

YOUTH PREVENTING YOUTH EXTREMISM



ERASMUS PLUS MOBILITY OF YOUTH WORKERS
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"Green
Elephant"
Foundation



PROJECT BACKGROUND



In this project we worked on and shared the methods of preventing radicalization among the youths. We worked with use of in our work a particular publication which has been published recently in 2017 by the UNESCO MGIEP entitled "Youth Waging Peace".

With this project we assembled multinational group of youth workers and worked together to achieve learning outcomes that allowed us all to go back to our local home environments and develop training skills of other local youth workers and address the problem of radicalization within its roots.

All addressed youth workers are able address local youths as well as their families&guardians, teachers, policy makers and administrators with more understanding of causes laying behind youth radicalization and knowledge about the solutions.



To improve our efforts, we had to expand our understanding of who the stakeholders are and mainstream the activities that will reduce extremism. Our definition of education should include all the institutions, individuals, and experiences that shape and challenge a person's worldview; and we should include in our discourse anyone who might be a part of a young person's education -- from teachers and administrators to coaches, parents, bloggers, reporters, pop culture icons, and more. Prevention of violent extremism should involve all stakeholders that shape our societies. Strategies to prevent violent extremism should make use of all venues that provide youth with learning opportunities: formal and nonformal education, extra-curricular activities, media, playground, internet, and others



PROJECT AIMS



The aim of the project has been to create the space for youth workers, educators, trainers to discuss the topic of preventing violent extremism and radicalization of youth, to search for new tools to be used in prevention of radical behaviours and to discuss and plan realistic steps to take on local level in favour of prevention youth violent radicalization and extremism.

We involved 4 persons from each incoming partner country and 6 from Poland, which meant we worked on in the group of 34 people. Participants were youth workers, educators, trainers willing to work on and share methods on preventing radicalization among the youths, workers, volunteers or persons associated with the partner organizations and actively involved in the youth work. Persons open for a peaceful dialogue and open to share about vulnerable, emotional and controversial topics: values, religion, politics etc.



As expressed in "Youth Waging Peace" (by UNESCO MGIEP 2017) Ms Carolyn Nash, USA Founder and Executive Director, Myanmar Leads and Ms Yulia Nesterova, Russia PhD Candidate, Indigenous Rights and Education, University of Hong Kong:

In efforts to reach multiple stakeholders and ensure universal applicability, recommendations regarding PVE often promote the false notion that the answers to the threats we face are simple: Encourage tolerance. Teach critical thinking. Develop empathy.

These are excellent goals. But if they are to be achieved, they must be presented in the context of reality.

How do you encourage understanding and respect among people on the losing end of entrenched structural racism and exclusion?

How do you foster a sense of community and belonging in young people who do not identify personally or emotionally with the community into which they were born?

How do you respond to the critical thinker who correctly identifies geopolitical injustices that punish people based on nothing more than the location of their birth and the reality of their socio-economic status?



How do you encourage empathy and compassion when science tells us white people care less about black people¹, rich people care less about poor people, and we all care less about groups too large for us to forge a personal connection?

We don't have the answers to all these questions. But we do understand that unless we contextualize our efforts to prevent violent extremism in an honest assessment of the structural inequalities that persist in our world, we will nullify our effect by destroying the trust of those we seek to reach.

Young people understand that the deck is stacked for or against them depending on where they live, what family they were born into, and the color of their skin; depending on which government rules their country, which country occupies their territory, how much oil they have, how much money they lack, and how interesting their plight might be to western media.

Compassion, critical thinking, and empathy are difficult competencies to develop, even in a perfect world. Our more daunting challenge is to develop them in world that is brutally unjust.



When we encourage critical thinking we must be prepared for, and even welcome, the ability of young people to correctly identify and challenge injustice. When we promote empathy and compassion, we must be prepared to discuss the global and local realities young people will point to as instances when they, as individuals, as a community, or as a country, race, or religion, have been treated with indifference and intolerance.

If we are to reach young people effectively, all activities to prevent violent extremism, build peace, and create a stronger, safer world must be rooted in a candid conversation about the instability and violence with which we currently live.



CASES DONE BY THE PARTICIPANTS



INTERVIEWS OF ANDREA

INTERVIEW 1:

A: Andrea

I: Interviewed

A: It is right to answer with the same money? (the interviewed just before answered that the solution for the terrorism is to "kill everybody")

I: terrorism is about people who want to kill you and it us dangerous for me but also for the terrorists because always there will be someone how want to catch them and eliminated them, like what happened with Bin Laden.



