

SozialMarie

PRIZE *for* SOCIAL INNOVATION

20
26



“Social innovation designs solutions to urgent societal challenges. It provides space for new approaches, innovative answers, and identifying new paths. It responds to emerging social issues or solves problems in our world through new approaches. These actions can come directly from communities. However, in all cases, decisions and actions must be supported and shaped together with the community. Social innovation creates sustainable, exemplary solutions to inspire actions for change.”

Definition of Social Innovation
Unruhe Privatstiftung

Dear readers,



Dear SozialMarie followers,

Some of you may be wondering why the SozialMarie award ceremony is not taking place on May 1 – International Workers' Day – as it traditionally has, but instead on May 11 this year. The reason is a pragmatic one: in Slovenia, May 1 falls during a school holiday week every year. As a result, many nominated projects have been unable to travel to Vienna in the past, and we would very much like them to be with us in person at the award ceremony. The new date is intended to make that possible.

Personally, I find this change difficult – after all, SozialMarie has traditionally taken place on 1 May for 21 years. Nevertheless, I am convinced that social innovation also means questioning the familiar and exploring new paths.

In terms of content, however, the core of SozialMarie remains unchanged. We engage with social innovation in a variety of social and political contexts. These include countries that have recently joined SozialMarie, countries where social innovation emerges under challenging circumstances, and countries where we have collaborated for many years.

What connects all these areas is one central insight: social innovation arises particularly at interfaces where ideas, projects and initiatives meet, along with different experiences, perspectives and disciplines.

These encounters create productive ,hotspots': They challenge us to broaden our perspective, take a step back from our specific problem and reflect on our project again. Who could become a cooperation partner? Which new perspective could be decisive? Which of our project's resources have remained untapped so far? What might truly give rise to something new?

It is precisely these questions that often breathe new life into our work.

In the current political climate, I hope we all maintain the appetite and energy to keep searching for such interfaces, loopholes, partners and allies, so that together we can create something meaningful for our society.!

With best regards and all the best to you,

Wanda Moser-Heindl

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About us



Friedrich Moser & Wanda Moser-Heindl

Unruhe Privatstiftung (Unruhe Private Foundation) is distinguished by its support and advancement of the arts, science, research, and innovation. The foundation is the sponsor of SozialMarie-Award for Social Innovation and was founded by Wanda Moser-Heindl and Friedrich Moser in 2000. Unruhe Privatstiftung is a founding member of Sinnstifter, an Austrian association for community social project development.

SozialMarie is a prize for social innovation awarded to 15 outstanding projects every year. With its first call for applications in 2004 and prize award in 2005, SozialMarie is the oldest prize for social innovation in Europe and celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2024. Beyond its financial recognition and support, SozialMarie is, above all, a public stage for projects that provide innovative answers to societal challenges based on new approaches. SozialMarie supports its networks of outstanding projects while driving forward dialogue on social innovation.

The SozialMarie Criteria for Social Innovation focuses on engaging diverse communities and stakeholders, project impact, effective implementation, and providing best practices for other projects for social change. SozialMarie awards successfully implemented projects and is a premium seal of quality for effective social innovation.

Annually on May 1st, the SozialMarie expert jury annually honours 15 outstanding projects with a total of €54.000. The top three prizes awarded are respectively, €15.000, €10.000, and €5.000; the following twelve prizes are each awarded €2.000.

The SozialMarie-Award for Social Innovation initially awarded projects in Austria and international regions within a 300 km radius



The SozialMarie Prize for Social Innovation in 2005 initially awarded projects in Austria and regions within a 300 km radius from Vienna. SozialMarie has since expanded and awards projects based in Croatia, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia.

of Vienna. Since 2000, SozialMarie has further expanded by establishing local teams of jurors, coordinators and evaluators and recognises projects based in Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Croatia. 2023 was the first year in which Slovenia participated in the application and selection process with its own local team.

Each year, during the award ceremony on May 1st, inspiring individuals take on the role of active patrons for SozialMarie. They contribute their expertise through workshops, one-on-one mentoring, or — this year in Slovenia — the IEDC Bled School of Management is offering its ‚MBA in a Day‘ program to a selected project. SozialMarie has developed into more than an award over the years. With an engaged and growing international network of jury members, country coordinators, active patrons, and local evaluators, it has become an important player in the social innovation ecosystem in Central and Eastern Europe. It brings together winning projects and nominees from previous years in various online and offline events and provides possibilities for innovative organisations in the non-profit, private, and public sectors to strengthen international bonds and start new cooperative ventures.

Expert Jury



Barbara Glinser
Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI),
Vienna



Veronika Č. Janýrová
The Vienna Institute for International
Economic Studies (wiiw)



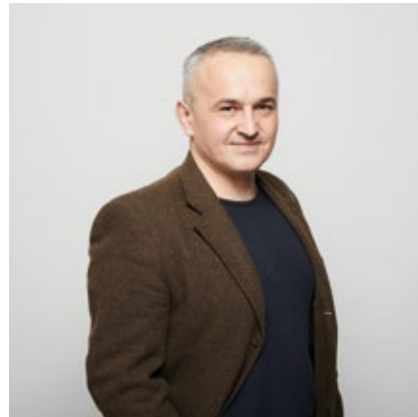
Katalin Teller
ELTE Institute for Art Theory and
Media Studies, Budapest



Tanja Tamše
Municipality of Celje, Slovenia



Danijel Baturina
Department of Social Policy,
Faculty of Law, University of
Zagreb



Miroslav Kocúr
Academic Dean at Schooltogo,
Bratislava



Jury Coordinator
Anna Misovicz

Understanding the System: A Politician's Perspective for Social Innovators

Marie Jílková is member of Czech Parliament and last year's SozialMarie patron.

Whenever politicians begin speaking to passionate changemakers from the nonprofit sector, it is always a delicate matter. We politicians are often perceived as being on the “other side of the river” — those who tend to keep a distance from good ideas rather than helping bring them to life.

I have been trying to disrupt this persistent pattern. As a politician, I consider it essential that we engage with, listen to, and truly understand social innovators — you, who place visions and dreams of improving people's lives first, and only then deal with the obstacles along the way. It was therefore an honor for me to serve as a patron of the previous edition of Sozial Marie, and to contribute to a specific form of social innovation by sharing insights from my own experience that may help innovators communicate more effectively with politicians.

I had the privilege of leading a webinar for many of you on how to speak with politicians — that very specific “species.” I approached this with the feeling that I was opening a door into a world that feels natural and understandable to me, yet remains complex, opaque, and often frustrating for many outsiders.

Meeting all of you from across Central Europe was a powerful experience, both professionally and personally. I encountered people who, even without political power, are transforming everyday lives — often with remarkable sensitivity, creativity, and persistence. When we spoke about the fact that political change does not begin in public debate but long before it, and that the entire process may take a year or more, I could sense both your frustration and a growing clarity — a feeling that “our world” was beginning to form a more understandable picture.

Perhaps the most powerful moment for me lay precisely in this tension. On one side, there are people with deep knowledge of problems and a strong capacity to innovate. On the other, there is a system that operates according to different rules — shaped by bureaucracy, rigid structures with blurred boundaries, short-term thinking, and at times very limited human motivations. Where do these worlds meet? They meet when we understand the system in which decisions are made, and only then begin to communicate and seek out the specific individuals who have the power to move things forward. It also requires recognizing that politicians are not a homo-

Patrons 2026

geneous group, but individuals who need visibility, must succeed in elections, and have the capacity to focus on only a few key issues.

For me personally, it was important to articulate something that often remains unspoken: meaningful change does not come from pressure at any cost. Mass emails or aggressive campaigns often do not work as we might expect. What carries far greater impact is relationship-building, trust, and a well-crafted, clear, and compelling elevator pitch.

Politicians who are truly committed cannot move forward without social innovators. They need your on-the-ground experience, your courage to test new approaches, and your ability to demonstrate tangible impact. Just as innovators sometimes lack access to the system, politicians often lack direct contact with realities that cannot be fully captured in reports and analyses. In this sense, we genuinely need one another. And if politics is not to become merely a business for a privileged few, we must learn to communicate — patiently, openly, and with mutual respect for the fact that we each come from different worlds.

At the end, I wrote the sentence: “Thank you for the innovations you bring to people’s lives.” It was not a formality. It was a reminder that, as a politician, I have always relied on people who bring solutions from the field — solutions that already work, that carry a story, data, and real impact.

In many ways, you help politicians fulfill their role: to deliver visible and meaningful change. We simply need to learn how to understand this dynamic and translate it into benefits for society as a whole.

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Katharina Jeschke *Austria*
Entrepreneur and cultural innovator working at the intersection of art, media, innovation and social impact. Founder of ARTS.MEDIA. IMPACT. and Managing Director of Österreich der runden & eckigen Tische, a platform for dialogue and democratic exchange.

“Powerful ideas for social change emerge when people meet, listen, and exchange perspectives. Dialogue across disciplines, cultures and viewpoints becomes a catalyst for innovation. Working at the intersection of art, culture, media and social engagement in Vienna and across Europe, I believe in creating spaces where new connections can form and unexpected ideas can grow. Initiatives that bring people into these spaces help strengthen communities, nurture creativity and contribute to a resilient and vibrant democracy.”



Jelena Kovač *Croatia*
Researcher and Teaching Assistant in Management and Nonprofit Management, specializing in shared leadership and volunteer motivation for organizational purpose and social impact

“Social innovation, from my perspective, is not merely about new ideas, but about the structural evolution of how we lead and sustain impact. I believe that the heart of sustainable social impact lies in the alignment between organizational purpose and volunteer motivation.

True innovation occurs when nonprofit management strategies successfully align individuals’ intrinsic values with organizational goals, creating a resilient framework for long-term community transformation.”



