



**PAClife**

**“Physical and Cultural Activity for Life Skills Development”**

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**Comparative Report**

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Christina Nassou and Chara Skourti

Authors:

Nassou, C., Skourti, C. (KMOP), Hopkins, P., Baker, C., Burton, L., Conibere, K. (University of Gloucestershire), Levett, P., Morris, B. (Play Gloucestershire), Sederberg, P., Aggerholm, J. (CLAVIS), Suhajda, V., Kolozsvajri (Rogers Foundation), Schirosa, A., La Farina, G. (CESIE).



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## 1. Introduction

“Life skills” are defined as psychosocial abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life<sup>1</sup>. Life skills can be fostered and are fundamental for a person’s progression in life, both personal and professional. Some of those skills are creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, effective communication and collaboration skills, cultivation of responsibility, development of healthy relationships and decision- making. These skills can be acquired through life experience but can be further developed through constant training and engagement.

Life skills are particularly important for adolescents and young people. Adolescents and young people leave behind the dependence and the safety that childhood is associated with and enter adulthood with all its opportunities and freedoms but also with all its insecurities and anxieties. Life skills can help adolescents and young people strengthen their self-confidence, interpersonal skills, learn how to use them in assessing knowledge, use resources for their benefit, and make the proper decisions in order to promote their wellbeing<sup>2</sup>. This way life skills can help young people anticipate with all the difficulties that might occur in adulthood and be involved in the society. In other words, life skills can equip young people with all the necessary qualities in order to become resilient individuals and active citizens.

Resilience as a concept was first introduced in 1973, aiming to describe the ability of ecosystems to return to their previous condition after disasters. In social sciences however, resilience is used to describe a person’s ability to successfully adjust to change and stressful instances in constructive ways and overcome any difficulty that might occur (Oliver, Collin, Burns, & Nicholas, 2014).

Scientists believe that what makes an individual resilient is a combination of pre-existing traits and environmental characteristics, which come together and act in order to overcome stressful situations. Some of those characteristics could be extraversion, high sense of self-esteem, goal orientation, optimism, or forgiveness (Wald, Taylor, Lang, Asundson, & Stapleton, 2006).

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/lifeskills/index\\_7308.html](https://www.unicef.org/lifeskills/index_7308.html)

<sup>2</sup> <https://gdhr.wa.gov.au/guides/teaching-sre/resilience-and-life-skills>

Resilience is a necessary and important concept especially in the Europe of 21<sup>st</sup> century, since economic recession, unemployment, and immigration find people vulnerable and trying to adjust to new circumstances (Cefai, et al., 2015a), especially when it comes to adolescents and young people, who might be the most vulnerable population when crisis occurs. In fact, although most children in Europe seem to grow up in favourable conditions, 3 out of 10 were at risk of poverty and social exclusion in 2013, a figure particularly increased after the global financial crisis (Coyette, Fiasse, Johansson, Montaigne, & Strandell, 2015, p. 11).

For the above mentioned reasons, the University of Gloucestershire (UK), Play Gloucestershire (UK), Rogers Személyközpontú Oktatásért Alapítvány (HU), KENTRO MERIMNAS OIKOGENEIAS KAI PAIDIOU(GR), CESIE (IT) and CLAVIS sprog & competence (DK) are implementing the 2 year Erasmus + project entitled: **PAClife – Physical and Cultural Activity for Life Skills Development** (2020-2021).

The project aims to support disadvantaged and migrant young people in building resilience through acquiring and developing life skills and key competences by participating in a programme of physical and cultural activity. PAClife will develop and implement a training tool for the building of life skills for low-skilled/low qualified migrant and disadvantaged young people. Through the training, the targeted young people will be involved in physical and cultural activities and will be trained to implement such activities. They will then be supported to undertake volunteer placements in the community working within settings to maximise the skills they have acquired by organising and implementing physical and cultural activities along with other children and adolescents.

Physical and cultural activity such as dance, sport, drama and play have been proven to have the potential to enhance personal development (Goudas, 2010) and are being widely used as a method for life skills development. Such activity is by nature active, interactive and highly emotional and has the power to attract, entertain and educate children and young people. At the same time physical and cultural activities provide the possibility to explore and practice values such as teamwork, goal setting, peer teaching, conflict resolution and can provide opportunities for creative experimentation, self- exploration and self – empowerment.

## 2. Key Findings of the Desk Research

### 2.1. The state of young people in each partner national context

Children and young people constitute the 33.3% of the Europe's population. In number, this translates to 169 million. Even though Europe is a union with many different states in terms of cultural characteristics, there are common features regarding young Europeans.

For example, young people seem to face more probabilities of experiencing long-term unemployment, especially in those states that are mostly affected by the financial crisis (Coyette, Fiasse, Johansson, Montaigne, & Strandell, 2015). In fact, European Statistics<sup>3</sup> show that in 2013, in the start of the economic crisis, 20.1% of young people were neither in employment nor in education and training<sup>4</sup>, and 27 million were at risk of poverty and social exclusion (European Commission, 2015), a figure that troubled policy makers because it exposed a whole generation to long-term unemployment. This percentage seems to be gradually dropping, reaching in 2018 the levels of 2008, i.e. 16.5%<sup>5</sup>. Also, young people seem to delay to leave from their parental homes. More specifically, they tend to leave their parental home earlier in the Northern EU states (in their early twenties), while they leave later (in their early thirties) in the Southern and Eastern EU states (Coyette, Fiasse, Johansson, Montaigne, & Strandell, 2015). At the same time, all young Europeans, seem to emphasize in the importance of physical wellbeing, with the majority to practice physical activities (Coyette, Fiasse, Johansson, Montaigne, & Strandell, 2015).

Focusing in each partner national context, Hungarian youth, in 2014 constituted the 33% of the population (Coyette, Fiasse, Johansson, Montaigne, & Strandell, 2015). Like in many European countries, they are more affected by unemployment and rarely leave their parents' house before age 25, in order to protect themselves from poverty (Medgyesi & Nagy, 2014). In

<sup>3</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Statistics on young people neither in employment nor in education or training](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Statistics_on_young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_or_training)

<sup>4</sup> NEET meaning Not in Education, Employment or Training

<sup>5</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics on young people neither in employment nor in education or training](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics_on_young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_or_training)

addition, according to the research conducted by the European Union, the number of young people who were neither in employment, nor in education or training in 2018 was at 16%<sup>6</sup>.

In Italy, data from 2014 show that young people constitute the 30% of the population (Coyette, Fiasse, Johansson, Montaigne, & Strandell, 2015). According to the latest ISTAT data, the number of young people who were neither in employment nor in education and training in 2018, was about 2.116.000, representing the 23,4% of the total amount of youth within the country, making Italy the first country in Europe with such high numbers (Sacco, 2019, p. 19). Young people without employment, training, or education, are commonly characterised by a series of psychosocial traits, such as low self-esteem and self-efficacy, poor motivation towards their opportunity of employment and poor trust in the future (Marzana, Poy, Rosina, & Sironi, 2018, p. 192). Their concentration across the country is divided as follows: 15,5% in the North, 19,5% in the central areas and 34% in the South.

