

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: | [LOCAL GREEN DEALS: OUR MUNICIPALITIES FOR THE GREEN TRANSITION - WE 4 GREEN] Ref N. 101138490 - CERV-2023-CITIZENS-TOWN-NT |
| Participant: | [COMUNE DI OTTIGLIO] (OTTIGLIO - ITALY) |
| PIC number: | 883830342 |

| EVENT DESCRIPTION | |
|--|---|
| Event number: | Deliverable D4.1 – WE4GREEN EVENT |
| Event name: | WP4 - EVENT 4 – Citizens' engagement and green transition – seminars in Spain |
| Type: | [Network of Towns Event 4: EVENT IN SPAIN] |
| In situ/online: | <u>/in-situ</u> |
| Location: | [SPAIN], La Palma del Condado Municipality |
| Date(s): | [2-3-4 April 2025] |
| Website(s) (if any): | Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/We4Green-Project |
| Participants | |
| Female: | 43 |
| Male: | 40 |
| Non-binary: | 0 |
| From country: POLAND Suwalki City Municipality | 6 |
| From country: LATVIA Jelgava Local Municipality | 5 |
| From country: CYPRUS Platres Community Council | 7 |
| From country: ITALY Ottiglio, Cella Monte, Rosignano Monferrato, Ozzano Monferrato, Sala Monferrato, Camagna Monferrato Municipalities | 14 |
| From country: SPAIN La Palma del Condado Municipality | 51 |
| Total number of participants: | 83 |
| From total number of countries: | 5 |

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

WP4 - EVENT 4 – Citizens' engagement and green transition – Seminars in Spain.

D4.1 – WE4GREEN EVENT 4

Place: La Palma del Condado in (ES), in situ

Lead Beneficiary: **LA PALMA DEL CONDADO MUNICIPALITY** (ES)

Dates of the event: **2-3-4 APRIL 2025**

Number of countries involved: 5 [4 foreign countries (Cyprus, Poland, Latvia, Italy) + 1 in situ (Spain)]

Number of individual direct participants: 32 foreign + 51 local participants = **83**

- Number of invited/international participants: 32
 - From CY = 7
 - from LV = 5
 - from IT = 14
 - from PL = 6
- Number of local participants from ES= 51.

Brief description of the Event 1:

The project has been approved by the European Commission under the call 2023 NETWORK OF TOWNS. The WE4GREEN activities will be carried out over 24 months: from December 1, 2023 until the end of November 2025.

Members of the partnership are from 5 different countries: Poland - **Suwalky City Municipality**, Latvia - **Jelgava Local Municipality**, Cyprus - **Platres Community Council**, Spain - **La Palma del Condado Municipality**; Italy - **Ottiglio, Camagna Monferrato, Rosignano Monferrato, Sala Monferrato, Ozzano Monferrato and Cella Monte Municipalities**.

WE4GREEN took inspiration from the Green Deal - the Europe's growth strategy for a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy. To create the first zero-carbon continent in the world by 2050.

The transnational project allows the 10 Municipalities and their citizens, to activate events, debates, meetings for the green topics, actions for local Green Deals, fighting the climate change and promoting the environmental sustainability. The Municipality of Ottiglio (Lead Partner) and the other partner municipalities are exploring topics such as the Green transition, the circular economy, applied renewable energies, sustainable waste management and the fight against climate change, from their local perspectives. The main project aim is to develop Local Green Deals - Local green pacts at any municipal level: a tailor-made local action plan to accelerate and expand the green transition of every single territory involved in the 5 European countries.

The workplan foresees **5 Work packages** with five WPs dedicated to Events, visits and training: 3 events in situ & 2 online. The participating organizations worked hard for preparing the Event n. 4°, held in Spain. With the approval of the European Commission, the Event has been held in April 2025 and not in May 2025. The dates for the realization: **2-3-4 APRIL 2025**, as arranged with the EU project Officer.

The 3 intensive days saw the citizens' involvement. Thanks to the meetings, 2 seminars, ceremony and visits, the WE4GREEN EVENT 4 involve several direct persons and capture the attention of quite a lot of citizens.

