



*European Association for the Education of Adults*

***3<sup>rd</sup> Grundtvig Award***

***Active Citizenship in a democratic society***

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## *INTRODUCTION:*

The European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) annually awards a Grundtvig Prize (EAEA Grundtvig Award) for an outstanding product/project which has enhanced Adult Learning.

The Award was named after Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783-1872), the Danish clergyman and writer, who is regarded as the ideological father of popular and adult education. He advocated 'life enlightenment' which aimed at giving each individual, regardless of age or background, the opportunity to learn throughout life. The objective of learning was twofold, to give personal fulfilment to the individual and to ensure the active participation of all citizens in public life. Grundtvig advocated the use of dialogue and the spoken word as a learning method. He further believed that teaching should be based on and should relate to real-life experiences and not abstract matters. These ideas inspired the creation of the Nordic *folk high schools*. These residential colleges of non-formal adult education are now established components of the Nordic

education system and also exist in other countries all around Europe.

Grundtvig prepared the groundwork for the development of centres of learning, in all kinds of contexts; from residential educational institutions to financial and agricultural co-operatives. He linked intellectual and cultural growth with group development, a prelude to civic relationships. Grundtvig's emphasis on the intrinsic value of learning, as a foundation to living useful and enjoyable lives is central to the definition of adult education that EAEA is promoting, with its focus on basic skills, valuing learning and active citizenship.

EAEA launched the first Grundtvig Award in Adult Education in 2003 to recognise and celebrate excellence in adult education. The Award is/was given to the organization, which presents/ed the best product of a transnational project in adult learning. Adult education projects with at least one transnational partner are/were eligible to submit a product for the award, such as videos, photographs, books, power point presentation, slides, posters, and similar visual media. Indeed, any product accessible to the public, presented in a comprehensible way, and useful and/or transferable to others is/was eligible to participate in this competition.

The Grundtvig Award for the year 2005 focused on Active

Citizenship in a democratic society.

Active citizenship can be defined as citizens taking opportunities to become actively and democratically involved in defining and tackling the problems of their communities and improving the quality of their life.

Many people have problems or feel too inhibited to participate actively in society.

There are many ways and activities to motivate them:

- to learn about their rights and duties as a citizen
- to value prior learning and experiences which results in more self-esteem
- to become involved in environmental issues in the community and beyond
- to engage in further learning about their position in society
- to help migrants to be included
- to learn about intercultural issues
- to bring different generations together to learn from each other and/or work together
- to explore ways of advocacy to promote learning for disabled people
- to establish a new life on their own
- to work for social inclusion in a multicultural society
- to break down barriers between residents and foster a sense of belonging through community involvement

and volunteering

- to provide and then support services, independent of public authorities, for hard-to-reach groups
- to commit themselves to work in their community
- to commit themselves to working for gender equality

Of course this list is not exhaustive and there are many more examples of how to be an active citizen and what it means to be actively involved in a democratic society.

Organizations active in adult learning were invited to submit their contributions.

Transnational projects or initiatives on active citizenship involving at least three countries were eligible.

Additionally a special Prize was announced for an outstanding out-of-Europe project focusing on the same issue.

A short but clear presentation of the project was required:

- What were the main goals of the project?
- What was done and how?
- Who was (were) the target group(s)?
- What was special about the way of working and what processes or partnerships were important?
- Which aspects of active citizenship were focused on?
- How were people involved?

- What was the impact for the participating organizations and the target group(s)?
- How was success recognized and tracked?
- What has been learned from this piece of work – what would be done the same again or differently next time?
- Would the project work without partners from other countries?

Finally, the special impact of the project had to be highlighted – the so called “wow” effect. Contributions could be presented in all European languages.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Grundtvig Award 2005 was celebrated in Lillehammer, within the framework of EAEA General Assembly and International Conference. It was hosted by Mr Audun Tron, Mayor of the County of Oppland.

The prizes were presented by Mr. Janos Sz. Toth, president of EAEA and Ms Margarida Gameiro, Deputy Head of Cabinet of Ján Figel, Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Multilingualism.

*3<sup>rd</sup> GRUNDTVIG AWARD WINNER 2005*



The Grundtvig Award 2005 went to the project 'Raccontare l'Europa' (Narrating on Europe), co-ordinated by the UPTER, Università Popolare di Roma with partners from Belgium, Germany, Italy and Spain.

**Raccontare l'Europa**

Submitting organization : UPTER Università Popolare di

Roma

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The general aim of the project is to bring together institutions working in the field of adult education and the cultivation of memory. These include both archives of personal writing (diaries, autobiographies, letters), and organizations in adult education which carry out educational activities through the medium of the short story and personal writing. We believe first of all that the possibility of these important institutions working together in research and educational activities constitutes an enormous contribution to the building of shared historical knowledge which starts from the real stories of people who have lived and currently live in Europe.

Telling one's story is a great opportunity for citizens to take active participation in the creation of knowledge; an opportunity for the subject to "take the floor", which is essential to active citizenship and without which no citizenship is possible.

Personal stories, written, read, studied and shared give concreteness to what is at the heart of democracy: valuing

the individual, and paying due attention to diversity.

We realised that the value of working with institutions that cultivated memory would give us our specific objective. It seemed important that the primary topic of the research project "Telling Stories of Europe" should be to highlight those experiences and personal events which give form and substance to our "feeling European". And this relates to all the possible meanings which the idea of Europe takes on for people: political and economic (The Europe of the Union) cultural, artistic, geographic, etc.

One of the questions we worked on helps us to understand this specific objective better: *"What events in our lives have contributed to creating a sense of Europe in us? And what does this sense of Europe consist of?"*

We looked for traces of such experiences and such thoughts in people's personal writing and stories, depending on the different competences and specific skills and talents that each partner in the project was able to contribute. The research was carried out, on the one hand in the memory archives, where we found writings from when Europe "did not yet exist", because these were often things written before the advent of the Union, on the other hand we looked for – and we continue to do so – real stories of individuals who "feel European", using interviews and collections of live stories.

We are discovering during this process a fascinating “invisible Europe”, which corresponds to the experiences which give rise to the sense of Europe: trips, friendships, job-seeking, love stories... experiences which are absolutely personal and which emerge from participation in the great historical and political events which have swept Europe.

For more information, please contact:

[www.europestories.org](http://www.europestories.org)

*3<sup>rd</sup> SPECIAL GRUNDTVIG AWARD WINNER 2005*



The special award went to a project submitted by the Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME), Beit Jala, Palestina.

