

# **Project Report**

## **“Ambassadors of Local Change”**

The project “Ambassadors of Local Change” was an initiative addressed to young residents of the city, aimed at increasing youth participation in decision-making processes and strengthening the civic competences of young people. The project was implemented with the support of Fundacja Antares within the *Erasmus+* programme and focused on developing knowledge about mechanisms of civic participation, in particular opportunities for youth involvement in the Participatory Budget of the City of Kraków.

The report was prepared by the project participants and presents our experiences, observations, and conclusions from activities carried out in 2024–2025. The document describes the successive stages of the project – from the study visit and learning about good practices, through district meetings and a proposal-writing marathon, to the young leaders’ camp. The report also includes an analysis of the project’s impact on participants as well as recommendations concerning youth policy and ways of engaging young residents in decision-making processes.

Our goal was not only to learn about the mechanisms of civic participation, but also to actively engage in activities for the benefit of our city and to develop concrete project proposals that could be implemented within the Participatory Budget.

### **Study Visit – Learning About Good Practices in Youth Participation**

The first important stage of the project was a study visit that took place on 27–29 May 2024 in the city of Pécs. Five project participants took part in the trip and had the opportunity to learn about examples of initiatives supporting the civic engagement of young people.

During the visit we met representatives of the non-governmental organization Nevelők Háza Egyesület, which has been cooperating with local authorities for many years in implementing educational and social projects for young people. The organization runs numerous activities



that support the development of civic competences among youth and promote their participation in public life.

On the first day of the visit we met with the organization's team and volunteers, who spoke about their projects and their daily work. We learned how educational activities for young people are organized, what methods are used in civic engagement projects, and how partnerships with public institutions are developed.

On the following days we also visited the city hall, where we had the opportunity to meet representatives of the local authorities responsible for youth policy. During the meeting we were presented with the city's strategy for developing activities aimed at young people and discussed how the municipality cooperates with civil society organizations and educational institutions.



Special attention was given to the promotion of the Participatory Budget and to methods of engaging residents in decision-making processes. The discussions covered, among other things, ways of informing residents about the possibility of submitting project proposals, organizing public consultations, and building trust between local authorities and the community.

The visit also included several discussion panels during which participants exchanged experiences related to youth engagement. We talked about the challenges of involving young people in civic activities and about ways of increasing their motivation to participate in participatory processes.

The study visit was an important source of inspiration for us and showed that active youth participation in public life is possible when appropriate conditions for dialogue and cooperation are created.



## District Youth Meetings

One of the most important stages of the project was the organization of district youth meetings aimed at collecting ideas from young residents about the changes they would like to see in their immediate surroundings and in the city as a whole. These meetings created an opportunity to discuss what everyday life for young people in the city looks like, what challenges we observe in our urban environment, and what solutions could be introduced through municipal participatory mechanisms, particularly through the Participatory Budget of Kraków.

The meetings took place between 15 November 2024 and 22 January 2025. During this period we organized 10 meetings attended by a total of 212 young people – secondary school students, university students, and young residents from different districts of the city interested in local issues and in having an influence on decisions concerning public space.

Our goal was not only to present the rules of the Participatory Budget, but above all to create a space for open discussion about the needs of young people and for jointly generating ideas for initiatives that could be implemented in the city. For this reason, we chose a workshop-based methodology that encourages dialogue, creativity, and the exchange of experiences.

### Working methodology – the World Café method

During the meetings we used the World Café method, one of the commonly used participatory approaches applied in public consultations and idea-gathering processes involving residents. This method enables parallel discussions in small groups while allowing participants to learn about different perspectives and further develop ideas proposed by others.



For the meetings we prepared five thematic tables corresponding to key areas of city life and the topics most frequently mentioned by young people in conversations about their needs and interests. These areas were: green spaces and ecology, education, culture, infrastructure, and sport and recreation.

Each table was equipped with large sheets of paper where ideas, comments, and conclusions from the discussions were



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written down. This allowed participants joining a table in later rounds to see the previously suggested ideas and expand on them or propose new solutions.

