

## EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

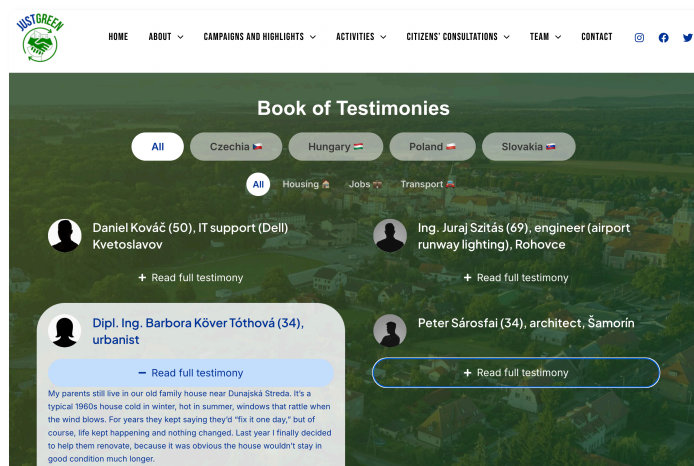
PROJECT	
Participant:	INSTITUT PRO EVROPSKOU POLITIKU EUROPEUM ZS EUROPEUM
PIC number:	949668122
Project name and acronym:	Green but Just? Engaging V4 citizens and communities to achieve a socially just green transition — JustGreen

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number:	D8.1		
Event name:	Report from four book testimonies events		
Type:	Testimonies in form of discussions and interviews		
In situ/online:	In situ		
Location:	Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland		
Date(s):	6.2025-11.2025		
Website(s) (if any):	<a href="https://justgreeneu.eu/book-of-testimonies/">https://justgreeneu.eu/book-of-testimonies/</a>		
Participants			
Female:	13		
Male:	16		
Non-binary:	0		
From country 1 [Czech Republic]:	8 (+2 remote, not counted as not in situ)		
From country 2 [Slovakia]:	7		
From country 3 [Hungary]:	7		
From country 4 [Poland]:	7		
Total number of participants:	29	From total number of countries:	4
Description			
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>			
<p>JustGreen consortium has conducted several discussions-interviews across the 4 countries in order to put together the everyday experiences of people in V4 countries and how they deal with the green transition. We ensured to give citizens space to speak, listen to how the transition affects them, and use these insights to shape how</p>			

the transition is explained and carried out. These citizen stories will be directly included in our upcoming dissemination activities. They will be featured in Brussels discussions, national public discussions, and our future communication materials. Their value is not only in the insight they provide, but also in the authenticity they bring, in a way that they are making the transition relatable, human, and based on everyday experience.

All discussions took place in person in V4 countries' capitals, but also smaller towns or villages, ensuring a mix of urban and suburban perspectives.

Additionally, in case of EUROPEUM, the JustGreen team conducted additional 2 online/phone conversations that are not counted towards the participants as they were not a part of events that were taking place in person as per grant agreement, however we still decided to interview these participants and make sure we include these “additional” interviews in our outreach and dissemination activities, as we are certain of the importance and impact that these testimonies would have. All testimonials were provided in national languages, and in addition a graphically prepared and interactive visualized book is available on our [website](#) in English.



Book of Testimonies - a website visual preview

- Housing

Across Hungary, housing testimonies reveal a shared pattern: people face outdated building stock, insufficient insulation, and high heating costs. Renovations are slow, expensive, and rarely linear. In Budapest, young buyers like Viktória, Réka, and Tibor describe multi-year efforts to upgrade old flats, battling drafty windows, gas convectors, and unreliable contractors. Even when improvements succeed, residents remain constrained by building-level limitations—non-insulated facades, shared roofs that block solar panel installation, or outdated layouts that hinder heating upgrades. These constraints echo across the V4 region, with mid-20th-century buildings dominating cities from Prague to Warsaw and Bratislava.

The absence of accessible grants is universal: Hungarian schemes are bureaucratic, urban households rarely qualify, and even motivated residents struggle to navigate opaque procedures. Comparable patterns appear in Poland's “Clean Air” programme and Czech New Green Savings, where paperwork and eligibility gaps slow adoption.

The consistent theme is clear: people are willing to renovate, but systems do not support them.

- Transport

In all countries it seems that the frustration is the same: sustainable transport requires government ambition, not only individual goodwill. We have learned from testimonials that without reliable rail, protected cycling lanes, or affordable electric mobility, personal behaviour has limited effect.

In all countries we see that the public transport networks in cities like Prague or Warsaw offer strong alternatives compared to more car-dependent urban periphery zones in Hungary or Slovakia. Also, we found out that the air travel is perceived as a luxury but also a growing source of guilt, particularly among younger respondents.

All respondents that witnessed to the transport topics seem to agree that the sustainable transport requires government ambition, not only individual goodwill. We have learned from testimonials that without reliable rail, or protected cycling lanes, or affordable electric mobility, personal behaviour has limited effect.

- Jobs

Job-related pressures appear indirectly. People across Hungary work full-time while managing renovations on the side, often participating in manual labour because skilled workers are too expensive or unavailable. Younger respondents, such as students, analysts, early-career professionals, balance demanding work with long-term financial commitments such as mortgages and staged renovations.

Some of respondents undertook the courses and seminars even though they've had a long-time jobs, and they realized that this gave them a greater flexibility in the job market and opened new opportunities, for new types of jobs or positions.

The testimonies showed us that:

- Renovation is a financial and emotional burden.

In all countries, renovation costs exceed initial expectations. Residents from Budapest to Kraków describe delays, unreliable contractors, and multi-stage upgrades stretched over years. People rely heavily on family support and personal savings—mirroring housing reports from Czechia and Slovakia, where intergenerational help is central to home ownership.

- Energy efficiency is the most valued upgrade.

Triple-glazed windows in Hungary, heat pumps in Czechia, insulated facades in Poland—these reflect a shared priority. Comfort and lower bills drive decisions more than climate ideals. Residents acknowledge climate change, but affordability dictates what gets done. We have noticed same pattern in our citizens' consultations and other communication with citizens' experiences in green transition.

- Support schemes exist but fail ordinary households.

Hungarians struggle with inaccessible grants; Czechs with over-subscribed programmes; Poles with complex rules; Slovaks with long waiting times. This cross-country inefficiency creates a paradox: people want greener homes, but state systems block them. We have seen similar pattern again in communication with the citizens, and through the research work for the [publication](#) “National policy analyses evaluating subsidy schemes in V4” and briefings on jobs and transport.

The book of testimonies showed us that people are willing to adopt cleaner heating, better insulation, and more efficient transport choices, but only when pathways are realistic. Meaningful transformation would require states to match citizens’ willingness with accessible, reliable, and fair support structures.