

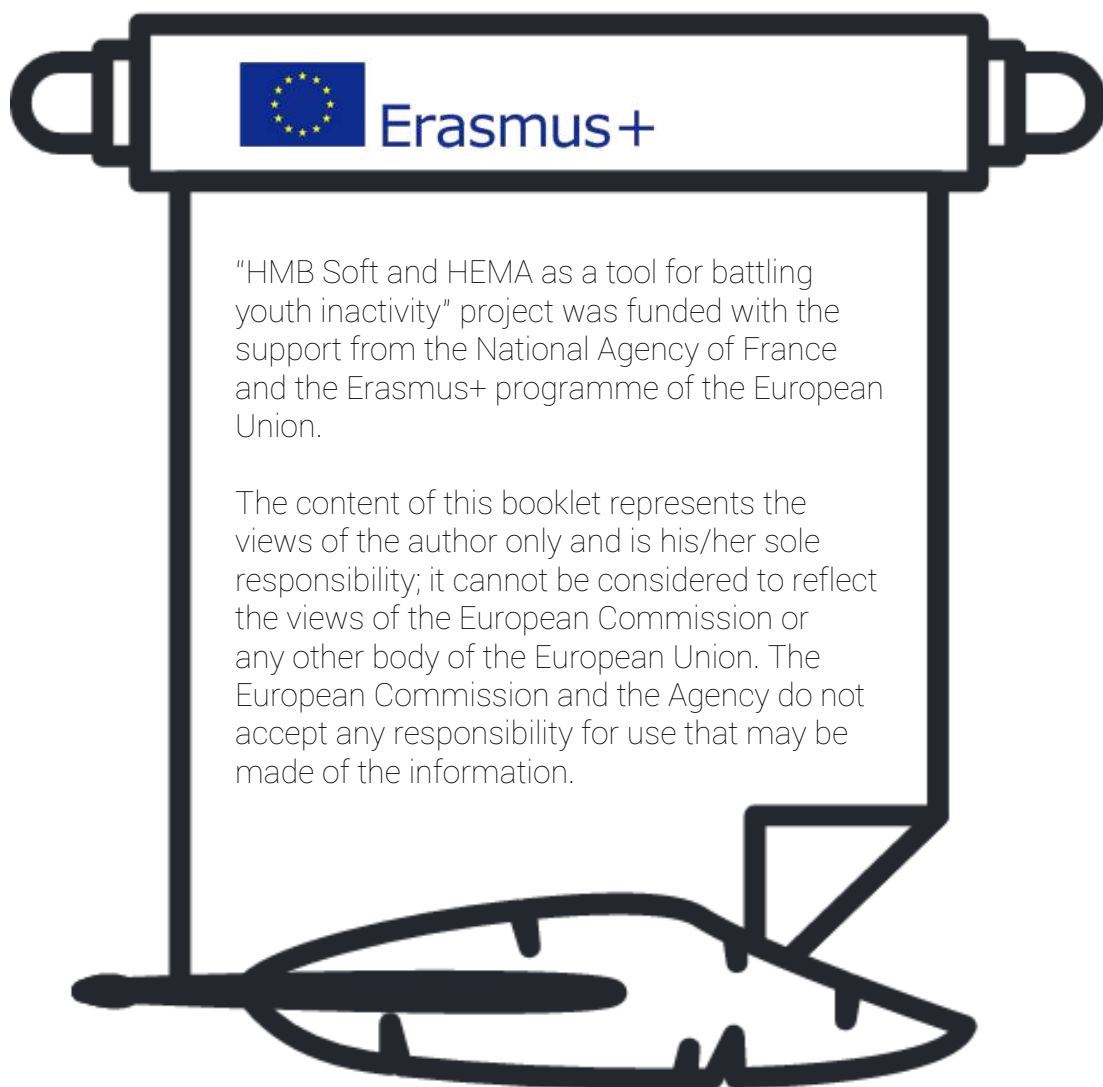
Booklet

**HMB Soft
and HEMA
as a tool
for battling
youth
inactivity**



**Ljubojno, Macedonia
25. Jul - 3. Aug 2023
Youth Exchange**





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This booklet will guide you through the project "HMB Soft and HEMA as a tool for battling youth inactivity". Let's start by giving you an intro to the Erasmus+ world!



Erasmus+ is the EU's program to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. It provides opportunities for people of all ages across the Europe and beyond!

It's open to everyone, not just those currently enrolled in education or training. With Erasmus+, you can volunteer across Europe and beyond or participate in a youth exchanges or different trainings abroad and in your country.

On your journey to Erasmus+, it's good to keep an open mind and adventurous spirit! Mostly you don't need any experience before, curiosity and willingness to learn are the key.