The IEDC *Slovenia*
Bled School of Management, founded in 1986 as the first management school of its type in Central and Eastern Europe, is one of Europe’s leading international management development institutions.

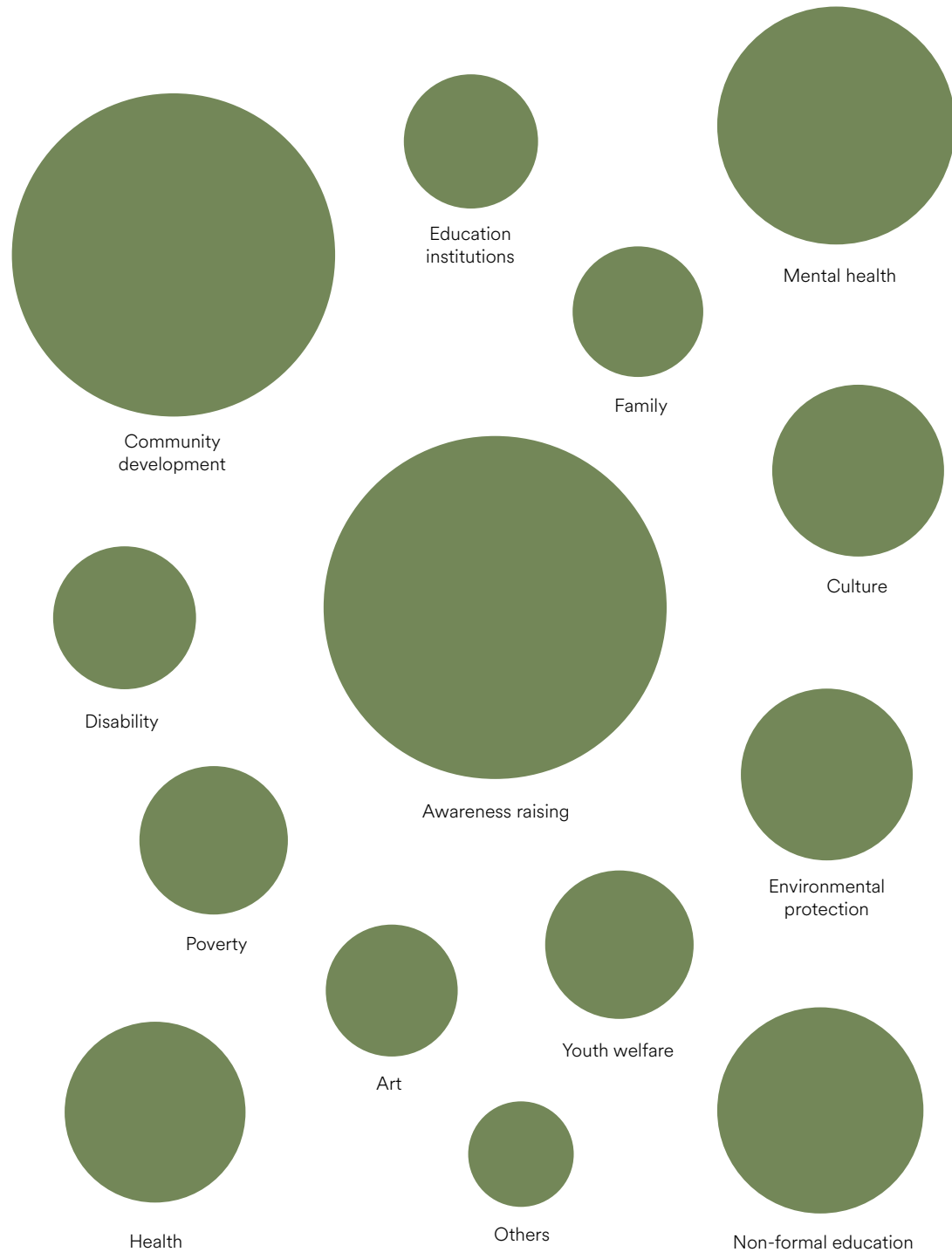
“At IEDC, we do not see social innovation as something on the educational margins. It is at the very heart of how value will be created in the future. As many great business thinkers have reminded us, the real measure of progress is not only what we achieve, but how we improve the lives of others along the way, and SozialMarie is a living proof of that.

If we truly want to build a better society, then all organizations, from grassroots initiatives to global corporations, must learn to act with purpose, collaborate beyond boundaries, and commit to creating meaningful and lasting impact..”

Mislav Ante Omazić

Fields of actions of submitted projects in 2026

369 projects were submitted to SozialMarie in 2026.
These projects indicate multiple fields of action.



Prize Winners 2026

Comprehensive Integration Program EDU-UA

challenge The war in Ukraine has presented Slovakia with a new challenge in terms of educating foreign children, while also exposing a lack of psychosocial support. These children have special educational needs, including trauma and PTSD care, but teachers lacked the necessary skills. Furthermore, Slovakia had no national strategy for educating foreign children, nor any developed language, psychosocial or cultural educational services.

idea This approach combines person-centred methods, non-violent communication and trauma-informed techniques based on neuroscience. Psychological first aid was provided at ten pilot schools, followed by language support and assessments. Two inclusive language centres offering adapted classes have been established, Ukrainian specialists have been integrated into the state school system, and a revision of school legislation is underway.

actors A project manager oversees coordination and advocacy, with support from an advocacy leader in the areas of networking and legislation. Three experts provide language and psychosocial support, while analysts produce five studies. Ten Ukrainian psychosocial specialists work directly in schools. The team is completed by a Ukrainian psychology team and Slovak language support teachers, implemented in collaboration with the City of Bratislava and pilot primary schools.

impact Ukrainian specialists have now been formally integrated into Slovak counselling centres and schools, and dedicated funding has been established by law. A unique Ukrainian psychology team serves the wider community. Ten pilot adaptation classes are being introduced in Bratislava, and professionals across the school system are receiving training in trauma-informed practice, which will benefit all children, not only those from Ukraine.

transfer What began as a crisis response has evolved into a widely applicable model. Trauma-informed approaches and inclusion principles now support all at-risk children. Legislative changes benefit children from marginalised communities. Funded by the European Social Fund (ESF), a new pillar will extend the model until 2028, transforming it into adult education, counselling practice and methodological guidance for adaptation classes nationwide.

appreciation of the jury *Inklucentrum* stands out for transforming an urgent crisis response into a coherent, systemic model where none previously existed. Its innovation lies in linking psychosocial care, language learning, and structural reform into one integrated approach, firmly embedded within public systems. Remarkably, a small team without prior specialisation in this field has, through exceptional commitment, driven significant policy change and initiated large-scale national programmes that ensure the model's sustainable growth and long-term impact.



Country
Slovakia

Region
Bratislava Region

Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

Fields of action
Education institutions,
Advocacy, Mental
health

Organisation
Inklucentrum-Centre
for inclusive education

In cooperation with
Centrum poradenstva a prevencie
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vzdelavanie-deti-z-cudziny

Modern Self-Defense

challenge In the Czech Republic, one in ten women has experienced rape, yet prevention is failing. Victim-blaming and elite martial arts approaches leave the most vulnerable—women, children, seniors and people with disabilities—without protection. Awareness that 80% of attacks are committed by someone known to the victim remains low, and society lacks tools to detect threats early, normalising harassment and helplessness.

idea The transformation of violence prevention from a sports discipline into a public health tool rests on three pillars: the early detection of manipulation and the setting of boundaries to stop up to 90% of verbal conflicts; the addressing of the freeze response, which traditional courses ignore; and the activation of bystanders to intervene safely, shifting responsibility from the victim to the community. This methodology is being scaled up in schools and businesses to change social norms.

actors As a fully remote, inclusive employer, the core back-office team is mostly made up of women on parental leave. Training is delivered by a network of over 40 certified instructors, 90% of whom are women and are actively challenging gender stereotypes in safety education. We have multi-sector partnerships spanning academia for methodology validation, NGOs for complementary crisis intervention and media partners for raising awareness and shifting social norms.

impact Impact is defined as cultural change on three levels: individual empowerment and resilience; institutional zero tolerance for bullying in schools and companies; and societal shift from victim-blaming to perpetrator accountability. Pre- and post-course questionnaires measure increases in confidence and knowledge, while qualitative 'stories of change' provide real-world evidence and inform the ongoing improvement of the methodology.

transfer Rather than relying on local traditions, the methodology is grounded in universal psychology and biology, making it transferable across cultures. Stress responses and power dynamics function similarly in different contexts, as shown by its successful adaptation in Egypt. Like open-source software, it has a universal core, with only language and scenarios adapted locally.

appreciation of the jury *Modern Self-Defense* redefines a traditionally male-dominated field through a trauma-sensitive, preventive, and widely accessible approach. Grounded in lived experience and shaped by the realities women face—while empowering all—it shifts the focus from physical force to awareness, de-escalation, and early intervention. By challenging harmful narratives and strengthening individuals in the face of patriarchal and suppressive structures, it generates broad societal impact, sustained through an independent and economically self-sufficient model.



