

GOOD PRACTICES

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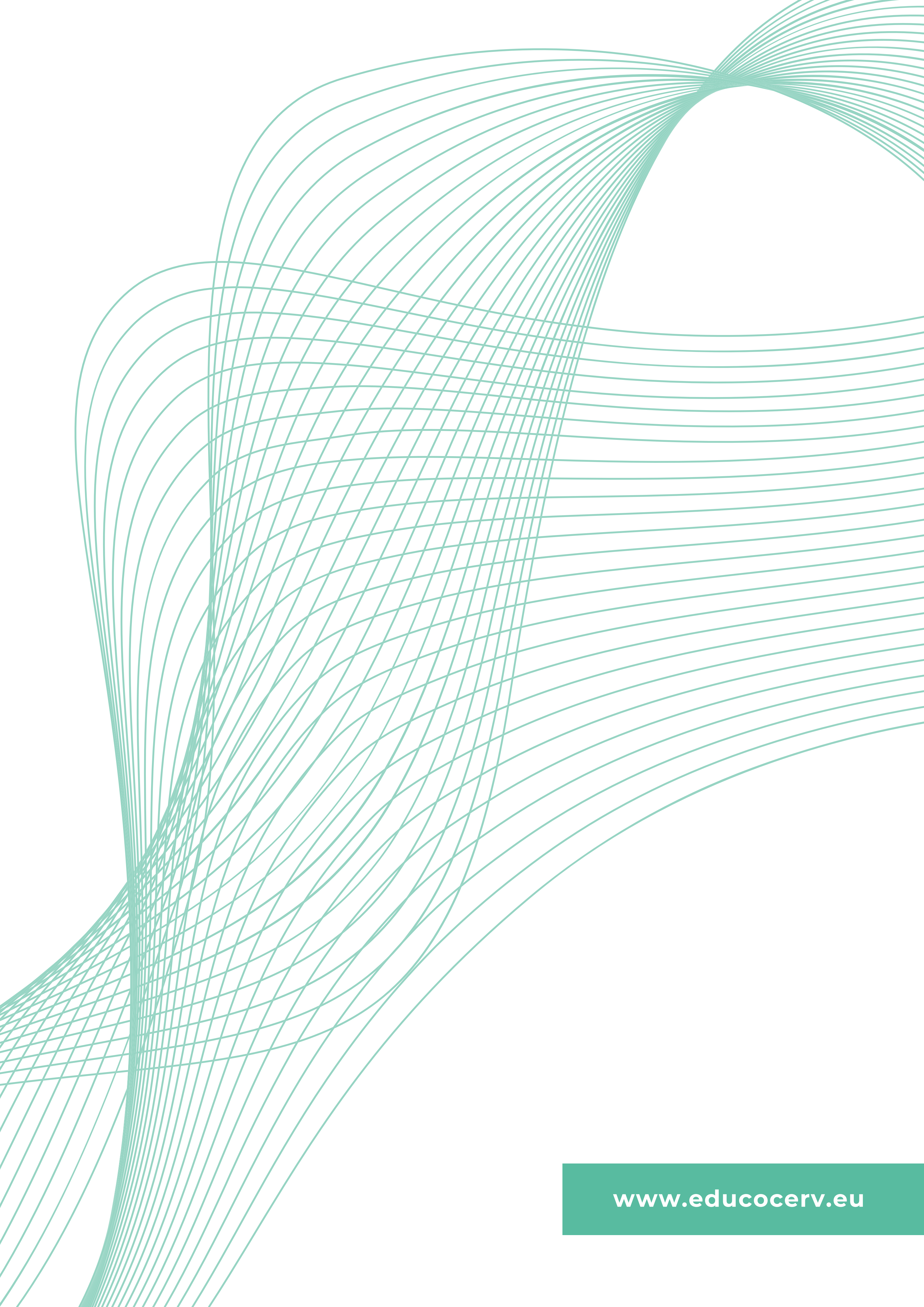
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Braşov



Braşov - GOOD PRACTICES

IDENTITY

BRASOV - RUMANÍA



INITIAL CHALLENGE

The initiative addresses the lack of food literacy, nutrition education and awareness of agrifood careers among young people in Europe. In many European countries, food education is fragmented or insufficient, particularly regarding critical thinking, sustainability, health, and the complexity of food systems.

