EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

(To be filled in and uploaded as deliverable in the Portal Grant Management System, at the due date foreseen in the system.

⚠ *Please provide one sheet per event (one event = one workpackage = one lump sum).)*

PROJECT	
Participant:	3 – Women's Center of Karditsa – WCK
PIC number:	913926144
Project name and acronym:	Cities 4 ELLA: Empowerment, Liberty, Leadership and Awareness for women survivors of GBV — ELLA

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	WP7 / D7.1
Event name:	Field visit Greece
Type:	Field visit
In situ/online:	In situ
Location:	Greece/ Karditsa
Date(s):	28-29 September 2026
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.wck.gr/ https://www.wck.gr/event-item/cities-4-ella-empowerment-liberty-leadership-and-awareness-for-women-survivors-of-gbv-ella/ https://www.wck.gr/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/D7.1_EDS-Field-visit-Karditsa-Greece.pdf
Participants	
Female:	47
Male:	12
Non-binary:	1
From country 1 ITALY:	8
From country 2 GERMANY:	4
From country 3 SPAIN:	4

From country 4 FRANCE	5		
From country 5 GREECE	39		
Total number of participants:	60	From total number of countries:	5

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

On 28-29 September 2026, 60 participants from all the 5 cities and partners involved in the ELLA project came to Karditsa for the first field visit of the project.
English/Greek translation was available to support exchange among participants.
The Terms of Reference for this event were developed by Women's Center of Karditsa (WCK) and then presented, discussed and validated during the second meeting of the Scientific Committee of the ELLA project, which took place online on 16 July 2026.
As per the TORs, the **field visit aimed** to:

- Deepen understanding of the Karditsa's multi-stakeholder ecosystem addressing the socio-economic empowerment and labour inclusion of women survivors of GBV
- To highlight the importance of collaboration among various stakeholders
- Explore adaptation of Karditsa's ECOSYSTEM approaches to other cities
- Facilitate peer learning and exchange among European stakeholders

The specific objectives of the field visit were:

a. Ecosystem Mapping

- Identify the specific local actors that form the regional safety net.
- Analyze the specific referral pathways, legal protections, and economic opportunities currently provided to survivors of GBV in Karditsa

b. Economic Empowerment & Labour Market Inclusion

- Present the local service models to act as a benchmark for other organizations offering insights into best practices and operational efficiencies
- Present the operational effective dynamics between different stakeholders

c. Academic & Evidence-Based Frameworks

- Define specialized training needs for local civil servants, bank staff, and union representatives to GBV issues
- use tools been created by the University of Thessaly, partner of WCK

d. Transnational Knowledge Transfer

- Explore the option of the adaptation of the "Karditsa's Model" to effectively support the integration of the women GBV survivors into the Labour market, to other European cities.
- Enable the visiting European partners to enrich the local Greek ecosystem

Here below are the **summarised minutes** of the field visit:
In the frame of the Cities 4ELLA project—implemented by ActionAid Italy, Women's Center of Karditsa, Municipality of Milan, Equipop (France), Fundación Salud y Comunidad (Spain), and Terre des Femmes (Germany)—a two-day field visit took place in Karditsa on September 28 and 29, 2026. The visit aimed to foster mutual learning and the exchange of experiences among project partners, the network of local organizations in Karditsa—specifically regarding support for women survivors of gender-based violence and their integration into the labour market—and collaborating entities.

On the 1st day, participants were welcomed by the Mayor of Karditsa, Mr. Vasileios Tsiakos, the President of the Board of Directors of KGK, Ms. Evangelia Xydia, the Vice-President of the Board of Directors of KGK, Ms. Olga Makri; and Ms. Benedetta Balmaverde from ActionAid Italy. During the opening session, the objectives of the visit were presented, and members of the Cities 4ELLA project consortium were given the opportunity to outline the progress made in their respective countries.

