



# Report on voluntary paths

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## INDEX

PREFACE	4
FRANCE	6
La Communauté de Communes Du Pays de Saint Aulaye	6
Veynes	13
GERMANY	20
Freizeitzentrum Upsala	20
KulturMarktHalle	28
ITALY	38
Paestum	38
Rovigo	44
Scicli	50



## PREFACE

In the 7 Local Community Hubs of INVOLVE, more than 14 permanent volunteer activities have been started. They represent the key tool of the Project to foster the encounter between different cultures and take care of people and places together.

Each volunteering activity was co-designed together with the community of volunteers of the project (both local and third-country citizens) in a participatory process that involved administrators and representatives of the most important civil society organizations of each pilot location.

Therefore, the design and development of volunteering activities were based on a process of identifying local needs and criticalities, building alliances and territorial networks, as described and formalized in the INVOLVE "Inclusion Model" (see deliverable No. 2.2).

Also for the INVOLVE project, the pandemic due to COVID-19 has strongly influenced the continuation of the project, as well as the voluntary activities.

In order to guarantee the continuity of the actions, the Technical Committee has adapted and simplified the activities to be carried out under the supervision of the European Project Officer.

With the amendment presented on 2 December (and accepted on 17 December), changes were made to some project activities.

Among these, the "permanent volunteering activities" were updated to respond to the pandemic crisis and the health measures adopted in each country, in deliverable 4.2 "Updates 14 voluntary intervention programs" (presented on December 28, 2020).

Thanks to the great commitment of the Local Coordinators and Social Assistants of the Project, the voluntary activities continued ensuring the safety and protection of all participants in the project activities, in full compliance with all health measures adopted at local, national and international levels. Furthermore, INVOLVE has managed not only to maintain the social



relations already established but also to become a determining element for social cohesion, in the light of the global health drama of the pandemic which has accentuated inequalities, creating new social marginalities among the most vulnerable people. , often foreign.

Volunteer activities carried out in the pilot sites of the project are listed below.



## FRANCE

### La Communauté de Communes Du Pays de Saint Aulaye

#### Introduction

2019 was a year dedicated to the structuring of the activities, we see that the knowledge acquired, and the friendships born have led to a succession of initiatives and events that brought people together and created a network of active citizens ready to take care of each other. Following a needs analysis carried out within the Community Pole, several essential points were identified: the need to focus on interculturality rather than migration, the need for help in organising cultural events or more concrete projects for building and maintaining the environment, as well as a need for the involvement of new people, the need for meeting spaces, etc...

Thus the community center decided to plan 3 projects to reach some of the identified needs:

- Project 1: Creation of a shared garden on the communal space located between the PRAHDA, the Youth Welcome Point and the petanque ground.
- Project 2: Accompanying people newly arrived in the area towards local associative activities. The people welcomed on the area don't often know how the sports and cultural activities in France are accessible and find it difficult to take the first step. The objective is to inform them about the existing possibilities, then accompany them in the first stages of their participation in an activity in order to facilitate their integration into the groups.
- Project 3: Intervention on the wetland. The aim is to make the wetland of St Aulaye accessible to fishermen, local inhabitants, and tourists. The project would involve the creation of a trail, with explanatory stations on the fauna, flora and aquatic environment.

The year 2020 brought a lot of impeachments with the pandemic crisis, who stopped some of the collective activities for a time but who also had an impact on the local elections during 4-month, fact which had a strong impact on our planning of activities.



The new municipality arrived on board just before summer, with a lot of other priorities and it had been possible to restart the negotiations on the field for garden project with them only in autumn with an agreement in June 2021. At the same time, the Youth Hosting Point (PAJ) changed their leader and they get out of the project. We finally agreed on a space already that used to be at disposal for an old organisation: the shared garden without. We finally start the activities in the garden with a real dynamic who came in October, when the summer season stopped and that local people where more available to involved themselves in the activities.

At the same time, the river union changed of direction and had less workers, and they canceled the wet zone project from their priority. Today we are steel trying to finalize with the community Hub to make the impact study and the technical notice of our future interventions.

A training session for volunteers was organized in April 2021 with our work camp leaders and local volunteers. This was an opportunity for four of them to improve their skills, including a young person from the association Ami24Ouest. It also allowed to make number on a day of collection of waste on the beach of the dancing hall, at the foot of the village.



Community Hub meeting



## Description of voluntary paths

### Activity 1: Setting up a shared garden

The first activity chosen by the community Hub was the setting up of a shared garden space between local people and newcomers. Here is a reminder of the objectives that had been set and the status of their achievement:

**Obj.1:** “To create a shared space between the people hosted at the PRAHDA and the young people of the Youth Hosting Point (PAJ) of St Aulaye, open to the rest of the local population”: The space has been created, the youth reception point has disengaged but the leisure center has joined the project, as well as a solidarity bus.

**Obj.2:** “To allow the setting up of a daily activity support close to the place of residence of the people welcomed at the PRAHDA”: The garden has been moved from its original location, but only by a few hundred meters, so the PRAHDA residents can still go there on foot, and are starting to come there regularly outside of formalized times, to grow crops, but also to enjoy this outdoor space.

**Obj.3:** “To create a support of exchange on the practices and habits of each one, the cultures, the ways of making by realizing a concrete common activity”: Two days were organized in autumn 2021, on November 6th and December 15th, around the know-how, with the presence of potters, horticulturists, local market gardeners. These days were rich in exchanges and creations, they also allowed the residents of the PRAHDA to better understand the project, to seize the possibilities and to bring a real contribution to the planting plan for the following spring, with desires to test the culture and to make discover vegetables and cereals having a great importance in their cultures.

**Obj. 4:** “To encourage the discovery of local biodiversity and plants from elsewhere”: Times with market gardeners, arboriculturists, environmental specialists, and site visits (Parc des Doublorigènes, Ferme du Parcot, ...) have been taken place or are planned for early 2022.

**Obj.5:** “Create social links around the garden and the cooking of the different fruits and vegetables grown”: For the moment, very little production has really been done during a very short summer season, we have not yet been able to taste together the fruits of our common work. On the other hand, each meeting is an opportunity for the families welcomed at



PRAHDA and the local volunteers to taste these small sweet specialties. And intercultural meals have been organized regularly throughout the project (when it was possible to meet).

**CALENDAR:** The garden began to be set up with irregular meetings until the beginning of September 2021 as the tourist season came to compete with our activities. Since the beginning of October, every Wednesday, the group meets to progress on the setting up of the cultivation areas and the preparation of the soil, the planting of fruit trees and berry bushes... Thematic days are also organized, such as the opening festival of the garden, a meeting with the solidarity bus, a day around the pruning of the fruit trees, a visit of a tree park.

**TOOLS USED:** We have created a complete set of tools for about fifteen people (spades, picks, planters, shovels, rakes, shears, pruning shears, wheelbarrows, ...) and adapted material for children. For this we made a call for donations of local volunteers bring their own material and we bought the essential tools that we needed and that we had not managed to collect otherwise. The call for donations also allowed us to get the word out about the project and to mobilize people who had not heard about the project before.



The shared garden



### **Activity 2: Accompany arriving persons to local associations**

The objective of this activity is twofold: to respond to the need for volunteers and participants in the activities proposed by local associations and to make the INVOLVE project known to the local population and in particular to the associative and activist sector.

