

INCLUSIVE
VOLUNTEERING

VOLUNTEERING AS A TOOL FOR INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

GOOD PRACTICES MANUAL



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Volunteering as a tool for inclusive society

GOOD PRACTICES MANUAL

This manual has been developed as part of a transnational partnership, funded by the Europe for Citizens (EFC) - European Commission program, involving organizations from Croatia, Germany, Ireland, Serbia, and Slovenia. These organizations combined their expertise to create this practical manual. This project was developed by the following transnational partners:



LJUBLJANA PRIDE ASSOCIATION, SLOVENIA

(LEAD PARTNER)

As an association, Ljubljana Pride Parade represents a marginalized social group of young LGBTIQ+ people and voices their needs in society. As the organizer of the annual Pride Parade, it also assumes the role of articulating the broader social interests and rights of the LGBTIQ + community in Slovenia. It positions itself as an organization that fights all forms of racism, discrimination, homophobia, and other forms of discrimination and oppression.

www.ljubljana.pride.org



YOUTH HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVE, CROATIA

Youth Initiative for Human Rights – Croatia was founded in 2009 and currently has four permanent staff. They are a member of the YIHR Regional Network, who works on empowering youth, underrepresented youth, and youth from war-affected areas to combat discrimination, racism, and xenophobia while promoting human rights. YIHR offers a collaborative hub for youth, NGOs, and grassroots group where they can host and organization educational and cultural events, as well as receive consultations. YIHR has facilitated the establishment of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office for WB formed on the model of the Franco-German Youth Exchange Office. YIHR – Croatia's mission is to foster transitional justice mechanisms, promote human rights, advocate civic values, and enhance post-war reconciliation and cooperation in the Western Balkans. In 2019 YIHR Network was awarded the Council of Europe's Vaclav Havel Human Rights Prize and YIHR Croatia was awarded the Human Rights Prize of the French Republic "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity".

The logo for Loesje, featuring the word "Loesje" in a stylized, handwritten-style font with a horizontal line underneath the letters "e" and "j".

LOESJE e.V., GERMANY

The objective of Loesje is to exchange ideas and opinions by stimulating people to create their own ideas, express themselves, and use their own unique talents to cultivate social and cultural exchange at both local and international levels. They create posters with short but strong texts (one-liners), which shine a different light on a particular subject, through a collaborative process. The international network is active since 1983 and are a registered association in Germany since 2004, where they have worked with 30 international long-term volunteers from as many countries, as well as many interns. Loesje is active in the fields of Human Rights Education, the No hate speech campaign, non-formal education, creative collaborative art creation, and much more. They conduct training courses, job shadowing projects, strategic partnerships, local creative integration projects in Berlin and festivals. In all of these volunteers are active and can express themselves and develop their skills.



IRISH NETWORK AGAINST RACISM (INAR), IRELAND

Irish Network Against Racism (INAR) is a national membership organization with 120 member organizations, including LGBTQ+ organizations, working collectively to address racism in Ireland. INAR's network of diverse civil society organizations is committed to combating racism and all related forms of discrimination in every sphere of life. As a network, developing a sense of solidarity between various member organizations with the common goal of combating racism, particularly those who might not have collaborated otherwise, is a priority. INAR is dedicated to finding common strategies and policy positions for combating racism, complementing each other's work, and offering cross-community and cross-sectoral support and solidarity. Through their work on hate crimes, they have established strong relationships with organizations representing the LGBTQ+ community and people with disabilities.



YOUTH INITIATIVE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, SERBIA

The Youth Initiative for Human Rights is a regional organization established in 2003. From its inception, YIHR has based its activities on principles of regional cooperation and establishing/maintaining connections among young people in the region, while building a more cohesive civil society. YIHR develops links among young people, CSOs, and decision-makers in the Western Balkans and supports youth activism across ethnic divides, conducts advocacy on human rights, and supports coming to terms with the past. YIHR has independently-registered branches in Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia. It is the only regional network that operates a coordinated program of activities.

