

An illustration of two people embracing. The person on the left has spiky white hair and is wearing a dark t-shirt. The person on the right is bald and wearing a white t-shirt. They are standing in front of a light grey wall with several green plants hanging from above. The text 'Breaking isolation' is written in large blue letters on the left side of the image.

# Breaking isolation

**ŠKOFJA LOKA'S STRATEGY TO FIGHT SOCIAL ISOLATION**

December 2025



Občina  
Škofja Loka

**URBACT**



Co-funded by  
the European Union  
Interreg



# ABOUT THIS STRATEGY

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This strategy (Integrated Action Plan) has been produced by the City of Škofja Loka through the close cooperation with 9 other european, small & medium sized cities, within an URBACT network called Breaking Isolation.

For about 3 years, the City of Škofja Loka (Slovenia) exchanged, learnt, experimented with its fellow european cities about social isolation, until it was able to reach and develop, by the end of 2025, its own strategy to fight isolation.

The present document tells the short story of this european collaborative peer-to-peer learning journey and the concrete, tangible action plan of the City of Škofja Loka.

As any strategy, the plan might evolve and change in the future, depending on opportunities, funding, political support, citizen' will, etc. It is therefore a guiding document, not a binding one.

For more info about the URBACT network of Breaking Isolation:  
<https://urbact.eu/networks/breaking-isolation>

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# Škofja Loka and social isolation

**'Social isolation is a condition in which a person suffers from a long term lack of social relations both in quantity and quality'.**

Social isolation is a rapidly growing social issue worldwide. According to the World Health Organization, nearly one person out of 4 is experiencing social isolation.

Yes, we live in a society supposedly more and more connected, through the promise of social media, yet, studies show that people have never been more isolated than today.

There are many reasons why people become isolated. It can happen after losing a loved one, a divorce, a long illness, losing a job or retiring. Sometimes it is because a person lives far away from family or friends.

Often several reasons come together, and the risk of isolation becomes bigger. This is not only a personal problem – it is also a challenge for the whole community, because isolation

makes participation and solidarity weaker.

To answer this challenge, Škofja Loka joined nine other European small and medium-sized cities in the URBACT network Breaking Isolation. For two and a half years, these cities worked together, shared experiences, visited each other and tested new ideas. From this process, Škofja Loka prepared its own Integrated Action Plan. Urbact local group, with the support of the municipal administration, prepared a roadmap with concrete steps to reduce social isolation in our municipality.

This IAP is the result of both local needs and European cooperation. It shows how learning from each other can help us to find new solutions. The plan is not fixed forever and it can and most likely will change with new opportunities, ideas or needs. But it gives a clear direction: to make Škofja Loka a place where nobody is left alone and where every person can feel connected and supported.

## Ker radi pomagamo drugim

► Ela Dolinar

Prostofer je vseslovenski trajnostni prostovoljski projekt za mobilnost starejših. Ta projekt povezuje starejše osebe, ki potrebujejo prevoz, a sami ne zmorejo uporabljati javnih in plačljivih prevozov, s starejšimi aktivnimi vozniki, ki po drugi strani radi priskočijo na pomoč.

**V Sloveniji imamo 1200 prostoferjev, 16.000 uporabnikov, v projektu pa sodeluje 109 občin. V Škofji Loki je enajst prostoferjev.**

Stana Bašelj



Rada sem prostoferka, ker s tem nekaj prispevam v dobro starejših. To delo me na neki način bogati, spoznavam nove ljudi in res so vsi hvaležni za te prevoze. Tudi kramljanje s starejšimi je med vožnjo vedno zanimivo.

Zuhdija Mušedinovič



Zakaj sem prostofer? Zato, ker me je že mama naučila, da je treba ljudem pomagati. In ona mi je bila svetel zgled, in to mi je ostalo. Prostofer sem že od vsega začetka, saj je najlepši in najboljši občutek, ko nekomu pomagaš. Zadovoljstvo je obojestransko.

Ela Dolinar



Prostovoljstvo je zame vrednota in zato mi ni težko včasih čakati več ur, da nekdo opravi pregled ali kaj podobnega. Ko vidiš nekoga starejšega, kako je hvaležen, sem zadovoljna tudi sama. Z nekaterimi, ki jih peljem večkrat, smo postali že skoraj prijatelji.

Jože Krek



Prostofer sem zato, ker je lepo pomagati starejšim. To me izpolnjuje in veseli. Zanimivo je poslušati tako zgodbe kot tudi težave, s katerimi se spopadajo starejši.

**Prostoferji v Škofji Loki:**

Zuhdija Mušedinovič - Zudo, Jože Krek, Franc Hafner - Aci, Joso Mlinar, Ela Dolinar, Marta Simonič, Stana Bašelj, Danica Štajer, Alenka Kavčič, Milan Mihalič, Franc Rutar.