The project is entitled ‘Learning each other’s historical narrative: Palestinians and Israelis’

## **Learning each other's historical narrative: Palestinians and Israelis**

Submitting organization: PRIME (Peace Research Institute in the Middle East)

Address: Beit Jala, P.O. Box 7 , PNA

Phone: 975-522-834-165 972-507-814823

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This project of the Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME) focuses on teachers and schools as the critical force over the long term for changing deeply entrenched and increasingly polarized attitudes on both sides of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The goal of the project is to "disarm" the teaching of Middle Eastern history in Israeli and Palestinian classrooms.

Specifically, teams of Palestinian and Israeli teachers and historians will develop parallel historical narratives of the Israeli and Palestinian communities, translate them into Hebrew and Arabic, and test their use together in both Palestinian and Israeli classrooms. Unlike other projects that are limited to revising existing Israeli and Palestinian texts, the PRIME project aims at engaging teachers on both sides

in an entirely new collaborative process for teaching the history of the region.

At this stage in their polarized history there is not enough common ground for Israelis and Palestinians to create a single historical narrative. Rather, the project is designed to expose students in each community to the other's narrative of the same set of events. For the first time, students in each school system (beginning with 15 and 16 year olds) will not only learn what shapes their own community's understanding of historical events, but be required to confront the historical perspectives and contexts that shape the other community's sense of reality.

The project may, at a later stage, develop multiple narratives of events within each community, reflecting the fact that neither the Palestinians nor the Israelis have a monolithic view regarding the history of the region. The goal, in other words, is not necessarily to create a single "bridging" historical narrative that is shared in common by both communities, but to break down stereotypes and build more nuanced understandings by the next generation of citizens of the two states in the region: Israel and the future Palestinian State.

For more information, please contact:

[www.vispo.com/PRIME](http://www.vispo.com/PRIME)

## *JURY MOTIVATION*

### **3rd GRUNDTVIG AWARD 2005**

#### **Active Citizenship for a Democratic Society. Making an invisible Europe visible.**

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has decided to declare the year 2005 the "European Year of Citizenship through Education"

The European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) called for projects in "Active Citizenship in a Democratic Society" for this year's Grundtvig-Award.

The deadline for submissions was 10th October.

We have received twenty-four tenders from fourteen countries, amongst which we received twenty-one from eleven countries in Europe. Two countries, Romania and Spain submitted four tenders each. From outside Europe there were three countries worth mentioning: Israel, India

and the USA.

The selection and assessment was carried out by a panel consisting of the following people:

- Arne Carlsen, Denmark
- Isabel Garcia-Longoria Serrano, Spain
- Roma Juozaitiene, Lithuania
- Jumbo Klerq, The Netherlands
- Monika Oels, Germany
- Janos Sz. Tóth, Hungary

The Grundtvig Award 2005 goes to the project '**Raccontare l'Europa**' (Narrating Europe), co-ordinated by UPTER, Università Popolare di Roma with partners from Belgium, Germany, Italy and Spain.

The project brings together institutions working in the field of adult education and cultivation of memory. Based on a common working methodology, the participants produced autobiographical pieces, carried out interviews and collected people's personal writing. The way the project was put together was by "telling stories of Europe", in order to highlight personal experiences and events which subjectively give form and substance to "feeling European".

Out of all the valuable tenders submitted, the panel decided

to give the award to the project named 'Narrating on Europe' for the following reasons:

- It presents an original and innovative approach, by starting with very personal experiences of story telling and then by developing more general concepts from those personal experiences
- The method of telling one's story creates a great opportunity to have active participation of citizens in the creation of knowledge, an opportunity for the subject to "take the floor", which is essential to activate citizens, and without which no citizenship is possible.
- It concentrates on essential aspects of democracy, the need to value the individual and to give due attention to diversity
- It promotes a sense and feeling of European citizenship which is not just economic or political, but, above all, emotional and cultural.
- It gives space to people of different age and social backgrounds (24-80), it is a kind of method of self-study.
- It offers the chance to focus on and present an opportunity for people to express themselves on a Europe which is often "invisible"

Secondly, we are giving a special award to a project submitted by the Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME), Beit Jala, Palestine. The project is entitled **'Learning each other's historical narrative: Palestinians and Israelis'**

The PRIME's partners are: the Georg Eckert Institute Germany and the American University's Centre for Global Peace, (US)

There are common textbooks written about common historical events; the impact of these when they are applied in education are discussed by Palestinian and Israeli academics. The target groups are primary school and high school history teachers, university teachers and students. It is aimed at 15-16-year-olds. The five-year project produced three booklets, distributed in seven Israeli and seven Palestinian schools and in schools attended by Palestinian and Israeli pupils. The project focused on developing critical thinking in education. The aim was to help teachers and students become aware of the different respective narratives and understand the complexity of social and political reality. Out of all the valuable tenders submitted, the panel decided to give the award to the Palestinian-Israeli project for the following reasons:

- The project is special because of the idea of two narratives that equally represent both sides of the conflict. It proves that in spite of the ongoing violent conflict, and in spite of the tremendous obstacles, the sides involved can develop enough trust and hope that they are able to co-operate, and jointly create a product that may promote peaceful co-existence between both sides in the future.
- The group process affected the teachers' attitude and behaviour so that they became more open-minded and inclusive towards the feelings and attitude of the teachers from the other side. Hundreds of pupils from both sides were exposed for the first time to the other side's narrative.
- The idea of two narratives in conflicting situations is a new idea and we imagine that it will have many more applications in different parts of Europe and the rest of the world, as well as applying to different aspects of ethnic, social and religious conflicts.

Prof. Bar-On and Prof. Adwan, the two co-ordinators of the projects say that writing the booklets was often emotional. "One man's hero was another man's terrorist," says Adwan.

### *GRUNDTVIG AWARD 2005 PROJECT CONTRIBUTIONS*

Twenty-five projects from Poland, Romania, Denmark, Spain, The Netherlands, Lithuania, Germany, Italy, Ireland, England, France, Austria, Israel, Palestine, USA and India were submitted for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grundtvig Award 2005.

The diversity of topics the projects deal with shows how broad the definition of active citizenship can be and proves that active involvement in society means much more than just being aware of political systems and voting procedures.

The projects show clearly that active citizenship starts on the "doorstep", in one's own community. A large number of the projects deal with the social inclusion of marginalized groups, such as prisoners, the deaf/hearing impaired people, migrants, unemployed and retired people. To be an active citizen means, in relation to these projects, to learn from each others experiences, and to understand each other

through personal contact and exchange of ideas, to face prejudices and to oppose and eliminate them, to help others to integrate, but also to be open to new cultures, mindsets, and opinions; and to commit oneself.

Active citizenship cannot be learned, but can be explained and brought closer. Therefore citizenship education as education for democracy plays a vital role in the development of European unity, mutual understanding and in building a "European" identity amongst its people. Some projects highlight the importance of such education. But it is not only democratic principles, awareness of citizen's rights and obligations which are needed to become active in our society. Self-confidence and awareness of one's own capabilities are two of the basic principles for active involvement as one of the projects shows. We continue to learn throughout our whole life, not only at school and university, but every day. No one can force us to be active, but the projects demonstrate how to encourage and motivate active involvement through encounters and self knowledge.

