



**COGreen**

COMMUNITY-BASED ACTION  
FOR A GREEN TRANSITION

**Transnational webinar**  
**FROM THE LOCAL SCALE TO THE**  
**TRANSNATIONAL DIMENSION**

*WP6 - Deliverable 6.1*



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## Introduction

In the framework of WP6, an international webinar was held on the problem of scaling up activities and the linkages between local, regional, national and European Green Deal actions. The aim of the seminar was to engage participants and the experts involved in a discussion about the tools, methods and problems of linking green actions at the level of local and supra-local policies and processes. The seminar was divided into two parts, in the first of which participants listened to presentations by invited experts dealing with the creation of partnership networks, bringing together different actors, operating simultaneously at the local, national and EU level. This part of the meeting focused on models of local actions, networking activities, tools for project dissemination. Professor Arkadiusz Karwacki discussed models for building a shared narrative of green change. Joanna Suchomska of the Sustainable Development Lab focused on mechanisms for animating partnership networks connecting different actors involved in the problem of green transformation of local communities. Urszula Budzich-Tabor of FAMENET and the Rural Parliament introduced participants to mechanisms for building European coalitions of local action. In the workshop part, participants identified the most important local actions worth disseminating. Lists were created of actors participating in green transformation processes who could be included in the actions. An array of networking activities was built by them. They sought opportunities to become part of existing local development groups, networks, and institutions.

## The Event Description Sheet (EDS)

<b>PROJECT</b>	
<b>Participant:</b>	[1] - [Stowarzyszenie Centrum Wspierania Aktywnosci Lokalnej, CAL] [2] - [Uniwersytet Mikolaja Kopernika W Toruniu, UMK] [3] - [Sveuciliste U Rijeci, Filozofski Fakultet U Rijeci, UNIRI] [4] - [Udruga Zmergo, ZMERGO] [5] - [Forum Nazionale Terzo Settore, FNTS] [6] - [Universita degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata, UNITOV] [7] - [Euracademy Association, EURACADEMY] [8] - [Dimos Karditsas, MUNICIPALITY OF KARDITSA]
<b>PIC number:</b>	[946100365] [999836619] [998542057] [946199790] [924949612] [999844864] [921470707] [936282025]
<b>Project name and acronym:</b>	[Community-based action for a green transition] — [CO-GREEN]

<b>EVENT DESCRIPTION</b>	
<b>Event number:</b>	[6]
<b>Event name:</b>	TRANSNATIONAL WEBINAR: FROM THE LOCAL SCALE TO THE TRANSNATIONAL DIMENSION
<b>Type:</b>	[Webinar / online workshop]
<b>In situ/online:</b>	[Online]
<b>Location:</b>	[Poland], [Warsaw, Toruń, Górnó, Starachowice, Wiązowna, Elbląg] [Italy], [Cosenza Panebianco, Magione, Cavalese, Rome] [Croatia], [Rijeka, Opatija] [Greece], [Athens, Karditsa]
<b>Date(s):</b>	15/11/2023
<b>Website(s) (if any):</b>	<b>Poland:</b> General webpage: <a href="https://www.cal.org.pl/projekty-2/cogreen-aktualnosci-i-wydarzenia/">https://www.cal.org.pl/projekty-2/cogreen-aktualnosci-i-wydarzenia/</a>

