

ABSTRACT

Programme:	Europe for Citizens
Call for Proposals – Date:	1 September 2015
Project Title:	European Network of LEsbian Gay Bisexual TrANsgender Friendly Towns
Project Acronym:	ELEGANT
Priority:	Strand 2 / Democratic engagement and civic participation
Measure:	Network of towns
Project length (months):	24
Total Budget (Euro):	150.000
Lead Partner:	Municipality of Ravenna (Emilia-Romagna, ITALY) Department of Social Services, Health, Animal Rights, Housing, Volunteering, Gender Policies and Culture
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Short description of the Programme:

The Europe for Citizens 2014/2020 aims at bringing European citizens closer to the European Union, seeking to bridge the gap, sometimes felt from the first, by the European institutions. For this reason the Programme contributes to achieve the overall objectives, which must be taken into account during the preparation of the project proposal:

- To **contribute to citizens' understanding of the EU**, its history and diversity
- To **foster European citizenship** and to **improve conditions for civic and democratic** participation at EU level
- To **raise awareness of remembrance**, common history and values
- To **encourage democratic participation** of citizens at EU level, by developing citizens' understanding of the EU policy making-process and, by promoting opportunities for societal and intercultural engagement and volunteering at EU level

The specific objectives of the Programme are:

- raise awareness of memory, history and common values of the European Union, as well as to its purposes, such as the promotion of peace, shared values and welfare of its citizens, stimulating debate, reflection and development of networks
- encourage democratic and civic participation of citizens at Union level, enabling citizens to better understand the process of shaping policies of the Union creating the right conditions to encourage social engagement, intercultural dialogue and volunteering.

Specific objectives – Network of Towns:

Networks for towns Strand supports Municipalities working together on a common theme in a long-term perspective may wish to develop networks of towns to make their cooperation more sustainable. Networking between municipalities on issues of common interest appears to be an important means for enabling the exchange of good practices.

Networks of Towns are expected to:

- Integrate a range of activities around the subject(s) of common interest to be addressed in the context of the Programme's objectives or annual priorities
- Have defined target groups for which the selected themes are particularly relevant and involve community members active in the subject area (i.e. experts, local associations, citizens and citizens' groups directly affected by the theme, etc.);
- Serve as a basis for future initiatives and actions between the towns involved, on the issues addressed or possibly on further issues of common interest.

Background of the project and challenges:

The Treaty on the European Union Functioning includes a number of regulations for combating discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

However, in many EU Member States, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people (LGBT) face discrimination and harassment on a daily basis. Prejudices and misconceptions about homosexuality and transgender people feed intolerant attitudes and behavior towards this community.

The project therefore aims to create a European network of LGBT friendly towns that includes both towns with a large experience and culture of hospitality towards this community and other towns sensitive to the issue that would like to start implementing policies in favour of this group of citizens.

Suitable project activities:

The Programme focuses on the organisation of a series of international events by project partners, which include actions / activities such as:

- Meetings of citizens of various European countries;
- Creating and conducting activities between transnational networks and partnerships
- Debates on issues such as European citizenship and active citizenship;
- Reflections on common European values;
- Information initiatives on the EU institutions and how they work;
- Activities for the exploitation of results;

Studies on issues related to citizenship and civic participation

In particular we foresee the organization of 5 or 6 EVENTS of 3 days each, based on a common working structure including the following ACTIVITIES:

1. Activities to involve local target groups: Public Debates, Open Forums...
2. Activities to let European delegates acquainted on best practices, success cases, local experiences: Study Visits, Workshops...
3. Activities to discuss among partners: Meetings, Seminars, Round Tables...
4. Practical activities and experiences focusing on the project theme.

Partnership:

6 Municipalities, from 6 eligible countries. They could be LGBT friendly towns with a large experience and culture of hospitality towards this community and other towns sensitive to the issue that would like to start implementing policies in favour of this group of citizens.