"Volunteering as a tool for an inclusive society" aims to build intercultural understanding and solidarity through activities engaging local communities in practices of inclusive volunteerism. This project explores how to use volunteering as a tool to deal with homophobia, racism, and xenophobia in the context of NGOs and local communities, as well as how to create inclusive environments when working with different stakeholders. Volunteering of marginalized groups is a key tool for promoting solidarity among EU citizens and beyond, as well as to cultivate more inclusive organizations. With this manual, the partner organizations want to share useful tools for all sorts of CSOs, with specific value added for the youth sector and local communities particularly interested in getting young people involved in their volunteering activities. The collected best practices they have established in their projects or organizations when it comes to volunteering are a tool for an inclusive society. Volunteerism has a beneficial impact on the volunteers, on the organizations, as well as on the communities in which the volunteers work, and more globally on society. These practices aim to encourage other organizations to reflect on volunteering as a tool for an inclusive society and to get inspired to create programs and projects that follow that vision. Be it creating opportunities for LGBTIQ+ youth to volunteer in a safe place, giving refugees and asylum seekers the possibility to volunteer in a bicycle repair association, or a homeless support project run by Muslim women in Ireland, we truly hope these initiatives will inspire you!

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Involving and supporting LGBTIQ+ young people in European Solidarity Corps (volunteering) projects - Guidance for organizations

Ljubljana Pride Association



Ljubljana, Slovenia



ljubjanapride.org



[LjubljanaPride](https://www.facebook.com/LjubljanaPride)



info@ljubjanapride.org



ABOUT THE PRACTICE

The publication offers some simple guidelines and tips for involving young LGBTIQ+ people in European Solidarity Corps (ESC) volunteering projects and for providing support during the project. The guidelines are easily adaptable for participants in ESC employment and traineeship projects and are also highly relevant for other young LGBTIQ+ people who are not involved in an organization's activities through the ESC program, but are participants in activities, colleagues, local volunteers, etc. The term 'volunteer' used in the publication includes all of these and related roles.



PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE PRACTICE

The publication aims to empower all youth organizations, including those involved in ESC projects and those not involved who may or may not be interested in joining the program in the future to reflect on the inclusiveness and, consequently, the quality of their volunteering projects (especially for young LGBTIQ+ people).



WHAT SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES IS THE PRACTICE RESPONDING TO?

The Ljubljana Pride Association is the only organization in Slovenia with an established and functioning LGBTIQ+ inclusive volunteering program, which means that the pool of organizations where LGBTIQ+ people could safely engage is quite small. The publication contains important elements of working with young LGBTIQ+ people and places them in the center of inclusivity. In doing so it also contributes to laying the foundations for building more accessible and inclusive spaces or programs (within a project or organization) to (future) LGBTIQ+ volunteers and individuals from other marginalized groups. And as a result, stereotypes and prejudices against LGBTIQ+ people are interpersonally challenged in the volunteer group through personal interaction. At the same time, the cooperation of the LGBTIQ+ community with allies is strengthened, leading to the development of a more solidarity-based, humane, and equal society. And as a consequence, contributes to greater empowerment and employability, especially of young LGBTIQ+ people, who are known to be a group with less access to employment.



POSITIVE IMPACT OF THE PRACTICE

- The publication raises awareness and the importance of inclusive, safer spaces for young LGBTIQ+ people, as well as other vulnerable young people from different marginalized groups.
- It encourages and educates all those who work with volunteers and other members of the organization to think strategically about building programs that are diverse and representative in an intentional way.
- The publication facilitates the continuous involvement of individuals in volunteering that is inclusive and uses methods and tools for the inclusion of marginalized groups - especially young LGBTIQ+ people; thus, contributing to the development of competencies and confidence of young LGBTIQ+ people.
- It contributes to greater activation and social inclusion of young LGBTIQ+ people who are systematically denied access to rights, opportunities, and resources because of their sexual orientation or identity.



