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Mediterranea

Associazione per lo Sviluppo Locale



BETTER CHOICES

A youth exchange funded by the Erasmus + programme

BETTER CHOICES

The founding aim of the project is to promote the values of environmental protection, bringing attention to the theme of global warming. No less important is the promotion of a fruitful cultural dialogue between the participants so as to contribute to instilling in them a deep-rooted sense of European citizenship.

This need has been identified by the young promoters of the project and the assembly of the partners has been oriented to enhance the different points of view on the issues of intercultural dialogue and environmental protection. The project involves organisations based in Italy, Spain, Bulgaria, Greece and Poland. All countries, as we have already pointed out, share high pollution rates but also a tangible awareness of environmental issues among public opinion and national governments.

Together with the problem identified above, it is also noted that young people living in rural and peripheral areas experience fewer opportunities for individual and professional growth than their peers living in urban centers. The project also aims to provide participants with an unprecedented opportunity to express their artistic potential through the creation of a graphic and photographic path. The project also aims to provide participants with an unprecedented opportunity to express their artistic potential in order to initiate an awareness-raising campaign on environmental issues.

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The main aim is to encourage and promote the personal and social education of young people, reinforcing their feeling of being European citizens. The young people involved in the Youth Exchange, are an essential 'active' part from the very beginning till the very end of such a project.

OBJECTIVES:

Specifically, the project pursues the following priority objectives:

- to promote intercultural dialogue, the values of freedom and active European citizenship by acting on the development of young people's critical thinking through non-formal training activities.
- To raise young people's awareness of the issue of global warming and of the pressing need to spread good environmental protection practices.
- To increase the artistic and professional skills of young participants through peer learning among participants. To learn more about the cultures of European countries

Foster the inclusion processes of young people with fewer opportunities "BETTER CHOICES" is a youth exchange involving **30 young people** from **5 European countries: Italy, Spain, Bulgaria, Greece, and Poland**. All participants share the same passion for art in all its forms and are young people interested in environmental protection. The participants want to improve their artistic skills and, at the same time, address issues related to global warming, good practices against pollution, environmental protection, but also experience intercultural dialogue and face the challenges of active European citizenship. The PARTICIPANTS are aged **between 16 and 29 years**, most of them live in disadvantaged rural or urban areas and suffer from many problems related to this: lack of cultural, recreational and educational opportunities, high rates of youth unemployment and social exclusion.

HOSTING ORGANIZATION

The youth exchange will be organized by the Italian hosting organization, Mediterranea Associazione per lo Sviluppo Locale APS. Mediterranea is not-for-profit organisation, whose mission is to promote EU policies addressing in particular youth, women and people with less opportunities. Since 1992 Mediterranea performs activities in the fields of social inclusion, culture, information and training, communication, social animation, job and carrier guidance, entrepreneurship. Through the "Informa" project, Mediterranea created and implemented a network of Youth Info-points in over 30 cities in the Apulia Region. This experience led to start up the "Informa" cooperative, leader in the region for job and training guidance. In the past years, Mediterranea has been also the main contractor for many

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national (PON) and regional/European grants (ERDF) such as the “OrientaLavoro” Front Office for job guidance and entrepreneurship, as well as the “InformaDonnna” infopoint addressing women.

In 2001 Mediterranea managed a Master in Cultural Heritage at the Lecce University together with Federculture, the Italian federation of Institutions working in the culture field.

Since 2002 Mediterranea has been in charge of VET and higher education projects, funded by the European Social Fund.

From 2002 to 2006 “Mediation Centre” has been created in the city of Bari for addressing the needs of many families, with a focus on children and teenagers. And from 2006 to 2008 a Family Centre supported disadvantaged families in Bari.

Since 2015 Mediterranea is managing a public open space in Alezio (Lecce), an “Urban Lab” with the aim of creating social and cultural initiatives for promoting social inclusion and active citizenship.

Mediterranea approach is based on active participation and involvement, non-formal and informal education and cross-sectoral multidisciplinary approach. Mediterranea cooperates with: public institutions especially at local and regional level; schools, universities, vocational and other educational institutions; public and private social inclusion organizations; other NGOs.

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<https://www.facebook.com/mediterraneaassociazione>

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Youth Exchange

Dates

From the 15th to the 25th May 2023 (the 15th and the 25th are the travelling days).