In the UK youth constitute the 36% of the population (Coyette, Fiasse, Johansson, Montaigne, & Strandell, 2015). According to Johnston (2015) young people were faced with the worst economic prospects and their lives were worsened during the 2010-2015 period. Global financial crisis contributed to this with people under 34 to be experiencing bigger risks of poverty. In fact, the unemployment rate for people aged 16 to 24 years old was increased by 1% from 2008 reaching at 14.8%. However, in 2018, the documented number of NEETs was 13.6%<sup>7</sup>.

In Denmark, youth constitute 36% of Danish population (Coyette, Fiasse, Johansson, Montaigne, & Strandell, 2015), with the NEETs to be the 10.9% of the population<sup>8</sup>. The Danish Government aims to increase the percentages of completion of youth education up until 90% until 2030 and at the same time to cut in half the proportion of young people unrelated to education or the labour market. In addition, there is the Danish Model, called “flexicurity”, which is a social safety net with social benefits for unemployed people. Young people under 30 years can apply for

<sup>6</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics\\_on\\_young\\_people\\_neither\\_in\\_employment\\_nor\\_in\\_education\\_or\\_training](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics_on_young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_or_training)

<sup>7</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics\\_on\\_young\\_people\\_neither\\_in\\_employment\\_nor\\_in\\_education\\_or\\_training](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics_on_young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_or_training)

<sup>8</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics\\_on\\_young\\_people\\_neither\\_in\\_employment\\_nor\\_in\\_education\\_or\\_training](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics_on_young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_or_training)

social benefits under special legislation for young people, which includes skills enhancement activities targeted to education and labour market. Every Dane over the age of 18 is entitled to public support for their further education - regardless of social standing (The Danish students' Grants and Loans Scheme). Nevertheless, there is an even larger group of young people in Denmark with serious social problems such as abuse, mental disorders and homelessness. An analysis from Momentum (Local Government Denmark (KL), 2018)<sup>9</sup> shows that the proportion of young people in substance abuse treatment who have a psychiatric diagnosis has increased from 32% to 46 % from 2006 to 2015. Also, as the National Board of Health's health profile from 2017 (National Board of Health's health profile, 2017) clearly shows, 12.1 % of the 16-24 year olds have a mental illness, which has lasted for more than six months, and 12.8% of 25-34 year olds face the same situation. A particularly vulnerable group are young people who have been placed as children out of their home (Local Government Denmark (KL), 2015). For example, 70 % of young people who have been placed outside of their home have not completed a youth education by the age of 25, while for the rest this percentage drops to 21%. At the same time, 43% of 30 year-olds are out of employment, while this percentage drops to 25% for the rest population. However, this is not something that affects only specific social classes. Recent studies show that vulnerability is changing and that middle-class children/young are increasingly affected<sup>10</sup>.

In Greece, young people constitute the 32% of the population (Coyette, Fiasse, Johansson, Montaigne, & Strandell, 2015). One can argue that youth constitute a vulnerable group since they face many inequalities in sections like employment and risk of poverty. More specifically, 30.3% of young people in Greece are unemployed and 24.3% face poverty (Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2018). From European statistics, the number of NEETs in 2018, was at 26.8%<sup>11</sup>. In fact, even after 12 months of unemployment, only 10% manage to find a job (Enikos, 2013). Least but not last, inequalities have also gendered characteristics with the 35.6% of young girls to be unemployed comparing to the 25.9% of men.

<sup>9</sup> Local Government Denmark (KL), Analysis, Momentum, March 2018:

<https://www.kl.dk/nyhed/2018/marts/unge-fylder-mere-og-mere-i-stofmisbrugsbehandlingen/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.cefu.dk/emner/forskning-samarbejde/livsstil-og-sundhed/ny-udsathed.aspx>

<sup>11</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics\\_on\\_young\\_people\\_neither\\_in\\_employment\\_nor\\_in\\_education\\_or\\_training](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics_on_young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_or_training)

## 2.2. Countries' migrant and disadvantaged young population – characteristics

Young migrants and especially the ones who are born outside of the European Union face the highest rate of risk of poverty and social exclusion<sup>12</sup>. In fact, in 2018 the 19% of foreign-born young people aged 15-29 years old belonged in the NEET category, comparing to the 12% of the native born, while 33% of young migrants that were born in EU and 44% young migrants that were born outside of EU were facing poverty.

More specifically, in Hungary, migration is a sensitive topic and authentic resources about the number and composition of the migrant population are not sufficient. However, Hungarian Central Statistical Office measures several different factors of disadvantage. Currently there is a highlight of the risk of poverty or social exclusion and relative income poverty by age group and Roma origin. Roma people are the largest Hungarian minority (the exact proportion is unknown, estimated between 5-10 % of the Hungarian population) and the most at risk of poverty and backwardness. Their relative income poverty rate is 38.4 % while it is 11.4 % among the non-Roma population, which means there is a factor of three difference between them. The risk of poverty or social exclusion rate varies six-fold, 63.2 % among the Roma population and 11.3 % among the non-Roma. **The age group 0-17 is the most at risk of poverty or social exclusion**, 22.5 % but it has to be noted that the differences are quite small – it is 18.9 % in the whole population. The difference is bigger in terms of relative income poverty, 25.3 % among the age group 0-17 and 19.5 % in the whole population (data exclude social benefits)<sup>13</sup>.

In the United Kingdom, migrant and disadvantaged young people are being left behind because they face particular barriers in accessing important public services and are locked out of opportunities. There are several factors that may contribute to this including socio-economic deprivation, social invisibility, poor internal organisation of the group, distinctive service needs that are currently not met, cultural barriers, stigma and stereotyping, small group size, and very importantly, a lack of evidence which limits the ability to assess the multiple disadvantages these people face (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2016). Migrants typically arrive in the UK when they are young. People who arrived before age 18 had similar employment outcomes to

<sup>12</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Young\\_people\\_-\\_migration\\_and\\_socioeconomic\\_situation#Social\\_inclusion](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Young_people_-_migration_and_socioeconomic_situation#Social_inclusion)

<sup>13</sup> Income conditions, living conditions – data of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office: [https://www.ksh.hu/stadat\\_eves\\_2\\_2](https://www.ksh.hu/stadat_eves_2_2)



the UK born. Differences between migrants and UK-born people in their twenties were therefore driven by people arriving from age 18 onwards. This finding for childhood arrivals is likely to be driven by a combination of factors, such as better language proficiency, UK qualifications, different expectations compared to recent arrivals, and local knowledge or networks<sup>14</sup>. High-levels of poverty are associated with poor social outcomes, for example, disadvantaged children are more likely to face educational and behavioural problems when they are older<sup>15</sup>. Whilst, white working-class boys from poor neighbourhoods face a ‘double-disadvantage’ of low family income and place poverty; significantly reducing their likelihood of academic study after GCSE<sup>16</sup>. Migrant and disadvantaged young people in the UK have similar characteristics to every other young person within the UK. However, migrant and disadvantaged young people have additional and possibly more complex emotional needs and physical barriers, which affect their physical and mental wellbeing<sup>17</sup>.

