



Training educators to transmit positive experiences and create opportunities for youth development

The action supported by EUROsocial+ seeks to contribute to improving intervention models for the adolescent population, in the different spaces, projects and initiatives carried out by the Uruguayan Institute for Children and Adolescents (INAU), by designing a new intervention model for adolescents.



The public policy relating to adolescence in Uruguay is one of the greatest current challenges for the country. The State has a National Plan for Early Childhood, Children and Adolescents 2016-2020 that focuses on the four lines proposed by the project: a life free from violence; work for adolescents; mental health; prevention of unintentional adolescent pregnancy. The Uruguayan Institute for Children and Adolescents (INAU), as the body governing policies covering childhood and adolescence, is, therefore,

creating a programme in its new organisational model called "Adolescences" responsible for guiding the component protecting and promoting the rights of this age group.

EUROSociAL+ is accompanying INAU's efforts by bringing the European experience closer and facilitating the exchange of peer learning and addressing issues such as: socio-educational innovations in autonomy, emancipation and the socio-labour inclusion of young people under 18 years of age, preventing absenteeism, the prevention and

intervention in filio-parental violence and the management of and preparation for an independent life by minors who are leaving protection homes or centres for the enforcement of judicial measures.

After this experience, Gabriela Falco, social educator at the Bosco Youth Centre in Montevideo and collaborator with INAU, offers us her reflections:

"I am participating in the activities to improve the care mechanisms for adolescents in Uruguay that are being carried out thanks

26%
of Uruguay's population
is under
18 years old

Source: National Plan for Early Childhood, Children and Adolescents 2016-2020



Martha Fabbiani, Gabriela Falco and Juan Fumero, on behalf of INAU, attended an experience exchange visit to the Amigó Foundation, where they met Felipe Tobón and Rafael Yagüe. Fausto Petrachi, a technician from the social policies area, represented EUROsocial+. (Photo taken by Amigó Foundation)

to the contribution of EUROsocial+. I was only able to be part of the first support stage, where we received contributions from the expert Vivian Reigosa along with a space for dialogue and exchange with colleagues from other centres, but I also had the opportunity to participate in the international visit to Barcelona and Valencia held in May 2019.

Both the contributions by the expert and the knowledge I gained of international experiences are now a fundamental part of my professional practice. It is not every day that a social educator can access an opportunity of this magnitude. To break with the daily routine of a practice—that can become naturalised—and to have the ability to observe, discuss, reflect, but above all to be able to give time to rethinking and criticising it and focus on the importance of seeing adolescence as the second window of opportunity.

Even in the first meetings with the teams from Youth Centres and Adolescent Spaces, it was already being mentioned that educators have to be aware of the power they have over the adolescents they are working with. Power both to generate positive and negative changes regarding their potential, but also in relation to the fragility of this

important stage in their lives. Much of what we observed during our visit was related to teams working on various programmes, where this is very clear and present, understanding that, as educators, we have the responsibility to transmit this information, and that we must create a range of opportunities for the development of young people.

I consider that working in training our teams, in this aspect, being able to transmit these experiences and all the knowledge accumulated during this year of working

with Eurosocial+, is one of the fundamental steps INAU must continue to take. "I have returned then to my daily work, convinced that there is a lot to do with the teams in the centres, especially feeling responsible for the motivation that I know exists, as well as recognising that there are many very positive national experiences that we must share among ourselves, generating a visible network of quality educational practices, and for the teams to encourage each other to continue growing along these lines".

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The action supported by EUROsocial+ seeks to contribute to designing a new intervention model for adolescents, assisted by the staff from INAU. The exchange of experiences and transfer of knowledge has, thus, been proposed as a strategy, both in terms of operator training and guidelines for intervention. Similarly, the initiative proposes to consider the following lines regarding care and intervention with the adolescent population: a) a life free from violence; b) mental health; c) work for adolescents; and d) prevention of unintentional adolescent pregnancy.

Working with:

