



# Deliverable D7.2

Report about EC rural workshops

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## Abstract

The objective of the Alliance *UNITA Universitas Montium* regarding the European Citizenship, which constitutes one of the axes of its action, is not limited to the communities of the respective Universities, especially their students. In this sense, the rural communities of the regions where the Universities that are part of the Alliance are located have a special role. These rural communities present some common elements, which characterize by extension the UNITA Alliance as a whole, and which present a special interest from the perspective of European Citizenship. Thus, it is about border regions, mountains and the southern part of the European construction project and with respect to them the purpose of the UNITA Alliance is twofold: on the one hand, deepening the knowledge of what the concept of European Citizenship represents, favouring the progressive consolidation of a European Identity, and on the other hand, receiving ideas and concerns from these communities in relation to possible lines of evolution that this concept of European Citizenship could follow to better respond to the concerns of regions such as those that make up the UNITA Alliance.

One of the main activities to achieve this objective is the development of workshops, which in some way transfer the experience of the online workshops developed in the respective Universities to rural settlements of the territories of each University of the UNITA Alliance. According to the provisions of the Project, this activity consisted of the Organization by each of the six member Universities of the Alliance of two workshops in rural locations. Those workshops were addressed, as has been pointed out, mainly to the populations of those rural settlements, but without neglecting other groups of people especially taken into account in the project as a whole, such as migrants or refugees. Likewise, the participation of students who had previously taken part in the online workshops was considered interesting, and encouraged, as a means of transferring the ideas developed in these workshops to the debate that could take place in those carried out in rural environments. And, in the same way, particular attention was paid to ensure gender balance among the people involved in these workshops.

This activity, included in the project with code 7.1.2, was developed by specialized teachers who put on the table approaches to European Citizenship of special interest to these rural communities. The twelve workshops carried out, two for each of the six UNITA Alliance Universities (Universities of Turin, Pau et des Pays de l'Adour, Savoie Mont Blanc, Beira Interior, West Timisoara and Zaragoza), were grouped into two rounds, the first extending from October 2021 to February 2022, and the second from November 2022 to May 2023.

This Report describes the activity carried out in these workshops, showing them ordered chronologically and grouped into the two rounds already indicated. The Report points out in a

summary way the programs of each of these workshops, mentioning both the topics and the specialists in charge of developing them, as well as the locations in which these workshops took place, the level of participation and, in those cases in which it was possible, the level of satisfaction of the participants with the content of the workshop and the suggestions raised by them. At the end of the report some images captured in the different workshops are included.

## Summary

1. 1<sup>st</sup> round of workshops (October 2021-February 2022)
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> round of workshops (November 2022-May 2023)
3. Satisfaction survey and answers of the participants
4. General conclusions
5. Annex: graphic testimony of the workshops

## 1. 1<sup>st</sup> turn of workshops (October 2021-February 2022)

The first workshop took place at the University of Pau et des Pays de l'Adour focused on the *Image and perception of European Citizenship*. This workshop took place the 21st and 28th October 2021 with 32 participants (migrants 6, rural community members 10, students 6 and administrative staff 10). The speakers from UPPA were Sabine Forero-Mendoza, Emilie Desconet, Meriem Mengi, Guillemine Taupiac-Nouvel, Emilie Destombes.

The workshop was developed in two phases:

### 1. Plenary session. European citizenship: origins, content, reality

A first phase served as an introduction to the theme with the main stages of the European project. The items presented were: Schuman Declaration, Maastricht Treaty, Charter of Fundamental Rights, European environmental policy... This phase allowed the transmission of basic notions on the concept of European Citizenship.

### 2. Focus Group with each group

Different questions were discussed. Among them:

*How can education strengthen European Citizenship?*

A lack of education at the EU during school (especially in secondary) was noticed: participants had very vague memories.

Concerning this point, different suggestions were made such as the "Civic and Moral Education" courses that could be an interesting framework to talk more about Europe.

It would be interesting to have a less academic/formal approach, but more focusing on:

- Mobility abroad for young people,
- European construction to show and understand the different reasons for the European project
- Focus and decryption of European news / European operations.

Other propositions for a better information and awareness of the European question were:

- internet seminars on European citizenship,
- better adaptation to the languages and communication channels, especially for young people (social networks such as twitch, tik tok).

*To what extent a real dialogue can be possible between citizens and European policies?*

According to the participants, this is far from being the case at present. EU citizens do not feel like they are informed about their rights, it should be put at the center of political decisions. For instance, during the European elections, there is a lack of information on the consequences of this

election. Consequently, citizens do not see the point in participating. One proposal that is done is, as for the legal meetings, to organize a sort of “European assise”: every 5 years, with a view to the European elections, drawing lots of citizens registered on the electoral lists to train them on the European question. Once trained, these citizens would have the task of relaying / raising awareness about the European election at the local level.

One observation that we have done concerning the European Citizens' Initiative: citizens do not know about this mechanism at all.

*What are the challenges for European Identity and Citizenship given the current tensions in Europe?* Nowadays, it is difficult to talk about European Identity because such identity refers to cultural and human considerations. The Member States, and above all, the citizens who inhabit them, are still far from feeling European because they first feel French, Italians, Germans, Portuguese, etc.

Different solutions emerged:

- Citizens should be explained the concept itself of European Citizenship (and therefore the rights and duties that flow from it), a legal concept that quite simply exists because affirmed in treaties.
- To strengthen European Citizenship, one way would be to create an educational process aimed at returning to the origins of the EU. This with the aim of identifying universal values which would be truly shared by all Member States.

While it is true that the European Parliament has supervisory power over the EU executive, it still lacks legislative power. The proposition of law should be a prerogative of the European Parliament.

