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the European Union



Young Activists Communicating Peace

International Training for Youth Workers

15.08.2022 - 22.08.2022

Sievershausen, Germany



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Background of the Initiative

Since 2015 **ICJA** offers trainings and youth exchanges in the frame of a concept we call ***“Young Activists for Peace”***. Until now over 400 participants came from different corners of the European Union, Eastern Europe and Caucasus, as well as the Mediterranean Region

The ***“Young Activists for Peace”*** projects offers a wide range of activities, topics and pedagogical concepts in the field of peace education, trainings for democracy, empowerment of youngsters with fewer opportunities etc. We do this, because we believe in the impact of this work on the young participants who will contribute democratic and peaceful societies in the long term.

In recent years, we have observed an increasing radicalization in public communications and an increase in hate speech on social media. News and social media are dominated by escalating and polarizing language. Nationalist, anti-democratic and racist actors are threatening social cohesion worldwide with targeted fake news. This has become increasingly clear over the past 10 years and has reached a new level since Russian troops invaded Ukraine: democracy and peace are under threat worldwide.

With this training, we want to remind you that we, as human beings, are also characterized by the ability to communicate successfully, to cooperate, to show compassion and to act in solidarity. We believe that the ability to communicate successfully is a key to greater understanding and appreciation for one another and contributes to a more peaceful society.

Goals of the Training

The training aims to provide the opportunity to develop knowledge by learning and performing. We were inspired by the following questions:

- ✓ Which concepts help us to understand and deal with interpersonal and social conflicts?
- ✓ How do my personal experiences of violence shape my thoughts and actions in conflicts, in general and in view of the current war in Ukraine?
- ✓ How is it possible to communicate peacefully instead of escalating and how can we implement this in our work with young people?
- ✓ How can we recognize fake news and propaganda in the media-led war and replace them with positive examples?
- ✓ Where can we contribute to peaceful communication in public discourse?

The Training provided sessions and opportunities:

- ✓ To promote Peace and international friendship in our societies and further develop the methodology used in our non-formal peace learning activities;
- ✓ To learn about developments and challenges for peace in the EU and in the world, and find ways to cooperate with each other in order to reach out to a wider community;
- ✓ To tackle issues such as increasing nationalism, hate speech, xenophobia and racism especially among young people;

- ✓ To learn how motivate and empower young people to take a more active stand against right-wing propaganda, discrimination against Muslims and human rights violations against refugees and migrant;
- ✓ Discover creative methods for dealing with conflicts.

Activities in Details

Day 1 - 15.08.

- ✚ Arrival and welcome
- ✚ Getting to know each other, team building, common tasks
- ✚ Orientation about venue, Corona and House rules
- ✚ Expectations, first information about program

Day 2 - 16.08

- ✚ Introduction in the program
- ✚ Getting to know each other: on personal level, on level of activities, presentation of your organizations
- ✚ Introduction in Erasmus+ and Youth Pass
- ✚ our motivation of participation
- ✚ Working with personal biography and exchange about
- ✚ Daily reflection round

Day 3 - 17.08

- ✚ Report of an eyewitness from the war in Ukraine.
- ✚ Exchange about opinions and emotions
- ✚ Which topics do we want to learn about?
- ✚ First steps towards communication with Russian participants via messenger
- ✚ Daily reflection round

Day 4 - 18.08

- ✚ What does peaceful communication mean? Experience of a simulation game adopted from "Betzavta"
- ✚ Exercises in communication according to the concept of nonviolent communication
- ✚ Daily reflection round

Day 5- 19.08

Workshops I

- ✚ Conflict prevention
- ✚ Peace making
- ✚ Peace enforcement
- ✚ Peace building

Workshops II

- ✚ Concept of Peace Building I: Ego State Model
- ✚ Free afternoon / Daily reflection round

Day 6 - 20.08

- ✚ Deepening the understanding of the ego states and Transactional Analysis (TA)

Open space:

- ✚ Slot I: 'online hate speech', 'developing inner peace', 'conflict Palestine-Israel', 'get in touch with the surrounding: Role of memorials. How to remember'
- ✚ Slot II: 'nation building', 'social and emotional skills', 'peacebuilding in neighborhood'
- ✚ Deepen the communication with Russian participants

Day 7 - 21.08

- ✚ Concept Peace Building II: Adotion of Berry's Model of Acculturation, which is used as Matrix of Integration
- ✚ Deepen the communication with Russian participants : Contact via Zoom
- ✚ Final evaluation
- ✚ Farewell party

Day 8 - 22.08

- ✚ Farewell & Departure

Daily Reports

Day 1, 15th of August 2022

Sequence of the day:

- ✚ Arriving to the venue
- ✚ Check-in
- ✚ Getting to know each other
- ✚ Dinner
- ✚ Evening session

The arrival

Friederike and Nikolaus helped us to find our way to the Antikriegshause and welcomed us one by one to the seminar. Since all of us started our journey from different corners of Europe, we had the joy of welcoming new people to our group all along the day. One or two more participants might still join us later this week.

When arriving to the venue, we got to choose which room we wanted to stay in. Rooms were separated with animal names such as Moose, Penguin and Bee. While people were arriving and settling down to their rooms, Barbara, our chef, had kindly prepared some coffee, tea, and snacks for us to share while getting to know each other's travel stories.

At 6.30 pm, we had dinner together and the first kitchen team, Tony, Divine and Elina, got into action with doing the dishes and cleaning the tables. Barbara said that this was the best kitchen team of this week so far. What a compliment!

