

This project's fulcrum was a creative workshop that brought together some women and men of European rural areas to experience, share, learn and think on how women can have an active role in participating to the European local rural development and how men have a key role in this process.

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Education and Culture DG

'Europe for Citizens' Programme



This project has been coordinated by CE.S.I.E



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RuralWomen

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RuralWomen



Let's Raise the Curtain!

Creative workshop to improve the participation of rural women in local development

Description of the project

This project aimed to improve active citizenship and local development of European rural areas by increasing a sense of ownership of the European Union among one of the most marginalized inhabitants: women. This project also aimed to involve rural men in this process.

Since the beginning of Industrialisation era, we are confronting the slow desertification of rural European areas by young generations. Rural women are often the main "outsiders" of democratic community life, local development and European identities. Their role within these rural community contexts is often linked to the family life and care, in opposition with the role of men, linked to public life and work.

To stop the process of desertification, to enhance local development and to improve the same chances for all, we needed to increase the involvement of women, who embody the way to give new vitality to the local democracy



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and economy. Moreover, their involvement led to the optimization of the human resources in the rural territory and helped women build a positive image of themselves.

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This creative workshop was developed around three moments blossomed in an evolution process of active, informal and creative learning:

(1) Intercultural learning process & sharing European rural women cultures and traditions and the problems they face in rural areas.
(2) Discussion on "How Europe can improve rural women's life quality"

(3) Elaboration of creative strategies to develop active participation and European identity within women coming from rural European areas and to improve the participation of men in this process.

This workshop was held in Sicily between the 16th and the 25th of November 2008 and brought together 43 women and men from several European countries representing very different cultures (France, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, Portugal, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Malta, Estonia and Italy). During this Workshop, professionals, community leaders and civil society representatives gathered together in Sicily for 10 days (between the 16 and 25 of November 2008) to (1) share European rural women cultures and traditions and the problems they face in European rural areas, (2) discuss on how Europe can improve rural women life quality, (3) learn about intercultural learning process, (4) elaborate creative strategies to develop active participation and a European identity within women coming from rural European areas and to improve the participation of men in this process.



Rural Outreach

Methodologies

The Workshop used a non-formal learning activities and gave participants the chance to gain new skills, knowledge, and attitudes as well as to learn how to use them in a variety of contexts, especially the working context. It helped to improve:

- communication in a foreign language,
- communication skills (non-verbal, listening, speaking),
- self-confidence,
- the ability to interact with different cultures and environments,
- active participation in society,
- the ability to solve problems and to resolve conflicts in a group,
- turning ideas into action by planning, organising, managing, and co-operating in a team.

Aims

General aims were:

- To give citizens the opportunity to interact and take part in building a more United Europe;
- To develop a sense of European Identity, based on common values, history and culture.
- To promote a sense of belonging to the European Union among its citizens.
- To foster tolerance and mutual understanding between people.

Specific aims were:

- to bring together people from across Europe to share and exchange experiences, opinions and values, to learn from history and to build the future;
- to promote action, debate and reflection related to the European citizenship and democracy, shared values, common history and culture;
- to bring Europe closer to its citizens by promoting



European values and achievements, while preserving the memory of its past;

- to encourage interaction between citizens and civil society organisations.
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 - to encourage interaction between citizens and civil society organisations.

Activities

Presentations and group discussions about problems and difficulties faced by women in the rural areas:

- Problems and difficulties faced by women in the rural areas;
- Social economic status of rural women in Europe;
- Gender based discrimination in rural Europe;
- Women's rights as Human rights;
- Equal opportunities as a strategy to improve women participation in rural Europe;
- Rural Europe and modern issues on gender;
- Presentation by participants: situation and problems faced by women in their rural context;
- How gender policy can address the different problems faced by women in rural areas: policies at a different level including EU policy;
- How rural development policy at local level interferes with the situation and problems of women in rural areas;
- Reflection groups on legal instruments to prevent gender discrimination in rural Europe;
- Developing skills and competencies in European funding opportunities and project building;
- Creative groups: strategies to improve participation of women in rural areas;
- Development of new European projects.

