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Volunteers Centre Skopje  
**Annual  
Report**



## **Volunteers Centre Skopje**

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# NGO in the heart of Skopje

We are one of the leading organizations for youth in Macedonia when it comes to youth work, volunteering, and active citizenship.

Throughout our **17-year** journey, we became a recognizable brand and a trusted partner through which over 8500 Macedonian and foreign volunteers and youth activists have passed. Our main goal as an organization is to give non-formal educational opportunities to young people in different fields, both locally and internationally

## Opportunities for 17 years.

We take an active part in society by offering equal opportunities to youngsters and working to improve their living standards. Volunteerism is a big and important idea also promoted by us while connecting youngsters no matter their nationality, religion, gender, political, economic, or social status.



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Program Coordinator



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Project Coordinator

# Our volunteers

International volunteers that we hosted in Macedonia through different programs. Our long term volunteers and their countries:

8  
Short term  
ESC

33  
VET  
students

1  
French Civic  
Service

18  
Long term  
ESC

60  
International  
volunteers



Chris  
Machold  
Germany



Clarissa  
Leute  
Germany



Antonia  
Barth  
Germany



Anna  
Marek  
Poland



Kacper  
Król  
Poland



Jolanta  
Ciopcińska  
Poland



Lucile  
Guéguen  
France



Annik  
Fasold  
Germany



Muammer  
Bozkurt  
Turkey



Belen  
Degin Doğer  
Turkey



José  
Rodrigues  
Portugal



Aleksandra  
Kanasiuk  
Poland



Jasse  
Heikkilä  
Finland



Angelina  
Berndt  
Germany



Marie  
Kiel  
Germany



Hugo  
Lhomedet  
France



Tamina  
Schulze  
Germany



Camélia  
Sghayare  
France

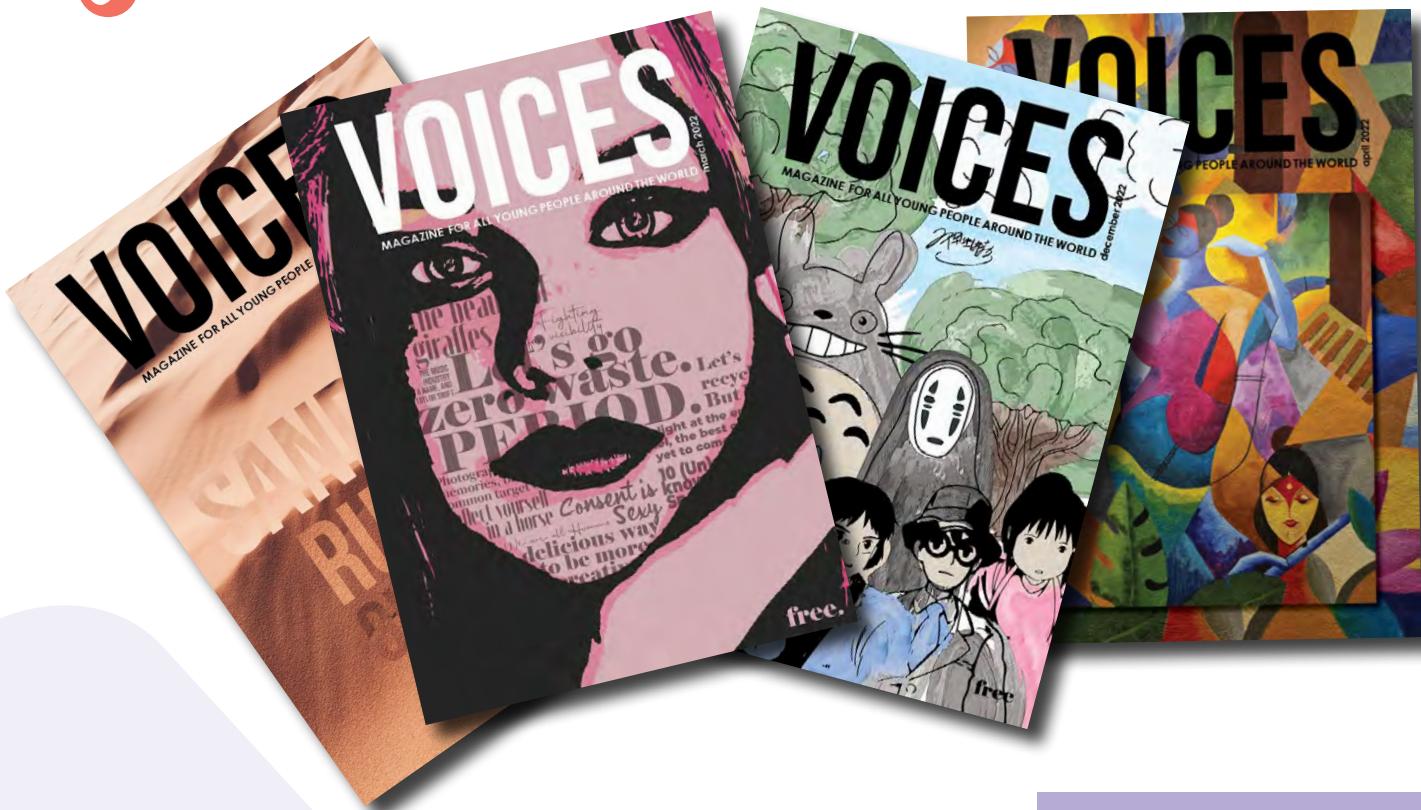


Katriina  
Weijo  
Finland

# VOICES magazine

Our monthly magazine has a very simple, yet powerful mission - to be the voice of youth.

VOICES magazine is created by an international team of volunteers and young people interested in journalism. It provides a wide range of topics, interesting points of view, and current issues from all around the world.



## VOICES to Hear

VOICES to Hear is the monthly podcast of VOICES magazine. Our podcast provides listeners with interesting content around the world. All the episodes are in English and available for everyone on Spotify, Google Podcasts, and YouTube.



# Our projects

We are implementing various projects every year, from local cooperation with different organizations to international projects with our partners around Europe.

