

The project « S.I.Re.N » was funded with the support of the European Union under the Programme "Europe for Citizens"

## Strand 2 – Measure 2.2 "Networks of Towns"

7 events have been carried out within this project:

### Event 1

**Participation:** The event involved 73 citizens, including 3 participants from the city of Lampedusa and Linosa (**Italy**), 7 participants from the city of Agios Athanasios (**Cyprus**), 3 participants from the city of Marsa (**Malta**), 1 participant from the city of Pesaro (**Italy**), 1 participant from the city of Grande-Synthe (**France**), 1 participant from the city of Strass in Steiermark (**Austria**), 14 participants representing the partner CSOs Amref, Africa e Mediterraneo and Sudwind (**Italy, Austria, Spain**), 43 participants of the Border Towns and Islands Network (BTIN) (**Italy, Romania, Sweden, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Greece, Germany, Spain, The Netherlands and Switzerland**).

**Location / Dates:** The event took place in Online format, organized **Lampedusa and Linosa, Italy**, on 15/06/2021.

**Short description:** The aim of the event was to deal with the topic of 'Being Border Islands of Europe', exploring the migration dynamics crossing the Mediterranean Sea from a historical and contemporary perspective, emphasising the importance of cooperation between local island administrations and presenting case studies from the islands of Lampedusa, Lesvos and Tenerife. The public online event has been followed by a workshop that involved mayors, civil servants and NGOs experts aimed at approving a document that sets a line of action a set of priorities of the Border Towns and Islands Network (BTIN).

### Event 2

**Participation:** The event involved 78 citizens, including 6 participants from the city of Lampedusa and Linosa (**Italy**), 2 participants from the city of Agios Athanasios (**Cyprus**), 3 participants from the city of Marsa (**Malta**), 1 participant from the city of Pesaro (**Italy**), 2 participant from the city of Grande-Synthe (**France**), 1 participant from the city of Strass in Steiermark (**Austria**), 11 participants representing the partner CSOs Amref, Africa e Mediterraneo and Sudwind (**Italy, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina**), 52 participants of the Border Towns and Islands Network (BTIN) (**Italy, Romania, Sweden, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Ireland, United Kingdom, Portugal and Spain**).

**Location / Dates:** The event took place in Online format, organized by **Agios Athanasios, Cyprus**, on 23/09/2021.

**Short description:** The aim of the event was to focus on the 'Intercultural Dialogue and Volunteering at the Borders of Europe', aiming at understanding the role of volunteering and third sector organisations. The most characteristic aspect was the opportunity to get to know personal experiences of volunteers working in different roles and in different migration contexts, such as Lampedusa (IT), Marsa (ML), Traiskirchen (AT), Maribor (SI) and Grande-Synthe (FR). In the afternoon a BTIN members workshop has been focused on the benefits and critical aspects of cooperation between local authorities, CSOs and volunteering in the migration field, aimed at identifying good practices to be developed in the future BTIN's activities.

### Event 3

**Participation:** The event involved 55 citizens, including 32 participants from the city of Lampedusa and

Linosa (**Italy**), 1 participant from the city of Siklónagyfalu (**Hungary**), 1 participant from the city of Marsa (**Malta**), 1 participant from the city of Pesaro (**Italy**), 3 participants representing the partner CSOs Amref and Sudwind (**Italy, Austria**), 17 participants of the Border Towns and Islands Network (BTIN) (**Italy, Romania, Ireland, Slovenia, Poland, Germany, Romania, Switzerland and Spain**).

**Location / Dates:** The event took place in **Lampedusa and Linosa (Italy)** from 28/04/2022 to 30/04/2022

**Short description:** The aim of the event was to raise citizens attention on the topic of peace, after the beginning of a new war at the hearth of Europe. It took place in the frame of the "Island of Peace" event organized by Lampedusa Municipality, with the topic "Mediterranean: a Sea of Peace". In the morning a big event about peace and Europe took place involving the whole school community (pupils, teachers, parents), around 1.000 people. In the afternoon, a public conference has seen the participation of the Italian Parliament Speaker, national and international politicians and mayors. Experiences of BTIN mayors and CSOs representatives from the borders of Europe have been presented: the still open wounds of recent and contemporary wars, the pathways to mending fractures and ensuring peace and cooperation, the efforts to welcome and include refugees from near and distant wars, enriched the debate. In the following days study visits to the most relevant places connected to migrations have been organized and a BTIN mayors' representatives round table took place.

#### **Event 4**

**Participation:** The event involved 45 citizens, including 4 participants from the city of Lampedusa and Linosa (**Italy**), 1 participant from the city of Marsa (**Malta**), 2 participants from the city of Pesaro (**Italy**), 3 participants from the city of Grande-Synthe (**France**), 1 participant from the city of Strass in Steiermark (**Austria**), 35 participants of the Border Towns and Islands Network (BTIN) (**Italy, Romania, Serbia**).

