

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	
Participant:	[101081558] - [Green Liberty]
PIC number:	[994801543]
Project name and acronym:	[Citizens´Observatory For Green Deal Financing] — [Citizens4EGDFunding]

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	4 (D4.1 and D4.2)
Event name:	Two Green Deal events for activists, citizens and media in Latvia, with focus on EP elections in second one
Type:	Seminar
In situ/online:	in-situ
Location:	<p>First event:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Riga, Latvia (1 event) 2. Daugavpils, Daugavpils municipality (2 events) 3. Līvāni, Līvāni municipality (1 event) <p>Second event:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Riga, The European Union house, Latvia
Date(s):	<p>First event:</p> <p>03/03/2023 (1 event – in Riga)</p> <p>20/04/2023 (2 events – in Līvāni and Daugavpils)</p> <p>21/04/2023 (1 event – in Daugavpils)</p> <p>Second event:</p> <p>16/02/2024 (1 event - in Riga)</p>
Website(s) (if any):	<p>First event:</p> <p>Green Liberty website: https://www.zalabriviba.lv/temati/vides-interesu-aizstaviba/vides-interesu-aizstaviba-tas-nav-tik-gruti-ka-izklausas/</p> <p>Environmental days in Daugavpils and Līvāni website (3 seminars were in the programme of this larger event) https://lpr.gov.lv/lv/2023/vides-dienas-livanos-un-daugavpili/</p> <p>Project landing page (Bankwatch website):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Want to advocate for the environment? It's not as hard as it sounds! - Bankwatch (3rd of March event) • Protection of Environmental interests: Green light to be

		heard! - Bankwatch (April events)	
		Second event:	
		Green Liberty website: https://www.zalabriviba.lv/pasakums-zala-barometra-diskusija-un-darbnica-gatavi-eiropas-parlamenta-velesanam/	
		Election compass section on the Green Liberty website: https://www.zalabriviba.lv/temati/eiropas-parlamenta-velesanas-2024/	
		Project landing page (Bankwatch website): https://bankwatch.org/event/green-barometer-discussion-and-workshop-getting-ready-for-european-elections	
Participants			
Female:	106		
Male:	47		
Non-binary:	1		
From country 1 [Latvia]:	153		
From country 2 [Belgium]:	1		
Total number of participants:	154	From total number of countries:	2
Description			
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>			
First event:			
Seminar for activists: “Want to advocate for the environment? It’s not as hard as it sounds!”, 03/03/2023, 10:00 – 16:00			
Representative from the State Chancellery of Latvia gave an overview of the various opportunities for public participation in national decision making.			
Representative from Ministry of Finance took participants through the process of planning, implementation and supervision of Latvia’s use of EU funds and indicated best opportunities for public participation.			
Members of Providus – centre for public policy and Latvian Ornithological Society (BirdLife International) shared the experience of their organisations – best methods and ways to achieve positive outcomes for the environment, nature and society. They reflected on their experience of organising focus groups, informational campaigns, lobby work and even going to court for specific environmental issues.			
Representatives of Green Liberty provided a fresh overview of the investments planned within various European Union funds, which can affect the environment, climate and biodiversity in both – positive and negative ways, as well as presented and encouraged other organisations to take part in the EU Funds Monitoring Committee, which is a real chance to influence in a positive way how EU funding is spent.			
Participants took part in a world-café and came up with various ways to make public participation and consultations in Latvia more meaningful and in line with the goals of the Green Deal. Many useful ideas were generated which will be combined with the outcomes of other events held during the Year for Environmental Advocacy in Latvia and then presented to national decision and EU level decision makers			
Seminars “Protection of environmental rights: Green light to be heard!” for young people (scholars), educators and local activists			

20/04/2023, Līvānu pirmā vidusskola (in Līvāni), 11:20-12:40 (for young people)

20/04/2023, University of Daugavpils (in Daugavpils), 16:30 – 18:00 (for educators and activists)

21/04/2023, Daugavpils Zinātņu vidusskola (in Daugavpils) 14:30 – 16:00 (for young people)

Three seminars (two for young people (scholars) and one for educators and local activists) were organised, where participants could learn about the existing opportunities of civil engagement and public participation in the decisions made by municipalities, the government of Latvia. They also heard the summary of experiences of environmental organisations on how to influence expenditure of public finances and EU funds in a climate, environment and biodiversity-friendly direction (summary of the main points from the seminar on 3rd of March). Together with their peers in groups they actively discussed how decisions can be positively influenced in their local municipality and community to be more in line with the needs of the society and friendlier towards environment.