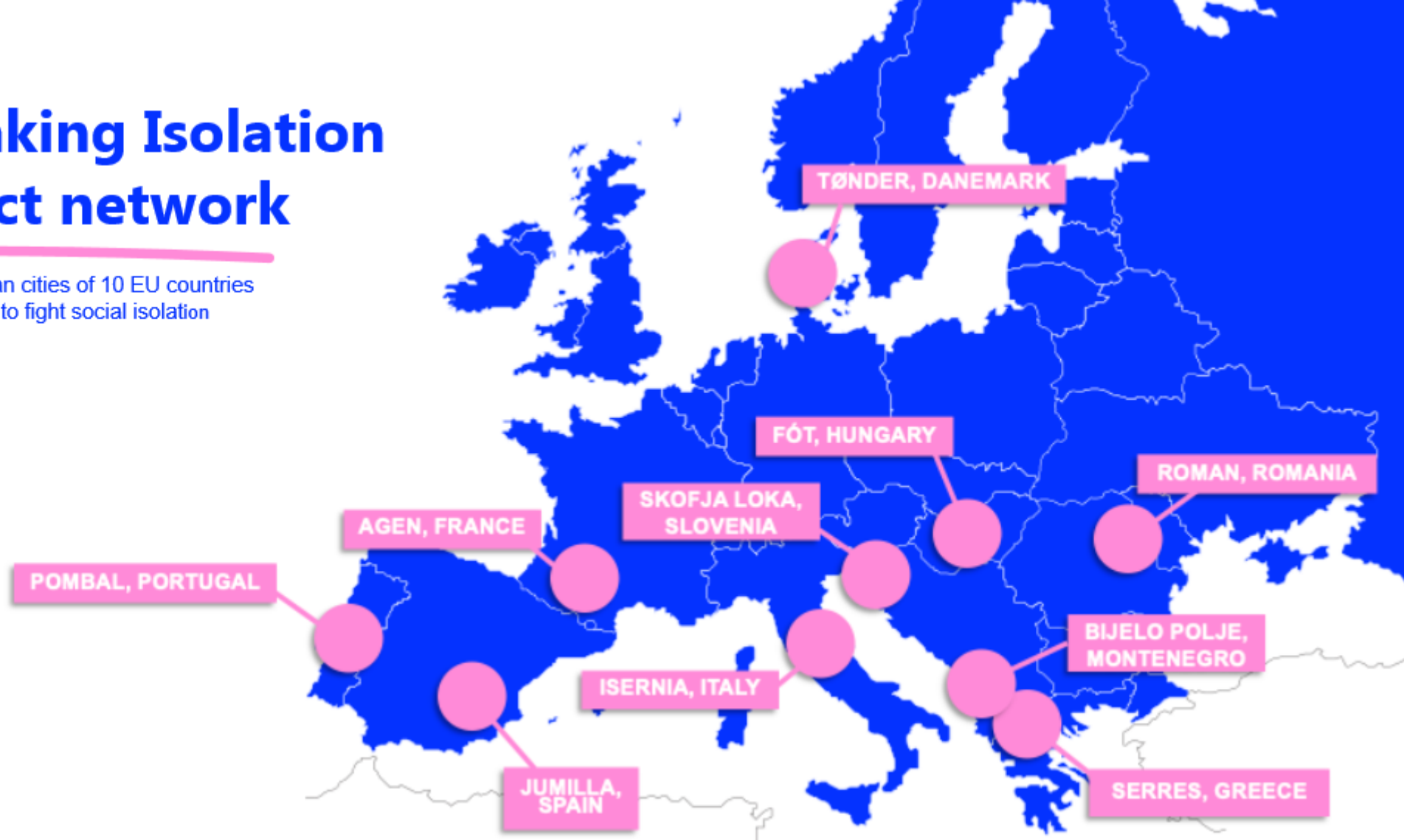
**Humanisti med nami**

Zuhdijo Mušedinoviča poznam kot izvrstnega sodelavca še iz podjetja Tehnik, poznam ga tudi kot krvodajalca, zdaj pa sem ga spoznal še kot humanista. Zelo se je potrudil, se organiziral in si vzel čas, da me je iz bolnišnice na Jesenicah varno pripeljal domov v Loko. Zudo, hvala ti!

Taib Jahić iz Škofje Loke

# The Breaking Isolation Urbact network

10 European cities of 10 EU countries  
united to fight social isolation



**Why a European network?** Social isolation is a growing issue everywhere, not just in one country but worldwide. This means that everyone is impacted but it also means that potential solutions are eventually to be found everywhere. Solutions might lie not just in your own country but maybe in a far away city somewhere across Europe. Started in June 2023 (until Dec. 2025), the Breaking

Isolation network gathered 10 small & medium sized cities from 10 European countries facing issues of social isolation and willing to fight it. For 2,5 years, they learnt about one another, exchanged their practices, visited each other, experimented new methods altogether, conducted local testing actions, to build, in the end, their own adhoc strategies to fight isolation.

