

BEST PRACTICES

from the 2023 European Destinations of Excellence
competition



**EUROPEAN DESTINATIONS
OF EXCELLENCE**



**SUSTAINABLE
TOURISM PIONEER**

Title:

BEST PRACTICES

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1. GENERAL BACKGROUND

The European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN) is an EU initiative implemented by the European Commission. Its aim is to recognise and award smaller destinations that have implemented successful strategies to boost sustainable tourism through green transition practices.

EDEN was first introduced by the European Commission in 2007 as an initiative to reward non-traditional, emerging sustainable tourism destinations in Europe. It used to be run under a different theme each year and was based on national competitions. In 2019, the initiative was redesigned and updated in line with the European Green Deal and is set to contribute to the recovery and resilience of tourism destinations impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The EDEN initiative aims to:

- showcase the best achievements in sustainable tourism and green transition practices across smaller European destinations
- promote the development of sustainable tourism in destinations, bringing value to the economy, the planet and the people
- establish a framework for participating destinations to exchange best practices and create opportunities for cooperation and new partnerships

2. PURPOSE OF THE BEST PRACTICES FROM THE 2022 EUROPEAN DESTINATIONS OF EXCELLENCE COMPETITION

In 2022, the European Commission launched the competition for the 2023 European Destination of Excellence. Destinations in EU countries and COSME countries with populations between 25,000 and 100,000 inhabitants are eligible to apply. 20 destinations submitted their applications. Kranj (Slovenia) was selected as the 2023 European Destination of Excellence.

The 2023 collection of best practices has been derived from the applications the destinations submitted to the competition. The report showcases the selection of best practices in sustainable tourism and solely presents and relies on the data that the cities have submitted in their applications.

The purpose of this document is to enhance and facilitate the exchange of best practices in promoting innovative and sustainable measures and initiatives for tourism destinations. The report aims at raising awareness about sustainable initiatives, tools, measures and projects, sharing the best practices implemented by destinations and strengthening peer-to-peer learning and sustainable development of tourism.

3. PRESENTING BEST PRACTICES

3.1 EDUCATION

3.1.1 The Nature School; Canik (Turkey): The Nature School provides Chair with an avenue for education and interaction with nature for the schools within the destination. Schools can use the facility to engage with the nature that surrounds the destination and educate children as to their natural backyard. For visitors this too can provide a valuable insight into the region's fauna and flora as well as help transmit a greater understanding and appreciation for the enjoyment of nature.

3.2 URBAN PLANNING

3.2.1 Becoming a destination for cyclists' destination; Békéscsaba, (Hungary): An extensive bike path network connects the parts of the city and settlements in its region, enabling several round tours starting from Békéscsaba. Although this network is not yet complete, it is continuous. The quality of the bike paths is also variable, but all neighbouring settlements can already be reached, especially the cities of the central part of Békés County (Békés and Gyula). In the near future – according to plans – the three cities will become fully connected via bike paths, with the construction of a “green corridor” along the Élővíz Canal. The flat terrain of the Great Plains is particularly suited to cycling, so Békéscsaba could become a starting point of various round tours by bicycle – as a matter of fact, it already is. In connection with this, bicycle rental is already available in several locations in the city. The first major bike path and cycling infrastructure development was concluded in 2011, when more than 5 km of new bike paths were opened. To date, this has been followed by the construction of over 32 km of cycling traffic facilities within the city limits, in several stages.



© City of Békécsaba

3.2.2 The walking and cycling path project; Békéscsaba, (Hungary): The “Development of the Wenckheim walking and cycling path” project was realised by the Municipality of Békéscsaba City with County Rank, with funding from the Modern Cities Programme. The goal of building this bike path was to increase the use of bicycles for transport and develop cycling tourism, by expanding the existing cycling network within the municipal boundaries of the city. This cycling development allows visitors to discover the most beautiful parts of Békéscsaba. The Wenckheim walking and cycling path offers a complex experience for everyone. First, crossing downtown Békéscsaba, it provides an opportunity to discover the Munkácsy Quarter, which preserves and presents the heritage of Mihály Munkácsy, the world-famous painter with a thousand ties to the city. Development of the Munkácsy Quarter began in 2017. This project, with a cost of nearly HUF 4 billion, will create the image of the Munkácsy Quarter and ensure the uniform appearance of the cultural facilities of the city centre. The Munkácsy Quarter aims to connect the name of this legendary painter even more closely to Békéscsaba. A further intention is to develop a more pleasant living environment for local residents and make the county seat a more attractive destination for tourists.



© City of Békécsaba

3.2.3 Plans for urban development; Čakovec (Croatia): The city of Čakovec is currently drafting a new General Urban Plan that will enable further development towards a modern, green and smart city. The new plan will establish additional "rules of the game" that will prevent interventions in the area that compromise the historical, cultural, and social heritage of the city. Čakovec stands out from other cities due to its developed crafts, small entrepreneurship, innovation and adaptation to technological changes. Besides these characteristics, fully built communal infrastructure, care for the environment, and investments in public facilities and social life will help attract locals as well as visitors.

Find out more at:

https://www.cakovec.hr/dokumenti/gospodarstvo/investment_guide_2016.pdf

3.2.4 SMART cycling resting spots; Čakovec (Croatia): Čakovec is ideal for cycling and hiking tourism, and with government fund, local authorities have introduced 'SMART bicycle resting areas' to develop cyclo-tourist infrastructure. These stops for cyclist are located in a strategic cycling road, and equipped with rest spaces, information panels, charging station kiosks

powered by solar panels or batteries, stands with integrated pumps, among other appliances for cyclist to use when stopping at the resting areas.

Find out more at: <http://www.total-croatia-cycling.com/news/728-cakovec-to-receive-three-smart-resting-areas-for-cyclists>

3.2.5 City Changer Cargo Bike; Dubrovnik (Croatia): To face the problem of unloading cargo in EU cities, especially in pedestrian zones, the City of Dubrovnik procured four electric cargo bikes, as part of the EU project City Changer Cargo Bike (CCCB). It is indeed a very successful model, that has been presented to the public together with the advantages of the use of such bikes in the historic centre, where the pilot project is being implemented, and where their use for delivery could make everyday life easier for caterers, traders, delivery services and citizens. The aims of this project are to demonstrate the multiples benefits, raise awareness in the public and private sectors, reduce pollution and congestion with motor vehicles and improve safety and use of public areas.

Find out more at: <https://civitas.eu/projects/city-changer-cargo-bike>



© City of Dubrovnik

3.2.6 A large e-bike network to encourage sustainable mobility; Kranj (Slovenia): For several years now, Kranj is promoting sustainability mobility and implementing different measures, becoming then best e-mobility municipality in Slovenia in 2021. Indeed, Kranj has the country's largest electrified bike rental system, KR-sKOLESOM, with 28 electrified stations, for 92 bicycles and 68 e-bikes. This system is part of a larger network named Gorenjska.bike. The latter connects five municipalities in the region, allowing users to rent and return a bike in different locations. In total, 43 stations with 60% of electrically assisted bikes are available.

Find out more at: <https://www.gorenjska.bike/>

3.2.7 Zero-emission mobility; Mafra (Portugal): One area of action in Mafra has been sustainable mobility within and to the destination, including public transport modes and low

or zero-emission mobility systems. The Municipality has been promoting the installation of charging stations for electric vehicles, the acquisition of electric vehicles for urban cleaning and the creation of a network of intermodal parks with connections to neighbouring municipalities. The city is actively participating in the Urban Mobility Plan for the Lisbon Metropolitan Area. Additionally, Mafra has made efforts to create pedestrian/clickable corridors encouraging the increase in more sustainable forms of mobility.

Find out more at: <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/11/10/2929> and <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/3022/7864bd02b23ee70b2ddf3aa2947ad7c19fb9.pdf>

3.2.8 Urban mobility with SHOW, HARMONY and SMART2; Trikala (Greece): Trikala is a pioneer in the field of sustainable mobility. With its pilot project SHOW, the city has opened a new way with holistic piloting of automated vehicles in urban environments, with 69 partners from 13 EU countries. HARMONY focuses on urban air mobility offering drone delivery services, while SMART2 develops demand-responsive transport schemes in low traffic areas and promotes micro mobility solutions in the city, supported by a global app.

Find out more at:

<https://show-project.eu/mega-sites-trikala/>
<https://www.e-trikala.gr/portfolio/harmony/>
<https://civitas.eu/news/smart-mobility-services-in-trikala-make-a-difference-for-citizens-and-tourists>

3.3 SUSTAINABLE ENERGY/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

3.3.1 Great potential for solar energy; Arsuz (Turkey): Protecting the green and ensuring its sustainability is important for the Municipality of Arsuz, which presents saplings to every newborn baby and newly married couples. Another measure has been implemented on the subject; tree planting has been made compulsory for each independent section while giving building occupancy.



© City of Arsuz

3.3.2 Aiming for zero-waste; Arsuz (Turkey): A waste collection center is available in the city and zero waste piggy banks have been placed throughout the district by the municipality, which has a zero-waste certificate. Waste vegetable oils are also recycled and a joint work with the tradesmen has been made. To promote the zero-waste, campaigns and competitions are organised about the subject in public institutions, organisations and schools. Located by the seafront, it is also important to prevent the wastewater from mixing with the sea, so treatment facilities have been established in the collective living areas and their disposal is ensured. In order to respect the environment, it is of course biologically combated without using any chemical drugs.

