

Name: Marine Sargsyan

Project: Youth for Regional Cooperation and Trust

Field of projects: Youth Diplomacy and International Relations

	Description
Aim	<p>The young generation of the regions countries, their communities and their societies will directly benefit from this project. The present and future governments are the indirect beneficiaries of this project as, by starting cross-border initiatives, young people will later be able to positively influence important political decision-making processes and events in the region. With the purpose to establish good relations among the youth in the South Caucasus and to develop youth cooperation, the IGAA aims to increase people to people links among the youth from conflict-affected communities, as the project will be implemented in Armenia and is targeting young people from Armenia, Georgia, Russia and Turkey, it is mostly focused on improving Armenian-Turkish relations and strengthening Armenian-Georgian bonds. We are committed to working with and through an appreciation of our own and others' humanness-expressed by our openness and willingness to listen, learn, and communicate. We generate revolutionary global responsibility in a celebration of diversity that honors the human spirit and generates stability.</p> <p>The aim of the project is to give young people the opportunity to work together and to develop their skills in the context of European cooperation, youth participation and active citizenship, focusing on leadership, planning, self confidence, self esteem and resilience. This will be achieved by engaging in personal development activities and providing the opportunity to engage in healthy discussions, and to exchange ideas and experiences on youth cooperation in order to build trust and mutual understanding for common peaceful future.</p> <p>The intended outcome is to inform participants about the possible ways of starting regional initiatives and to develop the skills required for success in this aim. Suggested examples will be based on local actions that are linked to global outcomes, such as Energy conservation and Water conservation, and are themes that can promote collaboration that crosses borders, cultures and disciplines, the core values that the EFA Network and Associate Members stand for.</p>
Goals	<p>To create regional network of young people for Regional Development Cooperation</p> <p>To promote active participation of young people in civic and political life of their community, region and country through non-formal learning activities (trainings, seminars, conferences, workshops)</p> <p>To develop the skills of young people in the context of mutual cooperation and understanding, youth participation, active citizenship and responsible leadership using global issues addressable by local actions. .</p> <p>To provide a stimulating range of contexts in which participants can explore various internal and regional problems that make it very difficult for the countries in the region to achieve cross-border cooperation, political stability and to act as 'good neighbours'.</p> <p>By bringing together a group of young people, this project aims to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Start a dialogue between the youth of Armenia and of its neighbouring countries (Georgia and Turkey)2. Raise awareness of the necessity to enhance cross-border cooperation and identify all the possible ways to increase collaboration3. Facilitate healthy discussions, regional cooperation debates and exchange of ideas, provide a positive experience4. to develop the skills required, focusing on leadership, planning, self confidence, self esteem and resilience.5. Break negative stereotypes6. Build trust and mutual understanding through non-formal education, (this in turn plays a fundamental role in the economic, social and political development of the region)7. Support the social and emotional development of the youth by fostering democratic values8. Encourage young people to develop initiatives and create regional networks of cooperation <p>Target group: The total number of participants is 27 (Armenians, Turks, Russians and Georgians). They are young people between 16-24 y.o., high school students and university students who are, or wish to become, active and engaged global citizens.</p> <p>Gender balance: Active recruitment will ensure equal number male and female participants will be involved in the programme.</p> <p>Venue and time: 5 days. The planned dates are November 20-25, 2014 in Stepanavan (Youth Capital of Armenia for year 2015!), Lori region in the northern Armenia, close to the border with Georgia. The logistic preparation for the project will start immediately following the Rhodes Forum, the successful presentation and grant award.</p> <p>A significant reason to conduct this regional dialogue is the 100 year anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in 2015. Thus, the general aim of the project is mutual understanding, recognition and reconciliation on the youth level to reduce the possibility of such atrocities in the future.</p>
Problems to be resolved	<p>It is almost twelve years since the three South Caucasus republics declared their independence, becoming democratic states. The South Caucasus is known as a region of frozen conflicts, resulting in various internal and regional problems that make it very difficult for the countries in the region to achieve cross-border cooperation, political</p>

stability and to act as 'good neighbours. The most intractable problem is the breaking of negative stereotypes - national, religious, cultural, historical and ethnic, for Armenians and Turks, Armenians and Azerbaijanis; national and historical for Georgians and Russians.

Guided by the fact that any political issue can be solved taking into account multilateral viewpoints, "Youth for Regional Cooperation and Trust" Training Course is a good opportunity to young people in the South Caucasus countries to conduct favorable relations with youth organisations and young people from the neighboring countries. As ambassadors of peace, the EFA Associate members and the IG Alpbach Armenia strive to initiate a dialogue in the region among young people.

