



PROJECTS ARE  
NOT FALLING  
FROM THE SKY

Useful hints for youth projects organizers





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Useful hints for youth projects organizers



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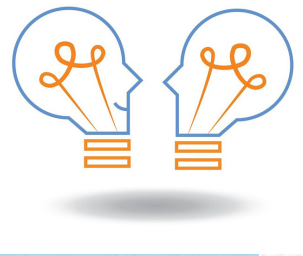


# ASSOCIATION HEUREKA GENERATOR

HEureka Generator Association was founded in September 2016 by people with many years of experience in the field of non-governmental organizations.

Our members are professional local and international project coordinators, non-formal education workers, and other young people who have been participating in many local and international youth projects.

What we all have in common is the will to be active and act for our local community.



## Links to follow and contact:



[www.heurekagenerator.com](http://www.heurekagenerator.com)



[heurekagenerator@gmail.com](mailto:heurekagenerator@gmail.com)



[HEureka Generator](https://www.facebook.com/HEurekaGenerator)



[Heureka Generator](https://www.youtube.com/HEurekaGenerator)



[HEureka Generator](mailto:HEurekaGenerator@gmail.com)



[@heurekagenerator](https://www.instagram.com/heurekagenerator)





# WHAT IS ERASMUS+?

Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. Its budget of €14.7 billion will provide opportunities for over 4 million Europeans to study, train, and gain experience abroad.

Set to last until 2020, Erasmus+ doesn't just have opportunities for students. Merging seven prior programmes, it has opportunities for a wide variety of individuals and organisations.

*Individuals* - Erasmus+ has opportunities for people of all ages, helping them to develop and share knowledge, experience at institutions and organisations in different countries.

*Organisations* - Erasmus+ has opportunities for a wide range of organisations, including universities, education and training providers, think-tanks, research organisations, and private businesses.



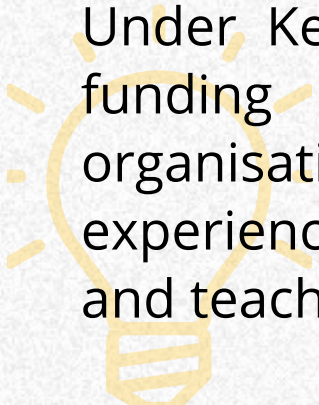
# Erasmus+





# KEY ACTION 1: MOBILITY OF INDIVIDUALS

This Action is all about providing opportunities for individuals to improve their skills, enhance their employability and gain cultural awareness.



Under Key Action 1 organisations can apply for funding to run mobility projects to enable organisations to offer structured study, work experience, job shadowing, volunteering, training and teaching opportunities to staff and learners.

Beneficiaries are able to spend a period of time in another participating country gaining valuable experience of life, study and work with the aim of increasing the opportunities available to them in the future.

**Key Action 1 covers the five fields of higher education, vocational education and training, schools, adult education and youth. It is important to note that target groups and activities for Key Action 1 vary by field.**



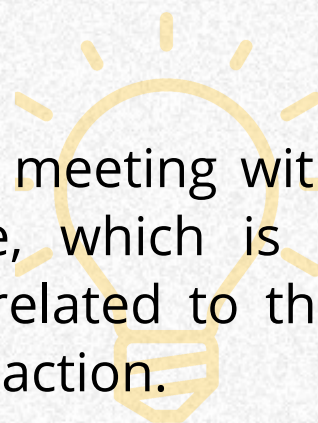
Key Action 1 is the largest action in Erasmus+ with 63% of programme budget supporting its focus on increasing mobility and skills.



## Key Action 1: Mobility of Individuals



# INTRO



A project is not only a week-long meeting with peers, but a few months adventure, which is a treasure box of various experiences related to the transformation of youth ideas into real action.

It often has specific problematic moments resulting from whole idea of what youth exchange is. Finding solutions often consume a lot of time and energy.

Sometimes in such situations lack of tools and help can cause serious problems. We hope that this publication will help you to solve some of them.





# NOT FOR YOUTH, BUT WITH YOUTH

One of mistakes often made by organizers of youth projects is the belief that adults should create projects for young people. As an argument for such thinking is usually professional qualifications of an adult, his experience or legal responsibility for project results.

In order not to make this mistake, we must take into account the specificity of a youth project.

The priority is to delegate as many tasks as possible to young people, who thanks to this will get the chance to be active on many levels.

