



Need for Fresh Air!



OCTOBER  
2006  
No 1

YOUTH IN TRANSITION  
armenia moldova  
belarus russia  
ukraine

60

Let's measure Support Measures



# The SALTO-YOUTH Eastern Europe and Caucasus Resource Centre

Support and Advance Learning and Training Opportunities (SALTO-YOUTH) network within the YOUTH programme was created by the European Commission in the year 2000.

SALTO-YOUTH supports quality development in European YOUTH projects. It organizes training courses and shares resources with European youth workers on different priority areas (geographic or thematic).

SALTO-YOUTH Network consisting of 8 SALTO Resource Centres, based within different National Agencies of the YOUTH programme. More information on [www.salto-youth.net](http://www.salto-youth.net)

The SALTO-YOUTH Eastern Europe and Caucasus Resource Centre was established in Warsaw, Poland, in October 2003, on basis of the European Commission decision.

The aims of the EECA Resource Centre:

- To raise visibility and awareness of the YOUTH programme opportunities within the Eastern Europe and Caucasus region
- To provide support and expertise to National Agencies of the YOUTH programme by contributing to events promoting cooperation with the EECA region
- To promote International Co-operation with EECA Partner Countries
- To support project organisers in the development of contacts, partnerships and projects

## SALTO-YOUTH EECA RC organises:

- **TRAINING EVENTS** – focus on development of skills, project management and an understanding of YOUTH programme Actions and of non-formal education
- **DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES** – contact making seminars and study visits aimed at building long-lasting partnerships between organisations from EECA and Programme countries
- **INFORMATION ACTIVITIES** – enabling organisations from EECA partner Countries to have easy access to the YOUTH programme and promoting co-operation with counterparts in Programme countries
- **CO-OPERATION WITH youthNET/CIS project** – another project in the promotion of the YOUTH programme within Eastern Europe, co-ordinated by Interkulturelles Zentrum based in Austria.

If you would like to be regularly informed on the activities of SALTO-YOUTH EECA RC and of the youthNET/CIS project, as well as on the latest developments in the field of non-formal education within the Region, you are invited to subscribe to the quarterly NEWSLETTER on [www.salto-youth.net/newsletter](http://www.salto-youth.net/newsletter)

In addition to above, SALTO-YOUTH EECA RC also provides access to:

- **“Contact List”** with addresses and fields of interest of organizations from Programme and EECA countries – to find a partner for your project, you can visit [www.salto-youth.org.pl](http://www.salto-youth.org.pl)
- **Network of Multipliers** – trained by the Resource Centre, a network of people within the EECA region, active and experienced in the promotion of the YOUTH programme. For further information visit [www.salto-youth.net/eecamultipliers](http://www.salto-youth.net/eecamultipliers)
- **EECA manual** – internet links to sources about Eastern Europe and Caucasus, which could help you in the preparation of your projects. More on [www.salto-youth.net/eecamanual](http://www.salto-youth.net/eecamanual)



STAMP OF APPROVAL



**pascal  
lejeune**

It is a real pleasure for me to welcome the launch of the YOUTH in 7 Magazine in this particular moment. We are approaching the end of the YOUTH programme and at the same time we will open a new phase of the educational programmes of the European Union for the period of 2007-13 with the "Youth in Action" programme. It is an excellent opportunity to sum up, evaluate and promote actions undertaken so far.

The YOUTH in 7 Magazine, as a communication tool offered by the SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centre working with Eastern Europe and Caucasus, is fulfilling this need in a smooth way.

Youth exchanges, European Voluntary Service and cooperation in the field of youth work involving young people and youth organizations in Partner Countries was a significant part of the current YOUTH programme. Within this cooperation, the Eastern Europe and Caucasus (EECA) region was an important priority for the European Commission. This importance was underlined at the end of 2003, when the Commission decided to create a special Resource Centre in Poland, which would facilitate and support development of cooperation between organizations from the Programme Countries and the seven Partner Countries in the region. With the help of the Resource Centre, the visibility of EU non-formal education initiatives in the EECA countries was improved and the participation of young people from these countries significantly increased. Within the last couple of years the number of projects involving partners from this region has almost doubled. The Commission has observed great potential and interest from its EECA partners, who are ready for cooperation.

It was also an important step towards the establishment of stable support for youth organizations in the EECA region, which will remain a priority of the European Neighborhood Policy.

Furthermore the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe, together with SALTO EECA RC, is providing additional resources to enhance the quality of activities in the EECA region.

Therefore the basis for further cooperation with EECA organizations in the field of non-formal education is already built. The new Action 3 "Youth in the World" of the "Youth in Action" programme, which is especially designed to cooperate with Non-EU Member States, will emphasize the importance of cooperation with EECA countries. Action 3 will support dialogue among young people from different cultures from the EECA region and Programme Countries, using non-formal education as a vehicle for learning about diversity and tolerance.

I am sure you will find a lot of interesting and inspiring information in the Magazine, which will motivate you to GO EAST and develop cooperation between the Programme Countries and EECA countries.

Let me take this opportunity to wish you all a healthy, happy and successful New Year with the new "Youth in Action" programme.

#### **Pascal LEJEUNE**

The Head of Unit  
Directorate-General for Education and Culture  
European Commission



**tomasz  
bratek**

Welcome to the first issue of the 'Youth in 7' Magazine, published by the SALTO Eastern Europe and Caucasus (EECA) Resource Centre. The magazine is a new addition to the list of tools created within the last few years to disseminate information, help build non-governmental organisations' capacity and assist in finding partners in the Eastern Europe and Caucasus Countries and the European Union within the frames of the YOUTH Programme and the forthcoming „Youth in Action” Programme.

Are you active within a youth organisation in one of the EECA countries? If yes, you know that your NGO would benefit from more intense and broader contacts with organisations from outside your country, be it in the EU or another country from your Region. Let this magazine, therefore, inspire and encourage you to start up new projects and partnerships in the area of non-formal education.

Do you come from an EU country and would be thrilled to develop active cooperation with counterparts within the EECA Region? Yet, the whole Region seems to be a complex and intricate puzzle of countries, history, politics and cultures. Thanks to the 'Youth in 7' Magazine, the picture will become clearer, and you will gain a better understanding of the relevant Partner Countries while learning the context and specific situation of the youth field within the Region.

As this first issue of the 'Youth in 7' Magazine is published on the brink of a new phase of the European Union programme for Youth, the future issues of the magazine will also serve as a link bringing together results and good practices from the YOUTH Programme and future experiences and good practices to be gained through the new "Youth in Action" Programme. The magazine will show you what others did, what worked and what could be done differently. So much has happened in the previous phases of the YOUTH Programme, why not use the exciting experiences and expertise of others as a springboard for your initiatives. Equipped with new information, skills and ideas, gained via the 'Youth in 7' Magazine, take advantage of the new opportunities to become available in the new year 2007. Have a pleasant reading.

#### **Tomasz BRATEK**

SALTO EECA Coordinator  
The Head of the Polish NA  
of the YOUTH programme



**EAST LOOK** Youth in Transition by Tomek Bratek & Andrij Pavlovych, page 3

MAP, page 8

**THEME OF THE ISSUE** Participation versus manipulation: challenges for the EECA region by Yaryna Borenko, page 10

**YOUTH EXCHANGE** EU YOUTH programme - What makes it so special for Russia? by Andrei Popov, page 14

Youth Exchange Participants' Reflections by Tatevik Baghdasaryan, Anahit Minassian, Tatev Yesayan page 16

**EVS** Sending a Volunteer to Russia... Conflict Zones and their Prevention by Rouzanna Ivanyan, page 17

Islands and Castles... a Russian Volunteer in the UK by Vidana Shugaeva, page 20

"Lucky chance drove me into Georgia's embrace" Interview with Nikolai Pushkarev, page 22

"I have my second home here now..." Interview with Christina Wimmer, page 24

**SUPPORT MEASURES** Let's measure Support Measures by Anna Fruba, page 26

Need for Fresh Air! by Areg Tadevosyan, page 29

## EASTERN MOSAIC

## AUTHORS

Editor: Tomasz Bratek.  
Editorial team: Yaryna Borenko, Tomasz Bratek,  
Gisele Kirby, Andrij Pavlovych, Karolina Rutkowska.  
Pictures: project beneficiaries.  
Design & layout: Justyna Marciniak

SALTO YOUTH EECA RC, Polish National Agency  
of the YOUTH Programme, FDES  
43 Mokotowska St, 00-551 Warsaw, Poland  
Tel: +48 22 622 37 12, Fax: +48 22 621 62 67

Published by the SALTO-YOUTH Eastern Europe  
and Caucasus Resource Centre, August 2005

Reproduction of texts and pictures is authorised  
provided the source and author are quoted.

Many thanks to all those who have contributed to this  
magazine. Special thanks go to Gisele Kirby for her per-  
sonal involvement and commitment to SALTO EECA work.

The views and opinions expressed do not necessarily  
express the official view of the European Commission  
or the SALTO-YOUTH EECA Resource Centre.

To receive further information or to contact the edito-  
rial team with your comments, suggestions or ideas  
please e-mail: [eeca-magazine@youth.org.pl](mailto:eeca-magazine@youth.org.pl)



# YOUTH IN TRANSITION

BY **Tomek Bratek**  
& **Andrij Pavlovych**

The social transformations of the last decades in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus created numerous opportunities and challenges but also new problems, particularly for the young people. The difficult social and economic situation affected most of the Region's population. Many people of all age are poor and marginalised due to unemployment, economic and social insecurity and the increase in criminality.



Young people suffer the most. In any society the transition from being a dependent family member to becoming an independent citizen is connected with difficulties and risks. But in the countries of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus young people are going through a double transition process – their own transition from adolescence to adulthood and the similar process of transformation of the societies in their countries. Sadly, the majority of young people have a gloomy vision of the future as they have lost hope for a prosperous life. They are still frustrated, discouraged and disinterested, and finally they have become indifferent to political and social life. The situation of youth is especially difficult in small towns and villages, where public institutions do not provide creative opportunities for recreation and do not organise spare-time and leisure activities for the young people. The only opportunities available are sports activities, which are still the most popular (especially football) amongst young people. Cultural and tourist mobility and international cooperation are modestly developed in Eastern European countries and Caucasus because of the economic situation of young people and of their parents. Very often, the mobility of young people is limited to the minimum: they do not even travel inside their own countries...

This is why non-formal education is extremely important for these countries in a transition period to open society. It would help to provide continuous education by covering the gaps in formal and extra-curricular

**The group of young people suffers the most. In any society the transition from being a dependent family member to becoming an independent citizen is connected with difficulties and risks.**

education. Non-formal education within the YOUTH programme has already had a positive impact on young people in the Eastern European and Caucasus region – it motivates them to become more active within their local community and shows them possible ways of involvement at different levels of society, developing responsibility for the future of their countries. The YOUTH programme shows the value of disinterested help for other people, encouraging voluntary activities that are so needed in the Region.

**Non-formal education within the YOUTH programme has already had a positive impact on young people Eastern Europe.**

Before you start cooperation with this Region –  
**Get a taste of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus!** 

Tomasz Bratek (Warsaw, Poland)  
Director of the Polish NA of the YOUTH Programme, Coordinator of the SALTO-YOUTH EECA RC  
 tbratek@youth.org.pl 

Andrij Pavlovych (Warsaw, Poland)  
Deputy Coordinator of the SALTO-YOUTH EECA RC  
 apavlovych@youth.org.pl 

## A taste of geography...

Eastern Europe... Caucasus... Hmm... Where are they? The answer depends on who you ask. It is well known that geography and distances have a double nature – physical and psychological... Sometimes Iceland can be closer for you than Belarus...

