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## PEACE IN THE SPOTLIGHT

**Final report of the study session held by  
Service Civil International and  
Voice of Young Refugees in Europe**  
in co-operation with the  
European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe  
European Youth Centre Strasbourg  
8-12 April 2019

This report gives an account of various aspects of the study session. It has been produced by and is the responsibility of the educational team of the study session. It does not represent the official point of view of the Council of Europe.

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## Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of the study session 'Peace in the Spotlight', held at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg, from 8 to 12 April 2019. 'Peace in the Spotlight' trained young people to be 'peace messengers', with the training paying special attention to the topics of gender and refugees. These two topics were identified by young volunteers – members of the Peace Messengers network as the most pressing and important topics to address when talking about peacebuilding. The Peace-Messengers therefore wanted to learn about the refugee rights together with young refugees, and to prepare jointly educational projects which would address the topics of peace, gender and the refugee rights. Working together in a mixed group of team members from both Service Civil International (SCI) and Voices of Young Refugees in Europe (VYRE) was really mutually beneficial and very inspiring. It allowed exchange of knowledge and expertise between the two teams especially in: 1) securing that the peacebuilding work of SCI includes young refugees and it is done with young refugees 2) opens space for young refugees to engage on topics of human rights and gender equality with a volunteering organisation 3) provides new educational tools for the Peace Messengers network to address gender issues and refugee rights on different volunteering camps.

The activity gathered 27 participants; they got to know the Council of Europe's work on human rights education to promote gender equality and social inclusion of refugees. Based on the Compass manual, they developed different proposals for workshops which can be applied in youth clubs, schools and youth organisations as well as smaller videos campaigning for human rights of refugees.

The study session was an intensive week with a lot of reflection on the themes of peace, refugees and gender. The highlight of the study session was the participants' motivation to (also) take concrete action on gender equality or inclusion of refugees. Considering the number of planned follow-up projects this has been reached. Many learning moments were created through the programme, which was organised in a participatory way providing the know-how from both organisations - partners. By non-formal education methods, the participants gained new insights and were actively involved in discussions and their own learning process.

During the last two days of the study session the participants were working on follow-up projects. This process did not stop when the study session was over: the participants were asked to send their project plans to the course-director. In total, eight detailed project-plans were identified, monitored and in some cases have already been implemented.

The programme of the study session included different topics such as volunteering, peacebuilding, gender equality and refugee rights, allowing enough space for the discussions and reflections. Many questions were raised, with a wide variety of follow-up project ideas arising. In the end, the participants reflected how they or their organisations could provide solutions for the different issues discussed during this study session. This report provides an overview of the week and some of the follow-up ideas proposed.

We would also like to thank the Council of Europe's European Youth Centre for the support in organising this activity together.

## Introduction

This report outlines what happened during the 'Peace in the Spotlight' Study Session in Strasbourg. In this report you will be able to read about:

- 1) The intention behind the study session
- 2) An overview of the programme and the different activities that took place during the session
- 3) Conclusions and results that came out of the week; and,
- 4) Follow-up activities planned by the participants

## Background

One of the strategic objectives (pillars) of the Strategic Plan of SCI (2015-2019) is to promote a culture of peace and pacifism. It has taken a prominent place in previous strategic plans and will continue to have one in the future one. One way to reach this objective is by running peace-education workshops during the international voluntary projects, which we organize. Through the years, the number of concrete workshops during events has stagnated and the peace-education sessions are largely conducted through online platforms. SCI wanted to strengthen the "offline" work again and wanted to train young multipliers to spread the message of peace. We understand peace in the broadest sense of the word and have a broad experience with peace-education. Nevertheless, during the study session SCI decided to focus on two aspects of peace: (1) persons who seek refuge from war, and (2) gender and peace.

One of the international teams within SCI is the Peace Messengers Network (PMN). Peace Messengers are using the non-formal education methodology for sessions on workcamps to connect the camps with SCI's identity as a peace organisation. Last couple of years PMN mainly worked through online courses and they identified the need organize a residential event again which allows the members of the network to learn more intensively and based on experience. At the same time, the study session was also an opportunity to reflect upon and invest into new forms of peace-education.

SCI has a long-lasting experience in working with refugees, which is also related to another aspect of the Strategic Plan: showing solidarity with people with less opportunities. Part of this experience was highlighted during the Building Bridges Campaign, which focused on including refugees more concretely in our activities, thereby working **with** these groups instead of **for** them. The participants of the study session were trained to become multipliers who are active in voluntary projects, working **with** refugees and asylum-seekers. In this way SCI wanted to highlight the current ongoing 'crisis' around refugees in Europe. The intension was that some of these multipliers would be young refugees themselves.

The choice to include these themes in the study session was logically made, as both themes are related to peace as well. Due to the fact that it would be better to talk, discuss and learn with refugees than about them, SCI approached Voice of Young Refugees in Europe (VYRE) to co-organize this study session together. Moreover, a relative new development within SCI was exploring the relation between gender and peace. Issues such as traditional notions of masculinity, gender-related violence, gender inequality (especially in conflict-areas) and gender-roles education are just some examples that have been further examined. It was the intention that the study session would also touch these topics.

