

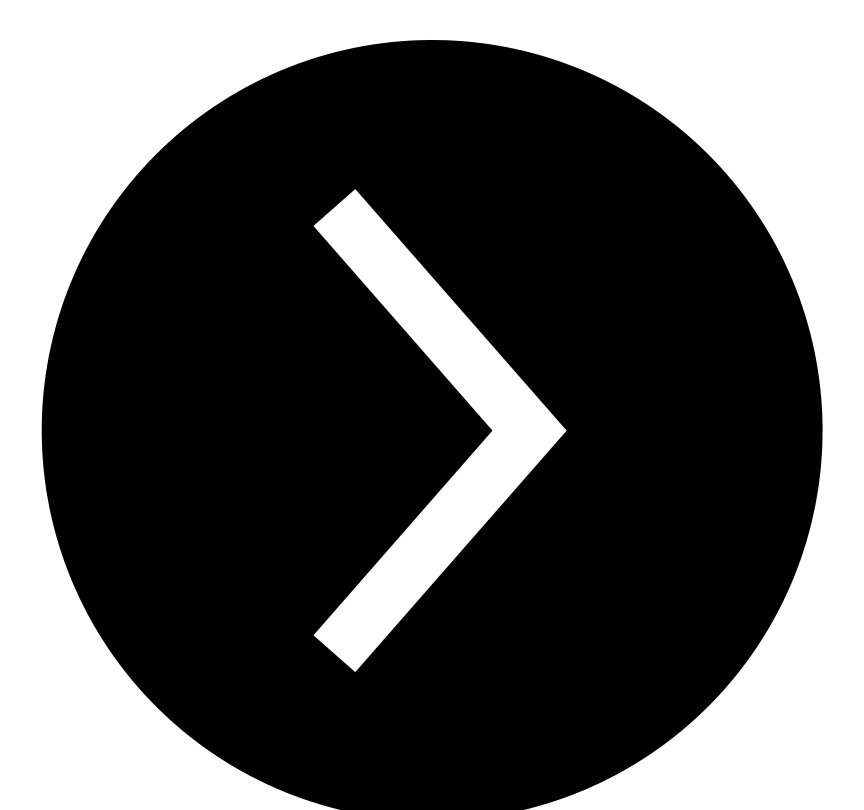
Social Innovation Spotlight



Episode 07

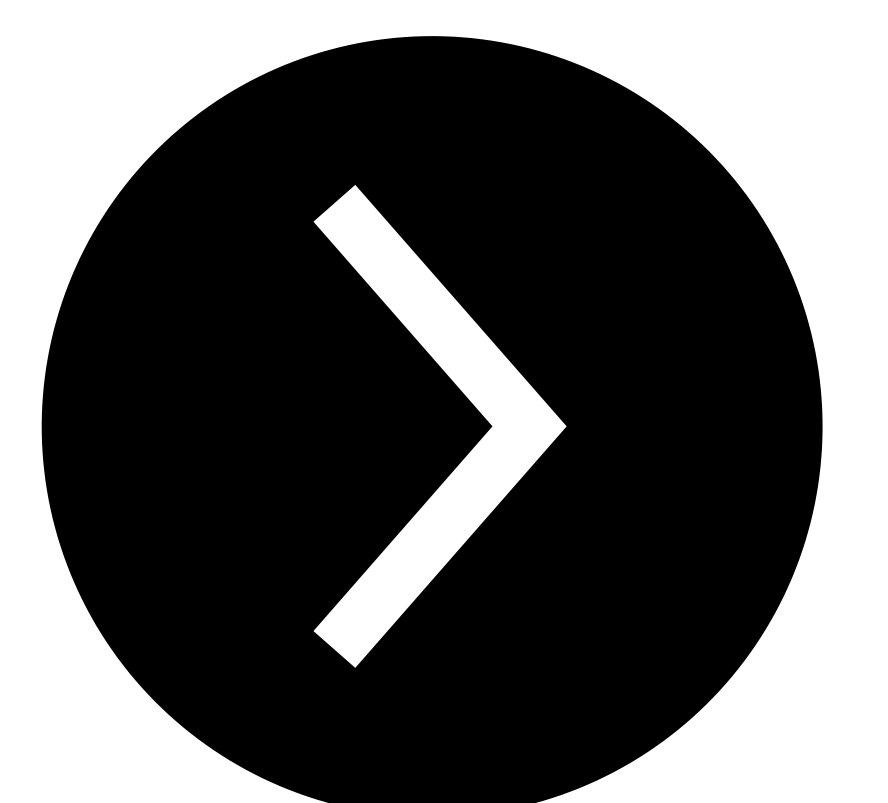
How to build a just work transition through local culture