The contributions show how important such experiences are, brought about through exchanges and personal contacts. Intercultural communication are the key words that can be traced in all the projects; Intercultural learning is the basis of active citizenship and, of course, active citizenship cannot

be considered separately from its political implications.

To be an active citizen also means to be active at a political level, to take part in elections, to know one's rights and obligations in society and to know how to use this knowledge. The importance of being an active citizen through active involvement in political issues is especially visible in regions of Europe where conflicts and wars are part of daily reality. Significantly, these projects stressed the importance of face-to-face contacts which allow bridges to be built.

In view of the project contributions, we would venture to say that active citizenship is only possible through such encounters which lead to more integration, understanding and collaboration.

Together we can be strong to support a common Europe, from large to very small communities, through protection of the environment, integration of the disabled, the defence of women's rights and civic education.

We can be active everywhere and we should be active together – this is the motto of the project contributions submitted for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grundtvig Award 2005.

Below, you will find short summaries of each project.

We would like to thank all participating organizations for their great contributions and are sure that all these

initiatives will provide inspiration for many future projects.

*PROJECT CONTRIBUTIONS:*

**Inigualdad de oportunidades – Prevención de la violencia contra las mujeres. Proyecto WOW**

Submitting Organization: Centro de Educación de Personas Adultas

“Juan José Lorente” – Zaragoza

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If women's work is neither recognised nor valued, if they are made to think that their opinion is not important, if sexist language is used when talking about them; if they receive lower salaries; if the media treats them as sexual objects; if they feel afraid to walk alone; if they do not feel free, then they are experiencing violence. It is a violence that is based on the superiority of one gender over the other, men placing themselves above women. The project of the Centro de Educación de Personas Adultas is based on these facts. In relation to this mistreatment, educating people on the need for equality between men and women is very important. Although we are convinced of the need to educate children in primary and secondary schools about the prevention of violence, the non-verbal image of women in families has to be changed as well. People start to understand the structure of society in the family where they begin to learn and socialise. Children therefore need to learn from the beginning about equality, bearing in mind the fact that children will become parents in the future. Towards this aim, the organization "Juan José Lorente" came up with the necessary elements for people to make a personal analysis

of their own situation and help them to draft their own individual, social and/or work selection on the basis of an equality plan:

1. To increase and develop a person's abilities, and to increase their self-reliance and freedom, also to encourage in them the capacity to participate in the social, cultural, politic and economic life of the district, town, city, etc.
2. To discover the participation as an equal is a right and a duty.
3. To present all the possibilities of participation in real relationships in different environments: groups, institutions and organizations.
4. To sensitize, to create bridges of approach, work, valorization and mutual respect.
5. To create instruments of communication and interrelation in equality.
6. To reread cultural patterns from an equality perspective.
7. To discover as they affect and they condition the roles of the generations, so that it is generated a will of opening and amplitude of sights.

For more information, please contact:

[www.centros6.pntic.mec.es/cea.jj.lorente/](http://www.centros6.pntic.mec.es/cea.jj.lorente/)

**Apprenons ensemble à préserver la nature – il n'est pas encore trop tard; Une Ecole Verte.**

Submitting Organization: Ecole N: 4 „Elena Donici Cantacuzino“

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This project from Romania focused very intensively on the participation of each inhabitant to work together for a cleaner environment. The basic idea was to inspire the whole community to participate in actions which would enhance awareness of ecological problems and find solutions for the future. This idea is based on mutual respect so that everyone takes care of nature for themselves and for following generations.

The movement started with the children of 3 schools in Dambovita, which remain in close partnership, to give a good example to the adults. At the beginning, the representatives of the 3 schools met to analyse the state of the environment and to decide what course of action they would take. Representatives of the students and the parents, educational specialists and organizations dealing with similar topics were also invited. Even the local

authorities were informed.

The children were taught to understand the problems of the environment and to develop strategies to save nature. Towards this aim, they started first of all to clean their class rooms and the school. A competition for "the cleanest classroom" was initiated. The children planted flowers and trees in the school garden and in some areas of the community. These ecological themes were also implemented in other subjects such as geography or physics. Some cleaning was done in the city's park and in tourist areas. These actions were followed by a presentation for the people who lived there. Questionnaires and discussions with local people proved the success of this project.

### **Digital Dialogues. Networking Community Media**

Submitting organization: Pädagogische Hochschule Freiburg

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The project addressed key questions for adult education in Europe: the development of self-confidence and self-

determination in educational pathways for adult learners from socially disadvantaged groups as well as for those who, due to their local situation, have difficulty in gaining access to adult education programmes; and the development of new teaching methodologies (including ODL) to enhance these groups' involvement in broadcasting, new technologies and adult education provision. To gain a longer lasting impact, one focus was on training trainers. So the adult learners from disadvantaged groups were at the same time "trainees" and, through the incorporation of their feedback, "evaluators" of the teaching and learning. The focus of the outcome was also on providing curricula and training aids for trainers, especially handbooks of good practice (see: [www.digital-dialogues.de](http://www.digital-dialogues.de))

Further actions were initiated, especially for people, who have difficulty in gaining access to the media. The aim was to learn how to deal with media, how to use it, to learn to be critical and to know how to use it for yourself and your social group. The activities were "Mothers and daughters learn about the internet", "Soundcheck" (a project which offered young bands the possibility to record their music and to link with other bands), the webpage "soundnezz.de", and collaboration with the radio stations of Freiburg, Sunderland and Vienna. Socially disadvantaged groups actually did develop their digital and communicative skills by using new

technology and gained self-confidence and self-reliance. Migrants became involved in broadcasting, unemployed people produced radio reports, young adults between the ages of 16-25 who were at risk of social marginalisation got involved in internet radio, and some women set up their own website.

For more information, please contact: [www.digital-dialogues.de](http://www.digital-dialogues.de)

### **The new Opportunity**

Submitting Organisation: Centro de Educación de Personas Adultas "San Martín de la Vega"

Address: C/ Maestro Rodrigo 2. 28330 San Martín de la Vega. Madrid, Spain

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Fax: 0034 91 894 72 00

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The project "The new Opportunity" focused on students aged up to 35 years who have no basic education and/or who had bad experiences in their school life. They all have in common the desire to seek a new opportunity to re-gain self-esteem and self-confidence through education and their own capabilities.

