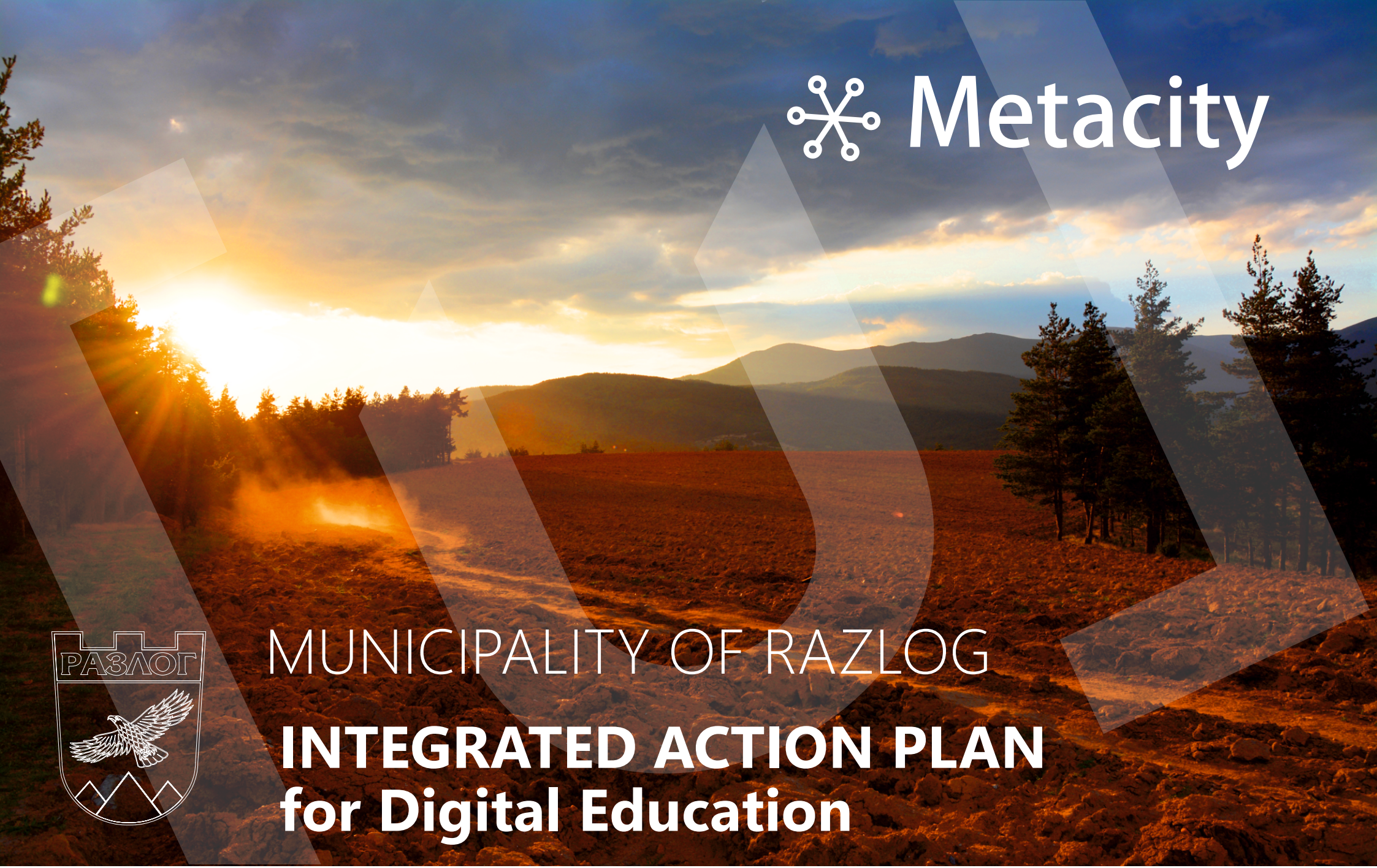

Metacity

MUNICIPALITY OF RAZLOG

INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN for Digital Education

URBACT

Co-funded by the European Union

Interreg

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POLITICAL STATEMENT

As Mayor of Razlog Municipality, I hereby reaffirm our firm political commitment to the Integrated Action Plan as a strategic instrument for the long-term sustainable development of our territory. This plan reflects not only the aspirations of our community but also our responsibility to align with the European Union's priorities for smart, green, and inclusive growth.

Razlog stands at a crossroads of tradition and innovation. We are determined to harness the potential of digital transformation, education, cultural heritage, tourism, and sustainable resource management in order to build a resilient future for our citizens. The Integrated Plan is more than a technical document – it is a shared vision that unites institutions, businesses, schools, and civil society in a common endeavor.

We fully recognize the transformative power of digitalization in education and governance, the importance of climate responsibility in every policy, and the need to foster social inclusion for all groups of our population. Our commitment is to ensure that no child, no family, and no community is left behind in this transition.

The Municipality of Razlog assumes political responsibility for the coordination, implementation, and monitoring of the Plan, while guaranteeing transparency, accountability, and participation at every stage. By mobilizing EU funds, national resources, and local partnerships, we will translate the plan's strategic goals into tangible outcomes for citizens.

This Plan embodies the European added value we aim to generate: stronger schools, empowered teachers, digitally skilled youth, sustainable infrastructure, and an engaged community ready to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

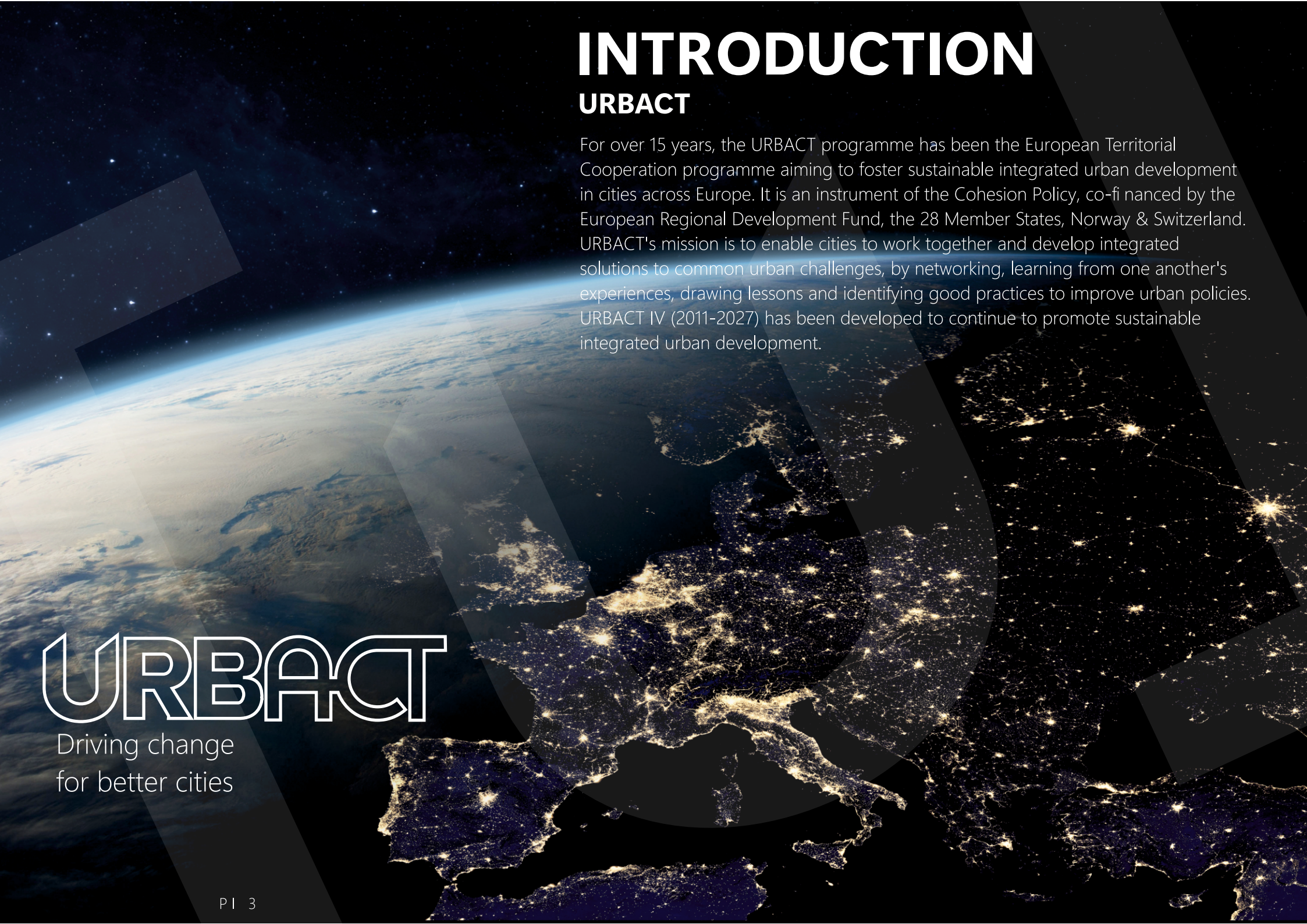
With this statement, I assure our citizens and our European partners that the Municipality of Razlog stands united and determined to turn this vision into lasting impact.

Eng. Krasimir Gerchev
Mayor of Razlog Municipality

INTRODUCTION

URBACT

For over 15 years, the URBACT programme has been the European Territorial Cooperation programme aiming to foster sustainable integrated urban development in cities across Europe. It is an instrument of the Cohesion Policy, co-fi nanced by the European Regional Development Fund, the 28 Member States, Norway & Switzerland. URBACT's mission is to enable cities to work together and develop integrated solutions to common urban challenges, by networking, learning from one another's experiences, drawing lessons and identifying good practices to improve urban policies. URBACT IV (2011-2027) has been developed to continue to promote sustainable integrated urban development.



Metacity

Virtual Solutions
for Real People

The METACITY network is built on tech-oriented cities and organizations in Europe that have already started the path of urban digitalization– and even lead it in their own countries, in areas such as IoT – and that want to build on past achievements and lessons learnt during the pandemic to face new digital challenges, anticipating change rather than reacting to it, and using new digital tools to facilitate citizens participation in the (meta) services of the future.

The Metacity project aims to increase competitiveness of small and medium tech-aware cities, benefi ting from the opportunity to enhance service effi ciency and citizen satisfaction provided by the metaverse. By integrating metaverse technologies, cities can create immersive digital environments for education, healthcare, tourism and public services, enabling streamlined communication, remote access to services, and personalized experiences, leveling the playing fi eld with larger cities. Metaverse-driven urban planning fosters innovation, economic growth, and ensures that citizens have access to cutting-edge solutions, ultimately improving their overall quality of life.

What is the Metaverse and what does it mean for common people?

In the Baseline study of the MetaCity project the lead expert **Eurico Neves** gives the following defi nition:
"In quite colloquial terms, the 'metaverse' is a virtual, computer-emulated, universe: a network of 3D virtual worlds focused on social and economic connection, and that may be explored through hardware such as a virtual reality headset. In the metaverse you can drive a Formula 1 car, sail across the ocean or walk a thin wood board 200 meters high. But you can also walk through a digital twin of your city and experience – almost as in real life - how new urban developments will be like, and consequently approve or disapprove. As such it may be a crucial tool for citizen engagement and participation."

CURRENT SITUATION

MUNICIPALITY OF RAZLOG

In the picture:
Rila National Park, captured from Pirin Mountain

Located in southwestern Bulgaria, 155 km south of the capital Sofia, the Municipality of Razlog borders two of the country's three national parks—Rila and Pirin. Pirin National Park also encompasses the Bayuvi Dupki Djindjiritsa Reserve, a UNESCO World Natural Heritage site.

Razlog's economy is driven by trade, tourism (including skiing, golf, spa and wellness, nature hikes, and cultural tourism), the processing industry, high-tech sectors, renewable energy, and agriculture.

With its breathtaking landscapes, rich biodiversity, and pristine nature, Razlog is a key hub for ecological and mountain tourism. Its long-lasting snow cover, along with neighboring Bansko, makes the region a prime destination for winter sports. Tourism is well-distributed across Razlog's urban center, suburban areas, and surrounding villages.

The processing industry, concentrated in the town of Razlog, specializes in pellet production, woodworking and furniture manufacturing, construction materials, and electronic components.

In 2024, the largest battery investment in Southeastern Europe was established within the municipality. A 33-megawatt photovoltaic power plant near Razlog is equipped with a 55 MWh energy storage system, significantly boosting the efficiency and reliability of renewable energy.

Agriculture and forestry hold strong development potential, particularly in organic farming, which is closely linked to rural tourism. Although large-scale construction peaked before 2009, real estate development and sales remain a vital part of the local economy.

With an education rate exceeding 50%, the municipality continues to invest in education and smart technologies to strengthen its six key economic sectors. Razlog is committed to fostering innovation and sustainable growth through education and technological advancement.

The unemployment rate stands at 6.9%, primarily affecting young people seeking their first job. To address this, training programs are in place to boost productivity and help individuals find the right sector to apply their skills.

ENVIRONMENT INSIGHTS

In the picture:
Pirin National Park - a UNESCO World Natural Heritage site

Designated protected areas

Krushe
Preservation of the only deposit of Archangelic Laperpiciun in Bulgaria

Kyoshkata
Ensuring the protection of a karst spring from which begins the river Yazo

Bayuvi Dupki – Dzhindzhiritsa
Conservation of rare Fir tree species and the diverse wildlife of the area.

Climate
Continental-Mediterranean

860 m.
Average altitude

-3°C
Average in January

19°C
Average in July

800 - 1200 mm.
Average annual rain

10
Main rivers

506,47 km²
Total Area

75%
Forest

8
Settlements

over 70
Hot mineral springs

2821 m a.s.l.
highest mountain peak

EDUCATION IN RAZLOG

The Municipality of Razlog is a leading educational center, known for its strong innovative academic programs, dedicated faculty, and community impact. Schools here provide high-quality education, preparing students for success and reinforcing Razlog's role in Bulgaria's educational landscape.

Among them, "Brothers Peter and Ivan Kanazirevi" Secondary School stands out as a pillar of excellence, offering innovative teaching, a rich curriculum, and a focus on student growth. It fosters academic achievement, leadership, and community engagement, shaping the next generation.

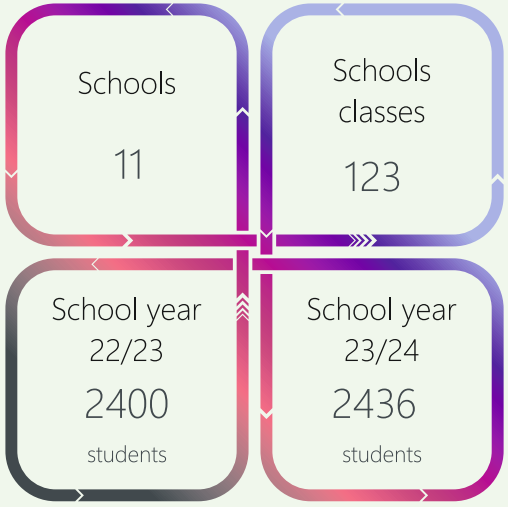
In Bulgaria, school education starts at 7 years old, though 6-year-olds may enroll if ready. It is divided into primary (Grades 1–7) and secondary (Grades 8–12) education, with general and vocational tracks. Schools include primary, basic, combined, high schools, specialized, and vocational schools.

State-Owned Schools

State schools in Razlog focus on vocational education, with vocational high schools serving as key training centers.

Municipal Schools

Municipal schools receive state funding based on student numbers, class sizes, and school type.



School	Number classes			Number students		
	School year			School year		
	22/23	23/24	Contrast	22/23	23/24	Contrast
Primary school "Snts. Kiril I Metodi"- Razlog	7	7	0	127	129	2
Primary school "Yane Sandanski"- Razlog	6	7	1	110	124	14
Grade school "Nikola Parapunov"- Razlog	17	17	0	396	406	10
Grade school "Snts. Kiril I Metodi"- Bachevo	7	7	0	92	92	0
Grade school "Bratya Miladinovi"- Eleshnitsa	7	7	0	80	74	-6
Grade school "Neofit Rilski"- Gorno Draglishte	6	6	0	70	65	-5
Grade school "Paisiy Hilendarski"- Banya	12	11	-1	205	187	-18
Secondary School "Brothers Petyr and Ivan Kanazirevi"- Razlog	26	26	0	590	615	25
Vocational High School "Nikola Stoychev"- Razlog	10	10	0	194	197	3
Vocational High School for transport- Razlog	15	15	0	282	296	14
Vocational High School for Mechanization of agriculture	10	10	0	254	251	-3
Total:	**123**	**123**	0	**2400**	**2436**	36

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Razlog Municipality has developed the current Integrated action plan for digitalization of education in order to supplement and contribute for the realization of main priorities defi ned in existing key strategic document and pave the way for further steps up to 2027 focused on the city's sustainable development and growth:

- **Plan for integrated development of Razlog Municipality 2021-2027** - major strategic document that sets up objectives and priorities for sustainable and integrated social and economic development of the Municipality for the 7-year period.