	Webpage of the outputs of the Event: <a href="https://www.cal.org.pl/projekty-2/cogreen/produkty-i-materialy/">https://www.cal.org.pl/projekty-2/cogreen/produkty-i-materialy/</a> <b>Italy:</b> General webpage: <a href="https://www.forumterzosettore.it/progetto-co-green/ecco-co-green">https://www.forumterzosettore.it/progetto-co-green/ecco-co-green</a> Webpage of the outputs of the Event: <a href="https://www.forumterzosettore.it/progetto-co-green/manteniamo-il-contatto-con-le-altre-comunita-2/">https://www.forumterzosettore.it/progetto-co-green/manteniamo-il-contatto-con-le-altre-comunita-2/</a> <b>Greece:</b> General webpage: <a href="https://www.euracademy.org/co-green/">https://www.euracademy.org/co-green/</a> Webpage of the outputs of the Event: <a href="https://www.euracademy.org/co-green/">https://www.euracademy.org/co-green/</a> <b>Croatia:</b> General webpage: <a href="https://zmergo.hr/co-green/">https://zmergo.hr/co-green/</a> Webpage of the outputs of the Event: <a href="https://zmergo.hr/2023/11/zakljucci-medunarodnog-webinara-co-green-from-the-local-scale-to-the-transnational-dimension/">https://zmergo.hr/2023/11/zakljucci-medunarodnog-webinara-co-green-from-the-local-scale-to-the-transnational-dimension/</a>		
<b>Participants</b>			
Female:	100	(Italy: 25, Greece: 20, Croatia: 34, Poland: 21)	
Male:	40	(Italy: 11, Greece: 15, Croatia: 5, Poland: 9)	
Non-binary:	2		
From country 1 [POLAND]:	30		
From country 2 [ITALY]:	38		
From country 3 [CROATIA]:	39		
From country 4 [GREECE]:	35		
Total number of participants:	142	From total number of countries:	4
<b>Description</b>			
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>			
<p>In the framework of WP6, an international webinar was held on the problem of scaling up activities and the linkages between local, regional, national and European Green Deal actions. The aim of the seminar was to engage participants and the experts involved in a discussion about the tools, methods and problems of linking green actions at the level of local and supra-local policies and processes. The seminar was divided into two parts, in the first of which participants listened to presentations by invited experts dealing with the creation of partnership networks, bringing together different actors, operating simultaneously at local, national and EU level. This part of the meeting focused on three, main elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The presentation of methodologies for local action that would take into account the impact of external policies, challenges and actors. In this part, Professor Arkadiusz Karwacki presented a model of action based on building shared visions and narratives based on local diagnosis of global problems including those related to the environment.</li> </ul>			

- In the second presentation, Joanna Suchomska of the Sustainable Development Lab presented examples of local pro-environmental activities carried out at the interface of citizen activity and the local government sector. She pointed to such mechanisms as the creation of partnerships and participation in diagnostics, emphasising the importance of adapting local development processes to the specifics of the target group. The expert also pointed to innovative examples of green governance activities, demonstrating an original method of working with environmental pollution, in which citizens, supported by developers and local government, build a local network and map of sensors to study the state of the air. A key element of these processes, for the expert, is the ability to build a social and institutional platform to link the knowledge and experience of external experts with the actions of local communities. In this way, a network of interconnected activities is gradually built.
- The third part of the meeting was devoted to building transnational networks and increasing the supra-local impact of Co-Green projects. Urszula Budzich-Tabor, representing FAMENT and RURAL PARLIAMENT, pointed out the most important tools for improving the European visibility of the project. She pointed out the need for participants to be involved in international networks, stressed the importance of good examples and practices, and emphasised the role of well-managed and communicated project materials.

After each presentation, the webinar participants had the opportunity to engage in discussion.

Examples of voices and discussions:

▪ In Panebianco, the change we hope for is to be able to create greater communication between citizens to be able to bring light back to our beautiful neighbourhood and make it a better place to live and work

▪ The persons expressing the authorities (municipalities, regions, central government) have been created through processes and 'exist' and 'act' within this framework. They have no intention of changing or challenging them!

▪ Yes! the vision we have of social change is precisely that of developing communities capable of listening to each other, telling their stories and being able to identify their needs and primary requirements, in every area or sector.

▪ Leadership in my fairytale society is not about power or control but about service and guidance. Leaders are chosen for their wisdom, empathy, and commitment to the greater good. Transparency and accountability would be the pillars of governance. And in my fairyland, the concept of "wealth" is redefined. It would not be just measured by material possessions but by the richness of relationships, the depth of experiences, and the joy found in everyday moments. This ideal society is not empty of challenges or disagreements, but those will be on the willingness of its people to listen, learn, and grow together. It would be a world where each person's unique story will be celebrated, where kindness and understanding pave the way forward, and where the collective dream of a better future is embraced by

▪ Pro-active involvement of potential knowledge drivers (selected with criteria of further transferability of knowledge rather than "numerosity" or simple "representativeness/involvement"). The example of the fishermen provides a concrete case: "making those who work, operate and act on the territory aware of the dynamics that occur at an ecosystem level and which guarantee the functioning of the Lake system". The objective is to ensure that the latter make this knowledge their own and cascade it onto the citizens (who see them as a fundamental part of the socio-economic fabric of the area. A sort of social leverage.