**Location / Dates:** The event took place in Constanta (**Romania**), from 12/10/2022 to 14/10/2022

**Short description:** The aim of the event was to explore the topic of the "Balkan Route and the Future of Europe". Following a round table discussion with the mayors of Constanta, Lampedusa and Grande-Synthe, where the importance of increasing mutual understanding and cooperation between the eastern, southern and northern borders of the EU was emphasised, followed by a joint public declaration, the public event was held. Issues such as migration routes between Romania, Bulgaria and the Black Sea, the reported violence on unaccompanied minors, and the efforts to receive Ukrainian refugees were discussed. Afterwards, delegates participated in field visits to the most significant places for the reception and social inclusion of refugees.

#### **Event 5**

**Participation:** The event involved 55 citizens, including 38 participants from the city of Grande-Synthe (**France, United Kingdom**), 1 participant from the city of Lampedusa and Linosa (**Italy**), 1 participant from the city of Siklónagyfalu (**Hungary**), 1 participant from the city of Marsa (**Malta**), 3 participants from the city of Pesaro (**Italy**), 2 participants from the city of Strass in Steiermark (**Austria**), 2 participants representing the partner CSOs Amref and Sudwind (**Italy, Austria**), 7 participants of the Border Towns and Islands Network (BTIN) (**Italy, Ireland, Poland, Greece and Malta**).

**Location / Dates:** The event took place in **Grande-Synthe (France)** from 24/11/2022 to 26/11/2022.

**Short description:** part of the 'Week on Forced Migration' programme, the aim of the event was to gain an in-depth understanding of multiple aspects of the complex situation concerning the Channel locations where large numbers of migrants are concentrated, as in a bottleneck, intending to make the risky crossing of the Channel to reach the UK. In addition to the rich public conference and to the BTIN General Assembly – that approved the admission of 4 new member cities – it was possible to commemorate the victims of a tragic shipwreck at sea and to share emotions and experiences with the local community. Contributions to the conference came from both sides of the Channel, with speakers from France and from the UK. It has also been the opportunity to launch the idea of city twinning between Lampedusa and Grande-Synthe, entry and exit points of the EU respectively, which will be finalized in October 2023.

#### **Event 6**

**Participation:** The event involved 26 citizens, including 2 participants from the city of Grande-Synthe (**France**), 2 participants from the city of Lampedusa and Linosa (**Italy**), 1 participant from the city of Siklónagyfalu (**Hungary**), 3 participants from the city of Marsa (**Malta**), 3 participants from the city of Pesaro (**Italy**), 3 participants from the city of Strass in Steiermark (**Austria**), 7 participants representing the partner CSOs Amref, Africa e Mediterraneo and Sudwind (**Italy, Austria**), 7 participants of the Border Towns and Islands Network (BTIN) (**Malta, Romania, Hungary, Greece and Poland**).

**Location / Dates:** The event took place in **La Valletta (Malta)** from 27/03/2023 to 29/03/2023.

**Short description:** the aim of the event was to deepen the topic of "Walls and Doors in Europe: Migration Policies and European Citizenship from the Border Towns and Islands Perspective", with the contribution of highly relevant speakers from international organizations, local municipalities, and NGOs. A BTIN

representatives round table gave the opportunity to discuss on how to include such topics in the future activities of the network.

## **Event 7**

**Participation:** The event involved 60 citizens, including 36 participants from the city of Strass in Steiermark (**Austria**), 3 participants from the city of Lampedusa and Linosa (**Italy**), 3 participants from the city of Grande-Synthe (**France**), 1 participant from the city of Siklósnagyfalu (**Hungary**), 1 participant from the city of Marsa (**Malta**), 2 participants from the city of Pesaro (**Italy**), 3 participants representing the partner CSOs Africa e Mediterraneo and Sudwind (**Italy, Austria**), 11 participants of the Border Towns and Islands Network (BTIN) (**Poland, Greece, Malta, Hungary, Slovenia, Germany, Greece and Bosnia and Herzegovina**).

**Location / Dates:** The event took place in **Strass in Steiermark (Austria)** from 11/05/2023 to 13/05/2023.

**Short description:** the aim of the events was an in-depth analysis of the Balkan Route from a place that experienced the huge flows of migrants in 2015-16, with the opportunity to visit border management and migrants reception sites and facilities, talking with the local police and military who shared their experiences and answered to the questions of the international delegation. The BTIN General Assembly welcomed one new member town. The public conference of this final event has also been the ideal venue to reflect on what the project brought to the Border Towns and Island Network (BTIN) and on its perspectives for contributing to the building a European future of active border municipalities.

PICTURE 1

'The project started in the middle of the pandemic: with travel bans enforced, partners travelled through Europe thanks to a digital, interactive map during the 2 events held from remote.'



### PICTURES 2 and 3

'From the southern border of Europe, the island of Lampedusa (Italy) to the Northern one, in Grande-Synthe (France), S.I.Re.N project embraced the whole Europe and, by commemorating the lives of the migrants lost at sea in shipwrecks in the Mediterranean Sea and in the English Channel, called for a more Solidary, Inclusive and Responsible Europe'