The vision of the Plan for integrated development of Razlog Municipality 2021-2027 is „The Municipality of Razlog shall be a prosperous valley, blessed with unique nature and preserving local traditions and rich cultural heritage, a preferred and loved home of entrepreneurial and hospitable people, attracting investors and visitors from all around Europe". This planning document defi ne the objectives, investment potential and priorities for sustainable and integrated socio-economic development of the municipality for the period 2021-2027 aiming to achieve a major transformation of the city and its urban environment, creating a smart city.

- **Smart Razlog** - fi rst municipal strategy for digital transition („Smart Razlog"), developed under the "IoTXchange" project, the URBACT network.

- **Integrated plan for urban regeneration and development of Razlog** - instrument for urban planning for sustainable and balanced development of the urban territory of the city. Three zones of intervention are identifi ed within this document: zone of public, economic and social impact

- **Strategy for local development of the Local Initiative Group - Razlog for the LEADER approach**. The Vison of the strategy is "Increasing the quality of life through further development, diversifi cation and balance of the socioeconomic activities on the territory of the Municipality of Razlog".

- **The Municipality of Razlog is covered by the relevant operational programs financed under ERDF and ESF, Rural Development Program (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development), National Recovery and Sustainability Plan.**

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

According to the Plan for Integrated Development of the Municipality of Razlog 2021-2027, 3 main strategic goals have been identified:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

Human capital: Improving the living environment and the quality of life through the improvement of public and public spaces and the provision of quality public services provided by a competent and prepared municipal administration.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

Economic development: Development of the local economy, promotion of entrepreneurship and innovation by utilizing the specifi c local potential.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

Environmental protection and development of the technical infrastructure: Achieving ecological development of the territory, through environmental protection, development and modernization of the technical infrastructure and implementation of measures for tackling climate change.

In the picture:
Dautovo Lake, the karst ridge of the Pirin Mountains, and the Razlog Valley

RELEVANT EXISTING STRATEGIES AND POLICIES.

On local level, the trends as far as digitalization is concerned are more or less similar to the ones observed on national level. Over the past decade, the Bulgarian Government has identifi ed ICT and eGovernment as priorities and has invested heavily in ICT. With the passing of the Electronic Government Act in 2008, Bulgaria highlighted its commitment to transitioning to a more digital government and society. The Government has since procured numerous large IT systems to support a government cloud and other ICT systems across government. While there has been signifi cant progress in implementing the national strategic objectives on eGovernment, signifi cant challenges remain. The provision of ICT and/or digital public services in the public administration remains decentralized and is characterized by ineffi cient spending, divergent practices and standards, limited and ad hoc inter-sectoral coordination and planning, and fragmentation of ICT teams.

Key strategic documents at national level in the context of the MetaCity project:

“Digital transformation of Bulgaria for the period 2020-2030" National strategic document

The document defi nes the vision and objectives of the digital transformation policy of the Republic of Bulgaria for the period up to 2030, as a generalized political framework, which includes the National Program "Digital Bulgaria 2025", the priorities of the "National Development Program BULGARIA 2030", as well as a number of other national strategic documents with a technological component covering the period 2020-2030. It takes into account the goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the use of new technologies to achieve them, as well as strategic documents of the European Commission "Europe fi t for the digital age", "Building Europe's digital future”, "New Industrial Strategy for Europe" and others.

„Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027)“

European Union (EU)

The Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027) is a renewed European Union (EU) policy initiative that sets out a common vision of high-quality, inclusive and accessible digital education in Europe, and aims to support the adaptation of the education and training systems of Member States to the digital age.

„Strategic Framework for the Development of Education, Training, and Learning in the Republic of Bulgaria (2021 - 2030)“

Republic of Bulgaria,
Ministry of Education and Science

The Strategic Framework for the Development of Education, Training, and Learning in the Republic of Bulgaria (2021 – 2030) has been prepared by the Ministry of Education and Science in collaboration with stakeholders. This strategic document and the Strategy for the Development of Higher Education in the Republic of Bulgaria for the period from 2020 to 2030 outline the overall framework for the development of education, training, and learning in the Republic of Bulgaria up to 2030.

CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

Population:

18,966, with 68.9% working-age (15-64), ensuring a solid labor force.

Youth (0-14):

13.9%, highlighting the need for digital education.

Elderly (65+):

17.1%, increasing demand for social services.

Urban vs. Rural:

59% live in the municipal center, requiring rural digital access improvements.

Workforce & Growth:

23.4% at working age, but -5.8‰ population decline, stressing the need for adaptive education and vocational training.

CONTEXTUAL FACTORS ANALYSIS

The Municipality of Razlog faces several demographic and socio-economic challenges and opportunities that influence its development, particularly in the context of digitalization in education. Below is an analysis of key contextual factors based on demographic data:

1. Demographic Structure

- The municipality has a total population of 18,966 inhabitants.
- The majority of the population (68.9%) falls within the 15-64 age group, a key demographic for economic productivity, social development, and demographic sustainability. This group plays a vital role in the labor market, driving innovation and contributing significantly to economic growth.
- The 0-14 age group comprises 13.9%, indicating a relatively small but significant number of students who will benefit from educational digitalization efforts.
- The elderly population (65+) makes up 17.1%, which suggests a growing need for social services and intergenerational programs.

2. Urban vs. Rural Distribution

- 59% of residents live in the municipal center, meaning infrastructure investments (such as digital education tools) will have the most immediate impact in the urban area.
- Rural areas may require additional focus on accessibility, including internet connectivity and digital literacy programs.

3. Economic and Workforce Factors

- 23.4% of the population is at working age, which presents opportunities for vocational training, business-oriented education, and skills development programs.
- The negative population growth rate (-5.8‰) suggests potential long-term challenges related to workforce availability and school enrollment decline, reinforcing the need for adaptive educational policies.

4. Implications for Digitalization in Education

- The aging workforce and population decline highlight the necessity of preparing young people with digital skills to drive economic growth and attract business investment.
- Digital tools can bridge urban-rural disparities, ensuring equal access to quality education for all students, regardless of location.
- Entrepreneurship and business-oriented education could help counteract population decline by encouraging youth retention and economic development.

Conclusion

The Municipality of Razlog's demographic trends emphasize the importance of investing in digital education, workforce development, and infrastructure to sustain economic growth and counteract demographic challenges. A strategic focus on business-oriented education, digital skills training, and technology-driven learning will help equip the younger generation for future opportunities while addressing workforce needs.

STRENGTHS

- Relatively high IT literacy, high educational level
- Potential for development of education and tourism in the development of alternative forms.
- Good broadband access within region and availability of public hotspots.
- Relatively high level of usage of internet and digital technologies on behalf of the local population.
- Sufficient capacity of the municipal administration and local actors to develop and implement projects and attract funding from various sources.
- A good track of investment in innovative technologies within the educational sector and availability of IT subjects within student's curriculum.
- High level of understand of local political leadership of the benefits of digital transition and clear readiness for adoption.

WEAKNESSES

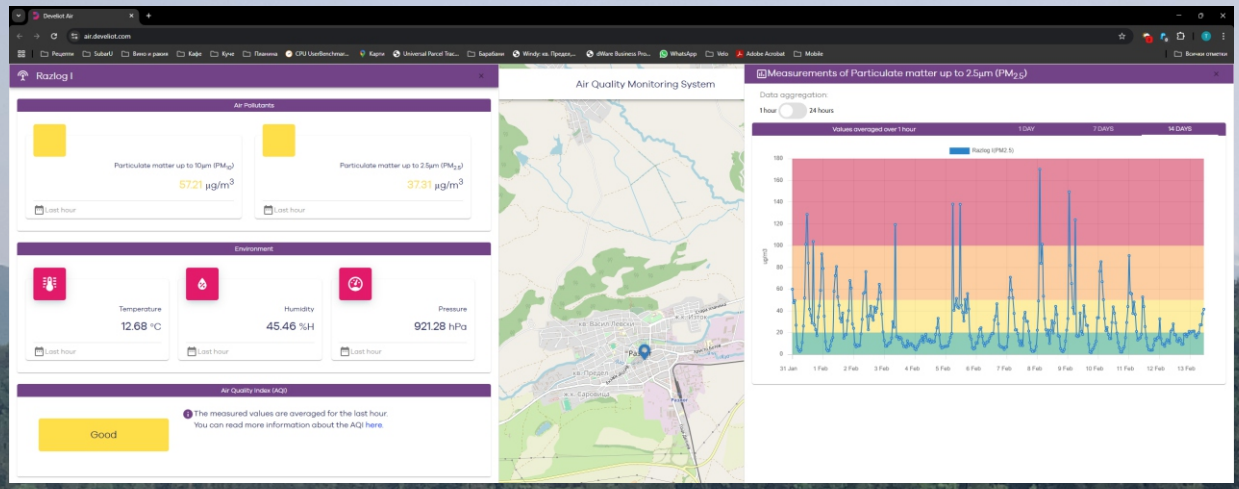
- Low level of penetration of digital solutions in all levels including public administration, tourism development and promotion, public security, environmental management, etc.
- Lack of sufficient sources of environmental data.
- Lack of awareness amongst the local population on the opportunities and benefits of digital transition.
- Lack of sufficient local resources to invest in the test innovative digital solutions.
- Lack of sufficient investments from the private sector.
- Lack of sufficient mechanisms for communication and collaboration between different local stakeholders – local government, business sector, education, NGOs.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Clear opportunity to utilize the benefits of digital transition and innovation in education to contribute to the development of priority sectors that are key to the local economy
- Clear opportunity to utilize the benefits of digital transition to solving long-standing local challenges including monitoring of air quality, environmental data collation, protection of local assets and resources, etc.
- Digital innovations (VR, AR, Smart city solutions) are favored in a number of available funding sources within the 2021-2027 programing period.
- The Municipality is well positioned to leverage upon the achievements of other cities within the EU through IoTxchange network and Metacity network.
- "Easy Wins" – the testing and adoption of several quick solutions will strongly contribute towards raising local awareness and demonstrating the potential for adoption of metaverse opportunities in education, tourism and etc.

THREATS

- Current political situation in Bulgaria leading to signifcant delay in the starting the implementation of funding instruments – Operational programmes, National Recovery and Resilience Plan.
- Potential opposition on the implementation of digital transition and innovation in education due to ineffective communication.
- ICT infrastructure is developing too slowly to meet demands.
- Digital transition and Metaverse development is not clearly articulate as national priority.
- Persistent Digital Skill Gaps - by 2030, only 52% of Bulgarians may have basic digital skills, far below the EU's 80% target, hindering education digitalisation.
- Societal Resistance to Change - conservative attitudes and limited support for change may slow the adoption of digital tools in education.



Since 2021 year, Razlog is monitoring the urban air quality in real time through the test installation of an Air Station with sensing key for air quality indicators along with environmental data which was SSA under IoTXchange project, URBACT Program. In 2022, and as a result from the participation in the URBACT network "IoTXchange", Razlog developed its fi rst municipal strategy for digital transition (Smart Razlog). At present, Razlog has over 55% fi ber optic coverage in all Municipal territory, as well as 5G connectivity.

IoTXchange
CONNECTING CITIES FOR BETTER LIFE

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

The Urbact Local Group (ULG)

The Urbact Local Group (ULG), in the context of MetaCity project, is the cornerstone of the development of the IAP. It brings together representatives from various stakeholders - ncluding local administration and city council, external experts, schools, the local development agency, and business representatives - fostering a unique collaboration, focused on international learning, evaluating the Small-Scale Action, and shaping the IAP.

Razlog's ULG is notably diverse and well-represented. So far, three ULG meetings have been held, with a total of 45 participants. The full group includes:

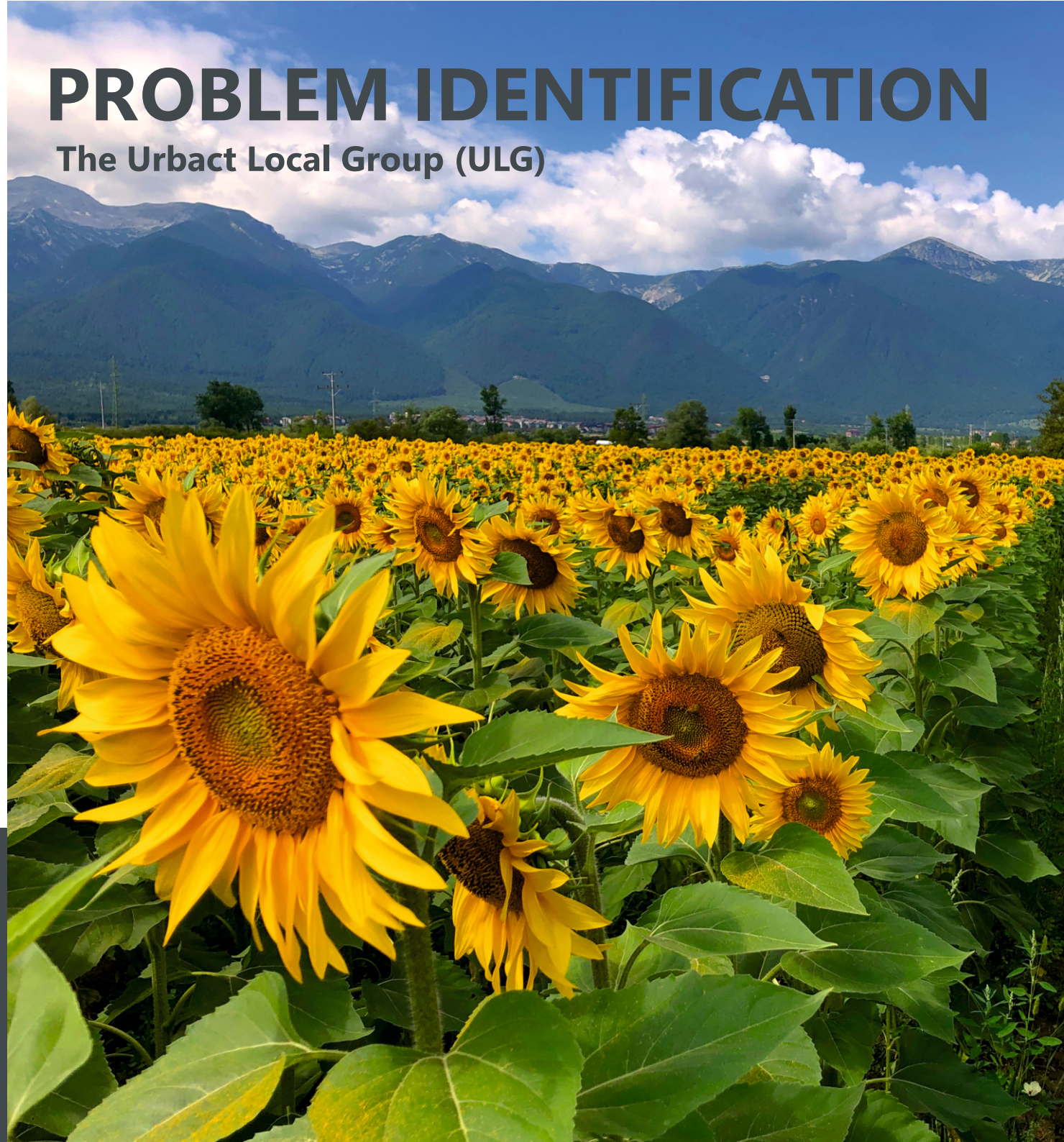
·Local government representatives:

- Mayor of Razlog Municipality
- Two deputy mayors
- Chairperson of the City Council
- Experts from multiple municipal departments

External participants:

- Teachers and students from three high schools
- IT specialists from private companies
- Representatives from NGOs

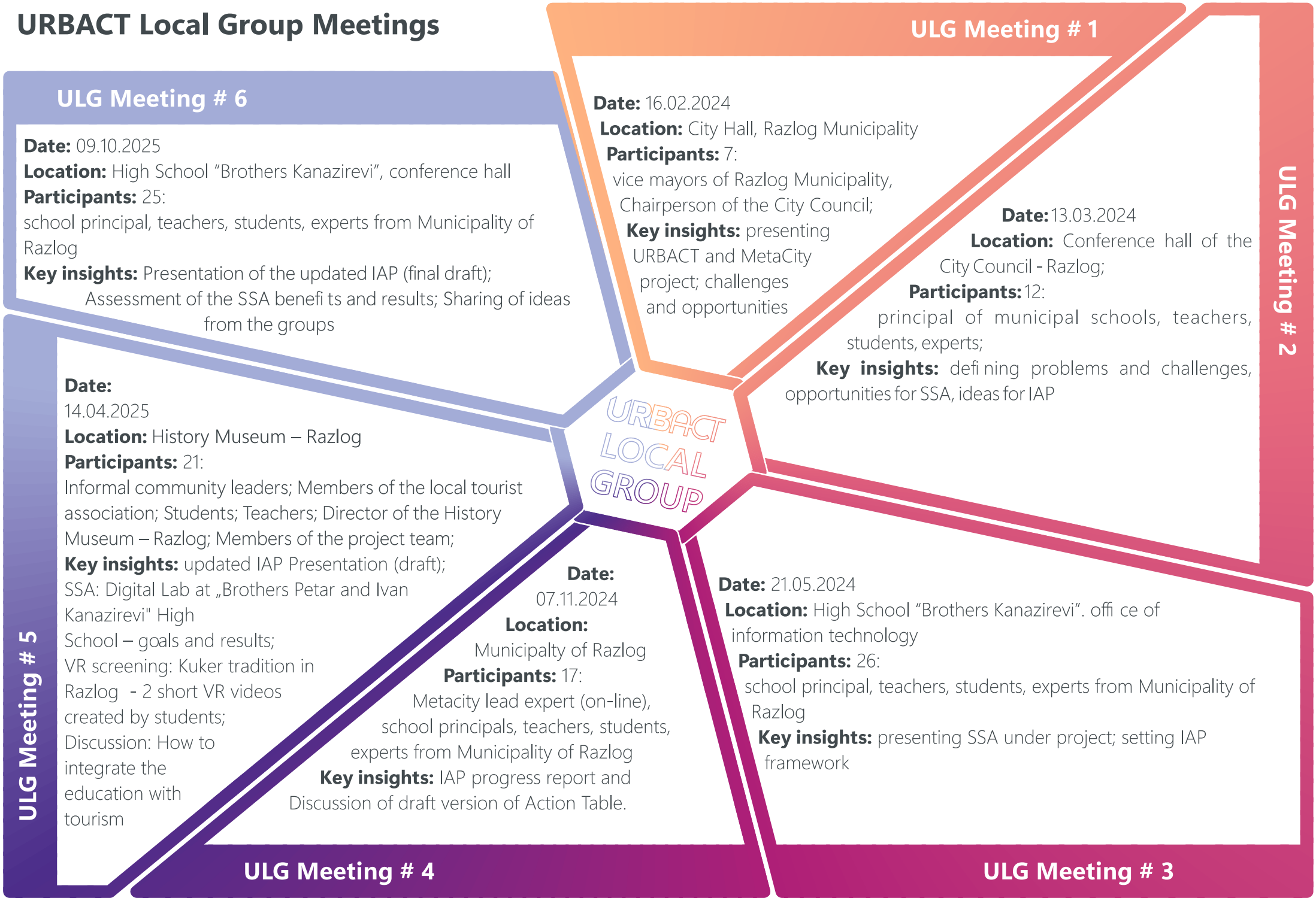
By expanding decision-making beyond policymakers and actively involving those directly impacted by urban development, the process fosters inclusive dialogue, drives innovation, and strengthens local ownership of proposed actions. Through the successful engagement of diverse local actors, we have developed more responsive and effective urban policies that directly address community needs.



ULG WORKING SCHEME

1. **Building a Strong Local Stakeholder Network**
   - o Clearly define the roles of each participant.
   - o Structured and transparent communication flow within the ULG.
   - o Ensure active participation and progress tracking.
2. **Assessing Local Needs and Challenges**
   - o Organize focus groups to gather insights from them.
   - o Identify key local challenges related to digital education transformation and innovation.
   - o Use data to define priorities for the Integrated Action Plan (IAP).
3. **Local Knowledge Exchange and Capacity Building**
   - o Conduct training sessions for municipal staff, educators, students and business representatives.
   - o Promote collaboration between schools and private IT companies to foster innovation.
   - o Leverage local expertise to co-develop digital solutions.
4. **Testing and Evaluating Small-Scale Actions (SSA)**
   - o Implement small pilot initiatives to test digital solutions.
   - o Collect feedback from to assess impact and feasibility.
   - o Use evaluation results to refine and scale up successful actions.
5. **Co-Designing the Integrated Action Plan (IAP)**
   - o Develop a shared vision for Razlog's digital development.
   - o Ensure the plan aligns with local policies and community priorities.
   - o Engage all stakeholders in co-creating specific actions and solutions.
6. **Implementing and Securing Local Support**
   - o Identify funding opportunities and partnerships for implementation.
   - o Integrate pilot initiatives into municipal development strategies.
   - o Foster long-term commitment from local governmentq educators and businesses.
7. **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Sustainability**
   - o Define key performance indicators to track progress.
   - o Mechanism for continuous feedback and plan adaptation.
   - o Ensure the sustainability beyond the project's duration.

URBACT Local Group Meetings



ULG STAKEHOLDERS LIST

Governance & Administration

1. Krasimir Gerchev – Mayor of the Municipality of Razlog
2. Hristo Zaikov – Deputy mayor for budget and fi nance
3. Slavcho Farfarov – Deputy Mayor for local development, programs and projects
4. Ivan Dimitrov – Chairman of the Municipal Council
5. Rumen Djambazki - Director of the Directorate "Territory Planning, Construction, Programs and Projects"
6. The MetaCity project team - Zlatka Stoycheva, Todor Damianov, Magdalena Parapunova.

Public Organizations

7. Rositsa Tumbeva - Principal of "Kanazirevi Brothers" High School .
8. Sonia Krancheva - Deputy Principal of "Kanazirevi Brothers" High School
9. Lyubomira Naydenova - teacher at the Vocational High School for Agricultural Mechanization
10. Dimitar Markov - digital technology teacher
11. Veselka Kozareva - digital technology teacher
12. Petar Petrov - digital technology teacher
13. Krasimira Hadjieva - science teacher
14. Velichka Kostadinova - science teacher
15. 25 students from grades 10, 11 and 12

Civil Society Organisations

16. Nadejda Hadziivanova – NGO "Destination Razlog"
17. George Farfarov – NGO "Eco Razlog"
18. Veneta Naneva – GM of Local Action Group - Razlog under LEADER approach
19. Hristina Manova – Director of Historical Museum

Business Community

20. Geoge Tsvetkov – Economic Development Agency – Bansko
21. Kostadin Tsakov – GM of "Users Services" Ltd - Bansko
22. Radostina Stoilova – IT expert, founder and manager of MindHub Coding School - Razlog

After consultation with its ULG, which members come up with the idea, the Municipality adopted the topic of Creating Digital Lab for VR and Live Streaming, since one of the main problems faced in the city is the digital illiteracy and lack of IT experts.

The ULG had the opportunity to learn from the challenges and ideas that has been developed throughout the other partner municipalities. In addition, the stakeholders provided valuable input in terms of selection of the topic and vision of the IAP. In summary, the collaboration among these stakeholders is crucial for developing an IAP for Successful and modern education in the municipality of Razlog

Their joint efforts support a shared vision for development of IAP. Another major contributor to the present IAP was the international exchange made possible through the MetCity Project.one of the city's key challenges: digital illiteracy and the shortage of IT experts.Through collaboration with partner municipalities, the ULG had the opportunity to learn from their challenges and innovative solutions. Additionally, stakeholders played a vital role in selecting the topic and shaping the vision of the IAP. Their collective efforts are essential in developing an Integrated Action Plan (IAP) aimed at fostering successful and modern education in Razlog.Furthermore, a significant contributor to the current IAP was the international exchange facilitated by the MetaCity Project, which provided valuable insights and best practices to enhance the municipality's digital and educational strategies.

TESTING ACTION

FIRST DIGITAL LAB FOR VR AND LIVE STREAMING

The first digital laboratory for virtual reality and live streaming was created and built, in "Brothers Kanazirevi" High School in Razlog, thanks to the Metacity project. The digital lab is emerging as a key catalyst for student development in an era where technology is turning education into a personalized and engaging experience.

*Actual wall decoration in the lab

URBACT METACITY DIGITAL LAB VR & LIVESTREAM

BENEFITS

1
VR content creation.

The integration of virtual reality into the educational process is innovative. The Digital Lab empowers students to create VR experiences that enhance course materials.
This undertaking is closely related to the second priority area of impact of the Razlog Integrated Action Plan – the development of a digital (VR) tourism product. By creating VR tours for the History museum in Razlog, the students demonstrate a variety of crafts for historical eras, traditions and culture, thus enriching the cultural heritage of the region for tourists to explore and appreciate.

2
Practical Application of Knowledge.

The digital lab provides a real environment where students can apply the technical and creative knowledge, they have gained in video recording, directing, technical equipment operation, graphic design, video editing, and scriptwriting. They also face live streaming challenges in front of an audience.

3
Live Broadcasting of Events.

The digital laboratory offers the possibility of live broadcasting of various events, gatherings, and lectures within and outside the school premises. This not only widens the scope of the audience, but also enables students to actively participate in the organization and conduct of such events, contributing to the community by promoting the region.

4
Professional Orientation.

Through work in the digital lab, students gain real experience and insight into working in the field of digital technologies. This enables them to understand if they want to pursue a career in this field and to prepare for it while still in school.

5
Trainings and master classes

The presence of a digital laboratory enables IT experts to conduct lectures and master classes in the field of programming and digital technologies.

Solution for solving the problem of lack of IT experts and digital illiteracy:

Ultimately, establishing a digital lab for VR and live streaming in school not only broadens students' technological horizons but also equips them with essential skills for a seamless transition into the professional world.

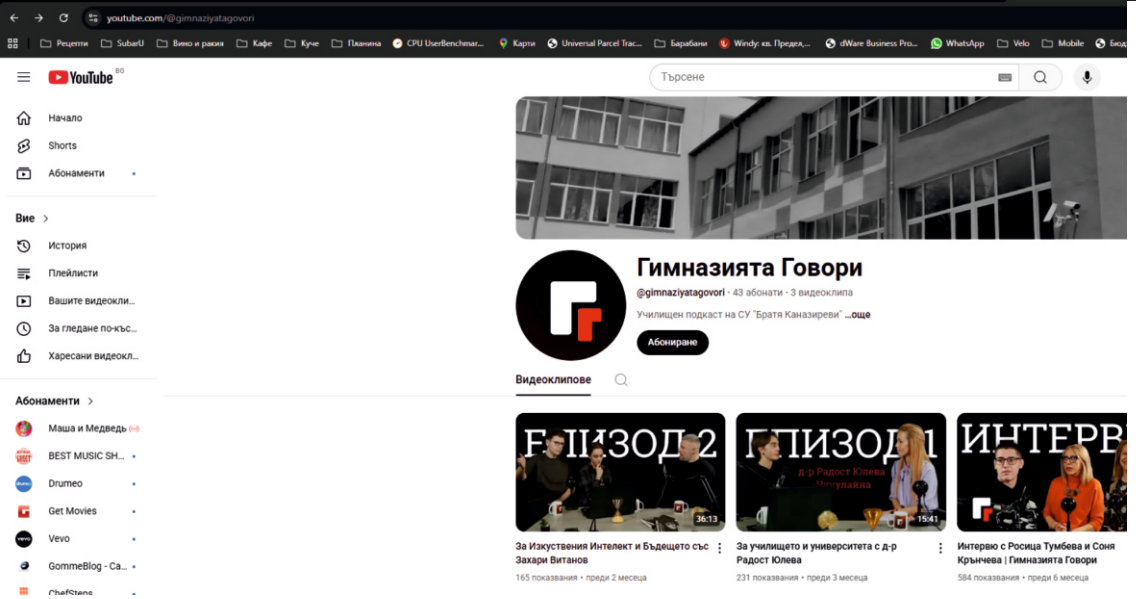
This initiative directly addresses the shortage of IT specialists and the growing demand for digital expertise in Razlog and the surrounding region, fostering a new generation of skilled professionals ready to meet the challenges of the digital age.

Implementation level:

Completed

Next Steps:

Razlog municipality intends to build more digital laboratories in other schools in its territory if this small experiment is successful.



1

News production and school events coverage

Students are already producing school news segments and live broadcasts of events, ensuring broader visibility of the school's activities and strengthening community engagement.

2

Virtual Reality cultural heritage product

One of the most notable achievements is the creation of a VR reconstruction of the traditional kukeri ritual. This immersive experience has become one of the most popular attractions in the History Museum of Razlog. Thousands of tourists have already had the opportunity to experience this unique Bulgarian tradition in an innovative way, combining heritage with modern digital tools.

3

Hands-on training for students

The Digital Lab provides students with practical skills in filming, editing, directing, and livestreaming, thus bridging the gap between theory and practice.

4

Beneft for the local community

The lab extends its impact beyond the school. By creating digital products such as VR cultural tours and livestreams of public events, students contribute to the promotion of Razlog as a modern, attractive destination. This not only strengthens local identity and pride, but also supports the tourism sector and cultural institutions by giving them new instruments to reach wider audiences.

5

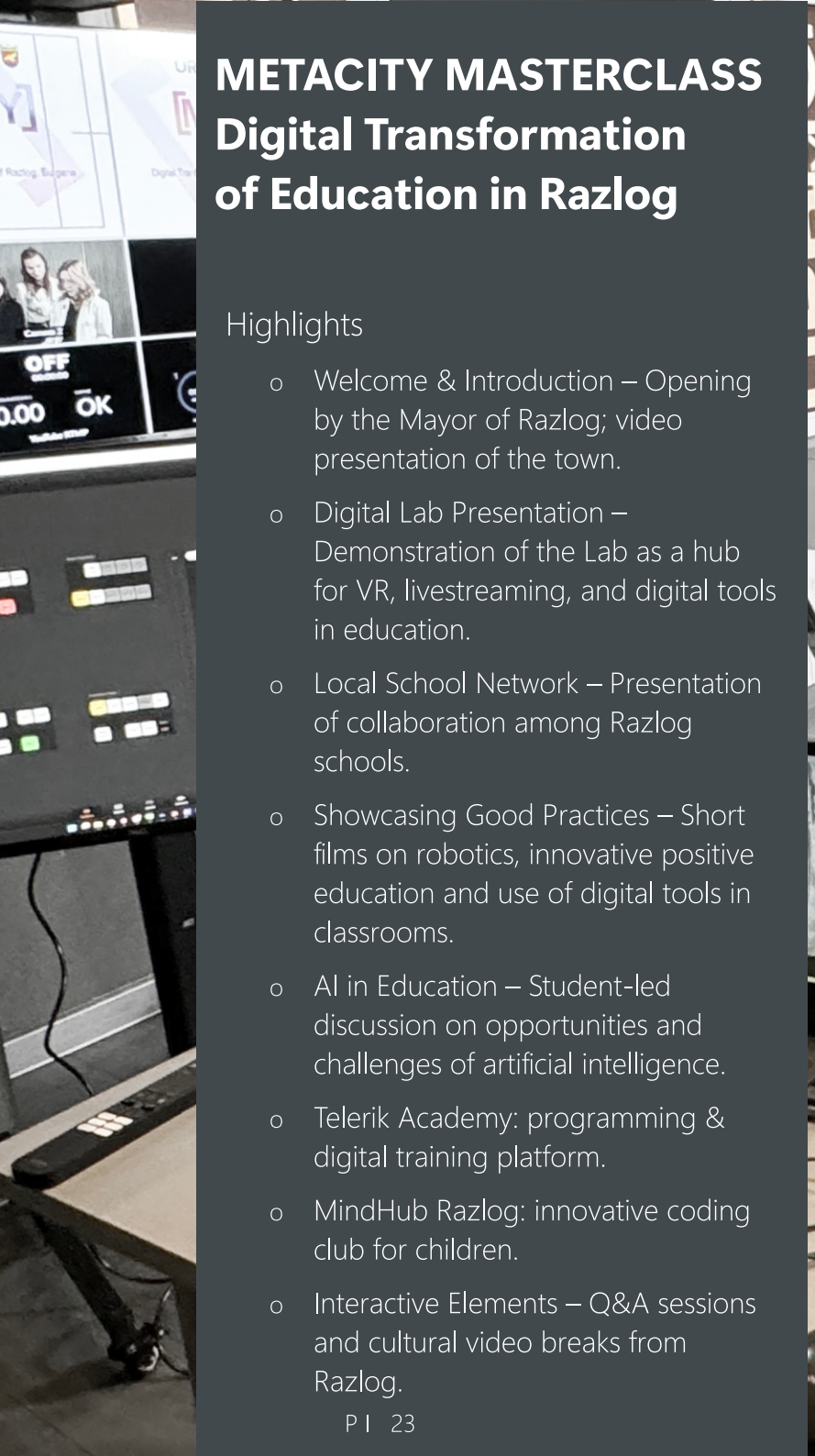
Synergy between education and digitalization

The project is a vivid example of how digital transformation in education can serve as a driver for community development. The integration of VR and livestreaming into the school curriculum equips young people with advanced digital skills, while at the same time creating resources that enrich the cultural and social environment of Razlog. In this way, the Digital Lab operates as a bridge between innovative education and regional development, multiplying the positive effects for both students and the community.