Activities

During the exchange, the participants are engaged in games, convivial and self-management activities, in-depth studies and workshops. The activities are divided into an:

- initial phase of brainstorming and reflection on issues related to environmental protection and intercultural dialogue;
- an operational and workshop phase, in which the young people are divided into five groups and tackle selected issues on the theme of the environment by working on real project work to launch an awareness-raising campaign using art in its various forms (e.g. photography, graphics; figurative arts, theatre, etc.) to achieve the creation of tangible outputs that will be exhibited and presented during the final event. The students, then, divided into groups, experiment their skills to convey both an environmental message and a message of unity among the peoples of Europe.

The workshop activities are interspersed with moments of play and role-playing games that aim to amalgamate the group and to get to know each other. During the exchange there will also be intercultural evenings and a trip to Gallipoli, an Ionian city symbol of cultural contamination, recently the protagonist of sad events of pollution. Outdoor activities and a trekking route are also planned.

All activities are carried out through non-formal learning methodologies and follow the approach of learning by doing and peer education. The whole Exchange is conceived, in fact, in self-management: not only the thematic activities, but also the management ones, are carried out by the participants and this favours the active participation and the development of transversal competences.

At the end of the Exchange, there will be a final event open to local citizenship in which the young

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people, after having tried their hand at a conference in English (the Italian group will be responsible for making a simultaneous translation to help the public) on environmental issues, exhibit the works made. In this context, a ceremony is planned to issue the participants with the YouthPass document, which is the certificate describing what they have learned during the project activities. This tool is used precisely to validate non-formal learning, recognising the skills that the learners acquire by participating in the youth exchange.

Countries

Italy, Spain, Bulgari, Greece and Poland

Participants

25participants (5 each partner) +5 group leaders (representatives from partner organizations). Age 16-29.

Participant's profile: All participants share the same passion for arts and are young people interested in environmental protection. Participants want to address issues related to global warming, good practices against pollution, environmental protection but also experiment with intercultural dialogue and address the challenges of active European citizenship. Young people are between 16 and 29 years old, most of them live in disadvantaged rural or urban areas and suffer from many problems in relation to this: lack of cultural, recreational and educational opportunities, high rates of youth unemployment and social marginalisation.

Accomodation

“Ostello Salento” is a structure in Alezio (Lecce) equipped with all the basic comforts and in accordance with the law, where another successful youth exchange was held. The structure is surrounded by greenery, is distributed on a single floor with bathrooms and services with several bedrooms, a large kitchen, common recreation room and outdoor spaces.

The participants will be accommodated in a dormitory with shared rooms and toilets. We will use a self-management approach, so the participants will be divided in mixed groups (gender

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and nationality) to cook and to clean. These groups (in rotation) will be responsible to cook and clean the spaces. There will be no washing machine: we'll have so much fun, that you won't need it. Please before arriving, remember to bring all the materials you need for the activities and free time on a USB key (video, presentations, files, movies, ..).

Link: <https://www.ostellosalento.com/>

Transport

The movements are mostly made on foot or for small stretches in cars driven by staff or with rented vehicles. If public transport is not suitable to manage the arrivals and departures of the group, the rental of a private bus is considered.

Insurance

Participants are insured against all risks related to their participation in these activities (accidents and serious illness, death, medical care, etc..).

Location

Alezio: Alezio is a small town in the province of Lecce (Puglia Region) very close to Gallipoli. This proximity has made tourism an important element in the city's economy, which preserves a primary role for the traditional activity of agriculture. It was certainly a city of Messapia. In the city it is possible to visit the "Museo Civico Messapico" (Messapian Civic Museum) which houses the numerous finds found in the necropolis. The Sanctuary of Santa Maria della Lizza, built by the Normans in the 12th century and bearing traces of a pre-existing Byzantine building, is also worth a visit.



PER LO SVILUPPO LOCALE

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Gallipoli: Gallipoli is a small town on the Apulian coast famous for its beaches and crystal clear water. The old town is located on an offshore island connected by a bridge to the mainland. Many tourist and cultural attractions of the city: Angevin castle, churches, museums and historical buildings.



