

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

 Please provide one sheet per event (one event = one workpackage = one lump sum).

PROJECT	
Participant:	[No 7] - ALDA - ASSOCIATION EUROPEENNE POUR LA DEMOCRATIE LOCALE (ALDA)
PIC number:	963194384
Project name and acronym:	Citizens Foresight Europe: Shaping the Future Together through Engaging Citizens Debates – Citizen Foresight EU

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	[T8.2]
Event name:	“Shaping the Future of Local Governance in Europe: Fueling Citizen Visions” international workshop
Type:	Workshop Open Space Technology
In situ/online:	in-situ
Location:	Belgium, Brussels
Date(s):	9 December 2025
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.alda-europe.eu/citizen-foresight-open-space-participatory-governance/
Participants	
Female:	19
Male:	10
Non-binary:	0
From country 1 [BELGIUM]:	12
From country 2 [GERMANY]:	3
From country 3 [MALTA]:	1
From country 4 [FRANCE]:	2
From country 5 [ITALY]:	5
From country 6 [IRELAND]:	1
From country 7 [HUNGARY]:	1
From country 8 [CZECH REPUBLIC]:	1

From country 9 [ROMANIA]:	1		
From country 10 [UKRAINE]:	1		
From country 11 [SPAIN]:	1		
Total number of participants:	29	From total number of countries:	11
Description			
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>			
Introduction			
<p>The international workshop "Shaping the Future of Local Governance in Europe: Fueling Citizen Visions" organised by the European Association for Local Democracy (ALDA), as project partner, took place on December 9 in Brussels. The event brought together 29 participants from 11 EU countries to engage in a participatory and innovative workshop using the Open Space Technology (OST) methodology. The event embodies the philosophy and objectives of the <i>Citizen Foresight EU: Shaping the Future Together through Engaging Citizens Debates</i> project, which aims to promote citizen engagement and democratic participation in envisioning the future of Europe. The objective of the project is to empower citizens to actively engage in democratic processes and have their preferences effectively represented in future oriented decision-making. Through project activities, citizens, civil society actors, and policymakers actively experiment with foresight and participatory methods to envision and co-shape desirable futures for Europe.</p> <p>ALDA stands at the forefront of promoting active citizenship and local governance, recognizing that the most potent solutions often emerge directly from the people who experience these challenges daily. ALDA's role in the project foresaw several activities to foster citizen engagement, participation and local governance in Europe. A key methodology that ALDA aimed to contribute to the project to foster this participatory approach is Open Space Technology (OST), a technique designed to be highly inclusive and collaborative, running group meetings or events around a central topic where participants create the agenda and manage contents themselves.</p>			
Methodology			
<p>Within the WP8, ALDA has been working throughout a structured process: through a set of specific activities, this work package aims to empower local authorities and diverse stakeholders to collaboratively address governance challenges by enhancing citizen engagement. The activities include a collection of specific needs and challenges related to citizen engagement, participation, and local governance in Europe; the creation of a Community of Interest related to citizen engagement and local governance; and the publication of Co-created Policy Recommendations based on the insights gathered from stakeholders engagement within the Community of Interest and the outcomes of the OST Event. The "Report on Citizen Engagement and Participation and Local Governance in Europe", which will be available on ALDA's website, contains a more detailed description of the methodology, insights and policy recommendations.</p> <p>The event programme was the following:</p> <p>10.30 - Registration and Welcome 11.00 - Opening session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcoming Greetings - Keynote speech: Pierluigi Brombo, European Economic and Social Committee, HoU Foresight, Studies, Assessment of Policies - Programme presentation: Adrien Licha, ALDA - European Association for Local Democracy - Introduction of the project: Martin Barthel, CRN - Comparative Research Network <p>11.40 - Opening the Circle: the Open Space Technology</p>			