The **second workshop** was held at the **University of Zaragoza**, on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021, entitled *The meaning of European identity and citizenship: an approach from rurality and migration*. With a total number of 34 participants, the workshop was held at the Polytechnic University School of La Almunia (EUPLA). This small municipality, whose economy is focused on the agricultural sector, in which a relevant migrant community works, was considered a suitable destination to host this initiative within the framework of the *UNITA Universitas Montium* Project. The objective of this workshop was to encourage the debate on the perception of European citizenship by members of rural and migrant communities, seeking ways to incorporate the vision of these groups in the construction of a European identity.

The activity began with an introductory presentation by Sergio Salinas, professor and Director of the UNITA Office at the University of Zaragoza, who exposed the *origin, content and development of European Citizenship*, focusing on its condition as an essential instrument for the progressive construction of a European Identity.

The second part consisted of a discussion table in which different speakers presented the approach to this concept of European citizenship, and its contribution, from the perspective of the different target groups of the activity, from representatives of rural and migrant communities to students

and civil society in general. The moderator of that table was Ángel Jiménez, professor at EUPLA and Dean of the College of Agricultural Engineers of Aragon, Navarra and the Basque Country.

The first speaker was Martín Orna, Director of the EUPLA, who focused on the importance that mobility has for European identity, both for students and migrants, highlighting the greater ease of integration in rural environments. Then Felipe Pétriz, former Rector of the University of Zaragoza and President of the Aragonese Council of the European Movement, stressed the fundamental role of European citizenship in strengthening a European identity.

The perspective of migrants was presented by Zita Chioreanu, Councillor for Social Action, Health and Education of the City Council of La Almunia, who, from her perspective as a Romanian citizen from a small location, located in a region, Transilvania, where people of different ethnicities live, and resident since 2000 in La Almunia, in which she is fully integrated, highlighted the role of European citizens to build an open Europe, in which everyone is welcome, and aligned with the values of peace, freedom, equality and respect for human rights.

The next speaker, Agustín Sánchez, Manager of the Association of Agricultural Entrepreneurs on the right bank of the Ebro River, highlighted the contribution of European citizens, and the free movement that it implies, for the economic progress of the agricultural industry in small municipalities, balancing the loss of local workforce with the incorporation of European workers.

The last speaker, Susana González, professor and Director of the EUPLA International Relations Office, returned to the importance of student mobility for a better understanding of European citizenship and the development of a European identity based on better mutual knowledge.

As a conclusion, a debate was developed with the intervention of both, those physically present at the workshop and the people who followed it online. The different participants highlighted the importance of this type of activities to improve the knowledge that the inhabitants of these areas have of these concepts and to be able to take advantage of the opportunities that are offered to them.

The **third workshop** took place at the **West University of Timișoara**, in partnership with the “Sf. Dimitrie” Technological High School from Teregova, Caraș-Severin County. The event was organized with the participants’ attendance on-site and in compliance with the rules of social distancing, at the “Sf. Dimitrie” Technological High School, in Teregova, Caraș-Severin County, on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

The event was organized in two sessions: workshop and focus-group, with the aim, on the one hand of popularizing the basic principles of European citizenship and the preliminary results of the UNITA project, and, on the other hand, of collecting, by means of a focus group, different perceptions of European identity and citizenship within a rural, mountain, cross-border, disadvantaged community.



### 1. Workshop (in rural areas) on the Significance of European Identity and Citizenship

This first activity was attended by a group of 23 people, namely: teachers, students, members of the civil society, from the “Sf. Dimitrie” Technological High School in Teregova, the Luncavița Secondary School, the Teregova City Hall, other members of the community, interested in the subject of the event.

In the opening of the event, the general framework of the UNITA Project and the activities specific to the work package were presented by the WP7 Coordinator - Dr. Ana-Cristina Nicolescu, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of the West University of Timișoara, and by Dr. Grațiela Noja, Associate Professor at the same faculty.

Dr. Corina Turșie, Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Political Science, Philosophy and Communication Sciences of the West University of Timișoara, presented the general principles of the EU citizenship and of the European/national/local cultural identity, as reflected in the preliminary results of an opinion poll using the questionnaire technique, as a quantitative working tool. The activity ended with a free discussion session among the participants, meant also to familiarize them with the topic of the next session, that of the focus group.

#### 1. Focus group: The impact of geography on belonging to the European space. The case of rural/mountain/cross-border areas.

Moderator: Senior Lecturer Maria Micle, PhD, Faculty of Political Science, Philosophy and Communication Sciences, West University of Timișoara

Rapporteur: Senior Lecturer Corina Turșie, PhD, Faculty of Political Science, Philosophy and Communication Sciences, West University of Timișoara

Target population: inhabitants of rural/mountain/cross-border area - the civil society

Considering the factual conditions to be met in establishing the target population, the event organizers chose the community from which the target audience for the focus group was selected, namely members of the rural community of Teregova, in Caraș-Severin County (located in southwestern Romania, in a mountain area - in the Timiș-Cerna Corridor, at the foot of Mount Semenic, cross-border - situated near the border between Romania and Serbia).

The target audience consisted of 16 people with the following factual characteristics:

- Age category: 18-25 years old (2 persons); 26-35 years old (3); 36-50 years old (4); 51-60 years old (4); 60-75 years old (3).
- Female (10); gender (6);
- Socio-professional categories: pupil (2), employee (8), retired (2), homemaker (4).

This distribution and fragmentation of the group ensured the adequate sampling of the population targeted by the research topic.

With 2 exceptions, the respondents have travelled outside Romania, either to work, to pursue professional projects or as tourists.

