

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Participant:	6 - garagErasmus ASBL (garagErasmus)
PIC number:	899790140
Project name and acronym:	Ec(h)o-cultures — ECHOCULT

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	13
Event name:	EC(h)O-CULTURE MEANS EUROPEAN CULTURE!
Type:	Citizen debate
In situ/online:	in-situ
Location:	Belgium, Brussels
Date(s):	5 May 2025
Website(s) (if any):	
Participants	
Female:	27
Male:	14
Non-binary:	
From Belgium]:	16
From Italy:	8
From Spain:	4
From Ukraine	3
From France	2
From Portugal:	2
From Morocco:	1
From Greece:	1
From Iran:	1
From Romania:	1
From Czech Republic	1

From Country 11 [Poland]	1		
Total number of participants:	41	From total number of countries:	11

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

On May 5th 2025, garagErasmus ASBL launched the Europe Day celebrations with an apéritif citoyen, titled *EC(h)O-CULTURE MEANS EUROPEAN CULTURE!*. The event brought together over 40 participants for an open and engaging discussion focused on sustainability, the European Green Deal, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We began the event by introducing some of the key sustainability initiatives currently underway by the European Union. This provided participants with a shared understanding of the EU's ongoing efforts in tackling environmental challenges and ensured a common baseline of knowledge, despite the participants' diverse backgrounds.

As the conversation unfolded, attendees were encouraged to share their thoughts, experiences, and ideas in an informal and collaborative setting. To promote deeper dialogue, participants were divided into smaller groups. In these breakout sessions, many insightful and innovative ideas emerged. To ensure that all contributions were captured and made visible, the ideas were displayed on an "idea board", where participants used sticky notes to post their thoughts. This board created an interactive space where participants could engage with each other's proposals, discuss them further, and refine the ideas collectively.

The participants' contributions were organized into key points and collectively shaped a list of policy suggestions related to sustainability. These recommendations reflect a wide range of actions and proposals aimed at driving sustainability across Europe. Some of the most prominent suggestions included:

- **European Year of Sustainability:** Designate an upcoming year as the "European Year of Sustainability", focusing on promoting and linking sustainable practices across sectors and Member States.
- **Sustainability as a European Value:** Acknowledge sustainability, in its environmental, social, and economic dimensions, as a core value of the European Union, alongside democracy, the rule of law, and human rights.
- **EU Daily Sustainability Portal:** Create an official EU platform that offers practical, localized guidance on sustainable living, covering areas such as recycling, green mobility, sustainable consumption, and energy efficiency, customized to the specific needs of each country and region.
- **Environmental Citizenship in Schools:** Proposals were made for incorporating sustainability topics into the curricula of schools across Europe to ensure that the next generation is well-informed and motivated to act for the planet.
- **Waste Sorting Made Easy:** Many participants emphasized the importance of harmonizing waste collection and recycling systems across EU countries, highlighting that unification would help streamline operations and improve the overall effectiveness of waste reduction efforts.
- **Sustainable Campus Label:** There was strong support for creating eco-certification systems for universities, businesses, and other organizations to encourage sustainable practices and increase accountability.
- **Green Shopping Labels:** Participants recommended promoting green consumer choices and encouraging sustainable tourism practices to reduce environmental impacts by

introducing clear and easy-to-understand eco-labels on everyday products and providing tax reductions for consumers choosing sustainably produced goods.

- **Sustainability Ambassadors:** To raise awareness and engage young people in sustainability efforts, participants proposed the establishment of a network of young ambassadors in every EU member state who would promote eco-responsibility and sustainability practices in their communities.

garagErasmus compiled all these ideas into a document intended for Members of the European Parliament, in order to encourage stronger policies and greater citizen engagement in sustainability efforts.

After the event garagErasmus team collected some feedbacks from the participants, confirming its significative impact::

A.G.: "... Hearing diverse ideas on sustainability from people across Europe was both eye-opening and energizing. I gained new perspectives and even a few potential collaborators!"

M.F.: "The proposal for integrating environmental citizenship into school curricula was particularly inspiring. I'll try to integrate that idea into my school programme"

A.L.: "Events like this remind us that policymaking must be grounded in real conversations with citizens. The suggestions gathered during the event deserve serious attention from EU institutions."

J.M.: "The event was very impactful both for the content shared and for the networking opportunity with other participants."

M.S.: "This event made things clear and practical, with useful ideas and group discussions. The involvement of civil society groups also made the results feel more serious and trustworthy."

The participants were very engaged and took an active role throughout the event. People from different backgrounds shared their ideas openly and worked together with great enthusiasm. The group discussions and idea board helped everyone feel involved and part of a shared effort to find real solutions for a more sustainable Europe. This event also welcomed representatives from several civil society organizations, who actively contributed to the discussions. Their involvement reinforced the demand for increased citizen involvement in shaping sustainability policies and highlighted the role of grassroots movements in driving change. Their alignment with the recommendations strengthens the legitimacy of the outcomes and increases the likelihood of broader institutional support.