



SUSTAINABLE YOUTH WORK

FROM VOLUNTEERS
TO ENTREPRENEURS

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“Sustainable Youth Work. From volunteers to entrepreneurs” is a publication summarising the international project co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

The project was a collaboration of the following entities:



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

GLOCALFACTORY



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More information about the project and additional
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November 2021



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FOREWORD

The future of youth work



Youth work has always been a challenge, at any time and at any latitude. The involvement of young people themselves and of the local community, collaboration with institutions, the search for spaces and time management, teamwork and the complementarity of very different stakeholders... all these elements have always characterized youth work. But to these elements are also added the ever new challenges, the strong potential for innovation, the immense enthusiasm and energy inherent in the younger generation of our communities. Not only the latter, but the whole set of features mentioned, makes youth work a real adventure! Discovering our community, ourselves and the future.

Two years ago, however, the emergency caused by the Covid-19 pandemic added a worrying obstacle for a sector and a segment of (very young) population and (young) workers already in quite difficulty. The meeting and the exchange, more of looks and experiences than of ideas, is the beating heart of youth work. Their suspension first, and then limitation, represented one of the most difficult challenges that young people and the youth sector have ever faced in the last 70 years.

SYW was a brave project. Strengthened by all the riches and contradictions of the "youth adventure", it added to its pedigree

an international character that went beyond, without neglecting them, all barriers. Not only between Countries, sea and continents. But also between sectors, between different ways of working, between conceptions of the world and relationships with young people themselves. Italy and Ghana, Poland and Kenya and Spain. Business men and volunteers, entertainment workers and social workers, meetings, internships and international teams. If you can't call this a brave project!

The pandemic has put us to the test and has created many difficulties for the implementation of the project. We don't hide it.

But we believe that even this difficult situation and the solvable and unsolvable problems, the clashes, the pacifications, the difficulties that each one, differently and specifically, has faced, have been as many chapters of our incredible adventure.

And of one thing we are sure: we can't wait to face the next challenge together!

Have a nice trip, inside and beyond Sustainable Youth Work.



The portrait of young people

The portrait of young people

Sustainable Youth Work was the title that we gave to our project. We all work with young people and therefore, it was sensible to include the youth work in the title to make it clear what we were up to. As our original idea was to allow the transfer of expertise from sport associations and social entrepreneurs to youth and cultural organisations, we added the word sustainable which we understand as 'causing or allowing something to continue for a period of time'. We wanted to equip non-profit organisations with an entrepreneurship drive that could help them work out strategies to assure economic stability.

The focus on entrepreneurial skills was a result of long discussions we had among the partners. The main difference that we observed between the EU and Africa is the objective of youth work in general. While in Europe the youth work is generally concentrated on values and development of soft skills and community building, the objectives are different in Africa where the objective of youth work is to prepare youth to enter the job market. We thought that these different approaches can stem from the wider social context. First of all, the median age of population in Africa is almost twice lower than in the EU and the emancipation threshold for young people in Europe is higher in Europe than in Africa. Young people

in Europe can simply stay longer with their parents without being a heavy financial burden for them, a thing that doesn't happen in Africa where the earlier a young member of the family can contribute to the family economy, the better. We also reached the conclusion that young people in Europe feel more anxious about getting into employment that doesn't match their education. Those observations brought us to the conclusion that entrepreneurship needs to be given more importance in youth work.

Before starting the work, we looked closely at the data on youth in our countries. Little did we expect that a couple of months later our analysis would already be outdated. The effects of pandemic on youth is still to be examined but it definitely turned the life of young people upside down. Remote learning was not such a big burden since we developed an online course but social distancing was exactly the opposite of what we believed young people need. We asked ourselves how we are going to run a project that is about crossing borders, meeting people and gathering crowds. International travels which were the essence of international youth work were seen as unwanted, organisation of large dissemination events were prohibited and social activities significantly limited.

All this had a tremendous negative effect on young people who become more apathetic and less willing to engage into social activity.

Situation in Italy

YOUTH AND PANDEMIC.

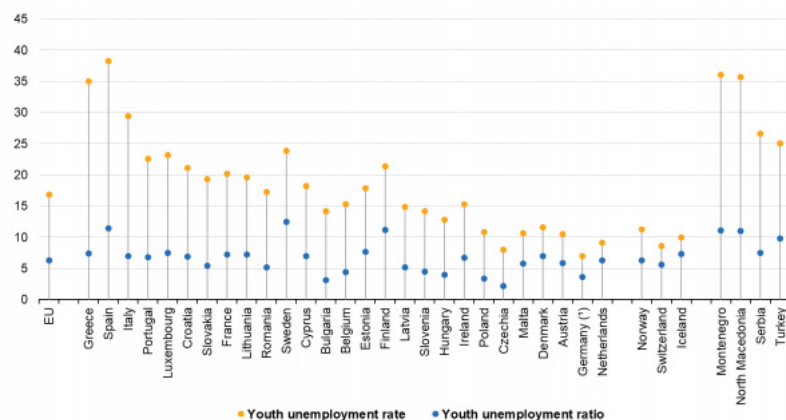
In 2020, the world was rocked by a pandemic that found everyone unprepared. The consequences are likely to be particularly serious for young people in Italy. There are significant repercussions on the dimension of social unease, mental health, insecurity about the future. However, the new generations show a great capacity for resilience, which is reflected in personal attitudes and social

participation, but also in a possible leading role favored by Next Generation EU.

YOUTH AND EMPLOYABILITY.

At the end of 2020 in Italy, “NEET” is the condition of more than one in 4 young people between the ages of 15 and 29. Adolescents and young women and men are stuck in the condition of not studying, not working, not being included in any training course, without any prospects for the future and the possibility of realizing their dreams and potential. In Veneto region, where Glocal Factory is located, the percentage of NEET among young people from 15 to 24 years old is 11,1%.

Youth unemployment rates and ratios, 2020
(in %, people aged 15-24)



(*) Provisional and low reliable data.

Source: Eurostat (youth_empl_100), (youth_empl_140)

eurostat

YOUTH AND VOLUNTEERING

The number of Italian volunteers continues to grow. According to the latest ISTAT data, 9% of the population is dedicated to volunteering for a total of 5,500,000 people. A number to be proud of, but still far from the figures recorded in other European countries. And young people? Unfortunately they are the least involved category, despite the amount of services available to them to find a

volunteer program that reflects their needs and interests.

