



Thanks

Organising a youth exchange is a daunting task for anyone, organising ten exchanges in one year is a tribute to the commitment of the staff and volunteers that work for Ballyfermot Youth Service. I would like to thank all the staff who participated in the youth exchanges for their dedication, patience, ideas and energy. Also to our administrator (Ursula) who helped out with the finance, insurance and other arrangements necessary to carry out a Youth exchange project..

To our many partners in various countries who we had the pleasure to work with and to Leargas our national agency for all their help and support. Also without the support and guidance from our own Management committee who have encouraged us to take on these projects and to the many young people who have represented Ballyfermot abroad

Thank you Gerry Mc Carthy
Manager Youth Service



Youth Exchange Leaders 2009
Gerry Mc Carthy, Ann Murray, Brian Perry
Emma Fitzsimons Emma Geraghty Janice Mc Garry
Evan Kenny John Kelly Andrea di Nisio
Selim Sari Bori Takacs Allegra Lalor William Newman
Ger O Reilly Martin O Reilly Tanya Conroy



European Youth in Action



Ballyfermot Youth Service December 2009

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Clár 'An Óige i mbun gnímh'



An Ard-S Oideachais
agus Cultúir



An Óige



city of dublin youth service board

comhairle
le leas óige



European Youth Exchange

Major Funding for Ballyfermot Youth Service from Europe and from Edgar Otto Thedens Bequest Fund

Ballyfermot Youth Service kicked off our Summer Programme this year with visits to eight European countries, Spain, Malta, Italy, Poland, Norway, Belgium, Sweden and the Caribbean Island of Martinique. 2009 was a record year for participation of young people from Ballyfermot in the European Youth in Action Programme. Over 80 young people took part in Youth Exchanges to various European countries organised by Ballyfermot Youth Service. In addition we played host to a further 50 young people here in Ballyfermot from Italy, France and Poland in August. The ages of participants were from 14 to 20 years. 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, some are between seven and ten days duration. The basis is that the young people take part in a programme of activities that reflect the priorities of the Youth In Action Programme. 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.

Youth Pass

All participants taking part 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.

In addition to the European funding Ballyfermot Youth Service also received €18,000 funding from the Edgar Otto Thedens Bequest Fund. Edgar left a sum of money to the Irish government that was to be used to encourage young people to travel throughout Europe and develop friendships with other young people.

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 and 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.

We have seen the positives for young people from Ballyfermot; 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 being amazing.

The manager of Ballyfermot Youth Service praised the staff of BYS who have put a lot of time and energy into applying for funding, making contacts with European partners and preparing the young people for their travel.

Gerry mc Carthy
Youth Service Manager
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Participants

Aaron Monks
Adam Dunne
Amanda Duffy
Amy Killeen
Amy Larkin
Andrew Cahill
Aoife Murray
Ben Moore
Billie Gene Lawrence
Cheryl Buckley
Ciara Nolan
Ciara O'Brien
Conor Connolly
David Cardiff
David Gonzales
David Haverty
David Kiernan
Dean Byrne
Dean Kelly
Derek Cully
Ealish Murray
Edel O'Regan
Ema Geraghty
Emma Boughton
Eric Daly
Fiona Anderson
Fiona Doyle
Gary Monahan
George Dunne
Gerard Callaghan
Hannan Fajuanu
James Bracken
Jason Cullen
Jason Dillon
Jennifer Keating
Jessica Wall
John Joe Coughlan
Karen Doran
Karlie Grey
Keith Abbey
Keith Mulvaney
Kellie Breen

Kelly Daly
Kevin Chtioui
Kim Byrne
Laura Byrne
Laurence Mc Kenna
Leanne Purcell
Lennon Killeen
Leon Griffin
Lestey Fitzpatrick
Lorna Maher
Maria Stynes
Mark Smith
Martin O'Reilly
Megan Keogh
Michael Delaney
Michael Fitzsimons
Michelle Coakley
Nadine Doyle
Niamh Gibney
Niamh Gifford
Niamh Jones
Niamh Smith
Paula Larkin
Ross Judge
Ryan Belmont
Sally Flynn
Scott Cashin
Shane O'Reilly
Shauna Brady
Shauna Breen
Shauna McCarthy
Sinead O'Brien
Stephen Maughan
Stephen Menton
Tanroy Conroy
Thomas Caulfield
Thomas Henaghan

