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ekopolis

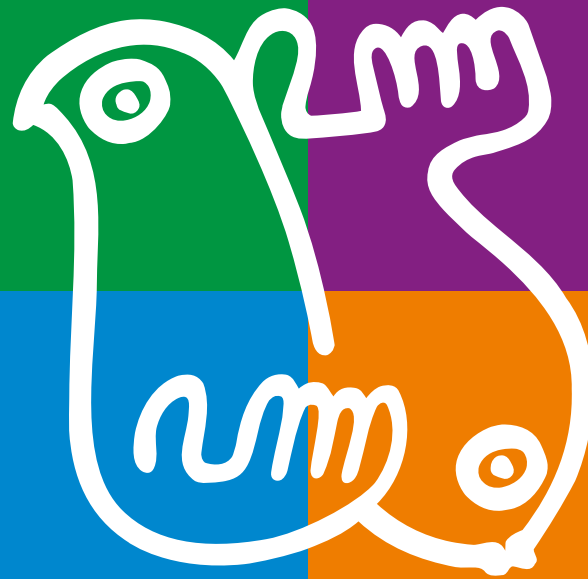
ANNUAL
REPORT

2022

VÝROČNÁ
SPRÁVA

ENVIRONMENT

**SMART
CITIES**



**CIVIL
SOCIETY**

**BY
BICYCLE!**

DEAR FRIENDS

At the end of March 2023, yet another serious statement by scientists to the need for climate measures on all fronts is issued. The assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change at the United Nations on the impacts of climate change on ecosystems, biodiversity and human communities at the global and regional level states that the rate of temperature increase over the last half century is the highest in 2000 years and the concentration of CO₂ is the highest in at least two million years. UN Secretary-General António Guterres warns that the "climate time bomb is ticking", appeals to the countries of the world to reduce the amount of emissions by 2040 and calls the last part of the report "manual for the survival of humanity". Unfortunately, instead of focusing on preserving the planet for those who come after us, it seems that the creature that calls itself a homo sapiens has other priorities on top of to do's list, and data is the last thing we are willing to act on.

In Ekopolis, while we do not ignore the critical situation, we have to accept people as we are. We seek and offer support for the better that is in us. The mirror of how well we are doing it is the long-term favor and support from you - the people we have been able to support, the donors and partners. This favor is both an obligation and an incentive for us to constantly look for what we can do better. Last year, the regenerative agriculture agenda was added to the scope of our activities, which represents a new and prospective approach to soil from the point of view of biological diversity, carbon balance, but also economics and the use of chemistry. The "Planting for the Future" initiative has already brought 3,000 trees planted by volunteers in their communities to the region. You can read more about all activities on the following pages.

Peter Medved, director

March 2023

TOGETHER FOR PEOPLE, NATURE AND FUTURE.

Since 1993, the Ekopolis Foundation has been creating space for efforts to protect the environment and people's growing interest in how we can realistically help our country. It has been supporting community projects for a long time - since its inception it has supported more than **3 761 projects** of non-governmental organizations, local governments and civic initiatives in the amount of more than **23,6 mil. eur.**

"Our vision is a country in which people are aware of their responsibility for the state and development of the environment. It is the citizens who are involved in improving civil society, have the guts to take a critical stance and act in such a way that future generations also have a quality life. "

**• IN 2022,
WE SUPPORTED
150 PROJECTS,
TOTAL
IN € 1 106 227,78.**

Through grant programs, it seeks to bring new ideas, innovative programs and, above all, local solutions to today's environmental problems. It supports projects and activities of non-governmental non-profit organizations in cities and local communities throughout Slovakia. The real value and benefits of these projects for people and the environment are incalculable.

Together with the foundations in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Romania, we are members of an international consortium Environmental Partnership Association, also we are a member of the European Cyclists Federation, the most influential cycling associations in Europe, as well as European Greenways Association, an association that is dedicated to the creation,

promotion and propagation paths for non-motorized transport in Europe. We belong to Civilscape, an international network to support the implementation of the European Land Convention, and we are partners in the Fair Trade initiative, which promotes fair trade ideas.

