

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:	[1] - [Europäische Akademie Berlin e.V.] ([EAB])
PIC number:	[949726807]
Project name and acronym:	[ConnAct EU]

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number:	[WP2]		
Event name:	Future Festival Berlin: Sustainable Spaces for All		
Type:	[Conference]		
In situ/online:	[in-situ]		
Location:	[Germany, Berlin]		
Date(s):	[30.04.2026]		
Website(s) (if any):	Europäische Akademie Berlin - Future Festival Berlin: Sustainable Spaces for all		
Participants			
Female:	49		
Male:	29		
Non-binary:	1		
From country 1 [Germany]:	70		
From country 2 [Czechia]:	2		
From country 3 [Italy]:	2		
From country 4 [Portugal]:	2		
From country 5 [Greece]:	1		
From country 6 [Netherlands]:	1		
From country 7 [Austria]:	1		
Total number of participants:	79	From total number of countries:	7
Description			

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

The Future Festival Berlin: Sustainable Spaces for All brought together 79 young people, municipal representatives, civil society actors, researchers, and sustainability experts from across Europe. As part of the ConnACT EU project, the festival provided an interactive platform to exchange ideas and develop solutions for sustainable urban development, social inclusion, and democratic participation.

Through different workshops and participatory formats, participants explored topics such as inclusive mobility, fair housing, green urban spaces, climate justice, and citizen engagement. A special focus was placed on young perspectives, with participants presenting their visions for the cities of the future and engaging in dialogue with policymakers and local stakeholders. The festival fostered cross-border learning, networking, and cooperation, encouraging participants to translate innovative ideas into concrete local action.



ConnAct for SustainAbility

Future Festival Berlin

SUSTAINABLE SPACES FOR ALL

Deliverable 2.1 Project Report



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DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENT, ACTIVITIES AND LEARNINGS

The “Future Festival Berlin – Sustainable Spaces for All” marked the second major German event of the ConnACT EU project, taking place on 30 April 2026 at the silent green Kulturquartier in Berlin-Wedding. Bringing together 79 participants from seven European countries, the festival served as a vibrant platform for cross-border dialogue, collaborative learning, and citizen-driven action on sustainable urban development.

The festival was jointly organised by the Europäische Akademie Berlin and its ConnACT project partners (the Association for International Affairs AMO (Czech Republic), the Municipality of Fundão (Portugal), the Municipality of Piraeus (Greece), Pakhuis de Zwijger Amsterdam (Netherlands), and the Provincia di Bergamo (Italy)). This joint organisation reflects a core principle of ConnACT: that sustainable urban futures are built not by individual cities acting in isolation, but through shared responsibility and structured European cooperation.

Building on the momentum generated at the Berlin City Link Conference kick-off in July 2025, the Future Festival deepened the project’s commitment to participatory, people-centred approaches to climate action. While the kick-off event established the political and conceptual framework for the ConnACT network, the Future Festival shifted the focus to concrete, local, and creative solutions; making it a living demonstration of the project’s ambition to translate European solidarity into tangible urban change.

Programme and Activities

The festival offered a carefully designed programme that combined thematic depth with participatory formats, creating space for both expert input and active citizen engagement:

- **Opening session:** Participants were welcomed by EAB and project partners, setting the stage for a day of collaborative exploration. The opening was followed by a keynote lecture by Julia Greve titled “Practical Recognition in the City: Class, Urban Belonging, and Democratic Disaffection,” which framed the day’s discussions within a broader analysis of social justice, belonging, and democratic participation in urban contexts.
- **Future Vision Panel:** A central feature of the festival was the Future Vision Panel, in which young activists and engaged citizens presented their visions and impulses for the sustainable cities of the future. The panel was designed not as a passive presentation format, but as a dynamic opening to the day’s collaborative work — surfacing the ideas, hopes, and demands that participants brought with them and anchoring subsequent workshops in lived, grassroots perspectives.
- **First workshop session (11:30–12:45 h) – participants chose from three parallel sessions:**
 - **Session 1:** Regenerative Tourism: Travelling Responsibly and Equitably – with Jimena Diamint, Urban Leisure and Tourism Lab, InHolland
 - **Session 2:** We Share the Street, but Do We Share the Power? Workshop on Mobility Justice – with Marie Boutin & Polina Medvedeva, Just Streets (Climate Alliance)