The participants discovered that they were capable of developing skills such as communicating in English, working on a computer, and talking about the culture and traditions of their village and country which proved to be important for their contribution to the group work. In addition, they realized that there are many people in other European countries that are interested in widening their knowledge, in sharing experiences and in getting to know each other. The students improved their knowledge of ICT and English conversation. In this way they were able to find out about other countries, cultures, teaching methods etc. To achieve these aims, English language courses were organized as well as some workshops to supply information about Madrid and about Spain in general. To learn more about Spanish culture relating to its history, traditional dishes etc. learning methods using the internet were implemented. The participants were told about some web pages where they could find this information. The students had to search for pictures and information about Spanish traditions (history, gastronomy, folklore etc.) and the best articles were showed in a Power Point Presentation. An intensive cooperation with Slovenia was accompanied by an internet forum, which linked the participants from different countries and allowed them to get to know the other people studying on the project and enabled travel exchanges between students.

For more information, please contact: [www.lu-velenje.si](http://www.lu-velenje.si)

## **A wealth for Europe**

Submitting organization: Europahaus Burgenland – Institut für politische Bildung

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Insights extracted from various European initiatives show that civic education in and for Europe is being carried out in very different ways:

- 1 on the one hand by striving to equip citizens with the necessary rights and instruments empowering them to exercise their role as citizens of the EU;
- 2 on the other hand by providing training, education, qualifications and information, which empower them to exercise their current rights in this new European context.

However, in carrying out the above, the respective actors or institutions, like citizens' initiatives and adult education programmes, do not enter in an extensive dialogue between

themselves. This communication is exactly what this project is aiming at: provoking such a dialogue between different positions and various potentials of such actors, and making it bear fruit for a European political discourse.

### **Several objectives**

- 1 To start a European discourse, which involves people who are concerned with and committed to democracy in Europe as demonstrated by their practical work in either research or education.
- 2 To launch a European network of "Study Circles" (or other local forms of structured reflection and learning), beginning with - but not limited to - existing experiences of projects and partnerships, in order to organize process of reflection at a European level.
- 3 To review different initiatives for their European quality and orientation, either on a political or on an educational basis (even verifying the thesis that many projects, although claiming to be "European" are rather "universalistic" ones - like democracy, human rights, well being etc. - and as such don't contribute to clarifications that are specifically "European").
- 4 Even to test the thesis that educational initiatives at a European level may well contribute to some emotional feeling of being European, but that they stop short and remain vague, without any sufficiently developed

political dimensions and participation programs

**Activities:**

- 1 To organize several "study circles" - or other small reflection and learning groups - in different countries simultaneously and with similar materials and questions. These groups discuss and document their discussions concerning fundamental questions regarding civic education and political rights as well as practical approaches and strategic issues.
- 2 To link up these different study groups and to exchange their work and results and so to build up a trans-national discourse community and to diffuse their results.
- 3 To organize a common conference and to enable the members of different groups to meet personally, to present their work for more scientific debate, and finally to inform the larger public opinion.

For more information, please contact:

<http://www.europahausburgenland.net>

## **Active Citizenship through Education of Adults**

Submitting organization: Area Centre for Education of Adults

Hateg

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The Romanian Project: « Active Citizenship through the Education of Adults » is the continuity of the project: "Dunare Crisis Mures Tisa DKMT" which took place between 2001 and 2004. The aim was to contribute to the Balkan Stability and was projected in three countries: Romania, Hungary and Serbia-Montenegro.

They focused on engaging trainers to develop permanent centres of education and intercultural cooperation in order to support Romania's membership of the European Union by linking the programmes of the three countries. One special aspect was to start research on the needs of the Euro region and human resources in order to develop the Education Centres in the right direction. It was important to discover what each country could offer in a specific economic area and to see how this corresponded to the European Market. The project's content and its results will be published in a documentary booklet in three languages.

The project is based on workshops, seminars, documentary visits in the partner countries and one country from the European Union.

## **Bridging Community Colleges**

Submitting organization: Association for Community Colleges

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Fax: +45 7363 0023

Email: [office@acc.eu.org](mailto:office@acc.eu.org)

The ultimate goal of the Association for Community Colleges is very ambitious. It is to develop a European (transnational) public sphere. The main strategy and the core idea of the ACC is that a unique way of promoting this objective would be through the establishment of European Community Colleges at a common European level and all over Europe. To this end, the ACC combines policy work, lobbying, networking and research together with the actual delivery of European Community College courses for European participants who discuss issues of common (European) interest.

The uniqueness of the ACC method lies in combining the formal, non-formal and informal aspects of learning and placing the three of them into the framework of residential

community colleges where everyone is a learner and a teacher at the same time. Apart from acquiring knowledge and skills that enable them to participate as active citizens at a local, national and transnational level, the participants create a sample European public sphere where they practice the art of co-citizenship – learning and living together while being enriched rather than hindered by diversity.

The ACC defines European Community Colleges as schools that:

- 1 take their starting point from an idea and an objective that is defined by a non-governmental group of citizens running the school,
- 2 have as their ideal boarding-school courses that last for a longer period of time (preferably at least one month),
- 3 organize courses on topics of common (European) interest in accordance with the idea of the group running the school,
- 4 are “governed by culture” in the sense that life at the individual schools should be influenced by local traditions and culture,
- 5 have mixed groups of European adults as their target group; adults who are interested in learning and also in paying part of the courses themselves.

For more information, please contact: [www.acc.eu.org](http://www.acc.eu.org)



## **European Intercultural Competence Programme – EICP**

Submitting organization: Deutsches Institut für  
Erwachsenenbildung DIE

Address: Friedrich Ebert Allee 38, 53113 Bonn, Germany

Phone: +49/228/3294 – 256/324

Fax: +49 228/ 32 94 – 399

Email: [gruenhage-monetti@die-bonn.de](mailto:gruenhage-monetti@die-bonn.de)

The European Intercultural Competence Programme EICP focused on the civil dialogue among public services, voluntary organizations and ethnic minorities at individual and institutional levels. The aim was to bring together service providers and community leaders and activists from migrant/ethnic minorities in order to facilitate and promote partnerships, intercultural learning, confidence building and mutual trust to contribute to social cohesion.

To achieve these aims, teaching concepts, experience, models and examples of activities were shared. Trainers

were taught to foster intercultural dialogue and give advice on this issue. The cultural competence of public services, NGOs and representatives of ethnic communities were improved, also migrant/ethnic organizations learned to represent the interests of their community more effectively. The target groups were NGOs, ethnical minorities, migrants and representatives of local administrations.

Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung- DIE focused on the three main issues and beneficiaries referred to in the application and developed three training schemes:

- 1 Civil Dialogue (CD) for local administration staff and representatives of migrant and ethnic organizations
- 2 Organizational Development of Migrant/Ethnic Organizations (ODEO)
- 3 Train-the-Trainers for Adult Educationalists (TTAE)

With the CD-training scheme, DIE were reacting to the growing openness of local governments towards migration and integration issues. CD addresses the majority of the numerous local governments in Germany- which have not yet started a process of intercultural organizational development, but are interested in intercultural training for their own staff.

