



CALL for ESC volunteers from ITALY and BULGARIA

Short Term ESC VOLUNTEERING Project in BULGARIA

CULTURAL HERITAGE REPORTERS

Period: 19th of August – 17 th of October 2019 ; **Location:** Ruse, Bulgaria

Application Deadline: 05th of August 2019



ABOUT the PROJECT

CULTURAL HERITAGE REPORTERS is short-term European Solidarity Volunteering project designed for 60 days and will be implemented in the city of **Ruse**, North-East Bulgaria. The project will host eight ESC volunteers from two different EU countries: **Bulgaria and Italy** involving them in activities dedicated to the cultural heritage valorization giving to participants an opportunity to take an active part in increasing the popularity of the heritage of North East Bulgaria that often remains outside the focus of the mainstream destinations of the Bulgarian tourism industry.

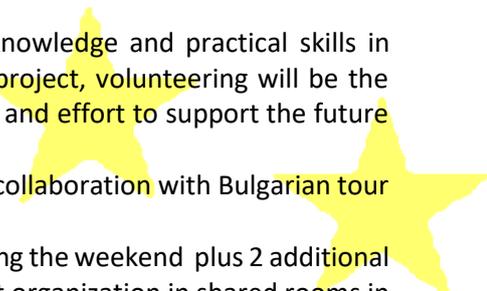
Participation in the development of the region will provide volunteers with knowledge and practical skills in participatory heritage, new media, research and tourism industry. During the project, volunteering will be the method whereby young people learn new skills while they contribute their time and effort to support the future development of the region.

The project will be implemented under the supervision of ICCS members and in collaboration with Bulgarian tour guides, museum staff and experienced mentor and other experts.

The volunteers will work 35 hours per week having two days free of activities during the weekend plus 2 additional days off per month. The volunteer's accommodation will be provided by the host organization in shared rooms in the city of Ruse /2 volunteers in shared room/. Each volunteer will receive €120 for pocket money per month. We reimburse up to € 270 for international travel expenses (for round trip per participant) the participants coming from Italy. Depending on the daily activities, the host organisation will provide to volunteers with food /or money for food;

PROJECT AIMS

The project will involve the ESC participants in activities dedicated to the digital valorization of the cultural heritage in the region giving to participants an opportunity to take an active part in increasing the popularity of the heritage



of North East Bulgaria that often remains outside the focus of the mainstream destinations of the Bulgarian tourism industry.

The project is designed to encourage young people from different backgrounds and skills levels to emphasizing on the development of “soft” skills, self-confidence and personal growth as well as to increase their employability in the sphere of creative industries and cultural tourism.

We are motivated to build a creative ambient where together with the volunteers to discover by first hand the cultural diversity and cultural heritage richness in Europe and to start on that basen an inter-cultural conversation about what we have in common and its social value.

METHODOLOGY: The project activities are build up on the idea for participatory heritage and considers cultural heritage as a tool for social inclusion of youth. In the context of the [lastest studies](#), we will develop the idea for participatory cultural heritage, based on the use of social media to create a culture of youth participation. The project will be carried out through learning by doing (informal learning) via the guidance, supervision and mentorship of our team and experts involved in each activity.

ACTIVITIES

The Short term ESC placement activities involve learning and using pactices in the field of participatory heritage, social media marketing, library and desktop research. Special care will be taken to ensure the learning dimension and the social components of the Short Term ESC program.

The tasks during the ESC volunteering project could be described in the next points:

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES (group activities)

- Experts from the host organization as well as external experts – (museum experts, licensed tour guides, ect.) will present to the volunteers lectures or workshops to introduce the cultural heritage of the region as well as the current state of the cultural tourism industry in Bulgaria.
- The participants will take part in organised visits to different museum institutions interviewing museum representatives and experts having the opportunity to extent their knowledge, improving their skills relevant to the project topic;
- The volunteers will also attend short training about decoupage skills with the aim to create handmade souvenirs dedicated to the representative sites of the cultural heritage in the region;

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES (the volunteers will work divided in small groups of 3 persons) ;

- Photo and/or video reportages and storytelling; photo/video content edition, (outdoor & indore activities)
- library/online research about the cultural heritage in the region
- writhing a travel book dedicated to the cultural heritage sites in Ruse region and North East Bulgaria;
- organizing public events for popularization of the project;
- Tasks related to photographing and documenting the development of the project;
- Tasks related to developing a web-blog and/or making off short video or other visual/ printing material about the project.
- YouTube channel/web blog creation/updating;
- workshops for creating souvenirs and info brochures dedicated to the cultural heritage sites ;