The activities varied according to the requests. Currently the program is :

- Every Monday afternoon: support around digital practices at the Digital Hostel
- Every Tuesday, Thursday and Friday evening: accompaniment to the bodybuilding club, handball, soccer and the music school
- Every Wednesday afternoon: open activities on the multi-sport field (pétanque, soccer, basketball, ...)
- On request: accompaniment in other sports clubs or on specific days.

### **Activity 3: Maintenance and creation of an interpretation trail in the wetland along the Dronne River**

This project is currently being studied by the community Hub, the river union having withdrawn, we are still creating specifications and an impact study carried out by volunteers "expert" of this type of environment. We hope that this project will be completed in 2022, or by the summer of 2023, with an international workcamp to start the process and then regular work.

Number and typology of volunteers involved

On the shared garden, we regularly have about 15 local people involved and between 20 and 25 TNCs. The participation fluctuates greatly depending on the weather and the proposed themes but the specific days can bring up to 20 more local people.

On the activities with the local associations, it is 32 people accompanied in individual or by small group towards 9 local associations, they took part in activities which touch nearly 130 local people and thus could interact with them.

On the project around the wetland, it is a small steering committee of 6 people who are currently working on it, with 2 very competent people on the question around the wetlands and 1 local elected official. We hope to be able to welcome 1 workcamp of 12 people next autumn, then to make local days with at least 20 participants.



Partecipatory day to clean riverbanks

## Challenges

It was very hard to even set up activities because of the pandemic, for regulatory reasons first, with a legislation that changed very regularly, forcing us to constantly review our copy, and rules of social distancing not compatible with many of our projects (especially culinary). Moreover, most of the local associations having been obliged to close their doors and having difficulty to maintain a minimal activity. So, we continued to keep the community Hub alive at a distance and in slow motion, but did little during the periods of locked down. And each time the rules were relaxed, we had to restart the dynamics almost from the beginning, the new locked down often catching up with the thoughtful beginnings of activity.



## **Description of international workcamps**

Three international workcamps took place within the framework of INVOLVE, the first in June 2019 in the commune of La Roche Chalais around the riverbanks and the creation of a fishing shelter. The second in January 2021 (should have been in June 2020 but had to be postponed) in St Vincent Jalmoutier, on the maintenance of the inter-communal holiday village, both green spaces and small maintenance and refreshment of equipment. The third one in autumn 2021 in St Aulaye, with the PRAHDA, on the creation of furniture in recycled materials for the garden space and for the PRAHDA.

## **Training for volunteers**

The participation of two local volunteers in the online training for volunteers, and the participation of four of them in the training for international workcamps set up by the organisation Sem&Vol has allowed the local volunteers to become more competent and autonomous, as they no longer need to be supported by the local social worker to organize the collective activities of the garden. They were also able to step back from the project and better understand its ins and outs. They are currently making proposals for activities to be set up in the area. They have proposed to the collective and to the town hall to create the "Take care of your village" days, monthly actions of cleaning and embellishment of the town center and its surroundings which will start in January with a day of creation of urban furniture in recycled materials.



## **Veynes**

### **Introduction**

The INVOLVE project was an opportunity for the association Villages des Jeunes to reinforce its commitment to a more human and sustainable reception of migrants in the region. Several participatory workcamp activities have been set up for many years in the direction of a public of young international adults but interweaving any public. This has enabled the association to acquire real know-how in terms of intercultural exchange and social mix.

Since 2017, a work of exchange with collectives and communities on the topic of the reception of the migrant persons was born in order to answer to each organisation's need according to its competences to the "migratory crisis" by the development of actions and activities on the area. The association Villages des Jeunes has promoted the participation of migrants in its workcamp activities in close collaboration with other partner structures such as Collectif 05 for access to integration contracts or France Terre d'Asile to enable people to participate in voluntary activities and thus fight against idleness and isolation.

The INVOLVE project has enabled us to go further by establishing more sustainable partnerships, allowing us to meet new organizations and thus participate in a stronger territorial network. At the same time, the participation of migrants in the workcamp activities have been taken up and the project has encouraged the creation of more specific dedicated activities carried out collectively by and for all the people in the HUB.

### **Description of voluntary paths**

#### **Activity 1: Workcamp activities for the preservation of heritage and the maintenance of technical know-how**

Volunteer workcamps have been organised over several weekends on the site of Clausonne activities to learn dry stone construction techniques. These first weekends allowed the meeting between local people used to the workcamp and novices discovering the isolated mountain environment. These experiences were the occasion to start a dynamic of exchange on the



object of the voluntary workcamps with participating persons supported by the CADA (Reception center for asylum seekers) and thus support the registration of some participants for longer workcamps (3 weeks or more) which take place in summer.



Workcamp in Clausonne

### **Activity 2 : “Digital basis” workshops**

Every Thursday have been organised workshops called « Bases numériques » («digital basis» in English). Those workshops have been designed in partnership with Centre de ressources des Hauts Alpains (the High Alpines Resources Center) in Veynes, providing a specific space and some materials for facilitating the workshops. The idea is to create a space to learn basic digital knowledge from peer to peer and with the participation of facilitators. The program of workshops



is adapted to the needs of participants. It is thought to help participants in their job search path (how to look for a job online, which websites to use...), but also in their everyday use of internet (introduction to the use of social networks, fake news, how to use free software...). A series of sessions has been dedicated to audio contents' creation to learn how to use the material, how to make interviews, how to edit content... Interviews have been recorded during specific events, such as the World Refugee Day with local and international people. Together the participant learned how to create their own website in order to publish their audio contents and especially one podcast that is an introduction to the history of the city of Veynes.



Board game during the International Refugee Day

### Activity 3: Workshops on how to live together

Workshops were organized around the theme of living together using the educational support of cooking and processing local products. These workshops were led by the association "Du beurre dans les épinards" and in partnership with the Veynes Social Center to learn to enrich



the cooking culture of participants through the discovery of world cuisines. Those workshops have been designed to be a space where local volunteers and TCN volunteers meet while cooking together and sharing their recipes.

They have been invited to practice what they have learned at events organized by INVOLVE project partners, such as the organization of international workcamps, local international evening or the World Refugee Day.

A series of workshops also focused on processing local products has been organized where participants met with local people and producers to learn how to make jams or how to distill lavender.

## **Number and typology of volunteers involved**

The people participating in the project are very diverse and thus represent the underlying social mix issue. We were able to count about sixty people mobilized around the project with people registered on the workcamp activities (volunteers from Spain, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Mexico, Korea, Czech, English, Polish,. ), professionals and volunteers active in the accompaniment of people, inhabitants often hosting people, professionals of culture and art as well as elected members of communities. The migrants who participated came mainly from Syria and Afghanistan but also from Eritrea, Sudan, Pakistan, Bangladesh.

## **Challenges**

The context of the pandemic has indeed affected the program of activities. During the first year, we were nevertheless able to organize cooking workshops at one of our host sites as well as participatory workcamps that took place outside. These activities allowed us to maintain a link with people who were even more isolated with the confinement, whether they were local volunteers or third country nationals.

Another challenge the fact that most of the migrants we have been in contact with during the project were staying in Veynes for a short time so it wasn't easy for us to keep in contact with them and develop sustainable activities. But step by step and in cooperation with our partner,



we adapted our activities also to the needs of this specific public by offering also occasional activities.

## **Outcomes achieved**

A partnership dynamic has been set in motion which tends to renew the activities as well as the emergence of new actors a little further away from the HUB who are also interested in voluntary activities with the migrants they welcome, especially in Briançon (the first town after the Italian border) with the Refuge Solidaire (an organisation allowing migrants to sleep, to eat, to wash, to have access to health care, to their rights and to all other necessities). Participation in the various activities was satisfactory in terms of quantity given the health context and the quality of the various exchanges was very good.