1. PLANTING FOR THE FUTURE

Briefly about the programme: In the Planting for the Future initiative, the Ekopolis Foundation combined efforts to protect the environment, long-term support of community projects and people's growing interest in how we can really help our country. Our goal is the return of trees to settlements and open country, wherever it is necessary. That is, especially in localities where functional green infrastructure is missing or damaged. An important part of the approach of the Planting for the future initiative is the support of local communities - active municipalities, schools, civic associations. The initiative includes educational, informational and demonstration activities to raise awareness of the importance of trees in the country.

In the spring of 2022, we opened the first grant round, in which we supported the **8 best projects**. In **autumn 2022**, we concluded the second grant round, where we supported up to **21 projects**. We are gradually creating a unique database of plantings in Slovakia. During the first year, we also managed to organize five moderated online discussions together with guests who presented examples of good practice for everyone who is interested in tree planting and looking for tips and advice on how to implement a good project.

To date, the Planting for the Future initiative has supported 30 planting sites, where volunteers have planted 2,253 trees in the landscape outside the forest. They are all projects of local communities - local active people, volunteers from non-profit organizations, municipalities or schools. Resources

**PLANTING FOR
THE FUTURE
PROGRAMME
CELEBRATED ITS
FIRST YEAR.**

**2 GRANT CALLS,
30 PROJECTS,
74,600 EUROS**

from corporate donors - our partners, as well as collected donations from private individuals - were used for planting. 74,600 euros were invested in plantings this year.

We celebrated the first anniversary, symbolically on Arbor Day, by planting in Zvolen, in the historical site of the Jewish cemetery. We met with representatives of the city of Zvolen, members of the Jewish community and volunteers from GLS, which is the general partner of the entire initiative. Actors from the J.G. Tajovský Theater also contributed to the work. During the summer festival they collected a contribution to Planting for the Future. The connection and collaboration of the corporate, non-profit and artistic worlds is a demonstration of how things can work.

**WATCH
A SHORT
VIDEO**



"The support of the general partner GLS General Logistics Systems Slovakia is key to the initiative, and the main partners VSE Foundation and Slovnaft a.s. contribute significantly to its development. This autumn too, we thank and keep our fingers crossed especially for active citizens who implement planting projects in locations across Slovakia," Peter Medveď, director of the Ekopolis Foundation. The plantings were supported by Kaufland, Slovenská sporiteľňa Foundation, Nespresso, Východoslovenská energetika Holding a.s., Green Print, Deutsche Telekom Services Europe Slovakia, L'Oréal. Resources from private donors were also used for planting.

2.GREEN BELT

Briefly about the project: The Green Belt grant programme supports active citizens and the permanent care of environmentally valuable local sites that serve the general public, support nature conservation and sustainability. The grant programme is organized by the Ekopolis Foundation thanks to a partnership with SLOVNAFT, a.s.

**16TH YEAR,
25 PROJECTS,
60,000 EUROS**

Green Belt grew in 2022 in 25 places across Slovakia. It was taken care of by communities who care about the landscape - water retention in it, less dust, natural shade and habitat for various animals. The first 17 projects were supported directly, 8 were decided by the public in a vote. During 18 days, more than 5,600 voters supported Green Belt.

"By involving the public in deciding on the final amount of support for individual projects, green initiatives also receive the support of local communities and, one might say, even higher legitimacy. We don't just decide from the table, as they say, but people tell themselves which project they prefer and appreciate," explains Anton Molnár, Director of Communications of Sloznaft, which is a long-term partner of the Green Belt programme.

The best project of Green Belt in 2022 is Liptovské stromoradia. The title of Top project went to the civic association Tatras together with an award for its chairman Rudo Pado awarded in memoriam. Thanks to a financial donation of 1,000 euros, planted trees in Liptov were happy - they will help with further care or new additions.

The new call of the Green Belt programme was announced on November 24 and carries the theme "With an idea, together and responsibly".

