

FOR A FUTURE TO COME

Contact Making Seminar

Potsdam, Germany

14th to 19th of December 2007



FINAL REPORT



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INTRODUCTION

The project “For a Future to Come – International Youth Work on Conflict Management” aims at enhancing the visibility of the Youth in Action Programme of the European Commission in Eastern Europe and the promotion of Conflict Management projects. The combination of the promotion of the Youth in Action Programme and the trainings on conflict management will give an advantage to both.

Particularly, the regional and ethnic conflicts in Eastern Europe and Caucasus countries all require from our point of view conflict solution approaches that improve the relationship between the conflict parties. Conflict management projects from local organisations bringing international and intercultural impacts into the different conflict processes seem for us to be very suitable for the improvement of the existing situations. But also, the uprising of populism, nationalism and intercultural tensions in EU countries makes it necessary for youth organisations from European Union countries to think about new approaches for conflict resolution that offer possibilities to improve working methods and to enlarge the impact of own projects, particularly for those organisations that deal with the integration processes and fight against racism and xenophobia.

This Contact-Making Seminar (CMS)/ Partnership Building Activity (PBA) gathered representatives of NGOs from Eastern European and Caucasian (EECA) countries as well as from European Union countries. During four days the participants had time to get to know each other, their organisations’ profile and target group and to set-up common project ideas for future cooperation.

Accordingly, the objectives of the CMS were:

- To build new partnerships between Programme countries and partners countries from Eastern Europe and Caucasus region to create new project ideas within the Youth in Action Programme
- To establish a Trans-European youth network for international youth projects dedicated to conflict resolution
- To provide knowledge about possibilities of co-operation with Eastern Europe within the International Cooperation of the Youth in Action Program
- To promote the implementation of youth projects in Eastern Europe and Caucasus region

The working methods were based on principles of non-formal education with a combination of practical and theoretical tools. The working methods included:

- Presentations of participating organisations
- Theoretical inputs
- Group discussion
- Brainstorming sessions
- Project development work

The participants of this CMS/ PBA consisted of former participants of one of our training courses on conflict management (Georgia, Poland 2007) and of newly recruited additional organisations' representatives in order to enlarge and multiply the range of our large scale project.

The event was organised with the support of all Project partners, but particularly thanks to close cooperation between Mostar Friedensprojekt e.V. (MFP, Germany), Association Young Azerbaijani Friends of Europe (AYAFE, Azerbaijan) and Minorities of Europe (MoE, United Kingdom). These three organisations were responsible for the implementation of Potsdam CMS and to that end established a project team consisting of three people. Sebastian Schweitzer (Germany) and Maksymilian Fras (United Kingdom) conducted the training, while Shahin Bayramov (Azerbaijan) was arranging logistical and technical support on the spot.

DAILY PROGRAMME

ARRIVAL DAY - DECEMBER 14 TH	
Hours	Session
All day	Arrival in Potsdam

DAY 1 - DECEMBER 15 TH	
Hours	Session
Until 9.45	Breakfast
10.00	Opening Presentation of the CMS Programme, Aims & Objectives
11.30	Coffee break
12.00	Getting to know each other Ice Breaking, Expectations, fears & contributions
14.00	Lunch
15.30	Starting the preparation of the Organisations Fair
16.00	Organisations Fair
18.00	Coffee break
18.30	YOUTH in Action Programme & Challenges in International Cooperation
19.30	Dinner
20.30	Intercultural Evening I

DAY 2 - DECEMBER 16 TH	
Hours	Session
Until 9.45	Breakfast
10.00	Intro & Energizer
10.15	Exchange of Good Practices Presentation of projects in and with EECA
11.30	Coffee break
12.00	Intercultural Learning Exercise Reflection on ICL exercise & theoretical input
14.00	Lunch
15.30	Conflict management and conflict resolution – Tools for international youth exchanges
17.00	Coffee break
17.30	Partnership in the project – Workshop on quality & theoretical input
19.30	Dinner
21.00	Intercultural Evening II

DAY 3 - DECEMBER 17TH	
Hours	Session
Until 8.45	Breakfast
09.00	Sightseeing in Potsdam
11.30	Coffee break
12.00	Work on project ideas – Needs analysis
12.45	Work on project ideas - Development and Planning
14.00	Lunch
15.30	Work on project ideas - Development and Planning
17.00	Coffee break
17.30	Work on project ideas - Development and Planning
19.30	Dinner
20.00	Free evening

DAY 4 - DECEMBER 18TH	
Hours	Session
Until 9.45	Breakfast
10.00	Energizer
10.15	Preparation for Project Presentations
11.30	Coffee break
12.00	Presentation of Project Ideas
14.00	Lunch
15.30	Future Planning and Follow-Up
17.30	Coffee break
18.00	Evaluation of the Seminar and Perspectives
19.30	Dinner
21.00	Farewell party

