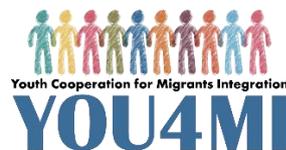




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KA220 YOUTH – YOU4Mi
“Youth Cooperation for Migrants Integration”
ANALYSIS AND INVESTIGATION

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Presentation of the project

The aim of this project is the integration of young migrants in Europe, following the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Due to the crises that many young people live in their countries of origin (economic, wars, political conflicts, etc.), many of them are looking for a way out to start a better life.

We want to facilitate the way for all these young people who arrive in a country without knowing anything, so that they can be helped by the local citizenship, thus supporting a peer-to-peer methodology.

Each partner will bring together a number of refugees and a number of local young people so that they can train them in different subjects, and so that they can enrich each other.

TARGET GROUPS

- Local young people from each region
- Young migrants living in these regions, coming from ethnic minorities and in difficult situations Youth and social workers
- Teachers and trainers Educational organisations
- Local politicians

Project Start Date: 28th February 2022

Project End Date: 28th February 2024

Total duration: 24 months

Partners

- MAD for Europe

MAD for Europe is a non-profit association that focuses on the educational and professional growth of the person, irrespective of age. Its activities aim to encourage citizen participation, European mobility and youth exchanges and include a wide range of specialized training courses, dedicated support for unemployed youth, reintegration, language training and the promotion of the artistic and historical heritage. It aims to contribute to the evolution and social inclusion of all human beings by providing educational experiences that are part of a lifelong learning process, on issues of development, vocational training and social improvement with particular attention to the condition of young people, women and vulnerable groups.

- TRAINING TO MALTA

TRAINING TO MALTA is a non-profit-association based in St Julians, Malta. It specializes in European Internships programs working as a receiving and intermediate organization. Amongst its core activities are: the promotion of European pathways for work-linked training, including language learning; the organization and management of cultural exchanges with EU and non-EU countries; orientation and training courses, qualifying and re-qualifying courses, refresher courses for European and non-European people. Besides, and the promotion of research, intercultural exchanges and the knowledge of different cultures.

- TIA FORMAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE ASSOCIAZIONE

TIA Formazione's main objective is the promotion of activities oriented towards European integration, with the aim of supporting the creation of a more European society, in accordance with the core values of human rights, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights and the Nice Charter. Its wide-ranging projects, which include training seminars and actions aimed at improving awareness and supporting the integration of non-EU citizens in Europe, aim to promote an innovative approach and revolve around the core field of education. Its activities are designed with a particular focus on young people and adults.

- ABU Akademie für Berufsförderung und Umschulung gGmbH

The ABU gGmbH is an adult education provider in Germany with multiple years of experience in supporting young people and adults with a migration or challenging social background through language learning and coaching activities aimed at supporting professional integration. It also supports pupils with professional orientation and is part of the Alpha-Bündnis initiative for alphabetisation. Throughout its courses it pursues an individualised approach that takes into consideration the needs of participants and operates a training restaurant for VET trainees, offering VET exam preparation courses in the field of gastronomy.

- SVENSKA UNGDOM LEAGUE

Svenska Youth League (SYL) is an independent youth organization located in Gothenburg, Sweden. It is actively involved in the field of non-formal education & sport at European, national and international level and seeks to contribute to the development of youth through design, support & implementation of youth initiatives and programmes for young people with fewer opportunities. Its main activities focus on youth empowerment, amongst others through the development of applied and entrepreneurship skills that can enhance the youth's prospects of employability and participation in society, social integration, active citizenship, gender equality and social innovation, with a main focus on improving the welfare and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

- Greek Council for Refugees

The Greek Council for Refugees (GCR) is a Non-Governmental Organization, which has been active since 1989 in the field of asylum and human rights in Greece. GCR aims to promote the rights of asylum seekers and refugees with a view to ensuring their protection and smooth

integration in society. Its core activities include free legal and psychosocial services, as well as education support and employment counseling, with a special emphasis on the most vulnerable, such as unaccompanied minors and victims of torture and trafficking. It maintains offices in Athens and Thessaloniki, field teams in the region of Evros and on the Aegean islands and operates the Pyxida intercultural Centre in Athens.