Strengths of the project are:

- The project "Youth for Regional Cooperation" will be the follow-up of the summer school program organized by the IG Alpbach Armenia (June-July 2012 in Yerevan) and entitled "The Priorities of the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Armenia", with the aim to educate young students on the role and the activities of Armenia in the region.
- Experience of the organizer in managing previous projects
 - "Leaders Plus" Training Course in partnership with Stepanavan Youth Center, Stepanavan, Armenia, May 2014
 - Social Skills Development Workshop: "Best Practices: Positive Youth Development" in partnership with Ark Family Center Inc. (USA) and School for Young Leaders (Armenia), Yerevan, Armenia, January 2014
 - Strengthening Responsible Citizenship for Community Development funded by the British Council and implemented in partnership with the Norfolk County Council, Yerevan November 2013
 - "World Leaders of Present. The Power Of the Young" winter school in partnership with the School for Young Leaders, Yerevan, Armenia, December 2012
- Quality and experience of the proposed trainer Adrian Tebbutt (ATEducation) in the development and running of international programmes in UK, Armenia, France, Estonia and Singapore
- The range of partner organisations

Weaknesses

- Short timescale for recruitment
- Short timescale for organization

Opportunities

- The chance to engage the most able young people in international dialogue
- The opportunity to develop independent programmes that share common goals and that will lead to continued dialogue

Threats

- Economic conditions that may impact the ability of delegates to fund 30% of costs
- University/school term dates and administrative requirements
- Maintainance of projects/contacts/motivation on return to home countries

Our new project focuses on youth and is the perfect continuation of the previous one as it will help them to put the acquired information and knowledge into practice. We are targeting youth because they are not only vital community assets for today's societies but also the future actors and decision-makers of our countries. It is important to inform young people about different possibilities and motivate them to start regional initiatives. But their willingness to cooperate with each other can be hindered by deeply-rooted prejudices and negative stereotypes, which is why it is also crucial to eliminate, or at least diminish these preconceived views and approaches, in order to ensure more active regional collaboration. Lack of trust and cooperation in the region has had, and will have, unfavourable, and in other cases even disastrous, consequences for the nations involved. The overall goal of the project is to build bridge between the generations, to shape the discussions and to grow the future generation –institutionally and intellectually, developing them by providing the necessary knowledge, skills, positioning and mentality.

Possible Partners

Youth organisations from
 Armenia
 IG Alpbach Armenia
 Armenian Progressive Youth
 Georgia
 European Diplomats' Association
 Caucasus Youth NEXUS
 Lagodekhi Youth initiative

	<p>Turkey Ankara Science High School (Ankara Fen Lisesi) Ödemiş Anadolu Öğretmen Lisesi in Izmir Russian Federation</p> <p>There is a huge number of Russian students who are studying in Armenia as an exchange student, thus, we will have a call of Russian participants and involve them into the project, to guarantee the diversity and international balance of the project</p>
Problem description	<p>Following the collapse of the USSR many national issues rose to the surface, with some resulting in armed conflict. As the problems are not solved on a governmental level yet, non-profit organizations are trying to conduct cross-border and intercultural dialogue on youth level aiming to break the negative stereotypes among nations. It is important not only in terms of democracy, economic development, political dialog, and regional security, but also conceptually since it implies the utilization of integration processes for the achievement of stable regional development and establishment of reciprocal confidence in the South Caucasus.</p> <p>We start by educating and motivating individuals one by one within a group dynamic. By inspiring one person at a time to collaborate with others and work towards something substantial, it is during this process that we will also encourage communities, societies, and nations to be friendlier and more helpful to each other. It is each individual that must transform first and then influence and contribute to producing strong and legitimate communities, institutions and, in effect, building strong and legitimate nations.</p>
Conclusion	<p>The short-term goal of this project is to develop a pluralistic regional identity, while retaining distinct national identities through development of shared skills and experience of young people engaged in active youth participation as local and global citizens.</p> <p>In the long term, this will certainly play an important role in breaking negative stereotypes, shaping good relations with neighboring countries and developing cross-border cooperation. In order to achieve our immediate objective, the following important steps should be taken:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A Need assessment to find out what percent of young people in the region are open to the concepts of cross-border cooperation in Caucasus, intercultural dialogue and involved, and to understand the factors (such as history, religion, nationality, etc.) that affect their decision to be closed to their neighbors. The process will involve analysis of the factors causing the problems and the suggestion of possible solutions. This is an important preparatory stage for the project which is to be held shortly afterwards. 2. Organizing a five-day long event which will educate the young participants on the subjects of tolerance and intercultural skills, provide a set of guiding principles on good neighborliness, strengthen their understanding of the role of youth participation in minor and major political events and decision-making, help them see themselves as potential leaders, and, ultimately, replace their negative connotations about politics with healthier, more objective and constructive judgment.
Evaluation and Impact indicators	<p>Participants will be required to evaluate each activity undertaken both individually and in groups, as well as undertake a pre- and post- activity questionnaire and final evaluation. Participants will be expected to keep a log of their experiences and to produce a personal action plan.</p> <p>Because the project includes the development of skills of young people it is anticipated that they will also lead in disseminating the outcomes. Such dissemination, in addition to creation of an Internet portal, might include organising public events (presentations, conferences, workshops...) based on their experiences or in developing skills in other young people.</p> <p>It could also include the development of information material (newsletters, brochures, booklets, as appropriate).</p> <p>The activities and methods will be participatory, based on non-formal approaches and, as the programme develops, increasingly led by the participants. Discussion leadership, youth participation and active planning form a key element of the work of the participants and will be a key element in their personal and social development. Use of social media and e-communication are integral to the programme and participants will develop a website and social media presence during the programme. This is a key element in addressing the maintenance of the of the project goals as identified in the SWOT analysis above.</p> <p>Participants will be expected to leave the programme with a detailed action plan for implementation on return to their own country, supported by the respective national agencies and to be fed back via e.g. Facebook, to the organisers.</p> <p>It is anticipated that young people will become more active and more willing to contribute to positive regional changes and the development of positive international relationships through different projects and initiatives planned during the programme.</p>
Program	<p>Topic: "Youth for Regional cooperation and Trust"</p> <p>Key words: Youth, Peace and Trust</p> <p>Task Set: The culture of negotiations; cross-border cooperation; young peace ambassadors; dialogue; what is the key to peace: youth, trade or culture? etc.</p>

