The YEIP project in Italy

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PARTNERSHIP

The YEIP project in Italy has been implemented by:

An NGO active in the field of education, support to disadvantaged groups and promotion of human rights.

Regional Government (north-west Italy)
WP1 – «State of the art»

METHODOLOGY

Phase 1 →
investigate the Italian context by the means of a literature review.

October 2017 →
findings were presented in a round table discussion to the attention of a group of 30 stakeholders.

24 October 2017 – Round table at University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Italy
WP1 – «State of the art»

RESULTS

Literature review

1. No universally accepted definition of radicalisation.

2. Difficulty in defining causes and factors that led to radicalisation.

3. Lack of a systematic political and legislative mechanism for the social prevention of radicalisation in Italy. At the same time, the Italian historical-cultural background has allowed to accumulate experience in the field of “crime prevention”.

4. Concerning the Good Lives Model and positive psychology, it emerged that Italy has no experience in the use of these tools for the radicalisation prevention.

5. Restorative justice: experiences that use mediation as an instrument of radicalisation prevention already exist, but they could be more implemented.

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Final consideration after the roundtable:

1. Broad definition of radicalisation
2. Female participation
3. Large sample size
4. Multidisciplinary perspective in all steps of the project
5. Communitarian conflict management
6. Good practices
The **phase 2** aimed to listen to the opinions of young people in School and University environments about the topic of youth radicalisation and marginalisation and their prevention.

The fieldwork research involved:

- **69 young people** aged 16-29
- who participated in a total of **4 focus groups** and **53 individual semi-structured interviews**
- carried on with the help of the **9 young co-researchers**.

22 March 2018—Training of Young Co-Researchers in Modena, Italy
OUTCOMES

- To fill in the gap of knowledge
- To train listening skill in professionals working with young people.
- To promote activities aimed to strengthen the personality of young people, giving space and implementing their own individuality, to encourage them to oppose to wrong messages.
- To teach the skills of respectful listening and discussion through regulated moment of dialogue and respectful debate, mediating conflicts occurred through restorative principles.
- To stimulate critical thinking that allows to question mass thinking, recognising when information and behaviour are not correct.
Phase 3 aimed to **test the YEIP GLM-based policy intervention** by conducting field trials following capacity building of professionals using the tools previously constructed in the School and University environment.

- **Training sessions for professionals** (school and university professionals) and policy makers were offered between December 2018 and March 2019.
- **97 professionals** working in schools and universities took part on the training.
WP3 – «Field Work Experimentation»

METHODOLOGY

• High school and university students of the professionals who participated in the training have then been assessed before and after the professionals’ training. This group of students, named intervention group, was compared with a control group (i.e., students of professionals who did not receive the training).

• The aim was to test whether a change (i.e., improvement) occurred in the intervention groups within the two environments, which was superior to that eventually occurred in the control group.
WP3 – «Field Work Experimentation»

METHODOLOGY

- **Selected instruments** responded by participants in both the intervention and control groups were the following:
  - the **Psychological Well-Being Scales** (Ryff & Keyes 1995)
  - the **Brief Resilience Scale** (Smith, Dalen, Wiggins, Toolwey, Christopher, & Bernard 2008).

- A total of **39 high school students** gave their consent and completed the first assessment (56.4% female, mean age 16.7 ± 0.6) – **16 completed the post-assessment**

- A total of **28 University students** gave their consent and completed the first assessment (85.7% female, mean age 22.0 ± 3.2) – **6 completed the post-assessment**
RESULTS

High school students:

• High school students of the intervention group showed a tendency towards slight improvements in most of the assessed dimensions of well-being as well as in global well-being and resilience.

• High school students of the control group instead showed slight decreases in well-being dimensions and in global well-being, and an increase in resilience that was nonetheless smaller than that of the intervention group.
RESULTS

University students

- University students of teachers who received vs. did not receive the training: both showed a significant decrease in most of the assessed dimensions of well-being as well as in global well-being.

- Altogether, it seems that training University-level teachers with the YEIP programme does not enhance students’ well-being and resilience. This might be attributable to the small number of students (n = 6) in the intervention group, or to a much less personalised relationship between teachers and students at the University level compared to the high school level in Italy.
• Level of awareness on how to prevent youth radicalisation is still low → training opportunities and tools such as YEIP seems to have a positive impact in increasing knowledge and awareness and in promoting the adoption of new approaches.

• Teachers and educators can really make a difference in promoting well-being and resilience of youth which are protective factors against radicalisation.
RECOMMENDATIONS – NATIONAL LEVEL

In terms of policy it is therefore advisable to:

- **Invest in the education** sector, increasing opportunities especially for marginalised youth

- **Investing in training youth workers, teachers and educators** to the principles of active listening, positive psychology and empowerment

- Encouraging universities and higher education institutions to **promote programmes and activities** to provide **counselling and social support** to their students

- **Universities and research organizations** should be encouraged to **study the phenomenon** of youth radicalisation at national level.
The European Commission, through its funding programmes, increases its support to the development of projects and programmes based on the principles of positive psychology, empowerment and inclusion of marginalised youth;

The European Commission continues to promote awareness and mutual learning among public authorities working with youth to improve the capacity of policy makers to understand the phenomenon of youth radicalisation and enact preventive actions at local level;

European level networks working in the field of prevention of radicalisation and support to marginalised groups should be supported in order to improve their actions.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION.

ANY QUESTION?

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