

Let's Talk about Sex!

Creative workshop about sexuality in Europe



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ABSTRACT

The main activity of the project "Let's talk about sex! Creative workshop about sexuality in Europe", funded by the Europe for Citizens programme, action 2.3, of the European Commission, has been a workshop on the topic of **sexuality**, seen from the point of view of three main pillars: **education, art&culture and politics**. Its main aim was to improve a sense of European identity analysing, through a creative approach, the private dimension of sexuality and its public aspect in the European citizenship. The project main phases were:

- *Preparation by partners*: Selection of participants (48 in total composed of citizens from 18 to 87 years old) working on gender or sexual issues, and/or artists (amateurs or professionals). Before the workshop, participants prepared a short presentation on sexuality in their countries, based on a research focused on education, art&culture and politics.

- *Creative workshop*: during 8 days, a European creative workshop about sexuality was held in Palermo (Italy). The topic was approached through **seminars, film projections, debates and round tables** which inspired some **artistic workshops: painting&collage, photography and theatre**.



Participants also presented their own national research in an imaginative way, and their countries through intercultural and aphrodisiac dinners. At the end of the workshop, a *Public exhibition* was organised to show the outputs of the creative activities.

The local community of Palermo also participated to this event.

- *Follow up and creation of the dissemination tools:* during the last months of the project, this publication-art book, the CD-ROM and the website have been created and disseminated at local and European level.

WHY A CREATIVE WORKSHOP ABOUT SEXUALITY IN EUROPE?

- Because sex and sexuality are often a taboo in our societies, even if represents a fundamental part of our lives and influences what we are and we would like to be.
- Because Europe is constructed in the base of tolerance and fighting against any kind of discrimination, included gender and sexual orientation. But gender and sexual equality, recognition of rights and non discrimination are still not fully ensured in our countries.
- Because every citizen has the right to be creative and to use its creative thinking to express its ideas, and because interaction through creativity contributes to the intercultural dialogue in Europe.



OBJECTIVES

- Providing citizens with the opportunity to interact and participate--> by making that participants from 17 different countries of the EU could interact and discuss about sexuality, politics, education, arts and culture, and actively participate in the creative workshops.

- Fostering a sense of ownership of the European Union among its citizens--> by fighting against discriminations based on gender, sexual orientation, race, etc., thus making citizens aware about their rights and their power as citizens to integrate minorities in the European Union.

- Enhancing tolerance and mutual understanding between European citizens--> by fostering an intercultural and intergenerational knowledge between participants, raising the awareness about the similarities between European citizens and cultures, and developing a sense of tolerance towards the differences. Workshops and participative seminars contribute to establish a dialogue between them in a creative way.

- Fostering action, debate and reflection--> by organising seminars which make participants reflect together on



issues related to sexuality: gender, sexual orientation and identity, commercialisation of sex, discriminations (homophobia, transphobia, etc.), privileges, role of media, sexual education, public policies and recognition of rights, etc. The debates that followed the seminars led to be more active as citizens in order to avoid discriminations in Europe.

- Encouraging interaction between citizens and civil society organisations from all participating countries--> by organising a workshop in which 24 organisations and 48 citizens interacted during 8 days to construct a tighter Europe and to promote the growing of ties between partners, which foster the creation of new projects and opportunities of interaction.

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS AND COUNTRIES

The project consists of a partnership of 24 civil society organisations from 17 countries: Italy, Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Slovenia, Sweden and United Kingdom.

Partner organisations participating in the project with CE.S.I.E were: CUBIC-Culture and Education in



Context, KVG, Balkan Centre for Regional Development with Human Rights Club, Youth Society for Peace and Development of the Balkans, Duha, Crossing Borders, Continuous Action, Pistes-Solitaires, Forum Femmes Mediterranée, Rodopi School, Youth Human Rights Group, AGEDO Palermo- Associazione di Genitori di Omosessuali, Provocopuscolo, Social Alternative Institute (Institutis Sociālās Alternativas), World at Our Home, Panevezys Margarita Rimkevičaitė Technological School, Youth Day Care Centre, Gabinete de Desenvolvimento Associativo and Cidadania – CMM, Fundacja Pomocy Dzieciom "Gaja", Young partners for Civil Society Development Association, International Youth Initiative Association, The MENA Group and Capture art and creative projects Ltd.