## **Relevance for Council of Europe**

The Youth for Democracy programme seeks to achieve the active participation and autonomy of young people in peaceful and inclusive societies of Europe. The study session within the programme contributes to the work on preventing and counter-acting discrimination that refugees, women and girls are facing today. The young people both from SCI and VYRE play an important role in supporting intercultural dialogue and conflict-transformation, and this activity provided them with more information and tools to do so.

In its previous work, SCI introduced the role of Peace messengers to work more concretely on building a culture of peace. Peace messengers would also act as multipliers, encouraging other youth to act as messengers for peace. In order for them to be able to deliver such activities, there was a need to have more constructive training for the Peace messengers within this study session. In this way, SCI would initiate discussions about peace amongst young people, who would then act and reflect on peace. With the current European situation, it was very important to motivate the Peace messengers with tools to support the inclusion and promote Human Rights for refugees/asylum seekers as well as, advocate for increasing importance of social inclusion. Gender was also taken as a specific part and integral need of the study-session, with a deep understanding that gender equality and inclusion is necessary in order to truly achieve peace. All of these points are clear priorities for the Council of Europe, especially its youth sector, thus working together with the Council of Europe allowed us to learn from the different standards of the organisation and explore Human Rights Education in the place where it is most promoted - the European Youth Centre.

### **Aims and Objectives:**

At the preparatory meeting the following final objectives were identified:

The study session in cooperation with Service Civil International and Voices of Young Refugees in Europe will build capacity of young trainers to act as 'peace messengers' within international volunteer camps. The participants will be equipped with Human Rights Education approaches and will use the Compass Manual to promote gender equality and the Human Rights of refugees.

#### **Objectives:**

1. To build a common understanding of the concept of peace and peace building including the threats to peace in Europe
2. To provide information and tools to young people so that they can act as peace messengers
3. To reflect on gender issues in peacebuilding and in the local context
4. To explore different challenges young refugees are experiencing in Europe and how Peace and Human Rights Education can address them
5. To support participants in designing follow up action as peace messenger by providing tools for campaigning, education and other activities.

## **Who Participated to the Session?**

The study session was a spirit-full one - the group of participants was open, dynamic and active. 27 participants took part in a week of discussion and learning. Some of the participants came from refugee / migrant backgrounds, while others had previous experience working around issues of gender, inclusion and peace. The participants were eager to learn about and for peace, with a strong interest in campaigning for either refugees or gender.

## **Presentation of Organisations**

Service Civil International (SCI) is a volunteer organisation dedicated to promoting a culture of peace by organising international voluntary projects for people of all ages and backgrounds. SCI's vision is a world of peace; social justice and sustainable development, where all people live together with mutual respect and without recourse to any form of violence to solve conflict. The organisation works to achieve this vision through the organisation of different activities, including trainings, volunteering activities, discussion and intercultural exchanges.

Voice of Young Refugees in Europe (VYRE) was founded by young refugees in the effort to unify and strengthen the voice of individual young refugees and refugee organisations in Europe. They support refugee youth through organising capacity building events and advocating for positive change. They are part of the Council of Europe Advisory Council, representing young people and discussing youth policy.

## **Topics and Issues Discussed**

The study session was an intensive week with a lot of reflection on the themes of peace, refugees and gender. The red thread in the study session was that the participants were stimulated to (also) take concrete action on the above fields and considering the number of planned follow-up projects this aim has been reached. Topics and issues discussed included: peacebuilding; gender; Human Rights; conflict management and non-violent communication; refugees and migration; and identity.

## Programme of ‘Peace in the Spotlight’

The interactive program-parts of the study session led to many new insights and interesting discussions among the participants. The following chapter firstly describes the main discussions and key-points explored within the program of the study session. Then in the next chapter we provide an overview of the key conclusions and outcomes of the study-session, in general and specifically concerning the main themes of the study-session: peace, refugees and gender.

Throughout the study-session, including the informal evening-sessions, participants learned from each other on interpersonal and intercultural level. The team facilitated as an outcome the intercultural learning during the study session. Here, we would like to mention that the group interacted very well with each other, even from the first day. This created a safe and trustful atmosphere and environment, where personal issues could be discussed openly and at the same time in confidence.



### Key themes and discussions

The study session started off with a welcome dinner, followed by a getting-to-know each other session. In this informal and interactive setting - among others ‘speed dating’ was useful to get to know each other. At the beginning, there were smaller groups of participants who knew each other either from SCI or from VYRE activities. By far most of the participants joined this session and started to communicate as a group.

On Monday morning our group was welcomed by Sarah Walter, Deputy Executive Director of EYCS, who shared about the history of the Youth Centre and invited participants to feel like at home (both enjoying the centre and taking care of it). During the **opening with an introduction to the study session** we shared information about the Youth Centre, the Youth Department of the Council of Europe and the co-management in the Council of Europe. The first day opened with speeches of the Educational Advisor of Council of Europe and **The Course Director of Peace in the Spotlight Study Session**. Those speeches indicated the aims, objectives and expectations of the Study Session.