Also, all participants spent a day visiting a rural area in the village of Petralia Soprana.



Working Plan

Working day 1 16/11/2008

In the afternoon, after the arrival in Petralia Soprana, the group participated in a session aimed at knowing each other and team building. In the evening it took place the welcome dinner.

Working day 2 17/11/2008

The first day started with welcoming speeches by CE.S.I.E and an introduction to the program. The participants were reminded of the objectives of the training course, the methodology chosen for the TC (four pillars of Education) and the schedule of the following days. After the introduction, the trainers facilitated name games and ice breaking activities that helped initiate contact between the participants. They started to approach the gender issue (Positive discrimination, Gender participation, Sensitivity – gender and culture VS. relativism); also they started to reflect on problems and difficulties faced by woman in the rural area: at this point, everyone shared

their experiences. In the afternoon, the trainers animated creative games on the project key words, on European notions and values. This gave –in a creative and active approach– the participants a common background and made them aware of larger structures and changes in the area. The game was followed by the lecture that analyzed the key words, European notion and values that interested us during this project.

Working day 3 18/11/2008

In the morning, a first group composed by half the participants (Estonia, Latvia, UK, Norway, Romania) gave a short presentation (power point, video or oral) about the situation and problems faced by women in rural contexts. In the afternoon, also a second group (Bulgaria, Portugal, Cyprus, Ireland, Greece) gave a short presentation (power point, video or oral) about the situation and problems faced by women in rural contexts.

These individual presentations – created at home based on research, concrete elements and interviews – analyzed many aspects: political and economical presence of women, social representation (stereotypes), situation of women in rural areas, problems faced in daily life and rural women's perception of Europe, expectations and possible solutions. The presentations helped the participants have an idea of the global and particular aspect of the problems and situations faced in different European contexts and feel part of a common Europe. These presentations were open to all other participants and to other members of local associations working on the same issues and were followed by discussions. In the evening, half of the

participants prepared an international dinner and presented something from their home country. These informal moments were dedicated to the intercultural discovery between the participants. Participants presented their culture and their traditions through songs, dancing and food specialities. These presentations had to take in consideration the conception and the social role of women. This was a good opportunity to share the beautiful aspects of each other.

Working day 4 19/11/2008

In the morning, all participants talked about two big themes: "how gender policy can address the different problems faces by women in rural area: policies at different level including EU policy" and "how rural development policy at local level interferes with the situation and problems of women in rural areas". They reflected together on priorities and solutions, general remarks, practices, needs.

In the afternoon they visited a rural area of Sicily, the village of Petralia Soprana. Participants met women and men from Sicilian rural areas active in rural development of their local community. This was meant to be an example of the action that the participants could undertake to develop their local areas. It was also an occasion to meet some people active in this field, to get to know actions done and to use these ideas in the strategies they develop in the future.

In the evening, they had dinner with local people. It was a particular moment because they spent some time with them and tasted a typical dinner prepared by the people of this community.

Working day 5 20/11/2008

In the morning, they reflected upon which legal instrument can prevent gender discrimination in rural Europe and on the problem of helping spouses (implementation of EU directive and its revision);



the participants were divided in some groups and after the reflections they opened themselves to a common reflection about the prevention of gender discrimination in rural Europe. Later on, there was a mid-term evaluation.

In the afternoon, participants were invited to meet the mayor and his colleagues at the town hall in Petralia Soprana, and he informed them about the political system and the economical and social situation in Petralia society. The participants presented their country and professions. Then, they moved to Palermo. From that moment on, all other activities were performed in Palermo.

Working day 6
21/11/2008



In the morning, the group focused on the future of rural women reflecting on how rural women see the evolution of their situation in their context.

Also, in the morning the participants worked on the possible strategies to improve participation of women in rural Europe. They based their work on funding opportunities and they made a toolkit.

