

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

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

PROJECT	
Participant:	[4] - [ZNANJE NA DJELU] (ZND)
PIC number:	[872841503]
Project name and acronym:	[COMPASS Europe: Civic Education and Dialogue for Europe's Future] — [COMPASS Europe]

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	[5]
Event name:	[NECE Lab: Transformative experience in civic education]
Type:	[awareness-raising]
In situ/online:	<i>[in-situ]</i>
Location:	[Portugal], [Lisbon]
Date(s):	[09.-11.03.2026.]
Website(s) (if any):	
Participants	
Female:	24
Male:	11
Non-binary:	0
From country 1 [Portugal]:	10
From country 2 [Spain]:	12
From country 3 [Croatia]:	3
From country 4 [Czechia]:	2
From country 5 [Slovakia]:	2
From country 6 [Netherlands]:	2
From country 7 [Germany]:	1
From country 8 [Italy]:	1
From country 9 [Austria]:	1

From country 10 [Montenegro]:	1		
Total number of participants:	35	From total number of countries:	10

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

The Lab curriculum was developed by Znanje na djelu and THE CIVICS Innovation Hub in cooperation with local partners and with input from experts working on current EU policy developments and civic education. The programme design combined theoretical reflection with participatory and practice-oriented methodologies, ensuring relevance to both contemporary EU policy discussions and the needs of civic educators and practitioners.

Participants were selected through an open application process based on their expertise, professional experience, and motivation to contribute to the Lab, while also ensuring geographical and gender diversity among the group. All preparatory materials, logistical information, and introductory resources were shared with participants in advance via email.

The Lab itself was a 2.5-day in-person event dedicated to exploring transformative experiences in civic education and their role in strengthening democratic participation, agency, and belonging that brought together educators, researchers, civic practitioners, and cross-sectoral stakeholders from across Europe. Through dialogue as both a civic and pedagogical method, space was created for shared inquiry, active listening, and co-creation across formal and non-formal education contexts. Discussions focused on designing transformative learning experiences that are learner-centred, participatory, and grounded in real-world relevance and shared with the experience of all the participants.

The Lab brought together participants from European countries, representing a wide range of sectors and professional backgrounds, including schools, universities, civil society organisations, adult education providers, and organisations working with children and young people, migrants, people with disabilities, rural communities, and teachers. Participants also contributed expertise in areas such as history and remembrance, entrepreneurship, mentoring, and civic participation, while operating at different levels of impact from individual and community initiatives to regional, national, and European policy development. The final part of the programme connected civic education practice with broader European policy discussions on democratic resilience, participation, and education reform, highlighting the importance of stronger collaboration between educators, civil society actors, and policymakers through facilitated role-play group work. The group work concluded with a set of reflections on future priorities, highlighting the need for stronger European guidance on citizenship education that allows flexibility for national contexts, stronger cross-sectoral networks and communities of practice, a greater focus on supporting citizenship development rather than solely teaching citizenship, and educational approaches that support identity development grounded in humanism, inclusion, and democratic values. These reflections provided valuable input for participants engaged in civic education policy development and advocacy at national and European levels.

First half-day: building the community and exploring transformative education

The first half-day of the NECE Lab focused on building a sense of community among participants and creating a shared understanding of the different perspectives, experiences and contexts represented in the group. Through sessions co-curated with the local partners, IPAV and the ECEC Network, participants were invited to exchange experiences and reflect on the meaning of transformative education in their respective contexts. Discussions focused on shared spaces, common challenges and opportunities for developing educational approaches that can contribute to meaningful individual and social change.

The day concluded with a welcome dinner featuring local social enterprises working with young migrants and supporting their integration into local communities. The organisations presented their work and demonstrated how cultural heritage, cuisine and traditions can foster connection and inclusion, transform perspectives, and contribute to building more cohesive, diverse and inclusive communities.

First full day: challenges and practices of transformative civic education

The first full day opened with a workshop exploring current challenges in civic education. Using a card game developed by students as a participatory tool, participants discussed youth-centred approaches to civic engagement and reflected on the challenges and opportunities they present. The session also provided a brief overview of the current state of civic education, complemented by an interactive discussion that allowed participants to connect broader developments with their own professional and educational contexts.

The second session introduced an interactive dialogue methodology, with participants working in smaller groups to explore the key conditions and ingredients needed for transformative experiences in educational activities. The discussions encouraged participants to reflect on what makes an educational experience genuinely transformative and what role educators, learning environments and participatory methods can play in enabling such experiences. The group reflections were complemented by expert input, providing additional perspectives and linking participants' experiences to broader approaches in the field.

The third session focused on sharing and analysing participants' own educational practices and programmes. Participants presented examples from their work and collectively examined their approaches, intended outcomes and experiences. Particular attention was given to assessing the impact of educational activities, both on participants as individuals and on the wider communities in which they live and work. This session encouraged critical reflection on how transformative outcomes can be recognised and measured beyond immediate learning outcomes.

Second full day: education, social transformation and systemic change

The second full day began with a reflective question: Should education be transformative at all? This provided the starting point for a broader discussion on the role of education in shaping society and on the extent to which educational systems and practices can contribute to social transformation. Participants explored how a culture of transformative civic learning can be cultivated and what conditions are necessary for meaningful change to emerge through education.

The programme continued with a panel discussion bringing together five speakers, followed by a Q&A session. The discussion explored the relationship between civic engagement and systemic change, as well as the interaction between EU policy-level developments and grassroots civic education practices. Participants reflected on how civic initiatives can contribute to wider social and institutional change and, conversely, how changes in policies and public frameworks can influence work carried out at the local and community level.

The NECE Lab concluded with an evaluation and closing session, providing participants with an opportunity to reflect on their learning, exchange final observations and assess the relevance of the Lab's approaches and methodologies for their own professional contexts.

As follow-up outputs, reflections and key insights from the Lab were compiled into a blog article published on the THE CIVICS Innovation Hub [website](#) and shared with participants and the wider public. In addition, a practical toolkit on civic dialogue methods and approaches for organising dialogue in local contexts was developed and distributed to all participants. Participants also contributed their own materials, examples, and methodologies through a shared online resource folder, further strengthening peer exchange and the sustainability of the learning process beyond the Lab itself.

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