



## ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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## Intercultural Education and Education for Democratic Citizenship

### *Project Citizen National Program*

The Intercultural Institute Timisoara has been coordinating the activities of the CIVITAS International Network in Romania since 2002, the most important activity being the implementation the Project Citizen methodology in schools, as part of the education for democratic citizenship classes.



Project Citizen is an innovative project-based method, based on the study of a problem in the local community which implies a public policy and which is chosen to be studied by pupils (detailed description available here). It is implemented in Romania based on a Collaboration Protocol with the Ministry of Education and Research, no. 40506, signed on the 27th of October 2004.

In 2016, an external evaluation study was realized in partnership with the Romanian-American Foundation to assess the impact of the program and identify options for its further development. A strategic development plan was produced based on the results of a consultation process with the key stakeholders.

The four strategic development directions that were defined as a result of the project and were implemented in the period 2017-2021, are:

- Updating the Project Citizen methodology, focusing on maintaining its accessibility for all students and on making it compatible with ICT use.
- Creating a comprehensive support system – handbook and guidelines for teachers, online platform for visibility and communication, web application, non-competitive incentive packages for schools, teachers and students.
- Training courses for teachers.
- An efficient management, support and monitoring system.

In 2017 the program was re-launched, with the support of and in partnership with the Romanian-American Foundation, aiming to pilot the implementation of the above mentioned strategic directions of program development. The main results achieved in 2017-2021 were:

- An updated Project Citizen methodology adapted to the specificities of the national curriculum;
- A set of Guidelines for the implementation of the methodology – for teachers and for students;
- An updated training program for civic education teachers which includes courses for beginners, post-training support for advanced teachers and an online training component);
- The adaptation of the training program to the online environment;
- The <https://cetateanul.intercultural.ro/online> platform for students and broader audience;

- The <https://prof.cetateanul.intercultural.ro/> online platform for the teachers who apply the method – containing a set of educational materials ready to be used in the classroom, both in the framework of the Project: Citizen project-based learning method and in the framework of other methodologies used in the Education for democratic citizenship classes, in accordance with the national curriculum;
- Local and national consultations with relevant stakeholders in the field of formal education;
- Training provided for over 600 teachers in 10 counties and Bucharest;
- Implementation of the method with over 11,000 students.

The program continued in 2022, offering training courses to teachers who were not familiar with the method and building a support system for the teachers who applied the method regularly.

Since August 2021 the program has also been supported through the project entitled “Democratic citizenship, a community project”, developed by the Intercultural Institute Timisoara in partnership with the Association for Solidarity, Culture, Education and Development (ASCED) in Râmnicu Sărat and the Human Rights Academy in Oslo, Norway. The project is funded through the Active Citizens Fund Romania, financed by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA Grants 2014-2021.

This project is implemented between the 1st of August 2021 and the 31st of March 2023 and it aims to develop several local civic groups that will support schools in the counties Alba, Argeş, Botoşani, Buzău, Gorj, Hunedoara, Maramureş and Vâlcea in their endeavour to develop students’ competences for democratic culture.

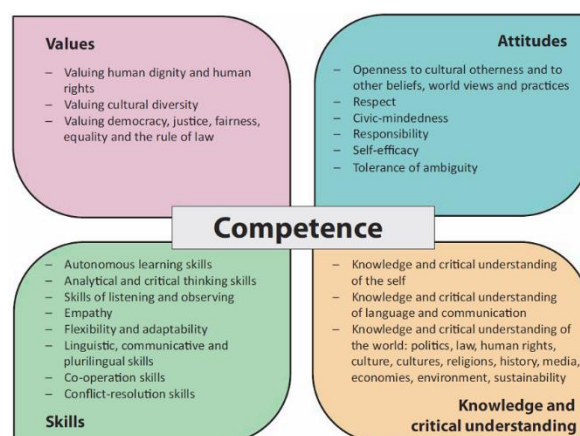
During the 2021-2022 school year, a volunteer network was created in the 8 counties, and online training courses were held for both the volunteers and the teachers who teach Civic Education in the 7th grade. The courses aimed at mastering the "Project: Citizen" method and supporting its implementation with students. At the end of the educational process, proposals for public policies were formulated by the students and directed to local authorities. Additionally, the volunteers supported teachers in organizing visits with students to local Council meetings.

An online conference was organized on May 20-22, 2022, during which presentations were made on the process of implementing the "Project: Citizen" method in the classroom. A total of 77 people participated in the event, including teachers and volunteers. The project activities also included a media literacy campaign and an awareness campaign on the importance of civic engagement. More resources are available on the social media page of the Intercultural Institute Timișoara and on the YouTube channel.

