

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	
Project name and acronym:	From the GroundUp: Fostering Rural Youth Participation in the EU Agenda
Participant:	LAG of Attica Islands
PIC number:	907190852

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	3
Event name:	EU citizenship and the rights of EU mobile citizens. Oxford Debate: The meaning of identity and belonging in political processes. Hate speech as a political tool
Type:	seminar, conference
In situ/online:	In situ
Location:	Galatas, Municipality of Troizinia-Methana
Date(s):	1-4 October 2024
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.atticalag.gr/groundup/
Participants	
Female:	88
Male:	59
Non-binary:	0
From country 1 [Czech Republic]:	3
From country 2 [Finland]:	3
From country 3 [Austria]:	2
From country 4 [Poland]:	3

From country 5 [Portugal]:	2		
From country 6 [Italy]	5		
From country 7 [Bulgaria]	2		
From country 8 [Sweden]:	2		
From country 9 [Germany]	2		
From country 10 [Spain]	2		
From country 11 [Greece]	116		
From country 12 [Slovakia]	2		
From country 13 [Ireland]	2		
From country 14 [Holland]	1		
Total number of participants:	147	From total number of countries:	13
Description			
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>			
- Target groups:			
Project partners, policy makers, civil society organizations, youth, local actors, European Parliamentarians and other high policy makers.			
Participants of the event were international partners of the GroundUp project, accompanied by local youth from Greece, i.e. students from local schools and their educators, teachers, policy makers, experts. As the vast majority of Greek participants were the youth from local schools, the programme of the event and its formats were adjusted to meet their needs (for example: use of interpreters, simplified language, addressing personal aspects of such concepts as “European citizenship”, etc.) and facilitate dialogue between them and the international project participants.			
- Description of the event and its activities/ context.			
Introduction to the GroundUp project			
From the GroundUp: Fostering Rural Youth Participation in the EU Agenda is a Network of Towns in the framework of the programme CERV. It is an initiative originating from a group of partnered Local Action Groups, supported by municipalities and non-for-profit civil society organizations from 14 EU Member States. The project activities are planned for 21 months, from January 2024 to September 2025. The goal is to actively engage and also to empower our local citizens from rural and peripheral areas in Europe, especially young people, in the EU-related and local democratic processes. We hope to develop measures which will respond to the real needs faced in this regard by our small, peripheral and rural communities, and which will facilitate exchanges, peaceful relations and mutual understanding between citizens.			
Goals of the event:			
- Building an understanding of EU citizenship and the rights of EU mobile citizens.			
- Exploring how the rights derived from EU citizenship function in local contexts.			
- Examining identity and belonging as aspects of EU citizenship.			

- Discussing hate speech as a political tool, with partners preparing in advance to exchange insights during the event.
- Getting project partners equipped with an example of hosting an Oxford Debate.

The two-day international conference, organized by LAG of Attica Islands and held under the auspices of the Municipality of Troizinia-Methana, was conducted as part of the "From the Ground Up" project.

The event, entitled "EU Citizenship and the Rights of EU Mobile Citizens," was attended by delegations from the thirteen EU Member States that are (together with Greece) partners of this project (Czech Republic, Netherlands, Finland, Bulgaria, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Slovakia, Austria, Ireland, Sweden, Germany). Over 100 students from local schools (Galatas Middle School, Galatas General High School, Galatas Technical High School, Methana High School, Poros Middle School, and the 1st General High School of Aegina) participated actively throughout the two-day event, showcasing their work. The conference part was successfully held on Wednesday, October 2 and Thursday, October 3, 2024, in Galatas and Methana.

