

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Participant:	1 - DRUSTVO ZA RAZVIJANJE PROSTOVOLJNEGA DELA NOVO MESTO (DRPD NM)
PIC number:	946969873
Project name and acronym:	EU – Home of Common Values — EU - Home CV

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number:	1		
Event name:	International conference "EU – Home of Common Values"		
Type:	Conference		
In situ/online:	in-situ		
Location:	Slovenia, Novo Mesto		
Date(s):	14. – 17. 6. 2023		
Website(s) (if any):			
Participants			
Female:	132		
Male:	88		
Non-binary:	0		
From country 1 Slovenia:	101		
From country 2 Italy:	36		
From country 3 Croatia:	120		
From country 3 Hungary:	24		
From country 3 Bulgaria:	12		
Total number of participants:	293	From total number of countries:	5
Description			
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>			
<p>The partners arrived on 14.6. and registered to the conference. We all presented each other and join common dinner. Afterwards we had intercultural program where international group of artists presented their performance.</p> <p>The conference on 15.6. was opened by Ms. Branka Bukovec, president of the host organization DRPDNM and deputy mayor of Novi Mesto, Ms Sara Tomsic. All delegations and participants were</p>			

greeted and introduced to the program of the conference.

Sara Tomsic, as the deputy mayor, greeted all the participants and wished them a pleasant stay in Novi Mesto. She recognized and praised the contribution of the host organization, DRPDNM, in a number of fields and especially citizens participation. Also, according to her statement, Novo Mesto is recognized as an active municipality where an increasing number of international projects are taking place. She concluded her speech with the wish that the municipality, organizations and all of us present continue to work on improving and bringing our communities together.

The initial phase of the conference was led by Mr. Groselj, who emphasized the importance of Europe today and the newly adopted priorities of the EU, which include:

1. EU enlargement (primarily refers to the Western Balkans, but also the rest of Eastern Europe)
2. Institutional changes (greater access and simplified bureaucracy)
3. Promotion of greater local representativeness and local involvement of citizens and organizations.

Also, the need to increase the involvement of young people in European politics was particularly emphasized. Especially in fields like education, culture and ecology. It was concluded that the European Union should encourage their education and foster the youth organization.

The participants then had the opportunity to ask questions, they primarily concerned: Euroscepticism, ecology, the possibility for young people to participate in the creation of European policy, as well as various problems that young people face today. In this context, the European Green Deal was particularly emphasized as a particularly important initiative.

Next was the presentation "Solidarity in practice" led by dr. Jure Gombac, professor at the University of Nova Gorica. During this segment, participants had the opportunity to gain a better understanding of Slovenia's migrant policy. Namely, in the last couple of decades, people from outside the former Yugoslavia began also to immigrate to Slovenia, which revealed major problems in the system and process of integration.

The main highlighted challenges that immigrants face in Slovenia today are:

- lack of resources and support for learning the Slavic language
- insufficient understanding of social services and overly complicated bureaucratic system
- insufficient support from institutions in protecting immigrants from exploitation by companies
- existing prejudices of society about migrants

At the end of the presentation, Mr. Gombac actively involved the international participants to share their diverse experiences, common challenges and established good practices for providing support and ultimately successful integration of migrants.

The break was followed by the presentation of the StoryLand project - improving foreign language and digital skills competence in adults by Alma Elizabeta Spelko, DRPD.

This project involved the creation of a digital platform for adult education. In this way, apart from the results achieved during the program, it continues to have an impact to this day. Experiences and establishment of good practice in adult education were also shared.

The next phase of the meeting was a debate on the opportunities for young people in the EU led by Ms. Franja Bucar, DRPD - she was also the coordinator of the event. This was a platform to discuss in more detail the newly adopted EU initiatives as well as other key issues. During the discussion, the importance of EU elections was particularly emphasized. The participants gained a better understanding of the selection process through the presentation. The key conclusions are:

- the number of representatives of each country is proportional to its population, each country counts
- young people are not sufficiently familiar with politics and the people running for office
- we elect representatives for our interest, therefore every vote is important

A special review was also made for Slovenia, where 56 seminars were held and an active campaign for the past elections. The common conclusion is that citizens should be better informed and motivated to actively participate in the election process.

Also, personal experiences and new ideas for promoting active citizenship and increasing youth engagement at the local, national and EU level were discussed. Various Erasmus+ initiatives for youth exchange and volunteering have been identified as one of the key resources. Accordingly, young

people were given the opportunity to share their experience with participation in European programs.

The first was Vito, a young local citizen who had the opportunity to participate in 3 Erasmus+ international events. He shared his experiences as a participant in the program and pointed out that this participation helped him establish his European identity and become politically active. He also emphasized the importance of meeting and exchanging ideas with similar young people from all over the EU. After him, two active EVC volunteers (Bojan & Emilija) from Serbia, shared their experiences from the program and life in the EU. They both particularly emphasized the importance of further enlargement of the EU.

The last part of the conference was the establishment of Good practices for integration and active participation, by PhD Lejla I. Leric, DRPD. She presented the findings of 2 conducted international studies on methodologies for empowering teachers and promoting student social entrepreneurship. She also shared her rich experience as a professor and creator of several programs for teachers and the field of education. The most significant trends in the field of student social entrepreneurship were discussed in detail. Finally, she presented the results of her initiatives and programs in this field:

- SFC (Support to choose future): encouraging long-term planning and decision-making skills for highschool dropouts.
- Training: young people are given the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills through informal education
- Interactive Handbook: intended primarily for young people in rural areas who are particularly affected by the educational gap

After the completion of the planned conference program, an open floor followed for all questions and reflection.

Friday, 16.6. was reserved for interactive debates on The EU in the surrounding world and the future of EU. Series of workshops on COVID 19 took place and lessons and good practices in pandemic conditions. Participants went on sightseeing tour of EU funded best practices and joined with their presentations, promotional material, national food, drinks the Intercultural festival »Zur Vseh Kultur« with International stands and cultural program with folklore dancing, singing...

The conference ended with great enthusiasm and motivation to meet again and jointly work on many issues in every partner country, Municipality. The main and most important outcome and result was that all the partners agreed to cooperate further and further promote EU, solidarity among EU countries/citizens...

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).