



Annual Report 2022

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25 years Co-PLANing

This year marks the 25th anniversary to the day Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development officially started its journey as a Civil Society Organisation. It has been an exciting journey from an improvised container-turned office with 4 people based in the informal area of “Breglumasi” just outside the capital, to a consolidated organisation stationed at the heart of POLIS University - its offspring institution, with a team counting over 25 professionals.

Co-PLAN, which stood for collaborative planning, emerged as an organization that instigated participatory planning as a cornerstone to urban good governance. It would establish in Tirana, starting with Bathore and Breglumas, the first ever pilot projects of urban upgrading with a combined social-physical approach, moving slowly from peripheral informal settlements, towards formal neighborhoods and city center. Shifting towards Neighborhood Development Agendas (NDAs) meant direct work the community and local leaders to set-up real democratic structures of community representation through concrete urban and social improvement actions. Pioneering in its approach, Co-PLAN reinvented city planning in a society that hated “planning as a concept” because of sensitivity to past centralized planning attitudes. It introduced Urban Exercises to bridge processes of negotiation and partnerships with local authorities, and processes of intermediation between communities and local authorities to handle the urban governance process.

The years 2000 were marked by “Good Urban Governance” models developed in the Municipalities of Elbasan and Fier. Together with the new Mayors, Co-PLAN challenged the physical planning status quo and introduced a comprehensive urban planning approach, paried with a number of instruments, such as: participatory strategic planning to determine development objectives; capital investment planning to ensure key infrastructure orients urban development’s and not the other way around; land use planning that enables the municipality to be the administrator of public interests while enables private developments; Information Management Systems to help municipality make analysis; projections and informed decision making.

Development and integration efforts intensified and materialized in the form of projects and Policy Platforms, as well as efforts to build qualified human resources. Between 2003-2005 Co-PLAN drafted a Platform on National Territorial Governance, including reformation of planning system, regionalization, and formalization of informal settlements. The platform was submitted to the Albanian Parliament opening a political and public debate. Similarly important, is Co-PLAN’s

substantial contribution to the New Planning Legislation. Through this planning law and the respective bylaws, most of the contemporary spatial planning and land management instruments it had been advocating for years, were finally legally adopted.

In 2013, as part of the major contribution to the decentralisation process, Co-PLAN provided a road map for regionalization and regional development in Albania, a substantial input to the discussions at the time. Ten years on, and the challenge is ongoing, the law of “Regional Development and Cohesion” in 2022 is a milestone that, with good political will, empowers regional actors to determine regional priorities and foster balanced regional development.

Adding to the development work, and reflecting on the need for a critical mass of expertise in the various disciplines related to city-making, good governance, and environment, in 2006 Co-PLAN established POLIS University, a higher education institution equally pioneering in its approach to academia and research, initially focusing on architecture, urban planning, art design and environmental studies. Today, POLIS University ranks among the top universities in the country.

In 2018, Co-PLAN established the Western Balkan Network on Territorial Governance, as a platform aimed at bringing forward the research on territorial governance in the Western Balkan (WB) countries bringing together research and policy-influencing forces from the region. Today the network counts over 20+ members, and works on undertaking pioneering research and policy advocacy across the region, to enhance the domestic territorial governance and impact in a ‘unique voice’ the EU integration of the WB countries from a TG perspective. The network holds annual meetings/workshops, hosted in turn in one of the regional member countries, and it has a periodical journal called ‘Annual Review of Territorial Governance in the Western Balkans’.

As it matured, Co-PLAN has also assumed an active role in the civil society strengthening process, through capacity development, and mentoring programs through numerous programs focused on community organizing, activism, advocacy and policy-influencing. The organizational maturity in terms of resources has meant that Co-PLAN has successfully engaged in numerous projects including several Horizon2020 projects, and most recently in the position of the project coordinator for a green transition project.

Advancing such an organizational mission would not have been possible without the Co-PLAN staff, whose hard work and dedication has been admirable. Similarly, Co-PLAN would not have been what it is without the support and trust of different donor organizations from Cordaid that helped establish Co-PLAN as an organization to many others such as the Dutch Embassy, Austrian Development Agency, USAID, US Embassy, Swiss Development Cooperation, the World Bank, Swedish International Development Agency, etc., that shared the same development goals and supported our transformative endeavours. 25 years on, we acknowledge the work and partnerships with grassroot organizations, community leaders, partner organisations, and municipalities across the country, where most of our transformative interventions have taken place.

The journey of Albania's modern urban transformation (and not only) is closely related to the 1990s. The end of a centralized, dictatorial system marked the beginning of

laissez faire



The City of Basic Needs >>>

Development or Infrastructure? >>>



1 in 4
Albanians left

○
1990

Meanwhile, some young Albanian professionals with an experience in the field of engineering and architecture, educated abroad, returned to Albania and founded the first organization for the time with this focus.



First Steps of Social Integration >>>



Participatory Planning >>>



Early days of the newly established Co-PLAN >>>

1995

1997

The young NGO introduced experimental urban planning practices in informal settlements/neighbourhoods Albania, starting with Bathore and Breglumas. Soon, Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development, grew to form one of Albania's premier institutes in the field of good governance and city sciences.

Making Cities Work!



The visit of the President of the World Bank at that time, James Wolfensohn, to one of the informal areas in 1999 marked a turning point in political discourse.

<<<



Appreciation from the community for the tireless work of Co-PLAN in the field >>>



The work on social integration extended to other informal areas as well. The former-Këneta area in the city of Durrës marks an iconic case.

v
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v



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1998

During this period of reflection for Co-PLAN, the necessity for a qualified group with the required knowledge and expertise in the fields of planning and architecture was emphasized, as well as the need to influence policy development. In 2006, Polis University was established.

The first models of Good Urban Governance were piloted in the municipalities of Elbasan and Fier >>>



In 2006, Co-PLAN founded POLIS University, an equally pioneering institution in higher education with an innovative approach to academia and scientific research, initially focused on architecture, urban planning, art design, and environmental studies.

>>>



2006

2009

From the Law on Planning, and Regionalisation Reform

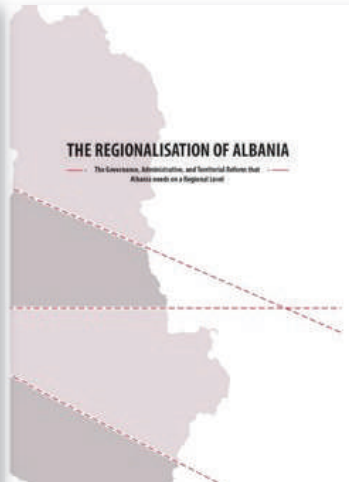


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The years 2010 mark Co-PLAN's significant contribution to the new planning legislation. The new law and bylaws reflected many contemporary spatial planning and land management instruments advocated by Co-PLAN for years.

○
 2010

...toward Policy-making and Policyinfluencing nationally!



<<< In 2013, Co-PLAN prepared and publicly shared the proposal for regionalization and regional development in Albania, a significant contribution to the discussions of that time.

Ten years and numerous challenges later, the “Regional Development and Cohesion” law was approved in 2022, a historic moment that, with political will, empowers regional actors to determine regional priorities and promote balanced regional development. This law marks another significant achievement for Co-PLAN.

<<< Over the years, POLIS University consolidated itself as a higher education institution, transforming into a strategic partner and collaborator in a number of joint project initiatives.



2022

Pressure, scrutiny, and debates have been an inseparable part of our journey. Co-PLAN has chosen to stand by the public interest and the community. Today, we aim to promote models of spatial planning and European governance in line with the

orientation & directions



Empowering Civil Society to engage in dialogue processes with state actors.

V
V
V



The establishment of Regional Networks like TG-WeB to factorize our voice in crucial decision-making processes at the European Union level.

V
V
V



In 2018, the National Activism Day (NAD) was established, dedicated to initiatives of activists nationwide.

○
2014

Co-PLAN has proposed new platforms for political actors in the country, encouraging debates. Some suggestions have already materialized into a series of legislative initiatives, while others form the basis of political discussions, with the hope that these ideas will transform into implementable policies.

of the European Union.



^^

Among its various virtues, Co-PLAN engages in regional projects, HORIZON2020 research projects, focusing on important topics such as Green Transition.

2022



about us

Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development is a non-profit organization that contributes to sustainable development, good urban and regional governance, addressing key environmental issues, civil society development, as well as influencing policy and promoting community participation that since 1995. At the core of our activity is working with people and institutions to drive tangible social transformation and positive change on the ground, producing promotional knowledge for better habitat management. Co-PLAN fulfills its mission through pilot activities and advisory services, which are launched by national and international institutions, as well as direct involvement with communities, local government units and other non-governmental organizations in the field of urban and regional management, management of environment and municipal finances. Although we are based in Tirana, Albania, we have developed a wide network of field projects at regional and national level.

The research and consulting work of Co-PLAN is built on four areas of expertise: Urban and Regional Development, Public Finance Management, Urban Environment Management and Research Work, as an integrated element in all areas. Each expertise is handled by dedicated teams. Co-PLAN has a long experience and a broad research portfolio in matters related to our thematic areas, especially in the field of environmental assessments, territorial management, preparation of strategic plans and development strategies; Preparation of urban regulatory plans; Provision of local government services; Integration of informal settlements, etc. Over the years, Co-PLAN has realized about 200 projects in Albania and the region, mainly financed by funding agencies and institutions such as the European Commission, UNDP, USAID, World Bank, Dutch Government, Development Agency, etc.

our team



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Project Assistance



Arba Balla
Executive Assistant



Altion Qirko
Logistics

The Co-PLAN staff is composed of the best experts in the fields they represent, whose expertise adds value to the organization. They are young, energetic, and come from diverse backgrounds, best representing Co-PLAN's work philosophy. The Co-PLAN staff is qualified in several thematic areas, including urban and regional management, municipal finance management, urban environmental management, and research. Some of our experts have completed their studies at international universities, mainly in distinguished academic institutions and research institutes.

200+

PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED
IN ALBANIA, IN THE
WESTERN BALKANS AND
EUROPEAN LEVEL.







highlights **2022**



W2E best practices at Titan Cement Factory, Thessaloniki

During the month of November, a study visit was conducted in order to exchange experiences through new technologies that Titan Antea Thessaloniki has successfully implemented for the use of alternative fuels.

Through this study visit, the project team aimed to directly influence policy makers, decision makers, presenting a clear overview of how the recovery process, which is a concept within the waste hierarchy, is a very good opportunity both in terms of both environmental and economic compared to the weak status of the waste management sector in the entire Western Balkans.

Part of the study visit was the visit to the alternative fuel production plant, near the Titan Thessaloniki cement factory, to see the process of using alternative fuels and to create a clear concept of the way it works and the possibilities of realism and the rise of these technologies in our country.

Approximately 40 people who were representatives of central and local institutions participated in this activity. mayors, representatives of entities engaged in waste management, as well as representatives of the media.





