

Reflection on Project Lab : Future craft

Redefining Sustainable development, (De-)Growth and Social Justice in (International) Youth Work

Period: 12th to 16th February 2025

Place: Weimar, Germany

The Erasmus+ Project Lab Futurecraft training was an immersive five-day event that brought together organizations, trainers, youth workers, and educators who share a deep commitment to fostering social justice, advancing education for sustainable development (ESD), and promoting de-growth in youth work. This event was not only an opportunity to gain new insights but also a space where diverse perspectives converged to address the pressing issues of social inequality, environmental degradation, and unsustainable economic growth within our broader societal and ecological systems.



On the first day, the atmosphere was set over a casual coffee session featuring four inspiring experts. These thought leaders introduced us to key concepts such as the circular economy, regrowth, post-growth, and sustainable development. Their presentations opened our eyes to the intricate connections between economic practices and environmental stewardship, and they challenged us to think beyond traditional models. The relaxed yet intellectually charged

environment fostered a sense of openness and curiosity, setting a collaborative tone for the days ahead.



The real journey began on the second day when we established our lab—a dynamic, co-creative space where participants from different parts of Europe could share their experiences and expertise. In this lab, the strength of our diverse backgrounds became evident. Paula from Latvia captivated

us with her presentation on the Doungut economy concepts, offering a fresh perspective on sustainable economic models that aim to redefine growth. Goran from Croatia enriched our discussion with his insights into an innovative initiative supporting local wine farmers, illustrating how traditional industries can adapt to new sustainability paradigms. Durmis from Turkey concluded our series of presentations by sharing a practical methodology implemented with small farmers in his region's villages, demonstrating how localized, grassroots efforts can lead to impactful, scalable change.

In the days that followed, our lab transformed into a fertile ground for dialogue and brainstorming. We moved beyond individual presentations to engage in reflective discussions, where every participant was encouraged to explore how their roles and local contexts



intersected with these global challenges. Through these collaborative sessions, we delved into

strategies aimed at disrupting harmful cycles and reimagining the tools and methods we use in youth work. The exchange of ideas was not just academic—it was deeply practical, with every discussion contributing to a shared understanding of how to integrate multidisciplinary perspectives into tangible actions.

As the event drew to a close, the conversation naturally shifted towards the future. We discussed potential initiatives and future projects, all underpinned by the conviction that addressing complex issues like climate change and inequality requires a united, cross-sectoral approach. The training underscored the importance of breaking down traditional disciplinary boundaries, proving that innovative solutions emerge when we combine insights from psychology, economics, sustainability, and beyond.

Reflecting on the Erasmus+ Project Lab Futurecraft training, it is clear that this experience was much more than a series of presentations and workshops. It was a transformative journey that not only deepened our understanding of how interconnected our societal challenges are but also empowered us with practical strategies to make a difference in our communities. The event has sparked a continuing dialogue among participants, laying the foundation for future collaborations and sustained efforts toward a more just and sustainable world.

