



## Activity Report

on the “Connecting towns for a stronger Europe” event

**Date:** July 27-29.07.2018

**Place:** Cherechiu, Bihor County, Romania

**No. of participants:** 255 persons

	Institution	Participant distribution						Total no. of participants
		Distribution by age			Dis-advantaged participants	Women	Men	
		<30	30-65	>65				
P1	Cherechiu Commune	15	25	25	25	30	35	65
P2	Dlha Ves Commune	10	5	5	0	10	10	20
P3	Kereki Commune	5	10	5	5	10	10	20
P4	Kokad Commune	10	10	10	5	15	15	30
P5	Újfehértó Town	10	8	2	10	12	8	20
P6	Motvarjevci Commune	5	10	10	2	10	15	25
P7	Felsotelekes Commune	5	10	5	2	10	15	25
P8	Szentgyorgyvolgy Commune	5	5	5	5	10	5	15
P9	Ocsod Commune	5	5	5	5	5	10	15
P10	Naszaly Commune	5	10	5	5	5	15	20
<b>Total</b>		75	98	77	64	117	138	<b>255</b>



The “**Connecting towns for a stronger Europe**” event took place in Cherechiu between July 27-29. The event allowed twinned towns to meet and help them strengthen their connections, the municipalities are the following: Municipality of Cherechiu from Romania, Municipalities of Kokad, Kereki, Újfeherto, Felsotelekes, Ocsod, Naszalt and Szentgyogyvolgy from Hungary, Dlha Ves from Slovakia, Municipality of Motrajevci from Slovenia, from with wich the following towns entered the partnership in recent years: Kokad Commune (2013) – Hungary, Kereki (2014) – Hungary, Újfehértó (July 2015) – Hungary and Dlha Ves (Gömörhosszúszó) Commune (2013) – Slovakia, Motvajejci (Szécsiszentlászló) Commune (2016). The formal agreement between Cherechiu and Felsotelekes and Szentgyorgyvolgy took place at the event.

A total number of 255 participants from the above-mentioned communes attended the three-day event, 190 of which were foreign guests.

The three-day event took place from Friday to Sunday, each day being centred on a different theme.

- **Friday**, July 27, 2018 – „Past and future – A Bridge for Europe”
- **Saturday**, July 28, 2018 – „Solidarity The Only Way for a Unitesd Europe”
- **Sunday**, July 29, 2018 – „The future of Europe”

The project aim was to encourage understanding and debating Euroscepticism by explaining the benefits of EU policies. Also encouraging development of networks, volunteering and solidarity for combating stigmatization of "immigrants" and building counter narratives to foster intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding all this related to debates on the Future of Europe. The purpose of this event was to stimulate debates, reflections, volunteering and



**Friday, July 27, 2018 – „Past and future – A Bridge for Europe”:**

The programmes on Friday were opened by Nyíri Sándor, the mayor of Cherechiu Commune from Romania, who greeted the guests, presenting them the programme for the following days, including the themes which were debated or presented, and the activities during the weekend. After this opening ceremony each commune were asked to present their commune’s history and the changes, as well as the achievements since the last town twinning meeting, which was in 2016. For this each ten commune presented their commune with a power point presentation, their challenges and progress during the last years, problems which affected the people from each represented commune, answering all the questions after. Each of the participants was given a program with useful information included.

After the one hour lunch break, the program continued with a debate with the following theme “Conflict and Peace in Europe”, this theme was first presented by Novák Tamás fom Hosszúszó, following by a pro-contra debate, where the participants could discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the EU parliament and its working mechanism, also the steps made by the EU regarding to discrimination and integration of minorities.

On this line, the program continued with screening a documentary with the theme “The discovery of the European Union” highlighting the history of the EU, its values and opportunities, its progress, about its positive and negative sides on the Vest European countries like Romania or Hungary, form economical, demographical, political and

infrastructural point of views, since being in the EU brings many benefits to some, but for others it doesn’t have the same effect. The evening continued by a presentation by Varga Zsuzsa from Szentgyörgyvölgy about “Euroscepticism- message to Europe”, regarding to the previous programs, the debate and the screening, the quests discussed their point of view, on why the





Euroscepticism is still on discuss, and why it is an urgent topic to solve, and here they brought up “Brexit” which had impact even on their work and progress, “Brexit” and Euroscepticism been connected, because of the media and the different stigmatism in each region. In conclusion the scepticism is caused by strict rules and regulations, common legislation and strong national identities.

