

Quarterly Network Report #3

July - September 2024

By Lead Expert, Stine Skot and the COPE partners with special contributions from Laura Petruske, ULG coordinator in Vilnius, Claudia Costa, ULG Coordinator in Pombal and Mimina Patekari, ULG Coordinator in Korydallos



COPE

– Coherent, place-based climate act

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This report is made using all the material and input the Lead partner team and the network partners from the 8 COPE municipalities have provided from July to September 2024.

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1. COPE in short

COPE is an URBACT APN IV network. The network consists of 8 partners, all European municipalities, with the City of Copenhagen as lead partner, and the seven partners are the cities of A Coruña in Spain, the two Greek cities of Kavala and Korydallos, the Romanian city of Bistrița, the French city of Saint-Quentin, the Portuguese city of Pombal and the Lithuanian capital Vilnius.

The COPE Network is about changing mindsets. As an URBACT Action Planning Network, the focus is on testing smaller initiatives to develop meaningful integrated action plans for urban development. To succeed in the green transition, change is needed in our political institutions, in the way we govern and plan our cities, and in civil society. Through co-created actions, deliberative dialogue, and the testing and evaluation of activities and governance structures, cities in the COPE network will work to develop and adjust municipal policies, strategies and structures to become coherent and integrated. In practice, this means that the municipality must be able to facilitate citizens' green actions in balance with the need for equity and a just transition.

2. COPE partners selected highlights

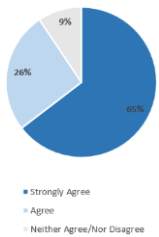
Small scale activities

Korydallos

September 16th – 25th Korydallos ULG did a small scale activity in form of a door to door and email campaign asking local citizens to answer a survey. The survey wanted to explore the local citizens attitude toward the ULG action plans. And here is a brief sum up of questions and answers.

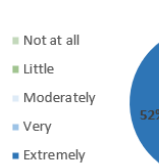


1. Do you agree with the reconstruction of the building and its transformation into a hub of young entrepreneurship and innovation?

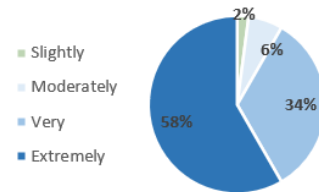


Other proposed uses: Fitness center, first aid center, Targeted to a specific category of population (e.g. retired women, kids, elders)

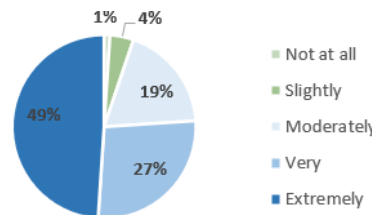
2. Do you feel that such an initiative will further improve the neighborhood?



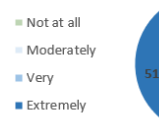
3. Do you think it will contribute to the development of the Municipality of Korydallos and the wider area?



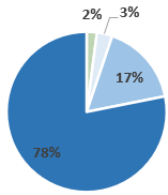
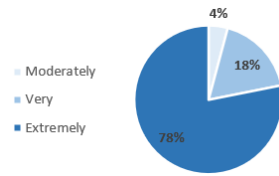
4. Do you think it will contribute to the development of local entrepreneurship?



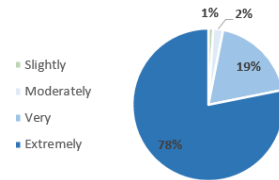
5. Do you think it will strengthen the local market?



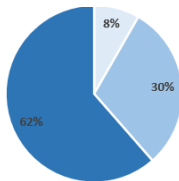
6. Do you think that energy reduction measures should be taken into account in the new building? (LED lighting, photovoltaics on the roof, natural gas, insulation, etc.)



7. Do you think that green actions around the building should be strengthened? (planting of trees in the courtyard, enhancing the greenery in the pedestrian area of Samos Street, etc.)