However, analyzing data within Ayni Cooperation (association for the promotion of international volunteering and research), we found that at least 60% of our audience is under the age of 35, a figure that indicates that, in the cooperation sector, the trend seems to be different. Among all the Italian volunteers, ISTAT records only 1.9% involved in Solidarity and International Cooperation activities, for a total of about 100,000 people. They may seem few, but consider that in the last 15 years there has been an increase of 35%!

<https://www.aynicooperazione.org/uno-sguardo-al-volontariato-in-italia/>

<http://www.vita.it/it/article/2021/03/08/in-italia-piu-di-1-ragazza-su-4-nella-trappola-dei-neet/158592/>; <https://www.openpolis.it/emergenza-covid-e-neet-una-generazione-a-rischio/>

<https://www.rapportogiovani.it/rapporto-giovani-2021-dal-15-aprile-nelle-librerie/>

Situation in Poland

In November 2020, 64% of Polish women and men aged 18–29 declared that they would like to live and work outside Poland (Ipsos research for the OKO.press portal). How did the COVID-19 pandemic affect the results of the November survey? Restrictions limiting freedom and mobility, remote learning, cultural life practically reduced to the Internet, low earning potential due to the closure of sectors of the economy that normally provide the most jobs for young and learners - these are just a few factors influencing the perception and assessment of their condition by young people.

LABOUR MARKET

The Polish labor market is not friendly to young people, and the COVID-19 pandemic makes their situation even more difficult. First, non-standard forms of employment definitely prevail among young people. Even in industries where there is a clearly defined workplace, working time and subordination, civil law contracts

dominate, which do not give young people the right to leave, do not guarantee elementary stability of employment and often require spending much more than 40 hours a week at work.

Secondly, in Poland for many years there has been no comprehensive coordination of the labor market and the education system. The Polish school does not encourage employment in specific professions, and successive governments do not implement solutions that would allow for flexible changes in the education system in relation to the challenges of the labor market. Third, in most Western countries, labor markets are dominated by industry collective agreements that impose precise employment rules for all workers in a given profession, including the requirement for full-time work, working time limits, rules for paying overtime and industry bonuses. In Poland, the percentage of employees covered by collective agreements is among the lowest in the European Union. In Poland, NEETs (non education, employment, training) constitute a relatively high percentage of the population aged 20–34. In 2019, this percentage was 15.3%, and in this group there were definitely more women - 23.7% than men - 8.8%.

YOUTH ONLINE

The Internet attracts young people more and more. Today, teenagers spend an average of 4 hours and 50 minutes a day in their free time online. On non-school days, this time is extended to an average of 6 hours and 10 minutes. Nearly every tenth (11.5%) teenager in his spare time is active on the Internet for more than 8 hours a day, and every fifth (21.3%) spends as much time in front of the monitor on days off from lessons. Every sixth teenager (16.9%) uses the Internet intensively at night (after 10 p.m.). Every fifth teenager declares that in order to be able to spend more time online, he is ready to give up studying (23.2%) and household chores (19.7%), and every third - from participating in a church service (30.6%). As it turned out, every third teenager (33.6%) shows a high intensity of the so-called problematic use of the Internet (a category determining, among others, risky behavior or excessively long online

stay), and three in a hundred - very high (3.2%). Girls from secondary schools are most affected by this problem - as many as two in five (39.4%) of the surveyed students say that if they were to be deprived of their smartphones, their lives would become empty. According to pupils and parents, schools have in most cases managed to cope with distance education. 70% of students assess the organization of distance learning in their school as good ("definitely good" - 13%, "fairly good" - 56.4%).

Almost three-quarters of adolescents have a positive opinion of remote learning. However, this does not mean that they would like to permanently move most of their education online. Almost every second respondent (45.3%) does not support such a solution. Teenagers also declare that during the pandemic they mainly lacked direct contact with their classmates - this was indicated by three-fourths of the surveyed students, and parents (76.0%) think similarly. Additionally, the students during online education lacked especially leaving home (63.3%), which was not noticed by parents, among whom only a few indicated such an answer (6.0%). Compared to 2010, the digital divide is no longer observed due to income, but rather due to insufficient infrastructure, especially in rural areas, and the lack of IT competences.



Protest in Poland. Photo: Grzegorz Żukowski

ACTIVISM

Negative emotions, such as rage, anger, frustration, and their effects, such as feeling depressed and withdrawn on the one hand, and active aggression on the other, are currently significant factors motivating young people to act. The scale of emotions and the need to process them lead to a search for a form of expression that would in practice translate emotions and knowledge about what is happening into specific moral obligations that young people create for themselves and for themselves. There is a great distance from the world of politics in the communities of the young generation. There is even skepticism about the European Green Deal: there are suggestions that decisions are still being taken too slowly and too late, and not on the scale that is already necessary today. Limiting climate change is seen by young people as a struggle for survival. The greater and deeper the awareness of climate problems, the more negative the assessment of older generations is. According to many, the Ethics of the End of the World 85 young people - the elderly neglected many matters, in the frenzy of various discussions there is even a radically sounding term that they should be "put against the wall".

ARE YOUNG POLES DIFFERENT FROM THEIR PEERS IN EUROPE?

They are more traditional than their peers in Western countries - they later start sexual initiation, still get married earlier than them, and they divorce less often (though more often than their Polish peers in the past). They have similar life aspirations, but are poorer than Western youth and see less promising prospects. In terms of prejudices, in recent years they have become closer to Russian, Hungarian and Bulgarian youth.

Situation in Spain

Informe juventud en España 2020 confirms that the interest of young people in politics remains close to 40%, doubling the figures of the previous decade, and with work, education, housing and equality, the topics of greatest interest to youth. Gender inequality is an issue of interest to the group of young people in general (77%), who also consider (83%) that sexist violence is one of the most important social problems.

In addition, there is majority support among young people for public equality policies and a general rejection of controlling attitudes, although sexism continues in the domestic sphere and in care. In any case, gender equality is the cause that has most mobilized youth (38%), followed by education (15.5%) and climate change (14.9%). Thus, 77% of young students have participated in some type of student action, the most frequent being participation in a student strike and voting for representative bodies, both with 58%.

On the other hand, 4 out of 5 young people are interested in issues related to the environment, this interest being particularly intense in young people between 14 and 19 years old. Furthermore, almost 5 out of 10 young people feel a maximum concern for the environment (47% compared to 17% of adults).

