

HAJMAT *International*

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Special Edition

BETTER HAJMAT

How young people
changed their city

s. 4

THEIR HAJMAT

Třinec, Ormož,
Drohobych, Kharkiv

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OUR PROJECTS

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2.0

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SIPE

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Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU



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PREFACE

Welcome to Hajmat International #1!

We are proud to present the first edition of Hajmat International, a special collection of stories, ideas and initiatives from young people connected with *Młody Hajmat* – now shared with partners and friends across Europe.

This magazine brings together the strongest voices from the *Ich Hajmat* (Their Hajmat) section, in which young people from different cities and countries reflect on identity, belonging, activism and community. You will meet youth leaders from Třinec, Ormož, Drohobych, and hear the inspiring voice of Daryna, who shares her cross-border story in two parts.

You will also discover highlights from our key projects:

- Youth City Synergy 2.0 – an international exchange focused on civic action and urban engagement,
- a short story inspired by our Young Citizen Manual,
- ideas from our youth think tank SIPE,
- and an article on Poland's presidency of the Council of the EU, seen through the eyes of young people.

And finally, we take a look at Upper Silesia's oldest towns, reminding us that identity is built not only through the future, but also through shared heritage.

We hope this edition will inspire you to connect, collaborate, and amplify youth voices – across cities, borders and cultures.

Warmly,
The Editorial Team of Hajmat International
(Młody Hajmat, FEIS Foundation)

BETTER HAJMAT

A story about how young people changed their city...

Dominik since a long time had felt that young people in his town had too little to say. At school, it was possible to agree on things, and at home it was sometimes possible to negotiate — but when it came to what was happening in the neighbourhood or the surrounding area, there was a sense of powerlessness and... shrugging of shoulders.

The old square next to the housing estate, where they used to meet their friends, became a flashpoint. Over time, everything started to fall apart: broken benches, rubbish, darkness because the streetlights weren't working. It became a sad place. Then one day, while browsing the internet, Dominik came across the **'Young Citizen Manual'**. He was intrigued by the fact that it contained specific ideas on how young people could take real action. And then he thought: why not?

He gathered a group of friends and together they began to plan. They knew right away that they needed support, so they contacted a local association dealing with ecology and urban space. The response came quickly:

'Great idea! We'd love to help. Let's meet up and work together.'

And so it began...



Thanks to joint efforts, they managed to:

- write a petition to the city council requesting renovation of the square,
- apply for a grant for new benches and bins,
- organise a community clean-up campaign, in which over 30 people took part in

Local residents were pleasantly surprised and... grateful. Soon, new benches appeared in the square, and in spring, volunteers planted the first flowers.

The city not only began to listen — it also began to see young people as partners.

‘I thought it would be too difficult. But it turned out that all it took was a little courage and a good plan,’ said Dominik, standing proudly next to the new plaque with the inscription *Project implemented on the initiative of young residents.*



Would you like to learn how you can make a difference?

Scan the QR code below to download the ‘Young Citizen Manual’ and learn how to act effectively!



THEIR HAJMAT

Interview with young people from Třinec

TŘINEC, CZECH REPUBLIC

Třinec is our small town, but there is no shortage of attractions here! Surrounded by beautiful mountains such as Jaworowy, it covers an area of 85.38 km² and is inhabited by approximately 35,805 people.

The star of the city is the HC Oceláři Třinec ice hockey team. They train in the modern Werk Arena, which can accommodate 5,400 spectators. Hockey matches and concerts are real events here that attract crowds.

But it is not everything! We also have Lesopark - a small paradise for active people. You can relax here, ride a bike, exercise in the forest gym, and even play tennis. There is also something for children - places to play and play sports. There are even races organized in Lesopark, such as "Běh pro Mediku".

Many residents work in the Třinecké železářny plant. This is where they produce long rolled steel products and are one of the largest steel suppliers.

WHAT ABOUT ENTERTAINMENT?

We have a great library, Městská knihovna Třinec, where everyone can borrow books. And the cinema, which will soon undergo renovation to even better meet the expectations of our community.



ORMOŽ, SLOVENIA

Ormož, our town in eastern Slovenia, is a place where we, young people, have plenty of opportunities to prove ourselves and express ourselves.