Country
Czech Republic,
Slovakia

Organisation
Modern Self-Defense

Region
Implemented
nationwide

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Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

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Fields of action
Adult education,
Youth welfare,
Violence prevention

Cinema without barriers - Slovenia

challenge People who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired in Slovenia have very limited access to film culture. Accessible screenings are rare and sporadic, and are concentrated in Ljubljana, leaving smaller towns underserved. There are no sustainable systemic solutions in place, such as regular programmes, an open database and clear standards, and marginalised communities have little role in shaping cultural spaces.

idea Regular screenings with audio description, descriptive subtitles and sign language interpretation bring accessible film culture beyond Ljubljana to smaller towns and rural areas. Training for cinema staff and collaboration with organisations representing marginalised groups address knowledge gaps. An open database of adapted films, a professional conference and a handbook of good practices ensure long-term solutions, with communities involved as active co-creators.

actors A freelance coordinator leads content development, coordination and evaluation. Three arthouse cinemas in Cerknica, Radovljica and Celje participate, with staff trained for accessible screenings. Audio description, subtitling and Slovenian Sign Language experts are engaged per project, alongside discussion moderators. Local organisations representing deaf and blind communities act as advisors and co-creators throughout. The concept was developed in cooperation with Polish, Romanian, and Hungarian organisations.

impact Deaf, hard-of-hearing, blind and visually impaired people gain greater access to cultural life, reducing social isolation and strengthening local communities. The project drives a shift in cinema practice, making accessibility a programming standard rather than an exception. Impact is measured through accessible screenings, target group attendance, trained staff, partner organisations, and audience surveys and event evaluations.

transfer Regular accessibility-adapted programs, staff training, community cooperation and an open database form a modular, transferable model adaptable to other regions. The holistic approach to audience inclusion extends naturally to other performing arts sectors — theatre, dance and performance — where accessibility for deaf, hard-of-hearing, blind and visually impaired audiences remains very limited.

appreciation of the jury *Cinema Without Barriers* transforms film culture from an exclusive space into a structurally inclusive system. Long-standing barriers faced by sensory-impaired audiences in Slovenia are addressed not through technical add-ons, but by embedding accessibility as a core principle. Participation in culture is reframed as a fundamental right. Its participatory co-creation model builds genuine expertise rapidly, and its vision is generously collegial: creating an accessible framework that any cinema in the country can adopt, setting a new national standard.



Country Slovenia	Organisation Public Institute Notranjska Regional Park
Region Upper Carniola, Littoral–Inner Carniola, Savinja region	In cooperation with Linhart Hall, Radovljica, Union Cinema, Celje
Sector Public administration	Contact Gregor Janežič +386 51 219 773 gregor@kd-cerknica.si
Fields of action Disability, Community development, Culture	Website www.kd-cerknica.si/kino-brez-ovir-slo

Asylum Lawyers' Network - NWAA

Asylum Lawyers' Network - NWAA

PRIZE WINNER

challenge The right to asylum is deeply politicised, yet constitutional guarantees must be upheld in every proceeding. The particular vulnerability of asylum seekers demands rigorous scrutiny of legislative proposals and procedural practices. Political shifts create challenges beyond Austria's borders — illustrated by NWAA's involvement in a landmark ECJ ruling that Taliban measures against women constitute persecution, entitling Afghan women to asylum across the entire EU.

idea From providing legal representation to destitute asylum seekers, the focus has evolved toward strategic litigation: obtaining landmark rulings from Austrian and European supreme courts that benefit not just individual clients but entire groups. Fundamental questions of asylum law are brought before the highest courts — including via ECJ preliminary rulings — to improve legal protection for asylum seekers across Austria and the EU.

actors Legal advisors from partner organisations refer cases to NWAA when Federal Administrative Court decisions appear unlawful, unconstitutional or raise unresolved legal questions. The coordination team reviews requests and, where strategically suitable, commissions project lawyers to represent clients. It also serves as an information hub, regularly updating partners and lawyers on ongoing and completed proceedings.

impact Strategic litigation strengthens the rule of law, curbs unlawful practices and compels authorities to apply human rights and EU law consistently. Landmark decisions create legal certainty and deepen public trust in democracy and fundamental rights. Impact is measured indirectly through success rates — even lost cases clarify legal issues and contribute to more consistent decision-making across the asylum system.

transfer The coordinated specialist network and pro bono model transfer to other areas of law and EU countries. Case selection based on landmark potential suits any context with recurring legal violations and accessible higher courts. Systematic monitoring of new laws and administrative practices adapts equally well — for instance to social security reform — while the network helps establish a broader pro bono culture across Europe.

appreciation of the jury The NWAA combines top-tier asylum expertise with strategic litigation to safeguard humanitarian standards in Austria. In a field with few specialised lawyers, it ensures that complex human rights cases are pursued at the highest professional level, preventing systemic gaps in legal protection. Through a distinctive bottom-up approach, it connects individual cases to structural change and carries them through all instances, including European courts, creating lasting impact on national and EU-wide practice and legal standards.



Country
Austria

Organisation
Caritas Austria and Diakonie Austria

Region
Implemented nationwide

In cooperation with
Diakonie Austria, Austrian Red Cross, Volkshilfe, Amnesty International Austria, Verein Projekt Integrationshaus, asylkoordination Austria, Queer Base, Tralalobe, UN Refugee Agency.

Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

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Fields of action
Migration, Law, Justice, Legal protection

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BBM Farm – Community Garden & Culture Space

challenge Children in state care and disadvantaged families often lack stable relationships and learning opportunities, increasing their risk of exclusion. Urban residents have limited access to sustainable living and food production, while inclusive spaces for shared learning and meaningful volunteering—especially with supportive employment for people experiencing homelessness—remain scarce.

idea This is an urban community space where permaculture, social support, education and culture reinforce one another. Practical gardening tasks help children, families and residents to develop their skills. People experiencing homelessness can find meaningful employment and a sense of belonging. Cultural programmes raise awareness and support financial sustainability. Together, these elements form an integrated model that addresses environmental, social and community needs simultaneously.

actors The garden manager oversees operations, supported by volunteer gardeners. The hospitality team handles catering, while trainers facilitate corporate programmes. An education specialist oversees children's activities and a programme coordinator curates cultural events. A fundraiser manages partnerships and donor relations. In line with Bike Maffia's participatory principles, decisions are made collectively in close collaboration with social institutions and homeless shelters.

impact At a systemic level, the project establishes a non-institutional learning space, promotes corporate social responsibility, and disseminates urban farming models. At the community level, it strengthens dialogue between diverse groups. At an individual level, participants develop practical and social skills, as well as greater independence. This progress is tracked through task completion and pre- and post-programme feedback.

transfer Permaculture and urban farming models can be easily replicated in community gardens, even with limited space and resources. This learning and employment approach suits social institutions, children's homes, and neighbourhood groups. The 2026 programme focuses on enabling institutions to implement the methodology independently, with adaptable cultural elements for local needs.

appreciation of the jury *BBM Farm* creates an integrated, low-threshold model in which social inclusion, environmental education, and culture meaningfully reinforce one another within a shared urban space. In a context shaped by deep social inequalities and limited inclusive learning environments, it offers a grounded, community-based response that addresses systemic gaps. By bringing together highly diverse groups through hands-on, purposeful activities, it fosters skills, connection, and confidence, while demonstrating a resilient, financially sustainable, and transferable model with impact that extends well beyond its local setting.



Country
Hungary

Organisation
Bike Maffia Association

Region
Budapest

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Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

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Fields of action
Homelessness

challenge Large quantities of raw sheep's wool are discarded across Croatia, causing significant environmental pollution of the soil, water and air, and placing an economic burden on farmers. In Lika alone, 200–300 tonnes are discarded annually, reaching 1,300 tonnes nationwide. The over-reliance of agriculture on chemical fertilisers exacerbates the problem, damaging ecosystems and threatening human health.

idea An innovative, patented process transforms discarded raw sheep's wool into eco-friendly fertilisers and repellents. Since wool is 50% carbon by weight, burying the fertiliser locks CO₂ into the soil as a nutrient, rather than releasing it into the atmosphere. This approach reduces pollution, replaces chemical inputs with natural alternatives and improves soil health, supporting healthier food production in line with the principles of the circular economy.

actors The project manager is responsible for operations, reporting and communications, while the company owner provides strategic oversight and drives commercialisation. An accelerator provides business consultancy and innovation support. Local communities participate in wool collection and educational programmes. The scientific community collaborates on technology development, while regional and international partners facilitate networking and the wider adoption of sustainable practices.

impact Wool waste is transformed from an environmental liability into a valuable community resource. Soil, water and air contamination are significantly reduced, farmers gain new income streams, green jobs are created, and rural vitality is strengthened. The impact is measured both quantitatively, through the number of tons of wool processed, the adoption of eco-products and the economic benefits to farmers, and qualitatively, through environmental improvement, awareness levels and community well-being.

transfer This technological process can be replicated wherever wool waste from sheep farming exists. The model of turning waste into sustainable agricultural products applies to similar challenges in other regions. Its educational approach can be adapted widely, and the circular economy model can extend to other organic waste streams, supporting green entrepreneurship globally.

appreciation of the jury *Eko Lika GREENNovation* turns a widespread environmental and economic problem into a compelling circular solution by transforming sheep wool waste into valuable agricultural inputs. In a region shaped by ecological degradation and economic constraints, it redefines waste as a resource — reducing pollution while supporting more sustainable farming practices. By creating new income streams for farmers and local jobs, the project demonstrates how environmentally driven innovation can deliver both ecological and socio-economic impact.



