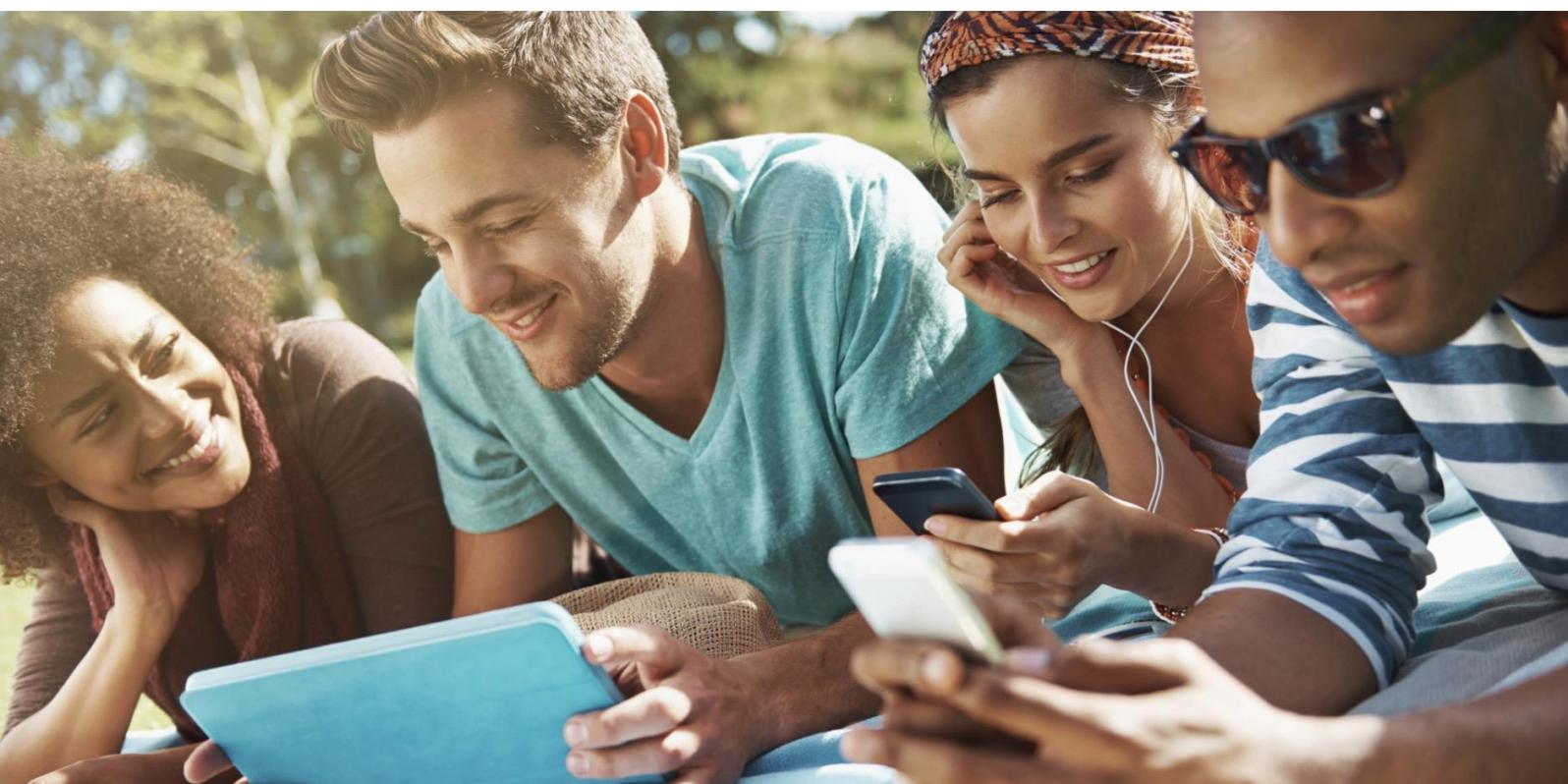


INTEGRATION THROUGH YOUTH WORK

Guidelines for actions, events, methods involving
refugees & youth



Abstract

Guidelines includes close to 60 different actions & methods to involve refugees into youth work; and, thus, foster their integration efforts. These were tested in real environment in Lithuania & Latvia throughout summer and autumn of 2017 (as activities of a wider Erasmus+ project "Together: Refugees & Youth").

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About the Project

“Together: Refugees & Youth” (TRY) created a special programme in which youth workers included refugees in their work with youth. This way the youth got a chance to develop in a multicultural environment – thus building up their tolerance and increasing multilingualism. In the meanwhile, the refugees got a chance to integrate into the society faster, since the activities helped them with the local language, culture, traditions, etc.

TRY had the following objectives: 1) to improve local youth work by involving refugees with their skills and experience; 2a) to integrate refugees to the societies faster by allowing cultural exchange with the local youth; also, 2b) to help their integration by promoting more favourable public opinion for them; 3) to provide youth workers with tools & standards for multi-cultural element in their work; and 4) to lower xenophobia, racism and foster multilingualism among the local youth. All of these were at least partly achieved¹.

The project had a total duration of 2 years (June 2016 - May 2018). Its activities took place in Latvia, Lithuania and Croatia.



Erasmus+



¹ More than two thirds of relocated refugees in the project countries had moved elsewhere (within the first months of resettlement). Thus, in many occasions it was not possible to build long-lasting bonds & complete the set objectives fully. Please note, that this report does not provide explanations for the mentioned exodus.

About Methodology

Note that all the opinions expressed in this publication, any conclusions and recommendations do not necessarily coincide with the position of the European Commission and/or Erasmus+.

It is worth noting, that the authors of this publication are aware that: 1) term *refugee* might have negative connotations in certain contexts; and 2) better (friendlier) terms could be used, such as *displaced person*. Yet, for the sake of universal understanding, it was decided to stick with the former.

The methodology/report/guidelines² is a product of: 1) research on the feasibility of integration through youth work³; 2) a corresponding training event for Latvian & Lithuanian youth workers⁴; and 3) a previously created methodology⁵ for 64 integration events in Latvia & Lithuania. It includes the list of tested activities/actions/methods to integrate refugees into youth work. Guidelines on how to carry out that properly are also briefly listed. These regard such things as how to:

1. organise the activities
2. ensure participation of youth & refugees
3. avoid and diffuse potential clashes
4. communicate with the wider public effectively
5. use other existing relevant material

Using the guidelines

Every separate activity/action/method has a brief description on what it is and how it was implemented. It also gives tips & recommendations (for implementation) where and when applicable. For instance, language games/learning could be done together with Erasmus Students' Network (ESN), who are adept in making such activities. In addition, the descriptions tell about the venues used, recommended number of people and anything else of importance (such as the amount of time required & whether it helped the integration much – in 5-star ratings).

The meaning of icons in the descriptions are as following:



If available, every activity also provides a testimonial from the participant, as well as press releases, links & photos.

² These terms will be used interchangeably in the publication.

³ Summary of the research - <http://refugees.lt/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/TRY-Research-Summary.pdf>

⁴ Press release after the training - <https://www.facebook.com/notes/refugees-in-europe/refugee-integration-in-the-baltics/223646298062701>

⁵ Initial methodology for TRY integration events - <https://refugees.lt/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Pilot-programme-1.1..pdf>

Organising the activities

It is of key importance to properly organise and coordinate the activities, actions & methods given in this document. This is because refugees & youngsters are involved, and, naturally, some groundwork is necessary. Thus, good part of TRY was dedicated to finding the right formula on carrying out such activities. The main findings may be seen below. These can be grouped in to the following: 1) ensuring continuous participation of both refugees & youth; 2) preparing the groups and avoiding & diffusing potential clashes; 3) making the activities interesting, relevant & useful; and 4) public relations & communication.

Ensuring continuous participation of both refugees & youth. Obviously, forming a new relationship as an adult person is not the easiest thing. It takes time and most of the people are not prepared to invest that. Yet, to guarantee refugee participation, one needs precisely to create bonds. The same goes for the refugees, as they should befriend youth workers, as well as youngsters taking part in the activities. The tip therefore is to start off slow (i.e. carrying out activities that do not require a strong bond between people involved. For example, a football match could be played by strangers). It is even better if the activities undertaken help to build up a future relationship. Smaller groups at first should make it easier too.

Tip for readers: start with activities, which could be done in small groups and do not require a strong bond to begin with (but helps to build it up).

A closer cooperation between youth NGOs, youth centres and the organizations that oversee the socialization of refugees in the country needs to be supported. Using already existing activities, young people could build up social ties with refugees easier.

To interest both youngsters and refugees, it is also necessary to be loud about the potential benefits (i.e. positive impact) to both groups. For the young, this entails experiencing new cultures, spending their time doing interesting and impactful activities, etc. As well as making new friends.

Whereas, refugees should be encouraged to take part because: 1) they could become a part of a bigger family (in the youth centre); 2) change their lives for the better by getting to know more of the local culture, language, etc.; and 3) get a chance to self-express throughout the activities.

Regarding the latter, including the refugees in the planning process of an activity/action or the whole activity programme is advisable. This way, they would not just express themselves creatively, but also will likely make the activities more interesting and relevant in the end. For instance, some of the activity plan could be built around refugees' hobby, such as making kites. At the same time, their involvement would then be necessary, and refugees could very well see that. Being vital for a successful implementation is a good driver to participate more eagerly.

Tip for readers: involve refugees in the planning, making & implementation of the activities.

Project experience: in Latvia, Lithuania & Croatia most of the relocated refugees have left⁶ the countries within the first few months of the resettlement. Thus, it was difficult to ensure continuous participation in the programme by the refugees.

Preparing the groups, avoiding & diffusing potential clashes. As the integration events of the pilot programme of TRY has shown, a two-way preparation is necessary. NGO's (and their youth workers) should be working towards local communities to be more tolerant.

It is important to keep in mind that cultural differences, respect and intercultural learning, etc. should be addressed in work with young people. This comes from the fact that the need for refugees "to live by the norms of the countries who are accepting them" was expressed intensively in the before-mentioned research³. The topic is sensitive, so it would be necessary to discuss integration, assimilation and what do these words mean to youngsters.

For better cultural understanding, youth could be given literature (novels / magazines) on orientalism or Arab culture, etc. Even a list of music (e.g. Spotify list) or movies would be helpful.