DEPARTURE DAY - DECEMBER 19TH	
All Day	Departure of the participants

PARTICIPANTS LIST

COUNTRY	SURNAME	NAME	ORGANISATION	CITY	EMAIL
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BY	Arkhanhelskaya	Hanna	Youth Public Union "New Faces"	Minsk	newfaces@newfaces-belarus.org
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TEAM MEMBERS

Country	Surname	Name	Organisation	City	Email
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GER	Schweitzer	Sebastian	Mostar Friedensprojekt	Potsdam	poachde@yahoo.de

PROGRAMME DETAILS

>> DAY 1

Opening and Getting to Know Each Other

Context: The aim of this session was to help the participants to get to know each other and to introduce the topic and the programme of the Contact Making Seminar.

Contents: Name games, ice-breaking games, group-building games, programme presentation and background information about the Contact Making Seminar, fears and expectations analysis.

Organisations Fair

Context: The aim of this programme part was to introduce all represented organisations and to make the first step for future cooperation.

Content: The participants got papers, markers and other materials to prepare posters of their Non-Governmental Organisation. Then, they had been divided into four panel groups, so that all of them had sufficient time to present their organisation and to attend the presentations of the other participants. All of them prepared posters with basic information like name, aims and contact details. Some participants brought with them brochures and leaflets to underline their short presentations.

Youth in Action Programme & Challenge in International Cooperation

Context: The aim of this session was to give a brief but fact-filled introduction for funding opportunities offered by the Youth in Action (YiA) Programme of the European Commission for cooperation with Eastern Europe and Caucasus (EECA).

Content: A PowerPoint Presentation was used to give an overview about the Youth in Action Programme. This presentation covered the general Programme aims and objectives, priorities and details of possible cooperation with the partner region of Eastern Europe and Caucasus. The participants had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the Programme outline.

Intercultural Evening I

Context: The session aimed at presenting national traditions, food and drinks and to inform about cultural particularities.

Content: Half of participants had to present their culture and country on this day. They decorated a table with traditional food and drinks they brought from their home. They also distributed folders, postcards and materials about their countries or presented short video clips.

>> DAY 2

Exchange of Good Practices

Context: The session aimed to introduce already implemented projects in Eastern Europe and Caucasus to the participants to give them examples and inspiration for own project ideas.

Content: Two projects have been presented. One implemented in Armenia in August 2007, entitled 'Under the Same Sky' and another in Italy in July 2006 with participants from Eastern Europe and Caucasus, entitled 'From East to West'. Programme, methodology and logistical aspects were analysed. After the presentation, a 'Question & Answer' session followed, where participants shared their experiences with Youth/ Youth in Action Programme projects with particular reference to EU-EECA co-operation.

InterCultural Learning Exercise

Context: With this programme part, the trainers wanted to raise the awareness of the participants of intercultural differences and the impact this can have on the perception of realities and life situation in order to prepare them for the intercultural challenges during multilateral youth projects.

Content: The story of "Abigail" was presented to participants together with the task of ranking the characters starting from the best to the worst one based on the moral and value judgement of their actions. Then, the participants formed four groups and had to set-up a common list. Following the presentation of group results participants discussed difficulties in reaching an agreement and strived to create a common group list as well as discussed the reasons for differing perceptions of the characters' behaviour and values attributed to them.

Conflict Management and Conflict Resolution – Tools for International Youth Exchanges

Context: The session was aimed to provide general and specific information about available sources that support youth organisations and workers with their project implementation in international youth work.

Content: With the use of two PowerPoint presentations the trainers gave an overview on useful supporting structures of youth workers including the Compass Training Manual, the T-Kits and SALTO-EECA structure.

Partnership in the Project – Workshop on Quality and Theoretical Input

Context: This session aimed at sharing experience and provoking reflection on the nature of partnership in Youth in Action Programme projects.

Content: A short presentation was delivered by the trainers. Participants then split in three working groups in which they explored issues of effective communication and crisis management in partnership-building processes. As an effect they produced recommendations for future work in that specific area.

Intercultural Evening II

Context: The session aimed at presenting national traditions, food and drinks and to inform about cultural particularities.

Content: The second half of the participants had to present their culture and country on this day. They decorated a table with the traditional food and drinks they brought from their home. They also distributed folders, postcards and materials about their countries or showed short videos.

>> DAY 3

Sightseeing in Potsdam

The participants took part in a sightseeing tour in Potsdam visiting the inner centre of Potsdam with its Dutch quarter and the Park of Sanssouci.

Work on Project Ideas – Needs Analysis

Context: To reach the central aim of the CMS which is to create common project ideas, this session provided structure, time and space. This main programme element is divided into three parts: Needs Analysis, Planning, and Presentation.

