

Integrated Action Plan City of Elefsina



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About this document

The URBACT Integrated Action Plan (IAP) is a city-level output that defines actions to be implemented within the city to **respond to the specific urban policy challenge of the One Health 4 Cities Network**. The IAP reflects the lessons learned from local stakeholders, transnational partners and the testing of actions at local level.

IAPs thus provide both a **focal point and end goal of the action planning journey** that cities undertake within their URBACT Action Planning Network (APN). IAPs help to ensure that both local-level discussions (within the URBACT Local Group) and transnational exchange (between the network partners) have a practical focus on planning a coherent set of actions to address the local policy challenge in each participating city, embedding an integrated and participative approach.

IAPs are **future oriented** – setting out the actions that cities and their local partners will implement beyond the life cycle of the URBACT network. For this reason, each IAP not only sets out what the city intends to do on its specific topic, but also has a **strong implementation focus**, for example through the identification of specific funding opportunities, governance structures and timelines for how the actions will be implemented and monitored.

About the Network

The **One Health 4 Cities Network**, an Action Planning Network of URBACT IV Program, brings light on how to implement the One Health approach in urban public policies, strategies, and projects. Comprising cities with varying levels of experience in One Health and local contexts, the network fosters a collaborative environment where the nine partners come together to learn and share experiences: Benissa (ES), Elefsina (GR), Kuopio (FI), Lahti (FI), Loulé (PT), Lyon (FR), Munich (DE), Eurometropolis of Strasbourg (FR) and Suceava (RO). The network aims to develop tools that empower decision-makers and operational teams to increase the positive impact of urban projects on the well-being and health of people, animals, and the environment. The network's lead partner is the City of Lyon.

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IAP SECTION 1: City Context & Vision

1.1 Context

Elefsina, located 20 km northwest of Athens, is a city with a rich historical and industrial heritage. With its strategic position near the port and capital, Elefsina has long played a central role in Greece's economy, acting as a key industrial hub. Today, it has a population of approximately 30,000 inhabitants, and while it is known for its ancient heritage, such as the Sanctuary of Demeter, it also faces modern challenges due to its economic and industrial character.



Economic Character of Elefsina:

Elefsina's economy is heavily reliant on its industrial sector. It houses some of the largest oil refineries, steel production plants, and shipyards in Greece. The city's port serves as a vital point for commercial shipping and logistics, particularly for the transportation of oil and other heavy industrial goods (euronews).

Elefsina has historically been a working-class city with a significant portion of its workforce employed in the heavy industries surrounding the port.

Despite its industrial importance, the city's economy was hard-hit during the Greek financial crisis, leading to economic decline and high unemployment. However, efforts to revive Elefsina's fortunes are underway. The city's designation as the European Capital of Culture in 2023 has created new momentum for regeneration. This status not only highlights its cultural heritage but also aims to attract investment and tourism, helping diversify its economy beyond industrial activities (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning).

Urban and Social Challenges:

As Elefsina continues to grow, it faces key urban challenges, particularly in housing and infrastructure. Due to its proximity to Athens, Elefsina has seen a rise in housing demand, especially among those seeking more affordable living options outside the capital. However, the city's industrial nature has placed constraints on urban development, limiting space for residential expansion. The local government has been working on housing and urban densification plans to meet this demand while maintaining affordable prices to avoid social segregation (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning).

The influx of new residents has also led to an increase in commuters, putting additional strain on the region's transportation infrastructure. Traffic congestion and the need for improved public transport links to Athens are ongoing concerns, especially as the population in the broader metropolitan region continues to grow. Addressing these infrastructure issues will be crucial as Elefsina's population and economy expand.

Cultural and Economic Revitalization:

Elefsina's efforts to balance industrial growth with cultural and social development are also tied to its cultural projects. Through the European Capital of Culture initiative, the city is working on urban regeneration plans, including transforming former industrial sites into cultural and recreational spaces. These initiatives aim to boost tourism, create jobs, and improve the quality of life for residents (euronews).

In summary, while Elefsina continues to be a major industrial player in Greece, its focus on cultural revitalization and urban development seeks to transform it into a more balanced city, blending its economic base with enhanced cultural and residential opportunities.

Elefsina, much like other industrial cities, faces significant environmental challenges related to climate change and its industrial legacy.