#### ***Programme introduction to the Council of Europe, SCI and VYRE***

In a format of a café, the team set up 3 locations in the seminar room where participants could learn more about: The Council of Europe, SCI and VYRE. Every organization was presented by a trainer or facilitator to answer participants’ questions accurately. Participants moved around the 3 locations to get to know all organisations. Participants asked more about the organisations’ past and current activities, especially on Peacebuilding. Afterwards, participants indicated that they found this introduction exciting.

The introduction continued with another division of groups, or corners. Those were: programme presentation, expectations and fears, organisational goals, networking opportunities and self-contributions.

The participants were again asked to go around each corner, where a facilitator introduced the specific topic. This dynamic method caused an immediate and parallel introduction of the different aspects of the upcoming study-session. It must be said however that the corner 'expectations and fears' stayed more or less 'a corner' during the study session and afterwards it could have been a more profound element during the whole study session.

The introduction was followed by two different activities, based on group-building. The first activity was held outside and was based on working together as a group to reach a common goal. Participants were asked to hold a rope and form (blindfolded) a square, a triangle etc. Another activity was comprised of drawing portraits of each other and discover more about the different backgrounds in the room.

### **Peacebuilding**

With regards to the theme of the Study Session, our first sessions tried to answer following questions:

- What is peace?
- How do we define peacebuilding, conflict and conflict resolution?

The main objective of this session was to introduce Peace and Peace Building; Creating Common Ground; and Building blocks of peace.

As part of the flow, an updated form of an activity called "Peace Barometer" was performed which contains a line separating agree and disagree zones. Instant statements were given. Then the participants were asked to position themselves upon the level of their agreement or disagreement to the statement.

As part of this, the following 4 statements were provided:

*"Peace is the absence of the war."*

The participants were exchanging ideas while discussing what the war means to them. Overall, participants mostly disagreed. Most of them said that it does not have to be always as an absence of war. Sometimes it is about equalising tensions within the country or ensuring there are no human right violations such as limiting the freedom of movement. These issues also cause lack of peace as a couple of participants shared examples from Syria and Kosovo.

*"Poverty is one of the main reasons for wars and conflicts."*

Most of the group placed themselves on the Disagree side. Their arguments were:

- Poverty is related but not directly related with conflicts and war.
- Poverty is one of the reasons however not the main one.
- Corruption and Religious Differences were added to the reasons.



- Poverty is the main reason for the Revolution – based on an example for the socio-economic differences in the society in Albania during Communism period.
- Lack of basic needs causes escalating the conflict up.
- Not every person has the same understanding of poverty. The statement depends on what poverty represents to individuals.

*“Sometimes it is appropriate to use violent methods to maintain peace.”*

Participants almost divided themselves standing half on the agree and half on the disagree side.

The main arguments for disagreeing were that:

- Violence causes more violence. Because of the fact that there is violence we cannot talk about peace.
- Using violence as a tool will surely violate somebody else’s rights. It naturally escalates to more violence as a “Snowball Effect”.

But participants also agreed with this statement because:

- Practically, it is difficult to maintain Peace without Violence.
- “How would pacifist opposition fight again Nazism during the WWII without Violence?”
- Sometimes there is no choice but to use violent methods to limit the possible dangers for peace. In this way you sustain peace.

*“There is nothing you can do as individual to build Peace.”*

Mostly disagreed with the most remarkable argument, which was appreciated by the majority, being:

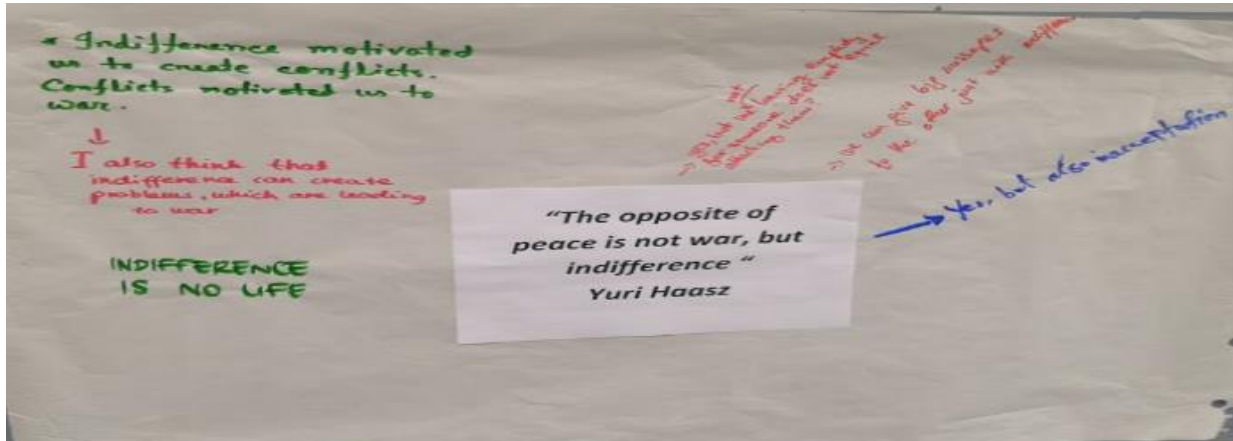
- Gathering people together with using non-violent methods can make a change in the world.