How do we factorise the CSO role in policymaking on an European level?

As part of the capacity development offered to Civil Society Organizations, an exchange visit was organized in Brussels (Belgium) during the month of November 2022. The purpose of the exchange visit was to get to know, understand and get involved in the processes of policy influence and dialogue in EU level. Numerous organizations with high performance in the grant scheme as part of the #ideal project participated in the exchange visit, including: Institute for Public and Local Studies represented by Mrs. Eralda Cani Methasani, Together for Life - represented by Mrs. Denisa Canameti, Illyria Association represented by Mr. Abdulla Diku, DMO Albania represented by Mrs. Eva Kushova, HDPC represented by Mrs. Elena Polo, and New Center represented by Mrs. Ferdiola Rushiti.

This study visit was organized through close cooperation with the European Policy Center (EPC), creating the possibility of engagement and dialogue with institutions important for the negotiation process such as:

- Mr. Vlad-Marius Botoș MEP and Chairman of the European Parliament's Committee for Regional Development and Deputy Chairman of the EP Delegation to the Parliamentary Committee for the Stabilization of the EU-Albania Association
- Mr Janis A. Emmanouilidis, Director of Studies, from the EPC on 'The EU at a turning point in history'
- Mr. Stefan Sipka, Policy Analyst, from the EPC on the 'European Green Deal', the Western Balkans Road to EU membership.

Participating organizations had the opportunity to engage in discussions and direct questions. Some of the key messages conveyed and emphasized by most of the guests were the importance of solid and continuous research; the need to engage and factor policy research, proposal and recommendations, etc.

Based on the current state of affairs in Albania, it was discussed and concluded that one of the essential meetings should be held in the European

Neighborhood and Enlargement Negotiations - General Directorate for Neighborhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) with representative Mr. Alberto Cammarata, Commanding Head of Unit, Mr. Vincent Rey, Head of the Team for Accession Negotiations, from DG NEAR, European Commission on "Albania's EU integration process and challenges".

During the seminar, Mr. Cammarata and Mr. Rey emphasized the importance of fulfilling the obligations in function of the EU integration process, with a special focus on the review process, where the cooperation of state and non-state actors is considered crucial. Mr. Cammarata noted the fact that the findings from the review process are essential and that the time frame regarding 'when Albania is expected' to join the EU is very much related to the willingness of the government to fulfill and respond to the obligations arising from screening process.

Participants in the workshop had the opportunity to interact directly with the three EU officials while also asking about the issues related to the challenge of factoring their work into such processes, especially in the case of officials who are not very willing to approve practically the recommendations coming from CSOs.

EU officials also stressed the importance of consistently and patiently becoming part of such processes and engaging directly with EU structures.

A very interesting part for all participants was the policy workshop "EU at a turning point in history"

conducted by the Director of Studies at the European Policy Center - Janis A. Emmanouilidis. The workshop was offered participants a very detailed resume on the influencing factors on the EU policy scene and how the processes in the Western Balkans are affected by this. Participating organizations understood the importance of consistent policy research and the importance of policy analysis beyond the local or regional context.



National Activism Day - #nad2022

Alongside the #spark program, a very important element in the project is the National Day of Activism, a day dedicated to celebrating civic activism of all forms with a geography that extends across the country echoing the importance of civic activism and the role its essential in building a healthy democracy.

The year 2022 marked the 5th anniversary of the National Day of Activism. For the last 5 years, over 160 local organizations, activists and well-known actors within the civil society scene have become part of #NAD through practical actions organized in different municipalities of the country, or participation in civil society fairs held in in Tirana.

On the 21st and 22nd of October we united and celebrated the National Day of Activism #nad2022. For the fifth consecutive year, organizations, associations, groups and individual activists operating throughout the Albanian territory became part of the activities organized on this occasion.

Their commitments and reactions over the years, as a good example of citizenship, were reflected in a short documentary at the event held near the Cultural Center of the Orthodox Cathedral Complex in Tirana.

Inspirational stories from local and foreign activists were shared for attendees, such as those of Portuguese humanitarian and doctor Gustavo Carona de Magalhães, educator Florida Kumanaku, cultural manager and academic from Italy Paolo Petrocelli, and activist and journalist Geri Emiri.

Numerous activities were organized throughout Albania, culminating in the 9-year school “Ferraj”, in Tirana. In this school of the Dajt Administrative Unit, improvement works were inaugurated in the infrastructure of the external environment, with a focus on the sports field and greenery.

Conceived also as a day in the service of students and the community in Ferraj, active citizens

and various organizations contributed through staff training, training courses and informative activities for students, the donation of didactic tools, informative corners, sports equipment, textbooks and art for children.

The National Day of Activism #NAD2022 was realized within the project “Sparking Activism Initiatives Locally - SAIL II”, implemented by Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development with the support of the Office of Public Relations at the US Embassy-Tirana, as part of the “Civil Society Capacity Building” program.

Our voice matters

We were pleased to organize the activity “Our Voice Matters” in collaboration with the Albanian partners, where stories of successful initiatives from #sparks and civil society organizations, supported by the “Civil Society Capacity Building” program, were presented.

Present at this activity Mr. Chad Twitty, head of the Public Relations Office at the Embassy of the United States of America in Tirana, appreciated the contribution and work done in improving the capacities and financial stability of organizations, as well as the advocacy skills of young activists to bring about positive changes. in the community.

In these nearly two years, through the implementation of this program, they have come to life previously unheard of ideas and initiatives, which have influenced the cultivation of an active civic culture and the development of the civil society sector.

This program made possible by the Office of Public Relations at the Embassy of the United States of America in Tirana will continue with further stages to support individuals, activists and organizations everywhere in Albania aiming to bring impact to society.









5 years #nad



For the last 5 years, over 160 local organizations, activists and well-known actors within the civil society scene have become part of #NAD through practical actions organized in the country, participation in civil society fairs held in central locations in Tirana.

Support through the Grant Scheme for 16 municipalities in the country

During the IV phase, the Albania Regional Development Program published 2 Grant Schemes, which targeted all 61 municipalities of Albania and enabled a financial allocation of 3.6 million CHF, which was followed by the successful implementation and inauguration of 18 projects during the year 2022!

The first grant scheme targeted municipalities affected by the earthquake, and funded 8 projects to support communities to address the complex developmental challenges of recovery. The projects financed and implemented range from the renewal of the infrastructure of gardens and nurseries, reconstructions of cultural and multifunctional centers, to the construction of connecting and infrastructural bridges.

The second scheme “For Regional Development and Cohesion”, with a more comprehensive dimension, was based on the priority needs and endogenous potentials of the region harmonized and identified in the Integrated Program for Rural Development of 100+ villages. With a record of applications in the first phase (55 municipalities), PDRSH, financed 10 profitable projects which increase the economic potential in the regions, promote sustainable tourism and support the social economic development of these territories.





National Environmental Forum

On May 5, 2022, GreenAL partners organized for the first time the Environmental Forum which gathered over 50 representatives of environmental organizations in Albania.

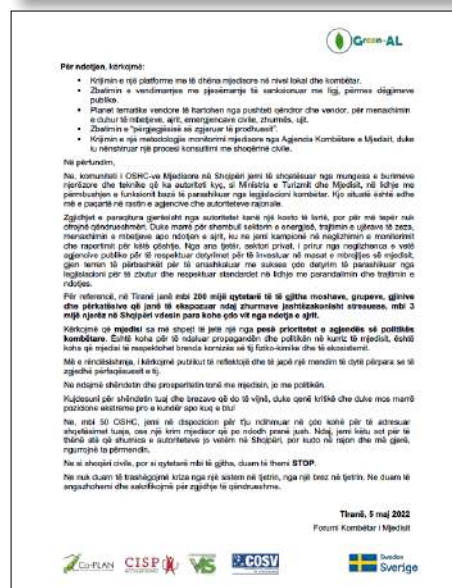
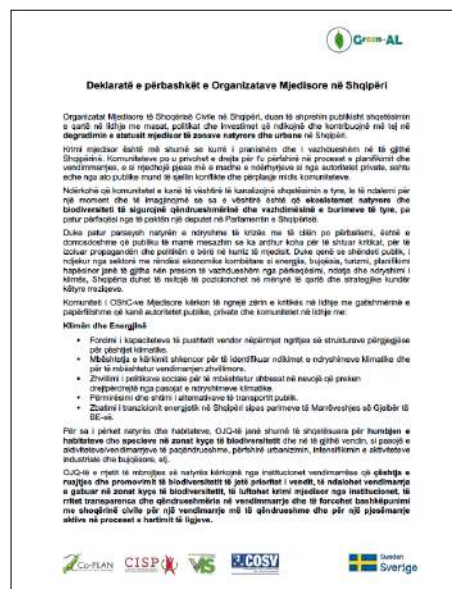
This forum was also attended by Ambassador Elsa Håstad in Albania, Deputy. the Minister of Tourism and Environment, Mrs. Ornella Çuçi, representative of the European Union in Albania and GIZ Albania.

During this forum, participants raised and discussed their concerns about environmental issues such as climate change, energy, pollution and habitat protection, which need to be addressed with policies and concrete actions involving all stakeholders.

Further, some of the projects supported through the #GreenAL grant scheme were presented, which aim to improve and promote environmental protection in the country.

An important moment of the work of this forum was the signing of the joint statement of Civil Society Organizations, through which it was requested that the environment be one of the five priorities of the national policy agenda.

The participants demanded that the responsible institutions fight environmental crime, increase transparency and participation in decision-making, strengthen cooperation with CSOs, create a platform with environmental data at the local and national level, as well as encourage scientific research for identified the impacts of climate change on the environment.





State of Local Public Finances in the country for 2022

The “Report on the State of Local Public Finances for 2022” provided a detailed overview of local revenues and expenditures, indicators of decentralization and events that characterized local self-government during 2022. The performance of local public finances was analyzed and linked to information from other sources to present the factors that may have contributed to the developments of the indicators for local income and expenditure. Between the debates on the review of territorial borders, the review of the strategy for decentralization and local self-government and under the pressure of local elections (May 2023), the financial developments at the local level for 2022 seem to have stimulated the interest of policies, politicians and citizens.

The Local Public Finance Report - State of the Year Report 2022 is part of a series of periodic quarterly reports summarizing developments in revenues and expenditures made by the 61 municipalities in Albania. The report is structured in two main sections: (i) section 2, which presents a detailed analysis of the funding sources of the 61 municipalities in the country, in total and by municipality; (ii) section 3, presenting an analysis of how the financial resources available from the 61 municipalities in the country were allocated. Key findings from the 2022 Status Report are presented in the final section of this document. The annexes attached to this report contain the methodology for the classification of data and indicators used in this analysis.”



‘Territorialja’ tryezë të përbash Toska: Janë ulur investimet e b veta!