Speakers/topics:

Representative from **Green Liberty/Bankwatch** – opportunities and NGO experience in public participation and protection of environmental interests in Latvia (in all 3 seminars).

Representative from **NGOs “Cita Daugavpils”** – activism and chance of positive influences on decision makers in the local communities of Daugavpils (only in seminar for educators and activists).

Information about participants:

Seminar for activists: “Want to advocate for the environment? It's not as hard as it sounds!”

Total number: 38, female: 30, male: 7, non-binary:1

Seminars “Protection of environmental rights: Green light to be heard!”

1. **Seminar for young people (in Līvāni):** Total number: 23, female: 12, male: 11
2. **Seminar for young people (in Daugavpils):** Total number: 68, female: 44, male: 24
3. **Seminar for educators and activists (in Daugavpils):** Total number: 19, female: 15, male: 4

Information about the speakers for each event:

**Seminar for activists: “Want to advocate for the environment? It's not as hard as it sounds!”,
03/03/2023**

Male - 3, including moderator, female - 3, non-binary – 1

Two speakers were from state institutions – **Ministry of Finance** and **State Chancellery of Latvia**, they are working in the fields of public participation and process of planning, implementation and supervision of Latvia's use of EU funds.

Two speakers were from NGOs - **Providus – centre for public policy** and **Latvian Ornithological Society (BirdLife International)**, both with extensive experience in public participation and campaigning for environmental goals locally, nationally and internationally.

Two speakers were from NGO Green Liberty – organisers of the event, both experienced in public participation, campaigning and monitoring of EU funds.

**Seminars for young people and educators/activists “Protection of environmental rights: Green light to be heard!”,
20/04/2023 and 21/04/2023**

Male – 1, female – 1

One speaker was representing the NGO Green Liberty, experienced in public participation, campaigning and monitoring of EU funds.

One speaker was representing NGO Cita Daugavpils – a local civil society organisation working to improve public involvement, civil society activity and EU values in the city of Daugavpils (this speaker was participating only in the event for educators/activists on the 20.04.2023) - this person spoke without a presentation.

Description of the event and activities for each event:**Seminar for activists: “Want to advocate for the environment? It's not as hard as it sounds!”,
03/03/2023**

Main conclusions from the discussions during presentations:

*There are multiple options for the citizens to participate in the decision making, most popular being: direct contacts with politicians, being in a political party, being part of an NGO, signed a petition, participated in a demonstration and others;

*[TAP portal](#) for public participation in legislation development is being actively developed and will be more user-friendly in the future;

*Deliberative approach (citizen forums) and participatory budgets can be effective tools for public participation;

* Based on NGO experiences, the best results in environmental advocacy are achieved when working together and acting on multiple levels at the same time: 1. sending formal letters and meeting with the decision makers, 2. sending press releases about the issue; engaging the society through petitions and protests, 3. going to court (if necessary);

*To achieve better results in environmental advocacy, this is what helps NGOs: 1. Develop a competent, professional image; 2. Communication with the European Commission; 3. Participation in the committees of the parliament; 4. Contacts in the parliament, ministries, city councils; 5. educational events for the public;

* Process of planning, implementation and supervision of Latvia's use of EU funds is a complicated one, but there are many stages where civil society and NGOs can contribute and receive information;

* A new platform for the Latvia's use of EU funds is being developed, where all the up-to-date information will be available on the foreseen investments, available support and project selections and monitoring committees;

* There are many EU funding programmes, which can and should be monitored by NGOs to make sure that the funding is spent for the benefit of the society and environment. In multiple cases “greenwashing” or even unwelcome investments can be seen regarding the use of EU public funds and NGOs need more capacity to monitor them efficiently;

Main conclusions from discussions during world-café:

***How to improve the process (make it more meaningful) public participation in decision making with regards to legislation and the use of public finances in Latvia:** 1. citizen forums; 2. process of public participation needs to be simplified and digitalised (use of apps, for example); 3. paid public participation (as opposed to voluntary as it is now for the most part); 4. raise public participatory skills in schools (teaching public participation); 5. state institutions must follow best practices of public participation management, not just “tick the boxes”.