PHASES OF THE PROJECT

Phase 1 - Preparation of the workshop (August - December 2009)

During this first phase the partners identified citizens interested in participating in the workshop between the target: people who worked with gender and/or sexuality issues (teachers, psychologists, sociologists, etc.), representatives of civil society organisations, professional or amateur artists . CE.S.I.E., in cooperation with the partner organisations, coordinated logistics (travel, accommodation and meals) and prepared seminars with experts and trainers. In each partner country, national groups conducted a short research and prepared a presentation on sexuality in their countries, in connection with art&culture, politics and education.

Phase 2 - Workshop on sexuality in Europe (9 - 17 December 2009, Palermo - Italy)

The workshop on sexuality, analysed through a





TRANSFORMING

triple perspective: education, art&culture and politics was held in Palermo with 48 participants plus experts, trainers and support staff, who shared during 8 days their feelings, opinions, experiences and creativity. Specifically, the activities developed were:

- One itinerary seminar on art&culture related to sexuality: participants, split in 5 groups, discovered Palermo looking for answers to the questions posed by experts such as "Is it Palermo male or female?" or "Can you find clear differences between the roles of women and men?". Pictures of each group can be find in www.sexualityineurope.eu

- Two theoretical seminars on education and politics related to sexuality: the key concepts of the project (gender, identity, sex, sex discrimination, education, prejudices, privileges, public policies, sexual exploitation and trafficking, etc..) were analysed with the participants. Active participation was ensured thanks to the in role-play simulations, debates and round tables.

- Presentations on sexuality in European countries through the three basic pillars of sexuality analysed --> national groups presented the results of their researches at a local/national level. These creative presentations led to debates and comparisons between European countries about the culture, sexual education, the way



that sex and sexuality is expressed through art, civil rights and public policies, etc. These presentations are available in www.sexualityineurope.eu.

- Three artistic workshops on painting and collage, theatre and photography: each participant selected on which workshop wanted to participate. For each one of the sessions, experts introduced one of the topics to stimulate reflection on the project issues. The topics selected were: Self-identity, Media, and Citizenship and Human Rights to avoid discrimination.

- Film projection: "The Dreamers" (Bertolucci, 2003) film related topic of sexuality, and after it debate with people from the local community who were invited.

- Intercultural activities --> cultural guided visit of Marineo (Sicily) accompanied by one of the partner organisations "Provocopuscolo" that is actively engaged on promoting citizens' participation in the community; intercultural dinner, in which participants presented their own culture through traditional dishes and drinks, dances and games; aphrodisiac dinner, which permit to discover similarities and differences on what is considered aphrodisiac in each European country.

- Public exhibition of the art works and theatre performance at the end of the workshop, participants invited citizens from Palermo to the exhibition of the works done during all the week. The photography group made a selection of the pictures to be shown either through a projection and in printed version; the painting&collage group had chose to work all together in big canvas

which were exhibited in the workshop room; and finally the theatre workshop made a performance ideated by them through the Theatre of the Oppressed, on the topic of trafficking and sexual exploitation. Pictures, paintings and collages could be seen at the end of this publication, in the CD-ROM and the website. A video of the performance is also available in the CD-ROM and the website.

Phase 3 - Follow up and dissemination (January-July 2010)

On the last day of the workshop participants developed creative ideas for follow-up of this project, which will be developed in the future from their partner organisations in active citizenship projects. They also evaluated the workshop with a successful result. Experts, trainers and support staff evaluated the meeting after it in order to extract good practices for new projects in the future.

Moreover, during the following months the website with pictures and videos related to the itinerary seminar, artistic workshops and the final exhibition, as well as this publication and the CD-ROM were developed.

Finally, local and European dissemination of the tools has been done by the partnership.

RESULTS AND IMPACT

The success of this project can be seen through: the evaluation by participants of their development of knowledge about the private sphere of sexuality and public citizenship and of their creativity through art; the exchange of good practices and knowledge on a topic which is not often discussed in public, but which has a decisive influence on what we are as citizens and which are our rights; and the long-lasting ties



created between the participants and partners.