Environmental Issues in Elefsina:

Industrial Pollution: The heavy industrial activity in Elefsina, including oil refineries, steel production, and shipping, has resulted in ongoing air and water pollution problems. This industrial legacy has led to serious environmental concerns, especially in the Thriassio Plain, one of Greece's most environmentally stressed regions. Soil contamination and air quality degradation are major issues, directly impacting both ecosystems and human health (euronews).

Climate Change:

(UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning)

Elefsina, like many other cities, is experiencing the direct effects of climate change, particularly in terms of rising temperatures and more frequent extreme weather events. Heatwaves and droughts are becoming more common, further exacerbating the environmental stresses caused by industrialization. Due to its industrial nature and dense urban environment, Elefsina experiences significant temperature differences compared to surrounding rural areas, creating a pronounced urban heat island effect. This effect, where temperatures in densely developed areas are significantly higher than in surrounding regions, amplifies the health risks posed by extreme heat, especially during summer, making the city particularly vulnerable to the consequences of climate change.



Water Resources and Flood Risks: Elefsina faces increasing risks related to flooding, particularly during periods of heavy rainfall. As urbanization intensifies and green spaces shrink, the city's stormwater drainage systems struggle to cope, leading to more frequent floods. This is a critical issue, especially as climate change increases the severity of such events.

Efforts Toward Environmental Management:

Green Infrastructure: Elefsina has begun to address these issues by investing in green infrastructure projects aimed at reducing the environmental impact of its industrial activities. Urban regeneration initiatives, part of its designation as the European Capital of Culture for 2023, include the creation of green corridors and the conversion of former industrial sites into public spaces. These efforts aim to mitigate heat island effects, improve air quality, and offer recreational spaces for residents (euronews).

Elefsina is working to balance its industrial heritage with environmental sustainability, acknowledging the urgent need to address both pollution and the effects of climate change. These challenges mirror those faced by many industrialized cities, but Elefsina's initiatives toward greener urban planning and sustainability offer hope for a more balanced future.

Strategic Urban Planning in Elefsina

The Municipality of Elefsina is actively working on a transformative strategy for sustainable urban development, aimed at addressing its unique industrial and cultural context. This process is part of a broader vision titled "Elefsina 2040: City of Culture and Sustainability," which integrates sustainability as a core value, reflecting both international and national climate goals, such as the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The overarching framework for this initiative emphasizes the need for balanced growth, ensuring that Elefsina can thrive economically while addressing environmental and social concerns.

A key element of the city's strategy is the "Elefsina 2040" plan, which outlines the steps for achieving long-term sustainability. This plan is being developed through an inclusive process, engaging with stakeholders from the local community, industry, and environmental groups. The aim is to create a roadmap that supports climate-neutral goals by 2040, while simultaneously improving living conditions for residents. The plan prioritizes areas such as industrial transformation, urban regeneration, and infrastructure improvements, especially for green spaces and environmental restoration.

In terms of public health, Elefsina is committed to adopting a holistic approach, focusing on both human health and environmental well-being. The health strategy emphasizes health equity and inclusive access to healthcare services, with particular attention to vulnerable groups, including children, the elderly, and economically disadvantaged communities. The city is also exploring the integration of the One Health approach, which recognizes the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health.

The environmental strategy within Elefsina's urban plan focuses on preserving biodiversity, improving soil and water quality, and creating green and blue corridors to mitigate the effects of urbanization and industrial pollution. These corridors, which include parks, waterways, and natural spaces, are essential for reducing the urban heat island effect and providing residents with cleaner air and cooler temperatures. Additionally, the preservation of black ecological corridors, which ensure the integrity of natural ecosystems in industrial zones, is a key component of the city's environmental resilience efforts.

Overall, "Elefsina 2040: City of Culture and Sustainability" sets out a vision for a balanced, sustainable future that respects the city's industrial heritage while addressing the challenges of urban growth, environmental sustainability, and public health. This comprehensive plan will ensure that Elefsina can continue to grow while maintaining a strong focus on sustainability and improving the quality of life for all its residents.

