



With the support of the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

## **JEAN MONNET MODULE EUinCEE**

### **REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP:**

### ***“THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN FOSTERING EU VALUES AND INTEGRATION IN TIMES OF CRISIS”***

***Report by Alessia PETRACIN***

***Bachelor student, University of Trieste***

On May 19, 2021, the international workshop “The role of civil society in fostering EU values and integration in times of crisis” was held at the University of Trieste, within the initiatives of the Jean Monnet Module “The Rule of Law in the new EU Member States” (EUinCEE). It was organised by professor Serena Baldin, EUinCEE Academic Coordinator and Module Leader, by professors Elisabetta De Giorgi and Giuseppe Ieraci of the University of Trieste, and by dr. Jasna Fakin Bajec of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

The event was carried out under the patronage of the Department of Political and Social Sciences of the University of Trieste, and with the support of the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union, the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts and the Secondary School of Venio Pilon Ajdovščina.

The workshop began with the welcome addresses of Professor Valter Sergo, Vice Rector of the University of Trieste; Professor Petra Svoljsak, Head of the Milko Kos Historical Institute, Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts; Professor Luciano Mauro, Deputy Director of the Department of Political and Social Sciences of the University of Trieste and Professor Andrej Rutar, Headmaster of the Secondary School of Venio Pilon Ajdovščina.

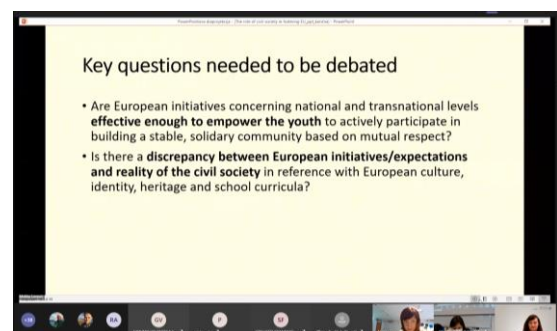


The workshop was attended by over 50 people.

The workshop aimed to highlight the role of civil society in fostering EU values through active participation in public life. Besides the participation of academics, who introduced the themes of cultural heritage and EU identity, as well as the rule of law’s crisis and the issues of EU integration, the workshop foresaw the direct involvement of Italian and Slovenian students, who

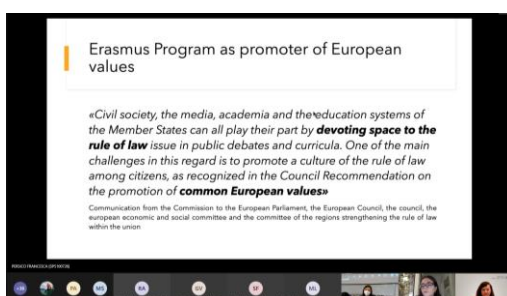
illustrated how they saw EU, their participation in the Erasmus+ program and proposals for European Youth's projects.

The first speakers were Jasna Fakin Bajec, research fellow at the Institute of Culture and Memory Studies, Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, and Melita Lemut Bajec, PhD candidate and professor at the Secondary School of Veno Pilon Ajdovščina. Their intervention highlighted the role of knowledge and understanding of culture and heritage in empowering youth to live the values necessary for the existence of a healthy community. Jasna Fakin Bajec underlined the role of culture as a pillar of sustainable development, and how young people are the best ambassadors of European values, whose mobility allows them to discover and enjoy. However, she proceeded to highlight how, despite culture being well-positioned in the strategic agendas, few initiatives are carried out in practical matters. Melita Lemut Bajec then went on presenting a research on practical approaches to help youth get in touch with cultural pluralism and heritage.



The second part of the workshop was dedicated to some young people's viewpoints on the ideas initiated by the European Union. The interventions were carried out by students of the Secondary School of Veno Pilon Ajdovščina. In particular, Matija Štrukelj talked about the existence of central European values, highlighting how, despite the arising of European values shaped by common historical events, aspects such as the stigma still surrounding some EU members and the fact that many modern democracies are built on violence, blood, oppression and exploitation question the previous-mentioned values. David Bajec held a speech on young people amid the expectations of the EU, suggesting the creation of a European party to represent them and show they're capable of leading. Feliks Možina considered European identity and its being reality or utopia, and suggested the EU should focus more on balancing the development of the whole system and the freedom of the individual countries. Finally, Laura Brecelj talked about young people as being the promoters of inclusion, diversity, integration and mutual respect, highlighting the importance of education in empowering youth.

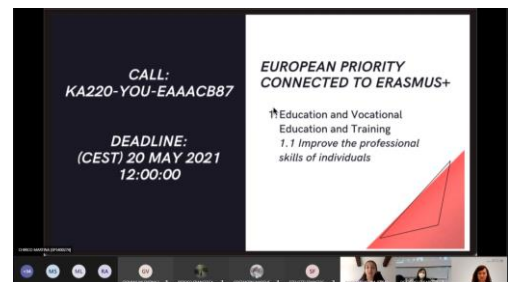
In the third part of the workshop, students of the University of Trieste talked about their experiences regarding the EU's Erasmus+ programme. Francesca Persico analysed the fundamental values of Erasmus and the main goals of the programme for the future.



Margherita Mabel Costantini talked about her experience as an European volunteer in the European voluntary service, and how this has impacted the way she feels towards European values.

Francesca Stelletti held a speech about a project proposal her and some other MA students created to respond to a call of proposal funded by the Erasmus+ key action no. 3, to facilitate integration and inclusion of minorities in the Italian Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia.

Federica Nestola and Martina Chirico presented a project that aims to reduce the skills gap between educational systems and labour market in the EU.



Finally, Giuseppe Ieraci, professor of Political Science at the University of Trieste and Niccolò A. Figà Talamanca, Secretary General of the Association “No Peace without Justice”, closed the workshop with a debate on the rule of law crisis and the future of EU integration.



They highlighted the failure of European institutions in punishing Hungary and Poland’s violations of human rights, pointing out the fact that advocacy is necessary to make a change.