

GABROVO – CLIMATE NEUTRAL AND SMART MUNICIPALITY

GABROVO, BULGARIA

Geographical center of Bulgaria

Territory: 555 km²

Population: 51 000inhabitants

Important transport intersection

A part of the Trans-European Transport

Corridor 9 /Helsinki – Istanbul/



GABROVO'S MISSION TOWARD CLIMATE NEUTRALITY

ОБЩИНА
ГАБРОВО

Winner 2021 - Gabrovo
EUROPEAN
GREEN LEAF
An initiative of the European Commission

100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities by 2030

European Committee of the Regions

NET ZERO CITIES

European Entrepreneurial Region

Covenant of Mayors
for Climate & Energy

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Gabrovo Designated
UNESCO Creative City
in 2017

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



GABROVO'S VISION

A GREEN, INNOVATIVE AND ACCESSIBLE MUNICIPALITY, WITH A STRONG ECONOMY, RICH CULTURAL HERITAGE, SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND OPEN TO PEOPLE



Climate City Contract GABROVO

The municipality's commitment to the well-being of citizens and a sustainable climate transition is evident through strategic plans included in the Integrated Development Plan of Gabrovo (2021-2027:

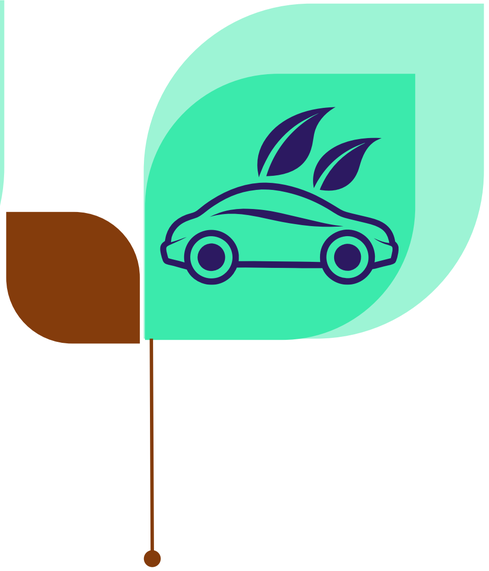
- ✓ Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan - SUMP 2021-2030
- ✓ Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan - SECAP 2022-2030
- ✓ Waste Management Program of Gabrovo Municipality 2021-2028
- ✓ Program for Promoting the Use of Energy from Renewable Sources and Biofuels - 2021-2030
- ✓ Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in Gabrovo Municipality 2021-2027
- ✓ Smart Specialization Strategy of Gabrovo Municipality 2021-2030
- ✓ Environmental Protection Program 2023-2027



