

# Making local youth environment safe and inclusive

## Name of the organisation

ՀՀ Արմավիրի մարզի Վաղարշապատի համայնքապետարան

## Website of the organisation

<https://ejmiatsin.am>

## Location of the organisation

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## Good practice aspect(s)/themes of youth work

- Non-formal education/-learning
- Active citizenship/activism
- Safe/secure youth work environment
- Cross-sectore cooperation

## Good practice category

A practice of processes and methods

## Good practice aim & purpose

Vagharshapat Municipality actively promotes youth development by providing inclusive and accessible environments for young people. Within the community, two youth-oriented environments operate to support young people: “Ejmiatsin Youth House” open youth centre and “Khoy” open youth space. These environments serve as platforms for youth engagement, personal development and civic participation.

The goal of having youth infrastructures in community is to enhance the civic activism and well being of young people through the implementation of professional youth work and the provision of accessible youth services.

“Ejmiatsin Youth House” open youth centre was established in 2022 by Vagharshapat municipality with the support of Youth Initiative Centre NGO and UNICEF Armenia. The centre operates based on the methodology and principles of open youth work, providing a safe and supportive environment where young people can develop skills, express their ideas, get professional orientation and actively participate in community life.

“Khoy” youth space was established in 2025 and serves as a safe space for about 200 young people for self-realization, development, practicing leadership competences and life skills. The content of the work depends entirely on the needs and interests of youngsters.

## **Good practice description**

“Ejmiatsin Youth House” open youth centre offers young people a wide range of services, including competence building for life and for competitiveness in the job market, individual or group counseling, non-formal and informal education, which will help young people to enhance their self-esteem, achieve more control over their lives, and improve their chances for gaining employment in the future.

The Centre also serves as a platform for thematic discussions, seminars, trainings and collaboration among civil society organizations, schools, childcare centres, social services, police, municipality and other institutions, providing a wide range of accessible services.

One of the key directions of the centre is also intercultural communication and promotion of volunteering culture. In the frame of “European Clubs”, which are informative cultural activities, youth workers and international volunteers organize sessions about Europe, European culture and history, EU institutions, values, runs workshops about Erasmus+, European Solidarity Corps and other mobility programmes, organise European cultural evenings, European film screenings followed by discussions, photo exhibitions, thematic weeks, collaborates with schools, NGOs and European networks. It contributes greatly to mutual cultural understanding, tolerance, solidarity, peace building, spreading democratic values and active citizenship.

Another important aspect of youth environments’ activities is promoting environmental awareness and healthy lifestyles. In the frames of which young people organize hikes, excursions, environmental clean-ups, recycling and zero-waste workshops and ecology awareness days with the support of the Municipality of Vagharshapat which contribute to youth participation, community involvement and environmental sustainability as well as ensure that activities are relevant, positive and beneficial for everyone involved.

Gyumri Youth Initiative Centre NGO (YIC) as a responsible organization for youth environments’ content, engages in youth policy development and participation in Armenia through capacity-building initiatives, training programmes, advocacy support, and structured collaboration with both youth and public authorities.

YIC brings together youth representatives and local self-government officials to co-learn and co-develop strategies for community-level youth policy. These trainings help participants understand how to draft and implement youth-related policy frameworks within municipalities, fostering collaborative youth-government engagement.

**Good practice result & concrete effects**

For the local community, the abovementioned activities strengthen social connections and encourage community participation. Public events, environmental campaigns, cultural evenings and youth-created media contents bring people together and promote dialogue between different groups in the community.

The presence of international volunteers also contribute to intercultural exchange, allowing community members to learn about other cultures and perspectives while sharing their own traditions.

Cooperation among self-governmental bodies, schools, NGOs and community partners strengthen local networks and create new opportunities for collaboration and youth participation.

Thus, ensuring safe and inclusive environment all the activities are carefully planned, implemented and supervised according to “do no harm” principle. All the parties receive guidance and support to ensure that activities are inclusive, respectful and appropriate for the participants. Special attention is given to creating a safe and supportive environment where all young people feel respected regardless of their background, gender, culture, or abilities.

**Good practice chapter of the European Charter on Local Youth Work**

Youth work policy