## **Description of international workcamps**

### **Workcamp Arzeliers Summer 2020**

From June 8 to 22, young volunteers from Europe, as well as young refugees living in the in the Hautes Alpes, have lived a collective experience of international work camp rich in historical heritage. A small group volunteers shared two weeks of work on the ruins of of Clausonne Abbey and continue the long work of rehabilitation of the site. The abbey was built in 1185, burned, transformed into a farm, it was doomed to disappear when the association of the Friends of Clausonne was created to safeguard the remains of this monument.

### **Workcamp Saint Genis Summer 2020**

The workcamp was in a small town, Serres in the Hautes Alpes. The Regional Nature Park of the Baronnies provençales, in partnership with the association Les Villages des Jeunes and the Pôle Randonnée of the Communauté de Communes du Sisteronais Buëch, launched an operation to raise awareness and promote the dry-stone construction technique in 2018. It is through actions of restoration and discovery of the built heritage in dry stone (conference,



visit) that the elected officials and the inhabitants were mobilized on this operation. The international workcamp is part of this approach on the site of the chapel.

International and local volunteers did participate to the restoration of a wall which is essential to put the chapel of the town back in its place in the landscape by redrawing the flat of the wall that leads to it. They discovered the technique of restoration of the dry-stone path: punctual resumption of the damaged parts of the path, realization of stone steps. The work camp was supervised by a professional of the dry-stone construction technique.

Historical wandering Clausonne Abbey from June the 13th to July the 3rd 2021 - Dry stone construction work of an old Abbey:

The presence of young volunteers, who come as part of international volunteer workcamps, allows us to reinforce the cultural diversity of our activities, and to open a window on the world, in an isolated area of medium mountains. Through the collective life managed together, the time of the workcamp and the shared leisure activities, the participants of the workcamp are led to meet each other, to do things together, to exchange their points of view and their knowledge. For the young people, this workcamp constitutes a space of discovery of the values of solidarity and acceptance of the other, a time of reflection on oneself, on society and on one's role as a young citizen of the world, to raise awareness on environmental issues. The workcamp is also an opportunity for personal learning: taking initiative, autonomy, living in a group, acquiring technical and linguistic knowledge.

Local people have been associated with the work site with their participation to the international evening, the visit organized by the association "Les amis de l'abbaye de Clausonne, the visit of local markets, participation to Cheese-making workshop organized by a local person. The workcamp did contribute to the enhancement and preservation of the local heritage in partnership with a local association "Les amis de l'abbaye de Clausonne" which works for the preservation of the heritage. The abbey being a place visited by hikers, the place will be now more attractive and more accessible thanks to the arrangements made by the volunteers.

## **Training for volunteers**

Two local volunteers took part to the online training for volunteers. Both were involved in the leading of workcamp activities in summer. Even though the training was not face to face, they really appreciated the opportunity that was given to them to meeting participants that were



sharing their same questions and issues. The experience enabled them also to have a global view of the INVOLVE project and to understand better. the European dimension of the project.



## **GERMANY**

### **Freizeitzentrum Upsala**

#### **Introduction**

The Upsala Leisure Centre was a logical choice for the activities in the INVOLVE project. It is a facility with a long history that is very well established in the neighbourhood. Due to the diverse range of offered classes, workshops and the spacious outdoor area, it has numerous daily visitors and has also reached their families and other networks through the visitors. As an institution of the Pankow district authority, Upsala works closely with the responsible youth welfare office and is networked with other youth work institutions in the district. Due to the changing social structure in the neighbourhood, many new Berliners with refugee experience have become interested in the services offered by Upsala. At the beginning of 2020, Upsala drew up two detailed concepts for the planned permanent voluntary activities. These no longer corresponded to the original plans because one project partner had to reduce its work due to the pandemic and had to leave the rooms used at Upsala, and in general because adjustments had to be made due to the pandemic. In the end, the support of a loosely existing gardening group and a theatre group were chosen, which was also to be aimed at the welcome classes of the schools in the vicinity. The schedule had to be adjusted several times in the course of the project.

#### **Description of Voluntary Paths**

##### **Activity 1: Urban Gardening for attractive and inclusive neighborhoods (UGAIN)**

A project involving instruction and permanent volunteer work in the practice of urban gardening for participants from the neighborhood and other cooperating institutions, involving



as well as new and old Berliners. The aim was to sensitize people from the neighborhood of the Upsala to the topics of sustainability and environmental protection, to contribute to nature conservation for native animals and to adapt the outdoor area of the Upsala to the changed challenges of the pandemic and make it experienceable. The participation and involvement of the children and parents was important for the joint transformation of the outdoor area.

Thanks to the support from the INVOLVE project, the garden group was able to continue and expand its work during the pandemic. For this purpose, a graduate designer was selected to coordinate the activities. A team of about 5 people was formed around her and, depending on

the season and the pandemic, a group of about 12 visitors helped.

After the new start in August 2020, the gardening group was able to rework a herb snail in the second half of the year, redesign the "small garden" and the rock garden, create a bee and insect hotel and start planting an insect "hedge" as a border.

After a winter break, outdoor activities could start again from March 2021. In the community garden, learning and play spaces, space for course content, stages and areas for recreation were structured and developed and implemented with participatory and inclusive interaction. In addition to the participation and involvement of the children and parents, of new and old Berliners, the focus was on nature conservation for native animals, the cultivation of



suitable plant species, bird houses and bat shelters. For local drainage, solutions were found for heavy rain or a lot of water in the outdoor terrace area. Covid-19 areas were created in the outdoor space that could not take place indoors. In the field of environmental and climate protection, educational information was provided on sustainable behavior with and in nature. Concrete activities included building, filling and planting the new raised beds, creating a bee pasture, as well as a bird feeder hedge and deadwood hedge, renovating the willow pavilion and signposting the herb and lemonade beds. After the elderberry harvest, a small elderberry blossom festival took place with fairy tales and interesting facts about mythology and the medicinal plant elderberry. Afterwards, the elderflowers were processed into syrup. The



lemonade garden was inaugurated with fruits and herbs harvested from the lemonade and herb beds.

### **Activity 2: Together for our Future (TOF)**

Regularly recurring volunteer activities were planned with instruction and activities in theatre, art, music, dance, photography, video, etc. on topics of education for sustainability for participants from the neighborhood, including new and old Berliners. Due to the loss of a cooperation partner, these activities had to be adapted and completely re-planned at the end of 2020. In the end, all those involved decided on a theatre project with the support of a theatre pedagogue. Initially planned for spring 2021, it was decided with the head of the theatre project to start implementation only with the new school year from summer 2021. The reason was the pandemic- related restrictions on indoor events, such as theatre rehearsals or other group activities, and the desire not to start working with students in a welcome class at the end of a school year. From the end of August, the implementation began in two groups. While an already established group with children from the immediate environment of the Upsala began with the free development of a play, which was then realized under the title "Trolls and Fairies", the children of a welcome class from the Klecks primary school worked concretely with the material of the play "Grüffelo". The workshop of the theatre group "Grüffelo" focused on group and community building through the basics of theatre work. The following topics were in the foreground: own identity and contribution to the group, role on stage and support by the group, trust in and from the group as well as non- judgemental observation and copying. In consultation with the accompanying teacher, Axel Scheffler's "Grüffelo" was chosen as the literary model for the play to be developed because the rhyming language and the alternation between the narrator's part and direct speech in short dialogues left room for the very different language levels of the participants. The animals in the story were puppets and played by the participants, as were parts of the stage set (river, trees, flowers, etc.). This gave the participants the confidence to go on stage with something tangible and to identify with the respective characters of the animals. The play development in the other theatre group started with the basics of theatre work. These were also part of the work during the rehearsals on the play, such as room running, freeze, improvising stories and confidence exercises. Through recurring games and exercises, a play was worked out, which was continued under the title "Trolls and Fairies". In the play there are two very different groups who don't like each other and are



strangers. It is about privilege, support, community, and reconciliation. Unfortunately, with rising Covid-19 caseloads, activities had to be stopped for the time being in November 2021 before another implementation under the INVOLVE project was completed. Work will continue with both groups after the infection situation improves.