How to achieve greater public participation in decision making:

1. non-trivialisation of environmental problems; 2. emotional campaigns; 3. Communicating and marketing nature capital and ecosystem services; 4. paid volunteerism in business enterprises; 5. campaign for promotion of TAP (public participation) portal; 6. improving and supporting local CSOs (neighbourhood committees).

What are the main challenges for meaningful public participation

1. State and municipal institutions are often not interested in meaningful public participation,
2. The expressed opinions often do not receive any feedback from institutions,
3. Formal framework (regulation) for public participation could be improved,
4. Many “bottom-up” initiatives that are popular in the society are not supported by the state/local institutions,
5. Official stakeholder working groups (in the parliament or ministries) often have a disbalanced composition – environmental interests or interests of disadvantaged groups are underrepresented,

6. Process of public participation often too complicated and boring for non-specialists.

Seminars for young people and educators/activists “Protection of environmental rights: Green light to be heard!”, 20/04/2023 and 21/04/2023

Main conclusions from the presentations:

1. Public participation is important for everyone – we can influence, how governments and local municipalities affect our lives and make sure that happens in the interests of the environment and the society (an example with the ministry’s initiative to shorten summer break),
2. There are multiple ways how everyone, including underaged people, can legally affect how decisions are made,
3. Local inhabitants need to be active themselves and form CSOs. Larger NGOs (Green Liberty, Latvian Fund for Nature, WWF, etc.) usually do not have the capacity to solve local environmental/societal issues,
4. Young people are encouraged to practice their civil engagement skills, it is possible through:
 1. becoming members of NGOs, 2. acting in School’s pupils’ boards, [applying to become a member of the Youth Parliament](#), and through other means.

Main conclusions from group discussions:

- Many issues came up which the students could highlight through various actions in the local municipality - waste issues, nature conservation issues, lack of walking trails and others.
- There are many ways how young people can raise awareness and attract attention of the local municipality and decision makers: collective letters, participation in demonstrations, etc.
- There are multiple emerging local NGOs working in Daugavpils which are a great chance for public participation and civil activism.
- There are 6 eco-schools in Daugavpils that should be more integrated into civil society activism.
- There is a lack of gratitude and encouragement from the local government of Daugavpils for civil participation and activism, which needs to be addressed.
- More protests are needed in local governments.
- More participation in national and international events – such as Earth hour.
- More engaging ways for the local inhabitants to meaningfully participate in the local government’s decision.

Links to presentations:

[Seminar for activists \(03.03.2023\)](#) (click the links “prezentācija” on the website)

[Seminar for young people \(scholars\) in Līvāni \(20.04.2023\)](#)

[Seminar for educators/activists in Daugavpils \(20.04.2023\)](#)

[Seminar for young people \(scholars\) in Daugavpils \(21.04.2023\)](#)

Evaluation summary for each event:

Following the seminars, the participants were asked to fill the EU Survey on Justice, Rights and Values.

Seminar for activists: “Want to advocate for the environment? It’s not as hard as it sounds!”, 03/03/2023, 10:00 – 16:00

17 people filled in the EU Survey on Justice, Rights and Values after the event (henceforth – Survey) on 3rd of March. Overall, the assessment of the event was high. With quantitative questions (with rating 1-5), the highest rating went to the adequacy of venue (4.88), overall assessment of the event (4.76), content of the event (4.7), length of the event (4.7), increased awareness (4.53), chosen methodology (4.52), choice of topics (4.47). and increased cooperation (4.47). The lowest rating was

in the question “increased skills” (3.65), which is explained by the focus on discussions and knowledge sharing of various topics, rather than practical exercises. 16 out of 17 respondents indicated that their perception of the topic had changed, 14 indicated that they are likely to react differently now, when confronted with the topic.

Regarding the question of gender mainstreaming, all the participants who filled in the Survey, confirmed through various answers that they had noticed that gender mainstreaming was integrated in the contents of the event – the materials avoided enforcing gender stereotypes, the content of the activity considered differences in situations and needs of different genders and others.

