

# MY ESC OUTCOME 2021!



Make a step to a change!2021

Christina Karadimitri 



- Me, myself and I
- Activities during the year
- INEX workcamps
- Being around Slovakia
- Farewell

Hello everyone! My name is Christina and I am a volunteer from Greece. I'm going to start of how I ended up at INEX, if you wonder! Well, I was thinking of getting a new start in my life, because I was bored in my routine that time. So, a friend of mine suggested the ESC programs and because I'm 30 years old, that would be my last chance.

So, I took it! I didn't even apply to many countries. I don't know why but Bratislava was really stuck in my mind and I saw the application at INEX. I did it. They took me! Out of a sudden, in ten days I had to pack, arrange everything and leave. And during covid-19 imagine the procedure, but I made it. Best stress I've ever had!





## Activities during the year! one-day volunteering

During the project, unfortunately we were in a lockdown and we had home office and most of the meetings online. But, ah well, it was fun that way too. At first, we had an online presentation about our countries, me and the other ESC volunteer, traditions etc. It was nice meeting all these people and get to know each other, even from zoom!

Then, we visited the social center **Integra** and we cleaned the garden and the area in the center. Sadly, we didn't have any activities with the people there, because guess what? Covid! But they were greeting us from their windows and it was so cute and heartwarming!

The time passed and it was beginning of summer that we did our first **tea-meeting** in person. We picked trashes from the Petržalka forest together with INEX office, trainers and other volunteers. It was so fulfilling cleaning part of the nature and being with other people was even more fun!

Of course, we had the **office work** as well, to upload programs from abroad, making our weekly quizzes and so on.



# Educational activities

## Training for leaders!

Part of the project was to be prepared for the summer workcamps. That to be done, we had the opportunity to have a in person training with our coordinator and another trainer from the office.

They were preparing us for upcoming incidents in the camps such as conflicts, financial management, covid cases and how to keep the group in touch.

At the end, we took a test in theoretical and practical skills. I learnt so many new stuff of how to be a "leader" without being a "boss" for example. Very informative!



# Inex messenger workshop

A little before summer, INEX asked me to create a workshop of my own preference subject. Then, I chose "**Bullying and discrimination**" where I searched about definitions, causes and much more.

It was very interesting to do it, to search for books and articles and I divided it into two parts: theoretical and practical. The practical one had an interactive exercise where I was asking the participants some questions about their backgrounds in order to observe some things.

Of course, I presented it online at schools and at the international workcamps taking place in summer. It was exciting seeing different people with different opinions to this.

# Promotional work for volunteering!

Part of our work in the office was the online promotional material about upcoming projects or activities during the year.

Usually, I was promoting the virtual workcamps either from INEX or other NGOs and whichever online activity was taking part (games, team-building nights).

Needless to say, twice a month I was making a weekly quiz about cooking around the world, international or national days and many other themes.




# Summer workcamps!

The time has come! We are ready to depart for our workcamps! The thing is that we had some unexpected issues and my first camp was cancelled.

So I went to **Barlička-seniors** at Prešov. The workcamp was scheduled at 1st-8th of August. We had some activities with the elderly, as painting, crafting, cooking and slight movement along with traditional slovak music. They were adorable and they were so happy just by interacting with us!

I met a very kind lady who was so motivated and energetic. She even wanted to teach me slovak, so she took a fairytale and started reading for me! So cute!



Then, I was together with another leader at **Eco-Slatinka from 15-22nd of August.** Slatinka is a magical place that for sure you must visit! It's a very unique place with lots of nature that hasn't mostly been touched by human hand. There is a beautiful river, where we renovated benches and built a moll for locals and tourists.

We took a tour at the educational path and cleaned the path to the forest, to be clear for the visitors. Last but not least, we cleaned the area around a 200 years old pear tree!

The local partner was very helpful and at the end of every day we had a BBQ outside the house with games.

# Uhrovec castle workcamp

Even though the summer workcamp was cancelled, we managed to do it in a September weekend. Me and the other ESC volunteer Helena went with three more volunteers to help the local partner with the white night festival (Biela noc).

We cleaned the path along the castle from the rocks and put candles all over it for light, because at night we had minimum vision.

There were also volunteers from the LP and we all hanged around the fire, had BBQ and got to know each other.



## Around Slovakia

When the lockdown was over I managed to take some trips across Slovakia, except, well, Bratislava. At first, due to workcamps I visited many places. I went to Prešov, Košice and Slatinka (near Zvolen). Also, later on I went to Banská Bystrica and Štiavnica, which is actually a UNESCO monument. Such a beauty!

The reason I loved Bratislava and Slovakia in general is that there are so many natural places to visit. Even in the capital city there are always parks, the botanical garden, that you can arrange a small detour of your daily routine. Very refreshing!

# Christmas is coming...

And as the time passes like the air, every year the volunteers are making a **Saint Nikolaus** short-play or a video for the social centers INEX cooperates with. So it was our time to shine! We sent gifts and cards to Integra and Barlička and with Helena we played a short video in slovak as the devil and angel, for our loving viewers.

It was so much fun preparing the dialogues and costumes along with "Mikuláš" who shared the gifts to everyone. But the funniest of all was trying to memorize all those phrases for the sketch. Worth it! I enjoyed every moment of it!

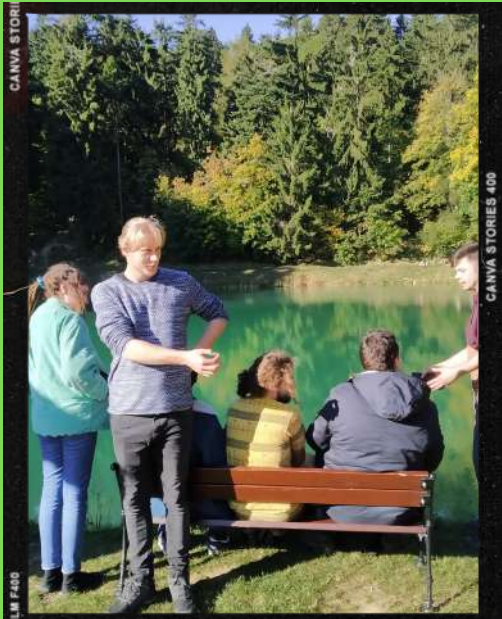


# Virtual workcamp presentation

In the meantime, in November I was asked to prepare a virtual international workcamp where people from all over the world could participate. So, I decided to talk about a topic that could inform and aware. "**Sex education**" and the importance of it.

Together with the theoretical part, I tried to make it more interacting and added some ice-breaker games and energizers. And of course, we talked openly about our thoughts, beliefs and emotions.

It's reassuring to know that the audience you are referring to, has the same opinions as you.





## Farewell...

The time is almost coming to say goodbye to this amazing and incredible adventure that is my volunteering at INEX.

First and foremost, I have no words to say to my office and colleagues who made me feel at home and helped me during my stay here. I've gained so much as an individual! I met people from all over the world...

Slovaks, Estonians, Croatians, Russian, Hungarian, even Greeks and the list goes on!

I saw what they meant of the "cultural shock" in the beginning, but now seems kind of vague. I came in contact with so many and interesting people with whom I am different but in the same time we share the same mentality. And that's what counts at the end!

I am really going to miss this year, but I will always cherish in my heart. Slovakia was my home for almost a year.

I will remember every one of the people I met.

See you again, soon! Till, then thank you all! I had a great time! Love ya!

