

were involved related to prejudice, discrimination, conflict. Each group had to explore and share situations in personal life and make it as a play but in frozen image. After one group showed the image the rest of the group had a task to approach to certain character and ask questions related to showed image. This particular approach help participants to understand better the message that group wanted to send. Further, to raise awareness about looking at it from the different angle. This was good precondition for further discussion within the group. The learning points that came out from the session were the biggest learning point for the group. How to react and to recognize the violence was something that group liked to discuss also how to react when violence is latent and how to be assertive.

**Prepared by Dejana Bibic,  
LDA Subotica EVS coordinator**

>>>>>>>> This journey began with some simple exercises where participants had to imagine the worst possible situation (experience) in their life and to give a special and crazy hug. To learn how to write a name using hips. After this first part of warming up with participants, it followed the main part – Image Forum Theater. The aim was for the participants to firstly understand

the concept with purpose for further development of forum theater in their organization and secondly to experience directly dealing with process. The workshop started with few introductory games described in text above, afterwards participant started to explore using images Forum Theater. First task was to discuss with small group about situations in which participants

## ROUND TABLE AND STUDY VISIT TO OSIJEK CITIES IN PARTNERSHIP FOR EU

Participants in the Round table were some 35 representatives of local governments, civil society organisations, national minorities from Subotica, Mostar, Osijek, and Szeged. The main objective of this project's component titled School of Local Democracy was to help improve intercultural dialogue in the region through improving the interaction and co-operation between the local governments included on one side and representatives of diverse organisations and institutions from multiethnic local communities. The two day programme included also the study visit to Osijek, to Tourist Information

Office, Archeological Museum and the University Campus (the largest regeneration programme taking place in Osijek). Both the round table and study visit coincided with marking of the Day of Osijek and with a number of side events, including the international seminar for the youth councils – from sister cities with Osijek and the signing of the Co-operation agreement between Subotica and Osijek.

In the programme of the round table particular emphasis was on exchange of best local practice in diversity management and citizen participation in local development strategies. Therefore, the Agenda was designed to combine experts' presentations on some key challenges of good democratic governance within the present context and relations between Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Presentations also included some key challenges in relation with the ongoing democratic reforms and EU integration, efforts aimed at reconciliation process and regional co-operation initiatives involving the three countries.





Further to this, during the two thematic panels, potential co-operation initiatives were explored in support to promoting the local governments as actors of confidence building and reconciliation.

In his introductory presentation, Miljenko Turniski, Delegate of LDA Osijek, presented the work of LDA-s in respective cities and emphasized the efforts of local policy and decision makers in bringing different sections of local communities together, especially in the process of improving the relations and mutual trust in post-conflict societies. Cross-border and regional co-operation programmes were specifically mentioned as a potential tool for designing and implementing local development strategies based on the principles of good democratic governance. The role of local civil society is therefore essential to promote the civil dialogue and cross-sectoral co-operation and partnerships. Those

were the main messages conveyed by the key note speakers in the panel were Mr. Damir Juric, political analyst from Osijek, Bosko Kovacevic, sociologist from Subotica, Jovan Komsic, sociologist from Novi Sad, Mihal Ramac, media expert, Novi Sad and Esad Bajtal, NGO expert from Sarajevo, Gordana Stojanovic, Osjecko Baranjska Regional Development Agency manager, Osijek. Incentives for people-to-people contacts were debated during the panel how to get the cities - Osijek, Mostar and Subotica closer.

## SUBOTICA – A EUROPEAN INTERCULTURAL CITY

*Intercultural governance at local level – how it works*

*Mediation, an efficient tool for inclusion of Roma population*

Subotica is a multiethnic municipality where none of the communities is represented in an absolute majority. Therefore, good local practices in managing cultural diversity are crucial issues. Among these communities is the Roma population, estimated between 3000 and 4000 people. Yet, local Roma people have different backgrounds; whereas some of them settled in Subotica a long time ago, others are refugees from Kosovo and Macedonia or were evicted from Europe. They belong to different religions: Orthodox, Catholic or Muslim.

