

İSTANBUL COMMUNITY MEDIA CENTER & DIGITAL SKILLS FOR INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Abstract

This paper is to inform the audience about the İstanbul Community Media Center, how it was established as a project, how it works, and how it promotes digital skills for intercultural dialogue and lifelong learning through its local and international activities realized since November 2014. The idea of transferring the effective work of Burgerhaus Bonnehaus (Community Center) in Münster, Germany, became real after 2 years' hard work and demanding project process in cooperation with YOUTHART Youth Art Research and Training Association, European Youth4Media Network e.V., Media Terra Nea and many other partner organizations and local stakeholders thanks to the funds and financial supports from the Republic of Turkey Ministry for EU Affairs within Civil Society Dialogue Programme Phase III and IV. Since its establishment in 2015, İstanbul Community Media Center has reached to 3000+ participants and visitors in the local and international activities, 250.000+ online followers and viewers. Through its activities, the most important social impact of the center has been on the intercultural dialogue and lifelong learning outcomes, which ultimately foster civil society dialogue, better understanding of social dimensions, healthier integration of modern city life, active participation in the democratic and civic life, and effective use of digital and media skills. Statistics gained from online tools proves well that such a center is highly useful especially for the youth and disadvantaged groups of the societies.

Establishment of the İstanbul Community Media Center

The initial steps were taken in 2012 when YOUTHART became a member of European Youth4Media Network. After joining in this network of about 50 international organizations from about 30 countries, YOUTHART, based in İstanbul, Turkey, started to focus more on projects about media. Building partnerships in projects funded mostly within European Union funds such as Youth in Action, Lifelong Learning, Erasmus+, Anna Lindh and Civil Society Dialogue programmes helped YOUTHART get a lot of experiences and expertise. Managers of the organization and participants of the project had the chance to observe good practices and successful projects, and returning back home with high motivation and enthusiasm to develop own projects in similar fields was inevitable due to the fact that the society in Turkey desperately needed such actions and projects about digitals and media. The first project that provided YOUTHART with funds to establish the media center was titled "Citizens Media for Intercultural and Political Dialogue" which started in October 2014 and ended in December 2015. The aim of this project was to open a community media center, create an Online Multimedia Platform, organise a series of local community workshops, international media conferences, media trainings courses for media trainers in İstanbul. We, the managers of the project believed that innovative media systems have to be developed to move citizens around the EU and Turkey towards a participatory acting and the implementation of freedom of expression and diversity. We are all motivated to work on that.

Participants of international media training courses gained a lot of knowledge and skills to be trainers so that they could teach what they learned to other people in the media center. The 4 trainings worked well and by the end of the project we had 24 media trainers who realized dozens of trainings, workshops and seminars about various topics, directly or indirectly touching the themes of intercultural dialogue and lifelong learning. The physical infrastructure as well as the technical equipment of the media center was also obtained thanks to the funds from the above-mentioned project. The office was opened in July 2015 in the hearth of İstanbul, working full time targeting the disadvantaged groups of the society, especially the youth.

Meanwhile, before the end of that initial project, steps for the sustainability of the media center were taken, and YOUTHART applied for bigger funds with a new project titled “Lifelong Learning for Digital Inclusion through Media Literacy”, in short “Learning Media Project”. This project is still under implementation until 15 May 2017. Currently, the rent of the media center as well as further equipment and staff costs are all covered thanks to the budget of this project. More media trainers and facilitators and graduated through international media trainings, and dozens of local workshops, seminars and information sessions are realized.

Budget

The total budget of the two projects that have funded İstanbul Community Media Center is about 260.000 Euro. The budget spent directly for the media center is about 10.000 Euro, and indirect costs are about 30.000 Euro. Although it seems like sustainability of such a center is quite impossible without international funds, actually these projects have provided YOUTHART such as big organizational capacity that it is now possible to survive with own resources and lead active at least locally.

Activities

- ✓ International Media Training Course, 13-21 November 2014, 20 participants
- ✓ International Conference, 15 November 2014, 80 participants
- ✓ 21 different local workshops, trainings, December 2014 - December 2015, 320 participants
- ✓ International Media Training Course, 09-16 November 2015, 22 participants
- ✓ International Conference, 14 November 2015, 65 participants
- ✓ International Media Training Course, 01-07 March 2016, 23 participants
- ✓ International Conference, 05 March 2016, 55 participants
- ✓ 14 different local workshops, trainings, March 2016 – February 2017, 218 participants
- ✓ Projeksiyon activity, 11 Şubat 2017, 90 participants
- ✓ 42 videos prepared within the projects
- ✓ Web platforms: www.citizensmedia.eu, www.learningmedia.eu, www.youthart.org.tr, www.youthartmedia.com and social media pages, 250.000+ visits
- ✓ Erasmus+ Programme European Voluntary Service information sessions as Eurodesk Info Point, individual and group meetings, 1800+ young visitors and attendees.

Social Impact, Results and Conclusion

İstanbul Community Media Center has reached to the number of 3000+ physical visits/participants and 250.000+ online viewers/followers. This proves well that the center functions well. As for the intellectual products of the media center, we can refer to the rich digital contents of the website, 200+ web blogs, 40+ videos, 3.000+ photos, 50+ booklets, newsletters and brochures all show that media activities have been productive and successful. Putting all these statistics together and looking from the perspective of intercultural and lifelong learning, we can conclude that İstanbul Community Media Center have become a successful project of projects because it develops media literacy skills of young people, who are socially disadvantaged, through lifelong learning activities; and by doing so, it is intended to increase the potential of being employed and mobility opportunities of this specific target group. Additionally, the dialogue among the different segment of society is enriched through the themes of media literacy, lifelong learning, civil society dialogue and digital inclusion. The feedback forms of the participants after each activity indicates that the objectives of the media center are successfully reached and both the leading organization, YOUTHART and the target group, the youth are satisfied.

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ВІЗУАЛІЗАЦІЯ ІТАЛІЙСЬКОЇ ІДЕНТИЧНОСТІ В АРХІТЕКТУРІ МІСТ ЛІВІЇ 1930-хрр.