This gap contributes to unhealthy habits, limited understanding of sustainable diets, and low attractiveness of agrifood careers, while the EU agrifood sector faces a shortage of skilled professionals.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

FoodEducators proposes a structured, user-friendly educational ecosystem that supports teachers and educators with high-quality, free educational resources on food, health, sustainability, food systems and agrifood careers.

The solution includes:

- A European online resource centre with downloadable lesson plans and multimedia materials.
- Teacher training, certification and quality control through a Teachers' Council.
- A challenge-based, action-oriented pedagogical approach focused on systems thinking.
- Engagement and awareness-raising activities such as Activity Weeks, Career Days, forums and workshops.
- A network of national hubs adapting and translating materials to local contexts.

CHANGES IT BROUGHT

The initiative has generated measurable educational and societal impact, including:

- Thousands of teachers trained and informed across Europe.
- Tens of thousands of students reached with structured food education.
- Increased integration of food literacy and sustainability topics into classrooms.
- Strengthened links between education, food systems and agrifood career pathways.
- Creation of an active European community of certified Food Educators.
- These changes contribute to healthier habits, improved awareness of sustainable food choices, and greater interest in agrifood professions.

TRANSFER POTENTIAL

FoodEducators has very high transfer potential due to its modular, adaptable and multilingual design.

Key factors enabling transfer include:

- Open-access digital resources adaptable to different curricula and age groups (6–18).
- A replicable hub-and-network model that can be implemented at local, regional or national level.
- Alignment with EU priorities on sustainability, health, education and skills.
- Flexibility to integrate into formal education systems, extracurricular programmes or community initiatives.
- This makes the model suitable for replication by municipalities, regions, schools, NGOs or education authorities across Europe and beyond.

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

- Early food education is a key lever for healthier, more sustainable societies.
- Supporting educators is essential to achieving systemic change in food literacy.
- Combining systems thinking, sustainability and career orientation strengthens long-term impact.
- European cooperation and shared educational resources significantly increase reach and efficiency.
- FoodEducators demonstrates how education can actively contribute to transforming the food system while inspiring future generations.



2



Kekava Municipality



KEKAVA - GOOD PRACTICES

IDENTITY

Ķekava Municipality – Latvia



INITIAL CHALLENGE

Ķekava Municipality faced several interconnected challenges related to youth participation, civic engagement, sustainable local development and governance.

Key challenges included:

- Limited structured participation of young people in municipal decision-making.
- The need for coherent, data-based youth policy planning.
- Ensuring long-term sustainability in energy, infrastructure, waste management and public services.
- Strengthening civic participation, transparency and shared responsibility between local authorities, citizens and civil society.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The municipality adopted a multi-layered, integrated approach combining youth empowerment, participatory governance and sustainable infrastructure development.

Key solutions included:

- Establishment of a Youth Council of Ķekava Municipality, providing a formal platform for youth representation and civic participation.
- Development of the Ķekava Municipality Youth Policy: Strategy and Action Plan (2026–2031), based on surveys, workshops, forums and stakeholder consultations.
- Continuous support from youth work specialists to ensure capacity-building and coordination.
- Implementation of participatory mechanisms such as participatory budgeting, municipal commissions, public hearings and grant competitions.
- Investment in sustainable infrastructure projects (renewable energy, energy efficiency, water and waste management) aligned with long-term development priorities.

CHANGES IT BROUGHT

The implemented practices generated tangible institutional, social and environmental changes, including:

- Active engagement of young people through a Youth Council composed of representatives from all parts of the municipality.
- Increased youth participation in local events, policy discussions and civic life.
- A shared strategic framework for youth work guiding all municipal institutions involved.
- Improved governance through citizen involvement in budgeting, planning and commissions.
- Measurable environmental benefits, such as reduced energy consumption, increased use of renewable energy, improved waste separation and reduced CO₂ emissions.
- Strengthened cooperation between the municipality, civil society and residents.

