

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Participant:	101081520 - VIESOJI ISTAIGA ATVIROS LIETUVOS FONDAS (OLF)
PIC number:	908898634
Project name and acronym:	COVIDemocracy in the Baltics — COVIDemocracy

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	WP1 – D1.1
Event name:	International workshop
Type:	workshop
In situ/online:	in-situ
Location:	Lithuania, Vilnius
Date(s):	January 25 th , 2023
Website(s) (if any):	https://olf.lt/en/covidemocracy-the-impact-of-the-pandemic-on-democracy-in-the-baltic-states/ - in English https://olf.lt/covidem/ - in Lithuanian
Participants	
Female:	19
Male:	5
Non-binary:	1
From country 1 [Lithuania]:	12
From country 2 [Estonia]:	6
From country 3 [Latvia]:	7
...	
Total number of participants:	25
From total number of countries:	3
Description	
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>	
<p>The international workshop was designed to gather experts in various fields (journalism, human rights, civil society organisations, government institutions, academia) to reflect on the effects of COVID-19 period on the state of civic spaces across the three Baltic states. The workshop was prepared in cooperation with the lead researcher overseeing the production of report that would outline the main identified trends within civil society in respect to recent crisis and its management. The workshop</p>	

featured several guided sessions to draw insights from experts participating in the workshop. These insights will further guide directions for focus groups and online consultations. The programme of the workshop is attached.

The list of attending civil society members, journalists, representatives of government institutions have been shared publicly with participants and is attached to this report.

The work with international experts resulted in a synthesised framework to shape the project for its forthcoming activities – summary attached. In short, with the help of experts from different fields the team has been able to identify 9 trends (the list is not exhaustive) that are observed in the post-crisis societies of the Baltic States.

It has also been noted that the following can be topics for further discussion within the COVIDemocracy project.

Possible topics for further discussion on practical solutions for building civil society resilience (especially incorporating hints to the possible work with “movable middle”):

- **To confront the practice of societal “labelling”,** “us and them” view of the world and the aggressive rhetoric against anyone who does not share our ideas. And by doing this – to reduce polarisation of society/-ies.
- **To increase inclusiveness of decision-making** (strength of different stakeholders and their power to influence decision-making) – at institutional level (formal mechanisms and informal practices of reception), at actors level (activists’ and CSOs’ motivation) and at support level (support for the activists coming from closest networks and general public).
- **To enhance analytical capacities and critical thinking in the society,** as the information-environment has become increasingly “contaminated” with the populist, anti-state and illiberal narratives. Greater societies’ resilience to these narratives also would allow the states to choose another, milder solutions than just banning information, symbols or limiting freedom of expression in other forms.

After this initial meetings, the intention is to use information gathered at the workshop to inform other activities of the project.

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