

Preparation Activities – Youth Exchange Digital Storytelling for Social Change (DiGiSC)

As part of the DiGiSC Youth Exchange, Team Hungary analyzed the country's most urgent social fractures, focusing on the systemic struggles of SEN children, the integration of third-country nationals, suicide prevention, and the protection of human rights. Through collaborative research and visual storytelling, we distilled these complex issues into a series of advocacy posters that contrast the stark realities faced by our communities with actionable, human-centered solutions.

Theme: Breaking the Cycle of "Island Integration"

1. Shared Understanding

In Hungary, the legal framework promotes "integrated education," but the social reality is often "Island Integration." This means children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are physically present in classrooms but lack the specialized support—such as T.A.s or speech therapists—needed to actually participate.

The Professional Crisis: As of 2026, despite EU-backed wage increases for teachers, there remains a massive shortage of special educators.

Systemic Barrier: Marginalized groups are frequently overrepresented in SEN categories, not due to disability, but as a tool for segregation (referring to "Roma Overrepresentation").

2. Real-Life Example (2026)

In many rural Hungarian schools, a single special educator might be responsible for three different villages. A child with autism in one of these schools may spend most of their day "coloring in the back" because the general teacher has not been trained in inclusive methodologies. This creates a gap between the Right to Education and the Opportunity to Learn.

3. Digital Storytelling Idea

The Hook: "The Invisible Desk"

The Story: A visual narrative following a child through a school day. Everyone is talking, the teacher is lecturing, but the child's desk is like an island in an ocean.

The Message: "Presence is not inclusion. We need specialists, not just seats."

Theme: Moving from Stigma to "You Matter"

1. Shared Understanding

Hungary has a historical legacy of high suicide rates, which has created a culture of silence. However, the National Suicide Prevention Strategy (2021-2026) has shifted focus toward community-based intervention.

Key Concept: Suicide is not just a clinical issue; it is a social one. Isolation, economic pressure, and the "shame" of mental illness are the primary drivers.

The Shift: Moving away from institutionalization toward "Emotional Literacy"—teaching youth how to talk about their feelings before they reach a crisis point.

2. Real-Life Example (2026)

Programs like YAM (Youth Aware of Mental Health) are now active in Hungarian schools. Instead of a doctor giving a lecture, students use role-play to act out stressful situations (e.g., exam pressure or bullying). This helps "normalize" the act of asking for help, which was previously seen as a sign of weakness in local culture.

3. Digital Storytelling Idea

The Hook: "The Weight of Silence"

The Story: A series of short clips showing "normal" moments—a coffee, a walk, a text—contrasted with a heavy backpack that the person carries. As they talk to a friend (peer support), the backpack gets lighter.

The Message: "You don't have to carry it alone. Talking is the first step to staying."

Third-Country Nationals (TCN) & Labor Rights

Theme: Integration vs. Exploitation

1. Shared Understanding

Hungary is currently experiencing a labor shortage, leading to a "Guest Worker" quota of 35,000 for 2026. These workers come from outside the EU (e.g., Philippines, Vietnam, Kyrgyzstan).

The Legal Trap: Residency is often tied to a specific employer. If a worker complains about bad conditions, they risk losing their permit and being deported immediately.

The Social Gap: They often live in segregated "worker hostels" and have little contact with local Hungarians, leading to mutual fear and misunderstanding.

2. Real-Life Example (2026)

In industrial hubs like Debrecen or Ivánca, thousands of TCNs work in battery factories. They face language barriers when reading safety manuals or contracts. Many are unaware that they have the same right to a minimum wage and safe working conditions as any Hungarian citizen.

3. Digital Storytelling Idea

The Hook: "The Person Behind the Permit"

The Story: A digital portrait series. Instead of showing the worker in a factory vest, show them as a father, a musician, or a cook. Let them speak in their native language with Hungarian/English subtitles.

The Message: "A worker is a human being first. Rights have no borders."

Human Rights & Digital Advocacy

Theme: Defending Civil Space in a Polarized Era

1. Shared Understanding

Ahead of the April 2026 elections, the social landscape in Hungary is highly polarized. "Human Rights" is often framed by state media as an "external" or "foreign" concept.

Environmental Justice: A new frontier where local communities are fighting against industrial pollution (battery plants) that threatens their water and health.

Digital Citizenship: The government's new digital ID systems provide efficiency but also raise concerns about surveillance and the "blacklisting" of activists.

2. Real-Life Example (2026)

Civil society organizations (CSOs) are using Erasmus+ Training Courses to teach youth how to use "Digital Empowerment." Since traditional TV and newspapers are hard for NGOs to access, they are creating "Underground Digital News" on platforms like TikTok to reach young voters about environmental and LGBTQ+ rights.

3. Digital Storytelling Idea

The Hook: "Our Town, Our Future"

The Story: A montage of a local protest against a factory. Show the faces of grandmothers, students, and workers standing together. Use "found footage" from phones to give it an authentic, grassroots feel.

The Message: "Rights aren't given; they are defended by the community."

Our team's mission is driven by the heartfelt conviction that everyone matters, a truth that transcends mere policy to touch our shared humanity. We stand for equal rights not just as a legal standard, but as a moral promise to ensure no one is ever silenced, overlooked, or deemed "less than." To us, equality is a world where every individual is seen, honored, and loved for exactly who they are. Learning how to pay attention, listen in even the most critical situations are key for empowering people. Because YOU matter!