Concretely this project has:

- Developed an interaction between citizens and civil society organisation about sexuality and gender issues, thus making them aware about their role in constructing a more inclusive society in Europe;
- Fostered the intergenerational dialogue by making learn, discuss and create together citizens from 18 to 87 years old from 17 different countries of Europe;
- Increased the creativity and creative thinking of participants, by making them express through pictures, collages, paintings and theatre what they thought about sexuality and citizenship in Europe;
- Demonstrated the wide possibilities of art when workshops are composed by groups culturally heterogeneous;

- Drawn a picture of Europe related to sexual education, art&culture and politics by making participants actively provide information about these issues in their countries;

- Permitted an interaction between citizens from Palermo and participants from other countries, thus giving visibility to the project issues and the Europe for Citizens programme and contributing to the intercultural knowledge and exchange;

- Created visibility and dissemination tools which have an impact in many other citizens and stakeholders, by making them aware about the importance of talking about sexuality issues related to citizenship;

- Raised the awareness about society problems such as trafficking and sexual exploitation, bulimia nervosa and anorexia, gender violence or discrimination based on sexual orientation, and about social challenges such as the recognition of civil rights, the full participation of women in society or the full integration of transgender and transsexual persons;

- Contributed to the intercultural dialogue in Europe by making citizens exchange their own culture through traditional and aphrodisiac dishes, music, dances and games.



DISSEMINATION TOOLS

Within the project "Let's talk about sex!" we have developed three main dissemination tools: a website, a CD-ROM and a publication.

Website: www.sexualityineurope.eu ---> this website is the main window of the project in the net. It has information on the project, partners, programme, activities realised, pictures of the itinerary workshop in Palermo, national presentations about sexuality, and the pictures, paintings & collages and videos of the artistic workshops and final

exhibition. You can also know more about the follow up activities.

CD-Rom: it contains an interactive vision of the project; the works of the photography and painting&collage workshops, and the videos of the theatre workshop performance during the final exhibition. It also contains the electronic copy of this publication in English.

Publication-Art Book: the present publication contains the outputs of the photography and painting&collage workshops. The aim of this publication is to spread out the project aims, activities and outputs and the Europe for Citizens programme and its opportunities, like the participation in this workshop. Also wants to promote active citizenship, a sense of European identity and tolerance among citizens in Europe, especially though making stakeholders and people interested to reflect about the importance of the recognition of rights regarding the sexuality in Europe and the non discrimination for reasons of gender and sexual orientation. The aim of the pictures and painting&collages exhibited is, finally, to show the power of creativity of participants coming from so many countries in Europe, and to foster creativity, interaction and discussion on the topic of sexuality, education, art&culture and politics of the European Union among the citizens who may have access to this publication.

Other tools used during the whole project by the partnership were the flyers to invite the local community of Palermo to the different events open during the workshop, press releases to the main media and radio interviews, and links from the partner websites to: www.sexualityineurope.eu





FOLLOW UP

Project follow up has mainly consisted in the creation and development of the main tools of dissemination (publication and CD-ROM, as well as improvement of the website) by CE.S.I.E in collaboration with its partners.

Moreover, during the workshop the Europe for Citizens programme was presented to the participants, which made them reflect and create new project ideas that are being developed during the following months and hopefully will be successful in the future. We specially would like to continue with the issue of gender and sexuality, for example, with projects about the importance of fighting against trafficking in Europe; but other ideas always related with active citizenship and interaction in Europe came out during the workshop.

Finally, local dissemination of the project results, website, CD- ROM and publication-art book will be carried out by partners. This will ensure a high visibility of the project aims and outputs, as well as the Europe for Citizens programme.

THE EUROPE FOR CITIZENS PROGRAMME¹

This programme supports a wide range of activities and organisations promoting “active European citizenship”, especially the involvement of citizens and civil society organisations in the process of European integration.

It supports four main types of actions:

- * Action 1 - Active Citizens for Europe: involving citizens either through activities linked to town-twinning or through other kinds of citizens' projects.

- * Action 2 - Active civil society in Europe: targeted to civil society organisations either through structural support on the basis of their European level work programme or through support to projects.

- * Action 3 - Together for Europe: including high visibility events, studies and information tools.

