

VOICES

MAGAZINE FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD

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Once we were an earthling. Cherishing the simplest moment came together with breathing. We would open our eyes and smile to the sun tickling our cheek through the window or greet the rain knocking gently on the windowsill. Having a coffee with a tint of milk or a fruit tea in the cosiest place at the corner of our street. Watching people passing by, noticing someone's shoes with bright-red laces or electrifying purple pants of that teen living next door to us. Casually, we would chat with an old lady sitting next to us on the bus, because we both spotted the poster, placed on the window, inviting us to visit the newest gallery in town. The air was full of sensations for our noses as we were walking by. Bubblegum from the candy store, freshly cut grass, waffles sprinkled with chocolate, roasted chestnuts... We would put the tips of our toes in the stream crossing the nearby park, just to sense how cold the water is today. And maybe we would hear distant children's laughter as they were splashing each other with cold water with their small hands allowing them only to catch a few drops from the stream. We would read the book and rush to share the details with that one friend who already finished it last week. Maybe even write a few lines in the pocket notebook that keeps our most creative sentences and ideas. Once we would truly cherish all of these little things. But it was when we were just an earthling. Now we are an earthling with a phone, a computer and a TV, and we like to juggle with them. And what the world needs now is our past earthlings sending a message to our present earthlings, starting with the simplest: "Hi, what color is your day today?"

Ewelina Chańska

Некогаш бевме земјани. Негувањето на наједноставниот момент дојде само по себе заедно со дишењето. Ги отворавме очите и му се насмевнувавме на сонцето што ни го скокоткаше образот или го поздравувавме дождот што нежно тропаше на прозорецот. Пиењето кафе со нијанса млеко или овошен чај на најпријатното место на аголот од нашата улица. Гледајќи луѓе кои минуваат, забележувајќи нечии чевли со светло-црвени врвки или наелектризирани виолетови панталони на тинејџерката што живееше до нас. Случајно, разговаравме со една стара дама што седеше до нас во автобусот, бидејќи и двајцата го забележавме плакатот поставен на прозорецот, кој не кани да ја посетиме најновата галерија во градот. Воздухот беше полн со мириси за нашите носови додека одевме. Меурчиња од слаткарницата, свежо исечена трева, вафли посипани со чоколадо, печени костени... Ќе ги ставевме врвовите на прстите во потокот што минува низ блискиот парк, само за да почувствуваме колку е студена водата. А можеби ќе ја слушнеме детската смеа од далеку додека се плискаа со ладната вода, успевајќи да фатат само неколку капки од потокот. Ја читавме книгата и брзавме да ги споделиме деталите со оној пријател што ја прочитал минатата недела. Можеби дури и пишувавме неколку редови во џебната тетратка што ги чуваше нашите најкреативни реченици и идеи. Само навистина да ги ценивме сите овие мали нешта... Но, тоа беше кога бевме земјани. Сега сме земјани со телефон, компјутер и телевизор и сакаме да „жонглираме“ со нив. А, она што сега му треба на светот е нашите минати приземни моменти да им испратат порака на денешните со наједноставното: „Здраво, каква боја е твојот ден?“

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ESC for beginners: **PICKLES** in one hand, life lessons in the other



Chapter 1

Even before I finally finished packing for one year abroad (which felt like cramming a circus into a shoebox), I was already imagining what I'd write in this first report. I had been reading all the other articles from volunteers, thinking of what I'd say when it was finally my turn. Now that the time has come, I find myself searching for the right words—because how do you sum up an undescribable experience in one page?

They told me time would fly by, that four months would disappear in the blink of an eye. Well, I must be blinking in slow motion because, for me, these four months have been packed with enough experiences to fill a lifetime. I've made more friends than I can keep up with, gotten lost in cities I couldn't even place on a map before, and stumbled through mistakes that left me with a few life lessons I'm pretty sure will stick with me. And let's not forget the first moments here, I had just landed in Bremen, with my luggage wheel apparently nonexistent anymore, leaving me to carry my pink, sticker-covered suitcases

in my hands for the rest of the year.

ESC volunteering is truly unique. After just a quarter in, I can hardly imagine my life without it, or the rest three yet to come. So, what can I share with you, dear reader, that might capture the essence of this journey? Let's be honest, it hasn't all been easy. Life rarely is. Stepping into a completely new environment brings its own set of challenges. Like the challenge of carrying a week's worth of groceries in your bare hands, for example. Why? Because you forgot to bring a bag from home, and refuse to pay for another one

to add to your ever-growing collection. So, you end up awkwardly juggling pickle jars and spicy vegan pizza rolls all the way back to your apartment. Would I still recommend this experience? Without a doubt. The excitement, joy, fun, intrigue, and love I've experienced here far outweigh any stress or difficulty.

Hmm, what else? On the home front, I've become an expert in nursing plants through various stages of vegetative states. Some never make it out. But hope springs eternal, so I keep adopting new ones from 'Zu Vershenken' ("to give away") or Lidl for €2.50, crossing my fingers the next one will thrive. And if you ever stroll through Bremen, don't be surprised to see people casually carrying mirrors, chairs, borderline trees in pots, wardrobes, nightstands, or even gorilla-sized teddy bears (picture for proof). That's not just a local quirk—that's all me and my flatmates furnishing our apartment without spending a penny.

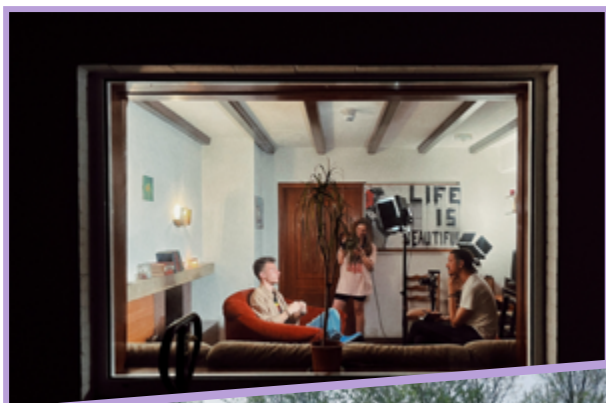
You also never quite know who in the city, let alone at home, to open the door if you're expecting a package. Making plans to go to Berlin or the ocean the next morning is basically the same as making plans for dinner that night.

Let's get on a more serious note. This experience has genuinely been insightful and defying. In conversations with other volunteers, I've noticed that while we all came here for different reasons, we've found unexpected joys along the way. That's the beauty of the ESC volunteering journey - it's like an all-you-can-eat buffet of growth, with a little bit of everything, and something for everyone. You just need to know which plate to take from. Here's what I believe: to become the best version of ourselves, we need to embrace the things that scare us, face the challenges head-on, and trust that we'll emerge on the other side stronger, wiser, and more resilient.

