



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



APRIL 2011.

NEWSLETTER



LIGHT HOUSE

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

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REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS FOR INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGE FINAL CONFERENCE IN MOSTAR

From the 30th March - 2nd April, 2011 in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the final conference of the project will be held under the common title "Participation and Intercultural Governance at Local Level in the Balkans: Challenges and European Perspectives".

This international conference is organized as the final event of the two-year regional co-operation project Regional partnerships for intercultural exchange (www.regionalicc.net), with the support of the European Commission, DG Enlargement Regional Programmes and within the Programme Consolidating Partnership between civil society organizations and public authorities for raising minority rights in the region. Lead partner is the City administration of Subotica, Serbia (www.subotica.rs), with the project partners: the Association of Local Democracy Agencies (www.alda-europe.eu), Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton, UK (www.light-house.co.uk), Local Democracy Agency Subotica (www.lda-subotica.org), Local Democracy Agency Osijek, Croatia (www.ldaosijek.hr), Local Democracy Agency Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina (www.ldamostar.ba).

The conference will give an overview of the project activities implemented during the past two years and provide space for interaction and debate of representatives from civil society organisations and local self-governments from Serbia, Croatia



and Bosnia and Herzegovina and with their counterparts in the EU on some key concepts related to the democratic participation and good local governance. The conference sessions cover the issues of the minorities participation at local level, moving from multicultural co-existence to intercultural governance, municipal service provision in culturally diverse communities, a role of the civil society in a new dialogue and reconciliation in the region. Closing session is designed to discuss the opportunities for civil society and local self-governments in cross-border/regional co-operation programmes.

On the last day of the conference a study visit is organized in Mostar (programme organized by LDA Mostar), thematic round table in the City hall of Mostar, cities exploring opportunities for Intercultural exchange follow-up activities: Mostar, Osijek, Subotica, Wolverhampton.

LDA SUBOTICA AND EVS: YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATING IN AN INTERCULTURAL LEARNING OF EUROPE



Youth work is considered by the Local Democracy Agency (LDA) Subotica as one of the main tools for developing an intercultural environment benefiting to all. The first signs of youth work at LDA Subotica began in 2007/8. From that moment LDA has been constantly trying to widen perspectives of young people in Subotica and elsewhere by promoting 'European Voluntary Service' (EVS) funded by European Commission, Youth in Action Programme. Indeed, it enables young people to spend up to 12 months abroad as volunteers helping with local projects in various fields. Today LDA is actively involved in EVS as part of a broader youth work programme - from providing young people with basic information on available opportunities to organising relevant events and accompanying them with their projects. Considering that EVS programme has a great impact on spreading intercultural ideas among LDA Subotica, its partners and eventually the whole local community, the Agency is supporting young people willing to get involved in voluntary work abroad by playing both roles as hosting and sending organisation. It has been now accredited for 3 years which enabled it to send already two Serbian young people to European countries (Slovenia, Denmark) as well as to

receive four EVS volunteers of different nationalities (Swiss, Lithuanian and French). There is a range of activities for EVS volunteers coming to LDA in which they can get involved such as supporting LDA's on-going projects on regional co-operation, promotion of minorities or improvement of social economic development. Moreover, EVS volunteers are engaged in youth work as members of the LDA team of volunteers gathering also local young people of Subotica and its surroundings. On the 15th-22nd October 2010, LDA Subotica implemented a project called "Let's EVS now" which



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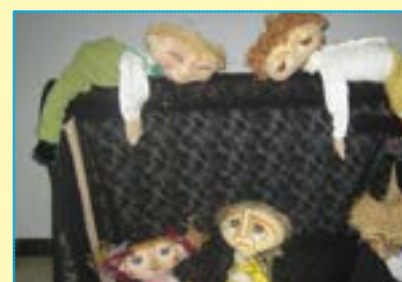
was funded by the Youth in Action Programme. The training of 6 days aimed at gathering EVS mentors, tutors and volunteers who are associated with this programme, organizations that send and host volunteers to raise understanding and awareness of quality aspects in the realization of the European Voluntary Service in accordance with recommendations of the Youth in Action Programme. With the prospect of new EVS volunteers coming for 2011/2012 period, LDA Subotica continues to invest in young people in Serbia and all over Europe, allowing them to get opportunities to share their cultures and learn from each others.

MULTICULTURAL FACE OF SUBOTICA Children's Theatre Subotica

Children's Theatre which is also known as a Puppet Theatre in Subotica (www.teatarzadecu.rs) was founded in 1934. The Theatre immediately became extremely popular among children in Subotica. After the World War II thanks to the theatre enthusiasts and modern technologies of that time the work of the theatre was renewed and since then it constantly performs its plays. The first professional troupe was formed in the season of 1953/54 and since then the Theatre started its way as an institution with the professional and artistic achievements which led to the top of stage creativity for children. In the year 1960 the puppet theatre changed its name into Children's Theatre – Gyermekszínház.

