Ref. Ares(2026)8238907 - 28/08/2026

Project number: 101214190 CERV-2024-CITIZENS-TOWN-TT

Co-funded by the European Union

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

(To be filled in and uploaded as deliverable in the Portal Grant Management System, at the due date foreseen in the system.

Please provide one sheet per event (one event = one workpackage = one lump sum).)

PROJECT	
Participant:	Comune di Polla- Municipality of Novska- Muncipality of Konche
PIC number:	Polla: 876415080- Grad Novska: 911440131- Town of Konche: 876190137.
Project name and acronym:	Proud to be European Citizens- PEC

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	3
Event name:	Final meeting
Type:	Workshop – Seminar – Round Table – Institutional Signing Ceremony
In situ/online:	In-situ
Location:	Polla (Italy)
Date(s):	From 7 to 9 August 2026
Website(s) (if any):	Konce.gov.mk/pec https://novska.hr/hr/vijesti/novosti/novska-polla-i-konche-povezani-projektom-%E2%80%9Eproud-to-be-european-citizens%E2%80%9C,8040.html https://comune.polla.sa.it/argomenti/argomento-dettaglio/2722801
Participants	
Female:	31
Male:	19
Non-binary:	0

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From country 1 Croatia:	12		
From country 2 Italy:	25		
From country 3 North Macedonia:	13		
Total number of participants:	50	From total number of countries:	3

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The third and final transnational meeting of the **"Proud to be European Citizens" (PEC)** project took place in **Polla (Italy)**, serving as the high-level capitalization and closing milestone of the initiative.

Building on the analytical debates held in Novska (Croatia) and Konche (Republic of North Macedonia), the Polla event focused on tackling low democratic engagement, providing concrete training on EU direct consultation mechanisms, and structuring long-term sustainability for transnational civic cooperation.

A defining achievement of this final event was its **capacity to extend well beyond the original three project cities**. The consortium successfully integrated historical twinning partners of Polla, welcoming municipal delegations and youth representatives from **Germany (Steinenbronn and Bernsdorf)** and **France (Quinsac)**. This multilateral environment transformed the event into a broad pan-European forum. The long-term institutional legacy of the PEC project was further demonstrated by the joint submission in **April 2026 of a new transnational project proposal under the CERV "Networks of Towns" call**, formalizing an expanded operational network among the participating municipalities.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

Activity 1. Workshop on the evaluation and analysis of low citizen participation at EU level

- Context and analysis: the working session opened with an analytical assessment of voter turnout and civic disengagement trends across peripheral and rural regions of Southern, Central, and Eastern Europe. Participants analyzed specific barriers—such as language obstacles, feelings of political distance from Brussels, and lack of information—that hinder active citizen involvement in EU policy formulation.
- Participatory dialogue: mixed working groups compared the civic perceptions of citizens from founding EU countries (Italy, France, Germany), recent member states (Croatia), and candidate countries (North Macedonia), highlighting that democratic deficits can only be countered through decentralized, municipal-level engagement.

Activity 2. Expert-led seminar on digital tools and platforms for EU citizen consultations

- Technical Presentation: an interactive seminar conducted by European policy experts guided participants through official EU digital democracy platforms, specifically **"Have your say"**, the **European Citizens' Initiative (ECI)**, and the **EU Youth Dialogue portals**.
- Capacity Building: The session provided practical demonstrations on how individual citizens, local NGOs, and municipal councils can submit public feedback on upcoming directives, launch petitions, and participate directly in open European Commission public consultations.

Activity 3. Interactive workshop – Direct participation in live EU public debates

- Methodology: participants were divided into two multilingual working teams to simulate and execute real-time civic contributions:
- During this interactive session, delegates were guided step-by-step through the practical procedures for submitting feedback and participating in ongoing European public consultations. The workshop addressed the primary practical hurdle identified by participants: navigating the user registration process on the official portal, demonstrating directly how individual citizens can easily create an EU Login profile to publish contributions. The presentation highlighted the multilingual functionality of the European consultation platforms, which allows citizens to participate in their

native language—a feature that perfectly mirrored the project's own multilingual approach, as all event materials, working documents, and debates were translated and made accessible across five different languages (Italian, Croatian, Macedonian, German, and French). This exercise effectively removed perceived administrative barriers, providing attendees with the concrete skills required to autonomously engage in future European decision-making processes.

- Outcome: both groups successfully tested the digital feedback tools, demonstrating how local communities can directly voice local concerns within EU institutional channels.