Shkruar nga Pamfleti





kët me OSBE-në,
bashkive me fondet e



LAJMET E FUNDIT

- 13:01 / ARDUR**
Dritan Goxhoj kalëzon në SPAK ministrin Ulis Manja
- 13:07 / Krimet**
Detaje të reja nga vrasja në Fier, policia kontrollon në gjithë qytet...
- 13:08 / Shkencë**
Naimi inskenoi ekzekutimin, ekspertët zbulon hetimet: Do ketë deshm...
- 13:07 / Shkencë**
Për 4 ditë vodhi tre biznese, kapet hajduti serial në Durrës, polic...



Award ceremony for the 6 winning municipalities from the first call

Six Albanian municipalities were declared winners in the first call of the “EU for Municipalities” grant scheme financed by the European Union. With the support of 1.1 million euros, the European Union through this grant scheme directly supports the construction, revitalization and restoration of 11 educational, social, cultural and commercial facilities in the municipalities of Mat, Berat, Shkodër, Gjirokastër, Pukë and Përmet where the main beneficiaries are young people, women and vulnerable groups.

The winning projects were presented during the grant signing ceremony organized in Mat Municipality with the participation of representatives of the EU Delegation in Albania, mayors and partners of the “EU for Municipalities” project.

In the opening speech of this ceremony, the head of the Good Governance, Justice and Law Enforcement Sector at the EU Delegation in Albania, Mrs. Lenka Vitkova emphasized the increase in EU assistance to the local government in Albania, which comes as a need to strengthen the capacities of the municipalities since they are the most important actors in the European integration process.

“The role of local government units for the European integration process remains important since 3/4 of European legislation is implemented at the local level. The EU has increased financial assistance to 34 million euros for Albanian municipalities and has expanded the range of this assistance for municipalities. At this stage, it is very important

for us to deal with the development of capacities, so that the municipalities are able to develop and implement projects to contribute to the European integration process” - said, among other things, Mrs. Vitkova.

10% of the value of the grants for the winning projects also comes from the central government through co-financing. The General Director of the Agency for the Support of Local Self-Government, Mr. Enea Hoti, in his speech, guaranteed that the government is ready to allocate income to all the winning municipalities in this call, as well as very soon to the winning municipalities in the second call.

Present at this ceremony Mr. Kelmend Zajazi, the head of NALAS, the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of Southeast Europe, appreciated the contribution of the EU to support the “EU for Municipalities” grant scheme as a pioneering project of the Delegation of the European Union in Albania.

“We are here to create a new trend that, together with the associations of municipalities and the EU delegation, create programs and other instruments for the improvement and modernization of local services, this is what citizens and young people expect. The implementation of projects from such programs is of multiple importance and especially for the countries that we are asking to become part of the EU, since they do not need to start from scratch, but prepare from now on, just like other EU countries.” - declared Zajazi.



Award ceremony for the winning municipalities from the second call

Providing quality services to citizens at the local level is a challenge and a priority for the municipalities in the country. In the conditions when the powers and functions of the municipalities in relation to the citizens have increased and the demands for institutional strengthening increase with the opening of negotiations for Albania's membership in the European Union from July of this year, the efficiency and development of the municipalities takes on a greater weight.

In this context, and following the support for the local government, the #EU4Municipalities program announced today the 13 winning municipalities of the second call grants during a ceremony held in the Lushnje Municipality.

The head of the Delegation of the European Union in Tirana, Ambassador Christiane Hohmann, asked the mayors present at the ceremony to become the voice of the citizens, while she reiterated the key role of the local government in the country's EU membership. This, bearing in mind that about 70% of the approximation of the EU legal framework in Albania must be implemented at the local level.

The director of the #EU for Municipalities program, Mr. Elton Stafa, said that in order to have as many such appeals and beneficiaries as possible, work should be done to increase the capacities of the municipalities.

Beneficiaries of the grant for a total of 600 thousand euros are the municipalities of Lushnja, Skrapar, Patos, Kucova, Kamza, Klos, Kavaja, Tropoja, Rrogozhina, Mirdita, Tirana, Lezha and Fushë-Arrëz.







projects **2022**





WASTE2ENERGY

From Waste to Energy for the Cement Industry in the Western Balkans'

Period of Implementation: 01/03/2020 - 31/12/2022

Donor: German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

Fund: EUR 365,120.00

Implemented by: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Implementing partners: Antea Cement Sh.a, Cementarnica USJE AD, Titan Cementara Kosjeric doo, Co-Plan Institute for Habitat Development, AMU Albanian Manufacturers Union, REC North Macedonia, RDA Zlatibor. Implemented in: Albania, North Macedonia and Serbia

The project '**From Waste to Energy for the Cement Industry in the Western Balkans**' has as its main objective the establishment of preconditions for the use of urban, industrial waste and scrap tires for the production of alternative fuels, thus replacing fossil fuels for cement production in the domestic cement industry in Albania, North Macedonia and Serbia. Through the project, it is intended to identify the potential of using different types of waste in cement kilns, knowing the fact that the use of waste as an alternative fuel for co-combustion is a known process to provide sustainable solutions for reducing currents different types of waste and meanwhile the reduction of fossil fuels used for energy production in the cement industry. This project was implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and Implementing Partners : Antea Cement Sh.a, Cementarnica USJE AD, Titan Cementara Kosjeric doo, Co-Plan Institute for Habitat Development, AMU Albanian Manufacturers Union, REC North Macedonia, and RDA Zlatibor.

During the implementation of the project in Albania, North Macedonia and Serbia, several results were achieved, we highlight:

- Evaluation of the production and use potential of RDF (Rejected Fuel)/SRF (Solid Recovered Fuel) in the cement industry;
- Improving the legal framework for the co-processing of waste as an alternative fuel at the local and national level by creating an open dialogue and relationship of trust with the interested parties;
- Increasing public awareness of the benefits of waste as an alternative fuel;
- Analysis of the creation and use of the collection network for different waste streams.

Also, during the project, a number of important documents were drawn up, where we single out:

- Market Study on the Quality and Quantity of Waste as well as the Potentials for the possibility of production of Rejected Fuels in the Republic of Albania

- Positioning Letter for the Improvement of the Legal Framework for the Co-processing of Waste as an Alternative Fuel at the local and national level in the Republic of Albania
- Analysis of Local Waste Needs and infrastructure in relation to municipal waste co-processing
- Feasibility Study for Production of Alternative Fuels in Bushati Landfill, Albania



waste 2 energy

FEASIBILITY STUDY STUDY FOR THE PRODUCTION OF
ALTERNATIVE FUEL AT BUSHATI LANDFILL, ALBANIA

**HOW CAN
WASTE BE USED
TO PRODUCE
ALTERNATIVE
FUELS?**



“Investments in the environment, strategic investments for the economy, well-being and sustainable future” - Student conference

On the occasion of “Earth Day”, a student conference was organized with the theme “Investments in the environment, strategic investments for the economy, well-being and sustainable future”. This activity brought together public and private educational institutions from Polis University (Tirana), University of Prizren ‘Ukshin Hoti’, and University ‘Aleksandër Xhuvani’ (Elbasan). During the conference, the potential of alternative fuels in the cement industry was discussed, as well as the possible involvement of universities in studies for implementation in our country.

Partnerships for the review of Local Urban Waste Management Plans

During the months of June-August 2022, we worked with the Municipalities of Mat, Kurbin, Shkodër, Krujë, Durrës and Kukës for the completion of data and, as the case may be, the revision of the Local Urban Waste Management Plans. Through the work of the project, it was possible to include in a part of these plans the concept of alternative fuels, the process of co-processing of waste as well as their possible financial and environmental benefits.

The involvement of municipalities in the process and the suggested changes have been formalized with an Agreement. In the Mat municipality, the presentation of the changes made before the Municipal Council was carried out, which approved the relevant changes.

Meetings with Civil Society Organizations, Media and Community

Organizations engaged in environmental and waste management issues were introduced to the objectives and findings of the project based

on the Market Study and were introduced to new technologies that affect the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, reducing the amount of waste deposited in landfills as well as reducing the amount of fossil fuels used in industry.

Consultative meetings were also held with journalists and representatives of the local media, as well as with local communities from the area of Thumana. In these meetings, information was presented about alternative fuels RDF and SRF. The process in which the rejected waste goes into the production of alternative fuel according to the relevant qualities and the ways of using this fuel in the combustion process in the cement industry was schematically reflected.

Takimi i 3-të i Grupit Kombëtar të Punës dhe Prezantimi i Rezultateve Finale të Projektit

The final meeting of the project “From Waste to Energy for the Cement Industry in the Western Balkans” took place in December, near the offices of GIZ Albania. This meeting was attended by representatives of the German Agency for International Cooperation GIZ GmbH, representatives of the municipalities engaged in this study, representatives of the Bushati landfill management company, representatives of TITAN Antea Cement sh.a, Co-PLAN Institute for Habitat Development, the Union of Albanian Producers (AMU) and representatives of civil society organizations, experts in the field, etc.

The main topics of discussion during this final meeting were the findings from the Market Study, the potential for the production of alternative fuels RDF/SRF in the study area, the legislation in force and approximation with that of the EU, proposals for completing the necessary legal framework, findings from the feasibility study (Best Possible BAT Techniques and cost-benefit analysis), community perception regarding alternative fuels and their use in cement plants.

Përmirësimi i infrastrukturës
për këmbësorët dhe biçikletat në fshatin Ishull Lehtë,
mbështetur nga Qeveria Zvicerane dhe Austriake

Dhjetor 2022

Projekt nga:



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun Svizra

Agenzia Zvicerane për Zhvillim
dhe Bashkëpunim SDC

Austrian
Development
Agency

RDPA

Regional Development Program Albania IV

Implementation period: April 2019 - April 2023

Donor: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

Fund: 7.575.000,00 CHF

Implemented by: ECORYS NL dhe Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development

Implemented in: Albania

The Regional Development Program Albania IV (RDPA) is a project and an ongoing joint effort to support the reform of Regional Development in Albania of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), implemented in partnership with the Albanian Government.

The main goal of the RDPA program is to reduce inequalities in Albania by supporting the development of strong regions, so that they advance their potentials and provide better social and economic conditions for their citizens. Given that an effective regional policy for Albania is vital, both to address historical regional inequalities and to respond to the challenges of the modern knowledge economy, the RDPA phase IV continues to support the Albanian Government in creating and successful implementation of regional policies. In this context, the program also aims to increase regional cohesion, reduce disparities in resource use, productivity and social/environmental standards. This will increase the effectiveness of management and create an inclusive society with higher skills and better jobs for women and men.

The main results expected from phase a IV-rt of the RDPA can be summarized as follows:

1. The central government can define, coordinate and successfully implement the institutional and legal framework for Regional Development.
2. The Albanian Development Fund as the managing authority and other competent institutions and bodies for regional development, can prepare and approve the program framework for the future use of EU funds and effectively and strategically use the increase of funds for the development of regions through the partnership approach.
3. Socio-economic conditions for Albanian citizens are improved through the implementation of regional development projects that reflect regional needs and priorities.

