



MEET OUR
NEIGHBOURS 2

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The Erasmus+ Project that brings the Balkans closer to each other



ABOUT THE PROJECT

“Meet your neighbors 2” – a great K2 Erasmus+ Youth Project

The Balkan Peninsula is an area characterized by a special dynamics of neighborly relations. Different ethnic and religious groups often coexist in a relatively small area. They share common traditions, history, cuisine, folklore, and even everyday problems of a domestic nature. Unfortunately, this same population has repeatedly become the object of policies that incite extreme hatred and tolerate violence and disunity, which have served different political interests.

Countries in the Balkans have a long history of fragmentation and its nations are often marked by prejudices and stereotypes that can also be defined as generalisations about members of a certain social group as a result of natural cognitive reduction. Such labeling is common because as we ascribe various personality traits to others (and consequently to ourselves), others also do the same for us. Group identity is always defined by the relationship towards other groups or group identities; a group that threatens us, our interests or even our survival. The others – often minorities in society – are ‘different, unadjusted, privileged’ and, generally speaking, perceived as intruders (if not even invaders) in relation to the majority population. In times of crisis, they – by their sole existence – may even be portrayed as a threat.



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Therefore, one of the tasks of this project is, first, to try to find out the reasons for the emergence of stereotypes in the Balkans, their characteristics, when they arose, whether they exist today. That it is important to understand the circumstances that led to the development of stereotypes so as to prevent possible future conflicts and deterioration of relations between the various ethnic groups in the Balkans. This can only be achieved by actively involving young people in this process because this is the generation that will determine what life will be like tomorrow. It will be achieved through development of set of instruments which will increase enriches their knowledge on the topic of the project, their civic activism, their tolerance, raising their awareness of conflict aspects, overcoming stereotypes and improvement of understanding each other.

The project focuses on young people born and raised in the previous period between the two epochs - the passing of division, differentiation and defamation of the neighbor and the coming - of shared common European values of tolerance, respect, freedom and respect for human rights. Therefore, in this key from a historical and cultural point of view, when the Balkan countries are located "closer" than any political, strategic, economic and other nature, it is very important to join the lasting foundations of future peace and new context in the Balkans.



„THE IMAGE OF THE OTHER STUDY“

General Analysis

The document was created within the project "MEET YOUR NEIGHBOURS 2", Work package no. 2 - Intellectual result 1. "The Image of other Study".

The preparation of this document represents the final stage in the realization of a set of complex activities of qualitative and in-depth study of the main problematic areas that lead to hatred and division between the participating countries. By shedding light on mythologies that glorify their own and denigrate others, this analysis provides a credible cognitive basis for work on suppressing, removing and overcoming xenophobic prejudices, stereotypes and other cultural barriers.

The goal of the General Analysis is to summarize the results of national analyses on the key aspects of quality intercultural communication and the development of intercultural sensitivity of young people from the Republic of Bulgaria, the Republic of Serbia, the Republic of Turkey, the Republic of Greece, the Republic of North Macedonia and the Republic of Romania.

The document and more info can be accessed on the official website of the project to the following link: <https://www.meet-our-neighbours.eu/>