TIPS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PRACTICE

In addition to following the guidelines for inclusive LGBTIQ+ volunteering, which offer the first steps towards creating an inclusive organization, we also suggest:



Connecting and collaborating with LGBTIQ+ organizations;



Adhering to the principle of "nothing about us without us": the involvement of LGBTIQ+ people and/or organizations is crucial when implementing activities dealing with LGBTIQ+ issues;



Purchase of relevant literature or materials on LGBTIQ+ issues;



Creating safer spaces (also in the form of concrete changes in the physical space, such as gender-neutral toilets);



Financial investment in training of all people involved in the organization's activities (employees, volunteers, external collaborators) on LGBTIQ+ issues and the concept of safer spaces (by LGBTIQ+ organizations).





TESTIMONIALS OF THE PARTICIPANTS/VOLUNTEERS

What helped you feel safe and accepted during your EVS/ESC project?

How did the host organization make sure this happened?



"Diversity of the group."



- "The principle of safe/safer spaces was ubiquitous and not just on paper."



- "My personal pronouns and my name (which is different from the name I was given at birth) have been respected. I felt most secure because I could talk about my problems without being judged."



- "Violent situations were handled instead of being swept under the carpet."



- "Asking about pronouns was normalized - I found it particularly important that I was asked about pronouns in Slovene, as the language is very gendered. I got the feeling that they cared."



- "The organization provided me with a counselor to whom I could turn in case of personal distress or community-related problems."



"They respected my pronouns."



- "They asked me what I needed or what would help me to feel comfortable and relaxed in my identity."

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Group volunteering project within the European Solidarity Corps

Ljubljana Pride Association



Ljubljana, Slovenia



ljubljanapride.org



[LjubljanaPride](https://www.facebook.com/LjubljanaPride)



info@ljubljanapride.org

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ABOUT THE PRACTICE

Since 2016, we have been hosting a short-term ESC project (previously group EVS) aimed specifically at LGBTIQ+ youth. Every June we host 15 young people who support the implementation of the Ljubljana Pride Festival. Volunteers are included in diverse activities: from taking photographs and filming, selling merch, providing hospitality to the guests, and managing the festival spaces. They are also provided with the opportunity to gain new competencies and connect more with their LGBTIQ+ peers. The project also allows them to experience how it is to be a part of a safer space, where their identities are not questioned or denied but given room to reflect and try out (to those questioning) or just be.



PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE PRACTICE

The **purpose** is to provide (volunteering) opportunities for LGBTIQ+ youth.

Goals:

- 1) empowerment of the LGBTIQ+ youth;
- 2) enable the gain of new competencies, thus making the LGBTIQ+ youth more competitive in the labor market;
- 3) provide safer space.



WHAT SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES IS THE PRACTICE RESPONDING TO?

Existing stigma, prejudice, and discrimination that target LGBTIQ+ youth, lack of specialized LGBTIQ+ volunteering opportunities and opportunities in general ...



POSITIVE IMPACT OF THE PRACTICE

LGBTIQ+ youth is more empowered, and soon after this experience many go on to start their own projects, activating more on a local level. In this way, the project is often an entry point of their further activist or active citizen development. The local community on the other hand is faced with increased visibility of the LGBTIQ+ young people, slowly realizing their potential and increasing acceptance.

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AYS - Educational and language support for children under international protection (Brother and sister)

Are You Syrious?



Zagreb, Croatia



areyousyrious.eu



[areyousyrious](https://www.facebook.com/areyousyrious)



areyousyrious@gmail.com



ABOUT THE PRACTICE

Volunteers in our programs are teachers, professors, pedagogists, sociologists, psychologists, social workers, as well as those who study or have significant experience in such fields. They meet 1-on-1 with refugee children for two hours per week to help them with homework, school material, and Croatian language acquisition. In addition, with approval from their parents, when it's needed volunteers are in contact with school teachers and professionals, building a bridge between school and family, as well as communicating and developing together the best learning strategies for each child.



PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE PRACTICE

- Supporting education of refugee children
- Filling a gap of insufficient Croatian language training for refugee children
- Supporting parents in their involvement in children's educational process
- Inclusion of refugees in the local community

Success in the formal education process and integration of refugee children relies on the solidarity of volunteers who wish to utilize their experience and knowledge to make everyday life easier for refugee children through this inclusive volunteering practice.



WHAT SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES IS THE PRACTICE RESPONDING TO?

This volunteering practice responds to insufficient support offered within the formal education system for Croatian language acquisition and additional educational support that refugee children might need due to language barriers, difference in educational systems, and educational loss while on the move.



POSITIVE IMPACT OF THE PRACTICE

Through the Brothers and Sisters program, 79 volunteers provided 2.886 hours of support with language acquisition and schoolwork for 51 children from 22 families in Zagreb.



TIPS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PRACTICE

Education of volunteers is crucial, and it should be focused on the needs and different educational experiences of refugee children, as well as a wider picture of the position and rights of the refugee population. Good practice is also mentoring. When possible, a long-term volunteer is accompanying a new volunteer in the first month of volunteering, supporting them with their knowledge and experience, and easing the adaptation period for the child. Finally, volunteers need to have space (we have a Facebook group) where they write volunteering reports, reflect on the studying process, share experiences and resources and ask for support from other professionals.



TESTIMONIALS OF THE PARTICIPANTS/VOLUNTEERS



Post by Jana "The Healer"



Post by Helena "The Creativity"



Post by Paula "The Energy"



Post by Maeva "The Winter Magic"



Post by Marko "Veliki brat"

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Biciklopopravljaona / BicPop

Zelena akcija / Friends of the Earth Croatia



Zagreb, Croatia



biciklopopravljaona.zelena-akcija.hr/



zelena-akcija.hr/hr



biciklopopravljaona@zelena-akcija.hr

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ABOUT THE PRACTICE

Biciklopopravljaona started as a volunteering participative project that aims to help people in repairing their own or donated bicycles. People learn how to fix broken parts of bicycles or how to change flat tires with the help of volunteers from BicPop. From 2009, more than 7,500 repairs were done in BicPop and over 600 donated bicycles were given to new owners. This bicycle service promotes solidarity, and it has become an intercultural meeting place of the local community. When the European migrant crisis started in 2015 and more refugees and asylum seekers came to Zagreb, they did not have any means of transportation, so BicPop decided to offer them help by teaching them how to repair old, donated bicycles. After over 200 bicycles were donated to people with refugee or asylum seeker status, many of the recipients decided to become BicPop volunteers. This led to their further inclusion in the local community because they now regularly interact with and repair bicycles with locals that come to BicPop.

Target group: refugees and asylum seekers



PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE PRACTICE

- Inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers in local community
- Breaking stereotypes of locals about foreigners, especially refugees and asylum seekers
- Promoting solidarity among different groups
- Helping refugees and asylum seekers in learning Croatian language and culture
- Providing refugees and asylum seekers specific knowledge and skills, useful for their everyday life and better chances for their employment



WHAT SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES IS THE PRACTICE RESPONDING TO?

Systematic challenges that this practice is responding to are integration of newcomers in society, lack of solidarity between various social groups, rise of racism, discrimination, xenophobia, and violence towards refugees and asylum seekers, along with climate issues related to traffic jams, pollution, and waste accumulation within the City of Zagreb.



POSITIVE IMPACT OF THE PRACTICE

Positive change of this practice is the creation of safe intercultural space for the local community, which also includes refugees and asylum seekers as its newest members. Popularization of volunteering and solidarity by teaching people how to repair their bicycles with the help of more experienced volunteers. Another positive impact is promotion of cycling in the city. This practice is a unique combination of environmental, practical and refugee-oriented service.