In Italy, as in any society, there are some vulnerable individuals (such as disabled people, young women returning to work after pregnancy, migrants, low-skilled people, etc.) who are more likely to swell the ranks of NEETs and giving attention to them can avoid the spread of the phenomenon (Sacco, 2019, pp. 20-25). During the last decade (2008-2018) the foreign population has increasingly affected the Italian labour market, with a population of at least 15 years old increased about one million and a half (ISTAT, 2019, p. 193). Therefore, attention was drawn to the migrants’ sons and daughters and to those children who came in Italy without their parents and are at high risk of early school drop-outs. Some of the disadvantages have been decreasing recently, but these progresses just occurred in those children who were born in Italy and whose mother tongue is Italian (ISTAT, 2018, p. 193). Another relevant category of youth facing inclusion difficulties are those in care (44.000 people). They are typically children placed in foster homes or residential facilities or unaccompanied foreign minors (who usually arrive after turning 15, poorly educated, showing a huge gap between their age and skills, which affects their school integration

<sup>14</sup> <https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/reports/young-people-migration-uk-overview>

<sup>15</sup> [www.uprising.org.uk/about-us/history-and-purpose](http://www.uprising.org.uk/about-us/history-and-purpose)

<sup>16</sup> [www.uprising.org.uk/about-us/history-and-purpose](http://www.uprising.org.uk/about-us/history-and-purpose)

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVxQufliVLU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5j0WODnbCRc> (In this video the young people talk about the social and cultural pressures they have faced and the differences which are heightened by growing up in a disadvantaged community.)

process) (Ricchiardi & Coggi, 2019). These youth show school adaptation and self-motivation difficulties, self-regulation and focus problems due to many factors pertaining their condition.

In Denmark, per January 2020, immigrants and refugees made up 13,9 percent of the population, arriving from more than 200 different countries, of which 58% come from Denmark. such as Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Pakistan. Per December 31, 2018, 51.613 vulnerable children and young people received at least one social support measure from the municipality<sup>18</sup>. Support can be given from the State, Municipalities or local NGOs regardless of vulnerability.

In Greece, there has been a difficulty to document the migrant flows. In the 1990s there was an increase in incoming influxes mainly due to the fall of the Soviet Union (Chindea, Majkowska-Tomkin, Mattila, & Pastor, 2008), but a rapid increase happened again in 2015 (with 211.663 people to cross the borders only in October) (UNHCR, 2019a) with the refugee crisis in Middle East countries (Petracou, et al., 2018). Concurrently, from 2015 it is very common for immigrants to be documented as asylum seekers, until their claims to be audited. This is why an analysis of the data of asylum seeker follows. The last census happened in 2011 and the Hellenic statistical authority has only made projections. For example, for the years 2017 and 2018, it is estimated that 112.247 and 119.489 migrants have arrived in Greece respectively (Voulgaris, 2018; Mpakalidou, 2019). Children and young migrants up until 29 years old are about 210.583<sup>19</sup>. In 2018 there were 2.638 children (193 of them were females), while in 2019 there were 2.488 children officially registered, with their majority to be from 14 to 17 years old. In addition, in 2019 63,912 young immigrants aged 0-34 years old applied for asylum<sup>20</sup>.

### 2.3. Physical and cultural activities as a method in building life skills per country

According to European Youth Strategy for 2019-2027, the European Union urges for special attention to vulnerable youth who face exclusion and for their empowerment in order to become active citizens and agents of positive change and to contribute to the elimination of youth poverty (European Commission, 2018). Physical and cultural activities could help towards that direction. First of all, physical activities according to the World Health Organisation (2006) could

<sup>18</sup> Statistic Denmark: <https://www.dst.dk/da/Statistik/nyt/NytHtml?cid=34764#>

<sup>19</sup> <https://iomintandem.com/project/greece/>

<sup>20</sup> [http://asylo.gov.gr/en/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Greek\\_Asylum\\_Service\\_data\\_December\\_2019\\_en.pdf](http://asylo.gov.gr/en/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Greek_Asylum_Service_data_December_2019_en.pdf)

potentially increase social interaction and community engagement addressing in that way to the wellbeing of both the individual and the community. More specifically, they offer the opportunity of acquiring new skills and enhancing their network, and they “contribute to young people physical, mental and emotional development, and offer broad social and academic gains” (World Health Organization, 2018b, p. 4). Respectively, cultural activities offer the opportunity to young people to enhance a number of traits such as their creativity by engaging in real-life challenges, their confidence, their ability to handle risk, their self-discipline, their communication and problem solving skills and their ability of teamwork<sup>21</sup>. In fact it has been proven that children and young people who participate in cultural activities, have better academic attainment as well as possess a combination of traits, like time management skills, communication skills, enhanced self-confidence etc., all of which characterize resilient people<sup>22</sup>.

More specifically, in Hungary the government supports integration of disadvantaged young people mainly through special school education and the grants of the Széchenyi 2020 Programme. Art education is not emphatic but it is a constant part of the general National Curriculum. On the contrary, Hungarian government puts a great emphasis on sport education, where pupils have gym class every day. In Hungary, there is the possibility of after-school activities, where sports and art study groups are the most popular. However, these study groups are mostly available for the children of middle and upper class parents. For example, studies have shown the link between disadvantaged social background and poor relationship to physical education (Borkovits, 2013). Good examples for building life skills through physical and cultural activities mostly remain within the civil society with the support of state grants. There are several art therapy, art pedagogy, sport activities, projects, and soft skill development programs to help disadvantaged young people run by non-governmental organisations. Municipalities can also develop local youth actions. In terms of volunteering, high school students have to perform 50 hours of community service before graduation as an important part of their education. The sports and leisure activities with children with special education needs are mentioned among the field of activities.

In the United Kingdom, there is a wide variety of youth life skills training programs across the country. Many are from local organisations working to meet the needs of their residents. A

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.lotc.org.uk/why/creativity-culture-and-the-arts/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.cubbies.in/cultural-activities-benefits-children.php>

high percentage of these life skills training programs are mentor based support. Recently there has been a rise in sports based groups focusing on working with migrant and disadvantaged young population to build confidence and life skills. Some of these organisations encourage a short period of volunteering during their program; under 18's struggle to find volunteering opportunities and migrants over 16 may struggle to have the paperwork required to get a DBS which is needed to volunteer in many of the organisations offering volunteering experiences.

In Italy, many national and local organisations, as well as political stakeholders, are working towards the empowerment of disadvantaged youth and their inclusion in the labour market and in different levels of education. For example, an inclusion program is the Italian Committee for UNICEF, through the implementation of the project NEET Equity (2018-2020) (Sacco, 2019, p. 4). Furthermore there is the Italian implementation plan of the Youth Guarantee, which aims at tackling youth unemployment in those EU countries showing unemployment rates higher than 25%, for both EU citizens or non-EU citizens legally resident in Italy) (Dipartimento per le Politiche Giovanili e il Servizio Civile Universale, 2018). At the same time, with the Law 107 of 2015 (La Buona Scuola), mandatory pathways were introduced called “alternanza scuola-lavoro”(school-work alternation) for all students in upper secondary schools in order to assist them to develop transferable skills and to facilitate the transition to adulthood (Marzana, Poy, Rosina, & Sironi, 2018, pp. 188-193). Finally, there are remarkable examples of cultural and sport activities that have been employed to boost soft skills development among youth. For example, there is the Baskin sport (from **basket** and **integration**), which is a unique sport created in Cremona, where everyone (with or without intellectual, motor and relational disabilities) is able to win (Rosa & Madonna, 2019). In addition, many efforts have been made after Law 107 was issued, focusing on the arts as a means of expression to strengthen cognitive, emotional and social skills, inspiring the Italian educational practice (Cattoni, 2017).