I feel incredibly grateful for the circumstances under which I'm here. Perhaps if they were different, it would have been a whole other story. But that's the thing about life. Adaptability and flexibility are the keys to making any experience a good one. As cliché as it sounds, there's truth in the old saying: when you focus on the bright side, the shadows don't seem so daunting.

As I look ahead to the next eight months, I'm filled with anticipation. Life, like this experience, is full of surprises, challenges, and moments of pure joy. And if you're willing to dive in, keep an open mind, and laugh at yourself along the way, you'll find that the rewards are worth every single twist and turn.

Joana Chukovska



SKOPJE CREATIVE FEST

celebrating youth and art



On the evening of August 17, 2024, Skopje's City Park came alive with artistry during the Skopje Creative Fest. The event brought together a diverse range of artists, including singers, dancers, poets, comedians, and painters, all sharing their unique talents.

Amid the hustle and bustle of the festival, Jakub Pokuciński had the opportunity to speak with Nikolija Zlatevska, organiser of Skopje Creative Fest. Despite her busy schedule, Nikolija shared her insights into the vision and mission of the event.

"The idea behind Skopje Creative Fest was to create a space where artists of all talents and backgrounds could come together and have an impact as a youth community", Nikolija explained. "Creativity has no bounds, and every young person deserves a safe space to present their talents, exchange ideas, and leave a lasting impression on a large audience".

Her words reflect the essence of the festival - a celebration of diversity and creativity, during which young artists can shine and inspire.

The artists brought their unique perspective and talent to the stage, and our VOICES team had the opportunity to ask them a few questions.



BEN HARKNESS

poetry

Instagram: @artbyblock

What message or emotion do you hope to share through your art?

"I hope to let people know through my art that it is okay to feel vulnerable."

How do you see the role of art in society?

"As an artist who expresses love, revolution, and anything in between, I believe art plays a crucial role in challenging norms and inspiring change."

interviewed by Adalberto Haayen



SARAH AND JANA - THE PAINTING DUO

acrylic art and canvas

Instagram: @thepaintingduo

What makes your art unique?

"Probably the love that we put into the art to make people's homes beautiful."

How do you stay motivated to keep creating?

"It's an everyday task to stay motivated and keep creating, but it's what we love to do."

interviewed by Ilysha Milton

ANJA MILENKOVA

visual art

Instagram: @anjamilenkova

What role does creativity play in your daily life?

"Creativity is my whole life. It runs in my veins. I live to create."

How do you balance your artistic activities with other aspects of your life?

"I chose subjects like music and art in high school to help balance my creative activities, but I plan to study something else in college. I hope to continue painting and making music in my spare time."

interviewed by Kübra Nur Bölükbaş





EZANA SHABANI

poetry

Instagram: @tinypoeticenders_

What does participating in this festival mean to you?

"I've been interested in poetry since I was 13. I'm happy to engage with this art form and love being part of events like this."

How do you feel about sharing your talent at this festival?

"Performing in front of people makes me more confident, and I love creating something for others, especially young people."

interviewed by Mustafa Gündoğdu



MILA POPOVSKA

dance

Instagram: @milapopovsk

What do you think is the most important quality an artist should have?

"A sense of self, and the ability to observe people and the environment."

How do you see your art changing in the future?

"In the future, technology may become more integrated into dance, making it a more common aspect of the art form."

interviewed by Nursena Bayraktape



MINDLEAPS (ALINA & NENAD)

dance

Instagram: @mindleapsnorthmacedonia

What inspired you to perform at the festival?

"We were invited by the organisers - it's an honour to be part of the event."

What inspires you to create?

"My inspiration comes from the joy of giving back to the community and being an active part of it. Plus, I've been passionate about dancing since I was young."

interviewed by Antonia Barth

DAVOR TRAJKOVIK

music band (vocal)

Instagram:

@l0stinreverie - @davortrajkovik

What does success mean to you as an artist?

"Success means above all working on something that I'm passionate about and resonate with people the same way they resonated with me. I think I can define success for myself as if I have been successfully able to put something out that has meaning to me and that someone finds some value in it as well. So just sharing my passions and my love with other people. That's what is success to me."

What advice would you give to other young artists who are just starting out?

"The number one advice I would give to any aspiring young artist, especially those from Macedonia but also around the world, is to meet people, share your stories, ask questions, talk about yourself, make friends, be kind, and try to connect with as many people as possible. And, of course, practice a lot."

interviewed by Emre Aydan



Skopje Creative Fest 2024 was a great reminder of the power of creativity and community. The event brought together young artists from various backgrounds, giving them a platform to share their talents and connect with others. As the festival wrapped up, it left us full of inspiration and excitement for what these talented creators will do next.

Ministry for the future

"Ministry for the future" - a powerful title of the training course I recently attended, which was held in Sarata Monteoru and Buzău, Romania in the period from 20-29.5.2024. Can we, participants, really be the key link in shaping a future the way we would like it, the way it should be? I would say yes, it is seemingly "ordinary" people, participants, each different, special, that can be the basis of change. I will explain in more details why I think that way, but let's start from the beginning...

The organizers, Fundatia Pentru Tineret Buzău, from Romania, invited more than 30 participants from 16 different countries to actively spend 10 days in the beautiful Sarata Monteoru, known for its healing salt water, where we will work out the circular economy from various aspects. The goal was through all those activities and workshops to acquire new methods with which we will be able to develop the circular economy as a tool for promoting sustainable development. Activities ranged from energizers for good morning, to games for getting to know each other, for gaining confidence and building team spirit, creative workshops where our creativity was put to the test from art in nature to designing clothes, decorations from already used things declared as waste. We even had opportunities to try ourselves in the roles of singers, actors, dancers, writers of stories and songs, ministers, time travelers and many other unusual, but very cleverly designed roles and activities. We created beautiful and ugly things, contrasts that perfectly capture the situation in which we all find ourselves. Excessive consumption, non-recycling, lack of care, so-called passive and uninterested living in terms of caring for the environment, can cost us very dearly, and at the same time, all that beauty that we all desire and enjoy overnight can turn into the ugliness

that we created during this training course, representing the dystopia that awaits us if we do not take something drastic. But I believe that we can deal with the situation, we have the capacity, but also desire that will come to the fore more and more.