TEAM-BUILDINGS ACTIVITIES (groups of 4 persons)

Outings to scenic spots in the cultural heritage locations in the region, Along with teaching fundamental and practical skills in team work, time/task management, photo and video documentation/reportages, the project will provide intercultural experience by meeting the volunteers with the local community and by introducing them cultural heritage sites in the region of North East Bulgaria;

ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES: (working in small groups)

- Tasks related to assistance of the logistic of the project (work planning meetings, discussions, etc.).
- More experienced volunteers will coordinate smaller voluntary groups working on different tasks assigned to each part of the voluntary project;
- Individual and group work with the mentor;
- Evaluation activities and European Solidarity Corps Certification;

SELECTION PROCEDURE and CRITERIA :

CULTURAL HERITAGE REPORTERS: ESC Short Term volunteering project is designed as non-formal intercultural learning experience aimed at young people with or without experience in travelling abroad. The volunteers should be 18-30 years old, willing to work as part of a team, pro-active and passionate about the cultural heritage and its social value. We expect the volunteers will be interested in the South East Europe, its history and contemporary challenges, ready to live in the city of Ruse and to work in intercultural context.

Experience with volunteering or work in NGO sector is not required, but it will increase the possibility of a positive experience for the volunteer considerably. The ESC Short Term project targets young people with the following needs and capacities:

- ✓ The project is open to young people who would also like to develop in particular their: team work ability, creativity, self-confidence and to increase their sense of initiative and employability in the cultural heritage, tourism industry and civic sector.
- ✓ The candidate volunteers should want to develop their social and organizational skills and should be ready to offer their time and effort to the project in exchange for the chance to learn practice skills and take part in an intercultural work experience.
- ✓ We welcome youngsters with cultural differences, youth who live in isolated regions/ economically disadvantaged areas, youngsters from immigrant cultures, NEET's, early-school leavers, or those with social problems..
- ✓ We find the proposed voluntary activities as relevant also to application of candidate volunteers interested in social or cultural topics, new media or handicrafts. If there are candidates with previous experience and/or education /in field of cultural heritage, journalism, tourism etc. or anything considered relevant to the project they are welcome to send also their portfolio;

PROJECT ENVIROMENT :

The CITY of RUSE is the administrative center of [North-Central planting region of Bulgaria](#). Over the course of centuries, the city of RUSE has been a place of vibrant cultural development, hence one of the main Bulgarian cultural centers. The city is situated on the highest bank of the Danube river, at a distance of 320 km from Sofia, 200 km from Varna, 300 km from Plovdiv and only 65 km from the capital city of Romania – Bucharest. Ruse has a continental climate with very hot summers and relatively cold winters. Owing to its position on the Danubian Plain, the city's winters can get windy.



Rousse PORT/ Rouse East & Ruse West/ is the biggest Bulgarian port on the [Danube river](#), a part of the important transport crossway of the trans-European transport corridors №7, №9 and the TRASEKA corridor - Europe-Caucasus-Asia.

The distance from Ruse to **BUCHAREST International Airport** is **80 km**.

The distance from Ruse to **VARNA International Airport** is **210 km**.

The distance from Ruse to **SOFIA International Airport** is **370 km**

The close proximity of the [river Danube](#) has always had a great significance for the development of the city from antiquity to the present day. The tourists offer describe the city as bright, cheery, free spirit and bicycle-friendly town.

The major local cultural destinations were established as early as the late 19th and the early 20th century: the Regional Library, the Ruse Art Gallery, the Ruse Regional Museum of History, the Ruse Theatre, the Ruse Philharmonic Orchestra, the Ruse State Opera and the Puppet Theatre. More than 260 buildings in Ruse are on the cultural heritage list. European Heritage Labels were recently put on the facades of about 20 of them. Ruse is the birthplace of the Nobel laureate in Literature Elias Canetti and the world-famous writer Michael Arlen.



RUSE REGION is situated in the North-Eastern part of Bulgaria and is one of the medium sized regions in the country, concerning Bulgaria's territory and population. The northern boundary of Rouse region goes along the Danube river valley and coincides with the state boundary of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Romania. The town of Rouse is located near the capital of Romania - Bucharest /45 miles/.