In the afternoon, participants received information about the kind of funds and EU organization they could refer to in projects solving the problems and needs of women in rural areas. They were given printed material regarding this issue; this material was useful even at a later stage of the project. In the evening, half of the participants (Slovakia, Estonia, Bulgaria, UK) prepared an international dinner and presented something from their home country. These informal moments were dedicated to the intercultural discovery between the participants. Participants presented their culture and traditions through songs, dancing and food specialties. These presentations had to take into consideration the conception and the social role of women. This was a good opportunity to share the beautiful aspects of each other cultures, to improve intercultural knowledge between participants and to promote cultural diversity.

Working day 7
22/11/2008

In the morning there was a lecture by an expert on "Rural Women & Europe" to see how Europe can have repercussions on their daily life as European women and how they can make good use of the opportunities offered by Europe to develop new projects valuating positively their role within European Rural development.

After that, they used the knowledge they had and the experiences they



had during the 4 previous days to work in creative group through non-formal expression on "How Europe can improve rural women life quality". In the afternoon they visited the historic part of the city of Palermo.

Working day 8
23/11/2008

During the whole day participants focused on the creative development of strategies to improve participation and European identity within women coming from rural areas. The participants developed general strategies on how to improve events and activities that can promote women involvement to local development with a European dimension.

These events had to 1) answer to the needs of the rural population through the realization, by groups of women and men reflecting together, of actions promoting its development (1st session), 2) be applicable to specific local contexts (2nd session) and 3) to have a huge European dimension (3rd session). The experts played a key role this day because they could provide information about good practices that

aimed to reach these aims. The trainers guided the participants through a process of finding strategies to answer to the needs together. The solutions had to be sensitive to cultural differences and they were not the same in all countries. Participants tried to come up with general strategies that could be adjusted to different local contexts.

Working day 9
24/11/2008

In the morning the participants worked on the preparation of the creative dissemination tools to disseminate the project results.

From all the work done before the participants had to extract what was important to put inside of the creative dissemination tool to improve the involvement of European women to the local development of rural areas. All participants thought about how they could- in a creative way- develop tools that could have a huge impact in rural contexts. The publication and the CD-Rom focused in reaching the civil society directly/ the website to spread the information to the authorities and other organizations.

In the afternoon participants participated in the Open Space Technology. They choose the partners that they would like to work in the construction of new projects and on a second moment had the time to develop them together. In order to facilitate the project development was given to participants a step by step guide:

- 1)Projects Title
- 2)Aims and objectives + target group
- 3)Methodology
- 4)Time frame/timetable
- 5)Partners
- 6)Funding opportunities
- 7)Deadlines

During the whole session trainers were available to support the diverse working groups in better developing the own idea.

Working day 10
25/11/2008

In the morning, before the evaluation of the creative workshop, participants presented the projects developed the day before. This way it was created the occasion to open the projects to new partners.

After that participants answered to an individual questionnaire concerning the learning achievements and the project in itself. They had also the chance to express themselves verbally in the group.

Follow up

Most of the participants in the project were very motivated to work on project building to improve participation of women in rural areas. Filling in their evaluation questionnaire, most of them wrote that the project's activities helped them develop new skills and competences. Some of the participants wrote a project idea about the capacity building and confidence building for women in rural areas. They called this project "Feeling Good in My Community"; through this project, they meant to achieve the following objectives:

To tackle the issue of internal migration and immigration of women in rural areas (Trafficking); to provide tools for education; to provide vocational training; to create a safe environment through counselling, support groups and psychological support; to provide access to information for state programs and available resources, to improve life quality in local communities in rural areas, to strengthen the local communities; to promote active participation; to create a Network

The participants' process and experience was really intense during this creative workshop.

The evaluation highlighted that:

- Participants liked the intercultural evenings because they gave them the chance to know more about other cultures. Getting to know the traditions and habits and customs of other cultures was a good opportunity to open their minds and to realize how much the world is varied.

- They enjoyed very much the visit of the rural "San Giovanni" and meeting local population because they got to see the real life of this community. They spent much time with local population and they were very curious and motivated to talk with them, to know their way of life.

- About the themes of this project, the participants enjoyed most of them, especially: Gender aspects of women in rural development; Gender based discrimination in Rural Europe; Rural Europe and modern issues on gender; How gender policy can address the different problems faced by women in rural areas: policies at different level including EU policy.