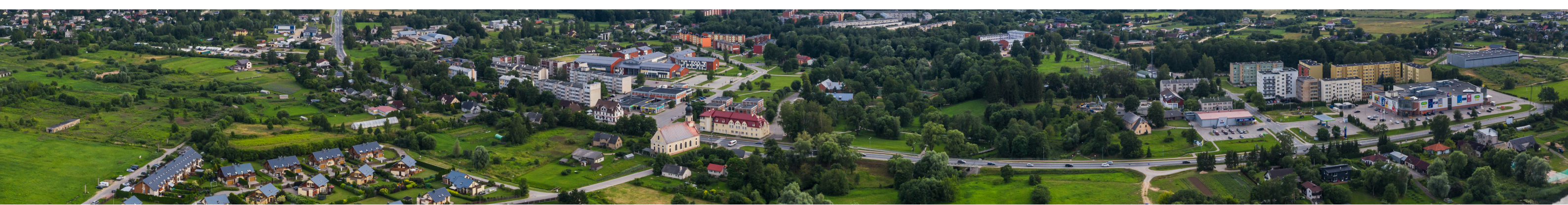
TRANSFER POTENTIAL

These practices show strong transfer potential to other municipalities and regions due to:

- Their scalable and modular design, allowing adaptation to different local contexts.
- The replicability of the Youth Council model and youth policy planning process.
- Clear methodologies for participatory governance and civic engagement.
- Alignment with European priorities on democracy, sustainability, youth empowerment and good governance.
- Applicability to both small and medium-sized municipalities seeking integrated development approaches.

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

- Youth empowerment is most effective when young people are given formal structures and real influence.
- Evidence-based policy planning strengthens long-term impact and institutional coherence.
- Civic participation mechanisms enhance trust, transparency and democratic governance.
- Sustainable infrastructure investments can be combined with citizen engagement to achieve environmental and social benefits.
- Integrated approaches linking youth, governance and sustainability are key to resilient local communities.
- powerment and good governance.
- Applicability to both small and medium-sized municipalities seeking integrated development approaches.



3



Athienou

ATHIENOU - GOOD PRACTICES

IDENTITY

Athienou - Cyprus



INITIAL CHALLENGE

ⲄAthienou Municipality faced the challenge of responding effectively to social needs while maintaining strong community cohesion, particularly in supporting vulnerable groups and fostering active citizenship.

Like many local communities, there was a need to ensure sustained civic engagement, intergenerational solidarity, and meaningful youth participation, while avoiding fragmented or ad hoc volunteer actions.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The municipality established and consolidated a formal, community-based volunteer coordination model through the Community Volunteerism Council of Athienou (CVCA).

This structure brings together citizens, local organisations and schools under a shared vision of solidarity and active citizenship, ensuring coordinated planning, implementation and continuity of volunteer initiatives. Volunteerism is embedded as a core element of local governance and community life.

CHANGES IT BROUGHT

The implementation of this model led to significant social and community impacts, including:

- Stronger social cohesion and trust among residents.
- Increased and sustained citizen participation in volunteer and social actions.
- Improved support for vulnerable groups, including families in need and elderly citizens.
- Active involvement of young people through schools and youth-oriented volunteer actions.
- National and European recognition of Athienou as a model municipality for active citizenship and solidarity.

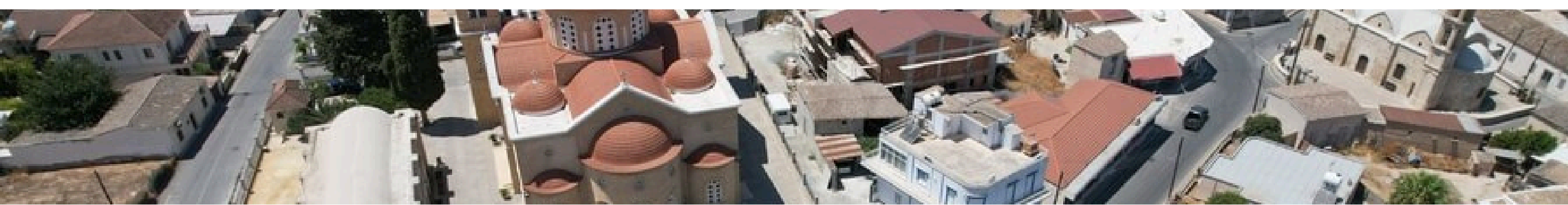
TRANSFER POTENTIAL

The Athienou volunteerism model shows high transfer potential because:

- It is based on a simple but robust coordination structure that can be replicated in other municipalities.
- It relies on existing local assets such as schools, associations and citizens.
- It is adaptable to different social, cultural and territorial contexts.
- It promotes low-cost, high-impact interventions focused on social value rather than infrastructure.
- It aligns well with European priorities on civic engagement, social inclusion and community resilience.

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

- Volunteerism can become a structural pillar of local governance, not just an occasional activity.
- A dedicated coordination body is key to ensuring continuity, efficiency and impact.
- Community-driven approaches strengthen social cohesion and mutual trust.
- Involving young people early helps build a long-term culture of active citizenship.
- Local solidarity networks can effectively complement public services in addressing social needs.



4



Kočevje



KOČEVJE - GOOD PRACTICES

IDENTITY

Municipality of Kočevje – Slovenia



INITIAL CHALLENGE

The Kočevje region faced the challenge of addressing environmental degradation, illegal waste disposal and limited youth civic engagement, while also ensuring that young people develop a strong sense of responsibility, active citizenship and connection to their local environment.

As a peripheral and heavily forested area, Kočevje required long-term, community-based solutions that combined environmental protection, education and civic participation.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

A set of complementary, community-embedded good practices was developed, combining volunteering, formal education and youth-led initiatives:

- “Let’s Clean Kočevsko”: an annual, municipality-wide volunteer clean-up campaign involving citizens, schools and public institutions, supported logistically by the municipality and public services.
- Structured school-based volunteering at Primary School Zbora odposlancev, integrating intergenerational and community volunteering into the school curriculum.
- ITS GRETA – Forest Eco-Ambassadors Programme at Gimnazija Kočevje, a two-year elective programme focused on environmental protection, sustainability and active citizenship, combining scientific research, public engagement and international cooperation.

Together, these initiatives embed volunteering and civic action into everyday educational and community life.

CHANGES IT BROUGHT

These practices have led to significant and lasting impacts, including:

- Removal of dozens of tons of waste annually and several hundred tons since 2008, including from illegal dumpsites.
- Increased environmental awareness and responsibility among citizens and young people.
- Strong participation of schools, integrating environmental action into formal education.
- Development of youth skills in research, communication, public speaking and civic engagement.
- Visible, long-lasting community outcomes such as eco-benches, public events, and educational materials.
- Strengthened local identity around environmental stewardship and collective responsibility.

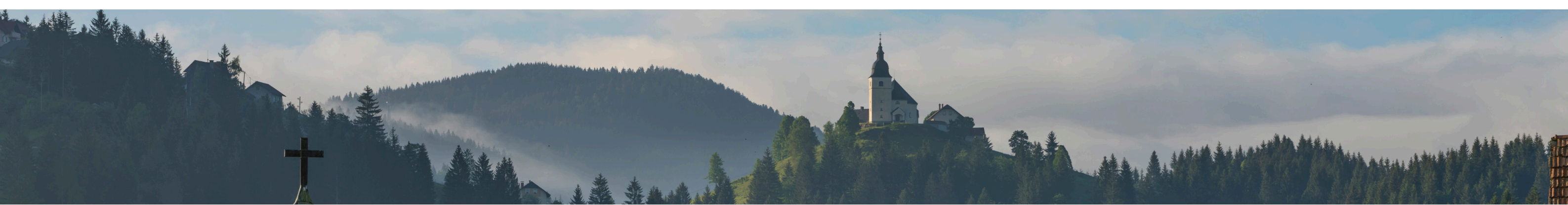
TRANSFER POTENTIAL

The Kočevje model has very high transfer potential because:

- It combines low-cost volunteer action with structured educational programmes.
- It is adaptable to both urban and rural contexts.
- It offers clear, replicable formats (annual clean-up campaigns, curriculum-integrated volunteering, youth ambassador programmes).
- It aligns closely with European priorities on sustainability, active citizenship and youth empowerment.
- It produces durable outputs that ensure long-term impact beyond project funding.

