



Contest for Citizens Ideas towards Better EU Budget

Awarded Citizens Projects
December 2012

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Background

The CEE Bankwatch Network Contest for Best Citizens Project Ideas for sustainable use of the EU Funds was carried out in eight Central and Eastern European countries¹. A few hundred citizens project ideas in various fields from *community development to energy efficiency and waste management* were collected and evaluated by national experts within the participating countries. The best ideas were selected on the basis of their potential to contribute to the sustainable development of the communities in question and awarded in *the official national Representations of the European Commissions* in the end of 2012.

On 19 February 2013, the Final Appraisal Ceremony will take place in Brussels, where the authors of the winning projects will meet to present and share their expectations and ideas for the better and more sustainable use of the next EU Budget with representatives of the EU institutions.

This event will showcase winners' ideas and the overall outcomes of the national contests, with a focus on the future Cohesion Policy and how it can deliver sustainable, grassroots projects and initiatives. It will present a chance for a step towards a closer and more productive dialogue between citizens and institutions, especially needed in the crucial period of the discussions and negotiations over Europe's future budget and the elaboration of national investment plans for the period 2014 - 2020.

¹ Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia, Macedonia
<http://bankwatch.org/contest>

Bulgaria

Mountain bike park “Hissarya” in Central Bulgaria

Favorable natural conditions, historical sights and many forest roads and trails in nearby woods are ideal conditions for the development of mountain biking, and in particular one of its styles - Cross-Country. The project aims to develop 3 routes: a short length, one for beginners and nature lovers, a 4-5 hours route for professionals and an all day long tour, combined with sightseeing.



*Winners Award Ceremony, Sofia, Bulgaria
23 November 2012*

The Urban Solar charger

The device will mimic a tree and any portable electronic devices will be charged by the sun, while their owners will be resting on a bench and surfing the Internet. About four of these chargers could be built and exposed within amount of the award - 1000 euro.

Bees in the city park

The project – settling of a bee colony - will be implemented on the roof of a public building in one of the many parks in the Bulgarian capital, Sofia. Workshops for both children and adults will be run by professional beekeepers, biology teachers and volunteers. Children will be given the opportunity to produce some honey themselves.

For more information on the contest in Bulgaria, go to:

<http://bankwatch.org/sastezanie>

Croatia

Bicycles Save Trees

The project idea is based on low-carbon separate waste collection system in the City of Koprivnica. The project idea is called *Bicycles Save Trees* and it is run by UZOR Hrvatske (NGO for sustainable development of Croatia). The concept is based on individual waste pick-up with bicycles on demand of the users of their service. The service is provided for free and it is entirely financed by selling of the collected materials. The impact of the project is reduced material consumption, reduction of CO₂, saving trees for paper production, etc.

Urban Gardening in Zagreb

The project idea is for promotion of *urban gardening*. The city of Zagreb has a lot of unused land and this initiative aims to establish shared urban gardens, where citizens of big residential buildings can have a piece of land for growing vegetables. The idea is to reduce the distance for food transport and to enable citizens to produce their own healthy food under supervision of experienced producers.

Waste Recycling

The project is based on *waste recycling* in the City of Karlovac old town area where the collection of waste is impossible for modern motor vehicles. The city of Karlovac does not provide such service in this historic city area therefore the NGO would *on voluntary basis collect recycled waste and transfer it to recycling companies*.

For more information on the contest in Croatia, go to:

<http://bankwatch.org/natjecaj>

Hungary

Mend it Yourself!

The project aims to show young people *how they could implement sustainability in their own lives, how they can use, mend, repair old, out-of-order tools, toys, household machines, bicycles in alternative ways*. Thus they develop their social competences and other skills inevitable in communities and everyday life, as well as at the jobs market.

They convince youngsters of the values of common environmental action *through street improvisation workshops, adventure therapy, theatre workshops etc.* Green Roots develop the participants' competences through individual training and through community activities where participants help each other and share their experiences and skills. The main target group of the project is *marginalised youth, as well as their existing or future communities*.

