

ARTICLE REMOTE CONTROL DIGITAL YOUTH WORK – TRAINING COURSE “NGOs ONLINE”, TRIKALA (GREECE), 01-10/11/2021

Welcoming DAY

Remote Control - Digital work: TC “NGOs Online”, Trikala, Greece. The day has come. The excitement, joy and a pinch of happiness was painted onto the beautiful faces of our participants. They have arrived in the warm and small town of Trikala. Some of them arrived during the day and some of them during the late hours. The first things they saw were the amazing flowy River in the center, old bridges and some landmarks such as the clock tower, old grocery market, a prison that used to be functional till 2006 which now is transformed into an astonishing museum.

Most of them headed to the restaurant and had a meal of their choice, drank some Greek sweet wine. They also shared some experiences from previous Erasmus+ projects, some hobbies, interests, memories and were given the chance to get to know each other better. But this was just one small introduction for what was about to happen in the next 9 days. So, shall we start?

Day 2

The participants woke up, had breakfast at the cozy hotel decorated in grey tones and headed to our working room. The working room is located inside the old prison we previously mentioned. Confusion, euphoria, happiness and quite a few sparkles were rising in the room lighted by white lights. All of them scanned across the woody space and tried to understand what was really going on and who are these people that will have to be a part of this small family for the next 8 days. The activities had just started. All the participants stood in one circle and made a gesture associated with their home. After that they had to repeat, repeat, repeat like a song stuck in your head till they remembered all the names.

The next two tasks were: to write 4 statements about themselves and one of them was supposed to be a lie where all of them had to guess which one is the lie. Then everyone was paired with someone who didn't speak their native language, both participants had to speak in their mother's tongue in order to express themselves and connect even more. After it everyone had to make an introduction about their amazing partner and what they have understood. Tears of laughter dropped across the room.

This day (as every other day of course) included 2 coffee breaks, one lunch break where they ate delicious Greek salads, feta cheese and many more.

After the first coffee break and quite memorising smell of espresso mixed with the aroma of tangerines, they have started the second session with an energizer. Coffee and energizer, who is going to think about sleep after this, right?

The second session included: objectives of the project, goals, and the working methodology that will be used. They shared their expectations, fears, and the ways in which they could contribute, develop ideas, grow and be present during the project.

Then it was time for lunch.

After lunch

Street action, getting to know Trikala better, what could be better than that? Well better hurry up and explore more. The participants were given 14 tasks such as places to visit in the city, ask the prices for one coffee learn some useful expressions in Greek, to find the umbrella street etc. to get to know the

welcoming culture in Trikala on an advanced level and to feel more comfortable. The last session for the day 2 of this journey included Youthpass and key competences or let's call them skills that the participants needed to understand and find more about in order to achieve their expectations. It was an informative session and one of the most important ones in this Erasmus+ experience.

Now let's all together go to dinner and move to day 3.

DAY 3

The third day was first about social identity. Participants were tasked to egosurf and find out what their online footprint looked like, with some participants being surprised with what they found. That led to an exercise to reflect on what they would want to improve, remove, or modify about their information available online.

In the afternoon everyone grouped up in their national teams, represented their NGOs and explored their social media presence and on how it can be improved.

Afterwards there was a focus on online strategies and its main aspects: SMM, Email Marketing, Branding, Content Marketing, Native Marketing, Affiliate Marketing, Pay-per-click marketing, Display advertising, and online public relations. The participants were then grouped up in teams and created brands that would be used again in the next few days: Paradiso (Youth Travel Agency), Karo (Ethical Designer Brand), WakaEco (Startup Recycling materials Shoes Business) and YODO (Youth NGO).

In the evening, the group had their first intercultural night which included quizzes, dances, foods and drinks from North Macedonia, Italy, Croatia and Portugal, which led to an amazing night.

DAY 4

Fourth day of the project started off with an energizer and quickly moved into social media: its addictiveness, the ways it can increase visibility for people and organisations, with a particular focus on Facebook. The participants were divided into groups and tasked to create a group, a page, posts and dissemination content.

