



Education and Culture DG

“Europe for Citizens” Programme



ACTIVE EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP

Golden Stars Awards 2008

The brochure of the awarded projects
Town Twinning, Civil Society and Remembrance Projects



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Foreword

As a member of the European Commission responsible for education, training, culture and youth, as well as for the important area of active European citizenship, I am witnessing many striking examples of Europeans engaging in projects across national frontiers. Europe for them is not an abstract idea but a concrete achievement born of close cooperation on concrete projects in which they have invested their emotions, creativity and intellectual capacities.

This very idea of constructing “A Europe of shared experiences, ideas and memories” is well demonstrated by the projects which were selected for the Golden Stars Award this year. The projects chosen in the “active European remembrance” category bring to life the memories of those who became victims of the two totalitarian regimes Europe experienced in the 20th century and of those who in the name of humanity and democracy opposed those regimes. This is even more symbolic as in the coming year we will commemorate twenty years from the fall of the iron curtain where civic movements led by courageous men and women played a crucial role. We live in a democratic Europe today but democracy needs to be reinforced every day by the continuous engagement of active citizens.

The two other types of projects were initiated by twin towns and civil society organisations from all across the European Union. They reveal the desire of Europeans to participate in Europe’s political, social and cultural life as well as the high degree of commitment and innovation with which the projects were carried out. It is reassuring to see that in today’s Europe there is both such a wealth of ideas and the will to translate them into concrete actions.

I would like to extend my congratulations to all the winning projects of this year. I am convinced that the fate of Europe is in good and able hands – the hands of active European citizens.



Ján Figel'
Commissioner for Education,
Training, Culture and Youth

Introduction

The Europe for Citizens Programme promotes active European citizenship. The programme supports and gives grants to projects initiated by different kinds of organisations. Those projects provide citizens with opportunities to participate in the construction of a common Europe. The 2008 Golden Stars include projects in three categories:

Town-twinning projects

Town twinning, as a grass roots initiative, favours direct and local exchanges of European citizens through activities designed and implemented between twinned towns. Among the winners of the Golden Stars Award 2008, we find examples of projects which have shown innovation in gathering European citizens and making them more participative in and sensible to topics of European concern.

Civil society projects

Projects initiated by civil society organisations can be of different character; seminars, creating networks, production of films, thematic or artistic workshops, grass roots initiatives, information campaigns etc. The three awarded civil society projects for a Golden Star 2008 all bring forward concrete proposals and solutions regarding different European themes, activities, realities and values.

Remembrance projects

By commemorating the victims, as well as preserving the sites and archives associated with Nazism and Stalinism, Europeans can draw lessons from the past and learn for the future through projects dealing with this dark history of Europe. The three awarded remembrance projects all use participative and innovative methods in involving European citizens in reflection, debate and actions related to common history, shared values, democracy and culture.

For additional information on the programme, please consult the website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship>

or the Programme guide:

http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/how-to-participate/doc92_en.htm

Golden Stars Winners 2008

The European Commission identifies and awards the Golden Stars in order to give a special recognition to projects which have been particularly successful in the field of Active European Citizenship. These projects can provide good examples and source of inspiration to other organisations and European citizens.

The selection of the winners

The European Commission initially evaluated 130 good quality projects, representing all actions and measures of the Europe for Citizens Programme. The evaluators analysed the projects, taking into account the permanent and annual priorities of the Programme and paid particular attention to projects which contributed to the themes of citizens' participation, development of opportunities for civic engagement in the EU and democratic innovations. Those themes are the focus of discussion at the Europe for Citizens Forum 2008, during which the Golden Stars Award ceremony takes place.

A shortlist of the 24 projects that best corresponded to the priorities of the Europe for Citizens Programme and to the themes of the Europe for Citizens Forum 2008, were presented to a jury. The jury was composed of the following members:

- As Chair of the Jury, Mr. Hannu Takkula, member of the European Parliament (EP) and rapporteur of the Europe for Citizens programme.
- Mr. Keith Walters, member of the Committee of the Regions (CoR) and 1st Vice-President of its EDUC Commission.
- Mrs. Brenda King, member of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and President of the SOC Section.

- Ms. Sandra Ceciari, representative of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), Head of citizenship and international cooperation.
- Mr. Dietmar M. Woesler, Director of the Institute for International Cooperation (IPZ) organisation, active in the field of town twinning.
- Mr. Karel Lannoo, chief executive of the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS), as representative of a think-tank from the field of Active European Citizenship.
- Mr. Dominik Czapigo, representative of the KARTA organisation, Poland, a partner organisation of a winner of a Golden Stars Award in 2007.

The jury choose 12 projects to be awarded with the Golden Stars Award. The result is a well-balanced selection of projects that represented best practice for each of the actions of the Europe for Citizens Programme. All project categories are represented in the Golden Stars Award: town twinning, civil society and remembrance projects.