- * Action 4 - Active European Remembrance: support to projects aiming at preserving the sites and archives associated with the deportations as well as the commemorating of victims of Nazism and Stalinism.

¹Information extracted from the website of the Europe for Citizens programme:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/index_en.php

“Let’s talk about sex! Creative workshop about sexuality in Europe” is a project under the Action 2.3 of the programme. This kind of action aims specifically << to support concrete projects of civil society organisations from different participating countries. A variety of organisations, established at local, regional, national or European level, can be involved. These projects should raise awareness on issues of European interest and on concrete solutions that can be found through cooperation or coordination at European level>>. The maximal duration of the projects is 12 months, and deadlines for presentation of new proposal are normally in February (only one deadline at a year).



“FINAL EXHIBITION-
PAINTING, COLLAGE
& PHOTOGRAPHY
WORKSHOPS”

Photography workshop (Lorena)



Photography workshop (Rasa)



Photography workshop (Lorena)



Photography workshop



Photography workshop (Giovanni, Sabrina and Lucia)



Photography workshop (George)



Photography workshop (Giovanni, Sabrina and Lucia)



Photography workshop



Painting & collage workshop (Alexa)



Photography workshop (Susanne and Rasa)



Painting & collage workshop (Roberta)



Painting & collage (Collette)



Photography workshop (Giovanni)



Photography workshop (Deborah)



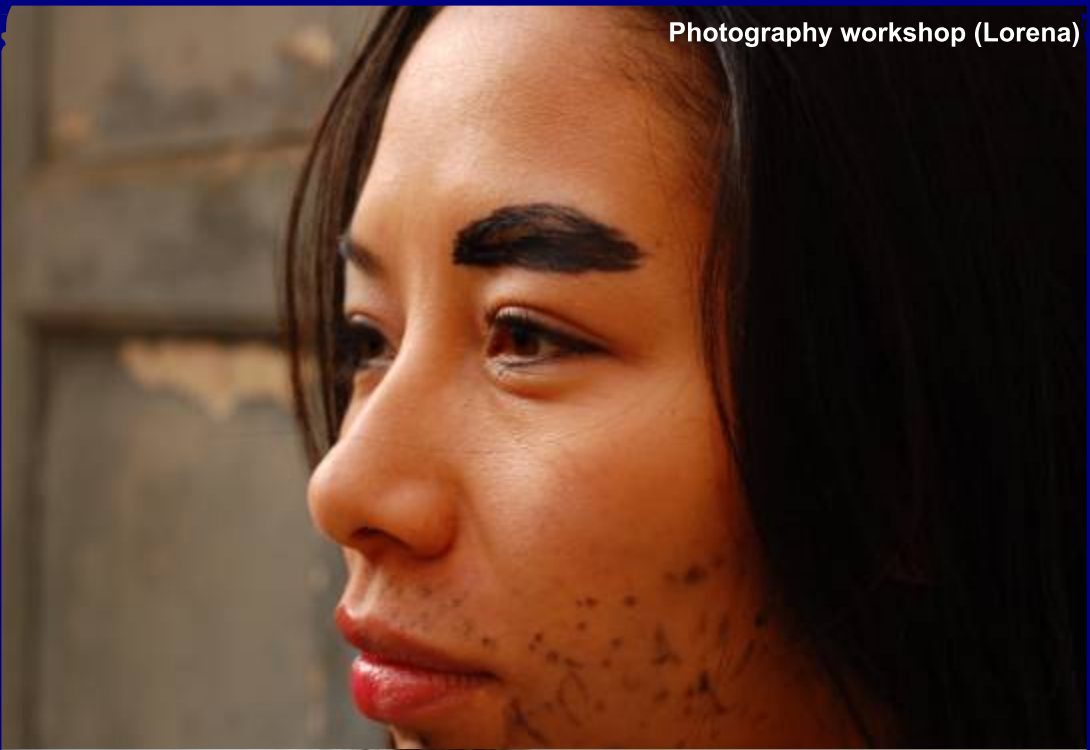
Photography workshop (Sabrina and Deborah)



Photography workshop (Sabrina and Boris)



Photography workshop (Lorena)



Painting & collage (Filippo)



Photography workshop (Susanne)



Photography workshop (Deborah)