In the case of the Caucasus countries the situation is quite easy – it is sufficient to find the Caucasus mountains on the map and check the names of countries which lie there: Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan... To be precise, these countries lie together at the eastern part of Turkey, in the southern part of the Caucasus mountains, whereas the Northern Caucasian region belongs to the Russian Federation (there are six autonomous republics, amongst which the best known, because of the tragic happenings, is Chechnya).

But where is Eastern Europe situated? In this case, the situation is more complicated (it was much clearer before the Berlin wall collapsed). The term Eastern Europe was mainly associated with countries located east of the Berlin Wall. Since its collapse, some countries - which were previously in the zone of influence of the Soviet Union, such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Poland - wanted to dis-



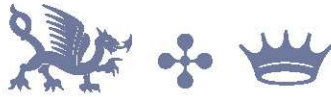
Europe... Simply speaking, the EU is very often referred to as just “EUROPE”, an example of a kind of a short-cut thinking ... Accordingly to this short-cut thinking model, the area of the Eastern confines of the so-called “EUROPE” is named Eastern Europe.

If you would like more definitions of what the Region of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus is, the YOUTH programme can help. According to the YOUTH programme’s understanding, the Region of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus (abbreviation – EECA) consists of the following so-called Partner Countries: **Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and the Russian Federation** (all its territory including its Asian part as well). If you have agoraphobia, please don’t look at the map of this region! 😊 The Eastern Europe and Caucasus Region is the largest amongst the First Priority Regions of Partner Countries (i.e. EuroMed and South East Europe), the size of which can be compared only with the Second Priority Region – Latin America.

**But where is Eastern Europe situated? In this case, the situation is more complicated (it was much clearer before the Berlin wall collapsed). The term Eastern Europe was mainly associated with countries located east of the Berlin Wall.**

tance themselves from the past and made their geographical location clear to the world. They started to call themselves the countries of Central Europe. Therefore Eastern Europe moved its borders further east. Also this geopolitical process was further strengthened with the enlargement of the to the new EU member states, formerly Soviet satellites; therefore, they are no longer in Eastern Europe but somewhere between Central-Eastern Europe and Western

Eastern Europe and the Caucasus is a very interesting region from the cultural point of view, but also very important because of geopolitical problems. This Region is very rich in “hot” political issues, ethnic and religious problems and ongoing wars due to unsolved territorial problems. Examples of these problems could be a case of the so-called “disputed territories”, which you must bear in mind in order to create the full picture of the geographical specificity of the EECA. These are areas within internationally recognised sovereign states whose status is in serious political or violent dispute ↪



and whose conditions differ substantially from those of the relevant sovereign states. They are often outside the central government's control and characterised by intense, long lasting and widespread insurgency or independence movements that enjoy popular support.

There are four such "quasi states" in the EECA region:

- ✦ Transnistria in Moldova
- ✦ Abkhazia and South Osetia in Georgia
- ✦ Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan

We cannot forget that young people living in these areas are also entitled to participate in the YOUTH programme. They are the target group for activities run under its different Actions, as the programme's priority is to promote universal peace and dialogue through encouraging tolerance and solidarity among young people.

The latest enlargement of the European Union brought the EECA Region not only physically closer, due to the new common borders, but also psychologically closer in the minds of EU citizens. Whilst previously only the Russian Federation had a common border with the EU (with Finland), now also Belarus and the Ukraine have a common border with EU countries; Moldova will become a neighbouring country soon and, eventually when the process of Turkey's integration into the EU is finalised, all three Caucasian countries will become the EU's neighbours. The process of enlargement has brought changes to the EU's political geography offering new opportunities to deepen existing relations between the EU and its neighbours in the East. The EU authorities are determined to develop further partnerships with neighbouring countries to mutual benefit, by promoting security as well as stability and prosperity. The EU's external borders will not become new dividing lines but a focus for enhanced cooperation.

All the EECA countries are already included in the "European Neighbourhood Policy" (ENP), except for the Russian

Federation, with which the EU has developed relations through a strategic partnership covering four "common spaces". The ENP sets ambitious objectives for partnership with neighbouring countries, based on commitments to

shared values, key foreign policy objectives and political, economic and institutional reforms. Partner countries are invited to enter into closer political, economic and cultural relations with the EU, to enhance cross-border cooperation and to

share responsibility in conflict prevention and resolution. The openness of the YOUTH programme for International Cooperation with

Partner Countries is results from the special focus that the European Union gives to youth policy development as well as its serious approach to the future of young people.

**WHAT ARE THE COMMON HISTORICAL FEATURES OF THE EASTERN EUROPE AND CAUCASUS REGION?** At first, all these countries were part of the former Soviet Union and previously most of them were part of the Russian Empire

Central authorities first tried to create a **LOYAL CITIZEN** of a **TZAR'S RUSSIA** in the XVIII-XIX centuries and then a **HOMO SOVIETICUS** in the ruthless XX century, someone who is just a part of the state machine, without his own needs, dreams or opinions

### A taste of history...

What are the common historical features of the Eastern Europe and Caucasus Region? At first, all these countries were part of the former Soviet Union and previously most of them were part of the Russian Empire. It means that over a long period, because of the lack of sovereignty of these countries, most of these nations lost their national identity, self-independence, spirit of initiative and community feeling. Central authorities first tried to create a "loyal citizen" of a "Tzar's Russia" in the XVIII-XIX centuries and then a "Homo Sovieticus" in the ruthless XX century, someone who is just a part of the state machine, without his own needs, dreams or opinions. Millions of people lost their lives during this assimilation process... Many others lost their →



A taste of

history



lives during the wars (WWI, civil war, WWII etc.) and modern military conflicts, the majority of which are still unsolved and painful (e.g. in the “disputed territories”).

Secondly, the common Soviet heritage... The most obvious is the linguistic context – the Russian language is still widely spoken in the post-Soviet area (be prepared for a situation in which participants from EECA countries create a “Russian speaking” group/community within a project). In addition, many people of the EECA countries still have “nostalgia for Soviet times” – the most common are cultural reminiscences (e.g. songs, movies, cartoons etc.) or childhood and youth reminiscences (e.g. Pioneer and Komsomol activities). Some myths from Soviet times are still very popular – for example the myths of the heroes of the Great Motherland War (the Soviet name for World War II) and the myths of the Pioneer and Komsomol organisations, which were the only centralised all-national youth organisations allowed in the Soviet Union. The Pioneer organisation was a quasi-scout organisation with communist ideology for children aged 9 to 14 and Komsomol, the Communist Union of Youth, for young people aged 14 to 28.

**The “Soviet heritage” still influences (sometimes at a subconscious level) the working style of youth organisations and youth workers in the EECA countries...**

The collapse of the Soviet Union is assessed differently by different people. The majority of the older generation sees Soviet times through “rose-tinted glasses” and misses its prosperity. Within the younger generation, we still can

find such opinions, but the majority of young people are very enthusiastic for new perspectives and the democracy building process.

Some myths from Soviet times are still very popular – for example the myths of **THE HEROES OF THE GREAT MOTHERLAND WAR** and the myths of the **PIONEER and KOMSOMOL** organisations.

## A taste of reality . .

Reality in the EECA countries is very different and very similar at the same time... All of these countries belong to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), whilst some of them are trying to create new international structures (Belarus is still integrating with the Russian Federation into a new union state; the Ukraine is trying to renew an “alter-CIS” – GUAM: this is an abbreviation of the member states – Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova). As you can see, transition of the Region is still going on.

Therefore taking into account the overall political situation of the EECA countries, we would say that it is a “bit” different from the situation of the countries in the European Union. According to a “Freedom in the World 2005” survey, which provides an annual evaluation of the state of global freedom as experienced by individuals, there are no “free” countries in the EECA region. There are several countries such as Armenia, Georgia, Moldova

REALITY in the EECA countries is very different and very similar at the same time...

and Ukraine that are indicated as “partly free” countries. This means that they are going through some changes, which could result in the democratisation of these countries. This survey was done by an American foundation “Freedom House”, which has been carrying out such research and analysis since 1972. The researchers define “freedom” as an opportunity to act spontaneously in a variety of fields outside the control of the government and other centres of potential domination. The “Freedom House” foundation measures freedom according to two broad categories: political rights and civil liberties. Political rights (PR) enable people to participate freely in the political process, through the right to vote, competing for public office, and electing representatives who have a decisive impact on public policies and who are accountable to the electorate. Civil liberties (CL) allow for the freedoms of expression and belief, associational and organisational rights, the rule of law, and personal autonomy without interference from the state.

## What is the tallest peak in Europe?

A taste of  
reality



**What do these results mean for trainers and youth workers who are going to cooperate with this Region?**

First of all, it means that the people from the EU countries should be aware of, as well as very sensitive to, the situation of youth workers and youth organisations in the EECA region.

Such a possibility for international co-operation, as for example offered by the YOUTH programme, is especially important for both groups of beneficiaries, those from the so-called “WEST” (Programme Countries) and from the so-called “EAST” (EECA Partner Countries).

Such cooperation is not easy – we may even call it a kind of challenge. There are not only cultural differences between these two regions, there is also a kind of “civilisation difference” (inside the EU you expect that everywhere you will encounter the so-called “EU standards” of political, economical and social systems, in the East you should be ready to experience “Eastern” standards).

These differences may result in fears, but as with everything new and unknown they can also be very attractive and challenging... The common problems usually encountered when cooperating with the EECA countries are: lack of reciprocal information; the partner finding process; language difficulties; the problems of the issue of visas and bank transfer; hard local economical situation (e.g. lack of hot water and heating, etc.)... **And now the positive aspects: the most important is that young people from the EECA countries are very interested in and very open to international cooperation within the framework of the YOUTH programme; they are very skill- and knowledge-oriented.** □

...and now a small test to finish with:

What is the tallest peak in Europe?

Please choose the correct answer:

- ✦ Mount Blanc (4807 m, the tallest peak of the Alpien mountains)
- ✦ Elbrus (5642 m, the tallest peak of the Caucasian mountains)

Remember, the answer you choose will define the Europe you live in...

**Some SALTO-EECA advice to bear in mind in order to make your international cooperation with the Eastern Europe and Caucasus region efficient:**

The people, organisations and local communities with whom we are cooperating are our partners. This means that they have the right to know and understand the essence of the common project.

You should do everything to ensure that all partners in the project are self-dependent as well as fully involved and that you are not treating them as if they were in need of your protection.

The common project should be transparent and understandable in every way by all its partners. You should not transfer the burden of project financing to partners facing financial difficulties due to the economic situation of their country.

You should not make promises, not only financial, which were not thought out thoroughly, as there could be a risk that they are not fulfilled.

You should also take care of partners' safety (in every way). You should remember that while working with partners from authoritarian regimes (e.g. from “not free” countries), local partners are the ones that would be affected by a potential risk. Therefore you should respect the rules and regulations that are implemented in your partners' countries.

While preparing an international project, you should make an effort to get to know the culture, history and traditions, as well as the basis of the law and political systems of the countries that will participate in the project. You should build your training programme and exercises accordingly.