Theater workshop

## Tandem Project

Due to the ongoing lockdown, the Permanent Voluntary Activities could not be implemented as planned at the beginning of 2021. For this reason, ICJA launched a digital tandem project together with the local HUBs, involving local volunteers and volunteers with refugee



experience. The participants of the project met online in pairs once a week and had one hour to get to know each other, exchange ideas and improve their German, Arabic, Farsi or English in the process. For this purpose, they received a suggestion by e-mail once a week, which set a focus for the next meeting (e.g. music, introduction to the neighbourhood, hobbies, etc.). In the summer of 2021, there was an excursion to a garden project with joint cooking, so that the participants could also meet offline once.

In addition, three anti-discrimination seminars were held online for participants from third countries.

The seminars dealt with the following topics: Formation of perceptions, categories and prejudices, everyday racism, structural racism and intersectionality, biography work and empowerment.

## **Number and typology of volunteers involved**

About 60 people from the following countries took part in the Permanent Voluntary Activities: Germany, Syria, Burkina Faso, Russia, Colombia, France, Hungary, Italy, Spain, Czech Republic. These were local residents from the district of Pankow, volunteers from Upsala and people with refugee experience from Berlin. There were also meetings with local initiatives and cooperation partners of the Upsala leisure centre.

## **Challenges**

With the onset of the pandemic, it quickly became apparent that the start of activities would be delayed. With persistent and recurring lockdowns, the decision was made to postpone most of the activities until 2021. Only in the outdoor area could garden AG activities be carried out during the second half of 2020. It was also possible to hold Permanent Voluntary Activities there from spring 2021. However, these meetings were initially subject to strong fluctuations



in the number of participants, because numerous requirements applied and the willingness to work in groups was lower than before the pandemic. It was also not possible to offer a large kick-off event for all interested parties. The offer was aimed at visitors who had already found their way to Upsala.

The activities of the theatre group were much more problematic. In times of lockdowns, it was not possible to work in a group in closed rooms. In addition, it was difficult for the students of the welcome classes to start the new project towards the end of the school year. While both groups ran well from August/September 2021 onwards, from October onwards there were again increased restrictions due to the pandemic and reduced numbers of participants as well as increased queries from parents. In November, the activities had to be stopped completely because first at the school, inter-class projects were cancelled and then indoor courses were also prohibited at Upsala. The pandemic not only made it more difficult to carry out the activities, but especially to get in touch

with the people of the neighbourhood. Many of the volunteers working in the project were busy with the challenges in their private and professional lives (home office, homeschooling) and had hardly any time and energy for the commitment that otherwise comes naturally to them. The organisation of the work camp also suffered from this exceptional situation due to the long existing planning uncertainty.

## **Outcomes achieved**

Despite all these adversities, the Permanent Voluntary Activities as well as the work camp experiences at the Upsala Leisure Centre were overall very positive and certainly an excellent tool for inclusion. In the theatre rehearsals and while working together in the garden, people who would otherwise have no common spaces to meet were able to exchange ideas. In conversations with the participants and in the Upsala team, it became clear how important it is to make such offers known, also and especially in places where the use of such programmes is not necessarily taken for granted (financially weaker families, welcome classes, etc.). The participants with refugee experience (from third countries) also confirmed several times that



it was a very enriching experience for them to meet many new people in joint volunteer activities and thus to counteract isolation to some extent.

## **International Workcamp**

The work camp was attended by 17 young people partly from European countries (France, Italy, Czech Republic, Spain), partly with refugee experience (Burkina Faso, Syria) from Berlin as well as team members from Upsala and ICJA as local participants. The team consisted of Italian, German and Syrian nationals and thus perfectly embodied the intentions of the INVOLVE project, where - in Europe – local nationals and third-country nationals come together through joint voluntary work and thus create more inclusive communities.

At the beginning, the team agreed on a "social contract" (guidelines for personal behaviour) with the volunteers, and they had the opportunity to share their fears and expectations. Most of the work focused on painting the façade of the recreation center, preparing for a creative project that Upsala would like to carry out with its usual visitors, namely local families with their children from different cultural backgrounds. The participants also repainted the raised beds in the garden and did some gardening. They also wrote down the names of the plants growing in the garden in their mother tongues, as Upsala wants to make multilingual information signs so that visitors, regardless of their mother tongue, can learn some basic facts about the plants in the project's garden.

On the first three afternoons of the work camp, a theatre workshop was held with the participants. On the one hand, the workshop was a cultural project and on the other hand a method for the participants to get to know each other. The participants had free time every evening and some afternoons/mornings. We also organised some free time activities, such as a guided tour to some sights in Berlin with dinner in a typical German beer garden.

The group dynamic was very good from the beginning and was strengthened e.g. by sharing energisers. In addition, the volunteers had to organise changing cooking teams that provided food for the whole group for a whole day. As members of the cooking teams, most of the young participants also learned how to organise and prepare a meal for a large group and manage their daily budget. The study part dealt with global and environmental issues. A visit



was organised to Peace of Land, a sustainable urban gardening project in Berlin, where the volunteers learned about permaculture. The Berlin-based project foodjustice also gave an interactive presentation on the global syndrome of obesity, malnutrition and climate change. On the same day, the group visited the cultural center KulturMarktHalle, where the second INVOLVE work camp in Germany will take place. This visit coincided with a meeting of local administrators at KMH, where various Berlin-based administrators of different social or cultural projects met to talk about the INVOLVE project and get to know the volunteers.



Workcamp volunteers



## **KulturMarktHalle**

### **Introduction**

The INVOLVE project corresponds to the founding idea of the KulturMarktHalle, as it stands and works as a neighbourly meeting place for intercultural exchange. Based on this approach, the project was founded in 2017 and the aspiration to bring together people with different life plans, experiences and histories who then experience this exchange as a mutual enrichment is the basis of the volunteer engagement and thus also of the INVOLVE Permanent Voluntary Activities as well as the international work camp.

At the beginning of 2020, the HUB prepared two detailed concepts for the planned Permanent Voluntary Activities. For this purpose, discussions were held with other organizations and institutions near the HUB, possible cooperation was agreed upon, and a schedule was drawn up. In particular, a close cooperation with the "TinyHouse Collective", the permaculture garden collective "Peace of Land" as well as the Eco working group of the KulturMarktHalle should be strived for. The schedule had to be adjusted several times in the course of the project (see Challenges section).



Photo exhibition in KulturMarktHalle

## Description of Voluntary Paths

### Activity 1: Sustainability, public spirit and culture

In the first activity, the aim was to sensitize people from the neighbourhood of the KulturMarktHalle to the topics of sustainability and environmental protection, to preserve traditional knowledge in the mindful treatment of nature, and to test innovative approaches. Neighbours were brought into exchange and the public spirit strengthened in order to tackle the challenges of living more consciously, healthier, more sustainable and in the long term an



appreciative everyday culture in metropolitan coexistence. Gardening and permaculture were to be brought more into the focus of city residents\* through the joint volunteer activities, such as sowing, tending, harvesting and utilizing edible plants, and social structures in the neighbourhood were to be consolidated.

