

Summaries of participants at final conference of Hungarian Best Practices of Local Governments program

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Good practices in topic of social inclusion – combating poverty by providing jobs and creating jobs for the benefit of the settlement community

Miskolc "Integration of deprived neighbourhoods in Miskolc"

Population: 155.476

About the municipality:

Miskolc is the administrative, economic, educational, and scientific and innovation centre of the North-Hungarian region, the seat of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county, the fourth largest city in the country. Surveys demonstrated that that poverty is concentrated in the region, with Borsod-Abaúj Zemplén County being the most affected area in the country. The causes of lower employment include the decline in industrial production and the closure of mines, as well as outdated skillsets local residents possess. Miskolc has a number of deprived neighbourhoods, which can be found both in the city centre and on the outskirts. The 2011 map of segregated areas distinguished between 31 outer and inner segregated areas, with a total population of 6 745 inhabitants.

The essence of good practice

The core of the good practice was the creation of a Working Group focusing on social cohesion, initiated by the Deputy Mayor of Miskolc, Andrea Varga. After a short planning process, the Task Force was formed in early 2020 with the involvement of several experts, outlining the actual tasks and directions, providing the basis for real, dedicated work. An international expert was also invited into the Task Force. A study on the work of the Task Force, its methods and objectives was prepared, which is part of the integrated strategy for municipalities. This initiative was selected because the data on segregation maps drawn up by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office were out of date, which made work difficult.

Vision: The map of the situation in deprived neighbourhoods in Miskolc is based on various studies of the city's segregated areas. The results of these studies, which can still be updated today, are used in the work of the Task Force, but its activities are not only concerned with the problems of previously defined segregated areas, but also with the definition of urban areas that are still at risk of segregation and their future.



The Task Force is composed of interested local government and institutional staff, representatives of local partner organisations, civil society activists and experts. By name: Abaújrakezdés Public Benefit Association, Bhim Rao Association, President of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County LMP, Civil Activists, Dialogue Association, dr. Ámbédkar School, UN Development Programmes, international expert, Epistémé Association, North-Eastern Gateway Association, Lyukó Mentor Programme, Maltese Relief Service Association - Tetemvári Model Programme, Maltese Relief Service North-Hungary Regional Centre, Maltese Relief Service - Fifth Street Office, Miskolc Holding Municipal Asset Management Ltd., Head of the Department of Cultural and Visual Anthropology of the University of Miskolc, Department of Sociology of the University of Miskolc, Miskolc Municipal Kindergartens, Miskolc Municipal Police, Paktum Office Miskolc, Symphonia Foundation

Where: on the spot, at the municipality's office. Implementer: members of the Task Force, civilian liaisons. The fact-finding work covered a one-year period, but long-term, ongoing activities are planned.

The following activities have taken place:

- Mapping of the situation, identification of deprived neighbourhoods;
- Data collection on the number of inhabitants in the deprived neighbourhoods and an accurate picture of the social situation in these neighbourhoods;
- Analysis of the data;
- Preparation of a problem map by neighbourhood;
- Joint formulation of a proposal for an action plan (local action plan) for the integration of deprived neighbourhoods;
- Establish local coordination and multi-stakeholder partnerships to underpin a successful integration process;
- Establishment of local governance (in a broader sense) for the integration of deprived neighbourhoods;
- Joint action in the implementation of the Action Plan, including contributing to the preparation of the new Integrated Urban Development Strategy of Miskolc;
- Connecting the city of Miskolc (municipality, NGOs) with European partners in order to develop joint projects, gain experience and raise the visibility of Miskolc's relevant interventions at European level.



About the results:

As a result of one year of operation of the Task Force, a team working in a coordinated way with a common goal has been established and through their professional commitment they proved able to identify key actions that contribute to reintegration and improve the quality of life of the residents:

- Road reconstruction measures have started
- Co-ordinated work between civil partners, local residents and the municipality has begun, and consultations are ongoing
- Community garbage clean-up in the affected areas has started
- Citizen's tea afternoon (live contact between the municipal administration and the citizens)
- The problems of homelessness have been brought to the attention of the municipality.
- More direct dialogue between the municipality and local residents.
- Professionals work together in a more coordinated while focusing on each other's field of expertise
- The municipality has become more open and participative, and its reputation has been enhanced.
- Residents' trust in the municipality has increased, which has fostered positive communication

About the future: they know that this is a long-term process that they are embarking on. They are committed to fulfilling the purpose of the project. They are confident that they will be able to carry out larger impacts with funds secured from tenders. There is a change of attitude, the people in the deprived areas are open to working together, and they themselves initiate the dialogue and share their suggestions and insights, which the municipality incorporates into the planning.

Szigetvár „Youth Island”

Population: 10.980

About the municipality:



The Szigetvár district is among the 23rd most disadvantaged area of the country, among Hungary's 176 districts. Its area of supply includes 15 kindergartens, 12 primary schools and one high school. There are a total of 2926 children in the 28 public educational institutions, of which 29% are disadvantaged or cumulatively disadvantaged. The problems of the district and the city are complex: unemployment, insufficient transport, inadequate access to services amplify and preserve the emerging disadvantage - both at the level of the municipality and individual families.

