



ACADEMIA EUROPAEA

The Academy of Europe

FROM KNOWLEDGE TO ACTION APPLICATION

Title: Assessing the Societal Impact of Urban Climate Innovations in Central and Eastern Europe

MAE/YAE Investigator(s): Katalin Solymosi (associate professor, Outgoing Chair, YAE)

Other investigators: Kinga Biró (postdoctoral researcher, Mahidol University, Salaya, Thailand), e-mail: kinga.bir@mahidol.ac.th

Mária Szalmáné Csete (habil. associate professor, Vice Dean for International Affairs, Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Budapest, Hungary), e-mail: csete.maria@gtk.bme.hu

Category: From Science to Society

Problem (max. 50 words):

Urban climate innovations are expanding across Central and Eastern Europe, yet their societal benefits are insufficiently measured due to fragmented indicators and limited regional assessment tools.

Unmet Need (max. 50 words):

There is no context-sensitive framework to evaluate how urban climate innovations contribute to climate goals and societal well-being in the specific political, economic, and social settings of the CEE region.

Project Description (max. 200 words):

This project proposes a context-adapted framework for assessing the societal impact of urban climate innovations in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). While many cities are experimenting with novel climate-related interventions, their effectiveness and co-benefits remain largely unevaluated at the regional level. We will review existing international approaches and synthesize region-specific indicators that reflect both environmental effectiveness and societal relevance, including aspects of equity, governance, and resilience. The methodology will combine desk research with expert consultations and small-scale field testing in selected urban environments. The output will be a practice-oriented, transferable evaluation tool to support evidence-based decision-making in municipal planning and funding applications. The framework will be aligned with EU sustainability targets but sensitive to the socio-economic and institutional specificities of CEE urban contexts. It will also foster regional knowledge exchange and support future cross-city comparisons.

Hypothesis (25 words):

A regionally adapted impact assessment framework can improve the visibility and relevance of urban climate innovations in Central and Eastern Europe.

Implication for Practice (50 words):

The framework will help municipalities in the CEE region identify effective climate solutions, enhance transparency in innovation outcomes, and support strategic planning aligned with local priorities and EU agendas.

Implication for Research (50 words):

This project contributes to applied research on climate governance and sustainability transitions by developing a replicable tool to assess innovation impacts in a regionally specific urban context. In addition to publishing the results of this work, we plan to organize a webinar on them with the AE Budapest Knowledge Hub.