We signed a partnership agreement with the city of Bytom on 9 June 2017. Its signing is the culmination of many years of cooperation between our cities. Bytom established cooperation with our city in August 2013, when, at the invitation of the Association of Municipalities of South-Western Mazovia, a joint study visit of city representatives took place in Slovenia.

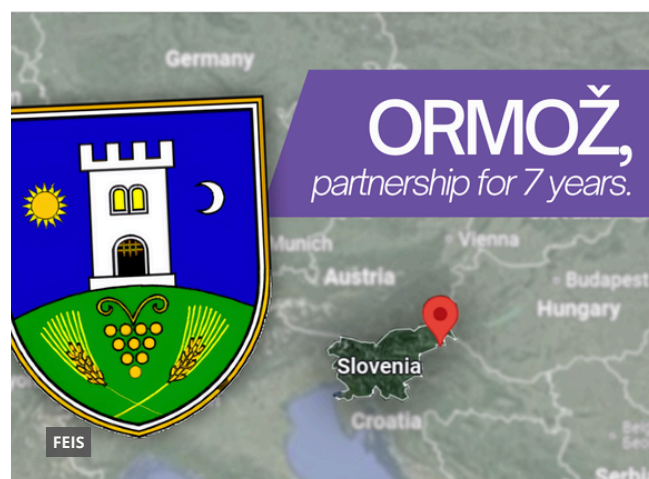
There are many activities waiting for us there, which are easily accessible and tailored to the needs of young people. As part of the 'Ormož Solidarity Factory' project, we have created a meeting place where young people of all ages can get involved in activities for the benefit of the town and engage in various informal activities.

Interestingly, despite its size (with a population of only 2,000), the town of Ormož is also extremely rich in culture. It is home to the Pokrajinski muzej Ptuj - Ormož, a museum famous for its rich prehistoric and ancient collections, an extensive exhibition related to the period of migration of peoples, medieval and modern monuments, as well as a space dedicated to rich folklore traditions.

There is no room for boredom in Ormož! The city authorities regularly organise various cultural events, concerts and festivals that bring generations together.

The sporting pride of our town is the Rokometni Klub Jeruzalem Ormož, whose members play handball professionally. It is one of the leading handball clubs in Slovenia!

Come and experience the atmosphere here for yourself!



THEIR HAJMAT

Young people from Drohobych

DROHOBYCH, UKRAINE

Drohobych is the largest in the Lviv region and about 85,000 people live here. It covers an area of 41 km², so there is a lot going on in these areas!

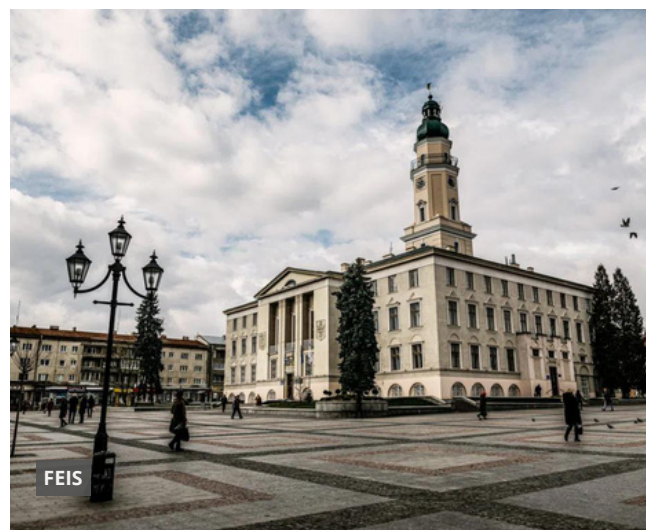
Let's start with history – Drohobych was founded at the end of the 11th century and played an important role in the Przemyśl region. Interestingly, today it is one of the most beautiful cities in western Ukraine!

There is no shortage of interesting attractions here – we have an outdoor cinema where you can watch films for free. It's great because you can spend your evenings with friends, admiring the stars.

But that's not all! We also have plans to create places where we can develop our passions, for example in the arts or gaming. We want everyone to be able to get involved and create something cool!

You also need to hear about our bicycle project! We want to make it possible to generate electricity by pedalling! This energy will be used to charge phones and tablets on the streets. It's not only environmentally friendly, but also very practical! We can exercise on bicycles and take care of our electrical devices at the same time

This shows that Drohobych not only respects its history, but also keeps up with modernity and focuses on innovation. Our city is a place where a lot is happening!