The essence of good practice:

In order to develop a good practice, in addition to professional aspects, determination, commitment and continuous redesign are needed in order to be able to develop professionally and be embedded in the range of municipal (institutional) services.

The aim of good practice is prevention with the toolbox of school social work. Eliminating disadvantage, breaking the cycle of learned inertia. It is worthwhile for children to start catching up at an age that can positively influence resocialization in the short term, creating a positive but realistic self-image. It can improve children's school performance, learning competencies, and status in school groups.

The Szigetvár Family and Child Welfare Center and Service has been providing kindergarten and school support services in the territory of the Szigetvár Municipality since 2016. As part of this, a youth club called Youth Island was established. After several attempts, the professional line was redesigned, the 6 to 16 age group was accepted, and cooperation with schools was tightened. The club plays an important role in prevention, especially with learning support and mental health services that are available every day of the week. Both local schools and disadvantaged families welcome children and help them develop their learning and social competencies. Children attending the club face complex social and school problems that can be traced back to family dysfunctions. School problems are often associated with antisocial norms, and their correction is a complex, time-consuming process that requires multiple levels of professional training. To facilitate this, the "Taller System" has been introduced, which builds on positive reinforcement and manifests the children's invested work - such as behavior, co-operation, and compliance - so that tallers collected from Monday to Friday can be used as payment in "Taller-market", where small presents are available for children.

During the emergency period of the coronavirus epidemic, the Ifi Club was also involved in the municipal-level defense. They provided full-day childcare, welcomed children working the parents in health and law enforcement, and helped with online education for anyone in need. In 2020 and 2021, the number of summer day camps was expanded to accommodate, in



addition to disadvantaged children, those whose parents no longer had enough leave due to online education, and there is no free capacity within the family for childcare on holidays. The number of participants of their camps is a good confirmation.

Establishing the Youth Club the following steps were taken:

- During the preparation of the EFOP applications, the operation of the Youth Club was included among the preventive elements of social assistance in kindergartens and schools, both professionally and in terms of resources. The application was submitted by the Szigetvár Family and Child Welfare Center and Service, so they also designed the good practice and developed the current operation in several steps.
- The location of the club was selected, for which a two-year rental agreement was concluded, and then the club was equipped from EU projects. The equipment and development tools of the club satisfy the needs of the 6-20 year olds, they are constantly expanding and offer a variety of alternatives for spending their free time usefully.
- Two local graduates were recruited 40 hours a week to avoid a generational difference between the club's target group and professionals. The Child Welfare Center directs the work of the two colleagues and plans the professional work according to the professional and legal regulations of the school social assistance and the recommendations of the professional protocol. They also use the good practices of other similar services in the design of their policies and programs, and are constantly looking for innovative opportunities to make the club more effective.
- The club is promoted through the social network, in local primary schools and in high school through school social workers, with the involvement of teachers. Colleagues from the family support service also encouraged children who were at risk of repeat schooling, dropping out of school or being criminalized to use the service.
- The operation of the club has been linked to other projects in order to channel even more financial and professional resources and programs into the club for prevention.
- Other organizations were involved in prevention, the Culture and Green Zone Association and the Szigetvár Anti-Drug Forum, who held and held prevention sessions on addiction topics.



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- After a year and a half, they had to rethink the operation of the club, the problems of the young people involved until then were so serious that no significant shift in their resocialization was expected.
- The club has been redesigned for the 6 to 16 year olds with catch-up, learning, leisure programs and summer day camps.
- For this purpose, the opening and operating rules of the club were changed.
- The Youth Club is an integral part of the concept of the local Youth Protection and Equal Opportunities Strategy, as it effectively helps to break the poor life situation of families with multiple disadvantages, the reproduction of disadvantages through children. It places emphasis on community building and social cohesion.

About the results in numbers in 2020:

- 1290 children participated in the club's programs
- 14 children took part in learning support on a daily basis
- 3 parental meetings and 4 inter-professional consultations were held
- "Pumpkin week" to ensure continuous programs during the autumn break

The real results that cannot be quantified are the ones that are most evident in children in everyday life, as can be seen from the feedback from both parents and teachers. Along with better learning outcomes, children's community status is constantly improving, they are more motivated to learn, and their vision is more positive and realistic. An indirect result is that the number of conflicts between parents and teachers has decreased and the interface between schools and social professionals has widened.

The presence of the pandemic was felt in the composition of the club. Even in previous years, mostly disadvantaged children were admitted, this proportion changed to 50% and the children of families belonging to the middle class of the settlement also appeared, because the parents were tired during the quarantine period, they no longer had mobilizable contacts or financial resources.

