



PROVINCIA DI PIACENZA



Minutes Report Second Youth Exchange Connect PD

Piacenza, Italy, 13th -16th January 2010

PARTICIPANTS: Massimo Trespidi (Chairman of the Piacenza Province), Pier Paolo Gallini (Welfare Councillor of the Piacenza Province), Anna Pirillo (Piacenza Province), Piero Solenghi (Consorzio Sol.Co. Piacenza), Sara Bassi Balugani (Consorzio Sol.Co. Piacenza), Lorenzo Turci, Caterina Migliorini, Daniela Petraglia, Stefano Cristalli, Simona Cikalova, Jasmine Nouniou, Alberto Rizzi, Elena Ferrari, Arianna Merli, Marco Fusco, Arianna Molinaroli, Cristina Lozonschi, Anna Buonocore, Simone Solenghi, Paola Maggi, Giorgia Sfriso, Maria Isabel Garcia Lucas (Council of Youth, Municipality of Cieza), Salmeron Maria De Los Angeles, Lopez Nuria, Balsalobre Maria, Vazquez Verena, Garcia De Angela Fernando, Anne Favre (St. Maximilian Kolbe House for Meetings and Reconciliation), Rutkowski Mateusz, Olechnowicz Lukasz, Sikowski Tomasz Jerzy, Lizewski Krzysztof, Nowak Magda Maria, Chabowska Agata.

AGENDA:

Monday March 22

- Arrival of participants.

Tuesday March 23

- Guided visit of Piacenza;
- Workshop on participative democracy best practices: Polish partners present the best practices concerning youth participative democracy realized on their own territory;
- Debate 1 – Government activism vs. laissez faire;
- Debate 2 – Migrants' 'second generations': which identity?
- Debate 3 – Climate change and political counteraction;
- Spare free time together.

Wednesday March 24

- Guided visit of the medieval town of Castell'Arquato.



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Thursday March 25

- Seminar on “Expo Milan 2015”;
- Workshop on participative democracy best practices: Italian and Spanish partners presents the best practices concerning youth participative democracy realized on their own territory;
- Debate 1 – Resources distribution and equity between developed and developing countries;
- Debate 2 – Freedom of movement and migrants’ rights;
- Debate 3 – Ethical consumerism and right to food;
- Spare free time together.

Friday March 26

- Drawing of the Conclusions;
- Presentation of the Conclusions to Massimo Trespidi (Chairman of the Piacenza Province) and Pier Paolo Gallini (Welfare Councillor of the Piacenza Province. Handing over of diplomas;
- Visit and cooking course at the “Azienda Sperimentale La Faggiola”;
- Goodbye dinner with tasting of products cooked together during the cooking course.

Saturday March 27

- Departure of the participants.

WORKSHOPS AND DEBATES:

Debates

Following the suggestions from the participants of the first exchange in Cieza, round tables are without any pre-assigned thesis to defend. Six youths take part in each round table, one for each group part in the project.

A moderator raises the issues in every round table.

At the end of each 40 minutes debate scheduled, people into the audience has been involved into the topic examined.



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Into “Climate change and political counteraction” debate, the attention is focused on these several questions: is there a real, shared political goodwill to fight global warming, or are announced policies nothing but political propaganda? Have political agreements (e.g. Kyoto protocol; EU 20-20-20 climate change package; Copenhagen U.N. climate change conference) been successful? Has anything changed with the election of the new President of the U.S.? Which is the best way to deal with developing countries claiming their “right to pollute” as developed countries did in the past? Is it fair to impose them strict emission limits even if richer countries don’t set a good example? What does sustainable development mean in terms of pollution?

Into debate about resources distribution and equity between developed and developing countries, the participants reason about the possibility to reach an equal distribution of resources between developed and developing countries and about which tools have proven effective. They talk over micro-credit, fair trade and over an active political action for a real redistribution. Then they discuss about if and which kind of reforms is needed in global institutions, such as the W.T.O., the World Bank and the I.M.F.

In the matter of freedom of movement and migrants’ rights, participants debate on how should developed countries deal with immigration, if migrants should be seen just as temporary workforce or if they have the right to obtain a permanent stay into the country in which they work. The discussion goes on about the best way to deal with refugees and to face illegal immigration.

The second workday is open by the debate concerning government activism and “laissez faire” theories. As emerged from the discussion, the global crisis in 2009 has triggered a steep rise in state intervention in the economy, as many banking giants have been rescued from bankruptcy with public money. The youths engaged with this topic confront each other on how and how much a democratic government should intervene in the economy in times of crisis. They talk over the legitimacy of government benefits about basic goods (cf. Italian “social card”, Spanish “VPO”) and to put any threat to the independence of firms from political pressures.

Into “Ethical consumerism and right to food” debate, participants start from a sentence of Expo Milan 2015 manifest: “Everyone on the planet should have access to healthy, safe and sufficient food.” They discuss about how this goal can be reached, if is acceptable to rely on GMOs, even if their long term effects on human health are still unknown and how biodiversity can be defended (cf. with organization such as Italian Slow Food). Finally, they tackle the question that organic farming be potentially able to feed the whole world and if there is any way to escape the quality vs. quantity dilemma.

Concerning migrants’ ‘second generations’, the discussion is focused about a fundamental question, how can a State diminish the effect of bipolar cultures and identities in the sons of migrants?