The Theatre has 5 annual premieres – 2 in Serbian, 2 in Hungarian and one bilingual New Year's performance. Total number of the plays performed annually is about 280. The performances are shown in the theatre's premises, on the field and abroad – in Sofia, Bucharest, Szeged, Berlin, Stockholm, St. Petersburg, Malmo, Mexico City and elsewhere.

Children's Theatre is also a coorganizer of International Children's Festival which is held every May in Subotica.



LOCAL DEMOCRACY AGENCY

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Dužijanca



Dužijanca (www.duzijanca.co.rs) is a unique cultural celebration marking the completion of the harvest.

It was permeated with a spiritual–religious dimension, given that it originated from the Bunjevac Croat farming families, expressing the gratitude to God for the crops. Nowadays, Dužijanca is an event in the city of Subotica and its surroundings starting at the end of April with the blessing of the harvest and ending in the last Sunday of August with a parish festival in Bunaric. The whole celebration comprises of about twenty events being celebrated in the city of Subotica and neighbouring villages for the whole century now.

Vojvodjanski mozaik



The publishing of the bulletin Vojvođanski mozaik (Vojvodina mosaic) was started in Subotica in 2008 with the financial support of the EU programme European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights which is implemented in four towns in the Province of Vojvodina: Subotica, Novi Sad, Sombor and Ada. This journal is a good example of the active multiethnic and multicultural cooperation and representation since young people from Roma, Ruthenian, Macedonian, German, Croatian, Backa, Hungarian and Jewish national communities are involved in the preparation of the issues writing the articles in their native languages. The main message which this multicultural newsletter convey is that all national communities have to live with each other not next to each other.

The initiator of the project was Roma Education Centre in Subotica and its president Stevan Nikolic is the executive editor of Vojvodina mosaic.

Beans Festival

The Beans Festival is a competition in cooking bean soup as a traditional ethno cuisine, accompanied by many cultural programmes performed by guests from different European countries. It is held every year at the end of August in the village of Donji Tavankut located in the neighborhood of Subotica. This is a charity event and all the money collected is dedicated to the humanitarian purposes.

One of the versions of Serbian bean soup recipe:

INGREDIENTS:

- 500 g dry white beans
- Smoked meat
- 1 cup oil
- 2 peeled tomatoes (chopped)
- 1 large onion (chopped)
- 2 mid-size carrots (chopped)
- 2 mid-size potatoes (chopped)
- 1 ribs celery (chopped)
- 1 chili pepper (chopped), salt, pepper

Preparation:

Soak the beans into cold water for a few hours or overnight. Drain and put them into a big soup pot with the fresh water. Cook for about half of an hour. Then add oil and vegetables. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for about one more hour until the beans are tender. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve with home - made bread.





LDA OSIJEK: CROSSING THE CULTURAL BORDERS

Cross regards - Intercultural competences and Cross-border cooperation is a three-lateral project being implemented by Local Democracy Agency from Osijek (www.lda-osijek.hr), People et Culture from Paris (www.people-et-culture.org) and Youth Education Center Blossin from Berlin (www.blossin.com). The project involves 8 young people from each partner country who participate in three international seminars which take place in Croatia, France and Germany. The participants have the opportunity to learn in an experiential way about the history, politics, institutions etc. of all the three countries involved in the project.



During the first seminar which took place in Osijek, Croatia on 16th - 22nd October, 2010 the participants had a chance to explore the city of Osijek, discuss about democracy and learn about the Homeland war in Croatia as well as the history of conflict in ex-Yugoslavia. The seminar program also included visits to Vukovar and Croatian Parliament in Zagreb. Second seminar of the project was held from 29th November to 5th December, 2010

in Strasbourg, France. The seminar was focused on the national identity of Alsace Loren region. There was also organized a visit to the Council of Europe for the young participants of the project. The final third seminar was held in Berlin on 21st - 26th February, 2011 and this time the topic covered a situation in Germany after the World War II also putting a great emphasis on the story of the Berlin Wall.

The project applies peer-to-peer and multiplier methodologies providing the possibility for a wider dissemination of the project results. It is funded by French-German Youth Office (www.ofaj.org). And Local Democracy Agency Osijek has been a project partner since 2008.

For the year 2011 it is expected to develop a quadripartite project involving Serbia as well. This possibility will be discussed during the next project partners' meeting which is scheduled to be held on the 1st March, 2011 in Osijek.