The European Commission is proud to present the winners of the Golden Star Awards 2008:

Town Twinning Projects

- Reichelsheim (DE) for the meeting *The Future of the European Union – Consequences and Perspectives of the Enlargement in view of German – French, German-Polish and German-Hungarian Town Twinning Partnerships*. Participating countries: FR, PL and HU.
- Bojnice (SK) for their *Meeting of the Citizens of Partner Towns*. Participating countries: DE, CZ, IT and PL.
- Bialogard (PL) for the meeting *Magic 27 – the Future of Common Europe*. Participating countries: BE, SE, LV and RO.
- Association of twinning committees of Puy de Dôme (FR) for the *European Youth Meeting: “Mobility of Young People in Europe”*. Participating countries: DE, UK, NL, RO, IT, PT and PL.
- Municipality of Amaroussion (EL) for the thematic networking project *Forum of the EU Citizens and Municipal Officers: Fighting for Q-cities, Fighting for a Better Daily Life*. Participating countries: IT, CY, PT, NL, BE, RO and SE.
- Plérin (FR) for the thematic networking project *Sustainable Development – Issue for European Citizens*. Participating countries: IE, PL and RO.

Civil Society projects

- *The Organized Civil Society: New Tasks in an Enlarged European Union*, an Italian project of the Euromed Carrefour Sicilia, with partners from RO, UK, PT, AT, CZ and PL
- *EUReporter*, a French project of the Babel International Association, with partners from CZ, BE, PL, HU, EE, PT, LT, DE, RO
- *Bring Europe Closer to Youth – Simulation of the Summit of the European Council*, a project of the Polish Robert Schuman Foundation with partners from PL, ES, IT, CZ, LV, DE, FR, SK and HU

Remembrance Projects

- *The Trans-national Culture of Remembrance at the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site: Preserving the International Victims Testimonies for Future Generations*, a German project of the International Committee of Dachau with partners from FR, CZ, NL, AT, BE, LU, HU, SI, RO, BG
- *Daughters of the Enemy*, a Czech project of the NGO Docs, Youth and Society with partners from IT and DE
- *The Neighbours Who Disappeared – Tribute of the Child Holocaust Victims*, a Czech project of the organisation The forgotten ones, with partners from IT, DE and UK.





REICHELSCHEIM

The Future of the European Union – Consequences and Perspectives of the Enlargement in View of German-French, German-Polish and German-Hungarian Town Twinning Partnerships

Themes

- Impact of the German presidency in the EU and Germany.
- The Lisbon Treaty.
- How are political decisions reached on the European level and how are the basic thoughts and values of the EU expressed within the enlargement process?
- The town-twinning movement in Europe today.
- Equal opportunities and the situation of people with disabilities in European cities.
- EU environmental policy and climate change.
- Fighting racism and intolerance.

Geography

The meeting was organised by Reichelsheim (Germany) and participating towns were Dol-de-

Bretagne (France), Jablonka (Poland) and Nagymanyók (Hungary).

Activities

The meeting, which was organised in order to prepare the enlargement of the town twinning by including the towns Jablonka and Nagymanyók, saw a good combination of workshops, interventions, artistic events, activities for school children and a series of debates on themes of European issues connected to the local context. Some activities for school children such as learning the European anthem, painting T-shirts and preparing a typical national meal were also held.

Participants

280 people participated in the meeting: town officials from the host town and the invited towns, pupils and teachers and people from a poor social and economic background.

Duration

The meeting was held between 20–25 October 2007.

Results

There was a high level of gained knowledge about the above mentioned themes among the participants and the meeting prepared the basis for extending the bilateral town twinning relation to two new towns.

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Testimony of the jury

“The twin town convention in Reichelsheim sets a vivid example for the role twin-township can have in the European integration process. The participants of this particular twin town convention successfully embraced both European subjects and interests of the citizens which led to the insight that there is a connection between their personal experiences and everyday life in their home country on one side and the benefits of the European Community on the other side.”

Dietmar M. Woesler, Director of the IPZ organisation, active in the field of town twinning.



Interview with Ellen Schnellbacher, President of the Verschwisterungsverein Reichelsheim e.V.:

Aim: *“Together with our twinned towns, we wanted to discuss topics on and enhance the knowledge of the EU. We dwelt on the question on how political decisions are made in the EU and we wanted to illustrate the basic values of the EU with the intention to make people more involved in issues on a European level.”*

Feelings and testimonies: *“There was a strong feeling of solidarity between participants and a very friendly atmosphere, highly appreciated by the participants. Why don't we arrange those kinds of meetings every year in a rolling agenda?”*

Difficulties and improvements: *“For the next project, it will be important to improve the organisational aspects, like for example translation. We didn't have simultaneous translation and from that we suffered from loss of time and misunderstandings that could have been avoided.”*



Tips: How did we do it?

Visibility: *“We enhanced the visibility of the project through posters and leaflets and we ensured a good media coverage in the local press. We also prepared papers with information sheets about the EU and stands for distributing this information.”*

Follow-up: *“This summer, we arranged a youth camp in Reichelsheim, hosting young people from Germany, France, Poland and Hungary for eight days. It was a great success and we plan to arrange those youth camps on a regular basis together with our twinned towns. We believe that engaging young people in the discussion on the future of the EU is as important as arranging the town twinning meetings for adults.”*



BOJNICE

Meeting of the Citizens of Partner Towns

Themes

- Impact of EU policies in societies.
- Protection of the environment in Europe.
- Social development.
- Mobility in the EU.
- European identity and integration.
- Information on the Year of Equal Opportunities.
- The function of the European Parliament and democratic life in Europe.