3.TREE OF THE YEAR JUBILEE 20TH YEAR

The winning Dragon Oak from Lozorno earned first place thanks to 5,916 public votes. Right behind the winning oak, with 5,858 votes, was Large-leaved Linden from Opina. The third place deservedly belongs to Beech from Svrčinovec, who received 3479 votes. A total of 26,202 tree lovers participated in the vote in 2022.

TOP PROJECT 2022

**WATCH
A SHORT
VIDEO**



**THE AIM OF THE
COMPETITION IS TO
DRAW ATTENTION
TO THE BEAUTY AND
VALUE OF TREES AND
TO AROUSE PEOPLE'S
INTEREST IN THE
ENVIRONMENT.**

**WATCH
A SHORT
VIDEO**



20 tree rings of the competition

The Tree of the Year competition in Slovakia has crossed the second decade. On the occasion of the jubilee 20th anniversary, we decided to present to the public all the previous winners of the competition through a photo exhibition. Visitors to the State Scientific Library in Banská Bystrica could enjoy it during the summer. The celebration was also diversified by a professional conference on the topic of trees - Trees and Us, which hosted special guests from Slovakia and the Czech Republic.

Dragon Oak in the European Tree of the Year competition.

During February 2023, the Dragon Oak represented Slovakia in the European Tree of the Year international competition. He was also visited by the Tree Hunter, Rob McBride, as well as by President of the Slovak republic, Zuzana Čaputová. The results of the competition were announced to the public on March 21, 2023 during the evaluation ceremony in Brussels. The Dragon oak won a wonderful 2nd place in the competition.

1. Place: Common Oak (*Quercus robur*)

Tree age: 700 years, Trunk circumference: 677 cm, Tree height: 18m

Forest in the cadastre of Lozorno village, Malacky district, Bratislava region

Dragon Oak

The tree got its name due to its power and appearance. It resembles a sitting dragon, and its bark is rough and scarred as if from mythical dragon fights. But no one is afraid of him. On the contrary! Everyone feels safe around him. It is hidden on a small hill in the forest, for centuries it has protected the locals - from the first settlers who helped build the nearby Pajštún Castle, through merchants and immigrants from Croatia. He also supervised the construction of a narrow-gauge steam forest railway, which, however, has long since outlived its usefulness. Logging is currently taking place in its vicinity. Hopefully, the Dragon Oak will

be saved for future generations, so that they too have the opportunity to discover the uniqueness of nature and the fleeting moment of time recorded in one tree trunk.

The main partner is the Slovenská sporiteľňa Foundation. The Tree of the Year was further supported by ISA Slovakia (International Arborist Society), Dajama publishing house, Artforum bookstore, ABIES horticulture and Terrabike. The patron of the survey was the singer Peter Lipa. The tree photographer is Martin Babarík.

4. PROGRAMME FOR SOIL

The For Soil programme is focused on the new concept of the so-called regenerative agriculture, which offers procedures for improving the structure and fertility of the soil, and thus the country's resistance to climate instability. The long-term goal is to support the discussion on the sustainable use of the landscape and measures to increase its resistance to the negative consequences of climate change. The context of the entire programme is the goal of decarbonization of Europe and Slovakia by 2050.

Part of the new programme of the Ekopolis Foundation and the Nestlé company was the launch of a new web portal www.prepodu.sk in 2022, where, in addition to available information on the possibilities of sustainable methods of land management, there is also a downloadable Analysis of the current situation of regenerative agriculture and agroforestry in Slovakia.

Regenerative agriculture in Slovakia - excursion and round table in Krakovay

On Wednesday, September 21, an excursion was held at the Krakovany-Stráže farm for experts from practice, who debated with interesting guests at a round table.

"As part of the For Soil programme, we published an analysis of regenerative agriculture, which resulted in recommendations, as well as the finding that this concept is not widespread in Slovakia. The agricultural cooperative in Krakovany-Stráže has the most experience in applying the principles of this sustainable method of land management, that's why we decided to cooperate as part of the Day of Living Soil event and bring our own program in the form of an excursion and a debate with experts," says the program manager from the Ekopolis Foundation, Martin Gálik.