Analysis of different learning techniques in each country

As highlighted by the project's partners within the limited scope of the national templates-investigations, across the EU member states examined there is no shortage of policies and tools that are either directly or indirectly focused or could also potentially be employed for the purposes of facilitating refugee/migrant youth participation and integration in the host societies.

Education

Starting from the field of education, emphasis was placed on the formal system of education by partners in **Germany** and **Sweden**, not least given the instrumental role of education in integration and participation and thus the importance of ensuring refugee/migrant children and youth are enrolled to school at the earliest possible stage following arrival in a host country – a process which has nevertheless been characterised by challenges particularly since the 2015 EU reception crisis, as highlighted in the cases of both Germany and Greece.

It is worth noting Sweden's approach *vis-à-vis* phenomena of Early Leaving from Education and Training (ELET), given that not least due to socioeconomic factors, "school dropout" can be higher amongst refugee and migrant youth. In this context, in parallel with other initiatives aimed at enhancing the capacity and knowledge of school principals and counselors, Sweden's Samverkan för bästa skola ("Collaboration for the best school") initiative is implemented with a particular focus on improving the quality of education for newly arrived students and, importantly, addressing the needs of students with mother tongues other than Swedish, in schools that display a low level of academic achievement amongst students.

Further institutional efforts at enhancing school inclusiveness were also mentioned by partners in **Germany** and **Malta**.

In the case of Germany, it is worth mentioning the example of the "youth migration service", operating under the German Ministry of Youth, which in 2021 supported 111.000 refugees, in the vast majority of cases with case management that concerned school integration (more than 15.000 cases), language (close to 25.000) and social integration needs (close to 20.000).

In the case of Malta, a set of policy measures, such as the “Policy on Inclusive Education in Schools: Route to quality inclusion in schools”, and initiatives implemented by the Migrant Learner’s Unit (MLU), operating under the Maltese Ministry of Education and Employment, were highlighted. As mentioned, these are *inter alia* aimed at dissolving barriers to education and inclusion, amongst others through language induction courses for all newly arrived students and through projects (“Making Friends”) aimed at creating links between local and foreign students in a spirit of mutual understanding.

Closely linked, the necessity of “welcome plans” with a primary aim of ensuring intensive language learning for newcomers and facilitating interaction with their peers, in an environment that fosters empathy, trust and a sense of community, based on respect for human dignity and rights, was highlighted in the inputs for Spain.

Dedicated support for refugees wishing to continue on to university education was flagged as a best practice in the case of **Germany**, where the “integrating refugees into German higher education – a holistic approach” programme, sponsored by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), has displayed significant results, supporting more than 30,000 refugees to integrate into the country’s higher education since 2016.

Lastly, examples of educational approaches and techniques, emphasising group interaction and teamwork, including through the sharing of experiences, thoughts and feelings, in the context of enhancing trust and creating an environment conducive to inclusion, with the help of music and games, were mentioned in the cases of **Italy** and **Spain**.

In this context, it is important to highlight the game-based learning approach. As discussed by partners in Italy, the use of board, real life and digital games for educational purposes, particularly given that students can be directly engaged in the preparation of the game, can lead to highly motivating and participatory instructive outcomes, while fostering teamwork amongst peers.

In a similar vein, the benefits of also employing new technologies and digital tools, which have been shown to have positive results in peer-to-peer learning, were further highlighted in the case of **Italy**, through the examples of smart education and educational platforms.

Policies and laws in the broader field of social inclusion

Though none of the partners referred to legislation covering specifically the integration of refugee/migrant youth, reference was made to laws that provide a basis for this aim to be feasible, such as those governing the requirements of entry for third country nationals into the labour market, those regulating residence statuses, as well as anti-discrimination law, which were highlighted in the inputs provided in the cases of Germany, Malta, Sweden.

Likewise, a set of national policies and strategies addressing to various degrees parameters that can also enhance the prospects of integration of refugee/migrant youth, such as National Youth Policies in **Greece**, **Malta** and **Sweden**, Strategies and dedicated policies aimed at combatting poverty and social exclusion (Greece and

Malta), including through supporting youth who neither work nor study (Sweden), as well as self-standing Integration Strategies (Greece and Malta), were also highlighted by the partner organisations.

