

## READ IT

### Active Citizenship in rural areas

#### *A Erasmus+ K2 supported EU project including 6 European countries!*

*Since the 70s of the last century, the situation in many rural areas in Europe has changed dramatically. A process of accelerated decline took place: a severe decrease of inhabitants and facilities, weak infrastructure, changes in the agricultural sector, closing of shops and schools, young people leaving the areas, less employment, unoccupied houses and buildings, increased poverty, etc. Therefore it is urgent to increase the social viability and live ability of small villages in the rural area. Together, young and old, need to discuss the changing lifestyles and its consequences for new organizational structures. For this reason, project partners identify active citizenship and volunteering as a significant development that needs support. It is important to know which learning wishes and needs active inhabitants have. Partners assume that (non-formal) education and training must play a major role in the developments described above. This European project is going to work out innovative ways to promote active citizenship in rural areas to compete the above mentioned deficiencies. Different European approaches to the same needs and challenges will be brought together to work out a common strategy for rural areas all over Europe. People and local communities will be empowered for a better future. Moreover the European dimension will be spread especially to local communities and show concrete benefit of Europe to normal citizens and their needs.*

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The Maison de l'Europe des Yvelines is part of this project supported by the EU Erasmus+ program.

The project is a partnership with organizations within a European network called EUNET (European Network for Education and Training). Participating organizations are from Germany, The Netherlands, Greece, France, Poland and Sweden.

The aims of the project are :

- Increase the social viability and livability of small villages in the rural area.
- Develop innovative ways to promote active citizenship in rural areas.
- People involved will learn about exchange opportunities.
- Share accumulated expertise, amongst the volunteers participating in the project and the project partners.
- Develop a manual with examples from the various countries that will be available and useful in a wider European context.

READ IT is a 2-year-project including 4 transnational meetings: in France, Sweden, Greece (Rhodos) and Poland with 24 participants in each seminar that gives a great opportunity to instill new skills and methods with the aim of developing collaboration, solidarity and partnerships in the rural areas of those countries.

The project will also develop a kind of digital manual for work with local development in rural areas with the aim to give added value to everyone engaged in this kind of work, voluntary or professional.

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The Maison de l'Europe des Yvelines is happy to be a part of this project and thus to add a European touch to the development of rural areas in our department, the Yvelines.