



REGIONALNA PARTNERSTVA ZA INTERKULTURNU SARADNJU  
REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS FOR INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGE  
Wolverhampton - Subotica - Osijek - Mostar



Nº 2

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# NEWSLETTER



LIGHT HOUSE



L D A

**LEAD APPLICANT:** Subotica – City Administration

**PARTNERS:** Association of Local Democracy Agencies – ALDA, Light House – Media Centre – Wolverhampton, UK, Local Democracy Agency Osijek, Local Democracy Agency Mostar, Local Democracy Agency Subotica

SUPPORTED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION, DG ENLARGEMENT-REGIONAL PROGRAMMES

## OPENING CONFERENCE

*Consolidating partnership between civil society organisations and public authorities for raising minority rights in the region, Brussels, 6-7 July 2009*

The People 2 People Programme is one of the three strands of the Civil Society Facility of the Directorate-



General for Enlargement of the European Commission. Following the announcement of the call, the Directorate has organised the opening conference for proposals on the theme: *“Support to civil society dialogue: consolidating partnerships between civil society organisations and public authorities for raising minority rights in the region”,* financed under the

CARDS Regional Action Programme 2006 (EuropeAid/126361/C/ACT/Multi). Besides providing a space for the beneficiaries to meet and network among themselves, the conferences is an occasion to connect them with the European Commission as well as relevant stakeholders at an European level.

## ROUND TABLE AND STUDY VISIT TO SUBOTICA

*Cultural Heritage of National Minorities. Subotica, 6-9 August 2009.*

The Round Table in Subotica City Media Centre gathering around 30 participants, guests from the partner cities of Osijek

, Mostar and Seged was organized during the traditional celebration of harvest days. On behalf of the hosting city Subotica, the key note speaker was Mr. Petar Horvacki, vice Mayor, who spoke about multicultural coexistence and more than twenty ethnic minority groups living in Subotica with a long tradition of mutual respect for diversity of their cultural heritage. The Vice Mayor of the city of Osijek, Mr. Ivan Vrdoljak, reiterated the long tradition of cherishing good neighbourly and friendly relations with the city of Subotica and he concluded his speech stating that further efforts should be made to support the co-operation between the local governments.



## 1ST MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

*Subotica, 8th August 2009 Project Team and Components.*

The first meeting of the Steering Group, composed by the Representatives of the Partners, was held in Subotica in August. The first step necessary to implement the project was the appointment of the Project Team who will be in charge of the assigned tasks as determined in the original project description. The project Partners appointed the following members of the team: Mr. Ben Oram (Wolverhampton Light house Media Centre), Mr. Miljenko Turniski(LDA Osijek,) Ms. Dzenana Dedic(LDA Mostar), Ms. Olga Perusic (LDA Subotica), Ms. Erika Kudlik (City Administration Subotica), Ms. Stanka Parac (ALDA, Project management). This step was fundamental to implement the activities originally divided in three main components:

## COMPONENT 1:

Project management consist of a series of promotion and visibility actions which will include a publication developed by the Partners in Subotica, Osijek, Mostar, the networking of intercultural cities and NGOs, thematic round tables and study visits to the cities on cultural



heritage of minority communities held during specific cultural events and a final publication which gather a collection of papers on good local intercultural governance.

## COMPONENT 2:

Capacity Building includes a series of three training residential seminars and the four day final conference with international and regional participation under the common title "School of Local Democracy" to be held in three cities convened in the project.

## COMPONENT 3:

Intercultural exchange and BE-ME perspective is designed as a set of activities consisting of preparation, pre-production and filming of the traditional cultural ethnic minorities customs in the cities included in the action. It aims at helping to develop some new innovative communication concepts, tools and approaches. The script and production of at least three documentaries on the cities included, ethnic minorities, cultural and religious diversities are among the main outcomes of the project and will serve for further dissemination and possible follow-up activities.

## ACTION PLAN DRAFTING

Another main priority of the Steering Committee was the drafting of the Action Plan which has been presented by Stanka Parac, the Support Partnership Manager and it has discussed by the entire board. To each of the partners have been assigned a specific role in organising the School of Local Democracy within the so called "capacity building component". The Trainers has also been appointed as follows: Ms. Milica Pesic, Media Diversity Institute, London, Ms. Snjezana Bokulic, Minority Rights Group International, London and Ms. Aleksandra Vujic, Vojvodina Human Rights Centre, Novi Sad, Serbia. The first School has already been held from the 22nd to the 26th of August in Subotica as a training for local authorities and NGOs in good local intercultural governance and it has coincided with Interethno Festival in Subotica. The second School for Local Democracy and the youth training will be held in Osijek, Croatia and will be managed and coordinated by LDA Osijek. The third School for Local Democracy is designed as the final conference and it will be coordinated and managed by LDA Mostar. For more detailed information on the whole programme please consult Newsletter n°1.

