



## Game Lab

Game Lab Youth Exchange is a non-formal education program for people in the field of youth work, held from 4<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> of July 2022 in Rijeka, Croatia. The program was organized by the NGO Institute of Youth Power Croatia and was attended by 30 participants from 5 different EU countries: Romania, Spain, Croatia, Italy and Czech Republic. The goal of this youth exchange was to explore and develop soft skills like communication, leadership, teamwork, problem-solving, creativity, resilience and adaptability, through non-formal learning methods with emphasize in gamification. Every day, the activities started with games such as ice breakers and other energizers. Most of the activities were based on working in mixed groups or national teams. After getting to know each other on day one, day two was packed with a lot of adventures. The game called Colorblind Communication Challenge was very tricky, taking the participants out of their comfort zone. They were all "blindfolded" and given some objects that they had to describe and match. It was very educational and it pushed them to function as a team. Although there were some hard moments during the exchange, the facilitators tried their best to keep the atmosphere of harmony, optimism and good relationships. Especially fun activity was Lip Dub. The participants were divided into groups. Each group got lyrics for popular pop/rock songs. They needed to recreate music video duration from 1 to 2 minutes and then split tasks and lip-sync while the original part of the video was shown on the projector. This tool was used to engage young people in the promotion of tolerance, diversity and being together in a common world. The third day was more of an international and cultural day. The participants played Game Share activity. They needed to come up with a team name and create a game that has national context and/or connection. When each game was created and presented all the participants played the game. To familiarize the participants with the city of Rijeka, The City Game was played. After being divided into groups, participants went to the city where got multiple tasks to do, exploring and finding out some facts about the city, culture, and Croatia in general. When they found a certain place, they needed to accomplish a certain task (e.g. make a short video capturing the most memorable moments from a film or theatre in front of the Croatian National Theatre or ask locals about famous Croatian beverages/sportsmen and women). It was very challenging and quite fun and nice to ask locals for directions. They got to explore the city in a very unique way. Every afternoon and especially on the last day of this youth exchange the reflection activity was held. Participants sat in a circle and one of them took one object. The person holding it could share whatever they have about the exchange. It can be about all the processes, people,



activities, accommodation. We were very active during the last phase of the project, dissemination in our local community and visibility (Social media, website, local newspapers). Participants held several workshops about the gamification and innovative approaches in the field of youth. We created a Game Lab brochure which is available online and we are in the process of organizing small local board games events. After all of this experience we have motivation to create an upgraded version of this youth exchange Game Lab 2.0. In the end we would like to say thanks to all of our partners, participants, stakeholders, volunteers and members who took an active part in this project. This article reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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