Find out more at: <https://www.arsuz.bel.tr/arsuza-sifir-atik-belgesi/>
<https://www.arsuz.bel.tr/kurumsal/iklim-degisikligi-ve-sifir-atik-mudurlugu/>

3.3.3 Use of renewable energies; Azores (Portugal): As in the entire Azores archipelago, there has been a strong focus on renewable energies to enable a successful green transition. The city will increase the capacity of the installed geothermal power, foreseeing a 60% increase in the dependence on renewable energies. Other commitments are planned such as photovoltaic panels to promote the production and use of clean energy.

Find out more at: <https://portaldenergia.azores.gov.pt/portal/POL%C3%8DTICA-ENERG%C3%89TICA/Renov%C3%A1veis?portalid=0>

3.3.4 Waste management; Azores (Portugal): The city of Angra do Heroísmo has shown good practices in waste management. Over the last decade urban waste management has been the target of constant improvement. The drastic reduction of municipal waste disposed of in landfills is a result of this. In 2012 the percentage of waste that was landfilled was 90% whereas in 2019 this rate has been significantly reduced to around 5%.

Find out more at: https://servicos-sraa.azores.gov.pt/grastore/DSR/SRIR_Relatorio_2020_Terceira.pdf

3.3.5 Clean renewable energy for public buildings; Čakovec (Croatia): In Čakovec the authorities are working to switch their energy consumption towards renewable sources, from LED public lighting to charging stations for electric vehicles. An example of the municipality efforts on more sustainable energy practices is the refurbishing of a complex of buildings with technology that will make the structure become more energy efficient powered by renewable energy sources. Some of the appliances implemented are a solar collector system for hot water and heating support has been installed, indoor lighting system reconstructed with LED technology-based luminaires and with the addition of motion sensors in the hallways and staircases, smart metering system for all energy sources installed and inefficient kitchen appliances with new ones of A+++ energy class replaced.

Find out more at: [https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/RURES-Pilot-Action-Report---Medjimurje-\(Croatia\).pdf](https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/RURES-Pilot-Action-Report---Medjimurje-(Croatia).pdf)

3.3.6 “Plastic Smart Cities Croatia”; Dubrovnik (Croatia): The Plastic Smart Cities Croatia is a project implemented by WWF, in cooperation with the Association Sunce Split, that is aiming to engage large and small municipalities in adopting measures and policies to reduce plastic consumption and to improve waste management. As part of the initiative, the city of Dubrovnik is committed to reduce plastic pollution by 30% within two years, but also to reduce its plastic footprint by eliminating single-use plastics and to stop the inflow of plastics into nature by 2030.



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Find out more at: <https://plasticsmartcities.org/pages/dubrovnik>

3.3.7 Use of geothermal energy for public buildings; Grevena (Greece): Grevena is also known as the green city of geothermal energy. This is due to the city's response to the call for greater climate and CO2 neutrality, Grevena took the step to seek its sustainable energy source in geothermal, renewable energy. Within 5 years (since 2017), the Municipality of Grevena managed, all the municipal buildings of the city such as the Vocational High School, the Indoor Gym, the Swimming Pool, the Town Hall, the Forest Office, the Library - Cultural Center and some schools to have a heating system and cooling through shallow geothermal - Geothermal Heat Pumps. In some of these buildings the works are in progress / auction. In Europe, Shallow Geothermal with Geothermal Heat Pump, is the most developed sector of the European geothermal market. Grevena, despite being a small municipality, carries out geothermal projects disproportionate to its size and when the installation of geothermal systems in other municipal buildings is completed, it will "correspond, based on the population, to 200 watts of geothermal heat per inhabitant", a quantitative element that ranks the Municipality among the first in Europe.

Find out more at: <https://www.geothermia.gr/en/portfolio/dimosia-ktiria-epaggelmatikoi-xoroi/item/86-grevena>

3.3.8 "PLug-N-Harvest" Project; Grevena (Greece): In order to strengthen the efforts for the protection of the environment, Grevena participates in the pioneering - pan-European - project "PLug-N-Harvest", within the program "HORIZON2020" of the European Union. Specifically, it is installed in the building of the Prefectorial Administration of Grevena active facade. It is a set of photovoltaic facades with metering equipment that will record the initial - before their installation- and the final energy status of the offices, in order to evaluate the system and calculate the reduction of the carbon footprint of the building. In addition, the "smart" facade will generate the same electricity from sunlight, which will be used to cover the same consumption of the offices where it is installed, while it also includes additional insulation for the building and mechanical ventilation device with heat recovery in each office.



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Find out more at: <https://www.plugin-harvest.eu/index.php/pilot-case-4-grevena-gr/>

3.3.9 Saving energy; Jelgava (Latvia): To save energy but also budget expenses, Jelgava is using new technologies. In some part of the city, the street lighting has been replaced with economical LED lamps, but also modernized, such as in Riga Street, where the intensity of street lighting automatically decreases at night. The city is implementing an environmentally friendly development, and the heat producer "Gren" is also an example of that, as it provides heat with renewable resources.

