

International Conference “Europe is our home“

Novo mesto, 16-19 September 2021

Društvo za razvijanje prostovoljnega dela was again successful on last year's Europe for Citizens, Town Twinning call and among a huge competition got approved project »Europe is our home«.

The main objective of the project is to promote and foster intercultural dialogue between citizens of different nationalities and different languages. The project did 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.

International conference that took place from 16th and 19th of September in Novo mesto, Slovenia gathered over 350 participants from all the partner countries: 8 partners from 7 EU and non-EU countries will participate: Slovenia, Croatia, Italy, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia. The conference was conducted through three plenary sessions, six lectures, three round tables, several debates and intercultural workshops. Due to the COVID-19 situation it took place in several locations in Novo mesto and in groups of maximum 50 participants. But the main part of the conference took place in the Centre of the Town with opening speeches of the president of the DRPDNM, Deputy Mayor of Novo mesto, Ms Sara Tomsic and Slovenian MEP dr. Klemen Groselj. Panel sessions were assembled with Short movies and digital storytelling a possibility for intercultural dialogue, Short presentation of the situation in Slovenia, Short introduction to the Slovenian integration system., Presentation of good practices on the local level, Presentation of 3 short movies and presentations by their creators/directors – Round table and Discussion. Panel was presented by prof. dr. Jure Gombač, Slovenian Migration Institute ZRC SAZU, University of Nova Gorica and Safa Hasan, Povod Institute. European Association for Local Democracy (ALDA) led a 1 hour session that was also projected via Social media live. ALDA presented “Tools and opportunities offered by the Conference on the Future of Europe” - Antonella Valmorbida - General Secretary of ALDA 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 Schuman Declaration and what has been its role in the constitution of the European Community? – 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 - Celia Charre, Project Manager at ALDA. DEVOTE “Developing the Competencies of Teachers to Integrate Students from Migrant Background into European Schools” project - Eva Trentin – Membership officer at ALDA.

Presentations of all delegations were done at Intercultural Fair “Zur vseh kultur” in the frame of International festival Week of Cultures. Partners presented their organizations and Municipalities also via music, art, workshops, round tables...

All the partners agreed that they will further cooperate with each other, especially on cultural, economic ...field and again try to jointly win some EU project in near future. Especially on the topic of dealing with Resilience, Solidarity and Future of the EU.

The project is co-funded by the Europe for Citizens Programme of the European Union.