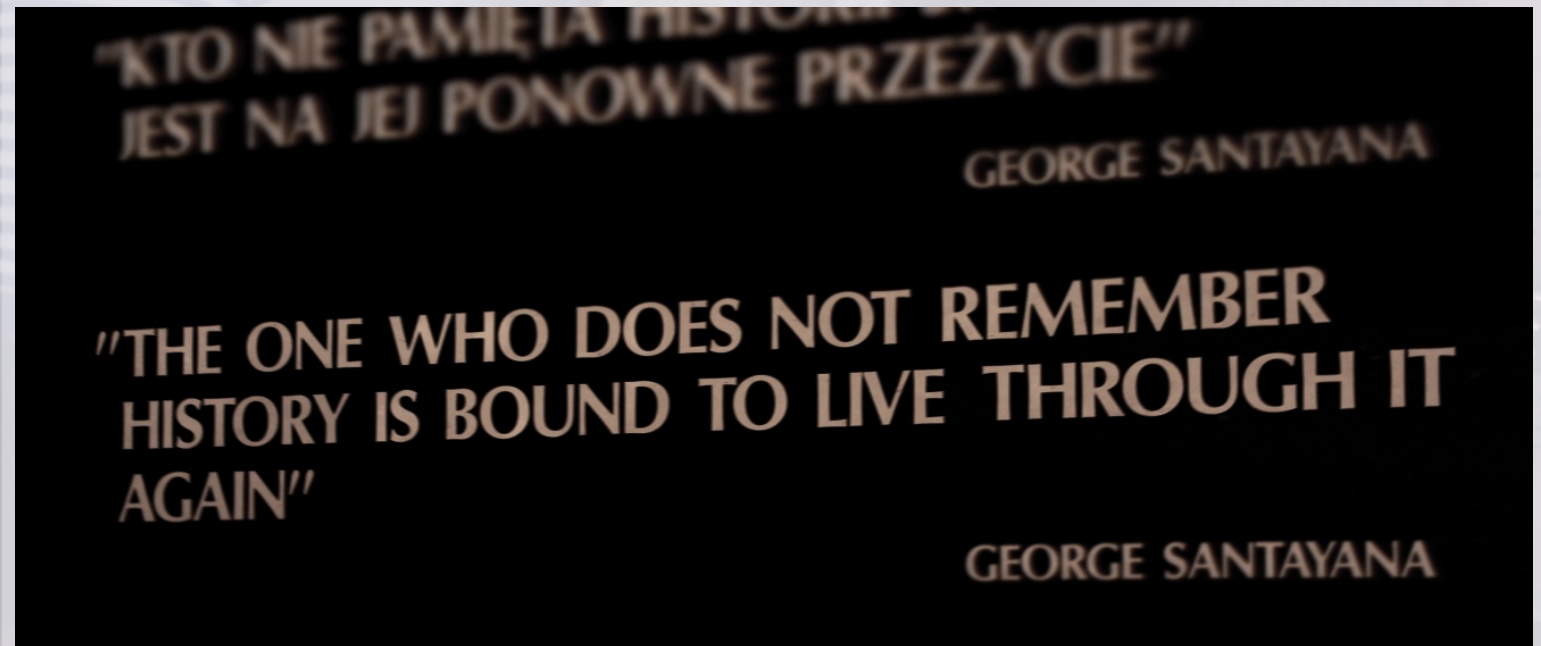
That event brought back again the moment he found his Grandpa's picture. Grandpa had passed away two weeks ago and they were going through his things. His Grandpa had always been a hero for him. Everything he knew was thanks to him.

His parents were always working and Grandpa had always been there. But on that day everything changed. On that picture was his Grandpa smiling and wearing a uniform, a Nazi uniform... He couldn't believe it. Grandpa was the kindest person he had known. He couldn't have been on the Nazi side.

"I am not quite sure I am really following you," said Mrs. Schmidt intrigued by his comment.

"Ahhmmm I just think we should be more mature and finally start taking responsibility for what was done. Surely we cannot change the past but the future is right in front of us."