A strategic initiative aims to ensure a just work transition in Kozani, addressing unemployment, outmigration and under-skilling due to de-lignitisation.



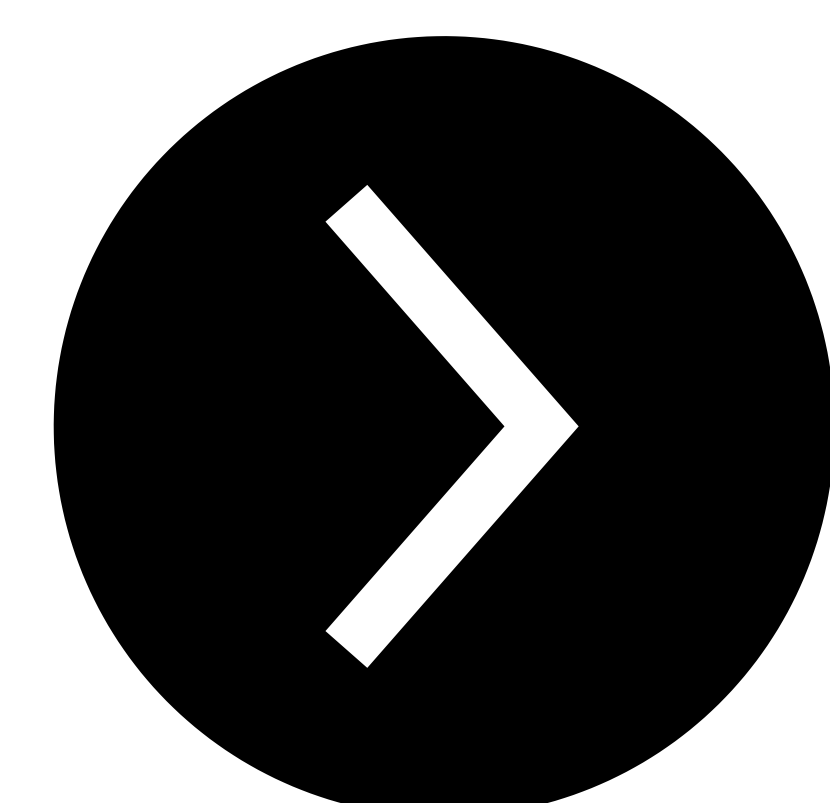
The challenge

- The shift away from lignite is expected to affect thousands of jobs in Western Macedonia, putting strong pressure on employment and local stability.
- Kozani faces high youth unemployment, while outmigration and NEETs weaken the local talent base and future prospects.
- Kozani has limited natural or cultural attractions to draw visitors and diversify its local economy.
- Local development strategies often remain top-down and struggle to build strong local ownership and grounding.