Environmental pollution and social dimension

Elefsina faces significant health and well-being challenges due to environmental pollution, driven by its industrial history and urbanization. Factors such as air pollution, noise, heat, and the lack of green spaces directly impact the city's residents, especially those in lower-income neighbourhoods near industrial zones. Additionally, social inequalities further compound these challenges, as vulnerable

populations often live in areas more exposed to environmental hazards. While urbanization has brought some benefits, such as improved access to education, employment, and healthcare, the connection between these factors and overall human health is complex and not fully understood.

There are clear negative health effects linked to environmental factors like air pollutants and industrial emissions in Elefsina, but the potential positive health benefits of creating more green spaces have yet to be fully realized. Given the possibility of synergistic or antagonistic effects from multiple environmental exposures, it is essential to reduce the overall exposure to pollution and hazardous conditions wherever possible.

Climate change presents an additional layer of vulnerability for Elefsina's population. Heatwaves, extreme weather events, and flooding will have a greater impact on vulnerable groups, including those with **pre-existing health conditions and those with fewer resources to** adapt. This often results in an increase in mental health problems, with children and those already suffering from mental illness being particularly at risk. The growing demand for healthcare services, combined with the potential for climate change to damage healthcare infrastructure, places further strain on the city's ability to provide care for its residents.

One of Elefsina's major challenges in the coming years will be its adaptation to climate change. The city must focus on mitigating the effects of rising temperatures, sudden changes in weather conditions, and the increasing frequency of extreme events like heavy storms, rainfall, and flooding. By enhancing infrastructure and expanding green spaces, Elefsina can improve its resilience to these challenges while promoting better health outcomes for its population.

Introduction to the Integrated Action Plan (IAP)

“From Seed to Fruit” – Building a Culture of Sustainability in Elefsina

The Municipality of Elefsina is facing one of the most pressing challenges of modern urban life: effective waste management. As a city shaped by its industrial past and rapid urbanization, Elefsina must now balance its economic and cultural identity with the urgent need for environmental sustainability and improved public health. Addressing these issues requires more than infrastructure – it demands a change in mindset and daily habits, starting from the youngest members of the community.

In response, the Municipality is developing an Integrated Action Plan (IAP) titled “From Seed to Fruit”, which introduces a holistic educational and environmental approach. The initiative begins at the nursery level, where children, educators, and parents will co-create learning gardens that serve both as green oases and interactive classrooms. Through these spaces, children will experience the full life cycle of nature – from planting seeds to harvesting fruit – learning about growth, care, and responsibility. The garden becomes a microcosm of civic life: a place where nurturing, cooperation, and foresight take root.

A central component of the project is hands-on waste management and composting education. Within each nursery, children will learn to separate waste

into dedicated bins – recyclable materials, organic waste, and general refuse. Organic waste will be collected and composted, demonstrating how what is often discarded can be transformed into something valuable and life-sustaining. This practical and sensory experience builds early awareness of sustainability, circular economy principles, and environmental stewardship.

The project's second phase extends beyond the school setting into the wider neighborhood, where public community gardens will be established. These spaces will invite participation from residents of all ages – children, parents, and grandparents – encouraging intergenerational learning and cooperation. The gardens will act as community hubs for sustainable living, where participants can engage in composting, recycling, urban farming, and environmental education. By transforming underutilized urban areas into green, productive, and inclusive spaces, the initiative strengthens social cohesion while promoting healthier and more resilient neighborhoods.

Ultimately, "From Seed to Citizen" embodies Elefsina's vision for a city where sustainability is learned, practiced, and shared. It integrates environmental education, health promotion, and community engagement into a single, coherent framework. Through this plan, Elefsina aims to cultivate a new generation of environmentally conscious and socially responsible citizens, capable of carrying forward the city's transformation toward a cleaner, greener, and more sustainable future.



1.2 Updating the Health Guideline and including the One Health Approach

For a sustainable city in balance

Strategic Health Guidelines for Elefsina:

Ensuring a Sustainable and Inclusive Future

Elefsina aspires to be a sustainable city where health and well-being are integral to urban development. Our vision is to create a city that balances economic growth, social cohesion, and environmental sustainability while fostering a healthy, family-friendly living environment.

Guiding Principles

Economic Prosperity and Job Creation: Develop and sustain economic opportunities while ensuring job creation and maintenance.

Cultural and Aesthetic Value: Enhance the city's beauty and cultural vibrancy, promoting a rich and diverse cultural life.

Social Equity and Solidarity: Foster social peace and inclusivity by ensuring equal access to opportunities and services for all community members.