Even the very beginning promised a lot, presenting ourselves through caricatures drawn by people we meet for the first time, capturing ourselves through a single object... For me, the choice of objects that the other participants decided to bring to represent themselves was particularly interesting. There was literally everything, from childhood toys, to lipstick, sunflowers, empty space, a watch, a dress, a picture, a pendant, a scarf... even at that moment I realized that a colorful adventure awaits us, full of novelties, diversity and creativity. And so it was, precisely that diversity of characters, views, backgrounds contributed to the success of the project in terms of finding different solutions for the tasks and challenges set for the topic, but also in general for our personal enrichment and broadening of horizons.

In the direction of personal enrichment, the international or intergalactic dinners (as we called them internally) definitely contributed, which, as always, are one of the most special moments. Of course, the diversity, the characteristics of the individual participants, representatives of a certain country, and culture are noticeable and we enjoy them during the entire duration of the projects. Because for the duration of the training course we live and work together, surrounded by those differences.



But for me the most beautiful moment is when from all that mix of different cultures, habits, backgrounds always emerges a synergy and a positive feeling and an experience that is remembered with pleasure. These evenings provide an opportunity to more directly emphasize certain symbols, recognizable things, moments or elements that the representatives of a certain country will decide to highlight for their country, and which will be remembered by the rest of the participants as a symbol or feature of a certain country or people. At those evenings, in addition to numerous dances and songs, we also learned a few words in Polish, we heard a live musical performance in Lithuanian, we confirmed that sarma is the main dish in the entire Balkans and you can't do without rakija, we got acquainted with the "chili" amulet from Italy, we predicted the future with Turkish coffee while eating Turkish delight, Estonian chocolates and snacks, Spanish appetizers, while my grandmother's ajvar conquered everyone from Portugal, Spain, to Latvia, Finland and Turkey.

Among the favorite activities of all participants, were the outdoor activities, including the visit to the Muddy Volcanoes, a UNESCO heritage site. In doing so, we were lucky to hit a not so active day, that is, the surface around the volcanoes was dry enough, to be able to get close and see the active muddy volcanoes up close. I must admit it was really unusual and interesting to see. In addition to being protected and recognized by UNESCO, it is interesting to observe, but it is also a good place to take very interesting photos, which is confirmed by the fact that many movie scenes have been shot right there. The next activity was a visit to the slow food market - an event that is held at least once a month and where all the

local products are presented and sold to visitors, from cured meats, cheeses, wine, beer to jewelry and clothes, accompanied by Romanian music for an even more beautiful atmosphere. Real enjoyment and great hanging out. As a matter of fact, I really liked the whole concept of slow food, although as a term and concept it was superficially familiar to me from before. But as we researched the happenings in our cities, I must admit that I was positively surprised by how much Skopje, but also Macedonia in general, has to offer in that section. I mean from the point of view of organizations, communities, we even had a whole elaborate platform, which, unfortunately, a large part of us do not know about (including me). From there, we have to work on visibility. It's a pity when something good is done, it goes unnoticed and is enjoyed by only a few people. So, dear people, when you do something good, please praise yourself, and let the rest of us take more interest, contribute as much as we can, or at the very least, research a little more about the happenings around us.

In the context of the main topic of the training course – circular economy in the direction of sustainable development, an excellent example in practice was the stay in Buzau and the visit to the Margiloman Park and Villa Albatros as the cultural center of Buzau. There we had a very interesting meeting with Anka, an expert in circular economy and one of the four city councilors in that domain. From a seemingly ordinary city, through the conversation with Anka, we got to know a different city of Buzau, a city that is completely oriented towards sustainability and where the circular economy is a priority and everyone actively works together to achieve that goal - Buzau, the circular city. In that part, the most special moment for me was

the self-sustaining school no. 11, the so-called Circular School which is completely independent and self-sustaining. It is heated by solar energy, it collects rain that is further used as technical water and a number of other things that really amazed me and without a doubt the world needs many more schools no. 11.

The listed examples from practice, but also the many others that were discussed and shared within the group of participants are just another confirmation that anything can be achieved, if we really dedicate ourselves and activate. Even in a seemingly ordinary exercise, when we were appointed to the position of six ministries that will lead the world and make it a better place, within three days of active work, we participants, amateurs in the field of governance and overcoming key problems came to precisely defined problems, needs for which we found very interesting and practical solutions... Which only leads me to the conclusion that nothing is impossible if approached correctly. If the big picture is perceived, the key problems and priorities are isolated and we jointly commit to overcoming, preventing and creating a better future and a sustainable planet that we will all enjoy. We will not overcome the problems of excessive consumption, the harmful impact of our actions, nor will we be able to move from a linear to a circular economy, if each and every one of us does not perceive the importance and necessity of the same. Hence the introduction that I believe that each individual has the power to make a change and only with a multitude of individual actions can we change and beautify the big picture.

Maja Martinovska





SILESIAN THROUGH CENTURIES





After the second World War Poland was basically a country of one nation. According to the 2021 census in Poland there are 38 million people. 97,7% interviewees pointed out Polish nationality but 2,3% others. The biggest minority that is included in 2,3% were Silesians – 596 thousands which is around 43% of all non-Polish people. Silesia is a region in two countries, Poland and Czechia. Poland is south west and south central. In Czechia is a region called Cesin Silesia which is in the north-east. Nowadays, people that use Silesian are mostly in parts that are called Upper Silesia and Cesin Czechia.

The history of Silesia is difficult. At the end of the X century Silesia was part of Piast Poland and during this time, Silesia was under the reign of Polish kings with princes reign for Silesia. The Polish reigned lasts until 1348 when the Kazimierz the Great remise Silesia to Czechia to reach the abnegation of the Czech King to crown of Kingdom of Poland. From that time Silesia was under the Czech kingdom until 1763 when Prusia and Austria won the war and included Silesia in both countries. Since that moment, Silesia was under the German Influence.

Important thing to mention is that this was the time of the industrial revolution where Silesia became an important part of the economy of Germany. The region is rich with coal, silver and other natural resources.

The next big event during Silesia history was the First World War, where Germany and Austria lost. Until 1918 Poland didn't exist on maps. So, after the war according to the Treaty of Versailles people got the opportunity to decide to which country they wanted to belong. In Silesia a plebiscite was held where local people decided to be part of Germany, but some

Polish immigrants that came for the job and some locals decided to make uprisings to bring Silesia to Poland again after around 500 years. After three uprisings, Silesia was split up into Poland and Germany. Border was complicated, usually people had families in both countries so it was hard for them to stay in touch.

The last episode of Silesia that created the border was the Second World War. After the war Silesia was split into mostly Poland and Czechoslovakia, where it still remains until our times. During the communist episode, it was forbidden to speak Silesian publically and follow local traditions.