In the afternoon the focus was shifted towards Twitter, and various aspects and uses of the platform were explored and explained. The brand groups were then tasked to work on their brands' social media presence by using examples, keywords and strategy, making it a very practical day with further social media related tasks to finish it off.

DAY 5

Participants embraced 5th day of the project continuing the learning about social media tools and how to use them. After the top ten game and an energizer the first session started with YouTube. A presentation followed by the trainers about this tool and how to use it. The participants learned about its characteristics and ways of advertisement. Also, some people shared their previous knowledge on the topic. Afterwards four teams formed with each had to do a different task: create a YouTube channel for the project, interview participants creating a vlog from the training course and create a news video about the whole project. Second part of the training was about some other social media. Participants were divided again in four different teams and each team had to present one social media and more specifically Monday, Pinterest, LinkedIn and Tik Tok. Next task was about creating a logo for the imaginary businesses from the

preview's days. By the night participants had their second intercultural night. First Greece presented their country followed by Cyprus, Romania and finally Poland. During the presentations they played Kahoot games, watched videos and of course they danced. They shared their food and products also and they had the chance to taste each other's culture.

DAY 6

Next day was the Cultural Visit Day and a free afternoon. Most of the participants visited " Meteora". They took the bus from the morning and went through Kalampaka there. Meteora is a rock formation in central Greece hosting one of the largest and most precipitously built complexes of Eastern Orthodox Monasteries. The six monasteries are built on immense natural pillars and hill like rounded boulders that dominate the local area. An important thing is that Meteora is included on the Unesco Heritage List. Participants were walked approximately 14 km to visit 2 or 3 monasteries! They had a wonderful time and fun during that visit even though were very tired. They returned around six o'clock in the afternoon. The rest of the day was free, so they had walks around Trikala and had some beverages on a cafeteria. At night they visited a shop to drink something and again a lot of fun followed! The day was amazing in general!

DAY 7

During the morning of the 7th day, participants were focused on WordPress, the most used content management system nowadays (over 42% of users). With the support of the trainers, the participants first had the opportunity to analyze the functioning of the platform, evaluating all its advantages. Then, gathered in national groups, they had the opportunity to create their own Wordpress page, as well as its interaction with the different social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Youtube). Thus, it was possible to create several free websites, consisting of pages, categories, blogs, contacts, etc.

In the afternoon session, the participants, divided into small groups, had the opportunity to build their own Wordpress page, developing their own site according to their topics Paradiso (Youth Travel Agency), Karo (Ethical Designer Brand), WakaEco (Startup Recycling materials Shoes Business) and YODO (Youth NGO)..

First, they developed their ideas on paper, to share them with the rest of the participants and receive the first feedback on their feasibility. In the second part of the afternoon the participants turned all their knowledge and ideas into the pages of the website. Participants enjoyed the night playing board games at the hotel.

DAY 8

The eighth day of the project began with a workshop organized by the Romanian participants, analyzing the potential of the video shooting. Participants, divided into small groups, created small videos using the TikTok platform. Once these videos were recorded, they worked on the editing part. Later on, participants focused on the different aspects of the dissemination activities (creating the project video, writing an article, creating the project logo, developing the content for social media). Divided into groups, they collaborated actively and with lots of energy to work all together.

DAY 9

Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. It has an estimated budget of €26.2 billion. The Erasmus+ Programme is a European founding programme established in 1987 offering young people from 18 to 30 years old, plus leader of the team 30+ years. They have possibility of studying abroad in another country for a period of 7 to 10 days.

Review of the week was on the last day and the the leaders discussed future plans with participants.

The participants will be tasked with evaluating, they will receive youthpass that will certificate their present in the project. Project will be finished with see you soon party.

DAY 10

Day 10 is departure day and some participants left at 6am and some had later flights. They all arrived home safe and full of new experience, knowledge and amazing memories of the wonderful time spent in Trikala.

Most of participants are looking forward to coming back for the second part of the training course, that will be held in Trikala (Greece) the next February.

See you soon! <3

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