



Europe for Citizens

**«Public perception of the refugee crisis:
the rise of Euroskepticism and radicalism»**

(A menekültválság következményei: az euroszkepticizmus és a radikalizmus növekedése)

**Co-founded by the Europe for Citizens programme
of the European Union**

Priority 2., Activity 2.2 "Network of Towns"

7 events were held in the project

EVENT NO. 1

Participation

The project allowed 26 citizens to meet from

- Budapest (Hungary) - 6 people
- Andrid (Romania) - 4 people
- Demecser (Hungary) - 3 people
- Donji Vidovec (Muravid) (Croatia) - 3 people
- Kolarovo (Gúta) (Slovakia) - 2 people
- Lodz (Poland) - 2 people
- Medgyesháza (Hungary) - 2 people
- Palics (Serbia) - 1 person
- Tornal'a (Tornalja) (Slovakia) - 3 people.

Location and time:

Online event, 08/09/2017

Detailed description: The topic was: „Project opening event” (kick-off meeting).

08/09/2017.: Online project opening (kick-off) conference

Public perception of the refugee crisis: The program called the rise of Euroskepticism and radicalism kept its first online preparing discussion with the participation of representatives of partner organisations and partner settlements to help the project happen, meet each other, get new relationships, realise opportunities and finalize the program.

At the beginning of the program the representatives of Ezer Gyerek Egyesület described the details, goals, local and European significance of the project and all the jobs in it. This was followed by the introduction of partners.

The leaders of the cities were talking about the current situations in the cities they are from, significant local and national effects of migrant crisis and they proposed local occasions when project meetings are worth organizing.

The participants also made an agreement in the two most important topics during the program. These are the migrant crisis, the „European thought” that becomes less attractive and the discussion about how radical mentality becomes more and more popular. Topics are going to be processed with youngsters by school programs, and also by workshops organized by local youth organizations. Based on another successful project, we want more photo exhibitions about the mentioned topics in the cities/villages. The participants also agreed that the next conference is in November in Donji Vidovec, Mauravid in Croatia.

EVENT NO. 2

Participation

The project allowed 84 citizens to meet from

Donji Vidovec (Muravid) (Croatia) - 52 people

Andrid (Érendréd) (Romania) - 8 people

Budapest (Hungary) - 7 people

Lodz (Poland) – 4 people*

Medgyesegyháza (Hungary) - 7 people

Tornal'a (Tornalja) (Slovakia) - 6 people.

Location, time:

Donji Vidovec / Muravid (Croatia), 08-10 November 2017

Detailed description: The event's topic was: „Migration's effects on the rise of Euroskepticism”.

08/11/2017: Workshop: „The future of Europe after migrant crisis”

Workshop, interactive task and discussion with students from Tótszerdahelyi and Muravidi. The groupwork focused on youngsters' individual and common Europe visions and was moderated by Gellért Pintér, student of political science.

Meeting: „Realizing migration”

Representatives of the participating settlements shared their communities' experiences on migrant crisis from 2015 and the following years. It was interesting that a couple of settlements' citizens has directly met refugees while other settlements' citizens only heard about them from the media.

09/11/2017.: Presentations about introducing the topics: „The pressure of migration and Euroskepticism”

Participants of the public meeting listened to two presentations about Euroskepticism as one of the crisis's consequence and radikalization. Csaba Tóth political scientist talked about the specialities of national and local politics, changing opinions and expressions of public figures and their effects. Dávid Király mass communication expert spoke about the impacts of media.

Conference: „Realizing migration – problems, possible solutions”

Performers- Josip Grivec, under-sheriff of Muraköz county, Dr. Béla Nagy, mayor of Medgyesegyháza, István Tislér, mayor of Tótszerdahely and Marijan Varga, major of Donja Dubrava shared the experiences of regions and settlements with the audience. When the migrant crisis appeared in Europe all the local governments had to handle the situation, inform the citizens and deal with the role of the European union in handling the crisis at the same time. This was a common point in all of the presentations.

10/11/2017: Future workshop: „Europe and the Euroskepticism”

The participants listened to a short public discussion about Euroskepticism, moderated by Pertl Gábor, colleague of Ezer Gyerek Organization. László Kormányos, major of Medgyesegyháza, Szabolcs Kurta, reformed priest of Érendréd and Anna Szögedi, major of Tornalja gave report to the audience. There were debates about early causeless expectations from the European Union, how population judge bureaucracy and the unstable situations during the migrant crisis.