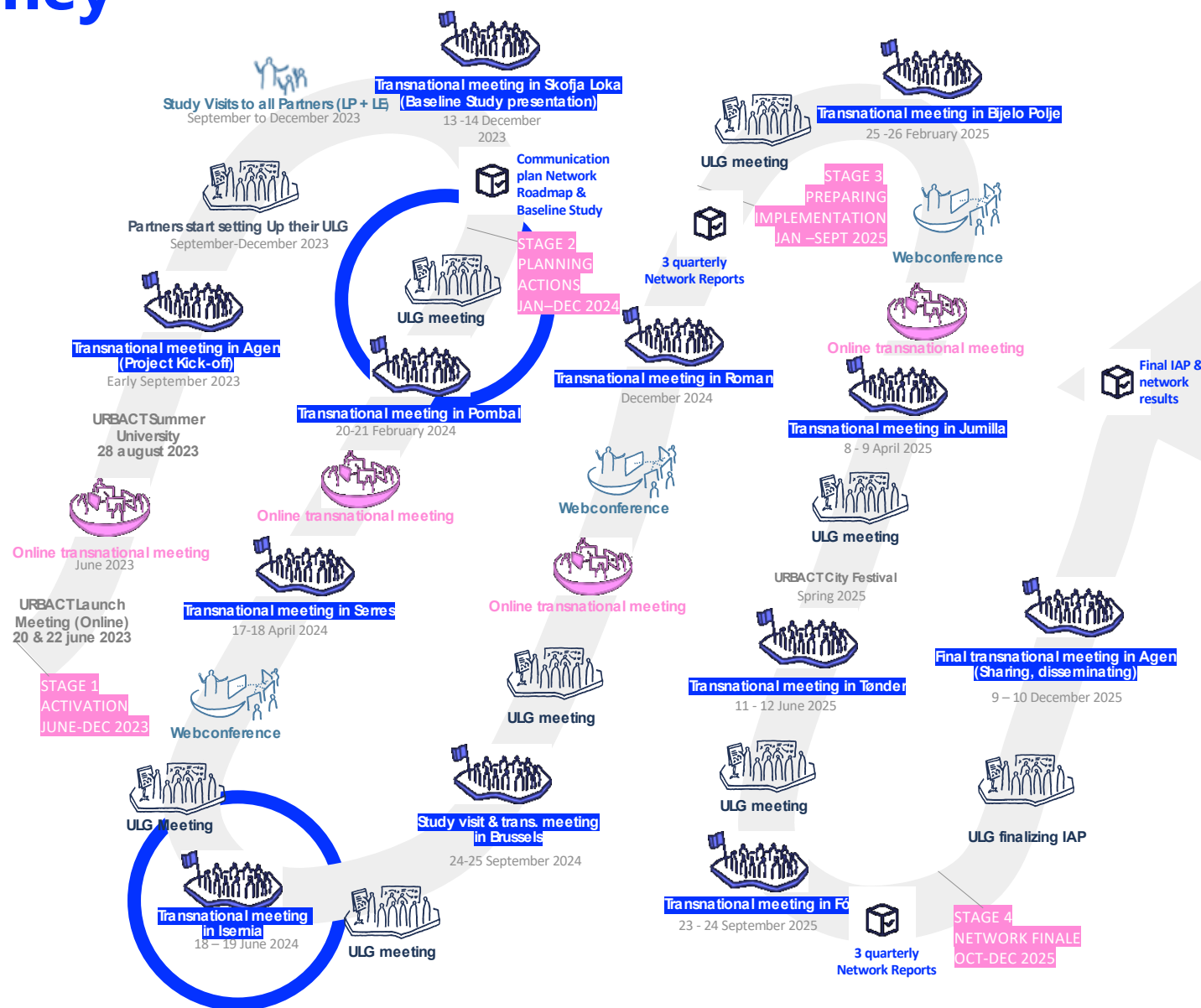
# A european Journey

The Breaking Isolation journey is structured around a series of collective rendez-vous called Transnational Meetings (TNM). These TNM gather, systematically, the 10 cities of the Breaking Isolation network and is the most precious exchange & learn space for the network. Indeed, during those TNMs, each city presents the results of their work at local level with their URBACT local group (composed of a mix of local stakeholders, NGOs, citizens, civil servants, etc.), then the hosting city showcases inspiring practices (through on site visits), Lead Partner checks up administrative and communication matters while the Lead Expert explains the next steps of the journey as well as presents the ad-hoc tools that cities will have to use with their ULGs.

In between each TNM, cities organize their URBACT Local Group (ULG) meetings, in order to share their results to the next TNM.

Alongside ULG meetings and TNMs, the network also ponctually organizes online meetings as well as webconferences on specific issues/topics.

This 2,5 years long journey is not only a learning experience but also a beautiful european cooperation based on genuine sharing and exchanging.





# A local collaborative adventure

URBACT networks are a European and transnational cooperation journey but also a local collaborative one. Indeed, each network has to bring together key stakeholders in order to build and work collectively on the local challenge and strategy. This document, and everything inside, was made possible by the deep engagement representatives of local NGOs, public institutions and municipality.

This strategy and IAP was prepared by:

- Municipality of Škofja Loka
- Zavod Tri
- Zavod Familija
- Zavod O, zavod škofjeloške mladine
- Društvo upokojencev Škofja Loka
- Medobčinsko društvo invalidov Škofja Loka
- Društvo U3
- Center za socialno delo (Center for social work)
- Vrtec Škofja Loka (Kindergarten)
- Osnovna šola Jela Janežiča
- Društvo Sožitje
- Zavod MEPI



# Our journey



The ULG dedicated a lot of time to identification of possible groups and individuals, that either already are or are at risk for social isolation. While we have concluded that it is difficult to identify whole groups and that risk depends of the factors, presented on page 10 of this strategy, the group also agreed to focus the attention on the elderly population, especially the ones that are geographically distanced from the centre of the city, young people that are not in education or employment (NEETs), young families and migrants – people that have recently moved to Škofja Loka, with special focus on those who do not speak or understand Slovenian.

With this in mind, the group has started to design actions that could help lowering the risk of social isolation and would target different groups of people and individuals that are already socially isolated. The group prepared a list of possible actions and programmes, out of which we chose 2 actions that would be tested during the project: „Slovenske urice“, which is a Slovene language course that it taught by intercultural mediator and covers also learning about Slovenian culture, and „Let's go to culture together“, which is an action that offers free transport to elderly who would want to visit a cultural event in the city (for free).