Geography

The meeting was organised by Bojnice (Slovakia) and participating towns were Bad Krozingen (Germany), Rosta (Italy), Jeseník (Czech Republic) and Zator (Poland).

Activities

The meeting offered specific activities for each age group and included thematic workshops,

presentations and artistic and cultural activities. In one of the workshops, the participants compared their systems of collecting litter, treating water and citizens' attitude regarding the protection of the environment. Anna Zaborska, member of the European Parliament, presented the institution and her work. The pensioners club of Bojnice guided the groups in an orientation game.

Participants

The inter-generational aspect was strong, seeing that mixed delegations of children, youngsters, adults and pensioners were actively participating in the meeting. The participants were hosted by 47 host families.

Duration

The meeting was held from 3–8 October 2007.

Results

The delegations signed the "Bojnice declaration", where they make a common statement on their will and positive approach of working together for a European spirit in the frame of the European integration process.

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Tips: How did we do it?

Method: "Before you start a project, it is of great importance to have a good knowledge of the themes of the meeting and it is crucial to find out what topics the people of your town, as well as the partner towns are interested in. Our inhabitants are very much involved in questions concerning the global problems and questions related to the EU. Furthermore, in order for the meeting to be useful for participants, they must have the opportunity to present their individual opinions in debates and discussions. It is also important to be well orientated in conditions given by the EU in order to receive a grant, as well as to have in mind that the EU grant cannot sufficiently cover all the expenses related to the project."



Interview with František Tám, Mayor of Bojnice

Aim: "At the end of 2006 and in the beginning of 2007, there were municipal elections in Bojnice, Jeseník and Rosta and the outcome of the elections saw a significant change in municipal politicians and representatives. Moreover, 2007 was declared Year of Equal Opportunities by the European Commission and we saw all these events as a good basis for a town twinning project, focusing on these interesting topics."

Feelings and challenges: "The meeting was quite demanding to organise, seeing that the participants (ranging from school children to pensioners) came from five different countries and spoke five different languages. Thanks to a well coordinated team of devoted people and a detailed, well outlined programme where participants could find their special topic of interest, the project proved to be a success."

Testimony of the jury

"The project is appealing as it stimulates knowledge of Europe in a creative way".

Karel Lannoo
 Chief Executive of the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS).



BIALOGARD

**Magic 27 – the Future of Common Europe
Democracy in an enlarged Europe**

Themes

- The enlargement process of the EU.

Objectives

- To initiate lasting co-operation between young people from the partner towns.
- To foster the youngsters interest in European integration and democracy in Europe.
- To get to know Romania and Bulgaria.

Geography

The meeting was organised by Bialogard (Poland) and participating towns were Akniste (Latvia), Gnosjö (Sweden), Olen (Belgium) and Caracal (Romania).

Activities

This youth meeting saw a good mix of activities like presentations, lectures, workshops, games, sport competitions and a session in order to develop future projects between the participating towns. The participants prepared a touring exhibition called “Town Twinning”, showing works of local artists and pictures from the twinned towns as well as souvenirs. The exhibition will travel during 12 months to the partner towns.

Participants

Each participating delegation consisted of 10 young people and 2 adult guides and all in all there were around 100 participants attending the meeting.

Duration

The meeting was held from 28–31 October 2007.

Results

The participants gained knowledge on the enlargement process of the EU. Another concrete result of the project was the travelling exhibition that will be shown in all the participating cities. The idea is that this will inspire people in their preparation of future twinning exchanges.

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Testimony of the jury

“The initiative of Bialogard demonstrates very well how town twinning can contribute to developing a European awareness and citizenship. With this Golden Star, we wish to encourage young people to follow the excellent example of Bialogard and its twinned cities.”

Sandra Ceciarini
Representative of the CEMR, Head of citizenship and international cooperation.

Interview with Stefan Strzalkowski, Mayor of Bialogard:

Aim: *“We used our town twinning network, which extends to different parts of Europe, in order to discuss democracy in an enlarged Europe.”*

Feelings: *“The project participants were very content and happy with the meeting and they felt that they had a great occasion to get to know each other and to establish new contacts and friendships.”*

Improvements: *“The project can improve by including more participants from outside the EU, for example participants from Croatia and Ukraine. This would give us a great opportunity to compare the meaning and practice of democracy inside and outside the EU.”*

Difficulties: *“The most complicated issue was to gather all partner cities for this meeting. Only four out of our eight partner cities could attend the meeting and for future projects, we will try to assemble all our twin towns together.”*



Tips: How did we do it?

Methods: “It was highly important to include and consult all participants in the planning of the project. Furthermore, a successful project is a product of common discussions, workshops and interactive meetings.”

Visibility: “We informed local mass media in due time before the project and information about our project was published in the local newspaper “Bialogardzianin”.”

Follow-up: “We are planning to implement more projects that will deal with the problems as well as the positive characteristics of the EU. We will try to organise those meeting together with all of the eight partner cities of Bialogard.”

THE TWINNING COMMITTEES ASSOCIATION OF PUY DE DÔME

European Youth Meeting: Mobility of Young People in Europe

Themes

- Mobility of young people in Europe.
- The Treaty of Rome.
- Europe and Town Twinning from youngsters point of view.