THEIR HAJMAT

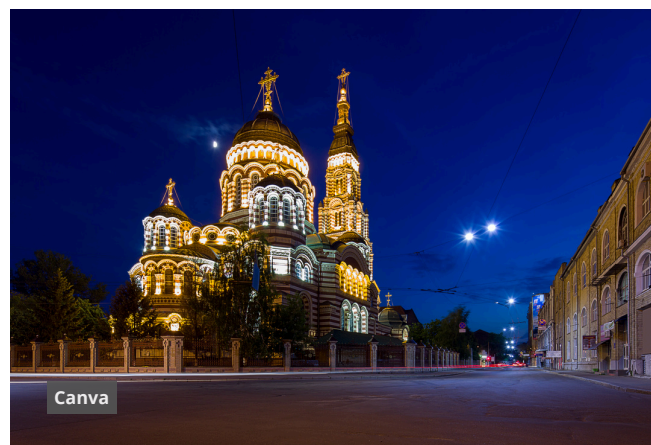
From Kharkiv to Milan...

A journey from Kharkiv to Milan, a journey of resilience and empathy

You might wonder where resilience comes from. You might wonder, how it is ever possible that such distant geographical points on the map of our continent might have anything in common. But they do. One - as an original point, the second one - as a destination point of existence and activity of DAR for peace and equality, a non-formal international group based in Milan, Italy which dedicates its heart and soul to optimizing integration and social inclusion of migrants, refugees and forcibly displaced persons from all over the World, and from all over the background.

Now, the international team of DAR empowers people of all ages that have ever been exposed to the relocation and/or forcible displacement to strengthen their ties and respect towards the host country through deepening their profound love to their state of origin. Thus, the origins matter, they are our strength, source of our resilience, empathy and inclusion.

Going back to the DAR's origin, the whole team of Founders (team = family), i.e. Daryna Kupriianova, Larysa Kupriianova, Zoryna Kupriianova are originating from Kharkiv, a famous hero city and the city of heroes in the northeast of Ukraine. Besides being an example of strength and resilience, Kharkiv cherishes its incredible history.



Did you actually know that:

- Kharkiv was established in 1654 as a Cossacs' fortress, ending up being a highly important commercial, military, and educational center of Ukraine? It is one of the most fundamental hearts of technology and education, bright minds, endless potential and unique cultural and historical landscape
- It is the only city in Ukraine with a full set of the Council of Europe's awards: the European Diploma, the Flag of Honour, the Plaque of Honour and the Prize of Europe
- That there are three Nobel Prize laureates who were born there
- That it is a home for one of the oldest and largest universities across Eastern Europe (V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)
- It is the place where the first horse tram was dragged and even the first ever atomic nucleus split was carried out?
- The first newspaper published in the Ukrainian language was born here

There are many more facts that you might not know about Kharkiv, because it is a city that hides exclusive spiritual and heritage-related treasures which will be dear for everyone.

Now, the city is fighting bravely for its history and culture, but once the war is won, it will be ready to host everyone who is looking forward to admiring its beauty of resilience and history!



MILAN

Tired, sad, and heartbroken by the tragic events of the suddenly erupted war, our future Leaders of DAR for peace and equality reached Milan, as the summer of 2022 was entering its very dog days. The story of the business heart of Italy was about to crack open.

There are diverse cities around the world. There are pleasant ones, ugly ones, those dear to our hearts and souls, ones that we feel indifferent to, and those who are likely to become healers. Perhaps it is the most proper way to call Milan (or Milano in Italian), the city that may cure everyone who will ever stop by.

With an enormous cultural, linguistic, historical, national, and many more diversities, it appears to be one of the most hospitable and inclusive cities on the Planet. Regardless of where you are coming from, you will always feel welcome there, and you are always at home.

Milan is the city where the highly profitable business is being daily calmed by endless greenery around, where even the busiest cafeteria will always remember your coffee preferences. It is the city where high fashion attracts, but famous Italian prêt-à-porter bewilders you even more. This is the city of eternal lights, chuckles, and inner happiness that radiates to all people around.