The conference part commenced on Wednesday with brief welcoming remarks from Anastasios Mouyios, Mayor of Troizinia-Methana; Kristina Garrido, representative of the lead partner LAG Sdruzeni SPLAV; and Mary Koukoulis, communication manager of the Attica Islands Network. Mr. Dimitris Bogiatzis, GroundUp Manager for the Attica Islands Network, then presented on "Ioannis Kapodistrias: a 'European citizen' in the 19th century." This was followed by the first thematic session, entitled "Understanding the concept of European identity." The first part of the session, entitled "The Rights and Challenges for European Citizens," was presented by Georgios Kasimatis, President of the Kythira Foundation for Culture and Development. The second part of the session, entitled "The Concept of European Citizenship," was presented by students of the 1st General Lyceum of Aegina.

The keynote speech, entitled "The Value of Being a European Citizen," was delivered by Ioannis Sakkiotis, Head of the Media & Policy Analysis Unit of the European Commission Representation in Greece.

The session concluded with a presentation of personal experiences by Rik Ten Arve, digital nomad, and Katerina Brentanou, principal of Methana High School. Mr. Kasimatis and other attendees also participated in this segment.

The second session addressed the topic of challenging stereotypes, exploring whether residents of peripheral regions are inherently anti-European or if their perception of Brussels is simply influenced by its distance. The session commenced with presentations from Galata High School and Galata General High School on the subject of "The European Union through the eyes of young people."

Next, George Koukoudakis, Mayor of Hydra and political scientist, as well as deputy professor at the Hellenic Military School, presented a comprehensive overview of the "Democratic deficit of the European Union."

The session concluded with a discussion on the challenges facing small municipalities in the periphery of Europe. Participants included Anastasios Mougios, Mayor of Troizinia-Methana; Georgios Koutouzis, Mayor of Poros; Georgios Koukoudakis, Mayor of Hydra; and Elvira Sequeira, Municipal Councillor of Torres Novas, Portugal.

On Thursday, the event commenced with the session, "(Mis)information Shapes the Participation and Action of European Citizens."

The first speaker was Clementine Diakomanoli, a European Union official and author of the book Fake News: What is Europe Doing?, who addressed the topic of "How the European Union Deals with Misinformation."

Next on the agenda were presentations by Dimitris Papangelopoulos, Communication & Policy Management Consultant, who addressed the topic of "Are there disinformation campaigns at the local level and how do they affect the local community?" and Elena Vatala, journalist and fact checker of "Ellinika Hoaxes" who presented "Examples of misinformation and ways to identify and deal with it."

Subsequently, students from local schools presented on the central theme "Young people are actively involved." The 1st General Lyceum of Aegina presented an account of its participation in the European Parliament Ambassadors Schools Program. Christos Athanasiou, a student of the Gymnasium with Lyceum classes of Methana and a member of the 2024 Youth Parliament, discussed the significance of being a Member of Parliament. A group of students from the same Gymnasium shared insights from their visit to European institutions.

The event concluded with a discussion on "Empowering the participation of young people in decision-making processes." The speakers were Sotiris Sambanis, Deputy Mayor of the Municipality of Troizinia-Methana, and Lena Papaioannou, Secretary General of the Municipality of Poros.

The two-day workshop concluded with a discussion among the partners on the conclusions of the conference.

LAG of Attica Islands would like to thank all the institutions and presenters who accepted our invitation and attended the event. We would also like to thank the Mayors who are members of our Board of Directors, the Municipality of Troizinia-Methana for their support, Galata High School for hosting the event in their auditorium, the principals and teachers of all the schools that embraced the initiative, and the young children who are the focus of the GroundUp project.

- Agenda of the event.

