

YOUTH EMBASSY

Promoting social cohesion and preventing tension in the local community



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CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction..... | 1 |
| 1 Objectives and methodology of work..... | 2 |
| 2 Theoretical PART..... | 4 |
| 2.1 Volunteering..... | 4 |
| 2.2 Legislative framework for volunteering in Slovakia..... | 5 |
| 2.3 Benefits of volunteering..... | 5 |
| 2.4 Working with the marginalized Roma community..... | 6 |
| 2.4.1 Marginalized community in Detva..... | 8 |
| 3 Analytical part..... | 10 |
| 3.1 Survey "Possibilities for young people to engage in volunteering in Detva" | 10 |
| 3.1.1 Basic characteristics of the organizations involved..... | 10 |
| 3.1.2 SWOT analysis - Cooperation of organizations and companies with young people in Detva..... | 13 |
| 3.1.3 Proposal of ideas for local government..... | 14 |
| 3.2 Survey "Civic engagement of young people"..... | 15 |
| 3.3 SWOT analysis – involving young people in social and civic activities..... | 17 |
| 3.3.1 Recommendations and measures for school..... | 18 |
| 3.3.2 Recommendations and measures for local government..... | 19 |
| 4 PROPOSALS..... | 20 |
| 4.1 Project 1: Promoting social cohesion and preventing tension in the local community..... | 20 |
| 4.1.1 Main goal..... | 21 |
| 4.1.2 Project partners..... | 21 |
| 4.1.3 Activities and outputs..... | 22 |
| 4.2 Project 2: I have my time..... | 30 |
| 4.2.1 Main objective of the project..... | 31 |
| 4.2.2 Target group and its involvement..... | 32 |
| 4.2.3 Cooperation with other entities..... | 33 |
| 4.2.4 Activities..... | 33 |
| 4.3 Budget..... | 36 |
| 5 Conclusion and benefits of the project..... | 39 |
| Summary..... | 41 |
| Literature..... | 42 |
| Attachments..... | 43 |

INTRODUCTION

The presented project deals with the issue of involving young people in volunteering and community activities with a special emphasis on supporting social inclusion and cooperation with the marginalized Roma community in the city of Detva. The starting point of the project is the belief that volunteering and active civic engagement of young people represent an important tool for personal development, strengthening social cohesion and building relationships between different groups of the population. The project responds to current social challenges, the needs of the local community and strategic documents in the field of youth work, volunteering and social inclusion.

The first chapter of the project will focus on the theoretical foundations of the issue being addressed. It will address the concept and meaning of volunteering, its benefits for individuals and society, the legislative framework of volunteering in Slovakia and the possibilities of its connection with the education system. The chapter will also include a theoretical understanding of working with the marginalized Roma community, including the basic principles of community work, participation and inclusion, as well as the specifics of working with Roma youth.

The second chapter will present the analytical part of the project. It will focus on the analysis of the current state of involvement of young people in volunteer and civic activities in the city of Detva. The chapter will include an evaluation of the conducted surveys among local organizations, institutions and young people, identification of strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats through SWOT analyses and naming key barriers and development potentials. The analytical part will serve as a basis for formulating proposed measures.

The third chapter will form the design part of the project. Based on the theoretical foundations and the results of the analysis, specific proposals for activities, projects and measures aimed at supporting youth volunteering, strengthening social cohesion and inclusion of the marginalized Roma community will be formulated. The chapter will be devoted to proposals for local government, schools, organizations and the community, as well as a detailed description of the proposed project activities, their objectives, target groups, expected outputs and benefits for the local community.

The entire project aims to create a comprehensive and feasible framework for supporting active citizenship of young people and the development of an inclusive local community in the city of Detva.

1 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY OF WORK

Project objectives

The main objective of the project is to support the active involvement of young people in volunteering, community and civic activities in the city of Detva with a focus on strengthening social cohesion, inclusion and cooperation with the marginalized Roma community. The project aims to create conditions for meaningful participation of young people, the development of their personal, social and civic competences and the building of positive relations between different groups of the population.

Sub-goals:

- analyze the current state of young people's involvement in volunteering and civic activities at the local level,
- identify the needs, motivations and barriers of young people, as well as the expectations of organizations, schools and local governments,
- support cooperation between schools, local organizations, local government and the marginalized Roma community,
- propose specific measures and activities aimed at developing volunteering, community participation and inclusion,
- to strengthen awareness of the importance of volunteering and civic engagement of young people in the local environment.

Work methodology

The project will use combined qualitative and quantitative research methods to comprehensively understand the issue being addressed. The theoretical part will be based on an analysis of professional literature, strategic and legislative documents in the field of volunteering, youth work and social inclusion of marginalized Roma communities.

The analytical part will mainly use:

- questionnaire surveys conducted among young people and representatives of organizations and institutions operating in the city of Detva,
- analysis of the obtained data through percentage evaluation and their interpretation,
- SWOT analysis aimed at identifying strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the area of youth involvement in volunteering and civic activities.

An important part of the methodology will be the use of a participatory approach. Young people, representatives of local organizations, schools and actors working with the

marginalized Roma community will be involved in data collection, interpretation of results and formulation of proposals. This approach will allow reflecting the real needs of target groups and increasing the relevance of the proposed measures.

In the design part, the methodology will be based on linking theoretical knowledge and analysis results with practical experience from the field. Proposals for activities and projects will be formulated with an emphasis on feasibility, sustainability and the possibility of their long-term use in the local environment. The principles of inclusion, equal opportunities, partnership and active community participation will be taken into account.

The entire process of project development will be carried out systematically, logically and transparently with the aim of creating a quality basis for decision-making by the local government, schools and organizations in the area of volunteering and youth work development in the city of Detva.

2 THEORETICAL PART

2.1 Volunteering

Volunteering has many benefits. The preamble to the Universal Declaration on Volunteering, adopted by the International Association for Volunteering at the 11th World Conference in Paris in 1990, states that “volunteers consider their work as a tool that contributes to social, economic and environmental development.” The declaration also states that volunteering “enhances human potential and the quality of everyday life, strengthens human solidarity, provides answers to the major challenges of our time and seeks to contribute to the creation of a better and more peaceful world” and “contributes to the vitality of economic life and also to the creation of jobs and new professions.”

Volunteering has a direct impact on the formation of young people and their values, on increasing their interest in the environment and society in which they live. Volunteering also supports active citizenship. It is a valuable complement to the work of the school and family, it is a means of personal development of the child and young person and their social participation. It provides young people with space for self-realization and the opportunity to discover their own potential through concrete ideas and projects, combined with useful feedback and evaluation of their activities. Volunteering is an experiential form of searching and discovering themselves, what they really enjoy and fulfill, what they want to do. It is a tool for acquiring and developing skills, thereby contributing to increasing the employability of young people and developing their competitiveness. During volunteering, young people learn new skills, develop their talents, or discover abilities in themselves that they did not know about before. At the same time, it meets the current needs of society and benefits all parties involved.

Volunteering is one of the paths of non-formal education and informal learning, which takes place primarily outside the school environment, but it is essential to connect it with the formal education system at all levels of schools, ie from kindergartens and primary schools through secondary schools to universities.

The year 2026 has been declared by the UN as the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development (IVY 2026).¹

¹https://www.dobrovolnickecentra.sk/images/stories/files/1.dobrovolnictvo_mladeze_online_2018.pdf

2.2 Legislative framework for volunteering in Slovakia

The basic legislative pillar of volunteering in Slovakia in 2026 is Act No. 406/2011 Coll. on Volunteering, which defines the legal status of volunteers, sending organizations and recipients of volunteer activities.

