

Press release Review of the event

The Danube-Networkers invite to an international session by Videoconferencing: Come together! Connecting people in times of Corona by culture

Sunday, 29.03.2020, 04:00-05.15 pm, 16:00-17:15 (German time)

Corona separates, Danube-Networkers bring people of all ages together over the Internet

Martin is sitting on his sofa with his two elephant pillows. The books pile up in Horst's study. Milena's two children snuggle up to her and wave to us. Martin is a Serb, he works at a school for people with disabilities in Novi Sad. Horst is a retired teacher from Biberach, Milena – a Bulgarian, who works in Ulm. In Corona times, they all sit at home in front of their computer screens.

The Danube-Networkers had to cancel a real network meeting in Frankfurt in March, now, in times of the virus, they are using the possibilities of the new media to bring people from all Danube countries together over the Internet - against loneliness and depression.

The initiative was developed by the coordination point of the education network, which is based in Ulm in the ILEU association. This Sunday afternoon, the ILEU team invites members of its network and guests to a video conference: *Come together - Connecting people in times of Corona by culture*. 42 women and men from 8 countries accepted the invitation. Aged 96, the oldest is Maria Stadelhofer, the mother of Carmen, who is the initiator. She lives in Mannheim. The youngest participants are students like Larry from Nigeria, who studies in Ulm, and in between people of all ages and situations.

The ILEU team, together with the Danube-Networkers from Ulm and Timisoara (Romania) and supported by the group of students, have come up with a program for the virtual meeting: After an introductory round, Simon opens the musical part with his saxophone: *Jardin d'hiver* is the title of the piece he is playing. Lucia from Timisoara recites the poem *La steaua* from the famous Romanian poet Mihail Eminescu, Ahmad from Lebanon has translated a verse from *The Little Prince* into English, French and Arabic. Viktoria, who is learning to play ukulele, performs her favourite song *Stand by me*. Horst, who previously also taught sports, has made a film explaining the steps of a Romanian dance. Every participant introduces himself. The program consists of music, singing and poems for almost two hours. Everyone gets a lot of praise from the others. The language is English, but it is translated now and again into Romanian and German, not all have learned English at school.

'We want to bring people in Europe and above all in the Danube countries together,' says Carmen Stadelhofer, 'as a sign of togetherness and solidarity in times of Corona.' Now also with the new techniques. The Zoom video platform is quickly installed, and all participants can do it. This is how the Danube-Networkers want to continue working in the near future - in their projects CODANEC and DENTA.

In the **DENTA project**, 8 groups from 6 countries interview people in the third age. They want to find out what is similar and what is different in their way of life, especially between people from Western and Eastern Europe. As the Ulm group cannot meet in real time at present, the interview texts will be edited together via video conference. How good that one can also involve this way a young doctoral student who currently lives in Leipzig and gives journalistic tips from there. More details: ileu.net.

At **CODANEC project**, people are invited to show their personal, intangible cultural treasure to people from other (Danube) countries. So far, almost 40 cultural treasures of very different types came together from Germany, Romania, Serbia, Bulgaria and Moldova - from blue printing over midwifery

to Horezu ceramics. All are presented in English and the respective mother tongue, and there are also volunteer translators for the other Danube languages. For CODANEC, the organizers have now launched a competition with cash prizes. Anyone interested can take part. Detailed information is available on the website codanec.eu.

The participants in the afternoon session on Sunday have come to a consensus: We'll meet again, preferably on next Sunday. If you would like to join us at 4 p.m., you are cordially invited. Please contact the organizers. Musical contributions from old and young are also sought! See you soon:

More information about the session Come together-connecting people against isolation in times of Corona program, (fotos and video) is available on the website <http://codanec.eu/come-together/>

If you have questions :

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With best regards,

Carmen Stadelhofer,
Coordinator of the Danube-Networkers network

Enclosed: A screenshot from the video conference.

Ulm, 30.03.2020

If you like to know more about the Danube-Networkers, have a look in our information brochure

https://ileu.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2019/11/E03_eng_Broschu%CC%88re_networkers.pdf

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