

PRESS RELEASE

Public kick-off of the D-Care Labs successful!

With the current COVID-19 situation, the 'new normality' of project kick-offs is going virtual. And that is exactly what D-Care Labs project did on the 20th October 2020.

With more than 180 people attending the virtual kick off in a beautiful 3D environment created by a Serbian start-up CollectiVibe, the D-Care Labs event began with the presentation of the vision of D-Care Labs project by Mr André Peters, representative of the lead partner Diakonie Baden and a video address by Ms Theresa Schopper, State Minister responsible for policy coordination in the Baden-Württemberg State Ministry.

The participants also heard more about the Danube Transnational Programme (DTP) by Mr Marius Valentin Niculae, Project Officer at the Joint Secretariat of the DTP.

With the welcomes underway, Ms Katja Vonhoff, Project Manager at Diakonie Baden presented the activities of the DTP project and all project partners, alongside their associated partners and paved the way for the presentation of two projects with whom D-Care Labs can learn and develop synergies – project CD Skills, presented by Ms Jasmina Dolinšek from the City of Maribor and Dr Jernej Dolinšek from University Medical Centre Maribor and project Finance4SocialChange, presented by Dr Volker Then from the University of Heidelberg.

With COVID-19 strongly affecting the activities of the project, the current pandemic was also a strong focus of the regional D-Care Labs breakout sessions, with participants discussing the problems caused by COVID-19 pandemic in the field of home care and presentations of regional lab concepts as means of problem solving.

The second part of the event was a plenary discussion focused on the contribution of European collaboration to problem solving in the social service sector and how European collaboration can support (inter-)regional social innovation processes.

The panel participants Ms Marie-Anne Paraskevas from Directorate General Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion at the European Commission, Ms Leonetta Pajer from the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia, Ms Heather Roy from Eurodiacona, Mr Jörg Mirtl from Priority Area 9 »People and Skills« of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region and Mr Teo Petričević from Act Group and D-Care Labs partner Croatia spoke about their work priorities, the meaning of social innovation from their individual perspective and what possibilities they see for European collaboration on a transnational, regional or national level. The panel was expertly moderated by Ms Katja Vonhoff (Diakonie Baden).

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