[Szombathely "Szombathely Community Rental Housing System \(KBR\)"](#)

Population: 76 085 people

About the municipality:



Housing prices in Szombathely are high compared to the national average. People with low socioeconomic status have no chance to purchase their own homes. Rising rents, the need to pay a deposit of several months' rent and the low number of rented apartments make their situation even more difficult. Landlords often reject families with young children, disadvantaged people, people of Roma origin, people on low incomes and people on social assistance. A recurring problem is that individuals and families are forced to move out of rental apartments several times each year and consequently they are constantly in between apartments. The KBR scheme provides a solution to this problem by helping target groups to access housing. The tenant pays no deposit and can rent the property at 15% below the market price. The security of tenancy is increased by the fact that the tenancy agreement is for 3 years, during which time the tenant has a registered residence and can therefore use the services of a kindergarten or school doctor in Szombathely. For the landlords the scheme is beneficial because it is the municipality that takes over the administrative costs, the task of finding tenants and the collection of the rent. The municipality is also responsible for the maintenance of the property. In addition, the owner of the apartment can take advantage of a 15% tax reduction. The main beneficiaries of the KBR scheme are individuals and families who have a regular income and employment but are often excluded from market-based sub-rental schemes because of the requirements and conditions imposed by landlords. The introduction of the KBR by the municipality took place during the COVID-19 epidemic, thus alleviating the crisis caused by the pandemic.

For those who are unable to obtain housing on the market, the municipality's rental housing scheme can provide assistance. However, most of the rental housing owned by the municipality is either occupied or in need of renovation. The number of applicants is high, with nearly 300 applicants for 34 municipal properties available for allocation in 2021.

The municipality of Szombathely, a city with county rights, maintains a complex system of municipal rental housing to address housing problems in the city. Based on the data compiled in 2021, the Municipality owns 2077 rental apartments. In 2021, the number of occupied apartments is 1945. The municipality is in the possession of 34 flats that can be rented out to people in need in the future. The demand for rented housing in the municipality is constantly increasing due to rising property and rental prices on the market. The socio-demographic composition of the applicants has changed, with mainly the middle class being eligible for the Szombathely Community Rental Housing Scheme. The Municipality provides HUF 70-100 million per year for the maintenance and renovation of rental housing units.

The essence of good practice:



KBR is a new, unique and innovative solution to rectify the shortcomings of the municipal rental sector in Szombathely. The aim is to solve the housing crisis of individuals by using privately owned, previously market-rented housing for social purposes. The apartments to be included in the scheme will be of a comfortable or semi-comfortable standard, with no enforcement and/or usufruct rights. For the landlords the advantage is that the risk of renting is borne by the municipality. A rental contract is concluded between the homeowner and the municipality for a minimum period of 3 years. The monthly rent is set at a lower-than-normal market rate, which means that the rent is also affordable to those middle-class citizens who are in less than favourable financial situation. No deposit is required, and the scheme provides a predictable future for people with housing problems for several years. Another positive aspect is that the rent subsidy for tenants in non-municipal owned housing can be provided by the municipality under the KBR scheme. The tasks of finding tenants and administering the letting are fully taken over by the municipality from the landlord. The landlord is entitled to a 15% reduction on income tax as she/he rents her/his property for social purposes. Since the introduction of the KBR in 2020, 14 privately owned dwellings have been included in the municipal rental housing scheme. The tenants selected by the municipality have no rent and utility debts.

The success of the scheme is demonstrated by the fact that 14 homeowners and 14 tenants have been enrolled in the KBR scheme since its launch in 2020. The municipality considers the non-profit, church and civil organisations as partners in Szombathely, as well as the social institutions maintained by the municipality, which have a key role in promoting KBR and in ensuring that KBR as an option reaches the widest possible range of clients with housing problems.

Since its launch, the municipality has spent 1 750 000 HUF on this program from its own resources. The operation of the scheme does not require the provision of separate infrastructure and human resources. The applications received are handled by 5 administrators in the Housing Office. The introduction of KBR will bring long-term savings to the municipality. Since housing subsidies, rents and housing costs can be planned in advance, the municipality's financial management is more predictable. For individuals and families, rented housing provides security, making it easier for them to find work if they have somewhere to live. Being employed means earning a wage, so they can pay their housing costs without entering a debt cycle. As they can maintain their livelihoods, they do not apply for benefits, thus "saving" the municipality money. Szombathely's population is ageing, the ageing index is increasing. This scheme could improve the demographic indicators because families with housing are more inclined to have children. If the age composition of the population improves, fewer resources will be needed for elderly care. Savings can also be made in the



renovation of municipal rental housing, as the quality of the municipal renting units does not deteriorate when private property is included. It is in the tenant's interest to keep the property in good condition and not let it fall into decay, as his/her contract may be terminated. The private owner has an interest in maintaining the comfort of the apartment, renovating it, as she/he can receive a higher monthly rent. The municipality will therefore have to spend less and less each year on the renovation of the rented housing.

Innovations of local governments topic

Budapest, XIII. District "Smart solution for the development of customer- and employee-friendly public administration"

Population: 117.008

About the municipality:

The XIII. District, as part of its integrated urban development policy, expects the practical application of a smart approach to improve the quality of life of local residents and reduce the burden on the environment, thus contributing to sustainable growth. On 5 February 2019, the Municipality of the XIII district adopted the Smart District Concept, and in June 2020 the SMART13 Action Plan. In this plan, the tasks are grouped into six sub-schemes, the implementation of which, with the cooperation of partners and the involvement of citizens, will make the district's own operations more efficient, improve and expand the range of public services and contribute to reducing the ecological footprint of local society. In line with this, its Information Technology Concept and Information Security Strategy states that the general objective should be achieved by using info communication tools and new information technologies.

