

The project « Diversity Unites – together for Europe! » was funded with the support of the European Union under the Programme "Europe for Citizens"

Strand 2 – Democratic engagement and civic participation

Measure 2.2 "Networks of Towns"



Eight international events have been carried out within this project:

Event 1: District of Recklinghausen, Germany, 1st international workshop

Participation: The event involved **48 citizens** - including **10** participants from the County of Sörmland (**Sweden**), **8** participants from Jelgava Local Municipality (**Latvia**), **14** participants from the District of Wodzisław (**Poland**) and **16** participants from the District of Recklinghausen (**Germany**).

Location / Dates: The event took place in Recklinghausen, Herten, Castrop-Rauxel, Datteln (**Germany**), from *13/09/2015* to *17/09/2015*

Short description: The aim of the event was to find answers to, amongst others, key questions as: 'What is needed for a successful neighbourhood development?'; 'How can the citizens of a quarter participate actively?' and 'How can we recognise obstacles for the different target groups in the neighbourhood and provide support for them?'. Accordingly the main focus of the first international workshop under the theme 'Multiculturalism' was laid on the topics 'neighbourhood development' and 'managing diversity'. Besides best practice visits to an intercultural centre, a mosque association and a quarter centre, the four groups of participants developing and presented their own model neighbourhood.

Event 2: District of Wodzisław, Poland, 2nd international workshop

Participation: The event involved **125 citizens** - including **12** participants from the County of Sörmland (**Sweden**), **17** participants from the District of Recklinghausen (**Germany**), **9** participants from Jelgava Local Municipality (**Latvia**) and **87** participants from the District of Wodzisław (**Poland**).

Location / Dates: The event took place in Wodzisław Śląski, Gorzyce, Cieszyn, Olza (**Poland**), from *15/05/2016* to *19/05/2016*

Short description: The aim of the event was to emphasise the integration of people with disabilities into their social environment and discuss possibilities of social and intercultural performing on a local and European scale. During an international seminar experiences and best practices in the field of work's methods with disabled people were exchanged. The exchange has been framed by panel discussions about the situation of disabled people in the Silesian province and the positive changes over the past 20 years concerning job opportunities for disabled people and the situation in education, under the participation of MEP Marek Plura. An integrative concert "Blues for disabled" as well as a study visit to the Foundation for Development and Social Entrepreneurship "Be Together", which helps activating unemployed and people at risk of social exclusion, were also included in the programme. The final event of the workshop was a common learning of basic phrases in the native languages of the partners and singing songs based on a songbook & dictionary, which was published within the project.

Event 3: District of Recklinghausen, Germany, 3rd international workshop

Participation: The event involved **76 citizens** - including **8** participants from the County of Sörmland (**Sweden**), **8** participants from Jelgava Local Municipality (**Latvia**), **15** participants from the District of Wodzisław (**Poland**) and **45** participants from the District of Recklinghausen (**Germany**).

Location / Dates: The event took place in Recklinghausen, Haltern am See, Herten (**Germany**), from *30/05/2016* to *03/06/2016*

Short description: The aim of the event on the one hand was to address the question in what way different political aspects and levels, especially EU politics, have an effect on life, diversity and integration within the living quarter. The podium discussion was joined by the Head of District Cay Süberkrüb, the First Alderman of Dorsten, former MEP Jutta Haug as well as a representative of the 'Europaunion'. On the other hand the participants were given the opportunity to directly experience European politics by slipping into different roles. After a short presentation on the work of the European Union, an EU-wide framework for educational politics and a suggestion for guidelines had to be established within the simulation game. The participants assumed the roles of members of various European institutions and could discover how these institutions and legislative procedures work and which opportunities there are to participate in the actions of the European Union.

Event 4: County of Sörmland, Sweden, 4th international workshop

Participation: The event involved **51 citizens** - including **9** participants from Jelgava Local Municipality (**Latvia**), **10** participants from the District of Wodzisław (**Poland**), **13** participants from the District of Recklinghausen (**Germany**) and **19** participants from the County of Sörmland (**Sweden**).

