

**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	
<b>Participant:</b>	MUNICIPALITY OF ATHIENOU (ATHIENOU DIMOS) - Cyprus
<b>PIC number:</b>	907666928
<b>Project name and acronym:</b>	LocalEUCharter: EU Charter on Fundamental Rights closer to citizen

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
<b>Event number:</b>	3
<b>Event name:</b>	European values among the technical teams of municipalities, politicians and civic youth associations for improving governance of municipalities
<b>Type:</b>	Meeting
<b>In situ/online:</b>	[in-situ]
<b>Location:</b>	Athienou - Cyprus
<b>Date(s):</b>	22/3/2023 – 23/3/2023
<b>Website(s) (if any):</b>	<p>PRESS RELEASE OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF ATHIENOU – APPROVAL OF PARTICIPATION IN NEW EUROPEAN PROGRAMS:  <a href="https://www.athienou.org.cy/en/press-release-of-the-municipality-of-athienou-approval-of-participation-in-new-european-programs/">https://www.athienou.org.cy/en/press-release-of-the-municipality-of-athienou-approval-of-participation-in-new-european-programs/</a></p> <p>LOCALEUCHARTER PRESS RELEASE - 3rd meeting in Athienou 3.2023 :  <a href="https://www.athienou.org.cy/deltio-ty pou-localeu charter-3i-synantisi-stin-athienou-3-2023/">https://www.athienou.org.cy/deltio-ty pou-localeu charter-3i-synantisi-stin-athienou-3-2023/</a></p> <p>PRESS RELEASE LOCALEUCHARTER - Conclusion of the 3rd meeting in Athienou 23.3.2023: <a href="https://www.athienou.org.cy/deltio-ty pou-localeu charter-oloklirosi-3is-synantisis-stin-athienou-23-3-2023/">https://www.athienou.org.cy/deltio-ty pou-localeu charter-oloklirosi-3is-synantisis-stin-athienou-23-3-2023/</a></p>
Participants	
Female:	35
Male:	20
Non-binary:	-----
1. Municipality of Valencia - Spain	3

2. Municipality of Cervia - Italy	2	
3. Asociatia Se Poate - Romania	2	
4. Município de Amarante - Portugal	2	
5. Klub Sportowy "BUDOWLANI" – Lodz - Poland	2	
6. DIMOS LARISEON – Greece	2	
7. Municipality of Athienou – Cyprus	42	
<b>***8. Hellenic Institute of Cultural Diplomacy Netherlands – Netherlands</b>	<b>Participants from Netherlands were absent</b>	
Total number of participants:	55	From total number of countries: 7
<b>Description</b>		
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>		
<p>The promotion of European values within the technical teams of municipalities, alongside the active participation of politicians and civic youth associations, holds great promise for enhancing the governance of municipalities. By fostering a culture that values principles such as democracy, inclusivity, transparency, and social cohesion, these diverse stakeholders can work collaboratively to build stronger and more responsive local governments. Through knowledge sharing, open dialogue, and the infusion of European ideals into municipal policies and practices, we can collectively work towards creating thriving communities that reflect the best of European values and ensure a brighter future for all citizens.</p> <p><b><u>Activities:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>T3.1 Presentation of Local Initiatives and Best Practices:</u></b></p> <p>In the Municipality of Athienou, the activity under T3.1 involved showcasing local initiatives and best practices that align with European values. This event provided a platform for community members, including municipal officials, politicians and civic youth associations, to present and discuss successful projects, policies or programs that embodied European values such as democracy, inclusivity and social cohesion. These presentations aimed to inspire others by demonstrating practical ways to enhance local governance while fostering a sense of community and cooperation among participants. Athienou had the opportunity to present its initiatives for a Climate Neutral Municipality of Athienou and the greening of its area but also its good practice for volunteerism that gave it the Good Practice Award of the URBACT Program for its actions in volunteerism.</p>		

### **T3.2 Conference about Improving Municipal Governance with European Values:**

The Municipality of Athienou organized a conference as part of T3.2, focusing on the enhancement of municipal governance through the infusion of European values. This conference brought together key stakeholders, including local government representatives, experts in governance and community leaders. Participants engaged in insightful discussions, shared experiences and explored strategies, to improve the governance of the municipalities in alignment with European values. The conference served as a platform for learning, networking and establishing a collective vision for more effective and values-driven local governance.

The Mayor of Athienou presented the theme «How to improve the governance of municipalities with European Values?», presenting the following, where the partners made a lot of discussion on the matter.

#### **What are the principles of European governance?**

European governance is based on the following principles:

- opening up and transparency of the EU institutions;
- involving civil society in decision-making;
- framing and implementing consistent and well-managed policies;
- ensuring a clear, stable and predictable regulatory framework supporting growth and jobs;
- respecting the principles of proportionality and subsidiarity;
- ensuring that each of the EU institutions and EU Member States explains and takes responsibility for what it does in the EU;
- contributing to the global governance debate with a view to improving the operation of international institutions.