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

- Environmental action is most effective when it is community-wide and youth-inclusive.
- Schools can act as powerful drivers of civic engagement when volunteering is embedded structurally.
- Youth-led initiatives strengthen democratic participation and local ownership.
- Combining practical action with education creates deeper, longer-lasting behavioural change.
- Local environmental challenges can be transformed into opportunities for active citizenship and European value promotion.



5



Siena



SIENA - GOOD PRACTICES

IDENTITY

Siena - Italy



INITIAL CHALLENGE

Siena faced multiple interconnected challenges related to youth civic engagement, access to opportunities, educational inclusion and generational renewal. While the city has a strong tradition of community life and participation, younger generations often lacked formal spaces to influence decision-making, express ideas, develop entrepreneurial skills, and access inclusive educational and cultural opportunities.

At the same time, there was a need to address educational poverty, support early childhood education, and link urban regeneration with social and educational innovation.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The municipality developed a portfolio of complementary good practices, each addressing different stages of life and forms of participation:

- Siena Youth Council (Consulta Giovanile)
- A structured platform for young people aged 16–23 to engage in dialogue with local institutions, co-design policies and participate in decision-making through assemblies, working groups and public actions.
- GenerAzione SI – Siena Startup House
- A youth entrepreneurship initiative providing free coworking spaces, mentoring, workshops and networking for young people aged 18–35, supporting business ideas rooted in the local context.
- EduCarSi – Education Care Siena
- A city-wide educational ecosystem tackling educational poverty by connecting schools, families, museums, public spaces and associations, with a strong focus on cultural access, children’s rights and emotional education.
- Raggio di Sole – Integrated Educational Centre 1–6
- An innovative early childhood education model unifying nursery and kindergarten into a single pedagogical pathway, promoting continuity, inclusion, family participation and nature-based learning.

Together, these initiatives form a coherent strategy of lifelong civic education and community empowerment.

CHANGES IT BROUGHT

The implementation of these practices has led to significant social, educational and institutional changes, including:

- Creation of a formal and lasting channel for youth participation in local governance.
- Increased empowerment of young people as co-creators of public policies.
- Development of a local entrepreneurship ecosystem supporting innovation, sustainability and collaboration.
- Expanded access to cultural, educational and emotional learning opportunities for children and adolescents.
- Regeneration of public spaces (e.g. Villa Rubini) as hubs for education, culture and wellbeing.
- Strengthened collaboration between institutions, families, schools and civil society.

TRANSFER POTENTIAL

Siena’s practices show very high transfer potential because:

- They are based on modular and scalable models adaptable to different city sizes and contexts.
- They integrate governance, education, culture and urban regeneration.
- They rely on strong multi-stakeholder partnerships.
- They align with European priorities on youth participation, social inclusion, education, entrepreneurship and sustainability.
- They demonstrate how local identity and heritage can be leveraged for innovative social policies.

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

- Youth participation is most effective when it is structured, continuous and supported by institutions.
- Cities can become learning ecosystems by connecting education, culture, public space and social care.
- Early childhood education benefits from integrated, community-oriented approaches.
- Entrepreneurship support works best when combined with mentoring, physical spaces and local networks.



6



Trikala



TRIKALA - GOOD PRACTICES

IDENTITY

Trikala, Greece



INITIAL CHALLENGE

The primary challenge faced by Trikala was the need to enhance sustainability, reduce carbon emissions, and shift towards climate-neutral urban solutions. The city aimed to integrate climate change mitigation strategies while simultaneously improving citizens' quality of life and promoting economic growth.

This required training municipal employees, creating strategic action plans, and engaging the local population in the transition to a more sustainable city.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

Cities Go Climate Neutral is an initiative designed to train municipal employees in climate-neutral urban strategies, focusing on the creation and implementation of Climate City Contracts.

