



Case Descriptions of the Local Innovation Partnership in **Vilkaviškis, Lithuania**



Context

Local Innovation Partnership (LIP) in Vilkaviškis, Lithuania

The case of the LIP Vilkaviškis acts on the EU target of 25% organically cultivated area by 2030, roadmap for Lithuania's industrial transition to a circular economy as well as the municipal food supply strategy of Vilkaviškis district municipality.

- The case of this LIP will include actors from the whole agri-food system: 1) several municipal departments in Vilkaviškis district municipality; 2) regional SMEs from farm to fork; 3) regional partners including other municipalities, regional authorities, support organisations for business development and NGOs.
- The challenge of healthy and sustainable food production and consumption with readily applicable concepts will be tackled from three angles: 1) competence/capacity-building for local authorities; 2) public sector as driver of demand; and 3) enablers for circular, organic/sustainable food producers/suppliers.

Why

- Developing sustainable food systems in the Vilkaviškis district will help to stimulate local economies. Supporting local farmers, producers, and businesses helps create jobs, stimulate economic growth, and retain income within the community.
- Sustainable farming practices, such as organic farming, agroecology, and regenerative agriculture, prioritize soil health, water conservation, and biodiversity preservation.
- Increased access to fresh produce, farmers' markets, and community-supported agriculture programs encourage healthier eating habits and reduce reliance on highly processed and unhealthy foods.
- Farmers' markets and farm-to-table initiatives provide opportunities for social gatherings, cultural exchange, and community engagement. This sense of belonging and social cohesion enhances overall community well-being and pride.

What

- The Lithuanian Innovation Centre (LIC) is working to foster collaboration between different stakeholders in Vilkaviškis District Municipality such as farmers, food producers, scientists, and technology providers in order to change traditional food processes and systems into more sustainable, regenerative, and circular modes.
- By bringing together diverse expertise, LIC facilitates knowledge sharing, joint projects, and the exchange of best practices in sustainable food production and environmental conservation.
- LIC collaborate with policymakers and provide them with insights, data, and recommendations related to sustainable food systems. This contributes to the development of supportive policies, regulations, and incentives that encourage sustainable practices across the food supply chain.

Who

Project Partners

Lithuanian Innovation Centre

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Associated Organisations & Other Stakeholders

- Vilkaviškis District Municipality
- Vilkaviškis Tourism and Business Information Center
- Vilkaviškis representative office of the Kaunas Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Crafts
- Vilkaviškis District Farmers' Union
- Vilkaviškis region local activity group
- AgriFood Lithuania DIH
- Smart Food Cluster



Piloting the KISMET project's

Enabling Programme for Sustainable Food Environments

1 | Governance, integration, participation

Motivating and involving decision makers

Easy access to evidence-based knowledge/key data can help various actors in the food system to motivate and engage politicians and decision-makers.

Create a **local communication plan** to improve Vilkaviskis municipality's food supply strategy and to build an effective conversation with stakeholders. The plan might be built around the following crucial criteria inspired by this case:

- making use of critical data: the plan will make use of key facts and numbers unique to the local food sector.
- letting the numbers speak: the plan will effectively explain the importance of these data in order to engage decision-makers.
- illustrating the true cost of food: the plan will throw light on the true costs associated with dietary choices.
- providing solutions and stressing the positive elements of change.

Activities:

- **Organize local workshop** to develop the communication plan strategy, milestones, tools, and measures for implementation.
- **Develop local communication plan**, that will help to improve Vilkaviskis municipality's food supply strategy and develop a dialogue with the stakeholders to reach local goals.
- **Improve municipality's competencies and capacity** to act on sustainable food environment with small-scale actors.

2 | Demand-side (drivers for sustainable consumption)

Seasonal Pyramids

Increase the knowledge of sustainable and local choices and make young people, kitchen staff and others understand the food and climate situation and take action.

- **Increase the municipality's ability to act on sustainable food environments** by working closely with small-scale actors (such as public canteens, farmers etc.). This collaborative approach will empower these actors and equip them with the necessary tools and knowledge to contribute to sustainable food practices.
- **Introduce local seasoning food options in public canteens within the LIP**, by creating a system that ensures sustainable food choices are available in these canteens.
- **To organize a local workshop.** Its purpose will be to facilitate dialogue and collaboration, helping participants identify key drivers and strategies to foster public sector demand for high-quality and sustainable food.

“KISMET empowers us to think globally together with dedicated partners all over the Baltic Sea Region and act locally in Vilkaviškis district municipality in Lithuania while transitioning towards a sustainable food environment of the future.”

Inga Vyšniauskienė (Lithuanian Innovation Centre)