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# M4EG GEORGIA KEY HIGHLIGHTS

MAY 2023 – MAY 2024 REPORT





*"It is good that the city has organized an open multifunctional space in the central park of Poti, which is not discriminatory and is acceptable for people of all ages and interests, as well as accessible for people with disabilities."*

**Alika Gihkashvili**

Chairman of the Youth Council. Poti, Georgia

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*"Innovative methods of learning and hackathons give a chance to youth to actively participate in the city's green development process".*

**Leila Dadashova**

A Winners of the Green Hackathon. Rustavi, Georgia

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*"Samtredia team successfully used the knowledge gained in the first stage of urban studies in the process of implementing other projects, including in grant competitions announced by donor organizations (GIZ) and received funding (500,000 GEL). Accordingly, we have a logical expectation that the new stage of urban imaginings will give us more knowledge and experience, more opportunities to better implement and use the knowledge gained at the teaching stage and to make effective population-oriented decisions."*

**Samtredia team**

Samtredia City Hall

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*"There is a need for closer cooperation and sharing of experiences with partners, both within and outside M4EG. Promotion of good practice and its replication. Finding the closest possible analogue to our project and intensive cooperation with its implementer".*

**Rustavi Urban Imaginaries team**

Rustavi Innovation Hub

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*"The Investment Preparedness Academy is rather important for the municipalities since it offers the opportunity to develop an investment catalogue, build capacity to independently attract new investment ultimately to improve social and economic standing of the municipality".*

**Nino Arabuli**

Advisor of Akhmeta Mayor

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*„Participation in this project is very important for us in order to be able to implement our ideas and initiatives. As you might well know, implementation of initiatives in green policies and smart solutions have become an important aspects of the modern life. We have been actively working in this direction and therefore, developing investment and development grants catalogue as well as the expert knowledge that the project promises, will help us to overcome significant challenges of the modern life“.*

**Giorgi Edisherashvili**

Gori Municipality Development Agency

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>CO</b>	<b>Country Office</b>
<b>EaP</b>	<b>Eastern Partnership countries</b>
<b>EU</b>	<b>European Union</b>
<b>EUD</b>	<b>European Union Delegation</b>
<b>GITA</b>	<b>Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency</b>
<b>LA</b>	<b>Local Authorities</b>
<b>LEDP</b>	<b>Local Economic Development Plans</b>
<b>LoA</b>	<b>Letter of Agreement</b>
<b>MRDI</b>	<b>Ministry of Regional Development and infrastructure of Georgia</b>
<b>M4EG</b>	<b>Mayors for Economic Growth (Facility)</b>
<b>NALAG</b>	<b>National Association of Local Authorities in Georgia</b>
<b>P4EG</b>	<b>Pathways for Economic Growth</b>
<b>RPA</b>	<b>Responsible Party Agreement</b>
<b>ULC</b>	<b>Urban Learning Center</b>
<b>UNDP</b>	<b>United Nations Development Programme</b>

Note on definitions: depending on the country context and/or wording previously used in endorsed documents, the report uses local authorities, municipalities, cities, and towns interchangeably.

This publication was funded by the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of Mayors for Economic Growth project and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

## Introduction

### What is M4EG's added value, why it is relevant for local authorities in Georgia:

- The M4EG serves as a powerful platform dedicated to strengthen local authorities in their pursuit of sustainable and inclusive development.
- M4EG brings distinctive knowledge, provides unique opportunities for learning, encourages exploration of new development pathways, and inspires action for the improvement of cities and towns.
- M4EG initiative is aligned with the national policy framework, and contributes wo Decentralization Reform in Georgia. It empowers local authorities to drive economic growth alongside with their community, and supports to increase access to financial resources.
- At the heart of the M4EG initiative is a commitment to enhancing capabilities, fostering continuous learning, networking and promoting peer exchange within and across EaP countries. The recently launched Urban Learning Center, along with its Foundation Course for Future Readiness, has garnered interest from municipal staff members who have enrolled and successfully completed the program.

The M4EG's deep demonstrator municipalities, exemplified by Kutaisi and Batumi, are at the forefront of showcasing how local authorities can leverage cutting-edge approaches. These municipalities are leading the portfolio design process, steering their cities towards positive transformation and embracing innovative solutions for sustained progress.

## Key figures

<b>Number of new members</b>	4
<b>Number of reconfirmed members</b>	64 out of 64
<b>Number of deep demonstrators</b>	
Portfolios	2
Urban Imaginaries	4
P4EG	1
Investment Preparedness Academy	11
<b>People reached via comms channel</b>	55,178
<b>Number of events/sessions</b>	51
<b>Number of municipal staff registered at Urban Learning Center/ULC</b>	80
<b>Urban imaginaries envelope</b>	EUR 60,000 *4
<b>Pf portfolio cities envelope</b>	EUR 230,000 * 2

## M4EG DEEP DEMONSTRATORS IN GEORGIA

WORKSTREAM	MUNICIPALITIES	REGION
<b>Portfolio</b>	Batumi	Adjara
	Kutaisi	Imereti
<b>Urban Imaginaries</b>	Poti	Samegrelo
	Rustavi	Kvemo Kartli
	Samtredia	Imereti
	Tskaltubo	Imereti
<b>Pathways for Economic Growth/P4EG</b>	Baghdati	Imereti
<b>Investment and Finance Preparedness Academy</b>	Gori	Shida Kartli
	Telavi	Kakheti
	Dedoplistskaro	
	Akhmeta	
	Khoni	Imereti
	Sachkhere	
	Zestafoni	
	Tetritskaro	Kvemo Kartli
	Shuakhevi	Adjara
	Senaki	Samegrelo
	Akhaltzikhe	Samtskhe-Javakheti

# Connecting the M4EG network – broad engagement

UNDP M4EG team offered various engagement and networking opportunities to the broader network and its signatories, thereby fostering partnerships, peer learning and experience sharing.



<b>Event</b>	Promoting Batumi and Kutaisi Portfolios: UNDP Portfolio Bootcamp in Istanbul
<b>Date</b>	12-18 February 2023
<b>Description</b>	Batumi and Kutaisi Portfolios were presented to the UNDP colleagues
<b>Outcomes</b>	UNDP Serbia team and partners got interested in Batumi and Kutaisi Portfolios and organized follow up meeting to learn more about Georgian cities' experience
<b>Media/posts</b>	<a href="https://innovation.eurasia.undp.org/embracing-a-new-way-of-working-reflections-on-our-first-portfolio-bootcamp/">https://innovation.eurasia.undp.org/embracing-a-new-way-of-working-reflections-on-our-first-portfolio-bootcamp/</a>



Workshop for M4EG member municipalities

# How to Plan Research: Research Methods and Useful Resources for Municipalities

March 24, 2023 · 14:00 – 15:30

## AGENDA

14:00 – 14:10	<b>Opening</b>
14:10 – 14:40	<b>Research methods</b> Mariam Paiaashvili, Maka Alavidze, Ketil Parkauli, TSU master's students/researchers
14:40 – 14:50	<b>Q&amp;A</b>
14:50 – 15:15	<b>Citizen Satisfaction Survey: UNDP Experience and Resources</b> Lika Sanikidze, UNDP Monitoring, Evaluation and Implementation Analyst
15:15 – 15:25	<b>Q&amp;A</b>
15:25 – 15:30	<b>Wrap up</b>

**Event** How to Plan Research: Research Methods and Useful Resources for Municipalities

**Date** 24 March 2023

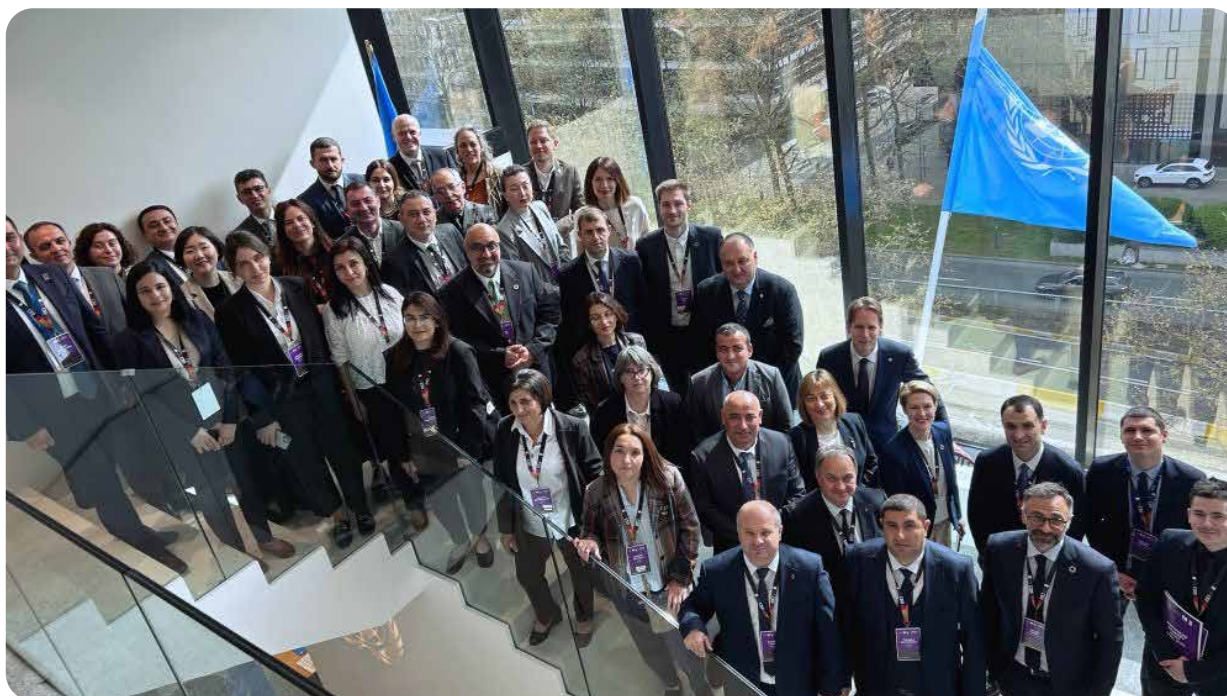
**Description** Workshop was organized for the M4EG network members to enhance their research skills. MA students from the Tbilisi State University talked about qualitative and quantitative research methods, dos and don'ts of conducting surveys, formulating questions, and designing research. UNDP representative walked the participants through the **Citizen Satisfaction Survey with Public Services**, being conducted by UNDP Georgia bi-annually since 2013. Representatives of municipalities learned how to assess satisfaction of citizens, how to structure questionnaire and which research resources are available for municipalities for this purpose.

**Outcomes** Participants learned about research resources and requested guidelines to help them plan small scale research activities.