Find out more at: <https://gren.com/en/our-energy-production/>

3.3.10 Sustainable use and management of water; Mafra (Portugal): One fundamental area the Municipality has been focusing on is the sustainable use and management of water. Mafra has made efforts by developing programs to reuse and reduce water consumption. This includes measures for the reuse of treated wastewater from domestic effluents, the implementation of systems of own supply for watering green spaces and the use of intelligent

automation in public irrigation systems to save water. This helps the local population to reuse water but also prevents water from being wasted.

Find out more at: <https://www.ecowaters.pt/en/local/mafra>
http://www.lis.edu.es/uploads/f31158b4_41c1_48b3_befc_b1fa727b64f5.pdf

3.3.11 Program for energy efficiency and less environmental impact; Mafra (Portugal): The Municipality has implemented the Mafra Requalifica program to promote energy efficiency in the public lighting network since 2016. This has resulted in savings between 50% and 70% in electricity consumption in the intervened streets. The program has contributed decisively to the improvement of energy efficiency and thermal quality requirements of existing buildings in the Municipality. This has stimulated the rehabilitation of degraded buildings. The Municipality promotes and supports the conduct of actions for environmental awareness to encourage the reduction, recycling and reuse of waste – this is done with the local community as well as visitors – for the overall goal to minimise the environmental impact caused by human consumption.

Find out more at: https://www.cm-mafra.pt/p/mafra_requalifica

3.3.12 LEAP Project for waste; Tetovo (Latvia): A Local Environment Action Plan (LEAP) has been implemented by the municipality, with strategic goals for environment protection. A number of projects have resulted from this, answering to several problems that have been highlighted, particularly for the thematic area of waste. The city supplied new machinery and containers, that will enable regular waste collection in the identified poor settlements, which will reduce illegal landfills and will contribute to a healthy environment for residents. The installation of semi-underground containers is also a project, in order to save city land space and decrease the number of people to collect waste, and also decrease the fuel consumption and the greenhouse emissions due to reduced time for discharge and reduced number of truck rides.

Find out more at: https://dryfta-assets.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/assets/eden2023/abstractfiles/1653656254Projects_MunicipalityofTetovo.pdf

3.3.13 Photovoltaic and heating systems in public buildings; Tetovo (Latvia): The municipality of Tetovo applied in a call of the Ministry of Finance and won the project construction of photovoltaic systems in public buildings. Solar panels have been then implemented in the “Gj.K.Skënderbeu”- Poroj primary school, the “7 March” high school and on the building of the water filter station. The replacement of heating equipment in the “Naim Frashëri” primary school also happened after the call the Government of the republic of North Macedonia and the ministry of Environmental Protection. Through these systems, the facilities have greatly reduced electricity consumption and gained stability in the energy supply. The municipality is then determined to continue the implementation of such systems in other institutions.

Find out more at: https://dryfta-assets.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/assets/eden2023/abstractfiles/1653656254Projects_MunicipalityofTeto vo.pdf

3.4 ECOLOGICAL CONVERSATION

3.4.1 Preservation of biodiversity; Azores (Portugal): Nature conservation policies have been responsible for the excellent state of Azores' natural heritage sites, where in harmony with the tourism sector they provide unique experiences for visitors. Notably is also the immense biodiversity present in its vast vegetative territories that contains about 80% of the endemic species of the Azores and all the native habitats of the archipelago.



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Find out more at: <https://sustainable.azores.gov.pt/>

3.4.2 Lielupe Floodplain Meadows; Jelgava (Latvia): The Lielupe Floodplain Meadows is the most visited natural sight in Jelgava, with 88,875 visitors in 2021. Listed as a Natura 2,000 site, it offers a large diversity of rare birds and plant species, and more than 80 wild horses, hence the use of visitor monitoring devices and the establishment of several restrictions by the city, to minimise the negative tourism impact and maximise sustainability. It is indeed forbidden to feed horses, to cut plants, to make noise or to enter specific area during bird nesting period. However, visitors can go for a walk with a nature guide or enjoy and learn by themselves with information boards about nature processes, bird and plant species.