Inventor: Hungarian Green Roots (members of the Federation of Young European Greens) from Pécs

Place of implementation: Pécs

Website: <http://pecs.zofi.hu>

Scones baked in ash

The project aims to develop *a local production and consumption structure in and around Nyíregyháza, in order to promote the introduction of a local alternative currency*. The project promoters strive to develop *a cooperative culture*, based on cooperation with nature and among its members. This needs gradual development and the specific, hands-on involvement of people that contributes to the restructuring of the social system and the enhancement of the learning skills of participants. As a first step, they would like to restore trust among people through community action, e.g. *urban gardening, community rental system, and book-exchange*.

Inventor: Cultural Creatives of Nyíregyháza, backed by Inspi-Ráció Association

Place of implementation: Nyíregyháza

Website: <http://nyiregyhazipenz.blogspot.hu/>

Preparation of plantation of wood along the channels to develop local energy production and promote the conservation of biodiversity

Along the drainage channels owned by the local government and operated by the water management company, *the project promoters plan to plant trees of local origin*. This would contribute to the *conservation of biodiversity, provide employment in the local community, increase forest areas, decrease loss of water due to evaporation and provide raw material for the heating of local public buildings*. This would reduce the dependency on *foreign energy sources and create energy sovereignty*.

Inventor: Derekegyházért Közhasznú Egyesület (local village development association)

Place of implementation: Derekegyház

REduce – REuse – REcycle - PARTY / Recycling Party

The primary aim of the *project is to use waste from overconsumption at an as high as possible scale in an environmentally conscious manner, e.g. through the exchange of worn tools/gadgets*. The

project promoter also plans to present creative ways of using these things at workshops led by artists at regular intervals. The project award would be used for the recycling party and arts workshop in February. The project also aims to develop a national network to promote this „good practice” widely. Based on the members of a growing community, a *platform for sharing „common treasures” for the exchange of not only material assets but also experiences, know-how for public benefit is to be established.*

Inventor: „Greenland group” civic society – backed by TIT Stúdió Association

Place of implementation: Budapest

Website: <http://www.greenportal.hu>

For more information on the contest in Hungary, go to:

http://mtvsz.blog.hu/2012/06/27/eu_alapok_te_erted#more4614135

Latvia

1st Prize: Eco-thoughts express in Riebiņi

The project aims to increase environmental awareness of children and youngsters and mobilize them to deal with global environmental challenges while contributing to local sustainable development in Riebiņi County. The ideas and activities have been developed by youngsters themselves and they include production of information materials and drawing books, giving thematic lectures and regularly organizing events in schools of the county and organize exhibition in the end.



Winners Award Ceremony, Riga, Latvia
22 November 2012

2nd Prize: Footbridges for bird-watching in Liepāja city

The project aims to develop footbridges and set up information billboards in Lake Liepāja to encourage people to learn about nature in the city, do bird-watching and find new ways of co-existence between people and nature. The Liepāja lake is a nature protected area, although there has been a management plan developed, defining areas that can be used for recreation. In practice, those areas are not accessible for visitors and people living in the neighborhood and therefore nature remains distant to many of them

3rd Prize: Creation of a multifunctional center for work and recreation in rural area in Ozolnieki County

The project aims to support efforts of local NGO in building skills of various social groups to apply ecological management methods and contribute to strengthening of local community. It envisages implementation of various activities that involve cultivation of land in rural area, developing of cycling path and camping site for children's summer camps, creating a pond. It also includes learning and applying organic farming methods and creating a composting site that could be used by local community.

4th Prize: Creation of „green class” in Ramuli primary school

The project is aimed to create „green class” nearby the school building, where children can learn and research on the environment, observe, discover and deal with various environmental challenges. With new facilities, environmental education methods will become more elaborated as the project will allow the provision of the necessary facilities for learning outdoors. The project has been developed by Ramuli primary school.

For more information on the contest in Latvia, go to:
<http://bankwatch.org/konkurss>

Macedonia

'Meteo' sensor boxes

The project's aim is *providing free and easily accessible information related to environmental pollution*. The NGO Free Software has designed a special box containing custom selected sensors which can measure various environmental parameters. Boxes can be placed anywhere, as long as they have internet access. The project is a direct result of the *lack of the city of Skopje to cope with huge air pollution last year, and as a result of increased number of deaths due to air pollution*. The project can be implemented by municipalities on local level and it will on one hand increase the information flow towards citizens but also provide the necessary push for municipalities to deal with air pollution locally.



