



# Prototyping Innovation Policies with(in) cities

Innovation Area:  
New European Bauhaus

**Košice, Slovakia**



# How does “prototyping...” work?

This City Case Description is the outcome of a policy prototyping exercise within a city ecosystem. Once the ekip research team has explored a policy area and its connection to cultural and creative industries (CCIs) and innovation, we ask: what would this mean in a local city context?

Together with local stakeholders, we test how a draft policy recommendation might stimulate innovation. Using Portfolio Sensemaking, stakeholders simulate an innovation portfolio, analyse the strengths and gaps of the local support system, and identify what resources are needed to realise the portfolio.

## Košice Context & Area of Focus

The EU Commission's Mission New European Bauhaus connects to the Košice's ambitions to combine cultural vitality, industrial transformation, and sustainable urban development. Located in eastern Slovakia, the country's second-largest city with a population of 230,000, Košice is a UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts and a former European Capital of Culture. The city has a strong foundation in creativity and design, which NEB emphasizes as drivers of beautiful, inclusive, and sustainable living spaces.



At the same time, Košice faces the challenges of energy transition, climate adaptation, and diversification of its industrial base, making the NEB framework a valuable tool for integrating sustainability into the city's development. By leveraging its universities, cultural and creative industries, and growing innovation ecosystem, Košice can use NEB as a platform to align cultural heritage with future-oriented practices, foster social cohesion, and position itself as a model city for green and inclusive transformation in Eastern Europe.



# Portfolio sensemaking

## ACCESSIBLE HOUSING IN INCLUSIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS

The innovation portfolio focuses on the short-term goal of communicating the accessible and affordable housing within inclusive neighbourhoods.



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- “For us, the portfolio method opens up
- the possibility to build a shared
- language and common understanding
- among all stakeholders. With unified
- data and communication, I feel we can
- better align our goals and make Košice’s
- innovation ecosystem more effective
- and collaborative.” ”

Marián Hudák, City of Košice



## Key aspects of the portfolio

**Effective Communication:** Leveraging innovative communication strategies to keep residents informed and engaged in the development process.

**Community Feedback:** Establishing channels for ongoing community feedback and participation in decision-making.

**Transparency:** Ensuring transparency in planning and implementation to build trust and collaboration among stakeholders.



# Who was there?

A BROAD MIX OF STAKEHOLDERS CO-CREATED THIS CASE

## CCI ORGANISATIONS

K13 City Cultural Centers  
Tabacka Cultural Center  
Cinema Usmev, East Slovak Gallery



## BUSINESSES

Business Kosice Agency



## ACADEMIA

Technical University of Kosice  
University of Pavel Jan Safarik Kosice  
Slovak Academy of Science



## LOCAL AUTHORITIES

City of Kosice, Dept. for  
Strategic Planning  
City of Kosice, Dept of  
Environment



## OTHERS

Creative Industry Kosice,  
Eastern Coast NGO,  
Spolka NGO,  
ETP NGO



# Analysis

## THE LOCAL INNOVATION SUPPORT SYSTEM

Košice demonstrates a multifaceted innovation support ecosystem characterized by strong stakeholder collaboration and participatory planning traditions. The system encompasses diverse actors including municipal authorities, educational institutions, cultural organizations, business networks, and community initiatives, creating a robust foundation for innovation activities.

Key strengths include established participatory planning practices, strong local and international networks, and active citizen engagement in public decision-making processes. The city has developed systematic data collection mechanisms and open data platforms that support evidence-based policy development.

However, the system faces critical coordination challenges. Standardized communication and unified terminology among stakeholders remain underdeveloped, leading to potential duplication of efforts and missed synergies.

Significant gaps exist in addressing marginalized communities and energy efficiency in panel housing. The focus on accessible and sustainable housing as a priority area reflects the system's orientation toward social cohesion and inclusive development, though implementation capacity remains concentrated primarily within city administration rather than distributed across the broader ecosystem.



# Conclusions

## & RECOMMENDATIONS

### *Enhanced Communication and Engagement*

The innovation portfolio must effectively utilize innovative communication strategies to keep residents informed and engaged throughout the development process. This approach has been instrumental in building trust and fostering collaboration among stakeholders. By ensuring that the community is actively involved in decision-making processes, the portfolio has strengthened the relationship between residents and policymakers, leading to more effective and inclusive urban development.



“I think that by using the portfolio approach, we can really connect different actors and avoid doing the same work twice. For us, it helps to see how housing, culture, environment, and community engagement all fit together, instead of treating them as separate issues.”

Miriam Šebová, Košice Technical University, Faculty of Economy

### Unified Stakeholder Goals

A key achievement of the innovation portfolio is the harmonization of language and goals among the various actors and stakeholders involved. By developing a common vocabulary, the portfolio has ensured that all parties, including residents, planners, and policymakers, are aligned and can communicate effectively. This alignment is crucial for the success of the initiatives, as it facilitates coordinated efforts and reduces misunderstandings that could hinder progress.

### Integration of Cultural and Social Considerations

The portfolio has successfully integrated cultural, minority, and climate considerations into its policies, promoting sustainability and inclusion across various sectors. This approach not only preserves cultural heritage but also fosters innovation, contributing to a more cohesive and vibrant community. By addressing these considerations, the portfolio has created a more inclusive environment that supports diverse perspectives and encourages creative solutions to local challenges.





## Our methods

### THE INNOVATION PORTFOLIO POLICY CANVAS

The Prototyping Workshop Methodology and the Innovation Portfolio Policy Canvas guide local stakeholders to analyse their local ecosystem, make an inventory of actors and resources, identify and create a potential innovation portfolio and analyse their local innovation support system.

### THE OPSI MODEL

The OPSI-model (Open Public Sector Innovation OECD) is adapted to analyze the innovation character of the policy area. Participants explore whether the policy involves new legislative measures or is more exploratory in nature, allowing for a deeper understanding of how the policy might influence the local ecosystem

### THE LIEPT MODEL

The Lund Innovation Ecosystem Portfolio Tracking (LIEPT) model is a tool that provides a framework for tracking changes in innovation portfolios in ecosystems where impact and growth happen not in one organisation but in many. This relies on collaborative efforts by many stakeholders.

## What is ekip

The ekip partnership funded by the European Commission consists of 5 universities, 4 consultancies, 4 creative and cultural organisations and 4 cities. Together we develop innovation policies for the cultural and creative industries in Europe. We do that in various ways: through research, consultations and interaction with people in the sector at policy labs and focus groups and assessments in city ecosystems.

## Want to know more? Want to do it in your city?

Would you like to explore the topic of Ecodesign further? Visit the [Fashion Transition: Eco-Design for Circularity](#) on ekip website, where you'll find relevant policy posters, presentations, videos, and articles.

You can even host your own session in your city! It's an empowering and insightful way to bring together local stakeholders across sectors and disciplines for a focused discussion on a topic of shared importance. The ekip method and approach are open for anyone to use including a Facilitator's Guide and templates available in the ekip Knowledge Bank under [Tools and Methods](#).

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*Disclaimer:*

*Each City Case Description reflects the views of workshop participants. It is a perspective from one city context, intended to inspire and ignite action*



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