The first part of the program was a field trip led by Lubomír Marhavý from the company Bioprutex. Using a soil probe, he showed the participants the effect of no-till farming on the health and fertility of the soil. The no-till method of tillage is one of the pillars of regenerative agriculture. The subsequent round table discussion was attended by the State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic, Martin Kováč, the chairman of the Krakovany-Stráže Agricultural Cooperative, Robert Dohál, Jaroslav Jankovič from the Slovak Agroforestry Association and Martina Šilhánová, the sustainability manager from Nestlé. Together with participants from the public sector, farmers and agriculturists, as well as representatives of companies and civil organizations, they debated the needs of individual sectors and the challenges we face.

5. PILSNER URQUELL ENDOWMENT FUND "FOR THE FUTURE"

Pilsner Urquell Endowment Fund Slovakia For the future! at the Ekopolis Foundation was established in autumn 2021. The purpose of the fund is to support and implement public benefit activities and projects that contribute to adaptation to climate change.

In 2022, we implemented the project FOR BARLEY as part of the foundation fund. This was used to support the sustainable cultivation of barley in Slovakia

and helped local farmers, but also the surrounding nature. The project was built on the principles of agroforestry. He specifically supported the planting of trees in locations where they will have the greatest impact on strengthening the soil's ability to retain water, prevent soil erosion and removal of the most fertile soil particles and humus, and at the same time contribute to strengthening biodiversity. The pilot agricultural cooperatives that participated in the project are PD Radošinka in Veľké Ripňany and PD Odorín. In the fall, a seminar "Sustainable agriculture" and a tour of Šariš Brewery, which was intended for barley growers in Slovakia, took place.

6. LIVING TRAILS

The aim of the program is to support the sensitive restoration of the Slovak landscape and to improve its recreational and educational functions. Since 2008, financial support has been focused on restoring and improving marked tourist trails and public spaces used by tourists.

A total of six sought-after tourist locations received help from the Living Trails grant programme in 2022. This has been implemented by the Ekopolis Foundation thanks to the support of the Horalky from Sedita for 15 years. More than 100 kilometers of marked routes and 8 rest areas or shelters were renewed, and chargers for electric bicycles were also added. The total amount of 10,200 euros was redistributed between the projects.

Supported projects in the Living Trails 2022 programme

1. **The Kilometers in Motion civic association** renewed the markings on the Horná Lehota - Tále tourist route, together with 4 signposts. The gazebo near the Kamila cottage was also renovated, where the surroundings were modified, new benches, a barbecue area, a bicycle stand, a service stand with tools and two new e-bike chargers were added.

**15TH YEAR,
6 SUPPORTED
LOCATIONS,
10,200 EUROS**

2. The civic association **Nature without Borders** managed to restore the markings and a resting place on the crest of the Oravské Beskydy. They also created a new resting place on the ridge, where benches, a table and an orientation rose made of solid wood were added.

3. **The civic association Potulky chotármi** took care of the restoration of damaged signage in the village of Rybník and a new rest gazebo above Tlmače. They built a gazebo on the bike path with a view of Tlmače, improved the surroundings, built a gazebo, benches and a table.

4. They can boast of the repair of the sidewalk, the renewal of signage and new furniture in Kopské sedlo. The project from the workshop of the **civic association Spoznávajme Tatry** took care of rest areas on the ridge of the Belianske Tatras, where benches, tables and an information board were added, and innovative guidance for tourists was also installed to prevent walking off the trail.

5. **The Cykloklub Dolný Kubín** implemented the restoration of bicycle shelters and bicycle markings in the town of Dolný Kubín and its surroundings. They renewed and treated 21 bicycle signposts and renewed the markings on the bicycle routes, where they also improved two rest areas.