GABROVO AIMS TO ACHIEVE CLIMATE NEUTRALITY IN 5 SECTORS



ENERGY SYSTEMS & BUILT ENVIRONMENT



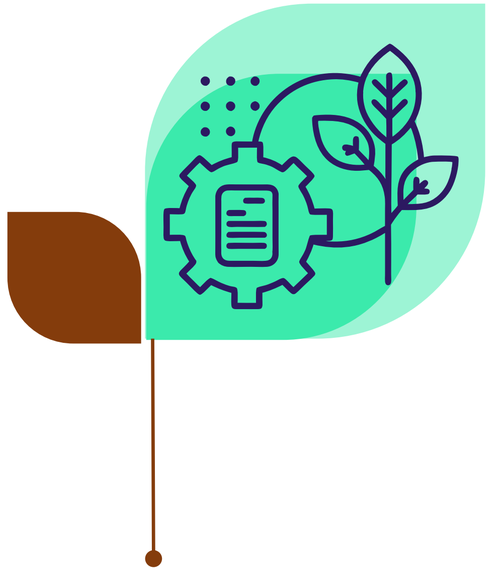
MOBILITY & TRANSPORT



WASTE & CIRCULAR ECONOMY



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE



NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

KEY AREAS OF INTERVENTIONS

Energy efficiency in buildings

Air quality monitoring

Urban development

Sustainable urban mobility

Street lighting

Water management

Waste management

Soil and forest preservation

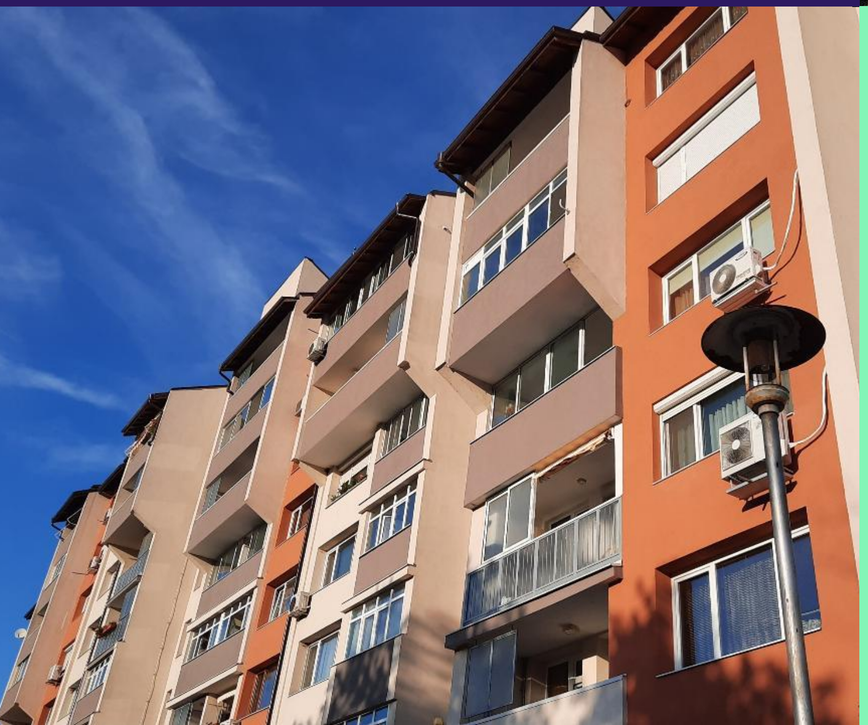
Public campaigns



BUILDINGS



Gabrovo was an active partner of the National Programme for Energy Efficiency in Multi-family Residential Buildings that resulted in retrofitting 36 buildings and energy savings of over 40%



2022 – establishment of energy efficiency one- stop-shop
2022 – implementation of EUCF project which supported citizens in the process of preparing applications for energy measures
2023 – 84 multifamily residential buildings were submitted for financing of energy measures through RRP /the application process was implemented through the public administration/



AIR QUALITY MONITORING

Green.Gabrovo.bg – a platform for monitoring the parameters of air quality in the city, operating as an integrated system of points for monitoring air quality in real time



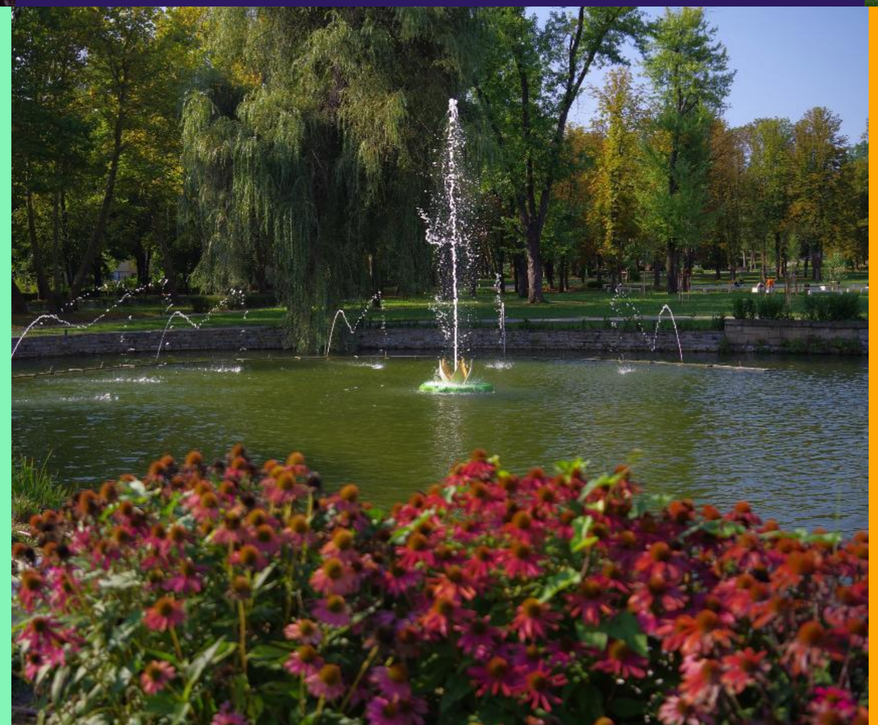


SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

ACCESSIBLE AND ECOLOGICAL URBAN ENVIRONMENT AND GREEN SYSTEM



Using complex approach in renovation of residential zones – street network, parking lots, areas for recreation and sports, energy efficient lighting, video surveillance, etc.
Construction of new roundabouts and bypass roads