The main mission of the Roma Education Center (ECR) from Subotica is the inclusion of Roma people into the society. The primary target groups are children, youth and women of Roma nationality. One of the main fields of action is education. ECR is acting as a

mediator between Roma people and the educational system. The basic idea is that to be fully part of the society, Roma people have to be educated. Consequently, ECR strongly encourages Roma children and young people to attend school. Among its tools, ECR has five pedagogical assistants working in classes in order to help pupils to adapt themselves in terms of language, socialization etc...

In a more global overview, ECR is mediating between Roma families and their whole surrounding including educational system, local communities, municipality and all the other institutions capable of helping for the inclusion of Roma. At the same time ECR is working with Roma to prepare them to become partners at the same level as other local communities within the society. It also aims to strengthen their position, for them to be visible and able to represent themselves. All in all, ECR directly helps around 2000 people.

In that sense, Subotica is a model of good governance for Roma people. From its foundation in 2005, ECR has created everything from the beginning. Now, it wants to share its experience and

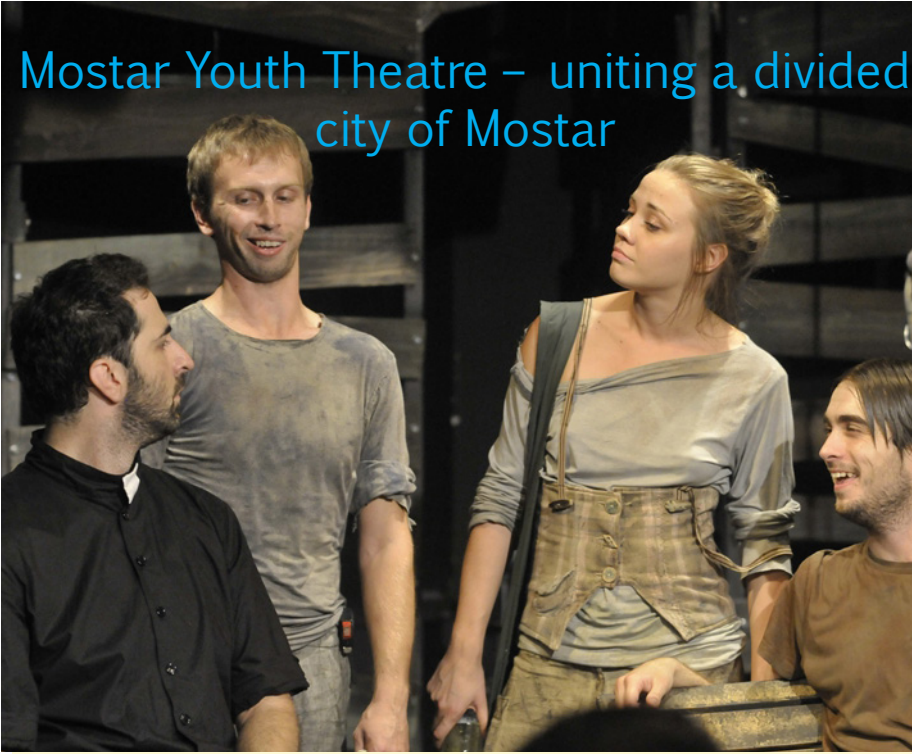


spread its model. It is already working to implement its practices in Vojvodina and in the rest of Serbia while contacts have already been taken with Montenegro. ECR believes that Roma issues are everywhere alike, that is the reason why it is looking for close cooperation at grassroots level in the whole Europe.

### Contact details of ECR:

President: Stevan Nikolic  
 Website: [www.ec-roma.org.rs](http://www.ec-roma.org.rs)  
 Mail: [office@ec-roma.org.yu](mailto:office@ec-roma.org.yu)  
 Phone: (+381 24) 527-474

## Mostar Youth Theatre – uniting a divided city of Mostar



Historic city of Mostar - a cultural and tourist center in the South of Bosnia and Herzegovina - has been divided into two camps since the Bosnian War (1992-1995): the Muslim-Bosnian East and the Catholic-Croatian West. Although the Old Bridge in Mostar is bridging the two parts of the city, it is not all about the bridge that unites this diverse city.