EVENT NO. 3

Participation

The project allowed 157 citizens to meet from

Budapest (Hungary) - 82 people

Andrid (Érendréd) (Romania) - 18 people

Demecser (Hungary) - 23 people

Lodz (Poland) Iakosai-13 people*

Palics (Serbia) - 4 people

Tornal'a (Tornalja) (Slovakia) - 17 people.

Location, time

Budapest (Hungary), 13-15 December 2017

Detailed description: „A process of migration: short-term and long-term effects”

2017. 12. 13.: Presentations about introducing the topics: „Local processes and European values”

After Péter Hann's and Gábor Pertl's presentations, representatives of partner settlements- Lajos Balajti (SK), Attila Nádor Hágó (RO), Szabolcs Kurta (RO), András Ricz (SRB) - talked about the most current migration news and happenings and their impacts in connection with the leadership of the city and also the citizens.

2017. 12. 14.: Conference: „Realizing migration”

120 students from secondary schools and universities watched a Hungarian movie, called 'Az állampolgár' (The citizen) that won several international awards. András Alföldi, colleague of the Hungarian Helsinki Commission and Gábor Pertl, colleague of Ezer Gyerek Organization gave a presentation about perceptions of migration and then took part in a roundtable discussion with Roland Vranik, director of the movie and Dr. Cake-Bealy Marcelo, main character of the movie.

Open debate forum: Perceptions of migration

Based on the talks and the film, young participants discussed the ways in which they perceive migration in their daily lives. Among other aspects, the effect of demographical and social differences (e.g. level of education, residence) shape these perceptions.

15/12/2017: Workshop: Impacts of migration

Foreign delegates and university students from Budapest discussed short- and long-term impacts of migration.

Participatory meeting: “Interpreting the refugee crisis”

Representatives for partner cities evaluated the Budapest event with respect to the extent to which and the ways in which cooperation aided the interpretation of the refugee crisis in local debates. Participants agreed to hold the next meeting on the historical aspects of migration in Medgyesegyháza in April.

EVENT NO. 4

Participants

The event brought together 126 citizens from the following places:

Medgyesegyháza, Hungary – 78 people

Andrid (Érendréd), Romania – 10 people

Budapest, Hungary – 4 people

Demecser, Hungary – 9 people

Donji Vidovec (Muravid), Croatia – 4 people

Kolarovo (Gúta), Slovakia – 17 people

Palics, Serbia – 4 people

Location and date

Medgyesegyháza, Hungary – 11-13 April 2018

Detailed description: „The public perception of Euroscepticism, radicalism and the refugee crisis – both from a historical perspective and today”

11/04/2018: Opening sessions: European values in a time of crisis

Opening remarks were presented by Péter Hann, expert for the association. Representatives for partner cities – Josip Grivec (HR), Attila Nándor Hágó (RO), Árpád Horváth (SK), Dr Béla Nagy (HU), András Ricz (SRB) discussed the crisis in Europe; they touched upon issues of Euroscepticism, a reduced support for European values, its manifestation in different countries, and potentially adequate responses to the phenomenon.

12/04/2018: Conference: Migration – Historical perspectives, present-day dilemmas

A session each was presented by Marianna Bagyinszky (historian), Péter Hann (program leader), Ezer Gyerek Egyesület, Árpád Horváth (mayor, Gúta), Dr Béla Nagy (mayor, Medgyesegyháza), Rita Vermes (principal, Schéner Mihály Primary School). The historical work „In Memoriam” by Marianna Bagyinszky was introduced at the event.

Open debate forum: Historical perspectives, present-day implications

A debate forum for local citizens and representatives for partner associations was organised based on the conference and the book presentation. The discussion focused on the historical experiences each village had of forced migration as a result of various crises, of integrating strangers, and how it impacts the perception of present processes.

13/04/2018: Training for final-year students of Schéner Mihály Primary School

Short presentations and group exercises, building upon personal and family recollections, were used to bring the issue of migration and the relevance of answers to it closer to students.

Participatory meeting: „Processes of migration”

During the final workshop of the series of events for foreign delegates, local citizens, teachers, colleagues at the mayor’s office the short and long-term effects of migration were discussed by, among others, Attila Nándor Hágó (adviser, Nagykároly), Árpád Horváth (mayor, Gúta), Dr Béla Nagy (mayor, Medgyesegyháza), András Ricz (representative, Palics). The Medgyesegyháza event was closed and evaluated during this session.