## MEDIA PROJECT

Filming, pre and post production of documentaries on multicultural practice and tradition in the local communities involved will be managed and coordinated by the Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton. Lighthouse Wolverhampton will shoot a documentary on the process of the project, on intercultural and minorities issues and on some events in the participating towns. The idea is to produce some documentaries of approximately one hour that should illustrate the multicultural context of the communities. Some specific events will occur in Subotica, Mostar and Osijek. In fact, the steering committee has decided that the Partners need to define them in advance in order to find a suitable occasion for the filming.

The Partners will need also to provide background information and inputs for the narrative part of the documentary and they could propose some specific problems that you wish to explore or contexts that need to be highlighted. Naturally, the film makers will act always with freedom of artistic expression. It has also been decide the the best language for the documentaries will be English in order to be also visible for a European public. Nevertheless, translation will be of paramount importance as many people in the Balkans often do not understand English as native speaker and they obviously will have to be involved as target groups of the media action. The final event and an occasion for presenting the film will be in October 2010 in Brussels.

## SCHOOL OF LOCAL DEMOCRACY 1.

*Training seminar on Intercultural Governance, Subotica, Serbia, 21-25 August, 2009*

The School of Local Democracy has been a five day residential training seminar for local government officials and civil society organisations held by intercultural governance workshops. The participants come from partner organisations of LDA Subotica, local authorities included in ALDA network



**Thematic Round Table:** Intercultural local governance and co-operation programme perspectives

both from EU and the Western Balkans, local civil society organisations and multiethnic municipalities from the Vojvodina Region. Participants from EU countries will include Austria, Hungary, Italy, France, UK, Spain. The topics of the workshops will include administrative capacities and human rights-related issues, with special regards to:

- ▶ European standards in human and minority rights protection;
- ▶ Local self-government system;
- ▶ Diversity management skills;
- ▶ Public policy making and power sharing;
- ▶ Conflict prevention and resolution;
- ▶ Citizen participation at local level

### KEY THEMATIC MODULES OF THE SCHOOL

**WORKSHOP 1:** European standards in human and minority rights protection presented. A team work and a specific focus on case studies have been the basic method of this part of the training. Ms. Snjezana Bokulic, MRG international, London

**WORKSHOP 2:** The Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe has been presented and explain. The effectiveness and the utilisation of this juridical tool has been described in details. Ms. Alexandra Vuic, Vojvodina Centre for Human Rights, Novi Sad

**WORKSHOP 3:** Diversity management skills as well as public policy making and diversity reporting has been the

main topics of the seminar on the role of media in intercultural understanding. This workshop has been held by the same trainer of workshop 4 as the two topics are interconnected.

**WORKSHOP 4:** "Citizen participation at local level: from the right to information to the right to participation" has been the issue of a series of thematic workshops on human and minority rights in local communities and in public service delivery. Ms. Milica Pesic, Media Diversity Institute, London

**WORKSHOP 5:** European experience – minorities and participation at local level; exchange of good local practice: case studies of: city of Osijek, city of Mostar, city of Seged. Ms. Stanka Parac, LDA Subotica Director, Subotica

## INTERETNO FESTIVAL, SUBOTICA, 22ND -26TH AUGUST, 2009

For the eighth time, this summer occurred one of the most prominent events taking place in Subotica. Experienced folk associations from various areas as well as dance groups, musicians and craftsmen from the Vojvodina region convened in the town. Thanks to those who created the festival, the organising group, to the participants of the previous years , the 8th Interetno Festival has greatly succeeded in gathering people and artists under the patronage of CIOF. A playhouse, some craftsmen's' tents and naturally the wonderful location of the city have been the venues of this event which included ethno dance house nights and the special worshipping. The opportunity of attending at some of the events of the Festival was also a valuable occasion of promoting cultural, educational and social activities such as:



- ▶ Folk Art Fair on the Main Square;
- ▶ Ex Libris, an International Book Exhibition called in the Town souvenir shop;
- ▶ Who wants to play...? Children workshops;
- ▶ Eco Corner, an ecologic set of workshops and handcrafts;
- ▶ Dance Panorama, performance of the foreign groups;
- ▶ Ethno Concert, music bands in "Etnopolis";
- ▶ Festival Club , party every night with the participants of the festival in Népkör.