Photography workshop (Sabrina, unknown and Boris)



Photography workshop (Susanne)



Photography workshop (Giovanni and Lucia)



Photography workshop (Lorena and Giovanni)



Painting & collage workshop (Camille)



Photography workshop



Painting & collage workshop (Thibaut e Cassandra)



Photography workshop (George, Sabrina and Deborah)



Photography workshop (Sabrina and Boris)



Photography workshop (participants)



Photography workshop (Massimo)



Photography workshop (Lucia)



Painting & collage (Dominiek and Cirus)



Photography workshop





Photography workshop (Susanne)



Photography workshop (Rasa)



Photography workshop (Lorena)



Photography workshop (participants)









Painting & collage (Roberta)







Photography workshop (Giovanni)





Photography workshop (Sabrina and Deborah)



Photography workshop (Lucia)



Photography workshop (Rasa)



Photography workshop



**Painting & collage workshop
Citizenship and Human Rights
to avoid Discrimination (I)**



**Painting & collage workshop
Citizenship and Human Rights
to avoid Discrimination (II)**



Painting & collage workshop
Citizenship and Human Rights
to avoid Discrimination (III)



Painting & collage workshop Media (I)

Painting & collage workshop Media (II)



Painting & collage workshop Media (IV)

Painting & collage workshop Media (III)



KEEP WALKING
JOHNNIE WALKER



Painting & collage workshop Self-identity(II)



Painting & collage workshop Self-identity(I)

COORDINATOR

Centro Studi ed Iniziative Europeo (CE.S.I.E)

Office: Via Roma n.94 – 90133 Palermo, Italy

Tel: +39 091 6164224 – Fax: +39 091 6230849

www.cesie.org

Contact person: Angela Martinez-Carrasco: angela.martinez@cesie.org

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

AUSTRIA- CUBIC-Culture and Education in Context: www.cubic-online.eu

BELGIUM- KVG

BULGARIA- Rhodopes Center for Community Development: www.rccd-bg.org

BULGARIA- Youth Society for Peace and Development of the Balkans: www.yspdb.org

CZECH REPUBLIC- Duha: www.velmed.duha.cz/english_page.htm

DENMARK- Crossing Borders: www.crossing-borders.org

ESTONIA- Continuous Action: www.continuousaction.ee

FRANCE- Pistes-Solidaires: www.pistes-solidaires.fr

FRANCE- Forum Femmes Méditerranée: www.femmes-med.org

GREECE- Rodopi School

GREECE- Youth Human Rights Group: youthhumanrights.atspace.org

ITALY- AGEDO Palermo- Associazione di Genitori di Omosessuali: www.agedopalermo.org

ITALY- Provocopuscolo: www.provocopuscolo.it

LATVIA- Social Alternative Institute (Instituts Sociālās Alternatīvas): www.sainstitute.lv

LATVIA- World at Our Home: www.worldatourhome.com

LITHUANIA- Panevezys Margarita Rimkevicaite Technological School: www.margarita.lt

LITHUANIA- Youth Day Care Centre: www.pjdc.lt

PORTUGAL- Gabinete de Desenvolvimento Associativo and Cidadania – CMM: associativismo@mun-montijo.pt

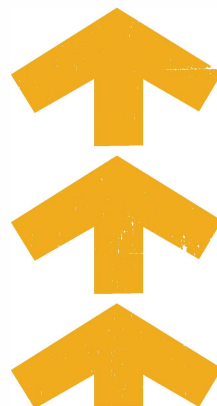
POLAND- Fundacja Pomocy Dzieciom "Gaja": www.fundacjagaja.pl

ROMANIA- Young partners for Civil Society Development Association: www.youngleaders.ro **SPAIN-**

International Youth Initiative Association: www.ongs-elconsul.org/internacionaljoven **SWEDEN- The**

MENA Group: www.menagruppen.se

UK- Capture art and creative projects ltd: www.capturearts.org



Let's Talk about Sex

Creative workshop about Sexuality in Europe

9th- 16th of December 2009, Palermo, Italy
Europe for Citizens programme- Action 2.3



Education and Culture DG

'Europe for Citizens' Programme



CeSIE

Centro Studi ed Iniziative Europeo

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