

RESILIENCE RESIDENCY

A creative Youth Exchange on queer dating, intimacy & relational resilience

FORMAT	DURATION	PARTICIPANTS	GEOGRAPHY
Erasmus+ Youth Exchange	8 activity days + travel	Approx. 5 × (5 youth + 1 GL)	Neighbouring countries

THE IDEA

Resilience Residency is an international creative Youth Exchange exploring what it means to date, connect and build intimacy as a queer young person today.

Dating apps, social media and constant digital communication have transformed how young people meet and relate to each other. Ghosting, situationships, hookup culture, texting dynamics, rejection, digital validation, over- and under-investment and changing expectations around intimacy have become part of contemporary dating.

For queer young people, these experiences are also shaped by where and how they live. Rural or small-town contexts, limited access to queer communities, conservative or religious environments, discrimination, economic barriers and health-related stigma can fundamentally change someone's opportunities to meet others and build relationships.

In some contexts, online dating is one option among many. In others, it may be one of the few available gateways to queer connection and community.

FROM ME TO COMMUNITY

The 8-day residency follows a simple learning journey:

ME	US	CREATE	COMMUNITY
Explore dating, intimacy, communication, boundaries, vulnerability and digital spaces.	Compare queer dating realities across neighbouring and different local contexts.	Turn reflections into creative peer-to-peer responses chosen and developed by participants.	Bring learning and resources back to other queer young people and local communities.

RELATIONAL RESILIENCE

The project does not understand resilience as learning to tolerate unhealthy relationships or harmful behaviour. We understand relational resilience as the capacity to navigate intimacy while maintaining one's wellbeing, boundaries and sense of self: communicating needs, navigating vulnerability, dealing with rejection, recognising unhealthy dynamics, asking for support and building healthier connections.

INCLUSION & FEWER OPPORTUNITIES

The project particularly aims to reach queer young people experiencing intersecting barriers, including:

- Geographical barriers - rural areas, small towns, peripheral regions and limited access to queer communities or safe spaces.
- Social, cultural & religious barriers - stigma, conservative environments, family or community expectations and limited possibility of being open about one's identity.
- Discrimination & stigma - experiences related to sexual orientation, gender identity or expression and other personal circumstances.
- Economic barriers - circumstances limiting access to mobility, community activities and international opportunities.
- Health-related barriers & stigma - including stigma associated with HIV, viral hepatitis, other sexually transmitted infections or other health circumstances that may influence dating, disclosure, intimacy and perceived acceptance.
- Limited access to opportunities - particularly young people with little or no previous Erasmus+, international mobility or non-formal learning experience.

Inclusion aim: around 50% of young participants facing one or more fewer-opportunity barriers. Participants will not need to be publicly out, and the project will avoid unnecessary collection or disclosure of sensitive personal information.

A RESIDENCY, NOT A TRAINING

We do not envision eight days of workshops about how relationships 'should' work. We want to create a temporary international creative community where queer young people can safely investigate what connection means to their generation, compare realities across borders and turn their experiences into something useful for others.

Possible formats may include zines, photography, illustrations, podcasts, anonymous letters, conversation cards, performances, short videos, memes or digital interventions. The formats and priority themes will be chosen by participants rather than predetermined.

CO-DESIGN & PARTNERS

Before the application is developed, partners will conduct a short anonymous needs-mapping process with queer young people in their countries. Its findings will shape the final objectives, activities and themes of the Youth Exchange.

We are looking for partners from neighbouring countries who want to actively co-design the project, can create a safe and inclusive environment for queer participants, can responsibly recruit and prepare their national group, and are able to reach young people outside the usual Erasmus+ mobility circles.

THE CONCEPT IS CLEAR. THE FINAL RESIDENCY WILL BE BUILT TOGETHER WITH ITS YOUNG PEOPLE.