Key aspects of the legislation

- **Definition of volunteer:** A natural person who, based on a free decision and without entitlement to remuneration, performs an activity for the benefit of another person or for the public benefit.
- **Contractual framework:** Volunteering is carried out on the basis of a written or oral contract. A written form is mandatory for long-term activities or if requested by the volunteer.
- **Reimbursement of expenses:** The amendment, effective from April 2023, brought stricter rules for reimbursement of costs (e.g. travel, food, accommodation), thus clarifying the financial relationships between the organization and the volunteer.
- **Accreditation:** The law regulates the accreditation process in the field of volunteer activities, which allows organizations to apply for state support and subsidies.²

In 2018, the Concept for the Education and Training of Children and Youth in Volunteering was issued. The aim of the concept is to create the prerequisites for the implementation of education and training in volunteering at all levels of education in schools and school educational institutions, to define the goals and principles of education and training in volunteering and to establish measures for their implementation. The concept and its implementation into practice are intended to contribute to making volunteering a natural part of the lifestyle of people and the life of communities in Slovakia, thereby connecting school with real life.

2.3 Benefits of volunteering

Volunteering has many benefits for all parties involved. The preamble to the Universal Declaration on Volunteering, adopted by the International Association for Volunteering at the 11th World Conference in Paris in 1990, states that “volunteers consider their work as a tool that contributes to social, economic and environmental development”. The declaration also states that volunteering “enhances human potential and the quality of

²https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2011/406/vyhlasene_znenie.html

everyday life, strengthens human solidarity, provides answers to the important challenges of our time and seeks to contribute to the creation of a better and more peaceful world” and “contributes to the vitality of economic life and also to the creation of jobs and new professions”.

Volunteering is a source of social interactions, positive experiences and feelings, a space for the development of key competencies and other specific knowledge, skills and abilities. Thanks to volunteering, young people can change their attitudes, values, value orientations or perspectives on life, but also their lifestyle. Volunteering opens up new possibilities, is a diversification, enrichment, brings a sense of meaning, necessity, usefulness and self-realization. It allows you to try new things, confront the unknown or overcome your boundaries, but also to travel and discover new countries. In the area of social life, we can perceive volunteering as a path to the development of personal and social responsibility, engagement and participation of young people. The benefits of volunteering for young people are closely linked to the world of study and work. Thanks to volunteering activities, young people gain valuable experience and practice, as well as knowledge and skills that they use in their professional lives. Some young people have found a job, decided to study or work thanks to volunteering. Volunteering allows students to better connect theory with practice. The benefits of volunteering for the personal, professional and social life of young people are interconnected. Social contacts and key competences that young people have developed or acquired through volunteering are particularly useful in the personal, social and professional spheres. Volunteering is also a way of discovering and developing young people's talents, through carrying out specific activities and cooperating with experts who provide guidance and support to young people.³

2.4 Working with the marginalized Roma community

Marginalized Roma communities (MRC) in Slovakia represent population groups that have long been exposed to social exclusion, poverty and systematic inequalities. Their situation is characterized by a combination of territorial segregation, low levels of educational attainment, high unemployment, inadequate housing conditions and limited access to quality healthcare. These factors reinforce each other and create a vicious circle of social disadvantage, which is often transmitted from generation to generation.⁴

³³. https://www.minv.sk/?ros_kros_2030

⁴<https://romovia.vlada.gov.sk>

At the systemic level, the issue of MRC is one of the long-term priorities of public policies in the Slovak Republic. The key strategic document is the Strategy for Equality, Inclusion and Participation of Roma by 2030, which follows on from the European Strategic Framework for Roma. The document is based on the principle that isolated measures cannot bring about sustainable change, and therefore emphasizes the need for a comprehensive and cross-sectoral approach. The strategy focuses on the areas of education, employment, health, housing, combating discrimination and supporting the active participation of Roma in public life. It places particular emphasis on involving members of the Roma community themselves in the creation, implementation and evaluation of policies.⁵

Practical work with MRC in Slovakia is carried out mainly through field social work, community centers and low-threshold social services. Field social workers and community workers operate directly in MRC locations, where they provide counseling, support the solution of social and family problems, mediate contact with institutions and contribute to increasing the orientation of community members in the public service system. This approach is considered effective mainly due to long-term work in the field, building trust and respecting the specific needs of the community.⁶

One of the most critical areas of work with MRC is the education of children and young people. Research and official reports point to the persistent problems of segregation in education, lower school success rates of children from MRC and high rates of early school leaving. These factors have a long-term negative impact on the employment of young people in the labour market and their ability to actively participate in social life. The Slovak Republic is therefore implementing projects aimed at supporting inclusive education, desegregating primary schools, cooperating with schools and strengthening the role of parents in the education process.

Of particular importance is the work with Roma youth, who represent one of the demographically youngest population groups in Slovakia. Young people from marginalized Roma communities often grow up in an environment marked by social exclusion, poverty and limited access to quality education and leisure activities. These conditions have a fundamental impact on their self-image, life ambitions and ability to plan their own future. Lack of positive role models, poor experience of success and repeated negative experiences

⁵<https://romovia.vlada.gov.sk/strategie>

⁶<https://eurofondy.praca.gov.sk>

with institutions can lead to low levels of trust, passivity or resignation to active participation in social life.

At the same time, it is a group with significant development potential. Professional sources point out that if young people from MRC are given the opportunity to engage in meaningful activities that respect their needs and experiences, they can quickly develop social, communication and civic competences. Non-formal education plays an important role in this process, enabling learning through experience, teamwork and practical activity, without the pressure of formal assessment.

Volunteering and community participation are effective tools for working with Roma youth, as they allow young people to experience a sense of usefulness, responsibility and recognition from their surroundings. By engaging in activities for the benefit of their own community or the wider local environment, young people build a positive relationship with the place in which they live, strengthen their self-confidence and develop work habits that are important for their further application. At the same time, this creates space for natural contact between Roma and majority youth, which contributes to the destruction of stereotypes and the building of mutual understanding.⁷

2.4.1 Marginalized community in Detva

The marginalized Roma community in the city of Detva represents a significant part of the local social environment and at the same time a group that faces long-term social, economic and educational disadvantages. These are manifested mainly in the areas of access to quality education, opportunities for self-realization of young people, limited opportunities for active participation in community life and persistent stereotypes from the majority society. The city of Detva is aware of the need to systematically address these challenges, which is also reflected in the implemented and planned activities aimed at supporting social inclusion and desegregation in primary schools. An important role in this process is played by local organizations and initiatives that have long-term experience with field work and building trust in the community, including the Roma Community Organization.

The marginalized Roma community in Detva also has significant internal potential, especially in the form of young people who are interested in engaging in activities for the benefit of their community, developing their skills and establishing positive relationships with the majority environment. However, in order to create such opportunities, it is

⁷<https://www.dobrovolnickecentra.sk>

necessary to ensure a safe, supportive and inclusive environment that takes into account the specificities of the community and encourages its active participation.

The project responds to the need to strengthen the connection between the marginalized Roma community, young volunteers, schools, local government and local organizations. The aim is to create joint activities that promote mutual understanding, break down barriers and contribute to improving social cohesion in the city of Detva. By involving the community itself in the planning and implementation of activities, the project follows the principles of partnership, equality and sustainable development of the local community.

3 ANALYTICAL PART

3.1 Survey "Possibilities for young people to engage in volunteering in Detva"

We approached selected organizations and companies operating in the city of Detva. The aim of the survey was to gain their perspective on their experiences with engaging young people, the perceived benefits of this cooperation, identify existing barriers, and map interest in future cooperation.

Data collection was carried out through an online questionnaire created in Google Forms. The questionnaire was distributed electronically and its completion was voluntary. A total of ten organizations participated in the survey, which provided relevant answers reflecting their practical experiences.

The responses were processed in the form of quantitative analysis, with the results evaluated in percentage terms. The processing also included a qualitative evaluation of individual questions, which allowed for a better interpretation of the attitudes and needs of organizations.

3.1.1 Basic characteristics of the organizations involved

The survey was mainly conducted by organizations operating in the field of social services (30%). This was followed by organizations in the field of culture and art (20%). Organizations in the field of education and leisure, as well as counseling and prevention, were represented by 10% each.