Participants also discussed, among other things, how to maintain project websites, how to engage in networking but also how to build a common narrative about projects and how to go beyond an action-based oriented approach.

In the second part of the meeting, the participants were divided into four rooms in which they were asked to work together to answer the following questions:

1. What can others learn about green transformation from your community (content)?
2. How can you transfer knowledge and experiences from green transformation to other communities or organizations (tools)? What works, and what not?
3. Who and how should be involved in the process of local transfer of green transformation knowledge and experiences (actors)?
4. Are there already initiatives, networks, platforms that can build coalitions of local

Each group had to produce a report presenting the answers to the questions. The results of the task in each group are as follows:

**Group 1:**

1. What can others learn about green transformation from your community (content)?
  - Community development processes, before arriving at specific issues, in this case green ones.
  - Facilitation and building of groups (among the inhabitants of the neighbourhood).
  - Strengthening of the community - active role of each and every one - collective civic sense.
  - Being able to establish dialogues between PA, ETS, Inhabitants (synthesis and co-planning) (how to break down the initial wall of distrust and build communities of good practices).
  - How to start from people (participation, participatory listening).
2. How can you transfer knowledge and experiences from green transformation to other communities or organizations (tools)? What works, and what not?
  - Digital manual (creation of digital content to disseminate good practices within the community by stimulating civic sense - active citizenship).
  - Social TV and radio in the local area.
  - Questionnaires (return of results).
  - After the stakeholder mapping phase, a phase of construction of a common language that does not create an "innovative" counter-tendency but rather presents itself as a dialogue with the realities that operate in the territory which can represent important vectors of dissemination, non-written knowledge and custom.
  - Actual "activities" such as cleaning initiatives, awareness walks on the theme of pedestrianism and alternative mobility, recycling and creative reuse workshops, festivals, etc., at the end of which feedback from participants is collected, but which nevertheless "transfer ""green" mode with Learning by doing and not just in a frontal and unidirectional way.
  - Cooperative Hackathon (collaborative tool for shared projects and ideas).
3. Who and how should be involved in the process of local transfer of green transformation knowledge and experiences (actors)?

- Schools, Experts, Neighbourhood residents, Profit, No profit, all those who live in the community
- Create shared governance
- University of the Third Age
- Administrations at all levels, especially local ones closest to citizens, and managers of environmental services
- Pro-active involvement of potential knowledge drivers (selected with criteria of further transferability of knowledge rather than "numerosity" or simple "representativeness/involvement"). The example of the fishermen provides a concrete case: "making those who work, operate and act on the territory aware of the dynamics that occur at an ecosystem level and which guarantee the functioning of the Lake system". The objective is to ensure that the latter make this knowledge their own and cascade it onto the citizens (who see them as a fundamental part of the socio-economic fabric of the area). A sort of social leverage.

4. Are there already initiatives, networks, platforms that can build coalitions of local

- Yes, there are few local networks and initiatives and we need to understand how to make them communicate with each other. We will try to collect all the good practices from the reference territories.

**Group 2:**

1. What can others learn about green transformation from your community (content)?

In the course of the discussion, we developed five recommendations which, by their universal nature, can be useful in planning and running projects in a variety of locations and at different scales.

Firstly, it is important to work with the local government or local authority. It is worth mapping the initiatives and programmes already in place. In this way, we can avoid duplication of ideas and potential conflict with authorities whose support may be important at different stages of the project. Our project can only intentionally complement or reinforce activities already underway if we fit into the existing institutional environment.

Secondly, with resources usually limited, it is useful to define the project's target group. Limiting the ambitions and activities to a predefined, relatively narrow number of actors increases the probability of final success without excluding the possibility of later scaling up the project.

