

‘Challenging the Crisis – Promoting Global Justice and Citizens’ Engagement in a Time of Uncertainty’

‘Challenging the Crisis – Promoting Global Justice and Citizens’ Engagement in a Time of Uncertainty’ (the ‘Project’) is a 3-year development education project led by IDEA together with partners in 5 other countries, of which the European Commission is the main funder. The other Partners in the Project are: *Fair Trade Hellas* (Greece), *CIPSI ‘Coordinamento di Iniziative Popolari di Solidarietà Internazionale’* (Italy), *Fondazione Culturale Responsabilità Etica* (Italy), *Instituto Marquês de Valle Flôr* (Portugal), *SLOGA* (Slovenia) and *Fundación Economistas sin Fronteras* (Spain).

Aim (Specific Objective): The Project's main aim is to engage young adults from Greece, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain to understand the interdependences of local and global inequality and to enable them to become active advocates on global justice issues; thereby anchoring development policies despite austerity measures at home.

Context: This Project will develop critical awareness amongst young adults and enable them to see the unfolding European debt crises in a global, interdependent context. Public engagement in and support for international development becomes more difficult to harness in times of austerity and uncertainty across Europe. The current context of harsh austerity measures in the partner countries is especially challenging for young adults (apprentices, university students, school leavers, etc.) who are in the process of trying to enter the workforce or continue in training/education. By providing space for critical reflection on the local context of social justice issues in Europe (debt, inequality, etc.) and linking this reality with poverty and inequality globally, the Project will engage young adults to act, and address issues central to a coherent vision for international development. It aims to ensure that any possible solutions to inequality and injustice, particularly within the post MDG reality, have a distinctively global dimension, providing space for Europeans to take action. This approach will lead to solidarity with other countries and communities, and support for international development policies aimed at eradicating inequality and poverty globally, despite current austerity measures at home.

Methodology: The Project will identify, train and support a network of “Young Global Advocates” (YGAs) from across the 6 partner countries. These young people will operate both in their own country and at a European level for the activities. The YGAs – supported by the Project Partners - are central to the wider impact of the Project activities by ensuring a multiplier effect through:

- peer-led sessions in their communities, organisations and countries
- an online platform and intensive social media presence
- engaging development NGOs to connect their international work with local justice issues

- opening space with media for debate and reflection on global aspects of the financial crisis, and
- targeting policy-makers through a Europe-wide youth-led campaign culminating in a European Citizens' Initiative with a target of 1 million signatures.

Key Outputs:

- Base-line of young adults attitudes to global justice issues
- Online platform with information on Project themes and exchange between young people from the partner countries
- 6 webinars led by experts on the Project themes from the Global South
- Global Youth Forum in 2014 with 60 Young Global Advocates from partner countries
- Media Guide to bring global justice issues into coverage of national financial crisis
- The European citizens' initiative¹ - an international campaign on a global justice topic related to the Project led by YGAs
- Advocacy action led by young people in each partner country related to ECI
- Advocacy manual developed by YGAs on developing and rolling-out campaigns

Results:

- At least 1200 young adults engaged in local justice issues are better informed and supportive of a European and global dimension to domestic justice issues and spaces for critical debate on local-global connections are provided
- At least 60 CSO actors in EU partner countries are empowered to highlight the interdependence between local and global justice issues
- 330 people responsible for media coverage on domestic justice issues and the debt crises are provided with a more global perspective.
- Policy makers at European level will be influenced by the network of "Young Global Advocates" and the ECI

Outcomes:

- Contribution to a more just and sustainable world by raising awareness and empowering EU citizens as global development advocates
- Influence legislative change at national and European level
- Change in public engagement approach of development NGOs and CSOs
- By bringing together young people, it is envisaged that a focus on global justice will show Europeans the value of responding jointly to the current financial crisis and therefore re-engage them with the idea of a European community acting in solidarity to overcome the global challenges we are presently facing
- By helping young people make connections between their daily lives and struggles of others globally, and advocating for global justice, the Project communicates an important message: despite severe inequality and austerity measures at home, Europeans still act in solidarity with people around the globe experiencing inequality, injustice and violations of their human rights and dignity.

¹ An ECI allows one million EU citizens (from a quarter of EU Member States) to participate directly in the development of EU policies, by calling on the European Commission to make a legislative proposal. <http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/welcome>