

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Participant:	6- Municipality of Genova-Italy
PIC number:	998295095
Project name and acronym:	Solidarity Across Towns — SOLIDARITOWN

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	10
Event name:	SOLIDARITY FOR ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
Type:	Cultural heritage learning ; policy dialogue; touristic, practice-transfer workshop ; cultural experience, role games
In situ/online:	In situ - Presential
Location:	Italy, Genova
Date(s):	12.03-15.03.2025
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.comune.genova.it/tutti-gli-argomenti/turismo/progetto-solidaritown-solidarity-across-towns https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Ydstw-Ovws https://www.facebook.com/goodmorninggenova/videos/ecco-solidartown-a-genova-il-meeting-internazionale-sulla-condivisione-delle-buo/1025267756188042/ https://www.linkedin.com/posts/convention-bureau-genova-3971a726-solidaritown-genova-2025-un-crocevia-per-activity-7305920037154877445-mpL9/?originalSubdomain=it
PARTECIPANTS	
Female:	33
Male:	26

Non-binary:	2	
From Romania:	2	
From Spain:	5	
From Poland:	2	
From Belgium	2	
From Slovenia	2	
From Ukraine	2	
From Italy	44	
From Portugal	2	
Total number of participants:	61	From total number of countries: 8

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

March 12–14, Genova became the meeting point for the sixth international meeting of the SOLIDARITOWN project, titled: WP6-SOLIDARITY FOR ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS).

Solidarity as an answer for critical time-International Meeting organized by the Municipality of Genova. The initiative held in Genova, organised by the Tourism Sector of the Municipality of Genova, promoted European cultural diversity and aimed to consolidate an itinerary of thematic tables and international conferences on civic engagement. From food and wine to sport, from eco-museums to European project networks, all seasoned with international partnership proposals for the City, the meeting highlighted numerous best practices and concrete ideas presented precisely in Genova, already the European Capital of Christmas, together with the other cities of the European Christmas Cities Network at the end of the three-day meeting held at Palazzo Tursi-Sala Giunta Nuova from 12 to 14 March.

A meeting of esteemed scientific value and a tourism proposal for the destination Genova that involved international representatives from half of Europe through panel discussions together with leading experts on cooperation, themes and EU funds and representatives of the Municipality of Genova to talk about solidarity, Inter cooperation tools and topics related to Sustainable Tourism and the Urban Agenda.

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS ATTENDING THE MEETING:

- Municipality of Genova (Italy).
- Christmas Cities Network Association and Ayuntamiento de Torrejón de Ardoz (Spain).
- Ayuntamiento de Medina de Rioseco (Spain).
- Asociatia Se Poate (Romania).
- Autokreacja Foundation (Poland) and Municipality of Gorlice (Poland).
- Association Edushakers (Belgium).
- Center Za Podjetnistvo in Turizem krsko (Slovenia)
- Associacao Educpro (Portugal)

- University of Lviv (Ukraine)

The activities that took place in Genova were:

- Debate with experts
- Role Game “Journalist for one day”
- Role Game “Critical friend”

1. Debate with experts (and participants) being the group leaders and invited guests about the future of democracy and technology in leadership.

- Presentations of examples of European Agenda Partnerships and discussions on the potential follow-up in the EU future policies.
- Analysing projects in Genoa about Sustainable Development Goals and Solidarity.
- Peer review of partner cities with the contribution of local social cooperatives that collaborate with the Municipality of Genoa on social and solidarity issues. Contribute of Valentina Giovine (Social Coperative “Il Cesto”) and Valentine Vagge (Social Coperative Agorà).
- **Analysing projects and strategies** in Genova about Sustainable Development Goals and Solidarity and doing a prepositive and constructive ideas exchange and peer review.

Over the course of two days, intercultural and solidarity dialogues highlighted the importance of strengthening communities and the bonds among their members, including those in positions of power. A shared conclusion emerged: sparking a significant change in mentality is essential and at the same time, poses a lot of challenges. To reach the goals of the Sustainable Development Goals across

Solidarity and truly achieve a genuine “social transition”, citizens must play an active role at every stage of the process.

