Event description sheet

- ## Project

Participant	FITT
Pic number	945961364
Project name and acronym	CONNECTOWNS2U

- ## DESCRIPTION

EVENT NUMBER	EDS 2
EVENT NAME	ECO EXHIBITION
Type	EXHIBITION and CONCERT - European capital of culture related
Insitu/Online	In Situ
Location	Timisoara Youth Center
Date	2,3,4 and 7th of August 2024
Website (if any)	
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS	315
FEMALE	174
MALE	133
Non binary	8

Participants
genders

Gender

200

150

100

50

0

133 — Male

174 — Female

8 — No binary

Participants
nationalities

250

200

150

100

50

0

213 — Romanians

23 — Germans

25 — French

21 — Ukrainians

11 — Bulgarians

10 — Polish

12 — Bosnians
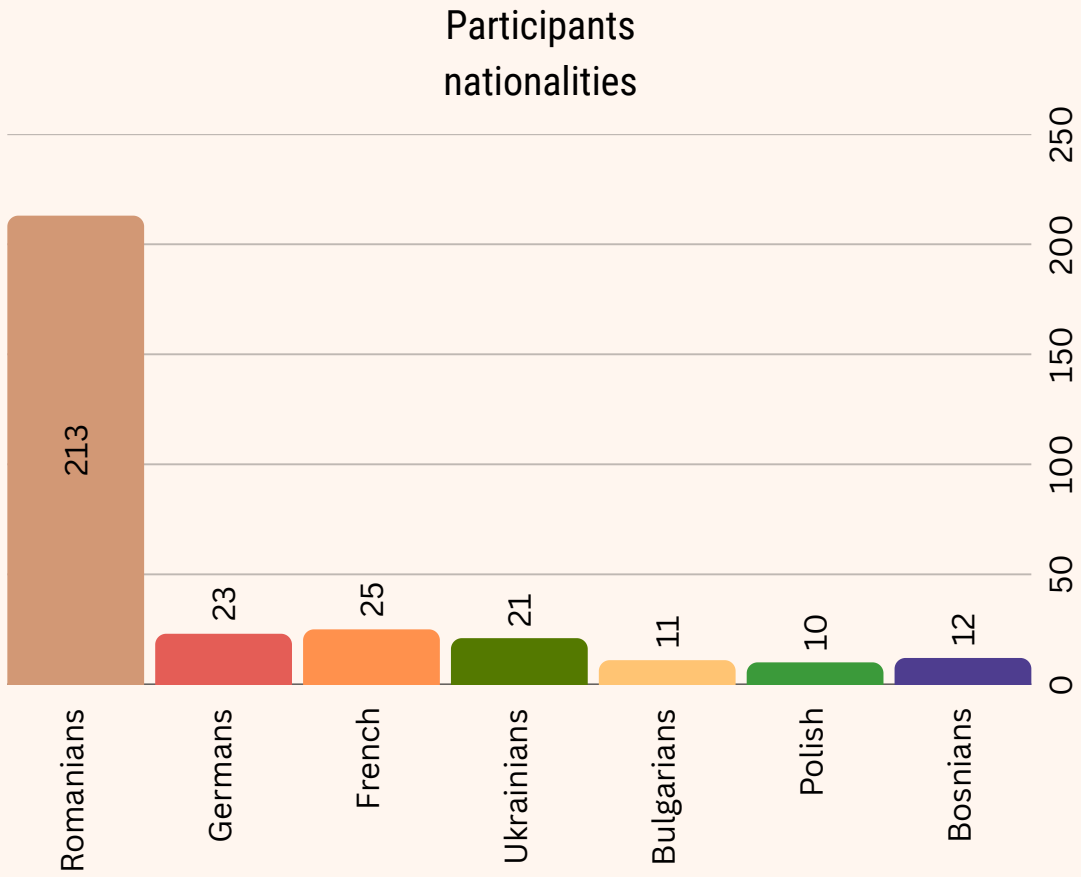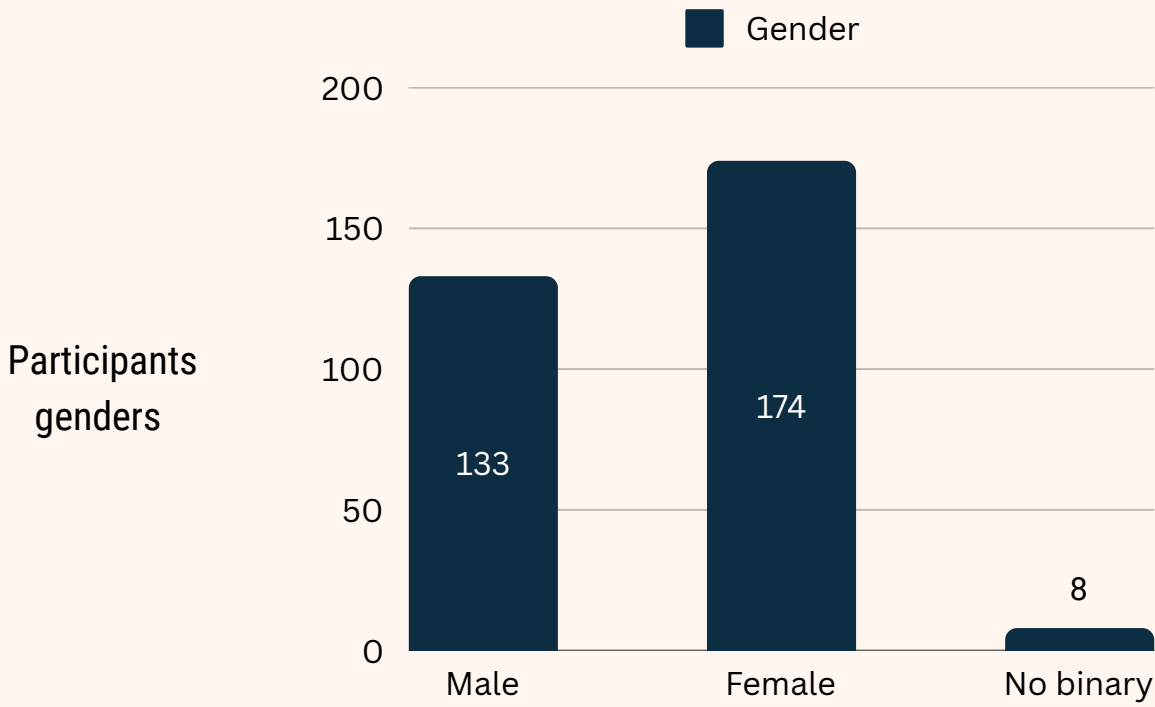
Presentation