Through these results, the Small-Scale Action has proven its impact not only in education, but also in tourism development, cultural promotion, and community empowerment, fully in line with the priorities of Razlog's Integrated Action Plan.

FROM TESTING TO IMPACT
Digital Lab Results

The Digital Lab for VR and Livestreaming at 'Brothers Kanazirevi' Secondary School has already delivered tangible results that contribute directly to both the educational process and the cultural life of the community. Most notably, it led to the launch of a municipal funding program for digital learning spaces, with an annual budget of €50,000.



METACITY MASTERCLASS Digital Transformation of Education in Razlog

Highlights

- Welcome & Introduction – Opening by the Mayor of Razlog; video presentation of the town.
- Digital Lab Presentation – Demonstration of the Lab as a hub for VR, livestreaming, and digital tools in education.
- Local School Network – Presentation of collaboration among Razlog schools.
- Showcasing Good Practices – Short films on robotics, innovative positive education and use of digital tools in classrooms.
- AI in Education – Student-led discussion on opportunities and challenges of artificial intelligence.
- Telerik Academy: programming & digital training platform.
- MindHub Razlog: innovative coding club for children.
- Interactive Elements – Q&A sessions and cultural video breaks from Razlog.

The second METACITY Masterclass, focused on the digital transformation of education in Razlog, showcasing the integration of VR, AI, robotics, and programming into the learning process. The event was streamed from the newly established Digital Lab for Livestream and VR at "Brothers Kanazirevi" High School.

Through the Masterclass we:

- Showcased innovative digital solutions (VR, AI, robotics, coding) in local education.
- Validated the Testing Action model as an effective tool for educational innovation and community engagement.
- Mobilized students, teachers, IT experts, and local institutions, ensuring strong stakeholder participation.
- Demonstrated how digitalization in education fosters synergies with community development and the cultural promotion of Razlog.
- Shared transferable inspiration and good practices with the entire METACITY network, supporting peer learning and encouraging other cities to explore the role of digital tools in urban planning and education.

INTEGRATED APPROACHED

TERRITORIAL INTEGRATION

Municipality of Razlog will share experience and good practices between neighbouring municipalities – Bansko, Belitsa, Ykoruda, Blagoevgrad. Through territorial integration, the neighboring municipalities – Bansko, Belitsa, Ykoruda, Blagoevgrad can create shared access to specialized educational programs, such as advanced digital courses, vocational training, and STEM initiatives that may be challenging for smaller municipalities to off er independently. This enhances educational access and equity, ensuring students across municipalities receive the same opportunities to develop as functionally literate, adaptive, and innovative citizens.

VERTICAL INTEGRATION

VERTICAL INTEGRATION

This integrated approach involves the close collaboration of schools, local government departments, and educational stakeholders to ensure that digital tools, teaching methodologies, and curriculum updates are consistently applied. By managing educational resources and policies in-house, the municipality can ensure that each school under its jurisdiction is equipped with state-of-the-art digital resources, infrastructure, and ongoing support for educators to foster a digitally fl uent environment.

Through this structure, Razlog aims to eliminate gaps in digital accessibility and educational standards across schools, ensuring that every young person has an equal opportunity to become a lifelong learner and contributing citizen in the digital age.

HORIZONTAL INTEGRATION

HORIZONTAL INTEGRATION

HORIZONTAL INTEGRATION

Municipality of Razlog will share experience and good practices between neighbouring municipalities – Bansko, Belitsa, Ykoruda, Blagoevgrad. Through horizontal integration, each department in the municipality will be inform about the IAP, also each school and educational institution in the municipality can share resources, best practices, and digital tools, helping to ensure consistency in the quality and accessibility of digital education. For example, a shared digital curriculum, jointly developed teacher training sessions, and collaborative events allow students and educators across the municipality to benefi t from the latest in digital education while building strong community

VERTICAL INTEGRATION

INTEGRATION BETWEEN 'HARD' AND 'SOFT' INVESTMENTS

The Municipality of Razlog's "Successful and Modern Education" project adopts an integrated approach that combines 'hard' (physical) and 'soft' (social) investments to create a comprehensive, sustainable digital educational environment. This integration ensures that both the physical infrastructure and the social components of education are developed in harmony to support the goals of functional literacy, adaptability, innovation, social responsibility, and lifelong learning for all students.

SOFT INVESTMENTS

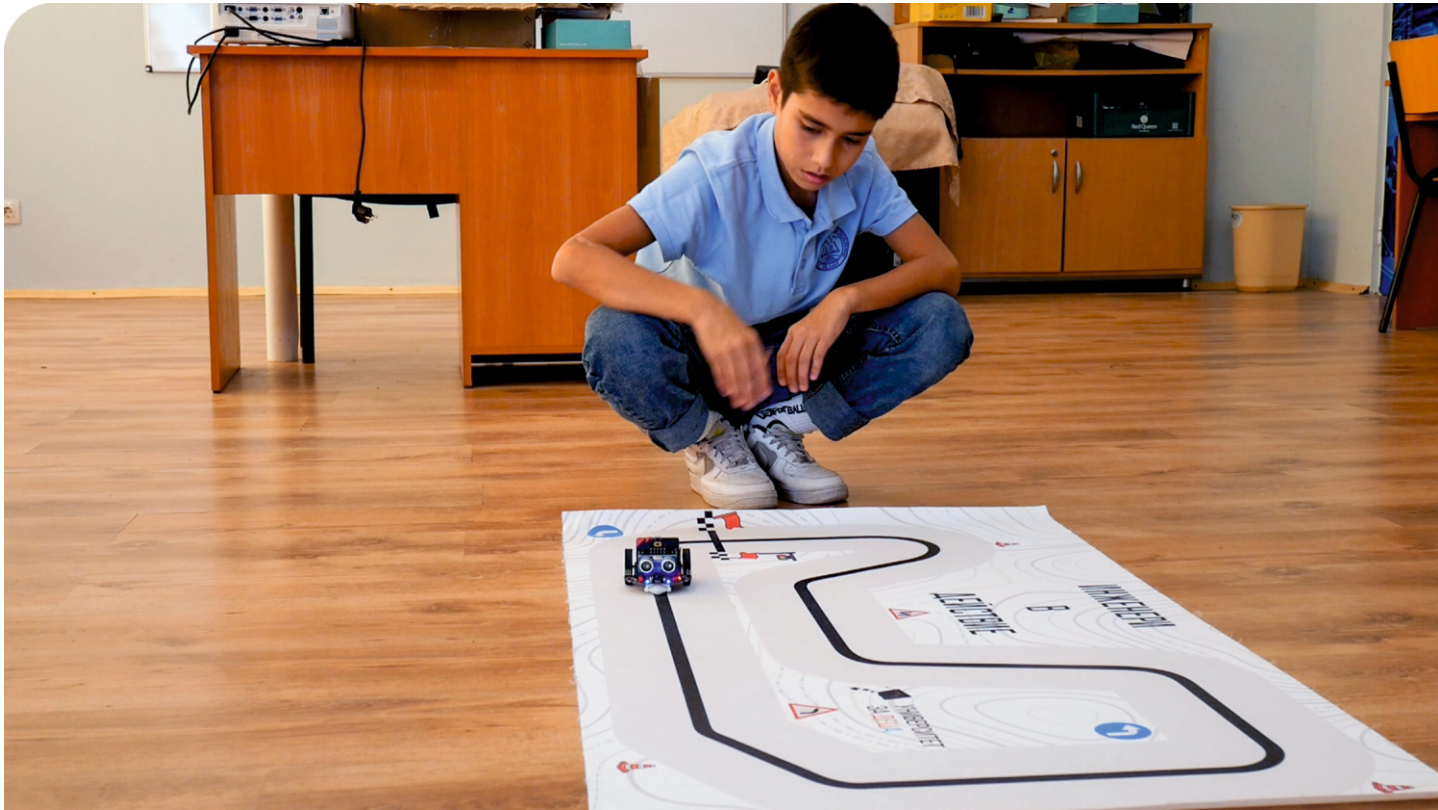
Soft investments, on the other hand, includes initiatives like teacher training in digital literacy and adaptive teaching methods, programs to promote social responsibility and active citizenship, and resources for student mental health and well-being.

HARD INVESTMENTS

Hard investments in the project include the development and modernization of digital infrastructure, such as high-speed internet, digital classrooms, interactive learning technologies, and updated school facilities. These physical improvements are essential for providing students and teachers with the tools needed to engage in a modern, technology-enhanced educational experience. Razlog's commitment to hard investments ensures that all schools within the municipality are equipped with cutting-edge technology and safe, functional spaces conducive to learning.

The integration of these hard and soft investments is critical to achieving the project's vision. For instance, technology alone cannot fulfill educational goals without trained teachers who can guide students in a digitally enriched environment. Similarly, social investments benefit from being supported by reliable infrastructure. This combination creates a sustainable ecosystem where digital literacy and social skills develop together, preparing students to thrive as lifelong learners in a dynamic, interconnected world.

INTEGRATION BETWEEN ‘HARD' (PHYSICAL) AND 'SOFT' (SOCIAL) INVESTMENTS



Priority 1:
Development of a favorable business environment, attraction of investments, promotion of entrepreneurship and innovation;

Priority 2:
Development of tourism and preservation of the local cultural and historical heritage;

Priority 3:
Improvement of the town of Razlog and the settlements within the municipality;

Priority 4:
Improving the infrastructure for providing public services and increasing their quality and scope;

Priority 5:
Increasing the capacity of the municipal administration and eff ective management;

Priority 6:
Development of environmentally friendly technical infrastructure;

Priority 7:
Protection of the environment, air quality and prevention of natural disasters;

Priority 8:
Energy efciency;

LOCAL PRIORITIES

In the picture:
Edelweiss (Leontopodium alpinum) - a rare and iconic flower, symbolizing Bulgaria's mountains. Protected by law, and picking it is strictly prohibited.

CURRENT LEVEL OF DIGITALIZATION

E-inclusion of Citizens in Local Government

Spatial Planning & Consulting

Social And Welfare Services

Education

Puiblic Transport

Road Infrastructure & Parking

Culture, Leisure & Sports

Tourism

PLAN OBJECTIVE

DIGITALIZATION OF EDUCATION

The Integrated Action Plan for Digital Education is a pioneering municipal initiative aimed at providing high-quality, innovative, accessible, and future-ready digital education. This plan seeks to create a comprehensive, community-wide effort that ensures all residents, regardless of background, can benefit from digital learning opportunities.

To achieve this, the local government, will work to develop a highly effective digital education ecosystem. This initiative will equip students and professionals with the skills needed for the digital economy, fostering innovation, adaptability, and competitiveness in an increasingly technology-driven world.

A key focus of the plan is promoting equality and inclusion. Razlog Municipality aims to support training programs that enable individuals to rapidly and effectively adapt to emerging digital environments, including the Metaverse.

Furthermore, the action plan aligns with European standards for digital education, ensuring that the local education system reaches high technical benchmarks and remains competitive on the European and global stage. This initiative will not only modernize education in Razlog but also position the municipality as a leader in digital transformation and innovation.

LETTER FROM THE FUTURE

Greetings from the future!

I am reaching out to you across time, a voice carrying gratitude, hope, and energy.

I once sat where you sit now, full of curiosity and wonder, experiencing the first steps of digital learning.

Today, I am thriving in a world that is more connected, dynamic, and full of possibilities than I could have imagined back then. And I know that everything I am today—my confidence, my independence, my ability to learn, create, and connect—was shaped by the digital education you are building right now.

From this future, I can see how every effort you make, every idea you nurture, and every opportunity you embrace matters.

Digital education is more than a skill.

Digital education is a bridge to inclusion, empowerment, and self-discovery. It opens doors to knowledge, strengthens communities, and gives voice to those who might otherwise be left behind. What you are doing today creates a foundation for lives full of curiosity, courage, and innovation. It is shaping not just individuals, but entire societies capable of learning, growing, and adapting together.

I want to thank you, from this future, for believing in the power of learning and for daring to imagine a world where every person can participate, contribute, and flourish. The path you are creating is bright and full of hope. It carries the promise that no one will be excluded, that every mind can shine, and that the future is not something we wait for—it is something we create, together.

So, keep going. Keep dreaming, keep building, keep inspiring. The work you do today will ripple across time, transforming lives, empowering communities, and shaping a world full of possibility.

From this future, I send you courage, gratitude, and endless hope.

VISION

Successful and modern education in the municipality of Razlog that meets the needs of contemporary society by creating a sustainable digital educational environment ensuring that all young people graduate from school as functionally literate, adaptive, innovative, socially responsible, and active citizens, motivated to continually enhance their competencies through lifelong learning.

Schools:

- Off er a maximally secure, digitally oriented, ecological, and supportive environment.
- Blend educational traditions with innovative pedagogical solutions, artifi cial intelligence, and digital development.
- Evolve into spaces for learning, leisure, and interaction among children, students, parents, and the local community.
- Unite around shared values to achieve a common goal: forming knowledgeable and capable individuals who can make responsible choices and achieve their goals in a dynamic and competitive digital environment.