"Don't worry that much. What these young boys did is just a mosquito bite for me, compared to what my people had to go through. With the passage of time you learn that it takes time to change people's mind and mentality and that you have to accept it. I saw my parents



and siblings die in the Holocaust camps, but if I hadn't been able to forgive, I would not have the happy life I have. I migrated to the US right after the end of the war, met my husband, got married and had three children. I am a happy Grandma now and every day I get to live and enjoy it, I am grateful for that. You have to forgive and give up on hate in order to move forward; teach the young generations that war and hate is never the solution, it just generates more hate. I tell that to my children every time they get angry to me for not being angry. I tell them that hope was what kept me going and I don't want to lose hope in the future of my Grandchildren as well. I could go on talking for hours about this but now I have to get off the bus. I wish you a beautiful day and thank you again," said Mrs. Schmidt smiling while pressing the "stop" button.

Peter was confused. This whole time he had been feeling so guilty, disappointed and ashamed of his family's past. But this old lady had faced the worst and best in her life

and was still able to forgive. She was a victim helping a persecutor's Grandchild deal with his guilt feelings...

He took out the book on the Holocaust survivors he had borrowed from the public library last week. Until today, he hadn't found the courage to open it and face the history. He had been afraid of what was written there but today he decided it was time to deal with it. He turned the cover over and began reading: "The most beautiful people we have known are those who have known defeat, known suffering, known struggle, known loss, and have found their way out of the depths. These people have an appreciation, a sensitivity and an understanding of life that fills them with compassion, gentleness and deep loving concern. Beautiful people do not just happen." ■



Overcoming fears

Artur Kraja

Inter-ethnic

Prejudices on an inter-ethnic level refers to having an already conceived opinion about a particular group of people before actually having the chance to get acquainted with them. Formed out of ignorance and influenced by misinformation (for example through the mass media).

Political conflict

- Ethnic division due to political situation within region.
- Prejudges of the other are strengthened through the duration of the conflict.

Interfaith

Bonds between people of different beliefs should be established through interfaith dialogue.

However, the reality is that the heads of these diverse religions (not all) and the political leaders belonging to that religions make this dialogue difficult to achieve because of various personal interests.

Xenophobia

exclusion of the "other"

"Others"

- foreigners
- people of different religion
- minority groups

Xenophobia is a dislike or fear of people from other countries or of that which is perceived to be foreign or strange.

Sexual orientation

Homophobia – the fear and the discrimination of the LGBT community.

People should have the freedom to express their sexual preferences.

In many countries, even in those that have legalized gay marriage, this LGBT community is still overcoming great hardships.

Solution

Intercultural and interfaith dialogue

People of diverse backgrounds participating in conferences, youth projects where such matters can be discussed.

In such gatherings interactions with the 'other' are made possible. We believe that through such experience ignorant perceptions will change in a positive way.

Personal changes lead to societal changes.

Interaction on local and individual level as a start.

Interactive version of the presentation available at:
prezi.com/aiubkfrymo5/overcoming-fears

A-SMYLE Alumnus Participates in the CoexEast Project in Poland

Milos Matic

The CoexEast Project was an international training course organized by Polish NGO SMIT Creator, which took place in town of Bielsko Biala, near Cracow, Poland from 13-20 of March 2013. It was funded by European Union and European Commission, who supervised the project and its progress. The main topics of the seminar were anti-discrimination and anti-xenophobia issues in today's societies. Based on that, we also learned how to start, conduct and maintain inter-cultural dialogue, where we went through different fields of social life, like political ideologies, political systems, religion, the issue of human rights etc. Apart from that, this project offered an increase our human potential in the domain of personal skills development and professional competencies.

In this project 11 countries were involved, but 10 were able to come to Poland. Countries present were Serbia, Romania, Albania, Greece, Cyprus, Lithuania, Estonia, Georgia,



Azerbaijan and Poland as host country. Every country sent one team of 3 members as their representatives. In each of the enlisted countries there were local NGOs who had a job of forming their country's teams, how they will do it, it's up to them.