Key components include:

- Training courses for municipal employees on urban sustainable development and climate neutrality.
- Development of a Roadmap for Designing Local Strategies for cities to achieve climate neutrality.
- Establishment of a Transition to Climate Neutral Cities Hub, offering resources, toolkits, and knowledge-sharing platforms.
- Video series featuring Success Stories of cities that have made successful transitions to climate neutrality.

This approach not only provides the municipal workforce with the knowledge needed to tackle sustainability challenges but also actively involves citizens in adopting new mindsets for greener living.

CHANGES IT BROUGHT

The initiative has led to several positive changes:

- Increased knowledge and skills among municipal employees regarding EU climate policies, which are now being applied to local contexts.
- Creation of sustainable, actionable plans for the transition to climate-neutral cities.
- Enhanced citizen awareness and involvement through educational campaigns and success stories shared through multimedia content.
- Active engagement of local citizens in sustainable practices, such as energy-efficient mobility, waste management, and smart city solutions.
- Improved cooperation between local municipalities and the European Union, reinforcing the city's role as a model for other cities in the EU.

TRANSFER POTENTIAL

The transfer potential of this initiative is very high due to:

- Modular educational courses that can be adapted to other municipalities in different countries.
- The availability of a roadmap and digital hub for sharing best practices, tools, and training materials.
- Strong alignment with the EU's Green Deal and Climate Neutrality targets, making it a scalable model for cities aiming to meet these goals.
- The initiative's focus on training municipal employees, which can be replicated in other urban areas looking to transition to sustainability.
- The capacity for multinational collaboration, as evidenced by the partnership between EU cities in this project.

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

- Knowledge and training are key to empowering cities and municipalities to design and implement climate-neutral strategies.
- Collaboration between local government, citizens, and the EU is critical in achieving long-term sustainability goals.
- The use of digital tools and knowledge-sharing platforms accelerates the transition process and engages citizens effectively.
- Climate City Contracts and sustainability roadmaps provide a clear and actionable framework for municipalities committed to climate neutrality.
- European cooperation fosters the exchange of best practices and innovations that can be implemented locally.



7



Újbuda



ÚJBUDA MUNICIPALITY - GOOD PRACTICES

IDENTITY

Újbuda Municipality (District XI),
Budapest – Hungary



INITIAL CHALLENGE

Újbuda faced the challenge of balancing rapid urban development with environmental protection, climate awareness and youth participation. Increasing construction pressure on green areas, combined with climate change impacts, created a strong need for active attitude-formation programmes.

At the same time, the district needed structured ways to engage young people and residents of all ages in sustainability, democratic participation and responsible lifestyles.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The municipality implemented a set of integrated, attitude-formation and participation programmes, combining climate action, environmental education and youth dialogue:

- Project 1: Green Attitude Formation (2019–2021)
- Development and implementation of a local climate strategy, a climate platform, and awareness-raising campaigns targeting all generations, in cooperation with a national environmental NGO.
- Project 2: “Youth: Together, with Responsibility!” – Youth Dialogue Project
- A participatory process engaging young people (15–29) in shaping the future of Újbuda and supporting the creation of a structured local youth strategy.
- Project 3: Pilot Project – Sustainable Meals for Youngsters
- Practical education on sustainable nutrition and alternative local food systems for secondary school students.

These actions were complemented by environmental education from early childhood, energy modernisation of institutions, green interior and outdoor design, and the creation of an informal Újbuda Youth Group acting as a multiplier.

CHANGES IT BROUGHT

The programmes generated concrete social, educational and environmental impacts, including:

- High public engagement, with 1,700 responses to public climate-related quizzes.
- Integration of climate change topics into daycare centres, kindergartens and schools.
- Launch of environmental education activities for seniors (60+).
- Active involvement of over 900 young people in youth dialogue and policy processes.
- Increased awareness of sustainable lifestyles, climate protection and responsible consumption.
- Emergence of youth-led initiatives on sustainability (e.g. clothing exchanges, repair workshops, sustainable fashion awareness).