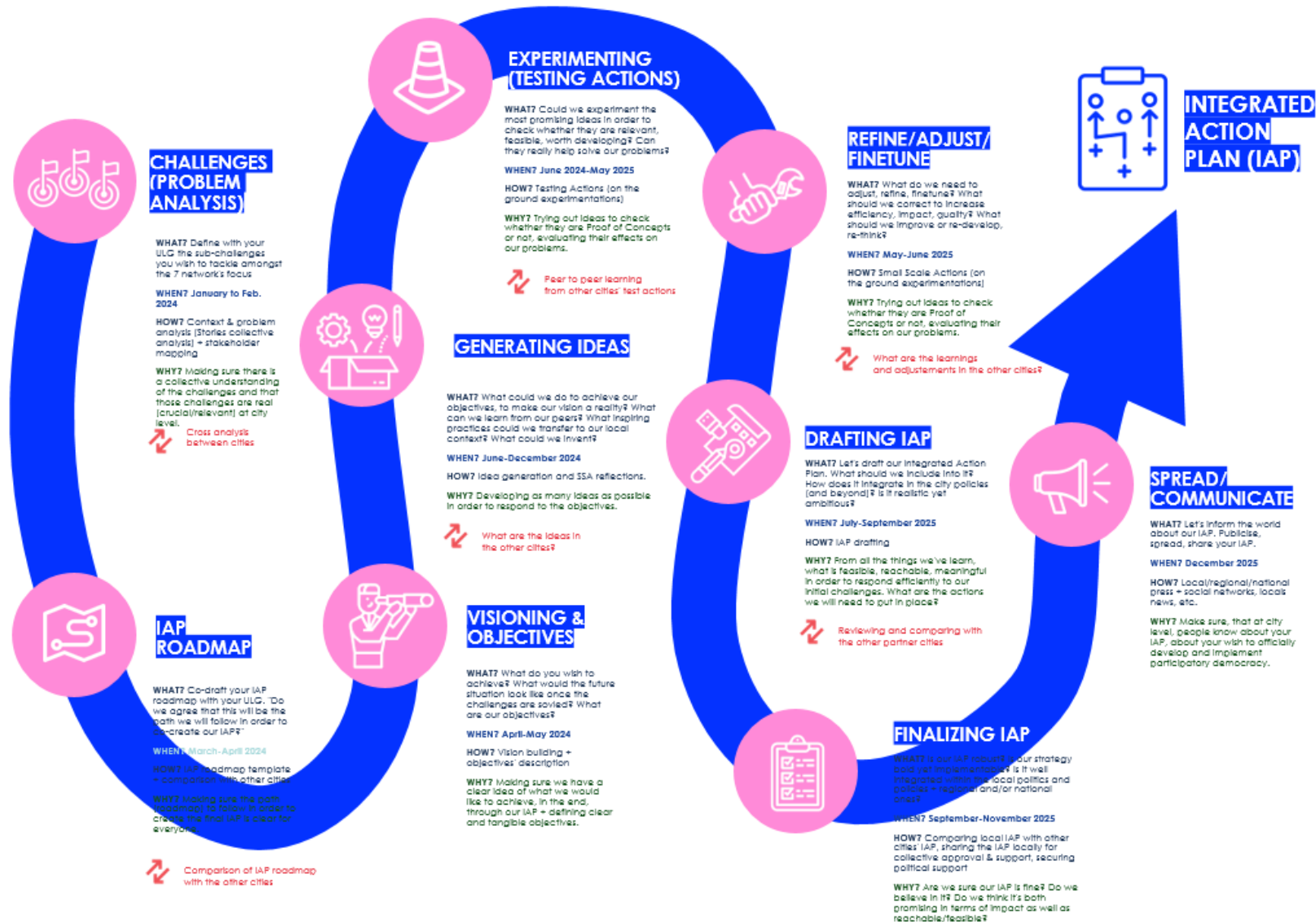
In the end, the group proposed 12 actions that are part of this integrated action plan. It was also decided that the follow-up of this plan would be a part of the tasks of the Council of inclusion (more on that on page 29).





# A collective journey

Breaking Isolation network is an action-planning network of cities aiming at developing, each one of them, a local strategy to fight social isolation, called an Integrated Action Plan (IAP). In order to build this IAP, each city of the network is taken through a collective process (together with local stakeholders composing URBACT Local Groups) to first, diagnose the challenges and issues of their city regarding the topic of



isolation, then come up with the vision and objectives they want to achieve, or in other words, express their ambition, then, co-create ideas, copy and transfer promising practices from the other partner cities, then experiment, meaning try out ideas locally to collect proofs of concepts, then evaluate, refine, adjust then pack together the strategy.





Isolation

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## THE PROBLEM

# Social isolation is multifactorial

Causes of social isolation are often multi-factorials. A well and sound socially inserted person can end up very rapidly isolated. Why? For plenty of reasons (see the risk cards below): the death of a loved one, a divorce, a break up, depression, dementia, long illness, the loss of a job, or even retirement, addictions, the fact of living far from relatives, domestic violence. They are plenty of factors which may lead to isolation. It does not mean that you will automatically face isolation if you experience one these situation, but it might increase the risk, especially when you start combining them (as factors add up).



DEATH OF A LOVED  
ONE (OR BREAK UP)



MENTAL HEALTH  
ISSUES



PHYSICAL  
IMPAIRMENT/  
LONG ILLNESS



UNEMPLOYMENT/  
RETIREMENT



POVERTY



INTIMATE PARTNER  
VIOLENCE



REMOTE LOCATION



ADDICTIVE USE OF  
SOCIAL MEDIA



ADDICTIONS TO DRUGS,  
ALCOHOL, GAMBLING



LACK OF SOCIAL SKILLS

**'Addressing individual  
risk factors in  
isolation will not be  
enough to tackle  
loneliness, and more  
holistic solutions will  
be needed.'**

Joint Research Center, EU  
Commission 2022.