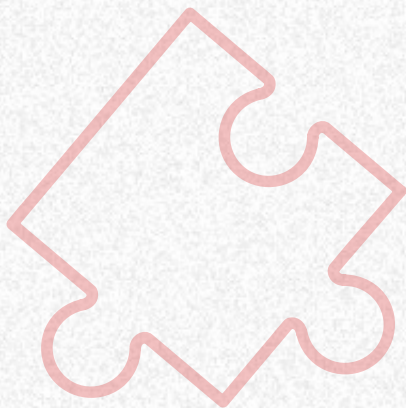
The basis of high-quality youth project will never be a beautiful poster, which we will order from a professional. It will also not be a professional website, whose creation we will order from an external company.

In a good-quality youth project, we will give a chance to create a poster or website to 16-years-olds who really want to create such poster. It is not the most important thing whether our active participant has sufficient experience that will guarantee us a high quality poster.



**The main thing is that a young active person will acquire valuable experience in the field that interests him. Maybe he will make some mistakes during the implementation, but it is not as important as just trying to take responsibility and trying to get the task done as well as possible.**

When deciding to create a youth project, let's give decisions about its topic to young people from our organization. Let young active people describe their idea and implement it throughout the project. Let's support them with our experience, share our resources, but do not reduce the tasks of young people to the level of help with a ready-made project written by adults.



**Not FOR youth, but WITH youth**



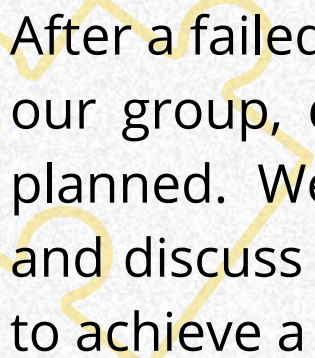


**Logo of the seminar is designed by Dominika Józwiakowska  
HEureka's Generator volunteer**

Adults help in a good youth project, young people are in the frontline of the project. The activity of young people and their willingness is what is most valuable. For this we create and implement projects not FOR youth but WITH youth.

Many European organizations are afraid of the reaction of grant givers who are allegedly not satisfied with the final results of the youth project. For example, if a happening in the city center, which was prepared by young people, did not work out, it will not be the basis for cutting funds.

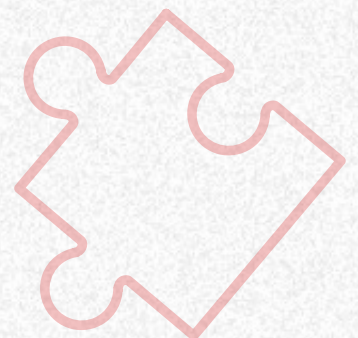




After a failed action in the project, we sit down with our group, discuss what did not work out as we planned. We discuss pros and cons of activities and discuss what can be done better in the future to achieve a better result.

In the report from our project we describe what conclusions youth drew from this particular unsuccessful activity.

**These conclusions are often the most positive effect of the youth project, which is more important than the successful happening itself.**



**Not FOR youth, but WITH youth**



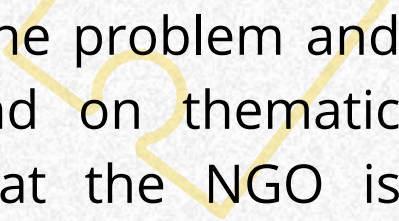
## WHEN PROJECT TOURIST APPEARS...

Imagine a group of young people who have an idea to exchange volunteer experiences with peers from other countries. They want to organize an event on children's day in their town. The idea is developed with the help of experienced people from their organisation.

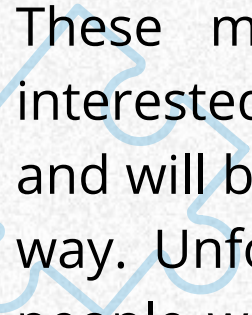
They find partner organizations from several other countries and start writing a project. Everything went well and the project application is ready and submitted. The project received funding after 2 months.

Unfortunately, one of the project partners has a problem with his group of young people who were involved at the stage of creating the project. It turns out that the partner simply signed the partner documents without a group, and the tasks from the project writing period were completed by an employee of the organization. Simply, another project, another stamp, another standard cooperation ...

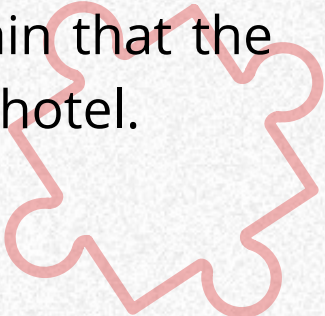




Our partner is trying to solve the problem and announces on its website and on thematic groups of social networks that the NGO is looking for participants who would like to take part in this youth exchange. The advertisement is seen by a lot of young people who did not create this project. An attractive trip to another country is 100% financed. Participants apply.