## We sent...

**6 volunteers** to short-term ESC projects in **3 countries**

**6 volunteers** to long-term ESC projects in **4 countries**

## We took part in...

**53 projects** in **24 countries**

that gave an opportunity to **279 participants** from Macedonia

## We hosted...

**10 local projects** in Macedonia

that involved over **200 locals**



## High schoolers for cleaner Skopje

(Local project with City of Skopje)

A project that encouraged high school students to take action toward a more ecological society. We held 23 workshops in all the public high schools, did a total of 11 clean-ups in every municipality in Skopje, and organized a poster contest between the schools in which the winning design was printed on a side of a public bus. A final event took place in the transport center and was joined by the schools and the City of Skopje.

**Partners:** Za Pochista Makedonija (For Cleaner Macedonia), City of Skopje



City of Skopje

# Projects with international and local partners



## Youth Participation for Strong and Sustainable Community Development (IPA)

The project aims to contribute to an independent and sustainable society that encourages participatory and gender-sensitive youth policy through structural cooperation and substantial participation in networked civil society.

**4 partners:** Coalition of Youth Organizations SEGA, SOS Children's Village, Association Woman's Forum, VCS

Within these projects, VCS has several partnerships across Europe and is implementing various projects on multiple topics, strengthening the capacities of young people. Through different international meetings, multiplier events, and online tools, VCS is working throughout the year and implementing different dissemination materials and resources for people around Europe.



## SOUP sharing (KA2)

Crowdfunding from the community to the community, offering an opportunity for citizens to take part in creating a better society. All the partners are organizing SOUP events in their countries and will write a guide, open to everyone, on how to manage SOUP in your local community.

**8 partners:** Passion Udflygt (Denmark), C-Cube (Spain), Associação Check-IN (Portugal), Community Labaratories (Lithuania) Allianssi Youth Exchanges (Finland), Kreaktiva (Croatia), Skola6 (Latvia), VCS (Macedonia)



## PeerAct (KA3)

Upscaling peer-to-peer anti-bias education for promoting common values is a project focused on building peaceful societies and tackling all forms of discrimination, intolerance, and inequality by including 1300 young people from different communities, backgrounds, and countries.