Find out more at: <https://visit.jelgava.lv/en/sightseeing/nature-and-parks/item/110-lielupes-palienes-plavas>

3.4.3 UNESCO Global Geopark; Karavanke (Slovenia/Austria): In the Karavanke UNESCO Global Geopark area, 49 geosites and 14 geopark sites have been registered, including geological and geomorphological natural values on the Slovenian side and areas with the status of nature/landscape reserve or natural monument on the Austrian side. Among these also

different Natura2000 protected areas on both sides of the border can be found. The task of the Karavanke UNESCO Global Geopark is to monitor, preserve and protect these features and, on the other hand, to make them accessible to the general public. A part of this is the GEO Festival which is comprised of a series of events aimed at different target groups: guided hiking tours, school campaigns, sports competitions, open days, study tours, language courses, exhibitions, lectures, educational workshops, ... The most prominent and important activities for achieving the conservation objectives are the educational activities. For the 12th year, Karavanke UNESCO Global Geopark has been running educational activities in the form of an annual Geopark theme. In the previous school years, the topics were: Volcanoes the Earth erupts; Diverse, colourful life in our forest is interesting; Fossils stories from the past; We are UNESCO!; The pulse of Nature; Minerals and crystals, beautiful creations of nature; Soils beneath our feet; Grasslands; Mountains–the world high above us. The Geopark is comprised of a multitude of stakeholders and actors that all participate, across borders to facilitate a unique natural experience that allows for a sustainable and knowledge tourism experience.



© City of Karavanke

Find out more at: <https://www.geopark-karawanken.at>

3.4.4 Blue Flag Certification for beach water quality; Larnaka (Cyprus): Thanks to sand cleaning machines, beach cleaning campaigns, recycling and further actions Larnaka's beaches consistently attain the coveted Blue Flag and water cleanliness certifications. As a coastal destination, Larnaka takes care of the maintenance of the beach and sea which play a huge part in its sustainable tourism offer. Several Larnaka beaches are consistently awarded Blue Flag status and water quality certifications as they are continually enhanced through the following assets: increased planting, the creation of facilities using natural materials, preservation of the reefs' biodiversity with strict fishing regulations, beach cleaning and recycling programmes as well as access and facilities for disabled persons.



© City of Larnaka

Find out more at: <https://www.visitcyprus.com/index.php/en/discovercyprus/sun-sea/beaches/516-faros-beach-pervolia-larnaka-larnaca-blue-flag>

3.4.5 Conserving Natural Resources; Loulé (Portugal): The brand Natural.pt is an integrated approach to Portugal's biodiversity and culture, a reliable brand recognised at home and abroad as a symbol of quality, excellence and support for place-based development. In 2015, the municipality of Loulé joined the brand. Around 51.3% of the municipality of Loulé is classified as a protected area, covering a variety of different habitats, where you can see many species of avifauna. This makes the area one of the most interesting for birdwatching in the Algarve, so a guide was compiled in collaboration with the Almargem Association, "Birdwatching in the municipality of Loulé - Ornithological Guide."

Find out more at: <http://www.cm-loule.pt>

3.4.6 Tapada Nacional de Mafra Protection; Mafra (Portugal): The Municipality is striving for the protection of terrestrial life. This is being displayed by the Tapada Nacional de Mafra, a forest enclosure with 833 hectares unique in Portugal where different animal species can be freely observed - among the most emblematic animals being the fallow deer, the deer and the wild boars. The forest management model is based on good sustainable practices for the conservation of biodiversity, the promotion of research and preservation of fauna and flora, for carrying out activities in recreational and nature tourism as well as environmental education. This helps the region and its residents to generate income by attracting visitors.

Find out more at:

<https://www.visitportugal.com/en/NR/exeres/125F943F-DA02-4920-B603-D5B978264FF0>
<https://tapadademafra.pt/en/pagina-principal-english/>

3.4.7 Blue Flag Certification for Teos Marina; Seferihisar (Turkey): The Teos Marina area in Seferihisar has received a Blue Flag certification. Teos Marina is an attraction center that brings domestic and foreign visitors together in the heart of Sığacık. It stands out with its unspoiled nature, historical texture as well as natural products. The Teos Marina, which has been operating since 2010, has a capacity of 480 boats in the sea and 80 boats on land. Further, transportation by ferry from Teos Marina to Samos takes about 2 hours. IMCI ranks 10th in the world and 2nd in Turkey among the 5 Blue Star rating for marinas.

Find out more at:

<http://www.bluestarmarina.org/en/article/33/situatedinawonderfulnaturalbayteosmarinainturkeyhasachieveda5bluestarrating>
<https://www.teosmarina.com.tr/en/kurumsal.html>

3.5 SUSTAINABLE CULTURE

3.5.1 Keeping the city green; Arsuz (Turkey): Located in the Mediterranean Region, which is the 2nd most important region in terms of solar energy potential, the Municipality of Arsuz has started a project of 550 KW for the generation of electrical energy from solar energy. With an average daily sunshine duration of 8.21 hours, the province of Hatay is indeed one of the provinces with the highest potential.

3.5.2 Tourism accessibility; Azores (Portugal): Azores has put an emphasis on being accessible to a large group of people, showcased through its numerous means of communication and various itineraries from which two stand out, the "Terceira - Soul of the Azores" and the "Eco Passport". While former has a special focus on the tradition, gastronomy and culture of the island, the latter encompasses the various points and tourist services that exist, rewarding tourists who make full use of these services.