The presence of the General Secretary for Gender Equality and Human Rights, a Governmental Executive, Ms. Katerina Patsogianni—who traveled from Athens specifically for the field visit—was very significant. In Greece the highest level of Governance for Equality and Gender Based/ Domestic violence issues, is the General Secretariat for Gender Equality and Human Rights. Ms. Patsogianni presented the support and empowerment counseling initiatives for women victims and survivors of domestic violence implemented nationwide through the Secretariat's network of structures, AVCs and Shelters, the national action plan to combat violence against women, and existing collaborations and networks among various ministries and organizations.
The Delegations of the project partners, had the opportunity to present in brief, actions implemented till from the beginning of the project, till nowadays.
Subsequently, the floor was given to the representatives of the local ecosystem, as well as to collaborating organizations from outside the prefecture of Karditsa. Representatives presented their organizations and discussed their modes of cooperation with the Women's Center of Karditsa, highlighting their shared view and common goal: the empowerment of women who are victims or survivors of domestic or gender-based violence, and the support of their access to and integration into the labor market.

Presenters were from:

- AVC of WCK, Legal Counselor
- Social Welfare Department of the Municipality of Karditsa, Social Worker
- General Hospital Karditsa, Social Worker
- Cooperative Bank of Karditsa, CEO/ President of FEBEA
- AN.KA. S.A, General Manager
- University of Thessaly, EU Expert Evaluator – European Programmes Coordinator, Managing Director of the Centre for European Programmes,
- DYPA Karditsa, Director of Higher Vocational Training Institutions (SAEK) of the DYPA
- Trade Union of Karditsa, General Secretary
- Directorate of Karditsa Police, Police Officer/ Head of the Domestic Violence Response Office

Through the presentations, participants were able to gain an understanding of the history of the Karditsa cooperation model, the current protocols and methodologies between the organizations, as well as the main challenges that needed to be addressed. At the same time, the presentations and discussion highlighted the prospect of extending the network to areas and municipalities with limited access to the city of Karditsa. During the morning session, participants discussed key issues and queries relating to Karditsa's local "ecosystem", exchanged best practices and explored the possibility of transferring and adapting them to different contexts. Emphasis was placed on the intersectional barriers affecting women survivors' access to support services, as well as on the need to organize and operate multi-sectoral, interdisciplinary networks.
The afternoon meeting of the partners focused on two areas: the creation of thematic networks for the socio-economic integration of women into the labor market, and how a bank ('ethical bank') can contribute to the smooth integration of women who are survivors of gender-based violence into the labor market.
At the first workshop, partners from five countries discussed the characteristics of multi-stakeholder networks that support the socio-economic integration of women survivors into the labor market. The partners discussed the reasons why it is necessary to create thematic multi-stakeholder networks, presented how existing networks operate in their respective countries, and identified similarities in their philosophy and the basis for cooperation. The discussion as a whole provided food for thought on how to adapt the points discussed to the stakeholder networks in each partner's city. The discussion highlighted the importance of cross-sectoral cooperation, clear referral procedures and strong relationships among local stakeholders in supporting the labour market inclusion of women survivors of GBV. Participants also reflected on how these elements could be adapted to their respective local contexts.
During the plenary meeting, the discussions held by the two groups were presented, along with their thoughts on best practice and the potential for transferring and adapting these to the local context of each partner.

On the 2nd day, participants visited the following organisations:

1. Women's Center of Karditsa; a fruitful discussion took place with the Scientific Staff of the AVC, which as being department of WCK operates in it, about the way of work with the beneficiars survivors of GBV, especially for the support to them, the pathways to their economic empowerment and finally their integration to the labor market.
2. Cooperative Bank of Karditsa: Ms Bletsa, Head of Sustainable Development and Strategic Partnerships Department of CBK, guided the partners through the Bank's services and in the meeting that followed, after a brief presentation, she answered questions that were raised.
3. KYPEA, ANKA: Within the framework of the collaboration with the Development Agency of Karditsa, the General Director Mr Sakellariou and the Scientific Staff presented the structure KYpEA—the Support Center for Entrepreneurship for Unemployed and Disadvantaged Citizens of the Municipality of Karditsa.
4. Municipality of Karditsa, at the building of Town Hall where the Mayor Mr Vasilis Tsiakos, the Vice Mayor for Welfare, the President and Vice President of WCK met the partners for the welfare. They received thank you gifts from the Mayor, made statements and then the evaluation session took place.

