

Summary of Study Visit in Istanbul, Türkiye

The report aims to present the knowledge, skills, methods, tools, and insights gained from Estonia, Türkiye, Poland and Italy during the Study Visit in Istanbul, organized by Istanbul Culture and Sport Association (IKOS), Türkiye, from March 15 to 22, 2024. The study visit had three main objectives:

- **Exchange of experiences:** The primary focus was on exchanging experiences, stories, and ideas among participants. This collaborative effort aimed to create a comprehensive set of knowledge useful for the remaining stages of the project and future work.
- **Inspiration and learning from innovation:** Participants visited local cultural and youth institutions to see and learn about innovative digital solutions and tools. This exploration was intended to inspire and enhance the digital capabilities of the project.
- **Expert engagement and knowledge sharing:** The visit included meetings with experts, educators, youth and culture workers, and authors of local solutions related to the project's topic. This engagement aimed to gain practical insights and foster a deeper understanding of effective local solutions.

The study visit primarily included six elements focusing on the approaches and methods used in the program: study visits, presentations, workshops, conferences, cultural visits, intercultural evenings and free time, and reflection sessions.

Preparation and key topics

Before their study visit to Istanbul, participants from each country prepared thoroughly to ensure a productive experience and later mapped out their key learning points and topics.

Soro Tori, Italy

Preparation:

The Italian team met online due to geographical dispersion to discuss the visit agenda, Turkish culture, and local habits. This was especially important as four participants were visiting Türkiye for the first time.

During visit:

Participants focused on learning about Turkish culture, habits, and methodologies through direct experiences and interactions. This broadened their perspectives on cultural diversity and intercultural communication.

Rõuge Noorsootöö Keskus, Estonia

Preparation:

The Estonian team, though not extensively preparing beforehand, gathered all participants to form a group and share important study visit details. A pre-departure meeting was held to answer questions, assign tasks, and finalize arrangements, ensuring everyone was well-informed and ready.

During visit:

Estonian participants encountered significant cultural differences, particularly during Ramadan, which highlighted the importance of openness and empathy. Visits to places like the Silence Museum and interactions with refugees deepened their awareness of diverse social challenges, fostering empathy and understanding.

Stowarzyszenie Miłośników Kultury Ludowej FOLKIER, Poland

Preparation:

The Polish team held a virtual meeting to share key details like the schedule, logistics, cultural tips, and preparation guidelines. They used a messaging group to stay connected, share updates, and foster a supportive environment for addressing concerns and expectations.

During visit:

Participants experienced cultural immersion, experiential learning, and expert dialogues. They gained insights into Turkish society, history, and current issues, which inspired them to bring this new knowledge back home to promote cultural understanding and sustainable development.

Knowledge transfer

The study visit enabled participants from Italy, Estonia, and Poland to gain valuable knowledge, skills, and attitudes, which they plan to integrate into their work with young people in cultural heritage, as summarized below.

Soro Tori, Italy

1

Cultural heritage and historical awareness

Exploring cultural sites and learning about heritage initiatives, along with insights gained from presentations on architectural and historical preservation, deepened participants' appreciation and understanding of cultural preservation.

2

Innovative community engagement

The innovative approaches showcased by different organizations inspired the participants with new methods for community engagement and social impact.

3

Local interaction and cultural exchange

Engaging with local students and participating in activities offered meaningful opportunities to connect with the local community, exchange best practices, and understand local perspectives.

Participants from Italy plan to adapt the visit's activities to their NGO's context, address common challenges in youth involvement, and compare their observations with current practices to identify areas for improvement.

Rõuge Noorsootöö Keskus, Estonia

1

Learning from diverse experiences

The visit facilitated the exchange of experiences in youth work, education, and cultural work, with visits to various institutions providing new inspirations and ideas.

2

Cultural awareness and open-mindedness

Participants faced and overcame challenges related to cultural differences, learning to appreciate and adapt to diverse cultural contexts.

3

Language development and communication skills

Project activities offered significant opportunities for language development and improved communication skills, despite initial difficulties.

Impressed by the self-sufficiency of Turkish organizations, the Estonian team plans to reduce their dependency on municipal support through strategic planning for sustainability. Additionally, inspired by the Experimental Learning workshop and cultural experiences in Istanbul, they aim to incorporate experiential learning methods into their programs, designing innovative educational activities.

Stowarzyszenie Miłośników Kultury Ludowej FOLKIER, Poland

1

Interpersonal and team-building skills

Group discussions, team-building activities, and interactions with local experts enhanced participants' abilities to collaborate, negotiate, and express themselves effectively.

2

Critical thinking and problem-solving

Activities such as city hunting and attending conferences sharpened participants' analytical and problem-solving skills, helping them tackle complex issues and adapt to new challenges.

3

Civic engagement and social responsibility

Visits to organizations emphasized the importance of civic engagement and social responsibility, inspiring participants to contribute positively to their communities.

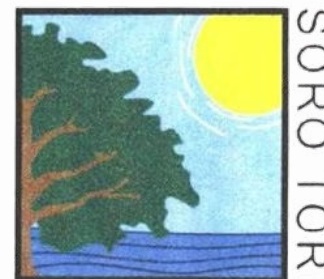
Participants from Poland plan to enhance cross-cultural competence and promote cultural diversity among young people through cultural exchanges, workshops, and heritage walks, while also empowering youth in leadership roles focused on preserving cultural heritage via forums, advocacy campaigns, and community projects. They also seek to establish partnerships and mentorship programs with cultural experts to enrich youth understanding and involvement in cultural heritage initiatives.



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