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Find out more at: <https://anradoheroismo.pt/terceira-tem-um-novo-guia-turistico/>
<https://anradoheroismo.pt/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Eco-Passaporte.pdf>

3.5.3 Annual "Enriching and Greening Larnaka's Beaches" Program; Larnaka (Cyprus): Larnaka takes care of its natural assets as shown by the annual "Enriching and Greening Larnaka's Beaches" programme. Within this programme beaches are upgraded with increased greenery, urban equipment, sand playgrounds, open-air gyms, beach sport courts and more. Additionally, several beaches are fully accessible by means of floating wheelchairs. Thanks to sand cleaning machines, beach cleaning campaigns, recycling and further actions Larnaka's beaches consistently attain the coveted Blue Flag and water cleanliness certifications.



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Find out more at: <https://csti-cyprus.org/projects/greening-cyprus-beaches/>

3.5.4 A Cross-border cooperation with Kosovo; Tetovo (Latvia): Located at the border with Kosovo, Tetovo has under implementation the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Kosovo – The Republic of North Macedonia under IPA II 2017 and 2018 – Reviving Crafts and Building Culture for Joint Touristic Development. The project aims to develop sustainability of tourism destination by creating new and improved touristic content that will improve and diversify the offer in the two cross-border regions, raise attractiveness, and improve craftsmen's visibility, as well as the condition to grow their businesses and promote their products. The cooperation between the two regions, in particular between Tetovo and Prizren, Kosovo, will be strengthened through joint crafts events and promotion. This programme will also allow exchange between visitors and locals, promote social inclusion, and involve local communities.

Find out more at: https://dryfta-assets.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/assets/eden2023/abstractfiles/1653656254Projects_MunicipalityofTetovo.pdf

3.5.5 “Green Street” Zone at Špancirfest; Varaždin (Croatia): Špancirfest is a street festival inviting locals and visitors to educate themselves about sustainability. During this festival, the city of Varaždin puts an emphasis on recycled and local produce and a sustainable concept to incite to a more sustainable approach. Within the festival, the “Green Street” zone encourages the usage of tap water, bicycle and public transport and renewable energies.



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Find out more at: <https://player.vimeo.com/video/715909271>

3.6. SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY/RESPONSIBILITY

3.6.1 Respect the City initiative; Dubrovnik (Croatia): Recognising the need for both urgent and systematic action based on sustainable models of development of the city and of tourism as its primary economic activity, the “Respect the City” initiative was developed in 2017 by the city of Dubrovnik. The latter has the objectives of reducing the negative impacts of over tourism, preventing a further degradation of the quality of residents’ life, preserving the fragile cultural and natural heritage of the city and enhancing the quality of visitors’ experience. It comprised therefore a set of short-term, medium-term, and long-term measures and activities, such as smart and sustainable transport solutions, sustainable and balanced local development, innovative destination management and human resources development. Dubrovnik wants then to be a sustainable tourism destination with this initiative, that has already attracted the attention of international media and tourism industry.



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Find out more at:

https://tzdubrovnik.hr/lang/en/get/kultura_i_povijest/75284/respect_the_city.html

3.6.2 A dedicated team for sustainable measures; Kranj (Slovenia): In Kranj, a Green Team, made up of 16 members from different institutions within the city, is collecting data, formulating development measures and targets, planning action plans and working towards their implementation. For the city, tourism industry should be part of sustainable activities. To achieve overall sustainable development in the field of tourism, regular annual meetings are also organised for business partners and the tourism industry to discuss trends and directions, as well as educational workshops.

Find out more at: <https://www.visitkranj.com/en/top-events/kranj---green-destination>

3.6.3 EU-funded programmes and projects for sustainability; Larnaka (Cyprus): The execution of significant projects included in the Strategy for Integrated Sustainable Development (SISD) and projects that fall under the Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) and Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) have helped Larnaka to practice sustainability. For an improvement of daily life quality, Larnaka has implemented actions that concern sustainable mobility (increased cycle and pedestrian paths, e-charging stations, modernised public transport network), sustainable town planning (anti-flooding works, park regeneration, accessibility), energy-saving initiatives (free household energy audits; photovoltaic system, LED street lamps) and environmental actions (measuring air quality; recycling and waste management, no-car zones, events/awareness weeks, clean-up campaigns etc).



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Find out more at:

<https://medcities.org/strategic-plan-for-sustainable-development-larnaca-2040/>

<https://docplayer.net/20623452-Larnaca-urban-sustainable-development-strategy.html>

<https://www.islepact.eu/userfiles/ISEAPs/Report/cyprus/ISLEPACT%20SEAP%20EN%20Larnaca.pdf>

3.6.4 Climate Adaptation; Loulé (Portugal): To achieve good environmental performance, it is essential to have a well-defined strategy. The issue of sustainability in the use and preservation of resources for future energy generation is the main priority when implementing the municipality's policies. Therefore, basic support documents were produced as a work tool, specifically the Municipal Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change and the Municipal Climate Action Plan. In the final phase of development is the Municipal Contingency Plan for Periods of Drought. The municipality also has a Municipal Observatory for the Environment and Territory of Loulé, containing a set of sustainability indicators. It is also important to mention that the municipality of Loulé has developed a project unique in the whole Algarve region - the Municipal Energy Charter.