In Denmark, the Danish Educational System has several opportunities for vulnerable young people, such as specially organized youth education and preparatory basic education, which offer production basic training or vocational basic training. Denmark has a strong tradition for volunteering in the social welfare sector, like sport associations, girl clubs and music associations. In Copenhagen, for example, many voluntary associations contribute with support and socializing on the pitch to the socially vulnerable citizens. Also, due to the latest Elementary school reform, pupils in primary school engage in physical activities for an average of 45 minutes each school

The physical activities contribute in improving childrens' and young peoples' health and well-being, and at the same time, support learning in the school's subjects. Finally, the Centre for Youth Research (CeFU), conducts researches for young people in close collaboration with organizations, institutions, education, ministries and others with contact with young people. Among their ongoing research are the following topics:

- When nature makes a difference - how nature can make a positive difference for young people on the edge of society
- Gentoft Municipality Youth Profile 2020 - temperature measurement on young people and recommendations for the future work of Gentoft Municipality
- Citizenship arts and social communities in vulnerable residential areas - how art can embarrass engagement and community

In Greece, in terms of fostering resilience in young people through alternative activities like physical and cultural exercises, new trends have emerged. For example, there is outdoor education, which includes activities in nature, and has been found to have a positive effect in social and ecological consciousness of the participants (Agathagellou, Lazaridis, & Housanlis, 2018). Unfortunately, at the institutional level it seems that outdoor education (Katsouli & Oustinof Ersof, 2019) as well as physical education are not so common. Even though research has proven that these activities foster both physical and mental health, bring people closer, contribute in development and employment and promote values (Papanikos, et al., 2016), only 20% of young adults and 11% of adolescents have sufficient physical activity levels. In fact, physical activities are mandatory for only two hours per week in junior high school (World Health Organization, 2018a). In addition, a number of projects have been implemented in order to promote physical education to its citizens. For example, there is the "Sports for all" project. It is addressed to all the population and is funded by the General Secretariat of Sports. Secondly, there was the "Different people-common needs: refugees moving towards a physically active life", implemented in 2016 and funded by the European Union, which was addressed to refugees aged between 15 and 30 years old, who resided in camps in Athens. In addition, there is the "Swimming school programme". In these programmes children aged between eight and nine years old familiarize themselves with the water environment, through exercises and play. At the same time, through active engagement pupils cultivate their individual and social competences and learn the basic rules of safety. It was launched for the first time in 2015 as a part of schools' physical education. It involved 12 courses

lasted a trimester and up to 2018, it had engaged 2800 groups and 444000 students (World Health Organization, 2018b). Furthermore, both municipalities<sup>23</sup> and private organizations organise summer camps for children between 6 and 12 years old after the end of the school year. Participating children can play, exercise, socialise, and practise their abilities in Olympic sports. The implementation of these activities also aims at promoting values such as a team spirit, trust, respect, responsibility and self-confidence. There is also the Scouts of Greece along with the Greek Guiding Association with branches all over Greece. Both Associations focus among others on outdoor activities that combine play, exercise and sports with learning, socialisation and awareness. They are addressed to children from 6 years old and over and aim at their overall personal development, social participation and life in nature through play and meaningful educational activities<sup>24</sup>.

### 3. Good Practices

In order to get a more thorough idea of the current state of youth life skills training programs and physical and cultural activity as a method for life skills development, some initiatives taking place in the partner countries are identified. These range from state to private initiatives, training courses, the work of NGOs, one- off training programs and events.

#### 3.1. Hungary

##### **Volunteer youth in action - a civic initiative for development and motivation of children raised in state care**<sup>25</sup>

Volunteer youth in action includes volunteering projects that aim to provide assistance to children and young adults (aged 10-24) living in child protection care or adopted families, in terms of (financial) awareness, planning skills, personality development and development of financial culture necessary for independent living. Projects use innovative, creative community methods and experiences that are designed, prepared and implemented with the involvement of children

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.opandacamps.gr/>

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.sep.org.gr/en/normal/home> and <http://www.seo.gr/homeEN.asp?ITMID=16&LANG=EN>

<sup>25</sup> [https://www.raiffeisen.hu/documents/10165/139643/RKP\\_csaladon\\_kivul\\_nevelkedok.pdf/0dee751c-2ee6-4535-ac02-faed255e712c](https://www.raiffeisen.hu/documents/10165/139643/RKP_csaladon_kivul_nevelkedok.pdf/0dee751c-2ee6-4535-ac02-faed255e712c)

and young adults. With the help of the projects, their life management skills, basic management knowledge, organizational skills and self-knowledge are developed, along with attitudes, social competencies and skills that contribute to their integration into the labour market.

**Target group:** Children and young adults (aged 10-24) living in child protection care, out of the family, integrated into a voluntary program managed by civil society organisations

**Organisation/ Entity:** Call for funding of the Raiffeisen Bank Hungary (2010, 7 supported projects)

**Evaluation:** N/A

**Language:** Hungarian

### **The Difference Between – Creative Tools for Communication and Connection**<sup>26</sup>

The Difference Between consists of a 50 hours long accredited training course using methods to empower the participants' capacity to facilitate and deliver activities in a clearer and impactful manner, with the support of tools and inputs coming from coaching, body awareness methods, theatre, dance, program design.

Learning outcomes:

1. Become more attuned to the learning needs of the context they are working in
2. Improve and boost their practical skills for working with groups
3. Promote and multiply the exchange of their best practices with other youth professionals

**Target group:** Youth, young adults, and professionals working with this target group

**Organisation/Entity:** Egyesek Youth Association

**Evaluation:** N/A

**Language:** Hungarian/English

### **A complex musical talent care program for disadvantaged and multiple disadvantaged youth**<sup>27</sup>

The short-term goal of the program aimed to engage students in continuing their studies in (musical) vocational training as a result of intensive music and skills development, and to acquire the knowledge, motivation, skills, and other support needed to meet institutional requirements.

<sup>26</sup> [https://egyesek.hu/wp-content/uploads/hu-en-kepzesi-tajekoztato\\_course\\_description-d006-02.pdf](https://egyesek.hu/wp-content/uploads/hu-en-kepzesi-tajekoztato_course_description-d006-02.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.snetbergercenter.org/hu/Kozpontunk/Tamogatott-projektjeink/2017-07-30/Komplex-zenei-tehetsegondozo-program-hatranynos-es-halmazottan-hatranynos-helyzetu-fiataloknak>



During the program, young talents participated in the activities of the program a total of 15 weeks. For the rest of the year, mentors not only followed their musical career, but kept in touch with their teachers and family members, continuously monitoring and supporting their development. Target group: students living in Hungary and in the Hungarian-inhabited areas of neighbouring countries, who are particularly talented in music, are of Roma origin and / or are at a disadvantage, and are at a multiple disadvantage

**Organisation/Entity:** Snétberger Music Talent Center

**Evaluation:**

- 80 graduated students
- 4 courses (two spring, one summer and one autumn)
- more than 30 students in secondary and higher education, 9 of them continue their studies at the Academy of Music
- 2 concerts at the MOM Cultural Centre in Budapest
- 2 performances in the 'Valley of Arts' Festival in Kapolcs
- 4 performances in Felsőörs

**Language:** Hungarian

**Strengthening social cohesion by cooperating with the ÁGOTA Foundation and the Szent Ágota Child Protection Service Provider to expand its community development activities**<sup>28</sup>

The project aimed to improve social cohesion, including community involvement and retention, community integration and community development, as well as a number of events such as preventive programs. A cultural-literary evening and a classical music evening were also organized. In the framework of social competence development and intergenerational sensitization, trainings, a family cap council program and mediation also took place. One of the biggest events of the project was the Integration Day organized for disadvantaged target groups, which took place in June 2018 with the participation of nearly one and a half thousand people. The camp activity organized for children and young people in state care was a very successful and

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.promenad.hu/2019/12/28/kozossegfejleszt-es-elmanyprogramok-segitettek-a-hatranyos-helyzetuek-integraciojat/>



effective project program in 2018 and 2019 as well. The project was financed by the Széchenyi 2020 Program of the Hungarian State.