**HOW CAN
COOPERATION
BETWEEN THE PUBLIC,
PRIVATE AND NON-
PROFIT SECTORS
BE FOSTERED FOR
SUSTAINABLE
REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT?**



Capacity Building for Local Government – an ongoing set of trainings

During the year 2022, two trainings on the topic “Feasibility and cost-benefit analysis” and “Practical guide for procurement procedures, granting of grants and contracts for external action of the European Union (PRAG)” were successfully carried out in the 4 Regions of country, with the participation of technical staff from 61 Municipalities. In order to more efficiently support the knowledge within the institutions and stakeholders of Albania, both training curricula were specifically delivered in a Training of Trainers seminar. The trainings were carried out within the framework of the cooperation agreement between the Rural Development Agency and The Albanian School of Public Administration-ASPA (2021) for the training of local government institutions with a focus mainly on strengthening the technical staff of municipal directorates which deal directly with the preparation and management of projects financed by various donors.

During the period April - September 2022, Technical Assistance for the Albanian Government was successfully finalized in Chapter 22 - “Regional Policy and Coordination of structural instruments” is one of the main chapters of the Acquis. The chapter becomes even more important given that (future) Member States will need to have an institutional framework and adequate administrative capacity to ensure programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in a sound and cost-effective manner. management and management and financial control.

The Deputy Minister of the Interior in Albania has been appointed as the national coordinator for Chapter 22 and the Local Government Support Agency (ASLG) has been asked to play the role of technical secretariat in this process. Meanwhile, since the Government of Albania is being supported by the Swiss and Austrian governments, through the Regional Development





Program in Albania (RDPA) – and because one of the main objectives of the RDPA is to support a reform in line with the best practices of EU and EU Cohesion Policy – The Deputy Minister of Interior and the director of ASLG requested the support of RDA for the process of preparatory work for Chapter 22.

RDPA Grants Scheme – Inauguration Activities

On July 15, 2021, the RDPA launched the Second Grant Scheme aimed at all the country's municipalities. The Grant Scheme was prepared in accordance with the "Program for the Integrated and Sustainable Development of 100+ Villages of Albania 2022-2026" implemented by the Albanian Development Fund, as the objectives of the "100 villages" program contribute to the objectives of the RDPA. The scope and nature of the second Regional Development and Cohesion Grants Scheme focused on the dimensions of regional development and encouraging institutions and partners to collaborate through inter-municipal projects and/or projects with a clear regional development impact. The Grant Scheme awarded 10 projects from 10 municipalities (Belsh, Kolonje, Gjirokastër, Berat, Malësi e Madhe, Selenica, Dibër, Librazhd, Kukës, Lezhë), with a total grant amount of 158,092,012 ALL. After the implementation of the supported projects, during the months of July - December 2022, a series of inaugural activities took place in the squares of each municipality, with the participation of the Ambassador of Switzerland and the Ambassador of Austria, mayors of municipalities, ADF, project staff and citizens.

The background of the image features two flags: the European Union flag on the left, characterized by a blue field with twelve yellow stars arranged in a circle, and the Albanian flag on the right, featuring a red field with a black double-headed eagle. The flags are slightly wrinkled and overlap each other.

ideAL

Dialogue for Inclusive Policy Development Evidence-Based in Albania

Implementation period: 01/06/2020 - 07/06/2023

Donor: European Union

Fund: 1,000,000 EUR

Implemented by: Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development and European Policy Center (EPC)

Implemented in: Albania

The project **“Dialogue for the development of comprehensive policies based on evidence in Albania”** (referred to as IdeAL) successfully completed its third year of implementation. The overall objective of IdeAL is to contribute to the improvement of public policy dialogue in Albania by strengthening policy dialogue in reform processes and facilitating engagement and dialogue between central and local state institutions and non-state actors. In more specific terms, the project aims to (i) Facilitate interaction and cooperation between state actors and non-state actors (civil society, research groups, social partners, media, researchers, etc.) and support structured and evidence-based policy dialogue facts. in the reform processes; (ii) Create a platform for capacity development to support non-state actors in areas related to public policy formulation, policy budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; (iii) To create a communication and learning platform on policy dialogue, to promote policy-making efforts, to promote results, good practices, lessons learned and continuous improvement. An important element of the project is that of providing technical and financial support to local non-state actors – including individuals or organizations. This support was an essential part of capacity building and ensuring the exchange and networking of knowledge between different actors. Some of the main achievements of the project in these three years can be summarized as follows:

- At least 21 policy-influential initiatives were identified and supported in the process of pushing forward meaningful proposals aimed at introducing policy changes or improvements across a spectrum of topics that affect different aspects of our local reality and the wider policy-making picture at a central level.
- In many cases, such proposals have been approved by the relevant institutions, as was the case in a number of sectors, including:
 - ‘Proposals on Chronic Disease Management Protocols in Emergencies’ presented by Together for Life;
 - Proposals for a number of aspects within the tourism sectors, including: Measures to curb informality among the tour guide community; Proposals for the inclusion

- of DMOs and relevant provisions in the current Law on Tourism; proposals for the introduction of certified standards in the hotel sector in Albania; etc.
 - Proposal for the prevention of the burning of agricultural land - improvements to the current legislation resulting in an amended law, as proposed by the Illyrian Association, currently awaiting approval in the Assembly; etc.
 - Proposal for lowering the retirement age of a certain social group of the Roma community that benefits from a social pension, proposed by the New Center in cooperation with two other local organizations;
- Numerous dialogues (at least 42) have been initiated and advanced at the local or national level, in the form of round tables, discussion tables, national forums, etc.;
 - Several exchange opportunities were offered to the most engaged sub-grantee organizations and individuals, reaching over 50% of sub-grantee organizations and individuals supported. Such exchange visits were in the form of structured exchanges and dialogue opportunities with policy makers at the EU level, in Brussels, or other member countries of interest, depending on the focus of the initiative of particular organizations or individuals;
 - Several training sessions have been organized by professionals with experience in the issues of policy influence, advocacy, communication for influence, policy influence and ethics, etc.;
 - Developed a solid collection of resources, be it in the form of manuals, case study clips or policy documents which are distributed through the dedicated platform www.ide-al.org.
 - In accordance with a long tradition, Co-PLAN has continued to provide its written contribution to the drafting process of the EU country progress report for Albania. Similarly, it has encouraged the community of organizations and individuals it supported to adopt similar practices by providing input, especially when specifically requested by the authorities.



**HOW CAN THE ROLE
AND SUBSTANTIVE
CONTRIBUTION OF
CIVIL SOCIETY BE
FACTORED INTO
POLICY-MAKING?**

Advocacy and awareness of climate change and a green deal for Albania - National Forum

One of the organizations supported through the project “Dialogue for the development of comprehensive policies in Albania-ideAL”, was the Institute of Environmental Policies with the project “Advocacy and awareness of climate change and a green agreement for Albania”. As part of the planned activities, the Environmental Policy Institute presented the findings in a national forum with the participation of decision-makers at the central and local level as well as civil society participants. The findings evidenced a conflict of competences between local and central institutions for taking measures against climate change on the one hand, and a lack of applicability of national strategic documents on climate change on the other hand, which at the same time are barriers to the integration of Albania in the EU. Despite the challenges at the governance level, the community and businesses expressed their willingness to contribute - stakeholders even more exposed to climate change.

Public Administration Reform: How to increase the efficiency of the structural reform - National Forum

Co-PLAN, in cooperation with the Institute of Public and Legal Studies, developed the National Forum: “Public Administration Reform: How to increase the efficiency of the structural reform”.

At the center of the discussion was the evaluation of the progress of the structural reform in the Ministry of Tourism and Environment as well as in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, two subjects of study within the initiative of #ISPL supported by #ideAL.

During it, the findings of this study report, undertaken during the year 2021, were presented, as well as other possible proposals and suggestions on the efficiency of this reform were discussed.

Present in this activity were Mrs. Albana Koçiu, representative of the Department of Public Administration, representatives of civil society organizations, experts in the field and other interest groups.

The structural reform, started in 2017, aims to strengthen the policy-making function in line ministries, which was reorganized into three directorates: policy development, program development and project conceptualization/feasibility.

The project “Dialogue for comprehensive policy development in Albania-ideAL” is implemented by Co-PLAN, the Institute for Habitat Development and the European Policy Center (EPC, Belgium) with the financial support of the European Union.



FINANCATVENDORE.AL

Local Public Finances

Implementation period: 07/01/2019 – 06/30/2023

Donor: Supported by LevizAlbania, a project of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, SDC.

Fund: CHF 7,575,000.00

Implemented by: Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development

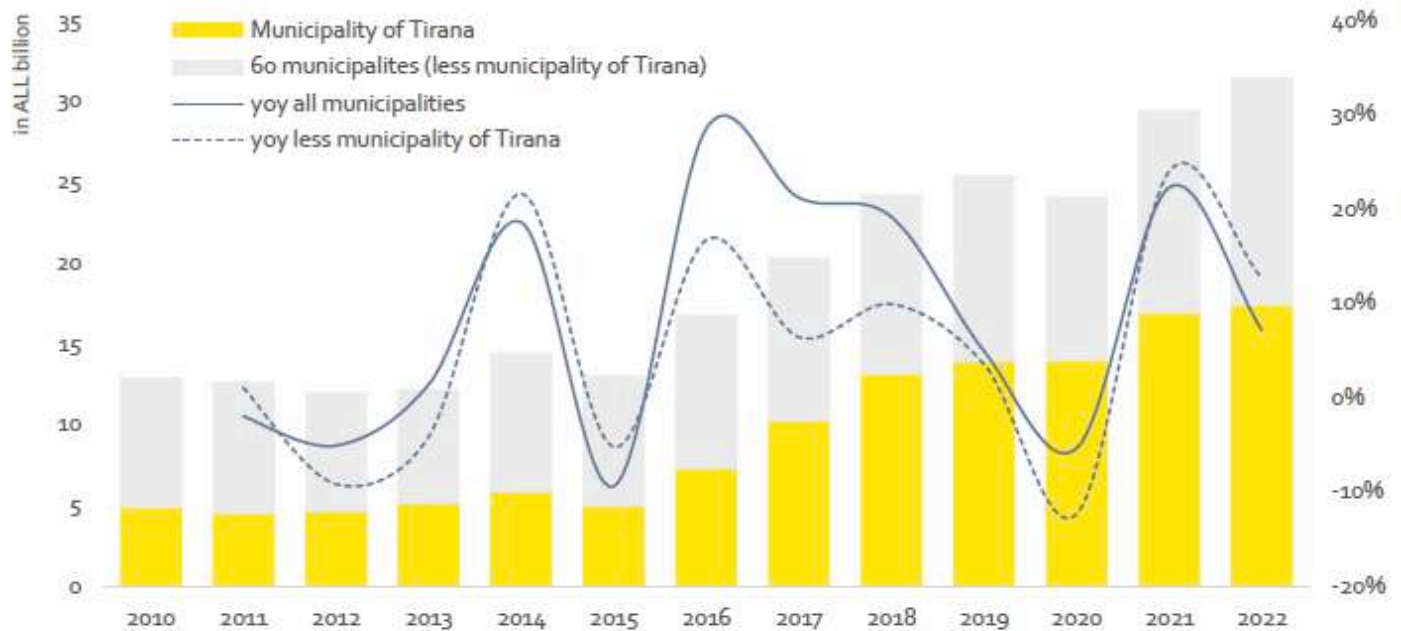
Implemented in: Albania

The main objective of the project is to provide a complete overview of the local public finances of the 61 municipalities in Albania in a periodic, structured and internationally comparable manner. The local finance platform www.financatvendore.al provides detailed data (by item and municipality level), providing a time series for local finance since 2010. Quarterly analytical reports and thematic articles inform on developments in income and expenditure, achievements and challenges faced by municipalities in exercising the functions and powers defined by the regulatory framework in force.