Individual outdoor meetings could first take place in June 2021, as soon as the corona incidence figures in Berlin allowed it. These meetings took partly place with members of the KulturMarktHalle's Eco working group, who had organized a scything workshop in June. In addition, there were three meetings in the run-up to the event to prepare and discuss permaculture issues. The aim here was to jointly strengthen the idea of sustainable management of green spaces in the neighbourhood through good networking of the individual initiatives, projects and collectives and to support each other in activities in order to achieve greater reach and visibility.

There were five 1-day workshops: Willow Weaving 1 & 2, Permaculture, Natural Cosmetics and the World of Bees.

In the two workshops on willow weaving, participants were first given an introduction to the technique of weaving. Then, they made willow structures as basic frameworks of small light bodies (lanterns) powered by solar lights. These lanterns were then used at the Cultural Festival for an installation in the public space, where the participants of the workshop walked together with the light bodies as a swarm from one venue to another.

The permaculture workshop took place in collaboration with the collective "Peace of Land" in their garden in the neighbourhood of the KulturMarktHalle. First, the participants were guided through the garden grounds and then there was a discussion about the extent to which the permaculture idea exists and is implemented in the different cultural contexts from which the participants come. Together, they also reflected on how this finds space in different social contexts (big city, provincial town and rural environment). In the practical part, the participants were divided into four groups and implemented tasks according to the principle of permaculture (making charcoal powder for the bio-toilet, making flour for home-baked bread, harvesting food for the common meal, bringing in hay for the compost). At the end, they cooked and ate together at the fireplace.

The natural cosmetics workshop also took place in the garden of the Peace of Land project. The participants first received an introduction to the topic of natural food and the production of natural cosmetics. Different plants and their effects on human health were explained and then collected in the garden. Each participant then produced a small assortment of natural



cosmetics in the practical part (marigold ointment, ribwort ointment, bath salts, ointment deodorant, rosemary essence). In the course of the day, the different knowledge was put into the historical and cultural context, also in exchange with the participants who had gained experience in other cultural contexts.

The workshop "The World of Bees" was also held in the Peace of Land garden. During a tour of the garden, participants were first educated about the importance of wild bees and their threat from conventional agriculture. They were then able to take a look inside a live hive and examined the dwellings of wild bees. In the practical part, participants made different types of wild bee dwellings themselves: prefabricated dwellings were assembled and placed in suitable locations in the permaculture garden, and others were assembled for distribution at sites throughout Berlin. The day ended with a shared meal around a campfire.

### **Activity 2: Tiny Houses and working with wood for sustainability**

The planning and implementation of a manageable building project, such as a TinyHouse, is a constructive example of community action. The ability to have a living and working space is a basic need of every human being. The creation of such a space in a collaborative effort strengthens community cohesion, social interaction and social participation. During the summer months, Tiny Collective (cooperation partner of the KulturMarktHalle) built the prototype of a TinyHouse in one month of work as part of the Down to Earth festival. This resulted in a small mobile building and a network of people interested in building, who were later invited to the project.

At the same time, the wood workshop was fully set up in the KulturMarktHalle. A person who had the time capacity to ensure regular supervision of the wood workshop joined the already existing team.

The Permanent Voluntary Activity 2 was divided into the two workshop series Wooden Buildings 1 and 2. The workshops on Wooden Buildings 1 were about building raised beds as part of the raised bed community garden of the KulturMarktHalle. On the one hand, this garden project is intended to offer older neighbours, for whom the care of an allotment garden is becoming too much, the opportunity to continue to pursue their passion on a small scale; on the other hand, it is intended to introduce young people to garden culture. The aim is to develop sponsorships between young and older residents of the neighbourhood.

The first step of the intensive course was to familiarize the participants with the set-up of the wood workshop, the machines, the tools and the material. In the second block, the participants



passed this knowledge on to the newcomers. The result was a fluid transfer of knowledge. Each group took over a specific part of the raised bed. At the end of the day, the individual parts were assembled and the raised beds were filled with soil and compost and planted with herbs.

In the workshop series Wooden Buildings 2, the skills already learned in working with wood were then further deepened by building the TinyHouse. These workshops took mostly place parallel to and in cooperation with the participants of the workcamp, therefore the TinyHouse construction will be further elaborated in the section on the workcamp.



Volunteers working on the building of the Tiny House

### Activity 3: Tandem project

Due to the ongoing lockdown, the Permanent Voluntary Activities could not be implemented as planned at the beginning of 2021. For this reason, ICJA collaborated with local HUBs to



launch a digital tandem project involving local volunteers and volunteers with refugee experience. Participants in the project met online in pairs once a week and had an hour to get to know each other, exchange ideas, and improve their German, Arabic, Farsi, or English in the process. For this purpose, they received a suggestion by mail once a week, which set a focus for the next meeting (e.g. music, introduction to the neighbourhood, hobbies, etc.). In the summer of 2021, there was an excursion to a garden project with joint cooking, so that the participants could also meet offline once. In addition, three anti-discrimination seminars were held online for participants from third countries. The following topics were covered at the seminars: creation of perceptions, categories and prejudices, everyday racism, structural racism and intersectionality, biography work and empowerment.

## **Number and typology of volunteers involved**

About 60 people from the following countries took part in the Permanent Voluntary Activities: Germany, Syria, Afghanistan, Great Britain, Iran, France, Bulgaria, Italy, Benin, Spain, Korea, Slovakia, Poland. These were local residents of the Mühlenkiez, volunteers of the KulturMarktHalle and people with refugee experience from Berlin. In addition, meetings with local initiatives and cooperation partners of the KulturMarktHalle took place.

## **Challenges**

With the onset of the pandemic, it quickly became clear that the start of activities would be delayed. With ongoing and recurring lockdowns, the decision was made to postpone most of the activities until 2021. However, as the last lockdown in Berlin lasted until early summer 2021, even with an extended duration of the INVOLVE project, it would no longer be possible to conduct activities at the intended frequency (weekly or biweekly meetings). Against this background, those responsible at the HUB decided to carry out the activities in intensive workshops, to which people from the neighbourhood of the KulturMarktHalle who have lived there for a long time and who have only come to Berlin in recent years (with refugee experience) were invited.



Also because the remaining time until the end of the project was limited and because meetings in larger groups were not yet allowed again at that time, the HUB decided not to offer the training to volunteers (Activity 5.1) collectively for all participants of the Permanent Voluntary Activities, but instead to integrate it into the individual workshops. Thus, at the beginning of each workshop, the objectives of the project were explained as well as an introduction to material science and the specifics of joint volunteer activities in the context of the INVOLVE project.

The pandemic not only made it more difficult to carry out the activities, but also, in particular, to make contact with the people of the neighbourhood. For example, access to the shared accommodation for refugees in the neighbourhood was forbidden for over a year for security reasons and it is still only possible to a very limited extent. The neighbourhood in the immediate vicinity of the KulturMarktHalle, for the most part belonging to the "risk group" of elderly people, understandably behaved very distantly over the past year and a half in order to protect their own health. Many of the volunteers involved in the project were busy with the challenges in their private and professional lives (home office, home-schooling) and had hardly any time and energy for the commitment that otherwise comes naturally to them. The organization of the work camp also suffered from this exceptional situation due to the long existing planning uncertainty.