The Silesian language is unrecognisable as a language right now, the Polish linguists consider it as a dialect of Polish but Czech linguist as Czech dialect. The Silesian is Slavic language with construction of sentences similar to other slavic family languages with German imports of vocabulary.

The arguments that consider Silesian as a dialect usually say that the construction of sentences is the same as in Polish with some specific vocabulary that comes from German and Czech. The argument against Silesian as a language is also the existence of the Silesian alphabet and literature. But the opposite side that supports Silesian as an independent language gives examples of homonyms (the same word but different meaning) as an argument for recognizing it as a language. Eg. Silesian – synek, Polish – syn, English - son, Silesian – spodnioki – Polish - spodnie, English – trousers. The other argument to consider Silesian as an independent language is also that other languages such as Croatian and Slovenian have German imports.

There are many other things except for a language that is different from Poland or Czech. The traditional food that only exists there as “rolada śląska, kluski śląskie i modro kapusta” which is “rolled beef, potato dumplings and red cabbage”, garlic soup “wodzionka” or yeasty cake called “kołocz”. Also, the biggest feast that is celebrated in Silesia is the feast of Saint Barbara on December 4th. The celebration is in church with a solemn mass and in families making a party. The reason behind this is because the region has a lot of mines and Saint Barbara is the patron of miners. There is also a difference between celebrating Christmas or Easter. In Silesia, traditionally, Baby Jesus gives presents on Christmas Eve which is unique compared to Poland.

If you ask a Silesian, most of them can say that it is challenging to preserve language and culture. Being a Silesian is feeling different, feeling that you don't have your own state and everybody tells you that it doesn't matter. But Silesians are not giving up. Nowadays Silesian is becoming popular in our region because of its uniqueness. The alphabet was invented and books were translated into Silesian. There are some Silesian brands of sweets, clothes or shops. Silesians hope that in the future this region will be recognized and respected by all countries because diversity can be uniting.

Jakub Pokuciński

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MY VOLUNTEERING ADVENTURE IN ARUBA

HAPPY ABOUT LIFE

Spending two months volunteering in Aruba was a transformative experience that left a lasting impression on me. The island's natural beauty, vibrant culture, and time spent with the hosting organization and the local people made for an unforgettable journey of personal and professional growth.

From the moment I arrived, I was welcomed into a supportive and vibrant team. CEDE, the organization I worked with, supports and helps other NGOs and projects on the island. I met my fellow "dushi" volunteers, David and Francesca, and we quickly grew close as we worked and lived together, forming friendships that I will cherish forever. Our strong bond set the foundation for a great time spent in Aruba. Each night, we would share stories, learn about each other's backgrounds, and explore the island together.

Aruba's stunning landscapes and rich culture were both relaxing and awe-inspiring. In my free time, I soaked in the sun on pristine white sand beaches, explored the island, and participated in various local activities. I hung out with the locals, made great friendships, and immersed myself in the local way of life. The warm-hearted people, relaxed lifestyle, and amazing music made every day a memorable adventure.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

My main role in Aruba involved marketing, helping CEDE prepare for future ESC projects and how they are going to present themselves with the goal to attract more participants. This allowed me to apply my skills meaningfully and make a significant impact.

I was working with Nygel (my supervisor) who had a marketing background to envision and discuss the possible changes that could be made to boost their presence. What kind of videos should CEDE post, what should be the general message, their branding and core values. We had an in-depth analysis of other NGOs and their strategies, strengths and weaknesses and saw what can be adopted and replicated on the island.

It was fun and challenging to think outside the box and come up with new solutions. I also worked on making some landing pages that would address the frequent questions that were being asked and give a glimpse of the expectations and possibilities for the potential volunteers on the ESC opportunities provided. Overall, I learned a lot and practiced many new tools like Framer, Figma and Canva.





The experience taught me valuable lessons in marketing strategy and community engagement, showing me how to reach out to people and adapt my perspective on Caribbean life to encourage volunteering in Europe.

We also facilitated and helped organize an Erasmus project called “Bridge to Europe” where multiple people joined from the other Dutch Caribbean islands and from parts of Europe. The topic was to connect and discuss what it feels to be European. There were multiple sessions where we shared our values, feelings and perceptions of what being European meant for all of us.

At the end of it there was huge progress where we connected between each other and gained perspective of other people’s points of view. It was thrilling to be in a vibrant group with new friends, partners and amazing memories made.

ABSORBING THE CULTURE

Throughout my time in Aruba, I met incredible people from diverse backgrounds. I had an amazing mentor who helped me get the local vibe and guided me whenever I needed help. Nygel, and our wonderful facilitator, Xenia, kept the atmosphere light, fun, and professional. These connections

broadened my perspective and enriched my understanding of the world. I never expected that the people there would be so Balkan like, caring, valuing the small moments and cherishing connections above all.

There were many challenges as well like the hot humid weather, the new languages we were adjusting to like Spanish, Dutch, English and Papiamentu, the animals I’ve never seen before like iguanas and geckos everywhere and the cute sand owls.

Ultimately, working closely with others, I honed my communication and teamwork skills, which will benefit me in all future projects.

Volunteering in Aruba was a life-changing experience. The two months passed quickly, but the friendships, cultural immersion, professional growth, and personal development I gained will stay with me forever. This journey not only allowed me to contribute to a meaningful cause but also helped me grow in ways I never imagined.

DUSHI

I want to leave you, dear reader, with a gift, and that is the word “dushi”. I used it in the beginning of this article and it is my most loved new word I ever adopted.

And I hope I can convince you to use it as well.

“Dushi” is a dynamic Papiamentu word. In Aruba, “dushi” can mean a lot of things; it can be used to describe food as ‘sweet’ or ‘yummy’, or to describe a good feeling (good music, a great vibe), but it is also used as a term of endearment for your friends or your lover, translated as ‘sweetheart’ or ‘sweetie’. Dushi is used in flirting as well. When you say someone is “dushi” it is comparable to saying someone is ‘hot’.

Basically, for me everything that I enjoy is dushi... “Dushi” is dushi! It sounds similar and correlates nicely with my languages for ‘душа’ which means ‘soul’ and its variations which all accent the amazing side of someone.

Lastly, I passionately encourage anyone who wants to make a difference to get involved in an ESC project to take that step. And trust me, IT’S WORTH IT! The experiences and memories you make will stay with you forever and enrich your life in ways you would never expect.

