

## SOCIAL INCLUSION – OUT OF THE BOX

### NGO INFORMATION

**Organisation name:** Xena – Centro scambi e dinamiche interculturali

**Country:** Italy

**Contact person:** Emiliano Bon, Grazia Raimondo

**Website:** [www.xena.it](http://www.xena.it)

**Other links you would like to share:**

**Fb name:** Xena centro scambi e dinamiche interculturali

**The blog of our volunteers:** <http://www.sveconxena.blogspot.it>

**Logo of organization**



#### NGO Short description

**Please describe your organization for the text that you would like to see visible in the blog and toolkit (max 1000 character)**

XENA is a non-profit, cultural association for social promotion which was set up in the autumn of 1994. Its name derives from ancient Greek meaning "foreign things".

Its main objective is to increase and improve the level of contact and interaction amongst different cultures. It's interested in issues related to intercultural learning, the prevention and fight against racism and exclusion, communication among youngsters, care of the environment, social and cultural services and the preservation of the artistic and cultural heritage.

**Field of work** (which are the main domains your organizations works on):

Xena works in the field of intercultural education, non-formal education, vocational training, promotion of active citizenship, promoting projects both at local and international level.

The main aims of our work are:

- To offer young people the possibility to join mobility programs in educational, professional and cultural spheres and to promote awareness of different cultures and systems;

- To promote opportunities for meetings between different cultures and to encourage greater knowledge of foreign languages also in the local sphere;
- To promote intercultural learning dynamics, and to prevent and combat racism and prejudices;
- To encourage the active and responsible participation of youth in society.

### **How do you work with youth? (methodology used and examples of activities)**

Xena promotes projects mainly within the frame of European Programmes – such as “Erasmus+” (i.e. “Youth for Europe”, “European Voluntary Service”, “Group Initiative”, “Support Measures”, “Leonardo da Vinci” and “Grundtvig”).

Beside this it works for the promotion of European Programmes in the local community (organization, high school, local authorities) .

### **Structure of organization:**

Xena’s workforce is formed by experts and trainers of European programmes: Lifelong Learning (i.e. Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig) and others; youth workers/educators; youth information experts; trainers. This group is supported by young Italian and foreign people, with different skills, united by strong ideals towards the basic aim of the association.

Volunteer work of all the members plays a fundamental role in the organisation.

The organization is divided in different areas:

VET, hosting area

EVS area

PROJECTING AND CONSULENCE area

LOCAL ACTIVITIES area

YOUTH CENTER

### **Number of workers in organization:**

10 permanent employees

5 employees on specific projects

### **Number of volunteers in organization:**

Evs Volunteers: 4/5 per year in Xena (plus 10 per year in coordinated projects)

Local volunteers: 10/20 depending on the period and the activities

## **Social Inclusion - OUT OF THE BOX**

### **What is the project Social Inclusion - OUT OF THE BOX for your organization? (in one sentence)**

This project is a great opportunity to build a reliable network between so many and so different associations around the world, this will be a big incentive to improve our work getting inspired by others, and will give us the possibility to think about possible future collaborations and projects.

### **What you/your organisation expect to learn/gain in this project?**

We expect to evaluate and improve our work through the ideas and feedback of others, exchange and share useful tools, easy to use, to pursue the common goal of social inclusion in our different realities, know about different places, problems and issues, inspire and get inspired.

## **Current situation regarding Inclusion in your country**

### **a) which is the understanding/definition of Inclusion in your environment (social and political)?**

Social inclusion is an approach to ensure and recognize the equal dignity and equal opportunities for all; it's foster a sense of belonging to a community; it's participation, acceptance, collaboration and peer learning; is a condition of welcome that values the differences and celebrates them. Inclusion, to be solid, should always be the result of a mutual work and accommodation of the individual and the context in which he lives / works / studies.

### **b) who are in your country included and excluded youth?**

The causes of social exclusion among young people in Italy are mainly the high rate of unemployment, inequality of opportunity in education and training, racial discrimination and even homophobia.

In addition in Italy is growing the phenomenon of hate speech and bullying, with a multiplication of the manifestations of hate and intolerance towards the "other", mainly among young people and in particular through the web and social networks.

### **c) which are the social groups that have a stronger need for Inclusion in your area? Why are them in this situation?**

Italy is facing a strong phenomenon of immigration from countries of North Africa, this, added to the general situation of economic crisis, the difficulty of managing the emergency, the lack of civic education and the systematic use of hate and fear for political purposes has caused a wave of racism and intolerance. Those paying even this consequence on their skin are the migrants themselves, who stigmatized and marginalized, even in schools, where they are considered a problem and a slowdown for the learning of others.

Therefore in our target area one of the social groups most in need of inclusion opportunities are the foreign citizens, especially the second generations.

### **d) What is done for social inclusion in your country?**

In Italy the efforts for social inclusion are still weak and mostly concentrated on the issues of disabilities.