As a voluntary and self-organized cultural institution, KulturMarktHalle has only existed for three years, half of which under corona lockdown conditions. In any case, contact with the various social groups in the neighbourhood is not easy, since boundaries exist and people tend to remain in their familiar surroundings and are only open to new things to a limited extent. This is where the work of KulturMarktHalle comes in, but it takes a lot of time to break down these structures.

## **Outcomes achieved**

Despite all these adversities, the Permanent Voluntary as well as the Workcamp experiences in the KulturMarktHalle were overall very positive and certainly an excellent tool of inclusion. In the workshops and while working together on the TinyHouse, people who otherwise would not have common spaces to meet were able to exchange ideas. In conversations with the participants and in the team of the KulturMarktHalle it became clear how important it is to



make such offers known, also and especially where the self-evidence of the use of such programs is not necessarily given (financially weaker families, people with migration history, etc.). Also and especially the participants with refugee experience (from third countries) confirmed several times that it was a very enriching experience for them to meet many new people in joint volunteer activities and thus to counteract isolation to some extent.

## **International Workcamp**

13 young people from four European countries attended the work camp (France, Italy, Poland, Spain), moreover, there were 4 participants with refugee experience (Iran, Syria) from Berlin as well as team members of the KulturMarktHalle as local participants.

In addition, through the joint work on the TinyHouse with the participants of the Permanent Voluntary Activities, as well as through joint neighbourhood walks and visits to cooperation partners and initiatives from the environment of the KulturMarktHalle, encounters with the local population were also part of the workcamp. In this way, a linguistic and cultural exchange with people from the two target groups of the KulturMarktHalle (residents of the Mühlenkiez, residents of the shared refugees' accommodation) could be created. For two activities, students from the "welcome class" (students with migration history) of the nearby Gustave Eiffel School joined the group and some activities were carried out together with the members of the Eco working group.

The group was accommodated on cots in the premises of the KulturMarktHalle. At the beginning of the workcamp there were some sessions to strengthen the group dynamics as well as for language animation. Overall, the dynamics of the group were very positive. The local participants with a history of migration also fit in well. A small hurdle was the language skills, since the European participants had a good command of English, which was not necessarily the case with the participants from third countries. This aspect was taken into account during the language training, among other things, and all participants endeavored to avoid the exclusion of individuals.

The participants were divided into three subgroups during the day: building group (sustainable building of the TinyHouse in the wood workshop), cooking group (sustainable food and cooking of international dishes) and cultural activities. From day to day, the groups rotated from one task to another. As some participants of the Permanent Voluntary Activities were



also involved in the construction of the TinyHouse, who had already gained experience in handling tools and machines as well as working in the workshop during the workshops on wooden buildings 1, they were able to pass on their knowledge. The design of the TinyHouse was presented and discussed with all participants. The first step was to provide the necessary material. The floor plate was cut to fit the area of the trailer and the floor insulation was prepared. The support structure, consisting of battens and beams, as well as the wooden panels for the exterior and interior cladding were cut, sanded and oiled. At the same time, the recycled windows were prepared. Then the support structure was attached to the floor slab, the roof structure was put in place, the exterior cladding and wall insulation were attached, the roof was closed and the door prepared. Finally, all the large parts were fixed in place. For the completion of the TinyHouse and the closing evening of the work camp, there was a small celebration with all participants.



Workcamp in KulturMarktHalle



The study programme of the workcamp included visits to projects and cooperation partners of the KulturMarktHalle in the neighbourhood that work on the topic of sustainability: the permaculture community garden Peace of Land, the container garden project "Garten auf dem Asphalt" (garden on asphalt), the Eco working group, the Insel Weißensee (TinyHouse village on a traffic island in Berlin). During the neighbourhood walks, topics were addressed such as gentrification, typical housing situations in East/West Germany and what has remained of them, typical Berlin neighbourhood structures, shared accommodation for refugees and how to cooperate with them.



# ITALY

## Paestum

### Introduction

The projects elaborated by the Capaccio Paestum local HUB are closely linked to a strong local choice to create and develop a sense of resilience because we think that a place does not belong to those who are born in it but to those who take care of it. Therefore, it is important to understand the social, cultural, and geographical context of Capaccio Paestum that is known not only in Italy, essentially for three factors:

- its archeological cultural heritage. That is an UNESCO site;
- its naturalistic and environmental area along the coast;
- its specialized agriculture and mozzarella production.

The “Piana del Sele”, in fact, is famous for the production of vegetables that are exported all over Europe and for the numerous farms that breed buffaloes whose milk is utilized for the production of “mozzarella”. But in these advanced productive sectors there also many contradictions related to a lot of TCN and migrants that work in the fields and in the farms often without regular contracts and isolated from the social and cultural contest. For this reason, the INVOLVE project has been a good opportunity to contribute to realize processes of social inclusion.



## **Description of voluntary paths**

The local Hub starting from these relevant contests at the beginning was dedicated to develop two paths of participating planification that could involve the local people and the foreign communities in actions of valorization and knowledge of the cultural and naturalistic heritage. The two projects elaborated by the local HUB were:

**Activity 1: the maintenance and valorization of four areas along the coast.**

**Activity 2: the valorization of the cultural heritage - the Archeological Park of Paestum and Velia and its walls.**

During the executions of the projects there have been actions and activities of cleaning, maintenance, gardening, infographic signals, guided tour related to both projects, cultural and artistic events, social events such as ethnic dinners and some general activities such as clean up the beaches, clean up the world involving the local community and the schools.

Moreover, during the execution of the project as the local conditions of many asylum seekers were deeply changed the local HUB with the support of the local team of Legambiente has decided to rent a house in the countryside to guest 16 asylum seekers to start an experience of social housing completely independent. So, in January 2021 there was the birth of "Casa OrtoMondo" and of the social garden cultivated by TCN. In a short period of time "Casa OrtoMondo " has become a meeting point for many TCN that live in our area and represents a model of social inclusion.



Valorisation of the Paestum archaeological area

## Number and typology of volunteers involved

A lot of TCN have been involved in the activities that the local HUB and the network of associations and institutions have planned during these three years of INVOLVE activities: we estimate that in these three years of activities more than 150 TCN and more than 200 local people have been fully involved in the volunteering activities and that other 2000 thousand people have participated to the events organized by the local HUB. Considering our local socio-cultural context and that our municipality is composed of 15 hamlets, these are really considerable numbers.



## **Challenges**

Due to the COVID emergency we were forced to reshape our approach to dealing with the health emergency. Fortunately, there were no cases of COVID-19 in our HUB and during the periods of health restrictions and lockdown we were able to maintain the fabric of social relationships and even carry out outdoor activities in small groups of volunteers. In addition, during the lockdown, the Hub volunteers carried out solidarity activities such as delivering food and basic necessities to people in a state of difficulty and marginality.

## **Description of the international workcamp**

The participants to the workcamp were 21 people, 8 international volunteers ( 2 from Spain, 3 from Germany included a volunteer from Syria but refugee in Germany, 2 from France, 1 from Bulgaria and 13 volunteers from the local HUB of the project INVOLVE, included 7 seekers asylum living in Paestum from Senegal, Guinea, Mali, Gambia, Bangladesh and Nigeria.