Closely linked to the latter, national integration programmes were also mentioned in the case of **Greece**, where the “Helios” national programme, which *inter alia* provides language learning, cultural orientation, job readiness and life skills services to beneficiaries of international protection through dedicated Language Learning Centres, has displayed a significant degree of enrolment by children and youth, as well as **Malta**. In the latter case, it is worth highlighting the approach of the “I Belong” national programme, which through a 2-stage process, which *inter alia* foresees 100-hour learning courses and exams, aims at ultimately supporting refugees/migrants in fulfilling the requirements for acquiring long-term residence status, thus potentially contributing to achieving sustainable solutions in the longer term. The programme was also flagged as the current best practice in the field of integration in **Malta**, and between 2018-2019 reached more than 2,000 persons, primarily from Serbia, Libya, the Philippines, and Somalia, with the second most numerous age-group of applicants being between the ages of 25-34.

It is also worth highlighting the case of **Spain**, where an inclusive approach, aimed at supporting the integration of people at the local level, in autonomous communities, through a minimum integration income is pursued. The amount granted can vary based on the composition of households or their financial situation, and is subject to a number of requirements, including that of holding legal residence, which may not always be the case for marginalised social groups. In this context, the case of the Valencian community is particularly noteworthy, given that it suffices for beneficiaries to be residing in the community for a minimum of 12 months and be at risk or be actively experiencing social exclusion, in order to be eligible for the support. At the national level, the Spanish government also provides financial support for integration, *inter alia* aimed at assisting beneficiaries of international protection with basic needs or with securing accommodation.

Participation

In the field of participation, official consultative bodies at the national and local level that can also be employed to promote youth participation were highlighted by partners in **Germany, Greece and Malta**.

It is worth mentioning that in the case of Malta, where *ad hoc* consultations with youth were also mentioned in the periods preceding the finalisation of national policies, including the country’s Youth Policy, there is a legal obligation to ensure that the Civil Society Committee – a standing committee operating under the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD), which forms opinions and issues recommendations to the Maltese government on socioeconomic matters falling under its competence– is obliged by law to have a youth representative amongst its members.

Though mostly of pedagogical value, the “Youth Parliament” in Greece, a programme organized on a yearly basis by the Foundation of the Hellenic Parliament, which

focuses on inducing young people into the core values, rules and practices of democracy, should also be mentioned. The programme serves to promote the formation of a field of public dialogue, where 300 student representatives up to 21 years old, can *inter alia* engage with stakeholders (e.g. experts, elected officials), organize public events and through discussions and debates formulate and submit their opinions and recommendations on matters that affect daily or social life (e.g. climate change, human rights), in a process that culminates in a 5-day working session at the country's Parliament.

Lastly, civil society networks, such as the National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations (LSU), were also highlighted as a means to foster youth participation and integration. The LSU is a coordinating body for youth organisations with a highly diverse range of activities in Sweden, which *inter alia* operates as a platform on issues concerning youth, while providing the opportunity to youth representatives to participate in high-level meetings and committees in the UN and EU systems. It is also customarily consulted by the Swedish government prior to the adoption of legislation on matters that affect the youth.

Funding

Availability of funding, including through EU instruments, such as AMIF, was also highlighted/arose as a tool that can support youth participation and integration based on the inputs provided in this section by partners in **Germany** and **Italy**. Nevertheless, as is the case with all other methods presented by the partners for the specific section, it should be taken for granted that the specificities of each national context and discrepancies thereof, including with respect to the extent to which integration can more easily be pursued with the support of national funds (e.g. as arising in the case of Germany), or is more reliant on the availability of EU funds (as is the case in Greece), means different capabilities and in turn different results, even with respect to methods that, on the surface, seem quite similar. Yet such an assessment goes beyond the scope of the current document.

Opportunities and challenges

In what concerns the opportunities and challenges presented by the partner organisations, the main point of convergence regarded broader socioeconomic factors, as well as factors that pertain to the extent to which refugees/migrants can have access to services and rights in host countries, as these can severely hinder the broader integration process and children and youth's ability to invest in their development through education.