With the ODEO-training scheme, DIE were responding to the need for improving the managerial competence of migrant/ethnic organizations, which had emerged in

previous researches. For the ODEO-scheme, existing training was adapted to the specific aims of the EICP project, enabling migrant/ethnic organizations to interact professionally with local governments. TTAE ensured sustainability by training experienced practitioners to deliver the CD-scheme.

For more information, please contact: <http://www.die-bonn.de>

## **Firstly the Citizen**

Submitting organization: Association of German Popular Universities

Address: 19 Jules Michelet St., Ap. 1, Bucharest – 1 010462, Romania

Phone: (+40-21) 310 12 22; 318 56 66

Fax: (+40-21) 314 77 78

Email: [iiz@iiz-dvv.ro](mailto:iiz@iiz-dvv.ro)

In the pilot phase of the project, a network of community trainers in 20 localities was created to teach them about matters concerning the principles of democracy, citizen rights and obligations, as well as the Romanian legislative framework related to transparency in public administration

and participation of citizens in the decision making process. They were taught about the advantages of active participation in community life. A strong collaboration was set up with Germany, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and the Association Pro Democracy to exchange experiences.

Two national seminars attended by 20 people were organized. In the first seminar, issues concerning representative and participative democracy, citizens' rights and obligations were presented, teachers were also trained to acquire skills related to citizen involvement in community life and solving their problems.

The second seminar aimed at training participants as a human resource, trainers for the community, so that they could disseminate information more thoroughly that had already been acquired and provide expertise concerning the involvement of citizens in solving problems and in the decision making process.

In connection with that educational process, a network of community trainers was created, whose main objective was to circulate all the information the participants learned about.

For more information, please contact: [www.iiz-dvv.ro](http://www.iiz-dvv.ro)

## **Jugendliche und Medien**

Submitting organization: Kinderfreunde Mühlviertel

Address: Gewerbestraße 7, A – 4222 St. Georgen, Austria

Phone: 0043 7237 2465 14

Fax: 0043 7237 2465 19

Email: [andrea.wahl@kinderfreunde.cc](mailto:andrea.wahl@kinderfreunde.cc)

This project, which took place in Austria, brought children from different countries together to learn about media.

They all came with different pre-suppositions, some of them had never used with photo- or video cameras, some of them already knew how to use the internet. The aim was to learn about the media in general, such as news magazines, video, taking photographs, creating radio broadcasts. The special learning focus was always the theme of racism. Placing that subject at the centre of the seminar resulted in many interesting discussions taking place with the children. The Intercultural Learning was achieved by mixing people from different countries within the groups. They spoke together in English; children of the same nationality spoke their national language. It was a big success, learning about other countries and their people, hearing about other cultures,

values and attitudes. This proves that children are interested in knowing more about the European Union and about being anti-racist human beings.

The participants had the opportunity to try different media; they could create their own unique radio broadcast. Two special highlights of the project were the visits of the Austrian Television ORF and the Radio Station FRO.

For more information, please contact: [www.kinderfreunde.cc](http://www.kinderfreunde.cc)

## **Active Involvement in Civic National and European Activities of Aged or Newly Retired People**

Submitting organization: Sc Info Project SRL – International Centre for Adult Education.

Address: 5 Transilvania Street, 430253 Baia Mare, Romania

Phone: +40 744 808 765

Fax: +40 262 220 896

Email: [mariana.hudrea@alphanet.ro](mailto:mariana.hudrea@alphanet.ro)

The project is based on the importance of doing something for retired teachers who, after many years spent among young people, suddenly feel excluded and isolated. Helping retired people to develop skills and competencies means helping them remain active after retirement, regain their self esteem and prolong their life by getting involved in community projects. Some coordinating teams established several goals to follow and pursue:

- 1 Promoting life long learning and enhancing the potential of individuals to facilitate the social integration of aged people who are preparing to retire or for newly retired people
- 2 Developing new skills to deal with the problems of modern society
- 3 Promoting key skills in the management of social life
- 4 Exchanging experience and the knowledge of staff through network development
- 5 Helping the target groups acquire new skills in project management and active European citizenship
- 6 Acquiring skills and competencies meant to help retired people to set up their projects for professional and self-development.

Throughout the duration of the two-year project, over 200 people aged between 35-76, from different professions, became involved. Partnerships with the country and local authorities in all partner countries have been established. Universities, colleges and NGOs interested in working with adults have been involved.

The participants learnt how to use a computer and how to look up information on Internet. At the end of the first year a magazine was published in electronic and paper format:

[www.multinet.ro/international-projects/](http://www.multinet.ro/international-projects/)

An international magazine was published and is also available in electronic format at: [www.infoproject.nvn.ro](http://www.infoproject.nvn.ro)

Other activities arising from this project could be mentioned; one of them is that a group of teachers wrote a project with the help of the G2Active coordinators, which was submitted to the local authorities and received finance for a year. Through the project they succeeded in organising a class for children hosted by the Tuberculosis Hospital of Baia Mare.

The climax was reached during the last meeting organized in Baia Mare, in May 2004.

An International Conference was organized on that occasion in partnership with Baia Mare Local Council, Petre Dulfu Country Library and the Association of Retired People – CASPEV. All the participants were involved and they shared their ideas on education and on cultural aspects of their

countries.

For more information, please contact:

[www.infoproject@nvn.ro](mailto:www.infoproject@nvn.ro) or/and <http://uprd.blogspot.com>

## **Apreciar la Diferencia**

Submitting organisation: Fundación Belén

Address: Plaza Pintor Sorolla, 4 Madrid 28010, Spain

Phone : 00 34 91 448 39 40

Email : [info@fundacionbelen.org](mailto:info@fundacionbelen.org)

This is an educational project which aims to improve the integration of disabled students in schools. The innovative aspect is the starting hypothesis which is to see integrative education as a benefit not only for disabled students, but also and in particular for all students. The project looked for a way to prove this hypothesis.

To prove this and as a basis for investigation, a psycho-social investigation has been set up among adolescent students attending integrated schools in three similar villages; similar as to their social characteristics (rural area, 150 kilometres distance from a big city, population between 5.000 and 20.000 inhabitants.) This has been carried out in the three countries involved in the project. In total, 1483 investigations were made among non disabled adolescent students.

The aim of the project "Apreciar la diferencia" is to value the advantages of integrative education with non disabled students, by means of comparative data about the same situation: the socio-educational integration of disabled students. Also an objective study using reliable public data (OECD, Eurostat, Eurobarometer, European Observatory of Disabilities) concerning some social and integration indicators was prepared to show a correlation between the true situation reflected in the investigation and the actual

integration policy (49 pages) of the three countries concerned.