Teachers:

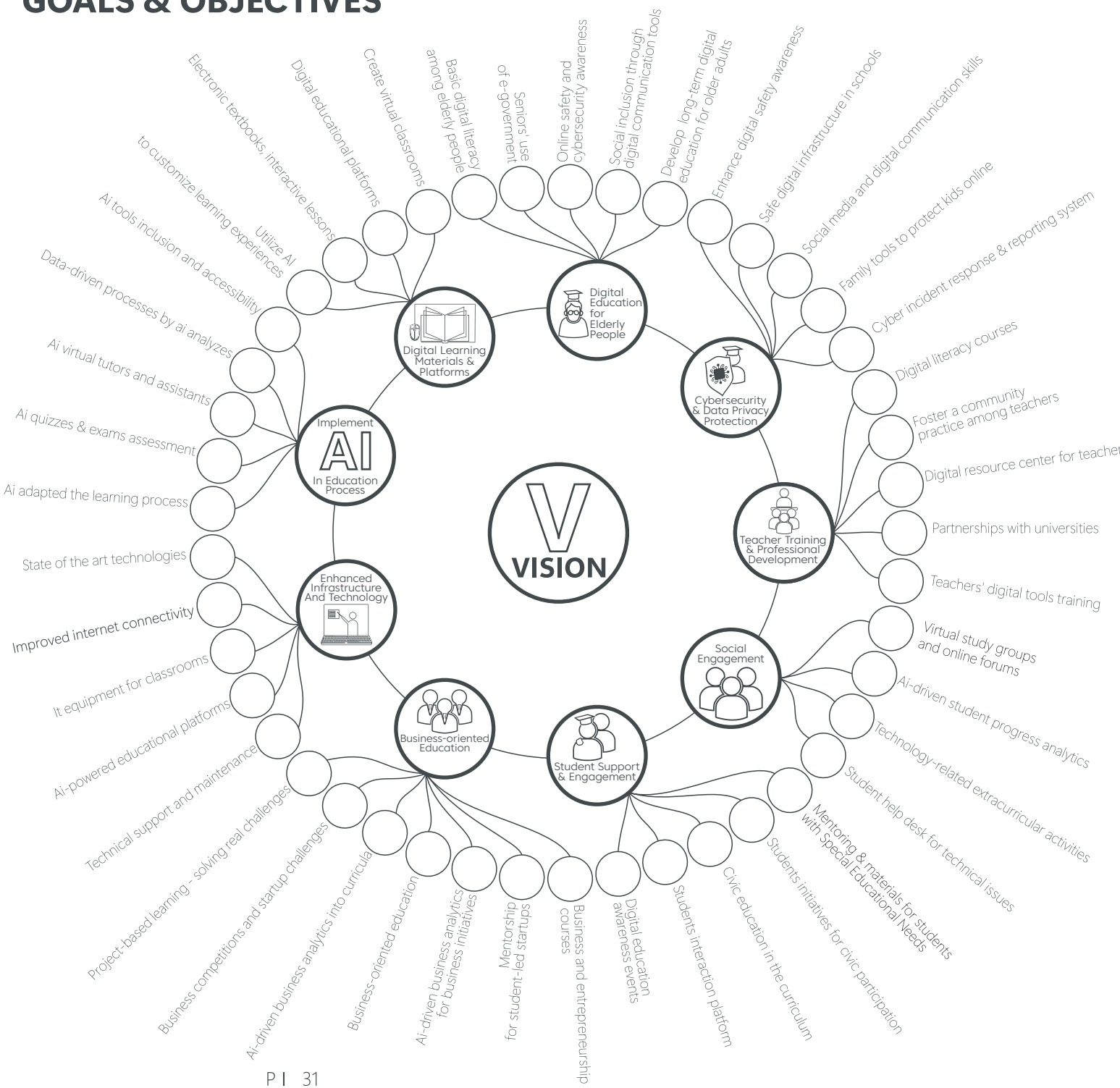
- Digitally competent, supportive, dialogic, and open to innovations.
- Mission-driven to motivate and inspire children, helping them build digital skills and competencies applicable in various life and professional situations.
- Dedicated to fostering critical and analytical thinking in children and students, by using digital technologies and supporting their professional, creative, personal, and emotional development.

Students:

- Possess knowledge, digital skills, and competencies, striving for personal development and lifelong improvement.
- Have a mindset geared toward successful social and professional realization.
- Be active citizens with society oriented values and work for the overall improvement of society and public welfare.

In the picture:
Dautov Peak, elevation of 2,597 meters in the Pirin Mountains

GOALS & OBJECTIVES



1. **Enhanced Infrastructure and Technology**
   Modernize technology to support a digital educational environment.
2. **Implement AI in Education**
   Use AI to prepare students for the future while keeping critical thinking and problem-solving central.
3. **Digital Learning Materials and Platforms**
   Develop and integrate digital resources to enhance teaching and learning.
4. **Teacher Training and Professional Development**
   Improve teacher skills in digital literacy and innovative teaching methods.
5. **Student Support and Engagement**
   Provide support to students, including those with SEN, for success in digital learning.
6. **Social Engagement – Raising Digital Awareness**
   Promote digital skills for socially responsible and active citizens.
7. **Business-Oriented Education**
   Equip students with entrepreneurial and business skills through digital tools.
8. **Cybersecurity and Data Privacy for Children**
   Ensure safe digital envoiorment in schools and social media, family protection tools.
9. **Digital Education for Elderly People**
   Promote basic digital skills and long-term learning for seniors.

IAP SUMMARY

Objective & Context
The plan aims to modernize education in Razlog through digital technologies, aligning with national and EU initiatives like URBACT, Metacity, and "Digital Bulgaria 2025."

Current Situation
Razlog has strong potential in tourism, high-tech, and education, with over 55% fiber optic and 5G coverage. However, digital adoption in public services, tourism, and environmental management remains limited.

Stakeholders & Consultation
Local authorities, schools, businesses, IT experts, and NGOs collaborate through the Urbact Local Group (ULG), whose meetings have shaped the plan's priorities.

Challenges
Key issues include digital illiteracy, a shortage of IT professionals, slow digital integration in administration and services, and limited funding for technology upgrades.

Pilot Action

Digital Lab for VR & Live Streaming
A VR and live streaming lab at Brothers Kanazirevi High School will:

- Develop VR content for education and tourism
- Train students in video production, design, and streaming
- Support community engagement and career orientation

Vision & Objectives
The goal is a "successful and modern education" through:

- Upgraded school infrastructure (broadband, devices, interactive tools)
- AI-driven personalized learning and assessment
- Digital learning platforms for hybrid education
- Teacher training and best practice sharing
- Student-led digital projects and initiatives

Investment & Collaboration
The plan promotes

- Vertical integration (schools & local authorities)
- Horizontal collaboration (municipality, NGOs, businesses)
- Regional partnerships (Bansko, Belitsa, Ykoruda, Blagoevgrad)

SWOT Analysis

- Strengths: High IT literacy, solid infrastructure, readiness for digitalization
- Weaknesses: Limited digitalization in some sectors, funding gaps, weak stakeholder communication
- Opportunities: EU/national funding, pilot projects, experience exchange
- Threats: Political delays, ICT gaps, communication barriers

Action Plan & Funding
Implementation (2026–2030) includes infrastructure upgrades, tech integration, teacher training, and student support. Funding sources include EU grants, the National Recovery Plan, local budgets, and private investments.

Management & Risk Mitigation
The Municipality of Razlog leads the initiative, ensuring coordination, risk management, and stakeholder engagement through scheduling, meetings, and communication campaigns.

This plan establishes a sustainable digital education ecosystem, blending modern technologies with traditional learning to prepair students for the future.

Actions	Responsible	Key Partners	Timescale	Budget
Objective: Modernize the technological infrastructure to support a digital educational environment				
o State of the art – Analyze the existing technological infrastructure in all schools to identify the main action. o Internet Connectivity: Ensure all schools have high-speed internet access. Partner with local ISPs to improve coverage and affordability. o IT equipment for classrooms: purchase modern devices such as computers, tablets, interactive whiteboards, and smart boards. o Implementing AI-powered educational platforms for personalized learning and data analysis. o Technical support and maintenance for all digital tools and infrastructure.	Municipality of Razlog	Municipal Council Schools Ministry of Education (Regional Representatives)	2026-2030	EUR 600 000

Intended Result	URBACT Integrated Approach Matrix				
All schools equipped with reliable internet, modern devices and maintained IT systems enabling effective digital education.					
		Sectoral	Sustainability	Territorial	Governance
	Current:	Fragmented IT systems and uneven connectivity across schools hinder consistent digital learning.	Heavy reliance on short -term project funding, with no overarching strategy or long -term goals.	Rural schools are less equipped with devices and connectivity, widening the digital divide.	Top-down planning limits local initiative, innovation, and tailored solutions.
	Intervention:	Provide high -speed internet, modern digital devices, and AI-enabled tools in all schools.	Secure sustainable funding through municipal co -funding, private partnerships, and project grants.	Ensure equal provision across all schools via a regional assessment and resource allocation program.	Establish co -design processes involving schools, municipal councils, and the Ministry of Education to build ownership and alignment.
	Future:	A strong digital foundation that supports both education and the local economy.	Stable, long -term use of infrastructure, with continuous upgrading and maintenance.	Reduced urban –rural digital gap, ensuring equal opportunities for all students.	Shared ownership and accountability among schools, municipalities, and national authorities, fostering sustainability.

Digital transformation in education cannot succeed without strong and reliable infrastructure. At present, schools across the municipality and the wider region face serious limitations: fragmented IT systems, uneven internet connectivity, and an overdependence on short-term project funding. Rural schools are particularly disadvantaged, with fewer devices and weaker connections, which exacerbates inequalities between urban and rural students. In addition, digital planning is still carried out in a top-down manner, leaving little space for schools and local actors to contribute their own perspectives and solutions.

The strategic objective is to equip every school with high-speed internet, modern devices, and AI-enabled platforms, all maintained through sustainable technical support systems. This will establish a strong digital foundation for education and, at the same time, strengthen the local economy by preparing students with the skills needed for the future workforce.

To achieve this, several coordinated actions will be implemented. First, all schools will undergo a comprehensive assessment of their current IT systems to identify priority gaps. Based on this, resources will be allocated to ensure full internet connectivity in partnership with local internet providers, while classrooms will be modernized with laptops, tablets, smart boards, and interactive technologies. Alongside this, AI-powered platforms will be integrated into the learning process to support personalized learning, adaptive teaching, and data-driven analysis.

Ensuring sustainability is a central element of this strategy. Instead of fragmented and temporary initiatives, a stable financial model will be created, combining municipal co-funding, partnerships with the private sector, and targeted project support. A dedicated technical maintenance system will be established to guarantee that all digital tools remain functional, up to date, and secure. This will enable long-term, reliable use of infrastructure rather than isolated short-term projects.

Equity is also a guiding principle. A regional assessment and allocation mechanism will ensure that schools in rural areas receive the same opportunities as those in towns. By systematically reducing the digital gap between urban and rural areas, the strategy will create balanced access to education and prevent further inequality.

Finally, governance will shift from a top-down model to a collaborative one. Schools, municipal councils, the Ministry of Education, parents, and local stakeholders will be directly involved in the design and implementation of infrastructure plans. This co-design approach will build trust, strengthen accountability, and align local initiatives with national education policies.

The expected outcomes are clear: a robust and cohesive digital education system with stable, scalable infrastructure; reduced territorial disparities; sustainable funding and maintenance mechanisms; and stronger cooperation between schools, municipalities, the state, and private actors. With this foundation, education will become a driver for digital inclusion, innovation, and economic growth in the region.

ENHANCED INFRASTRUCTURE &TECHNOLOGY

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- Municipal education budget for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and infrastructure.
- National digitalization programs (e.g., Digital Bulgaria 2030).
- EU Structural and Investment Funds (ERDF, ESF+, Recovery and Resilience Facility).
- Horizon Europe for innovative educational technology pilots.
- Corporate sponsorships, equipment donations, and Public–Private Partnerships (ISPs, telecoms, IT vendors).
- Leasing or subscription-based procurement models for hardware.

MONITORING & EVALUATION SYSTEM

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- % of schools with high-speed internet (target: 100% by 2027).
- Student-to-device ratio (target: 1:1 or 1:2 depending on grade level).
- % of classrooms equipped with smart boards/interactive tools (target: 100%).
- Average IT system downtime per semester (target: <2%).
-
- Monitoring tools: annual IT audits, school self-reporting, central municipal dashboard.
-
- Evaluation: biannual stakeholder reviews with schools, ISPs, municipal IT experts, and parents.

FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY

- Municipality leads strategic investment planning, aligning co-funding with state and EU sources.
- ISPs deliver infrastructure upgrades; IT vendors provide devices/software under framework agreements.
- Schools appoint ICT coordinators responsible for local management.
- Regional education board ensures compliance with standards.
- Governance: co-design committees (municipality + school directors + Ministry of Education).

RISK ANALYSIS

- Financial: reliance on one-off projects – multi-annual budget, EU/national co-funding. 

- Technical: fast obsolescence – leasing/renewal cycle every 3–4 years. 

- Equity: rural–urban divide – territorial needs assessment, equal distribution. 

- Operational: lack of qualified technicians – service contracts, teacher IT upskilling. 

STRATEGIC IMPACT & ADDED VALUE

Upgrading technological infrastructure ensures reliable connectivity and access to modern devices across all schools, reducing inequalities in education. Impacts include:

- Educational performance gains: up to +15% improvement in digital literacy scores (OECD, PISA benchmark).
- Equity outcomes: bridging rural–urban gaps, guaranteeing minimum digital standards for every child.
- Socio-economic benefits: stronger digital skills pipeline feeding into local labor markets.
- Scalability: replicable municipal ICT model transferable to other regions.
- Long-term resilience: infrastructure forms the foundation for AI, VR, cybersecurity, and blended learning adoption.

Actions	Responsible	Key Partners	Timescale	Budget
Objective: Prepare young people for a better future by leveraging AI while ensuring that human skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, and well-being remain central to education				
o Personalized learning: AI can adapt the learning process to the needs of individual students. By analyzing data on student performance, it adapts content, pace and difficulty levels. o AI Grading: AI can assess assignments, quizzes, and exams efficiently, freeing up teachers' time for more personalized interactions with students. o Virtual Tutors and Assistants: AI-powered chatbots and virtual tutors provide instant help to students, answering questions and guiding them through concepts. o Data-Driven processes: AI analyzes student data to identify patterns, predict learning gaps, and recommend interventions. o Inclusion and Accessibility: AI tools can assist students with disabilities, providing real-time text-to-speech, speech-to-text, and other accommodations.	Municipality of Razlog	Creator of educational AI platforms Schools Ministry of Education (Regional Representatives)	2026-2030	EUR 65 000 Annualy EUR 325 000 in Total

Intended Result	URBACT Integrated Approach Matrix				
Students benefit from personalized learning, teachers save time, and overall educational outcomes improve.					
		Sectoral	Sustainability	Territorial	Governance
	Current:	Minimal AI use, heavy teacher workload, and a significant generational gap among educators.	No clear funding for AI platforms. All activities are school based.	Uneven access to digital innovations, especially in villages and neighboring municipalities	Limited awareness among stakeholders
	Intervention:	Introduce personalized learning, AI grading, and virtual tutors	Develop AI implementation programs for teachers in partnership with AI providers . Engage senior teachers by demonstrating clear benefits	Establish joint governance at municipal and inter - municipal level with schools, parents, an d AI developers	Develop a multi -level governance framework — state, with active participation of parents, NGOs, the Education Inspectorate, and AI providers
	Future:	Improved student outcomes and greater efficiency	Scalable and adaptable digital education solutions	Cohesive digital education system for shared knowledge and resources	Inclusive governance model with strong trust among stakeholders

ACTION TABLE
Goal: Implement Artificial intelligence (AI) in education process

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming all sectors of society, and education must harness its potential to prepare students for the future while easing the workload of teachers. At present, the use of AI in schools is minimal. Teachers continue to face heavy workloads, administrative burdens, and a pronounced generational gap in digital skills. Most initiatives are school-based and fragmented, without systemic funding or coordination. Access to AI innovations is uneven, with rural schools and smaller municipalities lagging behind, while overall awareness among key stakeholders remains limited.

The strategic objective is to introduce AI tools that provide personalized learning opportunities, streamline administrative processes, and make education more inclusive. AI has the capacity to adapt lessons to each student's abilities and pace, thus improving learning outcomes. Automated grading and assessment can reduce teacher workload, freeing up time for direct interaction with students. Virtual tutors and AI-powered assistants can supplement classroom learning by offering instant support and guidance. Furthermore, AI can analyze performance data to identify learning gaps early and recommend timely interventions. Importantly, AI also enhances accessibility: real-time text-to-speech, speech-to-text, and adaptive interfaces can support students with disabilities, ensuring that all learners benefit from digital transformation.

To realize these opportunities, a structured intervention framework will be implemented. Schools will gradually introduce AI-based platforms for personalized learning, grading, and tutoring. Teacher training and support programs will be launched in partnership with AI providers, focusing not only on technical skills but also on practical benefits for teachers of all generations. By demonstrating how AI can reduce routine tasks and improve classroom efficiency, the strategy will build confidence and reduce resistance among more experienced educators.

Sustainability requires a shift from isolated experiments to stable and scalable solutions. Funding will combine municipal co-funding, partnerships with technology companies, and targeted state and EU programs. This will ensure continuous system upgrades, integration with existing platforms, and affordability across schools.

From a territorial perspective, the strategy emphasizes cohesion. AI adoption will not be limited to larger urban schools but extended to villages and neighboring municipalities through shared resources, inter-municipal cooperation, and regional training centers. This will prevent new digital divides and ensure balanced development across territories.

