

“Bridge among Cultures” YE in Armenia

Gyumri “Youth Initiative Centre” NGO in the frameworks of the project “Bridge among Cultures” – BraC of “Youth in Action” program hosted 24 participants from Armenia, Georgia, Germany and Italy on June 20-28, 2013 in Vanadzor city.

The aim of the project was to bring together young people from different countries and cultural backgrounds and provide them with space to communicate and get to know each other’s culture.

The objectives of the project were:

- To help participants recognize different cultures, traditions, find shared values as well as differences between them, as the basis for understanding and tolerance; through giving them a chance to live together, work on the same idea and to share the experience.

- To bring together young people who live in countries where there is a lack of communication due to conflicts by sharing cultures and traditions.

- To give chance to the youth from EECA countries and European Union to meet, communicate, share cultures, ideas and emphasize that Europe is not only the European Union, but it is much a larger community that shares the same values and does not know any borders.

- To give young people an example of cooperation on the international level and to encourage them to undertake similar activities in the future (within Youth in Action Programme in particular).

During the 9-day project 24 young representatives of 4 different cultures got the opportunity to present their national music, dances, traditions, cuisine as well as the cultural peculiarities. All the participants worked together in a team and in mixed groups to

find similarities and differences between their cultures. The project was carried out in non-formal methods of work which ensured free self-expression of each participant.

The project took place in a camping site where over 200 children from different regions of Armenia were having their summer vacations. The participants dedicated project final event to the children. They performed an interesting and interactive performance accompanied with multilingual songs and music.



Upcoming Clubs

Tuesdays:

16:00 - German Culture Club
(Alex and Judith)

Wednesdays:

16:00 - English Intermediate
(Syuzi Muradyan)

Thursdays:

17:30 - English for Beginners
(Syuzanna Sahakyan)

Friday:

15:00 - French Cultural
and Language Club
(Thomy Sadatchy)

Saturday:

16:00 - English Intermediate
(Syuzi Muradyan)



More info on Facebook:

[https://www.facebook.com/
www.yic.am](https://www.facebook.com/www.yic.am)

Youth Exchange Hosting "InclYOUthsion"

Gyumri "Youth Initiative Centre" NGO, in cooperation with "European Youth Leaders Liechtenstein", hosted an international youth exchange project within the framework of the European Commission "Youth in Action" Programme. The project took place in Gyumri on July 19-28 and aimed at contributing to the promotion of the inclusion of people with special needs and raising the awareness of the community in Gyumri on the issues of those people.

The project hosted 28 volunteers from 4 countries – Armenia, Georgia, Austria and Liechtenstein. The volunteers planned and implemented a row of public events – open air exhibition, intercultural evenings, graffiti, community cleanup, etc. The closing event of the project took place in the evening of July 26 on Foralbergstreet – at the plot of the newly-to-be-constructed centre for people with multiple disabilities. During the final event the participants presented a theatre play, social advertisement and wheelchair gardening project directly targeting the main topic of the youth exchange. The social advertise-



ment is available through https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gxvzhz_jn2_k

By Gurgen Balasanyan

Training course Learning For Better Future

Every year thousands of young Europeans pack themselves and leave for European Voluntary Service, looking for adventure and opportunity to discover themselves and the unknown part of the world. What is EVS giving to a volunteer to pass it on in their lives? Are all volunteers equally capable to go alone through their EVS process? And how can EVS increase the employability of a young person?

These are only few of the questions which became the reason for building this training course.

Youth Initiative Centre NGO hosted a **6-day international training course aimed at enhancing quality of mentorship and learning within European Voluntary Service to insure future employability of young volunteers, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds.** The training focused on exchange and sustainable use of tools for guiding volunteers through their EVS process, looking at the aspect of **voluntary "Service" as tools for non-formal "Learning"**.

The training brought together 24 representatives from 10 countries / Armenia, Portugal, Spain, Belarus, Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, Romania, Poland and Germany/.

The training course was based on the principles of non-formal



learning.

The training was in itself serving as a model of "learning for the future".

By Nelli Minasyan

Training Course

“YOUth are EmployAble”

Volunteering + Acton = Changes

Gyumri “Youth Initiative Centre” YIC NGO with the support of Counterpart International Representation in Armenia and USAID is implementing “Volunteering + Action = Change” pan-armenian volunteering campaign. In the frameworks of the campaign “I am a volunteer” flashmob took place. The flashmob took place on July 26th in the all regions of Armenia and in Yerevan at the same time.

During the flashmob in 10 regions of Armenia and in Yerevan the youth reflected one letter from “I am volunteer” sentence. As a result, we have “I am volunteer” sentence out of the reflected letter.

Painting day



“What is volunteering” painting day took place on August 30 in Lchashen community of Gegharqunik region.

The event was public and open-air. Professional and armature painters, youth and children, the representatives of the community and just passers-by were present during the colorful day and they all together tried to “paint” volunteering according their imagination.