- 1 Armenia
- 2 Azerbaijan
- 3 Belarus
- 4 Georgia
- 5 Moldova
- 6 Russian Federation
- 7 Ukraine

### Brief key facts of the EECA's countries (2005):

NAME OF COUNTRY	AREA/ LAND (SQ.KM)	GDP/ PER CAPITA (2004)	POPULATION	POPULATION GROWTH RATE	AGE STRUCTURE			LIFE EXPECTANCY	
					0-14	15-64	65-...	MALE	FEMALE
ARMENIA	28.400	4600\$	2.982.904	-0,25%	21,6%	67,5%	10,9%	67,97	75,75
AZERBAIJAN	86.100	3800\$	7.911.974	0,59%	26,4%	65,7%	7,8%	59,24	67,66
BELARUS	207.600	6800\$	10.300.483	-0,09 %	16%	69,5%	14,6%	63,03	74,69
GEORGIA	69.700	3100\$	4.677.401	-0,35%	18%	65,9%	16%	72,59	79,67
MOLDOVA	33.371	1900\$	4.455.421	0,22%	20,02%	69,5%	10,3%	61,12	69,43
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	16.995.800	9800\$	143.420.309	-0,37%	14,6%	71,3%	14,2%	60,55	74,04
UKRAINE	603.700	6.300\$	47.425.336	-0,63%	15,6%	68,8%	15,6%	64,39	75,31

## Network of Multipliers

Network of Multipliers: People who promote and inform others about the YOUTH Programme in Eastern European countries and the Caucasus.

### ARMENIA

**TATEVIC MARGARYAN** from the NGO World Independent Youth Union (Erevan), ✉ [margaryantc@yahoo.com](mailto:margaryantc@yahoo.com)

**ATOM MKHITARYAN** from the Federation of Youth Clubs - Armenia (Erevan), ✉ [mkhitaryan@yahoo.com](mailto:mkhitaryan@yahoo.com)

**AREG TADEVOSYAN** from the National Pool of Trainers (Erevan), ✉ [areg.tadevosyan@gmail.com](mailto:areg.tadevosyan@gmail.com)

### AZERBAIJAN

**TALEH BAGHIYEV** from the Azeri-Anglo Youth Society (Baku), ✉ [talehbagiyev@hotmail.com](mailto:talehbagiyev@hotmail.com)

**SHAHIN BAYRAMOV** from the Association of Young Azerbaijani Friends of Europe (Baku), ✉ [sh\\_bayramov@yahoo.com](mailto:sh_bayramov@yahoo.com)

### BELARUS

**TATSIANA ALIAKSEYEVA** from the Centre for Youth Information and Documentation (Minsk), ✉ [tatsiana@euro26.by](mailto:tatsiana@euro26.by)

**MARYNA KORZH** from the Youth Education Centre "FIALTA" (Minsk), ✉ [marisha\\_k@mail.ru](mailto:marisha_k@mail.ru)

**KATSIARYNA SALADUKHA** from the international charitable NGO "Independent Children's Aid" (Minsk), ✉ [katesolod@hotmail.com](mailto:katesolod@hotmail.com)

### GEORGIA

**RUSUDAN CHKHEIDZE** from SOS Children's Village Georgia (Tbilisi), ✉ [rusudanchkheidze@yahoo.com](mailto:rusudanchkheidze@yahoo.com)

**ANNA DZIAPSHIPA** from the Educational Television Centre of Georgia (Tbilisi), ✉ [anidziapshipa@hotmail.com](mailto:anidziapshipa@hotmail.com)

**GEORGE KAKULIA** from the Academy for Peace and Development (Tbilisi), ✉ [giorgi\\_kakulia@hotmail.com](mailto:giorgi_kakulia@hotmail.com)

### MOLDOVA

**ALIONA CARA** from the National Youth Council in Moldova (Chisinau), ✉ [cara\\_aliona@yahoo.com](mailto:cara_aliona@yahoo.com)

**OLGA CONOP** from the NGO "World Window" (Tiraspol), ✉ [orangeline@yandex.ru](mailto:orangeline@yandex.ru)

**VITALIE ROTARU** from Invisible College Moldova (Chisinau), ✉ [ilvar81@mail.ru](mailto:ilvar81@mail.ru)

### RUSSIAN FEDERATION

**LIUDMILA ANTIPINA** from Baikal Ecological Wave (Irkutsk), ✉ [lyudachen@mail.ru](mailto:lyudachen@mail.ru)

**ROUZANNA IVANYAN** from the NGO "Youth Information Centre" in St. Petersburg, ✉ [rouzanna@youthcentre.ru](mailto:rouzanna@youthcentre.ru)

**ELENA KUCHERYAVAYA** from the Support Centre for Public Initiatives in the Kaliningrad Region, ✉ [veter73@mail.ru](mailto:veter73@mail.ru)

**VERA LYSIKOVA** from the Youth Human Rights Movement (Voronezh), ✉ [vera.lysikova@hrworld.ru](mailto:vera.lysikova@hrworld.ru)

**ANDREY POPOV** from the Committee on Social Issues (Pavlovsky Posad, Moscow Region), ✉ [andrei@dts.ru](mailto:andrei@dts.ru)

### UKRAINE

**YARYNA BORENKO** from the NGO "European Dialogue" (Lviv), ✉ [yaryna@dialog.lviv.ua](mailto:yaryna@dialog.lviv.ua)

**ANDRIY DONETS** from the Donetsk Youth Debate Centre (Donetsk), ✉ [andryushkad@yahoo.com](mailto:andryushkad@yahoo.com)

**ANTONINA GRYVKO** from the federation of youth programs "Social Initiatives of Youth" (Kyiv), ✉ [antoninag@rambler.ru](mailto:antoninag@rambler.ru)

**KATERYNA KUZNETSOVA** from the NGO "Debate Centre" (Simferopol), ✉ [debate@crimea.com](mailto:debate@crimea.com)

**DMYTRO SAMARSKY** from the charity fund "Friends of Children", ✉ [samarskyd@gala.net](mailto:samarskyd@gala.net)

**OLENA YAREMKO** from the Academy of Ukrainian Youth (Lviv), ✉ [olena\\_yaremko@yahoo.com](mailto:olena_yaremko@yahoo.com)



# Participation versus manipulation: challenges for the EECA region

BY Yaryna Borenko



What does participation mean in such a dissimilar and heterogeneous Region as that known as Eastern Europe and the Caucasus? This region, which is perceived as an integrative phenomenon, is difficult to understand as a model of prevailed political culture. Even though it is true that the countries within this Region have many common features, it is also sensible to differentiate them, taking into account the different laws, political situations and traditions, a return to history after Soviet values failed in the early 90s.

Youth policy and youth participation are connected to the type of political development in each country. There are young democracies (like Ukraine and Georgia); strong authoritarian regimes (such as Belarus and Azerbaijan); peaceful countries and countries in the aftermath, or in the throes of, domestic wars (like Armenia and Russia); as well as countries trying to manage territorial conflicts (like Moldova and Georgia); and areas developed as result of conflicts into semi-statehood institutions (such as Abkhazia, Nagorny Karabakh and Transnis-

tria). This article aims to analyse the situation of youth participation in the EECA by trying to generalise some of the common features as well as pointing out some differences.

## Historical background and current situation

The background to youth policy relates to the Soviet tradition, because most of the politicians responsible for youth policy were 'socialised' during the period of Soviet traditions and are followers of the collective doctrine of youth actions. However, as the countries are reforming in different ways, it is noticeable that Soviet ideas have also been retained in different ways. Youth in the Soviet system was totally included in the system of totalitarian state policy, which tried to provide a unified policy connected to the model of internationalism, semi-militarism in social relations and the elimination of any informal space. The communist party, which had influence over state policy and was



Yaryna Borenko  
(Lviv, Ukraine)  
Programme Director  
of the NGO European Dialogue  
✉ yaryna@dialog.lviv.ua



The political and cultural under-  
ground of the 60s created the background for the political changes  
in the late 80s, which continued until the disintegration of the Soviet Union.  
However, the strong political engagement of youth in the 90s gradually faded  
into the significant social passivity of the modern youth also known as “genera-  
tion P” or “next generation”.

a substitute for state power, provided a paternalistic vision of youth policy. Youth organisations such as the ‘Young Pioneers’ or ‘Komsomol’ were seen as the “younger partners” of the Party, which had to coordinate their activity with the “parental institutions”. The small informal space and participation of youth as an independent actor, and a contra-totalitarian voice, which happened in the 60s, was connected to the dissidents’ movement. The political and cultural underground of the 60s created the background for the political changes in the late 80s, which continued until the disintegration of the Soviet Union. However, the strong political engagement of youth in the 90s gradually faded into the significant social passivity of the modern youth also known as “generation P” or the “next generation”.

The involvement of youth in so called “civil society building” seems to be strong however if one takes into consideration the number of NGOs created directly by youth or working in the sphere of youth policy. The dualism of social activity and youth participation shows sharp divisions among socially active and socially passive youth. The active youth is a minority – mainly strongly institutionalised organisations, independent or followers of the previous paternalistic traditions, depending on the country or the concrete situations in the relevant regions. For example, the “Youth politics – 2006” paper of the Russian government postulates the state’s aim to create “socially positive youth organisations.” In the common political situation of the country, this means supporting organisations that are loyal to the authorities and eliminating any oppositional organisations from the youth scene. On the one hand, it follows the Soviet “paternalistic” model for supporting only loyal youth institutions. On the other hand however, the influence of external factors, following in the

frame of international cooperation, is so massive that there are many organisations within the country, that are quite democratic and provide independent activity.

Youth participation within the EECA Region is different. However, many activities of young people are directed towards increasing participation. Within the EECA Region there are seven countries with a common modern historical background, but quite different post-communist and post-modern development; it is possible to identify the similarities as well as the differences.

### Civil participation

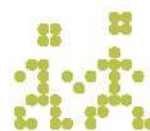
Practically every country in the Region applies a special law to youth organisations and youth policy. Beside that, the mode of political culture prevailed by the authorities plays a significant role in the implementation of this law. “Subbotics” are a good example of a post-soviet relic in youth policy, which is considered as collective actions of youth. Individual work is promoted through the means of training in leadership, teamwork and organisational development, etc. The use of modern civil education methods, and post-Soviet trends as a type of political culture, are implemented – more or less – in all post-totalitarian countries. In the most authoritarian country of the Region as Belarus, civil participation is strongly limited and needs the state authorities’ permission. Russia, after the ‘orange’ revolution in the Ukraine, tries to divide the Youth into “us” and “them”. The significant feature of the Russian youth policy is to create a “socially positive youth organisation” as declared in the “Youth politics – 2006” document. Therefore most of the democratic organisations try to declare on a political statement and develop of civil programmes.

Another example is understanding volunteering. Voluntary activities of youth are considered to be the same as the activities of the young pioneers in Soviet times, which means that volunteering is understood not as an individual but a collective action, that should have a structure such as units, leaders and older “parents”. As a result, voluntary activity becomes an attachment to other activities or connected to students’ workcamps (formerly known as ‘Brigades’).





Every country has different regions, but Russia's territory is vast, which makes it difficult to communicate and to construct a unified youth policy.



Civil participation



### Regional participation – intercultural communication

The meaning of youth participation and youth activation comes from the US model of civil education and regrettably acts as a common action in urban meaning. Secondly, the participation of youth differs in rural and urban areas, as in most countries civil innovations are provided mostly in capitals and in large urban centres. Thirdly, the role of youth is increasing in the way of political participation – the challenges of authoritarian and post-authoritarian regimes in a post-communist Region demonstrate the increasing role of youth organisations and youth groups during the elections and supported political issues.

