



Date: February 2020

Report – Workshop in Brod

On 18th and 19th of February, youth representatives from families of the missing persons from different ethnic backgrounds participated in the workshop 'Differences and Similarities between the communities in Kosovo'. Workshop was held in Brod, Dragash, and together youngsters worked on identifying the differences and similarities of each community.

The main goal of the workshop was to mention how communities coexisted in the Western Balkans for centuries despite their differences in culture, traditions, language, etc. The workshop commenced with simple introduction as a first step of knowing each other. Then the main participants' focus was on the discussion regarding history in the Western Balkans mentioning all of the above differences but also adding the similarities that the communities have in common.

Later on, participants were divided into three mixed groups and the main task was to display the reality they live in through illustration of tree's main parts. The objective was; at the roots section to write the differences between the communities; at the branches section to list the similarities between whilst at the tree trunk section to list what are the steps to be done in order to move forward and achieve collectively in different areas.

Soon after the groups were divided they started to write down their mutual objective: find the differences, similarities, and what has to be done further in order to function better as communities who share the same place to live and conduct daily obligations.

First group identified: language, religion, tradition, history, and politics as differences. Mentality, war, unemployment, law, currency, and food as similarities. Furthermore, they have identified the crucial steps they need to follow together in order to function excellently: Tolerance, coexistence, European Union.

Second group identified: culture, tradition, religion, language, education system, and music as differences. On the other hand, they listed: patriotism, economic development, coexistence, mentality, technology, and youth as similarities. The last two steps what an ideal community should look alike are: cooperation and good understanding.

Third group was not far from previous groups with their ideas, thus they identified: tradition, religion, language, education system, and politics as differences whereas, craft, pollution, sports, provocation on ethnic basis, mentality, food, and they way of life as similarities. What should be done in the future is to learn both languages, establish good neighboring relationship, set ourselves free from the conflict period during 1998-2000, and set more ambition in order to change the place we live in.



Youngsters during their free time took skiing lessons in Brod, Dragash. All this was conducted by a professional ski instructor thus the cooperation amidst the communities during this activity strengthened even more. This was another step towards building bridges through mutual coexistence and understanding. This was another activity under the umbrella of workshop 'Differences and Similarities between the communities in Kosovo'. In the evening, all being tired and happy from the long day with various activities, all the youngsters participated in board games hence they spent even more time with each other and what was more important is the fact that they started to learn new words from each language. As an output of this positive approach and example we see a need of organizing language classes in order to bring them even closer to each other,

The highlight of the workshop was the positive energy and readiness to link all the differences and similarities by working together towards a common goal which is: quality formal and informal education, employment, tolerance, coexistence, cooperation, and integration in the European Union.