Mostar Youth Theatre (Mostarski Teatar Mladih) [www.mtm.ba](http://www.mtm.ba) is definitely not less important in transcending ethnic boundaries for over 35 years. At the moment this is a creative space with six nationalities under one roof. Bosnians, Serbs, Croats, Roma volunteers, representatives of Greek and German nations are sharing their ideas and working towards the common goal.

Mostar Youth Theatre (MTM) is primarily a theatre of ideas. Ideas which are particularly independent of all ideology, nationalism and division of any kind. The theatre is a project that focuses on a new, open and contemporary art of theatre. Mostar Youth Theatre

despite all the problems of recent times, maintained a steady, uninterrupted course, with 134 premieres and 5000 repeat performances, as well as 1200 other events. Its plays and shows have been attended by over 2 million viewers on four continents. One of the essential things for Mostar Youth Theatre is interaction with audience which is appreciated, considered as well as informed and educated.

It is also important to say that MTM has created a performance "Mother Courage" (Bertolt Brecht), directed by Rahim Burhan, in cooperation with Roma Theatre „Pralipe“ and forum play on topic Discrimination in education "Here, at our parts", as a result of a workshop, in cooperation with Roma community. These examples of cooperation once again confirm the fact that art and especially theatre is totally indifferent to the race, nationality or religion and is a powerful tool in creating the bonds between people from different ethnic and national backgrounds.

A great part of MTM work is dedicated to the continuous and systematic theatrical education of children and young people under the progressive and modern European methods. There are childrens and youth drama groups, a senior MTM group, a music group, a dance group, a video-art group and the MTM club-gallery in the Mostar Youth Theatre.

Every year Mostar Youth Theatre organizes The International Theatre Festival of Authorial Projects, which is usually held at the end of August. MTM makes four awards for the best original new pieces. They are called the "Mravac" awards.

Mostar Youth Theatre, through the Centre for Educational Drama in Bosnia & Herzegovina (CDO BiH) <http://www.cdobih.org/> is a member of the International Drama/theatre Education Association (IDEA). Theatre's members are also members of several international associations and networks, what enables them to maintain a constant communication with theatres, theatre workers, universities, drama critics and other professionals from around the world.

In conclusion, Mostar Youth Theatre is aiming to preserve the spirit of intercultural dialogue among the youth groups of different ethnic background in the divided city of Mostar since 1974. Its entire concept has been based on educating the young people for intercultural understanding. The theatre art, or the art of play, as Sead Djulic an Artistic Director of the Theatre reiterated, may have a powerful role in healing the wounds of the past conflicts.

### Contact information of the Theatre:

E-mail address: [cdo@bih.net.ba](mailto:cdo@bih.net.ba)

Phone: +38736558485

Address: Trg Republike 1  
88000 Mostar  
Bosnia and Herzegovina

# LOCAL DEMOCRACY AGENCY

DECEMBER 2010.

## ASAN

### WOLVERHAMPTON, UK: All Saints Action Network (ASAN): strengthening community links

All Saints Action Network is an independent charitable company which aims to improve the quality of life for people who live and work in All Saints and neighbouring areas. The area of All Saints is an old established community in the centre of Wolverhampton. Over time the community has changed and these days there are a wide range of people from different backgrounds. The largest communities are from India and Jamaica but in the last five years, increasing numbers of people have started arriving from Eastern Europe, Africa and the Middle East. ASAN is now a membership organisation with about 400 households representing about 1500. Many people from these communities are ASAN members.

ASAN was created by local residents because they were angry at the decline of the economy in their community. In 1995 the local hospital, the Royal Hospital closed with a very large loss of jobs and local people decided to form a new organisation to try and improve the local community. ASAN was created as a legal company and charity and people from the local community and from churches and other organisations. ASAN started off by developing a number of priorities with local people. These included the need to develop services for the local community and also the need to create businesses to provide local jobs.