Country
Croatia

Region
Lika-Senj County

Sector
Commercial enterprise

Fields of action
Regional development,
Climate change,
Environmental
protection

Organisation
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Family Village Program

Family Village Program

PRIZE WINNER

challenge Low-income families living in poor housing conditions with high utility costs are structurally excluded from state renovation subsidies. Barriers include a lack of self-financing, limited access to information and support, complex administration processes, post-financing requirements and legal obstacles. Those who need support the most cannot access it. A one-stop model is needed to remove these limitations and ensure that housing renovation is genuinely accessible.

idea A one-stop support model addresses financial, administrative and social barriers to housing renovation grants in a comprehensive, integrated way. Habitat verifies eligibility, provides administrative and planning assistance, pre-finances investments and offers personal mentoring throughout. The innovation lies in Habitat's intermediary role, which bridges the gap between the support system and families in need, ensuring that existing state resources are accessible to those who need them most.

actors Habitat for Humanity Hungary runs the programme with a small, dedicated team. The field programme coordinator identifies households, checks their eligibility, assists with compliance, and guides clients through the banking, legal, and administrative processes. A field project manager coordinates renovation planning, contractors and quality control. The team is rounded out by management, financial, fundraising and communications support, which handle information materials and programme promotion.

impact Housing conditions improve, energy consumption falls and financial stability grows. In the medium term, households gain greater trust in institutions and confidence in navigating available support. Impact is measured through households involved and renovated, intervention types and energy expenditure changes, complemented by case studies and feedback. Programme learnings feed directly into systemic policy analyses and recommendations.

transfer Presented at national and international forums, the model has gained recognition in professional and political circles. Featured in an EU collection of good practices linked to the Social Climate Fund, it serves as a reference for civil society, researchers, local authorities, and policymakers designing renovation programmes for vulnerable households.

appreciation of the jury *Family Village Program* is innovative in addressing a key paradox: a public subsidy that excludes those most in need. By adapting and sensitising the one-stop-shop model to the realities of vulnerable groups, it turns existing funds into genuinely accessible support, adding tailored guidance that empowers families to benefit from them. Its strength lies in ensuring that public resources reach those they are intended for, while offering a scalable model for tackling energy poverty and housing inequality—already recognised in national and European policy debates.



Country
Hungary

Organisation
Habitat for Humanity Magyarország

Region
Implemented nationwide

In cooperation with
Erste Bank Hungary Zrt.

Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

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Fields of action
Poverty, Advocacy,
Family

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Humana Nova – Inclusive Circular Economy

challenge Structural weaknesses exclude people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups from the open labour market, confining them to segregated or temporary work, while the textile sector has high environmental costs and low social responsibility. Humana Nova instead combines inclusive employment, social support and circular textile production in a market-based model.

idea *Humana Nova* organises the entire textile value chain, from collection to sales, with adaptations for different working abilities. The circular model encompasses upcycling, industrial rags and felt packaging, reducing waste and creating value. Production uses locally sourced and recycled materials. Social support and work adjustments are embedded in everyday processes, alongside workshops that foster ecological and social awareness.

actors Cooperative management combines democratic decision-making with a market-oriented approach to business. The Assembly and Supervisory Board promote transparency, and a manager oversees operations. Teams cover production, textile waste management, a second-hand shop, B2B sales, and finance and human resources, all with strong social support. Individual job adjustments are made to include vulnerable people across all processes. Marketing and design are handled externally.

impact Of the 59 employees, 34 have a disability and 20 belong to other vulnerable groups. Long-term integration into the open labour market reduces unemployment and increases financial independence. Employment stability is monitored quantitatively, while individual support plans and feedback track qualitative outcomes. The model also changes perceptions of the employability of vulnerable groups and has prevented 5,000 tonnes of textiles from being disposed of.

transfer Inclusive employment, work adapted to diverse abilities, embedded social support and circular economy principles can be applied across regions and sectors. The model respects local conditions and legislation while retaining its core logic. Humana Nova's strategic goal is to develop it further as a franchise.

appreciation of the jury *Humana Nova* has, for over a decade, consistently integrated social inclusion, ecological responsibility, and economic viability into a coherent model. Rather than advancing a single solution, it demonstrates how circular economy principles and inclusive employment can be combined within a competitive market environment. By adapting work to people — not the other way around — it redefines productivity and value creation, offering a mature and transferable example of how systemic change can be sustained over time.



Country
Croatia

Organisation
Social Cooperative Humana Nova

Region
Implemented nationwide

In cooperation with
Local and regional self-government units (e.g. the City of Čakovec, Međimurje County), as well as public institutions in the field of employment.

Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

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Fields of action
Unemployment,
Disability,
Environmental protection

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Integrated Health and Social Care Centre



Country
Slovakia

Region
Košice Region,
Prešov Region

Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

Fields of action
Unemployment,
Homelessness, Health

Organisation
Nadácia DEDO,
Foundation DEDO

In cooperation with
Všetci pre rodinu, n.o.
Dorka bags, n. o., Dorka, n. o.

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challenge In Slovakia, over 70,000 people experience secondary homelessness, including more than 5,000 people in Košice. Among them are children who are often homeless long term, with the issue spanning generations. A fragmented, high-threshold system with limited outreach fails to address their complex needs. This has led to extreme health inequalities, premature mortality, deepening poverty, intergenerational disadvantage, and long-term, unsustainable public costs.

idea The DEDO Foundation network tackles homelessness by providing an integrated centre offering housing, social support, employment and healthcare under one roof. Clients receive professional services in outpatient and outreach settings based on their individual needs. The model incorporates proven methods such as Housing First, Individual Placement and Support, and Trauma-Informed Care. A multidisciplinary team works across sectors to provide long-term systemic solutions.

actors The network comprises four organisations: the DEDO Foundation, which leads on housing and strategy; Všetci pre rodinu, which provides social workers, psychologists, legal experts and medical staff, including GPs, nurses and psychiatrists; Dorka Bags, which runs a social enterprise tailoring workshop and delivers supported employment; and Dorka, which operates shelters for families with children. Each organisation contributes its specific expertise to the integrated centre.

impact Stable housing, physical and mental health, employment and a reduced risk of homelessness are all improved by the project. It also eases the pressure on acute healthcare services. Impact is tracked through an integrated client database which measures indicators relating to housing, health, social stability and employment. Data are continuously analysed to improve services and inform a results-based communication strategy that demonstrates long-term systemic change.

transfer The project improves housing, health, and employment while reducing the risk of homelessness and easing pressure on emergency services. Its impact is tracked through an integrated client database, with ongoing analysis used to improve services and support a results-driven communication strategy focused on long-term systemic change.

appreciation of the jury *The Integrated Health and Social Care Centre* achieves something rare: a fully functioning system in which housing, healthcare, social support, and employment are not parallel services, but a single, coherent whole. By bringing proven approaches together within one accessible structure, it overcomes the fragmentation that so often leaves the most vulnerable without adequate support. As the first model of its kind at this scale in Slovakia and the wider region, it offers compelling evidence that multidisciplinary collaboration can deliver sustainable, systemic solutions to homelessness and social exclusion—and that these solutions can be transferred.

KLİK – Cooperative-Led Energy and Climate OSS

challenge Vulnerable households are typically left passive or excluded as energy transition is driven by institutions and markets. Energy poverty, climate vulnerability and complex administration deepen inequalities. Local communities rarely have the capacity to develop innovative energy projects. What is needed is a democratic approach in which citizens take ownership of knowledge, information and the social benefits of transition.

idea A physical, cooperative-run Energy-Climate Office offers free, continuous and independent support — from first questions about renewables, energy saving and home renovation through to implementation and financing. Energy-poor households get hands-on help accessing subsidies and navigating administration, with no financial risk. Energy transition becomes a collective process rather than an individual market choice, reducing inequalities and building local climate resilience.

actors A cooperative manager, project manager and project associate run the office together, covering operations, activity planning, citizen consultation, advocacy and project development with national and EU partners. Energy advisors, designers and contractors join as needed for energy analyses, technical documentation, project implementation and educational workshops.

impact Living conditions improve, energy bills fall and energy democracy grows in urban and rural communities alike. Citizens otherwise shut out of the transition gain access and trust in collective action. Progress is tracked through households advised, renovations completed, energy savings and CO2 reduction, alongside qualitative assessment of empowerment and trust. Vulnerable groups receive special attention in cooperation with the Red Cross.

transfer The model is built around universal citizen needs, not specific regional conditions, making it highly replicable. Cooperative governance, the office as a community access point, citizen engagement methodology and the linking of social and energy policies all travel well. The cooperative structure combines professional work, volunteering and surplus reinvestment to reach those systematically left behind by market-based approaches.

appreciation of the jury *KLİK* sets a strong example for a democratic, community-driven energy transition. By shifting the one-stop-shop model from institutional provision to community organisation, it blurs the line between service providers and beneficiaries. Citizens become co-owners and decision-makers, actively addressing structural barriers that exclude households from the clean energy transition. In a context of largely centralised energy governance, *KLİK* offers a compelling, transferable model for a just and inclusive climate future.



Country Croatia	Organisation KLİK Energy Cooperative
Region Koprivnica-Križevci County	Contact Martina Nemčić +385 99 509 8931 Martina.nemcic@zadruga-klík.hr
Sector Commercial enterprise	Website klikninaodrzivo.com
Fields of action Community development, Climate change, Environmental protection	

Mini Diversity Explorers – inclusion through play

Mini Diversity Explorers - inclusion through play

PRIZE WINNER

challenge Although compulsory kindergarten brings neurotypical and neurodivergent children together from age three, many educators lack the tools to support this diversity. As a result, gaps in inclusion, social skills, and self-awareness can lead to bullying, mental health issues, and early school leaving.

idea MDE provides educators with the tools and knowledge needed to create inclusive communities for children based on self-awareness and mutual support. The toolkit provides learning resources and games for at least 30 sessions per school year and can be easily integrated into existing curricula. Through experience-based games with children aged 4–8, it initiates societal change — teaching children to accept one another and approach shared play and learning with an inclusive mindset.

actors Psychologist and play therapist Fruzsina Élő leads the project, and special educator Györgyi Bokor-Bacsák provides professional support. Project management is handled by linguist Kinga Jelencsik-Mátyus. Andrea Révayné Hajdú and Ágnes Fábián contribute expertise in early childhood education, while Zita Kismarty-Lechner manages graphic design. Production is carried out inclusively at Alfa Rehabilitációs Nonprofit Kft. by employees with reduced work capacity.

impact Research with 400 primary pupils showed measurable improvements in attitudes toward disability. Teachers report higher engagement and attention, the topic is now discussed in parent meetings, and growing demand for training confirms MDE's effectiveness in addressing a formerly taboo issue.

transfer Designed in accordance with Hungarian educational regulations, MDE can be easily adapted to other contexts. Based on user feedback, new characters and themes — such as linguistic, cultural, health or family diversity — can be added. The programme is suitable for formal education, after-school programmes and camps alike. Translation for international partners is possible, and the programme's inclusion of cultural and linguistic diversity makes it effective with ethnically diverse groups.

appreciation of the jury *Mini Diversity Explorers* stands out as an innovative approach that translates years of lived-experience-based sensitisation into a structured, practical educational tool for kindergartens. Grounded in the perspectives of parents of children with disabilities and professionals with classroom experience, it ensures that authentic insight shapes both content and methodology. In a field where comparable resources are largely absent, it provides a clear, accessible framework that supports not only individual educators but entire kindergarten-communities in making inclusion tangible and sustainable.