The geographical situation of Rouse region characterizes the region as a major republican transport crossroad. Two of the main Pan-European transport corridors cross on the territory of the region - transport corridor № VII and transport corridor № IX, added by the possibilities given by the corridor "river - sea". The town occupies a strategic place hence the existence of well-developed transport system - automobile and railway, border checkpoints, duty free area, river transport, a bridge over the Danube River. The density of the road network is approximately 0,370 km per sq.m on the region territory, which is considerably higher compared to the average for the country. There is constructed and well-developed railway infrastructure on the territory of Rouse region. Close to the city is located the Natural Park [Rusenski Lom](#) where the canyon of the rivers Beli and Cherni Lom creates the valley of the Rusenski Lom River – the last right-side tributary of the Danube River. It's is located 20 km south of Ruse, takes up a territory of 3408 hectares and has been a protected area since 1970. Nowadays it is part of two Natural 2000 sites and an Important Bird Area with about 200 nesting bird species. The canyon-like relief of the river is famous for its beautiful landscape called "a mountain in the plain" and known for its rich diversity of orchids, birds, bats and butterflies. The Park is a member of the [DANUBE PARKS](#) - Danube River Network of Protected Areas. [Rusenski Lom NATURAL PARK](#) is named after Rusenski Lom River.

The [World Wide Fund for Nature -WWF](#) considers the Rusenski Lom Nature Park as an [area of high conservation value](#) because with its four rivers features unique nature, history and traditions. The combination of rocks, forests, rivers, and caves with meadows is reason for the biological diversity on the territory of the park. There are different marked routes in the park that allow volunteers to observe its biological diversity in their free time. On area of 3408 ha only, can be found 900 plant species (23% of Bulgaria's flora), 200 bird species are nesting, 76% of Bulgaria's mammal species use the area and 22 fish species swim in its waters. The fauna represented in the park are Egyptian vulture, Black stork, the European ground squirrel, or Crexrex.



The variety of eco trails and opportunity for various outdoor activities – rock climbing, cave visiting, cycling, walking tours and kayaking make the unique destination of the Rusenski Lom. All routes are well-marked and do not require special training. The Natural Park is also famous for its rich cultural and historical heritage. On the territory of the park are situated the [Rock-Hewn Churches of Ivanovo](#)– included into the UNESCO's list of the world cultural heritages, the [Medieval Town of Cherven](#) considered as national archaeological reserve since 1965 as well as the only active rock monastery in Bulgaria, [Basarbovo rock monastery](#). The park's territory includes also the second largest cave in Bulgaria – [Orlova Chuka](#).

PREPARATION before DEPARTURE:

will include research of experience and examples of travel guides, tourist blogs/vlogs from the home communities of the participants and will be important for the success of the project. As our equipment consists in computers, tablets and 2 cameras, Please, bring with you any mobile journalism tools you prefer to use – smartphone, camera, ect.

NB: Please, inform us in advance if you have any special needs or medical conditions that project's team should be aware of (allergies, mobility problems, medical treatment, personal support, etc.) by writing us an e-mail to evs.iccs.bulgaria@gmail.com ;

The official language in Bulgaria is Bulgarian language that is a member of the Southern branch of the Slavic language family. Since 2007 has been among the official languages of the European Union.

Although Bulgaria is in the European Union, it is not part of the Euro zone. The name of the currency in Bulgaria is lev at the rate of 1.95583 leva = 1 Euro (€). In 2019, the national minimum wage in Bulgaria is fixed at 286 € per month that is the lowest in the EU.

HOST ORGANISATION:

[INSTITUTE FOR CREATIVE CIVIL STRATEGIES](#) was founded in 2010 with the aim to assist the successful personal development, social integration and professional realization of young people who work with, developing their creativity as a model for active participation in the civil, social and cultural dimensions of society and promoting the European youth and lifelong learning policies.

The organization is based in Ruse and works also on national and international level. Institute for Creative Civil Strategies is registered as cultural organization in the list of cultural organization of the Bulgarian Ministry of Culture. Since 2015 the organization is a member of the Anna Lindh Foundation network for intercultural dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean area;

The ICCS's long-term strategy is to mix the boundaries between creative industries and youth civic participation, implementing on this base educational, cultural and research projects focused on youth cultural participation. Our projects are built on three major pillars – creativity, sustainability and employability encouraging the youth social and cultural entrepreneurship.

OUR TEAM consists of young university professors, PhD and MA students in Cultural studies, Media and Communication and Social work who also have EVS and other non-formal education experiences. We also work actively with Bulgarian youth from different Bulgarian universities with profile in social studies and humanities.

More about the organization find on our website, our weblog and on our FB Fan Page:

www.iccs.ngobg.info (BG) www.iccsbulgaria.wordpress.com (EN) https://europa.eu/youth/volunteering/organisation/947613274_ga (EN) www.bondofunion.eu/portfolio-project/shape-your-future/ (IT) ; www.youtube.com/watch?v=eRhlU3oXIDg