# EVIDENCE GATHERING REPORT ON YOUTH CHALLENGES FOR FUTURE



photo: Art Square Lab

# IMAGINARIUM: CREATIVE YOUTH FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURE PROJECT



## ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Evidence Gathering Report on Youth Challenges for the Future is a first Intellectual Output produced by the project partners in Luxembourg, Finland, France and Ireland.

The report captures findings from the qualitative research and presents the starting point for other outputs elaborated during the project:

- **CREATIVITY ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR YOUTH WORK**
- **Tool-kit FOR CREATIVITY**
- **GUIDE for FUTURES THINKING for YOUTH WORK**
- **WEB PLATFORM:**
- **EVENT THINKACTON**

# Project Description

Many social challenges that we are facing, such as climate change, inequality or poverty, have been further developed in a short space of time by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many dark narratives are being created, with environmental, social and economical crisis in the first line.
But, uncertainties should not frighten or paralyse us; they should help us anticipate and prepare.

In the project "Imaginarium," partners for Luxembourg (Art Square Lab), France (Co-Actions), Ireland (M-Powered) and Finland (University of Turku) are going to introduce creativity using Design Thinking and Futures Thinking methodology that will enable a proactive search for possible development solutions for tomorrow.
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Young people will be ensured that designing the future is, on the one hand, a search for opportunities and potential, and on the other hand, systematic, purposeful and initiating practical solutions, aimed at responding to uncertainty.
On the other hand, youth workers will be supported with the research, materials and tools to introduce Futures Thinking and Design Thinking as regular creative ways of thinking for young people, adapted to the new realities.

# Our Goals and Objectives

- Bring the creativity in non-formal educational system thanks to the Design Thinking and Futures Thinking and creative problem-solving methodologies
- Supporting students and educators in developing new sustainable ideas for positive futures
- Support educators with materials useful for teaching creativity and sustainability
- Support educators with a tool to measure creativity of young people
- Professional development of staff and stakeholders: intensive training about the use of creativity in education of young people
- Encourage young people to implement their ideas: inform them about the funding possibilities for Solidarity Projects (Erasmus Plus EU Program) and provide them with basic project
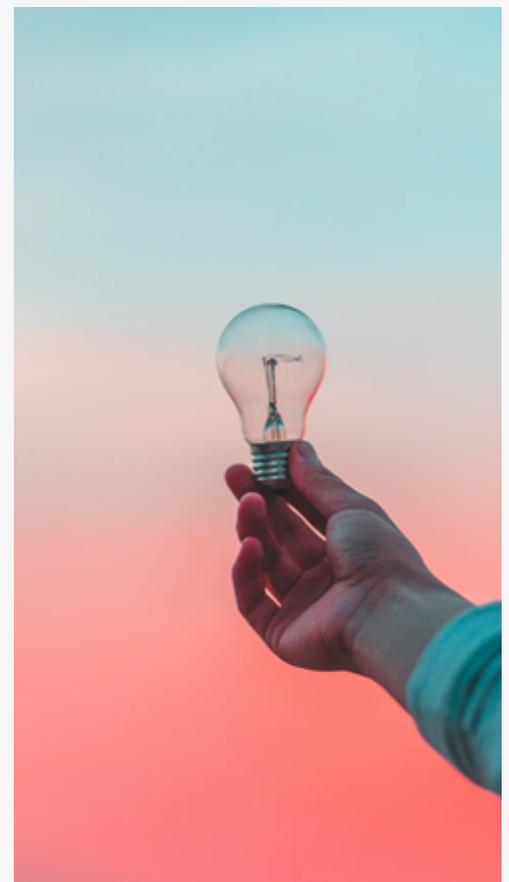- Management skills fostering social entrepreneurship and employment.


Photo: Canva

# Defining the terms

**IT WAS DEEMED IMPORTANT TO DEFINE THESE TWO TERMS: YOUTH WORKER AND CREATIVITY.**

### Youth worker

The youth worker supports, initiates and organizes free-time activities for young people who are at risk of addictions, crime, aggression, prostitution, a lack of parental care; they conduct workshops and activities in youth clubs, institutions of formal and non-formal education or on the streets; they collaborate with schools and local communities; they organize support and help from social services and health services.
(Source: 10.5 Youth workers | YouthWiki Available:
https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/chapters/poland/105-youth-workers)

### Creativity

According to the interviewees, creativity means having a new perspective on things, finding alternative and original solutions to a problem. Creativity is a mental process related to collectivity and participatory processes. It is also a state of mind where the body feels relaxed and at the same time inspired.

Any form of imagination is creativity.