Find out more at:

<http://www.cm-loule.pt/pt/menu/682/municipio-eco-xxi.aspx>

<http://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/countriesregions/countries>

<https://www.covenantofmayors.eu/about/covenant-community/signatories.html>

3.7 SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH DIGITALISATION

3.7.1 “Smart Trikala” and “100 Climate Neutral and Smart Cities by 2030 “; Trikala (Greece): Labeled as Greece’s “first digital city”, the Municipality of Trikala has developed a wide range of digital and smart solutions, such as smart parking, smart lighting and smart pedestrian crossing. As part of the 100 cities of the European Commission’s Mission, the city of Trikala

has committed to be a frontrunner on climate neutrality by 2030 and further assist other European cities to follow suit by 2050.

Find out more at: <https://trikalacity.gr/smart-trikala/>

3.8 SUSTAINABLE GASTRONOMY/AGRICULTURE

3.8.1 Békéscsaba becoming a destination for gastronomy; Békéscsaba, (Hungary): Békéscsaba is also famous for its gastronomy. Upon hearing the name of the city most people think first of sausages and the Csabai Sausage Festival, and with good reason, since Békéscsaba is the “Sausage Capital”. Csabai sausage is a world-famous Hungarian product, and the Sausage Festival, which preserves the traditions of sausage-making, is the largest gastronomic event of the region. Csaba Park, which preserves and presents the traditions of making Csabai sausage as a gastronomy tourism event venue and hosts the Csabai Sausage Festival that was established on the basis of this heritage. Along the Wenckheim bike path, the traditions of local sausage-making are presented in Csaba Park. A further gastronomy-related attraction along the bike path is the Csabai Hamlets- and Cereal Production History Exhibition Site, a.k.a. the Cereal Museum, which was established on account of the fact that thanks to its high-quality wheat Békés County has played an important role in cereal production and processing for centuries.

3.8.2 Climate-friendly farming; Halfeti (Turkey): Climate change, which has been experienced with global warming in recent years, has a negative impact on the soil and water resources, which are already insufficient in agricultural activities, and poses a risk to the sustainability of agriculture. When organic farming methods are applied with knowledge, it will provide economic and environmental sustainability in agriculture. In this project, which was prepared in this context, it is aimed to create an economically more profitable agricultural sector by making agricultural production in a way that will not harm the environment, human and animal health in order to protect soil and water resources within the framework of the principle of organic agriculture and the principle of sustainability. It is aimed to create and develop eco-tourism with the integration of agriculture and tourism in order to provide additional income for the farmers by presenting their natural, cultural and historical values to tourism and by processing their organic products, without leaving the agricultural activity, which is the main occupation of the farmers, and ultimately to increase the welfare level of the society they live in.

Find out more at: <https://halfeti.bel.tr>

3.8.3 Eco-friendly local businesses; Jelgava (Latvia): To save energy but also budget expenses, Jelgava is using new technologies. In some part of the city, the street lighting has been replaced with economical LED lamps, but also modernized, such as in Riga Street, where the intensity of street lighting automatically decreases at night. The city is implementing an environmentally friendly development, and the heat producer “Gren” is also an example of that, as it provides heat with renewable resources.

Find out more at: <https://gren.com/en/our-energy-production/>

3.8.4 Kranj Long Table, a green culinary event; Kranj (Slovenia): After Covid-19 epidemic, Kranj decided to create the Kranj Long Table, a green culinary event to help the catering sector. Seven Kranj chefs with their assistants and staff prepared and served a menu with 100% local ingredients, for 100 seating visitors in the garden of the Khislstein castle. No food was left, guests took with them any excess food in recyclable containers. To continue the sustainability level, the Kranj Long Table was the first event where the carbon footprint was measured and is now an example for more climate-friendly tourism event in Slovenia. By promoting sustainable mobility for guests and using electricity from renewable sources, the organiser avoided 266 kg of CO₂ and reduced the event's carbon footprint by 18%. In addition of that, the profit of the ticket sales went towards meals for Kranj Social Work Centre's clients and a family in need. With the success of the first edition, the Kranj Long Table will be held again this year.

