

**The project « Back to the future » 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 102 citizens, notably 12 participants from the city of Camariñas (**Spain**), 12 participants from the city of Daugavpils (**Latvia**), 8 participants from the city of Övertorneå (**Sweden**), 11 participants from the city of Almansa (**Spain**), 7 participants from the city of Tubize (**Belgium**) and 52 from the city of Blansko (**Czech Republic**).

**Location/ Dates:** The event took place in Scandiano (**Reggio Emilia, Italy**), from 18/03/2015 to 23/03/2015.

**Short description:** On the occasion of the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the twinning agreement between the cities of Scandiano (IT) and Blansko – CZ (signed in 1964/65) and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary between Scandiano and Almansa – ES (signed in 1989), we created a good opportunity to reflect upon the meaning of these twinings and in particular upon their evolution from the postwar period to date. The aim of this project is to prevent the diffusion of an individualist and skeptic attitude of the citizens towards the EU by making them understand that the "official" history of these latest 50 years of Europe is, after all, much closer to their everyday life than expected. We haven't retraced this half century of European history by quoting books and official historiography, but by encouraging the citizens of all partner cities to retrieve their memories, in particular those bound to the main European incidents/events and to their "European experiences". In other words, we have recalled and collected the collective memories from 1964 to date, with a glance backwards, i.e. to the twinning exchanges experienced with our partners so far, but also with a future-oriented perspective, that is the participation to EU projects, such as European citizens' meetings, life-long learning project (former Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo or Grundtvig) and so forth. We wanted everybody to understand that the history of Europe is, in the end, deeply intertwined with their own personal history, therefore definitely "living", actual and rooted in everybody's reality, and, as active European citizens all of them played, are playing and will play their role in the shaping of the EU.

The day of 18/03/2015 was dedicated to the arrival and welcoming of the delegations, accommodation c/o the families of the territory.

The day of 19/03/2015 was dedicated to the deepening of the participants' knowledge about the culture and the monuments of the hosting town. Then, the exhibition "Back to the future: on the trail of our European history" was inaugurated by both European guests and local participants. The historic description, the personal memories, the pictures and the objects were inputs for reflection, discussion and sharing of opinions and thoughts. Meanwhile, at "Circolo Al Ponte" (in Jano, one of Scandiano's hamlets) young artists from Italy and Sweden started a 4-days work to create a street-writing piece of art expressing fusion and harmony between the respective cultures of origin.

The day of 20/03/2015 was dedicated to the deepening of the knowledge about the hosting territory and the socialization among the participants coming from several different countries. The delegations visited Reggio-Emilia and Parma, and they had lunch at the "A. Motti" institute, a vocational school specialized in Hotel management and Catering, who has a strong experience in the field of EU projects.

The day of 21/03/2015 was articulated in two parts: in the morning some workshops (Europe, cuisine, traditional art decoration) were arranged at the M. M. Boiardo Junior High school for kids, teens and adults; in the afternoon in the Boiardo's Fortress there was a conference named "50 years together: from the Berlin wall to the Smart Europe" with some remarkable speakers such as the Regional councillor to European Policies Patrizio Bianchi, the Member of Italian Parliament Mr. Maino Marchi and the Member of the Czech Parliament Ing. Lubomir Toufar. In the evening, some artists coming from the partner countries performed at the Youth Centre (mainly theatre and folk dance) for the host families and the broader public (free entrance).

The day of 22/03/2015 was dedicated to the celebration of the 50<sup>o</sup> anniversary of the twinning between Scandiano and Blansko and the 25<sup>o</sup> anniversary of the twinning between Scandiano and Almansa. All delegations took part to the ceremony, as this special event was worth being shared with all participating countries, as it is a good example of friendly relationship that have been able to last and renew themselves over the time.

The day of 23/03/2015 was dedicated to the visit of some kindergartens and primary schools in Scandiano (as several participants were school staff members) and then to the departure of the delegations.