

## GYLP - study trip to Slovakia

The first activity within the project GamCon Youth Leadership Program- GYLP was the 2 weeks' study trip organized for 20 young leaders from Gagauzia. Study trip was divided into two parts. From June 26-30 students had the opportunity to visit Brussels, the capital of the EU, and to learn more about the work of the European union and its institutions. During the following week, from July 3-7, students visited number of successful civil society initiatives across Slovakia and had the opportunity to learn more about the work in non-governmental sector.

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Second part of study trip started with a very nonformal activity at Bratislava- the Gagauzian evening. On July 2<sup>nd</sup> young leaders from Gagauzia organized a thematic evening with presentation of history, cultures, traditions, language, traditional folk dances, as well as national Gagauzian dishes. Such event was a great opportunity for Slovaks to learn more about the Gagauz region and helped young people to get to know each other better.



During the first “working” day of study trip the meeting with representative of the Office of Mayor of Bratislava took place. He talked to students a lot about the work of the Office of Mayor, but mainly about his activities as a student. Students could learn more about his working experience with young students form high school and the way how to motivate young people to be more active and then develop their own society. Students got a lot of advices for their future work.

During the second part of a day young leaders had meeting with Pontis Foundation representatives. Tatiana Zilkova told them about activities and experience of Pontis Foundation.



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No less interesting meeting was with representatives of [eRko](#)- the children's organization working throughout whole Slovakia. Gagauzian students could learn more about how to work with children and young leaders as well,



how to motivate them to be a responsible part in development of their own society. As activities of initiative eRko is explicitly volunteering (nowadays day have more than 7000 members), representatives also shared their experience of how to motivate people to work with children and create a functioning network of volunteers.

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Representatives of the initiative [Zelená hliadka](#) and [Cyklokoalícia](#) prepared a small city tour in Bratislava to present their activities dedicated to improve the infrastructure of the city. During the meetings students could see not only the results of hard work of both

initiatives, but also learned more about ways how to help their own community without financial and other additional support.

On Tuesday, July 4, participants had presentation of the initiative [Nástupište 1 – 12](#) in Topoľčany, which is a multimedia space for contemporary culture open for public. Zuzana Godálová, director of the initiative, presented to students their activities which focusing on art, culture, education and environment and sport as well. As the multimedia

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space is situated in the underpass beneath the bus station and its open for public, students could see some of the activities of members of Nastúpište 1- 12.



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Next destination of study trip was Žilina, where students had the opportunity to visit two very inspiring civil society initiative. First, students visited [Nadácia krajina harmónie \(NKH\)](#), NGO which works with disable people. Representatives of NKH presented to students how to work with people with special needs and how to help them to be part of society and then create a harmony in society. Students could meet with clients and also volunteers working with them and see how they cooperate together.



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During the second meeting students got information about the activities and projects of [Stanica Zărieție](#). One of the founder of NGO Truc spheric-operator of Stanica told more about how to implement projects without any financial support and how to establish cultural space which connect people from different sphere of life. For students was very inspiring the story how they built their biggest building – an alternative theatre scene- from beer boxes and clay. They could see that without lot of money but with huge excitement they can achieve their goals.



Wednesday GYLP participants moved to little village in east Slovakia, [Spišský Hrhov](#), where they met with representatives of *Mayor office*. Students got information how can functioning local government contribute to development of life of majority and roma minority as well. Visit of Spišský Hrhov was an exceptional experience for Gagauzian students to see how productive can be cooperation with every part of society, even if this part is presented by Gypsies.



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Second part of day was spent in Prešov, where students visited initiative Relevant, which work with young and needy people to affect their lives in positive way. Students could learn more about how to create space for children to meaningfully spend their free time and to prevent undesirable social phenomena. Last but not least they could hear success stories of their work with children, but also adults who grew up in orphanage and became a full part of society.



The meeting at Youth initiatives in Prešov was more about the activities of young people on high schools and the work of student's parliaments. Representatives from this initiative shared best practices and lessons learned with Gagauzian students and told more about how increase the voice of their activities in Gagauzia.



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Next day students had the opportunity to visit a very special initiative in Banská Bystrica [Divadlo z Pasáže](#). Divadlo z pasáže is a unique theatre which work as a professional institution but with disabled people. Students could learn more how to work with needy people and how to connect cultural, artistic and social sphere.



Second part of day was spent in a village [Zaježová](#), far from urban territories, where civic association [Živica](#) is operating. One of the member of Živica prepared for a student a very interactive presentation of activities



of people living in [Záježová](#), who are trying to live like their ancestors and in this way teach other people to “responsible consumption and conscious modesty”. Except the presentation students had the opportunity to spent a night in [Záježová](#) and for a short time be a part of this very inspirational initiative.

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The last meeting for young leaders was prepared in Nitra with the founder of community centre Hidepark. During the visit students could see a number of activities of more than 14 NGOs which together created a space for children, youth, but also older people. Hidepark connect together sport, culture, art, ecology but especially friendly people.



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