These may be people who really will be interested in exchanging volunteer experiences and will be able to join the activities in a smooth way. Unfortunately, quite often there are also people who are not close to the subject of the project, are not interested in active action and changing the reality for the better. These people want to have fun, take a nice picture of themselves, and worst of all, complain that the conditions were not like in a five star hotel.



**When project tourist appears...**



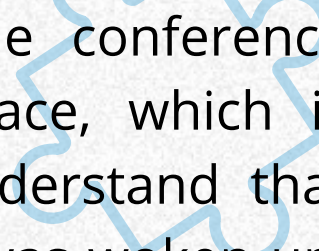
**Some call it 'project tourism'. It is a negative phenomenon involving the improper use of the educational opportunities that are created as part of various educational projects by young people and adults.**

How does a young, active person feel in a situation when a 'project tourist' appears among other participants? This is definitely not a comfortable situation, often causing great frustration and conflicts.

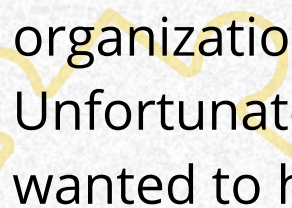
A lot of work which should be put into exchanging experiences with other active people is slowly changing into conversations with our tourist who doesn't like the fact that there were pancakes for breakfast and not his favorite salad.

Immediately after this problem comes the next: our tourist does not come to a meeting in the conference room at 10 am because the previous night he had a great time until 4 am listening to music, singing and not quite worried that the next day we are preparing an event for children from families in difficult economical situation..



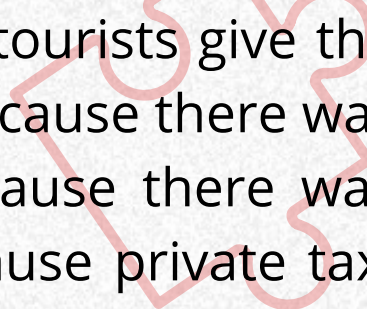


The tourist finally comes to the conference room with a grimace on his face, which is supposed to make everyone understand that this is a bad project because he was woken up. This is a bad project because it does not meet his party needs.



A lot of energy of the organizers and other active people on the project are put in to deal with the problem of 'project tourist'. This energy should, after all, be used 100% in the organization of the event for the kids. Unfortunately it wasn't because someone wanted to have fun.

In the end the event for the kids was organized. Many people are happy that we did something cool. Among these people we have one tourist, or sometimes more...



During evaluation meeting our tourists give the lowest grades to all activities, because there was no favorite food for them, because there was too little fun till late night, because private taxi was not rented to take them from the airport.

**When project tourist appears...**



## MEANING OF FIRST DECISIONS

When a project idea arises in a non-governmental organization, one of the most important steps is to find partners who will change the idea into real action with us. Exactly at this moment one decision can affect the fact that at a later stage of our cooperation tourists and people who do not feel responsibility for the final success will appear in our project.

Many less experienced organizations create a project partnership by entering a social networking site and placing an advertisement 'we are looking for a partner'.

Anyone can reply to such an advertisement. If we are lucky, good and responsible organization will contact us. If we are less fortunate, someone who simply wants to travel for free may contact us.



Every time we are angry with an irresponsible project participant who does not get involved in the actions, let's think for a moment if we are not the one to be blamed for this situation because of mistakes in earlier stages of cooperation with partners.

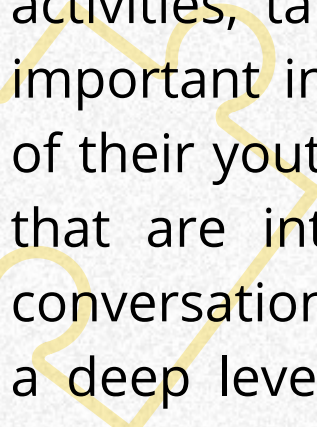
An improperly established partnership can create a huge amount of problems for a few months from the very beginning. Projects do not really fall from the sky, and a good partnership is not determined by chatting for several minutes with a partner and right after it sending a scan of the signed partnership document.

So how can we create a responsible partnership that reduces the risk of later irresponsible behaviors?

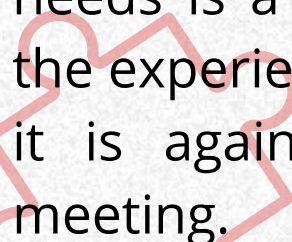
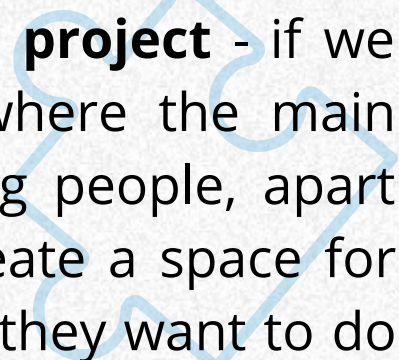
Here are some ways...

