



## EMBRACE DIVERSITY

Moldova, 19 - 27.06.2016

*'And if we cannot end now our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity. For, in the final analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's futures. And we are all mortal.'* - John F. Kennedy



I have always believed in that every human being is created equal, therefore we have to show respect to each other. But as I see the globalisation processes - which should contribute to bring people together to achieve more understanding- prevents us from breaking down the walls of discrimination.

Why is it so difficult to turn the idea of human equality into a reality? A major factor is human nature. Former U.S. congressman William

Randolph Hearst once said: "All men are created equal in one respect, at least, and that is their desire to be unequal." What did he mean? Perhaps 19th-century French dramatist Henry Becque said it more clearly: "What makes equality such a difficult business is that we only want it with our superiors." In other words, people want to be equal with those above them on the social scale; but not many would be willing to limit their privileges and advantages by granting equality to those they consider to be below them.

But what could I do personally to be more open and reduce my preconceptions? When I was wondering on this question I saw the call for participants for the Erasmus+ Contact making event named Embrace Diversity. I was sure, I have to be the part of this event. This is how I became a member of a wonderful experience.



The event was organised by the Danish InterCollege, a non-governmental organisation which goal is to stimulate global progress, built on international respect, understanding and coherence. They invited 33 young leaders from twelve countries to take part actively at the event in Vadul lui Voda.



The aim of the Contact Making Event (CME) was to strengthen the cooperation of European organizations regarding the inclusion of LGBT community. Although the main goal was networking we had plenty of opportunities to learn and gain more information on the topic. The activities of the CME included interactive exercises, workshops, presentations, discussions and group work.

For me the discussions were really interesting, they gave me a bunch of new information regarding the LGBT community. The participants said that LGBT organisations from post-Soviet countries (Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine) are constantly facing problems of homophobia in the society. They shared their experiences in the field of prevention of the

homophobe legislation and fighting against hate crime.

The team also visited the capital, Chisinau. There we had time to enjoy the beautiful view of the parks, visit The Metropolitan Cathedral “Nativity of the Lord” and enjoy local food and wine.

During our stay in order to raise the awareness for the rights of the LGBT people from all over Moldova, a march “Fara Frica” (No Fear) were organised in Chisinau on the 22th of May.

The march took place in silence, coordinator of the GENDERDOC-M Moldova programme, Angela Frolov, has said that “in silence, we can hear each other without fear of any kind, and the freedom starts from inside: if we overcome the fear, we become free.” The participants in the solidarity march wore white jerseys, with the campaign’s logo, No Fear.

While we were in the city, we saw a huge group of people from the orthodox church demonstrating against the Moldovan LGBT movement. On the other street there were young men, radical nationalists they also wanted to literally fight against the people who joined the solidarity walk. Fortunately, no one was harmed throughout the event.





The CME provided us a friendly and open environment, best for networking. We had plenty of free time, what we used for great conversations, walking around the local area and learning new card games.

I am glad that I took this opportunity, because my first Erasmus+ experience will definitely remain a delightful memory. I am happy for the chance to visit Moldova, a unique and green country with all the unusual habits, noisy markets and half-legal minibuses as public transportation.

The whole CMU, including the discussions, workshops and project work had a huge effect on me. I am sure that the programme reached its goal. I made a lot of new connections, and hopefully in the (near) future I will be able to work together with the lovely people whom I met.

I am thankful to the InterCollege team for the organisation, and to the ICRP for their support and guidance.



*Annamária Beláz*