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Youth exchange

Hip hop beyond borders

15-22.08.2016

Konstancin-Jeziorna, Poland



Fundacja Inkubator Innowacji
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Project Description:

„Hip hop beyond borders” – was a youth exchange project held in Konstancin-Jeziorna between 15th and 22nd of August 2016. In the project took part young people from Poland, Spain and Italy, 30 participants in total. The main aim of the project was informing about hip-hop culture and its impact on fighting with young people problems and social exclusion. Young break-dancers from 3 countries came to Poland to work and train together. They also taught poor kids from Konstancin-Jeziorna the basic steps of break-dance and the art of graffiti. At the end of the exchange together with children, they prepared an event for inhabitants of Konstancin-Jeziorna. Also, they had a performance for Residents of the Social Welfare House at the Old Town in Warsaw at Wójtowska street. The main result of the project was raising awareness about the importance of hip-hop culture through reportage in Polish Radio 4. A long-term benefit of the project is raising awareness about Erasmus+ programme in Konstancin-Jeziorna.





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Applicant organisation:



Fundacja Inkubator Innowacji is a non-profit foundation located in Konstancin-Jeziorna (Poland). We are working mostly on the local and international level.

The members of the organisation are specialist of working with youth and children, united around the idea of promoting education and European awareness among the youth and generally among the society, supporting people, helping people with fewer opportunities in their social integration, making youth participation in public life more active and strengthening the principles of civil society and democracy.

Our organisation is open to everybody, so every individual who would like to contribute to making changes within the region, at the same time to increase its capacities, might join us to create a better future. Another aim of the organisation is to intervene with the competent authorities to protect the interests of vulnerable social groups and to promote the participation of youth in the improvement of social and cultural issues.

Partner organisations:



Asociación Juvenil Coratje is a nonprofit organisation whose primary objective is active participation of young people and development of their potential through non-formal education, mentoring, support and art activities (dancing, graffiti).

We organise activities, workshops and courses for Adolescents and Young Adults, and European Exchanges will soon begin to be organised. Organisation involves young people in hip hop culture in order to build leadership skills and promote social responsibility. Organisation is working mostly with youngsters from Torrellano and teaches them breakdancing and graffiti.





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AimNetwork



Association of Intercultural Mediators



Association of Intercultural Mediators Network is a cultural, not profit association based in Ferrara, Italy. They promote Intercultural

dialogue by cooperating with all grade of schools. Their focus is to avoid early school leaving and the risk of social exclusion for the children and families of migrant people. The members,

come from different areas of experience and expertise and they have distinct but complementary professional roles into the organisation. Their aim is to promote, with the use of latest technologies and knowledge, sensitivity and awareness towards the condition of multiculturalism.

One of the primary purposes of AIMNETWORK is to help the immigrant pupils integration by promoting sports activities through foreign and local students. They also cooperate with the teachers by elaborating with them strategies for the student's honest evaluation using informal education's indicators to recognise pupils' competencies. AIMNETWORK is interested in the research in the field of education, especially on intercultural and interreligious issues, using the meat of mediation to avoid conflicts in the classroom and the society. Very often the staff participate in conferences with contributions and case studies on intercultural mediator's role in Italian education, best practices and strategies in debt of interculturality.

AIMNETWORK in cooperation with NETWORK REVOLUTION organise courses for teachers, trainers and youth workers, on intercultural education and digital literacy by promoting the use of e-learning platform ATHENA. They are also developing relations between the EU similar institutions and national organisations to provide an exchanging platform of information and experiences in the fields of intercultural education and integration.



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The venue:



The project took place in Konstancin-Jeziorna.

Konstancin-Jeziorna is a picturesque health resort situated about 20 km from Warsaw's city centre. The town was created in 1969 through combining neighbouring towns: holiday resort Skolimów-Konstancin and industrial Jeziorna with some villages. The Konstancin-Jeziorna area in Mazowsze Region is very well-known as a health resort. In the town, there is a huge health resort, a picturesque lake, vast fields, forest and a lot of old villas.

The participants were accommodated in Pokoje Efa. The venue was comfortable, participants shared 2, 3 and 4-person rooms. They had access to all facilities. Also, in front of the place, there is a lot of space for outdoor activities. The venue was located around 600 meters from the training room where a breakdance workshops held.