# Background information

**Number of interviewees: 21**
Finland: 2
France: 7
Luxembourg: 8
Ireland: 4



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# Main Findings

## 1. TECHNIQUES/ METHODS USED TO ENCOURAGE CREATIVITY AND IMAGINATION AMONG YOUTH



Photo: BlinkBlink Studio for Art Square Lab

The most common method used to encourage creativity among young people is to encourage them to act independently and take the initiative, rather than forcing them to participate. The role of the youth worker is to guide and mentor young people to develop their own activities. This process can be done by creating an atmosphere of trust and a safe space to evolve.

During the discussions, it was said that non-formal education stimulates creativity through co-creation. What should be emphasised is supporting learning through failure and making mistakes, so that young people are not afraid to try, even when social pressure remains strong.

Young people should be guided to identify their skills from formal and extra-curricular activities, in order to know their strengths and areas of development. Being self-conscious of their potential is seen as important.

Creativity can be encouraged by developing soft skills such as empathy through role playing and experimenting, storytelling and debates.

## 2. SOURCE OF INFORMATION, TOOLS AND MATERIALS TO ENCOURAGE CREATIVITY AND IMAGINATION AMONG YOUTH

Youth workers mostly find information through peer exchange and by adapting existing material to their own needs. They stated that there are no formal resources available and found their material on the internet. Then again the content is very broad and of differing quality which makes it difficult to get relevant content.

Interestingly, one youth worker from Finland stated that he doesn't use material or tools, but he rather lets himself be guided by the young people and reacts to their needs. He also mixes in his education, personal and professional experiences and shares them as content.

YA youth worker from Ireland also mentioned that their source of information is the young people. By observing and listening, they get insights to react to.

Some youth workers regret the lack of tools to develop creativity, such as toolkits.

## 3. ACTIVITIES ALREADY DEVELOPED FOR YOUTH ABOUT FUTURE THINKING

The activities currently used are multiple:
- Involving different stakeholders to raise visibility and purposefulness
- Involving young people in organising activities and developing material
- Mentoring young people about their career plan and presenting them with different options, to support their dreams but also keep them attached to reality

It was interesting to notice that in Finland, the youth workers mainly encourage young people to take initiative and design their own project/activity. They offer support but very few guidelines. Whereas in Luxembourg, it was deemed necessary to provide young people with instructions.

The role of the youth worker is to value the potential of young people to build confidence.

# 4. BIGGEST CHALLENGES WHEN WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE



Photo: Canva

Working with young people has its challenges. Creating a space and an atmosphere where the young people feel secure and are able to find their place and worth is of great need. They need an open atmosphere and praise.

The generational gap between the young people and the youth workers is a challenge. Youth workers do not necessarily understand the current challenges young people are facing, which can be linked with the use of technology for example.

The culture of youth is very hectic and anxious, therefore they have difficulties concentrating and committing to activities. Young people are overwhelmed with information which makes them anxious.

We are surrounded by so much negativity coming from news channels, pandemics, environmental changes, that it is difficult for young people to be optimistic and creative.

Youth should also not be generalised and the older generation should consider young people individually. Young people should be given room for thoughts and imagination. They should be given time and space to try, experiment and make mistakes to learn and grow.

## 5. MAIN OBSTACLES IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S CREATIVITY

The young people are self-censored, inhibited and lack self esteem/confidence. They place themselves in a mold created by the perceptions from social media. Social media gives them the possibility to be whoever they want to be, but at the same time there are endless possibilities which makes them undecided. Because of the lack of self-esteem, they are usually guided by leaders, mostly coming from social media, and lack their own personality and creativity. Fast pace and peer pressure kill creativity.

Disadvantaged youth will have disadvantaged thoughts and disadvantaged imagination, but advantaged youth see a brighter future.

In Luxembourg and Ireland, the education system was seen as hindering creativity. Students need to fit into boxes and therefore there is no place to dream or innovate.

Lack of self-esteem, confidence and being afraid to be judged were mentioned as obstacles.

## 6. YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE FUTURE

From the findings, we can observe different results between Finland and the other countries. In Finland, young people seem to have a clear idea of what they want to do and they are studying for it. In Luxembourg and Ireland, young people are rather optimistic about their future, though somewhat dependent on what their parents want them to do and become. In France on the other hand, young people are rather pessimistic about their future and cannot project in the long term.

Regarding sustainable future, young people in Finland do not seem to put much thought into it, some are concerned and engaged in sustainable development but rather passively. In the other countries, young people are rather worried about their future and definitely more concerned than the previous generation. They do feel like the problem is in their hands.



Photo: Fred Entringer for Art Square Lab

# Findings by country

**THIS SECTION INCLUDES THE PROJECT PROCESSES, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EXECUTION.**

**Work of a Youth worker**

**FINLAND**

- Basic work: organising confirmation camps 3 times per year, guidance training for 3 years with 1st year for major training, 2nd year for deputy director training and 3rd year for leader training
- Managing the camping centre located on an island and providing summer jobs for young people in the camping
- Work more as a facilitator to guide young people on achieving goals rather than telling them what to do

About 70 young people take part in the confirmation camps of which almost half continue with the guidance training (28 people currently).

