



YOUTH LEARNING
THROUGH ARTS

Youth learning through arts in the European Year of Youth

This year's theme shines a light on the importance of the European youth building a better future – greener, more inclusive and digital.

Education, Youth, Culture and Sports Council approved conclusions on building a European strategy for the cultural and creative industries ecosystem (4-5 April 2022). The strategy is structured around five pillars, one of which is **stimulating skills development and enhancement, as well as education and training.**

On 20th May 2022, the Committee of Ministers adopted the Recommendation (CM/REC (2022)15) to the member States on the role of culture, cultural heritage and landscape in helping to address global challenges. The Recommendation appeals to the new understanding of culture in awakening the imagination and critical thinking, encouraging freedom of expression, strengthening democratic participation and social cohesion, fostering recognition and mutual trust, encouraging social interactions and empathy, stimulating public debate and intercultural dialogue, creating peace, promoting democracy and human rights.

In 2021, EU leaders reaffirmed their pledge to work towards a more social Europe in the **Porto Declaration**. They agreed that priority should be given to supporting young people by addressing the impact of the COVID-19 crisis **on their careers, their education and training plans**, and by ensuring they become the driving force of an **inclusive green and digital recovery**.

YOUTH LEARNING THROUGH ARTS PROJECT

The project started a new European interaction with partner organisations and professionals of youth and cultural operators in participating countries. The project produced six workshops with arts-based methods for youth and youth organisations in three countries. Themes were reactive eco-crisis, improvisation and drama and accessibility. Each country hosted a learning activity for art educators and youth workers and organised multiplier events where results were shared nationally. One dissemination event was held in Brussels.

The collective outcomes of the project are three pedagogical ebooks created, one in each country. Via these ebooks, other art educators and youth workers can take up the methods presented. Ebooks are free for everyone to put to practice in their work.



WHAT SHOULD BE DONE NOW?

1. The use of arts as a tool for youth work should be supported

Youth organisations and cultural institutions should continue connecting more to developing pedagogical and non-formal methods that can be used in the future. Art is a powerful tool in youth work.

Culture is not just a presentation of cultural diversity. It is the use of artistic and creative tools for building relationships between individuals and societies. Hence, promoting arts and cultural education across formal and informal curricula should be supported.

2. There is a need for mobility programs for children's or youth cultural operators in Europe

YLTA project has shown how much can be done with well-planned and structured actions. Cooperation between different sectors is inspirational and important. Cross-sectoral (culture, creative industries and education) mobility programs for professionals are needed in cultural and youth work.

3. Arts and culture should be attached to youth programmes and youth workers' actions

Young people can use the arts as a tool for expressing emotions or messages. YLTA project has shown how youth can use arts as a tool for advocacy work (eco-crisis) and a form of expression (improvisation). Arts and culture can be used effectively in shaping youth's messages about climate change.

4. Arts and culture are important and need resources

The world changed during the YLTA project. First we faced the COVID-19 pandemic and then a war broke out in Europe. Children and youth are the ones who suffered from these events the most. During the YLTA project, we concluded that arts and culture are even more important after the project than when we first started it. Now culture and arts mean more than ever in Europe and they should be funded along with essential needs.

5. Resources are needed to make culture and arts accessible to youth

YLTA project included accessible ways of implementing arts for youth, being inclusive for a variety of special needs. Accessibility guides and methods are needed in all countries.

Youth learning through Arts is an Erasmus+ strategic partnership project coordinated by the **Association of Finnish Children's Cultural Centers**. The project started in spring 2021. Project partners are **The Finnish Nature League** (Finland), **Pionirski dom – Centre for youth culture** (Slovenia) and **Društvo IMPRO - Association for culture and education IMPRO** (Slovenia), **Małopolski Instytut Kultury w Krakowie MIK** (Poland) and **The Center of Documentation of the Art of Tadeusz Kantor Cricoteka** (Poland). All organisations share values and missions and are destined to enhance the implementation of children's cultural rights as stated in the UN Convention on the rights of the child, article 31.



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