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Training Course for youth workers:

**“Empowering European Youth through Civic
Education and Digital
Tools”**

**23rd June – 01st July 2024
Uzana, Gabrovo region, Bulgaria**



Organized by:

**EUROPE IN YOUR HAND
BULGARIA**



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Dear friends and partners,

*In the following pages, we have summarized the information you need to know about the training course **Empowering European Youth through Civic Education and Digital Tools**.*

We are very glad that you have decided to participate in our project, and therefore we will strive to offer a warm welcoming to you in Bulgaria.

If you have further questions, do not hesitate to contact us at project.euhand@gmail.com

Enjoy exploring the practicalities!

Welcome to



The Project is hosted by:

“Europe in your hand”, Bulgaria

Who are we?

"**Europe in your hand**" is an organization of youth leaders and volunteers, which was created to support various public causes, and which implements a wide range of activities and programs at local, national and European levels. The organization promotes the idea of developing the potential and increasing the capacity of young people, and in particular of its members, by looking for ways to improve their competences, gain new knowledge and experience in the non-governmental sector. The organization is based on the idea of active citizenship, promotion of the European values and the benefits of integration, non-formal education (for youths and adults) and sustainable development.



One of the main principles of the NGO is the promotion of participation in national initiatives and European projects of disadvantaged people and those with low social status. We wish to provide equal opportunities for professional growth to all youth volunteers regardless of their religious or racial affiliation. "Europe in your hand" is a non-governmental organization for all active young people who are looking for ways to develop themselves and to work for the benefit of society.



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Amongst our aims are:

- Promotion of active European citizenship and non-formal education among young people.
- Promotion of European values and the benefits of European integration.
- Stimulating intercultural dialogue and providing a platform for young leaders from different countries to perform.
- Promotion of education through sports and outdoor activities.
- Encouraging the participation of young people in society, and supporting social integration and personal fulfillment.
- Supporting and promoting European practices in the field of sustainable development and ecology.
- Stimulating the development of culture, music and art among young people.
- Stimulating innovation in the youth sector.
- Promotion and work on the creation and implementation of initiatives in the economic, social, cultural, ecological and civil aspects related to the development of the regions in Bulgaria.
- Assisting central, local and regional authorities, non-governmental organizations and businesses to define socially beneficial project ideas.

Information regarding the Training Course

What is the main goal of the project?

Europe faces important challenges today. Socio-economic problems, violent extremism and a lack of trust in democratic processes are amongst the biggest threats to Europe's shared principles of peace, justice, democracy, respect for human rights, freedom, equality, tolerance and non-discrimination. In this context, education and training have an important role in cultivating mutual respect and fundamental values as well as in fostering inclusion and equality. Citizenship education, in particular, is becoming a key topic in many education systems. It aims to support young people in becoming active, informed and responsible citizens who are willing and able to take responsibility for themselves and for their communities and to contribute to the policy-making process.



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As young people in Europe join a non-governmental organization or form an informal group, they become ambassadors of the European idea. The problem however is that, with their current capacity, not all young people can unleash their potential well enough to influence the decision-making process even on a local level. They might be interested in politics and have a strong feeling of European citizenship, however, they need to support these statements with a solid background of theoretical and practical civic education and a greater knowledge of the European integration process.

The main goals of this project are to develop new methods, tools and approaches in civic education and fostering European citizenship among young people in Europe, who show interest in current social and political issues, want to be actively engaged and make decisive and independent choices.

The specific objectives are creating innovative open source digital tools and inclusive methods for civic education; fostering exchange of good practices in youth work and non-formal education; building capacities of youth organizations to tackle current and future education and training needs, caused by the Coronavirus epidemic and more recently - the war in Ukraine; support and improve skills of youth workers by giving them practical skills in civic education through non-formal activities; fostering European citizenship and broadening and developing social and intercultural competences and critical thinking of young people; enhancing partnerships and developing new initiatives for civic education across Europe; raising awareness among young people, especially in rural areas, on activities provided by the EU for them.