This is the city:

- With the largest tram network in Europe,
- With numerous flamingos available to spot in the park of Villa Invernizzi,
- Where there is one of the highest buildings in all whole Europe, and it is a UniCredit Bank's skyscraper!
- With the largest stadium in Europe,
- And... guess what, even with its bull that brings luck! Sic., your homework for your future Milan trip will be to find out where this bull is... There is a nice aperitivo bar right around the corner by the way!

What's more, Milan's famous Duomo took more than 500 years until the last architectural work was completed! However, it eventually turned out to be one of the most elaborate Duomos of the whole continent! There is even a solar clock ornamented with Zodiac signs in the XVIII century!

And did you know that you can still adopt gargoyles of Milan's Duomo? Well, yes, you still can! Once upon a time, the gargoyles' adoption concept was tailored to assist the financing process of the whole building's renovation, raising more than 100,000 Euros almost immediately, but the nice tradition persists up until today! To add, if you are attentive enough, the names of the most generous donors are still engraved next to the statues!

Last but not least, you should remember that Milan proudly hosts canals designed by Leonardo Da Vinci himself!

And, don't ever forget! You are always welcome here!



OUR PROJECTS

Youth City Synergy 2.0

In March 2024, the FEIS Foundation, as part of the Erasmus+ programme, had the pleasure of organising an international youth exchange entitled 'Youth City Synergy 2.0'.

The participants of the project were young people from Poland, Ukraine, the Czech Republic and Slovenia. The main topics discussed during the exchange were local heritage, city identity and, of course, civic engagement among young people.

Our goal during the project was to strengthen the sense of belonging to the local community and promote the cultural heritage of the cities where the participants came from. Our task was to prepare young people, with particular emphasis on members of Youth City Councils, to independently organise events and social initiatives that would refer to local traditions, history and values in an interesting and modern way.

A lot happened during the project, but most importantly, the participants took part in a meeting with the Chairman of the City Council in Bytom, Mr. Michał Staniszewski, and learned about the history and contemporary face of Silesia, and actively participated in many developmental workshops.

One of the results of the project is the revamping of our Youth City Game in Bytom, which encourages young people to discover the city through their eyes. We encourage you to do the same – copy the QR code and invite your family members or friends to spend time together!



SCAN HERE



AMBITIOUS PLANS FOR DIFFICULT TIMES

Poland, taking over the presidency of the Council of the European Union in January, has entered a crucial period for the Community. Faced with unprecedented geopolitical, economic and social challenges, our country is tasked with shaping EU policy in a way that will ensure the Union's security, stability and competitiveness.

The main priority of the Polish Presidency is to strengthen European security and defence. In the face of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Poland is clearly seeking to strengthen European defence cooperation both within NATO and with non-EU partners, as well as to increase investment in the European defence industry. It is also crucial to strengthen the protection of the EU's external borders and to counter hybrid threats.



In the field of energy, Poland is focusing on diversifying energy sources and making the EU independent of Russian raw materials. Accelerating the energy transition towards renewable energy sources and ensuring energy price stability are key challenges. The Polish Presidency emphasises a just transition that takes into account the specific characteristics of mining regions, such as the Silesian Province, and provides them with support in the transition to greener energy.



POLAND25.EU

The Polish Presidency also focuses on strengthening the European economy and competitiveness. Supporting innovation, digitalisation and small and medium-sized enterprises is key to building a strong and resilient Europe. Poland strives to strengthen the single market and remove barriers to the free movement of goods, services, capital and people. Once again, Upper Silesia, with its rich industrial and scientific potential, plays an important role in achieving these goals at the national level.

In the area of social policy and health, Poland promotes social cohesion and combats inequalities. Ensuring equal access to high-quality healthcare and strengthening the EU's resilience to health threats are key objectives.



When discussing the external dimension, which is so important for the European Union's position, the aim is to strengthen the EU's partnership with the countries of the Western Balkans and the Eastern Partnership. Promoting European values on the international stage and supporting multilateralism are key to building a strong and influential Europe.

Polska prezydencja w Radzie UE to przede wszystkim szansa na wzmocnienie pozycji naszego kraju w Europie i na świecie. To także ogromna odpowiedzialność, wymagająca skutecznego zarządzania i budowania konsensusu wśród państw członkowskich.