2. Acting as a journalist, (Role game, “**Journalist for One Day**”) by groups, interacting with local citizens, interviewing them about Urban Agenda in Genova and Solidarity.

During the two days, it was possible to carry out the role-playing activity Role Game. as “**Journalist for One Day**”, which involved participants in a simulated journalistic experience. The exercise allowed them to develop skills in research, interviewing, and article writing, focusing on the theme of solidarity in Genoa and, in particular, on the international actions and collaborations promoted within the framework of the Solidaritown project, funded by the CERV Programme (Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values) of the European Union.

The activity contributed to fostering reflection on the values of active citizenship, European cooperation, and civic participation, encouraging a practical and participatory approach to learning.

The Solidaritown initiative promotes community engagement, social inclusion, and active citizenship across European cities. Genoa, as one of the participating municipalities, collaborates with various international partners—including civic organizations, youth associations, and local authorities from other EU countries—to exchange best practices and foster solidarity-based actions at the local level. This activity will simulate the process of covering such a story from a journalist’s perspective.

The purpose of this role-playing activity is to engage participants in a realistic journalistic investigation on the topic of solidarity in the city of Genoa, with a specific focus on international cooperation and partnerships developed under the Solidaritown project, funded by the European Union's CERV Programme. Participants will take on the role of a journalist for one day, conducting research, interviews, and writing a short report or feature article intended for publication in an international civic or social affairs outlet.

Assignment Description

Title of the Assignment: Solidarity in Genoa: International Partnerships within the Solidaritown CERV Programme

Role: Participant acts as a professional journalist assigned by a recognized international publication (e.g., Global Civic Voice, European Youth Post).

- Investigate the role of Genoa in the Solidaritown project.
- Explore how the city collaborates with international partners to promote solidarity.
- Conduct at least two simulated interviews:
 - One with a local project coordinator in Genoa.
 - One with an international partner organization (e.g., from Braga, Medina de Rioseco, Krsko or another EU city).
- Collect relevant quotes and insights about achievements, challenges, and community impact.
- Produce a 200–300-word journalistic article summarizing findings.

Methodology

Review the context of the Solidaritown CERV Programme.

Prepare interview questions related to international cooperation, civic engagement, and the meaning of solidarity in Genoa.

Role-Playing Interviews: conduct the simulated interviews (played by facilitators or peers). Take notes as a journalist in the field.

Writing Phase. draft a short feature or news article using information gathered.

Ensure journalistic standards: factual accuracy, objectivity, clarity, and human interest.

Presentation and Feedback: share the final article with the group or facilitator (acting as editor). Receive editorial feedback and suggestions for improvement.

Expected Outcomes. Development of journalistic and communication skills.

Increased understanding of European civic cooperation under the CERV Programme. Enhanced awareness of Solidarity practices in Genoa and partner cities. Production of a short, publishable news story on the Solidaritown initiative.

Evaluation Criteria. Quality and relevance of interview questions.

Depth of investigation and use of gathered information. Clarity, structure, and journalistic style of the final article. Demonstrated understanding of the topic and EU context.

3. Role Game “Critical friend” (Role game, “Critical friend”)

Role Game-Critical Friend analyzes projects and strategies in Genova about Sustainable Development Goals and Solidarity, doing a prospective and constructive ideas exchange and peer review.

In the context of international collaborations focused on social inclusion, solidarity, and participatory democracy, role-playing combined with the Critical Friend approach helps partners to:

- explore different cultural and social contexts;
- test and refine models of inclusion and cooperation;
- strengthen empathy towards marginalized groups) in particular co-create shared strategies for implementing sustainable development goals.

Genova is actively working towards achieving the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through various projects and strategies.

- The central focus of the activity was on participatory democracy and shared models of solidarity, (encouraging participants to reflect on how individuals and communities can actively contribute to decision-making processes)

- In addition, the game emphasized hospitality, social inclusion, accessibility, and integration, inviting players to examine practical ways to create more inclusive and equitable societies.