Day 1 - Tuesday, October 1st

Arrivals to Athens, transfers to Methana provided by the Greek host, schedule of transfers is *tbc* via email

The international participants will be accommodated in Hotel Avra and Hotel Apollon in Methana
Welcome dinner in Methana

Day 2 - October 2nd

Transfer to Galatas from the hotels

1. Registration and welcome coffee (09:30 - 10:00)

Venue: Amphitheater of Galatas' Middle School

2. Opening Session (10:00 - 10:30)

- o Welcome speeches (Hosting LAG and a representative of the local authorities) (10 minutes)
- o Short presentation of the project and the partners (Gosia Wochowska - Project Manager and Kristina Garrido - Project Leader) (10 minutes)
- o I. Kapodistrias (1st governor of Greece): A mobile citizen of the 19th century and victim of disinformation (D. Bogiatzis, 10 minutes)

3. Understanding EU identity and belonging (10:30 - 12:00)

- o Setting the context: Rights and challenges faced by EU mobile citizens (G. Kasimatis as the Moderator) (5 minutes)
- o What is EU citizenship? (Students from the local school) (10 minutes)

- o Expert Talk: “The meaning of being an EU citizen” (Ioannis Sakiotis, EC Representation in Greece, Head of Media and Political Analysis) (20 minutes)
- o Panel Discussion: Personal stories of EU mobile citizens (locals, project partners) (45 minutes)
- o Q&A Session (10 minutes)

4. Coffee break (12:00 - 12:30)

5. Challenging stereotypes: Are people living in rural areas really anti-Europeans or they just feel Brussels is far away? (12:30 - 13:30)

- o EU from the youth’s eyes (Students from the local school) (10 minutes)
- o EU for rural areas and how geography of discontent arises (Dr. George Koukoudakis, Professor in Greek Military Academy, Political Scientist, Mayor of Hydra)
- o Panel Discussion followed by an open discussion with the public (local authorities, Elvira Sequeira, Councillor, Torres Novas, Portugal and other Project Partners).

6. Closing remarks (13:30-14:00) - a moment to debrief the 1st day of the event (30 min) - moderator: Gosia

Afternoon programme for the project partners:

- Lunch
- A study visit - to be confirmed where it will take place
- An internal partners’ meeting to discuss GroundUp local activities (30 min) - moderator: Gosia Wochowska and Kristina Garrido

Day 3 - Wednesday, October 3rd

1. Opening Session (09:30 - 09:40)

2. (Dis)information shaping citizens participation and engagement in Europe (09:45 - 10:45)

- o Expert Talk: “How the EU tackles Disinformation ” (Klimentini Diakomanoli, author of “Fake news, what does Europe do?”, EC official).” (20 minutes) (online)
- o Are there disinformation campaigns at the local level? How are they impacting local communities? (Dimitris Papangelopoulos, Communication and Political Management Consultant) (20 minutes)
- o A practitioner's input: analyzing instances of disinformation and strategies for recognizing and countering it (Elena Vatala, Journalist, Fact Checker for Ellinika Hoaxes) (20 minutes)

3. Break (10:45 - 11:00)

4. Actions for Youth Engagement and Empowerment (11:00 - 12:00)

- o Our experience from European Parliament Ambassadors Schools (Aegina High School) (10 minutes)
- o Being a parliamentarian (Christos Athanasiou, Member of Youth Parliament, Methana High School) (10 minutes)
- o Becoming a change factor (Nikos Viennas, President of Salamina Youth Council) (10 minutes)
- o Panel Discussion: “Empowering youth voices in political processes” (youth and young members of local authorities) (30 minutes)

5. **Break (12:00 - 12:15)**

6. **Oxford Debate: The meaning of identity and belonging in political processes. Hate speech as a political tool. (12:15 - 14:15)**

7. **Closing Remarks (14:15 - 14:45)**

- o Summary of key takeaways: a moment to debrief the 2nd day of the event

Afternoon programme for the partners:

- Lunch
- Departures to Piraeus, transfer provided by the host, check in hotels in Piraeus

Day 4 - Thursday, October 4th

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfers by metro (suggested) to the airport independently



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GroundUP Conference *is* UP

EU citizenship and the rights of EU mobile citizens

The meaning of identity and belonging in political processes, Hate speech as a political tool