After dinner, we moved into the seminar house to start our first and last evening session. From now on, we will have evenings free for our own activities and relaxing together. Tonight's session was facilitated by Friederike and Nikolaus who told us about the venue and the history of **Young Activists for Peace** project. Friederike explained the week schedule and presented the tasks for the week, including kitchen tasks, morning and evening activities and writing this report. Everyone got to present themselves to the group by shortly telling what brought them to apply to this project. It was fascinating to hear everyone's stories and interests. As an energizer, we were told to form a line to find out who has the biggest feet in the group. This had to happen without speaking. Next, we formed a new line based on the time we spent travelling to Sievershausen. The shortest travel was 2 hours and some of us had spent a few days on trains and other forms of transport. Since it was getting late, we ended the session without a reflection but learned that this would be an important part of the following days.



Day 2, 16th of August 2022

Sequence of the day:

- ✚ Breakfast
- ✚ Agreeing on the schedule
- ✚ 3 questions and positioning in corners
- ✚ Energizer 1
- ✚ Youth pass information
- ✚ Name exercise
- ✚ Break
- ✚ Dice with faces
- ✚ Energizer 2
- ✚ Write/draw biography
- ✚ Lunch
- ✚ Organization matter
- ✚ Presentation of biographies
- ✚ Evaluation of method
- ✚ Short reflection in pairs
- ✚ Final reflection in groups
- ✚ Dinner
- ✚ Party



Agreeing on the schedule

Together with the facilitators we set up the time table of every day and agreed upon times for lunch and dinner.

Questions in corners

At first we positioned ourselves in four corners according to our feeling within the group (alone, respected, warm and excited). The next question was about biography work and if we thought necessary/ relevant. Finally we positioned ourselves according to the most pressing issue on our minds (family, friends, future, anything else). The exercise was breaking the ice and stimulated openness regarding our feelings.

Energizer 1

In a circle we firstly passed the clap of our hands to left or right. Then we changed the rules and the clap transformed into a woosh - sound. To increase the level of complexity, we added a boing sound to block it to reverse the sense of movement and a badoo to pass it anyone else.

Youth pass information

Nikolaus informed us about the utility of the youth pass and outlined the key competences



that we later on can put in our certificate ourselves. The first and second page is send and signed by the organisation whereas the third page is completed by ourselves.

Name exercise

One after one, each person went to the Flipchart up front and put their name there and explained to the audience who gave the name, if it had a meaning and if they liked it or not. The additional questions helped us to remember names better and understand how exactly everyone wanted to be called, thereby

facilitating that everyone felt comfortable in the group. Some people expressed that their names were too heavy or too common and everyone had a chance to openly express how they wanted to be called instead.

Facial expression dice

In groups of three with people who did not yet know each other that much, we rolled the dice with facial expressions on it. Depending on the facial expression revealed on the dice, we talked about a situation of the past weeks in which we felt like the emotion displayed (angry, surprised, happy, puzzled). Everyone in the group commented every expression. This exercise was already a snippet of biography work as it allowed us to cover and share some personal stories and share feelings. We realised that somehow a lot of our stories were interconnected and that we experiences similar struggles or joys.

Energizer 2

In pairs we trained visual memory. One person needed to turn around whereas the other one changed three things about their appearance/ clothes. The other person then had to guess what had changed.

Write/draw biography

Everyone got a Flipchart paper and colourful pens and we could write, paint or draw important moments of our biography. It was not compulsory to use the entire paper. Organisational issues such as throwing food away, drinking vegan milk, when to have a hot meal etc. were covered. After the lunch break we presented the biography papers in groups of 7 or 8, determined by a colourful stick. The presenter could talk for 5 minutes (no more to symbolise that everyone's life story is of equal value) and decide what to cover and what to leave out. The audience needed to listen actively and refrain from making comments or any judgement or advice. Afterwards questions were allowed and the audience could comment on parallels. This task helped us to reflect upon our own lives and how we became who we are while at the same time promoting honesty and understanding. Somehow this activity could be linked to peace building as we all experienced conflicts in our lives and shared how we dealt with them.

Evaluation of method

We gathered in the big group again and commented on the biography method. Generally, people appreciated method and non-judgemental approach, only one person felt it to be too introspective. Evaluating the method helps us to understand in how far we can apply it to our own projects/groups back home.



Reflection in pairs

With our neighbour on the right in the circle we shared the highlights of the day or what he/she/ they wanted to remember of the activities.

Final reflection in groups (30 minutes)

In groups of four how we felt, what do I want to share with the group, what we were thankful for and was our impressions of the day.

Dinner

Pizza made it a perfect day.

Day 3, 17th of August 2022

Sequence of the day:

- ✚ Breakfast
- ✚ Small warm-up activity (creating our own world map & positioning ourselves in our countries where we grew up)

- ✚ Welcoming special guest from Ukraine- Alina Malina & listening to her personal experience during the time of Ukrainian war (09:00-12:00) >>> the report was followed by open discussion
- ✚ Lunch break
- ✚ Warm-up (funny) exercise "happy mushroom"
- ✚ Discussing "Reflection questions" in small groups
- ✚ Reflection of the day with the same daily group
- ✚ Dinner
- ✚ Intercultural night gathering

Map creation

We started the day with a creative activity to introduce ourselves to our special guest from Ukraine- Alina Malina. We were asked to position ourselves according to the countries where we have been brought up, and then according to where we are living now. So, everyone found their neighbors from the other countries and that allowed Alina to have a clear idea about ourselves and our backgrounds. It also helped to create a safe space where Alina could open up and share her personal life experience with us.