6. **Urbár Žiar** is responsible for the restoration of the sidewalks and the repair of the symbolic cemetery in Žiarská dolina. They renewed the markings on the hiking trails, cleaned the anti-erosion bumps and trimmed the overgrown rhombus. Two new direction indicators were installed. One new footbridge was added and one was repaired. The symbolic cemetery in Žiarská dolina also underwent repair of the pavement and paving, the fence was repaired and two new benches were added.

7. TESCO PREMISES FAVORABLE FOR BIODIVERSITY

In the cities of Trnava, Partizánske, Prešov and Humenné, visitors to the Tesco hypermarket can look forward to a more pleasant and beautiful environment. Thanks to the cooperation with the Ekopolis Foundation, it was possible to modify the adjacent areas and plant new greenery, which will also improve the diversity of nature in the locations.

The Ekopolis Foundation worked on the project with experienced garden studios. The specific measures were designed to respect the conditions of the given place, its area, accessibility, frequency of passage by people and the function that the place fulfilled until then. A total of 45 trees of various species, but also fruit species such as plum, cherry, apple, pear, and ornamental trees - linden, maple and oak were planted in individual locations. Also, 155 bushes of bramble, sedge and bird's tooth were planted, and smaller flowering branches were sown. Planted trees and bushes help to retain water in the environment, created islands of natural shade, help capture dust and reduce the temperature in the summer months. Greenery also promotes nesting opportunities for birds and shelter for small insects.

THE PROJECT IS AIMED AT IMPROVING CONDITIONS FOR BIODIVERSITY AT FOUR SELECTED TESCO DEPARTMENT STORES.

OUR OTHER PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

NEW CVERNOVKA FOR PEOPLE AND NATURE

We traditionally meet in autumn in Bratislava's New Cvernovka with volunteers from Deutsche Telekom Services Europe – Slovakia to help the cultural center with the maintenance of the local garden. One of the other joint brigades was held on Thursday, September 8.

In the spirit of the "re-use" principle, they try to use every component of the garden, so they mulch the dry branches, and we sprinkled the garden paths with this mulch. The rain in the afternoon put a bit of a damper on our work, but there is always something to do in the building and every free hand is useful. At the end, we at least helped with cleaning out the cellar.

A DAY WITH THE SLOVENSKÁ SPORITELŇA AT STREČNO CASTLE

On Tuesday, September 6, we had a great day with the Slovenská sporiteľňa bank and the Považie Museum at Strečno Castle. During the joint brigade, it was possible to clean the lower part of the area from invasive plants and treat the railing on the upper part of the castle with a new coating. For a job well done, in addition to the wonderful views, we also received a tour of the castle with an engaging explanation. We wish Strečno Castle many satisfied visitors. We thank Slovenská sporiteľňa for the work done, but also for the donation of paint, work tools and renewed orientation boards at the castle.

FRUIT GROWING EXPEDITION IN AUSTRIA

At the beginning of September, a group of enthusiastic fruit growers went to the Alchemisten Park in Kirchberg am Wagram, Austria, which contains approximately 200 edible trees and shrubs. The goal was not only to enjoy and taste familiar and exotic fruits, but mainly to be inspired. Maybe something similar will be created here in Slovakia in the future.

Our ambassadors Bruno Jakubec and Ľudo Vašš from Ovocný strom could not

be missing from such a group. Aďa Miklošová from Jedloles, Janko Litvák from the Doma v záhrade magazine, Feri Cimerman from the SadOVO project from the CEEV Živica workshop, Jakub Cíbik for the Living Country program from BROZ (Bratislava Regional Conservation Association) and of course we from the Ekopolis Foundation were also there.

On the way home, we stopped at the nearby DIE GARTEN TULLN, where you can find more than 50 examples of gardens of various types.