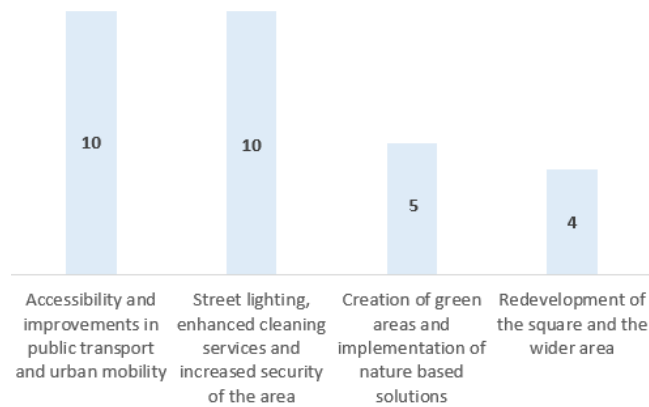


8. Do you think that green actions should be supported to increase vegetation and improve the quality of the environment in the area?



9. Do you think that local transport needs to be strengthened in order to improve access to the area? (e.g. electric bicycles, electric scooters, public transport, etc.)

10. What other initiatives or actions do you think should be taken both in the building and the wider neighborhood to upgrade and improve the quality of life of the residents?



September 25th outside the former 12th Primary School Korydallos ULG featured an Interactive Workshop with participation from local residents, youth, and entrepreneurs.



When	Roles	Target group
On September 25, 2024, outside the former 12th Primary School in Kanaria.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants: Engaged in interactive workshops, providing feedback on proposed actions and suggesting new ideas. Municipality of Korydallos: Organizer and facilitator of the Testing Action. Local Community: Participants included community members, local entrepreneurs, and other stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents of the surrounding neighborhood. Local youth and entrepreneurs.
Actions		Documentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interactive Workshop: Participants will evaluate the proposed actions, shared feedback, and suggest new actions for the building's renovation. Discussion on Barriers: Identification of obstacles and potential challenges in implementing the proposed ideas. Documentation: Collection of feedback through questionnaires to assess the overall sentiment toward the building's renovation and its future use as a youth entrepreneurship hub. 		Collection of feedback from the Workshop and the Questionnaires.

The workshop provided attendees the opportunity to evaluate the proposed renovation plans and actions, assess the level of agreement within these actions, offer feedback, suggest new ideas, and identify potential obstacles to the building's transformation. Organized and facilitated by the Municipality of Korydallos, the event gathered input from a diverse group of stakeholders, including local residents, young people, and entrepreneurs. Additional feedback was collected through questionnaires to capture participants' overall perceptions of the building's future as a Youth Entrepreneurship Hub.

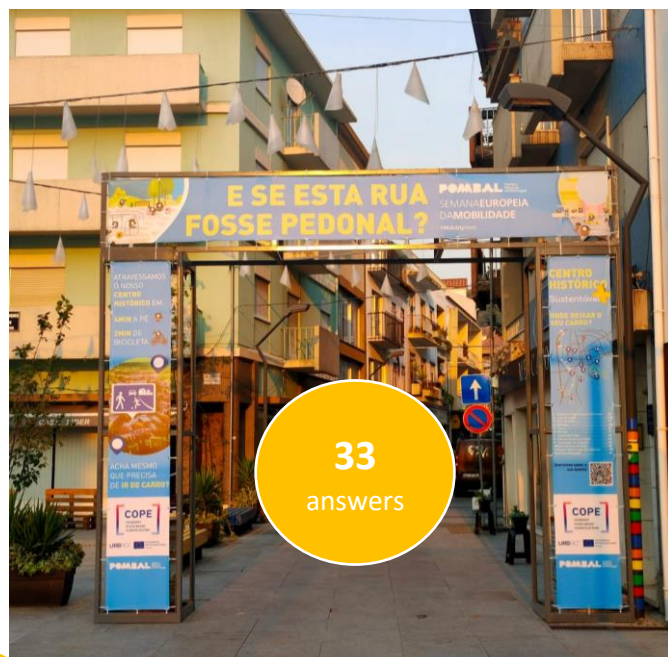


Measurement	Indicator	Expected Output	Actual Output
Collect and categorize all ideas and feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of actionable ideas generated and barriers identified. Number of questionnaires 	A comprehensive set of new suggestions and feedback on the proposed renovation actions.	Report summarizing the key suggestions collected from the Workshop and the Questionnaires.

