

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:	Local action group Vallis Colapis
PIC number:	947901752
Project name and acronym:	<i>Connecting Rural Europe: Networking and development in small towns</i> Rural EU

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	WP6
Event name:	INTERNATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING EVENT - YOUTH (CROATIA)
Type:	International mobility
In situ/online:	In situ
Location:	Hotel Duga Resa, Duga Resa, Croatia
Date(s):	1. - 6. 12. 2025.
Website(s) (if any):	https://leader.vallis-colapis.hr/novosti/11-rural-eu/389-rural-eu-mobilnost-u-dugoj-resi-mladi-iz-hrvatske-italije-spanjolske-i-rumunjske-za-ruralnu-europu
Participants	
Female:	14

Male:	12		
Non-binary:	0		
From country 1 [Spain]:	5		
From country 2 [Romania]:	5		
From country 3 [Italy]:	5		
From country 4 [Croatia]:	11		
Total number of participants:	26	From total number of countries:	4
Description			
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>			
<p>The international mobility in Duga Resa brought together participants from Italy, Spain, Romania and Croatia to explore the realities, challenges and potentials of rural youth in Europe. Three facilitators guided the group through a programme that combined team-building, research-based reflection on rural youth, and practical work on designing future solidarity projects and community-driven messages for decision-makers.</p>			
Methods Used:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interactive Team Building and Simulations: Cooperative games helped participants experience intercultural cooperation and the importance of mutual understanding in rural communities. - Research-Based Reflection: Participants analysed survey and focus group results on rural youth, using attitude barometers, group discussions and data comparisons to confront stereotypes and connect findings with their own realities. - Storytelling and Visual Mapping: Through story circles, community maps and poster/zine creation, participants used flipcharts, drawings and keywords to map resources, challenges and ideas for change in their rural areas. - Multi-stakeholder dialogue: Participants visited Duga Resa and held a meeting with representatives of the Duga Resa municipality. There, participants worked in mixed groups as if they were youth, NGOs, media and local authorities to negotiate concrete responsibilities and visualise a web of cooperation with strings and flipcharts. - Project workshops: National teams followed a structured “project tree” process and card-based exercises to design and refine ESC Solidarity Project (a key introductory milestone into youth engagement with EU social, cultural and community development programmes) ideas and prepare short pitches. - Manifesto world café: Rotating small groups contributed key messages on rural reality, vision, demands and commitments, which were then synthesised into a shared Rural Youth Solidarity Manifesto. 			
Main Conclusions:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared rural challenges: Participants recognised common issues across countries, including limited opportunities, infrastructure gaps, social exclusion risks and the pressure on young people to leave rural areas. 			

- Value of cooperation: The exercises with local decision makers showed that effective support for rural youth requires clearer roles, mutual expectations and regular cooperation between youth, NGOs, media and local government.
- Youth agency and solidarity: The project sessions confirmed that rural youth are ready to take initiative through local solidarity projects if they receive basic support, recognition and space to act.
- Importance of participation: Many ideas focused on strengthening youth participation in local decision-making and making it easier for young people to influence policies and initiatives that shape rural life.
- Need for visibility and follow-up: Participants stressed that outcomes of the mobility – project ideas, manifesto messages and new partnerships – should not stay on paper but be shared with local and European decision-makers, National Agencies, municipalities and communities as a basis for future actions.

On the last day of mobility we welcomed a guest teacher and her students from Slava Raškaj primary school in Ozalj. They are all members of the school's volunteering club, so we presented our activities to them and engaged them in one of the sessions. The young students were inspired and impressed by the work that was being carried out and excited to see their own questions and struggles reflected in the work of an EU rural network that was being created before their eyes. Indeed, the mobility concluded with a strong sense of shared European rural identity, clearer understanding of how young people, NGOs, media and local authorities can cooperate, and a set of Solidarity project ideas and manifesto messages that participants plan to bring back to their communities to keep fuelling possibilities of "staying" and investing in rural area from the bottom-up, in collaboration with their municipalities, friends, peers and local youth workers.

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