

The project « Unity in diversity of the EU - social inclusion an European theme of twinning » was funded with the support of the European Union under the Programme "Europe for Citizens"

**Applicable to the Action 1 – Measure 1.2 "Networks of Twinned Towns"
Action 2 – Measure 2.3 "Support projects initiated by civil society organisations"
Action 4 – "Active European Remembrance"**

5 events have been carried out within this project:

Event 1

Participation: The event involved 716 citizens, including 8 participants from the city of Corby (Great Britain), 13 participants from the city of Châtellerauld (France), 10 participants from the city of Igoumenitsa (Greece) and 685 participants from Velbert (Germany).

Location/ Dates: The event took place in Velbert (Germany), from 14.11.2013 to 17.11.2013

Short description: The aim of the event was to explore the main issues for the next two years of cooperation and to build up professional-workshops which will cooperate within the following "headlines": Youth unemployment - social reality in Europe (Creating a network for voluntary internships), migration and poverty within the EU - location determination and visions 2020, social inclusion - what happened since Lisbon 2000 and cooperation in the child- and youth welfare - exchange and developing of strategies (building a professional network). The twinning conference was the first meeting of professionals who will work together within the project. The focus was the comparison of the nations, an inventory and a construction of a situation analysis: which structures exist within the different fields, with which institutions and associations we should cooperate, who is missing? We visited /public institutions and (European-) schools for best practice. Speeches, citizen meetings and an European culture programme were also on our agenda. The citizens were invited to define with us the main issues of the project and to get information's about our work. All twinning-clubs, citizens and friends were invited into the city hall for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Elysée-contract. Both mayors - the French and the German one - opened up the French/German exhibition for this event. Contemporary witnesses reported about their most important memories (students, teachers, club-members, artists and politicians). The international guests were also invited to join the celebration of the memorial day at the "Schloss Hardenberg", afterwards the wreath-laying ceremony for all nations and the hour of remembrance at the "Mariendom". Highlight of the measure was the European festival with lots of cultural highlights (international buffet, international music-groups, etc.).

Event 2

Participation: The event involved 1970 citizens, including 10 participants from the city of Corby (Great Britain), 70 participants from the city of Châtellerauld (France), 16 participants from the city of Igoumenitsa (Greece) and 1.874 participants from Velbert (Germany).

Location/ Dates: The event took place in Velbert (Germany), from 08.05.2014 to 11.05.2014

Short description: The aim of the event was to give young people the possibility of exchange about European issues. Specially disadvantaged young people were invited, who usually do not have a chance to join international meetings like this (unemployed, migration background, people with handicaps). About 150 youngsters took part of this event in Velbert. Within a variety of cultural workshops they approached European issues; for example: they wrote an European song, they interviewed politicians and citizens about the coming up election in Europe (radio-workshop), etc. Besides that they got the chance of factory tours/company visits to inform themselves for internships. "Volunteering in Europe" and the "European election" were the main issues of the 2 days of the European festival downtown.

All citizens could inform themselves about European issues and the effects and consequences for the state and local governments. European and local politicians and the team of "Fo(u)r Europe" took the chance to discuss actual themes. A huge European voluntary fair took place in the city centre to inform about the possibilities of voluntary work and cooperation with the twinning partners. Within this festival young European musicians started to build a new network. The young people from the international meeting presented the results of their workshops and the professional workshops (youth unemployment, migration & poverty, inclusion and working together within child- and youth-welfare) continued. Because of thematic overlapping within the 1st and 2nd (youth unemployment and migration) workshop the organisers decided to merge these workshops. The multinational teams were relieved and cooperated within this workshop. For the first time people with handicap participated at the programme (special parallel programme). Because of the successful experiences we decided that we will continue and include people with handicap at all measures.

Event 3

Participation: The event involved 1311 citizens, including 11 participants from the city of Corby (Great Britain), 18 participants from the city of Châtellerauld (France), 30 participants from the city of Velbert (Germany) and 1.252 participants from Igoumenitsa (Greece)..

