



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



PRESS RELEASE

27th June 2016

FOCUSING ON WHAT MATTERS IN EUROPE: EMPOWERING OUR MARGINALISED YOUTH

This week, Europe will be coming out of the UK Referendum shock enter into a process of managing it. The IARS International Institute and its “Abused No More” partnership find this to be the right timing to release its youth-led pan-European investigation into what matters for young people in Europe when it comes to their rights. The results are today released in the form of a free e-book titled **“My Voice – My Rights: Young, Marginalised and Empowered by Law”**.

Dr. Theo Gavrielides – IARS’ Founder and Director as well as coordinator of the project said: *“The UK and our charitable Institute were chosen by the European Commission to lead on this youth-led project that aims to empower the most marginalised youth in European societies. Today we release the results and recommendations of our young people who at least in the UK showed solidarity in their belief for continuing to build a unified Europe through its Union and core values of promoting peace and the well being of its people. Let this small step taken by our young people after the UK Referendum act as a sign that the post World War II dream has not collapsed”*

The research was conducted with young people by young people in the UK, Poland, Italy, and Romania and reveals that lack of knowledge of basic rights leads to a vicious circle of further marginalisation and exclusion. Increasing legal literacy of marginalised youth through the provision of public legal education (PLE) constitutes a key empowerment tool that can facilitate integration and promote inclusion. However, there is a substantial gap in education and training services across Europe to provide young people with basic legal skills and knowledge that will enable them to address and assert their rights when facing discrimination and abuse.

Mr Silva Mendes, Director for Youth and Sport at Directorate General for Education and Culture, European Commission said: *“Social exclusion of young people is one of the biggest contemporary challenges Europe is facing. It is a multi-faceted issue and requires a multiple response. “Abuse no more”, introduces the somewhat abandoned notion of legal literacy in our formal education systems, in a rather innovative way to prevent marginalisation and social exclusion. My Voice – My rights gives us the opportunity to re-discover our legal systems and seek in there solutions but more importantly it makes us realize that individual rights are not merely a tool of preventing marginalisation but at the same time a reflection of our European values such as freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination. Re-exploring our roots and our common cultural heritage can indeed be an effective answer to the multiple crises Europe is facing.”*

Dr Howard Williamson, CVO CBE, Professor of European Youth Policy, University of South Wales said: *‘My Voice – My Rights’ resonates powerfully with the 2nd European Youth Work Declaration. As inequality in Europe worsens and the migration ‘crisis’ deepens, we need more creativity and initiative in supporting those young people who are most adversely affected by it. This e-book is but the first to emerge from the Abuse no More strategic partnership supported by the EU Erasmus + programme. It*

holds much promise. It is an exciting project at exactly the right time.

The e-book can be downloaded for free here and was produced in the framework of the 3-year “Abused No More” Empowering Youth and Safeguarding Professionals” (AnM) programme. “AnM”, co-funded by Erasmus+, is the first youth –led initiative in Europe that addresses the lack of legal literacy of marginalised youth at risk of social exclusion with particular focus on those young people that face multiple and intersectional discrimination based on age, gender and ethnicity. Furthermore, the project utilising youth-led methodologies addresses gaps in education and training provision for young people marginalised people in relation to anti-discrimination.

Faisal Kassim, Chair of the Youth Advisory Board *Since last year, approximately 1.1 million refugees entered Europe from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq. Most of them reported to be women that usually have no legal awareness. Their lack of legal knowledge makes them more vulnerable to abuse and discrimination. That is why this e-book and Abused no More programme could not have come at a better time. What makes this book unique, however, is the fact that marginalised youth were given the opportunity to take leading role in designing and implementing future training programmes.*

The findings are based on extensive literature review in six languages and fieldwork with in-depth interviews, focus groups and consultation with 84 young people and over 20 organisations in the participating countries. The research will be presented and debated at an international conference organised by the Action for Equality, Support, Antiracism (KISA) that will take place in Cyprus on the 22nd September 2016. The event will host international experts, youth professionals and researchers. To find out more about the conference and to support the project email contact@iars.org.uk



My Voice - My rights:

Young, marginalised
and empowered by the law



The “Abused No More” project is funded by Erasmus+ KA2 under Grant Agreement 2015-1-UK01-KA2015-012555
www.abusednomore.org

The “Abused No More” project is funded by Erasmus+ KA2 under Grant Agreement 2015-1-UK01-KA2015-012555 www.abusednomore.org

Notes to Editors

- The full report can be downloaded here: <http://www.abusednomore.org/e-book-download/>
- The Executive Summaries in English can be downloaded here: <http://www.abusednomore.org/e-book-download/>
- To find out more about the Abused No More Programme and to get involved in the activities please follow the link <http://www.abusednomore.org>
- To join the Abused No More pan-European network please follow the link <http://www.abusednomore.org/join-our-network/>
- To support the project consider donating via the Big Give
- Abused No More is co-funded by the European Commission under the Grant Agreement: 2015-1-UK01-KA205-012555
- For more information: Contact@iars.org.uk, 0044(0)2070644380
- The project is delivered in partnership with Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej (Poland), KISA – Action for Equality, Support, Antiracism (Cyprus), Anziani e Non Solo (Italy) and Romanian U.S. Alumni Association (Romania). The IARS International Institute is the coordinator for the programme.



**The IARS
International Institute**

Community-led solutions for a fairer society