Educational Opportunities: Open up educational pathways and include diverse population groups in lifelong learning.

Well-Being and Tolerance: Promote well-being, tolerance, and a cosmopolitan spirit within the city.

Observations and Analysis: In updating the Health Guideline for **Elefsina, we acknowledge key challenges:**

Urbanization: Rapid city growth and density require strategic planning to balance development with green and open spaces.

Aging Population: An increasing elderly population necessitates enhanced healthcare infrastructure and services.

Income Inequality: Socioeconomic disparities impact access to healthcare and overall health outcomes.

Healthcare Shortages: There are gaps in both ambulatory and inpatient care and a need for more skilled healthcare professionals.

Access for Special Groups: Ensuring healthcare access for vulnerable populations is crucial.

Climate Change: Addressing heatwaves, invasive species, and climate-related health risks is essential.

Mental Health: Growing incidences of mental health issues among children and youth require targeted interventions.

Crisis Management: Developing resilience to crises such as pandemics and conflicts is vital.

Key Challenges

Socioeconomic Inequality in Health Opportunities: Addressing the uneven distribution of health resources and services across different socioeconomic groups.

Health Impacts of Crises: Preparing for and mitigating the health impacts of pandemics, climate change, and demographic shifts.

Key Action and Thematic Areas

Target Groups with Special Needs:

Develop tailored healthcare services for vulnerable populations including refugees, the elderly, and low-income families.

Integrative Health Concepts:

Implement One Health and Planetary Health approaches to address **interconnected health and environmental issues.**

Preventive Healthcare and Resilience:

Strengthen preventive measures and build community resilience against **health risks and crises**.

Health Promotion:

Enhance programs and policies that promote overall health and well-being across the city.

Healthcare System and Medical Services:

Improve access to and quality of healthcare services, including addressing shortages of healthcare personnel.

Digitalization in Healthcare:

Leverage technology to improve healthcare delivery, access, and management.

Health Literacy:

Increase public awareness and understanding of health issues and services through education and outreach.

Coping with Illness and Death:

Enhance palliative care services and support systems for individuals and families dealing with severe illness and end-of-life issues.

Children's and Youth Health:

Prioritize health services and programs focused on the well-being of children and young people.

Health-Promoting and Sustainable Urban Planning:

Integrate health considerations into urban planning to ensure a healthy, sustainable environment.

Mental Health and Addiction:

Address mental health challenges and substance abuse through comprehensive support and intervention strategies.

By focusing on these areas, Elefsina will strive to achieve a balanced, healthy, and inclusive urban environment, ensuring that all residents benefit from a high quality of life and equitable health opportunities.

1.3 Vision for Elefsina's Health

Vision of Elefsina

Elefsina envisions a **sustainable, inclusive, and resilient city**, where its industrial legacy becomes a foundation for green transformation and social innovation. Building upon its history as a city of labor, culture, and creativity, Elefsina aspires to redefine its urban and environmental identity – evolving into a **model city where culture, community, and sustainability coexist in balance**.

The city's long-term vision, aligned with the *"Elefsina 2040: City of Culture and Sustainability"* strategy, is to create a **healthy, green, and participatory urban environment** that enhances the quality of life for all residents. This transformation places **education, environmental awareness, and civic engagement** at its core,

recognizing that meaningful change begins with people – and especially with children.

Through the initiative **“From Seed to Citizen,”** Elefsina seeks to cultivate environmental consciousness and active citizenship from the earliest years of education. Starting in municipal nurseries, children, teachers, and parents will learn about the natural cycle “from seed to fruit” while practicing **composting, waste separation, and sustainable resource management.** These hands-on experiences aim not only to foster environmental literacy but also to instill values of care, responsibility, and community participation.

The vision extends beyond the schoolyard. By creating **public neighborhood gardens,** the municipality will offer spaces for intergenerational collaboration, where residents – from children to grandparents – can participate in gardening, composting, and waste management activities. These green areas will serve as local hubs for environmental education, social interaction, and collective well-being, reinforcing Elefsina’s commitment to sustainability and inclusion.