Interview guide - key questions included:

1. Can you tell us what image or memory comes to mind when you hear the phrase European identity /European citizenship?
2. How would you appreciate the fact that Romania is a member of the European Union?
3. Do you think that the secondary / tertiary education has contributed to the strengthening of your knowledge / your children's knowledge of European identity and citizenship? (In what way? Describe.)
4. Have you experienced living abroad for longer than a vacation (for instance, to study, to work...)?
5. Do you consider that the experience abroad has changed your perception of the relationship between you and the others, in the foreign country?
6. Do you consider that the experience abroad has changed your perception of the relationship between you and the others, when returning to Romania?
7. To what extent has your own cultural identity been influenced by Romania's accession to the EU?
8. To what extent has migration influenced and / or changed cultural practices in your community?
9. How are the Romanians seen by the inhabitants of the countries where you have been?
10. How do you see the inhabitants of the countries where you have lived or travelled?
11. What changes has Romania's accession to the EU brought to your community (advantages/disadvantages)?
12. In your opinion, has regional geography been an opportunity or an obstacle for the development of your community?

The focus group took place inside the "Sf. Dimitrie" Technological High School from Teregova, as provided within a previously concluded partnership agreement, the local authorities having contributed to the identification and invitation of the participants to the event.

The participants were placed in a circle, they were explained how a group interview is to be carried out, what is their role as target audience, the rules of conduct and interaction specific for such an activity. The familiarization of the group members with each other consisted in the participants introducing themselves, in pairs, considering that they were members of the same rural community

where everyone knew each other. However, this was a useful, interactive, and emotional moment, when the participants found out how they were perceived by their peers in the group.

The round of questions and answers was carried out in a relaxed atmosphere, generating authentic and interesting discussions.

As a conclusion it can be said that the community subject to research has been severely affected in the last 20 years by the phenomenon of international migration (the countries of destination of the migration flow being: Spain, Italy, France, Austria, Germany).

The local identity prevails (participants identifying themselves by the term “Teregovean”), but European Citizenship is also assumed. Participants (men in particular) are concerned about the disintegration of the traditional community and fear the loss of local identity over time; women appreciate as a positive and emancipatory effect the opportunity to travel and work abroad, due to Romania's membership in the EU, thus gaining autonomy within their families.

The whole discussion highlighted the role of school and education in exercising its primary function, that of communicating updated knowledge, but also of facilitating the assimilation of EU values - interculturality, tolerance, knowledge and acceptance of differences, nondiscrimination, environment protection-.

Through the European projects in which they were involved, the community members, both students and adults, had the opportunity to visit schools and communities outside Romania.

The geographic position of the locality is not considered a disadvantage: as part of the community's identity, it is rather seen from the perspective of the potential development of agritourism; on the other hand, respondents acknowledge that the lack of jobs in the locality and region forces the young and active population to migrate abroad or to urban areas.

The community is marked by massive social and cultural changes, intensified by Romania's membership in the EU.

The **fourth workshop** of this 1<sup>st</sup> round was held in the **University of Turin** on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2021 about *Cittadinanza europea, diritto alla salute e territorio: alcune esperienze a confronto* (European citizenship, right to health, and territory: comparing different experiences). The workshop was organized with the assistance of Europe Direct Cuneo, ASL 1 Cuneo, Consorzio socio-assistenziale cuneese and took place at Cuneo (Sala Giovanni). The number of participants was 77 (staff and organisers excluded).

The program of this workshop was the following:

– *Introduction* - prof. Francesco Costamagna (Università di Torino)

– *La lezione della pandemia: dal coordinamento europeo alla medicina territoriale* (The lesson of the pandemic: from European coordination to territorial medicine) - prof. Barbara Gagliardi (Università di Torino)

– *Gli ambulatori della salute come servizio di prossimità: una presa in carico innovativa* (Health clinics as a proximity service: an innovative management) - dr. Luigi Domenico Barbero (Direttore distretto ASL CN1); dr. Anna Maddalena Basso (DiPSa ASL CN1); dr. Veronica Perrone (IFeC)

– *Il progetto Incl Invecchiare Bene: una nuova opportunità per la presa in carico socio-sanitaria nelle valli cuneesi* (The Incl Aging Well project: a new opportunity for social and health care in the Cuneo valleys) - dr. Gabriele Ghigo (Direttore Distretto Cuneo ASL CN1); Sara Marchisio (Consorzio socio-assistenziale cuneese)

– *L'accessibilità alle cure e il ruolo dell'Infermieristica di Famiglia e di Comunità: il viaggio di UniTo dal Piemonte all'Europa e ritorno con il contributo dell'ASL CN1* (Accessibility to care and the role of Family and Community Nursing: UniTo's journey from Piedmont to Europe and back with the contribution of the CN1 ASL) - dr. Paola Obbia (Università di Torino, Presidente AIFeC)

Each panel was aimed at providing an insight on the main aspects of the projects that were implemented to improve the way the right to health and the access to the healthcare system are granted to the senior residents of the area of Cuneo - with a particular attention for the needs of the ones residing in the surrounding rural and inner areas.

Despite health being mainly a topic of regional competence, it is useful to keep in mind that

- the EU could have an (indirect) impact, in that it could provide valuable support in terms of financial assistance and general policies - especially in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and, subsequently, the newly established Next Generation EU Fund;
- similarly, valuable resources could derive from the PNRR, established at national level to revive the economy after the pandemic-related crisis.

Health being a fundamental right granted at all levels - though, as for Italy, the local level probably plays the most significant role - it is interesting to analyse the projects and plans that have been implemented in the city and surrounding areas of Cuneo.

Great attention is paid to senior citizens, and more specifically to those residing in inner and more secluded areas, as we can see by delving into the details of the CoSENSo and Invecchiare Bene - Piter Terres Monviso projects, implemented with the assistance of several local actors.

Local healthcare and social assistance services can provide extremely valuable resources for the addressees, thus representing a way in which the fundamental right to health can be safeguarded even further and in more challenging areas.