**7 partners:** EPTO (Belgium), Ofensiva Tinerilor (Romania), Youth On The Move (Greece), Par, Humanitas, Pomoc Dec (Serbia), European Institute of Education and Social Policy, VCS (Macedonia)



## SALT - Shake a leg, together! (KA2)

The project is about a healthy and active lifestyle, aiming to reach as many people as possible in participating countries and encourage them to take up any sort of physical activity, to inform them about its benefits and to help make physical activity an attractive hobby.

**5 partners:** Saltes (Lithuania), Zavod Voluntariat (Slovenia), Pi Youth Association (Turkey), Jovobarat Egyesulet (Hungary), VCS (Macedonia)



## Promoting Women Environmental Entrepreneurship (PWoEE) (KA2)

The project aims to provide digital means to support young female entrepreneurs in Europe by providing tailored training curricula and a digital mentorship community for real-life situations and support through their entrepreneurial pathway focused on preserving our environment.

**3 partners:** Youthpreneur Stichting (the Netherlands), Eprojectconsult – Istituto Europeo di Formazione e Ricerca (Italy), VCS (Macedonia)



## DALI4Youth (KA2)

Digital Art for Learning, Inclusion, Creating equity & embracing diversity targets youth workers and young people, especially NEETs, who need to be prepared to face the current needs of the youth sector after the COVID-19 pandemic, including a feeling of belonging to our society, more and improved digital skills, a higher level of creativity to adapt to the new reality and more awareness of the situation NEETs are experiencing.

**5 partners:** Ici et Ailleurs (France), Open Europe (Spain), Zini Foundation (Latvia), CRES (Italy), VCS (Macedonia)



## TWOST - Training without stereotypes (KA2)

The project is aimed at preventing gender-based discrimination toward youth with a primary outcome of an online self-assessment tool to develop personalized guidance towards gender awareness, with a particular focus on analyzing strategic areas within the organization such as HR management, leadership, coaching, mentoring, youth animation, stereotypes in communication activities, gender-based violence, and participation, and also online database.

**7 partners:** Associacao Animam Viventem (Portugal), Asteri (Greece), Centro Giovanile di Formazione Sportiva (Italy), Centro Studi "Cultura Sviluppo" (Italy), Club Basquet Granollers (Spain), Xeracion (Spain), VCS (Macedonia)



## Digital Community Radio for Youth Inclusion and Diversity (KA2)

The project aims to strengthen and build good practices and capacities of the partner organizations through training and exchange in the field of digital youth work. More concretely to use the community radio and smartphones as tools for building and strengthening young people's competencies, including those from different ethnic and religious backgrounds.

**4 partners:** Bergmál (Iceland), Art of the Box (Belgium), Aarhus Global Media (Denmark), VCS (Macedonia)



## Fewer Opportunities Re-thinking Z to A / F.O.R.Z.A (KA2)

The project aims to initiate the strategic digital transformation of youth work and raise awareness about the entrepreneurial potential of social media marketing as a new form of youth employment.

**5 partners:** Ass. A Rocca (Italy), Way SAS (Italy), Aproximar (Portugal), GrowthCoop (Spain), VCS (Macedonia)



## Quality assurance for the work of the Business Liaison Coordinator (Regional project)

The project is funded by the Austrian Federal Ministry of education, science, and research, in collaboration with the Macedonian Ministry of education and science and the Center for vocational education and Training.

This regional project is in coordination with the OEAD agency for education and internationalism from Austria and it includes Kosovo and Albania as well. The project provides training for all vocational high schools in the country and promotes teachers-coordinators that are a link between the school and the companies where the students do their practical work and work-based learning. Volunteers Centre Skopje as a partner organization, since the beginning, is responsible for the local logistical support and successful implementation in Macedonia.