Ultimately, Elefsina’s vision is to become a **City of Responsible Growth** – one that transforms its challenges into opportunities, reconnects people with nature, and promotes harmony between the industrial, cultural, and ecological dimensions of urban life. Through collaboration, education, and environmental stewardship, Elefsina aims to grow as a **city that learns, adapts, and thrives – from its roots to its future.**

IAP SECTION 2: Overall Trends and Challenges for Elefsina

2.1 Definition of SMART Strategic Objectives

In this chapter of the Integrated Action Plan of the Municipality of Elefsina, the strategic and specific objectives are defined to guide the plan's interventions, with the main goal of developing a culture and awareness of waste management among citizens. These objectives form the basis for implementing actions that promote sustainability, environmental awareness, and active citizen participation in everyday environmental practices.

This strategy is shaped through close cooperation and continuous communication with the local Urban Local Group (ULG), aiming to create a collective identity and sense of responsibility around waste management. Particular emphasis is placed on cultivating a positive attitude and daily habits through actions of information sharing, dialogue, and co-creation with the local community.

The objectives presented have been formulated according to the SMART criteria, ensuring they are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

Through this methodology, the Municipality of Elefsina seeks to create a coherent intervention framework that aligns with the real needs and capabilities of the area. This section proposes a comprehensive strategic approach focused on sustainable waste management, aspiring to transform citizens' relationship with the environment, enhancing collective responsibility, and fostering long-term changes in attitudes and behaviors.

2.2 Integrated Approach & Actions

Foster a culture of well-being from early childhood by promoting healthy habits, inclusive health services, and the One Health approach across public policies and programmes by 2030.

Actions:

- Review and inform current city policies with One Health principles.
- Introduce health education and physical activity programs in nursery schools
- Expand health support for children and their families through inclusive health services
- Develop health habits curriculum for nurseries and primary schools



IAP SECTION 3: Action Planning Details

The following are the key strategic objectives of the Integrated Action Plan (IAP) of the Municipality of Elefsina, developed to address the city's priorities in public health, environmental sustainability, and social cohesion. Each objective has been designed according to the SMART criteria: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

A central idea of the plan is that lasting change begins with the youngest members of our society. In Elefsina, we envision our nursery schools as fertile ground, where children – like small flowers – are ready to absorb new ideas and grow with values of care, responsibility, and sustainability. Through this foundation, we aim to build a culture of environmental and health awareness that extends across generations.

3.1 Strategic Objectives

3.1.1 Healthy Beginnings: Well-being from Early Childhood

Foster a culture of well-being from early childhood by promoting healthy habits, inclusive health services, and the One Health approach across public policies and programmes by 2030.

Specific: Introduce health education and physical activity programs in nursery schools; expand health support for children and their families; and promote awareness of animal welfare from a young age.

Measurable: Increase participation in early childhood health and sports programs by 20%, and expand access to community health services by 15%.

Achievable: Utilize existing school infrastructure and collaborate with local health professionals, educators, and family support networks.

Relevant: Addresses the well-being of children and families, encouraging long-term healthy behaviors and inclusive health awareness from the earliest stages of life.

Time-bound: Targets to be achieved by 2030.

3.1.2 Green Beginnings: Learning Sustainability Early

Promote environmental sustainability through early education, focusing on climate resilience, ecosystem protection, and sustainable practices in daily life for children and their families by 2030.

Specific: Integrate environmental education into nursery school curricula; implement child-friendly initiatives for recycling, water conservation, and nature-based activities.

Measurable: Achieve a 25% reduction in single-use plastics in municipal early education facilities and establish new green play areas and gardens in at least 70% of nursery schools.

Achievable: Engage local environmental organizations, parents, and school staff to co-design and support the implementation of sustainable practices.

Relevant: Prepares future generations to understand and respond to environmental challenges, starting from their very first educational experiences.

Time-bound: Full implementation and monitoring by 2030.

This child-centered approach in Elefsina reflects a long-term vision where the seeds of sustainability and well-being are planted early, ensuring a resilient, healthy, and environmentally conscious community for years to come.

3.1.3 Learning by Doing: From Nature to Responsibility

Cultivate environmental responsibility through hands-on learning, empowering children to understand natural cycles, food origins, and the importance of proper waste management by 2030.

Specific: Create educational gardens within nursery and kindergarten facilities where children plant, care for, and harvest fruits and vegetables; introduce interactive lessons on composting, recycling, and the journey of waste.