One of the main activities during the morning session was our active listening to Alina's

real experience of witnessing the war and the Russian aggression against Ukraine. Alina left most of us in tears after she explained how struggling it was to manage her family situation during the aggression, and how her brother was encouraging her to leave them and flee Ukraine in order to be with her small family in Hannover, Germany.

Her journey back home was not easy at all from leaving her big family, seeing her country torn apart, and struggling to leave all the memories behind and cross the border.



Our take-aways from Alina's experience:

1. Alina emphasized how important it was for her to take care of herself and her mental status so that she can be able to look after her family and contribute to her society. This was one of our take-aways from her speech.
2. The second important lesson was how borders can dehumanize people in such situation like war and conflicts.
3. Media coverage cannot be trusted, and we have always to check the facts and to seek them from the local eyewitnesses – if possible.
4. The reality of how easily anyone can become a refugee in a blink of an eye.
5. How Ukrainians assess the help and support provided by the European countries, and how the international community was numb in the beginning of the war.

Heated discussion after Alina's presentation:

Alina's presentation not only evoked the participants' emotions, but also sparked interesting discussions between all of us.

We discussed the current situation in Ukraine, and how the Ukrainian see Europe's reaction to the war. For most of us, especially the non-European participants we were thinking that Europe has been doing a lot to help the Ukrainians in their crisis, however, Alina confirmed that they were not satisfied at all with the European slow reaction and how European countries should have acted rapidly.

Second part of the day after lunch break

The second part of the day evolved mainly around our reflections of the morning session, and the following questions were asked by Christoph as a follow-up for Alina's presentation.

- How do I feel after this session with Alina?
- What did I get out of this speech and discussion?

And the following two questions were asked in order to build the structure of the remaining period of the training.

- On what topic do you want to work on?
- What kind of goal do you want to achieve?

After splitting into five small groups, we came up with the following different goals and topics:

1. How does soft power affect the world in a negative way (language, culture, media, traditions, etc.)
2. Inclusion of perspectives, identity, attitude, prejudice, stereotypes.
3. What does it look like to work inside a peacebuilding/keeping organization?
4. What is required to be a peacebuilder?
5. The approach of media and combating disinformation.
6. Links between war and ecology.
7. More facts, backgrounds, information, and objectivity.
8. How to provide safe spaces for exchanging opinion.
9. Importance of being positive amid conflicts.
10. Having a thorough overlook on armed conflicts around the world.
11. Gender and peacebuilding
12. LGBTQ+ and gender equality
13. What are the individual actions towards building peace?
14. Development & its effects on nationalism.
15. The prolonged conflict between Palestine and Israel.
16. Media polarization of societies.
17. How to act and communicate peacefully.
18. More general views of conflicts.
19. Conflict management and peace theories.



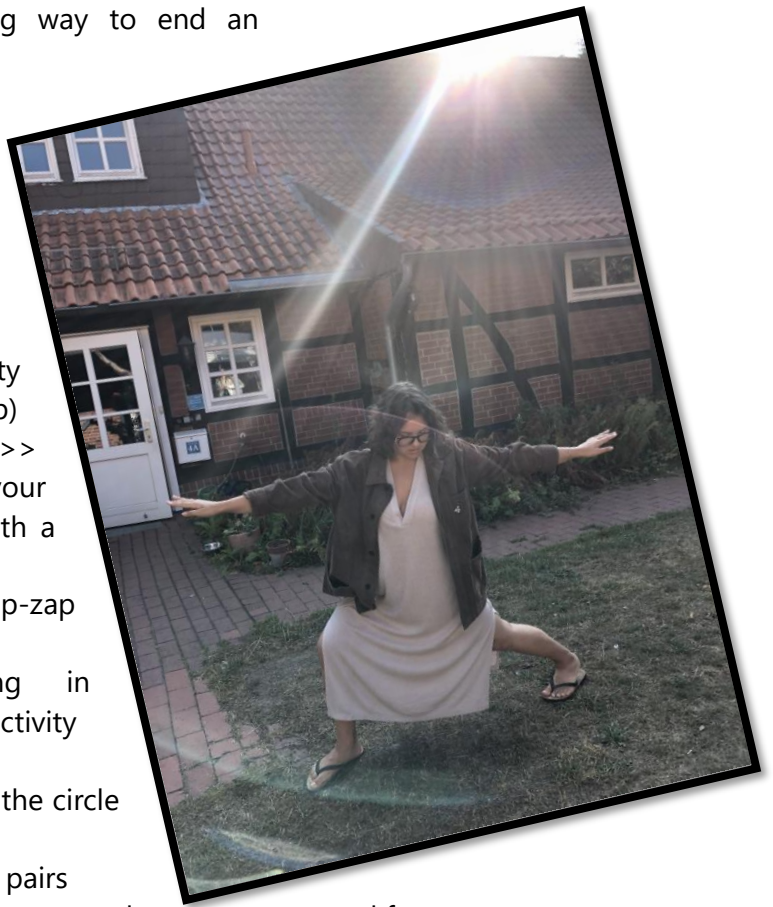
Before we close the day, Christoph suggested that we can think of three situations in our life when we were happy, and with each situation we breath in while remembering that moment, and when we breath out we think of someone from the group and send them the positive energy of each memory.

It was a very nice and relaxing way to end an overwhelming day full of emotions, and sensitive topics.