Specific objectives:

- To provide a reliable, methodologically sound source of information for all interested parties, including municipalities, CSOs, citizens, academia, experts, media, etc., in order to better plan the use of financial resources and enabling detailed research on local government issues.
- Provide local voters with an instrument to influence municipal decisions on how public money is used against community priorities.
- To evaluate the perception of citizens about the local task, what affects the decision to pay or not to pay taxes, the perception about the local services offered and the willingness to pay for improved services. Acquaintance with the perception of citizens on taxation and local public services, influencing factors and challenges to increase the payment of local taxes, enable the improvement of the system from the citizen's point of view.

**LOCAL PUBLIC
FINANCES -
HOW WAS THE
PERFORMANCE OF
MUNICIPALITIES
IN THE COUNTRY
DURING 2022?**



FINANCATVENDORE.AL

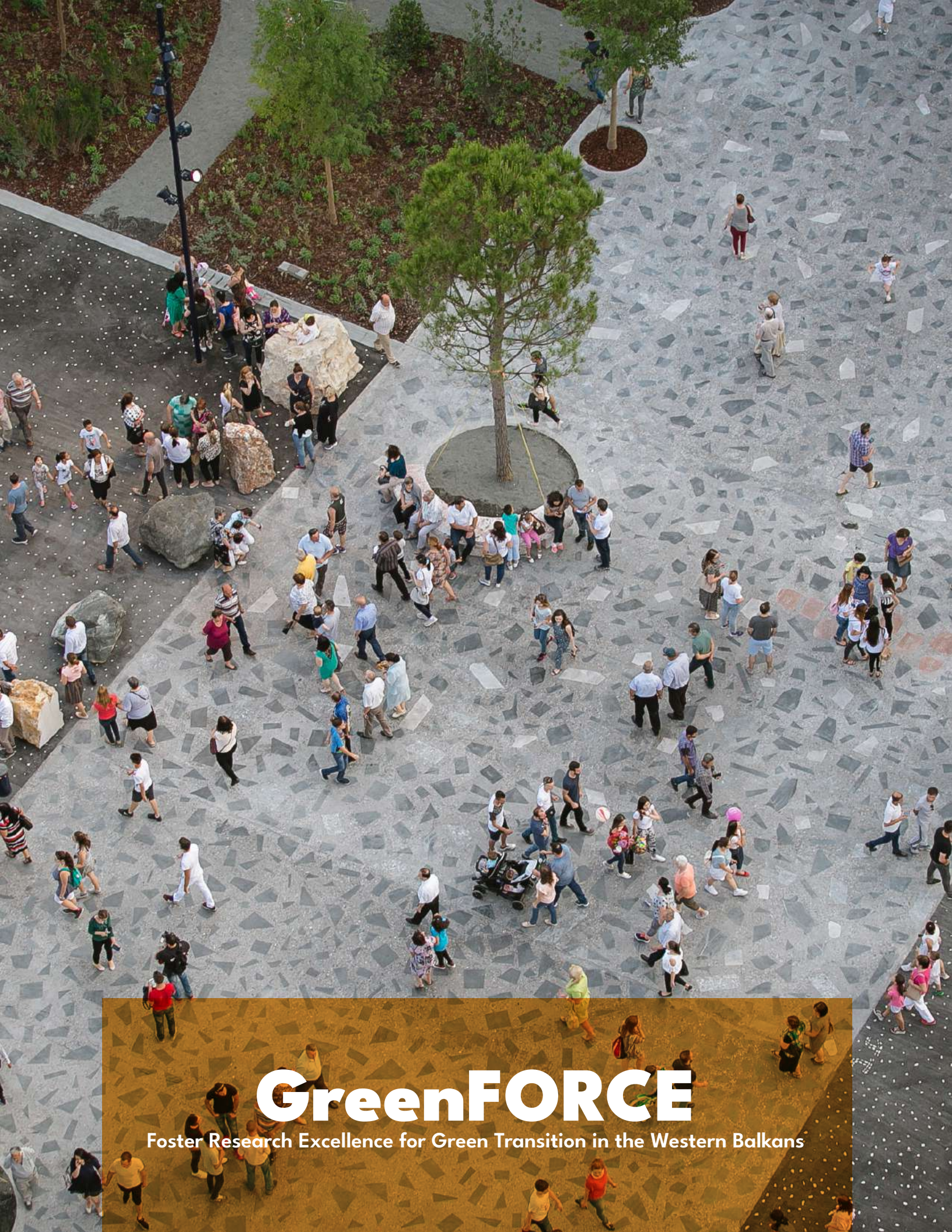
+QUARTERS OF DATA FOR 61 MUNICIPALITIES
(SINCE 2010)

+30 LOCAL PUBLIC FINANCE REPORTS

61 MUNICIPAL PROFILES

21,157 USERS (JANUARY 2023)

177,773 PAGE VISITS (JANUARY 2023)



GreenFORCE

Foster Research Excellence for Green Transition in the Western Balkans

Periodha e Implementimit: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2025

Donor: European Research Executive Agency (REA)

Fund: 1 499 305.00 EUR

Implemented by: Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development, University of Belgrade – Faculty of Geography (UB-GEF), Center for Economic Analysis Association (CEA) Nordregio, Politecnico di Torino (POLITO), POLIS University

Implemented in: Western Balkans

GreenFORCE - Foster Research Excellence for Green Transition in the Western Balkans, is a Horizon project, funded by the European Research Executive Agency (EREA), which started implementation in July 2022.

The coordinating partner of the project is Co-PLAN, the Institute for Habitat Development in Albania and the two regional partners are the University of Belgrade – Faculty of Geography (UB-GEF) in Serbia and the Center for Economic Analysis Association (CEA) in North Macedonia. Nordregio, a pan-Nordic research organization located in Sweden, together with Politecnico di Torino (POLITO), Italy are the main EU research institutions, while POLIS University in Albania is the associate partner of Co-PLAN.

GreenFORCE aims to promote excellence in scientific research and innovation of Co-PLAN, CEA and UB-GEF, along the Green Transition of the Western Balkans, as a means to improve their research profile, strengthening the research and management capacities of their staff and contributing to the convergence between Western Balkan and EU research capacities, as well as to wider policy initiatives for the Western Balkan region.

The ambition of this project is to enable the transition from individual learning to institutional learning, ensuring that research and management practices are institutionalized within the recipient organizations. GreenFORCE will contribute to “Improving access to excellence” by enabling avenues of collaboration, exchange, co-design, co-creation with academia, civil society and policy makers at the regional level.

**HOW TO FOSTER
EXCELLENCE IN
WESTERN BALKANS
GREEN TRANSITION
SCIENTIFIC
RESEARCH THROUGH
A TWINNING
PARTNERSHIP
AMONG EU AND WB
ORGANISATIONS?**

Kick-Off of the GreenFORCE project

On July 4, 2022, the project partners officially launched the GreenFORCE project with a virtual event that gathered all partners and aims to initiate the project.

The event served to approve the consortium agreement, define ethical and IPR responsibilities, discuss and agree on the project approach, activities and tasks for each of the work packages, preparation of project outputs and coordination between project partners .

Preparation of the Scientific Research Publication Plan and the Joint Strategic Research Agenda

The objective of the Scientific Research Publication Plan is to organize and monitor the scientific production created by the project ensuring the achievements identified in the proposal.

The Joint Strategic Research Agenda is a long-term joint research agenda for twinning organizations with a particular focus on monitoring and planning sustainable transitions at local territorial levels in the Western Balkans.

These are two essential documents of the project which are under preparation, through co-design workshops, discussions and seminars as well as the involvement of all partners. So far, two workshops have been held in a hybrid format to further the work on these documents.

Co-Design Workshop Contributing to the Conceptualization of Just Green Transition in the Western Balkans

Studying the effects and costs of the green transition in the Western Balkans is one of the main goals of the GreenFORCE project. In this framework, two co-design workshops were organized on November 8 and 22, 2022 to investigate the readiness/potential of societal actors throughout the green transition process and to provide a framework for continuous monitoring of impacts and costs.

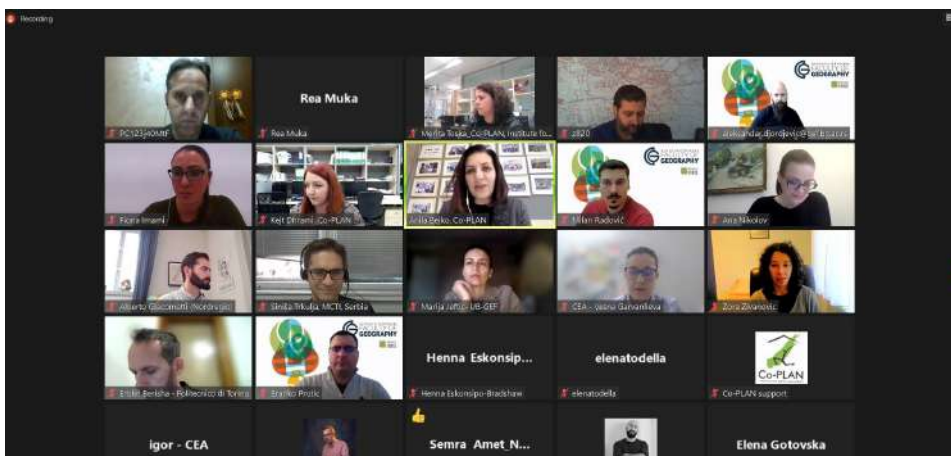
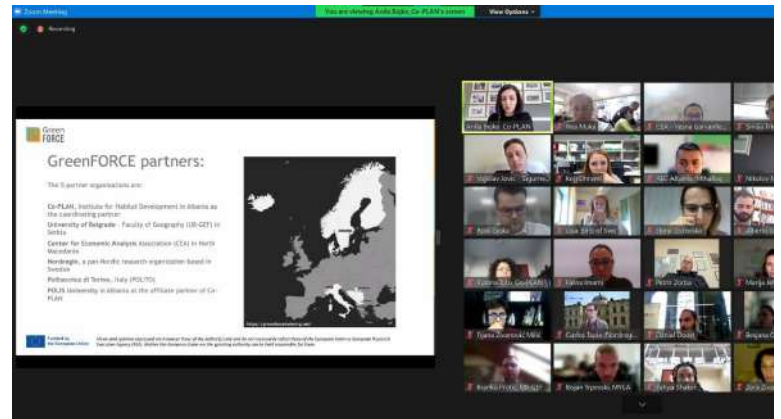
The main objective of the co-design workshops was to support the conceptualization of the Green Transition in the Western Balkans, from a political, socio-economic, spatial, scientific and technological point of view.

