

EXPERIENCING

OCTOBER 2021

ISSUE 4

COOPERATION



EXPERIENCING COOPERATION

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE ?



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"EXPERIENCING COOPERATION"



TOWN TWINING ACTIVITY
"BUILDING EUROPE AT HOME"



'19 INTERNATIONAL YOUTH
CONFERENCE



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HIGHLIGHTING THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE OUTDOOR YOUTH FESTIVAL "EXPERIENCING COOPERATION"



"Seeing the people appreciate the art we made and dancing together in a circle while everyone was free to be themselves." - **Verica Krstevska**



"New friends, knowledge and lots of companionship" - **Slave Koteski**



"Highlight was the party where I could notice that many people really connected and clicked" - **Evgenija Geramitchioska**



"The party, the movie with the discussion and the people" - **Angela Nikolova**

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TOWN TWINING ACTIVITY "BUILDING EUROPE AT HOME"



Meeting new people and possible collaborations in the future.



I met new people, I learned a lot about foreign educational systems and I found out how many similarities we have as "neighbour countries".



The hospitality and the accommodations were outstanding, wish I could've spent a few more days in Nymfaio.



Established connection and opened opportunities for cooperation with music ensemble(s) from Florina

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BILATERAL COOPERATION FOR REGIONAL TRANSFORMATION



The “Cooperation for common future” goes International.

The 19th edition of the International Youth Conference brought up together up to 60 participants from the countries from the SEE region to discuss "European Values for the Future of the SEE Countries". When we are discussing the future of the SEE region it is inevitable to include the representatives from "Cooperation for a common future" initiative - SEE in Action.

Eleni Vasdoka, Anna Bampili, Alexandros Pavlou, Aegli Sakellari gave their contribution to the 19' IYC through several roles - part of the International Preparatory Group (well known as the "IPG team"), in a role of moderators, as well as part of the team of facilitators and reporters. With their participation at the conference we have once again confirmed that we are definitely **BETTER TOGETHER**,



The main conference aim is to mobilize young leaders from SEE to reinvent a more inclusive regional cooperation process. Equally, the project aims to work with young leaders from the region to raise their decision making and advocacy skills and to help mould a generation of democratic leaders who cross historical, geographical and cultural barriers will support the EU integrative process of/within the region.

MY PERSONAL STORY: EXPERIENCING COOPERATION

METODIJA STOJCESKI, NORTH MACEDONIA

Having worked for more than 20 years on the creation and implementation of youth policies, especially focused on reconciliation and initiating cooperation in the region of Southeast Europe, I can freely say that a significant part of the young population has clear stereotypes and prejudices about others in the region.

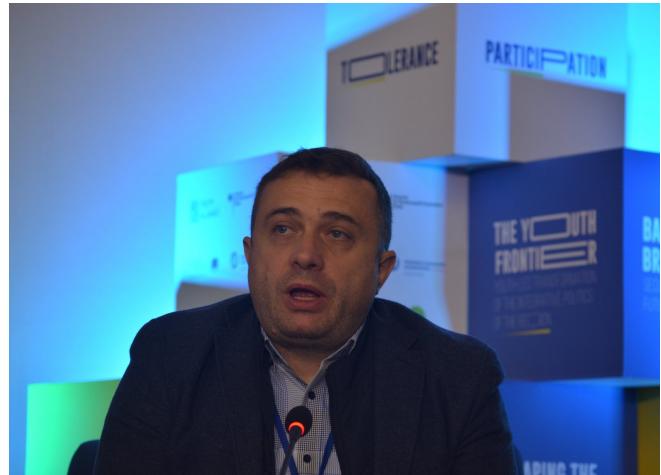
In all these years, the question lingers in my mind whether these young people know each other well enough, are those strong emotions based on personal experiences or are they a reflection of the daily political narrative, historical events or as part of the media representation of others?

Before reaching any conclusion, I would like to share with you some of the personal experiences I have gained as a part of the team that has been implementing the initiative for the establishment of bilateral youth cooperation offices between the Republic of North Macedonia and Greece. At the very beginning of the initiative in 2018, we conducted a survey to find out the perceptions of young people on both sides of the border that they for each other. The research included young people (16-29 years old). From the information we have received , I would like to interpret the following:

Nearly 60% of the young surveyed Greeks have never traveled to a neighboring country. While almost 85% of young Macedonians have already visited Greece.

Of the young people who have visited the neighboring country, the number of those who can say that they know someone or have friends in the neighborhood is insignificant and even smaller is the number of those who know the real needs and living conditions of young people from the neighboring country. Most often, young people from Greece travel through North Macedonia as a transit country , while for young people in our country Greece is just a destination for summer vacation and shopping.

I can freely conclude that young people from both countries do not know each other, they develop emotions for others based on the information that are coming from the societies in which they live. The need to create a platform for communication and getting to know young neighbors is essential. We, as youth workers, must work on creating platforms for regional cooperation and networking. That is why we are working on the establishment of bilateral youth cooperation offices. The contact points in Florina and Valandovo so far show that they are a great tool for connecting, but also for breaking stereotypes and prejudices among young people on both sides of the border.



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