Every country has different regions, but Russia's territory is vast, which makes it difficult to communicate and to construct a unified youth policy. As mentioned above, the EECA Region includes some war and post-war areas such as Chechnya, Nagorny Karabakh, South Osetia, Transnistria and Abkhazia. These regions need specific administrative regulations, which are also related to their youth policy. For example – Abkhazia and Transnistria. Both these areas are semi-state organisations, dealing with their own power institutions and authority, living in most cases from illegal deals. Abkhazia was a part of Georgia in Soviet times, and actually this region has no connection with the other part of the former republic. The young people, who remember only war from their childhood, do not understand and only have a very simplified imagination of the other part of their country. However, whilst the older generation remembers the integral image

of the Soviet republic, the new generation sees only destruction and disintegration. Therefore the necessity to arrange intercultural dialogue on the intra-country level is one of the biggest challenges for youth policy. The same example can be seen in the case of a “peaceful country” such as the Ukraine. In the time of presidential elections in 2004 and “orange” revolutions, the young people could meet for the first time in the “Maidan” (public square) and develop intra-national intercultural communication projects – when the young people from one part of the country got to know the life and traditions of another part.

### Political participation

Traditionally young people, especially students, are progressive in moments of political changes. The youth of the former Soviet countries do not remember the three young men who were killed in August 1991 by the Soviet military; but these three young people are the illustration of how obsessed young people can be, if they understand the significance of the historical context and their role in it. Young people from Azerbaijan and Armenia took part in the domestic war and participated in the Nagorny Karabakh conflict at the end of the 90s, believing in the future of their countries; the students in the Ukraine and Georgia →



The division between participation and manipulation is so complicated that sometimes politicians and civic leaders try to connect the two by trying to provide participation through authoritarian methods.

Political  
participation

fought for independence in the 90s and for fair elections in 2003-2004. This spontaneous wave of activities demonstrates the high potential of youth to participate at the political process in the moments of big challenges in their country.

Consolidation of the youth opposition movements in Georgia and the Ukraine a few years ago, and the repressive state policy against the youth, human and civil rights movements showed that opposition to authoritarian regimes provides a strong youth policy, especially for urban youth to prevent their political activities. However the civic activities, including international communications among the youth, build a background for political claims in authoritarian regimes and the state tries to control them. Political participation is a very strong issue for the EECA Region – changing values among the youth, from patriotism to nihilism. The situation in independent Transnistria is very demonstrative – the young people try to provide the pro-Russian vision and to identify themselves with Russia, however the Moldavian part is rather orientated in the direction of Romania. The privileges for Moldavian youth to go to Romania to study are so massive, that the young people became more or less apolitical and individualistic in comparison to those living in the illegal Transnistria state.

## Conclusions

Within the EECA, as a transformed Region, youth participation is rather spontaneous. The fine line dividing modern participation and manipulation from the side of the state authorities is difficult to see. However, the sources of political culture in a youth milieu or youth organisation become visible at the time of meeting with a foreign culture, e.g. in a youth exchange or other international activity. To understand whether pupils are participating in the school council, or whether the council is a manipulative body, is very simple by observing and speaking with the young people, but not visible if studying social reviews. To understand whether youth in Russia is participating in political demonstrations in support of the actual regime because of political statements, or is repressed by the school authority, is also difficult as is understanding to which countries Nagorny Karabakh and Abkhazia belong. The division between participation and manipulation is so complicated that sometimes politicians and civic leaders try to connect the two by trying to provide participation through authoritarian methods. In the words of one of them: “...sometime we can use these in order to show the people, how they can be active and that will be good for their local communities”. The independent civil structures sometimes have no influence on the people and prefer to cooperate with the state. The state does not know how to implement democratic ways and continues to work as usual. To destroy this circle is the big challenge for the young democracies and post-totalitarian regimes in the diverse Region of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. □

## EU YOUTH programme

### What makes it so special for Russia?

BY **Andrei Popov**


The EU YOUTH programme – what makes it so special for Russia? Why are there thousands of young Russians attracted to a Programme that we are not even a member of?

Naturally these questions were not relevant back in 1995 when our youth centre “SPEKTR” was asked to host “one day in the Moscow region” of the first EU Youth programme study visit to Russia. We did not even know what a study visit was all about and just wanted to share ideas about youth work and present our groups and clubs to colleagues from Western Europe. The day closed with handshakes and hugs and we believed it would end there.



It did not take long before we started receiving mails from our visitors – youth workers from Finland, the UK, Germany and France. Did they really care or were they just being polite?

To look at the User’s Guide and Compendium was a bit scary – lots of strange words and phrases, difficulties with translation. But we have a saying “eyes are scared while hands are making” and we came onboard since the motivation was too strong – international mobility offered directly to the young people. But would it work? Wouldn’t we be trapped by illusions again like many times in the past? Pessimists became quieter after we had worked out the project with the UK hosting group on ‘youth and traffic safety’ and got support from the UK National Agency. Now - are we talking about being young and going to Britain? Ha-

ha! The UK consulate visa officers would be doubtful! How could you prove you were not going to stay there till the end of your days? It was a serious question back then and it is still serious now. It was the first lesson for being careful with all supportive documents, but once we learned about it we had fewer problems later in following the standard questions of the EU consulates and surprising their staff with clear and concise answers proving that we 



Andrei Popov  
(Pavlovsky Posad,  
Moscow Region, Russia)  
Committee on social issues,  
 [andrei@dts.ru](mailto:andrei@dts.ru)

**A 5-year long multilateral youth exchange initiative called “Building bridges from West to East” brought together youth organisations and youth councils from Denmark, Austria, Ireland, Russia, Moldova and Belarus.**

THE  
MOTIVATION

were “safe” visitors. When the internet became more widespread in Russia, it proved really useful to check out the sites of the respective countries’ consulates. Such information helps to avoid being puzzled when you find out that all of them vary in terms of what documents, besides those related to your project, they collect and the time it takes them to issue a visa. We learned that you never become an expert in this field. However, we found out that each of them usually has a full visitor visa information published on their home-page and there is time (if you plan it in advance) to prepare for everything.

So, we are in Britain! Getting to grips with the project’s insights into road safety when riding a motorbike was a challenge in itself – we drive vehicles on different sides – the first intercultural experience to confront. Several members of the Russian group had motor ball game skills (football on the motorbike) – an activity they taught to the rest of the group (you can drive on any side) and this game became the core of longlasting friendships for the future . There was one more important conclusion reached by the young people on the exchange – finding ways to share something you are good at with the wider community could be much more fun than just doing it within your own group; it facilitates your personal growth and when you stand by your own idea from the beginning to its implementation – it’s worth living! This may sound like

a natural way of life today, but 10 years ago it was a lifestyle changing conclusion for many of us.

This belief then became the basic motivation for developing contacts and initiating further projects with Danish, Finnish, German, French and other European youth groups. Participants of the first project were becoming peer leaders with project management experience, taking part in YOUTH programme seminars and training courses. The participation projects they developed demanded an advanced knowledge of rights and responsibilities, why not then make a project concentrating on all this while bringing in the experiences of European partner groups? A 5-year long multilateral youth exchange initiative called “Building bridges from West to East” brought together youth organisations and youth councils from Denmark, Austria, Ireland, Russia, Moldova and Belarus. Each partner had the opportunity to host one leg of the series of youth exchanges targeting youth community involvement, ways of participating in the decision-making process at local level and youth rights lobbying. Each leg was becoming more diverse and consecutive in methodology, capacity building and dissemination of project results. The final leg took place in Denmark, in April this year. In the course of its duration many other good ideas were elaborated and took the form of various other independent initiatives within the YOUTH programme - exchanges, training courses, seminars and EVS.

An Information project has already been thought of by the partners as a logical follow-up initiative on experience dissemination. With the support of the SALTO EECA Resource Centre, the Multipliers network, and driven by our own strong motivation, our European partnership is working towards broadening networks and improving project quality. □



## YOUTH EXCHANGE PARTICIPANTS' REFLECTIONS

Tatevik Baghdasaryan  
Anahit Minassian  
Tatev Yesayan

"Camera to the right ... shot! ... camera to the left ... shot! ... Soaring mountains covered with a white blanket of snow, breathtaking canyons spiced up with the smell of the ancient spirit, a long icy highway that takes us to a typical Armenian village called Lusakert. This was the place where people from 4 different countries (Armenia, Georgia, Latvia and Lithuania) met and lived an unforgettable week together. Those were people full of life, enthusiasm and a great will to explore anything new.

Four countries, 35 participants... All of us different yet so similar... We were all brought together by a wonderful project called "Discover yourself by discovering the others on the mountain peak".

The week was full of interesting seminars and discussions that were held by the skilled trainers of the programme. This made us realise and appreciate the diversity and team work. Global villages, where every national group got a chance to present their own country through its traditions, national dances and food, were the best way to get in touch with each other's cultures.

But what really brought us closer was the hiking in the Armenian mountains. This is when we faced the real obstacles and challenges. Here was no nationality, everyone was just a human being going through difficulties, coping with tiredness but caring not only about themselves but also about the others. This allowed many of us to discover new friends but not only... This allowed us to discover ourselves through discovering the others...

Camera to the right ... shot! ... camera to the left ... shot! ... But the camera cannot capture everything. The warmth, the smiles, the emotions will be kept in our hearts forever..."

*Tatevik Baghdasaryan and Anahit Minassian*

"I've just got that the participation in such seminars is not good at all, it's too bad because you understand that you will miss your new friends. I'm sure with the majority of them I'll keep in contact for a long-long time (why not for a life time) until death separates us..."

*Tatev Yesayan*



Four countries, 35 participants... All of us different yet so similar... We were all brought together by a wonderful project called "Discover yourself by discovering the others on the mountain peak".



# Sending a Volunteer to Russia..... Conflict Zones and their Prevention

by Rouzanna Ivanyan



What do you need to remember when you are sending an EVS volunteer? It is quite easy to find the answer to this question – it is enough to log into the internet and look through the documents on EVS projects. But is there a need to bear in mind something else if you are sending a volunteer to Russia? How to work with Russian youth organisations? What are the rules and mechanisms of the financial regulations in the third sector of this country? What are the peculiarities of the Russian “way of thinking” that can influence the project?

The aim of this article is not to answer such questions but just to indicate three zones that can potentially become conflict ones if you are not prepared beforehand. It is important to emphasize that the focus is on situations when Russian organisations play the role of host and do not bear the financial responsibility towards the European Commission for the provided funding.

