



**INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH YOUTH WORK
IRELAND TIPPERARY IN 2015**



YOUTH EXCHANGES AND TRAINING:

5 young people from Tipperary spent 10 days in Italy in July 2015 with others from Italy, Albania, Croatia and Austria to work on the Erasmus+ 'Je Suis Charité? Nous Sommes UE!' intercultural project, looking at what would be best for their new societies, and learning about each other both culturally and spiritually, as well as having fun.



In July 2015, 2 members of our Youth Executive attended a training course in Vienna entitled Civil Courage. They gave examples of Civil Courage in our own lives, communities and country and because Mental Health is so important within TRYS, they used examples of how to stand up and speak out about mental health needs.

OPPORTUNITIES ON BOARD 3

'Opportunities on Board III' is a bilateral youth exchange between Tipperary Regional Youth Service and the Active Youths of Florina. Growing out of an idea initially formed

during an international seminar on youth employment, the project centred on young people developing a healthy leisure time both physically, mentally and in terms of active citizenship as part of an alternative use of their free time. Participation of young people in making decisions about their own lives was a key element of the project. The project gave young people from Tipperary and Florina:

- the opportunity to meet each other and learn about each other.
- to have new experiences and opportunities
- to get involved in two week long schedules of activities and learning opportunities
- to develop social, interpersonal and life skills so that you are confident to travel and explore
- to learn to be peer leaders and to develop the quality of their participation in our organisational structures.
- to learn to become positive, contributing members of the European community and recognize the benefits of being active citizens



The young people who participated came from a range of backgrounds. The young people have fewer social and economic opportunities and this project was a real way for them to develop their skills and attitudes, both in terms of personal development, active citizenship and employability. Activities included participating in physical leisure time activities (the glen of Aherlow, Zumba Prespa lake), programmes that developed mindfulness and resilience and the participation in a youth leadership programme. Methodologies included group work, self-directed learning, multimedia activities and planning and participation in programme development. The project resulted in young people having greater understanding of themselves and of



other young people from Europe, which resulted in more confident and socially aware young people who have changing attitudes about the opportunities and options available to them. These young people are more positive about their future and what they can do to influence it. It also impacted on the participating organisations that have learned more about participation, policy making and the benefits of international work as a key component to our youth work practice.



Quotes: “My favourite part of the Greek exchange was basically the whole Greek Exchange. Everything about it was brilliant. Since the Greeks came to Ireland first, we had all been introduced to each other, and had become friends. It was fun meeting them again in Greece two months later.” “All of the Irish guys were very friendly, although they did not know me, they made me feel comfortable and thanks to this I managed to practice my spoken English. We (Greek guys) also had the chance to show the Irish parts of our culture and our country's beauties. I was very glad to see that they enjoyed the activities and especially the food!” “I believe that the last week will be forever stuck in my head as our Irish friends visited us and we had some great time” “The friendships built for me in part 1 and part 2 of the exchange are forever lasting I think, We all enjoyed it so much and have built such strong relationships with the other countries” “The biggest social learning for me was visiting the child protection centre because it was an experience I never had before and it was so nice to sit down and play games with the kids and speak to them about everything. I learned how to play thumb wars in Greek.”



INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS ON YOUTH EMPLOYMENT - EVS

EVS – Leargas’ EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE – young people aged 18-30 can for 2 to 12 months to Europe to do voluntary work, gain skills, learn a language and live in another culture. Travel and accommodation is paid plus the volunteer receives a monthly allowance. Michael Crowe from Tipperary was in Bydgoszcz city, Poland in 2015. Michael’s volunteering entails teaching English to unemployed people in the community. “It is a great experience to meet new people, gain skills and experience a new country and culture” Keighley Moore from Thurles spent most of 2015 in Valencia, Spain – “it has been a wonderful experience. In Bonagent our aim is to give disabled or intellectually challenged adults an opportunity to do day to day tasks independently and in the future live alone with little help from carers. Coming here is one of the best decisions I've made”. Antony Hoare from Cashel is just completed his EVS in Sweden in 2015; he worked with young people through sport and really enjoyed it, he even played soccer for a local team!

