

# 2GETHER

# 4EVER

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**THE POWER  
WITH YOU**

**'TAKE ME  
I AM FREE**

**INTERESTING  
ARTICLES INSIDE**

## **RELIGION AND DISCRIMINATION**

Since the beginning of time, people started to understand that a lot of natural phenomena (thunderstorm, draught, etc.) happens without their influence. Because of that, figures of God were created which represent a symbol that is used for people to understand those phenomena and it shows people the way and purpose of life. That's why, in prehistory, one of the oldest deities appeared: Great Mother Earth (or roughly put, believing in nature itself), goddess on which a lot of world religions based their faith without even knowing it. Looking at the fact that most of the religions have similar elements, changed through time because of life in different areas and simply another way of living, one asks himself why is religious discrimination a thing today?

Religious discrimination is the unequal treatment of an individual or a group based on their beliefs. It can happen to everybody and anywhere. Religious freedom is under serious threat in many countries. According to some researches, Muslims, Jews and Christians are being harassed more often than any other faith group.

Due to many reasons many people decide to leave their countries for a better quality of life or for better job opportunities. Many of them carry their own religious beliefs and due to their personal opinion they don't want to adjust to the host country's official religion. Some countries accept and allow them to practice their faith and other countries are more conservative and they are not so willing to help these people to feel like they are at home. That's why they feel discriminated and not accepted.

We can see in many cases how minority religion is being mistreated. For example, Athens is the only European capital city without a mosque. Muslim people always were a minority in Greece, but today because of immigrants and refugees it's more necessary to establish a mosque. The new leftist government of Greece wants to establish a mosque in Athens, but the nazi political party and many conservative citizens reacted negatively to this initiative. Because of the slow work, the Muslims are forced to build illegal and improvised places to pray.

Another example of violation of religious beliefs takes place in France. Mayors of several French cities decided to proceed with prohibition of burkini after Jihadist terrorist attack. Muslim women feel that this new regulation oppresses and tramples their right of freedom and it threatens their special identity.

Religion and culture often form inseparable part of the identity of many people. Religious communities are under legal orders, so government should treat all religious groups equally. Citizens should have right to practice their religious traditions, and not to work on important religious days and festives. Therefore, proper education is crucial to make the change.

**ELSA HYSI (GREECE)**

**LUKA STEFAN (CROATIA)**

## **ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP: TO BE OR NOT TO BE**

Nowadays active citizenship is defined as a feeling of responsibility for the wellbeing of society and understanding that our actions can help to change the world. Active citizens take initiative in areas of public concern in order to improve their community, to make the difference. During Youth Exchange “Include me”, which took place in Cyprus this November young people from different countries shared their opinions on the topic.



### **Tsvetelina (23), Bulgaria**

Few years ago I used to ignore news, I wasn't interested in what is going on in a society which I belong to. During university time I changed my attitude by realizing that in a long-term you benefit from being an active citizen. And there are so many ways to be the one: don't escape voting, read and analyze news, join NGOs or similar groups of your interest, take part in local activities, get inspired, act and make others be inspired by your example.

### **Gjergji (20), Albania**

I pay my taxes, I vote and take pride being a part of Albanian society. As an active citizen, I also participated in several protests against governmental laws. I think our society is our family – we need to help each other, protect and serve our common interests and needs. If they are disrespected by the government or any other institution, group of people or individuals, we should make an effort to change the situation.





### **Lea (17), Croatia**

The only thing what many people do is only complaining. They think that active citizenship is a waste of time, they let other people decide for them and later get annoyed about the situation. I believe we should at least try to make a difference in our communities. The best way to do it is to get involved in local activities, join groups, find people with similar views. We should make an effort to influence local and state politics – not just follow the rules, but create them.

### **Ilaria (24), Italy**

On some level I am an active citizen as I am volunteering in different organizations. It is important to be active in your community – you understand the place where you live and its culture better, learn how to respect it. I think that topic of active citizenship should be obligatory in schools – we should teach children the importance of active citizenship, build their interest in being active for their community and country. Those who don't care, follow the vicious cycle of not feeling involved and doing nothing



### **Cristian (22), Romania**

As an active citizen I volunteer in different organizations in my country and abroad, one of my duties is to work with handicapped people – together with other volunteers we create events for them or simply communicate with them, making them feel like any other person in our society. I believe that our community is a big team and we are responsible for creating a good atmosphere inside it. A real value is connections between people in our society, the feeling that everyone is an important part of it and his/her opinion is respected.