Program

The program titled "The Book of Portraits" showcases an exhibition of digital portraits created by local artist Alina Sferle. The event will take place on August 2, 2024, starting at 8:00 PM, at the εpsilon Gallery located in the Youth Center, as part of the Connectowns2U project.

Program and Exhibition Content:

- **Meet with Alina Sferle:** The artist will be present to engage with visitors, discussing her work and inspirations.
- **Exhibition of Works:** *The Book of Portraits* is a captivating collection of digital drawings that explore human diversity. Through portraits of individuals from various eras and cultures, this collection invites reflection on personal identities and individual stories.
- **Technical and Context:** These portraits were created during daily recreational drawing sessions at a time when traditional materials were scarce. By using digital tools, Alina Sferle showcased her artistic talent and resilience in overcoming material challenges.

This exhibition serves as both an artistic demonstration and an introspective journey, where each portrait tells a unique story while highlighting the artist's adaptability.

Until August 4, 2024: Art exhibition "Reflecții," featuring works by Adela Murărescu and Constantin Popovici.

August 4, 2024: Concert by the band Fără Zahăr.

7:00 PM: Doors open for the concert.

8:00 PM: Concert by **Fără Zahăr,** designed for the whole family. Children under 12 enjoy discounted tickets.
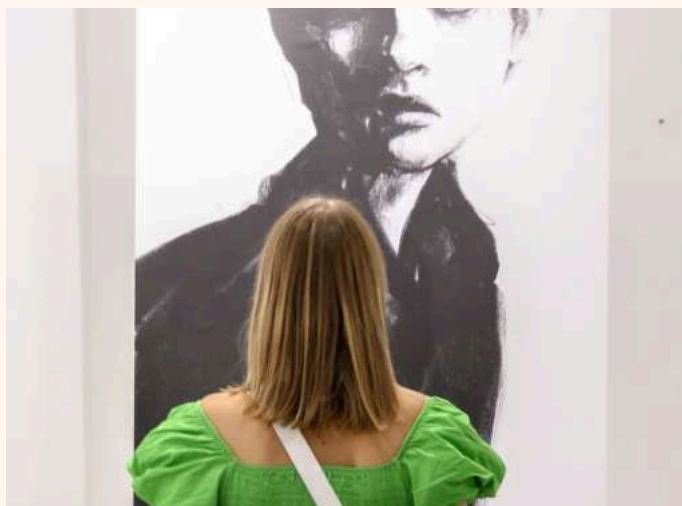
Roundtable Workshop Agenda – August 7

Welcome and Introduction
Welcoming participants with coffee/tea.
Brief presentation of the moderator and speakers.
Statement of objectives and outline of the roundtable session.