In the end of the first day was held a traditional evening with regional dances and traditional songs. Among the performers were a rock band from Diosig, Haverock, and a strict traditional performance with Pontos József, from Chesereu, who performed for the participants folk songs and dances, including them in the show, teaching them the a traditional dance from the Hungarian folklore.

In conclusion we can say that the objective of the first day were met, since we promoted the fight against stigmatism, tolerance and integration, and nonetheless we promoted the maintenance of close partnership between the participants

### **Saturday, July 28, 2018 – „Solidarity The Only Way for a United Europe”**

Regarding to our central theme, Saturday’s program was opened by a theatre play with title: “Solidarity means involvement”, the play was open for everybody, with a donation-based entry.



This was followed by a culinary tasting, which was prepared in an outdoor cooking contest, each team preparing their own local dish, and then presenting them, and the preparation mode, even with a sotry behind the receipt. With this contest, named „Visit throguh European cuisine”, the aim to promote acceptance and tolerance was reached. The following program, a debate about “Opportunities in the EU”, was presented by Molnár Bálint from Öcsöd, where

the participants were separated in groups of 10 people, and discussing in these groups the positive and negative effects of the opportunities, which included the youth migration from their home land, the possibilities of the learning systems, like Erasmus+, and the voluntary program EVS, for the youth, where they have the possibility to learn more, and to create



better connections. From economical point of view, about investors creating jobs in these countries, but in the same time exploiting the youth, and the labour market, due to the regional labour law system.

On the following hours a creative workshop was held for the participants with “Integration of immigrants is a two-way process” theme, in which the participants showed and explained their point of view on this topic, followed by a European Evening with the theme of “Different But Equal-Fighting Stigmatism” including performances by many dance groups and music bands, such as the local



kindergarten folklore show, with traditional folk songs and dance, extreme moto-show, award winning Stihl Timbersports show, Fitt Dance from Cherechuiu, Tini Dance Center, and live concerts of Mulatós Menyecskek, Kontor Tamás, Majsai Gábor, Rudan Joe Acoustic concert, followed by the fireworks.

### **Sunday, July 29, 2018 – „The future of Europe”**

On the last day of our event, the main theme was “The future of Europe”, according to this theme, in the morning hours the participants discussed about „Sharing experiences for a stronger Europe”, where the 10 communes discussed about their problems, and how they would cope with them. They discussed and exchanged ideas and had a brainstorming regarding this topic, in order to raise the participants’ awareness on their responsibility in taking part in EU’s future. This discussion was coordinated by Toth Anikó from Naszály.

After this program, there was a parade of the tours through Chesereu village, with 15 carriages, where the participants had the opportunity to have a ride on a carriage, which was followed by a multiple performances by choir teams from Chesereu and Cherechuiu. The next topic was





discussed by a brainstorming, the theme being “The importance of involving citizens in decision-making”, which was coordinated by Osváth István from Kokad who told the participants the importance of freedom of speech and opinion, he underlined the fact, that every person’s idea and opinion is important in decision making, the EU being a Union for the European citizens. As well Nyíri Sándor, the mayor of Cherechiu Commune expressed his opinion, for this topic, explaining that his decisions depends on the opinions and needs of the people living in this commune.



The representatives then went to sign the cooperation agreement, with Felsotelkes and Szentgyorgyvolgy’s representatives for the future cooperation, becoming twin-towns, and creating a stronger communication between them.

In conclusion, the objectives of this weekend were reached, by promoting democratic participation in decision making, fighting stigmatism, promoting tolerance, diversity, creating a stronger relationship between the participant communes, between the four countries, and signing the cooperation agreement.



**Accommodations:**

The foreign guests were provided with 2 nights accommodations in the period between July 27-29, 2018.

- 2 nights \* 190 persons

**Catering service:**

The participants received meals during the entire duration of the event.

- Breakfast: 2 days \* 255 persons
- Lunch: 3 days \* 255 persons
- Dinner: 2 days \* 255 persons

**Travel services:**

The company providing travel services transported all the foreign participants to their accommodations.

- 2 days x 190 persons