- By integrating role-playing and the Critical Friend method, partner organizations move beyond traditional meetings, creating dynamic spaces for dialogue, learning, and innovation.

- International Participants engaged in scenario-based role-playing, simulating real-world challenges and policy-making situations. By adopting different perspectives and negotiating solutions collaboratively, they gained firsthand experience of the complexities involved in fostering social cohesion and democratic engagement.

- A key objective of the game was to ensure that the lessons learned and strategies developed could be applied on a broader scale across the participating countries. Each nation's contribution, though small, collectively aimed to support social development initiatives and envision a future that transcends Europe, fostering international solidarity and global cooperation.

- Overall, "Critical Friends" served not only as a learning experience but also as a practical incubator for social innovation, where creativity, empathy, and civic responsibility were combined to generate actionable ideas for a more inclusive and participatory world.

WIDE DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES TAKEN PLACE

12/03/2025

The City of Genova, partner in the international Solidaritown project, showcased at Palazzo Tursi and on the city's tourist routes together with delegations from 7 European countries. The project, which has had the support of the lead partner ECCN Association, linked to the European Parliament, from the outset, aims to establish an itinerary of international conferences, to be held in each of the partner cities, in which young people from all over Europe will discuss civic commitment and the European values underlying the solidaristic and democratic union of peoples.

Arrival of participants from each partner delegation at the location in Genova,

Official welcome dinner at Palazzo Lomellino (**guided tour** by Massimo Ruggero, project manager Solidaritown Italy), networking among participants, **presentation of the schedule** for the next two days, and setting up other organizational details. Welcome Dinner at **Palazzo dei Rolli Palazzo Tobia Pallavicino** current headquarters of the Chamber of Commerce.

13/03/2025

Opening Solidaritown, greetings and welcome of Genova Municipality

"Solidaritown is a perspective of shared democracy as well as an opportunity to share active European design networks," says Massimo Ruggero- Solidaritown Programme Manager for Italy. But also, a further way to make Genova Best in Travel 2025 known to international guests as a fast-growing tourist destination'.

Through this project, the City of Genova is collaborating with organisations from the City of Torrejón de Ardoz, National Polytechnic University of Lviv (Ukraine), Krsko Centre for Entrepreneurship and Tourism (Slovenia), City of Bucharest and the Se Poate Association (Romania), City of Gorlice and the Autokreakja Foundation (Poland), City of Seia and Educpro of Braga (Portugal), City of Louven and the Educshakers Association (Belgium). A dense network of public and private institutions and actors to consolidate the European CERV Programme (Citizenship, Equality, Rights and Values) of which Solidaritown is a part, aimed among other things at the creation of a permanent network of cities and institutions able to dialogue and plan actions for the social development of territories and communities. "We wanted to tell the story of our city," concluded Massimo Ruggero, "in order to teach and share with some European countries our concrete model of sustainable and solidarity-based development, so that it can be declined in a broader and more complex context for our Europe as well.

Panel Expert. Technical table at Sala Giunta Nuova of Palazzo Tursi (2 hrs)

Format and method: 20 min opening input per speakers; moderated questions on (i) campus to city link (ii), partner participation (iii) data/KPIs for local solution; audience Q&A.

During the round table on "**Destination Genoa 2025: a crossroads for the future and Europe**", we talked about the role of our city as an increasingly international destination, awarded the prestigious "**Best in Travel 2025**" award.

Speech by the Convention Bureau of Genoa, which highlighted the opportunities offered by the MICE sector, internationalization, and conference tourism for the city's development.

Meeting with the guide at the entrance of Palazzo Tursi and departure of the Tour in EN language "La Genova Verticale"

13.30: Lunch at Palazzo Imperiale (Palazzo dei Rolli), Medieval experience.

Departure of the guided tour in EN language (3 hrs): "The Historic Center: from the cathedral of San Lorenzo to the Diocesan Museum"

During the guided tour (1.30 hrs) **Role Game- Journalist for one day** with Social Team/Municipality of Genoa-Piazza San Lorenzo.