Part 1: Introductory Presentations
Each participant shares their perspective and experience related to the event.

Interactive Discussion
Guided exchanges among participants.
Q&A session.

Synthesis and Conclusions
Summary of key points by the moderator.

Event Closure
Acknowledgments and closing remarks.

ROUND TABLE – VOLUNTEERING TODAY

CONCLUSIONS

The meeting brought together volunteers, volunteers coordinators, a representative of the municipality and of the Collective for a European Civic Service. It was organized within Connectowns2U project, funded by the European Commission through CERV project, focusing on promoting volunteering at local level.

Thus, the discussion evolved around the main challenges, opportunities, solutions and plans of collaboration between the key actors at local level.

The main challenging points identified:

- **Language barriers for the international volunteers:** A major challenge is communication, particularly when working with young people with fewer opportunities and a low level of English.
- **Cultural integration:** International volunteers often worry about not being accepted, highlighting the need for better cultural integration and support.
- Organizational difficulties: Youth organizations face challenges in creating events or projects that satisfy all members, reflecting broader struggles in volunteer engagement and consensus-building.
- **Decline in volunteering culture:** While 2023 saw strong volunteer engagement at local level, within the European Capital of Culture programme, there's been a decline since, and a poor communication and visibility of volunteering programmes, no coordination at local level, and bureaucratic processes.
- **Lack of centralization and coordination:** NGOs, volunteers, and local authorities often operate in silos, leading to overlapping efforts, missed opportunities for collaboration, and inefficient use of resources. Without a unified approach, volunteers may receive varying levels of support and training, leading to inconsistencies in their experiences and potentially reducing their motivation to continue volunteering.

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Recommendations for solutions and improvements

- **Cooperations for common events organized by volunteering organizations:** fostering the exchange of good practices in working with volunteers and events organizing. Functional volunteering-dedicated platform: There is a strong need for a functional and active centralized platform in Timisoara, to streamline communication, advertise volunteer opportunities, and facilitate collaboration between NGOs and volunteers. Such a platform could include features like testimonials, event spaces, and regular updates to keep NGOs and volunteers engaged. Incentives for volunteers: Offering incentives like free public transportation, organizing team-building activities, and providing safe spaces within the volunteering activities, especially for marginalized groups, can help sustain volunteer motivation and involvement.

- **Youth engagement:** Efforts should be made to engage more young people, especially high school students, in volunteering. This could include volunteer fairs focused on local opportunities, partnerships with schools, and targeted outreach to promote volunteering as a valuable experience.

- **Improved support structures:** Volunteering and youth NGOs would benefit from better support, such as access to affordable office and activities space, financial incentives, and more opportunities for recognition, networking with other stakeholders and collaboration with local businesses and government bodies (e.g contexts in which local businesses to get to know the local organisations for potential sponsorships).

- **Volunteer training and resources:** Providing volunteers with resources, such as guides on interacting with specific communities (e.g., people with fewer opportunities), and sharing best practices across organizations would enhance their effectiveness.

- **Long-term engagement and recognition:** To ensure sustained volunteer engagement, it's essential to recognize their contributions, offer consistent support, and maintain regular communication through centralized systems, which to support the recognition of volunteering and the competencies volunteers get from it, helping them entering or advancing in the work field.

Volunteering in Timisoara and the local ecosystem offers significant personal and community benefits, as the city is a rich cultural one and it offers several opportunities but there are common challenges among volunteering organisations, that need to be addressed. By improving communication, offering better support and incentives, and creating centralized resources, Timisoara can foster a more impactful volunteering context.

The first steps agreed upon include creating a **shared space, such as a Drive**, for the resources used by volunteering organizations, as well as organizing future meetings to stay in touch and ensure that the recommendations are actively pursued through collaboration between the NGOs and the Municipality.

Moreover, FITT will ensure that the recommendations will be included in the **Local Youth Strategy,** which is set to be **approved by the Local Council** in the upcoming month, ensuring that they will be implemented with the necessary support and resources, this approach aiming to foster a more coordinated and impactful youth engagement in the community.

FOLLOW UPS

- Gala in November
- 2nd group of youth is launched in October 2024