REPORT
MY YOUTH GOALS 2.0

YOUTH EXCHANGE

28 MAY - 3 JUNE 2023

VARNA, BULGARIA

The youth exchange *My Youth Goals 2.0* took place at Golden Sands seaside resort on the Northern Bulgarian Black Sea coast. The chosen accommodation was Detelina Hotel, which once again proved to be an ideal place for conducting the activities as it is located away from the big city, making it easy to work outside and enjoy the first days of summertime. Additionally, its proximity to the beach and bus stops ensured convenient access, granting participants the opportunity to effortlessly explore the nearby attractions.

32 young people took part in the exchange, aged 18-30, from 6 European Countries: **Bulgaria**, **Romania**, **Lithuania**, **North Macedonia, Slovenia and Slovakia**. The participants arrived at the hotel on 28 May in the evening and left on 3 June in the early morning.



Purpose and aim



The young people were introduced to:

- European values
- Democracy
- EU Youth strategy
- Human rights
- Inclusion of young people in society
- European Youth Goals

The aims of the project were:

- To introduce the youth to the EU's youth policy
- To raise the skills and competences of the participants
- To discuss the future of the EU project and its trajectory
- Get the youth acquainted with the Erasmus+ programme

Various non-formal learning methods and activities were used:

- Ice breakers and energizers
- Role playing and simulation games
- Creativity and teamwork games
- Discussion, debates, brainstorming and reflection
- Intercultural and experiential learning
- Soft-skill training

EU Youth Goals



During the exchange, participants gained an understanding and deeper knowledge regarding the history, diversity, and establishment of the European Union (EU). They learned more about the EU values, such as dignity, equality, freedom, democracy, rule of law, solidarity, and human rights. The exchange also aimed to empower the young participants, enabling them to actively engage as European citizens and participate in the democratic life of Europe.

Moreover, participants not only gained but also honed valuable soft skills, including leadership, negotiation, analytical and problem-solving abilities, critical thinking, constructive engagement in dialogue and debate, comprehension of abstract concepts, and intercultural competences.

The youth were also introduced to an intercultural environment, emphasising the significance of treating one another with dignity and respect. Additionally, participants learned effective methods to promote the common EU values and discovered ways to have their voices heard within the democratic sphere of Europe. The training also provided insights into the opportunities offered by the Erasmus+ Programme.



Throughout the youth exchange, the participants engaged in five Youth Goals of the EU, namely

#8 Quality Learning
#3 Inclusive Societies
#7 Quality Employment for All
#10 Sustainable Green Europe
#11 Youth organisations and European programmes

Furthermore, to kickstart their mornings, the participants were invigorated with ice-breakers and energizers, preparing them for the day's activities. The ice-breakers and energizers not only served as a means of preparation but also fostered an atmosphere of fun and comfort among the participants. The interactive activities created a positive and enthusiastic atmosphere, setting the tone for productive and engaging experiences throughout the day. Participants exercised to keep their mind active through yoga, volleyball, table tennis and other collective sports.



Day 1 Quality Learning

Integrate and improve different forms of learning,
equipping young people for the challenges
of an ever-changing life in the 21st century.

On the first day, participants learned about the history and values of the European Union, familiarising themselves with the Youthpass certificate and its significance as recognition for their involvement in non-formal and informal learning within youth projects.

Participants discussed on how they can use the Youthpass certificates in their future training and professional career. They learned the differences between formal and non-formal education and their key role for the future of our society.



EU Youth Goals



Day 2 Inclusive societies

Enable and ensure the inclusion of all young people in society.

Participants explored the concepts of inclusive societies. During the **Where do I stand** activity participants were given a statement concerning civil, political, social and economic rights. They had to stand behind their opinion by choosing from which side of the room they wanted to stand, symbolising their agreement or disagreeing with the statement.

1. Some people, naturally, have more rights than others.
2. Some rights are more important than other rights.
3. We were not born with rights, we get them
4. It's more important to have a home, food and basic necessities than to be able to say what you like.
5. Free speech should be absolutist.
6. During national emergencies rights can be limited.
7. People should have the right to euthanasia.
8. The death sentence should be allowed.





Through the activity **Act it Out,** participants were introduced to the general idea of human rights, in an interactive and unique way. Participants had to find a way to communicate their ideas with each other. Cooperation and creativity were stimulated, as participants prepare their short performances.

Article 14 Right to education
Everyone has the right to education and to have access to vocational and continuing training.

Article 12 Freedom of assembly and of association
Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association at all levels, in particular in political, trade union and civic matters, which implies the right of everyone to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his or her interests.

Article 11 Freedom of expression and information
Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers.

Article 17 Right to property
Everyone has the right to own, use, dispose of and bequeath his or her lawfully acquired possessions. No one may be deprived of his or her possessions, except in the public interest and in the cases and under the conditions provided for by law, subject to fair compensation being paid in good time for their loss.

Article 20 Equality before the law
Everyone is equal before the law.



Day 3 Quality Employment for all

Guarantee an accessible labour market with opportunities that lead to quality jobs for all young people.

The third day was dedicated to quality and inclusive employment for all in our society. The aim was to inspire young people to understand the right to work, and its social and economic dimension, as well as to make them think about how decent work can support life with dignity.

The activity **Different wages** aimed to simulate a workplace where people were doing the same job but earning different wages in an imaginary architecture studio. It allowed youngsters to learn about discrimination in the workplace, especially on the grounds of sex and age, and to gain ability and knowledge to defend the related rights of fair wages and equal pay for equal work as well as the right not to be discriminated against.