**Target group:** marginalized groups and individuals

**Organisations:** ÁGOTA Foundation, Szent Ágota Child Protection Service Provider, Snétberger Music Talent Center

**Evaluation:** N/A

**Language:** Hungarian

### **For social inclusion of disadvantaged young people through sport**<sup>29</sup>

The program is aiming the social inclusion of disadvantaged young people and children with economical obstacles. Through sport, they want to provide an educational pattern that contributes to youth become positive self-esteemed, determined, goal-oriented, creative, trustworthy citizens of our country and thus build a successful career after their studies. The collaborators of the program are coaches, teachers, trainers, parents, representatives of the Roma local governments. Establishing partnerships, keeping contact with the parents, teachers and the coach is a priority, so they can monitor the children on a daily basis. The program presents a new form of education in which learning and sport are complementary and reinforcing elements.

**Target group:** Disadvantaged young people, children living in poverty

**Organisation/ Entity:** Roma Nationality Government of Újpest

**Evaluation:** N/A

**Language:** Hungarian

<sup>29</sup> <https://ujpestiroma.hu/a-hatranyos-helyzetu-fiatalok-sporton-keresztuli-felzarkoztatasaert/>

### 3.2. United Kingdom

#### **GARAS (Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers)**<sup>30</sup>

GARAS offer support to those seeking asylum in Gloucestershire. They welcome them when they arrive, advocate for them during daily struggles, support them if they face being sent back as well as helping them to adjust to their long term future if they are recognized as refugees. As well as this they aim to work with other agencies to support their users (see organisation below). They do not deliver life skills training but do direct their users to organisations who can.

**Target Group:** Asylum Seekers & Refugees

**Organisation/Entity:** GARAS (Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers)

**Evaluation:** N/A

**Language:** Predominantly English

#### **GLOUCESTERSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST 'Wild Welcome' Scheme**<sup>31</sup>

Using their knowledge, enthusiasm and understanding of the natural world the people of Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust provide disadvantaged children and young people from Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (GARAS) with opportunities to play, explore and improve their local green spaces and the natural world they find themselves in, in their new home in a new innovative project. This is run through after-school and after-college sessions with nature-based activities to help child refugees and asylum seekers to feel a connection to their new local environment. This will help the children and young people integrate into their new community as well as help them to build a connection to wildlife and the natural world.

**Target Group:** Disadvantaged children and young people, child refugees and asylum seekers

**Organisation/Entity:** Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust (a part of The Wildlife Trusts)

**Evaluation:** N/A

**Language:** English

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.garas.org.uk/>

<sup>31</sup> [www.wildlifetrusts.org](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org)

## **PLAY GLOUCESTERSHIRE**<sup>32</sup>

Play Gloucestershire's Play Rangers provide active and creative play in urban and rural communities providing adventure, friendship and fun for hundreds of young people each year. School aged children and their families are the main beneficiaries of and Play Gloucestershire particularly support children from disadvantaged and rurally isolated communities and those living in challenging circumstances. Play Gloucestershire provides volunteering opportunities for young people aged 10 to 17 years old, aiming to develop their strengths and utilise their talents. Most young people start by informally helping at play sessions in their home community. Some then sign up to the Young Volunteer Programme, logging their volunteer hours and achieving milestones with rewards such as a polo shirt, head torch, the coveted hoodie and ultimately a place on one of our training camps.

The Young Volunteers realise that doing good makes you feel good, and as well as the satisfaction of being a valued part of our play team, they also develop important life skills such as confidence, resilience and independence. Places on the Young Volunteer training events are highly sought after, and these gatherings enable young people from a whole range of backgrounds and abilities to meet and make friends, develop new skills and have lots of fun.

**Target Group:** Rurally isolated & disadvantaged school aged children

**Organisation/Entity:** Play Gloucestershire

**Evaluation:** N/A

**Language:** English

## **DofE (Duke of Edinburgh's Awards)**<sup>33</sup>

The DofE charity works with organisations across the UK to help young people gain essential skills, experience, confidence and resilience to successfully navigate adult life. DofE programs are run through schools, colleges, youth groups, young offender institutions, fostering agencies and hospitals. There are four sections to complete at Bronze and Silver level and five at Gold. They

<sup>32</sup> [www.playgloucestershire.org.uk](http://www.playgloucestershire.org.uk)

<sup>33</sup> [www.dofe.org](http://www.dofe.org)

involve helping the community/environment, becoming fitter, developing new skills, planning, training for and completing an expedition and, for Gold only, working with a team on a residential activity.

**Target Group:** Young People aged 14 to 25

**Organisation/Entity:** The Duke of Edinburgh Charity

**Evaluation:** N/A

**Language:** English

### **YOUNG ROOTS**<sup>34</sup>

Young Roots aims to improve the life chances of 11 – 25-year-old refugees and asylum seekers in and around Brent and Croydon (London). They achieve this by running fun and educational activities, offering peer-led language learning, and providing one-to-one casework. Many of their activities are run in partnership with other organisations to provide holistic support and ensure young people can access other services and opportunities.

**Target Group:** 11 – 25-year-old refugees and asylum seekers

**Organisation/Entity:** Young Roots

**Evaluation:** N/A

**Language:** English

### **UPRISING**<sup>35</sup>

UpRising is a national youth leadership development organisation. Their work provides routes to leadership and employment for those who have talent but lack opportunity. Their 9-month leadership program focuses on social action and is supported by their team of mentors from across the business world.

**Target Group:** 16-25 year olds

**Organisation/Entity:** UpRising

**Evaluation:** N/A

<sup>34</sup> <https://youngroots.org.uk/>

<sup>35</sup> [www.uprising.org.uk](http://www.uprising.org.uk)

**Language:** English

**Play Torbay and Questing<sup>36</sup>**

Play Torbay is a long-standing Play Association that offers play opportunities in adventure playgrounds across the Torbay area and alternative Education to excluded young people or those at risk of exclusion. They also work with young people who volunteer and work alongside paid playwork staff and have become members of the paid staff team also. One of their young members has also become one of the Organisation's Trustees.

The Organisation runs an annual quest that is offered to disadvantaged young people, who often have additional needs. The quest is delivered at a local venue such as Torre Abbey, Greenway (home of Agatha Christie). The site inspires the week long co-production of an encounter between young people, playworkers and local artists. Often focused around a dramatic play or production that is shown at the end of the week, the young people spend their week with drama students and artists devising the work. Every year Play Torbay applies for funding to make the project happen.