Day 4, 18th of August 2022

Sequence of the day:

- ✚ Breakfast
- ✚ Small warm-up activity (Brothers & sisters catch-up)
- ✚ Second warm-up activity >> pick up a feature in your partner and describe it with a sign
- ✚ Third warm-up activity: zip-zap "name game"
- ✚ Practicing communicating in peace through the chairs' activity
- ✚ Lunch break
- ✚ Warm-up activity by using the circle silver rings
- ✚ Questions- cards activity in pairs
- ✚ Peace-building model about needs and fears
- ✚ Applying the needs-fears model through the activity of closing eyes while walking and being guided/accompanied by a classmate
- ✚ Discussion in smaller groups >>> the same pair who did the previous activity together
- ✚ Closing the day by expressing how we feel in a word or a sentence
- ✚ Reflection of the day with the same daily group
- ✚ Dinner



Warm-up activities

We started the day by doing three small warm-up activities. The first one was called "brothers and sisters" activity where there are two participants trying to catch the others and the only way to be saved from being caught is to hold hands with any of the group members.

The second activity was also fun; we were divided into pairs, and we were asked to describe our partner with a sign. It was a thoughtful activity where we tried to think of our perception about our partner and the most significant features about them. The group came up with very creative descriptions.

Last warm-up activity was called "Zip-Zap" activity where we stood up in a circle and one person in the middle who had to point at someone telling zip or zap. "Zip" means naming the person on your left, and "zap" means naming the person on your right.

Main activities of the day:

- Frieda gave each of us a folded paper with instruction that we should not share with the other participants and also, we should not talk while doing the activity. Apparently, there were three categories of orders: 1. Put all chairs upside down. 2. Put all chairs in one circle 3.put all chairs outside.
- We started applying the tasks and at the very beginning we thought there was a competition between us and that the tasks contradicted one another but in the end all of us achieved what we wanted.

Second round of warm-up activities:

We were introduced to a warm-up activity by using connected silver bracelets. The purpose of the activity was to stand in a circle and pass a set of bracelets to each other by holding hands with your partner.



After the warm-up we played a card game with questions. The cards were placed on one bench, and we had to pick up one of them and choose someone to discuss a question with. The ground rule is that in a pair only one person can have a card (so you're either holding a card and waiting for someone to finish and join you or wait till someone will take a card and approach you/you approach them). This activity helped us to discover

more about each other and share our thoughts.

Second session

Christoph told us about peace-building model connected to our needs and fears. First of all, he introduced a set of basic needs (like love, autonomy, recognition, safety, orientation etc.) and asked us to split in pairs and elaborate on our most important need with our partner.

After a short discussion he revealed to us what fears stand behind each of the needs (love-rejection, recognition-judgement, autonomy-restriction, safety-violation etc.) In order to understand the co-existence/co-dependence of fears and needs we performed an exercise where we also split in pairs and one person had to close their eyes while being guided by their partner to an agreed place and then we changed roles.

After the exercise we shared our thoughts and feelings in the same pairs and reflected on our needs – whether they were fulfilled or not. During this discussion we found out that some needs (and to some people) have to be verbalized while other are being done unconsciously (like grabbing a hand harder). A crucial point was to understand that it always a task for both sides of pair – it's important to realize your needs and being able to share them; the task of 'receiving' side is to understand the need and help to succeed in fulfilling it (or at least give some tools).

End of the session

We ended the session by expressing how we feel in a word or a sentence.

Day 5, 19th of August 2022

Sequence of the day:

- ✚ Breakfast
- ✚ Energizer and logistic information
- ✚ Workshop I: Peace building tools
- ✚ Break
- ✚ Workshop II: Ego state model: exercises
- ✚ Lunch
- ✚ Dinner

Morning routine & Energizer

We start the day with an energizer offered by Elina. We made a circle and danced.



Workshop I

The trainers announced the news and possibility to contact with Russian participants and then we continued with reflections of peace building methods that are the following:

1. Conflict prevention
2. Peace making
3. Peace enforcement
4. Peace building

Conflict prevention: In this case the conflict is not in present but if there is not mediation it can occur. USA and China could be a good example of it.

Peace making: It shows up after a conflict and it is promoted by third parts like peace corps and also NGOs can take part in this field.

Peace enforcement: It is military action which are enforced to promote and maintain the peace in conflict environment.

Peace building: It is the promotion of peace at grassroots level. It involves conflict prevention and peace making. The peace education is also a part of it.

The general conclusion was the conflict prevention and peace making are the part of peace building while the peace enforcement is not sustainable in long term.

Workshop II

After break we analyzed a model of peaceful communication called "*Ego State Model*". The model has 3 parts which are parent, adult, and child and their subdivisions. These are the representations of way of acting while communicating with others. There are some productive ego states which facilitate communication and are better to use in conflict situation. After the explanation we split in pairs, and we reflected on the way we position ourselves in some experienced conflict situation.

As a summary, we concluded that the most productive way of communication is the adult-adult stage in peace building.

After the lunch we had free time activity until the evening. The model was in general useful, and we had opportunity to implement it in the next day.

Day 6, 20th of August 2022

Sequence of the day:

- ✚ Breakfast
- ✚ 1st energizer: pillow game
- ✚ Small conversation on how we felt this morning
- ✚ Card game ('what is an important part of conflict for you?')
- ✚ Small break
- ✚ Reflecting on ego-state model we were introduced to before
- ✚ Choosing a conflict of our own and analyzing it from the perspective of the 'ego state'
- ✚ Discussion
- ✚ Lunch
- ✚ 2nd energizer: trees
- ✚ Open space: splitting into groups and discussing topics



Pillow game. All the participants had to stand in the circle and pass the pillow to the second person to their left. The game becomes more active when there are two pillows.

After the energizer we went to the session room and decided to start the day by sharing our feeling in that exact moment (it could be one word, a couple of sentences or no response at all).