- Also, participants enjoyed presenting their experiences on the situation and problems faced by women in the rural context and the creative workshop on affirmative measures to address the problems of women in rural Europe. They reported that these activities were particularly engaging.

- They appreciated the discussion of the strategies to improve participation of women in rural Europe and thinking about the opportunities, organisations and presentations.

of opportunities – share best practices – break down of stereotypes through a methodology like Information campaigns, vocational trainings and Exchanges. Another project idea that participants wrote was about was: Art as a bridge to research political thinking and sustainable Environment. This project was aimed at women and was meant to build a bridge between younger and elderly people. It aimed to sharpen their consciousness; to express themselves; to promote active participation, to build active citizens; to provide them with the opportunity of learning about other countries' policy; to provide methodology approaches; to increase their knowledge of the political system and of the environmental issues. They considered art as a tool that could help increase their knowledge of themselves and of their capacities. Also, with regards to the methodologies, they considered the possibility to



apply: earning by doing, cultural animation, role playing. Participants worked on these projects very well. They were motivated to create projects and activities to increase the power of rural women and of women more in general.

DESCRIPTION OF PARTNER'S ASSOCIATIONS



Centro Studi ed Iniziative Europeo (CE.S.I.E) was established in 2001 on the inspiration of the leading Italian sociologist Danilo Dolci. It is engaged in the promotion of cultural, formative, scientific and economic development at both local and international levels.

Its aims are:

- To promote intercultural development;
- To act as a bridge between research and the application of knowledge;
- To apply reciprocal communication in order to consolidate peace and democracy;
- To abolish every form of discrimination and promote social inclusion and equal opportunities;
- To promote global awareness and responsibility towards the application of human rights;
- To facilitate the growth of people and organisations, with particular attention to youth, through grassroots development.

The organisation is actively engaged in:

- empowering the local community, civil society, women and young people;
- promoting and participating in sociological research at both local and international levels;
- realising projects with a variety of stake-holders;
- developing partnerships between countries through collaboration with individuals, associations, universities, research institutes, local authorities, national governments and intergovernmental institutions;

CE.S.I.E's is composed of 20 members, including experienced project developers and managers, trainers, researchers and teachers.

CE.S.I.E has 5 operative seats: in Palermo (Italy), Floriana (Malta), Alexandria (Egypt), Dakar (Senegal), and Kathmandu (Nepal).

Contacts:

CE.S.I.E

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Web: www.cesie.it



Progresit is a non-profit organization composed of mainly young people. The young staff working in Progresit is primarily interested in a professional presentation of projects on a national as well as on an international level. Progresit and its members work primarily in the area of education/formation and the support of education in Slovakia. Progresit was founded in 2004 and it earned accreditation for training from the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic as early as in 2005. Progresit also carries out trainings for companies and for public relations focused on the use of different Structural Funds of the European Union. Progresit has participated as a leader partner in the program "IS EQUAL" and also in other programs such as the "Leonardo da Vinci", the "Twining" and the "Youth and Socrates Grundtvig".

Contacts:

Progresit, Hošťáky 31, 921 01 Piešťany, Slovakia
tel: 00421-911-214 312
www.progresit.sk



Prosvasi is a non-governmental organization (NGO) working with people that are socially excluded (i.e. people with special needs, all kind of minorities, poor and disadvantaged people). Its purpose is the creation of a social environment in which there is no discrimination and where equal opportunities are given to everyone. Hence the members of this organization are not only the socially excluded but also are the "privileged" ones.

Prosvasi's main goal is to support people that are socially excluded. In particular Prosvasi's goals are:

- > To promote a smooth social enrolment of the socially excluded;
- > To secure the implementation of human rights and prevent discrimination of any kind;
- > To strengthen the participation of socially excluded people in everyday life and culture.

The activities of this organization are:

- Rehabilitation programmes for people with special needs.
- Drama Workshops
- Cultural Programmes
- Art exhibitions
- Theatre Performances
- Training courses
- Youth exchanges
- Counselling
- Group discussions
- Seminars
- Excursions
- Field trips
- Conferences
- Research Projects
- Exchange ideas and experiences



Contacts:

Prosvasi NGO, 3, Lycourgou Str., 3012, Limassol – CYPRUS
www.prosvasi.org



Akina Dada wa Africa (AkiDwa) Swahili version for African sisterhood is a national network of African women living in Ireland empowering themselves and speaking for themselves in order to enhance changes on issues that affect them in their lives.

