

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

(To be filled in and uploaded as deliverable in the Portal Grant Management System, at the due date foreseen in the system.)

⚠ Please provide one sheet per event (one event = one workpackage = one lump sum).

PROJECT	
Project name and acronym:	Young Workforce – Youth and Gender Equality for Europe's Welfare [Yo-Wo]
Participant:	Bulgarian Youth Association (BYA)
PIC number:	937119523 / E10036181

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	WP 7
Event name:	Europe for youth and social innovation through EU policies
Type:	workshop, seminar, debate, visits
In situ/online:	[in-situ]
Location:	Sofia; Vratsa; Republic of Bulgaria
Date(s):	[18-21/06/2024] 18-21 June 2024
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.lapoblallarga.es/va/pagina/proyecte-yo-wo https://www.lapoblallarga.es/va/noticia-pagina/proyectes-europeus www.bulgarian-youth.eu https://cardet.org/projects/yowo-young-workforce-youth-and-gender-equality-for-europe-s-welfare/ https://cardet.org/project-news/conclusion-of-yowo-project/ https://www.mc-velenje.si/evropski-projekt https://eidpfoundation.org/Projects/ https://www.ujszilvas.hu/ujszilvas/ https://autokreacja.org/blog/2024/11/14/yo-wo-young-workforce-youth-and-gender-equality-for-europes-welfare-summary/
Participants	
Female:	35
Male:	33
Non-binary:	-
From country 1 [Bulgaria]:	53 (29 male, 24 female)

From country 2 [Spain]:	4 (4 female)		
From country 3 [Cyprus]:	2 (1 male, 1 female)		
From country 4 [France]:	2 (1 male, 1 female)		
From country 5 [Slovenia]:	2 (1 male, 1 female)		
From country 6 [Netherlands]:	1 (1 female)		
From country 7 [Hungary]:	2 (1 male, 1 female)		
From country 8 [Poland]:	2 (2 female)		
Total number of participants:	68	From total number of countries:	8

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

Work Package 7: Europe for youth and social innovation through EU policies [EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS PHASE] - Sofia and Vratsa, Republic of Bulgaria between 18-21 June 2024

Objectives of the meeting:

- To achieve a better understanding of how EU projects have changed Bulgaria and exploring best practices of Vratsa (Bulgaria);
- Better understanding about EU policies related to youth and social innovation;
- Generating ideas and exchanging ideas about social innovation and youth local communities.

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS ATTENDING THE MEETING:

- Bulgarian Youth Association as a host in collaboration with Vratsa Municipality and Vratsa Youth Center;
- Municipality of La Pobla Llarga (Spain);
- Youth Center Velenje, Culture and Education (Slovenia);
- Local Government of Town Újszilvás (Hungary)
- Fundacja Autokreacja (Poland);
- European Institute for Diplomacy and Policy (Netherlands);
- Jean Monnet (France);
- CARDET (Cyprus).

Main Activities Description:**18/06 (Tuesday)**

Arrival of the participants and welcoming them in the capital Sofia in hotel Ramada Sofia City Center. The location next to the center provided an opportunity to explore the city and the local culture with a walking tour during their available time. The evening dinner was the official opening of the event where we used the opportunity to get to know each other better in informal setting and to discuss the next days agenda.

19/06 (Wednesday)

Early departure to Vratsa city which was the town which supported Bulgarian Youth Association for this project.

We've visited one of the few recognized National Youth Centers with which we collaborated. There we had a discussion together with local young people on the topic of EU projects and how they have changed Bulgaria and the region of Vratsa through the perspective of the youth center as being part under the Municipality's administration with the conclusion that EU had a vital impact on the center and it's function. Discussion with youth worker from the center and decision maker. Several presentations about the local realities and also European statistics from Eurostat about NEET's , Youth Employability and Next Generation EU expectations, barriers and benefits.

After that we've had a local guide and have visited the Regional History Museum Complex of Vratsa, where a non-formal method game was used in order to explore the history of the region inside the museum with different local groups.

Lunch at a local restaurant and the opportunity to view local recipes and their preparation.