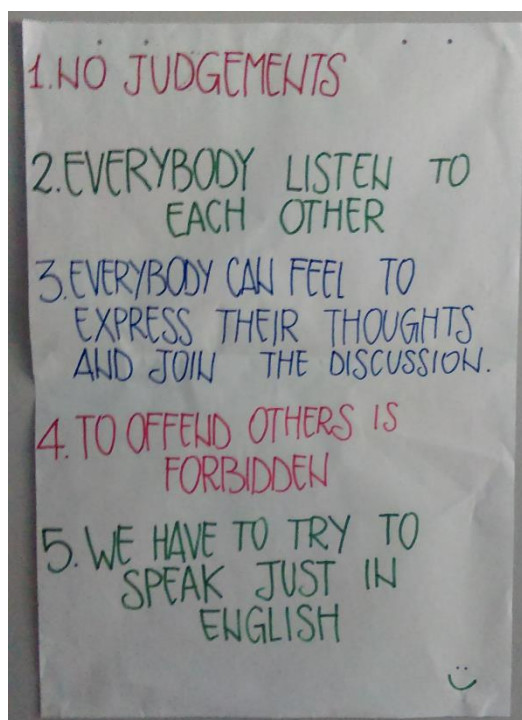


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Activities implemented:

Contract:



Our contacts consisted on 5 points:

1. No judgements
2. Everybody listen to each other
3. Everybody can feel to express their thoughts and join the discussion
4. To offend others is forbidden
5. We have to try just speak in English

We decided that everybody needs to follow the contract during the whole exchange no matter if it is workshops time or free time.

Getting to know each other and team building games:



Participants stood in the circle, and they were repeating the names of each person. Also, they had to connect break dance move with the person and also repeat not only the name but also the move. Thanks to that exercise the learn our names.



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Using the techniques of contemporary dance, we also conducted team building which helped us to create trust in the group and team spirit.

Workshop – Street working as a tool of working with young people with fewer opportunities:



We implemented this workshop by plenary discussion. Below some conclusions and sharings by our participants:

- Hip-hop is a powerful tool. It is cool for kids. They want to involve and train breakdance for instance. This art, which is also sport can influence in their life. It learns discipline, fair play, respect. All the things these kids miss in their normal life.
- Antonio leader of Italian team is working with people who use drugs. They are especially children between 8 and 14 years old. Antonio teaches them to break dancing. He does that because he truly believes that break dancing can help the and do some changes.



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- When you start break dancing, you become a part of a big family and community. People who belong to this community always are willing to help you. Because of that young people with fewer opportunities should join this family.

Workshop – “How hip hop can help young people with fewer opportunities from Konstancin-Jeziorna”:

- Sometimes hip-hop can be the only chance for these people to get out from a toxic environment. It occupies their mind and free time.
- Elements of hip hop can help these children to socialise with other people and to make friendships with other youngsters
- It can change their lives.
- They can know that there can be a better life.

Reflection on Hip hop and breakdancing:

Q1: What is hip hop for you?

- A style of life
- You have friends in hip hop. It's part of your life.
- It's a time to express yourself and feel free
- The freedom
- The love
- A way of life
- Sharing, inspiring, creating a community
- Hip hop helps people feeling better. When you have no possibility to say, you express thanks to hip hop



Q2: What is the role of hip hop in your life?

- It is the base of all the things I do. Even when I do other things, it comes back to hip hop.
- Hip hop is love. It changes people's lives. Everything you do with this love. You bring this feeling from hip hop into everything in your life.



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- It is a community
- I feel different to people who don't do hip hop, like a stranger. I feel like myself with you (points at everyone in the group).
- It brings me more consciousness. It changes your point of view on things and makes you want to study more about lots of different things.
- Sometimes people get angry because I am always training. It is difficult to meet with my friends

because my way of life is so different.

- Hip hop is like a boyfriend!
- Hip hop makes me a better person – more hardworking, open to more people, more sociable. If I didn't do hip hop, I don't know if I would have ever been abroad. Even though recently I haven't been training.
- Before I started hip hop I was a very shy person and would stay at home, but when I started dance my life changed. I made new friends, met a lot of people, and it gave me an opportunity to travel. It made me a better person. It shows me how to behave – how to not judge people, and how to help people.
- Hip hop has given me my friends, my job, etc.
- My friends who have taught me hip hop
- Thanks to hip hop, I want to surpass myself

Q3: Are there any people who contribute to hip hop in your life?

- I think you create your own definition of hip hop with the people you share it with. I don't do graffiti, dj etc., but I will train ten hours a day. I created my own definition of hip hop but maybe for some people it is not a complete version of hip hop.
- Everyone in hip hop gives you something unconsciously. I think hip hop is an instrument to make you grow up. Everyone starts hip hop when they are a child. Inside you there is always a child and strong emotion. Rakka is 29 years old and still dances – maybe because she still needs this connection to this emotion and feeling. Hip hop is a stimulation for emotion. And when you see the emotion in others, you want to do the same.
- Hip hop helps you to grow up. You learn to manage yourself, your time and your work.
- Why do we continue to dance? Why don't we stop? I think the answer to this is the key.