Tip for readers: to get to know the culture youth could be given Spotify list of Arab music, list of best Arab movies and/or a short novel.

More important is training on how to start and maintain conversation with refugees. Especially, during the initial contact. This should focus on avoiding:

- sensitive topics (e.g. *how is your home?*)
- victimisation (e.g. *I am sorry for the difficulties you face here*)
- exclusion from the local society and ghettoising (e.g. *are Lithuanians nice to refugees?*)

Youth organizations should join other actors in the field and provide aid to (young) refugees too, such as giving psychological or academic consultations. It is important to involve providers of such services (therapists, etc.) in constructing the help to meet the needs of refugees.

Additionally, youth workers need to receive training on working with people from refugee background and including them into activities with local youth. The training should regard intercultural learning, human rights education, diversity, work with

⁶ The reasons for the exodus vary. Read more: <https://borgenproject.org/facts-refugees-in-lithuania/>

groups and interfaith. Existing material could be used to help this task. For example, in Lithuania there is a special methodology⁷ (in Lithuanian) prepared for social workers that engage with refugees. It touches on most of the relevant subjects.

Know-how in conflict management is of key importance too. Youth workers should be trained not only how to avoid cultural clashes, but also what to do if that happens (how to diffuse the situation). Surely, this relies a lot on knowing the culture, but tactfulness and preparation in psychology are also handy.

Making the activities interesting, relevant & useful. First and foremost, the activities should not be one-off events. This means that continuation should be foreseen.

Integration, as well as building up of social bonds (between refugees & locals) requires time. For that reason, the pilot programme of TRY oversaw weekly (smaller-scale) activities rather than a one big event.

Tip for readers: integration is a step by step process. Thus, having weekly continuous activities is more desirable than a single big event.

If there are several youth workers and refugees willing to engage in making and implementing activities together, matching them per their interests would be appropriate. For instance, two people that are into sports would get a long together much easier. They would likewise be a better team in youth work. It is an authors' recommendation to use interests (sports, entertainment, talents & crafts, etc.) for such matching.

Lastly, to make integration through youth work even more efficient, refugees should be given a sense that their community is strong and letting their roots in. This could be done by inviting a mix of different ethnicities to activities (e.g. Afghans and Syrians). Normally, refugees from different backgrounds do not intermingle much. Given a chance, though, they could meet and greet others, that are facing similar situation and challenges. The experience of TRY shows, that such fellows can not only become friends, but also share tips and useful information with one another.

Public relations (PR) & communication. For activities to be successful it is important to keep in mind that they should be visible. Meaning both before and during the event itself and afterwards. Similarly, it should target participants (to take part) as well as the public (to raise awareness).

Prior to the activity, social networks should be used extensively (most of the youngsters, as well as refugees use those). This entails not just making a post, but also creating an event (e.g. on Facebook) and sending invitations. Besides, the flow of news should be

⁷ Methodology for social workers working with refugees (in Lithuanian) - http://www.sppd.lt/media/mce_filebrowser/2016/10/28/Migracijos_Metodologija_GOOD_3redakcija.pdf

continuous. It is recommended to inform about the event 4 times: 3-2 weeks before; 7-5 days before; 3-2 days before; and a reminder on the last day.

As for communication once the activity starts, there should be someone documenting it. Alternatively, it could be broadcasted live (via Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat or other). However, make sure to get a consent from the participants to use the photos/videos with them. For one, it could be that they do not want the publicity. More importantly, public photos of refugees might put some of their family members (still back at their previous home) in danger. The advice is to talk this out beforehand.

Tip for readers: *make sure refugees consent to using media material with them. Publicity might put some of their family members (at the source country) in danger.*

Lastly, a proper follow-up is crucial. Any news about the event should be released as soon as possible. These days media outlets do not accept anything that is older than 1-2 days. For that reason, there should always be a person (or a volunteer) responsible for making a press release about the event right away. Note that such issues should include high quality photo(s). Thus, the same or another person should take care of that too.

Pilot programme activities, actions & methods

Directions on how to use the guide are given in the *Using the guidelines* section above.

Summary of activities

First three columns of the table below are straightforward, the fourth needs an explanation: it indicates whether the activity is good for building up a link between the participants. This rating is given on a 1 to 5 scale (where 1 means not suitable; and 5 – very suitable). The colour code for this column is as following: **red** – no satisfactory result; **green** – very satisfactory results. While **yellow** means that the activity is neutral in this sense.

Note: click on any of the names to jump to the more detailed description of that activity.

| No. | Title | Duration (in hours) | Rating for integration |
|---|---|------------------------|------------------------|
| Took place in Lithuania Error! Reference source not found. | | | |
| 1. | Lithuanian Traditional Cooking Workshop (Rukla & Vilnius) | 2-2.5 | 5 |
| 2. | Language games | 2 | 4 |
| 3. | Adventures in Dūkštai Educational Trail | 4-5 | 5 |
| 4. | Playing Arts Workshop | 2-2.5 | 5 |
| 5. | Language Café (VA Caritas) | 2 | 4 |
| 6. | World Refugee Day (Rukla Reception Centre) | 3-5 | 5 |
| 7. | Integration Picnic (VA Caritas) | 2 | 4.5 |
| 8. | Closer to the refugees (“Arčiau pabėgėlių”) | 2 | 5 |
| 9. | Garden Day | 2 | 5 |
| 10. | Let’s play Board games | 2 | 3 |
| 11. | Magic Show with Rokas Bernatonis | 4-5 | 5 |
| 12. | Lithuanian Folk Dances | 2 – 2.5 | 5 |
| 13. | Grillin’ & Chillin’ | 2 – 3 | 5 |
| 14. | Let’s play together | 2 | 5 |
| 15. | Presenting Italy | 2 | 5 |
| 16. | Arab Culture Pub-Quiz | 2 – 3 | 5 |
| 17. | Refugees in “Open Kitchen” | 2 days [12:00 – 20:00] | 5 |
| 18. | Inspirational videos evening | 2 | 4 |
| 19. | Bingo/Charades evening | 2 | 5 |
| 20. | Henna Tattoo evening | 2 | 4 |
| 21. | We run Vilnius Together | 2 | 5 |
| 22. | United Football Tournament | 4 | 5 |
| 23. | Basketball Together | 2.5 | 5 |
| 24. | Ramadan - Iftar dinner (VA Caritas) | 2 | 5 |

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|---|-----|
| 25. | Music evening (Red Cross) | 2 | 5 |
| 26. | Sharing is caring | 2 | 5 |
| 27. | Social Business Idea Challenge | 19 th August – 9 th December (2017) | 5 |
| Took place in Latvia | | | |
| 28. | Workshop on Morocco and Arabic culture | 2.5 | 4,5 |
| 29. | Faith moves mountains | 3 | 3,5 |
| 30. | Social entrepreneurship opportunity workshop Error! Reference source not found. | 2 | 4 |
| 31. | Handcraft workshop Error! Reference source not found. | 2-3 | 5 |
| 32. | One roof for global stories Error! Reference source not found. | 1.5-2 | 4,5 |
| 33. | Picnic and sports | 1.5-2 | 4,5 |
| 34. | Sports together | 2 | 4,5 |
| 35. | Ramadan Together | 2-4 | 4,5 |
| 36. | Hiking in Zemgale | 2-3 | 4 |
| 37. | World refugee day in Latvia | 1.5-2 | 5 |
| 38. | Midsummer celebration day | 1.5-2 | 4,5 |
| 39. | Learning Europe languages | 1.5-2 | 4 |
| 40. | Social Business inclusion | 2-3 | 4,5 |
| 41. | Intercultural dinner party | 2.5-3 | 4 |
| 42. | Boosting intercultural awareness | 1-1.5 | 4 |
| 43. | inclusion | 1.5-2 | 4,5 |
| 44. | Getting to know Eritrea | 1.5-2 | 4 |
| 45. | Creating open space for intercultural dialogue | 1.5-2 | 4 |
| 46. | Error! Reference source not found. | 1.5-2 | 4 |
| 47. | Youth together, part I | 2 | 4 |
| 48. | Youth together, part II | 2 | 4,5 |
| 49. | Kurdish cultural evening | 2 | 3,5 |
| 50. | Open cinema evening | 2 | 4,5 |
| 51. | Intercultural meetup with students | 2 | 4,5 |
| 52. | Storytelling evening | 2.5-3 | 4,5 |
| 53. | Ukrainian cultural event | 1.5-2 | 4 |
| 54. | Table games zone | 2 | 5 |
| 55. | Story sharing for better experience | 2 | 4 |
| 56. | Loesje workshop, part I | 4 | 4,5 |
| 57. | Loesje workshop, part II | 2 | 4,5 |
| 58. | Karaoke evening | 2 | 5 |

| | | | |
|-----|---------------|-------|---|
| 59. | Human Library | 2-2.5 | 5 |
|-----|---------------|-------|---|



1. Lithuanian Traditional Cooking Workshop (Rukla & Vilnius)

Description:

Rukla. Most of refugees in Lithuania live in the refugee reception centre in Rukla and their chances to meet local people and culture are limited. Therefore, our team has organised a traditional cooking workshop there.

While preparing the cold pink soup (*šaltibarščiai*) refugees were enthusiastic and curious. Most of them have never seen anything similar before. This event allowed them to touch the local culture by getting involved in cooking and tasting Lithuanian traditional food. All in all, the event was a success, as the participants appeared keen on taking part in future similar events.

Vilnius. The same event (involving different participants) was organised in Atviras jaunimo centras “Mes” in Vilnius. Participants were enjoying making (and tasting) the traditional cold pink soup, as well as *tinginys* (local dessert).

Our review/recommendation: it's an amazing experience to share traditional food with people from different backgrounds. Highly recommended event.

