

Conclusive report of COOLTOUR project:

Cultural Heritage and youth

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Abstract: This document contains four countries' reports related to the COOLTOUR project, which focuses on cultural heritage and its role in developing competencies in youth. The document provides comprehensive details regarding surveys and interviews carried out among 364 youth aged 11 to 26 across four countries. It delves into their perception of cultural heritage and relationship with culture. It further reflects on the analysis of survey and interview results, highlighting participants' views on cultural heritage, commonalities, and distinctions. Additionally, the document provides recommendations for promoting cultural heritage among young people, such as utilizing social media and organizing engaging cultural events.

Key points

- This document discusses the COOLTOUR project and its focus on cultural heritage and youth development.
- It includes information about a survey conducted among young people, their understanding, relationship with cultural heritage and perceptions of community
- This document provides survey and interview results, mainly focusing on the similarities and differences.
- Recommendations are given for promoting cultural heritage among young people, such as utilizing social media and organizing engaging cultural events.

Project "COOLTOURS" aims to increase the potential of youth work in developing the competencies of the future and innovation, based on education in the field of cultural heritage. It will be reached by the acquisition and growth of competencies in the area of designing useful and innovative educational solutions; working with creative, inclusive, and participatory methods; exchange of experiences and knowledge; identification and dissemination of good and innovative practices in this topic.



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Estonia, Turkey, Poland and Italy

All four countries recognize the significance of cultural heritage in fostering a sense of belonging and cultural pride within their communities. They emphasize the importance of preserving and promoting cultural heritage for future generations, acknowledging the role of engaging young people in cultural activities and heritage preservation. Each country highlights the crucial role of youth in developing competencies and building connections with cultural heritage. Furthermore, the countries stress the importance of inclusion and diversity in their cultural projects, aiming to involve individuals from different backgrounds, age groups, and cultures to ensure that everyone's skills and potential are valued and utilized.

Each country main insight

A key insight from the Estonian perspective is the emphasis on the importance of community and traditions in shaping the involvement of young people in cultural heritage. The analyzing document highlights the significance of community activities, common traditions, and the role of different communities in fostering a sense of belonging and engagement among Estonian youth. This underscores the value of community-based approaches and the preservation of traditions in promoting cultural heritage among young people in Estonia.

From the Turkish perspective, a key insight is the focus on the transfer of cultural heritage and traditions among different generations. The analyzing document emphasizes the importance of raising awareness and increasing the knowledge of young people on culture and cultural heritage. Additionally, the emphasis on intergenerational dialogue and the transfer of knowledge between older and younger generations highlights the significance of preserving and passing down cultural heritage within Turkish society. This underscores the value placed on intergenerational connections and knowledge transfer in the context of cultural heritage in Turkey.



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Polish insight emphasizes the importance of participation in cultural events and activities in shaping the engagement of young people with cultural heritage. The analyzing document highlights the popularity of musical events and festivals among Polish youth, as well as their participation in traditional folk holidays. This underscores the value of cultural events and activities in promoting engagement with cultural heritage among young people in Poland. Additionally, the document emphasizes the importance of recognizing and appreciating the diversity and cultural richness of different groups and nations, highlighting the significance of cultural heritage in shaping individual and group identity.

For Italians, a key insight is the emphasis on the cultural context in which young people live and the importance of recognizing their daily interactions with history and culture. The analyzing document highlights that young people in Italy are immersed in contexts and realities that are rich in history and culture, which influences their daily lives. This underscores the significance of acknowledging the cultural context and experiences of young people in Italy when considering their engagement with cultural heritage. Additionally, the document emphasizes the importance of inclusion and respecting the cultural richness experienced by different age groups and cultures, highlighting the value of recognizing and embracing diverse perspectives in the context of cultural heritage in Italy.

Qualitative approach

To foster engagement with the youth, a qualitative approach was employed, involving semi-structured interviews in the cases of Estonia, Turkey, Poland, and Italy. Out of the 364 participants, 92 took part in these interviews. Both Estonia and Turkey each had 10 youth participants, with Estonian youth ranging from 11 to 17 and Turkish youth ranging from 19 to 26. Italy also contributed 10 youth participants aged 13 to 20 to the interviews. Additionally, Poland provided input from 62 participants aged 13 to 26.