Amphitheater of Galatas' Middle School
2-3 October 2024

GROUNDUP



ΔΙΚΤΥΟ
ΔΗΜΩΝ
Π.Ε.
ΝΗΣΩΝ
ΑΤΤΙΚΗΣ



Wednesday, October 2nd

9:30 - 10:00

Registration and welcome coffee

10:00 - 10:30

Opening Session

- Welcome speeches (Hosting LAG and a representative of the local authorities)
- Short presentation of the project and the partners (**Gosia Wochovska**, Project Manager and **Kristina Garrido**, Project Leader)
- I. Kapodistrias (1st governor of Greece): A mobile citizen of the 19th century and victim of disinformation (**D. Bogiatzis**)

10:30 - 12:00

Understanding EU identity and belonging

- Setting the context: Rights and challenges faced by EU mobile citizens (**G. Kasimatis**)
- What is EU citizenship? (Students from the local school)
- Expert Talk: “The meaning of being an EU citizen” (**Ioannis Sakiotis**, EC Representation in Greece)
- Panel Discussion: Personal stories of EU mobile citizens (locals, project partners)
- Q&A Session

12:00 - 12:30

Coffee break

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Wednesday, October 2nd

12:30 - 13:30

Challenging stereotypes: Are people living in rural areas really anti-Europeans or they just feel Brussels is far away?

- EU from the youth's eyes (Students from the local school)
- EU for rural areas and how geography of discontent arises (**Dr. George Koukoudakis**, Professor in Greek Military Academy, Mayor of Hydra)
- Panel Discussion followed by an open discussion with the public (Local authorities, Project partners)

13:30 - 14:00

Closing remarks





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Thursday, October 3rd

9:30 - 9:40

Opening session

9:45 - 10:45

(Dis)information shaping citizens participation and engagement in Europe

- Expert Talk: “How the EU tackles Disinformation” (**Klimentini Diakomanoli**, EC official)
- Are there disinformation campaigns at the local level? How are they impacting local communities? (**Dimitris Papangelopoulos**, Political Management Consultant)
- A practitioner’s input: analyzing instances of disinformation and strategies for recognizing and countering it (**Elena Vatala**, Journalist, Ellinika Hoaxes)

10:45 - 11:00

Coffee break

11:00 - 12:00

Actions for Youth Engagement and Empowerment

- Our experience from European Parliament Ambassadors Schools (Aegina High School)
- Being a parliamentarian (**Christos Athanasiou**, Member of Youth Parliament)
- Becoming a change factor (**Nikos Viennas**, President of Salamina Youth Council)
- Panel Discussion: “Empowering youth voices in political processes” (Youth and young members of local authorities)



Thursday, October 3rd

12:00 - 12:15

Coffee break

12:15 - 14:15

Oxford Debate: The meaning of identity and belonging in political processes. Hate speech as a political tool

14:15 - 14:45

Closing Remarks

- Main take aways/ findings from the event

The main characteristic of the conference was the involvement and active participation of students of local schools (Galatas Middle School, Galatas General High School, Galatas Technical High School, Methana High School, Poros Middle School, and the 1st General High School of Aegina). The students, with the assistance of their professors, had spent time and energy to prepare presentations on topics related to the EU Citizenship, their view of the EU but also experiences from European Projects or related activities. The professors expressed their interest to participate as schools in future programs

and their need to be assisted to accomplish it. It is, also, worth mentioning that the schools' active participation was with just two weeks' notice (or even less in some cases) as schools in Greece open on September 11.

The session entitled "Understanding EU Identity and Belonging " covered the subject of EU (mobile) Citizenship in multiple ways and in depth. The presentation of "Ioannis Kapodistrias: a 'European citizen' in the 19th century" made a connection with the local history but also an introduction to the subject, showing that mobilization has also happened before EU. The moderator, a former EC Official, and mainly the keynote speaker, Ioannis Sakkiotis, Head of the Media & Policy Analysis Unit of the European Commission Representation in Greece, presented clearly and with simple words the benefits of EU citizenship focusing on the freedom to travel, study and work all over the EU. These benefits were confirmed by personal experiences shared in a panel discussion.