- ღონისძიების დეტალები
- თარიღი: ხუთშაბათი, 2023 წლის 30 მარტი
- დრო: 15:00-16:30
- ღონისძიებაზე დასწრების დასადასტურებლად, [დარეგისტრირდითაქ!](#)
- Zoom-ის ბმული ავტომატურად გამოგიგზავნით რეგისტრაციისას.

<b>Event</b>	Tallin's Pathway – ULC Inspiration Session
<b>Date</b>	30 March 2023
<b>Description</b>	Under the Urban Learning session M4EG offers municipalities inspiration sessions to enable them connecting with colleagues from other cities and countries. At this session representative of the Tallin City all presented how they have used SDC localization to move to digital and green.
<b>Outcomes</b>	• Established contact with the Tallin City
<b>Media/posts</b>	<a href="#">ULC Inspiration Session: Tallinn Digital Twin Platform</a>





**Event** Portfolio Sensemaking in Brussels

**Date** 26-28 April 2023

**Description** Regional Portfolio City Sensemaking: held in Brussels with 9 mayors/deputies and city teams implementing a mission-oriented economy approach (area based adaptive programming, 'Portfolio Approach' in UNDP). ([Reflection blog post](#)).  
From Georgia, Kutaisi and Batumi delegations joined the event.

**Outcomes** · Networking between Portfolio cities and teams

**Media/posts** [Did portfolios enable something in the city systems that was not there before?](#)

[Mayors for Economic Growth initiative runs a Partner Dialogue on city transformation](#)



**Event** Tbilisi Local Economic Development Forum

**Date** 30-31 May 2023

**Description** M4EG contributed to the Tbilisi 13th Local Economic Development Forum titled "Sustainable Development - Green, Smart, Business-friendly". Forum is an effective platform for sharing experience, modern approaches, and new ideas that creates a sustainable and long-term perspective for cooperation and development of cities. Local governments are at the forefront of today's and tomorrow's local and global challenges and crises. In a changing world, local governments have to keep pace by going beyond business as usual and explore new ways and cutting-edge approaches to create responsive, resilient, and sustainable urban spaces where municipalities will have increased economic opportunities and vibrant communities. Topics included: Sustainable Economic Development; Local Self-Governance in Legal Terms; Business Environment in Georgia and Trends in Sector Development; Real Estate Market; Green Urban Future and Trends in Energy Consumption; Tourism - Emerging Opportunities and Challenges; Financial Access and Investment Opportunities; Innovations for Transforming Cities; Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment; The Impact of Migration on City's Economy; The Role of Competitiveness in Socio-Economic Development; Spatial Arrangement and Urban Planning/Challenges in Transport Policy; Labor Policy and Trends in Labor Market Development; Real Economy; Urban Architecture; Health Policy and Management of Oncological Diseases in Georgia; Animal Population Management; Sustainable Development of Beekeeping.

**Outcomes** Mayors of the M4EG deep demonstrator municipalities – Batumi, Kutaisi, Samtredia, Baghdati – presented their experience under M4EG:

- Batumi Startup Ecosystem Portfolio
- Kutaisi Eco Smart City Portfolio
- Samtredia's work on reimagining city life and new identity as a city promoting healthy lifestyle
- Baghdadi's journey under Pathways for Economic Growth – first pilot initiative

**Media/posts** [UNDP Georgia](https://www.facebook.com/TbilisiLEDForum)  
<https://www.facebook.com/TbilisiLEDForum>



Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
of the Czech Republic



**CZECH REPUBLIC**  
DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION



Ministry  
of Foreign Affairs  
Republic of Poland



Polish aid



**Event** UNDP Innovation Challenges – opportunities for local partners (regional event)

**Date** 10 June 2023

**Description** UNDP colleagues announced Innovation Challenge Funds’ opportunities for local partners

- Czech Challenge Fund (Georgia, Republic of Moldova, BiH)
- Polish Challenge Fund (Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine)

Challenge Fund supports testing and implementation of innovative solutions from the private sector, research institutes and universities are applied to tackle specific development challenges identified in partner countries. This activity is an effort to identify promising innovative solutions that facilitate transfer of the new technologies and know-how to have a positive impact at scale and address locally identified challenges.

Challenge Fund project includes applicant and a local partner. Challenge Fund applicants are Czech and Polish private sector, research institutes, universities and NGOs who introduce their innovative solutions together with local partners. Successful applicants receive UNDP Challenge Fund award of up-to 40,000 USD. Applicants are required to work with a local partner to ensure relevance and sustainability of the solution in local conditions.

**Outcomes** Kutaisi Municipality applied with local partner and received funding



ARUP



TAL  
TECH



THE LAUNCH OF COURSE:  
FOUNDATIONS FOR FUTURE READINESS

26 July 2023  
10:00 - 11:15 GMT+3

<b>Event</b>	ULC Launch (regional event)
<b>Date</b>	26 July 2023
<b>Description</b>	<p>Under the Urban Learning Center (ULC) the first course was launched - Foundations for Future Readiness. This launch marked a significant milestone in M4EG efforts to support local authorities in the Eastern Partnership to reimagine urban spaces for positive change and to be more inclusive and future-ready by introducing approaches beyond conventional.</p> <p>The ULC intends to introduce approaches beyond 'business as usual' with a range of tools and approaches with an 'urban makeover' intention, including such things as foresight, social and community listening, sensemaking, adaptive and agile management, learning and monitoring effects, all with a strong focus on local solutions linked to the global objectives set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its framework of SDGs.</p>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M4EG signatories in Georgia and EaP countries learned about the content and purpose of the Foundation Course, as well as ULC future plans</li> </ul>
<b>Media/posts</b>	<a href="https://eum4eg.com/news/the-mayors-for-economic-growth-facility-launches-a-foundations-for-future-readiness-course/">https://eum4eg.com/news/the-mayors-for-economic-growth-facility-launches-a-foundations-for-future-readiness-course/</a>





**Event** M4EG Regional Forum - Future-Fit Cities (regional event)

**Date** 4-6 October 2023

**Description** Future-Fit Cities brought around 230 participants from Eastern Partnership gathered in Batumi on 4-5 October for a dynamic Urban Forum, co-organised by the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) of the European Commission, UNDP, and partners.

The Future-Fit Cities Forum addressed the intricate challenges faced by municipalities. We're paving the way for greener, more inclusive, and resilient cities that harness the power of public-private partnerships to drive growth and innovation. The M4EG 2023 annual forum offered conversations around building socio-economic resilience and tapping into diverse sources of financing in cooperation with international donors, financial institutions and the private sector, building on the EU's Economic and Investment Plan for the region.

The Forum inspired new ideas, featuring insights from renowned international speakers representing leading urban development institutions like ARUP, the Creative Bureaucracy Festival, Urbanist AI, the Centre for Public Impact, Demos Helsinki, and CHÔRA, alongside esteemed partners such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

**Outcomes**

- New partnerships established between municipalities and practitioners
- Urbanist AI workshop planned for geo municipalities

**Media/posts** Press Release: [EU and UNDP to Convene Future-Fit Cities Forum in Batumi](#)



**Event** ULC Foundation Course – training for M4EG signatories

**Date** 28-29 November 2023

**Description** A two-day training was organized for municipal staff members - practitioners & learners - from 15 city halls and state representatives' offices to introduce the Foundation Course for Future Readiness under the Urban Learning Center.

Participants gathered to learn about smarter and inclusive cities, addressing complex challenges, innovations in public sector, mobilization of resources and new Pathways for Economic Growth.

This Foundation course introduces some of the key topics that will shape municipalities in the coming decades. The intention of this course is to boost the future readiness of municipalities to shape thriving and prosperous places.

Across a series of modules, participants gained a broad understanding of a range of topics; from the Green Deal, and Smart and Inclusive Cities, to approaches to managing complex problems and mobilizing municipal resources, funding and financing.

The course provides a range of opportunities to learn; from video summaries and bite-sized content to interactive quizzes and activities to help you to apply these new learnings to your own context.

**Outcomes** Key takeaways:

- We observed huge appetite and enthusiasm for learning among the participants
- There is a need for new concepts and approaches, which is provided by the Foundation Course for Future Readiness
- ULC provides useful and unique resources for municipal staff and they need more of this!

**Media/posts** [UNDP LinkedIn](#)





**Event** Best Practice Program Award 2023

**Date** 24 November 2023

**Description** The NALAG's National Conference and Award on Best Practices is an annual event that creates a forum for local authorities, civil society and communities to discuss the most important developments at the local level and share experiences, successes and lessons learned. In 2023, eight municipalities were honoured with the prestigious Annual Best Practice Programme Awards by the National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia (NALAG). Below are 2023 winners:

- Lagodekhi: Empowering Youth for the Future.
- Batumi: Pioneering Municipal Transformation Portfolio with the "New Startup Ecosystem in Georgia".
- Ambrolauri: Crafting Municipal Programmes Tailored to Children and Families.
- Oni: Championing Citizen Engagement in Local Decision-Making.
- Zugdidi: Leading the Way in Paper and Cardboard Recycling.
- Zugdidi: Ensuring Mobility Services for People with Disabilities.
- Kutaisi: Spearheading a Sports Development Concept.
- Senaki: Supporting People with Disabilities in Generating Income and Engaging in Public Life.
- Poti: Nurturing Creativity through the Youth Summer Film School.