## Competences for Democratic Culture

In 2022 the Intercultural Institute continued the cooperation with the Education Department of the Council of Europe for further developing the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) and for developing practical tools for its implementation.

The Intercultural Institute had a very active role in the development of the RFCDC, especially by coordinating at European level the testing and validation of the descriptors of competence, which are included in volume 2 of the RFCDC. Details about the RFCDC are available in English at [www.coe.int/competences](http://www.coe.int/competences) and in Romanian at <http://ccd.intercultural.ro>. In 2021 the Council of Europe published the additional volume which includes the competence descriptors for children below the age of 10, coordinated by the IIT.



In 2021, the Intercultural Institute also concluded the testing process of the two tools aimed at assisting in the implementation of the RFCDC, respectively the RFCDC Portfolio and the RFCDC Teacher Self-Reflection Tool.

The RFCDC Portfolio has two versions, one for learners below age 10 and a standard version for learners above 10. Learners are thus guided to collect examples of situations, inside and outside of school, where they display behaviours illustrating various competences for democratic culture and to reflect on the situations and respective competences.

The RFCDC Teacher Self-Reflection Tool is hosted by the IIT at [www.trt.intercultural.ro](http://www.trt.intercultural.ro) and is also accessible in the section dedicated to the RFCDC on the Council of Europe site, [www.coe.int/rfcdc](http://www.coe.int/rfcdc)

In addition, the Intercultural Institute continued the promotion of the RFCDC among education professionals in Romania and at international level.

## Teaching about the Holocaust and Human Rights

The Intercultural Institute has been partner with The Olga Lengyel Institute for Holocaust Studies and Human Rights since 2015 to offer educational programs for Romanian teachers. Every year, a 4-day Summer Seminar for 30-40 teachers from across the country is offered in collaboration with Elie Wiesel National Institute for the Study of Holocaust in Romania.

The aim of the seminar is to contribute to increasing the quality of education regarding the Holocaust and social justice in Romania. The objectives of the program were to:

- Develop a coherent understanding of the Holocaust in Romania;
- Discuss methods and approaches for teaching the Holocaust;
- Develop teachers' understanding of the impact of stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination at individual, group and society level;
- Develop teachers' understanding of the Jewish life before and after the Holocaust;
- Learn about the Roma genocide during WWII;
- Address the link between Human Rights Education and Holocaust Education as a way to better understand the past and act for the future;
- Promote positive values for life in a diverse world, such as: tolerance, interculturalism, dialogue and appreciation of the other.

The 2021 seminar, co-financed through the Europe for Citizens programme of the European Union, the Dutch Jewish Humanitarian Fund and a donation from the Ausnit family, brought together in Cluj-Napoca 38 teachers from Romania. The seminar program included presentations on historical topics given by Romanian and international experts, a testimony given by Holocaust survivor Vasile Szekely, methodological workshops and case studies, but also a guided tour that included sites relevant for Jewish life in Cluj-Napoca. The teachers had the opportunity to learn about Holocaust History and look at the facts through the lens of human rights in order to understand the atrocities of the past and to identify the best approaches to teach their students to be active citizens opposing injustice, including anti-Roma racism.

As a follow-up of the seminar, teachers had the opportunity to apply for a small grant to implement local projects with their students in order to put into practice what they learned at the seminar. This initiative encourages teachers to be innovative and to engage their students in participatory learning activities focused on topics related to the Holocaust and human rights. At the same time, these projects take into account present-day realities and use the lessons of the Holocaust to motivate students to act against stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination in their own environment.

### **Intolerance has no place in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – Europe for Citizens**

This project - coordinated by the Fondazione Centro di Documentazione Ebraica Contemporanea, Italy, in partnership with the Intercultural Institute Timisoara, Terraforming South, Serbia and Big Picture Association, Poland - took place between 2021-2022, with the aim of raising public awareness about the need to oppose injustice, to act for the protection of human rights and to ensure that history does not repeat itself.

The project activities included organizing national seminars for teachers from Serbia, Italy, Poland and Romania, initiating local projects developed by teachers together with students and members of the local community, as well as organizing an international conference that took place in Timisoara in April 2022, bringing together 30 participants from 5 countries. As a result of this project, a Handbook was published that advances an interdisciplinary approach to the Holocaust, human rights and intercultural education: <https://www.intercultural.ro/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Learning-from-the-Past-Acting-for-the-Future.pdf>

## Demogames - Democracy and Games: Analog and Digital Game-Based-Learning Tools for Youth Work

In the fall of 2019, the Intercultural Institute, in partnership with GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies STIFTUNG (coordinator), Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe (Belgium), Demokrative - Initiative für politische Bildung (Switzerland), Asociación cultural Da2 Trucados (Spain) and Culture Goes Europe (CGE) - Soziokulturelle Initiative ERFURT EV (Germany), started the implementation of the project **Democracy and Games: Analog and Digital Game-Based-Learning Tools for Youth Work** (DEMOGAMES), financed through the Erasmus + Program, KA205 - Strategic Partnerships for Youth. The project has a duration of 36 months, between September 2019 and August 2022.