- **Session 3:** Climate Justice & Urban Development: Which Steps to Take? – with Oliver Peters, German Institute of Urban Affairs (Difu)
- Lunch break: Participants enjoyed a shared vegetarian lunch provided by MARS, the in-house caterer at silent green: a deliberate choice that reflected the festival’s commitment to sustainability in practice as well as in principle.
- Second workshop session (13:45–15:00 h) – participants chose from four parallel sessions:
 - **Session 1:** Utopias in Practice: Collective Urban Future (Creative Session) – with Dr. Thomas Mehlhausen, FUTURIA Berlin
 - **Session 2:** Climate Crisis Meets Housing Crisis: Fair Housing in a Hotter World – with Deutsche Wohnen & Co Enteignen
 - **Session 3:** Designing Cities with Care: Urban Planning Beyond Cars – with Verkehrsentscheid Berlin
 - **Session 4:** Decolonial City Tour in Wedding (African Quarter) – with DESTA – Decolonial City Tour
- Collective Wrap-up: Takeaways & Next Steps: The festival closed with a plenary reflection session in which participants shared key insights, discussed what they intended to implement locally, and celebrated the most compelling ideas from the day through a brief award ceremony. A live graphic recording captured the visual essence of the day’s discussions and served as a collective memory of the event.

Key Learnings

The Future Festival Berlin generated a wealth of insights that will directly inform the ongoing development of the ConnACT project and its upcoming activities in Prague, Bergamo, and Amsterdam:

- Sustainability is most powerful when it is locally rooted and internationally connected. The festival demonstrated that the most effective responses to climate challenges emerge when local knowledge and experience are enriched by cross-border exchange. The presence of delegations from six ConnACT partner countries and Austria made this dynamic tangible throughout the day.
- Cities are central actors in the transition to sustainable futures. Across all workshops and discussions, participants explored how urban governance, from mobility policy and housing strategy to inclusive planning and decolonial approaches, shapes the conditions for climate justice and democratic participation.
- Climate justice and social justice cannot be separated. The festival’s diverse programme consistently surfaced the intersections between environmental sustainability and social equity. Affordable housing, accessible mobility, and inclusive public space are not separate agendas: they are different dimensions of the same commitment to just urban futures.
- Young people bring urgency, creativity, and legitimacy to sustainability debates. The Future Vision Panel was one of the most energising moments of the festival,

demonstrating that young activists are not waiting for institutional permission to imagine and demand better cities. ConnACT is stronger for centering these voices.

- Participatory and creative formats generate more durable change. Workshops, co-creative reflection sessions, and the graphic recording encouraged participants to move beyond passive reception and develop ideas they could take home and act on. This experiential dimension is what distinguishes the ConnACT event series from a conventional conference.
- European cooperation builds local capacity. Participants from all partner countries noted that the opportunity to compare approaches, share failures alongside successes, and build personal relationships across borders strengthened their confidence and expanded their toolkit for local action. This is the transformative potential that the ConnACT network is designed to cultivate.

TARGET GROUPS

The Future Festival Berlin was designed to attract a broad and deliberately diverse audience, in keeping with ConnACT's commitment to inclusive participation and the conviction that sustainable urban futures must be co-created across sectors and generations.

Young people and youth organisations formed a primary target group. The festival created dedicated space for young voices through the Future Vision Panel, recognising that the generation most affected by the climate crisis has both the right and the capacity to shape the cities they will inherit. Their presence was not merely symbolic: young activists contributed substantively to the day's discussions and challenged participants to think more boldly.