The composition of the respondents indicates a significant participation of entities with a social, cultural and educational focus, which corresponds to the character of the city and its public benefit institutions. The absence of environmentally focused organizations represents a potential gap in local cooperation.

Organizations that provided answers: Detva Counseling and Prevention Center, Detva Social Services Facility, A. Sládkovič Cultural Center, Detva Private Associated School, Tourist Information Office, Eko Katruška, Detva Retirement Community, Detva Retirement Home, Podpolianske Museum, Roma Community Organization.

Regarding volunteering experience, the same proportion of organizations have long-term experience with volunteers (30%) as occasional experience (30%), which indicates existing practice of working with volunteers.

At the same time, 30% of organizations do not yet have experience with volunteers, which represents room for the development and support of volunteer programs.

The most frequently mentioned area is accompanying and assisting activities (80%), which represents a key area for youth involvement. There is also a very high interest in helping with events (70%), leisure activities for children and seniors (70%), and marketing, promotion, and social networks (70%), which points to the need for active and flexible assistance. A significant share also includes involvement in creative activities (60%). Half of the organizations can offer space for administrative assistance (50%) and digitalization or work with technologies (50%). The lowest, but still relevant, share is represented by environmental activities (30%).

Most respondents are rather cautious about involving primary school pupils. A total of 50% expressed a positive or rather positive opinion (30% yes, 20% rather yes), which indicates that half of the organisations see real potential for this target group. On the other hand, 50% of respondents have a rather negative attitude (40% rather no, 10%), which points to the need for clear rules, support and appropriate setting of conditions for involving younger pupils.

The most frequently preferred form is short-term one-off activities (50%), which are the least demanding in terms of organisation and responsibility. Inclusive activities are also significantly represented (30%), which indicates an emphasis on involving different groups of children. Similarly, 20% of organisations mention the possibility of involvement in the form of regular but simple activities, assistance with public events and intergenerational activities.

The key conditions for the involvement of primary school students are adult supervision (30%), consent of a legal guardian (30%), and cooperation with the school (30%), which clearly point to the need for safety and responsibility.

The involvement of high school students in volunteer activities is perceived as clearly positive. 100% of respondents state that there is room for their involvement, which confirms the high potential of this target group and its readiness to engage in diverse activities.

The most suitable area is project activities (80%), which allow for longer-term and meaningful involvement of secondary school students. Digital skills, IT and marketing

(70%) are also of great importance, reflecting the strengths of this age group. More than half of the respondents report longer-term volunteering (60%), which indicates an interest in more stable cooperation. This is followed by work with the public (50%). Smaller, but still relevant, space is given to auxiliary activities (30%) and professional or thematic assistance (30%).

The most frequently preferred form is long-term involvement lasting several months (50%), which allows for both skill development and continuity of activities. This is followed by one-off activities (30%) and short-term involvement lasting several weeks (20%), which can serve as an entry form into volunteering. The vast majority of organizations consider flexible, project-based frequency as the most realistic (70%). A smaller proportion reports involvement once a month (20%) or 1–2 times a month (10%).

Organizations see the greatest scope for youth involvement year-round (50%), which indicates the potential for long-term sustainable forms of volunteering. A significant portion of respondents report the possibility of involvement during the school year (40%). The smallest scope is perceived during the holidays (10%), which may be related to the limited operations of organizations or the holiday period.

The most prominent problem in involving young people in volunteering is the lack of interest of young people (70%), which represents a key challenge in the development of volunteering. Another significant limitation is the need for supervision (50%), which increases the demands on staffing. Equally frequently mentioned are the time commitment of young people (40%) and legislative and safety restrictions (40%).

The most important support for involving young people in volunteering would be a volunteer coordinator (80%), which clearly points to the need for systematic management of volunteering. A systemic solution at the city level also plays an important role (60%), which would create stable conditions for cooperation. This is followed by cooperation with schools (40%).

Interest in participating in a joint initiative with the city of Detva is very high. 60% of respondents indicate a clear interest and another 40% rather yes.

The survey confirmed that organizations perceive youth volunteering as a significant and development potential for the city of Detva. They see the greatest scope for involvement mainly among high school students, while they prefer project-based, longer-term and flexible forms of cooperation, often in the areas of digital skills, public relations and community activities. The involvement of primary school students is evaluated more cautiously and is mainly tied to short-term, simple activities under clearly defined

conditions. Organizations are able to involve young people mainly year-round or during the school year. The main barriers include lack of interest among young people, the need for supervision and time constraints. A key support measure would be a volunteer coordinator and a systemic solution at the city level. Interest in a joint city initiative is clearly high.

3.1.2 SWOT analysis - Cooperation of organizations and companies with young people in Detva

Strengths

- Most organizations have real-world experience working with young people.
- Engaging young people is clearly seen as beneficial for both organizations and the community.
- Organizations especially value the new ideas, energy, and innovative perspective of young people.
- There is a high willingness of organizations to engage in other joint initiatives for youth.
- Organizations from various fields (social sphere, culture, education, consulting, tourism) operate in the city, which creates a good basis for interdisciplinary cooperation.

Weaknesses

- Cooperation with young people is often only occasional and short-term.
- There is a lack of systematic coordination of cooperation between organizations, schools and local governments.
- Organizations have limited personnel and time capacity to work with youth.
- Lack of stable funding for activities aimed at young people.
- Cooperation is largely dependent on the individual initiative of individuals.

Opportunities

- Creation of a common platform or network of organizations working with youth in Detva.
- Deepening cooperation with schools and involving young people in real projects in the community.
- Development of volunteering and project involvement of young people in the activities of organizations.

- Support from the local government through grant calls, a coordinator or methodological support.
- Connecting traditional areas (culture, social issues) with modern topics (digitalization, innovation, marketing, community development).

Threats

- Long-term lack of time for young people due to school and extracurricular obligations.
- The risk of burnout among active workers and volunteers in organizations.
- Young people's waning interest if they don't see a concrete impact of their work.
- Insufficient systemic support for youth work at the local level.
- The untapped potential of young people can lead to their passivity or departure from the region.

3.1.3 Proposal of ideas for local government

1. Youth work coordinator at the town level

Establish a position (or part-time position) of a city youth coordinator who would connect schools, organizations, businesses, and young people. He would coordinate youth activities, mediate cooperation between entities, and assist with the preparation of projects and grants.

2. Small grants for youth and community initiatives

Announce an annual call for small grants for projects by young people or organizations working with youth. Project focus: volunteering, community activities, culture and traditions, ecology, digital and innovative solutions for the city. This would support the "bottom-up" initiative and strengthen the relationship of young people to the city.

3. Youth participatory budgeting

Set aside a portion of the city budget for young people to decide on. Ideas from young people would be collected, followed by a public presentation of projects and voting. This would achieve real youth involvement in decision-making and increase trust in local government.

4. Youth opportunities database

Create a simple online database of opportunities (volunteering, internships, part-time jobs, projects) to which organizations and companies could contribute.

5. "Youth for children" program

Launch a city program where young people would address specific city challenges (public space, cultural events, city communication, environmental topics). We propose a form of short-term project teams and mentoring by the city and experts.

6. Supporting volunteering and rewarding active young people

Introduce a system of city awards for young volunteers and active organizations. The awards would be public, the winners would receive a certificate and be featured on city channels.

7. Regular round tables of organizations, schools and local governments

Organize 4 meetings per year of all actors working with youth. The goal would be to share experiences, plan joint activities, and find synergies.

3.2 Survey "Civic engagement of young people"

We conducted a survey among classmates at our high school – Gymnasium, Business Academy and Technical Secondary School Detva. We conducted the survey using Google Forms via Edupage. We received 48 responses, from which we identified these results.

The largest part of respondents (38%) perceive civic engagement comprehensively – as a combination of participation in elections, helping the community and interest in what is happening in the area. A significant group (31%) connects it mainly with interest in local and social events. A smaller part of respondents (19%) understands civic engagement primarily as helping the community or volunteering. Only a small percentage (6%) narrows it down exclusively to participation in elections and the same proportion of respondents cannot precisely define the meaning of civic engagement.