**Target Group:** children and young people

**Organisation/Entity:** Play Torbay

**Evaluation:** N/A

**Language:** English

### 3.3.Italy

**Associazione Baskin<sup>37</sup>**

Baskin Association, in accordance with its social purposes, intends to pursue many relevant objectives, such as: promoting a culture of sport geared to integration between people with and without disabilities, promoting and disseminating Baskin (Integrated Basket) and activating sports initiatives (especially in the field of basketball). Baskin allows the active participation of players with any type of disability (physical and/or mental) that allows shooting in a basket. This calls into question the rigid structure of official sports and this proposal, which was created in Cremona in a school context with the collaboration of parents, teachers of physical education and support.

The Association Baskin ONLUS was born in 2006.

**Target Group:** Young people with and without disabilities.

**Organisation/Entity:** Associazione Baskin-ONLUS

<sup>36</sup> <https://playtorbay.org.uk/>

<sup>37</sup> <https://baskin.it/about/>

**Evaluation:** On the one hand, the sharing of sports objectives with disabled children allows young people without disabilities to appreciate the richness and skills that diversity brings with it. On the other hand, disabled young people increased self-confidence, the ability to combine sacrifice with pleasure, have grown psychomotor abilities and interaction skills with children and adults.

**Language:** Italian

### **Il Velo d'Italia**<sup>38</sup>

"Il Velo d'Italia" is a national poetry competition created in collaboration with MIUR, the Ministry of Education, University and Research, with which the Italian Red Cross seeks to raise students' awareness on the issue of forms of discrimination linked to migration through solidarity and art. The Project aims to increase young people's knowledge and awareness on the migratory phenomenon, with the ultimate aim of creating more inclusive communities that can promote tolerance, the culture of non-violence, mutual respect and remove barriers to prejudice.

**Target Group:** All secondary school students who have attended a meeting with the CRI volunteers on the theme of the competition.

**Organisation/Entity:** Croce Rossa Italiana

**Evaluation:** N/A

**Language:** Italian

### **NEET Equity**<sup>39</sup>

NEET Equity is a UNICEF project selected by the Department for Youth Policies and the Universal Civil Service in the context of the "Prevention and Combating Youth Uneasiness" Notice (ID 189/Uneasiness Notice). It is developed in three Italian municipalities (Naples, Taranto and Carbona) and has the general objective of improving the capacity of the territory to build active participatory policies in favour of the inclusion of young NEET. It was started in May 2018 and will end in 2020 (Sacco, 2019, p. 7).

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.cri.it/ilveloditalia>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.unicef.it/doc/8738/neet-equity.htm>

**Target Group:** NEET Equity involves 300 boys and girls between 16 and 22, in the transition from secondary school to work.

**Organisation/Entity:** UNICEF ITALIA

**Evaluation:** N/A

**Language:** Italian

### **Il Laboratorio dei Talenti<sup>40</sup>**

The Social Cooperative “La Panormitana”, in partnership with other organizations (Comitato L’Autismo Parla, NeuroTeam, TEACCH -house, Parrocchia SS. Ecce Homo, Parsifal, Vivi Sano Onlus, Contaminando Bios, Opera Pia TelesinoArdizzone) and the Psychology Department of the University of Palermo, has started in Palermo in 2013 the project: “Il Laboratorio dei Talenti”, funded by Fondazione con il Sud. The project aimed at improving personal independence levels of involved youth, strengthening their social and relational skills and fostering their self-efficacy skills by encouraging them to take care of objects and projects. These goals are to be achieved through forms of rehabilitation which employ the Applied Behaviour Analysis and the organization of some recreational activities, such as art workshops, gardening, sport, theatre and summer activities.

**Target Group:** 60 minors aged between 6-18 suffering from autism spectrum disorders

**Organisation/Entity:** Fondazione con il Sud

**Evaluation:** Click on the following link to learn more about the outcomes related to this best practice (English subtitles available): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EL7UgKXlarA&feature=youtu.be>

**Language:** Italian

### **In&Out - Boosting youth and migrant integration through cultural and volunteering activities<sup>41</sup>**

In&Out is a project co-funded by the Erasmus + program, Key Action 2 – Strategic partnerships in the youth field and it aims at creating a network of cooperation and exchange of good practices

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.esperienzeconilsud.it/illaboratoriodeitalenti/scheda-del-progetto/>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.inandoutproject.eu/>

between youth workers in Europe and those working in the Caribbean, bringing together faraway territories, through art in various forms (we used the methods developed by the In&Out partners and we had sessions on RMA, photography and storytelling, dance and art). Five European partner organizations (among them CESIE) - directly concerned by unemployment and migrant crisis, settled up the this project, whose objective is to promote volunteering and culture as an effective tool for the integration of youth with fewer opportunities and young migrants in Europe, by developing methodologies adapted to their local context, by sharing best practices and strengthening the networking and cooperation of European and Caribbean professionals on these issues. See the tools<sup>42</sup>.

**Target Group:** Europeans and Caribbean youth workers and young people

**Organisation/Entity:** ADILES (France), Bee.com (Italy), Dansare Utan Gränser (Sweden), Jarit (Spain), CESIE (Italy)

**Evaluation:** For the local participants, it was an opportunity to meet and share moments with migrants and vice versa. For those more experienced in art it was a good opportunity to share their knowledge and for those less experienced to test their creativity

**Language:** English (+ partners' languages)

### 3.4. Denmark

#### DFUNK<sup>43</sup>

DFUNK is a nationwide youth organization that creates networks and disseminates knowledge among young people with or without refugee backgrounds. Through social activities, it engages young refugees in the community, strengthens their skills and resources and helps them establish networks with other young people. DFUNK has several different activity groups around the country. They meet around food, sports, board games, art and everything that interests them.

**Target Group:** The target group is young people between 15-30 years:

- Young-to-young: Local groups where young people with and without refugee background meet and have fun together

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.inandoutproject.eu/download-draft-tools/>

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.dfunk.dk/>



- Food mekka: Shared cooking and dining
- Sport groups: football, volley and running

**Organisation/Entity:** DFUNK

**Evaluation:** N/A

**Language:** Danish

### **DIF get2sport<sup>44</sup>**

DIF get2sport has among other things supported 55 associations in 43 exposed residential areas in 22 municipalities. The effort is financed by private and government funding. The purpose of DIF get2sport is to ensure a well-functioning sports association life by relieving the voluntary powers of sports associations in the exposed residential areas, so that the volunteers can concentrate on the training and club operation instead of practical and social problems. The DIF get2sport effort is needed as there are a number of special challenges for sports associations in vulnerable residential areas:

Children's sports participation is characterized by their parents' social and cultural background. This is reflected in a lower sports participation rate for children whose parents are not at work than for children whose parents are at work. Children whose parents are born outside Europe also have lower sports participation than children whose parents are born in Denmark.

DIF get2sport supports the associations in various ways in relation to ongoing practical challenges. For example, it may be that the coach of a football team has a parental circle where no one has a car and therefore cannot be transported to the next match. Here, DIF get2sport has the opportunity to support the association, so activities can be carried out and coaches and members can be retained.

