

Non-governmental organisation

“We are the future”

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PARTNER ORGANISATION EVALUATION LETTER

Reflecting on our enriching experience in the Professional Development Activity “Protect the Environment and your Mental Health with your Connection with Nature (PEMEHECON)” (project number 2025-1-AT01-KA153-YOU-000297129), held in Vienna, Austria from 18 February to 1 March 2026 (including travel dates), we can confidently say that this initiative has been far more than a training course—it was a powerful transformation. By bringing together 21 youth workers from 7 partner organizations, PEMEHECON created a unique intercultural space where learning felt natural, meaningful, and emotionally supportive. It helped us reconnect not only with nature, but also with ourselves, and it inspired us with practical, inspiring ways to bring wellbeing and environmental awareness back into our youth work.

For our organization, which is committed to youth empowerment, inclusion, and high-quality non-formal education, PEMEHECON was highly relevant and deeply motivating. The project addressed a challenge that many young people and youth workers face daily: the increasing influence of technology and the reduction of time spent outdoors. We explored how screen-based habits can slowly shape behavior and lifestyle, contributing to concerns such as anxiety, loneliness, stress, and burnout. At the same time, the project offered a hopeful perspective: nature can become a real substitute for “junk entertainment,” and—more importantly—a pathway to calm, clarity, creativity, emotional balance, and healthier routines.

A key strength of PEMEHECON was its creative and experiential methodology. Through mindfulness-based games, forest theatre, yoga and nature elements (Earth, Air, Water, Fire), grounding activities, meditations on nature, clay therapy, storytelling, and team-based challenges such as “Hunting Treasure in Nature”, we had the opportunity to experience learning from within. The training strengthened our competences not in theory only, but through practice—supporting self-confidence, self-awareness, and self-control, while also improving emotional intelligence and resilience. We particularly valued the way the course blended well-being outcomes with environmental education, proving that mental health and environmental responsibility can be addressed together.

We also strongly appreciated the focus on inclusion and equal opportunities, including how the methods can be adapted to reach young people with fewer opportunities. The activities created emotionally safe learning spaces where participants could collaborate, feel valued, and develop stronger motivation to actively participate in community life. This inclusive approach, combined with the non-formal format, made the learning accessible, dynamic, and engaging for youth workers and—later—youth participants.

The project objectives were achieved through a structured and well-balanced program that combined personal development, intercultural exchange, and practical competence-building. The participants gained tools and methods to implement high-quality workshops on environment and health—workshops that can increase youth employability by equipping young people with transversal skills, and that can enhance active citizenship by strengthening agency and responsibility. Another impressive element was the emphasis on using modern technologies (apps and digital tools) in a meaningful way—supporting reflection, creativity, and youth engagement without replacing the core value of real nature-based experience.

Furthermore, PEMEHECON offered rich learning and cultural value. The intercultural exchanges and shared experiences helped us understand that similar mental health and environmental challenges exist across partner countries. The program therefore expanded our perspective and strengthened cooperation, while also encouraging us to adapt methods to our local realities and natural environments.

Our participation left us significantly more confident and motivated to implement the training results in our local communities. We are excited to bring back proven, ready-to-use activities such as forest theatre, grounding practices, yoga with nature elements, creative connection exercises, clay-based work, storytelling, night walks in nature, and the “create your own activity” approach. We believe these methods will help young people shift away from stress and passive routines, and toward calm, creativity, clarity, and a renewed connection with both nature and themselves.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the organizers, trainers, and all partner organizations for the warm and supportive atmosphere, the professionalism of the facilitators, and the quality of the learning experience. PEMEHECON enriched our perspective on how creativity, mindfulness, and nature-based education can strengthen youth wellbeing and active citizenship at the same time. We look forward to sharing the knowledge gained through dissemination activities, implementing workshops in our communities, and continuing this positive impact for young people long after the training ends.

Best regards,

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