Country
Hungary

Organisation
Association for Inclusion

Region
Budapest,
Bács-Kiskun,
Győr-Moson-Sopron,
Jász-Nagykun-
Szolnok, Pest,
Szabolcs-
Szatmár-Bereg

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Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

Fields of action
Early childhood
education, Education
institutions, Disability

Ministry of Love and Empathy

Ministry of Love and Empathy

PRIZE WINNER

challenge Two structural problems converge: the erosion of Hungary's social care systems, growing polarisation and the political instrumentalisation of social issues have left most of society to face pressing problems alone. Simultaneously, a deep cultural divide between the contemporary art scene and the broader public makes collective engagement with socially relevant topics particularly difficult.

idea *The Ministry of Love and Empathy* imagines a government department that genuinely cares about people's well-being. An on-line platform and physical exhibition invite visitors into role-play scenarios engaging with questions at the intersection of personal and social experience — issues that seemingly no one pays attention to. Deliberately realised outside traditional art spaces, making it accessible beyond the artistic community.

actors Artist Nóra Juhász leads the creative concept, project management and development of online platforms and installations. Curator Balázs Fodor organises events and handles community communication and documentation. Zsolt Dér contributes as conceptual consultant and manages on-site operation and mediation during exhibitions.

impact Several thousand visitors engaged with the Ministry, many returning and bringing others — a sign of strong personal engagement and community impact. Continued enquiries about reopening signal lasting demand. Professional attention and collaboration requests from the arts sector, including curatorial students at the Hungarian University of Fine Arts, confirm both social and professional embeddedness.

transfer Originally developed in English and freely accessible online, the project is inherently international. Institutional fiction, role-play and emotional „administration“ draw on universal experiences that travel across regions. The online platform, physical customer service format, event structures and participatory procedures adapt flexibly to different local contexts while retaining their critical and community-oriented character.

appreciation of the jury The Ministry of Love and Empathy uses institutional fiction and artistic methods to open new forms of public engagement. A fictional ministry becomes a participatory space for real societal concerns. By making complex and often invisible experiences—such as loneliness, care deficits, and emotional exhaustion—accessible and shareable, it creates new avenues for dialogue and recognition. Its strength lies in turning individuals into active contributors, fostering a shared language that brings private struggles into the public sphere.



Country
Hungary

Organisation
Nóra Juhász

Region
Budapest

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Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

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Fields of action
Awareness raising,
Culture, Art



Country
Czech Republic

Organisation
Freya, z. s.

Region
Implemented
nationwide

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Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

Website
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Fields of action
Adult education,
Disability, Violence
prevention

challenge People with intellectual disabilities are systematically denied the right to a fulfilling intimate life. Without accessible education, they are at risk of isolation and violence. A pervasive taboo among caregivers leads to restriction rather than support. Involving people with intellectual disabilities, their families, and professionals simultaneously ensures alignment and transforms social services into spaces that respect self-determination.

idea Three pillars drive the model: group sessions covering consent, boundaries and emotions; parental groups building caregiver confidence; and methodology transfer enabling staff to implement the programme independently. By shifting attitudes across the entire ecosystem simultaneously, the model initiates systemic change. It is fully field-tested and ready for replication.

actors Freya's expert team is leading the implementation process, with two counsellors heading up the development of the methodology and the workshops. A graphic designer with a background in social counselling ensures that the tools are accessible to people with intellectual disabilities. Accredited courses transfer know-how to front-line workers, who then implement the programme independently within their own organisations.

impact Pre- and post-tests show an average increase in knowledge of 40%, with interviews confirming shifts in attitudes towards personal boundaries. The project challenges stigma and establishes sexuality as a legitimate topic in social services. The accredited methodology shifts practice from restrictive to supportive, and demand from other organisations serves as a further indicator of success.

transfer A Group Work Guide and accompanying worksheets allow for independent implementation. Although developed for people with intellectual disabilities, the principles also apply to children in foster care and inclusive schools. The successful adaptation for deaf people confirms the model's flexibility. The modular, culturally adjustable model works across regions, target groups and national borders.

appreciation of the jury *Open Path* addresses a deeply neglected and taboo issue—the right to intimacy for people with intellectual disabilities—and reframes it as a matter of fundamental human dignity. Through genuine co-creation with participants, their families, and professionals, it achieves a rare alignment of perspectives on a highly sensitive topic. Translated into a scalable and sustainable model, it sets a new standard for dignity-based care and holds strong potential to shift the sector toward more informed, responsive, and accountable practice.

Project O2

Project O2

PRIZE WINNER



Country

Croatia
Slovenia

Region

Implemented
nationwide

Sector

Commercial
enterprise

Fields of action

Awareness raising,
Community
development,
Climate change

Organisation

MAGIC FOREST d.o.o.

In cooperation with

Vukovar Butterflies and
local schools and kindergartens

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challenge Under the EU Green Deal, Europe has committed to planting an additional 3 billion trees by 2030, yet progress is falling far short of this target. Key obstacles include a lack of scalable restoration initiatives, ongoing soil degradation, biodiversity loss, and the impact of climate change. Many degraded areas are difficult or hazardous to access, which further slows efforts. Drone technology can overcome these constraints, enabling safe and efficient restoration work in otherwise inaccessible locations.

idea Drones and specially designed SeedBombs restore degraded ecosystems in hard-to-reach areas — without heavy machinery, at lower cost and with reduced environmental impact. Educational and participatory activities engage local communities and vulnerable groups, strengthening environmental awareness and responsibility. Currently active in five European countries, the model is set to expand to two more by 2026.

actors A team of interdisciplinary scientists, foresters and ecologists is responsible for site surveys, species assessment, seed selection and monitoring. The production of SeedBomb involves permanent staff as well as marginalised groups, including Roma and veterans, who are employed seasonally. Drone pilots coordinate flights and airspace, and a logistics and community team engages with schools, kindergartens, and local associations. External partners in Slovenia, Austria, Germany, France, Serbia, Bosnia and Ireland support market expansion.

impact By connecting citizens, local authorities, schools, civil society and businesses around nature restoration, the project fosters trust, cooperation and collective action. Joint field activities create long-term partnership networks that extend beyond individual projects, thereby enhancing community resilience. Impact is measured by the number of partners and local collaborations, the repetition of long-term cooperation with the same communities and the emergence of new initiatives as a result.

transfer The model is scalable and adaptable to diverse conditions. Already implemented in Croatia, Slovenia, and Kosovo, it is expanding to Austria, Germany, Serbia, and Montenegro, with methods transferable across environments and tailored to local needs.

appreciation of the jury

Project O2 reimagines what reforestation can look like in a country marked by excessive and often illegal forest exploitation. Its innovation reaches beyond the technology itself: by turning ecological restoration into a participatory, visible process, it draws in communities, businesses and public actors as active participants rather than bystanders. The combination of drone-based seeding with education and social inclusion creates a model that is at once ecologically effective and deeply human, scalable in reach yet grounded in local engagement. A compelling new blueprint for environmental action.

Women's Trade Union School

challenge Women remain underrepresented and less influential in trade unions, and gender inequality persists in the workplace. Despite formal rights, lower pay, limited advancement, discrimination and violence continue. Trade unions lack the knowledge and internal capacity to address these issues systematically, and women workers lack safe spaces in which to share their experiences. Consequently, inequality is reproduced within the very institutions intended to counter it.

idea The idea is for women to gain the knowledge, skills and support needed to play an active role in trade unions and workplaces. Through education, peer exchange and practical exercises, participants learn to recognise discrimination, advocate for change and engage in collective action. At the same time, the programme strengthens trade unions by introducing a gender perspective to their policies and practices, and by encouraging anti-harassment measures and the creation of safer spaces for women.

actors An interdisciplinary team covers feminism, trade union organising, sociology and public policy. Marija Čačić leads methodology and mentors trainers; Jelena Ostojić develops theoretical modules on work and gender; Snježana Ivčić covers precarious work and health rights; Bruna Nedoklan leads modules on gender-based violence; Petra Ivšić coordinates field work with unions; Ana Vračar manages overall coordination, logistics, evaluation and reporting.

impact There is increased participation of women in trade unions, greater visibility of gender equality issues, and safer working environments. In the long term, trade unions will have the capacity to respond to discrimination and violence. The impact is measured by the number of participants, the sectors and unions involved, the results of feedback surveys on knowledge and confidence, the number of initiatives launched within organisations and the analysis of changes in union policies and practices.

transfer Designed as a flexible model adaptable to different sectors, regions and national contexts, the project links trade union infrastructure with feminist and interdisciplinary expertise. While trade unions have a presence in the field, they have limited capacity, whereas external experts have knowledge but lack networks. The programme bridges this gap. With the support of EPSU, the model has strong potential for application in other European countries and contexts.

appreciation of the jury *The Women's Trade Union School* strengthens women's roles within trade unions by linking feminist perspectives with practical organising. Addressing pay gaps, precarious work, care responsibilities, harassment, and internal union democracy, it builds capacity for structural change. By enabling women to advance their own concerns from within, the programme drives transformation at the core—reshaping structures, influencing policies, and contributing to a more democratic labour movement.



