

Club Spotlight – European Club

“Europe is the world's second-smallest continent by surface area, covering about 10,180,000 square kilometres or 2% of the Earth's surface and about 6.8% of its land area. Of Europe's approximately 50 states, Russia is by far the largest by both area and population, taking up 40% of the continent, while...” These are all just facts. What is Europe, really?

Once a week, on Thursdays at 3 o'clock, the famous blue room at YIC becomes very crowded. For over an hour it turns into the most international meeting place in Gyumri, when we, eight EVS volunteers, present and discuss various topics from the perspectives of our different countries. Since its beginning on November 1st, we have successfully challenged stereotypes of our countries, presented national music and famous people, and talked about characteristics of volunteering in Germany, Denmark, Poland, Portugal, Austria, and Romania. Regardless of the topic we approach, we attempt to be creative and fun, and laughter is always a vital ingredient.

As one of the club leaders, European Club is, for me, an opportunity to make participants aware of particular values that my country and culture represent and cherish. On the other hand, as one of the club participants, I discover that “European culture” is an insufficient term for the extremely complex and diverse ideas, traditions, and customs that it is supposed to cover.

All in all, I cannot guarantee that joining European Club will allow you to come up with a single appropriate answer to the question: what is Europe? I believe that such an answer does not exist. However, my friends and I are more than sure that regular participation in our club will let you create your own vision and understanding of Europe - or at least the countries we come from. Why not give it a try?! *By Aleksandra Zieba*



Upcoming Clubs

YIC is on holiday from 28th December. Old clubs will restart and new clubs will begin from 10th January.



Happy Holidays!

From 



Read about YIC's

Christmas Market

on page 3!



More info on Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/YIC-NGO-Youth-Initiative-Centre-Gyumri/137970669569711>

International Training Course

Cross Border – Build Bridges

Conflict management and negotiation skills are vital tools in everyday life and especially in cross-border dialogue, which is a key focus point in YIC's activity directions. YIC aim to spread techniques to assist youth in cross-border dialogues, so spreading conflict management and negotiation skills is an obvious step for the organisation. Wanting to reach further than the participants of the training projects, YIC chose participants, who are actively involved in youth work and can spread the information in their respective local communities, thus enlarging the target group to include youth NGOs, their members, benefices, etc.

The training course was organised in association with Uluslararası Sürdürülebilir Kalkınma Derneği – International Sustainable Development Association, Turkey and was hosted in Gyumri. From 25th November and four days on, 24 participants from 8 countries took part in workshops and activities about stereotypes, understanding conflicts, establishing cross-border dialogue and ways to handle conflicts using negotiation skills and conflict resolution strategies.

The mentality from the trainers was already from the very beginning that everyone was there to learn and to share experience and knowledge. The training was therefore organised in a way that left space for the participants to contribute with inputs and knowledge through discussions, group work and simulations. The training course also provided the participants with a chance to develop their own projects and establish contacts for future partnerships. A final day in Yerevan was spent experiencing the city and a traditional Armenian dinner and concluded the training course.

By Kristoffer Jansen



Prisoner's dilemma

Two prisoners are questioned separately about a crime they committed. Each may give evidence against the other or may say nothing. If both say nothing, they just go to prison for one month. If one gives evidence and the other says nothing, the first goes free and the second goes to prison for a year. If both give evidence, both go to prison for three months. The overall best strategy is for both to say nothing in order to get the smallest collected punishment (one month in prison each, two months in all). However not knowing (or trusting) what the other will do, each prisoner's best strategy is to give evidence, which is the worst possible outcome collectively (one goes free and the other to prison for a year, so twelve months in all).

International Christmas Market

Vardanants /Central/ Square

29.12.12

15:00

On Saturday, the 29th of December, the people of Gyumri will notice something very different and unusual in the city centre-- an international Christmas market occupying Vardanants /Central/ Square!

Organised by YIC within the framework of International Club, this special market will feature stalls from numerous different countries, each one presenting unique holiday cultures and traditions. There will be traditional foods, drinks, decorations, songs, dances, games, and of course a wonderful

Christmas atmosphere!

This special event is open to the public, so come join us to taste an Austrian-German *Lebkuchen*, make a Danish Christmas heart, sing a Romanian Christmas song, sample Portuguese *filhós*, find out what a Polish "*barsch* with little ears" actually is, and see some American Christmas decorations. This holiday season, YIC's Christmas market is the place to be!

EVS-Hosting

Take Initiative - Gain experience

Since YIC was formally registered as an NGO in 2009, volunteering has been one of the most important and appreciated aspects of the organisation's work and focus. At YIC, volunteers have a huge impact—they bring new life to ideas and initiatives, they implement projects that assist people in need, and they help inspire and motivate many of the organisation's members. That is why YIC has hosted 20 international volunteers since their founding—and why EVS volunteers have always had a home at YIC.