Finally, governance will evolve into a multi-actor, multi-level framework. Decision-making will involve not only schools and municipal councils but also parents, NGOs, regional education inspectorates, and AI developers. Such inclusive governance will foster trust, transparency, and alignment with national education policies, while ensuring that the ethical use of AI remains central.

The long-term vision is clear: improved student performance, more efficient and motivated teachers, and a scalable digital education system that is both inclusive and adaptive. By embedding AI into the core of educational practice, the municipality and region will not only modernize their schools but also strengthen their role as leaders in digital transformation, fostering a culture of innovation and shared responsibility.

IMPLEMENT AI IN EDUCATION PROCESS

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- EU funding (Digital Europe, Erasmus+ AI pilots, Horizon Europe).
- National digital innovation funds and Ministry of Education programs.
- Municipal co-financing for AI tools.
- Corporate partnerships with AI/EdTech providers (cloud credits, licenses).
- CSR initiatives from IT sector.

MONITORING & EVALUATION SYSTEM

KPIs:

- % of schools using AI-powered learning tools (target: 10% by 2026; 100% by 2029).
- % of teachers trained in AI literacy (target: 80% by 2027).
- Student performance vs. baseline (minimum +10% improvement in STEM subjects).
- Teacher workload reduction (≥15% fewer administrative tasks).
- Accessibility metrics (100% inclusion for students with disabilities).
- Evaluation: AI dashboards, annual transparency audits, inclusivity assessments.

FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY

- Municipality coordinates pilots and scale-up with AI vendors.
- Schools integrate AI gradually (math, languages first).
- Teacher training delivered through workshops (universities/NGOs).
- Governance: multi-actor steering committee (municipality, schools, AI providers, parents, Ministry).

RISK ANALYSIS

- Ethical: algorithm bias, privacy – GDPR compliance, independent audits. — RISK Level: L
- Financial: costly licenses, vendor lock-in – open-source solutions, multi-annual contracts. — RISK Level: M
- Pedagogical: over-reliance on automation – blended models. — RISK Level: M
- Social: resistance from teachers/parents – awareness campaigns, transparent pilots. — RISK Level: H

STRATEGIC IMPACT & ADDED VALUE

AI transforms teaching into a personalized, adaptive process, increasing inclusivity and efficiency. Impacts include:

- Learning outcomes: improved exam results (+10–15% average).
- Efficiency: teachers save up to 2 hours per week via AI grading/feedback.
- Equity: equalizes opportunities for students with learning disabilities.
- Systemic scalability: AI-powered learning ecosystems transferable to other municipalities.
- Economic alignment: supports the development of AI-skilled graduates aligned with national digital strategies.

Actions	Responsible	Key Partners	Timescale	Budget
Objective: Develop and integrate digital learning materials and platforms to enhance teaching and learning.				
o Development of electronic textbooks, interactive lessons, VR, and multimedia resources aligned with the curriculum. o Integrate educational platforms like Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams and Moodle to facilitate online and blended learning. o Create virtual classrooms to support remote learning and digital collaboration. o Utilize AI to customize learning experiences based on individual student needs and progress.	Municipality of Razlog	Municipal Council Schools Ministry of Education (Regional Representatives)	2026-2030	EUR 95 000

ACTION TABLE
Goal: Implement Digital Learning Materials and Platforms

Intended Result	URBACT Integrated Approach Matrix			
Modern, engaging digital content and platforms become an integral part of teaching and learning across all schools.				
	Sectoral	Sustainability	Territorial	Governance
Current:	Traditional textbooks still dominate the learning process, limiting innovation and engagement	Short-term pilot platforms are with limited maintenance. Emerging private startups not yet recognized by educational authorities.	Rural schools face significant difficulties in adopting digital learning materials due to the existing funding system, which deepens inequalities	Educational authorities and teachers are not sufficiently engaged in the design and development of digital learning platforms, leading to low ownership and adoption.
Intervention:	Develop and introduce e-textbooks, VR lessons, and blended learning platforms that complement and gradually replace traditional textbooks.	Ensure budget allocation for updates, maintenance, and content renewal to secure long-term sustainability. Schools and municipalities should invest in digital tools	Guarantee an equal rollout of platforms across municipalities, including rural areas, to reduce disparities.	Promote co-creation of digital learning materials with educational authorities, teachers, and students to ensure relevance and acceptance. Integrate digital platforms directly into the core educational process, rather than leaving them as extracurricular or pilot initiatives.
Future:	A more innovative and engaging education system, improving learning quality and student motivation.	Long-term accessible and well-maintained platforms, ensuring continuous improvement of digital resources.	Balanced access across municipalities, creating equal opportunities for urban and rural students alike.	High adoption and community support through trust and co-creation. Reformed education funding prioritizes sustainable digital learning.

ACTION TABLE
Goal: Implement Digital Learning Materials and Platforms

Digital learning materials and platforms are central to the modernization of education. At present, traditional textbooks continue to dominate the learning process, leaving limited space for innovation and interactive teaching. Many schools rely on short-term pilot projects with no clear mechanism for maintenance or long-term integration. Private startups are emerging but remain outside the recognition and support of educational authorities. Rural schools are particularly disadvantaged, as the current funding system makes access to digital resources uneven, further widening existing inequalities. Additionally, teachers and education authorities have not been sufficiently involved in the design of platforms, which reduces their ownership and motivation to use them.

The strategic goal is to establish modern, engaging digital content and platforms as an integral part of teaching and learning across all schools. This involves the systematic development of electronic textbooks, interactive lessons, VR experiences, and multimedia resources directly aligned with the national curriculum. Global platforms such as Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, and Moodle will be integrated in a coherent manner, supporting blended learning and ensuring continuity between physical and digital classrooms. At the same time, virtual classrooms will be developed to expand opportunities for remote education and collaborative learning across municipalities. Leveraging AI to personalize learning experiences will further allow for adaptation to individual student progress and needs.

The intervention phase focuses on both innovation and sustainability. Schools and municipalities will invest in e-textbooks, VR lessons, and blended platforms, gradually complementing and replacing traditional resources. To avoid the "pilot project trap," secure funding mechanisms will be introduced, covering regular updates, content renewal, and long-term maintenance. By embedding digital platforms into the formal education process, digital resources will no longer remain isolated extracurricular initiatives but will become a core element of teaching.

Territorial cohesion is another key dimension of the strategy. The equal rollout of platforms across municipalities—including rural areas—will guarantee that students in smaller or less privileged schools enjoy the same opportunities as their peers in urban centers. Regional collaboration and shared resource hubs will support smaller schools with training, access to digital libraries, and technical assistance, closing the urban–rural digital gap.

Finally, governance will be inclusive and collaborative. The co-creation of digital learning materials with teachers, students, NGOs, and educational authorities will ensure relevance, higher adoption, and ownership. Digital platforms will be directly tied to state educational policies and curriculum frameworks, avoiding fragmentation. By engaging multiple actors—schools, inspectorates, municipalities, and private developers—the governance framework will establish accountability and trust, ensuring that platforms remain dynamic, accessible, and future-oriented.

The long-term vision is a digitally enabled education system where every school, regardless of location, can rely on high-quality, interactive, and personalized digital learning tools. This will not only enhance student engagement and outcomes but also build a more balanced and cohesive education system, in which innovation is sustainable, access is equitable, and digital literacy becomes a cornerstone of civic and economic development.

IMPLEMENT DIGITAL LEARNING MATERIALS & PLATFORMS

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- National budget - textbook and curriculum funds.
- EU (ESF+, Erasmus+, Creative Europe).
- Private EdTech partners (Google, Microsoft, Moodle, VR content providers).
- Municipal Education budget.
- Public-Private Partnerships PPPs for VR/AR resources.
- Students co-created Video, VR/AR resources.

MONITORING & EVALUATION SYSTEM

KPIs:

- % of schools using blended platforms (target: 100% by 2027).
- % of curriculum content digitized (target: 90%).
- Platform usage metrics (min. 10 logins/student/month).
- Teacher/student satisfaction (>85%).

Evaluation: analytics dashboards, annual curriculum alignment reviews, feedback surveys.

FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY

- Municipality coordinates licensing and distribution.
- Schools adapt content under Ministry oversight.
- Teacher digital content leaders support peers.
- Governance: joint committees (teachers, students, parents).

RISK ANALYSIS

- Financial: insufficient budget – subscription models. RISK Level: M
- Pedagogical: digital overload – hybrid guidelines. RISK Level: H
- Equity: rural disadvantages – pooled funding. RISK Level: M
- Technical: interoperability issues – centralized standards by government authorities. RISK Level: H

STRATEGIC IMPACT & ADDED VALUE

AI transforms teaching into a personalized, adaptive process, increasing inclusivity and efficiency. Impacts include:

- Learning outcomes: improved exam results (+10–15% average).
- Efficiency: teachers save up to 2 hours per week via AI grading/feedback.
- Equity: equalizes opportunities for students with learning disabilities.
- Systemic scalability: AI-powered learning ecosystems transferable to other municipalities.
- Economic alignment: supports the development of AI-skilled graduates aligned with national digital strategies.

ACTION TABLE
Goal: Teacher Training and Professional Development

Actions	Responsible	Key Partners	Timescale	Budget
Objective: Enhance teacher competencies in digital literacy and innovative pedagogical practices.				
o Organizing regular training sessions, workshops, and webinars on digital tools, AI technologies, and innovative teaching methods. o Establish partnerships with universities and educational organizations for continuous professional development. o Create a digital resource center for teachers to access the latest research, tools, and best practices. o Foster a community of practice among teachers to share experiences and strategies for integrating technology in the classroom.	Municipality of Razlog	Municipal Council Schools Ministry of Education (Regional Representatives)	2026-2030	EUR 54 000 Annualy EUR 270 000 in Total

Intended Result	URBACT Integrated Approach Matrix			
Teachers gain strong digital and pedagogical skills, applying innovative methods consistently in classrooms.				
	Sectoral	Sustainability	Territorial	Governance
Current:	Teachers' digital skills are uneven, with large gaps between younger and older generations.	Professional development is often sporadic, fragmented, and lacks clear long -term goals, leading to low impact.	Rural teachers face reduced access to training opportunities compared to their urban colleagues.	Training sessions are often imposed top -down, resulting in limited motivation, ownership, and long -term application.
Intervention:	Organize hands -on workshops, university partnerships, and create resource hubs for continuous professional learning.	Introduce regular PD cycles supported by networks of good practice across municipalities.	Expand online training programs and regional cooperation initiatives to overcome geographical barriers.	Develop co -created educational programs in partnersh ip with NGOs, government institutions, and teachers themselves, ensuring relevance and acceptance.
Future:	A skilled and innovative teaching workforce equipped with up -to-date digital and pedagogical skills.	Establishment of a sustainable culture of lifelong professional learning among teachers.	Equal opportunities for all teachers, regardless of location or school resources.	Stronger motivation, ownership, and improved learning outcomes, supported by state -led and well -funded professional development programs.

ACTION TABLE
Goal: Teacher Training and Professional Development

The digital transformation of education depends on the readiness and skills of teachers. At present, their digital competences remain uneven, with significant gaps between younger and older generations. Professional development is often sporadic, fragmented, and lacks continuity, which limits its long-term effect. Rural teachers in particular have reduced access to training opportunities compared to their colleagues in larger towns. Training sessions are frequently organized in a top-down manner, leaving teachers with limited motivation, ownership, and confidence in applying innovative methods consistently in classrooms.

The strategic vision is to establish a well-prepared and innovative teaching workforce, capable of integrating digital technologies and modern pedagogical approaches into everyday practice. Teachers must not only acquire technical knowledge of digital tools and AI-based solutions but also develop confidence in using them creatively to improve student engagement, critical thinking, and learning outcomes.

To achieve this, regular professional development opportunities will be introduced through workshops, training sessions, and webinars focused on digital tools, AI technologies, and innovative teaching practices. Partnerships with universities and educational organizations will ensure access to the latest research and methodologies. A dedicated digital resource center will provide teachers with up-to-date tools, case studies, and best practices, while also fostering a community of practice where educators can share experiences and collaborate on innovative solutions.

The approach is designed to be sustainable and inclusive. Professional development will shift from sporadic initiatives to a structured system of regular PD cycles, embedded in national and municipal education strategies. Networks of good practice across municipalities will support teachers with continuous learning and exchange, while online programs and regional cooperation will guarantee equal access for rural schools. This will help bridge territorial inequalities and create a balanced professional learning culture.

Governance will emphasize co-creation and shared responsibility. Instead of imposed training, educational authorities will design programs in collaboration with teachers, NGOs, and universities, ensuring that professional development remains relevant, motivating, and widely adopted. State policies will provide long-term funding and institutional support, embedding professional learning into the core of the education system rather than leaving it to short-term projects.

The long-term result is a highly skilled, motivated, and innovative teaching workforce. Teachers across all municipalities will have equal opportunities to develop their digital and pedagogical competences, supported by stable networks, resource hubs, and collaborative practices. This will establish a sustainable culture of lifelong learning among educators, leading to improved teaching quality, stronger student outcomes, and a more resilient and future-oriented education system.

TEACHER TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- National teacher training budget.
- Erasmus+ and ESF+ mobility programs.
- EU Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition.
- University/teacher association partnerships.
- Municipal scholarships.

MONITORING & EVALUATION SYSTEM

KPIs:

- % of teachers trained in digital pedagogy (target: 90% by 2027).
- Average training hours per teacher/year (≥20).
- Number of teachers certified in AI/digital tools.
- Teacher confidence (>80% in annual survey).

Evaluation: annual skills assessments, classroom observations, peer reviews.

FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY

- Training by universities, institutes, EdTech providers.
- Peer-learning networks ("communities of practice").
- Governance: joint steering body (municipality, universities, Ministry, unions).

RISK ANALYSIS

- Low uptake – incentives, certificates, career progression. — M RISK Level
- Training costs – EU/national co-funding. — M RISK Level
- Shortage of trainers – train-the-trainer models. — L RISK Level
- Skill obsolescence – continuous upskilling model. — H RISK Level

Comprehensive teacher development builds capacity and resilience. Impacts include:

- Pedagogical innovation: 90% of teachers apply digital tools effectively in class.
- Sustainability: creation of self-sustaining professional learning communities.
- Equity: all schools, including rural, benefit from certified trainers.
- Scalability: Continuing Professional Development (CPD) model exportable to other municipalities.
- Systemic resilience: supports long-term digital readiness in the education sector.

STRATEGIC IMPACT & ADDED VALUE

Actions	Responsible	Key Partners	Timescale	Budget
Objective: Provide comprehensive support to students to ensure their success in a digital learning environment.				
o Digital literacy courses covering computer science, programming and digital security. o AI-driven analytics to monitor student progress and identify areas for improvement. o Encouraging student engagement through technology-related extracurricular activities, coding clubs and digital projects. o Establish a student help desk or support system for technical issues. o Encourage collaboration between students through virtual study groups and online forums. o Mentoring & materials for students with Special Educational Needs	Municipality of Razlog	Municipal Council Schools Ministry of Education (Regional Representatives)	2026-2030	EUR 42 000

ACTION TABLE
Goal: Student Support and Engagement

Intended Result	URBACT Integrated Approach Matrix			
Students develop digital literacy, receive timely support, and engage actively in collaborative learning.				
	Sectoral	Sustainability	Territorial	Governance
Current:	Students often demonstrate weak digital literacy and receive uneven support across schools.	Support activities are typically one -off initiatives without continuity or follow -up.	Some schools lack extracurricular programs, limiting opportunities for holistic development. Majority of school can't offer proper programs for students with SEN	Low student voice in shaping educational programs and decision -making processes.
Intervention:	Establish coding clubs, digital helpdesks, and AI -based monitoring tools to provide timely and personalized support. Establish digital tools based school programs for students with SEN.	Create an institutionalized student support system with dedicated fund ing from school budgets. Encourage children support interaction and integration for students with SEN.	Promote equal educational opportunities across all municipalities by ensuring balanced access to extracurricular activities. Develop extracurricular programs through co -creation with neighboring municipalities and in collaboration with local actors.	Empower student councils to actively co -design programs together with NGOs, government institutions, and schools.
Future:	Students grow into confident, engaged digital citizens equipped for future challenges.	Continuous engagement and progress tracking ensure long -term support and measurable improvements.	Balanced student development, combining academic success with extracurricular learning and well -being.	Enhanced participation through bottom -up platforms, where students' voices are recognized and integrated into educational planning.