Challenges

The impact of the relatively less privileged/vulnerable social position in which refugees/migrants frequently find themselves, was highlighted as a challenge for the education process and its results in the inputs provided by partners in **Greece**, **Malta**, **Sweden** and **Spain**. Invariably this also impacts on prospects of participation and the

“willingness” to integrate, since the frequent marginalisation of people with a migrant/refugee background and in particular the lived experience of this exclusion increases the risk that young people “become entrapped in a system of disconnection from society and its institutions”, as pointed out by partners in Malta. Delays in accessing the labour market, the marginal degree of participation in high level decision-making by people with a refugee/migrant background, frequently observed substandard living conditions, as well as the need to learn and comply with cultural norms in the host country, while lacking the necessary means to be able to also preserve elements of one’s own cultural background, were also flagged as challenges in the inputs provided for Sweden, without this meaning that the causes and resulting alienation for refugees/migrants is limited to only one member state.

In a similar vein, issues pertaining to the ability to regulate legal statuses were also flagged in the case of Greece, given the detrimental impact that protracted legal limbo and/or severely restricted avenues to obtain legal status *inter alia* have on mental health and the ability to focus on education and integration. The overall state of the national economy, the impact of policies and narratives in the field of migration, and a mismatch between laws and practices were also highlighted as challenges in the case of Greece.

Opportunities

In what concerns opportunities, the ability to access EU funding instruments, such as AMIF, ESF and arguably Erasmus+, was highlighted as an opportunity in the inputs regarding **Malta** and **Sweden**, albeit, as mentioned in the previous section, too much or exclusive dependency on EU funds, without the necessary investment through national means as well, could also mark a challenge with respect to long-term prospects of integration and participation and can, under conditions, allude to an unwillingness on behalf of state authorities to actively support these processes.

The availability of national integration policies and programmes were also highlighted as opportunities in the case of **Greece**, **Italy** and **Malta**. As pointed out in the previous section, the “I Belong” programme promotes a 2-tier framework that supports refugees/migrants in acquiring the necessary knowledge (language, culture etc.) to be able to obtain long-term residence permits, thus seemingly providing an all-inclusive package that streamlines the process of inclusion. Helios, on the other hand, though much more limited in scope, provides a much-needed entry-point to being included in life in Greece, given that it remains the sole dedicated nation-wide programme for refugees wishing to learn Greek and can provide some limited support towards independent living (e.g. with renting an apartment).

Regarding participation and political representation, consultative bodies at the local level were highlighted as opportunities in the cases of **Germany** and **Greece**, respectively through the examples of the Migrantenbeirat – an elected committee with a consulting function in the various Berlin districts, which was also flagged as a good practice – and the Migrant and Refugee Integration Councils. The latter are established at the municipal level in Greece following a decision by the city council, and are competent for: (a) recording and investigating the problems faced by migrants and refugees who permanently reside in the municipality concerned; (b) submitting recommendations

for the development of actions aimed at promoting integration and for addressing identified problems; and (c) organising, in cooperation with the municipality concerned, events aimed at raising awareness and strengthening social cohesion. At the end of each year, they are also responsible for submitting an annual report highlighting the challenges encountered and proposing solutions, which local authorities have an obligation to take into consideration at the first municipal council meeting that takes place after the report's submission.

Concerning specifically young people, the example of Local Youth Councils was highlighted in the case of **Greece** as a potential opportunity. These are elected councils aimed at strengthening young people's participation in the management of local affairs, and are *inter alia* tasked with identifying needs and challenges faced by local youth. They can also undertake initiatives, in collaboration with local authorities, aimed at fostering the active and effective participation of young people in local society and develop cooperation with corresponding bodies at national and European level. As of 2021, a first step towards including people with a refugee/migrant background in the Councils' operations may have signalled the way towards a more inclusive approach in what regards youth participation at the local level.