**Meaning of first decisions**






**Contact Making Seminar (CMS)** - European organizations meet in one place, present their activities, talk about their missions and what is important in their work. They present the ideas of their youth and try to find other organizations that are interested in the same idea. A 'live' conversation allows us to build trust and check at a deep level whether a potential partner really matches our project.




**Creating ideas during previous project** - if we participate in another project where the main action involves meeting of young people, apart from the main activities, let's create a space for them to come up with what else they want to do together in the near future. 2-3 hour session, during which youth from several organizations will come up with a new project to meet their needs is a good start. The new project will use the experience of this already ending. In addition, it is again an idea developed during a live meeting.

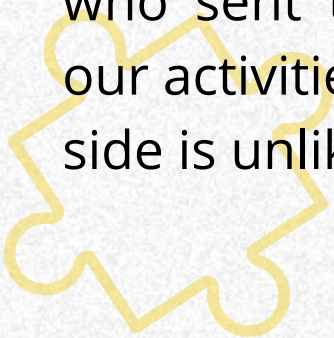




**Let's use the experience of our existing partnerships** - instead of randomly choosing a new partner from the internet, let's ask one of our already proven partners if they could recommend us an organization they have already worked with and their joint activities were of good quality. A recommended partner is a much better start than blind luck from the Internet.



**Ask your potential partner how he finds youth for his activities** - If you see that a non-governmental organization does not work with young people on a daily basis, and its main activity is to create groups for projects from people not associated with this organization, it does not necessarily have to be a good partner for us. If people who do not even remember who sent them to our project are involved in our activities, then the responsibility from their side is unlikely to be high ...





**Check how your potential partner presents his actions** - Visiting the organization's website, Facebook page, Instagram, YouTube channel can be very helpful to understand what the partner's daily activities are, and whether your missions are really similar and suited to act together .

**Share your tasks with your potential partner before making the final decision on partnership in the project** - Ask for information about the possibilities of your partner's involvement in our joint project in the coming weeks (sending ideas to develop joint action, sharing their resources ...). If there are serious communication and organizational problems on this stage, it can be a sign for us that it is not a good idea to establish a partnership. Not answering emails at this stage is a sign that similar problems may occur during the project. Remember that the most important thing is not to start partnerships without any knowledge about a potential partner. Lack of work put into establishing a proper partnership increases the risk that during the implementation of the project a project tourist will visit us, the participants will not be active and the final result will be poor.

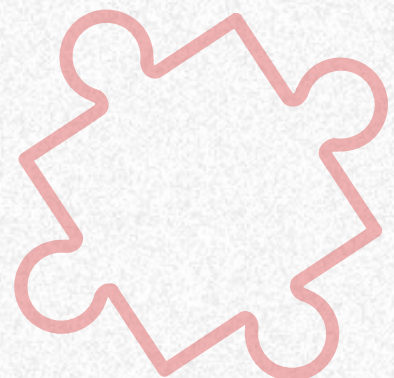
**Meaning of first decisions**



## AND WHAT IF WE ALREADY HAVE A PROBLEM?

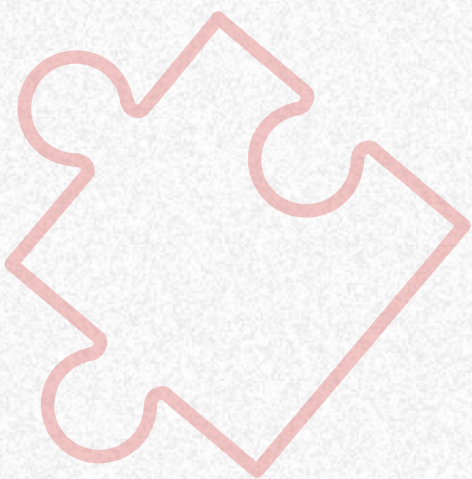
And what if we already have a problem. We know that we won't make it the next time, but the current situation has to be dealt with.

We have several partners in each project, and the most important principle is joint action. When a problem arises, we should always remember that we cannot be alone with its solution. It is only up to us whether we ask for help and how we will share the responsibilities related to solving the problem.