For the other youth worker with more experience, the activities are related to cultural youth work and youth leader in youth clubs:

- Organising and coordinating graffiti workshops
- Organising and coordinating music events and festivals like Rock Akademia
- Mentoring young people to find their passion, their study/career path and make sure they understand what the reality is like

**Photo: Canva**

# Findings by country

## THIS SECTION INCLUDES THE PROJECT PROCESSES, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EXECUTION.

**Definition of Creativity**

### LUXEMBOURG

- For most of the participants, creativity means having a new perspective on things, finding alternative and original solutions to a problem. Creativity can be something very simple, it doesn't need to be complex. Bringing together two things that might not have previously been considered can be enough to bring us to something new.

- Creativity is important to open doors and escape from daily life. Without creativity life is boring.

- Creativity is a mental process related to collectivity and participatory processes. It's also a state of mind when your body needs to feel relaxed and at the same time inspired.

**" FOR ME CREATIVITY IS A PROCESS THAT SHOULDN'T EXPECT ANY RESULTS"**

**" IT'S A FLOW WHEN YOU COME UP WITH SOME IDEAS THAT ARE OUT OF THE BOX. HAVING A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON DIFFERENT THINGS. IT'S A PROCESS AND IN THE BEST CASE AN OUTCOME"**

**" IT SHOWS US THINGS IN A NEW LIGHT"**

### IRELAND:

- The core of creativity is an imagination, it is about finding different outlets and ways to explore your imagination and create physically what your mind tells you. Any form of imagination is creativity

- Creativity is a huge thing. Almost whatever we do it is about creativity – when you cook, when you write an email, almost everything requires you to be in contact with your creative mind. Maybe we should tie the term creativity down as it is too broad.

- When working with young people we need to be aware that imagination and creativity are slightly impaired by the education system.

Conclusion:
Positive future and creativity can be two separate things. They can go in quite opposite directions. The more creative you are, the worse future you are able to imagine. We must be careful about that and define what is our priority – to encourage young people to think of a positive future or to boost their imagination without any limits.

## A. TECHNIQUES/ METHODS USED TO ENCOURAGE CREATIVITY AND IMAGINATION AMONG YOUTH

**FINLAND**:

- By encouraging young people to take part instead of forcing them.

- Though the process for organising these activities has been the same for years, youth workers spend time on trying to think in a different way. If a participant wants to try something new, they can and are encouraged to do so, even if it would not succeed. The process can be thought of again and retried.

- Music, graffiti, letting young people create their own happenings (3), developing projects and workshops with music professionals (5), mentoring young people through the Rock Akademy about career management, guiding the young people within their journey.

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### LUXEMBOURG:

Participants agree on the fact that the school system and formal education hinder creativity even though youngsters have a huge potential. Creativity is innate for youngsters. On the contrary, non formal education helps stimulate creativity with the co-creation of projects and helps offering a safe space where youngsters can create.



Photo:Canva

" THEY NEED TO GAIN SELF CONFIDENCE AT THIS AGE (BETWEEN CHILDHOOD AND ADULTHOOD) THROUGH CREATIVE PROJECTS"

" SIMPLY GOING OUT FOR A WALK, DISCONNECTING FROM WHAT YOU WERE DOING CAN LET IDEAS POP INTO YOUR MIND AND LET YOUR MIND WANDER TO HELP WITH CREATIVITY. AND ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE, WE CAN IN SOME SENSE FORCE CREATIVITY, TRAINING THE MUSCLE OF CREATIVITY"...

" SOMETIMES I DO SOME SHORT EXERCISES, ALSO FOR FUN AND RELAXATION, BUT I STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT YOUNGSTERS CAN BE CREATIVE WHEN THEY ARE RELAXED, AND USUALLY THEY ARE NOT…."

" IT'S IMPORTANT TO HAVE A RELAXED ENVIRONMENT (NOT SO OBVIOUS)"

"BY LETTING YOURSELF MAKE MISTAKES. WHEN YOU BRING TOGETHER IDEAS, IT DOESN'T NEED TO MAKE PERFECT SENSE, TO BE PERFECTLY POLISHED, LIKE WHEN YOU BRAINSTORM TO PUT IDEAS TOGETHER"

## FRANCE:

Connecting the dots between the young person's potential future and ideal future

- Identification of skills: life chart of the different stages of their professional and extra-curricular activities
- methodology of RECTEC tool http://rectec.ac-versailles.fr/wp-content/uploads/sites/135/2021/09/Rectec_guide-Conseil_EN.pdf
- follow the principles of non-formal education
- remind them that they should not be afraid to make mistakes
- use role-playing, experiment with situations, develop empathy, support them in developing different points of view
- methodology of "little story, big story" tool https://globeconteur.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Fiche-Animation_Petite-Histoire-Grande-Histoire.pdf

## IRELAND:

- Take them out of the city and into nature, give them physical work but also the opportunity to have fun, do outdoor sports.
- Anything that "pulls young people out of their heads" that helps them feel conscious of what is possible: any kind of interaction, team building, getting them to create a free and creative atmosphere. So when we provide them with specific tools, create a good atmosphere, we do not need to teach them how to be creative, they have this naturally.