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Similarities and differences

Based on participating countries' analysis, there are several similarities and differences among the four countries in relation to cultural heritage and youth engagement. Said differences mainly widen the details of similarities based on cultural distinctions.

Young individuals in all four countries encountered the concept of cultural heritage primarily through educational institutions, the internet, and social media. This reveals a shared pattern in the sources of cultural heritage information for youth across these nations. Although schools were consistently a prevalent source of exposure to cultural heritage, the extent of exposure at home exhibited variations. Notably, in Turkey, a larger percentage of respondents acquired knowledge about cultural heritage at home compared to Estonia, Poland, and Italy. This implies potential distinctions in the familial role of transmitting cultural heritage information.

Secondly, a common thread emerges in the shared enthusiasm for and participation in cultural events and traditions. Musical events, festivals, and traditional folk holidays garnered popularity among the youth in all four countries. The specific activities in which young individuals engaged, however, varied based on culture and country. For example, in Estonia, traditional events like calendrical holidays held widespread appeal, whereas in Poland, musical events and traditional folk holidays took center stage. These distinctions highlight the diverse cultural preferences and traditions inherent in each country.

Thirdly, a noteworthy portion of youth expressed a sense of connection to their cultural heritage through their families. This indicates a shared appreciation for the importance of family and its role in preserving cultural traditions. It is essential to note that the term "family" may carry nuanced meanings based on cultural distinctions. For instance, in Estonia, youngsters identified family as the paramount influence, whereas in Poland, the emphasis was placed on a sense of belonging to a group. These differences indicate varying cultural values and priorities among the youth in different national contexts.



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Additionally, social environments were identified as the main influence for youth engagement in cultural activities. This suggests that peer interactions and social networks play a similar role in shaping cultural experiences for young people. This observation may mirror the specific challenges that youth encounter in each country when engaging with cultural heritage. For example, in Estonia, there were difficulties with photo-storytelling as a method of cultural engagement, while in Turkey, the closure of education institutions during the COVID-19 pandemic hindered the development of group dynamics and skills among young people. These challenges may reflect unique societal and educational circumstances in each country.

Lastly, the use of both in-person and online groups for cultural and social activities are important. Young people in all four countries mentioned being part of various groups, such as book clubs, travel clubs, philosophy groups, and cultural groups. These groups served as platforms for entertainment, learning, and social interaction, indicating a common trend in the formation of diverse social and cultural communities among youth across different national contexts.

Quantitative approach

To gain insights into the role and significance of cultural heritage among youth, an online questionnaire was utilized. Among the 364 participants, 272 engaged in the quantitative questionnaire. Estonia contributed 66 participants, aged 11 to 17. Turkey had 100 youth participants in the quantitative questionnaire, aged 18 to 26. In the case of Poland, 51 participants from the age group of 13 to 26 took part in the questionnaire. Lastly, Italy contributed 55 participants aged 13 to 20.

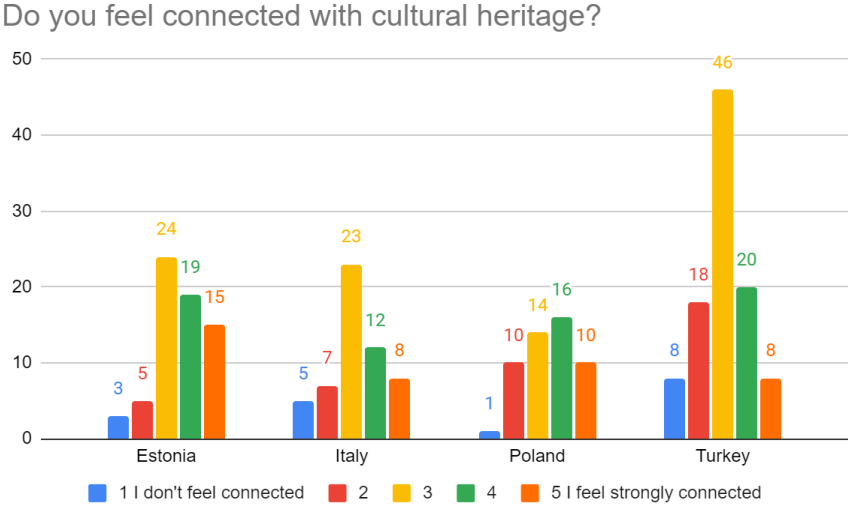
Similarities and differences

One thing the questionnaire focuses upon is asking about youth connection with cultural heritage. This question provides a direct measure of the participants' emotional and personal connection to cultural heritage. It offers insights into the significance they



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attribute to their cultural heritage. Understanding the degree of connection helps in gauging the overall impact of cultural heritage on the participants' lives.