So, what are the 7 principles of good governance?

- participatory;
- consistent with the rule of law;
- transparent;
- responsive;
- consensus-oriented;
- equitable and inclusive;
- effective, efficient and accountable;

#### **IMPROVING LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Community engagement & equitable participation create change.

Democracy requires public participation and community engagement to engender a government “of the people, by the people, for the people.” Local governments have a responsibility to engage their community members in a robust and equitable manner in order to effectively carry out the key functions of government, such as crafting and implementing laws, budgets, plans, directives, and strategic visions. However, government practices often fall short of this ideal, even though many take an active interest in improving their approaches. The inability of many local governments to strongly and authentically engage their constituents in public decisions has contributed to producing, maintaining, and even worsening social and health inequities that persist today.

An equitable, inclusive community engagement approach to public decisions ensures that the people most affected and most marginalized, especially those who have been historically left out of these conversations (eg, low-income people, returning citizens, communities of color, recent immigrants, speakers of English as a second language), have a say in the decisions that affect their lives. Inclusive civic engagement results in government processes, practices, and decisions that are more responsive to community priorities, avoid many unforeseen consequences, and create relationships that hold local governments accountable. Effective community engagement can also lead to decisions that result in a more equitable distribution of the drivers of good health, like where public transit infrastructure is located or investments in neighborhood parks, schools, or housing. Additionally, giving people more control over the decisions that affect their lives and their communities has positive impacts on health. Most important, improvements in government practices, such as local agencies' engagement strategies, can lead to lasting changes in organizational culture, policies, and processes that extend long after any one public decisionmaking process. With a greater commitment to intentionally increasing equity in their community engagement efforts, local governments are in a better position to address social and health inequities and promote access to resources, services, and programs that help people lead healthier lives.

A number of strategies can be used to build more effective community engagement and public participation — particularly of groups who are traditionally left out.

### **1. Budgeting**

Budgeting is one of the most important things local government does. Budgeting involves allocating limited financial resources to support the delivery of key public services — from public safety, roads, and public transit to parks and libraries. A local government's annual operating budget reflects its vision, strategies, and priorities for the future and determines which projects and services will actually be implemented each year.

### **2. Local Legislation & Policymaking**

Legislative bodies pass laws and policies on a wide range of issues. In addition to budgeting decisions, legislative bodies make decisions that affect the quality, affordability, and accessibility of public transportation, housing, parks and open space, waste management services, and water and energy utilities.

This legal framework, combined with other structural factors, means that legislation is often adopted, implemented, and evaluated with little or no direct input from the people who will be directly affected by the policy or from those who experience the greatest health inequities. Consequently, laws often fail to account for the wants and needs of residents who are experiencing inequities. Indeed, traditional policy development processes are likely to maintain the status quo or, in the worst cases, exacerbate existing inequities or even create new ones.

Local policymakers can use a number of strategies and tools to ensure more equitable engagement and representation of all residents in the policymaking process.

### **3. Planning**

Another core function of local governments is to help plan for the future growth of a community. State laws usually stipulate how often localities must update their comprehensive plans or master plans, and the laws require public participation in the planning process. Plans include policies, strategies, and actions to meet a locality's future goals for their community, touching on a wide range of issues like housing, transportation, land use, economic and community development, parks and open space, environmental quality, and public safety. Community engagement efforts provide key

information to help understand needs and concerns and, ultimately, to gather support for proposed projects.

#### **4. Voting & Elections**

One of the most fundamental ways that residents influence local government is by voting. When more people exercise their power as voters, they can elect local leaders whose values are aligned with their interests and hold leaders accountable to everyone they serve. Unfortunately, voter participation in local elections is very low;

#### **T3.3 Game to Spread European Values Among Municipal Technical Teams, Politicians, and Civic Youth Associations:**

As part of T3.3, the Municipality of Athienou introduced an innovative approach to promote European values—through a game. This interactive and engaging activity was designed to educate and inspire municipal technical teams, politicians and civic youth associations. The game incorporated scenarios and challenges related to European values, encouraging participants to think critically, make decisions and work collaboratively. By gamifying the learning process, this initiative aimed to ensure that participants internalized and applied European values in their roles, ultimately contributing to the improvement of municipal governance.

These activities in the Municipality of Athienou underscored the commitment to European values in local governance, fostering a culture of cooperation, inclusivity, and continuous improvement in municipal operations. They served as valuable tools for raising awareness, sharing knowledge and actively working towards better governance practices that align with the principles of the European Union.

Date: 2023-05-04

Review: 2023-08-08

2<sup>nd</sup> Review: September

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