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
|  50+ (Rukla) 25 (Vilnius) |  Rukla refugee reception centre & Atviras Jaunimo centras “Mes”, Vilnius (Lithuania) |  2-2.5 hours |  5/5 |
|--|---|--|--|

Participants' testimonials:

Sana, a refugee from Syria who came to Lithuania under the European Union's relocation scheme with her husband and three sons, said: *“It is a really nice method [to integrate] because we get to understand the way things are in Lithuania, and the Lithuanians here get to understand us. I have never tried the soup before and I like it.”*

Neda said: *“I really liked the soup and I like Lithuania – I like all countries.”*

Rana said: *“The evening has been very nice, and I have met some friendly people.”*

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.unhcr.org/neu/13378-volunteers-give-refugees-taste-life-lithuania.html>
- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/tasting-saltibarščiai-in-rukla-refugee-center>
- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/lithuanian-traditional-cooking-workshop>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/refugees.eu/photos/?tab=album&album_id=644939622370561
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BV9rLT3hw6g/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BV9rUIBhNl0/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BV9rabyhUgG/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › https://www.facebook.com/394039027460623/photos/?tab=album&album_id=643063492558174
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BVw9SADhXVf/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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2. Language games

Description: youngsters from all over the world met in Vilnius Open Youth centre “Mes” to learn Lithuanian, make new friends and have fun. Participants learned little bit about the local language and culture through several activities. Among which: drawing, association of ideas and many other funny games. A coffee break gave them a chance to get to know each other, make contacts and exchange information.

Our review/recommendation: it was the very first meeting, but the group was close-knit right off the bat. In this light, we feel positive about the potential of Language Games events for integration.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  15 |  Vilniaus atviras jaunimo centras “Mes”, Vilnius, Lithuania |  2 hours |  4/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/language-games>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/394039027460623/photos/?tab=album&album_id=642329789298211
- › https://www.instagram.com/p/BVsP_WTBEGq/?taken-by=refugeeseu

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3. Adventures in Dūkštai Educational Trail

Description: together with refugees (from Rukla Reception centre) we have had an opportunity to trek in the Dūkštai educational trail. Some kids (or as we have called them “young adventurers”), were searching all around the trees, bushes and in the river for a natural souvenir, to take back to the refugee centre as their personal treasure; while others were making flower bouquets.

At the end of the trail Lithuanian food was served. Everyone sat together at one big wooden table and ate as a big family.

Our review/recommendation: everyone was happy, and the participating refugees said that they've never imagined Lithuania to be such an amazing country. Great activity for integration.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  35 |  Dūkštai, Lithuania |  4-5 hours |  5/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/adventures-in-dukstai-educational-trail>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/refugees.eu/photos/?tab=album&album_id=646908385507018
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BWPMEN9hzn0/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BWPMHn9BHIE/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BWPMKD8BBzf/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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4. Playing Arts Workshop

Description: refugees and youth had an opportunity to delve into art. Participants had absolute freedom in painting on the sidewalks with chalk, using markers on the walls and using crayons and other means to unleash their creativity.

While some of the people were discovering (and even rediscovering) their inner artist; other part of the group was being taught how to dance traditional, POP and Salsa dances and being introduced to the magic of dancing.

Our review/recommendation: art events are great for integration. To prove that, some of the participants didn't want to leave even after the event has ended.

| | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------|---|---|
|  20 |  | Ūksmė, Vilnius, Lithuania |  2-2.5 hours |  5/5 |
|--|---|---------------------------------|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/playing-with-art-in-vilnius>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/refugees.eu/photos/?tab=album&album_id=644258792438644
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BV6qytzBUrl/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BV6q2Awh5dY/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BV6q5VQBQjh/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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5. Language Café (VA Caritas)

Description: our volunteers joined a language café – an initiative from VA Caritas Užsieniečių integracijos programme in Vilnius. It's for refugees and foreigners that want to practice their Lithuanian. Either in beginner or in advanced group, refugees/foreigners were happy to learn Lithuanian and to meet new people.

Our review/recommendation: learning the local language is a must for integration; thus, language events are necessary (on a weekly basis or even more frequently).

| | | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------|---|---|
|  15 |  | Vilnius, Lithuania |  2 hours |  4/5 |
|--|---|-----------------------|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/language-cafe-practice-your-lithuanian>

Photos:

- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BVC7gNshsXj/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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6. World Refugee Day (Rukla Reception Centre)

Description: We took part in a big event hosted by the Refugees Reception Centre in Rukla. It was a great opportunity to meet refugees, talk to them, to see with our own eyes how do they live. The schedule of the event included: sport games, activities for kids, Lithuanian traditional music concert. During the lunch break delicious food made by refugees (their countries traditional cuisine) was served.

Balloons and soap bubbles were brought for kids to play with.

Our review/recommendation: events in reception centres are good entertainment for refugees & good learning for the locals. Highly recommended.

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
|  100 |  Rukla refugee reception centre, Lithuania |  3-5 hours |  5/5 |
|--|--|--|--|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/world-refugees-day-2017-rukla>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/refugees.eu/photos/?tab=album&album_id=639645092900014

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7. Integration Picnic (VA Caritas)

Description: Lithuania's VA Caritas organised an international picnic in Vilnius near the White Bridge. Both Lithuanians and foreigners gathered to the riverside to share meals and have fun together.

Around 40 people joined the event, bringing food and games. It was easy to get to know each other: the atmosphere was right, and everyone was willing to meet new people. Kids enjoyed soap bubbles and Twister. Language, origin and age barriers were broken down by volleyball and football matches.

Our review/recommendation: it's good experience to have an activity – picnic or something else – outside & away from the usual places.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
|  40 |  White Bridge, Vilnius, Lithuania |  2 hours |  4.5/5 |
|--|---|---|--|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/picnic-for-integration>

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8. Closer to the refugees (“Arčiau pabėgėlių”)

Description: conference “Closer to the refugees” took place in Vilnius Information Youth Centre, where more than 30 people participated to get acquainted with the refugees' reality. Most of refugees in Lithuania live in the reception centre in Rukla and the chances to meet local people and culture are limited. Thus, this event was perfect opportunity for them to not only form new bonds, but also get to know Lithuanian culture better. To create lax atmosphere and introduce participants to traditional (and not so traditional) Lithuanian music, Strings of Earth, a Lithuanian music band, was invited. Furthermore, UNHCR provided us with VR equipment (with 3D movies from Zaatari refugee camp) to help local participants get introduced into the realities of refugee camps across Europe and the World.

During the event we had number of guest speakers, who presented their experience in refugee integration. Our first guest speaker was Justina Elena Kraučelytė working for VA Caritas Užsieniečių integracijos programa. Justina broke the ice by telling the audience about her personal experience in her daily work & a refugee reception center in Belgium.

After her, refugee from Russia, Yevgenii Titov, talked about his reasons for leaving motherland and current political and other realities of Russia. He talked about his past (journalist in Novaja Gazeta, a free and independent newspaper; how he managed to escape to Lithuania) his present (challenges and other situations he faces while living in Lithuania) and his future plans.

Lastly, we had Abdul Basir, an Afghan translator for the Lithuanian army in Afghanistan, talk about his work experience and being blackmailed and threatened by Taliban (accused of "helping Catholic Americans"). He is currently a refugee, residing in Lithuania and trying to make a living.

Our review/recommendation: public conference is a way to raise awareness & spread information on certain topics and/or issues. Yet, it is advisable to make it more interactive by having an element of entertainment and/or interactivity (e.g. VR experience for participants).

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
|  30+ |  Vilnius Information Youth Center, Lithuania |  2 hours |  5/5 |
|---|---|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/arciau-pabegeliu-closer-to-refugee>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/394039027460623/photos/?tab=album&album_id=650823011782222
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BWcMaCNhiC0/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BWcNZsJhBuP/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BWcNdnDhsMp/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BWcNf-hhI2b/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

Live video:

- › https://www.facebook.com/refugees.lt/videos/650415065156350/?autoplay_reason=gatekeeper&video_container_type=4&video_creator_product_type=0&app_id=350685531728&live_video_guests=0

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9. Garden Day

Description: refugees had an opportunity to (re)discover their gardening skills by taking part in Garden Day organized in partnership with VA Caritas Užsieniečių integracijos programa. It was a great chance for the refugees to get acquainted with the local flora. Also, by planting wax begonia and white cedar in a public space, they felt part of the local community.

Even children wanted to join in: after playing a little bit with coloured chalks they felt curious about planting and wanted to play a role in that.

After all the work was done, new flowers and plants came to life on the tarmac through beautiful drawings made with chalks.

Our review/recommendation: We believe that every time the refugees will pass through "their garden" they'll see their plants growing and putting down roots. It's a

nice metaphor, as they themselves are settling in (putting down roots) in a new country.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  15 |  Vilnius, Lithuania |  2 hours |  5/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/garden-day>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/refugees.eu/photos/?tab=album&album_id=651252941739229
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BWe0Yadheds/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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10. Let's play Board games

Description: board games is one the many great ways to get together with a cup of coffee (or any other beverage) and delve into the many different worlds these games have to offer. Our volunteers team together with refugees gathered in a cosy environment of Vilnius youth centre "Mes". Here they got to know each other better, share personal stories & a cup of warm tea while rolling dice, playing card and trying out many intriguing board games.

It was interesting to learn new games and the stories behind them. At the same time, the participants discovered all the different ways the games can be played/interpreted in different countries.

Our review/recommendation: unfortunately, the date wasn't very suitable so not many people have joined the event. Having said that, there are better activities for integration.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
|  4 |  Vilnius Youth centre 'Mes', Lithuania |  2 hours |  3/5 |
|---|---|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/lets-play-board-games>

Photos:

- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BWsZ-b4BGSY/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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11. Magic Show with Rokas Bernatonis

Description: Rokas Bernatonis, one of the most professional and talented illusionists in the Baltics, had a show in Rukla Refugee reception centre. Rokas made an incredible show for refugees and charmed everyone with his unique and positive personality.

Rokas speaks only English and Lithuanian languages but making magic has no language or any other barriers, thus everyone enjoyed the show. To make communication easier, there was a translator, who spoke in Arabic everything Rokas said, but afterwards Rokas engaged with all the people in the centre on his own (using body language and other non-verbal communication methods).

Kids were most excited about this event and asked Rokas to repeat the tricks and teach them, how to be real magicians.