The participants from **Poland, Italy, Cyprus and Latvia** arrived in **Andalusia (ES) in early April 2025**.

From **the 2nd to the 4th of April 2025**, the town of **La Palma del Condado**, nestled in the heart of Andalusia, hosted the fourth transnational event of the WE4GREEN project. This event marked a crucial step in the implementation of the EU-funded initiative (Ref. No. 101138490 - CERV-2023-CITIZENS-TOWN-NT), aligning its local experiences and public dialogue with broader European policies on environmental transition, sustainability, and democratic participation.

The Event 4 agenda was realized as follows:



1 DAY – April 2, 2025

The first day of the event was characterized by a warm welcome and the spirit of hospitality deeply rooted in Andalusian culture. Delegations arrived at Sevilla Airport, where they were met and transported to La Palma del Condado.

Upon arrival, the Teatro España in Plaza de España came alive with the opening ceremony. The event officially began with the **Welcome Ceremony** and the speech from the Mayor of La Palma del Condado, **Ms. Rocío Moreno Domínguez**, who welcomed consortium members and highlighted the significance of the green transition for small local municipalities. Her welcome to the Partners members was marked by a sincere warmth and a clear vision for the future of her town within the broader framework of the EU Green Deal. She spoke not only as an institutional representative, but as a citizen of a community that lives daily with the challenges and opportunities posed by environmental change.

Ms. Moreno Domínguez emphasized the symbolic value of hosting such an event in La Palma del Condado, a town historically tied to agriculture and viticulture, and today striving to become a model for small-scale ecological transition. Her words were a call to action, encouraging municipalities—regardless of their size—to take ownership of their environmental future and to see in European cooperation not just a political formality, but a living tool for real change.

The Ceremony continued with a general overview of the planned activities and a presentation of the local context, showcasing La Palma's dedication to sustainability.

Each partner Municipality then took the stage to present their community's green journey.



These presentations, enriched with visual materials, created a vibrant mosaic of local experiences, illustrating the diverse ways in which European territories are addressing climate and environmental concerns.

Later that afternoon, an academic from the Cátedra del Vino delivered a compelling talk on the link between environmental preservation and traditional wine-making practices, emphasizing how ancient knowledge can serve contemporary ecological goals.

The first day concluded with a graceful performance by the Municipal School of Dance, celebrating the local folklorist dance, as intersection of culture and environmental awareness, followed by a Welcome Dinner, where informal exchanges further strengthened the sense of community among participants.

II DAY – April 3, 2025

The second day began early, with participants boarding buses to visit the **Doñana Natural Park**, one of the most important protected natural areas in Europe. This park, located between the provinces of Huelva, Seville and Cádiz, is recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site for its extraordinary biodiversity and the richness of its ecosystems. This was the planned Visit to see applied strategy for the sustainable tourism and the safeguard of the local natural areas. Instead in the afternoon, as planned into the approved application form, it was held in the morning.

At the arrival at the La Rocina Visitor Centre, the group was welcomed by environmental guides who provided an introduction to the park's ecological function within the wider Mediterranean context.

The visit was not merely a sightseeing excursion, but rather a profound educational experience aimed at understanding the vital connection between biodiversity preservation and climate resilience. The delegates had the opportunity to explore the area surrounding the Acebrón Palace, where environmental education activities were conducted, including guided walks and interpretation of local flora and fauna. The group was then taken through the Marisma-Cotos, where the intricate balance of wetland ecosystems was explained. These marshlands are crucial breeding and feeding grounds for migratory birds and endangered species such as the Iberian lynx.



As the group moved towards the dunes and the Atlantic coast, discussions focused on the effects of rising sea levels and coastal erosion, offering concrete examples of how climate change is reshaping natural landscapes. What struck many was how Doñana's delicate ecosystems are simultaneously vulnerable and resilient, and how conservation efforts led by local authorities and NGOs are deeply intertwined with European policies like the EU Biodiversity Strategy. The entire experience reinforced one of the project's key messages: that meaningful environmental transition must begin with a deep, personal connection to the land and its stories.