In a similar vein, the importance of encouraging participation among disadvantaged social groups and creating the space for them to voice their concern, via targeted support, was flagged in the case of **Sweden**. The existence of anti-discrimination policies, including in the workplace, as well as the necessity to promote intercultural activities and events, where residents of a Municipality can get to learn more about each other, were also highlighted as potential opportunities in the case of Sweden.

Lastly, though not explicitly highlighted as an opportunity, the seeming high degree of acceptance felt by people with a refugee/migrant background in the Spanish society, coupled with the readily available possibility to obtain permanent residence in Spain, once required documents are procured, can be considered as an opportunity in the, particularly given the high degree of willingness of refugee/migrant youth to remain in the country.

Good practices in each country

An array of good practices at different stages of development were highlighted by partners, perhaps also reflecting different stages in the evolution of each country's preparedness in receiving refugees/migrants. For instance, as mentioned in the inputs for Sweden, the country has an established 70-year-old history as a destination country for third country nationals, whereas countries such as Greece, still seem to struggle with overcoming established beliefs on their nature as transit countries, amid the increased integration needs arising since the 2015 reception crisis. This doesn't mean that countries more experienced in managing migration have managed to resolve phenomena of societal segregation, as also highlighted in the case of Sweden.

That being said, efforts at combating such phenomena, through good practices *inter alia* aimed at providing particularly disadvantaged youth with viable opportunities, at redressing instances of discrimination and at promoting intercultural dialogue and understanding were highlighted in several of the country inputs provided.

In the case of **Italy**, emphasis was placed on the NEETwork project, which aims to address the needs of particularly underprivileged youth who neither study nor work, through a combination of interventions that aim and/or envisage to create a stable pathway from education to employment. The project's beneficiaries are namely young people aged 18-24, with a low educational and a deprived socio-cultural background, who reside in the region of Lombardy, are not enrolled in a Youth Guarantee scheme and face challenges in independently reactivating themselves. The project supports them through a tailor-made approach that includes reinforcement and orientation on the labour market, training in the digital field and support in obtaining a 6-month paid traineeship opportunity with a third sector organisation or with a company. Economic incentives (e.g. covering a portion of the internship allowance), as well as administrative support are also provided to companies willing to participate in the project through the provision of traineeship opportunities.

In a similar vein, albeit with a core focus on supporting youth not in education, employment or training (NEET) in developing basic and advanced digital skills, the Net for NEET projects in **Italy** was also highlighted as a good practice. Through an online coaching and peer-to-peer training approach aimed at enhancing employability in the digital age, the project also aims to facilitate the social inclusion of disadvantaged youth, by providing them with the space and opportunity to meet with peers, training experts and recruiters, through the creation of an online community.

Though not related to a specific good practice, at this point it is worth noting Sweden's National Youth Policy, and the Ways Forward Policy, both of which have young people that are NEET, including newly arrived youth, as their key target group, amongst others with the aim of supporting their transition from the school environment to work and participation in society.

That being said, some similarities with Italy's NEET initiatives can be found in the Embark for Life initiative in **Malta**. As mentioned in the relevant inputs, the initiative focuses on providing individualised support to young people aged 15 to 25, who are facing challenges in finding and/or keeping a job, amongst others through empowering them to participate in educational programmes with the aim of enhancing their employability. Similarly, albeit focused on a younger age group (5-18), the Youth Support Centres of the NGO Arsis-Association for the Social Support of Youth in **Greece**, support young people who experience the consequences of social exclusion and live in deprived areas in welfare institutions or are detained in prisons, through comprehensive interventions which include creative workshops and courses

that support school integration, with the aim of addressing the root causes of victimisation and marginalisation.

In what concerns specifically refugee/migrant youth, youth integration courses developed by the BAMF and consisting, amongst others, of language learning and practical job orientation and preparation were highlighted as a good practice in the case of **Germany**. As mentioned, the initiative aims to support refugee/migrant youth's personal development, to facilitate their understanding of the German society and ultimately their integration.