Action 2 EVS

European Volunteer Worker

European Voluntary Service (EVS) supports transnational voluntary service of young people, both within and outside the European Union. The activities take place in a country other than a volunteer's country of residence. It is unpaid, non-profit-making and full time for a given period. It benefits the community. EVS is open to all young people between the age of 18 to 30, regardless of their background or whether they are legally resident in a programme country or in a partner country. The Europeans Union provides finance to cover travel, food and accommodation along with a small allowance each month. Ballyfermot Youth Service is registered as a host and sending organisation. This year we have three volunteers with us Selim, Andrea and Bori. We have also sent one volunteer to Greece from Ballyfermot (John Curren) for one year..



Andrea
I'm Andrea, the EVS volunteer from Italy. I arrived here at the end of July and just now I realised that three months have gone, wow! I'm working with Ballyfermot Youth Service, my tasks are various such as be with the children in our center making sport, art or cultural activities with them. I also participated to the Killary Youth Exchange like a videomaker and youth worker assistant and now I'm working to the youth democracy project will take place in the next seven months. I'm happy to work here because this job give me the possibility to do what I like such as writing, making video and other creative and art activities that are the focus of my degree got in the Italian university. My English is getting better, someone told me, I don't think so but I'm learning a lot of slang words from the children and a lot of "funny" words from my workmates. I feel comfortable when I can do a good job and help them, I hope I did it. I'm leaving in Ballyfermot and for the first period was just a place far to the city centre, I thought, but now I love this district, its way of life and its Irishness, I'm proud about, I don't wanna live in a poshy area of the city centre. And my free time? Gorgeous, I have the possibility visiting the whole Ireland and also to spend crazy time in Dublin city with my friends, dancing, going to some exciting concerts, know a lot of stunning people from every country, have my adventures and living without break this exciting experience.

Bori

Hello, I'm Bori, the Hungarian volunteer, I'm here for the beginning of the August and I'm leaving with my two flatmate Selim and Andrea. Hungary is in the eastern part of Europe, I usually say that because a lot of people don't know where is my country. I'm a literature graduate and I'm working like a youth worker in Ballyfermot Youth Service. I already did one youth exchange in Killary with young people from Italy, France, Poland and Ireland, of course. I'm a photographer and I have the task to take some picture about every event and activity that the youth service organise. I like to work here and after have solved the problem of the language I was completely satisfied about my tasks. We went in an English school for one month and I was happy learning language and know a lot of new people that now are my friends. I can say my new life in Ireland became form there. And getting better day by day. I feel comfortable in Ballyfermot, at the beginning I was a bit scared about this district because someone told that is a bad area but now I'm ok because I knew the people which live here. As usual everything is negative if you just don't know and stop yourself in front of the appearances. I'm spending good time here and having a very great experience, thanks to the European Union and to the Ballyfermot staff that choose me.



Selim

Hi, Selim is my name, I'm come from Turkey, I'm a European voluntary worker in the Ballyfermot Youth Service. I'm an engineer and I'm working in the Gurteen Information Centre, spending a lot of time with them making various activities. I know a lot of young people now and I do computer games with them. They call me the "Turkish" not in a bad way but in a friendly way. I like working here in Ballyfermot and have many new friends in Dublin. Since coming to Ireland I have being able to visit the Aran Islands and Killary adventure centre. I have also being to Glendalough and many museums. I am enjoying my stay in Ireland and hope to come back some day.



Norway

DANCE CAMP UNIQUE in Oygarden / Norway

The Youth Exchange title is Dance Camp Unique. The creation of a unique dance show, It took place from 10th August - 17th August 09 In Skjergardsheimen Norway. Overall 40 young people from four countries took part.

They were from

Norway (Bace camp) HOST
France (Maison de l Europe des) Venez
decouvrir l Europe pres de chez vous
Ireland (Ballyfermot Youth Service)
Estonia (European Movement Estonia
NGO)



Cultural night presentation through culture and dance

The theme of the exchange was a DANCE CAMP were young people got the chance to learn different forms of dance such as Irish dancing, abstract dance, Jazz dance, Modern dance .The dance workshops were held during the day and concentrated on showing the young people new skills and techniques. The overall aim of the workshops was to show that dance form could be used to create a unique show using language, light, sound and cultural games, There was also a presentation of the Youth in Action programme. Each Country also performed a presentation of their national culture through dance, media and arts

While we were in Norway we got to visit the city of Bergen. We also camped and went fishing.