Pombal

During the European Mobility Week the 16th to 22nd of September 2024 our COPE partner the municipality of Pombal in Portugal made a [small scale action](#). The purpose was to test the citizens and local stakeholders reaction to closing down for hard mobility in the historic city center and to ask them of their opinion on what they would like to have in the public space.

They put up 3 gates on the 3 main entrances to the historic city center with information about the COPE project and about the small scale action being an experiment to close the roads for cars for a week to test what it does for the life in the streets and the businesses. On these gates there was also information regarding time needed to cross the area by walking or cycling, awareness to the existence of pedestrians on the street, the number and location of parking spots nearby and a QR code linking to a survey.

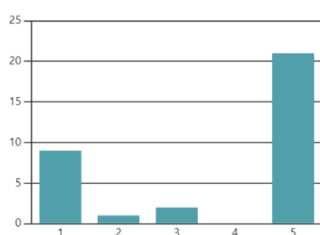


At the main gate they asked the question:

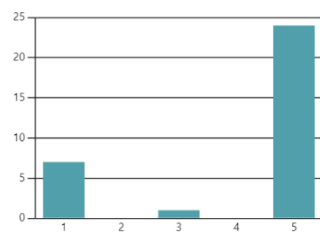
Do you agree closing the street to traffic?

They got 33 answers showing, with a scale were 1 is not agreeing and 5 fully agreeing that people agree to the question although with some resistance from shopowners.

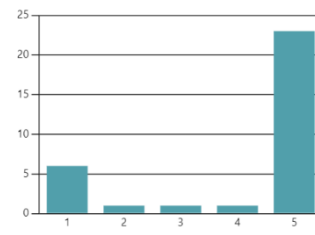
Almirante Reis: **3.70 (0-5)**



Miguel Bombarda: **4.06 (0-5)**



Capitão Tavares Dias: **4.06 (0-5)**



In the historic city center the streets are very narrow and the cars take a lot of space either driving or being parked throughout the day by residents, shopowners or other nearby employees. This small scale action was a way to showcase how the space could also be used; either for soft mobility or for greenings or for the people in the streets to be able to meet, talk and bring life.



What if there was an urban garden here?



What if there was shade and chairs to enjoy this square?

The Pombal Municipality placed different furniture and plants in strategic places. The furniture was from materials the municipality had already and they worked across departments to dress up the historic center. They managed to do this using only one week of work.

To get feedback on the different ideas, they asked place-based questions for the citizens of Pombal to think about and answer.

Although not that many have used the QR codes and answered the questions those who did generally agreed with the changes that were proposed. And maybe it also made more people aware of how they use the historic city center.

The fact that the action did not show a lot of resistance can be seen as a green light for the Pombal team to continue their work on bringing more balance between hard and soft mobility in the historic center. Still, there is work to do with shopowners regarding the benefits from reducing traffic.



What if the ideas also spread to the streets?

13

answers

Agreement

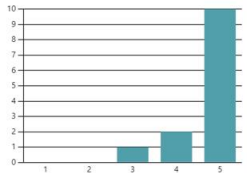
Average:

4.69



The Pombal team observed and talked to citizens in the streets who enjoyed the new possibilities of having lunch in the streets or taking a rest at a bench. And shopowners enjoying not having a car in front of their shop, but instead a flower bed.

What if you could read a book in the street? Or just be?



12

answers

Agreement

Average:

4.67



What if there was a bicycle stand here?

