COPE

# A Coruña, Spain
# 251 543 inhabitants

## Challenge

**Within a framework of overall improvement of the neighborhood's environmental sustainability, the main objective is to change the neighborhood's narrative and external perception.**

## Local heroes

This action depends on Sagrada Familia organizations, especially the neighborhood association and social entities, whose perspectives reveal the richness, diversity, and true reality of the community.




## Lessons learnt

- Foster neighborhood collaboration from the start: Create structures uniting associations and social entities, ensuring all voices shape the projects.
- Blend culture, technology, and communication: Use digital tools, murals, and branding to revitalize spaces, strengthen identity, and share heritage.

## Solution

# A neighborhood rewriting its story

The neighborhood begins to tell its own story. Local associations come together under a shared structure, working collaboratively toward an autonomous URBACT Local Group. A new neighborhood brand reshapes its image and energizes community life. Digital murals bring facades to life, while interactive routes reconnect residents with their shared past. Technology, culture, and participation weave together to strengthen collective identity, revive local memory, and build a shared future grounded in pride and belonging.




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# Bistriţa, Romania
# 78 877 inhabitants

## Challenge

**In 2022 there were no alternative means of travel to and from school, so children were either driven or walked to school. Therefor, the city was suffocated with cars, and streets unsafe for biking.**

## Local heroes

**We analyzed with the ULG which small-scale action to implement. We decided that instead of implementing several smaller actions, it would be of a greater impact to have only one, but at a bigger scale: Ensure a safe travel to school, encourageing the youth to use the bike lanes.**



## Solution

# Bike racks for schools

**Bike lanes were built recently in Bistrița, to counteract the city's suffocation with cars. To encourage their use, we installed 14 bike racks in schools, with the aim to promote green mobility and use of bike lanes. Also, a dedicated bus lane was built to ensure the faster crossing of the city with electric buses. All these were made to have a healthier, greener city, and to start the change of behaviour with the children.**




## Lessons learnt

- **Listen to the needs of the stakeholders**
- **Make them part of the game**
- **Frame sustainability in terms of comfort, cost- saving, and community well-being, not just environmental responsibility**
- **A dedicated budget**
- **Involvement of stakeholders: teachers, local suppliers**
- **Coherent project team**

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# Copenhagen, Denmark
# 650 000 inhabitants

## Challenge

**How can a disadvantaged neighborhood contribute to Copenhagen halving CO2e emissions per Copenhagener from consumption of 10 CO2e to 5 CO2e in 2035? Food and drinks account for 19% of CO2e emissions.**

## Local heroes

**This would not have happened without the personel from the playground who facilitate the garden and provides the setting for a weekly garden club of adult neighbors who meet and help each others as well as they contribute to the playground's activities for kids.**

## Lessons learnt

- **Listen to the needs of the ones driving the change and support them as best as you can**
- **Encoruage ideas and let the development be as open as possible so you don't force an agenda that is not supported by the neighborhood**

## Solution

# Urban garden promoting plant based cooking

**In 2025 we established an urban garden at the local playground with the purpose of enhancing children's understanding of food and involve them in growing produce for communal cooking at the playground. Adults were invited too, and they took responsibility for some of the planting boxes and became engaged in the playground's activities like communal dinners. The playground will now host a monthly communal dinner with a plantbased menu to support the green agenda and reduce loneliness in the neighborhood.**



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# Kavala, Greece
# 56 000 inhbitants

## Challenge

**Residents often do not realise the extent of their individual carbon footprint or its consequences on the environment & lack of green spaces.**

## Local heroes

**It was planned and carried out together by the Municipal Authority, the Neapolis Local Council, and the Municipal Department of Green Maintenance.**

## Solution

# Revitalization of Paflagonia's Street Park

**Paflagonia's Street Park in Kavala had become a space people walked past, not a place they used. We decided to prove that small, practical change can shift how a neighbourhood feels and behaves. Instead of buying new infrastructure, we started with what the Municipality already had. Materials from the municipal warehouse were reused and transformed: wooden pallets became benches and amphitheatre seating, and existing elements were adapted rather than discarded. The upgrade added greenery, improved paths and fencing, better lighting, and a small amphitheatre.**



## Lessons learnt

**Local material reuse is practical and cost-effective, proving circular approaches can work at neighbourhood scale. When residents are involved, they develop ownership and help protect the space. Visible, fast improvements build trust, raise environmental awareness, and reduce resistance.**

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MUNICIPALITY OF KAVALA

COPE

# Korydallos, Greece
# 67 456 inhabitants

## Challenge

**The main integration challenge was to reconnect the Kanaria neighborhood, marked by fragmented public space, limited accesibility, and outdated infrastructure with the wider urban fabric of Korydallos.**

## Local heroes

**This action would not have been possible without the creativity, energy, and imagination of the students from the 1st Vocational High School of Korydallos, who became true co-creators of their neighborhood's future.**