Geography

The Twinning Committees Association of Puy de Dôme consists of 35 twinning committees which represent 65 municipalities from the region of Puy de Dôme. The association organised a meeting, inviting the towns from those municipalities from the region and 21 cities from Italy, Germany, United Kingdom, Portugal, the Netherlands, Romania and Poland.

Activities

The meeting included a series of conferences on mobility in Europe and on the Treaty of Rome; questions put to members of the European Parliament; comparative testimonies from young and old people and a photo exhibition of twinned towns. There was a questionnaire on Europe, prepared before the meeting by the youngsters themselves, and of which the results were presented in a plenary session.

Participants

400 youngsters from the participating towns.

Duration

The meeting was held from 19–22 October 2007.

Results

The youngsters gained better understanding of the importance of being European and in fostering a European identity. From concrete examples, they improved their knowledge of mobility of young people in Europe. Finally, they increased their knowledge about other countries and cultures.

Tips: How did we do it?

Active participation in planning: “We engaged the youngsters to actively participate in the planning and execution of the meeting, all having concrete responsibilities like constructing the questionnaire, including the translations; to make the badges for the participants and to create posters and leaflets etc. This is important in order to motivate the youngsters.”

Follow-up: “Several ideas of continued cooperation between the participants were launched, including for example to organise a follow-up of this meeting in Poland, as well as to prolong the meeting into the ordinary town twinning meetings.”



Interview with Evelyne Laquit, The town twinning committees association of Puy de Dôme :

Aim: “We had realised that youngsters in the communes of our twinned towns didn’t show much interest in getting involved in town twinning activities. Therefore, we decided to organise a special youth meeting engaging young people from our twinned towns, in order to enhance their interest in and to communicate their vision of Europe. We also wanted to make them more interested in the functions of a town twinning committee.”

Feelings: “The youngsters were very enthusiastic during the meeting and they showed great interest in learning more about European topics, as well as a real will to engage in European actions such as town twinning. The main lesson learnt during the meeting was that young people are interested in participation and intercultural dialogue in topics that are of interest for them.”

Difficulties: “The main difficulty during the meeting was the language. As the project budget didn’t allow us to use simultaneous translation, we had to use English as the working language and this caused problems for some of the participants to understand and participate.”



Testimony of the jury

“As we know, a great part of young people is not very interested in political issues. An event like this one can help to encourage interests in political subjects, in taking part in twin-town events and in becoming an active European citizen.”

Dietmar M. Woesler
Director of the IPZ organisation, active in the field of town twinning.

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AMAROOUSSION

Forum of the EU Citizens and Municipal Officers: Fighting for Q-cities, fighting for a Better Daily Life

Themes

- Quality procedures and practices in the field of municipal services towards citizens.
- Public management and administrative innovations.
- Competitive and less time-consuming services.

Objectives

- Enhancing inter-municipal and town-twinning interaction.
- Exchange of best practices and expertise on European policy-making in quality assurance issues.

Geography

The municipality of Amaroussion coordinated the project involving 36 municipalities from seven member states: Italy, Cyprus, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, Romania and Sweden.



Tips: How did we do it?

Methods: “The unique interest of the municipal authority of Amaroussion in the themes of the project, a good team spirit and the passion for innovation and creativity related to the changing European environment were the main components for the successful outcomes of the project.”

Visibility: “Six months in advance, there were pre-conference dissemination activities consisting of distribution of communicating conference material. Additionally, information leaflets about the conference were published and circulated to the public and cities across Europe.”

Activities

The project consisted of a thematic conference and four parallel workshops for the exchanges of best practices with an extended geographical coverage. The main scope of the meeting and activities were three-fold: first, to involve all interested parties in a European quality-building process, secondly to institutionalise, consolidate and expand the first European Cities Network for Quality entitled: “Q-cities Network” for the systematic exchange of knowledge and expertise. Finally, to sign a “European Quality Oath” under the auspice of the Network for ensuring “quality culture” in municipal services and establishing new twinning bonds among its members.

Participants

Participants at the conference were political representatives of local authorities and municipalities, institutions, NGOs, quality experts, specialised practitioners, universities and citizens.

Follow-up/Continuity

The quality network of this thematic networking project has been holding conferences for three years, starting out as thematic “partners”, they eventually established a network of partnerships, signed a Statute and expanded their network to other countries and municipalities.

Results

The results consisted of further establishment of new twinings with interested towns, establishment of the first European Quality Cities Network of twinned towns, signing of the EU Quality Oath and committing members to combine their efforts for a better quality of citizens’ life and a full, active European citizenship for their municipal authorities. A DVD about the Forum was produced, including a presentation of “Q-cities” and about the conference and its outcomes.



Interview with Michalis Christakis, Secretary-General of the municipality of Amaroussion:

Aim: “We considered a European Quality Cities Network to be the most dynamic answer to the need for better and more sustainable patterns of European governance considering quality procedures. Our vision was to create responsive and efficient public services based on quality in favour of the European citizens.”

Feelings: “We are very proud that the project nowadays is a best practice example for similar cooperative synergic initiatives.”

Improvements: “An additional thematic day in combination with an earlier distribution of the speakers summarised interventions would have allowed the participants to better involve in a creative dialogue in the “Questions and Answers” section of the conference.”