Relocating traffic outside the central part of the city
Reducing noise and air pollution
Availability of newly constructed alternative and faster roundabout of Gabrovo /connection between Northern and Southern Bulgaria/



STREET LIGHTING



1998 – 2001 Gabrovo became the first municipality with integrated system for street lighting management (Demo zone project for energy efficiency funded by Global Ecofund)
2012 – 2013 Modernization of the street lighting in 128 villages – reduced CO_2 to 22 155 t/year and 64% energy savings



2019 – ...Implementation of ESCO contract for modernization of city street lighting – planned energy savings of min. 1 100 847 kWh/year and reduction of CO_2 to 902 t/year

SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY

2022 – Gabrovo SUMP until 2030 was adopted
The city administration and some public enterprises use electric vehicles





2021 – accomplishment of the first phase of Gabrovo Integrated Mobility Project which provided for the purchase of 14 new and ecological buses, of which 3 are electric vehicles
Introduction of revised public transport system and introduction of ICT transport solutions
Introduction of paid parking zone in the area of the city center



WATER MANAGEMENT

Joint investments with the local water company for modernization and development of the water supply network in the Municipality
2019 – 2023 - Construction of 20.7 km of new water supply system, two new pumping stations and repair of 13 existing reservoirs for water supply in 15 Gabrovo villages and reconstruction of the water supply system in additional 5 villages.



WASTE MANAGEMENT

Piloted an innovative project for underground waste management with sensors, with an access to the facility only for the residents of the area

Reverse vending system - implemented for the first time in Gabrovo

Citizens campaigns for raising waste management public awareness



SOIL, FOREST AND BIOIDIVERSITY

WORKING ON MEASURES FOR PRESERVATION, PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT

Part of the EU forest strategy "Deals for soils in Europe" that aims to achieve:
the EU's biodiversity objectives
greenhouse gas emission reduction target of at least 55 % by 2030.
Gabrovo supports the Soil Manifesto.

The city is implementing a HuMUS project which aim is to take care of soil health.



PROJECTS

The first energy community in Bulgaria was formed in Gabrovo. It is a group of 73 legal entities and individuals who, by virtue of a common agreement, jointly produce energy from renewable sources.

Collaboration between cities/regions and energy communities as means to accelerate of the energy transition - "LIFE" PROGRAM.

Energy communities – local ownership of power, "LIFE" PROGRAM. Integrated solutions for positive energy and resilient cities. HORIZON PROGRAM, 2020.

Energy measures – support for households at risk of energy poverty. Free energy analysis of 4 residential buildings. HORIZON PROGRAM 2020.





ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Implementation of energy efficiency measures in cultural infrastructure buildings:

- Emanuil Manolov Culture House
- RIM Gabrovo
- Hotel in REMO ETAR
- Youth Center

CURRENT PROJECTS

Better management through cooperation to achieve sustainable urban development (UrbanCOOP).

Gabrovo - renewed, eco, efficient, and active administration (Smart GreeNaa).

Green empowerment of youth - green professions for a greener Europe (Green Youth Empower).

Testing innovative insurance solutions for regions to adapt to climate change (SOTERIA).

CITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE – URABCT PROGRAM





UPCOMING ECOLOGICAL MOBILITY PROJECT

Gabrovo Municipality in partnership with Sevlievo Municipality

7 new ecological buses that will serve the Gabrovo-Sevlievo line

7 charging stations

Additional lighting on 22 pedestrian paths in Gabrovo and 60 pedestrian paths in Sevlievo

Electronic fare system in urban transport

- AMIGOS Project
- Active Mobility Innovations
- for Green and Safe Solutions

Reducing emissions from transport

Carbon neutrality by 2030

Reducing traffic by improving its management and control

Increasing the use of public transport and promoting active mobility





ATTRACTIVE, ECOLOGICAL, AND SAFE URBAN ENVIRONMENT AND GREEN SYSTEM

Comprehensive solutions for neighborhood improvement - street network, green zones, recreation and play areas, energy-efficient lighting, video surveillance

