



PROJECT PARTNERS

Interkulturelles Zentrum (Austria) promotes the development of relations between people of different cultural origin and trains people to carry out practical intercultural work, in particular cross-border cooperation between schools, international youth work, as well as intercultural education and diversity management in Austria. IZ cooperates with international institutions (CoE, EC, UNESCO), Austrian ministries and in other European countries. Since 2007 IZ has been hosting the Austrian Agency for the EU program "Youth in Action".

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Agora CE (Czech Republic) works towards reinforcing democratic principles at various levels of society by encouraging citizen involvement in decision-making, broadening the consultative space for public debate and promoting public debate in Czech society. Since its foundation in 1998, Agora CE has played an active role in developing Czech civil society. The organization transfers the knowledge, skills and experience with new practices in local governance to its partners in its more than twenty citizen participation projects.

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Education Development Center (Latvia) promotes the strengthening of a democratic and civic society in Latvia in order to improve and activate the participation of different groups of the population in the life of the society, to improve their life quality and encourage the cooperation in this field among the state and municipality institutions, the private sector and the individuals as well as to promote the cooperation of different non-governmental organizations thus promoting the sustainable development of Latvia's society.

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The **Public Policy Centre (Romania)** is dedicated to undertaking activities that contribute to inclusive and transparent public policy development at the local level, thus aiding the advancement of effective local governance and improving the democratic character of local policy making in Romania. The mission of the Public Policy Centre is to contribute to the improvement of public policy by conducting independent research, enhancing the information flow, and facilitating policy debate among various policy stakeholders.

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The **Open Society Foundations (Hungary)** work to build vibrant and tolerant democracies whose governments are accountable to their citizens. To achieve this mission, the Foundations seek to shape public policies that assure greater fairness in political, legal, and economic systems and safeguard fundamental rights. On a local level, the Open Society Foundations implement a range of initiatives to advance justice, education, public health, and independent media. The Foundations place a high priority on protecting and improving the lives of people in marginalized communities.

The Grassroots Europe project is managed by the **Education Support Program (ESP)** of the Open Society Foundations. ESP's mission is to support activism, research, policy, and practices that promote education justice.

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Grassroots Europe for Local Wellbeing Initiative

LEAD PARTNER

Education Support Program
Open Society Foundations (Hungary)

PROJECT PARTNERS

Interkulturelles Zentrum (Austria)
Agora CE (Czech Republic)
Education Development Center (Latvia)
Public Policy Centre (Romania)

DURATION

1 January–31 December 2011

PROJECT WEBSITE

grassrootseurope.educationdevelopment.org

OUR PROJECT

The Grassroots Europe for Local Wellbeing project gives European citizens active in the field of education and social inclusion the opportunity to interact among themselves, with policymakers and civil society organizations at the local, national and EU level.

At the local level it pursues a community-based, participatory approach and seeks to involve a diverse array of grassroots education organizations that work towards promoting soft factors for local development (culture, creativity, and innovation of citizens) and fostering local wellbeing through formal and informal education.

By convening citizens of diverse social and professional backgrounds, paying particular attention to the perspectives of disenfranchised groups, the project aims to enable local voices not typically heard to become a part of the Europe 2020 policy discussions around education integration issues, ensuring valuable interaction between EU decision-makers and those directly affected by EU policies.

This project is developed and implemented through the cooperation of 5 civil society education organizations from Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia and Romania. By benchmarking of successful community based grassroots activities that foster local wellbeing, and collecting policy recommendations for the local, regional, national and European Europe 2020 process, we believe that expertise and good practice can be shared across Europe.

PROJECT EVENTS

Partner Meetings

- Project kick-off meeting (26–27 January 2011, Budapest, Hungary)
- Coordination meeting (19–20 May 2011, Cluj, Romania)
- Coordination meeting (7–8 July 2011, Riga, Latvia)

International Events

- International Grassroots Conference (7–9 October 2011, Budapest, Hungary)
- Project evaluation meeting (14 November 2011, Brussels, Belgium)

Country Events

Austria

- Conference for Austrian grassroots (9 May 2011)
- Grassroots panel (30 May 2011)
- Conference of Austrian Grassroots Network (27 June 2011)

Czech Republic

- Grassroots roundtable (14 April 2011)
- Workshop for grassroots (29 April 2011)
- Roundtable for grassroots (9 May 2011)

Hungary

- Grassroots workshop (11 March 2011)
- Grassroots workshop (9 May 2011)
- Grassroots workshop (24 June 2011)

Latvia

- National-level grassroots workshop (28 February 2011)
- 5 regional grassroots workshops (14 March, 21 March, 28 March, 4 April, 11 April 2011)
- Country-level grassroots workshop (9 May 2011)

Romania

- Workshop for grassroots (8 April 2011)
- Workshop for grassroots (9 May 2011)
- Grassroots Market (27 July 2011)

PUBLICATIONS

- Literature review of grassroots and volunteerism in Europe
- Policy analysis on the Europe 2020 process
- National publications – case studies as a result of the local grassroots meetings
- Joint volume on the topics of Grassroots in Europe for Wellbeing – five country experiences

THE EXPECTED IMPACT OF THE INITIATIVE

Representatives of more than 100 European grassroots education organizations will have the opportunity to contribute directly to debates, policy discussions, and the development of project models to foster local wellbeing through building a multicultural and inclusive society.

Partners will create a sustainable model of cooperation, able to further the policy agenda of linking grassroots education voices with policy discussions. Partners will develop the methodology for the project, organize and facilitate local roundtables, contribute to the final grassroots policy recommendations on local wellbeing generation, and begin building the institutional infrastructure for sustaining structured grassroots policy communication work.

Local, national and international policymakers will participate at various levels of the project throughout the year, i.e. taking part in local community roundtables, attending the project evaluation meeting, and discussing the recommendations of the grassroots organizations generated by the project.

By undertaking this project, partners will further develop their own capacity in working in the field of grassroots activism for local wellbeing, civic engagement, and active citizenship, advancing their theoretical and applied research in these fields, deepening their working partnerships with key NGOs operating throughout the EU.