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Europia works with young EU nationals in Greater Manchester to support their goals. Magdalena 'try' Kij Story – a young woman's journey from Poland to Manchester.

After experiencing a mental health nervous breakdown in Krakow (Poland), Magdalena 'Try' Kij got to the UK in November 2017. She was young, strong and the UK was her Dream Land. In her home country, she was involved with the independent movie industry as a makeup artist and costume designer. She knew she had **artist blood** from her grandfather; she was purchasing her fate. Her motto was 'try'; therefore, every step hides a new opportunity behind.

Magdalena met people from Europia at a local festival in Manchester in 2018. She engaged with the organisation straight away and was asked to collaborate at their next event, Kukuryku. Afterwards, she got involved with **Europia Art Collective** (EARTS), a collective of established and emerging artists from mainland Europe who live in Greater Manchester and add to the vibrant culture of the region.

Maggie, as she likes to be known, **brought her kindness and creativity to Europia** and in return, she got the feeling of community. As an artist with Europia Art Collective, Maggie started helping with masks workshops. Painting with children and adults to create the masks, which metaphorically we all wear. Also, to teach them how they could take it off. At Europia Art Collective, she met with other artists including Corina Bibere and Karol Kochanowski for sharing ideas and work together.

Maggie does activism through her Art. She is mindfulness of problems on society shoulders: Migrants, women role, poverty, and climate change. She set "HOPE!" with the body artist Kristina Karpanuka, which claims how Mother Earth is shrinking and dying while people look on their smartphones.

When national UK lockdown began due to COVID-19 in March 2020, Maggie made online tutorials how to make home-made cover faces and took part in the project 50+ Polish, which aimed to help elderly Polish immigrants.

In September 2020, she started **BA Fine Art at the University of Salford**. She wants to develop her artistic skills, as art is not just painting or dancing or playing an instrument but all of it simultaneously and with just one heart.

Recently, Magdalena 'Try' Kij has started a new role with Europia as an **Eastern and Central European Development Worker**. With her experience and abilities, she will be able to help many other people through the path she already did.

[instagram.com/magdalena_kij](https://www.instagram.com/magdalena_kij) | [facebook.com/stickmaggie](https://www.facebook.com/stickmaggie)

For information about free services and support for EU nationals in Greater Manchester, visit www.europia.org.uk | <https://www.facebook.com/EuropiaMcr> | <https://twitter.com/EuropiaMcr>

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