**SOS4LOVE PROJECT**

**#PEDAGOGY4LOVE**

**WEEK REPORT 1, STEP 1**

**OUR IDEA: “UNEMPLOYMENT IN CYPRUS”**

In Cyprus, we face a problem with unemployment especially since the economic crisis struck in 2013. A big majority of people lost their jobs which cost major hardships in their lives. There are families in which only one of the parents has a job or even in the most dramatic case in which none of the parents has a job and they need to be supported by the government through specific organizations, which provides an average income to the families in need. Due to unemployment, families find it hard to cope, especially with the society’s standards nowadays. We, the students and teachers, are willing to do our best in order for this issue to be addressed and help people understand the severity of this existing problem.

Our goal is to spread awareness, sensitize and make unemployed people, mainly the young adults of the new generation to feel hopeful and believe in their future within their home country. We truly want to support this through the Sustainable Development Goal 8 - ‘’Decend work and Economic growth’’. The GOAL was to work and show the current problem and that many measures should be taken so as to SOLVE this problem. Our movement towards this awareness is represented through the steps below;

**STEP 1:** We all made the decision to choose *“Unemployment”* as our topic for the SOS4LOVE project as we truly believe it is a significant problem in Cyprus that inspires our heart to take action; thus, aiming for a better job career for all people and mainly for the younger future generations.

**STEP 2:** We, then, discussed about the problem which has intensely existed ever since Cyprus was hit by the financial crisis of 2013 while implementing tough austerity measures to restructure its economy. We, the students, along with our teachers/facilitators expressed our feelings and shared our knowledge about this troubling topic. Unfortunately, unemployment in Cyprus has created a chain of people with or without a family to become poor and depressed with very limited opportunities to become employed; and then, we questioned ourselves, “How can anyone ensure us equal youth employment for all the future graduating young people, since the government or the society have not taken concrete actions yet?”

**STEP 3:** We decided to go to public areas in Larnaca to conduct a survey about unemployment. With the help of our teachers/facilitators, we wrote down six questions to interview unemployed men and women of different ages and socio-economic backgrounds as well as people who became unemployed due to the financial crisis and have been very much affected.

The questions were the following: 1) Do you work or are you unemployed? , 2) Did you graduate from a school/college/ or university? , 3) What is your personal opinion about unemployment? , 4) How did you face unemployment? , 5) If you were unemployed today, what would you do? , 6) Do you think unemployment will eventually eradicate?

However, due to the terrible weather conditions, we could not go out to interview people but we rather decided to make phone calls. We interviewed five people who either they have experienced unemployment or they are currently out of work.

**STEP 4:** Once we collected our data, we worked together and discussed about our findings. One of the interviewees stated that whether someone has been unemployed for few years or still faces unemployment, the rest of us can help that person to overcome this problem. She further explained that if we help and give LOVE to that person, who struggles daily, we can make a difference and make that person’s life easier and happier. Her final statement was true inspiring while the main goal of this project is after all about LOVE in the world. Our group discussion helped us to become more aware about the severity of this problem and we are willing to learn more with the aim to spread our knowledge and experiences as a TEAM to other people across Cyprus.

**STEP 5:** As a future step, we are hoping to interview more people and possibly ask our parents as well to participate with us in this project, expressing their own point of view since they have more life experiences. We hope to address this problem by using the social media not only to spread awareness but also to make our voices heard; therefore, making a positive impact to all young people and to awaken their inner strength that with LOVE and taking ACTION we CAN make a difference.

**DIFFICULTIES:**

It was difficult to allocate time with our classmates to complete the interviews. We were supposed to go around to different cafes and restaurants downtown and interview different people but due to prior commitments and already scheduled meetings, it was difficult to find a suitable day for everyone. So instead working during the weekend, we had to meet on a week day before out English lesson. Unfortunately, the weather conditions on that specific day were bad, therefore, affecting our ability to move around. Consequently, we went back to our English Language School and we did phone interviews instead. The difficult part here was that we had to speak very clearly and treat the phone interview with the same seriousness that we would have given to an in-person interview while simultaneously taking notes.