UNIQUE DANCE SHOW, FJELL CULTURAL HALL, NORWAY

The highlight of the exchange was a performance in the Cultural Centre were all the young people got to perform in the big dance show UNIQUE . Tickets for this event cost €10 and over four hundred local people from the community came to see the show. Each country had 10mins to do a unique dance or song , this was followed by a grand finale of all the young people together performing one piece. Many friendships were made in Norway and the experience will always be remembered by the young people.

Ballyfermot Youth Service Leaders Bryan Perry & Emma Geraghty



Belgium

Exploring the Values of Rugby & Sport Belgium Aug 2009

In Aug 2009, 40 young people met in the little village of Al Vile Cinse in Southern Belgium. The Youth Exchange was centered around a small rugby club (Coq Mosan) and there were groups from Belgium, Ireland (Ballyfermot), France and Finland.

The theme of the Exchange was to explore the values of rugby such as: leadership, team spirit, courage, sportsmanship, and friendship. The Youth Exchange also looked at how sport can be used as a tool for intergration in society and how you can transfer these values into your own life. Two of the groups, Ireland and Finland were not from rugby backgrounds.

The Youth Exchange started by mixing all the young people together and having training sessions each day for two hours. There was also workshops on the history of rugby and its relevance to modern society, the various traditions and heritage of the different countries where rugby is played. This was followed later in the week by having a full game against each other.

The young people also got a chance to try a number of other sports including Gaelic football which was facilitated by the group from Ballyfermot, in addition we did swimming, rope climbing and a nature trail walk through bogland. A visit to Francorchamps race course where Formula One takes place was also included.

The group visited Maastricht, Aachen, Liege and Brugge taking in the culture of each city and seeing how each country provides leisure type activities for their young people.



The experience also allowed young people to learn about each other's lives, by living together, learning about different aspects of life and other cultures. 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 how taking part in sports can be used as a positive activity to break down barriers.

France	Thionville Yutz Generation
Belgium	Centre de jeunes "Le Grand Môme" ASBL
Ireland	Ballyfermot Youth Service
Finland	Puumalan Kunta



Leaders William Newman and Gerry McCarthy

Oakwood

BYS Open New Centre in Wicklow

For the past three years Ballyfermot Youth Service have been developing our own outdoor education centre in County Wicklow. The centre is based outside Blessington on the road to Glendalough and was previously operated by Catholic Youth Care as Oakwood. Following their decision to hand this centre back to Coillte, who own the premises, we approached them and agreed that BYS would take over the lease. The location of the centre is ideal for many activities and as it is based in the Garden of Ireland many natural amenities such as: lakes, forests, walking trails, kayaking activities and mountain biking trails.

The centre was in very poor condition and needed major refurbishment to bring it up to modern standards. BYS appointed architects Kearney Merriman and set about designing a centre that would be able to be used for outdoor sports activities and for hosting international exchanges. The centre can now sleep up to 24 persons and each bedroom has its own bathroom facilities. There is a common sitting room and modern kitchen facilities. Major work was conducted on insulating the property with double glazed windows, doors and installing a new central heating system.

Ballyfermot Youth Service would like to thank the many individuals and organisations who helped us with the project. To our Funders Rapid Ballyfermot, Dublin City Council, CDYSB and the Local Drugs Task Force for their assistance with this project. And to Coillte and Catholic Youth Care who agreed to transfer the lease to us. Also to our builder Elmleaf Construction and Architect Brian Merriman. We look forward to using the centre and continuing our work with young people giving them a positive experience of living in the country.



d.o. i.t. 4 you

democratic opinions informatic technologies for youth

think glob@lly. act loc@lly

d.o. i.t. 4 you

WHAT?
action 1.3 on youth participation and consultation through information technologies

WHO?
Italy (Tortona, Tropea) and Ireland (Dublin, Limerick)

WHEN?
from september 2009 till june 2010

HOW?
online platforms, information systems, seminars, online consultations, focus groups, role play...NON FORMAL EDUCATION!



