ACTIon Project

Coordinators Networking Online Event

Report

6-28-2022
15:30 – 17:30h CEST

ACTIon

Promoting active citizenship through civic education and active online participation of youth role models

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Agenda

The networking and synergy event was planned and conducted as a two-hour online session/webinar and moderated by Kostas Diamantis-Balaskas (Action Synergy), WP5 lead within the ACTIon partnership and responsible for synergies and innovation.

Time	Topic	Method and Responsible
15:30- 15:35	Welcome and Introduction	Kostas Diamantis-Balaskas/Action Synergy Emilia Venot/EACEA
15:35- 15:45	Warm-up and get to know each other	Mentimeter-Survey
15:45- 16:00	Brief presentation of the ACTIon project	Tzvetina Arsova Netzelmann/nexus
16:00- 16:45	Brief project presentations	Moderated break-out rooms: Round I – Part I The participants are divided into 4 thematic groups (5-8 projects each) and present their projects
16:45- 17:00	Networking and synergies	Moderated break-out rooms: Round I – Part II Discussion of collaboration and synergy ideas (documented on a Padlet by facilitator)
17:00- 17:10	Discussion in plenary	Reports from groups and summary of cooperation ideas Kostas Diamantis-Balaskas/Action Synergy
17:10- 17:25	Focus on special topics	Moderated break-out rooms: Round II Participants choose and join one of the three topic-related groups: 1) Methodology and Implementation 2) Impact Assessment 3) Transfer and Influencing Policy
17:25- 17:30	Outlook and conclusions	Kostas Diamantis-Balaskas/Action Synergy Tzvetina Arsova Netzelmann/nexus

Participants

The project coordinators of the currently co-financed Erasmus+ KA3 Social Inclusion projects were invited to participate in the meeting, present their projects to other project coordinators and discuss networking and cooperation ideas.

A total of 35 coordinators representing 30 projects registered to participate (including the ACTIon project group). They came from 13 different countries: eight from Spain, seven from Italy, four each from Belgium and Greece, three from the Netherlands, two from Bulgaria, and one each from France, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, and Slovenia. At the event, 31 coordinators participated representing 28 projects. Additionally, the meeting was attended by four representatives of the ACTIon project team and one project officer from the EACEA team.

At the beginning of the event, participants participated in a warm-up "get-to-know-each-other" session by answering several questions via the tool Mentimeter (https://www.mentimeter.com/). First, they answered four questions regarding their personal preferences. They then went on to answer four further questions about their expectations for the event, the key words and education sector of their project, and their experience in project management.

Nearly 90 different keywords emerged – the most common among them were social inclusion, network, education, participation. Media literacy, critical thinking, digital citizenship and democracy also had a prominent presence. At the same time, less common keywords such as crowdfunding, bottom-up policy making, ethnic peer mentoring, fair trade, emotions, gamification, and co-working spaces also appeared. This confirmed the richness and power of educational projects on many different levels and aspects.

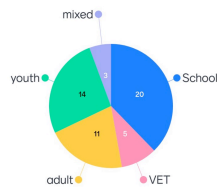## What are the key words of your project?

We had a good pool of experienced participants (22 of the 37 participants stated that they had 5-10 or 10+ years of experience in EU projects). Participants expected the event to be an occasion to network, share experiences, learn about and from the other projects, meet the other coordinators (even if only virtually), disseminate their project, get ideas for new projects, find new partners, and get inspired.

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Which educational level/sector is your project addressing?

The biggest number of projects were in school (20 projects) and youth (14 projects) settings, but a good number of projects (11) addressed adults as well. Some of the projects dealt with VET or mixed education sectors.

The introductory part was followed by a brief outline of the host project ACTIon. After that, the first round of break-out rooms allowed all participants to present their own project. For that, the projects had been thematically grouped according to the key word the participants had provided during their registration.

The participants were divided into 4 different break-out rooms according to the main thematic focus of their project as stated in the registration form:

- **Digitalisation/media literacy/art**

- **Employability/environment**

- **Active citizenship/participation/policy reform**

- **Migrants/minorities/bullying**

There were about 8-9 participants in each room, including one facilitator from the ACTIon project team. All presentations made during Round I of the break-out room sessions can be accessed here: https://padlet.com/kdiamantisbalaskas/gf6c64sxvvlb268i

After the project presentation round, each small group discussed how to create or increase synergies among the KA3 projects and make them more visible.