Who will participate?

Participants & Partner Organizations

Country	Number of participants	Partner organizations
Bulgaria	7	Europe in your hand
Poland	7	New Europe Foundation
Lithuania	7	ASOCIACIJA TAVO EUROPA
Spain	7	EDUCACIÓN E INGENIO S.S.
The Czech Republic	7	EVROPSKE CENTRUM MLADEZE BRECLAV
Participant number per organization: 7 participants (age: 18-45)		



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When will the project take place?

Participants' Arrival day: 23rd June 2024 before 17:00 (PM) in Sofia.

Start of the program: 23rd June 2024 at 21:00 in Uzana.

End of the program: 01st July 2024 at 22.00 in Uzana.

Departure day: 02nd July 2024.

We will provide group transportation by bus from Sofia to Uzana on day of arrival and from Uzana to Sofia on day of departure !!!

If you plan to **arrive earlier** or **leave later**, and you need to find an accommodation, let us know, so that we can support you. Your expenses out of the days of the training will not be reimbursed by the organizers.

It is possible to extend your stay for a maximum of 2 days in total (1 before, 1 after, or 2 before/after). In case your stay exceeds the 2 day limit we cannot reimburse your travel expenses. Any additional expenses (accommodation/food/ other personal expenses) which occur over the course of these “extra-days” have to be covered by yourself.

Important Note: ALL participants must travel from their home country to Bulgaria and back. This is the new rule we have from National Agency and Erasmus+ Programme. We cannot host people who come from different country than the Sending Organization's country.



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Financial and practical conditions

First of all, there is NO participation fee for this project! 😊

Travel reimbursement & Insurances

Board and lodging will be provided and paid by the Organizers of the Training Course. There will be travel reimbursement according to the Erasmus + regulations (see the table below).

Please pay attention to the figures and conditions.

<u>Country</u>	<u>MAX. TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT PER PERSON</u>
Bulgaria	50€
Poland	275€
Lithuania	275€
Spain	300€
The Czech Republic	275€

***Above amount is for travel costs from home to the venue of the project and return. Travel expenses to the hotel and back to airport will be covered from the joint travel budget for the project!

Very important!!!

Your tickets are an essential part of the accounting of the project that we must keep and present to the Erasmus + National Agency, the main funders of the training.

Therefore, if you cannot provide your original tickets, boarding cards, receipts, insurance and invoices clearly stating the travel agency, your name and the exact costs of the tickets, we will not be able to reimburse you.

Please DO NOT BUY any tickets before approval of the organizers !

Please note if you bought your ticket in your local currency which might be different than EUR, we will calculate your travel costs according to the exchange rates from the official European Central Bank web-site:

https://www.ecb.europa.eu/stats/policy_and_exchange_rates/euro_reference_exchange_rates/html/index.en.html



Travel expenses

The travel expenses (from your home town till the venue of the course and return) are reimbursed on presentation of the relevant receipts **up to the maximum amount listed in the table above**. In the frames of the project the reimbursement will be done only for travel expenses incurred according to the rules given below:

- **Travel expenses** will be reimbursed only upon presentation of **documentary evidence** of the sum actually paid: original invoice or/and a copy of credit card slip. **The documents** must have the date, price, name of the traveler, destinations of the travel and the bill has to be completely clear.
- **Electronic tickets** will only be reimbursed on receipt proof of payment (invoice, paper of booking/purchase printed from internet, copy of credit card-slip showing the transfer of the money for the ticket, **payment confirmation from internet**) and on presentation of the boarding pass for the outward journey.
- Kindly note, that **the booking paper alone is not enough to prove your travel expenses**. You should present as well **the boarding passes**, a bill, a slip of payment and print-out from your bank account to confirm the sum paid for your ticket.
- **Keep all travel documents** you get during your trip, in order to receive the reimbursement for transportation: boarding passes, bills, slips, tickets etc., because we absolutely need them! We strongly suggest you make scanned copies just in case – and you can send us your documents, or part of them at any moment to project.euhand@gmail.com
- **Taxi fares** cannot be reimbursed.
- We are strongly recommending you to have insurance while you are in Bulgaria. Each participant will be in charge of purchasing one, because no private insurance will be reimbursed.