AkiDwa was established in August 2001 by 7 African women living in Ireland with the aim of responding to and addressing the existing and changing needs of African women living in Ireland. It is a voluntary, non governmental organisation and a representative body for all African women living in Ireland irrespective of their national/ethnic background, tradition /religious beliefs, socio-economic, or legal status. AkiDwa work focuses on development and human right issues based on a gender perspective.

Their mission is to promote equality for African women living in Ireland so as to ensure positive change and social justice.

Our belief that Women's Rights are Human Rights is fundamental to our work.

We recognise that African women face particular barriers to their empowerment, so the following Human Rights underpin our work.

Contacts:

AkiDwa- African Women's Network

29 Gardiner Place, Dublin, Ireland

www.akidwa.ie



Biedriba Skalbes

The aim of the Society is to provide professional twenty-four-hour available psychological aid for people in crisis situations, preventive work and education, in order to improve psychological climate in society, as well as raising public awareness regarding human rights. We are part of an NGOs network that includes: Civic Alliance Latvia, Network of Latvian Women's Organizations, Information Network of Women's Organizations against Domestic Violence..

We work because we believe that the help we can provide is needed for people. We believe that our activities can affect a development of more tolerant and more open society.



It is important for us to understand how other people feel and live.

The aim of non-governmental organization Society "Skalbes" is to provide 24-hour crisis intervention service for children and adults in crisis situations. "Skalbes" primary activity is to provide *in-walk and telephone psychological consultations in crisis situations* such as spousal abuse, child abuse, suicide, death of relatives, sudden loss of work, loneliness, terminal illness, etc. This is the first crisis intervention center in Latvia. It also cooperates with other aid organizations in Latvia: police, hospitals, social services, and other psychological aid organizations.

Crisis Telephone line 7222922 is available 24 hours, seven days a week, offering psychological consultations and information about aid available in Latvia.

Crisis Center "Skalbes" *organizes seminars* for other organizations in such topics: domestic violence, child abuse, stress and self-help, crisis intervention basic principles, accidents and sudden traumatic events, communication and interrelationship skills.

"Skalbes" also *organizes support groups* for women who suffer from sexual abuse and domestic violence, children and youth support groups, self-support groups for men.

Contacts:

Skalbes

Kungu street 34, Riga, working time 9.00 - 17.00.Latvia, tel: 7222922

www.skalbes.lv



Ocre- is located at Castelo De Vide, in the northern of Alentejo, Portugal. It has existed since June 1998 and is active in six communes (Caster De Vide, Nisa, Marvao, Portallegre, Crato and Arronches). Ocre promotes gradual involvement of people through a process of discussion, exchange and searching for answer, and through the development of actions adapted to the context which is our living space. As an area of research, it works in the Territory – Idea, which grows with all who share the same quest, regardless of distances, ages, creeds or backgrounds.

Contacts

OCRE - Associação para a Valorização do Ambiente, Cultura, Património e Lazer

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Apartado 80

7320-121 CASTELO DE VIDE

PORTUGAL

www.ocreassociacao.org



Bulgarian Network for Child and Youth Trafficking Prevention

Our organization works with vulnerable to trafficking girls and young females. Most of them are rural women who suffer multiple discrimination: being women, living in disadvantaged area and - very often – belonging to a minority group. We have got some experience in campaigning and delivering tailor-made trainings responding to the specific educational needs of the women-at-risk.

BNCYTP is **the only** initiative in the region that provides a platform for cooperation, exchange of ideas, support for project development and databases with educational resources and experts on youth trafficking prevention.

