

2. Newsletter, November 2017

“Creative Tools for Youth Initiatives against Radicalization and Populism”



Who we are!

What is culture? What is identity? How do stereotypes and prejudices arise? And how can youth workers prevent radical thinking of youngsters? These are just few of many questions, which participants discussed during the training course “Creative Tools for Youth Initiatives against Radicalization and Populism” in July 2017. 26 people from 7 countries (Italy, Portugal, Hungary, Spain, Bulgaria, Germany and Turkey) gathered in the house of “Youth and Change Association” in the city-centre of Diyarbakir to find out how we can promote tolerance and use cultural diversity as a positive tool in youth work. **In this monthly Newsletter we want to document and publish our working steps and results back in our home countries.** The first one is written by the German participants.

<http://www.youar.eu/>

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Topic: Right-wing populists have it easy in Europe!

Researchers in eight EU countries have asked people for their consent to intolerant statements. One third sees a natural hierarchy between people, half rejects Islam and a majority is sexist.

For the first time comparable figures from eight European countries are available. The Friedrich Ebert Foundation, which belongs to the Social Democratic Party in Germany, has published a large study on the topic. The title of the study:

"The Devaluation of Others: A European State Description on Intolerance, Prejudice and Discrimination"

The scientists relied on detailed, representative surveys of 1000 people each in Germany, England, France, the Netherlands, Italy, Portugal, Poland and Hungary.

The research was done in 2011, you can imagine how much it changed since then.

Populistic movements grew since then, right wing – populist parties became big.

The result of the study: Group-focused enmity, pejorative attitudes and prejudices against people perceived as "foreign" or "different" are widespread in Europe.

In the Netherlands, the derogatory statements met with the lowest approval, in Poland and Hungary the largest. For xenophobia, Islamophobia and racism the study only identifies minor differences between countries. Significant differences found the researchers in the dimensions of anti-Semitism, sexism and homophobia. The Europeans apparently unite the rejection of strangers: "About half of all European respondents believe there are too many immigrants in their country," says the study.

About half condemn Islam as a religion of intolerance - an extent in which the Netherlands is no exception.

Another result of the study is that the derogatory attitudes can have tangible consequences. Those willing to devalue people by their origins are more likely to be ready to oppose integration, to deny immigrants political participation, to discriminate against them, or even to use force.

"Women at the cooker" is not just a sexist statement, but consensus in Hungary, Poland and Portugal. In Germany, Great Britain and France, too, a majority of respondents argued that women should take their role as wives and mothers more seriously - with the exception of the Netherlands.

A majority rejects same-sex marriages – for example 88.2 are against it in Poland, about two third in Portugal, Italy and Hungary, between 40 and 50 percent in other countries. The exception is - once again - the Netherlands with 17 percent.

"Populism insults, extremism fights"

The study specifically warns against an increase in right-wing populism. Many people are not fundamentally disinterested in politics, but feel left alone by the politicians. The complaints of these people were directed not against the established parties, but against immigrants, Muslims and weak groups in society. The widely expressed rejection of diversity must be taken seriously as a threat to democracy, according to the authors of the study.

The youth is left?

Usually people think young people are open minded and alternative. They travel, they get to know other cultures.

Not in the whole of Europe. **In five countries even extreme right and populist parties dominate.**

More than one in four of the under 25-year-old voters planned to vote for Marine Le Pen before the presidential election in France. Thus, she was in polls since February in the first place among the younger, only shortly before the election the non-party candidate Emmanuel Macron managed to catch up. Also in other European countries, the most popular party among the young people is a right-wing populist or right-wing extremist. Whether in Slovakia, Poland, Hungary or Austria. **"Young people are less and less interested in mainstream politics, but are increasingly turning to populists,"** says Tamás Boros. The political scientist is co-director of Policy Solutions, a political research institute, and researches populism in Europe.

The established parties have focused for a long time not on the young, but on older voters. "It's simply because there are more older people and in percentage, more older people vote in elections," says Boros. In addition, young people would rather choose radical parties than older ones do .

In Germany too. There has been no consistent picture in the provincial elections since 2016. In Saxony-Anhalt, the right wing party "AfD" was among the first voters the strongest force, in other provinces it was above in others under the average.

Young people are also considered unpredictable voters. In polls before the Dutch parliamentary election in 2017, the party of right-wing populist Geert Wilders was ahead with 27 percent among the young Dutch. In the election itself, however, it was enough for the fifth place with 21.5 percent.

Tool for youth work:

You are a teacher, youth worker or similar and want to deal with xenophobia and promote tolerance and solidarity? This task may be a method to exercise:

“Our life is more globalized than you might expected”

Suggested Age of participants: 10 - 16

Time: 90 minutes

Material: no special material is needed

A lot of people are saying that their own culture is in danger because of too many immigrants coming to their country.

But have a closer look to your culture! Look at the food you eat, the music you are listening to, the last movie you were watching, the god you might believe in ...

Is it all without any influence from the outside, your food, your favourite music?

Read the following Saying!

Your food Italian

Your car French

Your coffee Brazilian

Your religion Hebrew

Your numbers Arabic

Your letters Latin

Your democracy Greek

Your neighbour just a foreigner

What do you think was the message the one who wrote this Saying wanted to transport?

Do you agree on the message?

Have a look at your music playlist? How many foreign songs do you have on it?

Where was the last cinema-movie you have seen produced?

From what countries are the players of your favourite football-team coming?

How international was your breakfast today? Had coffee already?

Imagine your supermarket without any foreign products.

Where are the clothes and the shoes produced you are wearing right now?

What else can you add as an influence from another country?

Your favourite game ...

Your ...

What is typical for your own country or region that got developed/exists without any influence from the outside? How could a Saying look like with just topics/products from your own country?

Try to create one ...

Share the results and discuss how easy or difficult it was?

Also this video might be interesting to watch together with your participants

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iGoNCLsGY20>

Organisations involved in this network are:

Genclik ve Degisim Dernegi (Turkey/Kurdistan) (www.genclikvedegisim.org)

YOUTH FOR PARTICIPATION ASSOCIATION (Hungary) (www.facebook.com/YOPA.NGO)

AL Teatro (Portugal) (<https://www.facebook.com/alteatro.teatrodoarade>)

SERVEI CIVIL INTERNACIONAL DE CATALUNYA ASOCIACION (Catalunya) (www.sci-cat.org)

SERVIZIO CIVILE INTERNAZIONALE (Italia) (www.sci-italia.it)

Fondatsia "Detsa na Balkanite" (Bulgaria) (<https://balkankidsfoundation.jimdo.com>)

JANUN e.V. (Germany) (www.janun-hannover.de)

Website of the project: <http://www.youar.eu/>

Facebook of the project: <https://www.facebook.com/Youareu-138643850059639/>

Contact for the newsletter: blumenberg.lena@web.de