Other projects have been implemented in the Cuneese area over time, and the most successful ones have received positive feedback at EU level and have been introduced in other countries as well (e.g. family and community nurses in Portugal).

Objectives of event/activity:

1. Providing an outline of the legal context addressing the right to health and access to the healthcare system - a fundamental principle widely shared by EU Member States;
2. Illustrating some of the projects that have been implemented in order to promote new and more effective models of medical and social assistance for the senior residents of Cuneo and its rural surroundings (focus on the CoSENSo and Invecchiare Bene - Piter Terres Monviso projects);
3. Providing some insights on the ways the Cuneese model has been circulating, since the early 2000s, and has managed to receive positive feedback at EU level and in other EUMS;
4. Obtaining feedback regarding the level of overall satisfaction with the event and drawing conclusions.

To conclude, the overall feedback on the event was generally positive, meaning that the audience was satisfied with the seminar and its contents. Lower scores indicate that some aspects might be reconsidered, especially with regards to future activities.

The **fifth workshop** of this round was organized by the **University of Savoie Mont Blanc** on 4th December 2021. The workshop was focused on *What does being a European citizen mean?*, and its location was the Connected Campus, Faverges. The number of participants was 4 (the connected campus manager, a high school student, a customs employee, a high school headmaster, all inhabitants from the area where the workshop took place). 4 more participants should have joined the activity but did not because of bad weather condition or because of Covid. The workshop was moderated by Anne-Sophie Nardelli, associate professor in history (USMB), and Doriana Treta, PhD student in Law (USMB - Universidad de Zaragoza) and it was distributed in two sessions.

1st session. Plenary session. European citizenship: origins, content, reality

The first session was devoted to reflections and clarifications on the historical and legal dimensions of European citizenship. It started with an activity that featured practical cases, so that participants' perceptions of European citizenship can be collected and enquired. The case studies allowed to challenge preconceived ideas about European citizenship and the rights the European citizens enjoy.

The session ended with a presentation made by Anne-Sophie Nardelli on the history of the notion of European citizenship and with another one presented by Doriana Treta, PhD student, on European citizenship as legal concept. Both arose reactions and questions from the participants.

## 2nd session. Discussion about three major issues

- 1) Does living in a mountainous area increase or decrease the feeling of being a European citizen? Does living in a cross-border area increase or decrease the feeling of being a European citizen?
- 2) In the face of the current tensions in Europe, should the EU change and strengthen its identity? Should this identity be based on a strengthening of citizenship?
- 3) How can the specific problems of mountain territories be taken into account in European policies?

The **last workshop** of this first round took place at the **University of Beira Interior**, on 11th February 2022. The event was held at the auditorium of the ADERES - a local association located at Cortes do Meio (a village nearby Covilhã). The total number of participants was 32 (20 students, mainly from Political Science and International Relations, 10 citizens from the village and 2 professors).

The main objective of the event was to develop students' critical awareness of public policies and entrepreneurship in rural areas. One of the key aspects was to include a gender parity discussion.

The workshop was designed to allow the contribution of two academics, a businessman and a person responsible for third-sector institutions. The programme of the event was the following:

- Opening: Prof. José Pascoa and Prof. Bruno Costa, from UBI.
- *Políticas Públicas e empreendedorismo no interior* (Public policies and entrepreneurship in the interior). Prof. Doutor Luis Mota (Insituto Politecnico de Leira), Dr. Ricardo Miguel Fernandes (Administrator of A. Fernandes e Fernandes SA) and Dr. José Armando Serra dos Reis (Vice-President of the Covilha City Council).
- *Promover a igualdade no interior do país* (Promoting equality within the country). Prof. Doutora Catarina Sales (UBI) and Prof. Dra Graça Rojao (Chairman of the Board of Coolabora) with Dr. Vinícius Albernaz as moderator.
- Brainstorming-*criação de propostas para a melhoria da qualidade de vida no interior* (creation of proposals to improve the quality of life in the countryside).

## 2. 2<sup>nd</sup> turn of workshops (November 2022-May 2023)

The **first workshop** of the second round took place at the **University of Beira Interior**, on 17<sup>th</sup> November 26, 2022, having as the main objective to make it possible to get to know Serra da Estrela and the characteristics adjacent to the mountain's biodiversity. The initiative was prepared in coordination with those responsible for the sports department.

The event was held at the Serra da Estrela Mountain with 34 participants (30 students, mainly from Political Science and International Relations, and 4 professors).

The **workshop** of this second round corresponding the **University of Turin** was held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at the Palazzo ex Mater Amabilis, focused on the subject *Tutela della democrazia e dello Stato di diritto in Europa: quali strumenti e quale efficacia?* (The protection of Democracy and Rule of Law in Europe: which tools and how effective?). The workshop was organized with the assistance of Europe Direct Cuneo and the total number of participants was 42 (staff and organisers excluded).

The program of this workshop was the following:

- Introduction - prof. Alberto Miglio (Università di Torino)
- *Lo Stato costituzionale ed i suoi "pilastri": la necessità di un equilibrio* (The constitutional state and its "pillars": the need for a balance) - prof. Giorgio Sobrino (Università di Torino)
- *Protezione della democrazia e democrazie protette* (Protection of democracy and protected democracies) - prof. Fabio Longo (Università di Torino)
- *L'indebolimento della democrazia costituzionale nel contesto europeo* (The weakening of constitutional democracy in the European context) - dr.ssa Giulia Chinaglia (Università di Torino)
- *Gli strumenti di tutela dello stato di diritto nell'ordinamento dell'Unione europea: quale efficacia?* (The tools for protecting the rule of law in the European Union legal system: what effectiveness?) - prof. Francesco Costamagna (Università di Torino)

Each intervention focused on issues related to the needs and the tools liberal democracies both the national and the European level have to protect themselves from illiberal degeneration. After a brief presentation of Prof. Alberto Miglio, Prof. Giorgio Sobrino outlined the pillars of the Constitutional State as emerged from the War World II, which mainly rests on political direction and checks and balances.