Christoph took a deck of cards with different pictures on it and placed it on the floor so we could walk around and find the one that is the most suitable for answering the question 'What is an important part of conflict for you?' Then we divided into groups of 3 and shared our thoughts. After this we decided to discuss our choices with the rest of participants.

The day before we discovered an 'ego-state' model which basically helps you to define the state you're in when you communicate with other people (critical/nourishing parent, adult, adopt/rebel/free child). We realized that this model got a real impact on us because we began to analyze our actions even in our free time. We decided to reflect on this model with the situation that really happened to us: one of the participants woke up the others because she was concerned that they would sleep through a session. We came to a conclusion that this kind of intervention is closer to the parent ego and a not adult one. We also discussed a child-parent symbiosis and whether it's a great thing for long term.

In order to consolidate our knowledge on the topic we were invited to split into pairs, choose a conflict of our own and analyze it from the perspective of the 'ego-state'. It was great to have a partner performing such a task because we could help each other to get another point of view on the



situation. Later we discussed our experience with other participants.

Trees. All the participants had to stand in the circle, the game began with one person pointing at another random participants, 'making' them a tree. 'A tree' had to put hands to the air and scream while the people to its left and right represented loggers who imitated the process of cutting down a tree. After a few seconds 'a tree' pointed out at someone else, so they also became tree.

Open space. Open space was a great opportunity to discuss topics we were really interested in. A few people volunteered to lead and perform some sort of workshops. We had 2 time frames: 15.00 – 16.00 ('online hate speech', 'developing inner peace', 'conflict Palestine-Israel', 'get in touch with the surrounding. Role of memorials. How to 'remember'), 16.00 – 17.00 ('nation building', 'social and emotional skills', 'peacebuilding in neighborhood'). In each of the time frames we could join only one discussion. This activity was very insightful, an opportunity to share and gain some knowledge.

It was our penultimate day, so we felt more comfortable with each other, willing to share more thoughts and feelings. The 'ego-state' model helps you to work on your actions, makes the communication more productive in the future. After reflecting on your state in different situation, further it comes more and more naturally (you don't feel like you're overthinking). At the same time, it's sort of impossible to adopt only productive states, all of the states keep you in balance. With the help of the model, it's possible to resolve not only interpersonal conflicts but also international ones, because in the end behind every large-scale conflict there are ordinary people.



Day 7, 21st of August 2022

Sequence of the day:

- ✚ Energizers, physical activities
- ✚ Acceptance of values and Cultural identities model
- ✚ Evaluation and feedback on the program
- ✚ Goodbye activity

Sunday was the last day of our training when we had a pretty intense program. As usual, we started our day from energizers and physical activities offered both by our trainers and participants which helped us to get ready for the comprehension of the important information. Then, Christoph presented to us a new model of peacebuilding, based on the Acceptance of values and Cultural identities (as y and x axes). This is a quite new method that was deduced from a model of acculturation, created by sociologist John Berry. It

was invented about 5 years ago and now is being integrated into some educational institutions in Germany and may be further integrated in other parts of Europe and the world. This system established 4 ways of reaction to a variety of situations in our daily lives: Adaptation (valuing others' needs more than personal ones), Separation (valuing your needs more than the others'), Marginalization (not realizing your own needs while not having respect for others'), Integration/Dialogue (recognizing your needs and feeling while being respectful and open to

communicate and cooperate with others). After we connected this model to our personal stories and discussed it in pairs, we got introduced to 10 values, chose 3 of them, discussed why and how we implement them in our daily lives, as well as wrote down 5 aspects of our cultural identity.

Some of the participants also continued the communication with Russian attendees through a 45-minute video call where they had a chance to address their questions and get a grasp of the communication in a live session.

After lunch, we shared our feelings and experiences about the training and documented different aspects of it:

- What did you like the most?
- What you did not like?
- What do you want to share with the group?
- What do you think about the place we stayed?

Then we came to the warmest part of our day when we had to say goodbye to each other, feel each person's energy and wish/share what we wanted to tell them. As our trainers mentioned, it was a highly important activity since we had to end our training logically and positively.

As a conclusion, today's session was a balanced combination of valuable knowledge and emotional satisfaction. Through the model we have learned, we concluded that our values and cultural identities influence our daily decisions and actions. Now, with the realization and understanding of our reactions, we can work on moving towards the Integration/Dialogue method of addressing different situations and conflicts, the ones that are the most effective in peacebuilding.

Day 8, 22nd of August 2022

On Monday Morning we said goodbye to some few participants who had to leave very early in the morning to reach their destinations. With the rest of the group we continued the evaluation of the seminar and planned our cleaning duties. After finishing the evaluation we started cleaning the house and in less than an hour time we were done thanks to an incredible teamwork.

We gathered again in a circle and said our final goodbyes and finished with a powerful energizer. The seminar ended with the feeling of togetherness and a strong shared believe that peace is possible.