Spain is one of the countries with the latest youth emancipation in Europe (the average age of emancipation in the European Union is 26.2 years, while in Spain it is 29.5) and the situation threatens to worsen with COVID : after the pandemic, the percentage of young people who consider stopping living with their parents or guardians falls 15 points. In 2019, 48% thought about doing it and in 2020 only 32.8% were considering it. COVID-19 has also affected reproductive desire, increasing the percentage of young people who do not want to have children from 16.8% to 18%. In general, 75% of young people are not emancipated due to lack of stability or sufficient income.



Photo: Stefan Mueller

The labor market has also been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has deepened pre-existing problems such as precariousness and job instability and has lowered expectations among young people. More than half (52%) of young employees have temporary contracts, a temporality 30 points higher than that of the rest of the population. However, almost 38% would like to work more hours than they currently work. At the same time, almost 4 out of 10 unemployed youth believe that they are unlikely to find a job in the next year, while 66% believe that, after the pandemic, their job and economic opportunities will be worse than those of previous generations.

The effects of the pandemic have aggravated educational inequality among Spanish youth who, by 60%, understand that their use of the academic year has been significantly diminished; reaching 11.2% who claim to have learned less than half that in a normal year. Half of the students also declare that teacher supervision is better in face-to-face teaching and almost 8 out of 10 prefer this method to online.

The psychological impact of the pandemic and, above all, of the Great Confinement, which has affected up to 32% of youth, and this impact is also much more intense among women than among men.

The preferences of young people with regard to access to information: social networks and the internet (46%) surpass television (44%) for the first time as channels of political information.

Situation in Ghana

In Africa, the number of youth is growing rapidly. In 2015, 226 million youth aged 15-24 lived in Africa, accounting for 19% of the global youth population. By 2030, it is projected that the number of youth in Africa will have increased by 42%. Africa's youth population is expected to continue to grow throughout the remainder of the 21st century, more than doubling from current levels by 2055. Empowering the youth with the knowledge and skills to play a full role in nation- building is therefore of paramount importance to the development of Ghana. Currently, 16.9% of the youth are estimated to be unemployed, and given the high youth labour under-utilisation rate of 42%, the proportion of unemployed youth could be more. The Government through the National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Plan (NEIP) supports and incubates young people's businesses with a supportive ecosystem for young Ghanaian entrepreneurs aged 35 years and below. Ghana has had a variety of funds and business support services designed to help business, especially start-up businesses owned by young entrepreneurs. These include Youth Enterprise Support, the Youth & Social Enterprise Fund, the Youth Construction Enterprise Fund, and the Youth Enterprise Support (YES) Initiative.

(<http://www.youthjobcreation.org/ghana-youth-a-critical-resource-for-national-development/>)

For more info: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351904513_Overview_of_Youth_Development_in_Ghana; <https://www.youthpolicy.org/factsheets/country/ghana/>

Situation in Kenya

The youth have been facing have been facing a lot of challenges in the past years hence barring them from achieving their full potential in the society. This are but a few of their problems.

EMPLOYMENT CREATION

There are about 500,000 youth who graduate from various tertiary institutions yearly ready to enter the job market every year. However, due to the slow economic growth, corruption, nepotism and demand for experience by potential employers, 75% remain unemployed.

EMPOWERMENT AND PARTICIPATION

One of the greatest challenges in Youth Empowerment and participation is how to ensure that young people are passionate about causing transformation in Kenya. Youth Empowerment and Participation is the quit essential force for causing such transformation.

Young people need a youth branded platform from where they can speak powerfully, take appropriate action, and inspire belief that will have a catalytic impact all over the country through youth-led development initiatives. Youth empowerment and participation is a dynamic cycle.

Overall, it is anticipated that the outcome of Youth Empowerment and participation is strong contribution to National prosperity, economic competition and reduced unemployment. When empowered, young people can contribute greatly towards good governance and democracy with a passionate desire to be catalyst for National Development.

HEALTH

The uneven distribution of health facilities in the country continues to widen disparities in affordability and access to medical care. Statistics indicate that only 42% of the population has access to

medical facilities within four kilometers and 75% within eight kilometers. Medical personnel are also too few to sufficiently address the health needs of the population, let alone those of the youth. Currently there is one doctor for every 33,000 people in the rural areas and 1,700 in the urban areas and it is estimated that only 12% of the health facilities are youth friendly.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The 8-4-4 system of education was geared to imparting appropriate skills to enhance self-employment. However, due to the high costs, poverty and lack of facilities, there have been high school dropout rates.

Most of the youth either drop out of school or graduate without necessary skills for self-employment. Many girls drop out of school due to early pregnancies.

The country's training institutions are also either inadequate or lack the essential facilities and technology to prepare students for the challenging market demands.

Recently, sub-standard training institutions have come up to take advantage of shortage of training opportunities to exploit desperate youth. In most cases, there is no linkage between the training institutions and either the formal or informal (jua kali) sector. The youth trained in these institutions cannot, therefore, be immediately absorbed into the job market.

CRIME AND DRUGS

There is a fast emerging trend of injecting drug use especially narcotic. Moreover, abuse of drugs is highly associated with the risks of contracting HIV/Aids and other sexually transmitted diseases especially among the youth. Violent criminal attacks, including rape, mugging, armed carjacking and home invasions are increasingly being associated with the youth these days. Over 50% of all the convicted criminals are young people aged between 16 and 25 years.

LEISURE, RECREATION, AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Leisure, recreation and community service are important for the psychological and physical development of the youth. It also provides opportunity for appreciation, participation and creative experience in leisure, music, art, dance, drama crafts, novelty events service and cultural activities.

This helps engaging the youth to make good use of their leisure time, express their beliefs and values as well as promote and preserve local art and culture for the benefit of the future youth.

However, current investment in leisure and recreation has not reflected its importance.

YOUTH AND ENVIRONMENT

Degradation of the environment, through pollution, poor waste management and deforestation, is a major challenge for Kenya. With the ensuing destruction of water catchments, depletion of fish and other marine stock, pollution of rivers and destruction of plants and animals, the youth cannot be assured of quality life in the future.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Due to lack of access to information and communication technology (ICT) especially in rural areas, youth cannot exploit their career, business and education opportunities.