Throughout the different phases of the project, the following points could have proved to be indicative of a very active citizenship:

42The interest of teachers in the starting hypothesis

43The interest of the students who were very willing to put together this investigation although the time they needed to collate the answers was their own free time

44The excellent results of the received data.

45The discovery of the need to improve the scope of personal relationships between students and teachers

The need to develop new integration tools as school materials to be made freely available.

In total, the project is 250 pages long with 50 pages of database. But the clearest result that we can draw in conclusion is the reality of the starting hypothesis: the coexistence during the adolescent stage of students with different capabilities helps them all to improve their lives as human beings.

For more information, please contact:

[www.mec.es/educa/leonardo/actividades/Socrates\\_Leonardo\\_20\\_12\\_04/pdf\\_doc/fundacion\\_belen21\\_12\\_2004.ppt](http://www.mec.es/educa/leonardo/actividades/Socrates_Leonardo_20_12_04/pdf_doc/fundacion_belen21_12_2004.ppt)



## **Developing of good Practice and Sharing Experiences with Marginalized Groups**

Submitting organization: CEPA Dulce Chacon CP Madrid VI

Address: Carretera Nacional 400 Km 28, 28300 Aranjuez – Madrid, Spain

Phone: +34 918099095/96

Fax: +34 918099047

Email: [vertigomuerte@yahoo.com](mailto:vertigomuerte@yahoo.com)

The project developed by the school of the Dulce Chacon, in a prison in Madrid, has been carried out by the inmate students of the prison.

“One of our main goals is to help people to go back into society with dignity and all the possible skills they can develop, with our aid, in order to be able to start a new life away from drugs, crime and also, to live with the possible illnesses many of them may have, mostly due to their contact with drugs”.

The target group is clearly people who are in prison because of crimes they have committed at some time in their lives, who may have contracted a life-threatening disease (AIDS) or who may have had experiences with drugs. They felt important and happy to be supported by other people and to

be able to help other people through their own experiences. At a European level, partners in this project are Finland and Scotland; in this new course that has already started, France has also been included. The main goals were:

1. To enable the students to share experiences with people of all ages. They have a lot of important experiences that can help a lot of other people that may have contact with the highly dangerous world of drugs.
2. To share a love of life and to stress the importance of being strong and hopeful fighting day after day to improve their lives and to be happy.
3. To share the necessity and value of studying.
4. To learn from others what they can then share with us.
5. To learn from teachers' experiences when working with marginalized groups.
6. To motivate our students to keep on studying.
7. To create a safety net while so sharing their experiences.
8. To make the work mostly audio-visual mostly, so anyone could understand them.

In order to achieve this, the following steps were taken:

1. The students were made aware of the significance of what they were about to do and share.

2. They were asked to think about what aspect of their lives they wanted to share with other people and to write a composition.
3. Some teachers would read the compositions and would categorise them according to their topics.
4. A short guide was prepared to show what was going to be used from their compositions, to make images
5. Pictures were drawn based on the guide.
6. ICT equipment was used to create the images they wanted to produce.

**Enhancing guidance and counseling services delivered to families of children and young people with hearing impairment.**

Submitting organization: Sensory Inclusion Service Borough of Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire County Council.

Address: The Globe Centre, Glebe Street, Wellington, Telford, TF1 1JP, England

Phone: +44 1952 522 660

Fax: +44 1952 522 661

E-mail: [andrew.broughton@telford.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.broughton@telford.gov.uk)

The key purpose of the project was: to share and develop expertise on the part of those who counsel and support the parents and carers of young people who are deaf/hearing impaired in order to facilitate a smooth transition to adulthood and a high quality of life.

- 1 To develop counselling and support skills through participating in and observing the work of the project partners

- 2 To carry out a trans-national survey in the partner countries by questionnaire and direct contact with families supported by each partner of their views on services received
- 3 Based on the above two bullet points, to draw up action plans for each partner service in order to improve long-term support delivered to young people who are deaf/hearing impaired and who are in transition to adult life

The project had a one-year duration: August 2003 to August 2004. Visits were arranged by staff in the partner agencies to each partner service. Initially a Project action plan was devised to ensure that visits were highly focused in order to enhance skills for the benefit of the client group. In addition, a trans-national questionnaire was devised and translated into the three languages. The returns from these produced a huge amount of data, which was analyzed and compared with other worldwide literature in the field from which a substantial report and action and improvement plan was devised. In addition, in each partner country consultation conferences were held with deaf/hearing impaired young people and their families to enable discussion to take place as to how services delivered could be improved, particularly in relation to supporting the young

people in transition to adult life. The report produced from the survey (both questionnaire and consultation conferences) has been adopted by each partner service to inform their planning and development over the next few years. The project is having a direct long-term impact on services delivered to the client group ie: deaf/hearing impaired young people in transition to adult life.

For more information, please contact:

<http://www.telford.gov.uk/Health+Social+Care/Child+and+family+care/Sensory+Inclusion+Service.htm>

## **Family Learning the Other Side of the Coin**

Submitting organization: ROC MIDDEN BRABANT

Address: Apenijnenweg 4, 5022 DV, TILBURG, The Netherlands

Phone: +31 135830933

Fax: +31 13 583 0960

Email: [n\\_erradi@rocmb.nl](mailto:n_erradi@rocmb.nl)

The general topic of the Grundtvig 2 "Family Learning" Project is directly related to complete social integration, and the best situation for families. This is an area of debate which is totally linked to social integration and equal opportunities.

The main goal of the project was to make all the participants: trainers, educators, native parents and

immigrant parents aware of the fact that the only way to bring people together to understand each other and to know more about other cultures is to consider the other side of the coin. This project tried to use existing fieldwork centred on family learning which had been organised by the participating countries (NL; FR; PO; and ES) to analyze and understand what the common factors are that emerge which can be cited and used as an example of good practice. As a result it appeared that DIALOGUE turned out to be the key solution to facilitate intercultural learning and the breakdown of barriers between residents, schools, families and social workers.

During this project we have tried to reverse the roles of the trainers; educators became learners in the world of the native and immigrant families. This was a real eye opener. The parents were given the chance to participate in the project and impose their own programme and needs.

These parents who mostly felt that they were not part of society and that they were not participating actively in it have been able to have the opportunity to feel that they really exist; that they are parents with serious responsibilities, whom everyone should respect. The participation of the parents in the activities and in talking about their problems themselves and not via their social workers, doctors, or representatives have awakened a

feeling of pride, self confidence, and trust.

The reaction of the trainers and educators was surprising because they often have their own way of working and making activities and programs FOR the target group and not WITH them. This was an eye opener and could create a new process to embed in the organization of policy and the Curriculum.