The first co-design workshop provided information and expertise about the context, challenges and how regional stakeholders address issues related to the fate of policies related to the green transition in the Western Balkans.

The aim of the second co-design workshop was to stimulate dialogue on green transition research using three case studies from Serbia, North Macedonia and Albania as a starting point.

The main findings from these workshops contributed to the creation of the document 'Conceptualizing the Green Transition in the Western Balkans' (D4.1), which provides an overview of how to conceptualize the Green Transition in the Western Balkans, particularly in relation to the preparatory phase, the role of different social actors, their cooperation to achieve ambitions and finally the impacts (costs and benefits) that transition can have in society.

Two more co-design workshops will be held, which will focus on discussing a framework for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of the green transition in the Western Balkans, and are expected to be organized during 2024.







SAIL

Sparking Activism Initiatives Locally

Implementation period: 07/2020 - 12/2021

Donor: Office of Public Relations, American Embassy in Tirana

Fund: USD 180,000

Implemented by: Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development

Implemented in: Albania

SAIL builds on the tradition of the ‘Kindle Advocacy’ project (2016) and supports young activists and civil society organizations to play a more active role in key processes of raising, or influencing urgent issues related to governance, democracy, city building, rights and similar issues that shape and affect the lives of citizens in urban and rural areas.

The project aims to:

1. Strengthening the internal capacities of local CSOs and young activists to monitor, analyze and take concrete steps/actions related to policy making in policy areas related to governance, democracy, city building, rights, etc. .
2. Promoting and spreading the culture of activism and advocacy by facilitating interaction and cooperation between activists, civil society organizations, media, researchers, etc.) and supports structured and evidence-based policy dialogue on urgent issues and important processes of democracy and governance.

The project aims to cultivate and increase the internal capacities of local civil society organizations and young activists to monitor, analyze and take concrete steps/actions through a dedicated program for their training known as #spark. Participants in the program are offered opportunities for capacity development and advocacy experience. The dedicated team of mentors supports each participant in the #spark program to take a series of concrete steps to realize their initiative.

**HOW CAN CIVIC
ENGAGEMENT BE
INCREASED AT THE
LOCAL LEVEL?**



The #spark 2022 program

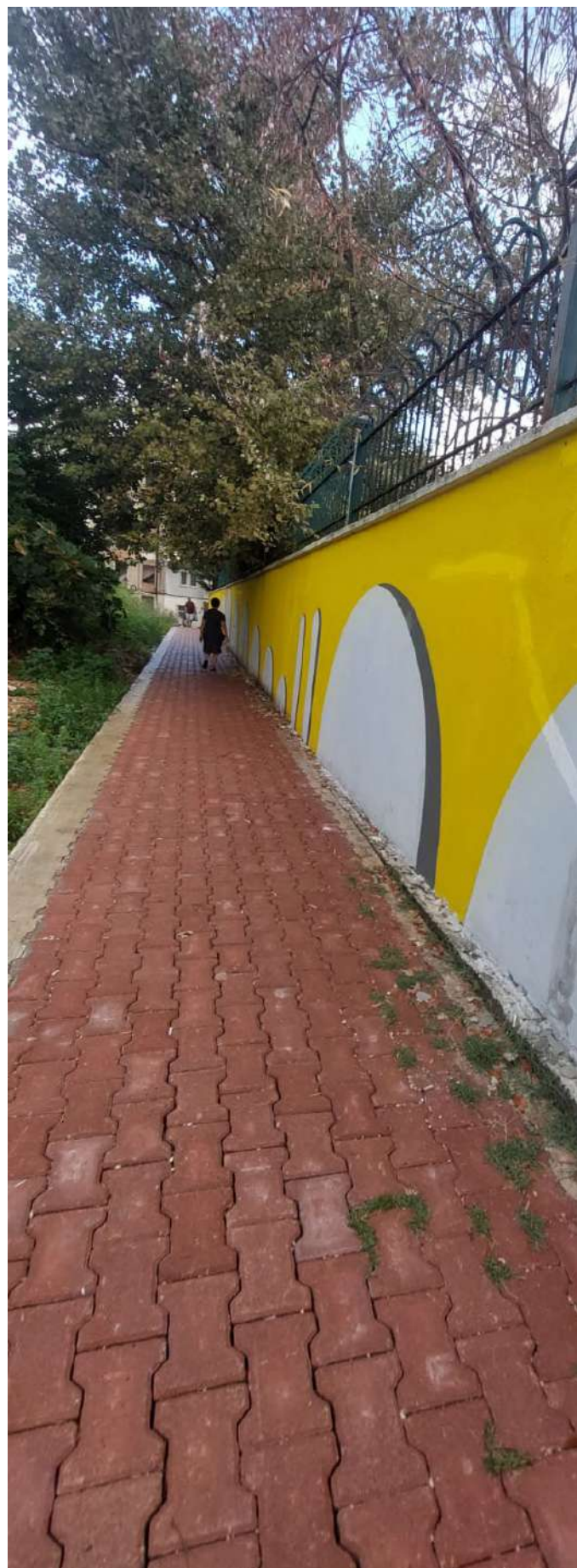
In total, fifteen (15) activists and/or groups in twelve (12) different cities of the country have successfully completed the #spark program, achieving concrete changes.

Some of the initiatives have designed and published specific advocacy products; such as policy documents, articles and campaigns.

About twenty (20) activities have been organized by local activists, using the knowledge gained throughout the program, inspired by the training process and also supported by mentors.

With the support of SAIL 2, the participants were able to access the national media and expose their initiatives; some of them have been invited to popular television morning shows (initiatives from CYC Gjirokastra, Sashen Rexhepaj, Antigoni Bullari), while almost all initiatives have been documented in the form of short presentation videos about their work and achievements. Also, #sparks are continuously promoted on official social media channels and Co-PLAN's official social media page.

2022 also marked the 5th anniversary of National Activism Day (#NAD), an accomplished tradition celebrated “with concrete actions” across the country. Over twenty (20) organizations and activists have participated in NAD 2022. Some of these organizations participated in numerous activism activities of different natures in the village of Ferraj, outside Tirana, while activists and organizations in different parts of the country organized activities and reflected them online to join the program of NAD2022.





Green -AL

Empowerment of Civil Society Organizations
for environmental protection in Albania

Implementation period: Swedish Government Agency for Cooperation and Development (SIDA).

Fund: EUR 1,223,100

Implemented by: Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development, CISP, Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli COSV, Coordinamento delle Organizzazioni per il Servizio Volontario VIS Albania, Volontariato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo

Implemented in: Albania

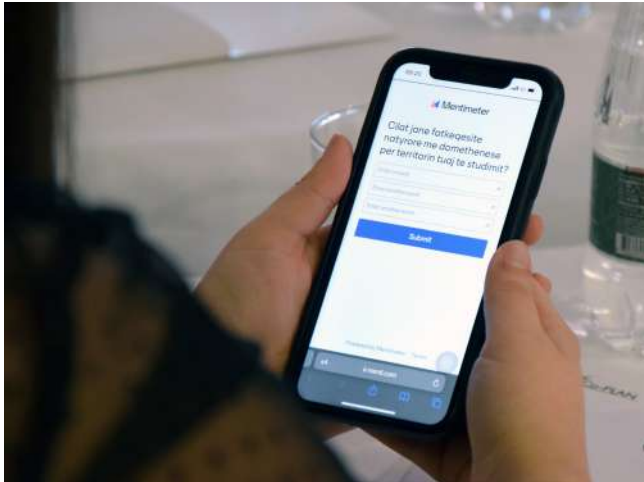
Green-AL “Empowerment of Civil Society Organizations for environmental protection in Albania” is funded by the Swedish Governmental Agency for Cooperation and Development (SIDA) and implemented by Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development as a leading partner, in cooperation with CISP organizations Sviluppo dei Popoli, VIS Albania, and COSV – Cooperazione per lo Sviluppo.

This project aims to contribute to the improvement and strengthening of environmental organizations and influence the promotion of cooperation between civil society actors, public authorities and the private sector to advocate and address environmental issues in Albania.

Green-AL also addresses the challenges and limitations of local environmental CSOs related to improving their organizational sustainability and professionalism, increasing the rate of absorption and management of grants from foreign donors, improving the skills to engage in effective partnerships and their engagement in lobbying and advocacy in order to influence decision-making within the environmental sphere. The Green-AL project will address these needs through:

- (a) Raising the capacities of CSOs to make them more professional and sustainable;
- (b) Awarding and implementation of grants;
- (c) Advocacy activities and the preparation of policy documents, participation in round tables and seminars to influence policy making;
- (d) A series of activities to promote cooperation and raise awareness through multimedia products (documentaries, clips and infographics), publications, public events, etc.

**HOW CAN THE
INFLUENCE OF
ORGANIZATIONS
INCREASE IN POLICY-
MAKING PROCESSES
IN THE FIELD OF THE
ENVIRONMENT?**



The Gender perspective in Civil Society Organizations

The Co-PLAN team, Institute for Habitat Development in collaboration with expert Rudina Pasholli, organized two training sessions in the city of Kukes, on December 12 and 14, 2022, with the theme “Gender perspective in Civil Society Organizations”, as part of #GreenAL project incubation process. The training in question was carried out for all civil society organizations operating in the north-eastern region, as well as individuals and free professionals.

The focus of the training was familiarization with the basic concepts of gender equality in relation to the environment, ways of including the gender element in projects, as well as gender roles and dynamics. Through a process of interaction and practical exercises, participants discussed and exchanged thoughts and views on gender equality.

Thematic and financial support of civil society organizations through the grant scheme

Throughout 2022, a total of 31 projects were selected for financial support through two calls for project proposals focusing on initiatives and partnerships as well as networking, advocacy and influencing policy making. Over 60 organizations benefited from the support that will be provided through capacity building training and financial support.