Using the Peace Barometer statements participants were able to discuss the related terminology: peace, war, violence, conflict, peacebuilding. They shared also what peace means to them, their reasoning with others and gaining other perspectives from varied opinions. At the end of the sessions, participants indicated that they were fascinated with the richness of ideas.

Another exercise called “Peace Flags” was intending to direct participants’ to their inner self to re-evaluate their values regarding peace and expressing their peace flags with their thoughts. They were asked to draw their personal *Peace Flags*, which shape, colours, symbols freely be chosen by themselves. All flags were presented by creators in a people’s circle then they were exhibited in the Conference Room.



After that “A couple of Peace Quotes from famous Scientists, Politicians, Philosophers and other famous Personalities” were displayed on paperboards and participants commented on them.



Participants also worked on designing a “Peace Flower” which contains key terms for peace. The flower created is presented below. The heart of flower was formed by peace in different languages. The participants outlined within the flower that peace is consisted of:

- Safety
- Love
- Empathy
- Justice
- Freedom
- Power
- Solidarity
- Trust
- Care
- Stability
- Mindfulness
- Silence

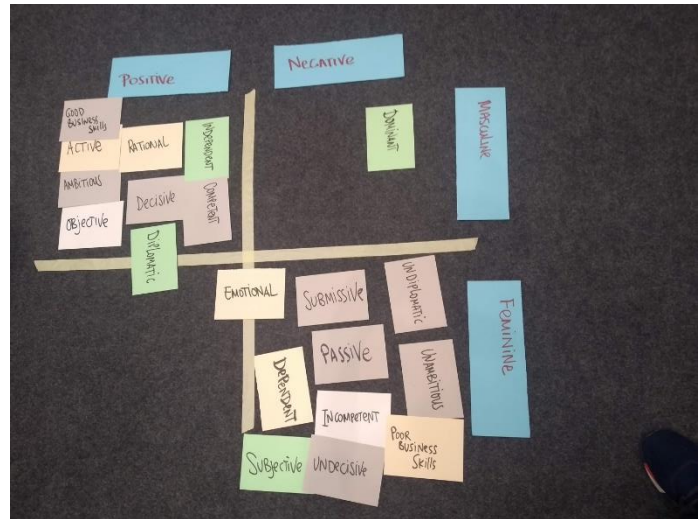


Through these activities, participants had opportunities to consider their views about Peace to enhance self-learning after interactions with the rest of the group members.

## Gender and Gender Equality

On Tuesday morning the group focused on the topic of gender. The facilitators introduced Gender Matters, the Manual on addressing gender-based violence affecting young people. GENDER MATTERS is a resource for working on issues of gender and gender-based violence affecting young people, with young people. It aims to build on educational resources and experience of Compass, the manual on human rights education with young people. It provides practitioners in human rights education with specific education tools and insights for a gender-sensitive approach to human rights education.

The group did gender mapping where the group assessed on positive and negative masculine and feminine traits. Through this exercise the group realized that the majority of the traits which were typically related to women were negative and positive traits were more attributed to males (see picture)



The participants also used the Stella activity from Gender Matters, which uses ranking techniques to confront the different values of participants in relation to issues of morality by having the participants read individual stories and facilitated discussion on behaviours and gender norms. ([link to the activity here](#)),

The participants were particularly interested in the different roles and found some of the story shocking particularly the differences in opinions. They found it hard to agree with good and bad behaviour and a lot of the groups differed, with some thinking that some characters were less 'bad' than others. There was a very heated discussion on this. Personal values were discussed, and it was clear that each person's values had an influence on their choices. Participants understood that expectations and values about gender in society are a cause of limitations and discrimination, especially towards women. They were particularly motivated to work on gender equality as a fundamental human right.

## Human Rights

Human rights were introduced through a presentation. It was mentioned that Human Rights are the basic standards without which people cannot live in dignity. Human rights are about equality, dignity, respect, freedom and justice. Examples of rights include freedom from discrimination, the right to life, freedom of speech, the right to marriage and family and the right to education and healthcare, the rights for protection of refugees etc.

Human rights are held by everyone, everywhere and all the time. Human rights are universal, that is, they are the same for all human beings in every country. They are inalienable, indivisible and interdependent, they cannot be taken away.

## **Introduction to Human Rights Education**

To introduce Human Rights Education, the participants did an activity called 'Different wages' from Compass Manual. It was a simulation that confronted people with the realities of the labour market. It addressed issues of different wages for jobs and discrimination in the workplace.

The participants were given tasks to do, with a promise that everyone would receive payments and a request for them not to discuss amongst each other. One group had to clean the seminar room, other group had to draw 4 world maps, another group had to find quotes about human rights and write them down, and the last group had to google human rights and write some rights down. After some time, each group started doing their tasks, but from time to time they were talking to each other, so the "manager" had to tell them to remain silent. After their "shift" had ended and all the tasks were done, they lined up in order to get their salary. However, as the activity suggested they all got different amounts. It was up to facilitators to check the list and decide who will get more and who will get less. They accepted it at first, but they still looked confused, and after a while they were angry about the different salaries. Once they realized that they did the same work, but the salary is not equal, after more than half of the people moved, one of the participants started a riot and others soon joined them. Finally, they all started to make a demonstration and shout 'We want equal salary!'. It was unexpected and interesting to see them unite so fast and act together.