**Outcomes** • Batumi received best practice award for Startup Ecosystem portfolio

**Media/posts** [NALAG](#)  
[UNDP Georgia](#)



1 თებერვალი 2024 || 14:00 – 15:30

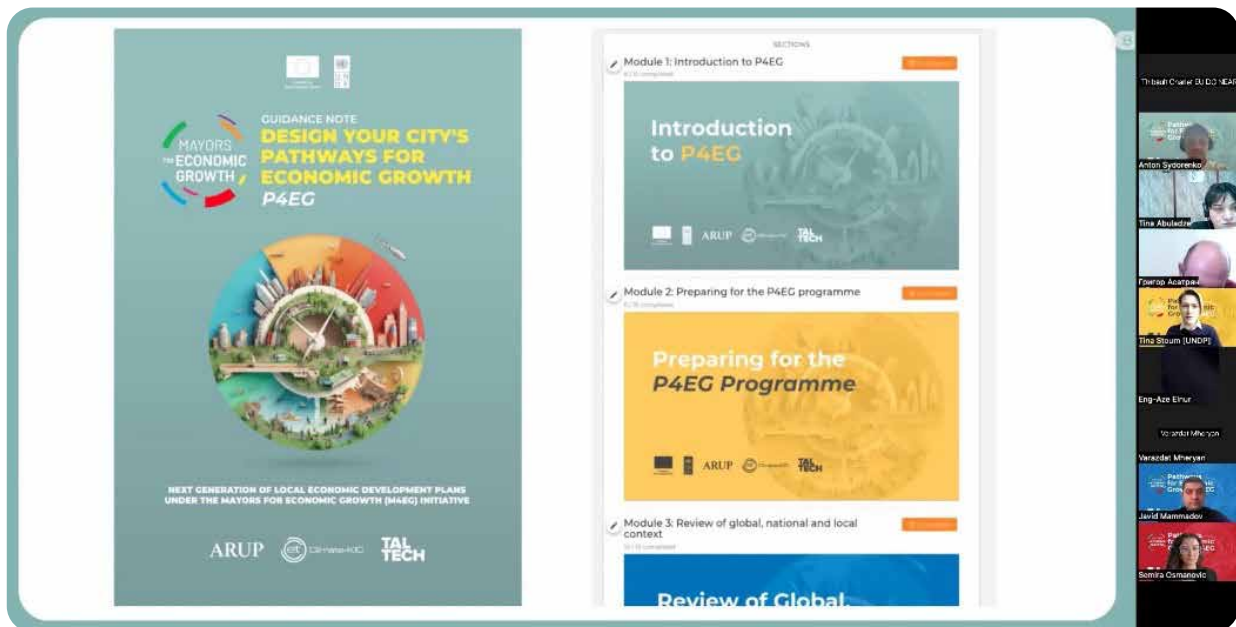
<https://undp.zoom.us/j/89745514580>

**ცოცხალი ქალაქები : ქალეზზე მორგებული ქალაქების დიზაინი**

Arup-ის, გაეროს განვითარების პროგრამის (UNDP) და ლივერპულის უნივერსიტეტის კვლევის ანგარიში

ხატია მარგველაშვილი , ნინო საჯაბა, თინათინ გაგოშიძე

<b>Event</b>	Workshop for M4EG member municipalities - Cities Alive: designing cities that work for women
<b>Date</b>	February 1, 2024 14:00 – 15:30
<b>Description</b>	<p>A workshop was organized to present key finding of the research paper - Cities Alive: designing cities that work for women.</p> <p>“Designing cities that work for women creates wider social, economic, and environmental benefits, along with safer, healthier, and more inclusive spaces, not just for women but for entire households and communities and is integral to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development across urban areas around the world.</p> <p>This report, by Arup, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the University of Liverpool, offers a novel approach and a clear methodology to directly engage women in decision-making processes, incorporating their needs, concerns, and ideas across all aspects of urban planning and development. It also provides actionable recommendations for all urban practitioners, government authorities, and communities alike, with real-world case studies to illustrate how cities can be designed in a gender-inclusive way” - <b>UNDP</b></p>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipalities learned about approaches of how to consider gender aspect in urban planning and designing public spaces.</li> </ul>



**Event** The EU, UNDP, ARUP, EIT Climate-KIC and TalTec launch a new framework for local economic development – the Pathways for Economic Growth (P4EG)

**Date** 6 March 2024

**Description** The European Commission’s Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), Arup, EIT Climate-KIC, Tallinn University of Technology (TalTech), and UNDP launched today the Pathways for Economic Growth (P4EG) framework, a methodology to design a new generation of local economic development plans in the context of the EU-funded project **Mayors for Economic Growth (M4EG)**.

Founded on the principle of holistic development, the P4EG framework helps cities best assess social, environmental and economic factors in local development, as well as the potential for scaling up their projects in cooperation with central governments, donors and European and International Financial Institutions.

Comprising eight building blocks, the P4EG approach provides cities and towns with the necessary framework to set a diagnostic of their local situation, identify key drivers of change, opportunities, stresses, and shocks facing them. It allows the establishment of prioritised actions for municipalities to deliver on the targets set out in their development vision, and promote entrepreneurship and innovation.

**Outcomes** • M4EG signatories across the EaP countries learned about the P4EG methodology and new learning course

**Media/posts** [M4EG](#)  
[P4EG Guidance Note and join the P4EG introduction course](#)  
[Recorded video in Georgian](#)



**Event** M4EG FUNDING and INVESTMENT PREPAREDNESS ACADEMY - Inaugural event and first workshop

**Date** 23 April 2024

**Description** Representatives of 11 municipalities Gori, Telavi, Dedoplistskaro, Akhmeta, Khoni, Sachkhere, Zestafoni, Tetrtskaro, Shuakhevi, Senaki, Akhaltsikhe, which have been selected to develop investment catalogue gathered at the inaugural event of the Investment and Finance Academy.

M4EG Georgia is testing a Funding and Investment Preparedness Academy, pursuing capacity development and preparedness for upcoming financing opportunities through various public and private investment and donors. It is a continuation of UNDP-MRDI partnership in framework of the Fostering Regional and Local Development project (2018-22), under which 11 municipalities were the first to develop Investment Profiles.

This initiative is in line with the Georgia's Decentralization Strategy 2020-25, particularly the Strategic Goal 2 - ensuring adequate material and financial resources for local self-governments, which stipulates that Local authorities have the right to have own financial resources within the national economic policy to dispose within the limit of their competences. To this end, the Government committed to support consistent increase in local government's own revenues, improve mechanisms for the allocation of state resources.

In recent years, there has been a notable increase in business sector investments in fixed assets within local self-government. For instance, from 2014 to 2022, these investments surged by 64.3%, reaching 5,849.5 million GEL. It's important to highlight that this increase is primarily concentrated in larger cities such as Tbilisi, Batumi, Kutaisi, and Poti. Hence, it is crucial for other municipalities to take proactive steps to attract further investments within their territories.

**Outcomes** We anticipate that as a result of the learning journey, 11 municipalities will be equipped with:

- Skills how to better position municipality's economic and investment potential
- Robust municipal investment and development project profiles (slide decks) in Georgian and English
- Competitive development project ideas
- Able to foster an environment conducive to private sector collaboration.

**Media/posts** [UNDP Georgia](#) - [Fb](#) - [LinkedIn](#) - [X](#) - [Insta](#)





**Event** Workshop for M4EG municipalities – Urbanist AI

**Date** 24-25 April 2024

**Description** Georgian municipalities receive substantial support from the European Union and UNDP to create modern and inclusive urban spaces. We provide financial and institutional assistance and empower municipalities with new technology and citizen engagement tools.

The UrbanistAI platform allows everyone to plan and co-design their city? This user-friendly app empowers citizens and stakeholders to contribute to the urban design process. Through this platform, municipalities can engage citizens and visualize their ideas for new urban projects. Their collaboration with planners, architects, and landscape designers leads to a more inclusive and creative design process.

**Outcomes** Recently, representatives from 40 municipalities came together for a three-day workshop to master UrbanistAI.

- Series of workshops were planned in participating municipalities (Samtredia, Tskaltubo, Dusheti, Oni etc)

**Media/posts** [UNDP Georgia](#)  
[Fb](#)  
[X](#)  
[LinkedIn](#)  
[Insta](#)  
[Threads](#)



**Event** Launch of the Green & Just Transition under the Urban Learning Center

**Date** 15 May 2024

**Description** M4EG announced the launch of the Green and Just Transition course as part of the Urban Learning Center (ULC). The course introduces the key concepts, solutions and planning processes essential for a Green & Just Transition and what this means for cities or towns, in terms of their practice, planning and projects. The modules in this course connect with several Pathways for Economic Growth (P4EG) steps outlined in the P4EG Course of the Urban Learning Center, namely, Local Economic Situation Assessment, Strategy Making, Action Planning and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL).

The self-paced online course is available on the ULC SparkBlue Platform (after log-in) and provides video summaries and bite-sized content such as interactive quizzes and activities to help users apply new learnings to their own context.

The Urban Learning Center is designed as a Learning Ecosystem that interconnects community members at the national and regional levels, organized around the practitioner member as both a learner and contributor. Access to ULC is free and available through the SparkBlue online community engagement platform (sign-up is required for new participants). The ULC was developed as part of the Mayors for Economic Growth Facility funded by the European Union.

**Outcomes** Participants learned about content of the new course and green transition hands-on experience of Polish and Bulgarian small towns. The course will be translated into national languages of the EaP countries and made available for local network members

**Media/posts** [UNDP](#)





**Event** Urbanist AI in Dusheti

**Date** 16 May 2024

**Description** On 16 May youth from Dusheti learned about basics of placemaking and Urbanist AI platform. The aim was to engage young citizens in urban ideation and design by applying AI tool and redesigning public spaces in the municipality.  
It was a collaborative workshop of representatives of the Dusheti city hall and local youth.  
Participants: 12 (youth and city hall representatives)

**Outcomes** The group worked on redesigning of selected two public spaces

**Media/posts** [Dusheti Youth Center](#)



Popular space at the Basaleti Lake redesigned via Urbanist AI

## Future-ready municipalities – deep engagement



<b>Event</b>	Working meetings with Urban Imaginaries and Portfolio municipalities – Kutaisi, Samtredia, Tskaltubo and Batumi
<b>Date</b>	12-16 January 2023
<b>Description</b>	Five Letters of Agreement (LoAs) were signed in November-December 2022 with Batumi, Kutaisi, Samtredia, Tskaltubo and Poti. Monitoring visit was organized in four municipalities to check in with implementation teams
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of LoAs monitored</li> <li>• Planned activities were discussed in details</li> <li>• Project implementation challenges were discussed and solved</li> </ul>
<b>Media/posts</b>	<a href="#">LinkedIn</a>

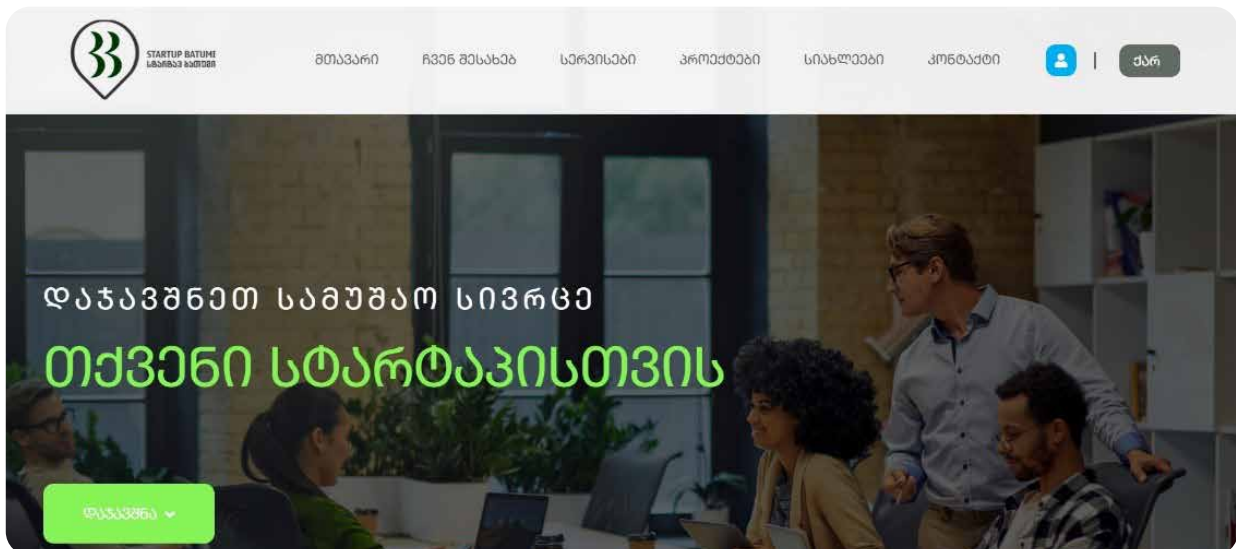


# BATUMI



**Issue** Start-up Ecosystem Portfolio

- Goal**
- Diversify and broaden Batumi's talent pool by retaining talented local youth and attracting external, high-skilled talent.
  - Contribute to a renewed urban identity by making Batumi Georgia's second startup capital.
  - Ignite interest, develop startup-savviness, and encourage a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation with a particular focus on youth.
  - Improve City Hall's capacity to enable Batumi's startup ecosystem.