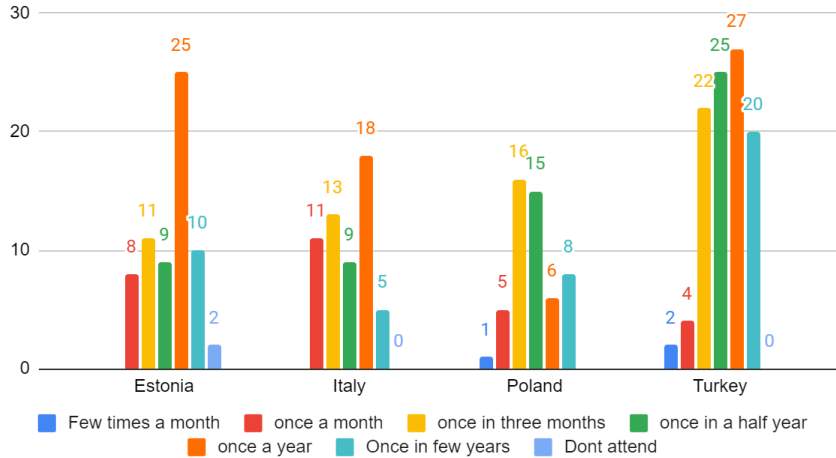


The scale of the question required the youth to rate their connection on a scale from 1, indicating "I don't feel connected," to 5, signifying "I feel strongly connected." The majority of youth (107 out of 272) opted for the middle option, 3, indicating a moderate level of connection. Notably, Estonian youth predominantly selected the "I feel strongly connected" option, while Turkish youth were more inclined to choose the "I don't feel connected" option.

The options determining why individuals feel or do not feel connected can vary due to cultural differences among countries. However, given our mapping of connections with cultural heritage, it is advisable to investigate whether there is a correlation between the attendance of traditional events and the reasons why youth may not perceive a strong connection with it.

This question delves into the participants' actual engagement with cultural heritage in the form of traditional events. The frequency of attendance reflects the practical involvement of young people in cultural activities, shedding light on the vibrancy and continuity of cultural traditions within their lives.

How often do you attend traditional events?



Considering that the Turkish response to the last question exhibited the highest frequency of "I don't feel connected" with cultural heritage, the prevalence of options such as "once in three months," "once in half a year," "once a year," and "once in a few years" among the 100 participants may suggest a potential infrequency and limited awareness of their participation in traditional events. This hints at the possibility that the perceived lack of connection could be attributed to a limited engagement with cultural activities.

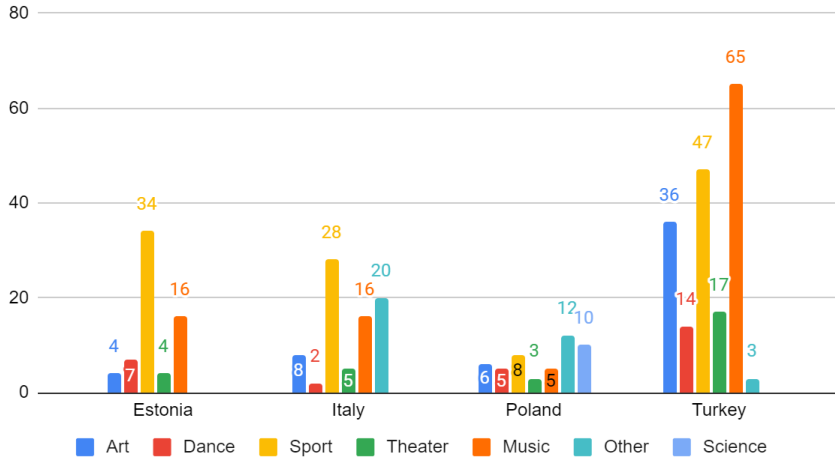
On the other hand, youth from Poland and Italy appear to be more actively engaged in attending traditional events compared to their counterparts in Turkey and Estonia. Italian youth, in particular, showed a higher preference for "once a month," while Polish youth leaned towards "once in three months" as their preferred frequency.