Measurable: Establish gardens in 100% of municipal nursery and kindergarten schools; ensure all children participate in at least one complete growing cycle per school year and are involved weekly in waste separation and composting activities.

Achievable: Leverage public green spaces and existing schoolyards; provide training for teachers; engage parents, local farmers, and volunteers to support the gardening and recycling programs.

Relevant: Encourages a deep connection between children and nature, enhances understanding of sustainability, and builds lifelong habits of environmental care and food consciousness.

Time-bound: Full implementation across all schools by 2028, with annual evaluation and improvements through 2030.



3.1.4 Acting Together: Community Waste Responsibility

Promote collective environmental action and civic responsibility, involving young children, educators, and families in collaborative waste management practices both inside and outside the school by 2030.

Specific: Train children to sort their classroom and lunch waste into proper bins (organic, recyclable, and general waste); organize supervised group visits to municipal waste collection points to deposit sorted materials; host "Green Days" with families to reinforce habits at home.

Measurable: Achieve correct waste sorting in at least 90% of daily school activities; organize quarterly educational visits to neighborhood waste collection points; involve families in at least 2 community environmental actions per year.

Achievable: Use existing municipal waste infrastructure; provide visual aids and child-friendly bins; collaborate with the municipality's waste services for support and collection.

Relevant: Builds a strong sense of civic duty and environmental ownership in children, while also fostering intergenerational learning and community participation.

Time-bound: Core practices to be established by 2026, with measurable behavioral improvements tracked annually through 2030.

This expanded, action-based strategy aims to embed environmental and social responsibility at the heart of early education in Elefsina. By nurturing children's understanding of nature, food, and waste from the earliest age, the municipality is investing in a generation that respects the planet and contributes actively to a cleaner, greener, and more sustainable community.



3.1.5 Every Drop Matters: Learning to Protect Water

Promote water conservation practices among young children, families, and schools, fostering awareness about the importance of protecting water resources by 2030.

Specific: Introduce water-saving activities in nursery schools, including water-efficient gardening, water collection methods (e.g., rainwater harvesting), and educational games about the water cycle. Teach children to reduce water waste in their daily routines both at school and at home.

Measurable: Achieve a 15% reduction in water usage across municipal nursery schools by 2028; engage 90% of families in water-saving actions at home, such as using water-saving appliances or reducing water consumption in daily activities.

Achievable: Work with local environmental experts and water conservation organizations to provide resources and training for teachers and families; use the school gardens as a hands-on example of water management.

Relevant: Water conservation is a key challenge for the region, and involving children and families in these efforts ensures lasting habits that can positively impact the community's water resources.

Time-bound: Full implementation in schools by 2026, with sustained reductions in water use through 2030.



3.1.6 Growing with Compassion: Caring for Animals

Promote animal protection and welfare education from an early age, teaching children respect for all living creatures and the importance of compassionate animal care by 2030.

Specific: Integrate lessons on animal welfare, including proper care, the ethics of pet ownership, and the protection of local wildlife, into nursery school curricula. Organize school visits to animal shelters and local farms to foster empathy and understanding.

Measurable: Ensure 100% of nursery schools organize at least one animal welfare-related event or visit per year, and 75% of children are involved in activities related to caring for animals at school.

Achievable: Collaborate with local animal shelters, veterinarians, and environmental organizations to provide educational materials and hands-on experiences for children.

Relevant: Raising awareness about animal rights and environmental care at an early age fosters long-term values of respect for nature and all living beings.

Time-bound: Full integration of animal welfare education into nursery schools by 2027, with annual activities taking place thereafter.



3.1.7 Growing Green Together: Families in Action

Strengthen family involvement in waste management through shared activities between children, parents, and teachers, aiming to create a unified approach to environmental responsibility by 2030.

Specific: Organize regular waste management workshops for families, where children and parents can engage in activities such as creating compost together, building recycling stations at home, or participating in community clean-up events. Create take-home materials and guides to encourage sustainable practices at home.

Measurable: Engage 80% of families in regular waste management activities, such as home composting or recycling, and hold at least 3 joint family-school waste-related events per year (e.g., clean-up days, waste sorting contests, etc.).

Achievable: Develop educational toolkits and activity guides that are accessible for parents and children; collaborate with local organizations to offer resources, such as composting bins and recycling incentives.