Country
Croatia

Organisation
Organization for Workers
Initiative and Democratization

Region
Implemented
nationwide

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Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

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Fields of action
Work,
Awareness
raising,
Gender equality

“

“*Inklucentrum* stands out for transforming an urgent crisis response into a coherent, systemic model where none previously existed”

“*Cinema Without Barriers* transforms film culture from an exclusive space into a structurally inclusive system.”

The Jury says ...

“Its strength lies in ensuring that public resources reach those they are intended for, while offering a scalable model for tackling energy poverty and housing inequality—the *Family Village Program* already recognised in national and European policy debates.”

“*Project O2* reimagines what reforestation can look like in a country marked by excessive and often illegal forest exploitation.”

“*The Women’s Trade Union School* strengthens women’s roles within trade unions by linking feminist perspectives with practical organising.”

“Through a distinctive bottom-up approach, *Asylum Lawyers’ Network NWAA* connects individual cases to structural change and carries them through all instances, including European courts, creating lasting impact on national and EU-wide practice and legal standards.”

“As the first model of its kind at this scale in Slovakia and the wider region, the *Integrated Health and Social Care Centre* offers compelling evidence that multidisciplinary collaboration can deliver sustainable, systemic solutions to homelessness and social exclusion — and that these solutions can be transferred.”

“*Eko Lika GREENovation* turns a widespread environmental and economic problem into a compelling circular solution by transforming sheep wool waste into valuable agricultural inputs.”

“*The Ministry of Love and Empathy* uses institutional fiction and artistic methods to open new forms of public engagement.”

“By shifting the one-stop-shop model from institutional provision to community organisation, *KLIK - Cooperative-Led Energy and Climate OSS* blurs the line between service providers and beneficiaries.”

“*Modern Self-Defense* redefines a traditionally male-dominated field through a trauma-sensitive, preventive, and widely accessible approach.”

“Grounded in the perspectives of parents of children with disabilities and professionals with classroom experience, *Mini Diversity Explorers* ensures that authentic insight shapes both content and methodology.”

“*Humana Nova* has, for over a decade, consistently integrated social inclusion, ecological responsibility, and economic viability into a coherent model.”

“*BBM Farm* creates an integrated, low-threshold model in which social inclusion, environmental education, and culture meaningfully reinforce one another within a shared urban space.”

”

Nominated Projects 2026

Admission ticket to the accessible Pécs

NOMINATED

challenge There is no reliable nationwide database of accessible places, so people with disabilities and older adults cannot find truly accessible locations. Existing information is unverified and barriers only reveal themselves on arrival, limiting participation. What is needed is a community-built, grassroots network of verified city databases led by those directly affected.

Country
Hungary

Region
Implemented
nationwide

Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

Fields of action
Awareness raising,
Disability, Community
development

Organisation
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Pécs

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idea The Barrier-free Pécs Database shows how a medium-sized city can drive systemic change from the ground up. Accessibility knowledge is organised from below, not imposed from above. Making the invisible visible, the database highlights everyday barriers and shifts social mindset. Free access for users and surveyed locations alike is essential, and its simplicity makes adoption by other cities straightforward.

actors Exploration teams of up to four disabled association members conduct site visits using a professional checklist, sending descriptions and photos to the coordinator, who verifies and uploads entries in Hungarian and English. An IT expert handles maintenance. The coordinator manages marketing, partnerships, fundraising and model sharing. Site owners receive changes via newsletter.

impact The „Nothing about us without us“ principle gives people with low self-confidence meaningful agency. Community grows while decision-makers engage with accessibility as a city asset. Impact is measured through participant numbers, social participation levels, partnership growth and comparative analysis of accessible locations.

transfer Built on community involvement, peer experience, openness and measurability, the model adapts to cities, regions and countries — especially in Hungary, tourism and international partnerships. It applies wherever personal experience outweighs official information, such as sustainability, education and community services.

Buy Out Spektral – Securing Free Space

NOMINATED

challenge Rising property prices and speculation endanger self-managed cultural spaces. When Spektral's building was put up for sale in 2024, closure became a real risk. Non-commercial spaces for art, activism and civil society are vulnerable to short-term funding and private landlords. This crowdfunding project removes property from speculation and allows citizens to invest directly in social infrastructure.

Country
Austria

Region
Styria

Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

Fields of action
Awareness raising,
Community
development,
Culture

Organisation
Spektral Vermieter
Association (Owner) /
freefutureforces Asso-
ciation (Operator)

In cooperation with
Radio Helsinki,
IG Kultur Steiermark,
habiTAT

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idea Rather than waiting for an investor, the Spektral community acted: using the habiTAT model, €368,000 was raised through direct loans. The Spektral Vermieter association purchased the premises, with rent financing repayments and securing affordable rents long term. Spektral became the first cultural space admitted to the habiTAT network, proving solidarity financing works for culture too.

actors Spektral Vermieter owns the property; Free Future Forces has run operations since 2004. A volunteer team manages PR, loans and communications. Around 320 members shape Spektral's direction, supported by over 100 lenders. Partners include Radio Helsinki, Elevate Festival, IG Kultur Steiermark and habiTAT.

impact Solidarity financing works for culture — Spektral proves it. €368,000 raised from over 100 lenders and 320 members secures twenty years of cultural work and establishes affordable rents for the long term. As the first cultural project in the habiTAT network, Spektral now fields inquiries from threatened cultural spaces across the country, confirming the model's wider reach.

transfer Spektral has proven the habiTAT model works beyond housing. The legal structure under the Alternative Financing Act, communication strategy and experiential knowledge are replicable. Spektral now consults similar projects, serving as a reference for threatened cultural spaces, youth centres and self-managed initiatives seeking financial resilience.

Celje City Conferences

NOMINATED

challenge Low trust in public institutions, limited citizen participation and fragmentation among stakeholders define the local challenge. Structured dialogue between the municipality, experts, businesses and civil society is largely absent. The project responds to the need for more inclusive, transparent policymaking and tackles broader questions of social cohesion and participatory democracy.

Country
Slovenia

Region
Savinja

Sector
Public
administration

Fields of action
Urban development

Organisation
City Municipality of Celje

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idea A permanent, structured platform for dialogue between residents and key city stakeholders. City conferences provide a safe, open space where residents, experts, businesses and decision-makers participate equally and co-create solutions. A methodological process ensures ideas are translated into guidelines and concrete actions implemented by the city administration.

actors Developed in 2022 through collaboration between municipal leadership and external partners, who defined themes and selected speakers. External facilitators prepared content and process; municipal staff handled logistics. A dedicated core team was later established to lead the conferences long-term.

impact With 80 to 150 participants per conference, engagement is stable and diverse. The project strengthens trust between residents and the municipality and fosters shared responsibility. Impact is measured through post-conference reports on participation and proposals collected. A key indicator is the municipality's adoption of proposals into concrete actions.

transfer The model is adaptable to different contexts. Themes, methods and stakeholder engagement can be tailored locally. Core elements are participatory methods, the municipality as facilitator, and turning discussions into action. Transfer requires political support, cross-sector involvement, and basic organisational and financial capacity. Experience from Celje serves as a practical guide.

CroCube – Educational Space Platform

NOMINATED

challenge Several interconnected challenges drive this project: a lack of tangible national space achievements to inspire young people, limited hands-on STEM learning, low public understanding of space technologies in everyday life, and a need to strengthen the national innovation ecosystem. *CroCube* demonstrates that even small countries can build and operate satellites.

Country
Croatia

Region
Implemented nationwide

Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

Fields of action
Professional qualification,
Non-formal education,
Awareness raising

Organisation
CroCube –
Educational Space Platform

In cooperation with
Spacemanic CZ s.r.o.

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idea *CroCube* uses an on-orbit mission as an educational platform, making space accessible to all ages through public events, school partnerships, museum programmes and online content. Participants witness space in real time, connecting signals, data and imagery to science and teamwork. The project also promotes volunteering, mentoring and industry collaboration.

actors A core team works with technical partners and contributors including engineers, educators, designers and legal experts. Skills gained through training abroad are shared with the community. Mission outputs are accessible via amateur radio and open satellite data, extending beyond national borders.

impact Greater STEM interest, improved space literacy and a national model inspiring youth. Impact is measured through session and participant numbers, partnerships, media reach and audience engagement. Teacher and participant feedback and repeat participation provide additional qualitative insights.

transfer A satellite is not required everywhere, but the methodology is. Transferable elements include workshop formats, open calls, interactive campaigns, museum and school cooperation, and communication linking real data to accessible explanations. The model adapts to different regions through local partners and community-relevant topics.

Dankó Courtyard

NOMINATED

challenge Loneliness is a serious issue in large cities, where many cannot afford recreational activities. The Magdolna Quarter faces multiple challenges including violence, substance use, poverty and truancy, which reinforce each other. An open, safe community space where people can connect without expectations could offer meaningful relief.

Country
Hungary

Region
Budapest

Sector
Public administration

Fields of action
Awareness raising,
Youth welfare,
Community development

Organisation
Rév8 Józsefváros
Urban Development and Rehabilitation Company

In cooperation with
Municipality of Józsefváros (8th District of Budapest)

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idea The community space offers free activities without registration, open to all. The space is welcoming and inclusive at all times, with a sports field, barbecue area, green spaces and a community garden alongside organised programmes. Community workers are always on hand for support and conversation, and a district guard ensures safety during opening hours.

actors Open April to October, seven days a week, with two community workers and a district guard always present. A project leader works closely with a project coordinator handling operations and HR. Monthly tasks include scheduling, programme planning and external representation. Rév8's full communications team also contributes.

impact A strong community has emerged, with regular visitors of all ages. For residents of cramped apartments in the Magdolna district, the courtyard feels like their own space. Attendance has grown year on year, and in 2025 visitors began organising their own programmes. Word-of-mouth growth is itself a measurable indicator of success.

transfer Although location is key, the model adapts to regions with similar urban spaces. Free access, diverse programming, community presence and an inclusive, non-institutional atmosphere create a replicable framework for addressing urban loneliness and social disadvantage in comparable neighbourhoods.