Our review/recommendation: Magic show with Rokas Bernatonis was one of the most successful events held in Rukla. Kids were left inspired by magic performance and joy it brings to every individual. Highly recommended.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  60 |  Rukla [Refugee Reception centre], Lithuania |  4-5 hours |  5/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/magic-show-rukla>
- › <http://www.tv3.lt/naujiena/921653/iliuzionistas-rokas-bernatonis-magija-dalinosi-pabegeliu-stovykloje-rukloje>
- › <http://www.alfa.lt/straipsnis/50205481/iliuzionistas-rokas-bernatonis-lankesi-pabegeliu-stovykloje-rukloje-sunku-patiketi-jog-lietuviai-siuos-zmones-nelabai-siltai-prieme>
- › <http://www.delfi.lt/veidai/zmones/iliuzionistas-r-bernatonis-magija-dalinosi-pabegeliu-stovykloje-rukloje.d?id=75482235>
- › <http://kauno.diena.lt/naujienos/lietuva/salies-pulsas/rukloje-gyvenantiems-pabegeliams-ir-iliuzionisto-trukai-ir-tautiniai-sokiai-824099>
- › <http://valstietis.tv3.lt/naujienos/salyje/rukloje-gyvenantiems-pabegeliams-ir-iliuzionisto-trukai-ir-tautiniai-sokiai/>

- › <http://www.diena.lt/naujienos/lietuva/salies-pulsas/rukloje-gyvenantiems-pabegeliams-ir-iliuzionisto-triakai-ir-tautiniai-sokiai-824099>
- › http://baltnews.lt/vilnius_news/20170810/1017451959.html
- › <http://www.newsjs.com/lt/rukloje-gyvenantiems-pab%C4%97g%C4%97liams-%E2%80%93-ir-iliuzionisto-triakai-ir-tautiniai-%C5%A1okiai/dTINEKKkFKXuIVM/>

Professional video:

- › https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6MBzWc_PVo8

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/refugees.eu/photos/?tab=album&album_id=661417350722788
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BXXoZJmhrvg/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BXXoc8ZBlrq/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BXXohX8hOcY/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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12. Lithuanian Folk Dances

Description: our volunteer Ineta, professional folk dancer, came to the Rukla Refugee reception center for the first time in her life with hopes to teach refugee's youth traditional Lithuanian folk dances. By learning the basic moves of traditional Lithuanian dances, refugee youth got an opportunity to experience first-hand our traditions and customs. Furthermore, during this event they had an opportunity to try traditional Lithuanian outfits, dance and play traditional Lithuanian games and, of course, hear Lithuanian folk music.

Our review/recommendation: Games and dances are a good and fun way to introduce youth to new environment and/or community.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
|  30 |  <p style="text-align: center;">Rukla [Refugee Reception centre] Lithuania</p> |  2 – 2.5 hours |  5/5 |
|--|--|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/lithuanian-folk-dances>
- › <http://kauno.diena.lt/naujienos/lietuva/salies-pulsas/rukloje-gyvenantiems-pabegeliams-ir-iliuzionisto-triakai-ir-tautiniai-sokiai-824099>
- › <http://valstietis.tv3.lt/naujienos/salyje/rukloje-gyvenantiems-pabegeliams-ir-iliuzionisto-triakai-ir-tautiniai-sokiai/>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/refugees.eu/photos/?tab=album&album_id=668626420001881
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BXm7UorBQnj/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BXm7cs4Bj5t/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BXm9bZwhDse/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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13. Grillin' & Chillin'

Description: During this event, both local youth and refugees were invited into the office of TRY team to make hot-dogs and hamburgers together. During the event, they did not only have an opportunity to enjoy their creations, but got to know each other better, play table-top and other games, dance together. Refugees got an opportunity to open up to locals more and mingle in an international environment, while local youth's misconceptions and stereotypes about refugees were broken. Thus, we consider this event a great success.

Our review/recommendation: Even though key aspect of the event was grilling and enjoying food, numerous side activities were provided, but not mandatory. These include: table-top/video games, dancing competition, singing competition.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  25 |  Vilnius city center, Lithuania |  2 – 3 hours |  5/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/grillin-chillin>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/394039027460623/photos/?tab=album&album_id=664349670429556
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BXp7LZUhtKJ/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BXp7HxhBh82/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BXp7Q16hPtj/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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14. Let's play together

Description: Videogames is one of the major ways to bring people together and have fun. During one of our visits to the Rukla Refugee reception centre we decided to bring something new and intriguing to their daily lives - video games. Dancing on top of high mountains, racing in a sports car, going on adventures in jungles – these are only a couple of activities children would love to do and with the power of videogames, their dreams could come true.

Even though children were not informed beforehand about such event, very quickly majority of children and youth, living in the Rukla Refugee reception centre gathered to play together.

Our review/recommendation: Youth were very happy to be able to mingle in a virtual world, where your dreams can become a reality. We advise to have different types and genres of games prepared in case kids are disinterested in one of the games

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
|  20 |  Rukla [Refugee Reception centre] Lithuania |  2 hours |  5/5 |
|---|--|--|--|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/lets-play-together>

Photos:

- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BYGMBQnH9I/?taken-by=refugeeseu> (*note: we did not take more pictures during this event because it was for kids*)

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15. Presenting Italy

Description: Past TRY events were organised with Lithuanian culture, food and traditions being key aspect of the events. This was done to help with the refugee's integration process into the local communities. However, since Lithuania is a proud member of the EU, refugees should be introduced to European culture as well.

Hence, we decided to organize events aimed at introducing different European countries. To start the European integration events, we started with Italian culture and its food.

Our Italian intern made the introduction to the Italian culture to refugees by making traditional Italian food (Lasagna and Tiramisù) and presenting her traditions and

customs. Participants were excited by the introduction of other European cultures and food. Participants were cheerfully mingling in the international environment, getting to know each other and creating strong new bonds.

Our review/recommendation: even though there are numerous ways to represent a country and its culture, food proved to be most effective and enjoyable by participants feedback.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  10 |  Vilnius city centre, Lithuania |  2 hours |  5/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/italian-dinner>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/refugees.eu/photos/?tab=album&album_id=6922801576365077
 - › https://www.facebook.com/pg/refugees.eu/photos/?tab=album&album_id=679792895551900
 - › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BYVR-mfHoqB/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
-

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16. Arab Culture Pub-Quiz

Description: Vilnius. During the *Vilnius Arab Week*, we invited both locals and refugees to challenge themselves and their knowledge in the *Arab Culture Pub-Quiz*. Seven teams with 2 to 6 members in each team gathered to have fun and compete for the first prize – a board game to play with their teammates.

After the Pub-Quiz, dances, board games and other activities were organised to facilitate intercultural exchange further and make deeper connections with each other.

This event not only helped participants make new friends, but also helped them learn more about refugee situation worldwide and other interesting (and some-fun) facts.

Pabrade. Since the Pub-Quiz, organised in Vilnius had a big success, our team decided to bring it to Pabrade, where refugees are located. We have organized Arab Culture Pub-Quiz in a day centre “*Kulturu Ikalne*” where around 30 people came to challenge themselves on their knowledge about refugee situation worldwide, as well

as overall general facts. During the event, three teams (8-10 members each) were competing for the main prize and the youngest team were announced the winners.

Our review/recommendation: These events received overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants and huge interest was shown from locals on the topics of current refugee situation worldwide. We suggest to have mini-tasks for participating teams between each round of the Pub-Quiz to test their teamwork skills in practice.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
|  30 |  Vilnius city centre & Day centre "Kulturu Ikalne", Pabrade (Lithuania) |  2 – 3 hours hours |  5/5 |
|--|--|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/arab-culture-pub-quiz>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/refugees.eu/photos/?tab=album&album_id=679792895551900
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BZLJLUbHorg/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BZLJTxsNbCq/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BZLJV8ynadV/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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17. Refugees in "Open Kitchen"

Description: "Keulè Rūkè" organised an open kitchen event, where participating cooks and chefs could show off their skills and exchange tips & tricks how to improve their recipes. TRY team decided that this is a great opportunity for their refugee friend Basir to show off his cooking skills and share Afghan cousine with locals. The tasty smell of pilaf - traditional Afghan meal and hot saffron tea created a feeling of warm and welcoming home. With the help of "Keule Rūkè" event, TRY team got an amazing opportunity to not only promote Arab culture but break common misconceptions about refugees. This event was a perfect example to show to the public, that there are numerous direct and indirect ways to help refugees with their integration into society.

Our review/recommendation: Additional hands (volunteers) are strongly advised for the cooks, since different tasks are usually required to be completed during the event. Dishes should be prepared in advance to avoid any shortage during the event.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
|  200+ |  Keulė Rūkė, Vilnius, Lithuania |  2 days [12:00 – 20:00] |  5/5 |
|--|--|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/refugees-in-open-kitchen>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/refugees.eu/photos/?tab=album&album_id=685258878338635
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BaGBSH0hFIZ/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BaGBOy4hFt6/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BaGBK9vhxeS/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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18. Inspirational videos evening

Description: motivational videos are one of the main ways to raise awareness about social issues witnessed nowadays. Hence, one of the events we organised was Inspirational video evening. During it, participants were shown different videos, targeted at raising the awareness of current social issues (discrimination, lack of refugee integration, bullying, stereotypes, etc.)

Discussions between participants were held afterwards, where everyone had an opportunity to express their concerns and methods of solving these issues.

Our review/recommendation: After each video a short discussion on the thoughts and emotions on presented issues should be held. Discussions should not be forced onto participants and if there is no interest, only summarizing discussion should be done.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  12 |  Vilnius city centre, Lithuania |  2 hours |  4/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/inspiring-movie-session>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/refugees.eu/photos/?tab=album&album_id=683349968529526
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BaGAKGWhwqf/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BaGAMM9hESc/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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19. Bingo/Charades evening

Description: many people think Bingo is an ultimate social game when the players find the selected numbers on their card and they call out “Bingo”! But TRY team decided to take a unique spin on it, where all the participants had to fill in the sheet with names of other people and their personal facts/quirks (for example: “have you ever participated in sports event?”). After a couple of rounds of this game, Charades were followed. All the participants were really interested in alternative bingo and Charades. Furthermore, everyone remained in active discussions long after the official part of the activity.

Our review/recommendation: Alternative bingo and Charades, in our personal experience, are extremely good methods to promote intercultural exchange and form long lasting friendships.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  18 |  Vilnius city centre, Lithuania |  2 hours |  5/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/bingo-charades-evening>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/394039027460623/photos/?tab=album&album_id=689405191257337
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BaTgnTHH9FZ/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BaTgpXZnaHG/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BaTgrT3H0hT/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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20. Henna Tattoo evening

Description: the start of the summer brought new discoveries to our team. This time TRY team was introduced to Eastern culture and traditions. One of the symbolic elements of Eastern culture is called Henna drawings. It's a tradition of painting your body with the beautiful artwork from henna tree also known as "chna".