Topic

HMB Soft (Historical Medieval Battle) and HEMA (Historical European Martial Arts) as a tool for battling youth inactivity.

Aim

Empower young people with knowledge and methods on how to use HEMA and HMB Soft to tackle the current issues and how to use these methods in problem-solving; encourage them to develop a healthy lifestyle by nurturing their bodies and minds.

Main objectives:

- 1** To develop participants' competencies in the area of HEMA and HMB Soft.
- 2** To increase participants' competencies (teamwork, leadership, communication, conflict management) through participation in various non-formal activities in intercultural settings.
- 3** To introduce participants to athletic self-development and to help them to obtain and improve the skills needed for HEMA and HMB Soft.
- 4** To raise self-esteem and self-confidence of the participants about their own art and to strengthen their charisma and self-presentation.
- 5** To equip the participants in skills on how to use athletic self-development and healthy body and spirit to combat the current issues that societies are facing.
- 6** To strengthen participants knowledge of Erasmus+ Programme and to provide participants with an opportunity to work on development of new project ideas.



Partners

Young Explorers for New Skills – France
Volunteers Centre Skopje – Macedonia
Manufactura Historica – Croatia
Beli Orlovi – Serbia





Few words about...

HMB Soft (Historical Medieval

Battle Soft) is a martial art for young athletes who use safe (soft) equipment: a sword, a shield and, of course, armor. Just like the adults! The equipment for HMB Soft is mainly manufactured by authorized HMBIA partners and passes a multi-stage system of quality and compliance checks.

HEMA (Historical European Martial Arts) are martial arts of European origin, particularly using arts formerly practiced, but having since died out or evolved into very different forms. While there is limited surviving documentation of the martial arts of classical antiquity (such as Greek wrestling or gladiatorial combat), surviving dedicated technical treatises or martial arts manuals date to the Late Middle Ages and the early modern period. For this reason, the focus of HEMA is de facto on the period of the half-millennium of ca. 1300 to 1800, with German and Italian school flowering in the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance (14th to 16th centuries), followed by Spanish, Portuguese, French, English, and Scottish schools of fencing in the modern period (17th and 18th centuries). Arts of the 19th century such as classical fencing, and even early hybrid styles such as Bartitsu, may also be included in the term HEMA in a wider sense, as may traditional or folkloristic styles attested in the 19th and early 20th centuries, including forms of folk wrestling and traditional stick-fighting methods.



Day 1

First day started with opening of youth exchange and welcome word from the host organization. The focus was on creating open and safe working atmosphere, to create the common ground, to get to know each other. Participants explored the local environment through the in-field games, especially "Tribe Game". Name games, energizers and ice-breakers were important part of the day, since the participants were slowly getting to know each other and creating the group chemistry. Reviewing expectations, fears and contributions was also very helpful for participants in terms of settling in. As an introduction to the topic of the YE, more experience group members shared basic knowledge about the history and future of HEMA and HMB Soft.





Day 2

It was day full of action. Starting from the reconnaissance walk in the village, participants could learn more about the place they are and hear some historical stories from the region. The walk took them to the place where local youth organize the gatherings. There, the group decided to set up a "camp". Participants all together put up a tent which Serbian partner use on medieval festivals and exhibitions, to bring up the spirit of medieval times. From this moment the area around the tent became the battlefield - place where participants learned and practice the disciplines. For the start,

participants deepened the knowledge about HMB Soft, the rules and methods, and involvement

in the field. Main goal of the

day was to raise understanding of the participants on way of applying HMB Soft and deeper understanding of the participants on methods, techniques and tools of European Martial Art.

The discussion on ambitions and future possibilities of the sport followed.