EVENT NO. 5

Participants

The event brought together 124 citizens from the following places:

Palics, Serbia – 81 people

Andrid (Érendréd), Romania – 9 people

Budapest, Hungary - 5 people

Donji Vidovec (Muravid), Croatia – 7 people

Lodz, Poland – 9 people*

Medgyesegyháza, Hungary – 8 people

Tornal'a (Tornalja), Slovakia – 5 people

Location and date

Palics, Serbia – 17-19 May 2018

Detailed description: “Migration and potential responses to the new challenge it poses”

17/05/2018: Presentations: Local aspects in responses to migration

The meeting was opened by Péter Hann, program leader for Ezer Gyerek Association. Representatives for partner cities – Lajos Balajti (SK), Josip Grivec (HR), Attila Nándor Hágó (RO), Dr Béla Nagy (HU), András Ricz (SRB) discussed the challenges facing each country and city with regards to migration. The diverging practices of each country and the resulting tensions were also mentioned.

Workshop: Local responses to the integration of refugees

Hosts, delegates from partner cities, and Serbian citizens discussed the characteristics and effectiveness of local responses to the refugee crisis. Visitors were greatly interested in the Serbian refugee system.

The workshop ended with a convivial informal discussion.

18/05/2018: Conference: On the Two Sides of the Border

The conference examined the politics of Hungary and Serbia with regards to the migration crisis, focusing on the impacts of the double fence (secured border fence). Presentations by Márk Zoltán Kékesi (sociologist, lecturer at Szegedi Tudományegyetem, Faculty of Psychology) and Bea Sárcsevity Hajdú (social worker, social policy expert, doctoral student at ELTE) explored how the fence impacts the everyday lives and thoughts of those living near the border. The presentations were followed by a lively debate and discussion.

Meeting: Refugees and refugee camps in Serbia

The photo exhibition of photographic artist Edvárd Molnár, titled “Refugees and refugee camps in Serbia” was opened by András Ricz (representative, Palics) and Péter Hann (program leader, Ezer Gyerek Egyesület). A panel discussion for the representatives of partner cities explored how art may help in understanding the refugee crisis and further inclusion.

18/05/2018: Workshop: Migration is a challenge for twenty-first century Europe

Delegates from partner cities and Serbian citizens discussed the short and long-term political, religious and economic challenges presented by migration. The debate revealed that everyday political answers and humanitarian perspectives often clash in Central Europe.

Event no. 6

Participants

The event brought together 145 citizens from the following places:

Kolarovo (Gúta), Slovakia – 67 people

Andrid (Érendréd), Romania – 10 people

Budapest, Hungary- 5 people

Demecser, Hungary – 5 people

Donji Vidovec (Muravid), Hungary – 24 people

Lodz, Poland – 15 people*

Medgyesegyháza, Hungary – 8 people

Palics, Serbia – 4 people

Tomal'a (Tomalja), Serbia – 7 people

Location and date

Kolarovo (Gúta), Slovakia – 21-23 June 2018

Detailed description: “The impact of migration on local social and economic processes”

21/06/2018: Opening sessions: Local processes and migration

Árpád Horváth (mayor of Gúta) welcomed participants and expressed how glad he and the local community were that for the first time a partner city meeting took place in Gúta.

The impact of migration on local processes was first discussed by Péter Hann (Ezer Gyerek Egyesület) based on previous experiences in the project. Presentations on the topic were held by Dragos Georgescu (director for the Nagykároly Castle), András Ricz (representative for Palics), Attila Sallai (representative for Érendréd), and Imre Takács (director of the education office, Gúta).

Youth workshop: Impacts of migration

Participants (students and representatives for partner cities) discussed the European Union's pressing problems and the challenges of migration, following an introductory session by Árpád Horváth (mayor of Gúta) and Péter Hann (program leader). The students (from II. Rákóczi Ferenc Primary School, Corvin Mátyás Primary School, and Nagybaldogasszony Egyházi Iskolaközpont) debated the strengths and weaknesses of the European Union, its dilemmas, and the Slovakian and local impacts of migration through interactive tasks, building on their own experiences.

22/06/2018: Conference: The Visegrad Countries in Europe during the Refugee Crisis

Presentations were held by László Barak (editor in chief, parameter.sk, Bratislava) and Gábor Horn (president of board of trustees at Republikon Foundation, Budapest) on the topic of the refugee politics of the Visegrad Countries, their impact on the European Union, and the way the refugee politics of these countries influenced the regional rise of Euroscepticism and right-wing radicalism.

A lively debate followed the presentations in which both members of local public life and citizens of Gúta and representatives for partner organisations took part.

