



Ballyfermot Youth Service Limited

October 2008



Ballyfermot Young People Take on Europe!

European Youth Exchanges

This year 2008 has been a record year for participation by young people from Ballyfermot in the European Youth in Action Programme. Over 55 young people have taken part in Youth Exchanges to various European countries organised by Ballyfermot Youth Services. In addition, we also hosted a further 50 young people here in Ballyfermot from Italy, Norway and Northern Ireland.

The exchanges have involved young people participating in: drama, arts, music, sport, peer education and leadership programmes. The main priorities of the Youth in Action Programme are:

- *European Citizenship*
- *Participation of Young People*
- *Cultural Diversity*
- *Inclusion of Young People with Fewer Opportunities*

Every exchange is different, the duration varies between seven and ten days. The basis is that the young people take part in a programme of activities that reflect the priorities of the Youth In Action programme and demonstrate the informal learning that takes place during the experience. The funding for these programmes comes directly from the European Union and covers 70% of travel cost, there is also an allowance for food, accommodation and activities.

The most difficult aspect for the young person is the fear of the unknown. Would they enjoy the experience? Could they get over the language barriers? Would they be comfortable around other young people from a different country? Our experience has been that once the young person gets over their initial nervousness they fully enter the experience.

The Youth Programme has been a tremendous boost to Ballyfermot Youth Service it has enabled us to encourage young people to participate in a broader range of programmes. It has acted as a recruitment tool for us. We now have a waiting list of young people who want to take part in programmes.

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Dialogue Unlimited Salzburg 2008

'Exploring Cultural Diversity, Through Music'.

In July 2008, 40 young people from 4 participating programme countries, Ireland, Austria, Italy & Greece took part in the 'Dialogue Unlimited' Youth Exchange Programme to Salzburg in Austria. (1st July to 10th July) All the young people were between the ages of 16 and 20 years old. Our group, five boys and five girls came from all parts of Ballyfermot.

Theme

The theme for the exchange was 'Dialogue Unlimited' which encouraged young people to explore one another's culture through, participating in various workshops.

The young people used music arts and media together with dance, jazz, hip hop, rock and radio. They had the opportunity to learn to play an instrument, sing a song in public, carry out interviews with various people using the medium of radio.

Like most exchanges, the experience also allowed young people to learn about each others lives, by living together, learning about different aspects of life and how each country in the European Union treats it's young people.

The exchange finished with a grand performance by the young people in public, showing their skills and talents they had learned to an invited audience. The young people came away from Austria with many wonderful memory's and life long friends.



• Leaders from Ireland

Janice Mc Garry
Emma Fitzsimons

• Young Peoples Comments

"A life changing experience"

"It was the best time I ever had"

• European Partners on this Exchange Were:

Italian: Youth for Youth

Greeks: Citizens in Action

Austria: Youth Corner (Salzburg)

Ireland: Ballyfermot Youth Service



Metis Sport – Belgium

The Youth Exchange took place from the 1st to the 11th of July in the town of Spa in Belgium. There were thirty young people on the exchange six from Ballyfermot.



Theme

The theme of the exchange was on the topic of racism and sport and racism in sport. The project explored how sport can be used as a tool for integration, for personal development and growth, to gain knowledge of other people and challenging our personal prejudice.

Given that one of the priorities of the Youth in Action Programme is to combat racism and xenophobia in Europe, this youth exchange allowed the young people to experience through participation in sport can be used as a positive activity to break down barriers.

To achieve this goal the young people met professional sportsmen confronted with the problem of racism in Liege football Club seeing how they dealt with the problem on the terraces and changed attitudes of their fans. They also got to try out a range of sports such as: Kin ball, Skiing, Hiking, Rugby and Cycling.

While in Belgium they visited the 'Territories of the Memory'. which is a museum dedicated to the millions of people who lost their lives during the Second World War in Europe as a result of prejudice

and hate. They also visited a refugee centre which looks after people coming to Belgium now from all over the world.

This project also allowed young people to discover other cultures, to include/understand them and to accept them. Now it is hoped that they will act as ambassadors of tolerance, respect and right to the difference.

• Young Peoples Comments

"I made new friends for life"

"I learned so much about other people & countries"

• European Partners on this Exchange Were:

The Youth Exchange was organised by: Centre de Jeunes le Grand Môme in co-operation with l'Association Cohésion (Le Robert, Martinique)

l'Association Hair (Bucarest, Roumanie) Ballyfermot YS Ltd. (Dublin, Irlande).