Historically, Genoa has a strong tradition of solidarity, particularly in the context of its medieval merchant families, such as the Lomellini. These families developed complex network systems and solidarity-based relationships that enabled them to thrive in trade and commerce. The Lomellini family's story showcases the importance of family ties, mutual support, and collective action in achieving economic and social success.

In modern times, solidarity continues to be a vital concept in Genoa, particularly in initiatives promoting agroecology and local food systems. Organizations like

URGENCI, an international network of Local Solidarity-based Partnerships for Agroecology, emphasize the importance of solidarity in building trust-based relationships between producers and consumers. This approach prioritizes mutual support, fair prices, and sustainable agriculture practices.

While I couldn't find direct references to the Urban Agenda's impact on Genoese citizens' perception of solidarity, it's likely that local initiatives and community programs play a significant role in shaping their understanding of these concepts.

Some Key Aspects certainly emerged from the interviews carried out by representatives of the partner cities with citizens of Solidarity in Genoa:

- **Historical Roots:** Medieval merchant families like the Lomellini demonstrate the importance of solidarity in achieving economic and social success.
- **Agroecology Initiatives:** Organizations like URGENCI promote solidarity-based partnerships between producers and consumers, prioritizing mutual support and sustainable agriculture practices.
- **Community Engagement:** Local initiatives and community programs likely play a significant role in shaping Genoese citizens' understanding of solidarity and its relevance to urban development and regeneration projects. Here are some key aspects that emerged and were reworked from the interviews:
 - **Urban Regeneration Projects:** Renzo Piano's Waterfront di Levante project aims to transform Genoa's seafront into a vibrant urban district, promoting socializing and community interaction through mixed-use development, public spaces, and waterfront promenades.
 - **Community Engagement:** The city of Genoa fosters stakeholder engagement and co-ownership in developing its resilience strategy, involving local politicians, multi-sectoral representatives, SMEs, and research institutions.
 - **Grassroots Solidarity:** Initiatives like the Refinteg project conference on refugee intake and solidarity practices demonstrate Genoa's commitment to exploring and promoting solidarity in urban development.
 - **Sustainable Urban Development:** Genoa's strategy for sustainable urban development includes concrete actions on environmental sustainability, climate change mitigation, and improving quality of life through a holistic and inclusive approach.

Key Elements of Genoa's Urban Development Strategy:

- **Grey Asset:** Innovative infrastructure development and efficient use of existing infrastructure
 - **Green Asset:** Urban regeneration, climate change adaptation, and sustainable development
 - **Soft Asset:** Economic and social impacts on communities and businesses, focusing on vulnerability analysis, cost-benefit analysis, and resilient communities
- Genoa's approach to urban development prioritizes community engagement, sustainability, and solidarity, aiming to create a more resilient and inclusive city.

14/03/2025

European solidarity, cooperation and planning, between different communities, was the leitmotif of the WP6 Genova Solidaritown Italia meeting, which promoted the Sustainable Development Goals across the continent with the aim of setting up a network to help people who are victims of all forms of discrimination, marginalisation and social marginalisation in Europe and the rest of the world.

Precisely in this sense, the international project presented in Genova does not intend to celebrate diversity and solidarity only at particular times of the year, but to address the current challenges in Europe, from war and political conflicts to the increasingly widespread problems hindering social development, such as integration, immigration empowerment and accessibility, while encouraging

collaboration between cities and the active participation of citizens in the promotion of peace, justice and social inclusion.

New areas of cooperation for Genova with Slovenia (wine and food tourism-cultural itineraries), Spain, Belgium, Portugal, Poland, Romania and Ukraine for the development of territorial enhancement routes (rural and eco-museum for the urban and metropolitan area) and a route of scientific best practices applied to tourism and cultural heritage to be developed with the cities of Barga, Lviv, Madrid and Valladolid. All with a focus on solidarity actions as vehicles for promoting positive values.

These are the main project ideas presented by the Tourism Department of the City of Genova at the WP6 CERV Solidaritown International Congress, which took place in Genova from 12 to 14 March. The Ligurian capital represented Italy at an important meeting on multiculturalism and solidarity in tourism in Europe, which was attended by a total of eight countries from the old continent.