**"FIRST OF ALL, I TELL THEM THEY HAVE EVERYTHING THEY NEED TO IMAGINE. THEN YOU NEED THEM TO RELAX AND TO GET THE CONNECTION WITH THE BODY. AND THEN GIVE THEM A LITTLE CHALLENGE, BUT ONE THEY ARE CAPABLE OF COMPLETETING. WHEN THEY CAN DO 5 YOU GIVE THEM SOMETHING ON LEVEL 4.5. "**

- All kinds of mental exercises, but it is of great importance to emphasise that they do have everything and all kinds of techniques, tools, exercises are only to help them to let it out. So it is always about what they have in their mind, what they think.
- Cognitive exercises – based on shapes, words, etc. They work when the body's general state is ok. If they are happy, if they are uplifted.
- Encouraging them to question but also to answer the question with a question. This way we encourage them to find the answers by themselves. To be creative. They have ownership of the ideas.
- In Ireland there was a national programme funded by the state, run by a charity organisation about creative writing. That was an excellent tool based on storytelling.
- Debates are also a very popular tool to engage young people to discuss the future. They are organised both online and in person. The most important are questions you give the young people: they should be interesting, open, stimulating, engaging, and thought-provoking.
- Examples, good practices, inspiring stories, already existing solutions. Minds and imagination are much more productive when you feed them. It is a huge barrier when you say that: there is a problem, nobody found any solution yet, find one! It is almost impossible for imagination to find a solution in a vacuum.

## B. SOURCE OF INFORMATION, TOOLS AND MATERIALS TO ENCOURAGE CREATIVITY AND IMAGINATION AMONG YOUTH

### FINLAND

Materials are developed internally using similar backgrounds as the congregation but adapted to their own use. YMCA organises other training than the congregation and creates their own material for that.
Each activity is organised with a purpose. For example during kayaking lessons, young people are not just taught how to kayak, but they have a purpose and a task to achieve for which they need to learn how to kayak. Activities are contextualised
Young participants of these confirmation camps and training are often wealthy kids who arrive with their own microcar, also because the camp is costly. These young people want to learn more practical things and how to get things done on their own, bringing liability.

Best ideas come from the youngsters and support/commitment from the City. Youngsters become producers and create themselves. Juska doesn't try to find tools. His education is in medianomie/audiovisual/communication. From his past experience, in music, and community pedagogy and studies in youth leadership, he mixes them all to make art with youngsters.
The difficulty is to make them commit. Everything happens very fast in their life (tiktok life).
To motivate youngsters, you need to get the big bands to come and the right influencer. They can watch concerts online, so why come to see them live?

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### FRANCE

- In the professional or personal network
- Peer to peer and exchanges of good practices with other youth workers
- Through short training courses or professional networks like Animacoop

### IRELAND

- Observation is a great source – I observe young people or kids, how they work, play.
- Youtube, internet
- Books
- Irish internet resources: https://www.youth.ie/training-and-events/, https://www.youth.ie/resources/

Youth workers from non profit charity organisations are rather spontaneous in terms of creativity tools collecting, producing. They are not aware of some open online resources developed by Youth organisations. Probably there is not much cooperation between them. On the other hand they find it very interesting and useful to have a database with tool descriptions, hand-outs, etc. In their opinion, the internet is full of useful and adequate materials for formal education while it is rather chaotic and lacking resources to be used in informal teaching and learning.

# B. SOURCE OF INFORMATION, TOOLS AND MATERIALS TO ENCOURAGE CREATIVITY AND IMAGINATION AMONG YOUTH

## LUXEMBOURG

Some participants regret the fact that they do not have many information sources, they do not have enough tools and materials and need toolkits for example. Some others mainly receive information from peers, other youth workers in Europe or from other professionals they meet.

