

**The REcup Project, under the European program CERV-2022-CITIZENS-TOWN, hosted its Study Experts Meeting titled “Unemployed Citizens Participate Actively in European Policy Formation” from March 6 to 8, 2024, in Soriano nel Cimino, Italy.**

The REcup Study Experts Meeting, held from March 6 to 8, 2024, in Soriano nel Cimino, Italy, brought together unemployed citizens, stakeholders, and experts to discuss ways to enhance civic participation and democratic engagement for those facing barriers to employment. Organized under the REcup Project, the event aimed to explore strategies for integrating unemployed citizens into European policy-making while fostering collaboration between local institutions, trade unions, chambers of commerce, and educational organizations.

The event began with the arrival and welcome of participants at the Town Hall, where local officials introduced the objectives of the meeting. The first day provided a cultural context through a visit to the historic Orsini Castle, allowing attendees to engage in informal networking while learning about the region’s heritage.

The second day opened with a workshop on the civic and democratic participation of unemployed citizens. Representatives from the participating organizations—coming from Romania, Malta, Greece, Croatia, Slovenia, and Spain—shared insights on best practices, policy frameworks, and successful initiatives that empower unemployed individuals to engage in civic life. The discussions focused on barriers to participation, lack of institutional representation, and the role of local authorities in fostering active citizenship. Participants exchanged ideas on enhancing digital literacy, developing advocacy skills, and promoting community engagement among unemployed citizens.

Following a networking coffee break, the workshop continued with further exploration of the policy measures needed to bridge the gap between unemployment and active participation. Discussions emphasized the importance of public-private partnerships, access to training programs, and the role of civic education in empowering unemployed citizens to contribute to the decision-making process.

In the afternoon, local stakeholders and experts joined the group for a roundtable discussion, where debates focused on employment policies, social inclusion strategies, and initiatives that promote democratic engagement for marginalized groups. Experts highlighted the role of municipalities, labor unions, and NGOs in ensuring that unemployed citizens are not excluded from civic participation. Case studies from different regions provided valuable insights into successful employment reintegration programs and grassroots movements advocating for social change.

On the final day, participants explored Soriano nel Cimino’s historical and cultural sites, reinforcing the connection between heritage, civic identity, and active participation. The event concluded with a final discussion and evaluation session, where participants reflected on key takeaways and next steps. The meeting provided a strong foundation for further collaboration, ensuring that unemployed citizens have a more active role in shaping policies that affect their future.