The project DEMOGAMES is based on the didactic approach of game-based learning and applies it to teaching young citizens on democracy. Mediated knowledge on democratic processes, norms and values often remains abstract. In contrast, highly complex facts can be conveyed in an active, participative and engaging manner through game based learning. With this project, several game based learning tools have been designed and tested that later on will be applied in promoting democracy education in youth work and non-formal education with the main purpose to engage, connect and empower young people.

The DEMOGAMES game box and the facilitator's manual that will accompany it will advance democracy education with respect to learning about, through and for democracy. Thus, young people will get familiar with the topic of democracy in an engaging and participative way by playing analogue and digital games. The active participation in playful units awakens young citizens' interest in the subject and promotes experiential learning. Building on the "Reference Framework of Competencies for Democratic Culture" (RFCDC), from the Council of Europe, educational methods have been designed to include different perspectives on democracy, highlight the benefits of cultural diversity for social and political life, with the aim to increase social inclusion by fostering beneficial dispositions towards democracy and the EU.

In 2022, IIT organized a Training of trainers (ToT), an event that prepared youth workers and non-formal education practitioners to use specific methods from the Demogames Box. The content focused on non-formal education methods and reflections on different concepts of democracy, as well as on learning how to use games in general and games from the Demogames Box to educate young people about, through and for democracy.

IIT was involved in creating the outline and structure of the Demogames facilitator's manual, with its main responsibilities including the inclusion and coverage of the subject of the Reference Framework for Democratic Culture Competences and describing ways in which gamification mobilizes and uses democratic competences. At the same time, IIT was also responsible for coordinating and creating MOOC videos about each game.

### Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe network (DARE)

The Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe (DARE) Network was officially launched on 28 June 2003 in Antwerp (Antwerp Declaration on Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe). It is a Europe-wide network of primarily NGOs, academic institutions and training providers devoted to promote active democratic citizenship and human rights through formal education, non-formal and informal education, and life-long learning.



The Intercultural Institute Timisoara is a member of DARE network.

In 2021, IIT participated in the General Assembly of the network, an event that took place online and included workshops on the topic of education for democratic citizenship and the new challenges for this field in the context of the coronavirus pandemic.

More details on the network's activities can be found at [www.dare-network.eu](http://www.dare-network.eu).

### Dealing with popular myths. Youth work against disinformation and distortion of historical facts

The Intercultural Institute Timisoara is a partner in this project that started in 2020 and aims to map myths and distortions of historical facts among youth and deconstruct them through the tools of historic-civic education.



The objectives of the project are:

- to increase the capacity of the partners to work with youth on resisting popular myths and distortions of historical facts;
- combat the spreading of fake news and other forms of online disinformation;
- counter myths and distortions with narrations based on historical facts;
- speak against discrimination, segregation and racism;
- fight manipulation and propaganda;
- develop critical thinking and media literacy;
- strengthen democracy and promote the European values.

The main target groups are the project's consortium, youth workers, teachers, youth and the general public. The project is carried out transnationally because it aims to discuss issues that are shared by different European countries, both historically (discrimination of minorities, scapegoating and othering, Holocaust..) and contemporarily (prejudices and stereotypes, fake news and hate speech).

In 2022, IIT produced 5 video materials of approximately 3 minutes each, which address a certain myth or historical distortion, which is deconstructed with the help of historical sources and methodologies from civic education and history. We also created a guide of approximately 50 pages that contains: the presentation and general concept of the project, the research within the project and a brief presentation of the specific cases of each country, deconstructed myths (2 per country, 10 in total), description of the production of video materials and suggestions on how they can be used in working with young people, methods used during the implementation of the project (in mixed mobility and training courses), suggestions for youth workers and teachers on how to use the materials produced within the project.

### Digital Destiny

The activities of the Digital Destiny project, financed by the European Commission through ERASMUS+ program, started in March 2021 and will last for two years. The project is coordinated by North Consulting in Iceland and involves, together with the Intercultural Institute Timisoara, partners from Belgium (DJAPO and Mediawijs, Flemish Knowledge Centre for Digital and Media Literacy) and Greece (The University of Western Macedonia).