Thirdly, it is important to listen to the voice of the project participants throughout the duration of the project. One should be ready to modify the objectives or tools in a way expected by its beneficiaries.

Fourthly, it is useful to incorporate bottom-up initiatives that emerge during the project. Although they are not part of a pre-defined plan, they are sometimes firmly rooted in the local context and respond well to the needs and expectations of the community. They also allow participants' involvement to be strengthened.

Finally, workshop participants highlight the need for promotion. Importantly, advertising the project, its objectives and individual activities, helps to promote the ideas behind the project.

2. How can you transfer knowledge and experiences from green transformation to other communities or organizations (tools)? What works, and what not?

Participants highlight the need to use modern, inclusive and interactive forms of education, which are proving to be much more effective than traditional tools. We recommend research walks as an opportunity to meet the community and communicate two-way. On the one hand, researchers/activists can learn about the community's perspective, needs and aspirations. On the other hand, it is the community that gains new perspectives, knowledge and experiences in a friendly, casual atmosphere. Another tool is the short videos prepared by project participants

after training in a dedicated workshop on visual processing. This form of promotion and knowledge transfer allows content to be acquired for distribution and, at the same time, provides a real benefit in terms of the acquisition of hard competences for project beneficiaries and contributors. Similarly, slightly less advanced but also inclusive and interactive methods are used in the form of co-creation of ecological fairy tales and organisation of an art competition to promote project ideas among the youngest.

3. Who and how should be involved in the process of local transfer of green transformation knowledge and experiences (actors)?

Workshop participants pointed out the difficulty in arbitrarily identifying knowledge transfer actors in green projects. The effectiveness of the selection of actors depends on the characteristics of the project. Nevertheless, two issues seem to be important. The first is the need for the broadest possible, inclusive action that does not leave actors or institutions on the margins or outside the action. The second is the simultaneous need to profile activities or limit them to a sufficiently narrow audience to make them as effective as possible within the limited resources available.

4. Are there already initiatives, networks, platforms that can build coalitions of local

Workshop participants pointed to numerous examples of ad hoc coalitions or agreements between various actors (local government, third sector, volunteers) for specific activities. It should be noted that the cooperation networks created in this way, although devoid of an institutionalised character, have the potential to strengthen and function also in projects other than those for which they were established.

### **Group 3:**

1. What can others learn about green transformation from your community (content)?

In our webinar discussions regarding community-led green transitions, we pinpointed key issues and valuable lessons that can serve as guiding principles for other communities. One prominent challenge identified was bureaucratic obstacles, impeding the swift implementation of green initiatives. Additionally, the scarcity of resources posed a significant hurdle, emphasizing the crucial need for efficient resource management. A crucial point highlighted was the necessity to prevent the adaptive degradation of community members, where individuals become accustomed to deteriorating environmental conditions, such as polluted air and water, and reluctantly accept these lower living standards. Karditsa boasts a highly active collaborative ecosystem, and it is imperative to map various stakeholders and formulate a shared vision for the community. The ecosystem needs to develop consciousness, necessitating a motivational switch to inspire all stakeholders to actively contribute to this shared vision and goal. Our circular economy approach yielded valuable lessons, emphasizing the promotion of resource use and reuse while minimizing waste production. The success of the "Deucalionas" educational project, addressing floods through the collaboration of 80 nationwide experts, underscored the effectiveness of democratic processes, open dialogue, and a collective commitment to specific projects. The relationship with local authorities emerged as a contentious point, prompting reflection on the genuine willingness of authorities to prioritize the green transition. Communication with the community underscored the importance of aligning green initiatives with everyday needs, dispelling perceptions that the transition is detached from daily life. Awareness also emerged as a critical aspect, with debates arising on community understanding of the green transition and individual roles within it. In summary, our experiences underscore the significance of overcoming bureaucratic hurdles, fostering collaboration, and aligning green initiatives with community needs for a successful



green transition. The "Deucalionas" project stands as a model for effective engagement, highlighting the value of inclusive, democratic processes.

2. How can you transfer knowledge and experiences from green transformation to other communities or organizations (tools)? What works, and what not?