The meetings were divided into three rounds of discussion. In each round participants worked at one thematic table, and after the round ended they moved to a different table and topic. This rotation allowed every participant to take part in several discussions and contribute to multiple thematic areas.

At each table there was also a “table host”, usually one of the young leaders involved in the project. The role of the host was to introduce new participants to the topic, briefly summarize ideas discussed earlier, and ensure that all proposals were recorded. Thanks to this system, each round of conversation built upon the previous discussions.

At this stage we did not aim to develop fully prepared project proposals for the Participatory Budget. The primary goal was to collect ideas and discuss what works well in the city and what could be changed or improved. Participants could propose both specific initiatives and more general ideas related to urban space, transport, green areas, or cultural activities.

This format made the discussions very open and creative. Ideas often emerged spontaneously, with one proposal leading to another. Participants inspired each other, added new elements to previously suggested ideas, or proposed completely new solutions.

One participant said after the workshop:

*“ It was really cool that we could move between the tables and see what others had come up with. Sometimes someone mentioned an idea and a moment later several people were adding their own thoughts, and suddenly it turned into something much bigger.”*

Another participant pointed out that this format made it easier to join the discussion:

*“ At first I was a bit nervous, but it was easier to say something at a small table than in front of everyone. And once we started talking, the ideas just kept coming.”*

The idea maps collected during the meetings and written on paper table sheets were later analyzed by the project team. This made it possible to organize the proposals and group them into main thematic categories.



The list of ideas gathered during the district meetings became the basis for further project activities, particularly the proposal-writing marathon, during which some of these concepts were developed into concrete projects submitted to the Participatory Budget.

The district meetings also showed us how much potential for action young people have and how important it is to create spaces for discussing local issues. For many participants it was their first experience of having a real influence on city matters and their first opportunity to learn about mechanisms of civic participation.

As one participant summarized:

*“ People often say that young people are not interested in the city, but I think it’s the opposite. Usually no one asks us about it. Once we were given space to talk, there were really a lot of ideas.”*



### Youth Ideas for Participatory Budget Projects

During the district meetings held between 15 November 2024 and 22 January 2025, together with other young residents we discussed what kinds of initiatives could be implemented in our city through the Participatory Budget. During the workshops we analyzed the needs of our districts, talked about problems noticed by young people in the everyday functioning of the city, and reflected on possible solutions that could improve the quality of life for residents.

We worked in several thematic groups, which helped us organize the ideas and look at them from different perspectives. As a result of these discussions, several dozen project proposals were

created. For clarity, we divided them into five main areas: green spaces and ecology, education, culture, infrastructure, and sport and recreation. This structure helped us identify which aspects of city life are particularly important for young residents and where we most often see the need for change.



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During the meetings we noticed that many ideas focused on the quality of public space, access to green areas, practical education, and opportunities to spend free time in active and meaningful ways. At the same time, many proposals concerned environmental initiatives, community integration, and improving access to different services for young people.

Below we present the main directions of ideas developed during the district meetings. The full list of all proposals prepared by the participants can be found in the annex to this publication.

## **Green Spaces and Ecology**

One of the most frequently mentioned categories concerned ideas related to the natural environment and increasing the amount of green space in the city. During the discussions we repeatedly emphasized the importance of green areas for residents' health, air quality, and overall quality of life in urban environments.



Among the proposals were ideas for creating new parks and small green squares in districts with high building density. Participants pointed out that access to greenery is particularly important in places where residents have limited opportunities to relax outdoors. We also discussed the possibility of transforming some municipal areas into small neighborhood parks or recreational spaces.

Many ideas also focused on introducing solutions that support biodiversity. One proposal was to create flower meadows in parks, green areas, and along transport routes. Participants noted that such solutions are beneficial for pollinating insects while also adding aesthetic value to the urban landscape.

The idea of community gardens also generated significant interest. We proposed creating places where residents could jointly grow vegetables, herbs, and fruit. Such gardens could serve integrative, educational, and recreational purposes while promoting a more environmentally friendly lifestyle.