HeliDoc - Real-time documentation that saves lives

NOMINATED

challenge High time pressure, cognitive stress and growing documentation requirements burden preclinical emergency care. Memory-based documentation is error-prone and pulls attention from patients. Destination hospitals receive critical information late, causing treatment delays. Existing IT systems were not built for dynamic emergency situations, putting patient safety at risk.



Country
Austria

Region
Carinthia, Tyrol

Sector
Commercial enterprise

Fields of action
Health

Organisation
Noxavis
Tech Solutions
FlexCo

In cooperation with
ARA Air Rescue,
Christophorus
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St. Pölten University
of Applied Sciences,
Medical University of
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idea HeliDoc weaves documentation into the care process. AI-powered voice assistance captures medical information in real time, generating records automatically and eliminating retrospective work. A secure live data stream sends structured patient data to the destination hospital before arrival. Offline AI keeps data sovereign without network coverage.

actors Noxavis Tech Solutions leads development. CEO Magdalena Druml handles design and user engagement; CTO Marco Sonnberger oversees software architecture and AI. Emergency personnel are continuously involved in development and testing. Research partners include FH St. Pölten, MedUni Graz and FH Joanneum, with hospitals evaluating the live data stream.

impact Real-time documentation and early information sharing cut time-to-first-treatment and raise patient safety, while easing strain on emergency teams. Care quality in rural areas improves and scarce resources are used more precisely. Impact is tracked through usability studies, professional feedback and real-world process data.

transfer Developed for air rescue, HeliDoc's modular design transfers to ground-based services, resuscitation teams and trauma rooms. Real-time documentation, hands-free use, offline capability and secure data transmission apply across contexts, making HeliDoc scalable wherever time pressure and documentation demands converge.

First Aid Courses for People Experiencing Homelessness

NOMINATED

challenge Acute health conditions, injuries and chronic illness are daily realities for people experiencing homelessness in high-risk environments. Access to practical first aid education adapted to their situation is extremely limited. Without knowledge or trust in the health system, minor problems escalate into avoidable complications and emergency interventions.



Country
Czech Republic

Region
Plzeň Region

Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

Fields of action
Homelessness,
Poverty,
Awareness raising

Organisation
Czech Red Cross -
Regional Branch Pilsen

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projekty/street-me-
dicine/

idea Practical first aid education reaches people experiencing homelessness in environments they know and trust. Registered nurses from the Street Medicine project in Plzeň lead courses using experiential methods rooted in real-life situations. Content and pace are tailored to participants' needs, strengthening emergency response, injury treatment and long-term healthy behaviours.

actors The Street Medicine team in Plzeň coordinates the project, handling planning, partner cooperation and recruitment alongside social services and NGOs. Registered nurses develop content and deliver training. In the next phase, trained young lecturers will teach under nurses' guidance. Czech Red Cross volunteers support practical delivery and organisation.

impact Participants gain first aid skills and health knowledge, preventing injuries from worsening and supporting mutual assistance within the community. The project also helps rebuild trust between people experiencing homelessness and health and social services. Impact is assessed through feedback, skill observation, follow-up conversations and field insights.

transfer A low-threshold approach, trust-based recruitment, modular structure, experiential learning and close cooperation between health-care professionals, social services and volunteers travel well to other contexts. Course content must be tailored locally, but the educational model applies in other regions and with other vulnerable groups facing barriers to mainstream health services.

Járókelő – Active Citizens for Livable Cities

NOMINATED

challenge Many urban public space issues go unresolved. Citizens often don't know how to report problems or doubt anything will happen. Fragmented municipal responsibilities produce slow, opaque procedures. The root cause is rarely bad faith, but lack of information and mutual distrust. Delayed interventions drive up costs, and citizen feedback rarely leads to systemic improvement.

Country
Hungary

Region
Implemented nationwide

Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

Fields of action
Advocacy,
Community development,
Environmental protection

Organisation
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idea Járókelő enables reporting, management and tracking of public space issues through a transparent process. A nationwide volunteer network ensures case processing and municipal follow-up. Beyond a technological tool, it builds structured relationships with municipalities and service providers, supported by a mobile app and data-driven dashboard.

actors Five professionals work with over 100 volunteers. More than 70 case handlers manage report forwarding and statuses, overseen by a coordinator ensuring quality control. Around 30 further volunteers provide administrative and legal support. Strategic planning is defined by the project owner; technology developed through project-based cooperation.

impact Beyond resolving urban issues, Járókelő fosters informed and engaged citizenship. Impact is measured through returning user rates, case resolution times and volunteer engagement. Tens of thousands of reports feed into visualised outputs enabling data-driven municipal feedback.

transfer Digital, scalable and institution-independent, the model adapts to other municipalities and international contexts. Proven in over 20 Hungarian municipalities, it is not location-specific. A mobile app under development broadens its reach, and the model extends naturally to other areas of public interest reporting.

KAMPUS

NOMINATED

challenge Slovakia has one of the EU's highest brain drain rates, with 20% of students studying abroad. Despite hosting three universities, the Trnava Region serves merely as a transit station due to its proximity to Bratislava and Brno. Scholarships address finances but ignore deeper ties. Without retaining talent, the region's transition to a knowledge-based economy will be impossible.

Country
Slovakia

Region
Trnava Region

Sector
Public administration

Fields of action
Non-formal education,
Regional development

Organisation
KIRA, n.o.

In cooperation with
Nádvorie

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idea A year-long programme works intensively with six participants, combining soft skills workshops, Design Thinking and real-world community projects with mentoring, networking and paid internships in partner organisations. Students are co-creators, not just attendees — they define co-living rules and shape programme content, building genuine roots in the region rather than responding to short-term incentives to stay.

actors A programme manager handles strategy, partnerships and finances, while a community coordinator oversees daily operations and group dynamics. An alumni coordinator maintains the alumni community, and a social media manager handles communications. A network of professional mentors provides individual guidance, with administrative and HR support provided by KIRA.

impact Mentoring quality and satisfaction are tracked through feedback sessions and interviews, while skill changes are measured via entry and exit questionnaires. Long-term impact is monitored through alumni success stories — several graduates now work in regional development and the non-profit sector. The programme turns students into leaders who create value in the region rather than leaving it.

transfer Designed as a universal blueprint, the public-private partnership model — private sector providing infrastructure, local government delivering content — applies to any European university city. The selection methodology, mentoring structure and legal framework are transferable, and KIRA offers the model as open-source know-how with support.

challenge Municipal waste management faces growing pressure to support circular economy principles. Socially disadvantaged groups have limited access to reusable goods, and awareness of responsible consumption remains low. KOLO responds through systematic reuse, targeted social support, education and community building — offering practical, real-life examples of sustainable behaviour.

Country
Slovakia

Region
Bratislava Region

Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

Fields of action
Awareness raising,
Community develop-
ment, Environmental
protection

Organisation
KOLO n.o.

In cooperation with
City Hall of Bratislava

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idea KOLO integrates waste management, social support and education into a comprehensive reuse model. Items are collected, sorted and returned to circulation, reducing waste. Quality goods reach disadvantaged groups through targeted assistance from partner organisations. School programmes, workshops and public events raise awareness of responsible consumption and circular economy principles.

actors Municipal waste company OLO a.s. runs the project through employees at the reuse centre. The KOLO team comprises a manager, team leader and shop and warehouse staff, with colleagues across OLO departments contributing to operations, events and administration. This integrated structure ensures professional oversight and effective delivery of environmental and social objectives.

impact Volume and weight of items received, sold and donated, gift deeds executed, workshop frequency and visitor attendance track quantitative impact. Visitor satisfaction surveys and community benefit assessments provide the qualitative picture, together offering a comprehensive view of KOLO's environmental, social and educational contribution.

transfer Tailored to Bratislava but adaptable to other cities and regions, the model's transferable elements include the reuse centre, donation system, educational workshops, community engagement and impact monitoring. Financial requirements may limit scope in smaller municipalities, but the core model remains replicable across diverse contexts.

challenge Mainstream media increasingly produces fast, superficial content derived from PR rather than journalism, eroding media literacy and critical thinking — particularly among young people. In-depth cultural coverage has almost disappeared, with non-institutional culture especially at risk. Media literacy remains neglected in education, leaving young people vulnerable to information overload.

Country
Croatia

Region
Implemented
nationwide

Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

Fields of action
Non-formal
education,
Culture, Art

Organisation
Kurziv – Platform for
Matters of Culture,
Media and Society

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idea *Kulturpunkt* is a media platform established by the independent cultural scene it serves, built on the belief that culture is vital to a fairer, more inclusive society. It provides daily coverage of cultural production and activist initiatives, offering critical perspectives on underrepresented topics and fostering civic engagement through education and work with young people.

actors An editorial team coordinates the newsroom, supported by over 100 external contributors from diverse professional and generational backgrounds. A key element is the inclusion of new voices: young authors enter through an educational programme offering mentored work and first professional media opportunities, ensuring long-term renewal of the author base.

impact The project raises visibility of independent culture, encourages critical discussion and supports underrepresented voices. Educational programmes build a sustainable knowledge infrastructure beyond market-oriented media. Impact is assessed through contributor diversity, long-term engagement, community feedback and continuity of work.

transfer Although rooted in Croatia's independent cultural scene, core approaches travel well: understanding culture and media as public goods, critical reflection and education as empowerment tools, and mentored inclusion of new voices — already tested in a European online pilot. Formats making complex topics accessible adapt to other local and regional contexts.