## Musicling - Social entrepreneurship with recycled instruments (KA2)

This project supports young people to create recycled instruments from waste and helps them learn how to play them with basic notions of music theory. It also promotes entrepreneurship and provides tools and skills for young people to start their own projects related to the topic.

**4 partners:** Xeracion Valencia (Spain), K.A.N.E. (Greece), Euro-Net (Italy), VCS (Macedonia)



## Reinventing Community Radio in the Smartphone Era (KA2)

Centres digital radio as an enhancement of civil society and a tool for citizenship and democracy. The project will be enabling the detection and development of talent in radio making, smartphone storytelling, and community radio.

**5 partners:** Stamp Media (Belgium), Carpe Diem (Croatia), Udruzenje gradjana Omladinski kulturni centar Abrasevic (Bosnia Herzegovina), Aarhus Global Media (Denmark), VCS (Macedonia)



## Youth with a Voice (KA2)

In this project, the participants can find their voice and use it to motivate other youngsters. All the participants that participate in the project will be in charge of creating and making podcasts about issues that are important to them.

**3 partners:** Baltic Regional fund (Latvia), Asociatia Erhangaj Egyesulet (Romania), VCS (Macedonia)

# Our activities

We are organizing several activities during the year at a local level and strengthening the capacities of our volunteers in different fields. We also provide logistical support for other local institutions and organizations that are hosting ESC volunteers.



**Daycare Centre for street children** is an association working with children from the Roma community and protecting the rights of the children. Our volunteers are involved in every day activities by helping the children with school, organizing workshops, supporting the teachers, and providing food, and taking care of hygiene. VCS also organizes donations of food, clothes, and school supplies for the children.

**POU Zlatan Sremec** is an elementary school for children with special needs, where our volunteers are engaged in ongoing school activities, organizing creative workshops, and raising public awareness.

Our team supported local actions, and initiatives and took part in various events:

D-Festival  
Wizzair Marathon  
International Youth Day  
NGO Fair Civica  
Festival of Inclusion  
Играем заедно  
International Festival for Children's Theatre "Igor Madzirov"  
International conference HR





## 45 public events for the local community

German, Portuguese, and Spanish  
conversation classes

Language cafe

Karaoke parties

Pub quizzes

Speed friending

Cleaning actions

Walk and talk to Vodno

Skopje SOUP events

Panel discussion

Donations

St. Andrew's Night

Youth Day

### Workshops:

Chinese culture

Creating musical instruments from  
recycled materials

Self-defense

Volunteer for change

Non-violent communication

Social media marketing

Discrimination, Prejudice, and

Stereotypes

Volunteering, active citizenship, and  
youth work



# Projects and events organized in Macedonia

VCS organizes different projects and events around Macedonia through different mobilities, funding, and international days.



## No hate speech, Ljubojno (Youth Exchange)

The project took part from the 11th to the 20th of June, gathering over 30 participants from Macedonia, Croatia, Slovenia, Portugal, Denmark, and Latvia. It aimed to empower young people to address online and offline hate speech. During the project, participants learned key competencies to do so in their own realities and challenge their peers to speak up as well.

## Neighborhood of youth centers, Skopje (Seminar)

A project attended by 30 youth workers and representatives of municipalities from 8 different countries: Macedonia, Germany, Belgium, Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was organized in the House of Culture from the 6th to the 13th of May. The participants discussed the need for Youth Centers and the implementation of the Law on Youth. They also agreed on further cooperation to improve the conditions for young people and provide opportunities for their more active participation in public life. The seminar was organized with support from the Municipality of Kisela Voda.





## Skopje Soup, Skopje & Strumica

(Community events)

Withing the KA2 project Soup Sharing, 3 Skopje SOUP events were organized in 2022. Participated by over 120 locals and internationals, the events gave an open space to 10 youngsters to present their ideas on how to improve their communities. The audience voted on the best ideas and winners got a small donation from the participants. Moreover what was shared during the events, were soup, ideas, and partnerships.