A stimulating shared pathway that places the participating countries at a constant working table to plan international paths and opportunities for the promotion, protection and valorisation of our heritages, declined through new tourist and cultural opportunities, with particular attention to the different Christmas traditions for which Genova had already obtained, in 2022, the award of European Capital of Christmas. But also an opportunity for young people from all over Europe to discuss the civic commitment and European values behind the celebration of Christmas as a moment of celebration, sharing and celebration of the founding values of solidarity and multiculturalism.

Project ideas, operational hints and best practices At several tables, themes requested by the EU for the creation of shared strategies were addressed, aimed at analysing possible new tools for the implementation and monitoring of best practices for the social and cultural development of cities and communities in general.

Expert Panels- municipal, university and volunteering associations, no profit organizations. Topics:

-Solidarity for achieving Sustainable Development Goals. Analysing projects in Genova about Sustainable Development Goals and Solidarity

-The European framework: relations between European Agenda Partnerships and Sustainable Development Goals". Presentations of examples of European Agenda Partnerships and discussions on the potential follow-up in the EU future policies.

Format and method: 15 min opening input per speakers; moderated questions on (i) campus to city link (ii), partner participation (iii) data/KPIs for local solution; audience Q&A

From cooperative proposals to support the most fragile people with Agorà and Il Cesto, to recognised international models of cooperation strategies for citizenship declined between Sustainable Tourism and International Relations by Director Sandra Torre, Massimo Ruggero and Gianluca Saba representing the Municipality of Genova. There was also no lack of articulated topics related to Framework Programmes discussed and analysed by international experts.

From the best practices of the night declined by Simone D'Antonio to the fundraising experiences of the City of Milan with the presence of Marco Mazziotti. In particular the debate about the future of democracy and technology in leadership revolves around the European Union's pursuit of "tech sovereignty" and its potential impact on democratic practices.

Key Concerns during round table:

- Digital Technology's Impact on Democracy: Digital technologies have negatively impacted democracy, enabling authoritarian dynamics, undermining accountability, and boosting surveillance powers.
- Role of Big Tech Companies: Large tech companies have significant influence over digital spheres, often prioritizing profits over democratic values and citizen participation.
- EU's Regulatory Approach: The EU's regulatory framework, including the Digital Services Act and Digital Markets Act, aims to limit tech companies' harm but may not directly promote democratic practices.

Proposed Solutions/objective:

- Compare institutional roles in solidarity management at city, campus and community levels.
 - Surface collaboration opportunities and constraints (governance, finance, volunteering and engagement) for achieving sustainable development goals.
 - Highlights discussion themes.
 - Enabling regulations, procurement, and partnerships for scale up.
- Tech Citizenship Strategy: Implementing a tech citizenship strategy that promotes citizen engagement, democratic innovation, and accountability.
 - Digital Democracy Initiatives: Supporting initiatives that use technology to enhance democratic participation, such as citizen assemblies and e-governance mechanisms.
 - Public-Interest Technology: Developing public-interest technology that prioritizes democratic values and citizen influence over state and corporate interests.

Conclusions/ Challenges and Opportunities:

Some experts argue that the EU's focus on regulating big tech companies and promoting European digital infrastructure is necessary but insufficient for democratic renewal.

Balancing Competitiveness and Democracy: Finding a balance between promoting European competitiveness and ensuring democratic values in technology policy.

Citizen Participation: Encouraging active citizen participation in technology development and policy-making to ensure democratic renewal.

Rethinking Democracy: Adapting democratic institutions, practices, and ideologies to the digital era and technological advancements.

Completing the thematic tables in the composite scientific proposal coordinated by Massimo Ruggero are the themes of cultural enhancement and related tourism tools with important project ideas that have emerged from the numerous experiences the City has made available to international delegations by involving countries in guided thematic tours that have learnt about the city's main themes. From the cultural and historical offer of 19th century museums, palaces and villas, to the enjoyment of the historic centre and its workshops, to tours of vertical Genova, to the heady and fragrant sensations of the Pesto Experience held at the MOG.