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LOCAL DEMOCRACY AGENCY

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NANSEN DIALOGUE CENTRE IN OSIJEK - CREATING “NEW SCHOOLS” IN EASTERN CROATIA

Nansen Dialogue Centre (NDC) in Osijek is a local Civil Society Organization whose mission is social reconstruction of the society. The main activities are educational projects implemented in post-war multiethnic communities in Eastern Croatia.

One of the consequences of the Homeland war is the division along ethnic lines within many communities in region of Eastern Croatia. The most dire consequence for the future of this region is, as pointed out by various researches, the segregation of the children through the education system, beginning with the kindergartens and ending with the high schools. Children of different nationalities attend classes in separate classrooms,

shifts, and even buildings. Especially severe segregation is between Serbian and Croatian children. Other minorities are not so much in focus, although Eastern Slavonia is highly multicultural area: in Baranja region there are 24 different national communities, and before the Homeland war 27 different ethnic groups lived in Vukovar.

Divided education plays a key role in discouraging the development of understanding among various national groups and encouraging discrimination. Intercultural learning is not included into the present education system in Croatia.

Within the scope of the project The New School, initiated by NDC Osijek, teachers, parents and expert associates

developed a curriculum of the intercultural subject “Cultural and Spiritual Heritage of the Region (CSHR)”. CSHR enables children of different nationalities in a multicultural community to learn about cultural heritage of all ethnic groups that live in the region so that they could get to know each other, understand and respect their differences. CSHR openly promotes integration and tolerance and provides pupils with intercultural competences. There was formed a multiethnic group of pupils, which was a challenge consider-

able for the further development of relations within their ethnic group as well as with other ethnic groups. Teachers through this work got acknowledgement and support for their further work on decreasing the gaps between children of different nationalities. For the smooth implementation of the CSHR there was published a handbook for the teachers. This handbook, successful experience of four years of implementation and good evaluation bring a hope to spread the CSHR to other multiethnic and multicultural parts of Croatia and even wider.

At present, the most important role of the CSHR is that it helps to bring children of different nationalities together in divided schools. The development of intercultural competences among children and teachers is essential not only to overcome the consequences of war and encourage the process of establishing trust between members of different ethnic groups, but also as a preparation for future



life in a united, multicultural Europe. Implementation of CSHR in schools is supported by European Union, Delegation to the Republic of Croatia, Ministry of Science, Education and Sport of the Republic of Croatia, and supervised by Education and Teachers' Training Agency.

ing that pupils attend classes in different grades and shifts. The implementation of CSHR was started during the school year 2007/08 in Eastern Slavonia and Baranja. Within three years it was implemented in three primary schools, as a pilot project with the inclusion of 75 children, and since the school year 2010/11 it is being implemented in eight primary schools in the eastern Croatia region involving over 180 children.

External evaluation of the implementation of CSHR and feedback from children who participated were absolutely positive. CSHR among pupils had a positive impact on their attitude towards others, which is extremely important for the

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CELEBRATING EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURS' DAY IN MOSTAR

On the 25th May, 2010 for the second time in the city of Mostar there was organized a celebration of the European Neighbors' Day (<http://www.european-neighbours-day.com>), this year marking the 10th anniversary of Neighbours' Day since it was launched in Paris in 2000. The celebration was organized by Local Democracy Agency Mostar (www.ldamostar.org) in cooperation with the City of Mostar and Mostar City Council. In the year 2010 this celebration of friendly gathering and solidarity was supported by 1200 partner cities gathering 10 million participants from 32 different countries. Mostar was the first city in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2009 becoming a member of the European Federation of Local Solidarity (E.F.L.S.) based in Paris,

which coordinates the ceremonies marking the European Neighbours' Day in the member countries. Membership of the city of Mostar within the E.F.L.S. was initiated by LDA Mostar which became a member of this network in 2010.

The City of Mostar in 2009 organised the marking of European Neighbours' Day in two local communities of Mostar, Brankovac and Pothum. The event was attended by the City Councillors and Mostar City Council President, representatives of Mostar City Administration and City Mayor, foreign consuls, EU Info Centre staff, civil society organisations, schools, and residents of these local communities. With voluntary contributions of local businessmen and catering stores, this was an opportunity for the citizens to socialise and through the informal conversations establish contacts with their political representatives. The aim of the event also was to present Europe as one big neighbourhood and to bring the

European Union closer to the citizens of Mostar, all for the purpose of an easier integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the EU.

European Federation of Local Solidarity as a co-ordinator of the activities of celebrations of the European Neighbours' Day all over the world, published a report of this event in Mostar on their website (<http://www.european-neighbours-day.com>). This celebration is an important international promotion of the City of Mostar and organizing the marking of the European Neighbours' Day in Mostar was named the best practice in 2009.

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