

Preface

Today we live in a fast-changing and interdependent world, filled with challenges and opportunities. Every day we face a wide range of social, economic and environmental issues, connecting us to other parts of the world.

To assist young people to understand and tackle these global challenges, we need to provide opportunities for youth to learn about and explore global issues and be able to draw connections to their own lives and realities.

The non-formal youth education sector, has developed and grown rapidly across Europe. As a result of a number of national and international initiatives and especially in the framework of the EU Youth Programme (2000-2006) and the EU Youth in Action Programme (2007-2013), a lot of young people have built key lifelong learning competences (knowledge, skills and values) as individuals, trainers and facilitators. However, most of the initiatives under these programmes were mainly Eurocentric and failed to add a global dimension. Furthermore, especially in the New Member States, training opportunities and materials for youth organisations in relation to global issues are limited compared to, for example, training opportunities and materials for school teachers.

In order to support the introduction of Global Education into youth initiatives, the present toolkit aims to address global development issues in non-formal education and youth work through **learner-centred, participatory, dialogue-oriented and experiential methodologies**.

The objectives of the Youth of the World! Toolkit are to:

- introduce global perspectives into young people's local contexts;
- increase the capacity of youth workers in facilitating attitudinal change of young people towards a globalized society;
- provide practical tools and methodologies aimed at supporting young people to become responsible global citizens.

The toolkit is specifically developed for non-formal youth settings. It can be used by youth workers, youth leaders, trainers or facilitators to raise awareness of global issues among young people, connecting them to communities across the world.

The present toolkit is the result of the project "Youth of the World! Mainstreaming Global Awareness in Youth Work", co-funded by European Union. It was developed by a team of experts from six European countries, with a background in youth work and Global Education. The toolkit is based on research exploring attitudes of youth organizations towards global issues in relation to their own area of work. It was developed in close cooperation with young people, youth workers, trainers and other global education experts during two international project events: an International Workshop in Scotland (September, 2013) and an International Summer School for Youth Trainers in Cyprus (April, 2014).

By reviewing available resources on global education in youth work, the writing team concluded that there are many Global Education resources available. Therefore, the project team decided to use a product-based approach in order to connect real life experiences of young people in Europe to lived experiences of people across the globe. Therefore, the toolkit is divided into six main chapters, representing different commodities related to the everyday lives of young people: Water, Tobacco, Chocolate, Textiles, Mobile Phones and Meat. The products are used as a starting point for exploring global realities and global interdependencies. All activities address at least one of the following crosscutting global education themes: sustainable development, rights, diversity, health and lifestyle choices, social justice and equity, globalisation and interdependence.

Each chapter is set up in the same structure: introductory background information about the topic in the global context, two introductory activities and three activities exploring the topic in depth. At the end of each chapter, you can find links to additional information for further reading. The last chapter of the toolkit introduces four steps and suggestions on how to get active in your own community and how to take action as a responsible global citizen to foster a more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable world.

The authors of the Youth of the World! Toolkit wish you an exciting experience in engaging future global citizens!