

Summary of Study Visits in COOLTOUR project

The report aims to present the knowledge, skills, methods, tools, and insights gained by participants from Estonia, Türkiye, Poland, and Italy during their study visits to partner countries as part of the COOLTOUR project. The study visits took place between September 4 to September 11, 2023, in Rome, Italy; March 15 to March 22, 2024, in Istanbul, Türkiye; and June 26 to July 3, 2024, in Zgierz/Łódź, Poland. In total, over 70 participants attended the study visits, during which more than 50 activities were conducted to enrich the experience and deepen their connection with cultural heritage, both at local and national level. Although no study visit was arranged in Estonia, a social hackathon was held from April 21 to April 25, 2024, with 32 participants in attendance.

Though with slightly different approaches, all study visits had same objectives, shared as follows:

- ☐ **Exchanging and sharing knowledge:** To facilitate the exchange of experiences, ideas, and expertise among participants, creating a valuable knowledge base for the project's future stages and ongoing work in the cultural heritage field.
- ☐ **Inspiring and developing competency:** To engage with local institutions, experts, and innovative solutions and to inspire participants, enhance competencies, particularly in digital tools, cultural heritage and youth work.
- ☐ **Strengthening collaborations and networking:** To foster and strengthen networks among partner organizations, promoting collaboration and the development of shared initiatives for cultural heritage and youth engagement.

The four partners of the project and the participants of the study visits are:

Rõuge Noorsootöö Keskus, Rõuge, Estonia

Stowarzyszenie Miłośników Kultury Ludowej FOLKIER, Zgierz, Poland

Istanbul Kultur ve Spor Derneği, Istanbul, Türkiye

Soro, Tori, Tagliacozzo, Italy

Preparation, key learnings and applying new ideas in practice

Before their study visits, participants from each country took steps to prepare and ensure a productive and enriching experience. After the study visit, they mapped out their learning points and key topics that arose during the study visit. During their study visits, participants were able to gain valuable knowledge, skills, and attitudes, which they plan to integrate into their work with young people in cultural heritage. Below is summarized each country's insights of their study visits.

Rõuge Noorsootöö Keskus, Estonia

1 Preparation

The Estonian participants prepared thoroughly for the study visits, aligning objectives through individual discussions and a Facebook chat group. A final meeting ensured task assignments, clarified questions, and finalized arrangements, making the group well-informed and ready.

3 Gained Knowledge

Participants gained skills in community renovation projects, innovative education methods, and culinary traditions. Hands-on activities, like gold leaf application and folk costume belt-making, deepened their appreciation for regional culture and expanded their communication skills.

2 Learning Points

During the visit, the team encountered many cultural differences, enhancing their understanding of cross-cultural empathy. They also learned how to integrate traditional crafts into education and observed effective community engagement strategies.

4 Applying Knowledge

The Estonian team plans to improve their work by incorporating experiential learning methods, designing educational programs that blend social projects with cultural heritage, and fostering youth engagement through interactive museum events, cultural workshops, and reflective practices.

Stowarzyszenie Miłośników Kultury Ludowej FOLKIER, Zgierz, Poland

1 Preparation

The Polish team began preparations with virtual meetings to discuss schedules, logistics, and cultural insights. A messaging group kept everyone connected, addressing concerns and boosting confidence for the study visit.

2 Learning Points

The team gained deeper insights into partner countries' societies and history through cultural activities and expert discussions, which underscored the value of cultural exchange in fostering mutual understanding and sustainable development.

3 Gained Knowledge

The participants improved interpersonal, team-building, and critical thinking skills, while emphasizing civic engagement and social responsibility through visits to local organizations and community projects.

4 Applying Knowledge

The Polish team plans to apply their new cross-cultural competence by creating youth initiatives like cultural exchanges, workshops, and leadership roles in preserving cultural heritage, while fostering partnerships and mentorship programs.

Istanbul Kultur ve Spor Dernegi, Istanbul, Türkiye

1 Preparation

The Turkish team completed participant selection on time, despite challenges due to natural disasters. The general and final briefings always ensured they were well-prepared for their study visits.

2 Learning Points

In Italy, the team learned from NGOs and schools about cultural heritage education and youth engagement, while in Poland, they observed how traditional crafts and community activities can be effectively incorporated into youth education.

3 Gained Knowledge

The participants expanded their skills in map reading, history, architecture, culinary arts, and interactive workshops. They also gained experience in radio broadcasting, art-based learning, and city dynamics, deepening their cultural engagement.

4 Applying Knowledge

The Turkish team plans to adapt orienteering, museum visits, and culturally connected activities like dance and cooking workshops. They also aim to implement adventure-based activities, radio broadcasts, creative drama techniques, and music workshops to promote cultural understanding and teamwork.

Soro, Tori, Tagliacozzo, Italy

1 Preparation

The Italian team held online meetings to discuss the study visit agendas and cultures of visited countries, ensuring all members were informed and ready for the cultural exchange.

2 Learning Points

Participants deepened their understanding of Turkish culture and intercultural communication through hands-on experiences. In Poland, they emphasized the importance of "learning by doing," gaining valuable insights into cultural diversity and experiential learning.

3 Gained Knowledge

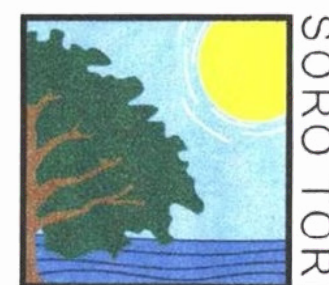
Team acquired skills in cultural heritage preservation, youth support, and experiential learning through arts and crafts. Workshops in theatre, weaving, and woodworking enhanced their creativity, emotional intelligence, and appreciation for craftsmanship.

4 Applying Knowledge

The Italian participants plan to adapt the innovative approaches they observed to fit their small NGO's context. They aim to improve youth engagement and community impact by integrating new insights into their existing practices, fostering cultural exchange and social development.



Project organizations



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