It was really a big group of volunteers that during the workcamp have helped the local HUB to consolidate the goals of the project particularly they have been active in the following sectors:

- activities related to the safeguard of the coastal ecosystem of the beaches of Paestum;
- activities related to the maintenance of the ancient city walls that surround the archeological park of Paestum;
- activities to better the living conditions of the social housing “Ortomondo” in which 16 asylum seekers live;
- organization of the annual festival:” Festambiente Paestumanità” a festival dedicated to the environment, solidarity, art and music.

The international volunteers have been hosted, in a camping site (in the respect of the rules to prevent the covid emergency) next to the base camp of the project where daily we met all together, (always in the respect of the rules related to covid emergency) to start the working



activities. As it was a considerable group, we subdivided it into three small groups: white, yellow and green, that in turn took part in each activity planned, so in this way it has been possible to do more activities simultaneously in different sectors.

Volunteers involved in the activities 21. Working hours per volunteer 40 hours. Time dedicated to the organization of the festival 15 hours per volunteer. Time dedicated to excursions, visit and knowledge of the local context 25 hours per volunteer. Time dedicated to meeting and discussion related to the INVOLVE project 10 hours per volunteer. (Average). A workcamp is an opportunity to know other people, to realize a melting pot, for this reason we spent many time usually after dinner, talking about the INVOLVE project, the personal experiences, the personal approach to try to face the big problems related to the social inclusion, the real conditions of life of seekers asylum, how difficult is to be considered “a stranger”, and how to put in practice the claim “act locally think globally”.

But the richness of a workcamp is also the time spent in discovering the beauty of a area; therefore the participants have had the opportunity, during the two days off, to visit several places of our district but also during the daily free time we have had the pleasure to show them the beauty of our area: the archeological park of Paestum, the national museum, the fisher town of Agropoli, the historical center of Capaccio, Amalfi and Positano, the Vesuvius and Naples. To taste local food and to enjoy good music.

Moreover during the Festambiente Paestumanità the festival held on 23 - 24 - 25 July there have been a lot of events all related with the goals of the INVOLVE project and before on July 21 there has been the presentation of the book: “#Procida non deve morire. Un Saharawi con il mare nel cuore” with the participation of the author Mr. Ciro Bruno Linardo that concerned the life conditions of the Sahrawi people, at the meeting took part in videoconference the representative of the Saharawi people in Italy Ms. Fatima Mahfud. This event was organized in collaboration with the association: “Piccoli Ambasciatori di Pace” that every year in summertime guests saharawi children in Agropoli.

## **Outcomes achieved**

Most of the goals of the INVOLVE project have been achieved: to act together by volunteering. to help in the maintenance and valorization of the area. To overcome the



suspicion towards the others. To know different habits and approaches. To strengthen the cohesion of the local community. To show that TCN and local people can do things together. To create a net between associations and local institutions. To help in the development of social programs for the TCN such as the opening of an office dedicated to the TCN by our municipality. To open a social housing that permits 16 TCN to have a house and to be a centre for the diffusion of the good practices.

## **Training for volunteers**

Our local HUB, in its official meeting point located inside tower 27 one of the ancient towers along the city walls of Paestum, before the starting of the activities and during the duration of the project organized training paths dedicated to the volunteers to give them all the necessary information related to the personal job security and of the sensibility of the archeological and environmental contest in which they will operate. The formative path regarded:

- training about the general activity of the project by the local social worker;
- training about the useful approaches to create integration and inclusion by a cultural mediator;
- training about the local archeological and environmental contest related to the areas of the project by an archeologist and a landscape architect;
- training about the use of the tools and about the rules related to safety when working plus, the safety rules to face the Covid emergency by a doctor specialized in job safety.



## Rovigo

### Introduction

At the beginning, the volunteers most involved in the activities of the Hub were the people seeking international protection present in the area and more precisely they lived in the extraordinary reception centers (CAS) managed by the cooperatives present on the area of Rovigo.

Following the approval of the Security Decree 1 and bis, year 2019, the reception centers in our area started to suffer numerous exits by applicants. The elimination of many basic services and the absence of job opportunities forced these people from third countries to leave Rovigo and Italy in general.

Unsettled by these events, but aware of the opportunities offered by the INVOLVE project, we decided to involve the second generations in the activities, i.e. all those young boys and girls who live in our area and whom we have met several times during the voluntary work we do in the city's schools.

Specifically, in addition to local citizens, the Hub is composed of representatives of local associations, representatives of the ENAIP school in Rovigo and the IPSIA Enzo Bari school in Badia Polesine, girls and boys from reception centers, young second generations, and the Municipality of Rovigo.

### Description of voluntary paths

#### Activity 1: Maintenance of a green area near the school

Together with the second-generation girls and boys of the ENAIP school, we took care of the cleaning and regeneration of the area near the school, owned by the Municipality of Rovigo, an area that has always been neglected, often dirty and degraded.

In agreement with the school and the city administration, volunteers from the Hub and the students cleaned and regenerated the area by planting shrubs and trees and maintaining the flowerbeds.



Maintenance of a green area near the school

### **Activity 2: Environmental migration brochure**

The second activity was the realization of an information leaflet on environmental migration and climate change translated into several languages.

Through meetings with students from IPSIA Enzo Bari in Badia Polesine we explored many environmental issues, in particular climate change and environmental migration.

### ***Activity 3: School library***

We decided to help the students of the ENAIP school in the development of a small library within the school, as a cultural and social place. This need stems from the need of many students to find a cultural place to meet and discuss, also outside school hours.



Hub Volunteers selected a number of books dealing with the environment and climate change. We have also asked students to contribute to the library with foreign language books from their home countries. Through meetings and interventions we will continue to explore these issues with students to foster a dialogue on issues of inclusion and sustainability.



Co-planning the school library

## Number and typology of volunteers involved

80 young people were involved in the project activities, coming from Italy, China, Nigeria, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Serbia, Moldova, Romania, Morocco, Tunisia, Burkina Faso, Senegal. In addition to these, about 10 volunteers coordinated the different activities of the Hub.



## **Challenges**

The activities we had planned were to involve two high schools from March 2020 until the end of the school year.

Due to the emergency caused by COVID-19, since 23 February 2020, all schools of all levels, in Italy and in our region, have been closed (DPCM of 23/02/2020 and Veneto Region Ordinance n. 1 of 23/02/2020). With this emergency, Italian students have started Distance Learning: frontal lessons at school with teachers have been replaced by video lessons and the extracurricular activities planned for the 2019/2020 school year have all been suspended.

We have therefore tried to keep the Hub active through virtual distance meetings with volunteers to reschedule activities together. In the difficult period we were involved in during the first lockdown, we still wanted to continue our contribution by serving the community by taking care of the distribution of meals for people in need. This activity was carried out in collaboration with other associations in the area to increase the efficiency of the service and at the same time strengthen the ties with the other associations present in our area at a time of emergency.

## **Outcomes achieved**

With the arrangement of the area near to the school and the creation of the library, we were able to promote actions for the care of the area to promote greater awareness among the younger generations of what are the "common goods". Through participatory planning we have fostered in the students the birth of a sense of belonging to the community, and we have fostered the desire for active participation in the life of the community. Today the area is kept clean by the Hub's students and volunteers who continue to look after it.

The relationship with the students has allowed us to consolidate our presence in schools and to maintain contact also in the future with second generation children to work together for a more inclusive community.

The discussion on the topic of climate change has allowed the volunteers to have a greater awareness of what the effects are also on our area and how important it is to understand that these too are among the causes of migration.