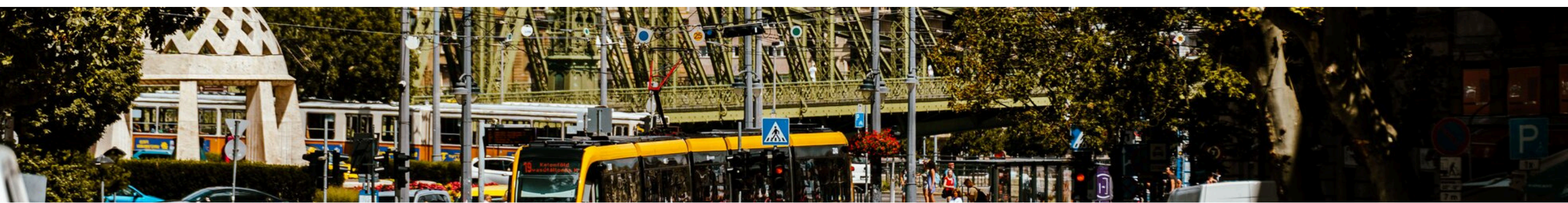
TRANSFER POTENTIAL

Újbuda’s approach has strong transfer potential because:

- It combines strategic planning with practical, low-threshold activities.
- It addresses multiple age groups through tailored methods.
- It relies on partnerships between municipalities, NGOs and educational institutions.
- It can be adapted to other urban districts facing development pressure and climate challenges.
- It aligns closely with European priorities on climate action, youth participation and democratic engagement.

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

- Attitude formation is most effective when it starts early and continues across generations.
- Climate strategies gain legitimacy through active citizen and youth participation.
- Schools and local communities are key entry points to reach families.
- Informal youth groups can act as powerful multipliers for sustainability.
- Integrated, cross-sectoral approaches strengthen long-term impact and social ownership.



8



Finestrat



FINESTRAT MUNICIPALITY - GOOD PRACTICES

IDENTITY

Municipality of Finestrat – Cala de Finestrat, Spain



INITIAL CHALLENGE

For more than 30 years, Cala de Finestrat suffered recurrent flooding caused by the ravine, especially during heavy rainfall events. The problem was the result of a combination of factors:

- Topography and climate, with intense Mediterranean rain episodes.
- Urban development, which altered natural drainage patterns.
- Changes in hydraulic parameters, including reduced infiltration capacity, increased water speed and shorter concentration times.

These conditions caused repeated damage to public space, infrastructure, businesses and residents, turning the ravine into a chronic risk factor and a symbol of urban vulnerability.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

After five years of technical analysis and planning, the municipality implemented a comprehensive, phased hydraulic solution, combining nature-based and engineering measures:

- Phase 1 (500 m): Modification of the channel bed to reduce water velocity and increase infiltration capacity.
- Phase 2 (200 m): Creation of a transition section from an open channel to an underground channel.
- Phase 3 (300 m): Underground channelling of the ravine and controlled drainage to the sea through an anti-storm tank.

This integrated approach addressed the problem at different spatial scales, from upstream flow management to safe discharge at the coastline.

CHANGES IT BROUGHT

The intervention produced clear and measurable improvements, including:

- Elimination of recurrent flooding in the urban area during heavy rain events.
- Significant reduction of risk to residents, visitors and local businesses.
- Improved hydraulic behaviour of the ravine, even under extreme weather conditions.
- Recovery and enhancement of public space along the ravine corridor.
- A visible transformation from a conflictive infrastructure into a functional and resilient urban element.
-

The “before and after” images included in the document clearly illustrate the turning point achieved by the project.

TRANSFER POTENTIAL

This case has high transfer potential for other municipalities, particularly:

- Coastal or Mediterranean cities exposed to intense rainfall and flash floods.
- Urban areas affected by historic watercourses altered by urbanisation.
- Municipalities seeking practical solutions for climate adaptation and flood risk management.

The phased methodology, long-term planning approach and combination of hydraulic correction and urban integration make the model adaptable to different territorial contexts.

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

- Attitude formation is most effective when it starts early and continues across generations.
- Climate strategies gain legitimacy through active citizen and youth participation.
- Schools and local communities are key entry points to reach families.
- Informal youth groups can act as powerful multipliers for sustainability.
- Integrated, cross-sectoral approaches strengthen long-term impact and social ownership.