Content: The trainers presented a shortened and simplified application form of the Youth in Action Programme for Youth Exchanges and Support Measures. According to guidelines set out in this application participants were asked to develop common project ideas dedicated to conflict management and resolution. A brainstorming session followed, collecting the project ideas and grouping the participants according to their interests.

A special attention was put on the possibility that the participants can apply for funding three youth exchanges which must take place in Armenia, Azerbaijan or/ and Georgia, directly to the "For a Future to Come" project team.

Work on Project Ideas - Development and Planning

Context: To reach the central aim of the CMS which is to create common project ideas, this session provided structure, time and space for this purpose. This main programme element is divided into three parts: Needs Analysis, Planning and Presentations.

Content: The participants worked in working groups on their project ideas using the simplified shorten application form as an orientation and guideline for project development. The trainers supported the groups in this process.

>> DAY 4

Work on Project Ideas - Development and Planning

Context: To reach the central aim of the CMS which is to create common project ideas, this session provide structure, time and space for this purpose. This main programme element is divided into three parts: Needs Analysis, Planning and Presentations.

Content: The participants worked in working groups on their project ideas using the simplified shorten application form as an orientation and guideline for project development. The trainers supported the groups in this process. At the end of this session the groups prepared their project presentations.

Presentation of Project Ideas

Context: To reach the central aim of the CMS which is to create common project ideas, the next session provide structure, time and space for this purpose. This main programme element is divided into three parts: Needs Analysis, Planning and Presentations.

Content: The working groups presented their group work results to the other participants and the audience got the possibility to ask questions for clarification. The trainers gave comments and suggestions to support the participants in the up-coming project implementation process.

Future Planning and Follow-up

Context: This session was designed to give participants an overview about the up-coming steps within the Large Scale Project and to introduce project features that enable the participants to cooperate and to support each other after the end of the CMS.

Content: The participants received information about the project webpage and its elements including the launch of the webpage's latest feature, the Forum, the time schedule for the next project events, and about manual and video publication dates.

Evaluation of the Seminar and Perspectives

Context: The final evaluation should support the evaluation process of the project by including the opinions, suggestions and comments of the participants.

Content: The participants evaluated the project at first in group evaluation and later on with the help of a written and anonymous evaluation form. See the results in Annex.

CONCLUSION

The Potsdam CMS should certainly be considered as a successful and well-implemented project. The outcomes went far beyond the organisers' expectations for a number of reasons.

First of all, participants proved to be highly motivated and engaged. Moreover, the entire group displayed above-average willingness to make the best of the provided opportunities within the programme of the seminar. Participants were active and supportive in sharing their own knowledge and experiences to the project as well as asking their colleagues for guidance and information in the areas they felt less experienced in. Most participants provided positive feedback to the team during the seminar duration, both in relation to seminar programme as well as their personal and organisation benefits from the project.

General aims of the seminar have been achieved and judging by the contents of final evaluation forms, participants are looking forward to take part in the next step of the Large Project "For a Future to Come".

ANNEX: SUMMARY OF EVALUATION FORMS

Total number of forms: 25

EXAMPLE:

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Bad

Is nice, I like!

Please rate the following from 1 (poor/none) to 5 (excellent).

1. PROJECT PREPARATION PROCESS

(Application process, practical information and preparation)

0	0	0	13	12
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- *“Enough information, no complains”*
- *“We’ve got detailed and practical information which was really helpful”*
- *“All practical information was given in a proper way, simple, understandable and etc”*

2. FULFILLMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING COURSE

(Networking, future projects, exchange of experience)

0	1	3	10	11
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- *“Good exchange of experiences and knowledge”*
- *“All objectives were fulfilled”*
- *“It was a real CMS. We worked really together, planned great projects, shared ideas and experience with each other”*
- *“It was areal Contact Making Seminar. Very good that people had long coffee breaks and some time between programme part for conversations about future projects and ideas”*
- *“It was a really great chance to get in touch with different NGOs and also to make a common project with them. So there is a real output”*

3. TEAM SPIRIT AND GROUP DYNAMICS

0	1	0	3	22
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- *“Maybe luck or right selection, but everyone was fine. Team spirit was coming from each of team”*
- *“It was a good working spirit among participants, but there were some them I could not communicated with them, because of some reason”*

4. WORKSHOPS AND PROGRAMME ELEMENTS

Opening Session. Presentation of the CMS Programme. Aims and Objectives.