Mario Krstevski

Our volunteer on the 2-months ESC project with CEDE Aruba

The journey of women in the Olympic Games



The 2024 Summer Olympics have just come to an end and they were nothing less than sensational (and somewhat dramatic). One of the reasons why they were so important is that there was a 50:50 representation of men and women competing, making them the first Olympic Games that reached full gender equality.

Women competed for the first time at the Olympic Games in Paris in 1900. In the 1900 games, women made up 2.2% of all the competitors, and they could only compete in tennis and golf as individual sports, as well as sailing and croquet as group sports. In this year Charlotte Cooper became the first female individual champion by winning the women's singles tennis competition. Further on, more and more sports were added for women, such as archery (which was removed and added back repetitively), figure skating, swimming, and diving. In Stockholm in 1912, there were art competitions that were open to women, but there aren't detailed records of their participation in them. When athletics were added in 1928, women were forbidden from 800-meter and longer races up until 1960, since they were considered unsuitable for them.

As time went on, women were open to all of the sports in the Olympics. But, some Olympic events remained closed to women, and in cases where both genders competed, men often faced tougher versions of the same event. For instance, men compete in the 110-meter hurdles, while women compete in the 100-meter hurdles.

However, even after lots of development, women continued to face unequal treatment. A stark example occurred in 2012 when the Japan women's national soccer team, fresh from winning the 2011 FIFA Women's World Cup, was made to travel to the London Olympics in economy class, while the men's team traveled in business class. Moreover, cultural and religious factors have also influenced women's participation in the Olympics. In some countries, particularly those with strong religious traditions, societal norms discourage or even prevent women from participating in sports. This is especially true in countries with a significant Muslim population, where conservative values often limit opportunities for

women in athletics. However, global efforts to promote gender equality have encouraged more women from diverse backgrounds to participate in the Olympics. The increasing visibility of female athletes on the world stage has inspired more girls to pursue sports.

That brings us to the Paris Olympics this year. The 2024 Paris Olympics marked another significant step forward in the pursuit of gender equality in sports. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) ensured that the Games featured an equal number of male and female athletes for the first time in Olympic history, making gender parity a core aspect of the event. In addition to this milestone, the 2024 Olympics expanded the number of mixed-gender events, further emphasizing the importance of equality and collaboration in sports. Paris 2024 also introduced several initiatives aimed at empowering women, such as mentoring programs for female athletes and coaches, and increased visibility for women's sports in media coverage. These efforts reflect the continued commitment of the IOC and the Olympic community to creating an inclusive environment where all athletes can compete on equal terms, setting a new standard for future Olympics.

The story of women in the Olympic Games is a story of resilience, progress, and the enduring fight for equality. As the OGs continue to evolve, the spirit of the Olympics - a spirit of unity and greatness - will guide the way toward a more inclusive and empowering future for women in sports.

Dela Dodevska

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ЕСК за почетници: Кисели краставички Во една рака, Животни лекции Во друга



ГЛАВА ПРВА

Уште пред конечно да се спакувам за една година живот надвор од дома (чувството беше како да се обидувам да собирам цел циркус во кутија за чевли), веќе замислував што ќе напишам во овој прв извештај. Ги читав сите текстови од претходните волонтери, мислејќи што ќе кажам кога конечно ќе стигне мојот ред. А сега кога времето дојде, наидувам на кочница од едноставна причина: како да доловиш вакво неописливо искуство во помалку од илјада зборови?

Ме предупредуваа дека времето ќе летне, дека четири месеци ќе минат додека да трепнеш. Изгледа јас трепкам во забавена снимка, зашто овие четири месеци беа исполнети со толку многу случувања што се чувствувам како да сум проживеала втор живот. Стегнав толку неочекувани пријателства, се загубив во градови што претходно не можев ни на карта да ги лоцирам, и направив грешки кои ми оставија лекции за цел живот. Да не ги забораваме и првите моменти овде, кога слетав во Бремен, со едно тркалце помалку, принудена да го носам мојот розов куфер со светкави стикери, во раце до крајот на годината.

Волонтирањето со програмата ЕСК (Европски Солидарен Корпус) е навистина нешто посебно. По само четвртина од времето изминато, веќе не можам да си замислам каков би ми бил животот без него, да не зборувам за останатите три четвртини што доаѓаат.

Што можам да споделим со вас, драги читатели, за да го доловам овие четири месеци најблиску што можам? Да бидеме искрени, не беше сè мед и млеко. Животот ретко е таков. Влегувањето во сосема нова средина носи свои предизвици. Како предизвикот да носиш храна за цела седница во раце до дома, затоа што си заборавил

торба, а не сакаш да платиш за уште една која ќе ја надополни пренатрупаната заборавена колекција во плакар. Така што, се враќаш дома, жонглирајќи со тегли кисели краставички и лути вегански пицички, со верба и надеж дека ништо нема да заврши на тротоар.

Дали сепак би го препорачала ова искуство? Без сомнение. Возбудата, радоста, забавата, и среќата што ги доживувам тука, далеку ги надминуваат стресовите и тешкотиите.

Хмм, што друго? Дома станав експерт за враќање на растенија од низа вегетативни фази. Некои никогаш не ги преживеаја, да бидеме искрени. Но, надежта последна умира, па така продолжувам да посвојувам нови цвеќенца од „Zu Vershenken“ („да се подари“) или од Lidl за 2,50 евра, со стиснати палци дека следното ќе опстане. И ако некогаш се прошетате низ улиците на Бремен, не чудете се ако видите луѓе како носат огледала, столици, дрва во саксии, гардеробери, ноќни масички, па дури и огромни плишани мечки

(слика во прилог). Тоа не е само локална навика – тоа сме јас и моите цимери уредувајќи си го станот без да потрошиме денар.

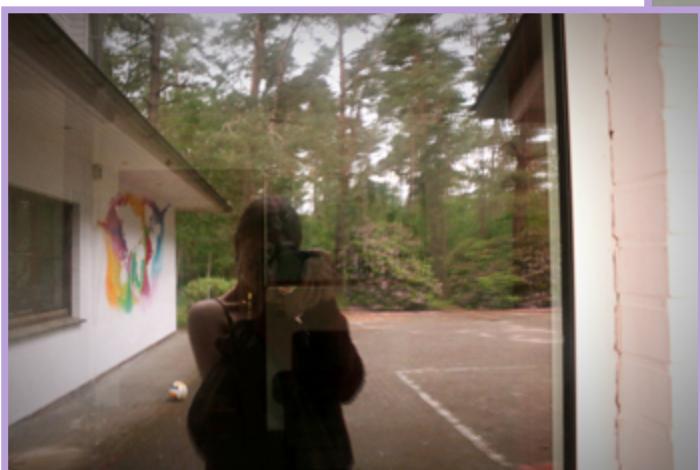
И никогаш не знаеш кој во градот, а камоли дома. За да отворат врата, на пример, ако чекаш пакет. Договорарањето да одиш во Берлин или на езеро утредента е исто како да правиш планови за што да вечераме тој ден.