YOUTH WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The categories of youths with special needs have been identified as the: Unemployed youth; Out of school youth; Female youth; Youth infected and affected by HIV/Aids; Street youth; physically, and mentally challenged youth; and Youth in difficult circumstances.

ACCESS TO FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Traditional financial institutions have avoided lending to youth due

to their relative inability to comply with the high transaction costs, difficulty in assessing and managing their risk profile, and lack of the required financial documentation as well as collateral.

This are just but a few of the challenges the youth face in their day to day lives as they try survive and reach their dreams. Hopefully a solution can be found to the problem of the youth. This may include the launch of more youth groups and support from the government and non-governmental organizations.

(freely inspired by <https://studyinkenya.co.ke/blog/challenges-facing-kenyan-youth>)

A blue speech bubble with a white outline and a white drop shadow, pointing downwards and to the right. It contains the text "Need analysis and the objectives of the project" in a white, italicized serif font.

*Need analysis and the
objectives of the project*

Need analysis and the objectives of the project

The project Sustainable Youth Work stemmed from a need analysis involving all the people reached by previous Erasmus+ project Cultnet. More than 120 youth workers from Italy, Poland and Burkina Faso were asked about their needs and problems. Results can be synthesised in two words: network and sustainability. Strong of its previous experience, SYW seeks to address this key need dividing it into 3 different problems:

1. Need to make youth work sustainable to face the natural instability of non-profit activity and a general lack of entrepreneurial drive among youth workers. Raising funds for a project is one of the main issues in youth work. Any cultural, sport or social project can be very successful but it requires a stable financial plan to survive. Sport associations tend to have better economic stability than cultural organisations that rely heavily on donations and grants. The transfer of their expertise to cultural organisations is one of the issues we try to address. Through a complete learning path including online course and international mobility we hoped to provide youth workers with entrepreneurship skills. At the same time, we wanted to connect the world of associations and socially oriented businesses in order to join ef-

forts to achieve better results. In addressing these needs, the project complied with EU youth strategy to “improve quality and sustainability of youth work and volunteering in both Partner and Programme’s countries and enhance their synergies with the labour market and society”.

2. Low (or no) official recognition of skills and competences achieved through non-formal learning, especially in Partners’ countries. Official recognition is very important to improve the quality and appeal of youth work. Sustainable Youth Work project aimed at bridging the gap through the involvement of public and private educational institutions to sign a ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ (MoU) in which these entities express their intention of implementing the online course. In doing so the project fully complied with the objectives of “improving the recognition of youth work, non-formal learning and volunteering in Partners and Programmes countries and enhancing their synergies and complementarities with other education systems”.
3. Need for exchange, transfer of expertise and knowledge among youth workers who come from diverse regions of the world. According to the main results of previous projects, youth workers from Partner and Programme countries actively seek opportunities to work together. Previous project Cultnet began to build an international youth community dealing with the topic of art and culture for inclusion. Sustainable Youth Work aimed to improve, foster and spread it. That was to be achieved by adding new organisations from Partner and Programme countries to the network and creating a mobile app. In doing so, the project complied with the aim of “fostering cooperation and exchanges in the field of youth between Programme Countries and Partners Countries from different regions of the world”.

THE OBJECTIVES OF SUSTAINABLE YOUTH WORK PROJECT WERE:

- to improve the quality of youth work in terms of economic stability,
- to pursue the official recognition of non-formal learning path,
- to ideate and test a model to assure economical sustainability in youth work.

The objectives of the Sustainable Youth Work project

The project aimed at building up a professionalising learning path for youth workers which would increase their knowledge, skills, competences and attitudes on youth participation, social inclusion, project management and social entrepreneurship. We hoped to achieve that by fostering the recognition of non-formal learning and by expanding the existing networks of youth workers from Europe and Africa. Achieving specific objectives positively would influence the general objectives set by the proposal: to contribute to improve a well-performing education and training systems and youth policies providing people involved with the skills required by the labour market and the economy.

Through the improved quality of youth work, more young people, especially those living in peripheral areas, are able to co-design and be the protagonist of sustainable, diversity-friendly

and fully inclusive cultural events/projects. Young people are more likely to access and create cultural opportunities which allow them to put into practice theoretical and professional knowledge. Their engagement contributes to increasing the social sustainability of their communities.

Finally, the project contributed to the establishment of a community of non-governmental organisations, businesses, cultural and training associations from Italy, Poland, Ghana, Kenya and Spain. After the completion of the project, members of the network can keep their network up and running thanks to the mobile app developed by the consortium. Community building is favoured by mobility activities that allows exchanges of methodologies and practices among youth workers who come from completely different historical and socio-economic backgrounds. Working in intercultural teams and in an effective, competitive business field, is expected to significantly boost the professionalism of youth workers and their competences in adapting new methodologies to their own working context.



*New learning path.
Our proposal*

New learning path. Our proposal

The main innovation elements of this projects are:

1. Mixing of partners coming from 4 main sectors: cultural, business, youth and sport sector. The innovative element is the transfer of build-up aggregation and development of youth workers through the examples and models taken from the sport and business sector to youth and cultural sector. Most youth workers are active in their own communities to create art and culture events, entertaining activities done by and for young people. One of the aims of SYW was to make them learn from the business and sport sector how to convert their activities into more sustainable and business-oriented ones. The capacity building in this direction was ensured by the competences of two SMEs part of the consortium: one from Spain, an expert in cultural events (Marmaduke) and one from Ghana, an expert in developing training and business models (iSpace).
2. Achieving social goals and inclusion of people with fewer opportunities through a deep learning of business models and sustainable development of cultural activities. Activities developed by YWs in the communities involved in the project were mostly directed to support young people with

less opportunities. We wanted to involve them in cultural and structural events pursuing social goals. SYW built up new competences to revolutionize the way to achieve educational improvements to help employability (part of European 2020 strategy). Thanks to the learning path, youth workers learned how to achieve social goals using business models and creating activities that can be self-sustainable and replicable in time. They learned new skills and competencies that can be useful in their future working life.

