

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Participant:	[1] – [ASSOCIAZIONE CULTURALE LIGHTHOUSE LANGUAGES] ([Lighthouse Languages])
PIC number:	[913055181]
Project name and acronym:	[Defending Empowered Media, Openly Cultivating Resilience and Creating YouthWise Inclusive Social Engagement] — [DEMOCRACYWISE]

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	[1]
Event name:	[DEMOCRACYWISE Project's Kick-off Meeting]
Type:	[International Event]
In situ/online:	[in-situ]
Location:	[Italy], [Orte]
Date(s):	From 06/09/2024 to 09/09/2024
Website(s) (if any):	https://democracywiseciv.wordpress.com/kick-off-meeting/ https://www.lighthouselanguages.it/portfolio/democracywise/
Participants	
Female:	45
Male:	43
Non-binary:	0
From country 1 [Italy]:	41
From country 2 [Cyprus]:	12
From country 3 [Spain]:	4
From country 4 [Poland]:	10
From country 5 [Portugal]:	6
From country 6 [Ireland]:	6
From country 7 [Hungary]:	9
Total number of participants:	88
From total number of countries:	7
Description	
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>	

DAY 1:

Arrival of the delegations, meeting with the local volunteers. Tour in Rome and visit to the Europa Experience David Sassoli.

DAY 2:

DEMOCRACYWISE project's Kick-off Meeting

Morning: Open meeting at the Palazzo Roberteschi in Orte 9:30-13:00

Presentations and Discussions:

-Overview of the project's objectives and actions to reduce the perceived democratic gap, aligning with the Civil Society Projects Call and the CERV programme. This activity foresaw a comprehensive presentation to the public of the DEMOCRACYWISE project, of the Civil Society call and of the CERV Programme. This allowed to amplify the visibility of the project to the community and outside the consortium and to promote the CERV programme to other stakeholders and associations that have never took part in the programme, as well as the Civil Society Call.

-A focused debate on the "perceived democracy gap" highlighting how communities feel disconnected from democratic processes. This activity was organized as a group activity: firstly a presentation introduced the topic of "Democratic deficit" to the public and then participants were divided in groups and asked to debate among themselves about the perception of democracy in their community and then share their results with the others. It resulted in a direct engagement of participants and in an intergenerational cooperation among different target groups, allowing the exchange of point of view, the confrontation of ideas and the sharing of knowledge and experiences.

-Each participating organization presented its role and upcoming activities, emphasizing how the consortium's diversity could tackle these challenges. The participants presented their organization, key activities and fields of work, this allowed visibility for partners' projects and activities and the possibility to further networking with other stakeholders outside the consortium.

Debate outcomes:

The result of the Open meeting were the expression of expectations and recommendations from the target groups for the future implementation of the DEMOCRACYWISE project, such as:

-the need for targeted communication to engage youth and seniors in civic discussions: it has been proved hard to engage these target groups together, as they carry different level of experience in democratic and civic participation. It is fundamental that specific activities are carried out to facilitate their cooperation. In particular, language can be an obstacle since seniors are less likely to speak english.

-a proposal has been made by some people attending the meeting to create focused activities tailored to hard-to-reach groups. These groups were partially involved in the kick-off meeting thanks to the participation of local organizations working with them, but the need to deepen the outreach to this target.

-suggestions for practical actions, such as leveraging local festivals and community centers to disseminate information more effectively. Some of the participating organizations, such as senior social centers offered to host the DEMOCRACYWISE.

Afternoon: guided tour of Orte city center and undergrounds. The guided tour allowed team building, intergenerational and intercultural bonding among the participants, both locals and part of the consortium. The tour has been led by local volunteers of the Association Veramente Orte APS.

DAY 3

Morning: Team building activities and operational meeting.

Team-building activities: interactive exercises were conducted to strengthen bonds within the international participants, creating a collaborative and open environment at intergenerational and intercultural level. Activities emphasized the development of social and transversal skills, such as critical thinking, media literacy, assertive communication, etc.

Operational meeting:

The meeting was held in contemporary with the team-building activities and involved only the members of project's staff. Main achievements:

-Timetable and content discussion: the project team finalized a comprehensive timetable for future project activities, ensuring all sessions aligned with the goals of engaging the target groups.

-Methodologies and dissemination: emphasis was placed on participatory approaches, such as co-creation workshops and storytelling sessions, tailored for youth and seniors. Feedback highlighted the importance of digital tools and in-person events to reach marginalized communities.

Afternoon: Participation in the Ottava Medievale di Orte: some of the participants directly engaged in the Medieval Parade, dressing with the 7 "Contrade". This allowed the participants to be fully included in the local community, resulting in a greater dissemination of the DEMOCRACYWISE project and

acknowledgement for the EU funding, since the speaker directly mentioned their participation when introducing the parade. The other delegations integrated with the local participants, fostering mutual understanding and exchange.

DAY 4

Departure of delegations.

The Kick-off meeting achieved the following results:

- To establish a cooperative environment, allowing participants from different EU countries to meet and work together.
- To launch the DEMOCRACYWISE project, triggering debate among the local community on its main topic: the perceived democratic deficit.
- To acknowledge the EU funding and present the Civil Society Projects Call and CERV programme to a wider public.
- To carry out an operational meeting to set future project's actions.
- To favour the dissemination of the project, thanks to the active participation of delegates in a local city festival.

Feedback:

- young participants appreciated the interactive approach of team-building activities and emphasized the need for more digital tools to maintain ongoing engagement.
- participants aged 60+ found the discussions accessible and valued the opportunity to share their perspectives on the democratic gap. They recommended hosting intergenerational workshops to foster mutual understanding between age groups.
- informal, community-oriented events like the Ottava Medievale were effective in breaking down barriers and creating a welcoming environment. Suggestions included collaborating with local organizations to identify and invite more individuals from hard-to-reach groups to future events.
- delegates highlighted the importance of follow-up meetings and periodic updates on project progress to maintain momentum and engagement.

In addition, the logistic of the event foresaw, where and when possible, the use of train for transfers from and to the airport (Fiumicino Airport); the delegations have been hosted all in the historical centre of Orte in houses owned by locals or as guests, allowing the organization to limit the use of transportation.

This resulted in a more sustainable management of the group of participants.

Target groups:

- participants have been engaged inside and outside the consortium, allowing the communities to take part in project's activities.
- organizations part of the consortium participated in the kick-off meeting with their own delegations, composed by a minimum of 4 to up to 12 participants, of these max 2 people were directly representing the project staff, while the other were citizens of the local community or affiliates (non operative workers) of the organization.
- the delegations were made up of mixed participants, assuring the presence both of youth and senior citizens
- the local community, stakeholders and public authorities in Orte and Viterbo Province has been involved through the Lighthouse Languages network and targeted invitations.
- citizens have been informed and engaged through posts on social networks, posters and flyers, and word of mouth.

Presentations, photogallery and contents of activities are available at this link:

<https://democracywiseciv.wordpress.com/kick-off-meeting/>



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