11

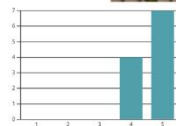
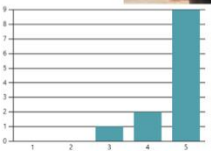
answers

Agreement

Average:

4.64

What if the railings were eco-friendly?



11

answers

Agreement

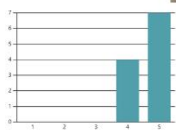
Average:

4.64



What if the street showed you the details of the city?

This experiments was enforced for one week. After that week the cars came back slowly, but the furniture are still used and some shopowners stubbornly move flower beds back to the space were the cars used to be parked. Something has changed.

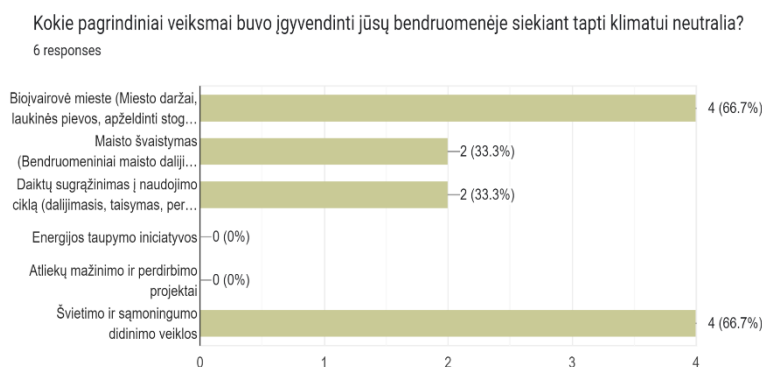


Vilnius

In Municipality of Vilnius they followed up on one of their small scale actions. They wanted to engage the Vilnius citizens in taking green actions and therefore they offered up to €5,000 in funding for initiatives supporting climate-neutral activities. To follow up on this action they circulated a questionnaire among the ULG in September to share their experience of implementing projects during this period. The questionnaire showed

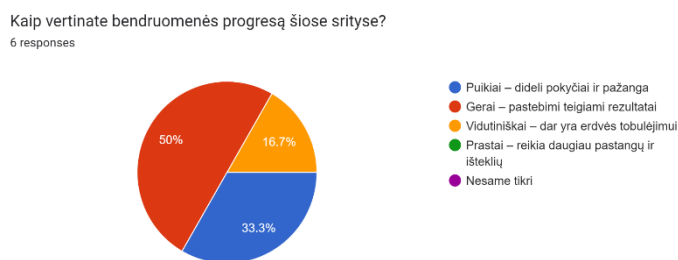
1. Key Actions Implemented

- **Bio-diversity promotion:** Several initiatives, such as urban gardens and wildflower meadows, focus on enhancing biodiversity in the city (e.g., Pilaitė, Žvėrynas, Verkiai).
- **Food waste reduction:** Some communities, such as the one in Sapiegų Park, implemented food-sharing fridges to minimize food waste.
- **Circular economy efforts:** Initiatives like object-sharing platforms (e.g., "Supa Ūkas") promote the reuse and recycling of goods.



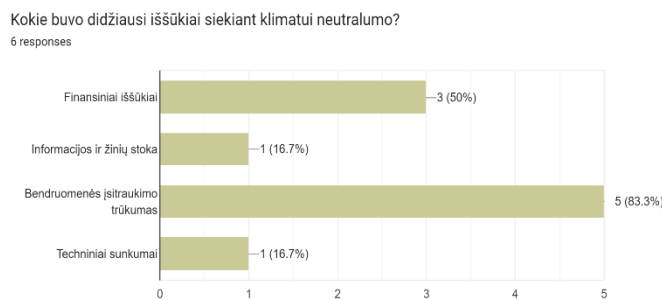
2. Community Progress

- Most respondents feel positive about their community's progress. Some rate it as **"Excellent"** due to significant changes, while others see **"Good"** progress with noticeable improvements.



