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Closing the empowerment gap through citizenship education
How to address educationally disadvantaged groups

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Report

Geocaching Tour (17 November 2011)

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Conception & Realisation by:

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As the opening event of the NECE conference 2011, the NECE geocaching tour was conceived as a two hour paper chase around Old Praga including the aim to discover the various faces of this historical city as well as to enable a first contact between the participants. The main task was to find six significant places for the district's history using the GPS device. After reaching every staging destination the participants had to seek for hidden envelopes, which contained short information to explain the meaning of each particular place for the history of the different districts. The descriptions shed light on local traditions and explained the unique development of Old Praga.

The tour began with a short explanation of the different tasks and methods of the geocaching led by Konrad Pruszyński. After dividing the participants into three groups, each guide (Konrad Pruszyński, Olga Napiontek, Mateusz Fałkowski, Katarzyna Lorenc and Marcin Mitzner) instructed the participants how to operate the GPS. Thereafter each group started the tour seeking different destinations.

After the tour the participants were asked to fill in the evaluation forms. The most of them recommended geocaching as a good method of exploring new unknown places as well as a helpful way to get in touch with other people. Further, the so-called icebreaking effect of geocaching was mentioned very often in the evaluation. Thanks to the historical input the tour was also very useful as source of information about the Praga districts and a good possibility to discover Warsaw. Besides the attendees emphasized that geocaching represents an effective method to bring people in contact. Therefore it can be useful on many other occasions and fields such as team formation, school excursions, conferences, video workshops but also as an interesting way to discover the neighborhood. Tours like this are adaptable for the main targets: integration of participants, discovering the city, starting other bigger events

On the other hand the participants offered some suggestions to optimize the course of the tour. For instance next time it would be helpful to provide more GPS devices and divide the attendees in smaller groups. Moreover the geocaching tour should take place during the day and over a shorter period of time.

In conclusion, all of the participants saw the geocaching tour as a great experience which offered the opportunity to learn about Praga district and to feel it's unique atmosphere.

From the organizers point of view it was an opportunity to see how geocaching works as a method of education in a multicultural and very specific group and the experience of this tour demonstrated the great potential of geocaching. It is adaptable for different groups and occasions. Further for the organizers it was fascinating and enriching preparing the tour. We hope that this method serves as an inspiration for the participants and can be used in further projects.