A digitally transformed education system must place students at the center, ensuring they develop strong digital literacy, receive timely and tailored support, and actively participate in collaborative learning. At present, however, digital literacy remains uneven across schools, support systems are fragmented and short-lived, and extracurricular opportunities are not equally accessible. Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) face additional barriers, as most schools cannot yet provide adequate programs or resources. Moreover, student voices are often underrepresented in shaping educational programs and decision-making.

The vision is to build an inclusive, future-oriented learning environment where students are not only consumers of digital tools but active creators, collaborators, and innovators. They must be empowered to develop essential 21st-century skills such as coding, digital security, critical thinking, and teamwork, while at the same time receiving reliable support structures that enhance their confidence and participation.

To achieve this, digital literacy programs will be integrated into the educational process, covering computer science, programming, and safe online behavior. AI-based monitoring tools will be introduced to track student progress and provide early intervention where difficulties arise. Schools will establish student helpdesks to resolve technical issues, ensuring that technology becomes a reliable enabler rather than a barrier. Extracurricular activities such as coding clubs, hackathons, and digital projects will provide opportunities for students to apply their skills in creative, collaborative contexts. Special attention will be given to SEN students, with digital tools, mentoring, and tailored materials ensuring equal access and active participation in both academic and extracurricular learning.

This approach emphasizes sustainability and equity. Support for students will move from sporadic, one-off projects to institutionalized systems embedded in school structures and funded through regular budgets. Equal access across municipalities will be secured through coordinated programs, ensuring that rural and urban students alike can benefit from extracurricular opportunities. Cross-municipal collaboration and co-creation with local actors will further strengthen the territorial balance, fostering regional networks of student initiatives.

Governance will be reoriented towards active student participation. Student councils will gain a stronger role in co-designing activities and programs, working alongside schools, NGOs, and government institutions. By giving students a meaningful voice in decision-making, the system will foster a culture of ownership, motivation, and shared responsibility.

The long-term result will be a generation of confident, engaged, and digitally literate citizens, equipped for the challenges of the future. Students will not only succeed academically but will also benefit from a holistic learning experience that integrates extracurricular development, peer collaboration, and well-being. By embedding continuous monitoring, tailored support, and inclusive participation into the system, education will become more resilient, equitable, and aligned with the realities of the digital age.

STUDENT SUPPORT & ENGAGEMENT

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) youth engagement programs.
- Municipal education budget.
- Erasmus+ extracurricular programs.
- Corporate sponsorships.

MONITORING & EVALUATION SYSTEM

KPIs:

- % of students in digital literacy courses (target: 100%).
- Coding clubs/projects per school (target: ≥1).
- Engagement levels (attendance ≥90%).
- AI-based student progress tracking.

Evaluation: quarterly reports, municipal student surveys.

FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY

- Student helpdesks supported by ICT staff.
- Youth council co-designs programs.
- NGO partnerships for clubs/literacy.
- Governance: student representation in design.

RISK ANALYSIS

- Low participation – gamification, mentoring. — RISK Level: H
- Disadvantaged students excluded – scholarships, free equipment. — RISK Level: H
- Staff shortage – NGO/volunteer support. — RISK Level: M
- Equity - rural disadvantages – pooled funding — RISK Level: M

Student-centered engagement strengthens skills and participation. Impacts include:

- Academic success: measurable reduction in dropout rates by 5–7%.
- Skill-building: coding and problem-solving as future labor market competencies.
- Civic participation: stronger representation of youth in local governance.
- Scalability: replicable student councils and digital clubs across municipalities.

STRATEGIC IMPACT & ADDED VALUE

ACTION TABLE
Goal: Social engagement - raising local awareness of digital skills

Actions	Responsible	Key Partners	Timescale	Budget
Objective: Raising local awareness of digital skills for socially responsible and active citizens.				
o Development of projects and initiatives for students that promote civic participation in public services and sustainable development. o Inclusion of civic education in the curriculum for the development of leadership skills and an active civil society. o Creating a platform for interaction between students with the local government, NGOs and public organizations. o Organizing events. Awareness Campaign about the benefits of digital education and garner support.	Municipality of Razlog	NGOs and public organizations Schools Ministry of Education (Regional Representatives)	2026-2030	EUR 115 000

ACTION TABLE
Goal: Social engagement - raising local awareness of digital skills

Intended Result	URBACT Integrated Approach Matrix			
A digitally literate and socially responsible generation participates actively in civic and community life.				
	Sectoral	Sustainability	Territorial	Governance
Current:	Low civic engagement through digital tools; participation is sporadic and fragmented.	Awareness activities are usually isolated, one -off actions, without long - term continuity.	Civic participation is higher in towns but remains low in villages, deepening territorial inequalities. Weak collaboration b etween schools, NGOs, and municipalities, which limits the scale of initiatives.	No clear government policy to promote digital civic engagement in education and communities.
Intervention:	Launch civic projects, curriculum integration, and community events to embed digital citizenship in everyday learning.	Develop regular awareness campaigns and long -term school – NGO partnerships for sustainability.	Implement inclusive civic engagement campaigns at both municipal and regional level, ensuring rural areas are covered. Use regional educational institutions like "Brothers Kanazirevi" High Scholl as a development hub.	Advocate for and establish a government policy framework that actively supports civic participation in schools and communities.
Future:	Emergence of digitally skilled, active citizens who use technology responsibly for civic participation.	Creation of a long -term civic culture rooted in education and community life.	Balanced and cohesive civic engagement across towns and villages, reducing territorial divides.	Strong, multi -actor cooperation between schools, NGOs, municipalities, and government, ensuring sustainability and trust.

ACTION TABLE
Goal: Social engagement - raising local awareness of digital skills

Building a digitally literate and socially responsible generation requires more than technical training—it calls for the integration of civic values, leadership skills, and active participation into the educational and community framework. Currently, civic engagement through digital tools in the municipality remains low, fragmented, and sporadic. Awareness initiatives are often isolated, without continuity or follow-up, while participation levels differ between towns and villages, reinforcing territorial inequalities. Schools, NGOs, and municipalities rarely collaborate on a sustained basis, limiting the scale and impact of local initiatives. The absence of a clear government policy further hinders the establishment of a long-term culture of civic participation.

The strategic vision is to foster a generation of digitally skilled citizens who not only master technology but also use it responsibly to contribute to public life and sustainable community development. This requires embedding civic education into the curriculum, promoting active citizenship, and developing leadership skills. Students must gain opportunities to interact directly with local government, NGOs, and public organizations, learning to co-create solutions for real challenges.

Key interventions will include the systematic development of civic projects and initiatives that connect students with public services, environmental sustainability, and local decision-making. Regular awareness campaigns will highlight the benefits of digital education and promote broad support from families, communities, and institutions. Events such as digital citizenship days, hackathons for social good, and local forums will encourage active participation and strengthen links between schools and civil society. Educational institutions like "Brothers Kanazirevi" High School will serve as development hubs, ensuring rural areas and smaller communities are included in these efforts.

Sustainability will be ensured through the institutionalization of partnerships between schools and NGOs, backed by municipal co-funding and regional collaboration. By embedding civic education and awareness activities into regular school life, initiatives will move beyond one-off events towards long-term programs. Regional and municipal coordination will guarantee balanced access to opportunities, bridging the urban–rural divide.

At the governance level, a government policy framework will be advocated and established to support civic participation in education and community development. This framework will encourage multi-actor cooperation, ensuring schools, NGOs, municipalities, and central institutions work together with shared goals and clear accountability.

The long-term outcome will be the emergence of a civic culture that is deeply rooted in both education and community life. Students will become confident, active digital citizens, contributing responsibly to their schools, towns, and villages. Territorial cohesion will be strengthened as civic participation grows evenly across regions, while strong institutional cooperation will create trust and resilience. Ultimately, social engagement will evolve from fragmented, isolated activities into a sustainable ecosystem of inclusive digital civic culture.

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT - RAISING LOCAL AWARENESS OF DIGITAL SKILLS

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- EU Citizenship and Values programs.
- Municipal civic engagement budget.
- NGO/private sector partnerships.
- National youth civic education programs.

MONITORING & EVALUATION SYSTEM

KPIs:

- Civic projects/year (≥5).
- % student participation in civic–digital initiatives (80%).
- Attendance at awareness events (>200/event).
- Public perception (>75%).

Evaluation: annual civic engagement report, NGO review.

FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY

- Schools integrate civic digital education.
- NGOs and municipality co-organize events.
- Governance: joint committees.

RISK ANALYSIS

- Low turnout – inclusive outreach. 

- Financial risk – annual municipal budget line. 

- Rural exclusion – mobile campaigns. 

Civic–digital engagement fosters social responsibility. Impacts include:

- Community impact: >500 youth annually involved in civic digital actions.
- Social cohesion: increased trust between citizens and institutions.
- Scalability: model exportable to other regions, aligned with EU Citizenship Education agenda.

STRATEGIC IMPACT & ADDED VALUE

Actions	Responsible	Key Partners	Timescale	Budget
Objective: Empower students with entrepreneurial and business skills through digital tools, fostering career development and driving economic growth.				
o Introduce business and entrepreneurship courses, focusing on digital business models and financial literacy. o Partner with local businesses and startups for mentorship and real-world projects, while supporting student-led startups through school initiatives. o Establish an innovation hub to support student-led business initiatives and strengthen partnerships with incubators and accelerators for hands-on entrepreneurial experience. o Organize business competitions and startup challenges. o Integrate digital marketing, project management, and AI-driven business analytics into curricula. o Implement a bottom-up approach in business-oriented education by enabling schools to collaborate with industry experts in developing a dynamic curriculum that aligns with market needs and emerging industries. o Introduce project-based learning where students work on solving real business challenges provided by local enterprises.	Municipality of Razlog	ocal businesses, Economic Development Organizations, Business Incubators, Schools, Ministry of Education (Regional Representatives)	2026-2030	EUR 450 000

Intended	URBACT Integrated Approach Matrix			
Students acquire entrepreneurial and business skills and competences, through digital tools, fostering career development , c reate				
	Sectoral	Sustainability	Territorial	Governance
Current:	Entrepreneurship training is insufficient; certain professionals miss opportunities, and some have no job prospects	Few links to local economy	Urban students have more business exposure	Education –business link is weak
Intervention:	Digital business & startup training; career -focused curricula	Partnerships with businesses, incubators	Access for all schools to goal oriented education, in cooperation with business	Co-design curricula with enterprises
Future:	Career-ready, innovative students	Enduring business – school cooperation	Even entrepreneurial opportunities on regional level	Strong school –business ecosystem. Educational programs oriented to business demands

ACTION TABLE
Goal: Business-Oriented Education

To prepare students for a rapidly changing labor market and the digital economy, schools must go beyond traditional teaching and actively foster entrepreneurial skills, financial literacy, and innovation. Currently, entrepreneurship training remains insufficient, with many students lacking opportunities to develop practical business competencies. The links between education and the local economy are limited, leaving students underprepared for careers or self-employment. While urban students often benefit from greater business exposure, rural students remain disadvantaged. The weak connection between schools and businesses further undermines the potential for students to contribute meaningfully to the regional economy.

The strategic goal is to ensure that students acquire entrepreneurial and business skills through digital tools, preparing them for career development, startup creation, and active integration with the local economy. This requires a comprehensive approach that embeds entrepreneurship into curricula, links schools with local businesses and startups, and creates real opportunities for students to apply knowledge in practice.

Key interventions will include the introduction of entrepreneurship and business courses with a strong digital focus—covering areas such as digital business models, financial literacy, digital marketing, AI-driven business analytics, and project management. Project-based learning will enable students to solve real challenges provided by local enterprises, while school–business partnerships will create opportunities for mentorship, internships, and hands-on experience. Competitions, startup challenges, and innovation labs will provide platforms for students to test ideas, take risks, and learn from failure.

To ensure sustainability, innovation hubs will be established within schools or in partnership with regional institutions. These hubs will act as incubators for student-led startups and will link directly with accelerators and business networks to provide professional guidance and resources. By embedding a bottom-up approach, schools will collaborate closely with industry experts to co-design dynamic curricula that align with labor market needs and emerging industries.

Territorial balance will be addressed by ensuring that business-oriented education is equally accessible to rural and urban students. Regional educational institutions can serve as anchors for disseminating entrepreneurship programs across municipalities, reducing inequalities in exposure and opportunities. Through collaboration with local enterprises, municipalities, and chambers of commerce, schools will create a supportive ecosystem that connects education directly to local economic development.

At the governance level, partnerships between schools, municipalities, and businesses will be formalized through policy frameworks that encourage joint investment in education and innovation. Schools will not only educate but also serve as active contributors to regional development strategies, embedding entrepreneurial thinking in community life.

The long-term outcome will be the development of a new generation of digitally skilled, entrepreneurial, and innovative citizens who actively contribute to the regional economy. Students will graduate with both the confidence and competence to create startups, join competitive industries, and sustain meaningful ties between education and the local economy. Over time, this will build a resilient entrepreneurial culture rooted in schools and supported by strong education–business–government cooperation.

BUSINESS-ORIENTED EDUCATION

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- Erasmus+ and ESF+ entrepreneurship programs.
- Municipal/regional economic development funds.
- Business/startup partnerships.
- National SME support programs.

MONITORING & EVALUATION SYSTEM

KPIs:

- Entrepreneurship courses (≥3 per school).
- Student-led startups/year (≥5).
- Participation in innovation hubs.
- Graduate career outcomes (tracked for 3 years).

Evaluation: annual entrepreneurship report, employer surveys.

FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY

- Partnerships with businesses/incubators.
- Municipality establishes innovation hub.
- Governance: tripartite council (schools, municipality, business).

RISK ANALYSIS

- Curriculum mismatch – employer consultation. 

- Urban bias – rural program access. 

- Startup funding gap – municipal micro-grants. 

Business-oriented education drives local innovation. Impacts include:

- Economic growth: creation of 20+ startups within 5 years.
- Employability: 60% of graduates gain direct labor market advantage.
- Scalability: entrepreneurship curricula transferable nationally.
- Systemic linkages: strengthens education–business–municipality ecosystem.

STRATEGIC IMPACT & ADDED VALUE

Actions	Responsible	Key Partners	Timescale	Budget
Objective: Digital Lab for VR and Live stream				
○ Municipality of Razlog is aims to upscale the Testing Action and Create the Digital Lab for VR in other schools. ○ Purchase and installation of equipment for Digital Lab. ○ Expected Result: Adoption of digital solutions for better education	Municipality of Razlog	Municipal Council Schools Ministry of Education (Regional Representatives)	2026-2030	EUR 180 000 for New Labs EUR 60 000 for Updates EUR 240 000 in Total

Intended Result	URBACT Integrated Approach Matrix				
Multiple schools use innovative digital tools, enhancing innovation and immersive learning opportunities.					
		Sectoral	Sustainability	Territorial	Governance
	Current:	VR used only in pilot projects	Equipment depends on projects	Only one school with VR access	STEM program for schools' equipment, with no clear strategic plan
	Intervention:	Set up digital labs in more schools	Municipal budget + school use plans	Creation of digital tools, based on assessment of needs of all schools, according to their students and educational profile	Strategy based investment for digitalization of education
	Future:	Innovative learning with immersive tech	Stable lab operations	Intensive use of next-level digital tolls for improving student results and capabilities	Ensuring of equal access to digital tools

Goal: Test impact in real environment

The goal of testing impact in real environments through the creation of Digital Labs for VR and live streaming represents a transformative step for the educational system of the Municipality of Razlog.

The initiative moves beyond the initial pilot stage and seeks to establish digital laboratories in all schools across the municipality, with each laboratory tailored to the specific educational profile of the institution, the age group of the students, their areas of interest, and the potential for business-oriented applications. This approach ensures that the technological solutions introduced are not generic, but context-sensitive, maximizing both their pedagogical value and their long-term relevance.

The implementation will involve the purchase, installation, and integration of advanced digital equipment, as well as the development of customized digital learning content aligned with the national curriculum. Teachers will undergo training not only in the technical use of these tools but also in the design of immersive learning activities adapted to their school's specific profile. For example, laboratories in primary schools will focus on interactive educational games and creative storytelling, while secondary schools may emphasize STEM experiments, vocational simulations, and entrepreneurship-oriented projects. In addition, business-focused schools will integrate digital tools that replicate real-life scenarios in marketing, management, and production processes, thereby creating strong links with the local economy.

