

EMYS MANIFESTO



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THE EMYS MANIFESTO

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**December 2023
Nicosia, Cyprus**



E M Y S

Engaging Marginalized
Youth for Sustainability

The EMYS Manifesto was created in the framework of the Erasmus+ project **EMYS-Engaging Marginalized Youth for Sustainability** (Project: 101051370 – EMYS – ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-YOUTH-TOG). The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

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CONTEXT

WHAT IS THE EMYS MANIFESTO?

The Manifesto you have in your hands is the result the collaborative work of the EMYS Network, a group of 50 young people from Austria, Cyprus, N. Macedonia, Spain and Sweden. This network was created during a Youth Networking Event that took place in Nicosia, Cyprus between the 1-5 of December 2023 in the framework of the Erasmus + project EMYS - Engaging Marginalized Youth for Sustainability.

A manifesto is a written statement declaring publicly the intentions, motives, or views of its issuer. (Merriam-Webster). The EMYS Manifesto consists of a declaration of intentions and views of the EMYS Network regarding the participation of youth in civil society. It includes a series of aspirations and guiding principles that should be internalised for the creation of sustainable initiatives and for effective activism that will lead to social transformation and justice.

HOW WAS THE MANIFESTO CREATED?

The EMYS project was a two-year project which aimed to trigger the motivation and enhance the capacity of young people to take actions and implement initiatives on local, regional, national and European level. By doing so, young people become change makers equipped to advocate and deal with the challenges they face in their communities but also on a European level.

One of the final activities of the project was the implementation of an International Youth Networking Event which aimed to exchange good practices in the field of youth advocacy and lobbying; facilitate the creation of networks among young people for the implementation of common European activities and empower youth participation. The main output of the event was the development of the EMYS Network and Manifesto.

Over the course of the event, the participants worked in groups to identify and develop their vision, desired outcomes and guiding principles that consist the core of the Manifesto. The youngsters that make up the EMYS Network, brainstormed together and using the world cafe methodology, they exchanged ideas and developed the contents in a collaborative manner. The development of the document was complemented and informed by the rest of the activities of the event which included workshops on advocacy and lobbying, communication strategies, fundraising and grants available to youth, EU Youth dialogue, and learning about the local context and social initiatives. The EMYS Manifesto was presented on the last day of the Youth Networking Event.



#MANIFESTO

THE MANIFESTO

VISION

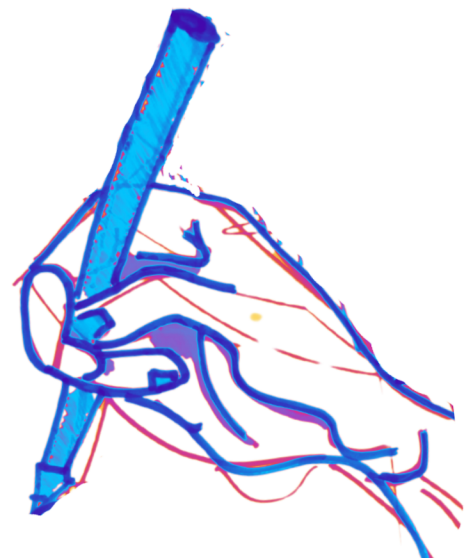
Society is a safe space built on inclusion, diversity, equality and empathy where the youth is educated, active and able to exchange these values globally, supported by the institutions with climate and social justice as their priority.

Climate Justice

Climate crisis is affecting everyone, so we have to be the change and fight for climate justice. However, some of us are privileged and are not facing the same difficulties as the others. If we want to live in an inclusive world, our leaders have to do everything to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement. Our vision is to stop global warming, fossil fuels, the rising of the oceans and species extinction.

Safer Spaces

Young people demand safer spaces where they can share their ideas, opinions, and wishes openly and freely. A place where nobody is discriminated or marginalized on the basis of gender, race, religion, ideology, sexuality, disability, nationality. A space in which emotions can be expressed safely, so that everyone has the same opportunities to actively participate and be included.



Youth Exchanges

Youth Exchange programs fulfill young people's aspirations for a better future by fostering global awareness, overcoming discrimination and cultivating friendships. Participants share experiences and knowledge building trust and understanding while actively contributing to a global community.

Through traveling, they embrace interconnectedness, initiating projects that reflect their collective vision for a harmonious world based on mutual respect and cooperation.

Education

The education of young people must play a fundamental role in ensuring that they are informed and empowered citizens. Promoting activism, encompassing political and social knowledge to avoid ignorance of the current reality is one of our main missions. Through youth gatherings, we cultivate skills, promote equality and increase the younger generation's ability to actively contribute to a better society.

Global Responsibility

Belonging to a community is something we cannot evade. Belonging implies being responsible and, therefore, since we, as young people, belong to this world, we also have something to say. This responsibility does not remain in the nation, it transcends it because of globalization. Our actions have consequences in other parts of the world. This should be kept in mind in order to remind young people the importance of what we do but also what we don't do and let happen. We have to take action.