Online Meeting

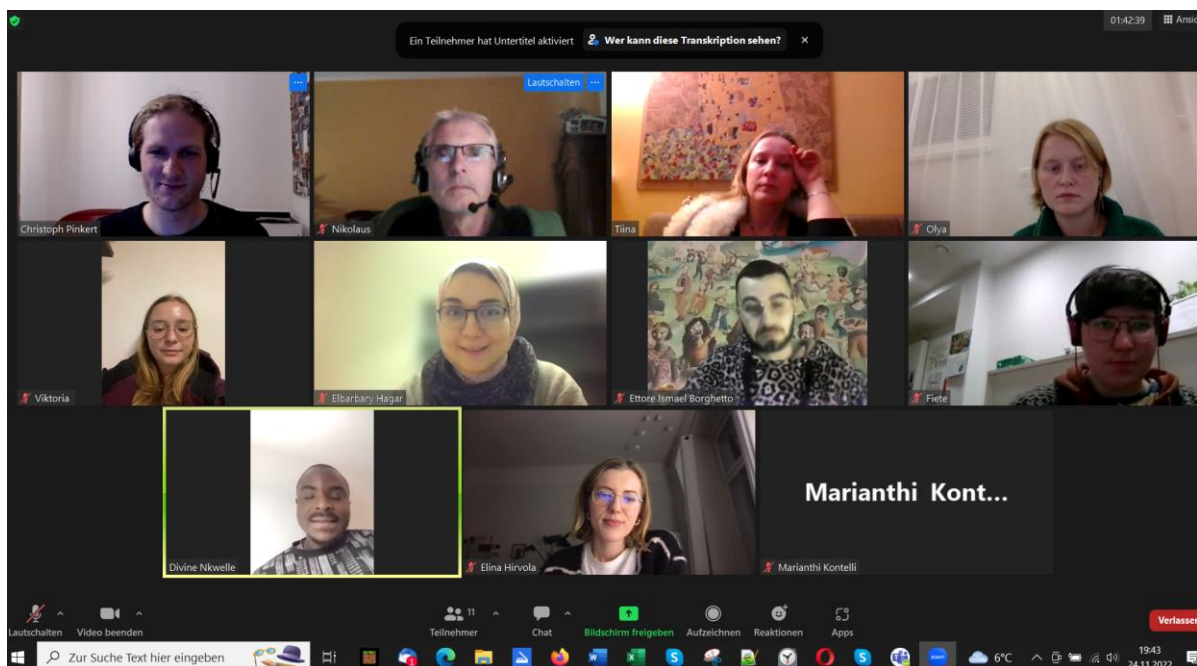
The group was invited to join an online meeting as follow up of the training. About 11 participants met on the 24 November from 6:00pm to 8:00pm.

Friederike Weyh and Christoph Pinkert led the group based on questions communicated in advance. The participants were able to exchange and reflect with each other alternately in the plenary and in outbreak rooms. The leading questions at the meeting were:

- What do you think about our training in Sievershausen after three months?
- Is there anything that has changed in your way of thinking, acting ... since then?
- What has happened in your (professional) life in the last three months?
- There will be the possibility to ask questions, to share stories and to get in contact again.

The process the participants of the training was considered was named as particularly valuable. For most of them it was a quite intensive group experience. There were participants from a country at war and participants from countries at peace; this led to tensions but also to experiences of solidarity and compassion. In general, the high diversity in the group was appreciated; the participants came from very different cultural, social and religious backgrounds. One participant stated, the group first had to reach a certain level of awareness in order to be able to work on central questions and contents of the training. Many participants described their experience mainly as "inner growth" and found it difficult to clearly name a result of the training. The experience of dealing with conflicts and exploring needs and fears was seen as particularly important.

Quote: *"The training opened my mind to new questions".*



Conclusions

This training brought together 21 professional and volunteering youth workers from Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Iran, Italy, Cameroon, Slovakia, Turkey, Ukraine and Germany for a 7 day seminar and training programme to get a qualification in peace and conflict resolution on a personal and societal level. The programme included an intensive training in peace education, concepts of nonviolent communication and concepts of peacebuilding. Participants developed their personal skills and dealt with a wide range of current and urgent peace policy issues.

The content of the training reflected a wide range of topics that European youth workers and peace activists are dealing with in view of the destructive war in Ukraine and the many violent conflicts in the world. The central theme and concrete challenge at the same time was the question of how conflicts can be dealt with constructively and how non-violent communication between individuals and groups can succeed.

Two concepts that are used in peace building were essential in training the participating youth workers: the **Ego State Model** as a further development of **Transactional Analysis** and the **Integration Matrix**, which was further developed from **John Berry's Modell of Acculturation and implements elements of ATCC** (*L'Approche et Transformation Constructives des Conflits*).

The participants got to know these concepts by working on different methods and reflecting on how these could be helpful in concrete conflict situations. In the units, the different levels - personal, interpersonal, social and societal - were always considered and dealt with.

The training was designed as an experience-based learning in a group dynamic process with complementary theoretical contributions to the respective underlying concepts. This helped to provide a holistic learning experience. On a meta-level, the participants constantly were invited to reflect upon experiences and insights gained. This was helpful in the process as it helped the participants to detect the benefits and challenges to be expected when implementing these methods with their own target groups.