THE OLDEST CITIES OF UPPER SILESIA: HISTORY AND HERITAGE

As everyone knows, Upper Silesia is a region with a rich history and cultural heritage dating back to medieval times. Let's take a look at the oldest cities in this region, their origins, development and influence on the formation of culture and economy. We invite you on a journey through time, which will allow us to learn fascinating stories about Bytom, Opole, Racibórz, Prudnik and Gliwice.

BYTOM: THE HEART OF UPPER SILESIAN INDUSTRY

Bytom is one of the oldest cities in Upper Silesia, with a history dating back to the 12th century. The first mention of the settlement comes from 1136, when the chronicler Gall Anonim refers to 'Bitom'. In 1254, Bytom was granted city rights, which contributed to its rapid development. The city became an important centre of trade and crafts, and in later centuries also of industry.

In the 19th century, Bytom became a centre for coal mining and metallurgy. The establishment of mines and smelters led to an influx of people, which contributed to the dynamic growth of the city. In 1868, the first railway line in Upper Silesia was opened here, which further facilitated the transport of raw materials and products.

Over the centuries, Bytom, like other cities in Upper Silesia, was under various political influences. It was part of the Kingdom of Poland, the Kingdom of Bohemia, the Habsburg Monarchy, the Kingdom of Prussia and finally Poland. These changes influenced the formation of the identity of the city and its inhabitants.

Today, Bytom is a city that combines tradition with modernity. Historic tenement houses, churches and market squares coexist with modern buildings and infrastructure. Places worth visiting include the Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the town hall and the Upper Silesian Museum, which presents the rich history of the region.

OPOLE: CAPITAL OF UPPER SILESIA

Opole, located on the Oder River, is one of the most important cities in Upper Silesia. Its history dates back to the 9th century, when a Slavic settlement existed in this area. In 1217, Prince Kazimierz I of Opole granted Opole city rights, which marked the beginning of its development. The city became the capital of the Duchy of Opole and an important political and cultural centre.

In the Middle Ages, Opole was the site of numerous historical events. In 1295, a convention of Piast princes was held here, during which decisions were made to take joint action against external threats. In later centuries, the city developed as a centre of trade and craftsmanship, as well as an educational and cultural hub.

Like other cities in the region, Opole has changed its national affiliation over the centuries. It was part of the Kingdom of Poland, the Kingdom of Bohemia, the Habsburg Monarchy, the Kingdom of Prussia and finally Poland. These changes influenced the development of the city and its inhabitants, creating a unique cultural mosaic.

Today, Opole is a city full of life and culture. Every year, it hosts the National Polish Song Festival, which attracts thousands of music lovers from all over Poland. It is also worth visiting the historic Old Town with its town hall, cathedral and the Museum of Opole Silesia, which presents the rich history of the region.

RACIBÓRZ: GATEWAY TO THE HISTORY OF UPPER SILESIA

Racibórz, located on the Oder River, is one of the oldest and most historic cities in Upper Silesia. Its roots date back to the 9th century, when a Slavic settlement existed in this area. In 1217, Prince Kazimierz I of Opole granted Raciborz city rights, which marked the beginning of its dynamic development. The city quickly became an important centre of trade and craftsmanship, as well as a site of numerous battles and conflicts.

In the Middle Ages, Racibórz was often destroyed by fires and wars, but each time it was rebuilt and developed. In the 18th century, the city became part of the Kingdom of Prussia, which contributed to its further development. Numerous factories and industrial plants were established here, as well as schools and cultural institutions.

Racibórz, like other cities in Upper Silesia, changed its national affiliation over the centuries. It was part of the Kingdom of Poland, the Kingdom of Bohemia, the Habsburg Monarchy, the Kingdom of Prussia and finally Poland. These changes influenced the development of the city and its inhabitants, creating a unique cultural mosaic.

Today, Racibórz is a city that combines tradition with modernity. Historic tenement houses, churches and market squares coexist with modern buildings and infrastructure. It is worth visiting, among others, the Piast Castle, the town hall and the Museum in Racibórz, which presents the rich history of the city and the region.