Activities:

1. To conduct need assessment on the Cross border cooperation, awareness about stereotypes, communication.
2. To support the social and emotional development of the youth by fostering democratic values, regional youth, activity, positive experience.
3. To organize and carry out the series of workshops and interactive games relating to skill development, intercultural dialogue, tolerance and trust. Promotion, teaching and learning of a negotiation culture.
4. To organize and carry out the series of plenary sessions, Providing a set of guiding principles to support cross-cultural and trust building awareness through non-formal education, which in turn plays a fundamental role in the development of good neighborliness. Participants will learn techniques for how to build healthy relationships with self and others. Each participant will have the opportunity to experience public speaking.

Duration of the project: 2 months October 15 -December 15, 2014

Activity 5 days: November 20 - 25, 2014

Number of Participants: 27

Countries involved: Armenia, Georgia, Turkey and Russian Federation

Stages of the project:

1. Find partners from neighbouring countries
2. Set the team,
3. Contact trainers,
4. Call for participants,
5. Selection of participants,
6. Hotel arrangements,
7. Confirmation from participants and trainers
8. Administrative and technical preparation for the event,
9. Implementation of the project
10. Monitoring
11. Evaluation
12. Follow up

Budget

2 volunteers (1 Georgian, 1 Armenian) 1 youth policy expert (IG Alpbach Armenia, Marine Sargsyan) and 1 Trainer/ Independent Education Adviser (UK, Adrian Tebbutt) will be involved in the implementation of the project. Their task and responsibilities will be technical, organisational and administrative.

The award in the amount of €9920 will cover accommodation, meal, local transportation, airfare of trainer and his salary. The total number of people involved in the project is 27, including participants, trainers, project manager and assistants.

Budget:

Accommodation per person €25 per night (breakfast included) (3375 EUR for 27 people, 5 nights)

Lunch €10 per person (27*5=1350 EUR)

Dinner €15 per person(27*5 =2025 EUR)

Coffee Break 4 EUR per person (27*5=540 EUR)

Airfare Istanbul-Tbilisi 300 EUR per person (5 participants from Turkey) (1500 EUR, grant request 1050)

Mini-bus Tbilisi-Stepanavan-Tbilisi 20 EUR per person /5 participants from Turkey, 7 from Georgia traveling from Tbilisi/ (240 EUR, grant request 168)

Mini-Bus Yerevan-Stepanavan-Yerevan 15 EUR per person /7 Armenian participants, 5 Russian, 1 trainer, 1 expert, 1 volunteer) 225 EUR (grant request 157,50 EUR)

Airfare: London-Yerevan-London 450 EUR

Trainer's honorarium 500 EUR

Expert's Honorarium 300 EUR

All printing will be made from the budget of the IG Alpbach Armenia. The Organization will also provide equipment, volunteers for organizational support and administrative tasks, stationary (folders, pens, notebooks, booklets about Armenia and the South Caucasus), printing, Xerox with the total value of €2000.

Total Cost of the project €12505

Total grant request: €9920