

The Revolution Revisited – Rethinking Europe project was funded with the support of the European Union under the aegis of the Europe for Citizens programme

Applicable to Strand 2 – Measure 2.2, Networks of Towns, Strand 2 – Measure 2.3, Civil Society Projects & Strand 1 – European Remembrance

Three large activities (i.e. Events 1, 2 and 3), encompassing forty-eight individual public discussions and other commemorative events related to the topic of revolution were carried out within this project:

Event 1: Vienna Humanities Festival

Participation: This event involved 3,413 (three thousand four hundred and thirteen) citizens, including at least six participants from Budapest (Hungary), at least two from Bratislava (Slovakia), at least six from Sofia (Bulgaria), at least three from Amsterdam (The Netherlands), at least 10 from Berlin (Germany), at least 10 from London (United Kingdom), at least two from Kraków and Warsaw (Poland) at least 10 from Lviv, Kyiv and Kharkiv (Ukraine), at least 10 from Belgrade (Serbia), at least three from Moscow (Russia) and at least 2,500 from Vienna (Austria).

Location / dates: This event took place in Vienna, Austria from 22/9/2017 to 24/9/2017.

Short description: This edition of the Vienna Humanities Festival, entitled Revolution!, took the 100th anniversary of the Soviet revolution as a starting point for a debate between an international group of academics, activist, journalists and citizens from across Europe on the causes, impact and lessons learned (or not) from revolutions in recent European history. Since 1917, Europe has gone through many revolutionary periods and we can even define the period we are currently living in as a revolutionary period. The revolutionary movements of 1968 developed the key values that would define Europe for decades to come. Meanwhile, in 1989, Europe appeared to overcome the traumatic political consequences of the post WWII era, with the continent celebrating a peaceful wave of velvet revolutions amidst the promise of unification, prosperity and progress. Yet, almost three decades later, another revolution is spreading disunity across that same continent, as the “populist revolution” (as witnessed in, for example, the recent Brexit vote) threatens to tear the European Union apart.

Event 2: Pan-European Debate

Participation: This event involved 1,538 (one thousand five hundred and thirty-eight) citizens, including 96 participants from the city of Warsaw (Poland), 127 participants from the city of Sofia (Bulgaria) and 1,315 participants from Barcelona, Spain.

Location / dates: The events that formed the pan-European debate cycle took place in Warsaw (Poland), Sofia (Bulgaria) and Barcelona (Spain) from 02/10/2017 to 21/11/2017.

Short description: The aim of this event was to stimulate citizens across Europe to reflect on the legacy of revolutions in Europe's history, and to engage in discussion about the current and desired future of Europe. 1917 was a revolution that bore with it the spirit of progress, of intellectual and artistic energy. Two decades later, terror took control and that progressive energy petered out. What lessons can we draw from the history of the October Revolution and its aftermath today, as Europe witnesses a “populist revolution”? How can the legacy of the velvet revolutions of 1989 be protected and strengthened? How can we preserve and affirm European values in face of the “closing of the European mind”? Seven satellite debates took the 100th anniversary of the Soviet revolution as a starting point for the generation of a multi-layered and engaged reflection on the whole cluster of questions that are of vital importance for us at a time when the European project finds itself at a crossroads.

Event 3: Internet Presence of the Live Debates and the AV Archive

Participation: This event saw the involvement of 25 citizens, including nine from Barcelona (Spain), two from Warsaw (Poland) and 14 from Vienna (Austria).

Location / dates: The internet presence was organised in Vienna (Austria), from 22/09/2017 to 21/11/2017.

Short description: The aim of this event was to use the possibilities offered by live streaming and the further internet presence of these live events to increase people's involvement in the project and to widen its outreach (expanding the number of people reached to at least 50,998). The live streaming and the video highlights archive allow citizens who cannot physically attend the discussions to still view and engage with the concepts they touch upon. The internet presence of the debates also ensures the long-term accessibility of the insights gained from discussing the impact and consequences of Europe's revolutionary history, which this project helped to generate. The AV archive is there to provide documentation & material that can be used by pupils, students, educational entities, NGOs or simply citizens who are eager to learn.