

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Participant:	DDTG DUNA FEJLESZTO TRANSZNACIONALIS CSOPORT NONPROFIT KFT (DDTG Nonprofit Kft.)
PIC number:	910156918
Project name and acronym:	European Alliance for Volunteer Support - learnings from Covid-19 crisis — ERAS II

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	4
Event name:	Improving conditions for the development of volunteering post-Covid-19
Type:	Discussions, conference, good practices exchange, workshop
In situ/online:	In situ
Location:	Pécs and Orfű, Hungary
Date(s):	14. 9. – 16. 9. 2023
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.erasnetwork.eu/
Participants	
Female:	30
Male:	30
Non-binary:	0
From country 1 [Hungary]:	52 (23 F and 29 M)
From country 2 [Slovenia]:	2 (2 F)

From country 3 [Bulgaria]:	2 (2 F)		
From country 4 [Portugal]:	2 (1 F and 1 M)		
From country 5 [Latvia]:	2 (2 F)		
Total number of participants:	60	From total number of countries:	5

Description

Pécs and Orfű hosted the last project meeting and program within the framework of the "ERAS II - European Alliance for Volunteer Support – learnings from Covid-19 crisis" project, which is co-financed by the European Union within the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) Programme.

As a Hungarian project partner, the event was hosted by DDTG Nonprofit Kft. from Pécs, the professional program was put together by Éva Knyihár. Bulgarian, Latvian, Portuguese and Slovenian volunteer organizations were present. At the information day on September 14, several organizations dealing with volunteering were represented, including the Pécs Community Foundation, the Pécs Bike Mafia, the Cultural Labor Social Cooperative, and the "Fekete Sereg" Youth Association. This was followed by a discussion of partners and local volunteer organizations on gender roles in volunteering. Before the meeting, the ERAS photo exhibition was available to the residents of Pécs for one month from August 31st, which was hosted by the "Free Port" in Pécs, a cultural center and community space in the center of the city that can be visited free of charge.

The following day, the Basket Community of Pécs presented itself. The organization's activity is essentially the organization of a larger local community, which operates an alternative, protected local market, flows information, and thus also has the function of shaping attitudes. Its long-term goal is to boost the local economy, make it easier to assert interests and provide new sales channels for farmers, craftsmen, and entrepreneurs. The Pécs Basket Community is an existing organization with one delivery day a week, which builds a valuable bridge between the countryside and the city, small producers, farmers, artisans and families. An important goal is to make healthy local food available to families with a lower economic status. They want to expand their activities with home delivery and their own product ranges, and further build cooperation with the catering segment and civil organizations. The organization does most of its work with the help of volunteers, and several questions were asked by the visitors. The participants of the ERAS II project were very interested in the operation of the organization, and it was also suggested that the Portuguese guests establish an institution based on similar foundations in their own city.

After the visit, a two-hour discussion was held in the "Free Port" in Pécs, the topic of the discussion was how municipalities can support voluntary organizations for better crisis response. With participants from organizations participating in the project and volunteer organizations of the host city, we identified good practices of municipalities for supporting volunteering. We have identified what we still need and how municipalities can support voluntary organizations to better respond to crises. We wrote down the proposals and sorted them by importance, from the proposals that are most important for the development of volunteering and need to be supported by the municipalities, to those that have less impact on the development of volunteering, but are still important for the municipalities to support and implement. They are supported by the practices of partner municipalities in the project. The collected good practices of the participating cities and the developed proposals were written down in the guidelines for municipalities to effectively support volunteering:

https://www.erasnetwork.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Guidelines-How-can-municipality-support-volunteering_links.pdf

After the lunch, the participants visited Orfű to get to know the organizers of the accessible tourism day. The partners were welcomed by the deputy mayor of the municipality of Orfű and presented their approach to supporting NGOs and involving volunteers in activities. The engagement and support of the mayor also play an important role in the cohesion of this small and connected community. The Disabled Tourism Day was held in Orfű for the first time in 2017. The location is one of the country's most popular tourist destinations, with a beautiful location, four lakes, and extremely diverse beach, sports, and recreation opportunities. In addition to organizing the all-day cheerful festival, the main goal is to bring people with disabilities to experiences that they would otherwise not have or would have difficulty experiencing. At the event, everyone can feel good whether they are injured or healthy, both children and adults, and they can have a great time while discovering that our fellow injured people are the same people, that we can help each other, and it feels good to help. Therefore, an important goal is inclusion, sensitizing society in the direction that the disabled and the healthy can be together, live and have fun.

As a final program on Saturday, the members of the international volunteer group cooked together with the Pécs

Bike Mafia team and participated the delivery of the food as part of the charity program. The Pécs Bike Mafia usually gathers once a month on the weekend, when they jointly cook a huge portion of hot food, box it, and then deliver the food to those in need by bike. As an organization, Pécs Bike Mafia has been an enthusiastic and committed helper of the needy in Pécs since 2015. As a sub-unit of the Budapest Bike Mafia, in cooperation with the Family Support Service, they deliver food by bicycle to families and pensioners living alone once a month. This means approx. 150 servings of hot food, if they can also pack vegetables, fruit, cookies or perishable food. They mostly work with the donations and active participation of private individuals, but they also welcome company teams and even high school students who can perform their community service with them.

