

IMPROVING LIFE SKILLS

*(Training and Networking project with Neighboring Partner Countries)
Youth in Action Programme*



During 15th-21st April 2013 in Tirana, SOS Children's Villages Albania *with the support of Youth in Action Programme of European Union* developed the one week training course "Improving Life Skills". The target group of the project was young people aged 18 to 25 years old, which came from alternative care experiences. In the event were involved 24 young people coming from different countries of Europe, concretely: Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, Latvia, Macedonia and Poland.



The project "Improving Life Skills" aimed to empower the young people for their integration in trade market of global society. The main goal was to raise competencies and self-esteem of young people, which have lost parental care, to be trained and prepared for independent life through non-formal education. The project developed training sessions in friendly version way by using various methods as: exchange experiences, presentation of good practices, role plays; methods learning by doing and learning by sharing. At the same time, the project

intended to have the chance for the young people to get acquainted with new developments in Europe on the field of legislation, policies, practices and rights, employment opportunities, especially for young people in care. Training promoted the role of citizenship for a consolidation of strong development of Europe in the future.

Main topics addressed by project were: -Presentation of YiA Programme; -Legislation and the rights of the young people without parental care; -Main public institutions responsible and experience of young people in practice for reaching the state services/facilities (good practices; sharing personal experiences; difficulties); -Increasing of self esteem and self confidence of young people without parental care. How to reduce the range of unemployment in their target group, evidence the barriers: discrimination, fears, rejection, abuse, affect in personal and interpersonal development of young people and how they could cop or avoid them; - Financial planning and youth employment (How could we manage our money? Job seeking, CV



preparation, dignified presentation in a job interview, self-employment etc); - Practical skills for youth integration into global society; - Building future cooperation.



Project “Improving Life Skills” was conducted as support of the advocacy campaign “I Matter”, initiative of SOS Children’s Villages International. Also, this project was a “Young people project” because they have been part of this project, since in the beginning when the idea was conceived. They were involved in each phase of the project implementation. During the application period the youngsters supported by National Advocacy Advisor actively contributed on project writing. SOS Children’s

Villages Albania in collaboration with partner organizations and youngsters selected the trainers (one from Albania, one from Armenia and one from Latvia). National Advocacy Advisor in collaboration with youngsters prepared terms of reference for the trainers; and monitored the development of training sessions. During all sessions of the training all participants had the possibility to ask for clarification, share their experiences (good ones or their difficulties), ideas and, also, to suggest different topics that are with importance in their countries.

For them, it was a great experience because they had the opportunity not only to raise their capacities about their employment but to increase also knowledge about the other cultures and exchange the positive models. For majority of young people it was the first time that took part in a training course with cross cultural representative, for 7 days they were together - this fact helped them to develop sense of tolerance and diversity. During the training young people had the opportunity to represent their respective country culture (they were prepared in advance for this). Also, they had the possibility to know better about Albanian culture, by traditional foods, visited historical cities (Kruja, Durresi) and by exchange with Albanian peers.



The youth group visited the premises of SOS Village in Tirana and they were informed about the way it works, what it offers and how does it offer different services. We informed the civil society about the project by collaborating with visual media (interview at Channel One – National TV).

At the end of the project young people were motivated that, competencies they gained during the training days were useful for personal development to improve their life, at the same time to affect social promotion on their countries by following up the initiative launched. This group of youngsters is encouraged to share this experience with their peers and to develop further with new youth participation projects.



There were 24 different youngsters from different countries, and again they shown that place where they live is not a barrier for them to rise their knowledge, to collaborate, to understand, to work and to help each other and, also to make new friends.

Eristjana KARÇANAJ
Youth participant