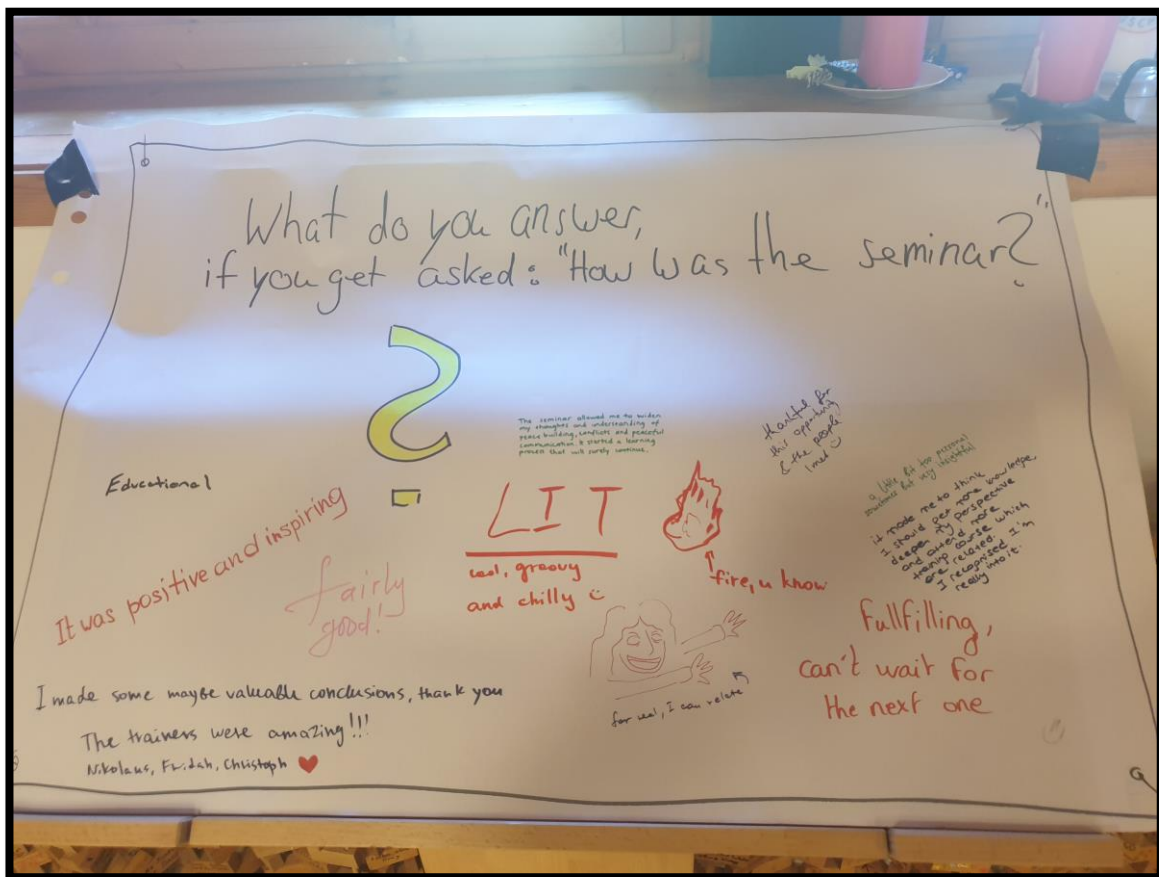
Dealing with the current war in Ukraine brought very emotional discussions and conflicts between the participants, but also many moments of inner connection. The effects of the war were always present: most of the participants came from Ukraine, the guest from Ukraine told about experiences of the outbreak of war and flight and its effects on the civilian population, but also showed forms of processing and acting in solidarity.

This had an impact on the group dynamic. As some participants were directly affected by the war, the group had to learn to deal with different perspectives and attitudes with a high emotional charge. As a result, there were very emotional discussions and some of the participants would have preferred not to talk about the war in Ukraine, but rather about a conflict in another part of the world to which none of the participants had a direct connection. The trainers were able to use peacebuilding tools to make it clear to the participants that the constructive processing of emerging conflicts can also be experienced as peacebuilding within the group setting as experienced in this training seminar. The participants experienced what it is like to endure suffering together and to draw strength from it. But they also had to learn to come to terms with the limits of understanding.

The high diversity of the participants in terms of age, life experience, living situation and cultural backgrounds was always challenging but could be used as a resource. The diversity of interests within the group was taken into account in that the participants themselves were able to exchange ideas on specific topics via the "open space" method and offer each other workshops.

Part of the group contacted two participants from Russia via Messenger and Zoom and exchanged views on their current perspective and life in a totalitarian society. The training provided the participants with concepts and techniques to better understand themselves and the world. They experienced how explosive the discussion of these issues is at the seminar and at the international level and were able to learn and live "communicating peace" in theory and practice. It continues to be important that Erasmus + facilitates such exchanges.

Feedback of the Participants



Peacebuilding strategies

Enough free time to reflect by your own and on your own

PeaceBuilding Concepts and theories



The structural parts about the stories, discussions, card games to think about our feelings and thoughts, small discussion and reflection groups

I enjoyed the different concepts we learnt + the possibility to discuss them with the other participants. I really liked the spirit, energy and genuine interest of some of the participants and I highly appreciate the chance to communicate with Alex and Anastasia.

work in group and opportunity for working and discussion with everyone it was great to know about peacebuilding and new theoretical concepts.

What I liked the most

EVENING PLAYING (Games, discussions, etc.), PEOPLE, Atmosphere...
Group work, discussions, participants, place.

The different Conflict and peacebuilding models.
The tasks and energysers!

I enjoyed the most the theory and new knowledge I'm bringing back home. Also the space you gave to participants to create their (our) own workshops (on Saturday).

Warm ups (they add up to your confidence and very useful for those who work with kids/youth); games to know the people, distancing new methods; listening and being heard

Flexibility of the facilitators for adapting/changing the program/timetable according to our collective needs

I appreciate that there was time for discussions in small groups and therefore space for everyone to speak and share ideas, for example in reflection groups. I'm happy we also had a chance to communicate with Russian participants and see this as a valuable peace building "activity".

Great energisers!! And I think how all contributed!

