

Friday 12th July 2024

Conference: “Strengthening Civil Society in the Danube Region for a Joint Europe” in the frame of the 8th Partner Meeting of the Danube-Workers

Workshop 1: “Getting to know each other through joint cultural activities, analog and digital”

Moderation by: Tsveta Shenkova

Minutes made by: Charlotte Gollnick

1. Input Dr. Dušana Findeisen (Ass U3A) – “No Europe without culture”

- Remember Jacques Delors, he is the architect and the brick layer of Europe, EU integration became historical project, removing borders within Europe became reality
- Thinking about and introducing Erasmus
- His acting was a mixture of negotiations, political skills and pedagogy
- “Tell European citizens that Europa is a wonderful place. There will be no Europe without culture.”
- Four pillars of education: learn to live together, to be, to do, to learn
- Europe is not immortal, we have to decide if we want it or not

Participants contributions: What comes to your mind?

- Learning how to be is important, especially with marginalised groups (self-esteem, emotional intelligence, critical thinking, cultural awareness)
- There are problems between lifestyle and ego, learn to live together is the first step, even in simple things we have problems, e.g., in families how we speak with each other and between generations
- School is also about learning how to be together (communication, conflict resolution, cultural sensitivity, multi-lingualism)

2. Input Marina Kuch (ILEU) & Emily Velikova (Univ Ruse, Bulgaria) - “Danube Networkers invite: Come together for connecting cultures”

- Project Danect (<https://danect.eu/>) supported by Baden-Württemberg Stiftung, city of Ulm, Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend
- Culture as approach to overcome borders and strengthen civil society
- Started as attempt during Covid-19 pandemic
- Brings together people of all ages, especially senior citizens from all over Europe
- Monthly forum for cultural and social exchange
- More than 180 activities with more than 7000 participants from 15 countries

Participants contributions:

- Ukraine: Interesting how culture influences, but a pity that it took a war for people to be interested in Ukrainian cultures
- How do we reach people who are not already involved with culture?

3. Angela Pudda (Porto Torres, Italy) & Elena Muste (Cluj-Napoca, Romania) – “Combining culture & travel, not just traveling”

- Combine analogue and digital ways to travel
- Vima platform with search and offer function: <https://vima-danube.eu/>
- Project started with help of Botanical garden in Ulm to discover plants
- Cultural and personal treasures on the platform
- Currently increasingly problems with over-tourism, future of travel will be changed
- Have a look at the platform and try it out!
- Find interest groups, discussion forum or a local showing you their city on your next trip
- How to make travelling fun and make friends: reliable information of websites of towns, region, countries; more funding for international exchanges with schools, universities and private exchanges; share experiences and cultural peculiarities; practice languages and get in touch with locals; human added value in addition to the usual offers of tourism companies

4. Elena Goerttler-Reck (Danube Office Ulm, Germany) – “Project Danube Guides Action 2”

- Special nature-culture guide for the Danube Region in 8 different countries
- Aim is to communicate natural and cultural heritage of Danube Region by providing suitable offers to different target groups (tourists, school groups, local populations, people with disabilities)
- Several projects so far, right now Danube Guides Action 2 runs until December 2025, goals: to raise awareness in population for sustainability; sensitize different target groups for the Danube as a lifeline; building capacity of more Guides; expand and consolidate the network
- Activities: Network Danube Guides, Capacity Building, Follow-up project development, communication