One of the areas of public services in local government is the organisation of local administration. The Municipality of Budapest XIII. district is committed to operating a system in all areas that can respond flexibly to social challenges and is open to public participation and dialogue. In the field of public administration, the development of eGovernment services contributes to the simplification and transparency of administrative processes, ensuring that public administration actors can provide efficient and quality online services, with the aim of increasing customer satisfaction.

The basic expectation of society is to ensure the effective functioning of local government. This objective is served by the task management system set up in recent years. The



development, implementation and continuous improvement of this system has resulted in a more dynamic and quality-oriented work of the staff, and in addition to this, it has increased the satisfaction of the citizens.

The project contributes to the operation of a more efficient, simpler and cheaper municipal public service system, which offers citizens, businesses and organisations a number of benefits in their daily lives and operations.

The need for the project was based on the demand to assist and support regular management control, the experience of internal audits of the quality system and feedback from citizens. At management level, the need was expressed for a registration system to manage the various notifications received by the municipality in a uniform way, capable of monitoring the electronic submissions, the responses and the implementation of actions.

When conducting the customer satisfaction survey, it was noted that the residents who contact the town hall are not followed up with feedback or it takes too long to answer them, which is especially embarrassing when information is needed immediately or at short notice.

The Mayor's Office has an integrated quality management system, which entails regular review and continuous improvement and development.

Annual reports are made on the activities of the office and improvement proposals are formulated in response to the issues and problems identified. The sources of this are:

- Citizen and customer satisfaction survey data (three weeks per year).
- Feedback from the municipality (number of complaints, content of decisions, proposals adopted/not adopted).
- Staff experience.

An annual action plan is drawn up to carry out tasks for continuous improvement.

Chronological list of improvements made:

2018: board and committee meetings, registration of agendas, definition and implementation of tasks:

It was observed that each unit filed and maintained its own collection of proposals and documents. When preparing the agendas, it took a long time to gather the material according



to the work plan. A similar process was to begin after implementation. To remedy this, a unified registration system has been set up, accessible to all with the appropriate authorization

2019: receiving functional emails, registering incoming signals and replies, responding, setting deadlines for action:

Prior to the implementation, 11 functional email addresses were used to receive submissions from citizens. Now the system receives and distributes submissions through one channel. Retrieving staff responses, checking back with management on the content of responses, implementation of promised actions was difficult. Citizens complained that they did not receive a reply to their emails. This is why the new module was needed.

2020: availability of templates, management of public space reservation permits: the content of the responses has been standardized to reflect a coherent image of the municipality administration. The handling of the public space reservation permit procedure has been introduced as a new office task and a working group of 4 people has developed a process for digital administration using the features of the task management system.

2021: electronic filing of incoming e-mails, administration of the community budget procedure: in order to reduce the administrative burden on staff, the filing of incoming e-mails is automated. The introduction of the community budget is a new form of partnership. It was clear that a well-established system for organising the process should be developed.

The need to make improvements was further reinforced by the COVID-19 emergency situation. As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, smart solutions emerged and came to the fore. The impact of the external circumstances and the need to ensure the continuity of administrative tasks have created a constraint, both in terms of time and in terms of expanding the range of services more rapidly.

Results of good practice:

- a new procedural order has been established to assist the work of the elected representatives of the municipality, changes to proposals can be tracked, viewed and retrieved according to levels of authority, the implementation of tasks of the representative body, their content and deadlines are public.
- facilitated the management of a large number of e-mails: customers receive immediate feedback on the receipt of their mail and the start of the case procedure, the administrative



workload of municipality employees is reduced; the retrievability of emails and replies helps and supports management control, and the examination of the content can be used as a basis for decisions and actions.

- ensure a rapid response time, which allows new tasks to be developed more quickly, thus improving the quality of services.

The improvements described cost a total of 35 million forints. All this was paid from local resources. Following each modification, employees received internal training on the new functions of the system, their use and the rules for their application.

Financial savings were mainly achieved through the elimination of paper administration. Office paper consumption at the municipality has been reduced by almost 25%.

Ipolytölgyes – „Long ladder” Municipal Equipment Rental

Population: 320

About the municipality:

With 320 inhabitants, Ipolytölgyes is situated in beautiful environment, but far from regional centres offering a wider range of services. The municipality strives to reduce disadvantages deriving from the lack of infrastructure. High tax revenues (from local businesses) allow residents to access a series of different services provided by the municipality. Most important is the village caretaker service, which alleviates lack of facilities, with kindergarten children being transported from home to the nursery in the neighbouring village. People in need can be transported to health care facilities, but also to cultural and sporting events in an organised way. The municipal equipment rental service is a similar help available to the population. In Ipolytölgyes, there are 150 people with multiple disabilities living.

The essence of good practice:

Ipolytölgyes is a rich municipality. The local government has a high tax revenue, but what they are proud of is that even the poorest local resident is far richer than the average Hungarian citizen!