Outcomes

The following cooperation and networking ideas were elaborated in the four discussion groups:

I. Digitalisation/media literacy/art

- Adult education projects
- All projects are working on key competences:
    - -digital competences
    - -cultural competences
    - -inclusion competences
    - -transversal competences
- European Peer Review methodology:

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

- made for VET education
- now used in adult education
- and even in schools
- Creative expression of young people with disabilities
- Media literacy/critical thinking/digital projects
- Inclusive competences
- Similarities: Structure of the project (research, design, testing, validation, dissemination)

II. Employability/environment

- Cooperation and synergies
- Coordinate at level of dissemination
- Transfer good practice at a school scenario
- Exchange of experience/ideas

III. Active citizenship/participation/policy reform

- Providing results and resources from other projects on related topics on own website
- Sharing successful actions and toolkits (good practices) of previous/other EU-commissioned projects
- During/after synergy events (like this webinar):
  o Directly sharing contacts you believe might be interesting for other partners
  o Compiling lists of websites, social media pages etc. of partners in synergy events so partners can look information up after events
  o Asking partners in synergy events: do you want to receive project updates (newsletters etc.) from others?
- During a project, look up and consult other organisations that work in the same areas/have done similar activities about their experiences, advice etc. (for example with creating MOOCs)
- Policy recommendations:
  o Analyse and link up/reference similar policy recommendations
  o Create joined dissemination events focused not only on presenting projects, but policy recommendations

IV. Migrants/minorities/bullying

- Sharing more about our projects e.g., by sharing a list of our social media outlets
- Organising/using joint events to promote the projects
- Sharing of best practices but also challenges
- Inviting other projects' coordinators to partner meeting
- Creating a training network "Migrants becoming trainers" - Train the Trainers for young migrants interested in working in NGOs

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The second round of group work in break-out rooms focused on specific topics relevant to all projects. The participants could decide which group to join and exchange positive and negative experiences and learnings related to tackling the following topics:

1) Methodology and Implementation
2) Impact Assessment
3) Transfer und Influencing Policy

The results were documented on the tool Padlet (https://padlet.com/) and can be summed up as follows:

1) Methodology and Implementation

What has worked so far and what has not in your methodology approach and methods implemented?

- As to cooperation with teachers: "paper work fear" expectations affect their engagement
- Inability to have transnational training hampered a lot the discussions on methodology
- Zoom is ineffective as tool for creative processes
- Working with webinars has many positive sides (time saving for teachers), but often leads to signing up without showing up (many registrations and lower rates of participation
- Webinars/Online-Methods can allow for a safer space to discuss issues that face-to-face meetings often do not allow for some participants

2) Impact Assessment

How did you assess impact for beneficiaries (pupils, young people etc)? Are there important lessons you have learned?

- Feedback forms for participants
- Select participants and invite to focus groups
- Interviews
- Political partners to monitor the political impact of the project
- Challenge: Impact Assessment after the end of the project
- Measurement of potential impact

3) Transfer und Influencing Policy

Do you have concrete examples of how you managed to influence policy-makers? How can you get people to actually read your policy recommendations?

- Organising roundtables – twice per year
- Publicly invite MEPs and public figures, e.g., tweet or post on FB that you have invited them
- Organise events with members of parliament to present project results/recommendations

- Have a dedicated person in the team for that task
- Have closer contacts with policy makers
- Participate in working groups of national parliament and relevant ministries - change of governments is a challenge
- Pair with a national association (as associated partner), if you don't do this at the organisation level as a regular activity
- Advocacy institutions need the grass-root level input
- Involving public authorities from the beginning is better than informing them at the end. E.g., set up focus group committees online, including public authorities

Outlook

The final feedback round confirmed that the event turned out to be a very useful networking opportunity to meet up virtually, exchange perspectives on and experiences with challenges that the majority of the projects face and to increase the potential for synergies and impact through informing each other and learning from the experience of the other projects. More initiatives like this were welcomed by the project coordinators.

This meeting's report was outlined by nexus as coordinator of the project ACTIon with contributions from consortium's partners ALL DIGITAL and Actions Synergy.

For more information visit our website: https://www.erasmus-action.eu

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union