

Key Action: Learning Mobility of Individuals
Action Type: Mobility of young people

Project Title

Whispers from the desert

Project Coordinator

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Project Information

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EC Contribution 46,171 EUR
Partners Akdeniz Egitim ve Istihdam Dernegi (TR) , Desert Bloom for Training and Sustainable Development (JO) , Asociación Juvenil El Nexo (ES) , JOVESOLIDES Egypt (EG) , L ASSOCIATION EURO-MEDITERRANEENNE DES ECHANGES, VOLONTARIATS, EVENEMENTS (TN)
Topics Physical and mental health, well-being ; Environment and climate change ; Cultural heritage

Project Summary

Objectives

By this project we want to start cooperation between young people of European and Arab countries. A group of young people, motivated to explore and learn other cultures and countries, especially aware of different stereotypes and prejudices there exist in correlation to 'East-West' (taken conditionally), took the initiative to gather more young people from more countries and to develop this project commonly.

Based on identified needs and interests, project is developed around the topics of cultural and natural heritage and sustainability. Through those topics we want to raise the awareness about cultural traditions of each country involved and unique natural and eco systems that there exist. Participants will have many opportunities to learn from each other and with each other and to realise their intercultural capacity and awareness. Meanwhile, they will also learn about deserts, rivers, mountains as part of nature, their ecosystem and their connection to culture and traditions. They will explore what deserts and rivers can teach us about sustainability in many different areas such as architecture, renewable energy, water management, tourism etc. We will explore cultural and natural heritage of Croatia, specifically Podravina region and enrich our learning by involving and communication with local communities.

With this project we want to address identified issues and needs, which primarily include challenging stereotypical views of each other. Project will support learning on differences in life's and traditions in Europe and so called Arab countries (we will learn what 'Arab' actually means and what it comprehends), which are often seen as opposing to each other. Our approach will be opposite to that and since the beginning, we are focused on finding common points and building up on them, building friendship based on mutual understanding and respect.

Another important topic we will cover is nature and its healing powers, especially in times when people live very stressful lives or are continuously cluttered by enormous amount of data through online contents. With this project we want to explore and learn about those healing powers of nature so we can benefit from it more in the future. To do that, we will have outdoor activities in Borik forest which is famous in the area.

We also want to set the grounds for future cooperation among European and non-European countries.

Objectives of this project are:

- a. To explore nature, culture and sustainable practices of each of the countries and to understand interconnection among those 3 things better
- b. To learn about each other, support mutual understanding and break stereotypes that exist on relation Europe-Arab countries (often called "east-west clash")
- c. To present cultural and natural heritage of Croatia and local area of Durdevac and use local resources for learning, such as visitors centre, Borki forest, river Drava
- d. To raise the awareness about healing and calming side of nature, learn techniques and and to encourage participants to use them more in their lives
- e. To provide space to learn about deserts and life in deserts from various perspectives
- f. To share and experience each other's cultures and grow in cultural understanding and acceptance
- g. To explore different possibilities for sustainability and sustainable development

Activities

Within this project we plan two activities: a preparatory visit approximately one month before the youth exchange to prepare all the details for the youth exchange to assure quality implementation. Two representatives of each organization will take place in the meeting, including one facilitator too.

Second and main activity will be youth exchange which will include 30 young people from 6 countries: Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, Croatia, Turkiye and Spain. It will also include 6 group leaders and two facilitators. Profile of participants is diverse, primarily considering cultural backgrounds but also field of studies or interests which will provide more space for learning.

Project will also include young people with fewer opportunities.

Impact

As results, we expect 30 young people from diverse backgrounds with extended knowledge and awareness about each others culture and nature and as well sustainability. This will enhance mutual understanding and collaboration between Europe and Arab countries involved, leading to long-lasting friendships and partnerships beyond this project.

Participants will also have increased awareness and appreciation of different natural environments and their significance in shaping culture, sustainability and well-being.

Stereotypes, especially those existing in Europe, will be challenged and new attitudes will be based on the facts learned through this project and shared by participants of this project.

Participants will have a chance to develop practical skills and knowledge related to sustainability practices, cultural sensitivity, and intercultural communication. Hopefully this will have a positive, long term impact on them and empower them to become ambassadors and advocates for environment protection and cultural diversity within their own communities.

This project is expected to have significant impact at local levels of partners, especially at the local level of coordinator which is rural community and where young people don't have many opportunities for this type of learning and cultural exchange. It will also have broader impact through assuring the visibility of local communities cultural and natural heritage outside of the border of Croatia, even outside of Europe.

Through intensive dissemination activities which will be done after the main activity by each team, we expect to reach large number of young people and share the project results with them. Hopefully, this will inspire them to get more involved primarily in their local communities, but in the long term also to different exchange programs which will provide opportunities for personal and professional growth at many levels.

Finally, we expect this project to be inspiration for continuation of cooperation among partners and participants and that it will ignite a spark for new collaborative projects and initiatives through cross-cultural exchange and sustainable development practices among young people from different regions.

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