Roundabouts and bypass roads

New parking lots and designation of parking spaces

Inspection and passportization of the green system

GIS layer for the green system



CURRENT
Project Accelerating Climate Adaptation for Better Resilience in European Mountain Regions

Horizon Europe Program 2021-2027, Climate Mission

Key activities: Development of a new Green Infrastructure Strategy for Gabrovo Municipality; implementation of a pilot project for rainwater collection to maintain urban green areas and tree planting to increase the permeability of green areas and more

www.chisto.gabrovo.bg

CAMPAIGNS AND INITIATIVES

Systematic work with different target groups to change attitudes and form a responsible approach to an eco-friendly way of life. Educational and informational campaigns.

Campaigns to encourage civic initiatives.

International conferences and seminars

Carnival of Humor and Satire, May 17, 2025

Uzana Polyana fest, July 18-20, 2025



UPCOMING – GABROVO - CENTER OF INNOVATIONS, EDUCATION, AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

CONCEPT FOR INTEGRATED TERRITORIAL INVESTMENTS:

3 project ideas worth 23.3 million leva

10 partner organizations

Center for digital skills and innovations in the former "Radion Umnikov" school - training in robotics and automation, information technologies, virtual reality, 3D creativity, and prototyping.

House of the Future at the Technical University - Gabrovo. Start-up companies will test innovative products.



UPCOMING
SHORES OF THE PRESENT –
a set of measures for creating a green, innovative and inclusive urban environment in Gabrovo and Plovdiv

CONCEPT FOR INTEGRATED TERRITORIAL INVESTMENTS:

5 project ideas worth over 88 million leva.

15 partner organizations

Creation of the "Christo and Jeanne-Claude" Center

Renovation of the House of Humor and Satire

Renovation of the "Orlovets" sports hall

Improvement of the riverside area of the Yantra river

Construction of a new pedestrian bridge

Major repair of the "Cosmos" cinema in Plovdiv



Regional Information Center

Funding: Technical Assistance Programme 2021-2027 (ERDF)

Part of The National Network of 27 Regional Information Centers

- Supporting transparency and communication on EU Cohesion Policy
- Promoting funding opportunities and project results

Key Activities

- Information sessions and public events
- Mediation and stakeholder consultations
- Guidance for beneficiaries
- Youth engagement and training
- Urban planning initiatives
- Media relations and awareness campaigns



Public Events and Initiatives

Gabrovo Innovation Camp

Annual event fostering innovation and entrepreneurship

Engages institutions, businesses, academia, and civil society

Quadruple Helix Model for problem-solving

Workshops on digital transformation, green economy, and startup acceleration

Networking and mentorship for young entrepreneurs



Urban Planning and Development Initiatives

Urban Planning Days – Discussions on sustainable urban growth

Smart Cities & Mobility workshops

Public-Private Partnerships for urban development

Stakeholder engagement for inclusive urban design





Beneficiary Consultations and Support

- Providing guidance on EU funding applications
- Helping businesses, NGOs & municipalities access funding
- Supporting Integrated Territorial Strategies
- Ensuring transparency in fund management & reporting



EU policy Initiatives:

"Europe in My Region"

- Public awareness campaign on EU-funded projects
- Engages local communities in interactive exhibitions
- Includes talent shows, workshops, and open discussions
- Raises visibility of successful EU-funded initiatives

Regional Dialogues for EU Cohesion Policy

- Public discussions on the impact of EU-funded programs
- Workshops with local authorities, businesses, and civil society
- Case studies on best practices from Gabrovo and beyond
- Encouraging citizen participation in regional development strategies



Youth policy Initiatives:

- Class Hour Sessions at RIC Gabrovo – Informative sessions for students on EU policies and funding opportunities
- "How I Want the EU to Change My City" – Youth engagement campaign
- Together for Europe – Civic Dialogue – Encouraging public participation in EU policymaking
- The Entrepreneur as a Discoverer – Inspiring entrepreneurial thinking among students
- Business Idea Competition – Supporting young entrepreneurs
- EU Project Detectives – Students exploring and analyzing EU-funded projects to increase awareness of EU investments

GABROVO
MUNICIPALITY



THANK YOU