TIPS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PRACTICE

To approach marginalized targeted groups that they want to include in their volunteering through first helping them in solving some basic problems that they are facing. To organize courses about gaining specific skills needed for volunteers to be able to work with people that need help and to take in consideration the language barrier. To find some attractive and spacious location in the city centre that is easily accessible to a large number of people.



INTEGRACIJA SAD!

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Protocol: how to proceed in case of domestic violence

Sor Juanas 9M



Berlin, Germany



sorjuanas9m@gmail.com



ABOUT THE PRACTICE

The idea is to create a protocol with the most important information about how to proceed in cases of domestic violence. This protocol is done in collaboration with other women and will include information about institutions that provide support in different areas such as physical and mental health, legal advice, and the alternatives offered by the embassies of the home countries of the affected women. The target group is migrant women of Spanish speaking countries.



PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE PRACTICE

The goal is to make this information available free of charge and in the mother tongue of the affected women, since many of them don't know how to deal with such situations in a foreign country, especially when they do not speak German or when they are new in the city and do not have a network that supports them.



WHAT SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES IS THE PRACTICE RESPONDING TO?

- Domestic violence and other related kinds of violence that migrant women face (e.g. institutional and financial violence).
- Discrimination on grounds of language and/or nationality.



POSITIVE IMPACT OF THE PRACTICE

The collective is currently working on the protocol and even though this is a work in progress, we have already gathered relevant information that has been shared informally or through other communication channels of the community. Additionally, developing this protocol has provided us with a safe space where we can share our experiences and empower ourselves mutually.



TIPS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PRACTICE

To take the time to research what similar resources exist from related organizations to maximize effort, resources, and time.

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Die Lernwerkstatt

The whole practice of the organization

Die Lernwerkstatt – lernen & lernen lassen e.V.



Berlin, Germany



die-lernwerkstatt.org



andre.broetz@die-lernwerkstatt.org

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ABOUT THE PRACTICE

The aim of our organization is to provide a space for self-determined, collaborative and creative education. People (volunteers) can come to us with an idea for a project, workshop, or a course and we help them to facilitate it into practice. Participants of all ages and backgrounds are welcome, since our financing concept centers around gifting: each event is a gift and there are no participation fees or formal requirements. We do our best to be as inclusive as possible with the workshop facilitators, volunteers, and our participants, trying not to exclude anyone for any given reason.



PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE PRACTICE

- To give anyone an opportunity to share knowledge or to create a space for learning from and with others
- To create a wide range of creative and collaborative learning formats, that engage people of all backgrounds in self-determined education processes
- No previous experience with facilitation is necessary, we offer a space to experiment and practice with formats and topics
- Learning by doing is the driving factor
- Volunteers and facilitators aren't required to commit a specific amount of time, we are very flexible and most people are engaged for roughly 1-2 hours per week



WHAT SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES IS THE PRACTICE RESPONDING TO?

Allowing anyone to host an event or anyone to participate has its challenges, since lack of experience generally requires close assistance from our team members and the openness of our participation groups sometimes leads to conflicts or very heterogeneous environments (e.g. with regard to age, competence levels or language/cultural backgrounds). However, we believe that spaces that offer exactly this kind of openness and room for experimentation are strongly needed in our society. Most educational institutions create numerous barriers, for example through participation fees or specific qualification requirements before events can be hosted. Our response to this systemic challenge is to help facilitate the ideas of anyone, who is motivated and passionate enough about sharing a certain topic with other people.



POSITIVE IMPACT OF THE PRACTICE

Many people with little or no experience have organized workshops, courses, and projects within the framework of our organization. Through the learning by doing approach, they quickly learn a great deal about the process and improve continuously over time, which has helped us empower a great number of people over time. They have often been able to transfer the gained skills and competences into their own career paths. The inclusivity of our participants has created a rich diversity in our events and has allowed people from all kinds of financial and cultural backgrounds to access high quality education.