## Status per Portfolio Positions

**SHIFTING NARRATIVES.** Key findings of narrative research were presented at the Batumi Tech Park to local community on 1st February 2023.

**STARTUP ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION.** The city hall joined forces with the Batumi Tech Park to launch pre-acceleration program for local startups. 20 startups took part in the learning program and pitched at the Demo Day (Portfolio event #1).

In November three local universities - Batumi State University, Batumi Navigation Teaching University and Batumi State Maritime Academy – agreed to form working group and promote startup entrepreneurial education in universities.

**PHYSICAL SPACES OF INTERACTION.** The City Hall has identified municipal property, in the city center, worked with consultants on development of the space concept as well as a service provider, which will renovate the space

Proposed design of co-working space

**CONNECTING BATUMI.** In 2023 the Batumi City Hall joined the Startup Grind Georgia, which organized Startup World Cup (SWC) 2023. Around 150 attendees, 10 competitor startups and international jury took part. While Batumi attracted solid attention and positioned itself as a City which builds startup ecosystem, further steps need to be taken to use momentum and keep this interest.

City supported additional networking events organized at co-working spaces. It also contributed to the big tourism event Tourister in November 2023, where leading startups in tourism sector conducted workshop for local community.

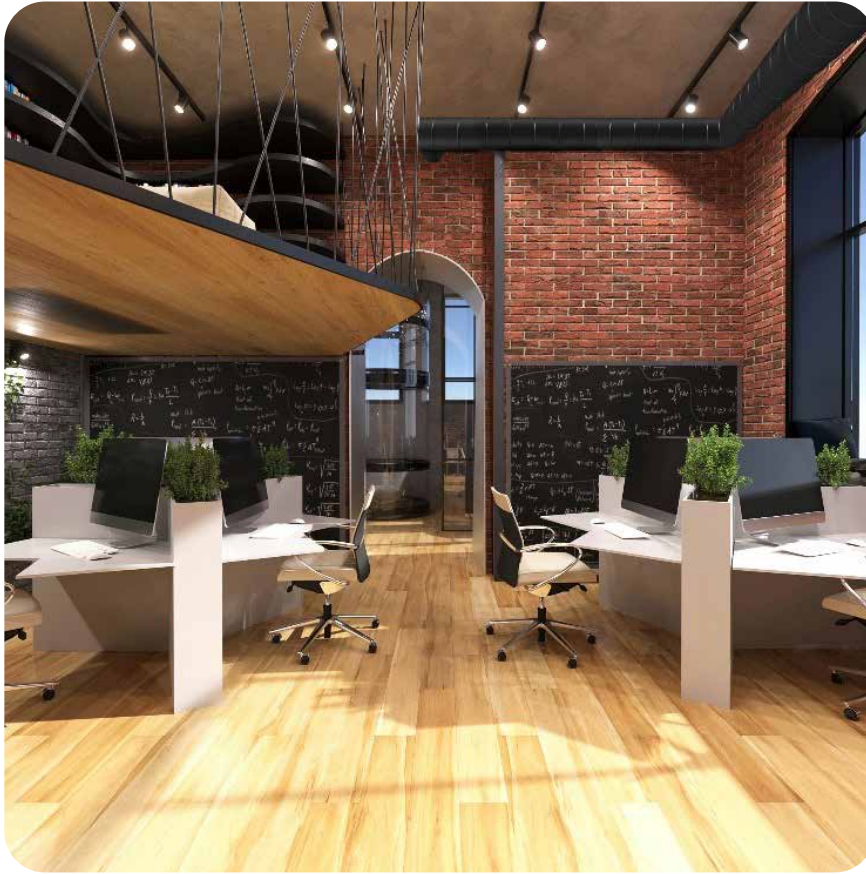
**CITY AS AN ECOSYSTEM ENABLER.** Study visit was organized for the municipal working team in Tbilisi. Tbilisi City Hall hosted the group and shared their experience of Spark project, which is a joint project of Tbilisi City Hall and the European Union, offering special business development programs to existing small and medium-sized businesses and startups. Learning program was designed for Batumi team.

Thanks to the series of meetings with interesting speakers organized with support of Louise Skärvall, Accelerator Lead from the UNDP Regional Innovation Team, the Batumi portfolio team learned about experiences of other startup cities worldwide and had an opportunity to discuss the following topics:

- how they build ecosystem, support new entrepreneurs and startups as well as other key players in the entrepreneurship ecosystem
- cities' approach to identify and bring in smart solutions, new partners and supporters
- how cities are providing fundings to entrepreneurs

**STARTUP INFORMATION PORTAL.** Communication strategy was developed first. At the moment startup platform is being designed by the city.





Proposed design of co-working space

## Batumi Portfolio Start-up Ecosystem

**Portfolio Position 6**  
**CITY HALL AS ECOSYSTEM ENABLER**  
City Hall is Learning: Design a learning program for Batumi City Hall core team to acquire knowledge on start-up ecosystems, municipalities' roles in them. This program will include a study trip, four+ workshops with selected start-up expert speakers.

**Portfolio Position 2**  
**START-UP ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION**  
Start-up University Batumi: A start-up/ entrepreneurship culture plug-in in the Batumi formal education system. An entrepreneurship and start-up course at a Batumi University. Make start-ups a part of the formal university programs, for example within the Business School.  
**Pre-accelerator program**

**Portfolio Position 1**  
**SHIFTING NARRATIVES**  
Narratives Research: Research project on dominant narratives pertaining to a start-up ecosystem among local youth aged 14-29 years.

**Portfolio Position 8**  
**START-UP INFORMATION HUB**  
Start-up Information Portal: Design a web platform that serves as an information hub for both investors and young entrepreneurs interested in Batumi. A tool for the Municipality to be "present" online and attract and engage with stakeholders.

**Portfolio Position 3**  
**PHYSICAL SPACES OF INTERACTION**  
The New Space: Create a new physical space different than all existing start-up spaces in Batumi, that has an informal vibe, is attractive in terms of location and ambience for young talent. The space will be enabled by the Municipality but designed and run by an independent start-up coalition.

**Portfolio Position 4**  
**CONNECTING BATUMI**  
Networking the Ecosystem: Establish a pulse of networking events and activities that connect existing communities and attract new energy to Batumi.

# BATUMI EVENTS



<b>Event</b>	Startup Narratives presentation
<b>Date</b>	1 February 2022
<b>Description</b>	As part of the Batumi Portfolio Position on Shifting Narratives, <b>narratives research</b> results were presented jointly by the research organization ACT, Batumi Tech Park and
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The event was attended by the representatives of universities, startup community, civil society, City Hall and Adjara government</li><li>• Up to 40 attendees participated in the follow up discussion about building startup ecosystem</li></ul>
<b>Media/posts</b>	<a href="#">LinkedIn</a>





## Batumi the Black Sea startup capital

Tblisi is awesome but Batumi is on the sea!



<b>Event</b>	Portfolio working meeting with the Batumi Mayor, Vice Mayor, and the Portfolio team – presenting best practices
<b>Date</b>	2 February 2023
<b>Description</b>	<p>The Batumi Portfolio Design process was facilitated and supported by CHÔRA Foundation and uses CHÔRA's System Transformation Framework and the AGORÀ Urban Transformation Stencil, a tool co-developed by UNDP IRH and CHÔRA Foundation.</p> <p>The Batumi City has already activated six portfolio positions (shifting narratives, startup education, new space, connecting Batumi, city hall as ecosystem enabler, startup information hub). Set of events were scheduled for 1-3 February under the four respective positions and options jointly with the Batumi tech Park.</p> <p>The purpose of the visit of Ekin Karel, Igor Izotov and Colin Donohue was to support Batumi team, provide guidance to the team at the current stage of portfolio design and contribute to the planned activities.</p> <p>The meeting with the Mayor, Vice Mayor and the Portfolio team covered the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Big Picture – Era of the Startups</li><li>• Corporate/Open innovation</li><li>• Cryptocurrency island</li><li>• StartupChile</li><li>• Municipality acceleration programs</li><li>• Narratives for Batumi</li></ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As a result of the visit a <a href="#">blog about Batumi</a> was collaboratively developed and published</li></ul>
<b>Media/posts</b>	<a href="#">Batumi City Hall</a>



<b>Event</b>	Demo Day of the Startup Pre-acceleration Program in Batumi
<b>Date</b>	3 February 2023
<b>Description</b>	The main goal of the pre-accelerator program is to support entrepreneurs living in Adjara to develop entrepreneurial skills and creating startups. Program started on 14th of December and 25 teams with ideas, from different fields and industries for 1.5 months participated in trainings, mentorships and networking sessions for development of their ideas, mostly from edutech, energy efficiency, foodtech and tourism industries. Participants are idea and MVP stage startups, who beside of mentorship, need seed capital for further development of products and validation on market.
<b>Outcomes</b>	· GITA announced targeted increased funding for Adjara based startups
<b>Media/posts</b>	<a href="#">Batumi City Hall</a> <a href="#">Batumi Tech Park</a> <a href="#">Cleverton</a>



<b>Event</b>	Co-working Friday in Batumi
<b>Date</b>	3 February 2023
<b>Description</b>	Informal get together was organized for local ecosystem members. Around 18 startups, city hall representatives and other partners gathered to network in an informal environment. It was a test meeting to test whether this format would be made regular by local community.
<b>Outcomes</b>	Testing a new networking format; connecting local startups





**Event** Startup Summit and World Cup National Competition 2023

**Date** 27-28 May 2023

**Description** On May 27-28th, Georgian Startup Summit was attended by over 300 people at Hilton Batumi with an additional 50 attendees for side events. The audience was diverse and very important exchanges were done over each break. During sessions, more than 15 speakers shared their knowledge and experience on topics such as:

- Innovation is Eating the World: Disruptions in Traditional Industries, Factors of Scale Potential, the Startup Growth Journey, Georgian startup ecosystem
- ,Seeds of Fire: Detecting Early Signal of Massive Growth Potential, Seed to Scale Stage: What is Needed, How the Work Changes by Stage, Selling to enterprises, Diverse fintech value & strategy, Georgia's emerging angel community, Go to market fast: Tap into your 'Sphere of Influence', Emerging VCs.