Prof. Fabio Longo highlighted some constitutional arrangements useful to protect democratic systems from anti-systemic political parties that can pose problems in the democratic functioning. When the anti-democratic party is no longer a minority, the Constitution may provide useful means

of protection against tyrannic drifts of the majority and, ultimately, the fact that the State belongs to an international (political) alignment or supra-national organisations might be an external and additional protection.

Dott.ssa Giulia Chinaglia carried out a threefold analysis to show how an illiberal democracy impinges on the Constitution, the ordinary law and the separation of powers. She mostly focused on the illiberal drift occurring in Poland and Hungary.

In conclusion, Prof. Francesco Costamagna spelled out the tools available at the EU level to ensure the compliance with EU values (art. 2 TEU). After noticing the ineffectiveness of the mechanism under art. 7 TEU, he showed how much more powerful to the latter aim might be Regulation 2020/2092 on a general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget.

The main objectives of the workshop were:

1. Providing a thorough outline of the legal and economic tools available at national and European level to ensure the protection of democracy and Rule of Law;
2. Pointing out the illiberal drift occurring in some European States with particular focus on Poland and Hungary;
3. Showing the practical functioning of those instruments in concrete cases, when applied to member States of the EU;
4. Raising the awareness on the main features of illiberal democracies in the European context.

As a conclusion, it can be affirmed that the overall feedback on the event is generally positive, meaning that the audience was satisfied with the seminar and its contents. Lower scores indicate that some aspects might be reconsidered, especially with regards to future activities.

The **third workshop** of the second round was the one organized at the **University of Savoie Mont Blanc**, entitled Europe in the mountain areas, what for? This workshop took place on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023 located in the Connected Campus, Bourg-Saint-Maurice Les Arcs. The workshop was organized in close connection with Sylvain Cachat, the person in charge with the Connected Campus, and the municipality of Bourg-Saint-Maurice Les Arcs. The total number of participants was 25, belonging to different generations (students, people working in the villages and the ski resorts around, retired people) and nationalities (mainly French of course, but we had the pleasure to welcome a German citizen, a British citizen and a Ukrainian citizen).

The workshop was moderated by Anne-Sophie Nardelli, Associate Professor of History (USMB), and developed through discussions around these questions:



- 1) Welcome word and introduction: What is UNITA? Why are universities interested in European citizenship?
- 2) What does European citizenship allow? Discussion around some practical cases and the participants' representations.
- 3) Historical and present-day perspectives about the following issues: Does the fact that the Tarentaise valley is a border territory make your feeling of belonging to the EU easier? Do you know of any examples of European policies that have had an impact on your territory? Which could be the specific issues of mountainous border areas? What place is there for mountain areas in Europe? Which are the consequences of current tensions in Europe (for instance, Brexit) in your territory?

The global output of the workshop was very rich: the inhabitants showed their interest on debating on the opportunities offered by European citizenship and the specific problems of border mountain territories. As people living and working in areas that face huge challenges in the future (climate change, diversification of the activities in the ski resorts, access to higher education), the participants were quite well aware of the role that the EU plays in land use planning and development. Even though they called for greater consideration to be given to the specific issues of the border mountain territories (for instance, the possibility for mountain guides and ski instructors to work abroad), they felt also very concerned by the debates on what could be a European identity.

The **fourth workshop** of the second round was developed by the **West University of Timișoara**, in partnership with “Eftimie Murgu” Theoretical Highschool Bozovici, Caraș-Severin County. The workshop took place the 4th April 2023 focused on rural tourism and the promotion of tourism potential in the mountainous Banat in the context of European Citizenship and Identity. Its objectives were:

- to bring, in a creative way, to the attention of the participants the benefits and opportunities offered by tourism in the mountain Banat;
- to encourage its development in a sustainable and responsible way, respecting European values and principles.

With a total number of 33 participants, the workshop was developed by a team of 6 academic members of the UVT:

- Assoc. Prof. Corina Ilin, Faculty of Sociology and Psychology.
- Prof. Grațiela Noja, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration.
- Lecturer Corina Turșie, Faculty of Political Sciences, Philosophy and Communication Sciences.
- PhD student Denisa Ungurean, Unita Office UVT.
- Students ambassadors (UVT): Roxana Matei, UNITA Students Assembly.
- Ionel Flavius, Beneficiary of virtual & standard mobilities, UNITA.

In the opening of the event, the general framework of the UNITA Project and the activities specific to the work package were presented by Dr. Grațîela Noja, Professor at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of the West University of Timișoara. The students ambassadors (UVT): Roxana Matei, UNITA Students Assembly and Ionel Flavius, Beneficiary of virtual & standard mobilities, UNITA, shared insights into the benefits and challenges of participating in mobility programs (European financed). By sharing their experiences, the ambassadors inspired high-school students to engage in similar opportunities, foster a sense of community, and promote intercultural understanding within the UNITA alliance.

- Dr. Corina Turșie, Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Political Science, Philosophy and Communication Sciences of the West University of Timișoara moderated the practical activity:

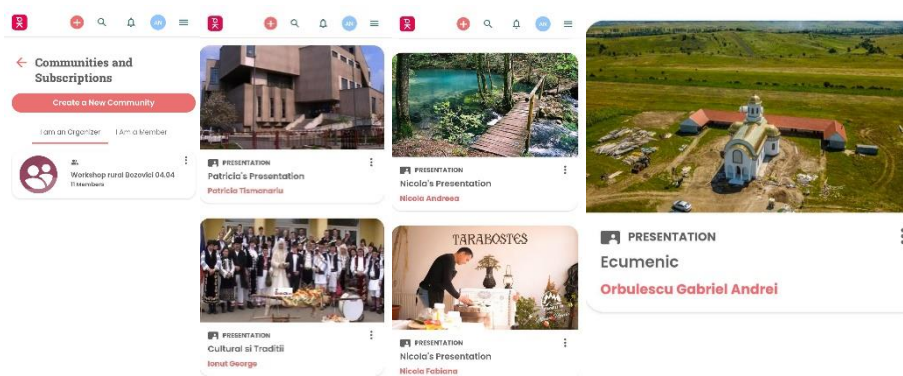
Topic: What do you think about the mountainous Banat?