TIPS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PRACTICE

People with little or no experience with organizing and hosting events need close assistance through the process, so make sure to plan facilitation support accordingly and also to give flexibility with regard to topics and formats. Allowing participants of all backgrounds to take part in events is certainly challenging, but it has more advantages than disadvantages. Make sure to sensitize the workshop facilitators and volunteers, to help prepare them to deal with the heterogeneous groups.



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Amal Women's Group Health Day

Amal Women Association and Islamic Foundation of Ireland



Dublin, Ireland



amalwomenirl.com



niera@amalwomenirl.com
(coordinator email)



ABOUT THE PRACTICE

Health screening day is a one-day event held in a Dublin mosque where a team of nurses provide medical examinations and blood checkup tests for the community free of charge.

The targeted group is the Muslim community in the Dublin area, especially those who face difficulty in accessing regular medical services due to lack of language knowledge or having no medical card because of their legal status or social circumstances.



PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE PRACTICE

This event aims at providing free medical service to disadvantaged people in the Muslim community.

- **goal 1:** providing health checkup to 80 to 100 people, including regular checks and necessary blood tests.
- **goal 2:** participants can see a GP with their checkup report on the same day.
- **goal 3:** participants can get their blood test results back in 3 weeks time.
- **goal 4:** spreading awareness about serious illness causes and general healthy life practices.



WHAT SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES IS THE PRACTICE RESPONDING TO?

This event gave a chance to nurses and doctors from the Muslim community to give back to their community by volunteering to work along with the hired medical team in performing examinations, giving advice and referrals.

Muslims in Dublin come from many different origins and speak different languages, so a team of volunteers speaking different languages was available to help in translation and interpretation.

This type of event is very important at the current time due to the huge pressure on medical services in Ireland as an impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, all medical services are suffering from loss of capacity, which includes long waiting lists for patients and being understaffed.

People who don't speak English were most impacted by the lack of capacity and were struggling to secure decent medical services with a reliable translation or interpretation service.

This event was very appreciated by both the volunteers and the participants. Sometimes people want to do good things for their communities but they don't know how, so when they participated in this event they felt they could help many people in need with the experience they have.

On the other hand, people from the community who felt isolated had an opportunity to meet doctors and nurses from their own community who speak their own language and and they felt supported and content.

In addition, many people were able to receive a diagnosis due to the availability of free tests, whether it's a diabetic condition, blood pressure problem or something more serious, and then were helped to book appointments immediately with professionals near their homes to follow up.



TIPS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PRACTICE

Our advice would be to increase the number of nurses on the day to help speed up the process and serve more people.



TESTIMONIALS OF THE PARTICIPANTS/VOLUNTEERS



"Thanks to the IFI and Amal group. This is one of the most accepted programs delivered for the community by ranking.



FEEDBACK

Most things work well such as safety nets delivery, Doctors and Nurses on ground, facilities and refreshments provided. Others include the online registration and well structured arrangement to be seen by Safetynet.

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Homeless Support Project by Muslim Sisters of Eire

Muslim Sisters of Eire, Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland



Dublin, Ireland



msoe.ie



muslimsisterofeire@gmail.com



ABOUT THE PRACTICE

The Homeless Support Project run by Muslim Sisters of Eire is a project whereby Muslim Women in Ireland lead by giving direct practical solidarity to large numbers of Dublin's homeless people every Friday evening. Every Friday evening MSOE sets up a hot food stall outside the historic General Post Office (GPO) on Dublin's main thoroughfare O'Connell Street, giving out 400-500 hot meals, with fruit and other healthy foods, to people experiencing homelessness and poverty. They also provide essential hygiene materials, tents, and sleeping bags. The target group is people of all genders and all faiths in the Dublin area, who face homelessness and poverty and need a hot meal and shelter.



PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE PRACTICE

To provide practical solidarity to people facing poverty, exclusion, and homelessness.

- **goal 1:** Provide hot food and vital material for survival to those in need.
- **goal 2:** Build solidarity and good relationships between all people in Ireland.
- **goal 3:** Promote social integration, diversity and empowerment of women.
- **goal 4:** Enact the core tenets of Islam and charity to dispel myths and stereotypes about Muslims, and Muslim women in particular.