Startup World Cup Regional Competition was the culmination of the first day. 11 Top Georgian startups - Kernel, Kikliko, Arena Games, Calen AI, Awork, Elven Technologies, Kovzy, Artisio, Datamind, Cargon and Wempler were granted an opportunity to pitch their companies. Judges - Bill Reichert, Luke Kowalski, Zach Coelius, Ron Weissman, Diana Koziarska chose Artisio as a regional winner.

Berdia Qamarauli and his team will compete in Silicon Valley for the final competition in San Francisco on December 1, 2023. The winner of the Grand Finale will receive a US \$1,000,000 prize in investment. They will also receive global exposure through media recognition from all of the journalists covering the event.

## Outcomes

- Batumi startup Portfolio was promoted as separate session was dedicated to the M4EG and Batumi City Hall
- Batumi Business Breakfast exposing conventional business leaders to high-growth startups and VC, including CEO of Orbi Group, leading maritime crewing companies and other stakeholders
- A concentrated theme on maritime innovation involving the Maritime Academy, almost 20 maritime companies and VCs visiting from UK with a focus on maritime innovation investing
- UK maritime company Propelme, digital platform for crewing, exploring relocating the company to Batumi
- Dozens of investor-startup conversations, including some which have led to active investment diligence processes
- Ron Weissman, chair of the Angel Capital Association in discussions about partnering with Startup Connect and Amcham to bring best practices in policy and angel investing to Georgia
- We offered scholarships to help participants with financial challenges take part. It has to be noted, that the largest number of scholarship seekers came from Batumi (56%), though some from other small municipalities such as Zugdidi and Kutaisi attended as well. Almost half the scholarship applicants indicated they had active startups. Students and investors comprised ones that did not.

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## Media/posts

**UNDP Georgia**  
**Batumi City Hall**

Press Coverage:

<https://bm.ge/ka/article/dges-batumshi-saqartvelos-startap-samiti-iwyeba/134948>

<https://bm.ge/ka/article/warmatebuli-antrepreniorebi-sheupovari-komunikatore-bi-arian---bil-raiqarti/135034/>

<https://bm.ge/en/video/startup-connect-is-organizebit-batumshi-saqartvelos-startap-samiti-chatarda/40765/>

<https://bm.ge/ka/video/saqmianisagamo---startup-connect-is-organizebit-batumshi-saqartvelos-startap-samiti-chatarda/40758>

<https://ajaratv.ge/article/115545>

<https://ajaratv.ge/article/115528>

<https://www.tbcbusiness.ge/en/business-support/blogs/startup-summit>

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/ka/siakhleebi-da-tendentsiebi/27-28-maiss-k-batumshi/452416>

<https://dev.ge/news/startup-world-cup-is-pinalistebis-vinaoba-tsnobilia-1684841567>

<https://dev.ge/news/27-28-maiss-batumi-startap-samits-da-startap-msoplio-chempionats-umaspindzlebs-1684216401>

<https://batumi.ge/ge/?page=shownews&id=7438>

<https://live.palitraneews.ge/2023-06-08/08:00>



**Event** Local startup community meeting the EU Ambassador H.E. Pawel Herczynski and Batumi Mayor

**Date** 9 June 2023

**Description** The EU Ambassador H.E. Pawel Herczynski together with the Mayor Archil Chikovani met local startup community. The event was hosted by the Batumi Tech Park. Opening discussion was around - Why is city interested to build new startup ecosystem in Batumi. The Portfolio team talked about Startup ecosystem development portfolio: progress so far, dynamics and foresight, followed by reflection of the local startup community about trends, needs and plans. Representatives of the following local startups Upskill and Kartvelian Legends addressed the audience. A tour in fablab was also organized for the Ambassador, during which new invention was demonstrated.

**Outcomes**

- Local community had a chance to flag up challenges and needs, ask questions directly to the EU Ambassador and the Mayor
- They also presented their startup ideas

**Media/posts** [Batumi City Hall](#)





**Event** Tourism Forum in Batumi – session with startups

**Date** 11-12 November 2023

**Description** As part of the Batumi Portfolio, the team contributed to the big tourism event Tourister in November 2023. On November 10-11, the Tourism Festival "Tourist" was held at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Batumi. The main themes of the festival were developed around 4 key issues: digital technologies in tourism, changing tourist behavior, tourism marketing and data analytics in tourism. During the 2 days of the festival, about 400 attendees, mainly represented by Georgian small and medium-sized businesses (hotels, restaurants, travel agencies), local newcomers and students from local universities, had the opportunity to listen to international and local speakers from tourism and related fields. Georgian technology startups Biliki, e-Consul and Kovzy shared their experience through a workshop with 20 local young entrepreneurs and 15 other interested attendees from the event. The name of the workshop was "Encouraging the development of entrepreneurship and startup ecosystem in the field of tourism."

**Outcomes** • Networking and establishing new contact

**Media/posts** [Ministry of Economy and Finance in Adjara](#)  
[Tourister](#)  
[Media coverage 1, 2, 3](#)



**Event** Entrepreneurship in Higher Education

**Date** 24 November 2023

**Description** Representatives of three Batumi based higher education institutions – Batumi State University, Batumi Navigation Teaching University and Batumi State Maritime Academy – gathered to learn how to promote culture of entrepreneurial thinking and acting among youth. Session with Johannes Lindner, Professor at the Vienna University and My moto is "Empower the Next Generation of Changemaker through Entrepreneurship". Each generation must learn how to shape the future of society and the economy.

For this idea Johannes founded IFTE (Initiative for Teaching Entrepreneurship) and the e.e.si Network of Entrepreneurship Education Coordinators in Austria. IFTE develops Entrepreneurial Learning programme for children and young people: "YouthStart programme. Johannes is Head of the Department & the Center for Entrepreneurship Education and valuebased Business Education at the University Teacher College Vienna/Krems. Johannes works with students on their entrepreneurial mindset at the Schumpeter Startup Academy Vienna and the University Vienna. Johannes is committed as UNIDO-Senior-Expert for Entrepreneurship Education.

**Outcomes**

- Experience sharing
- Considering idea of organizing quarterly coordination meetings

**Media/posts** [LinkedIn – Johannes Lindner](#)  
[LinkedIn](#)



**Event** Startup Investment Forum in Batumi

**Date** 11 December 2023

**Description** On December 11, 2023, Axel - Georgian Angel Investors Network "Startup Investment Forum - Batumi" was organized and initiated by Batumi Technopark of Innovation and Technology Agency of Georgia. The event was held within the framework of the "Mayors for Economic Growth/M4EG" initiative of the European Union and the United Nations Development Program, with the support of the Batumi City Hall and the USAID Economic Security Program.

The main goal of the forum was to promote the development of the startup ecosystem in the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, to increase the involvement of the private sector, to interest investors in supporting the local startup ecosystem, and to promote local innovative and technological startups.

The Medialab team conducted a workshop for local entrepreneurs and the Batumi tech Park beneficiaries on the topic: "Startup at the initial stage: testing, scalability and bootstrapping for survival"

**Outcomes** Partners and supporters of the project were:

- Socar Georgia
- Medialab
- GEC Consulting
- KUDOS Georgia
- Kettari Foundation
- KLAB
- Networking
- Follow up discussion between angel investors and startups which pitched
- One local entrepreneur joined the Axel as angel investor

**Media/posts** [Batumi City Hall](#)  
[UNDP](#)  
[Axel Facebook](#)  
[Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency/GITA](#)  
[USAID](#)





**Event** Hardware Startup Incubator 2.0

**Date** 14 March 2024

**Description** Hardware Startup Incubator 2.0 is the largest technological project in Georgia, which aims to develop hardware startups and deepen knowledge in this direction in the regions. The Western Georgia semi-finals are held in Batumi.

The event was supported by the Batumi City Hall under the EU-UNDP Mayors for Economic Growth initiative as part of the Batumi Startup Ecosystem Portfolio.

At the event, 11 teams from Georgia presented technological prototypes to the jury members. The final will be held in the Tbilisi Technopark.

**Outcomes** • Identified winners

**Media/posts** [Batumi Tech Park](#)  
[GITA](#)



# KUTAISI



## Quote

*"With green interventions, Kutaisi promotes a green circular economy – and this eco-smart transformation stimulates the well-being of all. We are starting the eco-smart, future-ready city today. We can say that's an old city with new opportunities."* **Ioseb Khakhaleishvili**, Mayor of Kutaisi

## Issue

Eco-Smart City

## Goal

1. Become an attractor for stakeholders with sustainable interest and agendas.
2. Engage with Kutaisi's citizens, visitors, and businesses to become active stewards of the environment and urban-natural ecosystems and resources.
3. Inform and lead an agenda for sustainable policies and incentives at a country level.



**Kutaisi Eco  
Smart City**



New branding of Kutaisi as an EcoSmart city

**Status per Portfolio Positions**

**1. Citizens for Green Kutaisi:** Kutaisi has already developed a communication plan and visual/narrative identity, including a logo and tagline, for the transformation vision.

**2. Smart Waste - Street Demonstrator:** The Municipality has purchased and installed 21 Separation boxes equipped with sensors to be tested for possible scaling.

Green Mobility - Behavioural Nudging: Within the portfolio, electric car chargers were installed for the first time in the city by the Municipality. Additionally, the municipality adopted a decree exempting owners of electric vehicles from using chargers and paying parking fees in the city. At the same time, other new chargers placed by private companies have already appeared, such as hotels starting to place an electric charger in its parking spaces. To certain extent, the mentioned initiative has sparked a renewed interest in electric car usage in the city, inspiring private companies to offer similar services.

Energy Efficient Building: The municipality has started transforming the municipal transport company's building into a demonstration of green, energy-efficient, and sustainable solutions. The building will be equipped with solar panels, generating the full energy demand.

**3. Academy for Applied Eco-Innovation:** Developing local talent that can drive urban innovation projects is a critical enabler in supporting cities through sustainability transitions. This intervention was a first step in creating a structured program of learning that engages local youth of different ages (including students) in sustainability subjects and technologies and applies their learnings to real city projects. In 2023 a training program (curriculum) on Energy Efficiency and Green Buildings was developed based on the needs of two target groups of young people and training sessions were conducted. In total 39 (10 girls, 19 boys) participants have undergone the mentioned training course.