The task was related to the personalization and promotion of a tourist attraction in the mountainous Banat. More precisely, the participants had to choose a type of tourism and find an objective to promote. The time was distributed in two phases: 25 minutes + 25 minutes of team work report. Each team was made up of a maximum of 5 participants who had to identify and assign the roles of moderator, speaker/s and timekeeper.

The goal was the promotion using Pecha Kucha mobile application 10 images x 20 seconds



Presentations (6) are available here:



In conclusion, the onsite workshop held in rural areas focusing on rural tourism and the promotion of tourism potential in the mountainous Banat region successfully addressed the importance of

European citizenship and identity. By bringing together stakeholders, academic experts, and local communities, the workshop facilitated knowledge exchange, collaboration, and capacity building.

This collective effort contributed to the development of sustainable tourism strategies, empowering local communities to capitalize on their unique cultural and natural resources while reinforcing a shared sense of European identity. Through such initiatives, the project supports regional development, enhances cultural understanding, and fosters a sense of belonging within the diverse European community.

The **fifth workshop** of this second round took place on the **University of Pau et des Pays de l'Adour** on 13rd April 2023 at the village of Louvie-Juzon in the Ossau Valley. The workshop was focused on the *Image and perception of European Citizenship in a rural contest*, and the total number of participants was 19.

The event was developed under the direction of Géraldine Larguier, Romane Thibaut, Olivier Bessy and Meriem Mengi from UPPA and its goal was discussing about the specificities of rural areas in the scope of European Citizenship. After a presentation of UNITA alliance, different questions were discussed, among them:

- How do you relate to the concept of European citizenship?
- Perception: how do you feel about being European?
- How would you describe the “Citizen in a rural area “?
- Living in rural areas: what are the particularities? Is it more difficult than elsewhere?

Three themes were identified:

#### Theme 1 – European identity in rural area

During the workshop, the participants discussed the feeling of belonging to the valley and to Europe, which can somehow appear distant. European identity, less perceived, does not cancel out local identity, but is superimposed on territorial anchoring. A debate followed on the European charter of regional languages: territorial anchoring must hold cultural characteristics.

The perception of European identity in rural areas can be complex and multifaceted, influenced by a range of social, cultural, and economic variables.

#### Theme 2 - Europe and sense of representativeness

The issue related to representativeness in the elections and, more specifically, in the European Parliament, was raised. In fact, the general feeling is that the representatives and the represented may not be as connected, or at least, not as strongly as they would like it to be. Participants expressed that the Parliament may be distant from their daily lives and concerns. Somehow, there is a search for a certain proximity-relation in the discourse of the participants.

### Theme 3 –Citizenship in the Ossau Valley, a perspective from rural woman

Such a character is playing a significant role in the definition of European Identity. Thus, it is important to consider this perspective. A collective portrait of the women of the valley has been sketched through a projective technique. Here are the main characteristics that were expressed: a leader, cultured, discreet, committed and proud to be from Ossau Valley.

Women living in rural areas may have access to traditional knowledge that can be beneficial for their empowerment (ie: know-how on specific resources). They may also have stronger connections to their communities, which can provide social support and opportunities for collective action.

The workshop finished in a very positive ambiance with formal and social exchanges. Participants were very satisfied and UNITA team was asked to organize a next workshop, in another rural area.

The **last workshop** was the one organized at the **University of Zaragoza**, on May 5, 2023 and held at the Higher Polytechnic School of the University of Zaragoza in Huesca. The activity consisted of a Round Table around the consideration of what it means to be a European citizen for the inhabitants of rural communities. The workshop was divided into two clearly differentiated parts. In the first one, the Director of the UNITA Office, Sergio Salinas, and, especially, the former Rector of the University of Zaragoza and current President of the Aragonese Council of the European Movement, Felipe Petriz, expressed the importance of European Citizenship both in relation to the rights that it implies as well as its role as a tool for consolidating a European identity, understood as a feeling of belonging to a political project based on principles and based on specific values without equivalent in other regions of the world.

In this first part, special attention was paid to the importance of initiatives such as the one represented by the Alliance *UNITA Universitas Montium*, which allow the link between universities to be extended to the territories in which they are located. Thus, UNITA can serve to create synergies

that make it possible to solve common problems in these territories, particularly in relation to their condition as territories in which the agricultural sector plays a central role.

The second part of the Round Table focused specifically on the impact that the European Union has had on the agricultural sector of the Member States, including the contribution that European Citizenship has represented in this regard, with advantages such as the free movement of workers of that sector.

This second part was developed by José Manuel Penella, Director of Rural Development of the Agricultural Union UAGA, and Lucía López, veterinarian and coordinator in Aragón of the NGO Justicia Alimentaria-VSF (Food Justice). The first speaker gave an account of the profound change generated by the European Union in the agricultural production model, leading to one that differs in quality and food safety from the rest of the world. Mr. Penella stressed that although this model poses difficulties for agricultural producers in the European Union, it represents a source of pride and a step forward that should be taken into account by consumers. They should become aware of what it means to have this production model and show a preference for local products in terms of consumption.