"I made new friends for life"



France 2008

Let's walk on the wild side of Ariege

The Youth Exchange took place from 17 July to the 28th of July 2008, in Ariege, Foix in Southern France. We had a group of thirty two young people drawn from five countries of the EU: France, Ireland, Latvia, Portugal, and Spain, eight young people were from Ballyfermot.

Theme

The theme of the exchange was based on the natural environment of the area, the countryside, its towns and villages and how we can appreciate them. To discover the environment we took part in a number of hikes and visits to various organic farms and a ecological museum based in the town of Alzen. We also took part in an ecological construction workshop where we built a house from natural products based in the forest. The exchange allowed the young people from the city to get an understanding of living in a rural area, how the local economy works and how we can look after our environment.

The accommodation for this exchange was in three parts. First we got to stay with local families for two nights and then it was off to a hostel followed by a camping experience in the forest.

Like all exchanges that involve different cultures and languages, our young people got to brush up on their own language skills. Sometimes it is not always about language ability, it can be about an expression, handshake or smile that we can communicate with one another.

Part of the programme also allowed each group to give a presentation through culture and music of their own country. For young people coming from the city this exchange was a new experience and one that they will always remember.



• Young Peoples Comments

"It was the most amazing experience for me"

"I learned a lot about different cultures"



• European Partners on this Exchange Were

France: (Les Francas de Foix, Foix Enfance Jeunesse)

Spain: (International Youth Initiative Association)

Latvia: (Youth for Society)

Portugal:

Ireland: (Ballyfermot Youth Service)

On the Move, Berlin

Young People from 4 European Countries in Intercultural Dialogue

Understanding Each Other and
Learning together via Work, Games
and Sports from May 22nd - May 29th
2008

Theme

In May ten young people from Ballyfermot embarked on a Youth Exchange with a difference, This project was held in Berlin, Germany and was hosted by one of the largest training organisations of that country. Internationaler Bund. The project involved Young people from Poland, Germany, Finland and Ireland, getting to know and appreciating each other. Our group was drawn from the School Completion Programme in St Dominics Secondary School and Ballyfermot Youth Service.

The project was based in a Youth training centre which specialises in skills training for young people. These skills included Carpentry, Painting and Decorating, Horticulture, Beauty and Sports. The young people got to try various trades and tested their own abilities.

The project encouraged young people to look outside one's own box and help them widen their eyes to the opportunities and chances of the bigger (European) relationships. and motivation.



One of the days was spent in an Outdoor Education Centre which specialises in providing challenges of a High-Rope-Course in Frankfurt/ Oder. Each young person was given the opportunity to achieve their own personal goals while taking part in the course. There was also a soccer-match on the sports ground of the league -Red-White-Neuenhagen' were all the groups played each other and also other visiting teams from all over Germany.

As we were based just outside the city of Berlin, we were able to visit the city and see all the major attractions including parts of the Berlin wall still standing. We were also able to see the major reconstruction that Berlin is undergoing.

The young people experienced that in spite of language-barriers and socialisation with very different cultures, communication and dialogue is possible - and people can reach good results and experience many good and beautiful things together.

- *Young Peoples Comments*

"The ten days took me on a great journey"

"I really learned a lot"

- *European Partners on this Exchange Were:*

**Internationaler Bund
Germany**

Ballyfermot Youth Service

Abo Kringlan Turku Finland

Nova SOL Poland



Italy, Tortona July 5 to 18th

We Clown: I Can, YOU Can!

The multilateral exchange 'WE CLOWN: I CAN, YOU CAN' was held in Tortona Italy from July 5th to 17th 2008. It involved five countries (Italy, Ireland, Denmark, France and Belgium) and fifty young people.

Theme

Ten of the young people were from Ballyfermot and like the previous project to Germany, it was a joint programme between St Dominic's School Completion Programme and Ballyfermot Youth Service.

The main theme of the exchange was the Intercultural Dialogue (European Priority 2008) reached through the figure of a clown. Using art, media and circus skills every country has its clown, and without verbal communication it is possible to break down barriers and communicate.

The young people worked on becoming Clowns through a series of workshops. They were able to break down the walls of stereotypes and as characters able to transform a difficult situation and unpleasant one into a happy one. This involved a great amount of imagination and non formal learning by the young people. During the project the young people performed in the streets of Tortona as clowns showing off their skills in juggling and tricks.

