

European Conference

The Impact of Cultural and Citizenship Education on Social Cohesion

3 - 5 December 2009, Vilnius, Lithuania

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Project Fact Sheet

Workshop 5

**“Poverty – Social Exclusion – Civic Participation:
How to Organise Access from the Fringes of Society?”**

	Section	Indications of content
1	Title of project	Active Citizenship / Voter Education in Disadvantaged Communities
2	Location (City/Country)	Dublin, Ireland and throughout Ireland
3	Main topics (select 5 max)	In the context of participative workshops the projects explores the following reasons: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To vote – standing up for oneself – the struggle of people to obtain the right to vote; 2. Identify issues of concern to voters and develop a position on those issues; 3. How to choose a politician who will promote the issues.
4	Practice-related keywords (5 max)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing up for myself and my community; • My vote is my Voice; • My Vote Counts; • Working for Social Change; • Holding Politicians Accountable.
5	Brief description of project (150 words)	<p>The Active Citizenship / Voter Education Programme takes the form of three workshops. The workshops explore:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why and How to vote; 2. Identify issues of concern to the voter and how to develop a position on issues; 3. How to choose a politician who will promote the issues. <p>The workshops are 85% participation and 15% information. The material is presented in a manual containing all the resources and detailed information on the learning process and on charts, which simplify the work of the facilitator / educator. The values and learning activities are based on those of Paolo Freire.</p>
6	Objectives of project	To explore with citizens the importance of participation in the democratic electoral process and to develop the knowledge and skill to participate.
7	Impact of the project on education and social cohesion (250 words)	The workshops have been facilitated in many parts of Ireland and have led to an increase in voter participation in disadvantaged areas. The community groups have consisted of people in socially and economically disadvantaged areas, people recovering from addiction, lone parents and young offenders. Participants become motivated to vote to acquire the skills to register to vote, to complete ballot sheets, to identify issues of social concern and develop a position on these issues and also how to choose a politician who will promote the issues.
8	Target groups	Communities in disadvantaged areas who are alienated from the democratic electoral process.

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9	Project methods/ Project format	Three workshops: 85% participative, 15% information based on the values and methods of Paolo Freire.
10	Project Time scale	3 times 3 hours sessions
11	Project Initiator	Community workers to facilitate the programme
12	Resources involved (financial, human, others)	Materials and charts – the workshops are facilitated by trained facilitators
13	Evaluation/Materials	Questions asked at the end of each workshop
14	Contact information	The Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice Ozanam House 53 Mountjoy Square Dublin 1 Ireland Telephone +353 18780425 Email vpj@eircom.net