Ајде да станеме малку посериозни. Ова искуство навистина ми остави белег и ми ги разниша претпоставките. Во разговори со други волонтери, сфатив дека иако сите дојдовме тука од различни причини, најдовме неочекувани радости по патот. Тоа е убавината на волонтирањето во ЕСК – шведска маса за личен развој, со по нешто за секого. Само треба да знаеш од која чинија да земеш. Еве што мислам: за да станеме најдобрата верзија од себе, треба да се соочиме со предизвиците и со работите што не плашат, и да веруваме дека ќе излеземе од другата страна помудри и поотпорни.

Чувствувам огромна благодарност за околностите под кои сум тука. Можеби ако беа поинакви, ќе беше друга приказна. Но, тоа е работата со животот. Способноста да се адаптираме и да бидеме флексибилни е клучот за да направиме кое било искуство добро. Колку и да звучи клише, има вистина во старата изрека: кога ќе се фокусираш на светлата страна, сенките не изгледаат толку страшно.

Кога размислувам за следните осум месеци, се полнам со возбуда. Животот, исто како и ова искуство, е полн со изненадувања, тешки ситуации, и моменти на чиста радост. И ако си подготвен да се нурнеш во сè, да го задржиш отворен умот и да се смееш на самиот себе по патот, ќе откриеш дека наградите вредат секој еден пресврт и заобиколница.

Јоана Чуковска





Exploring Skopje

Skopje, the capital of Macedonia, is a city that appeals to all the senses. From its different building styles to the sounds and smells that fill the air, Skopje offers a unique experience to anyone walking through its streets. This piece brings together personal experiences and observations to describe what it's like to explore this lively city.

Nursena: "As I walk through Skopje, I notice the natural beauty around me. The city is full of green spaces, with mountains visible in the distance and the Vardar River flowing peacefully. Skopje combines nature and city life in a way that feels balanced. In the city center, especially in Macedonian Square, I feel the energy of the capital. However, the city also shows its rich history. On one side of the river, the buildings remind me of Brutalist architecture, while on the other side, the architecture reflects the Ottoman period. In the middle, the square looks more European. This mix of styles shows how Skopje brings different cultures together".

Mustafa: "Touch is an important way I connect with Skopje. The fountains in the city remind me of those in Turkey, bringing back memories from my childhood. Touching the cool water after a walk makes me feel at home. The statues in Skopje are another interesting experience. They are big, detailed, and feel a bit unusual, almost like they belong in another world. These statues are a symbol of Skopje's unique and complex architecture".

Kübra: "The smells of Skopje tell their own story. The scent of roasted corn in Čaršija reminds me of my childhood in Turkey, where the streets smelled the same. The delicious aroma of „Ćevapi“ is also hard to miss, making you hungry as you walk by. Nature adds its own fresh smells, especially in places like Matka Canyon, where the air feels clean and refreshing. But not all smells are pleasant - sometimes, passing by a trash bin can be unpleasant. Still, the good smells in Skopje stand out, making it easy to forget the bad ones".

Emre: "The sounds of Skopje create a lively atmosphere. The constant noise of traffic, with cars zooming by and honking horns, is always there. But in quieter areas like parks and by the river, you can hear birds singing and the gentle sound of water from the fountains. Local Roma children often play drums on the streets, adding a joyful rhythm to the city. You can also hear different types of music coming from homes, shops, and bars, showing the diverse musical tastes of the people".

Skopje is a city that stimulates all the senses. From the sights of its varied architecture to the touch of its fountains and statues, the smells of its streets and nature, and the sounds that fill the air, Skopje leaves a lasting impression. This simple sensory journey through Skopje reveals a city that you not only see but also feel, smell, touch, and hear, making it a memorable place to visit.

Nursena Bayraktepe
Mustafa Gündoğdu
Kübra Nur Bölükbaş
Emre Aydan



„Мислам дека сум многу побогат“

Во Арад, Романија живеам речиси половина година, што значи одамна ја оставив зад мене првата половина од мојот волонтерски проект.

Зошто ме немаше да се јавам со текст претходно? Бидејќи не знаев на што да се насочам и како тоа да го опишам. Причината е што се соочив со некои предизвици што сега ме прават посрекен. Од нив научив многу за себе, а тоа е како на работите да реагирам поинаку за разлика од претходно кога многу често сум реагирал многу емотивно и со откажување после и најмал предизвик. Овде постојано сум решен да се справам со сите предизвици и целта ми е овој проект да го завршам најуспешно што може.

Како што реков, има и предизвици, но за првпат сега кога се справив со сите нив, се радувам на нив, бидејќи гледам дека од тоа дека учам и мислам дека тоа ќе ми помогне во иднина.

Посебно ми се допаѓа што овде со моите колеги и цимери не сме само колеги и цимери, туку ние и реално сме многу

добри пријатели. Нешто што навистина ќе го понесам од овде со мене после проектот се моето патување во Белград на викенд со дел од моите колеги - волонтери, а и во наредниот период планираме да посетиме повеќе места и држави.

А посебно би го истакнал мојот колега и претходно цимер - Кауси со кого постојано одиме на активности заедно, јадеме заедно, патуваме заедно, си помагаме во активностите и се е во ред.

Би заклучил дека можеби многу работи овде, од сегашна перспектива, ми звучат тешки, како бариерните пречки во комуникацијата со локалното население и некои други слични предизвици, но сепак, мислам дека по завршувањето на проектот ќе имам еден прекрасен и светол спомен во животот.

Даниел Шикоски, наш долгорочен ЕСК-волонтер во Романија



Lake Bogoria



**Flamingos'
favorite spot**

WHERE IS LAKE BOGORIA LOCATED?

Lake Bogoria is located about 200 km northwest from Nairobi in Africa. It is one of Kenya's Great Rift Valley Lakes. It is a remarkable natural wonder that captivates visitors with its unique wildlife, geology, and stunning scenery where millions of flamingos visit the lake throughout the whole year. It is a saline, alkaline lake that was formed due to volcanic activities and lies in a volcanic region that is south to Lake Baringo. This lake is also a Ramsar site which means it is assigned as an important source of wetland and is set to be protected.