The project also provided the opportunity for the young people to discover Italy. They visited the cities of Genoa and Turin and most of all made life long friends. They also produced a film made in Ballyfermot and put on a cultural night. Taking part in the exchange has given the young people more confidence in themselves and in the community they come from. They have shown that they are part of the wider European culture and have the same hopes and aspirations as other young people in Europe.



• Young Peoples Comments

"I've never seen so many clowns"

"We never stopped laughing"

• European Partners on this Exchange Were:

Denmark: Syddjurs Ungdomsskole - Center Hornslet

Belgium: MJA

Ireland: Ballyfermot Youth Service Ltd

France: European and Mediterranean Youth Association

Italy: Comune di Tortona



Ireland, Warriors against Racism

Youth Exchange June 08

The Youth Exchange took place from 21st to the 28th of June 08 in Dublin and the Killary centre, Leenane Connemara Co. Galway. There were four groups participating: Ireland, Italy Norway and Northern Ireland. Altogether there were fifty-two young people involved in the project.

Theme

The theme of the exchange was Warriors against Racism. We decided on this theme so as to challenge the young people on the issue of racism and also because each country faced new communities arriving from all over the world and it is an issue that we all live with.

The Warriors title was to reflect that we should all fight intolerance wherever it comes from.

The exchange was based around a series of workshops and team sporting activities. We included name games, icebreakers and word games. We included these activities so that all participants would engage in a fun informative and informal setting. This helped the participants relax and become comfortable with each other.

We held the workshops each morning in Killary, these took the form of art, media and discussions on Anti-racism. The workshops helped focus on stereotypes that have negative consequences for



ethnic minorities. The sporting activities were all team based and all teams were made up of participants from one another's country. This allowed for intercultural learning from one another.

Each night of the programme a cultural presentation was held by each country. This usually took the form of traditional music and dance, art video images / slide show etc.

There was also the opportunity to learn various phrases of one another's language and we tried traditional food and drink. This was a new experience for a lot of the young people and the helped give them a better understanding of new cultures.



• Young Peoples Comments

"The people I met were just like you and me"

"I met some great new friends"

• European Partners on this Exchange Were:

Ireland: (Ballyfermot Youth Service)

Norway: (Bace- camp)

Italy: (Comune di Tortona)

Northern Ireland: (Western Education and Library Board)

We have seen the positives for young people from Ballyfermot that this programme provides; it has opened their eyes to new communities and has taken some of them out of the mindset that the world is only where they live. When we look back on the experiences so many of our young people have had, it's been amazing.

Youthpass

All participants taking part this year in the Youth in Action Programme have the right to receive recognition for their participation and learning which can be used in their future lives. The Youthpass Certificate has recently been developed for this purpose.

Local Partners

Some of our projects have included local partners such as the Dominican Campus School Completion Programme and Caritas College. By working together in partnership we have been able to identify and recruit young people who have benefited from taking part in these programmes. BYS wants to extend this partnership approach to other organisations in Ballyfermot and build on our expertise in the Youth in Action programme. The Youth Programme is a tremendous tool that youth organisations should make use of for young people. Any organisation or community development group working with young people and want to develop a programme can contact us at the office in Decies Road.



Objectives of the Youth in Action Programme

The general objectives stated in the legal basis of the Youth in Action Programme are the following:

- Promote young people's active citizenship in general and their European citizenship in particular;
- Develop solidarity and promote tolerance among young people, in particular in order to foster social cohesion in the European Union;
- Foster mutual understanding between young people in different countries;
- Contribute to developing the quality of support systems for youth activities and the capabilities of civil society organisations in the youth field;
- Promote European cooperation in the youth field.

Thanks

Organising a youth exchange is a daunting task for anyone and I would like to thank all the staff who participated in the youth exchanges this year both front line staff and backroom staff.

Gerry Mc Carthy (Manager)

Youth exchanges Leaders

Germany:	Sr. Liz Smyth Gerry Mc Carthy
Belgium:	Gerry Mc Carthy Jody Garry
Austria:	Janice Mc Garry Emma Fitzsimons
Italy:	Sr. Liz Smyth Paddy Rochford
Killary & France:	Brian Perry Ema Geraghty Emma Fitzsimons

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