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THE UNITED FITTERS

OF

YOUTH  
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FEST

1-30 AUGUST

*This is the magazine of **Youth Summer Fest**: an initiative in Youth Centres UP 2, an international project hosted by Timis County Youth Foundation (FITT), that brings together volunteers from the world, eager to create spaces and activities for the young people of Timisoara and Lugoj.*

## **WHAT WILL YOU FIND IN THE THIRD NUMBER OF THIS MAGAZINE?**

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# Intercultural night: a personal reflection

by Firdaows Chesamae

Being a part of FITT is incredible to me. Apart from getting to know new people, I got a chance to learn about their cultural backgrounds, and that was super cool! I was thrilled that FITT organized this cultural night.

As this event takes place every Thursday night, we will see volunteers from several countries represent their countries in the event. Last week, the cultural night was so much fun as I saw them presenting their traditional food, cultures, dancing, etc.

For me, this event was exciting because I got the chance to learn about their cultures, to try their traditional food, learn a little bit of their languages and so on.



Last but not least, this event did open up my world: as a person who doesn't know much about other countries' cultures, I got the chance to learn about them better through this event. I am able to notice the cultural differences between my country and those of others, so it's a lot of fun.

I don't think I would have been able to find this sort of event on my own if I had not stepped out of my comfort zone to live in this new place in such a big international community! Thank you to FITT for having me on this project and to everyone who shared their cultures so far! Everyone here is fantastic, and I'm super excited for the next intercultural night.



# A Botanical Fair & Talent in the house

by Kiki Rewinkel

On Friday late afternoon, the first-wave volunteers came together to set up a fair in the botanical park of Timisoara. Finding the right location took a while. We wanted to be close to the road for people who would spontaneously pass-by, but that also meant being creative with the space that was available. So, we had to accept the trees in the middle of the playing field. This went to a **wave of confusion**: there was a lot missing in the first bus that the logistics team came to bring. In the end they had to go back and forth 2 more times (**shoutout to the logistics team!**). Happy go lucky in the end everything arrived all right!



After we carefully set up our activities, including a clothing market, various games and bracelet factory, something was still wrong there, and it was way too late to fix this: **the fair turned out to be a children's paradise.**

The first participants were a bit too young to be part of our target group but we were happy to engage with such great energy. At least we had a lot of interaction with the local community. Even if they were 6 years old, their parents seemed to be younger than 35 for the most part. Later on, with the help of music, we were able to catch the attention of all age groups.

Who doesn't like good live music?! Some people even had the guts to take the open Mic invitation with both hands. Cautiously and with a contracted face, they stared at a small mobile screen to read the lyrics and sing along with all their hearts and voices. Fortunately, FITT had a lot of talent in the house! All and all, a great celebration!

### Ada Kilicarslan, Türkiye

On August 13, another big event took place on the Botanical park, Timisoara. Various activities targeting local young people were organized, including theatre improvizes, open air stage, fashion show, "Gymcana" and face painting. It was super interesting and fun for me as well as for local people. A lot of people from different age groups participated in our activities and had fun.



# LIVING TOGETHER

by Ines Adnot

Besides the project, FITT offers us the opportunity to experience life in community, which is significantly different for each of us. The beauty of volunteering also lies in learning to live with other people from around the world. Maybe it's your first time sharing a room with three strangers? Or maybe you have never cooked alone?

"At first I was uncomfortable, but as time passed, it felt easier than expected to accept it. My roommates are so sweet."

**Beyza, Turkey**



After a day of organizing and promoting events it is time for everyone to return to our temporary home. Some of us need some free time for ourselves, others gather in the kitchen to cook or decide to go for a walk along the river. By sharing this international experience, each person learns more about our world but also about themselves.

"I Lived in different kinds of communities and in dormitories in college (shared kitchen and bathrooms) but also in shared houses in the different countries I have lived in. I love to cook and spend time in the kitchen, to see what people are cooking, sharing food and tasting other's meals."