Ms. López warned of the risks for the agricultural sector resulting from climate change and the need to adapt to them. ~~and~~ She highlighted the role that the European Union can play in this regard through the Common Agricultural Policy. She also highlighted the need to strengthen the gender approach in the agricultural field, favoring women's access to the management of agricultural facilities as a means of fixing the population in those territories.

After the Round Table, a debate took place with the participants and it concluded with the satisfaction, expressed by the Director of the UNITA Office of the University of Zaragoza, that this activity has served to encourage the union of the educational and agricultural sectors as a driving force for progress of the development of the territory.

### 3. Satisfaction survey and answers of the participants

In some of the aforementioned workshops a feedback questionnaire was submitted to the participants. The most relevant results of these workshops are briefly presented below.

In the case of the workshops organized by the **West University of Timișoara**, some conclusions were drawn from the responses of the participants to the aforementioned questionnaires.

The participants in the first workshop held at this University submitted 17 questionnaires, distributed as follows: members of private and public entities (3), civil society (4), teaching staff (10). From the analysis of those questionnaires, most participants declared themselves very satisfied with the quality of the content provided and discussions carried out during the workshop, and the way in which it was organized. They found it educational and motivating, by the fact that it offered them new and useful information, the opportunity of discussions beneficial to the understanding of the concepts and manifestations of EU citizenship and, finally, a pleasant experience. The workshop made them realize once again that every person, regardless of their occupation, has their own role and is valuable for the community they belong to, through what they do or say, that every person is part of a whole, whether it is Teregova, Romania or Europe. The on-site organization of the event was also appreciated, given that the pandemic has limited such professional activities to the virtual space, with all the inherent gaps in terms of social interaction.

The number of questionnaires increased for the second workshop organized by this University, reaching 28. From the analysis of the information contained in them, it can be deduced that most participants declared themselves very satisfied with the quality of the content provided and discussions carried out during the workshop, and the way in which it was organized.

For its part, the **University of Turin** offered more precise data from the quantitative point of view regarding the information included in the questionnaires completed by the participants in both workshops. These questionnaires offered participants the following options:

1 - (very dissatisfied/ strongly disagree)

2 - (dissatisfied/ disagree)

3 - (quite dissatisfied/ quite disagree)

4 - (quite satisfied/ quite agree)

5 - (satisfied/ agree)

6 - (very satisfied/ strongly agree)

In accordance with these possibilities, the responses of the participants in the first workshop regarding their satisfaction with various aspects of its organization were:

- Venue: 6 (49,1%) - 5 (36,4%) - 4 (14,5%)
- Event organizers/staff: 6 (30,9%) - 5 (43,6%) - 4 (23,6%) - 3 (1,8%)
- Audio Visual Effectiveness: 6 (20%) - 5 (30,9%) - 4 (27,3%) - 3 (14,5%) - 2 (7,3)
- Length: 6 (36,4%) - 5 (36,4%) - 4 (23,6%) - 3 (3,6%)
- Content: 6 (10,9%) - 5 (38,2%) - 4 (40%) - 3 (9,1%) - 2 (1,8%)
- Presenters: 6 (30,9%) - 5 (40%) - 4 (23,6%) - 3 (5,5%)

And in this same sense, the questionnaires of the participants in the second workshop offered these results:

- Venue: 6 (65%) - 5 (25%) - 4 (10%)
- Event organizers/staff: 6 (75%) - 5 (25%)
- Audio Visual Effectiveness: 6 (50%) - 5 (50%)
- Length: 6 (75%) - 5 (25%)
- Content: 6 (100%)
- Presenters: 6 (100%)

For their part, the participants who responded to the questionnaires in the case of the **University of Savoie Mont Blanc** ranged their answers from “Satisfied” to “Very satisfied”. They were especially interested in getting knowledge and awareness about the European law and about the UNITA alliance.

The question of the observations made by the participants in the questionnaires was also of interest in those raised in the workshops held at the **University of Zaragoza**. By way of example, observations such as the existence of an information deficit regarding the rights resulting from European Citizenship or the need not to consider that European Citizenship has reached a point where its development is not necessary, can be noted. including an extension of the list of rights that it implies. On the basis of these statements, several participants highlighted the importance of events such as these workshops with respect to making adequate information available to European Citizens.

From a general perspective, the results offered by the information contained in the questionnaires are very positive. The perception of these questionnaires allows us to conclude that the objective of disseminating the concept of European Citizenship in rural areas has been fulfilled. The participants in the different workshops, both in their answers to the questionnaires and in the debates

held during them, expressed their greater knowledge about what European Citizenship implies for the inhabitants of regions with the characteristics of those that host Universities. of the UNITA Alliance.

On the other hand, the debates and papers developed during the workshops have made it possible to perceive the concerns and specific concerns of the inhabitants of those territories that could be reflected in a future evolution of European Citizenship, therefore also the second objective of the Alliance UNITA in relation to this activity can be sufficiently satisfied. Even the responses of the participants make it possible to identify issues to be considered with a view to the future development of activities with these objectives, more adapted to the needs of the inhabitants of those territories.



## 4. General conclusions

From what is indicated in this Report, it can be deduced that the activity to which it refers has satisfactorily fulfilled the proposed objectives, both in terms of the dissemination of the concept of European Citizenship, with its contribution to the consolidation of a European Identity, and regarding the collection of concerns of the inhabitants of border regions, mountains, Romance languages and the southern part of the European Union in relation to its future development.

Participation in the different workshops organized by the six Alliance Universities must be considered satisfactory, the almost 400 participants (396) are a relevant number, especially if factors that these regions present such as their low population density or the dispersal of its inhabitants.

On the other hand, the results offered by the questionnaires completed by these participants confirm this positive assessment and offer ideas for the design of future lines of action that allow further achievement of the objective of consolidating Citizenship and European Identity in regions of the characteristics of those that make up the territories of the Universities of the UNITA Alliance.

