

The project is based on the recognition that the **European Green Deal** and the **Future of Europe** have a significant impact on local governments and the everyday lives of citizens. Climate change, sustainability, and the transition towards a more environmentally conscious society are challenges that must be addressed primarily at the **local level**.

In line with this approach, the project aims to **promote dialogue and cooperation between European citizens, local governments, and civil society organisations** so that they can jointly respond to these challenges and contribute to the development of a more sustainable and more integrated European community.

It is essential to examine the European Green Deal at the **municipal level** and to encourage cooperation between cities in different countries, as local governments are the primary arenas where climate policies and measures are implemented. Local authorities are responsible for many areas that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions — such as waste management, transportation, and urban planning.

Local-level action can **significantly contribute** to achieving national and global emission-reduction targets. Climate change affects cities and their residents in various ways — from extreme weather events to rising sea levels. Municipalities must develop and implement adaptation measures to increase their resilience to these impacts.

Cross-border **knowledge and experience exchange** creates opportunities for cities to learn from one another and develop effective strategies. Since every city has its own unique circumstances and capabilities, the local-level approach allows for **tailored solutions** that take into account local conditions, resources, and priorities.

Through international cooperation, cities can learn from each other's **good practices** and develop innovative and effective solutions. Local

governments have a more direct connection with citizens, enabling them to involve communities more actively in the transition toward a climate-friendly Europe.

Local projects and initiatives provide citizens with the opportunity to **participate in decision-making** and to actively contribute to building a sustainable future. Cross-border cooperation also fosters the exchange of ideas and experiences, strengthening the shared sense of responsibility and commitment among European citizens toward the objectives of the European Green Deal.

Cities can pool shared resources, knowledge, and expertise to address climate change more effectively. Cooperation enables them to access **grant funding, technical assistance, and capacity-building opportunities** that would be more difficult to obtain individually.

Cross-border partnerships can contribute to the **harmonization of climate policies and regulations** at regional and European levels, supporting the coherent and coordinated implementation of the Green Deal.

Local-level actions can significantly contribute to emission reduction, adaptation, and resilience building, while international cooperation can **accelerate innovation, knowledge sharing, and policy alignment**. Citizen engagement further strengthens ownership and commitment to the goals of the European Green Deal.

Connection to the objectives of the call for proposals

The project directly contributes to the general objectives of the call by **promoting peaceful relations, mutual understanding, and friendship** among European citizens. Through networking events, workshops, and forums, it supports **active local participation**, cooperation between municipalities, and the **exchange of good practices**.

The project's focus on sustainability and climate neutrality is fully aligned with the priorities of the call and contributes to the creation of a **more democratic and environmentally conscious European Union**.

The Project's Contribution to the Call's Priorities

- **Fostering peaceful relations and active participation:** the project promotes dialogue and cooperation among citizens of European countries, strengthening unity and mutual understanding while addressing shared sustainability challenges.
- **Strengthening mutual understanding and friendship:** by showcasing local manifestations of sustainability, the project highlights shared experiences and fosters a sense of connection and solidarity among European citizens.
- **Promoting cooperation and the exchange of good practices:** the project creates opportunities for sharing experiences and proven methods in sustainable development, energy management, and other related fields.
- **Supporting good local governance:** by involving local decision-makers, the project strengthens the role of municipal and regional authorities in the process of European integration and promotes transparent, effective governance.

Target Audiences

The primary target group of the project consists of the citizens of the participating partner cities – a total of approximately **150,000 people** – while the number of directly reached residents is expected to be around **10,000–20,000 people**.

According to our preliminary assessments, nearly **40% of participants will be individuals who have not previously taken part in similar professional programmes**. The **cultural events** linked to the project's

activities play a particularly important role, as they make it possible to reach people who may not be directly interested in the professional programmes but will still become aware of the project.

The involvement of residents from the partner municipalities has already begun during the **preparatory phase**: with the support of civil society organisations, we gathered local citizens' opinions on the project's themes and implementation methods.

During implementation, we will encourage citizens to participate actively through **workshops and consultations**. They will also be present as the audience of professional events (reached through media and social media campaigns), and they will be informed about project activities via **local and community media**.

Citizen engagement will take place primarily through the **networks of municipalities and local civil society organisations**, as these actors maintain direct contact with residents and can effectively disseminate information about the project's activities.

Approximately **40 civil society organisations** are participating in the project, based on previous partnerships.

Target Groups

1. **Local residents, especially young people:** by involving young people, the project aims to make Europe more understandable and appealing to them, while strengthening their sense of European identity.
2. **Local government decision-makers:** their involvement ensures that the project's results are relevant, practical, and can be integrated into local governance processes.

3. **Civil society organisations:** by supporting dialogue and cooperation among civil organisations, the project advances sustainability initiatives and cross-border collaboration.

These target groups are key actors in the successful implementation of sustainable development initiatives and in the local-level realisation of the **European Green Deal** objectives. Their active involvement ensures a **diverse and inclusive approach** to addressing the challenges of sustainability and climate neutrality.