After the tasks were completed, the payments were handed out according to the participants age and sex (randomly handed out through labels in the beginning). Guiding questions were asked during the discussions, including how it felt, does this discrimination actually happen in the reality in their country, and about the gender pay gap.

During the discussion and evaluation of the activity, we asked them what the activity was about and they guessed partially that it was about different wages and discrimination. We talked about this kind of situations in real life and they shared some examples from their countries. They shared that they felt frustrated, angry and ready to act. Some said that they remained silent so they would not lose their salary completely. They felt powerful when there was a riot, because they had a feeling that united, they can make a change and they succeeded. However, they also agreed that there are many situations like this where workers can not affect managers.

Through this activity we introduced Human Rights Education – learning about, through and for Human Rights. In a discussion with the participants it became clear what it is especially that:

1. They learned about human rights - got knowledge about human rights especially in this case the non-discrimination, fair salary and gender equality;
2. They learn through human rights – in a safe context where they can experience issues connected with Human Rights protection or challenges to Human Rights;
3. The learn for human rights – as most of them were ready to take action – to strike, campaign, educate and engage to protect Human Rights.

## **Conflict (management) and non-violent communication**

This session started with a game called the *Conflict Chair*. Eight chairs were put at random in the middle of the room. Participants were divided in three groups. One group had to put the chairs in a row in the middle, a second group had the task to set the chairs in a circle, while the third group were to bring the chairs to the window. The participants started with enthusiasm on their task, but this also led to people being carried away and conflicts emerged. During debriefing it appeared that the participants were surprised how fast they jumped into violence and conflicts, without trying to find a solution fit for all.

During the second part of the session, the “6 Steps of Conflict” were presented to the Group:

1. Irrational people are emotional- acts like shouting, hitting each other
2. Calming Down...Discussing in a more rational way.
3. Trying to find a common issue, what the actual conflict is about.
4. Proposing Solutions.
5. Finding the common resolution.
6. Following Up & Evaluation.

Following those footpaths, 3 handouts with cases-situations were given to participants, who were divided into groups. These groups played out the different conflict roles in the cases such as a conflict at home and conflict at work. Participants used some acting in small groups to get into roles and present the “6 Steps of Conflict”. After they presented there was a space for comments and suggestions by other groups.

An Explanatory Video on Non-Violent Communication was shown to the participants. ([Learning to speak Giraffe Video](#)). After watching this video, the same conflict chair game was used as a case study. Participants were encouraged to discuss within groups and find solutions for the conflict using non-violent communication this time.

### **Young Refugees in Europe: Understanding the Situation**

This activity started by literally making a map of Europe and marking the issues concerning young refugees, starting from the personal experiences of the participants, but gradually going beyond that as well. Issues for young refugees in European countries were listed. Some of the issues mentioned included: discrimination, lack of access to basic safe facilities, hate speech and hate crimes, populism, abuses by the services, no support for inclusion etc.

The second part was relating those issues with relevant human rights documents, such as the Geneva Refugee-Convention and the European Convention of Human Rights. The question was asked of which rights are exactly in stake? Based on the map participants could actually identify that all their Human Rights were at stake.

Following that, participants started to look what on local level and from the participants’ organizational perspective could be done. This searching for solutions was well appreciated by the participants and it took mostly away the feeling of being powerless of some participants at the beginning of the sessions. Important note in this session: As some of the participants were young refugees, some situations came

very close to their heart as well, but they were well recognized by other participants and received with empathy.

## **Identity(ies)**

To start the discussion the participants were asked to think what is identity and they should look inside of them first. They said that they are born with nationality, sex, religion, etc. but after people are shaped by the environment, peers, education and other factors.

After this brainstorming, participants were given papers and they had 5 minutes to write 5 identities or belongings in a star. Once they completed this activity, they walked around, and they asked other persons what they wrote and see if they have something in common. After they shared their identity aspects, we asked them to come back in plenary.

One of the things that we heard from many participants was that they said that gender is not something that describes their identity. There were some people that disagreed, so we had a small discussion based on this topic and how gender is or is not an important aspect of identity. Another powerful discussion with many opinions was in what way and in what aspect religion and nationality is a part of our identity and how it defines us and shapes our lives. Also, participants agreed that consciousness and social relationship are two aspects of identity.

When they were walking around, they made couple of groups and they were active and productive during this session. In general, we could hear some very different opinions and how culture is defining us and what is that we are born with and what is the aspect of identity that is new for us later on in life.

## **Practical tools for Action**

### **Creative Session**

This session provided some alternative tools for the participants to deal in another way with the topics discussed on the previous days. Groups were formed and had to present a certain issue linked to identity and inclusion/exclusion using the following tools:

- Garbage-recycling,
- Music and dance
- Theatre
- Video.

Although the time given to prepare a presentation was short, everyone was amazed by the quality of the presentations. And as often, art is another powerful way of expressing matters and can state what words maybe can't express.