The session "Challenging stereotypes: Are people living in rural areas really anti-Europeans or they just feel Brussels is far away?" was more difficult to be addressed. The keynote speaker, Mayor of Hydra and political scientist, approached it with a presentation on "Democratic deficit of the European Union" and concluded that although sometimes EU seems to be less democratic the reality is totally different, and EU is probably the area with the most democracy all over the world. In the panel discussion that followed, with participation of 3 mayors from Greece and a Municipal Councillor from Portugal, it was made clear that rural areas all over Europe face the same problems (mainly depopulation, ageing of population and less opportunities for the youth and young) and that EU and its support is their main hope to solve them. But support programs should be better planned for local needs and with easier procedures.

The session, "(Dis)information shaping citizens participation and engagement in Europe" covered the topic of Misinformation spherically. The first speaker Clementine Diakomanoli, European Union official and author of the book Fake News: What is Europe Doing?, who addressed the topic of " How the EU tackles Disinformation " and presented the respective European policy perspective in simple and clear manner making it understandable to attendees and especially the youth. The second speaker, Dimitris Papangelopoulos, presented real cases of fake news and misinformation spreading in past elections for local authorities and ways to handle and answer them. The last speaker Elena Vatala, journalist and fast checker of "Ellinika Hoaxes" showcased a simple methodology on how to check the validity of "shocking news" that go viral by noticing details on the post and/o crosschecking it on reliable sources.

The last session "Actions for Youth Engagement and Empowerment" was really inspiring and hopeful for the future as teams of local schools' students presented case studies of their own experiences from participation in European Projects and initiatives (e.g. European Parliament Ambassadors Schools) or youth leadership programs like the Greek Youth Parliament, setting the example for each other and creating ideas for future involvement of other schools. The closing discussion among young members of the local authorities revealed ways to be engaged in the local decision-making process but also the needed motivation which is the ability to shape your area's future.

Main take-aways from the event according to project partners: What have you learned? What was useful?

- Sharing the experience of being from a rural community.
- Context of the local fake news and its practical side. Perspective of locals on EU and its institutions.
- It was interesting to learn about European Schools as this was new. Was also interesting to hear about some of the contexts of Greece with regards the project topic.
- How young people think and the problems of ignorance that leads to no participation

- Why being part of EU is important for Greece and that information about the ERASMUS+ is not communicated enough in some countries.
- Presentation of the local students and schools (5 different schools in total) – really catchy, personal stories and also inspiring to see what's possible to do in your own region to activate potential of the youth.
- Presentations of the local schools were great, also a little bit of the analytical approach: They mentioned that they feel the young people from cities are more privileged – we might stop there and start a discussion: Why is that, why do you feel that way?

- Hyperlinks to some sessions/ modules (where applicable)

Registration link: [Registration form \(google.com\)](#)

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6JUeWm2pjhc>

- Graphical elements and photos of the event



















80,00 cm

GROUNDUP

FOSTERING RURAL YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN THE EU AGENDA



ΔΙΚΤΥΟ
ΔΗΜΩΝ
Π.Ε.
ΝΗΣΩΝ
ΑΤΤΙΚΗΣ

LAG OF ATTICA ISLANDS

EU CITIZENSHIP AND THE RIGHTS OF EU MOBILE CITIZENS

The meaning of identity and belonging
in political processes. Hate speech as
a political tool

**EU MOBILE
CITIZENS**

1-4 OCTOBER 2024
MUNICIPALITY OF TRIZINIA - METHANA, GREECE



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200,00 cm

- Website and/or FB page of the event.

Links where the beneficiaries (project partners) published this report:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Pfu-T5_PLLfswmhbPeJH-36zGZuTj4t_/edit?tab=t.0

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