Serbian NGO Creshendo, who was in charge of forming our team, offered the chance for anybody who is interested in the enlisted topics to apply. The only condition was that person needs to be younger than 26. Being part of this team was a great

chance to, once again, represent my country in an important project like this.

During the project we went through different types of workshops and lectures about specific elements

of good and stable inter-cultural dialogue. Adding to that, we got the chance to visit Auschwitz complex where we saw what could happen when those dialogues do not exist. Cruel reminder of mistake we cannot let happen ever again

At the end we composed our own Manual for Inter-cultural Dialogue as a material and practical result of the whole seminar, where we putted together all the knowledge we got and results of our practical workshops. So we came back home richer for so much, with

our geopolitical awareness awakened and skills to somehow improve our community.

I'm really glad I had a chance to be a part of this project and got to meet unique people from whom I learned a lot. I believe these types of projects are very useful, especially for the youth in Serbia, because it will provide better information and contacts for them, so their experience can be used in getting our society back to normal. ■

A-SMYLE

The American Serbia and Montenegro Youth Leadership Exchange (A-SMYLE) Program was established in 2005 to create stronger linkages between the United States and its partner countries Serbia and Montenegro and to reach out to youth in the region. The program provides the opportunity for students, aged 15-17, to explore youth leadership, civic responsibility, community activism, democracy, and American society, as well as educate Americans about the countries of Serbia and Montenegro and their cultures.

Learn more about the A-SMYLE Program at:

www.americancouncils.org/program/3n/ASMYLE

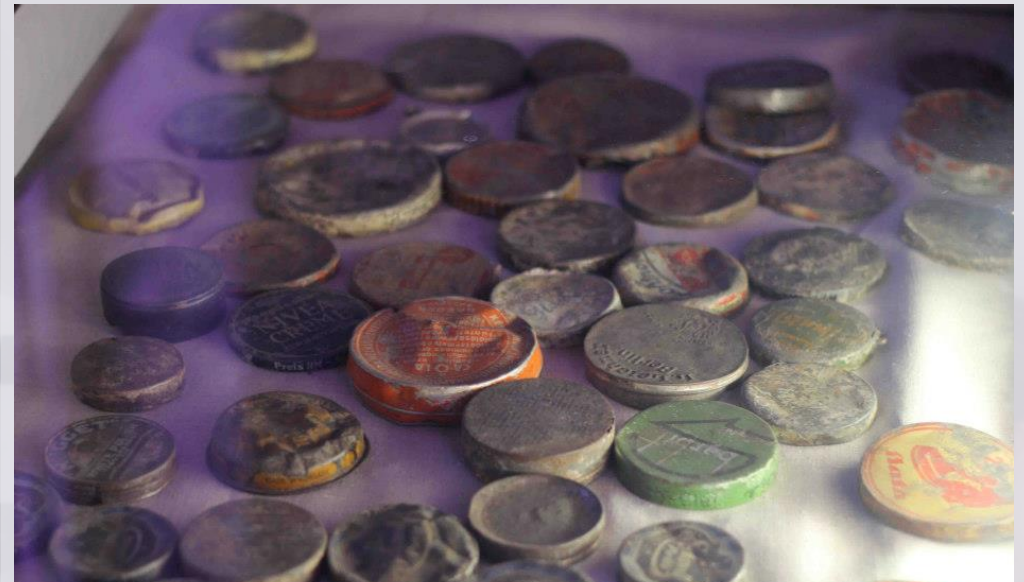


Auschwitz Visit: Overwhelming Experience

Theo Mavrosavva







Organizations participating in the project

Proposer

Stowarzyszenie Młodzieżowych Inicjatyw Twórczych „CREATOR” Poland

Partners

Active Youth.....Albania

Asociatia Tineri Parteneri Pentru Dezvoltarea Societii Civile..... Romania

Association „Crescendo”Serbia

Association of Active Youths of Florina..... Greece

Axalgazrduli Asociacia “Mileniumi” Georgia

Azerbaijan Tafakkur Youth Association..... Azerbaijan

Kulturos centras “In Actio”Lithuania

MTÜ Noored Ühiskonna Heaks.....Estonia

Nautilus Search and Rescue Team..... Cyprus