During the meetings we also discussed the need to plant more trees throughout the city. Participants highlighted the role of trees in lowering temperatures during heat waves,



improving air quality, and enhancing the visual appeal of public spaces. Another idea was to create avenues of fruit trees that could be accessible to residents.

Some proposals focused on introducing green infrastructure into the urban environment. These included, for example, green public transport stops with plants growing on their roofs or walls, as well as green roofs on public buildings. Such solutions could improve the urban microclimate and increase biologically active areas within the city.

We also discussed ways to reduce waste and promote more responsible consumption. One idea was to introduce a system of bottle-return machines operating on a deposit basis. This type of solution could encourage residents to return packaging and help reduce the amount of waste in public spaces.

Additional proposals concerned clothing exchange initiatives in schools and events promoting the reuse of items. Such activities could help reduce clothing overproduction and increase environmental awareness among young people.

Finally, some ideas focused on protecting animals living in the city. Participants suggested creating hedgehog shelters in parks, developing urban beekeeping initiatives, and planting vegetation that supports pollinating insects.

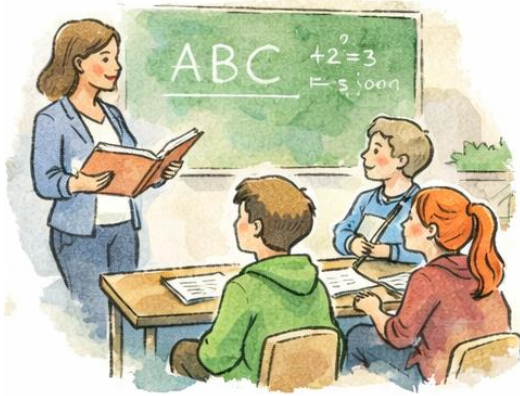
## **Education**

The second important area of ideas concerned projects related to education. During the meetings we often emphasized that schools should prepare young people for the real challenges of adult life, not only for passing exams.

One of the most frequently discussed topics was the mental health of young people. Many participants pointed out that students experience significant stress related to schoolwork, exams, and social expectations. For this reason, several ideas focused on organizing workshops on coping with stress, relaxation techniques, and building a healthy balance between study and rest.

During the meetings, participants also proposed initiatives related to financial education. These included lectures and workshops that would help young people understand the basics of budgeting, saving money, and making responsible financial decisions.





Participants also highlighted the importance of developing practical life skills. Among the suggested initiatives were workshops on cooking, basic legal knowledge, dealing with administrative matters, and planning a professional career.

Another important topic was equal access to education. One proposal involved creating a support programme for students preparing for the final secondary school exams by funding tutoring or organizing free preparatory classes.

Participants also suggested improving access to psychological support in schools and increasing the accessibility of school infrastructure for people with disabilities.

## Culture

The third category of ideas focused on projects related to culture and the artistic life of the city. During the meetings we emphasized that culture can be an important tool for social integration and a way for young people to develop their interests and passions.

Among the proposals were ideas for organizing thematic festivals, music events, and meetings with artists. Participants also suggested organizing concerts by young musicians in public spaces and creating places where emerging artists could present their work.

Some ideas were also connected with promoting the history of **Kraków**. These included urban games related to the city's history as well as educational events organized in public spaces.

Some participants also proposed creating legal spaces for street art and murals that could enrich the visual character of the city while also providing a platform for young artists to showcase their creativity.



## Infrastructure

Another group of ideas concerned urban infrastructure and transport. During the meetings many participants pointed out the need to improve public transport and increase the comfort of moving around the city.



Among the proposals were ideas for expanding the tram network, increasing the number of night connections, and improving the synchronization of traffic lights.

Participants also suggested developing passenger information systems that would allow residents to track the location of buses and trams in real time.

During the discussions, additional ideas focused on increasing the number of park-and-ride parking facilities and improving infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians, including the construction of new bike paths and bicycle repair stations in Kraków.

