EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Participants (AP):	• CONCELLO DE GONDOMAR (SPAIN), PIC nº 885909246 • COMUNE DI ALI TERME (ITALY), PIC nº 938717889; • WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL (MALTA), PIC nº 886244672; • URADZ GMINY KAMIONKA WIELKA (POLAND), PIC nº 913393129; • OBSHTINA TRYAVNA (BULGARY), PIC nº 884844962; • OPCINA KAPELA (CROACIA), PIC nº 889668287; • OBECNY URAD DOLINKA (SLOVAKIA), PIC nº 938954763; • DIMOS NEAS PROPONTIDAS (GREECE), PIC nº 938438626; ´ • MATRASZOLOS KÖZSÉGI ÖNKORMÁNYZATA (HUNGARY), PIC nº 882829787
Coordinator (COO):	UNIÃO DE FREGUESIAS DE MELRES E MEDAS (PORTUGAL), PIC nº 893175128
Project name and acronym:	Union of Rural Towns Embracing Europe — EUruralTOWNS

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number: Project number:	1 ; 101279873
Event name:	TOWN TWINNING - MELRES (GONDOMAR / PORTUGAL)
Type:	Through a series of debates, thematic workshops, and participatory events, the project will reflect on the EU's historical achievements, lessons from its integration process, and current challenges. The initiative encourages participants to cocreate visions for a more inclusive, socially cohesive, and territorially integrated Europe. To this end, we will also hold an official ceremony to sign a brotherhood pact.
In situ/online:	in-situ
Location:	Portugal, Melres
Date(s):	From 12 to 17 de November 2026
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.melresmedas.pt/jfmm_union_of_rural_towns_embracing_europe.html
Participants	

Female:	81		
Male:	77		
Non-binary:	2		
From country 1 UNIÃO DE FREGUESIAS DE MELRES E MEDAS (PORTUGAL):	74		
From country 2 CONCELLO DE GONDOMAR (SPAIN):	49		
From country 3 COMUNE DI ALI TERME (ITALY):	4		
From country 4 WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL (MALTA):	5		
From country 5 URADZ GMINY KAMIONKA WIELKA (POLAND):	2		
From country 6 OBSHTINA TRYAVNA (BULGARY):	5		
From country 7 OPCINA KAPELA (CROACIA):	4		
From country 8 OBECNY URAD DOLINKA (SLOVAKIA):	6		
From country 9 DIMOS NEAS PROPONTIDAS (GREECE):	5		
From country 10 MATRASZOLOS KÖZSÉGI ÖNKORMÁNYZATA (HUNGARY):	6		
Total number of participants:	160	From total number of countries:	10

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

EUruralTOWNS

TOWN TWINNING

The town twinning initiative 'Union of Rural Towns Embracing Europe', or 'EUruralTOWNS', was led by the Union of Parishes of Melres and Medas (Portugal) and brought together ten small rural municipalities from across the European Union. The twinning event took place in Melres, Portugal, from 12 to 17 November 2026, and was attended by partners from PORTUGAL, SPAIN, ITALY, MALTA, POLAND, BULGARIA, CROATIA, SLOVAKIA, GREECE and HUNGARY.

In close alignment with the priorities of the CERV Programme and its objective to 'promote debate on the Europe that citizens want', the project sought to strengthen the sense of European belonging and improve citizens' understanding of the concrete benefits of EU membership.

At its core, 'EUruralTOWNS' fostered dialogue amongst people from rural and, often, marginalised areas, enabling them to engage critically and constructively with the future of the European Union and the collective effort to combat Euroscepticism.

Through a series of debates, thematic workshops and participatory events, the project reflected on the EU's historical achievements, the lessons of the European integration process and current challenges. The initiative encouraged participants to co-create visions for a more inclusive, socially cohesive and territorially integrated Europe. To this end, we also held an official ceremony to sign a twinning agreement.

Citizens had the opportunity to express their views and contribute concrete proposals. These were brought together in a handbook and on a dedicated project website, serving as lasting tools for public awareness-raising and European dialogue.

We therefore engaged our target group: "adult residents with fewer opportunities in the participating regions, aged between 40 and 60". The project involved 160 direct participants (86 international and 74 local participants).

MAIN PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

- Work visit to Gondomar City Hall; cultural visit to the Gondomar Filigree Museum and Gramido Polis.

- Work visit to the headquarters of the Union of Parishes of Melres and Medas; cultural visit to the Union of Parishes of Melres and Medas Ethnographic Museum;
- Collection of contributions for the guide entitled "**Cultural Manifesto against Euroscepticism and Future Perspectives for Europe**" and for the town-twinning website.
- Interactive workshop: "Sustainable agriculture and short supply chains", creating local producer networks among the twinned localities.
- Town twinning: "Union of Rural Towns Embracing Europe"; **Official signing of the "Oath of Brotherhood**".
- Guided cultural visit to discover Porto's Historic Centre, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Work visit to Guimarães City Hall; cultural visit of the Historic Centre, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Conference: "The role of rural local and regional authorities in the European integration process".

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