## THE PROBLEM

# SOCIAL ISOLATION IS HARMFUL

Findings indicate that the influence of social relationships on the

RISK OF DEATH ARE COMPARABLE WITH WELL-ESTABLISHED RISK FACTORS FOR MORTALITY SUCH AS SMOKING AND ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION



and exceed the influence of other risk factors such as physical inactivity and obesity.

(Holt-Lunstad J., 2010)

A study conducted on a 10 year period with over 12 000 people demonstrated that loneliness is associated with a

40 %  
INCREASED RISK OF  
DEMENTIA.

(Sutin AR., 2020)



Findings suggest that deficiencies in social relationships are associated with an

INCREASED RISK OF  
DEVELOPING CORONARY  
HEART DISEASE AND  
STROKE

(Valtorta NK et al., 2016)



# Already existing programmes

During the initial phase, we have analysed already existing practices and programmes that are aimed at individuals and groups that are at risk of social isolation.

Some of those were included in the baseline study of the Breaking Isolation programme, while others were analysed and added in discussion with the ULG.

These programmes are:

## □ ELDERLY TO ELDERLY PROGRAMME

(Starejši za starejše, Društvo upokojencev Škofja Loka)

The concept? Volunteers, mostly „young“ retirees regularly (at least once a year) visit (or contact by phone) every person in the municipality that is over 80, to chat with them – to brighten up their day, give them useful information, help them organise small tasks (pedicure, doctor's appointments, etc.) and inform them about the possibilities of a better quality of life in their home environment.'

Currently, there are around 50 volunteers making sure that the programme is running smoothly.

## □ HALO 65+ PHONE SERVICE (Društvo U3)

The concept? A free phone service, operating daily between 9am and 3pm, offering information and help especially to the elderly people in our community. The service offers help with booking medical appointments, filling-in different applications for social services etc.

## □ DOUBLE-USE SOCIALIZATION CENTRES FOR KIDS AND THE ELDERLY – „SREČEVALNICA“ (Zavod O, CSD, Familija)

The concept? Municipality has set up three children & youth centers in three larger communities around the center of the town. As they were in use only in the afternoon, an NGO working on intergenerational solidarity proposed that they be used as daily centers for elderly in the morning.

Now, we have activities for elderly in the morning, regularly attended by up to 15 people per center, as well as activities for children and youth in the afternoon. All of the activities are primarily targeted at individuals at risk for social isolation.

## □ PROSTOFER (Municipality of Škofja Loka)

The concept? As Škofja Loka is comprised of the center town as well as a lot of surrounding villages, commuting to the public services, such as the clinic, can be a challenge. So the municipality has set up a car service, which gather retired volunteers who drive other elderly around for appointments, shopping, etc. Currently, there are 12 volunteers who drive elderly around every day.

## □ PUMO+ PROGRAMME (Zavod Familija)

The concept? A national programme, launched by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, focusing on the young NEETs (individuals Not in Education, Not in Employment, Not in Training). The programme offers structured daily programme for about 40 – 50 individuals per year, offer different social activities, such as gardening, cooking, discussion groups, summer camps etc.





Vision

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**In 2035, Škofja  
Loka will be a  
city of  
interconnected  
citizens where  
nobody will be  
left out.**

No matter if someone lives in the old town centre or in one of the villages, they should have easy and reliable ways to reach the places that are important to them such as community spaces, services, friends and opportunities. Good public transport and careful planning of public spaces will help people stay connected and active in daily life.

The municipality will work together with citizens, local organisations and public services to notice early signs of social isolation and to respond in a quick and sensitive way. Special focus will be given to those most at risk, including older people, young people who are not in school or work, and families who are new in the area. Through community programmes, personal outreach and open public spaces, Škofja Loka will make it easier for people to build and maintain strong social ties.

This future cannot be created by institutions alone, it depends on the care that people show for one another. A culture of mutual support should become part of everyday life. By encouraging neighbours to look after each other, by creating more places to meet, and by listening to people's experiences, Škofja Loka can become a place where everyone feels seen, heard and included in the community.



# 7 Challenges for breaking isolation



The Lead Expert of the Breaking Isolation network, Christophe Gouache, identified 7 needs regarding social isolation:

1. We need to better identify socially isolated people
2. We need to better diagnose those at risk of isolation (early signs)
3. We need to develop direct answers to help out those already isolated
4. We need to reinforce and multiply solutions to prevent isolation of those at risk
5. We need to raise awareness on social isolation, how to recognize it and its effects
6. We need to develop city-wide answers by partnering within municipality departments and with local stakeholders, and in particular, local NGOs
7. We need to reinforce a culture of mutual community care

**In Škofja Loka,  
concretely, we decided  
to focus on...**

- **Identification of people that are at risk of isolation**: we will develop or upgrade already existing effective mechanisms that will in regular periods enable municipality, public institutions and NGOs to monitor and identify people that are at risk of social isolation, with special focus on the elderly (people about 80), young NEETs and migrant families.
- **Upgrading already existing and developing new direct answers to those already isolated**: we will upgrade the community care programmes, such as Elders for elderly (Starejši za starejše) and publicly funded programmes, such as Halo 65+, to include the whole geographical area of the Škofja Loka municipality as well develop new approaches to socially isolated people, with special focus on the groups of people that are more at risk of isolation.
- **Developing partnership between municipality, public (social care) institutions and NGOs**: strengthen the already existing coordination bodies, such as Council for inclusion and, if needed, form new consultation bodies that will be able to ensure proper coordination of already existing efforts to tackle social isolation and develop new approaches and programmes.