## 5. Annex: graphic testimony of the workshops

Below there are images of the brochures and posters for the dissemination of some of the workshops as well as photographs or screenshots taken during them.



Poster of the first workshop at UBI



### UNITA: WORKSHOP WP 7 - MESA REDONDA

**El Significado de la Identidad y de la Ciudadanía Europeas: Una Aproximación Desde la Ruralidad y la Migración**

**AULA MAGNA de la Escuela Universitaria Politécnica de La Alfranca (EUPLA), C/ Mayor nº 5, La Alfranca de Dorla Godina (Zaragoza)**

Jueves, 11 de noviembre de 2021, 12:45 - 14:30

Ponencia Marco: Prof. Sergio Salinas Alcega: Sentido y contenido de la ciudadanía europea. El proyecto UNITA como vía para la mejor comprensión de la ciudadanía europea

Componentes de la Mesa:

- Prof. D. Martín Orma Cammona: Director de la EUPLA
- Prof. D. Felipe Peritz Calvo: Exrector de la Universidad de Zaragoza y Presidente del Consejo Aragonés del Movimiento Europeo
- D<sup>a</sup>. Zita Chioresanu: Concejala de Acción Social, Salud y Educación del Ayuntamiento de La Alfranca de Dorla Godina y Vicepresidenta 2<sup>a</sup> de la Comarca de Valdejalón
- D. Agustín Sánchez: Gerente de la Asociación de Empresarios Agrícolas de la margen derecha del Ebro (AEAMDE)
- D<sup>a</sup>. Elisa Sanguin Pérez: Estudiante del Grado en Ing. Civil en la EUPLA

Moderador: Prof. D. Ángel Jiménez Jiménez: Profesor de la EUPLA y Decano del Colegio de Ingenieros Agrónomos de Aragón, Navarra y País Vasco.

La Mesa Redonda es presencial, pero en caso de no poder asistir, también podrá unirse por Meet: <https://meet.google.com/dlms-ynh-qyn>

Poster of the first workshop at UNIZAR



Poster of the second workshop at USMB



Poster of the second workshop UBI

## ALTO ARAGÓN

## Unita forja el sentimiento de ser ciudadano europeo dentro del medio rural

La Politécnica de Huesca acogió un debate de investigadores, miembros de Unizar y productores

**Nacho Prádanos**

HUESCA.- Qué supone para un ciudadano del medio rural ser europeo y pertenecer a la Unión Europea. Esta fue la reflexión inicial con la que partieron los ponentes Sergio Salinas, director de la oficina Unita, Felipe Pétriz, presidente del Consejo Aragonés del Movimiento Europeo, José Manuel Penella, responsable de Desarrollo Rural en Uaga, y Lucía López Marco, veterinaria y coordinadora en Aragón de la ONG Justicia Alimentaria-VSF. El encuentro tuvo lugar ayer en

la Escuela Politécnica de Huesca organizado por Unita, la alianza europea de universidades.

El antiguo rector de Unizar, Felipe Pétriz, abordó desde la educación la cohesión de los conceptos: ciudadanía, desarrollo rural y proyecto Unita. A través de actividades, participa con charlas en los centros para acercar la Unión Europea. "Tratamos todas las directrices que emanan de la UE e influyen en la vida cotidiana", sostuvo Pétriz, ya que estas alianzas institucionales crean a su vez "alianzas territoriales" que permiten superar crisis económicas, crisis sanitarias y guerras.

"La UE sigue siendo la gran desconocida", insistió Pétriz, que trata de cambiar eso desde las aulas argumentando que "si decidimos asociarnos entre univer-



Sergio Salinas, José Manuel Penella, Lucía López Marco y Felipe Pétriz este miércoles en la Escuela Politécnica de Huesca.

sidades, siendo cada una de un territorio que tiene problemas análogos, esta alianza saldrá reforzada y permitirá el desarrollo de las comunidades".

### Sector agrario

El debate giró entorno a la situación del medio rural enfocado al sector agrario y el cambio vivido gracias a la Unión Europea. Como responsable de Desarrollo Rural del sindicato agrario Uaga, José Manuel Pe-

nella, dio cuenta de la "profundidad" de los cambios. "Generar un modelo de producción que se diferencia en calidad y seguridad alimentaria con el resto del mundo está siendo difícil para los agricultores. La PAC y valores como el respeto al medio ambiente deben ser respetados por los consumidores", indicó Penella.

"El esfuerzo ha sido muy grande por mejorar la agricultura y facilitar el acceso a todo

el mundo a alimentos saludables, pero no se ha hecho tanto hincapié en la conciencia de los consumidores en consumir productos locales y valorar este trabajo. Todavía nos queda recorrido ahí", completó Lucía López Marco, veterinaria y coordinadora en Aragón de la ONG Justicia Alimentaria-VSF.

El clima está poniendo en violo a todos los agricultores, por ello, el sector apuesta por adaptarse. "El cambio climático ya está aquí. Uno de los cambios que trae la UE es ser productores de alimentos y gestores de las ayudas de la Política Agraria Común. Tener responsabilidad sobre nuestro entorno y nuestro producto", remarcó Penella, que ha insistido en que a la PAC le ha faltado ser "más valiente" en el modelo agrario familiar.

Finalmente, Sergio Salinas, catedrático de Derecho Internacional Público de Unizar y director de la oficina Unita, celebró que educación y sector primario unan sus caminos para "avanzar en el desarrollo del territorio". ●

### Mention in the press for the second workshops at UNIZAR

### Presentation made during the first workshop at UNIZAR



First workshop at UNIZAR





Second workshop at UPPA



Second workshop at USMB



Second workshop at UVT





Second workshop at UNIZAR