



# Stepping into Life – youth exchange

22-30 November 2018, Romania, Nădășel (Cluj county)

with youth from Bulgaria, Cyprus, Ireland, Lithuania and Romania

## Project impact evaluation report

Project coordinated by **Dreams for Life** and implemented with the support of the **Erasmus+** Programme of the European Union.



The following information represents the results of the impact evaluation realized at the end of the project period. The participants filled in an on-line evaluation form in the last week of the project period. The content of the report represents qualitative and quantitative data, offered by the participants. The evaluation process, data analysis and report compilation are made by **Bogdan Romanică**, the project team member.

## Table of Contents

<b>1. Has the participation in “Stepping into Life” changed/influenced you at PERSONAL level? If yes, please tell us few things on how the project changed/influenced you? .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. How the participation in “Stepping into Life” changed/influenced you at PROFESSIONAL level? Please tell us few things on how the project changed/influenced you? .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. What have you used in your life from the things that you've learned during the youth exchange?6</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4. Please assess to what extent the following affirmations apply to you, as a result of the youth exchange:.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>5. All in all, how much the participation in the youth exchange influenced you positively?.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>6. Is there anything else that you would like to add in order to assess the impact of the project on you? .....</b>	<b>8</b>

## 1. Has the participation in “Stepping into Life” changed/influenced you at PERSONAL level? If yes, please tell us few things on how the project changed/influenced you?

- I felt more connected with myself and I felt that I dug deeper as I got to know myself better. It was an amazing experience and I discovered some things about me that I didn't know i. e. giving free hugs.
- The personal introspection aspect gave me a chance to learn more about myself and what makes me feel good and act/react in a more positive way in life.
- Helped me to place some dots at unfinished lines. Double checked strengths and weaknesses. Improved confidence and had a chance to dive into my personality and analyse it a bit from different perspectives. Expanded worldview and witnessed human behaviour in it's natural habitat :D. Overall - enriching experience!
- This project influenced me and my life in very many ways on a personal level.

I feel a lot more positive energy in my life as I was exposed to so much kindness, positivity and inspiration. Also, because we were given the time every day to reflect and think about what we are grateful about, I have come to appreciate and be much more grateful for my life.

My confidence was developed because I had the chance to push myself in a safe and accepting environment. From this I have become more comfortable with being myself and meeting new people.

I was also given the space to explore my inner self, my passions, values, trusting habits and the unknown! I was encouraged and supported emotionally by the beautiful leaders and participants that I was surrounded by.

This better sense of self awareness developed all of the relationships in my life. I built some beautiful connections with the people on this project and they are very special connections because we all experienced this amazing journey together and it is something that we will always have. Making all these new connections really gave me a new faith in humanity as I could feel so much love and kindness around me. My relationships outside of this project were developed as I came back much more grounded and I was able to offer myself in a healthy way after having learnt more about myself, about my values and my trusting habits. I have also made a lot of connections since this project as I came back with a new excitement to meet more beautiful people and I also learnt about my passions and I can now express myself freely and meet people with similar interests that can help me to grow.

This project also totally changed my view and connection with nature. I now feel a love for nature to an extent much further than I could've ever imagined. I feel grateful

to now have a new relationship with the earth and my eyes have been opened to the importance and the beauty of our home.

I was inspired creatively by this connection with nature and by the people I met. It was so inspiring seeing so many talented people show their work and ideas.

- I feel more peaceful, confident and healthy.
- I learned that helping others is an amazing way for a more fulfilling life. Its not necessary to spend so much money to achieve that , rather small acts of kindness
- Friends and people around me told that i changed to better after the project. This change helped many of my friends in their hard times and helped me also in some personal issues.
- This project has influenced me in so many ways, consciously and subconsciously, that pinpointing them all concretely seems impossible. With that said, what I've been doing consciously is establishing firm boundaries between me and the surrounding world, even the closest ones, because I learnt that I have to take care of my energy and mental health in order to live a harmonious life. Also, I started practicing meditation almost everyday.
- It helped me rediscover my self again , the one i lost all those years growing up. I learn to self reflect every day in order to make the next day better and more productive
- This project change My will power and actions in doing what My Soul loves. At my personal level I feel more confident, more open to express My ideas, more strong and green.
- It made me realize the big importance of nature in life and how powerful is the spiritual human connection
- I took this project as a life experience, as I've got to know more about myself, about my qualities, my emotions and my fears. I've discovered, for instance, that I like spending time in nature, alone and also surrounded by people. This project also changed my perspective and I've come to the realization that I'm so small in this big world and my problems are also small and I should not make a drama out of them and just start thinking outside the box.
- I think it changed the way i felt in the nature and the way i think about it.
- I believe more in myself.
- I am more grateful for a lot of things in my life, i met amazing people, i got ideas what to do next I'm my life and to be less lost, i found again my connection with nature
- I gain confidence in public speaking and also my social skills improved.
- It encouraged me to be more honest with myself.  
It made me more aware of my strengths and my weaknesses and how to improve my weaknesses.  
It also encouraged me to be braver in doing things that may scare me, to step outside my comfort zone.
- It made more self aware. It encouraged me to be more honest with myself and others. It has also boosted me self esteem and confidence, especially with meeting new people and doing new things.