Organisers will reimburse **100%** of eligible travel costs up to the limit.

50% of travel cost will be reimbursed after participants provide their original tickets.

Remaining 50% of travel cost will be reimbursed after approval of project report. If travel costs are less than 100 Euro we will reimburse 100% during the project activities in Uzana.

Reimbursement will be done by bank transfer after approval of project report and **upon completion of the participant's report in Mobility Tool+ (considered mandatory under the Erasmus+ Programme, further info will be provided on spot during project)**.

Note that, only participants attending the entire training course can be reimbursed. The Commission **solely** reimburses public transport costs.



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Please note that the organizers will be in touch with each participant for the organization of the participant's travel. **Participants MUST inform the hosting organization of their intended travel reservations – dates of arrival/departure and travel costs – and the hosting organization will PRE-APPROVE and CONFIRM that these arrangements meet the project's requirements so that the participant can continue with the payment/booking of these travel services.**

ANY TRAVEL COSTS DONE BY THE PARTICIPANT/S WITHOUT THE HOSTING ORGANIZATION'S EXPLICIT APPROVAL AND/OR IN EXCESS OF THE ABOVE-MENTIONED AMOUNTS WILL NOT BE REIMBURSED.

Personal health

It is very important that you notify us of any health risk or possibly necessary medicines (if you did not note it yet in your application form, please let the team know about it as soon as possible via e-mail).

The information you provided on any special needs does not remove your own personal responsibility for ensuring your own health.

What to bring?

- Clothes and shoes **suitable for sports and walking / hiking.**
- Your **original tickets for the entire trip, the invoice** of the travel agency (the price clearly indicated on the ticket), **the boarding passes.**
- Your **travel insurance** contract and a legible copy of it.
- Your **ID/passport.**
- Your own **medication.**
- Your **willingness to reflect on your own skills, knowledge and attitudes.**
- Your **motivation, inspiration and energy for an exciting project week.**
- Your **spirit to share your experience, questions and doubts.**

Important: There will be intercultural nights!!!

Please be prepared to present your own country and culture in the most creative and interactive way. You can make PowerPoint presentations, show videos and use multimedia.

Please bring:

- Something typical about your country such as food, drinks, music, traditional objects, promotional materials and whatever else you want to present to share with all participants.



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- Materials about your organization.

Where will the project take place?

=> **Uzana – the region of Gabrovo**

People say that home is where the **heart** is.

The heart of many Bulgarians and foreigners belongs to a dream Uzana - the Heart of the Balkan. **Uzana** (Bulgarian: Узана) is a summer-winter resort and also the geographic center of Bulgaria.

Once you set a foot on its ends, you can not help falling into her enchantment. The mighty embrace of the mountain has preserved this unique place where one can recharge with energy from its grandeur and beauty.

Far from the urban vanity you will find abundance of colors and shades, serenity and peace of mind.



Uzana is located at the foot of Ispolin peak at 1,420 m above sea level, near the Bulgarka Nature Park in the Stara Planina. It consists of large meadows surrounded by forest. The average altitude is 1300m.

Here the warbling of the birds and the whisper of wild grasslands will put a spell on you forever. Uzana is a home of rare floral species included in the Red Book of Endangered Species.

The region of Uzana provides a lot of opportunities for cultural tourism. The nearest big city is **Gabrovo**, around 22 km away. Internationally known as the center of humor and satire of Bulgaria, Gabrovo offers many interesting places of historical importance for its visitors. Near Gabrovo is situated the open-air ethnographic museum Etara, where people can learn more about Bulgarian crafts. Another landmark of the region - the Sokolski Monastery is situated a few kilometers away from Uzana.