Towards a similar aim, albeit with a focus on employability, the Integrationslotsen programme and the Migrpreneur initiative were flagged as good practices in the case of **Germany**. In the first case, the programme is aimed at ensuring a 5-year paid employment for refugees/migrants residing in Berlin, following an initial job training period, which seems to usually result in obtaining employment in the fields of language support and social consulting for other third country nationals, thus also highlighting a peer-to-peer approach. This is expanded upon in the case of the refugee/migrant-led Migrpreneur initiative, which focuses on aspects of networking and on empowering migrant entrepreneurs, while helping them with overcoming bureaucratic obstacles that may hinder their entrepreneurial growth.

Closely linked, albeit with an exclusive focus on youth aged 18-35, the Torno Subito programme was highlighted as a good practice in the case of **Italy**. The programme financially supports young students and graduates from cinema, food and wine schools to gain additional training in Italy or abroad, and to subsequently gain work experience or start their own business in the region of Lazio. As mentioned, a core aim of the programme is obtaining the necessary level of skills that can create meaningful opportunities in the effort to join the region's productive fabric.

Emphasis was also placed on the "Vives emrende" programme in the case of **Spain**, which is *inter alia* focused on supporting socially excluded groups, including youth with a refugee/migrant background, in accessing the labour market. The programme has a particular focus on entrepreneurship, supporting beneficiaries with accessing microcredits up to a limit of €25,000, as well as with acquiring the necessary knowledge-basis for running their own business, through online workshops and individualised tutorials.

In the case of **Sweden**, the Diskrimineringsombudsmannen (Equality Ombudsman) was flagged as a good practice in the field of combating discrimination (in the workplace, at school, with regards to access to services etc.). The Ombudsman's webpage, which provides information on national anti-discrimination legislation and the means for those affected to report relevant incidents, is accessible in 17 foreign languages. Thus, the initiative ensures a significant degree of accessibility,

empowering and enabling disadvantaged groups to know their rights, to voice their experiences and pursue redressive action when these are violated, in turn also contributing to the visibility of what still remains a highly underreported phenomenon in many countries.

Towards the same goal, the Human Rights Directorate (HRD), operating under **Malta's** Ministry for Home Affairs, Security, Reforms and Equality, was highlighted as a good practice in the relevant country input. The HRD, which was established in 2015, works towards promoting civil liberties, equality, antidiscrimination and integration, with the main goal of ensuring that "everybody belongs". Since 2018, the HRD also has an Intercultural and Anti-Racism Unit, which is competent for the implementation of the country's integration strategy and oversees implementation of Malta's 2019 Local Integration Charter – an instrument aimed at consolidating integration initiatives carried out by local councils and to encourage further cooperation between them on matters of integration – in collaboration with local councils and the Local Councils Association. The Local Integration Charter itself was also flagged as a good practice, given that within 3 years of its launch, it has been adopted by more than 2/3 of Malta's local councils.

The governing principles of the Charter, amongst which promoting inclusive discourse and diversity, events aimed at bringing communities together and the active participation of refugee/migrant communities, bear resemblance with initiatives highlighted as good practices in other national contexts, some of which have already been mentioned in the previous sections.

For instance, the Bündnis Demokratie und Toleranz (Alliance for Democracy and Tolerance), which was mentioned as a good practice in the case of **Germany**, is an Alliance consisting of public figures, representatives of parliamentary groups, civil society, business and science, which aims to promote and strengthen civil society, democratic values and enable participation. The Alliance organizes concerts, district festivities and other events aimed at promoting dialogue between locals and refugee/migrant communities. Likewise, the Rådet för Europeiska Socialfonden (Swedish ESF Council), which is the competent state agency for managing the European Integration Fund (EIF), was highlighted as a good practice in the case of **Sweden**, amongst others due to the fund's contribution to the promotion of intercultural dialogue, active citizenship and participation.

A similar emphasis on the need to establish spaces for dialogue and participation, with a view to strengthening social cohesion, can also be found in the case of the BENN project ("Berlin Entwickelt Neue Nachbarschaften"/"Berlin develops new neighbourhoods"), which was flagged as a further good practice in the case of **Germany**. As mentioned, the project has different activities and support for inclusion in the various districts of Berlin, and has a positive impact on increasing awareness

and networking between locals and refugees/migrants. With a main goal of promoting integration at the level of the district, amongst the project's core fields of action is also supporting locals, including children and youth, in having their voices heard and in participating in decision-making processes that affects their district.