3. Introducing a link between youth workers operating in different areas (sport, ICT, culture) based on sustainable and social business models. They discovered new opportunities and methodology to develop their tasks thanks to the examples brought into the learning path from the culture, sport and ICT. The new international and multicultural teams were able to have a deep overview of the new ways to manage events and to make the community connected all over the years to their achievement. Youth workers implemented practical learning schemes that can be replicated in different scenarios and improved a strong cooperation with their counterparts in five different EU and non-EU countries involved in the project.
4. Strengthen the link between communities thanks to the ICT tools. The ICT tools available within the project such as MOOC, mobile app and wiki area became a key feature to maintain the communities throughout the project and beyond it. The ICT tools developed in the SYW project will be available after the end of the project and they can be sustained using the business model learned through the non-formal learning path. The mobile APP adds the opportunity to work and exchange experience with youth workers from different regions of EU and Africa. Youth workers can exchange their experience, expertise, suggestions, etc. They can be on the street and filming a direct involvement of vol-

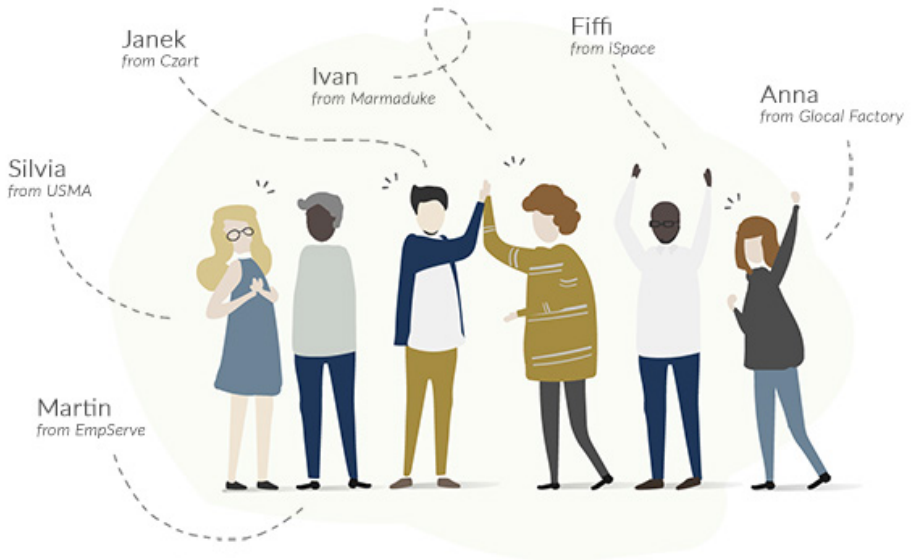
unteers at the same moment it is happening and they don't need to go back home to revise the material and upload it on the platform. Wiki area will take a step forward and give suggestions and structure to the material collected during the experimentation phase and the training experience elaborating a new concept of training community.

Partnership. Who and why implemented the project?

Sustainable Youth Work is the result of a previous project based on collaboration among some of the partners. The project was born to capitalize a great product of Erasmus+ project Cultnet: a MOOC to improve skills of youth workers in dealing social inclusion and youth engagement through art and culture. Thanks to mobilities that were possible thanks to the previous project, a first community among youth workers from Italy, Poland and Burkina Faso was also created.

On the basis of these results, the Sustainable Youth Work project aims to build up a learning path developing entrepreneurship skills and effective and sustainable international cooperation of youth work. This objective is achieved by involving business organisations, sport associations and educational institutions to improve, test and adopt the proposed learning path. Therefore, the enlargement of partnership was fundamental for the success of the project.

The core of the project consortium is represented by Glocal Factory and CZ-ART. **Glocal Factory**, given its experience, was the lead partner. It focuses its activities on innovative teaching and learning methodologies and on the elaboration of training schemes for youth, teachers and young people. The members and associates of the Glocal Factory worked on several EU projects as training methodological supervisors and as responsible for the draft and implementation of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan. Glo-



GLOCAL  **FACTORY**

USMA

CZART
stowarzyszenie

 **MARMADUKE**

 **EmpServe**
Innovate • Create • Impact

ISPACE



cal Factory led the consortium and coordinated the work of the intercultural teams, exchange of business-oriented models and mobilities. It also implemented Memorandum of Understanding in its area.

CZ-ART is a youth organisation that focuses on artistic expression as a vehicle for inclusion of young people. Its aim is to use non-formal methods in youth activities. They have an extensive network of volunteers in the field of art and culture in Czestochowa, Poland. Therefore, it had a key role in mobility and improvement of the learning path. CZ-ART is also experienced in involving youth workers through ICT and its experience was crucial in building a mobile app, wiki area and digital communication of the project. Their tasks included among others:

- Coordination of the ICT,
- Coordination of the course, wiki area and the production of mobile app,
- Coordination of the experimentation in Poland,
- Running a dissemination event and implementing the dissemination plan in Poland,
- Selecting participants and preparing international mobilities.

USMA promotes volunteering for social integration and sport education and organizes sport and inclusive activities involving its members, their families and the local community. It cooperates also with local authorities, AICCREVE, catholic parishes and other communities and, therefore, its role in the project included:

- Sharing its sustainable model in building up youth events
- Forming an intercultural team which was going to test the project's results with its volunteers
- Coordinating dissemination and social media campaign

- Establishing a Memorandum of Understanding with local institutions thanks to its long history of cooperation with local community
- Developing a dissemination strategy able to diffuse project results and achievements

iSpace is an agency that aims to promote start-ups for innovation in working especially with young people. Its experience in training and engaging with young people over the national territory made this company a suitable partner to realise the following tasks:

- Hosting youth workers from the EU countries during the training experience
- Contributing to the building of the ICT tools suitable for the needs of the project
- Encouraging young people and youth workers to experiment the proposed learning path
- Engaging with local policy makers, authorities and communities to foster the recognition and validation of non-formal learning.

Marmaduke is a Spanish SME active in youth cultural events. Its specific profile and its experience in Erasmus+ for Entrepreneurs programme made them suitable to undergo the following role:

- Hosting youth workers from the EU and African countries to a professionalizing, training experience
- Disseminating project's results in a multicultural youth event
- Signing the Memorandum of Understanding with other institutions in its area.