Starting in October 09 a youth democracy project entitled 'd.o. i.t. 4 you' – 'think glob@lly, act loc@lly', which stands for 'democratic opinions informatic technologies for youth' is starting in both Ireland and Italy. There are four organisations involved in the project: Ballyfermot Youth Service, Limerick Youth Service, Tortona & Tropea. The project, which is the first of its kind is about youth participation, in particular about their right to be listened to on the matters that concern them and on all issues that have to do with their communities. The main aim is to improve the relationship between young people and local administration (politicians), to gain their trust and be involved in their decisions.

The organisations want to experiment with new technologies and encourage young people to use them to express their opinions on certain issues. This will be done through SMS (texts), shared website, social networking sites and other technologies not normally used by young people in this way. Through this approach each group of 10 - 12 young people hope to gather information from hundreds of local young people and present them to local officials alongside a strategy to take action on identified issues. The project will also involve two international events one in Tortona (Italy) and one in Ballyfermot where all the groups will meet to share their experiences of the project and work on a wider European issue.

Through this partnership the young people involved hope to improve understanding of the issues that matter to young people across both countries and work together to have their voices heard and valued.



Killary Youth Exchange

In August BYS hosted a Youth Exchange in Dublin and Killary Adventure Centre in Leenane Co Galway involving fifty young people, they were from groups from Poland, Italy, France and Ballyfermot.

The theme for the Exchange was Fashion, Meria and Sport. we were looking at how fashion and sport are interlinked and how the media can be used to influence our decisions to purchase certain styles and labels. We used sport as the tool to break down the barriers between the different nationalities and to overcome any language difficulties.

The week started in Dublin where we began to get to know each other and give our guests the opportunity to experience our Irish food and customs. After two days in Dublin we set out for Killary. The journey there took us through the heart of Ireland so our guests could see and appreciate the beautiful landscapes on the way.

In the mornings we had workshops about fashion and art skills where we planned the International Fashion Parade for the last night. During the workshops we made tee shirts, designed shoes and produced a series of advertising posters which could be used to sell products and services.

In the afternoons we experienced an exciting range of outdoor activities including rope, swing, ringo and laser war with the instructors from Killary.

In the evenings each country hosted its own national night. In this way we learned about their cultures. We got to know about each country's customs and traditional fashions and got to taste some of their traditional foods. As we were based in the west of Ireland we spent a day in Galway where we went shopping and visited the sights of the city.

Everybody had a great time on the exchange and mixed well with each other. The last night when we had the International Fashion Parade was great fun and we learned lots about fashion and one another. The young people from Ballyfermot were very good hosts and made extra effort to communicate with people from the different cultures and were very tolerant and helpful with people who did not have English as their first language. Towards the end of the exchange you could hear a new type of language being spoken, which was a mixture of all our languages together and the true meaning of being a European citizen was achieved.

Comments or new expression learnt by young people:

"Che minchia fai"

"Mi piaccio"

"Caput"

"What's the story?"

Exchange Partner:

Ireland Ballyfermot Youth Service

Italy I.Gi.S. Istituto Della Gioventù Siciliana

Poland Youth Culture centre MDK

France Francas du pays de Fois – Secteur Jeunesse



Leaders Ann Murray, Selim Sari, Bori Takacs, Andrea Di Nisio and Gerry McCarthy

ITALIAN TRIP

Ten young people from Ballyfermot went to Tortona, Italy from the 11th – 16th June to take part in an exchange with a group of 10 young Italian people. The groups were made up of young people between the ages of 15 and 18 and was hosted by 'Comune di Tortona'. The trip provided an opportunity for the young people to share experiences and develop an understanding of each others cultures and countries and most importantly enjoy themselves.

The Ballyfermot group got a very warm welcome upon arriving in Tortona having had a walking tour of Milan that afternoon. Over the next few days they got to take part in lots of different activities such as rock climbing, beach volleyball, diving at the swimming pool, afternoons on the beach, shopping, walking the 'Road of Love' and chair lifts to the top of a mountain to play some games !! Through all these activities both groups got to know each other, share experiences and share stories. The exchange was made up of two parts, the first being three days in Tortona followed by three days in Levanto. The accommodation in Tortona was a convent with an all weather football pitch, which obviously pleased the lads! The next three days were spent in Levanto, a beautiful town on the beach surrounded by high mountains and cliffs. We stayed in a lovely hostel and enjoyed the local food and views. The fantastic weather meant that the groups could get in some much needed sun bathing and swimming!