The steps taken for this are:

The Municipality of Ipolytölgyes has created a good practice out of necessity. Initially, the equipment used by the municipality for municipal maintenance was borrowed on demand by staff and public workers, and later by the population. A community equipment rental service



was set up for this purpose. The range of equipment available for borrowing was deliberately designed to make the daily life of the villagers easier and to reduce the cost of living.

Each family has access to more than fifty different types of equipment, from long ladders to trailers and canoes, without having to buy, store or repair them! All they need to do is to use them. Repair and maintenance costs are shouldered by the municipality. The method has a significant community development and community building effect, as the equipment is owned by the community; there are no complicated legal formulas and contracts when using the service, because it is trust-based and works well in the small community.

Through municipal equipment rental, residents experience directly that the assets managed by the municipality are for their benefit, under the supervision of their elected officials.

In addition to the fact that the utilization rate of the equipment used by the entire population is many times higher than those owned privately - and this is remarkable even from a sustainability perspective - the real result is that this practice counterbalances the disadvantages caused by living in a small community far from urban areas. Besides this, renting for free represents a significant saving for families. **At least 60% of households in Ipolytölgyes regularly use rented equipment.**

[Püspökszilágy: Small-scale innovative and classical methods to protect mountain and hilly settlements against flash floods, possibilities for water conservation and adaptation to climate change](#)

Population: 742

About the municipality:

Püspökszilágy is a marshy settlement in Pest County, at the junction of the Cserhát and Gödöllő hills, which has been hit by flash floods more than 10 times in the last 15 years (consequences: flooding, erosion, bank slides, damage to utilities). It is also a very dry area of the country, with annual precipitation of 500-600 mm.

Considering the average age of the population, the village counts as having one of the highest percentages of elderly citizens in the country. There is no through traffic, and the two national establishments that have been operating here for 50 years enjoy full tax exemption. The village has a population of 742, a primary school, a kindergarten, a GP's office, and a town hall. For the last 15 years, the municipality has run a forest camp with the aim of promoting environmental education, but unfortunately this was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, so the municipality has been looking for new opportunities.



The essence of good practice:

Since 1 September 2017, Püspökszilágy has been the main project site for an EU grant, overseen by the Ministry of the Interior. In addition to the EU tender, all the national tenders that have been awarded have been coordinated to this end and supplemented with own resources. The 4-year project got virtually 100% completed in 2020 and the facilities are operational. The municipality strived to implement marketing, dissemination, and public acceptance in completely new and innovative ways.

The 3 major rainfalls since the plant has been operational are proof that an effective system against flash floods has been put in place. The projects have also fulfilled the function of water conservation, and the associated improvements have also made significant progress in the area of climate change adaptation.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the project has been highly successful in transforming a virtually inoperable forest camp and its facilities into an environmental laboratory in the municipality, including training for adults and the establishment of a municipal green office. Local NGOs, farmers, schools and neighbouring municipalities have been involved in the operation and implementation of the projects, from the preparation all the way to the realization.

Another innovative feature of the project is the ongoing "giving away" of certain project elements (part of the stream, lake, nature trail, recreation area). The municipality would like to symbolically hand them over to local NGOs, school classes and families to complement their supervision, maintenance and monitoring. This would ensure the sustainability of the project and, above all, that the local population could take ownership of the project.

For the problem of water management, the municipality has been looking for a solution for the last 20 years. In 2017, the Ministry of the Interior took the initiative to submit a LIFE project in the field of adaptation to climate change. Püspökszilágy applied as a project member together with thousands of other municipalities and after several selection rounds, it was selected as a project member in the very first such project that won funding.

The municipality itself designed the good practice in the village after the preparatory phase but left the possibility during the five-year period to expand and enrich the practical solution by involving NGOs, schools, experts and the experience of study trips abroad. After the project proposal, a coherent strategy was developed and carried out with the help of OVF and WWF, also project members. A vulnerability assessment was also conducted with the assistance of



the Climate Change Officer and is available on both the municipality and the project website. In the implementation, due to the situation and condition of the municipality and the need to secure self-financing, several tenders were submitted and subsequently secured.

The practice was also part of the overall strategy of the municipality, which has dealt with environmental education for two decades. As part of the project, a specific strategy has been developed to identify and implement low-cost, disseminable solutions that can be used as an example by small and large municipalities alike. It was a good and useful initiative by the Ministry of Interior.

The substantive preparation started in 2017, based on the project idea from 12 years ago, and was practically completed in 2020, but the implementation of the complementary project elements is still ongoing today. A further EU application (LIFE-LOGOS) has been submitted, which has also been successful and will be implemented between 2021-2024.

It was crucial to be able to involve the neighbouring municipalities on both sides of the watershed, in the project, as it was able to create a micro-region where the impact, implementation and all the difficulties of the project could be experienced in practice. The project's monitoring system, its complementary technical instruments and the environmental laboratory are a great help in this respect.

Best practices of elderly care with special focus on home care services

Budakeszi - Maintaining creativity in old age, cultivating creativity in retirement

Population: 15.000

About the municipality:

Budakeszi is a district centre, a regional centre that has been integrated into the capital. It functions as a green belt around Budapest, where many multi-generational families decide to move. Budakeszi has a population of 15,000 out of which the number of elderly is 3400.