As an example the participants developed the following video presenting some of the challenges for refugees coming into Europe:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dKsonPwoDXSIGMgmJasZnVwpqaW2f6qI/view>

## **Facilitation**

The session started with a roleplay that emphasised the amount and how different the types of messages participants in a group usually receive, a note that the role of a facilitator is not an easy one. It was followed by an exercise in facilitating with participants using hand gestures.

The key part of this session was a discussion on the role and the key competences for a facilitator. The different groups made different classifications and it was interesting to hear these discussions. There was a general consensus that some roles and competences are quite essential, but it can differ depending on what kind of facilitator one is, and which emphasis he/she/they prefers. For example, the group outlines that some of the competences which are specific to the work on gender equality and inclusion of refugees are:

1. Ability to create a safe space for the participants – refugees who might have experienced trauma
2. Asking questions allow participants to overcome shyness
3. Being able to listen actively
4. Understanding the challenges that refugees are facing when coming to Europe
5. Being a Human rights activist and not only a facilitator helps!

## **Ideas for Follow-up: Brainstorm**

The last session on Thursday was dedicated to start thinking about follow-up after the study session. Participants could propose ideas and were grouped based on those ideas. Different tools for project planning were handed out and during the second part of the session participants were already thinking and discussing how to implement those ideas. Many questions came up and many ideas started to develop from those questions.

The last day started with a presentation of EYF, which was very welcomed by the participants, because they were dealing at the moment with project-planning. The session was extended in time by many questions asked to the EYF representative.

It was followed by continuing working on the project-ideas for follow-up activities started on the day before. Those ideas were presented in two groups, in which participants could ask questions or leave notes for the presenter. You can find more information about the follow-up in the next chapter.

Friday ended with a conclusion and evaluation session. Different methods for evaluation were used, and the general feeling was really positive.

Some of the comments received on the evaluation form related to the main learning outcome of the week included:

- Learned how to identify and discuss human rights violations (mainly gender-related topics), how to educate and engage youth with human rights education

- Amazing new tool - Theatre of the oppress
- I learned and reflected a lot on gender equality,
- Discovering the stories of refugees in Europe and VYRE
- Diversity is difficult to understand but when you understand it and accept It is wonderful. We all have to work on our self to achieve this!
- I questioned myself a lot during the week, which was tough and amazing experience at the same time. I feel like I know myself a little bit better now :)
- We are all equal and how important the human rights are and how we should focus more in refugee's issues
- I learned a lot about the roles of the Council of Europe. All these European Institutions are very confusing and there is no better way to understand how they function than by actually visiting them and working with them.
- I also discovered Human Right Education, I didn't know it was an actual learning process with technics and characteristics.
- And of course, how to obtain funds from the EYF, very useful.





## Conclusions

The study session was at one side meant to explore peace with a focus on refugees and gender. On the other side, it was meant to give tools to the participants to spread the message of peace and raise awareness about (young) refugees in Europe and gender-issues.

We can state that both aims were mostly covered by the end of the week. Participants explored peace in several ways, and by taking part in the different activities the participants were also stimulated to think about how to work on these issues with other people. The participants got aware that the question 'what is peace' is not easy to answer, instead asking and exploring the question is a way of peace-education in itself.

In the field of gender, the participants felt disappointed and angry that they themselves also carried traditional gender-values. Personal values and identity are directly related to that, yet a lot of participants concluded that gender identity often a ground for discrimination and there is a need to work more on gender equality.

Last, but not least the participants started to think how they themselves or their organisations were able to provide (partly) solutions for the difficult situations many young refugees in Europe are living in. The fact that part of the group consisted of refugees themselves brought a special dimension and value to the study session.

The study session was broad in the sense that it touched many aspects, yet the discussions went quite deeper than just the surface. Many questions were being raised and that is, in the opinion of the preparatory team, about the best that a study session should deliver. The study session in the end did not finish at the end of the week as many project-ideas arose and some of them turned to be already complete project-proposals.

As a follow-up to this project, and to take the topic of peace and youth work further, SCI is working to create a stronger online course focused on peace (also included in a recent work plan application). This would be planned to create further peace messengers and thereby having a larger multiplying factor. The intension is to take the method of this study session further and give a facilitators training to the peace messenger so that they can act further in their local communities.

## Follow-up activities:

During the study session, some discussion took place on follow-up projects the participants could implement based on what they had learned and discussed within the week. After the study session, participants send proposal outline what they wanted to do and how they were planning to work on the topics. Many ideas were shared during the last days of the study session, but the ideas mentioned below are the proposals which the team received within the first month after the activity through email. The team is currently monitoring the implementation of the projects and follow-up with the participants on how their projects develop. The following shows a summary of the follow-up projects currently being implemented and shared with the team:

### **Community Project**

Eamonn is holding participatory trainings and education events for the marginalised youth of Bridport, particularly the youths living in Skillin which is an estate that is currently gentrifying. The activities will be given through a perspective of critical pedagogy and pedagogy of the oppressed. The intention is to assist youth in engaging with the existing structures in the town and to create/manage structures of their own. The project will be implemented with different partners and funders, including businesses; charities; governmental and education institutions; and youth organisations. A good working relationship with local groups is being established to get this project up and running.