Leaders John Kelly and Emma Fitzsimons



Throughout the trip the Irish group had constantly challenged themselves to try these new experiences and especially the Italian food. This proved to be very successful and left the group with a new understanding of themselves, their Italian friends and of what being European really is.

We were looked after really well by the Italian group and made some good friends along the way. John and Emma would like to thank all the young people who took part and the Italian group for making the trip a real success.

Comments by young people:
"Italy 09 was deadly"
"Had a deadly time"

Exchange Partners:
Ballyfermot Youth Service.
Comune Di Tortona.



Martinique

Citizenship and Sport – A Youth Exchange in Martinique

On 22nd of October 2009 9 young people and 1 leader left Ballyfermot for Riviere Pilote in Martinique, a French ruled Caribbean Island to take part in a Youth Exchange with Italy, Belgium and of course Martinique.

There were 40 people from the 4 countries and the exchange ran from 21nd Oct to Nov 3rd (including travelling days and an over night in Paris on the way!) The Young people were all aged between 18 and 23 and our group 5 boys and 4 girls all came from Ballyfermot.

The Theme of this exchange was Citizenship and Sport which encouraged the young people to explore what it means to be a citizen; a citizen of Europe; a citizen of their own countries and the rights and responsibilities of being a citizen and the place that sport plays in all of that.

The young people explored what it means to be a citizen in Martinique by experiencing their traditional dances, by engaging in local radio and TV programmes, and immersing themselves in the Martinique Culture. They also learned how sport can bridge many gaps in language and understanding and they played Beach Volleyball, football, dodge Ball, water sports, hurling, sailing locally designed and made boats as well as kayaking, walking, skipping, swimming and snorkelling.

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 its young people as well as how the European parliament works, through a series of workshops, games and discussions

Leader: Allegra Lalor

.Young peoples commens:
Martinique... its seriously easy going!
It was a cultural diversity experience like no other I've ever had
You know its been a good cultural exchange when at then end you want to exchange your own culture!
We learned a lot from each other and it was great to get the opportunity to come and experience a culture so different.

Organisations involved:
The exchange was hosted by L'Association Cohesion, Martinique

Ireland: Ballyfermot Youth Service
Italy: Commune di Tortona
Belgium: Centre de Jeunes Le Grand Mome



MALTA

Ballyfermot Youth Service Meets Xghajra Scout Group Malta

It was on this day, 20th August 2009, That 8 young people from Ballyfermot travelled to Malta to meet 8 young people from this beautiful island situated in the Mediterranean Sea.

Their were mixed feelings within the group during the weeks before departure. Eager, Nervous, Anxious, Fearful, but most of all Excitement. But one question kept popping up within the group. Were the hell is Malta?

After weeks of planning and preparation we finally landed on this beautiful island and were happily greeted by our 8 young hosts who also had similar feelings about this wonderful experience we were about to undertake together.

After the first day of meeting, greeting, team games, cliff jumping and a small spot of sun bathing the ball was rolling. Two different cultures living and eating together in a school in 35oc heat on an island in the Mediterranean Sea.

Our main plan was that all 16 young people plan, organise and carry out an overnight Adventure Expedition on a small budget and include the following Adventure Activities. Sea Kayaking, Navigation, Coastal Walking And Camping.

A complete success would be the words to describe how it all went. The importance of team communication and peer recognition were just some of our themes during our preparation activities.

5 Nights and days of Adventure, Group work and experiencing the Maltese culture had everyone one just about wanting to stay with these beautiful people forever.

All our plans and hopes worked out perfect due to the effort and courage of the young people from Ballyfermot and Malta.

It was unfortunately time to say goodbye and go our separate ways. But it was an experience of a lifetime for all involved and our fearful feelings at the start had all turned into tears of joy.

The skills we have gained as two cultures and the relationships we made will last forever.

The biggest memory of all was seeing all our young men from Ballyfermot crying rivers of tears just before our departure. Let's bring back these tears of joy by allowing the Maltese to experience our culture. Our next challenge for our 8 young people from Ballyfermot would be to make this become reality.