Now, considering that the frequency of organizing traditional events can vary due to internal factors such as being celebrated once every four years or occurring annually, our focus shifts to school and afterschool activities. Exploring after-school activities provides a broader context for understanding how young people spend their time outside of formal educational settings. This question allows us to identify if cultural heritage is integrated into their extracurricular pursuits and to uncover any correlations between the types of activities and the participants' cultural engagement.



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What after-school activities do you partake in?



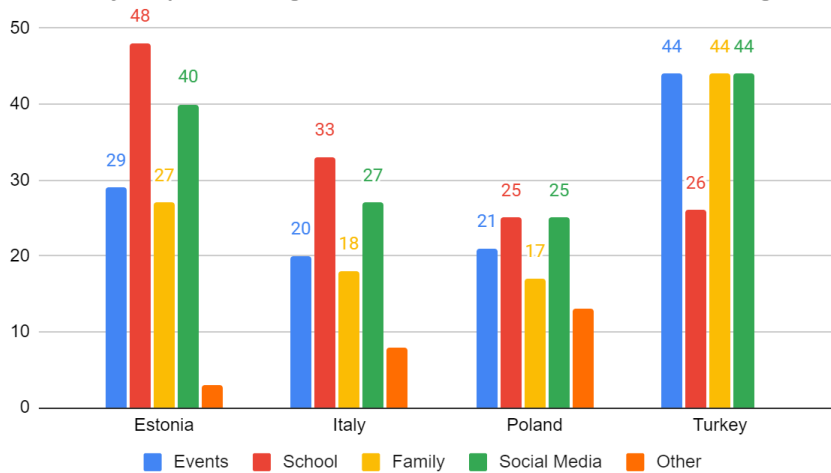
The most favored after-school activity is considered to be sports, garnering the highest number of votes from Estonia (34) and Italy (28), while ranking as the second choice for Turkey (47). In contrast, dancing emerges as one of the less popular options, consistently being either the last choice (for Italy with 2 votes) or the second-to-last pick (for Estonia, Poland, and Turkey).

Lastly, we would like to address the importance of a preferable way of getting the right information. Understanding the preferred channels for receiving information about cultural heritage is crucial for tailoring outreach and educational efforts. This question helps identify whether participants rely on traditional sources, such as school, or if they prefer modern mediums like social media. It offers insights into effective communication strategies for promoting cultural heritage among young people.



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How do you prefer to get information about cultural heritage?



The preferences for obtaining information differ significantly among the youth in each country. It is important to consider the age demographics of the questionnaire participants. The popularity of the "school" option might be associated with the fact that respondents were between the ages of 11 to 17. In contrast, for Turkey, where participants were aged 18 to 26, the "school" option was the least favored. Notably, Poland (13 to 26) and Italy (13 to 20) shared more similar age demographics, and it is observed that the options of "events, school, and social media" are closely ranked to each other.

In conclusion, the questionnaires from each four countries have provided a detailed understanding of how youth in different countries perceive and engage with cultural heritage. The varied degrees of connection and preferences for traditional events and after-school activities underscore the influence of cultural, age-related, and societal factors on youth relationships with their heritage. The findings highlight the need for tailored approaches in cultural heritage promotion, acknowledging the diversity in responses and preferences across nations. Moreover, the examination of preferred information sources emphasizes the importance of adapting communication strategies to effectively reach and engage young people.

Photo-contest and story-telling

Each country organized a photo hunt to capture the perspectives of young individuals on their daily culture. Through this initiative, participants submitted images illustrating how they perceived culture and/or highlighting cultural aspects they considered inseparable to their existence.

The idea behind this initiative was to understand through these images how young individuals perceived their everyday culture and to identify the nuances and aspects such as culture and sports that analysts observed when looking at the collective picture formed by these smaller details.