**Target Group:** school age children, young people

**Organisation/Entity:** DIF get2sport

**Evaluation:** Reports on get2sport efforts made by Aalborg University show that we can use the same methods of prevention against crime committed by young people with a different ethnic

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.dif.dk/da/get2sport>

background than Danish and crime committed by other young people. It is basically about giving young people an experience of being part of the community.

### **GAME Denmark<sup>45</sup>**

Game Denmark is a fast growing, innovative NGO recognized as one of the world's 150 best NGO's. Founded in 2002 in Denmark with a mission to create lasting social change through youth-led street sports and culture, GAME establishes innovative facilities and trains youth-leaders as instructors and role models in street sports and civil society. For example, GAME House Copenhagen is an asphalted street sport house in Copenhagen. Activities such as urban music school, rap courses for women, dance studio, street football, street basket, yoga and parkour.

**Target Group:** youth and young people

**Organisation/Entity:** GAME Denmark

**Evaluation:** N/A

### **Mind your own business<sup>46</sup>**

With entrepreneurship as the focal point, Mind Your Own Business engages boys aged 13 to 19 from vulnerable residential areas across the country. In collaboration with volunteer venture pilots from civil society and business partners from the business community, it allows boys to establish their own micro business. In the work, the boys strengthen their professional and social skills and gain a stronger connection to the education system and the labour market.

**Target Group:** adolescents up to 19 years old

**Organisation/Entity:** Mind Your Own Business

**Evaluation:** N/A

### **Danish Folk high school<sup>47</sup>**

<sup>45</sup> . <http://gamedenmark.org/en/>

<sup>46</sup> <https://myob.dk/>

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.danishfolkhighschools.com/>

Danish Folk high school is a school where students live and learn together. The schools is alternatively organised with no prerequisites, no exams, and no grades. It is structured around the interests of the students as the main driving force for learning. The main aim of the folk high schools is life enlightenment, public education, and democratic education. The folk high schools design their own educational practice and plan the content of courses and activities based on the individual school's core values and the main aim of the folk high schools. Roughly speaking there are seven types of folk high schools in Denmark that offer a wide range of courses, study trips, and specialized subjects, such as General schools, Gymnastics and Sports Schools and Lifestyle Schools. The long stays are up to 40 weeks, weekly rate about 230 EUR with the opportunity to apply for grants. Age limit 17,5 years.

**Target group:** children and young up to 17.5 years old

**Organisation/Entity:** Danish Folk High School

**Evaluation:** N/A

### **Local Sport Clubs**

Local Sport Clubs is with good contact with vulnerable young people, for example:

AC Hillerød - uses sport as a social educational tool. The football club has, among other things, focused on getting more young girls of different ethnic backgrounds in outdoors residential areas and works on including them in active sports communities. The girls spend time in a social and safe environment with skilled coaches, who are anchored locally. Street football is used as means for social integration, socialisation and a tool to reach more young people. The trainings are open and free for those interested in participating.

**Target Group:** young people

**Organisation/Entity:** Local Sport clubs

**Evaluation:** N/A

## **3.5. Greece**

### **Creative Centres of the Municipality of Athens**<sup>48</sup>

The Municipality of Athens operates centres of creative learning that offer cultural courses in Greek to young people and adults. They started operating under the concept “culture for all”, and they aim at providing opportunities for creative expression through arts. In total, seven centres of this kind operate in the Municipality of Athens, offering cultural activities and programmes of creative employment. For example, courses of theatrical play for children from five to twelve years old are offered until June 2020. Between October and December 2019, an educational cultural activity named “Chasing the Legend” for children between 5 and 11 years old was also offered<sup>49</sup>: its aim was to get children to know more about the world-famous opera singer Maria Callas, both as person and as an artist, through searching her personal items (photos, letters, watches, clothes) in a cultural play.

**Target Group:** children and young people

**Organisation/Entity:** Organisation of Culture, Sports and Youth of the Municipality of Athens

**Evaluation:** N/A

**Language:** Greek

### **“Imagine Peace Youth Summer Camp”**<sup>50</sup>

In 2017 the British Council, the International Olympic Truce Centre and Save the Dream organized a youth summer camp called “Imagine Peace Youth Summer Camp”. It was addressed to young people between 18 and 25 years old, and for one week in August 2007, 50 young people from 15 countries around the world participated in educational activities and sport activities that aimed at fostering the values of equality and peace; at the same time, participants explored the role of sports in conflict resolution. The camp was held in English, in Ancient Olympia.

**Target Group:** young people 18-25 years old

**Organisation/Entity:** British Council Greece, International Olympic Truce Centre, Save the Dream

**Evaluation:** N/A

**Language:** English

<sup>48</sup> <https://opanda.gr/index.php/draseis-gia-paidia-opanda/89-ekapideutika-programmata/2432-tria-nea-programmata-gia-paidia-sto-kentro-dimiourgikis-mathisi-evelpidon>

<sup>49</sup> <https://opanda.gr/index.php/dimiourgiki-mathisi/86-paidia-kai-neoi>

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.britishcouncil.gr/en/events/imagine-peace-summer-camp>

## “On the Way to Learn - Long Term Training Course on Outdoor Education and Experiential Learning”<sup>51</sup>

The Erasmus+/Youth Action Program “On the Way to Learn - Long Term Training Course on Outdoor Education and Experiential Learning” was implemented in 12 countries between 2015 and 2017. The Knot was the leading organisation of the project and in Greece, the NGO CEIPES<sup>52</sup> was responsible for its implementation. The project addressed to 32 youth workers from 18 to 25 years old and implemented a variety of outdoor physical and team building activities like hiking in Georgia, simulation games, energiser in order to bond the members of the team and facilitate their cooperation for the completion of every given task in the activities. Aims of this project were the exchange of experience and methods for outdoor education and experiential learning, the development of cross-cultural awareness, the enhancement of teamwork and cooperation and the increase of knowledge about outdoor education and experiential learning methods. The ultimate goal of the project is to cultivate competences in order youth workers to use experiential learning methods and outdoor education in youth education.

Through physical activity, participants were able to form bonds and connect with each other even though they were strangers at the beginning. At the same time, since participants were not all from the same countries, they had to foster their communication skills in languages different from their native. Judging from the results, the program managed to build strong relationships with people, it was something that they enjoyed and it helped them realize that trust does not need long time to be built (Kokkinos, 2017).

**Target Group:** 18-25 years old

**Organisation/Entity:** Baltic Youth Way (Latvia), The Knot NGO (Belgium), Youth Association DRONI (Georgia), Apy NGO (Armenia) Raplection (Croatia), Be International (Czech Republic), International Centre for the Promotion of Education and Development- CEIPES (Greece), Esplora (Italy), Associação Intercultural Amigos da Mobilidade na Hungria (Hungary), Fundatia Compartir, European Crossroads (Spain), Turkiye Genclik Birliđi Dernegi (Turkey).

**Evaluation:** Internally. Evaluation via group reflection.

**Language:** English

<sup>51</sup> [http://www.theknotweb.eu/outdoor\\_education/](http://www.theknotweb.eu/outdoor_education/)

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.greece.ceipes.org/lttc-outdoor-activities/>

### **Epikentro, ActionAid** <sup>53</sup>

“Rise-Beyond Goals”<sup>54</sup> is a program implemented by Epikentro, which aims at the empowerment of marginalized youth from 12 to 18 years old. Through football, both boys and girls in the area of Kolonos in Athens learn to respect differences, to express their feelings and to lean on each other in order to succeed their goals. The program includes activities such as friendly leagues, art labs, youth empowerment teams, as well as language lessons. Another initiative of the same organization is the program “Let’s talk about us”<sup>55</sup>, which is a youth lab that promotes self-reflection, communication, expression, empowerment, empathy and building team spirit, through engaging young women (over 18 years old) in drama techniques.

