



Study Visit
“Exploring Youth Work Realities in Kosovo(*)”
3rd – 7th of October 2010

Course documentation and evaluation of the activity



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1. Summary of the activity

While many partnerships exist between organisations in Youth in Action Programme countries and most of the countries of South East Europe, relatively little cooperation within the Programme has involved specifically partners in Kosovo. Youth work and the conditions of local young people have therefore remained unknown to many youth leaders and youth workers in other countries.

The SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre organised a study visit to Kosovo in 3rd – 7th of October 2010. The aim was to increase the knowledge and understanding of youth workers from other European countries on local realities and working environment of their colleagues in Kosovo. Additionally, the aim was to foster further cooperation with Kosovo in the field of youth, in particular within the Youth in Action Programme.

The activity included visits to various youth organisations and many meetings and informal gatherings with local youth workers and young people. The participants had also an opportunity to meet the Advisor of the Ministry of Education and Culture in Kosovo to learn about recent policy developments in the field of youth, and discuss about the impressions and information gained during the visit. Space was also provided for mutual exchange; in between the field visits the participants shared and reflected upon their experiences and build partnerships for future cooperation.

The study visit began in Peja where the group stayed from 3rd of October (evening) until 5th of October (noon). The journey continued Klina, and in the evening the group arrived to Prizren, where some of the participants had chosen to stay with local families, rest were accommodated in a hotel. The group stayed in Prizren until the departure day 7th of October. (The programme of activities is in detail on the page 3 of this document.)

The study visit was organised by the SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre in cooperation with three local youth organisations: Environmentally Responsible Action (ERA) group from Peja, Youth Center Fisniket from Prizren and Youth Centre Ardhmeria from Klina. The programme of activities was carried out in a team consisting of a representative of SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre, external facilitator (Dragan Atanasov, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) and members of local organisations (Vullnet Sanaja and Elina Savolainen from ERA group, Alfred Kinolli and Isuf Halimi from YC Fisniket and Vitore Zefi from Youth Centre Ardhmeria Klina).

2. Programme

	3 rd of October	4 th of October	5 th of October	6 th of October	7 th of October		
Until 9:30	Arrivals	Breakfast					
9:30 – 13:30		Introduction to the activity and to youth work in Kosovo	Reflection time	Reflection time	Departures		
			Departure from Peja	Meeting with the Advisor of the Ministry of Education and Culture of Kosovo; discussion			
		Break	Visit of Youth Center Ardhmeria Klina	Visits of youth organizations in Prizren (Durmish Asllani Roma CSO, Dokufest, OOK Youth Organization Krushevo)			
		Visit of ERA group					
13:30		Lunch	Lunch in Klina Departure to Prizren Accommodation and free time	Lunch			
14:30 – 19:00		Presentations by youth organizations from Peja (Anibar, Marimangat -rock climbing, NPU - Initiative for Peace and Unity, Youth Center Liria from Istok)		Optional: City tour in Prizren			
		Break				Visit of Youth Center Fisniket	Summary, evaluation and closure
		Visits of youth organizations in Peja (Youth Center Lorenc Mazreku, Zoom Youth Center, Red Cross)					
19:00		Dinner	Dinner	Traditional dinner in the Youth Center Fisniket Free time		Dinner	
20:30 -	Getting to know each other Introduction to the Youth in Action Programme	Informal gathering in the Youth Centre Zoom	Goodbye party				
Night in	Peja	Peja	Prizren	Prizren			

1. List of participants

Country	Name	Organisation / function
Albania	Nevin Alija	Center for Legal Civic Initiatives
Albania	Manila Harizi	Beyond Barriers
Austria	Andrea Hollenstein	Interkulturelles Zentrum, NA Austria
Austria	Petra Schwaiger	4eva
Bulgaria	Rosen Dimov	Initiative Regional Youth Council
FYRo Macedonia	Dusko Radevski	Group Felix
FYRo Macedonia	Eniser Selmanoska	Theodor-Heuss-Kolleg
FYRo Macedonia	Iljaz Shemsedin	Centre for Rural Development - SEE
Kosovo	Enis Shabani	Youth For Tomorrow Rahovec
Latvia	Ilze Šmate	Sermuksi Primary school
Netherlands	Peter Keijzer	Richter
Poland	Joanna Omalecka	Stowarzyszenie Inicjatyw Niemożliwych MOTYKA
Poland	Paulina Bilska Marek	Semper Avanti
Serbia	Nikola Koruga	Visionerski transport
Turkey	Erdem Muhtaroglu	Municipality of Bornova

Organising team:

