Abused No More: Safeguarding Youth and Empowering Professionals

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Erasmus+

Why are we here? – the problem

- ***We have a problem in Europe – We have a problem at home***

"90 million young people currently residing in Europe, 27 million are at risk of poverty or social exclusion with particular emphasis of young people with a migrant background are considerably more likely to be at risk of exclusion compared to their native-born peers (48% vs. 28%)."

- ***"Social exclusion of young people is one of the biggest contemporary challenges Europe is facing"***

- ***"Social exclusion is a multifaceted issue and requires a multiple response."***

- ***Young people whether of marginalised background or not feel more and more alienated by politics, institutions and top down structures of control and power.***

Why are we here? The solution

- ***We NEED to work together***
- ***We NEED to work in a multi-disciplinary manner***
- ***We NEED to think about others – not just ourselves***
- ***We NEED a bottom up approach and we NEED to allow our young people to guide us to find solutions***
- ***We NEED to speak from evidence***
- ***We NEED to check our governments and institutions***

Poem by Martin Niemöller (1892–1984)

First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out— Because I was not a Socialist.

Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out— Because I was not a Trade Unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out— Because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

No revolution! Just evidence-based, bottom up change through education

- We are here to launch the research findings of the Abused no More project.
- We are here because IARS and the Abused no More consortium believe in working with institutions and governments for a bottom up change that will improve people's lives – in this case, young people's lives.
- We are here because we believe we can do this with you.
- We are here to tell you what we have found and because we still have a long way to go to achieve our objectives.
- We are here because we cannot do this without you.
- We are here because we need your expertise.

Brexit, the dramas and the reality check

- Brexit means Brexit! But what does Brexit means?
- It is true that when it comes to the EU, we do not all agree about its purpose, value and indeed future.
- But I am yet to meet at least one European who would disagree with the original vision of the EU for building a regional democracy where all individuals would enjoy equal access to basic rights and freedoms.
- To this end, we use the lever of the law in the hope that through regional conventions and social policies we can create a baseline of minimum standards that everyone must respect.
- For some groups, persistent inequalities, marginalisation and poverty continue to define their lives and future. This is particularly true for young people especially those from marginalised backgrounds including migrants.

Brexit, the dramas and the reality check

- Just in 2015, over 1.1 million individuals arrived in Europe mainly coming from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq.

- The rate of new arrivals is 60,000 per month (180,000 new refugees arrived since January 2016). 34% of them were children and it is estimated that over 50% of them were young people.

- The economic crisis!

- Not just a European issue – our issue.

Brexit, the dramas and the reality check

- The example of Greece!
- Since 2011, over 20,000 Greeks became homeless while in 2015 the unemployment rate reached 26%. The well-known strong traditional Greek family structure and the values that underlie it came under strain, often unable to bear the burden of increasing numbers of unemployed and homeless relatives.
- Against this backdrop, just in the last 3 months, over 141,149 refugees arrived in Greece (over a million arrived in 2015).
- In a country of 11 million and with a youth unemployment rate at 60%, help for these young migrant and refugees and respect of their human rights became someone else's problem.
- Here at IARS, we have made it our problem!

Abused No More “Safeguarding Youth and Empowering Professionals” (“AnM”)

The “AnM” project is inspired and motivated by the priorities of

- the European Youth Strategy

and is developed aligned with the provisions of

- the Lisbon Treaty: “Encourage the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe”

“AnM” aims to foster

- young peoples/ migrant integration
- social equity and inclusion

through a two-tier approach i.e. by empowering and involving directly marginalised youth in its delivery, while at the same time increasing the capacity of organisations servicing them.

Who are we: The IARS International Institute

- I was a young migrant myself!
- Set up IARS as an leading, international research and policy Institute that has been providing educational, research, policy and networking services at local, national and international level in the field of Youth – Justice – Equalities
- *"Our mission is to give everyone a chance to forge a safer, fairer and more inclusive society."*
- We are focused on empowering the most marginalised communities including young people, migrants, refugee and asylum-seeking women, victims through direct service delivery, while enabling organisations to achieve, measure and improve their social impact.
- To achieve our charitable aims we work directly with communities producing **evidence-based** solutions to **current** social problems, sharing best practice and we support **young people and the community** to shape decision making.

AnM: The Partnership

'Abused no More: Safeguarding Youth and Empowering Professionals' (AnM) which is funded under the Erasmus + Key Action 2 for Youth.