Difficulties: “During the beginning of the Forum we had to deal with some minor technical difficulties, but these were solved through time tested solutions due to our experience derived from the applications of ISO 9000 and EMAS.”

Testimony of the jury

“With the Golden Star to the project of Amaroussion, we wish to recognise a successful initiative showing how a thematic network can be a good tool to enhance a lively project and contribute to the European debate on a major issue for our society – in this case the importance of public services.”

Sandra Ceciari
Representative of the CEMR, Head of citizenship and international cooperation

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PLÉRIN-SUR-MER

Sustainable Development – Issue for European Citizens

Themes

- Eco-citizenship: integration of sustainable development procedures in the day-to-day life of European citizens.
- Protection of the environment.
- Global warming.
- Water policy: quality and protection of rivers and water.
- Renewable energies.
- Agenda 21.

Geography

The project was coordinated by the host town Plérin (France) and involved towns were Avrig (Romania), Wronki (Poland) and Cookstown (Northern Ireland).

Activities

The meeting included a conference with high quality interventions, workshops and debates, in parallel with an exhibition on sustainable development and a screening of the film “An inconvenient truth” (David Guggenheim).

Participants

The meeting involved farmers and cattle-breeders, associations of environmental protection, students from establishments specialising in agriculture industries, teachers, community representatives, decision-makers, and a Member of the European Parliament.

Duration

The meeting, introducing for the first time the above mentioned themes, resulted in continued cooperation on those themes between the towns involved. A follow-up on this thematic networking meeting will probably be held in Wronki in two years.

Results

Within the framework of the meeting, a charter of environmental protection was signed by the four cities involved in the project. Furthermore, a DVD and a website were produced and articles in the local press mentioned the meeting. A forthcoming meeting has been scheduled in Poland in for two years time in order to analyse the repercussions and progress made in terms of environmental protection.

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Interview with Pierre-Michel Connen, President of the Twinning Committee of Plérin-Sur-Mer:

Why: “Seeing that environmental issues are high on the agenda, both in Europe and worldwide, we wanted to contribute on a small scale to this subject and to raise the awareness locally about related topics, using our international network.”

Feelings: “The meeting was a great success and the participants felt that they could contribute to the discussions with knowledge on the themes of the meeting and at the same time learning from the other participants on how to enhance the awareness of environmental challenges. The meeting also provided intercultural learning experience to the participants, creating a feeling of being an active European citizen.”

Tips: How did we do it?

Preparatory meetings: “We organised several preparatory meetings, gathering local and regional actors, in order to create a common methodology for the project.”

Visibility: “The regional newspaper “Le Penthièvre” published a 4-pages article about the Twinning Committee of Plérin and the meeting.”

Testimony of the jury

“I feel that the merit of this project is its highly participative character and its well targeted subject, addressing a European reality that needs to be considered by all levels of European societies”.

Keith Walters
Member of the Committee of the Regions,
1st Vice-President of its EDUC Commission

EUROMED CARREFOUR SICILIA

The Organized Civil Society: New Tasks in an Enlarged European Union

Themes

- The role of civil society organisations in the European integration process and in promoting active citizenship in Europe.
- The role of the European civil society in fighting social, economic and political problems in areas affected by poverty, war and criminality.

Objective

- Develop dialogue between civil societies in European countries, as well as between civil society and EU institutions

Activities

Project activities included two conferences to debate upon the themes of the project and to share best practices. The conferences included field visits to local organisations. The participants also had the opportunity to meet and have a dialogue with representatives from the European Commission.

Partner organisations and geography

Partner organisations came from Romania, Czech Republic, Poland, United Kingdom, Austria and Portugal. All in all, 170 representatives from local and international organisations participated in the conferences.

Duration

The project ran for 10 months.

Results

A brochure was produced including a presentation on how the formal dialogue between civil society and different institutions works in each participating country. Furthermore, a website was created which is meant to be an instrument for communication among partners, who also networked to cooperate on future projects.



Testimony of the jury

“The project’s subject area lies at the heart of all civil society organisations’ field of competence. It sought to make the voice and the concerns of socially and economically deprived societies heard at the European level, as well as to invite representatives of the EU to consider their recommendations.”

Brenda King
Member of the European Economic and Social Committee, President of the SOC Section.

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Interview with Giovanni Luca D’Alia, project manager.

Why: *“The main idea of the project was to create an occasion for dialogue between civil society organisations from different European countries, as well as gathering organisations from regions with strong social and political problems from old and new member states.”*

Feelings: *“The project has been a very enriching and inspiring experience and we would like to thank our partner organisations who played a very proactive and responsible role throughout the project”.*

Difficulties: *“Apart from a certain financial constraint, the most challenging difficulty was to manage a very large partnership that could represent different countries and realities of the EU.”*

Euromed Carrefout Sicilia

Euromed Carrefour Sicilia Europe Direct is based in Palermo and works on promoting the idea of European integration among citizens, students and organisations. The organisation is cooperating with local institutions and organisations, schools and local media and it has several contacts and partners in different EU-countries.



Tips: How did we do it?

Teambuilding: The project started with a teambuilding phase, where Euromed Carrefour Sicilia met with representatives from CEDAG (Comité Européen des Associations d’ Interêt Général) and NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Organisations), in order to build up a team of organisations that could substantially contribute to the project.