During this event we did not only hear about the history of motives behind such tradition and paintings, but every participant got an opportunity to try painting on his/her body. To facilitate the knowledge and experience exchange, we had henna art specialist *Maritana Larbi* from Pakistan. She showed us unique techniques of this ancient ritual, history behind it and many other useful tips & tricks.

Our review/recommendation: If possible, professional Henna artist should be invited to the activity as a facilitator or helper. This would promote not only the artist's work, but the intercultural dialogue as well.

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
|  20 |  VU orientalistical centre, Lithuania |  2 hours |  4/5 |
|--|---|--|--|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/henna-tattoo-evening>

Photos:

- › https://www.instagram.com/p/BaTg799H_hh/?taken-by=refugeeseu
- › https://www.facebook.com/394039027460623/photos/?tab=album&album_id=632061233658400

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21. We run Vilnius Together

Description: on the 4th of July our team participated in the annual running marathon in Vilnius - "We Run Vilnius".

This year's marathon was special, since 2018 marked the 30th year of Erasmus+ programme and many organisations and youth, in some form affiliated with Erasmus+, were invited to participate in the marathon. TRY team decided to not only promote Erasmus+ programme, but TRY project and its core values as well. Even though our team didn't get gold medals, but as they ran carrying the flag of the project during all the marathon, they finished it all together.

Our review/recommendation: While running, the project's flag was held, representing diversity and solidarity which are the main values of TRY project.

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|--|---|---|---|
|  15 |  Vilnius city centre, Lithuania |  2 hours |  5/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/try-team-in-we-run-vilnius>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/394039027460623/photos/?tab=album&album_id=633380906859766
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BaThQ8MHDoG/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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22. United Football Tournament

Description: united football tournament was held in the central stadium of Jonava, where many mixed teams of refugees and locals competed while sharing a common sense of respect and unity. It was a friendly competition between all participants, where everyone got a chance to build new skills (including teamwork), forge strong bonds and promote cooperation between refugees and locals.

People, who didn't want to participate in football matches, could contribute to the arts installation, called "Solidarity hands". Wooden hands were provided, and people could paint on it, representing the symbol of solidarity. Furthermore, since we had many refugee and local children participating in the event, we had volunteers who played numerous games and made colourful balloon animals for kids.

Our review/recommendation: A variety of activities should be provided for participants, who are not interested in the core activity.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
|  60 |  Jonava, Lithuania |  4 hours |  5/5 |
|--|--|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/united-football-tournament>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/394039027460623/photos/?tab=album&album_id=678580792339777
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BZDyOPYHeGy/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BZDyr4NnPNU/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › https://www.instagram.com/p/BZDy_19H22V/?taken-by=refugeeseu
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BZLE5W5HU75/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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23. Basketball Together

Description: on 25th of August, our volunteers Paulius and Tomas with a group of refugees joined more than eleven thousands of Lithuanian fans. It was a last preparation match before the start of the European men's basketball championship "EuroBasket 2017" and everyone gathered to support Lithuanian national basketball team.

During this time, they had an opportunity to see all the elite stars of the European and World Basketball playing on one court. This activity was a great opportunity for refugees not only to see preparation match of European men's basketball championship, but to indulge further in Lithuanian culture and its traditions.

Even though Lithuanian team lost, participating refugees enjoyed their time greatly and were inspired by the spirits of Lithuanian basketball team players and their fans.

Our review/recommendation: Even though participating refugees enjoyed greatly this event, a survey should be done in advance to know, which sports they are most interested in participating in.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  10 |  <p>Siemens Arena, Vilnius, Lithuania</p> |  2.5 hours |  5/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/together-in-basketball>

Photos:

- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BYOdm2EnthO/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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24. Ramadan - Iftar dinner (VA Caritas)

Description: VA Caritas Vilnius hosted an Arabic dinner event in Vilnius, where one of the religious observances of Ramadan – the Iftar, was introduced. It's a meal at the end of the day's fast when people gather to break their fast together right after Maghrib – time which is around sunset. Even though this tradition is the same through Arabic countries, each country and family has different dishes. Thus, TRY team contributed to organising this event and promoting awareness of locals of such traditions and variety of dishes, eaten during this time.

Our review/recommendation: Events, such like these, are a great way to introduce locals to Arabian traditions and culture. Furthermore, it is a good way to promote intercultural exchange and mingling.

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
|  10 |  VA Caritas Užsieniečių integracijos programa in Vilnius, Lithuania |  2 hours |  5/5 |
|---|--|--|--|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/iftar-dinner>

Photos:

- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BVZV0XUh8LC/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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25. Music evening (Red Cross)

Description: Red cross is an international organisation focusing on humanitarian help for those who need it the most.

To raise awareness on humanitarian help required, they organised music night in Refugees and Migrants centre in Kaunas and TRY team was invited to participate, as well as collaborate on carrying out the event. Refugees were invited to the event to perform and participate in front of public audience. Dances, songs, theatre acts and many more were shown during the event, which represented different cultures and customs. Participants of the event got an opportunity to not only indulge in Eastern and Arabic traditions and customs, but in Lithuanian traditions as well.

Our review/recommendation: Cultural sharing events are very good for refugee integration into society and to raise awareness of current refugee situation in local environment

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
|  30 |  Centras InLT, Kaunas, Lithuania |  2 hours |  5/5 |
|--|--|---|--|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/music-evening>

Photos:

- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/Badlwe5H7Q-/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BadltrVHNYu/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/Badlqv8ntPf/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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26. Sharing is caring

Description: Rudamina. TRY team was invited to share our project's activities and current refugee situation in Lithuania with local kids in Rudamina's Culture Centre. This was done through various workshops, which sought to understand: 1) who is a refugee; and 2) what common stereotypes they are surrounded by. Discussions and video presentations on what are the current refugee situation in Lithuania and Europe were facilitated to solidify their new-gained knowledge.

Aukstadvaris. In addition to presenting the project and its related topics to the kids in Rudamina's Culture Center, our team was invited as a guest speaker to youth exchange "OPEN YOUR HEART FOR EXCLUDED". During this youth exchange 36 participants from 6 different countries: France, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Serbia and Lithuania were presented with our project and its activities. Best practises, carried out events and experience in refugee integration were presented as well. Furthermore, our key activity of TRY project: *Social Business Idea Challenge* was introduced to the participants.

Our review/recommendation: interactive presentations and having an opportunity to be guest speaker in such events gives opportunity to share current issues (refugee integration into society) and how we can solve them. Furthermore, through various workshops different ideas for refugee integration through youth work can be developed, which later can be applied in practise.

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
|  15-36 |  Rudamina, Vilnius & Aukstadvaris (Lithuania) |  2 hours |  5/5 |
|---|--|---|---|

Photos:

- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BauJkVRHeQW/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BauKuucnHPh/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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27. Social Business Idea Challenge

Description: Hackathon and Open Discussion at BiZZ'17 – Social Innovation Festival.

Social Business Idea Challenge was started at Social innovation festival “BiZZ'17” in the historical place – Antalieptė. During the event TRY team had a private stage where main obstacles refugees in Lithuania face, how youth and Social Business can solve them were presented. Furthermore, our team got an opportunity to present and invite people to participate in *Social Business Idea Challenge*.

During the festival we had several guest speakers, who talked on different topics. Our first speaker was associate external relations officer Renata Kuleš from UNHCR, who presented current refugee crisis in Europe and how Lithuania is coping with this issue. Second and third speakers were Yevgeniy and Mamdouh who talked about their personal experience in integrating into Lithuanian society as refugees. After the lunch an open discussion was held with the participants and refugees. The main idea was to present details about refugee's life in Lithuania and the problems they are facing in it.

Social Business Idea Challenge. To propose and develop various business ideas to promote healthy refugee integration methods, international competition for youth was created.

Participation was open for everyone, with the main emphasis being youth (aged from 18 to 30) and/or people from refugee/migrant background.

During the competition teams gained experience and knowledge required to create and establish a social business, targeted towards swift integration of refugees. There were many participating teams, but only was nominated a winner of the grand prize: crowd-funding video and campaign, as well as technical support from SBIC's network of experts.

Final event of this competition was held in Vilnius on 9th December 2017.

Our review/recommendation: Social Business Idea Challenge was an excellent opportunity to generate and test-out different ideas for refugee integration. We would advise to contact companies, as well as other NGOs for possible promotion or technical/financial support during the contest.

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
|  150 |  Antaliepte / Online / Final conference – ISM, Vilnius, Lithuania |  19th August – 9th December (2017) |  5/5 |
|---|---|--|--|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/social-business-idea-challenge-hackathon-and-open-discussion-bizz17>
- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/business-contest>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/394039027460623/photos/?tab=album&album_id=669402019924321
- › https://www.facebook.com/394039027460623/photos/?tab=album&album_id=667837203414136
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BX-GdnAhe98/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BX-PVBIBegc/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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28. Workshop on Morocco and Arabic culture

Description: the meeting had gathered people from different countries with various religious and social backgrounds. Thus, intercultural exchange was facilitated, even though the main aspect of the event was opportunity to experience first-hand lifestyle and traditions of Morocco and Latvia.

During the meeting one representative from the Morocco named Mo, shared a colorful presentation with different venues and sites (sightseeing and other activities) that can be found in Morocco and his home town Sadi.

After Mo, Vita, representative from Latvia, shared information about Morocco from her personal perspective, since she was living there for four years. She not only expanded on the sites worth visiting in Morocco, but also provided general information about the hospitality, traditions and customs of locals.

The main idea of the intercultural evening was to introduce people with the Arabic culture and traditions. Furthermore, it was a tool to spread intercultural awareness and understanding between cultures.

Our review/recommendation: as this event was targeted at youth, for better reach and technical support, we would advise to contact local youth centers for possible support.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
|  20 |  Youth centre Trepes, Riga, Latvia |  2 hours |  5/5 |
|--|--|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/learning-workshop-about-morocco-in-riga>
- › <https://jaunatne.info/lv/iepazit-maroku/>

Photos:

- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BU828DtBct6/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1465824040204354

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29. Faith moves mountains

Description: due to religion being one of the main tools of connecting different cultures and people, our team decided to create a gathering of people with different beliefs, cultural and/or other backgrounds. During this gathering we discussed the importance of religion, shared the knowledge and experience about events in Ukraine and what other means, not only religion, can bind people together.