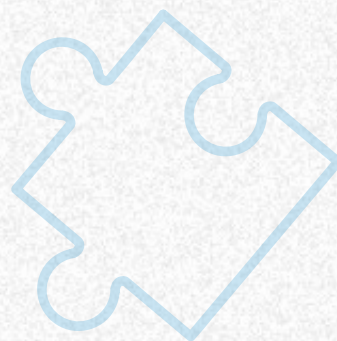


**Cooperation of leaders** - In our project, every youth group has a leader. When a problem arises, do not try to solve it yourself. The task of the leaders is to act together, support each other, and most importantly take care of our entire group, and not just participants from their organization. From the very beginning of the project activities, let's put emphasis on agreeing with the partners on it. Lack of understanding in this topic can lead to the fact that the coordinating organization will be left alone with many problems, and the other leaders will only help their participants or will simply become leaders only in name.



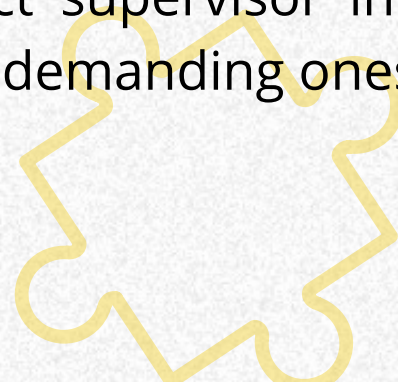
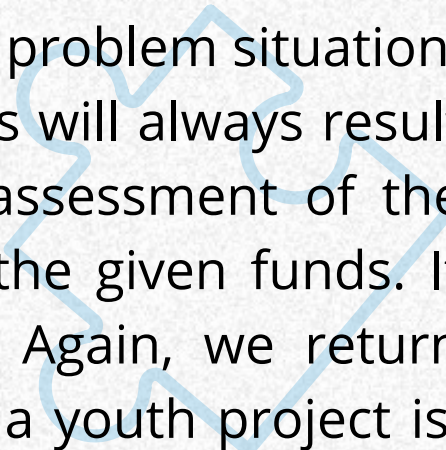
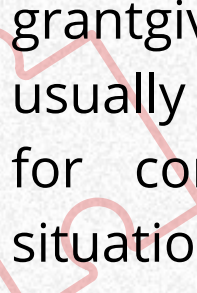


**Let's work with our group** - We want young people to take matters into their own hands. Therefore, we will assign many responsible tasks to them. There are no contraindications for young participants to be responsible for resolving the conflict in the group too. Let's sit in a circle, ask everyone for opinions on the matter and an idea how to solve the problem. In this way, according to the principle that two heads are better than one, we can find many solutions to the problem that we would not think about ourselves before. Additionally, thanks to this, we can positively deepen relations in our group and strengthen joint responsibility for actions.



**And what if we already have a problem**

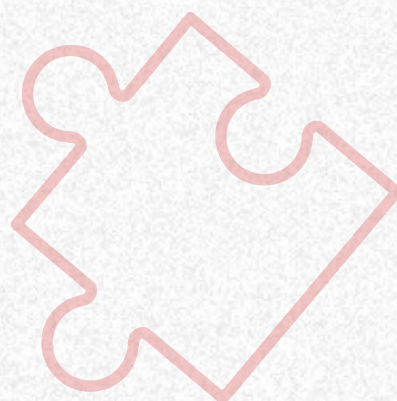




**Contact with the project supervisor** - The grantgiver, by accepting our project proposal, usually designates a person who is responsible for contacting us and helping in difficult situations. Many coordinators are afraid of contacting the supervisor in a problem situation, being convinced that mistakes will always result in a reprimand, a negative assessment of the project and, finally, a cut in the given funds. It has little to do with reality. Again, we return here to the specifics of what a youth project is. Giving young people a chance to act will always be at risk of making mistakes, and the supervisor knows that. Asking for help from the project supervisor is the most reasonable action on our part, and for the project supervisor this is part of his job. Let's remember here, however, not to contact the project supervisor in trivial matters, but only in really demanding ones.



**Let's use specialized publications** - It is always good to have a publication with you that contains tips on how to solve difficult situations in our project work. Most of the grant fund websites contain the 'Publications' tab, in which we will find many items with helpful tools. So let's read a lot and use the experience of others. Many project problems are similar and occur quite often in different parts of Europe. It often seems to us that what happened on our project has never happened before. Meanwhile, many people have faced similar problems before us, and they share their experience in readily available publications.



**And what if we already have a problem**

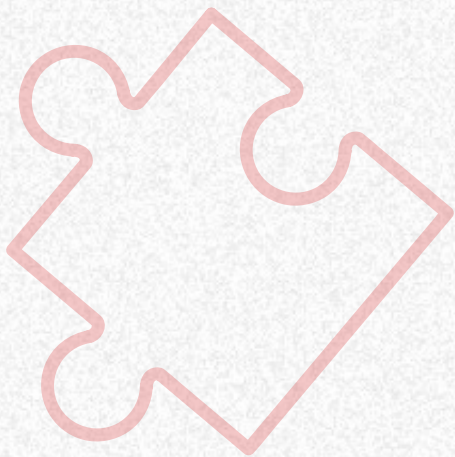


## PRIVATE MOTIVATION AND THE PROJECT OBJECTIVE

On projects in different parts of Europe, we meet participants who focus on complaining and do not give much from their side. They think, that international youth exchange should meet their private needs. These are often the needs specific to tourist travel more than for international youth exchanges.