Location/ Dates: The event took place in Igoumenitsa (Greece), from 07.10.2014 to 11.10.2014

Short description: The aim of the event was to create an international meeting of people with and without handicap to discuss the theme: "Inclusive education in Europe - an illusion?" Lots of guests came to Igoumenitsa to exchange their experiences and get in contact with professionals, experts, citizens and discuss actual issues. The most famous guest was the French quadruple amputee Philippe Croizon. A great variety of offers were presented to the guests: professional workshops, speeches, lectures, films, forums, field trips, cultural programme and lots of sports (Especially for the handicapped): volleyball, tennis, rowing and the high-light: swimming with Philippe Croizon. He is a model and motivator for all of us because he showed us, that even things which seemed to be unreachable and impossible can be reached with strong believe, power and support. All participants felt confident that with lots of little, personnel steps towards Europe, they can change a lot. Many motivating contributions of the guests showed what people in crises in Europe were concerned about. The end of the meeting was a huge European festival on the marketplace in front of the city hall. Again international music groups performed, Greek-specialities were provided and a firework finished the event. The conference in Greece ensured that most participants changed their "image" and understanding of Europe. The economically component plays an important role within Europe (and the same access to European issues). But the overcoming of borders, the support of diversity characterized identities and the prevention of "black-and-white thinking" are important aspects too.

Event 4

Participation: The event involved 2667 citizens, including 2 participants from the city of Corby (Great Britain), 5 participants from the city of Igoumenitsa (Greece), 58 participants from the city of Velbert (Germany) and 2.602 participants from Châtelleraut (France).

Location/ Dates: The event took place in Châtelleraut (France), from 05.05.2015 to 10.05.2015

Short description: The aim of the event was to offer all participants (especially disadvantaged ones) the chance to participate at the culture-event - inclusive culture activities. This date was changed - in consultation with the European commission and the coordination partner - because the French partner wanted to include the celebration of the National holiday (8th of May) and the Europe day, the 9th of May, within the 4th measure. Invited were young people from the partner cities and from other twin cities of Châtelleraut: Pila/Poland, Castellon/Spain. Also guests from Canada and Scotland were invited. A lot of local partners cooperated and offered within the European youth meeting a variety of creative-workshops where the youth could practice the European cooperation and the lively and intensive discussion about European issues like: the European charter of fundamental rights, including cultural work - to create ways of participation for all, what means European identity today - which prospects are offered by the EU. The main theme was the field of CULTURE and a new professional workshop took place, where professionals discussed new ways of cooperation and new projects. The other three workshops of professionals continued. Highlight of the week was the ceremony of the 8th of May. In cooperation with the young the ceremony was planned and the young European people had an active part of this ceremony and though it became a very special, European event. People from 10 nations were invited to the WORLD-Café and the opening of the exhibition, created for the 50th anniversary of the French-German twinning. European and local politicians took part in various events: panel debate, concerts, and workshops. The network of European artists/musicians continued to grow. Two big concerts were organized for the youth. And again, people with handicap participated at this event too. A special programme were planned and organized for them.

Event 5

Participation: The event involved 1935 citizens, including 8 participants from the city of Corby (Great Britain), 13 participants from the city of Châtelleraut (France), 11 participants from the city of Igoumenitsa (Greece) and 1.903 participants from Velbert (Germany).

Location/ Dates: The event took place in Velbert (Germany), from 18.06.2015 to 21.06.2015

Short description: The aim of the event was the presentation of the results of the professional workshops and the 2 years of cooperation to the public. The main issue was to present the "Best practice" examples of the 4 partner countries, the work of all local partners and to discuss our visions of Europe 2020 and future prospects. Because of that, the events took place within the cooperating local partner organizations. The youth migration service (International Bund) opened the conference and presented its work, offered a varied programme and international buffet to the guests. Within the framework of an European summer-festival the "Werkstatt für Behinderte" (Workshop for handicapped) presented its variety of work and celebrated the new international cooperation with 500 participants. Highlight of the festival was the performance of the English band and the balloon competition. In the evening the unemployed-consulting "BePro" presented their project "Gebrauchtwarenhaus" (second-hand-warehouse) with a special offer: "Late-Night-shopping", fashion show and Live-Music. All citizens were invited to inform themselves about all offers of the association and the work of the project. The highlight of the final conference was the European festival at the "Offenes Bürgerhaus Birth/Losenburg" with 700 participants! A lot of politicians (European and local) took part and the results of the professional workshops (network for internships for the youth, professional exchange, cooperation within culture and the work with handicapped) and the new network of social inclusion were presented to the public. It followed a variety of offers: European chorus festival, programme for the whole family, international food and finally the Concert "Rock fo(u)r Europe". The date of the final conference was changed too because of the changing of the 4th measure.