So despite the arrival of seven EVS volunteers during October and November, YIC's EVS family would not be complete until the eighth volunteer landed in Armenia on December 4th. Nele is a 20 year-old German volunteer from Klein Leppin, a village near Berlin. She joins the existing volunteers from Austria, Denmark, Poland, Portugal, Romania, and Germany.

Her activities at YIC will revolve around the theme of cultural exchange and raising awareness about the different cultural dimensions of Europe. This will be accomplished principally through the German Club, which will consist of two elements:

- A linguistic element focusing on developing the participants' skills and knowledge of the German language, which corresponds to a demand for learning and practicing German in the local community;
- A cultural element that introduces and explains different aspects of German culture such as the history, traditions, arts, and foods.

The cultural element in particular is also part of sharing and promoting European culture and values. This aim is also achieved through the European Club, which Nele will help facilitate with the seven other EVS volunteers.



By Kristoffer Jansen

Lilit Volunteering in Romania

Hi! I am Lilit, and I am doing my EVS in Bucharest, Romania. I arrived here in August, and my volunteering will last for 12 months. I am working with children in schools, kindergartens, and hospitals. I tell the children about Armenia - the colors of the Armenian flag, how to say “hello” and “good-bye” in Armenian, the Armenian alphabet, and Armenian songs with some dance movements. I also teach them to make origami figures, which I learned here through trainings. At the end I give them passports with an Armenian stamp, by which they can come to Armenia (it is funny!☺). In the hospitals we play games, make origami figures, draw, and do face-painting.

I like what I do here. It is very exciting to go to some of the schools and from the entrance hear the children’s voices: “Lilit is coming, “Doamna” (Miss) is coming.” And when I enter

the classroom and ask if they remember the colors of flag they say: “*karmish* (red), *kapujt* (blue), *tsinanaguyun* (apricot).”

It is really good to know that children love you and that they wait for you. It is the best feeling when they run forward to you and start to kiss you, and in the end they don't let you go. I agree that the best judges are children :)

EVS is a good opportunity for me to discover myself; and in another sphere, to obtain experience working with children, including children with disabilities.

This experience is really a good chance to get acquainted with other cultures (we are 20 people from 16 different countries!) and new ways of thinking, and to discover many NEW things FOR you and ABOUT you!

TAKE A RISK AND START DISCOVERING!

By Lilit Gevorgyan



Interview with Member of October - David Simonyan

We caught the member of October for a short interview:

Please, tell us a little about you/your school/your career.

My name is David Simonyan. I was born in 1990, October 6, in Gyumri. I graduated from Axuryan college named after M. Nalbandyan. Now I study marketing at Armenian State Agricultural University.

What hobbies and interests do you have?

I am interested in football and tennis. I am also fond of swimming and painting.

Which kind of job would you like to have?

I want to become a sportsman or art critic but I am an economist at present.

How long are you a member of YIC?

I have been YIC member for nearly two years.

Why did you decide to join YIC?

I wanted to communicate with kind, clever, intelligent people.

Which is your most favorite project or event you have taken part in?

I attend all the events with pleasure!

What is the most interesting thing you have learned at YIC?

I realized the importance of being active and I have learnt to be free.

What will you advise to other members of YIC?

Dear people (*people jaaaaaaaan*) let's meet 2013 New Year with enthusiasm, hope and happiness!



Interviewed by Nune Minasyan

Interview with Member of November - Ani Darbinyan

We caught the member of November for a short interview:

Please, tell us a little about you/your school/your career.

I study at the department of International Relations at the branch of European Regional Educational Academy in Gyumri. I like my profession very much but I'm going to get a new profession in future.



What hobbies and interests do you have?

I like to spend my free time with lovely people in a pleasant atmosphere. Being a quiet person by nature, I like listening to music and dreaming to the

sound of music. I also like reading books and watching nice movies.

Which kind of job would you like to have?

I found it hard to choose my profession of diplomat, but I like it very much. However, I don't really see myself in that area in the future. I want to get a new profession in order to work at a bank.

How long are you a member of YIC?

I have been a member of YIC since March 2010 and it has been two beautiful years as a member.

Why did you decide to join YIC?

I wanted to join YIC because I liked the mission of the organisation and the goals that this youth group strives for. YIC gave me something, that I wasn't able to get from any other NGO of Gyumri. It's a fresh breath in Gyumri, a bright and colourful point, the centre of all initiatives.

Which is your most favorite project or event you have taken part in?

I think this question is very difficult to answer because there isn't a program, which wasn't important to me and there is no event, which I didn't attend with love. Everything was well-organised, so it's difficult to single out one thing; Actually, it isn't possible... for me every event has been great!

What is the most interesting thing you have learned at YIC?

I have learnt a lot of things in YIC. I've gained a lot of knowledge and I have picked up new values. My personality has been shaped by YIC.

What will you advise to other members of YIC?

I advice the other members of YIC to appreciate their status of volunteer, to appreciate the value of being a "member of YIC". To be a willing and caring member as I have been. Let's reach new heights with YIC!

Interviewed by Nune Minasyan

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