Slovenia	Maija Lehto	SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre
FYRo Macedonia	Dragan Atanasov	Facilitator
Kosovo	Elina Savolainen	Environmentally Responsible Action ERA Group
Kosovo	Vullnet Sanaja	Environmentally Responsible Action ERA Group
Kosovo	Vitore Zefi	Youth Center Ardhmeria Klina
Kosovo	Alfred kinolli	Youth Centre Fisniqet
Kosovo	Isuf Halimi	Youth Centre Fisniqet

2. List of visited organisations (organisations' short presentations)

(The following information is provided by the organisations themselves prior the study visit)

1. ERA is a local environmental NGO in Peja, Kosova, founded in 2003. Their goal is to promote and increase environmental consciousness, awareness, and responsibility amongst the youth and community in Kosovo, in order to protect, conserve and promote the region's natural and cultural heritage. Through its environmental and education programs, ERA sustains and reinforces rural and urban local, national and trans-boundary civil society, by promoting responsible and sustainable development and positive cross-border cooperation in the region.
2. Anibar is a new NGO with many old activities. This year biggest activity of Anibar was »Anibar International Animation Festival«, which is a film festival devoted to animated movies. The aim was to familiarize the people from Kosovo with the latest global trends of animation. Anibar 2010 was the first edition of the festival and the first of its kind in Kosovo. It was held from 27th to 30th of August in Peja, Kosovo.
3. Marimangat e Pejes is the first and currently the only climbing club in Kosovo. The membership is consisted mainly of people living in the town of Peja, but there are also other members from other towns or even other countries. The team was created in 2002 with the initiative of Mauro Barisone (an Italian climber with Courmayer certificate), Agim Haqku - Yole an alpine guide from Peja and the support of several Italian climbing clubs.
4. NPU (Initiative for Peace and Unity) is a new organization which is lead by youth of Roma community and they practice their activities in Youth Center Zoom in Peja.
5. NGO "Liria" (Freedom) is a nonprofit organisation from Peja. It was established in 2004 in order to strengthen the position of youth in problem solving and decision making. Main aim of the organization is to support the youth to realize their visions regarding sustainable development in the socio-economic sphere and to promote a healthy and clean environment. Its main activities include trainings of non-formal education, environmental activities and advocacy campaigns on environmental issues. Organisation's vision is a healthy and well educated youth, which lives in a clean environment and avoids negative occurrences.
6. Youth Center "Ate Lorenc Mazrreku" was established in 2001 upon the initiative of Parish Youth St Katarina in Peja, and with a donor support from "Caritas Veneziana". The center's activities include continuos education of young people about peace-building, tolerance, health, environmental protection and promotion of human rights.
7. The mission of the Youth Center is to support the development of contemporary youth and to create opportunities for international integration. This organisation aims to achieve the mission through social, educational, cultural and sports related activities, and diminish the influence of partisan politics and radical movements. Special attention is dedicated to increasing volunteer work as it is considered a crucial mechanism to facilitate the development and progress of society in general.

8. Youth Center Zoom in Peja is established in 2004 as an initiative of a union of NGOs in the Peja municipality. It's non religious and non political.

It is open for all youth regardless of ethnicity, religion or gender. The main objectives of the Center Zoom are empowerment of youth and promotion of youth associations, networking among youth associations and building constructive relationships between the youth associations and institutions.

9. Youth Center 'Arhmeria' - Kline was founded in October 1999, as an initiative of Italian Ngo called ICS Italian Consortium of Solidarity (ISC). Mission of the Youth Center is creating a new society, advanced and democratic, in order to advance integration, corporation and tolerance. Main activities in the Youth Centre are hosting local youth groups, developing culture and sport related youth initiatives and providing health education and non-formal trainings for young people.

10. The Youth Center 'Fisniket' is active in the fields of peace building, non-formal education and empowering young people for their future life. The organisation is active in the region of Prizren, but has also activities all around Kosovo as well as in Serbia and in Montenegro. The Youth Centre aims to reach young people in all -Albanian Serbian, Turkish, Bosnian, Gorani and RAE (Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians) - communities. Various projects are realised annually in villages and municipalities. These projects consist of trainings, conferences, youth camps and other sport and cultural activities.

11. NGO "Durmish Aslano" is among the first organisations dealing with civil society and the Roma Community in Kosovo. It was founded more the 30 years ago. The aim of the organisation is to preserve the identity of the Roma community by organising various cultural, artistic and spiritual activities such as »self dance groups« (Roma folk songs and dance) and theatre in Roma language.

12. DOKUFEST, The International Documentary and Short Film Festival, is the largest annual film festival in Kosova. The festival is organised in August in the picturesque and historical town of Prizren, and it attracts numerous international and regional artists. The films are screened twice a day in three open air cinemas as well as in two regular cinemas. Additionally, the festival is also well-known for its lively nights after the screening. Various events take place in the frame of the festival: workshops, DokuPhoto exhibitions, festival camping, concerts etc.