Later, the delegates returned to La Palma del Condado and gathered at Bodega Garay, a local winery that has become a reference point for sustainability in the field of viticulture. Founded on principles of environmental stewardship, the winery's philosophy is centered around producing high-quality organic wines while preserving the integrity of the land and its resources. Over a carefully prepared lunch showcasing seasonal products, Mario Garay, owner and visionary behind the winery, explained how the production process at Bodega Garay avoids the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers, relying instead on natural composts and traditional cultivation methods. He emphasized the importance of preserving local grape varieties and working in harmony with the seasonal rhythms of nature.

What made the visit particularly impactful was the way in which the winery integrated sustainable practices across all levels of its operation, from the vineyard to the bottle. Energy efficiency measures, reduced water usage and a circular waste management system were among the features highlighted. Moreover, the winery functions as a community hub, offering educational programs for schools and public events to raise awareness on climate and agriculture. The experience at Bodega Garay illustrated how small enterprises can act as powerful agents of change in rural areas, leading the way in green innovation without compromising tradition or quality.

In the afternoon, the participants reunited themselves at the Salón de Actos of the Ayuntamiento de La Palma del Condado. The venue hosted the first **Public Seminar** of the event, entitled **"WE4GREEN Seminar 1: Citizens' Engagement in the Green Transition."** This seminar, open to local citizens and featuring the presence of citizens, academics and public officials, was divided into two thematic parts.



SEMINAR 1 - First part: SPANISH CASES

- Presentation 1: *"Organic wines and green practices"* - Cases of sustainability and sustainable development applied in La Palma del Condado - SPEAKER By GARAY BODEGA - Mario Garay
- Presentation 2: *"History of the vineyard in Huelva and green agriculture"* - Cases of sustainability and sustainable development applied locally - SPEAKER By ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF WINE – Antonio Redondo Morales

The first segment was dedicated to Spanish case studies. Bodega Garay illustrated the vineyard's commitment to organic wine production, presenting it as a model of how small enterprises can contribute to the green transition. Antonio Redondo Morales from the Association of Friends of Wine offered a historical perspective on the evolution of viticulture in Huelva and its growing focus on ecological agriculture, drawing a clear connection between cultural heritage and sustainability.



SEMINAR 1 - Second part: FOREIGN CASES

Cases of sustainability and sustainable development applied for/by citizens – *from Partners*

- ITALY – Ottiglio Municipality Mayor, Massimo Pasciuta, *The problem of microplastics on plates and food safety*
- LATVIA – Gunita Tolēna, Deputy Director of Kalnciems Secondary School, *Our green school education*
- CYPRUS - Panayiotis Papadopoulos, Troodos Network, *“Our Regions for Climate R4C” Project running in Troodos*
- POLAND – Jerzy Gałązka acting Head of Environmental Protection Department - the City Hall of Suwałki, *Ecological education in urban spaces*

The second part of the Seminar shifted the focus to foreign Partners' contributions. The Mayor of Ottiglio, Massimo Pasciuta, addressed the pressing issue of microplastics, emphasizing the health risks linked to environmental pollution and the need for urgent policy responses. Pasciuta addressed a topic that deeply concerns both experts and citizens alike: the presence and impact of microplastics in our food systems. His presentation was both sobering and enlightening, as he described how microscopic plastic particles—originating from the breakdown of larger plastic items—are now routinely found in soils, waters and even within the human body. He drew attention to how these particles are increasingly present on food crops and, more alarmingly, on the surfaces of everyday tableware, leading to potential ingestion. With reference to recent studies, he explained the health risks associated with long-term exposure to microplastics, such as hormonal disruption, inflammation, and even possible links to chronic diseases. The Mayor urged the audience to consider not only legislative actions but also behavioral changes at the local level, from reducing single-use plastics to supporting alternative packaging and raising awareness in schools. What emerged from his intervention was the urgent need for municipalities to treat the issue of microplastics not as a distant or abstract environmental challenge, but as an immediate threat to public health and food security. His appeal resonated with the core of the WE4GREEN project: empowering citizens and local institutions to recognize their role in shaping safer, greener and healthier communities. By connecting environmental degradation with tangible, everyday consequences, his speech successfully bridged the gap between ecological science and civic responsibility.



