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Guidelines for a Workcamp Exchange

Results of World Exchange 2,
CBY project funded by the European Commission



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Introduction

A **Workcamp Exchange** combines the formats of youth-exchange and workcamp, bringing together theoretical knowledge and practical implementation.

The idea of Workcamp Exchange was developed and tested during the World Exchange 2 project funded by the Erasmus+ programme by the following **partner** organisations:

- Kora - Italy
- Quinta das Relvas - Portugal
- Seiklejate Vennaskond - Estonia
- IDC - France
- GREAT - Indonesia
- CYA - Cambodia
- DALAA - Thailand
- NVDA - Hong Kong

Workcamp exchanges are supposed to combine elements of **youth exchanges** (non-formal learning, intercultural exchange, group discussion, evaluation and monitoring of the learning experience) and **workcamps** (practical work with benefit to the community).

The partners of the World Exchange 2 project believe that there is a growing interest among young people for more diverse **learning experiences** both within youth exchanges and workcamps.

This document outlines the **structure and elements** that an organisation should consider when planning a Workcamp Exchange.

More information and tools can be found at www.youthexchanges.org.



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I. Basic principles and objectives of a Workcamp Exchange

- Providing an opportunity to learn about each other's cultures and countries, while uniting youngsters through working for a common goal.
- Sharing practical skills that participants can later implement in their daily lives.
- To create awareness towards a specific topic, in coherence with values such as human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, using the methods of non-formal learning.
- Personal development through non-formal education and contribution to the local community/hosting organisation.
- To enhance communicational and language skills.
- To promote active citizenship and youth initiative.
- To provide to the members of the local community some intercultural experiences and information about non formal learning opportunities.



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II. Management of a Workcamp Exchange

- Duration: 12-20 days (including travel days).
- Participants: 15-30 participants (minimum 4+1 participants per national group) from at least 3 countries.
- Age: 18-30 years old for participants, no age limit for the leaders.
- Make sure that all the group leaders have prior experience in non-formal education.
- Consider respecting a gender balance while selecting participants.



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III. Structure of the project, activities, and required elements

The essential workcamp exchange elements are:

- Getting to know each other: name games, ice-breaking and team building activities.
- Fears, expectations and contributions.
- Energizers (preferably in the beginning of every session).
- Intercultural learning activities.
- Intercultural evenings.
- National workshops/presentations related to the topic.
- Thematic knowledge-sharing and discussions connected to the practical activities.
- Formation of workgroup(s) according to the size of the group and the practical activities planned.
- Dividing roles within a workgroup. Such as people responsible for documenting the process, taking care of the group, keeping the time, looking after the tools, etc..



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- Participants or local volunteers with knowledge and skills to share on the topic (possible workcamp leaders).
- Daily reflection groups
- Introduction of the Youthpass and the 8 key competences
- Final evaluation
- A day off and/or a field trip is needed every 6/7 days of activities, to give participants an opportunity to rest and discover the surroundings.
- Inclusion of the community (for example creating an open-house event/ an open workshop on the topic/ inspirational visits etc).

Things to keep in mind while creating the schedule:

- An equal balance between the time dedicated to the NFL activities and the time dedicated to the practical activities.
- Spread the practical work activities on several days, so that the participants would not do manual work more than half a day at a time. This prevents overloading the participants with physical work and provides space for necessary discussion and sharing moments.



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IV. Preparation

- Organise a Planning Meeting (either physically or virtually) between 4 and 8 weeks in advance among the group leaders. Divide roles and responsibilities, discuss the programme, share participants' profiles.
- Finalise the schedule.
- Agree on a communication tool to use throughout the project and use it to distribute information to participants and organizers, such as:
 - The infopack for the workcamp exchange.
 - Registration form that includes data and special needs of participants.
- Prepare the workcamp activities:
 - Agree on the specific tasks and goals
 - Divide tasks and responsibilities among workcamp leaders
 - Create a list of needed tools and materials
- Make arrangements with the necessary partners from the local community (e.g. field trips, open house events, inspirational trips...).
- The group leaders make sure that the national group members prepare the necessary activities (e.g. intercultural evening, energisers, presentations...).



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V. Dissemination

- Daily report by the participants to be posted on organisations' social media channels.
- A summary (presentation, video, blog article...) about the workcamp exchange by the participants. (each national group prepares its own).
- All the involved organisations share the dissemination materials created by the participants in their social media platforms and other means (for example local newspapers, fairs, events, presentations etc.).
- Leaflet about the program by the organisation for the participants.



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