Ideas and operational ideas will then be shared in various areas by local and international representatives, from which possible cooperation project areas for the realisation of territorial valorisation paths (rural and ecomuseum for the urban and metropolitan area) and numerous scientific best practice paths applied to tourism and cultural heritage to be developed together with the Municipalities and Universities of the Cities of Krsko, Braga, Lviv, Leuven, Gorlice, Bucharest, Madrid, Medina de Rioseco and Valladolid.

These projects can be modulated on the basis of other possible international memberships with the representations of other countries that may feed the European solidarity network from time to time.

Finally, making this international stage in Genova concretely proactive were the role-playing actions carried out by the international delegations in the midst of citizenship with interviews and role-plays on the themes of participatory democracy and shared models of solidarity, reception, social inclusion, accessibility and integration to be applied on a large scale in the participating countries as a small contribution of each country to the cause of social development, for a greater future of Europe.

A new important stage in the construction of a path of European best practices in which Genova was once again a leading player.

At the end of the round tables, involvement of those present with the "**critical friends**" **Role-Game** to analyze projects and strategies in Genova about Sustainable Development Goals and Solidarity, doing a prospective and constructive ideas exchange and peer review. Genova is actively working towards achieving the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through various projects and strategies. Here are some notable initiatives:

The following projects were cited:

- *Genova Global Goals Award*: This award, established by the Genoa City Council and the Department for Economic Development, recognizes local businesses that contribute to sustainable development and the SDGs. The award is divided into five challenges, known as the "5Ps" of sustainable development: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership.
- *HomelessZero project*: Aimed at ending extreme poverty, this project demonstrates Genova's commitment to SDG 1 (No Poverty).
- *Solidarity Emporium*: This initiative provides food and basic necessities to families in difficult economic situations, aligning with SDG 2 (Zero Hunger).
- *Urban reforestation*: Genova has planted 16,000 trees and created new urban gardens, supporting SDG 15 (Life on Land).
- *SECAP (Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan)*: Genova aims to reduce CO2 emissions by 40% by 2030, contributing to SDG 13 (Climate Action).

Strategies:

- **ACTION PLAN GENOVA 2050**: This plan focuses on building a sustainable and resilient city, with the Economic Development Department and Resilience & EU Project Office working together to achieve the SDGs.
- **Liguria 2030**: A multistakeholder table promoting the UN 2030 Agenda and encouraging partnerships to achieve the SDGs.
- **Education and awareness**: Initiatives like the Centre for Environmental Education and anti-violence centers support SDGs 4 (Quality Education) and 5 (Gender Equality).

In the late afternoon (3 hrs) experience at the Solidarity workshops of Genoa and immersive experiences inside the Palazzi dei Rolli, a UNESCO heritage site and the historic workshops.

Historical heritage plays a significant role in promoting solidarity and democracy by preserving collective memory: historical heritage sites and artifacts serve as

tangible connections to the past, allowing communities to reflect on their shared experiences and values.

- Fostering identity and belonging: Historical heritage can strengthen community bonds and promote a sense of belonging among citizens, which is essential for building solidarity.
- Promoting democratic values: Historical heritage can serve as a reminder of the struggles and achievements of past generations in promoting democracy, human rights, and social justice.
- Encouraging civic engagement: By preserving and celebrating historical heritage, communities can encourage citizens to engage with their history, culture, and democratic processes.
- Supporting education and awareness: Historical heritage can be used as a tool for educating citizens about the importance of democracy, human rights, and social solidarity.

Examples:

- Memorials, museums and sites are powerful reminders of the importance of human rights and democracy.
- Cultural festivals and events: Community festivals and events can celebrate historical heritage and promote solidarity among citizens.
- Historic preservation: Efforts to preserve historic buildings and sites can help maintain community identity and promote a sense of shared history.

By preserving and celebrating historical heritage, communities can promote solidarity, democracy, and civic engagement, ultimately contributing to a more just and equitable society.

15/03/2025

Departure of participants