The priorities set for local services were the establishment of the community centre, the building of sports facilities, encouraging local people to be involved in their heritage and the developing of a community maintenance project. ASAN is now based in the old Church which it shares with the church community. This is a close working relationship which has developed considerably over the last few years. The church now run a community business providing food from the Community Centre. The community maintenance project has also been a very important local development. ASAN owns about £5000 worth of tools which it hires out free to local people for their use. Local people need to sign up to be a member of ASAN to access this service.

The priorities for creating business were quite opportunistic. The first business was a car park and storage facility. This has been followed by a furniture business. Two years ago ASAN purchased and refurbished an old school which it has now turned into offices and a conference and seminar centre. The most recent business is a nursery which was set up earlier this year. The businesses remain a key part of the ASAN approach. The businesses enable ASAN to develop new activities and invest in the local community.

ASAN has developed a range of different partnerships with local groups and with public and private bodies. Many of the

organisations that ASAN works with serve specific communities. A number of groups for example just provide services to the Indian community. ASAN supports them by trying to assist them to access funding and other support. In the past, ASAN has worked with young people to encourage them to organise their own sporting activities based at ASAN's sports facilities. In 2007 and 2008, a group from All Saints went over to Budapest to share a sports programme with a sports club there and the visit was returned the following year.



Trying to repeat those kinds of programmes is difficult simply because it is expensive to organise visits abroad. ASAN is currently planning a new project involving artists some of whom are students at the local university. The project is partly about helping local artists to display their work by providing them with rooms to mount exhibitions. However the project is also planning to create "public art" on the exterior of an old school that ASAN is currently negotiating to take over from the City Council.

If you would like to have further information on ASAN and its work, you can visit the website at [www.asan.org.uk](http://www.asan.org.uk). There are various related links to other activities that ASAN is involved. You can also contact Mike Swain direct on [mikeswain@asan.org.uk](mailto:mikeswain@asan.org.uk)

## New EVS volunteers in LDA Subotica

# Hello! Sveiki! Bonjour!

We are Gabriela, Gregoire and Agnes, the three volunteers doing their European Voluntary Service (EVS) in LDA Subotica. Until the end of July 2011, we dedicate our time to various activities: the project 'Regional Partnership for intercultural exchange'; the work with young people on topics such as Europe,

democracy or volunteering; LDA publications and microcredit project.

We are looking forward for working with you and living such an intercultural experience in Subotica. Please do not hesitate to get in touch:

Gabriele Kuštan:

[gabriele.kustan@aldaintranet.org](mailto:gabriele.kustan@aldaintranet.org)



Grégoire Vialleton:

[gregoire.vialleton@aldaintranet.org](mailto:gregoire.vialleton@aldaintranet.org)

Agnes Rivet:

[agnes.rivet@aldaintranet.org](mailto:agnes.rivet@aldaintranet.org)

## Tales from three cities

### SUBOTICA: A bridge with no river

*Old Slavs are used to believing that evil spirits could be hiding in caves, under the doorsteps or under the bridges. In Subotica, that belief has led to the tradition that during the wedding ceremony, the groom has to carry his bride across a bridge in order to dispel the evil spirits. Subotica used to have a canal with a bridge upon it. But over the last century, this canal slowly disappeared. Even if the bridge stayed, it started to become less and less visible. Nevertheless, this tradition remained until today.*

*Subotica is famous for having a very high rate of ethnically mixed marriages: around one third of the total number of marriages is between persons from different communities. Even though the past conflicts contributed to increased ethnic distance, constant efforts are made to improve intercultural understanding, especially among the youth. In many ways, the bridge symbolically contributes to the process.*

*Last October, the bridge located in the city district called Prozivka was renovated. From a former almost invisible site, the bridge has become an important regeneration component of a densely populated city district. Further to this, the bridge is already used as a meeting point for all citizens, especially those thinking of getting married...*