A series of open educational resources for primary school teachers were elaborated to support them in developing sustainable development educational activities. The methods proposed include the use of digital storytelling and digital resources as well as approaching topics that are relevant for society, especially those related to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Resources that will facilitate the parental involvement in education will also be created. The original didactic approach elaborated is based upon the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture.

In 2022, the project developed a methodological framework and a digital resource kit. These resources were implemented and tested by primary school teachers who participated in an international online training course with six working sessions. IIT supervised the monitoring of training for Romanian teachers. Details about the project are available at [www.digitaldestiny.eu](http://www.digitaldestiny.eu).



## Diversity, Inclusion and Participation

### Track and Field for All

Initiated in 2020, the Track and Field for All project (T&F4All) is an innovative project which aims to use athletics for social and cultural integration. The project focuses on participation of young people in athletics activities in places where track and field activities are not so much practiced, in those neighbourhoods and streets where children and young people live in disadvantaged conditions.



The main priority of the project consists in encouraging the participation in sport activities of children and young people, from about 12 to 24 years of age, who mainly belong to groups with fewer opportunities, in particular migrants and ethnic minorities, such as Roma. Athletics consists of a series of disciplines that can be carried out by young people regardless of gender, and it also has the advantage that it doesn't require using large or expensive equipment, or complex teams or structures.

In 2022, IIT contributed to the creation of the "Guidelines for creating street athletics routes - street sports education". The general idea was to create a product that can be used both in the sports environment and in the educational one, to integrate young people, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and to actively involve them in an inclusion process using sport as a tool, to improve their skills and knowledge. This was translated into Romanian. IIT also organized a training course for sports teachers and educators on the topic of inclusion, with an emphasis on Roma youth. Following the training course, IIT coordinated two meetings during which Roma youth were encouraged to get involved in sports activities. Partners in this project are entities from Cyprus, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Spain and Turkey. The project includes various activities in 2020-2022 and is co-financed by the Erasmus+ program.

### ARMS – Migrants Assistance Services in Western Romania

The ARMS project is coordinated by the LOGS Association - Social Initiatives Group in partnership with the Intercultural Institute Timisoara and is financially supported through the Active Citizens Fund program.



The project aims to increase the capacity of the vulnerable group represented by immigrants arriving in the Western area of Romania, without legal entry, asylum seekers and refugees with a form of protection in Romania, by:

- providing counseling and information services on available services offered by authorities,

- emergency medical and material assistance (food, hygiene products, clothing)
- short-term integration services by providing training activities on life skills and accessing jobs, as well as activities aimed at facilitating overcoming trauma and achieving intercultural exchange.

IIT was responsible for ensuring the visibility of the project, both locally and nationally. In 2022, IIT was responsible for producing a brochure on the asylum application procedure in Romania. The aim was to create a simple and useful guide for those seeking asylum. Based on the specific needs of migrants entering Romania, the brochure was written in both Pashto and English, and was subsequently distributed to relevant border authorities and NGOs working in the field.

### People prepared for the future of Vulcan

The project *“People prepared for the future of Vulcan”* is financed through the Operational Programme (OP) “Human Capital” - POCU 2014-2020. The Intercultural Institute Timisoara is partner in this project together with S.C. Interlog Com SRL, as Project Promoter, Municipality of Vulcan and Mihai Viteazu Technological High-school Vulcan. The project has a duration of 30 months, starting with April 2021.



Starting from a generous general objective, the project aims to contribute to “the reduction of the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion in marginalized urban areas, totally or partially on the territory of Vulcan municipality, by implementing integrated measures that aim to improve life quality, foster social cohesion, improve the living environment (infrastructure, access to services,

housing) through economic growth on the local development strategy territory and specific employment measures for 740 people over a period of 30 months.” The Intercultural Institute Timisoara contributes to the achievement of the project objectives by implementing two sub-activities:

- A 5.1. Actions to combat discrimination among people from marginalized community;
- A 5.2. Social innovation actions – creating partnerships at community level.

By implementing methods specific to social-educational animation, intercultural education and participative governance, the IIT aims to obtain qualitative results that support a change in mentalities, behaviours and attitudes both at the level of the majority population and at the level of the population in marginalized communities, with a specific focus on children and young people in situations of social, educational and cultural exclusion in Vulcan municipality.

In 2022, at the level of the target group and the population, the implementation of both sub-activities began by applying questionnaires to identify cases of discrimination; informing

members of the target group about discrimination in general and to identify situations of discrimination in which they have been; sports events addressed to young people from the majority community and the Roma community; meetings between citizens from marginalized communities to identify the problems they face and the proposed solutions; establishing partnerships in the community and opening dialogue between citizens and local authorities.