Budakeszi is struggling with the problem of traffic passing through the town everyday – 240 000 cars/day. New residents keep moving to Budakeszi and they require rapid infrastructural development, for which there are not enough resources. Budakeszi is maintaining a large network of institutions putting a financial burden on the municipality.

The overall aim of the municipality is to make older people active and encourage them to be creative. The municipality wants old people to feel that Budakeszi is a good place to live.

The essence of good practice:



The good practice in Budakeszi is to promote activities based on creativity in old age. For the elderly population, the municipality organizes highly innovative programs at the House of Generations, aimed at developing and preserving creativity in older people.

The city realized that previously only a few people used the Day Care for the Elderly service, and there were often more staff than people being cared for. This was not cost-effective. In accordance with the Government Decision 1275/2010 (XII.8.), the Council for the Elderly of the City of Budakeszi was established on 3 June 2013, at the initiative of the municipality. They were the one proposing the Strategy for Older People and the Local Equal Opportunities Programme whose purpose is to enable older people to decide on the quality of life measures they want the municipality to take. The council is composed of doctors, teachers, senior citizens' club leaders, transport experts, members of the press and the head of the family support service, in the presence of the mayor or deputy mayor. On their suggestions, the range of services provided to the elderly has been modified. The site was renamed the Council's House of Generations. The aim was to organize attractive programs there for all generations, programs that would make life more fulfilling. As a result, the programs are now so rich and creative that the house is always full.

The Creative Circle was the first successful program to teach oil painting techniques to those who had not had the opportunity when they were young but felt the need for artistic expression. The programs change daily: 'Adventures in Music, Senior Dance, Ceramics, Computer Class, Film Club, Nations Day, Nations Kitchen, 'Drop-in: improvisational board game', 'Things you know wrong', etc. The sessions have been attended by people who have taken it upon themselves to run other creative sessions.

This good practice, which has been running successfully for years and is now being reorganized after the epidemic, is to focus on creative activities, as suggested by the Council for the Elderly, and to make the programs open to all ages, forming generational bridges.

The opportunity to create is also the best way to build community. The city plans to take this good practice further into the field of home care, but the epidemic has intervened, taking the focus elsewhere.

[Budapest, XII. district - Targeted support for people with dementia and their relatives](#)

Population: 55.947

About the municipality

The district has a population of 55,947, of which 14,867 are over 65 (27%), significantly above the metropolitan average, of whom 62% are women. Life expectancy in 2018 was 78.7 years



for men and 82.1 years for women, the second highest in the capital. The high number of ageing population and the increasing proportion of elderly people pose increased challenges to the care system. It is a known fact that the greatest risk factor for Alzheimer's disease is advanced age, the number of people affected is increasing. There is no recent survey on the exact number of people living with dementia in the XII district but based on the available data the estimated number is at 1100.

Dementia is a major challenge for family members, the health system and the social care system. Information on dementia is still scarce. Families are often left alone with their relative with dementia, not knowing where to turn for help. There is a strong taboo around the disease, with many people hiding the patient in their homes. The taboo is compounded by a strong sense of denial, which means that people are usually diagnosed late, at an intermediate stage, when early diagnosis is crucial. Isolation and a sense of shame aggravate the situation. Dementia is usually accompanied by other health problems that need treatment. The lack of 24-hour care, support and leisure time leads to exhaustion of the primary carer, who may become ill themselves.

Essence of the good practice

The purpose of the good practice of the XII district is to provide targeted support for people with dementia and their relatives.

The Hegyvidék Equal Opportunities Programme (HEP, 2013), the Concept for Ageing (2013) and the research report preparing the ITS review (2020) all emphasize that the district has a high proportion of older people, which is coupled with a higher life expectancy than the national average. The latter document points out that the risk of developing dementia increases with ageing. The HEP specifically highlights the lack of services for people living with dementia, which the Office is working to address.

The Municipality of Hegyvidék launched the Dementia Office as a voluntary task within the Hegyvidék Social Centre on 1 March 2020. Its objectives include raising awareness on the topic, producing information materials, organizing Alzheimer Café lectures, building a database, mapping services that could improve the quality of life of people with dementia and of those caring for them, sensitizing district service providers, organizing professional days and groups for relatives, and building cooperation with other institutions. In addition to facilitating the lives of people living with dementia and their families, the dementia-friendly community will strive to develop a community approach that supports people living with dementia to live the best quality of life available to them, to be recognized, involved in decisions according to



their abilities, to engage in meaningful activities and to remain independent as long as possible, supported by an appropriate urban physical and institutional environment.

The Dementia Office helps family members by providing information about the disease, and by offering a range of activities to help them relax and reduce the risk of burnout. The self-help support group is a good way of building a grassroots support community. By sensitizing social and district service providers, the stigma associated with dementia can be dissolved and isolation reduced. Providing a supportive, safe physical environment helps to improve the quality of life of those affected. Networking services across the district will improve the quality and speed of care.

