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Summer Workshop Camp - the joy of getting to know each other!

Only a few days have passed since the Summer Workshop Camp, an event that brought together Roma youth from three countries: Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, and already in the heads of the organizers there are ideas for next year's events. Because when we think of events planned for the vacations, we mainly look for entertainment, a moment when we can take a break from our responsibilities, school, work, the city. And if on this occasion we also manage to learn something new, that's great because that's what the Summer Workshop Camp was created for, to provide entertainment, education and, above all, to integrate participants from different countries communicating in different Roma dialects.

During the ongoing edition of this year's camp at the International Youth Meeting Center in Oswiecim, after finishing their group work, Soliana from Poland and Richard from Slovakia were to present the results of their group work and their reflections on: "What unites us" and "What divides us"? "What is similar about us?" and "What is different about us?" Soliana recited that what definitely unites all Roma groups is language. "It's similar, but not the same." - she added. "Also, what we have in common is that Roma love cars, games. And what makes us different? "We don't have the same skin color, the Roma have different skin colors, they also have different styles of dress and are engaged in different professions," she concluded. Julka from the second group added that all Roma are united by a love of music and dance, but most of all: "We are united by Europe!", "We all live and live in Europe, we have a similar culture and Roma roots. But what really unites us is that we are all Roma."

And right here there is a lot of agreement. The first day of Summer Workshop Camp was a moment of getting to know each other and trying to establish closer relationships. And here it turns out that the obstacle was not language, as it sometimes happens when people from different countries get to know each other. No one had to speak English and force themselves to be linguistically correct, because communication was improved by Romani in various dialects. In the evening, on the other hand, Sinto Valentin from Poland played the violin and was accompanied on the guitar by Krystian from Slovakia, the rest of the group sang together songs well-known among Roma from different countries, and here, too, communication worked at the highest level, although there were no rehearsals beforehand, and everyone saw each other for the first time.

Twenty people, participants and attendees of the Summer Workshop Camp during various workshop tasks exchanged interesting information about traditional Roma dishes in different countries, what a day at school is like, what life is like in the Lunik IX settlement in Kosice, Slovakia. After which they solved quizzes on the knowledge gained during the workshop, which was decisively won by

the group from Slovakia. The boys, under the supervision of Antoin - their coach and mentor, and smashed the bank of knowledge about the participants and attendees of the summer camp by taking first place.

Despite the wide variety of activities, the group also had time to play together. In summing up the workshop, what they liked most was the opportunity to get to know each other, integration, new contacts and a good atmosphere. "I like meeting new people", "Getting to know new habits", "Kamarati radost", "Friendship", "Learning new things and spending time with friends", "Roma knowledge". , "Co-operative games and activities" are just a few of the messages from our international group.

Clearly the Roma are united by Europe, and in particular by the shared history that informs their modern identity. And although taking part in the International Roma Holocaust Remembrance Day commemoration and history workshop was also a sad experience for most of the participants, which also appeared in the information from the group, certainly the sense of togetherness that appears on this special day gives hope for a better future together and, above all, for the next edition of the Summer Workshop Camp!