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European youth voices at International conference on violent youth radicalisation: “Stop managing us!”

In January 2020, the **IARS International Institute** and the **YEIP partnership** launched the findings of one of the largest scientific studies on violent youth radicalisation across 7 European countries: United Kingdom, Greece, Cyprus, Italy, Sweden, Portugal and Romania. At the conference, young people from around the world send a clear message to governments and the European Union “Stop managing us as if we are risks”!

The YEIP International Conference “**Addressing Violent Youth Radicalisation in Europe**”, hosted by the **University of East London’s School of Psychology**, brought together over 120 people including the Home Office, the Italian Ministry, policy makers and young people. A range of other professionals including politicians, policy makers, researchers, experts and scholars debated on the issue of violent youth radicalisation. Keynote speakers included the European Commission, public authorities from participating countries as well as prominent academics.

Dr. Theo Gavrielides, IARS Founder and a Professor at UEL said: *“It is with great pride that I saw our young people and many policy makers from around Europe coming together in unity to find new, positive ways forward to address the increasing phenomenon of hate. It is with trust and solidarity that we can address marginalisation and violent radicalisation not harsher punishments and the narrative of division”.*

The YEIP project highlighted the attitudes, experience and knowledge of young Europeans, youth workers and other practitioners. This was also accompanied with a testing of innovative tools for addressing the phenomenon of youth radicalisation, and a tackling of this issue amongst marginalised groups. As opposed to the current approach underpinning criminal justice rehabilitation and offender management, the YEIP project proposes interventions based on the framework of positive psychology, and the strengths based Good Lives Model, as a better form model of de-radicalisation.

Education is the key, the biggest tool to help prevent violent youth radicalisation, creating soft power which reduces the fears and insecurities discussed previously. A very important role can be played as well by the new generations. The IARS international Institute, whose main goal, as stated by founder Prof. Theo Gravrielides, is “bringing young people together with a stronger collective voice to push for

greater equality and social justice”, promoted a huge participation into the debate of many young people directly involved into the parallel workshops and initiatives organised in the framework of the International conference.

To contribute to the intellectual outputs of the Youth Empowerment and Innovation Project (YEIP), IARS organised a **99% Campaign** writing competition. This year, young researcher Amanda Blackhurst (USA) received the award with her research: The Role of YouTube Algorithms in Online Radicalisation. All the submitted articles are available [here](#).

Amanda Blackhurst said: *“To be selected as the winner of the IARS 2020 Writing Competition has been a great honour, as there were so many worthy candidates who wrote about interesting and pressing topics. It’s essential that young people feel like their voices and opinions are heard, especially on topics that concern them, such as youth radicalisation. Thank you to IARS for their commitment to provide a platform for young people to feel empowered and heard.”*

The YEIP project created a range of different tools, including **training**, **books**, and **toolkits** to help policy makers, both nationally and internationally form more effective policies to tackle violent youth radicalisation. The materials are all available here: <https://yeip.org/>

NOTE TO EDITORS:

ABOUT THE PROJECT

“Youth Empowerment and Innovation Project - YEIP”, a 3-year Erasmus+ funded programme that aims to design a youth-led, positive policy prevention framework for tackling and preventing the marginalisation and violent radicalisation among young people in Europe. The project started in March 2017. Led by young people and coordinated by Dr. Theo Gavrielides and the IARS International Institute, YEIP is delivered in partnership with 18 partners from seven EU countries to construct and test innovative, policy intervention models founded on the principles of restorative justice, positive psychology and the Good Lives Model (GLM). YEIP is developed in response to the Call for proposals EACEA No 34/2015 Key Action 3: Support for policy reform - Initiatives for policy innovation – [European policy experimentations in the fields of Education, Training and Youth led by high-level public authorities].

The project is cofounded under Erasmus+ Grant Agreement N° 2016-2927 /9.

YEIP is co-delivered with: Public Authorities: UK: The Home Office, Greece: Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change, Common Benefit Enterprise for Services of Neapolis Sykies, Cyprus: Municipality of Engomi, Italy: Regione Liguria, Portugal: Camara Municipal de Oliveira de Azemeis, Sweden: Lansstyrelsen I Kalmar lan, Romania: National Council for Combating Discrimination, Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports. Researchers: Greece: Family and Child Care Center, Cyprus: Centre for Advancement of Research and Development in Education, Italy: Anziani e non solo, Portugal: Inovamais, Sweden Linne Universitetet, Romania Fundatia Schottener Servicii Sociale, Khulisa, Buckinghamshire New University.

More information about the project can be found here <https://yeip.org/>

ABOUT THE IARS INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE

The IARS International Institute is a user-led and user-focused charity with a mission to give everyone a chance to forge a safer, fairer and more inclusive society. Over the last 10 years, the Institute has been providing world-class and cutting-edge educational, research, policy and networking services of local, national and international significance. We are focused on empowering the most marginalised communities through direct service delivery, while enabling organizations to achieve, measure and improve their social impact. IARS is an international expert in criminal justice, restorative justice, human rights and inclusion citizenship, public service and user-led research.

To find out more about the IARS International Institute please follow the link www.iars.org.uk