In the afternoon we visited one of the main tourist locations in the region The Ledenika Cave which we used as a good example for a place with initiatives done from the young people for the young people, mostly in the context for wellbeing and sport. We had a follow-up discussion on how tourism, wellbeing and sport could be a crosspoint for future collaboration between our countries, but as well some of the partners exchanged contact information with the local business with which they will exchange interest for job shadowing.

The day was closed with a reflection of the day and with setting the topics for the next day. The participants exchanged ideas with excitement and used the dinner for informal discussion.

Departure back to Sofia.

20/06 (Thursday)

The day started with presentation of the European Youth Programmes like Erasmus+ which is the main programme with which Bulgarian Youth Association is working. As most of the partners are Municipalities, for them the programme was not so well known, so it was beneficial to focus on it.

After that we've separated the participants in different groups in order to discuss more on EU Policies related to youth and social innovation which we can implement on local level using European programmes. Each group had time to generate and present their idea. The

groups had different topics, but during the presentation participants had the opportunity to help the other groups to improve their ideas with constructual feedback.

At the end of the group dynamic, we had 4 specific ideas that could be directly implemented as social innovation or used as a backbone for a local sustainable strategy. One of the participants has the position of Mayor in their Municipality and will directly work on the topic after returning back to their country.

During the break few people used their time to get interviewed by a Belgium based journalist about their experience so far.

In the afternoon we had a visit from a successful youth entrepreneur Blazhka Dimitrova founder of the first zero waste restaurant in Bulgaria who is awarded by Forbes in the category “30 under 30”. Her restaurant was deeply affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic which was also having youth volunteers as cooks. As a first line worker affected, she shared good/bad practices from her own experience and how she uses social innovation for better sustainable methods in business. A discussion followed up how this could be implemented in various scenarios in order to tackle youth unemployment.

Follow-up key notes shared:

Safe & Healthy work environment • Delegation of minor tasks (eg proof reading) to reduce stress of individuals • Flexibility- be allowed to work from home • Safe parking / adequate lighting • baby station / baby sitting services-benefits • security • stress management - wellness programs - regular breaks • ergonomic furniture • healthy snacks • proper ventilation - better air quality

Training and Development: 1. Mentoring and guide within the office for new employees I. 2) External personnel (eg. 3rd Party professional) arranging workshops within the office. 3. External Training events (eg. Seminars and workshop outside the company. 4) Extra reward and paid learning opportunities (eg. new language learning for employees if interested or requested, painting, cooking, buying relevant books)

After that participants were divided into groups. They had to generate and exchange ideas on how to improve work conditions for inexperienced youth workers in the labor market and to discuss best experiences about front line working conditions. Some of the partners had less experience, as they are not directly involved in employment process, but Municipalities were supportive in the process and the topic, contribution of ideas was received from all sides. One of the main topics on which participants focused was close to the experience of the mentor basing their ideas on sustainability in EU and zero waste as a potential social innovation conducted by youth workers which were most of the partners.

In the ending sessions, the groups had to present their ideas in the form of a theatre play.

The day finished with positive feedback for the event. We had a final conclusion that non-formal methodology is more appealing towards young people and could be used by the partners in their local work. Self-reflection time and certification. The event finished with details about the next and final meeting WP8 in Cyprus.

The event was officially closed with participation in an international folklore programme where the participants had the opportunity to get to know the local Bulgarian customs,

traditional and dances. Dinner.

21/06 (Friday)

Last feedback and conclusions about the event.
Final historical tour in the city of Sofia with a guide.
Farewell and departure of the international participants.

In the afternoon the Bulgarian local participants had a brief discussion on the event and on what to work on in the future with the conclusion that the event was successful and achieved its objectives receiving positive feedback from the partners. Three persons showed interest to volunteer in our organization due to this event !

Closing. The event was successful in engaging young people and served as a bridge with policy makers like partner Municipalities. Partners stated committed to implement more sustainable strategies and to work on youth unemployment in their countries.

Project Coordination and Communication: It was agreed beforehand, that all the informal communication for the event will take place in a secure online environment via Whatsapp application. The group was also used to share photos/videos and results. All formal communication was done via email and in a different coordination group with all the partners. We've sent in advance all the needed information to the delegates: infopack, agenda with the activities, room distribution and travel template. Although the meeting took place in 2 different cities, we've concluded without any organizational issues.

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).