Ideathon – Kutaisi Eco-Smart City: At the beginning of 2024, within the Academy for Applied Eco-Innovations, an Ideathon was organized in Kutaisi with the participation of 50 young people. The Ideathon aimed to support young talents by encouraging and implementing creative and innovative ideas. The best projects identified during the Ideathon were recommended for implementation to the Kutaisi municipality.

**4. Kutaisi Eco-bot and app:** The municipality, in cooperation with Kutaisi International University, is working on establishing an information-sharing platform that can engage with different citizens/audiences to deliver real-time information. This platform aims to inform their decisions with more sustainable choices, such as how to sort waste and green route options in the city.

**5. Learning and Exchange Program Blueprint:** The Municipality portfolio core team participated in a study tour at the Smart City Expo World Congress in Barcelona, Spain, one of the largest gatherings for urban stakeholders and a premier showcase of intelligent solutions. During the visit, team members engaged in learning, and networking, and shared Kutaisi's vision on a global stage, promoting the Kutaisi Eco Smart City Portfolio. They explored the latest solutions and gained insights from case studies to address the unfolding urban challenges at home.





Waste separation boxes installed in Kutaisi

## Kutaisi Portfolio Eco-Smart City

**Portfolio Position 1**  
**SHARED IDENTITY**  
Citizens 4 Green Kutaisi: The objective of this option is to engage Kutaisi citizens in the Smart Eco strategy and create a continuous flow of information between initiatives that are happening and the citizens. This option aims to establish a structure for effective communication in support of the information exchange and awareness needs of the rest of the portfolio as well as develop the various elements needed for running coherent communication campaigns with citizen participation.

**Portfolio Position 3**  
**LIVING LABS**  
**Smart Waste:** This option is a Proof of Concept applied to a limited number of selected waste containers in different parts of the city to learn about technology and waste management.  
**Green mobility:** This option will test two different methods for encouraging citizens to adopt electric vehicles.  
**Energy Efficient Building - Open air lab:** This option aims to transform one of the existing municipal buildings into a demonstration of energy efficiency and sustainability solutions.

**Portfolio Position 5**  
**MUNICIPALITY AS KNOWLEDGE HUB**  
**Learning and exchange program Blueprint:** This option will develop a proposal for a learning program to support the municipality in developing new skills and capabilities that enable them to manage and expand their portfolio.

**Portfolio Position 2**  
**INFORMATION RICH STORIES**  
Kutaisi Eco bot and app: Establish an information sharing platform that can engage with different citizens/ audiences to be able to deliver real time information that informs their decisions with more sustainable choices, such as how to sort waste, the nearest empty waste container, green route options in the city, etc.

**Portfolio Position 4**  
**TALENT 4 URBAN INNOVATION**  
**Academy for Applied Eco Innovation - Proof of concept:** This option is a proof of concept of a new learning program focused on sustainability. The PoC will focus on developing and delivering a program of courses around energy and buildings to a selected group of youth in several age groups (pre-teens, teens and students).

**Portfolio Position 6**  
**NEW GREEN VALUE CHAINS/ EXCHANGES**  
Kutaisi "Eco wallet": This Option proposes a first implementation of a local e-currency and wallet designed to be used for sustainability and environment related exchanges. The first used cases would be to support the implementation of the other Seed Options - notably Options 3 and 4. The currency would be used both as a behavioural nudging mechanisms, rewarding sustainable actions and behaviour but also to purchase "green" services, such as green parking.

This publication was funded by the European Union; its contents are the sole responsibility of the "Mayors for Economic Growth" Facility and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

**[Portfolio approach]**

**TEAM** | Kutaisi: Ioseb Khakhelashvili, Tinatin Bertshvili, Irakli Goglichidze, Rusudan ChinChaladze, Ketevan Tskhaka  
UNDP: Yana Chung, Otar Kojnaria | Chora: Ekin Karel, Mariela Atanassova

# KUTAISI EVENTS



**Event** Kutaisi Portfolio – Eco Academy

**Date** October 2023

**Description** The training component aimed to foster the creative development of young people in generating and forming eco-innovations. The purpose of the training was to raise awareness of scientific achievements and innovations among young people, cultivate strong innovative thinking, enhance problem-solving skills, and inspire the creation of new, innovative systems through non-formal education. The training specifically focused on areas such as energy efficiency and green buildings, which are crucial aspects of the Eco Smart City concept. In total 39 (10 girls, 19 boys) participants have undergone the mentioned training course. The training successfully enabled young participants to: develop creative imagination and technical skills; create original and simple solutions for practical tasks; Developing creative proposals tailored to the needs of the "Eco Smart City"; Learn about smart cities, green buildings, energy-efficient transportation, renewable energies, smart factory management, nanomaterials and smart materials and their applications.

- Outcomes**
- Fostering local talent adept at spearheading urban innovation initiatives, vital for facilitating cities' transition towards sustainable development.
  - By involving youth of various age groups in sustainable development endeavors, equipping them with knowledge, and igniting their motivation, a robust foundation for sustainable urban growth is established.





<b>Event</b>	Ideathon “Kutaisi Eco-Smart City”
<b>Date</b>	March 2024
<b>Description</b>	<p>The ideathon, conducted in Kutaisi under the urban transformation initiative "Kutaisi-Eco-Smart City," aimed to nurture young talent and foster creative, innovative ideas for development and execution. Projects identified as the best during the ideathon were recommended for implementation in Kutaisi.</p> <p>The ideathon's objective was to pinpoint ideas and projects addressing the priorities and challenges of the "Eco-Smart City." Specifically, projects were expected to concentrate on one of the following challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Smart waste management solutions</li><li>• Green transport</li><li>• Energy-efficient green buildings</li><li>• Smart lighting and infrastructure</li></ul> <p>Over 50 young minds came together to brainstorm ideas that would help transform Kutaisi into an eco-smart city.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nine youth teams presented their creative and innovative concepts to the jury, focusing on Eco-smart park development, waste separation initiatives, Eco-Smart bus shelter designs, and various other projects aimed at enhancing the city's appeal and creating a more eco-friendly environment for residents and visitors.</li></ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The best projects identified during the Ideathon were recommended for implementation to the Kutaisi municipality.</li></ul>
<b>Media/posts</b>	UNDP in Georgia on: <a href="#">X</a> <a href="#">LinkedIn</a> <a href="#">Instagram</a> <a href="#">Threads</a>

# POTI



## Quote

*"It is good that the city has organized an open multifunctional space in the central park of Poti, which is not discriminatory and is acceptable for people of all ages and interests, as well as adapted for people with disabilities."*

**Alika Gihkashvili**, chairman of the youth council.

## Issue

*"Urban challenges continually necessitate development, the creation of new visions and strategies, and active municipal involvement will be crucial in this new phase. Poti is committed to implementing the UN Sustainable Development Goals, with its own vision and localized tasks to achieve these global objectives. This advanced program of Urban Imaginaries will facilitate the formation of new partnerships and close cooperation to organize specific initiatives aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. For the municipality, the new phase of the Urban Imaginaries program presents a unique opportunity to explore innovative approaches to future challenges, share alternative solutions, and evaluate the progress of ongoing urban processes in the city." – Poti City team*

**Goal** Large-scale attractions are not physically found in the market; Therefore, safe amusement rides were selected, because practical experience and research of disabled children's rides on the market showed

In the newly developed multi-functional space, the municipality aims to systematically organize cultural events and a flea market, while actively involving private and public school students, children's organizations, and civic associations in various activities. This project marks the first use of a human-centered approach by the municipality, enabling the city hall to better address citizen needs through practical and realistic planning, similar to the approach used in Central Park.

The project implementation was divided into two phases:

- Creating an open space for watching sports and cultural events with a screen and chairs.
- Installing two attractions/swings.

At the first stage, a LED monitor was purchased, co-financed by the municipality, to be used for diverse events. The monitor's settings allow it to be used flexibly in different locations.

At the second stage, the space was adapted further, with installations and attractions suitable for people with disabilities. Safe play attractions were added, including an adapted lens and a special wooden house with a ramp for children in wheelchairs. Additionally, chess tables were custom-made to accommodate people of all ages and abilities, including wheelchair users.

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**Status per Portfolio Positions** Project is completed, however the process of arranging the multifunctional space continues. With the help of M4EG municipality is conducting survey to learn about citizens' satisfaction with the park and their further needs to plan upgrades accordingly.

Through competitive process, Poti was also selected for the advanced cohort of Urban Imaginaries program, which implies learning of how to scale initiatives up, big, out and deep.



# POTI EVENTS



<b>Event</b>	Poti Citython
<b>Date</b>	13-14 May 2023
<b>Description</b>	<p>The first <b>citython</b> in Poti was conducted - the city between the sea, rivers and lakes.</p> <p>15 teams pitched interesting <b>blue economy</b> ideas. It was organized by the city and its partners. <b>M4EG</b> also contributed and supported the city in this initiative.</p>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<p>3 winning projects were identified within Poti Citython. Each of them was given a cash reward of 5000 GEL for completing the projects.</p> <p>"Portal" - changing the old look of Poti with a new look, through the glass bust of the mural and AR technology.</p> <p>"Poti Art-Residence" - revival of art craft activities in Poti and production of designer souvenirs.</p> <p>"Omerta" - a multifunctional space on Maltakvi beach, with a cinema, children's entertainment area, mini-bar and storage room/chest.</p>
<b>Media/posts</b>	<p><a href="#">LinkedIn</a></p> <p><a href="#">Poti City</a></p> <p><a href="#">Cleverton</a></p>





<b>Event</b>	Opening of Central Park in Poti
<b>Date</b>	28 February 2024
<b>Description</b>	The Poti City organized opening of the multifunction space in the central park. Local community gathered to enjoy new infrastructure and attractions. Especially satisfied were children.
<b>Outcomes</b>	City continues working on improvement of the park facilities and services for local citizens under Advanced Cohort of Urban Imaginaries.
<b>Media/posts</b>	<a href="#">Twitter</a> <a href="#">Instagram</a> <a href="#">Threads</a> <a href="#">LinkedIn</a>

# SAMTREDIA



**Quote** *“Project results have a tangible impact in the target area/target community; There is an increase in the mobility of people in the multifunctional space, which gave an incentive to business entities. Two new business objects were opened already” - Samtredia municipality team.*

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**Issue** Developing sports facilities and new identity of the city