A: maybe with the leaders of the movements this could be the only one solution but what about the others who is in the middle of the process of being radicalized? How to deradicalized them?

I: one side have to say no, same like what happened with I.R.A. (Irish Republican Army), in northern Ireland they leave the guns and stopped, if they will do the same I will say ok and I will forget what you've done and you can have a normal life again. But I don't know what we can do with the religious fanatics.

A: We thought that maybe the education can be the solution for that, what do you think?

I: In my opinion if refugees go to Poland, Germany everywhere they have to respect the culture there but what is happening in Europe now is that they want to change our religion " You must be Muslim"; close themselves in the ghettos and we must accept.

[They had to leave]



INTERVIEW 2:

A: What radicalization means for you?

I: I think if you want to be a good human being it is necessary to be radical person in everything; what you think, what you do. The issue is what kind of radicalization is. Like Fascism, Nazism are also radicalisms but not good, Christianity is good. What Jesus said is good, is something that everyone of us should know and put in practice.

A: What is important about Jesus message?

I: Jesus said that we must respect other people believes but not support everything, between these two words there is a big difference. If I experience something wrong for me, I won't support this (ideas, believes) but I must accept it, accept and respect are important attitude to have and to front differences. When I read the bible, what is written in 5th, 6th and 7th chapters it's super for me, it's something that I should do.

A: How could we solve this issue? About violent extremism movements?

I: If everyone of us will be a radical person doing good things there will be no problem.

A: But how can we understand what is good for the others?

I: I think it doesn't matter from where you are from to understand what is good, if you beat me or come to my house and kill my family everyone of us know that is bad, if I give some bread to someone how has nothing for eat it's good.

A: We know that there are people doing this so how could we solve it?

I: Education is the best way, to accept different idea. These Muslim people how said that if someone don't believe in your religion you must kill them, it's not good for me; if someone doesn't believe in what you believe you have no right to kill him you have to accept that. Going back to the education it must be on every level from elementary school.

A: What do you think about open the polish borders?

I: It's a good idea, I think that the borders are something not good for humans; Jesus said that we are all the same, brothers and sisters.

A: I think that these problems exists because some people take advantages over the minorities, like poor people for them the first problem every day is to eat so for them nothing matter that much, so we have to understand how these people act and how to help them.

I: When we say education we say words but I want to say that acts speaks loudly than words, an example; if someone come to you and want to kill you, just you have to say: "ok if this is what is right for you do it I won't fight". Jesus said that is better to lose your life instead of kill someone. Only these actions can change their mind, if you fight with them you will do the same, what is the different from you and him? What is the different from German soldiers and Russian soldiers during the second world war? Nothing, both tried to survive. The best thing is to make good actions.

[The man received a call and he had to leave so we shook hands and said goodbye].



CASE OF MARSI



At the beginning of 2018, the Albanian government approved the imposition of tariffs on the national highway that connect Albania with Kosovo. This action caused a strong reaction from the residents of Kukes area where the checkpoint would be built. These reactions soon became radicalized for several factors. First it was the high price of 5 €, which was considered unacceptable from the citizens due to the low incomes. Albania is one of the countries with low economic standard in Europe. On the other hand, Kukes area is considered among the poorest in this country. Another reason was the political use of the situation by opposition parties, exploiting citizens' dissatisfaction. Combined together, these factors led to the violent protest and the destruction and burning of checkpoint office. The push factors for setting the tariff by the government were: improving infrastructure and a better security for citizens. After a series of negotiations, a reduced tariff was introduced for residents of the area. We can say that the economic factor is the major one that led to radicalization of the situation, as well as poverty and the political use of the situation from opposition parties.

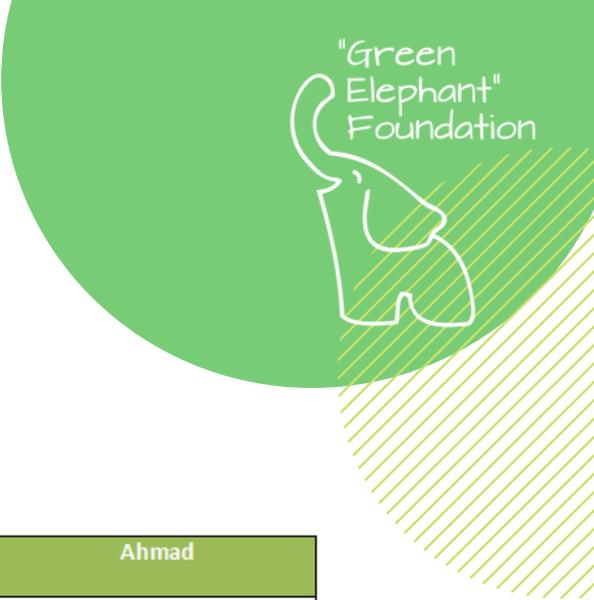
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53sNthotaE>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pylEKTSDauw>

In 2018 Albanian government prepared a tourist advertisement spot as part of touristic campaign based on the movie "Taken", as one of the most successful productions by Hollywood during 2008 starring Liam Neeson. In this film Albania is introduced as a country of origin for many gangsters and mafia connections, which really damaged the country's image. The government and campaign directors used a widely seen movie to improve the country's image in the eyes of world.