Location / Dates: The event took place in Eskilstuna (**Sweden**), from *19/09/2016* to *23/09/2016*

Short description: The aim was to exchange about effective and sustainable ways of "Networking between the parties involved". Included were: Presentations about the way politicians and representatives of the citizens of Eskilstuna work hand in hand for the integration of migrants, about networks between politicians and NGO's in Sörmland working on intercultural issues as well as a presentation from the Board of Senior Citizens about their work. The National Association for Disability Organizations and the Swedish Association for Survivors of Accident and Injury (RTP) informed the participants about their work in building internet-based networks for handicapped and other groups of persons. The international group also took part in a study visit at 'Skiftinge Family Centre', a cooperation between the city of Eskilstuna and the County Council, assisting families with young children.

Event 5: District of Recklinghausen, Germany, representatives meeting & interim evaluation

Participation: The event involved **37 citizens** - including **5** participants from the County of Sörmland (**Sweden**), **8** participants from Jelgava Local Municipality (**Latvia**), **8** participants from the District of Wodzisław (**Poland**) and **16** participants from the District of Recklinghausen (**Germany**).

Location / Dates: The event took place in Recklinghausen, Haltern am See, Herten (**Germany**), from *23/10/2016* to *28/10/2016*

Short description: The aim of the event was to build synergies between the planning in regular partnership work and the project activities for the upcoming year. The working meetings took place in connection with a meeting of the political representatives of the four partner districts. Within this event the four heads of district could meet personally and get a deeper insight into the current project implementation and process development. During the following interim evaluation the remaining work programme, the target achievements and sustainable project implementation were in focus.

Event 6: Jelgava Local Municipality, Latvia, 5th international workshop

Participation: The event involved **76 citizens** - including **5** participants from the County of Sörmland (**Sweden**), **9** participants from the District of Wodzisław (**Poland**), **9** participants from the District of Recklinghausen (**Germany**) and **53** participants from Jelgava Local Municipality (**Latvia**).

Location / Dates: The event took place in Jelgava Local Municipality (**Latvia**),
from 24/04/2017 to 28/04/2017

Short description: The aim of the event was to discuss social inclusion policies in Latvia and show best practice examples in Latvia. Special attention during the event was paid to the issues Families with children. In addition the Director of the Latvian Samaritan Association introduced the participants to innovations in the social sector and revealed a vehicle equipped for home support for elderly people. An insight into integration for different aged and social groups was obtained at `Viesu Līči` Farm, whereas access to the environment for people with special needs was demonstrated at Tērvete Nature Park. There were also working group sessions at Tērvete to develop a new project, where each country defined their main goals, activities and planned results.

Event 7: County of Sörmland, Sweden, working meeting & common evaluation

Participation: The event involved **26 citizens** - including **4** participants from Jelgava Local Municipality (**Latvia**), **3** participants from the District of Wodzisław (**Poland**), **3** participants from the District of Recklinghausen (**Germany**) and **16** participants from the County of Sörmland (**Sweden**).

Location / Dates: The event took place in Eskilstuna (**Sweden**),
from 29/05/2017 to 01/06/2017

Short description: The aim of the event was to assure the mutual achievements within the last third of project implementation as well as coordinating the necessary steps in order to realize the mutual project products and contributions by each partner. A common evaluation under the keyword `Lessons learned` brought together different aspects and learning fields of international networking and project realisation and confirmed the common conclusion: "We can do good things – in many different ways!"

Event 8: District of Recklinghausen, Germany, 6th and final international workshop

Participation: The event involved **101 citizens** - including **12** participants from the County of Sörmland (**Sweden**), **11** participants from Jelgava Local Municipality (**Latvia**), **15** participants from the District of Wodzisław (**Poland**) and **63** participants from the District of Recklinghausen (**Germany**).

Location / Dates: The event took place in Recklinghausen, Haltern am See, Herten (**Germany**),
from 27/08/2017 to 31/08/2017

Short description: Highlight of the final workshop and certainly of the whole EU-project was the celebratory signing of the `Memorandum of Understanding on Sustainable future networking` by all partners. The joint signature was conducted by Ingrid Jerneborg Glimne (County of Sörmland), Ilze Vītola (Jelgava Local Municipality), Leszek Bizoń (District of Wodzisław) as well as by Harald Nübel (District of Recklinghausen). In the final group work session the importance of the project for the work on location in every district was emphasized and creative reflexions such as project summaries in form of a poem and the living sculptures showing the importance of Europe were presented by the participants.