**Sultana, France**

No matter how many people you have lived with before or if it's your first volunteering experience, Timisoara will remain a gathering point of our differences and similarities. Whether it is through our discussions in the evening, the cooking sessions, the improvised parties or the distribution of tasks, everyone will have learned and exchanged something during these two months at the Youth Summer Festival.

"It's cool to share everything, having conversations. People respect each other."

**Firdaows, Thailand**



# FITT is a match made in heaven

by Selwan Esmat

Each of us has his own way of life, but not everyone can enjoy being alone. For example, when you study, work or travel, you may think that it would be better not to be alone, that you might enjoy everything more with others. Some of us enjoy being with the family and some of us enjoy being with friends. **But with FITT, it's different.**



FITT makes it different. You travel alone, but you meet strangers, and with time you discover that they have become good companions, perhaps even family. For example, when I arrived in Timisoara for the first time, I felt that it was completely different from my country: the weather, the people, the language, everything was different, but different in a good way. **When they welcomed me in the dormitory with warm smiley faces, I thought “what a great start”.**

The time and place also make a difference in our comfort while traveling. Timisoara is one of the most important and oldest cities in Romania. It is a beautiful city with friendly and conservative people at the same time, and **a summer atmosphere that makes you feel refreshed.** Most importantly, it is a city full of history whose streets are witnesses to its great history in terms of designing homes and lighting. Even nature is in harmony with civilization wonderfully, to the farthest description.







**"I had great workshops in here. I never thought it will turn to be that special."**

**Riyad H. Ali, Azerbaijan**

**"I had great moments in here. My special moment was when I presented the Portuguese culture in the intercultural night. I got to know everyone and introduced them to my culture."**

**Beatriz Soares, Portugal**



**"It was the perfect time and the perfect place with the perfect people."**

**Selwan Esmat, Egypt**



**"I learnt a lot, not only from the project but from the people. We have all such different lives and experiences, and I must admit I still have to learn a lot."**

**Rocío Martínez, Spain**



# Interviews with volunteers

by Hany George

## Flavia Curtut, 25 years old, Romania

- I learned how to be on time, to not be late.
- I think that cooperation with international youth is full of **useful cultural exchanges** because I can meet people from all around the world and I can make connections with them. Also I love to cook and here I had the possibility to learn more dishes from other cultures.
- I like the city center of Timisoara because it is without cars, it is only for walking.
- It is my pleasure to be part of this project as a dance teacher.



## Josué G. Arroyos, 22 years old, Spain

- What really thrilled me about Romania in the first instance was the connection with the land and traditions that I found in the countryside. I genuinely believe that **the best part of Romania is outside the cities**, it's in the hills where the shepherds live, where the cavals sound, where the forests grow and where the people produce palinca.
- Even though I was glad to find some similarities between Romania and Spain because of the roman latin past but also because of the last century history, in this last case you find familiar open arms similarities but also old fashioned manners that may be easier to point out when you experience them abroad.



## Giorgia Torcia, 19 years old, Italy

- I like the environment that was created here by FITT, more in particular the sharing of our cultures and backgrounds because this helps us feel as a family. Mention of honour to my amazing team (Cocoloco) who is doing a wonderful job and I'm super proud of them!
- The biggest difference that I spotted between Italy and Romania is the multiculturalism: Romania is a mix between the Slavic and the Latin culture so everywhere you go you can notice these two different cultures mixing together.



## Aruzhan Otegenova, Kazakhstan

- On International Youth Day, there was a conference organized in the Youth House followed by different workshops. Those workshops were amazing, with different activities such as ceramic making, collage making, photo shooting and many more. I liked the earrings making workshop the most and managed to prepare two earrings by myself. In general, it was very fun and I really enjoyed being there.



## Sona Mehdizadeh, Azerbaijan

- We had the wonderful opportunity to sample delectable cuisine from many countries last week. My personal favourite was Italian pasta. To be completely honest, I knew very little about Portuguese or Romanian culture before this occasion. And that evening I had the chance to learn more about these nations. My friends and I will represent Azerbaijan next week, and we are very excited to introduce our culture to our international friends.





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[www.fitt.ro](http://www.fitt.ro)

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