### Local action for education in Timisoara

Partners: Intercultural Institute Timișoara, Timiș County School Inspectorate

Schools where the project is implemented: Gymnasium School No. 20, Rudolf Walther Gymnasium School, William Shakespeare Theoretical High School. The overall objective of the project is to contribute to the reduction of the number of people in situations of social exclusion in marginalized urban areas within the Timișoara Local Action Group (LAG) territory, by facilitating access to education and preparing teaching staff to work with children from disadvantaged areas, as well as supporting the development of a unified local community based on knowledge.



The specific objectives of the project are:

- Facilitating access to different levels and forms of education through integrated support measures that include educational and social dimensions for 160 children and young people from marginalized urban areas, of which at least 80 (50%) are of Roma ethnicity.
- Reducing school dropout rates and improving access to quality education for children and young people from marginalized urban areas by increasing the capacity of educational institutions within the LAG territory to provide inclusive and quality education.
- Initiating a sustainable mechanism based on social innovation, the principles of Lifelong Learning and Democratic Learning Resource Centers (DLRC), and local partnerships between educational, social, and economic institutions and organizations, involving community representatives, in order to facilitate long-term access to education for children and young people from marginalized urban areas within the LAG territory.

### **We act together! - Participation and intercultural dialogue for inclusion and community development."**

The Intercultural Institute Timisoara, in partnership with the Popular Foundation - European Social, Economic and Cultural Strategies, is implementing the project "Acțiune împreună! – Participare și dialog intercultural pentru incluziune și dezvoltare comunitară.", co-financed from the European Social Fund through the Human Capital Operational Program 2014-2020. The project was initiated in 2022 and will end in December 2023, being a contribution to the

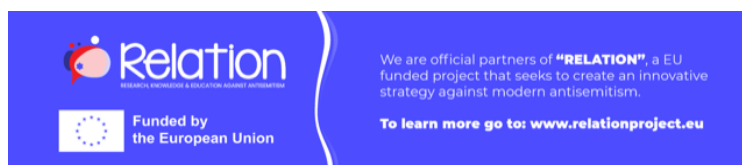
implementation of the local development strategy of marginalized urban areas on the territory of GAL Timisoara.

The general objective of the project is “increasing the social integration of disadvantaged people from marginalized communities on the SDL territory, through intercultural, artistic, civic participation and intercultural dialogue actions, as well as by improving the public image of these communities”. The target group of the project consists of 350 people, children, young people, students and adults from the GAL Timisoara territory.

Within the project, activities will be carried out to engage children and young people in socio-cultural animation interventions, story writing and public reading and community journalism that will contribute to acquiring competences that support overcoming marginalization risks and improving intercultural relations within targeted communities as well as with the majority community. Also, a cultural anthropology study on the memory of local population coexistence will be carried out, a film focused on changing the public image of marginalized communities will be produced and broadcasted and activities to support civic involvement of citizens and promote intercultural dialogue will be carried out.

### **RELATION – Research, Knowledge, Education against Antisemitism**

This project aims to create an innovative strategy for combating antisemitism that starts from a better knowledge of the Jewish history/traditions as part of the common history/traditions, and puts in place a set of educational activities in Italy, Spain, Romania and Belgium as well as online actions in order to tackle this phenomenon.



Initially, research will be conducted in order to map the state of the art, in each participating country, of antisemitic feelings and anti-Jewish prejudices/bias. The methodology used as framework for the research activities and data analysis will rely on Standpoint Feminism and Critical Discourse Analysis, which foster reflexivity and critical thinking, deconstruction of dominant antisemitic discourses and set for the alternative and counter-narratives. This methodology will be integrated by a web monitoring process. Given the lack of studies on the intersection of antisemitism and sexism, and the perception of antisemitism by Jewish Women (Gold, 1997; Stoenner 2020), our research might be able to fill some of the gaps in this field and inspire targeted campaigns.

Based on the research, educational activities for pupils and training activities for teachers will be developed. The project will mix formal and non-formal education, following the principles of human rights education of the Council of Europe and the European Union in the field of youth and the Guidelines for Policymakers developed by UNESCO and OSCE to address antisemitism through Education (2018). The pedagogical strategy is based on two aspects: a) the comparison on concrete cases of prejudice at the level of the teachers and b) the active participation of the students also through a peer to peer approach.

An online awareness raising campaign tailored for young people will be carried out to support them to substantiate their point of view on antisemitism and other forms of prejudice, intolerance and hate speech. The storytelling, that will be used both for pupils and for young adults activities, will contribute to raise awareness and reflect upon different cultural and religious backgrounds, bias and understandings.