### **Workshop on accepting cultural difference through intercultural dialogue**

Florida delivered a workshop entitled 'Changing our communities by accepting our cultural difference through intercultural dialogue activities', working with 15 young people from different ethnicities who live in the city of Klina, Kosovo. The purpose was to bring the youth together to exchange and interact with each other through entertaining and interactive activities. The young people would then have the change to have further follow-up activities themselves that would consist of art installations or events, environmental activities or cultural activities.

### **Human Rights Workshop**

Arta plans to organize a workshop focused on human rights split into three distinct parts. The first session consists of a game where the youths (all coming from different local communities) would get to know each other deeper and more clearly. The second session would asking questions on whether participants agree with certain statements/topics based on a Compass activity – Electioneering: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/electioneering>. The third section would provide more information and discussion on human rights and the people working for human rights based on the Fighters for Rights activity (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/fighters-for-rights>). The objective of the workshop was for the participants to meet and get comfortable with each other, as well as encourage co-operation, open-mindedness and further action.

### **Looking at Gender with youths from different backgrounds**

Matilda wanted to work with youths from different backgrounds, aged from 10 – 20 years, who would come from Roma communities, Egyptian communities, rural areas, were at risk of trafficking, the LGBTQI+

communities, or/and have social and economic obstacles in Albania. She wanted to increase awareness about double discrimination in Albania, use sport as a tool in order to break taboos on gender in Albania and building bridges between different vulnerable youth groups. She designed a football game for gender equality, a workshop that would be an information session on gender equality, and a study visit to the Roma community organisation, allowing ESC volunteers to visit and get to know more about the gender roles within the community.

### **Academy of Junior No Hate Speech Activists**

Merushe looked to work with young people from the Balkans to break down stereotypes, prejudices and fight against hate speech. The objective was to learn about Hate Speech online, as well as offline, and how to create counter narratives. This would raise awareness in the youth aged 16-25 years and would be planned over 5 days using different non-formal and human rights education methods.

### **Train the Trainers in Diversity (Human Rights, Gender and Refugees)**

Petra trained 10-15 psychology students (volunteers) who would become facilitators or trainers of intercultural and gender sensitive workshops delivered to high school students and employees at multinational companies in Hungary. The workshops would focus on gender and ethnicity related issues, with short trainings being given a few times to the students and longer, one day trainings offered for the employees. The activities would include games on micro-aggressions, information on gender unicorn, information on privilege (including the game take a step forward) and provide toolkits/materials for further learning and activities.

### **The Bright Side of the Moon**

Lediona wanted to work on an international project between Albania, Turkey, France and Germany where several short documentaries would be realised in every country. These documentaries would bring focus to the (successful) lives of some immigrants and refugees. The documentaries would look at migration; discrimination and intolerance; as well as citizenship and participations. The documentaries would be created by young film crews (directors, cinematographers, editors, etc) with some background in migration. The aim was to encourage activism in a creative way and to promote solidarity with the target audiences, including locals who may not have been in touch yet with this part of immigrant/refugee's life.

### **Together you are never alone**

Rudi's proposal wanted to support the access to studies and education for exiled students (students which have been exiled from their countries for political, economic, humanitarian or climate reasons). The project team would work on a booklet that would present the key information and services regarding the French (higher) education system and student's services available in Arabic, English and French. There would be three workshops offered in Paris, informing students about their rights, explaining the French system, helping them to prepare and showing resources they could use and then distributing the guide. A website would also be created with all this information included for those students (or potential students) who won't have access to the info sessions.

## Study session

### “Peace in the Spotlight”

Study session organised by the Association of Service Civil International and Voices of Young Refugees in Europe in cooperation with the Youth Department of the Council of Europe

European Youth Centre Strasbourg

8-12 April 2019

## Programme

### **Sunday, 7 April 2019**

- Arrival of participants
- 19:00 Dinner
- 21:00 Welcome evening

### **Monday, 8 April 2019**

- 09:30 Welcome by Sarah Walter, Deputy Executive Director of the EYCS  
Opening with Introduction to Study Session,  
Intro of aims & objectives of the Study Session / Expectations & programme  
Introduction to the Council of Europe, SCI and VYRE
- 11:00 Break
- 11:30 Team Building activity
- 13:00 Lunch
- 14:30 Introduction of Peace and Peace-building  
Creating a common ground
- 16:00 Break
- 16:30 Building blocks of peace
- 18:00 Reflection group
- 19:00 Dinner
- 21:00 Intercultural evening

### **Tuesday, 9 April 2019**

- 09:30 Introduction to gender and gender equality  
Activity based on the Gender Matters manual  
Gender based stereotypes and discrimination
- 11:00 Break
- 11:30 Gender based violence  
Gender issues in peacebuilding

- 13:00 Lunch break
- 14:30 Take a step forward  
Introduction to Human Rights Education
- 16:00 Break
- 16:30 Conflict transformation skills  
Non-violent communication
- 18:00 Reflection groups
- 19:00 Dinner
- 21:00 Storytelling evening