Representative from Ukraine, named Maks, shared his experience of being away from home for political and other reasons. He introduced difficulties migrants/refugees are facing when they try to integrate into new society and what youth (and youth work) can do to promote swift integration.

After the sharing of Maks's experience, discussions were shifted towards religion and its importance in uniting people. Even though during the discussion people with various religious beliefs were present, a consensus was reached that faith is important and respect towards each other is crucial today.

Our review/recommendation: as this event had number of activities, we would recommend small breaks in between to give participants opportunity to share their feelings with each other.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  12 |  Pļavnieki, Riga, Latvia |  2.5 hours |  4.5/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Participant's testimonial: *"I enjoyed the non-formal atmosphere and the snacks gathered by the participants and the hosts of the workshop."*

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/movie-evening-for-understanding>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1465828776870547
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BVEe60GhUpU/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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30. Social entrepreneurship opportunity workshop

Description: social entrepreneurship is one of the main ways of promoting and solving numerous social and other issues country faces at the time. Since Latvia is a member of EU, it has obligations to accept certain number of refugees into its territory. Unfortunately, locals are not as open as the government itself, thus integration of refugees is harder than it should be.

With this in mind, we organized *social entrepreneurship opportunity workshop*, which gathered different creative Non-Governmental organizations (NGO) in Riga.

The main idea of the meeting was to search for the ideas that could help find a way to use refugees skills which could help them get self-employed in Latvia or in any other country. To achieve that, various discussions and activities were organised to develop and stimulate new ideas, how NGO and private sector could contribute. Variety of ideas and plans were thought out during the event, which later were implemented together with the refugees.

Our review/recommendation: as this event is more of a “long-term” event, we would highly recommend for the facilitators to maintain constant follow-up with the participants of the event.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
|  30 |  NVO nams, Riga, Latvia |  3 hours |  3.5/5 |
|--|--|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/social-entrepreneurship-workshop-to-boost-cooperation-among-ngos>

Photos:

- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BVO7a9zhB5r/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1465832613536830

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31. Handcraft workshop

Description: skills and practical knowledge is the key to success. Therefore, handcraft workshop was created as a tool to gain practical knowledge and additional way to integrate minorities and/or refugees.

During this workshop participants got an opportunity to delve deeper into the culture of Latvia. As one of the most popular hobbies in Latvian women's communities is knitting, participants were given opportunity to try it out and learn basic skills required to knit. Furthermore, knitting is considered a form of meditation and one of the best ways to increase social skills or creativity.

Both professionals and starters were welcome to participate in the workshop and practice their knitting, as well as create new bonds between locals and migrants/refugees. Even though this activity is more considered acceptable for western countries, majority of the participants were from eastern countries and many misconceptions about refugees and their background were broken during this event.

Our review/recommendation: facilitators of the event should have team of experts or people, who are accustomed to the art of knitting and be able to help participants, if any issue occurs.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  16 |  Ilģuciems, Riga, Latvia |  2 hours |  4/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/handcraft-workshop>

Photos:

- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BV7Jm-1hJPv/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1465835776869847

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32. One roof for global stories

Description: event gathered representatives from Mexico, Brazil and Egypt, who were sharing their life stories and experiences after moving to live in Latvia. They presented hardships, happiness and many other situations and emotions they experienced while trying to integrate into Latvian society.

Stories these people shared with local youth were inspiring and helpful, since they shared tips and tricks of survival in unfamiliar and unusual environments. Furthermore, stereotypes about foreigners were broken during the event and new strong bonds were formed.

Our review/recommendation: We believe that inviting experienced and positive people to share their success stories are the best way to motivate people. Therefore, organising similar events can help inspire people and provide them with a possibility to search for more integration opportunities in foreign culture.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
|  15 |  Youth centre Trepes, Riga, Latvia |  2-3 hours |  5/5 |
|--|--|---|---|

Participant's testimonial: *"Very inspirational! Everything is possible, even learning Latvian language!"*

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/integration-story-night>
- › <https://jaunatne.info/lv/pieredzes-stasti-par-latvijas-iepazisanu-un-parcelsanos-uz-dzivi/>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1465838680202890

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33. Picnic and sports

Description: it is well known that more than half of Latvian territory is covered by woodlands and green areas. This green treasure attracts many people from neighbouring countries, however, because of a fast lifestyle many locals do not have the time to appreciate it properly. Thus, our team organised this event to create a healthy environment for participants and bond not only with one another, but with nature as well.

During this international event, both local and refugee youth had a chance in mixed teams to play grassroots sports (e.g. cricket, football), exchange cultures, traditions and customs and enjoy traditional cuisine of different countries.

Our review/recommendation: weather played a major role in the success of this event; thus, we recommend having a plan B in case unpredicted bad weather occurs.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  10 |  Mežaparks, Riga, Latvia |  1.5-2 hours |  4.5/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Participant's testimonial: "loved it! #50shadesofgreen"

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/sporty-picnic>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1465848776868547

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34. Sports together

Description: to bring people of different backgrounds, cultures and values closer, TRY team organised sports day, which gathered immigrants/refugees from Ukraine and local youth of Riga. Through various team-based grassroots sports (football, basketball, etc.) youth got a chance to form strong bonds, learn more about each other's culture. Furthermore, each participant got an opportunity to not only learn new skills (team-building, communication, etc.), but teach others as well during the games.

Our review/recommendation: events such as these help to enhance social, cultural, moral, ethical competencies to provide changes at personal, professional and social levels.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
|  15 |  Pļavnieku sporta laukums, Riga, Latvia |  1.5-2 hours |  4.5/5 |
|--|--|---|---|

Participant's testimonial: "Weather spoiled our game, but we had the chance to talk under the tent until the rain stops for us to go home, so it was a nice day, we got to know each other better!"

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/sport-day-at-the-suburb>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1465852000201558
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BVVKZEBYO6/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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35. Ramadan Together

Description: Ramadan is very important for Eastern cultures, yet not a lot of people in Latvia know about it. To bring a change to such situation, TRY team organised an event, where Eastern culture was presented in a non-formal way, including Ramadan and Iftar dinner.

Even though the main idea of the event was to introduce local youth to new cultures and customs, intercultural exchange and communication took place and both locals and refugees got an opportunity to learn more about each other.

Our review/recommendation: events, such as these, help bring people of different cultures, beliefs, etc. together and give an opportunity for minorities to be included into the society swifter.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
|  30 |  Youth centre Trepes, Riga, Latvia |  2 hours |  4.5/5 |
|--|--|---|---|

Participant's testimonial: "Not even water? YES, not even water."

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/understanding-ramadan>
- › <https://jaunatne.info/lv/saprast-ramadanu/>

Photos:

- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BVZZHkshL4C/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1465856116867813

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36. Hiking in Zemgale

Description: hiking trip along the Zemgale river was organized to establish closer relations between the local and refugee youth. Various games were played and nature trails were explored to find interesting treasures for “young adventurers” to bring back to their home. Hiking trip was ended with the discussion evening and experience sharing by the fireplace. Variety of topics that are related to different world views (e.g. religion, integration, living in foreign countries) were covered and all the participants felt part of one big community.

No strict instructions were given to the participants on hiking trip, thus importance of team and communication were discovered during the trip. Team spirit and mutual understanding of multicultural values were one of many things participants shared as key aspects of the trip.

Fresh air and the surrounding nature made the youth open more easily comparing the times spend together in city centre or other indoor facilities.

Our review/recommendation: it is recommended to have team building and other active tasks prepared during the trip to maintain everyone's focus on the trip and being together. Furthermore, we advise to leave space in the schedule for the reflection of the activity to give opportunity to participants to express themselves.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  10 |  Ozolnieki, Latvia |  2-4 hours |  4.5/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Participant's testimonial: “Mosquitos were the biggest challenge to overcome and stay calm without scratching. #natureforyouth”

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/hiking-in-zemgale>

Photos:

- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BVI2KzbB0KL/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1465858796867545

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37. World refugee day in Latvia

Description: as “World refugee day” is one of the most important dates for our team in the year, we decided to hold an event in Stockholm School of Economics in Riga. During this event numerous speeches were given by UNESCO representatives on current refugee crisis, how it is affecting Latvia and how youth can make a change. Furthermore, several workshops were organised, which include Human Library, where people got an opportunity to freely approach people from different backgrounds and “read” about them. During it local youth had an opportunity to hear different stories of refugees and how they are trying to integrate into society and what hardships they encounter.

Each participant felt being part of a bigger community and strong, long-lasting bonds were formed during the event. Furthermore, local youth were inspired by the stories of refugees and gained a deeper understanding of the current refugee situation across Europe and how they can contribute in defusing harmful situations.

Our review/recommendation: we recommend to approach schools and universities for possible collaboration on events of bigger scale. Furthermore, providing a variety of different activities (workshops, guest speakers, etc.) is a great way to maintain prolonged interest of the participants.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
|  40 |  “SSE” Riga, Latvia |  2-3 hours |  4/5 |
|--|--|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/world-refugee-day>

Photos:

- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BV9eMcnhfry/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1465862040200554

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38. Midsummer celebration day

Description: as JĀŅI is one of the most anticipated summer events in Latvia, our team decided to include refugees in the celebration of the Midsummer day. Refugees were introduced to the event's history, it's meaning and heritage it carries through various games, discussions and other activities together with the local youth. Refugees got an opportunity to not only see the traditional clothes Latvian youth wears for such events but try them on as well and become the star dancers of the events.

In addition to the games and dances refugees were introduced to, they had an opportunity to try unique cuisine of Latvia and share differences and similarities their customs share.

Our review/recommendation: even though the main aspect of the event was to introduce refugees to the Latvian customs, we highly recommend giving opportunity for them to present their culture as well. Thus, intercultural exchange can be facilitated further, and greater integration can be achieved.

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
|  30 |  Youth center Trepes, Riga, Latvia |  1.5-2 hours |  5/5 |
|---|--|--|--|

Participants' testimonials:

"Latvians know how to dance! #partylatvianstyle"

"I enjoyed the feeling of unity in such a diverse company of people."

