

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Participant:	Câmara Municipal de Vouzela
PIC number:	897501813
Project name and acronym:	Rural Alliance for Greater Democratic Participation - RurAll

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	6th
Event name:	Promotion Of Rural Youth In European Politics
Type:	Workshop
In situ/online:	[in-situ]
Location:	Cenon, France
Date(s):	11-14th June 2026
Participants	
Female:	32
Male:	22
Non-binary:	0
From country 1 [Bulgaria]:	2
From country 2 [Croatia]:	1
From country 3 [France]:	31
From country 4 [Greece]:	2
From country 5 [Hungary]:	2
From country 6 [Italy]:	1
From country 7 [Latvia]:	2
From country 8 [Lithuania]:	1
From country 9 [Malta]:	1
From country 10 [Poland]:	1
From country 11 [Portugal]:	5
From country 12 [Slovakia]:	1

From country 13 [Slovenia]:	2		
From country 14 [Spain]:	2		
Total number of participants:	54	From total number of countries:	14

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

From 11 to 14 June 2026, the sixth and final RurAll Network of Towns meeting was held in Cenon and Bordeaux, France, under the central theme “Promotion of Rural Youth in European Politics”, bringing together 54 local and international participants, with a gender-balanced composition of 22 men and 32 women.

The event gathered representatives of rural municipalities, civil society organisations, educational actors, local stakeholders and European partners within the framework of the CERV Programme, with the purpose of reflecting on the role of young people in democratic life, their political concerns, their influence on the future of Europe, and the importance of creating more inclusive, participatory and resilient rural and semi-rural communities.

The event gathered delegations from the RurAll partnership, including partners from Portugal, Hungary, Croatia, Bulgaria, Latvia, Malta, Lithuania, Poland, Greece, Slovenia, Italy, Slovakia and Spain, together with the host partner from France. The programme focused on youth political participation, the influence of young people on the future of Europe, and the importance of creating accessible democratic spaces where young citizens can express their concerns, contribute to public debate and participate actively in local and European decision-making processes

The main objectives of the meeting were to strengthen civic and political engagement among young people in rural areas, improve participants’ understanding of how European institutions and local authorities can support youth participation, exchange good practices on youth leadership and democratic innovation, promote inclusive community engagement through direct interaction with local citizens and institutions, and consolidate the transnational cooperation created throughout the six RurAll meetings.

The programme began on Thursday 11 June with the arrival of participants in Bordeaux, hotel check-in, a first meeting with the Cenon team at the hotel and the distribution of welcome materials. The day concluded with a welcome dinner at the hotel restaurant, which created a friendly and informal atmosphere for the delegations and allowed the first exchanges among partners after their arrival. This opening moment was important in reinforcing the sense of continuity from previous meetings and preparing participants for the final stage of the project.

On Friday 12 June, participants travelled from the hotel to Cenon, where they were officially received at the Municipality of Cenon. The institutional reception included a welcome speech by Jean-François Egron, Mayor of Cenon, followed by an intervention from Carlos Oliveira, Mayor of Vouzela. This moment gave visibility to the European dimension of the project and framed the day around the topic “The Influence of Young People on the Future of Europe.” The reception also allowed participants to better understand Cenon’s local context, its social diversity, its public policies and its commitment to inclusion, ecological transition, youth engagement and participatory democracy.

The programme then continued with visits to several municipal facilities in Cenon, including Estacade, a sports facility, the municipal swimming pool, and Utopia, a cultural cinema facility. These visits helped participants understand how public spaces can be used not only for leisure or service provision, but also as tools for social cohesion, community participation and youth development. Through these site visits, the delegations were able to observe how local infrastructure can support democratic life by creating accessible places where citizens, especially young people, can meet, participate, learn and feel part of the local community.

After lunch in Cenon, the afternoon focused on education and youth engagement. At Michelet School, the headteacher, Mr. Julien Delzon, and the project coordinator, Mr. Mathieu Bonnamy, presented the school’s European projects and its work with young people at local and European level. This session was particularly relevant because it connected the project’s political objectives with the everyday realities of education, mobility, intercultural learning and youth empowerment.

The day also included the conference “Youth Consultation – Understanding the Political Concerns of Young People in Rural Areas”, with contributions from Sarah Begarin Rodière and Pierre Lefort.

The discussion encouraged participants to reflect on the expectations, frustrations and priorities of young citizens, as well as on the need for local authorities and European institutions to listen more effectively to youth voices. The conference generated meaningful debate on how young people perceive

politics, what obstacles prevent them from participating, and what kinds of spaces, language and methods are needed to make democratic participation more accessible and attractive to them.

One of the most distinctive elements of the Cenon meeting was the integration of participants into local cultural life through the Cypressat Festival. During the evening, the European delegations were publicly acknowledged in front of a large local audience, giving visibility to the RurAll project, the participating municipalities and the European funding that supported the initiative. This moment strengthened the link between the international partnership and the host community, while also showing how cultural events can become spaces for European awareness, intercultural exchange and informal civic engagement.

On Saturday 13 June, the programme continued with the workshop “Leadership and Political Participation for Rural Youth”, held at Rocher de Palmer. This session was one of the core activities of the meeting, as each participating country presented a case study or successful initiative related to youth leadership, political participation, rural engagement or democratic inclusion. Contributions from local actors, including Dalinda and Patrick Duval, further enriched the discussion by connecting European reflections with concrete local experiences.

The afternoon included the final evaluation of the meeting. This evaluation session had a double purpose: to assess the quality and impact of the Cenon event itself and to reflect on the overall RurAll project after six international meetings. Participants discussed the knowledge acquired, the relationships created, the good practices identified and the possibilities for future cooperation.

On Sunday 14 June, the event ended with breakfast, hotel check-out, airport transfers and the departure of the delegations.

The evaluation of the event reflected a very positive level of satisfaction with the organisation, content, hospitality and overall structure of the meeting. Participants particularly valued the strong involvement of the Municipality of Cenon, the balance between institutional sessions, participatory workshops, cultural activities and informal networking, and the way the programme was closely connected to the local context.

The content of the event was also considered highly relevant. Participants appreciated the diversity of methodologies used throughout the programme, including conferences, presentations, site visits, good-practice exchanges and informal discussions. The workshop on youth leadership and political participation was identified as one of the strongest elements of the meeting, as it allowed all delegations to contribute actively and created a strong sense of shared ownership. The educational component at Michelet School was also valued because it showed how European cooperation can be integrated into youth work and education, while the visits to municipal facilities helped participants understand how local policies can support inclusion, participation and community cohesion.

Some difficulties were also identified, mainly related to the high temperatures during the event and the intensity of the programme. Participants noted that the working days were long, with early departures and late returns, and that future events could benefit from more time for rest, deeper reflection and informal exchange. However, these observations did not reduce the overall positive assessment of the meeting. On the contrary, participants recognised that the demanding rhythm reflected the ambition of the programme and the effort made by the host municipality to offer a rich and meaningful final event.

The event showed that youth participation cannot be reduced to formal political representation, but must be understood as a broader process involving education, access to public spaces, cultural inclusion, mobility opportunities, consultation mechanisms and trust between young people and institutions.

Overall, the sixth RurAll meeting in Cenon and Bordeaux successfully closed the project on a collaborative and forward-looking note. It strengthened the network created throughout the previous meetings, gave visibility to youth as a central pillar of European democratic life, and encouraged partners to continue working together beyond the official duration of the project. The conclusions of the event highlighted that the future of rural democracy in Europe depends on the active involvement of young people, the openness of institutions, the recognition of local diversity and the creation of long-term spaces for dialogue, cooperation and shared learning.

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