## International Youth Day

(Community events)

We celebrated International Youth Day with a two-day event at the "Biljana Belicanec" House of Culture in Kisela Voda, on the 12th of August. By organizing various eco workshops, design thinking workshops, and an exhibition of the art of young people, the event has a space for the young people in our community. A special attraction was the popular cinema on wheels, with electricity obtained from generators by cycling by the attendees as well as performances of the band Resonance and juggler Kiril Gochevski. The event was organized together with VCS and GoGreen and supported by the Municipality of Kisela Voda, the National Agency for European European Education Programs and Mobility, and the EU delegation in Skopje.



## Train-The-Trainer, Struga

(PeerAct project training)

Volunteers Centre Skopje in cooperation with EPTO European Peer Training Organisation conducted anti-discrimination training as part of the project "PeerAct" in Struga, from the 6th to the 13th of March. 70 young people from Macedonia, Serbia, Portugal, Slovenia, and Romania were trained and gained peer education skills and transferred the knowledge gained through this project between their peers and their local communities.



## Volunteer Management Training, Struga

(IPA project)

Volunteer Center Skopje organized training for the management of volunteers in CSOs within the project "Youth participation for strong and sustainable community development". Representatives of civil society organizations gained skills and knowledge for managing volunteers in the organizations, including the legal framework for volunteering, recruiting, motivating, and retaining volunteers, developing a volunteering program, and other important aspects of volunteering. The training was held in the period from 18 to 20 May in Struga.

## Diverse Youth Identities, Struga

(Training Course)

Over 20 educators, youth workers, and youth leaders from 11 countries gathered in Struga, where they learned more about the inclusion of young people in LGBTQ+ communities. The project was held from the 23rd to the 31st of May and focused on working with the topics of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics in youth work. VCS was hosting the project, supporting the implementer and organizer LEAP Sports Scotland.



## Musicling, Skopje

(Transactional project meeting)

The second meeting between the partners in the KA2 project Musicling took place in the VCS office from 24th to 27th May. The four partners viewed the achievements so far and discussed the next steps of the project. Musicling aims to get youth to develop key skills for their future through creativity and arts, specifically music and crafts, through the creation of musical instruments from recycled materials. It also teaches the necessary skills and tools for youngsters to start their own entrepreneurship projects.

# Implementing Youth Strategies



## Development of National Youth Strategy 2023 - 2022

The National Youth Strategy is an important document setting the basic principles and directions for the action of all actors in the society that will improve the young's socioeconomic position and create an environment that will allow the young to accomplish their rights, needs, and interests. VCS with its representative was part of two working groups about youth participation and youth work.

## Development of Local youth strategy in Kisela Voda

Through the "Youth participation for strong and sustainable development of the community" project, the municipality of Kisela Voda was selected as one of the 4 municipalities where the project and Volunteers Centre Skopje supported the process of creating local youth strategies and a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed with the mayor of Kisela Voda for formalizing the cooperation. Based on the thematic areas of the National Strategy for Youth, VCS with its staff and volunteers was involved in the creation of the local youth strategy of Kisela Voda Municipality.



# Vocational Education and Training (VET)

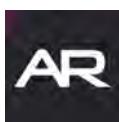
Volunteers Centre Skopje in 2022, continued the Vocational Education and Training Mobility-VET as a part of the Erasmus+ programme providing practical engagement, and an internship for young foreign students in Macedonian companies related to their profession. By providing an opportunity to work in an International environment, and compare and exchange best practices, the VET program aims to strengthen the practical knowledge and skills of the students through performing practical activities in companies, institutions, and private businesses that are interested in the development of the future career of young people.

Volunteers Centre Skopje, this year has created an environment for 33 young people in industries like IT, nursing homes and health care for elderly people, tourism, professional hairdressers, cosmetics and beauty, International trade, Event Management, Sport animation, Clinical, and Biomedical labs, providing all the necessary logistical support.

Upon completing their practical work, the interns gain credits and certificates for the successful completion of their internship in another country in the field related to their education.



# Partners





# Opportunities.

For everyone.



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