## 2. How the participation in “Stepping into Life” changed/influenced you at PROFESSIONAL level? Please tell us few things on how the project changed/influenced you?

- Active listening, enhanced communication skills, networking
- I feel more confident in doing my tasks and projects.
- Seen psychology at it's best. Found out new ways and methodologies that can help anyone on their way. Risen up my confidence in things that I do and the life path I'm taking.
- This project gave me awareness of my potential. The exercises we carried out made me aware of all that I can offer to world.

I met a lot of inspirational people with new ideas and this motivated me and gave me the drive to do something great with my life. We were also given the chance and the space to create and come up with ideas which was really helpful and encouraging.

We talked about multiple intelligences and were given the chance to assess ourselves. This gave me a clearer picture of what I have to offer currently and also of what I may want to develop. Although I am still very young, I think it was very helpful to know what I am good at/interested in because it will help me when it comes to decided which career path I might like to take. I was introduced to the fact that I know for sure I would like to do something helpful and good for the world.

Being educated on my intelligences and also my values was very important and something that will really benefit me in any workspace I go into.

- I feel motivated to learn and achieve new things.
- I became more social person so I can build better relationships with my co-workers
- In my professional level the project made me want to go to a University and chase my dreams/.
- I don't work because I'm a student, but what I've noticed about myself is that I no longer feel obligated to take responsibility for other people (and their actions) and spend my own time on things that distract me from my own purpose, responsibilities and health.
- It made me realize that I can pursue my dream career by just "stepping into" it (pun intended). I also learned that big goals are achieved by making a lot of smaller steps
- At professional level I've decided to make some actions in sharing My gifts and talents to the world. So, again I am more confident and open to bring My ideas to others. I am making a course where I will learn people how to discover their authenticity, also I have candidate with a little project to get financed (peace house - where I will do workshops about mindfulness, meditation, connection with nature and non violent communication) and I am organising an event with a Buddhist monk about how to deal

with negative emotions.

And I will go in an EVS - in Iceland. I will be the international camp leader in a workcamp (a project about ecology and nature).

- It challenged my ability to work in a group, my trust and to speak in public
- I've started paying more attention to what people say and let them finish their ideas and then take action.
- It changed the way I feel about going to an interview.
- I believe more in my facilitation skills.
- I'm trying to implement knowledge in our weekly events, also it gave me energy to work with young Lithuanians and internationals
- With the skills I gain from the youth exchange I am currently working with unemployed young people in my area. I help them to find a course that is suitable for them and also work.
- One day in particular we worked on all the different types of intelligences there are and the strengths and weaknesses we have. It made me realise that the profession I would be quite suited to is nursing. It would suit all my strengths.
- It made me realise that my strengths would be very suited for nursing and the caring profession.

### **3. What have you used in your life from the things that you've learned during the youth exchange?**

- to always reflect and get to know how I feel. such an important thing to do.
- To be thankful and to respect nature. Be look for the good things instead of focusing on the bad. To trust my peers and family more.
- Successfully shared ikigai mythology with a person who was willing to self discover his way. Also trying to communicate in less influential way by using more "i" instead of "you" in non formal environment. And simply remembering the environment and trying to reflect it in daily life through out my behaviour.
- I use all the newly discovered knowledge and understanding of myself in this project everyday. I express myself and my light into the world every day and if I wasn't given the amazing opportunity to look deeper into myself during this project, I would not be able to do that to my full potential today.

My increased confidence from this project helps me know day to day social situations.

I use my team building and communication skills that were developed over the course of this project everyday in my workplace, in my family, friends and my community.

I use my cultural awareness to build bridges and relationships with people from all

around the world. I also like to share with people the interesting things I was taught and introduced to about all the other participants countries.

