

The project «Brothers In FREEdom» was funded with the support of the European Union under the Programme "Europe for Citizens"

Applicable to the Strand 2 – Measure 2.1 "Town-Twinning"

Participation: The project involved 400 citizens, notably **191** participants from the city of **Renče-Vogrsko (Slovenia)**,

Location/ Dates: The event took place in **Staranzano (Italy)**, **from 15/03/2018 to 24/03/2018**

Short description:

After several preliminary meetings of Local Authorities, project partners & local stakeholders, a program of three-day activities was defined in accordance with bad weather and involved communities shared a preliminary survey on Euroscepticism and the future development of the network between our small towns.

1) The 15th of March was dedicated to the meeting of primary school pupils when pupils, teachers & local stakeholders from Staranzano and Renče were involved in activities on the common area of the Isonzo River basin that our communities enjoy without borders in the common EU. During the day, pupils (45 from Renče & 85 from Staranzano Primary School) have worked together in six mixed creative laboratories. Furthermore, there was presentation of an exhibition dedicated to 40 years of twinning between Renče and Staranzano.

2) The 17th of March was dedicated to:

- in the morning: several sightseeing of the Natural Reserve of the Isonzo River Mouth for several citizens groups from Renče (pensioners, disabled persons, cultural & sport associations), as well as an "ex-tempore" art performance (the exhibition of artworks was open to the public on the last day of event) with the participation of 22 painters from both towns;

- in the afternoon: sports games for people with disabilities, including a group of Pakistani asylum seekers who live in Staranzano and who participated in traditional games (Škulje, bocce) together with representatives of the sports association from Renče & Staranzano;

- in the evening: there was a meeting and a public concert with the participation of 3 choirs (2 from Slovenia) and a final common dinner for all participants.

3) The 24th of March was dedicated to:

- street-art performance,

- a small fair of typical local food products,

- a public conference on "Europe without Borders" on the role of small towns and the future of EU,

- the presentation of the video taken during previous days & presentation of the website dedicated to twinning since last year (rencestaranzano.eu)

The conference involved Italian and Slovene speakers, experts in European policies and programmes, and also representative of asylum seekers, all discussing the history of Europe from the Cold War, the value of twinning between the communities from Eastern and Western Europe, the current problematic situation and the importance of the common work for a better EU.

During the conference, the results of the local stakeholders' survey have been presented, showing how distant EU feel the citizens living in small towns, and how much, however, they believe in the values promised by the creation of the EU: Peace and Human rights protection and promotion.

After the conference, was officially opened an art exhibition with paintings made during the "ex tempore" in the nature of the Isonzo River Reserve, and the theatre group of local youth organized readings on borders, exodus and migrations.