Relevant: Waste management is a community-wide issue, and involving families strengthens the connection between school education and household practices, creating more consistent waste-reduction behaviors.

Time-bound: Establish these activities in 100% of nursery schools by 2025, with continued engagement through 2030.

3.1.8 Little Hands, Big Impact: Recycling Education in Schools

Implement comprehensive recycling education and practices at all nursery and kindergarten schools, ensuring that children understand the full cycle of waste management – from sorting to disposal to recycling – by 2030.

Specific: Teach children about recycling through interactive lessons, sorting games, and hands-on activities (e.g., making crafts from recycled materials). Equip all schools with clear, child-friendly recycling stations and bins.

Measurable: Ensure that 95% of students participate in daily waste sorting activities, and that 100% of nursery schools have functional recycling systems in place, with materials properly sorted and disposed of in collaboration with municipal waste services.

Achievable: Provide teachers with training on effective recycling education techniques; collaborate with local waste services to ensure timely collection of recyclable materials from schools.

Relevant: Early exposure to recycling practices teaches children the importance of waste segregation and management, encouraging lifelong eco-conscious behaviors.

Time-bound: Fully operational recycling systems in all nursery schools by 2026, with annual progress reviews through 2030.

3.1.9 Smart Eating, Green Living: Families and Schools in Action

Promote sustainable food consumption and waste reduction practices within the school environment, teaching children and families about food waste and sustainable food sources by 2030.

Specific: Introduce sustainable meal practices at nursery schools, such as using locally sourced, organic food, and educating children about food waste reduction through cooking classes and food-related activities. Teach children to properly dispose of food scraps through composting.

Measurable: Reduce food waste in school cafeterias by 20% and ensure 100% of children are taught about food sustainability practices at school. Involve 70% of families in food waste reduction activities at home.

Achievable: Partner with local farmers, food cooperatives, and nutritionists to provide sustainable food options and learning materials; create partnerships with local composting programs.

Relevant: Food waste is a growing global issue, and starting this education from a young age helps instill the importance of mindful consumption and responsible food disposal.

Time-bound: Full integration of sustainable food practices into nursery schools by 2027, with ongoing community engagement through 2030.



These additional goals focus on water conservation, animal protection, waste management, and family involvement, ensuring a holistic, community-driven approach to sustainability that begins at the very youngest age. By involving children, families, and educators in hands-on activities, Elefsina can foster a deeply rooted culture of care, responsibility, and environmental awareness for generations to come.

3.2 Specific Objectives

3.2.1 Planting Seeds of Sustainability: Nurseries Leading the Way

Integrate environmental education and sustainable practices into all municipal nurseries of Elefsina by 2027.

Actions:

- Establish the “From Seed to Citizen” program in every municipal nursery, connecting children, teachers, and parents through experiential learning.
- Create educational gardens where children learn the natural cycle of life – from seed to fruit – while developing responsibility and teamwork.
- Introduce composting practices within nurseries, using organic waste from daily meals.
- Implement waste separation with color-coded bins, encouraging children to correctly dispose of materials.
- Organize interactive training sessions for teachers and parents on sustainable practices and healthy living habits.

3.2.2 Eco-Kids in Action: Composting and Recycling at Nurseries

Reduce organic waste generated by nurseries by 30% through composting and recycling by 2028.

Actions:

- Provide each nursery with a composting unit and clear waste-sorting infrastructure.
- Develop a simple monitoring system to record and report waste reduction results every year.
- Reuse the compost produced in school gardens, closing the loop of waste and growth.
- Conduct awareness campaigns on waste prevention and resource efficiency within the educational community.

3.2.3 Growing Together: Community Gardens for All Ages

Create at least three community gardens across Elefsina's neighborhoods by 2030, promoting intergenerational participation and social inclusion.

Actions:

- Identify suitable municipal or underused plots for conversion into public green spaces.
- Design community gardens as inclusive, accessible areas that foster collaboration between children, parents, and older residents.
- Include composting sites, small cultivation zones, and educational installations in each garden.
- Collaborate with local associations, volunteers, and environmental organizations for maintenance and activities.
- Use these spaces for neighborhood events, green festivals, and environmental education workshops.