Activity 4. Transnational round table – Future strategic cooperation and policy themes

- Multi-stakeholder Consultation*:* mayors, local administrators, and civil society delegates from Italy, Croatia, North Macedonia, Germany, and France gathered in an institutional round table to define future cross-border priorities. Key thematic areas identified for continued joint action included sustainability in rural regions, cultural tourism, youth exchanges, and European project management.
- Synergy & Network Expansion: the roundtable celebrated the **joint application submitted in April 2026 under the CERV Network of Towns call**, establishing an enduring alliance to ensure that the impact of the PEC project continues through future structured EU initiatives.

Activity 5. Institutional signing ceremony – Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

- Formal Agreement: the event culminated in the official signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) by the institutional representatives of the participating municipalities.
- Commitments: the MoU sets out clear commitments to share administrative best practices, coordinate joint civic and cultural initiatives, maintain youth exchange programs, and participate collaboratively in future European funding programs (CERV, Erasmus+, and Creative Europe).

OBJECTIVES REACHED

- **Concrete empowerment in EU democratic tools:** provided direct training to citizens on utilizing official European Commission consultation platforms, turning passive spectators into active democratic contributors.
- **Expanded pan-european impact:** broadened the project's reach beyond the initial tri-party agreement to include German and French municipalities, creating a wider European network of local governments.
- **Long-term institutionalized cooperation:** ensured sustainability beyond the project lifecycle through the execution of a formal MoU and the joint submission of a CERV Networks of Towns grant application.
- **Reinforced transnational civic identity:** strengthened solidarity, intercultural understanding, and shared European values across 5 European nations.

COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

A multi-platform communication campaign covered the proceedings to ensure extensive public visibility and engage local and international communities:

https://comune.polla.sa.it/notizie/3632468/t

https://www.italia2news.it/2026/08/12/il-gemellaggio-a-polla-riscuote-successo-giovani-arrivati-da-tutta-europa/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaCkNUwS9pk

https://www.105tv.it/polla-diventa-internazionale-da-tutto-il-mondo-per-partecipare-alla-40-edizione-del-festival-del-folklore/

https://www.facebook.com/p/Proud-to-be-European-Citizens-61585415256524/
https://www.facebook.com/opstinakonche/?locale=mk_MK https://www.facebook.com/RTVKobra/
https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=28329168760023665&set=pcb.28329174230023118

https://www.facebook.com/plugins/post.php?href=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fzlatko.risto

v.1%2Fposts%2Fpfbid0f7Fp1gpNpwhi7G3Ry9uawv5xNdtgafi73c71MRjeRMrTgL49LaPzEg8Mhgra6Fjzl &show_text=true&width=500

https://www.facebook.com/italia2tv.it/posts/a-polla-sono-state-accolte-le-delegazioni-di-kon%C4%8De-macedonia-del-nord-novska-cro/1637767338359525/

https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1028608140048981
https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2025364078113457

https://www.occhiodisalerno.it/article/polla-gemellaggi-europei/CBNUPILL-a?fbclid=IwY2xjawT-LdNwZG9mBWV4dG4DYWVtAjExAGJyaWQRMG5KSHJiYnRBUERpT21DelpzcnRjBmFwcF9pZBAyMjIwMzkxNzg4MjAwODkyAAEevwVUeNDkDoAeAP0895MnoGvf3sxTt4KIMaDIQ5Q2IEUkQ4wlutTWpwvdLP4_aem_xQ_SnYVGPV5WZi9_ffXXBg

https://www.google.com/search?sa=N&sca_esv=2ba57f22761bd0f1&rlz=1C1HKFL_itIT1219IT1219&sxsrf=APpeQnvRqLfcUp2_18MqBcvRoeoaA0NbcQ:1787907688358&q=GEMELLAGGIO+POLLA+KONCHE+NOVSKA&udm=2&source=univ&fir=XgOxTu4n2JTY_M%252CPppdeo7yr3ZDZM%252C_%253Bz11jARdFrtQUzM%252Cu029au6TILrJDM%252C_%253BaX5GSi3U-

tv5OM%252Cu029au6TILrJDM%252C_%253Beiyv8szSs1erWM%252C98_bMyRUlE2d5M%252C_%253BQ6W71MXjnRKhgM%252CtBlQeX0PlhMOfM%252C_%253BKBkPSun1io5FKM%252CgEzRrq5-mhhkhM%252C_%253BgZM23c1E56acrM%252CixtufFrngCY-

pM%252C_%253BolKXB5pfnlowUM%252Cu7dFzfpsqZSsgM%252C_%253BDM7cavmwXSV1MM%25 2Casbj_1RZ-DAkUM%252C_&usg=AI4_-kSOn_U4MdbF-WtB_jkHCpWnogZucg&ved=2ahUKEwjIh5-V-8KWAxXezgIHHZIqBKk4ChDsCXoECCMQBQ&biw=1366&bih=599&dpr=1

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).