Sharing of responsibilities: All activities were organised and developed following a strict rule of direct involvement of all partners.

Particularities: In Palermo, the project participants were guided by the NGO ECO – for responsible tourism, to a cooperative that works with organic farming and agro-tourism, using fields and properties that once were confiscated by the mafia. In Bucharest, a social theatre presentation was held on how to work with youngsters on topics like social inclusion, xenophobia, discrimination and respect for the environment.

Follow-up: Organisations participating in the project were very inspired to form new partnerships and initiate trans-national projects, as well as exchange best practices on social theatre and role games for youngsters.

BABEL INTERNATIONAL

EUReporter

Themes

- Participative journalism.
- European politics, economy and culture, seen through a European's eye.
- Local themes that could have a European impact or similarities in other countries.
- European values and cultures.

Activities

The project was implemented by the online Magazine cafebabel.com, which central editorial team is made up of professional journalists, situated in Paris. Babel International counts on local teams composed mainly of volunteers situated in 19 countries. The project consisted of a series of interviews which was done by approximately 60 young "citizen journalists" in eleven different European cities and of eleven local debates. The central editorial team chose young journalists from its network and sent them to different cities to write about some of the above mentioned themes. The articles were published in a format that allows further exchanges and debates on line.



Participants, audience and geography

The participants were 60 young citizen journalists from all over Europe and local civil society organisations that took part in the debates organised in the framework of the project. The audience consists of 300 000 visitors a month of cafebabel.com and participants at the locally arranged debates.

Duration

The project ran for 11 months.

Results

The articles written by the journalists got published on cafebabel.com, where they could be discussed on the blogs and forums of the e-community. The project offered mobility and international learning experience for the youth journalists that were sent to the different European cities and helped to organise debates with a European perspective on a local level.



Tips: How did we do it?

Visibility: "By choosing themes and topics for the articles that are important on a local level and by involving the local civil society, we enhance the visibility of the project. Local topics seen through a European point of view create the best interest and visibility, as the citizens can identify themselves better with local issues."

Follow-up: "In 2008/2009 we will launch a project called "EU Campaign", with the aim to start series of debates regarding next year's European parliament elections."



Interview with Monika Oelz, project manager:

Aim: "We wanted to combine the trans-national and the local dimensions of the European citizenship by "Europeanising" local debates as well as making the European public interested in local issues." The main idea of the EUReporter project was to mix the local and the transnational spheres, in order to seize current local topics through a European perspective. Europe is not just Brussels, Europe is all of its cities and there is a need to make Europe concrete to its citizens. We want to achieve this starting at the grass-roots level."

The organisation

Babel International publishes the online Magazine cafebabel.com, with 300 000 visitors a month and 30 000 registered recipients of their newsletter. It is released in 6 European languages, has 80 active blogs and is a community based media with 45 600 members.

Testimony of the jury

"The project offered a great opportunity for young Europeans to exchange experiences and acquire different cultural perspectives."

Dominik Czapigo
Representative of KARTA organisation, Poland, a partner organisation of a winner of a Golden Stars Award in 2007.

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THE POLISH ROBERT SCHUMAN FOUNDATION

Bring Europe Closer to Youth – Simulation of the Summit of the European Council

Themes

- Inspire young people to be active European citizens.
- Increase their knowledge on how the EU works.
- Simulation of a summit of the European Council.

Activities

Secondary school students and teachers attended an international meeting and took part in a simulation of a summit of the European Council, as well as in a workshop on intercultural learning and in panel

Tips: How did we do it?

Learning by doing: “In the planning and the implementation of the project, we applied the principle by young people for young people and learning by doing. We wanted to make sure that the youngsters find the meeting interesting and appealing and we managed to create a very positive atmosphere among the participants, students and teachers by combining formal and informal methods.”

Visibility: “We made sure that information about the project was updated on our website and we also asked participants from different countries to make sure to publish information about the project on their own websites, as well as spreading it to the local media.”

Follow-up: “Many of the participating schools have already implemented their own projects together, for example exchanges and e-twinnings.”

discussions. The simulation in itself, focusing on Turkey’s entry into the EU, was conducted by trained multipliers.

Participants and geography

There were 20 secondary school students and teachers from Poland, Spain, Italy, Czech Republic, Latvia, Germany, France, Slovakia and Hungary participating in the meeting.

Duration

The project ran for 8 months.

Results

An interactive web site was created in order to form a basis for a network of European Clubs. European Clubs exist within the schools and are created by students and teachers with the aim to improve the knowledge of the EU. Bilateral partnerships have been initiated and the participating pupils and teachers got inspiration to carry out simulations in their home countries.

The organisation

The Polish Robert Schuman Foundation (PRSF) is a non-governmental, non-political organization established in 1991. Its aim is to encourage Polish citizens to actively participate in the process of unifying Europe and to spread the idea of active participation, by organising various activities like conferences, trainings and debates. The PRSF is also one of the initiators of the Ukrainian-German-Polish Forum established in order to facilitate direct contacts between NGOs and citizens’ initiatives in these three countries.



Interview with Ieva Grundšteine and Joana Rozycka-Thiriet, project managers:

Aim: “The main aim of the project was to involve young people in the discussion on the future of Europe, to show how the EU functions and to encourage young people to become leaders of promoting active European citizenship at the local level.”