- Presentation of the macro topics and rules of the workshop: Anna Ditta, ALDA - European Association for Local Democracy
- 12.00 - Light lunch
- 13.00 - Co-definition of the sub topics and Group Session
- 16.30 - Debriefing
- Plenary discussion of the identified scenarios, solutions and policy recommendations: Anna Ditta, ALDA - European Association for Local Democracy
- 17.00 - Closing Remarks (Anna Ditta, ALDA - European Association for Local Democracy; Adrien Licha, ALDA - European Association for Local Democracy)

The event opened with an insightful keynote speech by Pierluigi Brombo, Head of Unit for Foresight, Studies and Policy Assessment at the EESC, who highlighted the importance of foresight in shaping inclusive and resilient local governance across Europe.

Following the keynote, Martin Barthel, Vice Director and Executive Manager of Comparative Research Network (CRN), the project leader, presented the Citizen Foresight Europe project and introduced the online platform (www.citizenforesight.eu) which will bring together organisations interested in foresight and participatory policymaking across Europe. Besides, the Community of Interest has been presented and promoted to participants.

The workshop then continued with an introduction to the OST methodology by Anna Ditta, Head of the Project Development Department at ALDA. She explained the principles of this fully participatory approach, outlining the rules of engagement and what participants could expect from the sessions.

After a networking lunch, where participants had the chance to get to know each other and connect, they got into the heart of the open space workshop. All were invited to reflect on the core theme of the workshop: building the cities of the future, grounded in strong local democracy and active citizen engagement. In line with the OST approach, participants collectively proposed and selected the sub-topics they wished to explore, forming discussion groups around shared interests.

Four key sub-topics emerged: sustainable sufficiency and inclusion; intergenerational dialogue and social loneliness; the housing and renting crisis; and emerging technologies for local democracy. Each group was tasked with identifying current challenges and needs related to their chosen topic, envisioning desirable future scenarios, and co-developing concrete policy recommendations to help achieve these outcomes.

At the end of the event, participants and organisations gathered for a quick final moment of reflection on the day, satisfaction of the activity and methodology and on the results at the end of the day. Therefore, the CERV Survey has been shared and completed by participants. In-person feedback emerged during this final phase, as well as from informal exchanges throughout the day, showing an overall positive feedback on the event, and participants' enthusiasm for the innovative methodology of OST. The possibility to share personal ideas and priorities, co-create topics of discussion and have no time constraints to groups' discussion was a surprise for them and was very much appreciated. Participants felt the ownership of the process and of co-creation of the final policy recommendations which will be published after the event.

Conclusions

The event successfully fed into the co-creation of policy recommendations, which were identified by the three groups and are outlined below, supported by concrete implementation actions detailed in the comprehensive report available [here](#).

The policy recommendations call on EU policy-makers, national governments, and local authorities to take action on democratic participation, the digital and green transitions, equality, sustainable urban mobility, lifelong learning, and social inclusion, as reflected across the proposed policy measures.

Sufficiency and Inclusion group:

- Enhance Educational Systems for Inclusion and Sustainable Mobility
- Develop Local and Community-Owned Governance Frameworks for Sustainable and Inclusive Mobility
- Secure Funding for Local Governance and Mobility Transformation

Intergenerational Dialogue and Social Loneliness group:

- Facilitate Digital Inclusion for Older Adults
- Develop Structured Intergenerational Volunteering Programs
- Expand Community and Social Spaces for Active Aging
- Encourage Evidence-Based Policy and Capacity Building

Emerging Technologies for Local Democracy group:

- Implement an Umbrella Approach for Small and Medium Municipalities
- Strengthen Digital Literacy Across Society
- Develop Transparent and Trustworthy AI Tools
- Establish Public Data Commons and IoT Infrastructure
- Promote Enabling Digital Tools for Participation

Participants' positive feedback, and in particular their enthusiasm for the collaborative environment of the methodology, suggest potential follow-up initiatives using OST and highlights the project's potential for sustainable impact and long-term community engagement.

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