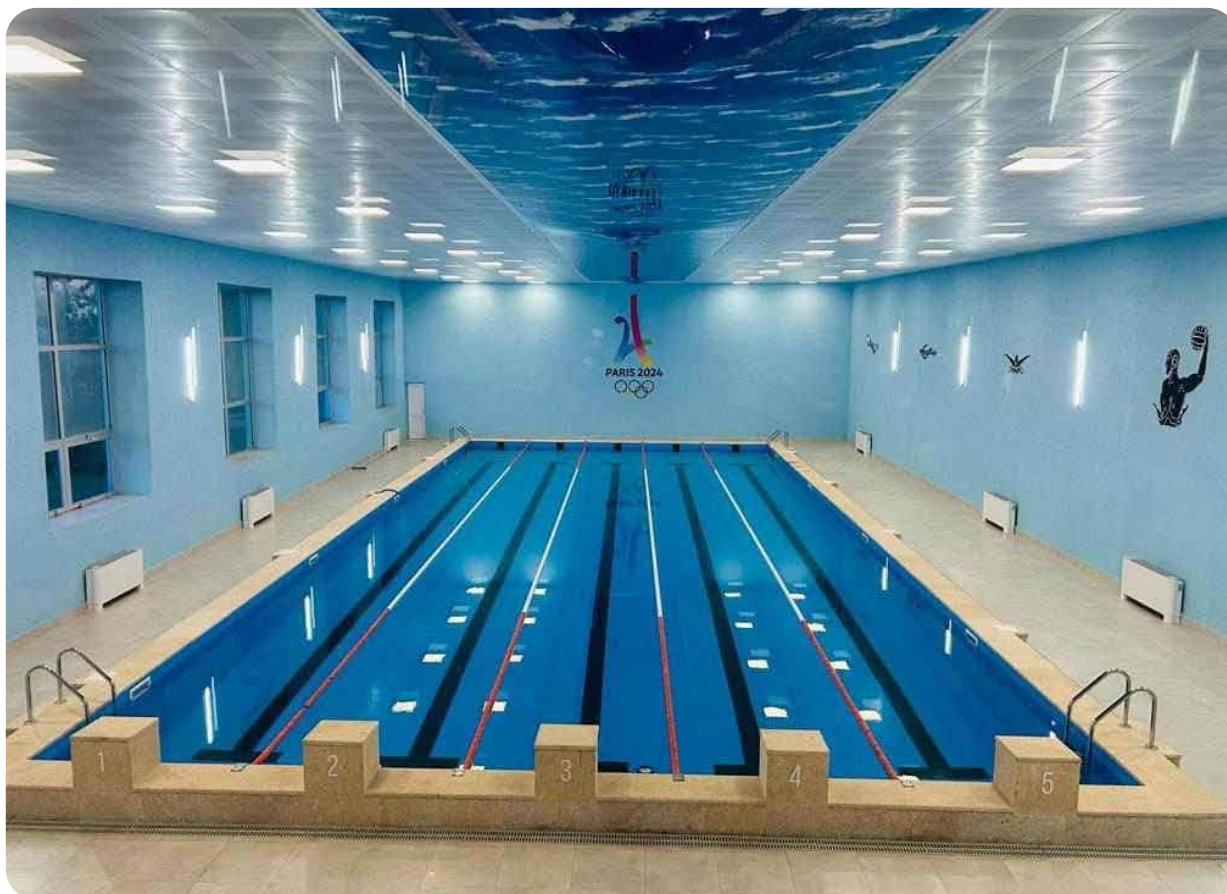
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**Goal** Rehabilitation of the swimming pool, space for children

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**Status per Portfolio Positions** Municipality completed rehabilitation of the swimming pool.

## SAMTREDIA EVENTS



<b>Event</b>	Opening of the Swimming Pool
<b>Date</b>	6 December 2024
<b>Description</b>	The city hall organized opening event to celebrate renovation of the pool.
<b>Outcomes</b>	Local community will benefit from the new sports facilities
<b>Media/posts</b>	<a href="#">Samtredia Municipality</a>



# TSKALTUBO



**Quote** *“In response to this dynamic environment, the goal of Tskaltubo Municipality is to enhance the future readiness of municipalities, fostering a thriving economy. The aim is to develop innovative tools and approaches that prepare the municipality for the uncertainties of the future, creating a sense of readiness for the changing landscape. Adopting useful approaches enables us to analyze and predict forthcoming changes” – Tskaltubo municipal team*

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**Issue** Developing vibrant cultural and social space

**Goal** The project's goal was create a Cultural Hub, engaging small entrepreneurs at the premises of the house-museum of Georgian writer Niko Lortkipanidze, located in the village of Chuneshi, Tskaltubo municipality. This location was chosen for its potential to become a multifunctional space with the necessary infrastructure, establishing a cultural hub for approximately 46,000 residents in Tskaltubo municipality. This initiative aims to transform the lifestyle of the local population by fostering favorable conditions for youth interaction and maintaining their engagement through various cultural activities. In turn, this will enhance trust between the local community and the municipal government.

To achieve this, the municipality decided to engage a broader spectrum of people by issuing a call for ideas, giving the local community the opportunity to implement significant projects. Initially, a grassroots approach was employed, involving door-to-door visits, interviews, and surveys with residents to identify preferred projects. These interactions revealed challenges such as the lack of spaces for gathering, communication, and entertainment, particularly in rural areas.

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**Status per Portfolio Positions** The municipality completed implementation of the project. An amphitheater for public events and a wheelchair-accessible restroom were arranged at the premises of the museum.



# RUSTAVI



**Quote**                    *“Innovative methods of learning and hackathons give a chance to youth to actively participate in the city’s green development process”.*  
**Leila Dadashova**, one of the Winners of the Hackathon.

*“Urban imaginaries methodology and principles are used for citizen participation, alternative youth employment, startup ecosystem, green policy, improvement of service provision. The mentioned methodology is important for the innovative development of the city and its transformation. Also, through them, it is important to form a new type of civil servants who will be able to cope with the growing challenges facing modern cities and constantly emerging”*  
**Rustavi team**

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**Issue**                    Increase Rustavi youth participation in development process of municipal green services

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**Goal**                    Promoting green entrepreneurship among youth through applying innovative approaches; developing environmental services  
 The main goal of the project is to involve the youth in the process of creating municipal green services, to equip the corresponding service center of Rustavi City Hall with modern equipment, which will contribute to the growth and development of recreational spaces in the city. Therefore, the project is directly related to the environment and climate change.

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**Status per Portfolio Positions**                    Completed



**Event** Hands on practice for civil servants and youth for improved environmental service delivery in Rustavi

**Description** Under the Objective 1.1., was prepared the Curriculum for designing the hands on practice aimed at building civil servants' and youth skills for identifying, refining and addressing environmental problems faced by the city, and finding alternative solutions for their realistic implementation. Special emphasis were made on connecting with diverse partners for improved environmental service design and delivery in Rustavi. The curriculum was developed by a consultant, based on the materials and information received through the meetings and focus groups conducted by Rustavi Innovation Hub with Rustavi youth at the College Modus. The curriculum covered the following objectives: Analysis of the problem and development of design solutions; Understanding the ways in which services are delivered; Customer relationship support; Learning to prototype. The curriculum methodology of the trainings were built on a learning-by-doing methodology. In every session we will go through the cycle: experience, reflect, conceptualize, create.

**Outcomes** Green Services curriculum for municipality

**Media/posts** [Trainings](#)



**Event** Trainings: green policy for municipal services and environmental protection

**Date** November-December 2023

**Description**

A. Based on the curriculum prepared, during November and December training sessions were held at the School of Innovations in Rustavi. The trainings were attended by 25 students.  
[Social media - trainings](#)

B. Cohort of youth and civil servants were taken through the hands-on practice exercise and in this regard on December 5 and 6, a two-day working meeting was held at the Rustavi Art, Sports and Youth Development Center. The topic of the training was- the function, role and municipal services of youth activities in the process of youth activity development. The training was delivered by Aneli Chkhartishvili, the Head of the Youth Department of Rustavi City Hall.  
[Social media coverage link cys centre](#)

C. On December 8 and 9, a two-day training was held at the Rustavi Media Library. The topic of the training was - green policy for municipal services and environmental protection. The training was delivered by Mariam Latsabidze, the Head of Rustavi City Hall Media Library.  
[Social media coverage link media library](#)

D. Also, during December were held trainings for young participants to learn working in the metaverse, using the latest tech for urban planning and development. Civil servants representing different units and young people attended the trainings. In total the trainings were attended by more than 40 participants.

**Outcomes** As a result of the trainings participants gained skills for innovative planning and cooperation mechanisms that will be applied in their future work and municipal services, this in result will increase their efficiency and citizens' participation in the processes.

**Media/posts** [Trainings, cys centre. media library](#)





**Event** Rustavi Metaverse Academy for green entrepreneurship development established in Rustavi

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**Date** November-December 2023

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**Description** As a result of the project intervention a Metaverse Academy equipped with appropriate technical devices was established in Rustavi, where youth have an opportunity to learn to use modern technologies (VR equipment) for urban solutions, like utilizing the city's available spaces for improved environmental conditions for residents. Within the framework of the academy, it became possible to simultaneously involve several parties in urban planning process.

Two laptops and five VR headsets were purchased for the Metaverse Academy, which will be established in Rustavi, where youth will be able to learn to use modern technologies (VR equipment) for urban solutions, like utilizing the city's available spaces for improved environmental conditions for residents. The laptops and VR headsets will stay at the basis of the Rustavi Innovation Hub and the city hall on the basis of the Schools of Innovations.

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**Outcomes** Such approach backed up by the cutting edge tech solutions attracts young people to engage with local self-governance initiatives for city's development, on one hand, and open up opportunities to contribute with their own initiatives, on the other. The functioning of the academy after the completion of the project will be provided by the School of Innovations based in Rustavi in close partnership with Rustavi Innovation Hub. This will ensure the project benefits sustainability.

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**Media/posts** [VR training](#)

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**Event** A Metaverse training for local youth

**Date** December 2023

**Description** A Metaverse training was provided by an expert Mikheil Lobjanidze, for 25 participants. The purpose of the course was for young people to learn working in the metaverse, using the latest tech for urban planning and development. The training was held on December 8, at the Rustavi Innovation School.

**Outcomes** Series of 10 trainings and 25 participants.

**Media/posts** [VR training](#)



<b>Event</b>	Youth engagement in the design and provision of sustainable environmental services for Rustavi residents
<b>Date</b>	October-November 2023
<b>Description</b>	<p>Within the framework of the RPA equipment was purchased. In order to put the theoretical knowledge gained within the framework of the hands-on learning sessions into practice, special equipment for environmental care was purchased for the Rustavi municipality. Namely, 3 small lawn tractors and 3 motor blocks.</p> <p>For Rustavi city, green development is an urgent priority and this direction will still be relevant; therefore the techniques provided to the municipality will help to successfully accomplish its goals and perform work. The work that used to be done by hand of the employees, now can be done more easily and effectively with the help of modern equipment, even in the places that are hard to reach. 30,000 square meters have already been mowed down at this stage.</p>
<b>Outcomes</b>	3 small lawn tractors and 3 motor blocks handed over to the Service Agency of the City Hall
<b>Media/posts</b>	Social media coverage links: <a href="#">minitractor</a> and <a href="#">moto blocks</a> .