Municipal representatives from the six ConnACT partner countries brought institutional perspectives and concrete governance experience to the conversations. Their participation ensured that the ideas generated at the festival could be connected directly to policy processes and local decision-making structures.

Civil society actors, including NGOs, community organisations, and grassroots initiatives, played a central role in the programme both as facilitators and as participants. Their engagement reflects the ConnACT project's understanding that lasting urban change requires active civil society alongside institutional commitment.

Researchers and sustainability experts contributed analytical depth and evidence-based framing to the discussions, helping participants situate local challenges within broader structural and comparative contexts. Members of the general public were also warmly welcomed, reinforcing the festival's character as an open civic space rather than a closed professional event.

DURATION OF THE EVENT(S)

The event took place on April 30, 2026, at the Silent Green Kulturquartier in Wedding. Overall, the event ran from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., lasting a total of 8 hours.

INFORMATION REGARDING THE GENDER DISTRIBUTION (FEMALE, MALE, NON-BINARY) AND THE COUNTRIES OF RESIDENCE

Of the 79 participants who attended the Future Festival Berlin, 49 identified as female, 29 as male, and 1 as non-binary. The majority of participants (70) were based in Germany, reflecting the festival's location in Berlin. The remaining 9 participants travelled from the ConnACT partner countries and beyond: 2 from the Czech Republic, 2 from Italy, 2 from Portugal, 1 from Greece, 1 from the Netherlands, and 1 from Austria.

The event was conducted entirely in English, enabling full participation across national and linguistic boundaries and reinforcing its character as a genuinely European exchange. The presence of delegations from all six ConnACT partner countries ensured that international perspectives enriched every element of the programme, from the Future Vision Panel to the workshop discussions and the final collective wrap-up.

WEBSITE OF THE EVENT OR LINK TO EVENT DESCRIPTION

Project website featuring all partners and project activities:

<https://www.eab-berlin.eu/connect-eu-networks-of-towns/>

Event website:

<https://www.eab-berlin.eu/future-festival-berlin-sustainable-spaces-for-all/>

I.A: FURTHER OUTPUTS AND MATERIALS CREATED

Beyond the direct learning and exchange generated on the day, the Future Festival Berlin produced a range of outputs that will extend its impact across the ConnACT project and beyond:

- Future visions for sustainable cities: The Future Vision Panel and workshop discussions generated a rich collection of ideas from participants. Recurring themes included the creation of urban cooling and leisure spaces around water areas; the development of inclusive “third places” where people from different backgrounds can meet; the integration of more nature and green infrastructure into urban environments; the expansion of public and cooperative housing models; improvements to public transport accessibility and reliability; the establishment of smoke-free outdoor areas; and the development of neighbourhood-level sustainability initiatives and awareness agreements.
- Live graphic recording: A professional graphic recorder captured the key themes, ideas, and connections that emerged across the day's discussions in a visual

format. The graphic recording serves as a shared artefact of the festival's collective intelligence and will be shared across the project's communication channels.

- Event documentation and social media content: The festival was documented through photography and written summaries. Content will be shared via the EAB website and social media platforms to amplify the event's reach and visibility within the broader ConnACT network and European civil society.
- Strengthened partnerships: The festival provided an important opportunity for all six ConnACT partner organisations to meet in person, deepen their working relationships, and coordinate the next phase of project activities. The connections forged between participants from different countries and sectors will carry forward into the upcoming exchange events in the partner cities.

All learnings, ideas, and materials from the Future Festival Berlin will be systematically integrated into the design of the upcoming ConnACT events in Prague, Bergamo, and Amsterdam. The festival was not only a deliverable in its own right, but a generative moment in the project's evolving journey — one that has equipped participants across Europe with fresh perspectives, new relationships, and renewed commitment to building more sustainable, just, and democratic cities.