Furthermore, an additional important role of the Dementia Bureau is to provide information on various memory loss diseases that do not require medical expertise, and to emphasize prevention, contributing to healthy ageing.

[Jánoshida – Communities for active ageing in Jánoshida](#)

Population: 2545

About the municipality:

Jánoshida is settlement on the Zagyva River, which boasts the oldest church in the area dating back to 1186. The most important transport link in the southern part of Jászság is the main road 32, which runs tangentially along the edge of the village, next to the Zagyva River.

The population is 2545, of which:

- 632 inhabitants over 60 years of age.
- Number of single persons over 65 years of age: 157.
- The number of active-age residents is 1387.

Jánoshida is an ageing settlement. More and more elderly people living alone and with dementia are asking for help. Loneliness and isolation in old age have an impact on the physical and mental well-being of older people.

The essence of good practice:

Demand for basic social services is increasing, but the maintenance of day care services may be threatened by low funding. The municipality is trying to address the problem of aging population by creating an active ageing policy, the strength and power of which lies in the groups of elderly residents in the municipality. By re-establishing community groups,



Loneliness and deterioration can be halted. The renewed strength of community can reenergize older people.

The active ageing policy is based on effective, personalised prevention, the basic principle of which is to maintain independence. It has physical, spiritual, intellectual and social tools, which the village hall and the senior citizens' club, in cooperation with the educational and training institutions in the municipality, are trying to implement in a holistic approach, involving the elderly in the life of Janoshida through the operation of differentiated senior citizens' groups, mental and spiritual care, knowledge transfer, development of creativity, strengthening community relations, and the creation of a dementia-friendly environment.

The elderly will feel the need to participate actively in the life of the community through the experience of belonging to a group, which could mean joining one of the senior citizens' club.

The aim is to involve as many older people as possible in the life of the municipality, thus reducing loneliness. There are several small groups of pensioners. Many older people are also involved in representative bodies and civic organisations.

These groups are brought together and facilitated by the Village Hall and the Seniors' Club. Through joint programmes, the groups form a large community in the life of the municipality. The groups focus on preparing for old age, developing positive coping strategies, life path integration, and the search for meaning. Emphasis is placed on lifelong learning, social activity, and arts experiences. Inter-generational cooperation, community and social activity (in the form of volunteering, membership of representative bodies, employment) and the promotion of social relations are also important. Emphasis on developing a dementia and elderly-friendly approach and prevention through person-centred care.

After the epidemic, the aim is to re-launch these groups to implement good practice, thus strengthening community cohesion and reducing loneliness and isolation. Peer-to-peer links will be given renewed importance.

Public safety and crime prevention topic

Budapest Capital District XIII – “Rendezvous with Safety” - public safety program
Population: 117.008

The crime statistics of the XIII. district are good in comparison to the capital. The crime prevention activities of the municipality are effective, the tasks defined in the public safety

concept have been implemented for years. However, one must not forget about crimes and offences that disturb the residents, which often remain unknown to law enforcement agencies, because citizens themselves do not dare or do not want to report them to the authorities. To maintain and improve the municipality's achievements in the field of public safety and prevention, they must continue to detect and prevent crimes that directly harm or threaten citizens and their communities, in close cooperation with the law enforcement agencies, organizations and NGOs working in the field of public safety in the district.

It is important to understand the factors that influence the public's perception of safety. Although the range of tools and methods for gathering public opinion has recently expanded considerably, local authorities have little or no scope for interactive solutions. It is well known that the perception of safety of urban residents is often affected by anomalies unknown to the authorities, mostly in public spaces, most of which do not constitute a violation but have the potential to do so. Professional analyses show that there are still many latent crimes and offences which are not detected by law enforcement agencies because citizens themselves do not report them to the police.

The municipality, recognizing its key role as a central reference point for the public in learning about public safety, and in disseminating crime prevention information, has started to develop a new program, involving professionals. The new program is called "Rendezvous with Safety". The project provides residents an opportunity to attend municipal events to have a cup of coffee and a chat with professionals, police officers, public safety officers and vigilantes. Many of the professionals who came to the "rendezvous" were approached with comments and suggestions on public order and safety, and many were also interested in how to improve the personal safety of their homes, property, and family members. Thanks to the attitude and active involvement of the professionals involved, more and more citizens who wanted to do something for public safety in the district felt it was important to express their opinions and suggestions.

What did the municipality expect from the new program?

- to collect the suggestions and concerns of local residents about the public safety situation in the district
- to build cooperation with citizens in order to improve their quality of life and subjective sense of security and to prevent them from becoming victims;
- to facilitate more effective cooperation with district law enforcement agencies, senior staff of local government and public institutions, and NGOs;



- the use of the experience gained during the program series in defining the future directions of the district's public safety concept, in assessing the development goals and directions.
- the implementation of the municipality's comprehensive crime prevention, public safety concept

Following the events, an action plan was drawn up to take the necessary measures. In August 2020 a professional working group was set up, consisting of the professionals involved and senior staff delegated by the municipality, which jointly evaluated and analysed the reports, opinions and suggestions made during the discussions and ensured that coordinated measures were taken. The new public safety program is now complete and continuous.