Let's present some examples...

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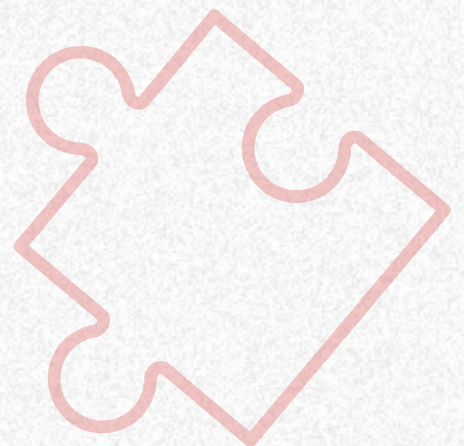
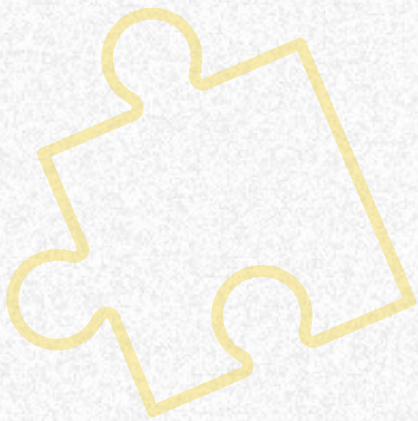




**I want to be in a room with my friend** - A couple of very good friends come for an youth exchange and ask the organizer for a separate room for themselves. This contradicts the essence of integration efforts on the exchange, where we always try to ensure that young people get in touch with all other participants as soon as possible. Thanks to this, we have a chance to learn a lot of new things faster and we will definitely work more effectively in an integrated group. The participant's request to get a room with a person he or she already knows is reducing the educational opportunities for these participants. He is in touch with a friend for long period of time during this youth meeting, and not with other peers. Why to lose a chance to meet a new person in that way? His good friend will not run away in a week and certainly after the exchange there will be many opportunities to spend time with him.



**Remember, however, that there are exceptions to each rule. If we have been given important reasons why two friends must be accommodated together in the same room, we must consider such a solution. An example here is a participant's illness that requires the support of a person who knows well what help should look like in this situation.**

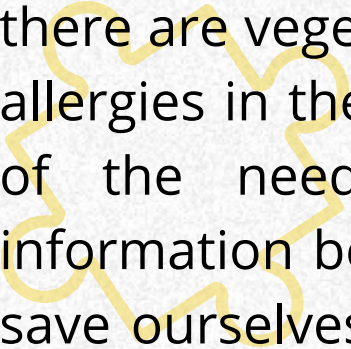




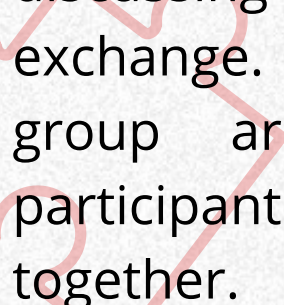
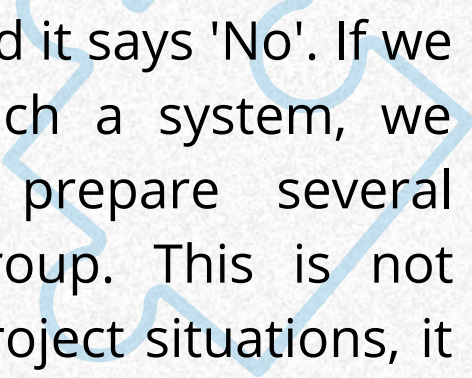
**I don't like salads** - In the evening groups of participants meet with their leaders to discuss pluses and minuses of the ending day. The basis for such a meeting should be to discuss the educational process of the day and collect additional comments on the practical aspects of the youth exchange. Often, however, such meetings turn into endless discussions about whether the food was tasty enough or why we don't have a biliard room in the venue. If we have over thirty participants from several countries in our group, it is unlikely that we will satisfy everyone. So what should organizers pay attention to, and which comments from participants are inappropriate?

During the exchange, the organizer should provide 3 attested meals in sufficient quantity. If the food is varied, there is enough of it and it is fresh, this is exactly what we should provide at the youth exchange.