0	1	1	7	14
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- *“I was afraid of name-gesture game and I was awarded”*
- *“It would be nice to use more games during the seminar”*
- *“The ice-breaking worked”*

Getting to know each other (name and gesture, drawing, expectations and fears)

0	1	4	5	13
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Organisations Fair

0	0	3	12	9
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- *“Discovered more information about NGO’s and understood better what they are organising”*

Youth in Action Programme and Challenges in International Cooperation

0	0	1	9	14
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- *“It was good though I have already seen it”*

Intercultural Evening I

0	0	1	5	18
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Exchange of good practice

0	0	1	12	11
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- *“It inspired me and made me think what useful things I can do”*

Intercultural Learning Exercise

0	0	4	4	16
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Conflict Management and Conflict Resolution - Tools for International Youth Exchanges

0	0	1	9	14
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Partnerships in the Project - Workshop on Quality and Theoretical Input

0	0	2	9	13
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- *“Good prevention not to make mistakes on future projects”*

Intercultural Evening II

0	0	1	5	19
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Sightseeing in Potsdam

0	0	1	7	16
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Work on project ideas: Needs Analysis

0	1	2	11	11
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Work on project ideas: Development and Planning

0	1	1	11	12
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- *Good suggestions, working in group, sharing ideas"*

Presentations of Project Ideas

0	0	2	8	14
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Future Planning and Follow-Up

0	0	0	4	20
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5. FACILITATION (TEAM AND HOSTING ORGANISATION)

0	0	1	6	18
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- *"The team provided all what we needed, so what else can I say?"*
- *"Great trainers! Thanks, I have learnt a lot from you"*
- *"Good timing, professional and flexible"*
- *"Just the best!"*
- *"Good people, always on time, great communication"*

6. LOGISTICS

0	0	4	6	15
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- *"I like the place where we stayed, everything is cool"*
- *"Perfect"*
- *"Accommodation was ok"*
- *"It was good to do a sightseeing"*

7. ACCOMODATION & FOOD

0	2	6	9	8
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- *"Food was a bit too specific for me"*
- *"Accommodation: good, food: not so bad"*
- *"Food was sometimes a bit fat"*
- *"Nice place, tasty food, smiling faces..."*
- *"We had everything what we needed and the accommodation, place, food were great"*

8. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS FROM THIS SEMINAR TO YOUR ORGANISATION, COMMUNITY, YOURSELF, etc.

- *"New partnership in future cooperation"*
- *"Future cooperation, projects, partners, experience, skill improvement"*
- *"I became aware about Youth in Action Programme, SALTO Structure, Compass tools, etc"*
- *"This seminar reached almost all my expectations"*
- *"Of course to get new partners for future contacts was important but it also was an excellent introduction for this kind of projects, which are for me completely new"*
- *"This seminar gave me ideas to provide new projects for local community"*
- *"The possibility for local young people from different cultural background to discover a country and learn about cultural diversity and ways to solve conflicts"*
- *"The benefit is huge for me and my organisation: development of projects with other partners and future plans"*
- *"I learnt a lot about intercultural differences, conflicts, way of thinking and behaving. I got very useful information, games, and exercises not only for me but also for my organisation and community. I understood that when we are open-minded and tolerant, we are "All different – All equal!"*
- *"Experiences, shared information, new partners for future projects, knowledge of other cultures, getting to know"*

activities of different organisations, etc., more about YiA, manuals about conflicts, ...”

- “That we had some opportunities to create our own projects which might be implemented in the future”
- “New contacts, future partners, new friends across borders”
- “My organisation got new contacts and project ideas”
- “For myself: new people from different organisations. For my NGO: new contacts with organisation for future projects. For my community: probably future project”
- “New contacts, new spirit, new projects and ideas, more experience”
- “I learnt a lot of things which I will try to implement in future...”
- “I have basic knowledge to make a youth project in the future and I know people to turn to for help and partnership”
- “We have not yet had projects with EECA countries. The seminar helped to understand the common challenges and to find future partners”

9. SUGGEST THREE CHANGES FOR THE PROGRAMME OR THE USED METHODOLOGIES OF THIS SEMINAR:

- “More name games”
- “Maybe some more ice-breaking exercises”
- “Longer sessions: maybe shorter breaks instead of 30 min break”
- “Nothing”
- “I would change the distance between the seminar room and the hotel”
- “Some more parties for the group only and all together”
- “Don’t have any!”
- “More time for presentation of organisation, more free time to visit Berlin”
- “More energizers”
- “Longer seminar”
- “Methodologies were really great and interesting, but maybe more exercises on specific topics might have been needed”
- “More free time but in general it was really perfect!”
- “As the people participating had a very different background (some with a lot of experience and some without any) then it is hard to have a better approach”
- “Use more games and energizers”

10. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

- “Thanks”
- “Well done! Looking for further projects”
- “Thank you very much, see you soon and take care”
- “I saw and learnt very good things from people that have huge experience. Thank you! For your wonderful example!”

- *“Thank you! It was really interesting and good project. I am happy for this opportunity”*
- *“Thanks a lot for this seminar, I hope that we will meet in the future”*
- *“With such organisers, you always want to work! Thanks a lot!”*