# Strategy

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## OUR STRATEGY IN ONE PAGE

Too many people, of all age range, are suffering from the growing phenomenon of social isolation



Škofja Loka is a city where no one is left aside suffering from isolation and where those at risk are taken care of by the community.

### [Specific objectives]

Better identify socially isolated people and those at risk

Upgrading already existing and developing new direct answers to those already isolated

Increase coordination among different actors and programmes to make sure nobody is left out

### [Operational objectives]

Develop and implement effective assessment tools for early identification

Establish a reporting and alert system for cases of social isolation

Develop protocols for high risk situation

Collect already existing practices

Enable and support upgrades of existing practices

Develop new programmes/interventions for socially isolated or high risk individuals

Establish effective cooperation mechanism

Raise awareness of the social isolation as a public issue

### [Actions]

- Assessment tool for early recognition of social isolation

- Active database of relevant organisations and programmes

- Protocols for high risk situations

- Active database of relevant organisations and programmes

- Holiday activities for at risk kids
- Meeting place –srečevalnica (upgrade)
- „Slovenske urice” – introduction to slovenian language for newcomers
- Public „garage”
- Let's go to culture together
- Peer support for at risk groups
- Postmen as social workers

- Set up regular meetings for relevant stakeholders, both public institutions as well as NGOs

- Social isolation awareness campaign



# The strategy of Škofja Loka





# Action plan



# ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR EARLY RECOGNITION OF SOCIAL ISOLATION

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

Setting up an assessment tool that would enable different organisations to detect early signs of social isolation and identify the persons that are in high risk of isolation

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Better identify socially isolated people and those at risk



### OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Develop and implement effective assessment tools for early identification



### KEY STEPS

1. Setting up coordination body
2. Develop list of indicators
3. Develop possible questions for identification
4. Preparation of the assessment tool
5. Testing the tool in action
6. Evaluation of the testing results
7. Adapting the tools based on feedback and evaluation
8. Final version of the tool



### ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-lead: Škofja Loka municipality & Center for social work  
Active contributors: ULG members

Supporting partners: ULG/follow-up group  
Communication friends: Relevant institutions



### COSTS & FUNDING

The preparation of the assessment tool will not require additional funding, as the process will be coordinated by the municipal employees and the process foresees voluntary involvement of experts and representatives of relevant organisation in the community.



### MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

Monitoring indicators: number and frequency of the usage of the tool; social isolation cases that are detected by the tool.

There should be regular updates of the tool based on the feedback from the users, and the evaluation of the tool will take place once a year with the project follow-up group.



### RISK MITIGATION

The two main risks are that it will not be possible to develop the tool or that the tools developed will not be used by the organisations. Mitigation for both risks is foremost making sure that the organisations concerned will be included in the preparation of the tool and that there will be sufficient time to test the tool before putting it to regular use. Additionally, the tools should be an upgrade of the tools that some organisations, such as the Association of retired people, already uses.

# ACTIVE DATABASE OF RELEVANT ORGANISATIONS AND PROGRAMMES

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

Setting up a database of relevant organisations and programmes that focus on different aspects of social isolation and individuals at risk for social isolation. The database will include descriptions of the programmes, target groups/individuals as well as contact points.

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Increase coordination among different actors and programmes to make sure nobody is left out



### OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Collect already existing practices



### KEY STEPS

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Set up a digital solution for the database                   | shared.  |
| 2. Gather relevant information                                  | 4. Test the database with interested organisations   |
| 3. Prepare an overview of what are the information needed to be | 5. Enable online access to the relevant organisation |



### ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Lead: Škofja Loka municipality

Active contributors: ULG members



### COSTS & FUNDING

The preparation of the assessment tool will not require additional funding, as the process will be coordinated by the municipal employees and the process foresees voluntary involvement of experts and representatives of relevant organisation in the community.



### MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

The main indicator will be the set up of the database. We will monitor the usage by checking how many times and how often the database is accessed, as well as how regularly the database will be updated.



### RISK MITIGATION

As a database is only useful if it is regularly updated and changes are recorded, the main risk is that the information is not relevant or is out of date. We will mitigate that by having regular checks of the information with the relevant organisations.



# LET'S GO TO CULTURE TOGETHER

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

The programme is aimed at individuals that are socially isolated or at high risk for it. Within this programme, individuals are invited to culture events within the municipality, provided with free tickets and transportation from their homes to the places where the cultural events take place. The process is coordinated by the information point Halo 65+.

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Upgrading already existing and developing new direct answers to those already isolated

### OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Developing new programmes/ interventions for socially isolated or high risk individuals



### KEY STEPS

1. Identify the people that will be invited to this programme
2. Prepare (regularly, on a monthly basis) an overview of possible activities
3. Find efficient channels to contact the relevant individuals
4. Define the protocol when an individual expresses a wish to join an activity.
5. Regularly update the database of individuals that would be encouraged to join the programme.



### ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-lead: Društvo U3 and municipality  
Active contributors: Društvo upokojencev, Zavod 973

Supporting partners: ULG/follow-up group  
Communication friends: CSD, NGOs, Hospital



### COSTS & FUNDING

As the services required to implement this project are already covered within different calls and public services of the Municipality (Prostofer, Info točka 65+), there are no additional funding sources required.



### MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

Indicators:

- Number of people attending the events
- Number of people that attend the events more than once

The project will be evaluated on the semi-yearly basis.



### RISK MITIGATION

As experienced during the testing of this actions, there is a significant risk that the socially isolated individuals will not respond to the invitations by phone or mail. This will be mitigated with additional support, including integrating this action within the already existing visits to the socially isolated individuals and those at risk for social isolation.