WBC-RRI.NET

Developing Responsible Research and Innovation in
Western Balkan Countries: Improving Self-Sustainable Research
and Innovation Ecosystems

Implementation period: March 2021 - March 2024

Donor: European Union, H2020-SwafS

Fund: 197,000 EUR

Implemented by: University of Novi Sad (Lead Partner); University of Banja Luka; Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development; Vojvodina ICT Cluster; South-East European Research Centre; Center for Social Innovation; Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts; NCDIEL; European Science Foundation; Ministry of Tourism and Environment, Albania; The Association “Knowledge, Education and Science - ZONE”; Science Technology Park Montenegro; RTD HEALTH CLUSTER.

Implemented in: Kune-Vain-Tale Lagoon; Country of Montenegro; Autonomous Province of Vojvodina; Republic of Srpska; City of Skopje.

The overall goal of **WBC-RRI.NET** is to promote the implementation of the principles of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) at the territorial level in the Western Balkan Countries (WBCs), in order to promote the creation of a guiding governance framework for R&I (Research and Innovation), applicable at many levels. The approach is based on the reasoning that the concept of RRI, adapted mainly at the level of research institutions, can also be applied at the level of regional and territorial governance of research and innovation. The project approach addresses five different territories of the Western Balkans (4 ecosystems at the regional level and 1 ecosystem at the country level) and will activate the involvement of RRI in them. At the macro level, a number of RRI activities are being implemented throughout the project, raising an active dialogue in the WB macro-region and fostering understanding of all the pillars and principles of RRI under one framework holistic. These activities are associated with the development and implementation of the 5 ‘anchor’ initiatives of RRI. In Albania, the ‘anchor’ initiative “Citizen Science in the Kune-Vain Lagoon Wetland Ecosystem” targets two main keys of RRI, namely Public Participation combined with Governance, in the territory of Lezha District. The main focus of this initiative in the Kune-Vain Lagoon is ecosystem services, highlighting the low level of knowledge and mobilization of public and non-public actors towards environmental issues and the protection of similar ecosystems.

**WHAT ARE THE
PRINCIPLES OF
RESPONSIBLE
RESEARCH AND
INNOVATION?**



The first co-design workshop in Kune-Vain-Tale Lagoon

This co-design workshop brought together representatives from national and local actors to discuss the development scenario of the 'RRI' (Responsible Research and Innovation) mooring initiative in Albania, in the Kune-Vain-Tale Lagoon. The anchoring initiative aims to apply citizen science practices to the assessment of the ecosystem services of this protected area, in the context of increased vulnerability to climate change. The activity brought together 30 actors, mainly from the national, regional and local government; also, representatives from academic institutions; civil society organizations; and the private sector. The main objectives of this first workshop were:

- Identification and co-evaluation with actors of the problems and challenges of the sustainability of the Lagoon;
- Identification of aspects of key issues and priority ecosystem services to study in the Lagoon;
- Open discussion about the future of the Lagoon in the context of climate change;
- Voting and choosing the most suitable scenario for the future

The workshop ended with an open discussion, where participants voted on the most desirable scenario (Scenario 2: Resilient socio-ecological system) and the most realistic (Scenario 3: Disaster Preparedness) for the future. With this choice, the participants reaffirmed their role in the future as main actors in the lagoon; and their commitment to use and manage the lagoon as a common resource, collectively and in accordance with ethical environmental principles.

The second co-design workshop in Kune-Vain-Tale Lagoon

This activity focused on the co-creation of activities for the evaluation of ecosystem services in the lagoon, as part of the implementation of the vision of the future scenario for the year 2024. The activity gathered 33 actors from local and regional governments, civil society organizations focused on the issues and environmental protection, academic institutions and local businesses (fishermen and restaurant owners in the protected area) discussing the methodology to be used for the assessment of ecosystem services, based on the findings of the first workshop. The aim of the workshop was to agree on general methodologies for evaluating these services and how to channel data-based knowledge into policy-making. The workshop was organized in two sessions, where the first session addressed topics related to 'Creating knowledge on lagoon values and visioning the future', while the second session focused on the presentation and validation of the services to be designed and evaluated, including the relevant methodology to be applied. In conclusion, the ecosystem services that were identified as most important in the context of the Kune-Vain lagoon are: Providing fisheries; Purification of water from agricultural irrigation canals and sewage; Mitigation of coastal flooding and extreme tides; Carbon sequestration by soil and aquatic vegetation; Recreational and cultural services.

Piloting citizen science and other RRI practices in the Ecosystems of Albania, Workshop 3-7 October 2022 within the Architecture Weeks in Tirana, Going High! Pros and Cons of City Valorization

This workshop was organized and moderated by Dr. Kate Dhrami and MSc. Imeldi Sokoli. Also with the participation of Dr. Rudina Toto and Dr. Rodion Gjoka as guest presenter in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and Environment and supported by 10 experts from the Co-PLAN staff.

The purpose of the workshop was to pilot a citizen science process with environmental studies, planning and architecture students, simulating 2 roles in the process. First, they acted as science-involved citizens, piloting a process where they produced scientific knowledge through a mapping exercise. Second, the students acted as ‘citizen scientists’, involving the community in participatory processes aimed at the production of scientific knowledge. In this case, the students led the process following the principles of responsible research.

The citizen science approach is promoted as a combination of the main ‘dimensions’ of responsible research and innovation, otherwise known as RRI, implemented in the Kune-Vain Lagoon pilot area in Lezhë Municipality, under the umbrella of the Horizon project WBC-RRI.NET, implemented by Co-PLAN and the Ministry of Tourism and Environment. Students contributed to two of the components addressed by the project, which are coastal flood mitigation and tourism and recreational services.

The workshop had 30 participants and was organized in 3 main parts: the didactic/eco-design part; survey and experimental part; and the exposure part.

Realization of Carbon Sequestration Service Measurements in Kune-Vain Lagoon Pine Forest

Within the WBC-RRI.NET project, a field expedition was carried out for the carbon sequestration component. Students from Polis University, volunteers from ADZM, local environmental experts and Co-PLAN experts were involved in this activity. Following the principles of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI), the necessary field measurements were carried out to evaluate the carbon sequestration service of the Kune-Vain Lagoon pine forest. During this process, the involved parties not only helped to create a database for the vegetation component, but also learned how such measurements are made in practice. The knowledge acquired by the participants included: calculating the height of the tree in the field; calculation of tree diameter; the naming of different types of pines, both in Latin and in Albanian; assessment of the current state of the tree; tree location mapping; and scientific methodology for such field activities. Thanks to this activity, a database consisting of more than 700 trees was created, which was essential for the continuity of the assessment of this ecosystem service provided by the lagoon.



EU4M

BEpërBashkite

Implementation period: 1/06/ 2021 - 31/11/2023

Donor: European Delegation in Albania

Fund: EUR 2,647,236.75

Implemented by: NALAS, Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe, Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development, Eco Partners, Association for Local Autonomy and Albanian Association of Municipalities

Implemented in: Albania

“EUforMunicipalities” is a new project financed by the European Union. Its aim is to promote the development potential of municipalities and improve the socio-economic and environmental conditions of local communities in Albania. The project will address the main problems affecting the quality of life and economic prospects of local communities, equipping them with European standards.

The priority of the “EU for Municipalities” project is to support strategic processes that will allow local government actors to mobilize resources to implement their plans and strategies. “EU for Municipalities” will help to create a best practice for local governments and citizens to determine how to focus on the development of local communities and the direct role that the European Union can play in improving governance. and quality of life of citizens. Through the support of municipalities in Albania, the project will influence their development and growth in the process of integration into the European Union.

What does EUforMunicipalities (EU4M) do?

1. Addresses fundamental problems that affect the quality of life of local communities in Albania through investments in infrastructure and improvement of public services.
2. Contributes to the creation of a favorable environment for local economic development and social cohesion.
3. Supports municipalities’ capacities to raise funds to finance capital investment projects (as included in their strategic development plans).
4. Strengthens the human capacities of local governments to absorb and implement financial assistance from the EU and to increase the chances of success in other potential EU financial instruments.
5. Creates a “best practice” model for governments and citizens on how development priorities should be defined, coordinated and implemented.



Professional Fellows

GLC Professional Fellows Program – Empowering Citizen-Led Democracy

Implementation period: 11.03.2022 - 31.05.2024

Donor: Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, US Department of State

Fund: USD 36,540

Organized by: Great Lakes Consortium (GLC)

Implemented by: Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development, Pro European Network Center for Community Organizing (CCO), Centrul de Resource pentru participare publica, Civil College Foundation (CCF)

Implemented in: Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, USA

The **GLC Professional Fellows Program** is a two-way international exchange program focused on the areas of governance and civil society for mid-level leaders from five Eastern European countries.

It supports active citizens to be strong advocates for citizen-led democracy in Eastern Europe. The program does this by providing professional, digital and blended development for participants to develop skills for community organizing, citizen engagement, community-led development and advocacy.

European participants take part in a 6-week, all-expenses-paid trip to the USA. This trip includes a four-week internship in a professional environment (NGOs, public institutions, etc.).

Then, a two-week reciprocal visit brings American mentors to Europe to assist European colleagues in implementing their individual 6-9-month project plan and to provide joint consultations and workshops.

The goals of the program are:

- Provide community leaders with enhanced technical knowledge, leadership skills and professional connections to create positive change in their communities;
- Build lasting connections between young professionals from the six partner countries.

Co-PLAN has implemented this program in Albania since 2017. Until the end of 2022, there are two active grants from this program.

Five participants of the 2020 delegation went to the United States

Five participants, part of the 2020 delegations whose experience was postponed due to the pandemic, completed their 4-week internship in the United States. During the period May - June 2022, Klaudio Hyseni, Elona Xhepa, Kreshnik Hoxha and Ardit Vraniçi, carried out internships based in North Carolina, Massachusetts, New York, New Mexico and Ohio, as part of the PF21 grant. They then returned to Albania to implement their individual project plans.

Mentors from the United States visited Albania in September 2022

Three American mentors, Hector Vaca Cruz, Shazlina Corder and Blanca Surgeon, visited Albania to help the Albanian participants implement their individual project plans. During these visits, a workshop was held by two mentors (Shazlina Corder and Blanca Surgeon) on the topic of “Re-energizing our community’s economy” to share knowledge on economic development and what can be done to expand it from within our communities.

During their stay, a meeting was held between the American mentors and representatives of the American Embassy in Tirana, Albanian participants of the program and representatives of Co-PLAN.

Five Albanians went to the USA as part of the PF23 grant

Five Albanian participants of the program traveled to the USA for their personal experiences in the period September - November 2022, as part of the PF23 grant. Briseida Gjoza, Enkeleda Sako, Riges Beqiri, Anila Salianji and Livia Kreko developed their practice in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Ohio, North Carolina and New York. Upon their return, they began implementing individual project plans, which will be supported by the visits of their respective mentors from the USA, which will take place in 2023.