More information are available in English, Serbian and Hungarian at: [www.interetno.net](http://www.interetno.net)

## EVENTS

### CORROLARY ACTIVITIES

*Cultural events in Subotica, Mostar and Osijek*

As already above mentioned, every partner organisation will indicate an event which should highlight the specificities of its own area. It will offer a suitable occasion for the producers of the documentaries to film a particular event as well as allow citizens and participants involved in the project to enjoy the cultural and the social life of the Partners' municipalities. In this framework two events have already occurred in Subotica and two others would take place in Osijek and Mostar.

### DUŽIJANICA, AUGUST 2009, SUBOTICA

For decades and centuries the joy and happiness of every single Bunjevac farming family upon the successful finishing of the harvest have been shared by all, both the family members and the reapers. The celebration on the occasion of ending the harvest, the Dužijanica was imbued with a spiritual and a religious dimension, giving thanks to God for the collected crop. Owing to the efforts of Blaško Rajić, a priest in the St. Roka Church and the person who brought into life again and fostered the Bunjevac Croat cultural heritage, the bandaš and the bandašica (the King and the Queen of the harvest) were selected for the first time. A milestone was thus reached as Dužijanica became a public event. Since 1968, a series of events

have been related to the harvest: the competitions of reapers, the selection of "bandaš and bandašica", the assembly of reapers (skupština risara), the reapers' night and the procession. This tradition as well as the decoration the shop windows and the races have represented a tourist attraction not only for Subotica, but for its region, too. Although part of our population was included in both church and civil Dužijanica commemorations, it should be noted as a basic indicator that the former one was celebrated by believers only. The central part of the church celebration was the Holy Communion, while the civil-urban Dužijanica gathered those citizens who did not attend the church celebration on the occasion of completing the harvest. Hence, the divided Dužijanica had been celebrated in two parallel tracks for 24 full years. The year 1993 is of crucial importance for the history of Dužijanica. The activists of the Bunjevačko Kolo Cultural Association and the representatives of the church succeeded in approaching and uniting the church and civil celebration of Dužijanica. It was a thorough success. After more than eight decades, Dužijanica was a common commemoration again, united and enriched with new cultural contents. Dužijanica is a specific expression of the entire set of spiritual and material values created by the Bunjevac Croats during their history in the region. A brief description and photos of the event are available in Serbian at: [www.subotica.info](http://www.subotica.info)

### MACEDONIANS, MACEDONIAN CULTURE, MUSIC AND LANGUAGE IN OSIJEK

Building the Bridges between the Two Homelands

The Macedonian Cultural Association (MCA) "Brothers Miladinovi" Recognising the importance and the need for nurturing Macedonian national identity, in the early nineties of the last century, an idea was born among a group of enthusiasts belonging to the Macedonian national minority in Osijek: establishing an organisation that



would contribute to the promotion and fostering the specific culture, tradition and language of the Macedonian minority in Osijek. Indeed, on October 22nd 1994, MCA "Brothers Miladinovi" was founded in Osijek. The Association bares the name of the Brothers Konstantin and Dimitrija Miladinovi, Macedonian poets from the end of the nineteenth century whose work was supported by the well-known Croatian bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer. With his encouragement and financial assistance "The Collection of Macedonian Folk Poems" came out of print in 1861. The book is considered to have laid the foundation of the Macedonian language and literary tradition. MCA "Brothers Miladinovi" is one of the six associations that are under the umbrella of the Society of Macedonians in the Republic of Croatia. During the last 15 years, the MCA enriches the cultural life of Osijek organising gatherings, concerts of Macedonian contemporary, classical and folk music, scientific and cultural events, exhibitions, book and film promotions. These activities have been supported by the Office for National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, as well as through the programs of the City of Osijek and the Osijek-Baranja County. Since 2009,



two members of the MCA have been representing the Macedonian national minority and its interests at the City and County level, namely, Marija Činčurak and Dragoljub Siljanovski. The Association has an Executive Board and several clubs, such as the choir, Macedonian folk dance clubs for adults and children, ethno workshop, culinary and children creative club, and two schools for Macedonian language, for adults and children. main activities of MCA "Brothers Miladinovi"

**Events organised by the MCA**

The Days of Brother Miladinovi In the last 12 years, this event held in June both in Osijek and Djakovo honouring of the age-long bond between the cities of Djakovo , the head office of the bishop Strossmayer and Struga, the birth place of the two brothers. They are celebrating the month when "The Collection of Macedonian Folk Poems" of 1861.

