



Activating citizens

REPORT

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WHO



German and Finnish National agencies of Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corps, European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre and the network Europe Goes Local

WHAT



38 representatives of municipalities and youth organisations got to know the programme European Solidarity Corps and different practical steps how they could integrate it in their local communities. They got to know good practices through 7 different projects, that are described in this report as well. The participants of the seminar got to know the different aspects of the European Solidarity Corps, such as the quality label, the importance of the quality partnerships, up to all the supportive mechanisms, that can help them to start. The links and all the content can be found in [Padlet](#). Also a very nice [movie](#) was created to sum up the activity.

MUTUAL BENEFITS & SUPPORT

Furthermore the seminar introduced other EU programmes which could support youth work and European cooperation on a local level, such as Erasmus+ and “Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme”. The European Charter on Local Youth Work was presented and also the Changemakers toolkit - both helpful instruments to support the strategic development of European youth work of municipalities. .

THE MAIN AIM

Getting familiar with Volunteering and Solidarity projects in the context of municipalities to activate the citizens - was well achieved.



VILLA LEIPZIG

“*Villa Leipzig is a socio-cultural center in the heart of Leipzig. They initiate, enable and support offers and projects in the fields of youth, culture and social affairs. Their mission is to support young people and the wider community in developing their potential and realizing their ideas. They are aware that working together enables experiences.*”



Villa Leipzig has been active in the field of European Volunteer Service since 2001 and later in ESC. Meanwhile, they also send 10-15 people per year abroad in ESC projects and host / coordinate 10-15 ESC volunteers per year in projects all over the town. In addition they are active in realizing ESC volunteering teams, youth and professional exchanges.

The main concern of the work of VILLA is that people in Leipzig participate in the society on an equal, self-determined and active basis. Encounters between people is the focus of their work. They enable generations to meet and enable people with a migration background to meet.



Good practice project: Community garden for diversity

The aim of the project was to create and shape an accessible community garden where people with and without disabilities can come together to work, exchange and learn.

The project promoted common, practical action towards a common goal of creating a more inclusive city.

Participation and commitment, solidarity, sustainable gardening and common learning are also important topics of the project and respond to societal needs.

The project helped to activate the local community and to fill a wasteland with life by making it useful and usable for all. In this respect, apart from participation, this project also made a meaningful contribution to sustainable urban design and resource utilization.



More of Villa Leipzig: [video](#).

Community garden for diversity

Over a period of 15 days, Europe was brought into the local community in Leipzig-Engelsdorf by 28 young people from different countries and with different backgrounds.

During the ESC there was an active daily exchange and working together with the local residents, young and old people as well as students with learning disabilities.

Participants got to know other young people from other countries and backgrounds and in addition, the host organization built its experience with volunteers with disabilities and gained an intensive learning experience for the future as well.



BEZIRK UNTERFRANKEN

“

The municipality of Bezirk Unterfranken has been running projects since 2008. It has been established on the basis of 35 years of town twinning partnership with the Calvados Region in France.

”



All joint projects involve German volunteers and those from France. There is a direct exchange happening.

The two partnership offices provide partnerships for municipalities, schools and associations. In the youth field, they organize bi- and multilateral youth seminars, multiplier trips for associations together with the district youth ring of Lower Franconia and the participation of youth music groups in music seminars.

The projects are really diverse and offer lots of places for learning to volunteers.

More about Bezirk Unterfranken.



Good practice project: Youth café, City of Stauffenberg

The project group wants to set up a youth café in a central place in the city of Stauffenberg. The idea originates from a group of young people, who recognized the lack of public space for gatherings of young people..

The youth café is intended to be a meeting place for young people from the town, where they can spend their free time together, talk about their everyday topics, but also support each other with problems in school or at home. A place that benefits the general public, where prejudices can be weakened and new contacts are made. With the project social integration in Stauffenberg is promoted.

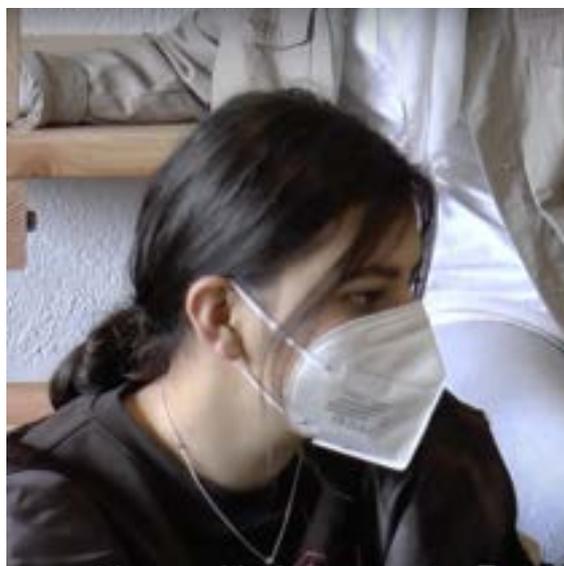
So far there is only one youth room there, which is mainly used by younger young people, but especially for older young people from 15/16 years there is no official meeting place. It was decided to present this need to the city's council.