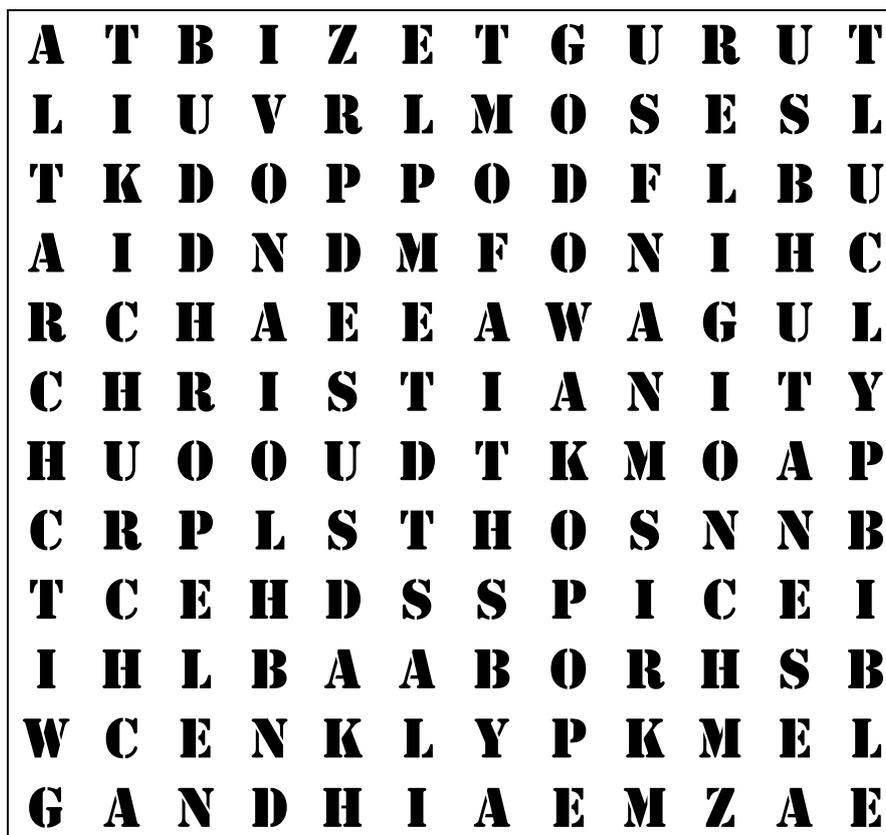
**Baguslava (40), Poland**

For me active citizenship is about cooperation between people in our community, solving problems together, which makes life easier and pleasant. I am a member of Polish part of Amnesty International. We organize different events, workshops, sign petitions and send them to the government. I spend a lot of time volunteering, I also lead local and school groups, teaching them human rights. We should be an example for other people, inspire them to become active citizens in our society



**VALENTINA APPOLONOVA (ESTONIA)**

**FIND THE WORDS**



## **TRADITIONS: THE WAY TO KEEP OUR IDENTITY**

Each European country has its own history made up of all traditions and customs that represent the folklore of the nation.

Traditions represent a critical piece of our culture, in fact, they help form the structure and foundation of our families. It's always good to remember that we are part of a history that defines everything about us: our past, shapes, who we are today and who we are likely to become. We don't have to ignore the meaning of our traditions, because if we do that it's really easy to damage the underpinning of our identities.

Customs help to promote peace because they reinforce values such as freedom, faith, integrity, a good education, personal responsibility, a strong work ethic and the value of being selfless. They also contribute a sense of comfort and belonging that brings families together and enables people to reconnect with friends.

Nowadays, revival of these traditions is often considered an event because the trend of the times, together with the progress, have reduced them. What every European citizen should do is to utilize every opportunity available to us to reinforce the values and beliefs that we hold dear.

**GIORGIA CAPRA (ITALY), KATARZYNA LUCZYNSKA (POLAND)**

## **LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP**

Nowadays, more and more people are going to abroad to create financial stability there. Fortunately we can live wherever we want according to our desires, talents and opportunities. Especially in the European Union everybody has the rights to live its own life.

So if you want to live or work abroad, here are some essential and necessary information for you for safety reasons. First, check the webpage of Eures ([ec.europa.eu/eures](http://ec.europa.eu/eures)), where you can find a lot of information about destination. Good to know how the taxing system, health care system, education system and social support system work in different countries. It contains a description of the administration, the laws and the job opportunities for employees. You can also check the morphosis of labor market in order to get to know possibilities.

One of the most difficult thing to fit in a different culture, therefore you should discover the culture, habits and history of the country. It is also important to be indulge in the language of your chosen country, because the English is not enough.

**LUCA SARA SIMON(HUNGARY), BENCE SPISAK (HUNGARY)**