The idea

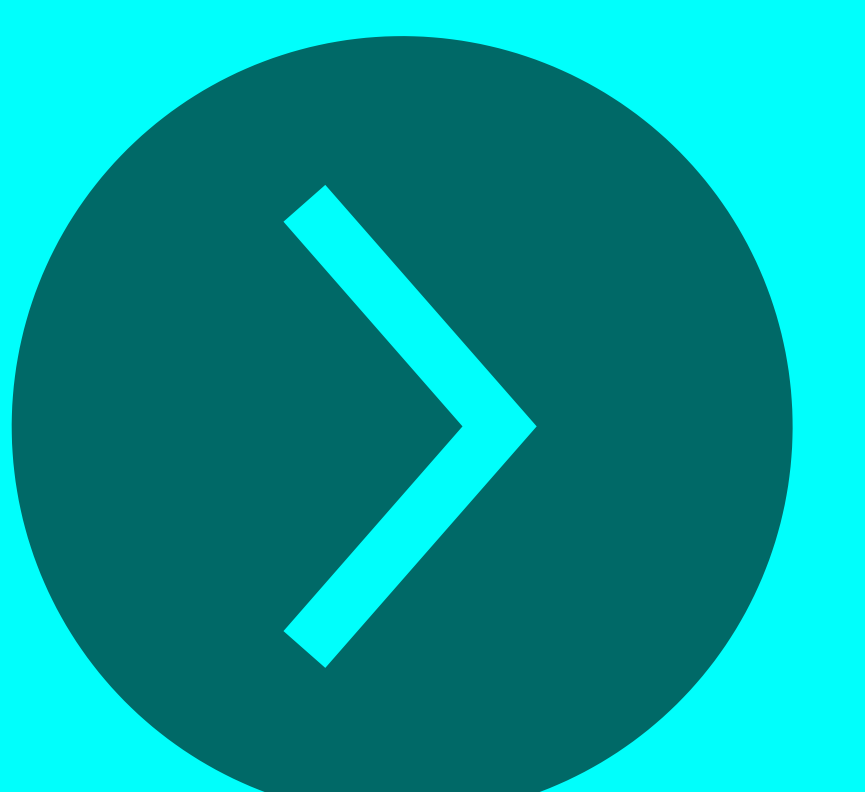
EcoZani is a strategic initiative supporting a just work transition in Kozani by tackling unemployment, outmigration and skills gaps after de-lignitisation. It uses the city's Carnival as a testing ground to foster economic diversification.







What's innovative here?


- **3Z ambition:** turning the Kozani Carnival into the first Zero-waste, Zero-emission and Zero-exclusion event in Greece and Europe.
- **Ecosystem building:** develops 3Z products and creates circular innovation hubs.
- **Lasting impact:** extends the 3Z vision beyond the Carnival through public participation and year-round upskilling and reskilling programmes.



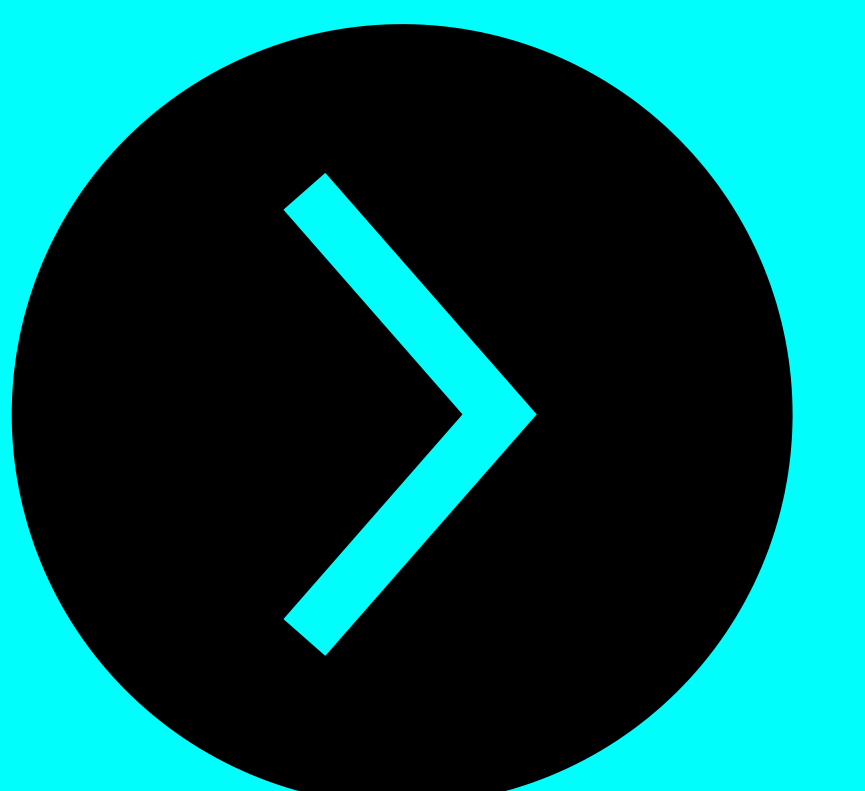
Impact so far

The Carnival promotes zero waste, zero emissions  and circular solutions through public events.