So dialogue seems not to be only something that takes place elsewhere, beyond our borders, it has to start here, in Europe itself, in our inner cities, which, all too often are where the seeds of intolerance and prejudice are sown. We must rediscover and draw on our shared cultural heritage with a view to mutual respect and understanding.

For more information, please contact: [www.rocmb.nl](http://www.rocmb.nl)

## **Former sans Exclure**

Submitting organization: ESAN France

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Fax: 0033 3 20 55 10 99

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Encouraging people to participate is anything but easy. The pre-requisite is a favourable basis. The main hurdles remain

lack of motivation and distrust of the State and other statutory agencies. To arouse interest, a project needs to deal with issues that the people concerned would consider fundamental enough to invest time and energy in.

And what would be more important for such people who are in need, the excluded, than to empower themselves and get back some sort of control over their own lives!

How could they possibly get back to employment, to community life, once their working life is over? How could they possibly imagine such a life plan when they only live one day at a time, with no expectation of anything else?

There are many voluntary organisations and social services providing necessary emergency support. However, for people to be helped to find their place in society and for them to be advised on their integration in the community, something more is required.

For people in need, it is important to integrate them into community life, to help them get a job, access to training schemes or to take part in any activity that would give them a recognised position or status in Society. Our project was about exploring innovative ways of social intervention and / or learning schemes that would allow such integration into community life and not only professional integration, so that people in need can find their place and be pro-active citizens. The partner organisations were invited to analyse

their own experiences in terms of learning practices and social service provision. Both formal and informal learning—some that might be considered useless – tried to identify the key elements that people need to succeed (in terms of self-esteem, access to general knowledge, self-expression, etc) that occur on a regular basis. We have therefore explored adult learning schemes, some more, some less formal, that are related to lifelong learning and empowerment. Some of them are considered as pre-requisites prior to any training schemes, so that the motivated person can discover their own abilities to learn, and act as a citizen.

For more information, please contact:

[www.listen.esan.org/off-gen\\_working\\_doc.htm](http://www.listen.esan.org/off-gen_working_doc.htm)

## **Inclusive Practices for Learners with Disabilities**

Submitting organization: CENTRE OF CONTINUING  
EDUCATION

Address: 22/24 Kosciuszki Street, 81-704 Sopot, Poland

Phone: +48 58 5503365

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Email: [urszulahadrych@sopot.pl](mailto:urszulahadrych@sopot.pl)

The aim of the project was to draw the attention of the stakeholders to the educational needs of the hard of hearing, deaf, sand-blind and blind adults.

The IPLD project was inspired by the European Year of People with Disabilities and particularly by its three objectives:

- reinforcing the cooperation between all the parties concerned, namely government at all levels, the private sector, communities, social partners, the voluntary sector, researchers, voluntary sector groups, **people with disabilities** and their families;
- improving communication regarding disability and promoting a positive image of people with disabilities;
- raising awareness of the heterogeneity of people with disabilities and the high level of discrimination facing people with disabilities”.

The partners built a very good local partnership with various organizations including universities; initial courses for teachers were initiated with the help of university specialists. Psychological courses will also be implemented in some organizations providing education for sensorially impaired learners. All the target groups were widely involved at every

stage of the project. They appreciated the recognition of their difficulties and problems and shared European experiences. They learned that some problems which seemed to be insoluble can be solved in another country and the solution can be adapted to local needs.

For more information, please contact: [www.ipld.cku.sopot.pl](http://www.ipld.cku.sopot.pl)

## **Integration with Democracy and Dignity**

Submitting organization: Folkevirke

Address: Niels Hemmingsens Gade 10, 1153 Copenhagen K.  
Denmark

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Fax: +45 39 29 90 77

Email: [folkevirke@folkevirke.dk](mailto:folkevirke@folkevirke.dk)

We considered that most of the migrant citizens living in Italy live here permanently and want their life now and in the future to be in the EU. For this reason we have the right to take part in public life and administration, decisions that affect our citizens' future by establishing rules and laws. So,

we started on our path towards the improvement of citizens' rights. We are working on two levels. First of all, the recognition of the right to vote in administrative elections, which is mainly a political issue: in fact according to the Italian Constitution Titolo V, councils, regions and districts have the right to decide to improve such rights. In addition to this the Strasbourg Convention and the Anci Motion, issued on October 7th, state the same thing. Pisa is following the path that many other types of council have set out upon before; namely Genoa, Venice and Ancona. These have already changed local Statutes. Last February, the 23rd, we started a campaign in San Giuliano: we asked the citizens to sign a petition. The petition will be given to the district administration and it concerns the extension of the right to vote to migrant residents. 2.000 citizens have already signed the petition. We are also working inside each council to push the Council of Pisa to recognise such a right. We are also working to have the so-called additional councillor sit on the city council. This has already been accepted. Next February/March 2006 we should have this representative elected. This step is quite important: migrants would start being inside institutions. The additional councillor would not have the right to vote but he/she could ask for information, raise particular questions, motions, etc. We believe that this fundamental

right to have the right to vote will be finally recognised.

For more information, please contact: [www.kultunaut.com](http://www.kultunaut.com)

## **Learning by Doing**

Submitting organization: Videnscenter for Integration  
(VIFIN, resource Centre for Integration)

Address: Havneparken 2, 7100 Vejle, Denmark.

Phone: +45 7643 2272

e-mail: [ije@vejle.dk](mailto:ije@vejle.dk)

*Learning By Doing* is a two-year project that aims to promote an exchange of information on best practices in integrating immigrants into the local society via teaching the national language as a second language, and through work & cultural orientation training. A survey will be conducted to determine the barriers to teaching and learning a second language, and more importantly, to identify culture, values and language at the workplace. This is intended to serve as a basis for designing better and more effective training programmes.

A total of 7 transnational meetings – cum – sharing sessions were held, which served as venues for the sharing of

experiences among the partners. These meetings enabled teachers to exchange teaching methodologies and designs, and to discuss the challenges of teaching and motivating migrants to learn the national language and build a new life for themselves in their adopted countries.

The partners established a web site: [www.migrants2work.com](http://www.migrants2work.com) ; which serves as a platform for exchanging good models of integration.

The partners developed three sets of survey questionnaires to determine if the migrants' and the teachers' perception of the demands of the labour market matched that of the employers and to identify the factors that hinder effective teaching and learning of a second language. These have been piloted by Denmark and the partners are now conducting the survey in their own areas.

Finally the project has been distributed to organizations and government institutions involved in education and the integration of migrants in the areas where the partner organizations are located.