Food

We will arrange kitchen teams, so everybody gets the chance to cook and prepare the meals with other young people and leaders. There will be a fully equipped kitchen to cook for a large group. All the food will be provided by the staff. For any problem about the food we'll have the possibility to buy extra in the markets in the surroundings. Please it is strongly recommended that if you have any

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particular needing about food (allergies, vegetarian,..) to inform us before coming in order to manage it before.

Travel reimbursement procedure

Accommodation, food and activities are fully covered by the project (and paid by Mediterranea directly), while the travel costs will be reimbursed up to:

- **275 euro** (Spain, Bulgaria, Poland participants)
- **180 euro** (Greece participants)

Each participant will buy her/his own tickets (please send us the travel itinerary and wait for our authorization before to buy the tickets). We'll refund the costs after receiving by ordinary mail in Italy all the **original tickets, boarding passes and invoices** from your home to the accommodation (including busses, trains, shuttles to the airport, etc).

We're allowed from Erasmus+ Agency to refund only the original tickets (altogether including the return tickets) once we'll receive physically by ordinary mail after the youth exchange. No first class tickets or taxi expenses are allowed to be reimbursed.

We'll process only one bank transfer to your sending organization or the group leader, for the whole national group after the youth exchange. No other amount of money will be asked or given to the partners/participants. We can refund your travel tickets in case you wish arrive or leave 2 days before/after the youth exchange, in case you want to have a private tour (but you have to cover food and accommodation by yourself for the extra days, as well for the internal travel tickets).

Language

The language of the exchange will be English. Find below a table with basic Italian:



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yes/no	si/no	Hi	ciao	left /right	destra/sini stro
thank you	grazie	good-bye	ciao	straight on	dritto
your welcome	prego	How much is it?	quanto costa	Street	via/strada
excuse me	mi scusi	where?	dove	Ticket	biglietto
please	per favore	when?	quando	I don't understand	non capisco
good morning	buon giorno	Yesterday	ieri	I don't speak italian	non parlo italiano
good afternoon	buon pomeriggio	Today	oggi	hot/cold	caldo/fred do
good night	buona notte	Tomorro w	domani	no problem	nessun problema

In Italian every written letter is pronounced. You should remember this useful rule and without thinking in a while you'll be speaking Italian ;)

What to prepare

- Intercultural evening where you will have the opportunity to share something about your identity/culture with others. We suggest that all participants can go beyond the traditional “national culture” and think of their individual cultural identity. Think of the elements that compose your identity, the building-blocks of what makes you ‘you’, and try to show them to other participants during this evening. Maybe some of you are into traditional music and others more into rock culture; someone might really like those folk dances from your country and someone else knows everything about... Hip-hop; maybe you feel you are really a typical person from “your country” or maybe you don't fit so well into that box. Whatever you identify with, that's what you should share.



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What to bring

- Anything you may need (USB, PC, video, photo, etc) for the intercultural evenings and workshops you're supposed to prepare.

Youthpass

Every participant is individually entitled to receive a Youthpass Certificate.

Erasmus +

Erasmus+ is the EU's programme for education, training, youth and sport in Europe. Its budget is estimated at €26.2 billion, almost double that of the previous programme (2014-2020).

The 2021-2027 programme places a strong emphasis on social inclusion, green and digital transition and promoting young people's participation in democratic life.

It supports the priorities and activities set out in the European Education Area, the Digital Education Action Plan and the new Skills Agenda for Europe. In addition, the programme:

- supports the European pillar of social rights
- implements the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027
- develops the European dimension in sport.

Opportunities

- Erasmus+ offers mobility and cooperation opportunities for higher education
- vocational education and training
- school education, including early childhood education and care
- adult education
- youth
- and sport.



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Key Action 1 – Mobility of Individuals - Youth exchange

Youth Exchanges are intended to contribute to the personal development of the young participants. The exchanges are open to all European youngpeople, regardless of their background, education, or socio-economic situation.

A Youth Exchange brings together groups of youngpeople from two or more countries, providing themwith an opportunity to meet, discuss, and confrontvarious themes, while learning about each other'scountries and cultures. The main aim is toencourage and promote the personal and socialeducation of young people, reinforcing their feelingof being European citizens. The young peopleinvolved in the Youth Exchange, are an essential 'active' part from the very beginning till the very end of such a project.

Contacts

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Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/mediterraneaassociazione/>

Other useful/emergency numbers:

Police: 113 / 112

Fire Brigade: 115

Ambulance: 118

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