EmpServe is an NGO with a strong network of young people

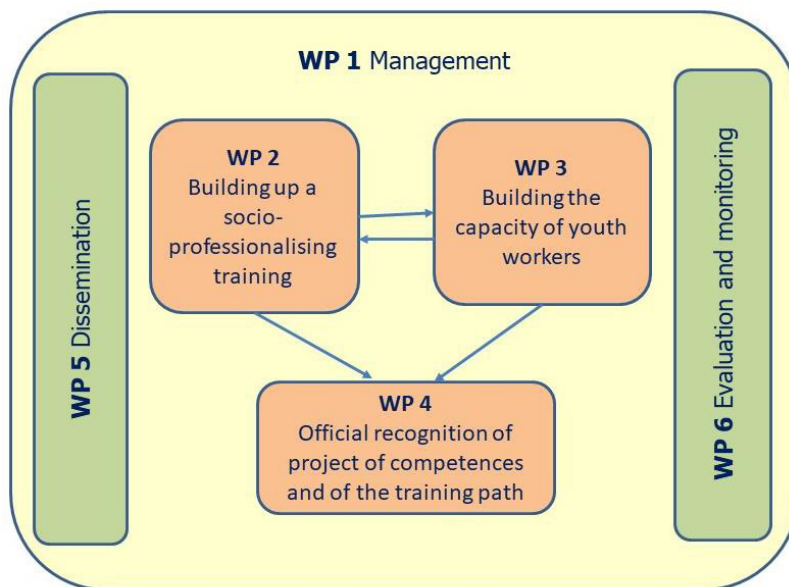
and a large experience in dealing with youth problems through ICT tools. It has the right competences to:

- Forming an intercultural team
- Encouraging youth workers to experiment the proposed learning path
- Testing, developing and adopting the digital tools
- Disseminating project's results
- Collaborating in Monitoring and evaluation strategy



Innovative learning path

The objectives of the Sustainable Youth Work project were to be achieved through a series of work packages (WP) that were interdependent. Work packages 1, 2 and 3 which were the core of our project included the development of the digital tools (WP1), capacity building (WP2) and gaining the recognition of the training (WP3). WP4 and 5 which included dissemination and evaluation respectively allowed us to monitor the process and reach a wider audience. All the activities related to the management were included in WP1.



We started the development of the learning path with the design of the training curriculum and the definition of the main products: the module on entrepreneurship which was added to the existing MOOC for youth workers, creation of the mobile app - an ICT tool to share experiences and enhance the management of a youth project, and drafting the structure of the wiki area. All the tools were used to structure the capacity building actions foreseen in the WP3. For the experimentation of the tools, in work package 3 we

selected 24 youth workers who completed the MOOC and formed international groups. Each group was composed of 5 people from one country and three people from each of the other communities involved in the project. In this way, we established groups in Italy, Kenya and Poland, each with 8 members. These intercultural teams were the core target users of the app and wiki and they took part in the mobilities.

The training path established a strong link between the theoretical knowledge gained by participants and the practical skills learned during the experimentation period. The non-formal learning activities implemented by the project were then officially confirmed and supported by the project consortium and recognised by the local entities which signed the memorandum of understanding.

Through the process of monitoring and evaluation, we were able to spot the weaknesses of the learning path and bugs in the digital tools and later, through the dissemination of the project results, raise awareness, promote and diffuse the project's outcomes and results. Project dissemination activities in Europe and in Africa allowed to reach a wide audience with an impact on the youth sector.

Who can benefit from the project?

The intellectual outputs of the project can be used by the members of the consortium and other organizations which work with young people and are interested in training their staff. It can also be useful for local authorities, schools, youth clubs and leaders of local communities. Stakeholders were reached via activities undertaken by the international teams, organization of national dissemination events, involvement in the final dissemination event, participation to the stakeholders' initiatives on the territories to promote the project's results, organization of roundtables and meeting mostly with the local authorities and policy makers to strengthen their engagement in the project activities and to foster the recognition of

the learning curricula.

All the products of the project, such as the course, mobile app, wiki area, mobility diaries and this publication, are available on the website (yedu.eu). We encourage you, youth workers and any other interested people to replicate our path of socio-professional improvement. We hope that it will help you grow as a professional.

Developing the digital tools

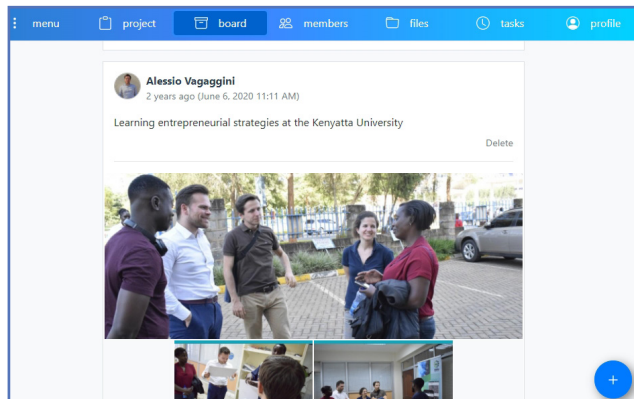
We spent the first months of the project on developing digital tools: the fourth module of the online course on sustainability and social entrepreneurship, mobile app and wiki area for youth work. Each tool was then tested by the selected youth workers before, during and after the mobility to assure the adherence of the products to the user needs. The international team in charge of the design and production of the tools was in fact integrated with youth workers who provided feedback, suggestions and inputs.

The existing massive open online course (MOOC) on project management developed within the CultNet project included three modules, ie. Youth participation, Social Inclusion and Project management. Each module contained reading materials, interviews with the youth workers from Italy, Poland and Burkina Faso and exercises. It was a self-paced course which allowed the participants to start it at any given time. With the help from Erasmus+ we were able to add the fourth module on sustainability and social entrepreneurship. We used the canvas business model as it can be easily implemented to the nonprofit context of youth work. The biggest asset of the course are the interviews with the experts in the field of youth entrepreneurship recorded in Ghana, Kenya and Spain.

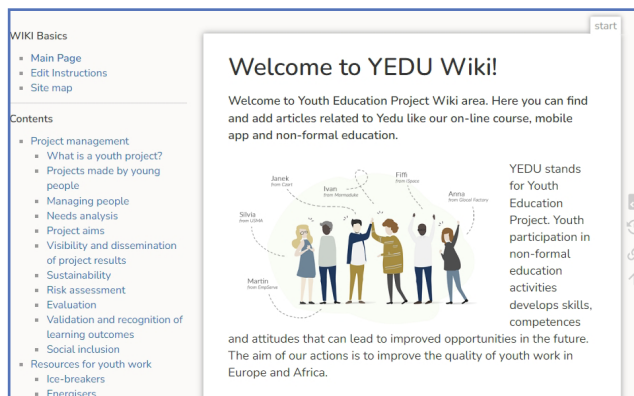
Mobile app was created to foster collaboration among youth workers who completed the MOOC and were willing to join the experimentation phase. The app allows users to create groups and invite other users to join them. It can be used to share the contents



A frame from the video from the online course.