From Latvia, Gunita Tolēna shared her experience with the “Green School Education” initiative in Kalnciems, an innovative approach to embedding sustainability in education from an early age.

Cyprus contributed through the voice of Panayiotis Papadopoulos, who spoke about the “Our Regions for Climate – R4C” project in the Troodos area, highlighting Troodos area’s Community resilience.

Finally, Jerzy Gałązka from Suwałki, Poland, discussed urban ecological education and its

impact on shaping environmentally conscious citizens. The session concluded with reflections and a lively informal dinner, allowing participants to digest the richness of the day's discussions.



III DAY – April 4, 2025

The final day of the event was held at the Salón de Actos of the Ayuntamiento, at La Palma's town hall, again. The morning began with the registration of participants and the opening of the second **Public Seminar "WE4GREEN Seminar 2: Citizens' Engagement in the Green Transition"** focused on citizen engagement in sustainability. In this second public event, the emphasis remained on blending local and European perspectives, at the presence of citizens, general publics and councillors.

SEMINAR 2 - SPANISH CASES

- *Manuel Robledo, professor of the Degree in Oil and Wine, green practices and environment linked to gastronomy*

SEMINAR 2 - FOREIGN CASES

Sustainable practices and green transition applied in the Partners' territories -- *from Partners*

- ITALY – Giuseppe Bargerò, Physician, Expert from Ottiglio Municipality, *The connections among health, lifestyles and sustainability*
- POLAND – Marcin Bonisławski, President of the board Municipal Heating Company, *The path to sustainable and green energy in Suwałki's district heating*
- CYPRUS - Yioula Michaelidou Papakyriacou, Troodos Network manager, *The Thematic Centers as hubs for green transition*

The first presentation was given by Professor Manuel Robledo (ES), who brought attention to how sustainable practices are being developed within the sectors of food and wine, especially through educational initiatives that connect young people to local traditions and environmental stewardship. This was followed by new contributions from the international partners. Dr. Giuseppe Bargerò (IT), representing Italian partners, introduced a reflection on the relationship between public health, lifestyles, and sustainability, stressing how behavioural change is an essential pillar of the green transition.



From Suwałki, Marcin Bonisławski, from the Municipal Heating Company (PL), offered a technical insight into how his city is transforming its district heating system into a green and sustainable model. Yioula Michaelidou Papakyriacou from the Troodos Network (CY) closed the international segment by describing how thematic centers in Cyprus serve as community-based hubs for environmental education and innovation.

A debate session followed, during which participants exchanged thoughts on the challenges and opportunities presented by the green transition at the local level. The organisers concluded showcasing its efforts toward sustainable urban design and community involvement in environmental initiatives.

At the conclusion of the Seminar, the participants, doing a walking tour of La Palma del Condado city centre, arrived to the restaurant. A farewell lunch at *Nuevo Casino* and a final internal technical meeting focused on the progress of the WE4GREEN project have been held. Partners discussed upcoming milestones and agreed on strategies to ensure continuity and impact. The Project Coordinator, Massimo Pasciuta, concluded the session with final remarks, expressing gratitude for the fruitful exchange and reaffirming the commitment to continue working together toward a greener Europe.

Throughout the three-day event, all activities were documented through videos, photographs, and official reports. Educational materials were shared, satisfaction questionnaires were distributed to gather participant feedback and attendance was recorded. What emerged from this experience in La Palma del Condado was more than a simple exchange of ideas. It was a demonstration of how diverse municipalities, through collaboration, creativity, and citizen participation, can give concrete shape to the European Green Deal and translate ambitious goals into meaningful local action.

Over the course of three intense and meaningful days, representatives from ten municipalities across Europe, along with local stakeholders and citizens, gathered to reflect and build new approaches to citizen-driven green transformation.

LINKS

<https://www.comune.ottiglio.al.it/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/We4Green-Project>

PICTURES









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