**The conflict zone, which is often met, lies in the relations between the sending and hosting organisations....**

In the first place, problems in inter-relationships are provoked by the Russian partners’ insufficient knowledge about the rules of the European Union YOUTH programme, especially in the area of the projects’ financial regulations. For instance, the Russian partners have no idea which of the resources they have access to in the running of the project and which are not

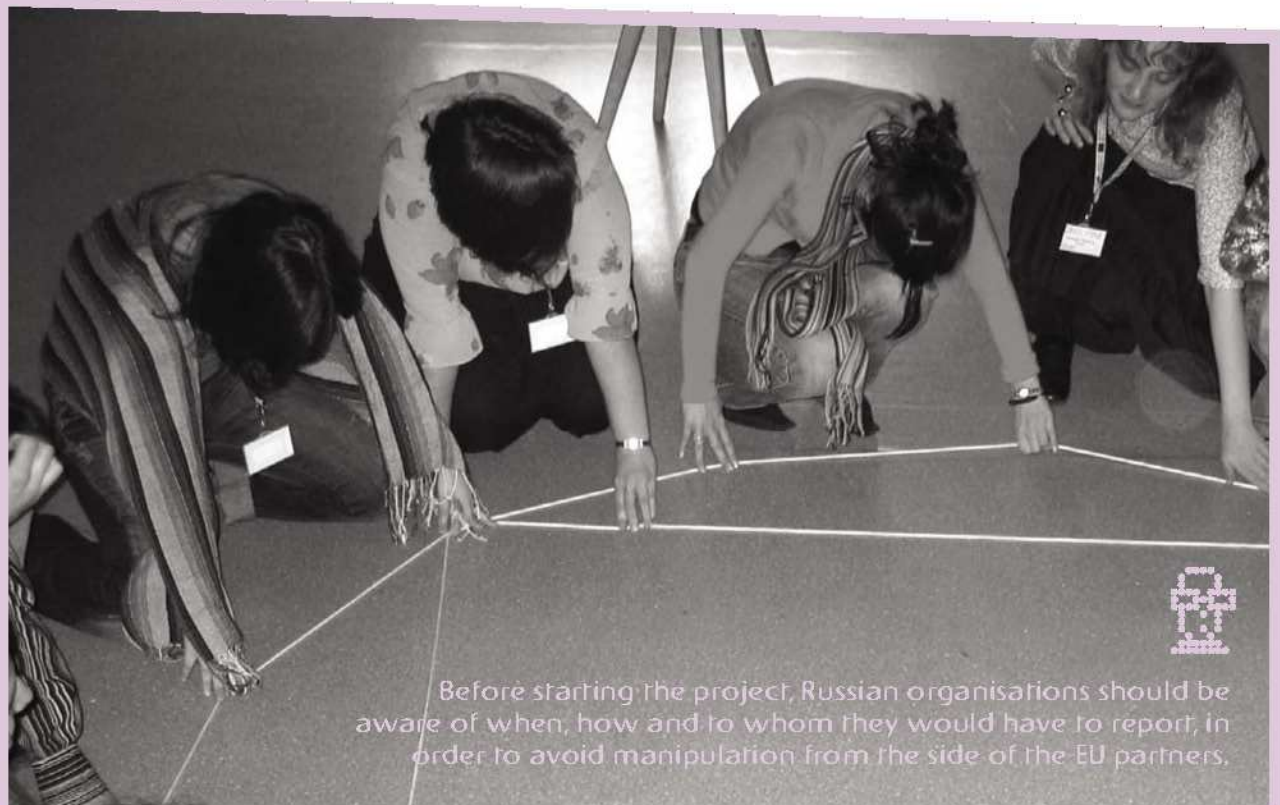
available to them; which documents are necessary for the reporting to the sending organisation; in which way money can be transferred, etc. The different methods for financial reporting requested by the different YOUTH National Agencies create confusion. The lack of personal contact between Russian organisations and the SALTO Resource Centre, the Multipliers of the YOUTH programme in the region, and the National Agencies, is a handicap.

Ignorance of the practical and financial principles for implementing an EVS project may become a pre-condition for a rise in distrust, misunderstanding and “collapse” of the project. Misunderstandings appear more often in the following cases:

- 1 the sending organisation from the EU does not outline clearly and in detail the information on the financial aspects of the project;
- 2 the sending organisation from the EU changes its demands of the Russian partner concerning the financial documents for the project reporting, in the course of the agreements;
- 3 host and sending organisations interpret financial obligations of the YOUTH programme in a different way;
- 4 sending organisation from the EU does not take into



Rouzanna Ivanyan  
(Sankt Petersburg, Russia)  
YNGO Youth Informational Centre  
✉ [rouzanna@youthcentre.ru](mailto:rouzanna@youthcentre.ru)



Before starting the project, Russian organisations should be aware of when, how and to whom they would have to report, in order to avoid manipulation from the side of the EU partners.

#### Misunderstandings...

- ↓
- consideration the specificities of Russian legislation (specifically, that it is easier for Russian organisations to cooperate with EVS projects if funds for the projects are not transferred to bank accounts but are delivered in cash; thus the Russian organisations avoid superfluous bureaucracy);
- 5 the sending organisation from the EU aims at saving in fees for mentors, local coordinators, etc.;
- 6 instead of equivalent partnership, the relations “buyer” – “doer” are formed; what’s more, the sending organisation from the EU puts itself in the position of the one who “orders and pays for the music”;
- 7 the host organisation from the Russian Federation focuses its attention only on the financial aspect and tries “to earn on a project”.

#### Recommendations for conflict prevention:

Active participation by the National Agencies’ representatives, the SALTO Resource Centre and the Multipliers in the implementation of the project would substantially reduce the risk of a conflict. This involvement should take place, as far as possible, from the very beginning of the project

implementation. Besides, the role of the Multiplier or SALTO representative should be objective. Their goal should consist in mediation during the negotiations, conflict mediation, additional explanation, etc.

Before starting the project, Russian organisations should be aware of when, how and to whom they would have to report, in order to avoid manipulation from the side of the EU partners. The agreement between host and sending organisations is an obligatory component; however it is essential, as far as possible, to avoid rigid wordings concerning the method of payment, leaving it to the partners’ choice. It would be effective, if National Agencies inserted on their web-page a precise checklist for the documents needed for financial reporting.

**Complicated relations between sending and host organisations often become a stumbling block for the implementation of a project and have a negative effect on the volunteers....** Mentoring is an effective mechanism for guaranteeing a comfortable stay for a vol- ➔



The projects involving a number of volunteers in the same region are the best from this point of view, because they form a group from the very beginning and can lay the foundation for group support, intercultural dialogue and learning from each other.

sending and host  
organisations  
relations

unteer in another country. Nevertheless, it is worth stressing the following: in a number of cases mentors are chosen casually, the volunteer's opinion is not taken into account, the responsibility for the volunteer's supervision lies on the mentor's goodwill and could not be strengthened by the sending organisation or the volunteer. Thus, the high potential role of a mentor is leveled and decreased.

#### **Recommendations for conflict zone prevention and decreasing the risk:**

It is recommended that the sending and host organisations enter into a contract with a mentor on a paid services basis (with a fixed fee) monthly or every second month. All obligations, demands, mentor's reporting forms as well as the possibility of prolongation or rupture of the contract, with the volunteer's approbation, should be clearly registered in it. In case the volunteer finds it necessary to choose another mentor, it is essential to do it in the way that the new one has a mechanism for integrating into the project.

The second recommendation is to clearly inform the volunteer about the functions and obligations of the mentor before coming to a country and to give the possibility of communicating with each other by correspondence (internet, e-mail, etc).

#### **Informal contacts with other EVS volunteers are an effective resource of mutual support in case of a stay in a foreign country.....**

The projects involving a number of volunteers in the same region are the best from this point of view, because they form a group from the very beginning and can lay the foundation for group support, intercultural dialogue and

learning from each other. Such projects can also create new possibilities for volunteers' mobility; for instance, a volunteer spends two months in one organisation, the next volunteer replaces the first one for the next two months, the third – two months more, and so on. This scheme permits the avoidance of a regular routine and patterns both for the volunteers and host organisations. However, it should be taken into consideration that group dynamics cannot be developed in a proper way without control, especially in situations when volunteers stay at the same place. The division of sub-groups according to the country of permanent residence, language, etc. becomes a real danger. In this connection the potential possibilities of such projects are leveled and decreased in the sphere of intercultural learning.

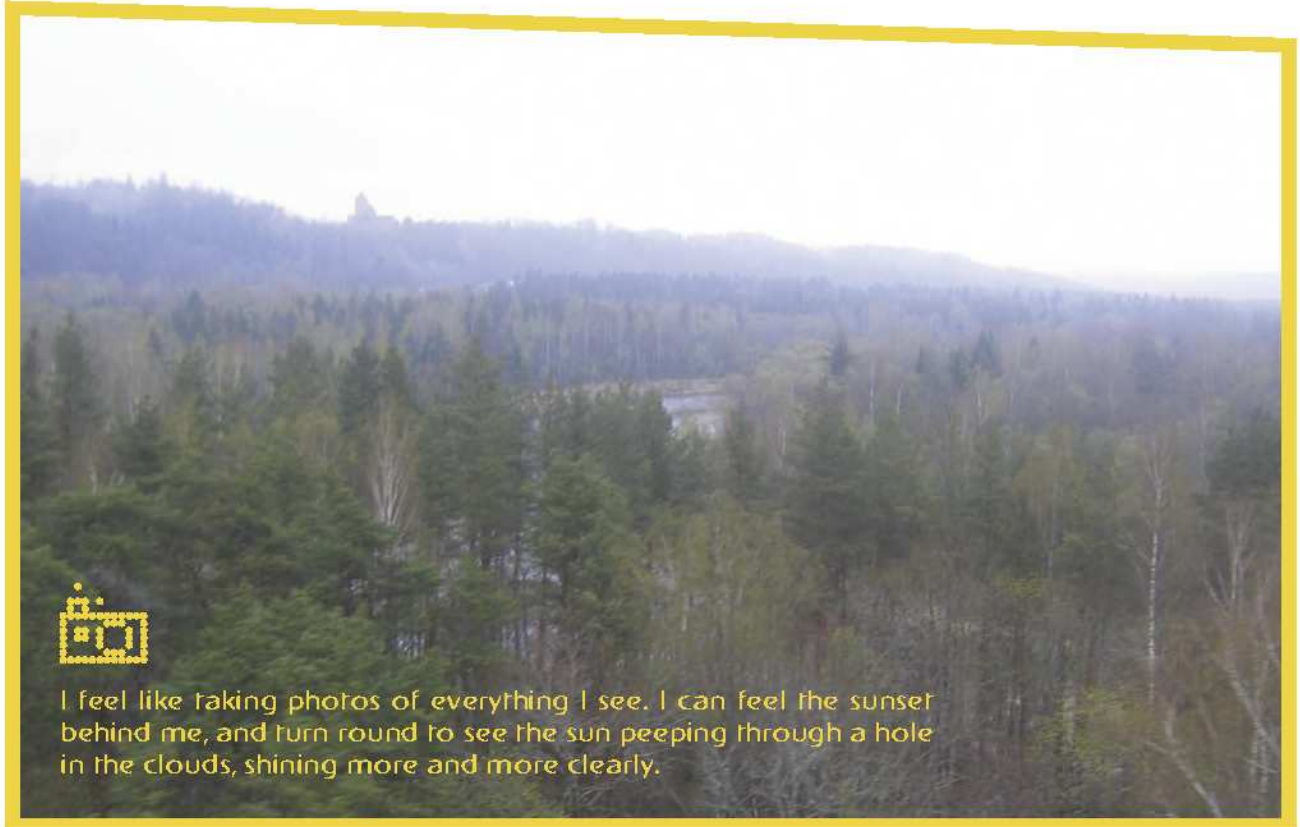
#### **Recommendations for conflict zone prevention and decreasing the risk:**

If it is supposed that the volunteers will spend a lot of time together (for instance, staying at the same place), it is recommended to foresee, and even to indicate, the salary of the "mentor for the whole group" in the project budget. Then it is possible to define mentors' tasks as follows: to support group processes; to help solve conflict situations; and, at least at the beginning, to facilitate the forming of positive group dynamics. The Multipliers of the YOUTH programme cope with this role on the condition that additional training is provided in the field of work with long-term groups. If it is supposed that the volunteers will stay at the same apartment, it is recommended that a training event on team work is organised upon arrival in the host country. During this training the possibilities for intercultural learning within the group, expectations from each other, preventive measures on conflict solving, mechanisms for common work and stay, etc. could be discussed.

Analysing the possible zones of conflicts mentioned above and others, it is worth emphasising that good relations between the volunteer, host and sending organisations are strong allies in finding the right solutions. □

# Islands and Castles.... a Russian Volunteer in the UK

by Vidana Shugaeva



I feel like taking photos of everything I see. I can feel the sunset behind me, and turn round to see the sun peeping through a hole in the clouds, shining more and more clearly.