Key Outcomes and Lessons Learned:

During the field visit the participants:

- presented the progress made so far in implementing the project, best practices, working models, challenges and concerns from their cities and countries, which fostered an environment of mutual learning regarding multi-stakeholder networking systems and interdisciplinary collaborations aimed at combating gender-based violence, the socio-economic empowerment of women and their integration into the labor market
- they were introduced to the multi-stakeholder cooperation model, the Karditsa "ecosystem". A representative from each organization presented how their organization operates and how it is linked to the ecosystem. Through this process, the participating partners gained an understanding of how the local network operates, with a focus on the socio-economic empowerment and labor market integration of women who have survived gender-based violence
- through group discussions, practices and approaches were identified that can be transferred to other local contexts, whilst particular emphasis was placed on the interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach to support pathways for women's integration into the labor market
- through the field visits, participants came into direct contact with the front-line support service, the WCK's AVC, the service providing support for professional plans for integration into the labor market, the KYpEA, as well as how the Bank finances and supports entrepreneurship. The visits gave participants the opportunity to see the cross-sectoral links, to reflect on similarities and differences, and to consider what could be utilized in their own local context

To Do/Follow-up

- Compilation and analysis of the key findings from the field visit to Karditsa. The findings will be presented at the next meeting of the project's Scientific Committee
- Sharing the presentations and materials from the first and second days with the project partners and stakeholders
- Utilization of the conclusions from the first day's session, the discussions in the workshop groups, and those arising from the field visits, to plan future mutual learning activities in the remaining partner countries.
- Internal discussion and follow-up within the working group on «Labor market inclusion, Gender-based violence and Networking», to examine how some of the practices highlighted during the visit to Karditsa can strengthen existing initiatives aimed at the labor market inclusion of women survivors of gender-based violence.

Post-event monitoring was conducted through the internal evaluation questionnaire and the EU Justice, Rights and Values survey link shared with participants.

The post-event questionnaire was completed by 25 out of 38 participants of the second day, corresponding to a response rate of 65,8%.
The evaluation of the visit to Karditsa indicates a very high level of participant satisfaction across all assessed areas. The relevance of the topics received the highest ratings, with 24 out of 25 respondents assigning a score of 4 or 5. Participants also reported high levels of satisfaction regarding the methodology—with 19 out of 25 respondents giving a score of 4 or 5—as well as the usefulness of the event for their professional practice and for improving their understanding of gender-based violence, with 20 out of 25 respondents assigning a score of 4 or 5.
Furthermore, the evaluation results show that networking (mentioned 22 times) and the exchange of knowledge (mentioned 21 times) were the two aspects most frequently highlighted by participants as factors that foster a shift in perspective or approach to their work.
The comments made by participants in the «Qualitative Feedback» section further highlighted the value of the conference as a forum for networking and peer-to-peer learning, as well as for the transnational exchange of knowledge. Participants appeared to particularly appreciate the opportunity to compare practices across countries, the cross-sectoral collaboration among organizations in Karditsa, and the chance to reflect on similarities and differences and consider what could be applied in their own local context. According to the 'voices of the participants', some of the most important takeaways from this experience are:

- «Ecosystem» is a great word
- The sense of belonging together in working against GBV
- Interdisciplinary coordination is essential for combating GBV sustainably. Strong cooperation between different stakeholders in Karditsa
- The importance of interpersonal relationships in mobilizing the network
- Networking is extremely valuable
- Sharing experiences with colleagues from other European countries and learning about the support and networking in a smaller town
- Interdisciplinary collaboration at all levels and across networks

The field visit achieved its objectives and highlighted the added value of transnational cooperation in promoting the socio-economic empowerment of survivors of gender-based violence on their path to financial independence. It emerged from the discussions that, despite differences in the way multi-stakeholder networks operate and/or in the way services are delivered, the partners face many common challenges whilst sharing a common vision: to support the long-term integration of survivors into the labor market.
The field visit highlighted the importance of cooperation between the various stakeholders in removing barriers to labor market integration – including those relating to care responsibilities, health and safety needs in the workplace and broader structural barriers. Finally, the possibility of exploring how the Karditsa ECOSYSTEM's working model could be adapted to other cities was put forward as 'food for thought'.

In conclusion, the experiences gained from the field visit to Karditsa will reinforce, complement and inform future mutual learning activities within the ELLA project and will collectively contribute to strengthening the ongoing exchange of best practice among the project's partner countries.

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