3. Challenges Faced

- **Community Engagement:** One of the most frequently mentioned challenges is the difficulty of getting broader community participation.
- **Financial and Technical Issues:** Some communities struggle with financial constraints and technical challenges, hindering faster progress.
- **Infrastructure:** Lack of permanent space or stable infrastructure was highlighted by specific projects.



4. Suggestions for Improvement

- Several suggestions include creating tools to help measure the carbon footprint of communities and organising more events or resources provided by local authorities (e.g., funding and organising opportunities by elderships seniūnijos).
- Continued engagement, shared ideas, and more active involvement by local government are recurrent themes in recommendations.

In summary, while there is positive momentum in climate-neutral activities across different communities in Vilnius, challenges such as engagement, financial constraints, and infrastructure need to be addressed to sustain and accelerate progress. These are the current activities from the Vilnius communities:

1m² of Biodiversity



The 1m² Biodiversity Project is an initiative aimed at enhancing urban biodiversity through the creation of 1x1 meter raised bed designed to attract insects. Each bed also includes an informational sign highlighting the importance of biodiversity and its benefits. These biodiversity pockets have been set up in various locations across Vilnius, including Pilaitė (Vydūno Street), as well as territories in Šiaurinis Žvėrynas, Naujoji Vilnia, Rasos, and Verkiiai.

These raised beds are an excellent example of how biodiversity can be supported and promoted. These natural spaces require minimal maintenance—just watering when necessary. Plants such as rudbeckia, echinacea, catnip, bee balm, sage, lavender, and yarrow provide food for bees, butterflies, and bumblebees while also serving as a habitat for other beneficial insects. Each year, these vibrant plants will

bring joy to surroundings while helping sustain vital ecosystems.

Community Fridge initiative in Antakalnis

The initiative, which began at the end of June, marked this quarter as a trial period to observe how it functions and identify any challenges in its operation. This food-sharing station allows residents, as well as businesses like stores, bakeries, cafes, and restaurants, to leave surplus, edible food that others can take and consume. Alongside the fridge, open shelves provide space for sharing dry

goods, hygiene, and cleaning products.

Inspired by similar projects in Nordic countries, the initiative aims to reduce food waste and promote social justice by redistributing food to those in



need. The fridge is open 24/7 and maintained by local volunteers who ensure cleanliness and proper use. Despite initial concerns, the community fridge

quickly became a success, with active participation from local residents and businesses. It encourages thoughtful food consumption and sharing, addressing the broader global issue of food waste.

Community Garden in Verkiai

The Verkiai Community Garden, established on May 1st, 2024, marked its first season this year. The garden quickly became a vital space for its participants, who have expressed strong interest in continuing their involvement next year. Due to its success, there are plans to expand the garden by adding more raised beds, allowing even more community members to engage in this collaborative, sustainable initiative. The garden not only fosters community spirit but also promotes urban green spaces and sustainable living.



Books and Children Toys Exchange Spot in Markučiai



The Books and Children's Toys Exchange Spot in Markučiai is a small but impactful initiative that has successfully brought together a community. Through monthly meetings and a dedicated exchange station for books and children's toys, the project encourages families to share, swap, and connect. The initiative aims to continue fostering this sense of community by expanding its activities and ideas online, providing families with further inspiration for individual action and sustainable practices. The ongoing exchange of resources promotes both environmental consciousness and community engagement.

Community Actions in Ideas Garden Community Garden in Pilaitė

The Ideas Garden Community Garden in Pilaitė hosted several professional lectures on insects and biodiversity, attracting great interest from the community and nearby neighborhoods. An insect hotel was installed, and a noticeable increase in local biodiversity was observed, with more insects present in the area. Additionally, gardening activities were successfully carried out, further enriching the community's engagement with nature and sustainability.