Testimonies: Students and teachers participating in the meeting:

“After this meeting I want to start a European Club. I want to use the contacts I gained here and also organise a simulation.”

“I’m going to start an e-twinning programme with a Polish school.”

Improvements: “For future projects, we would like to invite people from non-EU countries as we already are in contact with schools in Ukraine, Belarus and Georgia. We think that the participation of those countries would add another dimension to our project.”

Difficulties: “The first difficulty was of financial character as the funds we received were not enough to invite as many people as we would have liked to. The second difficulty concerned the involvement of the partner organisations, although very willing to help out with organising the project; they were too far away geographically to be useful for this matter.”

Testimony of the jury

“If the EU is to be a success, the younger generation must feel a sense of ownership of the institution. This project will, I believe, encourage that feeling of ownership.”

Keith Walters
Member of the Committee of Regions,
1st Vice-President of its EDUC Commission.

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THE INTERNATIONAL DACHAU COMMITTEE

The Transnational Culture of Remembrance at the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site: Preserving the International Victims Testimonies for Future Generations

Themes

- Preservation of international victim testimonies and of the memory of families of concentration camp survivors.
- Examination of the conflicting national, political and ethnic perspectives of Nazi repression, in order to come to an overall understanding of the Nazi terror and its manifestations (i.e. extermination camps).
- Europe-wide reflection on the future of remembrance.

Activities

This was a 3-phase project, consisting of the collection of international victims' testimonies from different prisoner groups of the Dachau Concentration Camp, a symposium about the content and methods of mediating victim testimonials and finally a documentation and evaluation of the project with international youth groups. The symposium made it possible to present and discuss testimonies of the second and third generation of the families of the concentration camp survivors.

Participants and geography

The participants were survivors, about 40 descendants and representatives of the succeeding generations which ensured an inter-generational aspect of the project. Furthermore, about 30 research and education specialists in the field attended the symposium. The participants came from France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Hungary, Romania, Czech Republic, Austria, Luxemburg, Slovenia, Germany, Bulgaria, Poland and Israel.

Duration

The project ran for 12 months.

Results

Hitherto, the perception of the Dachau concentration camp in the documentary exhibition as well as in other education opportunities for visitors was shaped by the view of German survivors alone. The results of this project will be published in form of documentation and the plan is to complement the documentary exhibition at the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site with views of victims of other nationalities.

The organisation

The International Dachau Committee was created in 1958 by survivors from the Dachau concentration camp. The organisation established the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site in 1965. CID aims to preserve and commemorate the main sites associated with the deportations to the Dachau concentration camp as well as maintain and archive historically valuable materials.



Interview with Dr Annette Eberle, project manager:

Aim: "The original idea of the project was to strengthen the memorial site as an international place of reflection, by integrating the different views on the meaning of remembrance of the second and third generations from various countries."

Feelings: "The most impressive feature of the project was the multitude of different destinies and paths taken by survivors after the liberation from the Dachau Concentration Camp, as well as the various ways to share their experiences with their families and with society."

Testimonies: "My father chose life, not death." Descendant of survivor explains why her father chose not to tell her about his imprisonment and survival at the concentration camp."

Difficulties: "The discussions at the symposium showed the possibilities, but also the difficulties of an understanding between generations, nationalities and descendants of survivors and research and education specialists in the area."

Testimony of the jury

"This project represents a consistent effort not to abandon and forget the past without first drawing lessons to build the future. The prize goes to the overall and continuous endeavour to preserve the memories of the victims of Nazism."

Brenda King, Member of the European Economic and Social Committee, President of the SOC Section.

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Tips: How did we do it?

Follow-up: "This project being part of an ongoing process at the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site, the follow-up and continuity are self-evident. Our aim for the future is to continue to raise awareness and transfer knowledge of the individual destinies and testimonies of the Nazi terror system, the Second World War and the Holocaust to coming generations."



NGO DOCS, YOUTH AND SOCIETY

Daughters of the Enemy

Themes

- Stalinism and its impact on the descendants of political prisoners in the 1950s in former Czechoslovakia.

Objectives

- Preservation of immaterial documents (collection of testimonies) from the daughters of the political prisoners, making them available to future generations and young people, thus creating a link between the past, the present and the future.
- Awareness-raising on individual destinies.
- Educating the young generation about the implications of Stalinism in the 1950s in former Czechoslovakia.

Duration

The project ran for 1 year.

Tips: How did we do it?

Methods: “We used the modern audiovisual technology to produce audiovisual archives of the testimonies from the daughters. Furthermore, the shooting of the interviews made by film students was supervised by Helena Trestikova, a popular Czech director of documentary films. The consultant during the shooting of the testimonies was Ms Jana Svehlova, the author of the doctorate thesis “Enemies’ Daughters” from 1999 and originator of the self-support group of the daughters of political prisoners.”

Visibility: “We made large publicity for the project while realising it. The information was communicated in different newspapers, magazines, to radio stations and on websites and also through some programmes on the public Czech television.”

Activities

This documentary project combines collection of oral testimonies and the production of audiovisual archives. Students from FAMU – a film school in Prague, shot and edited interviews with daughters of political prisoners during the Stalinism era in former Czechoslovakia.