The majority of respondents are convinced that young people have the ability to influence events in their city or municipality. As many as 50% are clearly convinced of this and another 31% are inclined to this opinion. On the contrary, a smaller part of respondents (19% in total) have a rather or completely negative attitude towards the possibility of young people's influence. The results thus point to a predominantly positive perception of the role of young people in local public life.

The results show a balanced level of respondents' involvement in social or volunteer activities. Exactly half of the respondents (50%) have participated in such an activity in the last year, while the other half (50%) have no personal experience with similar activities.

More than half of respondents (56%) are not members of any organization, association or group. Membership in some form of organized association is reported by 44% of

respondents, indicating that active involvement in formal structures is present but not predominant.

Most often, respondents are involved in sports organizations (25%) or other types of organizations (25%). A smaller part is active in the field of culture (6%) and helping people (6%), while no respondent mentioned the field of the environment (0%). More than half of the respondents (56%) also declare that they are not a member of any organization.

The largest group of respondents participates in extracurricular activities occasionally (38%). Another 31% participate only rarely and 25% do not participate in school activities outside of class at all. Only a small part of respondents (6%) declares regular participation, which points to the rather occasional nature of students' involvement in these activities.

The strongest motivation of respondents is gaining experience that can be used in the future (50%). Another significant motivation factor is the opportunity to learn something new (44%). A quarter of respondents (25%) cite helping others or having fun meeting new people as motivations. At the same time, a relatively high proportion of respondents (38%) declare no interest in participating in activities.

Respondents are most interested in technology and innovation (50%), which indicates a strong orientation towards modern and practically usable areas. There is also a high interest in sports and health (44%). A quarter of respondents (25%) are interested in culture and traditions, politics and civic issues or other areas. There is less interest in helping the community (19%) and the least interest in environmental issues (13%).

The most common obstacle to engaging in activities is lack of time, cited by more than half of respondents (56%). Lack of information about available opportunities (25%) and lack of interest in these activities themselves (25%) also play a significant role. A smaller proportion of respondents (19%) perceive lack of support from their environment as a barrier.

Respondents most often state that financial support or a form of reward would help them to get more involved (56%). The involvement of friends (50%) and better information about opportunities (44%) are also strong supporting factors. A smaller proportion of respondents would welcome more support from the school or local government (19%) and only a small percentage (6%) consider better leadership or mentoring to be key.

More than half of respondents (56%) express a positive attitude towards engaging in youth activities in the future. However, a significant proportion of respondents (44%) express a rather or completely negative attitude, which points to divided opinions and the need to better adapt activities to the interests of young people.

Respondents most often indicate an interest in creative and participatory activities aimed at the development of the city or school (44%). There is also a great interest in cultural and social events (38%) and the creation of digital content (38%). A quarter of respondents (25%) would prefer environmental projects, while a smaller part (13%) is interested in volunteering and helping the community. Almost a fifth of respondents (19%) declare that they do not want to participate in activities.

The survey results show that young people have a relatively good awareness of civic engagement and often perceive it as a combination of interest in what is happening in their area, participation in public life and helping the community. Most of them believe that young people can influence what is happening in their city or municipality, but this belief is only partially translated into real involvement. Involvement in social, volunteer or school activities is rather occasional and a significant part of young people remains passive.

The main motivation for participation is mainly the acquisition of experience, new skills and practical knowledge that can be used in the future, as well as the possibility of self-realization and social contact. On the contrary, the biggest barriers are lack of time, poor information about the possibilities of participation and partial lack of interest. Young people would participate more if they had a better overview of the activities, felt the support of their surroundings and perceived the concrete benefits of participation.

3.3 SWOT analysis – involving young people in social and civic activities

Strengths

- Young people have a basic awareness of civic engagement and associate it with concrete and meaningful activities.
- There is a prevailing belief that young people can influence events in their city or town.
- Some young people already have personal experience with volunteering or social activities.
- Strong intrinsic motivation to get involved, especially for the sake of gaining experience, personal development and social contacts.
- Strong interest in modern and practically oriented areas such as technology, innovation and helping the community.
- Willingness to engage in future activities if they are meaningful and attractive.

Weaknesses

- Irregular participation in school and extracurricular activities.

- Low level of formal membership in organizations and associations.
- Weaker awareness of opportunities to participate in activities.
- Perceived disinterest or lack of acceptance of young people's opinions by adults.
- The time commitment of young people, which limits their willingness to engage in the long term.
- Lower interest in political and formal civic topics.

Opportunities

- Creating attractive, project-oriented activities with practical impact on the community.
- Connecting civic engagement with technology, digital tools and innovation.
- Involving young people in decision-making processes at the school or local government level.
- Strengthening informal forms of engagement and short-term activities that better take into account the time possibilities of young people.
- Developing mentoring, peer education and teamwork.
- Better communication and promotion of activities through channels close to young people.

Threats

- The persistent feeling that young people's opinions are not taken seriously can lead to demotivation and passivity.
- Long-term lack of time and overload with school duties.
- Weak systemic support from institutions or insufficient financial support for activities.
- The risk of formality and dullness of activities that do not correspond to the real interests of young people.
- Competition from other leisure activities and the digital environment, which distracts from civic engagement.

3.3.1 Recommendations and measures for school

1. Systematically develop students' civic and community engagement

Introduce regular project or theme days focused on civic engagement, volunteering and community topics, ideally linked to the real needs of the local community.

2. Link activities to young people's interests

Develop activities in the areas of technology, digital content, innovation and social topics (e.g. school hackathons, media projects, ecological challenges).

3. Strengthen awareness and communication

Create a clear information channel (section on the school website, bulletin board, school social networks) where all options for participating in activities will be presented in a focused manner.

4. Encourage peer engagement

Involve active students as ambassadors or activity coordinators who will motivate their classmates and participate in the preparation of events.

5. Introduce recognition and appreciation of activity

Introduce forms of non-financial appreciation (certificates, commendations, inclusion in the student's portfolio, bonus points for evaluating behavior or professional subjects).

3.3.2 Recommendations and measures for local government

1. Create space for the voice of young people

Establish or actively support a youth parliament, youth council or regular consultations of young people with local government representatives

2. Support short-term and flexible forms of engagement

Support one-off or short-term volunteering activities, challenges and micro-projects that take into account the time possibilities of young people

3. Financially and methodologically support youth activities

Introduce small grant schemes for youth initiatives or projects implemented in collaboration with schools and organizations

4. Connect schools, organizations, and the community

Support cooperation between schools, non-profit organizations, cultural institutions and local businesses in implementing activities for young people

5. Improve communication towards young people

Use digital channels and language close to young people when informing about opportunities for involvement and presenting the results of their work

4 PROPOSALS

The motivation for preparing the project was the effort to systematically respond to the needs of the city of Detva in the field of youth work and support for the social inclusion of the marginalized Roma community. Existing surveys have confirmed the growing willingness of young people to engage in volunteer activities for the benefit of the community, as well as the significant interest of local institutions to cooperate with young people in the form of meaningful, long-term and project-oriented activities. At the same time, the local government of the city of Detva declares a clear interest in developing youth volunteering and creating conditions for their active civic involvement, which is also reflected in the implementation of projects aimed at supporting desegregation in primary schools. The project was created in cooperation with the City Office of Detva and the Roma Community Association as a response to these needs and opportunities, with an emphasis on the active participation of the marginalized Roma community itself. Joint activities are intended to contribute to building mutual trust, reducing social barriers, developing volunteer competencies of young people and strengthening an inclusive and cohesive local community.

4.1 Project 1: Promoting social cohesion and preventing tension in the local community

The project aims to support social cohesion in the local community through community work and the creation of a safe space – a community clubhouse. The target group is children, youth and adults from socially disadvantaged backgrounds as well as the wider public. The project offers informal educational, leisure and community activities, tutoring for children, strengthening parenting and social skills, as well as supporting the involvement of residents in joint decisions. Joint events and open activities will contribute to reducing prejudice, strengthening coexistence and active citizenship.