## Sport and Recreation

The final category of ideas focused on projects related to physical activity and recreation. Participants emphasized that access to sports infrastructure is important for residents' health and overall quality of life.

Among the proposals were ideas for building new outdoor gyms, sports fields, and spaces for calisthenics training. Such facilities could encourage residents to be more physically active and provide accessible places for exercise in different parts of the city.

Participants also suggested developing recreational infrastructure near water, creating additional urban swimming areas, and organizing sports events open to residents of different ages.



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During the meetings, there were also proposals for constructing new sports facilities, such as climbing walls, beach volleyball courts, and padel courts in Kraków.

## Conclusions

The ideas proposed during the district meetings show that young residents of Kraków have a broad vision for the development of the city. Our proposals include both small local initiatives and more ambitious infrastructure projects.

Many ideas repeatedly referred to themes such as environmental protection, youth mental health, access to education, and the need to create friendly and accessible public spaces. This shows that young people view the development of the city in a comprehensive and long-term way.

The collected proposals became the basis for further activities within the project, particularly during the proposal-writing marathon for the Participatory Budget, where some of these ideas were developed into concrete projects submitted to the next edition of the programme. The full list of ideas developed during the district meetings can be found in the annex to this report.

## Proposal Writing Marathon – From Idea to Project

Another important stage of the “Ambassadors of Local Change” project was the proposal-writing marathon for the Participatory Budget, which took place on 12 and 20 February 2025. These meetings were a natural continuation of the earlier district workshops and focused on transforming previously developed ideas into concrete projects that could be submitted to the Participatory Budget of the city of Kraków.



Fifteen young people participated in the event. They had previously taken part in the district meetings and were particularly interested in actively engaging in the process of submitting projects to the Participatory Budget. The aim of the marathon was not only to prepare project proposals but also to develop participants’



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skills in planning social initiatives, analyzing local needs, and working collaboratively in teams.

The meetings had a workshop format and were based on non-formal education methods. At the beginning, participants became familiar with the procedure for submitting projects to the Participatory Budget. The main components of a project application were discussed, including the project description, identification of target groups, justification of the project's necessity, identification of a potential location, and preparation of a preliminary budget. An important part of the workshop was also explaining the formal and substantive criteria used by municipal institutions to evaluate submitted projects.

Participants then began working in project teams. The starting point for their work were the ideas collected during the district meetings. Young people analyzed them in terms of feasibility and compliance with the rules of the Participatory Budget. In many cases, it was necessary to further clarify the project concept, define its scope, and estimate implementation costs.

This process allowed participants to better understand how project preparation works from both an organizational and formal perspective. During the workshops, participants learned, among other things:

- how to formulate project goals clearly and concretely,
- how to define the target group and expected results,
- how to prepare a realistic budget,
- how to justify the need for a project in the context of residents' needs.

For many participants, this was their first experience with preparing a project proposal, which made the workshops an important learning experience. Young people could see that developing a project requires not only a good idea but also planning, analysis, and teamwork.

As a result of the marathon, five project proposals were developed and prepared for submission to the Participatory Budget:

 **Green Roof of Kraków – creating a green space in the heart of the city**

This project proposed the creation of a green space on the roof of a public building. The space would function as a garden accessible to residents and as an



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educational area where environmental workshops could be organized.

**🍏 Fruit City – more greenery and fruit trees in Kraków**

The aim of the project was to plant fruit trees in urban areas, particularly in parks and residential neighborhoods. The project promoted the idea of shared urban resources while increasing residents' access to greenery.

**🌸 Flowers for the City – floral joy for residents**

The project proposed creating new flower beds and flower meadows in public spaces. Its aim was to improve the aesthetics of urban areas and support biodiversity by creating environments friendly to pollinating insects.

**☐ Stress Under Control – a school without stress, full of support and balance**

This project focused on youth mental health and included organizing workshops on coping with stress, school pressure, and emotions.

**💰 Developing Financial Literacy Talks – financial education for young people**

The project aimed to organize a series of meetings and workshops for youth focused on personal finance management, saving, and basic economic knowledge.