## **Description of international workcamps**

On July 19, 9 international participants and 4 participants from Rovigo (Italy) arrived at the INVOLVE workcamp of Gaiba (RO) from five different European countries (Spain, France, Italy, Germany, Poland, Burkina Faso). The team consisted of Italian and foreigners people which perfectly embodied the intentions of the INVOLVE project where – in Europe – local nationals and third country nationals come together through shared voluntary work and create more inclusive communities by doing so.

On the first morning, we agreed on a “social contract” with the volunteers (guidelines for personal behavior) and they had the opportunity to communicate their fears and expectations. Work started on the second full day of the work camp. During the camp, maintenance and improvement interventions were carried out on the panoramic point along the embankment road that affects the municipality of Gaiba. The viewpoint was in a state of decay, which is why we decided, together with the municipal administration, to restore it to a state of decorum and bring some aesthetic improvements. For this reason, the interventions made were sanding, painting and installation of colored signs to indicate the various cities of origin of our volunteers.

In another area of the city, the volunteers brought their contribution to the community by taking action in cleaning interventions. Another very significant activity was the cleaning of the river Po embankment area, near the observation point where the volunteers also carried out a citizen science activity, river litter monitoring.

Another activity we carried out was the accommodation of the guests of the SAI project of the Municipality of Occhiobello with the Cooperativa di Tutti i Colori.

Volunteers helped guests to arrange furniture and furnishings inside their accommodations, helping them to arrange the structure. The volunteers also had free time and visited the small town of Gaiba and the points of main historical interest in the area. We then dedicated a day to discovering the Po Delta, with a boat trip in the lagoon; subsequently we continued the discovery of the area by visiting a free beach near Scardovari, a typical fishing village in the heart of the Po Delta.

We also visited the city of Rovigo and the Legambiente Hub, where the municipal Administration, partner of the INVOLVE project, greeted and thanked the volunteers.

The study part focused on global and environmental issues. During the camp we organized focus moments with our experts: one on climate change and environmental migration during



the INVOLVE festival. In relation to climate change, we also have organized a training session on the theme of water resources, water quality and the state of health of rivers.

## **Training for volunteers**

All participants were trained on different topics, in particular:

- training on the generic activities of the INVOLVE project;
- training on the importance of urban regeneration, the protection of common goods and participatory planning;
- training on useful behaviors to improve social inclusion;
- training on environmental migration and climate change;
- training on the use of instrumentation and safety regulations.



## Scicli

### Introduction

The Local Community Hub of Scicli focused on improving the inclusion of long-established foreign communities, asylum seekers and refugees in the local community, collaborating with reception centres in the region and Mediterranean Hope's "Casa delle Culture".

In particular:

- Tunisian communities, which have been present in the region for about twenty years.
- young africans (sub-saharan Africa and the Horn of Africa) who arrived with the landings at the port of Pozzallo;
- Syrian families who arrived through the humanitarian corridors and are guests at Mediterranean Hope "Casa della Culture"

Historically, the local community has not always been welcoming towards migrants, except for foreign and local families, thanks to the children who attend the same schools. For adults, on the other hand, the difficulties of inclusion are often more evident and can be seen in the lack of participation in community life and the difficulty of finding work and accommodation. Through the activities proposed with the INVOLVE project, an attempt has been made to overcome the difficulties of inclusion, creating relationships and opportunities for local and migrant volunteers to meet and exchange ideas.

### Description of voluntary paths

#### Activity 1: Yoga with me

At the beginning of the INVOLVE project's activities, one of the permanent volunteer routes was a yoga course for children aged 4 to 10, both foreign and local. Due to the pandemic and the various lockdowns that occurred, it was not possible to run the course in person. The course was therefore reshaped into a yoga course for adults and held online. In this way, the original idea of yoga as a means of getting to know locals and foreigners was not abandoned, but the



target group was changed. In such a difficult and isolated period as the lockdown, the online yoga course proved to be a great psychological help for the participants, especially for those young people living in reception centres who found, in the weekly yoga appointment, a moment of support against emotional distress and new-found socialisation. At the end of each yoga lesson, which lasted about an hour and a half, there was a 'virtual café', where each participant told about his or her day and thoughts, an activity of sharing and confrontation useful for creating friendship and solidarity.



Yoga course for children

### Activity 2: Joiner the world

With the carpentry workshop, we wanted to develop an activity to involve people from a relational point of view and to leave a concrete sign on the area, in a place that is particularly interesting for its botanical and naturalistic aspects. The tourist signage was created in the



Costa di Carro suburban park, which runs along part of the Scicli coastline, between the towns of Cava D'Aliga and Sampieri. The route is about 4 km long and winds along the high and low rocky coastline, dotted with Mediterranean dune vegetation. The workshop took place during the summer period, in the presence of and in conjunction with the international volunteer camp. During the workshop, third-country nationals, locals and ten volunteers from the international workcamp worked together.



Valorisation of the Costa di Carro park

## Number and type of volunteers involved

During the online yoga activities, about:

- 10 migrant guests in the reception centers of the area;



- 2 representatives of the local Tunisian community;
- 4 volunteers from the local community.
- The following took part in the carpentry course:
- 10 third-country national volunteers;
- 2 guests of the reception centers of the area;
- 10 local volunteers;
- 6 volunteers from other local associations.

## **Challenges**

Due to the pandemic, the carrying out of permanent voluntary activities was strongly affected. In addition to the difficulty of having to carry out new activities and having to "experiment" new techniques and practices of inclusion, the uncertainty of not being able to plan any intervention was added since Sicily was one of the regions most affected by Covid-19, with continuous and long periods of lockdown or "red zones". Furthermore, the pandemic has had an impact locally, determining a context of pessimism towards the future. The reshaping of online activities was also strongly affected by the pandemic, especially from the point of view of the number of participants in the activities.

The challenge we set ourselves was precisely that of being able to carry out activities and continue to build on the social relationships established through the project activities and make them a tool to counteract the social difficulties that emerged during the pandemic.

## **Outcomes achieved**

The online yoga course achieved its objective of creating opportunities for knowledge, discussion and cohesion between people, from adults to the younger generation. During the lockdown, even if carried out through a computer screen, the activity served to restore



confidence and optimism and not disperse the relational heritage acquired in the previous months.

The aim of the carpentry workshop, which was aimed at both migrants from the reception centres and foreign residents and the local population, was to take care of an area of great natural and landscape value, which is little known and not valorised. The result was largely achieved, as the work was carried out with great enthusiasm and cooperation from everyone. At the same time, the psychological aspect of finally being able to carry out an activity in presence, after the period of meetings and online activities, aroused great enthusiasm among the participants and was welcomed by the whole community.

## **Description of international workcamps**

The INVOLVE international volunteer camp took place in Sampieri, an ancient fishing village, part of the Municipality of Scicli, in south-eastern Sicily. In the INVOLVE volunteer camp, for ten days, the international volunteers worked together with volunteers from the Hub, of whom third-country nationals - many from the area's reception centres - and locals. The activities mainly focused on the carpentry workshop and also on cleaning the paths and beaches of the area. The work took place in the mornings and was based on the participation of volunteers in a workshop to make wooden signs (engraving, decoration, making the supports) which were then placed along the nature trails of the Costa di Carro suburban park. Prior to the Hub's activities, the park was in a state of degradation. The actions carried out made the area more attractive for tourists and visitors but above all for the local community.



International volunteers working on signposting in Costa di Carro park

## Training for volunteers

All the volunteers of the Hub, third-country nationals and locals, participated in several training sessions on the key issues for tackling volunteering activities together. In particular: training on the use of tools and equipment for urban regeneration; training on conflict management; training on the area's historical, landscape and natural heritage; training on diversity and inequality education.