*Winners Award Ceremony, Skopje, Macedonia
22 November 2012*

Web and mobile applications for a better environment

This project envisions the production of *mobile applications and a web based application for citizens who would report environmental problems in their community*. The mobile application takes the location information of the taken photograph and sends the picture on the web server. The urgency and type of problem will be selective from the application. The respective municipality services will be prompted to act in order to resolve the problem.

Eco-shelter

The Eco-shelter will be built with recycled materials and will be completely self-sustainable system with installed photovoltaic and solar collectors. The aim of the project is to provide both a low cost, self-sustaining shelter for stray animals and help alleviate the problem with stray animals in a humane way. Animals brought to the shelter will be accommodated. The shelter will provide space for around 80 dogs or cats. Animals will be kept in specially designed area (not in cages). *This project can be implemented by any municipality that faces a problem with stray animals*.

For more information on the contest in Macedonia, go to:
<http://www.ekosvest.com.mk/mk/aktivnost.php?id=16>

Poland

1st Prize – Bio-construction

The project is based on an idea of foundation of *Bio-construction Technologies Center* in Kock (Lubuskie Voivodship, Poland). The idea is for the development of a *professional implementation center focused on eco-passive building technologies*. It will be financed from production of bio-building materials, consulting services and trainings. On the preliminary stage it would employ around 15/20 people. The foundation of the center would accelerate the formation of a new market segment in the field of residential buildings and thus would help to achieve tangible results in reduction of CO2 emissions in this sector.



*Winners Award Ceremony, Warsaw, Poland
29 November 2012*

2nd Prize – Rainwater for a rainy day

The project aims at the construction of *four reservoirs of rainwater located by three settlements in Krzeszowice* (Małopolskie Voivodship, Poland). The main *aim of the project is to solve the problem of temporary water shortages that occur in the region mostly from spring to autumn*. During the draught period inhabitants could collect water from the reservoirs and use it in their daily farm work. In total the system shall supply water to 40 households and 15 small farms as well as to the employees and guests of the mountain hut.

3rd Prize – Implementation of Community Supported Agriculture in Mazowsze

The Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is an alternative local model for agriculture and food distribution. CSA applies also to a specific group of people who *support one or more local farms and thus share the risk of costs related to food production with the producers*. CSA constitutes an alternative, favorable model for small farms. Thanks to advance payments the farmer knows his annual profit and can run his farm independently from prices fluctuations on the market. Payments are made in the early spring and deliver necessary means for investments in seeds, equipment and fertilizers.

For more information on the contest in Poland, go to:
<http://bankwatch.org/konkurs>

Slovakia

Old, but good "Village jumble sale"

The aim of the project is *to create a roofed market place, a sort of jumble sale* where people can bring unused things (e.g. Old tables, chairs, TVs, radios, washing machines, etc.) in order to avoid items ending up in waste collection points, scrap yards or even illegal dumps. As a result, *the amount of waste in the region will be reduced.*

"Games" in Bohunice

A neglected park with garden, chapel and a renovated manor house in the heart of the town could be used by all the citizens. The project *suggested turning the garden into an orchard (containing local sorts of apple, pear, plumb, cherry trees, briars etc) with a small herd of sheep, which would graze there and as well as a fishpond.* In autumn, the fruit would be sold to citizens, cooked into marmalades and sold at charity events and sheep meat to be eaten at a yearly traditional firemen festival. Fish from fishpond would be distributed on Christmas for the traditional Christmas meal.

Rail cycle-park Bratislava Branch

An old neglected rail station would be cleaned and revitalized. The aim of the project is to create a cycle track in the station between the tracks to ease the traffic in that part of town, plant trees to improve the environment and renovate the building and create a new community and culture center while keeping the spirit of railways. Also, a small community vegetable garden with a composting place would be selected to motivate people to produce their own food, recycle and make use of biological waste.

For more information on the contest in Slovakia, go to:

<http://bankwatch.org/sutaz>