**" I HAVE A LOT OF BOOKS/MATERIALS ON PROBLEM-SOLVING BUT NOT ON DEVELOPING CREATIVITY"**

**" I LOVE READING ON DIFFERENT TOPICS, SOMETHING NOT DIRECTLY LINKED TO THE PROJECT"**

**" YOUTH WORKERS' SEMINARS, INSPIRATION FROM MUSIC AND MOVIES"**

**"I USE SOME OF THE TOOLKITS FROM THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE, BUT DO NOT REMEMBER CONCRETE ONES ABOUT CREATIVITY"**
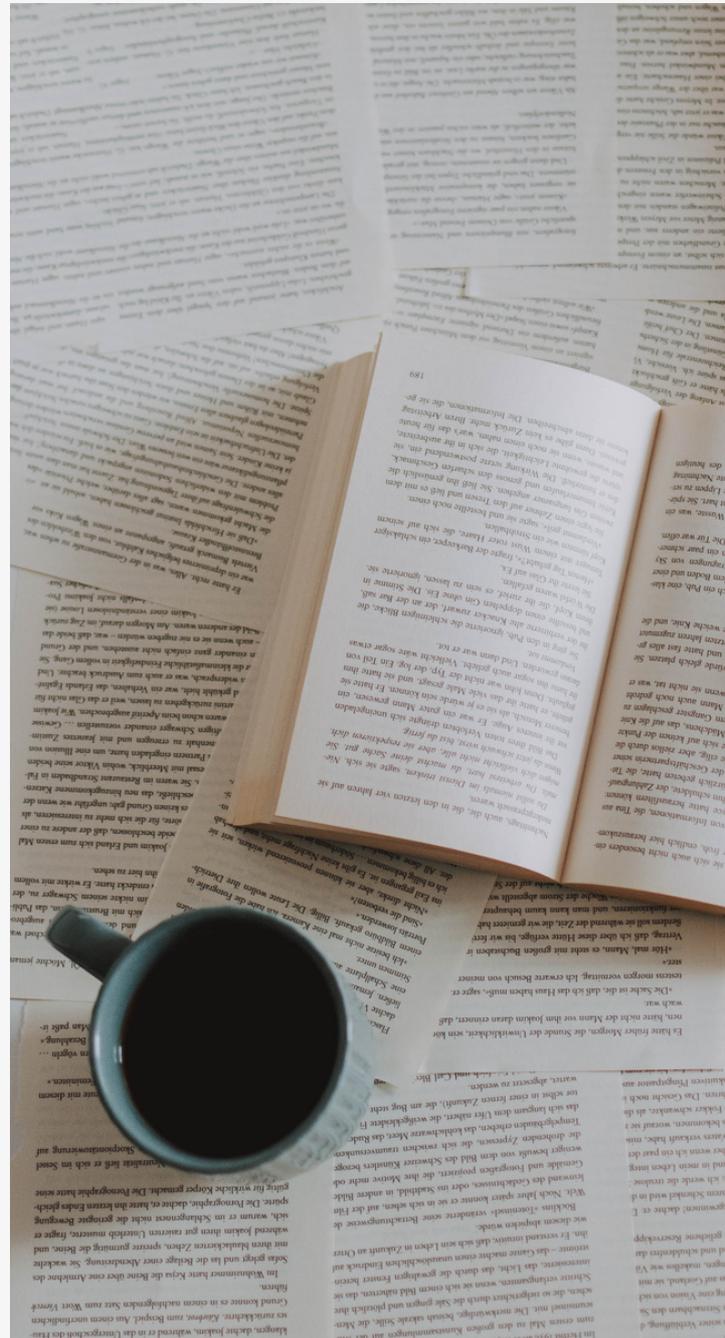


**Photo: Canva**

# C. ACTIVITIES ALREADY DEVELOPED FOR YOUTH ABOUT FUTURE THINKING

## FINLAND

During group discussions, they have been thinking about the educational path of the young people. Youth workers have different educational backgrounds and levels, though they still do the same work.

When taking care of the camping site, they also learn that they need to respect nature. When cutting a tree, a new one might not grow. They have to take into account the future generations.

=> Need for a toolkit with different options and which can be adapted to own needs, and also that young people are involved in planning such material as they are the target group Getting different kinds of partners together to join forces and get resources, like theaters, libraries, schools, etc. to develop new kinds of concepts. Lectures about media, graffiti, hiphop to promote them to school on Kiva Koulu. Proposing different options to young people to get them to know different cultures and alternatives and bringing the concept further. Young people are looking for fame, while based on experience, they shouldn't.

Mentoring youngsters about their career plan and ensuring they have a long term plan, for example in music, that they think about their exit plan. Giving young people the possibility to make art and push them out of their comfort zone, while reminding them that there is school as well and studying will have an impact on their future.

## LUXEMBOURG

Participants say that they help with the self-development of youngsters and encourage their autonomy to become adults: sports, cooking workshops for example… Youth workers should value their potential. Participants agreed that giving time for creativity is important, but often young people need to be guided.