According to Eurostat, Latvia’s population has the highest female-to-male ratio in the EU, and this is particularly the case among people working in various NGOs and CSOs that are dealing with environmental or social issues. Since, these organisations constituted the primary target group, it was difficult to achieve gender balance - this event had four times more female participants than male participants. However, special care was taken to achieve more even gender balance among the lecturers/seminar leaders and this was noticed also by the participants as indicated in the survey answers.

Seminars for young people and educators/activists “Protection of environmental rights: Green light to be heard!”

Unfortunately, only one participant filled in the Survey during the **seminars for young people (scholars)** - most likely a teacher from the seminar in Līvāni. This is most likely due to the fact, that although the link to the survey was forwarded to all contact persons – teachers, who were involved in the organisation of the seminars for young people (scholars), they might not have been forwarded to scholars themselves, possibly due to the length and complexity of the survey. Another possible explanation is that the link to the survey was forwarded to them, but scholars did not find the time to fill it in. No e-mail addresses were directly gathered from the scholars – participants of the event, since the event was organised as part of a larger event (Environmental days organised by EuropeDirect DienvidLatgale) and there was no contact with the participants prior to the event.

Judging from their involvement (subjective evaluation by the organisers and teachers present) in the group discussions and active answers to questions, the scholars’ perception had changed and they are likely to react differently now, when confronted with the topic of public participation and active citizenship in their life - this was particularly pronounced in the first seminar in Līvāni on 20.04. In the second seminar in Daugavpils on 21.04 the scholars were comparatively more cautious with their answers, which can be explained by the large number of participants and by a slight language barrier – a large part of the group were scholars, whose first language was not Latvian, however all their classes do take place in Latvian, as required by law. Despite this, the teachers present gave positive reviews after the seminar.

Three participants filled in the Survey for the **seminar for educators/activists**. Overall, the assessment of the event was high. Only 2 quantitative questions received answers below score of 4.66 - Increased skills (3.66) and increased cooperation (4.3). All indicated that they would use the new knowledge acquired in their future work at least to some extent.

Regarding the question of gender mainstreaming, all the responders indicated that they had noticed that gender mainstreaming was integrated in the contents of the event – the materials avoided enforcing gender stereotypes, the content of the activity took into account differences in situations and needs of different genders and others.

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Second event:

Seminar “Green Barometer discussion and workshop: Ready for European Parliament elections!” 16/02/2024, 10:30 – 13:30

The seminar was intended as event for the members of the environmental and nature protection organisations that are part of the Green Barometer initiative in Latvia - Green Liberty, Latvian Fund for Nature, World Wildlife Fund Latvia, Latvian Ornithological Society and Biological farmers association of Latvia. Members from the first three organisations participated in this event.

The goal of the Green Barometer initiative is to monitor and evaluate political developments in relation to nature and environmental issues, to stimulate discussions on nature and environmental problems among policy makers and to ensure inclusion of these issues on the agenda of Latvian policy makers and parties. It has performed Latvia's first comprehensive assessment of political parties and policy decisions from an environmental perspective, jointly implemented by leading environmental and

nature conservation organisations.

During the seminar preparatory activities of the European Parliament elections 2024 were planned and discussed - the Green Barometer Manifesto for political parties and potential MEPs, the planned "Green Grill" (type of event organised by Green Barometer – public debates with politicians on environmental matters) and evaluations of political party programmes and previous votes by current MEPs. The event took place in the European Union House in Riga and there were two main speakers at the event:

Green Liberty biodiversity expert gave an introduction presentation which 1) highlighted the main environmental and nature conservation challenges in the EU over the next four years, 2) highlighted some of the known most important political decisions/votes in the next period of the EP, 3) provided a summary of the results of another event - a seminar for young people *Green barometer invites young people: it's also your European Parliament* – where active young people shared their ideas on what could be included in the Green Barometer manifesto and what they themselves expect from the next EU cycle and MEPs. The summary of those ideas was shared in this event to inspire ideas for the manifesto. Presentation available [here](#).