When implementing the programs, we paid special attention to aspects of equal opportunities. Throughout the duration of the project, our partners have strived to create an environment that is open and welcoming to everyone, regardless of their gender. On September 14, 2023, partners and local organizations also discussed gender in volunteering at a round table - how volunteers perform different roles during volunteering that correspond to the social roles attributed to their gender, why this is so and what could be done to attract volunteers into roles that are not typical of their gender. Special attention was also paid to the disabled, during the program in Orfű, the participants were able to learn about the day of accessible tourism and enrich themselves with useful information. Most of the project activities involved locals, mostly volunteers from local organizations and visitors to the photography exhibition. They participated in the presentation of their experiences with volunteering during the crisis. Partners and participants were also able to transfer the good practices they learned and/or adapt and improve their volunteering practices by incorporating elements of good practices from other countries. Volunteers from local organizations contributed to discussions on how municipalities can support voluntary organizations to better respond to crises, sharing their opinion on how local authorities should support the development of volunteering, providing information on what support is already in place available for volunteers and their organizations and what else they need. By preparing guidelines for municipalities, they had the opportunity for democratic cooperation and active citizenship.

Testimonies of participants:

»At the event organized by our Hungarian partners, I gained a lot of knowledge and insight into the operations and projects of various NGOs from different fields. As we provide support to NGOs in our region and have a broad perspective on community needs, we are now well-equipped to pass on and implement many of the practices we have learned. The discussion on gender in volunteering opened me new aspect that particularly inspired me. In Slovenia, we have the experience that approximately 60% of volunteers are women, largely due to the majority of volunteer work being in the social and educational sectors. However, this event provided a new perspective on what motivates each gender to engage in volunteer activities and where this fits on Dilts' pyramid. This newfound knowledge enables us to approach male volunteers in a different way, which, we believe, will encourage their increased participation in more traditionally female-oriented volunteer activities, based on their identity and purpose.« (Participant from Slovenia)

»At the event organized by our Hungarian partners in Pécs, the discussion about the distribution of gender roles in various volunteer works made me think about how many different stereotypes exist about which jobs are suitable for women and which for men. This discussion made me think about what my selection criteria are when I am choosing a specific volunteer work, and it was also very interesting to hear the experiences of participants from other countries. The most memorable moment was the opportunity to participate in the Pécs Bike Mafia event. We helped with the food preparation, got to know the volunteers who deliver the food and just enjoyed the atmosphere of being happy to help.« (Participant from Latvia)

»All the discussions and meetings with different NGOs were very fruitful and gave me ideas that I can apply in my work with the volunteers I am responsible for. Everything we discussed during the 3 days made me reconsider the work and initiatives our organization undertakes - what we have as resources, where are our gaps and challenges, and things that we can improve in order to be better and innovative.« (Participants from Bulgaria)

»To me, the event in Hungary was really useful in terms of connections and enriching my knowledge when it comes to volunteering. I managed to learn a lot from the local organizations and to transfer some of their ideas to my work.« (Participants from Bulgaria)

»My experience in Pécs during the Transnational Meeting in the scope of ERAS II brought me a lot of new learnings regarding volunteering innovative approaches. I had the opportunity to contact directly with different project leaders and organisations related to a variety of fields of intervention that entirely rely on volunteering to develop their successful work. From social impact projects to local food health projects I met some of the backstage strategies of volunteering programs in Pécs besides the visits to the facilities where these projects held their work. Also, the group dynamics were quite interesting and led to fruitful discussions and sharing moments about the participant's background, challenges and opportunities related to local policies related to volunteering. The cultural experience significantly enriched me because it allowed me to have a general perspective on the expressive culture of Pécs, for instance the high number of museums and the music shows.« (Participant from Portugal)

»The meeting was very inspiring and professionally met my expectations, because I heard many good thoughts and lessons from the participants. The team was very colorful and prepared. It was also excellent for building relationships. Participating in the program was a great experience, not only in a professional sense, but also in its atmosphere, the implementation of the events went smoothly and exceeded my expectations.« (Participant from Hungary)

The event description sheet is published on the project partners websites:

- Municipality of Litija, Slovenia: <https://www.litija.si/objava/826077>
- Društvo za podporo civilne družbe, Slovenia: <http://consulta.si/www.consulta.si/eras>
- Association Euni Partners, Bulgaria: https://eunipartners.com/en_gb/eras-ii-learnings-from-covid-19/
- Institoyto Koinonikis Kainotomais Kai Synoxis, Greece: <https://fifty-fifty.gr/eras-ii/>
- DDTG Nonprofit Kft., Hungary: <https://www.ddtg.eu/eras-ii>
- Municipality of Orfu, Hungary <https://orfu.govern-soft.hu/page.php?49>
- Municipality of Lousada, Portugal: <https://www.cm-lousada.pt/pages/152>
- Municipality of Kekava, Latvia: <https://kekava.lv/nekategorizets/eras-projekta-ietvaros-sniedz-atbalstu-brivpratiqo-darbam/>
- Solis Tuvak, Latvia: https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid0vJkmJJanTghVaJcQoctL9BLVrwXzj28o4FNWi15rgBgbR9MM3WwW2ZPifTBpQHm7l&id=100064259666226&paipv=0&eav=AfZKGsaRlnGfU0TnXm0tm-YK7IQddZpJQimEmZ9rVhzosGS7KZtSrqqBwmRYVW93i0&_rdr

The event was open to the public and announced in advance on Facebook and in the local print media in the 8,000-circulation magazine "Made in Pécs". Link to media releases about the project: <https://www.erasnetwork.eu/media/>