### **Wednesday, 10 April 2019**

- 09:30 Challenges for young refugees in Europe  
Mapping and understanding the situation
- 12:30 Lunch break
- 14:00 Tour of positive initiatives – visit of several social businesses and civil society working on  
refugee integration in Strasbourg with Makers for Change
- 16:00 Coffee break provided at Makers for Change office  
Free time
- 19:00 Dinner in town  
Free time

### **Thursday, 11 April 2019**

- 09:30 Stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination
- 11:00 Break
- 11:30 Addressing fake news and hate speech online and offline  
Introduction to Bookmarks,
- 13:00 Lunch
- 14:30 Facilitation skills
- 16:00 Break
- 16:30 Taking action
- 18:00 Reflection groups
- 19:00 Dinner

### **Friday, 12 April 2019**

- 09:30 Presentation of the funding possibilities by the European Youth Foundation and  
exchange with Marcio Barcelos from the EYF  
Finalising the taking action
- 11:00 Break
- 11:30 Presentations and feedback to the action plans
- 13:00 Lunch
- 14:30 Presentations and feedback to the action plans  
Conclusions
- 16:00 Break

16:30 Evaluation  
Closing of the study session  
19:00 Dinner  
21:00 Farewell party

**Saturday, 13 April 2019**

Departure of participants

**Aim and objectives of the Study Session “Peace in the Spotlight”**

The study session in cooperation with Service Civil International and Voices of Young Refugees in Europe will build capacity of young trainers to act as ‘peace messengers’ within international volunteer camps. The participants will be equipped with Human Rights Education approaches and will use the Compass Manual to promote gender equality and the Human Rights of refugees.

**Objectives:**

1. To build a common understanding of the concept of peace and peace building including the threats to peace in Europe
2. To provide information and tools to young people so that they can act as peace messengers
3. To reflect on gender issues in peacebuilding and in the local context
4. To explore different challenges young refugees are experiencing in Europe and how Peace and Human Rights Education can address them
5. To support participants in designing follow up action as peace messenger by providing tools for campaigning, education and other activities.

## Appendix 2: List of participants

### **Participants**

#### **Albania**

Lediona Kasapi

Merushe Zeneli

Matilda Zizolli

#### **Armenia**

Chougher Maria Dough Amajian

#### **France**

Muneir Elhassan

Jamaleidein Omer Abdalla Adam

Rudi Osman

Paya Ndiaye

Fatoumata Soumah

#### **Greece**

Marianthi Galateia Nikolouia

#### **Hungary**

Petra Barany

Reka Ecsér

#### **Indonesia**

Mokhammad Arif

#### **Italy**

Stefania Diceglie

#### **Kosovo<sup>1</sup>**

Florida Gashi

#### **North Macedonia**

Arta Abduli

#### **Norway**

Paulina Anna Pasternak

#### **Poland**

Dorota Skotak

#### **Sri Lanka**

Dinusha Lakmali Wasala Mudalige

#### **Sweden**

MD Tamzid Hasan

Shakila Umme

#### **United Kingdom**

Eamonn Custance

#### **Preparatory team**

Wilbert Helsloot

Fehime Pehlivan

Ivana Kostadinovic

Amy Stapleton

Eranyak Oganova

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<sup>11</sup> All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood

in full compliance with the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

**Local visit**

Roberta Taramelli Makers for Change

**Council of Europe Secretariat**

Stefan Manevski, Educational Advisor, Youth Department

Nina Kapoor, Programme Assistant, Youth Department

Marcio Barcelos, European Youth Foundation



## Appendix 3

### Reference List

Youth Department of the Council of Europe: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/home>

Council of Europe Resources: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/resources>

Fighters for Rights activity: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/fighters-for-rights>

Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young people:  
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/electioneering>

Youth Transforming Conflict:  
[https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47261899/T-Kit12\\_EN.pdf/9791dece-4a27-45e5-b2f1-b7443cb2125b](https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47261899/T-Kit12_EN.pdf/9791dece-4a27-45e5-b2f1-b7443cb2125b)

## Appendix 4

### Visibility Links

Didier Reynders visits the European Youth Centre: News article highlighting 'Peace in the Spotlight'.

[https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/news/-/asset\\_publisher/IEL7ZgITXeTU/content/11-april?\\_101\\_INSTANCE\\_IEL7ZgITXeTU\\_viewMode=view](https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/news/-/asset_publisher/IEL7ZgITXeTU/content/11-april?_101_INSTANCE_IEL7ZgITXeTU_viewMode=view)

Voice of Volunteers Blog post: Personal account of the Study Session shared on the SCI volunteer Blog.

<https://voicesofvolunteers.wordpress.com/2019/04/17/peace-messenger-study-session-in-strasbourg/>

Video shared from the Study Session itself. Shared through the google drive.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dKsonPwoDXSIGMgmJasZnVwpqaW2f6qI/view>

Facebook Post from Service Civil International shared on the Study Session.

[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=10157355533962848&id=340964432847](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=10157355533962848&id=340964432847)

News post shared by VYRE on their website outline the event with a small description.

<https://wearevyre.net/news/vyre-held-study-session-peace-in-the-spotlight-together-with-sci>