Volunteering?! What are people looking for, when travelling to another country to volunteer? I suppose a dream of their own. We all have dreams, either conscious or subconscious ones.... People travel the world to get to know others, and to find their own place in the world....

So where shall I start my story? Probably best from the beginning...

I was a restless child, curious about everything and unable to sit still for even five minutes. On finishing school I joined the geographical department of the State University in Irkutsk, in anticipation of endless travel and participation in all kinds of activities. I adored nature, and saw how irresponsibly people were treating it. At university I found a group of like-minded people, and we began volunteering locally to develop a new environmental organisation 'Baikal Environmental Wave'. Baikal Wave was founded by an English woman, Jenny Sutton, who has

lived in Russia since her first visit to the Soviet Union 30 years ago.

Thirty years ago, during the days of the 'Iron Curtain,' the environmental movement hardly existed in Russia, yet there was a sense of duty and care towards nature, which changed radically with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Today the environmental movement in Russia remains weak. The government gives no sponsorship to civil society groups concerned with environmental questions, as these groups tend to expose environmental crimes caused in one



Vidana Shugaeva  
(Irkutsk, Russia)  
EVS volunteer in the UK  
✉ [vidchange@mail.ru](mailto:vidchange@mail.ru)

Vidana  
Shugaeva  
volunteer  
placement

⇒ way or another by lack of attention to environmental politics. Civil society groups in Russia are almost entirely dependent on financing from abroad, a sad but true fact.

Before coming to the UK, I was a public official of the environmental waste department of the city of Irkutsk (in Siberia, not far from Lake Baikal). There was too much paper work for me! I did my best to be forward-thinking but lack of professional knowledge kept me back. So I decided to take my future in my own hands and gain more skills abroad, where the field of environmental management is not a 'closed book' as it usually is in Russia. My choice of destination was determined by my love of two things – islands and castles! Not to forget, of course, my English friends who helped me to organise the placement, and my craze for British music! My 'sending organisation' was Baikal Environmental Wave, the organisation where I 'grew up'. And my volunteering placement is funded thanks to the 'European Voluntary Service,' part of the EU YOUTH programme. The main activities of the NGO 'Baikal Environmental Wave' are environmental education, translation of information on environmental conservation and organisation of specific actions to increase public awareness of environmental plight. Due to their sense of Russia being a 'never-ending homeland,' Russians are not inclined to consider the depletion of natural resources – "why worry about landfill or logging of another for-

est? Look how many places are still not used!" – but will these places remain for much longer? ... Trying to change such opinions is the main goal of all environmental organisations in Russia at present.

Having been in the UK for several months, I have begun to appreciate the attention people pay to the living world. Television programmes about plants can last for hours. Not to mention informative BBC documentaries that give rise to concern and alarm for the future of natural systems around the world. The real value of environmental protection is discussed throughout England. High importance is given to things such as recycling and to involving the public in these topics. This is something to study!

And also personally, so many new impressions! The 'Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust' Headquarters at Slimbridge, near Gloucester, where I am volunteering, embodies my dreams of living among natural surroundings, with clean air and abundant wildlife around me. The fine staff at the centre really care about their work; educating the public and taking care of a unique sanctuary for migrating birds – many of which come from Russia!! I have become fond of them all – both the local inhabitants and the birds. I had never before spent time in such close proximity to wild creatures, nor believed that it was possible. Like humans, each bird has its own character and individual look. Some of them are shy, and others cheeky, begging for food or simply trying the taste of your trouser legs to see which species you belong to! All this has inspired me to learn more, and I hope to follow this placement by getting a scholarship for postgraduate study, to further my knowledge of water ecosystems. □



Vidana Shugaeva ✉ [vidchange@mail.ru](mailto:vidchange@mail.ru)



#### USEFUL ADDRESSES:

Wildfowl and Wetland Trust ✉ [www.wwt.org.uk](http://www.wwt.org.uk)

European Voluntary Service ✉ [www.sosforevs.org](http://www.sosforevs.org)

European Youth Programme UK agency ✉ [www.connectyouthinternational.com](http://www.connectyouthinternational.com)

# “Lucky chance drove me into Georgia’s embrace”

Interview with Nikolai Pushkarev

The training and seminars organised within the YOUTH programme are useful in the sense that they provide an opportunity for participants to meet, get more information on the possibilities that the YOUTH programme has to offer and learn about each other’s cultures. Certainly projects do follow such events, which allow other young people to experience the excitement of travelling and of non-formal education...

The European Voluntary Service project, which took place in Georgia, was one of the direct results of an EVS Training Course organized by SALTO EECA. The partners of the project were the Dutch NGO, Falkor ICY, and the Georgian NGO, Human Rights Information and Documentation Centre. The project started at the end of August 2005 when Nikolai Pushkarev, a Dutch volunteer, arrived in Tbilisi, and ended at the end of February 2006. Now that the project has come to an end, it would be interesting to know how the volunteer himself feels about the experience, whether his expectations were met, whether the experience was worthwhile... The following short interview with Nikolai gives us an insight into this project and an idea of his experiences of living in Georgia.



Nikolai, where did you first hear about the YOUTH programme?



During my student days we cooperated with YOUTH in the organisation of European student exchanges.



Why did you want to do an EVS project and why in Georgia? What were your expectations?



Study had exhausted my brains and depleted my nerves. I always had a great love for travel and an inescapable drive for the ‘new’. Georgia was for a long time high on my list of countries and lucky chance drove me into its embrace. Whatever the expectations were, they were certainly not disappointed. On the contrary...



How did you feel about the welcome on your first day when you arrived?



OK I guess, can’t recall really. A bit chaotic maybe.



What was the thing that mostly struck you (surprised you) for the first time when getting to know the Georgian culture?



Nikolai Pushkarev  
(Netherlands)  
EVS volunteer  
in Georgia

What was the thing that mostly struck you (surprised you) for the first time when getting to know the Georgian culture?

Getting to know a ‘culture’ is a gradual experience. I had ideas about some aspects of Georgian traditional culture before arrival. What maybe struck me mainly are the contrasts between on the one hand the intense ‘life’ that is felt on every corner and on the other hand some inner strain often sensed within individuals, the people’s good-natured openness, but also sometimes a deceiving ‘second layer’. Also the, let’s say, ‘typical’ relations between the sexes.

Can you remember one nice, and one not so nice, situation or thing that come to your mind after having lived in Georgia during that period?

Well... the nice thing was drinking chacha with two charismatic farmers on their sun-lit warm evening vineyard. Of the other I cannot talk... Not so nice: too typical flock of grey-black 15 year-old ‘bichos’ who, hardened by their endemic imaginationlessness, seemed to be in the need to stick their nose in other people’s business.

How did you communicate with the people in the office and outside the office, in what language?

Russian mainly, some English, even less Georgian...

What were your tasks in the organisation and did you have an opportunity to work on your own project?

My main tasks were English editing and helping setting up a project for ‘Let Us In’, an organization striving for the empowerment of socially excluded women. Fortunately, other projects and activities added up to this along the way. I had an opportunity to work on my own project, though I can’t really make a clear divide between own, and not own...

What does intercultural learning and non-formal education mean to you?

Utterly formalized and irritatingly over-used terms to describe something that really does occur.

Did the project meet your expectations?

In general: yes, at the very least.

How would you advise young people who would like to do EVS in Georgia?

Be careful with expats! Keep away from them if you can...

How would you express in one word your feelings about this experience of living in this country?

Ouroboros!

Ouroboros? Strange... I myself wondered what this word meant and I was impressed when he showed me the picture of the thing that this word stands for... When I asked him to explain why, he said he just could not explain... The definition I found on the internet is: ‘The Ouroboros (also spelled Oroborus, Uroboros or Uroborus) is an ancient symbol depicting a snake, or dragon, swallowing its own tail, constantly creating itself and forming a circle. It often represents self-reflexivity or cyclicity.’ Now you can judge yourself....

...Anyway, Nikolai said he wanted to come back to Georgia one day...□



# “I have my second home here now...”

Interview with Christina Wimmer

**Sending organisation:** INFOECK, Jugendinfo Tirol (Austria)

**Hosting organisation:** Academy of Ukrainian Youth (Lviv, Ukraine)



**Why did you want to do an EVS project and why in the Ukraine?**

I decided to do an EVS project after finishing school because I wanted to go abroad for one year. I took this decision because it was always very interesting to learn foreign languages, to learn something about how people in other countries live, to visit the world and not stay all my life just in one place and get a lot of different experiences while doing it. Also I decided, during my time at school, that I want to work afterwards in the social sector, and so I decided that my work in a foreign country should be linked to the social sector. Most of all I wanted a project where I could work with children and youth. And then I found an organisation which coordinates EVS projects and I took the opportunity and asked if they had a project for me.

For me it did not matter in which country my EVS was, it was important that the project was a good project and was connected with children and youth. And when I got the offer to go to Ukraine for my project, I was happy to have the opportunity to visit this country, because I somehow never considered the idea of going there. The eastern part of Europe is somehow no place where you go normally on holiday, and so I have the unique possibility to visit this part of Europe.



It is important for me, and helps me very much, that I get so much support from the local volunteers who also work for my organisation. I also get the possibility to realise things I would like and I always meet lots of new people and have the possibility to go to many different meetings and events and to get really lots of different impressions and experiences.

At the moment, it is somehow a problem that I have started, together with my mentor, to have some meetings with youngsters and there was not such a big response from the youngsters but we tried this out for the first time and so everything was also very new for us and we are already with solving the problem, so everything will be fine. But this is something that is not so super for me at the moment, but there is no one to blame for it and as I already said, we have big plans for the future.



**What are your tasks in the organisation and have you an opportunity to work on your own project?**

My tasks are at the moment: Once a week I go to a school called Levenja, which is a school with some special classes for children who have problems with seeing, and help the English teacher during the lesson (reading with children who have problems with it or playing short language games etc.) One day during the week, I visit a hospital to play with the children or draw something or make handicraft, to entertain them.



**What is the thing that mostly struck you (surprised you) for the first time when getting to know the Ukrainian culture?**

Ukrainian people, also young ones, still have a strong connection to the church and believe in good and everything connected with it. Also young people here know lots about their country and about Ukrainian culture and traditions, which has not such a high value for youngsters in Austria. I think it is very important that especially young people keep up national traditions and this is something I like very much here.



**What do you like, and what do you think could be better, during your EVS in Ukraine?**




Christina Wimmer  
(Austria)  
EVS volunteer  
in Ukraine



What are your tasks in the organization and have you an opportunity to work on your own project?

At the weekends children come to our youth centre and together with one of the local volunteers I organise art activities and games. During the week I also help my boss with some office work. I also participate in different actions organised by my organisation (Mikolaja etc.) or take part in meetings, conferences or other kinds of events. If we have the opportunity I also visit schools or universities to talk with the youngsters about my country or EVS or the YOUTH programme and things connected with it.


My mentor and I have also founded a “European Club”. We meet twice a week with local youngsters to get to know Europe together. Our meetings are held once in English and once in German. This also answers the question about my own project. This “European Club”, and everything connected with it, is, together with my mentor, my own project and we are also organising an event to promote this club. I’m also planning a Youth Exchange for the time after my EVS. For these projects I really get all the help and support I need to work on them.

 How would you advise young people who would like to do EVS in the Ukraine?

They should prepare themselves for a really warm and friendly nation and for being very welcome here. They should also inform themselves about their country and traditions and everything connected with it, if they don’t know very much about it, because Ukrainian people are really interested in other countries and cultures and ways of living and some of these things I think you just have to find out for yourself how they are. So they have to be ready to meet lots of new people and find many interested, open-minded, interesting friends here. If they have possibility before, I would also advise them to start learning Ukrainian a bit, as the language

is, because it’s a Slavic language, really different to the Germanic languages and so it does help you if you can at least read and write before.