News feed in the mobile app.



Wiki area where everyone can add contents.

such as documents, photos and messages, assign the tasks and their completion as well as automatically create Gantt charts. The app is free of charge and is integrated with the yedu.eu platform.

Wiki area is a collaboratively created part of yedu.eu platform which allows any user to add and edit content related to the youth sector. The wiki area lets people who finished the learning path tell their experience, share good practices and answer more common questions. During the experimentation phase, youth workers created content for the wiki area once they completed the online course and the international mobility.

Putting our hands to work

Once the digital tools were ready we were able to start the next phase of the project in which we could see people work together. On the one hand, we wanted to provide the opportunity to create a community of youth workers from EU and Africa, enlarge the existing network of youth organisations and increase the skills and competences of social workers but, on the other hand, we also wanted to test our tools and receive feedback which could help us improve them. In order to do this, each partner organisation selected a group of youth workers willing to participate in the project and asked them to complete the online course. The most active members of the national teams were then selected to participate in the international study visits and training courses which took place in Poland, Italy, Kenya, Spain and Ghana. The organisation of the study visits and training courses were an opportunity for them to use the mobile app and wiki area and to assess their usefulness for such activities. One of the improvements proposed by the participants was adding the document sharing option and modification of the task option. Pandemic forced us to modify our original plans, however we managed to implement most of them.

Our original plan was to organise three study visits and two training courses. Study visits would allow the youth workers to

get to know the local ecosystem of youth work through a series of meetings with leaders of local communities. Training courses would give the opportunity to have in-depth understanding of social entrepreneurship. The dates of each mobility would be selected in a way to offer an opportunity to participate in an organisation of a cultural event. Due to the ever-changing travel restrictions, lockdowns and limited participant ratio, we had to adjust our original plan to the circumstances and modify some of the aspects of our mobilities.

Study visit in Poland, Italy and Kenya

Study visits gave youth workers an opportunity to spend time together, share their knowledge on youth participation and to reinforce their commitment. The visits focused mainly on peer-to-peer observation and meetings with leaders of local communities in order to better understand the youth work in the EU and Africa. The experience was tailored to the needs of each participant and varied according to the country of destination. All study visits were organised as planned with the study visit to Kenya taking place in February 2020, just a few days before the first lockdown.

Training courses in Seville and Ghana

The aims of the training courses were to increase the competences of youth workers in the field of social entrepreneurship and provide them with skills necessary to provide support to young people with entrepreneurial drive. For this reason we decided to host the training courses in Spain and Ghana where our partners run economically sustainable initiatives. Marmaduke in Spain is a cultural agency which organises between 60 and 100 concerts a year all over Spain. The company currently has two full time workers and takes part in the Erasmus for Entrepreneurs programme as a hosting organization. iSpace in Ghana is a technology hub which

provides support to young developers through incubating their initiatives. Their hub helps women harness technology to unlock new skills and develop existing ones so they can improve career prospects and access more job opportunities. A number of their members launched successful mobile apps which are now used by thousands of users.

Final meeting in Italy

The last meeting was an opportunity to summarize the project and look back at what we have been able to achieve. This meeting was especially important for us because it was the first time when we were able to meet all together in one place after long months of online work. The pandemic and the restrictions imposed by the governments had an important impact on our initial plan for the project and nobody could have imagined how much adjustment were necessary to make it happen as planned. For these reasons the final meeting was a moment to celebrate and to rethink the future of youth work.

We organised three sessions during the final meeting in Italy: round table about youth work in EU and Africa in the context of global pandemic, peer-to-peer evaluation of the results of the project and the workshop aimed at multiplying the project results in the future. We were also invited to the concert of our local project partner to share our experience with local community.



INTERNATIONAL MOBILITIES

Focus on Culture

Czestochowa, Poland, September 2019

As it was the first international meeting for youth workers, our aim was to create a strong relationship between the participants and to provide them with an insight into the local ecosystem of NGOs working in the field of culture. We visited two different organisations every day and on Friday and Saturday we were directly involved in the organisation of an annual event called “Cultural Night”, in which CZ-ART has been involved for years.

Focus on sport

Padova, Italy, December 2019

As the Italian partner of the project is USMA, a sports union, the main topic was sport, outdoor and leisure activities. As in Poland, participants visited various organisations and had an opportunity to talk to local leaders. At the end, we helped in the organisation of a musical show.

Focus on Entrepreneurship

Nairobi, Kenya, February 2020

The theme of the visit in Kenya was focused on helping young people learn entrepreneurship skills that would let them leave poverty and get a job. We visited organisations that work in the informal settlements in Nairobi with the objective of equipping young people with skills and attitudes that would allow them to escape poverty.

Focus on Culture and entrepreneurship

Sevilla, Spain, June 2021

The training course in Spain was supposed to take place in April 2020 but since Spain was the epicentre of the pandemic at that time, the mobility was postponed. When the travel restrictions within the EU were finally lifted and our volunteers were able to cross the borders, there were other obstacles - the Spanish restriction on organising the artistic events which were the main topic of the training course and the restrictions on travelling from outside the EU. Finally, the training course took place in June 2021, more than a year later.

Focus on IT and entrepreneurship

Accra, Ghana, August 2021

Meeting in Ghana also happened behind schedule. The biggest challenge was to find a person willing to travel to Africa in the time of pandemic. An opportunity that would result in a waiting list in normal circumstances turned out to be seen as dangerous. Most people simply preferred not to expose themselves to unnecessary risk of being in a country where access to medical help is limited. Another reason raised by potential candidates was the necessity of going through an extremely complicated process of crossing multiple borders and risk of getting trapped in a forced quarantine in a foreign country which could end up very costly for them. But we found one person willing to do so - Mariusz Jas from Poland.

The visit was successful though shorter than planned due to various reasons, one of them being the collapse of the Dubai airport caused by Afghans fleeing their country after the American troops withdrew from Kabul. It was also much more costly than it would have been before the pandemic. Airline ticket prices and the price of the mandatory vaccines required for the entry to Ghana raised significantly. Not to mention that Mariusz was forced to stay in quarantine even though he was fully vaccinated against covid-19. The training course itself was very fruitful as not only did Mariusz learn a lot about social entrepreneurship but also the members of iSpace could learn a lot from Mariusz who is an expert in IT himself.