The model and methodology used within RELATION project will be compiled in a book that will be published on paper and online and a handbook which will provide guidance for transferring the methodology in other EU countries.

Partners: Fondazione Centro di Documentazione Ebraica Contemporanea – CDEC, Italy (coordinator); Fondazione Hallgarten-Franchetti Centro Studi Villa Montesca, Italy; Intercultural Institute Timisoara, Romania; Università Degli Studi Di Milano, Italy; Università Cattolica Del Sacro Cuore, Italy; Comunitat Jueva Bet Shalom De Catalunya, Spain CEJI – A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe, Belgium

### **IDEA – Intersectoral Dialogue, Empowerment and Actions for Inclusion of Youth in Europe**

The main goal of the IDEA project is to create a context for dialogue between different entities working in the broad field of youth integration. Partners from Armenia, Austria, Spain, Slovakia and Romania have brought several relevant actors from their countries into the coalition. Thus, there are representatives of public or non-public actors working with: refugee and Roma youth; young people with disabilities; socially disadvantaged children and young people; victims of violence and many others. The entities will participate in face-to-face workshops in different European countries, so that they can acquire the use of new inclusion methodologies.



In 2022, IIT was responsible of creating an online space to promote intersectoral dialogue, facilitating entities from different European countries to share their know-how and methodologies, but also to initiate projects together. This will contribute to the exchange of practices and the creation of new alliances, for the benefit of all those involved.

### **Development of the civic capacity of rural communities by empowering the Roma rural communities**

The project entitled “Development of the civic capacity of rural communities by empowering the Roma rural communities” started in 2021 and it lasts for almost two years – until the middle of 2023 – and is coordinated by the Urban Regeneration Resource Centre Association in partnership with Nevo Parudimos Association and the Intercultural Institute Timisoara. The project benefits from EEA and Norway Grants funding, through the Active Citizens Fund. The program operator is The Resource Centre for Roma Communities.

The target group includes 800 disadvantaged people, among whom:

- a minimum of 500 Roma
- a minimum of 500 young people
- 25 representatives of local public authorities who will develop their capacity to develop and manage community development projects
- 25 teachers who will benefit from the intercultural education training program.

The project activities will be implemented in the Timis county, including Timisoara municipality and (alphabetically) Checea, Chevereșu Mare, Măguri - Lugoj, Pesac, Periam, Sânpetru Mare, Saravale, Satchinez.

The main expected results of the project are:

- 850 people benefiting from capacity building measures;
- 500 people from disadvantaged groups engaged in advocacy activities focused on their own needs;
- 500 people from disadvantaged groups consulted;
- 1 new and improved model of addressing the needs of disadvantaged groups;
- 800 people benefiting from awareness campaigns focused on the role of civil society organizations in society;
- 10 court actions supported by the project team.

The Intercultural Institute Timisoara is involved in developing the intercultural education aspect of the project.

### IIT – member of the Coalition for the Rights of Migrants and Refugees

The Intercultural Institute Timisoara is a member of the Coalition for the Rights of Migrants and Refugees (CRMIR, [www.cdmir.ro](http://www.cdmir.ro)): the Coalition was established in 2017 and now comprises 22



NGOs from all the regions of Romania, as well as 5 supporters from the academic environment and among international organizations. The CRMIR members cover a wide range of expertise, including research, advocacy, material, legal and health assistance, cultural orientation and intercultural dialogue. So far, it is the only entity of this kind active in the field of migration, asylum and integration in Romania.

The Coalition's mission is to ensure that the personal, civic, economic and social rights that every migrant and refugee benefits from on the Romanian territory are respected. Thus, CRMIR will coordinate advocacy activities, monitor their effect, interact with decision makers and influence the public decision in the field of migration in a transparent and fair way.

The main objectives of the Coalition are:

- to improve the image of migrants and refugees in the public space through a unitary communication strategy;



- to optimize migrants' and refugees' access to rights by correcting contradictory provisions or provisions that are not based on legal principles/ social justice in the legislation in force and by improving legal practices/ provisions with impact upon their fundamental rights.

The activities of the Coalition include:

- elaborating position papers regarding any aspect of interest in the migration practices, legislation and policy, meant to eliminate the malfunctions in their application;
- organizing information/ training sessions, seminars, conferences, events that aim at informing the public and relevant actors about (sensitive) aspects of migration;
- initiating debates, including public debates, on topics of interest;
- participating in sessions and meetings organized by public institutions and other types of organizations in the field of migration;
- monitoring the press in the field of migration;
- participating in the process of elaboration and adjustment of integration indicators and monitoring their collection by public institutions;
- monitoring the implementation of public policies and the activity of actors with responsibilities in the field of migration.