The participants enjoyed the day with colors and tried to talk



and explain what is volunteering in their opinion. The huge poster was full of “volunteering” images in the end. The volunteering action was implemented in the framework of “Volunteering + Action = Change” project.

By Nelli Minasyan

Youth Employability has been one of the main challenges that Europe is facing this century, and the latter is a direct result and a cause for the crisis that the once prominent powers are facing. Having valuable experience in the field of youth work, volunteering and youth empowerment, Gyumri “Youth Initiative Centre” /Armenia/ and European Youth Leaders Lichtenstein offered a 7-day Training Course aiming at promoting volunteering as a learning mechanism for increasing youth employability.

The training course took place in Dilijan, Armenia, on August 1st, 2013. It hosted 28 participants from 13 European countries. The TC “YOUth are EmployAble” introduced the 3R methodology /Recruitment, Retainment, and Recogni-



tion / on promoting volunteerism first as a learning process and later how the learning can be turned into an employability component.

The objectives of the project were:

- Providing youth workers and youth leaders with knowledge, skills and tools on recruitment, retainment, recognition and reward of voluntary work;
- Introducing mechanisms for structured tracking of voluntary work as a learning process;
- Reflecting upon types of voluntary activities that lead to youth capacity development and increased competitiveness in the job market;
- Sharing the best practices on volunteering and youth employability in different European countries;
- Building partnerships among the civil society organizations of the programme and neighboring partner countries concerning volunteering and youth employability.

The training course was based on the principles of Non-Formal Education and contributed to the recognition of non-formal education through the vast application of the latter in the training activities.

By Nelli Minasyan

“Beyond Waiting...” Multimedia Exhibition in Armenia

“Beyond Waiting: Stories from the Armenian-Turkish Border” multimedia exhibition was exhibited in Yerevan at the AC-CEA/NPAK Armenian Center for Contemporary and Experimental Art from August 27th until September 7th, 2013, and in Gyumri at the Aslamazyan Sister’s Gallery from the 10th until the 15th of September.

Hrant Dink Foundation, YIC Youth Initiative Centre in Gyumri, Galata Fotoğrafhanesi and Free Press Unlimited jointly held the multimedia exhibition “Beyond Waiting: Stories from the Armenian-Turkish Border”.

Five multimedia documentaries are cooperatively produced by Aleksey Manukyan, Anıl Çizmecioğlu, Anush Babajanyan, Arif Yaman, Armenuhi Vardanyan, Deniz Pekkiyıcı, Eren Aytuğ,



Marianna Vardanyan, Sofia Danielyan and Volkan Doğar.

Sealed in 1993, the Turkish- Armenian border continues to divide people, villages, railway tracks, children's laughter and memories. The "Beyond Waiting" exhibition captures the daily lives of people in the border cities Kars and Gyumri as well as the years of interrupted dialogue and prompts us to listen, speak and act 'beyond waiting'.

Thanks to the support of the United States Embassy, five multimedia documentaries have been exhibited; the documentaries were produced within the framework of the “Multimedia for Dialogue” project supported by the Consulate-General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the British Embassy. The project aims at creating an efficient environment for the joint productions of young photographers from Turkey and Armenia, to strengthen their voice through new forms of storytelling and to contribute to the dialogue between the two neighboring countries. The next destination to travel after Gyumri is Belgium, Brussels.

By Esmarida Poghosyan

EVS For a Sustainable Learning Society

The EVS project took place on the island of Lefkada, Greece between May 02 – June 16, 2013. The main aim of the project was to finalize an eco-house construction that would later serve to the young people.

The project itself was a total experiment to us for a number of reasons:

Being an EVS coordinator myself, it was interesting to see how EVS coordination was done in a partner organization at hand; learn from the achievements and mistakes. Sometimes I was feeling we knew too much of the framework of EVS which was good to the other participants but might bother sometimes to the project team.

The activity that we were supposed to do was completely new to me and had nothing to do with our profession. We were building the walls of the eco house using clay, sand, and straw with complete human force; installing photovoltaic system, etc.

Perhaps, the most important things learnt during the



EVS project were more related to life than to profession. Most importantly, we had a couple of dreams achieved during this short period, namely: Riding 24 hours on a motorbike; Camping at the beach; Swimming in the sea with high waves. Take the maximum possible from your EVS project – it can be turned either to voluntary work with Activity Agreement or to a complete adventure like in our case.

By Gurgen Balasanyan and Sona Sahakyan

“Mission: Evaluation; Result: Evaluation” TC in Greece

From June 24 to July 5, 2013 we, Esmarida Poghosyan and Siranush Minasyan, participated in

the TC "Mission: Evaluation; Result: Evaluation" in Lefkada, Greece. The TC was organized by the organization Solidarity Tracks in Lefkada.

The main objectives were exchanging ideas and methods for evaluation and exploitation of the results of evaluation sessions as well as to develop new competences. The final outcome of the course was a new developed manual for evaluating non-formal education. The participants were divided into 4 groups and each of them worked in one chapter of the manual. Later, the whole group had meeting to discuss the working process and to find out the gaps to work on. The manual will be distributed to all organizations working with youth and dealing with non-formal education as soon as it is ready with all graphs and written context.