When our project partner sends us his group profiles, let's put there a question whether there are vegetarians, vegans, people with food allergies in the group and ask for a description of the needs related to it. Having this information before the youth exchange we will save ourselves ongoing conversations with the kitchen staff. However, if in the participant's profile we get a description like 'I do not like potatoes', then the question arises whether our task is to provide participants with food that they like.



The answer is quite simple and it says 'No'. If we would like to implement such a system, we would probably have to prepare several separate menus for our group. This is not possible. As in many other project situations, it is important here to prepare properly the group before coming to the exchange and to focus on discussing how the group works in the youth exchange. Many of our joint activities in the group are based on compromise and participants must understand this by acting together.

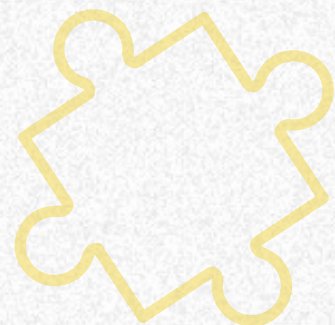
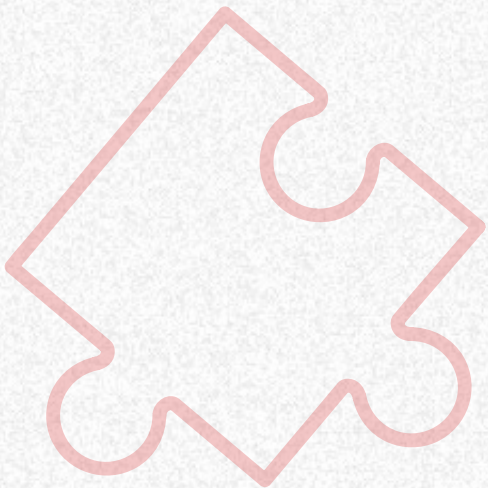


**You must provide me transport to the airport** - Many youth exchanges take place in large cities that are well connected with stations and airports. In such cases, the organizer may focus on other logistics aspects. The situation is different when the youth exchange takes place in a small village or town. Here, together with our partners, we must plan the transport well. You need to calculate the time of arrival to the venue, check if we can find suitable public transport, decide whether you may need to rent a bus to get the participants to the center.

Let us remember, however, that we are not the only ones responsible for preparing logistics. Our participants should check the travel possibilities themselves, see what is the cost of the trip and inform the organizer about it. The organizer is here to help, but there is no rule that it is his responsibility to provide a travel plan to each participant.

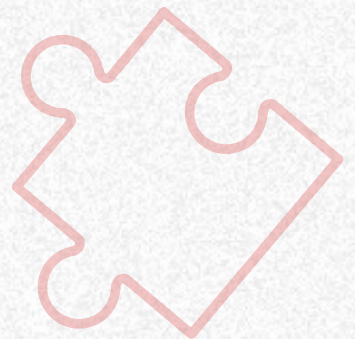


Travel planning is an important part of the educational process where participant can learn a lot. We cannot accept a situation where the participant unjustifiably presents a claim attitude expecting from us ready travel documents and providing him with rented transport from point A to point B.

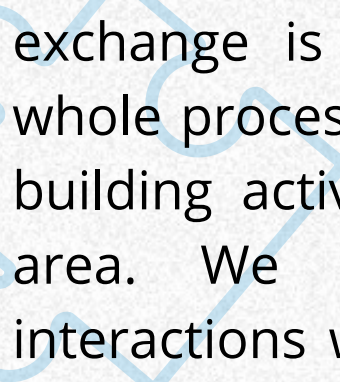




**Why do I have to run some workshops** - There are no trainers at the youth exchange. There are no teachers or people running the educational process like at school. Here, we all learn from each other. The organizers are not able to provide good quality youth exchanges even if the conditions are great. Quality always determines whether participants are active or not. If every exchange participant wants to give something from himself to others, then everyone will receive a lot in return. If there are people in the group who only demand from others and do not want to give anything by themselves, then the exchange will be weak. When preparing the group for exchange, let's explain the fundamental rule to the participants as we mentioned at the beginning of this publication: youth creates youth exchange.

