**European Cultures Together Part Two**

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**Context and overall objectives**

The Context of European Cultures Together programme is to bring the identities of EU Cultures including marginalised communities to other partners. ECT 2 is the second instalment of our planned trilogy of European Cultures Together programme. We highlighted our partners arts, heritage and their cultures as we foster an interactive approach across our partners to promote and advance traditional cultural activities thus, creating a union of multi culturalism. This Cuisine event advanced the cultural flavours and traditions of each partners traditional dishes. These displays gave the over 300 members of the public and our delegates the unique opportunity to taste the flavours from across Europe and beyond as other communities joined the event giving us sixteen display tables for the Savour Festival of Food Event. This allied with the workshops and direct engagements, arts & drama Performances, with presentations allowing all present to explore the flavours of Europe, rich and diverse cultures and diversity of styles. The delegates exuded immense enthusiasm for their own traditional costumes, arts, heritage and culture, however their willingness to explore all of the cultures on display indicates that Europe as a collective would benefit from combined as well as individual cultural themes. The European union, without its cultures, would be like a tree without its leaves.

These integrative, inclusive and open activities allowed TCG to hit the objectives of ECT. These activities with the specific inclusion of marginalized communities such as Roma, Traveller, LGBTQ and our' New Communities’ created a sense of European identity which in turn can create a greater feeling of self-worth (Dubowitz, 2020) Our event highlighted the need for more awareness, inclusion and visibility. By bring the marginalized groups into ECT and the interaction and integration during workshops strengthens the findings of Dubowits (2020). Gender identity was to the fore in all activities which was visible during the Courageous conversations which recognized Article 21 (Non-discrimination) Article 22(Cultural, Religious & Linguistic & Diversity) &(Equality between genders)

**Work performed and main achievements**

The main event of European Cultures Together was the Savour of food festival on the 27th of October in the four-star Ormond Hotel Kilkenny. This allowed the Partners of ECT 2 to promote their cultures, cuisine and traditions to other Nationalities present. On the day other affiliated multinational community groups associated with Twilight Community Group displayed their cuisine and traditions ensuring that the event was a multicultural programme. This allowed us to successfully reach our main achievement that being Integration, acceptance and interaction within a diverse range of cultures. It gave Visibility to the Minority groups on the day. Through interaction and open discussion, it brought awareness, visibility and inclusion of our LGBTQ, TRANS, Roma and Traveller Communities present. While this allowed the delegates to interact and discuss their cultures and the similarities and differences, we had more structured approaches through our Direct engagement event and our workshops. Direct engagement highlighted the cultures of the programme through Arts, Music and Drama which included languages and Presentations from our Partners on different aspects of the programme. These structured workshops are a vital component which facilitated strong courageous conversations and debate. This allows the freedom to open and honestly discuss the ECT project and reflect on its objectives and discuss the Workshop presentations. The venues for the Presentations and the workshops were specifically selected to give maximum exposure for the ECT objectives of Integration, inclusion and interaction of the cultures. It was built into the programme visits to the Cultural Venues of Kilkenny. We ensured that all the delegates were exposed to the International Savour Food Festival as this gave everyone the opportunity to experiences all that is best in Irish Cuisine.

**Results and impacts**

The ECT Project was completed October 29th 2023. The aims of the project were to create awareness, inclusion of all the community groups and the marginalised groups and ensuring and enhancing the visibility of the groups. Often these groups are excluded from mainstream society; our aim was to dispelled all the preconceived ideas that create stigmatization and discrimination of the LGBTQ , Trans, and minority and social economic disadvantaged groups. The targeted groups of Twilight and the 8 partners included participants from the LGBTI+ community, Traveller, Roma, Ethnic minorities and those experiencing a socio-economic disadvantage. This aspect of the ECT2 was an important element of the programme, the collaboration and courageous conversations helped to reduce the identified gap through a celebration of diversity and promotion of mutual understanding and shared cultural experiences. These interactions will advance the promotion of EU values, help to alleviate stigmatization and combat disinformation.

The project has increased social interaction, diverse friendships, advanced cultural knowledge, promoted diversity awareness and fostered the spirt of Inter-culturalism; the connecting of cultures increased the awareness of all communities targeting those who are marginalized and increased visibility for all; ensuring a society where diversity for all is accepted and celebrated. The impacts of reducing the identified gaps by celebrating diversity and promoting mutual understanding and sharing cultural experiences will have a long term and sustainable affects. When the Trilogy of European Cultures Together Programme is completed in 2024, the advancement of stronger co-operation and interaction between the partners will enhanced the Impacts to a higher degree, it is our belief that continued collaboration of the partner organizations will strengthen the goals of Inter-culturalism and promote our ethos of ‘Communities are Stronger Together’ .