WHAT SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES IS THE PRACTICE RESPONDING TO?

Homelessness, exclusion, and poverty. Social divisions and religious intolerance.



POSITIVE IMPACT OF THE PRACTICE

The project, which has existed for 7 years, has alleviated suffering for thousands, raised awareness about the issues of poverty and homelessness, raised the profile and positive image of MSOE and Muslims in Ireland through media coverage, participation in civil society collaboration, and has now been cited in the National schools' curriculum.



TIPS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PRACTICE

Commitment! Start small and stick to it, and build from there and stick to it! Be very transparent and accountable when taking donations.



TESTIMONIALS OF THE PARTICIPANTS/VOLUNTEERS



"It's amazingly rewarding and very humbling work meeting people in need. And ultimately it's beautiful. You would think that as Muslim women, wearing Hijabs in Dublin city centre at night, we would feel vulnerable. But we don't. We feel safe. Our clients value us and protect us. They love seeing us. They stand up for us if anyone tries to say or do anything to us. That is the meaning of solidarity, supporting and protecting each other."



ARTICLES ABOUT THE PRACTICE



[Facebook watch: Muslim Sisters of Éire](#)



[Instagram post: Muslim Sisters of Éire](#)



[Sunday World: 'Muslim Sisters of Eire fed a 'heartbreaking' number of children at their soup run'](#)



[Irish Times: \(VIDEO\): 'Number of people in need right now is spiralling out of control'](#)



[Dublin Live: 'Muslim charity feeding hundreds of people in Dublin city centre severely impacted by COVID'](#)



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Pride Info Centre

Youth Initiative for Human Rights



Belgrade, Serbia



yih.rs



office@yih.org

Pride Society



Belgrade, Serbia



prajd.rs



parada@parada.rs

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ABOUT THE PRACTICE

Pride Info Centre is a visible space in the city centre of Belgrade for LGBT+ youth to come and volunteer. Until 2018, volunteering at the Pride Parade in Belgrade was strictly limited, for safety reasons. Starting in 2018, Pride Week, Pride Parade, and the new Pride Info Centre started to open up more to its community. A public open call for volunteers engaged the public further, and over 100 LGBT+ youth with different identities and backgrounds volunteered for Pride activities. With special attention we created space for LGBT+ youth coming from marginalized communities (people with disabilities, Roma people, people coming from low-income backgrounds, women with a special emphasis on trans women) to voice their concerns and opinions, but also to present to others their problems and challenges. With help from Pride Society (Pride Info Centre) and YIHR they were given the opportunity to organize events during Pride Week and talk about issues and challenges they are facing to raise awareness with the public.

Target group: LGBT+ youth



PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE PRACTICE

Purpose: Since a lot of LGBT+ youth are still afraid to come out, Pride Info Centre is providing community through opportunities to volunteer, gain practical experience, and have a safe space where they can openly express themselves and actually be heard.

- **goal 1:** Safe space
- **goal 2:** Empowerment
- **goal 3:** Space for LGBT+ youth from marginalized communities to be listened to and heard



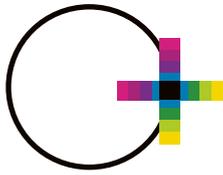
WHAT SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES IS THE PRACTICE RESPONDING TO?

LGBT+ youth in Serbia are often faced with discrimination, physical violence, and psychological violence from their parents, peers, and strangers. Pride Info Centre provides them with a space to be heard and to feel accepted by their community. The space allows them to talk, point out the problems they face, and offer solutions.



POSITIVE IMPACT OF THE PRACTICE

After visiting and hanging out with their peers, our volunteers felt empowered to organize their own workshops and education for other LGBT+ youth. Pride Info Centre also became a place for the community to visit anytime during the year and feel accepted and empowered to continue to volunteer throughout the whole year.



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