6th International Reunion of Program Alumni in Budapest and Pecs, Hungary

Nga data 16 - 20 Nëntor 2022, u mbajt ribashkimi i 6-të i alumni të programit në Budapest dhe Pecs, Hungari me 78 pjesëmarrës nga gjashtë vendet partnere të programit. Shqipëria u përfaqësua me 13 pjesëmarrës nga rrjeti i saj i alumni dhe 1 përfaqësues nga Co-PLAN.

Si një event me slognin ‘Sukseset dhe rruga përpara’ ai shërbeu për tre qëllime kryesore: 1) Grumbullimi i rrjetit të alumni për të mësuar nga njëri-tjetri; 2) Festimi i 10 vjetorit të Programit GLC të Professional Fellows; 3) Njohja e pjesëmarrësve më aktiv evropianë dhe amerikanë të programit.





Seasonal Workers

Better employment conditions for seasonal workers in Albania and Kosovo

Implementation period: September 2021 – December 2023

Donor: GIZ through the Open Program of Regional Funds for the Modernization of Municipal Services (ORFMMS)

Fund: 86'064.25 EU + 28'783 EUR (Grant D+ Kosovo)

Powered by: Co-PLAN, Habitat Development Institute, Democracy Plus (D+)

Implemented in: Albania and Kosovo

Seasonal employment is usually not recorded as a specific employment category and contributes largely to the informal economy. Seasonal workers are often not provided with adequate working conditions, and due to more difficult supervision and a weak bargaining position, they are often forced to accept poor employment conditions. Given the seasonal nature of work, employees are engaged on a casual or temporary basis, while a large number of employees are employed informally.

Given the context, the overall objective of the project is to increase the engagement of seasonal workers in the labor market and offer them better employment opportunities through an electronic registration system. Following the general objective, each partner country in the project has developed specific objectives, based on the specific context, and in the case of Albania, these objectives can be summarized as follows:

1. Facilitating and coordinating the processes of the National Working Group to improve policy making and the legal framework related to labor issues and especially those of seasonal workers in Albania by evaluating, reviewing and providing specific recommendations for the legislative framework;
2. Evaluation, improvement and adaptation of the existing electronic registration system in Albania for issues and requirements related to seasonal workers;
3. Improving engagement and access to the labor market of seasonal workers by creating new opportunities to find a better job;
4. Providing assistance and technical support in adopting a multi-level, multi-stakeholder approach in engaging, promoting and raising awareness during the implementation of the project for better distribution of the Seasonal Workers Policy and Implementation of the Reform in Albania;
5. Dissemination of information on the results and lessons learned for the employment model of seasonal workers in the region and the identification of the potential for reform in Kosovo;

6. Provision of targeted legal recommendations for policy makers to adapt the legal framework related to seasonal/temporary work and support during its implementation in Kosovo
7. Providing recommendations and proving the need for an adapted electronic registration system in Kosovo, to support the implementation of the new employment model for seasonal and temporary work.

Considering the need to reform seasonal employment both horizontally and vertically for the agriculture (Albania and Kosovo) and tourism (Albania) sectors, addressing at the same time the high level of informality in the sector(s), improving policies related to seasonal work. and the development of an IT registration system for seasonal workers would open up good opportunities for addressing this issue.

“

The labor market in Albania is regulated by law by the ‘Labor Code’, which does not recognize seasonal work as a specific form of employment, but sees it as part-time work.

”



**HOW CAN WE
ENSURE MORE
SUITABLE WORKING
CONDITIONS FOR
SEASONAL WORKERS
IN THE REGION?**

Kick off Meeting in Tirana - Towards the Reform of seasonal employment in Albania

One of the key activities organized during the month of September (2022), is the seminar “Better employment conditions for seasonal workers in Southeast Europe”, marking the start of the project. The seminar brought together partners and high-level representatives from Albanian government institutions as representatives from the Ministry of Economy and Finance in the role of the key counterpart institution, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Tourism, the General Directorate of Taxes, the Institute of Social Insurance, the National Agency of Employment and Skills, the National Agency of the Information Society and representatives from the Union of Albanian Producers. The participants in the meeting agreed on the necessity of solving the issues of seasonal employment in Albania and emphasized their convictions about the benefits that the reform will bring to the formalization of the agricultural and tourism sectors. On the other hand, a sectoral approach to seasonal workers is the first decisive step which will further the reformation in other sectors as well.

Meetings between institutional actors in Kosovo - Drafting of the National Analysis of Seasonal Employment

After a preparatory work for analyzing the situation with seasonal workers in Kosovo, on May 19, an initial meeting was held with all identified interested parties at GIZ premises in Kosovo.

Although the project was previously presented to all individually identified stakeholders, the purpose of the training was to bring all stakeholders together to:

- presented the project and its regional approach together with the presentation of excellent practices in the region, the current situation and the first findings about seasonal employment in Kosovo in the agricultural sector;
- discussed with the interested parties the importance of promoting the reform of seasonal workers in Kosovo and the challenges to the reform;
- direct the cooperation between institutional actors and the formation of the Working Group for the Country to follow the project;

The participants in the meeting agreed on the high importance of seasonal employment reforms in Kosovo, especially in the agricultural sector. This becomes especially important considering that Kosovo is currently working on new amendments to the Labor Law.



Civil Emergencies

Emergency communication project - Citizens' risk and safety awareness

Implementation period: 01.01.2021 - 19.07.2022

Donor: Friuli Venezia Giulia Region

Fund: EUR 50,000

Implemented by: Polytechnic of Pordenone SCPA, OGS - National Institute of Oceanography and Applied Geophysics, UNAGA - National Union of Journalists' Associations in Agriculture, Food, Environment, Territory, Forestry, Fisheries, and Renewable Energies

Implemented in: Albania

The project focused on creating requirements for an autonomous and sustainable management of emergencies related to natural hazards on a national scale in the future, towards harmonization with the standards set by the EU. The aim was to contribute to increasing the awareness and response of the population, promoting effective communication at different levels (from understanding the scientific aspects to managing fake news) that enables citizens to make informed decisions about protecting themselves and of others. The direct beneficiaries were communicators (eg, journalists and media officials in general), first responders and Albanian decision makers involved in emergency management, as well as citizens (students in particular) who engaged and used the products (training, public events distributed through videos and informative/educational materials) developed within the project.

The project aimed to achieve the following objectives:

- Preliminary context analysis regarding risk assessment and seismic and tsunami risk management;
- Determining the existing context and boundaries regarding the communication of natural hazards;
- Assessing the awareness of the population and specific groups (journalists, policy makers and first responders) regarding natural hazards, especially regarding seismic and tsunami hazards;
- Identification of basic needs;
- Defining a communication strategy and actions to be implemented before and during the emergency, taking into account the identified problems and the specific social and cultural context;
- Experimentation of innovative technologies for effective training / communication, accessible remotely and by a wide audience of users.

**HOW SHOULD
WE REPORT IN
TIMES OF CIVIL
EMERGENCIES?**



Training Course on Emergency Communication: Dealing with Earthquakes and Tsunami

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the insufficient capacity of society at all levels to respond to emergency situations, highlighting a low awareness of the risk and the lack of a clear and common institutional communication strategy. Inadequate, unclear or contradictory communication was one of the factors that sometimes jeopardized the effectiveness of the measures adopted even in countries where emergency management plans and initiatives exist.

The Emergency Communication Training School aimed to provide communication professionals, first responders, emergency management officials, and scientists in their role as “information providers” with the necessary background to lay the foundation for a common understanding of the phenomenon and for adequate communication of scientific information to the population. The opportunities offered by “Citizen Science”, namely the information provided by citizens in terms of improving risk assessment, were also investigated. During the training school, a specific module addressed the use of virtual reality as a media communication tool for scientific aspects. In fact, all participants had the opportunity to immerse themselves in 3D virtual reality as one of the possible tools to raise awareness of emergency situations related to natural hazards.





transparency

The report of the Independent Auditors To the Executive Director of Co-PLAN Institute for Habitat Development

We have audited the balance sheet of Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development (hereinafter referred to as “Organization” or “Co-Plan”) for the period to 31 December 2022. Management Structures of Co-Plan are responsible for preparing and presenting accurate financial statements. Our responsibility is to give an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We have conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing. Under these standards we are forced to plan and exercise the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements contain no material errors or deviations. An audit involves the application of certain procedures in order to take evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant judgments made by management structures, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that the audit evidence obtained of us provides a basis sufficient and appropriate to give our opinion.

These financial statements are prepared based on a historical cost, under the principle of double registration in accordance with the method “accounting of funds,” which differs from the National Financial Reporting Standards and Accounting Albanian legislation.

According to our assessment, the financial statements give a true and correct financial position of the Organization as at 31 December 2022, and its financial performance and cash flows for the year ended, in accordance with the method “accounting of funds”.

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Board of Directors of "Co-PLAN" - Institute for Habitat Development"

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of "Co-PLAN" - Institute for Habitat Development" (hereafter referred as the "Organization"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2022, the statement of activities, the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes and appendices to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Organization as at 31 December 2022, its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the National Accounting Standard for Non-Profit Organizations in Albania.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Organization in accordance with the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (IESBA Code) together with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Albania, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the IESBA Code. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Grant Thornton sh.p.k.

Tirane, Shqipëri

27/06/2023

Adrian Jashari, FCP
Adrian



Co-PLAN Institute for Habitat Development Statement of financial position for the year ended December 31, 2022 Amounts are expressed in EURO unless otherwise stated

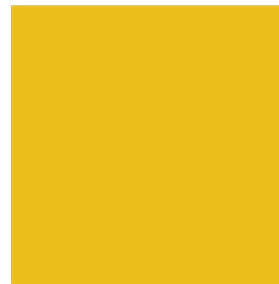
	Note	31 December 2022	31 December 2021
Assets		1,662,773	977,740
Cash and cash equivalents	4	-	636,368
Term Deposit	5	206,242	202,740
Subsidiaries/parent	7	351,398	118,784
Prepaid expenses	8	298,360	15,888
Other receivables	9	42,915	20,140
		2,507,885	2,055,881
Fixed assets			
Total assets			977,740
Liabilities and project funding	10	317,132	112,671
Liabilities	11	1,188,324	1,152,841
Deferred income			
		1,405,396	1,372,712
Total liabilities			977,849
Net assets		1,192,329	977,849
Unrestricted net assets	12	1,192,329	977,849
Unrestricted Net Assets		2,507,885	2,551,661
Total Liabilities and Net Assets			

The Statement of Financial Position is to be read in conjunction with the notes set out on pages 8 to 22 and forming part of the financial statements.

These financial statements were approved by the Management Board of Co-Plan - Institute for Habitat Development on June 27, 2023.

Adrian Jashari
Adrian Jashari
Executive Director

Adrian Jashari
Adrian Jashari
Finance Manager



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Co-PLAN 2022.