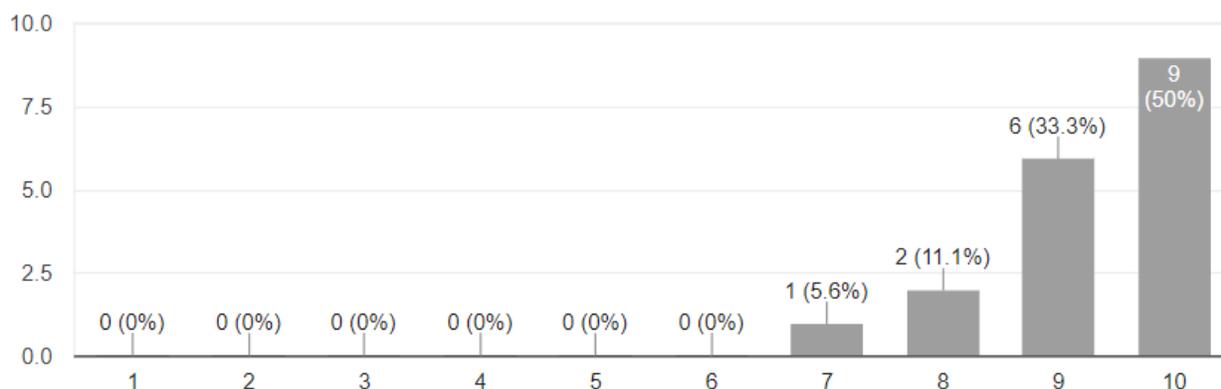
- I have been practicing meditation more frequently, eating vegetarian, reflecting on my feelings and also having many long walks in the nature.
- i started really listening what people where telling me and start having more meaningful relationships with them
- The word Ikigai the leaders tough us about, i bought a book of this word and is good to read and to enrich my knowledge.
- I started practicing meditation almost everyday and gained more confidence in my art and the way I present myself to the world. I also do moon rituals on every full moon. I no longer 'hide' my interest in occult topics (spirituality, astrology, e.g) and feel free to express myself.
- To self reflect every day
- To be more involved and to share My ideas.  
To make the morning ritual: about what are you grateful for.  
To ask nature for guidance and answers.
- I started to reserve more time for self reflection, to be more grateful, and to take more opportunities instead of 'playing safe'
- I've started taking longer walks. I've started drawing, I found out that it relaxes me. I've started being more interested in my self-development and in my personal growth.
- I really can't think about just one thing that i got from this experience but almost all of them.
- Trusting others, delegating responsibilities and speaking up.
- Some energizers, some connections, some ideas for self development
- I do daily meditations which helps me relax and also I follow ikigai.
- I have continued to use the meditation we practiced every morning. I have also began to start every morning with what I am grateful for.
- In the mornings I now meditate and I say what I am grateful for. I also like to take moments during the day for myself to be alone with my thoughts and to reflect.

#### 4. Please assess to what extent the following affirmations apply to you, as a result of the youth exchange:

Affirmation	Low extent	Medium extent	High extent
Increased motivation and interest for self-realization.		16%	<b>84%</b>
Higher access to resources (materials, social capital, information, educational opportunities).	4%	<b>56%</b>	40%

Better materialization of the personal and professional potential.	4%	23%	<b>73%</b>
Development in cognitive skills.		33%	<b>66%</b>
Increased chances to find or make a suitable job.		<b>55%</b>	45%
Increased clarity about the direction I want to follow in life.	4%	30%	<b>66%</b>
Increased mental health (more self-confidence, more positive, more energy, self-esteem, self-empowerment)		17%	<b>83%</b>
Increased critical thinking, civic engagement and participation.		23%	<b>83%</b>
Better relationships with family.	11%	33%	<b>56%</b>
Better relationships with peers (colleagues, friends)	9%	24%	<b>67%</b>
More confident to speak in English.	4%	18%	<b>78%</b>
More personal initiatives.		22%	<b>78%</b>

## 5. All in all, how much the participation in the youth exchange influenced you positively?



## 6. Is there anything else that you would like to add in order to assess the impact of the project on you?

- Keep doing what you do, it's amazing.
- Yes, i'd like to add some tasty/warm tea and cookies (with chocolate!). That's all :)

- i would love to participate to a YE like this one again and give this opportunity to people of mine that actually need to see this project
- I am forever grateful for the amazing experience I had. I am very thankful for the magnificent people I met and for the care and attention from our mentors. I wish everyone good luck, lots of love and I hope for the best for everyone!
- This project came to me at a time i was feeling lost and without a purpose. It gave me hope and provided me with the mental compass that i needed to use in order to find my passion again. I'm really grateful i had the opportunity to take part in this program and i would like to thank everyone that worked so hard to create this youth exchange. I also made new friends and now i have one more reason to travel
- Was exactly what I needed! Thank You dears. May the Light be with You!
- The unexpected reactions i had to deal with in the group helped me grow as a person and as a facilitator.
- Thank You