Participatory meeting: Local answers to the challenges of the refugee crisis

Experiences and good practices of the various cities and towns, based on the workshop and the conference, were discussed by foreign delegates, local citizens, teachers, and colleagues of the mayor's office.

Public perception of the refugee crisis: the rise of Euroscepticism and radicalism

23/06/2018: Film screening and debate forum: Refugees: Historical lessons and present-day experiences

The session was opened with a screening of a film by Gúta TV detailing the post-World War II measures against and deportations of Slovakian Hungarians. The open debate forum was led by Béla Angyal local historian and explored the dilemmas of flight and reception, the significance of historical, economic and religious differences, and the influence of past experiences on present situations.

Event no. 7

Participants

The event brought together 179 citizens from the following places:

Andrid (Érendréd), Romania – 73 people

Budapest, Hungary – 8 people

Demecser, Hungary – 15 people

Donji Vidovec (Muravid), Croatia – 27 people

Kolarovo (Gúta), Slovakia – 5 people

Lodz, Poland - 7 people*

Palics, Serbia – 2 people

Tomal'a (Tomalja), Slovakia – 21 people

Location and date

Andrid (Érendréd), Romania – 03-05/08/2018

Detailed description: “The impact of the refugee crisis on politics and common European values”

03/08/2018: Conference: How to help well: the impact of the refugee crisis on European values

The conference aimed to explore how various religious, civil society and charity organisations can ‘help well’ in 2018 in Europe and how they can represent common European values in their day-to-day operations.

Presentations were held by István Ferenczi (president for Asociația Help to Help), Lehel Hompöth (leader for Klaus Winter (Stella Maris) Roma Integration Center), Csaba Ilyés (archdeacon, Kalazanci Szent József, Nagykároly), and Tamás Iványi (education centre leader, regional leader for education at Magyarországi Evangéliumi Testvérközösség in the Bereg region).

Speakers at the panel discussion (moderated by Péter Hann, programme leader) following the presentations emphasised that while the presence and support of huge European charity organisations is important, ‘good help’ requires the knowledge and experience of local organisations, whether they work with refugees or local disadvantaged citizens.

Youth workshop: The European Union and local images of migration

Young members of the Érendréd reformed congregation, local teachers, and representatives for partner cities discussed how they view the European Union and they want the European Union to view their towns. The topic of migration was discussed in an interactive manner. The workshop revolved around two questions: the facts we might learn about and the most common assumptions we make regarding migration. Like in previous workshops, when the dilemmas of participating towns came up, the issue of migration from these towns was mentioned.

04/08/2018: Presentations: “Europe in the Future – as seen today”

Tibor Papp (mayor of Érendréd) welcomed participants and briefly introduced the main economic, social, and cultural characteristics of the town.

Péter Hann (program leader, Ezer Gyerek Egyesület) concluded the experiences of the workshop and the conference, focusing on the visions of future that were discussed.

Tibor Papp (mayor of Érendréd), Lajos Balajti (representative for Tomalja, Slovakia), Gyula Kiss (member of Szivárvány Közművelődési és Szabadidős Egyesület, Demecser), Csaba Erdős (reformed priest, Érendréd) held presentation on the visions of the future of local societies.

Participatory meeting: Faces of Europe – art, local public life

The 'Faces of Europe' photography exhibition by the Vasile Vénig László Photography Club was officially opened as part of the Europe for Citizens project meeting. The exhibition presents 28 photographs depicting how religious and civil charity organisations and private persons help refugees and disadvantaged people in general. Photos were taken in various towns and countries across Europe.

After the opening, members of the public and representatives for partner cities discussed the topics of art and charity. Each town expressed a wish to include local artists in public life through organising exhibitions and ordering artworks.

Cultural festival

Cultural groups from Donji Vidovec and Tomal'a performed at the 'Carei Fest' that took place during the meeting. These events provided an opportunity for Péter Hann (programme leader) to inform the wider public about the events and conclusions of the project and the Romanian meeting in particular.

05/08/2018: Project conclusion: Changes in Europe following the refugee crisis

Representations for the partner cities discussed, besides the Romanian meeting, the significance of the entire, year-long programme, how the representation of common European values by partner organisations was strengthened, and how conclusions and experiences of the meetings could be relayed to local communities.

* included the participants of online video talkings and webconferences

News about the programme and events can be found on the "Európai polgárok hálózata" Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/Európai-polgárok-hálózata-204406353342893>

An English summary of the events and results of the year-long program can be downloaded here:
http://ezergyerek.hu/media/1189/egye2017_18-narrative-report.pdf