13. OOK Youth Organization Krushevo. Initially the organisation was just an informal group of young people who wanted to improve the quality of life in the community, and organised informal gatherings of youth from Krushevo, Zlipotok, and Globoqice and volunteered in humanitarian actions. The organisation was established to promote the favorable economic, social and cultural conditions for all citizens, especially young people in the municipality.

3. Summary of the participants' evaluation

The following narrative report is based on the evaluation questionnaire that participants filled in at the end of the study visit (part of the questionnaire where participants could comment freely)

Most of the participants were generally quite satisfied with the study visit, regarding both logistical background and the content of the program. Highlights were by all means meeting and talking to local young people and getting a good overview of youth work realities in the Kosovo. However, the participants also came up with a few critical comments and suggestions for improvement.

Participants point out the high level of coordination, organisation and availability of information, quality discussions and getting in touch with the locals and the Kosovo reality (home stays and pointed out as especially positive). Everyone appreciated the work of the facilitator and of all team members. The participants also gave a very positive feedback on group dynamics and interaction within the group. Working methods were suitable for most of them, and they liked when they were offered to choose between different program elements and share later on.

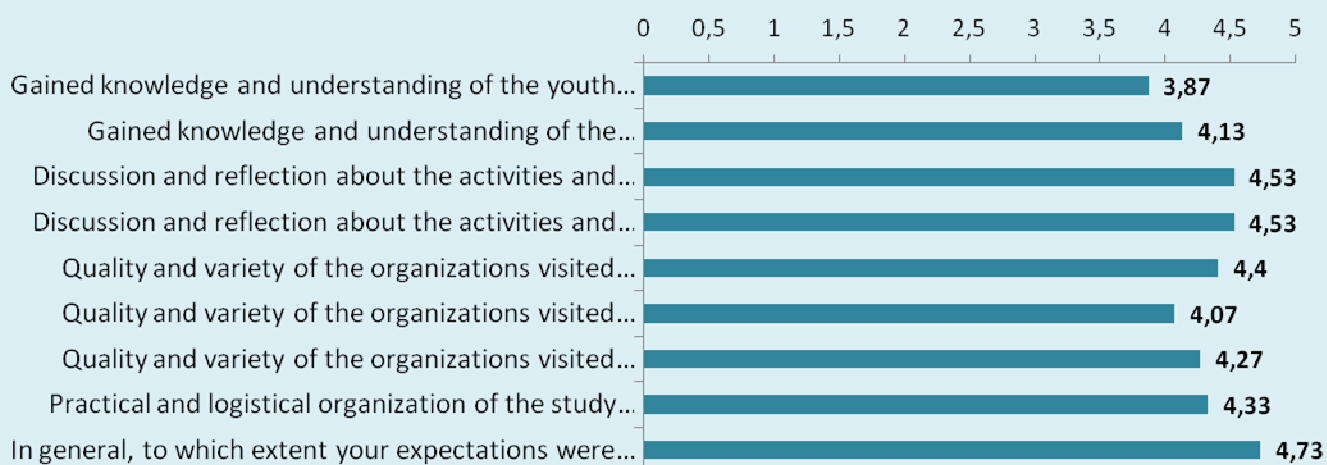
They also underline the useful parts in stimulating partnership and conclude that the visit was more fruitful than expected, including the informal part of the visit. Some of them mention the possibility of further cooperation, however, only one participant have concrete ideas (one Youth exchange and one Study visit with partners from Kosovo, and the plans of an Action 1.3 Youth Democracy project with program countries.) Comments were in accordance with the rating they gave in the certain aspects.

The participants also mentioned a couple of issues that got lower ratings and that could be improved. One of the things is that the group presentations should be more interesting and that there should have been more diversity in topics. Sometimes some of them had the impression that the presentations focused too much on the achievements and positive aspects, and not really discussed the challenges that organisations have to face. In some cases there was more emphasis on the facilities/youth centres themselves than on the practical work done there.

Also, it is mentioned that more local partners should have been visited, especially minorities (Serbian, Bosnian, Roma) and that getting-to-know part was not so well structured. (However, it was also pointed out that there was no enough time even for those who were seen.) Some participants mention problems related to food, it being expensive and the offer not wide enough. One more note was that the visit maybe should have been organised for a longer period of time, which would give the opportunity to do more practical and field work, and to get to know at least the work of one or two local partners more in depth.

Summary of the answers given in numbers in reply to a series of questions

Evaluation



Results show the average assessment grade for each question, whereas 1 means 'bad' and 5 means 'very good'.