#### **IIT, as a member of the Board of Directors of the Association Local Action Group Vulcan (LAG Vulcan)**

As a result of the project “Now for the Future of Vulcan”, implemented in the period August 2017 – December 2017, IIT has developed activities specific to its status as founding member and member of the Board of Directors of the LAG Vulcan.



IIT insists on the importance of involving and consulting the members of the targeted communities. Thus, it initiated discussions in order to develop capacity building activities for these communities and to participate in a systematic dialog with the municipality and the LAG, as this is the core of the CLLD-type interventions (community-led local development) as an innovative tool in approaching social exclusion and marginalization, proposed by the European Commission for the period 2014-2020.

### The Crocus Project

The Crocus Project is an Irish initiative of Holocaust Education Ireland. Within the project, IIT has distributed crocus bulbs nationally for students over 10 years old to plant in memory of children during the Holocaust. Eventually, the flowers bloom around Holocaust Remembrance Day (January 27). The Crocus Project is a tangible way to introduce young people to the Holocaust and to raise awareness about the dangers of discrimination. In 2022, approximately 10,000 crocus bulbs were distributed to 85 schools in Romania.

### SHEILD

SHIELD is a project funded by the European Union's Internal Security Fund, aimed at protecting places of worship against the risks of extremism. SHIELD aims to strengthen security measures in places of worship by improving coordination, cooperation and communication between law enforcement agencies, public authorities, religious leaders and congregations. The combination of protection factor analysis and risk factor analysis within Shield brings together stakeholders and target groups to develop new measures to ensure the protection of these places and the resilience of believers of different religions.



The project results will be publications in the form of fact sheets and recommendations, and experience exchange sessions in the form of workshops and conferences, to increase awareness and information among target groups about practical measures and tools for increasing the protection of places of worship.

In 2022, IIT was responsible for outlining vulnerabilities and conducting a risk assessment on terrorist attacks on places of worship and religious buildings, respectively for representatives of Christianity, Judaism and Islam in Romania.

The SHIELD consortium consists of 18 partners from 10 EU countries, engaged for two years from January 2022 to December 2023.



## Youth

### Consultancy Council on Youth Issues Timisoara

The Intercultural Institute Timisoara is an active member within the youth public consultation structure of Timisoara. IIT was one of the founding members of the Consultancy Council on Youth Issues in Timisoara, a consultative structure without legal personality which functions on the basis of a structured dialogue regarding the elaboration and monitoring of public policy application in the field of youth at local level. At present, the CCYIT is coordinated by the Timisoara City Hall and has periodical consultancy meetings.

### Youth Express Network

The Intercultural Institute Timisoara has been an active member within this European youth network on social inclusion since 1996. In 2022, IIT continued the communication with the member organizations of the network, with the main aim of involving young people in non-formal activities that would develop their competences in the field of social inclusion, human rights and democratic citizenship.

### European Solidarity Corps volunteering

The purpose of this project was to contribute to the creation of a democratic culture in which young people are competent and encouraged to be active citizens who care about the societies in which they live, about the well-being and human rights of all members of these societies and who have the knowledge and tools necessary to oppose injustice and discrimination. As part of this project, volunteers were involved in several activities over the course of a whole year. They took part in activities in both formal and non-formal contexts, with the aim of promoting diversity, civic participation, human rights and social inclusion. Volunteers had the opportunity to work with teachers, students and young people, conducted documentary research and contributed to organizing online awareness campaigns.



One of the main tasks of the volunteers was to support a national project focused on developing students' competencies for democratic citizenship. Volunteers contributed to this project by working with both teachers and students to support this process. They also helped organize national and international courses for teachers who teach about history, human rights and the Holocaust. At the same time, they contributed to a human rights awareness campaign that was launched on social media. They had the opportunity to learn how to create and implement an awareness campaign, as well as to contribute innovative ideas based on their knowledge and experience.

The third type of activities in which volunteers were involved consisted of organizing workshops, meetings and small-scale projects that brought together Roma and non-Roma youth in several neighborhoods in Timisoara. Volunteers worked with education specialists from IIT, as well as with artists collaborating with IIT to involve Roma and non-Roma youth in cultural activities aimed at combating intolerance and promoting respect for diversity.

Volunteers have had the opportunity to experience different types of activities that focus on the same objectives and subjects but use different methodologies and target groups. Therefore, the organization's activities and, implicitly, the activities in which volunteers were involved are quite diverse and have offered each individual the opportunity to develop new skills and come up with ideas for actions and approaches to create a positive impact.