So be ready to have really a great experience and to get to know a lot about this country in a short time and also to celebrate a lot – if they have the possibility to celebrate something, they just do it – and just to have lots of fun and gain many impressions and experiences.

 How would you express in a few words your feelings about this experience of living in this country?

I really like living here very much. First you come with the feeling that everything will be very different and not like at home but nothing differs so much that you can’t cope with it and mainly things don’t differ at all. In the short time I have been here I have met so many nice, interested and interesting people and seen so many things and learned so much about everything here that I didn’t expect before. Sometimes it really shocks you how different some things from the governmental side – insurance, pension, schools, etc. – are, even though this country is not even thousand kilometers away from my home country and even has borders with the European Union. But Ukraine is at the moment in a phase of great change and so I think that these things will get better. This is something that makes me somehow sad, as I know that it could be different. But most of all I have my second home here now and this is something that makes me very happy. □

## Let's measure Support Measures

BY Anna Fruba

Action 5 of the YOUTH programme is, in other words, Support Measures. You might ask, why it is called this?


While the other Actions' names reflect the activity to be implemented, Action 5's name indicates its main aim – to provide support for youth workers, youth leaders, project coordinators and young people themselves in establishing international contacts, improving the quality of their international cooperation, developing their organisations and gaining new skills and competencies focal to their work.

By providing such support, Action 5 also fulfils the important aim of supporting the development of the main Actions of the Programme.

Although at the beginning Action 5 might seem complicated and “user unfriendly” because of the complexity of the nine activities it proposes, the key to learning how to use them is to understand the idea behind them and their aims. They were all created to suit the various needs of people and of their organisations active, or wanting to become active, in international cooperation.

There is no upper age limit for Action 5 users. It is important to realise that Support Measures are for all those involved in youth work at local and international level, with different levels of experience in the youth field and international cooperation. What counts here is what is to be achieved by a certain activity and how it reflects the needs of young people and the organisation itself. Action 5 is a helpful tool for beginners in the YOUTH programme,

who want to establish new contacts and implement projects with partners from other countries. It can also be useful for those who are experienced in the YOUTH programme but want to further develop partnerships and their own skills. Furthermore, it is a great tool for those who want to pass on their good practice and share experiences gained during activities. It is perfect for those who want to evaluate, with their partners, their cooperation and move it to its next stage.

The nine different activities of the Support Measures are designed to fulfil the various needs of young people, youth organisations and NGOs in the field of international cooperation. The key words in Action 5 are: **training, information and cooperation**. All the rules, as well as objectives of each 



Anna Fruba  
(Warsaw, Poland)  
Action 5 Officer, Polish NA  
of the YOUTH Programme  
[✉ afruba@youth.org.pl](mailto:afruba@youth.org.pl)





Action FIVE

activity, can be easily found in the YOUTH programme User's Guide and many programme-related websites. What is crucial to understand, however, is how a youth worker, a youth leader, a project coordinator, an organisation and a young person herself can benefit from Action 5.

Currently, except for Activity 9 - Support for capacity building and Innovation - Action 5 is open to cooperation with all Partner Countries and can be efficiently used in many areas of International Cooperation. Looking at projects implemented by Polish organisations together with NGOs from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus and other Programme countries some significant results, that cannot be overestimated, can be easily seen. Dozens of projects already

*Contact making seminars and feasibility visits help to create stable partnerships and equal involvement of all partners in future projects from the starting point of cooperation. They are designed in a way that provides a possibility to find suitable partners for future activities and also to plan them in detail.*

together without actually knowing each other's needs and long-term goals. Unfortunately, such projects often result in problems and misunderstandings caused by different expectations, not enough involvement of all the partners, lack of common rules of cooperation and lack of knowledge about the partner organisations' different local realities. Feelings of frustration and dissatisfaction among partners can also be caused by unequal partnerships where one organisation is responsible for the whole of the activ-

ity and partners are just participating without having any influence on what is planned and how it is implemented.

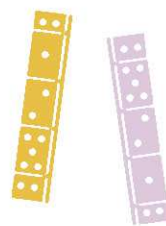
Action 5's activities can be good tools to avoid such situations. *Contact making seminars* and *feasibility visits* help to create stable partnerships and equal involvement of all partners in future projects from the starting point of cooperation. They are designed in a way that provides a possibility to find suitable partners for future activities and also to plan them in detail. Involving all the parties interested in setting up cooperation (youth leaders, project coordinators) helps to define the needs and aims of each of the organisations as well as aims and objectives of the future project, its outline, possible topics and rules of cooperation. In this process partners are equally involved in creating a common activity, which strengthens their commitment both to the partner organisations and to the project itself. It also gives their cooperation transparency. Partnerships created and built this way are likely to be stable, long-term and based on equality. All the partner organisations know what kind of support they can expect from each other, what kind of projects they can implement together and most of all, whether to implement them at all.

completed show the supportive role of Action 5 towards youth organisations and youth leaders, both in programme and EECA countries. First of all, it can be a tool to include organizations from the partner countries into the activities of other actions of the programme and to improve the quality of implemented projects as well as the every day work of involved partners. Secondly, it is a perfect investment in the capacity development of cooperating organisations. Thirdly, it is an efficient way of creating strong partnerships with long-term goals.

One of the often mentioned problems in international cooperation is weak partnership among organisations involved in projects. There are various tools for finding partners for Youth Exchanges or European Voluntary Service, such as: the internet, discussion groups, chat rooms, local organisations that already have contacts abroad or even private connections. Partners found in this way often decide to do a project

Job shadowing and study visits are efficient tools to get to know different realities of youth work and to spread good practice in international youth projects.

Let's measure Support Measures  
SUPPORT MEASURES



Contact making seminars and feasibility visits

Certainly it is not only about creating new partnerships and links. For those who successfully cooperate with each other there are other options in Action 5 that support the further development of partnerships. *Job shadowing* and *study visits* are efficient tools to get to know different realities of youth work and to spread good practice in international youth projects. *Seminars* can be used as a tool for evaluation of existing

ways of reaching certain groups of young people and creating methods for working with youth on concrete issues. Looking at the tools provided by Action 5, it is possible to organise a meeting aimed at working out together innovative methods of working or to have an activity aimed at implementing an innovative approach in involving new groups in the YOUTH programme, verifying the efficiency of those methods in international and local reality and also promoting them among partners and local communities.

## Action 5 is also aimed at supporting innovation in youth work and international cooperation

cooperation and planning its future development. *Transnational partnerships and networks* are long-term projects that support the creation of effective tools of communication between the partners involved and implement new projects. All those activities can serve as an additional boost to already existing cooperation.

Action 5 activities not only provide knowledge, competencies and skills in project management but also support the promotion of the horizontal priorities of the YOUTH programme, such as inclusion of youth with fewer opportunities,

The above mentioned activities of Action 5 are designed to help implement good quality projects – i.e. developing sustainable and reliable partnerships, addressing the needs and abilities of each partner organisation, facilitating an exchange of experiences, best practice and know-how and gaining new skills and competencies in the field of international cooperation.

In summary, it is important to note that all of the defined areas where Action 5 can offer its support to those organisations that are interested and involved in international cooperation, are not the only ones. Nevertheless, they are of great importance to international youth work and the implementation of youth projects. It is recommended that

## use the tools of Action 5 to avoid problems that could occur during projects

intercultural learning, non-formal education, active citizenship, participation of youth and international youth policy. In other words, *training courses*, *seminars*, *study visits* and *youth information* make it possible to gain skills and knowledge useful for transferring priorities of the YOUTH programme to international youth projects and local youth work - i.e. capacity building.

Action 5 is also aimed at supporting innovation in youth work and international cooperation. It is obvious that the term “innovative” must be considered, as something that is already well known for one might be new for another. It is essential for a project to reflect the needs of a group involved in the activity and its local context. Support for innovation means looking for and implementing new, creative tools and

the tools of Action 5 be used to avoid problems that might occur during projects, usually caused by a lack of knowledge about the needs and aims of partner organisations and the differences in their project management skills. They are also irreplaceable as a mean of exchange of experiences, mutual learning and common work on innovative methods and approaches towards youth work. And last but not least, activities under Action 5 that bring together youth leaders and youth workers from various backgrounds are always a huge inspiration and motivation for future cooperation and work with young people at all levels. What is to be learned depends only on those involved in the learning process. Wouldn't you say it is a great measure of support? □



What is to be learned depends only on those involved in the learning process.



The idea of this Training Course (TC) was developed during the project “The Experiment of Alternative Training”, organised by the Polish National Agency, with the support of the EU YOUTH programme, in December 2004. The main aim was to bring together youth leaders and trainers from different countries, to explore the core issues of non-formal education (NFE) processes, and to discuss the ways in which alternative, experiential and creative/artistic methods should be used in the context of NFE measures.

During the TC activities and especially during the informal communication, we had many opportunities to explore the local realities of young people and also the similarities and differences in the principles, values and types of youth work as well as training in our countries. During one of the evenings – after an extensive working day in an intercultural group – some participants of the TC and members of the training team (from Poland, Austria and Armenia) realised that the issues which arose from this TC were very pertinent for quality within YOUTH, and for the development of educational activities in general – and that there was a definite need to think about a continuation of this measure in the future...


The following days the members of the initiative group discussed all the findings that needed further investigation and also the failures which should be avoided, and thus developed the idea to have a TC in Armenia, involving youth leaders from 3 Programme Countries and 2 Partner Countries, to continue the journey to the depths of non-formal education and creative approaches.

Actually the motivation to organise this project came from the concern of experienced trainers taking part in the TC in Poland:

... that non-formal educational aspects in different YOUTH programme activities, especially in TCs, are becoming more and more standardised ... and that trainers and programme managers are becoming simple “factories” of production through

standardised and widely accepted (sometimes already acquired) tools and models ...

This tendency is not only decreasing the quality of non-formal educational activities (despite some “photographic developments”), but also damaging the concept of non-formal education in general. So the initiative group decided to do exactly the opposite, to organize a TC where **experiment was the rule**, and standardisation was something to be avoided by all means. This was supposed to be accompanied by permanent personal and group reflections on the process, on results and on concerns, not only from the point of view of taking part in this event and taking something back to the organisations, but also to make some generalisations about the core of training processes that would be useful to fight the aforementioned tendencies.

So we started, and as is usually the case with good ideas, we succeeded.... the project got funding from the Austrian NA. 



Areg Tadevosyan  
(Yerevan, Armenia)  
National Pool of Trainers  
 areg.tadevosyan@gmail.com



All of us understood that we needed this moment of silent self-reflection during all measures, but that unfortunately there was often a subconscious intention to fill in with “conversations”, “words” even the occasional natural moments of silence...



Need for Fresh Air



It is hard to verbalise when it was a journey to the other, to the alternative... and trying to put it into this format I have decided to do it this way:

### SILENT TALKS...

A lot of silent work was put in the programme. Long hikes with no verbal communication, silent sessions, silent evaluation... In general, all the participants shared the same conclusion that the silent parts of all the TCs were full with something that, before this experience, was not visible to them. All of us learned to talk silently. And after these parts, during reflection, participants said that they had learned many things about each other, that maybe during regular “work” would not have been possible to learn for a long while. All of us understood that we needed this moment of silent self-reflection during all measures, but that unfortunately there was often a subconscious intention to fill in with “conversations”, “words” even the occasional natural moments of silence...