The touristic spot introduced the real Albania inviting Liam and his friends to visit and enjoy Albanian beauty as a tourist destination. Albanian hospitality as well natural beauties and country history are some of the attractive factors for visitors. The movie introduced Albania as a gangster site, while the factors mentioned in the touristic spot are pushy and attractive facts.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hoH2EiQc3ms>





Interviews were prepared by Marsi Dhimitri and Blerian Proda during the daily activity for in Zakopane. We talked about the Project and Extremism with several people explaining the reason why being in the town. Only 4 of them mentioned below spend more time with interviewers and were willing to engage in a long conversation. After the introduction, to them it was asked a set of questions.

Anna	Miroslav	John	Ahmad
22 years old girl from Poland; Blond hair; Student in Krakow; Extremism in 1-word: complete anarchy; Example: Poland has some forms of extreme cases especially with German people, burning of books, etc. Ways to prevent: Education is one way of preventing it;	19 years old guy from Bratislava; Student of Erasmus + in Krakow; Extremism in 1-word: Hitler; Example: Roma people house burns; London bombs; Ways to prevent: Education; Employment is another way	58 years old guy from Philadelphia; Extremism in 1-word: Radicalism; Example: Shooting in the schools; Ways to prevent: Education;	42 years old Muslim Turkish refugee, married, 3 children, work in a kebab shop Zakopane; Extremism in 1-word: not-good; Example: Turkey bombs; Ways to prevent: put people to work;



CASE OF GIOTA



We have a political group in our country, Greece, called Golden Dawn. This political group has been established since 1980 and is considered as an organization with Nazi ideology, as far as they also have the symbol of Nazi to represent them. The Golden Dawn is an organization of the extreme right political side and the members of this group are for example journalists, rich people and also criminals, because some of them have accused for murders. They have recently been in the Parliament with a really good percent, which means that as the time passes more and more people vote support them.

The members of this group believe that Greece belongs only to Greek people and no other person from any other country belongs here. This belief makes them hate the different person that they have opposite to them and makes them react in an extremism way. They hit the immigrants, make them suffer and they are capable of killing them if it is needed. One of the important member of the group in a political speech that he had some years before, he said that we must gather all the immigrants in a big stadium and light them fire so as to clean our country from them.

Some years before in our organization we had an extremist event. We have decided to give free Turkish lessons to people of our village. The reason that we have decided to do this was because a man of our community has married a woman from Turkey, so it was easy for us to talk with her and convince her to help other women to learn something different. At the beginning everything was perfect. As the weeks passed, a person of the organization that we have represented above came to our organization and threatened us to stop these lessons unless he would burn our museum and everything we had inside. There was no particular reason for this, just because of the Turkish lessons. So we decided to stop them and since then we haven't done something else similar to this.



An Interview with Priest Jan in Zakapané/Horewaka church | 14.04.2019

Q. 1. → Me: What is radicalization and extremism? To prevent it, what should we do?

Priest J.: Radicalization is a process. A person thinks extremely political and he/she has his individual ideas about religion and other subjects. But he/she doesn't accept other's ideas. Also he/she tends to violence. Extremism is higher than radicalization. To prevent it, we/religious men should explain the true ways, advise to pray. Families should be careful, they should advise/teach to respect each other.

Q. 2. → Me: What do you think about 'religion wars' all around the world?

P. J.: They are not totally religious wars. I think they are political. The governments of the countries think their future. They give reason to the wars. And on media, the wars are generalized as religion wars. On TV, political wars of countries are manipulated as religion wars.

Q. 3. Me: What do you think about ISIS terrorist group? Who supports it?

They are radicalized extreme terrorist group. And the number of participating to it is increasing. Because there are too much missionary activities following to Islam religion. We ~~are~~ are extremely/totally against ~~the~~ radicalization and terrorism. We don't accept violence in any area.

Q. 4. Me: What do you think about the terrorist action to muslim mosque in New Zealand?

P. J. + I haven't heard it, I don't know it.

THANK YOU !!



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