The project is prepared within the framework of the grant scheme of the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic to promote, support and protect human rights and freedoms and to prevent all forms of discrimination, racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other manifestations of intolerance - LP 2026

4.1.1 Main goal

The main goal is to strengthen social cohesion, inclusion and equal opportunities in a disadvantaged community in Detva through educational, activation and community activities that will contribute to the prevention of discrimination and intolerance.

Sub-goals

- Create a safe space for learning and support school success Implement events connecting the Roma community with the city and reduce prejudice
- Promote healthy habits, social skills and leisure activities for all age groups
- Involve the community in organizing programs and develop their skills in leading and evaluating activities

4.1.2 Project partners

The main project implementer will be the City of Detva, which will cooperate with the following partners in the project:

- The Roma Detva Civic Association is a key professional partner for working with the Roma community and socially disadvantaged groups. It participates in the implementation of non-formal education, leisure and preventive activities, provides social and employment counseling and mediates contact with the community. The project results will be used in further community work.
- The Union of Roma Maternity Centers in Central Slovakia provides methodological support for work with families and mothers with children. It shares experiences of good practice, involves parents in activities and disseminates project outputs within the network of maternity centers.
- Informal self-government in the Dvadsiatky area in Detva ensures the involvement of local residents in the planning and implementation of activities. It supports participation, responsibility and community decision-making. The project results will serve as a tool for strengthening local self-government.
- The Roma folklore ensemble in Detva participates in the cultural and presentation activities of the project. It contributes to strengthening identity, intercultural dialogue and public presentation of the project results.

- The community center/field social workers of the city of Detva provide field work, contact with target groups and coordination of activities directly in the locality. The project outputs will be used in planning further community and social interventions.
- Primary schools and kindergartens in Detva collaborate to engage children in educational and preventive activities, identify students' needs, and share project results in the school environment.
- The Center for Counseling and Prevention (CPP) Detva provides professional counseling, preventive activities, and methodological support. The project results will be used in further work with children, youth, and families.
- The Office of Labor, Social Affairs and Family - Detva office is a partner in the field of social prevention and employment. It cooperates in counseling and shares project outputs relevant to social work and family support.
- The A. Sládkovič Cultural Center provides facilities and co-organizes public and presentation events. It supports the dissemination of project results to the public.

4.1.3 Activities and outputs

Within the project, we propose the implementation of several groups of activities. They will take place in the Roma community location on Štúrová Street, where the city, as part of the desegregation project Opportunity for All, will install the so-called Shell – a simple structure for the local community. However, the activities can also be implemented in other parts of the city as well as in other cities and municipalities with a Roma community.

1. An informal "nursery" for children and mothers from the community

Informal “kindergarten” is a community educational activity aimed at children aged 2-6 and their mothers. The activity takes place in a small group (up to 10 children and 5 mothers), which allows for an individual approach and a safe environment. Before starting work with children, mothers undergo training in working with children. The aim is to develop basic hygiene, motor and social skills of children and at the same time strengthen the parental competences of mothers. The activity is also open to non-Roma children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, thus supporting inclusion and preventing segregation.

Target group

- children aged 2 – 6 years
 - mothers from the local community
- a) Preparing mothers for working with children

Before the start of regular activities, participating mothers undergo initial training focused on the basics of working with young children, hygiene, safety, communication and organization of activities. The preparation takes the form of practical demonstrations, joint planning and mentoring, so that mothers gain confidence and basic competencies for active participation in the implementation of the program.

b) Hygienic teachings

Hygiene habits are developed in a playful and repetitive manner, appropriate to the age of the children.

- Handwashing is done using games and songs (e.g. the "soap song"), which help children learn the correct procedure and length of washing.
- Children learn how to use the toilet properly, basic rules of cleanliness and independence.
- They are taught to put personal belongings in a designated place and to take care of the common space.
- Mini "cleaning rituals" encourage cooperation between children and mothers in maintaining order, thereby building responsibility and a positive relationship with the environment.

c) Motor exercises

Motor activities are aimed at developing both gross and fine motor skills, coordination, and balance.

- Circuit training with stations includes jumping, throwing, drawing, and balance exercises that alternate in short blocks.
- Children's dance warm-up to Romani and children's songs promotes movement, rhythm and the joy of activity.
- Fine motor skills are developed through working with beads, modeling clay, folding, and stringing, which is important for later writing and school readiness.

d) Social games and role-play

Social skills are developed through games and role-playing.

- Themed games such as "Doctor and Patient," "Shop," or "Family" help children learn communication, rules, and basic social roles.
- The "Circle of Friendship" promotes the ability to wait in line, listen to others, and express oneself appropriately.

- Conflict resolution games teach children how to share, ask for help, and say no without aggression or conflict.

e) Mini educational blocks

Educational activities are short, playful and adapted to the age of the children.

- Children are introduced to basic concepts such as colors, numbers and animals.
- We work with short stories and fairy tales in both Romani and Slovak, which supports language development and understanding.
- It also includes activities focused on school readiness, such as holding a pencil correctly, simple worksheets, collages, and creative tasks.

f) Involving mothers through mentoring

Mothers are an active part of the implementation of activities and gradually take on greater responsibility.

- Each week, one of the mothers has the role of "lead mom" who participates in selecting and preparing activities.
- Through practical involvement, mothers' parenting and organizational skills are built.
- The activity supports the development of competencies necessary for future assistantship or community work.

The informal "kindergarten" is also open to non-Roma children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds or from families where neglect is present. This approach supports the natural mixing of children, prevents segregation and strengthens inclusion and mutual understanding from an early age.

2. Afternoon activities for children and youth

Afternoon activities are regular leisure and development activities designed for children and young people from the local community. The activity creates a safe space for meaningful spending of free time after school, development of talents and interests and at the same time acts as a preventive measure against risky behavior. Children and young people actively participate in the selection of activities and take responsibility for the selected activities, which strengthens their independence and self-confidence.

Target group:

- children and youth from socially disadvantaged backgrounds
- the activity is also open to non-Roma children and youth

Thematic blocks and main activities:

- a) Folklore and traditional Romani culture
 - singing, dancing and working with rhythm in cooperation with the ROMKA Detva group with more than 40 years of tradition
 - the possibility of choosing your own responsible activity (dancing, singing, music group, break dancing)
 - workshops focused on choreography, rhythm and musical instrument control
- b) Sports club
 - football mini club
 - sports games and competitions
 - "Challenges of the month" aimed at improving physical fitness
 - evaluation and support of group leadership activities
- c) Creative workshops
 - art activities (drawing, jewelry making)
 - creation of motifs inspired by Romani costumes
 - working with waste materials and artistic recycling
- d) Additional activities
 - board and puzzle games
 - practical activities aimed at preparing cheap and healthy school snacks
 - basics of financial literacy

3. Tutoring and study support

Tutoring and study support activities are aimed at systematically helping children and young people cope with school responsibilities and reducing the risk of school failure. They are implemented in small groups and in an individual approach, in order to respond to the different knowledge levels and needs of individual pupils. Community assistants, volunteers and older pupils are involved in the activities within the framework of peer education, which strengthens motivation and natural learning among peers.

Tutoring takes place regularly in a community space that provides a safe and stimulating learning environment. It focuses mainly on subjects in which students have long-term poor results, especially mathematics, Slovak language and foreign languages. It includes help with homework, explaining the curriculum in a clear form and practicing learning strategies. Special attention is paid to 9th grade students of elementary schools in the form

of preparation for Monitor 9 and entrance exams to secondary schools. Support is provided for secondary vocational school students in mastering vocational subjects, writing school projects and seminar papers, which increases their chances of successfully completing their studies.

4. Evening meetings of adults – informal community self-government

Evening meetings of adults are aimed at strengthening informal community self-government, building trust between local residents and developing their ability to jointly solve everyday problems related to life in the community. The activity creates a safe space for dialogue, joint decision-making and taking responsibility for the environment in which residents live. The aim is to improve order, maintenance of common spaces, resolving neighborly relations, preventing conflicts and strengthening the competencies of adult community members.