We had unforgettable days in Lefkada full of new experience and challenges and of course, fun was huge part of it. The group was very friendly with participants of different cultural and national backgrounds, who were ready to share their experience with each other.

On the very first day of the project we had an intercultural evening and all the participants represented their countries in different ways: they spoke about their traditions; some of them were even wearing their folk costumes. We tasted food and beverage from different countries and watched country presentations. After the intercultural evening there were a lot of participants, who expressed their wish of visiting Armenia. Now some of the participants have already applied for projects in Armenia.

During the free evenings we all went to some cafes together or just stayed in the hotel and had nice discussions on different topics, spoke about our countries and traditions.

The 6th day of the course was free and a nice cruise to 3 Greek islands was organized. It is really very hard to depict the whole beauty of the islands. Words



are not enough to describe that breathtaking view and the spirit of old Greek history. The most impressive island was Ithaca. While we were there we couldn't do anything else but remembering the whole history of Odyssey.

To sum up we would like to add that we are very grateful to "Youth Initiative Centre" NGO for giving us this unique opportunity of participating in this TC and experiencing Lefkada with all its beauty.

By Siranush & Esmarida

"Youth, Creativity and Employability" YE in Great Britain

A Youth in Action –sponsored youth exchange entitled "Youth, Creativity and Employability" was held from the 2nd-13th of August in UK, in Gloucestershire. The project was organized by "ASHA Centre" which organizes the same project every year including the youth of 5 countries. The project included such young people who had lack of opportunities, who were in institutional care or from families relying on social welfare etc. and face the problem of having few opportunities. The participant countries were Ukraine, Hungary, Poland, Armenia and UK. There were 5 participants and 2 team leaders from each country.

The participants from Armenia also were 5. Three of them were from orphanages, and the other two -Gayane Arakelyan and Volodya Khachatryan were the representatives of "Youth Initiative Centre" NGO.

The objective of the project was to help young people overcome all problems related to employability and education by using tools such as drama and stage skills. Experienced group leaders, using different methods, gave young participants a chance to create their own cultural platform where everyone came to the final outcome through the play. The theatre, drama and Forum theatre gave them chance for self-discovery and self-expression, and finally they created a common wonderful performance. The program concluded with the performance played by participants, which was called "Faceless Man". The latter, appearing in different situations, gained all the individual acquires the characteristic of human feelings and values. And only after it he be-



came a real member of society. The performance was staged in the theatre where the audience enjoyed the performance with great enthusiasm and pleasure.

During the project the participants had an opportunity to visit Gloucester, Bristol and also they enjoyed the beauty of capital London.

The project was succeeded because the participants, besides travelling and knowing new cultures, gained big amount of new knowledge and skills.

By Gayane Arakelyan.

T.A.L.K YE in Sweden

The youth exchange named "T.A.L.K – Tolerance, Awareness, Love, and Knowledge" took place in Ånäset, Sweden in August, 2013.

The participating countries were Sweden, Armenia, Georgia, Portugal and Ireland. The 30 participants from different countries came together and within a week worked and talked about antidiscrimination and European awareness.

The project aimed to discover and challenge norms in the society which is based on ethnicity, gender, disability.



During the project the Armenian team with the other participants explored the norms in the society based on gender, ethnicity, disability, developed ideas and thoughts about how discrimination can be tackled in their local community, promoted anti-discrimination and inclusion of all kinds of people

The methodology was based on non-formal learning and the activities included theatre, working in pairs and small groups, team building, case studies, simulation games, open space lectures, visits, discussions and artistic expressions.

By Nelli Minasyan

Gyumri Youth Radio

"Youth Initiative Centre " NGO is presenting its new initiative. It is Gyumri Youth Radio which we want to let to your judgement. Gyumri Youth Radio is broadcasted by YIC NGO. This interesting idea is realized by the joined forces of a group of young people. The main aim of Youth Radio is to introduce to society the passing events among young people, to touch upon the young people's interesting daily life living in Gyumri, to keep you in contact with European volunteers, their lifestyle and conducted activities . Our working stuff periodically will present the programs, projects and cultural events, as well as everything new and actual.

YIC EVS Hosting

The summer for YIC was the period of saying goodbye to our lovely volunteers and welcoming the new ones. In August YIC hosted Thomy Sadatchy from France for



6 months period. Thomy has started French cultural club to present French language and culture to the youth of Gyumri. The club is taking place every Friday at 15:00 at YIC office.

Thomy is assisting YIC in finalizing the web-site of the organization and is involved in the on-going projects of the organization.

Thomy is doing his secondary activity at Gyumri municipality in PR department. Thomy is assisting the staff of Gyumri municipality to finalize the PR documents and update the web-site.

Thomy will be with us for another 3 months. You can visit YIC to meet him and attend his activities.

By Gayane Arakelyan

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