

The project «Europe is our home» was funded with the support of the European Union under the Programme "Europe for Citizens"

Applicable to the Strand 2 – Measure 2.1 "Town-Twinning"

Participation: The project involved 317 citizens, notably 20 participants from the city of Zagreb (**Croatia**), 25 participants from the city of Sremski Karlovci (**Serbia**), 60 participants from the city of Banja Luka (**Bosnia and Herzegovina**), 20 participants from the city of Herceg Novi (**Montenegro**), 30 participants from the city of Trofaiach (**Austria**), 30 participants from the city of Trieste (**Italy**) and 132 participants from the city of Novo mesto and DRPDNM (**Slovenia**).

Location/ Dates: The event took place in **Novo mesto, Slovenia**, from 16/09/2021 to 19/09/2021

Short description:

Project managed by Društvo za razvijanje prostovoljnega dela Novo mesto gathered over 310 citizens from 4 EU and 3 non-EU countries (Slovenia, Italy, Croatia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia), that participated in all Project activities. Indirectly the project reached over 50.000 participants. Project started with events/information campaign in each partner countries before the main event in Slovenia. The main event of the project was 4 days 4 days International Conference "Europe is our home" in Slovenia, which was assembled with 12 different happenings on several locations all with a goal to raise awareness of the richness of the cultural and linguistic environment in Europe and European identity, promote diversity, respect for common values and develop cooperation between cities. The whole event gathered more than 600 citizens.

The day of 16/09/2021 was dedicated to arrival of all the participants, welcome, introductions, networking and setting the basis for the next days.

The day of 17/09/2021 was dedicated to plenary sessions, round tables, debates, lectures, workshops and networking through Week of Cultures and Žur vseh kultur festival, fair and events.

Welcome speeches were done by Branka Bukovec, the president of DRPDNM; Novo Mesto Deputy Mayor, Ms Sara Tomšič and Slovenian MEP, dr. Klemen Grošelj.

Presentation of the applicant organization and the project by Snježana Blagojević

Via Panel by prof. dr. Jure Gombač from Slovenian Migration Institute ZRC SAZU, University of Nova Gorica and Safa Hasan, Povod Institute the participants were introduced to Short Movies and Digital Storytelling as Possibility for Intercultural Dialogue; Short presentation of the interculturalism, intercultural dialogue situation in Slovenia. Short introduction to the Slovenian integration system was presented with presentations of good practices on the local level and how they can be transferred in partner countries. The panel closed with 3 short movies, presentations by their creators/directors and Round table with Discussion followed.

Tools and opportunities offered by the Conference on the Future of Europe were presented by Antonella Valmorbida - General Secretary of ALDA-European Association for Local Democracy and Steering Committee member of the Civil Society Convention on the Future of Europe

Presentation of the project DESIRE - DEclaration of Schuman: Initiative for Revitalizing Europe. What is the Schumann Declaration and what has been its role in the constitution of the European Community? Was done by Dejan Gluvacevic, Dunav 1245

Presentation of the project PERCEPTIONS - Identifying and understanding narratives, imaginations and perceptions of the EU – held outside of Europe – and the way they are distributed via various channels, especially social media channels was done by Celia Charre, Project Manager at European Association for Local Democracy

DEVOTE “Developing the Competencies of Teachers to Integrate Students from Migrant Background into European Schools” project was done by Ms Eva Trentin – Membership officer at European Association for Local Democracy

Lecture on EMIRE - Empowerment of migrant and refugee women (ERASMUS+ KA2 project) and presentation of relevant E+ projects was done by Ms Tjaša Kozjan, DRPDNM

Lecture on New Diversity Chapter for Europe - European Network of Towns for DIVERSITY (EFC NT project) and presentation of relevant EFC projects was done by Ms Franja Bučar, DRPDNM

Lecture and presentation of NEST - New Skills to Enhance Integration of Asylum Seekers and Beneficiaries of International Protection was done by Snjezana Blagojevic, DRPDNM

Lecture and presentation of Support for Policy reform, Civil Society Cooperation in the Field of Youth – Lecture and workshop was done by Ms Kaja Jenkole, DRPDNM

The main networking event and presentations of all delegations was done at Intercultural Fair “Zur vseh kultur” in the frame of International festival Week of Cultures in the main square of Novo mesto, in front of Mayors House. All the partners presented their organizations, Municipalities, Countries via music, art, workshops, round tables... The most important part was the Round table on strengthening of intercultural dialogue, understanding and overcoming the stigmatization of migrants and national minorities.

The day of 18/09/2021 was dedicated to best practice presentations that was implemented via study tour to the oldest secondary school in Slovenia and cultural sights of Novo mesto, a visit to exhibition and meeting with NGO's. The interpersonal approach getting in touch with main objectives of the project was implemented also via Living Library and group work/discussion groups, many of whom were high school students, and half of the participants were foreign guests.

The day of 19/09/2021 was dedicated to presenting results, talking about further cooperation, evaluation, last words, farewell and departure.

Through various working formats, participants deepened their knowledge of EU institutions and policies, raised awareness of the richness of the cultural and linguistic environment and learned about European integration process based on solidarity, tolerance and respect for common values and diversity. Participants interacted with people from other countries and recognized the importance of the Europe for Citizens Program in terms of future partnerships.