The development of community gardens in Elefsina's neighborhoods will be carried out in a way that fully incorporates the principles of equality, social justice, and inclusive participation. From planning to maintenance and management, active involvement of women, caregivers, migrants, the elderly, and people with disabilities will be ensured, so that they can lead and benefit equally. Resource allocation will be based on detailed data, targeting those with the greatest need, while the participation process and monitoring of outcomes will be transparent and carefully designed. In this way, the gardens will serve not only as spaces for cultivation and environmental stewardship but also as living examples of education, social cohesion, and shared benefits for all residents.

3.2.4 Little Steps, Big Impact: Inspiring Active Citizenship

Promote behavioral change and active citizenship through environmental participation and local engagement by 2030.

Actions:

- Launch a “Green Ambassadors of Elefsina” initiative to empower residents and schools to lead sustainability actions.
- Develop educational campaigns linking sustainable behavior with community pride and public health.
- Encourage residents to co-design local solutions for waste reduction and urban greening.
- Organize annual events to celebrate progress and highlight local sustainability champions.

3.2.5 Building Green Leadership: Strengthening Municipal Capacity

Strengthen the Municipality’s capacity to coordinate and monitor sustainability and environmental education initiatives by 2030.

Actions:

- Create a dedicated coordination unit within the Municipality to oversee environmental education, waste management, and community projects.
- Build partnerships with universities, NGOs, and schools to exchange knowledge and resources.
- Develop an integrated monitoring and evaluation framework using measurable indicators (waste reduction, participation rates, environmental literacy).
- Secure national and EU funding to scale up successful pilot actions across the city.



IAP SECTION 4: Implementation Framework

4.1 Resources/assesses and key partners for the implementation of activities

OBJECTIVE	RESOURCES	LEAD AGENCY	KEY PARTNERS	TIME-SCALE
Strategic Objective 1 Healthy Beginnings: Well-being from Early Childhood	Health educators, municipal budget, school facilities	Municipality of Elefsina	Health services, schools, NGOs	2025–2030
Strategic Objective 2 Green Beginnings: Learning Sustainability Early	Educational material, green infrastructure funding	Municipality of Elefsina	Environmental NGOs, schools	2025–2030
Strategic Objective 3 Learning by Doing: From Nature to Responsibility	Gardening tools, training, volunteers	Municipality of Elefsina	Teachers, parents, local farmers	2025–2028
Strategic Objective 4 Acting Together: Community Waste Responsibility	Waste bins, educational material, staff	Municipal Waste Dept.	Schools, families, waste services	2025–2030
Strategic Objective 5 Every Drop Matters: Learning to Protect Water	Water-saving equipment, experts	Municipality of Elefsina	Water utilities, NGOs	2025–2030
Strategic Objective 6 Growing with Compassion: Caring for Animals	Educational content, transport	Municipality of Elefsina	Animal shelters, veterinarians	2025–2027
Strategic Objective 7 Growing Green Together: Families in Action	Workshops, toolkits, facilitators	Municipality of Elefsina	Parents associations, NGOs	2025–2030
Strategic Objective 8 Little Hands, Big Impact: Recycling Education in Schools	Recycling stations, training	Municipal Waste Dept.	Recycling companies, schools	2025–2026
Strategic Objective 9 Smart Eating, Green Living: Families and Schools in Action	Local food supply, compost units	Municipality of Elefsina	Farmers, nutritionists	2025–2030

OBJECTIVE	RESOURCES	LEAD AGENCY	KEY PARTNERS	TIME-SCALE
Specific Objective 1 Planting Seeds of Sustainability: Nurseries Leading the Way	Educational gardens, trainers, compost units	Municipality of Elefsina	Teachers, parents	2025–2027
Specific Objective 2 Eco-Kids in Action: Composting and Recycling at Nursairies	Composting units, monitoring tools	Municipal Waste Dept.	Schools, NGOs	2025–2028
Specific Objective 3 Growing Together: Community Gardens for All Ages	Land plots, gardening equipment	Municipality of Elefsina	Local associations, residents	2026–2030
Specific Objective 4 Little Steps, Big Impact: Inspiring Active Citizenship	Campaign materials, facilitators	Municipality of Elefsina	Schools, citizen groups	2025–2030
Specific Objective 5 Building Green Leadership: Strengthening Municipal Capacity	Staff, monitoring systems, funding	Municipality of Elefsina	Universities, NGOs	2025–2030

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