



Co-funded by the  
Europe for Citizens Programme  
of the European Union



## **EVENT 2 - REPORT**

### **SMALL MEETING OF THE CHARTER OF EUROPEAN RURAL COMMUNITIES**

**IN LASSEE – AUSTRIA  
14/09/2017 - 18/09 2017**

**PROJECT TITLE : *TOLERANCE AND SOLIDARITY AS CORE VALUES FOR THE FUTURE  
OF EUROPE***



## GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE MEETING

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**PROJECT:** Co-funded by the Europe for Citizens Programme of the European Union  
Strand 2 - Measure 2.2 Networks of Towns  
Decision No 2017-1310/00-001  
Reference No 588829-CITIZ-1-2017-1-PL-CITIZ-NT  
Project for the period 2017 – 2018

**PROJECT TITLE :** *Tolerance and solidarity as core values for the future of Europe*

**EVENT NUMBER:** 2

**TOPIC:** *Tolerance. Reasons and results coming from intolerance  
Combating negative stereotypes and narrow-minded attitudes*

**DATE:** 14/09/2017 - 18/09 2017

**PARTICIPANTS:** 53 participants

Participated municipalities:

1. Cisse, France - 1 participant
2. Desborough, United Kingdom - 2 participants
3. Hepstedt, Germany - 2 participants
4. Ibanesti, Romania - 4 participants
5. Lassee, Austria - 20 participants
6. Medzev, Slovakia - 4 participants
7. Moravce, Slovenia - 4 participants
8. Nagycenk, Hungary - 4 participants



9. Estonia, Polva - 4 participants
10. Strzyzow, Poland - 4 participants
11. Zagare, Lithuania - 4 participants

During the time from the 14th of September to the 18th of September 2017, the Adults meeting took place in Lassee, Austria. The meeting in Lassee was the second one of the current adult program of the European Charter.

For these reason 53 people from different countries and local participants met and spent 4 days together in Austria. There were invited 4 persons from all invited countries. Some participated countries could not send full delegation. Those delegations with the lower number than 4 participants were replaced by local participants. 18 host families from Lassee provided accommodation in their houses and spent free time with participants.

### **What is our Charter?**

The Charter of Rural Communities was founded in 1989 in Cissé, France. Its main goal is to enforce the cooperation between small rural communities all over Europe. This cooperation is built on exchanges and meetings of people in the different countries. Therefore there are organized several meetings during the year, where people visit a municipality and stay there at host families in order to get to know each other's way of life better. Every member state of the EU has also one member in Charter.

### **Lassee in the Charter**

Lassee is the Austrian member of the Charter and already hosted 2 meetings. One big summer meeting in 2007 and one Adult meeting in 2014. The meeting in 2014 was the closing meeting of the multiannual project 2013-2014. So at this meeting there were delegations from each charter member.

Currently the Mayor from Lassee, DI Karl Grammanitsch, is the President of the Charter.



## PROGRAMME OF WORKSHOPS

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Workshops's moderator: Ikenna Okafor

Topic: *Tolerance. Reasons and results coming from intolerance. Combating negative stereotypes and narrow-minded attitudes.*

Part 1. National stereotypes

Part 2. *When life hands you a lemon...peel it*

Part 3. *All That We Share*

## WORKSHOPS' RESULTS

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The topic of the event in László Károlyi was *Cultural diversity – Tolerance. Reasons and results coming from intolerance. Combating negative stereotypes and narrow-minded attitudes* consisted one of the 6 topics included within the project *Tolerance and solidarity as core values for the future of Europe*. The moderator of the workshops was Ikenna Okafor.

The first task of the workshops was to find stereotypes which are popular for particular nationalities. Firstly participants worked in their national groups. Their task was to describe stereotypes about their own countries. They listed stereotypes including both negative and positive ones. All groups located their results on the boards. After this part, participants were randomly divided into several groups. Each group consisted of participants from different countries. The next task was to describe stereotypes about each of the nationality participated in this meeting and workshop. In this way all attended nationalities were described. The final part of this activity was the presentation of these results and discussion. Participants were given



a chance to comment and discuss presented stereotypes. They also answered to the following questions:

- Are these stereotypes true or not?
- Do most people hold the same stereotypes about a particular nationality in your group? Why or why not?
- Why do stereotypes exist?
- How do stereotypes affect your behavior toward others?



The second part of the workshop was used to take participants deeper into the question of identifying prejudice. In this aim workshop moderators use the activity “When life hands you a lemon...peel it”. The main aim of this task was to provide a visual representation of the similarities and commonalities between peoples. Participants were split into three groups. Each participant was given one lemon. Then they were instructed to “get to know their lemon”. Participants examined their lemons in as many different ways as possible, touching, smelling and rolling them around. After 5 minutes they put them back in one basket. Next, they were asked to find their lemons. Most of the participants recognized their lemons the first time round. They described the recognized lemons. Responses of participants differed, e.g. “My lemon had some dents”, “My lemon had some bruises”, “My lemon was a small lemon”, etc. However after peeling the lemons, participants claimed that they looked all the same. These answers were used to start a discussion



of diversity. The final conclusion of the discussion was that even if on the surface people can appear to differ more or less significantly, inside they are all the same.

Another important part of the workshops was the projection of the movie about stereotypes. The title of the movie was "All That We Share" and it was produced in Denmark by their television TV2. The action took place in the studio where there were drawn several boxes on the floor. Participants of different ages and backgrounds were separated into groups, e.g. "high earners" or "those who are just getting by". At first glance it could appear that there is no doubt that they belong to these groups. However, when the narrator asked them more specific questions, e.g. "Who are stepparents?" or "Who've been bullied?", the groups quickly broke up. People who identified themselves within the asked questions came out of their boxes and moved to the box in the middle of the room. The movie is very popular in Denmark it has already gained over 4 millions views on YouTube. This short film provoked discussion among participants about our negative feelings and attitudes, tendency to create barriers and divisions. The final conclusion was that it can be very easy to find a common ground with people who seem to be very different than we are and it just required the attitude full of open-mindedness.





During the workshop the participants learnt a lot about stereotypes, its reasons and negative effects.

The most important results of the workshop are:

- gain of awareness and understanding of other cultures and countries by fostering mutual understanding;
- activation of local inhabitants;
- participants learnt how to use intercultural dialogue as a tool in combating intolerance towards other cultures, religions and nationalities;
- exploration of European values such as human rights, active citizenship, participation and good practices as a common base for future cooperation within the Association “Charter of European Rural Communities”
- exchange of experience in promoting intercultural understanding and tolerance;
- gaining new knowledge about such terms as prejudice;