" REFLECTING UPON THE PAST AND FUTURE. WORKING ON PAST MAKES THEM FEEL MORE DETERMINED AND SELF-CONFIDENT"

" IMAGINATION, HOW YOU SEE YOURSELF, WHAT KIND OF VISION DO YOU HAVE? YOUNG PEOPLE ARE RATHER POSITIVE ABOUT THE FUTURE"

" I LIKE THE "WHAT IF" SCENARIOS, WHAT IF PEOPLE CHANGE THEIR APPROACH TO SOMETHING? "WHAT IF" QUESTIONS ALLOW YOU TO CHANGE SOMETHING SMALL AND GO THROUGH THAT IDEA LOGICALLY, THE MAIN THING IS TO LET YOUR MIND GO DOWN THIS PATH, THIS NEW IDEA"

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# D. BIGGEST CHALLENGES WHEN WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

## FINLAND

Getting the group to work during the first year and dealing with different personalities within a group = they have organised a specific training called "Action for Life" to get the group to work as an entity so that everyone find their place to develop.
The workers are aware in advance or during the first 2 years of the difficulties the young people might be facing personally or at home. Commitment, super hectic culture, youngsters have to learn to use technology. They are anxious and will get more anxious. Fast rapid pace of modern times.

## FRANCE

- To live with the "cultural" gap with the growing age difference between youth workers and young people
- Listening to them and offering enough space for them to express themselves, to express their own culture
- The use of new social networks, and the necessary acculturation
- Try to renew concepts that took the youth workers a long time to understand: cooperation, benevolence
- Avoid empirical analysis and not to become an expert on many things
- Trust them, but often there are limits because youth workers are not reassured, we must support youngsters in a relationship of trust
- Understand the individual obstacles and see how the group can contribute
- Get away from the uniformity of thought and stop thinking of one "youth"

## IRELAND

- Observation is a great source – I observe young people or kids, how they work, play.
- Youtube, internet
- Books
- Irish internet resources: https://www.youth.ie/training-and-events/, https://www.youth.ie/resources/

Youth workers from non profit charity organisations are rather spontaneous in terms of creativity tools collecting, producing. They are not aware of some open online resources developed by youth organisations. Probably there is not much cooperation between them. On the other hand they find it very interesting and useful to have a database with tool descriptions, hand-outs, etc. In their opinion, the internet is full of useful and adequate materials for formal education while it is rather chaotic and lacking resources to be used in informal teaching and learning.



**Photo: Canva**

Photo: Canva

## LUXEMBOURG

Participants agree that young people are tired, busy with school, they have no space for creativity and imagination. School is quite demanding, they don't have time to relax. Teenagers are also overwhelmed by the offer/information.

Another challenge is to keep the positivity and good mood and attitude while living in a tragic world and have bad indicators for the environment, more and more control.

Trust (connected to safety) is also an issue and it takes time to build.

" THEY ARE AFRAID TO REALLY DO WHAT THEY WANT TO DO,THEY ARE AFRAID TO BE JUDGED. THEY NEED SOME SUPPORT, HAVE SAFETY AND SECURITY IN ORDER TO TRY AND DEVELOP IDEAS AND CREATIVITY"

" PERSONALLY, I WANT TO SHOW YOUNGSTERS THAT THEY HAVE POTENTIAL, THEY ARE THE PILLARS OF SOCIETY. DURING THE PANDEMIC YOUNGSTERS WERE STIGMATISED, THEY WERE THE WEAK LINK"

" IF YOU HAVE FRIENDS INVOLVED IN SOMETHING, YOU ARE MORE LIKELY TO GET INVOLVED, IT'S IMPORTANT TO FIND A WAY TO BRING WAYS OF THINKING INTO THOSE COMMUNITIES OR GROUPS THAT PEOPLE ARE IN. WHEN IT'S IN THE GROUP IT'S GOING TO SPREAD WITHIN THE GROUP, IT CAN SPREAD FROM ONE GROUP TO ANOTHER GROUP AS WELL"

# E. MAIN OBSTACLES IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S CREATIVITY

## FINLAND

The preconception that things have always been done like this so why should I do it in a different way.
Others' failures are seen as an obstacle and are discouraging to try something new.

They are set to a mold. Though tiktok gives them the possibility to be whoever they want to be. Peer pressure, fast pace or a deadline kills creativity. Currently only few youngsters are able to commit. Need for proper idols they can relate to. Influencers are in a key role, especially if they are good people. Youngsters will follow.