### “WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT...”

We had a concrete day-by-day programme at the TC. We had places, routes and plans... But when you were not in the building, sometimes there was a possibility to catch the natural flow of things... and to go deeper, when there was a need to do so, even if “there was no time at all”... For example, the “getting to know each other” stage was extended almost to the middle of the TC. And as a result we had a considerable amount of work to do in last couple of days, which would have been impossible without the correct group spirit. A shared vision was developed which helped both facilitators and participants understand what WE wanted to create, investigate. Another interesting “game” with the time aspect was the usage of the night-time and early mornings. All of the participants agreed that these unusual time frames contributed a lot to the mobilisation and to the development of innovative approaches.

### CONCENTRATION ON CONTEXT

Another interesting aspect of this TC, mentioned by participants during the evaluation, was that it was very interesting to use sites with a deep cultural, spiritual or educational contexts (in a cave, in an ancient monastery, in mountains, in a national park, etc.) as training spaces. These greatly contributed to the working process especially if some planned, or coincidental similarities, were taking place with the themes addressed. And the decision to avoid the use of traditional stationery and other “necessary components” of “standard training processes” and instead make use of natural materials also contributed to the creation of the “Theme-Place-Context-Process-Theme” cycle.

### ADDED VALUE

The training process organised during the ‘pilgrimage’ was directed according to concrete themes. But it was very important to note that at the end of the process all of the participants mentioned that besides the work on these “concrete themes”, they discovered a great deal about themselves and were able to develop a new approach to some personal problems, to find ways out of their current life-puzzles. They were also able to understand where they were in the context of NFE, in their life and where they wanted to move on to.

### CONCLUSION

This short attempt at analysis covered only part of the findings of this way of doing things. And I personally will need a lot of self-reflections to verbalise the outcomes of this pilgrimage! But one thing was sure; there is a need to break out a gateway for creativity and innovation in non-formal education and we are sure that this was our second but not the last step in this direction.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to thank all the participants in this great journey for their most precious contribution – for the pieces of their life that they put into this process. For their hearts, their minds and their hands... For their burning hearts, for their bright minds and their helping hands...

...HERE IS A NEED TO BREAK OUT A GATEWAY FOR CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION





## Forthcoming SALTO EECA events

DATE	VENUE	TITLE & LINK
13-20 of November 2006	Germany	<a href="#">Training Course/Study Visit “TRAIN2EVS”</a>
25-31 of August, 2006 11-17 of November, 2006	Lviv, Ukraine Strasbourg, France	<a href="#">Training for YOUTH Trainers on cooperation with the EECA Region (part I and II)</a>
1-4 December, 2006	Poland	<a href="#">Multiplier’s Network Annual Evaluation Meeting</a>

## Invitations to UPCOMING events

**Training Course/Study Visit “TRAIN2EVS”** will take place in Germany 2006 between 13-20 November 2006. This activity is organised by the SALTO-YOUTH EECA RC in cooperation with the German YOUTH National Agency. It will bring together 22 voluntary and professional youth workers, youth leaders and project coordinators working directly with young people, who are interested in setting up new projects within the European Voluntary Service.

Training Course/Study Visit  
TRAIN2EVS

MORE INFO 

[www.salto-youth.net/tcsvA2](http://www.salto-youth.net/tcsvA2)

**Training for YOUTH Trainers on cooperation with the EECA Region;** Part I: Lviv, Ukraine, 25-31 August 2006; Part II: Strasbourg, France, 11-17 November 2006. This training course is organised by SALTO-YOUTH Eastern Europe and Caucasus Resource Centre in cooperation with the Council of Europe. Training for the YOUTH Trainers on cooperation with the EECA Region is split into two stages: First training stage took place 25-31 August 2006 in Lviv, Ukraine. Second training will take place 11-17 November, 2006 in Strasbourg, France. Participants are committed to attend for the full duration of both stages of the course.

Training for YOUTH  
Trainers on cooperation  
with the EECA Region

MORE INFO 

[www.salto-youth.net/toteeca](http://www.salto-youth.net/toteeca)

**Contact seminars for young people’s organisations: “Active Citizenship of young people in CIS and in Europe”.** 4 contact seminars will be carried out in two countries of priority region 1 (Russia, Ukraine) and in two EU countries (Austria, Poland). During the five day seminar, multipliers from youth organisations, initiatives and groups from CIS will meet with participants from programme countries (EU Member States, accession countries and candidate countries). The seminar will be facilitated by an international team of two trainers from EU-Member States and CIS. The contact seminars will focus on four different priority themes:

- the fight against racism
- human rights education
- strategies against the social exclusion of young people
- youth participation at local, regional and national level

Contact seminars for young  
people’s organisations:  
Active Citizenship of young  
people in CIS and in Europe

MORE INFO 

[www.iz.or.at](http://www.iz.or.at)



## Invitations to UPCOMING events

**“TOOL FAIR”**, France, 1-5 November 2006. The “Tool Fair” will gather 120 people from both programme and partner countries, all stakeholders in the YOUTH programme: young people, youth workers, trainers, etc. In one place, for 3 days, the fair will be a “showroom” for the huge variety and richness of tools developed and used under the YOUTH programme, a place to experiment with methods and exercises used within the different actions (youth exchanges, EVS, youth initiatives, training) and based on different themes (cultural diversity, inclusion, cooperation with partner countries, etc...). The fair could become the creation of the participants themselves and enable their tools to be used throughout the programme. “Savoir-faire” will be gathered in order to create a “common memory”.

### TOOL FAIR

ORGANISER ✚  
French National Agency  
& SALTO France  
Good Practice

**Seminar “Russia-Europe/Europe-Russia: The role of the youth organisations”**, Moscow - Russia, 25 November to 2 December 2006. The main aim of this seminar is to empower youth organisations (NGO) in developing and strengthening mutual cooperation between Russia and the other European countries. The seminar “Russia-Europe/ Europe- Russia” responds to the need to reflect more about some of the challenges previously identified in several activities: stereotypes, cultural differences, the role of youth work and youth NGOs, the articulation of civil society... Thirty participants will be selected: half will come from the Russian Federation and half from the rest of Europe. The selection of participants will be done by the team of trainers taking into account the profile of participants, NGO-government balance, as well as gender and regional balance. Organizer: Council of Europe - Directorate of Youth and Sport. Deadline: 13 October 2006. Contact Person: Claudia Montevocchi: [claudia.montevocchi@coe.int](mailto:claudia.montevocchi@coe.int)

### Seminar “Russia-Europe/Eu- rope-Russia: The role of the youth organisations”

ORGANISER ✚  
Council of Europe – Directo-  
rate of Youth and Sport

MORE INFO ✚  
[www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)

**Consultative meeting: A Forum “Conflict Transformation”, European Youth Centre**, Strasbourg - France, 15-17 December 2006. In the youth field, Conflict Transformation was translated into different formats: seminars, training courses in post-conflict areas (Balkans, south Caucasus...); political advice in terms of youth policy development through the Stability Pact; training courses on conflict transformation; publication of material to reflect the work realised, the creation of partnerships with the Mediterranean countries and the Middle-East. This forum finds its place as a space offered to reflect on these different practices, with young people and youth organisations active in conflict transformation; coming from post-conflict areas, confronted to this topic in their everyday work. The forum will bring together youth workers/youth leaders who are experienced in the topic of conflict transformation and who have had a leading role in activities related to this topic. Organizer: Council of Europe - Directorate of Youth and Sport. Deadline: 16 October 2006

### International Youth Camp in Anapa

ORGANISER ✚  
The Centre for Interethnic  
Cooperation

MORE INFO ✚  
[www.interethnic.org](http://www.interethnic.org)





**YARYNA BORENKO** is Programme Director of the NGO “European Dialogue” and a trainer in the “Dialogue” network (Lviv, Ukraine). She coordinated journalist workshops for the Ukrainian-Polish Media-Club from 2003 to 2004 and led the “Young Diplomacy” Centre in Lviv between 1997 and 1999. She has been working for a Lviv daily newspaper since 2002. Multiplier of the YOUTH Programme in Ukraine, she holds a PhD in Political Science.



**TOMEK BRATEK** is Director of the Polish National Agency of the YOUTH Programme and has been Coordinator of the SALTO-YOUTH Eastern Europe and Caucasus Resource Centre in Warsaw since its establishment at the end of 2003. Previously he was partly responsible for Action 5 – Support Measures and Cooperation with Partner Countries in the Polish National Agency. He has been engaged in international youth cooperation and the development of non-formal education since 1998. He completed comparative studies in International Standards of Criminal Law with a focus on Human Rights Protection at Warsaw University. For over 3 years he worked voluntarily for the Polish branch of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights in Warsaw.



**ANNA FRUBA** – in National Agency of the YOUTH Programme since April 2003. Began in Action 1 to move half year later to Action 5 where support for organisations and other Actions of the Programme is her main interest. Since February 2006 coordinator of Action 5 and Training and Cooperation Plan in Polish NA. Interested in organisational management and capacity building.



**ROUZANNA IVANYAN**, Programme director of Saint-Petersburg regional youth non-governmental organisation “Youth Information Center”. Author of manuals on non-formal education and intercultural learning for youth workers. Member of Consultative group of Committee on youth affairs of Saint-Petersburg city Administration. Involved in international youth work as an expert and trainer of the Council of Europe (Directorate of youth and sport) and European Commission in the field of project management, citizenship, non-formal education, intercultural learning and European youth work. Experienced in cooperation between EU and EECA countries, managing local and international youth projects. From 1998-2003 was employed as a coordinator of UNICEF (United Nations Children’s Fund) activities in North-West region of Russia. Member of SALTO trainers’ pool and trainers’ pool of Council of Europe. Multiplier and trainer of the European Commission’s YOUTH program in the Russian Federation. At the same time senior lecturer at Saint-Petersburg State University of service and economy.



**ANDRIY PAVLOVYCH** is Ukrainian and has been living in Warsaw, Poland, since 1998, where he works at the SALTO-YOUTH Eastern Europe and Caucasus Resource Centre. His fields of interest include international project management, civic education and active youth participation. From 1999 until 2004, he worked as International Programme Coordinator of Polish NGO “School of Leaders Association”, where he was responsible for organising summer schools, training courses and study visits for young political and social leaders from Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Moldova and Serbia. Between 1990 and 1997 he was one of the leaders of reopened Ukrainian Scout Organisation “Plast”. He graduated from the School for Social Research, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Polish Academy of Sciences.



**ANDREI POPOV**, full time social youth worker, Committee on social issues, Pavlovsky Posad, Moscow Region. Educational background: Moscow region state pedagogical university, faculty of English and German languages; Moscow social humanitarian institute, faculty of law; Black Hawk College, Illinois, alumni. Professional background – youth worker since 1995: facilitation of projects in sports education, community integration of at-risk youth, youth empowerment through establishment of and participation in student councils, legal support to local informal youth groups in management and sustainability, facilitation of participation in the YOUTH programme, volunteer coach in weightlifting and basketball for disadvantaged youth groups, member of the SALTO EECA region’s Multipliers Network.



**AREG TADEVOSYAN** is a freelance trainer with experience in non-formal learning and youth work in general. He is a board member of the National Youth Council of Armenia and the National Pool of Trainers. Between 2002 and 2004 he headed the Analytical Information and Programmes Department of the Centre for the Organisation of Youth Programmes of the Ministry of Culture and Youth Affairs. Multiplier and trainer of the YOUTH Programme in Armenia, he holds a PhD in Molecular Biology and Genetics.



[www.salto-youth.net/eeca](http://www.salto-youth.net/eeca)