Three out of the four countries, excluding Italy, actively took part in the photo hunt. Turkey, with three youth participants, contributed images that represented various aspects of Turkey's regions, offering a glimpse into the cultural nuances of their everyday lives. In Estonia, a total of four individuals participated in photo-storytelling, with the main insight derived from the young participants emphasizing their understanding of culture through events, festivals, and significant celebrations. However, since each side only managed to gather the perspectives of 3-4 individuals, it would be unfair to generalize these viewpoints as representative of the broader youth population. It is possible that some young participants might have felt challenged in understanding or capturing cultural elements, suggesting the need for a different approach to such tasks.

However, the photo contest achieved its greatest success in Poland, with the participation of 13 individuals in the photo hunt. Following this success, Poland organized a photo story exhibition titled "What CULTURE means to you?". The exhibition offered valuable insights into how young people from Zgierz comprehend and engage with the concept of culture. Through their creative expressions captured in photographs, these individuals showcase a profound connection to their cultural identity and a desire to explore its diverse facets. Through their photographs and participation in the exhibition, these individuals



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demonstrated a keen awareness of the importance of cultural expression in shaping their identities and enriching the cultural fabric of their community.

Overall solutions and suggestions

There is a strong recommendation for the integration of heritage culture into school activities. Young people expressed a preference for learning about cultural heritage through educational institutions, highlighting the importance of incorporating cultural heritage into school curricula and activities to effectively engage and educate young individuals.

The analysis also recommends the utilization of social media for the promotion of heritage culture. Cultural and youth workers are advised to find ways to utilize social media to promote heritage culture, as young people expressed a preference for obtaining knowledge about cultural heritage through social media platforms. This recommendation highlights the potential of social media as a tool for reaching and engaging with young audiences in the context of cultural heritage promotion.

Additionally, the significance of family connections in transmitting cultural heritage was underscored, with suggestions made to keep families connected with their own culture and traditions. This recommendation underscores the significance of family involvement in preserving and transmitting cultural heritage to younger generations.

Furthermore, there is a strong emphasis on encouraging young people to participate creatively in shaping and promoting cultural heritage within their own community groups. This reflects the value of empowering youth to actively contribute to the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage within their communities.

Lastly, the development of innovative cultural activities tailored to the age and interests of young people is recommended. This shows the importance of adapting cultural heritage experiences to resonate with the preferences of young individuals, emphasizing



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the need for age-appropriate and innovative approaches to engage youth with cultural heritage.

Shortcomings

Italy mentions some shortcomings and areas for improvement, highlighting that the type of questions asked in the surveys and interviews may not be suitable for young people in Italy, as they do not fully take into account the cultural context in which they live and with which they are in contact every day. Additionally, there is a mention of the need to use tools closer to the way young people communicate on social networks, such as Instagram and TikTok, to better engage with them. Furthermore, there is an indication of a lack of peer connection regarding culture and related events among young people, suggesting a need for more inclusive and engaging cultural initiatives. These insights point to potential areas for improvement in engaging young people with cultural heritage in Italy.

Young people in Poland face barriers such as budget and accommodation when it comes to participating in cultural activities. This indicates a potential shortage in terms of financial accessibility to cultural events and heritage sites for young people in Poland. Additionally, the analysis emphasizes the need for effective promotion and better utilization of social media platforms to reach young people, suggesting that there may be shortcomings in the current promotional strategies for cultural heritage in Poland. These insights highlight potential areas for improvement in addressing financial barriers and enhancing promotional efforts to engage young people with cultural heritage in Poland.

Conclusion

Four country analysis emphasized the significance of engaging young people with cultural heritage and the challenges associated with capturing cultural experiences through various activities and methods. The research findings underscore the importance of understanding young people's perspectives on culture and heritage, as well as the need to design inclusive and accessible cultural activities that resonate with their interests.



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Additionally, the document highlights the value of promoting active participation in cultural projects and the role of European citizenship in fostering a sense of belonging and appreciation for cultural diversity. Report acknowledges the need for refining approaches to photo-storytelling and questionnaire design to better capture young people's perceptions of cultural heritage. Overall, countries emphasize the importance of addressing these challenges and leveraging the insights to enhance the engagement of young people with cultural heritage.

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