At a much smaller scale, the Refugee Cityscapes initiative which was implemented by GCR, was also highlighted as a good practice. The initiative supported networking and participation, by bringing together newly recognised refugees and descendants of refugees from Asia Minor and Pontus, who worked together in identifying and proposing sustainable solutions for common challenges faced in the city of Thessaloniki, through a peer learning approach.

In the field of youth participation, UNICEF's U-Report initiative, which is a platform aimed at providing the space for young people to express their views on political and social issues that concern them, through online consultations, the results of which can then inform decision-makers, was highlighted as a good practice in the case of **Greece**. Though the initiative was only recently launched in the country (April 2022), it has already reached more than 700 members, most of whom aged between 15-19 (52%), while displaying a significant degree of gender balance, even if the latter is categorised in a binary manner (male/female). It has also achieved more than 90% average replies in the up to now conducted online consultations, highlighting a high degree of active engagement, which is achieved through tools/applications that are also more friendly and accessible to refugee and migrant youth, such as Viber, WhatsApp and Facebook. As such, the initiative has exhibited some first and promising results with respect to youth participation, which can pave the way towards its longer-term sustainability.

Conclusions

As arising from several of the inputs provided by the project's partners, peer-to-peer learning can be an important, if not necessary, tool for facilitating refugee/migrant youth's integration and genuine participation in a host country. This is particularly so given that the relations that develop between peers in an age where young people spend increasingly more time within same-age groups, as opposed to more traditional settings, can have a much more direct and impactful influence on them, compared to the past, when the role of the tutor or the parent were more prevalent in a young person's education and development. Peer-to-peer can also have a positive impact on blurring perceived power or cultural imbalances that may give rise to discriminatory behaviours and views, as it can be a mutually beneficial learning process fostering understanding, respect and personal development for all those involved (i.e. peer

tutors and tutees). Yet in order for peer-to-peer learning to reach its potential, a number of pre-requisites were highlighted by the project's partners.

A main point of convergence related to the need to ensure the proper preparation of peers, including through a preliminary preparation of peer tutors, before they can undertake the role and responsibility this role entails. Given that learning requires clear communication, it was for instance highlighted as a poor practice if the tutor lacked such skills or the confidence to meet the project's objectives, a full commitment to the role performed or even poor time management skills and a lack of interest and even enthusiasm in the subject taught.

Emphasis was also placed on the need to carefully identify and "match" peers with the aim of establishing a relation of equality between them, while looking for ways to trigger their interest by *inter alia* finding ways to create feelings of shared enthusiasm in the peer-learning process and its aims. For instance, the possibility of erroneously "matching" people who do not respect and/or may offend through their behaviour and beliefs the cultural background of their peers or who may display an authoritarian attitude, was flagged as detrimental to the model's potential success.

Towards the same aim, the necessity to acknowledge the strengths and abilities of each peer, including of those that may display comparative "weaknesses" in the learning process, not least as a basis for establishing a system of rotation amongst peer tutors and tutees, was highlighted as an important factor towards ensuring the development of relations of mutual understanding and equality.

The latter arises as particularly important, given the prevalent imbalance between local and refugee/migrant peers, that can *inter alia* arise through discriminatory treatment and the multiple obstacles (linguistic, socioeconomic, legal etc.) faced by refugee/migrant youth.

Emphasis was also placed on broader factors that can detrimentally impact on the education process and need to be addressed through *inter alia* ensuring the early integration of newly arrived students into the education system, through the establishment of dedicated second language workshops in schools, the active involvement of parents in the process of acquiring the necessary language and cultural skills early on and the involvement of second-generation refugees/migrants as mentors, but also the need to promote intercultural education through the training of teachers and the benefits of ensuring that refugee/migrant youth can get the opportunity to keep learning and the language and potentially culture of their country of origin, in parallel with those of the host country. Ultimately, pedagogical techniques are not only aimed at providing refugees/migrants an opportunity to lead a more active life as members of society, but to also share the knowledge they bring from

their countries of origin, which can also contribute to enriching a society's cultural wealth, while opening up the space for innovative processes and ideas to arise.

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