Accommodation and food

Participants will be accommodated in double and triple bed rooms in "Prima S" hotel in Uzana area. Each room has a bathroom and all necessary facilities for a pleasant stay . Accommodation and full board delicious meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner) are covered by the hosting organization.

The participants will receive a questionnaire where they will be able to share nutritional needs in advance, before start of the project after approval of the participant's application and as part of the preparational activities for the project.



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Once you arrive in Sofia:

Meeting point: Central bus Station Sofia

How to get to Central Bus Station Sofia

1. From Sofia Airport (Terminal 2) take the metro – the **YELLOW** line to metro station Serdica and change there to metro line 2 – **BLUE** and then go out of the metro at Central Bus and Train station Sofia. Link to digital map of the Sofia metro:
=> <https://www.metrosofia.com/en/maps>





2. From Sofia Airport (Terminal 1 and 2) take buses 184 or 84 towards the center and get down at bus station “Orlov Most” in English “Eagle’s Bridge” – there is a metro entrance – Sofia University and again use the metro lines as described in point 1 above.

Public transport in Sofia is 1,60 BGN (leva) per ride.

1 Euro = 1.95583 BGN (Leva – local currency).

Practicalities

- **European Health Insurance Card:** The card is accepted in every country of the European Union. If you do not possess the card, you can get it easily. You should go to the office recharged with health affairs, and ask for your European Health Card. It's a little blue plastic card, and you can get it for free. It is valid in every EU country for 1 year. Or any other insurance is welcome (organizers are not covering insurance costs);
- **Insurance:** Personal and medical insurance are the responsibility of the individual participant. We will not be responsible for any loss of luggage, currency or personal effects, or any medical costs. We recommend participants to have the European Health Card;
- **Currency:** Bulgaria is still largely cash economy. Visitors should exchange cash at banks or Change Bureaus. Some Change Bureaus charge commissions on both cash and travellers’ check transactions that are not clearly posted. Old, dirty or very worn denomination bank notes are often not accepted at banks or Change Bureaus. The Bulgarian national monetary unit is the Lev (BGN), divided into 100 stotinki. At the present rate of exchange 1 USD is approximately equal to 1,88BGN, and 1 EUR is approximately equal to 1,95 BGN.

Note:

We strongly advise you to exchange currency **ONLY IN BANKS** or with the assistance of one of our representatives at a recommended Change Bureau – please note that the normal change bureaus exchange EUR at the rate of 1.95 and above. If you happen to be at a change bureau that exchanges currency below 1.95 – then please do not exchange money there.

Upon your arrival you will have the opportunity to visit in an organised manner Bulgarian Bank and to exchange your currency.



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The working hours of any bank in Bulgaria are every weekday from 8:00 to 17:00.

Other Info:

- No certification or special skills are required (only good knowledge of English language), just bring your enthusiasm and live the event in its proper and cheerful mood! We encourage participants to be an active part of this project, embracing responsibility and enjoy the cultural side of this experience!
- After any participant is approved and completes his travel organization he will be added to a Facebook group of the project where we will be sharing useful info/reminders and will be assisting participants with any issues/questions before, during and after the end of the program.
- **Please make sure to inform us about any special needs you have such as food allergies/intolerances, vegetarian/vegan food, health problems, special diet. A questionnaire will be sent to all participants before the start of the project.**

Contact information:

If you need help, or need further information please do not hesitate to contact us:

“Europe in your hand”

8, Charles Darwin Str.

Sofia 1113, Bulgaria

e-mail: project.euhand@gmail.com

Telephone: +359 88 729 0538

Emergency numbers: SOS number Bulgaria: 112



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We are looking forward to meeting you in Bulgaria for a wonderful training programme!