By now, our Network covers 23 countries, represented by 74 organizations and independent experts, working for youth trafficking prevention via research, human rights educational programs, human rights advocacy and lobbying for youth and immigration policy improvement. Our first events started from February 2006 in the following countries: UK, Greece, FYROM, Bulgaria, Turkey, Hungary (European Youth Center, Budapest). Local and national events, organized by BNCYTP on human rights education for youth trafficking prevention are negotiated for 2007 across 11 more European and Mediterranean countries. We are supported by the Council of Europe, YOUTH Program of European Commission, British Council, Bulgarian Youth Platform, European Youth Forum, International Organization for Migration, Global Youth Coalition on AIDS, UN Department on Trafficking, Child Rights International, Balkan Human Rights Network and many other international organizations.

Contacts

Bulgarian Network for Child and Youth Trafficking Prevention

bncytp@youth-trafficking.net

<http://www.youth-trafficking.net/bncytp>

<http://www.stop-trafficking.net>



Polydynamo Center for Social Intervention - Kerkyra

The aims of this organisation are to facilitate the interaction of groups to develop innovative approaches for the integration and rehabilitation of unemployed and vulnerable social groups, to provide counselling and guidance and to promote cultural activities.

Polydynamo provides:

- Vocational counselling, professional orientation and business plan development;
- Individual psychological and social support for the professional career;
- Support of disabled people;
- Job-research techniques (CV, cover letters, interviews);
- Information and support regarding European initiatives and National projects, training courses and grants;
- Networking with the local society, the business world and social institutions for the economical and social development of the region;
- Training and informative material concerning the access to the labour market and the promotion of citizenship.

Contacts:

Polydynamo Center for Social Intervention - Kerkyra, Greece

Address: 11 Nikiforou Mandilara Str., Hermoupolis, Syros,

Postal Code 84100, Greece

Telephone: +30 2281.0.85379, Fax: +30 2281.0. 85357

E- mail: polydynamo@ncyclades.gr

<http://www.ncyclades.gr>



Positive Mind

“**Positive Mind**” is non-profit organization established in March 2007. The aim of organization is to promote mutual understanding and tolerance of individuals and society groups with different cultural, religion, national, race, social and economical background and health condition.

“**Positive Mind**” realizes and participates in different local and international [projects](#). Our activities are directed to new experience and possibilities. “**Positive Mind**” is for positive changes and equal opportunities.

Contacts:

Association „Positive Mind” Reg. Nr. 40008112899
Lauku iela 4 – 11, Tukums, LV 3101 Ieva Upesleja, Latvia
pozitivadoma@pozitivadoma.lv



MEDITERRANEAN S.O.S. is a Greek environmental and social NGO, active since 1990, for the protection of the natural and cultural heritage and the promotion of sustainable development of the Mediterranean Sea area, for the dialogue between the peoples of the region. the Mediterranean. MedSOS' aim is the promotion of integrated coastal zone management in the Mediterranean region with an emphasis on the local level through the active engagement of citizens. MedSOS' perception is that sustainable coastal communities can't be “engineered” from “the top”, but should be created from the “bottom” by involving NGOs, local residents and authorities in a constant process of shaping a future vision of their locales and acting to realize it. In that framework, MedSOS' methodological tools include production of information material (thematic leaflets/ posters, CDROMs, Videos, reports, etc) and environmental education packages, awareness campaigns by using all means of the information society, lobbying, youth information and exchange projects, as well as volunteer and technical projects in collaboration with local authorities.

Contacts:

MEDSOS- Mediterranean SOS Network

Mamai 3, GR-104 40 Athens, GREECE

Tel: +30 210 8226795

www.medsos.gr

NGO Generating Ideas

Our aim is to promote youth participation through various local and international projects. We work towards tolerance and inter-cultural dialogue. We are positive, respect each other and live with the nature!

We belong to an international network called *Global Voice* (www.globalvoice.org.uk). We have been engaged in many youth exchanges and participated in projects in co-operation with our international partners. We have managed some schoolings and this December there will be a charity event in co-operation with Tartu Art Museum for homeless children. We are planning to organise a youth exchange in Estonia at the end of August 2005 and host partners for job-shadowing.

Contacts:

Kalevi 51-3, Tartu, Tartumaa 51010, Estonia

tel: 3725165351

www.generatingideas.org