**Event** Training on usage of equipment

**Date** 30 November 2023

**Description** A training was held, where 20 participants had a theoretical course on the use of equipment and got some practical experience. Young people were trained to operate the equipment with the perspective of employment in the municipal services, and also ability to create matching solutions for further collaboration. The training was led by the Rustavi Service Center employees.

The workshop was organized together with the Rustavi City Hall project - "New Greenery - from a new generation" and closed with a greening campaign in the newly rehabilitated square on Kldiashvili Street. Rustavi Mayor Nino Latsabidze, State Governor of Kvemo Kartli Giorgi Dokhturishvili and members of the City Council joined the action together with the young people participating in the program.

**Outcomes** 20 trained representatives of the Rustavi Service Agency

**Media/posts** Social media coverage links [RustaviCityHall](#) and [RustaviInnovationHub](#)



**Event** Green City hackathon

**Date** 23-24 December 2023

**Description** A Green City hackathon was organized for youth to provide them with necessary support on ideation and solution building. The event took place at the college "Modus" working space. It was the first time that a hackathon was held in Rustavi city. A special announcement was made by Rustavi Innovation Hub regarding the start of the hackathon and distributed via various social media pages and groups. Interested groups had to fill the special **application** form. As a result, 8 groups, consisting of three members.

The groups worked for two days and developed the first prototypes of their ideas. All eight groups presented their ideas to the independent jury and two winning ideas were selected. They covered the issues of homeless animals and waste recycling.

The ideas were evaluated using a 5-point system criteria, where 5 means the highest rating, 1 the lowest; and covering the following directions:

1) Ease of use. How easy is the product for users to use. How easily the target audience will understand the principle of using this product and be able to use it.

2) Novelty/Innovation. How different is the idea from the existing ideas.

3) Implementation. How realistic it is to implement the idea, how expensive it might cost or how technically difficult it might be to do.

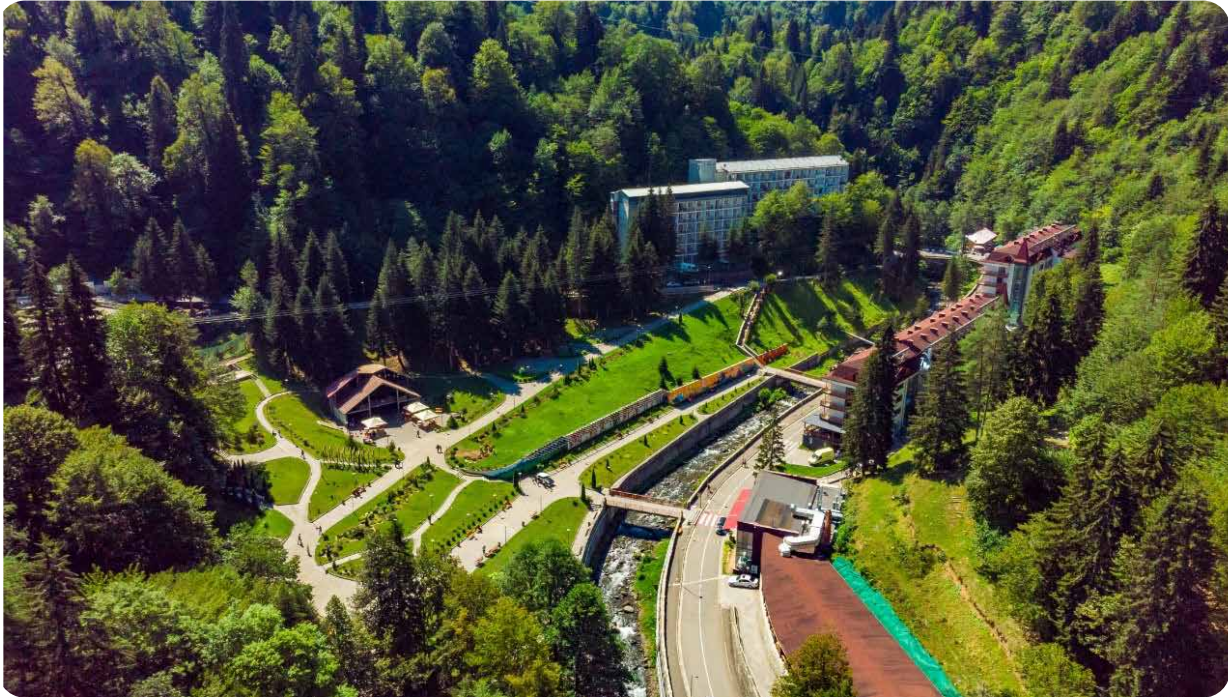
4) Compliance with functionality. How well does the product address the intended problem. How exactly does it perform what it was created for.

**Outcomes** As a reward for the winning groups, 6 vouchers of 200 GEL each were purchased within the project.

**Media/posts** [Social media coverage links: Hackathon](#) [HackathonFinal](#)



# BAGHDATI



**Quote** *“P4EG journey was increasingly interesting and challenging, as we lacked many data at municipal level. However, the process of context analysis through the building blocks helped us to identify and formulate our development priorities and on what to focus in the coming years. Most importantly we learned principles of the EU Green Deal and were able to streamline those in our development agenda”*  
**Tiko Abuladze**, Economic Development Department, Baghdari Municipality

<b>Issue</b>	PATHWAYS FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH Local Economic Development Plan
<b>Goal</b>	Piloting new methodology of the Local Economic Development Plans.
<b>Status per Portfolio Positions</b>	Completed

## BAGHDATI VISION

By 2050, Baghdati Municipality aims to become a thriving and appealing destination for residents, visitors, workers, and businesses alike. Guided by the principles of sustainable development and the EU Green Deal, and leveraging the municipality's economic and cultural heritage, our vision is to foster a conducive environment for the growth of competitive green sectors and the cultivation of future-oriented skills. This will be achieved through the adoption of innovative and eco-friendly approaches, enhancing services and infrastructure, promoting low-emission municipal mobility, and facilitating smart urban renewal.

## GOALS

### Alignment with the EU Green Deal objectives

### Priorities

### Objectives

Advancement of organic viticulture and winemaking as a thriving and competitive sector

**Objective 1:** Enhancing awareness of the municipality's economic potential and promoting investment opportunities  
**Objective 2:** Facilitating increased access to finance for economic actors in Baghdati Municipality and fostering the development of tourism products associated with winemaking.  
**Objective 3:** Enhancing business support services and upgrading public infrastructure to foster a conducive environment for economic growth.

**Healthy and affordable food**

Cultivating skills aligned with present and future economic demands and introducing cutting-edge approaches through innovation.

**Objective 4:** Enhancing workforce capacity and facilitating alignment with market demands through skills development and effective matching strategies.  
**Objective 5:** Expanding access to technologies and fostering the adoption of innovative approaches within the local economy.

**Future-proof jobs and skills training for the transition**

Green and smart urban renewal

**Objective 6:** Facilitating the introduction of a low-emission and eco-friendly public transport system to promote green mobility options.  
**Objective 7:** Revitalizing and renovating the central areas of the municipality to create vibrant and attractive spaces for residents and visitors.  
**Objective 8:** Undertaking energy-efficient renovations of municipal buildings to reduce energy consumption and promote sustainability in the municipality's infrastructure.

**Greener and smarter transport**

**Renovated, energy efficient buildings**



<b>Event</b>	Community Meeting in Baghdati – Pathways for Economic Growth
<b>Date</b>	16 May 2023
<b>Description</b>	<p>Local consultation was organized harvesting community perspectives on new local economic development pathways in Baghdati aligned with the EU Green Deal objectives.</p> <p>The event was designed with the purpose to incite feedback of local community across the building blocks: urban context, local economy, quality of place, infrastructure, environmental resilience and biodiversity, municipal services, quality of place, innovations and new technologies etc.</p> <p>The methodology was developed in partnership with Arup and Climate KIC.</p>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Baghtadi Local Economic Development Plan</li><li>• P4EG methodology</li></ul>
<b>Media/posts</b>	<a href="#">Facebook</a> <a href="#">LinkedIn</a>



## Other highlights

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M4EG Georgia established partnership with academia. Particularly, with the program of "Applied Social Psychology" Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Georgia. As part of the partnership, three MA students had practice within M4EG, providing research resources and support to signatories.

Students from the Applied Social Psychology faculty undertook fellowship at the M4EG Georgia office. In particular:

- 3 MA students conducted workshop for the wider network on research methods (24 March 2023),
- 2 students helped Baghdati municipality to conduct community survey and inform P4EG development,
- 3 students are engaged to study research papers and methodologies applied by cities for better planning and responding to needs of different groups (women, other)

## Learning opportunities

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### Urban Learning Center

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#### Description



### URBAN LEARNING CENTER

The Urban Learning Centre (ULC) brings new learning and networking opportunities within the M4EG network providing an enabling learning ecosystem. This includes a new generation of Local Economic Development Plans, moving from a linear project to a 'portfolio of options' approach to tackling complex challenges, and innovation mentoring and seed-funds.

#### FOUNDATIONS FOR FUTURE READINESS

The course aims to boost municipalities' future readiness to shape thriving places, with participants gaining a broad understanding of a range of topics across a series of modules – from the EU's Green Deal, Smart and Inclusive Cities, to approaches in managing complex problems and mobilising more municipal resources, funding, and public-private financing.

#### GREEN & JUST TRANSITION

The modules in this course connect with several Pathways for Economic Growth (P4EG) steps outlined in the P4EG Course of the Urban Learning Center, namely, Local Economic Situation Assessment, Strategy Making, Action Planning and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL).

#### ULC Courses

#### PATHWAYS FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH(P4EG)

This course complements the p4eg guidance note. It is designed to enhance the planning efforts of the p4eg, aiming to boost the capabilities of municipalities in developing their local economic development plan. Its goal is to assist in formulating forward-thinking plans that not only foster the prosperity of your locality but also ensure active community involvement throughout the development process.

## Library/LINKS

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- [Georgia Highlights 2022](#)
- [Portfolio Journey Briefs \(latest version April 2023\)](#)
- Center for Public Impact's site on the Urban Imaginaries Programme where Georgian municipalities' work is showcased. Incl separate article: <https://www.centreforpublicimpact.org/insights/learnings-from-urban-imaginaries-georgia>
- Blog: [Reimagining Batumi through a startup portfolio of options](#)
- Blog: [Kutaisi, a 3,600-year old city peering into the future](#)

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This publication was funded by the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the "Mayors for Economic Growth" Facility and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.