Study visit in Poland



Study visit in Italy



Study visit in Kenya



Training course in Spain



Training course in Ghana



Final meeting in Italy

A blue speech bubble with a white outline and a white drop shadow, pointing downwards. It contains the text "Dissemination and recognition of project results" in a white, italicized serif font.

*Dissemination and
recognition of project
results*

Dissemination and recognition of project results

The dissemination and exploitation strategy was divided into two phases. The first phase was drafting the dissemination strategy and selection of the assessment instruments. The second was its implementation. We prepared the dissemination plan which helped us keep track of the dissemination activities and measure their impact.

All the project outputs and outcomes such as the developed ICT tools (online course, mobile app, wiki area), the exchange of ideas and good practices, experience gained by individuals, knowledge sharing, assessment, recognition and certification of informal and non-formal learning.

Our results were disseminated to the target groups, such as youth workers, NGOs, policy makers, teachers, young people, and the general public. The dissemination was carried out along all the project lifetime from the announcement of the project in the very first months of the project implementation until the national and final dissemination event.

The channels of dissemination and exploitation were adapted to the target group that we aimed to reach. Some of the selected methods used were: Erasmus+ Project Results Platform; project

and organisational websites; SYW branding and logos, leaflets, newsletter, email campaigns, press releases and radio podcasts; videos; social media. The national dissemination events were the main way to disseminate the project.

SYW outputs and impacts will be sustained by:

The replication of the learning path with the use of produced digital tools, which were a one-off investment. Its life beyond the project does not depend on availability of a high amount of financial resources.

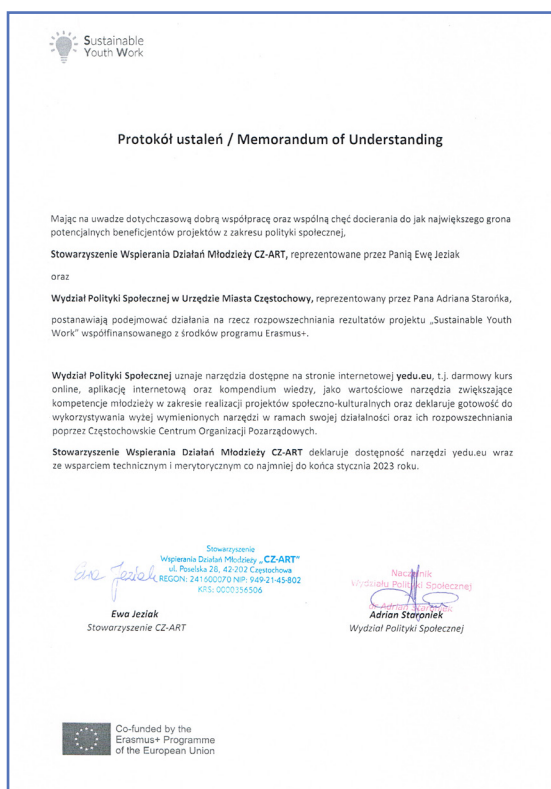
A strong commitment and a personal interest of partner organizations. CZ-ART, Glocal Factory, USMA and EmpServe use the path in their daily work with volunteers and as a training offer for other NGOs. iSpace has already enriched its training proposal by adopting the learning path.

The enlargement of the international network of youth organizations through the mobilities.

The support of local administrators and policy makers on the basis of the memorandum of understanding.

Memorandum of understanding.

One of the instruments of the dissemination process was the Memorandum of Understanding. A memorandum of understanding is a type of agreement between two or more parties which expresses a convergence of will between the parties, indicating an intended common line of action. It is often used either in cases where parties do not imply a legal commitment or in situations where the parties cannot create a legally enforceable agreement. In the case of our project, MoU was signed between each partner and local authorities or other entities which provide training to social workers or whose activities are in line with the objective of our project. In this document project partners and other stakeholders express their intention to include our learning path in their daily work.





*Conclusions and
recommendations*

Conclusions and recommendations



ANNA SCHENA

Project coordinator

Sustainable Youth Work has been an ambitious project, born from the relationships and enthusiasm of CultNet. It aims at expanding and improving the learning path and the international network of youth workers which are its heritage. Over the tool of culture and the involvement of youth workers from different countries and continents, the key element of SYW has been the business involved through the engagement of companies. The equal exchange between African and EU partners, involving both youth association and company from one as from the other, and between volunteers and business world, has been another of the main focus of the project. In the end, Sustainable Youth Work is part of a process of growing of ideas and relationships among people, and this feature characterized its development. Even now it is “completed”, it’s for us like a seaport from where to start for the next adventure/project/activity/... .

From all these experiences, materials, network and skills achieved, we’d like to provide you – young people involved in your community, youth workers, trainers, teachers, educators... - with some tips and recommendations. We selected some successful elements and some challenges met throughout the project lifetime.

Successful points:

- Collaboration among different countries and partners (somehow, it worked!)
- Production of effective and S.M.A.R.T. tools
- Mobility and meeting among different but complementary realities
- Creation of a wide network inside and beyond Europe

Challenging issues:

- Emergency caused by the pandemic of Covid19
- Communication among different cultures and kind of associations
- Effective engagement of young people in some of the countries involved
- Interaction among various interests and ways of working (sport, music, business, international cooperation, local associations etc.)



Taking into consideration all these elements and the path of the project as described in this compendium, our recommendations are:

1. **CONSTANT COMMUNICATION** – among partners and with your target, their needs and interests, NOT as a collateral task of the project but as the MOST IMPORTANT PART of it.

2. **FLEXIBILITY** – a project is a “living creature” you take care and develop with your partners, collaborators and target. It’s not yours and it doesn’t follow the foreseen path. Don’t be stubborn, be flexible!

3. **FUN** – the rule is simple: if it’s not funny, something is going wrong. Enthusiasm, energy and laughs are key ingredients of a good project... not only for others, first of all for you.

OUR

DETERMINATION

IDEAL RIDERS OFFICES
WELCOME
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**TO TRANSFORM OUR
TECHNICALLY ORIENTED
BE THE MOST ADMIN**

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S THE KEY TO SUCCESS

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**UR YOUTHS TO BE
ENTED, SHED LIGHT AND
RABLE IN THE SOCIETY**

ON

**YOUTHS TO BE
STEADY NATIONAL
OPMENT.**

