

# PEDITORY PROJECT

Peace Education Through Digital Storytelling  
2022-2-PT02-KA220-YOU-000097612

INTERVIEW FOR YOUTH WORKERS REPORT



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## Project and background

Peditory Project aims to provide educational solutions by building a partnership in the field of youth. The consortium wants to develop a new and innovative methodology and toolkit for peace education based on digital storytelling. These aims address the additional priority which is "Increasing quality, innovation and recognition of youth work". On the other hand, this project provides solutions to encourage young people to take more responsibility for their own actions whilst learning to question authority and develop empathy towards others by examining the social, economic and political environment to understand where conflict comes from and how to transform it. Peace education is oriented towards empowering people to become active and engage on a personal and political level to achieve peace. These aims address the additional priority which is "Reinforce the links between policy, research and practice".

Peditory results will be used in potential conflict areas/communities in order to foster mutual understanding, respect and acceptance amongst diverse people in that area/community, to enable them to work towards resilient, respectful, sustainable and cooperative communities. In this regard, PEDITORY will focus on the Horizontal priority "Common Values, civic engagement and participation in alignment with the additional priorities".

In order to achieve these objectives, and within WorkPackage2, a preliminary study has been carried out on the current situation of young people and youth workers, in order to find out what knowledge they have about peace education.

For this purpose, two surveys were carried out: one with young people and one with youth workers, and an interview with a focus group of youth workers.

This report presents the results of the interview with a focus group of youth workers, for which the following questions have been used:

1. What is peace for you?
2. What concept do you think the young people have about peace?
3. Do you consider the curriculums about peace education contains enough information to train young people as peace advocate?

4. What kind of activities do you develop with your users/students?
5. How can we attract young people to know more information about peace? What kind of activities/resources/materials do you consider are interesting for them?
6. What are the main challenges you are facing in peace education?
7. What do you think are the main challenges young people are facing regarding peace and coexistence?
8. Nowadays there are many fake news about peace, peace culture, coexistence... How would you prevent this fake news?
9. If you would have to create digital storytelling like resources for peace education, what are the most important topics for you to be included on them?
10. If you have to choose three soft skills to be exploited and worked on in peace education, which ones would you choose? In what way would you train and work these soft skills?

The answers are measured in a qualitative way in order to obtain the best and most complained information from the professionals.

## Profile of participants

The target group of this questionnaire are youth workers, trainers and/or educators.

In total, 52 professionals participated in the questionnaire. These participants are from different parts of Europe, specifically from the countries of Portugal, Italy, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine and Lithuania. In this way, and due to the individualities and general differences in each of the countries, the generalisability of the responses is allowed.

## Analysis of results

### ***Question 1: What is peace for you?***

Participants defined peace as the absence of negative discussions, absence of conflict, absence of war, absence of any kind of violence, individual rights of any person that should apply to all generations, cultures, social classes... They use some words like coexistence, coliving, cooperation, respect for human rights, social justice, understanding between people, open mind, agreement, dialogue and negotiation freedom, protection, security, calm, harmony and happiness, cross-cutting, multidisciplinary concepts that can be extrapolated to any area, whether physical, mental or emotional.

***Question 2: What concept do you think the young people have about peace?***

Some professionals indicate young people think peace is feeling good, not having worries, not having fights or arguments with colleagues, being free to do, act and decide, absence of violence and conflict in society, peace goes beyond the absence of violence and focuses on the creation of conditions for long-term peace and social harmony. They believe that they understand the concept as a more emotional and momentary feeling. They indicate that it is complicated to define it as each young person has a different vision and perspective; and its concept is little known and little worked on. Young people live in an age of immediacy, constant stimuli, lack of stillness and restlessness, so in some respects young people lack peace. Young people have an incomplete conceptualisation of peace and this concept does not make sense to them.

On the other hand, they also indicate that young people have no idea about peace by hiding the concepts of freedom, peace and empathy as a consequence of peer bullying, cyberbullying, family pressure, family problems, language problems and agreements, exclusion and violence. Young people do not know how to distinguish between peace and conflict because conflict situations have become a situation that is constantly encountered in everyday life and are normalized.

***Question 3: Do you consider the curriculums about peace education contains enough information to train young people as peace advocate?***

They think not because the problem is how and what is transmitted, the subject continues to be dealt with from an external, distant, theoretical perspective, but these are empty concepts. They do not work on the practicality of the concept, the routine, the development of soft skills, which are the ones that will determine and help young people on their path in life. They believe that young people should be

trained in values, principles, teaching them values and skills such as effective communication, conflict resolution, respect, coexistence.... They also indicate a lack of practical skills, a lack of emphasis on global perspectives in peace education. There were participants who did not answer this question, which may indicate a lack of knowledge or interest.