Meetings are held regularly in the evenings to allow working residents to participate. City representatives, field social workers, community leaders and expert lecturers are involved in the activities. An important principle is the active participation of residents in decision-making and the implementation of proposed solutions.

Evening program structure

a) Community forum

- regular monthly meetings of residents with the city, outreach workers and community leaders
- open discussion about current problems in the locality (order, waste, safety, school, housing)
- joint search for solutions and planning of specific steps
- strengthening residents' responsibility for common spaces and relationships in the community

b) "Living in the Community" course

- practical training focused on conflict resolution and nonviolent communication
- increasing the ability to communicate with authorities and institutions
- basics of financial literacy (household budget, management, loans, debt prevention)

c) Women's meetings - support circle

- a safe space to share experiences with raising children and family life

- topics of women's health, prevention and self-care
 - development of work and social skills of women with the prospect of future employment as community assistants
- d) Men's craft evenings
- carrying out minor repairs and maintenance in the clubhouse and common areas
 - self-help activities for the benefit of the community
 - involving men in community life and promoting gender equality
 - strengthening partnership cooperation and supporting women in their activities
- e) Cultural and community evenings
- informal meetings involving music, dancing, screenings or cooking together
 - stories from older community members about the history, traditions and life of the Roma community
 - strengthening identity, intergenerational relationships and community cohesion
- f) Family counseling afternoons
- Discreet and sensitive support for families in difficult life situations
 - assistance in communicating with school and other institutions
 - joint resolution of crisis situations in families
 - training in non-violent conflict resolution (without shouting and violence)
 - training on the "stop - listen - suggest a solution" model
 - community mediation meetings with the participation of experts

5. Cross-cutting community projects

Cross-cutting community projects connect all target groups of the project – children, youth, adults and seniors – and support the active involvement of residents in improving life in the community. Activities are aimed at building a relationship with the place, strengthening belonging, intergenerational cooperation and a positive presentation of the community to the outside world. Projects are implemented in the form of joint volunteer and community activities, which create space for cooperation between the Roma and non-Roma population.

a) "My street – my pride"

The activity is focused on beautifying and improving the public space around the clubhouse and apartment buildings, joint cleaning of the surroundings, landscaping and public areas, planting flowers and small greenery, painting and restoring benches and small furniture,

involving both children and adults with an emphasis on building a relationship with the place where they live.

The goal is to strengthen a sense of responsibility for the environment and promote pride in one's own community.

b) Family festivals

Family festivals are community events designed for entire families and the general public. They include, for example, organizing thematic events (e.g. Christmas workshops, creative and cultural meetings), creating space for informal meetings and building relationships between families. The events support intergenerational connections, inclusion and a positive image of the community.

c) Community Chronicle

A community chronicle is a long-term activity aimed at preserving the memory and stories of a community. It strengthens community identity and serves as a tool for positive self-presentation.

d) Community garden / green spaces

The activity is aimed at developing environmental awareness and shared care for the space:

- creation of raised beds around the clubhouse
- joint cultivation of vegetables, herbs and flowers
- involving children, adults and seniors in garden care
- learning the basics of nurturing, cooperation, and responsibility

6. Public presentation and integration events of the project

This activity is aimed at openly presenting the project results to the public, strengthening mutual understanding between the Roma and non-Roma communities and breaking down stereotypes. Through cultural, community and volunteer events, it creates space for personal meetings, dialogue and positive experiences of the city's residents with the Roma community. Emphasis is placed on the active participation of children, youth, families and adults from the community, who act not only as participants, but also as creators and bearers of the project's stories.

a) Christmas Academy

Public cultural and social event in the house of culture, intended for all residents of the city:

- presentation of activities that the community learned during the project to the general public

- involving children, youth and adults in the program
- announcement of the results of the "Children's Deed" as an award for the positive deeds of children
- strengthening children's and families' pride in their own achievements and abilities

The event contributes to a positive image of the Roma community and to building intercultural dialogue.

b) Community Open Day – "Come Join Us"

Open community event held directly in the clubhouse:

- tour of the clubhouse and presentation of its functioning
- demonstrations of children's activities (informal kindergarten, creative workshops, sports activities)
- live tutoring demonstrations where children present what they have learned
- small snacks prepared by the community itself

The goal is to break down barriers, encourage personal encounters, and increase trust between the community and the public.

c) "Journey through the project" - exhibition of results

Traveling or permanent exhibition mapping the progress and impacts of the project:

- "Before and after" photo panel documenting changes in the community
- short conversations with children about what they learned and what the project brought them
- Sample worksheets from tutoring and study support
- presentation of children's creative works
- stories from families about how the clubhouse and the project helped them

The exhibition serves as a tool for transparency, sharing results, and inspiration for further initiatives.

d) Living Library – "I am Roma, ask what you want." Interactive activity based on personal dialogue:

- "Living Books" - volunteers from the Roma community
- visitors "borrow" them for 10-15 minutes
- personal stories about life, trials, overcoming obstacles and successes

The activity promotes the elimination of prejudice, empathy and mutual understanding through personal contact.

e) "We help the city" - volunteer activity

Volunteer activities carried out in cooperation with the city:

- cleaning of parks and public spaces
- painting benches and small furniture
- tree planting and landscaping
- playground renovation

The goal is to show that the Roma community wants and is able to actively contribute to the development of the city.

The sustainability of the project will be ensured by continuing community work in the community clubhouse in cooperation with field social workers of the city of Detva. The clubhouse will remain a functional and accessible space for regular informal educational, leisure and community activities aimed at children, youth and adults. Tutoring of children, community meetings of residents will continue using the personnel capacities of the city and cooperating organizations. The outputs will be used in other community and social projects, work with families and in planning the development of the site. Informal kindergarten, tutoring, community meetings will be implemented in a simplified form even after the end of funding (mothers would be employed for half a year through UPSVR)

4.2 Project 2: I have my time

The project is designed within the framework of a grant from the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family - Subsidy to support the fulfillment of family functions

The initial situation in the Roma community in the city of Detva points to long-standing problems in the area of health protection and promotion, especially among young girls and families. The practice of the Roma Community Organization, as well as the experience of cooperating experts and community workers, shows that a significant part of young girls and families have limited access to understandable and practical information about health, reproductive health, disease prevention, hygiene and available health care options. Low health literacy is subsequently reflected in an increased incidence of health risks, early parenthood, neglect of prevention and a deteriorated quality of life for the entire family.

A particular problem is early family formation and early parenthood, which are often the result of a lack of information, strong peer pressure, persistent gender stereotypes and a lack of positive role models. Young girls do not have sufficient space to safely and confidentially obtain information about their own bodies, health and options for planning

for the future. Health topics, especially in the area of reproductive health, are often taboo in the community, which reduces the ability of young people to make informed decisions and increases the risk of health and social problems.

The project also responds to deficiencies in the area of parenting competencies and stability of family relationships. Many families face a combination of economic burden, stress, lack of support and poor communication skills, which negatively affects the physical and mental health of both parents and children. There is a lack of accessible preventive and educational activities that would systematically support healthy family functioning, strengthen parents' ability to cope with stressful situations and create a safe and supportive family environment.

4.2.1 Main objective of the project

The main objective of the project is to support the fulfillment of basic family functions in the Roma community in the city of Detva through preventive, educational and support activities aimed at young girls and families, with the aim of strengthening the stability of family relationships, developing parental competences, preventing negative phenomena in the family and supporting gender equality and the status of women.

The project aims to increase awareness, independence and responsibility of individuals and families, to prevent early parenthood and early marriage, and to create conditions for the healthy development of children in a family environment.

Specific project objectives

Specific objective 1: Increase the level of information and awareness of young girls and families about health, financial literacy, reproductive health and the risks of early family formation through systematic prevention programs.

Specific objective 2: To develop parenting skills, communication skills and partnership relationships in families through training and awareness-raising activities focused on raising children, resolving conflicts and building a safe family environment.