Participants highlighted that the focus on transferring knowledge and experiences from our green transition underscored the importance of integrating sustainable practices into daily life. We found that personal integration facilitates more effective communication about the Green Transition. To share experiences, physical contact, digital communication (both synchronous and asynchronous), and the creation of electronic platforms proved to be valuable tools. However, the efficacy of tools varied. Traditional methods like live seminars and school networks were hindered by resource constraints. Local networks, meetings, and teleconferences emerged as more practical alternatives, emphasizing the significance of well-organized local programs. Social media played a role in information dissemination and awareness-raising, provided it was carefully structured. Our experiences highlighted the necessity of creating conditions for meaningful communication, with personal contacts being particularly influential. Events and conferences served as platforms for sharing successes, challenges, and best practices, fostering collaboration among communities. The use of electronic platforms, despite resource limitations, became a crucial tool for disseminating data and analyses, promoting a broader understanding of the Green Transition.

3. Who and how should be involved in the process of local transfer of green transformation knowledge and experiences (actors)?

The engagement of various actors in local green transition processes emerged as a crucial aspect. Local residents were identified as pivotal participants, their active involvement deemed decisive for the acceptance of green measures and the realization of sustainable changes. Local authorities were acknowledged for their oversight and implementation role in supporting the green transition, while universities and research institutes were recognized as valuable sources of experiences, research, and innovative ideas. To involve these actors, conferences, public events, and educational programs were suggested as effective means of implementation. The spectrum of involved entities encompassed central administration, educational bodies, associations, volunteers, businesses, and cooperatives. Cooperation culture in specific green projects was emphasized, along with mutual respect and recognition of each participant's role. Initiatives involved synthesizing thoughts on projects, conducting needs analyses, determining project participants, and creating coordinating groups. Inclusivity was highlighted, utilizing online questionnaires and modern marketing tools to involve the entire society. Horizontal and vertical knowledge transfer mechanisms were proposed, involving representatives for both upward and lateral knowledge sharing. A dedicated website for local green transition actions, managed by a central coordinator or institution, was suggested as a comprehensive archive. The transfer of experience and knowledge was emphasized as a process from the grassroots level to the top, emphasizing organized meetings with defined objectives, agendas, schedules, and feedback loops to ensure interaction, equality, and respect among participants.

4. Are there already initiatives, networks, platforms that can build coalitions of local

During our discussions, the topic of initiatives leading to partnerships in local green transition processes was explored. One participant noted a lack of local initiatives in their area, with the Green Transition introduced externally through European programs or directives, rather than as a conscious community need.

Communication tools were identified as potentially fruitful, and private initiatives were highlighted, such as a company specializing in passive buildings seeking collaboration with the municipality. Energy community initiatives and inter-municipal cooperation were also noted. Despite bureaucracy-related delays involving the Municipality of Karditsa, European programs were recognized for their beneficial role in involving various local stakeholders.

Another participant emphasized the importance of educational programs to enhance stakeholders' understanding of green opportunities and challenges. Initiatives at both European and local levels, as well as personal initiatives, were mentioned. Digital tools were acknowledged, but interpersonal relationships were deemed crucial.

The participants shared their involvement in various initiatives, including collaboration with the Network of 36 Municipalities for rivers, local school networks, partnerships with universities, and projects addressing environmental issues such as plastic reduction and river health. These collaborations spanned education, environmental sustainability, and virtual representation of historical spaces, showcasing a diverse range of efforts toward local green transition.

#### **Group 4:**

1. What can others learn about green transformation from your community (content)?

Participants in the discussion felt that the “Green Network of Primorsko-Goranska County” (Zelena mreža PGŽ) is something we could recommend to other communities. “Green Network” was formed in March 2023 in Rijeka and it gathers active citizens and members of civil initiatives, representatives of local authorities, representatives of public institutions, activists, etc. It was formed under the urge to communicate in a more efficient manner between different initiatives, organisations, and public offices, and also to reach a wider public in spreading eco/green messages. Experience (however short-lived by now) tells us that we are stronger when networked and that different members inform, empower, and motivate each other to engage in the community while sharing tasks and responsibility for the common goal.

