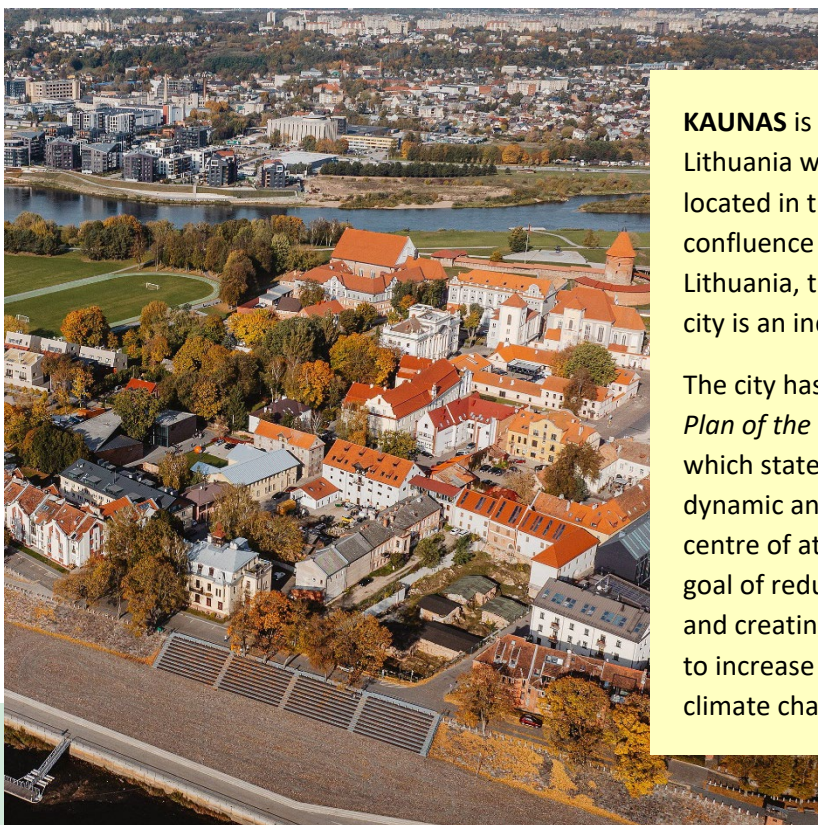


# BEST PRACTISES IN PLASTIC-FREE SOLUTIONS

The BALTIPLAST project co-financed by Interreg BSR helps to drive the transition to a green and resilient Baltic Sea region.

## Cross-departmental collaboration to reduce plastics in Kaunas

### KAUNAS, LITHUANIA



**KAUNAS** is the second largest city in Lithuania with 304 198 (2024) inhabitants, located in the centre of the country at the confluence of the two largest rivers in Lithuania, the Nemunas, and the Neris. The city is an industrial and academic centre.

The city has *The Strategic Development Plan of the City of Kaunas till the 2030*, which states the vision “Kaunas – smart, dynamic and sustainable change city, a centre of attraction”. The plan sets the goal of reducing environmental pollution and creating an urban ecosystem in order to increase resilience to the effects of climate change.

# 92 %

CO2 reduction

Every city faces the challenge of single-use plastic waste. To eliminate the plastic waste and promote sustainability, Kaunas City municipality did the inventory of SUP waste in 3 Kaunas City Municipal Administration divisions.

# Challenges and actions

Every city faces the challenge of single-use plastic (SUP) waste. For Kaunas City Municipality, it was important to understand **what kind of plastics are being consumed** and **what was plastics' amount** in daily life. In the BALTIPLAST project, Kaunas performed the inventory of SUP in 3 municipal divisions: Investment and Project Division, Environment Protection Division and Transport and Traffic Management division. The inventory took 2 months in each division and was divided into 2 periods.

Internal results revealed for example that employees drink a lot of coffee from takeaway cups or water from plastic bottles. All 3 divisions had introductory trainings about plastic harm and internal proposals after first period how to use less plastic. According to the inventory results, the *Guidelines for sustainable use of plastics in Kaunas city* were prepared.

## Brief description of activities

- Selecting divisions to participate in the inventory
- Organising introductory trainings
- SUP waste weighting
- Filling results in the inventory tools
- Getting internal results
- Organising internal meeting
- SUP waste weighting
- Filling results in the inventory tools
- Getting final results
- Organising round table discussions
- Preparing and sharing the *Guidelines for sustainable use of plastics in Kaunas city*

## Target groups and timeline

The pilot in Kaunas targeted **city administration employees** and **citizens**. The inventory took **2 months in each municipal division**, spanning from 2 May 2024 to 31 July 2024.

## Results

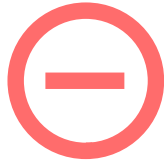
- **SUP usage significantly decreased in all divisions** between the first and second inventory periods due to presentation of internal results and harm of SUP;
- Transport and Traffic Management division employees started **working mostly digitally avoiding paper, pens** etc.; decided to **reject coffee takeaway cups and use permanent cups for drinks**;
- Environment Protection division employees **rejected using single use food packaging**;
- Kept **separate waste bins for plastic and set up new ones in other divisions** at the main municipality building;
- According to the inventory results, the *Guidelines for sustainable use of plastics in Kaunas city* were prepared.

## Enablers



- + **Strong support and interest** from the municipal employees
- + **Growing interest** from other divisions and **replicability possibilities**

## Barriers



- **High demand for human resources** to manage the development process

## Key takeaways

- **Strong interest** was expressed by employees and **collaboration between different divisions** was established about the topic of SUP reduction.
- It is important to **educate and regularly remind about SUP harm**.