The Youth Office then pointed out the possibility of submitting an application through the European Solidarity Corps. The instructor - a female craft worker - has trained the girls to create their furniture, the wooden elements and painted the walls and created a space that feels like their space and that they are using in their free time.



More about Youth Café.



INITIATIVE JUGENDBETEILIGUNG HESSEN

“

The project group got to know each other in the Wiesbaden Youth Parliament and in other initiatives. They wanted to build networks with existing youth bodies and reach equally committed and interested young people in places without youth participation in order to strengthen youth participation on local level.”



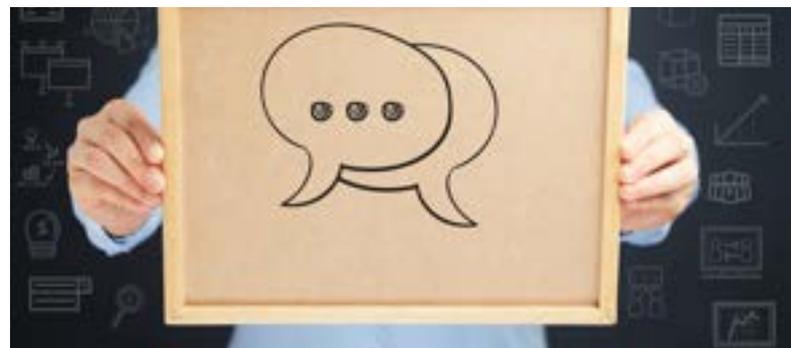
They established contact with and between existing bodies and contributed to their networking. In addition, they wanted to inform other young people about formats such as panel discussions, participation campaigns and workshops in cooperation with other youth participation formats and acquire them for projects.



They created more sustainable concepts of youth participation, to reach out for the long term goal of bringing more political power to the younger generation and to bring forward a more efficient political collaboration across regional borders. As well, they wanted to support the younger generation's enthusiasm about democracy and its values.



They wanted to motivate committed people to become active on the level of local municipalities in the long term, so that they can also have more active citizens among young people in the local environment.



INSPIRATIONAL INTERVIEW WITH ACTIVE MUNICIPALITIES

“European funds in youth & civil society - what is in there for your municipality?”

28.4.2021

9:30 – 11:00



Why municipalities should make use of European programmes?

How do European cooperation projects help them with local challenges?

We asked 3 German municipalities of different size and different fields of European activities **to find out more and inspire other municipalities to get active, too.**



The youth workers **Claudia Vogt-Gohdes** and **Mario Contrino**, of the municipal youth centre of Lauenburg/Elbe shared their examples within a Strategic Partnership which aimed at inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in youth exchanges, **Miguel Jeandrée**, volunteer in the local child and youth office of the “Verbandsgemeinde Altenahr” (they oversee youth and volunteer activities in a number of small villages) presented an exchange with their Hungarian twin town.

Wiesbaden

The biggest of the interviewed cities was Wiesbaden, the capital of the State of Hesse. Conny Meyne of “Wiesbaden international” presented their big local network and experiences of connecting local youth work with international mobility (more in German).

Wiesbaden is an active municipality in the “Europe goes local” network. “Europe goes local” intends to “support the recognition, practice and quality development of youth work as part of municipal youth policy & strengthen the European and international dimension of youth work at the municipal level” – so this works out even at the local level.

The European youth work helps to reach out for young people and to offer an extra incentive (the international mobility).

The examples of the three municipalities showed that there are a lot of learning possibilities offered for the young people in European mobilities and volunteering, such as reflecting the Middle-East conflict and peaceful relationships between Muslims and Jews as in the example of young people with a Turkish family background as participants in an exchange with Israel by the City of Wiesbaden. But it helps as well to strengthen the professional qualities of the youth workers, to learn from each other and to make intercultural exchange an integral part of the local youth work.

The interview session has been recorded; it is possible to access it here: [LINK](#).



8 steps to navigate through the European Solidarity Corps by Salto European Solidarity Corps:

1. **Get informed** – What societal change do you want to make?
2. Get your Organisation ID number
3. Get your Quality Label
4. **Develop** your project (including finding your partners and identifying potential participants)
5. Request & **receive** your grant
6. **Find and match participants** on the Solidarity Corps portal
7. Implement project activities
8. **Update** your Quality Label and report on the implemented activities



Read more



National Agency (Germany)
Erasmus + Youth in Action
European Solidarity Corps

GET SUPPORT

National Agencies are your contact; find yours [here](#)

FIND FURTHER

[Trainings](#)

[Partners](#)

[Volunteers for hosting](#)

[Volunteers for sending](#)

[Europeers](#) + [Eurodesk](#) infopoint

[Inspiring examples](#)

[Europe goes local](#)

[European Charter on Local Youth Work](#)

[Changemakers toolkit](#)

[10 steps to European Solidarity Corps projects for municipalities](#)