After the proposals were submitted, they entered the stage of formal and substantive verification by the relevant municipal departments of Urząd Miasta Krakowa. This process included checking whether the projects complied with legal regulations, assessing whether they were feasible, and estimating implementation costs.

As a result of this verification process, one project prepared by the participants received a positive evaluation: “Flowers for the City – floral joy for residents.” The project met all formal requirements and was considered feasible for implementation within the Participatory Budget.

The remaining projects did not pass the verification stage for various reasons, including formal limitations, difficulties in identifying a precise location, or issues related to the competences of specific municipal departments. At the same time, in one case the verification process became an important experience of dialogue with public administration.

The project “Green Roof of Kraków – creating a green space in the heart of the city” attracted the interest of city officials and was analyzed in detail by representatives of Urząd Miasta Krakowa. As a result, participants were invited to a consultation meeting to discuss the



possibility of implementing the idea on the building of the municipal Department of Geodesy located at Grunwaldzka Street in Kraków.

During the meeting, municipal representatives explained that implementing the project in the proposed location was not possible due to structural limitations—the roof structure of the building was not designed to support the additional load associated with a rooftop garden. At the same time, the officials presented the project evaluation process and discussed the technical and formal aspects that must be considered when planning investments in urban spaces.

Although the project was ultimately not approved for implementation in the proposed form, participants appreciated that their idea was treated seriously and became the starting point for a substantive discussion with representatives of the city administration. The meeting helped them better understand the technical limitations related to planning investments in urban space and demonstrated that dialogue between young residents and public institutions is both possible and valuable.

One participant summarized the experience in the following words:

*“Even if not all projects were accepted, we still learned a lot. Now we understand how the whole process works, and next time we’ll be able to prepare even better projects.”*

The proposal-writing marathon showed that young people are capable of actively participating in the creation of civic projects if they receive appropriate support and tools. At the same time, the experience revealed that preparing proposals for the Participatory Budget can be demanding for young people, especially if they do not have previous experience with such processes. The conclusions from the marathon became an important element of further discussions during the young leaders’ camp and while developing recommendations on how to increase youth participation in participatory processes in the city.

## **Young Leaders Camp**

One of the key activities carried out within the “Ambassadors of Local Change” project was the international Young Leaders Camp, which took place from 1–7 August 2025 in Hungary. The event was organized by Fundacja Antares in cooperation with the partner organization Nevelők Háza Egyesület. The camp brought together young people involved in project





activities carried out in their local communities, including initiatives related to participatory budgeting and youth activism.

The aim of the camp was to strengthen young people's leadership competences and prepare them to initiate social activities in their communities. The program was designed based on the methodology of non-formal education, which emphasizes active participation of young people in the learning process, using participants' experiences as a starting point for workshops, and creating a safe space to experiment with new ideas and social roles.

The working methods included workshops, social simulations, educational games, project work in small groups, individual reflection, and peer evaluation. A particularly important element was the process of reflection on learning – participants kept individual reflection journals in which they recorded their most important experiences and conclusions from each day of the camp.

### **Day 1 – Integration and Team Building**

The first day of the program focused primarily on participant integration and building an atmosphere supportive of cooperation. Participants began with introductory and team-building activities that allowed them to get to know one another and better understand their motivations for participating in the project. During the workshops, participants presented their interests, experience in social activities, and expectations regarding the camp.

One of the first tasks was the joint development of a group contract, a set of rules defining how participants would communicate, make decisions, and resolve possible conflicts during the camp. Creating these rules together increased participants' sense of responsibility for the atmosphere and the process of working together.



Later in the day, participants were introduced to the Youthpass tool, which is used to document learning outcomes in youth projects. The workshop introduced the idea of reflective learning and helped participants understand how experiences gained during the project can support their personal and professional development.

In the evening, an intercultural event took place during which participants presented elements of the culture of their countries and regions – traditions, music, customs, and typical dishes. The event helped strengthen relationships within the group and allowed participants to better understand the cultural diversity of Europe.