**Target Group:** 12 to 18 years old (Rise Beyond Goals) and adult women (Let’s talk about us)

**Organisation/Entity:** Epikentro, ActionAid

**Evaluation:** N/A

**Language:** Greek

### **Scouts of Greece: “Topo Challenge: the treasure of El Dorado”**<sup>56</sup>

The Scouts of Greece has been operating in Greece from 1910 and implements activities for children and young people from 7 to 18 years old with 25,000 members. The association engaged its members in an original activity called “Topo Challenge: The treasure of El Dorado”<sup>57</sup>. Through a project-based learning method, participants were called to find the hidden town of El Dorado and its treasure, decrypting photos and messages from Columbus and Juan. After its completion, they were called to imprint their course and its specifics on paper. This activity took place in the national garden of Athens. Through this activity, participants were able cultivate a number of life skills, such as communication, numeracy skills, debating and orientation.

<sup>53</sup> <http://epikentro.actionaid.gr/beyond-goals/> and <http://epikentro.actionaid.gr/empowerment/>

<sup>54</sup> <http://epikentro.actionaid.gr/beyond-goals/>

<sup>55</sup> <http://epikentro.actionaid.gr/empowerment/>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.scoutsofathens.gr/topo-challenge-%CE%BF-%CE%B8%CE%B7%CF%83%CE%B1%CF%85%CF%81%CF%8C%CF%82-%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%85-el-dorado-%CE%B1%CF%80%CE%BF%CF%83%CF%84%CE%BF%CE%BB%CE%AE-%CE%B3%CE%B9%CE%B1-%CF%80%CF%81%CF%8C%CF%84/>

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.scoutsofathens.gr/topo-challenge-%ce%bf-%ce%b8%ce%b7%cf%83%ce%b1%cf%85%cf%81%cf%8c%cf%82-%cf%84%ce%bf%cf%85-el-dorado-%ce%b1%cf%80%ce%bf%cf%83%cf%84%ce%bf%ce%bb%ce%ae-%ce%b3%ce%b9%ce%b1-%cf%80%cf%81%cf%8c%cf%84/>

**Target Group:** 7-18 years old

**Organisation/Entity:** Scouts of Greece

**Evaluation:** N/A

**Language:** Greek

## 4. Conclusions and Recommendations

### Conclusions

To conclude, from the above information it is evident that all partner countries show some common tendencies. For example, their young population (0-29 years old) varies from 30% (in Italy) to 36% (in Denmark and the UK). The countries with the highest percentage of vulnerable young people, who were neither in employment, nor in education or training are Greece and Italy (with 26.8% and 23.4% respectively), something that can be justified, since the south countries were mostly affected by the global financial crisis. On the other hand, the lowest percentage of vulnerable young is observed in Denmark (10.9%) with the UK (13.6%) and Hungary (17%) to follow.

Regarding the characteristics of migrant youth in each partner country, it is observed that all countries emphasize in immigration from other countries apart from Hungary, that there is a correlation between Roma minorities and vulnerability.

Furthermore, regarding the state of life skills training programmes, as data from literature shows, one in five young people from OECD countries does not possess a minimum level of skills to be able to function in the society with people from disadvantaged backgrounds to have twice the probabilities of being low performers (OECD, 2013). This highlights the necessity of training programmes in life skills in all of the above countries. An innovative way to approach the training of life skills is through physical and cultural activities. As it has been observed, not all partner countries possess the same level of experience on this field. For example, in Hungary we can discern an emphasis to physical activities, and in the UK there has been an increased interest to the migrants and refugees. At the same time, in Greece, physical and cultural activities seem not to be valued enough, especially from the public education. The countries with more experience on the field could provide the methodologies that could help develop and implement such

training programmes with the target population of young people and young migrants in those countries that are less experienced. The latter is important in order to fill in the gap of life skills training programmes and especially with methods that are more engaging such as physical and cultural activities.

In fact, some of the good practices that have been presented above could inform this process. However, the majority of the practices have not been evaluated regarding the number of beneficiaries, the impact of such practices in the fields they are targeted to, the indicators that would lead to collection of relevant data for the evaluations. In any case, some of the practices could be adapted and inform future life skills trainings through physical and cultural activities. For example, there can be used extensive trainings like in the “Difference Between” good practice but at the same time tools like games, project base method and specific sports could be included, like in the good practices “GLOUCESTERSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST”, “Local Sport Clubs”, “Rise-Beyond Goals” and “Topo Challenge: the treasure of El Dorado”. Especially the project base method that was used in the good practice of “Topo Challenge: the treasure of El Dorado” could actively engage young people in everyday activities, and through something interesting for them, to cultivate a variety of skills such as communication skills, problem solving skills, and experience in team work. In that framework, sport and cultural activities could be easily introduced. For example, young people could be divided in groups and with a common goal to engage in a number of activities, such as team sports, theatre performances, dance performances, artwork producing etc. The necessity of collaboration and the context of the activities could help them foster a number of skills, like problem solving skills and critical thinking, communication and negotiation skills, enhancement of their creativity and imagination, leadership skills, adjustment in the collaboration with different people in different conditions and responsibility<sup>58</sup>.

## Recommendations

It is evident that in this rapidly changing era, young people need to be able to adjust their skills into a continuously changing environment in order for them to thrive in every situation, especially those that come from vulnerable and disadvantaged backgrounds. Life skills are more

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.sitjapur.org/why-cultural-activities-are-important-along-with-academic-programs-in-colleges/>



important than ever before as they can help young people be more resilient and thrive in daily and professional life. From this short review of the literature and each country's context along with good practices that are already being implemented, we could conclude in some suggestions for the field we are working on. More specifically:

- Life skills training programmes targeted to young people should be **relevant** to the interests and the needs of the participants so that they are motivated to engage and participate actively. Physical and cultural activities are entertaining and at the same time provide a valuable space for lifeskills development, therefore as a method should be further explored. More specifically, **such activities should be analysed as to which lifeskills they target and develop** so that as method could be further used by the professionals working with young people.
- Life skills training programmes targeted to young people should be **easily accessible** by all regardless of their backgrounds so that more young people benefit from that. More effort should be put on engaging people from migrant and disadvantaged backgrounds through **disseminating** such initiatives widely and **facilitating access**.
- Life skills training programs should establish **metrics and indicators** that could show their effect and impact on the participants. This practice could help inform both the content of such trainings to align with the participants' interests and the but also the quality of these trainings.
- Life skills training programmes targeted to young people that are either implemented by the State, private organisations or NGOs should be structured in a way to provide **a form of accreditation** to the participants. The accreditation could help young people to certify their qualification in life skills that could in turn be proven beneficial for their professional life.
- The majority of life skills training programmes are taking place out of school hours and are being implemented by a variety of organisations. Given the importance of such trainings for young people, it should be considered how life skills could be also introduced in formal education structures, or how life skills trainings could be also organised in school premises.



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