



The project **“FOCUS - Stimulating new forms of active civic participation through focus on Social and Solidarity Economy”** was funded with the support of the European Union under the Programme "Europe for Citizens"

Applicable to the Strand 2 – Measure 2.2 "Networks of Towns"

4 events have been carried out within this project attempting to situate the term, the forms, the factors and the participants in Social and Solidarity Economy structures into a broader political context and investigate the relation with the well-known traditional theories and practices concerning the civic participation and the citizens engagement in the democratic life of the United Europe.

Participation:

Each event involved partner organisations from 11 countries and 202 citizens, including:

- 100 participants from the city of AGIA, other cities of the beneficiary municipality of Agia as well as from cities of neighboring municipalities in the Prefecture of Larissa **(GREECE)**,
- 5 participants from the city of Supetar that includes three villages Splitska, Škrip and Mirca on the northern side of the island of Brač and the city of Rab (Grada Raba), **(CROATIA)**,
- 14 participants from the city of Porto (Câmara Municipal do Porto) in Norte region/Northern Portugal **(PORTUGAL)**,
- 11 participants from the cities of Coutances and Carentan-Les-Marais in the Manche department in Normand and cities of Upper Corsica department of France (Préfecture de la Haute-Corse, Corse region in the island of Corsica), **(FRANCE)**,
- 14 participants from the the Lazio region / city of Rome, the Lombardy region / city of Bergamo and the city of Montone (Montone Comune), in the Province of Perugia in Umbria region, **(ITALY)**,
- 9 participants from the Naxxar locality that comprises the Naxxar centre, Sgħajtar area, San Pawl tat-Tarġa, Birguma, Magħtab, Salina, Baħar iċ-Ĉaġħaq and part of Mdliena and the city of Imdina (Imdina Local Council/Mdina Il-Kunsill -Lokali tal-Imdina), **(MALTA)**,
- 14 participants from the city of Pegeia and the city of Dromolaxia – Meneou **(CYPRUS)**,

- 13 participants from the city of Teruel, a town in Aragon, located in eastern Spain, capital of Teruel Province and the city of Ronda, in province of Málaga in the autonomous community of Andalucía **(SPAIN)**,

- 14 participants from cities in Harju County such as of the Anija, Harjumaa and Keila, other urban cities of surrounding rural municipality - Keila Parish / Keila Linnavalitsus, in north-western Estonia such as of the cities of Kernu, Nissi, Padise and Vasalemma **(ESTONIA)**,

- 3 participants from the city of Galway in the West region of Ireland on the River Corrib, in the province of Connacht, as well as of its diametrically opposite city, both large and populous urban areas in a straight line in the island, such as of the city of Dublin on Ireland's east coast, at the mouth of the River Liffey, in the province of Leinster **(IRELAND)**,

- 5 participants from the city of Strumyani in Blagoevgrad Province **(BULGARIA)**

Location / Dates:

The 4 events took place in Municipality of Agia, Thessalia region, Greece

Event 1 : from 16/10/2015 to 16/10/2015

Short description:

The aim of the 1st event (One - day Workshop - Open debate – Public Hearing) was the citizens' better understanding of the European Union virtues, of its history, achievements and basic fundamental principles as well as of the EU policy making-processes and the function of its mayor institutions. Sub-sessions were dedicated to the celebration of the anniversary of 20+ years of the idea of European citizenship and the diverse instruments of participatory democracy inside the Europe (e.g. referendums), as well as to the results of citizens indifference to participate as political actors and electorate body in the democratic decision-making processes (e.g. elections, debates' for a and platforms, movements, etc.) Emphasis was given to the "Europe for citizens" programme as a mental space for a deeper discussion on the future of Europe and on the kind of Europe citizens want, as well as a meaningful challenge for the enhancement of democracy inside the united Europe.

Event 2: from 17/10/2015 to 18/10/2015

Short description:

The aim of the 2nd event (Two - day informal education Workshop) was the raising awareness of already existing institutions, factors and forms of active civic engagement in the democratic life at

national and European level, as well as the stimulation of new ones through the encouragement of democratic participation of citizens, particularly of youth and those people from vulnerable groups, by promoting to them opportunities for societal and intercultural engagement and volunteering such as their occupation in cooperatives, non-profit organizations, charities and generally speaking, in social and solidarity economy structures, entrepreneurships and innovations. Emphasis was given to the role of Local Government authorities for a strong, sustainable, prosperous, inclusive, democratic and integrated

united Europe and the relative goal of extension of the present network between the national and international partners beyond the framework of "FOCUS" project.

Event 3 : from 02/06/2016 to 04/06/2016

Short description:

The aim of the 3rd event (Three - day lab of expertise and know-how) was the highlight of social entrepreneurship and solidarity economy structures as an alternative to the financial and humanitarian crisis and a way out the deny of the most vulnerable and excluded people-victims of this crisis to play their role as active citizens and support the democratic idea of European Union. Emphasis was given to the areas of Social and Solidarity Entrepreneurship that involve Eurosceptics, youngsters, third country nationals, marginalised, underprivileged and disadvantaged persons, who totally reject the Union or have hard questions about its work and achievements in a period of rising anti-European political forces and movements, extremist or populist movements, deep frustration and loss of public confidence in the idea of European integration.

Event 4 : from 03/06/2016 to 07/06/2016

Short description:

The aim of the event (Five - day lab of best practices) was the further promotion of different forms of Social and Solidarity Economy and Entrepreneurship such as Co-operatives, Worker-Owned Societies, Mutual Benefit Societies, Insertion Companies, Special Employment Centers, Guilds and Disability Associations in agricultural sector, tourism, retail and distribution, education and healthcare, Voluntary Organizations and Foundations of "public utility", Manufacturing services of waste collection, recycling, traffic control, etc., opposite to the great need to identify further ways in which to motivate citizens, particularly the young generation and foster generally the civic participation in democratic life inside the Europe.