The project is delivered in partnership with four other countries/partners:

- Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej (Poland)
- Action for Equality, Support, Antiracism - KISA (Cyprus)
- Anziani e Non Solo (Italy)
- Romanian U.S. Alumni Association (Romania)

Coordinated by The IARS International Institute

A dedicated website has also been set up with research, training and awareness raising material

http://www.abusednomore.org

“My Voice – My Rights” Aims and Objectives

Key objectives of the transnational report are to:

✓Assess the legal literacy of marginalised youth at risk of social exclusion in the UK, Italy, Cyprus, Poland and Romania in relation to multiple and intersectional discrimination. Particular emphasis was put on different types of abuse faced by young migrant women.

✓Identify the gaps in existing services in relation to anti-discrimination and training needs of young marginalised people in order to inform the development of a youth-led evidence based training programme for marginalised youth and service providers.

✓Promote youth empowerment by providing marginalised youth with an opportunity to take a leadership role in the design and implementation of the research and to inform the design of a training programme that meets their immediate needs with regard to discrimination.

Methodology

COUNTRY/ ORGANISATION	METHODOLOGY	SAMPLE
UK The IARS International Institute	4 in-depth interviews 4 in-depth interviews	4 young people 4 professionals – service providers
Italy ANS	3 in-depth interviews 1 focus group 2 in-depth interviews	3 professionals – service providers 14 young people 2 young people
Romania Romanian US Alumni Association	12 in-depth, vignettes based interviews 2 focus groups	12 young people of migrant and refugee background 8 organisations (service providers)
Poland SIP	4 group interviews (4 schools) 4 In-depth interviews	30 young people 4 professionals – educators
Cyprus KISA	2 focus groups 1 case study 10 in-depth interviews 2 follow up focus groups	4 young people 1 young person 10 young people 3 and 4, total 7 young people

Key Comparative Findings

- Increasing legal literacy of young minority ethnic women as a core social skill is of paramount importance and a gap that is yet to be addressed in the field of education, training and youth.

- There is a knowledge gap in relation to youth empowerment through public legal education for socially excluded groups of migrant background, especially young women, and models of community-led approaches to combating gender-based violence.

- Young people, particularly those who are aged 16-25 and who suffer from multiple disadvantages seem more likely to suffer from the negative effects of unresolved legal problems.

- Young people without any academic qualifications were more likely to report that they did not know their legal rights and legal processes.

Key Comparative Findings

- The burden of unresolved legal problems falls more heavily on the socially excluded “who are less likely than the average citizen to take any action or seek help with their problems” (Robins, 2007).

- Young people and especially women, especially migrants who come as dependents, should be given appropriate training and awareness service which would help them to build on their legal capacities when they face abuse and threats of divorce by husbands and other family members in the family.

- Public legal education should provide young people with hard and soft skills needed to develop their confidence, fulfil their potential and participate more in the society.

Key Comparative Findings

- Anti-discriminatory actions should be based on working with students' attitudes and appeal to their own emotions.

- NGOs and informal networks within migrant communities, should use their structures to provide legal information and education to marginalized migrant youth.

- Non formal educational routes are needed to bridge the gap in basic legal knowledge for young people; these need to be flexible and responsive to young peoples' needs and realities.

- Youth work should be about a twin role of both providing spaces for young people (to meet, discuss, reflect, plan, and consider their lives in the present) and helping to build bridges for young people (the 2nd European Youth Work Declaration)

Mr. Antonio Silva Mendes, Director for Youth and Sport at Directorate, General for Education and Culture, European Commission

"Social exclusion of young people is one of the biggest contemporary challenges Europe is facing. It is a multifaceted issue and requires a multiple response. "Abuse no more", introduces the somewhat abandoned notion of legal literacy in our formal education systems, in a rather innovative way to prevent marginalisation and social exclusion.

It aims at making marginalised young people aware of their rights and empowering

them so that they can face injustices and discrimination in their everyday lives. Interestingly, the evidence based research suggests that legal literacy not only contributes to the individual's well-being but also to the

societal one".

Mr. Antonio Silva Mendes, Director for Youth and Sport at Directorate, General for Education and Culture, European Commission

“Individual rights are not merely a tool of preventing marginalisation but at the same time a reflection of our European values such as freedom, tolerance and non- discrimination.

Re-exploring our roots and our common cultural heritage can indeed be an effective answer to the multiple crises Europe is facing.”

Next Steps

- Design a free, user-led, face-to-face training package and pilot them in the participating countries.
- Continue to involve young people directly in the design and piloting of the programme engaging at least 20 young volunteers in each country.
- Design and deliver an e-learning course reaching at least 1000 organisations and individuals across Europe.
- Enhance and promote out “AnM” Network in order to disseminate its practical results, exchange further best practices and ideas and ensure multiple effect and sustainability.
- Publish a book (online and in print) bringing together its 3 year learning and practical results and launch it at an international conference and disseminate internationally.
- Work with national governments, the EU and institutions to affect change and change society from the bottom up.

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