## **Day 2 – Equality and Civil Rights**

The second day of the camp focused on equality, civil rights, and the role of youth in democratic society. The program began with anti-discrimination workshops based on the simulation method “1 Step Forward.” Participants took on different social roles and, through a series of questions, observed how various factors – such as social background, economic status, or access to education – can influence a person’s life opportunities.

The exercise became the starting point for an in-depth discussion about mechanisms of social exclusion and the importance of equal opportunities. During the discussion, participants shared their experiences and reflections regarding inequalities they observe in their own communities.

In the second part of the day, participants learned about the basic principles of European youth policy and the possibilities for young people to influence decisions made at local and European levels. The activity took the form of a simulation game in which participants assumed the roles of different stakeholders – youth representatives, local authorities, and civil society organizations.

## **Day 3 – Designing Social Initiatives**

The third day of the camp focused on developing competences related to designing social projects. During the workshop titled “From Need to Project,” participants analyzed social challenges present in their local communities and discussed how young people can actively respond to these issues.



The workshop included needs analysis, defining project goals, and planning activities and expected results. Participants worked in small groups, developing concepts for social initiatives that could be implemented in their local communities.

In the second part of the day, participants worked on developing critical thinking and information analysis skills. The workshop focused on verifying the credibility of information on the internet and recognizing manipulation in social media. The session was conducted in the form of an educational escape room game that required teamwork and logical problem solving.

#### **Day 4 – Tools for Project Implementation**

The fourth day of the program focused on practical tools supporting the implementation of social initiatives. Participants learned about various digital tools that can facilitate activity planning, team management, and project communication. The workshop also included elements of communication strategy – participants learned how to effectively promote social initiatives and engage local communities in project activities.

The second part of the day focused on using art as a tool for social activism. Participants analyzed examples of artistic activities used in social campaigns and then developed their own concepts for artistic initiatives addressing issues important to young people.

#### **Day 5 – Project Presentations and Evaluation**

The final day of the camp was dedicated to summarizing the learning process. Participants worked in groups to finalize the concepts of social projects developed during the previous days. Each group prepared a presentation of their idea including a description of the problem, a plan of activities, and expected results.

The project presentations created an opportunity for discussion and feedback from other participants and trainers. This allowed young people to further improve their ideas and better understand the process of planning social initiatives.

In the final part of the day, an evaluation of the entire camp was conducted. Participants also returned to their reflection journals, where they summarized the experiences and competences they had gained during the program.



## **Impact of the Camp on Participants**

The Young Leaders Camp played an important role in developing the competences of the young people participating in the project. Participants had the opportunity to gain new skills related to planning and implementing social initiatives, as well as to develop interpersonal competences such as communication, teamwork, and leading discussions.

An important outcome of the camp was also the strengthening of young people's sense of agency. Many participants emphasized that taking part in the project helped them believe that they can have a real influence on their surroundings.

The most important outcomes of the camp included:

- development of leadership and project management competences,
- increased civic and social awareness,
- strengthened teamwork skills,
- development of critical thinking and media literacy,
- increased motivation to engage in social initiatives within local communities.

The experiences gained during the camp became an important support for young people in their further project activities, including preparing initiatives submitted to the participatory budget and implementing local social projects.

## **Youth Conclusions and Recommendations**

The implementation of the project allowed us not only to gain new skills and experiences but, most importantly, to better understand the mechanisms of civic participation at the local level. Participation in district meetings, preparing our own ideas for the participatory budget, the proposal-writing marathon, the study visit, and the Young Leaders Camp allowed us to see the decision-making process from the perspective of residents who want to actively co-create their city.

Throughout all project activities, we not only focused on generating ideas for concrete initiatives but also reflected on what motivates young people to engage—or not—in public affairs. We analyzed the barriers young people face and considered what actions could help



overcome them. The conclusions and recommendations below are the result of numerous discussions, workshops, and reflections conducted throughout the project.

