

EGL Study Visit in Croatia

Croatia, January 25 - January 29, 2023



SALTO Eastern Europe and the Caucasus in cooperation with the Croatian National Agency Ampeu and the Polish NA Narodowa Agencja Programu Erasmus+ organised a study visit in Croatia from the 25th to the 29th of January 2023. 12 participants from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Moldova joined as a part of the mentoring program which will last until December 2023.

During these four days, participants from the Eastern European and Caucasus region exchanged practices and experiences, learned about the realities of municipalities and youth work, and networked. They learned about the specifics of working with young people and various activities and how to develop a youth policy strategy.

They visited the EGL municipalities Kastav, Opatija, Rijeka, and Crikvenica. These municipalities shared best practices with the participants to inspire them.



Furthermore, the participants followed mentoring sessions with the EGL mentor Mario Žuliček from Croatia. They had a training session about youth participation and how to develop the youth work in their municipalities. They worked out action plans and learned about tools to develop the youth sector in cooperation with the municipality. The participants also shared their experiences and got to know other people's youth work policies. During this week, they got inspired and got new ideas to start planning local activities within the program. The mentor helped the participants with making their development and action plan.

Wednesday 25 January

On the first day of the study visit in Croatia, the participants arrived. They also participated to an integration session and introduction session with the plans for the future days.



Thursday 26 January

On Thursday, the participants had some integration events to get to know each other better, think of their expectations, and develop some ideas.

They also met with Kastav municipality representatives. The representatives were glad to share their experiences on youth involvement in the project proposal writing. They told about great project ideas, like a city community garden and a playground, that young people created and were implemented to make Kastav a better place. They also discovered the entrepreneurial incubator KASPI. The historical building House Gmajnički is housing this project. The participants also received a guide tour organized by youth guides around the town.





In the afternoon, the participants met with the municipality of Rijeka. They started the afternoon with a guided tour of the Benčić neighbourhood.

They had an excursion around Children’s House and met representatives of the city, they shared what kind of activities they implemented thanks to the involvement in the Europe Goes Local program. Moreover, they were introduced to the ideas connected to having an interactive library. Young people decided about the activities that will take place in the new library. They also decided about what they would need and what would be useful for them while the library was being built.

Friday 27 January

On Friday, the participants met with the municipality of Crikvenica, a town of 10 000 people. They learned how the municipality is working with youngsters, from environmental challenges, study help, play, and, what is more important, listen to them. Moreover, they cooperate with parents and foster families, to keep the process holistic.





Opatija met the participants in the start-up hub [Hubazzia](#). There, they listened to the representatives of the Youth Council, the Youth Department of the municipality, NGO's and the Croatian national coordinator of EGL. They shared the valuable information about the activities, plans, youth policy strategies, and events they're organizing for youth and with youth.

As the cherry on top to end the day, they met representatives of a small youth theatre in English "[Pygmalion](#)". They shared what kind of projects they're developing with youth and children.







Saturday 28 January

On the last day, the participants reflected on what they learned, what they'll take back to their own municipalities, and how they will develop the knowledge into something tangible. The training session on understanding how to involve youth into the municipality and increase the level of youth participation gave them some food for thought.







Moreover, the mentor Mario Zulicek who works in the association of the cities in Zagreb, told about how to develop their ideas into action plans and what are the pillars of municipal youth work are. After that they managed to have individual mentoring sessions in order to polish their plans and listen to suggestions on how to adjust them into their realities.

Onwards!

After this study visit in Croatia, participants will work locally on their youth work policy plans in February and March together with their local mentors until December. In spring, they will meet again for a new two day training with their mentors. During the summer, there will be an online evaluation meeting with mentors and participants. And the participants will meet one last time in December 2023 for a one day closure and evaluation ceremony.