# MEETING PLACE – SREČEVALNICA (upgrade)

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

Srečevalnica meeting place is a daily center/meeting place for elderly that currently already operates in the center of the city. We plan to extend the services also in rural areas, both by setting up meeting places in rural communities as well as providing transport from more distant areas to the existing center in the center.

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Upgrading already existing and developing new direct answers to those already isolated



### OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Enable and support upgrades of existing practices



### KEY STEPS

1. Identify the communities where there is most interest/need for new meeting places
2. Find a suitable (public) place in those communities
3. Find individuals/organisations to coordinate new meeting places
4. Invite possible group members and start building a community



### ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Lead: Zavod O  
Active contributors: Municipality,  
Društvo upokojencev

Supporting partners: Local  
communities (Krajevne  
skupnosti)



### COSTS & FUNDING

The basic operation of the Srečevalnica meeting places is already covered by national and municipal budget sources. Additional sources that will enable opening new centers will be allocated within the municipal budget, using already existing infrastructure of the municipality (cultural houses etc.)



### MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

Indicators:

- Number of new people involved
- Number of new meeting places



### RISK MITIGATION

The challenge of this action is to set up meeting places and/or groups that will meet regularly and where these meetings will take place on a regular schedule. We will have to be careful with the selection of the coordinators of the daily centers and offer sufficient support and guidance to enable that.

# PUBLIC „GARAGE“

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

A place where individuals or groups can use or borrow tools and basic building equipment, that allows anybody to join and perform basic repairs under the supervision of an expert. Part of this action are also workshops that will focus on professional skills, such as carpentry, upholstery, bicycle repair etc.

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Upgrading already existing and developing new direct answers to those already isolated



### OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Develop new programmes/ interventions for socially isolated or high risk individuals



### KEY STEPS

1. Find a suitable space for the garage
2. Find individuals or organisation(s) interested in coordinating this action

3. Buy basic equipment and tools
4. Advertise the service, especially to at-risk individuals



### ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-lead: Društvo upokojencev, Modelarsko društvo, Ljudska univerza

Supporting partners, Communication friends: NGOs



### COSTS & FUNDING

The costs for the tools and equipment will be covered by the municipal budget. The experts, especially lecturers on professional skills, will be remunerated from the budget of the public university institution.



### MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

We will monitor this with the following indicators:

- Number of people using the service (first time)
- Number of volunteers that will offer their expertise
- Number of workshops that will be offered and implemented



### RISK MITIGATION

As the service will only work if there are both volunteers to run it and participants that will visit the garage, it is vital we find an individual and/or organisation that would coordinate these activities.



# „SLOVENSKE URICE“ – introduction to Slovenian language for newcomers

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

Special Slovenian language lessons, taught by an intercultural mediator and encompassing both learning Slovene as well as Slovenian culture. The objective of the action is to provide not only the language lessons, but even more importantly to encourage participation of individuals that would otherwise not engage in the local community (stay-at-home moms etc.),

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Upgrading already existing and developing new direct answers to those already isolated



### OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Develop new programmes/interventions for socially isolated or high risk individuals



## KEY STEPS

1. Identify the relevant migrant communities and their needs
2. Find individuals in those communities, interested in becoming intercultural mediators

3. Educate new intercultural mediators
4. Offer services to the migrant communities



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-lead: Vrtec Škofja Loka &  
Zavod Tri  
Active contributors: Intercultural  
mediator

Supporting partners: CSD,  
Municipality  
Communication friends:



## COSTS & FUNDING

The main costs of the action is the remuneration for the intercultural mediator and the lecture materials. This will be covered by the municipal budget in the first year, after that it will become a part of the support services for migrants, covered by the national budget.



## MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

We will monitor this with the following indicators:

- Number of people attending
- Number of lessons organised
- Self-evaluation of the level of improved competences of the participants.



## RISK MITIGATION

As the implementation of this actions relies heavily on the intercultural mediators, the main risk is that we would not have people that would be interested in this role. We will mitigate that by actively encouraging communities to propose candidates and cooperate closely with organisations that work with those communities. In order to make sure that the service is implemented properly, we will also make sure that intercultural mediators will join a capacity building programme for intercultural mediators.

# PEER SUPPORT FOR AT RISK GROUPS

## WHAT IS IT?

Develop new programmes for peer support for at risk groups, similar to the Starejši za starejše programme. The programme aims to develop a system of checking-up on at risk groups, such as NEET, people with disabilities etc.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Upgrading already existing and developing new direct answers to those already isolated



## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Develop new programmes/ interventions for socially isolated or high risk individuals



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-lead: Škofja Loka municipality & NGOs  
Active contributors: Schools, kindergarten

Supporting partners: Center for social work



## COSTS & FUNDING

In the initial phases, the costs for coordinators of the groups will be covered by the municipality budget. In the next phase, we will aim at applying for funding from external sources, mostly national and EU funding.

# 7

# HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES FOR AT RISK KIDS

## WHAT IS IT?

Upgrading existing programmes for children and youth during the summer (and other) school holidays, with a special focus on those at higher risk for social isolation.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Upgrading already existing and developing new direct answers to those already isolated



## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Enable and support upgrades of existing practices



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Lead: Škofja Loka municipality  
Active contributors: Children and youth organisations

Supporting partners: Kindergarten and schools



## COSTS & FUNDING

The municipality already offers funding for holiday activities. We will increase the funding available from the public budget and adapt the tenders to encourage inclusion of children and youth that are at risk for social isolation.