Mentoring of new nurses

NOMINATED

challenge For nurses entering the profession or moving to a new practice environment, adapting to unfamiliar work is a major challenge. The first year is particularly demanding and closely associated with high staff turnover — a significant issue for institutions facing ongoing workforce shortages.

Country
Austria

Region
Styria

Sector
Public administration

Fields of action
Work, Health, Care

Organisation
Geriatric Health Centre of the City of Graz

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idea Starting on day one and lasting at least twelve months, the mentoring process offers guidance throughout the critical induction period. Beyond onboarding, it supports long-term professional and personal development. Strengthened motivation and team integration foster lasting loyalty, while improved collaboration ensures skills are used effectively and workloads distributed fairly.

actors Strategic oversight lies with GGZ nursing management, supported by a steering committee. A project team handles organisation, training and evaluation. Ward managers assign mentor-mentee pairs; nursing experts provide professional guidance; HR and IT ensure technical support. Mentors deliver phase-specific support based on a structured learning catalogue.

impact Structured mentoring enhances the appeal of nursing, counteracts workforce shortages and improves patient care. Impact is measured through turnover statistics, surveys and qualitative feedback, with retention indicators integrated into the balanced scorecard.

transfer Developed within the Geriatric Health Centres of the City of Graz, the model is designed for broader application. The mentoring process is universally applicable, the learning catalogue adaptable, and all staff can be qualified as mentors — making this a scalable approach to healthcare workforce retention.

National Competence Centre against Abduction

NOMINATED

challenge Serious human rights violations occur when people in Austria are forcibly relocated abroad by family members. Those affected endure control, surveillance, forced marriage and severely restricted freedom. Each case spans different countries and legal systems, creating complex legal, security-related and psychosocial challenges that demand a coordinated response.

Country
Austria

Region
Implemented nationwide

Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

Fields of action
Law, Justice, Family,
Violence prevention

Organisation
PeriFeri – Association for the Promotion of Education, Counseling, and Empowerment

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idea At the heart of this initiative is a comprehensive, victim-centred approach preserving human dignity and strengthening agency. Acting as the central coordination point between authorities, foreign representatives and protection agencies, it structures cross-border processes and closes critical gaps in national and international support systems.

actors A small, clearly structured team drives the work: a project manager for strategy and quality assurance, a deputy covering management tasks, and a project assistant. All three work directly with clients, advising and accompanying those affected from the first signs of abduction through crisis intervention, security planning and return.

impact Abduction, forced marriage and family violence are firmly established as human rights violations, regardless of gender, origin or status. Those affected learn about their rights and available support, restoring their agency. Impact is tracked through reports, consultations, returns and training demand, as well as qualitative feedback from professionals and clients.

transfer Primarily serving people in Austria with valid residence or asylum status and Austrian nationals taken abroad against their will, this model is rooted in Austrian structures. Its coordinated approach, international networking and country-specific expertise offer a replicable framework to strengthen victim protection in other national contexts.

STEM EduCamp

NOMINATED

challenge Young people in southern Croatia — especially those in rural and island communities — have limited access to STEM resources like museums and extracurricular activities. Schools in smaller towns often rely on outdated curricula, and teachers have few opportunities for professional development. Without informal, low-pressure environments to explore science, many students perceive STEM as too complex, leaving essential skills underdeveloped.

Country
Croatia

Region
Dubrovnik-Neretva
County, Split-Dalmatia
County, Šibenik-Knin
County

Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

Fields of action
Non-formal education,
Leisure education,
Youth welfare

Organisation
Association “Empower –
Improve – Integrate
for Development”

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idea Interactive workshops, outdoor camps, and hackathons offer hands-on STEM learning, while professional development programmes and a dedicated community support teachers. Science picnics and outdoor events engage whole communities. Through experiment-based learning in informal settings, the initiative builds early scientific literacy, motivation, and equitable access for students who might otherwise be excluded.

actors The OUI team implements the initiative with STEM specialists and volunteers. A coordinator oversees activities, logistics and school collaboration, while experts lead workshops and teacher training. Teachers pilot new materials, published in a school manual, and support impact monitoring. Community partners organise events, with volunteers assisting preparation and workshops.

impact Impact is tracked quantitatively by participation numbers and event frequency, and qualitatively through questionnaires on STEM confidence, interest, and talent perception. Problem-solving is assessed via observation and criteria, while community engagement is measured through stakeholder participation and feedback.

transfer Designed with mobility in mind from the outset, the model, complete with its mobile laboratory, modular workshops and open-access materials, can be easily adapted for use in other regions and countries. It is particularly valuable in rural and underserved areas, but is equally applicable to urban settings, diverse school types and a wide range of age groups.

Stop Intergenerational Transmission of Violence

NOMINATED

challenge Violence within intimate relationships is a serious and growing problem in the Czech Republic. Around a third of women and 7% of men experience it, and children are exposed to violence at home in half of all cases. Those who witness violence face higher risks of poor health, relationship difficulties and addiction, and are more likely to perpetuate it in later life.

Country
Czech Republic

Region
South Moravian
Region

Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

Fields of action
Mental health,
Violence prevention,
Family

Organisation
SPONDEA

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idea Research consistently shows that working with people who commit violence is key to reducing it. The Anger Without Violence programme helps clients identify anger triggers and strengthen their mental well-being, focusing on conflict management and conscious, safe emotion work. The programme is provided free of charge.

actors A director oversees four psychologists and therapists in a non-hierarchical structure. One member liaises specifically with clients' partners. Therapy is provided individually and in groups co-led by two therapists. The team cooperates with the Intervention Centre, Crisis Assistance, police, courts, child protection and the European Work with Perpetrators network.

impact Participants report better well-being and healthier relationships. Children benefit from safer family environments. The broader impact lies in interrupting the intergenerational transmission of violence, measured through client questionnaires administered before, during and after the programme.

transfer The TEZA method travels. Any organisation can adopt it through thorough study, dedicated training and gradual implementation, with regular supervision and cultural adaptation where needed. An intervention centre in the Liberec region has already been trained, marking the first step in wider dissemination.

SWAP FESTIVAL: Circular revolution against waste

NOMINATED

challenge Three interconnected challenges drive the project. Environmentally, 210,000 tonnes of textiles are discarded annually in the Czech Republic despite prevention being a stated priority. Socially, the buy-and-throw model prevails among Prague residents in dense housing. And intergenerational community spaces are disappearing, deepening social isolation.

Country
Czech Republic

Region
Capital Prague, South Moravian Region, South Bohemia, Vysočina Region, Hradec Králové Region, Liberec Region, Moravian-Silesian Region, Pardubice Region, Plzeň Region, Central Bohemian Region, Zlín Region

Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

Fields of action
Awareness raising,
Community development,
Environmental protection

Organisation
SWAP Prague

In cooperation with
Institute of Circular Economy (INCIEN), Global Fashion Exchange, Fashion Revolution, Federation of Furniture Banks, Plastia s.r.o., AutoNapúl, Zrno Zrnko, Heroine, Vogue, Na myslí (association), municipalities, and schools.

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festival



idea With textile bin usability below 40%, the project combines the circular swap model with community activation. SWAP Prague hosts a professional festival competing with fast fashion and acts as an incubator, training local organisers and transferring know-how. A centralised communications hub and Mapotic map connect the entire network, replacing anonymous bins with a living community.

actors Lucie Poubová, Kristýna Holubová and Ivana Špačková manage the project, supported by external experts. SWAP Prague acts as a central hub while trained local organisers run their own events autonomously. The Institute of Circular Economy provides data expertise, enabling efficient scaling without depleting core team capacity.

impact An on-site reuse rate of 80% minimises the carbon footprint of transport and waste processing. The project shifts behaviour from passive consumption to active sharing, measured through volunteers, trained leaders and established communities. INCIEN methodology provides statistics currently absent even at state level.

transfer *The Swap Academy* adapts the festival to any context, from corporate parks to small-town community centres. Operational know-how, visual identity, communications and the Find a SWAP tool are all transferable. SWAP Prague is expanding to regional cities and preparing a franchise package, becoming a model for community-driven waste management

Path to Dignity and Empowerment of Roma Women

NOMINATED

challenge Roma women face two barriers: external oppression through poverty, discrimination and controlling institutional approaches, and internalised oppression expressed as mistrust, shame and silenced voices. Many also face domestic violence and rigid gender roles. Safe spaces to discuss health, relationships and parenthood are largely absent.

Country
Czech Republic

Region
South Moravian Region

Sector
Civil Society
Social Economy

Fields of action
Ethnicity, Gender equality, Community development

Organisation
Teen Challenge
International Czech Republic

In cooperation with
SocioFactor s.r.o., expert network and co-organization of the conference "Dignity of Roma Women", Local Roma churches (Czech Republic) – community support structures, trust-building, and engagement

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idea Participatory HCD-based research identified the concrete needs of Roma women, forming the foundation for targeted support: planned parenthood accompaniment, workshops and breakfasts where women share experiences and build skills. The inaugural Dignity of Roma Women conference connected women, experts, policymakers and local leaders.

actors The core team of Jitka Opálková, Nicol Maláčová and Olga Čonková Polláková works alongside SocioFactor researchers. Partnerships span the Early Childhood Care Platform, the Government Commissioner for Roma Minority Affairs, the Museum of Roma Culture, church-based organisations, Masaryk University and a network of Brno NGOs.

impact Roma women move from subjects of controlling policies to active agents in decisions about their own lives, health and their children's futures. Growing self-confidence, opening of taboo topics and stronger community-institution relationships are measured through interviews, participation monitoring and changes in healthcare access.

transfer Trust, participation, HCD methodology and a cooperation model linking social services, healthcare, research, churches and cultural institutions travel well across regions. Community meetings, women as co-creators and sensitive approaches to planned parenthood adapt to diverse contexts. Already being shared and prepared for systematic dissemination.



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