For more information, please contact:  
[www.migrants2work.com](http://www.migrants2work.com)

**Social Inclusion of Persons Returned from**

## **Imprisonment**

Submitting organization: Elektrenai Centre of Vocational Training

Address: Rungos 18, LT – 26 Elektrenai, Lithuania

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Fax: +370 528 54301

Email: [bronev@one.lt](mailto:bronev@one.lt)

The project “Social inclusion of people released from imprisonment” aims to prepare an educational program which helps ex-prisoners to reintegrate into society and which prevents them from further criminal behaviour. The educational programme would include: development of interpersonal skills, communication skills, job hunting tips, encouragement of entrepreneurship, orientation in the changing labour market, training on the use of information and communication technologies, literacy courses, programmes for psychosocial support and other related topics. The educational program will form an overview of the experience of 4 countries and will also be adaptable for use in other societies. The programme will be prepared to be taught to prisoners and ex-prisoners.

The objectives of the project are, to exchange experiences of social inclusion of prisoners in different countries; - to

learn best practices; - to analyze methodology for the education of prisoners and ex-prisoners used in other countries; - to develop an educational program using the experience of partner countries; - to deepen intercultural dialogue and cooperation; - to encourage lifelong learning; - to disseminate innovation and good practice.

The project team will benefit from the experience of organizations working in other countries; learn best practices; discuss and analyse problems of common interest with colleagues from other countries, find appropriate solutions; apply the experience of other countries to everyday situations; Local communities will benefit from the inclusion of ex-prisoners, as the positive results of the project would mean a safer social environment within the community.

For more information, please contact: [www.iga-bg.org](http://www.iga-bg.org)

## **Green Team**

Submitting organization: Ait na ndaoine

Address: 2 Grange Close, Muirhevnamor, Dundalk co Louth

Phone: 042 9326645

Fax: 0429326646

Mail: [aitnadaoinecd@eircom.net](mailto:aitnadaoinecd@eircom.net)

Muirhevnamor Green Team is an idea about how people living in this area, can create awareness around the environment, with a clear objective of making things better. One of the big issues for people is dumping, we realize this is a problem that has many different reasons and requires a multi-task approach to make things better.

Our pilot project is to be taken on by approximately 12 people; the aim is to focus on Reducing, Reusing and Recycling. Ultimately, in the end, the desired result is to completely do away with the Rubbish bin.

We hope to achieve a pass it on effect, which we believe in time will transform our neighbourhood.

By employing step-by-step approaches, we hope to tackle all environmental issues.

Awareness through positive visible steps and education are the core methods, we intend to use, to get the community to buy into the programme. We are hoping for agreed solutions, to solve our problems.

*SPECIAL GRUNDTVIG AWARD 2005 PROJECT  
CONTRIBUTIONS*

**Development of a learning society**

Submitting Organization: People's Association for Rural  
Development PARD

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Street,

Thasildar Nagar, Madurai – 625 020 INDIA

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Fax: (0452)2533493

Telegram: PARD, Madurai – 20

Email: [pardmadurai@eth.net](mailto:pardmadurai@eth.net)

In spite of innumerable development initiatives, women in India remain marginalized and are commonly addressed as “the disadvantaged group” in our society, because of age-old customs and social taboos. People's Association for Rural Development (PARD) has been promoting the development of a learning society, through a provision of quality and a

comprehensive system, for the past 15 years in the Madurai District of Tamil Nadu, India, with the support of donor agencies in the country and abroad. Through their projects, women have been taking advantage of opportunities and have been actively and democratically involved in defining and tackling the problems of their rural communities and have improved their quality of life.

The main goals were:

- 1 Recognizing the value of the marginalized women groups and their contribution towards social inclusion, solidarity, trust, dialogue and the rights of the individual as a woman;
- 2 Organizing women's groups in various slums and rural pockets scattered in the district and bringing them under the umbrella of PARD;
- 3 Facilitating women's groups formed by PARD to come together to understand mainstream development, and discuss this among themselves;

The women's lives have changed enormously as more women's groups entered the labour force. The change has had inevitable consequences for women's economic empowerment as it strives to meet the changing needs of the women.

Today the targeted women groups have formed co-operative ventures, having boldly faced the challenges of our

contemporary society and have come forward to air their grievances collectively, democratically.

The major accomplishments in this project can be stated as follows:

- 1 Women's Group members have started contesting local Panchayat Elections and have been successful in becoming Ward members in the Corporation.
- 2 Atrocities against women are immediately reported and Women's Group leaders themselves seek legal remedies without the intervention of PARD. They can deal with any emergent situation.
- 3 Women's Group members go to a Police Station themselves directly and courageously report exploitation of women.
- 4 Women's Groups encourage illiterate members to take up Adult Education voluntarily.
- 5 Adults Education is no longer a stigmatized issue in society. Rather it has facilitated the collective development of women's groups locally.
- 6 Access to resources of various kinds has paved the way for participatory development.
- 7 Establishment of a Women's Literacy Centre solely run by Women's Group Members.
- 8 Children of the weaker sections among our

Women's Groups attend Non-Formal Education Centres run by Women's Groups in the respective areas.

9 Women's Group Members are taking care of the development of their own children to ensure that they attend regular schools.

10 Women's Groups have taken on the role of monitoring the situation of all children in school to minimize the number of child labourers in various types of industry.

## **Better Questions, Better Decisions Voter Education Initiative**

Submitting organization: Creative Narrations and the Right Question Project

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*Creative Narrations* is a consulting organization that specializes in multimedia support and training for non-profit and educational institutions. Bringing together narrative, technology, and community building, *Creative Narrations'* mission is to provide organizations with the ability to document and represent the voices and images of change. *Creative Narrations* sees the process of storytelling and skill building as essential to self-discovery, strengthening relationships, and developing democracy.

*Creative Narrations* and *The Right Question Project* focused on the problem, why many of the low-income people in America don't vote in elections. They offered non-profit organizations a new, non-partisan educational strategy with innovative training and multimedia materials to help them engage low-income citizens as voters. The aim was to show the citizens how important their vote and their decisions are for their own life. The target group were adult learners from Arizona and New Hampshire. The material which was used was distributed to social services, community organisations, and adult education networks throughout the United States. The key question was: "What in the daily experience of low income adult learners will allow them to make a connection to the importance of voting?" The people realized that the

impact of decisions starts at a micro level, which the organizations describe as "Micro democracy". The citizens discover the link between the decisions made in these sites and the decisions that emerge from elections in which they traditionally have not participated.

In the workshop "In the Land of Decisions" the participants thought about the decisions made in their daily lives and got more confident to participate in active citizenship. They also learned how to formulate questions. The aim of the second workshop was, to show the people how relevant their own stories are. Following on from that, they recorded their experiences on DVDs, VHS and on the Internet and disseminated them. The combination of the two workshops allowed the people to discover the connections between their lives and policy decisions to proceed later to the next step, voting.

For more information, please contact:

[www.rightquestion.org/betterdecisions](http://www.rightquestion.org/betterdecisions)

*CONTACT INFORMATION OF ORGANISATIONS  
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