

The project « We Belong Together – Citizens on Stage » was funded with the support of the European Union under the Programme "Europe for Citizens"

Applicable to the Action 1, Measure 1.1
"Town Twinning Citizens' Meetings"

Participation: The project involved 720 citizens, notably 500 participants from the city of Imeľ (Slovakia), 45 participants from the city of Némesszalók (Hungary), 45 participants from the city of Beled (Hungary), 45 participants from the city of Héreg (Hungary), 45 participants from the city of Pstruží (Czech republic), 20 participants from the city of Dolga Vas (Slovenia), 20 participants from the city of Capleni (Romania).

Location/ Dates: The event took place in Imeľ (Slovakia), from 21/06/2013 to 23/06/2013

Short description:

The day of 21/06/2013 was dedicated to the issue of active European citizenship. Predominantly young participants were involved in the activities, where the key goal was arousing their interest in happenings in their own social surroundings, municipalities where they live, also arousing interests in happenings within the EU. Therefore on the first day activities were realised such as the lecture on Fight against drug abuse among youth, presentations of free-time activities – cynology, archery, football. In this respect the workshop focusing on debates about the improvement of the work of European institutions was very important. In the frame of a moderated discussion young people from seven municipalities presented and drew up their proposals for the improvement of the work of the European Parliament, EU Council and European Commission. Young people have basic information about these institutions and their functioning thanks to the primary and secondary schools, where they study. However, this information is often not complex. For this reason, the discussion had educational features, too, because the young people extended their knowledge. In the course of the day activities designed for the youngest participants were realised, too, such as entertaining, social and sport games. The end of the day belonged to all participants, focusing on education and traditions. In the frame of a lecture the actual issue related to European citizenship was introduced to the participants. The lecture was conducted from the perspective of presenting the history of European citizenship (the name of the lecture corresponds with this feature: "20 Years of European Citizenship"), its basic principles and rights, offered by common citizenship to each individual. Traditions were presented in relation to domestic – Slovak customs (plucking of feathers, conserving cabbage) and music typical for this nationally mixed territory (Slovak and Hungarian) – zither music. At night, the night contest of volunteer fire brigades was held. It was an unusual achievement, particularly in term of time costs.

The day of 22/06/2013 was dedicated to sport and cultural activities, which helped them familiarise and get to know mainly the new partner municipalities. The day started with the opening of the exhibition of domestic animals and with the Run of Friendship. The 14th Run of Friendship between the municipalities of Imeľ and Nesvady is the expression of friendship among nations and nationalities, which fits in the conception of the project activities perfectly. In addition, in a forenoon were opened two exhibitions of handicrafts and paintings, which showed the hand skills of citizens of partner municipalities and the preservation of traditions. The afternoon program started with a common session of the partner municipal representatives dealing with the extension of the partnership and with the new partnership contracts. The participants of the session formulated the conditions of partnership and the texts of the new partnership contracts with Dolga Vas (SLO) and Capleni (RO) municipalities. The Saturday program culminated with the presentation of international culture and traditions. Each of the partner municipalities presented their culture program – songs, dances and music typical for their region and country. All generations performed on the stage. The cultural program was characterized by the spirit of getting know new partner municipalities and rustic entertainment by the spirit of creating new friendships.

The day of 23/06/2013 was dedicated to confirming the newly established friendships. The morning program was devoted to church services and spiritual union of the participants. The afternoon program started with the rooster stew cooking competition. Teams composed of the participants from the partner municipalities were preparing traditional rooster stew at the football stadium, each team, naturally, using their own recipe. The prepared stews were tasted not only by the jury, they were also available for all other participants. On the third day extension of the partnership by two new countries and two new municipalities was completed. The partnership agreements were signed with municipalities of Capleni (RO) a Dolga Vas (SLO). Sport was the dominant element of the afternoon activities. At first, football teams of the youngest participants met at the football pitch. They were replaced by the teams of senior men from the partner municipalities (former football players over 50) and also adult teams of the partner municipalities. Seniors were especially involved in the Sunday activities in the seniors' nook, where knowledge competitions were prepared for them. After ending of this activity the common wish of the partners for the future was formulated, this expressed their great interest in continuation of the close cooperation of the partner municipalities. After this activity the event was finished and the guests departed for their homes.