The Days of Macedonian Culture This year, in October, the Days will be held for the 15th time, marking the birthday of the MCA "Brothers Miladinovi" with numerous cultural and music events, concerts and Macedonian language and poetry evenings.. It is one of the oldest activities of the Association.

Macedonian Eve it is a tradition established within the last 6 years and held regularly around the 8th of March, celebrating the arrival of the spring and the Day of the Women. The evening is presenting the beauties of the Macedonian traditional meals, songs and dances and is aimed for strengthening the ties between the cultural heritage of Macedonia and Croatia.

**CULTURAL AND SOCIAL LIFE IN MOSTAR**

Mostar is a city in Bosnia Herzegovina, the biggest and the most important city in the Herzegovina Region and the centre of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton. Mostar is situated on the Neretva river and is the fifth-largest city in the country. Mostar was named after the bridge keepers (natively: Mostari) who kept the Stari Most (Old Bridge) over the Neretva river.

During the Ottoman era, the Old Bridge was built and became one of the symbols of Mostar. Destroyed during the 90s war, it has been reconstructed. In BiH there are officially registered



17 minorities (namely, Albanians, Montenegrinians, Checks, Hungarians, Macedonians, Germans, Polish, Roma People, Romanians, Russians, Rusinian people, Slovaks, Slovenians, Italians, Jewish, Turkish, Ukrainians). In the Mostar area, the minorities consist mainly of Roma people. There are also Jewish minority who have set up an association even though they not consist of a great number.

**Roma People and Association Neretva**

Roma people have registered association named Neretva, the name of the river which crosses the city. This association gather domicile for Roma people of roughly 30-35 families with around 150-170 members. Apart from them, there are also other Romas leaving in the area of Mostar, as they are nomads they are not permanently based in the town. In fact, they are travelling in surrounding areas of neighbour countries. It has occurred that Roma have organised cultural events for the International Day of Roma People, but mostly they celebrate for the festivity of Djurdjev Dan (George's day). Roma have also been included in the actions held by the OCSE office, some NGO-s and City of Mostar administration.

**Recurrent Cultural Events**

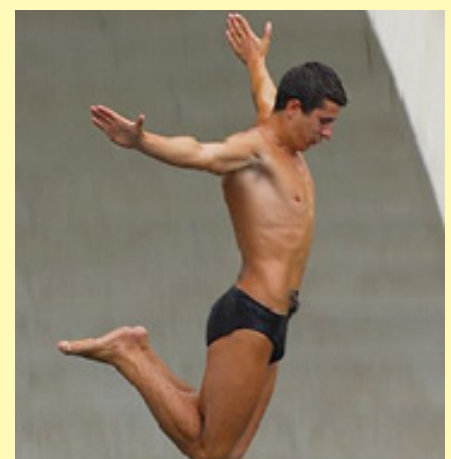
Mostar cultural life is particularly interesting. In fact, it is possible to attend a valuable set of smaller and larger events held all over the year which includes, among others, some cultural events connected to Orthodox Christmas, organised by Serb – Orthodox cultural association Prosvjeta, the Festival of authors' poetic and an international festival of modern drama performances organised by the Mostarian Youth Theatre, the Human Rights Festival Vivisect in which some documentaries and thematic fora on HR organised by OKC Abrašević (Youth Cultural Centre). Furthermore the many Art Cultural Clubs holds for occasion of Anniversary an entertaining programs of traditional dance and songs. In April,

some particularly enjoyable events take place: the Mostarian Spring, a manifestation including artistic content for the beginning of two-months manifestation happening during the week after Easter and the National theatre of Mostar "Mostarska liska" which involves professional companies. The best performance gets the price "Mostarska liska" during the final evening. The concert Melodije Mostara (The melodies of Mostar) is another interesting festival involving musicians from all over the region.

In July you can have the possibility to attend another array of particular events: the Municipality of Mostar organises the Mostarski ljetni festival (Mostarian Summer Festival) which includes: Šantićeve večeri poezije (The poetic eves of Santic) in honour of Aleksa Šantić, a famous Mostarian



poet, Anale crteža (Annals of draught) a traditional exhibition of drawings organised in cooperation with the Cultural Centre, the Blues Festival, an international music event, organised in partnership with the music centre Pavarotti, and last but not least, Skokovi aa Starog Mosta (Jumping from the Old Bridge), one of the oldest cultural and entertaining tradition organised by the Club Skakaca u vodu "Mostari" (Water-Jumpers Club).



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