LIFE BOOGI BOP

The project Boosting Urban Green Infrastructure through Biodiversity-Oriented Design of Business Premises (LIFE BooGI-BOP) was supported by the EU LIFE program. The project, led by Global Nature Fundz Germany, was aimed at creating a biodiversity-friendly design of corporate campuses as part of green infrastructure – especially in urban and suburban areas. In Slovakia, the main contribution of the project is 17 processed audits and conceptual proposals for improving the conditions for biodiversity and the implementation of concrete measures in the form of planting new functional greenery, the establishment of flowering meadows, the installation of elements suitable for insect life, but also water retention measures in 9 locations throughout Slovakia. Green design significantly contributes to a higher quality of life for users of buildings and outdoor corporate spaces, individuals and the entire company. The project ends in 2023 after its one-year extension.

EKOALARM

Introducing sorted collection at schools and spreading awareness about proper sorting and prevention of waste.

The pilot year of this project already took place in 2018. In the following years, 380 schools received containers for three-component sorted collection - blue for paper, yellow for plastics and the third for bio-waste or mixed waste. All baskets

provided to schools are made from secondary raw materials and are produced in Slovakia in cooperation with CURADEN Slovakia s.r.o. In the 2021/22 school year, 68 of them were selected, who, in addition to the baskets themselves, also received a "package" of supporting activities - tutoring, mentoring, methodical materials. In the 2022/23 school year, another 72 schools are approached. CEEV Živica provides a significant part of the activities at schools.

PROJECT LEARNING LANDSCAPES - LELA

The project is financially supported by the European Structural and Investment Funds. The amount of the non-refundable financial contribution is €197,144.21 Learning Landscapes (LeLa). The Learning Landscapes (LeLa) project develops the concept of a unique event "LE: NOTRE Landscape Forum", which provides an opportunity for informal discussion, creative interaction and dialogue between landscape architects, landscapers, and other professionals during workshops and excursions.

Experts of the Erasmus+ strategic partnership met intensively in 2022 to prepare a handbook on participatory landscape design - two meetings were held in Slovakia and one in Gdańsk, Poland, and also to prepare online landscape laboratories and observatories. These will serve to share inspiration and experience on how to work with the public in landscape planning.

On July 4-13, 2022, an international student workshop called "Cross-Border Learning Landscapes" was held in Bratislava and its surroundings, in which students from three countries developed various scenarios for the development of the border area of Slovakia, Austria and Hungary. They worked under the guidance of experienced lecturers, while an important part of their work was learning about the environmental problems of the territory, especially in connection with the protection of the Danube and Morava rivers. Connections to

several lecturers were provided by the Ekopolis Foundation, because water in the country was also an important topic for us in the past.

INSPIRING FOR BIODIVERSITY

The project is supported thanks to the Erasmus+ Programme.

Climate change and environmental protection are important topics throughout Europe. However, studies show how little people still know about the importance of biodiversity and its value to the environment. During the years 2020-2023, the Global Nature Fund and 5 other European partners, including the Ekopolis Foundation, have developed 30 innovative pedagogical tools that will help inspire people and allow them to understand the importance of biodiversity from different points of view. The tools are available on the website and experts in ecology will find interesting inspiration in them.

ACTIVE CITIZENS FUND – SLOVAKIA

Active Citizens Fund – Slovakia (ACF) is a grant program aimed at strengthening civil society, supporting active citizenship and improving the position of vulnerable groups in Slovakia.

ACF supports Slovak civic organizations in involving citizens in decision-making and in the creation of public policies, in efforts to create better conditions for good governance, in the protection of human rights and in the provision of civic education, and in improving the position of vulnerable groups in society. Special attention is paid to young people and their participation in public events.

Active Citizens Fund is part of the financial assistance of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway to 15 member states of the European Union. ACF in Slovakia is managed by the Ekopolis Foundation in partnership with the Open Society Foundation and the Carpathian Foundation.

CIVIL SOCIETY

**WATCH
A SHORT
VIDEO**



In the period 2018-2022, a total of 8,596,130 euros was redistributed in the ACF - Slovakia program among 188 projects of Slovak civil organizations.

In 2022, we presented examples of good practice through blogs under the title "Those who left a mark" and worked on ten videos that best illustrate a cross-section of our program topics.