Young people remain to work and build their  lives in the city and its rural periphery.


NEETs and unemployed young people gain  new skills through training modules and internships in public structures and SMEs.

**Environmental
& social**

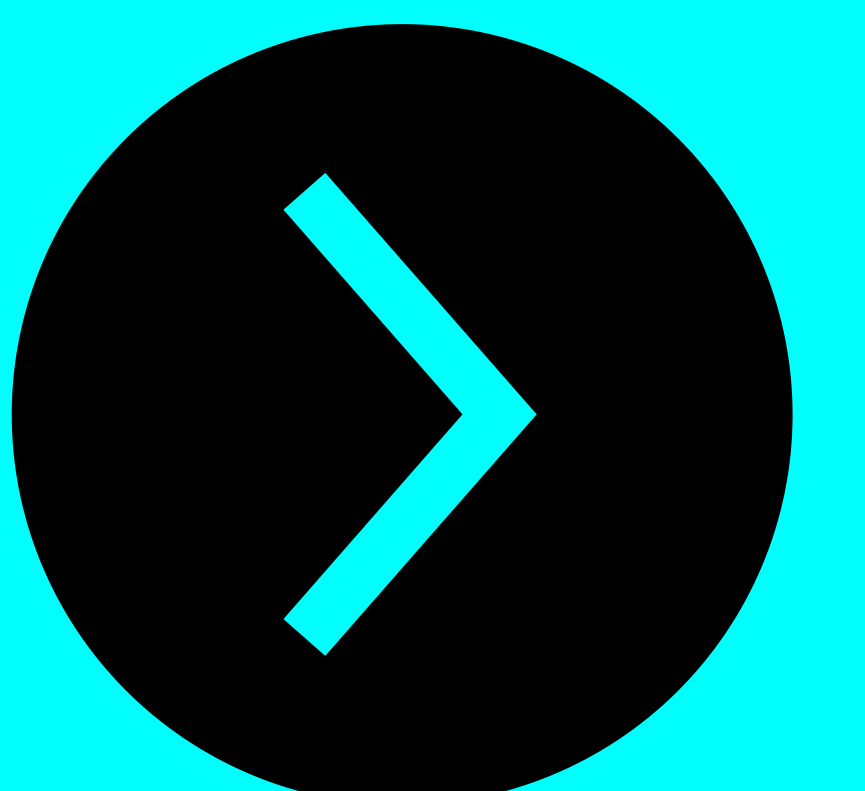


Impact so far

Transition strategies become grounded at the local level and gain support among local businesses and communities. 

Young entrepreneurs and existing businesses receive free support from partnership experts across skills such as green practices, business, management, marketing, digital and circular topics. 

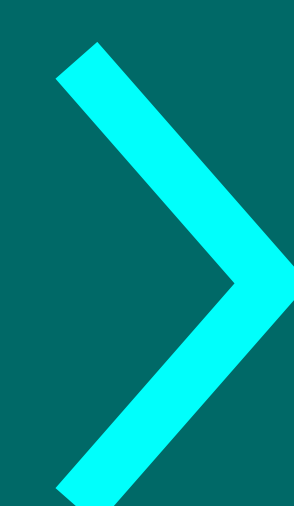
**Economic
& systemic**





What you can replicate

- Use annual events as a safe space to test new ideas for sustainability and inclusion.
- Get involved in public consultations and participatory planning processes connected to local transition efforts.
- Engage with local cultural events and initiatives that strengthen community identity while supporting sustainable change.



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**If this case sparked an idea,
don't let it stay on this slide.**

**Adapt it, remix it, and bring social
innovation to life where you are.**

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