



As part of Erasmus+ KA2 project Young Europeans Propose Solutions – YEPS, funded with support from the EC, we interviewed some of the students who participate in Municipal Youth Centre, Ruse. Leda Hristova and Martina Milkova, both students at English Language School *Geo Milev*, have answered questions about problems young people face today and their involvement in projects which contribute to solving some of them.



### **What do you do at the Youth Center?**

**Leda Hristova**: There are different clubs that offer various activities such as painting, singing, and dancing. I am part of dance studio *Impuls*.

**Martina Milkova**: I dance, do sports or art – in fact, there is something for everyone as long as one knows how they would like to spend their leisure time. Personally, along with ballet, little by little I began to be involved in other

activities such as photography contests, flash mobs, workshops, advertising campaigns, meetings with peers from other schools or towns.

**What do you think are the main reasons for the problems of teenagers these days?**

**Leda Hristova**: I think one of the main reasons is the negative impact of social media on them. Everybody just stares at their phones all day, scrolling their Facebook and Instagram, instead of making new friends, participating in different activities and helping the society to develop. Mobile phones also make us confident only behind the screens, but in real life they make us even more reserved.

**Martina Milkova**: I firmly believe that the main problems of the young generation are lack of education, values and motivation in life. As a result, all this leads to excessive aggression among teenagers. When one does not have a clear perspective of their future, it is easy to go with the flow without thinking about the consequences.