PRUDNIK: THE PEARL OF SOUTHERN SILESIA

Prudnik, located in the south of Upper Silesia, is a city with a rich history and cultural heritage. The first mentions of the settlement date back to the 13th century, when a Slavic settlement existed in this area. In 1279, Prudnik was granted town rights, which contributed to its rapid development. The town became an important centre of trade and crafts, as well as a site of numerous battles and conflicts.

In the Middle Ages, Prudnik was often destroyed by fires and wars, but each time it was rebuilt and developed. In the 18th century, the town became part of the Kingdom of Prussia, which contributed to its further development. Numerous factories and industrial plants were established here, as well as schools and cultural institutions.

Prudnik, podobnie jak inne miasta Górnego Śląska, przez wieki zmieniał swoją przynależność państwową. Był częścią Królestwa Polskiego, Królestwa Czech, Monarchii Habsburgów, Królestwa Prus i wreszcie Polski. Te zmiany wpłynęły na rozwój miasta i jego mieszkańców, tworząc unikalne kulturowe mozaiki.

Dzisiaj Prudnik jest miastem, które łączy w sobie tradycję z nowoczesnością. Zabytkowe kamienice, kościoły i place targowe współistnieją z nowoczesnymi budynkami i infrastrukturą. Warto zwiedzić m.in. zamek w Prudniku, ratusz oraz Muzeum Ziemi Prudnickiej, które prezentuje bogatą historię miasta i regionu.

GLIWICE: CITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Gliwice, located in the centre of Upper Silesia, is a city with a rich history and cultural heritage. The first mentions of the settlement date back to the 13th century, when a Slavic settlement existed in this area. In 1276, Gliwice was granted city rights, which contributed to its rapid development. The city became an important centre of trade and crafts, as well as a site of numerous battles and conflicts.

In the 19th century, Gliwice became a centre for coal mining and metallurgy. The establishment of mines and smelters led to an influx of people, which contributed to the dynamic growth of the city. In 1845, the first railway line in Upper Silesia was opened here, which further facilitated the transport of raw materials and products.

Gliwice, like other cities in Upper Silesia, changed its national affiliation over the centuries. It was part of the Kingdom of Poland, the Kingdom of Bohemia, the Habsburg Monarchy, the Kingdom of Prussia and finally Poland. These changes influenced the development of the city and its inhabitants, creating a unique cultural mosaic.

Today, Gliwice is a city that combines tradition with modernity. Historic tenement houses, churches and market squares coexist with modern buildings and infrastructure. It is worth visiting, among others, the Gliwice radio station, the town hall and the City History Museum, which presents the rich history of Gliwice and the region.

SUMMARY

The oldest cities of Upper Silesia are not only places rich in history, but also important cultural and economic centres. Bytom, Opole, Racibórz, Prudnik and Gliwice are cities that have shaped the face of the region for centuries, contributing to its development and progress. Thanks to their rich history and cultural heritage, they are extremely valuable to the inhabitants of Upper Silesia and to all those who want to learn about their fascinating stories.

We invite you to visit these cities and discover their unique attractions. Each of them has something special to offer, and their history and culture are sure to leave a lasting impression.

COOPERATION

Work with us!

JOIN THE CREATORS OF “HAJMAT INTERNATIONAL”!

Are you a young person full of ideas and passion, eager to share your voice with others? Hajmat International is the place for you!

Our magazine is a space where young people from Upper Silesia – and beyond – can express themselves, develop their skills, and make an impact on the world around them.

Do you have an interesting story, thoughts on an important topic, or want to share your experiences? Write to us!

HOW TO GET INVOLVED?

It's simple! Send us your work or express your interest in cooperation by emailing: office@feis.org.pl

You can also fill out the application form on our website: [\[https://feis.org.pl/wspolpracuj/\]](https://feis.org.pl/wspolpracuj/)



COOPERATION

Work with us!



MORE THAN JUST A MAGAZINE...

As part of the FEIS Foundation, you cannot only publish in *Hajmat International* but also take part in our youth exchanges, training programmes, and other international opportunities. Develop your skills and broaden your horizons with us!

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

Stay up to date with our upcoming events, publications, and opportunities by following us on Facebook, Instagram, and other platforms.

We are here for you – and because of you. *Hajmat International* is a space where every voice matters. Whether you are a writer, artist, photographer, or simply want to make a difference – you'll find your place here.



LET'S CREATE TOGETHER – JOIN US!