***Question 4: What kind of activities do you develop with your users/students?***

They use dynamic and active group activities, debates and dialogues, exchanging experiences, guided meditations dynamics, reflective art dynamics, expression through writing, group awareness dynamics, management of feelings and emotions, conflict resolution, group discussions, art-based activities, storytelling, creative expression, workshop, interactive activities, oral presentation, lecturing and teaching, writing tasks, non-formal methods, independent learning, learning in an online environment.

***Question 5: How can we attract young people to know more information about peace? What kind of activities/resources/materials do you consider are interesting for them?***

Showing materials or activities motivating for them such as digital and interactive materials, presenting the information in an innovative and eye-catching way, allow the exchange of experiences among peers, support groups, involve social networks, use reference figures through workshops or seminars, using interactive and multimedia resources, online games, podcasts, short videos, community events, peace festivals with diverse cultures, dialogue among young people, scout movement (useful for the creation of empathy and constructive dialogue between people); gamification (empowering creativity, role-playing); watching movies.

***Question 6: What are the main challenges you are facing in peace education?***

They indicate a lack of material, human and time resources, lack of knowledge of the concept, lack of vocation from the professionals, lack of interest from the users, lack of temperance, patience and quietness, engaging youngsters who may not see the relevance of peace education, cultural and linguistic, deep-rooted conflicts, fake news, being narrow minded, nationalism, arrogance, ongoing war, egoism, being

close-minded, necessity, racism, lack of emphasis, motivation to add it to curriculum, competition, curriculum limitations.

***Question 7: What do you think are the main challenges young people are facing regarding peace and coexistence?***

Professionals indicate youngsters are exposed because of the internet and social media. The internet can be dangerous if youngsters don't work on its proper use and awareness, it's difficult to distinguish truth from lies, receiving constant information, and it can affect their critical thinking, capacity for analysis, conceptualisations...

***Question 8: Nowadays there are many fake news about peace, peace culture, coexistence... How would you prevent this fake news?***

They indicate it's hard to prevent fake news, but it's possible by training users in the proper use of social networks and the internet, showing them not everything is real, there are many lies on the internet, and they have to be critical with all they see, hear and read.

***Question 9: If you would have to create digital storytelling like resources for peace education, what are the most important topics for you to be included on them?***

Soft and practical skills, the ones we need in our daily lives, like critical thinking, analytical skills, observation, communicating with others, debating, using digital storytelling by sharing inspirational peace stories, creating video podcasts, a digital art gallery without words but with art, visuals or pictures.

***Question 10: If you have to choose three soft skills to be exploited and worked on in peace education, which ones would you choose? In what way would you train and work these soft skills?***

The most written by participants were critical thinking, analytical skills, communication skills, through debates, dynamic activities, role-playing games, simulations, examples...

## Conclusions

With a sample of 52 professionals around Europe, they define peace as the absence of negative discussions, conflict, war, violence, and the promotion of individual rights and social justice. Some professionals indicate young people think peace is feeling good, not having worries, not having fights or arguments with colleagues, being free to do, act and decide, absence of violence and conflict in society, peace goes beyond the absence of violence and focuses on the creation of conditions for long-term peace and social harmony. They believe that they understand the concept as a more emotional and momentary feeling. They indicate that it is complicated to define it as each young person has a different vision and perspective; and its concept is little known and little worked on.

Some professionals believe that current peace education curriculums lack practicality and focus on theoretical concepts. They suggest teaching values, principles, and practical skills like communication and conflict resolution. And the way they work with their students is in dynamic group activities, debates, meditation, art expression, writing, and discussions to promote peace education.

They suggest to attract young people to peace education by using digital and interactive materials, innovative presentation methods, peer exchanges, social networks, workshops, multimedia resources, online games, and community events.

About the challenges in peace education, they indicate their challenges include resource shortages, lack of knowledge, interest, and vocation, cultural conflicts, fake news, narrow-mindedness, and competition with other curricular subjects; and the challenges of young people is related to the internet and social media, including exposure to misinformation, which can affect their critical thinking and analytical skills. In addition, and regarding fake news that affects young people, professionals say that preventing fake news involves training users to use social media critically and teaching them to discern between truth and falsehoods online.

Finally, and being asked about the most important topics to include in digital storytelling for peace education, they indicate it should focus on soft skills such as critical thinking, communication, and practical skills for daily life. And about the most important soft skills to work on in peace education, they consider they are critical thinking, analytical skills, and communication skills, which can be developed through debates, dynamic activities, role-playing games, and simulations.