HOT SPRINGS AND GEOTHERMAL ACTIVITY

Lake Bogoria has about 200 hot springs and 10 geysers which are distributed across the length of the lake.

It is one of the many lakes that make up the Rift Valley's detailed geological system. The lake is classified as a saline, alkaline body of water, resulting from volcanic activity that has shaped the Rift Valley over millions of years. This volcanic influence is evident in the lake's high mineral composition, which creates a difficult environment where few plants and animals can survive, but those that do are uniquely adapted to these harsh conditions.

The geothermal activity in the region is evidence of the volcanic forces that have shaped the landscape. These hot springs are not only a visual wonder but also contribute to the lake's unique chemical composition. Visitors can observe the steaming water and bubbling mud pools, a fascinating scene of nature's power and complexity.

FLAMINGO'S HEAVEN

Due to the lake's alkalinity, blue-green algae grows well, which in fact is flamingo's favorite food!

Lake Bogoria is one of the premier destinations for flamingos in Africa. The lake's high alkalinity and saline waters make it an ideal habitat for the lesser flamingo (*Phoeniconaias minor*), which survives in such harsh conditions. The lake's shores are often lined with thousands of these vibrant birds, creating a spectacular pink valley. Flamingos migrate to Lake Bogoria and they stay throughout the whole year making it a breath-taking view to tourists and visitors.

The lesser flamingos at Lake Bogoria feed on blue-green algae, which grow in the lake's alkaline environment. These algae are rich in carotenoids, pigments that give flamingos their characteristic pink and orange feathers. Flamingos have specialized beaks adapted to filter-feed from the lake's waters, allowing them to extract the algae very easily!

The presence of flamingos at Lake Bogoria is heavily influenced by seasonal migrations. While some flamingos are resident throughout the year, others travel from other parts of Africa in search of sustainable feeding conditions.

But sadly these lesser flamingos face many threats like heavy metal poisoning from many chemical factories, climate changes, habitat loss, water pollution and human activities. We need to change as soon as possible to save these delicate bird species, not only the lesser flamingos but also the whole biodiversity that lives by Lake Bogoria.

Conservation efforts are important to ensuring the ongoing health of the flamingo population at Lake Bogoria. The lake's delicate ecosystem is threatened by factors such as climate change, water pollution, and human activities. Protecting the lake and its surrounding environment is essential for maintaining the flamingo population and the biodiversity of the lake!

Finally, as we continue to appreciate and protect Lake Bogoria, it is crucial to support conservation efforts that protect both the flamingos and the delicate ecosystem they inhabit. For anyone with a passion for wildlife and natural wonders, Lake Bogoria's flamingos offer an unforgettable experience and a reminder of the beauty of our planet's diverse ecosystems!

Lara Mihajlovikj

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WHY IS *ARUBA* SO KNOWN FOR THEIR BEACHES?



Aruba, a small island in the southern Caribbean Sea, is famous for its beautiful beaches, which often appear in travel magazines and tourism ads. This Dutch Caribbean island offers a beach experience that draws visitors from all over the world. So, what makes Aruba's beaches so special?

Aruba's location is key to its excellent beaches. Positioned outside the hurricane zone, the island enjoys steady weather with little rain and gentle trade winds. This means the beaches stay sunny and inviting all year round. Unlike many Caribbean spots that face seasonal storms, Aruba's climate is perfect for beachgoers. The dry weather helps create the island's unique landscape of soft, white sand and clear, turquoise waters.

A standout feature of Aruba's beaches is their white sand. Beaches like Eagle Beach and Palm Beach are famous for their fine, powdery sand, which comes from coral and shell fragments that have been worn down over time. This sand feels soft to walk on and looks stunning against the bright blue Caribbean Sea. The water around Aruba's beaches is also very clear, which is great for snorkeling and swimming. The clarity comes from the low amount of sediment and the gentle waves that keep the water clean. Eagle Beach is often listed as one of the best beaches in the world. Its wide, open shoreline is lined with low-rise

hotels that don't take away from the natural beauty. The beach's soft white sand and clear water make it perfect for relaxing and water activities. The iconic fofoti trees, with their unique, bent shapes, add to the beach's charm. Eagle Beach's reputation is further boosted by its regular appearances on "best beaches" lists, like those by TripAdvisor and CNN.

Aruba's beaches aren't just about sand and water; they also offer great chances for snorkeling and seeing marine life. The clear water around Aruba is ideal for watching colorful coral reefs and various marine species. Popular snorkeling spots include the Antilla Shipwreck, a sunken cargo ship that has become a home for marine life, and the coral reefs near Boca Catalina. The rich marine life and easy-to-reach snorkeling sites add to Aruba's beach appeal.

The cultural and historical background of Aruba also makes its beaches special. The island's Dutch heritage influences how it handles tourism and hospitality, making visitors feel welcome. Local customs and traditions are often part of the beach experience, from local food served at beachfront restaurants to cultural festivals held on the sand. This mix of culture and relaxation offers visitors a unique and enjoyable experience. Compared to other Caribbean destinations, Aruba's beaches are special because of their unique features. Many

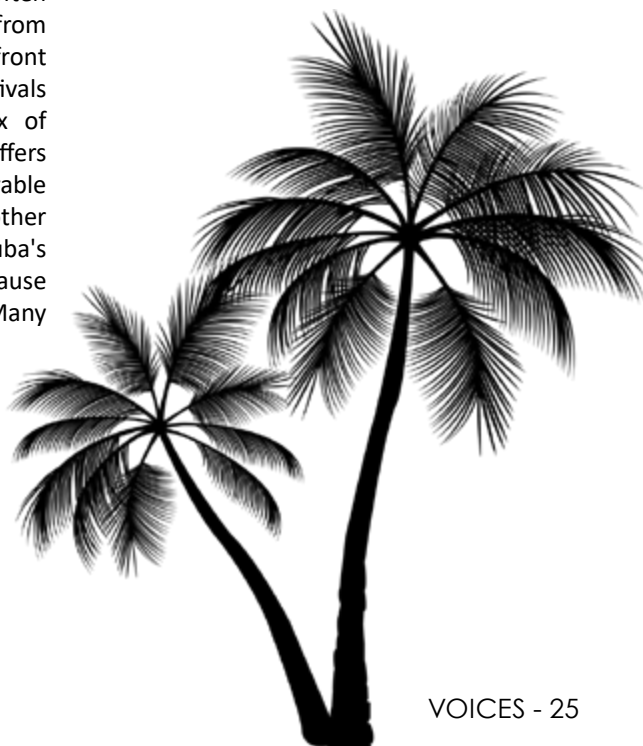
Caribbean islands have beautiful beaches, but Aruba's consistent weather, high-quality sand, and clear waters make it stand out. The island's location and focus on conservation and sustainable tourism help keep its beaches in top condition.

