

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 | |
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| Participant: | 1 - Town Klanjec (Klanjec) |
| PIC number: | 938892392 |
| Project name and acronym: | Small Green Towns for a Big Green Europe / Green Europe |

| EVENT DESCRIPTION | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Event number: | 1 |
| Event name: | Green Europe |
| Type: | Citizens' meeting |
| In situ/online: | in-situ |
| Location: | Klanjec / Zagreb (Croatia) |
| Date(s): | 11.-14.09.2025. |
| Website(s) (if any): | www.klanjec.hr |
| Participants | |
| Female: | 204 |
| Male: | 174 |
| Non-binary: | 0 |
| From country 1 Croatia: | 172 |
| From country 2 Poland: | 33 |
| From country 3 Slovakia: | 14 |
| From country 4 Czech Republic : | 14 |
| From country 5 Portugal: | 8 |
| From country 6 Spain: | 8 |
| From country 7 Hungary: | 14 |
| From country 8 Slovenia: | 42 |

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| From country 9 Serbia: | 18 | | |
| From country 10 Romania: | 8 | | |
| From country 11 Austria: | 11 | | |
| From country 12 Malta: | 8 | | |
| From country 13 Greece: | 8 | | |
| From country 14 Bosnia and Herzegovina | 20 | | |
| Total number of participants: | 378 | From total number of countries: | 14 |

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

The Town of Klanjec, as the lead partner, successfully implemented its eighth Town Twinning programme entitled Small Green Towns for a Big Green Europe /Green Europe/ from 11 to 14 September 2025. The four-day citizens' meeting brought together 17 partner organisations from 14 European countries, including two non-EU countries. Participants included representatives of local public authorities, civil society organisations and active citizens interested in civic engagement in sustainable development and the promotion and protection of shared European values.

Our event hosted 206 international participants and 172 local participants from Klanjec, creating a dynamic and inclusive environment for intercultural dialogue, exchange of knowledge and good practices, and participatory citizen engagement, as well as for discussions in which diverse and even opposing opinions were expressed. Each of our Town Twinning meetings is, in a way, a workshop in dialogue, reasoned debate, mutual respect and the understanding that our diversity is a value that defines us as Europeans and forms the foundation on which we must continue to build our common future within the EU.

The Green Europe programme once again confirmed this approach, and the theme of the meeting attracted exceptional interest from both international participants and local citizens.

Due to time constraints and the relatively large number of activities and participants, the programme was designed as a combination of plenary sessions and parallel thematic activities held simultaneously, allowing participants to attend joint sessions or choose workshops and debates according to their professional interests and personal preferences expressed during the project preparation phase.

During the meeting, 12 carefully designed activities were implemented, including panel discussions, seminars, workshops, presentations, forums and debates. A special highlight was the joint green action entitled Partner Green Action – Do Something Green Today, during which each partner organisation planted one tree in the Memorial Park of the Town of Klanjec.

All planned activities were successfully carried out, with a high level of citizen participation and interaction, and with the involvement of numerous experts who provided highly relevant information on the programme topics. The programme addressed key priorities related to the European Green Deal, sustainable and circular economy, green infrastructure, climate change adaptation at the local level, youth participation and citizen involvement in EU decision-making processes.

The first day was dedicated to participants' arrival and accommodation. Project activities began with a meeting of the project team and partner coordinators, followed by an Opening Conference and panel discussion. In addition to institutional speeches, the programme, its main objectives and the CERV programme were presented. The introductory debate focused on the preconditions for implementing climate adaptation policies at the local level, highlighting experiences from representatives of small towns and municipalities. Participants exchanged examples of environmental protection projects, energy efficiency initiatives and innovative green solutions tailored to small communities. Future opportunities for cooperation and joint initiatives were also explored. The day concluded with a welcome dinner hosted by the Mayor of Klanjec Zlatko Brlek.

The second day continued with a seminar and discussion on citizen participation in implementing the European Green Deal, giving participants, especially young people, the opportunity to express their views, ideas and concerns. EU tools and digital platforms supporting participatory democracy were presented, encouraging citizens to actively contribute to policymaking processes and counter disinformation related to the green transition. The presentation of the Count Us In platform generated particular interest, along with discussions on what citizens can do in their everyday lives to combat climate change and whether small individual actions can contribute to achieving the European Green Deal objectives.

Very engaging workshops were held on green infrastructure and the New European Bauhaus,

moderated by energy and sustainability experts from REGEA. They provided practical insight into concrete EU-funded projects, both completed and ongoing, as well as sustainable investments in small local communities such as those represented at the meeting. Young participants also discussed their expectations regarding green jobs. Differences in perspectives were evident depending on geographical background, with participants from Southern Europe and less developed countries expressing greater concern that the green transition could negatively affect employment opportunities. Such concerns were further explored in activities focusing on sustainable and circular economy, where participants discussed the economic dimension of the EU green transition and its investment challenges. By involving representatives of economic institutions and business support organisations from Krapina-Zagorje County, the project strengthened the link between environmental responsibility and economic resilience. Thanks to their expert contributions, participants reported in the evaluation that they now better understand both the necessity and the advantages of this strategic EU policy.

A particularly strong participatory dimension was achieved on the third day through interactive formats such as the debate *The Key Lies in Small Changes*, the forum *Personal Stories, Collective Future Powered by the EU*, and informal outdoor workshops designed to strengthen European identity, solidarity and intercultural understanding. Special attention was devoted to children and young people through a creative eco-theatre workshop organised by the private art residency *House of Klajn* and *Theater Tirena*, the promotion of green education through games and quizzes, and the continuation of the outdoor workshop from the previous meeting *No.2 Walk, Run, Think, Talk!*

A group of participants also visited the island of Krk, the first Zero Waste island in Croatia, to observe a best practice example of environmental protection. The project culminated in a symbolic joint green action: each participant planted a tree in Klanjec, initiating the future Green Avenue of Twinned Towns. At the same time, partner organisations planted trees in their own municipalities, creating a shared transnational action promoted under the slogan: „Small Green Towns and Their Citizens for a Big Green Europe – Do Something Green Today.“

The pluralism of opinions expressed during the meeting, balanced participation of citizens of different genders, ages, national and religious backgrounds, the geographical diversity of partner organisations, participation of non-EU partners, representatives of national minorities, local public authorities, civil society organisations, volunteers and experts on specific EU policies all contributed to achieving the objectives of the eighth Town Twinning programme held in the Town of Klanjec.

The Green Europe project strengthened citizens' awareness of the European Green Deal, improved mechanisms for participation at the local level, encouraged intercultural dialogue and solidarity, and demonstrated that small towns can play a significant role in shaping a greener, more inclusive and resilient Europe. The meeting reinforced long-term cooperation among partner organisations and empowered citizens to actively contribute to sustainable development within their communities and the European Union as a whole.

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