(Functional) Institutions for Youth

From local initiatives and small networks we could achieve developing functional institutions where we can address our problems. We need a unified and free system for all youth where we can consolidate our efforts . A fair representation is the one that includes all groups of ages in all political levels.

Equity - Equality

When thinking about a safe space, in an ideal world where everyone has the possibility to take an active role and have a voice, equality should be the core value to take into consideration to foster an open minded community based on inclusion. In order to provide an effective education to everyone, it is fundamental to provide the same opportunities in every situation, inviting people to train their empathy toward the willingness to understand and to listen, enhancing trust and respect for human rights and minorities. Again, only with an equal and just knowledge and development, our goal for a brighter future can be reached.

Actions

Our vision for action is to foster in youth the ability to build a thriving community through engagement at local, national and EU levels. Responsible action can reshape collective perspective and consciousness, driving positive changes that transcend borders and promote a healthier society for all.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In order to fulfil the vision for a more just and sustainable society, the EMYS Network identified the following guiding principles that should be part of our daily lives and characterize our worldview - the way we think and act towards others, towards the environment and towards ourselves.

| Solidarity is the umbrella in a rain of despair |



It is always someone's passionate, supportive, lovely hand who helps you in trouble. In the end we are all social beings, so we need to take care of each other. Cause we rise by lifting others!

| Meet me before you judge me |

It's very important not to draw conclusions before knowing the other person's opinions and views. Very often people draw conclusions based on the external appearance which sets the ground for mistrust, hate speech and discrimination. We are all different, we all have our own experience but we all want just to be loved, accepted and included.

| Wisdom grows with knowledge and knowledge grows with experiences |

Wisdom increases as one acquires knowledge and knowledge, in turn, expands through lived experiences. Wisdom and knowledge are inevitably interconnected.

| Embrace challenges and use failures as opportunities for learning and improvement |

Challenges and mistakes are the best way to learn and grow in every sense of the word. With each new challenge, you realize more and more what you really want and what you do not want in your life. That way you begin to eliminate the experiences of past mistakes and slowly create a better world.



| Bring education to every generation for a livable future |

Education about sustainability and social issues needs to be intergenerational and ideas need to be exchanged between generations. In order to create a livable future for all, young people's interests and concerns need to be heard by older generations who are in decision making positions and hold a lot of power. At the same time, young people should seek to learn from the older generations and their lived experiences on how to ensure a sustainable future. Different generations should serve as role models and sources of knowledge for each other.

| May courage be with you - all the way through |

Addressing power imbalances and social injustices -which are also blocking our ability to address climate change- is challenging and requires collective efforts, mobilization and time. It's important to keep going with our heads up. Courage to question our current system and fight for change, is something we wish to see in everyone.

| Less self is more |

Adopting a more selfless attitude can lead to a more fulfilling and enriching life.

| We (under)stand |

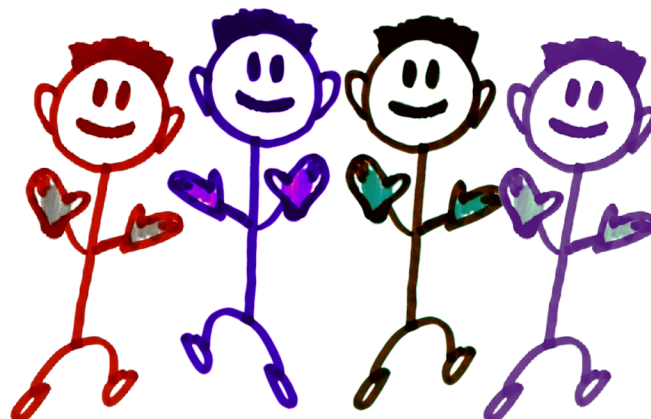
Sometimes we may be “under” understanding. We should be reflecting on how much we truly understand.

| Today for you, tomorrow for me, but always for us |

In order to achieve collective well-being we need to have each other's back.

| Respect the perspective |

People may perceive things from different angles. It's essential to highlight the value of these differences rather than imposing a singular perspective.



OUTCOMES

The missions we want to accomplish as active citizens in our community can not be easily summarised. Following the guiding principles in our everyday life and future decisions, we hope to bring a change and inspire others to do the same, hoping to reach our goals and to see these desired outcomes.

Encourage young people to tell, share and teach.

Knowing about the background of the others, we learn about situations in other countries and contexts and experiences. Through story telling people are connected. Everybody has something to teach and everybody has something to learn from each of the others.

Create a safe space for everybody.

To allow people to feel comfortable to share their stories, people should feel at home, wherever they are.

Bring forward the importance of non-formal and informal education

It's important to make available these methodologies because they allow a self-paced and self-directed learning process. Youth exchanges, for example, allow youngsters to be in charge of their own learning.

Young people recognize the importance of their active participation

Youth become more independent and they build life skills that are valuable assets for their future development.

Connect with people through their experience in their country about the same issues.

It's interesting to see how we all approach the same issues in a different way.