A politics and policy expert from the Latvian Fund for Nature presented a draft of the Green Barometer Manifesto, which was discussed by representatives of the organisations present, clarifying the fundamental theses for the final version of the manifesto. Finally, the forthcoming activities of the Green Barometer were discussed – the evaluations of the EP election programme and the voting patterns of the existing MEPs, as well as the Green Grill – a public discussion on environment, nature conservation and climate issues with the candidates of MEPs, which will be organised in May 2024, closer to the date of the European elections.

Information about the participants

Altogether 13 participants were present at the event, but 7 of them also visited the first event of this work package ("Want to advocate for the environment? It's not as hard as it sounds!", 03/03/2023), so 6 additional participants were present in this event in terms of the work package 4. Of these 5 were female, 1 was male. They were all from the environmental NGOs that are part of the Green Barometer coalition – Green Liberty, Latvian Fund for Nature and World Wildlife Fund Latvia.

Information about the speakers

Two speakers – 1 male, 1 female.

One speaker from Green Liberty - representative of the CERV project and the biodiversity & finance campaigner

One speaker from Latvian Fund for Nature – policy and politics expert and the main coordinator of the Green Barometer initiative

Main conclusions from the presentations and group discussion

As presented and discussed by the participants, the main challenges in the upcoming EU cycle include the failure to meet the 1.5-degree C climate target, the biodiversity crisis and the achievement of the ambitions of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030, the energy crisis and the need for an urgent transition to renewable energy as well as energy independence, fair transition of fossil and unsustainable sectors, the rise in the cost of living, the growing public discontent and the rise in populism, as well as EU's failures in the implementation of the circular economy.

The most important upcoming legislative acts were also discussed: the adoption of the Nature Restoration Law, various energy and transport related legislative acts, the next Multiannual Financial Framework, the possible introduction of the Nature fund, the 'Green claims' directive and others.

With regards to the discussion about the manifesto, the main points in the manifesto were clarified and specific points discussed between the organisations, common positions were formulated. It was decided that the demands in the manifesto would be split into three thematic sections – 1) Achievement of climate neutrality, 2) Environment and pollution reduction and 3) Nature conservation and restoration. In addition, there would also be overarching, horizontal priorities set, such as 1) Strengthening the tax policy that promotes the "polluter pays" principle - the transfer of the tax burden to services and goods that are more harmful to the climate, nature and environment, 2) Promotion of climate, nature and environmental policies that are based in science, 3) When implementing changes to solve climate, environmental and biodiversity crises, reduce inequality and support the most vulnerable groups of society as a priority, 4) Promotion of understanding in society about climate, nature and environmental challenges and the need to adapt, especially focusing on schools and student youth.

With regards to the discussion about the Green Barometer activities, it was decided that the “Green Grill” event and the evaluation of the party programmes/previous votes by MEPs will be done on a specific number of parties that have the highest chance of getting elected according to party popularity polls. The manifesto will be used as a reference point of the evaluations.

Evaluation of the event

Only one participant partly filled in the evaluation EU Survey after this event. Average score for all the numeric evaluations was 4.7. The other evaluations were also rather positive. It was marked that the organiser made sure that the participant group is diverse, that the perception of the participant is changed to some extent, that the participant is likely to react differently when confronted to the topic to some extent and that he/she will use what s/he learnt to some extent in the everyday life/work.

The Election Compass

The final version of the Green Barometer Manifesto was agreed upon by the NGOs and published on the 19 March 2024. It was then published also on the newly created election compass section in the Green Liberty’s website, available [here](#). The aim of the election compass section is to raise awareness about the importance to vote, highlight the priorities of the next EU cycle with regards to climate neutrality, environment and nature and inform about the various activities carried out by Green Liberty as part of the Green Barometer and the Citizen’s Observatory.

The election compass section includes well explained arguments on why it’s important to vote in the 2024 elections as well as the [translated version](#) of the [manifesto on the future of EU public finances](#), which was created in this project as part of another work package.

The election compass will serve as Green Liberty’s “one stop” location for all activities during the period until the European Parliament elections, which in Latvia will take place on the 8 June 2024.

The election compass was promoted through Green Liberty’s social media channels – Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. The website section has only just been published (was intended to be published once the Green Barometer Manifesto was ready), and the promotion has only just begun, but it will be continued until the elections through social media and other activities.

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