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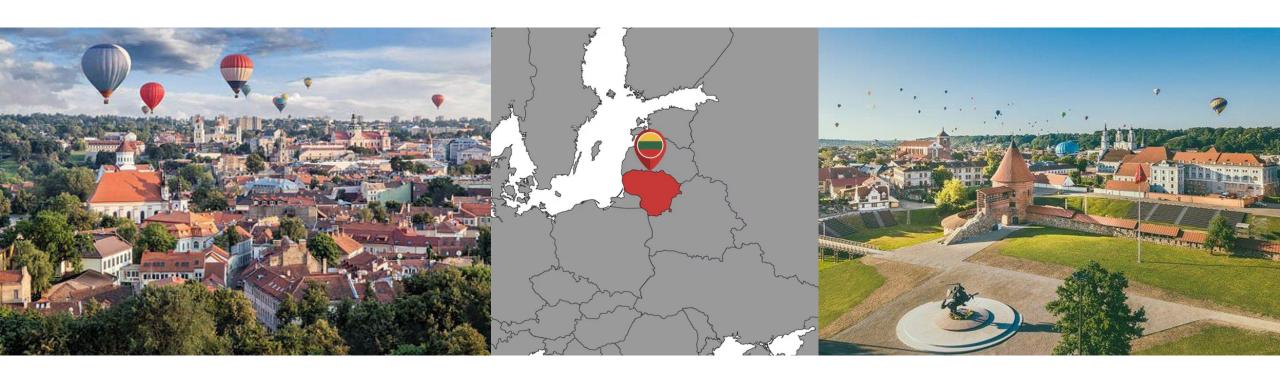
## Rural Transformation through Sustainable Mobility and Low-Emission Zones in Coastal Areas

Dr. Danguole Rutkauskiene



### Where are we?

Lithuania-Lietuva-Λιθουανία



### Who are we?

- **BETI** Baltic Education Technology Institute, Kaunas, Lithuania
- Founded in 2003 (22 years of experience)
- Founders professionals who have been working in ICT and education technologies for more than 15 years
- Cooperation with NADE (National Association of Distance Education), NSK (National Digital Coalition)

#### WE ARE INTERESTED, WE ARE RESEARCHING, WE ARE MAKING



Digital Media



Adult Education



Mentoring



■ Digital Literacy



Entrepreneurship



Sustainable Development





**Women And Technology** 



**Scientific Conferences And Seminars** 



**Education Of Students** 



Communities



Agriculture



**Quality Assurance** 



Science Research





**Educational Technologies** 



Socially Vulnerable Groups



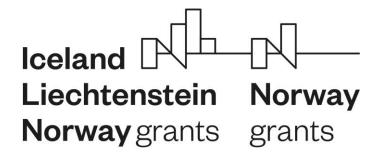
**Visual Communication** 

## National and European initiatives

- Framework
- Eureka
- Socrates
- Leonardo da Vinci
- Phare
- UNESCO
- Erasmus +
- Etc.











### **Projects**

#### **PROJECTS**

Select the field you are interested in

Adult digital literacy

Entrepreneurship

Socially vulnerable groups

Women and technology

**STEAM** 

Sustainable development

















































# Overview of Kaunas Municipality's Sustainable Development

Kaunas Municipality is pioneering sustainable rural transformation.

#### Focus Areas:

- Preserving rural identity while implementing green solutions
- Using decentralized settlement patterns to maintain biodiversity
- Investing in renewable energy and <u>community-led</u> projects
- Aligning with <u>EU sustainability goals</u>



# Unique Rural Characteristics Supporting Sustainability

#### **Decentralized Settlement Patterns:**

- Preserving traditional farmsteads supports biodiversity
- Local food systems reduce dependence on imports
- Over 8,000 hectares of green spaces in Kaunas



Babtai, a small town north of Kaunas

Unique Rural Characteristics Supporting Sustainability

#### **Renewable Energy Investments:**

- €4M invested in solar panels for public buildings
- Kaunas aims for 115 GWh of renewable energy by 2025
- Biomass & geothermal energy projects reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions



Solar power plant at Kaunas Kolegija

Unique Rural Characteristics Supporting

Sustainability

# Community Driven Urban-Rural Regeneration:

- Sanciai Cabbage Field Project transformed a neglected space
- 3,000+ residents involved in urban greening efforts
- Public gardening, cultural events, and sustainability workshops



Sanciai Cabbage Field

# Unique Rural Characteristics Supporting Sustainability

# Nordic-Inspired Environmental Practices:

- Eco-friendly urban design inspired by Scandinavian cities
- Child-friendly streets & pedestrianfriendly zones
- Green mobility: bike-sharing, electric public transport



Bike sharing system by Bolt

# Successful Initiatives in Sustainability & Rural Transformation

**Green Map of Kaunas:** Digital map showcasing eco-friendly locations (zero-waste shops, cycling routes)

Kaunas District Heating Upgrade (€35M investment): Transition to biomass & solar-based heating benefiting 400,000 residents

Sustainable Mobility Plan: Bicycle lanes, pedestrian paths, expanded public transport

**Eco-Friendly Europe Project (Erasmus+):** Youth engagement through sustainability-focused art, discussions, and activities



Green Map of Kaunas

# **Challenges in Implementing Sustainable Practices**

- Economic Constraints
- Urban Planning & Infrastructure
- Social Inclusion

Solutions - Partnerships, Funding, Education



### **Community Engagement & Education**

**Public Participation**: 3,000+ engaged citizens in the Šančiai Cabbage Field Project

**Educational Programs**: Sustainability workshops & urban gardening activities

#### Youth Engagement:

- Eco-Friendly Europe (Erasmus+)
- Interactive sustainability games like COOLAUTUVA



Community activities in Kaunas



# Collaboration with Other Municipalities & Regions

Kaunas Free Economic Zone (FEZ): Created 1,200+ green jobs, reduced CO₂ emissions by 18%

**Cross-Border Smart Village Networks:** Collaborations with Latvia on sustainable agriculture & tourism

Public-Private Partnerships: BaltCap Infrastructure Fund built 3 carbon-neutral schools

**EU-Funded Renewable Energy Projects:** €35M district heating upgrade benefiting Kaunas & Jurbarkas



## Thank you for your attention!



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