*Need for Greater Visibility of the Participatory Budget among Youth*

One of the most frequently mentioned conclusions was the need to better inform young people about the opportunities offered by the participatory budget. During district meetings, many participants admitted that they had not known that youth could also submit projects or vote on proposals from residents.



We observed that information about the participatory budget usually reaches young people by chance—through social media or friends—rather than through systematic communication directly aimed at youth. There is a lack of promotional activities conducted in schools and spaces where young people spend their daily time.

Therefore, we recommend that information activities about the participatory budget be conducted in a way that is better suited to a young audience. These could include workshops in schools, information sessions led by young leaders, and social media campaigns developed in cooperation with youth.

*Importance of Expert Support for Young Project Authors*

Another key conclusion from the project experience is the need to provide young people with more support in preparing projects for the participatory budget. While coming up with a project idea is often relatively easy, turning it into a formal proposal requires knowledge of administrative procedures, budgeting, and action planning.

During the proposal-writing marathon, we realized how important it is to have people who can explain complex procedures in a clear way and help young people refine their ideas. Thanks to such support, it was possible to prepare five complete project proposals.

At the same time, the experience of project verification showed that many youth initiatives fail at the formal stage. Out of the five proposals we prepared, only one—“Flowers for the City – Floral Joy for Residents”—received a positive assessment.



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From a youth perspective, this means that the project preparation process should be more supportive and educational. We recommend organizing project workshops, consultations with experts, and informational meetings where young people could receive assistance in refining their ideas before submitting a proposal.

### *Need to Create Spaces for Dialogue Between Youth and Local Authorities*

Throughout the project, we repeatedly emphasized the importance of direct dialogue between young people and representatives of local authorities. Meetings with those responsible for youth policy or the participatory budget allow young people to better understand decision-making in the city, while enabling decision-makers to learn the youth perspective.

An inspiration in this regard was the study visit to Pécs in Hungary, where we observed examples of cooperation between social organizations and local government. The meeting with city representatives demonstrated that dialogue between youth and public institutions can be conducted in a collaborative and open manner.

Therefore, we recommend creating regular spaces for dialogue, such as consultation meetings, youth discussion forums, or citizen panels involving young residents.

### *Strengthening Youth Civic Competences*

The project also highlighted the importance of developing civic competences. Many participants emphasized that they had not previously had the opportunity to learn in practice how local democracy works and how they can influence decisions about urban spaces.

Workshops conducted during district meetings and the Young Leaders Camp allowed us to gain knowledge in areas including:

- planning social projects,
- identifying the needs of local communities,
- teamwork,
- communication with public institutions.

As a result, young participants began to see themselves as individuals who can genuinely influence their surroundings.



### *Importance of Youth Collaboration with Social Organizations*

The project also demonstrated the critical role that non-governmental organizations can play in youth activation. With the support and experience of organizations such as Fundacja Antares, young people were able to gain knowledge, tools, and space to develop their own initiatives.

Social organizations often act as a bridge between youth and public institutions. Through them, young people can more easily engage in social activities, gain project experience, and develop leadership competences.

We recommend continuing to support cooperation between youth organizations, educational institutions, and local authorities. Such collaboration helps create lasting structures that support young residents' activity.

### *Strengthening Young People's Sense of Agency*

One of the most important outcomes of the project was the reinforcement of a sense of agency among participants. Many young people emphasized that they had not previously believed their ideas could be realized or that they could have a real impact on their surroundings.

Participation in the project allowed them to see that even small initiatives can lead to tangible changes in urban spaces and the life of local communities.

### *Summary of Youth Recommendations*

Based on the experiences gained during the project, we formulate the following key recommendations:

1. increase information activities about the participatory budget targeted at youth,
2. organize workshops and consultations supporting young people in preparing projects,
3. create permanent spaces for dialogue between youth and local authorities,
4. develop civic education programs in



schools and youth organizations,

5. strengthen cooperation between NGOs, schools, and local government,
6. support initiatives that develop young people's leadership competences.

We are convinced that implementing these recommendations can contribute to increasing youth participation in decision-making processes and building more open and participatory local communities.