## FRANCE

- Self-censorship
- The framework of calls for proposal and schemes that force youth workers and young people to fit into boxes
- Young people are often perceived only as "young" by institutions and adults and are told that their project will not succeed
- Lack of hope, difficulty in projecting oneself
- Weight of institutions on young people's capabilities
- Professional exhaustion of youth workers and educators: a high turnover of youth workers that has an impact on young people
- One of the messages often given to young people by institutions is "don't dream"
- The institutions expect young people to find a job, the institutions expect things to be very defined, no place for experimentation
- Our "individualistic-oriented" society in which it is harder to hope, harder to move forward

## IRELAND

- Most young people are naturally creative, but as they get older they get also very self-conscious about that.
- In the beginning of creativity sessions, young people would be very self-conscious and inhibited (like 10-15 min), but sometimes it will be enough to get them laughing to open their creativity resources. They don't need much to stimulate their creativity, not more than an **open atmosphere and praise.**
- Low **self esteem** is also a serious obstacle. They are afraid of **being judged** so they decide not to face the challenge.
- Young people have tons of imagination but **they are not confident** about that, they don't even know they have this potential. And you need to remind them what is happening in their mind. And help them to connect the internal communication with emotions. Young people often say: I can't imagine that, but as a matter of fact they are thinking so they are imagining something. We just need to point that out.

**Disadvantaged youth will have disadvantaged thoughts and disadvantaged imagination.** "So we need to work on their self-esteem but only to a certain point and then give them a kind of roadmap on how to get the hell out of where they are. **I don't think that much imagination will help.** No, rather a bunch of specific solutions, good practices, success stories. Examples, they will be inspired with and then follow. They need to see tiny little changes they have to do, not a big revolution".

Photo: Canva

## LUXEMBOURG

Participants agree that the school system hinders creativity.

Main obstacle is the environment in which we live, the world is not changing as fast as youngsters change.

There is also a controversial question about social media. For some participants, with social media, youngsters have too many inputs they cannot process. For some others on the contrary, thanks to social media youngsters become more creative. They are developing new skills for the future (videos on TikTok).

**" SOCIAL MEDIA CAN BLOCK CREATIVITY AND GENERATE ANXIETY (YOUNGSTERS ARE AFRAID OF JUDGEMENT: WILL I GET ENOUGH "LIKES" ON MY PAGE?…). PEER PRESSURE"**

**"SCHOOL SYSTEM IS A CATASTROPHE, CHAOTIC, OUT OF CONTROL"**

**" THE ENVIRONMENT, WHY PARTICIPATE IF NOTHING WILL EVER CHANGE, SOME YOUNGSTERS LOSE PERSPECTIVE AND HOPE"**

**" YOUNGSTERS ARE VERY CREATIVE (SOCIAL MEDIA, INTERNET, VIDEOS…), MORE THAN THE FORMER GENERATIONS BUT THEIR CREATIVITY IS NOT WELL VALUED FOR THEIR OWN BENEFIT IN ORDER TO ENHANCE THEIR CAREERS"**

# F. YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE FUTURE

## FINLAND

Most of the young people already have a very clear idea about what they will do and what they want to do professionally. Most of them are already studying what they want. It was somewhat surprising for the youth worker that nowadays young people know very clearly what they want to do as a job and who they want to become, compared with previous generations. Young people don't seem worried about climate change. Some of them are more concerned and active on this matter and have been taking part in the planning of the training organised by YMCA on sustainable development.

Difficulty to commit, everything is going at a fast pace. Young people feel like they can easily become the social media influencer, even though the job is really hard and only few will make a living out of it. Through the internet, they can see what the world has to offer. Youngsters are more aware of possibilities. They are positive about the future. We cannot expect them to be the same as we were. Because of the hectic pace, many cannot concentrate anymore which will become a problem in the next few years.

## FRANCE

- no long-term projections and pessimism, no utopias
- some young people are involved in social issues: climate, LGBTQ+, animal rights, etc. because they want things to get better

**"WE MAY HAVE A BIASED VIEW BECAUSE WE ARE USED TO SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE SOMETIMES IN SOCIAL DIFFICULTY."**

**THE CONDITION FOR PROJECTING ONESELF INTO THE FUTURE IS TO BE ABLE TO COVER ONE'S PRIMARY NEEDS: TO KNOW WHERE TO SLEEP OR TO EAT, WHOM TO LEAN ON. ONE MUST HAVE THE BASICS TO BE ABLE TO PROJECT ONESELF. INVOLVEMENT IN SOCIAL ISSUES IS OFTEN POSSIBLE WHEN ONE IS WELL OFF."**

## IRELAND

- Young people care for the future and sustainability even more than the generation born in the 80-90's. For them it is of massive importance. Because they are the ones who will deal with consequences.
- A lot of young people who are already active and take part in different charity or volunteer projects are very interested in the issue, and aware of the problem. In Ireland many young people are engaged in the European Program of Food Ambassadors. But the point is that this group is generally aware of politics, development, their personal learning, etc. They are usually very well educated.
- On one hand they feel optimistic and excited as so many things are available to them (technology is one of them) but what worries them is the environment in the future and climate change. And they see that adults hand the things over to them. But they are not ready to take this responsibility and fix it. That is why they are uncertain.
- Conclusion:
- We should work with youth in a positive way and ensure that they are fully supported. We should help them deal with negative emotions and create an open and safe atmosphere.

