



An opening press-conference took place on 06.10.2020, to mark the beginning of project BGLD-1.003-0003 'International youth centre - think locally, act globally!'

The expansion of the territorial reach of the International Youth Centre (IYC) and the increase in diversity of the activities is the fundamental goal of the project 'International youth centre - think locally, act globally!'. It is being carried out under the programme "Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups", with the financial support of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, funded by the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area 2014 – 2021. The beneficiary is the Municipality of Stara Zagora. The deadline for execution is 36 months and the funding is BGN 1 870 986 BGN.

In addition to the project team, the opening was also attended by the MP Radostin Tanev, the Head of Regional management for education, Tatyana Dimitrova, as well as headmasters of schools and youth workers.

The project's coordinator and head of directorate "Sustainable development and European integration", Georgi Simeonov recalled the opening of the International youth Centre, the Council of Europe Quality Label it has received and its work over the years. Mr. Simeonov outlined the new project as the second phase in the development of the IYC. It will increase the territorial scope of activities at district level in all 11 municipalities, activities organized by the initiative of the youth and their diversity as well. There will be a principle focus on the community's feedback and the inclusion of parents and young people. To improve the activities, the IYC's infrastructure will be expanded with the construction of an entertainment hall, following a recommendation from Europe. The municipality of Stara Zagora has already purchased

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an 11 square meter room, which will be adjoined to another room, giving a combined area of 120 square meters.

There will be information campaigns at schools, long-term training courses, educational seminars and conferences, as well as local visits within the region. There will be a package of activities for work with parents. Four youth camps are planned, as well as the establishment of regular interest clubs.

The international activity covers exchanges of groups from Bulgaria abroad and vice versa, round tables and national championships for presentations. There has already been communication with a school in Norway, which works with children in poverty stricken neighborhoods.

“Our idea is to shape leaders in youth policies. It is crucial that we have a mixed environment, people with big potential, whose behavior will attract others. We must get young people to perceive this center as their own space. My expectations are for global thinking to be leading” said the project leader, Ivanka Sotirova, dep. mayor of Stara Zagora municipality.

According to Radostin Tanew, the number of people working for the cause of youth policies is still too small. He expressed his readiness to support the work of the youth.