Participants/Audiences and geography

Students from FAMU film school and the daughters of the political prisoners. The project took place in the Czech Republic, but the testimonies will also be distributed to Slovakia, Germany, Italy, Poland and other European countries.

Results

A first presentation screening took place in March 2008 during the international human rights documentary film festival “One World” in Prague. The testimonies will be circulated to elementary and secondary schools in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia as from September 2008 and they will also be deposited in the archive of the Oral History Centre – Institute of Contemporary History (Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic) in Prague. During 2009 the testimonies will be shown in schools in Italy and Germany. As a result of the project, the daughters of political prisoners registered their own civic association “Daughters of 1950s” with the Czech Ministry of Interior.

Testimony of the jury

“I like this project because it employs innovative methods and highlights a subject that rarely receives much attention; it offers an opportunity to learn new aspects of the European history”.

Hannu Takkula, member of the EP and rapporteur of the Europe for Citizens Programme.



Interview with Zuzana Dražilová, project manager:

Feelings: “The strongest feeling is that we participated in communicating something until now unknown from the world and in particular for the Czech Republic and for Slovakia. I also feel that we entirely fulfilled our planned goal to let young people take part of information about the unknown and interesting past of the Stalinist era in former Czechoslovakia.”

Testimonies: “The remarkable thing about our project is that the testimonies in themselves are the project. Furthermore, all those testimonies together are offering a very comprehensive picture about the 1950s in former Czechoslovakia.”

Difficulties: “The major difficulty was to receive the proper co-financing to the grant of the European Commission. Finally, after organising a press conference in the Parliament of the Czech Republic, co-financing from the authorities of the Czech Republic was agreed upon. This support mainly came from the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic and Administration of Major City of Prague.”

Improvements: “We would also like to shoot testimonies with the sons of political prisoners of the 1950s in former Czechoslovakia. We consider this as a complement to the interviews with the daughters.”

The organisation

The Czech citizens association “NGO Docs, Youth and Society” was established in 2006 by film producer Zuzana Dražilová, together with Vladislav and Jiri Marek. It belongs to the network of the International Oral History Association (IOHA), Czech Oral History Association (COHA) and the European Documentary Network (EDN). The main goal is to produce audiovisual work on themes like Stalinism, the Holocaust, Anti-Semitism, social justice, racism etc.

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THE FORGOTTEN ONES

The Neighbours Who Disappeared – Tribute of the Child Holocaust Victims

Themes

- To engage young people to learn more about the Holocaust and to spread awareness about Jewish children who disappeared and were killed during the Holocaust in the Czech Republic.

Activities

The organisation supported a travelling exhibition to Germany, Italy, the UK and USA of the extensive project The Neighbours Who Disappeared. The history of the project goes back to the Education and Culture Centre of the Jewish Museum in Prague in 1999. Back then, students carried out research into local archives and gathered oral history from witnesses and survivors about children who disappeared from their neighbourhood during the Second

World War. Their work resulted in small exhibitions of panels that were later merged to create this travelling exhibition.

Participants/Audiences

Youngsters between 12–21 years old.

Duration

The project ran for 11 months.

Results and geography

With the international, travelling aspect of the exhibition, the project gained a strong European and international dimension as well as great visibility as it reached more than 1.300 students all over Europe. A network of organisations with similar activities was established.

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Tips: How did we do it?

Methods: “For each country, we produced a customised version of the exhibition, in line with the country’s requests, along with the accompanying catalogues in English. Furthermore, we applied the methods of oral history, multimedia education tools, long term student training projects and peer education.”

Visibility: “In the very beginning we asked for the allowance to be under the official auspices of Czech officials. The first years we arranged official presentations of the project in the Parliament and in the Senate. We involved schools in different countries to make PR for the project, encouraging them to contact local media. The Jewish Museum in Prague promotes the project as part of their seminars.”



Interview with Marta Vančurová, project manager:

Aim: “We wanted young people to be interested in the local history of the almost destroyed Jewish community and other minorities, caused by the Holocaust. At the same time, we wanted the project to include testimonies from witnesses and bystanders of the Holocaust, bringing survivors from small cities and villages to inform in local schools. This would allow the pupils to discover personal stories and create a personal picture of the life of an individual who lived during the Second World War.”

Feelings: “We were genuinely surprised how much a project like this could bring to young people today. The further we got into the project, the more we saw the deep historical, social and individual impact of the project through the response from the pupils and the teachers.”

Improvements: “What we could improve is to do better PR for the project and enhance our cooperation with the Czech TV, as well as having more meetings together and better administration.”

Difficulties: “The fact that we are dependent on sponsors creates the insecurity of not knowing whether it will be possible to continue the dissemination of the project next year. On the other hand, this problem can also be an advantage. Inspired by the Ministry of Culture we made a video documentation of the project to be able to spread the project to other European countries, even if we won’t have the sources or possibilities to travel with it anymore.”



The organisation

The Forgotten Ones Citizens’ Association is an independent citizens’ organisation founded in 2002 with the main objective to support history-related alternative educational activities in Czech schools and make young people interested in topics concerning the Holocaust. The association is closely cooperating with different national institutions and NGOs in the Czech Republic.

Testimony of the jury

“The project is appealing as it stimulates awareness raising of our common European destiny in an original and creative way”.

Karel Lannoo
Chief Executive of CEPS.



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