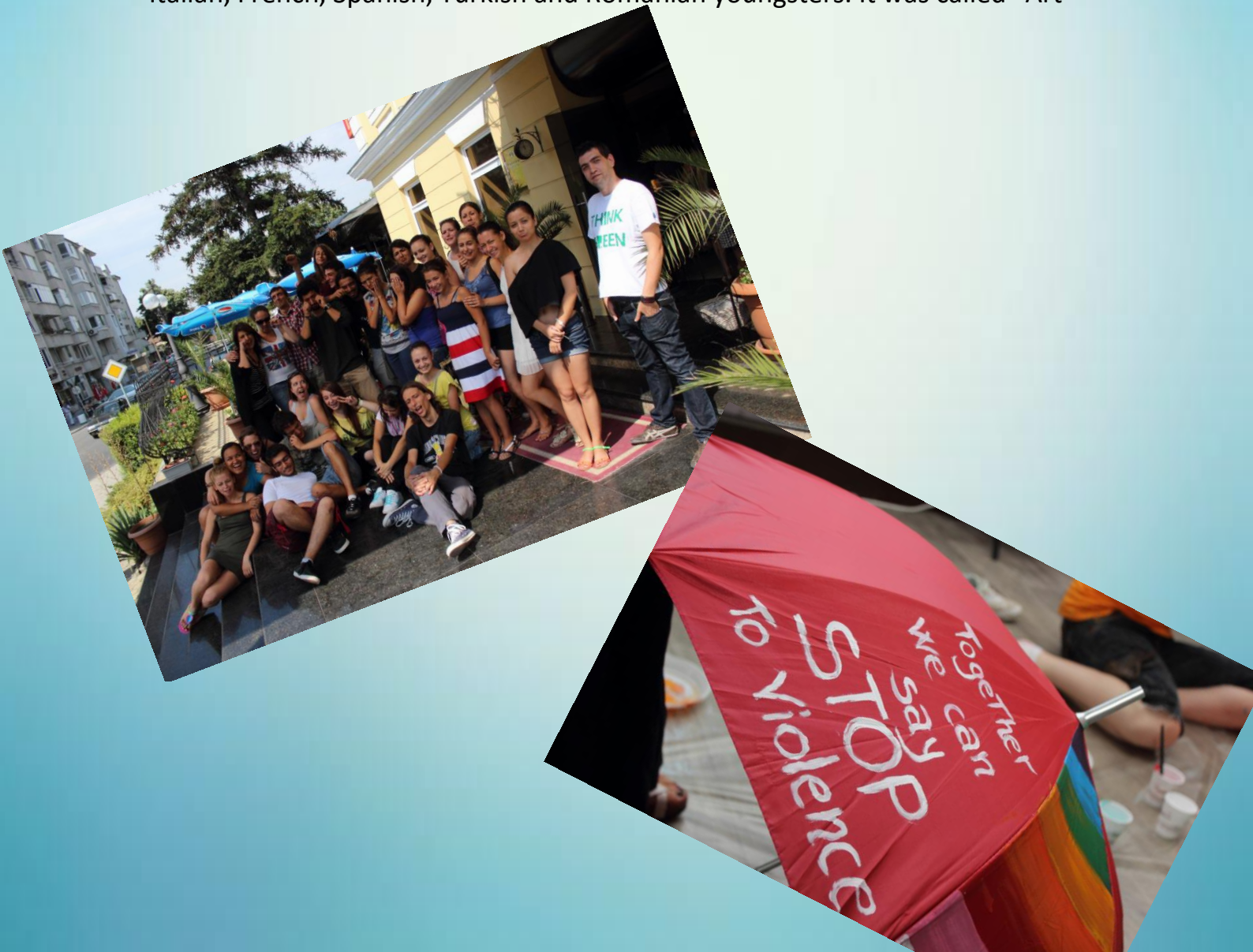




## **In what way are you involved in the projects of the Youth Centre?**

**Leda Hristova:** Every year, my dancing group and I compete in different countries or participate in various international festivals, where we meet a lot of new people and exchange experience. In Ruse we also took part in a campaign called “Time to move”. We went to the centre of the city like ordinary people and out of the blue the music started playing and we started dancing. People were very surprised, they stopped to watch us. We had a great day and a lot of fun. The main reason for this international campaign was to make people move more and to be more active and I think we achieved our aim.

**Martina Ilkova:** With the help of the dance studio, I had the opportunity to travel and take part in many concerts, voluntary performances and creative youth camps abroad – in Romania, Greece, Italy and Hungary. The most impressive and interesting to me, however, was my participation in a couple of international youth projects. My most unforgettable one, I guess because it was my first project, was held in 2012. The participants in the project were Italian, French, Spanish, Turkish and Romanian youngsters. It was called “Art



against aggression” and the name itself shows we worked on the idea that through art we could fight and get over the aggression among young people. In the “Up-cycle” project, along with participants from Sweden we took another worldwide issue into consideration – ecology and global warming.

My last project was “Many worlds, one Art”. To me, it remains my most exciting one not only because it was held in Greece but because I won it as an award by taking part in a photography contest. Like the other projects, we discussed a part of the problems which society faces nowadays. We barely had an Internet connection, so we could fully enjoy our time by running away from our personal life which I absolutely loved. Besides, we drew posters, played games on the beach, danced, learnt more about the culture and traditions of the countries of the other participants, coming from Portugal, Spain, France and others. Yet, our main task was to make up a short play together within a week. The play presented the idea that regardless of the cultural and religious differences between people, we are all equal and the same. During the preparation, we worked with Greek actors who helped us develop theatrical skills and techniques. The final performance was presented at the centre of Nea Moudania. We were all left totally amazed because of the local’s interest in our act which we performed in English. There were hundreds of people who applauded and admired us, despite our amateur performance. This was our award!

### **What do you manage to achieve with all these projects that you do?**

**Leda Hristova:** With all these projects which are organized by the Youth Centre Ruse, we manage to make people more active and be more curious about the world and the problems which we meet every day. All the trainings and lectures help people deal with life’s difficulties. I personally have learned a lot and made a lot of new friends while having fun being part of Youth Center Ruse.

**Martina Milkova:** The purpose of all these projects is to show people that every problem has its humane solution. It is a cliché to say it but it is true that when one’s willing to do something, there will always be a way to achieve it. Last but not least, in a personal aspect I would say that not only did I enrich my knowledge about many other nations and cultures but I also developed my discipline and communicative skills, met new people, as well as practised my



English language skills and most importantly, I acquired valuable experience for life.

**How long have you been a part of Municipal Youth Centre Ruse for?**

**Martina Milkova:** Honestly, the reason why I became a part of the Municipal Youth Centre, was my keen desire to dance. This is how I ended up attending the studio of modern ballet “Impulse” since 2009 and actually being aware of all the activities which the MYC offers. While spending lots of time in the rehearsal gym, I gradually became quite devoted to dancing, created lasting and valuable friendships, experienced incredible emotions and memories, which I will never forget.

**Leda Hristova:** I have been a part of it since 2009.