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- If I stop, I will lose something.
- But what is this 'something'? For me it is love.
- Yes, and you love it because you care about it.
- My father took a lot of drugs. My mother did the same. Their friends as well. Hip hop gives me something to do.
- I have started in a dance studio. Thanks to meeting break dancers, they have showed me the right culture. I have also approached graffiti.
- Hip hop has given me self-confident
- We have to give hip hop back what it has given us

Q4: Are there any experiences that affected your connection to hip hop?

- Yes. Four years ago I came to an event like this. It was my first time out of Spain and I didn't know English. At battles people can be different and more competitive, but at these projects you meet great people. It changed my mentality and since then I have kept travelling and meeting other people.
- I also travelled first time out of my country for a b-boy event and now I want to keep travelling.



- When I first started I tried to never lose any contest. But there are many things in hip hop. So even though there are these contests with very good b-boys, there are also other experiences within hip hop, and all give you something.
- First time I moved away from home I had to learn English, and I love to travel and meet new people. Hip hop has helped me learn another language and open my mind.



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- When I was 20 I decided to train every day of the month except one. I started to improve a bit. I went to compete and it became important to me to compete well. Now though, I still train hard, and I still compete sometimes, but now I do it more for me. It has helped me make hip hop more true to myself, and more beautiful as a result.
- In Spain, we have founded an association related to hip hop. We are promoting and sharing our culture.

Q5: What do you learn from hip hop?

- For me, discipline. In school I wasn't a good student, but hip hop taught me motivation and education.
- I learnt that there is no impossible thing in life if we work hard.
- I learnt to put my trust in other people. I have stayed with other people b-boys and girls who are strangers during events and things. My friends and family get scared but I trust these people.
- I learnt to see the world in a more positive way. I should do what I want to do and not what others tell me. I am a happier man since learning about hip hop.



- I think that hip hop helps me to overcome my limits. In hip hop the impossible becomes possible. For example when you learn a new move that you didn't think you could ever do.
- When I was a child, the school has kicked me out. Now, I will be graduated. Two of my dancers are here. Hip hop means something for me
- In my Spanish town, a lot of kids are learning hip hop. The government supports us



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- I know bboys who have started by making graffiti. Today, they are the best graphic-designers. My dancers have started studying at the University. They can connect hip hop to their fields such as medicine, psychomotor.
- I am studying Education and Protection Care. Hip hop can be a tool into my work

Q6: What do you give back to hip hop?

- Organising events, contests etc., because if nobody did this then none of these would happen.
- You can transmit and share your passion, for example when you do a street show. People are happy to see you dance and you can teach. When you go to see a show it's like time stops and you can see this beautiful art.
- Entertainment
- You can give things to hip hop when you don't realise.
- I think hip hop is the ultimate source and passion. But I think the most important thing we contribute is our hard work and passion.
- Without us, there would be no hip hop culture.
- I am currently studying the pedagogy of dance, and I would like to eventually write a book called 'pedagogy of breaking'
- Inspiration for the upcoming generations
- I would like to share, teach my culture
- Hip hop is a process. The challenges are focused on personal purposes only.
- To be a bboy esta la muerte. Still to be in the game
- I would like to retain hip hop as a lifestyle
- For me I just want to be a friend of hip hop culture and still be a part of it.





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Break dancing workshops for the local community in Konstancin **– Jeziorna:**

Our participants implemented open workshops for youngsters from Konstancin-Jeziorna. They taught young people basic steps of break dance.





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Graffiti workshops:

Participants gained some knowledge on drawing graffiti. According to rule “each one teach one” they used peer education method and they became teachers for themselves.





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Final event for citizens of Konstancin-Jeziorna:

Participants of the project prepared an event for citizens of Konstancin-Jeziorna. It was break dance jam. I the event also took part children who were learning break dancing during open workshops for youngsters from Konstancin-Jeziorna.





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Follow up activities / what we can do after this exchange:

Spain:

- Promote hip hop activities in areas where there is strong presence of Roma kids
- More Jams rather than competitions

Italy:

- More free spaces and free dance classes to introduce kids to the culture
- Organising free classes within studios to involve children and introduce them to exchanges, sharing and the hip hop culture
- Going to primary schools and give free workshops
- More Jams rather than competitions; organising free hip hop nights and jams in open spaces

Poland:

- Plan free workshops and projects in smaller cities, not only in Warsaw
- More street events that show positive aspects of hip hop culture and smaller towns
- Involve more artists (MC, Graffiti Writers, Bboys, DJs) who promote positivity in their art (lyrics)
- More Jams than competitions during the year





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Video created during the project:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5NNr1zjaAyU>

