

4th Participation Day, Budapest 2017
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The 4th Participation Day (PD) within the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) was held on 17-18th October in Budapest under the headline “Science meets Participation”. The main goal of the Participation Days is to bring together civil society actors, local, regional, national state representatives and other stakeholders from the European institutions in order to increase the participation in countries along the Danube, to exchange the experience and to strengthen the cooperation on all the levels. Such event-formats are not being used in the framework of all the macro-regional strategies of the EU but just within EUSDR and was firstly borrowed by the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region in June 2017 back-to-back with the Annual Forum in Berlin.

It means that there is a need for higher participation of all sectors, a need for an exchange platform for people who have mutual goals. Such events give you the networking possibilities and provide you with an access to many stakeholders. During four years of PDs there were different approaches used, different topics discussed, different actors involved. Nevertheless, if you look at the participants and especially their age, one will notice that there are almost no one, who represents the voice of youth along the Danube.

As a logical conclusion, the following question is coming up in the mind: How can the experienced actors involve more young people to contribute to such events? The answer can be – give them the responsibility to do something by themselves. When participating – then doing something at the same time. That is how the “Participation through Media” Workshop was born. Six young persons from the Danube countries were asked to organize a workshop for the PD’s participants and they dedicated it to the media issues, concentrating on the role of civil society there.

Why Media? Firstly, this topic was not represented within the 4th PD. Secondly, who can be speaking about it better, as not its most active users. Media Literacy, Fake News, Eco Chambers, Disinformation, Freedom of Media, Social Media, legal aspects of media... The topic was too broad, but anyway the young participants coped with their task. They focused on raising the awareness of the importance of media literacy especially among young people.

It is important to provide the youth with such opportunities, otherwise they are not going to participate actively. They constantly need motivation in order to achieve professional expertise. That is why such events could become good examples and instruments to increase youth participation.