2. How can you transfer knowledge and experiences from green transformation to other communities or organizations (tools)? What works, and what not?

An example of sharing knowledge with other communities is the research about the opinions of decision-makers on the climate crisis and their impact on local projects and activities, conducted by the above mentioned “Green Network of Primorsko-Goranska County”. The research is performed on the occasion of the 28th UN Climate Change Conference COP28 to address local environmental issues and the efficiency of the corresponding projects in the eyes of the public, as well as decision-makers. The core idea of the research is that the public must be informed about the decision-makers' perception of climate change which influences all aspects of everyday life in Primorsko-Goranska County, as well as about how climate change will be addressed. For this occasion, a simple anonymous online questionnaire of 18 questions was developed and sent to relevant addresses. On one side, this act will provoke decision-makers to think and rethink their local policies, and on the other side, the wide public including different communities will be informed about their plans and possibilities to be included in the processes of decision-making. Other relevant examples of transferring knowledge and experiences are protests and assemblies of citizens. Different initiatives and organisations are together preparing the Conference on the future of Primorsko-Goranska County. Participants in the discussion emphasized that there is a big gap between what should we do regarding climate change (sources of food, clean energy), and what are we doing. The

conference is planned to take place in the election year since the organizers feel that that time is always more fruitful for spreading messages and being heard.

3. Who and how should be involved in the process of local transfer of green transformation knowledge and experiences (actors)?

Participants in the discussion emphasized the importance of the education system for knowledge transfer. Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management was featured as one of the high-education institutions well equipped for such a task. Students could learn about well-managed and successful projects on a local level and use that knowledge further in their careers. The significance of the promotion of ideas doesn't end there (with high education). Children from the earliest age should be involved in diverse creative workshops where they can learn about the importance of the environment. Association "Our Children" from Opatija is already organizing this type of workshops, but this activity should embrace also kindergartens. Senior citizens are seen as a huge resource for local knowledge transfer because they have the experience and time to dedicate themselves to chosen activities.

4. Are there already initiatives, networks, platforms that can build coalitions of local

Several associations occasionally collaborate: the citizen initiative TIKO from the island of Krk, the association Croatian Permaculture (Hrvatska permakultura) from the town of Križevci, the Association for the Community Economy (Udruga za ekonomiju zajedništva) from the same town, Simbiocen from Serbia, Extinction Rebellion (international). The Association for the Community Economy is already a network of citizens, associations, and initiatives. These associations could build firmer connections and coalitions in the future.

On the European level is the example Ecolise, the European network for community-led initiatives on climate change and sustainability. Ecolise supports collaboration among community-led initiatives and networks.

#### **Summary of the workshop:**

- Each community involved has interesting examples of green micro change. The problem is often the scale and the focus on limited actions by a narrow group of actors.
- An important part of scaling up is to well recognise and join in the activity of existing support networks operating at a supra-local level. There are coalitions of organisations, expert and public actors supporting green transformation. They can strengthen community action, allow new resources and experiences to be gained, allow knowledge about models and ways of working to be exchanged.
- When designing a local green transformation, it is important to remember to communicate our actions, projects, obstacles with others. It is important to provide the tools to establish relationships. New media and technologies are important, but also direct contacts and previous experiences of cooperation.
- Building two-way relations and communication between active communities and policymakers and public actors is key. In doing so, it is important to ensure the subjectivity of the communities themselves. They must not be passive recipients of development policies, they must be able to shape them according to their own needs.
- In defining potential partnership networks, workshop participants identified a range of regional, national and international organisations that can support green community transformation processes.

In summary, a key element of the workshop was to shift the centre of gravity of community green transformation efforts. The participants involved were confronted with the need to build networks for action. The local nature of individual activities does not mean that they can be disconnected from the broader objectives of development policies. Moreover, effective, successful transformation requires narratives, visions for action, methodologies and ideas that can go beyond the community itself. This makes it crucial for the success of seemingly small, rooted transformation efforts to connect with problems but also resources and actors operating at multiple levels. This will enable a seamless transfer of knowledge between local and supra-local stakeholders of green change.