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Photo: Canva

## LUXEMBOURG

For participants, teenagers are busy with their studies. It is important that adults give them a future's perspective. They need to be inspired and motivated to think about the future.

Some youngsters are change makers, they take action and are rather positive about their future. Some others like the NEETS are pessimistic, hopeless, angry and they fight against the system.

**" YOUNGSTERS THINK THEY ARE HOPELESS (BECAUSE OF LACK OF WORK, OF OPPORTUNITIES) BUT THEY ARE ACTUALLY CHANGING THE FUTURE (SOCIAL MEDIA)"**

**" YOUNGSTERS ARE LINKED TO WHAT THEIR PARENTS WANT FROM THEM; YOUTH WORKERS SHOULD ADDRESS THE PROBLEM"**

**" THEY HAVE INNER RESOURCES AND ENERGY TO SUCCEED DESPITE DIFFICULTIES… ADULTS DON'T HAVE CONFIDENCE IN YOUNG PEOPLE, WE DON'T GIVE THEM THE OPPORTUNITY TO SUCCEED AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY"**

## OTHERS

**" YOUNGSTERS THINK THEY ARE HOPELESS (BECAUSE OF LACK OF WORK, OF OPPORTUNITIES) BUT THEY ARE ACTUALLY CHANGING THE FUTURE (SOCIAL MEDIA)"**

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- Ressources recommended by participants:
- **Book: A technique to producing ideas, by James Web Young**
- **Book: A Restless Art: How Participation Won, and why it Matters, by François Matarasso**
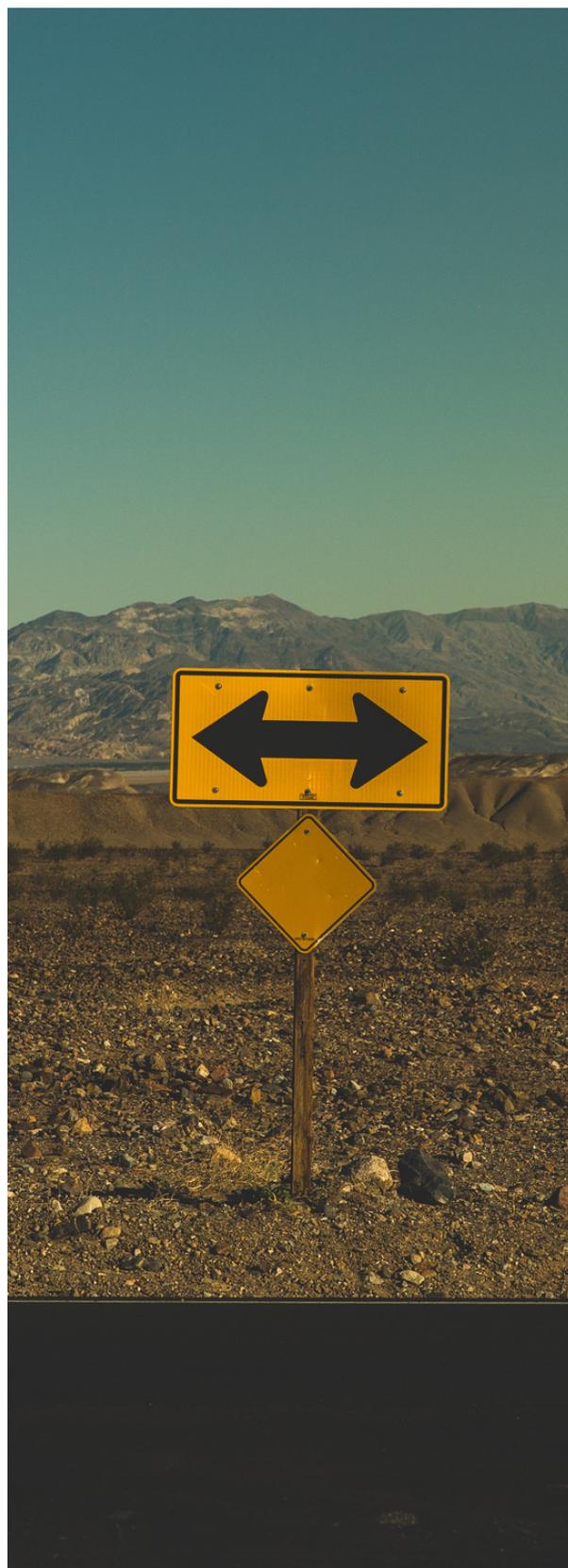- **Movie: Enough White Teacups**

**Photo: Canva**

# PROJECT PARTNERS

## THE AWESOME PEOPLE BEHIND THIS PROJECT

**ART SQUARE LAB - LUXEMBOURG**
**CO-ACTIONS- FRANCE**
**M-POWERED- IRELAND**
**UTU- FINLAND**