Leaders Allegra Lalor, Ger O'Reilly



SWEDEN

While planning our summer programme this year one of our youth groups decided that they would like to visit a European country as part of their summer activities. They carried out research, using the internet to find the costs of flights and accommodation. They also looked at activities they could do while they were there. Following their research, they chose to go to Stockholm in Sweden. This was a place none of them had ever being to and it was quite reasonable to get there. They also found they could purchase a "Stockholm Card" which allowed them to get discounts on public transport and admission to some places.

They then set about fundraising to cover the costs of the trip. They organised many discos, bag packing, and also sold spot the balls. They worked really hard for four months on their project assisted by youth workers Brian Perry and Emma Fitzsimons.

The trip took place from 20th August – 25th August 09. The group was made up of five girls and one boy all aged between 16 and 18 years. While in Stockholm they visited many places. They went to an Aquarium, Royal Museum, A sight seeing tour of Stockholm on a Barge, Tivoli Theme Park followed by a concert and they also took in some shopping.

One of our core learning objectives of Ballyfermot Youth Service is to promote personal development and independence for young people, this project demonstrated to the young people the advantages of working together as a team to achieve this task. The learning on this project has enhanced the personal social skills of the group. travel is a great way of broadening your outlook on life and seeing new cultures and ideas. The young people who took on this project are to be congratulated for their vision and teamwork. Well done also to the youth work team who worked on this project.

Leaders Brian Perry, Emma Fitzsimons and Emma Geraghty



SPAIN

Around the world in 80 day's (well 5 days actually)

Ten young people along with 2 youth workers from Ballyfermot Youth Service set off to Valencia in July to explore the theme of Philleas Fogg's legendary journey, around the world in 80 days with a group of 10 young people from various parts of Spain.

Each day was dedicated to one of the continents that Fogg passed during his journey through various artistic activities planned by Lilli, Keike and Grainne from our partner project Agora Cultural in Valencia.



First day: Africa and route by fire
Second day: Europe and route by the earth
Third day: Asia and route by the air
Fourth day: America and route by the sea
During the 5 days the young people had an opportunity to participate in exciting activities such as Canyoning in the Spanish mountains, competing in a treasure hunt "ginkana" around the city of Valencia where they had a task to complete at various locations helping them to learn more about Spanish Culture. More importantly the young people had lots of fun and met new friends while learning about each others cultures.

Edgar Otto Thedens

This exchange was funded through the Edgar Otto Theden's fund, late of Orlando, Florida, which was a sum of money left to the Irish State 'for the purpose of strengthening of education and travel of friendship between the young people of the Republic of Ireland and the young people of the European Union'.
Young Persons comments.....

It was my first time to meet a young person from another country

I'd never been on a plane before, I had a deadly time and I learned a lot about people from Spain.

Leaders Janice McGarry and Evan Kenny



POLAND

Communication For Tolerance

Hosting Country:

Venue:

Poland

Zakopane

Countries involved

Ireland

Latvia

Italy

Slovakia.

Irish Group Leaders:

Martin O'Reilly

Tanya Conroy

The Youth Exchange began on August 6 finishing a week later on August 13. There were five groups involved in the exchange from Poland, Latvia, Italy, Slovakia and Ireland. The Young People who took part from Ballyfermot have been regular users of our Youth Service for the last four years. This meant that the group members were familiar with each other. Our group was the youngest by an average of three years and it was agreed that English would be the means of communication throughout the project.

The exchange was based in Zakopane which is located in the southern base of the Tatra Mountains Poland. It is primarily used as a skiing resort in the winter. The theme for this exchange was based on the idea of Tolerance and what each person's opinion of tolerance means and how much each individual can tolerate or not tolerate. Each day started with energizers, which were followed by outdoor ice-breakers, games and various workshops.



Workshops

- Tolerance debate. Discussion among young people what they would and would not tolerate.
- Photography: "My Passion" workshop – Media Project: Create a newspaper by end of week based on tolerance involving trip to local town for photographs and subject matter.
- Irish group invited all to take part in GAA tournament while others had dance workshops.
- Media project: replace lyrics of famous song with words based on tolerance.
- "Healthy body means healthy spirit"
- Record song with costumes and present live to other groups

In addition to the above each country put on a cultural night where they showed off their customs through songs, dance and media presentations. We also got to take in some local tours such as the Wieliczka Salt Mine in Krakow and a trip by Cable car through the mountains. The exchange was a fantastic learning journey for the young people and many friendships were made, we hope to be able to invite the other groups to Ireland next year.

