

Rural youth and municipalities vs. youth and rural community

Name of the organisation

Rada mládeže Žilinského kraja

Website of the organisation

<https://www.rmzk.sk/>

Location of the organisation

M.R. Štefánika 8390/13, 010 01 Žilina, Slovakia

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Good practice aspect(s)/themes of youth work

- Array

Good practice category

Good practice aim & purpose

Everything started in 2016. The Youth Council in Žilina region started negotiations with city managers of villages Oravská Polhora, Zbrohlava, Oravské Veselé, and Beňadovo. Villages with different numbers of inhabitants, with city managers of different ages and different numbers of deputies. The main topic of meetings was the cooperation of the local village municipality with the youth inhabitants of the villages. And that was the beginning. Of What? Of mutual search for the development of cooperation between municipality and youth in the village.

Good practice description

Please describe your good practice based on the above given information (Explain your practice as such, in 'technical' terms and as clear and simple as possible.)

The series of facilitated meetings started in every village. First, discussion meetings were with young people of different ages, but also with important adults, who influence the lives of young people in the village. The aim of discussions was the formation of analysis of the state of life of young people in villages. Young people named what they are proud of in their village, what they like. On the other hand, they named problems, which they see and which need to be solved to improve their lives in the village. But only naming the problems was not enough, it was necessary to go deeper. It was necessary to think about the causes of problems and their future consequences.

The culmination of analysis was a mutual search for challenges to change. Young people and adults together created a tree of problems, on which the municipality can focus in the next 7 years. For everyone to be sure, how it will look in 7 years, during next mutual meetings we created a tree of aims, where we defined priorities, aims, and measures, which can be done to increase the quality of life in the village and intensify cooperation of youth with the management of the village.

When the heading of municipality and youth was clear, it was necessary to name how they will get there, what needs to be done to fulfill them. And so we created an action plan, which apart from activities also defined responsible subjects for realization and deadlines. And at the end of the whole process, the partaking sides – representatives of local municipality and youth agreed on what form they will use to follow the fulfillment of plans and goals.

The culmination of year-long work was a creation of strategic document – Conception of youth work in the village with the action plan and its approval by the local authority as binding document, which will show what they need to focus on, to make cooperation of young people and local municipality beneficial for all inhabitants of the village.

Please describe eventual challenges and problems related to the creation, implementation, and/or running of your good practice? (Explain the eventual difficulties that you have come across, so that others know what to think about if they want to implement your practice.)

In the village Zubrohlava, young people named many problems. One of them was, that they do not have enough space for activities of youth. At the beginning of the whole process, the dream of young people was to have their clubhouse. After the dialogue with adult representatives of different organizations active in the village young people understood, that they can share their clubhouse with other inhabitants of the village. And so after a mutual agreement with the management of the village young people proposed a solution – a community center/clubhouse, which will serve young people and other inhabitants. And they agreed on that. To make everything work, they established a local youth council, which networks young people in the village, finds out what their needs are, represents youth on meetings of local authorities and is involved in the communal life of the village. At the beginning the Youth council of Žilina region created a space for mutual dialogue in the village, active listening, searching for solutions and willingness to support the change.

Please give the names, roles and tasks of eventual partners involved in the creation, implementation and/or running of your good practice.

Municipalities of the Žilina Region

Please give an overview of the resources needed in order to establish and run your good practice. (Please describe the human, financial and other resources that are needed. Please also explain if you have got external financing from sources available for others, and if so, from what funding scheme(s).)

The pool of facilitators and experts, who were trainers for work with the municipality and young people. The project was supported by a grant from the Ministry of education, science, research and sport of Slovak Republic “Programmes for youth 2014 – 2020” which is administrated by IUVENTA – Slovak youth institute.

Good practice result & concrete effects

For young people:

development of competencies, considering the needs of youth and involving them in the decision process, the establishment of youth parliaments

For youth workers:

Improvement of competencies for the development of high-quality youth work on a local level

For your organisation as such:

development of competencies, competencies of members of the organization, publicity

For youth work in general:

example of good practice, which can be implemented in other municipalities

For society/your community in general:

recognition of youth work, development of youth work in local municipalities, creation of space that is friendly towards youth, increasing of participation

Good practice chapter of the European Charter on Local Youth Work