Then, participants worked in groups of five to build their fair remuneration policy of an imaginary business. By creating their own companies, each with an individual and distinct remuneration policy, participants explored the salary practices of workplaces and introduced to everyone their compensation packages. This activity helped participants crystalise their thoughts on the remuneration policy and come up with a specific strategy for employee retention and/or motivation.



Empowering young people to be aware and defend the right to desirable work and to join trade unions was the third objective of the day which was fostered through the activity **Trade Union Meeting**.

During the activity, the participants simulated a meeting gathering five people around the negotiating table: two managers of the company, one chair and two trade union representatives of the employees to negotiate wages and work conditions. Both sides were required to come with a new proposal that is a realistic basis for coming to a mutually satisfactory agreement.



Day 4 Sustainable Green Europe

Achieve a society in which all young people are environmentally active, educated and able to make a difference in their everyday lives.

On the fourth day, the participants went through the 17 Sustainable Development, part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the UN. The day started with a discussion of the goals and the UN agenda and then participants were divided into teams where each of them had to choose one particular youth goal to come up with solutions to the problem area.

2 Zero hunger

- Support sustainable agriculture and buy locally produced food
- Reduce food waste by planning meals and donating excess food
- Promote food security by supporting local initiatives and organisations
- Advocate for policy changes that address the root causes of hunger
- Raise awareness through social media and conversations
- Support international organisations working to eliminate the hunder

5 Gender equality

- Organise a meeting with the heads of HR department of the biggest companies in the country
- Allocation of special funds to NGOs who promote gender equality
- School non-formal educational campaign
- Campaign in social media (Instagram, Tiktok)

EU Youth Goals



7 Affordable and clean energy

- Raise awareness of the importance of renewable energy resources
- Investments in infrastructure for electricity
- Bringing electricity to the rural areas
- Investments in third-world countries to increase their production of green energy
- Rational and fair usage of electricity

14 Life below water

- Waste filtration and construct additional water treatment facilities
- Fines for improper disposal of fishing nets
- Stricter laws on catch amount limits, catch & let go
- Awareness of nutritional values
- Limit and abolish illegal seaside constructions

17 Partnerships for the goals

- Mobilise and share resources
- Ensure policy regulations at all levels and coordination among different government departments
- Support development countries through financial and technical assistance and knowledge-sharing)
- Promote global cooperation

EU Youth Goals



Day 5 Youth Organisations and European Programmes

Ensure equal access for all young people to youth organisations and European youth programmes, building a society based on European values and identity.

Participants were introduced to the different aspects and sectors within the Erasmus+ Programme. They were split in groups to develop their own youth exchanges and training courses, conceptualising the addressed problem, goal, place, time and partner countries, activities, learning outcomes and dissemination actions.

This session stimulated participants to explore in depth the Erasmus+ programme, what it offers, how to create projects, and how to implement them. Participants also proposed their contributions to the European Youth Strategy in its main pillars. All were divided into groups and then worked on new strategies and projects. Participants were able to create their own youth strategy following the framework of the European Youth Strategy 2021-2027:

- Campaigns targeted towards young people
- More debates between youth and politicians
- Participatory budgeting for youth
- Inclusion on political themes into school curriculum
- Organisational and financial support of socialising projects for young people
- Modernising the school system and promotion of non-formal education



- Cooperation between schools and companies
- Creating platform that promote all the opportunities available and allows the youth to interact
- Encouraging entrepreneurial mindset and supporting young people in starting their own businesses, fostering innovation and creativity



EU Youth Goals

Varna Adventure

Participants prepared raise-awareness campaigns about some of the Sustainable Development Goals for the local people and created a playful, interactive, and entertaining video showcasing their excursion in Varna, including their interactions with locals and special moments.

An adventure game was organised during the fourth day of the youth exchange. Participants were divided into groups. To finish the game each group had to complete six tasks while exploring the sea garden in the city of Varna.

- Each group must create a team name
- Each group must pick a symbol that represents the group: a stone or a seashell, or anything else that represents your group
- Each group must meet a local **young person** that speaks English and tell them about the Sustainable Development Goals and the project
- Each group will have to make a photo with an animal and another local of **all ages**
- Each group must find the secret bridge of wishes, hidden in the Varna Sea Garden and make a wish there



Intercultural Dialogue

Intercultural Evenings: Non-formal learning and sharing of national culture helped young people engage in intercultural dialogue. By organising cultural evenings, participants got the chance to proudly represent their country, while learning about other groups' culture, cuisine, music, dance, and interesting facts. The evenings included videos about different countries, traditional foods and drinks, music, and dances. These cultural nights foster the formation of intercultural groups and cultivate a feeling of tolerance among young people.

Secret Friend Game: On the first day, each participant picked a piece of paper on which was written the name of a different participant. As such, everyone received a secret friend, that remained unknown until the end of the exchange. The names of everyone were written on envelopes, that were then stuck to the wall. During the youth exchange, participants had to leave small gifts varying from notes, candy and souvenirs, to their secret friends, without revealing who it is. On the last day, an interactive game was played to reveal everyone's secret friend.



The youth exchange then concluded with the awarding of Youthpass certificates, the reveal of secret friends, and a final evaluation of the exchange. To celebrate the conclusion of My Youth Goals 2.0, a large cake with the Erasmus+ logo was given to the participants to celebrate together.





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