

The project took place in Sânnicolau de Munte, Bihor, Romania, between the 22nd of June and 25th of June 2023, with the participation of delegations from 3 countries, 5 localities, respectively Sânnicolau de Munte – Romania, Gersekarát and Szanda – Hungary, Obec Lehnice and Dlhá Ves from Slovakia. The main aim of the town twinning event was to meet and commonly discuss aspects related to the localities and their participation and membership in the European Union community: about the establishment of the EU, its current challenges and situation, its beneficial effects on the daily life of the settlements, and its future perspectives.

The first day of the meeting concentrated mainly on the past of the EU and on the phenomenon which

has influence on the outlook of the community: Euroscepticism and Europhobia, migration crisis, etc. The day ended with a folk song night, during which the delegations sang a bunch of songs characteristic for their regions.

The second day of the event focused also on the challenges of the EU, under a form of brainstorming. The younger participants also discussed about the equality of opportunities (gender, racial and religious) and the elimination of different forms of discrimination. The main point of the day was the presentation of the participating settlements, which was highly awaited by all the delegations. Besides showing the main characteristics of each locality (geographical, historical, etc.), the representatives also talked about the past and ongoing projects funded by the European Union, offering inspiration to the other ones regarding what kind of infrastructural (and not only) ideas could be implemented at the level of their confined or larger areas. The day ended with folk dance night, the show of the local “Zajgó” folkdance group was highly appreciated.

On the last day of the meeting took place the cooking contest, during which each locality cooked a meal characteristic to their region, therefore we could taste foods like the bryndzové halušky (-boiled lumps of potato dough with soft cheese) or the “Vasi borzas” (-meal based on grated potatoes and pork meat). The conversation part of the day focused on discussing the future perspectives of the EU and possible cooperation opportunities.

The event was a great opportunity for the participating localities to meet, get acquainted with each other, develop common initiatives and of course, to make friendships, not only on the level of settlements, but also of individuals.

During the project, the participants got acquainted with the foundation of the European Union, its beneficial effects on the localities and the challenges the community faces: migration crisis, Europhobia, Euroscepticism, the effects of the Ukrainian situation on the EU, etc. Therefore, the delegations are now better aware of the role of the European Union and its institutions in their lives and they know better their roles in this community.

By presenting the participating localities and getting acquainted with the infrastructural and cultural-social-economical benefits of their membership in the EU, the settlements could inspire from each other’s ideas and to think further how these can be implemented on the level of their region or locality.

By talking about the actual challenges of the EU, the participants got aware of how they can be more actively involved in solving the problems their community faces, therefore to become more responsible

European citizens.

This meeting was also a good opportunity for the participating localities to become familiar with each other’s folk songs and folk dances, but also folk clothing, to get more engaged towards preserving their local cultural values, therefore to sustain the multiculturalism of the EU. Moreover, this was a good chance for them to discover and accept cultural diversity, to become more tolerant and emphatic in face of these differences.