## Lessons learnt

- **Involving young people in shaping local projects brings fresh ideas and stronger ownership.**
- **Keep the process creative and inclusive.**
- **Work closely with schools, allow flexibility in student expression, and ensure their contributions are visible and valued.**

## Solution

## "THE NEST" - Engaging youth in naming and designing the identity of the Kanaria Entrepreneurial Hub

**To bring the vision of the Kanaria neighborhood to life, Korydallos turned to its youth. Students from the 1st Vocational High School were invited to reimagine the identity of the old school building set to become a Youth Entrepreneurship Hub. Through creative workshops, they brainstormed names, sketched logos, and shaped a shared future. The result: "THE NEST" ; a symbol of growth, belonging, and new beginnings. This testing action not only gave the hub a name, but gave young people a voice. It transformed them from observers to co-creators in the regeneration of their own urban environment.**



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MUNICIPALITY OF KORYDALLOS

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# Pombal, Portugal
# 51 170 inhabitants

## Challenge

**Green sustainability is a key mark for Pombal, but a hard candy when facing the narrow streets, the old building designs, and the scarcity of shops and people in a highly impermeable public city-center space.**

## Local heroes

**Local stakeholders ensured the success of the action! As part of the ULG, they emphasised that community involvement is essential to ensure that actions respond to real needs, promoting collective ownership and neighborhood dialogue around green solutions.**



## Lessons learnt

- **Think real needs - do thought-provoking actions!**
- **Apply participatory and communicative tools that allow to adjust actions to the feedback.**
- **Promoting collective belonging and participation throughout the entire process is key.**
- **A mixed ULG ensures collaboration between diverse stakeholders and views.**

## Solution

# What if this street was for pedestrians?

**In September 2024, the streets of the Historic Center were returned to pedestrians. Eleven areas featuring diverse and inclusive urban solutions were created in places that had previously been used for illegal parking. The small action was supported by outdoor messages highlighting that pedestrianization is possible due to nearby alternatives for traffic flow and parking. It also emphasized that walking or cycling through the historical area requires only a few minutes. The action demonstrated that streets should prioritize people and green spaces over cars. Consequently, illegal parking declined, and more citizens began using and enjoying these new public gathering spaces.**




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# Saint-Quentin, France
# 53 000 inhabitants

## Challenge

**In 2023, Saint-Quentin faced environmental and social challenges in two target districts (Faubourg d'Isle and Neuville), including high car dependance, limited green spaces and below-average median income (17 990 € vs 24 330 €).**

## Local heroes

**This project would not have happened without the active involvement of residents from both neighbouhoods, local associations, school representatives, and municipal partners working hand in hand in the ULG.**




## Solution

# Neighbourhood co-creation green action (CCGA)

**Saint-Quentin co-designed a neighbourhood green transition plan with residents, local associations, municipal services, and elected officials through an URBACT logo group (ULG). The plan focuses on participatory solutions to climate challenges in Faubourg d'Isle. Workshops engaged citizens in mapping existing resources, identifying needs, and co-creating proposals for nature-based improvements. Priority actions include renaturing the Marcel Pagnol scholl courtyards and redisigning outdoor spaces at Benjamin Rouché Library to enhance biodiversity, social use, and community life.**



## Lessons learnt

**Key advice for other cities:**

- **Start early with community engagement to build trust**
- **Use participatory tools that help visualise long-term visions**
- **Co-create solutions with citizens to enhance relevance and acceptance**
- **Leverage transnational URBACT exchanges to enrich local ideas**

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COPE

# Vilnius, Lithuania
# 632 000 inhabitants

## Challenge

**Joining the COPE network in 2023 raised the question - how many climate neutral communities do we have in the city? Do we have enough inhabitants to perform climate neutral activities and how can we support them?**

## Local heroes

**This would not have happened without our main Climate neutrality ambassadors - our most active communities from various districts of Vilnius city, who shared their lessons and experience with new comers. Bottom-up climate-neutral activities unite residents to tackle environmental challenges.**

## Solution

# Network of climate neutral communities

**- 2023: Released a survey for citizents in order to find out what kind of climate neutral activity they do or would like to start. Answers from more that 20 communities with greatest interest for biodiversity.**
**- 2024: Communities support Financial instrument was launched, 45 applications received. First results in summer – Community fridge, urban gardens, biodiversity plots, repair cafees.**
**- 2025: Continuation of the Program for Climate neutral actions, Communities involvement into Vilnius Green Capital 2025 events.**
**- 2026-2030: Implementation of actions foreseen in the COPE Local Action plan.**



## Lessons learnt

**Here are few things to keep in mind for this acion: The biggest challenge is to continue the life of the network and to secure funding for the actions foreseen in a very ambitious Local action plan, which was developed by efforts of the Municipality and Climate neutral Communities.**

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