

## Values versus Violence

### Summary of the project

On the 3rd of March 2009 a 17-year-old former pupil enters the Albertville secondary school in Winnenden and shoots nine pupils as well as three teachers. On the run he shoots three other people, before committing suicide.”

This is only one of several tragic violent acts that have brought us – a german, an english, a northern-irish and a hungarian organization together. We are sharing extreme experiences of violence. Therefore we are united in the strong motivation to use the special awareness of the people in our regions in order to make a change towards a more peaceful society since incidents of extreme violence seem to be a European problem. We strongly believe that education about values is the most effective way to prevent violent acts across all European regions.

Youngsters are demanding more than ever before to develop their own values and thereby give purpose to their life and they need our support in this process. Hence the project “Values versus Violence” (VVV) aims at **strengthening the awareness of values of European youngsters** in order to achieve a peaceful social atmosphere that is characterized by fairness, tolerance and the renunciation of violence.

According to Lawrence Kohlberg’s studies on moral development (1997) we will conduct a two-year term project that aims to assist around 40.000 youngsters of European regions in the age of 14 – 21 years to develop a strong awareness of values.

Values cannot be taught but we can enable youngsters to **reflect upon values**. Furthermore youngsters have to **find out values practically** to understand them. On this knowledge a didactic draught of the "institute of peace pedagogics Tübingen inc." is based on. VVV picks up this draught and will develop it in the project course. Especially trained value communicators are necessary to secure the quality of the value communication. Hence VVV is conceived triple tracked:

## 1. Educational system

We are setting up regional **centres of value communication** with a 3-part education system with lasting effect throughout Europe. This system will be conceived by a trans-national and interdisciplinary working group. Simultaneously these theoretical considerations and systemic developments are applied "live" into practise.

The **educational system** is a qualification concept on three levels which has been developed by the institute of peace pedagogics Tübingen inc., youth and adult **value communicators** are trained. Firstly, these trainings ensure important competences in the teaching of values of regional youth group leaders and pedagogues. Secondly, these value communicators accompany the "offline activists" in their commitment in the framework of their training.

## 2. Off-line and on-line activities

In **off-line actions** youngsters develop awareness of values through dealing with real situations, activities in which the project participants experience values through tangible actions. As an example, the project "Service-Learning" can be stated, in which the young people react to a deficit of society by social commitment. They get involved, for example with elderly or handicapped people over a longer period of time, thus developing social and democratic competences from which they derive their own values, motivated by the online discussions.

Furthermore they get coached by value communicators.

## 3. On-line activities

**On-line actions** take place on special web platforms, which integrate interactive social media.

For the **on-line activities** the discussions about values in the "Web 2.0" are at the fore. Young editors and web administrators develop a central online-platform and produce medial contents, which the online community should discuss. For example surveys on video are created in which young passers-by are asked about values. These should be **national platforms** in native language. Additionally Winnenden provides an **international platform** where youngsters from all the partner regions can post and discuss value topics

The on-line platforms fulfil two functions:

1. On one hand we will stimulate a virtual discussion about values on a regional and trans-national level.
2. On the other hand we can reach a broad range of youngsters successfully using on-line platforms by creating youth editorial staffs and youth web-administrators who speak our target group's language.

The connecting bend between the theoretical development of the education system and the practical youth actions is a **trans-national learning platform** on which pedagogues exchange their experiences of value communication. In this manner the initial draught of the value communication becomes further developed.

As a synthesis of the triple tracked system **local value camps** and **international meetings** will take place in the course of the project where all project participants – from the “offline-activists” to the members of the online-community are invited to get involved. At the international meetings the different experiences of violence and imaginations of values will be the starting point for the content of our work. So the participants experience the handling of experience of violence that varies due to cultural differences, and develop value concepts as a basis for civil courage, a pacific and self-confident way of life.

Finally, a **value manual** is published at the project end into all languages of the project partners.