The Municipality of Razlog, supported by the Municipal Council and the regional representatives of the Ministry of Education, will coordinate the delivery of the program, ensuring that funding streams from EU and national sources are aligned with local needs. The phased implementation between 2026 and 2030 will allow for a balanced rollout, with regular monitoring and adjustments to address the evolving requirements of each educational institution.

The expected impact is multidimensional. At the pedagogical level, the Digital Labs will create immersive and engaging learning environments that stimulate creativity, critical thinking, and digital competence. At the social level, the initiative will guarantee equal access to advanced educational technologies, reducing inequalities between rural and urban schools. At the economic level, it will prepare students for the digital labor market, foster entrepreneurial skills, and strengthen cooperation between schools and local businesses.

At the European level, the added value of this action lies in its scalability and adaptability. By developing a flexible model that adjusts to the profile of each school, the Municipality of Razlog offers a replicable framework for other municipalities across Bulgaria and Europe. The initiative is directly aligned with the EU's Digital Education Action Plan and contributes to the objectives of building a digitally skilled generation, fostering innovation, and supporting regional competitiveness. Through this program, Razlog positions itself as a frontrunner in educational digitalization, ensuring that every student, teacher, and school benefits from the opportunities of the digital era.

TEST IMPACT IN REAL ENVIRONMENT

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- EU an National STEM and innovation programs.
- National digital labs programs.
- Municipal budget.
- Corporate sponsorships.
- PPPs for digital content.

MONITORING & EVALUATION SYSTEM

KPIs:

- Schools with digital educational units, depending of school profile (≥3 by 2027).
- % of students accessing immersive learning/year (50%).
- Engagement/performance metrics.
- Number of co-created digital materials.

Evaluation: usage reports, surveys, independent reviews.

FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY

- Municipality procures and installs equipment.
- Schools develop curriculum-linked digital content.
- Teachers trained in digital pedagogy.
- Governance: innovation steering group (municipality, IT vendors, Ministry).

RISK ANALYSIS

- High costs – shared digital units. 

- Maintenance – service contracts. 

- Curriculum integration – teacher training. 

- Equity – mobile digital units. 

Digital units (Labs, Studios, Clubs, Etc.) modernize education through immersive methods. Impacts include:

- STEM outcomes: +20% engagement in science/math.
- Equity: rural students access cutting-edge tech.
- Innovation: co-created digital modules transferable nationally.
- Scalability: VR lab model replicable across municipalities.

STRATEGIC IMPACT & ADDED VALUE

ACTION TABLE
Goal: Digital Education for Elderly People

Actions	Responsible	Key Partners	Timescale	Budget
Objective: Bridge the digital divide for elderly citizens, empowering them with digital skills for everyday life.				
o Educational Programs and Courses– Offer free digital literacy courses in community centers and libraries, including video tutorials, and integrate digital learning into senior centers and lifelong learning programs. o Training and Mentorship– Train volunteers and students to mentor seniors, and implement "Train the Trainer" programs for community wor kers and municipal staff. o Practical Workshops and Social Connectivity –Organize workshops on e -government services, online banking, telemedicine, and social apps, as well as "Digital Coffee Mornings" for group practice. o Resources and Support– Provide printed and digital guides, help desks at libraries and municipal offices, and a 24/7 digital assistance helpline. o Cybersecurity and Online Safety – Conduct training on online scams, phishing, and fraud prevention, in partnership with law enforcement. o Access and Sustainability – Offer subsidized internet for low-income seniors and secure EU and national funding to ensure long -term program sustainability.	Municipality of Razlog	Community Centers Schools Ministry of Education (Regional Representatives) NGOs f or elderly inclusion Existing Senior Citizens' Clubs	2026-2028	EUR 175 000

ACTION TABLE
Goal: Digital Education for Elderly People

Intended Result	URBACT Integrated Approach Matrix				
Elderly citizens become digitally literate, safely use e services, and reduce isolation via sustained programs.					
		Sectoral	Sustainability	Territorial	Governance
	Current:	Low digital skills, limited use of e -services and communication tools. Elderly people are most often victims of digital frauds	No sustainable policy Is presented	Town –village divide; mobility/access barrier	No government policy for elderly people digital education
	Intervention:	Free courses, mentoring and tutorials, workshops on e-government, banking, telemedicine, social apps use	Train -the-trainer model, integrate into lifelong learning, secure EU/national/municipal funding	Example based trainings in libraries, community centers, clubs; mobile units, online learning, accessible schedules and venues. Actors work in teams, inter -municipal coordination; Coalition of municip alities, NGOs, libraries, partnerships with banks/health providers; volunteer network	Problem identification and measure implementation on state level
	Future:	Seniors independently use digital tools for everyday tasks	Sustainable program with stable capacity and financing	Balanced participation across neighborhoods, villages and municipalities	Coordinated governance and better reach to target groups

ACTION TABLE
Goal: Digital Education for Elderly People

Elderly citizens face growing challenges in adapting to the digital transition. Many possess only basic or no digital skills, which severely limits their ability to access essential e-government services, online banking, telemedicine, and social communication tools. This lack of digital literacy results not only in reduced efficiency in handling everyday tasks but also in social exclusion, increased dependency on others, and higher vulnerability to misinformation and fraud. Seniors who cannot engage with digital platforms are often cut off from vital information, health consultations, and financial services, leading to a diminished quality of life and reduced autonomy. In some cases, the absence of digital skills even affects their ability to claim benefits, manage personal data securely, or participate in community initiatives, widening the generational and territorial digital divide.

The lack of sustainable policies, combined with strong territorial disparities between towns and villages, further deepens these challenges. Rural residents in particular face additional barriers due to mobility constraints, limited access to training opportunities, and weaker infrastructure. Currently, there is no coordinated governance framework that systematically addresses the specific digital education needs of seniors, leaving efforts fragmented and often temporary.

The proposed action responds to this gap by introducing accessible digital training tailored specifically to elderly people. It provides free courses, mentoring, and tutorials supported by workshops on essential digital services such as e-government portals, online payments, telemedicine consultations, and safe use of social media for communication with family and friends. Sustainability is ensured through a "train the trainer" model that allows peer-to-peer knowledge transfer, integration of digital skills development into lifelong learning systems, and stable funding secured from EU, national, and municipal sources. Trainings take place in libraries, community centers, and clubs, while mobile units and online learning platforms guarantee access for residents in remote areas. Flexible schedules make participation easier and more inclusive, removing barriers linked to mobility, health conditions, or time constraints.

Governance is reinforced through multi-stakeholder partnerships that bring together municipalities, NGOs, libraries, banks, and healthcare providers. These partnerships are supported by volunteer networks and national-level advocacy, creating stronger capacity and coordinated responses to the digital divide.

The long-term result is a digitally confident elderly population, able to use online tools independently in their everyday lives. The program is designed as a sustainable model with reliable funding and institutional capacity. It ensures balanced participation across territories and establishes governance structures that guarantee both effectiveness and inclusiveness. By empowering elderly citizens to engage safely in the digital society, the initiative reduces isolation, strengthens independence, and creates equal opportunities between urban and rural communities. Beyond the individual benefits, greater digital inclusion also strengthens social cohesion, improves access to public services, and enhances community resilience in the face of rapid technological change.

DIGITAL EDUCATION FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- ESF+ inclusion programs.
- National lifelong learning funds.
- Municipal social services budget.
- Corporate sponsors (banks, telecoms, healthcare).
- NGO/university partnerships.

MONITORING & EVALUATION SYSTEM

KPIs:

- Seniors trained annually (≥300).
- Increase in e-service usage (+30% within 2 years).
- Student–senior mentorships (≥50).
- Participant satisfaction/confidence (≥60%).

Evaluation: surveys, usage tracking, interviews.

FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY

- Delivered via community centers, clubs, libraries, mobile units.
- Mentors: students, volunteers, community workers.
- Digital guides, helplines, online sessions.
- Governance: municipality, NGOs, senior associations.

RISK ANALYSIS

- Technophobia – outreach campaigns. 

- Rural exclusion – mobile units. 

- Short-term funding – integration into national programs. 

- Mentor shortage – volunteer recruitment. 

Digital literacy for seniors strengthens inclusion. Impacts include:

- Social cohesion: reduced isolation of elderly.
- Digital inclusion: +50% increase in e-health, e-banking, e-government use.
- Intergenerational solidarity: students mentor seniors.
- Scalability: mobile unit model adaptable nationally

STRATEGIC IMPACT & ADDED VALUE

Actions	Responsible	Key Partners	Timescale	Budget
Objective: Ensure a safe and secure digital learning environment for children, protecting them from cyber threats while promoting responsible online behavior				
o Curriculum Integration and Training – Integrate cybersecurity and digital literacy into school curricula, including mandatory courses on safe social media use, recognizing fake news, phishing, and online scams. o Workshops and Awareness – Conduct annual cybersecurity workshops for students and teachers, and organize parent sessions on online safety risks and protective tools. o Technical Safeguards – Install cybersecurity filters, child-friendly firewalls, enforce two-factor authentication (2FA), and strong password policies on school networks. o Policy and Governance – Develop and enforce anti-cyberbullying policies and conduct regular cybersecurity audits in schools.	Municipality of Razlog	Ministry of Education Local IT experts NGOs specializing in online child safety Youth organizations Law enforcement (cybercrime unit)	2026-2027	EUR 250 000

Intended Result	URBACT Integrated Approach Matrix				
Children learn and communicate safely; schools run secure systems with clear incident response procedures.					
		Sectoral	Sustainability	Territorial	Governance
	Current:	Cybersecurity & media literacy not systematically embedded, inconsistent policies;	Ad-hoc tools; limited funds, weak routines for updates and audits;	Protection level varies across schools; rural connectivity constraints	Fragmented roles, parents not enga ged, no clear incident response
	Intervention:	Integrate into curricula, annual workshops, anti-cyberbullying and responsible communication;	Budget for licences/maintenance, privacy-by-design processes, periodic audits, staff training	Standard security baseline (filters, firewalls, 2FA) in every school, remote reporting access	Create secure reporting portal, train IT and counsellors, protocol with law enforcement, Parent Academy
	Future:	Safer online behavior and better critical judgement of misinformation/scams	Institutionalized practices and compliance with data-protection requirements	Cohesive protection and reduced disparities across the municipality	Clear accountability and rapid, effective incident handling with family involvement

ACTION TABLE
Goal: Cybersecurity & Data Privacy Protection for Children and Digital Education

Nowadays Children grow up in an increasingly digital environment where online learning, social media, and digital communication have become central to their education and daily lives. This digital transformation brings significant benefits. It enables access to vast knowledge, interactive learning, and global communication, while also developing creativity and digital skills that are essential for the future labour market. Schools benefit from faster administration, innovative teaching tools, and more effective connections with parents and communities. Families can use digital platforms to stay engaged in their children's education and to access important services more efficiently.

However, these opportunities are accompanied by serious challenges. Children are among the most vulnerable groups online, often exposed to risks such as cyberbullying, identity theft, scams, harmful content, and misuse of personal data. Cybersecurity and media literacy are still not systematically embedded in school systems, which leaves protection uneven and inconsistent. Rural areas face additional difficulties such as weaker connectivity and limited resources for secure infrastructure. Schools often rely on ad hoc tools with insufficient budgets for licences, audits, or updates. Governance structures are fragmented, with unclear roles for teachers, administrators, parents, and public authorities. Families remain under-involved, while the absence of a clear incident response system reduces schools' ability to act quickly and effectively when problems occur.

The proposed action addresses these challenges by combining digital education with cybersecurity measures in a comprehensive and sustainable way. Awareness of digital safety and responsible online behaviour will be integrated into school curricula and reinforced through annual workshops. Families will be empowered through a Parent Academy that provides practical skills and tools for online protection at home. Schools will implement a standard security baseline with firewalls, filters, and two-factor authentication, while privacy-by-design processes, periodic audits, and staff training will guarantee ongoing resilience. A Cyber Incident Response and Reporting System will be created, supported by trained IT staff, counsellors, and protocols for cooperation with law enforcement, ensuring accountability and rapid response in case of incidents.

The sustainability of this approach will be secured through stable funding for licences and maintenance and by institutionalising digital safety as part of school routines. Governance will be strengthened by inter-municipal cooperation, stronger partnerships between schools and families, and clear accountability frameworks at both local and national level.

The expected impact is a secure and trusted digital learning environment. Children will become more responsible online users, capable of identifying risks, resisting misinformation, and protecting their privacy. Schools will run standardised systems that comply with data protection requirements, while disparities between urban and rural areas will be reduced. Families will play an active role in online safety, and incident handling will be rapid, coordinated, and effective.

The overall goal is to balance the benefits of digital education with strong protection against its risks, creating an inclusive and resilient system where children can learn, communicate, and grow with confidence in the digital age.

CYBERSECURITY & DATA PRIVACY PROTECTION FOR CHILDREN AND DIGITAL EDUCATION

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- EU cybersecurity and literacy programs.
- National cybersecurity initiatives.
- Municipal IT/education budgets.
- Private partnerships (cybersecurity firms, ISPs, EdTech).

MONITORING & EVALUATION SYSTEM

KPIs:

- Schools with cybersecurity baseline (100%).
- Students/teachers/parents trained in safety (≥90%).
- Cyber incidents resolved (target: 100%).
- GDPR compliance score.

Evaluation: annual audits, safety surveys, expert reviews.

FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY

- Integration of cybersecurity modules in curricula.
- Annual awareness weeks/workshops.
- Secure infrastructure and incident protocols.
- Governance: schools, municipality, law enforcement, Parent Academy.

RISK ANALYSIS

- Outdated systems – annual audits, upgrades. RISK Level: H
- Parental disengagement – awareness campaigns. RISK Level: H
- Data breaches – multi-layer protocols. RISK Level: H
- Staff shortages – IT contracts. RISK Level: M

STRATEGIC IMPACT & ADDED VALUE

Cybersecurity protects children and ensures resilience. Impacts include:

- Safety: 100% compliance with EU safety standards.
- Awareness: digital literacy among students, parents, teachers.
- System resilience: municipality-wide secure infrastructure.
- Scalability: model adaptable to other cities/regions.

STRATEGIC BUDGET OVERVIEW (2026–2030)
Total budget: €2,562,000

The Municipality of Razlog has defined a balanced financial framework supporting the digital transformation of education through infrastructure development, modern technologies, teacher capacity, community inclusion, and secure digital environments.

1. Infrastructure and Technology – €600,000

Largest investment (23%) covering upgrades of digital infrastructure and renewal of outdated school equipment to ensure a reliable technical baseline.

2. Artificial Intelligence in Education – €325,000

Supports the introduction of adaptive learning systems, automated assessment tools, and data-driven teaching methods (13%).

3. Digital Learning Materials and Platforms – €95,000

A focused investment (4%) that complements national digital content initiatives and supports locally generated interactive materials.

4. Teacher Training – €270,000

Strengthens digital pedagogical skills (11%), building on national and project-funded programmes to ensure consistent professional development.

5. Student Engagement – €42,000

Funds activities that motivate student participation: digital clubs, competitions, workshops (1.6%).

6. Community Digital Awareness – €115,000

Supports initiatives aimed at reducing digital disparities and promoting digital literacy across the community (4.5%).

7. Business-Oriented Education – €450,000

A significant allocation (17.5%) linking education with the local economy through entrepreneurship and vocational digital programmes.

8. Testing in Real Environment – €240,000

Ensures pilots of innovative solutions (9%).

Following the strong results of project-based pilots, Razlog will provide €50,000 annually for school digitalisation, distributed per student.

9. Digital Education for Elderly People – €175,000

Promotes active ageing and inclusion through targeted training (6.8%).

10. Cybersecurity and Data Protection – €250,000

Secures digital environments, ensuring GDPR compliance and safe digital practices (10%).

CONCLUSION

A Strategic Framework for Sustainable Digital Education

The Integrated Digital Education Action Plan of the Municipality of Razlog represents a collective commitment to shaping a modern, inclusive, and forward-looking educational ecosystem. By merging technology with human creativity and community values, the Plan aims to empower every school, teacher, and learner to thrive in a digital society — fostering innovation, equal opportunities, and sustainable local development that resonates far beyond the classroom.