Specific objective 3: To support young women in making responsible decisions about partner life, marriage and parenthood through educational activities focused on life planning, relationship competences and personal development.

Specific objective 4: To create and maintain self-help groups for young girls and families that will promote mutual assistance, sharing of experiences and development of practical skills leading to greater independence and social stability of families.

Specific objective 5: Strengthen the position of young Roma women in the family and community, support gender equality and the dismantling of gender stereotypes through

educational, discussion and inspirational activities with the participation of mentors and "living books".

4.2.2 Target group and its involvement

The project is primarily intended for young girls and young women from the Roma community in the city of Detva, aged approximately 12-25, and for families from the Roma community (parents and legal guardians of children). These are groups that face increased health, social and relationship risks and have limited access to preventive information and support services in the field of health protection.

Primary target group

- young girls and young women from the Roma community (12-25 years old),
- families from the Roma community – parents and legal guardians of children.

Their main need is to improve health and reproductive literacy, prevent diseases and promote a healthy lifestyle. Lack of understandable health information, taboos on health topics and low orientation in the health care system increase the risk of health complications and premature parenthood. There is also a significant need to support mental health, self-confidence and the ability to make informed decisions about their own health and life. Families also need support in creating a healthy and safe family environment, which is the basis for the healthy development of children.

Secondary target group

- non-Roma girls and young women from the region,
- organizations and professionals working with youth and families.

They need access to quality information on health, well-being and risk prevention, as well as proven methodological and editorial outputs in the field of health protection. The project will provide them with tools and examples of good practice that support the dissemination of preventive approaches and increasing health literacy in the wider environment.

Secondary target groups will benefit from:

- editorial and educational outputs of the project,
- dissemination of proven preventive approaches,
- sharing examples of good practice and experiences from the field.

We will address the following target groups:

- through mentors from the Roma community who have the trust of the participants,
- in cooperation with community centers, schools and local organizations,

- personal contact, community meetings and informal communication,
- in an understandable and culturally sensitive form, respecting the specificities of the community.

4.2.3 Cooperation with other entities

- **Health and prevention experts** (health professionals, gynecologists, health education lecturers) – they provide professional content for workshops and health education activities, conduct lectures, consultations and health education focused on prevention and health protection.
- **Mentors from the Roma community**– they play a key role in working with the target group, mediating communication between experts and participants, leading self-help groups and promoting trust and active participation of participants.
- **Educational institutions (elementary and secondary schools)**– they cooperate in reaching out to young girls, disseminating information about project activities, and implementing selected preventive and awareness-raising activities.
- **Local government**– provides collaboration in community activities, supports the project at the municipal/city level and helps connect it to local strategies in the area of health and social support.

4.2.4 Activities

By implementing the project, we want to address the lack of accessible prevention, the lack of practical health information, and the weak connection between professionals and the community. The project will create a safe space for open discussion about health, support the involvement of mentors from the Roma community, and strengthen trust between the target group and professionals. At the same time, it will contribute to a long-term change in attitudes towards health, the empowerment of young women, and the improvement of the quality of life of families.

1. Preventive programs (health, prevention of early family formation, marriage and parenthood)

The goal isto increase awareness among girls and families about healthy lifestyles, reproductive health, disease prevention, hygiene, and available healthcare options. The

activity also aims to support girls in safe decision-making, personal growth, and long-term life planning.

We propose to organize the following activities:

- **Interactive workshops** with a practicing health professional or gynecologist: myths and facts about menstruation and reproduction, how the body works, why it is important to wait to get pregnant, health risks of early parenthood, contraception - available options, how they work, how to communicate about it with your partner
- **Practical mini-lessons:** proper personal hygiene, childcare, nutrition on a low budget
- **Community Health Day**– blood pressure measurement, BMI, consultations, education
- **Career workshops**– “How to decide on a high school?”, “What can I achieve in 5 years?”
- **Model situations**– pressure from partner to get married early, family expectations, how to communicate your own needs
- **Discussions with successful Roma women** who have chosen the path of education

The output of the activity would be: infographics on reproductive health and healthy lifestyle, brochure: “My Body, My Health – A Simple Guide for Girls” and brochure “I Have My Time – Life Planning for Young Women”.

2. Training and awareness-raising activities for the stability of family relationships and the development of parental competencies

The aim of the activity is to strengthen the stability of relationships, mainly through communication training -how to resolve conflicts without shouting, how to express disagreement, how to set boundaries. We want to teach girls that there is equality in a relationship, that the division of household duties is important, and joint decision-making. The activity is aimed at supporting the responsible preparation of young women for marriage and parenthood, with an emphasis on protecting physical and mental health, the quality of partner relationships, and realistic planning of family life.

We propose to organize the following activities:

- **Workshop "Relationships Step by Step":** healthy partnership, respect and communication, expectations from marriage, rights and responsibilities
- **Workshop: "Am I ready to be a mother?":** real costs of a child, stress and physical strain, psychological readiness

- **Practical demonstration**– proper holding of the baby, bathing, preparing baby food, financial planning for the parent.

3. Self-help groups for families and girls

The format of the activities is based on regular meetings, held once a week or once every two weeks. The group is led by a mentor from the Roma community, which is a key element in building trust and open communication.

Self-help groups for young women focus on topics related to personal development and coping with life challenges, such as coping with peer pressure, planning for the future, building self-confidence, employment opportunities and job retention, as well as developing healthy relationships based on respect.

Special attention is also paid to working with parents. Topics discussed focus on creating a stable home environment, motivating children to learn, setting clear and understandable rules in the household, and developing financial literacy within the family economy.

4. Editorial and promotional activities

Outputs:

- Infographics on reproductive health and healthy lifestyle
- Brochure: "My Body, My Health - A Simple Guide for Girls"
- Brochure "I Have My Time - Life Planning for Young Women"
- Infographics for social media and fieldwork: How to refuse early marriage, How to create a budget, Where to turn in a crisis
- Results from the survey among MRCs– opinions of girls, parents, problems and needs in the area of family and education

The sustainability of the project activities will be ensured by a combination of personnel, methodological and financial measures. A key element of sustainability is the involvement of mentors from the Roma community and the strengthening of local capacities, which will enable the continuation of self-help groups and community meetings even after the end of the grant funding. The mentors and the involved volunteers will be able to implement basic support and awareness-raising activities after the end of the project without the need for external funding.

The created editorial and methodological outputs (handbooks, infographics, worksheets and survey outputs) will be used in the next three years in work with youth and families in the Roma community, as well as in activities for non-Roma girls and in cooperation with other organizations working with youth and families.

4.3 Budget

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A: PERSONAL EXPENSES

| Item | Number of units | Price per unit | Units | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------|-----------|
| project coordinator | 6 | €500.00 | month | €3,000.00 |
| field worker with MRK | 5 | €900.00 | month | €4,500.00 |
| assistants - mothers | 350 | €7.00 | hour | €2,450.00 |
| lecturers | 30 | €15.00 | hour | €450.00 |
| tutoring tutors | 40 | €15.00 | hour | €600.00 |

B: GOODS AND SERVICES

| Item | Number of units | Price per unit | Units | Total |
|---|-----------------|----------------|---------|-----------|
| retrofitting of Ulita (clubhouse), project consumables (sniffing bags, storage boxes, consumables) | 1 | €1,000.00 | project | €1,000.00 |
| Activity - Informal Kindergarten (supplies, games, worksheets, motor aids) | 1 | €1,000.00 | project | €1,000.00 |
| Activity - Afternoon activities for children and youth (supplies, games, sports equipment and supplies, materials for creative workshops) | 1 | €1,500.00 | project | €1,500.00 |
| Activity - Tutoring and study support (consumables, laptop) | 1 | €900.00 | project | €900.00 |
| Activity - Evening meetings of adults - informal community self-government (supplies, tools) | 1 | €1,000.00 | project | €1,000.00 |
| Activity - Cross-cutting community projects (planting, raised bed...) | 1 | €900.00 | project | €900.00 |
| Christmas Academy (event expenses, small prizes, refreshments) | 1 | €2,800.00 | project | €2,800.00 |
| Material for educational and preventive activities | 1 | €400.00 | project | €400.00 |
| Hygiene and educational packages for participants | 1 | €400.00 | project | €400.00 |
| Printing of editorial and educational materials | 1 | €2,000.00 | project | €2,000.00 |