As an Aruban, I feel incredibly fortunate to have been born and to live my entire life on this island paradise. With its crystalline waters, powdery white sands, and stunning sea views that stretch as far as the eye can see, Aruba truly embodies a tropical haven.

Adalberto Haayen

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Brugëtimi i grave në Lojërat Olimpikë



Lojërat Olimpike Verore 2024 sapo kanë përfunduar dhe ishin jo pak sensacionale (dhe dramatike). Një nga arsyt pse ishin kaq të rëndësishme është se kishte një përfaqësim 50:50 të burrave dhe grave që garonin, duke i bërë kështu Lojërat e para Olimpike që arritën barazinë e plotë gjinore.

Gratë garuan për herë të parë në Lojërat Olimpike në Paris në vitin 1900. Në lojërat e vitit 1900, gratë përbënin 2,2% të të gjithë konkurrenteve dhe ato mund të konkurronin vetëm në tenis dhe golf si sporte individuale, si dhe lundrim dhe kroket si sport në grup. Në këtë vit Charlotte Cooper u bë kampionja e parë femër individuale duke fituar garën e tenisit tek femrat. Më tej, u shtuan gjithnjë e më shumë sporte për gratë, si gjuajtja me hark (e cila u hoq dhe u shtua në mënyrë të vazhdueshme), patinazhi artistik, noti dhe zhytja. Në Stokholm në vitin 1912, kishte konkurse arti që ishin të hapura për gratë, por nuk ka të dhëna të detajuara për pjesëmarrjen e tyre në to. Kur u shtua atletika në vitin 1928, grave ju ndaluan garat 800 metra e më gjatë deri në vitin 1960, pasi ato konsideroheshin të papërshtatshme për to.

Me kalimin e kohës, gratë ishin të prezente për të gjitha sportet në Lojërat Olimpike. Por, disa ngjarje olimpike mbetën të mbyllura për femrat dhe në rastet kur të dyja gjinitë konkurronin, meshkujt shpesh përballeshin me versione më të ashpra të të njëjtit sport. Për shembull, burrat konkurrojnë në 110 metra me pengesa, ndërsa gratë konkurrojnë në 100 metra me pengesa.

Megjithatë, edhe pas shumë zhvillimesh, gratë vazhduan të përballen me trajtim të pabarabartë. Një shembull i mprehtë ndodhi në vitin 2012 kur ekipi kombëtar i futbollit i femrave të Japonisë, që sapo kishte fituar Kupën e Botës FIFA 2011 për femra, u detyrua të udhëtonte në Lojërat Olimpike të Londrës në klasën ekonomike, ndërsa ekipi i meshkujve udhëtoi në klasën e biznesit. Për më tepër, faktorët kulturorë dhe fetarë kanë ndikuar gjithashtu në pjesëmarrjen e grave në Lojërat Olimpike. Në disa vende, veçanërisht ato me tradita

të forta fetare, normat shoqërore i dekurajojnë apo edhe i pengojnë gratë të marrin pjesë në sport. Kjo është veçanërisht e vërtetë në vendet me një popullsi të konsiderueshme myslimane, ku vlerat konservatore shpesh kufizojnë mundësitë për gratë në atletikë. Megjithatë, përpjekjet globale për të promovuar barazinë gjinore kanë inkurajuar më shumë gra me prejardhje të ndryshme për të marrë pjesë në Lojërat Olimpike. Vizibiliteti në rritje i sportisteve femra në skenën botërore ka frymëzuar më shumë vajza që të ndjekin sportin. Kjo na sjell në Lojërat Olimpike të Parisit këtë vit. Lojërat Olimpike të Parisit 2024 shënuan një tjetër hap të rëndësishëm përpara në ndjekjen e barazisë gjinore në sport. Komiteti Olimpik Ndërkombëtar (KON) siguroi që Lojërat të shfaqnin një numër të barabartë atletësh meshkuj dhe femra për herë të parë në historinë olimpike, duke e bërë barazinë gjinore një aspekt thelbësor të ngjarjes. Përveç këtij momenti historik, Lojërat Olimpike të 2024 zgjeruan numrin e ngjarjeve me gjini të përzier, duke theksuar më tej rëndësinë e barazisë dhe bashkëpunimit në sport. Paris 2024 prezantoi gjithashtu disa iniciativa që synojnë fuqizimin e grave, të tilla si programe mentorimi për atletet dhe trajneret femra, dhe rritjen e shikueshmërisë për sportet e grave në mbulimin mediatik. Këto përpjekje pasqyrojnë angazhimin e vazhdueshëm të IOC dhe komunitetit Olimpik për të krijuar një mjedis gjithëpërfshirës ku të gjithë atletët mund të garojnë në kushte të barabarta, duke vendosur një standard të ri për Olimpiadën e ardhshme.

Historia e grave në Lojërat Olimpike është një histori e qëndrueshmërisë, përparimit dhe luftës së qëndrueshme për barazi. Ndërsa lojrat olimpike vazhdojnë të zhvillohen, fryma e Olimpiadës - një frymë uniteti dhe madhështie - do të udhëheqë rrugën drejt një të ardhmeje më gjithëpërfshirëse dhe fuqizuese për gratë në sport.

Dela Dodevska
Përktheu: Dora Arifi

Burimet:
olympics.com - Paris 2024: Record-breaking Olympic Games on and off the field
wikipedia.org - Participation of women in the Olympics
unwoman.org - Paris 2024 Olympics: A new era for women in sport

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TOPIC

- Anything, except politics or hate speech
- Think of topics that would interest **our audience** (youth)
- Maybe a **current event or trend** that you could write about?

RESEARCH

- Use **credible sources** when researching your topic
- Double-check** any information you include in your article to ensure **accuracy**
- Don't plagiarize**
- Link the sources** at the end of your article

STRUCTURE

- Use **short, attention-grabbing headline**
- Write an **introduction** at the beginning (what, who, when, why, how)
- Include **body** and **conclusion** in your article, maintain a logical flow
- Write your **full name** at the end

WRITING

- Use **clear and concise language** that your audience will understand
- Avoid** too technical terms and **hard language** unless necessary
- Be engaging** and try to make your article interesting to read

FEW RULES

- The article should be around 500 - 1000 words
- Don't** include images or illustrations in the document
- Send possible **photos separately** (with sources and assured they're **free of copyrights**)
- Edit and revise** (clarity, grammar, and spelling error)

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