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Workshops

During the two workshops on participative democracy best practices, partner organizations present at least one best practice concerning youth participative democracy realized on their own territories.

Polish partner explains to the audience the experience of St. Maximilian Kolbe House for Meetings and Reconciliation (DMK), an association founded in 1992 by Franciscan Friars from Gdańsk Province. It promotes and organizes the international youth exchange programs to foster the spirit of friendship and collaboration between the nations. DMK organizes international meetings, seminars and workshops to cope with the social and political problems in Central European countries. The aim is to encourage young people to take action in the social life. The association cooperates with many organizations from Eastern and Western Europe. Eastern Programs play one from the most important roles in its activity. The goal of these programs is to cope with the social and political problems characteristic for Eastern European countries and to exchange experiences in such areas as political and social change.

Italian partners present the National Voluntary Civil Service (SCNV) and the project "Partecipa rete". Since 2005, the SCNV is a way to share common values of the Italian Republic and to foster social cohesion and active citizenship. It is an opportunity for youths from 18 to 28 years old to spend one year into a solidarity activity. It assures also a little economic independence and it is frequently compatible with student career. Moreover, the SCNV guarantees an important chance for a personal growth and, through a constant training, for a professional growth; often the SCNV experience became a real job opportunity too. The areas in which people can choose to carry out their experience are: care, civil defense, environment, education, promotion of culture, artistic and cultural heritage, foreign civil service.

"Partecipa rete" is promoted by Regione Emilia-Romagna legislative assembly. It's a pilot project involving 3 schools and 5 councils. Students involved have been trained on a specific issue (this year on human rights) to take part in 3 plenary meetings. In the first meeting, youth representations has been involved (4 youths for each group for a total of 32) and they have exchanged and shared their experience. The second one has been focused on the exchange between students and local policy makers. Youths have expressed their proposals, needs, points of view. The last meeting has been focused on the exchange between youth representations and regional councilors of Legislative Assembly.

Spanish partner shows to the audience the experience of Youth Debate League which is held in Cieza. This is an unprecedented activity in the town, based in dialectic confrontations. Each weekend there will be two debates held about current affairs, en each one of the debates the teams made up of a maximum of five participants will defend the posture that was decided earlier by drawing lots. The debates are always about controversial questions of social interest and eminent topicality. It is an important opportunity to get to know the opinion of young people about the problems of current society.



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Leisure and cultural activities

- A guided tour of Piacenza, including the old city centre, some historical churches and palaces, the Dome, the modern art gallery “Ricci Oddi”, the museum “Farnese” and the theatre “Municipale”, prepared by students from Piacenza.
- Leisure activities, such as games, bowling, etc., involving the local scouts groups.
- A guided visit of medieval town Castell’Arquato (about 40 km from Piacenza), including the “Rocca Viscontea”, the geological Museum “G. Cortesi” and the Museum “La Collegiata”. Lunch with tasting of Italian pizza.
- Seminar on “Expo Milan 2015”.
- Visit and a cooking course at the “Azienda Sperimentale La Faggiola”. At the end of the day, a goodbye dinner with tasting of typical products and dishes cooked together during the cooking course.

Results

At the end of the week there is an evaluation session in which the participants can express their feelings about the exchange. After the drawing of the conclusions, these are presented to Massimo Trespidi (Chairman of the Piacenza Province) and Pier Paolo Gallini (Welfare Councillor of the Piacenza Province). Finally, there is the commencement exercises.

As emerged in the conclusions, the debates structure has allowed each participant to be free to express his own point of view on the different topics. Moreover, the participants haven’t been split into national teams, but they have been mingled together, eliminating polarization and fostering open discussions.

The participants have been free to discuss the issue they like, but each of them has been involved in one round table per day. This way, all organization have been represented at least by a youth in each round table and participants with different backgrounds, nationalities and points of view have interacted actively, giving their personal contribution to the discussions.

The moderator has facilitated the debate and involved everybody into the discussion.

Involving audience into the debates, with the possibility for other people to express their own feelings and to make questions, to point out critics or to suggest different point of views to the debaters, has enriched the discussion.

The objective to let the guests discover Piacenza territory, to foster interaction among participants and to stimulate a contact between participants and the local community, has been achieved by cultural and leisure activities proposed. Participants have particularly appreciated:
the opportunity to use bicycle to move around, an ecologic, fanny and comfortable way to discover Piacenza;
the idea of a guided tour in Piacenza prepared by youths from the city, this has allowed to our students to know better their own territory and fostered interaction;



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the day spent in Castell'Arquato for the beauty of the medieval town and landscape, for the interesting of the guided tour, as well as for the to the warm welcome of the local community;
the night spent playing bowling and lasergame all together;
the visit, the cooking course and the goodbye dinner at the "Azienda Sperimentale La Faggiola". "La Faggiola" is an experimental farm managed with the support of the "agricultural technical college Raineri Marcora". There, the youths involved into the meeting have discovered Piacenza traditional products and, thanks to the support of the vocational school for hotel services and catering "Raineri Marcora", they have learned how cook some of local famous dishes like "Tortelli" and "Pisarei e fasò". Finally, into a goodbye dinner prepared by the students of the vocational school for hotel services and catering, participants have had the opportunity to taste the products cooked together during the cooking course and many other typical dishes.