**With youth for a greener environment**

The first Erasmus+ Youth Exchange of our Association has been closed at the end of October. High school students between the ages of 15 and 20 and who follow today's nature and environmental problems with attention and want to take action against them came from Romania, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary.

The main object of **„**Youth acting for a greener environment – Small steps lead to big results” (Y-AGE) named project is to increase the youngsters’ environmental knowledge, develop their environmental awareness and competencies. Our foreign partner organizations - the Turulmadár Youth Office from Sepsiszentgyörgy in Romania, Luminosus n.o. non-profit organization from Nagykapos of Slovakia and Zespol Szkol im. Bohaterow Westerplatte school foundation from Jablonka, Poland –selected young people participating in the youth exchange already in September and prepared them for the program with tasks related to the topic. The task was for youth of each country to present a local environmental or natural problem (damage to nature or the environment) that affects them and they also feel their harmful effects. During the 9-day program, through project work, interactive lectures, games and field trips, young people were enriched a numerous new knowledge, gained and exchange experience at an international level - they would not have had the opportunity to do all this at the school desks. Furthermore, the youth exchange increased the openness, self-confidence, English knowledge and acceptance of different cultures of participating youth, moreover, through the common activities their creativeness and problem-solving competencies were developed. We encouraged young people to be active all the time. In order to get to know the culture of other nations, we held cultural evenings and they also got acquainted with Eger and the Bükk.

At the end of the program – to stay true to its name-, young people took a small step towards a greener environment through a waste collection campaign. Around the Lake of Felsőtárkány and in the nearing the forest, youth collected illegally dumped garbage and waste left by irresponsible hikers. From the collected waste a ‘garbage monster’ was built to draw attention to the waste problem, which causes severe environmental and natural damage in all the four countries.

The project was implemented within the framework of the European Union's Erasmus + program.