International training course **Advocacy: make yourself heard!**

# **Introduction to the training course**

***Date: November 4-12, 2013***

***Venue: Training center "Daugirdiskes" (***[***www.daugirdiskes.lt***](http://www.daugirdiskes.lt/)***), Lithuania***

**The *purpose of this project*** is to empower and build the capacities of local youth NGOs in Turkey, Lithuania, Poland, Spain, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Slovakia, Slovenia and Romania in advocacy so that the could effectively influence local and national policy developments

**We are aiming to achieve following results**

1. Youth NGOs in the these countries have skills and knowledge to actively engage in decision-making processes at national and local level;

2. Increased knowledge/understanding of youth NGOs with regards to national/European laws and policies concerning youth;

3. Established contacts/networks between youth NGOs at international level;

4. Advocacy actions implemented and run by youth NGOs locally;

6. Increased awareness among general public on relevant youth issues, especially with regards to marginalized groups.

7. Increased communication between public authorities and youth NGOs with regards to relevant youth policies.

The course is planned as a combination of a training course and practical assignment for practicing the gained skills and knowledge through realization of short advocacy actions.

The course is planned in a manner that provides not only sufficient information for advocacy and lobbying but also creates opportunity for reflection analysis and provoking changes in participants’ attitude towards their proactive behavior in own communities regarding issues relevant for their work. Since the NGOs often lack understanding of the necessity of institutionalization of the changes they want to see happen, the course provides time and experience for reaching this point of not only receiving load of information on the subject but also achieving utilization of gained knowledge. Mainly this will be achieved through the realization of a practical assignment- an advocacy action/campaign. Besides, the practical assignment will also ensure influence on the situation and raise public awareness with regard to their situation among the general population.

**Objective of training course**

* To gain basic knowledge and understanding of advocacy and lobbying concepts.
* To create a base of fundamental skills in advocacy and lobbying that will be further more specifically developed throughout the course.
* To comprehend the nature and purpose of advocacy and lobbying activities as crucial aspect of involvement of the non-profit/civil sector in the decision making processes on societal level.
* To gain specific knowledge of the current practices in advocacy in EU and EU institutions.

**Content:**

* The concept of advocacy
* Steps in advocacy planning (why, what, how, with whom, with what) ) and brief introduction to: identification of the topic; setting aims and objectives; defining the target group; developing message; defining of communication channels; widening of the supporter base; fund raising; action planning; data gathering and information analyses; monitoring and evaluation.
* The concept of lobbying
* Advocacy and non-profit organizations
* What is important for successful advocacy?
* Advocacy actions in EU countries

**METHODOLOGY**

* The training recognizes that there are a number of ways in which people learn. The Course will reflect some of these ways and will include: individual work, small group work, practical work, recordings, written assignments, self assessment, role plays, discussions, exercises, activities, simulation games, energizers, observations. The main approach in the course modules is the experiential learning. With such approach, the courses are taught using the experience of the participants and of the tutors in an exploratory manner to look at skills, attitudes and the acquisition of knowledge. Similarly practice is explored to extract learning and improve skills and intervention.

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