What I didn't like

Warm food

lack of warm food (soup), vegetables.

bad internet connection
lack of vegetables in food

bad Internet connection

too much "spirituality" in good-type virtual

professional cooking + cleaning services

didn't understand the structure of the program, I feel like there was no data/information being given to us to have more insightful conversations later

Sometimes I felt that people who weren't here from conventional perspective criticized by some participants

+ Bad Internet Connection
+ Shortage of Snacks and Cookies in break time
+ Getting into the main topic of training Course late

We didn't use enough the place (library, statues) as a pedagogical tools (except the workshop about memorials). We should have had a guided tour of the property (maybe by an employee or local) to get more into the place and not see it just like a sleeping/eating place.

Evaluation Form

1. Please mark your general satisfaction with the Training.

0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
			✓	✓		✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓	
						✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓		✓ ✓

2. Please cross or colour the box
In your understanding of the training, how far these areas were developed?
(1: poor, 5: fully)

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Topics, content and my learning growth				✓ x x x x x	x x x
2. Opportunities for practical application of training's content			x	x x x x x x x	x x
3. Time management of the learning process		x	x	x x x x x	x x x
4. Materials (texts, literature list, presentations)		x	x x x x x	x x x x x	x
5. Methodical structure of the seminar			x	x x x x x	x x x x x x
6. My opportunities to participate				x x x x x	x x x x x x x
7. Motivating atmosphere			x	x x x x x	x x x x x
8. European dimension of learning activities			x	x x x x x	x x x x x

Thank you for being part of my journey! :)

What do I like to tell the group?

I was nice to meet all of you to discuss your personal feelings and your preferences



Lots of respect and love to all of you

I felt pretty good & comfortable in this group, but it has been times in which I had to feel "stronger" like I had to learn to take care not only on our own's and values, but also on the others, but respecting the time and the care of the space we are living in. Also, when I had to consider the people who are around you and try to be the best in the different parts of the world. You all have so much potential, so be sure to use it, so instead.

Thank you all for your openness and courage. It is never easy to jump into a new group with over 20 strangers. I appreciate every single one of you and I am grateful for this week of learning, growing and connecting with each of you. Love and warm hugs and all the best for the future.

I love u and gonna miss u
P.S.: to Furkan: I'll miss your dance performances

I'm satisfied to meet everyone in a group I like our games and movie night, it was amazing! Thank you all!

Wah as

I appreciated so many individual kind words as well as the whole group. However, sometimes I feel like we could have been more active to each other in our own effort to connect.

It was a pleasure to meet you here. Hope to see you in the future.
It was a great learning experience to be with you.

Thank you for amazing and fun examples of your work, and for being so helpful.



You made me feel better.

Thank you for that!

Goals Topics

- Open Space
- What do you want to share?
- 15.00 - 16.00 ON LINE LATE SPEECH
- 16.00 - 17.00 NATION-BUILDING
- Little workshop on social & emotional skills (Learning "dealing" with emotions, talking about "difficult" topics)
- Peacebuilding in neighborhoods
- Conflict Palestine - Israel
- armed conflicts around the world
- Development and effects of Nationalism
- Media & polarization of societies
- How to act in a cosmopolitan - pluralistic, drama-sensitive society
- more general view of conflicts
- peace-conflict management
- to find some of the different topics

Ressources!

- Dixit (board game)

- Conversations with God & Mele Remiel Nitsch (Book series) (writing or not with help, so do not be stressed)
- Friedensalphabet
- Fliegflug
- Gefühlsmaße
- Common Stories / Conversations
- More than one story
- VERKÖRTER (Leben im Konflikt-Diskurs)

Quote of one participant



This training has significantly enhanced my understanding of the nonviolent approaches to conflict management. While all the topics treated, as well as the various methods employed to breakdown conflict management techniques were very effective, the Ego State Model stood out to me as one of the most engaging segment of the training. In a nutshell, if there ever was anything else needed to bolster my cross-cultural learning experiences and the immeasurable value that comes with it, this training provided exactly that. Many thanks to Christoph Pinkert, Fiederike Weyh and Nikolaus Ell for their outstanding skills and dedication to peace education. Thank you!

Participating Organisations

Turkey	PIYA Turkey	Website	iletisim(at)pigenklikdernegi.org
Estonia	ESTYES	Website	estyes(at)estyes.ee
Italy	Lunaria	Website	scambi(at)lunaria.org
France	SJ	Website	workcamp@solidaritesjeunesses.org
Ukraine	ISKRA STELLA	Website Website	info(at)iskra.org.ua info@ngo-stella.org
Greece	ELIX	Website	youth(at)elix.org.gr
Finland	Maailmanvaihto – ICYE Finland	Website	maailmanvaihto(at)maailmanvaihto.fi
Lithania	DEINETA	Website	nerijus@deineta.lt
Slovakia	KERIC	Website	lenicka(at)keric.sk
Germany	ICJA	Website	youthexchange(at)icja.de

Articles, Links and Social Media

Two participants produced a video about the training:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NndOwUC8RqQ>

[ELIX \(@elix.greece\) • Instagram-Fotos und -](#)



[Videos](#)

[Koolitus "Young activists Communicating Peace" 15.-22.08 \(Saksamaa\) - EstYES](#)



[Training: Young Activists Communicating Peace 15.8.–22.8.2022 in Germany | Maailmanvaihto ry](#)



Coordinating Organisation

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This project is registered as local awareness-raising activity associated with the Raising Peace campaign



Raising Peace is a networking initiative that aims to contribute to the construction of peace, the guarantee of human rights all over the world, and to highlight the role that International Voluntary Service (IVS) plays in the field. The programme achieves this through advocating for human rights, non-formal education training and capacity building, empowerment of activists and organisations and through communication and visibility campaigns.

This project was co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.



**Funded by
the European Union**

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.

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