Community Actions in Šiaurinis Žvėrynas



The community in Šiaurinis Žvėrynas revitalised an abandoned area between two residential buildings, transforming it into a vibrant space for children and teenagers, now called the Crane Garden.



Additionally, the community established a goods-sharing spot and continues to actively use a book-sharing house, fostering a spirit of collaboration and sustainability in the neighborhood.

Read more about the Vilnius activities and see their video at the [COPE website](https://urbact.eu): [Citizen-Led Green Transition in Vilnius | urbact.eu](https://urbact.eu)

Bilateral activities in Korydallos and Bistrița

During Korydallos Urbact Local Group (COPE) meeting on Thursday 5th of September 2024, the ULG group has welcomed the “Activate Students” project by school community of ștefan cel Mare Bistrița Secondary School (Romania). The ULG meeting had been scheduled to be hybrid, so different people from Romania and Greece could attend it. The team of “Active Students” includes students and teaching staff. More specifically, students: Feier Andrei, Mutu Alesia, Purghe Diana, Pacuraru Bogdan, Candale Cristian, Gherghel Elena, and teachers: Mrs. Luputi Monica and Mrs. Lazaric Anca. The project was articulated by the collaboration of Municipal employees specialized in EU Projects and was funded by Municipality of Bistrița. During the ULG meeting in Korydallos, Cristina Cudrec was attending as a representative of the Bistrița EU projects team. On the other hand, were attending the meeting members of Korydallos Municipal Committee of Gender Equity, several Municipal Councilors, teachers and students from Vocational High School of Korydallos. Mr. Nektarios Tsirmpas on behalf of Korydallos welcomed everyone to the Auditorium of Municipal Council meetings.

ULG meeting Participants (28):

- Project team (Bistrița & Korydallos)
- Ștefan cel Mare Bistrița Secondary School (Romania)
- Vocational High-School (Korydallos, Greece)
- Municipal equality committee
- Deputy Mayor for Transparency, E-Governance & Digital Convergence
- Municipal Councilors



The main idea of the project “Active Students” had grown up since last November in Korydallos meeting (CNM1st) through the ways the history of a city can feed the future plans of citizens. “How to promote the history of my city?” was the title of the contest in which students in Secondary School of Bistrița worked by being separated into teams and make a video about promoting the historical center of Bistrița. During the ULG meeting the projection of the history of the city was transformed into a projection of the city through the history of it. Additionally, through the methodology of involving people and their stories into the production of the knowledge about the historical center of Bistrița students were meeting the methodology of citizens engagement of COPE.

This methodological meeting has provoked an ongoing fermentation amongst several levels of knowledge for the two cities enriching the experience of the students, teachers, public servants, politicians, citizens, local planning, as well EU project understanding, extending the possibilities of deeper understanding on how citizens can feed the future planning for a city. During this meeting students from the Vocational High School of Korydallos have presented their work for COPE about designing names and logos for the reuse of a municipal building for upcoming professionals and had the opportunity the discuss with all participants for their experience and their ideas for the future.



3. Coming Up

Network level

November 29th : **Webinar on Circular Economy** by Expert Eleni Feleki

October - February 2024: **IAP development** 1:1 consultations with Ad Hoc Expert Marion Cugnet

28th – 29th of January: **Core Network Meeting #5** including Internal IAP Peer review.

October – November 2024: **MTR follow up** 1:1 meetings with LP and LE,

February 24th 2025: **Webinar on funding** tailored to the partners needs by Expert Marion Cugnet.

March 2025: **Cross network IAP Peer Review** with URBACT network Let’s Go Circular

URBACT level

September – December: NUP meetings across Europe

18-22 November: City Lab on energy

April-June 2025 application for Transfer Network opens (based on Good Practice, among other things)

8-10 April 2025: City Festival – open to actors also outside the networks (put it in the calendar).

March 2026: Final City Festival only for the participants in this round of networking

April-June 2026: Call for the next APN round (to be launched at City Festival 2026 New City Labs TBD by URBACT).



URBACT



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