EVENTS OF THE ACF - SLOVAKIA PROGRAMME IN 2022

Campaigns as a fundraising tool

Campaigns are a marketing tool that is increasingly used to raise funds for the implementation of the activities of non-profit organizations. However, many of them end unsuccessfully, they do not reach the set goal. The purpose of the webinar was to show non-profit organizations how to effectively use this tool and point out the most common mistakes of unsuccessful campaigns.

The webinar took place online on February 21, 2022.

Social entrepreneurship in practice

It sometimes seems impossible to set up a functional model of social business in the tangle of a lot of laws and changing information. Using simple and practical language, the guests tried to give a picture, presented the philosophy and benefits of social entrepreneurship, as well as advice on how to handle considerable challenges, but above all they advised how to set up a successful business plan of your own intention. The workshop took place on May 5, 2022 in 365.labbe in Banská Bystrica.

Sustainable financing of NGO activities - resilience of NGOs in times of uncertainty

We live and work in a time when our foundations are shaking many times more than ever before. The unpredictable situations associated with the pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine affect our activities directly and indirectly on a daily basis. Many doors close in front of us and new unknown challenges open up. How to adapt to the situation and withstand these challenges?

The webinar took place online on June 16, 2022.

International conference Inclusive education in a time of growing exclusion

On October 6 and 7, 2022, the international conference Inclusive Education in a Time of Growing Exclusion took place in Bratislava's Lindner Hotel Gallery Central. The conference took place as a part of the Regional Initiatives for Civil Society of the Active Citizens Fund Slovakia program in cooperation with the Children's Foundation of Slovakia. The international partners were the Open Society Fund Prague from the Czech Republic, the Open Society Institute - Sofia from Bulgaria and The European Wergeland Center (EWC) from Oslo, Norway.

We also participated in a communication meeting in Brussels and a capacity building workshop in Athens.

All information at www.acfslovakia.sk

Europe for Citizens - Reclaim our Civil Space!

The beginning of 2022 found us unprepared for a war conflict in the immediate vicinity of our country. A situation has arisen where we are faced with the arrival of war refugees. New residents arrived and continue to arrive in individual regions of Slovakia - towns and villages. We don't know how long they will stay, some may never leave. In such cases, it is necessary to start not only their integration, but also completely natural inclusion. However, inclusion cannot be implemented without the involvement of local civil society communities. We will look for solutions together, how we can not only in this tense situation, but

in general protect and develop democratic principles at the regional level, why we need to network with each other, why it is not possible for central institutions to ensure functioning local societies without their participation. At the event "Let's not wait for the central, let's create locally" we discussed why it is necessary for central institutions to realize the importance of support for the creation of such functioning and cooperating local communities and communities. The event took place on April 28, 2022 in Tabáčka in Košice. The event was part of the project Reclaim our Civil Space!.

IX. edition of HUMAN FORUM x ROCS

The next, in order of the 9th year of the conference HUMAN FORUM & II. year of the human rights conference of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic had the theme Strengthening democracy in the regions as a prevention of the growth of extremism & Human rights and democracy as pillars of stability and prosperity. President Zuzana Čaputová took over the patronage and personally attended.

The "Reclaim Our Civil Space!" project benefits from a 1,8 million € grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Regional Cooperation.

Programme of development of the Roma community

The aim of the programme is to support projects in Roma communities aimed at the healthy development of children at an early age and improving the environment in which children grow up. When implementing projects, great emphasis is placed on working with whole families and involving the wider community. The current year of the programme is already the fifth supported in a row and is based on previous experience and results.

In the calendar year 2022, the fifth grant round of the Roma Community Development Programme was concluded. All four organizations supported this year implemented their projects and closed them with a final text and financial report. Good results and progress in the development of the children involved were confirmed by repeated measurements with the help of experts and were achieved despite the restrictive conditions resulting from the complex covid situation, when movement and work in the target communities were significantly limited. The extraordinary financial support that the supported organizations received beyond the scope of the approved grant is also related to covid. These funds (1,000 euros for each supported organization) were used specifically for protective, disinfecting and hygiene needs. Also on the basis of these results, cooperation and financial support was offered and extended for another year to two of the organizations, namely NGO Spokonosť from Prievidza and NGO Nádej deťom from Banská Bystrica. They will implement the projects until the middle of the calendar year 2023.