Find out more at: <https://www.visitkranj.com/en/climate-friendly-food-at-the-kranj-long-table>

3.8.5 Seed Swap Festival; Seferihisar (Turkey): The town of Seferihisar has been organizing a seed swap festival since 2011. The Seed Swap Festival is focusing on collecting indigenous seeds of the region and other local seeds of the nearby cities in a preservation center. It is organized annually and provides an opportunity to farmers to exchange the local seeds and therefore supports economic and agricultural sustainability. The goal is to protect the diversity of local seeds, multiply them and to prevent their extinction. A local seed center was created by taking samples from the swapped seeds. The seeds collected in the seed center are multiplied and are distributed to the producers, farmers and citizens free of charge at the annual festival. The seeds are used in the vegetable gardens in the schools. This action is beneficial to everyone engaged in growing seeds and aiming to generate income while trading with seeds.

Find out more at: <http://seferihisar.bel.tr/seed-swap-festival/>

3.8.6 Circular foodchain; Trikala (Greece): Aiming for the development of a circular local agri-food approach, the city of Trikala has implemented the distribution of sustainable meals to its schools via its Biocanteen Transfer Network. At the same time, the CIRC4Food project focuses on developing a pilot on agri-food systems inspired by the circular economy. By combining compost and rainwater harvesting, Trikala is choosing to reduce its environmental footprint.

Link: <https://www.e-trikala.gr/portfolio/circ4food/>

3.9 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MANAGEMENT

3.9.1 Bozova Gathering Green Tourism and Agriculture; Bozova (Turkey): The district has a great potential in terms of tourism and due to the ecological structure of the region, it is important to carry out tourism activities by protecting natural resources and to ensure the integration of agriculture and tourism. The Green Tourism and Agriculture project is aimed to create and develop eco-tourism with the integration of agriculture and tourism in order to provide additional income for the farmers by presenting their natural, cultural and historical values to tourism and by processing their organic products, without leaving the agricultural activity, which is the main occupation of the farmers, and ultimately to increase the welfare level of the society they live in.

3.9.2 Old Bazaar Market; Chair (North Macedonia): The Old Bazaar in Chair is the oldest and largest marketplaces in the Balkans since at least the 12th century. Beside importance as a market place, Old Bazaar is known for its cultural and historical values. Although Ottoman architecture is predominant, remains of Byzantine architecture are evident as well, while recent reconstructions have led to the application of elements specific to modern architecture. It is here that the city municipality of Chair is placing a high emphasis on green and sustainable tourism practices such as. The Replacement of old windows and doors from metal and PVC profiles with new wooden profiles and installation of wooden shutters that contribute to energy savings; restricting the movement of cars thereby reducing CO2 pollution; emphasizing local products and arts and craft shops; installing an eco-lighting system; planting 2000 trees within 6 months with the plan to plant another 2000 in the next 6 months and installing solar panels across the old Bazaar. Chair is demonstrating that it is vital to ensure a sustainable tourism sector starts with the key attractions before trickling down to the rest of the sector within a municipality.

Find out more at: <https://travel.sygic.com/en/poi/old-bazaar-skopje-poi:5195445>

3.9.3 Memorandum of Understanding with the Cruise Lines International Association; Dubrovnik (Croatia): The Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) and the city of Dubrovnik signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work together. The aim is to preserve and protect the cultural heritage of the city through responsible tourism management and to help establishing Dubrovnik as a model of sustainable tourism in the Adriatic region and beyond. This will be done through a destination stewardship roadmap for the city, based on UN sustainable tourism, implementation of a previously developed 2020 cruise ship berthing policy with the aim of avoiding port and city congestion, regulation of traffic and the securing of a high-quality stay. Focuses are made on the extension of the peak cruise season, the increase of calls in the shoulder months and a better daily distribution of cruise calls from 8,000 to 4,000 passengers a day, in attempt to ease crowds and longer cruise ships stays. The CLIA and the city of Dubrovnik are also thinking of the possibility to have a Dubrovnik World Heritage Centre and an Intermodal Transportation Centre in the Gruž Port.



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Find out more at: <https://cruising.org/en-gb/news-and-research/press-room/2019/july/cruise-industry-and-city-of-dubrovnik-partner>

3.9.4 “Mill of Elves” Christmas Theme Park Venue; Trikala (Greece): In order to create its Christmas-themed park called “Mill of Elves”, the city of Trikala has transformed its most important industrial heritage into a green and zero-waste venue. Additionally, to make best usage of this new space, Trikala has chosen to host multiple events such as the “Trikala Green Festival – Street Food Edition”, raising awareness on green and zero-waste practices.

Find out more at: <https://exploringgreece.tv/en/greece/mill-of-elves-the-ultimate-guide-for-the-trip-to-trikala/27818/>

3.9.5 Varaždin Backyards Festival; Varaždin (Croatia): Launched in 2016, the Varaždin Backyards Festival highlights the city’s heritage while also showcasing its “hidden gems”. By opening up private spaces within the city, it allows a deeper insight into its tradition as well as bringing together locals and visitors via a variety of music, art, creative workshops and urban events.



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Find out more at: <https://player.vimeo.com/video/715909346>