## Culture, Heritage and Cross-Border Cooperation

### Timisoara European Capital of Culture 2023 Programme

In 2022, IIT implemented a project within the "Timisoara 2023 - European Capital of Culture" Cultural Program, funded by the Municipality of Timisoara through the Timisoara Projects Center. All activities organized within the project aimed not only to promote Roma culture as an integral part of the local, Romanian and European cultural space, but also to explore its relationships with Roma identity and anti-Roma racism.



These three central themes were put under the spotlight and discussed with the support of specialized persons, Roma and non-Roma, with the aim of reducing anti-Roma racism and promoting a culture of respect and intercultural appreciation, in which stereotypes are recognized as such and thus lose their power to govern intercultural relationships.

In this sense, the activities involved interactions between Roma and non-Roma participants, as a first step towards reducing social distance between them. Theater performances and film screenings were followed by discussions with the audience, aimed at creating a context of equal dialogue between Roma and non-Roma about how a deeper understanding of contemporary Roma artistic and cultural expressions can lead to real social changes, both for the construction of Roma identity and for reducing anti-Roma racism.

The role of Roma intersectional feminist theater was essential in this endeavor, highlighting not only anti-Roma racism but also other types of discrimination, historical and current, targeting other groups of people, and sounding alarms about the need to address these issues at a systemic level.

The training for young artists in the field of cultural animation in Roma communities also aimed to create long-term contexts for overcoming stereotypes at an artistic and social level. The representation of Roma in art over time has carried a certain image about Roma that has not captured the inherent diversity of Roma communities. The training aimed to sensitize

young artists in this regard, in addition to providing them with skills to carry out cultural animation activities in Roma communities, continued in 2023.

Reflection on Roma culture at European level centered on collaboration with the European Institute for Roma Art and Culture and included a conference and a workshop, innovative events focused on changing perceptions about Roma cultural heritage as part of European culture and supporting new forms of cultural expression by Roma artists, addressing both the historical dimension of Roma culture and specifically Roma slavery.

Although this project ended in December 2022, it is followed by a new project that includes the same goals in 2023, achieved through various artistic performances, exhibitions, training sessions and an academic workshop.

### **Mocioni Mansion in Foeni**

The year 2021 marked the start of the activities of the project focused on the rehabilitation and capitalization of the Mocioni Mansion in Foeni, a monument dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> century situated at about 50 km away from Timisoara. The project is implemented by the Timis County Council, in partnership with the Intercultural Institute Timisoara and NORTH Consulting ehf Iceland, between May 2021 and April 2024, co-funded by the EEA Grants 2014-2021 through the RO-CULTURE Program, the Timis County budget, IIT budget and state budget.

The Mocioni Mansion in Foeni was built in 1750 as a nobiliary residence for the Mocioni family, famous scholars, philosophers and politicians of Aromanian origin, who militated for and supported the rights, education and emancipation of the Romanians in Transylvania during the Austro-Hungarian domination.

The Intercultural Institute Timisoara was responsible for implementing the Capitalization Plan of the restored historical monument, including a centre for cultural, educational and artistic activities that will highlight the talent, creativity and cultural heritage that exist in the intervention area, which encompasses the local, regional and international level.

### **The Beit Project – The Nomadic School of European Remembrance**

The Beit Project / is an innovative international project about living together with others. It combines historical heritage with reflection on cultural diversity and its challenges. The project responds to the need to create a dialogue between young people from different socio-cultural backgrounds by studying and interpreting their urban environment and its history. Over several days, young people from two different schools get to know each other and work together. In the midst of urban heritage sites, the project brings together two groups of students from different schools, with a



maximum of 16 young people, in 2-day sessions. The students begin to build a nomadic school together, a temporary place of study. This dynamic process, which takes place over two days, allows each group (half a class from each school) to develop skills related to history, geography, civic education, arts, science and technology. Building their own “study house” is the first step of the project, the first joint activity of two students interacting for the first time.

After the urban sessions, the activity continues with the stage where students edit their videos to present them at a public event. The public presentation event allows students to present their audio-visual works to an audience made up of locals, people involved in education, heritage, local urban development, family, colleagues and any other interested persons.

The project has already been carried out in 16 European and Mediterranean cities: Paris, Marseille, Barcelona, Brussels, Rome, Berlin, London, Lodz, Tangier, Sofia, Skopje, Nice, Athens, Nantes, Bucharest and Iasi. This year it is for the first time in Timisoara. It is co-financed by the European Union within the Citizens program. Equality Rights and Values - European Memory. The project is also co-financed by the Municipality of Timisoara through the Timisoara Project Center and is part of the Cultural Program “Timisoara 2023 - European Capital of Culture”.