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/midsummer-celebration-workshop>

Photos:

- › https://www.instagram.com/p/BWLe_KmhFOe/?taken-by=refugeeseu
- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1465866070200151

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39. Learning Europe languages

Description: with the aim to create solutions, which could help refugees learn local language better, TRY team of volunteers organised this event. During it, various games, energizers and discussions were held with participants from various countries. Participants shared their experience in learning Latvian or any other language, difficulties they came across and how they managed to overcome them.

Our review/recommendation: this type of event is a key aspect of any cultural integration program. However, it is important to ensure that such event would be held in English (or the language majority understands) or to provide the translation from English to the local language for the local attendants who have minimal English proficiency.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
|  25 |  Ogre Culture Centre, Latvia |  1.5-2 hours |  4.5/5 |
|--|--|---|---|

Participant's testimonial:

"Visiting places outside big cities, like here in Ogre, you can find surprisingly more kind people than the capitals even though the population here is less; people are more friendly and approachable! I guess it's true that big cities are stressful!"

"Games and energizers, very cool ways for ice breaking and engaging discussion between us"

Press releases & links:

<http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/cultures-and-realities-of-europe-workshop>

Photos:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BWOFIXBhF2H/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1465867390200019

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40. Social Business inclusion

Description: during this event youth from Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, China, Romania and Pakistan were working on ideas of supporting refugees and asylum seekers through social entrepreneurship. Increase of civic society competences and young people's entrepreneurial skills development, as well as how to motivate youth from Baltic region to become entrepreneurs were discussed as well.

To test these ideas in a controlled environment, workshops were carried out during the event. Thus, international cooperation was promoted, outcome of which was seen during *Social Business Idea Challenge* that took place on 9th of December in Vilnius.

Our review/recommendation: even though this event has seen great success and creation of outstanding ideas, we would recommend to regularly do follow up activities of participant's ideas. This would not only help organisers to see progress of their ideas, but keep participants motivation and interest to be involved in further activities.

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
|  20 |  Rāmava, Latvia |  1.5-2 hours |  4/5 |
|---|---|--|--|

Participant's testimonial: "We need to be more aware of socially responsible way of running the enterprises to promote inclusion and integration."

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/social-integration-promotion-for-baltic-youth>

Photos:

- › https://www.instagram.com/p/BWXGfr_hug1/?taken-by=refugeeseu
- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469174953202596

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41. Intercultural dinner party

Description: food is one of the most unifying force in the world. No matter cultural, social or any other differences, people around the globe enjoy the food and ability to share it.

Thus, creation of this event, where locals and refugees were able to share not only their recipes and dishes, but also their stories, worries and happy moments.

Strong bonds between people, coming from Europe, Asia and Africa were formed and warm, family-like environment was maintained throughout the whole event.

Our review/recommendation: even though sharing of food is a great bonding experience, we would recommend giving opportunity for participants to make (or create) dishes together.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
|  20 |  Vecumnieki, Latvia |  2-3 hours |  4.5/5 |
|--|--|---|---|

Participant's testimonial: "Latvian food is really tasty! Wish when I cook it will taste similar at least! Thanks for the recipes, Linda!"

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/intercultural-dinner-workshop>

Photos:

- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BWsabGTBlxR/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469175996535825

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42. Boosting intercultural awareness

Description: at current moment, Latvia houses many people from various backgrounds, who have one thing in common – close to no communication with local youth, which promotes exclusion of immigrants and refugees.

To tackle this issue, international meetup was organised to break the ice between local and refugee youth, as well as negate all the stereotypes and misconceptions about foreigners.

During the event, various games, activities (team building, energizers, etc.) and discussions were carried out to promote inclusion, intercultural exchange and relationship building between locals and refugees. Furthermore, youth were introduced to the tools and non-formal activities, useful for boosting intercultural understanding and cooperation between people from different backgrounds.

Our review/recommendation: we believe, that follow-up events should be organized to maintain bonds created by the participants and promote refugee's inclusion further.

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
|  15 |  NVO nams, Riga, Latvia |  2.5-3 hours |  4/5 |
|---|---|--|--|

Participant's testimonial: *"being in Latvia without friends and family motivated to join the meetup to find new friends from different places."*

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/intercultural-meetup>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469176786535746

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43. Importance of social inclusion

Description: currently in Latvia, most of the refugees are families with small children, living in the asylum seeker centre. unfortunately, not all locals understand the situation they're in and how they could help with the integration process.

Thus, our volunteers visited Mucenieki asylum seeker centre, where they organised activities together with refugees and discussed on possible future events and workshops. Insights on their daily lives and hardships they face were also discussed and possible solutions were revealed.

Our review/recommendation: even though administration board of Mucenieki was happy to accept our workshops and activities in their center, we would recommend to create a regular communication channel. This would ensure the possible usage of their premises for any future activities.

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
|  15 |  Mucenieki, Latvia |  1-1.5 hours |  4/5 |
|---|--|--|--|

Participant's testimonial:

"We are strong, don't worry, we made it until here, we will make it further on!"

"Too emotional to describe, learned too much from this experience, people are strong, and strength comes within us and these people proved it to me."

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/visit-to-mucenieki-asylum-seeker-center-of-latvia>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469179279868830
- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BXTCrvcBJLr/?taken-by=refugeeseu>

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44. Getting to know Eritrea

Description: “Why people flee from Eritrea and how perilous their journeys are?” – these are the questions people ask when talking about people from Eritrea, but usually no one can answer them.

To help people get answers to these and similar questions, we organised a non-formal discussion, where people from Eritrea got a chance to share their stories, insights on integration and many other things.

Plans of Eritreans were shared and misconceptions of why they are in Europe were broken. Furthermore, possible solutions for better refugee integration and how youth can be involved were actively discussed between all participants of the event.

Our review/recommendation: since majority of the participants don't know each other in the beginning, it is strongly advised for the organisers to carry out some energizers or small team building activities to create friendly and safe environment.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  30 |  KKC, Riga, Latvia |  1.5-2 hours |  4.5/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Participant's testimonial: “I am speechless, most of us, listening to Eritrean's stories, which are their reality for so many months; we were uncomfortable living in our comfortable lives. I don't know what to say or do...”

Press releases & links:

- > <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/getting-to-know-eritrea>
- > <https://jaunatne.info/lv/iepazit-dazado-eritreja/>

Photos:

- > https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469182179868540

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45. Creating open space for intercultural dialogue

Description: as Latvia has many minority groups, part of them (due to political, social or other reasons) may feel excluded from the local communities. To mitigate that, TRY team of volunteers organised this event with the aim to find solutions, of how minority groups and refugees could be better integrated into society through youth work.

As raising cultural awareness and learning from each other can be a great starting point for intercultural dialogue and relations, future cultural events were the main discussion topic of the event. Furthermore, living conditions of both refugees and minorities in Latvia, learning Latvian language and how to be an active citizen were the “hot topics” of the project.

Our review/recommendation: even though participants were active in the discussions and had great interest in the topics of the event, we would advise to create and distribute info pack with relevant information before the event.

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
|  15 |  NVO nams, Riga, Latvia |  1.5-2 hours |  4/5 |
|--|---|--|--|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/creating-open-space-for-intercultural-dialogue>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469185216534903

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46. Today's youth – tomorrow's vision

Description: as youth has the main role in the integration process of the people who have come to Latvia for various reasons, having a positive view about refugees is crucial.

To break myths and misconceptions about refugees, their inclusion, reasons of coming to Europe and similar topics were discussed during the event.

Furthermore, since most participants from local environment were divided into two camps (conservative view-point and liberal view-point), discussions and workshops how to best promote inclusion and involve locals in the process were carried out.

Additionally, participating youth in mixed teams of locals and refugees were working together to create a plan for future activities, which would ensure better integration of refugees into society.

Our review/recommendation: as there were many workshops and discussions sessions held during the event, short coffee breaks were necessary for participants to get to know each other better and maintain high concentration.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
|  15 |  Ogre Culture Centre, Latvia |  1.5-2 hours |  4/5 |
|--|--|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/local-youth-future-vision>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469186323201459

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47. Youth together, part I

Description: “How to preserve your families traditions and values? What should be done to help refugees easier integrate into the society? What difficulties refugees come across in a new country and how locals can help in solving them?” – these and similar questions very often come across people, who are former Latvian refugees (kids, who fled to Latvia during Soviet occupation times). To help get answers to these and similar questions, TRY team organised an event, during which “TRY” project and its activities were presented.

Refugee youngsters shared their personal experiences of trying to integrate into local environment, what obstacles they came across and importance of knowing the local language.

Our review/recommendation: this event was a huge success both by the number of participants, as well as their interest and participation in the activities. Nevertheless, we would recommend to implement some team building activities and energizers in beginning of the event to create welcoming and safe environment.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  45 |  Kandava, Latvia |  1.5-2 hours |  4/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Participant’s testimonial: “The topic of the workshop has been around me since I was very small, because my family at home spoke Latvian, but most of my friends were Germans.”

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/workshop-with-latvian-emigree-youth-i>

Photos:

- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BYAsLevnat5/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469189579867800

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48. Youth together, part II

Description: following the activities and discussions, carried out in the previous event, we organised the second event, which focused on creating an action plan. It would include actions locals and refugees can take to promote better refugee integration into society, intercultural sharing and similar activities/events.

Participants were actively contributing with their personal insights how to best include refugees into such events, how to promote and share their traditions, as well as what steps should be taken to break current stereotypes and myths about refugees, minorities, etc.

Our review/recommendation: even though majority of participants were actively involved in the event, we would recommend having short coffee breaks. This would not only give participants opportunity to refresh themselves but leave free space to create strong interpersonal bonds.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  45 |  Kandava, Latvia |  2 hours |  4/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/workshop-with-latvian-emigree-youth-ii>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469190403201051

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49. Kurdish cultural evening

Description: even though Latvia has a number of people of Kurdish origins, little to no information is known to locals about their customs, traditions and current political situation.

Through this event we wanted to grab people's attention about Kurdish environment and break any misconception and misbelief about them.

During this event, locals were introduced to traditional games, songs, dances and many other things (including food), related to people of Kurdish origins. Locals were very interested in the activities and actively participated in trying to understand their customs better.

Our review/recommendation: to avoid any miscommunication or misunderstanding between locals and people of Kurdish origins, we would highly recommend having a couple of volunteers, who act as translators.