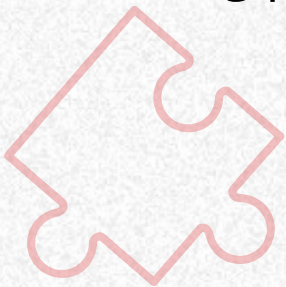
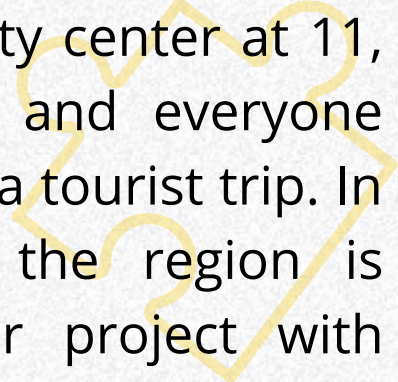






**I want to go on a trip** - A trip during a youth exchange is a great additional thing to the whole process. During it, we can conduct team building activity combined with exploring the area. We can also establish numerous interactions with the inhabitants of the city or village, who thanks to us will learn about youth exchanges and get the chance to talk with the inhabitants of other parts of Europe.

However, this is not a tourist trip. It can't look like we get off the bus in the city center at 11, set the time of return at 17 and everyone decides what to do. It would be a tourist trip. In the youth exchange, visiting the region is another chance to enrich our project with things that will help strengthen the openness, tolerance and competence of participants and residents of the local community. It is worth advancing our group and partners about this during preparations.





**Private motivation and the project objective**



# INTERVIEWS

**Leszek Kluch**

**English teacher**

**Participant of the seminar**



## ► How do you find participants for a youth exchange?

*- Once the organization that my school cooperates with lets us know about a project, I think of a way to advertise it in order to find as many students as possible who would like to take part in the exchange. This could be a poster that I put on a notice board, or I talk to the members of the Students Union and they help me spread the word. Then, if the number of applicants is bigger than required, I ask them to write a short paragraph about why they think they could contribute to the success of the project.*

## ► How do you prepare participants for an exchange?

*- We usually have several meetings during which I familiarize them with the topic of the project, requirements, necessary documents and travel arrangements. It's obvious that they have loads of questions, especially those who participate for the first time, and my job is to explain whatever they need to know. Sometimes it means contacting the sending organization, but bear in mind that no question should be left unanswered.*



► **Is it difficult to engage the participants in the dissemination process after an exchange?**

*- Before they go to an exchange they are told that it is not only the exchange itself that they are going to take part in. There are things that need to be prepared before and after it, so they are always fully aware of it. Usually they are so excited about the exchange that they are willing to share their experience, but it goes without saying as their leader I need to provide them with whatever help is required.*



**Dominika Józwiakowska**  
HEureka Generator's volunteer  
Our seminar's logo designer



► **What is your relation to HEureka Generator?**

*- I have been a volunteer for HEureka Generator Association for 5 months. I met wonderful people in this association in August 2018. Since then I have participated in 3 projects, of which I was on one project in Romania and on the rest - in Poland.*

► **Was it difficult for you to make a logo for the seminar 'Projects are not falling from the sky'?**

*- When I got a proposal from Andrzej – chairperson of the HEureka Generator Association, I took the notebook which does not reflect and started to draw first sketches that came to my mind. I had a lot of ideas and I was quick in designing, however coloring the logo was more difficult for me, I could not imagine how to match colors of the project properly. I needed to put more effort, spend time and think creatively on the logo design, but it satisfied me a lot and I can learn, experience something more.*

► **How did it happen that you are interested in graphics?**

*- I have a cousin who works in graphic design. I was curious about his work, so I decided to ask him about it. And it began - he explained, showed me what work with graphic design looks like. I never tried to create a logo until the opportunity came to design the symbol for an International Youth Exchange '2 ART or Not 2 ART', which is currently awaiting for accept.*



► **Did you finish any courses connected with graphics?**

*- I never finished any specific courses, but with the advice of my cousin I looked for ideas on the Internet, I looked at the motives on products such as chocolate or even cosmetics. Sometimes my brother told me what I could change or add in logo design.*

► **How did you explore programs?**

*- I got to know that graphic design can be done in the GIMP program in IT in high school. I tried to use this program. I watched a lot of Youtube tutorials about graphic design in GIMP, nevertheless, unfortunately I still have a problem with this program. When I was given the task of designing logo, I tried to do it in Paint 3D and somehow succeeded. I warn you, this is just the beginning of my graphic design work. I will continue to study in this field.*

► **Would you like to be professional in future with graphics?**

*- When I played The Sims 3 and The Sims 4, interior and garden design drew me more and these became my passion. The playing as an interior or garden designer gave me a lot of satisfaction and I was not bored. At first, I never thought about becoming a professional in this subject. I am currently studying garden art and plant arrangements at the university and I guess I found the way that is leading me towards design.*

**Interviews: Dominika Józwiakowska**



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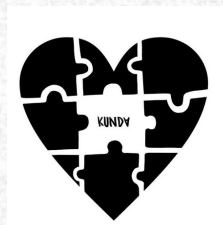
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[www.erasmusplus.cy](http://www.erasmusplus.cy)

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