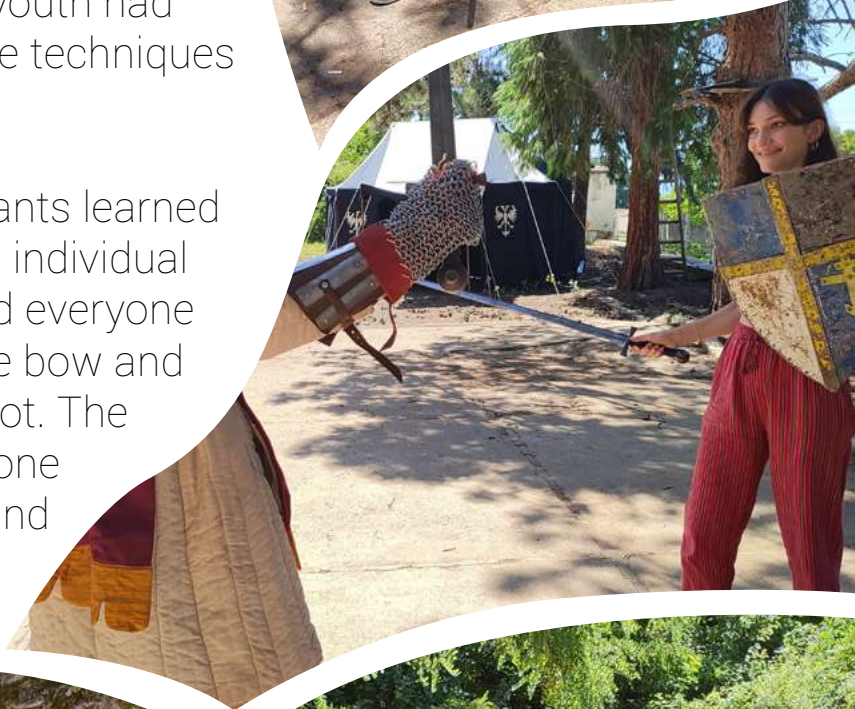
Building the own soft weapons from scratch was main occupation of the day. The weapons were made of PVC pipe, insulation, duck tape and glue.



Day 3

Participants visited the local village of Brajcino. The workshop of the day was about HEMA and Buhurt (Medieval style of battle) connected with practical training. The participants got to know the basic movements and methods for practising, equipment and requisites; practical sparring techniques. Youngsters were the most excited to learn how to handle the sword, shield and how to move in the full armour. Presentation in a form of show was open to local audience and local youth had opportunity to join and learn some techniques as well.

In the afternoon session, participants learned the art of archery. The trainer had individual approach to every participant, and everyone could learn how to first handle the bow and set an arrow, how to aim and shoot. The participants were first practising one after another in groups of three, and then they learned shooting on a command in the formation.





Day 4

The focus of the day was put on perfecting the skills gained in the previous days. The group carried on with the archery training, and the training continued on the local beach at Prespa lake. There was a leisure time and moment of being in tune with nature. The interesting part was trying the archery in different weather conditions, where the wind coming from the mountain surrounding the lake was making it a real challenge to hit the target.

The participants were also practicing the HMB Soft skills and memorizing the 8 basic movements they were taught. The work was mostly in pairs, where the two participants could in change attack and defend. Later on, participants splitted in teams were attacking and defending in formation. It was in a form of a game on points, where once touched participant was eliminated and the team needed to carry on with one less teammate.





Day 5

History speaks through the cities, buildings, customs... It was the day of storytelling and reflecting. Participants had a chance to visit and explore Ohrid. They got to know more about its old city, churches, ancient theatre, and original Gutenberg printing machine, of which only 4 in the world still exist. Main focus of the day was reflecting on the history, how it influences our today, what kind of stories each nation has to share, what we have in common and what differs us, what are the consequences of our past.

The mid-term evaluation was included in the schedule. For that, the facilitator draw the pizza with 8 different ingredients such as: activities, facilitators, group leaders, group, accomodation, food, free-time activities and general experience, which participants could evaluate individually.

In the evening, there was an intercultural evening, where all the countries could present their food, dances and traditions.





Day 6

Participants were preparing for the final festival in Ljubojno where they could present their skills, stories, reconstructions they were working on in the past days to a wider audience.

The annual festival in Ljubojno is a celebration of the whole Prespa region where people from local villages can present their traditions, foods, music and crafts. The project "HMB Soft and HEMA as a tool for battling youth inactivity" was part of the programme and the participants prepared the scenario of what and how they are going to present on the stage in the centre of the village. In the scenario was included sharing the national dances from France, Croatia, Serbia and Macedonia, the reenactment of medieval fight between two in full armors and flash-mob where all participants came together battling with the handmade soft weapons. Through this performance, the results of the youth exchange as well as the Erasmus+ programme were to be promoted.





Day 7

The day focused on the last preparation of the festival and the actual performance.

The audience welcomed the project group with an enthusiasm. The participants first performed the traditional dance from the Bretagne, the region in France. Then on the stage came the female representation of the group to perform traditional dance from Croatia. Changing the moods, traditional music was cut with the knight's call for the battle, and the audience could admire the reenactment of medieval battle. In the end, all of the participants jumped in to the scene, battling with each other. The battle was resolved in the peaceful manners, because the ladies of the project invited everybody to dance this time traditional Macedonian oro to which the habitants and guests of the village joined. The festival was final and closing part of the YE. After the festival, in the project environment participants had evaluation, sharing their thoughts on the project, giving and receiving, and Youthpass ceremony.