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
|  25 |  Jelgava, Latvia |  2 hours |  4.5/5 |
|---|--|--|--|

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/kurdish-culture-workshop>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469192156534209

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50. Open cinema evening

Description: movies are a great media to translate certain message to the people. Our team organised an open movie night to promote tolerance and mutual understanding amongst people of various religious and other backgrounds.

After short movies were showed, discussions followed, where participants got an opportunity to express their opinions about refugees, their integration into society and how different beliefs can act as barriers for acceptance.

Misconceptions of different religions, cultures and beliefs were tackled during the discussions and participants felt the importance of positive attitude towards refugees and immigrants.

Our review/recommendation: Even though the event gathered a fair number of participants, we would advise regular check-up on weather forecast to avoid bad weather. Furthermore, we would advise using blankets or any other objects to create cozy and welcoming environment.

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
|  30 |  Ķekava, Latvia |  2 hours |  3.5/5 |
|--|---|--|--|

Participant's testimonial:

"I enjoyed this evening, was very informative, although I was not expecting this from a movie night."

"It was not just a movie night! The discussions after opened my eyes in so many ways!"

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/open-air-movie-night>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469194059867352

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51. Intercultural meetup with students

Description: students are one of most socially active part of the society in Latvia. Meeting, involving local youth (students) and youngsters from countries they were forced to leave was organized to have an open space for further common activities within TRY pilot programme and after, to encourage common projects for *Social Business Idea Challenge* and creation of initiatives for successful refugee integration social business ideas.

The dynamic and energy of the young participants motivated everyone involved in the event and the volunteers got inspired to keep up their hard work regarding the motivation of youth and refugees to work together.

Our review/recommendation: we would recommend getting in touch with several universities to promote the event in the university and between students.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
|  18 |  University of Latvia, Riga, Latvia |  2 hours |  4.5/5 |
|--|--|---|---|

Participant's testimonial: *"I love making friends from different countries, even though their situation is tough we had a really nice time!"*

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/workshop-with-students-intercultural-meetup>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469197099867048

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52. Storytelling evening

Description: religion, culture, beliefs, agenda – these are just a few non-visible “reasons” people provide for discriminating each other. More visible “reasons” include skin color and for people of different skin colour it is a challenging task in the Baltic’s, where they easily stand out.

Together with “Afrolat”, a community uniting people of African roots or from mixed families, where one of the parents is with African roots, we organised a literature evening. During it, each participant, on his/her own free will got an opportunity to share their life-story in Latvia and witnessing or feeling discrimination, difficulties of integration, racism and similar topics. These were presented as literature stories and they took on a role of the author, to not only share the story, but to develop their skills as creators.

Locals were very interested in the stories shared and got a deeper understanding on the importance of youth work and inclusion, as well as diversity and multicultural understanding.

Our review/recommendation: this event saw a huge success and interest in both locals and refugees. By giving opportunity to participants to present the story as writers/storytellers, they have the freedom to share their story by going into as much or as little details as they see fit. Thus, creating a safe space to share their stories.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  35 |  KKC, Riga, Latvia |  2 hours |  4.5/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Participant’s testimonial: *“Racism is diminishing... from what I see, younger generations are more open minded. Thank you internet and travelling!”*

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/discrimination-story-night>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469198209866937

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53. Ukrainian cultural event

Description: currently, a big portion of refugees, residing in Latvia, are from Ukraine. Even though in not so distant past events unveiling in Ukraine, locals know what current political turmoil is happening in Ukraine, only a minority knows about their customs, culture, traditions, etc.

To promote integration, intercultural sharing, as well as raising awareness of people from Ukraine living in Latvia and their struggles, TRY team has organised Ukrainian cultural evening.

This event was organised in cooperation with Jelgava city municipality and the Ukrainian community. Folk dances, songs, Ukrainian customs and Ukrainian cuisine were presented during this evening.

Locals had an opportunity to not only get acquainted with Ukrainian traditions, but to create strong interpersonal bonds between locals and refugees.

Our review/recommendation: even though we saw an interest in locals to participate in this event, we would recommend having follow up events with introduction to other cultures as well.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  30 |  Jelgava, Latvia |  2.5-3 hours |  4.5/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Participant's testimonial: "A bit of a Ukrainian smell in Latvia, a bit of a home smell..."

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/ukrainian-culture-event>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469200829866675

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54. Table games zone

Description: table games are one of the best ways to strengthen existing or start a new friendship. Games such as "team UNO", "Codenames" and "Alias" promote and help develop teamwork, communication skills, as well as tolerance.

Together with young refugees and local youngsters from Vecumnieku municipality in Latvia, our volunteers team organised a table-top games evening, where people in a cozy environment could enjoy and learn more about different table-top games, played around the world.

Our review/recommendation: even though participants enjoyed the event very much, date chosen for the event was inconvenient; thus, a small number of participants gathered.

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
|  5 |  Vecumnieki, Latvia |  1.5-2 hours |  4/5 |
|---|--|---|---|

Participant's testimonial: "We should repeat this!"

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/uno-card-game-night>

Photos:

- › <https://www.instagram.com/p/BYnH-JCHe6Y/?taken-by=refugeeseu>
- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469204749866283

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55. Story sharing for better experience

Description: to promote intercultural exchange between people of different origin, living in Latvia, team of TRY volunteers created this event. During the event, various activities were carried out to share different stories and experiences while living in Latvia. Several workshops on how to integrate refugees better into society were facilitated and everyone got an opportunity to strengthen newly formed bonds.

Our review/recommendation: creation of cozy environment played a big role in the success of this event. We would strongly advice to incorporate music snacks & drinks during the breaks.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
|  20 |  Merkela, Riga, Latvia |  2 hours |  5/5 |
|--|--|---|--|

Participant's testimonial: *"The feeling of the cozy atmosphere was great!"*

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/intercultural-meetup-experience-stories>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469206803199411

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56. Loesje workshop, part I

Description: creativity and innovation is one of the key aspects for successful implementation of various projects. This is especially the case for projects with challenging topics, such as integration and intercultural understanding.

Thus, creative writing workshop by the usage of *Loesje* was organised to raise awareness on the topic of integration in context with other issues the local society is facing nowadays.

Participants in mixed teams of locals and refugees had to work together to create texts with rhyme, that would later be published as posters. During this workshop teambuilding, intercultural understanding, communication and creativity skills were fostered and new bonds between participants were formed. Thus, contributing greatly to the integration of the refugees.

Our review/recommendation: as the method of *Loesje* might not be well known by the target group, short introduction with examples should be made.

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
|  10 |  Ikšķile, Latvia |  2 hours |  4/5 |
|--|--|--|--|

Participant's testimonial: *"I enjoyed making the short and intellectual citations!"*

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/loesje-workshop-the-writing>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469212236532201

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57. Loesje workshop, part II

Description: this event is the continuation of previously described “Loesje workshop, part II” event.

During this workshop, participants, in the same teams as previously, had an opportunity to create visual posters for their poetry creations, which were later showcased in the streets of Latvia. These posters raise awareness of problems, such as exclusion, discrimination and other, to refugees related social problems and how art (especially poetry) can help tackle such issues.

After the posters were spread across the town, locals were invited to take pictures together with the posters and be part of a message.

Our review/recommendation: even though *Loesje* method is not well known, the results of the workshop were well received by the locals and a lot of them wanted to be part of it.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  10 |  Ikšķile, Latvia |  4 hours |  4.5/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Participant's testimonial: “I enjoyed communicating with strangers on the streets, was challenging!”

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/creating-posters>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469212766532148

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58. Karaoke evening

Description: as music is one of the oldest and best ways to bridge the gap between different cultures, religion, background and people, our team of volunteers decided to carry out Multicultural song night. During this event, participants from diverse backgrounds had an opportunity to represent their homeland with their traditional and popular songs. Part of these stories carried emotions, others – stories, but all of them had one thing in common – expression of oneself.

This event was open to everyone and participants did not only have the opportunity to express themselves through their voices, but through musical instruments as well.

Our review/recommendation: some of the participants felt left out since they didn't know any national songs of their country, thus we recommend preparing in advance some popular songs playlist.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  15 |  Purvciems, Riga, Latvia |  2 hours |  4.5/5 |
|--|---|---|---|

Participant's testimonial: *"I enjoyed the event and learned a lot about Latvia!"*

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/multicultural-song-night>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469215569865201

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59. Human Library

Description: “Human library” is a method, through which participants (otherwise called books) get an opportunity to present their stories and their history to interested individuals. “Readers” can get to know them as much as possible and ask anything they want.

With the idea of raising awareness about current refugee situation in Latvia and breaking stereotypes and misconceptions, our team of volunteers organised this event.

During this event ex-refugees got an opportunity to share their experience, story of fleeing their home country and finding inner peace in their current residency. Participating local youth, on the other hand, gained a deeper understanding of what a refugee is and why they are forced to flee their country. Thus, promoting awareness on the topics of asylum seekers, political situation abroad and refugee integration in Latvia.

After each book was read, a discussion followed on how participants (especially youth) can promote positive view on refugees and how they can promote swift integration of refugees into community.

Our review/recommendation: this event was one of the most successful held in Latvia. We highly recommend cooperating with local chapters of “Human Library” movement and include other people with social and/or other issues to diversify the “selection of books”.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
|  30 |  SSE Riga, Latvia |  2 hours |  5/5 |
|--|--|---|---|

Participant’s testimonial: *“The stories were very emotional and personal, giving the opportunity to better understand the difficulties people are facing when encountering the huge decision to fled from their homeland.”*

Press releases & links:

- › <http://www.refugeeseurope.com/news/live-library-story-night-political-refugees>

Photos:

- › https://www.facebook.com/pg/trysocialentrepreneurship/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1469217183198373

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About authors

TRY is coordinated by Asociacija "Aktyvus jaunimas" (Lithuania) and has been implemented together with: Brodoto d.o.o. (Croatia), Institute for Policy Research and Analysis (Lithuania), NGO „Integration Centre“ (Lithuania) and “Baltic Youth Way” (Latvia).

This publication is hence a product of cooperation between these organisations.

However, the main role is taken by Asociacija "Aktyvus jaunimas". It is a non-profit organization based in Kaunas, Lithuania that unites young leaders willing to work on a voluntary basis to facilitate an intercultural dialogue and enhance competence of the European youth.



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