Thanks to the joint activities of the professional working group, the communication and cooperation between the district police, the public order officers, the vigilantes and other specialised services (prevention and social services) has been further strengthened, as has the dynamism of coordination and cooperation.

[Budapest Capital District III - Crime prevention maze: victim support escape rooms for the elderly and drug prevention escape rooms for young people](#)

Population: 125.154

About the municipality:

Óbuda-Békásmegyer is the third largest district in Budapest, and the second most populous. In terms of public transportation, the district is well-connected through a high-speed rail line, several tram lines and a railway line. The diversity of the district is also reflected in the composition of its population, both in terms of social status and age. When it comes to the crime rate, the district is targeted not only by local criminals but by criminals from other districts.

The essence of good practice:

The municipality has taken the initiative to address the problem, through its two forums, the Victim Support Professional Cooperation System and the Drug Advisory Forum, by exploring and implementing different options to prevent victimization and by initiating prevention programs. The municipality also organized community forums, which also provided similar knowledge.

The project was designed by the coordinators of the two forums (civil servants) with the involvement of other stakeholders, who later helped with the design and then took part in the testing. The program has been developed in cooperation with local professionals (elderly care,



Public Health Department of the Government Office, police, civil guard, protection nurses, NGOs working with drug users, family support workers). The preparation and planning took several years because funding needed to be identified but after financial support was secured, the project was quickly completed.

As part of the project, Crime Prevention Maze was created. Both scenarios of the crime prevention maze take place in the same room, where a grandparent is raising her 15-year-old grandson alone. The grandchild's mother is working abroad, and his father is in prison. During the game you can either impersonate the grandparent or the grandchild. The door of the room is not locked during the game, so there is no feeling of being locked in. The aim is not to escape from the room, but to complete the tasks and the story in the available time. The game master monitors the players via a camera during the game and guides them to the next level if necessary. In both cases, the total program lasts almost an hour and a half, followed by a discussion about the game and the experiences. A minimum of 3 and a maximum of 6 participants per age group can take part in one session, which can be booked by appointment.

The programme is free of charge. By experiencing the process and prevention of the most common types of fraud, older people gain practical experience of what to look out for, how not to fall victim to fraud and, through a series of actions, they become familiar with the correct behaviour. Young people are confronted with decision situations and thus face the consequences of their choices. They are also presented with tasks and topics that can be discussed in a post-game session to ensure an effective outcome and to plan further group activities. This is a complex way of talking to the participants, seeking help for possible problems and preventing trouble.

[Páty - Integrated municipal policing model](#)

Population: 7.925

About the municipality:

Páty is located in the Zsámbék basin, 20 km from Budapest and is easily accessible by public transport or by car. The last estimated population of Páty was 7 925 (in 2019). Páty is a settlement in the agglomeration of Budapest, where the population has been growing dynamically over the last ten years. The problems of urbanisation have brought new challenges for the municipality and its management. Although crime statistics have tended to show an improving trend over the last ten years, the number of minor offences, which have had a negative impact on the residents' subjective sense of public safety - and thus on the quality of life - has increased, leading to numerous conflicts among the population. The lack of police presence in the municipality has become more and more common due to the crisis



caused by migration and the withdrawal of police forces to deal with the pandemic emergency. So, in the municipality there was a lack of resources/power to react to the citizens' complaints.

The essence of good practice:

According to the decision of the Council of the Municipality of Páty, from 1 January 2020, an independent municipal law enforcement organization was established employing four public area supervisors and one field guard. In view of the fact that Act LXIII of 1999 on Public Space Surveillance No. § (4) of the Law of LXIII of 1999 on the Regulation of Public Space Surveillance allows for certain law enforcement - sectoral - tasks to be performed by a public area supervisor after obtaining the necessary qualifications for this position, the municipality decided to establish this model, so that the law enforcement tasks can be performed by in an integrated manner, which has enabled annual savings of HUF 20 million and a significantly more efficient use of human resources.

The state normative subsidies for the provision of specialized field policing tasks ensure the financial conditions for long-term sustainable operation, while the public area supervisors ensure the performance of tasks related to the local government's contribution to maintaining public safety throughout the entire administrative area of the municipality, with significantly broader authority powers throughout the year. The resources required for the continuous operation of CCTV systems and the provision of security for public events organised by the municipality are 100% self-financed thanks to this scheme, which has resulted in additional savings of tens of millions of forints per year for the Municipality. The "Integrated Municipal Policing Model" could be an example for all municipalities to follow.

During the year-long process of developing the "Integrated Municipal Policing Model", the Law Enforcement Office was established as an internal department of the Mayor's Office of Páty.

The implementation of the "model" required the reorganisation of the internal processes of the Mayor's Office, no external partner was directly involved in its development. It is important to note, however, that the new surveillance organisation thus created - and made sustainable - cooperates directly and effectively with the vigilante and voluntary fire-fighting associations working for public safety, traffic safety, crime prevention and fire safety in the municipality, which has also made it possible to relieve the burden on the state law enforcement bodies (police, disaster management agency) in the municipality to a large extent.



Thus, Páty created a new integrated system of public safety provision by training public area supervisors to field guards and better coordinated their tasks.