# 8

# PROTOCOLS FOR HIGH RISK SITUATIONS

## WHAT IS IT?

Setting up protocols for checking individuals that find themselves in situations at high risk for social isolation, such as individuals who recently lost a partner, moved to a new place or moved to Škofja Loka from another city or country, finished school etc.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Better identify socially isolated people and those at risk



## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Develop diagnosis tools



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-lead: Škofja Loka municipality & CSD

Active contributors: NGOs & Council for inclusion



## COSTS & FUNDING

This action does not require additional funding, as it will be prepared by municipal and CSD employee during their working hours.

# 9

# SOCIAL ISOLATION AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

## WHAT IS IT?

Awareness campaign about the issue of social isolation that would be aimed at two different target groups. First one is general public, so the campaign should aim at raising awareness about social isolation as a public issue. Second one is aimed at employees and volunteers of organisations that already work with at risk individuals, with a focus on supporting them in recognising socially isolated individuals.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Increase coordination among different actors and programmes



## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Raise awareness of the social isolation as a public issue



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-lead: Škofja Loka municipality & OŠ Jela Janežiča

Active contributors: Council for inclusion

Communication friends: NGOs, Schools, Kindergarten, Center for social work



## COSTS & FUNDING

The funding will be provided in the municipal budget. In the first year, we foresee the cost of the action at around 7.000 EUR.

# 10



# POSTMEN AS SOCIAL WORKERS

## WHAT IS IT?

Cooperation project with Slovenian post office, focusing on training the postal workers on the issue of social isolation and how to recognise it. The training would also include protocols on how to report those individuals to relevant organisations that can offer support.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Better identify socially isolated people and those at risk



## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Develop protocols for high risk situation



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-lead: Škofja Loka municipality & Slovenian post office  
Active contributors: Center for

social work  
Supporting partners: Local NGOs, working on inclusion



## COSTS & FUNDING

In the initial phase, we will plan the funding for the training of post workers in the municipality budget. In the next phase, we will apply for funding for a dedicated coordinator of the programme to be employed in the Škofja Loka post office.

# 11

# MOBILE SOCIAL WORKERS

## WHAT IS IT?

Increase the number of hours that social workers can spend outside of their office, visiting people that have been reported as at risk for social isolation.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Better identify socially isolated people and those at risk



## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Develop diagnosis tools



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-lead: Center for social work

Supporting partners: Council of inclusion, NGOs

Active contributors: Municipality



## COSTS & FUNDING

As this action mainly requires a change in working methods of the Center for social work, there are no additional costs foreseen.

# 12



# Implementation

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# Governance & partners

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The strategy of Škofja Loka to fight isolation would not have been possible without the precious help and support of the URBACT local group of Škofja Loka as well as with the political engagement of the Mayor, Tine Radinja and Vice-Mayor, Tina Teržan.

In order to ensure the implementation of our strategy, we will delegate this responsibility to our Council on inclusion, comprised of 10 – 15 representatives of the municipality, public institutions and NGOs that will follow-up on the action plan and regularly monitor and assess the state of implementation and suggest possible changes and adaptations to the action plan.

We will furthermore appoint a person from the municipality administration, whose role will be to make sure that the Council on inclusion has sufficient support to be able to fulfil its tasks, as well as to prepare yearly reports and present it to the Municipal Council.





## Overall costs & funding

To implement the strategy of Škofja Loka, the Municipality of Škofja Loka will allocate sufficient sources to support the development of the actions in the first year, as well as support the participating organisations in finding additional sources through public calls, on national and European level

### **Funding per action – Funding as a whole**

In the yearly budget of the Municipality, there will be a budget line, dedicated to projects that fight social isolation, including funds to ensure that the evaluation and monitoring of this IAP. Additional funds will be allocated based on the requirements of each action.

### **Founding sources**

The funding source for the first year will be the budget of the Municipality of Škofja Loka. It will allow for developing the initial approaches and smaller scale actions.

In the following years, additional sources will be explored, starting with preparing projects to apply for public calls on national and European level. Special attention will be dedicated to actions that have the potential to upscale on the national level and for which the funding source should be ensured from the national budget.







# Timeline

This strategy and action plan will be put to action in the beginning of the year 2026. The process will start with ensuring that the funding for the actions will be provided in the municipal budget for 2026, followed by developing detailed timelines for each action and assigning it to individuals.

Mid-term evaluation is foreseen in 2027, followed by adaptations of the actions, based on the feedback received.

2025

Develop the action plan through consultative process, involving relevant stakeholders, and prepare the action plan to be discussed and confirmed by the municipal Council.

2026

Integrate the follow up of the strategy into the tasks of the Council on inclusion; provide funding in the municipal budget; develop detailed action plan for each actions, assigning individual coordinators

2027

Majority of the planned actions should already started. In the middle of the year, there is an evaluation foreseen by the Council on inclusion, providing feedback and the state of implementation and

2028

Based on the feedback from the Council on Inclusion, the actions will be adapted. We expect that additional funding from the national and EU level will be available, so the programmes will be able to expand.



# Global risk assessment

Risk category	Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation measures
Governance	Limited coordination between departments and partners	Medium	High	Clear mandate of the Council of Inclusion, regular coordination meetings
Financial	Insufficient funding for selected actions	Medium	High	Diversification of funding sources (municipal, national, EU), phased implementation
Stakeholder engagement	Decreased participation of target groups	Medium	Medium	Continuous outreach, involvement of NGOs and community mediators
Capacity	Limited staff time and operational capacity	Medium	Medium	Prioritisation of actions, integration with existing programmes
Sustainability	Actions not embedded in long-term policies	Low	High	Alignment with municipal strategies, political endorsement

LET'S COME  
TOGETHER AND  
END ISOLATION



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