C: OTHER ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE

| Item | Number of units | Price per unit | Units | Total |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------|-------------------|
| Publicity in regional media, flyers | 1 | €600.00 | project | €600.00 |
| TOTAL (subsidy) | | | | €23,500.00 |

CO-FINANCING

COSTS financed from own resources

| Item | Number of units | Price per unit | Units | Total |
|---|-----------------|----------------|---------|---------|
| Project journey - printing project outputs | 1 | €650.00 | project | €650.00 |
| We help the city - volunteer activity consumables | 1 | €600.00 | project | €600.00 |

CO-FINANCING €1,250.00

TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET €24,750.00

Comment on the budget:

- -The budget is compiled in direct connection with the planned activities of the community clubhouse.
- -Individual items correspond to the scope of work with children, youth and adults from the Roma community.
- -Expenditures are designed purposefully, economically and in line with the project objectives.

Personal expenses

- Project coordinator: ensures project management, activity planning, communication with partners and administration.
- Field worker/community assistant: ensures daily contact with the community, engages families and addresses current needs in the area. Community assistants (mothers): support informal kindergarten and build work and parenting skills.
- Lecturers of leisure and educational activities: folklore, sports, creative workshops, tutoring, financial literacy.

Personnel costs are necessary due to the regular nature of the activities and work with vulnerable groups. Form: work performance agreement

Goods and services:

- Supplies for informal kindergarten: hygiene supplies, didactic and art supplies, materials for motor development.
- Equipment for leisure and creative activities: sports equipment, art materials
- Materials for educational and preventive activities: office paper, exercise books, notebooks, flipchart paper, colored paper, cardboard, markers, pens, pencils, adhesive supplies, worksheets and cards for role-playing games and simulations, simple educational aids (model situations, picture cards, diagrams).
- Material expenditures directly support skills development, education, and prevention of risky behavior.
- Refreshments during community meetings: encouraging adult participation and building trust in the community.
- Hygiene and educational packages for participants: basic hygiene supplies (soap, toothpaste, menstrual aids), educational materials (notebook, pen, information leaflets), practical items supporting health and self-care. The packages serve as practical support for the health of young girls and at the same time as a motivational tool for regular participation in activities. At the same time, they allow the connection of theoretical information with everyday practice.
- Printing of editorial and educational materials (printing of manuals and workbooks, printing of infographics and information leaflets, binding and basic graphic processing). Printed materials serve as a permanent output of the project and will be used even after its completion in other preventive and educational activities.

Presentation and community activities

- Organization of community and presentation events: community open day, Christmas academy, exhibition "Journey through the project". Material provision: graphic outputs, printing of panels, technical provision, light refreshments.
- The activities serve to present the project results to the public and reduce prejudice.

5 CONCLUSION AND BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT

The presented work will comprehensively address the issue of involving young people in volunteering, community and civic activities in the city of Detva with an emphasis on supporting social inclusion and cooperation with the marginalized Roma community. It will be based on theoretical foundations in the field of volunteering, youth work and community development, which will be confronted with the current situation in the local environment through the analytical part. Based on the findings obtained, specific and feasible proposals for measures and project activities will be formulated, responding to the identified needs and challenges.

The work will aim to connect theory with practice and create a comprehensive view of the possibilities for developing youth volunteering and strengthening social cohesion at the local level. The results of the work will provide a basis for further planning and implementation of activities by local governments, schools, organizations and the community itself.

Contribution of work to practice

The contribution to practice will mainly consist in identifying specific possibilities and forms of involving young people in volunteer and community activities in the real conditions of the city of Detva. The work will provide practical recommendations for the local government, schools and local organizations on how to systematically develop cooperation with youth, create a safe and inclusive environment and support longer-term forms of participation.

The proposed measures and projects will be useful as a methodological and inspirational framework for the implementation of specific activities in the field of youth work and the marginalized Roma community. The work will contribute to more efficient communication between actors, better coordination of volunteer initiatives and strengthening the capacities of local organizations working with young people.

Contribution of the work to theory

The contribution to theory will lie in the systematic connection of theoretical knowledge about volunteering, non-formal education and community work with a specific local context. The work will expand knowledge about the possibilities of applying theoretical concepts of social inclusion, participation and active citizenship in the environment of a smaller town with the presence of a marginalized Roma community.

It will also contribute to the development of knowledge in the field of youth work by highlighting the importance of a combination of formal, informal and participatory approaches. The results of the analysis and the conclusions formulated can serve as a basis for further research focused on youth volunteering, community work and social inclusion at the local level.

Contribution of work to the local community

The benefit for the local community will consist in strengthening social cohesion, reducing social barriers and promoting mutual understanding between the Roma and non-Roma population. By involving young people in joint activities, opportunities will be created for building positive relationships, developing trust and actively co-creating life in the city.

The proposed activities will contribute to the development of young people's competencies, to increasing their self-confidence, responsibility and sense of belonging to the local community. The marginalized Roma community will gain space for active participation, strengthening internal potential and greater involvement in public events. The work will thus create the prerequisites for sustainable development of the local community and for long-term positive changes in the field of youth work and social inclusion.

SUMMARY

The presented work focused on the issue of involving young people in volunteer, community and civic activities in the city of Detva with an emphasis on supporting social inclusion and cooperation with the marginalized Roma community. It was based on the need to respond to current social challenges, strengthen active citizenship of young people and create conditions for meaningful participation of various population groups. The aim of the work was to connect theoretical knowledge with practical experience from the local environment and propose solutions that would contribute to the development of social cohesion and community life in the city.

The first chapter elaborated the theoretical foundations of the problem being addressed. Attention was paid to the concept and meaning of volunteering, its benefits for the individual and society, the legislative framework of volunteering in Slovakia and the possibilities of its connection with the system of formal and non-formal education. The chapter also included a theoretical understanding of work with the marginalized Roma community, the principles of community work, participation and inclusion, as well as the specifics of work with Roma youth.

The second chapter focused on the analytical part of the work. Through questionnaire surveys among young people, local organizations and institutions, the current state of youth involvement in volunteering and civic activities in the city of Detva was assessed. The obtained data were analyzed and interpreted using quantitative methods and SWOT analyses, which allowed identifying the main strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the field of youth work and volunteering at the local level.

The third chapter was dedicated to the design part of the work. Based on the theoretical foundations and the results of the analysis, specific proposals for measures and project activities aimed at supporting youth volunteering, developing community participation and strengthening the social inclusion of the marginalized Roma community were formulated. The proposals reflected the needs of the local environment, the principles of partnership, sustainability and active community participation and were directed mainly at local government, schools and local organizations.

The overall result of the work was the creation of a comprehensive view of the possibilities for the development of volunteering and civic engagement of young people in the city of Detva.

LITERATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

| | |
|---------|---|
| Annex A | "I Have My Time" Brochure |
| Annex B | Brochure "My Body, My Health" |
| Annex C | Infographic "Health and Healthy Lifestyle" |
| Annex D | Informal kindergarten – materials for games |
| Annex E | "Handwashing" manual |
| Annex F | Manual "Proper use of the toilet" |
| Annex G | "Cleaning" manual |
| Annex H | Manual "Basics of School Readiness" |
| Annex I | Manual "Motor Exercises" |
| Annex J | Manual "Social Games - Roleplay" |
| Annex K | Manual "How to communicate with authorities" |
| Annex L | Infographic "How to communicate with authorities" |
| Annex M | Manual "Women's Meetings - Support Circle" |
| Annex N | Manual "How to Resolve Conflicts" |
| Annex O | "My first budget" |