

The project «Experience Europe!» 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 315 citizens, notably 123 participants from the city of Capilnita (**RO**), 47 participants from the city of Modry Kamen (**SK**), 35 participants from the city of Opatow (**PL**), 45 participants from the city of Bercel (**HU**), 29 participants from the city of Kotegyan (**HU**), 36 participants from the city of Opcina Gola (**HR**).

Location/ Dates: The event took place in **Capilnita, Romania** from 12.07.2019 to **14.07.2019**

Short description:

The first day of the event, 12.07.2019 was targeted the civic participation in the decision-making process on European level, where discussions about the effectiveness of citizen participation were held by the hosting partner, Comuna Capilnita from Romania.

In specific, partners had discussion about the following themes:

- communication of the EU on economic difficulties
- civic participation and rise of Eurosceptic parties in Europe

During this section partners highlighted the importance of active involvement and their long-term impact on the EU's future.

Also discussions about the need to build a common identity, the need to increase inclusion in Europe, and the need to include people in the decision-making process were held.

After this section partners from Slovakia presented the point of view about the role and relevance for civil society in times of crisis. This was a discussion about despite the difficulties and obstacles created by this crisis, opportunities have simultaneously appeared to increase the value and relevance of civil society to EU citizens.

After that, partners from Poland presented some key aspects about the challenges linked to social media and citizens' participation in our societies and at EU level.

The first day ended with a debate about three critical issues:

- the need to build a common identity
- the need to increase inclusion in Europe
- the need to include all people in the decision-making process

The debate was moderated by Opcina Gola from Croatia a small locality what has a relatively good local budget, more active NGO's and social enterprises, partner 6 highlighting the importance of collaboration between all categories of local actors.

The second day, 13.07.2019 of the event was dedicated for two main themes, citizen participation in the political life of the EU and solidarity in the EU. Moderated by partners from Kotegyan from Hungary, Modry Kamen from Slovakia and Opatow from Poland, partners concluded the following main solutions related to citizens participation:

- Local public authorities has to take act in organizing more community development actions, which role is to promote bottom up approaches.
- At local level every partner should make a so called Local Support Group, formed from decision makers at local level, which has the role to communicate between citizens and public authorities.

About solidarity in the EU, the main conclusions were:

- Promoting volunteering - in this sense The European Solidarity Corps was presented by partners from Bercel - Hungary, which provides volunteering placements, traineeships and jobs for 2-12 months, fostering solidarity in communities across Europe.
- As an interesting approach for partners, from Hungarian partners' point of view, the EU structural funds represent a form of European solidarity, being important to access EU grants at all levels, SMEs, NGOs and local public authorities.

The last day of the event, 14.07.2019 was dedicated to citizen's rights and available mechanisms for EU citizens in participation on the EU decision making process. During this day partners presented for each other public consultation opportunities and methods, guides to EU institutions and the possibilities given by working groups and strategic partnerships. Near debates and seminars Community involvement and cultural activities were organized.