GOOD NEIGHBOR

Briefly about the project: Practical help for good ideas and useful changes, connecting people and building friendly neighborly relations, this is the goal of the Good Neighbor programme, which is focused on the vicinity of the Slovnaft refinery in the city districts of Vrakuňa, Podunajské Biskupice, Rovinka and Ružinov. The main partner of the Good Neighbor programme is SLOVNAFT, a.s. **The good neighbor supported thirteen community projects in 2022 and redistributed a total of 30,000 euros to the ideas of volunteers.**

Thanks to the Good Neighbor, three school projects, aimed at modifying outdoor spaces for children's education or free time, gradually came to life. Thanks to a grant, the popular children's traffic playground was improved in Ostredky Park in Ružinov. Athletes also received support - the organizer of the jubilee 10th annual Vrakuňa Run received a grant, and the funds also went to rowers

SMART CITIES

**3RD YEAR,
14 PROJECTS,
30,000 EUROS**

from Zlaté Piesky and the Hockey Club from Podunajské Biskupice to improve conditions for children's training. In the village of Rovinka, the grant will enable the locals to plant a green belt next to the houses in cooperation with the fire department. The good neighbor also supported the civic association Odysseus, which works with the community of drug addicts and people in the sex business. The association involved this community in the renovation and cleaning of the day center in the Pentagon. A more pleasant environment will support the motivation of the center's clients for positive change.

This year, the project of the first public community garden in Podunajské Biskupice and the protected Top-Art workshop also received funding for implementation. With the support of the Good Neighbor, Top-Art will organize the second year of creative workshops for handicapped children in Ružinov, connected with awareness about their lives.

SABRINA

(European Regional Development Fund)

The Sabrina project is focused on safe bicycle communications in the Danube region and is supported by the European Regional Development Fund.

From 2020, together with other partners from another 8 countries, we are implementing the SABRINA project, aimed at increasing the safety of cycle paths in Central and Eastern Europe. It includes a field audit of the safety of existing EuroVelo cycle routes.

In 2022, safety checks of the EuroVelo cycle path were carried out in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. In the Czech Republic, approximately 100km of the EuroVelo 9 route between Jeseník and Šošuvka was inspected. Selected parts of EuroVelo 9, or the Baltic-Adriatic route in Slovenia and Austria, were checked for safety already last year. From the Czech Republic, the team from the University of Zagreb continued the safety surveys of cycle routes in Slovakia, where they focused on approximately 100km of EuroVelo 6 between Komárno

BY BICYCLE!

and Štúrovo and EuroVelo 13 between Moravský Svätý Ján and Bratislava. The final conference of the Sabrina project took place on November 23, 2022 in Bucharest.

WELCOME CYCLISTS IN THE V4 COUNTRIES

(International Visegrad Fund)

Certification scheme Welcome cyclists! was launched in Slovakia in May 2008. It is inspired by certification schemes in Germany, Austria and Switzerland and is directly based on Cyklisté vítáni certification, within which more than 750 facilities and destinations are already certified in the Czech Republic. The goal of the certification is to increase the number of tourist facilities and services that are adapted to the needs of cyclists and thereby support bicycle transport and bicycle tourism in Slovakia as well.

International workshop "Cyclists welcome in V4 countries" - the workshop presented the certification of services for cyclists in Slovakia, Hungary, Poland and Austria and their joint marketing, as well as support from the regions of the Czech Republic and other related topics. Experts from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary and Austria spoke at the event.

BIKE TO WORK CAMPAIGN

Also in 2022, we were partners of the Bike to Work campaign. We have announced a competition for material prizes. If you measured at least 22 trips thanks to the mobile app, you automatically entered the competition for a Motorola Edge 20 Lite 5G mobile phone.

Výročná správa Nadácie Ekopolis

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VÝROČNÁ
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